



THE FROMM INSTITUTE  
FOR LIFELONG LEARNING  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

# FROMM FOCUS

The Newsletter of the Fromm Institute

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## A WORD ABOUT SUMMER SESSION

Dear Fromm Institute Members,

We are all going through a difficult time with this pandemic, but it is also an exciting time – a time that allows us to look “outside the box” – beyond our usual boundaries to create something new. You should have received an email from us on Monday morning sharing our new Summer Session Catalog.

Our upcoming Summer Session is not just the first time we are offering live, online courses, but also our very first Summer Session in forty-four years. Enrollment starts this coming **Monday, May 11** at [fromminstitute.org](http://fromminstitute.org). To participate, you will need a minimum internet speed of 3 Mbps download/upload. You can test your internet speed at [speedtest.net](http://speedtest.net).

The Summer Session is a small session – with only four courses – but it is also a very important test for us. It will allow us to assess faculty needs, student abilities, and staff support for future online, live programming. It will also give us an idea as to how many students are interested in courses like these which will inform the number of courses we offer in the Fall Session.

As we move into the future together, I would like to reiterate that the safety of our students, faculty and staff are paramount. We have planned and made decisions with that maxim in mind while continuing to uphold our mission to offer daytime courses for adults over 50 years of age. We are not able to offer in person courses or social programs right now, but the staff is continuing to brainstorm the best ways for us to “return to normal.” Thank you for all of your patience, support and kindnesses. Every email we receive reminds us of the importance of our work and the students and faculty we miss.

Currently USF is planning on reopening in August and proceeding with plans for their Fall Semester. We will continue to look to USF’s leadership for guidance on reopening the Fromm Institute. However, we are working on ideas for the Fall Session (including contingency plans), and will be reaching out to faculty shortly. We know that you are all eager to return to in person classes and want you to know that the Fromm Institute will have a Fall Session, but whether it will be online or in person is yet to be determined. The safety of the Fromm Institute Community requires time, planning, research, and communication with many parties.

My coworkers all join me in sending you our very best wishes for your safety, health, and continued perseverance.

Warmly,

Derek

# SCANDALS & HISTORY IN HOLLYWOOD HISTORY

by Jan Wahl

It's a perfect time to be swept away into intrigue, mayhem and mystery... and I'm talking onscreen! Cinema comes through with engrossing mysteries and even mystery comedies to get us out of ourselves and into some terrific plots, characters and who-the-heck-did-it?

Let's begin with one of my favorite recent films that not enough people know about. 2006's *Hollywoodland* stars a perfectly cast: Ben Affleck as George Reeves, TV's Superman. The word on the street and officially is that he died by suicide, distraught over his typecasting. The true story many of us knew about is that he was murdered. The moral turns out to be: be careful when having a steamy love affair. This engrossing film costars Adrian Brody, Bob Hoskins and Diane Lane.

Another Hollywood scandal was brought to us by Peter Bogdanovich in 2002. The 1920's come alive in *The Cat's Meow*, the true story of William Randolph Hearst's luck and talent in getting away with murder. Aboard his gigantic yacht were Charlie Chaplin, Marion Davies, Louella Parson and producer Thomas Ince. Hearst may have shot Ince, hid the evidence and had his body immediately destroyed. Eddie Izzard is terrific as usual, watch for him as Chaplin. Costumes, sets, dialogue... it all works in this movie of money and power running the show.

Two wonderful British TV series are worthy of searching out on BBC America, Google or PBS, *Inspector Morse* stars John Thaw as a charismatic but complicated detective in Oxford. Gorgeous locations and smart intrigue. *Endeavor* is the prequel to this series, showing Morse as a young man fighting the system. *Miss Marple* has Joan Hickson as the sweet but sneaky little ol' lady detective, able to solve crimes and get information far better than Scotland Yard. Margaret Rutherford played this part beautifully, too...but this Jane Marple makes it all new again.

It does not get funnier than Neil Simon's *Murder by Death* in 1976. The world's great detectives (Sam Spade, Charlie Chan, Nick and Nora Charles of *The Thin Man*, Miss Marple) are summoned by eccentric millionaire (Truman Capote) to guest at his remote mansion. Peter Sellers, David Niven, Maggie Smith, Peter Falk and even Alec Guinness turn this mystery into a spoof full of out loud laughs. We could use it now. A rare chance to watch Capote at his best!

