

# SAY CHEESE! ARTISANAL TASTING AND PAIRING AT THE COOP

February 10, 2026



The Park Slope Food Coop Cooking Squad Presents

# SAY CHEESE!

Tastings and pairings from the Coop's own cheese buyer, Yuri Weber

Learn about cheese sourcing, seasonality, and selection.



**Yuri Weber** has been the coop cheese, olive, bulk, and fine foods buyer for 16 years. He enjoys cooking and singing (not always at the same time).



**TO REGISTER:**

[foodcoopcooks.org/rsvp](http://foodcoopcooks.org/rsvp)

IG: [foodcoopcooks](https://www.instagram.com/foodcoopcooks)



**Note:** In-person attendance is limited to 30 seats.

Feb 18th

7:30 pm EDT

upstairs at the Park Slope Food Coop  
\$10 cash fee for  
the in person class  
(online is free!)

Courtesy of venue

Ever wonder how the Coop selects cheeses? Or, wish you knew how to shop the case like a pro? Join the PSFC Cooking Squad for **a practical, approachable cheese class** with our very own cheese buyer, **Yuri Weber**, on **Wednesday, Feb. 18, at 7:30 p.m. EST** as part of the Coop's monthly cooking series. This Cheese 101-style session offers a behind-the-scenes look at sourcing, seasonality and selection, along with practical advice for choosing cheeses for different occasions and budgets.

The class will focus on artisanal regional cheeses with an emphasis on standout producers from Wisconsin and Vermont. From understanding flavor profiles to creating thoughtful pairings with what's currently available, Yuri will share tips for building a seasonal cheese board and delve into the many practical facets of cheese—like which ones melt best and how to avoid quesadillas that drip!

DID YOU KNOW THE COOP SELLS OVER 5,000 POUNDS OF CHEESE EVERY WEEK?

Join us for an hour filled with practical advice from someone who knows the cheese case inside and out. Class will be **in-person at the Coop** and streamed **online via Zoom**. For in-person attendees, there is a \$10 cash-only fee taken at the door to help cover the cost of ingredients. Attendees will get to ask questions, meet Yuri and eat cheese! This class is perfect for anyone looking to elevate everyday snacking or hosting without overcomplicating things.

ABOUT THE CHEF

**Yuri Weber** has been the Coop's cheese, olive, bulk and fine foods buyer for 16 years. He enjoys cooking and singing (but not always at the same time). Yuri is also full of useful and interesting tips and facts about cheese! ***Did you know the Coop sells over 5,000 pounds of cheese every week?***

## RSVP, PARTICIPATE, AND FOLLOW

Sign up for classes, download recipes and find shopping lists to cook along from home at [foodcoopcooks.org](http://foodcoopcooks.org). As classes are added, they will show up on the Squad's home page. Check back regularly for updates! Follow the Cooking Squad on Instagram for more content, including shopping sessions with guest chefs!

## TEACH A CLASS

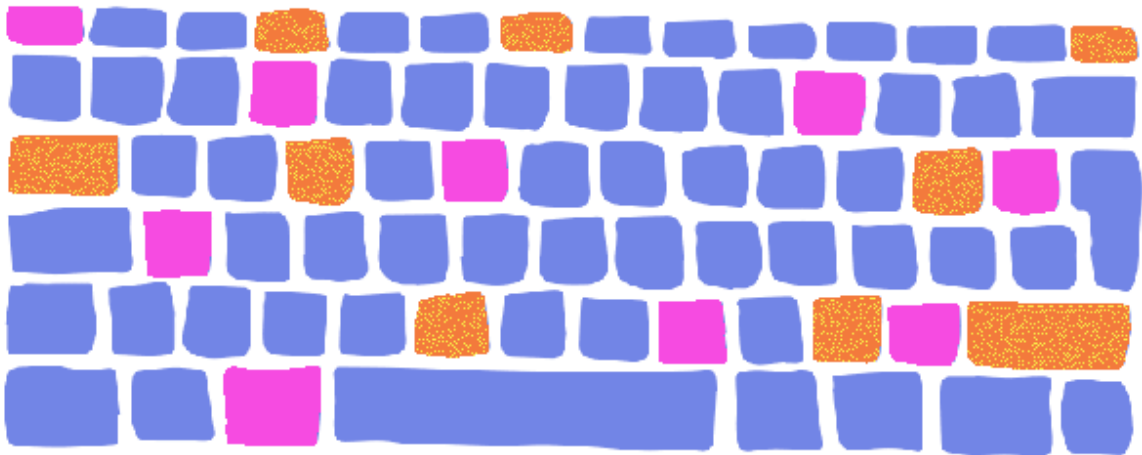
Though cooperation is at the heart of the Coop's mission, so is food! The Cooking Committee is looking for guest chefs to share their food expertise, traditions, and special treats. Members receive FTOP credit for preparing and delivering classes. Tell us what you want to teach!

