Music for Change
Kim Raver on Grey’s Anatomy in a Pandemic
Celebrating Graphic Design Diversity
A NOTE FROM HARVEY

My grandfather—“CY”—was my favorite person when I was a kid. With his own hands, he built a house in South Carolina. Later, he rode the last wave of the Great Migration to the industrial north. Together, we fished in the summers and held share his old man wisdom. Best of all: he kept two freezers filled with ice cream of every flavor. A cape could not have made him more of a hero.

But flying was his kryptonite. Hospitalized after a heart attack, he shared a regret. He had never flown to Florida, where his brother had lived for more than 50 years. He confided, “Life is too short. Family is important.” If his health improved, he promised that he finally would visit his brother’s home. He would dine at his brother’s table.

CY recovered. His laugh returned. His brush with death had given him a new lease on life. I offered to fly with him. Let’s book that flight now. My grandfather hesitated. Weeks later, he told me a story about a plane trip—nearly 24 hours—might be better despite his aching back. More months passed. Years. A bigger, more intense cardiac episode claimed his life. He never made it to Florida.

CY died 20 years ago. However, as the threat of the current pandemic ebbs, I find myself thinking about him more and more. It’s not just those stories of vaccinated grandparents hugging their grandkids after a too-long separation. It’s also the way people talk about the things that they will do after the pandemic. I share this story because I hope that the perspectives gained and priorities newly realized over the past year will guide you forward. Reconnect with friends and loved ones. Volunteer. Donate. Apply for that job. Mentor. Bake a cake. Learn a new language. Go to the opera. Book that flight. Become the person you want to be. Let’s book that flight now.

I invite you to join me in rebuilding the fine and performing arts.

Harvey Y oung, Dean of CFA

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PAINTING WITH PURPOSE

Blending classic techniques with street art, Josué Rojas represents his Latinx community with a unique voice

By Marc Chalufour
Hundreds of murals illustrate the streets and alleys of San Francisco’s Mission District where Josué Rojas works. They tell the stories of immigrants to the historically Latinx neighborhood. They honor women and LGBTQIA+ pioneers. And they give a voice to a community pushing back against police violence and gentrification. Graffiti and street art merge in this open-air gallery.

Rojas (’15) has lived or worked in the Mission since he was a toddler—his family settled here after fleeing El Salvador’s civil war—only leaving to spend two years at CFA. Since first picking up a paintbrush as a teenager, Rojas has developed into one of the community’s leading artistic voices, frequently exhibiting his work, painting murals, and encouraging other artists to tell their stories.

“In this community, art is the glue,” he says. The neighborhood that led him to art and continues to inspire him today has also given him the confidence to take a big leap: in 2021, he decided to strip away his other obligations—including running a local nonprofit—and focus full time on his art.

MASTERING THE LANGUAGE

Rojas says his life could’ve gone in a very different direction. His father died when he was 15, and he began acting out. “I started getting in trouble, writing graffiti.” But he also got a part-time job at Precita Eyes Muralists, a nonprofit that has promoted art in the Mission since the 1970s. Soon, he was learning to paint.

“It was the first time I had found something that I was actually good at,” he says. Small jobs followed: designing murals, illustrating stories for the Pacific News Service, a publisher of independent journalism. Rojas began writing for them as well, continuing to report while he studied painting as an undergrad at the California College of the Arts.

Report trips to Central America inspired his art and gave him the financial flexibility to pursue it. But when journalists began getting killed by gangs, Rojas reevaluated his plans. He learned about BU while attending the Institute for Recruitment of Teachers at Phillips Andover Academy in Andover, Mass., which promotes diversity in teaching and educational leadership. He liked the idea of stepping away from home to see what he could accomplish when focused entirely on his heart.

Rojas speaks of art as a language and says his decision to study at CFA helped him expand his vocabulary. “I felt very comfortable with urban art and what’s understood as Mexican heritage—classic murals inspired by Diego Rivera and then evolving into the Chicano movement of the 1960s,” he says. Two years in Boston allowed him to develop classic techniques and styles, like abstract expressionism. “Now I feel very comfortable being bilingual—I can speak East Coast and West Coast within American art.”

His thesis collection, The Joy of Exile, featured a series of paintings, but Rojas’ vision extended well beyond the canvas. He

Below: Homogenized (2016) Acrylic and mixed media on canvas, 36 x 60 in.
Right: La Palabra y la Imagen (2016) Acrylic on canvas, 80 x 40 in. Both pieces appeared in Rojas’ show, ¡Gentromancer!, which focused on the threat of gentrification to the Mission.
continued the images onto the walls and mixed in stanzas from a friend’s poem. In what is a Rojas trademark, cartoonish characters clashed with organic forms and familiar logos. The Boston Globe wrote that the installation “has the quality of a fever dream: roiling color and gesture. Violent imagery leavened with pop culture references.”

Rojas returned to San Francisco as soon as he completed his MFA in painting. As one of his close Kahn Award recipients, he received a grant that helped him set up a studio in the Mission and fund his next exhibit, ¡Gentromancer! He also accepted a position as executive director of Acción Latina, an organization that promotes arts, community journalism, and civic engagement in Latinx communities in the Bay Area.

For ¡Gentromancer!, which opened in 2016, he focused on the threat of gentrification to the Mission—and played with the styles used for his thesis. The 1980s cartoon robot Voltron frames one painting, La Palabra y La Imagen (“The word and the image”), looming over a canvas dense with images: a steaming volcano, a snapping tree trunk, blowing winds, two faces in silhouette. Voltron, which was formed by five smaller robots, symbolizes unity and a community’s ability to be stronger than the sum of its parts. Rojas says. The overall effect is of a Mayan mural morphing into a comic book panel.

In another painting, Amor: the Perfect Lotus, the face of Alex Nieto, who was killed in 2014 by San Francisco police in a nearby neighborhood, is divided into quarters, each rendered in a different style, a charcoal sketch abutting a splash of Warholian color, above a cartoonish minimalism. Rojas also coordinated a series of local street artists and graffiti writers to complete the mural, assigning each a 20-foot section. The artists worked in shifts, to remain socially distanced, and over three weekends they gradually covered the massive wall with tropical yellows, greens, reds, and pinks. Vines, flowers, slices of guava, graffiti letters, and a mythical deity are entwined in the finished piece.

“Murals are an external expression of a community’s internal values,” Rojas told Mission Local, a neighborhood news organization. “For our community to see that a mural is going up, even during these conditions, during the fires and pandemic. For them to see we are coming together, making something beautiful during this time, [that is important].”

Though he’d designed the birds in advance, Rojas didn’t know what the other artists would do with their space. “There’s a lot of trust,” he says, comparing the project to a jazz album. “Miles Davis wasn’t simply a great trumpeter. He laid the groundwork for a group of people to shine, and they made the Kind of Blue album.”

