



**Mechanics'
Institute**
Since 1854

Mechanics' Quarterly

Vol. 3, No. 4

October - December 2019

Cross-Cultural Explorations: Mechanics' Institute Celebrates Irish History and Heritage

Save the Date for Hinterland: Festival of Irish Culture and Innovation

Myles Dungan of Hinterland Festival



In collaboration with the Hinterland Festival of Irish Culture and Innovation in Kells, Ireland, Mechanics' Institute will be hosting Hinterland in San Francisco, November 8-10. This eclectic event will encompass Irish and Irish-American fiction and non-fiction that includes elements of drama, fiction, politics, history, fine arts, sport, genealogy, ecology, and children's literature. Irish luminaries such as Liz Nugent, Myles Dungan, Jim Lockhart, and Luke O'Neill will be in attendance as well as the local talent of Ethel Rohan, Emer Martin, and Matthew Spangler. Events will include panel discussions, author talks, poetry, writing classes, and history lectures. Tickets to related events will be available in early October. Please see milibrary.org/events/hinterland for details.

A Short History of the Irish Revolution in Four Parts with Myles Dungan

In Partnership with Hinterland Festival of Irish Culture and Innovation

6:30-7:30 pm

Board Room

MI members \$10 per session; Public \$15 per session; Registration required

For three years (1919-1922), Irish radical nationalists took on the military might of the British Empire in an uneven struggle. This short course examines how they fought their colonizers to a standstill and achieved independence.



October 15 An Introduction to the Irish Revolution 1919-1921

A short account of the main military and political events of the revolutionary period from the convening of the First Dáil in January 1921 to the conclusion of the Treaty negotiations in December 1922.

October 21 Newspapers, Propaganda, and the Anglo-Irish War

How nationalist newspapers were censored and suppressed by the British authorities, how the IRA wreaked vengeance on loyalist newspapers, and how both sides got their message across to the watching world.

October 28 War in the Shadows: Michael Collins and Covert Intelligence

How Collins, as IRA Director of Intelligence, with deadly consequences, turned the tables on a British administration which had relied, heretofore, on the effectiveness of its own spies and informers. (*Michael Collins, image at right*)

November 4 What Did You Do in the War of Independence, Grandad?

How to use online resources such as Irish census returns, the Bureau of Military History, the Military Services Pensions Collection, and newspapers to trace the activities of your ancestors during the Irish revolutionary period.

Chess

Upcoming Chess Events

Tournaments

October 22 – December 17: **2019 Fall TNM**
9 rounds, G/120; d5

October 26 – 27

2019 CalChess State Rapid & Blitz Championship

November 2 – 3: **Carroll Capps Memorial**
4 rounds, G/90; d5

November 16: **St. Amant Memorial**
5 rounds, G/40; d5

December 7: **McClain Memorial**
3 rounds, G/75; d5

December 20 – 22: **IM Donaldson Championship**
5 rounds, G/90;d5 for \$5000

Scholastic Tournaments

Swiss: 4 rounds, G/30; d5 at 10AM, Blitz G/5; d0 at 3PM.
10/6, 10/19, 11/10, 11/23, 12/1, 12/14, 12/28

Monday Night Rapids

Last Monday of the month, G/15 +2
9/30, 10/21, 11/25, 12/30

For more information and to register for events, visit the Chess Club website: chessclub.org.

Scholastic Chess Programs

Excitement is in the air for scholastic chess programs at Mechanics' Institute. Classes at schools around San Francisco are starting with the new school year, weekend classes and kids' tournaments continue throughout the year, and seasonal camps are offered at the Chess Club.

