

## ARTS, CULTURE & HUMANITIES



### **THE GUITAR: ITS MAGIC AND HOW IT CONQUERED THE WORLD**

Jonathan Palevsky



### **ROOTS OF THE BLUES**

Seth Kibel

#### **Sessions I and II**

**Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. (begins September 9)**

**Fee: \$148 (\$74 for each session)**

The first thing that comes to mind when one thinks of the guitar is Spain and there is indeed a centuries long tradition of great classical guitar music and performers from the Iberian Peninsula. However, the guitar has a long tradition in our country and around the world. In fact, it would be hard to find a country where this six-string chordophone hasn't made a substantial impression. The guitar is used in every conceivable type of music from the artist of art music to the folksiest of folk music. It is used in classical, country, folk, jazz, blues and rock music. The guitar comes in a mind-bending variety of different shapes, colors, and sizes including electric, acoustic, 7-string, 12-string and almost every other number of strings imaginable. Come and explore the amazing music and performers of this instrument that has changed the world. Show and tell included!

Jonathan Palevsky, B.M., M.M., is program director for WBJC. His undergraduate studies focused on musicology and his graduate work at Baltimore's Peabody Institute focused on instrumental training in classical guitar performance. Jonathan can be heard as host of Face the Music, Past Masters, WBJC Opera Fest and regular afternoon classical programming on WBJC. He also hosts Cinema Sundays at the Charles Theater. Jonathan has been a regular of the Osher faculty since the former Auburn Society's first semester in spring 1999.

#### **Session II**

**Wednesdays, 11:00 a.m. (begins October 15)**

**Fee: \$74**

Explore the origins of the blues in post-Reconstruction times and discuss such seminal musicians and songwriters as W.C. Handy, Mamie Smith, Bessie Smith, "Ma" Rainey, Alberta Hunter, Ethel Waters, Robert Johnson, Sonny Boy Williamson, T-Bone Walker and others. Trace the history of this music from its origins in the Antebellum South, the brief blues "craze" of the 1920s, and the northward migration of African Americans to Chicago, culminating in the electrified blues of McKinley Morganfield, a.k.a. Muddy Waters in the 1950s. Classic audio recordings, vintage video clips and live performances from the instructor himself will keep these lectures as lively and interesting as the music itself.

Seth Kibel is one of the Mid-Atlantic's premier woodwind specialists, working with some of the best bands in klezmer, jazz, swing, and more. Wowing audiences on clarinet, flute, and saxophone, Seth has made a name for himself in the Baltimore-Washington region, and beyond. He is the featured performer with The Klezmet, Bay Jazz Project, Music Pilgrim Trio, The Natty Beaux, and more. Winner of 28 Washington Area Music Awards (Wammies), including "Best World Music Instrumentalist" and "Best Jazz Instrumentalist."

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**ZOOM COURSE****THE BEST ROCK SONGS OF ALL TIME:  
FROM THE '50S THROUGH THE '70S**

Emanuel Abramovits

**Session I****Mondays, 9:30 a.m. (begins September 8)****Fee: \$74**

Put music fans in the same room and inevitably, they will ask each other ‘what’s your favorite song?’. If we talk about rock fans, there will be some choosing “Smoke on the Water,” “Bohemian Rhapsody,” or “Stairway to Heaven,” while many will have other choices. In this course, students will learn about the birth of rock and roll, the energy of the music and the stories behind the songs that have been the soundtracks of their lives, featuring artists such as The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Who, Jimi Hendrix, Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd, Bob Dylan, Queen and more. With audiovisuals, stories and anecdotes, let’s discuss what makes these songs great, the context when they became classics, the songwriters, the performers, their cultural significance and their resonance across time.

**ZOOM COURSE****THE BEST ROCK SONGS OF ALL TIME:  
FROM THE '80S TO TODAY**

Emanuel Abramovits

**Session II****Fridays, 2:30 p.m. (begins October 17)****Fee: \$74**

Rock music is constantly evolving. If the '60s and '70s gave us great rock classics, the '80s, '90s and the present century have been wonderful times to enjoy the music of Guns and Roses, Rush, Heart, Tom Petty, Bruce Springsteen and dozens of other great artists. We will discuss what makes their songs great, the context when they became classics, the songwriters, the performers, their cultural significance and their resonance across time. We will look ahead to the future of rock music — the technology, the threats and the challenges.

