

The King'sman

"THE VOICE OF BROOKLYN COLLEGE SINCE 1950"

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2018

A SPACE OF THEIR OWN



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Photo Credit: Marko Jokic

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The Brooklyn College

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Got a photo? Wanna give us a shout-out? Tag us on Twitter @TheKingsmanBC



The Kingsman made a great showing at the Student Involvement Fair last Tuesday! / Photo Credit: Allison Rapp

We're in an exciting moment politically. As I'm writing this, the Senate is deliberating on a Supreme Court pick that will have ramifications for decades. For the first time in his career as governor, Andrew Cuomo has a serious primary challenger, who's running hand-in-hand with a Brooklyn College alumnus. The nation is on the brink of a blue wave - or a pink wave, or maybe a red wave? Some color of wave is coming this November, that's for sure.

In this supercharged political climate, where all eyes are on the Capitol, it can be easy to forget that things are also happening at the local level, on this very campus. That's where we come in. For 69 years (don't laugh), The Kingsman has been providing in-depth news about goings-on around Brooklyn College. We'll still be upholding that tradition, instigating change across campus and highlighting the extraordinary achievements of our students and faculty. But I also hope that this semester, we can situate what's happening on the quad with what's happening across the city, state, and country.

If we ever fall short of that goal, I hope you the readers are willing to call us out and let us know. When we make a mistake, it is your Constitutional right to rake us over the coals for it. My e-mail is printed on the masthead for a reason - and that reason is not because I enjoy seeing offers from Nigerian princes in my inbox.

Enjoy this new semester. We sure will.

Quiara Vasquez
Editor-in-Chief



Talk to us!

Are you a CUNY student or faculty member with something to say? The Kingsman's Opinions section is accepting submissions. Send your op-ed to kingsmanbc@gmail.com before 11:59 PM Saturday. (The Kingsman only publishes articles written by Brooklyn College students and faculty, related to goings-on at Brooklyn College or CUNY. We reserve the right to reject submissions which are off-topic, obscene, or excessively wordy.)

A New Pedestrian Plaza Welcomes Students



Students, locals, and commuters relaxing at the Hillel Plaza. / Kenneth Mbonu

By Samantha Castro
Layout Editor

What was a simple street next to the intersection on Flatbush Ave and Nostrand Ave is now a flourishing pedestrian plaza.

The street is now decorated with potted plants and blue tables and chairs. Also, it's now closed off from traffic and only open for pedestrians.

Construction of the plaza began on July 17. The road itself was blocked by the 30. By August 9, the plaza was ready.

According to Kenneth Mbonu,

Executive Director of Junction Business Improvement District (BID), the main company behind the project, all the feedback he received so far is positive. From the elderly to the youthful, they're all enjoying the plaza.

"It's too crowded on campus," says Louis, a third year Brooklyn College student, "As students, we have to find somewhere off campus where we can relax."

However, there were a few concerns about the safety of the plaza. Since there are no barricades around the plaza at the moment, people are worried about a ran-

dom car running into the plaza. Mbonu addresses this concern by explaining that there will be barriers. It would prevent cars from running into the plaza but allow emergency vehicles like fire trucks in the plaza in case of emergencies.

He also discusses other features that will be part of the plaza that are in the works. Few examples are security, cameras, and wifi. Also, there will be a "Hillel Plaza Committee" which will consist of five members: two residents of the community, one member of the BID, one member from

community board 14, and one member from the precinct.

The main purpose for the committee is to approve programs that will take place in the plaza. On the BID website, there will be an application. Then, those applications are sent to the committee. The committee gathers and votes if the program will happen. Mbonu believes that this committee would be the most fair way of handling programs.

The idea of the Hillel Plaza was initially part of the "Construction Renovation Project" for the entire neighborhood. However, due to a budget cut, the plaza was the final part that was not started. So the Junction BID partnered with the Department of Transportation (DOT) to make a proposal and presented to the community board.

The community board had many concerns from snow removal to security because those details weren't first addressed. However, after continuous back and forth between the board and the DOT, the proposal was finally approved by the community board at their monthly meeting on March 12.

\$750,000 Construction Plan for Library Cafe Plaza

By Ryan Schwach
Business Manager

With reporting assistance from
Quiara Vasquez

With all the other ongoing construction projects around campus, the Library Cafe outdoor plaza is under renovations that are scheduled to be completed by the end of this calendar year. The project costs \$750,000 and is paid for out of Brooklyn's capital budget. It is not part of the "to-do list" of construction projects laid out by SVP of Finance and Administration Alan Gilbert, which was reported on by The Kingsman over the past year. According to Assistant Vice President of Facilities Francis X. Fitzgerald, the project is to "redo all of the paving and drainage." "This is being done because we had flooding and drainage problems in that area for

several years," said Fitzgerald. According to Fitzgerald, several tiles were peeling up and became a tripping hazard.

