What’s News

Louis Armstrong House Museum Director Regina Bain (left) and New York City Department of Cultural Affairs Commissioner Gonzalo Casals met al fresco last week outside Satchmo’s home and in the garden in Corona, Queens. The building was named a National Landmark in 1976 and a New York City
President Frank H. Wu is among the experts interviewed in "Asian Americans: Battling Bias," a report by the Race and Culture unit of CBS News.

**Absentee Ballots on Request**

Don’t miss your chance to help choose the president and vice president of the United States. There’s still time to ask for an absentee ballot.

Registered voters must apply online, postmark, email, or fax a completed application or letter request for the general election absentee ballot by October 27, seven days before the election. But no one should wait that long. The United States Postal Service has advised that it cannot guarantee timely delivery of ballots applied for less than 15 days before the election. In-person applications may be submitted until November 2, one day before the election. For details, click here.

Early voting locations will be open in New York City from October 24 through November 1. Hours of operation and locations in each borough are posted here. Everyone is required to wear a mask and maintain six feet of social distance within a Board of Elections facility.

**Hispanic Heritage Month Continues**
HSI-STEM Bridges Across Eastern Queens—a QC-Queensborough Community College partnership dedicated to increasing the number of Hispanic and lower-income students earning four-year STEM degrees—is recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month with a panel discussion on October 15 at 11 am. The panel features Hispanic and Latinx speakers from both colleges. Register to attend. HSI-STEM Bridges has been highlighting Hispanic members of its community through a social media campaign posted on the program’s website, as well as Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook.

Extending Hispanic Heritage Month into the following week, Mila Burns of Lehman College will present “Dona Ivone Lara’s Sorriso Negro, Soundtrack of Brazilian Feminist and Black Movements” on Monday, October 19, at noon. Jorge A. Alves (Political Science) will be the moderator. The lecture is sponsored by the Alliance of Latin American Students, Latin American and Latino Studies, and the Political Science Department. Register in advance here; registrants will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

**LGBTQ History Month Continues**

In observance of LGBTQ History Month, essential queer cinema screenings will be held on the evenings of Thursday, October 15, and Thursday, October 29, at 6 pm.

*The Celluloid Closet* will be shown on October 15. Based on Vito Russo's groundbreaking book of the same name, the film examines the troubling cinematic portrayals of LGBTQ characters that Hollywood perpetuated for more than a hundred years. Well-known actors, writers, and commentators provide poignant and even humorous perspectives.

**Zoom link:** Zoom ID: 955 3949 0116 and Passcode: 872964

*Julio of Jackson Heights* will be presented two weeks later, on October 29. Julio Rivera was the victim of hate crime on the night of July 2, 1990: He was beaten to death in the P.S. 69 schoolyard by three young men who wanted to “stretch out a gay man” in order to clean up the Jackson Heights neighborhood. In pursuing justice for him, Julio's friends and family built a movement for equality for the LGBTQ community of Queens, New York. The filmmaker, Richard Shpuntoff, will be available for a brief introduction to the movie and for a Q&A following the screening.

**Zoom link:** Zoom ID: 928 0174 8815 Passcode: 751369

Both film screenings are made possible through the generous support of
LaGuardia Community College/CUNY and the New York City Council through the offices of Finance Chair Daniel Dromm (District 25) and Speaker Corey Johnson. These events are co-sponsored by the Queens College Office of Student Development and Leadership, the Women and Gender Studies Department at Queens College, the Queens College Gender, Love and Sexuality Alliance/GLASA, the CUNY Office of Student Inclusion Initiatives, and the Queens College Libraries.

Bringing Young Women Up To Code

The Tech Incubator at Queens College is hosting Girls Who Code again this fall. A free virtual club, GWC is designed for 6th to 12th grade girls who are interested in learning and practicing coding skills, or want to explore careers related to computers and STEM in general. Through sessions facilitated by industry professionals, participants develop coding skills and use what they learn to build a project of their own choice. The club will meet from 10 to 11:30 am on six consecutive Sundays, October 18 and 25, and November 1, 8, 15, and 22. Register for this program here.

