

NEXT WEEK AT QUEST

February 2 - 5, 2026
This Is an A Week

There are three links (given in red below) for all classes for the semester: Auditorium, Classroom 15-17, and Classroom 27. Click on the appropriate link below to join a class no earlier than 15 minutes before its start.

AUDITORIUM

Meeting ID: 899 9142 8608

Passcode: 252525

ROOM 15-17

Meeting ID: 890 4628 0269

Passcode: 252525

ROOM 27

Meeting ID: 874 2995 4279

Passcode: 252525

Also given are meeting IDs and passcodes for the three meeting rooms. If you don't have Zoom installed, you can still enter a class using your browser by clicking on.

<https://zoom.us/join>

and typing in the Meeting ID for the room of your class along with the passcode.

In addition, you can attend classes on your phone by dialing 1-929-205-6099. You will be asked for the Meeting ID and possibly the passcode.

NOTE: All classes are conducted at 25 Broadway and are listed as either Hybrid or In-person only. Hybrid classes are available to members attending at 25 Broadway and to members attending from home via Zoom. In-person only classes are presented solely at 25 Broadway with no Zoom option.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2 @ 10:30 AM – NOON

Course: **ACROSS THE UNIVERSE**
Subject: This Just In – 2025
Presenter: Michael Hamburg
Room: 27
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Michael Hamburg**, Marion Schultheis
Tech Support: **Pete Weis**, Bob Reiss, Tamara Weinberg

This class will examine all the latest developments that have happened in the past year in the exploration of our Solar System and beyond. We have added to our knowledge of the ever-changing conditions of the Earth's environment and especially our climate. We have also delved more deeply into the nature of the major and minor bodies of the Solar System, including pioneering ventures into its very outermost regions.

We will look at the latest findings about planets around other stars and the implications for finding a second Earth or at least some bio-signatures. There have also been new findings about neutron stars, black holes, and gravitational waves. Our very understanding about the creation of galaxies and superclusters is now undergoing careful review. In fact, as we enter the discussion about the very beginning of the Universe, we learn that maybe we got it wrong.

Course: **IT AIN'T JUST ROCK 'N' ROLL**
Subject: Rockin' the 1800s
Presenter: Wayne Cotter
Room: Auditorium
Format: **Hybrid (To Be Recorded)**
Coordinators: **Steve Koenig**, Wayne Cotter, Mary Ann Donnelly
Tech Support: **Victor Brener**, Wayne Cotter

If you've ever wondered what popular songs of the 19th Century would sound like if performed by contemporary rock and folk musicians, this class is for you.

In this session, we'll examine some classic songs by well-known composers such as Stephen Foster. We'll also look at beloved tunes such as "The Man on the Flying Trapeze" and "After the Ball" by songwriters who have been long forgotten.

The musicians interpreting these songs will include Bruce Springsteen, James Taylor, and Mavis Staples. We think you'll be surprised at how contemporary these 19th Century classics sound to our 21st Century ears.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2 @ 12:10 –12:50 PM

Course: NOONTIME MEDLEY
Subject: Thinking About Museums
Presenters: Sheryl Harawitz and Andrea Irvine
Room: 15-17
Format: In-Person only
Coordinators: Sheryl Harawitz, Andrea Irvine

What makes art feel “serious”? Is it size, subject matter, materials — or simply the way a museum presents it? And where does that leave beauty, pleasure, and decoration? In this lunchtime talk, we’ll look at a handful of current New York exhibitions and play with the often-blurry line between the serious and the decorative, an invitation to notice how museums quietly steer our expectations and responses. Expect surprising pairings, a few questions, and perhaps a changed way of looking the next time you wander through a gallery.

Bring your lunch and your curiosity, museums aren’t just about objects, they’re about us.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2 @ 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Course: BALZAC: PERE GORIOT
Subject: Chapter One
Room: 27
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: Sheryl Harawitz, Tatyana Chernomaz, Andrea Irvine, Ellen Shapiro

Père Goriot (Old Man Goriot) opens Balzac’s vast undertaking, *La Comédie humaine*—his attempt to observe French society after Napoleon, from titled aristocrats and minor officials to servants.

Please read **Chapter One**, where we enter a modest boarding house in Paris’s 5th Arrondissement, on the Left Bank. Balzac begins where the French often do with appearances that are not superficial—the look of the house, the arrangement of rooms, the habits and postures of the people who inhabit them. Food matters, because in French life it always does. At the dining table, taste, money, manners, ambition, and resentment reveal themselves. Who eats what, how it is discussed, and who is watching.

