

NEXT WEEK AT QUEST

March 30 – April 2, 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, MARCH 30 @ 10:30 AM – NOON

Course: **ACROSS THE UNIVERSE**
Subject: The Search for Life
Presenter: Michael Hamburg
Room: 15-17
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Michael Hamburg**, Marion Schultheis
Tech Support: **Pete Weis**, Bob Reiss, Tamara Weinberg

*“The universe is teeming with civilizations, or we are completely alone.
Either thought is equally terrifying.”*

Arthur C. Clarke

Nothing less than discovering extraterrestrial life would forever alter how we viewed ourselves and our place in the Universe. Only a generation ago, we knew of no other planets except the familiar ones that revolve around the Sun. By the dawn of the Enlightenment in the 17th century, the birth of modern science, and the first Copernican Revolution placed the Sun and not the Earth as the center of the universe. A popular treatise known as “The Many Worlds” had populated the universe with all sorts of sentient beings. With many thanks to Galileo and the telescope, this is not surprising as those long-observed lights in the sky went from being ideal abstractions to actual physical places.

Today, we know that the Universe has no center and we are well into the exploration of the many extrasolar planets that have been discovered since 1992. Almost 6,000 planets have been confirmed with more awaiting verification. And yet...still no signs of life! However, we might stand a decent chance of finding an answer. Only time will tell. Beginning with a look at the only planet where we know life to exist, this presentation will examine the latest efforts and technologies dedicated to the search for life elsewhere in the Universe. Questions are most welcome, but no final answer is promised!

Course: **IT AIN'T JUST ROCK 'N' ROLL**
Subject: The Irresistible Bobby Darin
Presenter: Karen Levin
Room: Auditorium
Format: **Hybrid (To Be Recorded)**
Coordinators: **Steve Koenig**, Wayne Cotter, Mary Ann Donnelly
Tech Support: **Victor Brener**, Wayne Cotter

Bobby Darin was a hugely successful American pop singer in the 1950s and 1960s who worked in a variety of musical genres: pop, swing, rock 'n' roll, ballads and country. He also played several instruments, including piano, guitar, drums, harmonica and xylophone.

Darin's numerous hit records include "Dream Lover," "Mack the Knife," and "Beyond the Sea."

He was also a successful actor, featured in films such as *Come September, If a Man Answers, That Funny Feeling,* and *Captain Newman, M. D.*

Darin's music has experienced a resurgence in popularity of late due to the success of the hit Broadway show *Just in Time.*

MONDAY, MARCH 30 @ 12:10 -12:50 PM

Important Event: **CANDIDATES' FORUM**
Room: 15-17
Format: **Hybrid (To be Recorded)**

Candidates for Quest Council will speak briefly and answer questions. The candidates speaking at today's session are Tracey Lee (Vice President) and members-at-large Ellen Rittberg, Art Spar and Babette Ceccotti. Candidates will also be speaking on Tuesday March 31.

MONDAY, MARCH 30 @ 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Course: **BALZAC: PERE GORIOT**
Subject: *Gobseck* (sent out via QuestBusiness)
Room: 27
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Sheryl Harawitz,** Tatyana Chernomaz, Andrea Irvine, Ellen Shapiro

We will continue our discussion of the final chapter of *Père Goriot* and begin ***Gobseck***, a story set about ten years after the events of the novel. Balzac returns to the social world we have been exploring — the characters we have learned to love and hate. Remember Anastasie and her disastrous affair with a gambler? In this story we meet Gobseck, the watchful moneylender who moves quietly through Paris, observing the debts, secrets, and moral compromises.

Course: **PROFILES IN COURAGE**
Subject: John Lewis: A Profile in Courage
Presenter: Ken Sasmor
Room: Auditorium
Format: **Hybrid (To Be Recorded)**
Coordinators: **Wayne Cotter**, Tracey Lee, Ken Sasmor
Tech Support: **Victor Brener**, Wayne Cotter

John Lewis exemplified physical, moral, and psychological courage. In this session, we'll focus on the years 1960 to 1965 when he led and participated in events in the South that made civil rights history — lunch counter sit-ins, freedom rides on interstate buses, and voter registration drives.

As a 23-year-old, Lewis spoke at the historic March on Washington in 1963. He also was one of the leaders of the fateful march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge at Selma in March 1965.

Please join us as we examine the life and legacy of John Lewis.

TUESDAY, MARCH 31 @ 10:30 AM – NOON

Course: **SCIENCE CLUBHOUSE**
Subject: Cancer From an Evolutionary Perspective
Discussion
Leader: Steve Allen
Room: 27
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Steve Allen**, Jim Brook, Gil Santiago, Marion Schultheis
Tech Support: **Steve Chicoine**, Pete Weis

We will be discussing the book *The Cheating Cell: How Evolution Helps Us Understand and Treat Cancer* by Athena Aktipis, head of the Cancer Evolution Center at Arizona State University. In this book, Aktipis shows that evolution and cancer are closely linked because the historical processes that created multicellular life also created cancer. She demonstrates through many examples how all multicellular life, from cacti to elephants, struggle to create mechanisms to suppress tumors without also hindering reproductive success. Her goal is to utilize the understanding of cancer's evolutionary origins and natural selection mechanisms to come up with more effective cancer treatments.

