NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Hello members!

I hope the first week of study groups has been fun and rewarding as you share stories of your summer with each other. It’s been a pleasure to meet (in person!) those of you who are coming into the Graduate Center for *Ireland on Film* and later this week for *Family and Fiction*.

A reminder for all members – the add/drop deadline has been extended to September 30 to allow more time for those in Wednesday and Thursday study groups to decide.

The add/drop form is: [https://formfacade.de/sm/f9hP_Phmq](https://formfacade.de/sm/f9hP_Phmq).

The full Fall 2021 Study Group Grid is: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rvREYsNN2Hx7biu_DXgJUCkcMpLUsWvj/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rvREYsNN2Hx7biu_DXgJUCkcMpLUsWvj/view)

You should have received an invoice for the LP\(^2\) membership last week, either for $1,135 for the 2021-2022 academic year (Fall 2021 - Spring 2022 if you make one payment for both terms) or $715 for a single semester (Fall 2021 ONLY). If, while completing the payment steps, you receive an error message on the top of your screen that reads, “The maximum quantity allowed for purchase is 1,” the class/item has already been added to your shopping cart and cannot be added again as a duplicate. You should continue to the shopping cart to enter payment information and complete the purchase (button is in top right corner of the window).

The General Membership Meeting is this Friday at 2PM. If you would like to submit questions in advance, please submit them here: [https://forms.gle/eG29Eo5pwYziYYLx9](https://forms.gle/eG29Eo5pwYziYYLx9). The Zoom link for the meeting is below and will also be sent separately as a reminder later this week.
As you may know, the Graduate Center has a new Provost, Steve Everett, who has penned his first message to the Graduate Center community, marking the start of the fall 2021 semester. His letter is reprinted in full on the concluding pages of this issue of The Observer.

Lastly, I’m sorry to write that Olena Plaskon, our invaluable administrative assistant for the past two years, is leaving the Graduate Center for another opportunity. We will miss her and wish her the best of luck in the next adventure. Please continue to direct your questions and requests to engagement@gc.cuny.edu and Ariana and I will field all inquiries.

My best,
Mariel

Our office contact information: engagement@gc.cuny.edu 212-817-2474

IN CONVERSATION WITH LP² DIRECTOR, MARIEL VILLERÉ

Who is Mariel Villeré? How did she become our Director? What are her plans for LP²? Contributing Editor, Irene Sax, sat down (virtually) with Mariel to explore these questions. For the link to their conversation, click here.

In future weeks, we will converse with, and introduce you to, the women comprising the office we know as Engagement, as well as other people important to our community. Stay tuned.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

General Membership Meeting (GMM)

We’re all looking forward to the first GMM of the year. Find out what the Advisory Board has been working on. Hear about the plans are for the coming semester. Meet the new members. Find out how our hybrid classes are proceeding. Learn the latest about the CUNY reopening.
THIS FRIDAY, September 24, 2021, 2:00PM Eastern Time, Join Zoom Meeting here:
https://gc-cuny-educ.zoom.us/j/82390455733?pwd=VXhCdzRUTFBAOXFMWjRCYTIOSkxJUT09

Meeting ID: 823 9045 5733
Passcode: 327504

And Mark Your Calendars for More Important Dates:

GMM Part 2: Fall Fest (see below): Friday, October 1 @ 2PM
Rain Date: Friday, October 8

Member Connect Town Halls: Friday, October 15 @ 2PM
Get ready for the

LP² Fall Fest

Part 2 of the General Membership Meeting (GMM):
THE RECEPTION OCTOBER 1 AT 2:00 PM (Rain Date October 8)

We have always been a community both inside and outside the classroom. Just because the GMM is on Zoom doesn’t mean we have to forego the after-meeting reception.

Let’s celebrate the kickoff of a new semester with IN-PERSON outdoor gatherings around the city.

CLICK ON THE FOLLOWING LINKS to see the host of your chosen location and directions:
- Walter Reade Movie Theater (West 65 Street)
- 415 East 54 Street (Between 1st Avenue/Sutton Place South)
- Jackson Square Park (8th Avenue/Greenwich Avenue)
- Madison Square Park (Madison Avenue, 23rd - 26th Streets)
- Central Park (5th Avenue and 72nd Street)
- Soldiers & Sailors Monument (West 89th Street and Riverside Drive)
- 90 Riverside Drive (Entrance on 81st Street)
- 72nd Street and Riverside Drive
- 501 East 17th Street in Brooklyn
- 69-10 108th Street in Queens

*Each link will provide the specific location, photos of hosts and directions

Don’t let Covid conquer LP²’s sense of community.

