



EVENTS & SPECIAL PROGRAMS HIGHLIGHT



Thursday, April 4, 7:00 pm (Café opens at 6:30 pm)
Celebrate National Poetry Month!
6th Annual World Poetry Night in the Oral Tradition

Enjoy the inspired words of Amiri Baraka, Matsuo Basho, Emily Dickenson, Seamus Heaney, Czesław Miłosz, Anaïs Nin, Octavio Paz, Chu Chen Po, Rumi, William Shakespeare, Alice Walker, Walt Whitman, and more.

Continued on page 2

ARTISTS' GATHERING

Wednesday, April 17,
6:00 pm

Artists' Gathering

4TH FLOOR MEETING ROOM

Are you an artist? If art is your passion (all forms of art apply: visual or performing) the Mechanics' Institute wishes to know who you are and what you do. Bring your business cards, polish your "elevator



speech," and look forward to meeting other members with artistic flair and expanding your network.

Artists of all disciplines are invited. Please have a thirty-second "elevator speech" ready as well as at least thirty business cards. **Members only. Free.**

More Authors' Carnival listings on page 8

CLASSES HIGHLIGHT

Friday, April 5, 3:00 pm

Managing a Successful Book Group

Whether you wish to start a new group, or are seeking to rescue an existing group from the doldrums, this class will provide ideas and resources for group managers. Learn to find great books for group reading and questions that go beyond "Did you like the book?" Discover some tips for dealing with personality quirks in the group. See what the library collection has to offer and add excellent web resources to your toolkit. To register, call 415.393.0102, or go to <http://www.milibrary.org/class>. **Members only. Free.**



More class listings on page 5

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Laptops Available for Checkout

BOBBIE MONZON,
 MANAGING LIBRARIAN

Beginning Wednesday, March 13th, the Library made laptop computers available for check-out at the second floor Circulation desk. The laptops are for in-library use only and must remain within the Library—the fourth floor meeting rooms are not included. The maximum loan period is four hours per day and we require members to leave a valid ID as security upon checkout.

Each laptop has the same capabilities and programs as our desktop public computers. Software available includes Microsoft Office and Adobe Reader and we also offer easy printing to the public print stations. All laptops include a DVD player and a USB port for your flash drive. You must supply your own earphones/headphones if needed.

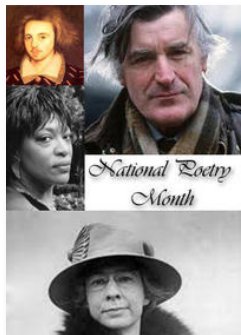
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EVENTS

Attend these intimate and up close author programs and engage directly with local, national, and internationally known writers talking about their newly released books. **Laura Sheppard, Events Director**

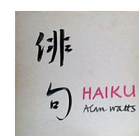


Thursday, April 4, 7:00 pm (café opens at 6:30 pm)

Celebrate National Poetry Month!

6th Annual World Poetry Night in the Oral Tradition

Once again, **Maurice Wren** and his ensemble of “poetry troubadours” including **Carol Fitzgerald**, **Gwynn O’Gara**, and **Maya** and **Barry Specter**, present an evening of verse by poets from around the world through the ages. These spontaneous and heartfelt recitations—all from memory—provide a feast for the senses. Stage direction and set design by Kathleen Blake. Audience participation is also welcome. Bring a favorite poem or HAIKU of your choice to recite by heart! **Members \$10; Public \$12**

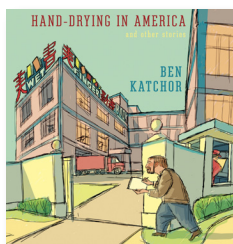


Thursday, April 11, 6:30 pm

Hand-Drying in America: And Other Stories (Pantheon) **BEN KATCHOR**

Co-sponsored by the Cartoon Museum, Art Institute, and California College of Art

From one of the most original and imaginative American cartoonists at work today comes a collection of graphic narratives on the subjects of urban planning, product design, and architecture—a surrealist handbook for the rebuilding of society in the twenty-first century. Here are window-ledge pillows designed expressly for people-watching and a forest of artificial trees for sufferers of hay fever. The Brotherhood of Immaculate Consumption deals with the matter of products that outlive their owners; a school of dance is based upon the choreographic motion of paying with cash; high-visibility construction vests are marketed to lonely people as a method of getting noticed. With cutting wit Katchor reveals a world similar to our own—but slightly, fabulously askew! **Members of MI, Cartoon Museum, and co-sponsors Free; Public \$12**



