

Spring 2013

## DEMO 18

Columbia College Chicago

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# DEMO

ISSUE 18 SPRING/SUMMER 2013

The Alumni Magazine of  
Columbia College Chicago

The avant-garde  
fashion designs of  
**AGNES  
HAMERLIK**

Revitalizing Detroit with  
**PHILLIP COOLEY**

Lessons learned on  
**KICKSTARTER**

**Columbia**  
COLLEGE CHICAGO

May 17, 2013 **ALUMNI AT**

# MANIFEST

★ urban arts festival

**Want to perform? Volunteer? Or just come out and be a part of the awesome Manifest audience?**

If you are an alumnus and would like an application to perform on the Alumni Stage, contact Cyn Vargas at [cvargas@colum.edu](mailto:cvargas@colum.edu).

## **ALUMNI LOUNGE**

**Noon – 7PM**

623 South Wabash  
Quincy Wong Center  
for Artistic Expression

Stop by, sit back, and relax in our alumni lounge! You'll enjoy your fellow alumni performers singing, reciting, dancing, and other cool stuff.

## **ALUMNI & GRADUATION PARTY**

**8PM – 11PM**

Hilton Chicago  
720 S. Michigan Ave.  
Grand Ballroom

**Columbia**  
COLLEGE CHICAGO

[colum.edu/alumnimanifest](http://colum.edu/alumnimanifest)



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Columbia alumni, students, and faculty share lessons learned on their way to crowd-funding success.

By Stephanie Ewing (MA '12)

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Musicians **Nikola Dokic** (BA '08), **Robert Palos** (BA '08), and **Adis Sirbubalo** (BA '07) found friendship and fulfillment by embracing—instead of running from—their roots.

By Sean McEntee ('13)

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Model-turned-entrepreneur **Phillip Cooley** (BA '00) intends to make over Detroit, one building at a time.

By Sean McEntee ('13)

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**ON THE COVER:** Born and raised in Poland, Agnes Hamerlik (BFA '12) is a designer on the rise with a darkly romantic, avant-garde aesthetic. Photo: Drew Reynolds (BA '97)

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to your new *DEMO* magazine. We hope you noticed that it looks different—and in the best possible way.

Since *DEMO* debuted in 2005, it hasn't received a makeover. Over the past two years, we've tweaked the magazine's look and feel as we moved away from being a publication about the college in general and more toward a magazine about, for, and by alumni. After conducting a 2012 reader survey with 1,000+ randomly selected alumni, we assessed what needed to change—and what shouldn't—and we learned that you most like reading about alumni work and professional accomplishments. As a result, we've increased the number of alumni included throughout the magazine (more Class Notes, more alumni in features), we've beefed up our showcase of visual work by alumni (Portfolio), and we've enhanced the alumni personality profiles (Spot On).



**DEMO aims to keep you connected to the college.**

*DEMO* aims to keep you connected to the college, and survey results indicate that the majority of you believe we're succeeding. But we heard loud and clear that you would like more information about networking and career opportunities. Therefore, we revamped our Alumni News & Notes section (previously called Out There). Now you'll find a treasure trove of useful content—including a bigger alumni events calendar (see page 40) and more information on how to get involved with the Columbia Alumni Association & Network (CAAN) chapter in your region (or if there isn't one, how to start one). Look to this section every issue for what's happening with alumni, and how you can take advantage of networking and professional development opportunities.

Finally, we hope you love the clean, modern, and highly readable new design, all thanks to our talented inhouse creative team.

I hope you enjoy your new alumni magazine. Please let us know what you think at [demo@colum.edu](mailto:demo@colum.edu).

**Kristi Turnbaugh**  
Editor-in-Chief

# DEMO

ISSUE 18 SPRING/SUMMER 2013

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### Contact us:

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[colum.edu/demo](http://colum.edu/demo)

## A QUESTION FOR PRESIDENT CARTER



Photo: Erika Dufour (BA '97)

## “I feel good about where we are. I couldn’t have done it alone.”

**DEMO:** As you get set to retire after nearly 13 years as president, what are you most proud of?

**DR. CARTER:** It’s been an interesting, rewarding, and challenging 13 years. I hope that when people look at the college they think it’s a different-looking place. I know it’s a larger place in terms of facilities and enrollment. I hope people feel it’s a better place.

The student body population is different. We were still a commuter institution when I arrived. When we began to get a sense that applications were coming from around the globe, we knew we had to be more residential. And the first important move in that direction was the University Center of Chicago. The year before we opened the UCC, we were housing 500 students. We’re now close to 3,000 beds of students who stay in our facilities. That really helped to change the mixture of our students. Our demographics are completely different now in terms of where our students come from—nationally and internationally.

Growing new programs has been important. We’ve identified and have always tried to keep our eyes on new, evolving fields of study. We’ve created a game design program. We’ve combined the fashion design and fashion business programs into a new fashion studies program. We’ve added the new major of scoring for film and television.

We’ve increased the number of campus buildings. The building of the Media Production Center probably will stand as one of the important activities during this presidency. It ended up being our first and, so far, only building that was built from scratch. It works well for what it was designed to do. It is a showpiece for us. We’re so proud of the building.

But we’re proud of what we’ve done also in our old buildings. We have refurbished them and changed them into some very, very effective teaching and learning spaces. We’ve got a good brand that we’ve established here in the South Loop, and our buildings carry it well.

The college wasn’t raising much money when I arrived. My predecessor [John Duff] was the first president to try to do something in fundraising. We’ve been able to move forward mainly in personal fundraising; we made some right decisions in terms of leadership in that area. I’m very, very pleased that our last gala raised over \$800,000. Our numbers have grown in fundraising, specifically in board and alumni giving.

I feel good about where we are. I couldn’t have done it alone. Kudos go to all of the VPs and deans, department chairs and staff directors, and associate VPs—everybody in the college community who understood this vision and helped us to realize it.



“Dr. Kim’s campus tours and open forum presentations generated an overwhelmingly positive response. The campus is truly energized.”

## Kwang-Wu Kim Named New President

**On February 26, the Board of Trustees approved Kwang-Wu Kim, DMA, as president-elect of Columbia College Chicago.** Kim will become the 10th president in Columbia College’s 123-year history.

Kim, who begins his contract in July, has more than 30 years of experience in performance, teaching, and administration. He is currently dean and director of the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts and professor of music at Arizona State University. In addition to his presidential role, Kim will receive a faculty appointment in the college’s Music Department.

“Dr. Kim’s campus tours and open forum presentations generated an overwhelmingly positive response from the Columbia College community as a whole,” said Allen M. Turner of the Columbia College Board of Trustees. “That type of consensus is extremely rare in higher education, and it was a key indicator that he was the ideal person

for the presidency. The campus is truly energized.”

A native Chicagoan, Kim holds a bachelor’s degree in philosophy from Yale University and a doctorate in music from Johns Hopkins University. Kim will succeed Warrick L. Carter, PhD, who announced his retirement last year and will remain in office until the transition this summer. Carter has been president of the college since 2000. During his tenure, enrollment increased by almost 25 percent to more than 11,000 graduate and undergraduate students. The size of the 2012 graduating class of more than 2,000 students almost doubled the number of graduates who walked the stage a decade ago. The urban campus footprint has doubled to 2.5 million square feet of occupied classroom, office, exhibit, performance, and residence hall spaces, making the college the largest single presence in the downtown South Loop area.

*To learn more about Dr. Kim, go to [colum.edu/drkim](http://colum.edu/drkim).*

## Alumni, Students Win Prestigious Awards

Dozens of Columbia College Chicago students and alumni were nominated for prestigious film and TV awards over the fall and winter. Some winners:



Paul Garnes

### NAACP IMAGE AWARDS

**Paul Garnes** (BA '96) is the line producer for *The Game*, which won for Outstanding Comedy Series.

### GOLDEN GLOBES

**Everett Downing Jr.** ('00) and **Aaron J. Hartline** ('98) were animators on the film *Brave*, which won for Best Animated Feature.

**Len Amato** (BA '75), president of HBO Films, produced *Game Change*, which won for Best Mini Series or TV Movie as well as awards for supporting actor and actress.

### ACADEMY AWARDS

**Everett Downing Jr.** ('00) and **Aaron J. Hartline** ('98) were animators on the film *Brave*, which won for Best Animated Feature.

### INDEPENDENT SPIRIT AWARDS

**Paul Garnes** (BA '96) and his team won the John Cassavetes Award for their film *Middle of Nowhere*.

### REGIONAL CRYSTAL PILLAR AWARD (STUDENT EMMYS)

Eileen Sears won best sports feature for her piece on sled hockey for the Multimedia Sports Reporting class' television show *Beyond the Game*. Jade Lagestee took home the best arts and entertainment award for her feature about AKIRA, the fashion-centered Chicago-based chain of clothing stores that aired on *Metro Minutes*.



**DEBBIE ALLEN**—dancer, choreographer, actor, director, and ambassador for arts education—spoke to the college community on February 27 for Conversations in the Arts. She shared childhood stories, discussed career-defining moments, and offered advice on persevering in the arts.



## Columbia, Second City to Launch Groundbreaking Comedy Degree

Columbia College Chicago and The Second City have collaborated to offer a bachelor of arts degree in theatre with a concentration in comedy writing and performance. When the new academic program launches in fall 2013, Columbia will be the only college in the United States to offer such a degree.

This interdisciplinary program will provide the cross training necessary for graduates to build successful careers in professional comedy as performers, writers, directors, and producers. Writers will learn to perform and pitch their own work, and to understand how to write for performers. Comedic performers will create material that showcases their specific persona and skills, and develop an understanding of the writing process.

The existing semester-long Comedy Studies program at Second City, open to all college students as a collaboration between the two institutions, is now in its fourth year. *For more information, go to [colum.edu/comedy](http://colum.edu/comedy).*

## Alumni of the Year, Commencement Honorees Announced

At this year's commencement ceremonies, taking place May 18 and 19 at the historic Chicago Theatre, Columbia College Chicago will recognize the 2013 Alumni of the Year and honorary degree recipients.

Columbia recognizes alumni who have made outstanding contributions to their fields and embody the mission of the institution as Alumni of the Year. This year, the college honors **DJ Len Ellis** (BA '52), cinematographer **Michael Goi** (BA '80), and journalist **Mary Mitchell** (BA '91).

Honorary degree recipients are outstanding individuals in the arts, education, politics, and public information. This year, the college honors: Jane Hamilton, award-winning novelist; Herbie Hancock, legendary keyboardist and composer; Rennie Harris, pioneering hip-hop dancer; Martha Nussbaum, award-winning author and philosopher; Joe Shanahan, owner of influential music clubs Metro Chicago and Smart Bar; Jessica Stockholder, internationally acclaimed sculptor/installation artist; and celebrated filmmakers **Robert Teitel** (BA '90) and **George Tillman Jr.** (BA '91).





## GIVE & TAKE

### Grease Co-author Jim Jacobs Establishes Theatre Scholarship

**Jim Jacobs is co-author of the hit musical *Grease*, one of the most popular and influential works in the history of American musicals. In 2012, Jacobs established a scholarship for continuing musical theatre majors demonstrating financial need who are entering their sophomore year at Columbia. The inaugural Jim Jacobs Musical Theatre Scholarship will be awarded for fall 2013. DEMO editor Kristi Turnbaugh interviewed Jacobs during a campus visit.**

**Q:** Why did you establish this scholarship at Columbia?

**JIM JACOBS:** In 1981, Columbia was the first place to take an interest in the show that my late partner, Warren Casey, and I wrote after *Grease*, which was *Island of Lost Coeds*. As I understand from Sheldon Patinkin [then theatre department chair], it was the first production done in what was then the 11th Street Theater, now the Getz. I got to know Sheldon really well and kids that were in the cast—several of them I still know to this day. As the years went on, every time I would come back to Chicago, the school was getting bigger and bigger

and more well known, and more things were happening. When my stepdaughter [Janissa Saracino ('13)] started attending Columbia, it brought me back here more to visit. Starting a scholarship seemed like the right thing to do.

**Q:** Characters in *Grease* are based on people you knew in high school. Which character was most like you?

**JJ:** I would say somewhere between Doody and Roger because I was sort of the smallest guy, I played a guitar, but I loved being the guy who pulled the pranks and made the other guys laugh. My cousin was Danny Zuko, and the title, of course, refers to guys like Kenickie who were just devoted to their car, always under the hood of the car and greasy. And of course, all of our food was as greasy as could be.

**Q:** *Grease* is a great title.

**JJ:** It's funny—after the show had been running for five years, in the late '70s, Barbara Walters asked us about the title *Grease*, and we explained it to her. Then Warren says, "I've never told this to Jim, but I never did like the title. But I guess it's too late to change it now."

*For more about the Jim Jacobs Musical Theatre Scholarship, go to [colum.edu](http://colum.edu).*



## MEET & GREET Manifest 2013 Creative Director: Thumy Phan

**Thumy Phan ('13)** is this year's creative director for Manifest, the college's annual urban arts festival. The creative director is in charge of designing all the promotional materials for the event, which is free and open to the public. Her concept for Manifest involves layering different media, including photography and graphic design.



"I'm really excited about how different it will be," Phan said. "I know we've used photography and illustration in the past, but never together, layering it. Even the T-shirt design has a layering of shapes. It's a star, but shapes make up the star. The whole concept was layering: bringing together all the elements of different students, their different skills and experiences."

Manifest itself will be just as multifaceted, featuring a colorful array of artistic expression, including the Tic Toc Performing Artists, a bicycle-drawn "mobile gallery" carting first-year students' work around campus, and a vintage Manifest T-shirt contest the week prior. Manifest is Friday, May 17.

*For more information, go to [colum.edu/manifest](http://colum.edu/manifest).*



**ROBERT ZEMECKIS,** famed film director (*Back to the Future*, *Forrest Gump*) and Chicago native, visited Columbia on October 25 to discuss his latest movie, *Flight*. Zemeckis spoke about his films' focus on human drama and flawed main characters.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Before becoming Columbia property in 1999, the 33 E. Congress building housed the Congress Bank from the 1940s until the 1980s. The college converted the bank's vault into a reverberation chamber for Audio Arts + Acoustics students. The chamber is used to produce and capture reflected sound, and the original vault door is still in use.



## Open Doors Gala Raises \$800,000

The 2012 Open Doors Gala on December 7 raised a record \$800,000 for the Open Doors Scholarship, which helps Chicago Public Schools' graduates to attend Columbia College Chicago. Funds also went to new scholarships that honor the memory of John H. and Eunice W. Johnson of the Johnson Publishing Company. Student performers provided entertainment for the 300 guests at the black-tie dinner at the Media Production Center.

Photos: Steve Becker and Jacob Bell (BA '12)

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AT [COLUM.EDU/NEWS](http://COLUM.EDU/NEWS).

### **Columbia Chronicle Receives 22 Awards**

*The Columbia Chronicle*, Columbia's student newspaper, won 22 Awards for Excellence in Illinois College Newspapers at the February 22-23 Illinois College Press Association Convention.

### **Film Critics Honor Columbia**

In February, the Chicago Film Critics Association (CFCA) presented Columbia College Chicago with its 2013 Big Shoulders Award, an honor bestowed to an institution that provides outstanding support for the arts. This is the first time the award has been presented to a college or university, according to the CFCA.

### **Fiction Writing Student Magazine Nets Top Award**

*Fictionary*, the annual magazine produced by the Student Board of the Fiction Writing Department, received a Gold Medalist Award from the Columbia University Scholastic Press Association.

### **Mayor Supports Wabash Arts Corridor**

Columbia College Chicago and Mayor Rahm Emanuel are working together to create the Wabash Arts Corridor, a stretch of public art on Wabash that will include large-scale photographs, an aerosol mural, and more.

