### MEET THE AUTHOR HIGHLIGHTS



### Tennessee Williams: Mad Pilgrimage of the Flesh

(W.W.Norton) AN AFTERNOON WITH AUTHOR JOHN LAHR Monday, October 6, 12:30 pm (café opens at Noon)
This riveting biography gives intimate access to the mind of one

This riveting biography gives intimate access to the mind of one of the most brilliant dramatists of his century, shedding light on Tennessee Williams' warring family, his guilt, his creative triumphs and failures, his sexuality and numerous affairs, his misreported death, even the shenanigans surrounding his estate.

Full listing on page 2



**The Zone of Interest** (Alfred A. Knopf) AN EVENING WITH AUTHOR MARTIN AMIS

Wednesday, October 29, 6:00 pm Co-sponsored by Contemporary Jewish Museum

The sordid brutality of the Holocaust is starkly drawn in Amis' portrayal of the everyday lives of officers of the Third Reich, and the enablers who create and build a world of concentration camps, slave labor, and genocide in this haunting story of breached morality, intimacies, betrayals, and defiance.

### AUTHORS' CARNIVAL HIGHLIGHT

## Interview with a Novelist: A Conversation with Colm Tóibín Tuesday, October 28, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

2ND FLOOR LIBRARY

MI & ILHS Free: Public \$15

The Irish Literary & Historical Society, in partnership with the Mechanics' Institute of San Francisco, is very pleased to present an evening talk by the novelist **Colm Tóibín**, in conversation with acclaimed Irish broadcaster and historian **Myles Dungan**.

Tóibín will be presenting his newest novel, *Nora Webster*. This novel is Tóibín's first full-length novel since the spectacular, bestselling *Brooklyn*, and marks Tóibín's return to the territory his readers love best: County Wexford, Ireland. Set in the 1970s, *Nora Webster* is the story of a woman whose husband has died young, after a long illness. In this work, Tóibín gives us an unforgettable portrait of an inimitable woman, her family, and the small Irish town that confines her.



Colm

Tóibín

Nora Webster

More Authors' Carnival on page 5

# Welcome MI's

# New Executive Director

TARYN EDWARDS,
MEMBER RELATIONS AND
MARKETING SPECIALIST

am pleased to welcome Ralph Lewin as the Mechanics' Institute's new Executive Director. He replaces Executive Director Jim Flack, who retired after 15 years of service.

Mr. Lewin is eager to assume his new duties at MI. He comes to us after serving six years as President and CEO of Cal Humanities, where he was a fierce advocate for the support of the humanities in California and nationwide. His experiences at Cal Humanities range from supporting Academy Award nominated documentary films, to inspiring a reading of *The Grapes of Wrath* in libraries across California.

(continued on page 5)

2, 8
3
4
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# MEET THE AUTHOR

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



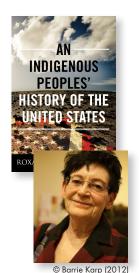
© Paul Davis

#### Tennessee Williams: Mad Pilgrimage of the Flesh (W.W.Norton) JOHN LAHR

#### Monday, October 6, 12:30 pm (café opens at Noon)

With vivid cameos of the formative influences in Williams' life —his fierce, belittling father Cornelius; his puritanical, domineering mother Edwina; his demented sister Rose; and his beloved grandfather, the Reverend Walter Dakin —*Tennessee Williams: Mad Pilgrimage of the Flesh* is both a compelling biography and an exploration of Williams's plays and formidable characters.

