



# Newsletter

August 2020

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## Message from the Chair

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Welcome to the new U3AC year. And what a strange one it is. I think the strangest in our (almost) 40-year history. Despite all the difficulties we faced our experienced and enthusiastic tutors, supported by our staff, have produced a very diverse range of courses. Our warm thanks to them. Some of our other usual activities have been postponed. I can only apologise and tell you that they will be back as soon as is humanly possible. There are more details later in this Newsletter.

I hope you have had a chance to look at our new website. It is intended to be easier to use and to look more up to date. And it's the place where you should be able to find the answer to most of your questions. Work had started on this well before the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic and we are pleased that we were able to complete it despite everything.

Your allocations letter will tell you which of your chosen courses you have been allocated. You will see that courses for the Autumn Term are 'confirmed' while those for the Spring Term are 'provisional'.

This is because we cannot be certain what measures will be in place in January and what the implications of these will be. At the moment, our bookings for external venues can only be provisional. For Bridge Street itself we need to plan using the most up to date guidance about social distancing etc. We also need to consult tutors about their preferences. We will update everyone individually about their courses for the Spring Term by the end of the Autumn Term.

In the meantime, please be assured that we are not aiming for Everything on Zoom Forever. We know that you want to meet people and to learn face-to-face. But also, that you all differ as to when you will feel comfortable in doing so.

We will be back IRL. As soon as possible. In the meantime, enjoy our virtual Autumn term.

**Susan Honeyford, Chair**

## Message from the Treasurer

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I would like to thank our former Assistant Treasurer (she prefers to remain anonymous) for her 19 years of excellent service. Regulatory and technical demands on the financial management of charities have become increasingly onerous so Council felt it was wise to move to a paid (part time) position for this crucial area of work.

I would like to welcome Louise Buckingham as our new Bookkeeper. She brings a wealth of experience to the role and will be working with our Office Manager, Carol Spong, and me.

Margaret Kerry

## Term Dates

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**Autumn Term:** Monday 5 October - Friday 11 December 2020

**Spring Term:** Monday 11 January - Friday 19 March 2021

**Summer Term:** Monday 12 April - Friday 18 June 2021

The start date for each course is given on the website and in the Programme of Courses.

## New Courses – please contact the Office to enrol

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### LIT 34: Book Group 4

**Leader:** Ann Dewar

**Day and time:** Wednesday 14:30 - 16:00

**Venue:** Zoom - Video Conference

**Length of course:** 3 terms. Autumn (3 weeks), Spring (3 weeks), Summer (3 weeks)

**Places:** 10

**Start date:** 7 Oct

As this is a new group, we may try various formats e.g. reading widely on a theme e.g. war/love/dystopias/sci-fi. Once established, members of the group will take it in turns to choose and present a book of fiction or non-fiction in English and available in paperback. Our first meeting will be a discussion of our favourite books with a view to agree on a programme for the term.

Please note: meetings are during term-time, but will also include January 6th and April 7th.

**Format:** Discussion

**About me:** I think reading nourishes the soul. I very much enjoy encountering new novels and discussing their qualities with an emphasis on setting, character plot, style, themes and, above all, personal response.

### PHL 13: Plato's Republic

**Tutor:** Chris Jones

**Day and time:** Thursday 14:00 - 15:00

**Venue:** Zoom - Video Conference

**Length of course:** 3 terms. Autumn (10 weeks), Spring (10 weeks), Summer (10 weeks)

**Places:** 15

**Start date:** 8 Oct

Enthusiastic volunteers will read the parts of the brilliant Socrates and the perplexed, questioning and sometimes alert, sometimes slow-off-the-mark two brothers of Plato, Glaucon and Adeimantus, in that masterpiece of western philosophy, the Republic, exploring the meaning of justice, and whether this is different from goodness. We will start with the dazzling fireworks of the introduction, Book 1, which features the complacent old Cephalus and his more thoughtful son, and the rudely aggressive moral relativist Thrasymachus. We will then cover parts of the rest of this sparkling, delightful dialogue. The Republic is the book to take with you on your desert island, always revealing greater profundity, but on the surface simple and accessible. I shall provide a running commentary, and facilitate group discussions. You will need the (revised) translation by Desmond Lee.