---

FEBRUARY 10, 2026

February 10, 2026

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



## **LIDL HIGHLIGHTS LACK OF COOP AFFORDABILITY**

Dear Editor,

I appreciated very much Anita Bushell's January 20 article on the Park Slope branch of Lidl, a new German grocery store on of which I was unaware. Among other things, she

highlighted items in several categories that are more affordable at Lidl than they are at the Coop, including mandarin oranges, multigrain bread, and croissants. All but one variety of apple there are also on offer at a lower price. All this with no work requirement.

Bushell prefers the quality of goods and feeling of community at the Coop. I do too, but her survey highlights an important reality: Increasingly, we are a place less about affordable foods and more about elevated (or some might say snobby) preferences and responsible (or some might say politicized) sourcing.

Our markup was “temporarily” increased to 25% from 21% nearly six years ago and with spiraling health care and other costs, reporting out of the general meetings makes clear there is no return on the horizon to the original lower food prices. For the past year, I’ve found it cheaper to have coffee delivered from Finland than to buy it at the Coop, to give one example.

Meanwhile far more members seem interested in engaging in geopolitical debates than with costs and affordability. Instead of turning up our noses at Lidl, we should consider how to replicate their tight mission focus and efficiencies. Or we should at least be more honest about the fact that affordability, for those of us who don’t qualify for special programs, is slipping away at our beloved Coop.

In cooperation,

*Ryan Tate*

*Receiving shift (Lifter)*

---

## **REGARDING LIDL’S REVIEW**

Dear Coop community,

Anita Bushell's January 20 article on the relative merits of Lidl and the Coop ("Cheap-Croissants but Lidl Charm") misses the mark. The Coop and Lidl are fundamentally different, but it hardly warrants pooh-poohing Lidl.

In truth, many Coop products are expensive, and Lidl is generally cheaper. As Ms. Bushell observes, the Coop wins on quality and variety. But many products at Lidl—like fresh breads—are actually superior to the Coop's. Lidl produce, while not as good as Coop produce, is decent and mostly cheaper than what's for sale at Trader Joe's. It's hardly fair to diminish it as "an okay option for last-minute dashes."

Frankly, I find Ms. Bushell's mockery of discount promotions as features of a "a glorified mini-mart" deeply out of touch when affordability is such an important issue. I also struggle to relate to her lamenting the loss of the semi-suburban Key Foods parking lot and ruing its replacement with housing units, many set aside for affordable housing. (N.B. It was community leaders who advocated for an affordable grocery store in the development.)

Lidl is not especially warm or charming; most groceries aren't. It employs the same antitheft gate system used across Europe. If this system reduces the shoplifting that chain supermarket operators often cite as reasons for avoiding certain neighborhoods, it's a reasonable trade-off. Lidl has been expanding across the city, often in neighborhoods lacking affordable alternatives. It's also open to anyone who walks off the street—unlike the Coop.

I rather like the Coop, which is why I'm a member, but that doesn't mean I look down on Lidl. I do however wholly disapprove of mocking a discount grocery store's food as "technically edible."

Sincerely,

*Daniel Stone*

---

## **PAGING COMPOSTABLE BAGS TO THE BULK AISLE**

Dear Coop members:

As a newer member of the Coop, I've been impressed by the sustainable practices in place: a robust composting system, food donation to CHiPS and other food rescue organizations, reuse of delivery boxes for shoppers, and much more.

