

A Note From the President

Our spring General Membership Meeting is bittersweet as Council members reaching their term limits must leave, while new members elected after a week of robust meet-the-candidate forums will add some fresh perspectives. So on behalf of Quest, our thanks to members-at-large **Mary Ann Donnelly** and **Nan McNamara** for their four years of counsel and insights, as well as **Paul Golomb** and **Ilene Winkler**, both of whom decided not to run for a second term. Congratulations to our four new Council members, **Bob Belfort**, **Victor Brener**, **Stu Parker**, and **Ruth Ward**, who will begin their two-year term of office on June 1.

Walking into the auditorium, members received *Quest: 30 Years*, a 48-page book detailing the history of Quest, which was

founded in 1995. One year in development, *30 Years* took an editorial and creative team of fourteen Questers to research, interview, write, and design, with special thanks to **Judith Hill** and **April Koral** and **Paul Adler**, editor in chief, creative director, and art director, respectively, who put in dozens of hours each to bring the book to life. Others involved were: **Donna Ramer** (editorial director); **Larry Shapiro** (executive editor); **Ruth Ward** (chief writer); contributing writers **Wayne Cotter** and **Michael Wellner**; copy editor **Barbara Gelber**; researcher Raquel Rivera; and interviewers **Nancy Dobi**, **Helen Saffran**, **Ellen Shapiro**, and **Nina Dioletis**. And if you weren't at the meeting? Stop by the office and Raquel will give you a copy; we'll be sending one to our members who are unable to come to Quest.

In addition to updates from key committee chairs (Marketing & Communications, Membership, Tech) and the Treasurer, along with sneak previews of new courses for the fall, this year's meeting was opened by the EllieJune Duo (**Ellie Schaffer** and **June Jacobson**) who engaged members with an original parody of "Season of Love" from the play *Rent* — "Season of Quest" — complete with a sing-a-long chorus.

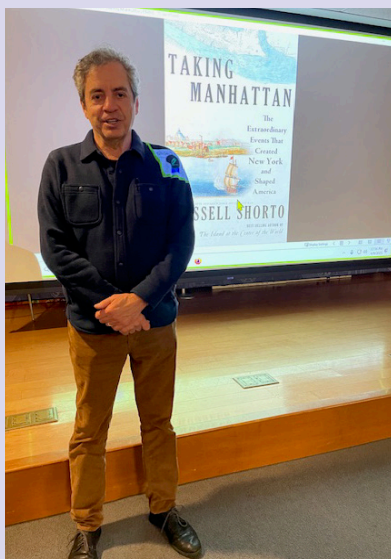
A post-meeting wine-and-cheese reception was the perfect way to end the day thanks to our Social Committee: **Gale Spitalnik**, chair; and **Lauren Gee**, **Pam Gemelli**, **Lois Klein**, and **Jamie Rower**.

And now, let's turn our attention to a great line-up of Summer Encores.

Donna Ramer

Guest Speaker Russell Shorto by Bob Reiss

On April 9, we listened to an absolutely fascinating talk by Russell Shorto, author of *Taking Manhattan*, his recent brilliant history of early New York City. Russell focused on the period when New York passed from Dutch to British control including profiles of major players of the era.



Guest Lecturer Patrick Bringley by Karen Levin

Patrick Bringley was our Distinguished Guest Lecturer on March 12.

Patrick spoke about his memoir *All the Beauty in the World*. After the tragic loss of his older brother, Tom, he needed to find a way to move on to get through his grief.

As a museum guard for 10 years at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, he described various paintings, art and sculpture that lifted his spirits and allowed him to help visitors navigate the museum.

