Welcome MI’s New Executive Director
TARYN EDWARDS, MEMBER RELATIONS AND MARKETING SPECIALIST

I 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)
TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

MEET THE AUTHOR

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

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

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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

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**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.

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Information & registration: 415.393.0100 or milibrary.org/events. All events are held in the 4th 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 2nd floor Circulation desk. All Book Discussions are held in the 4th floor Board Room.
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!
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.

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.

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.

Identity Theft Prevention
5th Floor Meeting Room
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.

Excel: Beyond the Basics
5th Floor Meeting Room
This class builds on the skills you learned in the Excel Basics class. Learn to create a simple chart; import data from an external source; sort, filter and format data. If you have a laptop running Excel, feel free to bring it to class. Library laptops will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration Required.

Discovering the Library’s Collections
4th Floor Meeting Room
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.

Investment Information on the Web
This class explores 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.
A Message from Ralph Lewin,
Executive Director

The 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,

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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
43rd Annual Carroll Capps Memorial

Sunday, October 26
10:00 am - 5:00 pm
43rd 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
Lecture by John Donaldson

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)
Twenty-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.

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 disdain? What does neuroscience say about how we mirror behavior? Join this provocative discussion!

Panelists include:

Cara Black
carablack.com
Holly Brown
facebook.com/hollybrownavtar
Julie Anne Long
julieannelong.com
Jason Marsh
greatergood.berkeley.edu/author/jasonmarsh
Elizabeth Rosner
elizabethrosner.com
Ransom Stephens, Ph.D.
ransomstephens.com
Caren Walker
scholar.berkeley.edu/carenwalker

Cells Institute Members and Litquake Bestseller Sponsors Free; Public $15

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

Chess (continued from page 7)

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