Let’s get together --members old and new -- to make this event a reality.

11 DAYS LEFT
SEVERAL FABULOUS LOCATIONS
LP² Science Seminar Series: “Our changing forests in a changing climate” by Andrew Reinmann, PhD
October 12, 4-5:30PM

LP² member Bob Braff will moderate a conversation with Andrew Reinmann, PhD, who is a member of the CUNY Advanced Science Research Center, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Science at Hunter College, an Assistant Professor in the Environmental Science Initiative and Co-Director of the Next Generation Environmental Sensor Facility. His research interests include forest and urban ecology, biogeochemistry, and global change biology. In our next Science Seminar, he will be helping us to better understand the effects of environmental change (e.g., climate change, urbanization, and land cover change) on carbon cycling.

Andrew suggests two readings prior to the talk:

RSVP here: https://forms.gle/sLkLB4S23jUAwRMT6 [forms.gle]

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE STUDY GROUP WORKSHOPS

Thinking About Coordinating A Study Group But Need Help?
Bring your ideas to the Curriculum Committee’s
LET’S GET STARTED:
Wednesday, Oct 6, 3:45-5PM on Zoom.

Whether you have just the germ of an idea or one that is almost fully developed, this workshop is for you.

We will work together to support the development of your ideas, suggest resources, help you to find a co-coordinator (if you want one) and answer your questions about the Study Group proposal process.
RSVP to Linda Anstendig at lanstendig@gc.cuny.edu by Mon, Oct 4; Zoom invitation will follow.

**How’s It Going?**
**Wed, Oct 13, 3:45-5PM on Zoom**

Current coordinators are invited to a Zoom session to discuss HOW’S IT GOING with your present Study Group--what’s working and what…not so much. Come and share insights and techniques with your colleagues. These meetings have proven very helpful!

RSVP to Linda Anstendig at lanstendig@gc.cuny.edu, by Mon Oct 11; Zoom invitation will follow.

**Need Some Help Completing Your Study Group Proposal?**
**Wed, Oct 20, 3:45-5PM on Zoom**

The Curriculum Committee will offer a workshop on COMPLETING A PROPOSAL. If you are thinking about submitting a study group proposal for next semester or for the future, join us to learn more about:
- Developing a successful proposal
- Finding appropriate resources on your topic
- Organizing a working syllabus
--Completing the Proposal Form

Experienced coordinators will be there to answer your questions and to share their techniques for developing a proposal. We encourage those of you who are at a later stage of proposal development to attend one of these workshops.

RSVP to Linda Anstendig lanstendig@gc.cuny.edu by Mon, Oct 18; Zoom invitation will follow

**Want To Learn Strategies For Enhancing Your Study Group Discussions?**
**Wednesday, Nov 17, 3:45-5PM**
You are invited to attend THE ART AND SCIENCE OF LEADING A DISCUSSION on Zoom. We encourage new AND experienced coordinators to attend to share ideas and learn new ones.

RSVP to Linda Anstendig at lanstending@gc.cuny.edu by Mon, Nov 16; Zoom invitation will follow.

**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.
As the new school year begins, we welcome 12 new members to our learning community. We will be running their bios here in The Observer over the next several weeks. When you meet them in study groups and Member Connect Town Halls be sure to say “hi.”

