

ARTS, CULTURE & HUMANITIES



**J.S. BACH AND THE MUSICAL HERITAGE OF EAST GERMANY**

Jonathan Palevsky

**Sessions I and II**

**Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. (begins September 10)**

**Fee: \$140 (\$70 for each session)**

This course explores the music of J.S. Bach, Mendelssohn, Robert and Clara Schumann, Liszt, and others. There wasn't much that was remarkable about the former East Germany but the incredible musical heritage of three of its cities is simply incomparable. The city of Leipzig gave us Bach, Mendelssohn, the Schumanns, Grieg, and Wagner. In Weimar, we find Franz Liszt and the endless parade of visitors and students plus both Goethe and Schiller on the literary side—and more Bach. In Dresden, we can delight in the music of Carl Maria von Weber and no less than nine premieres of Richard Strauss at the beautiful Semper Opera House—and of course, more Bach! Join us to consider the music of these remarkable composers who were all associated with this relatively small but musically fascinating part of Germany.

Jonathan Palevsky, B.M., M.M., is program director for WBJC. His undergraduate studies focused on musicology and his graduate work at Baltimore's Peabody Institute focused on instrumental training in classical guitar performance.

Jonathan can be heard as host of Face the Music, Past Masters, WBJC Opera Fest and regular afternoon classical programming on WBJC. He also hosts Cinema Sundays at the Charles Theater. Jonathan has been a regular of the Osher faculty since the former Auburn Society's first semester in spring 1999.

Make sure you are getting Osher emails and newsletter. Email [osher@towson.edu](mailto:osher@towson.edu).



### **BEBOP & BEYOND**

Seth Kibel

#### **Sessions I and II**

**Wednesdays, 2:30 p.m. (begins September 11)**

**Fee: \$140 (\$70 for each session)**

This course will present a survey of jazz history from the end of WWII to the dawn of the 21st century, covering exciting jazz, hard bop, modal jazz, jazz fusion, and more. Learn about the lives, personalities, and music of jazz legends including Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins, Stan Getz, Dave Brubeck, and many more. Classic recordings, vintage video clips, and live performances from the instructor will keep this class as exciting as the music itself.

Seth Kibel is one of the Mid-Atlantic's premier woodwind specialists, working with some of the best bands in klezmer, jazz, swing, and more. Wowing audiences on clarinet, flute, and saxophone, Seth has made a name for himself in the Washington/Baltimore region, and beyond. He is the featured performer with The Kleztet, Bay Jazz Project, Music Pilgrim Trio, The Natty Beaux, and more. Winner of 28 Washington Area Music Awards (Wammies), including "Best World Music Instrumentalist" and "Best Jazz Instrumentalist."

### **ONLINE COURSE**



### **MUSIC: CONTROVERSIES AND CURIOSITIES**

Emanuel Abramovits

#### **Session I**

**Fridays, 9:30 a.m. (September 13)**

**Fee: \$70**

Music has often been a source of controversy. In their goal for originality, musicians sometimes push the envelope too far and pay the price. We will analyze some controversial pieces and others that challenged established norms. This course will explore the biggest scandals in classical music, pop, and music for the stage and screen.

Emanuel Abramovits is a mechanical engineer with an MBA and has been a concert promoter since 2000, directly involved in many events by international artists. He designed and staged many original orchestral events, including an "Event of the Year" winner and several world premieres. He served as the cultural director at Union Israelita de Caracas from 2008 to 2019, releasing books, organizing film cycles, concerts, and art exhibits. He has been consistently teaching online and in presence across the U.S. since 2020.