Emanuel Abramovits is a mechanical engineer with an MBA and has been a concert promoter since 2000, directly involved in many events by international artists. He designed and staged many original orchestral events, including an “Event of the Year” winner and several world premieres. He served as the cultural director at Union Israelita de Caracas from 2008 to 2019, releasing books, organizing film cycles, concerts, and art exhibits. He has been consistently teaching online and in presence across the U.S. since 2020.

**ZOOM COURSE****FROM REALISM TO ABSTRACT ART**

Joseph Cassar

**Sessions I and II****Mondays, 11:15 a.m. (begins September 8)****Fee: \$148 (\$74 for each session)****NOTE: This course will not be recorded.**

This course addresses the fundamental question of how abstract art came about. Why did artists abandon traditional subject matter for art that focuses on color, line and shape, among other things, to create a new form of expression? We will discuss the historical development from art of ancient civilizations to that of the present day. Learn how art has always been representative of the time in which it was produced. Artists ranging from Magritte to Mondrian, Picasso to Theo van Doesberg, Naum Gabo to Antonio Sant'Elia, among many others, will be covered. This course is rich in visual images that invite questions and discussion.

Joseph Paul Cassar is professor of art and graphic communications at the University of Maryland Global Campus. He has been engaged in designing online art courses for the university as well as for the New York Knowledge Network. He has lectured at the University of Malta for the Faculty of Education, Mediterranean Institute, Faculty of Theology and formed part of the art department with the Faculty of Arts, where he lectured on the modern and contemporary period. He is the author of several award-winning art books with a special focus on Maltese modern artists. In addition to presenting at area institutions, Cassar has lectured at the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Walters Art Museum and at the Smithsonian Institution. Cassar is also a practicing artist who exhibits his works regularly in the Baltimore-Washington D.C. area. Cassar keeps Malta at heart, visits regularly and maintains a studio in Xemxija.

**GREAT WOMEN PHOTOGRAPHERS (PART 1)**

Steve Dembo

**Session I****Thursdays, 11:00 a.m. (begins September 11)****Fee: \$74**

Women have been involved with photography since its inception. Their male contemporaries are far better known with well-documented images and lives. In this course, we will learn about the great women photographers who are equal to their male peers, if not better. We will explore the very early women pioneers such as Clementina Maude, Viscountess Hwarden, Anna Atkins, Julia Margaret Cameron, Zaida Ben-Yusef and others from the 19th and early 20th centuries. We will discuss their methods as we view the many images they have created.

Steve Dembo received his M.F.A. from MICA. He is an adjunct professor at CCBC, where he teaches digital photography, digital imaging, and 2-D design. His photographic work has been critically acclaimed, has garnered numerous competitive awards and accolades, and has appeared in national publications and juried exhibitions. He has taught several courses at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Towson University. He spent 30 years as a college administrator in Connecticut, New York, and Maryland. He has been an instructor in history at York College-CUNY, Norwalk Community College, Community College of Baltimore, and Howard Community College.

**ZOOM COURSE****MUSEUM OF LOST ART**

Jim O'Leary

**Session I****Fridays, 9:30 a.m. (begins September 12)****Fee: \$74**

Explore this imaginary museum which holds more masterpieces than all the world's museums combined — lost, stolen, damaged or destroyed pieces of art, some even stolen multiple times. We feature treasures of King Tut's tomb, the Terra-Cotta Army, the Book of Kells, the Mona Lisa, Van Gogh's Sunflowers, Monet's Water Lillies and dozens more. We will learn how much art has been stolen, lost, damaged or destroyed over time. We will discuss the many reasons why art is stolen and why some art has been intentionally destroyed. Discover how many famous works of art have been lost to history and how some have been recovered.

Jim O'Leary is a lifelong educator specializing in science but with an enduring interest in art and the intersection of science and art. In preparing for a previous course on Vincent van Gogh, he came across several incidents of van Gogh's art being lost and destroyed, which led to investigating the topic of lost masterpieces.