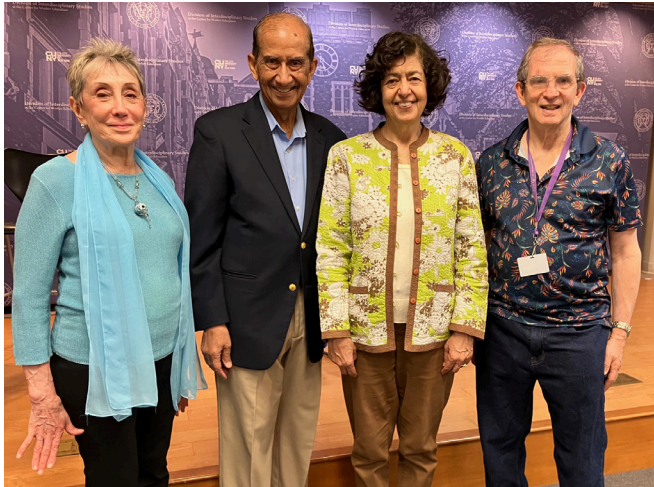
Questers were charmed by his experiences among some of the most beautiful and famous works of art. His stories about his fellow guards and their lives as well as the museum's daily life captured our hearts.

In addition to being a memoirist, Patrick is now a playwright and an actor. He will perform his one-man play at an Off-Broadway theater in New York City.



Quester's Choice by Bob Gottfried

Sabeeha and **Khalid Rehman** presented in Quester's Choice on Thursday April 24. Their extremely well-received talk focused on the history and meaning of the Qur'an, the role of women in Islam, and how to bridge the gap between followers of Islam and other faith groups in the USA.



Khalid Rehman and **Sabeeha Rehman**; flanked by **MaryBeth Yakoubian**, co-coordinator; and **Bob Gottfried**, lead coordinator, Quester's Choice.

Ze'eva Cohen

The film *Everything You Have is Yours*, in which Ze'eva Cohen is featured in two small scenes, will be screened from May 2–8 at DCTV's Firehouse Cinema. Ze'eva will be participating in a Q&A on Sunday, May 4th after the 12:00 noon showing with the other main persons involved in the film. The film is 90-minutes and the Q&A will take place at approximately 1:30pm. <https://www.dctvny.org/s/firehouse-film/everything-you-have-is-yours-MCRVAF34R4FFDSPPMNUN42SPIVYM>



Transportation:

N, Q, R, W, 6, J,
or Z to Canal Street

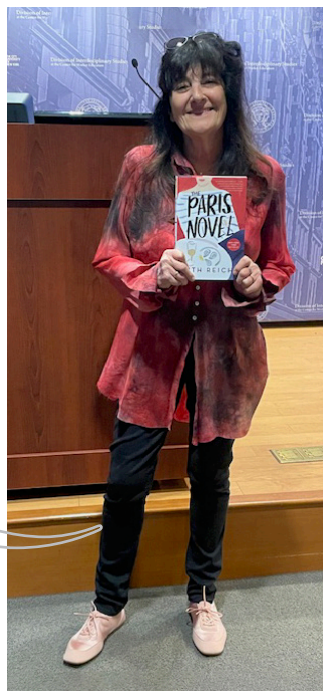
DCTV FIREHOUSE CINEMAS

87 Lafayette Street,
New York, NY between
Walker and White Street
(2 blocks south of
Canal Street)

Tatyana Tenenbaum, the film's director; Hadar Ahuvia, the lead person in this documentary film; and Ze'eva Cohen

Distinguished Speaker Ruth Reichl

Ruth Reichl was our Kenneth Leedom/Peter Cott Memorial Guest Lecturer on March 26. She delighted the "sold out" audience with stories about the food industry, her illustrious career, and her new book, *The Paris Novel*.



City Wanderings by Frank Montaturo

When overseas one of my finest... admittedly minor pleasures... has been to get a haircut... invariably in a language I haven't understood... relying on gesture and smile... completely surrendering to a barber's taste and whim in a time predating Google Translate. So... what an unexpected



delight... an invitation ... on discovering this subterranean tonsorial parlor along East Broadway in Chinatown. The steep gradient urged caution; the chairs suggested a waiting room. The promise of an inexpensive "styling" couldn't outweigh that of a memorable experience. And I wasn't disappointed.

