College Appoints New Provost and Two New Deans

One familiar face and two who are entirely new to the campus were recently named to important positions at Queens College.

ELIZABETH HENDREY (Betsy to many of us) will soon be able to remove the word “acting” from her title as, following a search that attracted over 100 applicants, she has been selected to become Queens College’s next provost and vice president for academic affairs starting July 1.

“It is very rewarding that, after a nationwide search, we are able to find such an extremely qualified person already on our campus,” says President Félix V. Matos Rodríguez.

Hendrey has been a part of the campus for over 25 years, in which time she has held several key positions. Before taking on the duties of acting provost, she served as chief operating officer and vice president for strategic planning and enrollment management. Previously, she oversaw 10 academic departments as dean of social sciences. Before that, as chair of the economics department, she helped to design and gain approval for the bachelor’s degree in business administration, and saw enrollment in that department increase by 25 percent.

In her time as acting provost she oversaw an increase in the college’s enrollment and inaugurated the transfer honors program.

“I was honored to be chosen to serve as acting provost and to be given the opportunity to learn the responsibilities of that position while working this past year with President Matos Rodríguez. I’m very excited about the opportunities we have to move the college forward by continuing our efforts to grow enrollment, to improve student success, and to provide support and resources for our faculty,” says Hendrey.

“Let me also add that it’s a privilege for me to have been at Queens College all this time as a faculty member and administrator, and now to be given this role in the senior administration.”

Following a national search, MICHAEL WOLFE has been chosen to be QC’s next dean of social sciences. He comes from nearby St. John’s University, where he has been a professor of history and associate dean of the graduate division of arts and sciences since 2007.

Wolfe holds a doctorate in history from Johns Hopkins University. Before joining St. John’s, he spent eighteen years at Penn State University–Altoona, where he served as chair of the history department and dean of the division of arts and humanities.

“I’m very excited about joining Queens College, one of our nation’s elite public liberal arts institutions. I look forward to working with its outstanding faculty and the team being assembled by President Matos Rodríguez to help all our students realize future success,” says Wolfe, who will assume his new position on July 6.

A specialist in European history—especially French history—whose research interests have ranged broadly across topics in the late medieval and early modern eras, Wolfe is a prolific author, editor, and reviewer whose books include Walled Towns and the Shaping of France, The Conversion of Henri IV, and A Passion for History: Interviews with Denis Crouzet (co-editor with Natalie Zemon Davis). His research has been supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the State Department’s Fulbright Program.

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Grads Groomed for Greater Challenges

MELAINA BADALIAN
“Music does nothing but good for people; nothing bad can ever come from music” is the mantra of senior Melaina Badalian. It mellows out those long Mondays, which can be as tightly coiled as her French horn: a three-hour Queens College Orchestra rehearsal, horn ensemble, then Brass Rep and its solos. Somewhere, she fits in a two-hour daily practice. “It’s not if I practice, but when I practice,” notes the Queens College Scholar and music performance major.

All that practice landed her at Lincoln Center’s Avery Fisher Hall for the inaugural concert of the World Peace Orchestra in September 2013. “Just to be sitting on that stage was amazing,” she beams. On their classical and ethnic instruments such as balaban, begena, and dombra, 134 young musicians from 50 countries performed for “the unity of humanity.”

From Shoreham, Long Island, Badalian helps out as an elementary school aide back home, stays fit through swimming and yoga, and is a summer lifeguard in Riverhead. She has played the French horn since fourth grade.

As a freshman in the Aaron Copland School of Music, she recalls, “I thought I knew music pretty well, but now I have a much better understanding of music as a whole.” Grateful to alumni for her scholarship, Badalian has excelled at rising to the rigors of honors classes, performances on campus and in the city, and carrying 15–20 credits a semester.

Next fall she begins the master of music program at Stony Brook University with this conviction: “I know for sure I really want to play music and share my love for music with the world. No matter who you are or where you come from, music can speak to everybody. It’s really powerful. If I’m feeling sad or upset, I can play or listen to a piece, and it changes my entire mood.”