QClass To Explore Women and Minority Voices in the Arts

QClass—the virtual series started this summer by Aaron Copland School of Music Director Michael Lipsey—will return on Wednesday, October 21, at 5 pm, with a discussion on Women and Minority Voices in the Arts. Panelists, all drawn from QC, will be Chloë Bass (Art); Julia Del Palacio (Kupferberg Center for the Arts); Meghan Healey (DTD); Maria Pio (Godwin-Ternbach Museum); and Emily Wilbourne (ACSM). Jane Cho (ACSM) proposed this program and will serve as moderator for the discussion.
Finding the Way

Bass, co-director of Social Practice Queens, is a multiform conceptual artist who received rave reviews for Wayfinding, a show presented in St. Nicholas Park by the Studio Museum in Harlem through September 27. As director of strategic partnerships at the Kupferberg Center, Del Palacio oversees offsite programming, artistic residencies at 15 public schools in Queens, and borough-wide initiatives with other arts organizations. She performs Mexican folk dance professionally. Healey, chair of Drama, Theatre and Dance, is a costume designer specializing in new plays and experimental work. Pio is co-director of the Godwin-Ternbach, where she oversees education programming and administration. Associate professor of musicology at QC and The CUNY Graduate Center, Wilbourne is also editor-in-chief for Women & Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture, and serves on the editorial boards of the Journal of the American Musicology Society and Women’s Studies Quarterly.

Diversity Matters

The subject of diversity is important to Cho, director of administration at ACSM, as well as a pianist who has performed throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia. At QC, she launched Achieving Diversity: Arts Administration Leadership Project, which pairs minority students with faculty mentors. “If you think about lack of representation by women, it’s in all fields,” she observes. “This has been happening since the beginning of history, all across the globe. So I thought it would be interesting to ask other women in the arts about their experience and vision.”

With Lipsey’s enthusiastic support, Cho assembled a diverse group of experts...
who are qualified to address a complicated topic. She has held remote meetings with speakers individually, to suggest issues for them to think about. “I’ll be there to guide the conversation, but the panelists are the stars,” Cho concludes.

To attend this event, click here.

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**Exams without Anxiety**

With midterms approaching, the QC Learning Commons wants to remind everyone about its services. The Learning Commons is a centralized peer mentoring and tutoring support network for the college’s undergraduate and graduate students.

The online learning environment can be challenging. Sign up for individual tutoring appointments to help with your studies.

[Click here to see tutoring options](#) and email, call, or visit the office Zoom hours to make an appointment. Services are free, participation is voluntary, and all are welcome!

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**Documentary Theater Troupe in Virtual Residence at QC**

Perhaps a century from now, when historians or researchers look back at how people in a place called Flushing experienced the Covid-19 pandemic, in addition to the expected newspaper, broadcast, and digital records of the day, they will find records of a very different type that will connect them to the period in a different and perhaps more visceral way: works of documentary theater.

Probably best known to the general public through the work of the actress, playwright, author, and teacher Anna Deavere Smith, documentary theater uses material gathered through research and interviews to create dramatic works about real people and events. And it is the métier of the Brooklyn-based theater company What Will the Neighbors Say? (WWTNS), which last spring began working with students and faculty in QC’s Drama, Theatre and Dance Department to create dramatic works capturing the great cultural fabric of Flushing. Like everyone else at QC, however, the group had to nimbly adjust their focus and methods in response to the pandemic-induced closure of campus just weeks into the semester.

**Pandemic Causes Shift to Online**

“In the spring before the pandemic, they were teaching the course in documentary theater using their particular research-based methodology,” recounts Meghan Healey, chair of Drama, Theatre and Dance. “After the pandemic, of course, the class is online and a lot of students shifted the focus of their projects to be about their own experiences of living through the pandemic.”

She says the students found the class to be particularly cathartic as a way of documenting and expressing what they were going through at that time. Under the direction of company members working as adjunct faculty, students wrote short solo performances of ten minutes or less that combined their own testimony with that of other people experiencing similar things.

“That is what What Will the Neighbors Say? does,” says Healey, citing the example of a previous work by the company. “One of the pieces they previously produced was about the hurricane in Puerto Rico. So, they went to Puerto Rico and did research and interviews with people about their
experiences in the hurricane and they wove that together into a longform theater piece to turn what is essentially documentary interviews into an artistic work of theater that fuses the two forms.”

“The spring was obviously an intense time for all of us in New York,” she continues. “What Will the Neighbors Say? created a really beautiful final project [presented via Zoom] that put together all the pieces that were created by the students in that class. Due to that really successful collaboration we invited them to come this year as a company in residence, even though in the time of Covid that has sort of a complex meaning, to be in residence without physically being in residence.”

Comparing Coronavirus to 1918 Flu Pandemic

Being in residence, Healey explains, means that that the company is a collaborative partner with her department. Their immediate plan, she says, is to work on a much bigger piece that will utilize things students uncovered in their pieces and material gleaned from the Queens Memory Covid-19 Project’s storytelling project to create a larger piece comparing the 1918 Flu Pandemic with the experiences of people today. (The Queens Memory Covid-19 Project, a collaboration of the Queens Public Library and Queens College Libraries, has been digitally collecting testimonials from Queens citizens of their pandemic experiences.)

