

WEISSMAN SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES GENERAL FACULTY REPORT (Fall 2014)

The Weissman School begins the new academic year with a host of new faculty members and an increasingly evident set of challenges having to do with enrollments. Apparently a consequence of the University's adoption of the Pathways General Education curriculum, some Weissman departments have experienced a reduction in the number of students enrolled in base curriculum courses, a trend that, if it continues, will necessitate adjustments in scheduling and perhaps in adjunct hiring as well. It appears that curriculum issues will continue to command the attention of Weissman faculty and administrators for the foreseeable future.

New Positions, Projects, and Events

On Monday, October 20th, President Wallerstein and Dean Peck hosted a dual celebration of the 15th anniversary of the George and Mildred Weissman School of Arts and Sciences and the 10th anniversary of the Baruch Performing Arts Center. Entitled "Academics and the Cultural Arts," the event included a performance by Linda Lavin with musical accompaniment by Billy Stritch, as well as a reception and remarks.

Seventeen new assistant professors are joining the Weissman School this year. They are Allison Hailey-Hahn (Communication Studies), Sarah Bishop (Communication Studies), Laura Kolb (English), Allison Curseen (English), Lisa Blankenship (English), Chun-Wo Pat (FPA-Graphic Arts), Mark Rice (History), Louis-Pierre Arguin (Mathematics), Feng Chen (Mathematics), Max Kramer (Modern Languages), Jean Gaffney (Natural Sciences), Stephen Gosnell (Natural Sciences), Camila Granados-Cifuentes (Natural Sciences), Jonathan Gilmore (Philosophy), Roseanne McManus (Political Science), Nicholas Sibrava (Psychology), and Steven Young (Psychology). The School enters the academic year with 245 full-time faculty members, 57 of whom have been hired in the last five years.

The Dedication of the Sandra Kahn Wasserman Jewish Studies Center will take place on Thursday, October 30th. On May 5th, the Center hosted its fourth annual spring conference. Entitled "Russian and Soviet Jewry: Cultural Production in the Old and New Worlds," the conference included a series of panel discussions and a concert by the Klezmer punk band Golem.

On Wednesday, September 17th, the English Department, together with the Wasserman Jewish Studies Center, hosted the Barbara Gluck Memorial Lecture. This talk, given in honor of our late colleague, was presented by Dr. Abby Bender of New York University and was entitled "James Joyce, the Promised Land, and Unsettlement."

The Weissman New Faculty Brown Bag Lunch Series continued last spring with talks by Professor Elizabeth Minei of the Department of Communication Studies, Professor Tatiana Emmanouil of the Department of Psychology, and Professor Timothy Ridenour of the Department of Mathematics on March 20th; Professor Stephanie Hershinow of the Department of English, Professor Jayson Harsin of the Department of Communication Studies, and Professor Andrew Lesniewski of the Department of Mathematics on April 24th; Professor Tshombe Miles

of the Department of Black and Latino Studies, Professor Martina Nguyen of the Department of History, and Professor Anja Richter of the Department of Mathematics on April 29th; Professor Pablo Piexoto of the Department of Natural Sciences, Professor Ely Shipley of the Department of English, and Professor Ivan Matic of the Department of Mathematics on May 6th. More lunches are planned for this semester.

In recognition of “the need to make improvements to our General Education curriculum,” the Weissman Faculty voted on September 18th to rescind the “Resolution on Halting Pathways” that had passed with an overwhelming majority a year and a half earlier. Faculty and administrators in the Weissman School are now at liberty to make adjustments to the Pathways curriculum through the usual curriculum process.

Student and Faculty Awards and Achievements

Professor John Maciuicka of the Department of Fine and Performing Arts has been awarded the 118th Rome Prize in the category of Historical Preservation and Conservation. Professor Maciuicka’s project is entitled *The Eternal Palace: Transformations and Reconstructions of the Berlin “Stadtschloss,” 1450-2002*. Rome Prize recipients are provided with a fellowship, which includes a cash stipend as well as living and working space at the American Academy in Rome.