# Kick\$tart My Art

World's  
Thinnest  
Smartphone\*  
\$3 million



Mobile  
Art Gallery\*  
\$8,700



Doombucket's  
Debut EP\*  
\$4,000



Catmunicator 3000\*  
\$750,000



Hovercraft  
Skateboard\*  
\$12 million

By Stephanie Ewing (MA '12) / Illustrations by Erik "E.N." Rodriguez ('11)

\*These may or may not be real projects on Kickstarter

**Artists of all kinds have jumped on the crowd-funding bandwagon, proving online platforms can help raise the money needed to bring their creations to life. Columbia alumni, students, and faculty share lessons learned on their way to success.**



Sean Jourdan's crew (many of whom are Columbia alumni) filmed his thriller *Teddy Boy* in Colorado.



#### CREATOR

**Sean J.S. Jourdan**  
(MFA '09)

#### PROJECT

***Teddy Boy***  
a feature-length film

#### CAMPAIGN START

**March 14, 2012**

#### CAMPAIGN END

**April 16, 2012**

#### GOAL AMOUNT

**\$33,333**

#### AMOUNT RECEIVED

**\$35,633**

#### BACKERS

**244**

#### BEST ADVICE

**Start fundraising early.  
Contact everyone you  
know and pitch the project.**

**In the video pitch for his Kickstarter campaign,** filmmaker Sean J.S. Jourdan (MFA '09), his wife, and their giggling baby daughter look directly into the camera and lay it all out for potential investors: “We want to do something special, something evocative, and just starting out, we don’t have the ability to just play it safe. I want to make something that one day, our daughter will be very proud of.”

When he launched his online fundraising campaign in March 2012, Jourdan had been a filmmaker for a decade, writing award-winning scripts, and producing and directing short films, including his 27-minute-long MFA thesis film, *The Beekeeper*, a finalist in Columbia College Chicago’s 2012 Written Image Screenwriting Prize. Ready to create his first feature-length film, *Teddy Boy*, Jourdan hit the pavement to raise capital the traditional way, but the studios and financiers weren’t biting. That’s

when he turned to crowd funding, raising \$35,633 from 244 backers—more than \$2,000 beyond his original goal.

His film, *Teddy Boy*, finished shooting in June 2012 and is slated to begin showing to select audiences in July 2013. “Without Kickstarter,” Jourdan says, “I wouldn’t have been able to make my first feature film—at least not now. For the past year, I’ve been the ‘almost’ guy. Kickstarter allowed me not to wait for other people to say yes.”

In return for taking a small cut (4 to 9 percent) of the total amount raised, crowd-funding sites like Kickstarter and Indiegogo let artists and creators of all kinds launch online campaigns to solicit donations from friends, family, and supportive strangers for a specific project that might otherwise languish unfunded or take many more years to complete by traditional means.

Columbia alumni, students, and faculty are breaking new ground with crowd funding, proving Kickstarter (the most well-known crowd-funding site) and similar sites can be a viable way to bring their creations into the world. ►

#### ▶ WEB EXTRA

Watch Sean Jourdan’s Kickstarter video about his film *Teddy Boy* at [colum.edu/demo](http://colum.edu/demo).



**CREATOR**

**Alyson Beaton**  
Assistant Professor, Art + Design

**PROJECT**

**Lille Huset**  
modular, eco-friendly dollhouses  
designed after real Chicago homes

**CAMPAIGN START**

**March 25, 2012**

**CAMPAIGN END**

**April 25, 2012**

**GOAL AMOUNT**

**\$8,000**

**AMOUNT RECEIVED**

**\$12,701**

**BACKERS**

**181**

**BEST ADVICE**

Running a crowd-funding campaign is like starting your own business, so be prepared.

*Alyson Beaton discusses her wild Kickstarter ride:*

**ON HER IDEA:** I have an architecture background and always had in the back of my mind these design activities for kids. It was my daughter's birthday, and I wanted to make her a dollhouse, so I figured out a way to make it using the laser cutter [at Columbia]. People said, "That's really cool! You should make more!" So I did. The interest in the product was very encouraging, and everyone wanted one. So I cut [a few] more, took them to a market, and then sold out. I figured I must have a decent idea.

**ON CHOOSING CROWD FUNDING:** I did a lot of research to figure out what it was going to take to mass produce a product. I learned it was going to cost [at least \$5,000] to mass produce about 1,000 [of the dollhouses]. Kickstarter was a no-brainer. The product

evolved over a year of testing it, photographing it, and giving it to kids before hitting Kickstarter, but I went there because I wanted to develop it based on feedback from people.

**ON THE CROWD-FUNDING PROCESS:** Before [attending a Kickstarter workshop at Columbia], I didn't think you needed much going into a campaign; you could just throw it together and hit "go." But you really have to have your stuff together before you launch. I worked on my submission a month before I pressed 'Go Live.' I had my cousin who is a copywriter read over it, my friend who is a financial planner read over it—you don't know who's going to see it and you want to look as legitimate as possible. That initial money I got from the Kickstarter campaign helped me get my first business loan, because it showed that I had gotten \$12,000—which is nothing to sneeze at. You do even have a little market data from [a Kickstarter campaign]. It helped my bank go, "OK, people did like your product, they did back you."

**▶ WEB EXTRA**

Watch Alyson Beaton's Kickstarter video at [colum.edu/demo](http://colum.edu/demo).



The Lille Huset pop-up shop allows Beaton to set up and sell her dollhouses on the road.

**ON THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON LEARNED:** In the end I made \$12,000, which was great and over my goal [of \$8,000], but I needed more money, and kept thinking, "Oh, it would be great to make so much more. If I made \$100,000, I'd be so happy!" In hindsight, though, it was the right amount of money, because even just mailing out the 181 backer gifts took me three months. The initial run of my product needed revisions, and if I had gotten more Kickstarter orders, I would have made twice as many and had twice as many out there that I needed to revise.

*Beaton sold all her initial production run of 1,000 dollhouses financed by Kickstarter, and with her business loan, has been creating and selling subsequent runs and seasonal collections online at [lillehusetshop.com](http://lillehusetshop.com) (prices range between \$8 and \$170) and through national and international retail outlets, including Barneys New York.*



## CREATORS

**Darryl Holliday** (BA '12)

**Erik Rodriguez** ('11)

## PROJECT

## The Illustrated Press: Chicago

a comics journalism book of Chicago news and history

## CAMPAIGN START

**April 2, 2012**

## CAMPAIGN END

**May 1, 2012**

## GOAL AMOUNT

**\$3,500**

## AMOUNT RECEIVED

**\$3,788**

## BACKERS

**88**

## BEST ADVICE

Think like a salesperson, and become your own marketer.



The Illustrated Press: Chicago hit stores in September.

When Darryl Holliday (BA '12) and Erik Rodriguez ('11) tell others they create comics journalism, most people are a little confused.

"They think we're talking about editorial cartoons or the comics section," says Holliday. Instead, Holliday and Rodriguez present the news, with real facts and quotes, frame by frame with illustrations, just like in graphic novels or comic books. Holliday writes and Rodriguez illustrates stories ranging from a Cook County Courthouse wedding to Chicago neighborhood histories.

Rodriguez and Holliday met at Columbia through their work on the student newspaper, *The Columbia Chronicle*. Intrigued by comics journalism, the pair wanted to collect their various stand-alone stories into a book. Before he graduated, Holliday won a Weisman Award from Columbia worth \$1,000, but he and Rodriguez still needed to raise \$3,500 on their own in order to print and sell their book.

"The best way to explain comics journalism is to show it," says Rodriguez. "And I think the 'comics'



aspect helped sell the project to a different kind of crowd [on Kickstarter]."

Getting the campaign up and running was an "incredibly stressful" process that included writing the pitch and shooting a promotional video, "having to be out there and being judged," and constantly haranguing friends, family, and colleagues on social media for donations before and during their month-long campaign, says Holliday. But running a Kickstarter campaign was also rewarding beyond just securing the funding required to print *The Illustrated Press*. "It was really the start of us marketing ourselves," says Rodriguez. Holliday agrees. "It made us much more confident and introduced us to people, which in turn made it easier to pitch other places."

*The Illustrated Press: Chicago was printed and hit the stands of Chicago bookstores and Etsy.com in September 2012. The Harold Washington Library Center chose work from The Illustrated Press to display in its main hall through July. Holliday, a reporter, and Rodriguez, a graphic designer and production manager at The Columbia Chronicle, also create freelance comics journalism pieces for WBEZ, Chicago's NPR affiliate station, and explore ways to present comics journalism online. ►*

### ▶ WEB EXTRA

Watch Darryl Holliday and Erik Rodriguez's Kickstarter video about their comics journalism project *The Illustrated Press: Chicago* at [colum.edu/demo](http://colum.edu/demo).



From left to right: Gewargis Envia (BA '12), Mason Arrington (BA '12), Larry Griffin IV (BA '12), and Peter Gabriel (BA '12)

#### CREATORS

**Gewargis Envia** (BA '12)

**Mason Arrington** (BA '12)

**Larry Griffin IV** (BA '12)

**Peter Gabriel** (BA '12)

#### PROJECT

### Moon Intern

a retro-looking, role-playing video game

#### BEST ADVICE

Take the time to get your project as advanced as possible before launching your campaign.

#### ▶ WEB EXTRA

Watch the Moon Intern video game team's Kickstarter video at [colum.edu/demo](http://colum.edu/demo).

#### CAMPAIGN START

**July 5, 2012**

#### CAMPAIGN END

**August 7, 2012**

#### GOAL AMOUNT

**\$30,000**

#### AMOUNT RECEIVED

**\$43,054**

#### BACKERS

**1,609**

“Moon Intern is a game we couldn’t have made without Kickstarter,” says lead designer, artist, and creator Larry Griffin IV (BA '12), who, like many independent game designers, used crowd funding to gain a foothold in a competitive market dominated by big-name production companies. Griffin met fellow game design majors Peter Gabriel (BA '12, lead programmer), Mason Arrington (BA '12, gameplay scripter), and Gewargis Envia (BA '12, user interface lead) in Columbia’s game design classes, where they worked together on their large group game design senior project.

**LG:** Moon Intern started for me when I was learning [game development] my freshman or sophomore year. It evolved over the years, talking with Peter [Gabriel], from this idea of being some guy on the moon doing jobs to having stories and plots. About a year ago, we decided it was going to be a Kickstarter project. Tom Dowd [associate professor, Interactive Arts and Media] told us about Kickstarter. It stayed in the back of my head as a really feasible way to achieve funding for projects. It was pretty scary starting the campaign; we were not too keen on asking for money. But I didn’t see it as begging, so much as pre-ordering.

**GE:** I was very confident before we started, but as the campaign went on, I kept getting more down, worrying in the slow periods that we weren’t going to make it.

**MA:** ...But then we got onto Rock, Paper, Shotgun, a gaming blog, and we just took off, and I knew then that we were going to succeed.

**PG:** But then there was another game, from another university, in a situation just like us—except they made something like \$150,000 on their first day. So you wonder: How did their project do that? Why didn’t ours?

**GE:** And we figured it had to be, in part, that they had gameplay, a really cool-looking demo to show. We didn’t, really. We hadn’t actually started production on the game yet—though we did have some nice art and a small Flash demo—but they’d already been in production for a quarter to a third of a year already.

**PG:** It doesn’t matter how much you say about your project, when you have something to show for it, people practically hurl their money at the computer screen.

*The Moon Intern team is planning to launch the game by the end of 2013 and is in talks with Sony to coordinate a possible PlayStation 3 release. ▶*

# Kickstarter Dos & Don'ts

Successful crowd-funding campaigns feature video pitches and written explanations of projects, and offer small thank-you gifts to project investors, called backers. But backers don't see the intense business planning, marketing, and legwork that goes on before a successful crowd-funding campaign even launches. Columbia entrepreneurs offer their tips on making a campaign as successful as possible.

## DO! UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE GETTING INTO.

"A lot of people don't know what they're getting into when they're using Kickstarter," says Art + Design assistant professor Alyson Beaton, creator of Lille Huset dollhouses. "You're starting a business, whether you want to or not, because you have to." Filmmaker Sean J.S. Jourdan (MFA '09) conducted extensive research before starting his campaign and found that Kickstarter's all-or-nothing funding scheme (projects only get funded if they reach or exceed their goals) was useful: "This all-or-nothing approach really did light a fire under me." Beaton agrees: "It really pressures you to get your [stuff] together. Either you're going to get it together and get started, or you're going to fail, email everyone to tell them you're giving their money back, and cry."

## DO! START EARLY AND GET YOUR NETWORK INVOLVED.

Jourdan says that about 90 percent of his film project's backers were connections of his in one way or another. "Much like finished films, many Kickstarter projects fail under the premise that if we build it they will come. Start fundraising early. Call your friends and family. Start reconnecting with folks from your past, then pitch and get them excited."

## DO! HAVE A PROTOTYPE TO SHOW SO POTENTIAL BACKERS CAN GET EXCITED.

Journalist Darryl Holliday (BA '12) and illustrator Erik Rodriguez ('11) say because their comics journalism project was visually oriented, it helped sell their concept to potential backers. This is an insight that the creators of video game Moon Intern wish they had heeded during their campaign, even though the project was successfully funded. "We got really lucky for not having real gameplay to show during the Kickstarter campaign," says creator Larry Griffin IV (BA '12). "If you have [a working prototype to show people] during the campaign, you're going to have a much easier time."

## DON'T! LAUNCH YOUR CAMPAIGN UNTIL YOU ARE TRULY READY.

"There were probably five different points in time where we were about to launch the Kickstarter, but pushed it back by a couple of weeks or a month," Griffin says, saying that this time allowed the team to improve the product. "But every time we did, it was better in the end."

## DON'T! BE AFRAID TO GO FOR IT.

"There's a lot of risk in running these campaigns," says Jourdan. "But don't be afraid. Just like the film should have your heart in it, your campaign should also have your heart. If people get a glimpse of your heart, they'll believe in you ... and put their hard-earned money on the line." —Stephanie Ewing (MA '12)



TOP: Noah Johnson is one of 350 Moon Intern project backers who will appear as a character in the video game. Each character is drawn to resemble the backer in the game's low-resolution art style. ABOVE: Players will navigate the moonscape as they perform odd jobs and random tasks in order to pay the rent.



A photograph of a man with a dark beard and hair, wearing a black shirt, playing a black electric guitar. He is looking down at the instrument. The background is a dimly lit room with warm string lights hanging from the ceiling. The title 'Used to be a Gypsy' is overlaid in a large, white, cursive font.

# Used to be a Gypsy

**Nikola Dokic** (BA '08), **Robert Palos** (BA '08), and **Adis Sirbubalo** (BA '07) each tried to leave their old worlds behind when they came to America. But after meeting, these three musicians found friendship and fulfillment by embracing—instead of running from—their roots

By Sean McEntee ('13) / Photography by Clayton Hauck ('05)



From left: Nikola Dokic, Adis Sirbubalo, and Robert Palos formed Eyes Manouche in 2008.

**Robert Palos (BA '08) wasn't ready to go back home.** Born and raised in Bosnia, Palos was one of millions affected by bloody 1990s civil wars that broke out in the former Yugoslavia, fighting that was characterized by bitter ethnic conflicts and divided the nation into seven new, separate states. After attending high school in Austria, Palos and his brother, Davor, moved as refugees to Chicago, where they had family friends. A guitarist, Palos enrolled at Columbia College Chicago in 2003 to study instrumental performance.

Over the next few months, Palos couldn't help but notice two other music students from the Balkans—Adis Sirbubalo (BA '07) and Nikola Dokic (BA '08)—but they consciously didn't seek each other out. "I kind of tried to stay away from my region," says Sirbubalo, who was born and raised in Bosnia. "I wanted to experience American culture."

Sirbubalo, an accordion and piano player, immigrated with his family as refugees to the United States in 2001, settling in Chicago. After auditioning for Scott Hall, the head of Columbia's Jazz Studies program, he enrolled at Columbia to study instrumental jazz. Dokic, a classically trained guitarist and audio aficionado, grew up in Serbia and moved to Chicago in 2003 to start a new life. He enrolled at Columbia to study audio design and production.