Mechanics' Institute Chess Club is proud to offer **free or fee-for-service chess classes** at Bay Area schools, teaching chess to hundreds of children and exposing students to the immediate benefits of the game. It's not too late to reach out to us via chessroom@milibrary.org if you want learn more about Mechanics' starting a chess program at your child's school.

milibrary.org/chess/scholastic-chess

Our **Saturday kids class** continues through the summer from 11am – 1pm with Coach Andy Trattner and others, with 20+ kids ranging from absolute beginners to intermediate level. No need to register in advance; drop by to try it out. Find the dates on our website. milibrary.org/events/chess-class-beginners-and-intermediate-players

Scholastic tournaments are offered once a month at the Institute: a morning 4-round Swiss tournament, and an afternoon blitz tournament for the fast action lovers. Find more information and register at milibrary.org/chess/scholastic-swiss-blitz-tournaments

Chess camps are an exciting way for kids to play chess and socialize over the board. Mechanics' Institute Chess Club's summer camps are winding down, but we will continue to offer camps during the holiday season. Check out dates and more at our website. milibrary.org/chess/scholastic-chess



Mechanics' hosts chess tournaments for all ages.

Recent Major Gifts

We are grateful for the support we receive from the following individuals and foundations, who make our continued growth possible. Thank you! The following contributions were received between June 1, 2019 and August 31, 2019.

David and Stella Goodwin*

The Charles D. and Frances K. Field Fund

Lindsey Crittenden

L. Daniela Kirshenbaum**

Alexandra and Robert Lindsay

Jerry and Jackie Moskowitz Gift Fund of

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Charles G. Stephenson

Estate of Alice M. Wilson*

Patrick Wolff** and Diana Schneider

* James Lick Legacy Society Member

**Life Member

Live Broadcasting Brings Chess Communities Together

Mechanics' Institute Chess Club brings our events to the community with live broadcasts. We are able to show 10 boards of our tournament games on the internet for viewers to follow, while providing live commentary of the games by master trio FM Paul Whitehead, WFM Natalya Tsodikova, and GM Nick deFirmian.

Broadcasting our club games leverages the power of technology to engage not only with our own chess community, but also with other clubs around the world. Using the universal language of chess to interact with people in different communities and cultures, we can make a substantive impact on the world.

Mechanics' is working to attract chess clubs in other cities to join in this online community-building effort. If you know of a club or group of people who want to join, please email us at chessroom@milibrary.org.



WFM Natalya Tsodikova (left) and FM Paul Whitehead (right) provide commentary of tournament games.

Library Closure for Improvement Project: December 23, 26-27

On December 23 and 26-27, library staff will be busy on a major shifting project: moving materials to make room for incoming volumes and to spread out those areas that are more tightly packed than others. This will mean the stacks are in a bit of disarray on those dates, so the library will be closed to members while we get the materials in order and update our catalog with the correct location info, so that you can find and browse library materials on December 28.

Please note that the chess club, administrative offices, and building will be open on December 23 and 26-27.

Any books that you return in the book drop during the closure will be checked in as of the last library open day, December 22.

Upcoming Events

Litquake @ MI

LITQUAKE

Get ready for the 20th anniversary of Litquake (October 10 – 18)! San Francisco's exuberant 10-day literary festival returns with several programs hosted at Mechanics' Institute, free to all. Registration is required.

Tiffany Shlain in conversation with **Kevin Smokler**
on **24/6: The Power of Unplugging One Day a Week**

October 15, 6:30 pm

The Berlin Woman with author **Alan Kaufman**

October 16, 6:30 pm

Obi Kaufmann on **The State of Water: Understanding California's Most Precious Resource**

October 17, 12:30 pm

Carolina De Robertis on **Cantoras**

October 17, 6:30 pm



(clockwise from top left) Tiffany Shlain, Alan Kaufman, Carolina DeRobertis (photo by Pamela Denis Harris), and Obi Kaufmann

CinemaLit Presents American Independents: Taking a Stand



October 4

Defending Your Life (1991)

Directed by Albert Brooks
Albert Brooks, Rip Torn, Meryl Streep

October 11

Lone Star (1996)

Directed by John Sayles
Chris Cooper, Elizabeth Peña

October 18

A Serious Man (2009)

Directed by Joel and Ethan Coen
Michael Stuhlbarg, Richard Kind

October 25

Winter's Bone (2010)

Directed by Debra Granik
Jennifer Lawrence, John Hawkes

Fridays; Doors open 5:30 pm; Program begins 6:00 pm

MI members free; Public \$10 Suggested Donation; Registration required

The Superwoman: Miriam Michelson and Suffrage Activism in San Francisco *co-sponsored by Alta Magazine and Jewish Community Library*

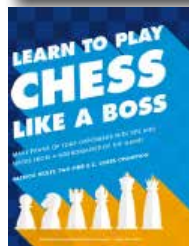


Author and historian Lori Harrison-Kahan will discuss the career of writer, journalist, and suffrage activist Miriam Michelson, who pioneered the women's rights movement during the 1890s.