In addition to the external renovations, the inside of the Library Cafe is undergoing

repairs as well. According to Howard Spivak, Director of Academic IT, the Library Cafe will be closed at night for an indeterminate period of time "due to ongoing active exterior construction."

As stated, the project is presumed to be completed by the end of 2018, with its availability to return to normal at the beginning of 2019. Students can still access the Library Cafe through Whitehead Hall.



The Library Cafe Plaza, completely blocked off. / Samantha Castro

LGBTQ Students Shine at Brooklyn College's First-Ever Queer Prom

By Quiara Vasquez
Editor-in-Chief

Sebastien DeJean paced around SUBO's penthouse in "Ren & Stimpy" socks and a pink tie he borrowed from his brother. He was understandably nervous as he waited for his date to arrive. Not only was this his first time at prom - but it was also a first time for the prom itself.

This wasn't any old prom either. It was "Queer Prom: In Space!", an event co-hosted by the LGBTQ Resource Center and Brooklyn College's LGBT Alliance on Friday, June 15. DeJean, who works at the Center, played a big role in bringing the prom to life. The event was a huge undertaking for the college's LGBTQ community, who worked tirelessly up until the last minute to make it a reality.

"That was kinda hectic," he said. "But I do like how it turned out."

While prom is usually thought of as a standard part of the high school experience, for same-sex couples and gender non-conforming students, this often isn't the case. Technically, gay couples have had the right to attend prom since the Supreme Court decided *Fricke v. Lynch* back in 1980, but societal pressure often dissuades LGBTQ students from dressing and acting how they'd like at prom - if they show up at all.

"LGBTQ people leave high school thinking, 'this isn't the prom I would have wanted, this... glorification of heterocentrism,'" said David P. McKay, director of the



Kardin Ulysee, the king of queer prom, having fun on the dance floor / Marko Jokic

LGBTQ Resource Center. McKay himself made a scene at his senior prom in 1979 when he and his then-girlfriend showed up in matching tuxes. There was no dress code prohibiting it, he noted, because no one figured anyone would break it.

"I think it actually would have been more difficult in 2009 than in 1979," he said.

Experiences like this have led students to throw their own "queer proms" with a more inclusive atmosphere. Brooklyn College students are no different.

"It's an idea that'd been floating around for a couple years before it materialized," said Jamie O'Malley,

a senior and current co-president of the Center. "People would bring it up and we'd be like, eventually."

"It was actually an idea that came up a while ago," said Sami Binder, an office manager at and former president of the Center. "I think two years ago? It was definitely a group idea. We were having a board meeting and we were talking about what kind of bigger events we wanted to do."

The idea first came up in 2015, but David McKay decided that 2018 would be the year it would finally happen.

"I insisted that everyone start planning this since September

[2017], and that by January [2018] we needed to have a plan," McKay told *The Kingsman*.

The Center's staff was game, but there were plenty of obstacles in their way. Most obviously, they needed to secure funding for the event. Grants from SGO helped, but what really helped was the number of vendors who offered to work at discounted prices as a show of support for the LGBTQ community at BC.

"The services at the event were all very on board with the idea of a queer prom," Binder said. "A couple asked why it was happening, but once they understood why we were doing it they were very supportive."

Still, money was tight, and it only got tighter when the LGBT Alliance was asked to change the date [by whom?]. Originally, queer prom was to be held in April, on the same day spring formal was going to be held. (Spring formal never happened.) They obliged, moving the event to June, which came with its own host of logistics issues: because the prom was now happening after the semester was over, the LGBTQ Center had to pay additional costs for booking, as well as security and overtime costs.

"We were lucky that we got so many things offered at a discount or for free, but it was still an expensive



Queer prom attendees gathering for a group photo / Marko Jokic

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LGBTQ Students Shine at Brooklyn College's First-Ever Queer Prom

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event," Binder admitted.

Despite all the difficulty behind the scenes, the prom itself was a joyful affair.

Fittingly for an event called "Queer Prom: In Space!" the normally se-date Gold and Maroon rooms were decked out with hanging glow sticks and spherical lanterns painted to look like planets. The tables were also decorated with colorful centerpieces: massive origami rocketships, hued with the familiar rainbow colors of the gay flag. Several attendees dressed the part as well. Most notably, David McKay attended in a suit colored in a flamboyant galaxy pattern - a space suit, if you will.