Though the three students' paths continued to cross in the music department, it took a chance meeting outside school to propel their relationship forward. Sirbubalo officially met Robert and Davor Palos in 2004 when his brother, Haris, was drumming in the Palos brothers' indie rock band, Ode. Soon, as Ode went on hiatus, Sirbubalo, Palos, and Dokic began getting together to jam occasionally and continued to play together over the next few years, mixing their different styles and interests of jazz and rock music. ►

## SMASHING SOUNDS

### Nikola Dokic (BA '08) works with Billy Corgan at Pumpkinland 2

**While studying audio arts and acoustics** at Columbia, Eyes Manouche/Ode guitarist Nikola Dokic (BA '08) had the chance to work with alternative rock icon and Smashing Pumpkins mastermind Billy Corgan on two of his solo efforts. Today, Dokic works for Corgan full time as a recording engineer at Smashing Pumpkins' studio Pumpkinland 2 in Northbrook.

"I was pumped to work with Billy," Dokic says, though he admits he wasn't much of a Pumpkins enthusiast when he first started. "After I started working for them, I started to get to know them, and I'm a big fan now."

Dokic served as assistant engineer on Corgan's 2005 solo debut, *TheFutureEmbrace*, and on the unreleased *Chicago Kid*. Today, he's helping with reissues of classic Pumpkins material and the reformed band's follow up to 2012's *Oceania*, which could be released as early as December 2013.

—Sean McEntee ('13)

## FEATURE

### FROM ODE TO EYES MANOUCHE

Dokic says the three never planned to start a band—largely because each had different musical leanings. But that changed in 2008 when the recent grads learned the Pink Monkey, a strip club in the South Loop, wanted to hire a group to play ethnic, burlesque-style music. Sensing a golden opportunity, the trio put together a full band, enlisting Lawrence University graduate Daniel Crane on drums and Jonathan Cole Blodgett (BM '08) on bass. That gig led to numerous shows at nearby Brando's Speakeasy, owned by the same people as the Pink Monkey.

"We played for, like, peanuts," Dokic says. "We just needed work. We played there for the next, maybe, six months and built up a crowd, and people liked it."

Thus, Eyes Manouche—"manouche" meaning gypsy—was born. The sound blends Yugoslavian folk, jazz, and rock into hypnotic, upbeat dance music. "The melodies and everything are completely from the region," Palos says. "[It's] a band that you go to see and you have a great time," Dokic adds. "You get [drunk] and dance like a maniac."

After gaining a cult following at Brando's, Eyes Manouche began to play other venues regularly, including The Joynt, a downtown jazz lounge, where the group landed a two-year weekly residency. The band went on to play nearly every venue in the city—the House of Blues, Hard Rock Café, Lincoln Hall, Double Door, Cobra Lounge, and Morseland, to name a few—and did it all without making a single call. As Eyes Manouche's popularity grew, the band was always in demand, somewhere, some time. And these best friends were able to make their living by embracing—instead of running from—their ethnic backgrounds.

## To the outside world, the deep friendship forged between people from warring regions might seem unlikely—or unnatural, even.

### FROM STAGE TO SCREEN

To the outside world, the deep friendship forged between people from warring regions might seem unlikely—or unnatural, even. Despite any tension existing in their respective countries, Dokic, Palos, and Sirbubalo say they saw only people, not ethnicities or nationalities. It wasn't until Ratko Momcilovic ('04) approached the trio to make a short documentary about Eyes Manouche (see sidebar) that Dokic, Palos, and Sirbubalo opened up about the Yugoslav wars.

"We were kind of cautious because we didn't want to look nationalistic," Sirbubalo says. "We wanted to just be in a movie that would just show us as subjects that had nothing to do with nationalism. We [all had] the same



ABOVE: Ode performs regularly at Chicago clubs and released its third album last year. BELOW: Palos and Dokic relax before a show at the Beat Kitchen. BOTTOM: Ode set list



### ▶ WEB EXTRA

Watch Ode's music video for "Man in a Glass" at [colum.edu/demo](http://colum.edu/demo).

conclusion of what happened during the war: No one had the right side, it's sad that it happened, and a lot of people died because of that.”

Completed in 2010, the award-winning film *Eyes Manouche* brought more attention to the band. But the group's time in the spotlight would start to diminish as fame faded and members shifted their focus to other projects. “At one point [*Eyes Manouche*] became sort of this monster that we created that took away from [*Ode*], something we actually tried to do seriously,” Dokic says.

#### FROM EYES MANOUCHE TO ODE

By May 2011, Palos and Dokic turned their attention toward resurrecting *Ode*, the indie rock band that Palos had formed with his brother, Davor, in the early 2000s. Sirbubalo, wanting a break from the band, went back to Bosnia, intending to return after a few months. “But some spontaneous stuff happened that made me stay,” he says. “It was almost a new beginning for me.” He got married in late 2012 and is a full-time musician in Bosnia, playing in multiple bands, including a jazz combo called Sarajevo Jazz Guerrilla and a rock band called Zoster.

After Sirbubalo's departure, Columbia student Elliot Taggart joined the band as bassist, filling the shoes of previous bassists Andrew Vogt and Skender Makota. Crane, on drums, completes the quintet.

Because playing in *Ode* doesn't pay the bills, Dokic and Palos use their skills in day jobs. Dokic ran his own production company for five years and now works as a music producer and sound engineer at Pumpkinland 2, the Smashing Pumpkins' Northbrook recording studio (see sidebar on page 15).

Palos is a guitar instructor at a private music school in Skokie, the Odeion School of Music (“the school of *Ode*,” Palos jokes). He teaches styles ranging from jazz to rock and electric to acoustic.

In October 2012, *Ode* released its third album, *Man in a Glass*, and first music video for the single of the same name, which was directed by Momcilovic. The band plays regularly in Chicago and has toured across the US. The members hope to break into European music festivals and perhaps even play in their home countries one day.

“I'm happy with what we're doing, but if we could do this and make a really nice living, that's definitely something I would love to do,” Dokic says. Palos adds: “We just love playing together.” **D**

## A WINNING COMBINATION

Director **Ratko Momcilovic** ('04) and band *Eyes Manouche* make beautiful music and movies together



Ratko Momcilovic with his girlfriend, Dovol Parsons

#### When filmmaker Ratko Momcilovic ('04) met

musician Nikola Dokic in 2009 and learned the story of Dokic's band, *Eyes Manouche*, he couldn't believe his ears. He was shocked that young men from Serbia and Bosnia could come to America in the wake of the 1990s Yugoslav civil wars and forge a deep friendship and musical bond.

“I remember the first time he was telling me about the band,” Momcilovic says. “I couldn't believe that they were together and they were friends. I was used to [former Yugoslavians] fighting.”

As a Serbian living in Croatia during the conflicts, Momcilovic saw the troubles firsthand. In 1999, he immigrated to the US, settling in Chicago. Harboring a lifelong dream to study filmmaking, he enrolled at Columbia College Chicago in 2003 and soon found work filming and directing commercials at Mega Force Productions.

After meeting Dokic and seeing *Eyes Manouche* in concert, Momcilovic “fell in love” and set out to direct his first documentary, about the band.

The five-minute *Eyes Manouche*, completed in 2010 with the help of cinematographers Jule Fontana (BA '08) and Charlie Anderson (BA '09), documents the horrors of war as recounted in separate interviews with Dokic (BA '08) from Serbia, and Robert Palos (BA '08) and Adis Sirbubalo (BA '07) from Bosnia. Viewers don't know the subjects' names or why they specifically are being filmed until the end, when the men come together to rock out on stage, shattering any belief that presumed enemies can't become friends.

To pull the most genuine emotion and feeling from the subjects, who were initially reluctant to be featured, Momcilovic interviewed each band member for about an hour and a half. “I wanted to show them individually showing their reactions of the war; I was trying to pull out exactly how they felt,” Momcilovic says. He adds that he especially likes when Palos says, “In order to love or hate somebody, you have to know them. You can't hate a whole nation.”

*Eyes Manouche* won Best Documentary in the 2010 One Chicago, One Nation film contest and Best Short Film in the 2012 Columbia College Chicago Alumni Film Contest. The film's success put Momcilovic on the map and helped him advance in his already-promising career. Worldwide Impact Now, a nonprofit organization, approached Momcilovic to direct a short documentary about retired US Army Colonel Tim Heinemann, who now spends his time doing humanitarian work. The 2011 film, *Karen: On the Edge of Existence*, shows the colonel helping ethnic groups in Burma battle years of oppression by Burmese military forces. Momcilovic plans to work with the producers of *Karen* to make a feature-length documentary about the situation in Burma.

Of course, he continues his relationship with his friends from *Eyes Manouche*. He enlisted Dokic and Palos to score the music for *Karen*, and, in 2012, he directed the music video for “Man in a Glass” by *Eyes Manouche*'s alter-ego band, *Ode*.

—Sean McEntee ('13)

#### WEB EXTRA

Watch Ratko Momcilovic's award-winning documentary, *Eyes Manouche*, at [colum.edu/demo](http://colum.edu/demo).



CALLING ON COOLEY: Phillip Cooley offers pro bono advice to small businesses looking to make it in Detroit. OPPOSITE PAGE: Ponyride, the 30,000-square-foot warehouse Cooley converted into rental space for community organizations, is at capacity with a long waiting list.



# MOTOR CITY MOGUL

Model-turned-entrepreneur **Phillip Cooley** (BA '00) intends to make over Detroit, one building at a time

By Sean McEntee ('13) / Photography by Jacob Boll (BA '12)

**Over the past decade, Phillip Cooley, 35, has worked to revitalize** one of America's most downtrodden cities, Detroit. Since opening the wildly successful Slows Bar BQ restaurant in 2005, Cooley has focused on rehabbing abandoned public places and providing attractive, affordable spaces for artists and entrepreneurs to thrive.

**FINDING HIS WAY:** After graduating with a film and video degree in 2000, Cooley took a Ford runway modeling job and travelled the world for two years, a whirlwind that included an eight-month stint in Paris working for Louis Vuitton. But after realizing the job didn't allow him the "voice" he craved, Cooley moved back to his hometown area of Detroit to try something new. "Even though I was young and dumb, I still wanted to honestly participate [in a community]," Cooley says. He worked as a janitor in a "rock-and-roll, motorcycle bar" and as a bar back at a lounge on famous 8 Mile Road before taking the plunge into community revitalization, inspired by this idea: "Move to your city, go to the bars, meet like-minded people, and start a movement."

**INTREPID ENTREPRENEUR:** Cooley used a combination of his savings, loans, and connections to his family's development company, O'Connor Development, to launch his first major venture, Slows Bar BQ, with like-minded entrepreneurs. After opening in 2005, the restaurant became an instant success, drawing city folks and suburbanites alike

to Corktown, the city's historic Irish—and largely abandoned—neighborhood near downtown. Now providing more than 100 jobs, Slows sparked other restaurants to open, a large migration of residents who filled apartments, and installation of previously nonexistent city services such as streetlights. From there, Cooley worked with local businesses and volunteers to raise and implement more than \$800,000 in improvements to Roosevelt Park, next to Detroit's decaying 1913 central train station.

**DIG A PONY:** In 2011, Cooley unveiled perhaps his most ambitious project yet: Ponyride. In an effort to combat Detroit's epidemic of foreclosed and abandoned buildings, Cooley purchased an old 30,000-square-foot warehouse, fixed it up, and began renting spaces to socially-conscious artists and entrepreneurs for as little as 20 cents per square foot—with utilities included. About a dozen community-minded organizations now call Ponyride home, including furniture manufacturing companies, graphic designers, hip-hop dancers, and nonprofits, such as the Empowerment Plan, which provides formerly homeless women with jobs making innovative self-heating coats that double as sleeping bags for people living on the streets. By providing Ponyride spaces at below-market-rate prices, Cooley says more people, regardless of income levels, can help revitalize the community. ▶



**THE CITY'S VOLUNTEER:** Cooley says he doesn't profit from the fruits of his labor; in fact, he says nearly every dollar he makes from Slows Bar BQ goes back into community projects designed to rehabilitate Detroit. In addition to serving on 15 community boards, including Greening of Detroit and Roosevelt Park Conservancy, Cooley provides pro bono advice (and considerable carpentry skills) to small startup companies looking to make it in the Motor City. He works tirelessly to raise awareness and funds, such as through his "ClandesDine" dinners, which are fundraising events held in nontraditional spaces, such as abandoned warehouses or garages, that allow donors to envision the Motor City's possibilities. Where others may only see emptiness, Cooley sees opportunity.

## "THE CITY HAS HELPED ME GROW MORE SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS."

"When I got here, I would love to say that I was the most socially conscious, but really, the city has helped me grow more socially conscious," Cooley says. Recalling his days as a Columbia film student, when he accessed all the available equipment and resources for the best possible result, Cooley cites Detroit's people as the most valuable partners imaginable in the production of his life. "When I think of Detroiters, I think of resourcefulness and strength. The residents are the greatest assets." ▣



**ONE TO WATCH:** Cooley's work has caught widespread attention. *Crain's Detroit Business* crowned Cooley as one of its "Twenty in their 20s" in 2006, *The Huffington Post* chose him as a "Greatest Person of the Day" in 2010, and *Vice* magazine listed him as one of the "Most Interesting Men in America" in 2012.

TOP: Cooley sits in the space of Ponyride tenant Empowerment Plan, which provides formerly homeless women with jobs making innovative self-heating coats for people living on the streets. ABOVE: The small-business Detroit Denim makes jeans by hand on site. BELOW: The opening of Slows Bar BQ in 2005 spurred economic and residential development near downtown Detroit. The restaurant provides more than 100 jobs.

### ▶ WEB EXTRA

Watch why *Vice* magazine chose Phillip Cooley as one of its "Most Interesting Men in America" and learn more about the Ponyride project and its tenants at [colum.edu/demo](http://colum.edu/demo).





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- Career Connect Event
- 3rd Annual Alumni Scholarship FUNd Run
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- And much more!

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## LIFE DURING WARTIME

**Andrew Nelles** (BA '08) recounts his days covering American troops in Afghanistan



*As a freelance photojournalist, Andrew Nelles (BA '08), 26, travels the globe to document presidential campaigns, major sporting events, and war. During his first freelance trip to Afghanistan in May 2010, he was embedded with American troops. Here, he recalls a few days he'll never forget.*

**We were up on a hilltop in an area** of northwestern Afghanistan near Bala Murghab in the Badghis Province. It was hot, with temperatures in the upper 80s.

The platoon I was operating with had been dropped off on the hill and told to dig in and create a new outpost. I was there on a freelance photography excursion trying to capture the war in Afghanistan, and I really wanted a photo of a Javelin rocket in flight.

The platoon spent most of their day digging a trench on one side of the hill. We took off our body armor to keep cool.

There were a few Italian soldiers there and we had traded MREs (Meals Ready to Eat) with them. Their food wasn't better, just different.

Suddenly, small-arms fire erupted. Shots came at us from multiple directions.

I remember hearing whistles and cracks. Sounded like an AK-47.

My lunch scattered across the ground as I dove for cover. One soldier dove into a smaller trench we had dug and dirt flew up around him as bullets pinged the earth. ►

**“We were up on a hilltop in an area of northwestern Afghanistan near Bala Murghab in the Badghis Province. It was hot, with temperatures in the upper 80s.”**

US Army 1st Lt. Steven Robinson, from 2nd Platoon, Bravo Battery, 2-321st Field Artillery Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, pauses during an early morning foot patrol of hills around Outpost Highlander near Bala Murghab in Badghis Province, Afghanistan, on May 24, 2010.