I'm curious about one, albeit small, area where we might be able to do better: the plastic bags used for pre-packaged bulk items and bread. I recognize there may be considerations I'm not aware of—cost or performance issues with compostable options—though given compostable bags are available in the produce section, I wonder if there's potential to transition these remaining plastic bags to compostable (or at the very least non-plastic) alternatives.

Part of my motivation for writing this letter is to see if this is something other members would support pursuing. The Coop's commitment to sustainability is a large part of what drew me to the organization, and I would love to help continue to drive this core part of our mission: "We strive to reduce the impact of our lifestyles on the world we share with other species and future generations."

Kindly,

*Kristen Mashikian*

---

## **FOOD HOLDS ENERGY WITH A MESSAGE**

Dear Coop members,

In 2015, when my daughters were 5 and 4 years old, I joined the PSFC. Our family enjoyed all the organic goodies we are so blessed to have available. My friend Anna, also a PSFC member, pointed out how I would bring carrots and a peeler with me to the Children's Museum; my nephew would laugh at how my stroller would be full of food and called me a refrigerator.

We would not leave home without all our food.

In the book *Food Rules*, writer Michael Pollan observes how much of what he sees for sale doesn't "deserve to be called food." Instead, he prefers to "call them edible food-like substances."

Having growing up in Tunisia and in Switzerland, I was alarmed at the quality of food sold in the US. My studies confirmed what my intuition was telling me: food is more than calories and nutrients. It holds the energy of the farmer, the farm, nature, and the intention behind the making of that food. Food holds a message.

I started cooking for my community to have conversations on ethical food and why we need to know where our food comes from. When we eat local food, it's easier to know the energy it holds. We want to give money to people who are caring for our land and taking good care of their employees and animals. I don't want to eat anger and pain, do you?

Guided by that philosophy, I do not buy ingredients from Israel, and I'm in favor of boycotting all goods from there until Israel ends what an overwhelming number of human rights organizations and authorities on international law say is a genocide, and Palestinians live freely.

I am honored to serve the PSFC with my food. I offer a vegan Tunisian sandwich called LA TUNISIENNE, free of cruelty. Find it Sundays in the grab and go fridge.

Sincerely,

*Nadia Ketoure*

---

## **HAVE RACHMONES: IMAGINE MENSTRUATION WHERE IMPORT OF HYGIENE PRODUCTS IS BANNED**

Fellow Members,

Perhaps you've heard someone ask: Why Israel? Why do thousands of Coop members demand a boycott of Israeli products, especially now that there's a ceasefire\*? Let's take a closer look and use an Israeli newspaper as a source. On January 22, 2026 *Haaretz* reported a "shortage in basics such as beef, poultry and hygiene products, caused by Israel's decision to ban the entry of these products..."

These banned hygiene products include menstrual supplies and diapers. Last week, I received a charity request to fund period kits for menstruating women and girls in Gaza. I was ready to donate, but then wondered: would these even make it through the blockade?

In the Yiddish-English home of my girlhood, my mother would often tell me to "have rachmones" (empathy or compassion) for others. Whether or not you've ever menstruated, it should be easy to imagine how wretched it would be to have no products to absorb your menstrual blood, and how much more of a horror it would be if you were living in a freezing cold refugee camp with extremely limited toilets or clean running water, and let alone privacy.

Every time we member-owners stock, sell, and buy Israeli products, we contribute to the economy of a country that has chosen to keep Palestinians in Gaza without period products and diapers.

Have Rachmones,

*Alyce Barr*

\* It's hard to understand what Israel considers a ceasefire, since Israeli forces have killed over 470 Palestinians during the current ceasefire.

---

## **SOME SEE UPSIDE TO A "LOOMING COLLAPSE"**

Dear Members,

I read recently of a "looming collapse" of Israel's agricultural exports market. Whether or not we boycott Israeli goods at the Coop, this collapse could achieve what so many courageous amongst us have campaigned for: a better world.

Sincerely,

*Damien Neva*

---

## **KNOW THE FACTS BEFORE YOU VOTE**

Dear Coop community:

As we gear up for what's sure to be a contentious discussion (and, finally, a vote!!) on

the boycott of Israeli products, it's essential that members reach out and learn the facts about previous and current organizing efforts.