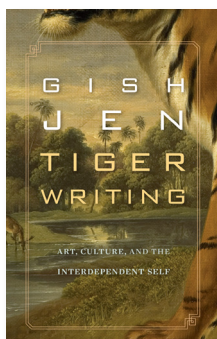
Tuesday, April 16, 6:00 pm

Tiger Writing: Art, Culture, and the Interdependent Self (Harvard University Press)

AUTHOR GISH JEN IN CONVERSATION WITH POET MAXINE HONG KINGSTON

Co-sponsored by Asia Society

Tiger Writing is a lively blend of family history, cultural criticism, and meditations on Gish Jen’s life as the daughter of Chinese immigrant parents, reflecting on Eastern and Western ideas of self and how they intersect. The novel, she writes, is fundamentally a Western form that values originality, authenticity, and the truth of individual experience. By contrast, Eastern narrative emphasizes morality, cultural continuity, the everyday, and the recurrent. This new book which is a culmination of her Massey Lectures in the History of American Civilization at Harvard, celebrates the writer’s process of self examination and creation. **Members of MI and Asia Society Free; Public \$12**



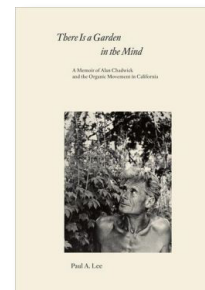
Information & reservations for Events and CinemaLit: 415.393.0100 or <http://www.milibrary.org/events>.



Thursday, April 25, 6:00 pm - An Earth Day Celebration!

There Is a Garden in the Mind: A Memoir of Alan Chadwick and the Organic Movement in California (North Atlantic Books) PAUL A. LEE

There is a Garden in the Mind shines a spotlight on the founding father of the American organic movement, Alan Chadwick, for his groundbreaking approaches to gardening. In this memoir, Paul Lee recounts his 1967 meeting with Chadwick in Santa Cruz, and their subsequent founding of the Chadwick Garden at UC Santa Cruz, the first organic and bio-intensive garden at a U.S. university. Lee describes the evolving awareness of the importance of organic food production and the role of industrial agriculture in our country's national health crisis. **Members Free; Public \$12**



CINEMALIT

CURATED & HOSTED BY MICHAEL FOX

Fridays: Cafe 5:30 pm; Program 6:00 pm.

Members Free; Public suggested donation \$10

APRIL BLOSSOMS—JAPANESE SCREENS

For twelve years Mechanics' Institute's **CinemaLit** has offered a monthly mini-film festival/salon, showcasing directors, stars, film genres, and classics. Each film is introduced by film critic and CinemaLit curator Michael Fox, or by guests who include local film writers, critics and aficionados. Come for the movie. Stay for the discussion!



Friday, April 5

The Twilight Samurai (2002)

DIRECTED BY YOJI YAMADA

HiroYuki Sanada, Rie

Miyazawa

A struggling nineteenth-century samurai, widowed with two young daughters, rescues his childhood sweetheart in this mature, humane epic.



Friday, April 19

Cast Me If You Can (2010)

DIRECTED BY ATSUSHI OGATA

Toru Masuoka, Hiromi

Nagasaku

An actor relegated to supporting roles and an aspiring actress strike sparks in this contemporary Woody Allen-esque romantic comedy.



Friday, April 12

The Teahouse of the August Moon (1956)

DIRECTED BY DANIEL MANN

Marlon Brando, Glenn Ford

This cross-cultural comedy tracks the travails of U.S. officers charged with Westernizing an Okinawan village after World War II.



Friday, April 26

House of Bamboo (1955)

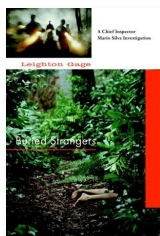
DIRECTED BY SAM FULLER

Robert Ryan, Robert Stack

An undercover U.S. Army investigator infiltrates a gang of American criminals in occupied Tokyo in this punchy widescreen crime thriller.

BOOK DISCUSSIONS

Our member-only Book Groups select, read, and discuss books of a particular type or genre. Members lead the discussions, new members are always welcome, and registration is not required (unless otherwise specified). Please note that Book Groups are not author events and the authors will not be present during the discussions.

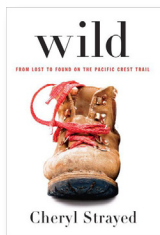


Monday, April 8, Noon Brown Bag Mystery Readers

Buried Strangers

LEIGHTON GAGE

In the second book of the crime novel series featuring Chief Inspector Mario Silva, a bone is discovered by a dog in Sao Paolo, Brazil. This seemingly innocent discovery leads to the uncovering of a hidden cemetery with more than three dozen corpses, many of which are children. Gage has written a sophisticated and suspenseful police procedural with a film noir quality. His descriptions of the Brazilian people and culture add to the atmosphere of the book.

