

LP² A Lifelong Peer Learning Program at the Graduate Center, CUNY

THE OBSERVER
December 14, 2020

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear members,

As we enter the final week of study groups, we are approaching other, bittersweet, changes. This past week I met with the outgoing Advisory board members to welcome the new Advisory board members who take office on January 1. Thank you to all who have served on the Board and worked so hard to make this transition to The Graduate Center a success. It's been a true pleasure to get to know you and make things happen together! I'm looking forward to working with the newly elected members, all of whom I have met through committee work, SIGs, or special projects. There are already initiatives in planning for us to sink our teeth into come January.

We will introduce the new Executive Committee, discuss amended Guidelines, and answer your questions at the General Membership Meeting (GMM) on Tuesday, December 15 at 3 PM. If you have not yet, please register using the link later in this issue.

I also joined the orientation session last week and met nearly all of the 21 new members joining the program in February for the Spring term. They are a lively, enthusiastic group that I hope you will get acquainted with over the winter through intersession activities and of course through study groups and other activities in the spring. You will learn more about them through features in the Observer as soon as next week – so keep an eye out!

For the quieter days, please consider using the Directory on the Zine to search by zip code for other members (whether new or long term) who live in your neighborhood to meet up for socially distanced coffee/tea or a walk.

Looking to spring, I am working with some of the committed conversation partner volunteers to get the program up and running within CUNY. The admissions committee has planned the calendar for admissions looking to Fall 2021 and I met with the Diversity-Outreach Committee last week to discuss the recruitment approach as well as plans for a new speaker series. Stay tuned for refreshed and new programming.

You will receive your spring schedules and rosters (for coordinators) within the next week and we will see you at the GMM.

Until soon,
Mariel

FROM THE ADVISORY BOARD

As Mariel noted, the final meeting of the current Advisory Board and the first meeting of the new board took place on December 9. At the joint meeting, the members of the current Executive Committee reflected on their experience over the past years. Harold, Eileen, Miriam and Michelle outlined the important issues the board faces, expressed their gratitude to their colleagues on the Executive Committee and the Board for their dedication and friendship; and spoke of their pride in the work of our LP² committees, SIGs, and special activities. The new and current members then discussed the responsibilities and processes of the Advisory Board.

After the joint meeting, the new board convened to elect its Executive Committee, as specified in the Guidelines. The board elected Barbara Marwell Chair; Bruce Smith Vice-Chair, and Barry Bryer Secretary.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Reminder, General Membership Meeting Tuesday, December 15, 3PM

As noted in the Director's Report, the agenda includes discussion of the amendments to our Guidelines recommended by the Advisory Board.

A summary of the amendments and the complete amended Guidelines themselves are available on the Zine. [CLICK HERE](#)

Please register [HERE](#) to receive Zoom details. The registration form includes the space for you to submit questions for the GMM in

advance. Within two weeks of the meeting, you will be asked to vote on the amendments by secret ballot. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the ballots cast will be required for adoption.

Community Outreach

Try Some Activities

As we enter the winter with no classes until the beginning of February, we hope you take advantage of the break activities. We offer at least one activity for just about every day in January. The December 21st Observer, the last until the new term, will list them all, so save that issue and sign up throughout the month. If you misplace the email, note that past Observer issues are available on the Zine.

Get in Touch

Are you my LP² Neighbor? Did you know that you can sort the LP² Directory on the Zine by zip code?

You can find members who live within walking distance and meet for a chat, a walk, or a socially distanced coffee. It could be someone you have not yet met in a study group or maybe someone you have seen only on a Zoom grid. Or perhaps a brand-new member who would appreciate the

contact. If you are willing to extend and/or receive an invitation through email or telephone from an LP² member, let Carol Borelli or Susan Sabatino know and they will send you the Zine zip code list for your neighborhoods. Please write LP neighbors in the subject line of your email. Carol: cborelli@gc.cuny.edu and Susan: ssabatino@gc.cuny.edu.

