

NEXT WEEK AT QUEST

September 7 – 10, 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: 831 2470 2819
Passcode: 252525

ROOM 15-17

Meeting ID: 859 5495 1087
Passcode: 252525

ROOM 27

Meeting ID: 874 2995 4279
Passcode: 252525

Meeting IDs and passcodes for the three meeting rooms are also listed above in case such information is needed. 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.

When joining Quest classes on Zoom, please make sure that your full name is displayed for security purposes. If you need help displaying your name, please contact a Technology Committee Member.

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, SEPTEMBER 7

Labor Day — Quest is Closed

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8 @ 10:30 AM – NOON

Course: **SCIENCE CLUBHOUSE**
Subject: An update on the Latest Developments in Artificial Intelligence
Facilitator: Steve Allen
Room: 27
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Steve Allen**, Jim Brook, Gil Santiago, Marion Schultheis
Tech Support: **Pete Weis**, Joan Lambe

In this session, we'll look at a major advance in AI that has occurred over the past two years that is providing exciting new capabilities for AI users. We will review the science behind this advance, show demonstrations of these new capabilities, and discuss dangers associated with this advance.

Over the past decade or so, major AI advances have been led by two competing approaches. The approach of Silicon Valley's Open AI was based on large language models, culminating in the release of ChatGPT at the end of 2022, while the approach of London's DeepMind focused on creating advanced systems that tackled specific problems.

Systems like ChatGPT were able to answer questions on virtually any topic but with limited reasoning ability. Their knowledge came largely from scanning the web. DeepMind's systems excelled at reasoning and made spectacular advances such as the revolutionary analysis of protein folding for which they shared the 2024 Nobel Prize in Chemistry. But this reasoning only extended to a few specific domains.

Only in the last two years have ways been discovered to combine these two approaches and produce systems capable of answering questions on virtually any topic using advanced reasoning abilities. These capabilities are now publicly available through several AI systems. An additional twist is that China now offers these advanced capabilities at a much lower cost.

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

For the first class of our Fall semester, we will look at some of the key rulings from the Court's most recent term. The presentation will cover the agency firing decisions, the tariff ruling and the ongoing battle over mail-in voting, including recent activity on the Court's Shadow Docket.

Course: THEATERWORKS WORKSHOP
Room: Auditorium
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: Art Spar, Mary Ann Donnelly, Donna Ramer, Ruth Ward
Tech Support: Tamara Weinberg, Wayne Cotter

TheaterWorks will open its Broadway season with the formation of five troupes:

- Yona Rogosin will produce a scene from "*The Odd Couple*," the female version.
- Mary Beth Yakoubian will produce a scene from "*Doubt*."
- Donna Ramer will produce and direct an original play by Nancy Dobi, "*A Guilty Pleasure*."
- Ruth Ward will produce an original play "*The Reluctant Presenter*."
- Art Spar will produce an original play "*Ain't Dead Yet*."

Come one, come all! We need actors, directors, playwrights, and stage crafters. In particular, we need an audience for those who like to watch. Active discussions will follow each presentation.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8 @ 12:10 – 12:50 PM

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

Nous allons passer un bon moment en classe en découvrant comment les Français pratiquent des sports d'été extrêmes. Ensuite, nous partagerons nos propres expériences de vacances et de voyages. Rejoignez-nous!

We are going to have a good time in class as we watch how the French participate in extreme summer sports. Afterwards, we'll share our own vacation and travel experiences. Please join us!

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8 @ 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Course: **OPERA UNCORKED!**
Subject: How I Became an Opera Nut
Presenter: Mary Beth Yakoubian, Peter Dichter, Frieda Lipp
Room: Auditorium
Format: **Hybrid (To be Recorded)**
Coordinators: **Mary Beth Yakoubian, Peter Dichter, Frieda Lipp**
Tech Support: **Victor Brener, Joan Lambe**

Yes, maybe the three of us are nuts! Why else would one of us get on a plane and travel 4,000 miles just to see an opera that was composed 250 years ago? How is it possible that one of us slept right through her first few operas before becoming an opera nut? Why would one of us meticulously calculate the first opera we would subject our kids to? Each of us got to this mad point via a different route. Our first presentation this semester will reveal the origins of our nuttiness and how we became shameless operaphiles. Do you have a story you'd like to share? Join us and maybe you too will go mad with us.

