

ISSUE 25 FALL / WINTER 2016

DEMO

The Alumni Magazine of
Columbia College Chicago

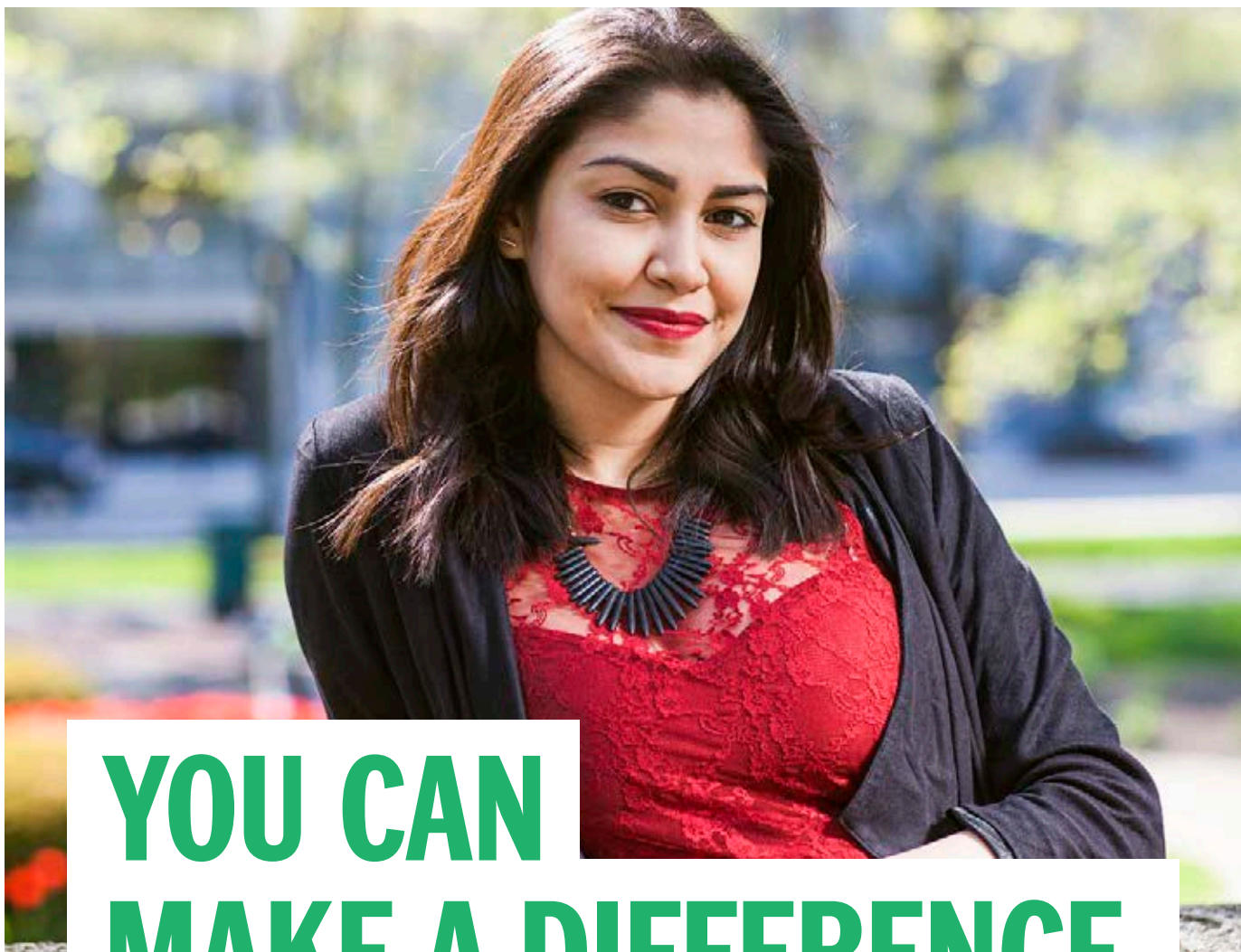
How TV
professionals
shaped the hit
show *Empire*

NASA writer
Sarah Schlieder
explores
our universe

Thelonious Martin

brings the beats

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DEMO (volume 11, number 2) is published by Columbia College Chicago. *DEMO* is mailed free of charge to alumni and friends of the college two times per year. The ideas and opinions expressed are those of the writers alone and do not necessarily reflect those of Columbia College Chicago. ©Columbia College Chicago 2016.

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Questions for President Kwang-Wu Kim

DEMO: What do you think would surprise alumni about Columbia right now?

PRESIDENT KIM: Meeting alumni and hearing their stories is one of the most enjoyable parts of my job. It's especially rewarding to talk with alumni who come back to campus for events like Columbia Weekend after being away for a long time—they're just amazed at Columbia's development. I'm pleased that there seems to be a correspondence between the alumni's hopes for the school and the direction in which we're heading; I really want them to get a clear sense that their school is moving to the next level. In particular, I hope that our renewed focus on student success is a positive surprise for them.

DEMO: What changes are in store for the college in the coming year?

PRESIDENT KIM: We've just formally launched the Career Center, which will be a major link between current students and alumni. The faculty is in the midst of rethinking the curriculum from top to bottom, and we're moving ahead with plans for the new student center. So we're really putting some concrete pieces of the strategic plan in place this year.

DEMO: How can alumni become mentors for students or other young alumni?

PRESIDENT KIM: One reliable way would be to contact Development and Alumni Relations, which has been setting up alumni roundtables, visits and events. But alumni

can also reach out either to the Career Center or to a favorite faculty member and find out if there is a way for them to reconnect with Columbia, perhaps by providing internships or other practical learning opportunities for our students. It's really about alumni getting involved in some fashion with how we support student success.

DEMO: What makes Columbia alumni unique?

PRESIDENT KIM: In almost every instance in which I connect with alumni, I'm meeting people who are doing exactly what we hope that Columbia graduates will do: they are innovating and creating. So for me, it's refreshing to interact with them. They always seem to have retained their excitement and enthusiasm.

DEMO: What does an active alumni community bring to Columbia?

PRESIDENT KIM: The professional resources that they command because of their experience, the example of their personal histories and—in some cases—financial support. Above all, I think it's so important for alumni to constantly share their stories with students and show them—model for them—what success looks like after Columbia. The greater the variety of these stories that students hear, the better, because it reinforces the point that we are all trying to get across to them, that there is no one path to that success.

MOCP CELEBRATES 40 YEARS WITH EXHIBITION

Columbia College Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Photography (MoCP) celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2016 with a showcase of its vast collection of photographic art in *MoCP at 40*. The floor-to-ceiling, wall-to-wall display included artists such as Elliot Erwin, Sally Mann, Robert Mapplethorpe and Myra Greene. Even then, only a fraction of the museum's 14,000 pieces were on display.

The MoCP is one of two photography museums accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The museum also serves as a starting point in the careers of many national and international photographers. "It's important that we can be flexible and respond to contemporary artists. After all, it's the artists that dictate the future," says Executive Director Natasha Egan MFA '98.



18 NEW MURALS JOIN WABASH ARTS CORRIDOR

The Wabash Arts Corridor (WAC) held its inaugural Big Walls Festival celebrating street art culture during the first two weeks of May 2016. WAC partnered with local galleries and sponsors to bring 18 local and international street artists to install large-scale murals. The artists included notable street artists Eduardo Kobra from Brazil and Ozmo from Italy. Throughout the course of the Big Walls Festival, the 18 artists—including students and alumni—installed more than 40,000 square feet of building murals, adding to the WAC's 20 existing murals around campus. The festival included street art tours, live art making and an artist panel.

Several of the artists created work specific to the city, including Kobra's colorful mosaic of legendary Chicago blues musician Muddy Waters and Collin van der Sluijs' *From Bloom to Doom* mural depicting two endangered Illinois birds among native flowers. The murals can be found throughout the South Loop.

1. Amuse 126 is a Chicago street artist who captures the attention of an everyday audience with his abstract typography and illustration.
2. *Make Your Own Luck* was created by the Brooklyn artistic duo ASVP. The mural was part of Vertical Gallery's "The Power of Paint" series which focused on the theme of using art to help others.



DEMO MAGAZINE WINS CASE GOLD AWARD

V for Victory! *DEMO*, Columbia's alumni magazine (that you're reading right now), was awarded the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Gold Award for Special Issues for its Fall/Winter 2015 23rd issue. The issue celebrated 10 years of *DEMO* with an A-to-Z guide of all things Columbia. The CASE Awards of Excellence recognize superior accomplishments in the field of education. Out of 41 entries, four institutions were awarded for special issues.

The issue's illustrated A-to-Z guide highlighted and celebrated both the history of the magazine and the college. The cover (featured above) and illustrations were created by Kyle Letendre '12, who works with Delicious Design League in Chicago.

“The brand is a way of telling our story to the world.”

COLUMBIA UNVEILS NEW BRAND

In summer 2016, Columbia College Chicago launched a new brand. More than a logo or color palette, our brand is the total experience created for key audiences—a unique-to-Columbia experience that embodies the college's mission and aims to help the world see us the way we see ourselves.

“The brand is a way of telling our story to the world,” says President and CEO Kwang-Wu Kim. “It's an organizing principle, a way of pulling everything together to tell a consistent story so the world can appreciate who we are and what we do for our students.”

The brand is already helping amplify and strengthen Columbia's key messages in communications. As part of the brand rollout, we launched an advertising campaign aimed toward parents and influencers of prospective students. The campaign included radio ads (see page 8) and a 30-second video ad that aired on Hulu.



FORMER BOARD OF TRUSTEES CHAIR DICK KIPHART DIES AT AGE 75

Dick Kiphart, former chair of the college's Board of Trustees, passed away on September 10, 2016, at 75. Kiphart had been on the board since 2009 and served as chair from March 2013 through May 2016.

As chair, Kiphart set in motion Columbia's five-year strategic plan and diversified the board by recruiting new members from various career backgrounds. Together, Kiphart and the board deepened Columbia's impact on students by increasing student aid from \$20 million to \$37.5 million annually. Under his leadership, the college also improved its connection to the Chicago community.

BILL WOLF ELECTED BOARD OF TRUSTEES CHAIR

Bill Wolf was unanimously elected as the chair of the Board of Trustees for Columbia College Chicago on May 12 at the final board meeting of the 2015-16 academic year. A trustee since 2012, Wolf is successor to former chair Dick Kiphart.

Wolf is managing partner at KDWC Ventures, a Chicago-based venture firm. He was previously the chair of Columbia's investment committee, as well as a member of the executive, finance and audit committees.

The board includes leaders from creative and business industries who provide the college with opportunities to strengthen resources. Wolf hopes his leadership will continue the momentum of the board, including finding new opportunities for advancement and success.



COLUMBIA COMMUNITY COLLABORATES ON RADIO ADS

When Columbia College Chicago set out to create radio and TV ads as part of the new advertising campaign, we didn't need to look far for the talent. Dozens of faculty, staff, students and alumni pitched in as location scouts, musicians, voiceover artists, audio engineers and editors.

"I don't know of another college that could have produced a complete campaign like this using internal talent," says Vice President of Strategic Marketing and Communications Deb Maue. "We had all of the talent right here to do everything for the radio and video spots."

Radio ads targeted to influencers launched in September on Pandora and Spotify and on local radio stations WTMX 101.9 FM and WBBM 105.9 FM. The video ad aired on Hulu.

"I loved the vision of using people from within the Columbia community," says Joan Hammel '86, who voiced a radio ad. "Who better than our own to put together the story about us?"



Student Igor Loncar (left) and Audio Arts and Acoustics part-time professor Josh Shapiro (right).



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR ALUMNI AWARD WINNERS AND NOMINEES

Columbia College Chicago is proud of the alumni who have been awarded or nominated for their exceptional achievements in the past year. The following list includes alumni who have received local and national acclaim for their media work.

- **Julie Altus** '01, Emmy nomination for Outstanding Sound Editing for a Series, *Gotham*
- **Arabella Anderson** '12, Writers Guild Award nomination for Writing in a Comedy Series, *Transparent*
- **Jeremy Beiler** '04, Writers Guild Award nomination for Writing in a Comedy/Variety Sketch Series and an Emmy nomination for Outstanding Writing for a Variety Series, *Saturday Night Live*
- **Kristin Crowley** '06, Illinois AP Broadcasters Association Award for Best Newswriter, WREX-TV (Rockford, Illinois)
- **Mark Friedman** '76, Illinois AP Broadcasters Association Award for Best Newswriter, WBBM-AM (Chicago)
- **Callie Hersheway** '07, Writers Guild Award for Writing in a Comedy Series, *Veep*
- **PK Hooker** '00, Emmy nomination for Outstanding Sound Editing for a Non-fiction Program, *He Named Me Malala*
- **Daniel Kibblesmith** '05, Writers Guild Award nomination for Writing in a Comedy/Variety Talk Series, *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*
- **Jonathan McReynolds** '11, Grammy nomination for Best Gospel Album, *Life Music: Stage Two*
- **Jennifer O'Neill** '01, Illinois AP Broadcasters Association Award for Best Reporter, Rivet News Radio (Chicago)
- **Patrick Smith** '10, Illinois AP Broadcasters Association Awards for Best Newswriter and Best Hard News Feature, WBEZ-FM (Chicago)
- **Annick Wolkan** '05, works on *Game of Thrones*, which received multiple Emmy awards and nominations.



MARK KELLY REFLECTS ON 32 YEARS WITH COLUMBIA

After 32 years with Columbia College Chicago, former Vice President of Student Affairs Mark Kelly accepted a position as commissioner of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE). But he can never leave Columbia far behind. Today, when he walks down the street, people stop to greet him with a jubilant "hell yeah!" They're referencing his iconic Hell Yeah Liturgy, a call-and-answer speech delivered at every New Student Convocation where students loudly affirm Columbia's principles and values.

Kelly will be remembered as a central figure in Columbia's narrative who always encouraged a vibrant student culture. During his time here, he helped establish a student experience that merges classroom, campus and city. He talked with *DEMO* about his Columbia history, his plans with DCASE and the story behind the Hell Yeah Liturgy.

DEMO: What will you carry with you from your history with Columbia?

Kelly: That's a tough question because I was there 32 years. I lived, breathed Columbia. It'll never leave me. I have this incredible new, exciting professional adventure, but there's no doubt that my Columbia experience will always frame everything I do moving forward.

DEMO: Can you tell us a little about the history of the Hell Yeah Liturgy?

Kelly: I've always believed in rituals and moments of liturgy, if you will, where

you're reminded of the values and you collectively affirm them. How do you do that at Columbia? How do you do that in a playful, meaningful, memorable way?

The first time I did it, I decided three minutes before I went up on stage. It occurred to me, well, it's not just "yes" or "of course." It's "hell yeah"—not terribly edgy, right? But it feels like it is when you have 3,000 students all saying "hell yeah" with their fists pumping.

"My Columbia experience will always frame everything I do moving forward."

DEMO: What are your goals with DCASE?

Kelly: I want to recognize everything that's been accomplished—the great legacy of DCASE. And also just to recognize the vibrancy of the cultural landscape of this city, whether it's architecture or theatre or music or dance or literature, design, the list goes on. I have the humble honor of helping celebrate and focus that.