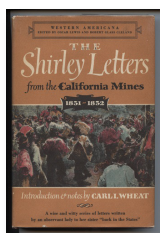


Tuesday, April 9, 6:00 pm True Adventure

Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail

CHERYL STRAYED

Strayed has written a memoir recounting her 1,100 mile solo hike on the Pacific Crest Trail from California to Washington state. Her adventure was precipitated by the untimely death of her mother, a series of bad life decisions including drugs and adultery, and the dissolution of her marriage all before the age of 26. Her tale is not only a chronicle of the geographical distances covered, but of the odyssey that occurred in her soul and spirit as she persevered in her quest to finish the hike and was helped along the way with the assistance and kindness of her fellow travelers.

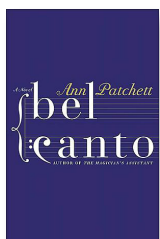


Thursday, April 11, 4:00 pm California Dreamers

The Shirley Letters from the California Mines 1851-52

LOUISE AMELIA KNAPP SMITH CLAPPE

First published serially in 1854-55, this is a cheerful, first-hand account of life in and around the California gold mines by one of the few women who was actually there at that time. **Registration required.**



Tuesday, April 16, Noon Fiction You Wish You Had Read

Bel Canto

ANN PATCHETT

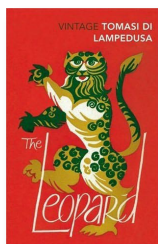
At a glamorous birthday party for a Japanese dignitary in a mansion in South America, a famous American soprano has just completed her performance when a band of terrorists surreptitiously enter the estate and take the party of international guests hostage. While all of the women, except for the soprano, are released, the rest of the party are held captive for months while negotiations are underway. Patchett has created a story combining improbable love, terrorism and the common language of music in her Pen/Faulkner award winning novel. This tale is loosely based on a real hostage incident that took place in Peru in April, 1997.



Wednesdays, April 10 and 24, 5:30 pm

The Proust Society of America: San Francisco Chapter

Under the leadership of Dr. Mark Calkins, Mechanics' Institute offers two bi-weekly discussion groups on a semester basis. The Proust Group discusses *In Search of Lost Time*, vol. 4, 5:30 – 6:30pm. The World Literature Group discusses Proustian-inspired works from 6:45-8:00 pm. These groups close to new registrations on March 27. For more information contact Dr. Calkins at mark@tempsperdu.com or Sharon Miller at smiller@milibrary.org.



Thursday, May 2, 6:00 pm

Forgotten Classics

The Leopard

GIUSEPPE TOMASI DI LAMPADUSA

This 20th century classic, completed in 1957 just prior to Lampadusa's death, remains the top selling novel in Italian history. The author, a Sicilian prince, tells the story of a noble family's decline in times of political, social and economic changes. **Registration required.**

Information & registration: Diane Lai at 415.393.0118 or dlai@milibrary.org. All readings are available at the 2nd floor Circulation desk. All Book Discussions are held in the 4th floor Board Room. Register online at www.milibrary.org/discussion.

CLASSES AT THE LIBRARY

Classes are open to Mechanics' Institute members and guests, and are free. During the renovation of the 3rd floor classroom all classes will be held on the 4th floor. Advance registration is required: call 415.393.0102, or go to our website <http://www.milibrary.org/class> and click on the class title.

Thursday, April 11, 10:00 am

Investment Information on the Web

Learn to access data from diverse authoritative websites covering market updates, top news stories with superb editorial commentary and analyst opinions, economic and industry news, company profiles, corporate developments, trading charts, investment strategies, financial reports, investment tutorials... and more. Noteworthy sites include MSN MoneyCentral, Yahoo! Finance, MarketWatch, Google Finance, Bloomberg.com, Morningstar.com, and Smart Money.

Wednesday, April 17, 3:00 pm

Shop Smarter

Are you skeptical about the reviews you find for the latest tablet computer? Are you hesitant to buy toys from an unknown website? As you prepare to spend your hard earned tax refund, come to our Shop Smarter class and acquire the tools and tips to find the best deals and protect yourself when shopping online and in stores. Learn from MI Library's wealth

of up-to-date and comprehensive consumer information to become a savvy shopper this shopping season and beyond.