This is Paris as lived: attentive, articulate, and intensely social. We’ll be using *The Old Man Goriot*, translated by Olivia McCannon, though any translation will work. If you’d like a PDF of the text, please contact sherylnyc@gmail.com.

Course: **PROFILES IN COURAGE**
Subject: Sylvia Beach: Midwife of *Ulysses*
Presenter: Donna Ramer
Room: Auditorium
Format: **Hybrid (To Be Recorded)**
Coordinators: **Wayne Cotter**, Tracey Lee, Ken Sasmor
Tech Support: **Victor Brener**, Wayne Cotter, Joan Lambe

In the first class of this semester, we'll take a look at how American expatriate Sylvia Beach went against critics, community, and courts to publish James Joyce's *Ulysses* when almost no one else would touch it. This courageous founder and owner of Paris-based *Shakespeare and Company* believed this much reviled and yet much-loved book was a work of art and put her reputation on the line and her business at risk to breathe life into this masterpiece.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3 @ 10:30 AM – NOON

Course: **SCIENCE CLUBHOUSE**
Subject: *Eve: How the Female Body Drove 200 Million Years of Human Evolution* by Cat Bohannon
Presenter: Steve Allen
Room: 27
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Steve Allen**, Jim Brook, Gil Santiago, Marion Schultheis
Tech Support: **Steve Chicoine**, Pete Weis

In this term's Science Clubhouse, we will be featuring a number of reports on fascinating science books. For our first session on Tuesday, February 3, we will have a presentation on Cat Bohannon's 2023 award-winning book *Eve: How the Female Body Drove 200 Million Years of Human Evolution*, which combines detailed reporting on scientific research with a sparkling literary style. The New York Times review said: "A page-turning whistle-stop tour of mammalian development that begins in the Jurassic Era, *Eve* recasts the traditional story of evolutionary biology by placing women at its center."

No advance reading is needed, but for those who are interested, a few links and attachments have been distributed through QuestBusiness.

Course: **SUPREME COURT**
Subject: Some Cases from the Court's Current Term
Presenter: Babette Ceccotti
Room: 15-17
Format: **Hybrid (To be Recorded)**
Coordinators: **Michael Wellner**, Sandra Abramson, Babette Ceccotti
Tech Support: Michael Wellner

We are now well into the Court's current term. In our first class we will look at some cases involving challenges to the President's authority under the Constitution: deployment of the National Guard (Trump v Illinois), the tariff cases, and two agency firing cases, Trump v Slaughter (Federal Trade Commission) and Trump v Cook (Federal Reserve).

Course: **THEATERWORKS**
Subject: New Scenes For Spring 2026
Presenters: Mary Beth Yakoubian, Yona Rogosin, Ruth Ward, Lisa Bu, Donna Ramer
Room: Auditorium
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Art Spar**, Mary Ann Donnelly, Ruth Ward, Arlynn Greenbaum
Tech Support: **Tamara Weinberg**, Wayne Cotter

We will begin developing new projects for Spring 2026. Teams led by Mary Beth Yakoubian and Yona Rogosin will produce scripted scenes from famous plays. Teams led by Ruth Ward, Lisa Bu and Donna Ramer will produce short original plays. New members are welcome. We need actors, directors, playwrights, and stage crafters. In particular, we need an audience for those who like to watch

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3 @ 12:10 – 12:50 PM

Course: **DÉJEUNER FRANÇAIS**
Presenter: Donna Basile
Room: 19
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Ruth Ward**, Donna Basile

On verra une présentation du Film Noir qui a ses racines dans le cinéma français. On s'amusera en regardant le suspense, l'angoisse, la trahison, le détective, le mec faible et la femme fatale, tous associés avec ce genre. Venez tous à cette réunion unique!

We will see a presentation of Film Noir which has its roots in French cinema. We will observe the suspense, agony, betrayal, detective, weak guy and la femme fatale, all associated with this genre.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3 @ 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Course: **CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP**
Subject: Revising with Partners
Presenter: Helen Saffran
Room: 19
Format: In-Person Only (**Note: This class ends at 3:00 p.m.**)
Coordinators: **Helen Saffran**, Judy Hampson, Donna Ramer
Tech Support: None Assigned

The adage that two heads are better than one is the basis for our first class of the Spring semester. We'll work with partners to share our writing and work on enhancing it by discussing it together. Maybe it could use some dialogue, a catchier title, a clearer way of expressing a difficult idea. It's always the writer's decision to accept any revisions.

As always, the class begins with a 10-minute writing response to a prompt which you can choose to read aloud or not. You may bring in writing you have done at home in any prose genre, poetry, essay or short play and the group will offer constructive responses. Writing that is read in class should be under 750 words, but longer pieces can be serialized and read over consecutive classes. Please bring in 15 copies of at-home writing to share with the class. At a loss for a topic? Try: Comic books I Loved As a Child.

