

THE OBSERVER

April 12, 2021

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear members,

My colleagues at The Graduate Center and I are so thankful for the generous donation made by the IER for dissertation fellowships to PhD students. Read on for more about the initiative and the two recipients of the inaugural award. It was a pleasure to work with several LP² members who helped to shape the award objectives and those who reviewed applications.

I have heard positive feedback about the Town Halls last week -- thank you to those who met with your advisory board contact and shared thoughts and ideas. Members who are on a leave of absence will be placed in a group upon returning to the program.

Save the date for a semester's end General Membership Meeting on May 7 at 2 PM. Please share the invitation to President Frank Wu's Fridays@3 with family, friends, and those in your network you think may be interested in his talk, "Diversity and Democracy: What would you have done during WWII?". Lastly, note that we are planning for one summer session this year and study groups will begin on Tuesday, June 1 (following the Memorial Day holiday).

Until soon,
Mariel

Our office contact information:

engagement@gc.cuny.edu

212-817-2474

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

IER Presents Two Fellowships for Racial and Social Justice

With LP² member contributions, the IER introduced the \$5000 Fellowship for Racial and Social Justice to support a doctoral student of high academic merit who shows exceptional promise in any field and is completing a dissertation that addresses race relations, human rights, and social justice; or that treats some significant aspect of the African Diaspora, including the culture and history of African Americans. Fellows are invited to deliver a talk to LP² members on their research and participate in a reception (when that becomes possible). Applications from members of all underrepresented groups are encouraged.

The IER Proposal Review Committee (Barbara Marwell, Susan Rauch and Carol Groneman) reviewed twelve submissions and decided that two proposals were worthy of funding. The IER board agreed to double the amount we give in our inaugural Fellowship award. This offer both demonstrates our commitment to the mission of the Graduate Center and helps support the dissertations of two graduate students whose work addresses two very different issues of specific concern to our membership.



1. Priscilla Bustamente. *Sexual Misconduct in Everyday Policing: Experiences of State-Sanctioned Racialized Sexual Violence in New York City* (Psychology Department) **Ariana insert picture and wrap 1st ¶ as with Wu.**

Of the twelve proposals, this study is the most relevant to IER's call for proposals addressing aspects of African American experience, especially around questions of social justice. Bustamente proposes the first empirical study of the victims of police sexual violence, which includes interviews with survivors. She has good connections with community groups and this study expands on her previous research and publications on dehumanizing experiences within everyday police practices. She has already published in peer-reviewed journals and has given presentations at two major professional organizations: American Psychological Association and the Society for the Study of Social Problems. We were impressed with the research's focus on

participants individual and collective modes of survival, healing and resistance to police sexual violence, demonstrating the ways that study this might generate resources for grassroots organizing, policy and education to address PSV.



2. Paul Butterfield. *A Better Approach to the Ethics of Humor* (Philosophy Department) *Ariana insert picture and wrap 1st ¶. As with Wu.*

Despite the philosophical rhetoric of Butterfield's proposal, this topic has real world implications. In exploring the transmission of racism through humor he studies how the social identity of the speaker and the audience are central to the acceptability of jokes, that is, Black comedians can say things that white comedians cannot. We think this relates to LP²'s recent discussions about who can use the racially charged language and in what context, as well as whether there ever is a context in which racially charged jokes (or words) are ethical. This research was inspired by reactions from students in Butterfield's philosophy of humor classes who expressed concern about humor's role as a subtle transmitter of racism. Butterfield's topic appears to be unprecedented in the philosophical literature.

Almost 200 Attend First LP² Member Connect Town Hall

To the 195 members who participated in the Member Connect Town Halls, thank you for making the occasion a success. This was the first event in a new initiative: 16 small group meetings, led by Board members, where members can share their concerns, questions and suggestions and learn about some of the Board's current initiatives.