EXPANDING THE OUTDOOR GALLERY

Although the Latinx community has been particularly hard-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, Rojas decided to coordinate a large team project in fall 2020. Birds of the Americas, an 80-foot-wide and 25-foot-tall mural in the heart of the Mission, celebrates the lives of four men, each depicted as a Central American bird: El Salvador’s toucet for Andres Guardado, a toucan for Sean “Tuca” Monterrosa, and Guatemala’s quetzal for Amilcar Perez Lopez and Luis Gongora Pat. Guardado and Monterrosa were both shot by police in June 2020 while Perez Lopez and Gongora Pat were killed by police in 2015 and 2016, respectively, within blocks of the new mural.

Rojas focused on painting the birds and assembled a team of local street artists and graffiti writers to complete the mural, assigning each a 20-foot section. The artists worked in shifts, to remain socially distanced, and over three weekends they gradually covered the massive wall with tropical yellows, greens, reds, and pinks. Vines, flowers, slices of guava, graffiti letters, and a mythical deity are entwined in the finished piece.

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MORE TO SAY

The challenges of the pandemic, including illnesses in his family, helped Rojas realize where he wants to focus his energy. After four years as executive director, he stepped down from his role at Accion Latina. For the first time since CFA, he’s focused entirely on his art.

“It can be very daunting to stare at an empty calendar or stare at my bank account,” he says. But he’s taking comfort in the words of one of his professors at BU: “Take care of the art and the art will take care of you.”

And he couldn’t be in a better place to do so. Even as the Mission changes and longtime residents are priced out, Rojas sees positive signs. There are still more walls to paint and new galleries keep opening, allowing voices like his to continue to be heard. “It’s a revolutionary act,” he says, of his community’s insistence that art is important.

Occasionally Rojas hears an old adage: “Painting is dead.” He bristles at the suggestion. “It really is disrespectful, not only to the practice of painting, but also the people who are now able to speak. I really believe there’s a lot more to be said.”

Left: Rojas mural. Enrique’s Journey (2009) was inspired by Sonia Nazario’s book of the same name and is located on Balmy Alley in San Francisco. Front: Joy of Exile, Mara Kid (2013) Oil on canvas, 60 x 48 in., uses a cartoonish style to address the serious subject of gang violence.
Acting Dreams
By Taylor Mendoza

Acting in the film industry is a dream come true. Having grown up watching films like "The Lion King," the idea of being a part of the magic of making movies was something I always yearned for. This dream was further fueled by watching films like "Malibu Rescue: The Next Wave," which starred my favorite actor, Cameron Boyce. I was so inspired by his performance as Romeo in the modern-day adaptation of Romeo and Juliet, and that's when I knew I wanted to pursue acting as a career.

CAMERON ENGBELL (’19) was 10—and watching a stage production of The Lion King with his grandmother—when he realized he wanted to be an actor. “I saw a little Black boy dancing and having fun on the stage that looked exactly like me,” he says. “I almost got kicked out because I was literally jumping up and down in my seat saying, ‘I can do that.’” Since graduating from CFA, he has been making his way in Hollywood, appearing in television shows and films like "Clickbait" on Netflix. I got to wear glasses, a Fedora, and a little sweater vest. I was actually thinking the other day that I want to play some weirder roles. I’m really interested in playing something that completely transforms me. I tend to get typecast as the boy next door. However, I think the most interesting role that I’ve played was a nerd named Kurt for a one-time role for American Pie Presents: R#J. I was wearing glasses, a fedora, and a little sweater vest. I was so much fun to play.

What’s the most interesting character you’ve played? I was actually thinking the other day that I want to play some weirder roles. I’m really interested in playing something that completely transforms me. I tend to get typecast as the boy next door. However, I think the most interesting role that I’ve played was a nerd named Kurt for a one-time role for American Pie Presents: R#J. I was wearing glasses, a fedora, and a little sweater vest. I was so much fun to play.

What’s your dream role? I’d love to play Miles Morales, the new Spider-Man. We need more representation of color in superhero movies.

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Kim Raver (’91) has appeared in many award-winning television shows. She currently plays cardiothoracic surgeon Teddy Altman on the hit ABC show Grey’s Anatomy.
Kim Raver stood on the Grey’s Anatomy set for the first time since the medical drama halted production in March 2020. She was clad in full PPE—not just a mask and scrubs, but a heavy personal respirator hood.

It’s strange to be telling a story that we’re universally going through in the moment,” she says. “I’ll be doing a scene, and then after I take off whatever costume I’m wearing, there’s this feeling of, ‘Oh my gosh, we’re still in it.’ There’s no separation. Usually, we’re telling a medical story that people can understand emotionally, but that they aren’t actually going through.”

Raver says the cast and crew were united by a desire to use the show as a platform to honor the arduous efforts of healthcare workers during the pandemic.

“It was that same feeling, addressing the pandemic on Grey’s,” she says. But as the astonishment wore off, the show’s cast and crew jumped into action to help real-life healthcare workers. The props department donated the gowns and gloves they had on hand for filming when PPE shortages were a major problem in hospitals around the country. On National Doctors’ Day—March 30—Raver and other cast members appeared in a social media video to thank the medical professionals fighting the virus on the front lines.

The rallying effort reminded Raver of another striking moment in her career when her craft and the harsh reality of life merged. In 2001, she was filming the NBC drama Third Watch, about New York City firefighters, paramedics, and police officers, when the September 11 attacks occurred. Many of the first responders the show consulted with went to assist at Ground Zero. And, just as Grey’s Anatomy donated PPE to hospitals, the show quickly organized to send equipment, including microphones, lights, and a working fire truck it used in scenes, to the emergency services in the days following the attack.

“We just wanted to help in any way we could,” says Raver, who played paramedic Kim Zambrano on the show. Third Watch opened its third season on October 15, 2001, with a two-hour special documentary featuring real-life first responders sharing their experiences in the aftermath of September 11. The season also went on to address the horrific events of that day and its impact.