Further, Healey says the company is collaborating with choreographers Yin Mei Critchell (DTD) and Marshall Davis. The pair are working on a film that expresses stories of the pandemic through dance; members of WWTNS are acting as dramaturgs for the piece, providing textural and research support. Last spring, says Healey, Critchell was working on a piece in which dancers in New York were collaborating with students living in Wuhan, China, the epicenter of the pandemic in their country.

To some extent, the collaboration between WWTNS and QC owes its genesis to a previous project with Los Angeles-based Cornerstone Theater Company, which held an institute summer residency at QC in 2018. “[Cornerstone is] one of the pre-eminent theater companies in the world that does community-based theater,” says Healey, who has independently collaborated with them on previous occasions “because it’s one of my areas of practice and expertise.” That summer 2018 collaboration resulted in The Cardinal: A Journey Through Flushing, written by Cusi Cram and directed by Juliette Carrillo. The play, presented on August 10 and 11, was derived from material the writer gleaned from interviews with residents in the local community; the cast featured QC students, local residents, original music, and a shadow puppet portrayal of the Queens landscape.

“What Will the Neighbors Say? cold-called us and said they wondered if we were still interested in doing other community-based collaborations, and we were,” says Healey. She subsequently began a dialogue with them about their goals as a company. WWTNS offered to teach a class in documentary theater, which Healey agreed would make a good first collaboration “as a way to just dip a toe in the water.”
Meghan Healey

Core Values Matter

“It was a really amazing experience,” she says. “They are such an amazing group of young artists, and I have just really been impressed by them, their passion, their commitment, and the quality of their work. I also think it’s great that they’re a company that really values diversity, representation, and community—which are all values that we consider core values of our program and things that we want to demonstrate to our students.”

“We have been making a strong effort to bring outside companies to join with us in these collaborations because it’s such a fantastic Socratic teaching model for the arts,” she continues. “And it introduces students to these important artists so that they can form personal and professional relationships with them that would allow them to have professional connections as they go out into the world.”

Healey says they’re still exploring how WWTNS and QC can go forward working in the Flushing community under the current pandemic restrictions. Consequently, she says their relationship with the Queens Memory Covid-19 Project has taken on greater significance. “I think their practices and knowledge would be incredibly beneficial to the company,” says Healey. “That is the plan. That is our challenge. That is what we are moving towards.”

Winner Chosen in Student Video Contest

By conveying a critical message simply and clearly, Sonia Rai, a junior majoring in design, won QC’s Health & Safety First Video Contest, receiving an Amazon gift card for $250. Her video, which lasts all of 16 seconds, derives its type treatments from the safety steps she’s illustrating. Rai hopes to pursue a career in graphic design; she’s off to a great start. The selection was made by Student Association in collaboration with the Office of Communications and Marketing.
Child Development Center Goes Online

Like other QC services, the Child Development Center—a nonprofit program licensed by the New York City Department of Health and the New York State Office of Children and Family Services—has created virtual extensions of the work it does in person. The center is offering pre-school learning as well as homework help for children in kindergarten through fifth grade. Activities available throughout the day with teachers include dance and movement, arts and crafts, science, math, and story time. The center provides these services free to student-parents and charges low monthly fees for faculty and staff. For more information, visit the center’s webpage or send an email.

College Library Suspends In-Person Services

To ensure the health and safety of students, staff, and faculty, Benjamin S. Rosenthal Library will suspend in-person services after Friday, October 16, 2020. Reservations will be honored through that date. The library will continue to offer remote services as usual. To connect with library help or learn about other remote services, see the FAQs. Library personnel will continue to update the college community as new information becomes available.

Heard Around the Virtual Campus

Sumaiya Jamal is one of 20 recent CUNY graduates awarded six-month, paid fellowships within the Office of the New York City Comptroller. Jamal, who studied accounting at QC, is assigned to the Bureau of Asset Management through the end of March 2021. . . . Charles Gomez (Sociology) received a
three-year, $253,898 grant from the National Science Foundation for his project, “Inequality in Global Scientific Research: Implications for Novelty and Innovation” . . . . Alex Lisyansky (Physics) recently received a two-year, $122,000 grant from the Office of Naval Research for studies of Photon Statistics of Nano-Size Light Sources . . . . Imani Mosley ’07, an assistant professor of musicology at the University of Florida, will present “Spectres of Empire: The Postwar Horror of Benjamin Britten’s Owen Wingrave” on October 21 as part of the research seminar program offered during the current academic year at the University of York (United Kingdom). . . . Beverly Philip, an alumna, has been named president of the American Society of Anesthesiologists . . . . President Frank H. Wu is one of the speakers in the press briefing that Asian Americans Advancing Justice released for its anti-racial profiling project.

The Q View is produced by the Office of Communications and Marketing.

Comments and suggestions for future news items are welcome. Send them to jay.hershenson@qc.cuny.edu.