1



2



3



4

**ANDREW NELLES DESCRIBES SOME OF HIS FAVORITE SHOTS:**

**1.** Tactical Explosive Detection Dog Handler Specialist Alexander Reimer, of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, and his dog Howard prepare for bed at Combat Outpost Sangsar in Zharay District, Kandahar Province, on August 7, 2012. Howard's kennel is next to Reimer's bed, but when kennels are not available, they sleep together.

**2.** An Afghan police officer meets with American soldiers in their police station in Zharay District, Kandahar Province, on August 3, 2012.

**3.** US Army Staff Sgt. Deandre Strange, of 3rd Platoon, Bravo Battery, 2-321st Field Artillery, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, heads for cover after enemy fire was received at Observation Post Barracuda near Bala Murghab in Badghis Province, Afghanistan, on May 26, 2010.

**4.** From left, Pfc. Branden Haworth, Pfc. Dylan Roberts, and Pfc. Ryan Wheelan of 3rd Platoon, Bravo Battery, 2-321st Field Artillery, wrestle while taking a break from filling sandbags at Combat Outpost Barracuda near Bala Murghab in Badghis Province, Afghanistan, on May 28, 2010.

Sgt. Christopher Bunnell of 3rd platoon, Alpha Troop, 4-73rd Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, fires a Javelin missile at a structure that armed individuals were seen entering, at Observation Post Barracuda near Bala Murghab in Badghis Province, Afghanistan, on May 28, 2010.



This marked the first time I had been shot at. Instinct and reaction took over. Gotta grab my armor—why’d I take it off? Gotta snap a photo—thankfully, I learned at Columbia to never be without my camera. Crap—I spilled my lunch.

A few of us crawled for the other side of the hill so we could suit up with our body armor.

One Afghan national who was traveling with us took a hit in the leg. It was minor, and he was able to make it to an evacuation helicopter later.

A soldier from our platoon saw two Taliban fighters on a hill across the valley. We took up positions. The Taliban scrambled, and headed into a hut on the hillside.

Two days later, Sgt. Christopher Bunnell was sent over to reinforce our presence on the hill. He took out the Javelin rocket launcher.

Bunnell’s whole job is to cart around the Javelin and operate it.

I had been trying to get a shot of the Javelin firing for a while, and this was the first time it would be fired in front of me. Bunnell trained his sights on the hut on the opposite hillside. He pulled the trigger and the machine began to make some noises.

He turned to me.

“You’re going to want to take that photo right about—”

I swung my camera around my shoulder and sprayed a burst of about six to 10 shots and ended up capturing the rocket floating in space.

Bunnell hit his target. The hut blew to bits. ▣

—As told to Andrew Greiner (BA '05)

## DARK STAR



Hamerlik was recently selected to be a designer in residence with the Chicago Fashion Incubator at Macy's on State Street. At press time, she was also awarded the 2013 grand prize from the Chicago Fashion Foundation, which was established by fellow alumna Lana Bramlette (BA '97).



**Agnes Hamerlik (BFA '12) is a designer on the rise with a romantic, avant-garde aesthetic**

**“Having a creative lifestyle has always been a part of me,”** says fashion designer Agnes Hamerlik (BFA '12). “The passion of creating something beautiful drives me every day.”

Born and raised in Poland, Hamerlik earned a bachelor's degree in Polish language and literature and a master's in Polish philosophy in the early 2000s and traveled Europe for nearly a year. “I had my ‘a-ha’ moment in Paris when I was able to go to the couture shops and experience high-end women's fashion,” she says. “Coming from what was a communist country, I was never privy to these types of luxuries growing up. This was how everything started. Looking at beautiful, handmade garments ... opened my eyes for what I could really create.” ▶

**Hamerlik sees her clothes as a way to express “a metaphor, a connection in between the body, material, and our identity.”**



Hamerlik's collection Dark Flower, inspired by the artist Frida Kahlo, tempers femininity with toughness. The designer continues to take classes to perfect her embroidery.



After moving to Chicago in 2004, Hamerlik taught at the Polish Consulate General and worked for the nonprofit Polish-American Association as a social worker. But her experience in Paris stayed with her, and by 2008 she was enrolled at Columbia. Studying fashion was “a fantastic journey of self-discovery through art,” she says.

Hamerlik sees her clothes as a way to express “a metaphor, a connection in between the body, material, and our identity.” Her designs often include exaggerated shapes, intricate embellishments, couture beading and embroidery, or unusual materials like neoprene. “I often manipulate conventional ideas of proportion and form,” she says. “I work with individual clients who appreciate avant-garde, edgy, and theatrical elements.”

Her most recent collection is inspired by the artist Frida Kahlo, whose iconoclastic personal style was an eclectic, lavish spin on Mexican indigenous costume and a complement to her intensely personal Surrealist paintings. Hamerlik’s contemporary take on Kahlo’s look tempers femininity with toughness: Richly embroidered black dresses are accessorized with not only Kahlo-esque braids but slick driving gloves and ammunition belts.

“I believe there is a place for everyone in the fashion industry,” Hamerlik says. “The problem is finding your niche.” She found hers at Columbia, where her undergraduate career culminated in her designs being chosen for the Hokin Honors exhibition in 2011 and Fashion Columbia in 2012. In 2012 she was selected to represent Columbia in the Driehaus Design Initiative Fashion Show, and she was the winning designer for both Launch 2012 Driving Fashion Forward: Autohaus on Edens Fashion Show and the Stanley Paul-Raelene Mittleman Scholarship competitions for excellence in design.

Additionally, Hamerlik was recently selected to be a designer in residence with the Chicago Fashion Incubator at Macy’s on State Street. At press time, she was also awarded the 2013 grand prize from the Chicago Fashion Foundation, which was established by fellow alumna Lana Bramlette (BA ’97).

But Hamerlik isn’t resting on her laurels. She is “designing and creating every day,” and uses her award funds to expand her skill set, taking additional classes at Harper College to perfect her embroidery. “I understand the value of hard work and perfecting my craft,” Hamerlik says. “My life is about an unexpected journey, not a destination.” ▣

—By Audrey Michelle Mast (BA ’00)

Hamerlik’s designs often include exaggerated shapes and intricate embellishments. “I often manipulate conventional ideas of proportion and form,” Hamerlik says. “I work with individual clients who appreciate avant-garde, edgy, and theatrical elements.”





# Justin Howard



## (No) Guitar Hero

### Cloaked in a skimpy leather tunic like a

200 A.D. barbarian ready to charge into battle, Justin “Nordic Thunder” Howard (BA ’07) stood in front of 5,000 screaming rock ’n’ roll fans with blood dripping down his knees. Moments earlier, while Metallica’s “Hit the Lights” blasted through the speakers, Howard injured himself performing one of his signature moves: a perfectly-timed-with-the-music leap into the air, followed by a direct crash landing on his knees and a series of synced pelvic gyrations.

It was August 24, 2012, and Howard, 29, was in Oulu, Finland, competing in the 17th Annual Air Guitar World Championships. “Pain is temporary,” he proclaimed into the microphone. “Air guitar is forever.”

Later that day, Howard was crowned the 2012 World Champion of Air Guitar, completing a long, tumultuous journey through the ranks of competitive air guitar, enduring debilitating performance-related injuries, and—of course—graduating from Columbia College Chicago.

Howard’s tale begins in Casper, Wyoming, where he grew up playing air guitar to classic rock, and later, country and western and ’80s thrash metal. As a kid he was “obsessed” with Elvis Presley, decorating his room with posters of The King. “I’ve been playing air guitar to music for as long as I can remember,” he says.

Equally passionate about film, the future showman learned about Columbia in high school while taking an advanced video

production class with Lance Madzey (BA ’94), an early mentor. In 2003, Howard enrolled at Columbia to study film and video post-production. “At Columbia you’re allowed to explore,” Howard says. “No one ever says, ‘You can’t do this.’”

Howard’s foray into competitive air guitar began in 2006, when he saw an ad in the *RedEye* for the US Air Guitar Championships Regional Competition in Chicago. “I thought to myself, ‘I’m going to do this and win,’” he says. And he did. The legend of Nordic Thunder—the stage name he took after it came to his former manager/air guitar trainer in a dream—was born.

Howard won the Chicago Regionals again in 2008, but ruptured a disk and herniated two others while performing at the US Finals—an injury that required back surgery. (It wasn’t his first air guitar injury: Before he turned pro, he tore the meniscus in his knee while air guitaring with some friends—an injury that also required surgery.) Howard, who once trained with a ballerina to learn how to move well on stage, won the Chicago Regionals in 2010, won it again in 2011, and then took the US title the same year. But at the 2011 World Championships, he lost by three-tenths of a point.

Not satisfied with second on the international stage, Howard flew on his own dime to Oulu, Finland, for the 2012 World Championships and entered the competition as a dark-horse entrant. The rest, as they say, is history.

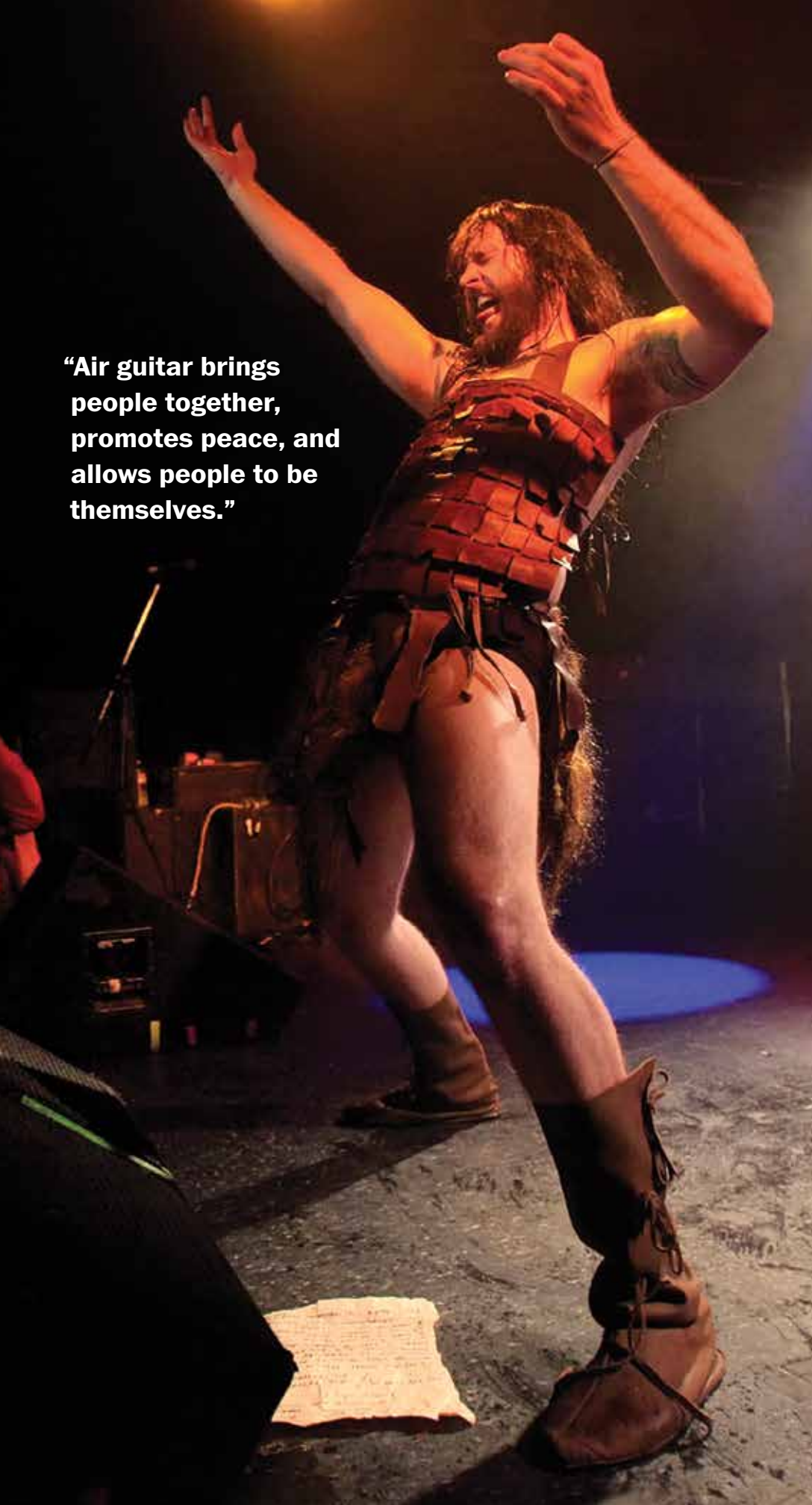
“I’ve had two major dreams in my life,” says Howard, who works full time as a video editor at Rotary International’s broadcast media department in Evanston. “One was to go to Columbia and get a job, and the other was to be the Air Guitar World Champion.” The champ will defend his world title in Oulu in August. **D** —Brent White (BA ’08)

### ▶ WEB EXTRA

View Nordic Thunder’s 2012 World Champion performance and his starring role in Dr. Pepper’s “Always One of a Kind” commercial at [colum.edu/demo](http://colum.edu/demo).



Photo: Andrew Nallies (BA ’08)



**“Air guitar brings people together, promotes peace, and allows people to be themselves.”**

## **TOP 5 AIR GUITAR SONGS ACCORDING TO JUSTIN “NORDIC THUNDER” HOWARD:**

### **1 “War Pigs”** (Black Sabbath)

This is the best air guitar song of all time. I don't care what anyone says.

### **2 “Jesus Saves”** (Slayer)

You really can't go wrong with any Slayer song. The notes climb the neck of the air guitar beautifully and quickly crescendo to some fast shredding, allowing you to sink down into a power stance and head bang.

### **3 “Can't You Hear Me Knocking?”** (Rolling Stones)

Sometimes it feels good to just jam. This song is most excellent for practicing your technical skills to reach a level of gnarly awesome.

### **4 “La Grange”** (ZZ Top)

This little band from Texas knows how to lay down some licks. Plus, they have beards. If you have a real beard—acquired from weeks of not shaving—you will automatically look cooler playing air guitar to this song.

### **5 “Welcome to the Jungle”** (Guns N' Roses)

My main man Slash once told me when we were out to lunch together, “Every song I've ever written has been written entirely for all the air heads out there to shred to.” You know what? I believe him.

# Karine Saporta



Master of Motion



**“My work is striking visually because this is how my mind works. I see pictures before I see movements.”**

**By the time she turned 20, Karine Saporta** (BA '72) was already on her way to becoming one of the biggest names in French dance when her father gave her some unforgettable advice: “He told me I couldn’t have a good cultural life if I didn’t go to America,” Saporta says. “I fell in love with New York and then Chicago.”

In 1970, Saporta discovered Columbia College during a trip to the city and enrolled to study modern dance and choreography and to experience a hands-on approach to cinema and photography, which would later inform her choreography.

“In France, the national cinema school was very theoretical,” says Saporta, who started dancing at the age of 5. “[Columbia] was much more practical and interesting.” French schools focused on thinking before doing, she says, but Columbia forced you to act—sometimes before thinking—and learn from your mistakes.

After earning a degree in communication arts, Saporta returned to France and started her own modern dance company, Compagnie Karine Saporta, in the early 1980s.

Saporta’s mix of hip-hop, Indian dance, and globally infused styles is heavily influenced by her eye for photography. “My work is striking visually because this is how my mind works,” she says, calling her dancing “stroboscopic.” “I see pictures before I see movements.”

Saporta parlayed these visual skills into her own photography company, which regularly produces exhibitions. She also directs short films and has taught dance at universities throughout France.

The multitalented artist’s accomplishments caught the attention of the highly esteemed Legion of Honour, which honored Saporta as a knight, one of the top decorations in France—a call she originally thought was a joke: “I thought it was only for politicians,” she says.

Saporta remains in high demand. In 2012, the mayor of Paris commissioned her to create a new work for the opening of a bridge across the River Seine, and her troupe toured Taiwan as part of a hip-hop festival.