In one episode, Raver’s character runs to the fire station after she sees what has happened to the World Trade Center on TV, ready to help. In another, set weeks after the attack, the show’s characters are still searching for the missing at Ground Zero. “There was a sense of community” in filming that season of Third Watch, with a storyline that addressed a tragic event that affected the entire nation, says Raver. “It was that same feeling, addressing the pandemic on Grey’s.”
ftermath.
and the tragic day’s
York City firefighters,
paramedic Kim
Cannavale) played
Raver (pictured
Hollywood Reporter
tor, writer, and executive producer on the show, told
Grey’s Anatomy
research before starting to draft the season’s episodes.
Vernoff says she was well
delayed from real life: one character’s mother dies after
contracting the virus at an assisted living facility, while
Raver’s experiences grappling with dark, difficult subjects
were a long way from her first foray into showbiz. Before
she was playing a paramedic on Third Watch or a heart
surgeon on Grey’s Anatomy, the New York City born and
raised Raver appeared on Sesame Street as a young child.
“I’d walk onto the sound stages and it was magical,” she
recalls. “There were all these puppets everywhere.”
But while she has fond memories of being on the Ses-
amente set, Raver says it was the time at the First All
Children’s Theater that really sparked her desire to act.
The performers were all children, ages 6 through 17, and all
of the productions were written especially for the theater
company. The famed late writer and theater director Eliza-
beth Swados even penned one of the performances.
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ate, Raver says it was the time at the First All
Children’s Theater that really sparked her desire to act.
Many of Grey’s Anatomy’s COVID-19 plotlines bor-
rowed from real life: one character’s mother dies after
contracting the virus at an assisted living facility, while
Raver’s character tends to a colleague who suffers wors-
ening COVID-19 symptoms and needs to be placed on a
ventilator. Raver says she felt the pressure to accurately
portray the physical and emotional toll the virus takes
on healthcare workers, but Vernoff says she was well
equipped to take on the challenge. “Kim is a total pro. She
was beyond prepared to take on the role. Her set work
and crew: not adding to the healthcare crisis by turning
the performance spaces and put on productions, “just to stay
in working shape while we were auditioning.” Finally, she
landed her breakout role in the 1995 Broadway production
of Holiday with Laura Linney and Tony Goldwyn. When
she started rehearsing for the show, she couldn’t help but
reflect on her performance in Third Watch at the Hun-
tington Theatre while at BU. “I remember thinking what
incredible prep for
FINDING BALANCE
When Raver has played a wide range of roles over her ca-
ter, from Audrey Raines, a Department of Defense senior
policy analyst, in the action-packed Fox series 24, to Nico
teenagers. Before she was acting, she was a dancer and
and took vocal warmups—all the way to
stage combat and doing vocal warmups—all the way to
I got from that experience,
Ugly Americans
Grey’s Anatomy
ter in the best light. When production on Grey’s Anatomy
halted in March 2020, season 16 inadvertently ended with
a scandalous cliff-hanger. Raver’s character leaves an
accidental, and incriminating, voicemail for her new-
named Hunt on their wedding day, which indicates she’s
cheating on him. The show’s devoted fans wasted no time
taking to social media to express their disappointment with
Altman—a quick glimpse at the comments on ABC’s
YouTube clip of Hunt listening to the voicemail, which has
more than one million views, shows the full range of their
discontent: “This scene crushed my soul and aggrieved me
amnesty,” wrote one fan. “That was cruel and heartbreak-
ing,” said another. But the fans weren’t the only ones who
were disappointed in the character’s actions.
“I’m upset with Teddy,” Raver told Entertainment
Weekly. “There’s a universal thing of when you have what
you want, the healthy people make it blossom, and the peo-
ple that need work kind of blow it up. And I think we’ve all
been there . . . the beautiful thing of the show is that [char-
acters] have their shining moments and then they have
their very ugly human moments.”
Raver especially feels the importance of showing
those very human moments in placing Altman this year,
connecting with viewers during such a difficult time.
“He has this really amazing gift of blending comedy and
and drama. As an actor, that’s the place you want to be, to
be able to tell those stories with that balance. I’m just so
grateful to be on this show.”
CELLISTS KENDALL RAMSEUR AND LAURA METCALF DISCUSS MAKING MUSIC DURING THE PANDEMIC AND BALANCING WORK AND PARENTHOOD

Edited by Mara Sassoon
Kendall Ramseur: Laura Metcalf: February about making music and balancing her husband, classical guitarist Rupert Boyd. worldwide, and the duo Boyd Meets Girl, with gentic,” adding that by the end, “the listener is debuted at #7 on the Billboard classical chart. debut solo album, First Day, in 2016, which has performed with pop artists like cellist renowned for her solo and chamber concert. The cello was my baby for so long. I didn't know somehow less committed to being a musician. KR: That's awesome. When did you release it? LM: It's finding that balance. I think having a vocalist who focuses on classics. It's not easy. You're trying to hear both those emotions—11 minutes is like gold. KR: It was in the Philippines during a tour of Australia I did four years ago. We were in a rural area, three hours outside of Manila, and we were staying at this really amazing music school. LM: There's a sense of artistic identity. You can't LM: Laura Metcalf, I don't think that I would want to be a soloist or play in an orchestra. I love to play chamber music. He empowered me to forge that type of career. KR: It's great that you had a teacher who was supportive. At BU, I felt like I had a lot of stories to tell through my music. I remember sharing that with Marc Johnson. I started working on an album where the focus was vocals and cello, and he would allow me to bring these pieces in, and we would work on them together. I blew away at a teacher who focuses on classical music was embracing this new thing. At that time, I didn't know of any cellists who were trying to sing simultaneously. ML: So it’s a lot easier. If you’re trying to hear both instruments at the same time and try to keep them both in tune. It took me a while to get down at it. I still haven’t mastered it. LM: There’s a cellist, Mike Block, who lives and teaches in Boston. He does a full solo show where he is singing and playing. He has been running a concert series the past couple years. Mike did a show for my concert series, and it brought the house down. If you’re ever in New York, you should come and play on the concert series. KR: If I love to once things open up more. And I have your contact info, we’ll stay in touch after this. We can figure out a collaboration of some type maybe. ML: I’d love that.
Confined to Zoom, muffled by masks, and facing perilous budgets, US music education is in a fragile space, but it could emerge from COVID-19 more diverse, inclusive, and relevant than ever.

By Andrew Thurston. Illustration by Celyn Brazier.
school bands have marched during the past year, it’s been at a distance—and with special shields covering trombones and trumpet bells. The coronavirus pandemic has upended music education in other ways, too, cutting some students off from their school-based instruments, denting orchestra recruitment, and forcing teachers to grapple with virtual rehearsals. Music educators, normally concerned about funding new instruments, are now worried about airborne particles and students without laptops.

“It’s been awful,” says Dana Monteiro, a music teacher at Harlem’s Frederick Douglass Academy. “I’ve been teaching in New York City for 20 years, and it’s like all of those other 19 years have nothing to do with this year.”

Some of Monteiro’s kids don’t have the technology—or the internet access—they need to join remote classes. Others have struggled by on cell phones. And it’s not like New York City, even in its toniest enclaves, is known for sprawling apartments. You can’t ask a student to start blasting tunes when their parents are working at the same kitchen table.

Rather than trying to re-create the classroom experience online, Monteiro (’16) has put his energy into sharing recordings of his playing—and encouraging his students to make their own.

“When we can talk about the recordings back and forth, meeting one-on-one or in small groups,” Monteiro says, “we’re actually assessing them. I love that they’re gaining confidence and taking that risk and letting me hear them.”

