

The Chicago Academy for the Arts

News and Notables - June 2019

NEW AND FEATURED

Jacques Agbobly (Visual Arts '16) received the 2019 CFDA Scholarship Award from the School of Fashion at Parson's New School.

Rose Colella (Music Department Chair) played with the Louis Armstrong Eternity Band at Birdland Jazz Club in New York.

Samantha Dauer (Dance '14) will debut her newest work at the Edge Theater on June 14 and 15 at Alluvian Dance Chicago's Emergence Dance Festival.

Jessica "Supreme" Disu (Media Arts '06) and her organization HerStory Chicago received a \$150,000 gift from University of Chicago Education Labs. Her program helps literacy, writing, and storytelling programs for young women and girls of color.

Christian Engelhardt (Musical Theatre '20) was awarded first place at the Chicago NATS Classical Singers competition and second place at the Chicago NATS Musical Theatre Singers competition.

Jackson Fahey's (Music '14) band La Fille performed on NPR's Tiny Desk Concerts.

Kelli Harrington (Musical Theatre Faculty) won a Jeff Award for "Performer in a Principal Role - Musical" for *The Bridges of Madison County*.

Meagan Hickman (Music '06) has released a music video for her new song "Unique".

The new film *Homecoming* by **Tom Hodges** (Theatre '83) was selected to screen at the Seattle International Film Festival. *Homecoming* has won nine awards at festivals around the world. The film will screen at the 2019 Indy Film Fest as well.

Lauren Iacoponi (Music '10) and her new gallery were featured in Chicago Magazine.

Kimberly Jones (Musical Theatre '94) is releasing a novel titled *I'm Not Dying With You Tonight* in October.

Su Jin Kang (Music '12) began school at the Juilliard School.

Alexa Jane Lewis (Musical Theatre '11) plays "Mama Morton" in *Chicago* at the Cadillac Palace Theatre.

Brittany Mack (Musical Theatre '07) is performing in Chicago Shakespeare Theater's production of *Six*. She plays "Anna of Cleves".

Gabriella Marzetta (Musical Theatre '13) stars in a new musical titled *Contact High* that is available on all streaming platforms. She is performing an Off Broadway run this summer.

Neal Markowski (Music '09) received a 2019 Individual Artist Program Grant from the Office of the Mayor of Chicago and Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.

Kevin Mimms (Theatre '08) was featured on *Criminal Minds*.

Larry Peifer (Visual Arts '02) is now senior designer at HLW International in New York.

Sophia Pietrkowski (Theatre '14) is currently touring as "Mowgli" in *The Jungle Book*. She is also on the road in a show about Greek mythology titled *Stories in the Stars*. Both are two person shows.

Maisie Schloss debuted a new fashion collection called "Maisie Wilen". She had previously worked with Kayne West on his "Yeezy" brand.

Elenna Sindler (Music '16) is the composer and music director for Red Orchid Theatre's production of *Killing Game*.

Past News and Notables below.

DANCE

Kevin Beverley (Dance '08) was featured on the Hideaway Circus podcast, WGN, The Daily Herald, WTTW, and Block Club Chicago about his starring role in Cirque du Soleil's [VOLTA](#). He is currently touring around Ottawa, Toronto, Miami, and Tampa, and recently performed in Chicago.

Leyna Bloom will star in an upcoming film called *Port Authority* from RT Features and Martin Scorsese's Sikelia Productions. She has also launched a campaign to become the first trans model to walk in the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show.

Evan Boersma (Dance '17) was featured in the Northwest Indiana Times about his spot in the Joffrey Ballet.

Rena Butler (Dance '07) has been named a choreographic fellow at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and wrote an article for Dance Magazine's November issue.

Morgan Clune (Dance '18) was featured in Daily North Shore Magazine.

Isaiah Day (Dance '20) was featured on ABC7. His video has been viewed over 100,000 times.

Zachary Gonder (Dance '14) is dancing in "Four Quartets" at the Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard.

Tanji Harper (Dance '95) is the Artistic Director of The Happiness Club—a Chicago-based organization designed to encourage positive values and social change through the arts. The organization was recently recognized by the Obama Foundation.

Zach Jeppsen (Dance '19) was featured on the cover of the Chicago Tribune. The story of his incredible commute and love of Dance was also shown on The Jam TV Show, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, and the Northwest Herald.

Danielle Keys (Dance '14) recently danced at The Kennedy Center.

Delaney Kleber (Dance '14) is an analyst intern at Ascension Healthcare as she finishes her degree in math, actuarial science, and data mining at DePaul.

Alli Riley (Dance '14) danced with Trifecta Dance Colletice at Vittum Theatre during the summer.