Please DO NOT believe claims of antisemitism (I for one am proudly Jewish) and other emotional appeals to secure votes against a boycott. Some members weaponize such claims, and it behooves all of us to understand the facts and vote our consciences.

The Coop has a long, proud history of boycotting products from countries and entities that fail to act in accordance with our Mission Statement. I urge all members to familiarize themselves with that Statement and the importance of boycotts in the struggles worldwide for justice.

Yes, this issue brings "conflict" among us and, yes, discussions on these matters can be challenging, but I believe in the Coop, its Mission Statement, and the integrity of our members to proceed with the facts and in a spirit of cooperation

Sincerely,

*Carol Wald*

---

## **TRYING TO "JOIN THE CONVERSATION" WOULD BE EASIER WITH SOME TRANSPARENCY, PLEASE**

Dear Coop members:

I'm writing with questions about the December 30 "Join the Conversation" memo announcing a facilitated conversation about conflict in the Coop community, capped at 12 participants, with work-slot credit for attending. The memo emphasized confidentiality and directed members to apply online.

I applied almost immediately, but wasn't selected. I understand that there was likely limited capacity, but when shift credit is offered for a limited-access event, the selection and approval process should be transparent.

Questions I hope the Coop can answer:

- Will there be additional sessions, and will members who weren't selected this time get priority or another clear path to participate?
- What were the selection criteria? Was it first-come/first-served, a lottery, or based on other considerations? If so, what were they? Was race, ethnicity, religion, or identity considered?
- Who approved this as eligible for shift credit, and under what policy or category? What safeguards ensured it was administered fairly and consistently?
- Where was this discussed publicly within Coop governance? I don't recall seeing it in General Meeting materials or minutes, but I'd appreciate a pointer if I missed it.

Sincerely,

*Vivek Bhagwat*

---

## **COOP WORK-SLOT CREDIT**

Dear Editor:

On January 12, I participated in a Coop event for work-slot credit to discuss how conflict at the Coop "affected your experience as a Coop member." It covered "your experience as a Coop member during times of conflict, especially if it feels personal," and was not about making "decisions about a boycott or convincing anyone of a par-

ticular view.” (Quoted text is all pulled from the document from the moderators). Six people took part.

We agreed to no audio recording and no names. Moderators were asked what they were bringing back from this session to the Coop community. They said they were not providing any information to the Coop.

I argued that the Membership needs to obtain value for holding this session as the Coop provided the site and work slot credits to the participants. It is not a breach of confidentiality to provide a high-level report, which does not include names or direct quotes.

I noted that I could write a letter to the *Gazette*, following those guidelines. One participant was against any letter writing. The moderators who had advised that they were not decision makers, now ruled against my right to inform the Coop. At that point I left the session.

If the moderators want to hold this type of meeting under the “No Feedback” to Members rule, then it should not be held on Coop property. It is really a private activity. The Coop should not host or provide work-slot credits for something that doesn't inform the Members and directly or indirectly, benefit the Coop.

I respectfully request that any future sessions be canceled.

In Cooperation,

*Stewart Pravda*

---

## **IN THE LAND OF “BROKEN LAND DREAMS” (WITH APOLOGIES TO THE BOSS)**

Dear Coop members,

My magical realism novel, *Broken Land Dreams*, out in Kindle and print, mentions the Coop and Park Slope. It's not just for Boomers, guys in search of themselves, or Brooklynites, but those in need of a Hired Power, progressives, mindfulness types, literary mavens, utopian dreamers, and young superheroes with contemplative and critical thinking powers.

The book defies a conventional linear narrative. In Part I, Jacob Traum, a grumpy, retired high school social worker and meditating lefty boomer, tells us his wife Maya has left him and warns him he needs to recover from himself. He describes the puzzling and socially unjust things he broods and dreams about that contribute to his disposition and emotional absence.

