



NEWSLETTER

FRIENDS OF THE PCI LIBRARY

MARCH 2007

ONE BOOK, ONE PHILADELPHIA AT PCI

The PCI branch was privileged to play an important role in launching the One Book, One Philadelphia program for 2007. Carlos Eire, the author of this year's selection, "Waiting for Snow in Havana; Confessions of a Cuban boy," appeared at the library for a kickoff lecture Tuesday, January 16th at 2 P.M. Mr. Eire spoke about his early life in Cuba and challenges he faced as one of the 14,000 unaccompanied children air lifted out of Cuba to the U.S. by Operation Pedro Pan in 1962. He also addressed the difference between writing this personal memoir as opposed to the type of scholarly work he had previously published as professor of History and Religious Studies at Yale University. He urged the members of the 8th grade class in attendance to never let other people prejudge them by telling them what they cannot accomplish in life.

Also, on Monday, February 5th, at 6:30 P.M., Cuba Libre Restaurant and Rum Bar's Executive Chef, Guillermo Pernod, Prepared Cuban Fare at the library and discussed the art of Cuban cuisine. Thirty very fortunate attendees enjoyed a lively presentation and a delicious tasting of Roasted Calabasa Salad and African Adobo Rubbed Tuna with Tomato Salad.

A SUNDAY IN NEW YORK!

The Friends of the City Institute Library are sponsoring a bus trip to New York City on Sunday, April 22nd. A luxury bus will leave from the library at 8:30 AM and take us to Times Square. We will depart at 6:30 P.M.

Cost is \$30 per person, Non-refundable. Payment in full must be received before reservations can be taken. For information, call the Library at 215-685-6621.

All proceeds from this event go to the Friends of the PCI Library.

CONVERSATION WITH KAREN FLECK, CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN AT PCI

Q: You do so many children's programs--what recent events stands out?

A: The ice cream making club in December was fun for the kids and the parents. First, our after-school leader Miss Liz introduced the children to the science of ice cream making. We used our book collection to look up recipes. The next step was to purchase an ice cream ball. This is a large plastic container that mixes the ingredients. The core has a compartment to hold the cream, sugar etc. and inside of that is a part to hold the salt and ice. (I bought this at an L.L. Bean outlet in New Jersey.) We sealed everything up and the kids began to roll the ball along the floor. You can guess if they were excited by the rolling the ball, and rolling, rolling.....Then everyone ate the treat. Since the program was in December, we had holiday flavors: candy cane, hot chocolate ice cream etc.

Q: I know you're interested in dance. What's your involvement been?

A: I've always loved ballet. As a child I was captivated by the beauty, and enchanted by the story-book ballets. I started ballet lessons as a teenager. I studied for years and years; it was a serious hobby. I have friends who are dancers and I took classes all the time--jazz and modern, but ballet is best for me. I also know dancers at the Pennsylvania ballet. I've arranged a lot of dance and dance-related programs at the branch. Pennsylvania Ballet also gave me an introduction to ballet and yoga for children here. Currently I am studying yoga.

Q: How is it living in the city with a large dog?

A: I love my dog--a Border Collie mix. He's a giant! I adopted my dog from a rescue home. The people at the home didn't think I could manage him so when I called a while after the adoption to speak to them, they thought I wanted to return him. Never.

Q: How many children's books do you read a year? How many adult ones?

A: So many children's books (gasp). I can't even count. I listen to books on tape also because it is a good way to get to fiction for the older children. (I avoid kid's movies because I hate them.) When I'm driving I listen to adult books. and I also listen to them when I am cooking and baking because I do some catering, and it's a good way to combine two interests.

Q: Have computers taken away from young book readers at PCI?

A: This is a community of wonderful children so I would say no, because we have children who have great interest in books and reading. Yes, computers are fun but parental values are passed on to kids, reading remains strong.

Miss Karen Conversation continued

Q: Do kids come back to see you when they grow up?

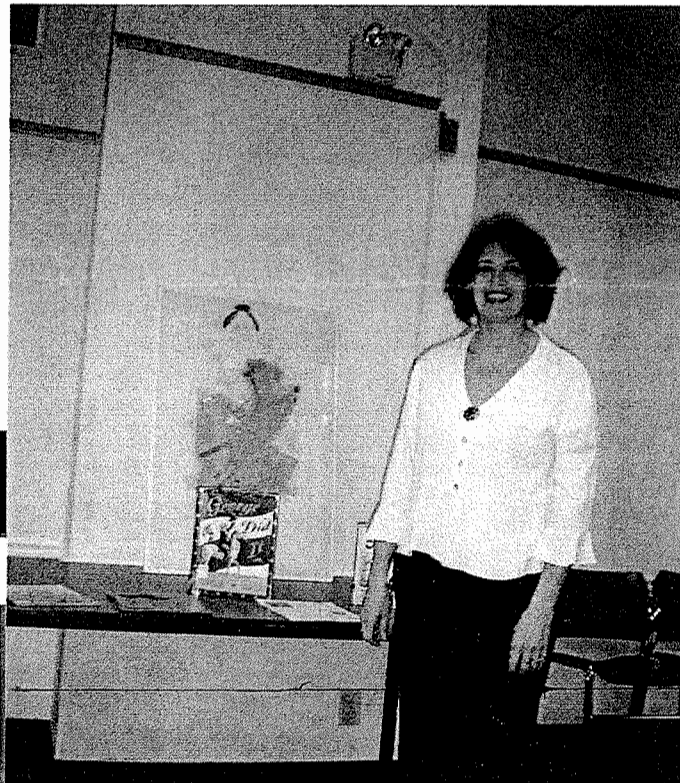
A: Absolutely. I'm still close with a family from South Philadelphia Library and I haven't worked there in thirteen years. Once a boy on his way to reform school stopped in to say good bye to me.

