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Even With No Students, Construction Continues At BC

By Maya Schubert
News Editor

While BC's campus remains for the most part closed, two of the schools' buildings are currently undergoing renovations, and construction will soon begin on several others.

Projects on Roosevelt Hall were supposed to start this past March, but were postponed when COVID-19 shut the campus down. Construction, permitted in Phase 1 of New York's Reopening Plan, began a few months after its original date.

"Roosevelt Hall received a major facelift this summer," Rich Pietras, BC's Media Relations Manager, told the Vanguard. "The scope

of the work included replacing the flat roofs on the old building, a cupola renovation, side chimney repairs, slate stabilization, as well as repairs to gutters and downspouts."

According to Pietras, the project is 95% complete and should be finished by next month.

Roosevelt Hall is currently receiving exterior brick repair, brick stabilization, and waterproofing. Those renovations are scheduled to be finished by the end of November.

The library's clock tower, or cupola, also received renovation over the summer, including exterior waterproofing, replacement of broken windows and the tower's balcony roof with a



Brooklyn College campus construction. / John Schilling

new door. The construction also includes the installation of a new light system in the tower, repairs to the cupola's roof, and the installation of a gold gilding for the roof. The finalization of repairs is slated for next month, weather permitting.

There are also planned

perimeter renovations for Roosevelt, Boylan, and Ingersoll Halls. According to Pietras, the administration hopes to start the projects next month and complete renovations on all three buildings by Spring 2021.

Social Justice Implementation Team Lays Out Action Plans

By Dorette Dayan
Staff Writer

The Brooklyn College Implementation Team for Social Justice has developed "Action Plans" based on recommendations made by students, staff, and faculty in the recent listening sessions.

These plans were sent out via email, on Sept. 28, Oct. 5, and Oct. 13, by Chief Diversity Officer Anthony Brown, Vice President of Student Affairs Ronald Jackson, and Business Management Department Chairperson James Lynch, on behalf of the Implementation Team for Racial Justice.

At the staff listening session recently, staff expressed concerns about fairness in hiring and promotion. In reaction, the team promised mentors to support the staff and ensure that they are correctly informed about their work. These mentors will cultivate a safe space for staff members to share any personal concerns or further suggestions. Furthermore, there will be professional development to prepare staff to advance their careers, and job postings will now be openly available on the CUNY website.

Also, staff as well as school management training sessions will be held to inform staff of relevant CUNY policies in regard to discrimination. The Implementation Team plans on hosting an informational session to review the current governing system of the college.

"It will also host a staff-led discussion of the options for enhancing staff representation and voice in the governance structures of the College," they wrote in the email.

At the student listening sessions, student concerns focused on the lack of diversity in the faculty and curriculum and requested additional student input regarding these matters. According to the Team, students will be given platforms outside of the classroom to discuss racial issues.

"In addition, the Office of Diversity and Equity has designated staff to assist students with issues related to Title IX, harassment, and discrimination," the team wrote.

Faculty will be prepared with enhanced implicit bias training sessions, which will be offered more often, along

with others "that will focus on how to manage healthy discussions of race and racism in the classroom."

To include more student input, the team wrote that, "Each academic department is required to have student representation on its curriculum committee." They recommended that the Student Government should make a more conscious effort to diversify student representatives on faculty councils, and each department in Brooklyn College should also develop student advisory councils, if they don't already have one.

The faculty also expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of diverse faculty members and the unpaid, overcompensated work that they are expected to complete.

BC is currently not able to hire more faculty members due to budget restrictions, but hopes to diversify new faculty hired once the hiring process begins again. The team would like to enhance promotions and tenure by including faculty service and student mentorship in the selection process, and by appointing a faculty mentor to guide the junior faculty.

The faculty continues to

have the same outlet for complaints and concerns in the Office of Diversity and Equities.

Lastly, the Team recommended the founding and fundraising of a faculty support fund.

"The College needs a flexible funding source to support a number of faculty initiatives that support diversity," they wrote.

As staff, students, and faculty await the action plans' commencement, many are cautiously optimistic about success.

"In each case the Team is responsive, thoughtful, and proactive," film professor Alexandra Juhasz, who attended the faculty listening session, said of the action plans. "But as can be expected—given how they were selected, where they report, and what little access they have to resources—their solutions make the best of systems, workers, and programs already in place, already underfunded and under-supported, and which themselves are in need of fundamental change."

"We are pleased with this progress and eager to continue the work," the Team concluded.

Women's and Gender Studies Prof Receives Threats For Misgendering Policy

By Ryan Schwach
Editor-In-Chief

A Brooklyn College Women's and Gender Studies professor has received threats after right-wing news outlets posted their syllabus online in a story criticizing the professor's policy on misgendering.

The policy, which BC adjunct B Aultman has had in their syllabus in some form since 2011, states: "Intentional misgendering, as with any attempt to slur another student's personal integrity on the bases of race, ethnicity, or religion, will result in immediate dismissal from the class for that session."

Aultman received a series of messages from supervisors pertaining to a complaint concerning the policy on Sept. 21. "I was kind of surprised," they said. Aultman was asked to refer students to the Title IX office or use the situation as a chance for a teaching moment. Aultman disagreed with the college's suggestion on their policy, because the behavior it is in place for is not one of discussion.

"They are not there to learn, they are there to disrupt," they said.

This is the first time Aultman has ever received any negative feedback on their policy, and has never had to put it into use by dismissing a student. "I never had to do that in the 12 years I have taught," they said.

Aultman stressed the policy is not meant to pertain to accidental misgendering,



The LGBTQ+ flag. / qz.com

but specifically "intentionally misgendering, intentional dehumanization," as they put it. "If people would just read the word 'intentional'...people make mistakes."

After the dialog with administration, Aultman believed the situation had been resolved. "I thought it would blow over," they said.

However, early this month, right-wing outlets Campus Fix, Campus Reform, and TheBlaze ran an article on Aultman's syllabus policy that was picked up by other websites, claiming to have been informed about it by an upset student.

"It is unreasonable to expect everyone to be accepting of the new standards of proper or acceptable behavior that the twenty-first century has made way for with its fast-changing dynamic," the anonymous student

told Campus Reform.

The article in Campus Reform also published Aultman's entire syllabus, along with their CUNY Graduate Center email address, which they said was submitted by another BC professor on behalf of the student, asking to stay anonymous as well. Aultman described the story as "silly" and "absolutely despicable."

Within a few days, as the story spread around the blogosphere, Aultman began receiving hateful emails. The first, from someone in San Francisco made transphobic remarks, including calling Aultman an "it" and that they "shouldn't be teaching." Another email called them a "monster."

"It was unnerving," they said.

The story made many LGBTQ students at Brooklyn College feel uneasy.

"It made gender variant and LGBT students, staff

and faculty feel very unsafe," said Kyle Aaron Reese, President of the Queer Student Action Alliance, and Chair of the LGBT Resource Committee. "I mean it's upsetting. Upsetting that people need to be so blatantly cruel, and extremely unsettling that a professor from our school anonymously threw another professor into harm's way, by name, and hung them out to dry."

Reese added that the incident made the LGBTQ community on campus "unsettled, upset, and scared I think too."

In a statement to the Vanguard, BC Media Relations Manager Richard Pietras said the college did not tell the professor to amend the policy.

