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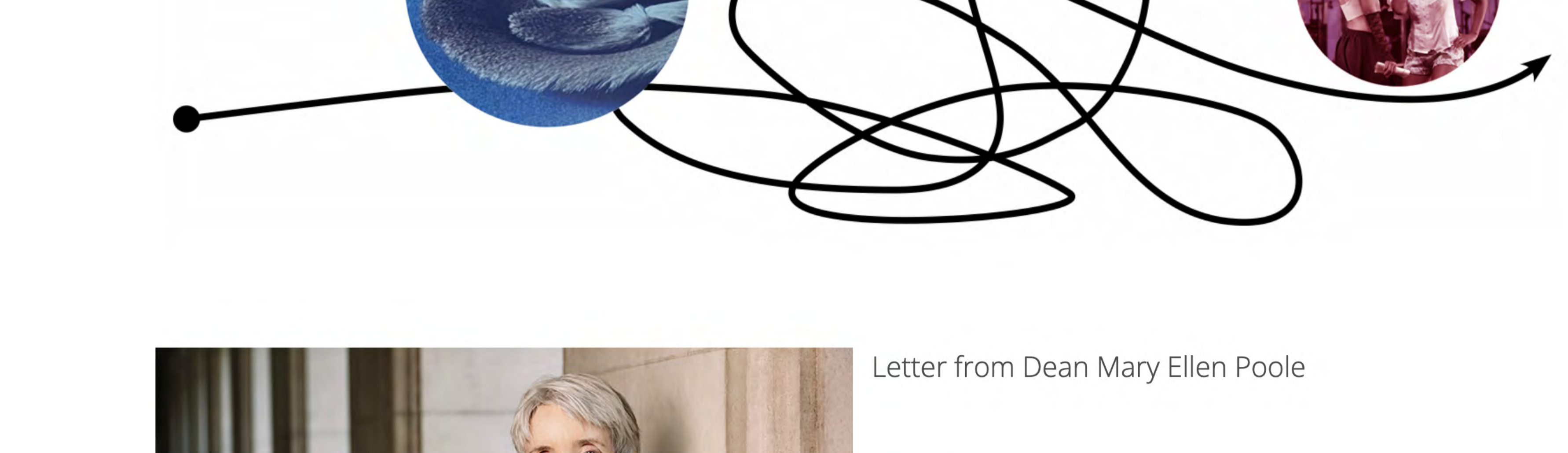
- Academics
- Research & Creative Practice
- ICA Pittsburgh
- Frank-Ratchye STUDIO
- News
- About
- Giving



Affecting Change & Advancing the Future

A hallmark of Carnegie Mellon's College of Fine Arts throughout its rich history has been the evolution and tutelage of today's creators, advanced thinkers and future leaders in their areas of expertise. These are the people who will innovate, devise new methods of design, architecture and the creative arts, and urge us all forward to meet new challenges to improve our world. In this issue, we look at the areas and people within CFA who are making our society better through advanced thinking, risk-taking and genuinely caring about our communities — be that local, regional, national or international. They are researchers, next-level thinkers, advanced makers and true creative geniuses who are dedicated to affecting change and advancing the future through their work.

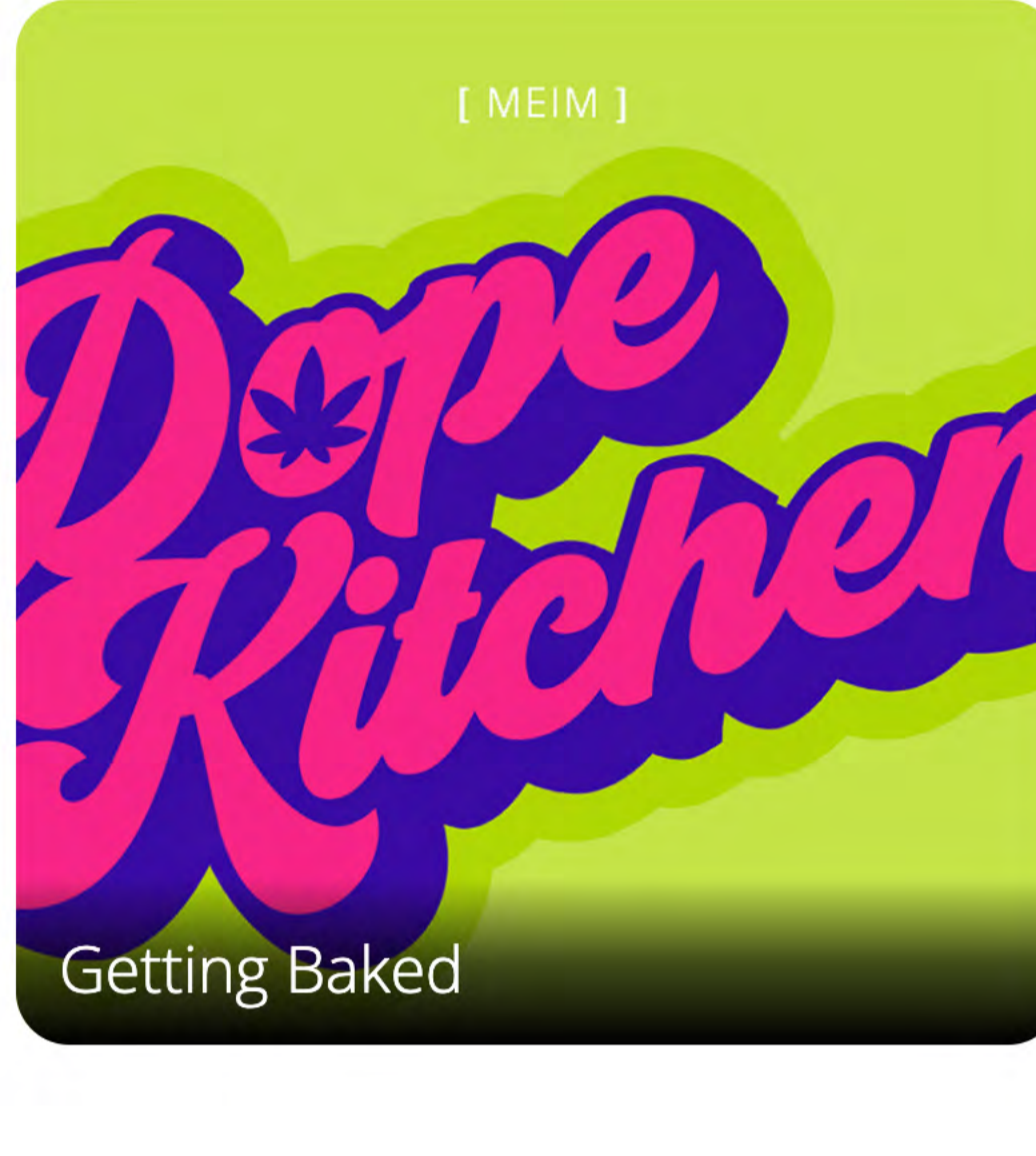
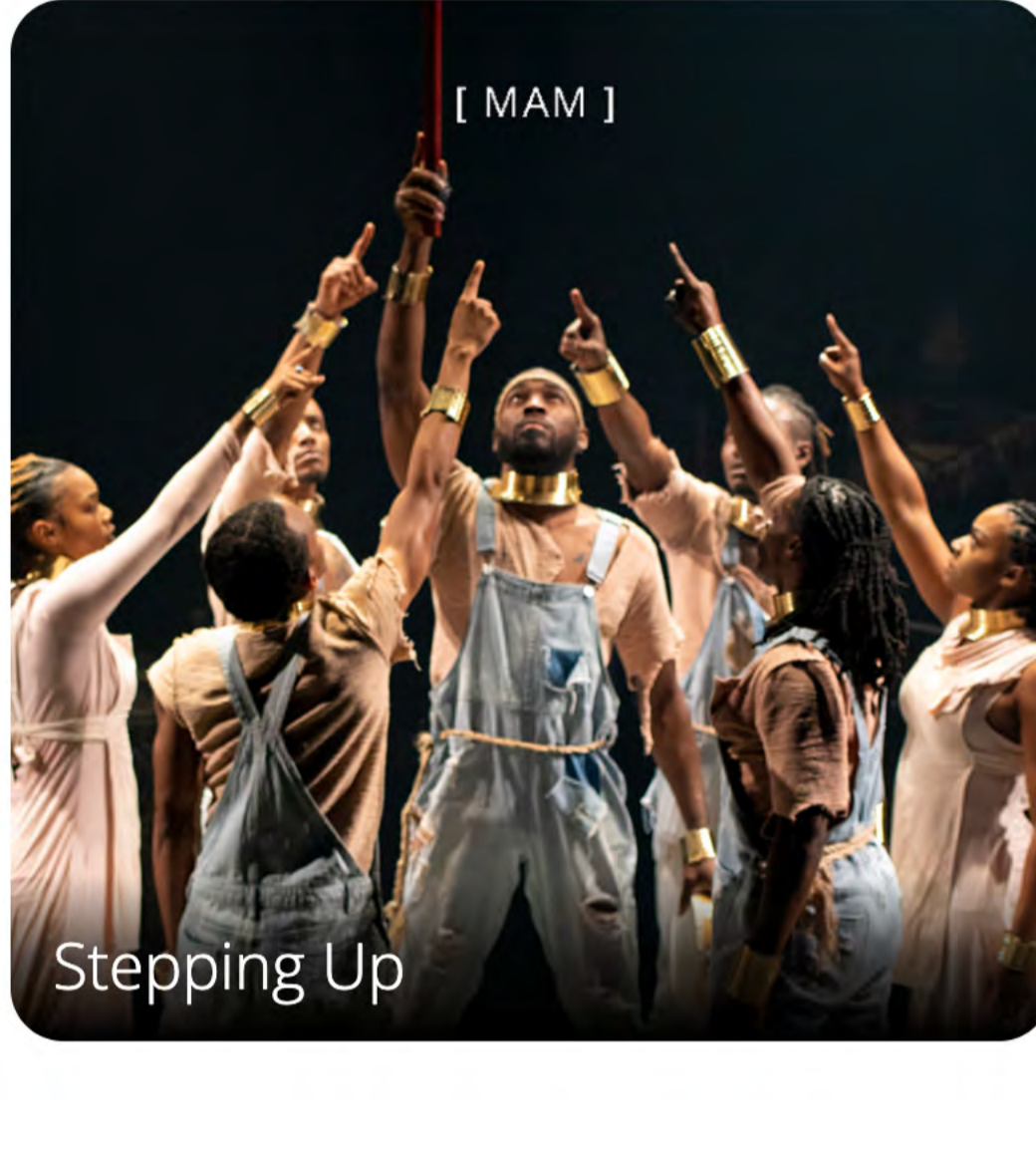
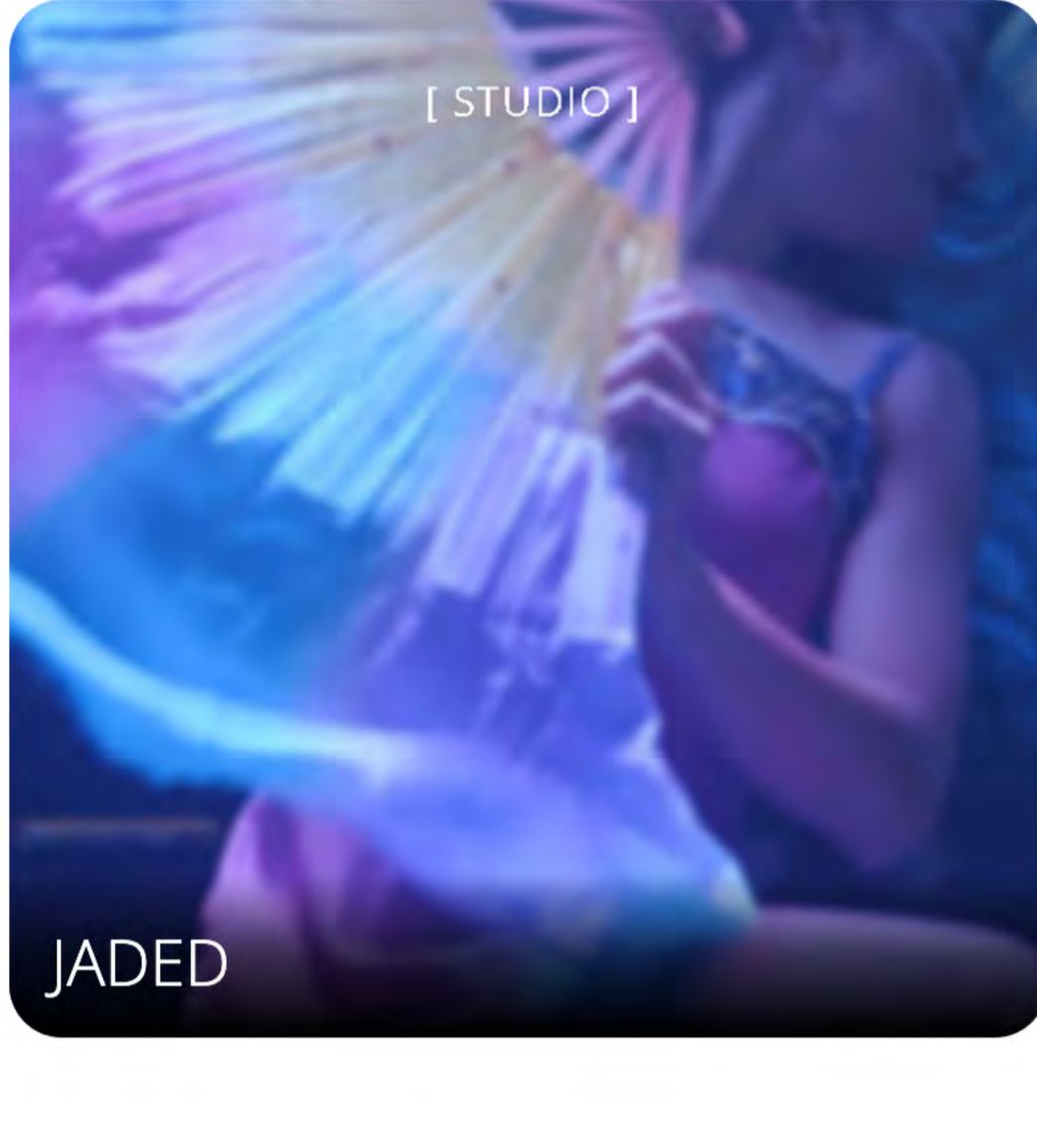
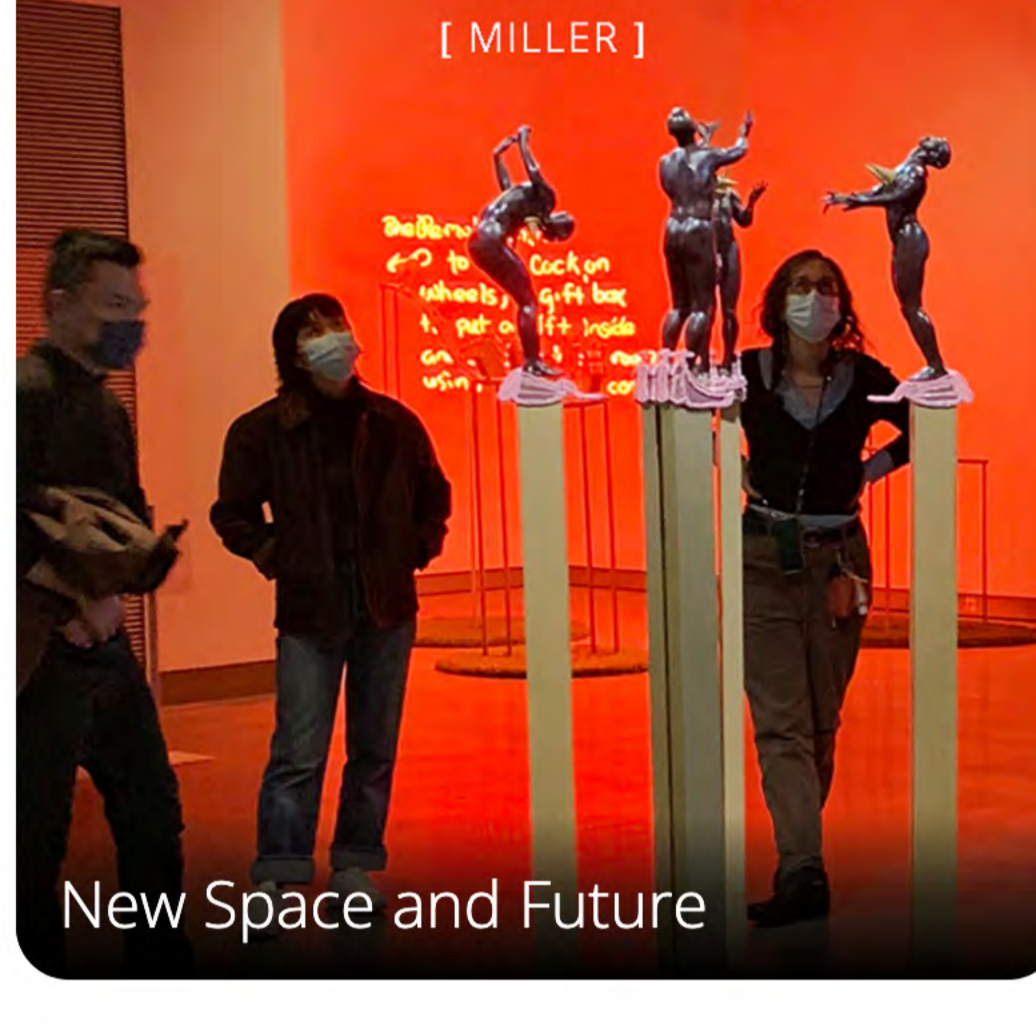
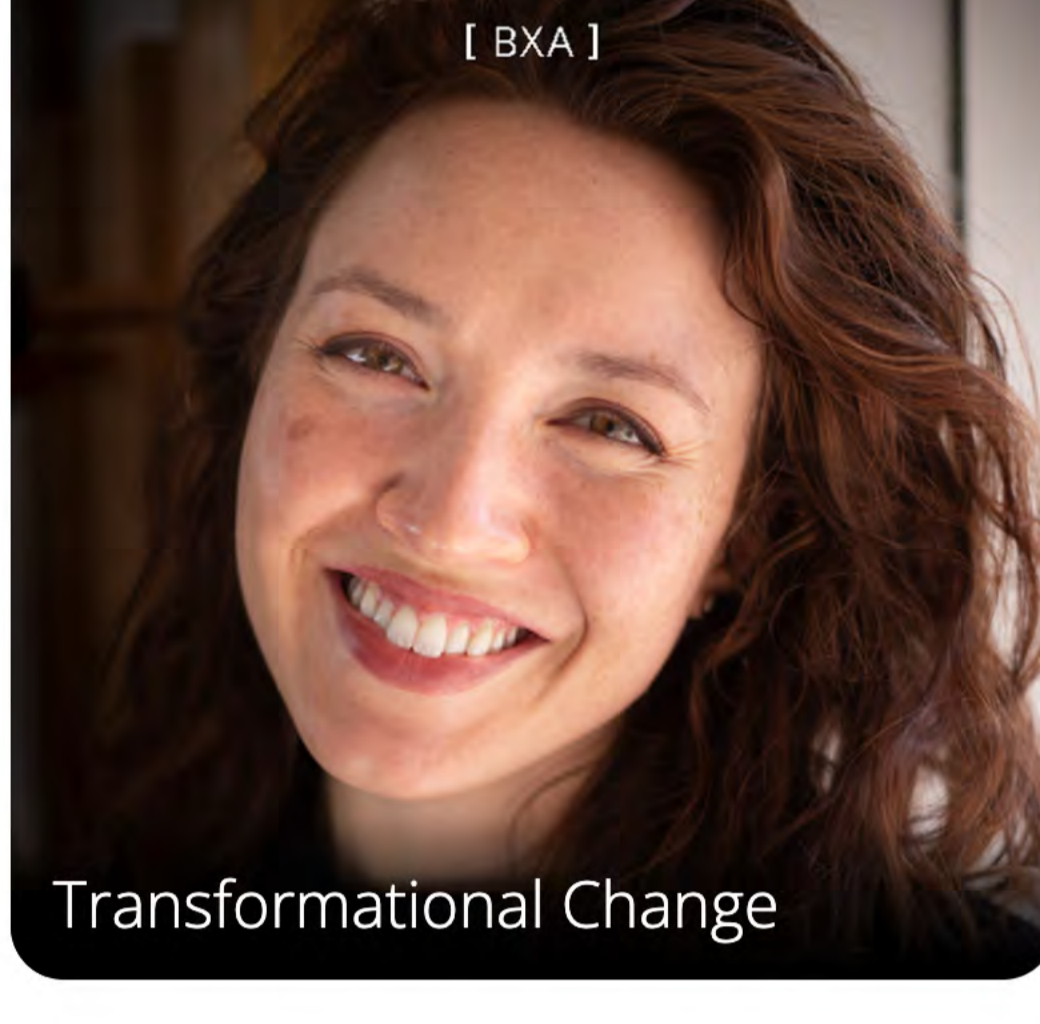
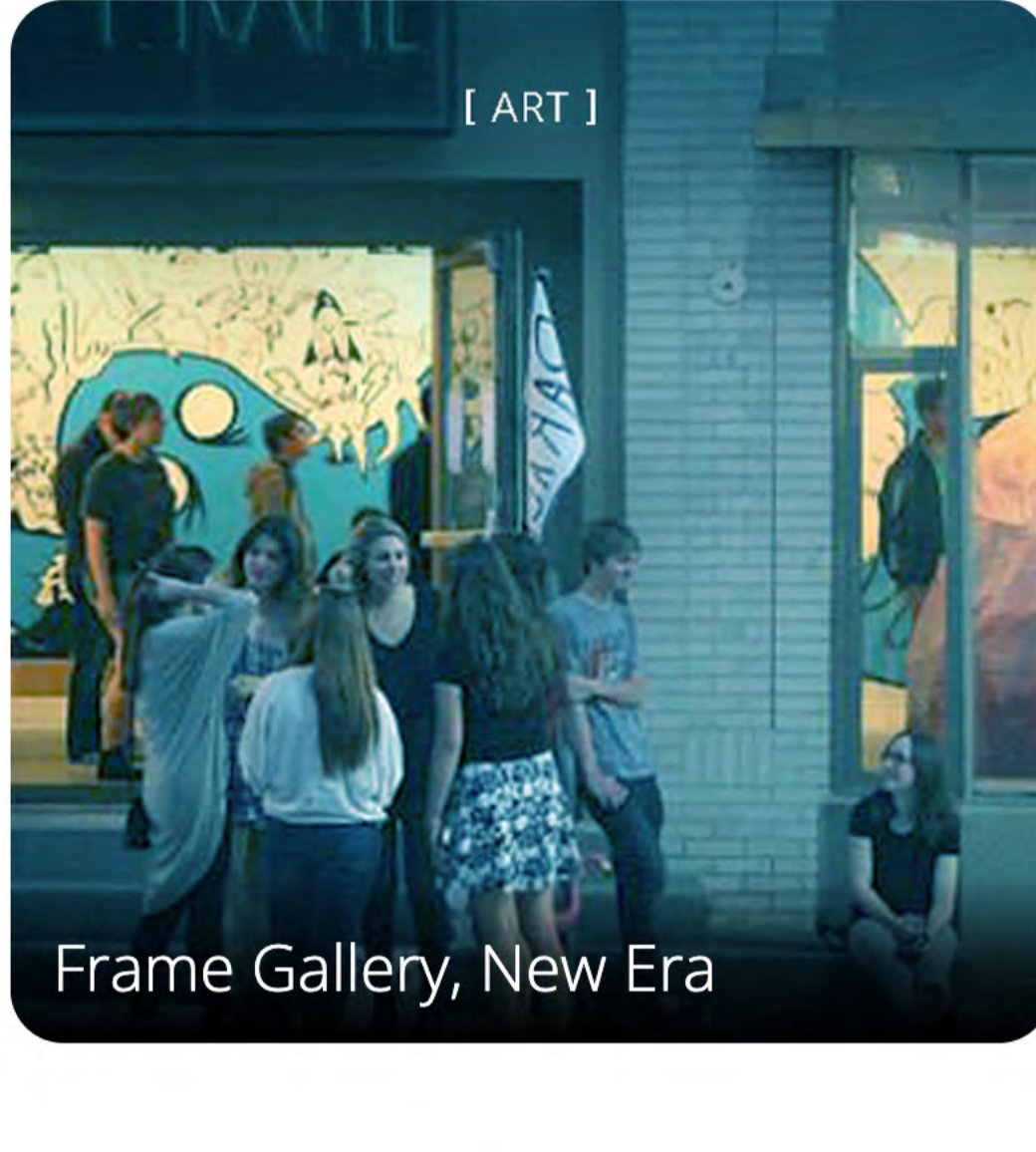
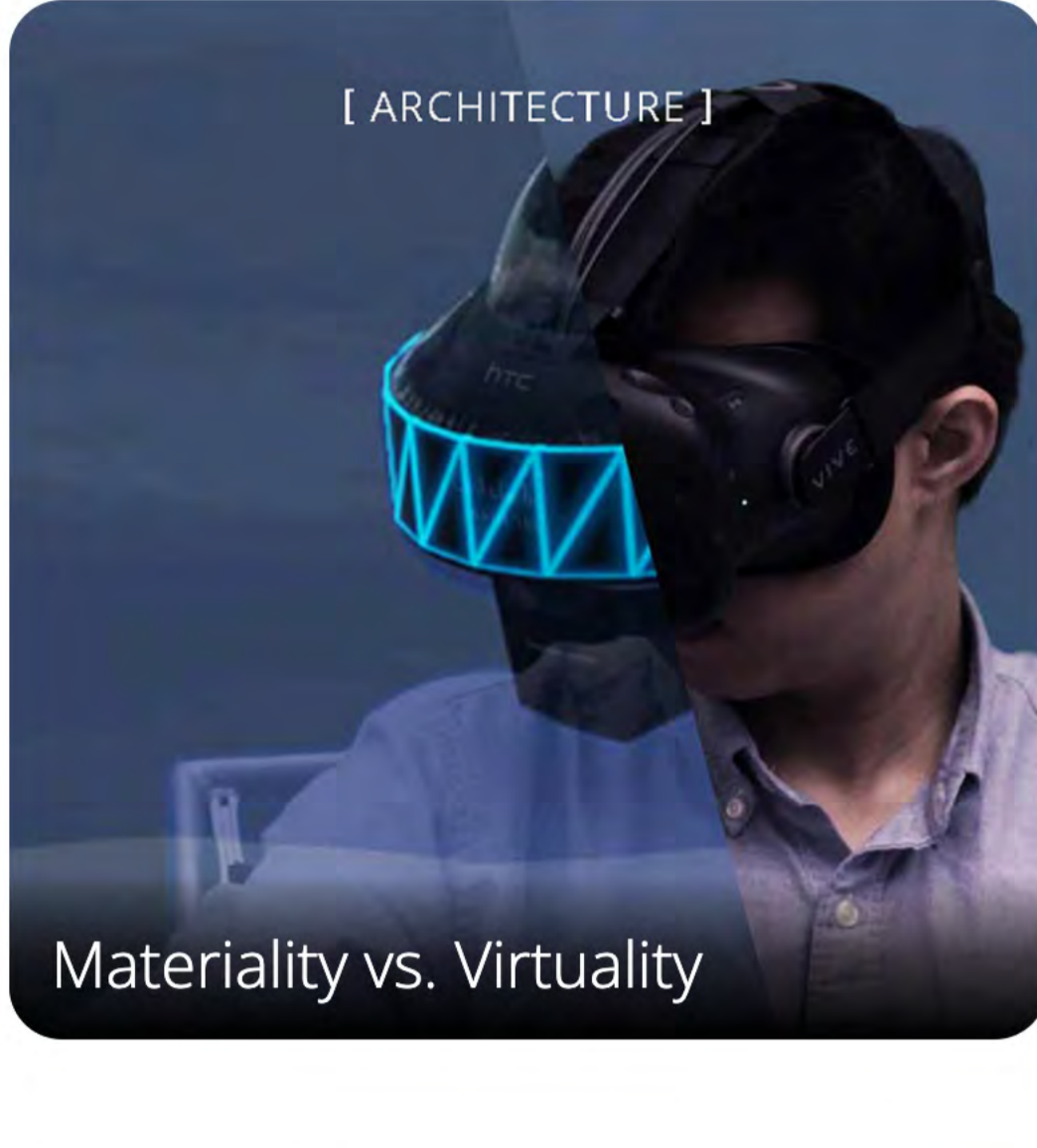
Discover How CFA is Affecting Change & Advancing the Future