“My life has been ruined by this love, this passion for dance,” she says. “It’s a very, very demanding art.” **D** —Heather Lalley



# Geling Yan

//////  
Epic Storyteller

**“I consider myself lucky that my audience likes me. But I’m most concerned about the next piece I’m going to write.”**

## Dance plays a critical part in Geling Yan’s (MFA ’99) writing.

The Chinese novelist and screenplay writer was dancing in the entertainment troupe of the People’s Liberation Army by the time she was 12. She later began writing as a war correspondent.

“As a dancer, I have a better sense of rhythm and tone when I’m making sentences and syntax,” Yan says. “Chinese authors often have a narration that’s very slow paced. My pace is sort of active and fast, which is also influenced by dancing.”

Born in 1958 in Shanghai, Yan has danced her way through the literary world, publishing more than 20 books, which have been translated into nearly as many languages. Although she’s won more than 30 literary and film awards, Yan is nonchalant about all the praise. “I consider myself lucky that my audience likes me,” she says. “But I’m most concerned about the next piece I’m going to write.”

Wanting to earn a graduate degree in America, in part to learn how to write in English, Yan found Columbia in a college guidebook, of all places. The school also came highly recommended from Chinese colleagues who knew of its artistic reputation. Yan says her writing improved through Columbia’s renowned Story Workshop, where writers sitting in a semicircle share and critique their work with a focus on improving a story’s voice and visual elements. The subsequent relationships she established in the fiction writing department with faculty members such as John Schultz and Betty Shiflett remain strong today. In 2007, Yan introduced Schultz and Shiflett to officials at China’s Fudan University, where they set up the country’s first master’s degree in creative writing.

Though she finds writing in English liberating, Yan looks to home to inspire her subject matter. “Chinese life is very unknown to the rest of the world,” says Yan, who most often writes about the ways Chinese people manage their lives amidst the state’s regime. “I have this sense of a mission to introduce it.”

Her crossover success with movies is attracting a worldwide audience. In 2012, *The Flowers of War* was China’s entry for the foreign-language Oscar. The film (at \$93 million, China’s biggest-budget movie to date, and starring Christian Bale) is based on Yan’s heart-wrenching historic novel of the same name. Set in 1937 war-torn Nanjing, where Japanese forces have taken control of the city, the story focuses on a group of Catholic schoolgirls and Chinese prostitutes hiding together in a church compound.

Like most of Yan’s novels and short story collections, *The Flowers of War* is inspired by real-life events. “Very seldom do I write things that are truly out of the blue,” Yan says. “I always hear extraordinary stories or sometimes read something in a newspaper.”

Once a news item or historical tale has captured her imagination, Yan researches passionately as her story comes to life. As for the writing, she keeps a regular schedule when not traveling.

“I have better days when I write so fluently that I think of myself as a genius and other days where I just push through,” says Yan, who now lives and works in Berlin, continuing her own dance between cultures, shedding more light on her own. ■ —William Meiners (MFA ’96)



John "J.C." Peterson, center, plays Pastor Bill in his feature film *POP-U-larity* alongside Michelle Ehlen as Cowboy Charlene Hornsby, Chicken Boy, and Ashely Cuellera as Katrina.

## John "J.C." Peterson



Plucky  
Screenwriter

A photography class at Michigan's Delta College in the late 1980s may have saved John "J.C." Peterson (BA '91) from a career in computer programming. The visual medium opened him up to the possibilities of film, and he enrolled at Columbia College Chicago shortly thereafter.

Now more than two decades after earning his film and video degree, Peterson took first place in the 2012 Columbia College Chicago Alumni Film Contest for his first narrative feature, *POP-U-larity*. The mockumentary-style movie follows several quirky characters en route to a small-town singing contest judged by a church organist and Pastor Bill (subtly played by Peterson). The winner of Penskegee's 25th Annual POP-U-larity singing contest is promised \$1,000, a year's

supply of fried chicken, and the coveted clout of becoming the town's most "POP-U-lar" person.

For Peterson, who has worked as professional fundraiser for nonprofits in Los Angeles since leaving Chicago, *POP-U-larity* was a do-it-yourself project with Michelle Ehlen, the film's co-writer, director, and reluctant singing cowgirl. Inspired by the diverse crowd at a karaoke contest, Peterson and Ehlen fashioned a script that allowed improvisational room for the ensemble cast. And they made the film—shot in 15 days over nine months—for only \$2,000, says Peterson. Now distributed by Ariztical Entertainment, *POP-U-larity* is available on amazon.com and could make money on the back end. "For years I was trying to sell screenplays," Peterson says. "Then I

realized there are other ways to get your work out there.”

It all begins with the written word. “I took every screenwriting course I could at Columbia,” says Peterson, who credits Randall Hurlbut with helping him develop a love for writing. And before Julia Cameron wrote *The Artist’s Way*, she taught many of that book’s principles in an advanced screenwriting class Peterson took.

**“For years I was trying to sell screenplays. Then I realized there are other ways to get your work out there.”**

Daily professional practices like grant writing and budgeting (now for Phoenix House) have schooled Peterson in a producer’s role—critical to filmmaking on a shoestring. “I can’t just sit in the back room writing,” says Peterson.

He’s now working on a documentary called *The Blue Room*, which is about a Mexican-American family living in what may be a haunted house in San Fernando. “We’re learning a lot about paranormal activities,” Peterson says, “but we don’t want it to be a ghost hunter’s show. For us, it’s really about the impact on the family.”

It’s not Peterson’s first foray into documentaries. At Columbia he got permission to do a video project instead of a term paper for a contemporary history class. The 10-minute video satisfied requirements for two classes, but, more importantly, led to the production of *Short Fuse: The Story of an AIDS Activist*.

POP-U-licity wasn’t Peterson’s first award, either. He earned honorable mentions for two screenplays in Columbia’s Written Image Awards: *One of the Family* (2006) and *Skunk Girl* (2005). In 2003, his book, *A Face in the Crowd: Expressions of Gay Life in America*, which was self-published in partnership with Judy Shepard and the Matthew Shepard Foundation, was named a finalist for the Lambda Literary Foundation Award.

Real life continues to inspire Peterson’s writing. Advising Down Syndrome in the Arts and Media, an organization that helps place actors with Down Syndrome in film and television roles, led Peterson to revisit a script that began at Columbia. *A Mother’s Love* awaits a home. ▣

—William Meiners (MFA '96)

Photo: Jacob Boll (BA '12)



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## CHAIRMAN'S CIRCLE

The Chairman's Circle recognizes annual donors of \$5,000 or more to any area of the college. Chairman's Circle-level donors are integral partners in providing the necessary resources for student success. From June 1, 2012, to March 15, 2013:

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## PRESIDENT'S CLUB

Individuals who contribute \$1,000 or more annually to any area of the college are recognized as President's Club-level donors. Columbia College Chicago recognizes the following individuals who joined the President's Club between June 1, 2012, and March 15, 2013:

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Jay S. Robinson (BA '77)  
Marci A. Rolnik  
David W. Ruttenberg  
Laura Shallow  
Jessica Tampas  
Mark E. and Jean M. Tansey  
Andrew and Esther Yu

## MANIFEST CLUB

The Manifest Club recognizes alumni donors who make a minimum pledge of \$10 per month or \$120 per year to any area of the college. Columbia College Chicago recognizes the following individuals who joined the Manifest Club between June 1, 2012, and March 15, 2013:

Ayanna A. Floyd (MFA '98)  
Colleen A. Rose (BA '89)

William A. Thill (BA '85)

**Columbia**  
COLLEGE CHICAGO



# See what's happening, get involved

## Dear Alumni,

Graduating doesn't mean that Columbia is part of our past. It simply opens the door to our post-graduation relationship with the school.

As alumni, there are several ways to stay involved or get re-engaged with the school. Attend any of the social or career-focused alumni events (check out [colum.edu/AlumniEvents](http://colum.edu/AlumniEvents)), volunteer for one of our alumni chapters across the country, use your talents to help students on campus, or donate to your favorite scholarship fund to help students stay in school. These are all great ways to connect and advance the Columbia community.

Our alumni volunteers who make up the Columbia Alumni Association & Network (CAAN) have initiated The Power of 5 giving campaign. Offering alumni an opportunity to "create change" through giving, The Power of 5 is one way you can make a difference for the next generation by supporting students now.

Alumni can donate monetary gifts to the Alumni Scholarship Fund in any increment of the number 5, starting with as little as \$5! **All of these gifts will be matched 2:1, but only until August 31, 2013.** The goal is to raise \$50,000 in five months. Go to [colum.edu/Powerof5](http://colum.edu/Powerof5) to make your gift count times three.

Because CAAN is the alumni force behind The Power of 5, we need all of our alumni to get involved to help Columbia be the best it can be, and for our alumni community to be the most supportive it can be.

If you have any questions, please contact us at any time.

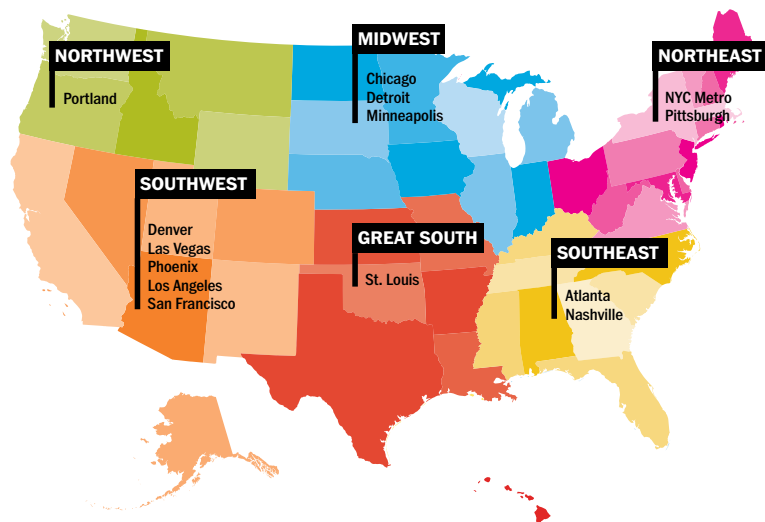
Kind regards,



**Michelle Passarelli** (BA '99)    **Sarah Schroeder** (BA '00)    **Cyn Vargas** (BA '01)

### CONTACT THE OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS

<b>Michelle Passarelli</b> Associate Director of Alumni Operations 312.369.6987 <a href="mailto:mpassarelli@colum.edu">mpassarelli@colum.edu</a>	<b>Sarah Schroeder</b> Director of Alumni Relations, West Coast 323.469.0443 <a href="mailto:sschroeder@colum.edu">sschroeder@colum.edu</a>	<b>Cyn Vargas</b> Associate Director of Alumni Events & Programs 312.369.8640 <a href="mailto:cvargas@colum.edu">cvargas@colum.edu</a>
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## CAAN UPDATES

See what's happening in your city, and get involved with the Columbia Alumni Association & Network (CAAN)!

### Atlanta

Brad Sanders is the new contact for the Atlanta area, so if you're heading that way, be sure to contact him for guidance. We are also looking for alumni in Atlanta to help coordinate events. Contact Brad Sanders (BA '76) at [onthephonewithti@yahoo.com](mailto:onthephonewithti@yahoo.com).

### Chicago

CAAN Chicago hosted a holiday party in December and attended the sold-out Kyle Kinane (BA '02) Comedy Show at UP Comedy Club in November. Alumni were treated to a private Columbia-only meet-and-greet with Kyle afterwards.

In August, CAAN Chicago celebrated the launch of Sean Chercover's (BA '91) new novel, *The Trinity Game*, at the Hidden Shamrock in Lakeview. Contact Joan Hammel (BA '86) at [joan@joanhammel.com](mailto:joan@joanhammel.com).

### Denver

Be on the lookout for upcoming event announcements for a Cubs/Rockies game and a screening of Sean Jourdan's (MFA '09) latest feature film. Contact Pat Blum (BA '84) at [pbcaanden@aol.com](mailto:pbcaanden@aol.com).

### Detroit

CAAN Detroit had an awesome cocktail party at Phillip Cooley's (BA '00) Slows Bar B Q in November. Special thanks to Phillip for hosting! Contact Julie Atty (BA '10) at [julie.atty@gmail.com](mailto:julie.atty@gmail.com).

### Las Vegas

CAAN Las Vegas is searching for a new chapter leader. If you're interested in getting to know the alumni in your area and helping them stay connected, contact Sarah Schroeder at [sschroeder@colum.edu](mailto:sschroeder@colum.edu).



1



3



2

1. **DJ Niena Drake** (BA '02) provided the music at the Project Green event.

2. **Mark Amos** (BA '01) and his wife let loose at the Midwest on the West Coast Holiday Party.

3. **Brett Bulatek** (BA '05), **Peter Woods** (BA '05), and friends enjoy alumni trivia night at Little Bar in Los Angeles.

### Minneapolis

CAAN Minneapolis officially launched in November with a party at Stanley's Northeast Bar Room. Contact Marie Chaiart (BA '05) at mariechaiart@gmail.com or Kelsi Moffitt (BA '03) at kemoffit@gmail.com.

### New York Metro

CAAN NY hosted a cocktail party at Puck Fair in November. This was one of New York's best events to date, so look for more in 2013! Contact Eric Wallace (BA '09) at ewallace@gmail.com or James "Woody" Woodward (MA '03) at mrwoody917@yahoo.com.

### Phoenix

In August, CAAN Phoenix celebrated the launch of Sean Cherver's (BA '91) new novel, *The Trinity Game*, at The Poisoned Pen in Old Town Scottsdale. After the signing, alumni joined Sean for dessert at The Sugar Bowl. CAAN Phoenix needs a new chapter leader. If you would like to get to know alumni and organize events in the Phoenix area, please contact Sarah Schroeder at sschroeder@colum.edu.

### Pittsburgh

In December, CAAN Pittsburgh attended the 2nd Annual Pittsburgh High School Rock Challenge and a VIP pre-event reception at Diesel Nightclub. Contact Mike Moscato (BA '94) at maguitarmike@gmail.com.

### Portland, Oregon

CAAN Portland hosted a cocktail party at Touche in October. In August, members headed out to the Oregon coast, where they were treated to a catered luncheon by chapter leader, Howard Shapiro (BA '53), and his wife at their seaside home. Contact Howard at pmahoward@aol.com.

### San Francisco

Dimitri Moore (BA '11) is the new leader of CAAN San Francisco, and we look forward to what he has in store for Bay Area alumni! Contact Dimitri Moore (BA '11) at DimiMoore@gmail.com.

### St. Louis

CAAN St. Louis hosted a cocktail party in October at Square One Brewery and Distillery, one of the first micro-distillery restaurants in the country. Contact Angela LaRocca (BA '08) at angela.larocca1@yahoo.com.

### Los Angeles

CAAN LA teamed up with the Northwestern University Entertainment Alliance (NUEA), the Hollywood Badgers from the University of Wisconsin, and alumni from the University of Michigan and the University of Illinois for a holiday party in December. In November, CAAN LA participated in the Young Storytellers Foundation's mentoring program, which provides underserved children in the public school system with an opportunity to write stories and see them brought to life. CAAN LA is the very first alumni association to get involved with this nonprofit foundation.

In September, CAAN LA teamed with Project Green to celebrate our alumni at the 2012 Emmys with a Project Green Music & Entertainment Gifting Lounge and Benefit Music Event at Petersen Automotive Museum. Project Green is a nonprofit whose mission is to protect green space for future generations.

The month of August saw CAAN LA cheering on the Cubs and the White Sox as both teams played the LA Dodgers at Dodgers Stadium. CAAN also hosted a movie trivia night in partnership with NYU and NUEA.

CAAN LA is searching for more chapter leadership! If you would like to help plan events and connect with local alumni, contact Sarah Schroeder at sschroeder@colum.edu.

