If art is a language that speaks, what is it saying? In statue form, Roosevelt rides a horse and boldly stares into the future; meanwhile, nameless African American and Indigenous people walk on foot beside him. Statues of confederate soldiers loom over our civic institutions—our libraries and schools and offices—without context or apology. Who are the anonymous slaves, servants, and laborers appearing as footnotes in portraits of our Founding Fathers? What values are being expressed by the constitutional monuments dotting the American landscape? And why do we skip over chapters—entire peoples, entire histories—in our national narratives? In this powerful talk, Titus Kaphar imagines a renewed, more nuanced engagement with American history: envisioning new spaces for marginalized or forgotten bodies to enter, and disrupt, the evolving fabric of our culture. For this creator, the artist’s role is clear: to draw back the curtain on ignorance and deception, and amplify the voices of those who cannot speak for themselves. In a simple phrase, it’s to celebrate the truth. Join Kaphar—one of the country’s most exciting young painters—on a revealing, intellectually nourishing tour of the issues most in need of amendment.
LECTURE HISTORY
In 1985, the Flinn Foundation established an endowment to commemorate the University’s 100th year. The gift created the ASU Centennial Lecture, and in 1989 it provided Barrett Honors College the resources to bring some of the world’s most influential intellects to campus.

In its 30-year history, the Centennial Lecture has become one of ASU’s premiere intellectual events featuring noted diplomats, scientists, playwrights, and authors. Each of the women and men chosen as the Centennial Lecturer has added significantly to the strength of the University, and each has provided students and members of the community with a memorable experience.

HISTORY OF BARRETT
Barrett Honors College was founded in 1988 by an act of the Arizona Board of Regents and was given a naming endowment in 2000 by Craig and Barbara Barrett, noted leaders in industry, education, and public service.

Since its inception 28 years ago, fueled by the Barrett endowment and ASU’s commitment to excellence in honors education, Barrett has become a pre-eminent four-year residential honors college, routinely attracting intellectually outstanding students from Arizona, nationally and internationally.

Barrett is among the top 10 institutions for attracting National Scholars. Its living and learning community provides a perfect synergy for students to exercise and challenge their intellects while pursuing outstanding educational opportunities.

Barrett students regularly receive record numbers of nationally competed scholarships such as Fulbright, Boren, Goldwater, Truman and Udall awards. Since 2000, only Harvard and Yale have named more students to the USA Today All-USA College Academic Teams. In 2015, the New York Times called Barrett “the gold standard” among honors colleges in the nation. In 2005, Reader’s Digest names Barrett “Best of America” in university honors education.

PAST CENTENNIAL LECTURES

2016 – Henry Cisneros
Immigrants: “An Essential Ingredient For A String America and Our Nation’s Future”

2015 – Sherman Alexie
“An Urban Indian’s Look at the World and How to be a 21st Century American Nomad”

2014 – Sandra Postel
“Understanding the Importance of Urban Water Systems”

2013 – Michael Pollan
“Out of the Garden and Onto the Plate: A Writer’s Education”

2012 – Sylvia Nasar
“Grand Pursuit: The Story of Economic Genius in Modern Times”

2011 – Oscar Arias
“For We Have Promises to Keep: Ensuring Peace for Future Generations”

2010 – Edward James Almos
“We’re All in the Same Gang”

2009 – Joel Meyerowitz
“A Look Behind the Lens”

2008 – Leonard Downie, Jr.
“Focusing on the Future: Politics, Conflict and the Media”

2007 – Anna Quindlen
“The Value of Reading and Writing in a Democratic Society”

2006 – Jules Feiffer
“Feiffer on Feiffer: My Life and Funny Times”

2005 – Kathleen Sullivan
“Civil Liberties in a Time of National Crisis”

2004 – Edward Albee
“The State of Theater and the Arts in America”

2003 – Charles Johnson
“Mindfulness and the Beloved Country”

2002 – David Halberstam
“America and the World: New Challenges in a Time of Uncertainty”

2001 – N. Scott Momaday
“Origins: The Reinvention of the Sacred”

2000 – Jonathan Weiner
“Evolution in Action: The View from Darwin’s Islands and Benzer’s Bottles”

1999 – Carlos Fuentes
“A Dialogue for the Americas”

1998 – Annie Dillard
“Performance of Beauty and Grace”

1997 – James Fallows
“News and Democracy: Knowing Enough to Survive”

1996 – Stephen J. Gould
“Pattern and Lack of Progress in the History of Life”

1995 – Sir Crispin Tickell
“The Human Hazard: Refugees and Environmental Change”

1994 – Lynn Margulis
“Gaia as the Living Earth from Space: Soft Goddess or Hard Science?”

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