Amber Robbin (Dance '07) launched her own consulting business called [Agents of Change](#), designed to support social justice organizations and activists through outreach and speaking gigs at high schools and universities.

Kara Roseborough (Dance '14) is dancing with the [American National Ballet](#). In addition, she finished writing a play and is currently editing a novel she wrote earlier this year.

Chloe Scott (Dance '14) an undergraduate student from ASU's College of Public Service and Community Solutions, joined the [SolarSPELL](#) project this year and traveled with the team to Vanuatu.

Maggie Vannucci (Dance '14) is living in Leeds, England. She is one of 14 dancers in the dance company VERVE. She is also completing her M.A. in dance performance.

Morgan Williams (Dance '08) is featured in the [Wisconsin Gazette](#) about their part in SueMo Dance Company.

MEDIA ARTS

Chaz Allen (Media Arts '14) had a cassette come out in July 2018.

Jack Dunphy (Media Arts '11) wrote and edited the film *The Great Pretender* which was selected for the Tribeca Film Festival. He was featured in Filmmaker Magazine's "[50 Most Anticipated Films of](#)

[2019](#)" for his upcoming film *Watch Me Drown*, which is a semi-autobiographical exploration of the relationships in Dunphy's life. The film will meld live action and animation.

Marissa Cameron (Media Arts '12) is a production artist at [Brandmuscle](#), working primarily with alcohol and beverage brands such as Smirnoff, Captain Morgan, Crown Royal, Jim Beam, Makers Mark, Jägermeister, and many others. She also serves as Secretary of [Chicago Women's Rugby Club](#), and is currently working on a documentary about the team, which was founded in 1976.

Alex Girav (Media Arts '13) debuted his film *The Night In All Things* at the Edinburgh International Film Festival.

Miguel Lucero (Media Arts '21) was featured on WGN TV with his family band Cielito Lindo Family Folk Music and his family sang the National Anthem at the Chicago Sky game in the summer of 2018

Brandon Martin (Media Arts '15) is part of the Innovation Lab at DePaul University that was nominated for a Chicago Innovation Award.

Jamie Weiss (Media Arts '17) released a photo series called *The Institution Presents*.

Ivan Winslow (Media Arts '10) is now an Account Strategy Manager at Soulsight.

MUSIC

Owen Cook (Music '12) works at the scientific manufacturing company [Bruker Constructing](#), aligning and testing laser scanning microscopes. He has been working with massively powerful lasers in order to see images of tiny grains of pollen.

Haley Fairman (Music '13) is currently working in the country music department at [Creative Artists Agency](#) in Nashville.

Dominic Flynn (Music '14) performed in Berlin during the summer of 2018, and his music will be performed by Open Strings Berlin.

Reuben Garza (Music '11) and **Sophie Dimitroff** (Music '11) are on tour with Noname.

Natasha Gawrit's (Music '13) new single "Lost and Confused" was released. Listen [here](#).

Monica George (Music '08) earned a new position at Chicago Community Trust as Coordinator of Civic Engagement.

Isabelle Gillman (Music '17) is the electronic music director at KWUR 90.3 at Washington University.

Matt Gonzalez (Music '05) and his band Typesetter went on an album release tour throughout the fall of 2018 for their album [Nothing Blues](#).

Jennie Horton (Music '12) is performing fieldwork in Toronto's Kensington Market neighborhood, studying small music venues, the local musicians who play there, and how the spaces remain economically sustainable in a city where over half the independent venues have closed since 2015. Her work will be part of a podcast series on Kensington.

Craig Hurley (Music '86) is promoting his comic book Daylight Sucks. He has signed with Michelle Hayes for representation. He was featured on an episode of *Chicago P.D.* in January.

Lauren Iacoponi (Music '11) is featured in Voyage Chicago and opened her solo exhibition "Serial Time" in November at the University Club of Chicago. Chicago Magazine is including her in their piece on unconventional gallery spaces for their April issue.

Matthew Jazwinski (Music '20) performed at the Family Life Center at Lurie Children's Hospital for hundreds of kids. It was broadcast on Skylight TV. He also performed at the hospital's Children's Ball with **Adam Chlebek** (Music '19), **Jaeden Roque** (Music '20), and **Declan Beyer** (Music '20).

Su Jin Kang (Music '12) wrote an orchestra titled *Pathless Woods*.

Nathan Laube (Music '04) was appointed to the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire as International Consultant in Organ Studies.

Vakaré Rūta Marshall (Music '04) teaches in Portland, OR and administers a small chamber music concert series. She recently finished a performance of Hildegard's "Ordo Virtutum". She will be singing in Leipzig, Berlin, and Prague as part of the Leipzig Bach Festival in June of 2020.

