

“The Art of Living: Practices for Flourishing in a Fractured World”

Post-lecture workshops

February 22, 2018 Vassar College

Moving | Carolyn Palmer | “Moving, Sensing, Connecting”

Through simple, gentle explorations of both habitual and non-habitual movements, we will unravel tensions and reclaim function. The workshop explorations—while sitting, standing, and walking—transfer to everyday activities, and make it easier to do what we want to do.

Carolyn Palmer is a developmental psychologist, Feldenkrais Movement Teacher, and ChildSpace Practitioner. She teaches in the Psychological Science Department.

Contemplation | Paul Kane | “Paying Attention: Modes of Contemplation”

This workshop will explore different modes and models of contemplative practice, drawing on a variety of sources. The emphasis will be on how we use our faculty of attention. Practices will range from quiet contemplation—exploring inner spaces—to physical activity that grounds us in our outer spatial world. We will learn a few techniques that can offer a tranquil interval in the midst of our busy lives.

Paul Kane teaches in the English Department and in the Environmental Studies Program, where he offers a course entitled “Contemplation in the American Landscape.”

Reading | Vanessa Zoltan | “Picking a sentence from the orchard of *Harry Potter*”

We will do the Jewish reading practice of PRDS (Pardes) as a group. We'll pluck a sentence from the *Harry Potter* series and see what it can teach us about our lives.

Vanessa Zoltan has her BA in English Literature from Washington University in St. Louis, her MS in Nonprofit Management from the University of Pennsylvania and her MDiv from Harvard Divinity School. She is currently a research assistant at Harvard Divinity School, a proctor and teaching fellow at Harvard University and the co-host of the podcast, *Harry Potter & The Sacred Text*.

Writing | Akta Kaushal | “Sensing the Sacred”

What is the role of sacred text and speech in our lives? Many of us do not normally think of ourselves as engaged in anything “scriptural” when we read or write or of what motivates us in the day, yet we all have our own mantras through which we make sense of our actions, give direction for our selves, and see our place in the world. This workshop will pursue this question through writing exercises and dialogue.

Akta Kaushal teaches in the Political Science Department, where she offers a course on Feminist Theory named “Phantoms of the Archive.”

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Activism | Shane Slattery-Quintanilla | “Reclaiming Hospitality: Community Arts and Activism”

In its most robust form, hospitality is a sacred practice devoted to cultivating spaces of comfort and inclusion. Only by attending first to the basic human needs of food, shelter, and safety are we able to create a platform for communal generosity, creativity, and action. In this workshop we will explore ways of fostering meaningful communities around shared political and artistic goals, and we will reflect on the ways these goals can meaningfully intersect. Note: Food will be served at this workshop.

Shane Omar Slattery-Quintanilla is a writer and media artist who teaches in the Film Department and Media Studies Program at Vassar. He is a member of Nomadique, a cooperative committed to social justice and empowerment through the arts.