Mindfulness Volunteers Wanted

David Grogan is looking for members who are interested in taking a six-week introductory mindfulness training workshop during the spring. No prior meditation experience is necessary, but a willingness to make a genuine commitment to developing a daily practice is essential. If you would like to participate in a preliminary orientation session during the break, email him at [David Grogan dgrogan@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:dgrogan@gc.cuny.edu) and he will get in touch with you.

Men Wanted!

The LP² is actively working on improving both the diversity of our membership and the sensitivity of current members to diversity issues. The Diversity Committee is working on these issues, but unfortunately the Committee itself

needs more diversity. There are only two men currently as active members of the Committee and the perspective of men is crucial to the Committee's effectiveness. If you want to help LP² make progress as a welcoming and sensitive environment, contact Doris Wallace at wallacedoris233@gmail.com. We need you!

Winter Break Activities

New

FDR and the New Deal with Marietta Meyers Monday, January 18, 1PM

We revisit the challengers, programs, court-packing battle and the New Deal's ongoing impact. What can we learn from this history, and what is the role of government during stressful times? Does the approach of the New Deal have validity today?

If you are interested, email Marietta Meyers mmeyers1@gc.cuny.edu.

You will receive a Zoom invitation and reading material the week before.

Book Discussion with Susan Smahl *Leave the World Behind* by

Rumaan Alam Monday, January 4, 1PM

A finalist for the 2020 National Book Award for fiction and a New York Times best seller, this extremely engaging and quick moving short novel is about a NYC family on vacation when a major disaster/blackout occurs. It addresses relationships, race, socio-economics, politics, etc. as it slips from normal vacation activities to dystopia. If you are interested, email Susan Smahl ssmahl@gc.cuny.edu obtain the book and start reading now on your own. You'll receive a Zoom invite the week before.

Previously Announced

Reflections on Virtual Life with Jan Adler Wednesday, December 30 or Thursday, January 28, 2PM

Now that we have completed almost a year of Zooming, share your thoughts and feelings about how the remote experience has affected your communal and private life and also about the strategies you have developed to survive or even thrive. Contact Jan Adler at jadler@gc.cuny.edu, and specify the date you prefer; you will receive a Zoom invite the week before the session.

The Armchair Traveler Dive Trips with Susan Sabatino Monday, January 11, 1PM

Pack your imaginary bags and come along with Susan, who has logged over 500 dives, as she revisits memorable scuba diving adventures, both on land and underwater, in the Philippines, Pacific Rim Micronesia, the Caribbean, the Black Sea, Cairo, Petra Jordan and other exotic places. Email Susan at ssabatino@gc.cuny.edu and you'll receive a Zoom invite the week before the session.

Trump Set to Leave on January 20. Now What? With Steve Kalinsky, Sara Otey, Barry Levine and Maury Harris Tuesdays at Two, from December 22nd through January 28th.

As (slightly more than) half the nation celebrates the election of Joe Biden and (slightly less than) half is dubious about the result, LP² weighs in. We look at the issues (economy, health care, media, polarization), seek historical context, and humbly attempt to predict the future. Basically, we try to make sense of it all. For a Zoom invite, contact Steve Kalinsky at

skalinsky@gc.cuny.edu. Whatever your political views, please join us; the discussion will be better if it includes diverse views.

Stitch Away Stress with Michelle Harris and Susan Herman Tuesday, January 5, 10AM

Join us for a remote knit/crochet/spin/weave/sew/stitch group. Share your skills and enjoy the meditative benefits of handwork.

Depending on interest, we will set up several sessions during winter break. Email Michelle at mharris@gc.cuny.edu or Susan at sherman1@gc.cuny.edu for a Zoom invite the week before the session.

Shtisel – the Netflix series With Susan Herman and Jenny Ross Friday, January 8, 15, 22 & 29, 1PM

Watch all 24 episodes of the award-winning Israeli TV show that focuses on an ultraorthodox Jewish family living in Jerusalem. Each episode lasts 45 minutes. We will meet on four Fridays and discuss six episodes each time. Email Susan sherman1@gc.cuny.edu to receive a Zoom invite.