Quest's Activists: Hands Off

Several Quest members marched on April 5th in the Hands Off/NYC Fights Back demonstrations. Their names have been omitted to protect the innocent.



"There was too much rain for me in a wheelchair so we held a mini-demo in my building lobby. People passing through were very supportive, with thumbs up and some cheering."

— Carole Abrahams

Who's Doing What

Bob and Ellen Gottfried recently returned from a fabulous two week trip to Greece. Starting in Athens they travelled to Epidaureis, Nafplio, Mycenae, Delphi, Meteora, and Thessaloniki, all on the Greek Mainland. They were transported by two wonderful drivers on a private tour and saw the sites with local guides. The highlights of the trip were their visit to the Acropolis in Athens and the tomb of Phillip II, the father of Alexander The Great.



• • •

Sybil Cohen visited number three son, Daniel with his wife, Rhonda, and their children in Englewood, Colorado.



• • •

Judy and Pete Weis have been to five protests already this year (more than in the 70s!). They've also been to the theater a lot (Oh Mary, Pirates!, Operation Mincemeat, Liberation), concerts (Verdi Requiem at Carnegie Hall), operas (Aida, Fidelio, Moby Dick, Madame Butterfly). These help keep their minds off the horrible things going on in the country.

• • •

On Wednesday, March 26, **Roy Clary** made a presentation on Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet to the Brooklyn Lifelong Learning group. He enjoyed an enthusiastic response and was delighted to receive an invitation to return "any time" to speak further about Shakespeare and his plays.

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On the afternoon of April 12th, **Betty Farber** joined the 14 poets who gathered for an outdoor session of poetry reading called

Poets On The Patio. The event was held at The Toasty Goat, a coffee house in Columbia, Missouri. The audience watched and listened on chairs and benches in the breezy patio. Betty's readings were taken from her book of poems, *Every Swing Should Have A Tree and Other Poems*, and one poem she read was from a recent issue of *QNews*. What a treat to share her poems aloud!

• • •

Susan Diehl and Arlynn Greenbaum enjoyed the Orchid Show at the New York Botanical Gardens on April 15.



• • •



Ellen Rittberg welcomed her sixth grandchild, a boy, Julian Pober Ritter in Los Angeles. His middle name, Pober, is Ellen's maiden name and the name she

uses professionally and is in memory of Julian's paternal great grandparents.

• • •

Bob Reiss participated in a Pro-Immigrant demonstration on April 19.



50501 Demonstration

by Yona Rogosin

Yona Rogosin joined thousands of others at the 50501 protest march on April 19 that filled Manhattan midtown streets from Bryant Park to 42nd to Madison Avenue to 59th to Central Park South and ending at Columbus Circle. The chants, interesting signs and camaraderie, along with the beautiful weather and opportunity for exercise, were powerful antidotes to the concerns, anxiety and frustrations so many have. Other Questers who also participated included **Richard Elrauch**, **Lois Klein**, and **Judith and Pete Weis**.



CCNY Main Campus tour by Michael Wellner

On a very gray, cool, and intermittently rainy Friday, thirty Questers ventured (most by subway) up to the main campus of City College at 137th Street and Convent Avenue, in Harlem.

We assembled in the President's Conference Room, where we were greeted by none other than CCNY's President himself, the very warm and welcoming Vince Boudreau, who has been leading City College for the past ten years. After a half hour introduction, and a spectacular view of the campus from the roof of the Administration Building, we were off, first on a short walk to what is arguably the most famous building on campus, Shepard Hall, with its many sculptures of famous Americans (Abraham Lincoln, among others), and its Great Hall, scene of many, many historic events on campus, and the location of the picture below!

And, in the course of talking among ourselves, **Bob Shick** and **Michael Wellner** discovered that they are actually fraternity brothers (Tau Epsilon Phi)! Who knew?

