Boston University College of Fine Arts Magazine

Summer 2023

CFA

Rebecca Ness Paints a Visual Diary

Dressing Performers for Success

Conducting Change in Classical Music

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

ON THE COVER: *Heartbreak at Ginger's: Heading Out* (2022) by Rebecca Ness

Dean
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Director of Communications
Laurel Homer (CAS'98)
Assistant Director of Communications
Emily White Holmes
Communications Manager
Diana Hernandez Johnson
Development & Alumni Relations
Janna Schwartz, Assistant Dean
Beth Barclay, Senior Major Gift Officer
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Editor
Mara Sassoon (MET'22)
Art Director
Lee Caulfield
Photo Director
Janice Checchio ('07)
Contributing Writers
Joel Brown
Molly Callahan
Marc Chalufour
Steve Holt
Sophie Yarin

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CFA ON INSTAGRAM

BU's new visual narrative MFA program is one of only a handful in the country focused on producing media such as comics, graphic books, picture books, and animation. "From the time students come in, I am introducing them to some of the most celebrated cartoonists in America," says comic book artist and chair of the program Joel Christian Gill ('04).

Scan the QR code to watch a video about the visual narrative MFA program.

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A NOTE FROM HARVEY

To live in an art museum would be amazing. This is a thought that I have had many times over the years. There are few places that I love more than an art gallery. I find the dynamic between the spare minimalism of brilliantly white walls and the complexity of exhibited artwork to be compelling.

Back when I lived in Chicago, I often would hold meetings at a coffee shop across the street from the Art Institute. Before and afterwards, I would cross the street, climb the stairs (passing those iconic lions), and spend time with Archibald Motley's *Nightlife* and Gustave Caillebotte's *Paris Street; Rainy Day*. I did this for nearly 15 years.

One of my priorities when I moved to Boston was to introduce more people to the thrill of an art gallery. Two years ago, we renovated our Stone Art Gallery. It was an enormous undertaking. We knocked down walls, installed massive street-level windows, created a new entranceway onto Commonwealth Avenue, invested in new lighting, and more. The result was extraordinary. The Stone itself is a work of art. It is now one of the great art galleries in Boston.

Since reopening, we have welcomed more than 10,000 people through Stone's doors. There is no one "type" of BU Art Galleries visitor. Over the past few months, we have greeted aspiring artists, critics, families with young children, and even the (now) second all-time leading scorer in the NBA. Visitors have spent time with the original creations of Josef Albers, Amy Sherald, Hank Willis Thomas, and even cartoonist Charles Schulz, the creator of Charlie Brown.

Our art exhibitions are free and open to the public. Thanks to the generosity of alumni, cost is not a barrier preventing students, neighbors, and even the casual passerby from having an experience with inspiring artistry.

There is a lot that can be said about the arts at BU—music, theater, and the visual arts—from the excellence of our faculty to the rankings for our academic programs. However, I want to call attention to those quiet moments when introspection is enabled by an artistic encounter. To see, to hear, to be touched by art is a profound experience.

I would love to hear about your first experience in an art gallery, concert hall, or theater. Feel free to email me at **cfadean@bu.edu**.

Harvey Young, Dean of CFA

WRITE: Share your thoughts on this issue—and anything else CFA-related—at **cfaalum@bu.edu**.

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Natasha Moustache (Dean Young)

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CREATING A VISUAL DIARY

With a photographic eye, Rebecca Ness makes intimate, slice-of-life oil paintings of everyday moments

By Sophie Yarin

Photo by Philip Grayso, courtesy of the artist and Carl Kostyál, London | Stockholm

Previous spread:
Heartbreak at Ginger's: Re-emerging **(2022) Oil on linen; 120 x 90 in.**

Above: ***Night out at Boobie Trap*** **(2022) Oil on linen; 90 x 60 in.**

Right: ***Heartbreak at Ginger's: Heading Out*** **(2022) Oil on linen; 90 x 80 in.**

REBECCA NESS, a queer 30-year-old artist from Brooklyn, has no problem being compared to the 20th-century American painter Norman Rockwell.

"I am always confused when people ask what I feel about that," says Ness ('15). "What's not to like? I love illustration. I love American art. I love Rockwell deep in my heart."

The associations with Rockwell abound for a reason: the scenes Ness paints seem as fleeting as those in candid photographs. Mundane moments—an artist friend's face illuminated by a computer screen, a man looking up from his newspaper, a person holding a mug of coffee while flipping through a magazine—are lavished with attention, humor, and vibrant colors.

The vivid-hued world Ness depicts in her paintings is hyperpersonal—bars populated with friends and acquaintances; a desk piled with loose papers, cups of coffee, and *New Yorker* magazines; a floor cluttered with squished tubes of paint and discarded bras. The energy in her compositions is palpable. Even inanimate objects refuse to lie still—pages curl, steam rises from coffee mugs. Her portrait subjects, many depicted from the neck down, fiddle with gloves and pencils, pointing their fingers and cracking their knuckles.

"I think I have a bit of a *horror vacui* with my work," she admits, using the Latin term for an aversion to empty spaces. "I'm always packing in information."

As a result, Ness' works are a visual diary. The viewer follows her into subway cars, to friends' studios, on camping trips and long nights out, seeing things the way she sees them, in ways that evoke exuberance, nostalgia, humor, and affection.

"A VERY SOCIAL WAY TO PAINT"

Ness began figure drawing and oil painting as an after-school student at the Acorn Gallery School of Art in Marblehead, Mass. Classes for youngsters at Acorn, Ness recalls, placed a special emphasis on learning the human form. "I learned very early on that there could be so much that you could say with a finger flick or a reflection in an eyeball."

This page: Photo by Lance Brewer, courtesy of the artist and Jessica Silverman Gallery; Opposite: Photo by Philip Greyes, courtesy of the artist and Carl Kostyál London | Stockholm

Above: ***Brainstorming*** **(2019) Oil on canvas; 60 x 70 in.**

Right: ***My Life*** **(2020) Oil on linen; 65 x 104 in.**

Photo by Jackie Furtado, courtesy of the artist

Photo by Prudence Cumming, courtesy of the artist and Carl Kostyál London | Stockholm

Painting people allows Ness to be a storyteller. In her crowd scenes—many of which were inspired by nights out at her favorite bar in Brooklyn, Ginger's—patrons clamor for the viewer's attention.

"The stories I tell are not always a piece-by-piece documentary of what really happened, but based on a spark of reality," Ness says. "Maybe I included a story that my friend experienced with someone, but I don't know what the other person looked like, so I invented them."

In Ness' *Heartbreak at Ginger's* series, which she says was inspired by "an experience of unrequited lust," the bar patrons scroll through iPhones, light cigarettes, wave to each other, and sip drinks. They wear their hearts on their sleeves, telepathizing their frustration, joy, and apprehension. Ness can usually be found in the corner.

"In those Ginger's crowd paintings, there are probably 10 to 20 people that I just painted over, because I thought that they had a story but realized later, 'Nah, this conversation is boring,'" she says. "It's a very social way to paint, if you think about it. I have to spend time with these characters and see if I have any chemistry with them."

"WE ARE WHAT WE KEEP"

Not all of Ness' paintings use human figures to tell stories. Much of her catalog could be classified as still life, and her inclusion of paintbrushes, newspapers, Dunkin' cups, and other signs of life lend a human element to the space.

"We are what we keep, what we collect," she says. "If I were to go to your house and look at your objects, I would probably have a really good idea of who you are."

Ness is particularly fascinated with her own workspaces; they give her the opportunity to take snapshots of something messy and unfinished and include the tools involved in creating these works. In *I See You*, a riff on a self-portrait, Ness sits at a table in the bottom left corner, taking up about an eighth of the canvas. The majority of the work is devoted to her studio space—a tangle of extension cords snaking around art supplies, rough drafts, color test pages, canvases, art books, notepads, and a pair of orange Nikes.

"I think portraiture through objects is an interesting proposition," Ness says. "My idea of a still life or a portrait is, 'What's on the floor?'"

CRAFTING A SCENE

"I prefer to work from life but I can't really paint at a bar," Ness jokes. In order to create a moment so personal it feels like a memory, she renders multiple photographs into a reference collage on her iPad.

"I find that it's very streamlined to make the study on the iPad, and then do the drawing and invention on the canvas," she says. "I don't like to have everything planned out before, because then the painting isn't fun."

Much of her process is devoted to re-examining ordinary moments for new details. Works like *Convening at the Table*, *Origins*, *Brainstorming*, and *Drawing Party* represent a period of fascination with figures sitting at a table covered in newspapers, notepads, and art supplies. She painted each work from a different angle and made minor variations to the items on display. In earlier series, she depicted close-ups of friends reading books and newspapers or hands holding pencils and eyeglasses.

Ness' subjects live in a Technicolor Brooklyn, where everyone is an artist and nobody keeps their room tidy. The more detail she includes—she uses oil-primed linen for its ability to capture fine detail "almost like paper"—the more her world comes into relief.

"I want to reward close looking," she says. "I find that when you look closely at paintings, you look closely in other parts of life."

Whether painting crowd scenes to tell a story or details to inspire a closer look, Ness is getting attention. She has been exhibiting since earning an MFA from Yale in 2019, landing coveted spots in prestigious art fairs including Art Basel Miami Beach, Art Cologne, and Frieze Los Angeles.

At the same time, she's interested in experimenting with new subjects. In 2021, after a camping trip, she shifted briefly toward nature painting, filling her canvases with flower stalks and twisted tree bark in the same carefree disarray as the paintbrushes on a studio floor.

"It was really hard, and I did it because I felt that I was getting stuck in one language and I don't think that's how you grow as an artist," Ness says.

It's helpful, she says, for her to look at each work as a short story. Since the misadventure at Ginger's, Ness has been on a bar kick, and lately the short stories she's committed to canvas have been about nights out at establishments like Boobie Trap in Bushwick and the East Village's Lucien.

What comes after that all depends on what she gets up to next.

"The one thing that held Rockwell back was that he had to create this short communication for what was largely just white America," she says. "I really differ in how much grace and freedom I have now."

COLLAGE

THE WORLD OF CFA

Niko Cohen designed this costume they wore at a skating competition in November 2022.

RISING STAR

Designing for the Ice

By Marc Chalufour

NIKO COHEN JOKES that they emerged from the womb watching anime. They learned Japanese in order to better understand the cartoons. They applied to the School of Theatre's costume production program with a portfolio of anime cosplay designs. And watching the anime series *Yuri!!! on Ice* inspired Cohen ('20) to take figure skating lessons at BU.

Cohen's mix of anime-inspired skills led them to Yumi Couture, where they spent two years working for Olympic figure skating costume designer Yumi Barnett-Nakamura. In 2022, Cohen established Lavender Thread Co. in Brighton, Mass., and began creating their own designs.

What makes a good figure skating costume?
A good costume makes the skater feel really good and empowered. And it also fits with the music and packages the skater appropriately for what they're trying to present and perform.

Can a costume impact judging?
One hundred percent. Skating is a very competitive sport but it's also a performance art. Your score includes your general skating skills, your performance, and your characterization. Costumes are a part of that.

How do you create a design?
When I receive the music, I like to listen to it on repeat and think about how it makes me feel, what colors, shapes, and movement I think about when listening to it. While in a design meeting with the skater, I sketch out ideas as I ask them their thoughts on what they'd like, while also taking into consideration input from their parent, coach, and choreographer. I try to prioritize the skater, since they're the ones who have to wear the costume.

What's your vision for your new company?
It's to make gorgeous costumes for figure skaters that they feel and look great in. At the same time, I want to break down what barriers I can in the sport. I'd like to offer semicustoms, rentals, and recycling to help alleviate the financial burden that comes with skating. I want to be thoughtful in supporting athletes in an environment where eating disorders and negative self-image are too common. I want to figure out how to help tackle the racism, homophobia, and transphobia in the sport. I want to enhance the figure skating community through costume design and production, in a way that allows me to be authentic to myself as an artist, athlete, and a person.

"Skating is a very competitive sport but it's also a performance art. Costumes are a part of that."

Cinematic Images; inset courtesy of Niko Cohen

SOUND BITES

"An arts education is a life-changing education. It . . . prepares you for success in whatever field you ultimately choose."

KRISTA VERNOFF, third from left, received the BU Los Angeles Entertainment, Film, and TV Alumni Network's inaugural Industry Achievement Award on April 13, 2023. The award honors Vernoff's groundbreaking career as writer, producer, and showrunner of the hit shows *Grey's Anatomy* and *Station 19*. The evening featured remarks from alumni and collaborators, including, from left, Michaela Watkins, Abraham Higginbotham, Peter Paige, Michael Medico, and Kim Raver.

Courtesy of BU LA Entertainment, Film, and TV Alumni Network (Vernoff); Jake Belcher (Symphony Hall); Charlotte Weinman ('22, CAS'22) and Julia Ty Goldberg ('21) (Shapiro-Barnum)

CELEBRATIONS

CAPPING OFF SCHOOL OF MUSIC 150TH CELEBRATIONS AT SYMPHONY HALL

CFA wrapped up the School of Music's sesquicentennial celebrations on April 1, 2023, in sonorous style: with a concert at Boston's Symphony Hall. Director of Orchestral Activities James Burton conducted the BU Symphony Orchestra and Symphonic Chorus in Mahler's Symphony no. 2 "Resurrection," with Chorus Master William Cutter ('87,'89).

