NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Hi members,

This week, more CUNY employees worked from campus as we prepare for the start of the Fall term on Wednesday. We have met with various campus constituents to get everyone familiarized with the Fall 2021 Safe Campus Reopening Plan which is on the GC website here: https://www.gc.cuny.edu/News/COVID-19-Information-and-Safe-Campus-Reopening. We are opening on August 25 in Phase 3. About 60% of the classes at the GC are hybrid or in-person this fall. For LP², we are currently planning to start the term with two study groups with an in-person component. Later in the term, we may consider bringing interested members on campus for two other study groups that had been slated for hyflex. I have been in close contact with coordinators, tech committee members, and members registered for these hyflex and potentially hyflex study groups. Coordinators and tech assistants are engaged in training at the Graduate Center on the hyflex equipment called a Meeting Owl Pro [owllabs.com], a unit that combines a 360-degree responsive camera (that pivots to film the person speaking), several microphones, and a speaker.

We are working together with flexibility and patience as each day brings new conditions and news. Hopefully the FDA will approve the vaccine for regular use as early as this week so that we can have a pillar to lean on. Please be assured that we are closely monitoring the trajectory of the pandemic. We continue to meet and communicate regularly with our campus reactivation steering committee, which has broad representation. The committee members, including LP² members Harold Berkowitz and Barry Levine, have been very candid and helpful in shaping our reopening plan and advising on the pace. Supporting the health and well-being of our community members, while fulfilling our academic mission, is paramount.
I will be in touch very soon with more details relevant to members coming to campus for their hyflex study groups. For all: the second add/drop period will run from September 7 - September 23. The add/drop form can be found here: [https://formfaca.de/sm/f9hP_Phmg](https://formfaca.de/sm/f9hP_Phmg)

And the full Fall 2021 Study Group Grid can be reviewed here: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rvREYsNN2Hx7biu_DXgJUCkcMpLUsWvj/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rvREYsNN2Hx7biu_DXgJUCkcMpLUsWvj/view?usp=sharing).

If you have questions, please be in touch!

Best,

Mariel

Our office contact information:

engagement@gc.cuny.edu

212-817-2474

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

FALL SEMESTER STARTS FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 10TH, 2021.

The LP2 Fall semester begins with study groups held on Friday, September 10th. The Observer will resume its weekly publication on September 13, the first Monday of the Fall Semester. Because CUMY is closed on September 15th and 16th for the Jewish Holiday of Yom Kippur, the first class of study groups falls in different weeks:

**FRIDAY** – September 10th
**MONDAY** – September 13th
**TUESDAY** – September 14th
**WEDNESDAY** – September 22nd
**THURSDAY** – September 23rd

POUR @ 4 OUTDOORS

**Date:** Friday, Sept. 10th  
**Rain Date:** Sept. 24th  
**Time:** 4 PM  
**Location:** Central Park  
**East Side Entrance:** (5th Avenue and 72nd Street)
**Meeting location:** Kerbs Boathouse/Conservatory Water
(First right upon entering the park. Follow the path to the patio facing the boat pond.)

**Hosts:** Susan Winston
Susan Rubens

**Transportation:**
*Bus: M1, M2

**Questions or concerns:**
Contact Susan R at srubens@gc.cuny.edu
201-220-0555

**Rain will cancel this event!**

**POSSIBLE ART SIG EVENT**
**Saturday, Oct. 16**
**Visit to the Yayoi Kusama Exhibit at the New York Botanical Garden**

We can’t offer you guided tours in museums or galleries yet, but we would like to schedule a trip to the New York Botanical Garden where work by Japanese artist, Yayoi Kusama, is currently featured. Before we make any arrangements, we want to know how many would be interested. The group rate for a comprehensive ticket which provides entry to indoor and outdoor exhibits is $30. The ticket also includes a self-guided tour map and access to the tram. Not included is admission to Kusama’s famous Infinity Room. That ticket is $10 and can be obtained at the Garden. The comprehensive ticket is timed entry. Please note --There are no refunds for inclement weather. Many of the Kusama exhibits are indoors so even if it rains, there is much to see. Round-trip train fare is $9.50. We are proposing an 11:30 departure. We will make lunch reservations; a snack bar is also available.