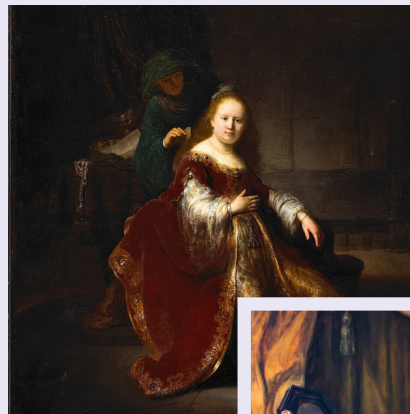
From there, rain and drizzle notwithstanding, we walked down to the South Campus, home of the Architecture and Science buildings, among others. And then, walking back through the main campus, we stopped for a very delightful and filling lunch at the nearby Fumo Restaurant on Amsterdam Avenue.

Everyone agreed it was a very special day, indeed. Most of us can't wait to return... on a sunny, mild day!



**The Wisest Person
Is Not The One Who Thinks
They Know More Than Everyone in the Room.
The Wisest Person
Is The One Who Wants To Learn Something
From Each Person In The Room.**

CultureQuest: The Book of Esther in the Age of Rembrandt by Dena Kerren



Our Culture Quest visit to the Jewish Museum on March 28th uncovered a lesser-known chapter in art history —Queen Esther. As a biblical heroine, Queen Esther served as a powerful symbol of hope and resilience for Jews who had fled oppressive regimes. In the Netherlands, her story resonated even more broadly, becoming an emblem of courage and resistance.

At first glance, one might not associate Queen Esther with Rembrandt, the 17th-century Dutch master who pioneered realism. Yet, *The Book of Esther* offers a fascinating lens through which to explore his connection to this enduring tale.

Though Rembrandt was not Jewish, he has long been regarded as a friend of Jewish scholars, models, and artists. He lived on the outskirts of Amsterdam's immigrant neighborhood, home to Spanish Jews who had fled the Inquisition and sought refuge in Holland.

The biblical *Book of Esther*, set in the fifth century B.C.E., tells the story of Esther and her cousin Mordecai, descendants of exiles from ancient Judea. After Esther wins a contest to become queen of Persia, she and Mordecai must thwart the evil scheme of Haman, the king's advisor, who seeks to exterminate their people. Elevated to power "for such a time as this," Esther reveals her Jewish identity in a dramatic confrontation, turning the tables on Haman, and ultimately securing his downfall.

It is no surprise, then, that artists of the time were drawn to this compelling narrative, painting scenes from Esther's story with great enthusiasm. *The Book of Esther in the Age of Rembrandt* explores the personal significance this tale held for both Jewish and Christian communities in 17th-century Amsterdam—an era when the Netherlands was emerging as an independent power.

Creative Corner

SUPERWOMAN®

by Betty Farber

Long black hair billowing behind her,
A floor-length purple cloak on her back
Floating above her high-heeled shoes —
She runs past me on East 61st Street.

Is she rushing to catch the
Third Avenue bus?
Or late for the W train to wake up
Wall Street?
A glance at her face will give me a clue.
I turn the corner. She is gone.

No bus has arrived. Subway stairs —
empty.
Is she flying above the traffic on
Third Avenue,
Purple cloak lifting her aloft?
Look! Up in the sky!
A purple light shines in the misty morning.

Thank You To Quest's QPal Volunteer Partners

For their Support of our
Newest Members Spring 2025



**Arlynn Greenbaum, Arlene Curinga,
Carol Rubin, Estelle Selzer,
Bob Gottfried, Lucille Granfort,
Nina Sanders, Len Lavitt,
Michael Wellner, Susannah Falk Lewis,
Rita Lavitt, Wayne Cotter, Pam Gemelli,
Lynnel Garabedian, Jim Brooks,
Ellen Rittberg, Tracey Lee, Lauren Gee**

Chicago Redux

by Ruth Kovner

This past Thanksgiving my family
and I visited my granddaughter
Kelsey, who had recently moved to
Chicago. I had been there many years ago,
but my memory was sketchy.