Course: **HISTORY OF NEW YORK CITY**
Subject: How The Great Migration Fueled The Harlem Renaissance
Presenter: Debbi Honorof
Room: Auditorium
Format: **Hybrid (To be Recorded)**
Coordinators: **Ilene Winkler**, Sandra Abramson, Michael Wellner
Tech Support: **Tamara Weinberg**, Pete Weis, Michael Wellner

Discover how the Great Migration transformed Harlem into a dynamic epicenter of Black culture and creativity. This presentation explores the journey of African Americans who fled the oppressive South for new opportunities in the North, sparking the Harlem Renaissance — a groundbreaking era of art, music, and literature that redefined Black identity and laid the foundation for future civil rights movements. Learn how shared experiences and newfound freedoms fueled an explosion of cultural pride, collaboration, and innovation.

Course: TWO NOVELS BY VIRGINIA WOOLF
Room: 15-17
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: Lynnel Garabedian, Sandy Kessler
Tech Support: Bob Reiss

After some brief introductory remarks about Virginia Woolf, we will begin discussing about a third of *Mrs. Dalloway*. Since there are no chapters or other specific divisions, a third of the book is about 70 pages, ending an account of Septimus Smith and before a renewed focus on Peter Walsh. Virginia Woolf sometimes tells the story as an omniscient author but frequently slips into the interior thoughts and feelings of the main characters in an innovative technique which came to be known as stream of consciousness writing. What do we learn about the three main characters, both from direct narration and from what goes on in their minds? The novel covers just one day, but the characters take us back many years to their past. It is 1923, five years after the end of W.W. I. What effects from the war does Clarissa still encounter during the June day?

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4 @ 10:30 AM – NOON

Course: SHAKESPEARE: HAMLET
Room: 27
Format: Hybrid
Coordinators: Roy Clary, Jim Brook, Ellie Schaffer
Tech Support: Ellie Schaffer, Bob Reiss, Ruth Ward, Joan Lambe

In our exploration of what is perhaps the greatest play ever written, there will be two presentations:

1. Roy Clary will show a video that includes scenes from the play and comments by great Hamlet's including Laurence Olivier and Christopher Plummer.
2. Roy Clary will discuss several key themes and initiate our understanding of the mystery of the play and its protagonist by noting the first two lines: "Who's there?" and "Stand and unfold yourself."

Course: TIME: THE WONDER OF IT
Subject: Shipwrecks: Time Capsules Beneath the Sea
Presenter: Marion Schultheis
Room: Room 15-17
Format: In-Person Only

Coordinators: Andrea Irvine, David Bartash, Marion Schultheis
Tech Support: Tamara Weinberg

When a ship sinks, it doesn't just disappear — it freezes a moment in time. From everyday objects to human stories, shipwrecks preserve history in ways no museum ever could. I'll discuss some ancient shipwrecks and what they left behind.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4 @ 12:10 – 12:55 PM

THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE is wishing Happy Birthday to all Questers for 2026. Birthday cake and sweets for dessert will be served up in the Lunchroom

Course: **BOOK CLUB: FICTION**
Book: The Lion Women of Tehran
Author: Marjan Kamali
Presenter: Arlynn Greenbaum
Room: 27
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: Jan Goldstein, Susannah Falk Lewis, Joan Vreeland

In this award-winning novel, two girls — one from the slums, the other upper class — become unlikely friends in 1950s Tehran. The book traces their friendship — and betrayals — against the backdrop of the political turbulence in Iran from the 1950s to the present day.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4 @ 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Course: **CINEMA QUEST: CURRENT & CLASSIC**
Films :
1. It Was Just An Accident (Linda Downs)
2. The Sting (Bob Gottfried)
3. Eleanor The Great (Arlynn Greenbaum)
Room: Auditorium
Format: **Hybrid (To be Recorded)**
Coordinators: Howard Salik, Marian Friedmann, Vince Grosso
Tech Support: Wayne Cotter, Bob Reiss, Michael Wellner

On Apple, YouTube, Fandango at Home (VuDu).

Today, we open with Linda Downs' compelling analysis of Cannes Palme d'Or-winning black comedy from acclaimed Iranian director Jafar Panahi: ***It Was Just An Accident.***

The film, which begins with what appears to be a minor roadside mishap, soon spirals into a gripping and multilayered exploration of truth, illusion, repressed fury, and the tangled dramas that bind communities together.