"The College has reviewed the guidelines in the syllabus regarding 'intentional misgendering, as with any attempt to

slur another student's personal integrity on the basis of race, ethnicity, or religion," and has determined that they are in line with the College's policy, which allows faculty members to set guidelines for their courses and to ask students to leave a class if those guidelines are not followed. Intentional misgendering is a violation of Brooklyn College policy with regard to gender discrimination and of New York City law," he said.

Aultman is currently working on an open letter to academic outlets about the situation, and believes they were unnecessarily asked by the college to change the policy. "It feels like I was put under the thumb of the administration," they said, "If BC is going to stand against hate then they should."

Student Resources Remain Open Online For Students

By Ian Ezinga
Business Manager

Following a recent announcement, the Division of Student Affairs is now running a drop-in service designed to inform students about the different resources available to them called “Dish it with DOSA,” and is held every Tuesday at 12:15 pm.

The sessions are held one-on-one with representatives, and students can ask anything, from degree questions, to financial aid questions, to student resource questions.

“Dish it with DOSA” is the brainchild of David Wells, director of BMLI, and was headed by VP for Student Affairs Ron Jackson. The administration felt, according to Student Center Director Mitzu Adams, that “we just wanted to let students know that we’re here.”

Attending a “Dish it with DOSA” session can answer some general or specific questions about services for students. The DOSA representative will either answer the question or direct students to whoever can, for example, send students contact information for an advisor or department. In most cases, additional information can be found on each of these resources’ corresponding pages on

CAMPUS SERVICES			Brooklyn College
ITS HELP DESK helpdesk@brooklyn.cuny.edu 718.951.HELP (4357) Mon-Thu, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Fri-Sun, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.	BLACKBOARD HELP Faculty Support: altsupport@brooklyn.cuny.edu or 718.951.4634 Student Support: altsupport@brooklyn.cuny.edu or 718.951.4668	LIBRARY SERVICES AND RESOURCES libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/zakalibrarian RefDesk@brooklyn.cuny.edu 718-951-5328	
FOOD PANTRY Appointments: tnyarL.com/foodpantryappointment	CHROMEBOOK AND IPAD LOAN PROGRAM brooklyn.cuny.edu/devicerequest devicerequest@brooklyn.cuny.edu or 718-951-5648	CENTER FOR STUDENT DISABILITY SERVICES vstewart@brooklyn.cuny.edu	
STUDENT EMERGENCY GRANT APPLICATION brooklyn.cuny.edu/petite-grant Applications can be emailed to studentaffairs@brooklyn.cuny.edu.	PERSONAL COUNSELING BCPersonalCounseling@gmail.com 718.951.5363	HEALTH CLINIC BCHealthClinic@gmail.com 718.951.5580	

Brooklyn College Student Resources are now available virtually./ Brooklyn.CUNY.edu

the College’s website.

Another service is students can book a visit to the college’s food pantry by checking their page under Offices and Services on the BC website’s “About” tab. A Brooklyn College ID provides two visits per month to the College’s food pantry, which can furnish students with a grocery bag or reusable bag (which students are encouraged to bring if they can) full of various nonperishable items. Visits to the pantry are made by appointment only.

In addition, while doors to the library will remain closed to students, most of the library’s resources are available online. Since late September, the library also allows requests and

pick-ups for physical material. Visiting Library. Brooklyn.Cuny.edu will bring you to the main page where you can use OneSearch, their research guides, or the endearingly helpful 24/7 chat with a Librarian that appears by clicking on the blue box labeled “Chat Help.”

Regarding whether the rise of COVID cases in BC’s immediate area will have any effect on on-campus resources like the library and food pantry, “To the best of my knowledge, nothing has changed yet,” said Adams.

The Learning Center has remained functional over Zoom. Instructions on meeting with a tutor, as well as the Zoom Schedule are available on the Center’s page.

Similarly, students can

meet over Zoom with a career counselor to discuss possible career paths, tweak resumes, have a mock interview, or receive additional advice for applying to jobs or internships. Whether we’re headed for another recession or not, it’s a good idea to have a spiffy resume and cover letter on the ready for any jobs or internships that come your way. Check out their page on the College’s website to learn more about their services.

The Health Clinic also remains available remotely. Students can schedule a tele-medical consultation with the clinic by emailing them or leaving a phone message. Just be sure to include your full name and phone number.

Students can still meet with personal counselors either over the phone or through a video meeting. Whether it is stress, anxiety, depression, or any other sort of mental health concerns, the first step would be either calling (718) 951-5363 or BCPersonalCounseling@gmail.com. Their hours are Monday - Thursday 9:00 am to 7:00 pm, or on Friday 9:00 am to 4:30 pm. After a screening with a supervisor, students will be matched with a clinical counselor.

“The goal was to make sure students had a place and a time to get answered any questions they have to ask,” Adams told the Vanguard.

CHECK US OUT ONLINE!

@THEBCVANGUARD ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Brooklyn College Welcomes New Queer Student Action Alliance Club

By Kendra Martinez
Staff Writer

After being in the works since last November, the Queer Student Action Alliance (QSAA) has officially become a Brooklyn College club. Under the guidance of Club President Kyle Reese and Vice President Nick Cevoli, QSAA aims to embrace and unify the Queer community by taking action against issues that are faced by Queer students at BC and CUNY-wide.

Reese is in his fourth year at Brooklyn College completing his BA in Queer Psychosocial Research and Cevoli majors in Healthcare for Disenfranchised Populations. Together the duo has worked closely with the LGBT Alliance for resources, student government to discuss club funding, and the Women's and Gender Studies Program.

Through their collaborations, activism, and volunteerism, QSAA has addressed issues

within their community as well as educated the BC student body about gender. From fighting for gender pronouns on student identification cards to advocating for more gender-neutral bathrooms on campus, QSAA has taken the pledge to work towards social and policy changes. "I've heard of students getting their IDs taken away if their picture doesn't match their name or their appearance didn't match the gender of their name, so they weren't being granted access to campus, and their IDs were being withheld from them," said Reese. "We wanted to change it so we started coming up with ideas," he said. And as of now, there is only one gender-neutral bathroom in the William James Hall building on the entire BC campus, and that remains an issue they hope to tackle in the near future.

"Transgender people and non-binary people, they don't really have



Queer Student Action Alliance in a group meeting before the pandemic. / Kyle Reese

a place to go to the bathroom. That can cause a lot of mental health, physical health, and grading issues," said Reese, citing the inconvenience of the time it would take for someone to get to that one bathroom and back.

The QSAA provides and welcomes a space for anyone who wants to be a part of it. "People are afraid of gender, they hear something that messes with their concept of gender,

and they freak out and there's really no reason for that. If we can teach people in a place where it is safe to learn about it, then I think it would be much more helpful," said Reese. He hopes to create a social atmosphere at Brooklyn College and CUNY to provide an open perspective on the Queer community. "We try to make it as open and as accepting as is for any other student on campus, which is important for the student's success," said Reese.

Reese and Cevoli have used their social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to make announcements and keep their audience engaged with the club. "I want to keep pushing that motivation to change things for the better and support one another," said Cevoli. He feels it is important for QSAA to set the tone for CUNY schools and their attitudes towards the Queer community.

On their latest Instagram post, the QSAA commemorated "Coming Out Day," a day

in which people of the LGBTQAI community embrace and reflect on the first time they publicly expressed their gender identity or sexual orientation. QSAA encouraged students to tell their stories and showed support to those who did.

