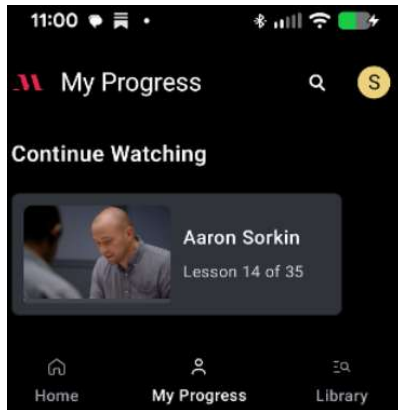




April 2026

Enjoying “MasterClass”

by Jerry Lerman (344)



I placed a spot in last month's issue mentioning that MasterClass, an instructional application, might offer you an excellent way to pursue new learnings. I had received a free one-year membership, but hadn't yet taken advantage of it. My procrastination stemmed from not knowing of any particular subject I'd want to devote time to learning, nor how big the time commitment might be. But, I remembered procrastination isn't a good thing – so I finally took a closer look at the product.

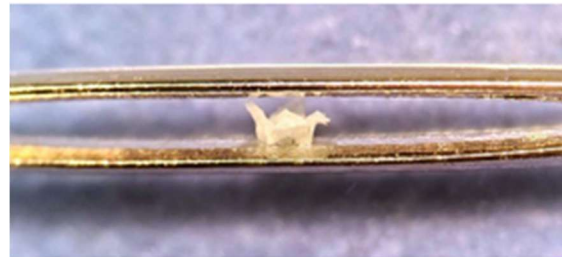
I am pleased to say that I'm really enjoying the course I've begun: Aaron Sorkin's MasterClass on scriptwriting. I've watched 13 lessons, running to about 3 hours, and have learned several things about a vocation that I'm not contemplating going into – but have always held in high regard.

I should say that in Reddit I have found some scathing reviews of the class, along with others that register satisfaction, so this class might not be everyone's cup of tea (it costs \$90). I sense, though, that the wide world of coursework available in MasterClass is bound to contain something that could interest you.

Aaron's Question Column



(Top) 14 golden camels in the eye of a needle (Willard Wigan) (Bottom) An origami crane in a needle's eye



Question: I just met a man who has been doing something quite amazing: creating micro-level origami cranes. He showed me one that fit INSIDE the eye of a needle. Can you tell us what's involved in making such a mini miracle?
-Jerry

Aaron's Answer (A'sA): Back in the early days of my childhood, I saw a lot of these miniature sculptures similar to what you are describing. I never bothered to look into them at the time, but thinking back, without any kind of machinery, creating these works of art is truly a daunting task and I also wonder how they did it.

The man credited with popularizing and pioneering miniature sculptures is
continued on page 3

Solution to Last Month's Quiz

KANGAROO WORDS

- VACATE (evacuate)
- SAD (dismayed)
- CON (deception)
- JOY (jollity)
- SLY (stealthy)
- SIN (transgression)
- WANING (weakening)
- YEN (yearning)
- RACIST (supremacist)
- MAR (impair)

This Month's Quiz

FEAST OR FAMINE

In speaking with a neighbor recently, I learned that I was woefully unaware of a historically horrible event that had occurred during my own lifetime – a famine responsible for tens of millions of deaths.

With a search of the internet, I then found other famines that have darkened humankind's days (only a couple of which I had had any awareness of).

But not to dwell entirely on the past's horrors, I then searched for and found some more enjoyable historical events : excesses in the enjoyment of food.

Below you'll find a collection of both types of episodes – and the starting year of their occurrences. I hope you'll have the appetite to pair each to its year!

FEASTS

- A. The Feast of the Pheasant (Hosted by Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy)
- B. Nero's Rotating Banquet (Held in a rotating dining room)
- C. Queen Victoria's Wedding Feast (lavish, heavily meat-focused 17-to-20-course banquet at Buckingham Palace)
- D. George Neville's Coronation Feast (lasted 3 days serving up **six wild bull, 400 peacocks, 204 kid goats, 1,000 egrets, etc.)**
- E. Regent's Banquet (Held by George IV for Grand Duke Nicolas of Russia)

FAMINES

- 1. Great Chinese Famine (15+ million deaths over 3 years)
- 2. Irish Potato Famine (1+ million deaths over 8 yrs)
- 3. Great European Famine (5+ million deaths over 3 years)
- 4. Soviet Famine (Holodomor) (6 million deaths over 2 years)
- 5. Great Bengal Famine (10 million deaths over 4 years)

YEARS

- 64
- 1315
- 1454
- 1465
- 1769
- 1817
- 1840
- 1845
- 1932
- 1959

Aaron's Answers continued from pg. 1

Willard Wigan. Born in 1957 to Jamaican immigrants in the United Kingdom, he became known for pushing this unusual art form into public awareness and proving just how far it could go. Working with improvised tools like sharpened needles, fragments of razor blades and even single hairs or eyelashes (self-procured), he creates sculptures so small they require microscopes to be seen clearly. The level of control required is extraordinary, he times his movements between heartbeats and slows his breathing to keep his hands steady. His work, which includes figures, animals and detailed scenes placed inside needle eyes or on pinheads, has helped define what miniature sculpting can be and has inspired others to explore similarly extreme scales. During the pandemic, he made the aforeshown sculpture of 14 24-karat golden camels in the eye of a needle, with all of the free time he had.

As for the origami, similar levels of care and precision are used to create such tiny masterpieces. Artists working at that scale use extremely thin paper and fine tools like tweezers or needles to make each crease. I have found evidence of a plastic origami crane made from a 0.1mm by 0.1mm plastic film being created at some point by Naito Akira (using a microscope and specialized wire tools), with most hobbyists creating paper cranes anywhere from 2mm down to a single millimeter using delicate needles and microscopes. At this size, the challenge is not just the folding itself, but controlling the material. Paper fibers behave differently when reduced to such

minute dimensions, and even slight humidity or static can interfere with the process (hence the use of a plastic sheet for the smallest origami crane ever made, mentioned above).

At such a small scale, one must wonder what the purpose of creating origami is. After all, is art not meant to be observed and enjoyed by others? However, this common perspective ignores the fundamental reality of art as a representation of skill, both to the artist and viewers. A 0.1mm by 0.1mm crane may be a bit too small, but what person would not find something to admire in the crane you saw?

And here I am struggling to make *any* crane. Thanks for the question!

Editor's note: Aaron concluded this submission to me with this note: "Now that it's on my mind, I'll attempt to make a crane in the next few days. Updates to come!"

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April 23rd - May 17th



(See <https://www.hillbarntheatre.org>)

**Target Date for YOUR Contributions to the next BI:
May 15, 2026**

Please reach us with your articles, news, photos, CHILDREN'S ARTWORK or questions for Aaron at

344 Bowfin, (650 572-9153) or email us at our email EDITOR@BOWFININQUIRER.COM or by

adding a NOTE on our website:

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