

The Chicago Academy for the Arts

News and Notables - March 2018

DANCE

Julia Rae Antonick's (Dance '00) dance company Khecari held residence at The Yates Gallery at The Chicago Cultural center for two weeks last July. This residency culminated in a free public performance. She was recently awarded a month residency at [Djerassi Resident Artists Program](#).

Kevin Beverley (Dance '08) is with Cirque du Soleil's newest show [VOLTA](#). He is currently touring around Ottawa, Toronto, Miami, and Tampa.

Evan Boersma (Dance '17) joined The Joffrey Ballet as a full company member. After graduating from The Academy, Evan joined the studio company at Joffrey, but earned the opportunity to be part of the full company in only a few months.

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

Samantha Dauer (Dance '14) participated in the [B12 Dance Festival](#) this past summer.

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.

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. She is prepping for her first actuarial exam.

Amber Robbin (Dance '07) is launching 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 working with [Fleetwood-Jourdain Theatre](#) before moving to Charleston, SC to dance with the [American National Ballet](#). In addition, she just 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.

Nina-Rose Wardanian (Dance '08) performed in Deeply Free: 20th Anniversary Season Finale in December at the Logan Center for the Arts.

Morgan Williams (Dance '08) is the co-founder of [SueMo: Dance Experience](#). She is also the director at Studio One Dance Company.

MEDIA ARTS

Finnegan Angelos (Media Arts '20) had his poem "The Tale of Adonis" published in the globally recognized *Thistle* literary magazine.

Courtney Cook (Media Arts '14) had position as a Consumer Marketing Intern for Solo Cup. She wrote blog posts for their blog, [Solobration.com](#), and created graphics for Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest. She is back at University of Michigan for her senior year, where she is studying creative nonfiction, art, and design.

Jack Dunphy (Media Arts '11) wrote and edited the film *The Great Pretender* which has been selected for the Tribeca Film Festival.

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's (Media Arts '13) film *The Night in All Things* screened at the International Film Festival Rotterdam during the end of January. Last fall, his short film *Taksim Square* was selected for the Chicago International Film Festival.

Miguel Lucero (Media Arts '21) was featured on WGN TV with his family band Cielito Lindo Family Folk Music.

MUSIC

Rose Colella (Music Department Faculty) recently performed at Idyllwild Jazz Festival in California and at Birdland Jazz Club in New York.

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.

Jon Deitemyer (Music Department Faculty) has been touring with Garrison Keillor's "Love and Comedy Tour".

Jackson Fahey (Music '14) was recently in Avast Studio in Seattle recording with the Cornish Latin Ensemble.

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

Rick Ferguson (Music Faculty) recently composed a piece for the Chute Honors Orchestra at Chute Middle School based on an original dystopian short written by Chute students. The performance is in May.

Dominic Flynn (Music '14) recently recorded classical guitar works at Guitar Salon International. Also, he placed second in the Lee Ritenour International Classical Guitar Competition.

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

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

Matt Gonzalez (Music '05) recently completed a nationwide tour with his band Typesetter, supporting the bands Worriers and Camp Cope. They played a festival in Gainesville, FL in late October.

Lalah Hathaway (Music '86) announced her 2018 "The Honestly" headlining tour which kicked off January 16 in St. Louis.

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 just signed with Michelle Hayes for representation.

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

Vakarè Rūta Marshall (Music '04) teaches in Portland, OR and administers a small chamber music concert series. She just finished a performance of Hildegard's "Ordo Virtutum".

Dylan McKenzie (Music '04) is releasing 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) just 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) was recently accepted into the Social Work program at Winona State University in Minnesota and is finishing up an internship with a victim services agency where she works with survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Furthermore, she started an intersectional queer sex education workshop series that she will soon be giving at LGBTQ+ conferences in the midwest.

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

Ean James Rush (Music '05) started graduate school at the University of Texas. He'll be pursuing an MBA specializing in Healthcare Administration.

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.

Akenya Seymour (Music '10) recently sang background vocals on every track of Mavis Staples' upcoming album "If All I Was Was Black". She got to work with Mavis and producer Jeff Tweedy (Wilco). She performed on the main stage at North Coast Music Festival on September 1st.

Joe Sonnefeldt (Music Department Faculty) is running for Illinois State Senate in the 27th district.

Kasia Szczech (Music '13) is currently teaching private lessons and recently began teaching at the Musical Offering studio in Evanston. She is currently recording an album for Magical Keys. She recently finished her composition degree at DePaul.

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

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) will be joining the BMI-Lehman Engel Musical Theatre workshop this year as a composer.

MUSICAL THEATRE

Jocelyn Adamski (Musical Theatre '99) has played the part of Maddie in *Making God Laugh* at the Steel Beam Theatre in St. Charles since mid-October.

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.

Sean Caron (Musical Theatre '12) just finished his show *Musical Therapy* at Gorilla Tango Theatre with Death & Preztels.

Maggie D'Angelo (Musical Theatre '13) is currently 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 just received her Bachelor's Degree in sociology from CU-Boulder.

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

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

Avery Gray (Musical Theatre '16) played Elle Woods in *Legally Blonde: The Musical* at Theatre Arlington in Texas, and recently transferred to the American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York.