We can't leave the genre with at least one film noir. *Murder my Sweet* by Raymond Chandler in 1944 gives us Moose Malloy trying to find his love Velma. Phillip Marlowe is driven into a web of blackmail and murder. For years after this I asked boyfriends to call me Velma. Weird, right? Guess I was looking for my Moose. As good as Dick Powell is in this, I'll park my shoes next to Bob Mitchum.

Some other mysteries to take us away: *The DaVinci Code*, *Gorky Park*, *The Ipcress File*, *L.A. Confidential*, *The Fugitive*, *Chinatown*, all six *Thin Man's* and *The Player*. Settle in and escape!

## CHRYsalis: THE 21ST THACHER ART + ARCHITECTURE ANNUAL



As a former art schooler and MFA holder, one of my favorite attributes of Fromm Hall is having the Department of Art + Architecture in the back of the building. Most evenings, I used to walk to my car to head home and I would glance into the studios. The sight of students making sculpture or of a drawing class being held, I'd be a bit whistful remembering my own days in the darkroom as an undergraduate or of creating installations in graduate school. As art students the one desire we all looked forward to was the final project and a show in the college/university gallery that the whole community could see.

This year, Covid-19 and a stay-at-home order firmly in place, the graduating seniors from Art + Architecture are being forced to have a virtual showing of their work instead of the impressive gallery show that pops up every May in the Thacher Gallery. In support of their work, I urge everyone to take a virtual visit to **Chrysalis: The 21st Thacher Art + Architecture Annual**. The exhibit will be ready for viewing on May 1 and will close on Aug. 29. Let us appreciate the hard work of all these USF seniors for whom the past four years have been an exploration of not only their scholarly pursuits but their creativity. - Scott Moules

### USF VIRTUAL EVENTS OPEN TO ALL

As a reminder, USF has created a series of free virtual events with dynamic thought leaders as we all navigate this unprecedented time together. These virtual events are free to all. Contact University Special Events at [usfevents@usfca.edu](mailto:usfevents@usfca.edu) or (415) 422-6441 for virtual event details. Click "register now" to sign up for a specific event. USF is recording these events as well, so if you sign up you should get an email with a link to rewatch the conversation.

#### **Mark Laret, UCSF President and CEO: "UCSF Saving Lives"** **Wednesday, May 6 | 12 p.m. PST**

UCSF has led the way in crisis preparation, research, and healthcare delivery. Gain insight into how UCSF has become an innovator to help the community and nation battle the COVID-19 pandemic. Moderated by Richard Callahan, USF public health and management professor. <<**REGISTER NOW**>>

#### **Alice Waters, Chef and Activist: "An Industry in Distress"** **Tuesday, May 12 | 12:30 p.m. PST**

A pioneer of the slow food movement, Alice Waters is one of the most innovative minds and leaders in the food and restaurant industry. As the hospitality industry faces major setbacks due to the pandemic, hear how Alice sees the community banding together to stay strong. Moderated by USF Hospitality Professor Kathy "K.O." Odsather. <<**REGISTER NOW**>>

These lectures are sponsored by USF's Covid-19 Response Fund. **You can make a secure gift to the COVID-19 Response Fund** which helps USF students who may need assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic.



This week's featured, *Express Yourself*, is a story from Institute member **Barbara Sapienza**. Submissions to *Express Yourself* are accepted on a rolling basis and can be articles, opinion pieces or notes, written by you, the students or others in our community, who want to share something with the larger Fromm Institute community. Email your submissions to **Scott Moules**, in the Fromm Institute office ([fromm@usfca.edu](mailto:fromm@usfca.edu)).

## THREE DOGS, THREE POLICEMEN, AND A LITTLE GIRL ON TRAINING WHEELS *by Barbara Sapienza*

The little girl across the street must be five or six now. She's on the street with her dog, playing on a small scooter. The street is quiet because we are sheltering in place. Her left hand is on the crossbar and with the other she holds her dog on a leash. Her dog is blonde like her, part pit bull and part teddy bear. He runs along beside her as she pumps 1 2 3 with her right foot and then hops on - both feet on the board. Then another 1 2 3 pumps with the right foot, and both feet rest on the board again. On and on she glides and the dog pulls her along. They are in tune. How glorious to see the little girl on her training wheels, zooming with the aid of her dog. So different from the way we are zooming now as we shelter in place.