Letter from Dean Mary Ellen Poole

"Artists express the conscience of society and call us to action."

[READ MARY ELLEN POOLE'S FULL LETTER](#)

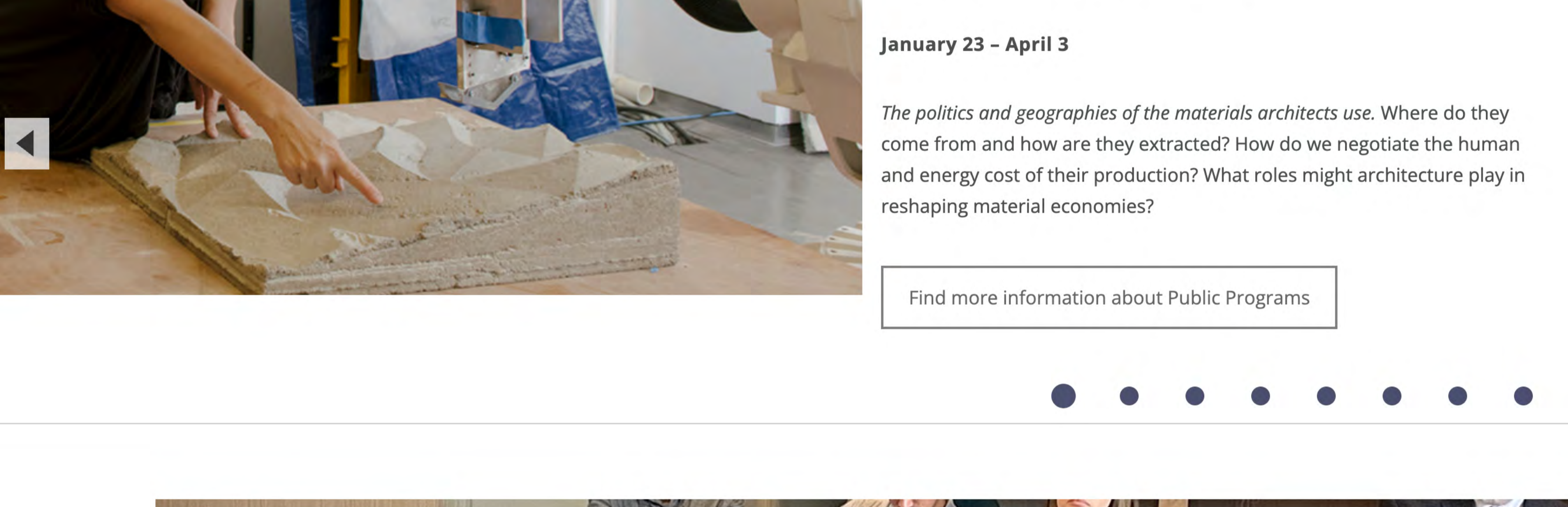


Carnegie Mellon University Mourns the Passing of Alumnus Philip Pearlstein, a Titan of Contemporary Art

Pearlstein's exacting depictions of the naked body — played out naturally in his studio with fatigued expressions, slouched postures, harsh lighting and odd cropping along the edges of the canvas — ushered in new possibilities for depicting the human form and influenced generations of future artists. Philip Pearlstein died on December 17 in New York City at the age of 98.

[Read More about Philip Pearlstein](#)

Events



[Architecture Event]

Spring 2023 Public Programs: Extractivism

January 23 - April 3

The politics and geographies of the materials architects use. Where do they come from and how are they extracted? How do we negotiate the human and energy cost of their production? What roles might architecture play in reshaping material economies?

[Find more information about Public Programs](#)



[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion + School of Music]

"Lullaby Project" Bonds Parents and Babies through Music

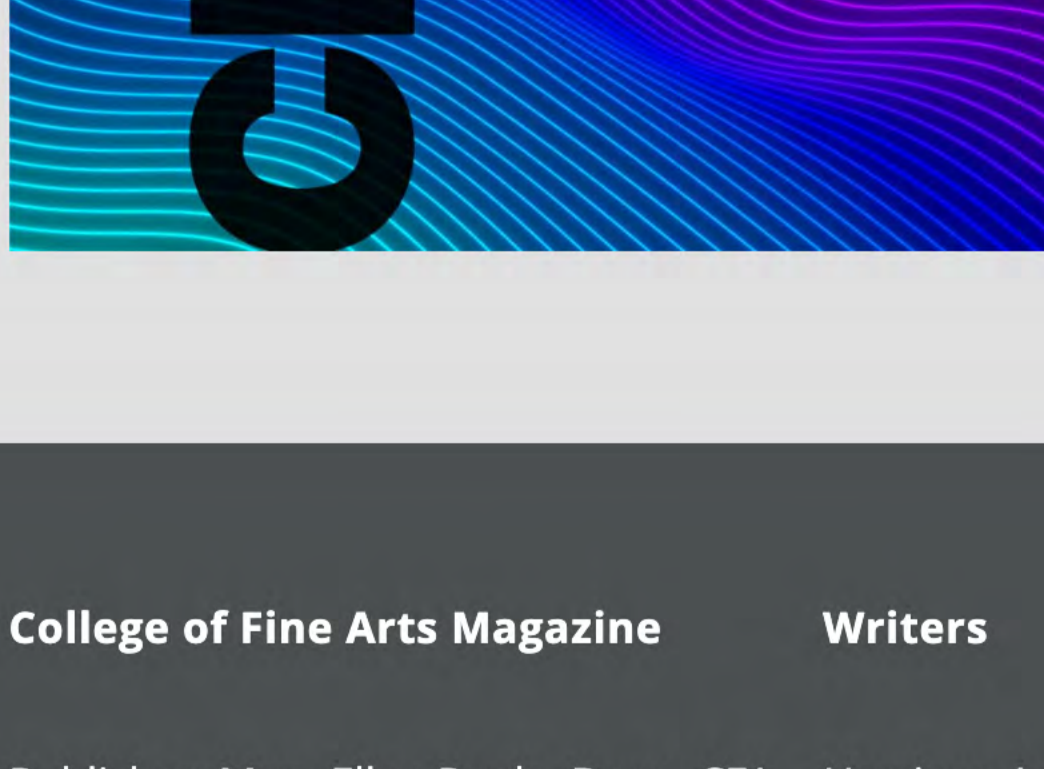
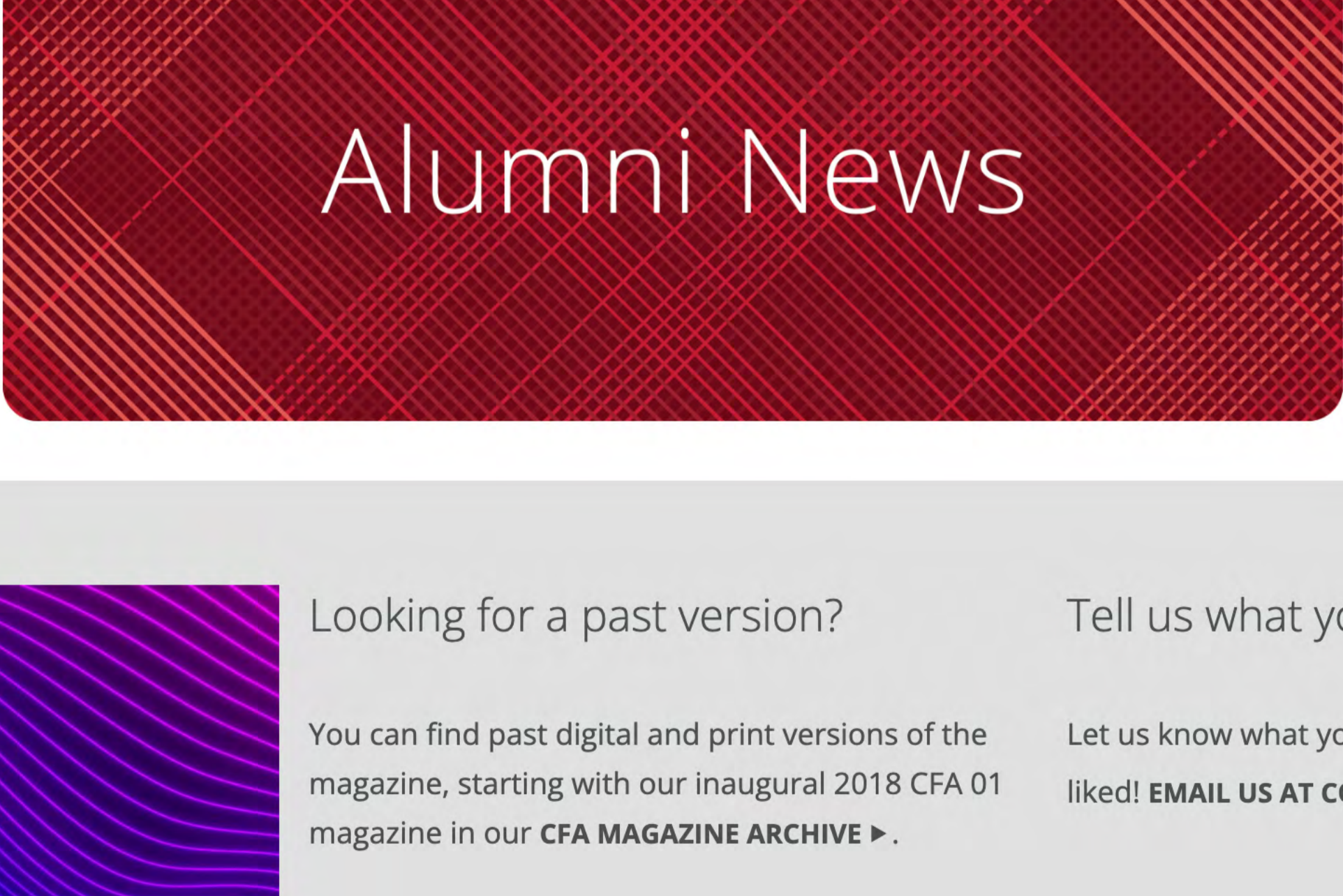
Crooning lullabies to babies has been part of the child-rearing process almost since time began. When parents create a personal tribute to their newborns, especially amid difficult birthing circumstances, the results are a magical part of their child's life journey.

[Read More about the Lullaby Project](#)

In Case You Missed It

Highlighted stories that you may have missed coming from all of CFA

- ARCHITECTURE
- ART
- DESIGN
- DRAMA
- MUSIC
- BXA
- MILLER ICA
- STUDIO
- MAM



Looking for a past version?

You can find past digital and print versions of the magazine, starting with our inaugural 2018 CFA 01 magazine in our [CFA MAGAZINE ARCHIVE](#).

Tell us what you think!