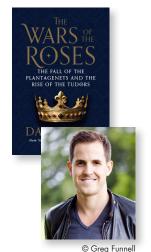
John Lahr is a regular contributor to The New Yorker, where for more than two decades he was the magazine's senior drama critic. A former theater critic at The Nation, The Village Voice, and British Vogue, among other publications, Lahr has published seventeen books on the theater and two novels, The Autograph Hound, and Hot to Trot. His book Dame Edna Everage and the Rise of Western Civilization won the 1992 Roger Machell Prize for best book on the performing arts. Lahr is a two-time winner of the George Jean Nathan Award for Dramatic Criticism. Members Free; Public \$15



### An Indigenous People's History of the United States (Beacon Press) ROXANNE DUNBAR-ORTIZ Thursday, October 9, 6:00 pm

Native American communities are among the poorest in the U.S., and activist and historian Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz argues that this is one of many symptoms of the colonial relationship into which Indigenous peoples have been coerced since 1492. In this book, Dunbar-Ortiz reframes the narrative of U.S. history to reveal the cumulative development of this colonial relationship, detailing the suppression—and in many instances the genocide—that has marked the Indigenous experience up to their modern-day poverty. Yet beneath this, she also reveals a narrative of self-determination and active resistance that offers promise for survival and resurgence of Indigenous societies. This book provides an alternative conversation for the Columbus Day Holiday.

Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz has been active in the international Indigenous movement for more than four decades and is known for her lifelong commitment to national and international social justice issues. Her 1977 book, The Great Sioux Nation, was the fundamental document at the first international conference on Indigenous Peoples of the Americas, held at the United Nations' headquarters in Geneva. She is also the author or editor of seven other books, including Roots of Resistance: A History of Land Tenure in New Mexico. Members Free; Public \$15



## The Wars of the Roses: The Fall of the Plantagenets and the Rise of the Tudors (Viking Adult) DAN JONES Monday, October 20, 12:30 pm (café opens at Noon)

The Wars of the Roses is a story of the decline of the Plantagenets, which began when the feeble-minded Henry VI became king as an infant. His reign eventually descended into madness and war, and the crown of England changed hands violently seven times as the houses of Lancaster and York fought for power. Thus some of the greatest heroes and villains in history are known—from Henry V, whose victory at Agincourt and prudent rule marked the high point of the medieval monarchy, to Richard III, who stole the throne and murdered his own nephews, the Princes (Edward V and Richard of Shrewsbury, Duke of York) in the Tower.

Dan Jones is a historian and award-winning columnist for London Evening Standard. A graduate of Cambridge University, where he was a star student of David Starkey, he has presented a documentary for the BBC's Handmade in Britain series and has appeared a number of times on the popular show Time Team. He is filming two television series – a series based on his bestselling book, The Plantagenets and another entitled Great British Castles, which are slated for broadcast in 2015. Follow him on twitter @djones.

Members Free; Public \$15

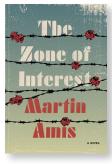
#### Wednesday, October 29, 6:00 pm

The Zone of Interest (Alfred A. Knopf) MARTIN AMIS

Golo Thomsen, the nephew of Hitler's private secretary, Martin Bormann, has a bureaucratic role at Buna Werke, where the Germans are attempting to synthesize oil for the war effort using slave labor. He sets his amorous sights on Hannah Doll, wife of camp commandant Paul, who is a drunk whose position is under threat. As Thomsen gets closer with Hannah, both of them, horrified at what is going on, conspire to undermine Paul. Meanwhile Paul, who is suspicious about his wife and Thomsen, plots a revenge. Amis took on the Holocaust obliquely in *Time's Arrow*. Here he goes at it straight with devastating results.

In 2008, Martin Amis was named by *The Times* as one of the 50 greatest British writers since 1945. His most well-known works are *Money* and *London Fields*. He has received the James Tait Black Memorial Prize for his memoir *Experience* and has been listed for the Booker Prize twice to date (shortlisted in 1991 for *Time's Arrow* and long listed in 2003 for *Yellow Dog*). Members of MI and CJM Free; Public \$15

Events continued on page 8





# CINEMALIT

**CURATED & HOSTED BY MICHAEL FOX** 

Fridays: Cafe 5:30 pm; Program 6:00 pm Members Free; Public suggested donation \$10

### **OCTOBER: ALTERED REALITIES**



Friday, October 3
7 Faces of Dr. Lao (1964)
DIRECTED BY GEORGE PAL
Tony Randall, Barbara Eden

A mysterious circus entertains a Western town with wonders and characters that teach valuable lessons.



