

THE MAGAZINE OF  
UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS

# EDGE<sup>U</sup>

WELCOME,  
PREZ!

Introducing  
Kerry Walk, PhD

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GENERATION  
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Featured student work, opposite:

Ruling Qu BFA '23 (Photography)  
"Motel"  
archival inkjet print  
20" x 16"





# FROM THE PREZ



## HAPPENING @ UARTS

Keep up with UArts' schedule of performances, exhibitions, and showcases—sign up for [happening@uarts!](mailto:happening@uarts!)



// You'll be amazed by the  
astounding depth and  
breadth of our students'  
creative expression,  
guided by a world-class  
faculty and staff. //

— KERRY WALK, PRESIDENT

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reetings to the UArts community!

It's been an honor and a pleasure to join UArts as its fifth president. My first semester is more than halfway over, and I've felt enormous joy in being a part of the most creative campus community in the nation. I've also enjoyed getting to meet so many of you last month during UArts Weekend, and I hope to meet many more of you in the weeks and months to come. Thank you for your warm welcome!

The UArts mission is to advance human creativity, and I can say with confidence that we're fulfilling this mission every day. My first months at UArts have been filled with student performances, exhibitions, showcases, and more. I encourage you to attend as many Happenings@UArts as you can. Like me, you'll be amazed by the astounding depth and breadth of our students' creative expression, guided by a world-class faculty and staff.

This issue gives us an opportunity to celebrate together. You can read about UArts' new Student Center and its student-designed murals; this past year's Silver Star awardees; the younger group of philanthropists who are supporting UArts; the legacy of the legendary Walter Dallas; alumni success; and much, much more.

Nearly 150 years ago, in 1876, the school that would one day become University of the Arts was founded. Today, we can look back on our history of accomplishment in advancing human creativity and feel extraordinary pride. We also look forward to UArts' next act, which promises to be big, bold, and audacious. Get ready—here we go!

Best wishes,

Kerry Walk,  
President

# An Invitation for

**F**or more than two decades, the **Richard C. Von Hess Foundation** has presented UArts students with new horizons.

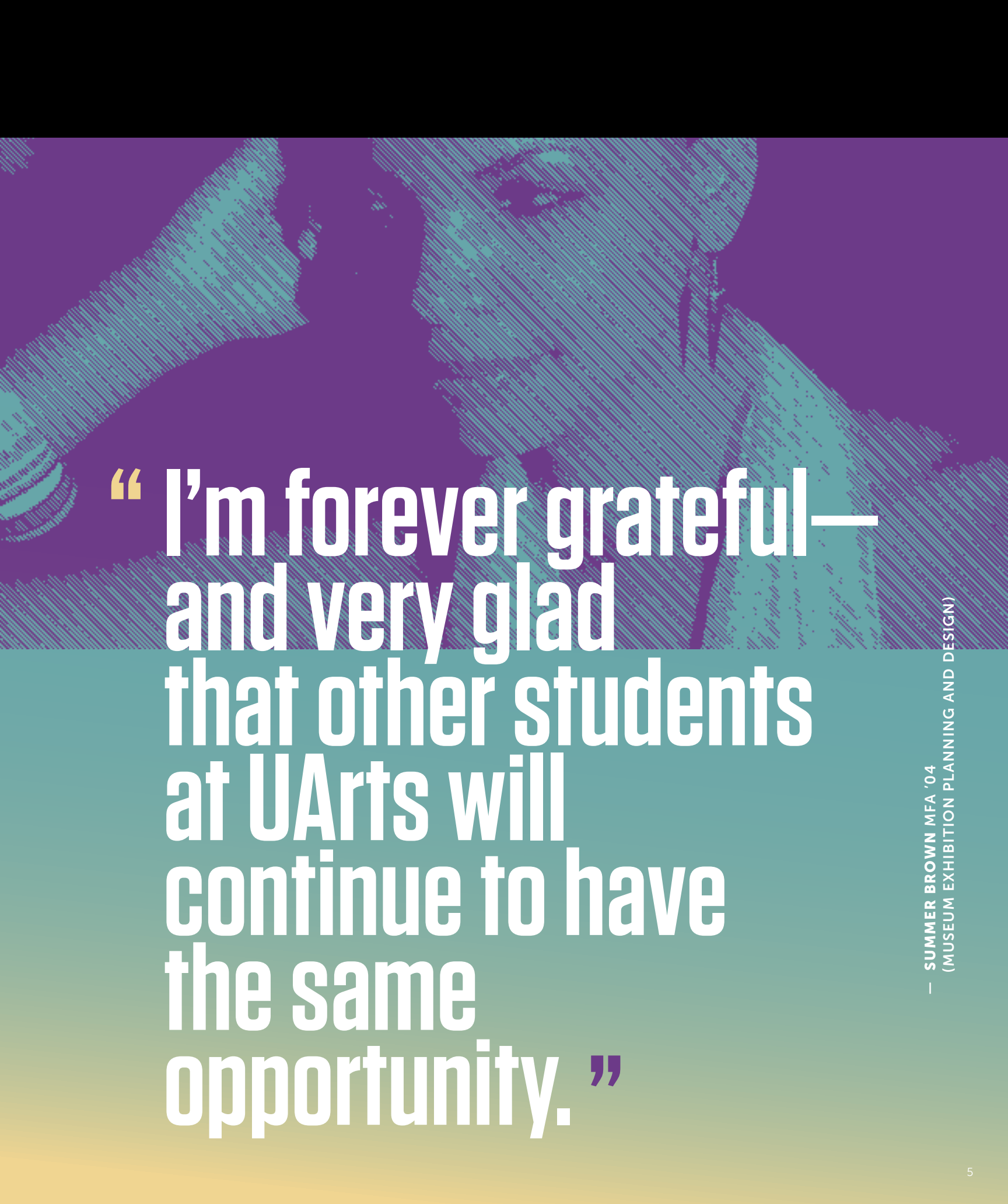
When **Summer Brown MFA '04 (Museum Exhibition Planning and Design)** first heard about the Von Hess Museum Design and Museum Education internships, she was financially distressed and on the brink of dropping out of her Master's program.

