

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

April 2023

GREETINGS FROM YOUR ALUMNI AFFAIRS TEAM

Dear School of the Arts Alumni:

We hope your spring is off to a great start and you are enjoying the beautiful weather. We are excited to write to you about alumni news and upcoming events.

This month, we were proud to co-sponsor two special Columbia screenings in New York and Los Angeles of the award-winning film, *Joyland*, written and directed by Saim Sadiq '19, co-written by Maggie Briggs '19, produced by Apoorva Charan '18 & Katharina Otto-Bernstein '92, and executive produced by Prof. Ramin Bahrani.

Dramaturgy alumni are gathering on Monday to celebrate the retirement of Professor Linda Winer. If you are an alum of the Dramaturgy program, [RSVP!](#)

Congratulations to the Theatre, Visual Arts, and Writing alums who have been named [2023 Guggenheim Fellows!](#)

Connect with School of the Arts alumni through [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#), where you can share updates about your work, upcoming events, and be inspired by what your fellow alums have been up to. ([Film](#) and [Writing](#) also have their own LinkedIn groups!) [The Artists' Resource Center's LinkedIn page](#) is a great place to find grant, fellowship, job, and residency opportunities.

Do you have new creative works to share? [Let us know!](#) What kind of alumni programming would be most useful to you? [Take the poll!](#) We love hearing from you!

We hope you will enjoy this month's news from your peers, as well as our Alumni Spotlight of Theatre alum Clarence Coo.

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



The School of the Arts co-hosted a Columbia screening of *Joyland* at Film Forum on 4/6. Photo from left to right: Co-writer, **Maggie Briggs '19**; Producer, **Apoorva Charan '18**; Writer/Director, **Saim Sadiq '19**; and School of The Arts Film Chair, **Jack Lechner**.

ALUMNI NEWS

FILM



Francisca Alegria '16 has signed a distribution deal for her debut feature *The Cow Who Sang a Song Into the Future* (2022).



It Aint' Over, a documentary written & directed by **Sean Mullin '06** & co-produced & edited by **Julian Robinson '08**, hits theaters in May 2023.



William Graham '06 & **James Ponsoldt '05** are at the helm of *Daisy Jones and the Six*, a new musical drama released on Amazon Prime Video.

THEATRE



Thomas Swayne '20 & Santino DeAngelo '18 produce *New York, New York*, now in performance at the St. James Theatre.

Rebecca Henderson '06 will appear in season 2 of *Single Drunk Female* on Hulu/Freeform beginning April 12.

Rachel Chavkin '08 directs *Thanksgiving Play* at Second Stage Theater now through June 4.

VISUAL ARTS + SOUND ART



The Precipice, an exhibition by 2023 Guggenheim fellow **Tony Chirinos '03** runs at Transmitter gallery in New York until May 7, 2023.



David Brooks '09's work, *Six Phases of Forest Procession (for the Budding Bird Blind)* is exhibited at the *Flora and Fauna* exhibition in 1053 Gallery in New York until May 7, 2023.



Monica Felix '20 is participating in the exhibition *Ida y Vuelta (Arrivals and Departures: Migration Experiences in Contemporary Puerto Rican Art)*, running until

September 30, 2023 in Hunter East Harlem gallery.

WRITING



When There Was Light, a second collection of poetry from **Carlie Hoffman '16** is out now from Four Way Books.



Flux, a debut novel by alumnus **Jinwoo Chong '21**, is out now from Melville House.



In Times to Come, a third novel from alumnus **Kristopher Jansma '06**, has been acquired by Ecco for publication next year.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Clarence Coo '10 (Playwriting) was born in the Philippines and grew up in a crowded, multilingual household in Virginia. He writes about language, class, and sexuality. His plays include *On That Day in Amsterdam*, *The God of Wine*, *The Birds of Empathy*, *Beautiful Province (Belle Province)*, and *People Sitting in Darkness*. His work has been produced or developed at Primary Stages, the Atlantic Theater Company, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, New York Theatre Workshop, and the Bay Area Playwrights Festival. He has received fellowships from the Dramatists Guild of America, the Rita Goldberg Playwrights' Workshop at the Lark, the New York Foundation for the Arts, and the Playwrights Realm, and he has been the recipient of a Whiting Award and the Yale Drama Series Prize. He is a member of the Ma-Yi Writers Lab and an alumnus of New Dramatists. In 2023, he was the winner of the Weissberger New Play Award, and his play *Chapters of a Floating Life* will be part of South Coast Rep's Pacific Playwrights Festival.

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

Kelly Stuart was such an incredible workshop teacher. Even when you only had a few pages, she had the ability to recognize the beating heart of your play, the part that was the most truthful, human and delicate. Sometimes I'd feel unsure about a scene that I had brought into class, but Kelly's insightful questions and encouragement always inspired me to go back and keep working on the play until the draft was complete. I've always been grateful for that.

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

Being at SOA helped me find my voice. When I entered the program, I was unsure what kind of writer I was. But during my time at Columbia, I wrote so much that I realized I kept writing about the same few things over and over again, even if the characters and situations were all a little different. I couldn't find the answers to the questions I kept asking myself, but the big realization was that it was the questioning that makes you a playwright, not the conclusions you end up with. More than twelve years later, I'm still writing about the same things.

What was your favorite or most memorable class while at the School of the Arts?

One memorable class I had was Maria Mileaf's course on Directing. My classmates were all playwrights, stage managers, and dramaturgs. And we all had to direct each other. And act. There was such a sense of freedom, knowing that we didn't have to be good at directing or acting -- since those weren't our concentrations. The important thing was that we were exploring what theatre meant and challenging our perceptions of what theatre could be. I learned so much about letting go and taking risks and that ultimately we are in theater because we believe that working together is fun.

What were the first steps you took after graduating?

After getting my MFA, I stayed in New York and applied to every playwriting fellowship and organization in the city. I received a lot of rejection letters. However I was lucky to get a handful of non-rejections a few years after graduating. I received fellowships and residencies with the Dramatists Guild, the Ma-Yi Writers Lab, and New Dramatists. From grad school, I knew that being part of a community of writers was essential to my productivity.

What advice would you give to recent graduates?

There is no one correct or typical path for a career in the arts. That uncertainty might cause a lot of dread for a recent grad, but it is actually a gift. You'll have so many experiences after graduation, not all of them seemingly artistic, but they all end up feeding your art and contributing to your singular voice. In short, don't stress out comparing your own artistic career to your peers'. We didn't choose to be artists so we could be like everyone else.

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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