Jewish Senior LIFE

Live and Learn Community Course Guide

With Appreciation

The award-winning Jewish Senior Life Live and Learn Community at Meer Apartments is supported by a generoud grant from the Marcia Applebaum Jewish Older Adult Enrichment Fund. JSL is most grateful for this meaningful support and ongoing partnership.



What is Live and Learn at Meer Apartments?

Meer Apartments' award-winning Live and Learn Community provides a range of university-level educational offerings right on site. Courses are taught by experts from world class institutions and cultural partners and presented in various formats to accommodate a variety of learning styles. From larger lectures to small seminars and discussions, each course is designed to foster student engagement and community connection. Jewish Senior Life is especially proud to collaborate with Oakland University/ PACE to offer courses (each marked with an asterisk * in this course guide) each semester, facilitated by Oakland University professors.

Come join us to experience the joy of learning alongside others!

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The Art of Ancient Egypt*

Join us for the final session of this six-part course about the world of ancient Egypt, where art was far more than decoration: it was a window into religion, power, daily life and the afterlife.

Instructor: Lisa Ngote is a Special Lecturer and Curator of Visual Resources at Oakland University, with both her BA and MA from Wayne State University.

The Union **Tuesday, December 1** **10:30 AM - 12 PM**

The Divine Miss M: The Music and Moxie of Bette Midler

Bette Midler has dazzled audiences for decades with her powerhouse voice, sharp wit and larger-than-life personality. Affectionately known as the Divine Miss M, she gave us unforgettable hits like *The Rose*, *Wind Beneath My Wings* and *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy,* along with iconic performances on stage and screen. Join us for a lively look at the extraordinary career, irreverent humor and unmistakable talent of this entertainer!

Instructor: Gary Graff is an award-winning veteran music journalist based in Detroit. He is the author of several books and an active member of Adat Shalom Synagogue.

The Union **Thursday, December 3** **11AM - 12 PM**

Registration is encouraged. Please sign up at the Reception Desk.

Film Discussion with Tara: Julie Andrews + Classic Comedy

Our discussion group will conclude our close-up of Julie Andrews films in December, then kick off 2027 with the timeless magic of classic comedy. From the ingenious physical humor of Buster Keaton to the masterful storytelling of director Sam Wood, we'll celebrate comic genius, iconic performances and the enduring laughter of true fan favorites. Each film will be shown in the days leading up to our group discussion.

Instructor: Tara Hayes, PhD., is known for leading dynamic discussions about books and films. She worked in the film industry in Los Angeles before returning to Detroit.

The Union **Three Discussion Sessions** **1 PM - 3 PM**

Thursday, December 3: Victor/Victoria
Thursday, January 7: Sherlock Jr. (Buster Keaton)
Thursday, February 4: A Night at the Opera (Marx Brothers)

Registration is encouraged. Please sign up at the Reception Desk.

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Jewish Historical Society of Michigan presents: Historic Jewish East Ferry Avenue

Take a stroll through the rich Jewish history of one of Detroit's most charming and architecturally significant streets. Discover the people, families and institutions that helped shape this historic neighborhood and learn why East Ferry Avenue became part of Detroit's vibrant Jewish story. Along the way, explore the beautiful homes, fascinating personalities and lasting legacy of a community that played an important role in the city's history.

Instructor: Catherine Cangany, PhD, is a historian of colonial and early federal Michigan. Before joining the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan in 2018 as its CEO, Katie was a tenured professor of history at the University of Notre Dame.

The Union **Tuesday, December 8** **11 AM - 12 PM**

Registration encouraged. Please sign up at the Reception Desk.

Jerusalem: A City of Three Faiths, Countless Stories

Join us for a live-over-Zoom journey through Jerusalem, a city of profound spiritual significance and fascinating history for more than 3,000 years. Explore all four quarters of the Old City, from Jaffa Gate and the Jewish Quarter to the Western Wall, the Temple Mount and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Along the way, discover the sacred sites revered by all faiths, along with the compelling stories and complex relationships that have shaped this extraordinary city. Bring your questions and experience – this tour is for everyone, no passport required!

Instructor: Gadi Ben-Dov is an experienced Israel tour guide and educator who brings a deep love of the land, its history and its people to every experience he creates. Drawing on decades of guiding and educational expertise, he specializes in making meaningful connections and bringing Israel's rich stories to life for visitors from around the world.

The Union **Thursday, December 10** **10:30 AM - 12 PM**

Registration is encouraged. Please sign up at the Reception Desk.