"The director at the time had just heard of the internship and thought I'd be a great candidate," Brown said. "She encouraged me to apply, and I was lucky enough to have the chance to work at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore."

Named for its benefactor—a Philadelphia native and a graduate of the Museum School—the Richard C. Von Hess Foundation has a mission to further art education, support museums, and promote the humanities. After completing his own education, Von Hess went on to become an







**“ I’m forever grateful—  
and very glad  
that other students  
at UArts will  
continue to have  
the same  
opportunity. ”**

— SUMMER BROWN MFA '04  
(MUSEUM EXHIBITION PLANNING AND DESIGN)

“It’s a wonderful feeling to be able to help people launch their careers and find their passion.”

— THOMAS COOK, CHAIRMAN,  
RICHARD C. VON HESS FOUNDATION

award-winning illustrator, graphic designer, art director, and founder of the Wright’s Ferry Mansion Museum in Columbia, Pennsylvania. Eager to give back to emerging generations, Von Hess bequeathed money to start his namesake private foundation upon his passing in 1991. Today, it’s run by his close friend, Thomas Cook.

“The foundation publishes books and conducts research,” Cook said. “We also help museums across America with conservation and exhibitions. But a big focus is funding students at PAFA [Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts] and University of the Arts to encourage the next generations of artists.”

Cook, who was personally trained as an art historian, said that the best aspect of his multifaceted job is delivering scholarships to students, which he used to do in person each year. Now Zooming with students and faculty, Cook continues to look forward to the announcement of recipients and serves as a mentor in the UArts community.