November 14, 7:00 pm; Free to all; Registration required; 4th Floor Meeting Room

Play Chess Like a Boss with Grandmaster Patrick Wolff

Have you ever wondered how chess players make the first move to learn the rules and transform from a pawn to a king? Join two-time U.S. Chess Champion and International Chess Grandmaster Patrick Wolff as he illuminates the path to a perfect checkmate. *Learn to Play Chess Like a Boss* includes an introduction to all the chess pieces as well as their strengths and weaknesses, tips on how to protect your pieces and prevent their capture, and guidance on when to attack and when to defend.



October 22, 5:00 pm; Free; No registration required; Chess Room

And More!



Check milibrary.org/events for additional programs, including appearances by L. John Harris (*left, photo by Andrea Young*) on October 24 for Café French.

A Selection of Upcoming Library Programs

Mechanics' Institute offers a host of classes as well as reading, activity, and discussion groups each week. For program details and to register for programs, check posters and flyers throughout MI, visit our website at milibrary.org, or call the reference desk at 415.393.0102 between 10am and 3pm, Monday through Saturday. Below is a partial list of offerings. Complete listings and information can be found at milibrary.org/events.

Calling All Readers

MI hosts member-only book groups like **Brown Bag Mystery Readers** and the **World Literature Group**. Upcoming selections include *The Snatch* by Bill Pronzini and *Manual for Cleaning Women* by Lucia Berlin. Check our website for readings and schedules.

New Book Group

Join fellow members in discussion of short reads at the latest addition to our roster of book groups. **Fast Fridays** highlights literary journals such as *ZYZVA* and *Paris Review*, focusing on contemporary writing. It meets on the first Friday of the month. Upcoming selections include J.R. Lansdale's "The Projectionist," anthologized in *In Sunlight or in Shadow: Stories inspired by the paintings of Edward Hopper*, "Wamsutter Wolf" by Annie Proulx, and "Acceptance Journey" by Mary Gaitskill. MI members are welcome to drop in. Check the web for readings and schedules.

Librarian-Led Classes

When you need to shop around, who can you trust when people may be paid to write favorable product reviews online? Learn to navigate **Consumer Reports'** online portal. Pre-registration is required.

Interested in nurturing your family tree? Attend a hands-on workshop exploring the use of **Ancestry Library Edition**. Pre-registration is required.

Want to improve your technological skills? Make an appointment for one of our monthly **Technology Office Hours**, or drop in with your device to the **Library Downloads Workshop**. Check our website for dates and registration details.

Classes, Workshops, and Programs

Medication Education and Safety for Seniors



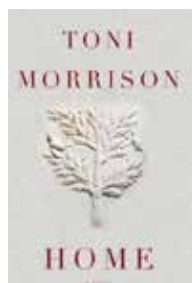
Join us for tea and a discussion with clinical pharmacist Ivy Ge on common medications and safety for seniors, covering:

- How aging affects medication absorption, metabolism, distribution, and excretion
- What classes of medication are considered dangerous to the elderly
- How to monitor medication side effects and seek medical help before it's too late
- Common causes for hospital admissions and ways to prevent them
- Where to find research-proven dietary recommendations and supplements that you can trust
- How to effectively communicate with your doctor about your medication-related concerns

December 3, Noon – 1:00 pm
Meeting Room
Members and Public Free;
No registration required

Discuss the Life and Work of Toni Morrison: *Home*

Celebrate the legacy and influence of Toni Morrison, whose honors include the 1993 Nobel Prize for Literature, a Pulitzer for *Beloved*, the 2005 Coretta Scott King Award, and the U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom, to name just a few. Join fellow members in a discussion of Morrison's 2012 novel *Home*.



Frank returns from the Korean War with symptoms of PTSD. Traveling by train and bus, he faces challenges navigating from California to an all-black town in rural Jim Crow Georgia. As nightmares of war collide with childhood memories, Frank discovers the courage he thought he had lost as he helps his troubled sister in this place he once called home.