The concert was also a farewell to David Martins, who has retired as a master lecturer and director of the BU Wind Ensemble. Martins led the Wind Ensemble in performing a new commissioned work by CFA Lecturer Kenneth Amis (BUTI'86,'87, CFA'91) along with Stephenson's Symphony no. 2 "Voices."

AWARDS

Julian Shapiro-Barnum named to *Forbes* "30 Under 30," nominated for Webby

IN 2021, Julian Shapiro-Barnum created the web series *Recess Therapy,* in which he conducts on-the-street interviews with children. Since then, the show has become a hit sensation, garnering almost 3 million followers on Instagram and spawning the viral hit "Corn Kid." It also earned Shapiro-Barnum ('21) a spot on the 2023 *Forbes* "30 Under 30" list and a 2023 Webby nomination for Best Web Personality/Host—along with fellow nominees Lizzo, Marlon Wayans, Trevor Noah, and Jimmy Fallon. Although Noah won the Webby, Shapiro-Barnum was the category's People's Voice Winner, an award voted on by the public.

FOR MORE NEWS AND EVENTS, VISIT **BU.EDU/CFA.**

CONVERSATION

CFA DEAN HARVEY YOUNG AND PRODUCER FRED ZOLLO TALK ABOUT THE FILM *TILL* AND THE NEED FOR MORE MOVIES ABOUT CIVIL RIGHTS

By Harvey Young

Photo by Doug Levy

TO SPEND AN HOUR with Fred Zollo is to experience the thrill of talking with a deep thinker. The theater and film producer is gifted with a quick and at times acerbic wit that reveals harsh truths about our society. His perceptiveness and desire to speak out have made him one of our most respected filmmakers. His films include *Mississippi Burning* (1988), *Ghosts of Mississippi* (1996), and most recently *Till* (2022). *Till* was honored in February 2023 by the Producers Guild of America with the Stanley Kramer Award, which recognizes one film and its producers for using "cinema as a platform to raise awareness for social issues."

Zollo (CAS'75) is perhaps best known for being one of the most successful Broadway theater producers of all time. But he does not boast about his numerous achievements. In fact, he contends that he doesn't know how many Tony awards he has won. The answer: he has been nominated more than 20 times and has won the award a dozen times.

In January, Zollo returned to Boston University—his first visit to the Charles River Campus in nearly 40 years—to speak with me about *Till* at the Howard Thurman Center. The film tells the stories of Emmett Till, the Black 14-year-old boy who was murdered in a racially motivated attack in 1955, and his mother, Mamie Till Mobley, who bravely displayed her son's bloated, dead body—and in so doing helped catalyze the civil rights movement. Before a near capacity crowd, Zollo and I talked about the process of making the movie and the urgency of Emmett Till's legacy in our current Black Lives Matter movement.

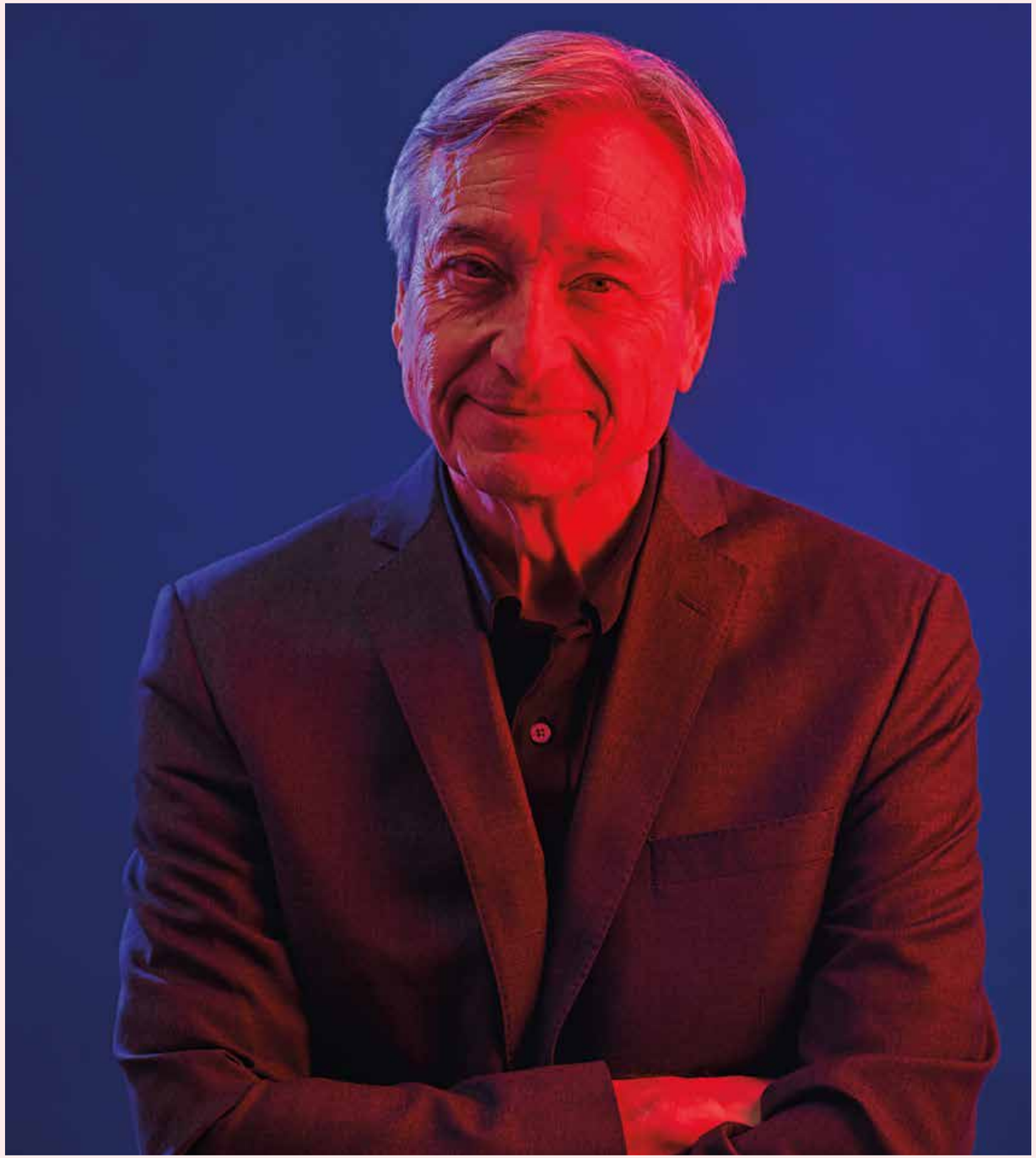
Not long after his visit to BU, I called Zollo for a follow-up chat to share with *CFA* magazine readers. We spoke as he sat in the Hay-Adams Hotel in Washington, D.C., only hours after having been honored by President Joe Biden at the White House, where *Till* was screened in the East Room in honor of Black History Month. The following, lightly edited for length and clarity, is our conversation.

Harvey Young: Joe Biden hosted you yesterday.

Fred Zollo: He could not have been more kind and supportive. It was great. The last time I was in that [White House] room was when President Obama gave the Medal of Freedom, posthumously, to [Andrew] Goodman, [Michael] Shwerner, and [James] Cheney [civil rights workers who were murdered by the Ku Klux Klan in 1964]. Joe Biden was there. We were reminding ourselves of that occasion.

What did President Biden say?

President Biden said it was one of the greatest moments of his presidency to bring *Till* to the White House. That is quite different than what Woodrow Wilson said at the first White



House film screening: *Birth of a Nation*. He said that D. W. Griffith's film was "like writing history with lightning." Lest we forget, Woodrow Wilson was a wretched racist.

Tell me about the process of making *Till*.
[Director] Keith Beauchamp was only 10 when he saw the *Jet* magazine photograph of Emmett Till. He committed his life to somehow making the world know about Emmett Till and trying to get some justice for him. Carolyn Bryant, one of the perpetrators [who died in April 2023], pointed her finger at Emmett and set this whole series of terrifying events in motion. No one [was] willing to prosecute her, despite Keith recently discovering a 1955 warrant for her arrest in a DeSoto County courthouse. It was never served. There is a legal question: Is there a statute of limitations on a warrant? There is no statute of limitations on murder.

I met Keith around 2005. I said, "Let's make a movie of this." It was very difficult to get people to agree with us and help us make the movie.

Why was it so difficult?
It's about civil rights. People don't want to see movies about civil rights. They're more interested in seeing slave movies. There's an evil message here somewhere. White audiences will go to see slave movies but not civil rights movies.

It took over 18 years. Barbara [Broccoli, coproducer] was extremely helpful. She brought along MGM and now Amazon. They do the James Bond films. Simultaneously, MGM revived a company that I had a long relationship with, Orion Pictures. That's where we made *Mississippi Burning*. It was a reunion of sorts. Orion is [now] run by a brilliant young woman named Alana Mayo. Rare in Hollywood: a woman of color who runs a major movie studio.

You were at this year's Producers Guild of America Awards.
Till got the Stanley Kramer Award. It is a very high tribute. Stanley Kramer meant a lot to me as a kid. He made a lot of movies: *Inherit the Wind*, *The Defiant Ones*, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*. He was a remarkable guy. We've had a little problem with some of the awards. Apparently, they don't want to give awards to this subject matter and they don't want to honor Black film artists anymore.

Producer Fred Zollo came to campus to speak with CFA Dean Harvey Young about the film *Till* in January 2023.

"People don't want to see movies about civil rights. They're more interested in seeing slave movies. There's an evil message here somewhere. White audiences will go to see slave movies but not civil rights movies."

FRED ZOLLO

And that is shocking. Last fall, there was such buzz. More recently, there's been a pushback against recognizing Black artists.
They tried to find excuses at first—"We don't want to see Black people tortured on-screen." There isn't anybody tortured in the movie. It is a difficult subject matter. When you put all the excuses aside, it is an all-white Academy [of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences]. The notion that they changed anything is ridiculous. They haven't. It's at best sugarcoating without the sugar. It's still all old, white men, like me.

Civil rights movies—there aren't many of them. I have now made three of them [including *Ghosts of Mississippi*].

It's amazing to think about the mainstream circulation of slave movies versus civil rights movies. Not only do slave movies outnumber civil rights movies, but they also gain more audiences and, often, more awards. You will recognize someone for being a slave before you would recognize someone for being a leader of civil rights.
I was talking the other day about a Quentin Tarantino movie that ends with horrific violence against women. No one has a problem with that in Hollywood. They love it. The abuse of women is what Hollywood is all about. Racism and the abuse of women. No matter what the academy says they're doing, they're not.

Why do you keep making films when there is such resistance?
I don't know. All the effort that went into making this film—it is very special. We have this brilliant Black female director, Chinonye Chukwu. There were two Black female directors who did amazing work this year. Viola Davis' film, *The Woman King*, is a terrific movie. The director of that film is Gina Prince-Blythewood, who is also brilliant. None of the best director Oscar nominees were women. In a year with Sarah Polley [who wrote and directed *Women Talking*], Prince-Blythewood, and Chukwu, how was not one woman nominated? And no one in the media cares. Where was the front page *New York Times* article?

In looking at the coverage, it's almost like there is an effort to excuse the absence by noting that women directors won the Oscar in the past two years—which itself was an anomaly in the history of the awards. It does not make any sense.
It does make a lot of sense. The same people are running the show. No matter what they say, they have made no effort at the academy. That's my opinion.

My dear friend Whoopi Goldberg is on the Board of Governors of the academy. I've been hoping that she can convince them to do something different and not do something that obviously isn't working. You have a situation where a wonderful actress who is not well-known in America—Andrea Riseborough—somehow gets a nomination [thanks to a social media campaign] on a film that has grossed $23,000. Good for her. But it had nothing to do with the normal way that that [nominations] happens. It proves that you can put the fix in if you know the right people. Welcome to America, right?

What are some of your upcoming projects?
We were about to open *Sing Street* on Broadway—the marquee was up and we were moving into the theater—when the pandemic hit. It opened in Boston in 2022 at the Huntington, and it'll be coming soon [on Broadway]. There's a play with Mark Rylance that we're going to do. It's a wonderful play that Barbara and I did about 15 years ago, called *Frozen*. Not to be confused with the Disney musical.

That would really surprise kids [laughs].
It's a really moving play. Mark Rylance would be extraordinary in it.

Things sort of come around. I'm finally going to do a play by Richard Nelson that I've been trying to do. I was going to do it with Mike Nichols 45 years ago, but that didn't quite happen. Robin Williams was going to be in it.