Katz-Cote (’16) is trying to figure out how she’ll capture that in the physical classroom. She’d already been pushing hard to move away from the sergeant major model—“I change that were pushing music education to a more inclusive, dynamic future. In recent years, teachers like Monteiro have been tackling some of the systemic problems facing the field, including a lack of access and limited playlists, opening it up to more students and different types of music.

“The way the country has been in the last four years or so, particularly the past year, represents a term of turbulence that is unprecedented,” says André de Quadros, a CFA professor of music. “It’s triggered a reckoning in all fields, and music education is starting to do much more self-examination.”

“SCARY AND EXCITING”

For close to a century, learning music in school has felt a lot like being drilled for the army—a director stands at the front, shouts out the orders, and the students try to keep up. That’s because after World War II, demobilized military band leaders frequently found jobs teaching music in public schools, says Karin S. Hendricks, chair of CFA’s music education department. Their example set the standard for generations.

“We’ve been stuck in this director-centered model. We’re still recovering from that,” says Hendricks. School by Zoom—when it works—has presented a fresh way of instructing on a more personal level.

“When you rehearse a band of 50 kids all in one room, trying to hear them one at a time is a nightmare,” says Heather Katz-Cote, K–12 director of performing arts in Westwood, Mass. As a remote teacher, she can selectively use the mute button to focus on one student or the whole class. “Now, I’m actually assessing them. I love that they’re gaining confidence and taking that risk and letting me hear them.”

Katz-Cote (’16) is trying to figure out how she’ll capture that in the physical classroom. She’s already been pushing hard to move away from the sergeant major model—“I
don’t want students to be sitting there with my throwing information at them”—because “we’re in a place of change right now and that’s scary and exciting at the same time.”

Hendricks says that kind of self-assessment is necessary nationwide. More kids might be getting music education than 20 years ago, but school day options still tend to tail off as they hit adolescence, frequently becoming limited to those in the school band, choir, or orchestra. In districts that require music education, large class sizes can see children thrown into a survey class—lots of talking about music, but very little playing. Even affluent districts are constantly fundraising to plug budget shortfalls or buy new instruments.

“It’s absolutely true that the kids I teach aren’t particularly diverse or inclusive,” Hendricks says many of the traditional folk songs heard in American classrooms, particularly in elementary schools, have racist origins, the offensive lyrics that made them a hit when they debuted in minstrel shows whitewashed out over generations. “Shortnin’ Bread” has its roots on plantations, “Jimmy Crack Corn” was a popular black number. “Often those songs aren’t challenged or the historical context is not considered,” says Hendricks. “We have a way still today of not thinking of music from other countries beyond Europe and America, too, as well as music that our students enjoy and listen to. It seems a no-brainer to start right now. We’re stepping back a little bit and looking at what we’re doing, now we’re doing it, and what it means to be a music educator. We’re in a place of change right now and that’s scary and exciting at the same time.”

ROCKING OUT

An instrumentalist who specializes in woodwind, Katz-Cote runs a one-week intensive modern rock camp every summer, and Monteiro runs an after-school Samba school and watched as 250 drummers beat out an experimental Samba program. After that, he says, “I kept keeping my eye open.” Eventually, he acquired enough instruments for every child in his 50-person classes. Instead of setting through music survey classes, all of Monteiro’s students get to taste the magic of Brazilian Carnival. If a child is new to the school, they can just pick up an instrument and play, while advanced players next to them can carry on perfecting more complicated parts. Monteiro also runs an after-school ensemble, Harlem Samba, and a community group for adults that includes many former pupils.

“Every single student in the school will learn to play an instrument,” he says. “That’s not a normal thing anywhere, but not a normal thing in New York City either.”

According to the Grammy Music Education Coalition, 3.8 million American schoolchildren have no access to music education—at one point, more students were in the military than in the public schools. But Monteiro says that he’s more inclined to go public with a school in a low-income neighborhood. “If you’re in New York City the country’s largest school district, more than half of high schools have no certified music teachers, according to a 2020 Education Through Music report. “I’m trying to do the masses—it’s an inclusive program that everyone has access to,” says Monteiro. “The traditional program is more exclusive, where the students who had lessons, who may own an instrument or have the means to rent one, get that particular class.”

CULTURAL AND SITUATIONAL RELEVANCY

In 2008, Monteiro launched a nonprofit to take his program into other schools. A Life with Drums, which helps fund instruments and professional development for teachers, works with 11 other schools in New York and Los Angeles.

But Monteiro cautions that just as he couldn’t build a Samba program in Harlem, Samba might not take root everywhere. Although he pushes for more diversity and cultural relevance in music—and studied the benefits of multicultural, participatory music in diverse classrooms for his CFA doctoral dissertation—Monteiro advises programs for schools to be situationally relevant too. “It’s a message he’s passed on to future music educators when he’s given Samba workshops at CFA.”

De Quadros also warns that diversity isn’t a “corporate badge that people should wear.” A conductor, ethnomusicologist, and human rights activist, de Quadros is the coauthor of two forthcoming books on social justice and the arts, Policing the World: Young People’s Challenge and Educate Race through Applied Theatre and Empowering Song: A Sustaining and Revitalizing Pedagogy. For the past decade, he’s also taught music classes to incarcerated people in R.I. Prison Education Program, bringing his CFA students out to teach.

“It’s not simply changing the color of representation, it’s much more than that. It’s understanding culture in its deep meaning and what people bring, as human beings, into this space, with trauma, with disability, with social histories,” he says. “Music and the arts have infinite possibilities, we just don’t always use them in the cause of justice.”

De Quadros, Monteiro, and de Quadros all make the same argu- ment, particularly after such a trying year. “I think a lot of educators that music classes—frequently shown to boost kids’ academic performance—benefit ‘the whole person,’” Hendricks, Monteiro, and de Quadros all make the same argu- ment, particularly after such a trying year.

“People have been making music for 70,000 years,” says de Quadros. “Music provides a space for inspiration, for consolation, for community cohesion, for mobilization, for personal meaning.”

“HEATHER KATZ-COTE

We’re stepping back a little bit and looking at what we’re doing, now we’re doing it, and what it means to be a music educator. We’re in a place of change right now and that’s scary and exciting at the same time.”

Katz-Cote learns songs by bands like Black Eyed Peas right along with them. “It’s probably one of the most fun things that I have done in the last 10 years of my teaching career—it was so out of my comfort zone,” she says. “The collaborative nature of the ensemble was so different than when I’m on the podium with a baton. It really was eye-opening and life changing for me in just finding different ways to access kids through music.”

DRUMS OVER FLUTES

Like Katz-Cote, Monteiro was schooled in the classics, playing clarinet, oboe, high school band. When he landed his first teaching gig in one of the rare New York City schools with a music department, he realized how limited the traditional program is more exclusive, where the students who had lessons, who may own an instrument or have the means to rent one, get that particular class.

