

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The 2025-2026 Robert A. and Elizabeth R. Jeffe Distinguished Lectures in Urban History

(New York, NY, July 14, 2025) – The Museum of the City of New York (MCNY) is pleased to announce the 2025–2026 **Robert A. and Elizabeth R. Jeffe Distinguished Lectures in Urban History**. The lecture series invites leading observers from various disciplines—including history, sociology, the arts, and architecture—to explore New York City's ongoing evolution. This upcoming fall and spring, the Museum will present lectures by **Steven Ujifusa**, **Prithi Kanakamedala**, and **Ross Perlin**. Past speakers have included notable figures such as Ned Blackhawk, Qian Julie Wang, Jeffrey C. Stewart, Colson Whitehead, Jill Jonnes, and John Turturro.

“We are looking forward to hosting a dynamic series of lectures exploring New York City’s past and present this year,” said **Stephanie Hill Wilchfort**, the Ronay Menschel Director and President of the Museum of the City of New York. “With topics spanning New York City’s historical eras, neighborhoods, and communities, the lectures will highlight how the City’s history helps us understand our current moment.”

“It is an honor to welcome three distinguished speakers, each a leader in their respective field, to the Museum this year,” shared **Nick Martinez**, Vice President of Education and Engagement. “We are excited for attendees to discover new insights into New York’s past, present, and future.”

Please find details on the lectures below:

The Last Ships from Hamburg

Wednesday, October 22, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

Price: General Admission \$30 | Members \$25

Learn about the mass migration of 2.5 million Jews who fled Eastern Europe between 1890 and 1921 in this conversation with **Steven Ujifusa**. Tracing their journey from Russian shtetls to New York’s mansions and labor protests, he weaves together themes of immigration, business, politics, and nativism—offering timely insight into both history and today’s refugee crises. The discussion is moderated by **Sarah Henry**, Ph.D., Robert A. and Elizabeth Rohn Jeffe Chief Curator and Deputy Director.

Steven Ujifusa is a historian and author who chronicles the confluence of American business, social, and maritime history.

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Brooklynites

Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

Price: General Admission \$30 | Members \$25

Join us as **Prithi Kanakamedala** explores the history of Brooklyn's free Black communities, which attracted people from all walks of life who helped shape the city with a radical anti-slavery vision. Her book, *Brooklynites*, recovers the lives of these remarkable citizens and examines their lasting impact on what would become New York City's most populous borough.

Prithi Kanakamedala, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the History Department at Bronx Community College of the City University of New York (CUNY) where she teaches U.S. History, African American History, and the History of New York City.

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Language City

Tuesday, March 10, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.

Price: General Admission \$30 | Members \$25

Discover the powerful stories behind New York's linguistic diversity as **Ross Perlin** discusses his latest book. In *Language City*, Perlin follows six remarkable yet ordinary speakers of endangered languages, exploring how they're keeping their languages alive against overwhelming odds.

Ross Perlin, Ph.D., is a linguist and co-director of the nonprofit Endangered Language Alliance, overseeing research projects focused on language documentation, mapping, policy, and public programming. This conversation is moderated by Monxo Lopez, MCNY's Curator of Community Histories.

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About the Museum of the City of New York

The Museum of the City of New York celebrates and interprets the city's history, art, popular culture, and civic life, highlighting New York's influence worldwide. Founded in 1923 as a private, nonprofit corporation, the Museum serves hundreds of thousands of visitors annually from around the world through exhibitions, school and public programs, publications, and collections.