EBRAHIM AFSHINNEKOO
“If someone touches a subway pole, what are they touching? I didn’t want to ask any more. I wanted to find out,” says Ebrahim Afshinneko. In summer 2013, the Macaulay Honors College pre-med student began to assist with a study based at Weill Cornell Medical School: taking DNA swabs in New York’s 468 subway stations to produce a baseline pathogen map useful in public health, bioterrorism threats, and disease surveillance. He grew into a leadership role, coordinating this PathoMap study that has fascinated commuters and the media.

The bacteria topping pizzas and live drug-resistant strains were among the 637 known bacterial, viral, fungal, and animal species they found—most of which are harmless. But half of the DNA couldn’t be matched to any known organism. Afshinneko is the co-lead author on the forthcoming Cell Systems article (July 15) on PathoMap, whose senior investigator is Christopher E. Mason at Weill Cornell.

In February, the QC senior represented PathoMap in Barcelona in discussions about expanding the project to 16 cities around the world, called MetaSUB (Metagenomics and Metadesign of Subways and Urban Biomes). He was one of the very few undergraduates invited to this conference of global aquatic scientists, where he co-presented research on the impact of dust on the fecal pellets of copepods, the oceans’ most abundant organisms. His mentor, marine biogeochemist Gillian Stewart (SEES), “really helped mold me into the researcher I am today, she always pushed me to challenge myself,” he says.

This spring, this talented researcher, teaching assistant, photographer, and volunteer received a Jonas E. Salk Award. These scholarships honor the eight CUNY graduates most likely to make an impact on medicine and research. While earning his

Seven QC Students Receive Fulbright Awards

When a college has more than one student who receives the highly competitive Fulbright grant to study, conduct research, or teach abroad, that achievement is reason to be proud. But this year Queens College boasts no fewer than seven graduating students who have been awarded grants for 2015–16 from the U.S. government’s flagship international educational exchange program. In the “Master’s Institutions” category in which Queens College is judged, only two other American colleges last year received more than seven grants.

“We are very proud that our students are being recognized so frequently by the Fulbright Program,” notes President Félix V. Matos Rodríguez. “These honors speak highly of both the quality of the students that Queens College attracts and the skill and dedication of the faculty members who teach here.”

This year’s exceptional showing for the college follows an earlier honor: last February, the U.S. Department of State’s

NEW APPOINTMENTS – from page 1

After a national search, MARTIN KLOTZ has been selected to be the college’s next dean of mathematics and natural sciences. He has held faculty positions at the University of Colorado–Denver and the University of Louisville, and currently serves as chair of the biology department at the University of North Carolina–Charlotte, where he directs the evolutionary and genomic microbiology laboratory. Klotz is also the editor-in-chief of the journal Frontiers in Microbiology.

“I’m very excited about the opportunity to join CUNY Queens College,” says Klotz. “I look forward to working with a faculty that is known for high standards in instruction, student-focused advising and mentoring, high-quality research, and engagement in the professional and local communities. I am also glad to know that the administration has a fresh, strategic outlook on the future of the institution, and is increasing activities that will build new and expand existing bridges to other academic institutions and the business community in the region.”
MD at New York Medical College, he says, “I want to use some of the funds to help keep my research going. My number-one research interest is to take this PathoMap project and sequencing technology and apply it to the clinical realm.

“Becoming a doctor has its own unique empowering nature about it,” affirms Afshinneko, whose parents emigrated from Iran. He is inspired by an uncle there, an internist who runs a nonprofit clinic. “I really believe that the practice of medicine is the practice of altruism. The motto of Queens College is that ‘We learn so that we may serve.’ That really resonated with me. It’s a motto I would want to live by.”

At home not only in microbiomes, big data, and the emerging field of metagenomics, Afshinneko considers his “long-lasting friendships” and mentoring relationships the highlight of his time at QC.