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The Detroit Institute of Arts presents: Georgia O'Keefe: Architecture

Join us for an up-close look at Georgia O'Keeffe's remarkable artwork, featured in the acclaimed and groundbreaking exhibition now on view at the DIA. Moving beyond her iconic flowers and desert landscapes, the exhibition explores O'Keefe's fascinating interpretations of architecture, from Manhattan's soaring skyscrapers to weathered rural barns and the adobe buildings of New Mexico. Discover how she transformed familiar structures into striking works of modern art through her distinctive use of color, line and geometry. Live over Zoom.

Instructor: Benjamin Colman, Curator of American Art for the DIA, has received both national and local attention for assembling this Georgia O'Keefe exhibit and bringing it to Detroit. He holds a BA in Art History from Yale University and his MA from the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture at the University of Delaware.

The Union **Monday, December 14** **3 PM - 4 PM**

Registration is encouraged. Please sign up at the Reception Desk.

The Art of Conservation: Yosemite Through the Eyes of John Muir and Ansel Adams

Celebrated naturalist, promoter of national parks, and founder of the Sierra Club, John Muir led a life focused on conserving nature's splendor; Ansel Adams is perhaps America's best known landscape photographer. Join us for this exciting live-over-Zoom presentation to learn how the artists' lives and different approaches to art intersected to help promote and protect the majesty of one of America's true natural gems, Yosemite National Park.

Instructor: Eric J. Simon, Ph.D., is a professor of biology at New England College in New Hampshire, where he teaches a range of courses and leads international travel experiences. An accomplished photographer and experienced leader of live and virtual tours around the world, he brings a unique perspective to exploring the natural world, its beauty, and the importance of conservation.

The Union **Tuesday, December 15** **10:30 AM - 12 PM**

Registration is encouraged. Please sign up at the Reception Desk.

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Exploring Broadway: Fabulous *Fiddler*!

Sheldon Harnick and Jerry Bock's beloved *Fiddler on the Roof* is widely considered the last of Broadway's Golden Age musicals. Before its premiere, some producers were concerned that it was "too Jewish" to attract mainstream audiences. However, the touching story and beautiful score proved to capture the essential human longings for love, community, success, freedom and family. This live-over Zoom lecture is filled with interesting facts, delightful tidbits and nostalgic video clips of this perennial favorite.

Instructor: James Sokol, Director of the Osher Marin Jewish Community Center in San Rafael, California, has worked in the opera world since 1988, having begun his career under Beverly Sills at New York City Opera and many subsequent years working for San Francisco Opera. He is a regular lecturer for several museums and organizations throughout the United States.

The Union **Tuesday, December 22 11 AM - 12 PM**

Registration is encouraged. Please sign up at the Reception Desk.

Special Concert! ~ Live at Meer * The Music of Latin America

Experience the vibrant rhythms and captivating melodies of Latin America from the comfort of Meer, thanks to gifted musicians Ray Urena and Patrick Fitzgibbon. Blending the rich, distinctive sounds of seven-string guitar and marimba, this talented duo brings a fresh perspective to musical traditions ranging from the breezy rhythms of Bossa Nova and the infectious beat of Merengue to Latin jazz and Son. Don't miss this engaging musical journey filled with rhythmic energy, artistry and the irresistable sounds of Latin America.

Instructor: Ray Urena is a Detroit-area guitarist, multi-instrumentalist and composer whose musical experience spans jazz, rock, live performance and film scoring. Patrick Fitzgibbon is a Detroit-area percussionist, composer and music educator. Both musicians join us from Oakland University, where they teach a range of classes in world music, percussion and steel band.

The Union **Tuesday, December 22 3 PM - 4:15 PM**

Registration is encouraged. Please sign up at the Reception Desk.

From Gone with the Wind to Casablanca: The Golden Age of Hollywood

Step back in time to Hollywood's Golden Age, from the late 1920s through World War II, when major studios churned out beloved films that captivated audiences around the world. In this live-over-Zoom program, we'll explore the star system, studio rivalries and the magic of movie-going while discovering what made this era extraordinary and why Hollywood struggled to recapture its former glory in the decades that followed.

Instructor: This class will be taught by Brian Rose, professor emeritus at Fordham University. His lectures on film and TV history are regularly presented at the Smithsonian Institution, New York's 92Y, as well as libraries and JCCs all over the country.