**Format:** Discussion

**About me:** I have been teaching Plato at the U3AC for the past six terms.

## PHO 02: Photography Group (Spring term)

**Convenor:** Eleni Paliginis

**Day and time:** Thursday 10:30 - 12:00

**Venue:** Zoom - Video Conference

**Length of course:** 1 term. Spring (10 weeks)

**Places:** 15

**Start date:** 14 Jan

This photography group intends to bring together people interested in photography and give a space where participants will show their photos, discuss them, exchange views, share knowledge and provide support. This will not be a teaching course in photography and some familiarity with the basics of photography will be useful. It is expected that participants have a DSLR or a bridge camera. We will have sessions in landscape,

night, interior, street, travel, portrait and macro photography. Each week, discussing the photos of the participants, we will refer to the best camera settings and lenses for this type of photography but, as rules are there to be broken, we could discuss interesting effects that could be produced through alternative settings. I would like to see this group operating in a fully supportive, non-competitive way and if some participants wish to present one of these sessions their offer will be welcome.

**Format:** Discussion

**About me:** I am an amateur photographer. I have followed a number of courses in different types of photography and I am particularly interested in landscape photography.

## About Courses

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### Zoom courses

Many courses will be held by video-conference (Zoom) in the Autumn Term. We have been running introductory sessions for members, if you haven't attended one of these a Beginners Guide to using Zoom is at the end of this Newsletter (page 8).

### Programme of Courses

The Programme of Courses is in a PDF format this year so that changes can be made when new courses and venues become available. The latest version can be viewed and downloaded from the website.

### Applying for additional courses

Would you like to apply for additional courses?

The list of courses with vacancies is on the homepage of the U3AC website and is updated regularly. To apply for a course, contact the Office.

### Withdrawing from a course

If you are no longer able to attend a course in which you have a place, please inform the Office at the **earliest possible** opportunity, so that the place can be given to someone on the waiting list. Please do not wait until the course is about to start or has started. Thank you.

### If you cannot attend the first session of term

If you are unable to attend the first session of your course please inform the tutor or the Office **before term starts**. Many courses have long waiting lists and we must be fair to other members, so if we do not hear from you before term starts, we will replace you with someone from the waiting list immediately after the first session.

### If you cannot attend a course session

For classes held in U3AC premises or by Zoom: please inform the Office.

For courses held outside: please send apologies directly to the tutor. Contact details are on the website underneath each course description. You will need to log in to the website to access this information (see overleaf).

## Tutors' details

For data protection reasons, the Programme of Courses does not include tutors' contact details or the venue if a course is held in a member's home. This information is given on the members' area of the website. Members without internet access can obtain this information from the Office.

To view the details on the website, log in using your username and password. Your username is usually your first name, then a full stop, then your surname. The first time you log in, you will need to set up a password. To set up a password, click the 'Forgotten Password?' button on the login screen.

Please contact the Office if you have any difficulties using the website.

## General Information

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### A reminder

The annual membership subscription of £82 contributes to the administration and accommodation costs of the U3AC. **It is not a payment for classes, lectures or activities.** Members can attend the Wednesday and Norah Boyce lectures (space permitting), apply for up to 6 classes and apply for visits arranged throughout the year.

### Discounts to members

We have a number of discounts for U3AC members in shops and restaurants around Cambridge. Many of these display a U3AC logo in their window or by the till to make it easier for you to spot. You can download the full list (giving any terms and conditions for the discount) from the U3AC website; there is a link on the homepage.

### Environment group

Recent activities and reports can be found on the website <https://u3ac.org.uk/environment/>  
Contact the Environment Group: [environmentu3ac@gmail.com](mailto:environmentu3ac@gmail.com)

## Deaths

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We were sorry to hear recently of the deaths of:

*Huguette Chatterton in April*

*Jill Rahman in July*

*Juliet Crowson in June*

*David Wilman in August*

## Cultural and Social Activities

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These activities are organised by the U3AC Cultural and Social Activities Committee. The Chair of the Committee is Clem Messenger.

When activities resume, information about the trips will be given in the weekly Bulletin and Newsletter.