CHRISTINA CHO

The majority of antibiotics and anti-cancer drugs come from the products produced by microorganisms, and an estimated 99 percent of bacteria—from sources such as soils to the human gut—aren’t even cultured in a lab, according to Sean F. Brady of Rockefeller University. Small molecule discovery “is a great field, a growing field,” explains senior Christina (Woo Young) Cho, who is majoring in chemistry within QC’s Honors in Mathematics and Natural Sciences program. She will be plunging into this field at Yale University next fall as a PhD student in chemical biology, with an eye on an academic career and establishing her own lab.

Last summer in Brady’s lab, Cho became immersed in microbiology, mass spectrometry, high performance liquid chromatography, and other techniques and tools. She has continued her research throughout the year, mentored by Rockefeller’s Jessica Schneider. “I’m interested in the field of chemical biology, drug discovery, and drug synthesis, of knowing how these drugs work in your body,” Cho observes.

The Brady lab is the fifth in which she has pursued her passion for medicinal chemistry as an undergraduate at Queens College. She wasn’t even thinking of a chemistry major when she was accepted into the Macaulay Honors College. Her family immigrated to Flushing from Korea when she was eight; both parents have college degrees, but could not work in their fields. “Nobody around me was interested in the sciences,” she recalls. Her freshman chemistry class at QC reinforced her realization “that I both liked it and was good at it.” She finds tutoring other students in chemistry and biochemistry to be “really fun.”

On campus Cho has been a research assistant for Thomas Strekas (physical chemistry), Susan Rotenberg (biochemistry), and Sanjai Kumar (medicinal chemistry). Through the CUNY Summer Undergraduate Research Program, she explored the biological uses of snail toxins with another mentor: Mandê Holford of Hunter College.

This semester, Cho has been taking Chinese, biology, and tennis and is involved in the Korean Campus Crusade for Christ and her church. She will study in Seoul this summer to learn more about her cultural heritage. “I have an open mind about everything,” she sums up.

JOSEPH GIUNTA

At 6-foot-1, with a mustache, beard, and shoulder-length hair, Joseph Giunta ‘15 is hard to miss. He stands out academically, too. A double major in film studies and media studies, he has won a scholarship to NYU’s prestigious master’s program in cinema studies. “I’m going to be taught by people whose textbooks I’ve been reading for years,” he says, smiling. “It’s unreal.”

Giunta credits his QC professors, Julian Cornell (Media Studies) in particular, with helping him recognize his talents for analysis and writing. “I’d taken an intro media studies class and liked it,” recalls Giunta. “Then I took more. I became interested in what films mean and how they function in society. Finally, Prof. Cornell, who taught many of my classes, asked, ‘What are you going to do with all of this?’ and encouraged me to apply to NYU.”

On his tight budget, Giunta seldom goes to movie theatres. (The last film he saw from a plush reclining seat was the Liam Neeson vehicle Taken 3.) Instead, he does most of his watching through Netflix and the personal collection he’s building by buying 10 titles a month. “I generally don’t pay attention to films until they’re three years old,” he says. He’s partial to directors Darren Aronofsky and Quentin Tarantino and actor Willem Dafoe; his most treasured possessions include a poster from the Vietnam war drama Platoon and a black-and-white still from the biker movie The Loveless, both artifacts signed by Dafoe. But Giunta also admires The Lego Movie for its two-layer, simultaneous appeal to kids and adults. “I want to write about The Lego Movie,” he says.

Surprisingly, he had no preference for film studies—or any other discipline—when he matriculated at QC. He chose the college for practical reasons. “I didn’t know what I wanted, except to get a good education that wasn’t super-expensive, so I could save up for graduate school,” he explains.

The second oldest of four children in a middle-class, Middle Village household, Giunta has been anticipating those expenses for nearly a decade. He started working when he was in junior high school. As an upperclassman at QC, he scheduled courses on only two or three days, which enabled him to put in 40 hours a week at Stop & Stor, a self-storage company. His earnings went toward costs not covered by his half-scholarship from the Queens College Foundation.