You were recently back on campus. What still resonates with you?
I was very impressed. I am very happy to see the construction, the cool new buildings, including the Booth Theatre, which is incredible. But it was more the feeling. There is a feeling of excitement there. There is an old television show called *Room 222*, about a high school in Los Angeles. It opens with a famous theme song as students go into the school. They like the school. The principal is a great guy; he's trying to do good things. The energy of the students as they are walking into the school in the opening credits—I was thinking about it as I was walking down Comm Ave with you. There is an energy of excitement or "we're really happy to be here." That's the great legacy of Dr. Brown and you. You brought this electricity there. I was very excited by it. ●

Emily Wang (COM'26)

Courtesy of Orion Pictures

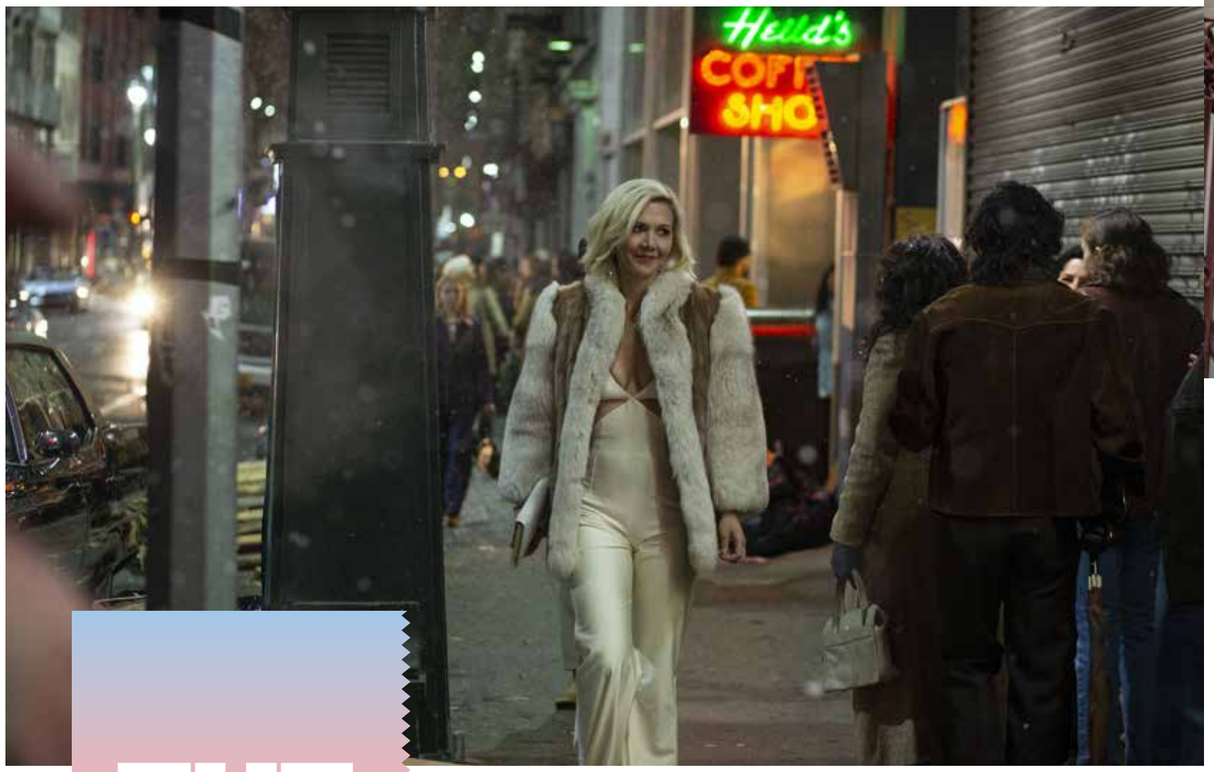
By Marc Chalufour

THE CLOTHES MAKE THE CHARAC-TER

Costume designers **Joyce Kim Lee** and **Natalie Turturro Mettouchi** dress performers for success

Clockwise from top: Album/Alamy Stock Photo; Amazon/Kobal/Shutterstock; Opposite: Chris Sorensen

Natalie Turturro Mettouchi, pictured here at the New York City vintage clothing store Early Halloween, has worked as an assistant costume designer on NYC period dramas, including *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, set in the cafés and comedy clubs of the 1950s and 1960s. Pictured on the opposite page, clockwise from top, are characters from the show, including Mrs. Maisel (Rachel Brosnahan), Maisel's mother, Rose (Marin Hinkle), and Maisel's father, Abe (Tony Shalhoub).



THE

first episode of the Amazon Prime series *Hunters* begins at a sunny waterfront BBQ. Kids splash in a pool. Adults sip beers on the lawn. A man in a KISS THE COOK apron works the grill and gregariously welcomes guests. It's a surprisingly cheerful scene for a show about vigilantes hunting Nazis—until things take a sudden, violent turn. A flurry of bullets leave the cook standing alone, gun in hand, surrounded by the bodies.

"The opening of *Hunters* was supposed to be jarring," says Natalie Turturro Mettouchi, an assistant costume designer on the show's first season. "We think we're at a BBQ among coworkers, but then all of a sudden we find the wolf in sheep's clothing." Mettouchi ('10) is speaking metaphorically, but clothing does play a critical role in rapidly establishing, then upending, viewer expectations in just three minutes.

Edith Head, arguably the most famous costume designer ever, summed up her work near the end of her career. "What a costume designer does is a cross between magic and camouflage," the eight-time Academy Award winner (and 35-time nominee) for costume design told *American Film* in 1978. "We create the illusion of changing the actors into what they are not."

In *Hunters*, that illusion is created by a mix of festive pastels and floral prints. High waistlines establish the late-1970s setting. And the whimsical apron accentuates the murderous turn of the cook, played by Dylan Baker.

"What do people first see when they watch a television show?" says Joyce Kim Lee, a four-time nominee and one-time winner of a Daytime Emmy for her work on the Nickelodeon kids' series *The Fresh Beat Band*. "They see the actor and what they're wearing—and it informs you in a second."

Costume designers play an integral role in creating the illusion of character identities and the believability of historical eras or fantastical locales. They find or make costumes for the stars, supporting actors, and background cast—and in the process help each to embody their character. Lee ('93) and Mettouchi arrived at CFA from different directions—Lee was premed before discovering a costume design exhibit and transferring to CFA, while Mettouchi began designing costumes in high school—but they graduated with a shared outlook on their craft: costumes are all about enhancing a story.

HBO/Kobal/Shutterstock

HBO/Kobal/Shutterstock

"It's escapism—putting yourself in other people's shoes and learning about them, and the world, and alternate realities."

NATALIE TURTURRO METTOUCHI

Mettouchi conducted extensive research while on costume designer Anna Terrazas' team for the first and second seasons of *The Deuce*, which starred Maggie Gyllenhaal, left, and Gary Carr, right. She sourced vintage clothing and fabrics, including for Gyllenhaal's jumpsuit pictured at left.

STUDYING THE FASHION

Over their careers, Lee and Mettouchi have dressed ballet dancers, stage actors, opera singers, and movie stars. They've designed a variety of costumes, from surfing outfits to spacesuits. But they have a singular focus: character building.

Lee starts each project by combing through the script and figuring out what the writer has—or hasn't—included. "You try to find clues," she says. If she can, she'll begin collecting images that might inspire each character's look. And when a script is light on specifics, Lee asks the writer what details they had in mind that didn't make it onto the page. "This character is 'dressed funny'—what does that mean?" she says, as one example.

As the costume designer for *Surfside Girls*, a 2022 Apple TV+ show, Lee was responsible for creating the looks for the show. Jade (Miya Cech) and Sam (YaYa Gosselin) are the leads who portray teenage surfers growing up in contemporary California. The two had very different styles and cultural heritages that Lee drew inspiration from, plus, she says, the script was packed with hints about the characters. Jade, a "fashionista" and Chinese American, wears cool jumpsuits, bomber jackets, and boots and shows off her academic interests with science-themed T-shirts. Sam, a Mexican American, favors "function over fashion" and wears Baja hoodies and jean shorts. Lee also wanted to create a visual link between the girls, so she invented a backstory in which they bought matching friendship bracelets that they wear everywhere.

Mettouchi has worked on a string of New York City period dramas. Her process often begins with historical research. *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* is set in the cafés and comedy clubs of the 1950s and 1960s; *The Deuce* tells the story of the pornography industry's rise in the 1970s; and *Hunters*, set in the late 1970s, is inspired by the real events of Operation Paperclip, a controversial US intelligence program that brought more than 1,000 Nazi scientists and engineers to work in the US after World War II. Despite some overlaps in time and place, these projects' costumes had little in common. Each section of New York City has distinct characteristics: uptown styles differ from downtown styles, high society contrasts with street fashion.

To prepare, Mettouchi watches films set in the era she's studying. *Kramer vs. Kramer*, the Meryl Streep–Dustin Hoffman legal drama, was a helpful source of 1970s inspiration. She also references photography books like *Terminal Bar* (Princeton Architectural Press, 2014). That collection of photographs taken by bartender Sheldon Nadelman of his patrons between 1972 and 1982 helped her understand how the characters of *The Deuce*—set in the same neighborhood as the bar—should dress.

There's no detail too small when it comes to creating an authentic look. Even undergarments that aren't revealed to the camera can be important. "They create this silhouette that takes you to a different time period," Mettouchi says. She knows that attention to detail will help draw viewers in and orient them to the characters' world.

"What fuels me is the story," Mettouchi says. "It's about putting yourself in other people's shoes and learning about them, and their worlds, and alternate realities."

THE RIGHT FIT

In the race to gather everything that a costume department might need for a production, shoppers scour local retail shops, vintage stores, online vendors, specialty rental houses, eBay, and Etsy. Their discoveries are sorted and racked by size, type, color, and pattern. One team works with the lead actors, another with supporting actors, and

Costume Credits

Joyce Kim Lee and Natalie Turturro Mettouchi have both designed costumes for stage and screen, but much of their most recent work has been for television and streaming shows. Here are some of their career highlights:

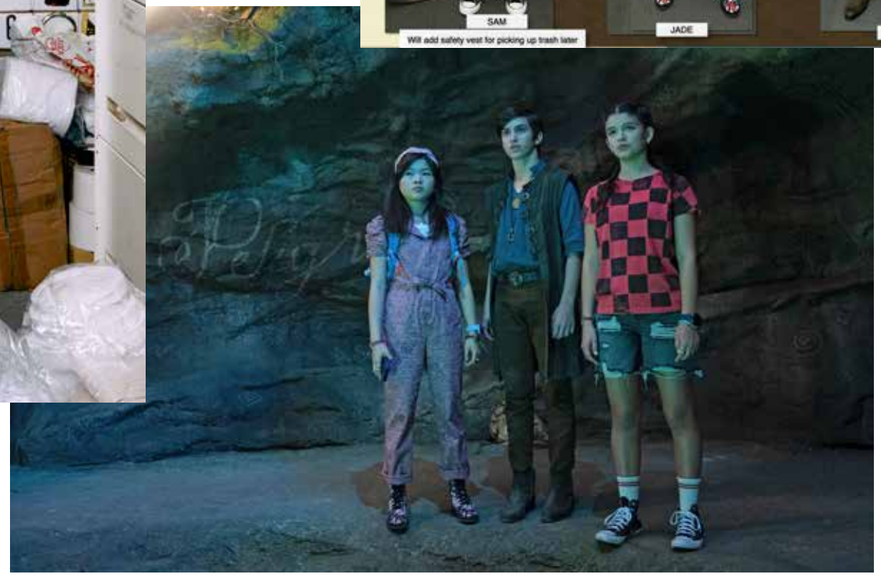
Natalie Turturro Mettouchi
Costume Designer
Esther in Wonderland (short film, 2021)
Assistant Costume Designer
Feud: Capote's Women (television, TBD)
Maestro (feature film, 2023)
Hello Tomorrow! (television, 2023)
The Time Traveler's Wife (television, 2022)
Hunters (television, 2020)
The Deuce (television, 2017–18)
The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel (television, 2017)
The Greatest Showman (feature film, 2017)
Costume Shopper
New York City Ballet (2013–15)

Joyce Kim Lee
Costume Designer
Surfside Girls (television, 2022)
Disney's Magic Bake-Off (television, 2021)
Just Roll with It (television, 2019–21)
Walk the Prank (television, 2018)
The Muppets (television, 2015–16)
The Haunted Hathaways (television, 2013–15)
The Fresh Beat Band (television, 2009–13), winner, 2012 Daytime Emmy for Outstanding Achievement in Costume Design/Styling

a third with the background—the people without speaking roles. Tailors make adjustments or, if something truly unique is needed, build a custom piece.

The apron for the opening scene of *Hunters* was a team effort: they bought several copies of a plain apron, and a member of the design team created the artwork for screen printing. During filming, someone had to be standing by to clean fake blood from the aprons in case the director needed more takes than they had costumes. For one of the lead actors, Logan Lerman, who had to embody a young New Yorker, the costume team wanted a very specific and authentic look. "We referred to Levi's archives," Mettouchi says. The jeans company then helped them recreate several pairs of vintage pants. And for Lerman's costar, Al Pacino—who plays a Holocaust survivor and philanthropist—head costume designer John Dunn created custom suits.

"We pay a lot of attention to the types of garments and fabrics, based on the character's socioeconomic status," Mettouchi says. "Where would they have shopped? How often would they have worn something?" If the answer to that last question is "often," then a garment is sent to the ager/dyer, who is responsible for making clothes look used.