Book Discussion with Jane Case Einbender
***The City & The City* by China Mieville**

Wednesday, January 13, 1PM

“If Philip K. Dick and Raymond Chandler’s love child were raised by Franz Kafka, the writing that emerged might resemble [this] ...novel”—Los Angeles Times.

Part detective mystery, part dystopian tale, the novel illuminates fundamental and unsettling questions about culture and governance. Email Jane at jeinbender@gc.cuny.edu, obtain the book, and start reading now on your own. You’ll receive a Zoom invite the week before the session.

Book Discussion with Aryllynn Brody
***The Girl with the Louding Voice* by Abi Dare’**

Thursday, January 21, 1PM

Trafficked by her father, a 14-year-old Nigerian girl lives with the hope of getting an education. Through her voice in this beautifully written book, we learn of trafficking, equality, women’s rights, women as mentors, friendship, hope and motherhood. Email Arlynn at

abrody1@gc.cuny.edu, obtain the book, and start reading now on your own. You’ll receive a Zoom invite the week before the session.

Reading Stories Aloud
With Sharon Girard and Helene Schiffman

Monday, January 4, 11, 18 & 25, 3PM

Welcome to the pleasures of reading aloud. Stories are emailed to you in advance, but preparation is unnecessary. A panel of readers reads the story aloud – sprinkling its reading with interjections, questions, one-liners, insights wise and dumb and short digressions. During pauses, the entire group joins in for comments and questions. The panel changes from session to session – giving all who wish to read the opportunity to do so. We’re considering stories by, among many others, Elif Batumen, Shirley Jackson, Italo Calvino, Anita Desai, Deborah Eisenberg, Gogol, Jamaica Kincaid, Grace Paley, Zadie Smith, as well as revisiting some of our favorite authors such as Raymond Carver and Flannery O’Connor. Email Sharon at sgirard@gc.cuny.edu for the Zoom link and please indicate if you would like to be on a panel.

China & the US: What Lies Ahead with Tom Hardy
Thursday, January 7, 1PM

As a second follow-up to Tom's study group, we speculate on the composition of President Biden's cabinet and on the relationship between the new administration and China. Former class members will automatically be signed up to receive a Zoom invite. Others who wish to participate should email Tom Hardy at thardy@gc.cuny.edu.

Impressionism in the Met: A Guided Tour with Carolyn Grossner
Thursday, January 14, 1PM

The Met has the finest collection of Impressionist art outside Paris. We will take an hour-long tour (repeated from this past summer's course) of some of the greatest examples of Impressionism, including works that led to the movement and those of post-Impressionism. It will be a relaxing lunch-hour talk about beautiful paintings with no Q&A afterwards. Please join me at this [link](#) on January 14.

The Great LP² Read
The Reluctant Fundamentalist
by Mohsin Hamid
Wednesday, January 27, 1PM

Join us for our second Great LP² Read. Our book was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize and was also a New York Times bestseller. Depending on how many people sign up, we will organize one or more Zoom discussion groups. Email Jane Case Einbender at jeinbender@gc.cuny.edu, obtain the book and start reading. You'll receive a Zoom invite the week before the session.

Theatre in Performance SIG
Encore with Bruce Smith

The Theatre in Performance SIG offered this summer will be revived during the winter break and then continue through the spring semester. Open to all members, it will meet every other week to discuss recordings of live play productions available for streaming. The initial plays will be chosen from Digital Theatre, a British streaming service that has a variety of critically acclaimed productions for £9.99 (approximately \$13)/month. The SIG will start during the first week of January; members can start

participating then. (Since this activity will continue, members can also join at the start of the spring semester.) Email Bruce at bsmith2@gc.cuny.edu to receive more detailed information. Note: Both past SIG participants and new ones should send this email ASAP.