"I didn't get that it was a pun," he admitted. "I literally went online and looked up 'space-themed prom suit.'"

While some people didn't take the theme quite so literally, everyone involved was eager to dress how they wanted. There was your typical prom suits and dresses, of course, but attendees showed up in everything from fishnets to duct tape. Some students even showed up in drag.

Whatever they wore, they sure seemed determined to have a good time. Prom-goers danced to tunes played by a nonbinary deejay and selected by popular demand.

"On a regular basis, I listen to a lot of pop music, a lot of hip-hop - stuff that's popular with 'The Gays,'" Jamie O'Malley told me. O'Malley fielded requests for the DQ in ad-



David McKay (left) and Palma Dellaporta (right) enjoying queer prom with each other / Marko Jokic

vance via Facebook, and was instrumental (pun intended) in cultivating a playlist of "uplifting queer and female voices." The results? A lot of

rapped 'Finesse' at me."

At about 9:00, David McKay got on stage and announced the prom court: king, queen, prince, prin-

"We've needed a presence here for a very long time."

- Palma Dellaporta / Advisor of LGBTQ Taskforce

Janelle Monae, and, for some reason, "Finesse" by Bruno Mars.

"Do, er, 'The Gays' love 'Finesse?'" I asked O'Malley.

"Everyone loves 'Finesse,'" they replied. "My partner aggressively

cess, and an ungendered category, Ruler of the Universe. To no one's surprise, the last title went to Sami Binder. McKay gave them a glitter-encrusted magic wand, and the coronation was complete.

While the Ruler of the Universe posed for pictures in the penthouse, the "Ruler" of Brooklyn College, President Michelle Anderson, was on the dance floor with her daughter. McKay wasn't surprised to see her there. "I have seen four presidents since I first came here," he said, "and Michelle Anderson has been by far the most supportive."

The importance of Brooklyn College's first-ever queer prom was not lost on those in attendance - even the chaperone.

"We've needed a presence here for a very long time," said Palma Dellaporta, an advisor on the college's LGBTQ Presidential Taskforce. She's been at Brooklyn College since 1989.

"About a week and a half ago I sent David McKay a text. I saw a gay couple, older, just walking down campus. It wasn't a 'we're queer, we're here' thing - it was just a normal couple, holding hands." In a quarter-century on campus, she had never seen anything like it.

"We're really happy about this," she said. "This is a big step."



Sami Binder, former president of the LGBTQ Resource Center, crowned as ruler of the universe / Marko Jokic



Free Admission to the Guggenheim For CUNY Students

By Allison Rapp
Managing Digital Editor

In a recent campus-wide email, Brooklyn College has announced that free admission to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum will be extended to all students and faculty with a plus one. Students will need to show their official college ID at the front desk to gain free entry. The Guggenheim will be offering this promotion to students at all CUNY colleges.

The Guggenheim, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and built in 1956, has been one of the leading art museums in New York City for decades. It features a wide

collection of impressionist, post-impressionist, early modern, and contemporary art, as well as rotating special exhibits.

“It is part of our department’s mission to get students into museums looking at works of art, and not just seeing them in reproduction,” said Professor Jennifer Ball, who teaches courses on Byzantine, medieval, and Islamic art at Brooklyn College. “The Guggenheim in particular houses a spectacular and important collection in a historically significant Frank Lloyd Wright building, so we are so pleased that this collection is now truly accessible to our students.”

Students can begin to take advantage of this opportunity beginning immediately. The Guggenheim is located at 1071 5th



The Guggenheim was built in 1956 by Frank Lloyd Wright and is home to many classic works of art. / Wikimedia Commons

Avenue. The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. every day except Thursday, and offers extended hours on Tuesday, when the exhibits are

open until 9 p.m.

For more information, visit the Guggenheim’s website at guggenheim.org.

New Library Exhibit Documents Flatbush Junction History

By Rosy Alvarez
Staff Writer

The Brooklyn College library has unveiled its newest exhibit documenting Flatbush Junction for the Fall 2018 semester.

Colleen Bradley-Sanders, college archivist, states, “Most of our archive info is about Brooklyn College itself so I wanted to explore more of the neighborhood and its evolution from the opening of the college through today.”

Not only is the exhibit thoughtfully curated by decade from left to right but it is also interesting to learn that notable historical figures like Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the namesake for Roosevelt Hall, visited and spoke at the campus.

Brooklyn College was founded in

1930 and despite it being the beginning of the Great Depression, most of the construction work was completed within five years. Initially a free university, Brooklyn College was created to provide a solid education for the sons and daughters of immigrants and working-class people.