“Cultural and Situational Relevancy

In 2008, Monteiro launched a nonprofit to take his program into other schools. A Life with Drums, which helps fund instruments and professional development for teachers, works with 11 other schools in New York and Los Angeles.

But Monteiro cautions that just as he couldn’t build a Samba program in Harlem, Samba might not take root everywhere. Although he pushes for more diversity and cultural relevance in music—and studied the benefits of multicultural, participatory music in diverse classrooms for his CFA doctoral dissertation—Monteiro advises programs for schools to be situationally relevant too. It’s a message he’s passed on to future music educators when he’s given Samba workshops at CFA. “I wasn’t trying to match cultural relevance, because I do really value a single student, I’m not Brazilian but either it was relevant to our situation,” says Monteiro, who’s also written a book on his approach, The Samba School: A Comprehensive Method for Learning, Playing, and Teaching Samba Percussion. “If you’re in a school where you have a successful music program, you shouldn’t break up the Samba program. But I do tell them that you do need to be flexible, you do need to understand that the way you make music isn’t the only way.”

HEATHER KATZ-COTE

HEATHER KATZ-COTE is the director of the Center for Arts Education and the principal investigator of Project 500, the Center for Arts Education and the principal investigator of Project 500, the "Rising Stars in Education," a centerpiece of the "Rising Stars in Education" initiative at CFA.

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Rutstrated by the underrepresentation of Black artists in his field, Richmond, Va.-based graphic designer and educator Jerome Harris decided to launch an extensive research project on African American figures in the history of the practice. “I was mostly seeing white men as the faces of graphic design. I wanted to prove to myself that folks who looked like me had been here all along,” he says.

That body of research became a traveling exhibition, As, Not For: Dethroning Our Absolutes, which came to BU’s recently renovated Faye G., Jo, and James Stone Gallery for a three-month run this past winter.

Harris says the title is derived from the writings of Alain Locke, a leader of the Harlem Renaissance. The first part, As, Not For, comes from a passage in Locke’s 1925 anthology, The New Negro, which Harris says “calls for the expression of Blackness as it exists, and not for anyone’s approval.” The second half is from Locke’s later essay, “Values and Imperatives.” “In the context of the show, it is a direct way to invite patrons to challenge what they have already accepted as ‘design history’—‘dethroning our absolutes.’”

The exhibition includes work by African American graphic designers over the past century, such as Buddy Esquire, well known for creating early hip-hop concert flyers; Laini (Sylvia) Abernathy, who designed jazz album covers; and graffiti artist Phase 2. The artists’ work is reproduced on posters of various sizes that fill gallery walls or stream down in long banners from the ceilings.

“There’s still a lot of work that needs to be done in diversifying art and design education. The work by the African American designers featured in As, Not For reflects voices that were always there, but might not have been highlighted or discussed in the classroom,” says Mary Yang, an assistant professor of art. Along with graphic design students Ashlie Dawkins (‘22), Gabriela Ferrari (‘22), Jay Li (’21), and Angela Lian (’21), she helped curate the show at the Stone Gallery. “It was important to bring this work to BU to form a conversation around the work. What has been neglected in design history? What work and who are we promoting and why?”

Yang and the student designers took advantage of the Stone Gallery’s renovations—which saw floor-to-ceiling windows replace the street-level concrete façade—in planning the show. Some pieces were prominently placed on walls that faced the windows that open out to Comm Ave. At night, the prints were illuminated by purple light so passersby could clearly see the art.

“With the renovations, it seemed appropriate to give the work the space it deserves. I hope that those who saw the exhibition will remember the designers and their work and bring them into their own conversations,” says Yang. “Most importantly, I hope visitors left inspired and with the desire to keep learning. We all play a role in shaping history and our designed world.”
Arne Glimcher, the founder of Pace Gallery—a contemporary art gallery with locations worldwide, from New York to Hong Kong—is one of America's most powerful art dealers. Even though it's been almost a decade since he turned over leadership of Pace to his son, Marc, his influence on the art world remains undeniable, and his opinion is still one of the most sought after in the industry. But when it comes to reflecting on getting his start in the world of fine art, and building his Pace empire, he isn't bashful about his time at Boston University. It was not great.

In April of 1960, while finishing his Bachelor of Fine Arts at the Massachusetts College of Art, and a few months before he would cross town to pursue his MFA at BU, Glimcher ('61) decided to open his own gallery on Newbury Street. With $2,800 from his family, he opened the space, which he named after his late father, Pace. At the start, the Pace Gallery showed the works of the only artists Glimcher knew—his art professors. In a video that Glimcher narrated in 2020 for the 60th anniversary of the Boston opening, he called it a time of “uncertainty, challenge, and hope.”

A few months after the inaugural Pace Gallery opened, Glimcher, a 21-year-old artist with big ambitions for himself and his painting, and now a fledgling business manager, arrived at CFA. He came at the beginning of a cultural revolution, as post-war optimism and abstract expressionism gave way to the pop art phenomenon characterized by the work of Andy Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg, Roy Lichtenstein, and David Hockney, among others. But at BU, he says, he felt stifled under the instruction of professors he viewed as too conservative for his own self-described “vanguard taste,” and surrounded by students averse to risk-taking.

It was, to borrow an art metaphor, like mixing oil with water. He left BU before the end of his second year, and he turned his attention to his gallery.
Slightly a few years later, despite his frustrating period at BU, his time here has become an integral part of his own narrative. It helped him realize what he wanted to do with his life and how to pursue it. And if it certainly didn’t inspire the success he would ultimately find, not only in the art world, where he’s worked with the biggest names, from Chuck Close to David Hockney to Maya Lin to Alexander Calder to Julian Schnabel (to name only a few), but in Hollywood as well. In 1988 he produced the award-winning Gorillas in the Mist, and he also developed the important, award-winning documentary, White Gold, about the ivory trade in Africa, in association with the African Environmental Film Foundation.

In a wide-ranging conversation conducted over Zoom with Glimcher, who was staying at his home in East Hampton, he held little back. He acknowledges that society, culture, and the art world have changed dramatically over his lifetime, particularly so during the last 20 years. And he at peace with this. “This is not my time,” he says. But he does have opinions on the industry that he has given his life to, and that provided him with so much, is headed.

CFA: You were born in Duluth, Minnesota, right? Can you talk about how you came to BU in the first place?

ARNE GLIMCHER: I was raised in Brookline, on St. Paul Street. I spent my youth at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and started to take classes there when I was eight years old. From the time I was four, I was already interested in art. In high school, I was writing English papers on Picasso’s [large, 1937 oil painting] Guernica.

My time at BU was not long, but it was important for me. I went to school with [the artist] Eric Marden (’61, Hon ’07). We were there at the same time; we developed our relationship and year after year, as I became a dealer, we both got married at the same time. He married Joan Baez’s sister, and I married Sarah.