There's so much more work to be done. Our cultural communities, they need a champion. They need to be better connected to each other. We need to plant our flag and remind everyone that we're not just an extra or a frill in the life of Chicago—we're at the core and we're necessary.



EMPIRE

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BUILDING AN EMPIRE

**COLUMBIA ALUMNI PERFORM
CRITICAL BEHIND-THE-SCENES ROLES
ON FOX'S HIT SHOW.**

By William Meiners MFA '96

In Fox's hit show *Empire*, hip-hop mogul Lucious Lyon (Terrence Howard) must choose which of his three sons will inherit his multimillion dollar entertainment company. On top of that, his ex-wife Cookie (Taraji P. Henson, who earned a Golden Globe for her role) is fresh from prison to demand her half of Empire Entertainment. Combining gritty storytelling with the backdrop of the hip-hop music business, the primetime show has soared beyond critical and rating success to a near-iconic status.

But for all its popularity, part of the magic in the groundbreaking drama may come with the challenge of making Chicago look like New York City. Set in the Big Apple, but filmed in the Second City, *Empire* has shut down traffic and shot scenes all over downtown, as well as the south and west sides. Through three seasons now, it's also employed plenty of people throughout the city, including several Columbia College Chicago alumni.

Ayanna Floyd MFA '98, **CeCe Destefano** '94, **David Leonard** '97 and **James "Jimmy" Carter** '09 give us a peek behind the scenes of the hit show.



Ayanna Floyd MFA '98
Co-executive Producer

Ayanna Floyd MFA '98 served as co-executive producer on the show's second season. In that role, she helped develop ideas among the writers, wrote two episodes and traveled from Los Angeles to Chicago film sets to be on-site with the crew from sunup to sunset—available to address any challenges with the script.

“Television is very much a writer’s medium,” Floyd says. “I wasn’t just interpreting words, but also in meetings from preproduction to location. Writers are a big part of the process, not like the movies

where they can be disassociated from the production.”

The Toledo, Ohio, native came to Chicago with one-time aspirations of becoming “the black female Spike Lee” and found her writer’s voice at Columbia. “Actually, I learned what I didn’t want to do,” she says. “I didn’t like setting up cameras or lighting, and I hated the word F-stop.”

At Columbia, she quickly began shooting in Grant Park, getting into the editing cage and figuring out what kinds of jobs she liked. “You immediately had your hands on films and were telling stories,” she says. “I discovered I liked writing.”

An LA move, a Disney fellowship and a breakthrough writing job on the medical drama *Gideon’s Crossing* helped spur Floyd’s career in television. The chance to work with a predominantly African-American writing team on *Empire*, however, became an entirely new experience.

“In broadcast television, I’m often one of the only black people in the room,” Floyd

says. “I had never worked anywhere where we were the majority [until *Empire*]. So the writing group felt very much like family.”

Floyd describes the writers’ room as a lively place where people pitch ideas and argue about what works. The showrunner has the last say, she says, but the writers are the first step in the process of making a television show come to life.

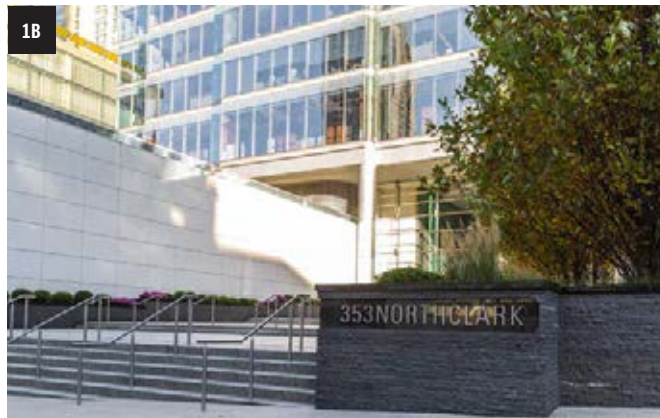
Even though *Empire* is a young television series, it continues to climb in viewership, critical acclaim and award nominations. The show’s largely African-American cast, including cameos and guest appearances from notable actors and hip-hop artists, may have helped foster its success. “We’ve never seen these characters on television,” Floyd says. “They’re just raw and don’t feel like TV archetypes. Overall, it just feels very fresh.”

SETTING THE SCENE

Set in New York City but filmed largely in Chicago, *Empire* has to get creative with its filming locations. If you’re binging season one, keep your eyes peeled for some familiar architecture. Here, we spotlighted scenes shot in the city and the surrounding suburbs during the show’s first season.

S1, EP 1: PILOT

1. In the pilot episode, the *Empire* headquarters were filmed at 353 N. Clark St.
2. Cookie Lyon is released from prison, striding through the gate in a glamorous white fur coat. The scene was shot at the Cook County Department Of Corrections at 2950 S. California Ave.





Fox's hit show *Empire* films many of its scenes in Chicago.



CeCe Destefano '94
Production Designer



David Leonard '97
Assistant Location Manager

There are challenges when disguising Chicago as New York City for a television series—though nothing too daunting for **CeCe Destefano '94**, the production designer who won an Emmy for her work on the pilot episode of *Alias* in 2001. As production designer, Destefano led the entire visual department in designing the first season of *Empire*, from costume to set design. While avoiding areas that showcase Chicago's unique architecture, Destefano and her crew found areas that captured the

density of New York and built appropriate sets.

For the first season of *Empire*, Destefano worked closely with show creators Lee Daniels and Danny Strong to build an overarching look for the series. She then worked with writers and producing directors on each episode to ensure that the end product matched the vision.

Destefano says they shot in brownstones on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive that already had the look and feel of New York's Harlem



3

S1, EP 6: OUT DAMNED SPOT

- 3. Cookie visits a friend in need at a seedy motel. The crew shot at the Cindy Lyn Motel at 5029 W. Ogden Ave. in Cicero, Illinois. ▶

“We’ve never seen these characters on television. They’re just raw and don’t feel like TV archetypes.”

—Ayanna Floyd



Terrence Howard plays Lucious Lyon, the mogul of Empire Entertainment.

“I had a great time designing the show. I felt like we pushed the envelope in helping create something different.”

—CeCe Destefano

neighborhood. They also set up a concert at the Double Door in Wicker Park and hopped across Damen Avenue to the Blue Line Lounge, where they installed break-away windows for a drive-by shooting scene.

“New York has so many looks,” Destefano says. “We looked for architecture that would work for the neighborhood they’re in.”

And sometimes the timing was just right. “For episode two, we shot a portion of Lucious’ flashback music video on West Quincy Street because it worked for us visually,” Destefano says. “But it was also a street we could close to traffic in downtown

after rush hour.”

To set up city shoots, Destefano relied on the talents of people like Assistant Location Manager **David Leonard** ’97, who served as the liaison between the film production crew and the surrounding community. He was tasked with communicating with all of the property owners and managing the filming logistics, including how they might affect daily routines such as parking. Part of the process involved distributing leaflets two days prior to shoots to warn residents of potential disruptions to daily routines.

“I dealt with everything from irate neigh-

bors who objected to shining bright lights on nighttime shoots to business owners upset over filming in front of their door,” says Leonard, who worked on the first two seasons of the show.

Leonard learned his way around City Hall, securing a plethora of permits required to park production vehicles and trailers, locating spaces for camera setups, and finding the police and fire officials needed for each location shoot.

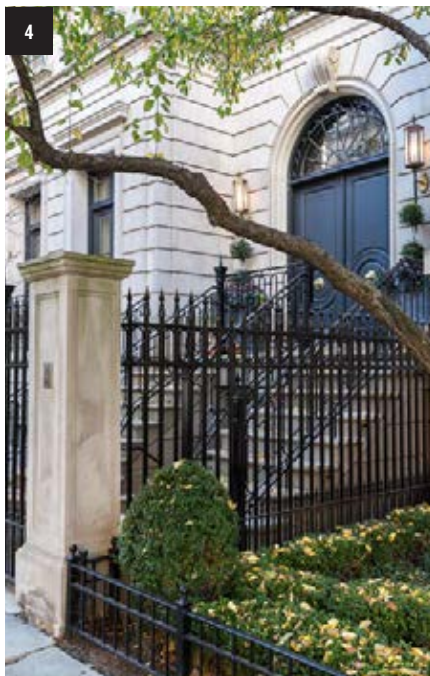
Even the smallest of hiccups can disrupt a day’s shoot. Caught unaware of a planned concert in Daley Plaza or surprised by jackhammering from nearby construction sites, a production crew could be sent into a tail-spin. On typical 16- to 18-hour days, Leonard’s approachable demeanor served him well in dealing with the public. He developed some of his personal negotiation skills as a student. “I was always networking and following up with people,” he says. “That’s certainly helped me a lot with what I’m doing now.”

Though she only worked on the first season of *Empire*, Destefano says she had a blast. “I had a great time designing the show,” she says. “I felt like we pushed the envelope in helping create something different because of the genre.” ▶

SETTING THE SCENE

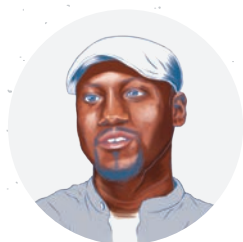
S1, EP 12: WHO AM I

- 4. The residence of the oldest Lyon son, Andre, was filmed at 1364 N. Dearborn St.
- 5. The building that houses the Lucious Lyon Sound tribute concert is filmed at 205 E. Randolph St. (and plastered with Lucious’ face for the occasion).





Terrence Howard, Taraji P. Henson and Taye Diggs stand as the three points of a love triangle on *Empire*.



James Carter '09
Musician

Empire opened the door for some crossover opportunities for **James “Jimmy” Carter '09**, a working musician who “played” bass in the music label’s band on the show. Because Carter was hired through the Musicians’ Union, he wasn’t allowed to speak in any scenes. “If I had a line, that would be a different contract and I’d have to be part

of the Actors’ Guild,” he says.

So how does a musician act? “Most of the time we’re pantomiming a performance, but it’s easy for us to look like we’re playing,” says Carter. “And we have played live on the set.”

One long day of pretending to play his bass may have even inspired his acting chops. In a scene on the show, Lucious works the band particularly hard. “We’re going to do it all night until we get it right,” he tells the gathered musicians.

The camera cuts to Carter’s natural look of anguish. His convincing performance led to a phone message from a friend who caught the episode: “Brother Jimmy, man you all over this show. It’s only been on five minutes and you have more facetime than Lucious.”

With the large crews, extras and stand-

ins, it seemingly takes a town to pull off the high-stakes production. In spite of the baggage that comes with city shoots, *Empire* has found a sweet home in Chicago. For the writers, producers and designers all working in tandem, the show’s success is linked to both this city and a well-oiled creative process. And for the Columbia alumni who’ve found their calling in television production, those lessons from their school days continuously come back into play. **D**



IMAGES COURTESY OF NBC.

Chicago Stories

Craig Gore '99, Tim Walsh '97 and Paul Alan Cope '11 bring the *Chicago* franchise to life.

Empire isn't the only show with a Chicago base. **Craig Gore** '99 and **Tim Walsh** '97 have been writing partners for about 13 years, and now they share co-executive producer titles on *Chicago P.D.* The pair—who attended Columbia College Chicago at the same time but didn't meet until later in Los Angeles—cut their collaborative teeth writing and selling television pilots. They are one of the original *Chicago P.D.* writing teams, having written since its debut on NBC in 2014.

Produced by Dick Wolf (creator and producer of the *Law & Order* franchise), the success of *Chicago Fire* was the greenlight for *Chicago P.D.* The Chicago franchise was further expanded with *Chicago Med* and *Chicago Justice*. The city itself provides a focus for the close-to-the-bone procedural tales.

The Windy City backdrop inspires the writers. "I finally bought my own Kevlar," says Gore, who's gone on many ride-alongs with Chicago cops to soak up the reality of their jobs.

Walsh is constantly revisiting the shadowy city of childhood. "I was born in Oak Park and raised in Palatine," he says. "So the city was my backyard growing up. It's an incredibly diverse landscape, which gives us an opportunity to explore characters and stories from vastly different backgrounds, socially and ethnically."

From scripts focused on neighborhood gang violence to stories of high-end burglaries on the city's North Side, Gore and Walsh have developed a draft, redraft and refine process that allows them to keep pace with a

series that typically preps for eight days and shoots for eight days. Occasionally, they'll pull an all-nighter to deliver a script under the looming deadline of a scheduled shoot.

While one leaves Los Angeles for Chicago shoots, the other reviews scripts from other writers and builds on writing developments. As for the show's success, Gore says, "It seems to feed the need for a more grounded, straightforward cop show."

Paul Alan Cope '11 left Chicago for Columbia's Semester in LA and now sits down the hall from Gore and Walsh. A script runner in his second season on *Chicago Fire*, Cope helps with everything from proofreading to continuity issues to securing the clearances required by a slew of network legal departments.

At 27 years old, Cope is content with his Los Angeles trajectory to date, which led him from behind-the-scenes work on reality television to his current gig with a scripted show. "My ultimate goal is to be a filmmaker," he says. "Screenwriting looked a little more obtainable, so it made sense to try and get into that room."

As part-time faculty in the Semester in LA program, Gore helps others get into similar rooms. With an April to June break from *Chicago P.D.*, he teaches a class where students complete an original television pilot script. In addition to writing and revising scripts based on feedback, students also hear their scripts read by actors in a table read, and Gore brings in agents, managers, producers and executives as guest speakers.

FEATURE



LIVE
WIRE
ACT

FROM WORKING FESTIVAL CIRCUITS TO TOURING WITH POP STARS, THESE SIX ALUMNI BRING LIVE MUSIC EXPERIENCES TO LIFE.

By Audrey Michelle Mast '00

While record labels experience declining sales in the age of streaming media, live concert revenue is booming. Music festivals and other live events are, in many ways, the nexus of culture. They might be ephemeral, but they're visceral and authentic—and most importantly, shareable on social media.

Behind the scenes, Columbia College Chicago alumni are bringing those experiences to life. We talked with **Jenny Beaulieu '15**, **Anjel Lopez '15**, **Chris Hemstreet '10**, **Eric Loff '08**, **Alex Bilancia '10** and **Aaron Sweatt '13** about what it's really like backstage. Whether they're working the festival circuit or for a local venue, touring with pop stars or creating one-of-a-kind experiences for big brands, these six alums are pumping up the volume.



DEMO: How has the music industry changed in recent years?

Hemstreet, event production: Brands are changing how they're trying to engage with consumers. They [once] were fine with putting out print ads and commercials that just get blanketed towards whoever's watching. Now, they'll spend the same amount of money, but they target the consumers they're actually reaching out for by booking talent that represents those customers' interests. By putting on unique events that you can build a video around, you can build the brand.