Whether you're a devoted Toni Morrison fan or new to her work, all members are welcome to participate in this special one-session book discussion.

October 29, Noon – 1:00 pm
Board Room
MI Members Free; Registration recommended

A Selection of Writing Workshops and Programs

How Mastering the Art of Letter Writing Elevates Your Fiction



October 26, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm
Board Room
Members: \$39 Public: \$49; Registration required

Workshop Your Query Letter to Finally Get an Agent

October 26, 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Board Room
Members: \$69 Public: \$79; Registration required

Gina Mulligan

Writers Lunch:

Make Your Crime Fiction More Realistic with Adam Plantinga

November 15, Noon
Meeting Room
Members & Public Free;
No registration required



"Scene" at Mechanics' Institute

The Believer: A Literary Celebration

On August 1, curator Ted Gioia hosted a program at Mechanics' Institute celebrating the popular eclectic literary magazine, *The Believer*, published in Las Vegas at the Black Mountain Institute. Five local writers – Anisse Gross, Jesse Nathan, Steve Silberman, Esme Weijun Wang, and Colin Winnette – shared favorite selections from past issues.



Esme Weijun Wang



GM Shakhriyar Mamedyarov and competitors

World Class Exhibition at Mechanics'

The world's #9 rated player, GM Shakhriyar Mamedyarov, came to visit the Mechanics' Institute Chess Club for the first time on August 7, putting on an amazing tandem simultaneous exhibition performance in front of a large crowd. Along with his friend and world class player, GM Rauf Mamedov, they defeated a field of 26 players, racing against a clock on each board that gave them just an hour and a half to finish all their games. They went 26-0 against a field that included four masters and many regular Mechanics' tournament players. The event was broadcast on our Twitch channel and can be re-watched at the Mechanics' Institute Chess Club's YouTube channel.

Liberté, Égalité, Le Jazz Hot!

On July 14, Mechanics' Institute's annual Bastille Day celebration attracted new faces and longtime members to celebrate Fête Nationale with Le Jazz Hot at the helm. Attendees were treated to hors d'oeuvres and beverages befitting the celebration of the storming of the Bastille, the end of feudalism in France, and the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*.



Le Jazz Hot

Coming Soon



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

Questions?

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E-mail:
reference@milibrary.org

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Library Hours

Monday - Thursday: 9 am - 8 pm
Friday: 9 am - 6 pm
Saturday: 10 am - 5 pm
Sunday: 1 pm - 5 pm

Closures

October 14
Indigenous Peoples' Day

November 11

Veterans' Day

November 27

Early Closure 9 am - 5 pm

November 28-29

Thanksgiving

December 23 - 27

Library Closed

December 24-25

Winter Break

December 31

Early Closure 9 am - 5 pm

January 1, 2020

New Year's Day

Night Tour at the MI

November 18, 6:00 pm

Members & Public Free; No registration required

3rd Floor Library

Mechanics' Institute of San Francisco was founded in 1854 to serve the vocational and social needs of the city's mechanics, artisans, and industrialists. Today Mechanics' Institute continues as a membership organization boasting a fantastic general-interest library, active cultural events calendar, and world-renowned chess club. Open to new, long-time, and prospective members, this tour of the Institute will orient you to the building, include an overview of our history and mission, and outline current services and the benefits of membership. Tours typically take 60 minutes, and a wine and cheese reception will follow.

Bi-Annual Members' Meeting

December 5, 5:30 pm Reception, 6:00 pm Meeting

Members & Guests Free; No registration required

Meeting Room

Join us for our bi-annual Mechanics' Institute community gathering to meet fellow members, staff, and trustees. Hear from staff about new plans and programs, technology updates, and our efforts to improve your experience as members.

Members' Holiday Gathering

December 12, 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

Members & Guests; \$15 Admission; Registration required

2nd Floor Library

Join fellow members and staff for our annual winter gathering to mingle and nosh. We will serve hors d'oeuvres, gourmet cheeses, delectable desserts, and tempting libations! Register in advance -- this fun and festive event reaches capacity quickly.

