

QUEST Q NEWS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A Quest Publication

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As I write this brief message, Easter has long passed, Passover is just a few days away, and in another unlikely turn of the calendar our Spring break lies ahead – the last week of April. And the weather has still refused to let winter get completely away; freeze and frost warnings were posted this past week.

And, of course, we are in the midst of one of the strangest election seasons that any of us has seen in quite some time. Who would have thought that the New York primary would have such significance? Or that we'd have three New Yorkers at the head of the pack. Strange doings, indeed.

But no matter whether you are a Republican, Democrat, Socialist, or an independent, one thing we can all agree on is that Quest is just about to conclude another very successful year. Our membership is strong, our finances are solid, and the quality of our presentations has never been better, thanks to so many members “stepping up” to increase their involvement. And our relationship with City College and the Center for Worker Education (CWE) continues to flourish. I can assure you that CCNY is proud of our organization, whose mission they see as perfectly complementary to CWE's. At this point in our lives, we are fortunate indeed to be a part of such a thriving senior community.

Please remember that June 7 brings the start of this year's Summer Session, which provides a wonderful opportunity to catch up on any classes, which you may have missed during the year, or might like to see again. These summer classes are truly the “Best of Quest,” and a perfect time to invite friends, relatives, and/or prospective new members to sample the best Quest has to offer.

After our August break, the fall semester will begin on Tuesday, September 6, the day after Labor Day. Note that because of a quirk in the calendar our fall season will have only thirteen weeks of classes instead of the usual fourteen. See the fall course catalog for full details. Also we are planning something special for our December holiday luncheon; stay tuned for more details.

For now, let me again extend my sincere thanks to our officers, council members, committee chairs, and to every member for helping to make Quest the success that it is.

Michael Wellner

Q NEWS

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QUEST, a community for lifelong learning, is affiliated with City College of New York (CCNY), and the Center for Worker Education (CWE).

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OLD SAYINGS—STILL RELEVANT

The problem with political jokes is they get elected. Henry Cate VII

If God wanted us to vote, he would have given us candidates. Jay Leno

Don't vote; it only encourages them. Author unknown

Politics is the gentle art of getting votes from the poor and campaign funds from the rich, by promising to protect each from the other. Oscar Ameringer

2016 Election Results

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWLY ELECTED COUNCIL MEMBERS

Vice President: Bob Gottfried

Secretary: Ruth Kovner

Treasurer: Steve Allen

At large: Phil Gisser

Bob Hartmann

Jane Pittson-Chianese

QUEST AT MOMA

This past spring saw the inauguration of a program jointly run by the Museum of Modern Art and Quest.

On the second Friday of each month, Quest members presented talks at the museum keyed to current MoMA exhibitions. These talks were open to the senior public as part of the museum's Prime Time program. The presentations offered were:

Joaquín Torres-García: The Arcadian Modern
Presented by Bob Reiss

Marcel Broodthaers: A Retrospective
Presented by Lynnel Garabedian

Edgar Degas: A Strange New Beauty
Presented by Myra Nissen



A Japanese Constellation: Toyo Ito, SANAA, and Beyond

Presented by Ellen Shapiro

Each presentation was well attended, Myra's requiring a change to a larger MoMA auditorium. Quest looks forward to additional initiatives as part of the Prime Time program.

MEET BARBARA OLIVER

By Myra Nissen

Barbara Oliver says she has spent most of her life working the left side of her brain — the analytical, logical side.



But she really yearned to work her right brain — her creative side. After interviewing Barbara, I came away feeling both sides of her brain are going strong.

Barbara is a native New Yorker; she grew up in the Bronx

and went to the Bronx High School of Science. She earned a B.A. from Hunter College and an M.S. in Library Science from St. John's University.

Barbara has had a varied working career. One of her first jobs after graduate school was as a stewardess on a Windjammer yacht sailing the Caribbean. After a stint at the advertising firm of Young & Rubicam, she taught for three years at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism and found it involved an enormous amount of preparation. (Ed note: no news to Quest presenters). At WNYC and ProPublica she taught classes to reporters and editors in researching backgrounds of people and businesses.

Barbara has worked at a consulting firm doing relocation studies and economic development. The firm worked with Fortune magazine for their annual issue on “Best Cities for...,” the focus of which changed every year.