Course: **TWO NOVELS BY VIRGINIA WOOLF**
Subject: *To the Lighthouse*
Room: 15-17
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Lynnel Garabedian, Sandy Kessler**
Tech Support: **Felix Pina**

We will set the framework for reading and discussing *To the Lighthouse* after presenting biographical information about Virginia Woolf and her family and introducing some important themes of the book. We will begin discussing the first six chapters of Part I, The Window.

Course: **CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP**
Subject: What is Creative Writing?
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

What is creative writing? In our first class of the Fall semester, we'll work together to attempt to answer this question. Is fiction the only genre that is truly creative? Some people wrongly conclude that creative writing is for the select few. We welcome you to share in our nonjudgmental adventures in writing.

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: "My Special Tree" or "Baseball."

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 @ 10:30 AM – NOON

Course: **DISCOVERY**
Subject: Who Owns Beauty?
Presenter: Andrea Irvine
Room: Room 15-17
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Andrea Irvine**, David Bartash, Marion Schultheis
Tech Support: **Tamara Weinberg**, Sylvia Schaindlin

Walk into a great museum and admire the treasures. But then ask a slightly troublesome question: **How did all this stuff get here?** Suddenly a beautiful object has a history—and perhaps an argument attached to it. Who owns something taken more than a century ago? If we give it back, who gets it? And can you "take" something without taking the object itself?

From hidden museum storerooms and the Benin Bronzes to Picasso and a rather wonderful tale in which two curators faint, we'll follow some unexpected side roads and discover that 'looking' at art may be the easy part.

Course: **SHAKESPEARE: THE MAN AND HIS WORKS**
Subject: Staging the Play
Facilitator: Jim Brook
Room: 27
Format: Hybrid
Coordinators: **Jim Brook, Paul Golomb**, Peter Dichter
Tech Support: **Paul Golomb**, Felix Pina

We will begin by sharing our recent experiences with or thoughts about the man and his works. Seen any good plays lately? Good, bad or a bit of both?

We'll then move on to a discussion of the practicalities of putting on a play. Choices about costumes, scenery, etc.

The session will conclude with a video produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company about how to cope with (and take advantage of) the verse).

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 @ 12:10 – 12:50 PM

Course: **BOOK CLUB**
Book: Lonesome Dove by Larry McMurtry
Presenter: Lois Klein
Room: 27
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Jan Goldstein**, Madeleine Brecher, Joan Vreeland

Lonesome Dove, by Larry McMurtry, is a Pulitzer Prize winning epic novel of the American West. From the small, tired town of Lonesome Dove, two retired Texas Rangers on their last hurrah undertake a cattle drive to Montana. Richly authentic and beautifully written, it's a story of love, loss and the unyielding spirit of the American West. As one reviewer put it, "If you read only one western novel in your life, read *Lonesome Dove*."

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 @ 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Course: **CINEMA QUEST: CURRENT & CLASSIC**
Films:
1. Song Sung Blue (Susan Keohane)
2. A History of Robert Redford's Sundance Festival (Marcia Porcell)
3. Palestine '36 (Lisa Levine)
Room: Auditorium
Format: Hybrid
Coordinators: **Howard Salik**, Marian Friedmann, Vince Grosso

Tech Support: Wayne Cotter, Michael Wellner

Song Sung Blue – Presented by Susan Keohane (Streaming: Prime or Apple)

Song Sung Blue tells the remarkable true story of Mike and Claire Sardina, a Milwaukee couple who form the Neil Diamond tribute band Lightning & Thunder. The film weaves together hometown nostalgia and the delicate vulnerabilities of its protagonists, transforming a quirky musical act into a heartfelt exploration of ambition, love, and resilience. Hugh Jackman and Kate Hudson deliver standout performances as Mike and Claire.

A History of Robert Redford's Sundance Festival – Presented by Marcia Porcell (*an original presentation and not streaming...developed solely as a tribute to Robert Redford*).