Course: SUPREME COURT
Subject: Journalism Under Fire
Presenter: Bob Reiss
Room: 15-17
Format: Hybrid (To be Recorded)
Coordinators: Michael Wellner, Sandra Abramson, Babette Ceccotti
Tech Support: Michael Wellner

This talk will be based on a 2018 book by Stephen Gillers, *Journalism Under Fire, Protecting the Future of Investigative Reporting*. We will present some of the more egregious threats to investigative reporting and some possible mitigations suggested by Gillers. Landmark cases such as New York Times v. Sullivan will be presented as well as the more recent spate of libel lawsuits brought by our current President.

Course: THEATERWORKS
Subject: Scene Rehearsals and Presentations
Presenters: Mary Beth Yakoubian, Yona Rogosin, Ruth Ward, Lisa Bu Donna Ramer
Room: Auditorium
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: Art Spar, Mary Ann Donnelly, Arlynn Greenbaum, Ruth Ward,
Tech Support: Tamara Weinberg, Wayne Cotter

We will continue to rehearse our scene 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. Volunteers are invited to prepare and present monologues. 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, MARCH 31 @ 12:10 – 12:50 PM

Important Event: CANDIDATES' FORUM
Room: 15-17
Format: Hybrid (To be Recorded)

Candidates for Quest Council will speak briefly and answer questions. The candidates speaking at today's session are members-at-large Vince Grosso (incumbent), Ken Sasmor, Babette Ceccotti, Marty Green, and Lynn Vairo. This is your last chance to ask your questions!

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

Le Déjeuner Français est reporté.

Il n'y aura pas de cours de français aujourd'hui, par respect pour la présentation des candidats aux fonctions de Quest. Notre prochain cours aura lieu le mardi 21 avril à 12 h 10, comme d'habitude, en salle 19.

Déjeuner Français is postponed.

There will be no French class today in deference to the presentation of the candidates for Quest office. Our next class will take place on Tuesday, April 21st at 12:10 pm , as usual, in room 19.

TUESDAY, MARCH 31 @ 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Course: CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP
Subject: The 10-Minute Curtain
Presenter: Donna Ramer
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 skill of writing ten-minute plays helps writers of all genres develop discipline, clarity and dramatic instinct in a short, manageable format. In this class, we'll focus on a single compelling conflict as we sharpen dialogue, structure and pacing. This compressed form will also build confidence (finishing a complete play feels achievable) and help train us to think theatrically: in action, subtext and character objectives that will add to our prose and poetry writing. The short form is a powerful foundation for growth.

As always, the class begins with a ten-minute writing response to a prompt, which you can choose to share or not. Also, you have the option of bringing in a piece you've written at home (any genre: poetry or prose) and the group will offer constructive responses to it. Writing that is read in class should be under 750 words, but longer pieces can be 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 writing about a character in a play or movie that moved you or *The Rule Breaker*.

Course: **HISTORY OF NEW YORK CITY**
Subject: Robert Moses' Impact on NYC in the 1930s
Presenter: Stuart Parker
Room: Auditorium
Format: **Hybrid (To be Recorded)**
Coordinators: **Ilene Winkler**, Sandra Abramson, Michael Wellner
Tech Support: **Tamara Weinberg**, Pete Weis, Michael Wellner

Robert Moses is often referred to as New York's master builder because of the parks, roads, bridges, and other public works he was responsible for in the twentieth century. In January 1934 after overseeing the creation of parks, including Jones Beach, and parkways for New York State, Moses joined newly elected Mayor LaGuardia's administration as Parks Commissioner and Chairman of the Triborough Bridge Authority. By the end of the decade, he was at least as powerful as any elected official in New York, including the mayor and the governor, in determining what bridges, expressways, parkways and parks would be built in or bordering New York City. This presentation will focus on how, despite the efforts of LaGuardia and President Roosevelt to reign him in, Moses accumulated so much power.

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

We will discuss Clarissa's party, which concludes the book as the three friends from Bourton reunite after thirty years. Have their lives turned out as might have been expected? What do you think of the last few lines of the book? Two short stories by Virginia Wolf, *Mrs. Dalloway in Bond Street* and *The Man Who Loved His Kind* and *The Garden Party* by Katherine Mansfield relate to *Mrs. Dalloway* and can be found online. Read these short works for interest and pleasure and a brief discussion. We may have time to show a short clip from the 1997 film of *Mrs. Dalloway*.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1

**QUEST IS CLOSED
IN OBSERVANCE OF PASSOVER**

THURSDAY APRIL 2 @ 10:30 AM – NOON

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

Using our Quest piano, we'll explore Beethoven's last two piano sonatas, numbers 31 and 32, Op 110 in A♭major and Op 111 in C minor. Composed between 1820 and 1822, these were his last piano works, the instrument he wrote for most frequently. Many listeners find the late music difficult and remote, but also transcendent and spiritual. Bring your open ears and your questions.