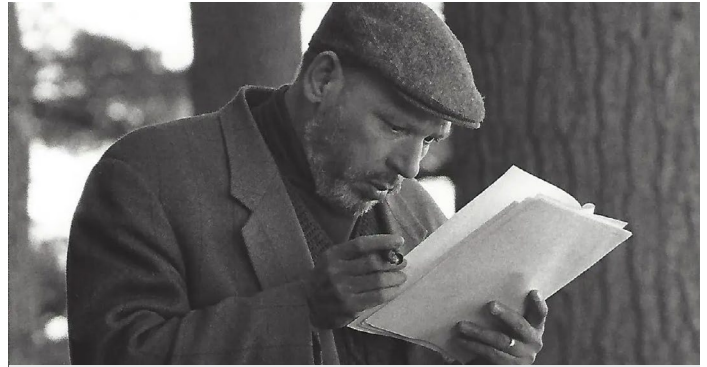
**ONLINE COURSE****KANDINSKY: A COLORFUL LIFE**

Joseph Cassar

**Sessions I and II****Mondays, 11:15 a.m. (begins September 9)****Fee: \$140 (\$70 for each session)****\*NOTE:** This course will not be recorded

This course focuses on artist Wassily Kandinsky who, in addition to being a painter, musician, and writer, was a lawyer and professor of law in Moscow. We will focus on his commitment to painting, his role as an abstract artist, his artistic development, and his involvement with Bauhaus.

Joseph Cassar, Ph.D., is an artist, art historian, curator, and educator. He studied at the Accademia di Belle Arti, Pietro Vannucci, Perugia, Italy, the School of Art in Malta (Europe) and at Charles Sturt University in NSW, Australia. He is the author of several books and monographs on the pioneers of modern art of the Mediterranean island of Malta, two of which have been awarded best prize for research in the Book Festival, Europe. He served as a free-lance art critic for "The Daily News" (1978-1981) and "The Times of Malta" (1997-2000). He has lectured at various educational institutions in Europe and the United States. He lectures at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC, The Renaissance Institute, Notre Dame University, Towson University, York College of Pennsylvania, Johns Hopkins University, Community College of Baltimore County among others. He currently designs online art courses for the New York Times Knowledge Network and for the University of Maryland University College. As an artist he has had two residencies: at Luther College, Decorah Iowa (2002) and at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts (2003). He was curator for the international Art Center: St James Cavalier Center for Creativity (1999-2003). Cassar exhibits his work regularly in the Baltimore-Washington area

**EIGHT PLAYS EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW, FALL 2024 EDITION**

Greg Jones

**Sessions I and II****Wednesdays, 1:00 p.m. (begins September 11)****Fee: \$140 (\$70 for each session)**

A continuation of this popular course series, this semester will capitalize on the Baltimore-area theaters' celebration of playwright, August Wilson. Students will learn about the life and works of Wilson including two of his most celebrated plays, "Fences" and "The Piano Lesson." This course will be rounded out with plays by playwrights who also used moments from their own lives to inform their work. Plays will include Paula Vogel's "The Baltimore Waltz," Tennessee Williams' "The Glass Menagerie," Arthur Miller's "After the Fall," and Eugene O'Neill's "Ah, Wilderness!"

Greg Jones is a local actor, playwright, and teacher. He is currently curating a staged reading series performed at the Classic Theatre of Maryland in Annapolis. His plays include "All Save One" (Julie Harris playwriting award), "Of All the Trees" (West Hollywood Pride Fest Award), "Dead Air" (Dominion Stage Best Play), and "The Calling" (Alliance of Los Angeles Playwrights Award). He holds a bachelor's degree in drama from Catholic University and a master's degree in English literature from Salisbury University.

