

SVEN-JOHAN SPÅNBERG
Walt Whitman



Walt Whitman. Mathew Brady
Photographs of Civil War-Era
Personalities and Scenes, (Record Group
111), from US National Archives

In his lecture, Professor Spånberg will concentrate on four areas. First he will discuss Whitman's personal background and the construction of a quite different poetic persona in "Song of Myself". A second concern will be the political context of the 1840s and 1850s, a turbulent period in US history, which deeply affected Whitman's treatment of, for instance, the slavery question. Third, he will discuss the many editions of *Leaves of Grass* and the changes Whitman introduced when he supervised their publication. Finally he will turn to the "Children of Adam" and "Calamus" clusters, where textual and sexual issues often overlap.

Sven-Johan Spånberg is Emeritus Professor of English at Umeå University, Sweden. He has also held a lectureship and docentship at Uppsala University and has been Professor of English at ÅA. His publications include *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel and the Traditions of Realism* (Uppsala University, 1974) and *The Adventures of Harry Richmond: The Unpublished Parts* (Uppsala University, 1990), both studies of George Meredith's work, and he has researched widely in nineteenth-century literature, examining the writings of for example Oscar Wilde and Charles Dickens besides those of Meredith.