Throughout the exhibition you’ll see old maps of the neighborhood and how the Brooklyn College campus and eventual extension, the West Quad, changed the look of Flatbush Junction. Professor Bradley-Sanders also made sure to take careful note of the businesses that resided in the neighborhood and what is there now.

To create such a detailed exhibit is not as easy as one might think. Bradley-Sanders explained that

even though most of the information were in the archives, there were a few images that they didn’t have.

“I found a man named Brian Merlis who has the most amazing collection of old Brooklyn photographs and maps,” stated Bradley-Sanders. “So I contacted him to see if I could borrow some of his images for this exhibit. I travelled out to see his collection and found a wealth of old maps. I had to sift through quite a few images before I found the ones I was looking for.”

Brooklyn College also has a history of social activism. One of the images in the exhibit is from the 1980’s when Brooklyn College students along with other CUNY and SUNY schools took to the streets and walked out of classes in masses to protest new tuition increases.

The exhibit also mentions the permanent shut down of the Brooklyn College Vanguard newspaper by then BC President Harry Gideonse. The Vanguard was a left-leaning newspaper in the throes of the Red Scare in the U.S. After publishing a story about the internal politics of the College’s Department of History that embarrassed the President, the students were locked out of their offices and the newspaper was shut down in May 12, 1950. We have protested racism, xenophobia, police brutality and advocated for LGBTQ rights in recent years and this image is a powerful statement of how students, through unity and free speech, have formed the present-day BC community.

When asked if there were any way that students could help with the curation of library exhibits Professor Bradley-Sanders replied, “we have allowed students to help with exhibits in the past but they are strictly employed by the library and are either studying or have graduated with a degree in Archiving. Since most of our historic documents and images are in our archives, we need people who know how to handle these documents carefully and who know how to properly digitize them.”

The current Flatbush Junction exhibit will be up now through January 2019. In 2019, Amy Roberts, project archivist, will be creating an exhibit from the YWCA of Brooklyn collection with the help of a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC).



Students in the 1980s on campus to protest against tuition increase/ Brooklyn College Archives

REVIEW: The "Bring A Weasel and A Pint of Your Own Blood Festival"



Top: "term of art" by Kate Kremer. Below: "Tongue Depressor" by Jerry Lieblich. / Illustration by Quiara Vasquez

By Quiara Vasquez
Editor-in-Chief

I can't tell you why the Bring A Weasel and A Pint of Your Own Blood Festival has that unwieldy and non-indicative name. (If there any weasels or blood bags in attendance, I certainly didn't see them.) I can tell you, however, that the festival is part of a collaboration between Brooklyn College's Playwriting Program and The Public Theater, and that this year, it consisted of four experimental plays by MFA candidates, all loosely based on the works of Mexican-born outsider artist Martin Ramirez.

I can also tell you that this festival also served as a ribbon-cutting for the new state-of-the-art Tow Center for the Performing Arts, which has been under construction for what seemed like forever and opened its doors for the first time just last month. Given that many plays last season suffered greatly from being staged off-campus at theaters seemingly chosen by throwing darts at a map of downtown Manhattan, it's a relief to see BC's theater productions getting a permanent home on-campus.

As for the four plays themselves? They're four very different works of art that have more to do with the personal interests of their playwrights than they do with Ramirez's biography or body of work.

Perhaps this is a good thing, though, because the only play to directly reference his life story is also the worst of the four. In Kate Kremer's "term of art," threespeakers quote from texts and transcripts

- Supreme Court decisions on immigration, descriptions of atrocities at Guantanamo Bay, a Wikipedia article on Ramirez's life and art - while a transcriptionist feebly attempts to jot everything down, so she can read printouts of her labor to the audience. Interesting concept; unfortunately, the play itself doesn't really cohere into anything more than a jumble of buzzwords and bad vibes. That may be an accurate reflection of our current political climate - but do we really need playwrights to give us the same vague sense of ICE-fueled dread we could achieve from twenty minutes of CNN?

Despite my gripes with the play itself, the cast and crew are all on-point. I could watch Schann Rae Mobley read the phone book - and honestly, "term of art" isn't too far from that. The costume, lighting, and scenic design are all good, and in many ways mirror the view from the Tow Center itself - angular, grey, abstract, and more arithmetic than artistic. There's even a (Far Better) printer narrowly in your field of vision.

The real star of the show, however, is Michael Costagliola's sound design. He plays back the actors' dialogue in stuttering loops, transforming their words into cascades of melody reminiscent of a Steve Reich composition. Maybe the worst thing about "term of art" is that these snippets of score succeed where the play itself fails.