In Part II, the surreal story begins. With the help of his dreamt-up, gender-fluid, hired power with superpowers from the future, Jacob embarks on a Dante-esque, pandemic-era personal journey. In Hell Inc. he's confronted by, then manages to escape three right-wing rats, leaders of the Ratocracy conspiracy—Ratty Ghoulani, Ayn Ratnd, and Pete the New York Pizza Rat. The rats seek revenge by infesting his former high school with Raticratic values and plan to take over Brooklyn. With the help of his Park Slope (Purgatory) men's group, the Brooklyn Codgers, and his high school students' socially conscious meditation group, imbued with their own superhero powers, Jacob must face himself as well as the Raticrats in a final showdown to reach Heaven (the Brooklyn Botanic Garden), save Brooklyn, and earn back Maya.

In our post-pandemic and Trump-redux era, this re-telling of Dante's cosmic journey will appeal to many of us facing an uncertain future and to those who appreciate how truth, love, and Brooklyn-style dreams triumph over meanness, greed, fake news—and New York rats.

Sincerely,

*David Forbes*

## **NOTE FROM THE GAZETTE EDITORS**

February 14, 2026

To Gazette readers,

Inconsistencies occurred in applying the Gazette's Letters to the Editor policies in the February 10, 2026 issue. As a result, two letters from that issue have been temporarily removed pending a review of those policies.

As the Coop's publisher, the General Coordinators have a responsibility to ensure that published material aligns with institutional and legal standards and that policies are applied consistently. In this instance, General Manager Joe Szladek and General Coordinator Ann Herpel were involved in the decision to remove the content in order to address those concerns.

A review of the Gazette's editorial standards and policies is underway to ensure they are clearly defined and consistently applied.

We regret any confusion this may cause and appreciate Gazette readers' understanding as we complete this review.