In 1979 three days after the Three Mile Island disaster, before the dawn of the computer, Barbara started as a researcher at the *New York Times* where she spent thirteen years. (She met Quester Dolores Dolan there.) The electronic

age was still in its infancy; there was no internet. She did research without the benefit of Google on a multitude of topics for *Times* journalists. She also spent seven years at the *St. Petersburg Times*, now the *Tampa Bay Times*, as Research Editor.

When Barbara took early retirement, she wanted to focus on her creative brain. She took sketching classes hoping to travel and draw, rather than taking photos. As a result, she learned to look at things with a new perspective.

Her mother was a jewelry addict. Barbara found a web site of jewelry resources on the internet two years ago and placed an order for the most beautiful pieces of glass beads in every color, shape, and texture. She's been designing pendants, chokers and earrings ever since. Undecided about making it a real business, she said, “I like to create, I want it to be fun. Making it a business is a big commitment. I had an unsuccessful business once, for about two years, designing and installing small gardens around NYC; business is not for me.”

Barbara loves to travel. She has spent time in West Africa, specifically in Mali and Senegal. She won a fellowship from the Freedom Forum to teach African journalists how to use the internet but managed to find time to go dancing and to attend drumming school. She traveled around Mali with a band of musicians, then went to Timbuktu and has a passport stamp to prove it.

Her next big trip is a three week trek through Central Asia, along the Silk Road. When Barbara finds time for Quest, she enjoys history courses. Another favorite is Movers and Shakers. My first contact with Barbara was through her Lewis and Clark presentation. Then I went to one of her jewelry shows. Left brain and right brain were working on all cylinders.

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NOMAD NEIGHBORHOOD — NYC, NORTH OF MADISON SQUARE PARK

Joan Briller

Photos by Lila Heilbrunn

You may find many moods on the streets of NOMAD. Walk them to find the old NYC of early 20th Century opulent cha-teau-like buildings rubbing up against wholesale and import stores selling fake flowers, sun hats and wigs.



Start at Madison Square Park. Madison Square Garden once bordered it- now it's an inviting green park with Public Art on display along with memorial monuments.



Chester A. Arthur- U.S. President from 1881-1885 has his corner in the park



Admiral David Farragut: Civil War hero looks over the park visitors from atop Stanford White's elegant monument base.



**Metropolitan Life Insurance Company
5 Madison Ave**



It is the commanding presence on the East side of Madison Square Park. It was built in 1909, is 51 stories high and the photo shows the handsome clock tower modeled on the Campanile in St Mark's Square in Venice.

Currently, Credit Suisse bank occupies the building on the North side and a new hotel called The New York Edition is housed in the clock tower.

The glass cabinet is now a wine cellar for the clock tower



restaurant. The wine cellar formerly housed filing cabinets for insurance policies. The 3 dining rooms once served as Met Life executive offices.

**St. James Building
1133 Broadway (corner of Broadway and W.26th St)**



It was built in 1898 and is a 16 story office building in Renaissance Revival style. Rizzoli's bookstore is now here on the street level floor—a perfect match of building and book emporium.

Radio Wave Building 49 W.27th Street



The building was home to Nicholas Tesla in 1896 when it was the Gerlach Hotel. Tesla was the father of AC electrical current and pioneered radio wave communication. Now we have the Tesla electric car.

THE CENTER FOR ARCHITECTURE

Bob Moore

25 QUEST members assembled at the Center for Architecture on LaGuardia Place the morning of March 18, 2016.



We were welcomed by Hadley Beacham, one of the Center's staff who introduced us to Tim Hayduk, Lead Design Educator at the Center. Tim served as our guide for the visit. He took us around a large multi-level exhibit which showed building designs created by New York architects for sites all over the world.

A lively dialogue ensued as QUEST members, especially those with an architectural background, weighed in with comments and views on the various designs.



The visit concluded with an exhibit of the role that wood plays in Finnish architecture with some beautiful examples of Finland's wooden buildings.



All agreed that this was a most interesting venue and many want to return for later exhibits.