Let us know what you hoped to see — and what you liked! [EMAIL US AT CONTACT-CFA@CMU.EDU](mailto:EMAIL_US_AT_CONTACT-CFA@CMU.EDU)

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[Academics](#)

[Research & Creative Practice](#)

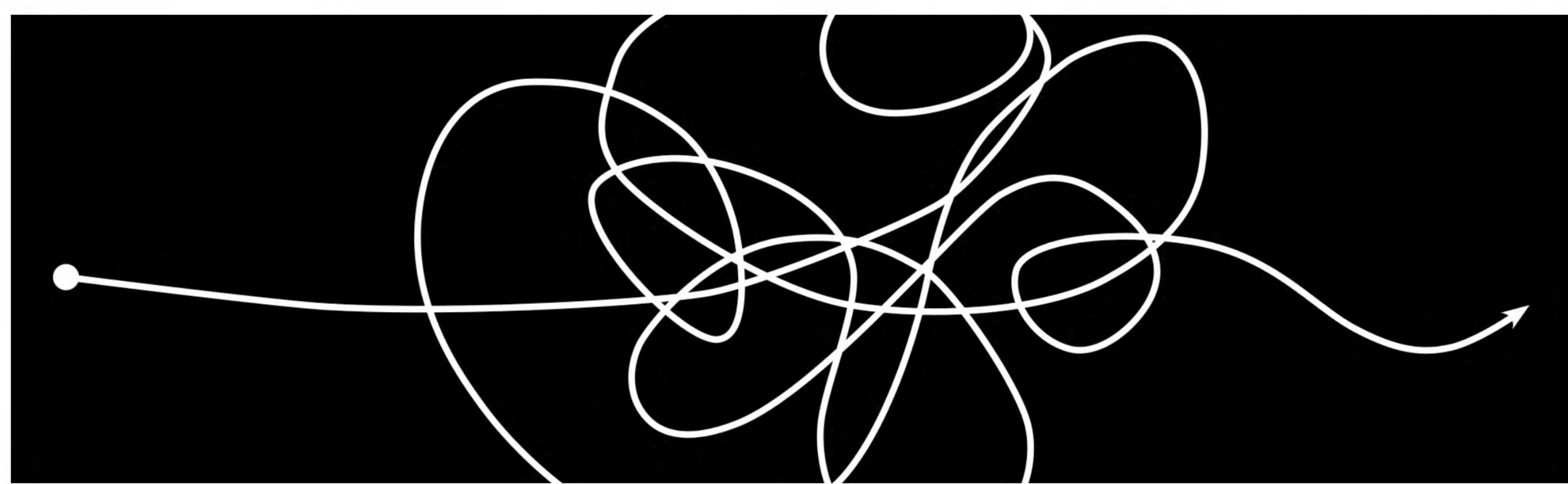
[ICA Pittsburgh](#)

[Frank-Ratchye STUDIO](#)

[News](#)

[About](#)

[Giving](#)



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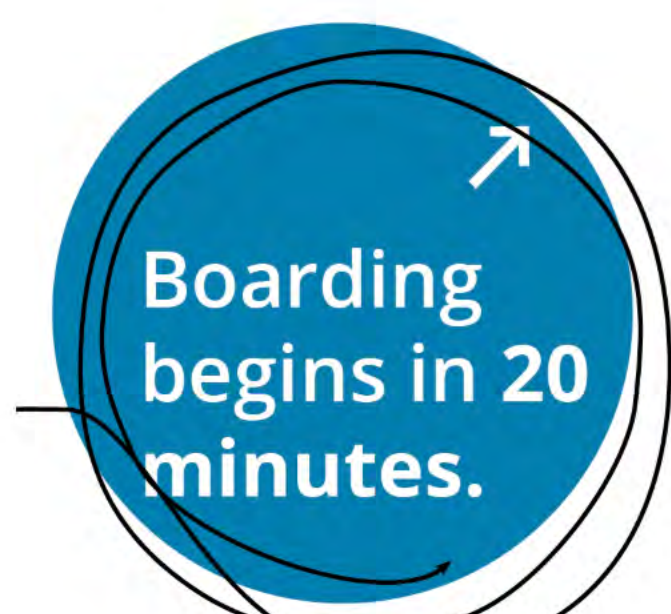
[School of Architecture](#)

Eddy Man Kim and the Pittsburgh Steps Project



[School of Art](#)

An Exhibition Rooted in History Addresses Ongoing, Contemporary Issues



[School of Design](#)

PIA, the Award-Winning Student Project



[School of Drama](#)

Preparing Drama Students for a New Theater Landscape



[School of Music](#)

Collaboration: At the Piano and the Research Lab



[BXA Intercollege Degree Programs](#)

Jules Mallis: Repairing the World through Creative Dialogue



[Miller Institute for Contemporary Art](#)

CFA Miller ICA Students Raise Funds to Fight Food Insecurity



[Frank-Ratchye STUDIO for Creative Inquiry](#)

Anna Betbeze TOUCH Workshop



[Master of Entertainment Industry Management](#)

MEIM Alum Finds a Winning Career at Prizeo



[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#)

A Multigenerational Workforce

[◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

[Faculty & Staff Resources](#)

[Contact](#)

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College of Fine Arts

[Academics](#)
[Research & Creative Practice](#)
[ICA Pittsburgh](#)
[Frank-Ratchye STUDIO](#)
[News](#)
[About](#)
[Giving](#)


School of Architecture

Eddy Man Kim and the Pittsburgh Steps Project

written by
Cally Jamis Vennare

Eddy Man Kim is curious about steps — particularly Pittsburgh steps.

Kim also serves as associate teaching professor and co-director of the [Computational Design Lab](#) at Carnegie Mellon University [School of Architecture](#). He is a practitioner, researcher, educator and technologist in architectural, web, media, brand and experience design.

"I've been at CMU eight years now. From Day 1, I've always been interested in Pittsburgh steps. Blame it on an architect's natural curiosity," Kim explained. "When I come to a new city ... I look around, I see odd things ... and then I can't stop thinking about them. One thing leads to another and before I know it, I'm doing a project about it. It's a natural progression for me."

In this instance, Kim's curiosity about Pittsburgh steps piqued the interest of the Garden Club of Allegheny County (GCAC), an organization committed to promoting greater knowledge of horticulture, conservation and historic preservation.

In spring 2022, Kim's Interface Architecture: Architecture Interface (IA:AI) class partnered with GCAC and formally launched "The Pittsburgh Steps Project." The project's objective — and the task of the undergraduate class of CMU sophomores — was to conduct speculative research on a defined network of Pittsburgh steps that "connect disconnected neighborhoods" throughout the city. Exploration of the steps spanned across a wide range of disciplines and media, ranging from broad-stroke storytelling to business-style marketing to granular geo-environmental analysis, painting a picture of the steps as a network of nodes.

"I'm motivated by CMU's larger agenda of being more relevant to the local community. That motivation is coupled with a personal interest to ensure that what I teach my students feels and is real, not just theory on paper," said Kim. "My IA:AI Studio is about professionalism and engaging with clients, as well as understanding a problem and coming up with ideas. Students are also given the flexibility to choose their focus — whether it be the construction of one-to-one scaled steps, the user experience, strategic thinking or something else. Researching neighborhoods, understanding demographics and working with real people on real projects is hard, but we don't do as much of it as we should."

At the end of the semester, each IA:AI team shared key learnings via an interactive exhibition at the College of Fine Arts' Great Hall on CMU's campus. The final exhibition featured dynamic "bouncy" steps, toy steps and even a Virtual Reality (VR) walkthrough.

As noted in the presentation by students Andrea Wan and I Lok U, "As life goes on, certain moments in history are lost to time, leaving behind monuments to narratives of past life. This interactive experience aims to bring new life to Pittsburgh steps through storytelling and advocacy. We tell the story of the steps, drawn from memories of the old and imaginations of the young, looking towards an imagined future where the steps may once again reestablish the steps as the genius loci of the community."

At the request of GCAC, The Pittsburgh Steps Project exhibition also traveled to the Frick Environmental Center for the Garden Club's November 4, 2022, symposium. It is the IA:AI team's hope that, with GCAC's support, they will continue to spread awareness and support for these lost gems.

[◀ Back to Discover How CFA is Affecting Change & Advancing the Future](#)

[◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

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ICA Pittsburgh

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News

About

Giving



School of Art



An Exhibition Rooted in History Addresses Ongoing, Contemporary Issues

written by
Andy Ptaschinski

In 1906, Reverdy C. Ransom delivered a speech titled "The Spirit of John Brown's Body" at the second meeting of the Niagara Movement, a precursor to the NAACP. This meeting — and Ransom's speech — was a key catalyst in the early fight for civil rights in the United States. More than 100 years later, [School of Art](#) Professor Britt Ransom, who is Reverdy Ransom's great-great-granddaughter, is reexamining this history in a new exhibition at Pitzer College.

The immersive installation, titled "Arise and Seek," contains several plaques of text from Reverdy Ransom's speeches that are held by casts of Professor Ransom's hands. In the center of the room are scale models of her great-great-grandparents' house and John Brown's fort, which are installed to reflect a multigraph photo, an early photography technique that captures a sitter's image multiple times through the use of mirrors. Ransom created the elements of her installation through a combination of digital modeling, 3D printing and casting, and the installation also includes historic photographs and a timeline.

By bringing together John Brown, a pre-Civil War abolitionist; Reverdy Ransom; and contemporary references to her own body, Ransom seeks to demonstrate that the fight for civil rights in the United States has a long trajectory and that the fight against racism continues today.

Though progress has been made, Ransom explained that we still have a long way to go. "When I read my great-great-grandfather's speeches, the language is so different in its vernacular but, at the same time, the content is so applicable to right now, it's actually alarming," she said.

Ransom uses her art practice to transform her research from a simple history lesson into a powerful experience for museum visitors that seeks to challenge them to think about the role they play within the continuing history of racism and inequality. "My goal as an artist is to reframe looking at something so that you think about how you yourself are situated within that cycle," she explained. Through learning about history and seeing the ties to the present day, Ransom explained, she hopes gallery visitors will be spurred to action.

This is the first time Ransom has made artwork about her family's history. She is also active in the renovation of her great-great grandparents' house in Wilberforce, Ohio, which recently received a major grant from the National Park Service. Ransom said she and her family aim to turn the house into a community space for research, activism and art.

◀ Back to Discover How CFA is Affecting Change & Advancing the Future

◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07

[Faculty & Staff Resources](#)

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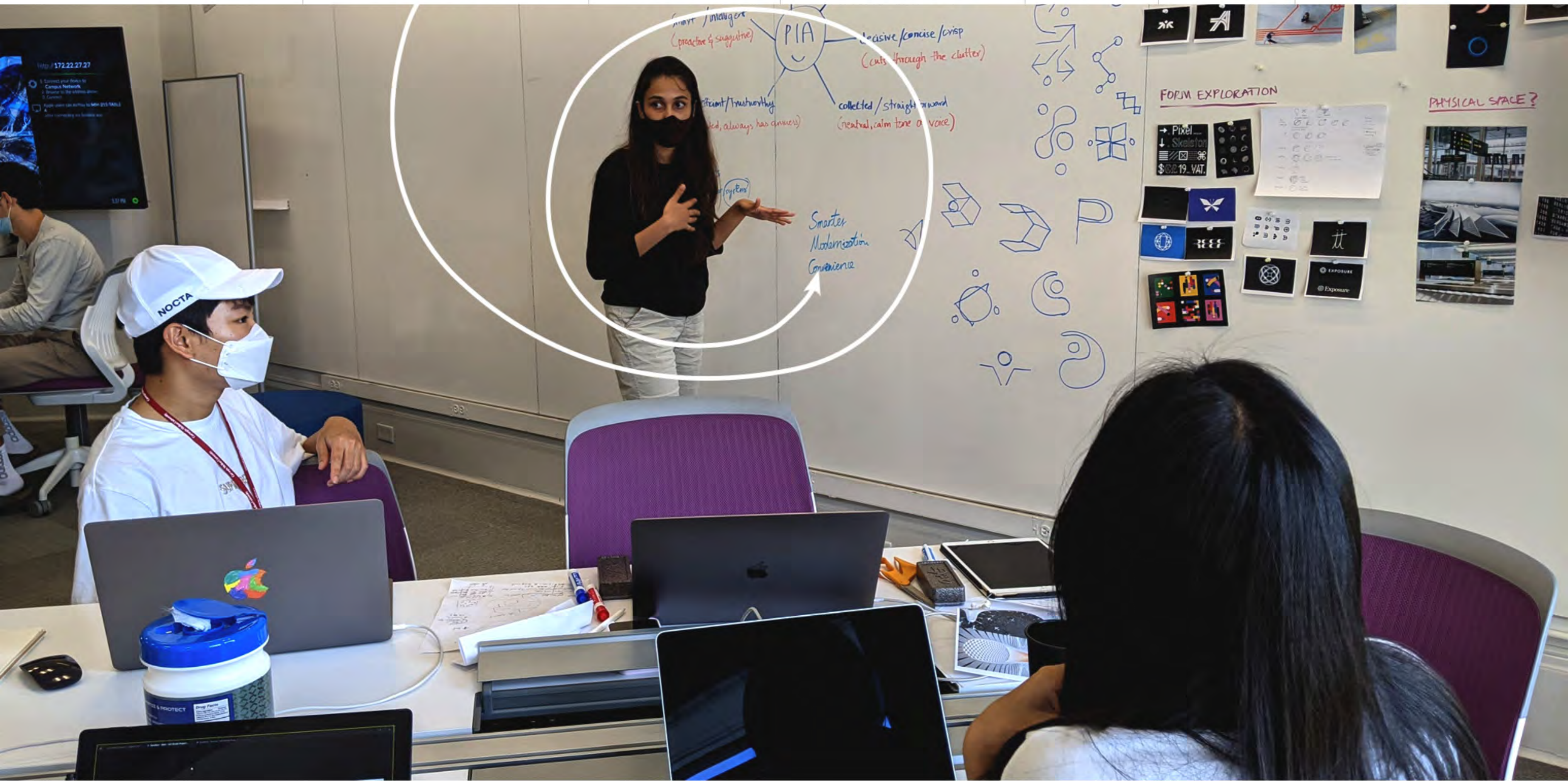
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School of Design



PIA, the Award-Winning Student Project

written by
Joe Lyons

Master's students from Carnegie Mellon University's [School of Design](#), Weijie Wang (MDes 2023), Devika Pillai (MPS 2022), Matt Muenzer (MPS 2022), and Youngryun Cho (MDes 2023), won the Gold Award at the HCII 2022 Conference for their team project, PIA. Only one project from the conference receives a Gold Award. Days after this announcement, their work also received the Notable Interaction Award from Core 77.

Their project, "PIA — Intelligent Voice Assistant for Pittsburgh International Airport," proposes an AI-driven digital assistant to ease the airport experience. "We all know that flying commercially can end up being a total mess, and we have all been in a position where we felt helpless," explained Wang, a member of the design team and master's student at Carnegie Mellon's School of Design. "From late or canceled flights, missed connections, long lines, crowded terminals and unappealing food, the current traveler experience can be complicated and disconnected."

The team didn't want their design to be confined to the airport itself. The design covers the holistic commercial flying experience, including travel timing to and from the airport, multilingual assistance, intelligent flight updates and more. The team drew from research at the Pittsburgh International Airport, as well as familiar experiences dealing with travel logistics. "We visited the Pittsburgh airport during our initial research phase, but also could draw upon a rich stock of pain points and insights that people had all throughout the journey — before the airport, at the airport and after leaving the airport. We saw a massive opportunity for design intervention in the space and were eager to dig into it," Pillai said.

PIA helps to solve the disjoint between airports and individual airlines. "Airlines cover booking, check-in, boarding and (importantly) the flight, but airports are the go-to party (or should be) for securing parking during your trip, finding dining and shopping before your flight, finding a way into town after landing in a new city and so much more. While airports often struggle to deliver on these services with rushed travelers, PIA's connected assistance can fill in those gaps and elevate previously underwhelming or invisible services, all helping travelers hit the marks in their itinerary," Muenzer said.

To account for the rushed nature of travel, PIA utilizes AI-driven voice assistance as a key aspect of its design. The team said that voice integration was an excellent fit for this opportunity because, often, air travelers feel stressed, rushed and uncomfortable. Voice interfaces can collapse complex requests and return reliable results, backed up by on-screen information, from a depth of airport and airline data.

The team recognized that PIA could be incorporated into existing airport features, such as assistive kiosks. "PIA's mobile app provides both touch and voice-led interfaces for travelers on the move, and this system also activates underused check-in kiosks, such as those we found distributed throughout the Pittsburgh airport."

"There are so many stakeholders involved in what you experience when you go to the airport for a trip," Cho said, noting the importance of design thinking for an issue such as travel. "The design tools and skills we had the chance to use on this project helped us step into a perspective from which we could start to see novel and mutually beneficial solutions in the space, even though we started as total outsiders."

The team said that the awards serve as an inspiration to forge ahead. "We worked really hard on this project, and it can get difficult to get a perspective on the work while you're doing it," Wang said. "Once it was done, we were super happy with the concept, as well as all of the detail we put in."

Although there's no current plan for the future of PIA, the group is hopeful that it will have an impact on travel systems and how we consider the whole airport experience.

"Something very exciting for us during our work was that, while much of our original research was rooted in experiences at Pittsburgh International Airport, we found that many of our design solutions had real potential across any number of airports," the team said. "As airports strive to grow, get smarter and work more sustainably, PIA could really bolster the usability and efficacy of services within airports, as well as those to which they are connected."

[◀ Back to Discover How CFA is Affecting Change & Advancing the Future](#)

[◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

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[News](#)
[About](#)
[Giving](#)


School of Drama

Preparing Drama Students for a New Theater Landscape

written by
Shannon Musgrave

The future of the American theater is being rapidly reshaped in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resurgence of the racial justice movement in our country. As the industry itself is shifting, so are the methods and practices of teaching the next generation of theater makers.

Professor Kaja Dunn joined the [School of Drama](#) in fall 2022 and brings with her a vision for creating a more diverse and inclusive theatrical landscape.

"I see a space where the stories that have been pushed to the side or hidden are brought front and center," she said, and beyond just telling these stories, broadening the ways in which they are told. "Using aesthetics from Asia, from the African diaspora, from the Latinx and Indigenous and Middle Eastern diasporas, and seeing how that changes the way we think about musical theater, or theater, or film."

She reflects on her own conservatory experience as one that was designed to "tear you down to build you up," forcing everyone into one type of Eurocentric mold. She's much more interested in cultivating students' understanding of their truest selves and building them up from there.

"I've been really interested in better ways of training theater students of color," she said, "and I think when we center the most vulnerable, we help everybody."

She hopes to accomplish this by exposing students to a broader history of theater and the people who have been making it, and to expand the ways in which students can learn about and tell those stories. In the fall, Dunn taught a course in anti-racist theater where students were assigned to research both theater companies and theater makers who center the work on, or are members of, the global majority. Their final product, however, was not a research paper or a report, but a TikTok or Instagram reel. Students were invested and excited about this work, Dunn said, and got creative with their projects; one even wrote an original song about Alice Childress.

Bringing Professional Experience into the Classroom

"Theater has changed faster in the last three or four years than it has in about 200," Dunn said with a laugh, "so there's a lot that theater and academia are figuring out for the first time."

Outside of the academy, Dunn works professionally in theater, television and film as an intimacy director and diversity consultant, and serves as the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Specialist for Theatrical Intimacy Education — a consulting group specializing in researching, developing and teaching best practices for staging theatrical intimacy. She sees firsthand the shifts in the industry as she works with theater companies around the country to create more equitable and culturally competent practices.

In a field that is so rapidly changing, Dunn said she feels an urgency to ensure that students are not only prepared for those changes, but also equipped with the knowledge and fortitude to push them forward. Keeping her finger on the pulse of what is happening in the industry is a tremendous benefit to her students.

"It's important to be able to tell students, 'This is what's happening in the field,' and as the field is changing, to bring that into the classroom," she said. For Dunn, maintaining the duality of working professionally and in the academy is vital. And she is driven to utilize the experience and knowledge that has been passed on to her, to encourage and lift up the next generation of artists.

"I'm teaching," she said, "because I feel like it's really important to pass on the legacy of people who fed into me."

[◀ Back to Discover How CFA is Affecting Change & Advancing the Future](#)

[◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

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[News](#)
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[Giving](#)


School of Music

Collaboration: At the Piano and the Research Lab

written by
Dan Fernandez

Jocelyn Dueck is a professional listener. As a collaborative pianist and vocal coach at the Carnegie Mellon University [School of Music](#), she is a specialist on the production of sound and teaches voice majors Italian, French, German and English diction and the nuances of singing that are controlled "from the chin up." She is now also helping researchers develop machine learning tools that can improve how people everywhere read and comprehend written words.

For Professor Dueck, working in the artificial intelligence (AI) space is just one more step in a long career in music and research. She grew up in Canada with musical parents of a choral background, who emphasized attention to detail in vocal music.

"My parents taught us curiosity," Dueck recalled, "and they'd quibble about grammar and pronunciation." With degrees in piano performance and coaching from the University of Minnesota, Dueck went on to serve on the faculty at Bard College, Mannes College, Manhattan School of Music and The Juilliard School before joining the CMU School of Music as an assistant professor of collaborative piano.

Her current work is with the Virtual Readability Lab, a collaboration between Adobe, the nonprofit organization Readability Matters, the University of Central Florida (UCF) and Google, aimed at developing technologies to improve reading proficiency for people from all backgrounds around the world. The Virtual Readability Lab is developing AI to make font, text size, spacing and letter shape recommendations that can be personalized to an individual to make documents more readable.

Dueck is an expert in prosody, "the music of language," as she puts it. Prosody, which is measured by attributes such as volume, duration, pitch and rhythm, is the process by which people place stress and inflection in both music and spoken language that makes it understandable and not disjointed. She created a rubric with criteria that she uses to listen to a study participant reading out loud and to score how fluent the reader is in the language. This data and the tools the team is building will improve digital reading for next-generation reading platforms.