Next, we launch our two-semester tribute to screen legends Robert Redford and Diane Keaton, beginning with Bob Gottfried's insightful review of ***The Sting***. In this classic, Redford and Paul Newman sparkle as two con men who orchestrate an ingenious plan to outwit the ultimate swindler, portrayed by Robert Shaw, and claim justice — and a fortune—for themselves and their co-conspirators.

Arlynn Greenbaum brings us a review of director Scarlett Johansson's intimate drama, ***Eleanor The Great***. The film features the luminous 94-year-old Jane Squibb, whose journey after a devastating loss takes on a life — and peril — of its own. Filmed across New York City, with memorable scenes set in Coney Island and the historic Congregation Rodeph Sholom synagogue in Manhattan, the film's pivotal moments, including Eleanor's transformative Bat Mitzvah, anchor this story of resilience and reinvention.

Course: **TIMELESS WRITINGS: THE CANTERBURY TALES**
Subject: Prologue & The Knights Tale
Room: 27
Format: In-Person only
Coordinators: **Sheryl Harawitz**, Mary Ann Donnelly, Judy Hampson, Andrea Irvine

We begin our journey to Canterbury with Geoffrey Chaucer — keen observer of human folly, pleasure, and wit — as our guide. For our first meeting, please read the **General Prologue** and **The Knight's Tale**, where ideals of chivalry and honor are tested as two knights, imprisoned in a tower, fall in love with the same woman and carry their rivalry onto the battlefield.

No need to worry about Middle English or dusty glossaries. We'll read in a clear modern translation, and Chaucer's pilgrims still feel fresh, sharp, and surprisingly familiar. We'll be using the **Nevill Coghill** translation (Penguin Classics), though any version is welcome. Contact me if you need a PDF.

Join the adventure — good company guaranteed.

Course: **YOU CAN DO POWERPOINT**
Room: Computer Lab
Format: In-Person only
Coordinators: **Tamara Weinberg**, Tracey Lee
Tech Support: **Tamara Weinberg**, Joan Lambe, Ruth Ward

Want to share your passion but don't know how to create a presentation? Drop in to our workshop and learn basic PowerPoint — all skill levels welcome! Each session will begin

with a short overview of how to create a basic slideshow and add images, text, and videos. Then you can work on your presentation with individual assistance — it's a PowerPoint study hall! Bring your own laptop with PowerPoint installed or use a computer in the lab and bring a USB-A thumb drive to save your work. Experienced PowerPoint users are encouraged to join in to share their skills and learn more advanced techniques as time permits.

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 4 @ 2:45 PM

Course: **SOLE MATES**
Format: In-Person Only
Room: Gather by elevator 7th Floor @ 2:45pm.
Coordinators: **Andrea Irvine**, Tamara Weinberg

It starts as a walk and ends wherever the conversation takes us. Some come for the view, some for the laughter, some for the drinks after — but everyone leaves lighter than they arrived. Join Andrea and Tamara for our easygoing Hudson wander.

THURSDAY, FEB 5 @ 10:30 AM – NOON

Course: **BEETHOVEN: THE LATE YEARS 1815-1827**
Subject: Late Beethoven Piano Sonatas
Presenter: Arlene Hajinlian
Room: Auditorium
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Arlene Hajinlian**, Larry Shapiro, Jim Hopkins
Tech Support: **Steve Chicoine**, Joan Lambe, Tamara Weinberg

Beethoven's late works are dramatically distinct from his early and middle heroic style. We'll start the semester with a deep dive into Piano Sonata No 30, Op 109 in E major written in 1820 and explore how his profound deafness forced him inward, to create music shaped by imagination, free of traditional classical form, creating a world of introspection and spiritual depth. We hope you'll join us.

Course: **CONTEMPORARY POETRY**
Subject: The Poetry of Victoria Chang
Presenter: Karen Millard
Room: 27

Format: Hybrid
Coordinators: Ellen Rittberg, Frieda Lipp, Karen Millard, Linda Schwartz
Tech Support: Felix Pina

Victoria Chang writes poems that engage both the mind and the heart in equal measures. Drawing on her experience as the child of immigrants and on structures borrowed from music, math and philosophy, she creates work that's precise, restless and emotionally sharp. Her poems explore how language gives shape to grief, kinship and identity without settling for easy answers. In our session, we will explore her poems and discuss how Chang uses form, repetition and constraint to invite multiple interpretations.