Friday, October 10
Fellini Satyricon (1969)
DIRECTED BY FEDERICO FELLINI
Martin Potter, Hiram Keller

A bizarre, uninhibited, gruesome, cryptic and fragmentary portrait of pre-Christian Rome, a garish underworld of decadence and depravity.



Friday, October 17
The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. T (1953)
DIRECTED BY ROY ROWLAND
Hans Conried, Peter Lind Hayes

This weird and wonderful musical about a boy who daydreams a grotesque nightmare during piano practice was conceived, designed and co-written by Dr. Seuss.



Friday, October 24
Shadow of the Vampire (2000)
DIRECTED BY E. ELIAS MERHIGE
John Malkovich, Willem Dafoe

F.W. Murnau casts a method actor as Dracula in *Nosferatu*, then struggles to control his silent-era star's appetite in this toothsome satire of moviemaking.



Friday, October 31
The Witches (1990)
DIRECTED BY NICHOLAS ROEG
Anjelica Huston, Mai Zetterling

A boy and his grandmother run afoul of a witches' convention at an English seaside hotel in Roald Dahl's haunted adventure story.

**Information & registration:** 415.393.0100 or **milibrary.org/events.** All events are held in the 4<sup>th</sup> floor Meeting Room and require advance registration unless otherwise noted.

# BOOK DISCUSSION GROUPS

Our members 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.



Dark Fire: A Matthew Shardlake Tudor Mystery

by C. J. SANSOM

Monday, October 6, Noon **Brown Bag Mystery Readers** 

In 1540, during the reign of Henry VIII, Shardlake is asked to help a young girl accused of murder. She refuses to speak in her defense even when threatened with torture. But just when the case seems lost, Thomas Cromwell, the king's feared vicar general, offers Shardlake two more weeks to prove his client's innocence. In exchange, Shardlake must find a lost cache of "Dark Fire," a legendary weapon of mass destruction. (courtesy of ipage.ingramcontent.com) Members Only. Walk-ins Welcome.

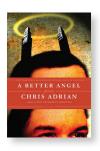


The Catcher in the Rye

by J. D. SALINGER

Tuesday, October 21, Noon Fiction You Wish You Had Read

The hero-narrator of The Catcher in the Rye is an ancient child of sixteen, a native New Yorker named Holden Caulfield. Through circumstances that tend to preclude adult, secondhand description, he leaves his prep school in Pennsylvania and goes underground in New York City for three days. The boy himself is at once too simple and too complex for us to make any final comment about him or his story. Perhaps the safest thing we can say about Holden is that he was born in the world not just strongly attracted to beauty but, almost, hopelessly impaled on it. (courtesy of ipage.ingramcontent.com) Members Only. Walk-ins Welcome.



A Better Angel

by CHRIS ADRIAN

Thursday, October 21, 5:30-6:30 pm

Literature in Brief - Short Stories

The stories in A Better Angel describe the terrain of human suffering-illness, regret, mourning, sympathy-in the most unusual of ways, from an author heralded for his wit and inventiveness. (courtesy of ipage.ingramcontent. com) Members Only. Registration required.



The Proust Society of America: San Francisco Chapter

Wednesday, October 8 & 22, 5:30 pm

Under the leadership of Dr. Mark Calkins, Mechanics' Institute offers two bi-weekly discussion groups, on a semester basis. The Proust Group discusses Proust's In Search of Lost Time, vol.1 (Swann's Way), from 5:30 – 6:30 pm. From 6:45 – 8:00 pm, the World Literature Group discusses Proustian-inspired works, beginning the semester with Shakespeare's Anthony & Cleopatra. The new semester began on September 10th, and these groups are now closed to additional registrations. For more information, contact Dr. Calkins at mark@tempsperdu.com or Diane Lai at dlai@milibrary.org.

Information & registration: Diane Lai at 415.393.0118, dlai@milibrary.org, or milibrary.org/events/book-group-meetings. A copy of each book is available at the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Circulation desk. All Book Discussions are held in the 4<sup>th</sup> floor Board Room.