The readability technology could one day be used for many applications, including improving highway signage to reduce accidents, and helping medical and military professionals process text more quickly, and to efficiently identify the most important information in a document.

In addition to the prosody work, researchers are also use eyetracking technology to follow readers' eye movements to assess how people tend to scan pages of text, which is often not a straightforward line-by-line reading. Dueck is interested in utilizing technology like this to improve teaching and pedagogy for collaborative pianists and other musicians, thus bringing the music-science collaboration full circle. "All of the tools we use for fluency in reading words can be used to enhance fluency in reading music notation," she said.

"Professor Dueck's work with AI serves as evidence that scientific progress relies on the elusive aspects of the human experience, which are at the heart of music making and art, in general," said Jonathan Bailey Holland, the Jack G. Buncher Head of the School of Music. "She represents a growing field of inquiry and research that Carnegie Mellon is well-suited to foster and support."

These technological advances came about through interdisciplinary collaboration between scientists and artists.

"Artists use their imagination every day to create something out of nothing," Dueck said. "And if we all expanded that sense of curiosity beyond the artistic sphere, we would see that the possibilities for interaction between music and other fields are endless."

[◀ Back to Discover How CFA is Affecting Change & Advancing the Future](#)

[◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

[Faculty & Staff Resources](#)
[Contact](#)

CFA

College of Fine Arts

[Academics](#)
[Research & Creative Practice](#)
[ICA Pittsburgh](#)
[Frank-Ratchye STUDIO](#)
[News](#)
[About](#)
[Giving](#)


BXA Intercollege Degree Programs



Jules Mallis: Repairing the World through Creative Dialogue

written by
Cally Jamis Vennare

"Art for the sake of art isn't interesting or important to me. Art that brings people together is."

Since graduating from Carnegie Mellon's [BXA Intercollege Degree Programs](#) with a bachelor of humanities and arts degree in anthropology and art, Jules Mallis (they/them) has made a distinct mark on the national landscape as a multimedia artist, VJ, DJ and educator working with digital media, paint, installation, performance, sound and audience interaction.

As executive director of social justice-based organization, Repair the World Pittsburgh, Mallis uses their creative practice and tools of communication and media to "change the world, inspire, provide commentary and make connections" that measurably impact urgent community needs, such as food justice and its intersections. The collective impact of the national organization's work is impressive: in 2021/2022, Repair the World mobilized 36,902 volunteers in 95,736 acts of service and learning through its 11 Service Corps locations, aligning with the Jewish values of repairing the world (tikkun olam) and providing \$3.2 million in value of volunteer time toward the needs of service partners across the country.

"At Repair the World, we are working to quite literally repair what is broken and to support community initiatives in the ways that are attainable right now as an organization and as individuals," explained Mallis. "We organize to leverage our resources together to address urgent community needs ... and are engaging in a practice of repair."

Did the BXA Intercollege Degree Programs at CMU — which integrates studies in the fine arts with studies in humanities or social sciences — influence Mallis' current passion for advancing social justice through creative dialogue? "At Repair the World, I can apply the core foundational knowledge that I learned at CMU in a way that feels genuine to me. As a Jewish American, I'm working with the community in ways that feel authentic and relevant. As a leader in that space, I'm helping to shape and move part of the cross cultural dialogue — through creative expression and modalities — at a really interesting moment in our history," said Mallis. "Our work could lack meaning without contextualization. This is where I feel social justice intersects most with my creative practice. Both are an ongoing practice, a conversation between ourselves and the community, a response to what the world is saying, feeling and sharing, and a way to make sense of it all."

[◀ Back to Discover How CFA is Affecting Change & Advancing the Future](#)

[◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

[Faculty & Staff Resources](#)
[Contact](#)

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ICA Pittsburgh

Frank-Ratchye STUDIO

News

About

Giving



Miller Institute for Contemporary Art

CFA Miller ICA Students Raise Funds to Fight Food Insecurity

written by
Margaret Cox

The CMU Annual Food Drive is an important way in which CMU demonstrates its commitment to the community. "For nearly three decades, Carnegie Mellon has run one of the highest-grossing food drives in the City of Pittsburgh — contributing more than \$319,000 and over 78 tons of nonperishables to support those in need," said Carole Panno, CMU associate director of Gift Planning and CMU Food Drive chair for the past 27 years.

Much of the success of the drive comes from the friendly competition among staff and student teams. This year, a new student-led team, Miller Lites — [Miller Institute for Contemporary Art Students](#), became the first College of Fine Arts student team rallying support for the drive. They not only exceeded their fundraising goal of \$500 but won second place for Highest Supporting Student Teams!

Behind the spirit of the Miller Lites were students from across CFA: Laurence Gao (junior, BXA Science and Arts), Grayson Ticer (junior, BXA Humanities and Arts), Christopher Zhu (Masters, Music) and Wendy Khun (junior, Drama).

Each student came together in this cause for reasons that are meaningful to them.

"I think that it is important for CMU students to engage with communities outside of the university setting," Gao said. "This annual food drive is a great opportunity to support our own CMU Food Pantry, as well as residents of Pittsburgh who are experiencing food insecurity."

It is an engaged way to learn about the city, said Khun. "The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank is a group that was born out of the Hill District back in the '80s and has since been one of the leading organizations in sustainably feeding and providing resources to Pittsburgh residents. I am so excited to be part of this student-led initiative to urge the CMU community to directly give back to the city."

Ticer got involved as a way to deepen a connection to this city. "I love Pittsburgh; it's an incredibly special place. Having the opportunity to contribute so meaningfully to this food drive was an exciting and rewarding way to return the affection."

The Miller Lites show us that the CMU community has a strong bond, and this is a way to share that feeling with others. "Food is like music and art that has the warmth and power to bring people together," Zhu said. "I believe the food drive is a great opportunity to benefit the community. It helps to fight hunger and waste and connects the community."

◀ [Back to Discover How CFA is Affecting Change & Advancing the Future](#)

◀ [Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

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The Frank-Ratchye STUDIO for Creative Inquiry



Anna Betbeze TOUCH Workshop

written by
Harrison Apple

In its fifth year stewarding the Sylvia & David Steiner Speaker Series, the [Frank-Ratchye STUDIO for Creative Inquiry's](#) Director Nica Ross brought Los Angeles-based artist and educator Anna Betbeze to conduct her [TOUCH workshop](#) with students, faculty and staff at Carnegie Mellon University. The TOUCH workshop stems from Betbeze's research with world-famous filmmaker/ animator Jan Švankmajer. After the former Czechoslovakian government censored his filmmaking, Švankmajer's practice moved into the world of proprioceptive touch and sensation, designing objects and environments that could not be censored by shutting down a projector.

Betbeze's three-day workshop included a compelling lecture on her work as a painter and maker producing large scale works of vibrant color, utilizing unconventional materials and techniques including faux fur and burning logs. Her opening lecture introduced eager participants to the core element of the workshop, conditioning them to perceive themselves in space without relying on visually dominant strategies. Betbeze's workshop contributes to critical pedagogical theories by building on what each person brings to the learning environment, then offering guidance and instruction based on what is available as a new group of creative investigators. Over the last two days, participants built stunning armatures designed to amplify sensations and change the way we move with one another.

On the final day of the workshop, the STUDIO opened its doors to the public. The participants and observers merged into a playful group of co-conspirators, adapting one another to movement machines, balancing, walking and feeling sympathetically.

[◀ Back to Discover How CFA is Affecting Change & Advancing the Future](#)

[◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

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Academics

Research & Creative Practice

ICA Pittsburgh

Frank-Ratchye STUDIO

News

About

Giving



Master of Entertainment Industry Management



MEIM Alum Finds a Winning Career at Prizeo

written by
Pam Wigley

Winning prizes is a treat, to be sure. Giving them away is even better, as Jueying Li has learned in her role as senior campaign fulfillment manager at Prizeo. Li, a 2014 graduate of the [Master in Entertainment Industry Management](#) (MEIM) program — a joint program of the College of Fine Arts and Heinz College — has learned firsthand what it's like to make people happy through the online "sweepstakes-for-good" platform.

Li joined Prizeo in 2014, shortly after graduation. Prior, she interned at Jerry Bruckheimer Films and a Beverly Hills talent agency. Managing talent and experience in film and television development, scripts and translation prepared her well for her role at Prizeo. There, she oversees campaigns from beginning to end, manages client relationships and focuses much of her time on fulfillment and financials, she said.

"I collaborate closely with the talent, the merchandising partners, vendors and fulfillment centers to make sure rewards that donors purchase are fulfilled on time," she said. "The campaign rewards include merchandise, exclusive signed items from talent, virtual prizes like personalized voicemails and videos, as well as in-person experiences, such as a lunch or a studio tour with the talent."

Her finance role includes assessing the campaigns' financial performance and managing financial reports, fulfillment budgets and fund transfers to the nonprofit organizations. She also performs research and data analysis projects, and she leads presentations to the executive team. A self-described "numbers person," Li said she's earned the trust of leadership when it comes to her data analysis skills.

Li said she finds her work rewarding, watching the business change and grow as she has taken on more responsibilities.

"The best thing about working at Prizeo is that every day, we are making the world a better place," she said. "It's very fulfilling when I receive thank you notes from the non-profit organizations telling us how many children or how many families that we've helped by raising funds for them, and when I get to meet so many incredible people that care about various causes, like the environment, humanity, education and so on. In a world of chaos, politically, socially and environmentally, many people are still trying their best to bring positive impacts to other people (and this planet) in need."

Her MEIM experience helped contribute, in part, to her career trajectory and personal success, she said. In her first year while in Pittsburgh, she learned practical skills like accounting, statistics, marketing, analysis and leadership. During her second year on the West Coast, she found the exposure to the entertainment industry and networks extremely valuable.

"The film festivals (SXSW and Sundance), the classes instructed by entertainment industry leaders, the internships that I took in entertainment companies, as well as the alumni/ in-school network, helped broaden my social circle in the entertainment industry and eventually secured my current job," she said.

The campaigns she works on vary in scope and benefits, and she shared a few of her favorites, not only because of how much she enjoyed working on them, but also because of the prizes that donors won. Check out her favorites here:

- In 2021, campaign Inspiration4, the world's first all-civilian mission to space, raised over \$11 million for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in collaboration with Shift4 Payment and SpaceX. Through the sweepstake campaign, one lucky winner joined the crew to travel to space.
- In 2022, Prizeo partnered with Lin-Manual Miranda and the Hamilton show to bring awareness to female reproductive rights. They have partnered with LMM and his team on over 15 campaigns throughout the years and raised millions of dollars for various causes, including immigration, art education, natural resources defense and environmental protection. Campaign winners got to travel all over the world and be LMM's VIP guests at the show premiere.
- In 2018, they partnered with the NFL and its 32 teams to raise funds for United Way Worldwide. The funds raised from the campaign help youth to learn and grow through Character Playbook™ — the NFL and United Way's digital program that educates middle school students on how to cultivate and maintain healthy relationships. The lucky winner of the campaign attended the VIP tailgate, was on-field before kickoff, attended the NFL Friday Night Party, watched the big game in VIP seats and had access to the Super Bowl Half Time Press Conference. Here is the campaign's landing page.

"Throughout the years, we've seen the public getting more comfortable and engaged with sweepstakes as a fundraising method; some large-scale organizations even set up their in-house sweepstakes giveaways," Li said. "It's important for organizations to be creative, and willing to take risks and try new things to expand their impacts."

[◀ Back to Discover How CFA is Affecting Change & Advancing the Future](#)

[◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

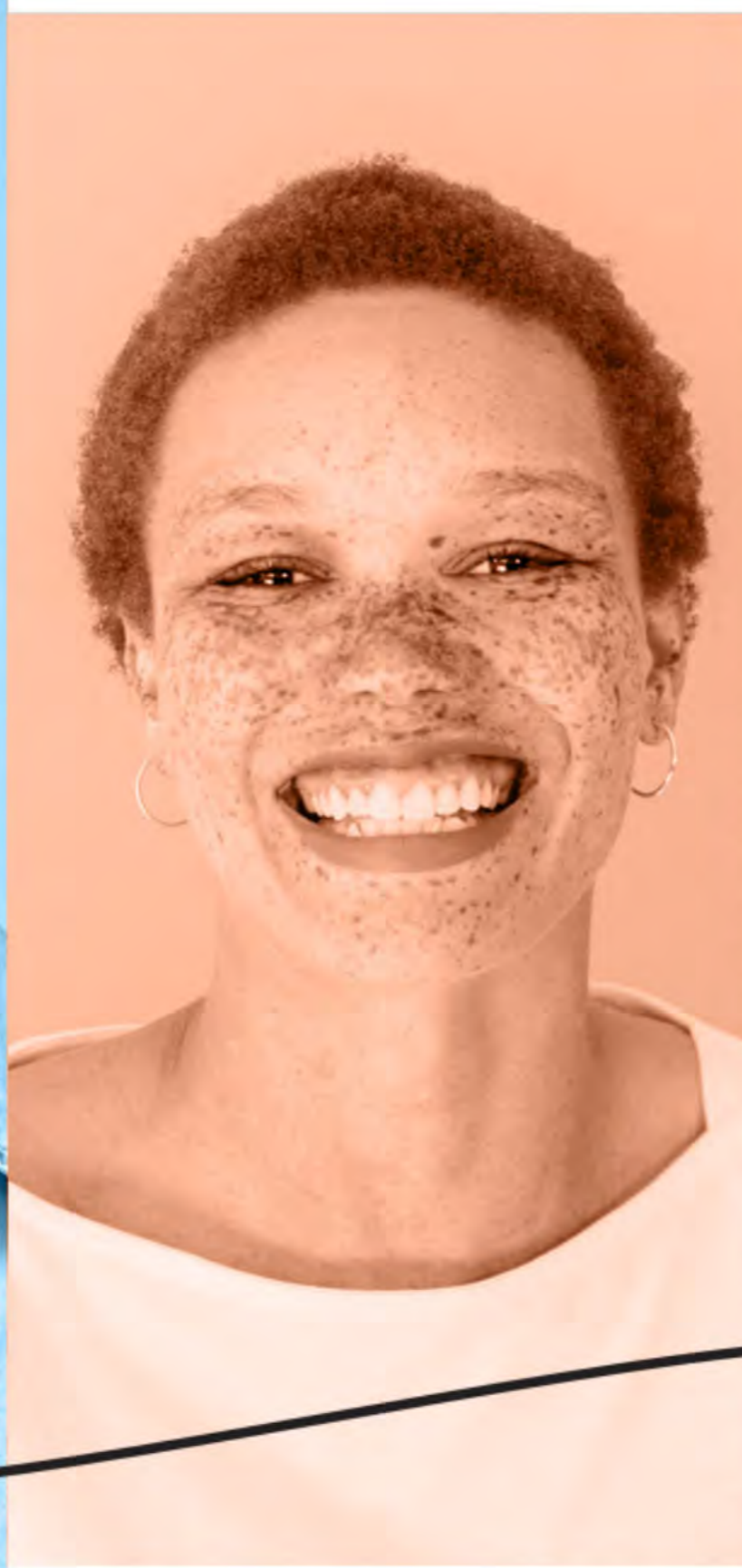
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[Academics](#)[Research & Creative Practice](#)[ICA Pittsburgh](#)[Frank-Ratchye STUDIO](#)[News](#)[About](#)[Giving](#)

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



A Multigenerational Workforce

written by

Valeria J. Martinez

Age diversity in today's workforce is the widest in our nation's history, which means many of us experience employees representing five generations working side-by-side. Commonly called a "multigenerational workforce," the country finds itself in a situation where several generations are working together. Those groups are:

- Silent Generation (Traditionalists) — born 1928–1945
- Baby Boomers — born 1946–1964
- Generation X — born 1965–1980
- Generation Y (Millennials) — born 1981–1996
- Generation Z — born 1997–2012

"In the College of Fine Arts community, we not only work alongside a multigenerational community, but we also serve one," said CFA Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Valeria J. Martinez. Helping all generations to coexist, now and into the future, is one goal Martinez has for CFA, and she has enlisted outside speakers to help.

In October 2022, Dax-Devlon Ross, anti-racist scholar and practitioner, engaged the CFA community in a conversation about generational gaps and their impact on our environment. He discussed distinctions regarding what younger generations want and need, as well as what elders want and need.

In his research, he suggested that younger generations desire:

- information and communication (timely and transparent);
- decision-making, input and agency (authenticity and trust);
- career advancement (clarity and opportunity);
- compensation (fairness);
- equitable access to resources (PD, tools, staffing); and
- equitable, accessible policies and procedures (benefits, etc.).

He argued that older generations want:

- recruiting and hiring diverse candidates;
- being more inclusive in certain processes;
- mitigating implicit bias;
- mitigating microaggressions;
- avoiding "call outs" and "cancellation"; and
- tapping into the race equity economy.

Ross provided two significant pieces of information from his workshop. First, he said, all parties need to distinguish between adaptive and technical problems.

"Technical problems can be resolved through current knowledge, but adaptive challenges require us to challenge ourselves to learn, grow and shift our priorities and tactics," he said. "Unfortunately, we tend to seek resolution of all challenges through technical frames."

His second point focused on people acknowledging the role identity plays in how they see different situations. In other words, it isn't just age that affects our focus; it's how age intersects with other social identities.

"Nationally, shifts are taking place across education," Martinez said. "We know this to be true by recent laws under review — cases at the United States and Supreme Court levels — as well as state and local policies in curriculum design. If we are to lead the nation in emotional intelligence and research, we must take age and other social identities into consideration when we aim to teach, learn, engage and connect."

[◀ Back to Discover How CFA is Affecting Change & Advancing the Future](#)

[◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

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College of Fine Arts

[Academics](#)[Research & Creative Practice](#)[ICA Pittsburgh](#)[Frank-Ratchye STUDIO](#)[News](#)[About](#)[Giving](#)

Letter from Dean Mary Ellen Poole

Dear Friends,

This past August at orientation, I stumbled upon a characterization of our college that started out as a kind of improvised joke with the incoming first-year students: With great fanfare, I welcomed them to the "College of Emotional Intelligence." To their great credit, they instantly understood what I was talking about, and a few of them even laughed appreciatively (getting the dean's jokes is always welcome, but not really necessary). My fellow deans may not have been as amused, but I stand by a theme that started to emerge last year and that, as I continue to peel back layers of the (delicious) onion that is CMU, stands out with ever greater clarity:

Artists express the conscience of society and call us to action.

Skimming the virtual pages of this magazine reinforces the point. You will read stories of the important and paradigm-shifting work of our faculty, staff, students and alumni. Of connections insisted upon in an increasingly fragmented world. Of the creation of tools that make us more mindful, more able to make better decisions in everything from the rehearsal process to the selection of building materials. Of projects that link personal and social histories, and demand that we reflect on that interaction. And of initiatives that empower those without power, community activism that breathes life into our values.

I am so proud to be associated with this group of humans who — as I suspected two years ago when I began to think about the possibility of joining you — use their considerable powers for good. I wish you all a year filled with the joy of doing your best and highest work.

With admiration,

Mary Ellen Poole

Stanley and Marcia Gumberg Dean
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[◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

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The Relevance of Materiality

Materiality vs. Virtuality

At the Carnegie Mellon [School of Architecture](#) (SoA) our students learn how to use computational technologies to create their designs. But, more critically, they also learn to consider how their designs affect the human experience. This requires greater sensitivity to the material and social cultures within which they build — not only in the physical world, but also in the digital world, where we all spend a great deal of time.

As virtuality and materiality continue to intermesh with one another, we will see unique opportunities and challenges emerge for designers. As our 2022–23 public programs explore this theme of Materiality, we're speaking with alumni working across the materiality/virtuality spectrum in our [e-SPAN Newsletters](#). The two alumni highlighted below — Yumiko Yamada (B.Arch 1999), partner at SANAA, and [George \(Qiaozhi\) Wang](#) (MSCD 2015), software engineer at Meta's Reality Labs Research — work at polar opposites of this spectrum, but the concern for human experience always remains central to their work.

Yamada is a partner at SANAA, the Pritzker Prize-winning firm where she has led some of the firm's most exciting projects around the globe. Her research takes her to the cutting edge of material science and also engages material choices with ancient venerability. The recently completed [Sydney Modern](#) project, a contemporary art museum at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia, is an example of the latter. The project features a sweeping rammed earth wall comprised primarily of local soils which six highly specialized craftsmen spent over a year building layer by layer.