Kelli Harrington (Musical Theatre faculty) performed as "Barbara Grant" in the Jeff-nominated production of *A Perfect Arrangement* at Pride Films and Plays.

Savannah Hoover (Musical Theatre '12) is currently 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.

Kaleigh Jerkatis (Musical Theatre '10) and **Cora Swise** (Theatre '12) performed at a benefit to raise money for sexual assault and domestic violence survivors on October 14th at The Drama Group Studio Theatre.

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 Lowis (Musical Theatre '11) just finished touring the world with Norwegian Cruise Line as their production cast singer. She later joined the equity production of *Rent* at the Gateway Theater of New York. Next, she is starring in a production of *Rocky Horror Picture Show* in Appomattox, Virginia.

Gabriella Marzetta (Musical Theatre '11) is currently performing in *Pinkalicious The Musical*, *Flight School the Musical*, and opening a new musical, *Science Fair* at Theatre Row Off-Broadway in New York, written by Academy alum **Kyle Hass**.

Freddy Mauricio (Musical Theatre '16) played Macbeth in *Macbeth* at Northwestern University.

Elise O'Connell (Musical Theatre '15) played the role of Ivy in a regional production of *Bare: A Pop Opera*.

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

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

Shayla Hope Rogers (Musical Theatre '12) is finishing up a year-and-a-half-long tour with the Missoula Children's Theatre. She toured both *Rumpelstiltskin* and *The Tortoise and the Hare*.

Domino Rosa (Musical Theatre '15) founded *Super Dope&Extra Lit*, a magazine written by people of color for people of color, to celebrate the minority perspective in this country. The magazine launched on July 25th. Additionally, he was just cast Aaron the Moor in the Globe Theater's student production of *Titus Andronicus*.

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

Emma Thatcher (Musical Theatre '10) was recently in the film American Folk.

During the summer, **Sydney Torres** (Musical Theatre '14) was an acting intern at Berkshire Theatre Group, where she was also in their production of *The Music Man*. She just finished understudying the role of Dyanne in *Million Dollar Quartet* and is back in Boston for her last year at Emerson College in their Musical Theatre program.

Älëxändriä Vërnäscö (Musical Theatre '02) is currently singing with The Marion Consort, a small vocal ensemble specializing in early music. Furthermore, she obtained her Masters of Social Work and just started at Rush University Medical Center as an oncology social worker.

Adina Verson (Musical Theatre '01) has joined the ensemble cast of *The Lucky Ones*. The production will be presented by Ars Nova, Piece by Piece Productions, and Z Space in The Connelly Theater in New York beginning March 19.

THEATRE

Molly Bires (Theatre '13) just earned her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and is moving to Israel to teach English in a public elementary school.

Izzy Chern (Theatre '17) has been cast as the narrator in *Kid Simple: A Radio Play in the Flesh*. It is her first main stage production of her college career.

Judith Edlund (Theatre '14) earned a BFA in Dramatic Arts with a Focus in Acting, while double minoring at Parsons in Fashion Communications and Photography, and is now pursuing her MA in Arts Management and Entrepreneurship.

Ari Fulton (Theatre '05) is the costume designer for the play *Skeleton Crew*, which will be performed by Huntington Theatre Company in Boston March 2-31. She is also the costume designer for the upcoming film *Nigerian Prince*.

Aaron Kahn (Theatre '93) is working with his company [Rather Than Happiness](#) and one of the national theaters of Lithuania (Šiauliai Drama Theatre) to direct *Mud* by Maria Irene Fornes. He is moving to Brussels for research and development of the Rather Than Happiness adaptation of *Dictionary of The Khazars* by Milorad Pavić. Also, he is in negotiations for the rights to adapt *Beautiful Losers* by Leonard Cohen.

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

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

Pretty. Funny. is a web series written, filmed, and performed by **Ariel Meshenberg** (Theatre '08) and **Chelsea Gulbransen** (Theatre '10).

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

Logan Padbury (Theatre, '14) has been performing in the show *Los Milagros / The Miracles* for [Free Street Theater](#).

VISUAL ARTS

Ralph Carlile Browne (Visual Arts '02) regularly applies his art to t-shirts and illustrations, and frequently produces gallery shows. He recently got a studio at Athen B. Gallery in Oakland.

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

Geoff Gaynor (Visual Arts '05) cuts gemstones in addition to designing and making jewelry.

Olivia Mulholland (Visual Arts '18) received a Gold Key portfolio scholarship award for her "The Body" portfolio at The Scholastic Midwest Regional Awards. She also won a Silver Key portfolio award for her second portfolio submitted "The Body 2".

Maya Ortiz (Visual Arts '14) is in her last year at Rhode Island School of Design and is currently interning at the National Museum of Mexican Art in Chicago.

Quinn K. Stone (Visual Arts '94) started [Stone Dog Studios](#), which builds sets and props for film, theater, dance, and other events.

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.

The six Visual Arts Department class of 2018 **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.

MORE

Lesley Skousen (Academic Faculty) is a contributor to the internationally-celebrated podcast *Footnoting History* (available on iTunes or through www.footnotinghistory.com). Their mission is to create 15-minute episodes explaining some of the best minor stories you come across while looking for something else.