Can you talk a little about your BU experience?

I came from MFAA, a different side of the coin, where a lot of experimentations were being won. At BU, figures had a reverence. Eric and I both had a friction with the professors. He was not a classically talented draftsman in life drawing classes, but his drawings were always interesting and inventive. I had more traditional ability.

And I had a studio and painted. But the students were much more experienced and known.

And what is the first place you really fell in love with art?

I fell in love with art. And the modernist aesthetic, which I believe can still be a narrative about the artist’s life through density and color, like Sam Gilliam’s new paintings. Conveying emotion through pure color like Rothko did. Sam Gilliam’s whole life is in his abstract paintings.

Why do you think that narrative art, as you say, based on identity and race and political movements, has taken off? Do you think in recent years, social media’s played a role in how art is seen?

I think it contributes to it. Political events have extended the awareness of the human condition in a personal way: ideas and emotions. How much of that is simply a function of the last 20 years and the internet? Only time will tell up to just 9 percent of global art sales, according to one study. But it’s rising. Does it surprise you when people are willing to buy an expensive piece of art without seeing it in person? Would you do that? It surprises me. I feel strongly that art needs to be experienced in person. However, having an online platform helped to connect our artists’ work with audiences during the pandemic in this year. So it is an important platform, even if it is different than what I have experienced and known.

What happened? It didn’t break my heart, but it is a different way of collecting. But times change. I am a very old-fashioned man. I have no idea. That’s why it would astonish me. Something totally new and unexpected. It doesn’t break my heart, but it is a different way of collecting. Times change. I am a very old-fashioned man. This is not my time. It’s my son’s time, and he runs the gallery.

Let’s talk about museums. Very few, with some exceptions like the Getty Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Museum of Modern Art, have large endowments to help them survive times like this. What will the museum business look like coming out of the pandemic?

I don’t know. It’s a very dangerous moment. It’s a civic issue in many cities. Detroit [Institute of Arts] was going to sell a major part of its collection to keep its museum going. Finally the government of Michigan gave them the money they needed. There are going to have to be more rescue operations. I think Boston [Museum of Fine Arts] has a very good board, and will not let it sink.

Museums are an integral part of the human experience; they have to survive. There are private museums that have opened, and that money could have gone to larger institutions to incorporate people’s collections without building a vanity museum. That’s unnecessary in the community.

Why did that start? What happened? It’s a much greater issue for collecting now than it was. In the ’60s, ’70s, and ’80s, the coterie of collectors all knew each other and traveled the world and would go to each other’s homes and see their collections. A lot of people kept collecting, but they didn’t give to museums.

Do you have a story that helps explain this? I remember the Tremaines [renowned artist couple Barton and Emily Hall Tremaine] owned Jasper Johns’ Three Flags, which I sold to the Whitney Museum of American Art. I knew them very well, and they gave a lot to the National Gallery. They gave 70 works, all secondary pieces. But then Emily complained they were never on view.

CFA: Can you talk about your BU experience?

I was there at the same time; we developed our relationship and year after year, as I became a dealer, we both got married at the same time. He married Joan Baez’s sister, and I married Sarah. It’s a social thing. Everything. Everybody. I don’t worry about any of it. Art is so powerful and has such an endemic role in human culture that you can’t hurt that or stop that. But the most interesting thing is that it’s become more about a person’s narrative, their own story? I am not as interested in the artist’s life as the artist’s work. The danger with art fairs and this market is that dealers will ask their artists to create something for, say, Art Basel in Miami, because they need material to sell. I just ask the question: Is the creation of art something that comes from inspiration? Is the art fair a valid inspiration for making art? Maybe it is. Any dissemination of art is valuable. But “any” doesn’t necessarily interest me. [French painter] Jean Dubuffet said, “Beware of the newest art, for when it arrives you won’t recognize it as art.” Great art that broke boundaries was always in advance of the general public’s perception.

Have you seen something lately that excites you? For me, all the newest art is general, with some exceptions. I have seen it all already. I go from gallery to gallery, and I see some wonderful things, but I want to be astonished and that’s rare. Greatness is rare. What makes it great? I have no idea. That’s why I would astonish me. Something totally beyond my expectation. I have seen that a few times in my life, and it’s really thrilling.

Do you think you’ll experience that again? I hope so. I will never stop looking.

I go from gallery to gallery, and I see some wonderful things, but I want to be astonished and that’s rare. Greatness is rare.
Now a freelance designer and art director based in California, Bassett was most recently a senior designer of social and editorial at Hello Sunshine, the Reese Witherspoon–founded media company. She’s created photo and video set designs, social media branding, packaging, and more. She’s even produced another cross-stitch: a flower-framed two-word review, “Bloody Brilliant,” for Lucy Foley’s The Guest List, a summer 2020 pick for Hello Sunshine’s Reese’s Book Club. That combination of old-fashioned elegance and modern boldness became an Instagram promotion for the book.

“I’ve always looked at graphic design as a means of solving problems,” says Bassett. “The first thing I ask myself is, ‘What medium would serve this best?’ In some instances, it’s a cross-stitch; in some, an illustration; in some, tried-and-true graphic design.”

A PRINTMAKER’S EYE

Many designers keep inspiration folders, others fill Pinterest boards. Bassett has an inspiration trunk. Originally her late uncle’s, the dark wood and leather chest is edged with the dents and chips of frequent use. “It’s a treasure trove of clippings,” says Bassett. “I collect small treasures in this trunk, hoping to bring new life to the bits I’ve found.”

Among the paper gems: stacks of security tint envelopes, crosshatched with lines and swirls to keep prying eyes from confidential mail. “All the patterns are so different. I love thinking about the secrets they keep.” She last used them to inspire backgrounds on cards she silk-screened. The trunk also holds some unusual souvenirs from the part-time job Bassett had at CVS through high school and college. “I worked in their photo department,” she says. “They have photo machines where it trims the edges off prints.” The offcuts are a bulky column of white edged by tiny slivers of photo. “They fascinate me. They create these beautiful patterns when stacked side by side.”

TACTILE

Tapestry needles, embroidery floss, fabric canvas. The essential tools of cross-stitch aren’t exactly graphic design staples. But in an era when so much design lives on-screen, created with clicks and keystrokes, Sarah Bassett sometimes turns to more physical crafts—cross-stitch, printmaking, silk screen, collage—to give her graphic design work a texture and depth, a tangibility, that Adobe software can’t provide.