After Commencement, Giunta will travel for a few weeks. “This will be my first summer off since my sophomore year in high school,” he notes. But he won’t permit himself to relax for too long. By mid-July, he’ll be back in Queens. “I’ll be looking for a part-time job before I start graduate school,” he says.

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Barry Commoner Center Awarded Over $40 Million from Department of Energy

Nuclear-weapons workers handle some of the most dangerous materials in the world. It takes trained people and organized programs to detect work-related illnesses early so that these workers can receive treatment. One of the first lines of defense has been the Worker Health Protection Program (WHPP), under the Barry Commoner Center for Health and the Environment (formerly known as the Center for the Biology of Natural Systems). The U.S. Department of Energy has just awarded it $40.5 million in renewed funding.

WHPP is run by Dr. Steven Markowitz, an occupational-medicine physician and epidemiologist as well as director of the Commoner Center. Working with the United Steelworkers, unions affiliated with the Atomic Trades and Labor Council, and regional medical providers, WHPP already has provided free medical screenings to more than 30,000 workers from 14 nuclear facilities in New York and seven other states.

Physicians trained in occupational medicine examine workers for evidence of work-related conditions like asbestosis, chronic pulmonary obstructive disease, cancer, hearing loss, and chronic beryllium disease. WHPP conducts extensive outreach to workers, and completes a written evaluation that they can submit to the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program for monetary relief.

In 2014 WHPP provided general occupational medical screenings to over 4,200 workers (more than 1,000 of them for the first time), representing the largest number in its 17 years of operation.

Most famously, WHPP has developed one of the largest occupational lung cancer-screening programs in the world, with more than 13,000 workers screened already. Its pioneering use of low-dose chest CT scanning facilitates early detection.

As director of the Barry Commoner Center, Steven Markowitz oversees multiple research projects; he’s seen here with (from left) technicians Steves Vanderpool and Rolando Munoz, and principal investigator Holger Eisl, who are monitoring New York City’s air quality.

COMMENCEMENT – from page 1

Summer of 1964. This horrific crime shook the nation to its senses about the brutal nature of the struggle for racial justice that was taking place in the South. Congressman Joseph Crowley, this year’s featured speaker, will be awarded the President’s Medal. A longtime member of the New York political community—beginning with his election to the state assembly at age 24—Crowley graduated from QC in 1985 with a degree in political science.

A crowd of over 10,000 is expected to be on campus for Commencement. The ceremony is being coordinated by QC’s new Administrative Events Coordinator, Sylvia Hernandez. It is not, however, her first QC commencement: In 1997 she graduated from the college as a sociology major with a minor in BALA (Business and Liberal Arts).

“Several family members and I—first-generation Americans—graduated from Queens College,” she recalls. “My parents were proud because they had emigrated from Ecuador to pursue the American Dream, and the college played an important role in helping us with our aspirations.”

Queens has been a part of Hernandez’s life in every sense of the word: “The borough is my home. I was born and raised in Queens, and I own a house in Flushing.”

In addition to her BA, Hernandez holds an MBA from St. John’s University and is pursuing a post-master’s certificate at Baruch College.

Prior to coming to QC, Hernandez spent several years as a retail sales manager in the fine jewelry business. “In my prior position, I conducted various marketing events, and Commencement is an opportunity to transfer those skills to make sure students and their families have a memorable experience.”

In the following pages we highlight some of this year’s exceptional graduates.

GRADUATE ABROAD – from page 3

notes. “Now I watch movies and plays with a different level of scrutiny.”

Belizaire also involved himself in the Center for Ethnic, Racial & Religious Understanding, becoming a dialogue fellow and adding his perspective as the American-born son of Haitian immigrants.

“CERRU brings a diversity of groups into a room to conduct difficult conversations,” he says. “I like hearing different viewpoints, being able to practice facilitation, and maybe find solutions.”