Cinema Quest continues its tribute to Robert Redford with a deep dive into the origins and legacy of his celebrated Sundance Festival. Marcia explores how Sundance emerged as a creative sanctuary, challenged Hollywood's commercial boundaries, and evolved into the definitive springboard for independent cinema. The festival is renowned for fostering risk-taking, championing original voices, and amplifying diverse perspectives—qualities that have reshaped both American and international filmmaking.

Palestine '36 – Presented by Lisa Levine (Streaming Prime or Apple)

Palestine '36, from acclaimed writer-director Annemarie Jacir (born in Bethlehem), revisits the 1936–1939 Arab Revolt. The film presents this turbulent period through a Palestinian anti-colonial lens, highlighting the resistance to British Mandatory rule and the era's intensifying wave of Jewish migration. Jacir's storytelling offers a compelling perspective on resilience and historical memory.

Course: TIMELESS WRITINGS: THE TALE OF GENJI
Subject: Chapters 1 and 2
Room: 27
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: Sheryl Harawitz, Mary Ann Donnelly, Judy Hampson, Andrea Irvine

The Tale of Genji is a foundational work of literature, but it is also a story—filled with relationships, love, jealousy, ambition, loss and the complications people create for themselves. We can follow the story, wander into its poetry and symbolism, or explore the unfamiliar world of Classical Japan.

For more than a thousand years, *Genji* has lived on in Japanese culture—in painting, theater, dance, film and manga. **Now we get to see what has kept readers coming back to it.**

For our first class, please read Chapters 1 and 2, about 60 pages, in the unabridged **Dennis Washburn translation**, which was sent out through QuestBusiness.

Course: **YOU CAN DO POWERPOINT**
Room: Computer Lab
Format: In-Person only
Coordinators: **Tamara Weinberg**, Tracey Lee

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.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 @ 10:30 AM – NOON

Course: **CONTEMPORARY POETRY**
Subject: The School of Confessional Poets Mid-century and the 21st Century
Modern (morphed) Practitioners
Presenter: Ellen Rittberg
Room: 27
Format: Hybrid
Coordinators: **Ellen Rittberg**, Frieda Lipp, Karen Millard
Tech Support: **Felix Pina**

The 1950's–1970's school of poets known as the confessional poets included Robert Lowell, Sylvia, Plath, Ann Sexton, W.D. Snodgrass and others. Many in this early group employed formal poetic forms and conventions. Concentrating on their personal inner states, domestic distress and sometimes their mental illnesses (including contemplation of suicide), these poets were up close and personal, and were the subject of the poem, The "I."

The 21st-century confessional poets morphed into something quite different. They deviated from conventional forms. Their poems typically have a conversational tone. Famous practitioners include Sharon Olds, Marie Howe, Ocean Vuong, Li-Young Lee, Frank Bidart, Danez Smith, Jericho Brown and many others. No topic is off limit.

Participants are encouraged to bring and share a favorite poem from this genre and to bring 15 copies. A handout of all the above poems will be sent within a week of this, and all future class sessions. No previous experience with poetic analysis is needed and it is not necessary to read the poems in advance.

Course: **HOW THINGS WORK**
Subject: How Materials Enable our High-Tech Society
Presenter: Marty Green
Room: Auditorium
Format: **Hybrid (To be Recorded)**
Coordinators: **Marty Green**, Tamara Weinberg
Tech Support: **Tamara Weinberg**, Pete Weis, Joan Lambe

A material is a substance with properties that make it useful for creating a structure, component, device, or product. Materials comprise metals, ceramics, glasses, semiconductors, polymers, composites, and biomaterials. Materials don't just make technology better; they determine what technologies are possible. Every technological revolution is ultimately a materials revolution.