This page: Joyce Kim Lee is the costume designer for the Apple TV+ show *Surfside Girls*, about two best friends trying to solve a ghost mystery. Opposite page: Lee's costume fitting images for *Surfside Girls*' Sam (YaYa Gosselin), Jade (Miya Cech), and Remi (Spencer Hermes-Rebello) and how they appear on film.

Photo by Patrick Strattner, taken at Target. Trim Corp., Los Angeles

Courtesy of Joyce Kim Lee (top). Jessica Brooks/Apple TV+

The costumes must fit the overall look and feel of the project, so close collaboration with the production designer is critical. Lee collects paint chips and color samples from each set to avoid accidentally putting someone in a red shirt if they'll be filmed standing in a red room or sitting on a red sofa. Because some of the *Surfside Girls* locations had to be filmed with a green screen backdrop—the locations were added digitally in postproduction—Lee couldn't choose clothing that included any green in those scenes.

Each costume must eventually be approved by the director, showrunner, and perhaps even studio or network executives. But before that, costume designers need to make sure the options work for the actors. Do any of them have allergies to a particular material? Ethical objections to wearing leather or fur? Tattoos to cover?

"What do people first see when they watch a television show? They see the actor and what they're wearing."

JOYCE KIM LEE

"It's the actor who is on camera, and my job is to provide them with the tools to feel like they've found the character," Lee says. But actors don't always speak up—or have a choice—when they're uncomfortable with something. Lee recalls a friend who dreaded going into her dressing room every day for six weeks because of what she had to wear.

To avoid putting an actor in that position, Lee takes advantage of her limited time alone with each cast member. "I say, 'When I submit these costumes to the director and showrunners, what happens after that is out of our hands—but while you're in my fitting room, let's have some fun and try to find this character.'"

For Lee, *Surfside Girls* was a rare opportunity to work on a project for which she felt a personal connection. The show was created, written, and directed by women, and starred a family of Asian descent. Lee was particularly interested in adding small details that helped to define Jade's family. She worked with the actors, director, and showrunner, for instance, to figure out how the characters could remove their shoes quickly when they entered the house. And she gave Jade delicate pieces of gold jewelry—a contrast to her friendship bracelets—meant to be gifts from her father, who was often away from home on business. Lee recalls seeing very few Asian faces on television when she was growing up, so she was proud to help create characters who her own children could watch.

While every project brings unique joys and challenges, Lee approaches each with the same attitude. "We're storytellers," she says. And to tell the best story, she wants to find harmony among the ideas of the director, showrunner, actor, and herself. The goal, she says, is to have a magical moment when the actor finally puts on a costume and everyone in the room senses their transformation into character. "I have this phrase: 'You know when you know,'" she says. "We think, 'This is it. We love this. It feels right, and the actor is happy.'" ●

CONDUCTING CHANGE

LINA GONZALEZ-GRANADOS HOPES TO OPEN DOORS FOR MORE WOMEN OF COLOR IN CLASSICAL MUSIC

By Joel Brown

Photos by Todd Rosenberg

Female conductors are vanishingly rare in classical music, especially at its highest echelons. Lina Gonzalez-Granados is getting there fast.

After winning the fourth Chicago Symphony Orchestra Sir Georg Solti International Conducting Competition, in 2020 Gonzalez-Granados ('20) was named the new Solti Conducting Apprentice under the guidance of Maestro Riccardo Muti, a post she will hold until June 2023. She was also appointed resident conductor by the LA Opera, a position she has through June 2025. She has been a conducting fellow of the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Seattle Symphony.

Gonzalez-Granados is also an immigrant—not a big deal for white men from Europe, but another challenge for a woman from Cali, Colombia. In fact, she says, being Latina was often more of an obstacle than gender. Her success has much to do with her calling forth a "rich, heartfelt orchestral sound" (*Chicago Sun-Times*), "rhythmic vitality" (*San Francisco Chronicle*), and "raw power" (*LA Times*). But it also required considerable determination.

She came to the United States in 2010, earned a master's from New England Conservatory (NEC) and a doctorate at CFA. While in Boston, she founded the Unitas Ensemble chamber orchestra, which promoted and performed the works of Latin American composers; it's dormant now because of her recent move to Philadelphia with her husband, trumpet player Andrew Moreschi.

We talked to Gonzalez-Granados about the resistance she has faced in her career, and how she hopes doors will open for all.

"There was very direct and outright closure of doors. But it really didn't matter because then I kept studying and studying and trying to find the opportunities."

***CFA*: It seems that coming to the United States in 2010 was the first door you had to open because there weren't enough opportunities for you in your home country?**

Lina Gonzalez-Granados: It's about a gender bias that has permeated there, but it's not only about gender; it's also how centralized and very little the opportunities in culture are in my country. All the things that are of the level that I would have aspired to in order to grow would be only in Bogotá or Medellín. Yes, I lived in Bogotá and did my undergraduate study there, but at the same time I was kind of an outsider, you know? The schools were very closed, and if you were in one school, you weren't in the other. So all the opportunities were very fragmented. I always took it seriously, but I think there was a more serious rigor in the schools here, to set me up for better opportunities.

But there were also challenges here?

Yes, it was different, because you had to add the race identity, which is something that is very unique in the States from other parts of the world, and how Latinos feed into not only the web of classical music, but actually how we feel in society. And that was my first encounter with that reality, which I think was way more significant than gender, because gender was slowly progressing.

Was the bias against Latinos subtle or right in your face?

There was very direct and outright closure of doors. But it really didn't matter because then I kept studying and studying and trying to find the opportunities. I was moving around, not necessarily waiting for that door that was closed to be open, because I think once it's closed, it's closed; there is no way to change people's minds. The only thing that I could keep doing was learning, which was my priority...just to learn as much as possible, for when the opportunity came I was more ready than anybody else. I think it was harder to be in academia than outside. Regardless of the universities that I studied at, there was little to no interest in making sure that all the opportunities were equal for everyone, and that was very clear.

Did people say they didn't want to work with a Latina conductor?

No, not in those words, but they were like, "You should go to your country and contribute there." When they asked me about my dreams and aspirations, it was like, "Why don't you go back? Your country would be better served if you go back instead of staying here." Those were the words. It was not the easiest.

I interviewed composer Missy Mazzoli (BUTI'98, CFA'02), who told me that she was often the only woman in her class and that often there were no female faculty either.

In my groups, I was always the only woman in orchestra conducting.

In my time at NEC, the first year we were only two people, and it was fantastic because it was a Venezuelan guy and me. So that was very, very nice, because we were able to form a bond out of that. We didn't do anything but just work and enjoy each other's company. We're talking about 2013 and 2014. Sometimes there were [public] commentaries that in this era would be absolutely reprehensible. And it's like, oh, right, this is racism. At that moment, there was not that much awakening to how much you can hurt someone by your words, especially in education. Things have progressed very fast.

I gather that you also found some mentors, though, who helped you along.

Oh, yes, absolutely. I mean, we're talking about all the bad things. But the good thing is that within my community I did find extraordinary mentors and supporters. Benjamín Juárez, he's a professor of fine arts emeritus now, and he was the CFA dean before all of this happened. He was very supportive of my endeavors. All of this, all it did was inspire me to find more voices in my art, to find a louder voice in my Latin American art. And from being isolated, I started to surround myself with people who felt that they could help me artistically, and he was one of them; and from then it just grew.

He introduced me to [American conductor] Marin Alsop one day, and she also became a big supporter of my art. And then, after marrying, I started getting busier outside Boston, and ultimately I started getting a lot of notoriety because of these endeavors.

Marin Alsop, then Baltimore Symphony Orchestra music director, was a rarity—a woman on the podium in America. She must have discussed that with you?

Of course. Marin has always helped us when we are breaking barriers because she has been the first in a lot of things. For example, I'm now the first Latina to hold a major position in an opera company, a conducting position. And I was the first Latino ever to conduct the Chicago Symphony. Those are big things! And I can only empathize with someone like her because she did it—she was the first to do a lot of major things.

We talk about the responsibilities and we talk about the burden that it is to carry that. Because in the end, it falls to our good work to open other doors for other generations. So, that's a huge responsibility to bear.

There were other mentors besides Marin Alsop and Benjamín Juárez?

Bramwell Tovey [former BU director of orchestral activities] was the best mentor I could ever have. It's still a little bit painful [thinking] about his passing [in July 2022], but I do carry everything that he taught me every day. He was the most positive man I've ever met. It was because of him I ended up graduating and closing that chapter in happiness. He opened every major door that I could find. When I found out about his passing—talk about feeling lonely! That day I knew that I lost my biggest champion.

What you are doing artistically is one of the most challenging things to do, with the additional layer of challenges for women and Latinos. There must be moments where all that really feels like a lot, and you must have found that strength somewhere...?

The older I get, the more I've realized that my strength comes from the love that I received from my family, and how grateful I am to have them supporting me on this journey, unconditionally. Whenever things got hard, I could always turn to my family. But when things were less difficult, and my parents were there and my husband was there, I tried so much because I was striving in the happiness and the love that I was receiving. That is my strength.

Have you seen changes in the classical world in the last few years of turmoil?

Definitely. For women, it started with #MeToo, which was a very important moment. This call to justice, it's important in order to have a healthier business environment within the classical world. The only downfall is that we are reactionary, not proactive. So, things have changed because of the great cataclysmic and cultural things that have happened.

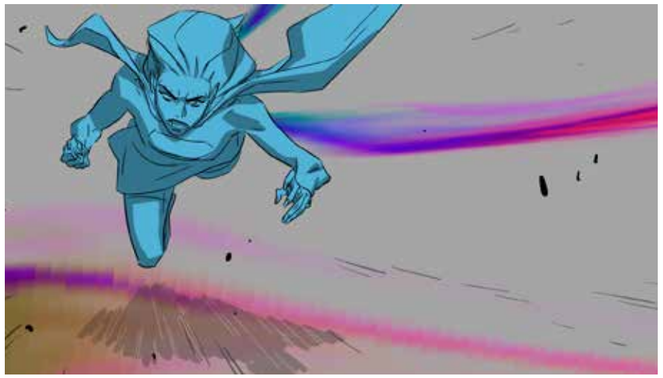
I've seen change. My hope is that women of color get all the opportunities. In the pyramid of parity, women of color are always last to be seen. I hope it is fast approaching. I hope it's not because of something very dramatic happening, but only because we really need those voices.

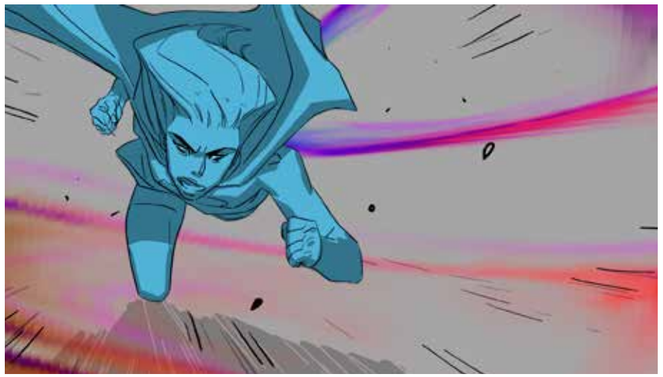
SUPER ANIMATOR

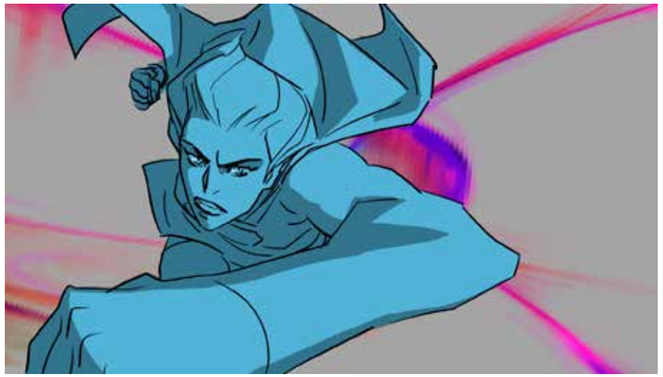
Jeff Wamester brings your favorite comic characters to life onscreen

By Mara Sassoon / Photos by Patrick Strattner

Jeff Wamester is a director at Warner Bros. Animation, where he oversees direct-to-video films based on DC Comics characters.