Betty (Nelly) Szlachter

Nelly was born and educated in Chile, where her Polish-Jewish parents had migrated. She and her husband came to New York when he received a Rockefeller Foundation grant to study for a master’s degree in public health at Columbia University. At the same time, she was in a specialized training program in family planning and infertility at the Margaret Sanger Research Bureau (later part of Planned Parenthood). When the chaotic conditions in Chile after Salvador Allende’s election and the horrific news from Chile after the military coup that followed made it clear that they would not return to Chile, they continued their residencies and fellowships in New York. Nelly began working full-time at Beth Israel Medical Center in charge of Reproductive Endocrinology and later on, in private practice. She loved seeing the medical advances in her field, teaching medical

**Fridays@3 Fall Lineup: Save the Dates**

**October 22:** Christian Davenport, The Space Barons: Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, and the Quest to Colonize the Cosmos

**November 12:** Clint Smith, How the Word is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery across America

**December 10:** Gloria Dominguez, Working with Women in the Amazon
students and residents in OB-Gyn and the diverse groups of people she saw in her practice. In 2017 she retired from her Obstetrics and Gynecology practice shortly after Mount Sinai Medical Center’s acquisition of Beth Israel ended Beth Israel’s residency program. After her retirement, she decided to fully enjoy this stage in her life in the spirit of the Ecclesiastes saying, "for everything there is a season….” She enjoys taking Juilliard courses on the operas being presented each season and taking courses in world politics. As a volunteer, she was the head of the Social Action Committee of the Village Temple, that has been working on immigration issues, helping undocumented immigrants in collaboration with organizations such as HIAS and the New York New Sanctuary Coalition. She continues to be active on these issues and volunteers at the Safe Passage Project, working as a Spanish translator to facilitate communication between lawyers and children facing deportation.

Her e-mail address is nszlachter@gmail

Gary Miller

Gary majored in psychology in college with the intent to become a school psychologist but decided instead to practice law. He practiced in the real estate field, particularly specializing in community association law, a topic on which he lectured both real estate brokers and other attorneys. Since his retirement in 2010, he has taken numerous college level history and education courses. He has volunteered for an upper Manhattan community program where he taught social studies to adults studying for their GED high school equivalency program, which he found very satisfying. He enjoys spending time with his two young adult children as well as traveling, playing tennis and participating in a weekly online Sherlock Holmes book club discussion group.

His personal e-mail is garyemiller.law@gmail.com
Elizabeth (Betsy) Gitter

Betsy heard about LP2 from member Carol Groneman, who worked with her in the John Jay College’s new Interdisciplinary Studies Program (ISP). Betsy already had displayed interdisciplinary predilections, getting her Yale PhD in English after having majored in Philosophy as an undergraduate. At John Jay, ISP functions as a small college-within-the College, a community in which faculty and students know one another well. ISP faculty design new courses almost every semester, co-teaching with colleagues from other departments. Among her favorites were those she taught with Carol Groneman: literature/history courses such as The Civil War, Childhood, The Idea of Punishment, and (most fun) Food in History and Literature. ISP was her home at John Jay from 1973 until she retired from full-time teaching in 2012.

After retiring, she continued working as a grant writer and a part-time curriculum advisor. Her favorite of the grants she wrote supporting teaching at John Jay was “Making Objects Speak,” for which faculty participants designed podcasts of museum collections and historic neighborhoods to enhance students’ understanding of their history and literature courses. Over the years, her numerous publications including essays and a book on blindness and deafness have reflected her interdisciplinary bent. At present she is a member of the Working Group on Psychoanalysis and the Arts, a program at the DeWitt Wallace Institute for the History of Psychiatry, Weill-Cornell Medical College. Her volunteer activities have included serving as President of the New Lebanon, NY Public Library and as a Member and President the Town School Board.

Her personal e-mail address is e.g.gitter@gmail.com.
ONLINE ART SHOW
From: John Becker
Title: Patterns on a Summer Day
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 Observer in the order in which they are received.

MEMBER FORUM

Marietta Meyers (mariettamm@meyersreg.com) says: The National Trust tour to Chicago is a great trip for LP\(^2\) members that are interested in architecture. I plan to attend. I have seen the buildings and would enjoy seeing them again.

*Millennium Park • Frank Lloyd Wright architecture • Private home & art collection • Robie House • The Art Institute of Chicago • Landmarks of the Loop*

*Chicago*

*Epicenter of American Architecture*

*May 28-Jun. 2, 2022*

888.484.8785

[nationaltrusttours.com](http://nationaltrusttours.com)[nationaltrusttours.us19]

Pour Outdoors: Pictures from the Central Park Pour

The Pour Outdoors attendees enjoyed the wonderful weather along with a perfect setting and a terrific gathering. Catching up with friends!
Celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month: NYPL
[click.email.nypl.org]

The NYPL is celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 through October 15 with a full lineup of events and resources. Explore its book lists, featuring titles by some of their favorite Latinx authors in English, español (Spanish), and bilingual editions. All month long, celebrate Latinx literature, experiences, and storytelling with multilingual programs, resources, story times for kids, and more.