Our first stop on the day we arrived was to
the wonderful Museum of Fine Art. Fantastic
paintings. Next day we had a grand tour of
the city. We stopped to look at the Museum
of Science, where my granddaughter that
very day received notice she had a new job.

Throughout the trip we had sight of Lake
Michigan, a huge body of water. In the next
few days we enjoyed eating at wonderful
restaurants and then we were off to a yacht
club in Indiana. Illinois and Indiana about one
another. A surprise was a stop at the Indiana
Dunes State Park. Imagine! Sand dunes in
the midwest!

While there we visited a friend's family
compound. There were several huge homes
there, mansions, and they were impressive.
Also some interesting houses, built in the
1920s but looking as though built within
recent years. Very, very modern.

At the end of the week, after many miles
of traveling, we headed back to Chicago and
then headed home. It was such an interest-
ing trip. Perhaps this time I will remember
the visit.

Special May Dates

1 Chocolate Parfait Day

2 World Tuna Day

3 World Press Freedom Day

4 Star Wars Day — May the Fourth
Be With You

9 Lost Sock Memorial Day

12 National Limerick Day

12 International Nurses Day

14 Dance Like a Chicken Day

17 World Whiskey Day

20 National Rescue Dog Day

21 National Waitstaff Day

25 National Wine Day

31 National Smile Day

New Members

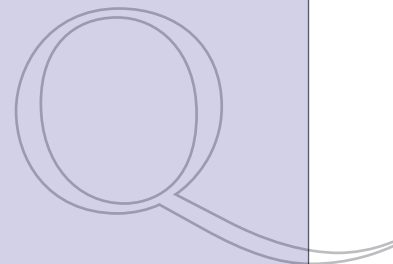
Quest welcomes two new members this month. Look for their red lanyards, indicating
a new member, at 25 Broadway, greet our new members, make them welcome,
and include them in our wonderful Quest.



Linda Eiges



Toni Lichstein



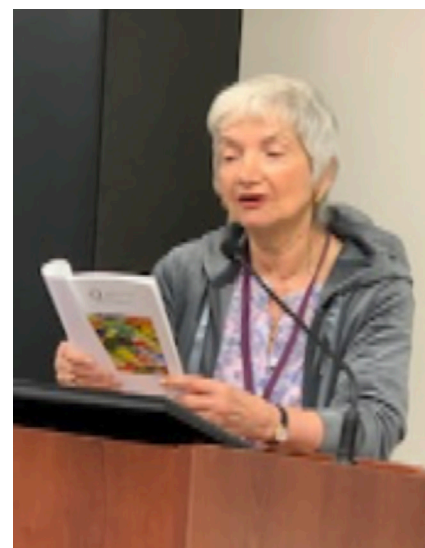
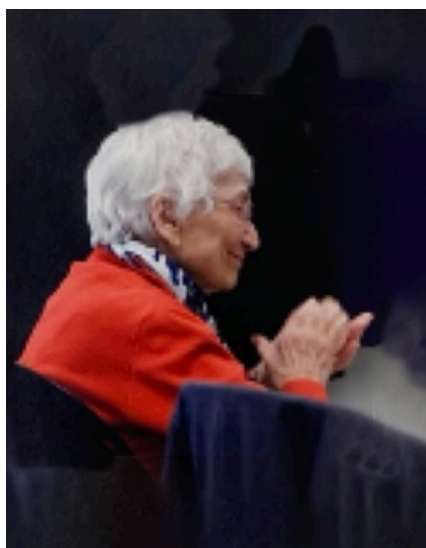
Summer Encores 2025

All classes are 10:30 am to 12 noon
See NWAQ every Friday for location and Zoom access