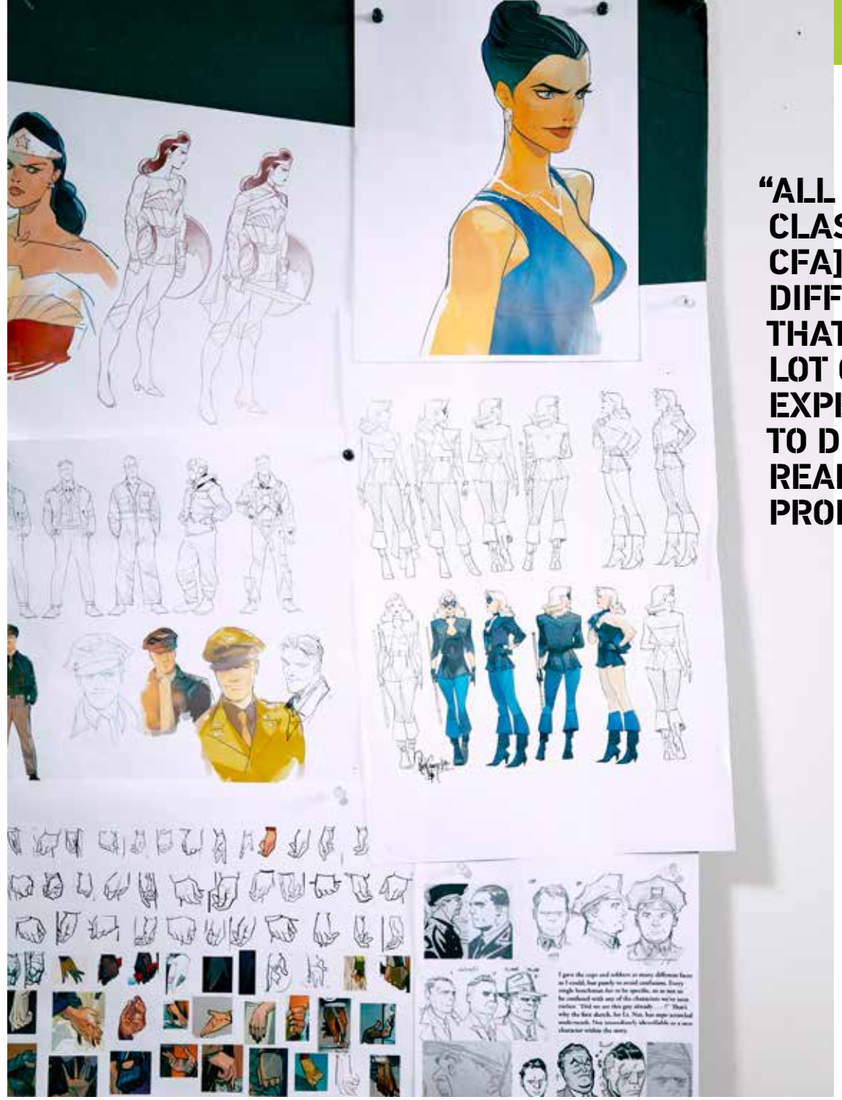




When Jeff Wamester was growing up in the 1970s and '80s in a small Connecticut town, his world revolved around drawing, cartoons, and comics. He looked forward to Saturday mornings, when he could plant himself in front of the television and watch his favorite animated series for hours. "I was absolutely fascinated with shows like *Voltron* and *Macross*, which were part of the beginning of anime gaining popularity in the United States," he says. "I couldn't get enough of them." After his morning cartoons, he'd slip away to sketch or pore over a stack of comics. "I read everything from Marvel and DC Comics. I'd borrow them from my local barbershop of all places. They had a bunch of comics that had just been sitting there for an eternity. Some of them were 30 or 40 years old."

By the time Wamester ('94) was nearing high school graduation, he realized that reading comics and watching cartoons could be more than just hobbies—he wanted to make them for a living. He studied art and illustration at BU and the University of Connecticut and today works for Warner Bros. Animation. As a director, Wamester oversees direct-to-video films based on DC Comics characters, including *Justice Society: World War II* (2021), which features the Flash, Wonder Woman, Superman, and Hawkman;

Courtesy of Jeff Wamester (storyboards)



For each film he directs, Wamester oversees the creation of a storyboard, a series of drawings that illustrate key moments in the script. It can consist of more than 1,000 individual panels, like those at left from *Legion of Super-Heroes*. He's also involved in character development and design (above and next page).

and *Legion of Super-Heroes* (2023), in which Supergirl attends a superhero training school.

"Working on these projects is exciting," Wamester says. "One of the things I find the most fun is trying to dig deep into these characters and consider how they are going to react to certain situations, and how they are going to grow. Every scene means something toward that."

BUILDING A FILM

Wamester's filmmaking process starts when he gets a script from the writers. It's his job

"ALL OF THE DRAWING CLASSES THAT I TOOK [AT CFA] MADE A HUGE DIFFERENCE. I FOUND THAT BECAUSE I HAD A LOT OF LIFE DRAWING EXPERIENCE, I AM ABLE TO DRAW REALLY QUICKLY, REALLY ACCURATELY, AND PROPORTIONALLY."

to make the visuals that bring those words to life. First, he oversees the creation of a storyboard, or a series of drawings that roughly illustrate key moments in the script. He works with a group of storyboard artists, sometimes 10 or more, going over the aim of the film and assigning each one a section of the script to illustrate using the software Storyboard Pro.

"Making storyboards can be a real grind because it's a lot of drawings you have to do," he says. "We're talking probably around 1,000 to 1,200 individual panels that need to be drawn." Wamester speaks from experience. He got his start in the industry as a storyboard revisionist for the animation company Film Roman's TV series *Ultimate Spider-Man*, and continues to work on storyboards on a freelance basis. Revisionists step in after directors request changes to storyboards. They'll change frames to better fit the timing of the film or television show, add elements to a scene (or take them out), and clean up the drawings to get them ready for the next step: creating the animated version of the storyboard, called the animatic, which plays the rough drawings in sequence, timed to voiceovers and sometimes music.

The foundational skills Wamester developed in classes at CFA, including understanding color theory and rendering three-dimensional objects, have helped him in his animation career. "All of the drawing classes that I took, too, made a huge difference," he says. "I found that because I had a lot of life drawing experience, I am able to draw

really quickly, really accurately, and proportionally. I spend less time thinking about how I'm going to draw something and more time thinking about the story and the points that we're trying to make. If you haven't honed your drawing skill like that, then you're fighting between telling the story and trying to draw the picture."

There are different approaches to creating storyboards, but the process always starts with a series of more rudimentarily sketched-out versions—the "roughs"—and ends with a set of more polished panels called "cleans." It can take about eight weeks to storyboard just 7 to 10 minutes of film.

"Some people pick out key points," Wamester says, "and they board those first and then go back and connect them. Some people do it more straightforward. I've taken that approach. I read the whole story, so I know it in my head, and I'll start drawing it out chronologically. If I see something's not working, I'll backtrack and fix it until it's got the functional trail or sequence that I want to create in the setup for that moment." The first draft, he says, is usually just for placing characters and seeing how they are moving through a scene. In later versions, the drawings get more detailed and characters begin to look truer to their final form, with their emotions and expressions added.

On the films he directs, Wamester gives feedback to storyboard artists as soon as they turn in the first rough panels. "I start making suggestions, like, we need to emphasize this, or this action doesn't hit the target for what we're trying to do in this scene, or we can use a better moment here or a different kind of shot." He'll get a revised version back to further fine-tune. "Sometimes there will be a story point that I'm like, 'Oh, this isn't going to work, whatever way we do it.' My job is to go to the producer and let them know that I think there's a problem. Sometimes I'll even come up with a solution and provide it, writing half a page of the story, or revising lines, adding lines, or pulling lines."

After the animatic is created, the film heads to production. Using various software programs, members of the animation team refine the pacing and design—including how the characters and environments should look—and animate the sequences, honing the color and lighting, adding voiceovers and music, and working with sound designers to perfect other sonic effects.

As director, Wamester is also involved in aspects of character development and design throughout the process of making a film. "I go through the script and ask, 'What is this character's story, and how do they progress through the story?'" He makes sure that the films stay true to the characters involved. "A lot of the characters we work with at WB exist within this canon. So, when we have a story, we're thinking about how the canon plays into the story. We're working within this huge network of stories and interactions, and we're trying to make sure that what we're doing is progressing these stories and characters, and motivating them. We want to avoid having a character do something 'just because.'"

COMIC-CON MOMENT

Wamester will never forget the joy he felt as a kid, reading the comics he borrowed from his barber. "I think ever since I picked a comic up, I've wanted to create one myself," he says. For years, he'd come up with ideas, eventually landing on one he thought was worth pursuing—*Electropunk: Children of the Future*, an alternative history graphic novel inspired by inventor and engineer Nikola Tesla, who is well known for pioneering the use of AC electricity and who experimented with the wireless transmission of electricity. "Tesla's lab burned down in the 1890s, and he had said that he had hundreds of experiments in there that were destroyed, a ton of ideas that he was going to follow through on," Wamester says. "This story kicks in as if that never happened, and through those experiments he discovers there are indeed things that go bump in the night. And so he enlists his orphaned niece and nephew, who he trains from when they're very young, to help him stop these monsters."

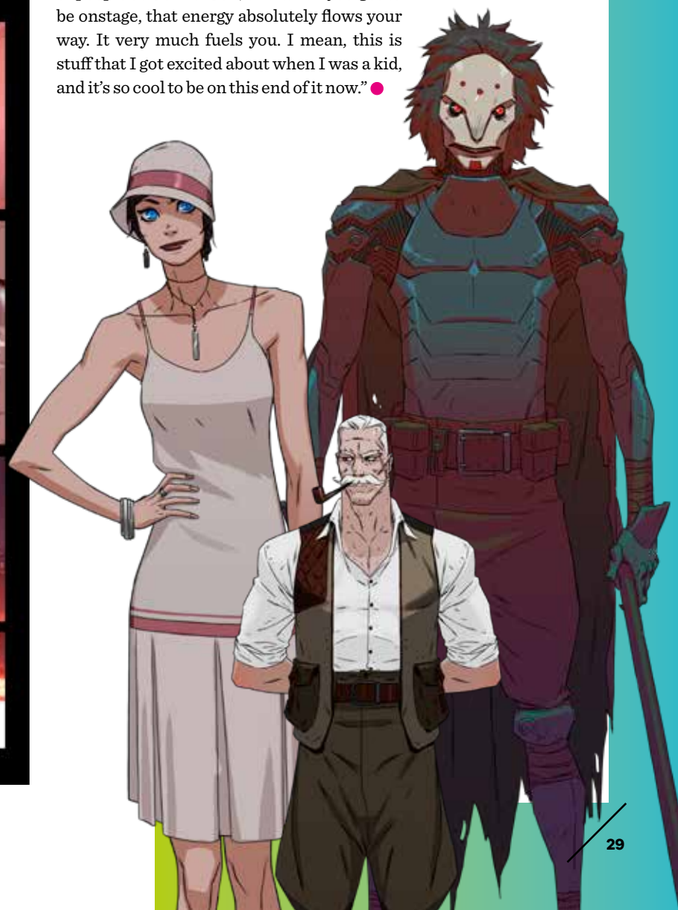
He pitched the idea to his writer friend B. Dave Walters, who he was hoping would collaborate with him on the graphic novel. "He thought it was such a cool idea," Wamester says. "We had an initial meeting, and he just took off and wrote the graphic novel, along with a 12-issue miniseries and another origin prequel novel." In 2020, at the beginning of the pandemic, they launched a Kickstarter campaign with the hope of raising enough money to produce the comic. They raised a little more than $45,000, more than their $30,000 goal. After beginning production on it two years ago, Wamester says, they completed a final proof in December 2022 and are looking for a publisher.

Below: Wamester collaborated with writer B. Dave Walters to create the graphic novel *Electropunk*, an alternative history graphic novel inspired by inventor and engineer Nikola Tesla. They completed a final proof in December 2022 and are looking for a publisher.

Courtesy of Jeff Wamester

In the meantime, Wamester is basking in the full-circle trajectory of his career. In July 2022, he was a panelist at San Diego Comic-Con, where he premiered *Green Lantern: Beware My Power*, another film he directed for Warner Bros. Animation. He joined the film's voice actors—Aldis Hodge (*Black Adam*), Jimmi Simpson (*Westworld*), and Jamie Gray Hyder (*Law & Order: SVU*)—onstage to answer fans' questions about the film. "It's exciting to have a movie showing up on the screen and have that many people cheer and laugh at places that I had been thinking, 'Oh, I want to make them laugh here,'" he says.

"It's hard to explain the level of excitement of people at Comic-Con, and when you get to be onstage, that energy absolutely flows your way. It very much fuels you. I mean, this is stuff that I got excited about when I was a kid, and it's so cool to be on this end of it now."



Collagene Creative Clinic

A NOT-SO-STILL LIFE

By Molly Callahan

Illustration by Silke Werzinger

Cindy Garza Moore worked with teens at risk of dropping out of high school. With art, she found a way to get them excited about classes again.

CINDY GARZA MOORE

was working with at-risk teenagers in a Texas school district when she noticed something that would change her career: the students came alive when they were making art or music.

"These were kids who were dealing with really adult issues like pregnancy or addiction," says Moore ('19). They had chronic absences and faced the possibility of not graduating high school. "It wasn't so straightforward for them to just get up and go to school. But I saw right away that many of these students connected with the arts." Students who previously skipped classes would make time for painting or music, creating a doorway for them to attend other classes. "They would say things like, 'I think if I had an extra music class, I could make my schedule work.'" Sometimes, these extra classes gave students enough credits to graduate. Other times, it was the motivation they needed to get back into their other classes throughout the day.

Moore knew at that moment she had to throw herself into art education. But while she had worked in schools, she didn't have a degree in teaching, and had no art experience. That didn't stop her. She went back to school and then launched a nonprofit to make art programs available to her community.