### STAY CONNECTED



Stay in theLoop, update your info, and check out new alumni events at [colum.edu/Alumni](http://colum.edu/Alumni)



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Photos 1 & 2: Nicholas Kimman (BA '95)

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IN FISCAL YEAR 2012, which ended August 31, generous individuals and organizations contributed a total of **\$7,779,937** to support the educational mission of Columbia College Chicago. Many of those gifts were designated for Scholarship Columbia, a five-year matching program backed by \$1 million, to address the financial needs of our students. To see the complete list of donors, go to [colum.edu](http://colum.edu).

**EVENTS**

Check out these upcoming alumni events across the country. For the full calendar, go to [colum.edu/alumni](http://colum.edu/alumni)



**MAY**

**Chicago / May 2**

**CAREER WORKSHOP: WINNING PROFESSIONAL MINDSET**

Contact Cyn Vargas (BA '01) at [cvargas@colum.edu](mailto:cvargas@colum.edu).

**San Francisco Bay Area / May 5**  
**ALUMNI RALLY**

Contact Dimitri Moore (BA '11) at [dimimoore@gmail.com](mailto:dimimoore@gmail.com).

**Los Angeles / May 6**  
**MINI-CAMP AT WRITERS BOOT CAMP**

Contact Sarah Schroeder (BA '00) at [sschroeder@colum.edu](mailto:sschroeder@colum.edu).

**New York / DATE TBD**  
**NETWORKING MEETING**

Contact James "Woody" Woodward (MA '03) at [mrwoody917@yahoo.com](mailto:mrwoody917@yahoo.com) or Eric Wallace (BA '09) at [ericwallace@gmail.com](mailto:ericwallace@gmail.com).

**Chicago / May 17**  
**MANIFEST**

Come back to campus to experience Manifest, Columbia's annual urban arts festival. Visit the Alumni Lounge and Stage, attend the Young Alumni Event, and then head to the Alumni and Senior Graduation Party!

**St. Louis / DATE TBD**  
**STAND-UP COMEDY AT THE FUNNYBONE**

Contact Angela LaRocca (BA '08) at [angela.larocca1@yahoo.com](mailto:angela.larocca1@yahoo.com) or Matt Staed (BA '06) at [matthew.staed@gmail.com](mailto:matthew.staed@gmail.com).

**JUNE**

**San Francisco Bay Area / June 2**  
**ALUMNI RALLY**

Contact Dimitri Moore (BA '11) at [dimimoore@gmail.com](mailto:dimimoore@gmail.com).

**Los Angeles / June 11**  
**CAAN CONNECT**

Contact Sarah Schroeder (BA '00) at [sschroeder@colum.edu](mailto:sschroeder@colum.edu).

**JULY**

**Various Locations / July 13**  
**NATIONAL BOWLING EVENT**

CAAN chapters around the country will participate in "Bowling for Bucks," which supports the Alumni Scholarship Fund through the Power of 5 campaign. Contact Sarah Schroeder (BA '00) at [sschroeder@colum.edu](mailto:sschroeder@colum.edu).

**Denver / July 21**  
**CUBS VS. ROCKIES**

Contact Pat Blum (BA '84) at [pbcaanden@aol.com](mailto:pbcaanden@aol.com).

**Phoenix / July 25**  
**CUBS VS. DIAMONDBACKS**

Contact Sarah Schroeder (BA '00) at [sschroeder@colum.edu](mailto:sschroeder@colum.edu).

**STUDENT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION UPDATES**



In the fall, students in the Student Alumni Alliance (SAA) were thrilled by a visit from Hank Chilton (MFA '98, pictured in back row in lavender shirt), a producer and writer in both film and television. Chilton's credits include *Nip/Tuck*, *Ringer*, and *Me, Myself & Irene*. Students heard about the highs and lows of Chilton's career, got an up-close look at his projects, and gained valuable industry insight and advice.

**WHAT IS THE SAA?** After graduation, it's not just what you know but who you know. The Student Alumni Alliance (SAA) exists to prepare students to become successful alumni in the real world by offering opportunities to meet Columbia College Chicago's rock-star alumni, who can give up-close industry insight, offer critiques of their work, and serve as invaluable professional contacts.

**ARE YOU A ROCK STAR?** The SAA is always accepting proposals for the Alumni Guest Speaker series. So, if you've been there, done that, and made a mark in your industry, we'd love to hear from you! Check out [colum.edu/SAA](http://colum.edu/SAA) to view some of our past speakers, and contact Michelle Passarelli at 312.369.6987 or [mpassarelli@colum.edu](mailto:mpassarelli@colum.edu) for more information.

**I JUST...**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Acted in a play</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Published a book</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Performed at Madison Square Garden</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Appeared on <i>Project Runway</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Started a business</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Found my calling</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Got married</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Had a baby</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Got a new job</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Retired</li> </ul>
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**Whatever you've been doing, we want to know.**  
Go to [colum.edu/alumni](http://colum.edu/alumni), click on "Promote Yourself," and submit a class note. If you've never logged in before, you'll need to complete a quick registration first.

Is your *DEMO* still going to mom's house? Reading someone else's copy? Make it right: Update your address at [colum.edu/demo/subscribe](http://colum.edu/demo/subscribe).

## CLASS NOTES

**What are you doing out there?**

**We want to know!** To submit your news, go to [colum.edu/alumni](http://colum.edu/alumni), click on "Promote Yourself," and submit a class note. If you've never logged in before, you'll need to complete a quick registration first.

Class news information will be printed based on availability of space. Announcements that are incomplete or older than one year cannot be considered for publication. Deadline for the fall/winter issue is July 15.

**1950s**

**Peter Berkos** (BA '51) was the sound editor on *Touch of Evil* (1958), which was ranked No. 50 of the 75 Best Edited Films in *Cinemontage Magazine*.

**1970s**

**Charles Carner** (BA '78) directed an episode of the CW drama, *Supernatural*. The episode, "A Little Slice of Kevin," aired on November 14.

**Hank Grover** (BA '79) joined the faculty of Columbia College in Hollywood. He teaches "Producing, from Greenlight to Completion." He still works as a line producer and production manager.

**Marci Javril** (BA '78) had her eBook, *Feel Like Yourself Again*, put into print. More at [yogaoftouch.com](http://yogaoftouch.com).

**1980s**

**David Cromer** ('86) had his staging of *Our Town* at the Broad Stage in Los Angeles named one of the top 10 theatrical productions of 2012 by *Los Angeles Times* critic Charles McNulty. More at [thebroadstage.com/Our-Town](http://thebroadstage.com/Our-Town).

**Patrick Egan** ('86) self-published his first novel, *Get Happy*.

**Donald Fox** (BA '85) is a master control operator at KOLD/KMSB-TV in Tuscon, Arizona.

**Richard Goldschmidt** (BA '87) had the 15th anniversary edition of his first book, *The Enchanted World of Rankin/Bass: A Portfolio*, released on Thanksgiving Day. The book features chapters on *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer*, *Santa Claus is Comin' to Town*, *Mad Monster Party*, *The Hobbit*, *Thundercats*, and many others. More at [miserbros.com](http://miserbros.com).



## Tim Gillengerten ('93) Transit T-shirt titan opens retail store

If you live in Chicago, you've probably seen at least one hipster sporting the distinctive "Loop Stripe" T-shirt, which features seven color-coded el train lines running down the front. This design, along with many other transit-inspired creations, is the brainchild of **Tim Gillengerten** ('93), who owns Transit Tees, Inc., a graphic arts company whose product lines center around transportation themes.

Inspiration struck Gillengerten in 2000 while he commuted via the Blue Line to his corporate job downtown. The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) serves as an essential utility, he thought, but the instructional signs could be considered contemporary art as well. Gillengerten began selling his products online, at street fests, and to dozens of neighborhood shops until opening his own store at 1371 N. Milwaukee Avenue in Wicker Park in November. A major reason he decided to open the store was that the CTA agreed to allow Transit Tees to be an official manufacturer of "CTA-inspired" merchandise, a process Gillengerten says took "five years and five lawyers" between the two sides to complete

the agreement. Gillengerten came to Columbia in 1989 to study film. Although he was a straight-A student, he found himself enamored with a computer graphics class, which put him on another path altogether. He immersed him-self in the graphic design industry and hasn't looked back. Before starting Transit Tees, Gillengerten designed for clients including Kraft, the Museum of Contemporary Art, and Wicker Park Fest. "It's an amazing industry," he says. "It never feels like work."

The Michigan-raised Gillengerten says he makes a point to hire interns and staffers from Columbia because he knows their hearts are always in their work. In fact, he says, about half of his 11-person staff are Columbia alumni, including a seamstress and art director. "I have a soft spot in my heart for anyone who goes there," Gillengerten says. "I know if you're at Columbia you have a passion for the industry you're there for. I know you're going to be someone that's there for a purpose."

For more information, go to [transittees.com](http://transittees.com).  
—Tim Shaunnessey ('13)

**Steve Pink** ('89) is in talks to direct *Sexual Perversity* in Chicago, a remake of the 1986 film *About Last Night*. Production is set to start this fall and star Michael Ealy and Kevin Hart. He is also in talks to direct the sequel to *Bad Santa*.

**Cynthia Pusheck** (BA '87) worked as the cinematographer on season two of the ABC drama *Revenge*.

**Robert Reddrick** ('88) was nominated for The Duke Ellington Award for Best Musical Direction for *The Marvin Gaye Story*.

**James Richardson** (BA '86) performed as "Sammy the Shepherd Man" and "Tiny Tim...Burton" in the holiday show *Nativity the Musical*.

**Janetmarie Valiga** (BA '81) released her poetry-laced novel, *Learning to Rescue*, under the pen name "Judy Malone."

**1990s**

**Andrew Armani (Joe Gerrits)** (BA '99) won an Ovation Award from the LA Stage Alliance for Best Fight Choreography. He worked on the play *Hearts Like Fists* for the Theatre of NOTE.

**Arnie Bernstein** (MA '94) was interviewed by media outlets in the wake of the Connecticut school shooting for his thoughts on such tragedies. His new book, *Swastika Nation: Fritz Kuhn and the Rise and Fall of the German-American Bund*, is due this fall from St. Martin's Press.

**Michael (Boltz) Lust** (BA '98) had his den of vintage 1980s toys featured in the *Chicago Reader* in July.

**Paul Bronsteader** (BA '93) is co-owner of Kodiak Mobile Television, LLC, which built a mobile unit called Grizz HD, a 45-foot trailer that contains standard production tools in a small, efficient package.

**Stacey Cohen** (BA '96) made the Best of 2012 list by *Chicago Social Magazine*, which highlighted the launch of her new online design service, Virtual Designer. Her eco-friendly design tool also appeared on NBC News and Fox News in Chicago.

**Tanisha Dalmas** (BA '93) is the associate director of communication at the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.



## Wyona Lynch-McWhite (MFA '01)

Museum maven is determined to “dazzle and transform” all visitors

**CLAIM TO FAME:** Wyona Lynch-McWhite (MFA '01) is executive director of Fruitlands Museum, a complex of eight buildings spread over 210 picturesque acres in Harvard, Massachusetts. Fruitland's galleries feature Native American, Shaker, and American art.

**BEGINNINGS:** In 1994, Lynch-McWhite enrolled in Columbia's

MFA photography program, focusing on documentary photography with a goal of working in commercial photography. But during her second year, she came across a *Chicago Reader* story about the Art Institute of Chicago (AIC) receiving a Lila Wallace grant. Inspired, she used the story as the basis for a school paper on how museums diversify their audience. “It changed my focus,” she says. “I was more passionate about museums as institutions in a new way.”

**TURNING POINT:** Lynch-McWhite's paper led her to a prestigious internship at the AIC. While leading a gallery tour, she zeroed in on a Clyfford Still painting. Though she had previously

dismissed the work as merely a lot of black paint, she suddenly “completely got” the message the artist was trying to convey. She says during that “transformative experience,” she felt the connection museums can create between artists and patrons. She knew she wanted to reproduce that feeling for others.

**RESUME BUILDING:** After a paid gig at the AIC in the education department, Lynch-McWhite ran a gallery at Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis and then became an art curator at The Columbus Museum in Georgia. From there, she was director and chief curator of The Eleanor D. Wilson Museum at Hollins University

in Virginia in 2004, then joined the Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton, Massachusetts, as deputy director in 2008. She landed her current role at Fruitlands in July—just in time for the museum's centennial year.

**TO DAZZLE AND EDUCATE:** As director at Fruitlands, Lynch-McWhite raises money, looks for new artists, and strives to connect patrons with art, to offer them the same feeling she experienced as an intern back in Chicago. “I spend a lot of time trying to create those transformative experiences,” she says. “I'm trying to dazzle and educate and transform all the people who come to visit.”

—Lisa Balde (BA '04)

**Alicia DeLaPeña** (BA '96) had her paintings featured on the CD jacket of *Smoke Signals* by jazz quartet Mercaba.

**Linda Evans'** (MFA '92) musical *Enter Singing* was featured in the September/October issue of *Dramatists Guild Magazine*.

**Paul Garnes'** (BA '96) *Middle of Nowhere* received Independent Spirit Award nominations for Best Supporting Female, Best Female Lead, and Best Supporting Male, and received the esteemed John Cassavetes Award (given to the best feature made for less than \$500,000).

**Chester Gregory** (BA '95) released a video cover of the song “WMyB (What Makes You Beautiful)” in support of National Bullying Prevention Month and in memory of suicide victim Amanda Todd. Gregory is an established Broadway performer (*Hairspray*, *Sister Act*) and pop recording artist.

**Robert Hartley** (BA '96) had his novel, *Following Tommy*, published by Barva Press. The novel relates the tale of two young brothers living in the Irish ghetto of the West Side of Chicago in the early 1960s. More at [thelostbookshelf.com](http://thelostbookshelf.com).

**Christofer Holland** (BA '91) released his first EP last August under the name Noah.

**Ksenia Horobchenko's** (MFA '93) debut book, *Crossing the Border*, was published by Little Creek Books. *Crossing the Border* is a collection of short stories.

**Kevin Keating** (BA '93) released his novel *The Natural Order of Things* through Aqueous Books. The novel concerns the adventures of a small group of students, teachers, employees, and priests at a Jesuit prep school in a dying industrial city.

**Michael Matthews** (BA '99) won an LA Stage Alliance Ovation Award for Best Director of a Musical for *The Color Purple: A Musical*.

**Chris McKay** (BA '91) is the co-director of *Lego: The Piece of Resistance* (working title). The film, which will feature Legos in CGI, stars Channing Tatum, Chris Pratt, and Will Arnett.

**Michelle Monaghan** ('99) was interviewed by [scaddistrict.com](http://scaddistrict.com) about acting, and gave advice for students on preparing for roles and following their dreams.

**Michael Moscato** (BA '94) plays guitar for Distant Signals, a Rush tribute band based in Pittsburgh, and produced the 2nd Annual Pittsburgh and Erie High School Rock Challenges.

**Gina Reyes** ('95) was hired at 20th Century Fox as a creative executive. *Variety* wrote a profile on Reyes at [bit.ly/VWYtcn](http://bit.ly/VWYtcn).

**Jane Richlovsky** (BA '91) raised the money to fund her project Pop Covers of the [18]60's, which consisted of restaging Edouard Manet's compositions in a mid-20th-century suburban milieu of modernist architecture, nuclear Jell-o salads, and groovy barkcloth.

**Andy Richter** ('90) was nominated for a WGA Award for Outstanding Writing in the Comedy/Variety (Including Talk) Series category for his work on *Conan*.

**Anna Shapiro** (BA '90) is an ensemble member at Chicago's Tony-winning Steppenwolf Theatre and directed the Chicago premiere of *The Motherf\*\*ker with the Hat*, by Stephen Adly Guirgis. Shapiro previously directed the play on Broadway.