Those skills proved useful last fall after a police officer in Ferguson, Missouri, shot and killed an unarmed black man, igniting protests across the country—and mixed reactions on campus. “I put a few tables together in the cafeteria for an impromptu discussion,” Belizaire recalls. “A lot of people didn’t know why other people were upset. I said, ‘This is what occurred; this is the community reaction; let’s discuss this.’ It was important to give people space to talk.”

Committed to social justice, Belizaire interned in the vehicular crimes unit of the Brooklyn district attorney’s office and spent a summer in Washington, D.C., through the Edward T. Rogowsky Program in Government and Public Affairs. This year, as a member of the CUNY Service Corps, he interned with the Urban Justice Center; his assignments ranged from assembling data for grant applications to documenting repairs needed in public housing.

Ultimately, Belizaire expects to apply to either graduate school or law school. “I’m very interested in international relations and public policy,” he says. He hopes to figure out his next step while he’s in Taiwan.
Transcontinental Gift

In an inspiring collaboration, Rikki Asher (Secondary Education) and the college’s UNICEF Club enabled Abetenim, in the Ashanti region of Ghana, to construct its first junior high school.

In 2011 Asher went to Ghana’s University of Kumasi to attend an international biennial; its theme was “Community Art in Focus: A Response to the Growing Problem of a Widening Gap Between Contemporary African Art and the Rural Community.” Afterward, she joined a group of artists and art educators who visited Abetenim, held workshops for children, and, with local residents, created a public mural. Primary school science teacher Frank Appiah Kubi, on the scene daily as the mural progressed, explained the village’s plight: An individual who had promised funds to build the desperately needed junior high school did not deliver.

“About ten of us heard this,” recalls Asher. “Together we decided to contribute about $40 each. A few hundred dollars goes a long way in Ghana.” Indeed, that $400 was enough to buy materials to begin construction of the new school—and the Ghana Project was launched.

Back at QC, Asher found enthusiastic support for the project among members of the United Nations-affiliated UNICEF Club, then headed by Trisha Guduru ’15. The students threw themselves into a series of fundraisers. “We raised money several ways, including car washes, a raffle, and bake sales,” says Guduru, a native of India who is graduating with degrees in both biology and computer science. Guduru also set up a Go Fund Me page for the school at http://www.gofundme.com/theghanaproject.

The initial $2,000 raised went into the school’s cement block and concrete construction. The completed building has three classrooms—accommodating 35 girls and 48 boys, ages 13 to 16, who attend from grades 7 through 9—as well as an office and a staff room. Under the direction of Appiah Kubi, who became the school’s principal, subsequent student-raised funds purchased a laptop computer, furniture, and teaching and learning materials.

Guduru continued to lead the Ghana Project, working with subsequent UNICEF Club president Kimberly Hajioff ’15. “I was excited to keep this going,” says Hajioff, a biology major. She co-sponsored events with other campus clubs “to pool our talents and double our efforts.” For example, ticket sales from a Halloween dinner-dance were put toward the Ghana school.

In a poor rural environment such as Abetenim, the challenges continue after students finish ninth grade. The high school admission fee is Ghc 2300 (about $615 in U.S. dollars), an enormous financial obstacle. Appiah Kubi has raised funds for several of his graduating students to continue their education. He hopes to develop a long-term plan for awarding scholarships. In the meantime, he says, “We owe the staff and students of Queens College for their immense contribution in bringing education to the doorsteps of our children.”

For more information and to view photos, visit the Ghana Project page created by QC students: http://theghanaproject.tumblr.com.

President Named an Aspen Institute Ascend Fellow

The Aspen Institute has announced that President Félix V. Matos Rodríguez has been selected to join the 2015 class of Aspen Institute Ascend Fellows. The Ascend Fellowship invests in leaders from a wide range of professions who have breakthrough ideas to build economic security, educational success, and health and well-being for low-income families.

“Poverty and inequality are the central economic, political, and moral issues of our time,” notes Walter Isaacson, CEO of the Aspen Institute. “The Ascend Fellowship is part of the Aspen Institute’s commitment to advancing opportunity and equality in America.”