The Union **Thursday, December 24 11 AM - 12 PM**

Registration is encouraged. Please sign up at the Reception Desk.

Phoenix Art Presents: Lessons from Leonardo

Five hundred years have passed since Leonardo da Vinci graced the planet with his genius. How could one man have such an impact on both the art world and all of western civilization? This genius of a painter, sculptor, architect, musician, mathematician, engineer, inventor, anatomist, cartographer, botanist, geologist and writer still teaches us life lessons by looking into his notebooks and studying his art, as we will do together in this engaging live-over-Zoom lecture.

Instructor: Before joining the PhxArt Docent program in 2010, Lisa White was a high school English and social studies teacher in Scottsdale and world history professor at Paradise Valley Community College. In 2021-22, she was Phoenix Art's President of the Docents as the world was reopening from the pandemic.

The Union **Tuesday, December 29 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

Registration is encouraged. Please sign up at the Reception Desk.

Tanzania:
Wildlife, Wonder, and Life in the Serengeti

From your seat at Meer, join us on the morning of New Year's Eve for a live-over-Zoom journey to Tanzania, home to the legendary Serengeti and some of Africa's most spectacular landscapes and wildlife. Through photographs and stories from our presenter's recent travels, we'll journey to three remarkable national parks, where giraffes, elephants, rhinos and other magnificent animals roam across vast savannahs. Beyond the wildlife, we'll also discover highlights of Tanzania's rich cultural heritage, including a memorable encounter with more than 1,000 Maasai schoolchildren and a glimpse into the lives and traditions of this remarkable community.

Instructor: Instructor: Eric J. Simon, Ph.D., is a professor of biology at New England College in New Hampshire, where he teaches a range of courses and leads international travel experiences. An accomplished photographer and experienced leader of live and virtual tours around the world, he brings a unique perspective to exploring the natural world, its beauty, and the importance of conservation.

The Union **Wednsday, December 30 2 PM - 3:15 PM**

Raphael, the Renaissance Artist:
Beauty, Balance & Brilliance *

Discover the extraordinary art of Raphael, one of the great masters of the Italian Renaissance, whose paintings are celebrated for their beauty, harmony and grace. In this engaging overview, explore his most iconic works, from exquisite Madonnas to the magnificent Roman frescoes, and learn how his artistry helped shape the course of Western art. Along the way, discover how Raphael's remarkable ability to capture human emotion, tell stories through art, and bring beauty to life remains inspiring to artists and audiences centuries later.

Instructor: Lisa Ngote is a Special Lecturer and Curator of Visual Resources at Oakland University, with both Bachelors and Masters degrees from Wayne State University.

The Union **Tuesday, January 12 10:30 AM - 12 PM**

Registration is requested. Please sign up at the Reception Desk.

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Russia, Ukraine, and the Remaking of the World Order *

This four-week course invites you to explore the war in Ukraine, from its origins and the unfolding course of the fighting, to the experiences of the Ukrainian people at its center. We will gradually broaden our perspective, looking first at the surrounding region and then at the wider world, examining how nations have responded and what this conflict may mean for global alliances and the future of the international order. Join us for a fascinating, in-depth look at a region that has remained at the forefront of world events since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Instructor: Dr. Cristian Cantir, Oakland University Professor of Political Science is an award-winning instructor who studies ways that Eastern European countries navigate their relationships with Russia and the West. He speaks widely on Ukraine and the region, including campus panels and media appearances.

The Union **Four Thursdays 10:30 AM - 12 PM**
January 14, 21 and 28; February 4

Registration is encouraged. Please sign up at the Reception Desk.

The Wall of Sound: The Phil Spector Story

Explore the remarkable rise, revolutionary musical innovations and complicated legacy of Phil Spector, the legendary producer who transformed popular music. Discover the stories behind his iconic recordings, his signature "Wall of Sound," those he worked with and the unforgettable hits he wrote and produced helping to define an era. Hear how this virtuoso's groundbreaking production techniques influenced generations, and hear his darker personal story.

Instructor: Gary Graff will teach this session. See bio on page 2.

The Union **Tuesday, January 19 11 AM - 12 PM**

Registration is encouraged. Please sign up at the Reception Desk.

How Spielberg and Lucas Changed the Movies

Award-winning directors Steven Spielberg and George Lucas revolutionized Hollywood with unexpected hits like *Jaws* and *Star Wars*, ushering in an era of the modern blockbuster. Discover how the groundbreaking films from these two masters transformed the movie industry with spectacular special effects and thrilling storytelling. Hear more about how the artists' creative partnership established an enduring legacy that continues to influence filmmakers and captivate audiences around the world in this live-over-Zoom lecture.