CONVERSATION WITH BARBARA BRADY, LIBRARY ASSISTANT II AT PCI

I came to PCI in 1988. I decided to leave my Roxborough neighborhood, where I could walk back and forth to my job at Roxborough branch library. (I had earlier worked at Wanamakers's and my mom said she could not believe I was going back to the city.) I could not quite get her to understand that I like living in the city. (My girls went to Hallahan where I had earlier been a student.)

Commuting is not an issue! Public Transportation is readily available. Coming back to the city interested me in the job at PCI, and additionally I would be working in the children's room. I like working with children. I had looked at other locations, and had turned down other promotions, but PCI was it.

My part in the children's room is the clerical end of the job. Processing, computer entries and other duties. I also help with patrons requests. I help to find things and make suggestions. I have four children and six grandchildren. My affection for children shows itself in my interactions with small library patrons--they sit on my lap, and after asking for a pretzel from the box on my desk, tell me frankly they don't like that kind. I am willing to switch.



BOOK REVIEW

By Evelyn Alloy

I have read *THE LEMON TREE: AN ARAB, A JEW AND THE HEART OF THE MIDDLE EAST* by Sandy Tolan twice to grasp the poignancy of events in war-torn Israel/Palestine reflected through the eyes, experiences and emotions of two displaced individuals. Tolan, not content to document the perfidiousness of all the major players in the middle east, has used memories and narratives as his novelistic device to engage our interest and sympathy.

Bashir Khairi, a Palestinian refugee/ exiled since childhood from Ramalla, pays a nostalgic visit to his old home. It is now occupied by Dalia Eshkenazi's family, Jewish refugees/exiled since childhood from Ramalia, pays a nostalgic visit to his old home. It is now occupied by Dalia Eshkenazi's family, Jewish refugees from a Bulgaria they are happy to leave. Dalia admits Bashir, and begins to understand the longing for home of displaced Palestinians. Sensing each other's sincerity, they begin a life-long friendship with occasional meetings, debates and letters. Throughout they differ in their expectations. Dalia believes in a Jewish state with an adjacent Palestinian state. Bashir hopes for a single democratic state for Palestinians and Jews. They achieve a degree of mutual respect, agreeing to disagree.

When Dalia's home is deeded to her by her parents, she converts it, in consultation with Bashir as its previous owner, to an open house and Kindergarten for Arab children. A new lemon tree is planted in the garden by Jewish and Arab children to symbolize growth and reconciliation. Dalia's letter to Bashir is worth listening to: "The use of force will not resolve this conflict on its fundamental level. This is the kind of war no one can win, and either both people will achieve liberation or neither will". An exceptional book.

FREE FILMS AT PCI

Monday Matinee Movies

Monday, March 5, 2:00 PM

Ken Russell's *The Music Lovers* (1970) starring Glenda Jackson with Robert Chamberlin as Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Monday, March 12, 2:00 PM

Mahler (1974) Ken Russell gives every word and frame emotional importance. On a single train ride, the sickly, aged composer Gustav Mahler and his wife Alma, confront the reasons behind their faltering marriage and dying love and his turbulent and dysfunctional family life as a child, his solace in the "natural world", his brother's suicide, his [unwanted] conversion from Judaism to Catholicism, the death of his young children. Starring Robert Powell and Georgina Hale.

Monday, March 19, 2:00 PM

Forever Callas (2002) Zeffirelli directed with Fanny Ardant as Callas. Also starring Joan Plowright and Jeremy Irons

Monday, March 26, 2:00 PM

Impromptu. (1991) Directed by James Lapine. Judy Davis plays George Sand, Hugh Grant is Frederic Chopin, with Emma Thompson and Bernadette Peters.

DESIGN CONTAINERS FOR THE SMALL GARDEN

Monday, March 26 6-7 PM

Part of the Pennsylvania horticultural Society city Gardening Series. Garden writer and educator Eva Manheim gives hints and tips for constructing container gardens for indoor and outdoor plants.