

# ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

**February 2017**

Dear School of the Arts Alumni,

Happy Valentines Day!

Congratulations to the School of the Arts newest alumni, who graduated last Wednesday, February 8! Each one of you worked very hard for your MFA or MA degree. We celebrate your achievement and look forward to staying in touch. You now join the very special and extraordinarily talented community of School of the Arts alumni around the world.

In the spirit of the holiday, this month's newsletter features Visual Arts alumna **Ramona Bronkar Bannayan** '86, who met her husband John, a student at Columbia's School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS) when she was a Visual Arts student at the School of the Arts. Ramona is the Senior Deputy Director of Exhibitions and Collections at The Museum of Modern Art. Ramona also volunteers her time to both the School of the Arts and Columbia University through her service as the School of the Arts representative on the Columbia Alumni Trustee Nominating Committee and as a member of the School of the Arts Dean's Council. [Read more about Ramona below.](#)

In film news, [Anatomy of a Male Ballet Dancer](#), directed and produced by film alumni **David Barba** '05 and **James Pellerito** '05 had it's world premiere at the *Dance on Camera Festival*. David Barba also serves as the Film Program's Director of Industry Outreach and the Columbia University Film Festival. **Kahane Cooperman** '91 directed and produced *Joe's Violin*, which has been Oscar nominated for Best Documentary (short subject). And *Moonlight*, co-produced by film alumna **Veronica Nickel** '10 won the Golden Globe for Best Drama Motion Picture, as well as a number of other awards.

Congratulations to theatre playwriting alumna **Paola Lázaro** '13 on her new play [Tell Hector / Miss Him](#), which opened last month at the Atlantic Theater Company. Theatre directing alumnus **Michel Hausmann**'s '14 new company Miami New Drama launched its inaugural 2017 season with *Terror*, directed by faculty member **Gregory Mosher**. You can also catch acting alumna **Jocelyn Bioh** '08 in Signature Theatre's production [Everybody](#), running through March 12.

Writing alumna **Kassi Underwood**'s '13 new book *May Cause Love: An Unexpected Journey of Enlightenment After Abortion* will be published by HarperOne today. **James Brasfield** '79 also had a collection of poems [Infinite Altars](#) published by LSU Press. And **Alexis Bony**, Writing '11, has returned to Columbia to take the position of Editor-in-Chief of [Columbia College Today](#). Alexis replaces **Alex Sachare** CC '71, who has been CCT's Editor-in-Chief since 1998. We wish Alexis the best and look forward to having her with us on campus.

At The Museum of The City of New York, you can see photography by Visual Arts alumnus **Joseph Michael Lopez** '11 for the ongoing exhibit, [New York at Its Core: Future City Lab](#). And if you're in Boston or are planning a trip there soon, check out [DRAW/BOSTON](#) through March 4 at the Sandra and David Bakalar Gallery at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design (MASSART). DRAW/BOSTON was curated by Visual Arts faculty member **Tomas Vu**, and features a number of Visual Arts faculty, students and alumni, including:

Sanford Biggers (Faculty)	Hedya Klein '03	Xu Wang '13
Nicola Lopez (Faculty)	Beau Willimon CC'99 SO	Bruno Pogacnik '14
Sarah Sze (Faculty)	'03	Tuguldur Yondonjamts '14
Rirkrit Tiravanija (Faculty)	Eric Ramos Guerrero '09	Yujin Lee '15
Valerie Hammond (Adjunct Faculty)	Chris Jehly '11	Cary Hulbert '16
Kiki Smith (Adjunct Faculty)	Nathan Catlin '12	Duy Hoang (Student)
Mark Dion (Mentor)	Corey Riddell '12	Cy Morgan (Student)
David Altmejd '01	Aurélien Couput '13	Bryan McGovern Wilson
Ernesto Caivano '01	Riaki Enyama '13	
Megan Foster '02	Kambui Olujimi '13	

To keep receiving news and updates from the School of the Arts, please [update your contact information](#). If you know a fellow alum who is not receiving emails from us but would like to, please have them email us at [artsalum@columbia.edu](mailto:artsalum@columbia.edu).

As always, please continue sharing your news and achievements with us via [artsalum@columbia.edu](mailto:artsalum@columbia.edu) and be sure to like and follow our [Facebook](#) page.

Best,  
Laila Maher  
Associate Dean, Student and Alumni Affairs

Will you have a film at the **Tribeca Film Festival** or **SXSW** this year? Please let us know by emailing the Office of Alumni Affairs at [artsalum@columbia.edu](mailto:artsalum@columbia.edu) with your name, graduation year, the name of the film, and your role.

**SAVE THE DATE, MARCH 29:** CAA Arts Access / School of the Arts Alumni Event, *Sweat* on Broadway, written by Theatre faculty member **Lynn Nottage**.

Our next CAA Arts Access event will be *Sweat* on Broadway on March 29. After the show, you'll be invited to join Professor Lynn Nottage and Theatre Program Chair **Christian Parker** '98 for a post show talk. School of the Arts Alumni will receive an early ticket offer before tickets go on sale to the Columbia alumni community on March 2. Look out for our announcement later this month!