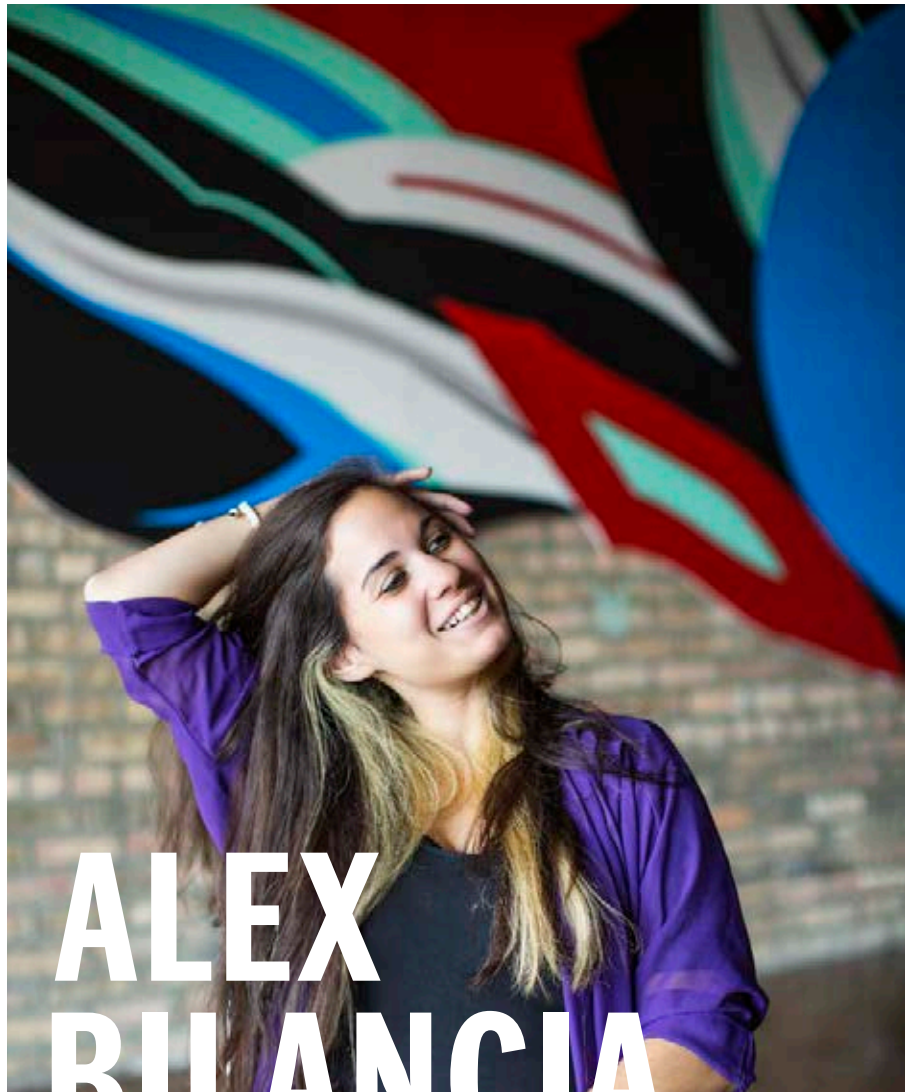
Beaulieu, festival development: When I first came to Columbia I thought I wanted to do A&R [Artist & Repertoire]—finding the music for record labels. But honestly, festivals are booming and record labels aren't doing so hot right now. I couldn't imagine myself trying so hard to find something I was passionate about and then try to lobby it to other people. That didn't seem like something I wanted to do. Now, I see people taking live events to a new level. VIP experiences are greater than they've ever been. Also, there is always a new company that wants to access audiences and needs to break through on something other than TV or radio. They're looking for experiences that are meaningful.

DEMO: What might surprise people about working in this field?

Bilancia, transportation coordinator: The intensity of the work and the level of professionalism that is expected. It can be fun, but it's not just a constant party—we're there to get a job done.

Beaulieu: How small of a group it actually takes to make these things possible. The core Riot Fest office is probably no more than 10 people. Also that we always love music, still. Nobody really tires of it.

Loff, lighting: How much we all depend on each other as a team. We trust each other. We watch each other's backs. Audio guys need me to provide lights and I need audio, for obvious reasons, to be able to do my job well. Security has our backs and we need to back them up as well. We're all dependent upon each other. We need marketers and promoters to do their jobs well so people come to shows, we need management to tell us what we need to know. It's one gigantic team effort that's pretty much make



ALEX BILANCIA

Alex Bilancia '10 is a freelance production coordinator whose clients include React Presents as well as Riot Fest and Young Chicago Authors' Louder than a Bomb Fest. In her role as a transportation coordinator, she might manage 10 drivers and more than 80 runs a day from airport to hotel to venue for dozens of artists and crew. As a hospitality coordinator, she ensures that green rooms are stocked and riders satisfied for scores of bands during a festival's three-day run.

A Day in the Life

"Each day of each show or festival is different. I'm responsible for coordinating all artist transportation surrounding

a festival—getting them from the airport to the hotel, to the site [and back]. But there can be a lot of other factors involved: transportation for an artist's crew, for their sound or lighting checks, if they're on different flights or at multiple hotels for larger groups, if there's an aftershow. Each moment in between is about managing these elements and all the inevitable changes as they happen. If you're working with multiple artists and a set number of runners, something as simple as a 30-minute flight delay could potentially set off a chain reaction and affect your entire day's schedule. It's all about staying organized, proactive and effectively reactive for whatever comes up."

JENNY BEAULIEU



Jenny Beaulieu '15 works in business development for Metronome, a Chicago-based marketing, sales and event production company. Recent projects include community outreach for Ruido Fest as well as coordinating food vendors for Riot Fest in both Denver and Chicago. She previously staffed the box office at Concord Music Hall, interned for the Windish Agency and Live Nation and even worked the door at a nightclub in her hometown of Boston before she was old enough to drink. “You can’t be in the door if you’re under 21, but you can work it,” she says.

A Day in the Life

“When I was working on [Pilsen’s Latin alt-rock] Ruido Fest, I was looking for community organizations to get involved working out a partnership, welcoming them to the fest, putting them on site with us. A month ago, I was bookkeeping and now I’m the food vending coordinator for Riot Fest. I make sure [the vendors] are all licensed and that they all know where they’re going and at what time. I get them permits to use city water. We also get involved with our neighbors. We don’t want to come in to a place and leave it worse than when we found it. We make sure everybody feels welcomed.”

“Everyone can find a point in life when music has been this uplifting experience.”

or break every day. The show has to go on, and it will. How well it goes really depends on everyone being able to communicate, on every level.

DEMO: What do you love about your job?

Beaulieu: I love getting community organizations involved. It’s one of my true passions. [Music] is so universal. Everyone can find a point in life when music has been this uplifting experience. It’s otherworldly. To have the opportunity to be a part of that, I’m honestly grateful.

Bilancia: How things are constantly changing. I’m regularly faced with new challenges and meeting new people, so I always feel like I’m learning something new. Managing transportation for a festival or big show is like working on a giant puzzle. I also love the environment—being able to work in a place where I can be myself, surrounded

Eric Loff '08 is the lighting director at Concord Music Hall, where he creates lighting schemes customized for individual bands and tailored to the energy of audiences. "I've always been fascinated with light," says Loff, an animation major who originally planned to pursue CGI lighting and compositing. "I still get to use the principles that I learned at Columbia—about light, color, composition and lighting people. Instead of being filmed, it's being seen live. You're not drawing and creating characters, but you have your scene, which is the stage."

A Day in the Life

"I'm in charge of our lighting equipment, making sure it's operating, fixing things, cleaning things. If we have a show at Concord, and that tends to be about two to three days a week on average. Then it's programming the lights for shows, running the shows. We average 10-12 hours in a day."

ERIC LOFF



“It’s one gigantic team effort that’s pretty much make or break every day. The show has to go on, and it will.”

by music and creative people who love what they do is inspiring.

Loff: The nights when I run lights to the music, to the crowd—I really live for those nights. I enjoy the camaraderie, the teamwork, the unpredictability. I love the physicality of it, too. I’m pushing and moving large items so it’s a good workout. Also: free music!

Lopez, VIP coordinator: I love that every job that I work is different—I’m on new event sites or new cities every day. Because I’ve seen things run in a lot of different ways, I’m a better employee. I can pick and pull the best elements and put them into my job.

DEMO: What are your biggest challenges?

Bilancia: When you’re dealing with multiple time-sensitive problems at once, things are thrown at you from all directions and there’s a lot of pressure to make it work, often when you’re mentally [and] physically exhausted. But I love what I do and it’s always worth it to figure out a solution.

Lopez: The crazy long hours. Often I’m



CHRIS HEMSTREET

working 18 hours a day. Then I come home, sleep for like, five, and get up and go back. But the pros definitely outweigh the cons for me. That’s why it’s easy to keep doing it. **Sweatt, artist relations:** I’ve played in bands for the past 15 years, so I understand what artists are looking for in most situations. This helps when it comes to understanding their headspace, but sometimes it can be a little challenging if we’re working with a diva. At the end of the day, we’re dealing with hospitality and it’s important to know your role and why you’re getting a paycheck.

Hemstreet: In this industry you really have to hustle. With events, everything’s last minute. There’s always something that’s lingering over your head. Working under that kind of pressure is fine, and I’ve realized I’m good at it. It’s not my favorite thing to be constantly pulling your hair out, wondering if everything’s going to line up. You find out pretty quick that it always does—if you have the right work ethic. You build up positivity and confidence and go from there.

Chris Hemstreet ’10 is a freelance production manager currently working for marketing consultancy firm NCompass International. His career highlights include producing the North Coast Music Festival and Red Bull Sound Select in Chicago. He also has helped create several promotional events for Bud Light, including a “takeover” of Catalina Island called “Whatever USA” and a fan experience at last year’s Super Bowl.

A Day in the Life

“My day-to-day is a lot of meetings and site visits. I work in production so a lot of it is tech-heavy logistics. There are a lot of booking conversations, a lot of budget conversations. You’re dealing with constrained timetables and small footprints, for the most part. You have a lot of moving parts, and you need to be pretty detailed.”

PHOTO BY ANTHONY CHIAPETTA '95

Anjel Lopez '15 is an event, festival and tour freelancer who recently toured as a VIP representative for both Pitbull and Meghan Trainor. She has also worked in the box office at Concord Music Hall, as a logistics assistant for React Presents and in a variety of roles for Riot Fest. "I would like to tour manage eventually," she says. "I'm learning the skills in terms of doing all these different gigs but I'm just kind of going with the flow. As a freelancer I'm kind of always on the hunt for the next thing."

A Day in the Life

"It changes depending on what I'm working on. Typically, I would say it's a lot of waking up super early, getting coffee, answering a ton of emails. As the VIP road representative for Pitbull, I'm dealing with venue folks every day, advancing security, making sure I have the proper space for the event that I'm throwing, making sure that my guests are having a good time. Lots of running around the venue or festival site, and then doing the same thing all over again the next day."

ANJEL LOPEZ



"I've always wanted to work in the music industry in some capacity, and college gave me the tools to make it a reality."

DEMO: What's the weirdest thing that's ever happened during one of your events?

Hemstreet: I was stage-managing a festival, and I got a call from the headliners maybe four or five hours before they were supposed to go on. They said they flew to the wrong city. I didn't even know that was possible but apparently it was, and they weren't going to be able to play. We ended up making it work but we had to shuffle stuff around all in about an hour. It was such a weird thing to have happen and always sticks with me, especially when somebody asks me in a [job] interview, 'What was a time when something challenging has happened and how did you deal with it?'

Lopez: Music festivals definitely have the crazier moments. Lots of fence jumpers. I feel like music festivals are a rite of passage for young people today. It's like their first big concert experience, so they want to do everything, try everything.

Sweatt: One of the best lessons I've learned is not to drive a golf cart too fast when you have an artist who "heavily partied" right before getting on!

DEMO: How did Columbia prepare you for your career?

Loff: As an animation student, I learned the value of planning ahead, working ahead, working things out on paper, working together as a team to create a product, at a certain time on a budget. That's a huge part of animation. But instead of dealing with a one- or two-year deadline, we have eight to nine hours. It's just greatly condensed, but the principle is the same.

Lopez: I owe Columbia everything, in terms of my career. I've always wanted to work in the music industry in some capacity, and college gave me the tools to make it a reality. It's very helpful that Columbia has professors working in the industry. They have relevant connections that are very helpful to students, in terms of internships and jobs. I was on the Student Programming Board. It helped me meet new people who saw my passion, and saw where I wanted to go. It gave me the basic tools I needed to do this for a living.

Hemstreet: We went down to South By Southwest [with AEMMP Records, Columbia's student-run record label]. I was completely wide-eyed. It was quite the experience overall. We won an award, too: the best student-run record label for that year (2010). My overall experience with Columbia was great. You'd be surprised—no matter where you are in this industry, you always find somebody who went to Columbia.

Bilancia: I'm a firm believer that you get out of Columbia what you put into it. You can take the classes, get your degree, go home and be done. Or you can ask for more, get involved, delve deeper into the community and see all the places it takes you. There are endless opportunities through Columbia, but you have to want them. The hands-on experience gave me the confidence to join the school's Student Programming Board, which opened up a whole new network of people and opportunities. From there I had the experience and recommendations I needed to get an internship with a major event production company in Chicago, and my career has snowballed from there. ▣



AARON SWEATT

Aaron Sweatt '13 is a production assistant for Optimist Inc., working on sponsored events like Nike's #Get-OutHere, as well as an artist liaison and runner for festivals like Riot Fest and Spring Awakening. He is also a talent buyer for House Call Entertainment, booking acts for Logan Square Auditorium, Township and local street festivals. In July he managed a month-long tour for Afrobeat-jazz ensemble Antibalas. "My first jobs in the industry led to where I am now," he says. "Every job builds upon itself to become something greater than [I did] the last year."

A Day in the Life

"I mainly work in Artist Relations. A lot of times it's as an artist liaison—which is essentially making sure the artist makes it to the correct stage and meets the stage manager, backline guy or gal [and so on]. It's also our job to make sure their green room is set up and they have what they need to make for a successful performance."



Jennifer Farrington stepped up as president of Chicago Children's Museum in 2008.

Jennifer Farrington

PRESIDENT OF PLAY

As president of Chicago Children’s Museum, Jennifer Farrington ’93 encourages young visitors to explore, invent, learn and play.

THE SHELVES IN the Tinkering Lab at Chicago Children’s Museum are crowded with young innovators’ past projects—built from wood, cardboard, paper towel rolls, basically any material imaginable. Museum President and CEO Jennifer Farrington ’93 looks through the creations fondly, pausing on a hand-written tip from a 9-year-old visitor: “If you don’t know what to build, start building and see where it takes you.”

“That’s beautiful,” Farrington says as she snaps a picture on her phone. Set against the chaotic shelves of the Tinkering Lab, she looks completely at home.

Since coming to the museum as an intern in the 1980s, Farrington has witnessed the institution’s massive growth firsthand. The Chicago Children’s Museum was founded in 1982 as a single room in the Chicago Cultural Center. Today it occupies a three-floor space in Navy Pier and hosts more than 400,000 visitors per year, making it one of the largest museums of its kind in the United States.

Farrington recalls feeling a bit aimless in her early college career. When she began interning at the museum as a Columbia student, using what she’d learned in television production classes to develop a mock studio, something clicked into place. “I liked that [the job] used all parts of my brain,” she says. “It appealed to my sense of wanting total creativity and total order at the same time.”

Over the years, she continued to work at the museum, including promotions to vice



Chicago Children’s Museum’s Tinkering Lab is one of many places where children can learn through play.

president of education and chief operating officer.