**EIGHT PLAYS EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW, FALL 2025 EDITION**

Greg Jones

**Sessions I and II****Wednesdays, 1:00 p.m. (begins September 10)****Fee: \$148 (\$74 for each session)**

In this edition of the popular series, students will look at plays by or about strong female characters. In addition to comments about the plays' context and place in the literary and theatrical canon, the course will be illustrated by performance clips and, where possible, live performances by celebrated local actors. Lively discussion is encouraged. Links to the scripts and online performances will be given in advance, but no prior preparation or attendance in previous classes is required. The eight plays to be considered are: "Medea" by Euripides, "Trifles" by Susan Glaspell, "Major Barbara" by George Bernard Shaw, "Hedda Gabler" by Henrik Ibsen, "Auntie Mame" by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee, "Night, Mother" by Marsha Norman, "Intimate Apparel" by Lynn Nottage and "The Children" by Lucy Kirkwood.

Greg Jones has appeared in more than 60 stage productions and has written 10 full-length plays. He most recently received the 2024 WATCH Award for Best Featured Performance in a Play for "The Winslow Boy" in Annapolis. He has a B.A. in drama from Catholic University and an M.A. in English literature from Salisbury University. He has taught English, literature, and film in colleges in Delaware, Maryland and Virginia and serves on the board of the Anne Arundel County Scholarships for Scholars program.



**ZOOM COURSE**
**INSTINCTIVE INTENSITY:  
THE FILMS OF GENE HACKMAN**

Arnold Blumberg

**Session I**
**Fridays, 1:00 p.m. (begins September 12)**
**Fee: \$74**

Gene Hackman was an actor of extraordinary energy, often playing characters whose rage was barely contained just below the surface, sometimes disguised by humor and a twinkle in his eye. As a member of the New Hollywood wave of actors, Hackman had memorable roles in "Bonnie and Clyde" (1967), "The French Connection" (1971, and the first of his two Academy Award-winning performances), "The Conversation" (1974), "Mississippi Burning" (1988), "Unforgiven" (1992, and his second Oscar win), "Crimson Tide" (1995) and "The Quick and the Dead" (1995), among many others. For at least one generation of fans, he will best be remembered as Superman's nemesis, Lex Luthor, in three Superman films released from 1978 to 1987. His decades-spanning career ended in 2004 with "Welcome to Mooseport."

Arnold T. Blumberg is a pop culture historian and professor of multiple courses in media literacy and other cultural topics. He has taught at UMBC, the University of Baltimore, CCBC, and Osher at Towson University. He spent 15 years in the comic book industry as writer and editor of "The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide," curated a pop culture museum for five years, and currently runs his own publishing company, ATB Publishing.

**ZOOM COURSE**
**THE INNER TRUTH:  
THE FILMS OF DENZEL WASHINGTON**

Arnold Blumberg

**Session II**
**Mondays, 1:00 p.m. (begins October 13)**
**Fee: \$74**

With an intensity and dedication reminiscent of Sidney Poitier and Gene Hackman (who shared the screen with Washington in 1995's "Crimson Tide"), the riveting and versatile Denzel Washington is one of the most accomplished actors of his generation. He drew early attention on the television series "St. Elsewhere" (1982–1988) and in war films like "A Soldier's Story" (1984) and "Glory" (1989), for which he won an Academy Award. Winning another Oscar for "Training Day" (2001), Washington has also mesmerized audiences in films like "Cry Freedom" (1987), "Malcolm X" (1992) and the "Equalizer" trilogy (2014–2023). He began directing with "Antwone Fisher" (2002) and, as a producer, he helped to adapt some of playwright August Wilson's works to film while winning a Tony for his role in the 2010 Broadway revival of Wilson's "Fences."