Instructor: Brian Rose will present this session. See bio on page 7.

The Union **Tuesday, January 26 11 AM - 12 PM**

Registration is encouraged. Please sign up at the Reception Desk.

The Greatest Illustrated Book Ever Made: John James Audubon & the Birds of America

Discover the remarkable life and artistry of John James Audubon, the celebrated naturalist whose groundbreaking masterpiece, *The Birds of America*, is widely regarded as one of the finest illustrated books ever created. Explore Audubon's artistic process, marvel at his extraordinary bird paintings, and take a closer look at the birds that inhabit our own Michigan area in this live-over-Zoom three-part course.

Instructor: Professor Eric Simon will present this course. See full bio, page 4.

The Union **Three Tuesdays 10:30 AM - 12 PM**
February 9, 16 and 23

Beyond Tradition: An Introduction to Jewish Spirituality

What does it mean to live a spiritually engaged Jewish life? Together we'll get a taste of the rich and multifaceted world of Jewish spirituality, from ancient traditions and sacred texts to prayer, ritual, meditation and the search for meaning in everyday life. Discover how Jewish teachings connect the individual to community, tradition, the divine and the world around us, and consider the timeless ways spirituality continues to shape Jewish identity and experience.

Instructor: Rabbi Paul Yedwab has served Temple Israel of West Bloomfield since his ordination from the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 1986. Prior to his rabbinic education, Rabbi Yedwab received an A.B. in Politics from Princeton University.

The Union **Thursday, February 11 10:30AM - 12 PM**

Registration is encouraged. Please sign up at the Reception Desk.

Exploring Treasures of Jewish Opera

Don't miss this delightful exploration celebrating the careers and talents of the Jewish artists whose work has graced many operatic stages - true treasures! Audio and video clips bring the beauty and excitement of opera into the discussion. Whether you're an opera buff, opera curious or not quite sure, this live-over-Zoom class is for you.

Instructor: James Sokol will present this course. See bio on page 5.

The Union **Three Thursdays 10:30 AM - 12 PM**
February 19, 25 and March 4

Registration is encouraged. Please sign up at the Reception Desk.

Live and Learn At-A-Glance

Hanukkah
1st Candle

December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1 10:30AM-12PM Ancient Egypt	2	3 11AM-12PM Divine Miss M 1PM-3PM Victor/Victoria	4 Hanukkah 1st Candle	5
6	7	8 11AM-12PM Jewish East Ferry Street	9	10 10:30AM-12PM Jerusalem Live Virtual Tour	11 Hanukkah 8th Candle	12
13	14 3PM - 4PM Georgia O'Keefe	15 10:30AM-12PM John Muir & Ansel Adams	16	17 No class	18	19
20	21	22 10:30AM-12PM Fiddler 3PM-4:15PM Concert!	23	24 11AM-12PM Golden Age of Hollywood	25 Christmas Day	26
27	28	29 11AM-12PM Lessons from Leonardo	30 2PM- 3:15PM Tanzania	31 New Year's Eve		

Live and Learn At-A-Glance

January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1 Happy 2027!	2
3	4	5 No class	6	7 1PM-3PM Film: Sherlock Jr.	8	9
10	11	12 10:30AM-12PM Raphael	13	14 10:30AM-12PM Russia/Ukraine	15	16
17	18 MLK Day	19 10:30AM-12PM Phil Spector	20	21 10:30AM-12PM Russia/Ukraine	22 Tu B'Shevat begins at sundown	23
24	25	26 11AM-12PM Spielberg & Lucas	27 International Holocaust Remembrance Day	28 10:30AM-12PM Russia/Ukraine	29	30
31						

Live and Learn At-A-Glance

No class

February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2 No class	3	4 10:30AM-12PM Russia/Ukraine 1PM-3PM Film: A Night atThe Opera	5	6
7	8	8 10:30AM-12PM Audubon & Birds of America	10	11 10:30AM-12PM Jewish Spirituality	12	13
14	15 Presidents Day	16 10:30AM-12PM Audubon & Birds of America	17	18 10:30AM-12PM Jewish Opera Treasures	19	20
21	22	23 10:30AM-12PM Audubon & Birds of America	24	25 10:30AM-12PM Jewish Opera Treasures	26	27
28						