

# Crossing the Divide

2020  
NEW YORK  
ENCOUNTER



February 14–16, 2020 | Metropolitan Pavilion, NYC

**These days we live as if enclosed in shells of ideology.** They divide us from reality, from each other and from ourselves. We proclaim the value of diversity, but can only talk to those who share our views. We say we love justice, but use it as a weapon against our enemies. We venerate science, but pick and choose its results along party lines. And when our ideologies fail to deliver, we are left alone, angry and afraid.

**However, some events still manage to break through these shells.** They can be tragic, like a natural disaster or a school shooting, or beautiful, like a new love or the birth of a child. Then, for a moment, we find ourselves in wonder...more aware...united. These events open our eyes and awaken something in us: nostalgia, thirst for life, a cry for meaning. And sometimes we discover that the seemingly unbridgeable distance between people—be they family, coworkers, or even strangers on the subway—is actually paper-thin.

We do not want to waste these moments! **And yet, left to our own devices, we retreat again into the shells of our tribal ideologies.** These experiences, which made us see things differently, quickly decay, and everything gets twisted to fit our preconceptions.

**In the end, is there anything that lasts? What can help us hold on to these experiences? Is there someone, somewhere, who lives fully and makes us want more from life? In short, a true friend?**

We climbed up, he first and I behind him,  
far enough to see, through a round opening,  
a few of those fair things the heavens bear.  
Then we came forth, to see again the stars.

—Dante, *Inferno*, Canto XXXIV

Join us on February 14–16, 2020, for a weekend of public discussions, exhibits and live performances to delve into these questions with friends.

Event Venue: **Metropolitan Pavilion, 125 W 18th St., NYC**

[www.newyorkencounter.org](http://www.newyorkencounter.org)

New York Encounter is an annual three-day public cultural event in the heart of New York City, offering opportunities for education, dialogue, and friendship.

All New York Encounter events are free and open to the public.

No registration is required.