Dylan McKenzie (Music '04) released a new EP with a show in Los Angeles, and preparing for a handful of acoustic shows in Europe. The new record can be found [here](#).

Collette McLafferty (Music '91) had her new track "Birdseye View" with DJ Disciple signed to the veteran house music label Catch 22 Recordings. It is her first time collaborating with a Billboard-charting artist. So far there have been remixes in Spain, France, and the U.K.

Annemarie Pulawski (Music '09) is working with Gardeneers to fight food injustice by building school gardens with students and their communities. She is teaching youth to grow their own food, and connect with their health, communities, and the environment.

Sydney Radler (Music '15) finished an Advocacy Internship in Washington, D.C. with The Trevor Project, a leader in LGBTQ Youth Suicide Prevention.

Raiye Rosado (Music '93) launched a new brewery called Rabid Brewing.

Leonardo Alexander Salinas (Music '15) is pursuing a Psychology undergraduate degree and plays music with his band. He also promotes shows for the local music scene in Lafayette, LA.

Luke Sangerman (Music '15) played drums for Ravyn Lenae at Pitchfork Music Festival 2018 and was featured on *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* playing with Noname.

Tyler Schwartz (Music '03) funded his \$30,000 goal for "[Story Time Chess](#)", a game to teach children chess using silly stories, vibrant illustrations, custom chess pieces, a unique chess board, and an engaging card game. He was featured on TEDx Beacon Street discussing his company Chess at 3.

Akenya Seymour (Music '11) released her new video "Decay" which details her battle with Lyme Disease and made her New York City performance debut at the 15th annual [Winter Jazz Fest](#) in January.

Patrick Stratton (Music '08) performed at the Spring Awakening Music Festival in the summer of 2018.

Kasia Szczech (Music '13) is building the Magical Keys Studio to include private lessons for children with disabilities. She is also directing, producing, and conducting a Magical Keys Christmas show in collaboration with MusicChorale Choir as a community event in the southwest suburbs. She joined their team as an accompanist in the fall.

Nhyta Taguchi (Music '15) was a Library Fellow at the Tanglewood Music Festival with the Boston Symphony and is now an intern at MIT with their Student Arts Programming.

Lila Thome (Music '21) sang the National Anthem at The Chicago White Sox Game in the summer of 2018.

Stephanie Tonnemacher (Music '06) is the Creative Arts Coordinator at Christ Church of Oak Brook. She also teaches private voice, guitar, piano, and songwriting.

Nathan Urdangen (Music '12) joined the BMI-Lehman Engel Musical Theatre workshop this year as a composer.

Alex Wurman (Music '83) was the composer for season two of *Patriot* which premiered on Amazon on November 10. He won an Emmy as the composer for the TV Movie *Temple Grandin* in 2010.

MUSICAL THEATRE

Haley Bolithon (Musical Theatre '18) played "Wendla" in *Spring Awakening* with Blank Theatre Company at Frontier in Edgewater in the fall of 2018.

Melanie Braxton (Musical Theatre '04) is training performers to fly (aerial effects) in productions on Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, in addition to teaching and performing stage combat.

Julian Burzynski (Musical Theatre '13) is part of the ensemble for the national tour of the musical *Something Rotten*.

Maggie D'Angelo (Musical Theatre '13) is interning for the nonprofit organization [The American Solar Energy Society](#) in Boulder, CO. She is serving on their National Solar Tour as their National

Conference Programs Manager, managing media partnerships and organizing for their upcoming national tour. Their mission is to provide educational and community resources to promote sustainability and the transition to 100% renewable energy. She received her Bachelor's Degree in sociology from CU-Boulder.

Audrey Flegel (Musical Theatre '01) is in the latest [Progressive Insurance Commercial](#).

Chandler Ford was part of Wagon Wheel Theatre's *Bridges of Madison County* in August and Variety Children's *Little Mermaid* in September.

Desiree Gorzela (Musical Theatre '05) is working in LA as a music therapist at a state psychiatric hospital.

Savannah Hoover (Musical Theatre '12) is a musical theatre styles dance teacher with an after-school program at Ravenswood Elementary for students 3rd-8th grade.

Ilyssa Kosova (Musical Theatre '15) is helping to create a devised theatre piece with [YEPP](#), a company which creates healing and unity with LGBT+ youth experiencing homelessness.

Max Krueger (Musical Theatre '14) is moving to Budapest in the spring to continue to study mathematics.

Brian LeTraunik (Musical Theatre '14) is an Assistant Professor of Theatre at Lamar University in Beaumont, TX. He is writing a book about the history of contemporary stage combat, to be published by Routledge in 2020.

Alexa Jane Lewis (Musical Theatre '11) performed in *Nunsense* at the Gateway Playhouse and was featured in [Broadway World](#).