Matos Rodríguez developed the Two Generation Student Retention and Degree Acceleration Pilot Program while in his previous post as president of Hostos Community College. The program would support low-income parents who are pursuing a college degree by providing their school-aged children with an academically based, full-day summer enrichment program. With their children in quality and affordable summer care, parents would be able to continue their studies and graduate sooner by taking courses during the summer. The summer enrichment program would specifically address the academic losses that low-income K–12 students typically experience due to “summer slide” (the loss of academic skills over the summer break).

“I am grateful to the Aspen Institute for making it possible to implement a program that provides much-needed support to parents working toward a college degree,” says Matos Rodríguez. “I look forward to using my experience as an Ascend Fellow to explore ways to improve the educational outcomes of college students who are parents both at Queens College and throughout the City University system.”

Commencement Parking

On Commencement Day, Thursday, May 28, the Main Gate entrance and the Schiller Road entrance will be closed and restricted to emergency traffic only. Anyone with a parking decal for Field, 10, 11, or 12, or special disabled parking passes should enter the campus through the Melbourne Avenue, Gate #2 entrance; you will be directed to park at the Student Union side deck.

If you have a decal for Field 1, you may park in Field 2/7 or 6. Please enter the campus through the Melbourne Avenue entrance. Faculty and staff assigned to Fields 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 14 must enter through the Melbourne Ave. entrance or the Reeves Ave. gate.

To be sure of on-campus parking, you should arrive before 8:30 am; all entrance gates will be closed when the parking fields are full.
CARLA SPENSIERI, receiving an MA in education, will also be in Brazil but will be working as an assistant to a Brazilian professor in a class of undergraduates who hope to teach English as a career. Proficient in Spanish and English, Spensieri says she applied for a Fulbright in Brazil because “Portuguese is another language I want to learn.” The future linguist lives in Flushing.

KARISSA CAPUTO and CARLSKY BELIZAIRE will both be working in Taiwan. Caputo, who had a double major in education and Spanish, will be teaching English to elementary or middle school students on the island of Kinmen, where she hopes to volunteer at the local orphanage. Caputo speaks Spanish, Mandarin, and Portuguese. (For more on Belizaire, see page 3.)

SARAH CHUNG, a Korean American proficient in the Korean language, will be a teaching assistant in the land of her ancestors. The undergraduate, who majored in political science and education, lives in Douglaston.

KATHERINE COX, who lives in Ridgewood, studied elementary education and mathematics. She hopes that her upcoming teaching experience with English language learners in Cyprus will further her goal of teaching non-native English speakers in New York City. “As a future educator, I realize my role is critical in helping children who struggle with a language barrier,” she says.

ALYSSA BLUMENTHAL, who is earning a CUNY BA degree, has received a Fulbright Study/Research Award. She will be spending a year in Sweden, researching renewable natural gas at the Bio-Gas Research Center of Linköping University. Blumenthal has an unusual combination of majors: music performance, arts management, and sustainable and renewable energy engineering. In the Queens College community she played the euphonium (a brass horn), served as an officer in the Physics Club, helped to create a sustainability app, and held internships with the U.S. Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Fulbright – from page 2

On his way to a life in academia, JOHN TYTELL (English) made a fateful turn from his original interest in the refined Henry James to a greater passion for the rough-and-tumble Beat Generation. In Writing Beat and Other Occasions of Literary Mayhem (Vanderbilt University Press), he discusses how his numerous books, travels, and public lectures have been the products of a life of engagement with extraordinary writers and their radical challenges to American culture—from Henry Miller to Jack Kerouac, William Burroughs, and Allen Ginsberg. If there is a prescription in these collected essays, it would be to get out from behind the lectern: Tytell is a raconteur of bracing, sometimes testy, often hilarious encounters with Beat writers and fellow travelers, which have served as part of the raw material for his scholarship. One chapter—“Passing Through: Fifty Years @ The Mind Factory”—follows the against-the-grain trajectories of his academic career, with indelible images of Queens College from 1963, when he first began teaching, until the present day. Ever the contrarian, he drily skewers fashions in experience, skills, family, fellowship, and the labor of committing words to paper.

