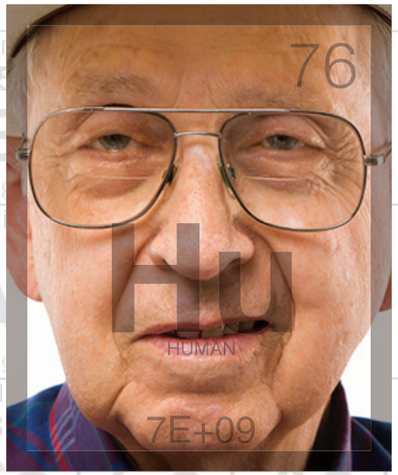
Commercial Folk:

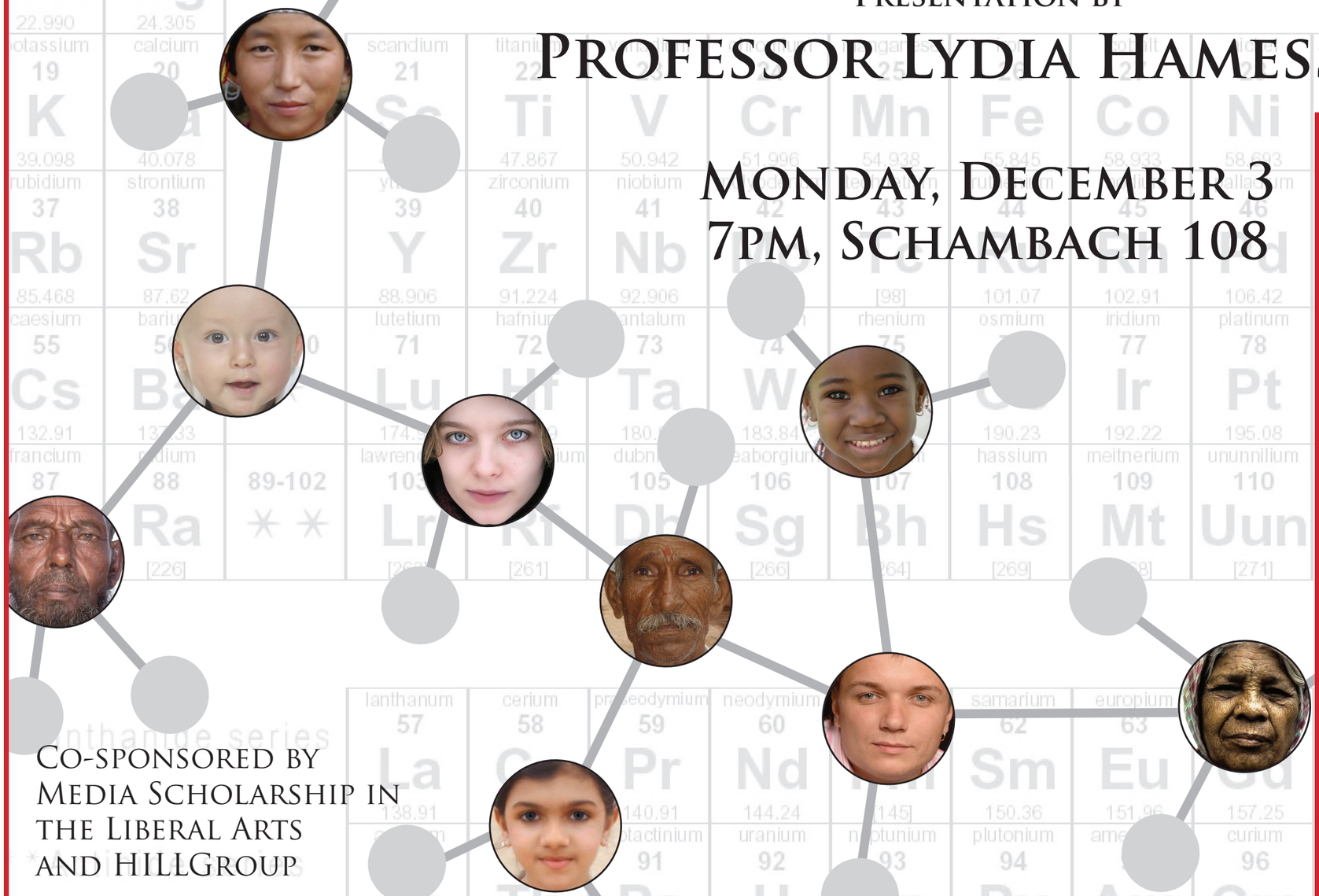
Dow Chemical's 'Human Element' Campaign



Presentation by

Professor Lydia Hamessley

Monday, December 3
7pm, Schambach 108



"DOW Chemical's Human Element Campaign's most visible presence was a 90-second television ad that featured lush images of the natural world and 'real people' of all ages and races from around the world as well as a voice-over that mixed spiritual profundity and chemistry made mystical: 'life is elemental,' 'we see all things connected.' However, the music used in the advertisement, 'The New Harmony Waltz' by Susan Voelz, is what creates this commercial's powerful, almost mesmerizing, effect. This leisurely-paced, folk-like fiddle tune transports the listener to an idealized rural world of a simpler time.

Dow states that "The Human Element" campaign "reintroduces the company and announces its vision of addressing some of the most pressing economic, social and environmental concerns facing the global community...." Professor Hamessley examines how this commercial, particularly its musical score, works in Dow's attempt to reconstruct a public image that for many is unredeemable.

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