**Later this Spring...Celebrate the Opening of the Lenfest Center for the Arts**

The Lenfest Center for the Arts is opening this Spring and you're invited! We will be having a special School of the Arts alumni celebration in April. Stay tuned for our official Save the Date email and Invitation. Questions? Interested in volunteering? Email us at [artsalum@columbia.edu](mailto:artsalum@columbia.edu).

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

This edition of the Alumni Spotlight features Visual Arts alumna **Ramona Bronkar Bannayan '86**. If you would like to submit your own stories to be included on our [website](#), you can do so at this [link](#).



**Ramona Bronkar Bannayan** has been with The Museum of Modern Art since 1990, and was named Senior Deputy Director of Exhibitions and Collections in 2011. She oversees the administration of the entire roster of temporary exhibitions, gallery rotations, performance, film, and collection shows, supervising an annual program of approximately 50 on-site presentations. In addition, she oversees the Museum's outgoing loan program and touring exhibition program, developing collaborations with other museums on jointly organized exhibitions at venues worldwide.

From 2005 to 2008, Ms. Bannayan served as a Project Leader with Matters in Media Art, a collaborative project intended to develop and publish guidelines for the care of time-based media artworks (e.g., video, film, audio, and software-based installations).

Ms. Bannayan has a BFA (1983) from Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, and an MFA (1986) in Visual Arts from Columbia University, where she graduated with honors. Since graduation, Ms. Bannayan has maintained her studio practice. Ramona works with a variety of materials including pastels, conte, watercolor, gesso and charcoal to create small square format landscapes. Her work has been included in exhibitions with Wolf Kahn, Lois Dodd, Emily Nelligan and Eric Aho among others. One of her images was even selected for interpretation by poet Mark Doty.

Ms. Bannayan has been a member of ArtTable and the American Alliance of Museums, and currently serves as a member of the Dean's Council, School of the Arts as well as on the Columbia University Alumni Trustee Nominating Committee representing the School of the Arts. [ramonabannayan.com](http://ramonabannayan.com)

### **Was there a specific faculty member or peer who especially inspired you while at the School of the Arts? If so, who and how?**

Jane Wilson was my first year adviser and I was very inspired by her approach. She was a fellow mid-westerner who had an intense respect and awareness of the physicality of nature. Without compromise, while working in an urban setting she managed to maintain that elemental grounding in her practice and thus expanded my own sense of the experiential.

### **What advice would you give to recent graduates?**

To remain open to change and see possibilities in a variety of experiences, even if they do not appear directly analogous to your masterplan.

### **How did you meet your significant other?**

Since this is Valentine's Day....

I was very fortunate when I was a student in the School of the Arts to meet my husband, John. He was a student in the School of Engineering, but we lived in the same graduate dorm, Johnson Hall. Mutual friends thought we would be a perfect couple and set up a double date. The rest is history as they say.

## **NEWS**

### **Film**

*Joe's Violin*, directed and produced by **Kahane Cooperman** '91, was nominated for the Oscar Award for Best Documentary (Short Subject). [More.](#)

Directed by **Francisca Alegria** '16 and produced by **Birgit Gernboeck** '16, *And the Whole Sky Fit In the Dead Cow's Eye* won the International Jury Prize for Best Short at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival. [More.](#)

### **Theatre**

Under the leadership of Co-Founder and Artistic Director **Michel Hausmann** '13, Miami New Drama (MIND) was awarded a matching grant of \$150,000 from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation for an ongoing project, *American Clásico: Envisioning the theatrical canon through a multicultural lens* at the Colony Theatre. [More.](#)

Playwriting alumna **Paola Lázaro** '13 debuted her new play *Tell Hector I Miss Him* at the Atlantic Theater Company in January. [More.](#)

### **Visual Arts**

The Lewis Center for the Arts at Princeton University has announced the selection of five Mary MacKall Gwinn Hodder Fellows for the 2017-2018 academic year. Among them are Columbia University Alumna, **Chitra Genesh** '02 and adjunct faculty member, **Marc Andre Robinson**. [More.](#)

In Practice: Material Deviance, featuring Visual Arts alumna **Ilana Yacine Harris-Babou** '16, at SculptureCenter until March 27. [More.](#)

### **Writing**

Alumnus **James Rahn** '88 published *Rittenhouse Writers: Reflection on a Fiction Workshop*. [More.](#)

**Emma Cline's '13 *The Girls*** named top 2016 book by numerous publications. [More.](#)

## **ALUMNI BENEFITS**

- + [Artists' Resource Center \(ARC\)](#)
- + [Update Your Information](#)
- + [Email Forwarding & CU Address](#)
- + [Online Alumni Community](#)
- + [CAA Arts Access](#)
- + [Complete List of Benefits](#)

Columbia University School of the Arts  
[artsalum@columbia.edu](mailto:artsalum@columbia.edu)