**ONLINE COURSE****THE FILMS OF LESLIE NIELSEN: FROM STARSHIPS TO SQUAD CARS**

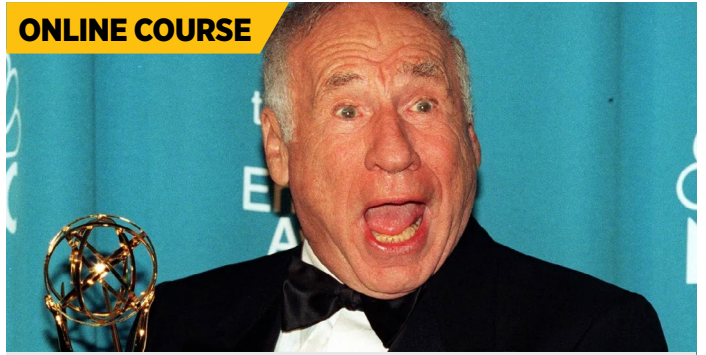
Arnold Blumberg

**Session I****Fridays, 1:00 p.m. (begins September 13)****Fee: \$70**

Leslie Nielsen had the incredible fortune to enjoy two different acting careers over his lifetime. In the first part of his 60-year career, he was a charming leading man in science fiction adventures, romantic romps, and television productions including his starring role as the Swamp Fox for Disney. In the second part, he skewered the seriousness of his previous persona in comedies and parodies of his earlier roles. In "Airplane!" (1980), according to critic Roger Ebert, Nielsen became "the Olivier of spoofs." An utter buffoon clowning his way through absurd comedies and parodies of the roles he played decades earlier, Nielsen was never happier than when he was skewering the seriousness of his previous persona. This course looks at both eras of Nielsen's long career. Seriously!

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Arnold T. Blumberg is a pop culture historian and professor of multiple courses in media literacy and other cultural topics. He has taught at UMBC, the University of Baltimore, CCBC, and Osher at Towson University. He spent 15 years in the comic book industry as writer and editor of "The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide," curated a pop culture museum for five years, and currently runs his own publishing company, ATB Publishing.

**ONLINE COURSE****IT'S GOOD TO BE THE KING: THE LIFE AND LAUGHS OF MEL BROOKS**

Arnold Blumberg

**Session II****Mondays, 1:00 p.m. (begins October 14)****Fee: \$70**

Born Melvin Kaminsky, Mel Brooks began his entertainment career as a Borscht Belt tumbler. As one of the writers that made "Your Show of Shows" a television landmark with colleagues that defined a generation of humor, and as writer/director of countless cinema comedy classics from "The Producers" (1967) to "Blazing Saddles" (1974) to "Spaceballs" (1987), Brooks infused his wacky work with a uniquely Jewish sensibility shaped during a difficult childhood and military service during World War II. A consummate showman, Brooks' creations have graced screen and stage, and Brooks himself has become pop culture royalty. At 97, the man sees no reason to retire, adapting some of his most beloved movies into musicals and animated series while collecting countless accolades for his life of laughs. It's good to be the king!

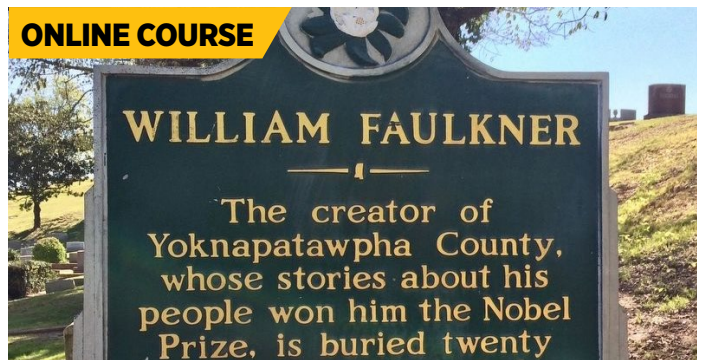
**ONLINE COURSE****THE FILMS OF DEBBIE REYNOLDS**

Arnold Blumberg

**Session II****Fridays, 1:00 p.m. (begins October 18)****Fee: \$70**

Starting with her breakout performance in the all-time classic MGM musical, “Singin’ in the Rain” (1952), Debbie Reynolds quickly established herself as “America’s Sweetheart” in everything from “Tammy and the Bachelor”(1957) to “The Unsinkable Molly Brown” (1964). Whether singing “A Home in the Meadow/Greensleeves” in “How the West Was Won” (1962), voicing an empathetic spider in an animated adaptation of “Charlotte’s Web” (1973), starring in her own TV sitcom, or capturing a new generation of fans with her role in Disney’s “Halloweentown” series, Reynolds was an energetic performer that lit up the screen and stage, preserved film history with a vast collection of movie memorabilia, and helped to establish a Hollywood dynasty.