Reese and Cevoli shared how the pandemic has affected their plans for the club. Since school went online, the process in going forward with QSAA has been slow. If they were on campus, they would be able to spread the word with flyers all around, but for now, they look to social media to connect with students. "It's a tough time for everything going on right now, and I think we all need to be there for each other," said Reese.

These setbacks, however, are no match for the vision that these founders have for the club's future as they continue fighting for the civil rights of BC Queer students and beyond.



WE DID IT!!!

**We are ecstatic to announce
that we have FINALLY been
approved as an official club**



BC Women of Color Mark Domestic Violence Awareness Month

By Matthew Hirsch
Staff Writer

In honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Brooklyn College's Women of Color (WOC) collaborated with Peer Health Exchange Club, Phi Sigma Chi Fraternity, and Public Health and Medicine Club to host a virtual workshop. The conversation shed light on different signs of domestic violence, types of abuses, and toxic patterns that can harm any relationship.

"What makes something abusive in a relationship is when one partner has power and control over another person," said guest-speaker Jessica Martinez, who works for a local non-profit agency called the Church Avenue Merchants Block Association (CAMBA).

Martinez specializes as a health educator under the Enough is Enough initiative to help combat sex crimes on college campuses. From accompanying sexually assaulted students in filing a police report to taking them to a hospital, Martinez and her organization are there to be a support system.

"What the Enough is Enough initiative is, is that we are health educators that are on college campuses. And basically, our job is to provide workshops and services to students in the prevention of sexual assault and domestic violence on college campuses," said Martinez. "We're here to do these workshops, and then if anybody on campus ever goes to any of these events

and they need help, we're here to help them as well."

The event began with a conversation about what people look for in a relationship, whether it be romantic or platonic. Attendees chimed in with answers such as honesty, communication, integrity, spontaneity, and, most importantly, memes. The consensus was that a relationship should involve genuine respect and care for one another.

As the discussion continued, the focus shifted specifically to intimate relationships and healthy boundaries between partners. Mohammad Tusar, a student from Phi Sigma Chi Fraternity, spoke about how it's essential to give your partner personal space when they're upset and might not want affection. The takeaway seemed to be that despite best intentions, your partner's comfort is paramount.

Martinez reflected further on the importance of partners in a relationship having time apart.

"Some healthy boundaries are like going out with friends without your partner. Because before we met our partner, whoever we're with, we're our own person. We come with our group of friends, and sometimes we just want to hang out with them," said Martinez.

Attendees expanded on what they thought could turn a relationship from healthy to toxic. One attendee, Marlaina James, spoke about how an overly-

jealous partner can be smothering and controlling.

"Depending on the action behind jealousy is a big thing, but also the type of things that you're getting jealous over. Because it could be something so small and it can start out as, 'Oh, it's cute. You're jealous over something.' And then it might snowball eventually in six months, a year, or two years, and that person is very controlling and manipulative. So, for me personally, I don't do jealousy," said James. To avoid it or other issues within a relationship, James thinks open communication is necessary.

There are different forms of abuse to look out for in a relationship that constitutes intimate partner violence (IPV), a form of domestic violence. Though not always as obvious as physical violence, IPV includes mental, verbal, emotional, financial, sexual, technological, and spiritual abuse. During the conference, gaslighting, which is a form of mental abuse, was specifically mentioned. Gaslighting is manipulation that makes someone question their sanity, perception of reality, or memory. For example, belittling someone's feelings or convincing them they misremember things.

Domestic violence is an issue that affects millions of people in the United States alone. 1 in 4 women and 1 in 9 men experience domestic abuse in America, according to the National Coalition Against Domestic



"Women of Color" at Brooklyn College (Facebook icon)./
Women of Color at Brooklyn College/Facebook Page

Violence. Though women disproportionately experience intimate partner abuse, it is a problem that affects men as well. According to the National Center for Biotechnology Information, about 15 percent of all domestic violence victims are men, and the statistic is likely higher, but men tend not to report abuse. Tusar shared his thoughts as to why men are less likely to report their abuse.

"I think it's an ego problem because a lot of the time if you report an issue like 'my lady hit me,' and guys would go, 'you're such a big dude. How do you let that happen?' Or that, that pain is probably nothing because they're seeing it as a lady hitting you," said Tusar. "And it goes to this whole social concept of seeing women as inferior or some other aspect of it. And they see it as not even abuse; it's just something that just happened."

Martinez also touched on victim-blaming, a mindset that has commonly made it harder for victims to escape IPV. In this state of mind, victims often blame themselves and make excuses for their abusers, ensuring that they stay in the vicious cycle of these harmful relationships.

"Sometimes people will

take it out on themselves and say, 'What did I do?' But then there could be other situations where it's physical abuse. Sometimes people will say, 'If I get hit once I'm done, I'm leaving. I never want to be with this person ever again,'" said Martinez. "But then there are other people who will stay in this relationship because of things they're holding onto. You blame it on yourself at first, and then it hit again, and then you left. That also falls into what's called a cycle of abuse where these things can happen over and over again."

Domestic violence can be difficult to recognize and accept when you are the one involved, but as workshop attendees discussed, power and control is ultimately what makes abuse exist in a relationship. If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, Martinez shared that help is available. Resources can be found on CAMBA's Victim Assistance Program page, which provides victims with services such as counseling and financial compensation claims. CAMBA also has a domestic violence hotline that operates weekdays from 9 am to 5 pm and a rape crisis hotline available 24/7.

CAMBA Rape Crisis Services

(800) 310-2449

Victim Assistance Program

(718) 282-5575

Domestic Violence Hotline

(800) 621-4673

Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities

(212) 788-2830

NYC Gay & Lesbian Anti-Violence Project

(212) 714-1141

Sex Crime Report Line

(212) 267-RAPE (7273)

- www.loveisrespect.com
- www.breakthecycle.org
- www.rainn.org
- <http://www.nsvrc.org/>
- <http://www.thehotline.org>
- <http://nyscasa.org/>

Domestic violence resources shared by speaker Jessica Martinez./CAMBA

PRA Holds Indigenous People Day Event

By Gabriela Flores
Features Editor

In acknowledgment of Indigenous Peoples' Day, the Brooklyn College Puerto Rican Alliance (PRA) hosted an online discussion about Indigeneity's complexity and its erasure in Central American history. With her focus on the Afro-Indigenous Garifuna people, guest-lecturer and Garifuna scholar Daisy E. Guzmán Nuñez challenged the concepts of neo-colonialism and anti-Blackness embedded in the nationhood of the Americas.

"Their Blackness overshadows their Indigeneity in the eyes of those who look for certain qualities to be able to label an Indigenous person. So in terms of geography and social politics, Blackness and labor are intertwined with violence towards Garifuna people and other Black Indigenous people in Central America, solely based on phenotype," said Guzmán Nuñez. Her project at the University of Texas, "From La Buga to the South Bronx: Garifuna Women Embodied Cartographies," traces the Garifuna people's diaspora in the United States. Despite their displacement from their original lands, Garifuna people have settled in predominantly Black urban spaces like Harlem and South Bronx, carrying on the spirit of Garifuna Wagia, or "We Are Garifuna."