Thank you,

*Gazette Editors, Joe Szladek and Ann Herpel*

---

## FILM NIGHT: “FLYING ON ONE ENGINE” (2008) AND “SUNSET AND THE MOCKINGBIRD” (2021)

February 10, 2026

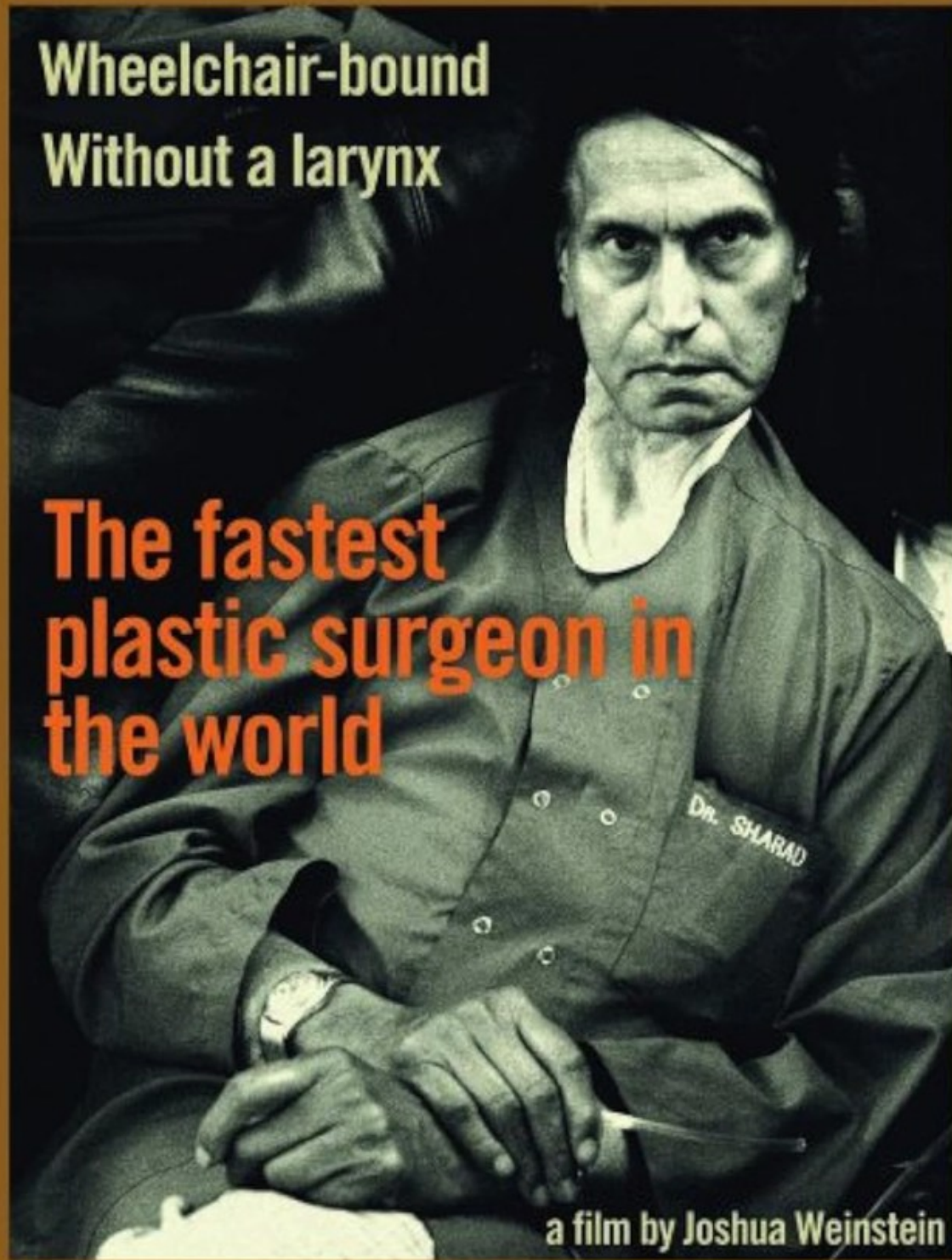


*Flying on One Engine* is an incredible, fantastic, heartwarming, inspiring, and hilarious documentary. It features the infirm 77-year-old Dr. Sharadkumar Dicksheet, an eight-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee who spends half his year performing free corrective cleft palate surgeries in India. The other half is spent living alone in a tiny rodent-infested apartment in Brooklyn, surviving on leftover take-out fried rice and buying lottery tickets. He’s a brilliant character, one you couldn’t possibly dream up. He’s funny and outrageous. His candor is priceless, while the work is dead serious. And that’s only part of what makes this film so entertaining.

Joshua Z. Weinstein directed the feature film, *Menashe*, which was released by A24, and nominated for a Gotham Award for “Breakthrough Director” as well as an Independent Spirit Award for “Best First Feature.” He has also directed the documentaries *Drivers Wanted*, *Flying On Engine* and *I Beat Mike Tyson*. As a cinematographer, he has lensed *Sell/Buy/Date*, *Elaine Stritch: Shoot Me* and *Bikini Moon*. Born in NYC, Joshua has been a Coop member on and off since 2008.

**Wheelchair-bound  
Without a larynx**

**The fastest  
plastic surgeon in  
the world**



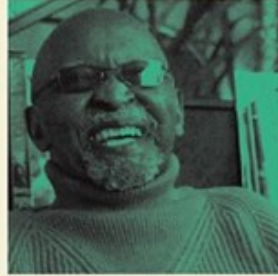
a film by Joshua Weinstein

**Flying **On One** Engine**

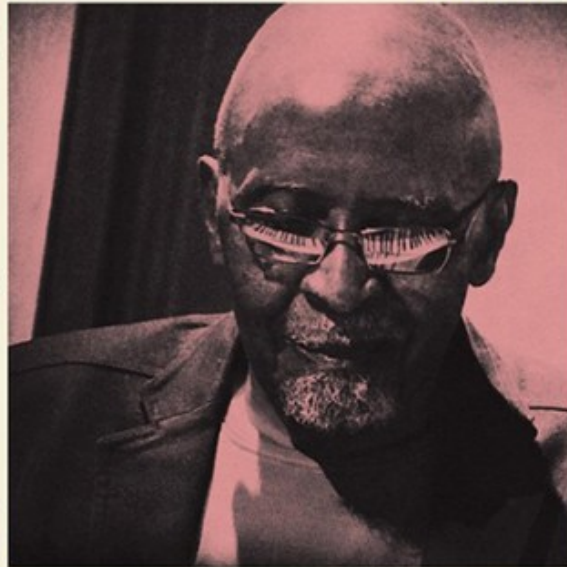
Graphics courtesy of venue.