The major topic on members' minds was when will we be returning to in-person study groups. CUNY and the GC will not have their final decision until summer, but it is unlikely that we will be back in GC classrooms for the Fall semester.

A dominant theme of the Town Halls was a longing for in-person social contact. Members had many ideas for how to make that happen, including outdoor gatherings now that the weather is warming.

We appreciated the opportunity to meet in small groups, renew old acquaintances and get to know people we had not previously met. There was interest in having more of these small group Town Halls. A more complete report will be in next week's Observer.

Want to Meet in Person? Pour at 4 Outdoors

At last Friday's Member Connect meeting, participants expressed the desire to be able to see members in person again and to meet some of the new members who have joined us since LP² went "virtual." Susan Rubens is looking for help in finding suitable outdoor locations. For example, the Lincoln Center Plaza would be a perfect location for those of you in the neighborhood or willing to travel.

Take a moment and think about where you live. Do you have a location idea that would provide outdoor seating? If so, we could gather and join you for a visit. Let's try to incorporate as many different neighborhoods as our membership provides.

Contact Susan Rubens at srubens@gc.cuny.edu with your location ideas.

Significant LP² Academic Calendar Events

LP² Summer Calendar:

Mon. 4/26/21: Summer registration opens

Mon. 5/10/21: Summer registration deadline

Friday 5/21/21: Summer rosters and schedules are sent

Tuesday 6/1/21: Summer session starts

Monday 7/12/21: Summer session ends

LP² Fall Calendar

Date	Day	Name
5/3/2021	Monday	Registration Opens for Fall Study Groups
9/6/2021	Monday	Labor Day (NO CLASSES) + Rosh Hashanah begins
9/8/2021	Wednesday	Rosh Hashanah ends
9/10/2021	Friday	Fall session starts
9/15/2021	Wednesday	Yom Kippur (NO CLASSES)

9/16/2021	Thursday	Yom Kippur (NO CLASSES)
10/11/2021	Monday	Columbus Day (NO CLASSES)
11/22/2021	Monday	First Day of Thanksgiving Break (NO CLASSES)
11/26/2021	Friday	Last Day of Thanksgiving Break (NO CLASSES)
12/17/2021	Friday	Fall session final day (GMM)

Call for Break Activities before and after Summer Semester

The Community Building Initiative is seeking volunteers to lead activities during the next two breaks. The first break is from May 17th to May 28th and the second break is from July 13th to September 3rd. Just as with our earlier break activities, yours can meet once, twice or multiple times. Whether it's a book or movie discussion, a current events discussion, a travel adventure or art presentation or something else, your colleagues will appreciate your efforts. We also invite all current and past coordinators to offer a one session encore presentation selected from a prior study group. Tech help is available to set up and assist you run the Zoom session. You'll receive a Zoom link to send to participants. Contact Jane Case Einbender at jeinbender@gc.cuny.edu to propose your activity.

REMINDERS

Admissions Committee Seeks Two New Members for Fall 2021:

With the Director and other LP² committees, the Admissions Committee works to create a qualified and diverse membership that will contribute to the continued excellence of LP².

Applicants must have been a member of LP² for a minimum of two years. Candidates should have strong communication and writing skills, *i.e.*, strong listening skills, a clear and focused conversational style and the ability to write succinct evaluations of applicants. They must know the history, philosophy, mission and structure of our peer-learning community. Each year, committee members attend four committee meetings, four information sessions and read applications in preparation for interviews. They interview candidates, write evaluations, make admissions decisions in conjunction with other members. The committee recommends

to the Director applicants who will contribute to, as well as benefit from, the LP² community.

Committee members are chosen by the committee chairs in consultation with committee members and the LP² Director.

If you are interested in joining, please send an e-mail including your qualifications by April 16, 2021 to Barry Cooper at bcooper@gc.cuny.edu and Laini Gerald at lgerald@gc.cuny.edu.