### AUTHORS' CARNIVAL



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



Four Immigrants Manga: A Japanese Experience in San Francisco, 1904 -1924 Wednesday, October 8, 6:00 - 8:00 pm

4TH FLOOR MEETING ROOM

Henry Yoshitaka Kiyama arrived in San Francisco from Japan in 1904, at the age of 19. He studied art at what is today the Art Institute, and lived in the City off and on until 1937. Between February 13 and 15, 1927, he held an

exhibit of his work in San Francisco's Japantown. In addition to his drawings and paintings, he displayed what was titled Manga Hokubei Iminshi, or "A Manga North American Immigrant History." A cartoon work consisting of 52 episodes, it depicted the lives of Kiyama and three friends in San Francisco between 1904 and around 1924.

Kiyama had hoped to have his work serialized in a local newspaper as a comic strip, but he had really created the material for a "comic book." In 1931, he published this work under the title of Manga Yonin Shosei, or "The Four Students Manga," inadvertently creating one of the first graphic novels, ever published in the U.S. In 1998, it was translated under the title of The Four Immigrants Manga: A Japanese Experience in San Francisco, 1904-1924. In 2000, it was a finalist for the USA Pen/West translation award.

After his presentation, translator **Fred Schodt** will be joined by **Peter Goodman**, the president of Stone Bridge Press, to discuss issues in the production, publication, and resurrection of this rare book. **Members Free; Public \$15** 

### Mechanics' Institute Tour @ Night Monday, November 3, 6:00 – 7:00 pm

3RD FLOOR LIBRARY

The Mechanics' Institute of San Francisco was founded in 1854 with four books and a mission to start an organization to serve the education, information, and social needs of the city's mechanics, artisans, and industrialists. Within a few years the Institute was offering classes in such subjects as mechanical drawing, industrial design, electrical science,



and applied mathematics; had started a chess club; and had acquired a magnificent library that slaked San Francisco's voracious appetite for technical and pleasurable reading material. Today the Mechanics' Institute continues as a membership organization boasting a fantastic general-interest library, active cultural event calendar, and world renowned chess club.

If you are a new, long-time, or prospective member the Tour of the Institute will orient you to our building, include an overview of our history and mission, and outline our current services and the benefits of membership. Tours typically take 45 to 60 minutes. A wine and cheese reception will follow the tour. **Free.** 

**Information and registration: milibrary.org/events,** or Taryn Edwards at 415.393.0103, or **tedwards@milibrary.org**.

### Ralph Lewin

(continued from page 1)

Mr. Lewin serves on the boards of the Federation of State Humanities Councils and the University of California Humanities Research Institute and is on the editorial board of the magazine *BOOM: A Journal of California.* He was born in San Francisco, raised in San Diego, and now lives locally with his wife, Caitlin Mohan, and sons Sam and Leo.



"I am honored and thrilled to be entrusted with the leadership of the Mechanics' Institute," Mr. Lewin said. "I look forward to working with the board, staff, members and supporters to create an exciting new chapter in the Mechanics' Institute's development. I firmly believe that the work of the Mechanics' Institute always has been and will be essential to the DNA of the Bay Area. The excellent library, vibrant lectures and conversations, and the world renowned chess club are something that each person in the Bay Area should know about and support."

Ralph has spent his first few weeks familiarizing himself with the building and the staff. He has a warm personality and a ready smile; if you see him feel free to introduce yourself!

# CLASSES AT THE LIBRARY



### Wednesday, October 1, 12:00 - 1:00 pm Taking the Fear Out of Estate Planning 4th Floor Meeting Room

An up-to-date estate plan puts you in control of the economical and efficient distribution

of what you own to those you love. Your plan also allows you to control who manages your finances if you cannot, and to specify the kind of health care you do, or do not, want. Planned giving expert **Phil Murphy** will teach you about the power of estate planning and what free estate-planning tools are available to you through your membership at the Mechanics' Institute. Attendance is limited. Light lunch provided. To register, please contact Ralph Lewin at **rlewin@milibrary.org** or 415.393.0117. **Registration Required.** 