In 2008, she stepped up as president and chief executive officer. Today, she presides over the day-to-day operations of the museum and the “collective of creative people” who come together to create exhibits and programs, and serves as president of the board of the Association of Children’s Museums.

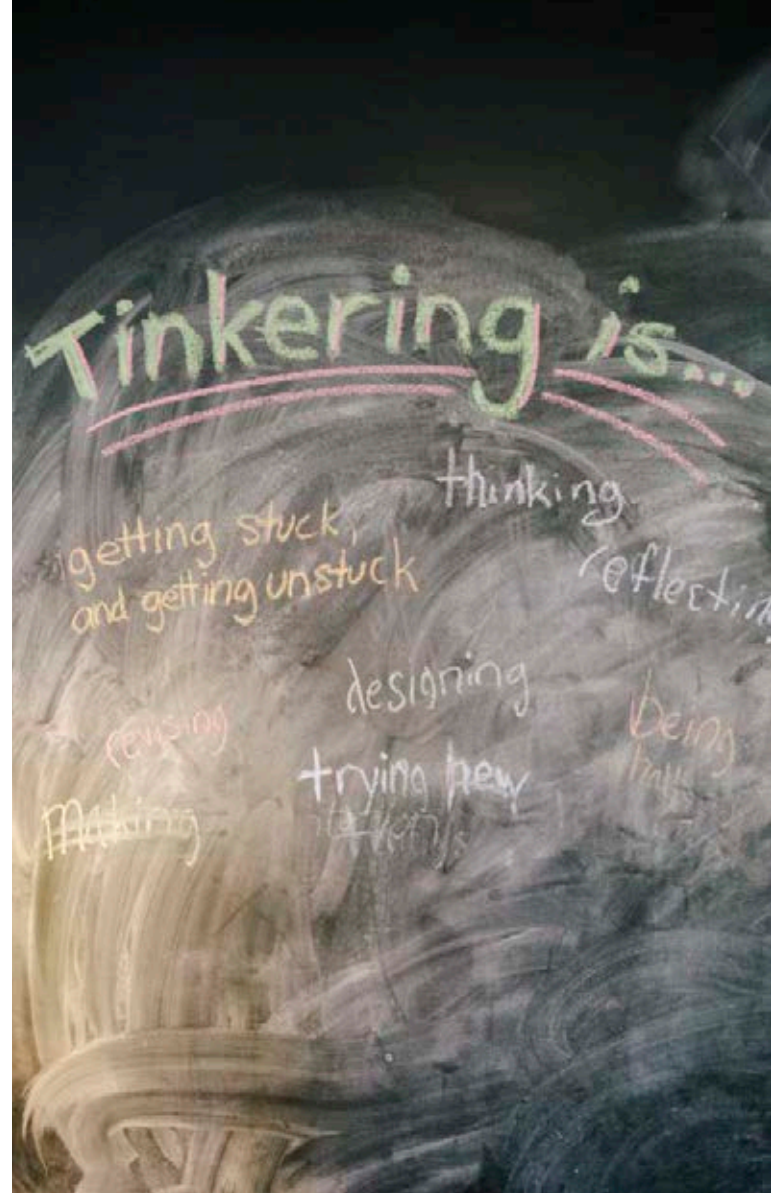
“I’m really lucky that I got into the exact right place and the exact right job for me,” she says.

The museum is the only cultural institution in the city devoted exclusively to

young children and their families. That’s part of what Farrington appreciates about her work: Museums, she says, are not only important hubs for arts and culture, but also places of social justice.

“It’s where people come together,” she says, “and where children can learn that these places are their right—to be a participant in the cultural life of their city.”

Farrington still draws on her Columbia experience at the museum today. “It’s very much the Columbia way: a diverse group of learners and artists and people all coming together and making something,” she says. “I think Columbia is so ahead of



Above: The three floors of Chicago Children’s Museum blur the lines between art, play and learning.
Right: A chalkboard in the Tinkering Lab collects ideas of what “tinkering” can be.



their time in terms of learning by doing and DIY culture and integration of business and creative output.”

“Access is a really important part of what we do here,” Farrington adds. “We want to make sure this is a diverse and vibrant place where all sorts of families can see themselves in the space.”

The museum’s main goal is to create a place where kids can focus on what Farrington calls “the universal pursuits of childhood”—activities that appeal to all kids such as creating, collecting and playing. A kid can build a skyscraper, make a documentary and use power tools, all in the same day. Conceived and developed in-

“We want to make sure this is a diverse and vibrant place.”

house, the exhibits encourage children to learn through play and to engage with the three-dimensional world firsthand.

“I think it’s powerful for children to have their own spaces that are beautiful and special and different,” Farrington says. “This is a place that welcomes you here. This is a place you belong.” —Eric Lutz

Genndy Tartakovsky

CARTOON CREATOR

Celebrating two decades of Genndy Tartakovsky's famous creation, *Dexter's Laboratory*.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY to a certain surly boy genius, his hyperactive ballerina sister and the secret lab in their parents' basement. Originally created as a seven minute short for Cartoon Network's *What A Cartoon!* series by former Columbia College Chicago student Genndy Tartakovsky, *Dexter's Laboratory* became one of the most-loved cartoons of the '90s. Tartakovsky went on to create *Samurai Jack* and *Star Wars: Clone Wars*. Today, he's at Sony Pictures Animation directing the *Hotel Transylvania* franchise.

We gathered our favorite Dexter facts for the occasion. The original voice of Dexter, Christine Cavanaugh, also voiced Babe the pig, Oblina in *Aaahh!!! Real Monsters* and Chuckie Finster in *Rugrats*. *Dexter* launched the careers of Craig McCracken (*Powerpuff Girls*, *Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends*) and Seth McFarlane (*Family Guy*, *American Dad*). Dexter's favorite restaurant, Burrito Palace, was inspired by Tartakovsky's favorite Chicago taqueria. So we're raising our Erlenmeyer flasks: Here's to two decades of inventions, adventures and "omelettes du fromage." —Megan Kirby

RECEIVED
3 ANNIE AWARDS

4 SEASONS
78 EPISODES

HIGHEST RATED
ORIGINAL SERIES IN
1996 AND 1997

FINAL AIR DATE
NOVEMBER 20, 2003

PREMIERED
APRIL 28, 1996



Schlieder smiles through the reflected light of NASA's James Webb Space Telescope's newly installed secondary mirrors.

Sarah Schlieder

LIFE ON MARS

Sarah Schlieder '16 discovered a cave on Mars as part of a Columbia astrobiology class. Now, she works full time at NASA.

IN 2014, SARAH SCHLIEDER '16 made an amazing discovery in a Columbia College Chicago astrobiology class: She found a cave on Mars.

Schlieder and her classmates used a program called JMARS, a digital mapping interface that allowed them to explore the Red Planet from the safety of a computer screen.

“Caves on Mars would appear as round or semi-round black circles. If there was any light reflecting, it would probably have been a crater,” says Schlieder. “When we realized we had potentially found a cave on Mars, the class was ecstatic.”

“The size of the cave she found compared to the surface of Mars is like a needle in a haystack,” says James Sweitzer, the part-time Science and Mathematics faculty member leading the class. “Sarah put in a lot of extra care and extra thinking.”

Because caves offer potential spaces for astronauts to live and work while avoiding the planet’s dust storms and radiation from the sun, Sweitzer scheduled a teleconference with NASA scientist Philip Christensen, who oversees NASA’s Mars missions.

The data got NASA’s attention; Schlieder and her classmates presented their findings to scientists at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California. When Schlieder introduced herself, her Science Journalism major stuck out. “[After the presentation,] they said there were some great opportunities at NASA for me,” she says.

When Schlieder began looking at col-



Schlieder poses in front of a 1960 Delta rocket outside of the Goddard Space Flight Center, where she works full time for NASA.

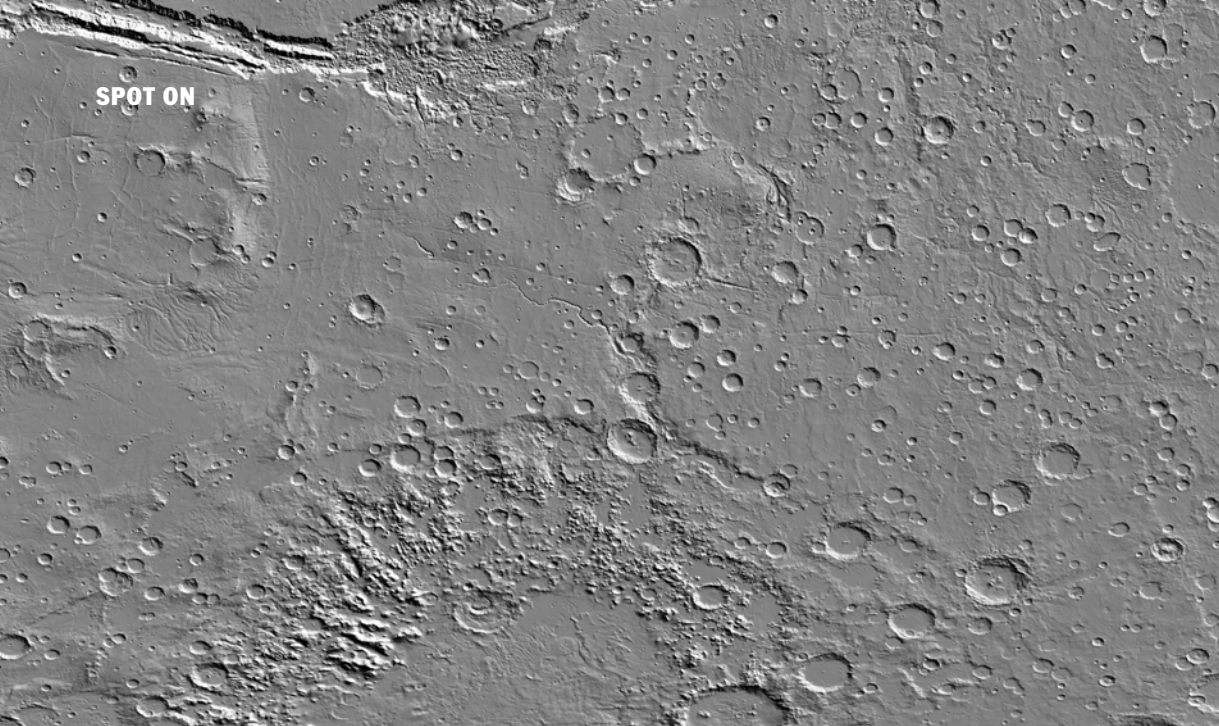
leges, she was drawn to Columbia’s Science Journalism major—the only undergraduate program of its kind in the country at the time. She grew up in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, reading magazines like *National Geographic* and *Scientific American* and watching the news with her parents every night. The opportunity to combine her passions for science and writing was impossible to ignore; Columbia was the only school she applied to.

Following the cave discovery, Sweitzer encouraged Schlieder to apply to NASA’s internship program. She accepted an internship position at the Johnson Space Center in

Houston, Texas, in 2014 where she oversaw digital and print communications for the Orion Spacecraft. When that opportunity ended, she was invited to take a position at NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center in Goddard, Maryland, while she was still a student. She stepped up full time at NASA while wrapping up her final year of classes online.

“I was balancing finishing my degree while also working a full-time job, and making sure that I’m putting 100 percent into both,” she says.

At the Goddard Space Flight Center today, Schlieder works on the Planetary Com-



Schlieder and her Astrobiology class used the program JMARS to scan the surface of Mars through images like this.

“We’re sending astronauts into space. We’re building rockets and launching satellites. We’re studying both the world beneath our feet and worlds lightyears away.”

munications Team, writing stories about planets in our own solar system. She facilitates communication support for the OSIRIS-REx asteroid mission, writing feature stories and press releases to keep the public up to date on the spacecraft’s journey to the asteroid Bennu. In 2016, she stepped up as managing editor of *NASA Next*, where she translates scientific research into stories for children and teens.

One of Schlieder’s favorite parts of

working at NASA? When it comes to space, the potential discoveries are endless. The first issue of *NASA Next* launched in May 2016, with Schlieder at the helm. “You may not know it, but NASA is doing some pretty awesome things,” she wrote in her first letter from the editor. “We’re sending astronauts into space. We’re building rockets and launching satellites. We’re studying both the world beneath our feet and worlds lightyears away.” — *Evan Kleekamp MFA '16*



SPACED OUT

CALLING ALL SPACE NERDS: NASA is up to some out-of-this-world stuff. Here’s some extra info on projects Schlieder is involved in.

GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER is NASA’s first and longest-running space flight center. Goddard is dedicated to learning about Earth, the solar system and the universe through observations from unmanned spacecraft. The engineers and scientists at the center operate and develop exploratory instruments for missions, including the Hubble Space Telescope, which takes pictures of the universe in visible, infrared and ultra-violet light.

OSIRIS-REx is NASA’S seven-year asteroid study and sample return mission. The mission launched a spacecraft in September 2016 to travel to the asteroid Bennu and collect a sample of loose rocks and soil from its surface. Because asteroids are the leftover debris from the formation of the solar system, Bennu’s sample will help scientists further understand the history of the sun and planets.

ORION SPACECRAFT is being developed by NASA to carry a crew of four astronauts to unexplored areas in space. This manned mission will allow humans to explore asteroids and Mars, and also retrieve crew and supplies from the International Space Station. The Orion is currently in development, and NASA hopes to launch it by 2030.

Scot O'Hara & Dale Boyer

BY THE BOOKS

Scot O'Hara MFA '95 and Dale Boyer honored their late friend Judith Handschuh MFA '96 by publishing her novel.



Boyer (left) and O'Hara (right) combined their last names to create their small press OhBoy Books.

ONE OF SCOT O'HARA'S MFA '95 most vivid memories of his friend Judith Handschuh MFA '96 is a classic Chicago tale. On a frigid Chicago winter night, O'Hara and Handschuh made the trek from dinner to their creative writing class. The two of them were forced to duck in and out of buildings to escape the subzero temperatures and warm up before they could continue on their way. O'Hara and Handschuh met during Columbia's Master of Fine Arts Fiction Writing program and immediately developed a friendship based on their nontraditional status.

"We were the two old folks in the class, and so we kind of connected because of that," remembers O'Hara. After graduating,

they—along with O'Hara's husband, Dale Boyer—developed a Chicago writers' group with friends.

In 2014, Handschuh died unexpectedly after post-surgery complications. After hearing of her death, O'Hara and Boyer considered what they could do in her honor. O'Hara recalls asking, "What can we do to remember her, and for her daughters?" "We were tossing around all these different ideas and finally Scot just said, 'Well, why don't we just publish her book?'" Boyer says.

In May 2016, O'Hara and Boyer started their own small press, OhBoy Books, LLC (a combination of O'Hara and Boyer), under which they published Boyer's debut novel, *The Dandelion Cloud*. They contacted Hand-

schuh's daughters with their idea about publishing her book. "Her voice should be out there. We shouldn't lose it," says O'Hara. Her daughters were thrilled, and after a few minor revisions and proofreading, OhBoy Books published Handschuh's novel, *No Justice!*, in April 2016. A legal thriller, the novel is the culmination of Handschuh's Columbia thesis.

To promote the publication, O'Hara and Boyer held a book launch at Columbia with the Creative Writing Department. The event included a reading by her daughters.