Tuesday, April 30, 10:00 am

Getting Your Affairs in Order

Whether you are young or old, married or single, healthy or ailing, now is the time to get your affairs in order. It is essential to gather your vital records (such as health, finance and legal documents) and other important papers into one place, to make a complete record of personal and professional contacts, and to ensure that medical directives have been executed in case your health is unexpectedly compromised. We will discuss the resources available at the library and online to assist you in organizing your personal files. We will also provide you with organizational tools that will help you create an efficient and comprehensive system for storing your information. Do yourself and your loved ones a favor by being prepared for an emergency before it happens!

The State of Library eBooks at the Institute

JEREMY SNELL, WEB LIBRARIAN

Starting in January 2011, the Mechanics' Institute contracted with OverDrive, the largest distributor of eBooks to public libraries in the United States, and began offering eBooks for our members to checkout and download. As of early March 2013, there have been 3,519 checkouts and 491 members have used this service to read eBooks on their iPads, iPhones, Android devices, Kindles, Nooks, and other eReaders. An average of 141 checkouts a month is enough to let us know that many of our members enjoy eReading.

However, I've had a number of conversations with members asking about the slow growth of the eBook collection. Why don't we have more titles? Currently, the library offers 373 titles for checkout and download, focusing on *New York Times* and *San Francisco Chronicle* best sellers and featured titles. After the initial launch of the service, the library was adding four to five titles a week, but a number of new factors have caused us to slow our purchasing.

To begin, libraries do not own the eBooks we purchase through OverDrive. Essentially we are licensing eBooks for use. This means if we ever decide to forgo our OverDrive contract, we will lose access to all eBooks we have previously licensed. Coupled with the lack of ownership, a number of changes have occurred since joining OverDrive that affect the availability of titles and how much our budget allows us to buy:

- In February 2011, HarperCollins placed a twenty-six loan cap on all of its library-circulated eBooks. After a title circulates twenty-six times, libraries are forced to lease a new copy. Due to this, many libraries (including the Mechanics' Institute) have boycotted HarperCollins eBook sales. For point of reference, we have print copies of various HarperCollins novels that have been checked out more than seventy times and do not yet require repair or replacement.
- In November 2011, Penguin pulled its newest offerings from OverDrive. Libraries were still able to purchase less recent titles, but that ended in February 2012 when Penguin severed its agreement completely with OverDrive. Other Big Six publishers that do not sell or only offer severely limited eBook title lists to libraries

include Simon & Schuster, Macmillan, and Hachette.

- In March 2012, Random House announced a price increase on all its eBooks. This resulted in more than a 300% increase in the purchasing cost for bestselling titles. On average for a bestselling Random House title in eBook format, the library now spends \$80. The recent *Thomas Jefferson: The Art of Power* cost the library \$85.00 while the print edition cost us only \$23.00. Furthermore, the consumer Kindle edition is available for only \$14.99 through amazon.com.

These factors have limited our ability to create the eBook collection we truly desire for our members—one that can reach beyond the bestsellers' lists. Instead, we walk a line between meeting demand for eBooks and not committing ourselves too deeply to OverDrive, a system that we feel no longer offers a cost-effective eBooks solution and does not advocate for the best interest of libraries and their users.



Luckily, there are other options that have been gaining traction recently. The California Library Association is working on a system where participating libraries will be able to purchase (not lease) eBooks. This is similar to a program that Douglas County libraries in Colorado began a few years ago, and the eBooks offered will focus on smaller, local publishers. Additionally, OpenLibrary, based in San Francisco, has been working with public libraries to make its collection of

scanned materials available, and the Mechanics' Institute is in the planning stages of offering this additional eBook lending service. A few other vendors are also entering the library eBook market, and we are keeping abreast of these new opportunities to offer our members the best possible service we can.

In the meantime, please continue to check out, download, and read eBooks from the library. For those interested in learning more about our eBook collection, visit milibrary.org/ebooks and stay tuned for instructive workshops once the 3rd floor class room is back in operation. If you have any questions, please contact me at 415.393.0111 or jsnell@milibrary.org.

CHESS



INTERNATIONAL MASTER JOHN DONALDSON, DIRECTOR OF THE CHESS ROOM

The Mechanics' Institute Chess Club has been a hotbed of activity recently. National Master Romulo Fuentes won the Winter Tuesday Marathon with ninety participants competing. This broke the previous attendance record of eighty-eight for the event which has been held continuously (eight weeks on followed by two weeks off) since 1973.

Michael Lum was the winner of the 13th Annual A.J. Fink Amateur Open held the weekend of March 9th and 10th. This rating restricted event, open only to players below Expert ranking, also set an attendance record with sixty-five competitors.