### Thursday, October 2, 12:00 -1:30 pm Navigating the New Value Line Database

Value Line has redesigned its platform, moving to a more dynamic, digitally-based product with new features and content to assist in making investment decisions. Learn how the

new design makes greater usage of lists for site navigation, and indicates more clearly the factors that users are most interested in. Attendees will familiarize themselves with the revamped stock screener that takes user-selected parameters to generate a focused list of companies that fit desired criteria, and be shown how traditional single-page company reports can be accessed. **Registration Required.** 

Tuesday, October 7, 12:00 - 1:00 pm First Tuesday TED Talk 4th Floor Meeting Room



# Topic: David Epstein: Are athletes really getting faster, better, stronger?

Bring your lunch and curiosity to talk about ideas, stories, and concepts with fellow Mechanics' Institute members and staff. This month we'll watch a video from March 2014 of David Epstein talking about whether athletes are really getting faster, better, and stronger. An informal discussion will follow the viewing. Walk-ins Welcome.

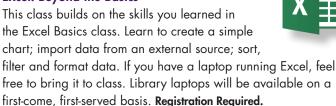


### Tuesday, October 7, 5:00 - 6:00 pm Identity Theft Prevention

Of the more than 1.8 million consumer complaints filed with the Federal Trade

Commission in 2011, 15% involved identity theft, making it the top individual category. Victims of identity theft not only risk losing money but also may face difficulty getting credit or loans. In this class, we'll discuss ways to avoid identity theft and protect yourself. **Registration Required.** 

### Wednesday, October 8, 5:00 - 6:00 pm Excel: Beyond the Basics







### Tuesday, October 21, 12:00 - 1:00 pm or 5:00 - 6:00 pm

### Discovering the Library's Collections

Learn how to search for and find materials in the library's collection, manage your library account online, and access the library's databases from

home. Walk-ins are welcome, but registration is recommended to ensure a spot. **Registration Required.** 

### Wednesday, October 22, 5:00 - 6:00 pm Eventbrite



Many Mechanics' Institute events require registration through Eventbrite, a third-party online ticketing service. See a demonstration of the Eventbrite registration process & learn how to sign up for events on the library's public computers or from your home. Following the demonstration, you'll try it out yourself by signing up for a fictional event using Eventbrite. Laptop computers will be provided on a first-come-first-served basis. Bring your own laptop if you wish. **Registration Required.** 



#### Thursday, October 23, 12:00 - 1:30 pm Investment Information on the Web

Learn how to access free and authoritative investment information focused on publicly traded companies, covering stocks, mutual funds, and

industry surveys. We'll explore company profiles, corporate developments and earnings prospects, valuation, stock rating services and screeners, trading statistics and financial reports. Websites surveyed include Yahoo! Finance, MSN Money, Marketwatch, Google Finance, Bloomberg.com, SmartMoney, and Morningstar. Also presented is a brief overview of two web-based Library subscriptions - Value Line Resource Center and Standard & Poor's NetAdvantage. Registration Required.

**Information and registration**: 415.393.0102 or **milibrary.org/events/learn**. All classes are held in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor classrooms and require advance registration unless otherwise noted.

### A Message from Ralph Lewin, Executive Director

he first time I walked into the Mechanics' Institute I fell in love. As a member, you may know this feeling – finding a home and community that is a welcoming place. I guess with all things we fall in love with, it is the particularity – the uniqueness about the person or place that attracts. With the Mechanics' Institute I found a place that reflects an adventurous spirit and our capacity as humans to create, a place with a deep respect for the life of the mind and the democratic belief that people of all backgrounds can create a better life through learning. In today's society, such places can be difficult to find and are worth our support.

I am grateful to Jim Flack, my predecessor, and to the members, board, staff, and supporters that have made Mechanics' the strong and lively place it is today. It is a privilege to be in the position to carry our work forward. I believe in the importance of the Mechanics', which comes partly from my background. I was born in San Francisco and spent the first two years of my life on California Street. I was raised on the edge of a sagebrush canyon in San Diego by my mother, who had experienced the terrors of war as a child in Germany, and a father whose grandparents immigrated to Boston to escape Anti-Semitism in czarist Russia.