## U3AC Film Group – Film Seasons 2020/21 Update

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Thanks to all the U3AC members and Film Group members who responded to my request concerning the planning of the 2020/21 Film Group programmes at Picturehouse Cambridge. Although some of you will be venturing into Picturehouse over the next few weeks it is quite clear that the majority of you would prefer to wait until the Spring Term, and even then some have expressed their doubts as to whether they would return as early as January.

In the circumstances there will not be a October/December 2020 Film Group programme at Picturehouse. Like all of you I hope that it will be possible to restart our Film Group in January 2021. However, this will depend on how the pandemic is being controlled in England, and on the latest advice/guidance from the U3AC office, the government and from Picturehouse. Any feedback from those of you who try out Picturehouse in the meantime will be welcome.

I will give you a further update in the Autumn but in the meantime for those of you missing films I urge you to trawl the BBC i-player on a regular basis as there are some fine films to catch up on, or to revisit. Do try and see the superb tribute to the late Olivia de Havilland shown recently on BBC 2, Robert Siodmark's "The Dark Mirror", film noir at its best.

**Jeremy Buncombe**

## Norah Boyce Science Lectures

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The Norah Boyce Science Lectures will resume in January. Further details will be in the December Newsletter.

## General Administration

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### Savings on postage

If two (or more) members live at the same address we save postage by sending their documents in one envelope. If you would like future mailings sent in separate envelopes, please inform the Office.

### Council meeting and minutes

The next U3AC Council meeting is on Friday 2 October 2020.

## Other Organisations

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Details of events held by other organisations can be viewed on our website:

<http://www.u3ac.org.uk/other-organisations/>

## Wednesday Lectures – Autumn Term 2020

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These weekly lectures will take place at 2.15 pm online via video-conference (Zoom).

Lectures presented online (via Zoom) are open to members only. You will need to log in to access the Zoom link. The link for each lecture is on the Wednesday Lectures page of the website.

To log in: Type in your username and password. If you need to set up a password, or have forgotten your password, click 'Forgotten password?' to create or reset it. Click the 'Login' button.

Any last-minute changes to the programme will be publicised in the weekly Bulletin.

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**7 October**      **No Lecture**

**14 October**      **London's West End: Creating the Pleasure District, 1800-1914**

Speaker              Rohan McWilliam

How did the West End of London become the greatest pleasure district in the world? Rohan McWilliam explores the world of prestigious theatres, grand hotels, luxurious restaurants, spectacular department stores and scandalous nightlife that emerged in the centre of the metropolis during the age of empire.

Rohan McWilliam is Professor of Modern British History at Anglia Ruskin University and a former President of the British Association for Victorian Studies.

**21 October**      **No Lecture**

**28 October**      **Why were Egyptian mummies so bad?**

Speaker              Dr Corinne Duhig

To the ancient Egyptians, the preservation of the mummified body, looking like the deceased individual, was essential for a continuing existence in the afterlife. In the Classical world the Egyptians were believed to be masters of mummification, and the many Egyptian mummies in museums tend to be of high quality, so we presume this is correct. But the vast number that are not on display — and those still appearing from the sands of Egypt — show that most are very poorly preserved, badly made and not in any way resembling the deceased — or, indeed, any human! Dr Duhig will discuss the why and how of mummification and its triumphs and failings.

Corinne Duhig PhD FSA MCIfA is a Senior Fellow at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research and Director of Studies in Archaeology at Wolfson and Lucy Cavendish Colleges, focusing on funerary archaeology and Egyptology.

**04 November**      **The role of the interpreter in the process of recreating music**

Speaker              Patrick Hemmerle

Patrick explores ideas related to the role of the interpreter in the process of recreating music, either past or present.

Music is the only art form that needs an interpreter to exist, and this has various implications. Patrick considers the evolution of the role of the interpreter over the last 3 centuries, the increasing place it takes in the classical music scene as the role of the composers has diminished, the difficult question of the task of the interpreter - a perfect mirror of the composer's intention, or a co-creator? Can several approaches of a work all be equally valid? Is there even any valid way of performing a work? Does the interpreter have a moral duty to the composer? This brings him to the wider question - what is music? Is it greater than all the interpretations that can be made of it?

There are also practical issues: what freedom do composers give the performers, and how this evolves over time. The whole talk will be illustrated musically.