Course: **CONTEMPORARY POETRY**
Subject: Naomi Long Madgett, Detroit Poet Laureate and Langston Hughes Mentee
Presenter: Lynnel Garabedian
Room: 27
Format: Hybrid
Coordinators: **Ellen Rittberg**, Frieda Lipp, Karen Millard, Linda Schwartz
Tech Support: **Felix Pina**

Naomi Long Madgett began writing poetry as a child and published her first book when she was just seventeen years old. Langston Hughes was an early mentor and as an editor of an anthology covering 200 years of Black poetry, he chose her work to be included. Ms. Madgett taught English literature in high school in Detroit and later in college after earning a Ph.D. but always found time to write poetry even while raising a daughter. She is best known for one of her early poems, Midway, which addresses the struggle of African Americans to achieve equal rights and social justice. It has been set to music, often recited, anthologized, reproduced without permission, and misquoted. Naomi Madgett became Poet Laureate of Detroit in 2001. She died at the age of 97 in 2020 just months after her eleventh book of poetry was published.

FEBRUARY APRIL 2 @ 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Course: **CONTEMPORARY SHORT STORIES**
Stories: 1. Winner (Karen Millard)
2. Outcomes (Nina Sanders)
Room: 15-17
Format: Hybrid
Coordinators: Nancy Richardson, Mary Buchwald, Frieda Lipp
Tech Support: Felix Pina

1. **Outcomes** by Nathan Blum. Presented by Nina Sanders

Two students, Nolan, a freshman, and Heidi, a senior, meet at their college's climbing wall. Though their interests don't intersect much at first, they come to learn a lot from each other as they become friends. Eighteen years later, an event occurs that causes Heidi to re-think what their relationship meant to her. Nathan Blum is a 25-year-old writer whose short stories have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *New England Review*, and *Ploughshares*, among others. He is currently working on a collection of short stories and a novel.

2. **"Winner"** by Ling Ma. Presented by Karen Millard

Ling Ma is a Chinese American author who often draws on her immigrant upbringing and experiences to shape her fiction. She frequently explores themes of ambition, identity and cultural expectation. In "Winner," a young woman reflects on success and rivalry as she measures herself against others.

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 Quest Office.

Any questions, please email Nancy at nancyrye9@gmail.com

Course: **QUESTER'S CHOICE I**
Subject: I Can't Define It But I Know It When I See It
Presenter: Philip Meyers
Room: 27
Format: **Hybrid (To Be Recorded)**
Coordinators: Mary Beth Yakoubian, Vince Grosso
Tech Support: Steve Chicoine

This famous quote was about pornography but could describe gerrymandering. We will examine the history, methods and some examples of this subject and the many (largely unsuccessful) efforts to have courts disallow some redistricting. Time allowing, we will look at the related issue of apportioning the congress among the states.

CULTURE QUEST

INNOCENCE FINAL DRESS REHEARSAL

**Metropolitan Opera House
Friday, April 3, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM**

Depicting the wide web of trauma left in the wake of a school shooting, the late, great Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho's final opera is a raw and unflinching *cri de coeur* in response to the senseless violence of our modern age. Captivating with its eerie, darkly beautiful sound-world and diverse vocal styles, ranging from traditional opera to expressionistic speak-singing to Scandinavian folk music, *Innocence*, with libretto by prominent Finnish authors Sofi Oksanen and Aleksis Barrière, was greeted upon its 2021 premiere by awestruck reviews.

For its Met premiere—in Simon Stone's powerfully direct original production—the cast is anchored by mezzo- soprano Joyce DiDonato and Finnish ethno-pop singer Vilma Jää as a grieving mother and the daughter she lost in the shooting, as well as soprano Jacquelyn Stucker and tenor Miles Mykkanen as a young couple whose wedding, a decade after the tragedy, uncovers buried secrets and reopens old wounds.

Come join fellow Questers for the wonderful experience of witnessing a final dress rehearsal.

- **When:** Friday, April 3rd at 10:30 AM
- **Where:** Metropolitan Opera. Please arrive no later than 10:00 AM
- **Cost:** FREE. Limited to 50 participants.
- **To Reserve:** Contact Estelle Selzer at Eselzer19@gmail.com ASAP to secure a reservation. Put Innocence Rehearsal in the subject. Your email will be acknowledged. We will have a waitlist.

NOTE: Please sign up only if you intend to come. Anyone who doesn't show or cancel will be placed on "future waitlist only" when they sign up to attend future CultureQuest events. Thank you for your understanding.