QUEST DISTINGUISHED—GUEST LECTURER SERIES

*Thanks to **Sandy Gordon**, our distinguished-guest lecturer series continued to stimulate and amaze us. Although no one can truly replace Sandy, a committee led by **Hedy Shulman** will try to follow in her footsteps in Fall 2016. Here are some highlights from Spring 2016:*

GUEST: Barbara Haws, Archivist Historian of the New York Philharmonic
SUBJECT: New York's Orchestra: Highlights from the Philharmonic's History



Ms. Haws revealed highlights dating from 1842 in the history of “our” Philharmonic. For example, she showed scores hand annotated by Leonard Bernstein and other legendary conductors. A fascinating talk.

GUEST: Dr. David Marwell
SUBJECT: Mengele and I: Behind the Scenes of the Manhunt and the Forensic Investigation of Josef Mengele.

Dr. Marwell, former Chief of Investigative Research at the U.S. Department of Justice, and former Director of the Museum of Jewish Heritage, discussed his involvement in the international manhunt and forensic investigation into the whereabouts and identification of the evil Auschwitz doctor. Using newly declassified, and previously unknown material from the case files, he presented photographs and documents from this infamous case.

GUEST: R. Barry Spaulding
SUBJECT: Adjusting to Another Culture: Doing Business in China

中国

Mr. Spaulding described the cross cultural issues arising when West meets East in the business world. Drawing on his decades of experience doing business in China, he explained why “yes” often means “no” and other cultural trip-wires.

GUEST: Dr. Alon Ben Meir, Professor and Senior Fellow at NYU's Center for Global Affairs
SUBJECT: Turmoil in the Middle East: Insights and Projections

A frequent Quest speaker, Dr. Meir updated his always insightful views on Middle East *Realpolitik*. A lively Q & A followed.

GUEST: Ms. Angela Garcia, Art Historian
SUBJECT: Jackson Pollock: A Collection Survey 1934-1954

Ms. Garcia, representing the Museum of Modern Art, offered unique insights into the current MoMA exhibition of the works of Jackson Pollock. This certainly enriched the experience of Quest members visiting the exhibition.



QUEST TRAVEL IN COLOMBIA

Toni Dickenson

In January, seven Questers joined 19 other travelers on a *SmarTours* trip to Colombia. The group met up in Miami, and arrived in the evening in Bogota. Bogota is located in the Andes Mountains, 8,600 feet above sea level. After a 4-5 hour plane trip, going through customs, adjusting to the altitude, and arriving at our hotel, safe to say, none of us went out for an evening exploration of the city's night life.

The next morning, Sunday, we were up early to start our tour, ascending another 2000 feet, braving the altitude to gain a panoramic mountaintop view of the sprawling city. It was sunny and temperatures were in the 60s; a welcome change from New York's cold. There was a charming church on the mountaintop; and even early in the morning, families were there to enjoy the day. The next stop was at a colorful flower and food market. The flowers, and especially the many varieties of roses, one of Colombia's major exports, were lush and beautiful. Our day ended with a tour of the Botero and Gold Museums located in the heart of the old city.

The following day we drove to visit a remarkable engineering feat, a huge underground salt cathedral that was built by the miners, complete with several chapels and separate niches for 14 stations of the cross. From the cathedral we proceeded to the airport and a short flight to the coffee triangle.

Colombia's coffee is judged to be the best in the world. We visited coffee plantations, learned some of the ins and outs of coffee production and, of course, had to sample the product. Our tour included the plantation of Hacienda San Alberto, the most awarded coffee producer in Colombia. At the Hacienda, the atmosphere couldn't have been better. Temperatures were in the 70s, we sat at tables outside surrounded by a beautiful garden. We were shown the fine distinctions used to determine and to brew the very best coffee. Naturally, it was necessary to sample yet more coffee. Non-sophisticates that we were, no one in our group preferred the coffee that was judged by the experts to be the "best".

After touring the coffee triangle we were off to Medellin, or as the local say, "Medajean", the city formerly notorious for being the base of the drug lord, Pablo Escobar. Our guides told us harrowing stories of "la violencia", of what life was like when the drug lords virtually ruled Medellin and other parts of the country. Fortunately for the Colombians, and for us, Mr. Escobar is no more. The city is now considered to be one of the safest in Latin America, has a progressive government and is quite interesting to visit. We strolled in a large downtown plaza full of huge sculptures that could

only have been carved by Medellin's native son, Fernando Botero.