O'Hara and Boyer extended their generosity to Columbia recently: They made a planned gift of their estate. The two will provide the college with The Scot T. O'Hara and Dale W. Boyer Rainbow Creative Expression Scholarship for a Columbia student whose work focuses on LGBTQ issues and themes, and also The OhBoy Creative Expression Award for a working artist in any discipline whose work focuses on LGBTQ issues and themes. O'Hara and Boyer have consistently donated to Columbia's Creative Writing and Dance departments, and their planned estate gifts are a way of ensuring that the charitable ideals they believe in will continue.

Both Boyer and Handschuh's novels are available for purchase online and O'Hara's debut novel, *Tarentella*, was released in November by OhBoy Books, LLC.

—Negesti Kaudo



Martin finds inspiration in late-night television and Chicago's hip-hop community.

Thelonious Martin

LATE-NIGHT BEATS

Hip-hop producer Thelonious Martin finds his inspiration surfing late-night television channels.

AS A TEENAGER growing up in suburban New Jersey, producer Malcolm “King Thelonious” Martin watched a lot of late night television. In fact, a J. Dilla bump he heard on Adult Swim made him want to create music. “It was just this moment—I heard something super soulful, and I was overcome with this feeling of happiness,” Martin recalls. “I realized that I wanted to recreate that for other people. I wanted to be a part of that, not just be a listener.”

At 24 years old, the former Columbia student has collected an impressive roster of achievements. He’s collaborated with Chance the Rapper. He’s produced songs for Vic Mensa, A\$AP Rocky, Mac Miller and others. And in 2014, he released his first full-length album, *Wunderkid*, while still enrolled at Columbia College Chicago.

After his late-night run-in with J. Dilla, Martin’s approach to music shifted; he began to pursue it studiously. Martin begged his mother for a laptop and began spending “countless hours” making beats and watching YouTube tutorials to teach himself to construct his own tracks. “I feel like I put myself through my own version of music school,” he says.

Martin grew up surrounded by music. In addition to the gospel he heard in church and his parents’ well-rounded collection of blues, soul and jazz records, his mother turned him onto OutKast, N.E.R.D., Jada-kiss and N.O.R.E. In high school, a handful of teachers introduced him to production software that allowed him to experiment with manipulating sound.

Martin began considering college as an opportunity to refine his skills. “I knew the scene in Chicago, especially the people in my age group, were about to be on to something,” he says. “I wanted to be a part of it.” He moved to Chicago and enrolled at Columbia, where he learned how to be more open as an artist and to network with his peers.

“I heard something super soulful, and I was overcome with this feeling of happiness.”

Outside of his classes, Martin found exactly what he was looking for in the city’s rap and hip-hop community. He joined SAVEMONEY—a rap collective that counts Chance the Rapper and Vic Mensa among its members—and released *Wunderkid* when he was just 21 years old.

The 15 tracks on *Wunderkid* showcase a surprising range for a debut album. The tracks alternate between R&B, pop and rap interludes. “Corners of Your Mind” and “Tree of Life Reprise” are sensual, featuring smooth female vocals between punctuations of piano, guitar and synthesizer. Martin’s instinct for rhythm is strongest in “Purp Interlude” and “Malcolm Interlude,” featuring Joey Purp and Mac Miller, respectively.



In 2014, Martin released his first full-length album, *Wunderkid*, while enrolled at Columbia.

The same year *Wunderkid* was released, Martin’s career came full circle when his song “September” was featured on Adult Swim. Late-night television continues to inspire him. In October, Martin released a beat tape called *Late Night Programming*, which he says explores what it was like “being a kid raised by television.” He is also working on a full-length album that will further explore the concept, currently titled *As Seen on TV*. —Naomi Huffman '11

SPOT ON



Beeman runs Grainline Studio,
located in Chicago's Garfield Park.

Jen Beeman

WHAT'S THE STITCH?

Jen Beeman '09 dishes on her popular blog and pattern company, Grainline Studio.

JEN BEEMAN '09 began Grainline Studio as a side project from her work as a freelance patternmaker: a blog where she could explore the ups, downs, ins and outs of designing and sewing her own clothes. When she released her first sewing pattern in 2011, she realized her designs could fill a modern niche. Commercial pattern companies were releasing retro (and sometimes downright dowdy) patterns; the internet sewing community's obsession with Grainline showed DIYers were ready for patternmaking to evolve.

"There weren't a lot of sewing patterns out there for contemporary clothes that people actually wear," says Beeman. "It was really good timing."

In 2013, Beeman quit freelancing to focus on Grainline full time. Today, she has a staff of three. Based in Chicago, the studio sells 17 fashion-forward yet classic patterns ranging from button-up shirts to pajama sets, with more patterns being added all the time. (Think Madewell style you can sew yourself.) Plus, Beeman fills her blog with easy-to-follow sewing tutorials and beautifully curated fashion inspiration.

DEMO: What draws you to patternmaking?

Beeman: I like that you're taking a 2D shape and turning it into a 3D form. It's a part of the brain that a lot of people don't get to use, and it kind of came naturally to me. It's sort of like engineering for the body. You have to design something where you can move inside and be comfortable.

DEMO: What sorts of classes did you take while you studied fashion at Columbia?

Beeman: Columbia was a really good fit because it had a good technical program. I mean, everybody wants to be a famous designer, but in reality there are more jobs available in other places of the industry. Since there were a lot of technical and patternmaking classes available to me, I took them all, and that really prepared me to get a job afterwards.

DEMO: How do you go about creating a pattern?

Beeman: When I started, my designs were usually something that was missing in my wardrobe that I couldn't find a sewing pattern for. There were less sewing pattern designers at that point, so it was a lot easier. Usually, if I'm missing something in my closet, other people are, too.

Now, I try to think about what would go with our other patterns, what would be a nice pairing for something we already have. And then I just go from there: make a few samples, see what's working.

DEMO: From start to finish, how long does it take to make a pattern?

Beeman: It's hard to really quantify that because we have multiple patterns going at a time. We're never strictly just working on one pattern—I think we're working on four patterns at the moment, and they're all in different stages. But generally, we need about six months from start to finish.



Beeman creates patterns and runs her blog from her immaculately organized Grainline Studio in Chicago.

DEMO: What has surprised you the most about your journey with Grainline?

Beeman: Maybe just that it's a viable business at all? I knew I couldn't be the only person who sews for themselves, but it's really surprised me how many people do—and how much it's growing. Now, it always blows people's minds when I tell them what I do. They're like, "People sew?" Yeah, a lot of people actually. — Megan Kirby

ALUMNI SHORTS

Welcome to Alumni Shorts, a new addition to *DEMO*. Think of Shorts as a collection of snapshots: quick glances at alumni projects, victories, updates and even some expert advice.



Midway Games used Tsui's face to model several *Mortal Kombat* characters.



BOSS LEVEL

JOSH TSUI DOCUMENTS CHICAGO'S VIDEO GAME HISTORY

If you grew up gaming in the '90s, **Josh Tsui** '91 might look familiar. After graduating from Columbia College Chicago, Tsui began working at Chicago-based Midway Games, makers of legendary games like *NBA Jam*, *Mortal Kombat* and *Cruis'n USA*. But the iconic, now-defunct video game company didn't just use his designs—they used his face.

Tsui has a cameo in *NBA Jam*, but his real claim to fame comes from his roles in

Mortal Kombat. He appears as the characters Sub-Zero and Liu Kang in the classic fighting game, which he worked on as a designer.

In addition to Midway Games, Tsui worked at top Chicago studios like Electronic Arts (EA) and Studio Gigante (which he co-founded). Today, he is the co-founder and president of the video game developer Robomodo, maker of the *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater* games since 2009.

At Columbia, Tsui switched from studying film to computer graphics, and today, he's combining his passions to preserve Chicago's video game history. His upcoming documentary *Insert Coin: Inside Midway's '90s Revolution* will focus on the superstar



history of Midway Games.

"Midway was basically at the top of the food chain when it came to video games back then," says Tsui. "Even to this day, people in Chicago, they don't realize these games were made in their own town."



EMPOWERING THE PEOPLE

DARRYL HOLLIDAY'S CITY BUREAU SPOTLIGHTS POLICE MISCONDUCT

Journalism is a watchdog that can keep powerful institutions in check. That's also the goal of **Darryl Holliday** '12, who helped found City Bureau, a Chicago-based media lab. Working with the Invisible Institute's Citizens Police Data Project (CPDP), Holliday is amplifying conversations about police misconduct.

"We're in contact with people all over the world through social media, and we've gained some valuable insights on the CPDP through those conversations."

In January 2016, on the heels of the national video release of the 2014 police fatal shooting of Laquan McDonald, the CPDP earned a \$400,000 grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation for news innovation. The project's online toolkit offers interactive maps that show citywide complaints against police officers, putting knowledge within reach of citizens.

"It's much easier to spread the word on news reports," says Holliday, who credits Columbia professor Barb Iverson with showing him how to apply digital tools to solid reporting. "We're in contact with people all over the world through social media, and we've gained some valuable insights on the CPDP through those conversations."

SAY CHEESE

KATIE POTTS RECOMMENDS SOME EXPERT CHEESE PAIRINGS

From backstage theater productions to proprietor of Petoskey Cheese in Michigan, **Katie Potts** '15 says running a business isn't terribly different from putting on a show—skills she picked up studying Live and Performing Arts Management at Columbia. But today, the cheese must go on.

Potts developed an expert understanding of different cheese families, along with their taste comparisons and histories. A cheesemonger is a fun and quirky job, she says, with plenty of opportunities for education.

Two big misconceptions about cheese? It's fattening and not for the lactose intolerant. "Total myths," Potts says. "Cheese is extremely high in protein and probiotics, so it can help aid in digestion and help you lose weight. And aged cheese and sheep and goat's milk cheeses have little to no lactose in them."

If you're putting together a cheese plate for your next party, Potts suggests the following pairings...



Sheep milk cheeses alongside a rich red wine are "mild and creamy, but complex."

Alpine or Swiss cheeses to go with Pilsner beers. "They have a creamy, long-lasting finish that pairs great."



Cheddars for dark beers because "the saltiness marries well with the richness of a porter."



And for the kids sipping root beer?

"You can't go wrong with jack cheese. It's mild but has enough flavor for an introductory cheese."



TURN BACK TIME

These alumni bring us a blast from the past.

Three alumni have made every day **#ThrowbackThursday** with 2016's trendiest nostalgic productions. These alumni captured the hearts of obsessive '80s and '90s fans with three unforgettable experiences.



Saved by the Max



Friends: The One Where They Sing!



Heathers: The Musical



OLIVER AUSTIN BERGER '14

FRIENDS: THE ONE WHERE THEY SING! (An Unauthorized Musical Parody)

Oliver Austin Berger '14 produced and portrayed the role of Chandler in the sold-out, two-month Chicago run of *Friends: The One Where They Sing!* (An Unauthorized Musical Parody) written and directed by Eli Golden. A musical parody of the first season of the beloved sitcom *Friends*, the 90-minute show at the MCL Chicago included an original score, homages to classic Broadway hits, a BYOB drinking game and improvisation.

“People were scared to do a show like this. No one had ever done a *Friends* parody musical before.”

Favorite episode from the original:

Season 1, Episode 7: “The One with the Blackout”

“It shows Chandler at his core. It’s this uncomfortable guy who, even when he’s set up for success, somehow manages to mess it up; and to do so, he covers it with humor.”



ZACK EASTMAN '08

SAVED BY THE MAX

Club promoter **Zack Eastman '08** collaborated with two friends to bring the Bayside High spirit to life in Wicker Park. The team created the ultimate dining experience by replicating the afterschool hotspot in '90s TV show *Saved by the Bell*, The Max. The pop-up diner extended its operations through December after selling out three months of reservations in an afternoon. Fans indulged in a nostalgic menu of comfort foods including AC Sliders, Mac and Screech, and Lisa Turtle Milkshakes.

“For me, *Saved by the Bell* was one of the first sitcoms where I was watching what teenage life was all about.”

Favorite moments from the original:

“As a kid, I had a huge crush on Lisa and also Stacy Carosi... I also liked the Malibu Sands series of episodes they had, where they all worked on a resort.”



COURTNEY MACK '15

HEATHERS: THE MUSICAL

Courtney Mack '15 starred as Veronica Sawyer in the Chicago production of *Heathers: The Musical* based on the 1988 cult classic film. Veronica Sawyer—a brooding teen queen trying to balance being kind and being cool—was played by Winona Ryder in the film, and Mack credits her critically acclaimed performance to connecting with Veronica on a personal level. Mack and Kokandy Productions received a 2016 Non-Equity Joseph Jefferson Award for her performance.

“There were a lot of people who told me that this is the closest version of me that I would ever play on stage.”

Favorite line from the original:

“Well, f*** me gently with a chainsaw. Do I look like Mother Teresa?”
—Heather Chandler

Whether she's creating bright, drippy monsters or graphics for *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*, Heidi Unkefer '13 uses her art to escape the everyday.

Monster Mash





PHOTOS BY CAMILA CEDIEL '16, RUBEN CANTU



Left: In 2015, Unkefer won the Wabash Arts Corridor alumni competition, for which she created her largest mural to date: *Slime Mountain*. The mural is located on the south-facing wall of 623 S. Wabash Ave. on Columbia's campus.

Above: Today, Unkefer lives in New York City, where she works for *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*.

GROWING UP AS A “weird art student” in the Midwest town of Canton, Ohio, Heidi Unkefer '13 learned to use her artwork to escape the mundane.

“A lot of my illustration is this fantastical world of bright colors and creatures and drippy, gooey things, and I think that was my outlet to wanting bigger things,” she says. “Having that sort of [small town] restriction in life led me to create this alternate universe for myself.”

Since her time at Columbia College Chicago, Unkefer's alternate art universe has led to bigger and better things. She jump-started her illustration and graphic design career at Columbia, which led to an opportunity creating tongue-in-cheek graphics for parody publication *The Onion*. Today, Unkefer works as a graphic designer for HBO's satirical news show *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*, creating photo mashups that appear as over-the-shoulder graphics displayed behind the show's outspoken British host.

When she was looking for colleges, Unkefer was drawn to big cities. At the same time, she appreciated Chicago's Midwestern familiarity. Columbia attracted her with a wide range of artmaking options and inter-

disciplinary opportunities, which she knew would allow her to explore and evolve as an illustrator. In school, she dabbled in different mediums like printmaking and screen printing. She also discovered a passion for collaborating with writers through class assignments and the student newspaper, *The Columbia Chronicle*—skills that came in handy when she began interning at *The Onion* in 2013.

“I love the idea of taking [writers'] ideas and then warping them a little bit into my own vision that comes out on paper or canvas or wherever,” she says. “I think it's really amazing whenever two creatives who are from different worlds come together and they create this one thing.”

At Columbia, Unkefer also began developing different illustration styles. “At times I can be this really cartoonish, crazy illustrator just making this alternate reality of characters and things that don't really exist,” she says. “And then there are times when I think my aesthetic is a little bit more laid back.” She learned to use color and composition to convey a mood, using her art work to illuminate the meaning of a collaborative piece before the viewer has read a single word.

