

One of the most popular attractions in Philadelphia's Mütter Museum is the Chevalier Jackson Foreign Body Collection: a beguiling set of drawers filled with thousands of objects that had been swallowed or inhaled, then extracted non-surgically by a pioneering laryngologist using rigid instruments of his own design. How do people's throats, lungs, and stomachs end up filled with inedible things, and what do they become once arranged in Dr. Chevalier Jackson's aura-laden cabinet? Animating the space between interest and terror, curiosity and dread, Mary Cappello brings her own aesthetic of poetic apposition and wend to bear upon Chevalier Jackson's methods and designs. This illustrated reading juxtaposes the inadvertent art effected by Jackson's refusal to allow a foreign body to wander with meditations on Cappello's queerly promiscuous body inside an MRI machine, or the incitement of cancer's erratic time.

Mary Cappello is a writer and professor of English and Creative Writing at the University of Rhode Island. Her four books of literary nonfiction include *Awkward: A Detour* (2007) and, following Maya Deren, a ritual in transfigured time, *Called Back* (2009). Her most recent book, *Swallow* (2012), emerges from the Chevalier Jackson Foreign Body Collection in Philadelphia's Mütter Museum. A new suite of lyric essays on 'mood' and its affinities with clouds, 'sonorous envelopes' and dioramas will appear next fall. A recipient of *The Bechtel Prize for Educating the Imagination*; the *Dorothea Lange-Paul Taylor Prize*; and, a Guggenheim Fellowship in Nonfiction, Cappello is a former Fulbright Lecturer at the Gorky Literary Institute (Moscow), and currently Holtzbrink Fellow at the American Academy in Berlin.

ICI Lecture Series **ERRANS**

The English verb 'to err' has largely lost its positive connotations. It no longer invokes wandering, rambling, or roaming, and is now understood negatively in relation to a prescribed path or goal. To be sure, errors are acknowledged to play an important role in the pursuit of knowledge and happiness, but usually only to the extent that their recognition allows for their elimination, correction, and avoidance. Recognizing that a critique of ideals of productivity, success, goal-orientation, and determination is necessarily paradoxical, the **ICI Lecture Series ERRANS** takes the shifting meanings of 'erring' – connoting the violation of norms as well as the activity of wandering – as a prompt to explore the critical potentials and risks of embracing error, randomness, failure, and non-teleological temporalities, and to do so across different disciplines and discourses.

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Mary Cappello

Errant
Foreign
Bodies