ENGAGING STUDENTS IN THE ARTISTIC PROCESS

Moore grew up in Weslaco, Tex., a city of 40,000 just north of the Mexico border that she describes as "a little hole-in-the-wall place." She doesn't remember having many art classes as a kid, except for one class in middle school that was a graduation requirement. Just before her freshman year of high school, she moved to Lewisville, a city almost three times as populous that's closer to Dallas and Fort Worth.

Moore "lived a whole life" before starting her job with at-risk students in the Lewisville Independent School District in 2011: "I got married, got divorced, moved to California, moved back, got remarried." When she moved back to Texas from California, she was recruited to work for the school district. "I'm bilingual and had a lot of people and tech skills due to working since I was 15," she says, qualities that made Moore an ideal candidate for a pilot program designed to reenergize students at risk of dropping out of high school.

Moore worked in the program for two years as its risk director, building relationships with teenagers who were close to dropping out, then working with them to design a schedule that would enable them to graduate instead.

"I started to realize, wow, the arts have this really huge, profound effect on the students," Moore says. She was inspired to pursue a career in art education. Without any formal art training, Moore enrolled at Texas Woman's University (TWU) for her bachelor's degree in art education and her teaching certification, where she was plunged into art and education.

"I remember my professor asked how many of us were confident in our artistic abilities? And, like, 90 percent of the class raises their hands while I'm sort of looking around, just sweating it out. I didn't know what I was capable of."

Moore needn't have worried. The professor's lesson that day was that it's more important for art educators to be passionate about engaging their students in the artistic process. Moore had that covered.

"I always loved the facilitation. Doodling around with kids in the at-risk program, and telling them that I just started drawing too. Those were really special moments."

Moore's art education at TWU ran the gamut: she learned about oil paints and papermaking. She fell in love with watercolors—she can still lose a whole day painting in the medium. And she grew as an artist; when she looks back at some of her earliest work, she sees rudimentary skills—and a whole lot of heart.

"I would show my students my [early] work, and they would be shocked," she says. "I told them that it just goes to show that if you practice, practice, practice, you *will* get better at something. One day, you'll make something you're really proud of, and no one can take that feeling away from you."

During her four years at TWU, Moore volunteered with the Teaching Artist Network, an organization that brings the arts out into the local community. By her senior year, she was voted its president, and she quickly ramped up the organization's outreach efforts, bringing free arts events and programs to a wider audience in Lewisville and beyond.

Moore, who describes the early part of her 20s as somewhat rudderless, had found her passion—using art as a way to connect with people and to help her community.

CHANGING LIVES THROUGH ART

After graduating from TWU, "I felt like I was halfway there," Moore says. "And I'm not one to do anything halfway." She enrolled in the master's in art education program at the CFA's School of Visual Arts to round out her schooling. The online program allowed her to stay in Texas, where she was raising her daughter, Ella.

Moore says she was drawn to the advocacy curricula in her classes. She wasn't just learning how to teach students art, but how to engage with them and their communities at the same time.

"I just fell in love with the professors at BU," she says. "It was such a nurturing environment, and I felt like I was part of a community. They gave us autonomy to complete projects in a way that spoke to each of us as artists, and that was so formative for me. I didn't feel like there was only one right way to do things. I try to give my students that same autonomy and foster that same curiosity in them."

Halfway through the two-year program, Moore created a nonprofit organization, Creatives Unite, that married her activism and her art. She and a group of volunteer artists, musicians, and creative problem-solvers sought ways to bring art to people and do some good.

At one event, she and other volunteers created watercolor portraits of pets at an animal shelter—anyone who adopted a pet got to take home a custom portrait. The shelter cleared out in a day. Creatives Unite volunteers also hosted workshops to teach teenagers how to use their creative talents in a job setting—kids who love music and audio learned how to create podcasts, for example. Every year, organizers would raise money to buy art supplies for children in the local children's hospital. And sometimes, the organization hosted events that were related to creative fields in more tangential ways, Moore says. They taught people how to fill out financial aid forms for college, or how to manage their finances as freelancers.

Moore graduated from BU with a renewed sense of purpose. She taught at an elementary school by day, and poured herself into Creatives Unite by night.

Perhaps most rewarding, though, is hearing from former students in the at-risk program all those years ago.

"I hear from students who tell me that I changed their lives, or that they felt seen and cared for in my classroom," she says. "That's the best. That's all you want, as a teacher."

Now, Moore is preparing for another reinvention. She and her family are moving to the Big Island of Hawaii, to be closer to Moore's in-laws. She and Ella have been learning as much as they can about the history and culture of the archipelago state, and Moore is already dreaming of how to build a new chapter of Creatives Unite in her new home—

"I HEAR FROM STUDENTS WHO TELL ME THAT I CHANGED THEIR LIVES, OR THAT THEY FELT SEEN AND CARED FOR IN MY CLASSROOM. THAT'S THE BEST. THAT'S ALL YOU WANT, AS A TEACHER."

the first of a network of chapters she hopes to create for the nonprofit. While Moore is still in the earliest stages of imagining what an expanded Creatives Unite will look like, the goal, she says, "has never been about the money. It's always been about the impact we can have on people.

"I've had some time—in between packing up our entire lives—to reflect on everything we've done [with Creatives Unite], and it still boggles my mind. We've been able to reach so many people, all with this idea of: What are we good at? How can we help? It doesn't take much—just someone to care."

VISIT: CREATIVESUNITE.ORG

FEATURE

ART MEETS ACTIVISM

Michelle Lougee and Resa Blatman create works that bring the environmental crisis to the fore

By Steve Holt

Cambridge, Mass., artist Michelle Lougee created this wall tapestry out of plastic collected from local cleanups.

J.D. Cohen

WHEN

Lougee (at right) uses upcycled plastic to make plarn (plastic yarn), which she knits into sculptures of dinoflagellates, diatoms, and other microscopic underwater life—blown up by a factor of many millions.

Julia Feather (top); Dean Powell (bottom)

Dave Barnum; Julia Feather (portrait)

Michelle Lougee picks up a plastic shopping bag, a soda bottle cap, or one of those tiny plastic and foil contact lens packages, she's not seeing trash, but dinoflagellates, diatoms, and other microscopic underwater life. The Cambridge, Mass., artist uses upcycled plastic to create the tiny plants and creatures—invisible to the naked eye—that are being choked out by post-consumer microplastics in our oceans.

Lougee makes some of these sea organisms by cutting plastic shopping bags into loops and crocheting them together around a wire support. In the summer of 2022, she debuted a wall tapestry—made of plastic collected from local cleanups—at Magazine Beach in Cambridge. Every one of her works takes hundreds of pieces of litter out of circulation that might have joined the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, a giant concentration of trash floating in the North Pacific Ocean that horrified her when she learned about it 15 years ago. Her works elicit, on first glance, whimsy and vibrancy, followed by sadness as the reality sets in that humanity appears hopelessly addicted to plastics that will never biodegrade.

"I want people to think, 'Wow, it's magical!' and then, 'It's horrible!'" says Lougee ('89,'94). "I want to walk that balance between beauty and disgust."

Using art to inspire a societal change is nothing new, and neither is art that makes a point about caring for the environment. But as news about Earth's ecological future gets progressively bleaker, alums Lougee and Resa Blatman have escalated the urgency in their art and become activists for a course reversal. Lougee calls on neighbors to organize cleanups and collect plastics to use in her pieces.

Somerville, Mass.–based Blatman ('06) says she was "appalled and saddened" in 2010 while watching a documentary about hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. She began making paintings and installations about climate change and started speaking about it more resolutely at her exhibitions. Blatman says she's observed an explosion of eco-artists like her and Lougee, whose work is reaching broader audiences, including those who may not accept human-caused climate change.

"When I first started doing this work, there were not that many environmental artists," Blatman says. "There was a group of us, and the majority were women. We were all being put in the same shows. Now, though, there are so many artists working with this theme, here and around the world."

SHIFTING ART

Painted scenes from nature were already a part of Blatman's repertoire when she sat down in 2010 with her husband to watch *Gasland*, the documentary showing the impacts on communities where energy companies were drilling for natural gas through fracking. With growing alarm, she watched as water and air became so badly contaminated by methane and other chemicals that residents developed a variety of chronic illnesses and, famously, found they could even light their water on fire.

Blatman was angry. She needed to learn more about how humans were hurting the environment, and knew that her artwork had to reflect what she was learning. Prior to her environmental awakening, one of her pieces might have depicted a natural ecosystem in careful balance. In her more recent work, ominous clouds hover over a colorful bird, a clump of green grass, or fragile wildflowers, signifying their vulnerability in the face of mounting threats. She began to exhibit with artists whose work made statements about species extinction, sea level rise, and other ecological crises.

Blatman's process starts by combing through pictures and articles on the web. She recalls coming across an image of algae growing in bodies of water where people were swimming. She was struck by both the awful reality *and* the shade of green. "It was so beautiful I couldn't resist it," she says. "So, I started painting about that. Oftentimes, I'll read about a topic, but because I'm a visual person, the visuals capture me. And then I think, people need to know about this."

Sometimes, Blatman's inspiration comes from seeing the problem in person. In 2015, she participated in a residency with the Arctic Circle, a nonprofit that leads arctic expeditions for artists and scientists to encourage environmental advocacy. She lived and worked onboard a tall ship with other artists and researchers while sailing among Norway's Svalbard archipelago, just 10 degrees south of the North Pole. A few years later, she and her husband visited Greenland. "When you look out at Disko Bay, icebergs the size of buildings drift by very slowly. You can't help but be in awe of their size and magnificence," she says. "The icebergs also attract humpback whales to feed on the krill that live there, and you get to witness an impressive dance of enormous rolling, diving, breath-spraying creatures up close. How can we not want to protect our environment when we see something as remarkable as the seascape of the Arctic, or any other natural wonder?" Blatman has since painted the melting glaciers she saw on her Arctic residency and created macramé "drawings" from a plastic fishing net that she picked up on the frozen beaches. "We took outings to the little islands and picked up trash—toothbrushes, those little dental floss things, combs, bottle tops—all kinds of pieces

1

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Resa Blatman; Jerry Russo (portrait)

Resa Blatman

"I've had people tell me that my work is beautiful, breathtaking, and makes them feel joyful, but also makes them want to cry—makes them want to think about their impact."

RESA BLATMAN

of plastic that came from the Atlantic Ocean and washed up in this place, where nobody lives."

Lougee also remembers the moment her art took on new meaning. She had been creating mixed media art from repurposed devices and electrical cords to depict genetically altered nature and agricultural scenes. Then she learned about the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, a massive vortex of plastic waste and debris swirling around a nearly 8 million square mile area. The majority of the patch is made up of plastic that has floated out from the mainland or cast off from boats and ships, never biodegrading but rather breaking down into microplastics that can be deadly to sea life. Surface trash and microplastics block sunlight, which plankton and algae use, along with carbon, to create their own nutrients and form a foundation of the marine food web. "I had that sinking feeling in my stomach, like you do for a personal crisis," Lougee says.

She began collecting plastic bags and crocheting them into recognizable ocean creatures, like octopi and jellyfish and coral. Soon she noticed that the structure of the microscopic organisms mimicked her crochet work, and they became her subjects as well.

Lougee enlists her friends and neighbors to source materials to make "plarn" (plastic yarn) for her fiber art pieces. Her Somerville studio (which she and Blatman used to share) has become a de facto recycling center, where she collects and sorts grocery sacks, newspaper sleeves, and other plastics that she transforms into the tiniest sea creatures—blown up by a factor of many millions, of course.

As part of a 2020 artist residency in Arlington, Mass., Lougee turned bag contributions from the community into an installation of 37 sculptures, titled *Persistence*, along the Minuteman Bikeway. And in the summer of 2022, she and Cecily Miller, public art curator for Arts Arlington, teamed up to collect plastics for the large-scale tapestry that hangs in Mass Audubon's nature center at Magazine Beach in Cambridge. Lougee brought together local children, teens, artists, and other volunteers to piece it together, and puts a fine point on what she wants the tapestry to say: end the use of single-use plastics.

"I have never thought of myself as a community leader," she says, "but I have a responsibility to have offerings of what people can do."

FIGHTING CYNICISM

Mixed into both artists' commitments to using their work to highlight human impact on the environment is a sadness about the slow progress of combatting ecological crises. Despite the passion with which she fights humanity's plastic problem, Lougee sees no end to the primary material in her artwork because corporations are unwilling to improve their packaging. "It's not close to being solved," she says. "The newspaper sleeves and some plastic bags are being phased out, but I've done public art projects with plastic bottle caps, and I don't see those going away anytime soon."

Blatman admits to becoming jaded witnessing humanity's refusal to give up activities that are contributing to ecological collapse—like frequent airplane travel and food and water waste. "I've had people tell me that my work is breathtaking and beautiful, and that they feel joy when viewing it, but some have said that it also makes them sad," she says. "There are changes being made, but I feel apprehensive that they're happening fast enough to save us from overheating, fires, floods, droughts, and a planet that may eventually become too wounded for our health and sustainability."

1. *Fishing Line Drawing* (2017) Fishing line found on the shores of the Arctic Circle; 18 x 10 in.