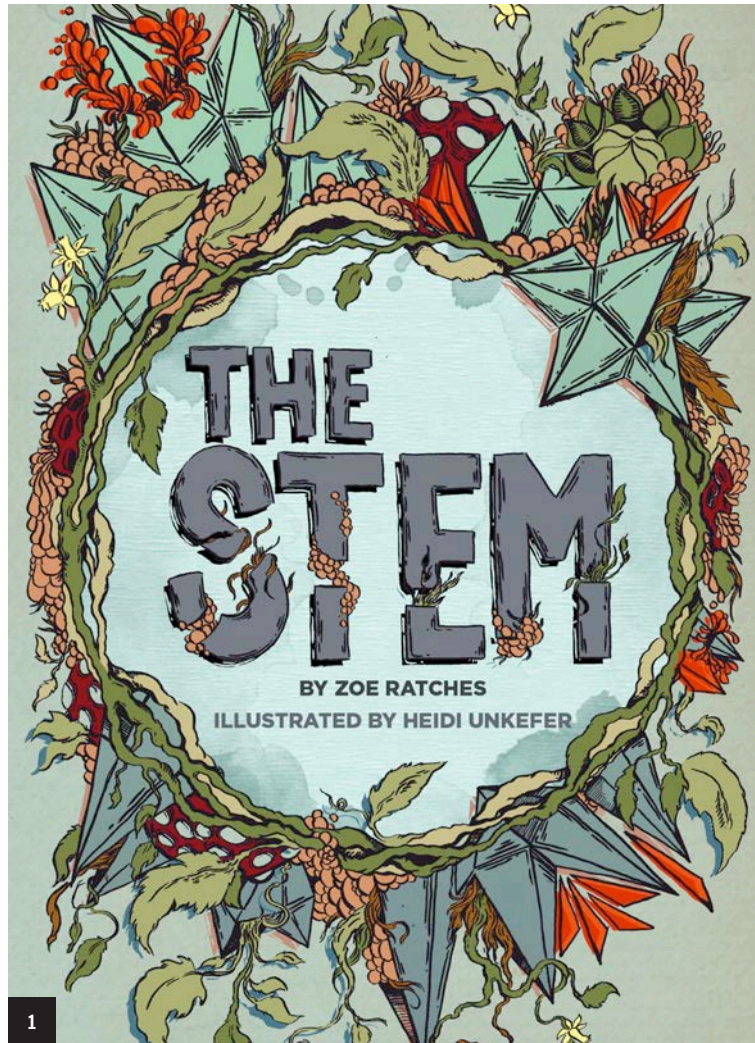
PORTFOLIO

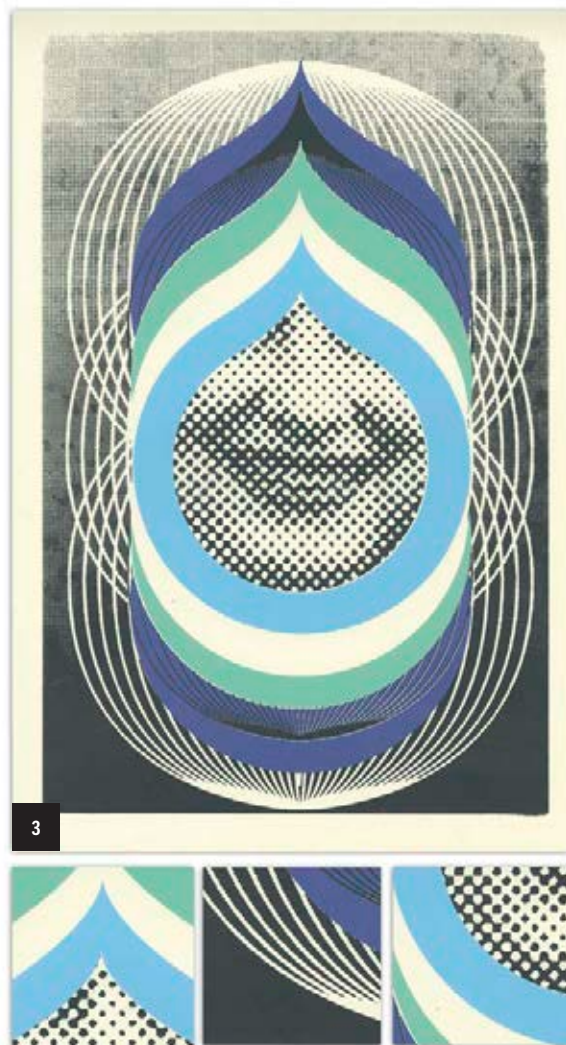
She began working as a graphics editor for *The Onion* and its sister site, ClickHole, in 2014. At the legendary parody website, she worked closely with a team of designers to create artwork to accompany articles. For instance, for the article “Obama Increases Sense of Urgency by Riding Last White Rhino on Earth Through Climate Talk,” she used photo manipulation to show the president solemnly riding a rhinoceros through a crowded auditorium.

In 2015, Unkefer won the Wabash Arts Corridor Alumni Competition and created her largest mural to date, *Slime Mountain*, located at 623 S. Wabash Ave. Her depiction of a smiling anthropomorphic mountain cheerfully spewing green goo was inspired by Chicago’s frigid winters. “Whenever it’s snowy or raining, people can look up and realize it’s still bright and beautiful in this world,” says Unkefer. “I wanted it to sort of take somebody into this alternate reality, especially when things get a little gray there.”

In 2016, Unkefer moved to New York City and began working as a graphic designer for *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*, where she creates on-air graphics using illustrations and photo manipulation. Fitting with the theme of satire, her graphics usually include notable political and societal figures in compromising, hilarious or critical situations. Unkefer admits that working with tight television deadlines has helped her focus as an artist. “I’ve been able to put my indecision aside to make these quick decisions to be more confident in what I’m doing,” she says. Recently, she also began freelance designing for nightly NBC talk show *Late Night with Seth Meyers*.

New Unkefer designs are showing up on campus in an unexpected place: In 2016, she designed a set of lapel pins for Columbia Admissions. The nine pins feature images like a typewriter, a dress form, a slice of deep-dish pizza and even an homage to Unkefer’s *Slime Mountain* WAC mural (quickly becoming a campus icon). Now, visiting students can take home a souvenir to remind them of the colorful spirit of Columbia, the city and the enterprising alumni artist who created them. You can see more of Unkefer’s illustrations and designs at heidunkefer.com. —Negesti Kaudu





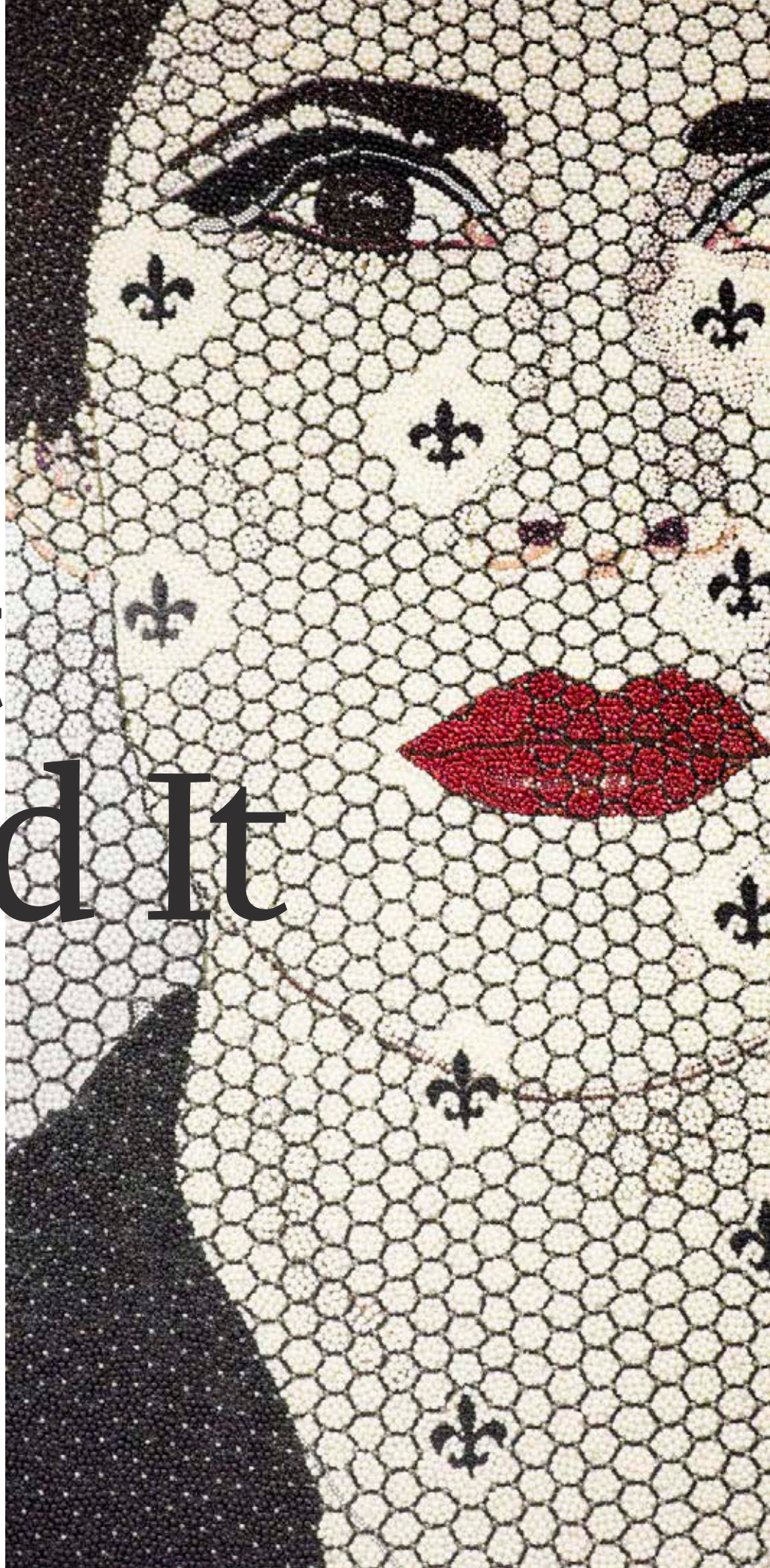
1. Unkefer has been commissioned several times by the literary publication *Flyleaf Journal* to illustrate cover designs for short stories. *Flyleaf Journal's* brochure-sized booklets contain a single short story and complementary illustration. "I've had writers tell me, 'Wow, you brought out parts of my story that I didn't see in there myself,'" says Unkefer. "I think it's fantastic and I really love whenever I can do that for them."
2. In 2016, Unkefer designed a set of lapel pins for Admissions. The nine pins reflect Unkefer's signature, cartoony style. "I can be a very crazy, bright, saturated cartoony, highly stylized, drippy, gooey-making artist," says Unkefer. The illustrations include art objects such as a typewriter,

saxophone and camera, as well as Chicago homages like a deep-dish pizza and a smiling Willis Tower.

3. Unkefer hand-printed this four-color screen print to explore the versatility of the halftone dot. The image in the center of the print is composed completely of halftone dots, so it appears distorted when viewed up close, but clear from afar.
4. Unkefer uses graphic design and photo manipulation to create a variety of over-the-shoulder graphics for the HBO series *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*.
5. As a student, Unkefer collaborated with Liz Grear '11, MFA '15 on this mock-up for *The Remedy*, a book Grear created as part of her Creative Writing classes.

Just Bead It

Stephan Wanger '94
recycles thousands of
Mardi Gras beads into
gigantic, detailed
mosaics—and teaches
others to do the same
through his nonprofit,
Bead Town.





Above: Wanger instructs a student in his signature beading method.

Left: *NOLA's Resilience*, 2010 (99 inches by 77 inches) was unveiled on August 25, 2010, to mark the fifth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. This detailed portrait of a woman's face—based on the August 2010 *LIFE* magazine cover—pays homage to the history and future of New Orleans.

STEPHAN WANGER '94 BELIEVES he works with the happiest medium, the New Orleans bon temps incarnate: Mardi Gras beads. “How can you hold Mardi Gras beads in your hands and not feel happy?” asks Wanger, who creates large-scale mosaics with recycled beads of every color. His inspiration comes from colorful, resilient New Orleans, but his story begins with the catastrophe of Hurricane Katrina.

When Wanger graduated from Columbia College Chicago with a degree in Marketing and Communications, he found a successful career in event marketing and web development. Then in 2005, Hurricane Katrina wrecked its way across the Gulf Coast, flooding most of New Orleans. As the city began to rebuild, Wanger was reminded of how his home country, Germany, was rebuilt after World War II with the help of the United States.

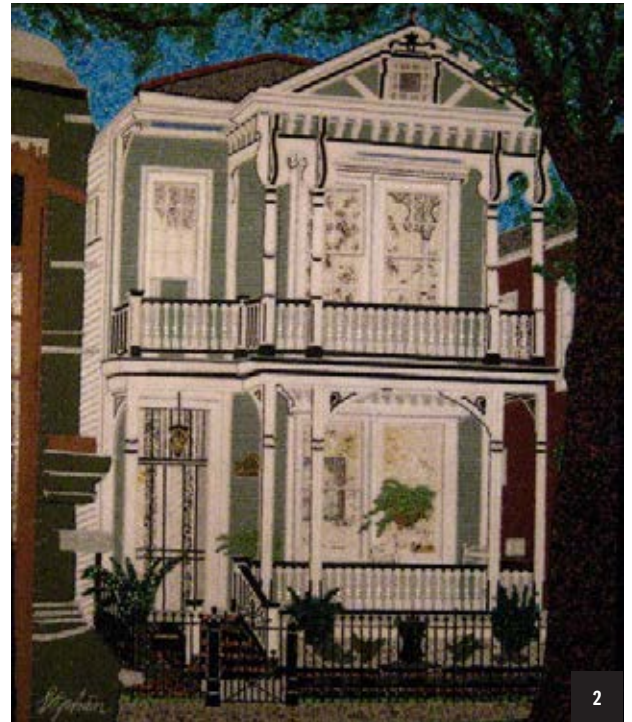
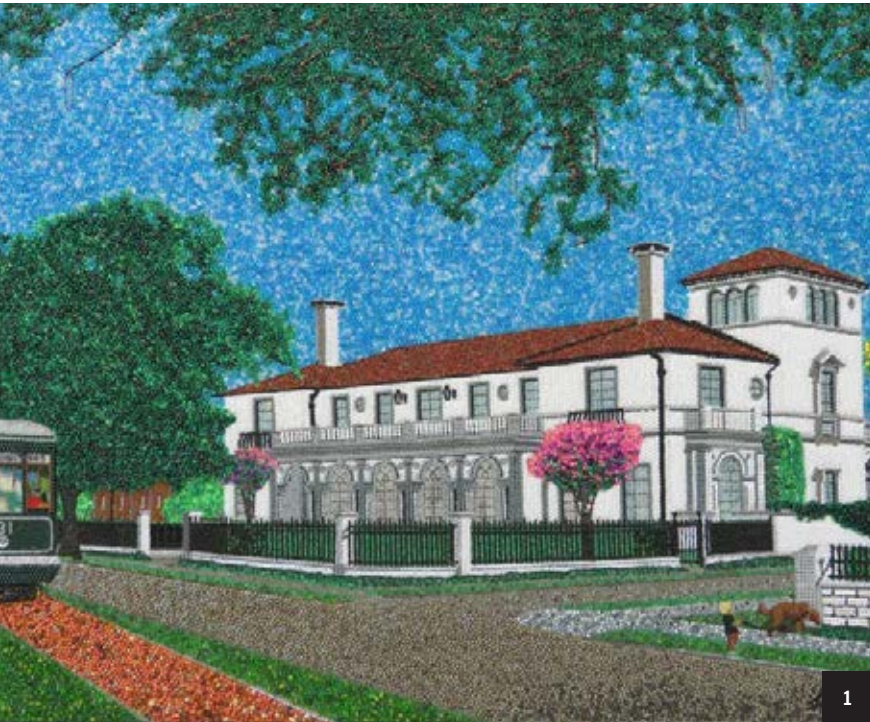
“The U.S. was so great to me. I wanted to give back, to help out. I said, ‘Give me a

hammer. I want to build,’” says Wanger. So he left his home and job in Chicago to move to New Orleans and assist in the rebuilding.