I am doing the zoom walk down the street with my red mask and old feet, my training wheels, each one seventy-five years old, together making them one hundred fifty. No. I'm exaggerating. I'm walking downhill on two solid feet, greeting neighbors who like me shelter six-feet apart, wearing their masks, except for a gardener who thinks he's providing essential services by blowing the dried oak leaves up into the air as people pass.

The man who lives at the bend in the road comes out of his house, holding a sandy colored muscular dog on a short leash. He is also muscular and exerts energy to hold the dog back, but the dog is pulling him down hill from his driveway. He says hi to me as I pass, keeping to the six-foot rule. On the opposite corner a woman takes a picture of a faded magnolia tree while her dog sits beside her at her feet. I walk along the street, passing them. When I hear shouting, I turn to see the muscular man lying in the street wrestling his dog. They are both writhing in place on the blacktop — both on the ground, the man screams.

"No. Stop. Don't." he yells. He's trying to contain the exuberant dog who has been excited by the smaller dog. The sandy dog wiggles out of his collar and disappears from my sight.

"No. Come back." The man stands up, and rushes out of my view after the dog. "Stop. Stay. Come here." Then I hear the animal sounds — raucous, grating barks precede high-pitched childlike screams. A cacophony of sounds fill the air. My heart races, alarmed by the noise, picturing the frantic scene. I cannot see them but I imagine the man rushing to harness his dog and women in between, trying to protect hers. I imagine biting and puncturing of flesh as blood drips from wounds. My heart beats faster and wilder than on the uphill walk I'll take later on the return. I walk quickly away from the scene, cursing the situation of the dog on a short leash. Thinking the dog and the man should be separated. The man obviously can't contain his dog.

My feet match my hot rage and propel me faster downhill. I picture myself lifting off and flying as I round a long

circular block. I don't know how to do this Corona virus on my training wheels. I don't see the azaleas, the calla lilies, the rhododendrons, the fading magnolias or the sturdy oak trees standing tall, their limbs bifurcating. I walk up the hundred stairs to finish the other half of the circle route and wonder if I'll meet again the man with the short leash or the women taking photos of the faded magnolia.

Parked on the side of the road are two police cars. I half expect to see the man with a dog on a short leash in one of the cars and the women taking the picture, sitting with her dog in the other. But no. There are three policemen in white masks standing beside the empty police cars. The three men talk among themselves as I pass near them. I stop, thinking of asking about the dogs, but instead I thank them for their service to our community. I don't mention the dogs. I don't want to get involved with two neighbors and their dogs.

"How are you doing?" one policeman asks. "Have you ever seen anything like this before?" He's referring to the coronavirus I know and not the dogs.

"No, I haven't," I say, "not like that." I'm thinking of the dogs.

The man waits. I say, "My grandmother told me about the 1918 Spanish influenza, the year after my father was born, when many people died."

"Yes, he says, there was that." He must be thirty.

I tell him when I was born my dad was serving in the Philippines in World War II.

"War," they say.

"Yeah. I didn't see him until I was two-years-old." It would have been just about the time I began to use training panties, I think. There were no toys then and no training wheels except for my knees for crawling and my feet for walking.

"Maybe the virus is our opportunity," I say, "to see the world as one small world and care for each other - like now." I've never spoken to one policeman for more than half a sec.

They listen. "Look how you and the rest of your generation begin with this crisis. I'm sorry. Look what you've inherited." I want to say O pono pono, a Hawaiian saying which means thank you, forgive me, I'm sorry, I love you.

"What's your name?" the shorter man asks,

"Barbara, I say."

"I'm Francisco."

"I'm James," another says, removing his mask, in deference to me I feel.

"I'm Ryan."

"Thank you for what you do," I say and I go on my way on my training wheels, these one hundred-fifty year feet. Near the top of the hill the dogs are gone but the woman is walking alone looking for her phone that got lost in the fray. She tells me her dog has puncture wounds and the man was nice. Further on the man with a short leash is walking down hill with his girlfriend and without the mad dog. He tells me it was awful! He's sheltering the dog for the Humane Society so it won't be put down.