Tuesdays June 3 – July 29	Thursdays June 5 – July 31
June 3: Steve Allen, <i>The Secret Life of the American Musical</i> Give My Regards to Broadway	June 5: Sandy Kessler, <i>American Constitutionalism: An Introduction to the Federalist Papers</i>
June 10: Gil Santiago, <i>Elon Musk</i> , Power, The Glory of It	June 12: Ellie Schaffer, <i>West Side Story</i> , Star-Crossed Lovers
June 17: Roy Clary, Actor, Bob Reiss, Playwright, <i>Mr. Jefferson's Women</i> , Flawed Greatness of Thomas Jefferson	June 19: Michael Hamburg, <i>They Defined the Universe</i> , Across the Universe
June 24: Tamara Weinberg, <i>The Art of Dutch Daily Life in the Golden Age</i> , Artists & Their Work	June 26: Creativity Day: A Celebration of Members' Artistic Works
July 1: Debbi Honorof, <i>Genealogy: Researching Our Roots</i> , Quester's Choice	July 3: Holiday / Quest Closed
July 8: Ellen Shapiro, <i>Siena 1300–1350</i> , Artists & Their Work	July 10: Robert Belfort, <i>Affirmative Action</i> , Supreme Court
July 15: Steve Koenig/Wayne Cotter/Mary Ann Donnelly, <i>5th Annual Salute to Songwriters</i> , Rock & Roots Albums	July 17: Marty Green, <i>The History of Money</i> , Quester's Choice
July 22: Trudy Deweese, <i>Life in a French Utopian Village</i> , Quester's Choice	July 24: Wayne Cotter/Art Spar, <i>100 Years of New Yorker Cartoons</i> , Quester's Choice
July 29: Judy Hampson, <i>Christianity and Gnosticism</i> , World of Religion	July 31: Elaine Martin, <i>We Never Lie in Our Dreams</i> , Health and Medicine

Meet Q Review's Creative Staff

On Wednesday, April 9th after our Distinguished Guest Lecturer Russell Shorto's presentation, interested Quest members met in the lunchroom to honor our benefactor **Eva Shatkin**, to meet Q Review's Creative Staff, and to sample some of the prose, poetry, and art offerings of our 30th Anniversary edition. While members enjoyed the delicious treats provided by **Gale Spitalnik** and the Social Committee, our Prose Editor **Judith Hill**, Poetry Editor **Judy Hampson**, and Art Editor **Paul Adler** explained what they would be looking for in our 2026 edition. Be on the lookout for frequent *Q Review* reminders in the NWAQ. Also, know that the current 2025 edition is available on our website at <http://questcontinuingednyc.org>



Irish Theatre Festival

On April 28, **June Jacobson, Wayne Cotter, Mary Ann Donnelly, and Roy Clary** participated in The Origin Theatre's Irish Festival. Directed by Wayne, they did readings of *The Long Wet Grass* and *Boys Swam Before Me*, two short plays by Séamus Scanlon, an Irish playwright and the CCNY librarian on the seventh floor of 25 Broadway.



Wayne Cotter, Mary Ann Donnelly, Playwright Séamus Scanlon, June Jacobson, Roy Clary

CultureQuest: Final Dress Rehearsal of Salome by Estelle Selzer



On a beautiful Friday morning in late April, 50 CultureQuesters gathered to watch the MetOpera's final dress rehearsal of *Salome*. With music by Richard Strauss that catapulted him to international fame and notoriety with this incendiary and powerful opera, *Salome* is the story of a young princess of Judea who dances for her stepfather Herod. She chooses as her reward the head of the prophet John the Baptist. The magnificent staging and range of voices in this new production was a hit with those who attended.

Questers gathered after the performance for a photo op outside the Metropolitan Opera House.

Council Election Results

The Nominations and Election Committee (NEC) is happy to announce that the following candidates won the four Member-at-Large positions for Quest Council, effective June 1, 2025:

Bob Belfort
Victor Brener
Stu Parker
Ruth Ward

Donna Ramer (incumbent) was elected President for a second term.

All the candidates were excellent and had amazing qualifications. We thank all the candidates for participating. The percentage of total members voting was 56%. Thank you to everyone who voted.

