

Cora di Brazzà Foundation Marks 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence with 2026 Memory Parlor

Two-day interdisciplinary program explores declaration, moral responsibility, historical memory, and the ethical meaning of human decision and action

MT. PLEASANT, MI, UNITED STATES, June 15, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Cora di Brazzà Foundation](#) will present the 2026 Memory Parlor, [Shadow of Intention](#), a two-day interdisciplinary program to be held July 22–23, 2026 at the historic Philadelphia Masonic Temple.



Logo of the Cora di Brazzà Foundation

The 2026 Memory Parlor is organized during a year marked by several significant anniversaries in the history of peace and justice history and philosophy, including the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the 125th anniversary of the birth of Korean philosopher Ham Sok Hon, the 30th anniversary of the International Court of Justice’s Advisory Opinion on nuclear weapons, and the 25th anniversary of the death of philosopher [G.E.M. Anscombe](#). Using these milestones as points of departure, the program will explore the relationship between declaration, intention, conscience, and human action across history, law, religion, politics, and philosophy.

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*Dr. Hope Elizabeth May,
President of the Cora di
Brazzà Foundation*

Bringing together scholars, artists, historians, legal thinkers, philosophers, and public intellectuals, the program presents a mosaic of conversations spanning ethics, war, peacebuilding, historical memory, and the

moral interpretation of political action.

Featured speakers and facilitators include Clifton Truman Daniel, eldest grandson of President Harry S. Truman; Stephen Rapp, former U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Criminal Justice who headed international criminal prosecutions focused on atrocity crimes in Rwanda and Sierra Leone ; Sandra Weber, author and scholar of John Brown; Korean artist and philosopher Bum Sun Jun; and additional invited participants from the fields of philosophy, history, law, religion, and peace studies.

The first day of the program, Intention and Action, will focus on philosophical and historical questions surrounding moral responsibility, political action, and the meaning of intention itself. Topics will include the philosophy of G.E.M. Anscombe, debates concerning President Truman's intention in the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the role of intention in international law and atrocity crimes.

The program will also examine John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry through the lens of Brown's own writings, especially his 1859 "Declaration of Liberty," considering how declarations of purpose shape the interpretation of political action, revolutionary intent, and moral responsibility. Participants will further explore how Brown's declaration may broaden traditional understandings of natural rights beyond political liberty alone toward questions of human dignity, stewardship of the land, and environmental rights, including access to clean air and water.

The second day, Asian Perspectives, will examine intention within Buddhist philosophy and Korean intellectual history, including Buddhist understandings of karma, the cultivation of ethical character, and the ethical significance of Right Intention within the Noble Eightfold Path. Discussions will also address contemporary nuclear issues in East Asia through the lens of peace, moral responsibility, and historical memory, alongside reflections on the thought of Ham Sok Hon, specifically his July 4, 1953 "The Great Declaration," translated into English for the first time by Dr. Won Kwang Paik. Inspired in part by the American Declaration of Independence, Ham



A scene from the 2024 Memory Parlor titled "Conscience in Action"



"International Understanding and Unity" by Violet Oakley

opens his declaration with a direct reference to 1776, situating Korea's search for moral and political renewal within a broader history of transformative declarations and revolutions of thought, including the Protestant Reformation. The text offers a philosophical and spiritual meditation on freedom, peace, conscience, and the ethical reconstruction of society during one of the most consequential moments in modern Korean history.

The program will also feature a display of Violet Oakley's rare *The Holy Experiment*, a 1922 folio containing twenty-two colored prints produced in a limited edition of only 500 copies. The volume presents in book form Oakley's celebrated mural cycle for the Pennsylvania State Capitol, including works created for the Governor's Reception Room and Senate Chamber. Influenced by Hegelian conceptions of history and moral progress, Oakley's sweeping visual narrative presents the unfolding of civilization as a movement toward greater unity, conscience, and peace, offering an artistic counterpart to the themes explored throughout the Memory Parlor.

The title, *Shadow of Intention*, reflects the idea that declarations and actions are often accompanied by moral ambiguity, competing motivations, and unforeseen consequences, both praiseworthy and blameworthy, extending far beyond their historical moment. Through lectures, conversations, and dialogue, participants will reflect upon how intentions are formed, justified, remembered, contested, and woven into the historical record.

"The Memory Parlor is convened to create a space in which participants connect fragmented narratives of peace and justice history and philosophy under the protection and shelter of beauty" said Dr. Hope Elizabeth May, President of the Cora di Brazzà Foundation. "As we find ourselves in this moment of time and inheritance, this program asks not only what societies declare, but how intentions are understood, justified, remembered, and contested."

Founded in 2019, the Cora di Brazzà Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to public education focused on the untold stories of peace and justice history and philosophy.

Registration is required. Additional information and registration details are available at shadowofintention.com.

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