Eventually he worked his way up to assistant carpenter. The atmosphere of the city inspired him to create something of his own, leading him to transform eco-friendly, local and accessible media—such as screws, nails and bottle caps—into art.

One night, with a strand of beads in hand, Wanger realized they could be the medium he was looking for—full of local spirit and readily available. “They hang from the trees [in New Orleans] and become bleached to silvery gray,” he says about the ever-present strands of Mardi Gras beads, which accumulate in the 10,000 tons of Mardi Gras trash that ends up in landfills every year. That night, he found more beads and glued them to an old plastic planter.

With many more nights of practice, Wanger perfected his technique, upgrading from planters to sheets of plywood



“This is my passion. New Orleans has given me a great gift.”

from his carpentry. He developed a style of photorealistic shading and colorful abstract backgrounds to perfectly portray iconic Louisiana subjects. The city began commissioning and displaying Wanger’s New Orleans-themed artwork, which drew the attention of local schools that hoped the colorful, resourceful art might inspire students’ creativity.

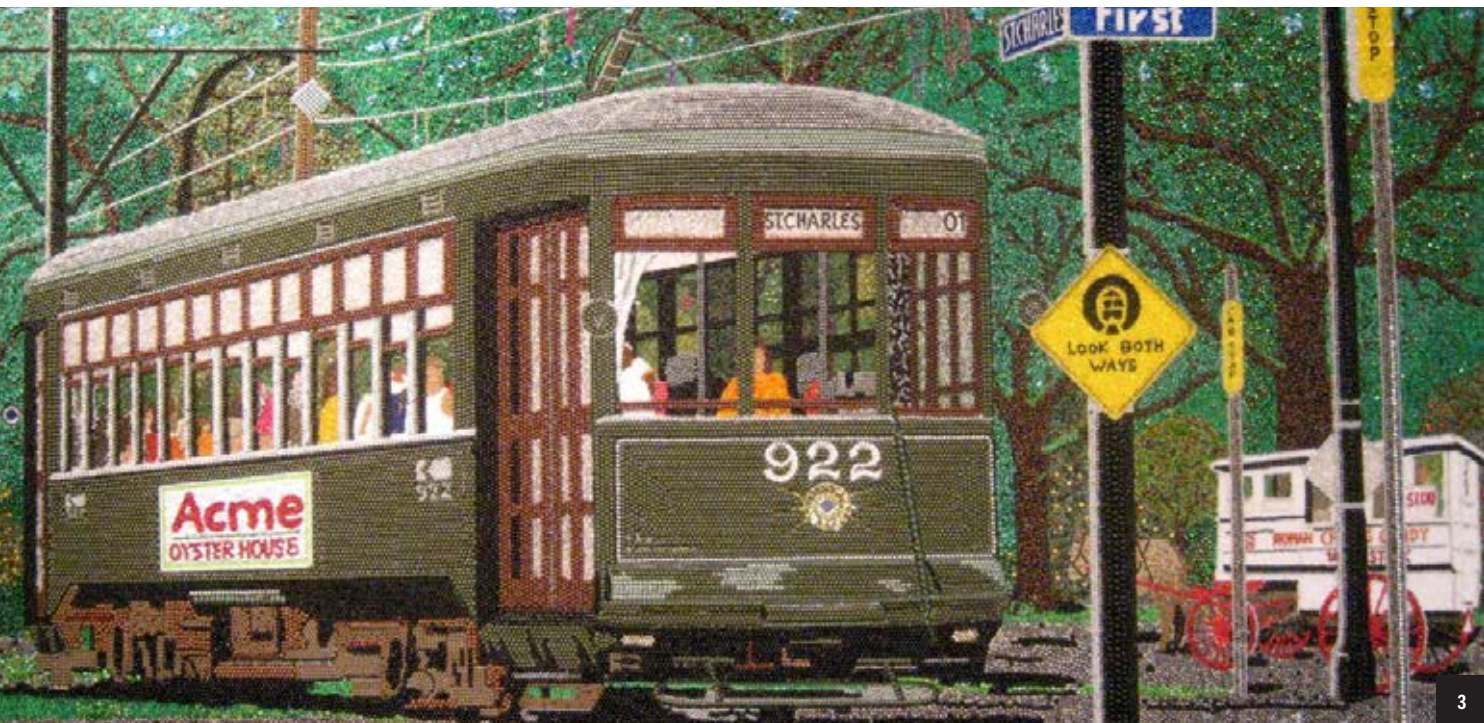
Wanger began volunteering to teach students mosaic-making, as well as the importance of recycling. He started his own nonprofit organization, Bead Town, in 2012. With Bead Town, Wanger has worked alongside students across North America, from New Orleans to Halifax, Nova Scotia,

Canada, to Gary, Indiana. His nonprofit instilled a sense of local pride in students and community members that burst forth in the beaded mosaic form.

In December 2013, hundreds of student and community volunteers from Louisiana completed work on *Une Rue Principale en Louisiane*, a 48 feet by 8 feet mosaic that secured a Guinness World Records title for World’s Largest Beaded Mosaic. Back in Chicago today, Wanger continues his artmaking pursuits in the name of sustainability and community. But he always remembers the city that gave him his start. “This is my passion,” Wanger says. “New Orleans has given me a great gift.”

—Audrey Michelle Mast '00





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1. *Dreaming on St. Charles Avenue*, 2015 (51 inches by 63 inches)—St. Charles Avenue exemplifies the beauty and history of 19th century New Orleans. In order to capture all the detail of this palatial mansion, Wanger used one-millimeter beads to compose the wrought iron fence and glass beads for the window.
2. *Home on St. Charles Avenue*, 2012 (63 inches by 51 inches)—If you look closely in the lower level main window of the house, you can see a miniature version of Wanger’s mosaic hanging on the wall.
3. *Streetcar*, 2012 (51 inches by 99 inches)—Wanger customized this commission to suit the purchasing couple’s interests.
4. *Swamps of Slidell*, 2013 (51 inches by 99 inches)—When beginning a mosaic, Wanger paints the board to guide his selection of bead color and quantity. He spray-paints the beads specific colors and glues each one on individually.
5. *Just Bead It*, 2015 (6 feet by 8 feet)—Wanger increased the size of the mosaic so that he could render each of the Jackson 5’s unique faces and personalities in clear detail.



Dear Alumni,

You have lots of options when choosing how to get involved with the Columbia alumni community. Just the other day, I was talking with an alum and he told me there were so many exciting, new opportunities that he wasn't sure which one to pick! Here are some quick questions you can ask yourself to help narrow the field.

Are you looking to build your professional or social network? If so, you'll definitely want to attend one of the many Chicagoland or regional events. From the Manifest Alumni Party to CAAN Connect, there are always fun new ways to build relationships.

Do you want a hands-on way to give back? Volunteer your time with current students at an Alumni Roundtable or dish ice cream at the Alumni Scoop. You'll enjoy connecting with students and they'll appreciate your words of wisdom.

Would you like to reunite with old friends? You can join a host committee for any upcoming alumni events and help recruit your former classmates to attend as well.

No matter how you choose to get involved, you'll definitely be glad you did!

Sincerely,

Miriam Smith

Executive Director of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving

P.S. You can follow us on social media to find out about upcoming alumni events and activities in your area. See you soon!

CAAN UPDATES

SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH ALUMNI ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND GET INVOLVED WITH THE COLUMBIA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AND NETWORK (CAAN)



We are excited to announce the 2017 Columbia Alumni Association and Network National Board! More than 100 alumni submitted applications to be considered for the board, which made for an exceptionally talented and competitive field of candidates.

National Board elections are held each summer. If you are interested in running for the board in the future, please be on the lookout for announcements in the Columbia Connection newsletter and on the alumni website in late spring.

2017 CAAN NATIONAL BOARD

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

MIDWEST

Marty Kane '06

Senior Admissions Officer at Columbia College Chicago

SOUTHWEST

Jennifer Oliver O'Connell '87, Secretary of CAAN National Board

Writer/Reinvention Coach/Yoga Instructor at As the Girl Turns

GREAT SOUTH

Brian Fisher '95

VP/COO at T-Werx Coworking

NORTHWEST

Howard Shapiro '53

Retired PR Professional

NORTHEAST

Michael Wojcik '96, President of CAAN National Board

Senior Director of Development at American Red Cross

SOUTHEAST

Vanessa Baez '11

Marketing Specialist at NBCUniversal—Telemundo

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Shani Black

Writer/Producer at CBS Television

Emory Brown '00

Creative Director at The Scientist Marketing

Dennis Carlson '97

President/CEO at Bespoke Benefits

Karen Lee Cohen '68

President and Founder of Crystal Pyramid Productions Inc.

Joanna De Jesus '10

Account Executive at Marketing Werks in New York City

Jeff Kinney '87, Vice President of CAAN National Board

Director of Field Production/Chief Photojournalist at CNN

Thomas Rovak, Jr.

Executive Producer/Senior Colorist/Post Supervisor at Rovak Colorist Services

Brittany Steiger '10

General Manager for PlayPenn in Philadelphia



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1. 2016 DEPS Alumni Artist in Residence Ervin A. Johnson '12 speaks to the attendees at the opening reception of his #InHonor exhibition.
2. Leslie Ramos '98 and a guest pose with Brazilian dancers at our Rio de Janeiro Carnival-themed Manifest Alumni Party.
3. Hollywood cinematographer Michael Goi '80 speaks to students at the Media Production Center.
4. The Alumnae Entrepreneur Panel participants pose for a group photo. From left to right, clockwise: Miranda Gardley '16, Audrey Sutherland '17, Suzanne Blum Malley, Lauren McGrady '11, Maggie Ness '06, Edye Deloch-Hughes '80 and Skye Rust '06.
5. President Kwang-Wu Kim poses for a photo with James Elder '83 and his wife at the Milwaukee Alumni Reception.



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PHOTOS BY KEEGAN LAWLESS '05, PASQUALE IANNINO '06

Class Notes

SUBMIT YOUR CLASS NOTES AT COLUM.EDU/CLASSNOTES

1970s

JAMES BLOCKER II '76 was recently named adjunct professor at Albany Technical College in Albany, Georgia.

HANK GROVER '79 was the unit production manager on *Cowgirl's Story*, a contemporary western feature film starring Bailee Madison and Pat Boone. The family drama follows a high school student who stays with her grandfather when both her parents are deployed in the military.

JEFF JUR '76 is the cinematographer on HBO's new series *Westworld*, produced by J.J. Abrams and based on the 1973 film by Michael Crichton.

SHAWN SHIFLETT '76 released his second novel, *Hey, Liberal!*, which is set in the racial tinderbox of Chicago in 1969.

1980s

D.V. DEVINCENTIS, who attended Columbia in the 1980s, took home a 2016 Emmy for Outstanding Writing for a Limited Series, Movie or Dramatic Special for the "Marcia, Marcia, Marcia" episode on *The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story*.

BRIAN KALATA '87 and **STEPHEN ANDRZEJEWSKI**, who attended Columbia in the 1980s, wrote, directed and produced the documentary *Pencils Down! The 100 Days of the Writer's Guild Strike*.

JANUSZ KAMINSKI '87 was the director of photography for Steven Spielberg's Disney film *The BFG*, based on the book by Roald Dahl.

PATRICK MARKS, who attended Columbia in the 1980s, was recently promoted to director, talent acquisition at Paramount Pictures.

KYM MAZELLE '86 is featured on a new track, "A Place In My Heart," by Italy-based electro house duo Crookers. The track was recently remixed by actor Idris Elba.

YVONNE MEDLEY, who attended Columbia in the 1980s, is currently working on the sequel to her debut novel *God in Wingtip Shoes*. In 2016, she was nominated as a Woman Trailblazer by the Charles County Commission for Women in Southern Maryland.

KARL OCHSNER '85 received a three-year fellowship with the University of Notre Dame to study STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) integration in the middle school classroom.

DINO STAMATOPOULOS and **ANDY DICK**, who both attended Columbia in the 1980s, co-host the podcast *Dino and Andy's Skull Juice* on Feral Audio.

SERITA STEVENS '81 finished writing *The Master's Will*, a Civil War historical tale. She also wrote the screenplay of the same name, which was a quarter-finalist with the Page International Screenwriting Awards.

MARLON WEST '85 was part of the effects team for the Disney film *Moana*, which came out in November.

1990s

JEN ALBERT '97 produced a live action production of *Punch and Judy* and also choreographed all the fights. The show was nominated for several awards at the Hollywood Fringe Festival. **SONDRA MAYER** '98 played Judy.

ILESA DUNCAN '99 adapted and directed *Rutherford's Travels* for Pegasus Theatre Chicago, which opened in November at Chicago Dramatists.

BRIAN FISHER '95 recently graduated from Western Governors University with an MBA in General Business. He is the vice president/COO of T-Werx Coworking in Cedar Park, Texas.

PAUL GARNES '96, HDR '16 is a producer on the Oprah Winfrey/Ava DuVernay series *Queen Sugar* on OWN. The series was picked up for a second season before its September premiere.

DAN GOLDING, who attended Columbia in the 1990s, took home a 2016 Emmy for Outstanding Picture Editing for an Unstructured Reality Program for the "Accident Waiting to Happen" episode on HBO's *Project Greenlight*.

ALEX KOLTON '90 is a voice-over actress living in London. She has worked on commercials for Dyson and narration for the Discovery Channel.

JERRY LABUY '98 has been appointed as co-chair and full-time professor of the Mass Communication Department at Rock Valley College.

MICHAEL MATTHEWS '99 directed *Charm*, which opened in September at Los Angeles' Celebration Theatre, where he is co-artistic director.

FRANK MAUGERI '91 became the new community programs artistic director for the Chicago Children's Theatre.

YUSAKU MIZOGUCHI'S '98 directed the feature film *Mafiosa*, which won the Best Action Film Award at The Hollywood Reel Independent Film Festival 2016. The film also received a nomination for Best Supporting Actor at the U.S. Hollywood International Film Festival 2016.



Television writer and producer **Lena Waithe** '06 turned heads last year with her role in the hit Netflix series *Master of None*. Waithe's role as Denise, the black lesbian theatre critic and best friend of Dev (played by Aziz Ansari), was revolutionary in a show that challenges the typical portrayal of people of color in television.