Karen Levin, Chair of NEC
David Bartash
Steve Chicoine
Bob Gottfried
Tamara Weinberg

Q News Staff

A Quest Publication

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Articles submitted to QNews may be edited by the Staff. The Editor-in-Chief is the final arbiter of the publication's contents.

Scavenger Hunt

by Susan Diehl

Want something fun to do over the summer? Explore the Metropolitan Museum of Art via a scavenger hunt!

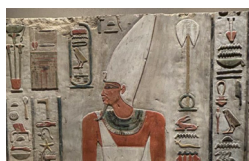
Here are photos of 20 objects throughout the Met. The art should be fairly easy to spot but may take you to areas of the museum you normally don't visit.

The clue attached to each one should help you find the right galleries.

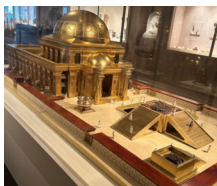
When you find an object, simply mark its location on a museum map. Hardcopies of this are now in the lunchroom.

My thanks to Linda Downs, Marian Friedmann, and Frank Montaturo for their help in selecting the objects and providing the clues.

Grab a friend and comfortable shoes and start exploring! We will meet in September to award prizes to those who find them all.



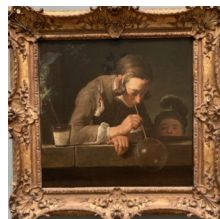
Clue: This is largest of many fragments found in Mentuhotep's tomb. It is across the room from a case filled with smaller fragments.



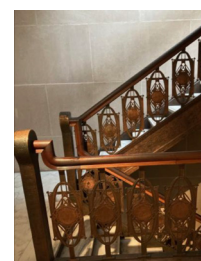
Clue: Feeling hungry? Then you'll find this easily.



Clue: These two paintings are by the same artist, but in different time periods so in different galleries that are near each other.



Clue: This lad in a 18th century French painting loved blowing bubbles. He might also have enjoyed the musical instruments in the same gallery.



Clue: These stairs will lead you down to a café. Find a table and enjoy the statues!



Clue: Simple, basic furnishings. A combination bedroom and "retiring room" where you spend quiet time to prepare yourself for a church service.



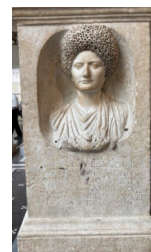
Clue: Some orders of nuns wore these medallions on ceremonial occasions. Turn around and see other Spanish-American articles in cases including a crown, a chest, and a crucifix.



Clue: A Egyptian head of a magical creature with a tongue sticking out. Do you think it's because he doesn't like Dendur?



Clue: These Greek funerary olive wreaths have been found in tombs throughout Greece. So why is it located so far away from the gallery with the mortuary kraters?



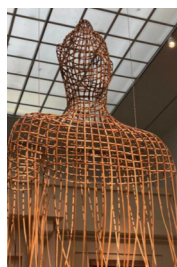
Clue: Her portrait on this Roman funerary altar shows a hairstyle that was high fashion in the Imperial Court.



Clue: Might she be a friend of the Woman in Gold? P.S. She is in the gallery next to the painting above her.



Clue: This saint is emerging from the belly of a dragon – fittingly, she is the protector of pregnant women. Across the room is the saint who is always on the go.



Clue: Buddhas usually sit with crossed legs. But this Cambodian Buddha has taken flight!



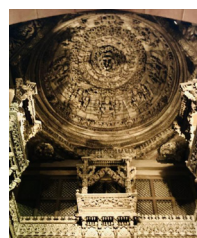
Clue: This bronze Roman orator has classy sandals!



Clue: This saint has been protecting travelers since the 7th century. Don't leave home without him!



Clue: May have been worn at a ceremonial pow-wow?



Clue: What a meeting house! What do you think the Jain talked about in there?



Clue: The Greeks loved their mortuary kraters oversized. You can't miss this!



Clue: He was a controversial abolitionist who was convicted of treason, sentenced to die, but on his way to the scaffold, he paused to kiss a baby. Makes sense that he shares a gallery with Abraham Lincoln.