Medellin's public transport system had been named one of the top transport systems in the world. We enjoyed a ride on the city's trains and its unique metrocable system, aerial cable cars that ascend to the favelas (shanty towns) dotting the surrounding mountainsides. It's an innovative transportation system that has shortened the mountainside residents' downtown commute from several hours to a matter of minutes. By allowing the slum dwellers access to the city and its jobs, the metro system played a pivotal role in reducing the violence that once bedeviled Medellin.

The tour's final destination was Cartagena. Cartagena was historic, charming and colorful; with a walkable old town, great shopping and places to eat. While in Cartagena we visited an Emerald Museum that had dioramas of emerald extraction, polishing and grading; we even had the opportunity to purchase a few – however, I don't think any of us did. While in Cartagena, we ventured a little off the beaten track, taking a walking tour of a once seedy neighborhood within the old city walls, Getsemani, notable for its bright and colorful narrow streets and buildings covered by artistic graffiti, but gentrification is taking place here too. Getsemani is now considered to be the "coolest" place in town.

Located on the Caribbean, Cartagena was quite hot and humid – temperatures in the 80s and 90s. However, since at the same time New York was buried by 27" of snow during the January blizzard, there were few complaints about Cartagena's weather from our group!

Idyllic as the city seemed, it too is facing the threat of climate change. Our hotel was located at the beach, separated only by a wide thoroughfare. On the last tour day of our trip, due to high tides, the street in front of the hotel was under about a foot of water, making pedestrian and vehicle transportation difficult. Along with much of the rest of the world, Cartagena is also in the process of developing a climate change adaption plan to address its vulnerability to rising flood waters and extreme weather events.

In summary, Colombia was an interesting, warm, safe, very clean and colorful country. Our trip was brief and involved a lot of travel time so we only had a tiny taste of the country, but it was beautiful and the trip was a great change from the snowy, cold, gray January of New York.



Quest Summer Session 2016

Date	Tuesday 10:30 - Noon	Date	Thursday 10:30 - Noon
<u>June 7</u>	Presenter: Caroline Thompson Course: Long Nineteenth Century Subject: Napoleon	<u>June 9</u>	Presenter: Art Spar Course: Ancient Greece: Crucible of Civilization Subject: Plato
<u>June 14</u>	Presenter: Vivian Oliver Course: A Jazz Cornucopia Subject: Anita O'Day 1:00 PM CCNY Professor William Helmreich: <i>The New York Nobody Knows</i>	<u>June 16</u>	Presenter: Toni Dickinson Course: Movers & Shakers Subject: Trotsky
<u>June 21</u>	Presenter: Mary Beth Yakoubian Course: American Roots Music Subject: Live Performance - Southern Appalachian Old-Time Music	<u>June 23</u>	Presenter: Doreen De Martini Course: Twentieth Century Chinese History Subject: Tiananmen Square
<u>June 28</u>	Presenter: Lynnel Garabedian Course: Artists and their Work Subject: Eliot Porter, Photographer Fairfield Porter, Painter	<u>June 30</u>	Presenter: Steve Allen Course: Mind & Brain Subject: Machine Intelligence
<u>July 5</u>	HAPPY JULY 4 th WEEK-END! No classes today.	<u>July 7</u>	Presenter: Bob Reiss Course: Fascinating Non-Fiction Subject: <i>Falling Upward</i> by Richard Holmes
<u>July 12</u>	Presenter: Jane Pittson-Chianese Course: Foreign Affairs Subject: The Failure of Multiculturalism in Europe	<u>July 14</u>	Presenters: Bob Moore, Phil Gisser, Wayne Cotter Course: Election 2016 Subject: Election Update
<u>July 19</u>	Presenter: Barbara Oliver Course: Economics and Society Subject: Newsconomics	<u>July 21</u>	Presenter: Wayne Cotter Course: Classic Rock Albums Subject: Bob Dylan Highway 61 Revisited
<u>July 26</u>	Presenter: Sandra Southwell Course: Art and History Subject: Art as a Reflection	<u>July 28</u> Final Session	Presenter: Sandra Abramson Course: Supreme Court Subject: 1823 Decision