Observer Schedule

The last Observer for this semester will be on Monday, December 21. Regular publication will resume on Monday, January 25. The Observer may appear during the break when there is news to communicate. Send your entries to Leslie Davis by Friday at 5PM at ldavis1@gc.cuny.edu. Online Art Show entries and suggestions for virtual tours should go to Carol Millsom at cmillsom@gc.cuny.edu.

TECH NOTES

Library Resources

Check out the new tab on the Zine: [Library Resources](#), for information about databases available from the GC Open Access and Open Education Resources and also from the New York Public Library and other libraries as well.

Reminders

For email please direct all IT inquiries to engagement@gc.cuny.edu. Also note that the OIT (Office of Information Technology) at The Graduate Center does not provide assistance with personal computers or mobile devices. If you need assistance with a personal computer, contact your PC manufacturer or your software vendor.

For Zine: the user ID and password to access protected areas of the Zine (www.irpzine.org) are NOT the same as your Graduate Center email/username and password. The user ID for the protected areas of the Zine is LPsquared; the Password is Fall2020. The secured portions are Members, Faces, and Calendar.

ArtSig Suggests Virtual Tours

Spend time getting lost in the enormous collection of photographs that have appeared in Life Magazine <https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/life-photo-collection>.

ONLINE ART SHOW

Stewart Alter: Split Trunk Tree
Acrylic on paper



Stewart says: “A favorite backyard Catskills tree that inspired me to explore the tensions between representation and abstraction, and between organic lines and expressionistic color as the basis for shape and structure.”

ONGOING EVENTS

Pour at Four hosted by Susan Rubens meets from 4 to 5PM on Fridays in the 24-hour chat room <https://sites.google.com/view/irpte/chstuff>.

The Women's Group meets at 3:45PM on Thursdays. Email

Arlyne LeSchack at
aleschack@gc.cuny.edu.

The Men's Group meets at 3:30PM on Wednesdays. Email Jay Fleishman at efleishman@gc.cuny.edu.

MEMBER FORUM

Rosalie Frost's exhibit *After...the Big Bang* is being shown from December 4 - 27 at the recently reopened Soho Photo Gallery, 15 White St. (212) 226-8571. Inspired by a light-filled image of bubbles, which seemed to look like the very early universe according to the Big Bang theory, this series of photographic images depicts the possible development of that universe over time. Due to Covid19 restrictions, the gallery will be open only on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 1 to 6PM. Please go to the Gallery's website, sohophoto.com, and click on "Visit our Gallery" to view the gallery's Covid19 protocol.



Rosalie's statement:

"This exhibit consists of a group of pigment print photographs mounted on a substrate without frames.

Michael Shapiro: Winter Approaching



Michael says: This photo was taken in Westbrook, Ct., where we are living to be safe. The water is Long Island Sound, where I walk.

CUNY EVENTS: UPCOMING & CONTINUING

[Evan Osnos on Joe Biden, with Peter Osnos and Kai Bird](#)

Tuesday, December 15, 6:00 PM

[Peter Baker & Susan Glasser on James Baker, with Kai Bird](#)

Tuesday, January 5, 6:00 PM

See <https://www.gc.cuny.edu/All-GC-Events/Calendar> for more events this week including a philosophy colloquium, linguistics colloquium, immigration seminar series, and a lecture on *Argonautica* organized by the program in classics.

NON-CUNY EVENTS AND RESOURCES

El Museo del Barrio has published numerous [exhibition catalogues and brochures](#) to enjoy from home.

Jazz at Lincoln Center offering [free weekly online programs](#).

The Jewish Museum has made their [audio tours](#) available online.

MoMA is offering free online [courses and specializations](#).

The Whitney Museum of American Art is offering from artist talks to art history courses, webinars and creative projects for everyone, see what's coming

up [here](#). Explore exhibitions online [here](#).

BRIC Rotunda Gallery is offering free Media Education Courses. More information [here](#)