KEITH MOORE '90 worked as a project manager for design firm Gilmore Ashford Powers Design, Inc. for 18 years. Moore had the opportunity to work with interior designer Calvin Ashford and former professional athletes Sammy Sosa, Juwan Howard, Eddy Curry, Kendall Gill, Michael Finley and Jalen Rose.

SEAN O'NEILL '91 is currently working on publishing *Rocket Robinson and the Secret of the Saint*, his second graphic novel for young readers.

LAURA RICCIARDI, who attended Columbia in the 1990s, took home an Emmy for Outstanding Documentary or Nonfiction Series for Netflix's *Making a Murderer*.

ANNA D. SHAPIRO '90, HDR '15, artistic director of Chicago's internationally acclaimed Steppenwolf Theatre Company, directed the opening production of the troupe's 41st season—the world premiere of *Visiting Edna* by Tony Award-winning playwright David Rabe.

CARL SEATON'S '94 latest film, *Bad Dad Rehab*, premiered on TV One in July.

BOB TEITEL '90, HDR '13 was producer on the movie *Southside with You*, which chronicled President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama's first date in Chicago.

CHRIS WALTERS '92 was appointed president of the United Methodist Foundation of the Northern Illinois Conference, Inc.

MARGARET WAPPLER '98 released the sci-fi novel *Neon Green*, which follows what happens when a spaceship lands in an "eco-affluent" family's backyard.

CAREY WESTBROOK '92 was a contestant on *Worst Bakers in America* on the Food Network.

2000s

RUBEN AGUIRRE '02, **JUSTUS ROE** MFA '08 and **DON'T FRET** '10 created murals for the Wabash Arts Corridor Big Walls art project that can be viewed in the South Loop neighborhood.

KRISTINE ARTH '03 was quoted in Bloomberg's full-page article, *Béhar's Four Tips for Hiring A Designer*.

GREG BABOR '00 edited the first episode of the History Channel series *Roots*, a remake of the 1977 miniseries.

RITA BAGHDADI '07 was the recipient of the 2016 Gucci Tribeca Fund, a grant awarded to documentary filmmakers, for *My Country, No More*, which she wrote and produced with Jeremiah Hammerling. The film centers on the wake of the North Dakota oil boom.

DON BITTERS III '08 recently debuted his feature film *Terrordactyl*, which was released worldwide by MarVista Entertainment. Bitters co-directed and created all of the visual effects for the film.

JOE BURKE'S '06 latest short film, *House Sitting*, premiered at Aspen Shortfest. He wrote, directed and acted in the film.

JESSICA CURTIS '03 web series pilot *Superfreaks*, which she co-wrote with her husband Eric Scott Curtis, was nominated for Best Pilot at the Hudson Valley International Film Festival held in New York.

RACHEL DAMON '05 was awarded support by 3Arts to present her original piece *Openwork*, a performance that reimagines needlecraft as a kinetic art, exploring how movement and needlecraft can influence each other.

BRANDON DERMER '08 directed the music video "Victorious" by Panic! At the Disco, which was nominated for an MTV Video Music Award.

KAYLA M. EMTER '05 was the film editor for the film *The Meddler*, starring Susan Sarandon and Rose Byrne. Emter was also part of *Variety's* Below the Line Impact Report 2016.

JOHN GULESERIAN '00 was the cinematographer for the film *Equals*, which opened on July 15. He was also named one of the "Most Exciting Cinematographers Working Today" by Collider.

BRIAN KALLIES '03 recently produced and edited the American Public Television documentary *Heroes on Deck: World War II on Lake Michigan*.

DANIEL KIBBLESMITH '05 is currently a writer for *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*.

KYLE KINANE '02 launched the podcast *The Boogie Monster*, co-hosted by comedian Dave Stone. In the first episode, the hosts discussed the supernatural and their favorite barbecue.

ALUMNI NEWS & NOTES

MIKE KRAMER '06 was featured in the *Daily Herald* regarding his career writing musical scores for dozens of movies and TV shows, including *Furious 7*, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, *Ninjago: Masters of Spinjitzu*, *Lego Star Wars: The Freemaker Adventures* and *Thor: The Dark World*.

JUSTIN KROHN '02 is an additional editor on the upcoming *Twin Peaks* reboot directed by David Lynch.

MATT KUGELMAN '04 made his directorial debut at the Chicago LGBTQ+ International Film Festival, where he screened his first feature-length film *Hurricane Bianca*, starring drag queen superstar Bianca Del Rio and former *Saturday Night Live* cast member Rachel Dratch.

ABBEY LONDER '08 was the producer of Festival Supreme, an October music and comedy festival curated by Tenacious D in Los Angeles. Londer is also the founder and producer of Riot LA, which takes place January 19-22.

AARON MUNOZ '01 wrote, directed and starred in the comedy short *Tennis Tips with Freddy Love*, which was an official selection to the Nashville Film Festival.

DARREN MUSIAL '03 released his second novel, *Hit Out*, a mystery thriller set in Chicago.

JULIE NAYLON '00 was named one of the best professional organizers in Los Angeles by CBS. She runs the home organization business No Wire Hangers.

CAROLINE NEFF '07 was named an ensemble member of Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre Company.

REBECCA NORRIS '03 co-wrote, co-produced and starred in the feature film *Cloudy with a Chance of Sunshine*, which premiered at the Manhattan Film Festival. It also screened at the Love International Film Festival, the Julien Dubuque Film Festival and the Illinois International Film Festival.



The recipient of the National Geographic Young Explorer award, **Jessica Van Fleteren** '11 spent four months at Tsavo East National Park in Kenya documenting the relationship between bees and elephants. She took pictures for the Elephants and Bees project, which uses beehive-lined fences to keep elephants away from crop fields.

2010s

ALVERNE BALL '05, MFA '10 was part of a Comic-Con panel about Black superheroes. Ball is an award-winning comic, novel, screen and teleplay writer.

BRIANNA BAURICHTER '13 was selected as one of four curatorial fellows for the Art-Prize fellowship for the Emerging Curators program in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

JACK BRADLEY '15 started working as the production coordinator in the Longform Premium Content division at Funny or Die.

NIC COLLINS '12 series *Year of the Snake* has been selected by 13 film festivals and is available for rent or purchase on Amazon.

DANA DAJANI '10 was nominated for a Woman of the Year 2016 Award from *Emirates Woman*, a leading women's fashion and lifestyle magazine published in the United Arab Emirates.

GEOFFREY DUKES '12 worked as a production supervisor on the film *Unexpected*, which premiered in the U.S. Dramatic Competition section of 2015 Sundance Film Festival. Dukes also worked as a production coordinator on the film *Operator*, which premiered at the 2016 South by Southwest Festival.

KIERA ELLIS '13 currently serves as the deputy press secretary for Chicago's Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

MICHAEL OBERHOLTZER '05 starred in the Tony-nominated play *Hand to God*. Oberholtzer also wrapped filming on the new Amazon Original series *The Good Girls Revolt*, which premiered in October.

DAVID ORR '04 co-founded Blue Aster Studio, a design firm specializing in projects for environmental and conservation organizations and small businesses.

RONNIE POLIDORO '09 received the Edward R. Murrow award for Best Use of Video with *Inside North Korea VR*, a virtual reality video of Pyongyang, the capital city of North Korea. Polidoro works as the supervising producer of digital video at ABC News.

ILIANA REGAN '05 was named one of *Food & Wine*'s 2016 Best New Chefs.

LYNDSEY SADLER '09 teaches design, printmaking and art history at Crown Point High School.

GENO TAZIOLI '04 will executive produce the remake of the cult classic *The Toxic Avenger*. The screenplay was written by **STEVE PINK**, who attended Columbia in the 1980s.

JORDAN VOGT-ROBERTS '06 premiered the trailer for his new film *Kong: Skull Island* at Comic-Con 2016. The movie will premiere March 10, 2017.



Austin P. McKenzie, a former ASL student who attended Columbia College Chicago in 2012, will star in the upcoming ABC miniseries *When We Rise*. Written by Oscar winner Dustin Lance Black, *When We Rise* chronicles the history of the LGBTQ/Gay Rights movement beginning with 1969's Stonewall Riots.

RAM GETZ '13 is an executive producer on *Crossface*, a biopic about the late wrestling champion Chris Benoit.

MICHAEL GORGOGNONE, who attended Columbia in 2012, recently wrote and directed his first feature film, *Go Mad and Mark*.

ALI HADLEY '15 recently landed a job in development at Amblin Television, the production company behind *American Gothic*, *The Americans* and *Under the Dome*.

LUTHER HUGHES '16 was featured in Windy City Media Group's 17th Annual 30 Under 30 list, which honors the best and brightest individuals in Chicago's LGBTQQA+ youth community.

REECE JOHNS '15 has been accepted into the Civic Orchestra Program, the professional training program of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

CHARLIE JUNGWIRTH '10 was one of three individuals to receive the 2016 Super Volunteer Award from Equality Illinois.

STEVE KEIDER'S '14 band, Wilde, recently released their first album, *The Party*.

PAUL LATZA '12 recently became an editor for Disney Interactive, where he edits new media videos for YouTube and social media.

COURTNEY MACK '15 was featured in *Chicago Tribune's* "Destined for Stardom: Hot New Faces of Chicago Theater 2016."

RYAN MCKIDDY '13 was named assistant program director, music director and night host at WSIX The Big 98 in Nashville, Tennessee.

BRAD MEYER '15 was nominated for a 2016 Daytime Emmy Award for Outstanding Achievement in Sound Editing–Animation and a 2016 Motion Picture Sound Editors Golden Reel Award for Best Sound Editing–Television Animation.

SAM MILMAN'S '10 feature film *Laid in America*, which he wrote and directed along with Peter Vass, has been bought by Universal. The movie premiered in London and Los Angeles.

LASHERA MOORE '12 is currently a teaching artist at the Center for Community Arts Partnership at Columbia College Chicago. Moore is also currently in the Windy City Music Theatre production *A Little Princess* and will be in *Hairspray* in spring 2017.

NICHOLAS OLSON '13 was appointed associate editor at *Cease, Cows*. His fiction work has appeared in *SmokeLong Quarterly*, *Hobart*, *Literary Orphans*, *decomp*, *Corium*, *Thrice Fiction* and other literary magazines.

AMYE DAY ONG MFA '15 published her essay "Things I Failed to Mention" in the *Green Briar Review*, an independent literary magazine.

ANNMARI ORTEGA'S '12 book *Saucy Girl*, the first of a contemporary romance suspense series, was published with Highland Press.

KEISA REYNOLDS '15 was featured in Windy City Media Group's 17th Annual 30 Under 30 list, which honors the best and brightest individuals in Chicago's LGBTQQA+ youth community.

CHARLIE RICE-MINOSO '11 was one of three individuals to receive the 2016 Super Volunteer Award from Equality Illinois.

DEIDRA SADDLER'S '16 second book, *...far above rubies*, was published by Faith Walk Publishing.

MAGGIE SICHTER '12 recently collaborated with Apple and was featured as an illustrator in the 2016 Keynote and iPad Pro Launch.

LALE SOYUGENC-KETCHAM '10 founded Windy City Bebe, an urban children's boutique in the Lakeview/Southport corridor.

JILL STRANGE '15 was selected to be the official ESPN DJ for the college football season. Strange toured with ESPN's College Game Day through the end of 2016.

DAVID WALL '13 created and directed the stop-motion animated music video for The Kickback's song "Fanger."

ALEX WROBLEWSKI '16 won the 2016 Student Still Photographer of the Year award at the White House News Photographers Association Eyes of History gala.

IN MEMORIAM

ERIC JUSTEN '98

MARJORIE ANN "MARGIE" NORTON '86

DANIEL SCHMIDT '10

MARRIAGES

SOMMER TERRY '07 AND **KIRK LAYDEN**

Upcoming Events

FALL/WINTER 2016-17
FOR MORE INFORMATION,
GO TO EVENTS.COLUM.EDU.



FEBRUARY 18-19

Ballet de Lorraine

Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, 220 E. Chicago Ave.

colum.edu/dance-center

The Dance Center will open their spring season with Ballet de Lorraine, one of the most important dance companies in Europe. The company will perform *Sounddance*, *Fabrications* and *Untitled Partner #3* at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.



MAY 12

Manifest

Throughout campus
colum.edu/manifest

Manifest is Columbia's annual urban arts festival celebrating the creative projects and works of students. Free and open to the public, Manifest features musical performances, gallery exhibitions, fashion shows, readings, an alumni reception and much more.

FEBRUARY 2-MARCH 10

Evoke: An Environmental Inspiration Exhibit

Arcade Gallery, 618 S. Michigan Ave., 2nd Floor

This exhibit will include artwork centered around current environmental issues in order to create a discourse for viewers, artists, educators and activists on environmental injustices.



APRIL 6-8

Liz Gerring Dance Company: Horizon

Dance Center, 1306 S. Michigan Ave.

colum.edu/dance-center

The Liz Gerring Dance Company makes its Chicago debut with their performance of *Horizon*, an evening-length work featuring seven dancers.



FEBRUARY 8-18

Peer Gynt

Studio 404, 72 E. 11th St.
colum.edu/theatre

After his wealthy father squanders the family fortune, Peer Gynt becomes determined to restore what was lost—and in the process, finds himself in a world of false pride, self-delusion and exotic adventures.



MARCH 9-11

Malpaso Dance Company of Havana

Dance Center, 1306 S. Michigan Ave.
colum.edu/dance-center

This performance is the Chicago debut of critically acclaimed Cuban contemporary dance ensemble Malpaso. The dance company will perform a new work, *Indomitable Waltz*, and the critically acclaimed *24 Hours and a Dog*.



MARCH 8-18

Little Shop of Horrors

Sheldon Patinkin Theatre, 72 E. 11th St.
colum.edu/theatre

A rock musical about love and murder, all surrounding an unfortunate florist who tends to a plant that will make all of his wildest dreams come true—as long as it's fed human blood and flesh.



MARCH 16-19

Donny McCaslin Residency Concerts

The Jazz Showcase, 806 S. Plymouth Court
colum.edu/music

Grammy-nominated jazz saxophonist Donny McCaslin completes his week-long residency with several on-campus performances.



APRIL 7

Cory Henry Residency Concert

The Music Center, 1014 S. Michigan Ave.
colum.edu/music

Grammy award-winning keyboardist Cory Henry completes his week-long residency with an on-campus performance.



JANUARY 26-APRIL 1

Viviane Sassen: UMBRA

Museum of Contemporary Photography, 600 S. Michigan Ave. mocp.org

Acclaimed fashion photographer Viviane Sassen's exhibition *UMBRA* will use photographic and multimedia works to highlight the play of light and shadow.



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DRAWING ON EXPERIENCE

The comics of **Kevin Budnik '11** read like diary entries. The illustrator records his daily life one panel at a time in a wide collection of self-published zines and online comics. In this comic for Backstory, Budnik recalls beginning his first comics in a Columbia College Chicago classroom.



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“Columbia’s community is unlike any other. Everyone comes from different backgrounds but shares the same creative mindset.”

MALIK WOOLFORK
President, Black Student Union

The Annual Fund helps students like Malik thrive. You can make an immediate impact when you give at colum.edu/giving

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