Fridays@3

Diversity and Democracy: What Would You Have Done During WWII?

Frank H. Wu, President, Queens College, CUNY

April 23, 3PM



Professor Frank H. Wu, our distinguished Fridays @3 speaker, is the American-born son of Chinese immigrants and the recently named president of Queens College, The City University of New York (CUNY).

He received a BA degree from the Johns Hopkins University and a JD with honors from the University of Michigan. He completed the Management Development Program of the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

In leadership roles at Queens College, UC Hastings College of the Law and Wayne State Law School, as well as on the faculty at Howard, he was the first Asian American to serve in such a capacity.

Wu is the author of ***Yellow: Race in America Beyond Black and White***, and co-author of ***Race, Rights and Reparation: Law and the Japanese American Internment***, which received the single greatest grant from the Civil Liberties Public Education Fund. [Register here.](#)

The Art and Science of Leading A Discussion Workshop Wednesday, April 21 from 4-5:15PM

You are invited to attend **The Art and Science of Leading A Discussion Workshop**. We encourage new AND experienced coordinators to attend to share strategies and learn new ones. RSVP to Linda Anstendig at lanstendig@gc.cuny.edu. A zoom invitation will be sent on the day of the workshop.

Open Call for Voices Online Submissions Deadline: May 31, 2021

Voices Online presents the creative work, both written and photographic, of our members. There have been eight editions of Voices Online, beginning in Fall 2012, and all are available to view on the zine.

We plan to issue the next edition of Voices over the next months. We will accept entries until MAY 31, but we encourage you to submit soon. For a copy of the guidelines for submissions send an e-mail to Charles Troob at lp2voicesonline@gmail.com.

LP² members serve as judges of submissions. If you are interested in being a judge, please contact the editors as follows:

Prose—Mary Houts at mhouts@gc.cuny.edu and Eric Roper at eroper@gc.cuny.edu

Poetry—Irene Sax at isax@gc.cuny.edu and Mark Fischweicher at mfishwords@gmail.com

Photography—Jerry Vogel at gvoegel@gc.cuny.edu

Help Wanted! - Fridays@3

The Fridays@3 Committee needs your help to increase attendance at this program!! The Monday before each Fridays@3 program, the GC office will send you an email invitation with the link. Please forward the email to your friends, family, book club, neighbors, and anyone you think might be interested in the topic. And make sure you come too.

ONLINE ART SHOW

From: Ken Witte

Title: Dawn on Jekyll Island, Georgia



Ken says: We were walking our dog on Jekyll Island's Atlantic coast in Georgia just as the sun was about to rise. What a pleasure to travel after a year of pandemic restrictions.

Attention Water Colorists, Sculptors, Block Printers, Photographers, Painters, Collagists and Needleworkers! Contact cmillsom@gc.cuny.edu with a title and brief statement about how or where or why you made it, and your work will appear in the Online Art Show.

MEMBER FORUM

On April 20 at 4 pm LP² member Zuzana Justman will participate in a Museum of Jewish Heritage Zoom panel discussion about the artist Alfred Kantor: *Painting the Holocaust: Remembering Alfred Kantor and his sketchbook*. She will speak about filming him for her documentary *Terezin Diary* and show excerpts from the film.

Here's the program registration link:

<https://mjhnyc.org/events/painting-the-holocaust-remembering-alfred-kantor-and-his-sketchbook/>

LP² Artists: A Chance to Show your Work at the Salmagundi Galleries

Founded in 1871, the Salmagundi Club is one of the oldest arts organizations in the United States. Housed in a historic brownstone in Greenwich Village, every year the club invites non-members to submit entries for a juried exhibition. In past years, LP² members submitting paintings and photographs to these events have exhibited, won prizes and sold their work at the Salmagundi Galleries. For information on how to participate, click [here](#).

Nancy Small continues her series: **A video view of the New York art scene**

Alice Neel: People Come First, through August 1, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Tisch Galleries, 2nd floor.