**ZOOM COURSE****ACTIVIST ACTOR: THE FILMS OF JANE FONDA**

Arnold Blumberg

**THE WORLD ACCORDING TO WOODY ALLEN**

William Florman

**Session II****Fridays, 1:00 p.m. (begins October 17)****Fee: \$74**

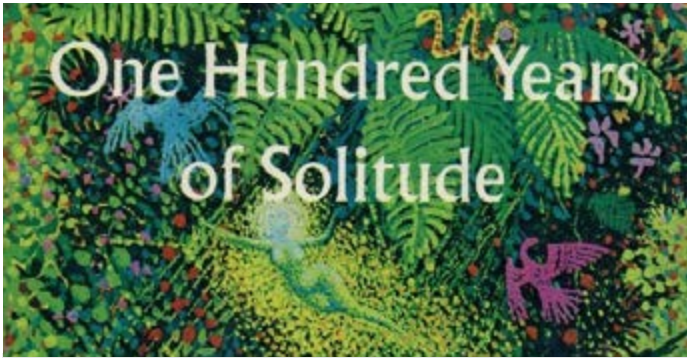
The daughter of a Hollywood icon, Jane Fonda quickly established her own identity and fame as a rising star in the 1960s, becoming one of the most dynamic and successful actresses of the 20th century. She also courted her share of controversy with her activism, later funding her crusade for a variety of social and political causes via a series of incredibly popular workout videotapes. From the wild west in “Cat Ballou” (1965) and outer space in “Barbarella” (1968) to the halls of corporate America in “9 to 5” (1980) and a friendship forged later in life in “Grace and Frankie” (2015–2022), Fonda has come a long way indeed. She also garnered multiple Academy Award nominations, including two wins for “Klute” (1971) and “Coming Home” (1978).

Arnold T. Blumberg is a pop culture historian and professor of multiple courses in media literacy and other cultural topics. He has taught at UMBC, the University of Baltimore, CCBC and Osher at Towson University. He spent 15 years in the comic book industry as writer and editor of “The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide,” curated a pop culture museum for five years and currently runs his own publishing company, ATB Publishing.

**Sessions I and II****Thursdays, 1:00–4:00 p.m. (begins September 11)****Fee: \$148 (\$74 for each session)**

Over the span of more than 50 years and 50 films, Woody Allen has created a body of work distinguished by its brilliant wit and intelligence, as well as his unique visual style. In this course, we will screen eight films: “Annie Hall,” “Hannah and Her Sisters,” “Husbands and Wives,” “The Purple Rose of Cairo,” “Midnight in Paris,” “Blue Jasmine,” “Crimes and Misdemeanors” and “Match Point.” Through these films, we will examine three dominant themes: relationships between men and women, fantasy versus reality and crime and punishment. In short, we will confront the central questions about the possibility of morality, the value of love, and the role of art in these seriocomic films.

William Florman, M.A., J.D., has taught courses in literature and writing at Boston College, Salem State College, and American University. Later, upon graduation from Georgetown Law School, he practiced labor law in Washington, D.C. and then engaged in various entrepreneurial ventures. For the last eight years, Mr. Florman has enjoyed his return to his first love, which is teaching.



### ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE: NOVEL AND NETFLIX

John Sinnigen

#### Session I

**Wednesdays, 1:00 p.m. (begins September 10)**

**Fee: \$74**

Published in Spanish in 1967, “One Hundred Years of Solitude” by the Nobel Prize winning author Gabriel García Márquez rapidly became a best-seller and a classic. An outstanding example of literary magical realism, this fictional saga of generations of the Buendia family is both a metaphor of the history of Colombia and, indeed, of Latin America as a whole. The first Netflix series based on the novel is now available. The course will provide an analysis of the novel from a sociohistorical perspective, while the incorporation of the Netflix series will allow for a comparison of literary and visual language. It will also invite comparisons between the lived experiences and perspectives of 1967 and 2025. This course is taught in English.

John Sinnigen is a retired professor of Spanish and intercultural communication at UMBC. He read “One Hundred Years of Solitude” when it was published in 1967, and he taught it in Spanish at least fifteen times during his career. In 2015 he visited the area of Colombia that inspired the Macondo of the novel.

#### ZOOM COURSE



### THE LIFE AND LITERATURE OF F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

Robert Jacobs

#### Sessions I and II

**Mondays, 2:30 p.m. (begins September 8)**

**Fee: \$148 (\$74 for each session)**

This year marks the 100th anniversary of “The Great Gatsby.” Genius of American letters, F. Scott Fitzgerald, left an indelible mark on American literature and culture. He was brilliant and tragic in equal measure. Starting with “The Great Gatsby” and moving on to some of his most acclaimed short stories, we will examine Fitzgerald’s portrayal of, and profound exploration into, the American dream. We will also delve into Fitzgerald’s deep familial roots in Rockville, MD as well as the considerable time he spent in Baltimore and Towson. We will also explore his passionate yet troubled relationship with his muse/wife Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald. We will read and discuss “The Great Gatsby” throughout the first half of the course. We will also cover four of Fitzgerald’s greatest short stories. Each class meeting will be a combination of lecture and discussion.

Robert Jacobs is a Towson University graduate with a B.A. in English. He traveled to the United Kingdom where he attained an M.A. in comparative literature from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. He spent several years in London working as a freelance writer and has contributed to a variety of publications such as “Time Out London,” The Baltimore Sun’s Metromix, and “The Examiner.” He is an adjunct instructor at Community College of Baltimore County, Johns Hopkins University and Montgomery College.

**ZOOM COURSE****WRITERS OF THE 1920S**

Jack Burkert

**Session I****Mondays, 1:00 p.m. (begins September 8)****Fee: \$74**

The decade of the 1920s was a golden era for both the creators and readers of the written word. Here we present the biographies and words of a few of them. Any discussion of the writers in the 1920s would necessarily include the story of those American literary and artistic émigrés of the Lost Generation, followed by a biography of one of its most interesting members, Zelda Fitzgerald. Our subjects also include highlights of the life of Baltimore's own journalist, H.L. Mencken, and a biography of perhaps the wittiest woman of the era, Dorothy Parker. It's a quick-paced introduction to each of these people and to the lost generation group, designed to introduce or perhaps fill in your knowledge of each one.

Jack Burkert is a Baltimore native and a 1969 graduate of the University of Maryland, graduating with honors with a degree in history and education. His working life, some 40+ years, was spent in various educator roles, beginning in the Baltimore City Public School System, then as a staff member at the Pennsylvania State University, through private employers and then until his retirement in his own consulting firm.

**THE INFANCY NARRATIVES IN MATTHEW'S AND LUKE'S GOSPELS**

Father Robert Albright

**Sessions I and II****Thursdays, 1:00 p.m. (begins September 11)****Fee: \$148 (\$74 for each session)**

The birth stories of Jesus found in the New Testament have been the source of wonderment for Bible readers for centuries. They have produced such cultural activities as Christmas and gift-giving. In this eight-week course we will delve into the mystery of these stories and why they have such magnetism on people of every country in the world — and why they have become even more important than Easter for the Christian world.

Rev. Robert E. Albright is a retired Catholic priest of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. He served as the Catholic Campus Minister at Towson University for the 26 years before his retirement in July 2006. Through teaching a scholarly approach to the Bible over the past 50 years, Father Bob has explored greater interfaith issues at the Institute for Islamic, Christian, and Jewish Studies of Baltimore. He has studied twice in Israel at the International Center for Holocaust Studies and has been to Israel over 18 times leading study tours and retreats and doing private research in Biblical sites and studying the Palestinian/Israeli situation. Father Bob is engaged in numerous Catholic/Jewish endeavors including a funded program to educate Jewish and Catholic high school students in each other's tradition.





## **ETHICS**

Ed Fotheringill

### **Session I**

**Wednesdays, 11:00 a.m. (begins September 10)**

**Fee: \$74**

Western philosophy has been primarily concerned with three major fields of interest: metaphysics (theory of reality), epistemology (theory of knowledge) and ethics (theory of goodness in thought, speech and action). This course will concentrate on ethics and the dimensions of moral experience from the perspectives of three distinguished philosophers: the ancient Greek, Aristotle, the 18th century German, Immanuel Kant, and the 20th century French existentialist, Simone de Beauvoir. Join us to learn and discuss various ethical theories.

Edward Fotheringill has been teaching philosophy at the college level for 45 years. For many years, he held the position of senior lecturer of philosophy at Towson University and Goucher College. For the last ten years of his career he was adjunct professor of philosophy and intellectual history at the Maryland Institute College of Art.

## **BIG THANKS**

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