**Eric Sherpan** (BA '94) is a participating member of The Center for Internet Security–Multi-State/Information Sharing & Analysis Center, which works directly with the US Department of Homeland Security and other federal agencies to enhance the cyber security posture for the state of Illinois.

**Joseph Stearns** (BA '98) was featured in *Princes of Waco* at Signal Ensemble Theatre in Chicago. He is also the co-artistic director of the theater.

**Keturah Stickann** (BA '98) was the choreographer/movement director for the world

premiere tour of Jake Heggie's, *Moby-Dick*, which was filmed for Great Performances during its run at San Francisco Opera. She also directed *Madame Butterfly* at Opera Santa Barbara, and directed and choreographed Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers* at Sarasota Opera.

**Genddy Tartakovsky** ('92) directed the hit film *Hotel Transylvania*, which was the No. 1 film at the box office during its opening weekend. *Hotel Transylvania* stars Adam Sandler, Andy Samberg, and Selena Gomez.

**Regina Taylor** ('90) was nominated for The August Wilson Award for Best Writing (Musical or Revue) for *Crowns*, performed at the Goodman Theatre.

**George Tillman's** (BA '91) film, *The Inevitable Defeat of Mister and Pete*, screened in the Premieres category at Sundance 2013.

**Eduardo Vilario** (MA '99) led the New Orleans Ballet Association in presenting the renowned Ballet Hispanico, teaming with the 20-member Grammy Award-winning Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra at the Mahalia Jackson Theatre.

**Erica Watson** (BA '98) emceed the Nazr Mohammed Foundation's fundraiser for capital improvements for Kenwood Academy. **Michelle Passarelli** (BA '99) was the publicist for the event.



**Jenine Esco** (BA '98) uses tarot cards to help her clients make decisions. She performs tarot readings via email and telephone and at events. To request a reading, contact Jenine at [jenineesco@hotmail.com](mailto:jenineesco@hotmail.com).

## 2000s

**Ryan Bourque** (BFA '09) was featured in two of The Hypocrites' holiday presentations, *The Pirates of Penzance* and *The Mikado*.

**Jeremy Cohen** (BA '09), owner of Chicago-based music management firm On The Grind Management, is expanding operations and opening a Los Angeles branch.

**Timothy Connery's** (BA '09) film, *Easton's Article*, premiered at the Fantasia International Film Festival in Montreal. The film was reviewed by *The Hollywood Reporter*, *BloodyUnderrated.net*, and *Libertas Film Magazine*. More at eastonsarticle.com.

**Jared Cortese** (BA '04) and his band, The Jesus Rehab, played at the Ace Bar in Lincoln Park on November 2 during their first tour through Chicago.

**Carlos Cruz** (BA '06) established his own publishing company, Zmurbi Librumz. He is working on a second book due this fall.

**Zachary Dean** (BA '01) had his screenplay, *Blackbird*, made into the crime drama *Deadfall* directed by Stefan Ruzowitzky. *Blackbird* was written in Screenwriting II. The show stars Eric Bana, Olivia Wilde, Sissy Spacek, and Kris Kristofferson.

**Danielle Dellorto** (BA '04) is a senior producer on *Sanjay Gupta, MD*, and received a Daytime Emmy nomination for the show.

**Amy Dvorak** (BA '05) was selected by *FOLIO: Magazine* for its "15 Under 30" list.

**Tracie Ennes** (BA '08) is an assistant editor for *Project Runway All Stars*.

**Thomas Evans** (BA '02) played the role of Willie Stark in *All the King's Men* at the El Portal Theatre in North Hollywood, California. The production earned a five-star review from the *LA Examiner*.

**Sarah Faragalla** (BA '03) is the director of RAW: St. Louis. Faragalla curates and features local artists in film, fashion, music, visual arts, hair, make-up artistry, and performance art. More at rawartists.org/stlouis.

**Anna Fong** (BA '01) hosted her spring 2013 runway show, Queen of Hearts, on October 21 at Radisson Blu in Chicago. More at anna-fong.com.

**Khanisha Foster** (BA '02) and her theatre company, 2nd Story, have published their first book, *Briefly Knocked Unconscious By a Low Flying Bird, 2nd Story Anthology*.



## Aidy Bryant (BA '09)

joined the ranks of NBC's *Saturday Night Live* in fall 2012 for the show's 38th season. While at Columbia, Bryant participated in the Comedy Studies program, which allowed her to study comedy for a full semester at The Second City, a famed stomping ground for many high-profile comedians and future SNL stars, including Bill Murray, John Belushi, and Tina Fey.

**Kevin Glendinning** ('01) won the Monitor Mixer of the Year award at The 12th Annual Parnelli Awards gala, held October 20 at the Mirage Las Vegas. More at bit.ly/ROeWLJ.

**Brittany Harris** (BA '09) joined the WTO Fox 39 news team as a capitol bureau reporter in Rockford, Illinois, in July.

**Jared Hoffa** (BA '07) works for *Windy City Live* and was included in a back-to-school host chat for the show's College Day.

**Kelsie Huff** (BA '03) took her show, *This Show Might Be Terrible*, to the Boulder International Fringe Festival in August.

**LaTonia Kimmons** (BA '04) held a public reading of her novel, *Baby Momma*, at the West Englewood Chicago Public Library on February 8 and 9.

**Aaron Koppel** (BA '07) had his album *Multiverse* featured in *Downbeat Magazine's* list of the Best CDs of 2012.

**Michael Kramer** (BM '06) co-wrote the score for *Stations: A Los Angeles Holiday Story*, which took home an LA Stage Alliance Ovation Award for Lyrics/Music for an Original Musical.

**Simone LaPierre** (BA '08) is the co-producer and creative networker for production company *Project Famous* and its online TV show, *Vaudevillains*, seen on RedDragonTV.tv.

**David Paul Larson** (BA '07), fashion photographer, was featured in the October issue of *Photo District News* at pdnonline.com.

**Aimee Lee** (MFA '06) released her debut book, *Unfurled: One Journey into Korean Papermaking*, through Legacy Press. More at aimeelee.net.

**Morgan Mack** (BA '09) works in film development for The Mark Gordon Company in Los Angeles.

**Adriana McClintock** (BA '00) is the director of development and communications at Friends of Ryerson Woods in Deerfield, Illinois.

**Thomas McGunn** (BA '09) performed in the Sondheim musical *Assassins* at Chicago's Viaduct Theatre in the fall.

**Lauren McKeague's** (BA '07) special occasion dress boutique, Pink Slip Boutique, was featured on ABC morning shows and in local papers. More at pinkslipboutique.com.

**Karlene Olesuk** (MA '02) had her profile featured on Columbia's Arts, Entertainment, and Media Management Department website.

**Michaela Petro** ('04) was featured in WildClaw Theatre's fall show, *The Life of Death*, an original adaptation of a horror tale by Clive Barker.

**Peter Reft** (BA '09) graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio.

**Joshua Reinwald** (BA '04) released his comic, *Crass Sophisticate*, which is available at crasssophisticate.com.

**Adam Rust** (MFA '05) was part of the Spare Parts exhibition at the Rag Factory in London in the fall.

**Allison Schein** (BA '08) is the archive manager of the Creative Audio Archive, an initiative of the Experimental Sound Studio. More at bit.ly/SUDozQ.

**Brian Schodorf** (BA '06), a Wichita native, won a regional Emmy and was named the 2012 Distinguished Kansan in the arts and entertainment category by *The Capital-Journal Newspaper*. More at bit.ly/WUDZVh.

**Adam Silver** (BA '07) starred as Goose in the 30 Minute Musical version of *Top Gun*.

**Trina Sotirakopoulos** (BA '03) published her young adult novel, *In Her Skin*.

**Kendra Stevens** ('04) brought her one-woman show, *Compilation*, to Gorilla Tango Theatre in Chicago for two nights in July.

**Bhoomi Thakore** (BA '03) is a research associate at Northwestern University.

**Latisha (Batchelor) Thomas** (BA '05) is working with I Am We to launch a project called Chicago's Unsung Heroes—The Photography and Audio Exhibition.

**Steve Tomlitz** (BA '04) was featured in James Joyce's *The Dead*, which ran in the fall at Chicago's Court Theatre.

**Aaron Vanek** ('03) will run the H.P. Lovecraft Film Festival in September in San Pedro, California. More at hpfilmfestival.com. Vanek also started a nonprofit company that develops and produces educational games.

**Julia Vazquez-Zimmerman** (BA '04) completed her master of arts degree in higher education from Kaplan University and accepted a position with the nonprofit organization Womankind.

**Jordan Vogt-Roberts** (BA '06) is the creator, director, and executive producer of the Comedy Central show, *Mash Up*. Hosted by T.J. Miller, *Mash Up* premiered in October.

**Victor Wagner** (BA '07) received the Audio System Tech of the Year Award at the 12th Annual Parnelli Awards Gala held at the Mirage Las Vegas.



**Heidi O'Hanley** (MAT '07) was named the 2012 Illinois Early Professional Art Educator of the Year by the Illinois Art Education Association.



**Tasha Ransom** (MA '02) won the Peter Lisagor Award for Best TV Public Affairs Programming. The winning show, *Living with ADHD*, can be viewed at bit.ly/145DU18.



## Rachel Stratman (BA '08) and Quentin Lareau (BA '07) tie the knot

Rachel Stratman (BA '08) and Quentin Lareau (BA '07) were married in Chicago on September 21, five years after meeting while working together on a film for the 2007 Film + Video Department Practicum. Fellow Columbia graduate Josh Staman (BA '07) officiated the ceremony, and Jeremy Lawson ('04) served as wedding photographer. Several other students from the practicum attended the wedding, and the reunited crew gifted the newlyweds with—what else?—a short film. The couple resides in Los Angeles. Lareau works as a freelance cinematographer, and Stratman is a production coordinator for Stand Up To Cancer. —Tim Shaunnessey ('13)

**Lena Waithe** (BA '06) is a producer of the film *Dear White People*, “a satire about being a black face in a very white place,” which raised \$41,405 in funding on Indiegogo. CNN profiled the film, and the trailer has received 850,000 views on YouTube.

**Adrienne “A.J.” Ware** (BA '09) was featured in *We 3 Lizas*, which ran through December at Steppenwolf Theatre’s Merle Reskin Garage Theatre.

**Kevin Wiczor** (BA '05) directed *James and the Giant Peach* in July for Metropolis Performing Arts Center, staged *Dearly Departed* for Circle Theatre, and directed *Scrooge, The Musical* at Steel Beam Theatre.

**Erica Winfield** (BA '03), also known as Miss Cajé, is the president and CEO of Utter Beauty, LLC, which has developed Utter Beauty, a new empowerment brand for women.

**Eric Wolfram** (BA '05) is a laboratory manager at Riverbank Labs in Geneva, Illinois.

**Annick Wolkan** (BA '05) is an associate producer on HBO’s *Game of Thrones*.

### 2010s

**Jillian Adams** (BA '11) celebrated her one-year anniversary as an assistant to two agents at Stone Manners Salners Agency.

**Weston Allen** (BA '12), **Jay Galbreath** (BA '11), **Will Johnson** ('12), and **Ryan Nanni** (BA '12) will create *Spirit of '68*, a documentary short about a Vietnam vet who joins the 1968 DNC Protests and ends up at NATO 2012. The project raised \$3,022 on Kickstarter in July.

**Karlie Baker** (BA '10) is local editor at *Sunset Hills-Crestwood Patch* in Missouri.

**Clarissa Bonet** (MFA '12) had her exhibit City Space at Calumet Photo Chicago from August 1 to September 15.

**John Bourgeois** ('12), **Sam Hubbard** ('12), **Patrick Hurlbut** (BA '12), **John Kelly** ('13), **Cassandra Rose** (BA '10), and **Liz Siedt** (BA '10), members of the alumni-driven Cold Basement Dramatics theatre group in Chicago, mounted an adaptation of Sophocles’ *Antigone* at the Oracle Theatre in August.

**Zoe Claster** (BA '12) was the stage manager for the world premiere of *Adrift*, a Polarity Theatre Ensemble production staged at the Greenhouse Theatre in Chicago.

**Michael Danovich** (BA '11) played the Ghost of Kahless Past in *A Klingon Christmas Carol*, which ran through December 30 at Raven Theatre in Chicago.

**Vincent Dee** (BA '10) works with the Own The Vote campaign, which encourages young voters to engage with each other on Facebook and Instagram.

**Joanna De Jesus** (BA '10) was promoted to production secretary for the television show *Burn Notice*, where she has been working for the past two seasons.

**Cody Estle** (BA '11) joined the Raven Theatre ensemble in Chicago and directed *Boy Gets Girl*, which ran from January 15 to March 2.

**Kalin Franks** (BA '10) was published at E-Learning, where she offered her perspective on work in this digital era.

**Michael Harnichar** (BA '11) joined Chicago’s Tony-winning Lookingglass Theatre Company as a group sales and senior box office associate. He is also producing a collaboratively devised work, *Bear Suit of Happiness*, for the New Colony Theatre.

**Michael A. Harris** (BFA '11) was featured in *My First Time*, a Broken Nose Theatre production staged at The Greenhouse Theater over the summer.

**Liz Heller** (PCRT '10), a University of Wisconsin MFA candidate, is showing her art at the Middleton High School Gallery.

**Steph Krout** ('11) was promoted to art director at AbelsonTaylor.

**Elizabeth Massura** (MAM '11) was promoted to manager of interactive marketing operations at Chicago Booth in July.

**LaShera Moore** (BA '12) works with the Youth Company Chicago in Jefferson Park as assistant director and vocal coach for its show, *Little Shop of Horrors*, which began in January. More at [youthcompanychicago.org](http://youthcompanychicago.org).

**Jennifer Ray** (MFA '12) had her photography featured in the Contested Territories exhibition, which explored some of the ways in which landscape photography can still bear witness to the ways of life and events of this world.

**Abigail Sheaffer** (BA '12) launched the blog Chicago Literati, which aims to bring together exclusive content from authors of all experience levels. Tribune Company’s subsidy *Chicago Now* selected the blog for its blog roster. More at [chicagoliterati.com](http://chicagoliterati.com).

**Jill Specks-Alexander** (BA '12) had her work featured in a show called The Human Condition

curated by *National Geographic Photographer*. She also had a dog portrait published in the 2013 Bad Dog Wall Calendar and the 2013 Page-a-day Calendars by Workman Publishing.

**Christopher Svehla** (BA '12) was promoted from tracking assistant to sales coordinator at Variety Insight, the new database arm of *Variety* recently acquired by Penske Media Corporation. Svehla triples as an assistant to the president, an assistant to the directors of business development, and deals directly with high-profile clients in a support capacity.

**Jeremy Vaughn** (BFA '10) published his novel, *Here Lies Death*, which is part science fiction, part fantasy, and part story of survival.

**Mike Walzman** (BA '12) published his debut novel, *The Fall to Freedom*.

**Brandon Will** (BA '10) attended The New School in New York City to pursue his master’s degree in creative writing/writing for children and young adults.

**Jayme Wojciechowski** (BFA '10) appeared in a staged reading of *Off the Spectrum*, about autism. The play was part of Red Tape Theatre’s Fresh Eyes Project.

**Chanelle Yarber** (MAM '11) is fundraising to launch an online TV network aimed at the African-American market. The network will give emerging artists a platform to air their work while also combating negative stereotypes in media. More at [gofundme.com/1cfw88](http://gofundme.com/1cfw88).

**Karen Yates** (MA '12) was cast in Lyric Opera Chicago’s production of *Elektra*, directed by David McVicar, which opened October 6.

### IN MEMORIAM

**James Marwood** (BA '57) died on October 19 at his home in Westerville, Ohio, at the age of 76. Marwood was employed at Illinois radio stations as an on-air personality and chief engineer. He was a veteran of the US Marine Corps.

