

THE OBSERVER

Break Activities Edition

NEW: ArtSig Event

Philadelphia Museum of Art

Thursday, January 6

Join us for a trip to Philadelphia to see the other half of the acclaimed Jasper Johns exhibition currently on view at the Whitney. Although the two shows were jointly organized, each has its special emphasis. For information and videos about the Philadelphia show, see the museum's website <https://philamuseum.org/calendar/exhibition/jasper-johns-mindmirror> and New York Times reviews <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/13/arts/design/jasper-johns-mind-mirror.html> and <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/23/arts/design/jasper-johns-philadelphia-whitney-art-review.html>.

The museum offers a public tour of the exhibition at noon.

We suggest taking Amtrak's Keystone 643 train leaving at 9:30 from the Moynihan Train Hall at Penn Station. The train arrives at Philadelphia's 30th Street Station at 10:50. Taxis are available in front of the station for the short trip to the museum. Fare is about \$7.00. Arrival at the museum allows time for coat checking before the 12:00 tour. The museum closes at 5:00. Amtrak trains leave at 5:18, 5:32, and 5:59.

Greyhound also offers an express bus trip to Philadelphia leaving at 8:25 and arriving at 10:55. The cost is lower (\$30 round trip) but trip is longer and at a less convenient time

To get tickets: Tickets may be reserved for specific dates and times on the museum's website <https://philamuseum.org/visit/admission>. Senior rate is \$23.00. Choose either 11:00 or 11:30 as the entry time.

Amtrak tickets may be purchased online. As with the airlines, Amtrak ticket prices vary according to availability. At this writing, a round-trip ticket for the

9:30 train and returning on the 5:18 is \$36. That will change. To get the best price, reserve early: <https://www.amtrak.com/home>.

Greyhound tickets are also available online

Tentative Schedule:

9:15 Meet in ticketed waiting room in Moynihan Train Hall

9:30 Train departs

10:50 Train arrives at 30th St. Station

Taxi to Museum. Get driver's number to call for return trip.

11:15 Arrive at museum. Check coats.

12: 00 Tour

1:00 Lunch in Museum Cafeteria

2:00 Return to look at John's exhibit on your own or visit other sections of the museum

Afternoon on your own. Call for cab 30 minutes before train time.

Although we are asking you to get your own tickets, we want to make this a group activity. Let Dick know your plans (chemkos@aol.com).

For questions about the exhibit or transportation: Carol Millsom (carolmillsom35@gmail.com)

OTHER INTERSESSION BREAK ACTIVITIES

Mondays, January 3 & 17 at 3PM:

Stories Aloud with Sharon Girard

We invite you to the pleasures of reading aloud. The stories are emailed to you in advance. 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 an opportunity to read to all who wish to do so. We're considering

stories by Elif Batumen, Italo Calvino, Deborah Eisenberg, Gogol, Nicole Krauss, Grace Paley, Eudora Welty, Saramago, de Maupassant. We welcome your suggestions too. We'll Zoom for about an hour and a half each Monday. Email Sharon at sgirard@gc.cuny.edu for the Zoom link. Please indicate if you would like to be a reader.

Thursday, January 6 at 2PM

Reflections on Making Decisions as NYC Opens with Jan Adler

It looks like much of what makes NYC special has opened up again. Now each of us is grappling with what we personally feel comfortable doing. This workshop will be a chance to share your thoughts and strategies on how you are making decisions and hear what others are thinking. If you are interested contact Jan Adler at jadler@gc.cuny.edu and you will receive a Zoom invite the week before.

Monday, January 10 at 11AM

A Virtual Walk in the Woods at the New York Botanical Garden with Carolyn Grossner

In the year prior to the pandemic Carolyn kept a journal outlining her experiences monitoring designated trees for seasonal changes in the forest at the NYBG. She will first give us an overview of the garden and its mission and then take us on a journey lasting from February through November. We will learn about the science of Phenology which measures climate change, visit the forest, and see trees, plants, fungi, birds, insects, and even an adorable snake named Slinky. It will be A Walk in the Woods not usually possible in January. Email Carolyn at cgrossner@gc.cuny.edu anytime between now and January 8th and she will make sure you get a reminder and the link.

Wednesday, January 12 at 2PM

LP² Weighs in on *The New York Times* Readers' Selection of the Best Books of the Last 125 Years with Steve Kalinsky

To celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Book Review, The New York Times has invited readers to select the "Best Book" published in the last 125 years. Thousands of nominees have been submitted and the Times has selected the 25 top contenders (+/-) and scheduled a run-off election. Which books made the cut, and which did not...and the 1600+ comments on NYT.Com have morphed into the great polarizing (literary) "food fight" of

the 21st century. Please join Steve (on Zoom) for a look at the Times contest and a no holds barred discussion of just what constitutes a "Best Book." Please email Steve at skalinsky@gc.cuny.edu for a Zoom invite.

Thursday, January 20 at 2PM

THE GREAT LP² READ: *The Mystery of Mrs. Christie* by Marie Benedict

Join with your colleagues for our fourth Great LP2 Read.

"A stunning story... The ending is ingenious, and it's possible that Benedict has brought to life the most plausible explanation for why Christie disappeared for 11 days in 1926."—The Washington Post. Agatha Christie disappeared for 11 days in December 1926 and it is hotly contested what occurred during that time. Marie Benedict draws on this true story for a historical fiction book that incorporates the elements of a suspense novel. To participate, email Jane Case Einbender jeinbender@gc.cuny.edu, obtain the book and read it on your own. You'll receive a Zoom invite before the session.

Wednesday, January 26 at 1PM

Book and Film Discussion with Robert Sholiton
BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN: Story to Screenplay

We follow the path from Annie Proulx's 28-page 1997 New Yorker story to Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana's 97-page Oscar-winning screenplay that Ang Lee turned into a masterful 2 1/4-hour film that won him the best director Oscar. The story, screenplay and three very brief essays by the author and screenwriters are all included in our text. We'll also screen a few key scenes from the film, which I suggest that you view or review. Our text is *Brokeback Mountain: Story to Screenplay*, Annie Proulx, Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana, available as either a 151-page Scribner paperback or on Kindle. The film is available on Amazon Prime or Vudu. To participate email Bob at rsholiton@gc.cuny.edu. You'll receive a Zoom invite before the session.

Thursday, January 27 at 2PM

Stand your Ground Laws — Help or Harm?
with Joy Schulman

The state of Florida passed a “Stand Your Ground” law in 2005. Prior to that, for hundreds of years, the general concept in most laws governing lawful behavior, when attacked, was “Duty to Retreat” except in your own home. This Stand Your Ground law has impacted the very recent Kyle Rittenhouse case in Kenosha, as well as the Trayvon Martin case. These laws are meant as a deterrent to crime. The statistical result has been inconclusive; at worst they have encouraged vigilante behavior. Most controversial in using the plea when the defendant was carrying a gun is what provokes the initial attack. Joy will send out links to current articles a week before (no more than 90 min. of reading) to lay the basis for a lively discussion. To participate, email Joy at jschulman1@gc.cuny.edu You’ll receive a Zoom invite before the session.