Professor Geanne Rosenberg of the Department of Journalism has been awarded a \$25,000 grant from the David and Katherine Moore Family Foundation for her work on News Literacy.

Professor Edyta Greer of the Department of Natural Sciences has been awarded a \$24,000 grant from the American Chemical Society.

Professor Martina Nguyen of the Department of History and Professor Karen Shelby of the Department of Fine and Performing Arts have won the internal competition to become Baruch’s nominees for the NEH Summer Stipends program. Professors Nguyen and Shelby will now enter the national competition for these awards, which support individuals pursuing research of value to scholars in the humanities or to a general audience.

Four Weissman faculty members have been awarded grants to establish faculty collaborations with colleagues at Brazilian Universities. They are Professor Tshombe Miles of the Department of Black and Latino Studies, who is working with faculty members of PUC-Rio on the topic of people of African ancestry in Brazil and the United States; and Professors David Gruber, Jamal Jalilian-Marian, and Pablo Peixoto of the Department of Natural Sciences, who are working with faculty members of the University of Sao Paolo.

Weissman faculty were awarded fifty PSC-CUNY grants in the last academic year, which was also the forty-fifth year of the program.

Weissman as a Center of Cultural Life

This fall’s Sidney Harman Writer-in-Residence is the distinguished novelist and short story writer Mary Gaitskill, who will read from her work on October 28th in the Asriel and Marie Rackow Conference Room of the Library Building.

As the inaugural event of its “Gender Fluid” series, BPAC hosted actor and activist Laverne Cox, who is one of the most visible transgender women in the country, with an Emmy nomination for her work on the television show *Orange Is the New Black*, a *Time* Magazine cover, and numerous national television interviews to her credit. She was joined by her twin brother, artist M. Lamar, for a discussion of their early years in Alabama, their growing realization of the paths their lives would take, their family, and their careers today.

Over four nights in October, BPAC presented the New York premiere of “Karen Finley: Written in Sand.” The iconic performance artist offered pieces about AIDS written between 1982 and 1994, some performed for the first time. Between the pieces, Paul Nebenzahl performed songs by musicians who have died of AIDS.

On October 11th, actor, comedian, and writer Alec Mapa, who is best known for his roles on the television shows *Ugly Betty* and *Desperate Housewives* and as the lead in *M. Butterfly* on Broadway, reminisced about his career in television and film in a show entitled “Alec Mapa: I Remember Mapa.”

“Solo in the City: The Best of FringeNYC 2014” showcased eight solo performance shows from the recent New York International Fringe Festival.

The Aaron Silberman Concert Series will present the Alexander String Quartet on November 14th in a program of Mozart, Kodály, and Shostakovich.

Conductor, trombonist, and composer Alain Trudel, who is Music Director of l’Orchestre Symphonique de Laval and holds a variety of other distinguished positions in the Canadian musical world, will perform with a small group on November 24th.

From November 6th through the 16th, the Encompass New Opera Theatre will present a new comic opera by Richard Pearson Thomas entitled *A Wake or a Wedding*.

This semester the Milt Hinton Jazz Series will present the Harlem Quartet, a group at home in both the jazz and classical traditions. The quartet’s mission is to advance diversity in classical music and engage new audiences through the performance of a varied repertoire, which includes works by minority composers.

The Mishkin Gallery opened on September 18th with the exhibition “Andy Warhol: Celebrating the Famous and the Unknown, Photographs and Silkscreen Prints.” Now part of the Baruch College Collection, these prints and photographs were awarded through a grant to the Mishkin Gallery by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Ranging from 1972 to 1986, the Warhol silkscreens and photographs encompass more than a decade of images of famous and anonymous figures, which offer a unique portrait of popular culture as envisioned by one of the most celebrated artists of the 20th century. The Gallery will be providing talks and workshops for the Honors Program, Freshman Seminars, and other Baruch classes.