"The dog likes people but goes mad for dogs," he says.

"We're all on training wheels," I say.

## KEEPING IT LIGHT

This week we have two comic submissions from Fromm Institute **Professor Adela Roatcap** and Fromm Institute member and artist **Amy Hosa**. If you want to share something amusing please send us your jokes or humorous ruminations to [fromm@usfca.edu](mailto:fromm@usfca.edu).

### A STORY FROM ADELA ROATCAP

This is one of those Spanish folk-stories popular when Cervantes was writing Don Quijote. It seems to me to be particularly suited to our unstable times:

"Once there was a little old man who lived in a far-away village. One day the little old man began packing his belongings. When his friends and neighbors saw what he was doing, they asked him:

"Where are you going, little old man?"

He replied:

"I am moving to the next village."

His friends and neighbors were quick to correct him:

"You mean, you are moving to the next village God willing, don't you?"

"No," answered the little old man. "I am just moving to the next village."

Well -- it so happened that when God heard what the little old-man said, He turned him into a frog and condemned him to live in a frog-pond for seven years. When the seven years were over, the little old man returned home and began packing his belongings. His friends and neighbors asked him:

"Now where are you going, little old man?"

He replied:

"I am moving to the next village."

"You mean -- you are moving to the next village God willing, don't you?"

"No," said the little old man, "I am just moving to the next village or back to the frog-pond."

So dear Frommies -- stay home and stay safe -- so we can all look forward to being hale and hearty for the Fromm Institute's Fall Session.

With Best Wishes,

Prof. Adela Roatcap

## CARTOONS FROM AMY HOSA

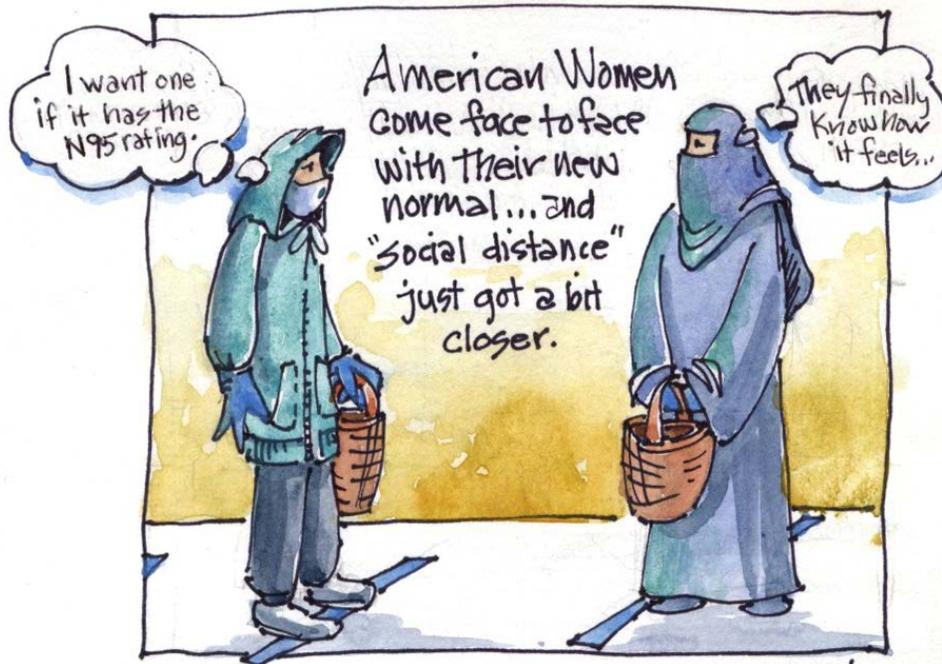
A friend and I have been sending each other daily "sketches with short captions" since April 1st. Somedays I sketch what is in front of me, sometimes I sketch what is on my mind and end up with an editorial cartoon. Cartoons continue on the next page.



CARTOONS FROM AMY HOSA



INVERSE REALITY 4/14/20 A. HOSA



THE PANDEMIC PARADOX A. HOSA 4/15/20