Gabriella Marzetta (Musical Theatre '13) stars in a new musical titled *Contact High* that is available on all streaming platforms.

JP Moraga (Musical Theatre '02) was part of Kyoung's Pacific Beat's PILLOWTALK which toured to Chicago as part of "CAATA's Revolutionary Acts" Festival at Victory Gardens.

Jose Ramos (Musical Theatre '11) was featured in the *Chicago Med* episode "Ties That Bind".

Alex Reznik (Musical Theatre '97) is an executive producer on the Netflix show *Seven Seconds*.

Domino Rosa (Musical Theatre '15) is organizing pride events for his magazine Super Dope&Extra Lit Magazine to celebrate the often overlooked queer people of color in the twin cities. He also taught at Northwestern's Cherubs program in the summer of 2018.

DeMone Seraphin (Musical Theatre '93) is the founding artistic director of [The New American Theatre Co N.Y.](#)

Emma Thatcher (Musical Theatre '10) made and starred in the short film [Soomin](#).

Sydney Torres (Musical Theatre '14) was nominated for Best Actress by Broadway World for her role of Isabel in [Refugee](#).

Elisabeth Withers (Musical Theatre '88) accepted the Professor of Music and Performance position at Valencia College's Arts and Entertainment Department.

Annie Yokom (Musical Theatre '11) debuted her first single on iTunes called "It's A Good Day".

THEATRE

Izzy Chern (Theatre '17) is traveling to Zanzibar to teach theatre.

Winter Dunn (Theatre '10) is a producer of the film *Jezebel*, one of three narrative films selected for Tribeca Film Institute's new program for films in post production. It premiered at this year's festival in September.

Ari Fulton (Theatre '05) is the set designer for "The Breakup".

Tom Hodges (Theatre '83) acted in and produced the short film *Homecoming* which premiered September 8 as part of the Martha's Vineyard Film Society.

Albina Katsman (Theatre '09) is producing and starring in a new TV series [So Foreign](#).

Sarah McGinnis (Theatre '07) was named to the Artistic Design Team as a Global Platform Artist for the number one hair product company in Italy.

Kevin Mimms (Theatre '08) was featured in the TV show *SWAT* during the episode "Seizure".

Leah Orleans (Theatre '13) has a two-person comedy and circus show called *Acrobatix* that began their fifth year of touring.

Sophia Pietrkowski (Theatre '14) devised a piece with Elenna Sindler (Music '16) and T'Yanna Nicole Smith about women navigating public space after sexual trauma. This piece is explored through a woman on the CTA experimenting with what it means to take up public space. She also performed in Los Angeles in "Performing History" by Roger Guenveur Smith at The Bootleg Theater. Lastly, she has been cast in *This Side of Eternity: The Kristallnacht Story* at the Nebula Theater in Palatine.

Jacquelyn Rosati (Theatre '92) has been appointed Co-Artistic Director of Route 66 Theatre Company. Jacquelyn previously worked as an actress in both film and television.

VISUAL ARTS

Jo Cosgrove (Visual Arts '03) is teaching outdoor education in Maryland. She makes art in the form of [bookbinding](#).

Olivia Mulholland (Visual Arts '18) was awarded the Creative Vision Award, DaVinci Award, Academic Excellence Scholarship, and Thalheimer Scholarship at Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). She was also accepted into the MICA Art Market where she sold three painting and one drawing.

Larry Peifer (Visual Arts '02) is the Senior Lead of Interior Design at WeWork.

Richard Torres (Visual Arts '14) has been teaching dance and art classes for [Family Focus](#).

Alexis Yracheta (Visual Arts '19) had her work auctioned at [Marwen Art Fair](#) on November 3rd and was accepted to the [New Hampshire Institute of Art](#) summer pre-college program where she was awarded a \$1000 scholarship. She also was accepted for the second year into 21 Minus at the [Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago](#). She worked on an interactive installation that was on exhibit June 16.

Six Visual Arts Department Class of 2018 students **Olivia Mulholland, Violet Moyer, Elise Robinson, Audrey Landgren, Molly Block, and Maddie Madura** were all winners in [Illinois High School Art Exhibition](#) (IHSAE) Senior Exhibition. \$43 million in scholarships was awarded to 312 seniors in the event, and the six seniors from The Academy won over \$1 million of the \$43 million. Academy junior Maxine Zhou's drawing won the Gold Medal and was chosen as one of 20 works to be a part of a newly created traveling show (see drawing below). Lily Boyle's sculpture won her a two-week course of her choice at the [School of the Art Institute of Chicago](#). Alexis Yracheta's mixed media piece won a scholarship to the [New Hampshire Institute of Art](#) Pre-College Program.