To highlight the exhibit of Neel's paintings, attached are two videos produced by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In the first, she discusses her life and the philosophy of her art.

Alice Neel: They Are Their Own Gifts, 1978 <https://youtu.be/MQtSDLOg05c>

In the second video, Kelly Baum and Randall Griffey, curators at the Met, discuss the organization of the exhibit and detail aspects of Neel's art that is both abstract and representational.

Alice Neel: People Come First, 2021 <https://youtu.be/ejGERwLV2Kg>

Following is an excerpt from The New York Times, April 1, Critics Pick article, by Roberta Smith.

A gloriously relentless retrospective of Alice Neel (1900-1984), the radical realist painter of all things human, is presently on view at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. "Alice Neel: People Come First" is a momentous show of more than 100 paintings, drawings and watercolors from streetscapes, still lifes and interiors to the portraits of a veritable cross section of New Yorkers, occasionally nude, that are considered her greatest work.

"People Come First" opens with a gut-punch, a 1978 portrait that almost dares you to enter: "Margaret Evans Pregnant." Evans, wife of the collage artist John Evans, is naked, her belly and breasts swollen by the imminent arrival of twins. The painting announces several Neel themes: motherhood, female agency, individual personality and the body.

Today, she is a cult figure, an early feminist, inborn bohemian, erstwhile Social Realist, lifelong activist and staunchly representational painter who bravely persisted, depicting the people and world around her through the heydays of Abstract Expressionism, Pop and Minimalism.

Neel's greatness lies in the different levels of realism she combines in her art. They include social and economic inequities; the body's deterioration through time; and the complex interior lives of her subjects. There's the reality of Neel's own personality, ever-present in her work; her insatiable curiosity about people; and her instinct for pushing the envelope, especially by cajoling her sitters to pose nude.

The realities of her tumultuous life are a constant, too. We see her family, lovers, children (from three different fathers), friends, neighbors in Spanish Harlem and denizens of the New York art world. Life's tragedies included the death of her first child, and the destruction of much of her early work at the hands of a jealous lover.

"I don't think there is any great painting that doesn't have good abstract qualities" she announced late in life. And yet in their depictions of individual beings, Neel's images go beyond painting in her figures' psychic honesty, they press out at us, like an unusually tactile version of photography.

Neel's achievement is being celebrated at a moment when figurative painting is ascendant, arguably more prominent than it has been in over 70 years. It expands her cult status, moving her squarely into art's most trafficked thruways — past, present and oncoming.

ONGOING LP² EVENTS

All Things Covid, hosted by Barry Levine and Steve Kalinsky, will be held every three weeks until the end of the semester (absent a need for an earlier update). The next session is Friday, April 30 at 3PM.

The Women's Group meets at 3:45PM on Thursdays. Contact Arlyne LeSchack at aleschack@gc.cuny.edu.

The Men's Group meets at 3:45PM on Wednesdays. Contact Jay Fleishman at efleishman@gc.cuny.edu.

Stitch Away Stress meets at 4PM Tuesdays. Members share skills and enjoy the meditative benefits of handwork. Contact Michelle Harris at mharris@gc.cuny.edu.

NON-CUNY EVENTS AND RESOURCES

CUNY EVENTS

For upcoming CUNY events, click here: <https://gc.cuny.edu/All-GC-Events/Calendar> and across the University here: <https://events.cuny.edu/>

Observer Submissions Send items for the next week's Observer to Susan Rauch at srauch@gc.cuny.edu by 5PM on Friday. Send Online Art Show entries and suggestions for virtual tours to Carol Millsom at cmillsom@gc.cuny.edu.

Member Forum If you have something to share with the LP² community, e.g., a photo, an article, a book or a web site that you've discovered that you think would be interesting to members, send it to Susan at srauch@gc.cuny.edu for inclusion in the Member Forum.