Bassett (’15) made her first professional cross-stitch at Converse, which she joined as a CFA intern and left in 2020 after rising to senior designer. Curating an in-house gallery show celebrating design work and art by women at the footwear company, Bassett picked up a needle and thread for her own contribution: two cross-stitches emblazoned with “No” and “Nope.” “It was a traditional female-driven medium that I was taking ownership of,” she says of her choice of cross-stitch for the show. “Ways to Do, which coincided with International Women’s Day 2019. It was also a way of pushing through my own fear of saying ‘no’ to people. “Through the act of slowing down and focusing on each stitch, I was able to really ingrain those words [‘No’ and ‘Nope’] into my mind and meditate on that mantra as I created the piece.”

Designer Sarah Bassett’s creative process includes a treasure chest of inspiration, celebrity approvals, and the occasional cross-stitch

By Andrew Thurston
Photos by Patrick Strattner
“IN GRAPHIC DESIGN, PHOTOSHOP, WE’RE WORKING IN LAYERS. PRINTMAKING REALLY FORCES YOU TO SLOW DOWN AND LOOK, TO CONSIDER LAYERS IN A MEDITATIVE WAY.”

Bassett traces her interest in patterns and textures back to printmaking classes at CFA. Although most of her design work isn’t handcrafted—Bassett learns on Adobe software as much as every other graphic designer—she encourages those starting in the industry to learn tactile, physical skills.

“In graphic design, Photoshop, we’re working in layers,” she says. “Printmaking really forces you to slow down and look, to consider layers in a meditative way: how are you building those fields of color; these textures on top of each other, to create the final image? It involves a lot of planning.”

During the design process, Bassett mimics a printmaker’s layering by combining computer-guided and more free-form design tools. “I’ve been trying to bounce between my laptop and my iPad,” says Bassett. “She’ll start by laying out type in InDesign, then export the file to her iPad where she’ll use an Apple Pencil and the Procreate illustration app to add a hand-drawn element. “I’ll juggle back and forth. It frees things up when you’re able to work with the Apple Pencil, it’s a little less restricting.”

It’s a technique she recently used on a por- sonal project, The Way We Scroll, a digital mindfulness and decluttering blog about minimizing objects or ditching social media platforms. Bassett’s recent personal project, a blog about minimizing objects or ditching social media platforms.

“CELEBRITY PING-PONG”

For many professional designers, the toughest part of the creative process is the pitch: getting their work past a creative director or client and incorporating—or pushing back on—everyone’s suggestions. For most of Bassett’s career, there’s been another hurdle to navigate: winning celebrity approvals.

At Converse, Bassett collaborated with singer Miya Cech and Stranger Things actor Millie Bobby Brown. Both have designed sneakers for the company and starred in its video campaigns. “I wanted it to have this cinematic weight where the type itself is very large,” says Bassett. “It’s a constant pinball machine. Going from one set to another, they’ll go with that larger, dreamy option.”

BOOK CLUB

Mood boards and creative direction for celebrity shoots were also part of Bassett’s job at Hello Sunshine, although the company’s smaller size meant she was more hands-on—dashing on set to move objects around and making sure the celebrity talent feels good, making sure every- body’s vision is on the same page.”

Bassett says she aims to present three options for any project to help get her work through the approval process—and to allow herself some creative freedom. “I always try to approach projects from a small, medium, large standpoint. The small solution is the one they asked for, the medium solution is what they asked for with a little bit of spice, and the large solution is my dream world,” she says. “It really helps scratch that creative itch. In order to keep yourself excited, it’s important to push yourself through that range. And sometimes, like 1 out of 10 times, they’ll go with that larger, dreamy option.”

“In graphic design, Photoshop, we’re working in layers. Printmaking really forces you to slow down and look, to consider layers in a meditative way.”

Making sure the celebrity talent feels good, making sure my boss feels good—it’s a lot of ping-ponging around making sure every- body’s vision is on the same page.”

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For an August 2020 short film series called Book Shook—celebrating titles by Wither-spoon, Black-ish’s Yara Shahidi, and The Good Place’s Jameela Jamil talking about a book that changed their life—Bassett collaborated with the company’s video team, generating location inspiration boards and adding title text to the films. For the latter, Bassett chose fonts (Origin Super Condensed and Archer Medium Oblique, stitched and given extra oomph with drop shadows) to complement the series’ message.

“The story is all about the book that really shook those women. The impact is something they’ll never feel again, and I wanted that to come through in the typography.”

Bassett only recently made the jump into freelance work, so she’s now busy adding new clients to her roster. She’s also starting a podcast, At Your Own Risk, with illustrator Dana Drew. In every episode, the pair will interview creatives and entrepreneurs, with a particu- lar focus on impostor syndrome, the feeling of self-doubt that leads many to believe they’re not cut out for their chosen field. “I’ve found that since there is a stigma in carving a career path in the arts, it always skewed on the side of playing it safe. I used to define success as finding stability in my career, even if that meant, at times, compromising my passions,” she says. “What I’m embracing moving forward is that taking risks that keep your priorities, values, and passions at the forefront will always be worth it.”

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1960s

Erica Miner ('67), an award-winning author and former Metropolitan Opera violinist, released Staged for Murder (Twilight Times Books, 2020), the newest installment in her popular Opera Mysteries novel series. The novel is set at the San Francisco Opera.

Larry Hovland ('68) performed during the 17th Annual Telethon for Hope, a daylong fundraising event that culminated with an evening of music to celebrate the work of the Housing Assistance Corporation Cape Cod is doing to keep people safely housed throughout Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket, Mass.

Philip G. Simon ('69) retired from his position as director of bands and associate professor of music at Wilkes University in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Simon was appointed professor emeritus in June 2019.

Peter Del Vecho ('80) produced Raya and the Last Dragon, which was released during the 17th Annual Telethon for Hope, a daylong fundraising event that culminated with an evening of music to celebrate the work of the Housing Assistance Corporation Cape Cod is doing to keep people safely housed throughout Cape Cod, Martha’s Vineyard, and Nantucket, Mass.

1970s

Winifred McNeill ('72) had his open exhibit titled Rope/Fire/Water at The Shed in New York, N.Y., which featured works by 45 WSA artists, including paintings in oil, acrylic, watercolor, and mixed media. Walker is an artist, teacher, and arts administrator.

Robert Del Vecho ('62) produced the animated film Raya and the Last Dragon, which was released in March 2021 on Disney+ and in theaters.

1980s

Ben Aronson ('80,'82) participated in a virtual conversation about his paintings with galleryist Karen Jenkins-Johnson in July 2020.

Peter Krasinski ('80, STH’98), a world-renowned organist and silent film accompanist, became the house organist for the Providence Performing Arts Center in Providence, R.I. Krasinski is the theater’s first house organist in 22 years.

Lynne Kwarcinski ('82, Whee-lock'80) retired from her 38-year position as director of bands and associate professor of music at Wilkes University in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Simon was appointed professor emeritus in June 2019.

1990s

Barsha's work explores nature and the environment. She presented her work at the Ameri- can Trailer Park Musical at the Butte Theater, Cripple Creek, Colo. The Henry Awards honor outstanding achievements during the past season and serve as the Colorado Theatre Guild’s annual fundraising event.