The Kusama exhibit has received favorable reviews both in the press and from our colleagues who have seen it. For more information, see [https://www.nybg.org/event/kusama/](https://www.nybg.org/event/kusama/). For the NY Times review, see [https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/09/arts/design/yayoi-kusama-botanical-garden-review.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/09/arts/design/yayoi-kusama-botanical-garden-review.html).
If you are seriously interested, email Dick Kossoff at chemkos@aol.com. Your reply does not obligate you to purchase a ticket. If we receive at least 20 positive replies, we will make the necessary arrangements. For questions: Carol Millsom at cmillsom@gc.cuny.edu.

MORE ZOOM BREAK ACTIVITIES

A Shout-Out to all who led recent break activities.
The Community Building Initiative (CBI) will be reaching out to members again later in the fall semester seeking volunteers to lead break activities during the next break(s). So put on your thinking caps!

The Great LP² Read

*Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell
Wednesday, August 25th, 1PM
Join with us for our third Great LP² Read. Revisit the book about which *The New York Times* declared “Why ‘1984’ Is a 2017 Must-Read.” It shot to No. 1 on Amazon’s best seller list in early 2017. We’ll explore why the book has found a large readership in this “post-truth” era, how the dystopia Orwell described suddenly feels all too familiar and consider how we react to it today compared to when we originally read it. **Update**: Even if you didn’t have time to re-read it this summer, you’re welcome to participate in our discussion. To sign up, email Jane Case Einbender at jeinbender@gc.cuny.edu. You’ll receive a Zoom invite before the session.

Thursday, August 26th, 2PM
Report Card on the Biden Economy: How’s Joe doing? with Maury Harris and Dan Hertzberg
The economy has been booming ever since President Biden took office at the start of the year. While the sharp recovery in jobs and GDP has been most welcome, there are worries that the economy is booming too much as inflation also has heated up.
Maury and Dan will send out a few articles and some questions ahead of time to frame our session. If you’d like to attend, please respond to Maury Harris at Mharris1@gc.cuny.edu and feel free to raise some subjects for consideration. You’ll receive a Zoom invite before the session.
Mharris1@gc.cuny.edu
Tuesday, Aug. 31st, 2PM  
Is the US becoming a failed democracy?  
with Bill Siegel  
The past five years have been a particularly difficult time for American democracy. Institutions that rank democracies, such as Freedom House, have downgraded the United States. Commentators have questioned whether the US is a flawed or, even worse, a failed democracy. We will explore and discuss flaws in our Constitution that hinder democracy and promote minority control of our government and also discuss voter suppression and recent efforts to distort the counting and certification of election results.  
If you’d like to attend, please respond to Bill Siegel at bsiegel@gc.cuny.edu. You’ll receive a Zoom invite before the session.  

ONLINE ART GALLERY  
Calling All Painters, Sculptors, Photographers, Block Printers Ceramicists and Textile Artists!  
Display the creative work you have been doing this summer in the Online Art Show. Send a photograph of your work with a title and a brief statement about it to Carol Millsom at cmillsom@gc.cuny.edu. Art works appear in the order in which they are received.  

MEMBER FORUM  
From Lucy Sacks: CUNY Insider Sounds Battle Call on Tight Public University Budget  
By Gabriel Sandoval@gluissandovalgsandoval@thecity.nyc  
The City University of New York is in abysmal financial shape ahead of the fall semester — and it’s time for students and faculty to “yell” for funding, a CUNY trustee declared.  
“*If we don’t ask, we ain’t gonna get,*” Henry Berger, a member of CUNY’s Board of Trustees, said in sounding the alarm last week at the 17-member body’s first in-person meeting since the pandemic began last year. To read the entire article, [click here](#).
From John Becker: **Watch Stephen Colbert, Broadway Stars Sing Billy Joel’s ‘New York State of Mind.’** [Click here.]

From Lucy Sacks: After witnessing the horror resulting from the hacking of a friend’s computer, Lucy sent these links for members who have, till now, chosen the easy way and allow their computers to store their passwords:

**Is it safe to save passwords on your computer?**
https://www.findreviews.com/is-it-safe-to-save-passwords-on-your-computer

**Why you should never allow your web browser to save your passwords**
https://www.techrepublic.com/article/why-you-should-never-allow-your-web-browser-to-save-your-passwords/

From Susan Rubens: **Pictures from the lovely gathering at Madison Square Park for the August 17 Pour @ 4 Outdoors.**

The weather held and some of us continued on to dinner together at Tappo. Hoping to continue this energy into the fall with our next event in Central Park on September 10th.
ONGOING LP² EVENTS

*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@qc.cuny.edu