Before starting the event, Daniel Vázquez Sanabria, President of PRA, shared a land acknowledgment that called for participants to "dismantle the ongoing effects of settler colonialism." He reminded them that cities and institutions

like Brooklyn College lay on the stolen lands of Lenni Lenape and other Indigenous peoples.

"This is where together, we must continue and persist. Land acknowledgments do not exist in the past tense. Colonialism is a current, ongoing process, and we need to build the mindfulness of our present participation in it," said Sanabria.

Neo-colonialism stems from the invasion of European settlers, which has led nations like Honduras or Belize in Central America to be founded on the grounds of anti-Blackness and white supremacy, Guzmán Nuñez argued. Consequently, the history of these nations has highlighted the descendants of European settlers, pushing to erase the Black experience - by extension, that of Afro-Indigenous people. In Latin America, Indigeneity and Blackness are often seen as two separate identities - not as one.

"As an identity, Afro-Indigenous is a subjectivity that sustains a form of Blackness that exists outside of the ethnogenesis of the Middle Passage," Guzmán Nuñez said. The common misconception about Blackness in Central America is that it only exists due to slave trades like the Middle Passage, which subsequently ignores Afro-Indigenous people's existence. "As Garifuna people claim an ethnohistory that removes them from the experience of the plantation, their contemporary struggles exist in the wake of the plantation."

With the waging of civil wars in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and other countries,



Garifuna murals in Livingston, Guatemala, showed during Guzmán Nuñez's presentation.../Passport the World

Garifuna people faced sociopolitical displacement that led them to migrate to the United States. In each city they settle in, the Garifuna carry on a cycle of "belonging and disbelonging" that does not necessarily tie them to the land itself, but their identity as Afro-Indigenous. By migrating, the Garifuna embody their Black resistance and mobility as they maneuver through new cities like New York, Guzmán Nuñez shared. To preserve and embrace their Afro-Indigeneity, Garifuna women have recreated their communal space that "form an extension of home" for their people.

"The resistance as seen through performances, political collective, and matrilineal networks are all part of what makes them Garifuna," said Guzmán Nuñez.

As a Garifuna New Yorker herself, Guzmán Nuñez began studying her identity politics as an undergraduate, after having limited access to the experiences of Black and Afro-Indigenous people in Latin America. Using Black feminist

anthropology, Guzmán Nuñez has explored the Afro-Indigenous experience as a Black experience.

"My politics of citation respect the legacies of Black feminist thought and Black feminist anthropology that before was limited by the White patriarchal legacies of social and cultural anthropology, that does not engage Blackness as an Indigenous anthology, but rather as 'slavish slock' and products of oppression within the White gaze," said Guzmán Nuñez.

Today, Garifuna people continue to protect their history and publicly display their resilience. This year, many Garifuna decided to launch a political movement where they check the "Black" race box and write in their identification as "Garifuna" on the census. In doing so, participants ensure that NYC will have an accurate count of Garifuna people since it is the "largest Garifuna community outside of Central America," Guzmán Nuñez said.

Though the identity of Garifuna people has yet to be fully recognized

by Latin America, their inclusion is possible, but systemic change is needed. Nations must first recognize the anti-Blackness and colonialism embedded in their political system, Guzmán Nuñez mentioned. However, since the nation was created with the intent of excluding Black people, becoming part of Latinidad can present a reconfiguration of identity politics for Garifuna people.

"For me, Garifuna never put into question my Blackness. Garifuna was always Black. So to redefine myself as 'Afro-Latina' and to re-explain my Blackness, is to add erasure to a history that did not have it. There's a history of displacement and political unjust that is always in relation to Garifuna people," Guzmán Nuñez said. "But to name yourself in 2020, is a personal politics that give Garifuna people room to engage with the complexities of their identity as Afro-Indigenous, as Garifuna, as Afro-Latino, or as Afro-Central American if they so do choose."

Indigenous Studies at BC (Or The Lack Of)

By Ryan Schwach
Editor-In-Chief

In a time where the United States and the wider world is reckoning with its past, some at Brooklyn College are looking to provide some of the context of that history, specifically when it comes to the very land we all live on.

Long before Columbus' westward expansion, American slavery, and American imperialism, the land that is now the United States was populated by the Indigenous peoples of North America, whose history has been widely erased from contemporary history educations, or at least has been watered down to lose most of its context and nuance.

"You can't talk about the story of America without talking about Indigenous peoples," said Lou Cornum, a former BC adjunct professor, who was the only Indigenous faculty at BC before they were laid-off this summer.

Cornum has participated in a group of Brooklyn College students, faculty, and administration working to try and amend this erasure by instituting more Indigenous Studies and decolonized education into our curriculums.

The group, called the Indigenous Working Group, began with a petition and a committee of 15 to 20 students and faculty calling for more representation from Indigenous voices in the BC curriculum.

"This is a part of scholarship that's missing," said Julia Steiner, a former BC grad and graduate student who is one of the major facilitators of the push for more Indigenous Studies at BC. Steiner, originally from Colorado, began thinking more about Indigenous history when she was younger and

visited the site of the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre in Colorado where 70 to 500 Cheyenne and Arapaho people were killed by the U.S Cavalry.

"Wait, we are only a state because these people were massacred, what the fuck?," she said.

Eventually, she found her way to BC and CUNY to further her studies, but didn't find a lot of outlets for it.

"There is not a single course at BC in over 20 years that has had an Indigenous focus," she said. On top of that, she noticed the lack of Indigenous or BIPOC professors in general in the tenured ranks of the faculty body, and this has become a large part of the Working Group's goal. "Ideally one of the things we've been pressuring admin for is hiring for scholars who are Indigenous, or Black and People of Color," she said, "It's Brooklyn in 2020, and our tenured professor body is mostly White."

Steiner also said that, as a White woman, she shouldn't have to be the one to deliver the message.

"That voice is important, and we shouldn't have to filter it through more White people," she said.

The Working Group has set the goal of not only hiring with a more diverse lens but changing the way we learn as well by bringing in more "decolonized scholarship," or education that comes from the perspective of those who have been colonized, rather than the more "eurocentric" angle.

For example, learning about the American Revolution not just from the perspective of the Founding Fathers and colonists, but also through the eyes of the Indigenous peoples who were there at the time.

"American history faces west, what if you taught

it facing east?," said Kenneth Gould, Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences who is a major force in creating the Working Group and pushing for more Indigenous education.

"Native American Studies should be prominent in history," he said. Gould helped to originally form the group and sees it as a step in the right direction, particularly since it was mostly formed by student voices.

"I love it when students take control of their own education," he said. "That's ideally what college education is."

Unfortunately, there has been some push back to the Working Group's goals from CUNY and BC that have halted any true change.

"Where the resistance is, is with investing dollars," said Gould. Steiner also acknowledges that money could halt the wheels of progress.

"There seems to be a value of, frankly, money over ethical scholarship at this point," she said. "It's not about what is right or wrong for this institution."

Brooklyn College and the CUNY system as a whole is widely underfunded as it currently stands, and that is always an issue when trying to perpetuate any change.

"CUNY is always under threat of having cuts to the budget," said Cornum, who also mentioned the difficulty in making change in a system "unwilling to change."

"With CUNY and all the bureaucracy and all the levels and administration, it's really hard to do new things, it's hard to build momentum," they said.

Part of any pushback to Indigenous Studies and decolonized education across the nation comes from the severity of

the history it wishes to highlight. One that forces us to reckon with a violent and damaging past that for many could be hard to stomach.

