

The Multicultural Impact of AESOP'S FABLES



Tuesday, March 21, 2023 | 12:00 p.m.

UTEP Fox Fine Arts Recital Hall

Dr. Selfa Chew-Melendez, moderator

Welcome

Cherry Duke
Department of Music

Excerpts from *The Fox and the Cookie*

(performed by Opera UTEP students
and Dr. Esequiel Meza, Jr., piano)

words and music
by Maria Thompson Corley

"The Best"

written and performed by Dr. Larry Lesser
Department of Mathematical Sciences

Introductory Remarks

Dr. Selfa Chew-Melendez
College of Liberal Arts

***Aesop's Fables: Culture and Musical Interpretation
from a Sociological Perspective***

Dr. Maria Cristina Morales
Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Kelileh va Demneh

Alireza Vaziri
Department of Art

***Parables & Parabolos:
Jewish Connections to Aesop's Fables***

Dr. Larry Lesser
Department of Mathematical Sciences

Selfa A. Chew holds a PhD in Borderlands History from The University of Texas at El Paso. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Communication Science from Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and her MFA in Creative Writing from UTEP. Her research focuses on racial relations, the Asian and African diasporas, and World War II. She is currently Associate Professor of Instruction at the Department of History, and the African American Studies Program and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies at the College of Liberal Arts.

Cherry Duke joined the UTEP Music faculty in 2015 and teaches applied voice and opera performance. As an operatic soloist, she has performed over 50 principal roles with opera companies and orchestras in the US and abroad. Her artistic research focuses on amplifying classical vocal repertoire from underrepresented demographics, especially Latinx and Black composers. This spring, she directs the world premiere of Maria Thompson Corley's opera for children, *The Fox and the Cookie*. Learn more at www.cherryduke.com.

Dr. Larry Lesser is a UTEP Distinguished Teaching Professor in UTEP's Department of Mathematical Sciences, a long-time supporting faculty member of the UTEP Inter-American Jewish Studies Program, and a collaborator with Music Department faculty on multiple funded projects. The page LarryLesser.com/Judaism has links to his papers and funded speaker series connecting Judaism and math. At UTEP Religious Studies events in 2020, Lesser released an award-winning album of his non-denominational, non-liturgical Jewish songs – he'll play one today and another at the premiere performances of *The Fox and the Cookie* next week.

Dr. Maria Cristina Morales' research examines how Latinx ethnicity interlocks with multiple statuses and social institutions particularly along the Mexico-U.S. border. She employs both quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches, and she strives for her research to be reflexive and theory driven. She co-authored the book *Latinos in the United States: Diversity and Change* with Dr. Rogelio Sáenz (Polity Press, 2015). She is currently working on three contracted book projects: *Latinxs on the Margins*, the second-edition of *Latinos in the United States* (co-authored with Rogelio Saenz and Coda Rayo-Garza), and *Frontera Madre(hood)* (co-edited with Cynthia Bejarano). She is the Associate Dean for Research at the College of Liberal Arts.

Alireza Vaziri is a creative director and design educator. He is a member of the American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) and has been an assistant professor of Graphic Design at the University of Texas at El Paso since 2021. He earned his MFA in Design from the University of California, Davis, and his BFA in Design from the Tehran University of Art. He has received some prestigious design awards and his work has been featured in numerous websites, exhibitions, and museums around the world such as the San Francisco Center for Contemporary Art, London International Creative Awards, Goethe Institute, The Sechrest Gallery of Art, Rubin Center for the Visual Arts, *Graphis Magazine*, etc.

THE **FOX** AND THE
COOKIE



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MARCH 27-28, 6:30 P.M.
FOX FINE ARTS RECITAL HALL