2. *Universal Sea* (2019) Installation: oil and acrylic on layered, hand- and laser-cut Mylar and Lexan; wall painting; glass crystals; glitter; wire pins; nails; 96 x 192 in.

3. *Bleachy Reef* (2017) Colored pencil and pen on board, mounted on wood panels; 24 x 60 in.

4. Blatman (at left) experimented with painting on Mylar with seaweed during her 2015 Arctic Circle residency.

Making Art House

CFA and COM students team up to produce a sitcom

By Joel Brown

Photos by Michael D. Spencer

TWENTYSOMETHING BARB returns to her family home after a breakup to find a quartet of artists using it as a studio and a crash pad: a dippy interpretive dancer, an inept rapper, an obsessive baker, and a metal sculptor in a welding mask. Barb, understandably, reaches for her mace.

Welcome to *Art House*, a sitcom pilot coproduced by the School of Theatre and COM's Department of Film & Television.

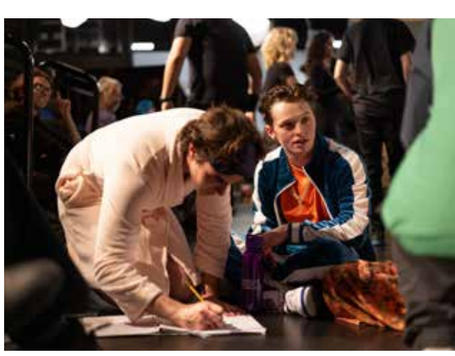
"It came out of our looking for different means of expression in which our students could perform, collaborate, and travel their artistic journeys," says Susan Mickey, director of the School of Theatre. "We're a natural fit. We're hoping this will be the impetus for more work together."

A traditional three-camera sitcom, like *I Love Lucy* and *All in the Family*, *Art House* was taped over several nights at the Joan & Edgar Booth Theatre in late April, with student actors, directors, designers, writers, and camera operators from both colleges working with industry veteran faculty. An elaborate three-room set and a live audience gave it that Hollywood feel.

Halfway between theater and single-camera shoots, the three-camera sitcom is on the way out these days. But Acsa Welker ('23), who plays Barb, says, "Honestly, the sitcom feels like the perfect learning space, because it's kind of the best marriage of the two forms. I feel ready to, hopefully, step onto a set in the future. Even if it's not the same, I still feel like I've learned a lot."

Turns out Barb's brother Phil invited the artists in to assuage his loneliness, and that they're not so bad after all; there's even some of the "hugging and learning" that *Seinfeld* famously eschewed.

A final, edited version of *Art House* will be shown on campus sometime in fall 2023. ●



Acsa Welker ('23) plays Barb (top photo, in tan coat) in *Art House*, a sitcom pilot coproduced by CFA and COM students. Barb comes back to her family home after a breakup to discover four quirky artists using it as a studio. Also pictured in top photo, from left: Sam Regueros ('23), Tyler Statkevicus ('23), Michaela Lazarou ('24), and Katie McRae ('23).

CLASS NOTES

WRITE TO US!
We want to hear what you've been up to. Send us your stories and photos, and we'll share the highlights here. Email **cfaalum@bu.edu**.

1960s

Susan Surman ('60), an award-winning playwright and actress, self-published the romance novel *Trade Off* in August 2022.

Anabel Graetz ('66) appeared in the 2021 movie *Free Guy*, starring Ryan Reynolds. Graetz's other screen credits include the independent film *Island Zero* (2018), *The Greatest Beer Run Ever* (2022), and the NBC series *New Amsterdam*. Graetz was the founder, director, and a soloist with the women's a cappella ensemble Laduvane. In 1995 she teamed up with **Deborah Anne Goss ('70)** to form the Proper Ladies, a duo that performed songs and parlor ballads of 19th-century America throughout the United States.

Mike Moran ('66) is leading the Kitt Moran quartet, which plays jazz regularly at Allegro Bistro in Venice, Fla., and the Grill at 1951 in Port Charlotte, Fla. The quartet has put out several CDs, and many of their songs are available on YouTube. They have collaborated with celebrities over the years, including Merv Griffin, Rosemary Clooney, Don Sebesky, Ron Carter, Burt Bacharach, and Teo Macero.

1970s

Lee-Alison Sibley ('72), who was a vocal performance major, received the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce Leadership Award in November 2022 for her contributions to improving relations between India and the US during her seven years living and working in Kolkata and New Delhi. Through her music and performance of Rabindra Sangeet (songs of Tagore), she forged friendships and was able to raise funds for many NGOs in West Bengal. She received the Woman of the Decade Award for leadership in 2017 from the Women Economic Forum. Sibley lives on Marrowstone Island, Wash.

MARY C. RUZICKA WEBBER ('80) was awarded the Audubon Artists Inc. 2021 Gold Medal of Honor in graphics for her piece *Serenade by Moonlight* at the Salmagundi Club in New York City.

Photo courtesy of Mary Webber

Stewart Lane ('73) produced the Broadway show *Pictures from Home*, starring Nathan Lane, Danny Burstein, and Zoë Wanamaker, which opened in February 2023. The production, based on the photo memoir by Larry Sultan, is a comic and dramatic portrait of a mother, a father, and the son who photographed their lives.

Paula Plum ('75) starred with her husband, Richard Snee, in *Grand Horizons*, the Tony-nominated play about the changing nature of love in marriage. The production ran from July through August 2022 in Gloucester, Mass. Plum is an acting coach and was appointed the 2020–2021 Monan Professor of Theatre Arts at Boston College. She is interim artistic director of Gloucester Stage Company.

Grant H. Drumheller ('76,'78) exhibited his work from January through March 2023 at the University of New Hampshire (UNH) Museum of Art. He is an emeritus professor of art at UNH, having taught there for 32 years. Drumheller will participate as one of six artists at the Museum of New Art/Portsmouth's show *Six*, in recognition of the 400th anniversary of the founding of Portsmouth, N.H. His work will also be featured at the Fine Arts Fair of the Hamptons, in Southampton, N.Y., in July 2023.

Rick Heinrichs ('76) was the production designer for the Amazon Prime Video series *The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power* and the Netflix film *Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery*. Heinrichs won the Art Directors Guild award for Contemporary Feature Film and was nominated for the Set Decorators Society of America, USA, award for Best Achievement in Decor/Design of a Contemporary Feature Film for *Glass Onion*.

Shaun Miskell ('78) retired from the Lab School of Washington in June 2022 after 40 years as the director of performing arts. The school opened the Shaun Miskell Theater in October 2019. After almost 45 years in Washington, D.C., Miskell looks forward to moving back to Massachusetts.

William B. Spencer ('78,'85) had double reed music published by Trevco Music, including an arrangement of *The Stars and Stripes Forever* for bassoon quintet, *The Screamin' Double Reed Blues* for three oboes and three bassoons, and a *Little Suite* for flute and bassoon.

Wilson Chin

ELLIE HEYMAN ('12) was the director of *Space Dogs,* a musical about the true story of Laika, a stray dog, and the Chief Designer, the top-secret Russian scientist who sent her into space during the Cold War. *Space Dogs,* pictured in these two photos, is available for viewing on BroadwayHD, the streaming platform that STEWART F. LANE ('73) and his wife, Bonnie Comley, created. Lane and Comley were also executive producers of the show, and MARY ELLEN STEBBINS ('11) was the production's lighting designer. Heyman's *The Great Work Begins*, a livestream benefit performance of scenes from *Angels in America* in support of amfAR's Fund to Fight COVID-19, made the *New York Times* Best Theater of 2020 list. It featured Glenn Close, Laura Linney, and Brian Tyree Henry.

Marsha Goldberg ('79) was represented by Adah Rose Gallery and had work on display at ART FAIR 14C in Jersey City, N.J., in November 2022. Goldberg also had two pieces in *The New Jersey Arts Annual: Reemergence* at the New Jersey State Museum in Trenton, which ran through April 2023, and a solo show that surveyed her work from the past decade at the Hostetter Arts Center Gallery in Basking Ridge, N.J., from November through December 2022. Goldberg was a resident artist at the Ucross Foundation in Wyoming from August through December 2022.

1980s

Julia Shepley ('80) finished a series of 16 unique prints for an artists' book collaboration with poet Susan Roney O'Brien and 11 other printmakers and artists.

Jason Alexander ('81, Hon.'95) directed the Los Angeles run of the play *If I Forget*, which portrays the Fischer family in Washington, D.C., at the turn of the 21st century, exploring both the personal and political issues plaguing them. Alexander was also part of the ensemble for the Comedy Central film *Out of Office* and appeared in the 25th anniversary special for *Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella* in August 2022.

Julia Freifeld ('81) published *In Each Other's Bones: A Memoir of Love, Loss, and Living* (LaGana Publishing, 2022), which chronicles Freifeld's journey from being caregiver and wife to finding a separate identity for herself during her husband's terminal illness.

Gary Ginstling (BUTI'83,'84), former executive director of the National Symphony Orchestra, became executive director of the New York Philharmonic in November 2022. Ginstling will succeed Deborah Borda as president and CEO of the New York Philharmonic in July 2023 after she retires.

Julianne Moore ('83) was named a founding board member for the Equal Rights Amendment Coalition's satirical campaign "WOMAN Corp," which highlights how corporations have more rights than women and calls for the addition of the Equal Rights Amendment to the US Constitution more than 50 years after the Senate passed it.

Justine Coope

LEO EGUCHI ('02), a Japanese American cellist, performed *Unaccompanied*, a series of eight new works he commissioned from immigrant and first-generation composers around the country, at the Pao Arts Center in Boston's Chinatown in October 2022.

Michael Chiklis ('85) starred in the inaugural episode, "Scott's Story," of the Fox anthology series *Accused* in January 2023.

Frank Meissner ('85), **Emily Ranii ('13)**, **James Rotondo III ('17,'23)**, and **Steven Doucette ('19)** worked on Wheelock Family Theatre's (WFT) fall 2022 production of *Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical*. Ranii is the WFT artistic director and was director of the play, Doucette was props designer, Meissner was lighting designer, and Rotondo was shadow puppeteer and scenic painter.

Joel Mroz ('85) recently completed the 25-minute music piece *Three Emily Dickinson Poems for Soprano and Orchestra*. The piece is both a song cycle and a tone poem.

Suzanne Wilson (BUTI'88) was the Phoenix Symphony Orchestra's president and CEO from 2020 to 2022. She has since moved to London with her family. She previously was executive director of the Midori Foundation, an organization that provides high-quality music education to New York City public school students in underserved communities.

Mark Cantrell (BUTI'84,'85,'87, CFA'89) was named president and CEO of the Florida Orchestra in 2019. He strives to make orchestras accessible to all. He was previously executive director of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra and CEO of the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra. Cantrell also became a trained and licensed pilot and flew shuttle planes out of New York's LaGuardia Airport.

1990s

Mary Ann Lanier ('93,'23) published the article "Experiences of Musical Improvisation: Self-Individuation and Participatory Sense-Making" in the peer-reviewed journal *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* in June 2022.

Robert Davison ('97) is creative director of print and photography at Boston University Marketing & Communications. He exhibited his work in the 2022 MassArt x SoWa Design Biennial, a juried exhibition featuring select work from faculty, students, alumni, and staff of the college's graduate and professional certificate programs in design.

Matthew Spivey (BUTI'98) was appointed CEO of the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra in 2022 after joining the organization in 2015. Spivey was instrumental in the appointment of conductor and composer Esa-Pekka Salonen as the orchestra's 12th music director and has developed new ideas, including innovative digital projects and imaginative performance concepts in a variety of concert formats.

Shoshana Telner (BUTI'92,'93, CFA'98) a Canadian pianist, closed out the Les AMIS Concerts at the Loft Cinema in August 2022 in Cobourg, Ontario. This was the last Les AMIS concert at the Loft and it included a variety of genres, from Haydn to contemporary styles.

2000s

Gregg Mozgala ('00) starred in the Broadway production of Martyna Majok's Pulitzer Prize–winning play *Cost of Living*, which highlights the complexities behind caretaking. Mozgala starred as John, a Princeton graduate student who lives with cerebral palsy.

Ginnifer Goodwin ('01) joined the ensemble for *Buddy Games 2*, the sequel to the 2019 comedy *Buddy Games*. She also will star in Disney's *Zootopia 2*, in which she voices the character Judy Hopps.

Ashley Williams ('01) played Aunt Pam in the Apple TV+ television series *Amber Brown*, based on the children's book series by Paula Danziger.

Sarah Davis Eaton ('02) was a soprano soloist in Handel's *Messiah* for the Master Chorale of Sterling's 30th Christmas concert in December 2022 in Sterling, Colo.

Kayla Mohammadi ('02) presented her work in the exhibition *Overlap* from August to September 2022 at the Caldbeck Gallery in Rockland, Maine.

Elissa Von Letkemann ('02) became design director, brand and marketing, at Winter Holben Architecture + Design in Kittery, Maine. In 2023, Von Letkemann was elected to serve on the board of the American Institute of Graphic Arts Maine.