"It's hard for people to pallet something like, 'Wow the place that I am living, the country that I am upholding, the beliefs I believe in is also committing genocide,'" said Steiner.

It is also a lack of understanding and pre-existing knowledge that makes it more difficult to get everyone interested.

"There are some people that think Indigenous People are not around, that they are just gone," said Steiner. "There is a failure systematically across the U.S to teach what actually happened, to teach the truth."

This lack of knowledge is something that Cornum experienced first hand when coming to New York in 2007 from Arizona. Cornum is from the Navajo tribe there, and grew up with that culture most of their life. In New York, Cornum lost their wallet and had to go to the DMV to apply for new documents, and had trouble when people at the DMV didn't comprehend their tribal documents that are supposed to be accepted. "They had to call someone in Albany," Cornum said. "People will just have no knowledge."

The failure to teach the history that leads to this lack of understanding comes long before anyone steps foot on a college campus. "It's often your first and last encounter with Indigenous education is in elementary school," said Cornum. "Unless you seek it out you could go your whole academic life after middle school not learning about Native American history."

For many, Indigenous

history comes with the story of Thanksgiving, and making headdresses out of paper and crayons. "That's something that I myself had to do in Arizona public schools," said Cornum. "It's young people who don't know and don't have the sort of tools to question the context of these stories that are being told to them," they said. As someone who is Indigenous, Cornum described this sort of education as "like seeing yourself outside of yourself, and it definitely leads to a feeling of alienation."

This watered down and at times totally fictitious way we learn about Indigenous peoples in elementary school is a mechanism of dealing with the violence of the past.

"We tell kids these little fables, but don't want to address the actual issues because the actual issues are bloody," said Steiner. "They are hard for us to pallet, not just for adults but for children too."

This is a main piece of motivation for the Indigenous Working Group: trying to provide the context of the history in its true and full form so people can better understand the world we live in today. "It's hard to make progress socially if you don't grapple with your history," said Dean Gould.

The Working Group is continuing to strive for more Indigenous Studies at BC, whether that be with its own department, integration into the History department education, or even required as part of the core curriculum.

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Esteemed Filmmakers Offer “Masterclass” to BC Students

By John Schilling
Arts Editor

Geeta Gandbhir and Blair Foster are a filmmaking power duo whose work precedes them.

Gandbhir, an Emmy award winning editor, worked on the Emmy-nominated Whoopi Goldberg Presents Moms Mabley and the Oscar-nominated God is the Bigger Elvis for HBO.

Foster, an Emmy award winning filmmaker, worked on Oscar winning Taxi to the Dark Side and Martin Scorsese’s George Harrison: Living in the Material World.

Together, the duo co-directed A Conversation with my Black Son, a short film that explores race, police brutality, and how the parents of African American boys go about having these discussions with their sons.

On Tuesday, Oct. 6, the History Department at Brooklyn College welcomed both Gandbhir and Foster to Prof. Philip Napoli’s Oral History class on Zoom to discuss their work, offer advice to students, and share their experiences in navigating the art of documentary filmmaking.

The idea that led to A Conversation with my

Black Son came after the death of Eric Garner, an unarmed black man who died from a police chokehold in 2014. As a response to the lives lost to police brutality, Gandbhir and Foster pitched the film to the New York Times, who greenlit the project, and each had their own motivation to make it happen.

“As a white woman who comes from a very conservative family, I was looking for a way to connect with them,” Foster said. “I hoped they would kind of get a window into something that I knew they didn’t really think about or know about.”

“The topic of race is so difficult and complicated for a lot of people to talk about,” Gandbhir echoed. “Trying to sort of find an interesting angle into the topic was really important to us.”

The film, which was shot in Gandbhir’s attic over the course of two days, is made up of a series of interviews with the parents of African American boys, some of whom happen to be friends of Gandbhir and were eager to lend their time to the project. This eagerness is felt early on in the film with laughs



Geeta Gandbhir (left) and Blair Foster (right)./ Photo edited by John Schilling

that quickly shift to tears as the parents share their experiences.

“It’s a great example of both a way to honor individual stories, and at the same time, it’s telling a universal story,” Foster said. “It works on both a micro level and a macro level.”

During both the production and post production phases, Gandbhir and Foster faced a variety of choices that went into the artistic aspect of the film. This included the decision to have the interviewees look

directly into the camera.

“We really wanted it to feel like you were having a conversation with this person who might be your neighbor, who might be someone you know, who might be a friend,” Gandbhir revealed.

Another significant choice the duo had to make was whether or not to interview the couples together or separately. Ultimately, they decided to leave it up to each couples’ discretion, which they admit could have posed a significant challenge when editing.

“Usually, if you really want them to pay attention to you...and the questions you’re asking, you don’t want them together,” Gandbhir shared. “It’s much easier for editing just to have one person at a time.”

Foster agreed but admitted that it worked out in this project, saying “The couples [were] interacting, and this subject matter sort of lends itself to that.”

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Indigenous Studies at BC (Or The Lack Of)

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“There should be ideally... not a major and minor program, but that everyone is required to read an example of decolonized scholarship,” said Steiner. “A little bit of a breakdown of how we educate, a little more interdisciplinary options.”

The group is also pushing

more cultural recognition, like the recognition of Indigenous Peoples’ Day, or instituting land acknowledgments at public meetings. Land acknowledgments are beginning to become more popular and are used at the start of a meeting to acknowledge that the land you are currently on is stolen land that once belonged to the Indigenous peoples that lived there.

The area around Brooklyn College specifically, was populated by the Lenape tribe.

In a quote posted by Brooklyn College’s Instagram, Dean Gould spoke about the importance of these acknowledgments. “We must acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional and unceded territory of the Lenape,” he said. “This acknowledgment

demonstrates a commitment to beginning the process of working to dismantle ongoing legacies of settler colonialism...”

This year, the movement saw a win when Indigenous environmentalist and scholar Winona LaDuke was named BC’s Hess Scholar-In-Residence, and gave her nearly a week’s worth of digital lectures that happened earlier this month.

Recently, they have seen a rise in interest in Indigenous Studies, especially now as the U.S reckons with its racial history across the board.

“People want to know backgrounds,” said Steiner. Although, like any major social change, it won’t happen right away.

“It is a process,” she said. “It’s not something that is going to happen overnight.”

Esteemed Filmmakers Offer “Masterclass” to BC Students

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The ultimate editing challenge, however, came when they first submitted the film to the New York Times. After editing hours of footage, Gandbhir condensed it all to a final cut that was roughly 10 minutes long. The New York Times asked them to cut it in half.

“A lot of what people had to say was redundant,” Gandbhir said. “So it was about who kind of said it best...or who had a unique take.”

For Gandbhir, the most important part of the editing process was maintaining the arc that starts with the parent’s own experiences with law enforcement and then how they have these conversations with their kids, the struggles that come with that, and a section in which the parents look into the camera and speak directly to their children.

In order to both maintain the film’s arc and honor the New York Times’ request to shorten the piece, Gandbhir and Foster had to cut some parents from the film altogether.

“You have to be very ruthless,” Foster said. “There is so much stuff you like and you like the people...and you have to kind of put that aside and think what’s the story I’m telling and who’s telling it in the best way. It has to be 100 percent.”

