
School of the Arts Alumni Newsletter | May 2023

1 message

Columbia University School of the Arts <artsalum@columbia.edu>
To: artsalum@columbia.edu

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May 2023

GREETINGS FROM YOUR ALUMNI AFFAIRS TEAM

Dear School of the Arts Alumni:

As the 2022-23 academic year draws to a close, we are proud to reflect on the incredible accomplishments of our amazing alumni. To help us do so, we've launched the [2022-23 Class Notes page](#), featuring alumni news we gathered over the past year. Each academic year our Class Notes page will celebrate alumni accomplishments. If you have an update to share, [let us know](#).

Because this will be our last newsletter for the academic year, we want to let you know about the exciting alumni events coming up this summer!

We just wrapped the [Columbia University Film Festival \(CUFF\)](#) in New York this month, with a lineup of incredible films made by SOA students and alumni (watch the [trailer](#)). If you are in the Los Angeles area, please save June 26-30 for CUFF LA. Keep your eyes on your inbox for more programming information when it becomes available.

We are celebrating alumni films at Tribeca Film Festival with screenings, receptions, and a talk with [Ellie Foubi '17](#), winner of the 2022 Tribeca Festival Audience Award and this month's alumni spotlight (below).

As a reminder, you can connect with School of the Arts alumni through [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#), where you can also share updates about your work, upcoming events, and be inspired by what your fellow alums have been up to. The [Artists' Resource Center's LinkedIn page](#) is a great place to find grant, fellowship, and residency opportunities (seriously—we're posting opportunities there everyday!).

We'd also love to have your feedback on this [very brief one question survey](#) regarding what kind of alumni events you'd like to see.

We hope you will enjoy this month's news from your peers.

With warm regards,

Laila Maher
Dean of Student and Alumni Affairs

Jessica Pierson
Associate Director of the Artists' Resource Center and Alumni Affairs

ALUMNI EVENT



Dramaturgy alumni from multiple decades gathered in NYC on May 1st to celebrate the retirement of Professor Linda Winer.

SOA Alumni Support the WGA Strike



An amazing group of SOA alumni joined the picket line in support of the WGA strike.

Included in the image are: Brian Birch '14; Nicole DeMasi '13; Morgan Faust '11; Bill Gerrard '12; Grainne Godfree '10; Rory Haines '11; Jon Haller '09; Gerry Kim '11; Kurt Lustgarten '13; Anya

Meksin '11; Zack Morrison '18; Olivia Newman '12; Robert Poole '12; Rob Richert '13; Lena Rudnick '14; Ben Seccombe '12; Bob Snow '10; Laurie Thomas '12; Shawn Wines '12.

Also in attendance were: Frank Angones '11; Silka Luisa '11; Sohrab Noshirvani '12; Brooke Sebold '12; Iris Shim '15; Rebecca Thomas '13; Shukree Tilghman '12.

Photo courtesy of Rory Haines '11 and Shawn Wines '12.

SOA Alumni at Tribeca



Still from the film *Shortcomings*, playing at the Tribeca Festival in June. Music coordination by Cheryl Wang '22.

School of the Arts Programming at the 2023 Tribeca Festival:

***Smoking Tigers*, Written & Directed by Shelly Yo '18**

Sunday, June 11, 6:00 PM at the Village East by Angelika
Post-screening reception to follow at The Penny Farthing

[Get Your Tickets Here](#)

Ellie Fombi '17 in Conversation with Prof. Annette Insdorf

Tuesday, June 13, 6:00 PM at Columbia University's Earl Hall Auditorium

[Get Your Tickets Here](#)

***Our Son*, Produced by Alex Peace '17**

Wednesday, June 14, 8:30 PM at the Village East by Angelika
Pre-screening reception begins at 6:00 PM at The Penny Farthing

[Get Your Tickets Here](#)

***Shortcomings*, Music Coordination by Cheryl Wang '22**

Saturday, June 17, 5:30 PM at the Village East by Angelika
Post-screening reception to follow at The Penny Farthing

[Get Your Tickets Here](#)

More SOA Alumni Filmmakers at Tribeca:

[*Rule of Two Walls*](#), directed by David Gutnik '12

[*The Adults*](#), produced by Julia Thompson '16

Laroy, written & directed by **Shane Atkinson '13**

Invisible Beauty, written & directed by **Frédéric Tcheng '07**

ALUMNI NEWS

FILM



Stay Awake, written & directed by **Jamie Sisley '15** and produced by **Shrihari Sathe '09**, opens theatrically.

Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny, directed by **James Mangold '99** and starring Harrison Ford, will have its world premiere at the Cannes Film Festival.



Bury Me When I'm Dead, directed by **Patrick Clement '20**, is one of the seven feature films selected for the Cannes 2023 Frontières Buyers Showcase.

THEATRE



The adaptation of *The Comedy of Errors* by **Julián Mesri '20** will run at The Public now through June 11.



Alice Reagan '04 directs *Evelyn Brown (A Diary)* at La MaMa's Downstairs Theater, now through June 4.

School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Play by **Jocelyn Bioh '08** will make its U.K. premiere at London's Lyric Hammersmith Theatre.

VISUAL ARTS + SOUND ART



Aki Sasamoto '07 has been honored with the prestigious 2023 Calder Prize.

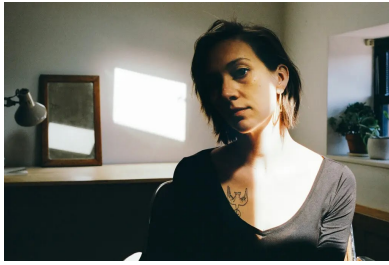


Professor **Adama Delphine Fawundu '18** is presenting *In the Spirit of Àșe* at the Newark Museum of Art until March 10, 2024.



Meg Turner '18, released her new photography book *WET*.

WRITING



Professor **Catherine Lacey '10** was named a 2023 Fellow of the Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers.



Brown Girls, the debut novel from alum **Daphne Palasi Andreades '19**, has been shortlisted for the inaugural Carol Shields Prize for Fiction.



Matthew Gellman '18 won the BOA Editions' Poulin Prize for his manuscript *Beforelight*.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Ellie Foubi '17 (Screenwriting/Directing) is an award-winning Cameroonian American filmmaker whose debut feature, *Our Father, the Devil* (2021) premiered at the Venice Film Festival. The film went on to win 25 prizes at international film festivals, including the Audience Award for Best Narrative Feature at the Tribeca Festival, the Mind the Gap Award at Mill Valley, and a Special Jury Mention at the Palm Springs International Film Festival. It also went on to be nominated for Best Feature at the 2023 Independent Spirit Awards. She's a BAFTA Breakthrough USA Fellow and was

named one of 25 New Faces of Independent Film by Filmmaker Magazine. Foubmi's projects have been supported by The Gotham, Film Independent, the Tribeca Film Institute, SFFILM Rainin Grant program, and the Venice Biennale College. Her stories often explore pressing social-political issues within the African diaspora through a genre lens, aiming to shine a light on marginalized populations whose voices are seldom heard or included.

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

There were many faculty members who supported me during my time at the School of the Arts, but two were really key in my development as a director. The first was Craig Zobel, who took a lot of time to advise me outside of class and really encouraged me to follow my gut. He also gave me amazing career advice that changed the course of my trajectory when I left school. The second faculty member is Tom Kalin, who taught me how to prepare as a director. I still rely on the preparation techniques I learned in his class in my work.

How did attending the School of the Arts impact your work and career as an artist?

It gave me the confidence to step into my power and deepened my love of filmmaking. I became a stronger writer because of the amazing screenwriting faculty I learned from. I was also able to do a directing exchange at La Fémis in my thesis year, where I wrote and directed a short film. This experience was a game changer for me and directly impacted my decision to shoot my first feature in France.

What advice would you give to recent graduates?

Be prepared to make sacrifices. You must be disciplined and create your own structure once you leave school. Otherwise, it's easy to get caught up between life and your survival job(s). Make a plan but stay flexible because life always throws you curveballs. So, if you don't get into a festival or a lab you've been yearning to participate in, try again or try something else. The key is to focus on your growth. If a door closes, knock on others until one opens, and it might be the door that you least expected. This is how I built my resilience. You have to be stubborn in your determination to follow your own path.

ALUMNI BENEFITS

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

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