



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

FROMM FOCUS

The Newsletter of the Fromm Institute

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IN GRATITUDE AND WONDER

This week we are halfway through the Fall Session. It's time to share some gratitude for where we are and how far we have come, but during this pandemic, I'm also filled with wonder at what we have all been able to do together. It seems like ages ago that we cancelled the Spring Session classes, USF closed the campus, we tested Fromm classes with a Summer Session, and then put together an exciting and intellectually challenging Fall Session, but that all happened in the last seven months!!

Thank you to USF – It goes without saying that we need USF to have a Fromm Institute in the first place. However, USF has gone above and beyond the call of duty to help us. USF leadership first reached out to us about the wellbeing of our students back in March. USF helped our staff move our offices to our homes, and USF provided us with all the technology we needed to continue working and to continue classes. Further, USF continues to support us. USF's Gleeson Library helps our students borrow books, and USF Instructional Technology Services provide us with unending tech support in our new world of Zoom webinars. Thank you.

Thank you to the Friends of the Fromm Institute Board of Directors – Our Board has responded throughout this pandemic with financial support to the Fromm Institute program and personal support to all the members of our staff. Beyond this, Board members regularly ask about the health and safety of our students and make suggestions in ways we can help our students at this time. Thank you.

Thank you to our Faculty – our **Academic Advisor, Jonathan Bailey** leads the way here. Since the start of the pandemic, we have had weekly meetings in which he helped form a challenging curriculum for our students, and suggested numerous program, technology, and personal modifications to assist our faculty and our students. Each of our current faculty members have also stepped up to present classes that they likely never presented in this format before. They have all embraced the new technology and thrived! Thank you.

Thank you to our Students – you supported us every step of the way by enrolling in our classes and keeping our faculty and staff on their toes. For the first time, I've been able to sit through entire classes with all of you. We can't see you, but your questions highlight the curiosity and thoughtfulness in your minds. When you send us emails to forward on to faculty, we can see that you challenge our faculty to consider things differently which I'm sure is part of their appreciation for our students and our program. Thank you.

Finally, Thank you to our Staff – this team is pure magic. They have all worked extremely hard to get us to where we are. We regularly hear from students that they have been in many Zoom sessions, but no one does it as well as the Fromm Institute. That is all because of this team. I'm fortunate to work with all of you. The easiest part of my job is leading a group that does not need to be led. Thank you.

For now, this is our world. Thank you all for making it as good as it is. I miss you all and I look forward to our future with inspiration and hope for what the Fromm Institute is becoming.

Warmly,
Derek Leighnor

Fromm Institute member Arlene Waksberg wanted to share these online events with the rest of the Fromm Institute community.



Join *The San Francisco Chronicle* for a series of live-streamed discussions throughout October, featuring reporters from across the newsroom and their guests. *The Chronicle* will unpack the issues on the ballot, examine the roles of women and race in 2020, provide the latest updates on how to vote safely and more. Tickets are free but *The Chronicle* asks for a small \$5 or \$10 donation to support this and future programming.

Wed, Oct 14, 2020

6:00 PM

Race on the Ballot

What does the election mean for race in America? Join *The Chronicle's* East Bay Columnist Otis Taylor in conversation with Sarah Treuhaft, vice president of research at PolicyLink; Dr. Jason Williams, assistant professor of justice studies at Montclair State University; and Debra Gore-Mann, president and CEO of The Greenlining Institute. The discussion will address systemic racism in housing, criminal justice and income inequality. [Get tickets here.](#)

Wed, Oct 21, 2020

6:00 PM

A Conversation with W. Kamau Bell

Join *Chronicle* Senior Political Writer Joe Garofoli in conversation with stand-up comedian and executive producer of the Emmy Award-winning CNN docu-series "United Shades of America," W. Kamau Bell. [Get tickets here.](#)

Mon, Nov 2, 2020

6:00 PM

Talking Politics with Former Gov. Jerry Brown

Join *Chronicle* Senior Political Writer, Joe Garofoli and Former California Governor Jerry Brown on the eve of the 2020 Election. Brown will offer insight into the presidential election, state ballot initiatives, efforts to address climate change and more. [Get tickets here.](#)

POETRY FOR A LOCKDOWN

Fromm Institute member **Eric Brody** shares some recent poetry in our *Poetry for a Lockdown* column. If you would like to share your poetry/prose poems, which you've written during our current stay-at-home orders, please submit your work to **Scott Moules** either at moules@usfca.edu or fromm@usfca.edu.