Since the release of *A Conversation with my Black Son* in 2015, the film has generated a huge response with schools implementing it into their



Geeta Gandbhir (top left) and Blair Foster (bottom left) on Zoom with History Prof. Philip Napoli (right)./ Photo edited by John Schilling

curriculum and through film festival screenings. It was the New York Times publishing of the film, however, that allowed it to have such an impact.

“We were extraordinarily lucky that we had good timing because the Times was just starting to do these kinds of shorts too. I think they were eager for just about anything,” Foster said.

“[The film] was widely shared on social media, and I think it was their most viewed Op-Doc of that year,” Gandbhir added. “Suddenly they wanted some more.”

Because of its strong reception, the film launched into a series called *The Conversation with the immediate sequel being A Conversation About*

Growing Up Black, a short film featuring interviews with young African American boys.

Prior to *A Conversation with my Black Son*, Gandbhir and Foster worked together on *Mr. Dynamite: The Rise of James Brown*, a documentary that utilizes archival footage and interviews to explore James Brown’s career in the music industry and his lasting impact. The duo also reflected on this experience as a means to emphasize the difficulty of interviewing people. For Foster, her interview with Maceo Parker, a saxophonist who worked with Brown, stood out.

“We were chatting beforehand, he was in a great mood...and then we sat down and the

camera turned on, and he just became a robot,” Foster joked. “It’s an interview I consider one of my biggest failures. I just couldn’t get really anything good out of him, and he’s not in the film that much for that reason.”

“There’s some people who unfortunately are just super camera shy,” Gandbhir explained. “You have to try to get them to forget the camera, and that can be really hard.”

Both Gandbhir and Foster have navigated these challenges by working to build trust with those they interview to ensure that they can produce their best work. This is because of the symbiotic nature of the relationship between the interviewer

and interviewee.

“You’re driving and the person you are interviewing is giving you the directions,” Foster explained. “The reality is you may not get everything you want...it is a process.”

“If you are pushing them and they are not giving, then step back,” Gandbhir added. “Let them go through other stuff and then come back to it. Let them get more comfortable with it.”

As the night came to a close, Prof. Napoli thanked the duo for sharing their experiences and remarked that it was “a masterclass in interviewing and documentary production.”

The Living Mural Continues On

By John Schilling
Arts Editor

As the weather gets colder and COVID-19 hotspots emerge, The Living Mural has lived on.

The Living Mural is a new approach to live theater, featuring short, individual performances that have been performed since late August at the Mall in Central Park every Saturday from 1-4 p.m. The project is the vision of Anna Strasser, who received her MFA in Directing from Brooklyn College in 2018 and served as an adjunct lecturer to undergraduate theater students.

During an interview on the Theater Department at Brooklyn College's Exploring Digital Theater, Strasser revealed to Chanou Wiltshire, the co-host of the online series, that in addition to Saturdays in Central Park, The Living Mural would now also be performing in Prospect Park near Grand Army Plaza on Sundays through the end of October.

With this change, Strasser has split duties with Lillian Meredith, another Brooklyn College alumna who has served as the director of Prospect Park performances whilst Strasser oversees the Central Park outpost. The decision to expand the

project came after months of performances with engaged audiences that went beyond what Strasser had first envisioned.

"When we initially thought of the project, it was really supposed to be one day and then maybe it was to the end of September," Strasser said. "And now it's to the end of October."

Besides the changes in both venue and schedule, however, the pieces performed have also evolved.

"Our initial moment in the park...we had somewhere like 10 pieces written, and now I think we have upwards of 16 or 17 pieces written because the project has sort of grown from that initial impulse," Strasser added. "Some of the initial 10 were like sweet monologues that you could picture someone sitting on a stool with a spotlight in a theater doing really beautifully, and everybody is crying... but then you put it in Central Park, and it doesn't work anymore."

This posed an early challenge for The Living Mural, as the team began to navigate Central Park and decide how to launch the project. While Central Park and Prospect Park provide safe venues for performances to live on, Strasser warns that as



The Living Mural performing in Prospect Park./ John Schilling

public spaces, they lack the intimacy that often distinguishes theater as a powerful medium.

"You put [the sweet monologues] in Central Park, and beautiful, internal movements aren't translating because down the way you have the percussion band and down the way you have the girl practicing ukulele with her dad, and you have the art vendors, and you have the caricature artists..There's just a lot going on," Strasser said. "In order to really reach over that threshold...we realized we needed much more front-footed pieces."

This new approach included original pieces that directly engaged the audience to generate more responses. Unlike the traditional theater setting, this often involves a call and response or question and answer format, which makes each interaction unique.

Among new audience members was Maude Apatow, daughter of American film director Judd Apatow and actress seen most recently in *The King of Staten Island*. Apatow was among the first audience members in Prospect Park when they

launched on Oct. 4.

The new changes have not only drawn more of an audience to The Living Mural but have also been a means to attract new performers to join the team.

"We also have a fair number of people who have stopped on the street and said 'hey, I want to be a part of this,' and I always say yes," Strasser revealed. "We have a bunch of people who I never met before who just happened to be in the park in the mall one day, and now are performing on the street with us."

One of these newcomers is RJ Reyes, who debuted in The Living Mural on Oct. 10, performing an original piece called "The Quarantined Lament of the Duke."

"As soon as I saw some actual live theater happening, I was like 'Ok I got to get in on this,'" Reyes told Niluka Hotaling, the production manager of the Dept. of Theater at Brooklyn College and co-host of the Exploring Digital Theater series. "This is a way to adapt to our new world, and keep the craft alive...It's not dead. It's just changed!"

Despite the project's resilience over the last few months, Strasser expects The Living Mural to finally come to a close by the end of October, as the weather transitions from chilly to freezing and with COVID-19 hotspots emerging in Brooklyn neighborhoods. Strasser still remains open to The Living Mural relaunching in 2021, but the project has already had a bigger impact than initially anticipated.

"What sort of started off as this impulse to heal and bring the community sort of took another level when we got an actual audience there...You're literally six feet away from the person, looking them straight in the eye, sharing this monologue with them," Strasser said. "When it's over, it's not like the curtain comes down or the lights go off and you just shuffle off. You're left with two people standing there, and then those people can choose to have a little conversation or check in, and that is more than what I initially imagined for the project."



BC alumna and The Living Mural actress Vanessa Chia Chung (left) with Maude Apatow (right) during performances at Prospect Park./ John Schilling