Blair Tinkham ('91) was the juror for the American Artist Museum at the Wellesley Society of Artists (WSA) annual exhibit in Wellesley, Mass., which featured works by 45 WSA artists, including paintings in oil, acrylic, watercolor, and mixed media. Walker is an artist, teacher, and arts administrator.

2000s

Pat Walker ('78) had a solo exhibition of her art, Within My Meadow, at Gallery Neptune & Meadow in Jamestown, N.Y., during the 17th Annual Telethon for Hope, a daylong fundraising event that culminated with an evening of music to celebrate the work of the Housing Assistance Corporation Cape Cod is doing to keep people safely housed throughout Cape Cod, Martha’s Vineyard, and Nantucket, Mass.

Robert Stuart ('77) exhibited his paintings in two shows: Linear Rhythms, an exhibition by Garvey|Simon Gallery at the Artisan Lofts in New York, N.Y., and Postmodern Contemporary at Hodges Taylor in Charlotte, N.C., which celebrated the gallery’s 40th anniversary.

Chris Byrne ('78), known as “The Toy Guy,” appeared on Live with Kelly and Ryan in December 2020 to highlight the season’s hottest toys.

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2010s

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2020s

Wendell McNell ('72) presented his recent ceramic sculpture and charcoal drawings at the Art House Gallery in Jersey City, N.J. She completed the work shortly before the lockdown was issued during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nancy Hankin ('73) received a Henry Award from the Colorado Theatre Guild for costume design for the production of The Great American Trailer Park Musical at the Butte Theater, Cripple Creek, Colo. The Henry Awards honor outstanding achievements during the past season and serve as the Colorado Theatre Guild’s annual fundraising event.

Blair Tinkham ('91) was the juror for the American Artist Museum at the Wellesley Society of Artists (WSA) annual exhibit in Wellesley, Mass., which featured works by 45 WSA artists, including paintings in oil, acrylic, watercolor, and mixed media. Walker is an artist, teacher, and arts administrator.

2021


WRITE TO US!

We want to hear what you’ve been up to. Send us your stories and photos, and we’ll share the highlights here.

Email: cfaalum@bu.edu
career teaching music in Concord, Mass., public schools.

Julianne Moore ('81) participated in a virtual reading of Peter Hedges's play Good As New for the MCC Theater in New York, N.Y., in July 2020. Proceeds from the performance and a subsequent Q&A benefitted the theater and its Our Light Campaign.

Michael Chiklis ('86) appeared in a recent episode of American Masters, the PBS documentary series. He starred as the preacher Father Dave. His performance was originally previewed on PBS All Access in January 2021. Also in January, Chiklis participated in a virtual conversation with CFAA to discuss the series and his career. He is set to play former Boston Celtics coach Red Auerbach in an upcoming HBO series about the Los Angeles Lakers in the 1960s.

Dianna Bellows ('10) is the萦illag for Miguel Espinosa Flamenco Fusion, a Denver-based world music band. The band is working on its third CD and eighth music video.
CFA Spring 2021

ELVIS INSPIRES A SHORT FILM ABOUT GENDER IDENTITY
By Taylor Mendoza

IN THE TRAILER for the short film GraceLand, a young child stands over a bathroom sink and determinedly slips off chunks of their hair. They pluck down what remains with a slick of dark shoe polish. Grace’s mom thinks her child is just another cute 10-year-old girl. Grace knows different. They believe they are the reincarnation of a music icon that is revered immediately, little Elvis walked into my mind’s eye.” — Dale is an assistant professor of Music Teacher Education at Morehead State University in Morehead, Ky.

DuWayne Dale (’18) was named the District B-College University Teacher of the Year by the Kentucky Musicians Educators Association. Dale is an assistant professor of music and director of bands at Morehead State University in Morehead, Ky.

Trevor Kowalski (’18) is a composer, pianist, arranger, and singer-songwriter. After CFA, Kowalski took a part-time studio recording job in his father’s studio in California. He has worked with award-winning film-makers, game developers, singers and soloists, animators, orchestras, and theater directors, and is currently working on soundtracks and studio recordings.

Ashlee Lamar (’18,20) received the Exceptional Award from the Connecticut Music Educators Association.

Jin Yu (’18) has recently performed at major performance venues in China, including Chengdu and Shenzhen Concert Halls; Hangzhou and Zhejiang Grand Theatres; and Suzhou Culture and Arts Center. Yu is an assistant professor at Jin’nan University in China.

Emily Faal (’18) was a Junior in the 2020–21 Utah District Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and competed at the Regional level in July 2020. She is available on all digital platforms.

Chengcheng Ma (’17,23), a pianist, was the first prize award winner and recipient of the John Liu New York State Senator Award at the 2020 Manhattan International Music Competition.

Mott Scinto (’17) founded the Cape Cod Orchestra and has built collaborative programs around the Cape Cod area. The orchestra, which includes many BU students, has recorded several virtual concerts for this season.

Russell Wagoner (’17) participated in a livestream Christmas concert to raise money for mission outreach at Jesse Lee United Method- ists Church in Boston.

Northern lights: The Four Winds, a 2020 Manhattan International Music Competition.

Bobby’s Fall Festival last September 2020. The performance of The Violin Duo at Bobbie’s Fall Festival of the Boston Lyric Opera and co-artistic director of Guerilla Opera, also in Boston.

Oscar notebook: The Four Winds, a 2020 Manhattan International Music Competition.

Jennifer Greens (’17), Matt Kuper- nias (’15), Laura Matosi Stanley (’16), and Heather Kate-Cole (’16) were part of a collaborative project called “You Can’t Font in the World.” Navigating the Lands- capes of P–12 Education Postdoc- torate* published in the Journal of Music Teacher Education. The piece is a report on their collective autoethnography, in which they explored their experiences teaching music in P–12 schools after completing an online doctorate at Boston University.

Kelsey Hollis (’17,20) was the first prize award winner, a pianist, at the 2019 New England Piano Competition. She was part of the faculty at the Berkshire Theatre Group in Stockbridge, Mass., in September 2020. The performance included selections from the baroque era up to contemporary 20th-century duets.

Brian Robillard (’16), Aja Jackson (’16), Sarah Shin (’16), and Mitch Rosengart (’20) worked together on Central Square Theater’s production of The First Pineapple and Other Fenerys, which was part of the first part of the concert. Rosengart was the writer and performer, Shern was the director, Jackson was the lighting designer; and Robillard worked in management.

Erlin Zeffino (’16) and Nicholas Quigley (’17) had articles published in the January 2021 issue of Music Educators Journal.

Marcello Candido (’17), a violinist, released the album Brasil x Argen- tina with pianist Katia Balloussier in July 2020. It is available on all digital platforms.

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