BLACK BEAUTY

by Eric Brody

At the amusement park,
 my daughter and I spun
on a carousel of stars
 beaming at one another Janey sat
lightly on black beauty
 whose tail waved in the breeze
She was all giggles and bounces
 I held on tighter understanding
centrifugal force
 and conservation of momentum and
time

 It was a moonless night and the stars
continued to shine
 for us as we walked home She
hopped the sidewalk cracks
 and squealed at the devil below I
watched over her play
 yet found myself pulled away until I couldn't hear
her footsteps
 This was our way —
she whirligigging through life
 my feeling the weight of the world to come In the
kitchen
 we turned off the lights and ate
ice cream by the glow
 of the open fridge
A cold humming filled our bellies

This was Janey's version of camping
 Once we heard a noise from the hall and she
knew a bear had entered
 black and bristly Its
claws clicked the tile
 he stood a few feet from Janey I was
frozen
 but could hear their breaths terrified
and reassured
 two presences dark and beautiful

POETRY FOR A LOCKDOWN

THE SEVEN STAGES OF LIFE

by Eric Brody

The first is confinement — womb, crib, sling, suckled, swaddled, bathed in coos adoring, and perfumed clouds, moon-face, sunny voices, foggy mornings hushed by other's choices.

Then the burst cocoon with confetti strewn, a second stage with props of silver spoon, all the world a canvas torn and spackled, the overlords entertained and shackled.

Enter conflict. Headstrong insecurity, the melodrama of open self-pity— the corpses of past selves fill stage three. Who should I become? and what will be?

Go forth! to green loves and blood-red regret. The moneyed maze and fenced desires beget a beehive, the mix of honey and wax, till pupa chops out with a battle axe.

The fifth is repaving — crossroads of hearts: two soak in mud baths, do pottery, the arts, the forest of Arden, and shopping carts; or uproot the pillars of name and home, awaken wildness where coyotes roam, and tragicomedy lives in a poem.

The final act, stages six and seven, a narrowing of setting and action, a settling of body, slowing of mind; concern for others, all worries entwined; and kindred spirits here and in heaven enrich the hours of tinted reflection; unwittingly sharp in bluntness, yet kind to the dull, the frail, the confined.

Now confined myself, I see the symmetry: the changing world before I came to see marries what will come when I cease to be. The birth of body from the dust of stars returns to earth — our atoms are not ours. And born in love, sometimes quite late freed love is born to overcome the hate. So hold my hand and put aside the strife. I'll hold on. Not like grim death but stubborn life.

POETRY FOR A LOCKDOWN

THE CARPENTERS

by Eric Brody

I harvest fine-coarse wood from fallen trees lying in the forest
of my heart-mind, evergreen softwood that
bends in the breeze and leafy hardwood
that is disinclined, Hard-soft wood to frame the jigsawing
words, a nest for metaphor to say it slant,
grain running straight as gregarious shorebirds, and spruced
words filed and arrayed to enchant. You too are a member
of the guild,
a heart bending in giddy confusion,
puzzling over mind-images to build a new forest
of our profusion.
We are the tongue and groove of poetry,
but you are the last nail that sets words free.