Yamada's knowledge has grown over her career, but she remains curious, keen to explore her options, and willing to take risks. When asked what encouragement she would offer SoA students looking forward to architecture careers, she recounts a story from her last year at school. She had read architect Rem Koolhaas's "Delirious New York," and — with what she calls naivete — set her heart on working for his firm, OMA. While visiting Europe after graduation, she "just went to his office, knocked on the door, and asked to visit. I didn't want to work at a place I didn't like!" Koolhaas's staff was kind, if confused, and welcomed her in to look around. A year later, she was, in fact, hired to work for OMA. So, her encouragement to architecture students? She laughs ruefully: "Don't be afraid to try. Always aim high!"

Wang, a software engineer at Meta's Reality Labs Research in Pittsburgh, works at the intersection of the virtual and the material. In his work, he collaborates with researchers in machine learning, 3D reconstruction and other cutting-edge topics related to augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR). He's currently working on the [Codec Avatars](#) project to design a photorealistic human avatar to be used for telecommunication, telepresence and VR in the Metaverse. If that sentence sounds like the polar opposite of architecture, Wang invites you to broaden your thinking about the interplay between physical and virtual environments.

"The physical world can never lose its meaning."

George (Qiaozhi) Wang

After earning a bachelor's degree in architectural engineering, Wang chose the SoA for graduate school because it attracts a diversity of applicants — designers, coders, practitioners — and offers an environment perfectly tailored to exploring the intersections between computing and architectural design. He enjoyed working with an inspiring, diverse cohort in [CodeLab](#), the SoA's interdisciplinary research and learning laboratory focusing precisely on those intersections.

Wang is a vocal supporter of digital design but cautions that "the physical world can never lose its meaning." This dual reality underlies his advice to current architecture students, as he encourages them to prioritize creating a balance between work and their engagement with the physical world. Wang has found this balance despite the intensity and challenge of his work, and he continues to follow his passion for augmenting physical environments with virtual realities.

featuring the following:

Sydney Modern Project (exterior), Sydney, Australia
image courtesy of Rory Gardiner

cover photo from George Wang's MSCD thesis project, "Project HADEN: HAptic DEsign iNterface for Expressive Spatial Design in Virtual Reality"
image courtesy of George (Qiaozhi) Wang

Sydney Modern Project (interior), Sydney, Australia
image courtesy of Rory Gardiner

[◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

[Faculty & Staff Resources](#)

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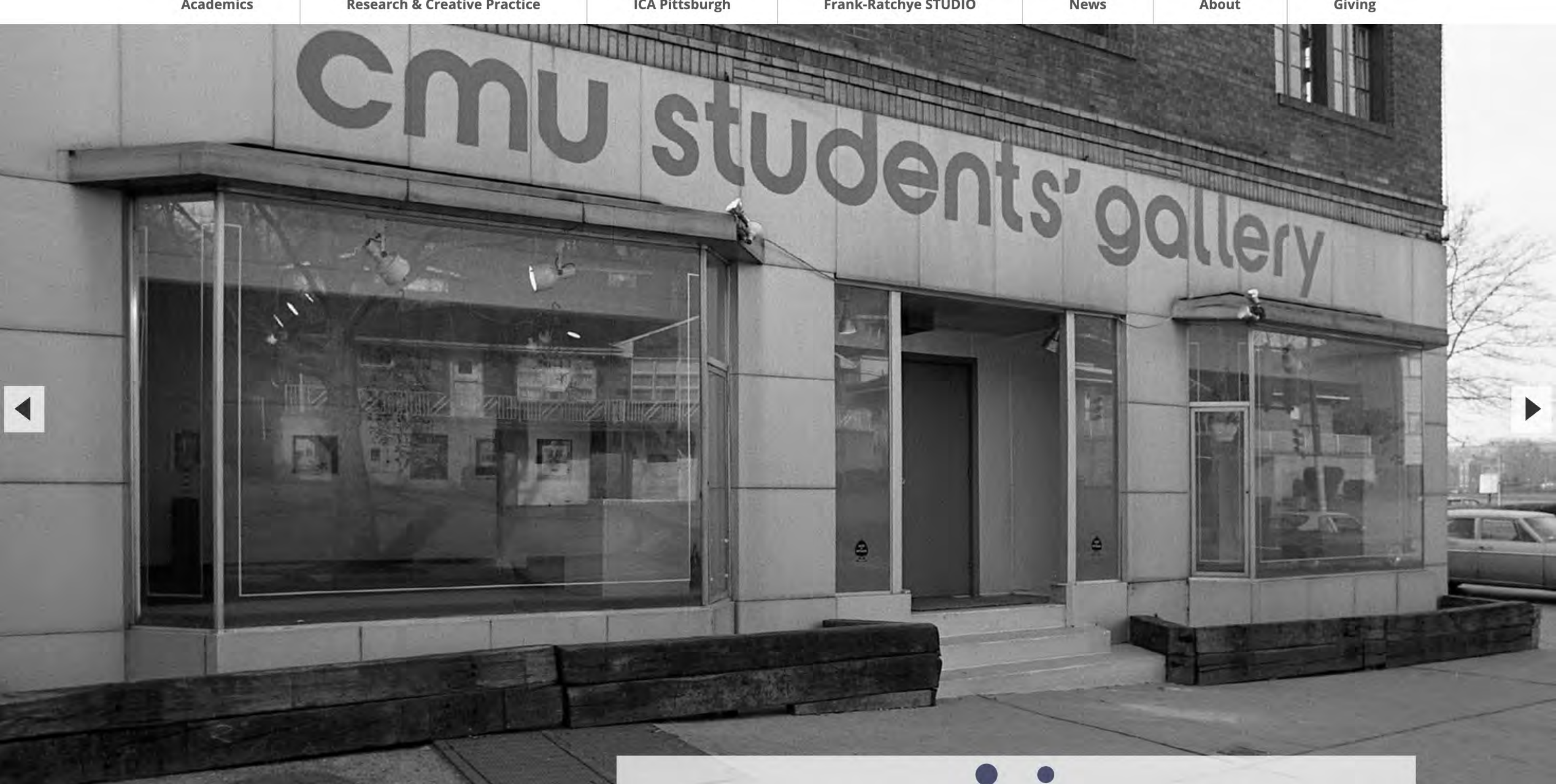
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Frank-Ratchye STUDIO

News

About

Giving



The Frame Gallery Enters New Era

Student-Run Art Gallery to Undergo Major Renovation

written by
Andy Ptaschinski

The Frame Gallery, Carnegie Mellon University's student-run art gallery, will undergo a major renovation this summer to make the venue accessible to all audiences and provide critical upgrades. Since its founding in 1969, The Frame has served as a crucial public-facing venue for free expression, diverse perspectives and inclusive community. This \$275,000 renovation ensures The Frame will continue to be an important locus of creative expression for CMU and the greater Pittsburgh community for generations to come.

In order to make the space ADA accessible, a new restroom will be constructed on the ground level, and the entrance will be modified to include a ramp. Further improvements will bring the space up to current gallery standards, ensuring that a wide variety of exhibitions and events can be held at The Frame. These improvements include: replacing the existing wallboard with double-layered plywood and a drywall finish so that art may be safely hung on the walls; replacing the lighting with easy-to-configure and energy-efficient LED fixtures; and general maintenance of the space such as floor refinishing, new paint and new baseboards. The renovation also includes a complete rehab of the façade and the installation of new signage.

The renovation of The Frame stems from the advocacy of student leaders and includes support from across the university. Funding is provided by the Provost's Office and Division of Student Affairs, CMU Housing Services, the CMU Universal Access Committee, Student Government, the College of Fine Arts and the [School of Art](#). The work is slated to begin in May and finish in time for the fall 2023 semester.

"Carnegie Mellon is thrilled to invest in the remarkable legacy and promising future of The Frame Gallery," said Provost James H. Garrett Jr. "For more than 50 years, The Frame has hosted hundreds of exhibitions, performances and events. Its scope reaches beyond the College of Fine Arts and presents opportunities for interdisciplinary collaborations across Carnegie Mellon and in our community. This renovation ensures the longevity of this important asset for our community."

The Storied History of The Frame

The effort to establish a student-run gallery on campus was led by A. Aladar Marberger, who would go on to be an influential gallerist and outspoken gay rights and AIDS activist. With the 1969 termination of the Woodlawn Pharmacy lease, located at the corner of Margaret Morrison and Forbes Avenue, Marberger, along with fellow CMU students Don Whipple and Stuart White, petitioned the university to support the establishment of a gallery.

According to an article in *The Pittsburgh Press* (October 30, 1969), Marberger led the effort to garner university support by "bothering the people in the office of the president until, impressed, they came up with an emergency budget to get the remodeling started." The *Carnegie Alumni News* (February 1972) noted that the university allocated \$10,000 to retrofit the space as a gallery. The university also had to obtain a commercial zoning variance "against neighborhood opposition that the gallery would become a 'hippie hangout.'" The *Pittsburgh Press* article notes that Dean of Student Affairs Earl Swank eased the fears of the opposition by assuring the community that "he would keep an eye on the operation from his apartment on the second floor of the building." The Carnegie-Mellon Student's Gallery, or Student Gallery as it was more frequently known, opened on October 28, 1969, with over 1,500 people in attendance.



The gallery became known as Forbes Street Gallery by 1974 and Forbes Gallery by 1982. During the 1996-1997 academic year, under the leadership of Karla Turcios (A '97) and Enrique Sacasa (A '97), the gallery's student committee began a campaign to renew the space. It included a new brand and a new name, The Frame Gallery. In addition to organizing exhibitions like *Sofrito!*, a Latino student artist group show, students also brought in important guest speakers, such as artist Amalia Mesa Bains. Students also began discussions on physical renovations, which resulted in repairs to the space's lighting.

"From its founding, The Frame has demonstrated that at Carnegie Mellon, students can accomplish the extraordinary," said Gina Casalegno, vice president for student affairs and dean of students. "The Frame is a unique showcase for our students' drive and passion as they uncover new forms of knowledge and expression through collaboration and creativity. The work of students to maintain this undergraduate-led space over generations is an impressive feat."

After he graduated from CMU, Aladar Marberger was encouraged to move to New York by Elaine de Kooning, who was a visiting professor at CMU from 1969-70. In the 1970s, he became the first director of Fischbach Gallery; under his direction, the gallery became a leader in presenting contemporary realism.

Marberger was the longtime partner of Robert Joffrey, the influential dancer, teacher, producer, choreographer and co-founder of the Joffrey Ballet. When Marberger was diagnosed with AIDS in 1985, he became outspoken about living with the disease and was the subject of numerous newspaper and magazine articles as well as a television documentary. He was also an early volunteer for experimental treatments. He died of AIDS-related complications in 1988, just eight months after Joffrey.

Ensuring the Legacy of The Frame for Future Generations

The effort to update The Frame began under Anne Crumley (CFA 2019), who served as the director of the space during the 2018-19 academic year. By that time, the gallery needed repairs: the wallboard had become damaged after years of use, the lighting was inadequate and the general conditions in the space had deteriorated. Crumley worked with the next cohort of leaders, Coco Allred (CFA 2020) and Zachary Rapaport (CFA 2020), to further advocate for updates to The Frame.



"Stopping by The Frame on Friday evening was a ritual to gather, discuss and celebrate the creative output of our arts community and share with the university at large."

Coco Allred (CFA 2020)

"Directing The Frame, I learned so much about what it takes to run a gallery, advocate for the arts and support artists." After graduation, Allred organized community art events and completed an ArtistYear, an AmeriCorp program that places teaching artists in schools. She's currently at an artist residency in Italy.

In 2020, a division of CMU's Student Affairs, SLICE (Student Leadership, Involvement, and Civic Engagement) worked with the Committee on Student Organizations to award The Frame a grant to update the space. Updates began under the next cohort of leaders, Iz Horgan (CFA 2021) and Moxie Duncan-Tessmer (CFA 2021), who, despite pandemic restrictions, began the process of renovating the gallery.

"I always loved that The Frame itself was a mystery to pedestrians," said Horgan. "The gallery disguises itself as a storefront, with large, display-like windows. One day if you walk past, it might be empty and the next day it might be completely transformed, almost overflowing with artwork. I am proud of the many hours of hard work and negotiation my team members, along with the cohort before us, dedicated to The Frame Gallery." Since graduating, Horgan continues to be a working artist.

Once renovations began, it quickly became apparent that The Frame needed more than cosmetic repairs in order to serve as a well-functioning space. With this understanding, the School of Art worked with student leaders to advocate for a full renovation of The Frame in order to restore its prominent role on campus.

Bridging the Past with the Future

The COVID-19 pandemic made ever more evident the necessity of an in-person gathering space for student creativity on the CMU campus. Not only does The Frame provide a space for the CMU and Pittsburgh communities to experience the creativity of students, but it also offers a welcoming and inclusive venue for the free exchange of ideas and learning, which is a core value of Carnegie Mellon University. Despite our new ways to connect online, nothing can replace the palpable and engaging experience of artistic experimentation in physical space.

"I am honored to play a small part in the impressive legacy of The Frame Gallery by supporting this essential renovation," said Charlie White, head of the School of Art.

"From the vision and tenacity of Aladar Marberger in carving out an entirely student-run campus space to the scores of student-artists who have exhibited in the space since its founding, The Frame has played a unique role in fostering generations of creative thinkers and cultural leaders at CMU."

Charlie White
Head, School of Art

As The Frame enters a new era, the original inspiration of Aladar Marberger and his classmates to establish a public-facing space dedicated to artistic exploration and creative expression remains as vital as ever.

featuring the following:

CMU Students' Gallery, 1974
image courtesy of Carnegie Mellon University Archives

Forbes Street Gallery, 1976
image courtesy of Carnegie Mellon University Archives

CMU Students' Gallery, 1972
image courtesy of Carnegie Mellon University Archives

◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07

College of Fine Arts

Academics

Research & Creative Practice

ICA Pittsburgh

Frank-Ratchye STUDIO

News

About

Giving



From Ashes to Activism

Professor Kristin Hughes Honored with Aggie Brose Award

written by
Elizabeth Sokolich

"It is not often that a building behind your home burns down, and you have the means to purchase the land. But that is what happened to me," said Kristin Hughes, Carnegie Mellon [School of Design](#) professor. So, from the rubble, Hughes began her work at Octopus Garden, a landmark in the Friendship neighborhood of Pittsburgh. Kristin Hughes is a 2022 honoree of the Aggie Brose Award for her excellence in community activism. The Aggie Awards celebrate local work that contributes to a "safe, educated and empowered community."

"A large apartment complex behind my house burned down one evening," Hughes recounted. "I happened to be standing on the sidewalk at 5:30 a.m. and asked the gentleman beside me, 'I wonder what they are going to do with this building?'" After discussing the building and the vacant lot next door with the owner, the seeds were planted for a space that encourages a positive atmosphere within Friendship.

"The Octopus Garden officially took root in 2009 and, over time, transformed from an impermeable vacant lot into raised garden beds and soft ground, supporting life in many and often unexpected ways."



Kristin Hughes
Professor, School of Design

Octopus Garden has lush raised beds for gardening, but invites anyone to interact with it whether or not they are growing vegetables. Through its art installations, communal seating and openness, it encourages visitors to exist in a space that cares about cultivating a communal and sustainable environment.

Octopus Garden has whimsical art that is full of character and provides a lively spot in the community. "Octavia the Octopus and Doris the Sea Monster are important art features in the garden," Hughes said. "Pittsburgh-based artist Laura Jean McLaughlin created both of these charming beauties with neighbors' help. Octavia, the Garden's namesake, holds court in the center of the Garden, visible to all who pass by." One of the features, Doris the Sea Monster, interacts with the local weather — when it rains, it sprays the rain water out onto flowers and other plants in the garden.

Hughes did not anticipate the garden's eventual presence in its local community. "For years it was not a desirable place," she said. "I think now most neighbors couldn't imagine Friendship without the garden." The garden welcomes hundreds of people each year and has been recognized in various ways, such as participating in the Pittsburgh Home and Garden Tour, Friendship House Tour and other events. It was also named one of Rick Seback's '25 Things That He Likes About Pittsburgh.' All events are free and maintained by the community, which is a testament to how much care Hughes' Octopus Garden has contributed to its neighborhood.

When asked about her commitment to working locally, Hughes mentioned a quote by Geoff Mulgan, a renowned social design innovator: "Some of the most important innovations evolve in a zig-zag line with their end uses are very different from those originally envisaged. Sometimes action precedes understanding. Sometimes doing things catalyzes the ideas. There are also feedback loops at every stage, making real innovations more like multiple spirals than straight lines." This has served as an inspiration to the way in which Hughes contributes to her community.

For over 20 years, the heart of Hughes' work has been dedicated to learning, social design and placemaking.

"Through the ongoing work and the people with whom I have had the privilege of working, I form these multiple spirals which continue to propel me to discover new areas of inquiry, seek partnerships outside of the discipline and build authentic relationships with communities, so engagement lasts over time."

Kristin Hughes

Hughes' commitment to building true relationships with communities she serves allows her work to have a meaningful impact within the locale. Her background in communication design and art gives her a strong toolkit that allows her to craft solutions at all stages of the design process. "All this exemplifies the slow but fruitful work of designing for social change."

◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07

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Forging New Theatrical Experiences

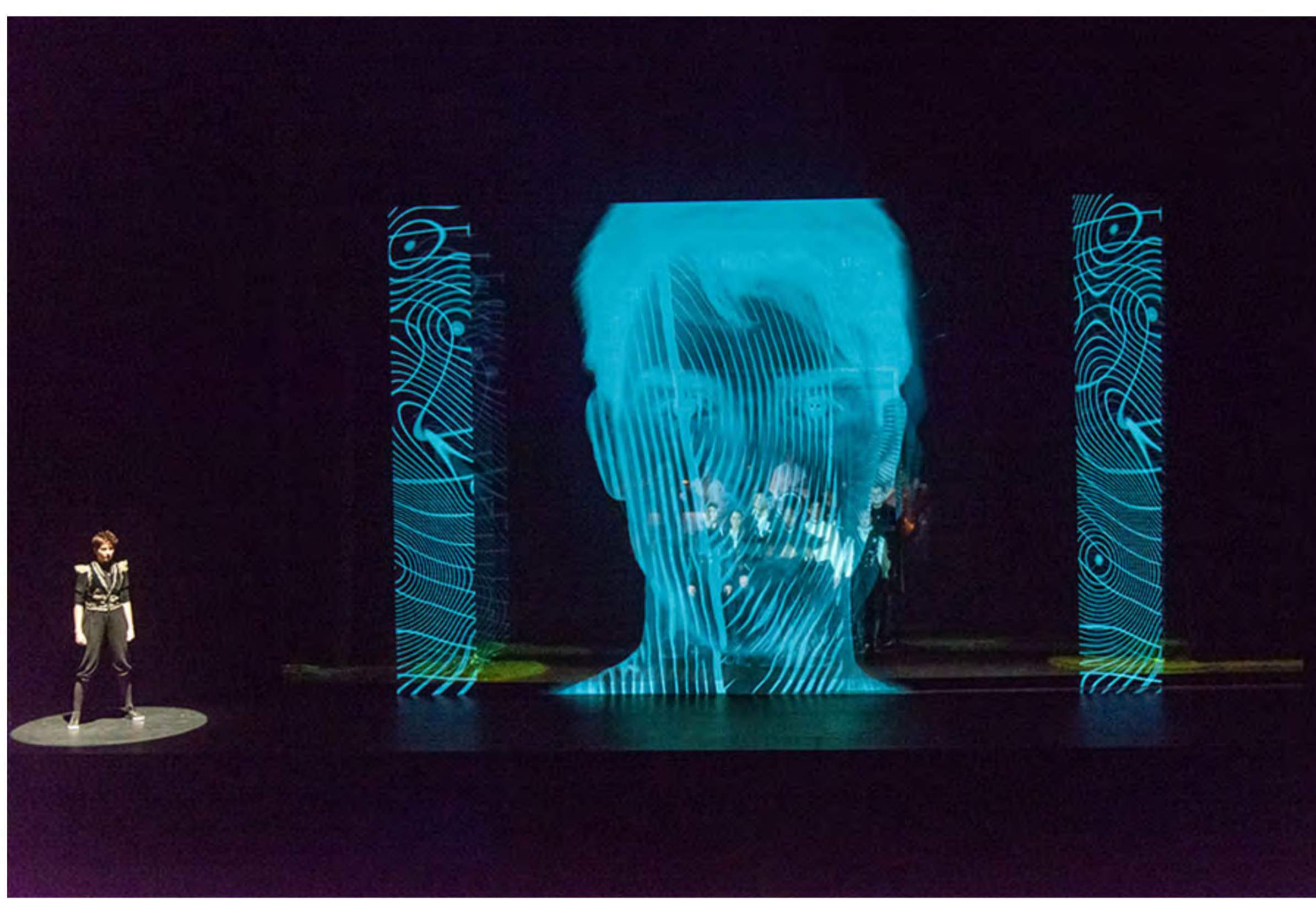
School of Drama's Video & Media Design Program

written by
Shannon Musgrave

In the [School of Drama's](#) fall production of "As You Like It," the world of the play was brought to life in part by media designer [Julian Kelley](#). Kelley, a third year MFA student in Drama's Video & Media Design (VMD) program, worked alongside the scenic designer and the lighting designer to create the visual landscape for the production. Relative to traditional theatrical design elements, media and projection is fairly new to the scene, but over the last decade or so, has become a vital component. Kelley is excited by the ways video, media and projection can enhance the storytelling of live theater by utilizing cinematic components, creating a more immersive experience for the audience.

"I use a lot of live camera work in my designs," he said. "Getting a close-up shot that's projected really big behind the actors on stage creates this double effect where you see the stage action, but you can also see the emotions much more clearly, as if it were a film."

He used this type of effect in "As You Like It" during a scene in which a stage fight was shot live and projected behind the actors, giving the audience the intimacy of watching a televised fight with the energy of something live in real time. This kind of simultaneity is a hallmark of how video and media can enhance live theatrical events.



Kelley created his designs for "As You Like It" with AI-generated imagery using Deform Stable Diffusion — an open-source machine-learning diffusion model. The use of AI art in theatrical design is a new frontier, and is proving a valuable tool for creators like Kelley. And he is quick with the distinction that it is just that — a tool. As AI art becomes increasingly popular, ethical issues around image iteration using artists' original creations are emerging as a result. However, Kelley says, as an individual artist it is a useful way to streamline the workflow process, and a great tool for inspiration. It has also made him consider his artistic work through another lens.

"It's really exciting to negotiate the very technical side of AI art — the coding side, and the parameters side — with a creative vision."

Julian Kelley

That technical/creative duality is built into the VMD program. Because the technologies and designs are so mutually dependent, students are taught system design and engineering at the same time that they are developing their creative design aesthetics; they are assigned both design and engineering roles for School of Drama productions throughout their time in the program. Kelley said that, although engineering is not necessarily a path he is interested in pursuing, his production assignments as an engineer have only given greater depth and specificity to his work as a designer.

With both BFA and MFA degrees, the VMD program's flexible curriculum allows for students to build a unique course of study within and outside the School of Drama, depending on their individual interests and goals. In fall 2023, the program will make use of a newly renovated facility featuring a fully outfitted soundstage, digital stage and two production studios. The building will be used as a collaborative space between VMD and the School of Art's Electronic & Time-Based Media (ETB) program.

VMD professor Lawrence Shea is developing new collaborative coursework with ETB professor Johannes DeYoung.

"We are really excited about this new facility. It's going to change the curriculum and really expand our collaborations with the School of Art."

Lawrence Shea
Video & Media Design Professor, School of Drama

Nica Ross, VMD professor and director of [The Frank-Ratchye STUDIO for Creative Inquiry](#), agrees. "It's going to allow us to segment up the work with studios that can be doing multiple things at multiple times, which is something we haven't had the affordance to do in the past."

◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07

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Transformational Change

Sarah Ceurvorst Connects Students with Communities to Create Positive Change

written by
Heidi Opdyke & Cally Jamis Vennare

Sarah Ceurvorst has always believed in the powerful combination of the arts, humanities and social sciences to create transformational change.

A 2013 Carnegie Mellon alumna possessing a bachelor's degree of humanities and arts with concentrations in psychology and art, Ceurvorst is a practicing artist and art teacher at The Ellis School. She traveled to Thailand as a Fulbright scholar after graduation before returning to Pittsburgh where she has worked with community partners to create youth programming.

When the opportunity arose to serve as inaugural director of [LEAP](#) (which stands for Leadership, Excellence, Access and Persistence), she quite literally leapt at the chance to direct a program that was "tailored to experiences that I loved at CMU" by empowering under-resourced high school students to become agents of social change.

"It does feel like this incredibly fortuitous opportunity," said Ceurvorst with a smile. "When I think back on my time at CMU studying humanities at Dietrich College, I learned about human behavior, human thoughts, how our brains work and how we act and are motivated. In the College of Fine Arts, I learned how to express all of that. Ultimately, the [BXA Intercollege Degree Programs](#) at CMU allowed me to think divergently and form connections where there weren't any beforehand. It really taught me how to be a brave thinker and a brave maker ... and how to forge my own path. And that is really what LEAP is all about."

Piloted in the fall of 2021, LEAP is an educational partnership between Carnegie Mellon's Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences, its College of Fine Arts and City Charter High School that provides a supportive, non-hierarchical learning environment for high school students to creatively engage with issues of equity and justice in their lives and communities.

In past LEAP workshops, Jane McCafferty, a professor of English and director of CMU's Creative Writing Program, had students working on poetry; while Kody Manke, an assistant professor of psychology, and Kevin Jarbo, an assistant professor in social and decision sciences, helped students understand how psychology can play a role in community work, change and social justice.



These and other LEAP workshops have "opened doors and horizons" for City Charter students, as faculty, alumni and community members openly share their approaches to art and activism.

"I learned how building networks and having a community in art is very important," said City Charter graduate and LEAP alumna Rai Venturino. "They showed me how it is possible to have a successful career in art, history and the humanities."

"The most amazing thing about LEAP is it helps you see what you might be missing right before your eyes," said City Charter graduate and LEAP alumna, Jahzia Ely. Getting to meet Art Professor Jon Rubin and learn about Conflict Kitchen, a culinary art project that served food from countries that the U.S. is in conflict with, "was a creative way to help people come together in one community to learn from each other."

Tapping the existing wealth of community knowledge and resources inside, and outside, the walls of CMU is yet another valuable LEAP deliverable. "It's exciting because our LEAP students are bringing so much to the table. Yes, there is a wealth of knowledge within the CMU community, but there is also great knowledge that is not housed within the walls of this campus," Ceurvorst emphasized.

"We are not just sharing what CMU has, but are acknowledging all the assets, the resources and the knowledge that these kids possess before they step on our campus. It is a really wonderful experience of learning alongside the students. So, my CMU education gets to continue ... but instead of being from my professors, it's from my students."

Sarah Ceurvorst

Listening and asking questions. Striving for something new. Daring to think of the world in a different way. Fostering lasting friendships and collaborations within the CMU community. "All of this has made my life richer," shared Ceurvorst. "And that's what CMU professors, alumni and students are doing all the time. It's so exciting, because I get to learn so much more than I knew was out there in the world ... and share that knowledge with others."

[◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

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A New Space and Future for the Miller ICA

Elizabeth Chodos Reveals What is to Come

written by
Margaret Cox

On September 28, 2022, Carnegie Mellon announced [A New Era for CMU's Institute for Contemporary Art](#) (ICA), marking a major evolution for the ICA and contemporary art at CMU. The \$15 million commitment from the [Juliet Lea Hillman Simonds Foundation](#) and the [Henry L. Hillman Foundation](#), will transform the ICA into a major civic resource for the city of Pittsburgh in a prominent location across from the Carnegie Museum of Art. The expansion into a 25,000 square foot facility expands the ICA's ability to produce high caliber exhibitions, reach broader audiences and connect the public to transformational experiences with the art of our time. The new ICA will be a civic and cultural element to the new Richard King Mellon Hall of Sciences project, a 315,000-square-foot collaborative, multidisciplinary building for education and research that is expected to begin construction next year. This unique environment for collaboration across multiple disciplines will be the largest building project at CMU to date.

In a recent discussion with Elizabeth Chodos, director, Miller Institute for Contemporary Art; CMU public art curator; assistant professor of Curatorial Practice, she reveals more about what this gift and expansion mean for the future of the ICA.

MC: How does a new space create opportunities for artists and the ICA's mission?

EC: This space helps us fulfill our mission of being open to the public. Our current facility can be hard to find and we don't have dedicated parking, which can make it challenging for us to connect with people outside of the CMU community. Instead of facing into campus, the new facility will face out to the city, and that means the work of the artists we exhibit will reach more people. The facility will also have a dramatically increased gallery space and we will be able to program more exhibitions throughout the year, amplifying the perspectives of more artists than we can currently.



MC: Can you tell us any details you're excited about in the features of the new space?

EC: In addition to the 25,000-square-foot expansion into a highly visible and accessible location, I am very excited about the potential of a shared feature of the entire building project. The three colleges: MCS, SCS and CFA have all allocated some of our square footage to create a flexible event space of approximately 2,500 square feet that can host artist lectures, performances, screenings in addition to hack-a-thons, science conferences, receptions and social gatherings. This dynamic space will provide a shared ground for all members of the CMU community to connect across disciplines. This state-of-the-art auditorium will be home to conversations and new ways to interact with artists and ideas that are critical to growing an engaged community of thinkers.



MC: Talk to us about how the location will open up new collaborations for CMU and Pittsburgh.

EC: This new chapter arrives at a rapidly changing time in our world. More than ever, it's important for arts organizations to grow and respond to important issues. The expansion positions the ICA at a vital intersection making way for new connections with CMU sciences, the Carnegie Museums and the larger Pittsburgh cultural community. This alignment nourishes, catalyzes and provokes new opportunities for partnership, growth and engagement in arts and culture within and beyond Pittsburgh. This move gives us an opportunity to reimagine the role cultural institutions play in advancing culture and building a better world.

[◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

College of Fine Arts

Academics

Research & Creative Practice

ICA Pittsburgh

Frank-Ratchye STUDIO

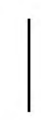
News

About

Giving



JADED

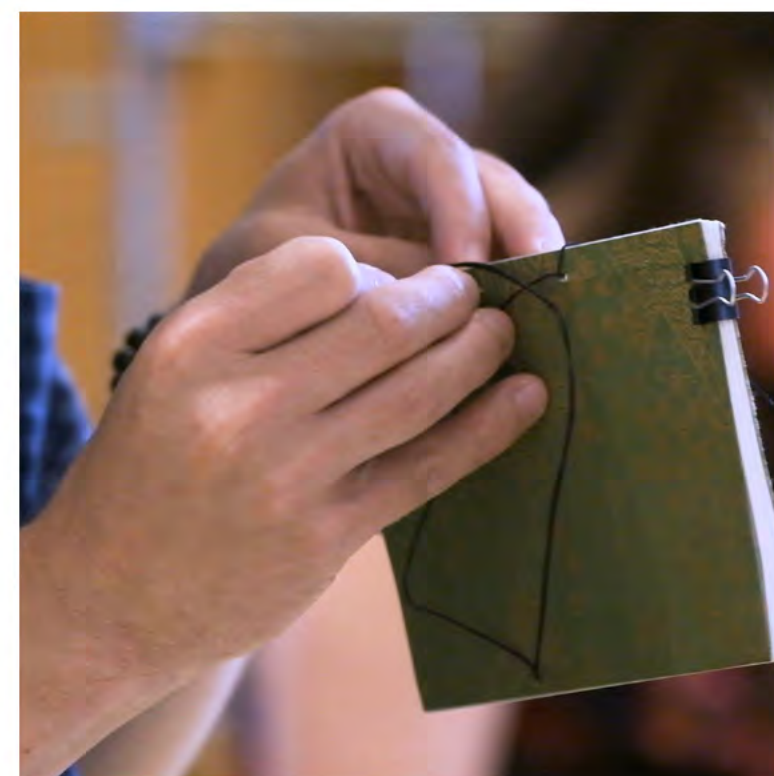


Celebrating AAPI Heritage

written by
Harrison Apple

Co-organized by CMU staff and students (including Anny Chen, Lena Chen and Caroline Yoo), JADED is a public programming series celebrating the art and culture of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. Organized by a collective of AAPI artists and organizers, the programming series builds interethnic coalitions to create safer spaces of kinship and address racial trauma while celebrating cultural heritage.

With support from the [Frank-Ratchye STUDIO for Creative Inquiry's](#) Director's Fund, JADED programming and intimate events reanimated local histories, preserved cherished family recipes and practices and nurtured intergenerational dialogue.



Over the course of four months and seven events, JADED covered workshops (book binding, onigiri picnic and kimjang making), walking tours (Pittsburgh's historic Chinatown, Chinese cemetery and Squirrel Hill) and live performance event with Jason Chu, Alan Z and MC Tingbudong.

This immense undertaking was made possible by the desire of its organizers and willingness of its participants to push the boundaries of Pittsburgh's arts, culture and history profile, while collaborating with one another to celebrate AAPI presence in the city. Their impact is still being felt across the region and was recognized by the Pittsburgh City Paper, which in December named them People of the Year in Visual Arts for 2022.

◀ [Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

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Stepping Up

CMU Alumnus Manages Largest African American Arts Organization in Washington, D.C., on the Heels of its 30th Anniversary Season

written by
Tina Tuminella

Carnegie Mellon University alumnus [Lamar Lovelace](#) has seemingly found the perfect job that blends his creativity, thoughtfulness, passion and relationship management talents. Last year, he rose to executive director of the famed arts organization [Step Afrika!](#) after serving as its deputy executive director since 2017.

"It's an exciting time. We're taking the tradition of stepping and its core principles of teamwork, discipline and commitment to new and exciting places across the globe," says Lovelace, a 2004 graduate, who holds a [Master of Arts Management \(MAM\)](#) degree, a joint program between the College of Fine Arts and Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy.

"Stepping is culturally rich connective tissue that binds African American history, dance and storytelling. It's very accessible. As an organization, we've always been very proud that everyone — of any age and from any place in the world — can enjoy and appreciate (what we do)."



Inside Step Afrika!

C. Brian Williams founded Step Afrika! in 1994 after a trip to South Africa. It began as an exchange program with Soweto Dance Theatre of Johannesburg and evolved into the first professional dance company focused on the performance and preservation of stepping.

Decades before the nonprofit organization's founding, the art form of stepping was cultivated in the United States at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCU) by members of African American fraternities and sororities. These teams brought stepping — which uses the human body as an instrument, producing sound in addition to movement — to center stage.

Step Afrika!'s troupe of 16 full-time dancers keeps the tradition of stepping alive and well by educating crowds on the history and impact of stepping through major theatrical productions. The dancers maintain an active touring calendar, visiting 40 to 50 cities domestically plus a handful of international destinations each year.

"Step Afrika! takes a tradition rooted on college campuses to the world's most-celebrated theaters," Lovelace says. "There is no other thing like it. The vocabulary is unique, the meaning behind the movement is unique. It's specific. It's singular."

As a U.S. cultural ambassador, Step Afrika! expands diplomatic relations all across the world through performances, workshops and camps. Lovelace thinks of Step Afrika! as a global brand ambassador for stepping as a cultural export.

The company's signature arts education program, Summer Steps with Step Afrika!, welcomes 200 children for a five-day camp each year. The camp culminates in a performance at one of Washington, D.C.'s, most venerable arts venues, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

"The transformation is truly incredible," Lovelace said. "In less than a week, the same shy kid who walked in with his heads down, struts out of the Kennedy Center with a beautiful sense of pride and swagger."



The Path of an Executive Director

While Lovelace once studied ballet and jazz himself, he eventually figured out he was better suited for behind-the-scenes work. At Step Afrika! and under Lovelace's leadership, corporate engagement has skyrocketed 400%, and he attributes much of his success to CMU and the MAM program.

"The end goal at Carnegie Mellon is to take your world-class education and matriculate that into a position of leadership," he said. "You start off specific, you gain experience, you grow, you lead and get to a space where you can manage an entire operation. You fully understand goals, how to track them, measure them and how to move from A to Z."

From real-world experiences, he learned how to be strategic and manage relationships, but by being in the classroom, he learned how to look at data, interpret it and apply it.

"I can now see the excellence of the MAM program and the benefits of a data-driven approach and the value of learning a variety of analytical tools, which was such an important part of my training," Lovelace said. "What sticks with me is the quantitative emphasis and asking the question, 'How do you let the data drive the narrative?'"

"For me, being an executive director feels like I've reached one of the key benchmarks of success, if you will, for what you aspire to be with an arts management degree."

He is consistently motivated by what he calls "the vibrancy of cause." Working closely with Step Afrika!'s board of directors, Lovelace spearheads fundraising, marketing, operations and long-range planning for the organization.

"There is such meaty work to be done," he said. "This is a job where you get to use your full self. In my role, I get to be a marketing director, a communications director and a finance director."

One of his favorite parts of the job is to watch board members' responses to the shows on tour.

"They get to be part of the standing ovation and cheers from the audience. They watch kids clamor to get photos of the dancers in the lobby and witness firsthand the grace and kindness of our performers. They witness the universal joy that Step Afrika! shares all over the world."

Looking toward the future, Step Afrika! has hired 2020 alumna Margo Cunningham, who also holds a MAM degree and serves as the organization's marketing manager.

"I'm getting to this intergenerational moment where I am essentially a grandfather," Lovelace joked. "I am impressed by the next generation of arts administrators — they bring a new technological skill set. I'm thrilled to see their leadership skills grow and expand."

featuring the following:

trailer for Step Afrika!'s new work, "No Justice, No Peace"

◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07

College of Fine Arts

[Academics](#)

[Research & Creative Practice](#)

[ICA Pittsburgh](#)

[Frank-Ratchye STUDIO](#)

[News](#)

[About](#)

[Giving](#)



Getting Baked in the Kitchen with Nicole DiMascio



Dope Kitchen Creator Shares Her Secret Ingredient to Success

written by
Cally Jamis Vennare

Nicole DiMascio (MEIM 2015) is the epitome of a savvy social media entrepreneur — one who is willing to take risks, who remains true to her vision and who isn't afraid to share her personal journey with an audience of almost 1 million TikTok followers.

She's also a cannabis user who, since launching **Dope Kitchen** in April 2020, has strategically grown her TikTok followers and garnered more than 20 million likes on the social media platform for being "unapologetically baked" while cooking in the kitchen.

What's her secret ingredient to success?

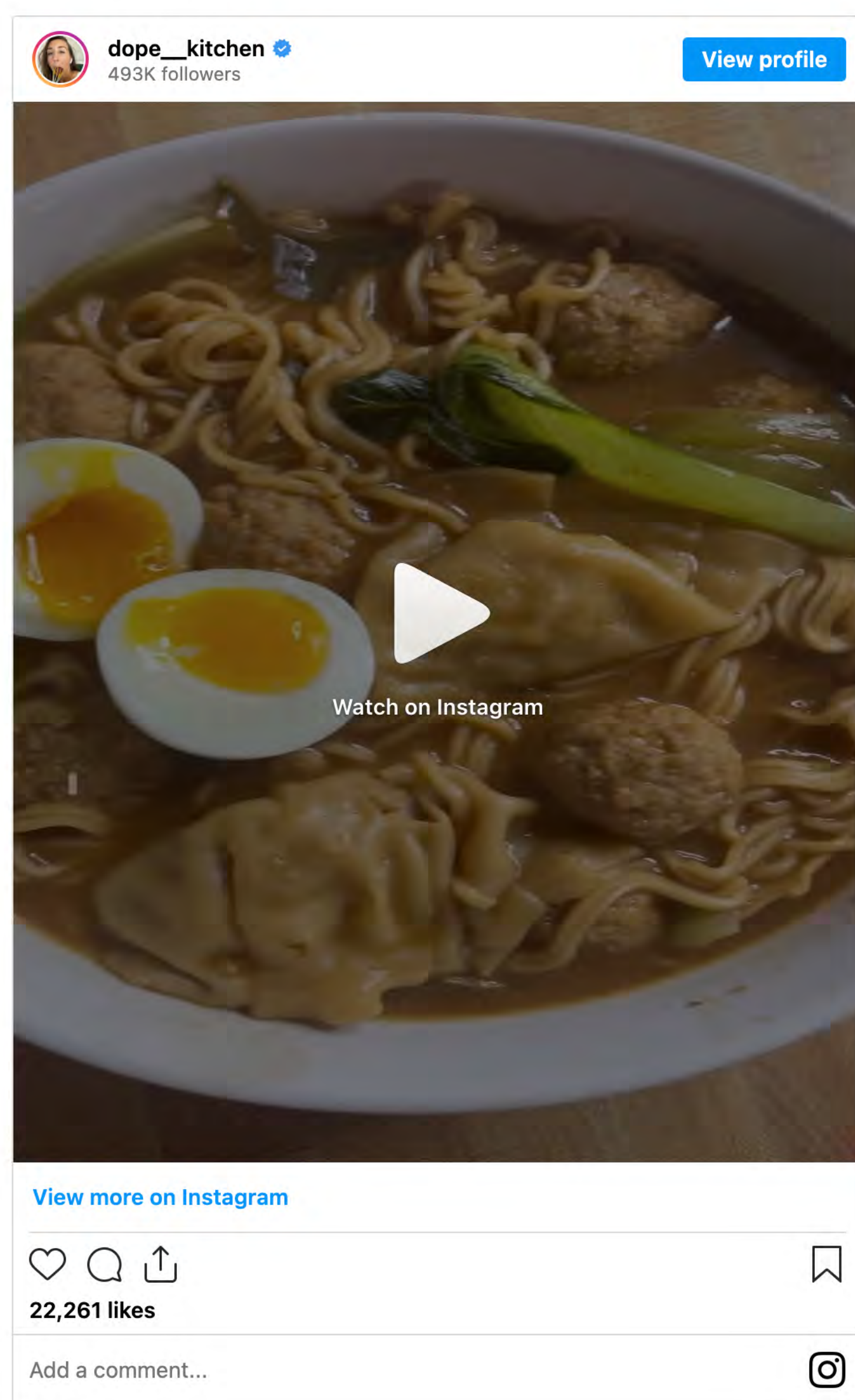
"People really like my content because it's very imperfect. Initially, I went through a phase where I felt that I needed to be like other food content creators, presenting beautiful plates of food that were perfectly styled," DiMascio said. "But then I realized what people like about my content is that it's very approachable. It's genuine and authentic. It's real and chaotic. It's all those adjectives that makes them come back and watch. And it's nice to hear that feedback because it reminds me that I don't have to try and be someone that I'm not. I can continue to be myself ... and be a little messy in my content ... and people love it."

DiMascio has not only shared recipes, but also much about her life in Dope Kitchen. By doing so, she has motivated many of her followers, especially women. "I've revealed a lot about my mental health struggles and my fitness journey (as a former competitive power lifter)," she explained.

"Some of the most touching comments have come from women who watch me cook, have fun and finish a plate of delicious, healthy food ... and are then inspired to rethink their relationship with food and exercise and to work on improving both."

Nicole DiMascio

As she builds her Dope Kitchen brand to include a website, food blog, more social presence and perhaps even a cookbook, DiMascio reflects on her graduate work at Carnegie Mellon and the important entrepreneurial lessons learned. "Through the MEIM program, I was exposed to so many angles of entertainment: how to build a brand, creative production and its costs, and how to tell a story and monetize content. The confidence that CMU gave me to try something and see if it sticks — and figure it out as I go — really helped me build the Dope Kitchen brand. I'm thankful for this happy accident and excited for journey ahead."



[◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

[Faculty & Staff Resources](#)

[Contact](#)



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[Academics](#)[Research & Creative Practice](#)[ICA Pittsburgh](#)[Frank-Ratchye STUDIO](#)[News](#)[About](#)[Giving](#)

A Titan of Contemporary Art

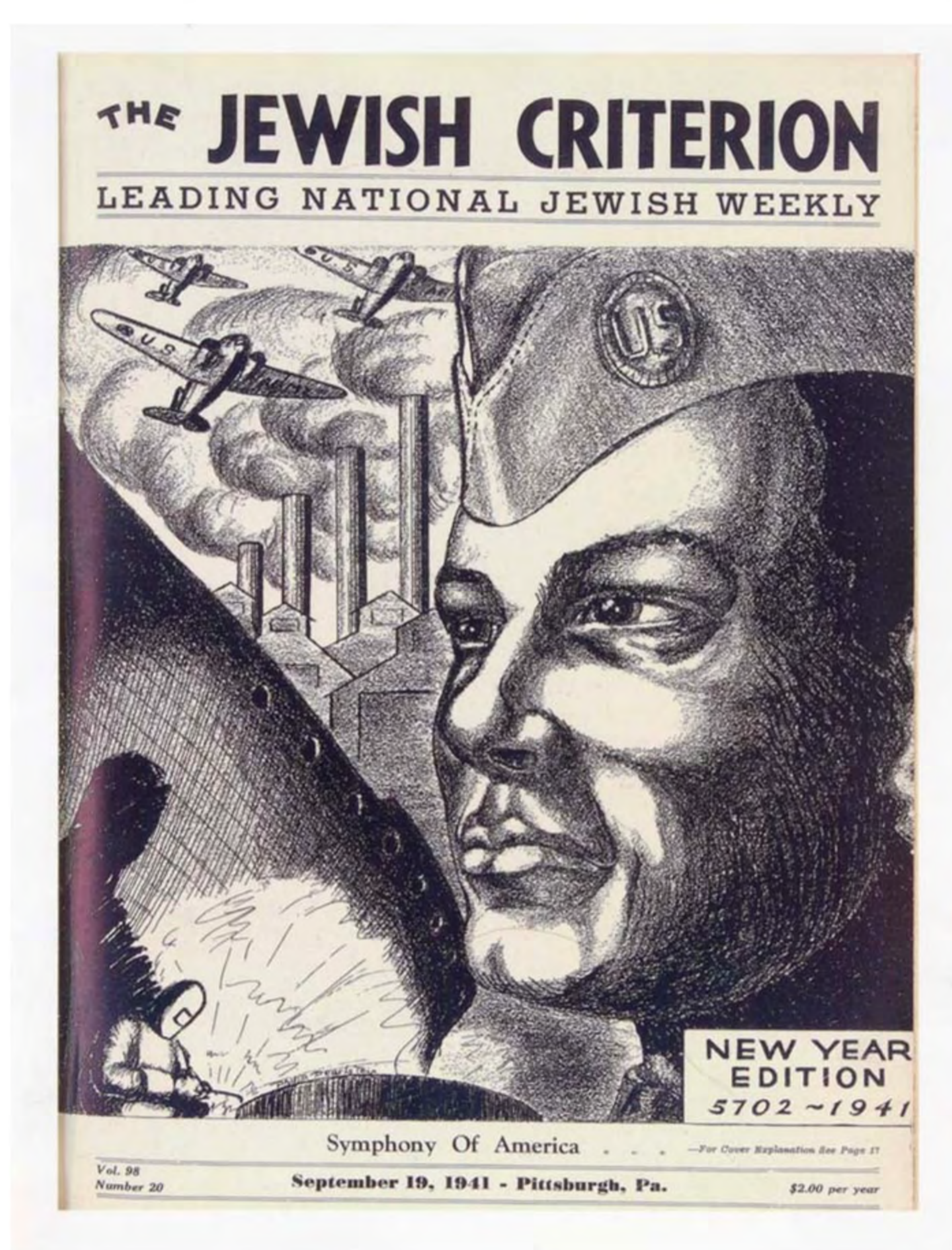
Carnegie Mellon University Mourns the Passing of Alumnus Philip Pearlstein

Written by
Andy Ptaschinski

When Philip Pearlstein began painting nude models in the early 1960s, most influential critics and art theorists thought figurative painting was exhausted, that the genre was nostalgic and counter-contemporary. Pearlstein's exacting depictions of the naked body — splayed out naturally in his studio with fatigued expressions, slouched postures, harsh lighting and odd cropping along the edges of the canvas — ushered in new possibilities for depicting the human form and influenced generations of future artists. Philip Pearlstein died on December 17, 2022 in New York City at the age of 98.

Pearlstein began painting in his signature style at a time when most artists were embracing the romanticism of Abstract Expressionism. His models offered contemporary art a completely revolutionary and modern notion of the human form. Unlike historical depictions of nude models — which partook in a narrative, functioned symbolically or invited erotic interest (or, frequently a combination of all three) — his models are free to exist as a factual recording of his studio.

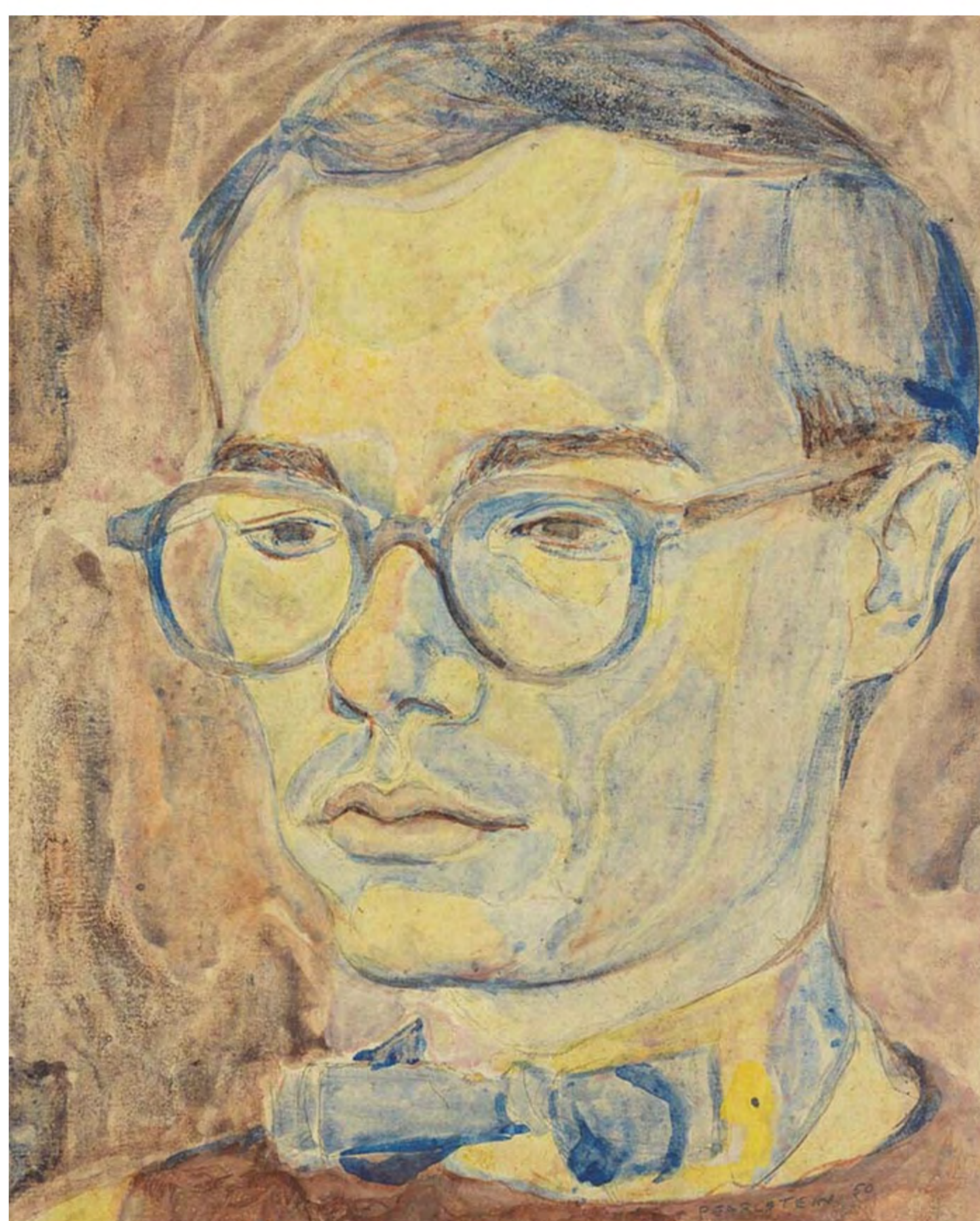
Pearlstein was born in Pittsburgh in 1924 and first began to hone his artistic skills at the Saturday morning art classes offered by the Carnegie Museum of Art. As a student at Allderdice High School in Squirrel Hill, he won Scholastic Art Prizes twice and his winning paintings were published in Life Magazine.



He began at Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University) in 1942, but his studies were quickly interrupted when he was drafted in 1943 into the war effort in Italy. Due to his art skills, he was assigned to a unit that made road signs and illustrations for training materials. In his free time, he made drawings to send home to his family, more than 100 in total, and saw the many of the rich Renaissance art treasures in Florence.

Back at Carnegie Tech in 1946, Pearlstein studied under Robert Lepper, one of the most influential art educators of the time. Lepper established the country's first industrial design degree program, and after Pearlstein showed him some of the work he had done during the war, Lepper hired him to help with a freelance project designing pamphlets for Alcoa architectural projects.

During this time, Pearlstein met Andy Warhol and Dorothy Cantor, the former of whom became a close friend and the latter of whom he married in 1950. Upon graduation, he moved to New York with Andy Warhol and the two shared an apartment for several months. In fact, Warhol's brothers only allowed him to move to New York if Pearlstein would keep watch of him.



Early in New York, Pearlstein supported himself as a graphic designer and exhibited with the scrappy but influential artist-run Tanager Gallery on the Lower East Side. In 1955, he earned a master's degree from the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University, where he wrote his thesis on Francis Picabia and Marcel Duchamp.

During this period, Pearlstein largely focused on abstract images of landscapes, but he became increasingly interested in realistic artwork due to the basic exercises he assigned his students while teaching at Pratt Institute of Brooklyn from 1959 to 1963. Pearlstein then went on to teach at Brooklyn College from 1963 to 1988.



Once he discovered the richness of figurative painting, he continued to refine and adapt these images for the rest of his life. Pearlstein held his last solo exhibition in 2022 at Betty Cunningham Gallery in New York City, which focused on still-life — watercolors of his collection of art, antiques, Americana, souvenirs and toys.

featuring the following:

Philip Pearlstein, right, in front of the College of Fine Arts in 1948 with Dorothy Cantor and Andy Warhol
photograph by Leonard Kessler

Philip Pearlstein, Female Model on Adirondacks Rocker, Male Model on Floor, 1980

Philip Pearlstein's artwork for the Jewish Criterion when he was a student at Allderdice High School in Pittsburgh c.1941

Philip Pearlstein, Portrait of Andy Warhol, c. 1948

Philip Pearlstein, Standing Male, Sitting Female Nude, 1969

[◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

College of Fine Arts

[Academics](#)[Research & Creative Practice](#)[ICA Pittsburgh](#)[Frank-Ratchye STUDIO](#)[News](#)[About](#)[Giving](#)

Lullaby Project

Bonding Parents and Babies through Music

written by
Pam Wigley

Crooning lullabies to babies has been part of the child-rearing process almost since time began. When parents create a personal tribute to their newborns, especially amid difficult birthing circumstances, the results are a magical part of their child's life journey.

Allegheny Health Network (AHN) and Carnegie Mellon University's (CMU) School of Music in the College of Fine Arts (CFA) came together recently to help new parents and children begin that journey. AHN and CMU brought the internationally renowned "Lullaby Project," a program of New York's Carnegie Hall, to Pittsburgh. The project, part of a CFA pilot course, paired student musicians with pregnant AHN patients to write and compose personalized lullabies for their babies. The goals: enhance maternal health, aid childhood development and strengthen the bond between parent and child.

This is the first partnership in the country between a health system and an academic university to launch the Lullaby Project, and it's the second only Lullaby Project in Pennsylvania. CFA added a special component to the program, incorporating sensitivity and trauma-informed training into the syllabus. To that end, College of Fine Arts Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Valeria J. Martinez worked with students and parents throughout the project. The Pittsburgh Lullaby Project's celebratory concert took place at Nov. 20, 2022.

CMU collaborated with Tracey Vogel, M.D., anesthesiologist and director of the Perinatal Trauma-informed Care (TIC) clinic at AHN's West Penn Hospital to select patients for the project, as well as educate enrolled CMU students on this highly specialized and innovative approach.

"Since its inception, the Lullaby Project has worked with new parents in challenging circumstances to foster an increased maternal bond. Trauma affects health over a lifetime, and we felt that collaborating with AHN could have a meaningful impact on parents and babies with traumatic birth stories,"

Monique Mead
Associate Teaching Professor, School of Music

"My hope this semester was to guide our teaching artists to support these new or expecting parents in expressing their love, hope and blessings for their children in an original, personalized way."

The AHN Perinatal TIC is one of the country's first such programs geared specifically toward obstetric patients. Dr. Vogel works closely with these patients to develop optimal birthing plans that address and help prevent postpartum psychological and/or physical complications.

"The AHN trauma-informed care clinic serves patients who have diverse experiences with trauma, from pre-existing events like domestic violence or sexual abuse to post-birth trauma, emergency cesarean delivery or major loss of blood with a previous delivery," Dr. Vogel said. "As these women prepare for another birth, it's critical that their traumatic history is considered."

According to research commissioned by the Lullaby Project, early results of the program demonstrate that creating and singing lullabies is mutually beneficial for parents and their children. By taking part in workshops, parents reported feeling a sense of improved well-being and heightened creativity, as well as a restored positive outlook for the entire family. From a clinical perspective, introduction to music early and often has shown to positively impact infant brain and social development.

The CMU/AHN collaboration officially kicked off in early October with the first half of the semester dedicated to learning about trauma-informed care, the history of lullabies, their application across the globe and the process of prompting and later writing a personalized lullaby. The second half focused on songwriting and recording sessions, all of which took place at the Awareness & Wellness Center (AWC) in Shadyside, Pa., a space also dedicated to healing from trauma.



"In their first session, participants worked with project musicians to compose an original lullaby for their children," Mead explained. "In a second session, parents worked with performers, composers and arrangers to refine and record their lullaby, and the entire program came together in a celebration of the compositions. The sessions were deeply intimate, and we hope that we can make these moms and dads proud with how we set the stage to help them convey their feelings through music."

Martinez, who co-taught the course with Mead, said the combination of sensitivity training and creative expression helped parents use music as a conduit to healing.

"We were able to supplement what the original Lullaby Project required with training, teaching and facilitation on culturally responsive pedagogy, cultural competencies, critical race theory and thinking and understanding forms of oppression," Martinez said.

"This course proves that incorporating those subjects into a curriculum can foster a better human experience and interaction. Our class helps people be better people, and this project is exceptional because it does that for people around the world."

Valeria J. Martinez
Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

In New York City, the Lullaby Project reaches mothers in hospitals, homeless shelters, foster care centers, schools and correctional facilities. The first Lullaby Project took place at Jacobi Medical Center in Bronx, N.Y., in December 2011. Since then, more than 2,500 families have written original songs for their children, many of which are available for listening and sharing at carnegiehall.org/lullabies or at lullabygh.com.

[◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07](#)

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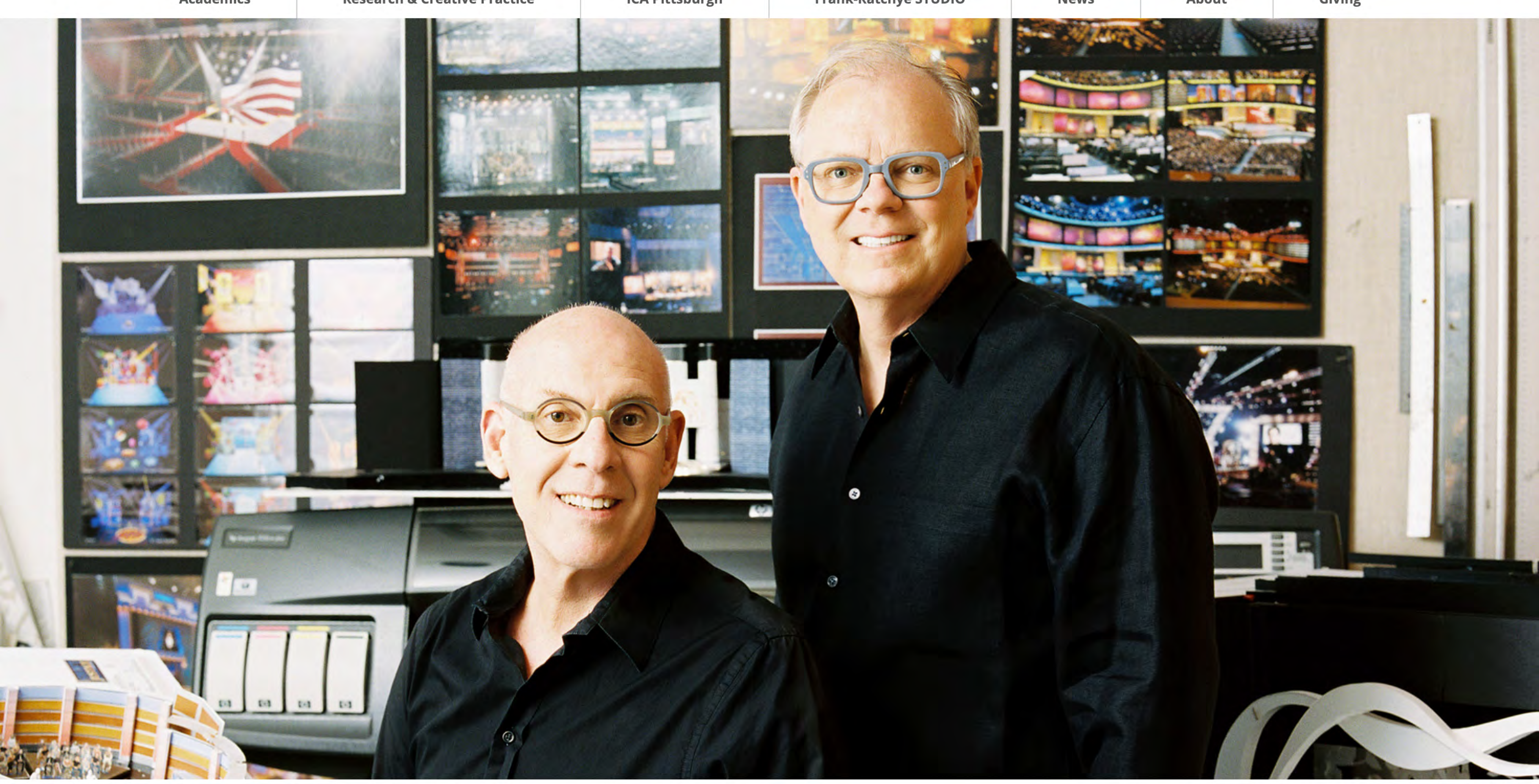
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Designing a Legacy

Alumni Couple John Shaffner and Joe Stewart's Philanthropy Will Support College of Fine Arts Students for Generations to Come

Written by
Amanda S.F. Hartle

If you've watched television in the past four decades, chances are you've seen — and loved — sets dreamed up by Carnegie Mellon University alumni couple John Shaffner and Joe Stewart.