Discover Latinx Book Lists, Programs & More

From book discussions and conversation groups to storytimes and STEAM activities, find more programs for all ages from the Library as we celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 through October 15 and beyond.

As part of its Washington Post Live series, the Post is offering this discussion in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month.

Wednesday, September 22 2:30PM ET

In its continuing series of conversations during Hispanic Heritage Month, National Museum of the American Latino Director and Smithsonian Latino Center & Interim Director Eduardo Díaz discusses the diverse and expansive contributions, cultures and histories of Latino communities.

Register → [s2.washingtonpost.com]

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

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.

Message from Graduate Center Provost Steve Everett

Dear Graduate Center community,

Welcome to the fall 2021 semester. I am thrilled to be joining you this year and look forward to getting to know each of you. To those of you who are returning and to those of you who are new to the Graduate Center, thank you for the commitment you’ve shown in confronting the many academic and institutional challenges created by the pandemic.

Accelerated transformations are ubiquitous in almost every field of intellectual inquiry today, with profound effects on human understanding, quality of life, and the ways in which we interact with the world and the people around us. It is easy to see parallels to the Darwinian Revolution, probably the most significant transformation of thought in the sciences influencing every branch of knowledge and leading to a rethinking of the nature of the world and our role in it.

Higher education is entering a new period of transformation that brings fresh opportunities to rethink old assumptions and pursue new opportunities for intellectual integration. It is a revolution of ideas shaped by massive social and economic challenges, rapid technological innovation, and a more comprehensive understanding of the nature of the human experience. To address such change and challenge, we, as educators and
researchers, must break habits of mind and entertain possibilities we didn’t even realize we were excluding.

For me there are three essential qualities that should be actively encouraged to enable an inclusive graduate-level learning environment — diversity, innovation, and integration.

Engaging diversity and difference is an institutional value that helps all of us imagine and develop the most creative ideas that shape and transform our communities into healthier, more just, and more inclusive places with diverse expressions of the human experience.

For too long our society has ignored the pain experienced by minority communities across our nation and in our local regions. That dynamic has changed dramatically, and we now have an opportunity and a responsibility to take substantive action. I hope to partner with you this year in the Graduate Center’s commitment to continuing the complicated work of examining these issues, acknowledging racism and privilege when identified within our institutional systems, and taking actions that lead to structural change.

The Graduate Center is built on an intellectual foundation of innovative thinking. Innovation is essential to staying relevant amid societal and technological change. Pursuing novel ideas and approaches and jettisoning outdated methods and assumptions can yield needed progress. I am encouraged by the innovation I observe in every discipline at the Graduate Center and hope to further promote discovery and inventiveness in my time here.

Integration of knowledge is the best way to prepare students for meaningful careers. Integration is not only the ability to make new connections, but also to find new ways in which traditional knowledge carries new meaning for our lives and allows us to be agents of social transformation. Today’s kinetic intersections of humanistic inquiry, scientific investigation, radical new artistic expressions, and active community participation offer new possibilities for scholarly and creative endeavors.

What excites me about joining the Graduate Center community is the opportunity to support the excellent work of helping students develop critical insights in and make connections among the various disciplines of
thought they encounter. Traditional fields of knowledge confer clear identity and promote the development of important insights and skills. These fields should continually be supported, refined, and envisioned anew. By merging discreet forms of knowledge into an interrelated and integrated whole, we can provide a deep, contextual understanding that can serve as an invaluable asset for our students’ lives. This is a key challenge and goal for us as educators.

In my brief time at the Graduate Center, I have observed a community that strives toward an ethically engaged synthesis of analysis, creativity, and action that ultimately reshapes communities through expanded types of knowledge and fosters more just and inclusive forms of human interaction.

I am honored to be a part of such a remarkable and caring community of scholars. I look forward to meeting each of you and learning more about your aspirations for the Graduate Center and how I may best support you in achieving those. Let me extend to each of you best wishes for a healthy and productive 2021–22 academic year.

Sincerely,

Steve Everett
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs