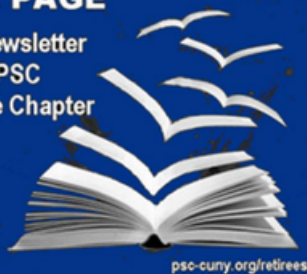


**TURNING  
THE PAGE**

The Newsletter  
of the PSC  
Retiree Chapter



**NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2024**

**Academic Year 2024-25, No. 2**

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# SOCIAL SECURITY LIVES!

## by JOAN GREENBAUM

A huge part of this election for Congress and for the Presidency hinges on the continued funding of both Social Security and Medicare. And while rumors swirl around almost everything, the assertions that these fundamental programs are going bust represent the apex of ugly lies. Social Security, established in the New Deal in the 1930s, and Medicare and Medicaid, created in the activist period of the 1960s, are cornerstones in limiting inequality and providing income and care for seniors and those with low incomes.

*Turning the Page* has written extensively over the last two years about NYC's governmental battle to privatize Medicare. In this issue, we turn our attention to the repeated demands by the Republicans that Social Security must be privatized or severely cut in order to "save it." We began this discussion in an excellent article by Bonnie Nelson in the last *TTP* (Sept./Oct.) entitled "Will Social Security Survive for our Grandchildren?"

Let's start with the Social Security Board of Trustees report issued in May that essentially states that Social Security is alive and well but needs to be adjusted in order to continue indefinitely. One proposed adjustment is to increase the amount of Social Security deductions (FICA). Clearly this makes sense. With many of us living longer beyond retirement than in the past, those who are working need to pay into the system proportionately. In the late 1960s, those who earned more than \$7,000/year paid no additional Social Security tax (FICA). In each decade, the total amount of taxable Social Security income has risen. It is only reasonable to increase it again, adjusting for actuarial factors and the cost of living. According to the Democrats, this will extend benefits to younger "retirees in training" (i.e. working people). We could not abide a world in which "we got ours, so too bad for them" was acceptable. [For the full report: <https://www.ssa.gov/oact/TR/2024/index.html>]

According to the *NYS Alliance for Retired Americans*, Democratic proposals would raise SS benefits across the board, increase the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA), increase benefits to widows, restore student benefits for survivors, eliminate the five-month waiting period for disability payments, raise or end the FICA cap on wages; and expand FICA payments to investment income of the very rich. The same organization has found that Republicans propose to raise the eligibility age again and again, lower basic benefits, or implement a flat benefit for all, that is, if Social Security isn't replaced by private IRAs or block grants to the states. We know from past experiences that these adjustments do not reach the needy or those with lower incomes. We also have seen that as with Medicare Advantage large corporations reach for higher fees and fewer services. [See: [https://www.ssa.gov/oact/testimony/SenateBudgetComm\\_20230712.pdf](https://www.ssa.gov/oact/testimony/SenateBudgetComm_20230712.pdf)]

The non-profit organization Social Security Works documents the ways that Wall Street banks and hedge funds claim that the Social Security Trust Fund will run out of money. This is one of the myths that the

Republicans attempt to perpetuate. Another is that Social Security adds dangerously to the debt. Social Security Works debunks this claim stating, “Social Security’s chief actuary has pointed out that rising inequality is the primary reason for Social Security’s shortfall [projected in 10 years]. If millionaires and billionaires pay their fair share, we can expand Social Security.”

One might wonder what would happen if the U.S. military budget were demonized the way Republicans treat Social Security.

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## DECARBONIZE CUNY NOW!

by NANCY ROMER AND EILEEN MORAN,  
CO-CHAIRS, PSC ENVIRONMENTAL  
JUSTICE WORKING GROUP

Due to decades of disinvestment by both New York State and New York City, CUNY’s old buildings have not been maintained or upgraded. Four CUNY buildings are among New York State’s top 20 dirtiest buildings, polluting the air for our students, faculty, staff and the surrounding neighborhoods. During the pandemic, the problems with CUNY’s HVAC systems became even more apparent.

The PSC’s Environmental Justice Working Group (EJWG), committed to making CUNY campuses greener and more sustainable, seized on the opportunity that the State’s passage of the NY Public Renewables Act (BPRA) and the Federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) provided. While the PSC supported the ultimate passage of the BPRA and other progressive legislation in NYS, Governor Hochul has failed to fund them, expecting private partners to advance wind and other renewable energy to meet the targets NYS set for itself for 2030 and 2040. That plan to decarbonize failed as interest rates rose and private investors, anticipating limited profits, walked away.



Decarbonize CUNY Town Hall at the Graduate Center, September 5, 2024.

These two legislative Acts provide the perfect opportunity for securing funds to enable New York State to transition off fossil fuels. This transition begins with installing renewable energy in public buildings, like those on CUNY and SUNY campuses. EJWG has teamed up with Public Power New York (PPNY) to sponsor **Decarbonize CUNY Town Halls** to highlight the financial support that the BPRA and the IRA could provide. Brooklyn College kicked off this series last May. After months of organizing over the summer, the EJWG helped nine campuses sponsor Decarbonize CUNY Town

Halls this September (Graduate Center, LaGuardia Community College, City Tech, John Jay, College of Staten Island, Hunter College, Queens College, City College, and Hostos Community College). Bronx Community College has scheduled its “Decarbonize BCC” event for later in November.

EJWG has developed a template for the Decarbonize CUNY events. Most events begin with PPNY showing its slides describing the grid and how it can transition to renewable energy under public, more accountable ownership. Chapters of New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) on the campuses have provided vital support as well. Our committee supports the local team’s efforts in any way we can. Each campus establishes an organizing team, some small and some quite large, that set the time, date and place of the event and make decisions on who they want to speak. In most cases, the chapter chair is part of the organizing effort, and/or supports the event. The PSC EJWG with amazing support from our Communications Department (thank you Fran Clark and our new Communications Associate Danny Kaplowitz) designed the flyer that most campuses use. Our legislative team (thank you Bettina, Tiffany and Sam) have recruited legislators such as NY State Senator John Liu, City Comptroller Brad Lander and Assembly Member Alex Bores to speak, and many of our campus organizers help and/or attend the town halls.

While CUNY administrations on each campus were also invited to present their decarbonization and sustainability plans, most did not. Clearly, CUNY management seems intimidated by us. We all want to see our campuses transformed and are necessary partners in that effort if it’s to succeed.

### **You Can Help — Act Now**

At each event, participants call Governor Hochul to demand that she expand and support the mandate that the BPRA is making possible for renewable energy so that NYS can meet the transition targets itself has set. You can help too by going to <https://publicpowerny.org/our-campaign/> to email the Governor and her appointees on the NY Public Power Authority. The Public Power NY Coalition is a collection of organizations across New York focused on the shared goal of clean, renewable, affordable, accessible energy.



Decarbonize CUNY Town Hall at the Graduate Center, 9/5/2024.

### **Next Steps — Stay Tuned.**

PSC EJWG expects that going forward those who organized the Decarbonizing CUNY events will continue their work and link up with their PSC chapter to continue sustainability efforts on our campuses. EJWG will also work closely with PPNY to build the movement to expand public renewable energy. Please consider attending the NY Power Authority public hearing on Wed. Nov 20, at John Jay College (10:00-12:00 and 6:00-8:00).

# GET OUT THE VOTE: ELECTION 2024

## by DAVID KOTELCHUCK

On September 9, the first meeting of the PSC Retirees Chapter this academic year was devoted to “Get Out the Vote: Election 2024,” led by each of three top political leaders of the national American Federation of Teachers, New York State United Teachers and our PSC chapter, and attended by 130 chapter members.

The first speaker was **John Ost, long-time Political Director of the American Federation of Teachers**

(AFT), who is leading the charge for AFT in this year’s presidential, state and local elections. He first noted the key role of retirees in the AFT’s political operations, “They are the backbone of everything we do.” John noted that Democrats have won the popular vote in five of the last six presidential elections (and served only three terms). But the popular vote “means nothing,” since the Electoral College (EC) determines who becomes president. Turning to the EC count, taking the states where each party leads in the polls, the Democrats lead in states with 226 EC votes and the GOP in states with 235 EC votes – and 270 are needed to win. Ost noted that if the



John Ost, Political Director, AFT.

Dems win in November in Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania, all Great Lakes states, while maintaining their leads in all other states they were leading in July, they will have exactly the 270 votes they need to elect Kamala Harris. (Wins in any other purple state, such as AZ, NV, GA and/or NC would provide a “cushion” to this winning EC count.)

Since the AFT has significant union density in all three of these states, it is focusing its resources of staff and programs there and will be asking our members to do phone banking and also go into these states, usually for three-day stints.

Then Ost went on to talk about the tight races in both the U.S. Senate and Congress. The Democrats have essentially a one-seat margin in the Senate now, with six Democratic senators up for re-election. While all six are ahead in the polls now, the chances of winning and maintaining control is “daunting.” So, the votes for congressional seats become critical. Remember, he noted, if Trump wins and the GOP wins a majority in both houses of Congress, Trump will have a “trifecta” and may be able to carry out much of the infamous 2025 Republican agenda.

### From the National to the State

The discussion then segued to **Nicki Richardson, Political Director of the New York State United Teachers** (NYSUT), and what we can do in this State. Nicki said the voting in NY this year matters more



Nicki Richardson, Political Director, NYSUT.

than similar voting in previous election years, because if Democrats can win back at least four of the seats we lost in the 2020 election, the Democrats can retake the U.S. Congress. In this case, even if Trump wins the Democrats can prevent the above-mentioned “trifecta.” With that, Richardson went on to review all of the seats in NY State which the Dems need to win back or secure after close elections in recent years, such as those on Long Island and in the Hudson Valley. She also urged PSC members to vote YES in November on Proposition 1, the NY State Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). The ERA, if passed, would be an amendment to the NY State

Constitution, guaranteeing women’s right to choice and protection of all New Yorkers against discrimination based on race, gender, religion, disability or immigration status.

**From the State to the City**

The last keynote speaker was our own **PSC First Vice-President, Jennifer Gaboury**, who urged member participation in PSC efforts to support City Council and State Senate and Assembly candidates with phone banking, post carding and door knocking. These, she noted, are all proven, effective means of gaining votes, even if at first they may appear inefficient.



Jennifer Gaboury, First Vice-President, PSC-CUNY.

**Local Services**

The final speakers were **Michael Foley, Communications Director for the PSC-CUNY Welfare Fund** and **Debbie Bell, formerly PSC Executive Director** and now one of our union’s healthcare consultants. Michael reported on vaccine access through our Silver Script and GHI cards, and how to get a special "Paxcess" co-pay savings card from Pfizer for ordering Paxlovid. Debbie Bell reported that no change in the current Medicare plan for NYC retirees is expected until the end of this year 2024, but that next year those on Medicare may well have to pay a \$15 co-pay for provider visits. She also noted that changes in health insurance for actives, currently under consideration by the City, are unlikely to be formally proposed until next year 2025.



Michael Foley, Communications Director, PSC-CUNY Welfare Fund.



Debbie Bell, former Executive Director, PSC-CUNY.

# STATE OF THE UNIONS

## by EILEEN MORAN

The October Retirees Chapter Meeting included two speakers who presented the state of the union, first nationally, then locally. First up was **Ruth Milkman, Distinguished Professor of Sociology, CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies**. Prof. Milkman has written on a variety of topics involving work and organized labor in the U.S. and reports to us each fall. This year, she provided us with data and analysis of nationwide union trends in 2023-2024. Ruth Milkman shared the School of Labor's Annual Report which she co-authored with her colleague Joseph Van Der Naald.

Ruth began by spotlighting the flurry of labor organizing and the union elections over the past year. Labor is receiving higher approval ratings from the general population, especially among young people, particularly young college educated folks. Gen Z and Millennials have higher regard for unions than Baby Boomers. Still, this does not move the union density needle very much. The private sector is still experiencing steady, slow decline with only 6% of private sector workers in a union nationally compared to 13.5 % in NYC. Clearly there's lots of work to do. Larger employers like Amazon



Ruth Milkman, Distinguished Professor, CUNY SLU.

continue to resist as Staten Island warehouse workers have no contract years after initial organizing success. Starbucks and other large retailers like Apple may agree to negotiate, but few contracts are completed. The success of skilled workers securing first contracts, like adjuncts, interns and museum workers, reflects mostly on how difficult these workers are to replace compared to Starbucks' baristas or other easily replaceable retail workers.

The public sector fared better: union density even grew slightly and public workers make up about a third of unionized workers nationally. Some decline in union membership in NY is a delayed impact of the Janus decision and the fact that the pandemic interrupted the sign-ups of new members as lots of folks left the City. Clearly there's a substantial uptick in activity since 2020. The win rate is up also.

Nationally, much of the activity has been in the Higher Ed sector but this is less true for NY. Within NYC, over 3,000 home care workers organized with 1199 as employers voluntarily accepted the union or after an election was won. United Auto Workers (UAW) and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) have both been actively organizing new members in the sector.

Ruth invited those interested in more details to google the full School of Labor report.

The next speaker was **James Davis, PSC President**, who reported extensively on challenges, successes, and a vision of the future. He began by expressing his appreciation of Retirees Chapter leadership and members for their invaluable experience and contributions to assorted PSC Committees and campaigns.



James Davis, President, PSC-CUNY.

### **On Election Work**

Given the high stakes of the current election, James reported on our efforts with phone banking, postcard writing, and door knocking which is done through the Legislation Committee and our New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) and American Federation of Teachers (AFT) affiliates. The House leadership is very important and AFT is deploying folks who have time to go for a day or a week to help with the election in Ohio, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania which is closest to us. He stressed how everything both for Higher Education and labor hangs in the balance.

### **On Membership**

James said that the PSC toiled in advance of the Janus decision and worked to ramp up membership which was very effective. But the Right's persistent messaging in the public sector that workers do not need to join a union is also effective. The PSC signed up 700 members in 2024, but it's a constant push as some leave CUNY or retire. At present, 88% of full-timers and 60% of part-timers are members, and these numbers need to increase. Even with lots of work, the percentage is steady due to attrition and even some people quite sympathetic to the union who consider the dues unaffordable.

### **On CUNY Enrollment**

One barometer of the health of the PSC is the health of CUNY. Enrollment is critical, and for the second year in a row, there is an increase across most campuses. Enrollment is down at a few colleges, but generally up at senior, comprehensive and community colleges, by 2% over 2023. Of course, student enrollment declined during the pandemic, but management's draconian response made matters worse. CUNY saved \$40 million but has a goal to save over 100 million by laying off folks, reducing classes, and increasing class sizes. With the student base contracting, legislators' responses to our lobby efforts in Albany and City Hall were tepid.

### **On Some PSC Victories**

Recently the PSC and allies at the Faculty Senates on the campuses fended off an attack on governance from CUNY's proposed changes to the CUNY By-Laws. The grievance against unpaid training for on-line teaching during the pandemic got those members paid \$900.



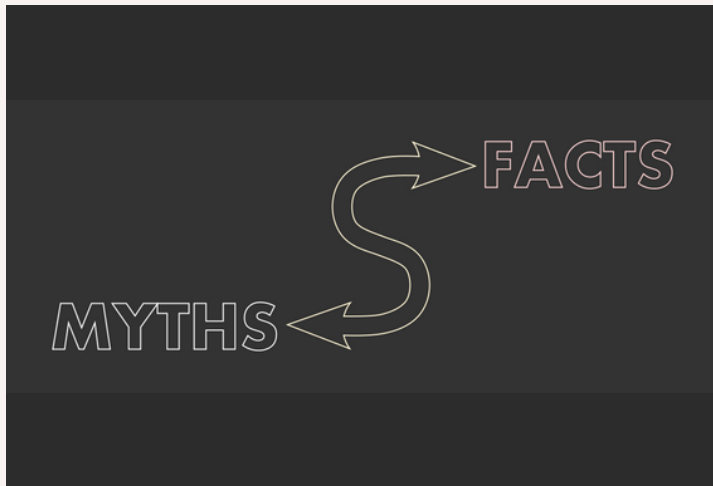
**On Contract Negotiations**

Contract negotiations have had 32 sessions. Early on it was a slog as CUNY is never quick but now the process has picked up some momentum. The PSC preference is to finish before the election and get economics nailed down, including securing raises with one step promotion. Progress on adjunct job security and Welfare Fund contributions is essential. CUNY’s opening offer last spring was inadequate, but we’ll require a large push from everyone to improve the economic offer as we approach 20 months without a contract. At our upcoming rallies and pickets some of us may risk arrest, and we’ll rely on retirees’ continued engagement with much appreciation for your sustained support of the contract struggle.

**On Healthcare**

The New York City Organization of Public Service Retirees (NYCOPSR) prevailed in numerous lawsuits, and the PSC provided an amicus brief in that effort. Now the City’s proposal is most likely dead in the water. Even if the Appellate Court and/or Court of Appeals allow Aetna’s plan, Aetna would have to rebid. We expect the status quo not to change in the near future.

There is little movement on health care changes for in-service and pre-Medicare retirees because of a stalemate between the Office of Labor Relations (OLR) and Municipal Labor Council (MLC). With two bids for a cheaper replacement for GHI/Emblem, the parties can’t agree on which one to accept.



Member Education i.e. *Myths and Facts* on healthcare is [on the website](#) and we’re looking to get out in front of whatever else the MLC may consider. The Social Safety Net Committee is also making chapter presentations. It’s important that our members understand the complexity of any new plan that comes forward. Kudos to those working on this and the Committee.

Despite any machinations, those receiving treatment or covered at Sloan Kettering are not at risk of losing that. The underlying issue is politics and policies that still drive the discussion between the MLC and the OLR. Hospital costs are an issue, but the City does not have expertise. A coalition on hospitals’ pricing and transparency has tapped two PSC healthcare experts working with NYSUT, Barbara Caress and Karle Kronebusch. James reminded us that workers and retirees should not bear the burden of increased health care costs. When Mayoral candidates seek PSC’s endorsement, screening will include where they stand on the City’s health care plans and policies.

# THE ADJUNCT RETIREE — AN OXYMORON? by DIANE MENNA

What does retirement mean to an adjunct? Easy question, right? No, very very wrong. In one respect, there is no such thing. What? How can that be? Oh, it can be. You mean an adjunct can never retire? Not like full-timers do.

Full-timers are required to choose a pension system, either TRS or TIAA, within their first 30 days. CUNY rarely if ever informs adjuncts about their eligibility for a TRS pension even though adjuncts can join from day one. (They cannot join TIAA.) An adjunct can begin drawing a pension from Teachers Retirement System if she was informed and financially stable enough to join many moons ago when she first started teaching. But drawing a pension has nothing to do with employment at CUNY.

Confused already? Okay, let's say you are a long-serving adjunct who has been teaching at CUNY for over 20 or 30 years. You're getting a bit long in the tooth, bedraggled, and had it with taking two subway trains plus the Q64 bus to Queens College. You want to "retire," I mean stop teaching. What do you do? You don't have to do anything. In fact, nobody really needs to be informed (except perhaps the person who has been assigning you classes). In fact, many adjuncts just drop off the face of the earth at CUNY or their departments, and nobody seems to be the wiser, or care really. But this has nothing to do with your TRS pension. You can draw a pension and still teach.

So, you really want to or need to stop teaching. It's time to "cash in" and begin drawing your lucrative (not) pension from TRS. You will probably collect approximately \$15,000-20,000 a year if you taught 15 or more credits a year. Obviously, you can't live on this. Oh, but wait, you have Social Security. An adjunct's wages for 20-30 years will probably net you about \$15,000 a year in SSI. So, that makes \$30-35,000. Can you live on that in New York City? You'd rather drop dead than move to Florida or North Carolina like everyone else you know. So, you convince yourself you can do it. You're an adjunct, you're used to shopping at the Salvation Army and eating cereal for dinner.

But here is the rub. If you stop teaching, not only do you not get paid, you also no longer get PSC health insurance, unlike full-timers who are covered into retirement. What are you going to do about health insurance? You are probably well over 65 like most adjuncts who "retire," so you will get Medicare, right? Yes, but Medicare only covers Part A (Major Medical) and 80% of Part B (doctor visits and everything else), so you will need to buy a medigap policy for the other 20% and Part D or Drugs (approximately \$2200 a year). **Adjuncts do not get health care into retirement like full-timers.** That's why most adjuncts keep teaching well into their 70's and even 80's. That's why Marcia Newfield, long-serving adjunct and former VP for part-timers says, "Most adjuncts can only leave the classroom feet first."

But some adjuncts do “retire,” or stop teaching. The Retirees Chapter has 129 members who were adjuncts. How do they do it? How do they survive financially? Many live in rent stabilized apartments or take advantage of Senior Citizens Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) from the Department of Finance, some inherit family property or funds, some have spouses with medical coverage and better wages, some qualify for Medicaid or SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program).

Not a pretty picture, right? This is the reason the PSC in contract negotiations has been trying for over 20 years to get adjuncts health care into retirement. But CUNY has refused and refused and refused. They are “not interested” in discussing it. It is a “non-starter.” Maybe you can take a “retired” adjunct to lunch, if you can find one. Or better yet, go to a contract negotiation session or demonstration and show your outrage and support.

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## **CULTURE CORNER**

### **OPERA REVIEW**

by **NORMAN LEWIS**

In my last article, I discussed some online performances that were presented at European opera festivals during the month of July, which I will continue here. First, a return to Bayreuth. On July 29, Michael Spyres, the great American “baritenor,” made his debut at the festival in the role of Siegmund in *Die Walküre*. As expected, Spyres was outstanding in every aspect of the role: his diction, characterization and musicality were all superb. It was a gripping performance and I have rarely heard a tenor deliver a better one. I hung on to every word of the narrative in which he recounts his origins. Later, the cry of “Wälse! Wälse!” was shattering in its intensity. Unfortunately, the Lithuanian soprano Vida Miknevičiūtė as Sieglinde was not up to his level. Catherine Foster, who has played Brünnhilde at Bayreuth for several summers, was also disappointing. The conductor, Simone Young, had trouble keeping up with the singers, and the pacing after Act I fell apart.

*Der fliegende Holländer* on August 1 was altogether better. It was beautifully conducted by Oksana Lyniv, who had so much success conducting *Turandot* at the Met this past spring. Her tempi were impeccable and she kept this opera, which can often sag at times, moving forward with great momentum. Michael Volle as the Dutchman sang with great beauty and lyricism. Elisabeth Teige, another house soprano frequently heard at Bayreuth, was simply not up to the demanding role of Elsa. Her voice is small and was almost inaudible at several points. She did get better as the opera progressed but never really seemed to fit comfortably into the role.

On August 7, I moved online to Italy for the Pesaro Rossini Festival. First up was his rarely-heard *Bianca e Falliero*, set in 17th century Venice. Jessica Pratt was Bianca and her voice did not seem suited to Rossini's florid bel canto style; she had trouble maintaining the line throughout the coloratura passages. The Japanese mezzo Aya Wakizono sang the trouser role of Falliero and acquitted herself well in this difficult role. Like many Rossini operas, much of the music was familiar from his other works. It was interesting to hear but frequently slow-moving and certainly not among the composer's best operas, and I understood why it is not performed more often.

On August 9, the Festival presented another Rossini rarity: *Ermione*. Unlike *Bianca e Falliero*, this opera deserves to be heard more frequently; it is a powerful and moving work. Based on Racine's *Andromaque* and set at the end of the Trojan War, it is a convoluted love and revenge story. Anastasia Bartoli was in fine voice as the title character, as was Juan Diego Flórez as Orest. The solos and ensembles were beautifully done. The entire production can be viewed online on Lady Izolde's excellent YouTube site: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Nb2ERJ2hPE>.

For my next article, I will be discussing the opening weeks of the new season at the Met. Two performances are streamed live every week and can be heard at this link: <https://www.metopera.org/season/radio/free-live-audio-streams>.

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## MUSEUM EXHIBITS 2024-2025

### by MARCIA NEWFIELD

There is always more to see than we have time for. I encourage you to go out of your habitual zone and check out a museum that you are not accustomed to. Here are some wonders that await you.

#### COOPER HEWITT

##### **Making Home — Smithsonian Design Triennial (November 2, 2024 — August 10, 2025)**



<https://www.cooperhewitt.org/channel/making-home>

This exhibit contains 25 debut commissions that illustrate the ways design is embedded in contemporary life. Ranging from domestic objects to built environments to social systems, the exhibition considers home as an expansive framework with varying cultural and environmental contexts. The curators regard “making home” as a universal design practice.

## MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

### Byzantine Bembé: New York by Manny Vega (Shown through December 8)



(<https://www.mcny.org/exhibition/manny-vega>)

Vega's visual storytelling interweaves community stories with themes that range from African deities to urban mythologies, spanning the personal and the collective. Deeply rooted in an idiosyncratic understanding of the diaspora experience, which in his case includes communities in El Bronx, El Barrio, and Bahia, Brazil, Vega's worldview is colorful, danceable, passionately

spiritual, and complex yet accessible. The show marks the Museum's commitment to its thriving neighborhood as it looks ahead to its next one hundred years.

### Raise Your Voice: Amanda Phingbodhipakkiya (Ongoing)

An immersive installation that mixes selections from the public art campaign "We Are More," which depicted the resiliency of New York's Asian American and Pacific Islander community, with original artwork of activists and allies Yuri Kochiyama and Malcolm X. Installed adjacent to the ongoing exhibition *Activist New York*, *Raise Your Voice* poses a series of questions and invites audiences to engage their own powers of advocacy and activism.



(<https://www.mcny.org/exhibition/raise-your-voice>)

## BROOKLYN MUSEUM

### The Brooklyn Artists Exhibition (Shown through January 26)



Jasmine Clarke. *Olivia*, 2022.

(<https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/brooklyn-artists-exhibitions-2024>)

Spotlighting artists who have lived or maintained a studio in Brooklyn during the last five years (2019–24), the 200 participants represent a full range of disciplines, from drawing and painting to sculpture, video, installation, and beyond. Pieces were selected by a committee of esteemed artists.

**Elizabeth Catlett: A Black Revolutionary Artist and All That It Implies (Shown through January 19)**

A defining Black woman artist of the twentieth century, Elizabeth Catlett (1915–2012) has not received the mainstream art-world attention afforded many of her peers. This exhibition of over 200 works gives this revolutionary artist and radical activist her due. A deft sculptor and printmaker, devout feminist, and lifelong social justice advocate, Catlett was uniquely committed to both her creative process and political convictions.



Elizabeth Catlett. *Black Unity*, 1968.  
(<https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/elizabeth-catlett>)

**Trailer: Liza Lou (Ongoing)**

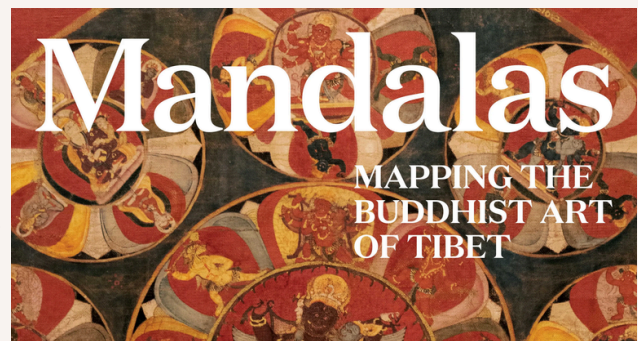
Liza Lou. *Trailer*, 1998-2000. (<https://www.lehmanmaupin.com/museums-and-global-exhibitions/liza-lou-trailer>)

On public view for the first time in a decade, *Trailer* fills the interior of a 1949 Spartan Royal Mansion mobile trailer stationed in the Museum's entry pavilion. Inside, the colors are limited to replicate the allure and intensity of Hollywood film noir. Everything is rendered in glass beads, from the furniture, typewriter, and glossy men's magazines to the guitar, guns, and shots of whiskey. A spectacle that examines the seen and the unseen.

**METROPOLITAN MUSEUM****Mandalas: Mapping the Buddhist Art of Tibet (Shown until January 12)**

A mandala is a diagram of the universe — a map of true reality that in Tibet is used to conceptualize a rapid path to enlightenment. This exhibition explores the imagery of the Himalayan Buddhist devotional art through over 100 paintings, sculptures, textiles, instruments, and an array of ritual objects, mostly dating between the 12th and 15th centuries.

This dazzling visual experience provides a roadmap for understanding Himalayan Buddhist worship through early masterworks, juxtaposed with a newly commissioned contemporary installation by Tibetan artist Tenzing Rigdol.



(<https://www.metmuseum.org/met-publications/mandalas-mapping-the-buddhist-art-of-tibet>)

### Celebrating the Year of the Dragon (Shown through January)



<https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/celebrating-the-year-of-the-dragon>

February 10, 2024 marked the beginning of the Lunar New Year, the Year of the Dragon, the most celebrated animal in Chinese culture. This exhibition assembles a remarkable selection of more than twenty works from the Museum's permanent collection that depict this imaginary animal in various media, including ceramic, jade, lacquer, metalwork, and textile. Together they illustrate the significant role that the dragon plays as a symbol of imperial authority, a dynamic force to dispel evil influences, and a benevolent deity that brings auspicious rain to all life on earth.

### Mary Sully: Native Art (Shown through January 12)

Mary Sully — born Susan Mabel Deloria on the Standing Rock Reservation in South Dakota — was a little-known, reclusive Yankton Dakota artist who, between the 1920s and 1940s, created highly distinctive work informed by her Native American and settler ancestry. This is the first solo exhibition of Sully's groundbreaking production.