From insisting creators include a hallway between apartments on "Friends" and selecting the infamous rattan and floral couch on "The Golden Girls" to making David Copperfield's magic specials must-watch TV and securing Taylor Swift an ottoman for her very first performance on the American Music Awards — the six-time Emmy Award-winning production designers have done it all.



But none of it would've been possible without a chance meeting in the College of Fine Arts in the 1970s.

In a scene design class, their professor William Mathews asked if anyone had worked on computers. John and Joe were the only two people to raise their hands. Together, they started working on the computer-aided entertainment design project — a technology that didn't take hold in their industry until decades later.

"We sat in a small, dark room for many nights typing long, complicated code to draw four rectangles," Stewart said. "One thing led to another, and we became friends."

Gradually, their friendship grew into a half-century love story as personal and professional partners.

Now, they're showing their love of Carnegie Mellon and for future generations of Tartans with a planned estate gift through their will that will support myriad personal and educational needs of School of Drama students, in addition to their previous gift of the Shaffner Stewart Graduate Design Studio in the College of Fine Arts and the initiation of The Anderson Fund in honor of Cletus and Barbara Anderson.

"All the things we learned, all the people we met, all the professors we had — CMU was indispensable in developing our careers and our success. We knew we had to give back."

John Shaffner

Stewart graduated in 1976 with a master's degree in scenery and costume design, and Shaffner followed in 1977 with a bachelor's degree in drama, scenery and costume design. Both were named honorary degree recipients by the university in 2019.

After graduation, they took their skills to New York City for a few years, working in theater production and television before making a cross-country drive in a 1965 Ford Thunderbird convertible. They journeyed to see what opportunities Los Angeles had to offer with College of Fine Arts Class of 1976 alumnus, future roommate and noted costume designer Daniel Orlandi along for the ride.

They secured an apartment in Beverly Hills for \$450 a month and began knocking on doors.

Stewart soon became an assistant art director on "Days of Our Lives" and game shows.

Early on, Shaffner took a job art-directing a Perry Como Christmas special in Colonial Williamsburg, Va., where he met Bob Banner, who was expanding into creating original content for syndication, a growing new branch of television entertainment. They were developing a new show, "Star Search." Shaffner designed, named and conceptualized the scoring on the long-running hit.

This meeting led to multiple music shows and specials and, eventually, to the couple's big break — David Copperfield.

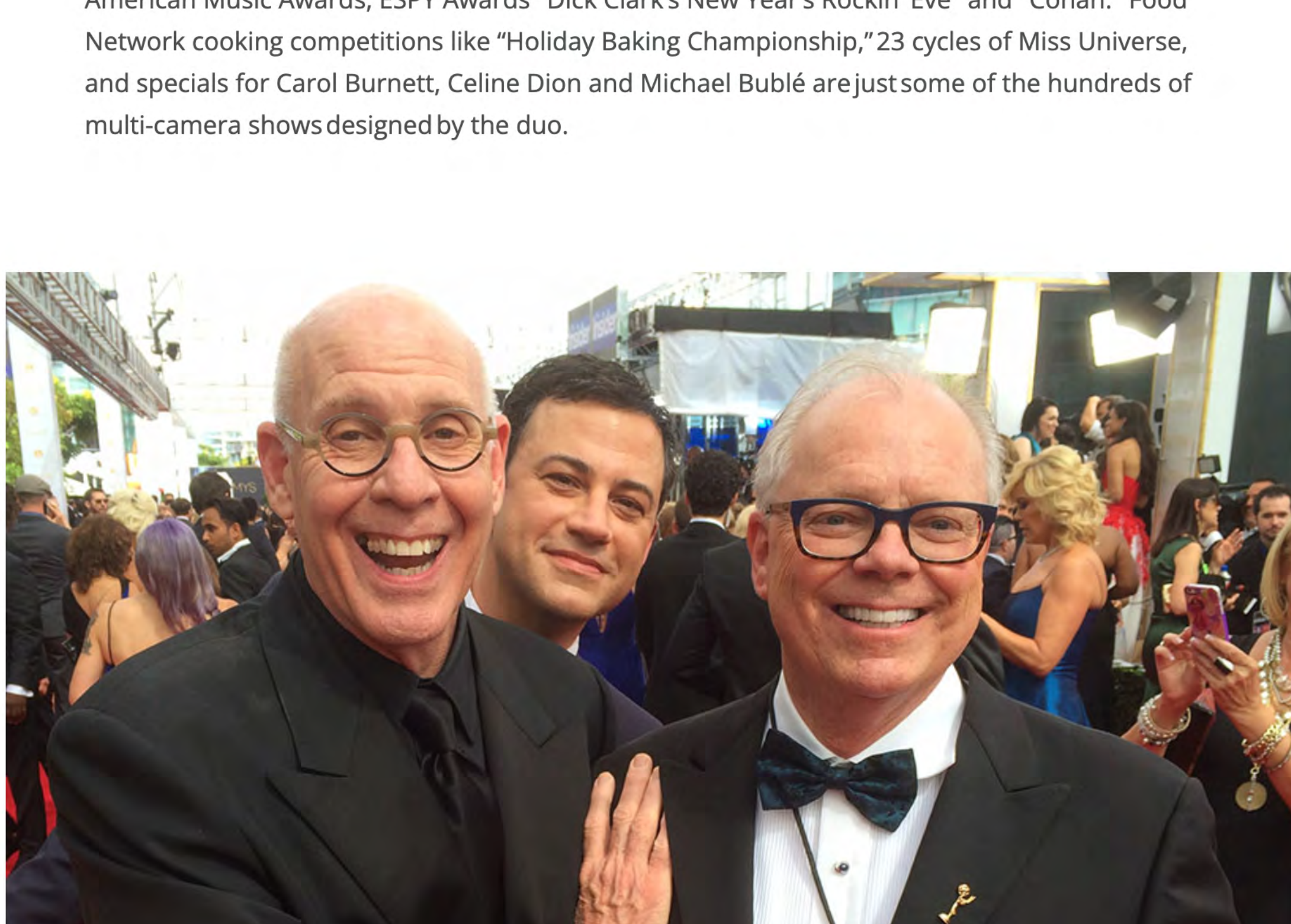
"Since I was tied up with finishing 'Star Search,' I told David there was one stipulation, my partner Joe Stewart would be co-designing this with me," Shaffner said. "Very quickly, David fell in love with Joe. We ended up designing 10 television specials for David, and that really put us on the map as production designers."

And the rest was history.

"All of a sudden, we took off. We were going in so many directions with more musical variety shows, events, award shows, and then, with 'Friends,' to sitcoms."

Joe Stewart

Television hits like "Dharma & Greg," "The Drew Carey Show," "Two and a Half Men," "The Big Bang Theory," "Mike and Molly," "Mom" and "The Connors" fill their resume alongside the American Music Awards, ESPY Awards "Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve" and "Conan." Food Network cooking competitions like "Holiday Baking Championship," 23 cycles of Miss Universe, and specials for Carol Burnett, Celine Dion and Michael Bublé are just some of the hundreds of multi-camera shows designed by the duo.



In total, they've earned 43 Primetime and Daytime Emmy nominations and won six Emmys, including a three-year run for Music Variety Design. They've designed more than 156 TV show pilots — 62 that went to series — for a total of more than 3,010 episodes.

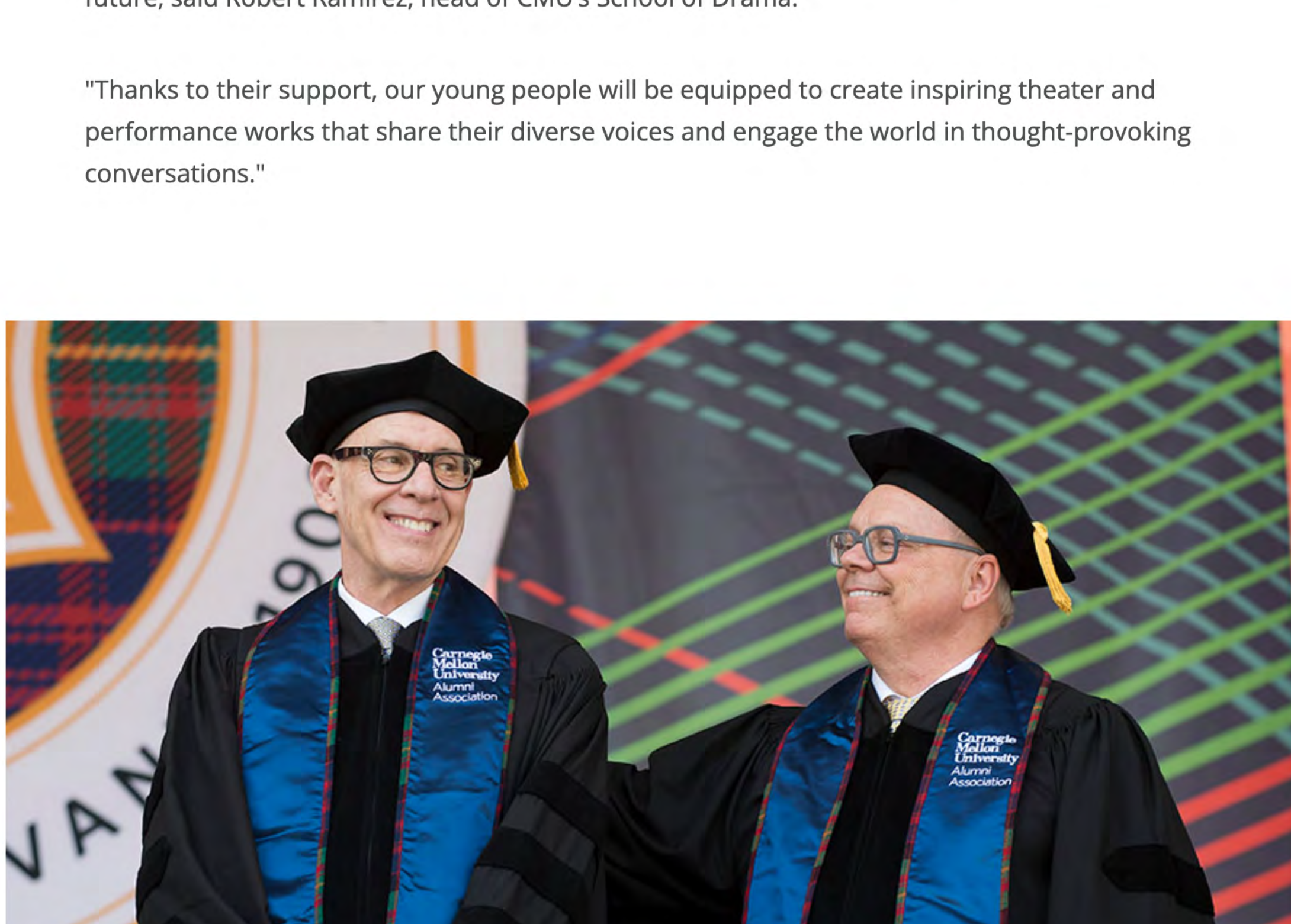
Both thank CMU for all they've been able to accomplish — and they want to ensure others can achieve the same heights of success, too.

"Our time on campus really became the beginnings of something that I don't think either of us ever imagined," Shaffner said. "Carnegie Mellon is like Hogwarts that way. It is a place of magical thinking."

"We had the greatest faculty that made us feel that anything was possible. Of course, we were critiqued. Of course, things didn't always work out right. But for whatever reason, at CMU, you always knew you'd pick yourself up and do it again. And that mindset has served us very well."

The duo's generosity helps to ensure students will benefit from the same lessons far into the future, said Robert Ramirez, head of CMU's School of Drama.

"Thanks to their support, our young people will be equipped to create inspiring theater and performance works that share their diverse voices and engage the world in thought-provoking conversations."



The couple also encourages fellow Tartans to not wait to give back.

"It's never too soon," Stewart said. "When we supported the studio space, we spaced it out over an installment plan. It made us feel so good. We knew it was the right thing to do because without Carnegie Mellon, our career and our life together wouldn't have happened."

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Building Equity

Paul and Ria Jacob's support constructs 'scaffolding' that equips School of Architecture students for success.

written by
Lauren Sisco

Nearly 50 years after finishing their degrees, Paul and Ria Jacob still talk about their university experiences fondly — Ria at the Maryland Institute College of Art and Paul at Carnegie Mellon University's College of Fine Arts.

"I was one of those crazy kids who knew I wanted to be an architect in third grade," said Jacob, who graduated in 1972 with a bachelor's degree in architecture.

His time at CMU set him on a path to a successful career in architecture. Shortly after his retirement from RTKL Associates in Baltimore, Maryland, he joined the board of directors for the Baltimore Design School, which was founded as a "transformation school" for the city's public school district in 2010.

"It is similar to a charter school but a bit more aligned with the city, and it focuses on helping students in underserved communities to prepare for careers in graphic design, fashion design and architecture," Jacob said.

The school provides the support, programming and training that Jacob and his peers benefited from in the past, but — as he quickly found out — were harder to come by for many Baltimore students.

"Over the first few years, I naively thought that their experience would be exactly like mine," he said. "I had all the support systems needed to really skyrocket into a career in architecture. When I realized that many of these kids needed things I took for granted, like a winter coat or lacked support at home, I knew we needed to look at approaching the students differently and more holistically."



In 2020, the Jacobs met Omar Khan, who had been newly appointed as head of the School of Architecture at Carnegie Mellon.

The couple knew they wanted to continue and deepen their connection to Paul's alma mater and the timing of that introduction could not have been more ideal.

At CMU, Khan saw the need for what he calls "scaffolding" to help attract, encourage and engage historically underrepresented students.

"Scaffolding" refers to curriculum supports that address issues of equity," Khan said. "People are not equally prepared for the same curriculum, so sometimes a scaffold is a laptop, sometimes it's an additional instructor or sometimes it's a mentor who helps a student realize that they belong here."

The Jacobs and Khan worked together to translate what had been created in Baltimore at the middle and high school-levels and apply it to Khan's vision for a more diverse and holistic architecture department at CMU. From that collaboration, the Jacob Family Endowed Fund for Diversity in Architecture was born and will serve as the foundation for critical scaffolding to be built.

The fund provides support that the School of Architecture can use now to jump start this effort with current students, and during the next few years, the couple will permanently endow the fund. With this two-pronged philanthropic strategy, opportunities for students will be supported in perpetuity.

For Ria, a major need at many universities is for the connections that students develop organically to grow into supportive programming that students can utilize for years to come.

"At lot of kids come to college and don't see people like them or don't have a big support system, so they don't feel comfortable," Ria said.

"In many cases, students form groups of their own to talk about their experiences. But at some point, those students will move on, so you have to have a plan in place to maintain that level of support, so students feel confident — academically and personally — to stay in the program."

Ria Jacob

Khan agreed with the need for support beyond the syllabus.

"These students are like family, and we need to do everything we can to make this work for each and every person," Khan said. "We want all of our students to graduate from this program because we know they're going to make a huge difference in this profession."

To evaluate the success of the fund, the measurements are simple: Are students staying, and are they thriving?

To Khan, the fund is already making an impact by providing hope and promise within the School of Architecture for a richer and more robust student experience.

"I couldn't be happier about this partnership. It gives us all a tremendous amount of confidence as we look to the future."

featuring the following:

image of Paul Jacob with Omar Khan, Professor and Head, School of Architecture

image of Paul and Ria Jacob with Lydia Randall (CFA 2023)

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◀ Back to CFA Magazine 07

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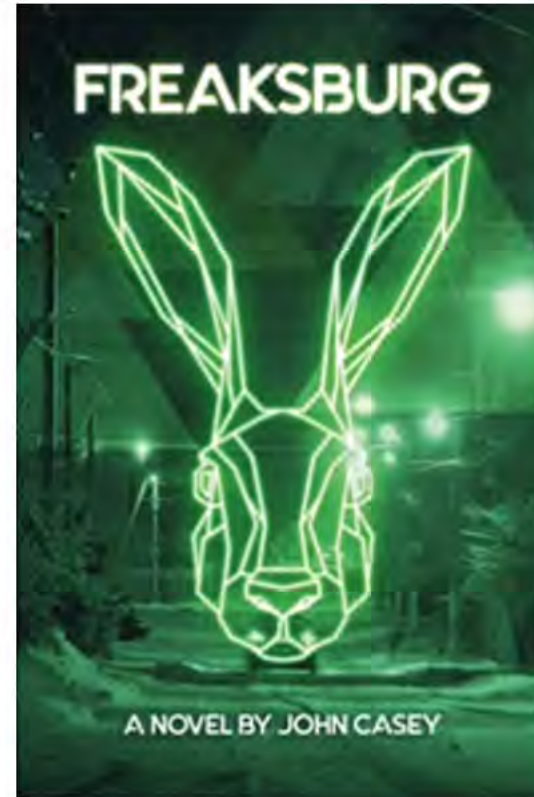
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ALUMNI NEWS

Share Your Stories

Thanks to those of you who sent an alumni news update to us after seeing the new digital CFA Magazine. Although we know that many of you send your news directly to the academic program from which you graduated, we would love for you to [fill out our alumni contact form](#) so we can help to let your classmates know what you've been doing.

Here are a couple that came through last time!



John Casey (BFA, Design/Journalism '85), published a new novel titled, "[Freaksburg](#)." Much of it is set in Pittsburgh, he said.



Sankalp Bhatnagar (BSA, Mathematical Sciences/Design '13; MA, Design '15) has focused his career on studying how designers operate in different contexts. His work has involved working across disciplinary boundaries, including at a design research laboratory, an R&D unit at a humanitarian organization, and an AI think tank across multiple academic institutions.

Bhatnagar joined the Harvard Library Innovation Lab as a research fellow during the past academic year to carry out a new and collaborative project in partnership with NuLawLab, where he is a senior researcher and, previously, a research resident. The partnership supporting his research is the first of its kind between the two law school innovation labs. "I saw a common task between the work I proposed to do and its alignment with the expertise of each lab," he said, "preserving legal knowledge and advancing legal design."

Sankalp gained his first exposure to the practice of legal design in a seminar on law, justice, and design at Harvard Law School, after which he taught and led efforts to advance the field and its directions at Northeastern University School of Law. He is now designing a workbook of exercises for law students tasked with crafting and choosing between legal alternatives that he calls a casebook for legal imagination.

"I aim to build an example of a new kind of teaching method, with the hope that it will be directly useful throughout the world of legal education," he said, "as well as more generally useful for thinking about law as its own form of design, so that we look around and see lawyers and judges designing our lives by making arguments, not apps, crafting scenarios, not services, and justifying decisions, not products."

Find out what alumni are doing across the [School of Architecture](#), [School of Art](#), [School of Design](#), [School of Drama](#), [School of Music](#) and [BXA Intercollege Degree Programs](#).

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