**Anthony Rosso** (BA '52), 85, passed away on July 3 in his Tinley Park home.

**Alfred Topolski** (BA '48) passed away on June 20, 2011, at the age of 84.



**Industry of the Ordinary** is the collaboration between Adam Brooks and Mathew Wilson (Art + Design). The project reframes standard scenes from everyday life for reflection and reconsideration. A mid-career survey of the duo's work, *Sic Transit Gloria Mundi: Industry of the Ordinary*, was exhibited at the Chicago Cultural Center between August 17 and February 17.

**Jehan Abon** (BFA '07), **Ben Bilow** ('08), and **Stefan Coisson** (BFA '08) (Creative Services), and former staff members Trevor Gerring and Abby Friedman McLean collectively won 13 national design awards in 2012.

**Stephen Asma's** (HHSS) book *Against Fairness*, which explores the idea of fairness and favoritism in our society, was published in November by the University of Chicago Press.

**Annette Barbier** (IAM) and **Mat Rappaport** (Television), with several other collaborators, received a Propeller Fund Grant to support a public art work in augmented reality that is now available as an app for mobile devices through [expose-ar.com](http://expose-ar.com).

**Robert Buchar** (Film + Video) directed a documentary, *The Collapse of Communism: The Untold Story*, which is available on DVD.

**Marcelo Caplan** ('06, Science + Mathematics) attended the 8th Annual Illinois Community Schools Forum and received the Community School Leadership Award for his work using community schools to connect students and families and engaging local communities.

**Mort Castle's** (Fiction Writing) short story "Altenmoor, Where the Dogs Dance" was produced as a short feature film titled *Elysium*. Also, Castle's story "New Moon on the Water" is up for a Bram Stoker Award. *Shadow Show: All-New Stories in Celebration of Ray Bradbury*, edited by Castle and **Sam Weller** (Fiction Writing), is also up for a Bram Stoker Award.

**Thom Clark** (Community Media Workshop) was a recipient of the 2012 Digital Excellence Pioneer Award for his work as co-founder and president of the Community Media Workshop at Columbia.

**Jessica Cochran** (Center for Book + Paper Arts) received an Illinois Arts Council travel scholarship to attend the Alliance of Artist Communities Annual Conference in Kansas

City. She also was awarded a Hatch Residency at the Chicago Artists Coalition, which aims to support an ecology of curatorial and artistic practice.

**Kevin Cooper's** (Film + Video) short film *The Painter* was the focus of a DNAinfo Chicago story. Filmed at the college's Media Production Center, the film paints a picture of urban youth living under the constant threat of violence.

**Caroline Davis** (Music) was profiled by *The Chicago Reader* in advance of her first album as a lead jazz saxophonist, *Live Work & Play*.

**Ron Falzone** and **Jack Newell's** (Film + Video) feature film *Close Quarters* won three Best of the Midwest Awards, including Best Actor, Best Actress, and Best Editing at the Midwest Independent Film Festival.

**Jill Forshee** (HHSS) began a three-year position with the Fulbright Foundation in Washington, DC. She is also working on a collaborative project with the Fowler Museum at UCLA and a book about cultures and arts of Timor Island, Indonesia.

**Suzanne Frandreau** (Center for Black Music Research) retired as head librarian and archivist for the Center for Black Music Research.

**Heather Gilbert** (Theatre) was named a recipient of a 3ARTS Award, which goes to women in the fields of theater, music, visual arts, the teaching arts, and dance, and awards a \$15,000 stipend.

**Tania Giordani** (BA '95, Science + Mathematics) co-wrote a book, *Defending Public Education from Corporate Takeover* (University Press of America), which addresses the current educational system in the United States, including President Obama's controversial Race to the Top initiative.

**Johnathon Gust** (BA '03, Radio), also known as DJ Zebo, was nominated for Best House Music DJ in the 32nd Annual Chicago Music Awards.

**Dean Deborah H. Holdstein** (School of Liberal Arts and Sciences) wrote the afterword for a book of scholarly essays, *Exploring Composition Studies: Sites, Issues, and Perspectives*.

**Fernando Jones'** (Music) children's blues group, Blues Kids, played the mayor's send-off celebration for Chicago blues legend Buddy Guy on November 29 at the Pritzker Pavilion before Guy headed to the Kennedy Center to receive a medal of honor from President Obama.

**Dirk Matthews** (BA '02, Portfolio Center) presented at the University of Twente in Enschede, Netherlands, about Portfolio Center's best practices for student online portfolios.

**Cecil McDonald** (BA '94) was selected by the University of Chicago's Art and Public Life initiative for its artists-in-residence program.

**Patricia McNair's** (BA '87, MFA '00, Fiction Writing) book *The Temple of Air* was named the Chicago Writers Association's 2012 Book of the Year in traditional fiction.

**Joe Meno's** (Fiction Writing) novel *Office Girl* was named a Best Book of 2012 by both *Kirkus Reviews* and *Daily Candy*. In July, it was named Best Book of the Month by Amazon.com.

**Camille Morgan** (Exhibition + Performance Spaces) curated a show titled *Dreams in Jay-Z Minor*. It featured work from Columbia MFA student Krista Franklin at Blanc Gallery in Bronzeville as part of Chicago Artists Month in the fall.

**Carol Ng-He** (BA '04, HHSS) was awarded as the 2012 Museum Art Educator of the Year by the Illinois Art Education Association.

**Debra Parr** (Fashion Studies) was nominated for the board of the College Art Association.

**Michael K. Paxton** (Art + Design) received an Illinois Arts Council Individual Artist Professional Development Grant for 2013—his third from the Illinois Arts Council—which will fund the total redesign of Paxton's website and cover documentation of new work that is underway.

**Ron Pitts** (Film + Video) was featured on WBEZ for making history as Columbia College Chicago's first black professor and for breaking color barriers as a filmmaker.

**Brendan Riley** (English) was selected to serve as the head of the Popular Culture Association and American Culture Association, a 2,000-member joint organization that is the primary resource for scholars of pop culture studies.

**Michael Robbins'** (English) book *Alien vs. Predator* (Penguin Books) was ranked by the *New York Times*, *Slate*, *Commonweal*, *Complex*, & *Vol. 1 Brooklyn* as a Best of 2012 book. Greil Marcus, prominent music journalist and culture critic, wrote about *Alien vs. Predator* in his monthly column in *The Believer*.

**Cole Robertson** (MFA '08, Library) received an Illinois Arts Council Grant in support of his new photographic series, *Defaced Library Books*.

**Jacob Saenz** (BA '05, Library) was awarded a 2012 Ruth Lilly Poetry Fellowship from the Poetry Foundation, one of five recipients chosen from more than 1,000 submissions.

**Brian Shaw** (BA '86, Theatre) was nominated by the Movie Maverick Awards for Best Supporting Actor for his work on the short film *Birth of a White Boy*, written and directed by Columbia Film + Video graduate student J. Paul Preseault. Shaw also appears as Kent in *F\*ckload of Scotch Tape*, written and directed by faculty member Julian Grant (Film + Video).

**Bruce Sheridan** (Film + Video) produced *Head Games*, a sports documentary that explores the consequences of concussions, which was awarded Best Documentary at the Boston Film Festival and listed on iTunes in the Best of 2012 section.

**Peter Thompson** (Photography) screened three of his films at Columbia College Chicago on October 4 and was lauded in the *Chicago Reader*, in the words of **Bruce Sheridan** (Film + Video), as "the best Chicago filmmaker you've never heard of."

**David Trinidad's** (English) poem "from Peyton Place: A Haiku Soap Opera" was selected to appear in the 2013 edition of *The Best American Poetry*. The poem is from his upcoming book, *Peyton Place: A Haiku Soap Opera*.

**Sam Weller's** (BA '90, Fiction Writing) essay "Come Home" appeared on *The Huffington Post*, and he published short stories in the journals *Rosebud* and *Criminal Class*.



## POINT & SHOOT

# Caught on camera around the country

SEPTEMBER 27-30, 2012

## 2012 Alumni Weekend

Alumni returned to campus to participate in career workshops, enjoy a fashion show, hear from rock-star alumni including screenwriter **Mark Protosevich** (BA '83), comedy guru **Dino Stamatopoulos** ('87), cartoonist **Art Baltazar** (BA '92), and Material Issue's **Ted Ansani** (BA '90).

1. Photographer **Diane Dammeyer** ('01) is greeted by the recipient of her scholarship.

2. Photographer **Larry Kapson** (BA '99) clowns around with panelists **Dino Stamatopoulos** ('87), **Mark Protosevich** (BA '83), and **Art Baltazar** (BA '92).

3. Students and alumni presented a natural hair and fashion show.



OCTOBER 16, 2012

## Columbia Night at the Chicago International Film Festival

Columbia hosted the 25th anniversary reunion for the cast of the film *La Bamba* and screened the Alumni Film Contest's short category winner, *Eyes Manouche*.

4. **Ratko Momcilovic** ('04) accepts his award for receiving first place in the Alumni Film Contest's short category.

5. **Davor Palos**, **Elliot Taggart**, and **Nikola Dokic** (BA '08) perform as Eyes Manouche.



DECEMBER 7, 2012

## Open Doors Gala 2012

The Open Doors Gala raised \$800,000—a record amount—to benefit the Open Doors Scholarships fund for Chicago Public Schools' graduates to attend Columbia College Chicago. Funds also go toward new Columbia College scholarships being funded in memory of John H. and Eunice W. Johnson of the Johnson Publishing Company. A capacity crowd of 300 college supporters attended the event at the college's Media Production Center.

6. The Media Production Center's main sound stage is transformed for the event.

7. John Bryan, retired chairman and chief executive officer of Sara Lee Corporation, received the Chicago Legacy Award in memory of John H. Johnson.

8. Student performers rock the house.



DECEMBER 7, 2012

## Student Alumni Association (SAA) Event

9. In December, faculty member and 93 WXRT DJ Terri Hemmert led students in a tour and meet-and-greet at the station. For more about the SAA, see page 40.



JANUARY 17-20, 2013

## Columbia at Park City

Ten alumni screened films during the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah. Columbia College Chicago held three events in Park City during the first weekend of the festival.

10. **Michael David Lynch** (BA '05), **Tom Fletcher**, **Margaret O'Reilly**, **Mike McNamara**, and **Robert Teitel** (BA '90)

11. **Laura Steele** (BA '90) gets beautified before Columbia's events at Sundance.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

# Spring/Summer 2013



MAY 17

### Manifest

Throughout campus [colum.edu/manifest](http://colum.edu/manifest)

Manifest is the annual urban arts festival celebrating the work and creativity of Columbia students. Free and open to the public, it features music, exhibitions, screenings, presentations, performances, and much more.



MAY 17-JUNE 15

### BFA Fine Art Exhibition 2013

Averill and Bernard Leviton A+D Gallery, 619 S. Wabash Ave.

[colum.edu/ADGallery](http://colum.edu/ADGallery)

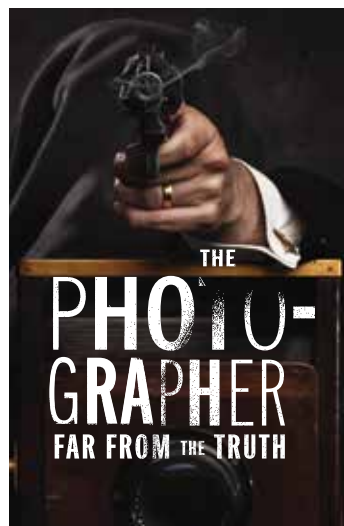
APRIL 15-JULY 3

### Spectator Sports

Museum of Contemporary Photography

600 S. Michigan Ave.

[mocp.org](http://mocp.org)



APRIL 17-APRIL 27

### The Photographer

Theatre Center, 72 E. 11th St.

Tickets: \$10 at 312.369.6126

[colum.edu/theater\\_center](http://colum.edu/theater_center)

Written by John Green, based on an original concept by Rob Malasch

APRIL 26-MAY 18

### MFA Thesis Exhibition

Center for Book and Paper Arts,

1104 S. Wabash Ave. 2nd floor

[colum.edu/cbpa](http://colum.edu/cbpa)

THROUGH MAY 4

### Rube Goldberg's Ghost: Confounding Design and Laborious Objects

Glass Curtain Gallery,

1104 S. Wabash Ave.

[colum.edu/DEPS](http://colum.edu/DEPS)

MAY 16-JUNE 15

### MFA Photography Thesis Exhibition

Glass Curtain Gallery

1104 S. Wabash Ave

[colum.edu/DEPS](http://colum.edu/DEPS)



JUNE 7

### Fashion Columbia

Media Production Center

1600 S. State St.

[colum.edu/fashioncolumbia](http://colum.edu/fashioncolumbia)

Fashion Columbia features the work of students in our Fashion Studies program and is the college's signature spring fundraising event.

JUNE 8-9

### Columbia at Printers Row Lit Fest

Printers Row in the South Loop

[chicagotribune.com/  
printersrowlitfest](http://chicagotribune.com/printersrowlitfest)

This year, Columbia sponsors the Poetry Stage at the Printers Row Lit Fest, considered the largest free outdoor literary event in the Midwest.

# LISTEN TO THE LESSON

Ray Bradbury taught me that the best creations are conjured from a point of emotional truth.

By Sam Weller (MFA '01),  
associate professor, Fiction Writing

## For 12 years, I worked side by side with writer

Ray Bradbury as his biographer. During this time, I picked up an abundance of invaluable approaches to creativity. The author of *Fahrenheit 451*, *The Martian Chronicles*, *Dandelion Wine*—as well as 600 published short stories, poems, and essays—was a Vesuvius of ideas and prolificacy. Bradbury passed away on June 5, 2012, at age 91, but in his nine decades of creative output, he won an Emmy; received an Oscar nomination; designed shopping plazas; wrote screenplays, teleplays, and radio dramas; owned his own theater company; and received medals from presidents and prime ministers.

Because of his fearless creative ethos and fluid movement across artistic genres, Bradbury is a poster child for Columbia College Chicago. I teach a class dedicated to the man and his work in the Fiction Writing Department at Columbia. Each and every day I hope to channel him for the benefit of my students. In my years working with the man and studying his body of work, many lessons emerge. But through serious critical analysis of his oeuvre, this point is one I share with all of my students: The best creations are conjured from a point of emotional truth. Bradbury wrote stories of humanity, culled from his own experiences with joy and sorrow, death and loss, injustice, censorship, poverty, family, wonder, and an unbridled celebration of life itself. Whether or not these emotional experiences were supplanted to Mars, near-future dystopias, small-town America, or the tenements of East Los Angeles, Bradbury wrote from a point of his truth. He articulated his heart through his imagination. And this is the point I make to my students: It's not always about writing what you know. It's about writing what you feel. ▣



Photo: Zen Selezawa

Sam Weller and Ray Bradbury

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!



**DEMO** seeks Backstory essays from Columbia College alumni, students, faculty, and staff. If you have a captivating personal story about how Columbia helped you grow, or vice versa (in 300 words or less), please contact us. For more information and submission guidelines, go to [colum.edu/demo](http://colum.edu/demo).

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C O L L E G E C H I C A G O

*Ruby C. Schucker*



## THE ALEXANDROFF LEGACY SOCIETY

### Creating a Legacy for Learning

The Alexandroff Legacy Society was established to honor Mirron “Mike” Alexandroff, president of Columbia College Chicago from 1962 to 1992, and recognize and acknowledge those donors who have designated a gift to Columbia through their estate plans, or in other ways. Mike Alexandroff helped transform a struggling, unaccredited college into the largest arts and communications college in the country. He believed that everyone was entitled to a chance to succeed. The Alexandroff Legacy Society provides a way for you to give a gift to Columbia and continue a *Legacy for Learning*.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** about The Alexandroff Legacy Society, please contact Ruby C. Schucker, Director of Planned Giving, Columbia College Chicago, at 312.369.7399 or [rschucker@colum.edu](mailto:rschucker@colum.edu).

colum.edu/**plannedgiving**