Arnold T. Blumberg is a pop culture historian and professor of multiple courses in media literacy and other cultural topics. He has taught at UMBC, the University of Baltimore, CCBC, and Osher at Towson University. He spent 15 years in the comic book industry as writer and editor of “The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide,” curated a pop culture museum for five years, and currently runs his own publishing company, ATB Publishing.

**ONLINE COURSE****YOKNAPATAWPHA COUNTY: THE LITERATURE OF WILLIAM FAULKNER**

Robert Jacobs

**Sessions I and II****Mondays, 9:30 a.m. (begins September 9)****Fee: \$140 (\$70 for each session)**

“The past is never dead,” wrote Faulkner, “it’s not even past.” Yoknapatawpha County was the grand fictional setting that allowed Faulkner to explore how the past continually endures and shapes our lives. Through his classic short stories, we will investigate how Faulkner’s prose style established the connections between time, memory, and place and the impact they have on the development of both personal and national consciousness. Through such classic short stories as “Barn Burning,” “Red Leaves,” “Dry September,” “A Rose for Emily,” and others, we will ponder those eternal verities that Faulkner spoke of in his Nobel Prize speech, “Courage and honor and hope and pride and pity and sacrifice.”

Robert Jacobs is a Towson University graduate with a B.A. in English. He traveled to the United Kingdom where he attained an M.A. in comparative literature from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. He spent several years in London working as a freelance writer and has contributed to a variety of publications such as: “Time Out London,” The Baltimore Sun’s Metromix, and “The Examiner.” He is an adjunct instructor at Community College of Baltimore County, Johns Hopkins University, and Montgomery College.



## INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE

Father Robert Albright

### Sessions I and II

**Wednesdays, 11:00 a.m. (begins September 11)**

**Fee: \$140 (\$70 for each session)**

This course will focus on modern Biblical scholarship to enable students to start seeing the Bible in the context of new discoveries. The course will cover eight aspects designed to help any reader of the Bible understand this timeless treatise with greater insight. Throughout this course, we will consider the Bible as a book of faith; a text that cannot be taken literally; a composite of many different styles and conflicting theologies; a vehicle for the word of God and the word of people; as association of many images; one larger story made up of many stories; and how the New Testament of the Bible contains a dominant apocalyptic theology.

Rev. Robert E. Albright is a retired Catholic priest of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. He served as the Catholic Campus Minister at Towson University for the 26 years before his retirement in July 2006. Through teaching a scholarly approach to the Bible over the past 50 years, Father Bob has explored greater interfaith issues at the Institute for Islamic, Christian, and Jewish Studies of Baltimore. He has studied twice in Israel at the International Center for Holocaust Studies and has been to Israel over 18 times leading study tours and retreats and doing private research in Biblical sites and studying the Palestinian/Israeli situation. Father Bob is engaged in numerous Catholic/Jewish endeavors including a funded program to educate Jewish and Catholic high school students in each other's tradition.



## ANCIENT CHINESE THOUGHT

Ed Fotheringill

### Session I

**Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. (begins September 11)**

**Fee: \$70**

This course will focus on the three major schools of ancient Chinese thought: Confucianism, Taoism, and Chan Buddhism. Confucianism is a humanistic philosophy focusing on social and political ethics. Taoism is the mystical tradition of China, emphasizing a way of life that is in harmony with nature. Chan Buddhism is a secular school of spirituality rooted in the intersection of Taoism and Indian Buddhism. Together, the three schools of thought paint a dynamic portrait of Chinese intellectual and spiritual culture.

Edward Fotheringill has taught philosophy at the college level for over forty years. He has been an adjunct professor of philosophy at Towson University, Goucher College, and Maryland Institute College of Art. He is an initiated disciple of the Hindu guru, Swami Satchidananda.