Arturo Chacón-Cruz ('03) performed in *La Traviata* and *The Tales of Hoffmann* in Spain, a concert of opera highlights at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the LA Opera, and *Un Ballo in Maschera* in Maryland in 2021 and 2022.

Amber Gray ('04) was featured in Stacy Kray and Yair Evnine's *Love the Struggle*, which was presented in concert at Joe's Pub in New York City in December 2022. *Love the Struggle* takes inspiration from 20th-century French philosophers and challenges conventional notions of love, freedom, and gender roles. Ticket proceeds were donated to Maestra, a nonprofit organization that provides support, visibility, and community for women and nonbinary musicians in the musical theater industry.

Tetsuo Tamanaha ('04), an assistant professor of fashion design at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), created educational components such as muslin reproductions, videos, and digital patterns that illustrated the complexities of haute couture construction for *Dior + Balenciaga: The Kings of Couture and Their Legacies*, an exhibition at the Museum at FIT in the summer and fall of 2022.

Nathan Troup ('04), a CFA opera lecturer, was the stage director for *Our Town*, an opera based on the Pulitzer Prize–winning play by Thornton Wilder. The production was presented in October 2022 as part of CFA's 26th Fringe Festival.

Uzo Aduba ('05) will star in *The Supremes at Earl's All-You-Can-Eat*, a film based on the 2013 book of the same title by Edward Kelsey Moore. Aduba also will star in *Painkiller*, a Netflix series dramatizing the origins of the opioid crisis in the US.

Na Sun ('05), a member of the New York Philharmonic, was a soloist in the fourth annual *The Sound of Spring: A Chinese New Year Concert with The Orchestra Now*, a collaboration between US-China Music Institute of the Bard College Conservatory of Music and the Central Conservatory of Music, China, which took place in January 2023. The concert celebrated the Chinese Year of the Rabbit and featured Sun performing *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*.

Leslie Sears ('06) and **Brian August ('10)** coauthored an article on the state of opera stage management in the country. The article is one of the American Guild of Musical Artists' most interacted-with articles and was shared on the official AFL-CIO website.

Rachelle Reichert's ('07) artwork was commissioned for permanent exhibition at the Ritz Mandarin Oriental in Madrid, Spain, and Meta headquarters in Menlo Park, Calif. She is exhibiting artwork at the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco, Calif.

Judy Braha ('08) and **David Keohane ('13)** were a part of the Great Barrington Public Theater's *Things I Know To Be True* in August 2022. The drama centers on the complexities of family dynamics, self-identity, and love. Braha, who was the recipient of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education's 2022 Oscar Brockett Outstanding Teacher Award, directed the play. Keohane was part of the cast.

Brian Major ('08,'10), a baritone, was featured in the January 2023 issue of *Opera News*.

Christopher Bannow ('09) was cast as Peter in Soho Repertory Theatre's *Wolf Play*, which ran from February 13 through April 2, 2023 at MCC Theater's Susan & Ronald Frankel Theater in New York City.

David Gram ('09), an assistant professor of theatre at Oakland University, is working on a book for Routledge on contemporary farce and his perception on the genre's evolution and significance as a mode of theater in the 21st century. He focuses on reviewing how playwrights of the global majority have embraced, subverted, and paid homage to the form to comment on social, political, and cultural issues.

Will Hart/NBC/NBCU Photo Bank via Getty Images

ELLEN TAMAKI ('14) portrays Drea Mikami in Netflix's *Manifest*. The series revolves around the passengers and crew of a plane who reappear after being presumed dead for five years.

Alex Wyse ('09) and **John Zdrojeski ('12)** are in the cast of the Broadway musical *Good Night, Oscar*, starring Sean Hayes, which premiered in April 2023.

2010s

Jackie Grant ('10) joined Rainier Youth Choirs for its 16th season as the director of colla voce for grades 6–8. Grant also teaches private voice and piano lessons in Maple Valley, Wash.

Annabel Osberg ('11) contributed to photographer Liz Nielsen's monograph *Apparitions*. She has contributed to two other monographs this year: on Los Angeles abstractionist Dion Johnson and on London-based painter Daniel Crews-Chubb. Osberg recently showed her paintings at the LA galleries Ladies' Room and Serious Topics.

Seth MacLeod ('12), principal cellist of the Cape Ann Symphony and Wellesley Symphony Orchestra, played in the Musicians Unleashed concert series on October 29, 2022, at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Gloucester, Mass., where he joined other Cape Ann Symphony musicians in performing compositions by recently appointed concertmaster Scott Moore, William Grant Still, the Grateful Dead, Rachel Grimes, and Dvořák.

Kenneth Moore ('12) is the band director and chair of the music department at Dexter High School in Michigan and was one of the three conductors asked to participate in the return of the annual Bowling Green State University High School Honors Band event in November 2022.

Mason Morton ('12,'15) and **Kendall Ramseur ('12)**, along with **Cordaro Rodriguez (LAW'12)** and **Micah Christian (STH'12)**, members of the quartet Sons of Serendip, performed for the Boston Common Tree Lighting Celebration in December 2022.

Hyun-ji Kwon ('13), a cellist, was a soloist in the first performance of the Augusta Symphony Orchestra's 2022–2023 season in November 2022 in Augusta, Maine. Kwon has performed in master classes for renowned cellists such as Natalia Gutman and Anner Bylsma. She is on the cello faculty at Colby College, Phillips Exeter Academy, and Project STEP, and she is a member of the Meadowlark Trio, Echo Bridge Cello, and Korean Cultural Society of Boston.

LIZZY RICH ('14), chair of the Boston University Young Alumni Council, married Chris Freyer in July 2022.

Ruth Debrot ('16), a lecturer in music education at CFA, presented a session titled Popular Music, Technology, and Dance in the Middle School at the Association for Popular Music Education conference in the summer of 2022. Debrot also presented a performance ethnodrama and scholarly panel in the summer of 2022 at the International Conference on Narrative Inquiry in Music Education, along with CFA faculty members Diana Dansereau, Tawnya Smith, Kelly Bylica, and Karin Hendricks. Their presentation was titled Interrogating the Myth That the Music Education Academy Is No Longer Sexist.

Chengcheng Ma ('17,'24) and **Hsing-Ho Hou ('22,'24, CAS'22)** participated in the adult division of the Student Concerto Concert of the Illinois Summer Piano Institute in July 2023. Ma performed Maurice Ravel's *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand* and Hou played Franz Liszt's *Totentanz*.

James Rotondo III ('17,'23) and **Marcella Barbeau ('19)** are recipients of the 2022 Robert L.B. Tobin Director-Designer Prize. Along with a team of creative artists, Rotondo (set designer) and Barbeau (lighting designer) created a production concept for the opera *Fellow Travelers*.

Kristoffer Danielsen ('18) taught at the University of Massachusetts Amherst during the fall 2022 semester as a sabbatical replacement for **Gregory Spiridopoulos ('00)**.

Desiré Graham ('18) cocreated *Still a Quiet Afternoon*, a play that features two people who witness several apocalyptic events through their window. The mythic, musical tragicomedy ran in July 2022 at Steppenwolf's 1700 Theater in Chicago, Ill.

Aaron Michael Smith ('18) completed his first feature-length film score for the 2023 film *Playland*, which is centered around the Boston gay bar the Playland Café throughout its history, from 1943 to 1999. It premiered at the International Film Festival Rotterdam in January 2023.

Kyra Tantao ('18) played A-Li in the Disney+ original movie *Zombies 3*.

John DeMartino (BUTI'14,'15, CFA'19,'22), a double bassist, joined the Boston Music Project as the Rimsky Orchestra Director.

2020s

Jose Martínez ('20), a tubist, was named ambassador for the Chicago Luminarts Cultural Foundation in December 2022 and has been a fellow there since 2016. Martínez participated as a guest tuba artist at the brass festival Isla Verde Bronces in Isla Verde, Argentina, in January and February 2023.

Julian Manjerico ('21) was cast as Beppo the Clown in the Tom Hanks comedy *A Man Called Otto*.

Shantel Miller ('21), a painter and 2021 CFA Kahn Award winner, won the 2022 Boston Artadia Award. The decision was reached after an extensive two-tiered jurying process culminating in virtual studio visits.

Hexing Ouyang ('22) was hired as a music enrichment teacher at the Tianjin Juilliard School in China.

Keianna Samantha Wen (BUTI'17, CFA'22) attended the Kent Blossom Music Festival in the summer of 2022 and began her Master of Music in horn performance at McGill University on a full scholarship in the fall of 2022.

Jenny Smith & Co.

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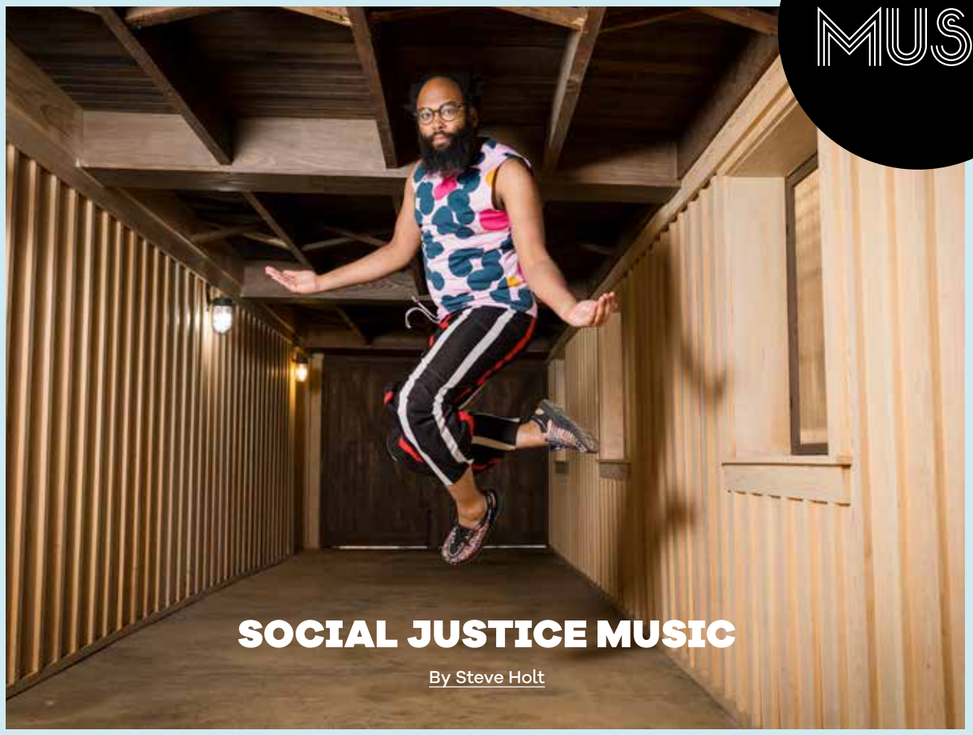

Courtesy of Loghaven Artist Residency

SOCIAL JUSTICE MUSIC

By Steve Holt

AS AN ARTIST, Anthony R. Green is hard to categorize. As a composer, Green ('06) writes traditional tonal ensemble pieces or incidental music for film and stage, but just as much of his work is experimental or even atonal—a style featuring no discernible keys or typical harmonies. As a trained pianist, Green feels as comfortable performing a contemporary piece written by a friend as he does a Margaret Bonds transcription or a Franz Schubert impromptu. Green refers to himself as a social justice artist, creating and performing works that call audiences to consider sexism, racism, homophobia, transphobia, and militarism in our world.

"I consider all of these things part of my Practice, with a capital P," Green says. "And there is not one [defining] word that you can just say and all of these things will be inferred. But I also like that about myself, because I don't like being put in a box. And even though people sort of get me wrong all the time, and I get frustrated by it, I secretly love it because it means that I'm uncategorizable."

Green's start in music came at five years old in Providence, R.I., when he watched his kindergarten teacher peck out a few lines of music on the classroom piano and copied them note for note. Despite continuing to play, he wouldn't start formal piano lessons for another five years, forming the foundation of improvisation, ear tuning, and rule-breaking that define many of his pieces today. At the same time, Green was learning the traditional classical pieces and as a teenager played piano with several church and school choirs and musicals. At BU, Green appeared on track to become a pianist. That is, until freshman classmate Naftali Schindler ('06), a composition major, saw a piece Green had written and encouraged him to double major in composition and piano.

Today, Green composes pieces others have commissioned, and writes and performs his own works. Much of his work now has a social justice bent to it. In 2013, after realizing they didn't know the names of more than seven Black composers between them, Green and his friend and violist Ashleigh Gordon cofounded the Boston-based nonprofit Castle of our Skins, a concert and education series that celebrates Black musical artistry—both contemporary and throughout history. In March, Project STEP—an orchestra comprising youth who identify with historically underrepresented groups in classical music—performed Green's "Chorale," which Green describes as "a sonic celebration of stories of Black feminist resistance of the 19th and early 20th centuries." Green says he wants the works he composes or performs to elicit emotion in audiences, and at times action.

"I would love the audience to develop a curiosity or even a sense of urgency, so that they leave the room knowing more about a situation or feeling more about a situation than they did when they came in," he says. "And if that knowledge and that feeling makes them research, makes them write a letter to their senator, makes them make a donation, then that's icing on the cake for me."

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