The average person has almost no connection to the world of materials because she/he understands the functionality of an object (for example, a jet plane that flies), but not the materials whose properties make flight possible. In this presentation, you will learn about the materials behind the many functionalities they enable.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 @ 12:10 – 12:40

Course: **CHAIR YOGA**
Room: Auditorium
Format: In Person Only
Coordinator: Lisa Levine

Quest members are invited to join Lisa Levine for chair yoga. Chair yoga is an overall stretch, strength and breathing practice done in street clothes and wearing shoes if you choose. Expect to increase flexibility, find balance, improve muscle tone, reduce stress and increase body awareness. We will focus on simplicity and safety while creating a challenge for experienced yogis.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 @ 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Course: **CONTEMPORARY SHORT STORIES**
Stories: 1. The Magic Barrel (Steve Allen)
2. Only the Dead Know Brooklyn (Paul Golomb)
Room: 15-17
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Susannah Falk Lewis**, Steve Allen, Frieda Lipp, Lynn Vairo
Tech Support:

1. The Magic Barrel by Bernard Malamud Presented by Steve Allen

Malamud (1914 – 1986) is recognized as one of the great short story writers of the 20th Century. Born into a poor family of Russian-Jewish immigrants in Brooklyn, he made his living as a teacher for many years. His first publication was the novel *The Natural* in 1952. He won the 1959 National Book Award for Fiction for his collection of short stories, *The Magic Barrel* from which this story comes. His novel *The Fixer* won the 1967 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and the 1967 National Book Award for Fiction. Many of the 55 short stories he wrote explored themes of Jewish life, often mixed with elements of Jewish mysticism. The annual award that PEN America gives for excellence in the art of the short story is named in his honor.

2. Only the Dead Know Brooklyn by Thomas Wolfe Presented by Paul Golomb

Some stories are contemporary because they are timeless. Wolfe is probably best known for his Carolina elegy *Look Homeward Angel*, but he spent years living and writing in New York City. This, in my opinion, is one of the best homages to the Borough across the Bridge ever written.

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.

If you have any questions, please email Susannah at susannah49@gmail.com

Course: **QUESTER'S CHOICE I**
Subject: How Smart Are You? Understanding IQ Testing
Presenter: Karen Cullen
Room: 27
Format: **Hybrid (To Be Recorded)**
Coordinators: **Mary Beth Yakoubian**, Karen Cullen, Anne Moses
Tech Support: **Steve Chicoine**, Ruth Ward

What does an IQ score really tell us about how intelligent we are? We'll trace the surprisingly colorful history of intelligence testing, from early efforts to measure the mind to today's IQ tests, then put theory into practice with mini-tests modeled on the WAIS-5, the clinical gold standard for adult intelligence testing. Along the way, we'll explore what these tests actually measure, what they leave out—and give you a chance to put your own skills to the test!

CULTUREQUEST

Cloisters In-Person Gardens & Museum Tour

September 18, 2026

Join us for a special guided group visit to The Cloisters, the Metropolitan Museum of Art's extraordinary museum dedicated to medieval European art and architecture.

Nestled in Fort Tryon Park, The Cloisters combines magnificent medieval treasures with tranquil gardens, courtyards, and architectural elements brought together from medieval Europe. A fascinating guided experience is planned that combines the beauty of the Cloisters' medieval gardens with the treasures inside the museum. Our group will be treated to:

- Highlights of the museum's most important and beautiful works
- Stories and insights that bring medieval art and daily life to life
- Time to learn about and enjoy the gardens

Lunch will be available at the Cloisters for those Questers who would like to remain and eat together after the conclusion of the tour.

- **When:** Friday, Sept. 18, 2026, at 11:30AM
- **Where:** 99 Margaret Corbin Drive, NY, NY 10040
- **Cost:** \$20 per person, limited to 25 people. There will be a waitlist.

To Reserve: Send an email asap to: Carole Kolber at cark4848@yahoo.com.

You will be notified if you make the cut. When you do, please write a check or pay through Zelle. Checks are made out to: Quest Lifelong Learning and are due in the CultureQuest box in the Office by Wed. Sept. 9 by 2:30 PM.

Please Note: Culture Quest now has its own new Zelle email address. If you pay through Zelle, you must send it to Culture Quest's new Zelle email address:

Quest25CQ@proton.me

before Wednesday, September 9 at 2:30 p.m. You must include: CULTUREQUEST, CLOISTERS TOUR to credit it correctly. Again, the amount is \$20. If we do not receive payment by the due date, please understand that you will go to the waitlist.

Important note: Please sign up only if you intend to come. Anyone who doesn't show or cancels will be placed on a "future waitlist only" for following CQ events. Thanks for your understanding.