<https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/mary-sully-native-modern>

### Siena the Rise of Painting 1300-1350 (Shown through January 26)

In the decades leading up to the catastrophic onset of the plague around 1350, Siena was the site of phenomenal artistic innovation and activity. While Florence is often positioned as the center of the Renaissance, this presentation offers a fresh perspective on the importance of Siena, from Duccio's profound influence on a new generation of painters to the development of narrative altarpieces and the dissemination of artistic knowledge. The exhibition will include more than 100 works by a remarkable group of Sieneese artists who perished during the plague.



<https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/siena-the-rise-of-painting-1300-1350>

# VISUAL ARTS CHALLENGE

## by ALAN FEIGENBERG

We asked Alan Feigenberg, professor emeritus of Architecture at City College to provide a first, in what we hope will be a series in Visual Culture. Some of you might remember Alan as the person who led PSC walking tours that ended in interesting places to eat and drink. Here he asks us to ponder what we see in our daily environment, and to pose your own photo and challenge for the next issue of *Turning the Page*.

### urban challenges

i see-notice-sense-create &

i embellish patterns, sequences, rhythms, symmetries & asymmetries.....

where am i ?

what am i looking at ?

what is each piece ?

have i seen this before ?

will i come back?

to see-experience this again? why ?



what might i see/notice if i returned: this week?

6 months from now ?

5 years from now ?

how might i explain/share this ?

as a photo? as a poem? an essay ? notes ? by acting? singing? dancing?

Please submit your challenge for the next issue to [retirees@pscmail.org](mailto:retirees@pscmail.org)



# ANXIETY

In the dream,  
Before the beginning,  
Stairs disappear;  
Classes vanish;  
Corridors are mazes;  
I can't arrive,  
And the end's already here,  
First student, then teacher—  
The term's unclear.

A Poem by Beverly Fenig

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## COMMUNITY BOARD

### Documentaries on James Baldwin Recommendations by BLANCA VAZQUEZ

**Blanca Vazquez**, retiree from the **Department of Film and Media Studies at Hunter College**, suggests these two major documentaries about the truth-teller **James Baldwin (1924-1987)**.

1. *The Price of the Ticket (1989)*, American Masters, PBS Passport Access

Using rarely-seen archival footage, this documentary intertwines interviews and cinema verite glimpses of James Baldwin with family interviews, assessments from his close friends and fellow writers, and scenes from his extraordinary funeral service in 1987 in NYC. <https://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/james-baldwin-film-james-baldwin-the-price-of-the-ticket/2632/>

## 2. *I Am Not Your Negro*, Raoul Peck (2018)

Based on Baldwin's last work-in-progress, available on HULU.

This documentary, more meditative, more poetic, narrated in Baldwin's words through letters, lectures and film excerpts, takes note of the corrosive power of racism and its reflections in films, television, and other popular media. The work reflects on the killings of his three friends, Medgar Evers (1963), Malcolm X (1965) and MLK (1968) before their 40th birthdays. <https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/documentaries/i-am-not-your-negro/>

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# Anti-racism Committee Baldwin Centennial Set for Spring

The Anti-Racism Committee of the Retirees Chapter has announced a celebration this Spring of the 100th birthday of author and civil rights activist James Baldwin. The celebration will start off on February 3 at our regular chapter meeting (1 p.m.) with a presentation by a noted Baldwin scholar.

Later in February and then in March and April thereafter (dates and times TBA), the group will read and discuss Baldwin's *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (Knopf, 1953), a semi-autobiographical novel of a teenager growing up in Harlem in the 1930s, and his relationships to church and family. These discussions will be on Zoom, and registration for the series will be announced at a later date. All Chapter members are welcome to join.

The final two sessions (May and June) are in the planning stages, and may include one of Baldwin's short stories and/or a variety of video clips of him speaking in the U.S. and Europe. The content of these two sessions, as well as the dates and times for all five sessions will be announced along with reservation details.

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## FALL SEMESTER MEETING DATES: PSC RETIREES CHAPTER

PSC Retirees Meetings, on Zoom

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2024, 1:00 PM

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2024, 1:00 PM

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The *Turning The Page* editorial committee for this November/December 2024 issue is made up of Diane Menna, Marianne Pita, David Kotelchuck, and Joan Greenbaum.

*Turning The Page* is a publication of the Retirees Chapter of PSC-CUNY, Local 2334 of NYSUT and the AFT.

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