Intimations By Zadie Smith: A Review

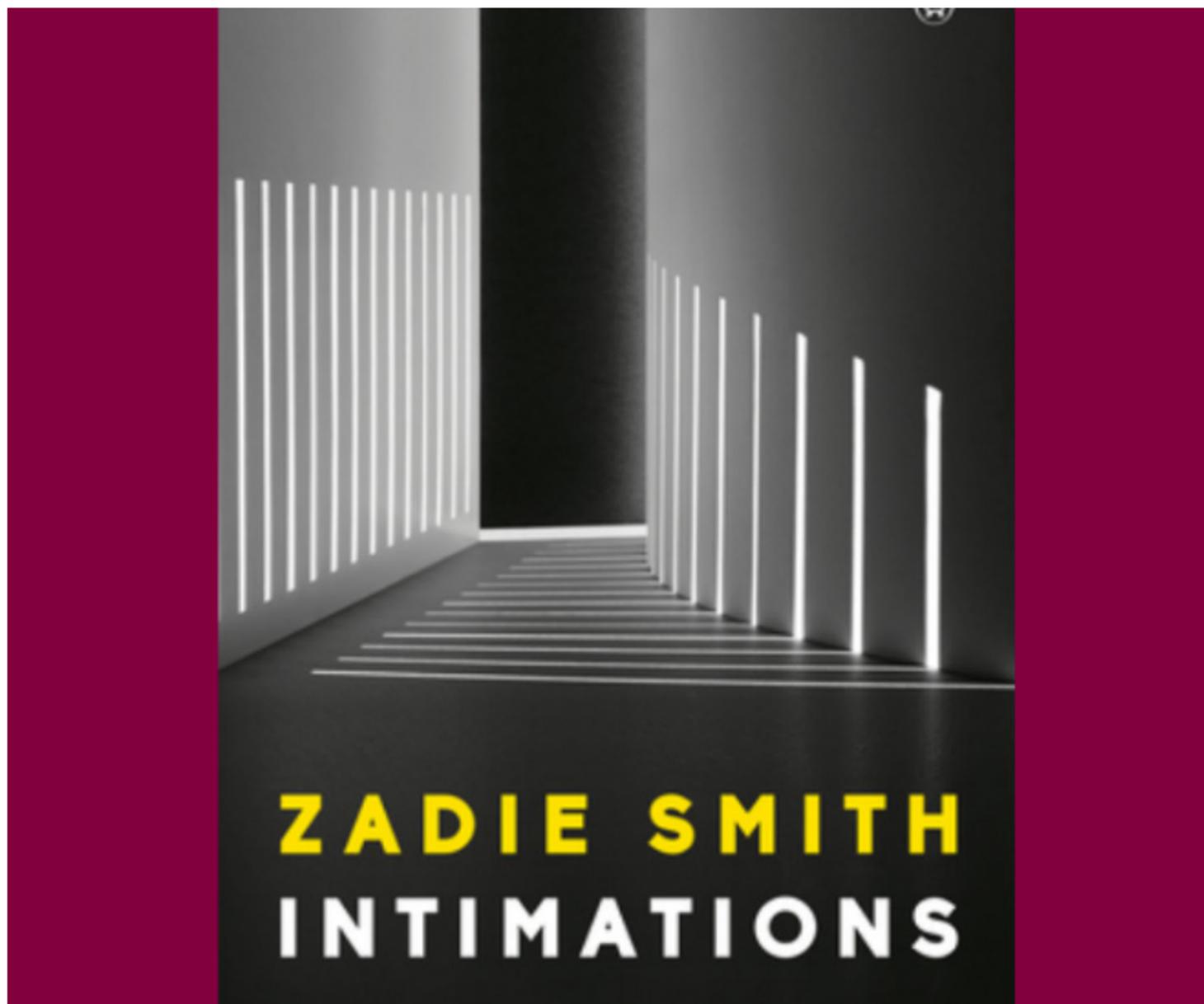
By Micharl Castaneda
Columnist

“Disaster demanded a new dawn. Only new thinking can lead to a new dawn. We knew that,” wrote Zadie Smith in her latest work, *Intimations*.

Intimations is one of the first books to come from a major author since the pandemic started that is written about the pandemic itself. It is a collection of six essays, each of which covers a different experience in the early days of the COVID-19 lockdown -- from March to midsummer.

In some ways, reading *Intimations* reminds of Julie Nolke’s YouTube series in which she describes the pandemic to her former self -- it has over 16 million views. Except Nolke is a passive observer getting upset at the news as seen from Toronto, Canada. By contrast, Zadie Smith speaks from a New York perspective, and the perspective of a Black woman in an upper economic class, who is not afraid to flaunt it to the reader. These are highly personal stories about the author’s experience.

Still, the problem with the book is that it feels dated the moment it was printed. I am not sure how many of us are up to the task of reliving the middle portion of 2020. In COVID time, it feels as much like a lifetime ago as it feels just yesterday. In order to get into the writing, one might have to pretend that they are



“Intimations”, Zadie Smith’s latest work./Zadie Smith

either hearing about this for the first time or with some distance from 2020.

If you can do that, then there is much to appreciate. The clarity of the writing and ideas presented are paramount. Smith reminds me of the Czech writer, Milan Kundera, in the way that you leave her work feeling that you have learned some life lesson.

The book will mostly likely serve as a powerfully written record of the early part of the pandemic. It’s not exactly *The Decameron*, but it paints a picture of its time more than it reports on it. Art tends to endure more so than journalism because it strikes a chord in the

human experience.

Smith begins her book talking about older women looking at flowers around 9th street and sixth avenue in New York City. She then speaks of the writer not as a creator, but as a control freak setting the world in her own mold. We then learn about people she knows in the village, where she lives.

Smith is a writing professor at NYU, and she speaks of the personal styles of her students (the style of all young people -- now radically interrupted due to the pandemic) and the promise of youth in all its vapid forms, as well as the underlying emptiness of the structures (university, technology)

that young people rely on -- so much so that their style is really all they own.

As random as this all sounds, it feels real in the shadow of COVID. The struggle of getting through one’s life during a pandemic is the challenge if you managed to stay healthy so far. We still have the same goals and needs as we did before, it’s just harder now.

If you read just one essay, *Postscript: Concept As A Virus*, is the one. Here, Smith speaks of racism as a virus, and the murder of George Floyd is described this way. She also writes of the contempt of world leaders wanting the masses to develop herd immunity from

COVID-19 so that they don’t have to deal with people whose lives mean so little to them.

The author did not contract COVID-19 or speak of anyone who did. She speaks of a lot of privilege in her life, but she is not divorced from the world and has a clear point of view.

This collection of essays reminds us that we need new dreams tonight. It tells us that we are in the dawn of the day of COVID and it’s just one part of the story. While it’s hard to reflect on something that is still happening, maybe it’s good to take a break and just breathe during a pandemic that takes away the breath.

On The Record: Away is Mine – Gord Downie

By Allison Rapp
Opinions Editor

I am, like many journalists, a stickler for due dates. Nothing gives me greater anxiety than bringing things down to the wire or scrambling to piece an article together moments before it is expected in someone's hands. I typically file my pieces several days in advance -- just in case a catastrophe of some kind occurs and I have to hit the drawing board again -- and I've never, ever, missed a deadline. This past weekend, I skipped town to meet up with family upstate to spend a few days doing close to nothing except basking in the crisp, non-city, autumnal air. I brought along my work materials, fully anticipating writing this column from the glorious deck of my Airbnb rental overlooking the Hudson.

I didn't write a single word.

Instead, I sipped coffee and stared out at the view, my laptop untouched in my bag. There are two schools of thought when it comes to writing first drafts: one is that "perfect" is the enemy of "good," and "done" is the first step to "good," but the other is that for many writers, sitting down and forcing oneself to write rarely yields promising results. I could not commit to either ideology over the weekend.

The onset of the pandemic

has lent itself to the idea that work -- even writing a few satisfying, coherent sentences -- has a way of feeling pointless these days. A lot of what we as students are currently expected to do feels redundant in the grand scheme of things. It likely won't matter this week, or next, or perhaps even in the long run -- why exert the energy?

But there's another school of writing thought that goes something like this: the next, most helpful thing you can do aside from move your pen is move your feet. So, over the weekend, I turned my attention alternately to my immediate surroundings, making a mental checklist of what I wanted to savor just a bit longer.