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 5 @ 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Course: CONTEMPORARY SHORT STORIES
Stories: 1. The Enormous Radio (Rica Fujihira)
2. Lara's Theme (Arlynn Greenbaum)
Room: 15-17
Format: Hybrid
Coordinators: Nancy Richardson, Mary Buchwald, Frieda Lipp
Tech Support: Felix Pina

Stories to read:

1. The Enormous Radio by John Cheever. Presented by Rica Fujihira

This story was first published in *The New Yorker* in 1947, and republished in an anthology released in 1978, *The Stories of John Cheever* for which Cheever won a Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and a National Book Critics Circle Award, as well as the National Book Award when the paperback edition was released in 1981. In the story, the elements of magical realism find their way into Cheever's otherwise realistic writing when a Manhattan couple buys a new radio which starts to broadcast conversations from neighbors in other apartments

2. Lara's Theme by Madhuri Vijay. Presented by Arlynn Greenbaum

Madhuri Vijay is an Indian author living in Hawaii. Her debut novel, *The Far Field*, won the JCB Prize for literature, India's most prestigious literary award. Her short stories have been published in *The New Yorker*, *Salon* and the *Best American Short Stories*. She is the recipient of the Pushcart Prize. *Lara's Theme* is told from the point of view of the younger son in a family of four in Bangalore in the late 1990's. The father takes saxophone lessons and practices *Lara's Theme* from *Dr. Zhivago* every night. It is a touching, humorous and beautifully written story.

Links for the two stories have been sent separately to all Questers via QuestBusiness email. A few printed copies of the stories will be available in the A-week box in the Quest Office.

Note location change for printed copies. Any questions, please email Nancy at nancyrye9@gmail.com

Course: **QUESTER'S CHOICE I**
Subject: Mary Queen of Scots: Victim or Traitor
Presenter: Ellen Gottfried
Room: 27
Format: **Hybrid (To Be Recorded)**
Coordinators: **Mary Beth Yakoubian, Vince Grosso**
Tech Support: **Steve Chicoine**

Mary, Queen of Scots, is often seen as a tragic figure, the victim of men and circumstances beyond her control. Is this portrayal accurate, or was she a cunning temptress, eagerly trying to usurp the throne of England? Come to this presentation and then make up your mind.

CULTUREQUEST
VIRTUAL TOUR OF THE GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Friday, February 13, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Welcome Back

The Farmer's Almanac predicts cold and inclement weather for Friday, February 13th, so please stay cozy and tune in to our virtual tour at the Guggenheim Museum. The session will begin at 11:00 AM and will be led by the knowledgeable and talented gallery educator who led us for Pollock and Kandinsky will guide us through the works by the remarkable German Expressionist Gabriele Münter.

Münter was part of a small subgroup of artists active in transforming late-Impressionist, and Art Nouveau painting into what is now identified as Expressionism. Early on, Münter developed a great interest in landscapes. Münter's landscape paintings employ a simplicity with softly muted colors, and flattened forms. She was strongly influenced by Henri Matisse and Van Gogh.

Münter took refuge in the small Bavarian market town of Murnau, a village untouched by industrialization progress, and technology. Münter bought a house and spent much of her life there. It was here she studied and lived with the painter Wassily Kadinsky. The garden and the countryside were a lucrative source of inspiration for Münter and Kandinsky.

Münter's landscapes are unusual in their use of blues, greens, yellows, and pinks; and color plays a large role in Münter's early works. Color is used to evoke feelings: picturesque, inviting, imaginative, and rich in fantasy. In Münter's landscapes, she presents the village and countryside as manifestations of human life, but there is a constant interaction and coexistence with nature. Kandinsky began to adopt Münter's use of saturated colors and abstract expressionist style. Münter and Kandinsky traveled throughout Europe together. It was during that time together Münter and Kandinsky helped establish the Munich-based avant-garde group called New Artists' Association. She contributed to a number of the most significant avant-garde exhibitions in Germany up until World War I.

- **When:** Friday February 13th, 2026. Please tune in by 10:45 AM. The tour will begin promptly at 11:00 AM
- **Where:** Guggenheim Museum/Virtual Tour. We will send a pass code the day of the tour.
- **Cost:** \$10.00
- **To Reserve:** Send an email ASAP to dena@kerren.us. The tour is limited to 35 participants. We will have a cut off. You will be advised by return email if you are registered for the tour. If registered, please leave a check for \$10.00, made out to Quest Lifelong Learning, in the CultureQuest mailbox in the office no later than Wednesday, February 4th, by 3:00 PM. Zelle payment is accepted. If you pay through Zelle, send it to Quest's Zelle email address, q25broadway@gmail.com, before Wednesday, February 4th. Please note Guggenheim virtual tour when sending Zelle payment.

Note: Please sign up only if you intend to tune in. Anyone who does not show without canceling will be placed on a waitlist for future events.