**Course Description**

We can learn a great deal about Kafka as artist and thinker by breaking up his career into three phases: an initial breakthrough in which the author produces remarkable stories like "The Metamorphosis," in which a protagonist "wakes up" to a deeper appreciation of his true nature; a middle phase in which he writes his well known short novel, *The Trial*, and refines and extends the voice of his typical protagonist in search of self-understanding; and a final and less well-understood phase in which Kafka distills to its essence his primordial theme about the human predicament. The focus of this lecture series will be on this last phase as represented in the stories "Josephine the Singer," and "The Hunger Artist."

**Instructor**

Steve Dowden earned his Ph.D. in German language and literature at the University of California at Berkeley in 1984. He is the author of Kafka's *Castle and the Critical Imagination* (1995). His most recent book is *Tragedy and the Tragic in German Literature, Art, and Thought*, co-edited with Thomas P. Quinn (2014).

**Texts**

"Josephine the Singer," and "The Hunger Artist," will be provided for download in the BOLLI Bulletin. Please purchase or borrow the short novel, *The Trial* by Franz Kafka, published by Oxford World Classics and translated by Mike Mitchell. Professor Dowden will discuss *The Trial* on February 1.

Complimentary for BOLLI Members
To RSVP, see the BOLLI BULLETIN.