I was comfortably relaxing in a beautiful part of upstate New York where the leaves had just begun to change colors. I was drinking beers with my dad, whom I don't get to see as often as I'd like on account of an entire eight hours of train time between us. I was laughing with my sister, sharing a bed like we used to do as kids on family vacations. Check, check, check.

It sounds simple on paper, but it's often remarkably difficult to count our blessings in the moment we're experiencing them.

Last Sunday marked three years since the death of The Tragically Hip's frontman, Gord Downie. Any self-respecting Canadian or frequent border-hopping



American knows their legacy and laments that their time as a band was sadly made brief. (Downie was diagnosed with brain cancer in 2015.) Two years later, in October of 2017, he succumbed to his illness, but not before touring with the group one last time, and producing several solo studio albums of his own -- all with the weight of terminal illness looming large.

Downie, knowing full well that his time was limited, chose to look around him and relish what was there: family, love, beauty, hope, and music. *Away Is Mine* is his seventh solo album, (the second released posthumously), recorded

over the span of four days just a few months before his death.

"To be together, step into the most," he sings on "About Blank," "surrounded by those who love you the most."

I don't know what it's like to stare down the recognition of your own mortality in the way Downie did, and I wouldn't dream of comparing his story with mine, but there's something to be said about writing through the shock, loneliness, and grief.

"Even seers are struggling to have their voices heard," he points out on "Traffic is Magic," "even seekers are struggling to have their voices heard."

If you're in the same boat as I am -- finding it hard to focus on the work and get the job done -- the cliché stands up: you're not alone. There's a wash of noise and destruction holding our attention and silencing our voices, and those who aren't absorbed by it are likely living in ignorant (and sometimes dangerous) bliss. If there is a silver lining to be had, it may very well be that we took this moment in time to consider the parts of our lives that are most important to us and the people who love us the most.

CHECK US OUT ONLINE!

@THEBCVANGUARD ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Le'Ve-Gone Bell: Jets Star RB Takes The Fight To KC

By Conrad Hoyt
Sports Editor

On Tuesday, Oct. 12, the New York Jets released star running back Le'Veon Bell, not even halfway into his four year, \$52.5 million contract.

Bell signed with the Kansas City Chiefs shortly after, who already had a star-studded offense led by Super Bowl MVP Patrick Mahomes, Tyreek Hill, and Travis Kelce.

Since he became the marquee signing for the Jets in 2019, Bell's run with the Jets was mired in poor team (and personal) performances and controversy. In 15 games with the Jets last year, Bell rushed for a total of 789 yards and 3 touchdowns. The team went 7-9.

In contrast, in 2017, Bell's final season with the Steelers before holding out, he put up 1291 total yards and 9 touchdowns. The team went 13-3.

Bell's decision to hold out during the 2018



Le'Veon Bell playing for the Jets./ AP/triblive.com

NFL season was due to wanting a larger and longer-term contract from the Steelers that Pittsburgh was not willing to give him.

When he secured the contract from the Jets, Bell and New York fans were optimistic about the team and offense. With quarterback Sam Darnold running the show, he now had an undeniably elite option, and optimism wasn't necessarily misplaced.

Bell, and Jets fans alike,

just did not anticipate the exact heights of dysfunction from the franchise's front office and coaching staff. The Jets are 0-6, and Head Coach Adam Gase is sure to be fired as soon as, if not before, the season concludes.

Bell spent three weeks on injured reserve after pulling his hamstring in the Jets season-opening loss to the Buffalo Bills. After coming back in game 5 against Arizona, just to get 60 yards on

13 rushes, and see his team lose 10-30, Bell took to social media, liking tweets advocating he be traded.

For a young and rebuilding team, the Bell signing never made a ton of sense for the Jets. The team was unlikely to make the playoffs this year and last, and the tide only seems to be turning for the worse. Without finding a trade partner, the Jets essentially lost Bell for nothing, and questions

now surround the entire franchise from General Manager Joe Douglas down to Gase down to even Darnold.

Bell can be, and surely is, excited for the rest of this season with the Super Bowl-favorite Chiefs. Jets fans, on the other hand, will find little excitement, as the franchise is not only headed into no man's land, but everything points to things only getting worse before they get better.

Vinny The Goat by Mo Muhsin and Gabrielle Toro Vivoni



Bronx Bombers World Season Hopes Crash Again



Gerrit Cole, baseball pitcher for the New York Yankees./ Patrick Smith/Getty Images

By Jose Rohdin
Staff Writer

The Yankees 2020 season ended just like the season before it, with heartbreak on an Aroldis Chapman pitch.

For such a historic franchise with the most trophies for any team in North American team sports, going 11 years without a World Series appearance comes as a disappointment. The last decade ('10-'19) was the first decade in Yankee history without reaching the World Series at least once.

The Yankees made a big signing in the offseason to attempt to secure that allusive 28th World Series trophy. They signed former Houston Astros ace Gerrit Cole to a 9-year \$340-million-dollar contract. Yankee fans had been calling for

a big free agent signing at pitcher, and it finally came.

Cole's signing was massive, securing one of the best pitchers in the game from a rival championship contender. Cole, who grew up a Yankees fan, was the perfect fit and was immediately loved by Yankee fans. It seemed as if Cole was the nail in the coffin for the American League, and the Yankees were massive favorites to win the pennant.

Cole was just an addition to an already strong pitching staff. Masahiro Tanaka and James Paxton had already been aces in the past, and even though their stuff has dropped off a little, they are still elite pitchers. To add to that, the Yankees might have the most dangerous

bullpen in the league with Zack Britten, Adam Ottavino, Chad Green, and of course, Aroldis Chapman.

On top of all that quality pitching comes one of the deadliest lineups in baseball. Bats like Aaron Judge, Giancarlo Stanton, DJ LeMahieu, Gleyber Torres, and Gary Sanchez would scare just about any starting pitcher.

On paper, this should all add up to a World Series appearance, if not winning the whole thing, but that obviously didn't happen. Injuries really hurt the Yankees. Aaron Judge, Giancarlo Stanton, DJ LeMahieu, Gleyber Torres, Zack Britten, and Aroldis Chapman all spent time on the injured reserve list. On top of that, James Paxton, who had just come off back

surgery, was struggling until he picked up an arm injury that sat him for the rest of the season. Along with all that, Gary Sanchez was just cold all year, with a batting average of .147 on the season.

The Yankees have been just on the edge for four straight seasons, and next season they hope to get over the hump and finally play for a title. The issue is what piece do they need?

The fact remains that they need to resign DJ LeMahieu at least and make an attempt for Masahiro Tanaka. But if they can't resign Tanaka, at least Luis Severino and Domingo German will be available next season after missing the entire 2020 season. Also, rookie Deivi Garcia showed flashes of being a quality back-of-the-

rotation starting pitcher.

With all the injuries this season, other players were able to show flashes. Rookie Deivi Garcia showed flashes to be a quality player, and Luke Voit solidified his role as the starting first baseman and one of the best bats in the league, leading the league in home runs.

In a season that looked as if it could have been canceled because of the coronavirus pandemic, it's hard to judge the season altogether. The shortened season and weird spring training could be attributed to this unsuspected failure by the Yankees. However, on the bright side, the Yankees have lost to the team that has won the American League for the fourth straight season.