Regular classes and lectures complement the tournament program at the MI. A recent talk by former member Jeremy Silman saw a standing room only crowd show up to hear the International Master from Los Angeles talk about psychology in chess.



Jeremy Silman lectures

The Chess Club now offers classes on Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday along with evening lectures when the Tuesday Night Marathon is in session. Three summer camps in June-July round out a full program of activities.

Chess for Women

Sundays, April 7, 14, 21, 28

11:00 am – 1:00 pm

TAUGHT BY EWELINA KRUBNIK

Funded by a gift in memory of R. Martin Wiskemann

Tournaments

Saturday, April 6

10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Children's Quad

Saturday, April 13

10:00 am – 8:00 pm

13th Annual Imre Konig Memorial G/45

Saturday, April 27 – Sunday, April 28

10:00 am – 8:00 pm

Lovegrove Senior Championship

Tuesday Night Events

April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

5:15 pm – 6:15 pm

Lecture by John Donaldson

6:30 pm – 10:30 pm

Spring Tuesday Night Marathon

Wednesday Night Blitz

April 3, 10, 17, 24

6:30 pm – 8:50 pm

DIRECTED BY JULES JELINEK

Wednesday Night Lessons (After 6—Chess for Adults)

April 3, 10, 17, 24

6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

TAUGHT BY EWELINA KRUBNIK

Thursday Night Lessons

April 4, 11, 18, 25

7:00pm – 9:00 pm

TAUGHT BY M.I. GRANDMASTER-IN-RESIDENCE

NICK DE FIRMIAN

Saturday Morning Chess Class for Kids

April 6, 13, 20, 27

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

TAUGHT BY INTERNATIONAL MASTER

ELLIOTT WINSLOW

Information & reservations: 415.393.0110 or <http://www.chessclub.org>. Picture courtesy of Felix German.

57 Post Street, San Francisco,
CA 94104
www.milibrary.org

Important Numbers
Circulation: 415.393.0101
Reference: 415.393.0102
E-mail: reference@milibrary.org

Library Hours
Monday - Thursday: 9 am - 9 pm
Friday: 9 am - 6 pm
Saturday: 10 am - 5 pm
Sunday: 1 pm - 5 pm

Erika Schmidt, Editor

Continued from p. 1

Laptops, continued

We hope this helps to relieve some of the congestion from heavy use of our public computers. As always, we strive to provide quality service to our members and hope that these additional computers will ensure that all members wishing to use a public computer can be accommodated in a timely manner.



AUTHORS' CARNIVAL

Readings, workshops, and camaraderie
in celebration of our members' creative
achievements.



Friday, April 19, Noon

Compared to What? A Discussion and Preview of an Upcoming Play

4TH FLOOR MEETING ROOM

Join us and member playwright Judith Offer for a discussion and sneak preview of her play *Compared to What?* Learn what it's like to research, write, cast, and produce a play locally. Select members of the cast will also perform a scene. This will be a great opportunity to see art and history created. *Compared to What?*, set in Oakland in 1926, examines the lives and working conditions of the Pullman Railway Car Porters. It premiered in July 2011 by the Mira Theatre Guild at the Bay Terrace Theater in Vallejo and is scheduled to run in Oakland at the First Christian Church (29th and Fairmount, just off Broadway) May 10 – 25, 2013. **Members and Guests Free.**



Monday, April 22, Noon

Poetry & Parlor Games: A Surreal Experience

4TH FLOOR MEETING ROOM

Join librarians Taryn Edwards, Jeremy Snell, Diane Lai and a host of member poets as we explore surrealist poetry writing techniques and play the parlor game, Exquisite Cadaver. This will be a fun way to celebrate National Poetry Month, bond with other members, your subconscious, and exercise your poetic spirit! Bring your lunch, sense of humor, spontaneity and be ready for a unique experience! The poems collectively produced from this session will be posted on our website and in our printed newsletter, *This Month @ MI*. For reservations see our website: <http://www.milibrary.org/events>. **Members only. Free.**



Tuesday, May 7, Noon

Write Now!

4TH FLOOR BOARD ROOM

Writing is more fun in a group and the key to good writing is lots of practice. Come explore a couple of writing prompts at this low key scribble session. Whatever your genre, you'll have fun putting pen to paper with others who want to gain flexibility and spontaneity in their prose or poetry. Bring your lunch and favorite writing utensil. **Members only. Free.**



For reservations or information about these events, see our website at www.milibrary.org/events or contact Taryn Edwards at 415.393.0103 or tedwards@milibrary.org.