Patrick Hemmerle is an acclaimed French concert pianist living in England, who speaks regularly on musicology, renowned for his capacity to clarify complex musical concepts.

## **11 November A British history of oil**

Speaker Terry Macalister

With climate change top of the political agenda this talk looks at the history of oil from the early finds in Iran through the North Sea discoveries to the present day.

Is it the end of the road for carbon fuels and the enormous wealth they brought to Britain and how come Cambridge played a significant role in this extraction industry?

Terry Macalister is a writer who spent 20 years at The Guardian where he was a prize winning Energy Editor.

## **18 November No Lecture**

## **25 November 'A potful of peses' - changing diets in the late Middle Ages**

Speaker Dr Joanne Sear

In The Vision of Piers Plowman, dated between 1367 to 1386, Piers keeps hunger at bay by making 'a potful of peses', the pea or bean pottage which formed the staple diet of the labouring poor in the late Middle Ages. But this was about to change as a longer term consequence of the Black Death was a rise in the living standards of the poorer classes, with the greatest improvement being an increased consumption of more and better quality foodstuffs.

This presentation will consider how the basic medieval diet changed after the Black Death and how we see this reflected in the domestic environment of the lower orders.

Joanne Sear teaches at the Institute of Continuing Education, Cambridge, and is editor of the Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History. Her own research focusses on medieval consumption and trade.

## **02 December The art of photographic restoration**

Speaker Gary Italiaander

A fascinating illustrated talk about the specialised restoration process, taking old and often damaged images which are then brought back to life to create new works of art. This talk has many interesting anecdotes including the family that wished to create a new portrait to incorporating a family member who was (sadly) no longer alive!

Gary is an internationally respected celebrity photographer whose studio was based at Harrods. His work has covered a wide variety of restorations for people including King Hussein and Queen Noor of Jordan as well as The King of Thailand.

## **9 December No Lecture**

## A Beginner's Guide to Zoom

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If you haven't joined a Zoom meeting before, you may find this simple guide helpful.

### The basics

Zoom classes are held in your own home – there is no need to come to the U3AC premises. You will need:

- a computer, tablet, smartphone, iPad or similar device with a camera and a microphone
- a good internet connection.

### Before your first Zoom session

It's best to familiarise yourself with Zoom before your first class. You will need to know:

- How to mute/unmute yourself (click on the microphone symbol). Note: To quickly unmute yourself on a PC/Mac, press and hold down the spacebar; releasing the spacebar mutes you again.
- How to change the name that appears under your picture. (On a PC or Mac, when you hover your mouse over your image, a blue 3 dot icon (...) appears. Click on this to see a range of options, including 'Name'. Click on 'Name' to change the name displayed on the screen.)

If you need help with this, contact the Office before your class starts. Only limited support will be available once the class has started.

### Accessing a Zoom class

- For each course in which you have been allocated a place you will be sent a link by email. This might be as late as the day before the course starts. Keep this link somewhere safe as we will only send it once and you will need it for each session. (Each class has a different link.)
- Click on the link to join the class. You may need to wait for the previous class to finish but you will be able to join at least 5 minutes before the class starts.
- Most classes are 'hosted' by the U3AC Office, in which case the email with the link will be sent from U3AC. A small number of classes are 'hosted' by the tutor, who may send the link out each week.

### Class etiquette

In many ways, Zoom classes are the same as classes held in a classroom.

- Send apologies to the Office if you cannot attend the class. The tutor or U3AC will take the register in the usual way.
- Join the class promptly.
- Before joining the class, check that there is nothing behind you that you don't want others to see.
- Make sure you are suitably attired.
- Do not sit too close to your screen.
- Ensure your face is in the centre of your screen.
- Place your iPad/tablet/phone on a stable surface.
- Mute your sound (turn off the microphone) when you are not talking to prevent background interference.
- Raise your hand if you want to speak, and wait for the tutor to ask for your contribution. Be patient – your turn will come!
- Only unmute your sound when the tutor invites you to speak.
- Don't eat during a class.

For further information you may find the Zoom cribsheet for tutors, on our website, useful:

[http://u3ac.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Zoom\\_Cribsheet\\_for\\_tutors.pdf](http://u3ac.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Zoom_Cribsheet_for_tutors.pdf)