OSHER MINI MEDICAL SCHOOL FOR THE PUBLIC

The University of California, San Francisco presents three new online medical classes for the public. Lectures begin the week of October 20th and will run for 6 to 8 weeks. For registration information please visit the Osher Mini Medical School site: <https://osherminimed.ucsf.edu>

The Health Emergency of Our Changing Climate Part 2: Public Health Strategies in the 21st Century

Tuesdays October 20 – Dec 8th from 7-830 pm

<https://osherminimed.ucsf.edu/climate-change-fall2020>

What's Next: COVID-19, Science, and the Public Health

Wednesdays October 21 – Dec 9th from 7-830pm

<https://osherminimed.ucsf.edu/what%E2%80%99s-next-covid-19-science-public-health-fall2020>

Innovations In Cancer Treatment: Radiation Therapy in the Modern Era

Thursdays October 22 – Dec 10th from 7-830pm

<https://osherminimed.ucsf.edu/innovations-cancer-treatment-fall2020>



This week, **Frances Pinnock** shares a story of loss that for too many Californians, has become a permanent part of their lives – wild fires. Living with climate change is not easy and Frances shares her own battle with the beast and the terrible loss of not just objects, but of the destruction of parts of our beautiful state meant to be wilderness respites and areas of outstanding beauty.

THE BURNING OF THE BOOKS

By Frances Pinnock

It is a fact, universally acknowledged that second husbands come with baggage: ex-wives, resentful children, you get the picture.

My sweet second husband, Paul, came with 4000 to 5000 books, collected over 50 years and in storage. At that time, 2003, I owned a cabin in Berry Creek, Butte

County (yes, if you have been reading the news you can guess what’s coming). Behind the “big” cabin was an unoccupied structure (see photo) Eager to please and impress Paul and with the help of a talented local craftsman we turned it into a beautiful library with a view of the Lake (see photos) My brother from London helped Paul load the books into the library, it was a labor of love. Paul wrote 3 novels in his library.



By September 8th, we had been at the cabin in Berry Creek, for some time to avoid Covid. That afternoon we heard a booming sound from a police loudspeaker “Evacuate Immediately.” It was very frightening.

We were well aware of the horrors when the Paradise people tried to evacuate. We grabbed our computers, Paul’s medication and 2 copies of Ulysses! (we were reading it out loud for Professor Zimmerman’s class.)



We jumped in the car, promised each other we would stay together and headed out. The trip down the mountain was harrowing.

Paul’s wonderful cabin is now ash along with his books (see photo). What does it mean to lose a lifetime of books? I cannot answer that. I am a reader but not a book lover. Paul is both. This is the first time I realize that we share together a love of reading but not a love of books. Since then I have witnessed the sorrow that this loss has caused, not just to Paul but to so many of our friends (and family in London) all who have responded with emotion.



The loss is of course minimal in comparison to other people’s losses in these fires. But it is still heartbreaking.

What I now recall with ineffable sadness is mentioning to Paul a book I wanted to read and him proudly responding: “hmm.. I think I have that book in my library.”

Well that experience is over now.

music and (e)motion

LIVE PERFORMANCES STREAMED

From the Concert Halls on Campus



San Francisco Conservatory of Music (SFCM) announces its **Fall 2020 concert series**, launching September 28 and featuring an expansive line-up of free live-streamed performances. While SFCM's concert halls and campus are closed to the public during the COVID-19 pandemic, this digital concert series will bring performances from SFCM's talented students, renowned faculty, and accomplished alumni directly to audiences around the globe.

"SFCM has extraordinary capabilities at the forefront of audio and streaming technology, allowing our students to perform together seamlessly from various spaces on campus," said Conservatory President David H. Stull. "This real-time collaboration forms the basis for our live-streamed concerts and offers a distinct advantage to students competing in a densely populated digital performance market."

MUSIC AND (E)MOTION

SFCM's 2020–21 season theme, "Music and (e)Motion," features thematically linked repertoire and curriculum exploring the ways in which music moves us, from meaningful emotional connections to the more literal embodiment of breath and rhythm experienced by instrumentalists, singers, and dancers.