Though “globalization” is often described as a new force or condition, many scholars question a viewpoint that seems to exaggerate the novelty of interconnections in the world. They argue that deep and often longstanding relationships across vastly different regions of the globe can be traced in the flows of people, ideas, goods, and practices. A groundbreaking anthology edited by ANUPAMA KAPSE (Media Studies), along with Jennifer Bean and Laura Horak, takes that argument in new directions. Silent Cinema and the Politics of Space (Indiana University Press) departs from neatly linear film histories that put Hollywood at the center and, more generally, tell the story of movies through the frame of individual nations. Instead, a stunning collection of essays begins from the international dispersal of cinematic production, circulation, and consumption from the 1910s up to the 1930s, offering theoretically sophisticated interpretations of cinema’s uneven dynamics and effects geographically, economically, politically, experientially, and in other ways. Each essay is beautifully researched, passionate in its love of cinema, and fresh in its approach to the stars, filmmakers, themes, locations, intitites, and aesthetics of silent film. As the editors and authors suggest, though today’s “globalization” is often identified with modernity, early films were rich in the thematics, ethics, and subjectivities of modernity. Perversely, it was the coming of “talkies” and aggressive nationalisms that helped drive them out of the cosmopolitan spaces where they had arisen and flourished into more geographically bounded film industries. Kapse and her co-editors have received the 2015 Best Edited Collection Award from the Society for Cinema and Media Studies, given for an outstanding example of a book that brings together the best work of a number of scholars in a single volume.
Armstrong Festival Set for June 20

The festival will feature three DJs noted for the different international flavors of their musical choices. Mexico City’s Sultan Balkanero, New Orleans-born Cochon de Lait, and British-born Rekha ‘98 will hold forth from the nearby Queens Museum.

In keeping with Armstrong’s ecumenical tastes in music, the second annual Louis Armstrong’s Wonderful World Festival—be hosted by the Kupferberg Center for the Arts on Saturday, June 20 in Flushing Meadows Corona Park—will feature acts from a variety of musical genres. “The first major music festival in the city’s most diverse borough will celebrate Louis’s vision of listening to ‘all kinds of music,’” says Kupferberg Executive Director Jeff Rosenstock.

Headlined by Grammy-winning rap star Ms. Lauryn Hill, the festival will also feature Brooklyn-based Afrobeat band Antibalas, Latin hip-hop unit Ozomatli, and two bands that continue to invigorate the New Orleans musical traditions that gave birth to Armstrong: Grammy-winning Rebirth Brass Band and Shannon Powell’s Traditional All-Star Band.

“In drawing from so many different styles, we’re drawing from Louis’s message of listening to all kinds of music and carrying it forward several decades to what it would look like now,” says Ninell Silberberg, associate director of marketing and communications for Kupferberg Center.

For Rosenstock, this is truly an instance of “the third time’s the charm.” One previous attempt to stage the festival in 2013 at the nearby U.S. Tennis Center never happened, and last year’s festival was much smaller.

“Last year’s festival was just 2,500 people. But we needed to plant the flag at Flushing Meadows Corona Park so we would be considered in future years,” says Rosenstock.

Inspiration for the festival comes directly from Louis, he explains, recounting that, when the house next door to Armstrong’s Corona residence was put up for sale, he purchased the property and had the house demolished so he could create an area to entertain friends and neighbors. Now a grand event bearing his name will take place annually just blocks from where he lived.

“I saw Armstrong as the ambassador of the United States. I see Queens as the ambassador of what the United States is today in terms of the changing demographics,” says Rosenstock. “And the location at the park, the site of the two World’s Fairs, really is the place to bring everybody to sense what a big global society we are now.”