*Junior  
Mance*



*Gloria  
Mance*



# **sunset** and the **mockingbird**

*memories fade. love is redefined. music endures.*



FEATURING GLORIA MANCE JUNIOR MANCE EDITED BY NICO NØRGAARD STAFFOLANI  
PRODUCED BY KALI HOLLOWAY ADAM KAHN DIRECTED AND PRODUCED BY JYLLIAN GUNTHER

SUNSETANDTHEMOCKINGBIRD.COM

Graphics courtesy of venue,

*Sunset and the Mockingbird* tells the moving love story of Gloria Clayborne and acclaimed jazz pianist Junior Mance, whose career spanned seven decades and featured collaborations with legends like Dizzy Gillespie and Dinah Washington. But Junior's most profound duet began in 1996, when he met Gloria. The two quickly married, and Gloria became his manager, companion and biggest fan. They traveled the globe together with music at the center of their bond.

In 2012, Junior suffered a stroke and developed dementia. Though his musical instincts remained intact, Gloria was confronted with questions of identity, legacy and the fragility of time. Filmed over 10 years, this deeply intimate documentary is told through Gloria's perspective, loosely structured around her personal journal entries. Like jazz, the film moves fluidly between past and present, combining verité footage with archival photos and performances. What emerges is a portrait of devotion, imperfection and enduring connection.

Jyllian Gunther is an Emmy Award-winning filmmaker and multimedia storyteller. Most recently, she co-directed and produced the HBO feature documentary *Bang My Box: The Robin Byrd Story* (2027). She served as writer-director for the HBO series *Swiping America* (2025). Her feature documentaries include *The New Public* (for PBS, distributed by Kino Lorber), and the critically acclaimed *Pull Out*. Other work includes: writer-director on NBC's Emmy award-winning *Who Do You Think You Are*, director on *Black Patriots: Heroes of the American Revolution* (History/A&E), director for the Amazon series *The New Yorker Presents*, producer for NPR's *This American Life* and more.

The films will be screened by Zoom on Thursday, February 19, at 7 p.m. (Meeting ID: 844 7273 8357). Directors Joshua Z. Weinstein and Jyllian Gunther will be present for a Q+A after the screening.

To be added to our email listserv for future screening announcements, please send a

request to jlymiller@me.com.

## MARCH CONCERT

February 10, 2026

**SEASON 2, 7TH CONCERT!!**

**Let's party!**

**A FAMILY CONCERT**

**& CREATIVE ACTIVITY DAY**

**MUSIC FEATURING:**

- THE KUGEL CREW
- BRANDON LÓPEZ
- DEBBIE BRUKMAN & BENJAMIN HELLER

**SUNDAY MARCH 15**

**PRESENTED BY THE PSFC CONCERT SERIES  
IN COLLABORATION WITH THE PSFC FUN COMMITTEE**

**PARK SLOPE  
FOOD  
COOP  
FUN COMMITTEE**

- ACTIVITIES START @1:30 PM
- SHOW @2 PM
- GROWN UPS: \$10
- 13-18YRS: \$5
- KIDS UNDER 12: FREE

**Get your tickets here!**



**SHAPESHIFTER LAB  
837 UNION ST  
BROOKLYN, NY 11215**

March 15: The Park Slope Food Coop Concert Series—in collaboration with the PSFC Fun Committee—invites families, kids, and curious listeners of all ages to a joyful, community-powered concert made especially for young ears and playful hearts.

This joyful, community-powered event celebrates music as a shared language—one that brings generations together through rhythm, movement, imagination, and fun.

### **Live Music for All Ages (Curated by the Concert Series Committee)**

An engaging, welcoming concert experience where children are free to listen, move, dance, and experience live music up close—right alongside parents and caregivers.

- **The Kugel crew**
- **Brandon López**
- **Debbie Brukman & Benjamin Heller**

### **Creative Activity Stations (Hosted by the Fun Committee)**

Three hands-on stations will be set up throughout the space so families can create before, during, or after the music:

- **Face Painting & Fun Tattoos** (with stencils!)
- **Coloring & Card-Making Station**
- **Mask Decorating & Mask-Making**

Kids can rotate between stations, express themselves creatively, and take their creations home.

Members and Non-members are all welcome!

Buy Tickets Here!

---

CROSSWORD: DDR

February 10, 2026



---

CROSSWORD: STOP

February 10, 2026