It was around our dinner table that we discussed history, ideas and ways of thinking. What some considered abstractions connected really, deeply and powerfully with who we were and our place in the world. I have spent much of my career talking with people who are dedicated to understanding our struggles and our triumphs, in an effort to identify and shape a better world.

In my short time with the Mechanics' Institute, I have been impressed by the excellent library, vibrant lectures and conversations, and the world-renowned chess club, not to mention the beautiful building itself. Walt Whitman wrote:

Mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong

The spirit of Whitman's words, the celebration and respect for the human ability to create, is carried out every day at the Mechanics' Institute. You see it in our books, our art, the staff, board, and members. We have a rich history and I look forward to being a part of that history, along with all of you.

With kind regards.

# Chess

INTERNATIONAL MASTER JOHN DONALDSON, DIRECTOR OF THE CHESS ROOM

### **Tournaments**

**Saturday, October 4 10:00 am - 8:00 pm** 14th Annual J.J. Dolan Memorial G/45

**Saturday, October 25 10:00 am - 8:00 pm** 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Carroll Capps Memorial

Sunday, October 26 10:00 am - 5:00 pm 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Carroll Capps Memorial

### Chess for Women

Sundays, October 5, 12, 19, 26 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

TAUGHT BY EWELINA KRUBNIK Funded by a gift in memory of R. Martin Wiskemann

### Tuesday Night Events

October 21 and 28 5:15 pm - 6:15 pm

6:30 pm – 10:30 pm Fall Tuesday Night Marathon

### Wednesday Night Blitz

October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 6:30 pm - 8:50 pm

DIRECTED BY JULES JELINEK

### Saturday Morning Chess Class for Kids

October 4, 11, 18, 25 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

TAUGHT BY INTERNATIONAL MASTER ELLIOTT WINSLOW



(continued on page 8)



# LITQUAKE PANEL: DOES LITERATURE MAKE YOU AN EMPATH?

Tuesday, October 14, 6:30 pm

3RD FLOOR LIBRARY

#### Moderator, Ransom Stephens, Ph.D.

Our panel of fiction and genre authors plus experts on the science of empathy (and you!) will investigate why or whether high-brow lit cranks up empathy more than a good mystery, romance, or space opera. What techniques do writers employ to evoke sympathy or distain? What does neuroscience say about how we mirror behavior? Join this provocative discussion!

#### Panelists include:



Cara Black carablack.com



Holly Brown facebook.com/ hollybrown author



Julie Anne Long julieannelong. com



Jason Marsh greatergood. berkeley.edu/ author/jason\_ marsh



Elizabeth Rosner elizabeth rosner.com



Ransom Stephens, Ph.D. ransom stephens.com



Caren Walker scholar. berkeley.edu/ carenwalker

Mechanics' Institute Members and Litquake Bestseller Sponsors Free; Public \$15

Information & registration: 415.393.0100 or milibrary.org/events.

### Chess (continued from page 7)

wenty-two-year-old Grandmaster Sam Shankland of Orinda won the gold medal as the top reserve player in the 2014 Chess Olympiad in Tromso, Norway. The recent graduate of Brandeis University and long-time Mechanics' Institute Chess Club member, scored an undefeated 9 out 10 for a performance rating of 2831 (bringing him to 2646 FIDE—number four in the U.S., behind Hikaru Nakamura, Gata Kamsky and Alex Onischuk) to take home the gold medal ahead of 2700-rated Alexander Moiseenko of Ukraine and Ian Nepomniachtchi of Russia.

Michael Lin won the annual Bernardo Smith Memorial, held August 16-17 at the Mechanics' Institute. The UC Berkeley student scored 5 from 6 to top the 35-player field. Vikram Ramsamy was second with 5 points, followed by Simona Nayberg at 4½. Among those on 4–2 the result of Richard Hack warrants special mention. The C-rated Hack played up five times, and beat a player rated 2180 to raise his rating from 1570 to 1664.

Sam Shankland with his gold medal. Image credit – Chess Drum (Daaim Shabazz)



Information & reservations: 415.393.0110 or chessclub.org.



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Sarah Cruz, Editor