(e)Motion Boost

Of the 68 concerts streaming this fall, eight performances across genres have been specially chosen to bring audiences an "(e)Motion Boost." These programs will feature expertly filmed, multi-camera HD video in addition to composer interviews, faculty storytelling, trivia factoids, and mini-documentaries on how each program was made.

Thursday, October 15

TELEGRAPH QUARTET: A Beethoven favorite and Telegraph Quartet's origin story, plus living composer Eleanor Alberga speaking from London.

Friday, October 30

STRING AND PIANO CHAMBER MUSIC: Students, alumni, and faculty perform together; high profile alums and department chair Dimitri Murrath share how SFCM's chamber music program keeps producing big job winners.

Wednesday, November 18

BRASS ENSEMBLE: Works by acclaimed brass composers and players, including a piece for brass, wood, stone, and steel.

Thursday, November 19

RJAM (ROOTS, JAZZ, AND AMERICAN MUSIC) SIDE-BY-SIDE: Duke Ellington, Marvin Gaye, Billie Holiday, Stevie Wonder, and other legends anchor this program in which jazz faculty superstars perform alongside their students.

IN THE VIRTUAL GALLERY

Fromm Institute students, **Amy Hosa** and **Tim Campbell** share a recent digital project - a short play done online via Zoom. Amy painted the the set and Tim acts in this short parable. To share recent or past art work with the greater Fromm Institute community please submit your files to **Scott Moules** in the Fromm Institute office (moules@usfca.edu or fromm@usfca.edu.)

THE BOX, A PARABLE FOR OUR TIMES

Fromm classmates, Tim Campbell and Amy Hosa have contributed to “The Box” a zoom performance aimed to get out the vote. Tim is an actor (in photo, center top) and Amy provided the "pandoro box" art for the background.



The Box: It's January 2020, in New York City, and Allison has just returned from Luigi's Deli to surprise husband Bernard with a special box of Italian pandoro – a delectable sponge cake from Verona. It's too late when they realize this is actually Pandora's box and they've released a street-smart wise-cracking band of evils representing all of today's crises. Their only hope is Hope but she won't come out of the box. Hope's parting advice: whether or not I come out, it's up to you and what you do in November. Tim and Amy, and friends collaborated with their friend and playwright, Barbara Anderson, who wrote "The Box" and other entertaining and provocative stories about our current predicaments to engage people to think and hopefully take action. She also released "Courbet's Pandemic," a rant from the viewpoint of a 26-year-old (there is cursing) about why wearing a mask matters.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mMG5sdshNmc>



E.J. KOH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO
CENTER FOR ASIA PACIFIC STUDIES
AND ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN STUDIES

**E.J. KOH: THE MAGICAL LANGUAGE
OF OTHERS BOOK TALK BY
E.J. KOH, AUTHOR AND POET**

Tuesday, Oct. 13
5:30–6:45 p.m.
Zoom Webinar

Free and open to the public. Registration required.

The USF Center for Asia Pacific Studies and Asian Pacific American Studies welcome author and poet E.J. Koh for a book talk on The Magical Language of Others, her memoir that weaves a profound tale of hard-won selfhood and our deep bonds to family, place, and language.

Read more and register online.



Fromm's "friendly neighborhood astronomer" **Andrew Fraknoi** was delighted to see one of his favorite colleagues, **Dr. Andrea Ghez** of UCLA, sharing the **2020 Nobel Prize in Physics** for the discovery of a huge, hungry black hole at the center of the Milky Way Galaxy. That monster black hole, a place where gravity overwhelms everything, has eaten enough material over the years to make 4 million stars like our Sun. Prof. Fraknoi was the moderator, a few years ago, of a public lecture that Dr. Ghez gave, explaining her work in everyday language. If you'd like to see it (perhaps with a young woman in your family or circle who is interested in science), it is available free at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dv1igzE-aX4>

Professor Fraknoi will be talking about the research that won Andrea Ghez the Nobel in the last class of his current Fromm class, the Violent Universe. It's just another way Fromm keeps you updated with the latest news!