The next play was more successful, even if both myself and the playwright would hesitate to call it a play. By her own admission, Rachel Kauder Nalebuff's "Woe is Me" is

more of a theatrical essay, sourced from interviews with doctors and actors and trying to draw parallels between the two. As it turns out, the two professions have quite a bit in common - they're highly specialized fields where your job often boils down to caring what other people feel. Kauder Nalebuff's avatar (a child actor played with aplomb by Sara Brown) asks the audience to consider whether "our collective bodies lost something in this split," and suggests ways that the two professions can learn from one another.

This may sound overly didactic, but it's actually quite fun. The cast is energetic, the script is breezy, and there are some surprising moments of levity too. Still, enjoyable as "Woe is Me" was, it never dissuaded me of the feeling that I was watching this talented quintet act out a thesis paper.

The other pair of plays fared much better. My longtime readers (all four of them) will recall that I was not a fan of April Ranger's "Must Wash Hands," but she redeems herself here with her one-act, "The Sandwich Program." The play centers on five women volunteering at soup kitchen, trying their damndest to provide comfort in a world that desperately needs it. The play is slightly stymied by Ranger's reliance on clumsy metaphors (sample: "my brain is like the sound of someone practicing the cello"), but even then the script and actors alike exude warmth.

But the big surprise of the night was the final production, Jerry Lieblich's Derrida-inspired (!) opera (!!) "Tongue Depressor." There's no

way to describe this play without sounding pithy or dismissive. My most valiant attempt would be... uh, "'The Rite of Spring' meets 'Green Eggs and Ham,'" maybe? A small but significant portion of the audience was clearly asking themselves, "what the fuck is this?"

Normally, I relish any opportunity I can get to point at "experimental" theater and ask "what the fuck is this?" But "Tongue Depressor" is the real deal, folks. It's a very bizarre play with a very limited vocabulary: for the first twenty minutes, the actors only speak six distinct words. But this isn't a gimmick or a piece of empty formalism. Those six words are all Lieblich and composer Dan Schlosberg need to weave an emotionally rich tale about language, loss, parenthood, and the things we left behind during evolution.

This season, Brooklyn College is staging seven plays by superstar graduates and professors from the college's MFA Playwriting Program (the first of which, Kate Benson's "Porto," opens early this October). I can't say that every single one of these plays is a work of genius. But if this (confusing, arbitrarily-named) festival proves one thing, it's that even when our graduates stumble in producing great theater, they do so with the aim of moving the medium forward, either in form or content. And sometimes, they put on a good show in the process.

I'm excited to see what they do. And I have the unique privilege to share these opinions on page seven of this very paper every month.

It's going to be a fun year.

BROOKLYN COLLEGE SPORTS

THE VOICE OF BROOKLYN COLLEGE SINCE 1950 - KINGSMANBC.COM - WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2018

Women's Soccer Wins First Home Game 2-0



Women's soccer team in action. / *Jasmine Peralta*

By Jasmine Peralta
Sports Editor

The Brooklyn College women's soccer team took the W during the seasons first home game Tuesday night against the Yeshiva University, Maccabees winning 2-0.

Deborah Vixama, freshman forward started off by making the first goal across from center and 10 yards out for the Brooklyn Bulldogs with assistance from freshman midfielder, Rachael Gomez during the first

period of the game.

The Bulldogs came in with full force against the Maccabees with strong defense in both infield and midfield during the first period of the game. Six minutes in, both of-fender and goal keeper, Kerri Kenna and Amanpreet Kaur, set defense high against Maccabees midfielder, Nicole Bick blocking Bick's shot.

Thirty-three minutes into and into the second period of the game, Gomez attempts to make the second goal when, goalkeeper, Rivka Gold-

enblatt saves the shot.

Kenna who took the position of center defense, played side-by-side Gomez wasting no time during the last four minutes of the second period, whipping the ball straight down the middle and into the net, making the winning goal for the Bulldogs.

"We worked really hard," stated Kenna. "Me and Rachael we had that quick break, that's what you have to do, just catch the other team off guard and just right down the middle score. It was nice to run up

the field and score."

According to Brooklyn College Athletics website, Kenna is a second-year member of the women's soccer team appeared in sixteen matches with sixteen starts and has a record of eight goals, two assists, 52 shots, and 29 shots-on-goal for 18 points.

The Bulldogs are currently 1-0 and will be facing Cairn University up next in Langhorne, Pennsylvania this Saturday.

Do you want to write like a King?

The Kingsman is looking for writers, artists, and photographers. Paid positions are available for the fall 2018 semester!

For more information, contact kingsmanbc@gmail.com