



Nordamerikastudienprogramm  
Institut für Anglistik, Amerikanistik und Keltologie

## Events | Veranstaltungen Sommersemester 2010



# Prof. Charles Altieri

## University of California, Berkeley

### "How to Create the New Rhetoric that Contemporary American Poets Seem to Be Seeking"

**Tuesday • 6 July 2010 • 6:00-8:00 pm**  
**Lecture Hall 11, Hauptgebäude**

Critics of modernism have convinced almost all poets, conservative and experimental, that poems are first of all aesthetic objects, Charles Altieri suggests in this talk. He argues that some younger poets are attempting to break from this dictum by emphasizing poems as rhetorical objects and capable of adapting the resources of traditional rhetoric. After all, treating poems as aesthetic objects will always emphasize their non-discursive sensual aspects. Altieri will try to explain this shift to rhetoric by defining poems as participating in a distinctive speech act, the demonstrative, which can serve as the pendant to John Austin's sense of the performative and let "performative" mean only what Austin wanted it to mean. Other poststructuralist uses of the term will have to compete with the demonstrative, which has a more social cast.

Charles Alteri currently holds the position of Rachel Stageberg Anderson Chair at the UC Berkeley English Department. Altieri's writings have explored major moments of twentieth-century American poetry, especially its relationship to philosophy and the visual arts. He is the author of numerous prominent works which have profoundly influenced the reception of American poetry, among them *Self and Sensibility in Contemporary American Poetry* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984) and *Painterly Abstraction in Modernist American Poetry: The Contemporaneity of Modernism*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989). Prof. Altieri's two most recent monographs are *The Particulars of Rapture: An Aesthetics of the Affects* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2003) and *The Art of Modern American Poetry* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005).