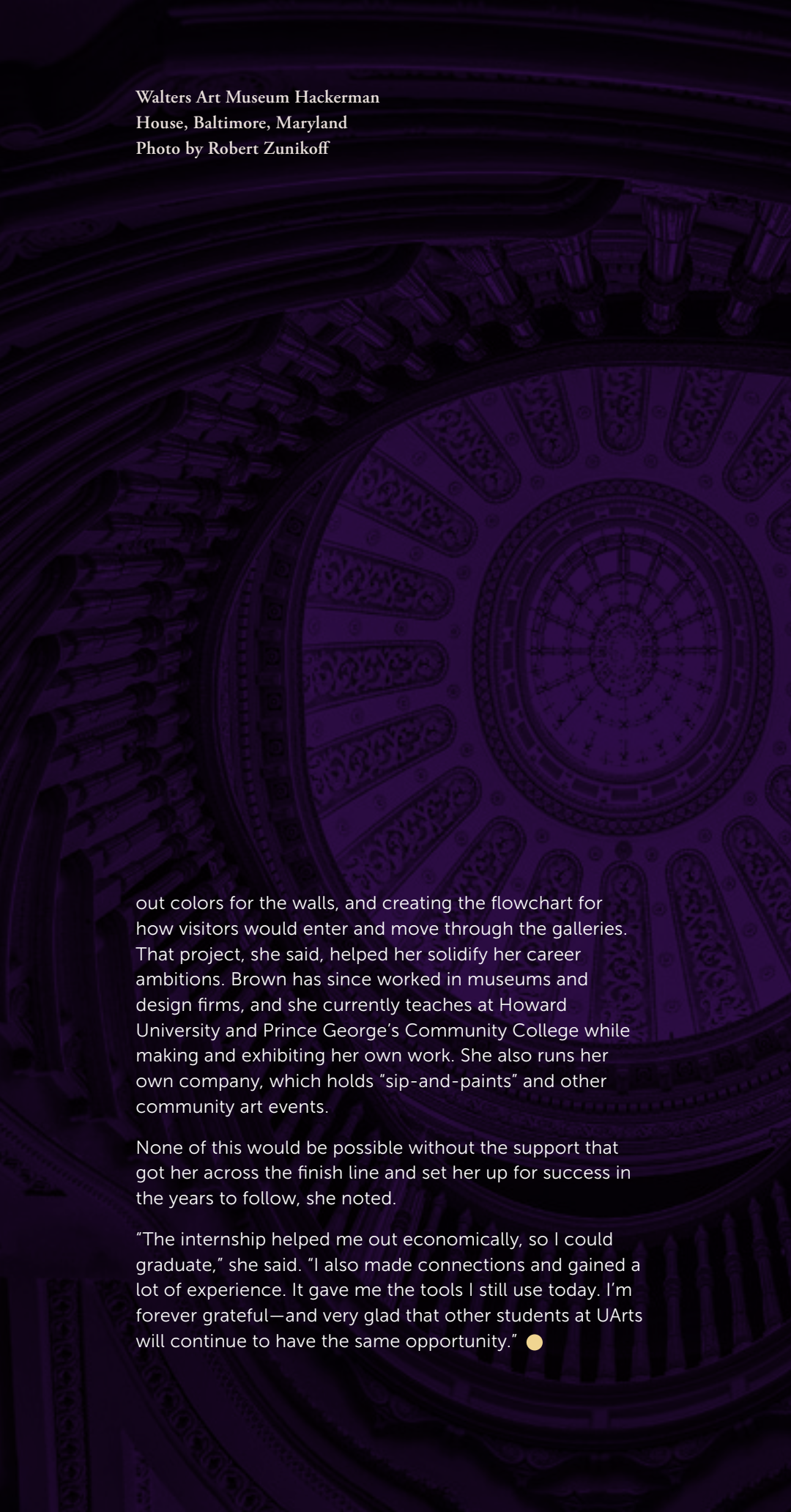
In addition to the Museum Education internship, Von Hess sponsors a publication arts visiting artist program at UArts and also offers UArts students unique scholarships for a year of study that include a stipend for travel. The awardees of all the foundation’s prizes are selected by faculty.

The foundation has also provided support for the Richard C. Von Hess Illustration Gallery and the Von Hess Resource Center—both celebrated additions to campus.

“It can be challenging to work in the arts—it’s lonely, and there is often not enough support,” Cook said. “So it’s a wonderful feeling and very gratifying to be able to help people launch their careers and find their passion.”

For Brown, the internship was life-changing. While at Walters, she had the chance to work on an exhibition of Brian Pinkney’s work. Not only was it an honor to assist the museum in introducing others to one of her favorite artists, but Brown also gained hands-on experience creating computer renderings for the exhibition, picking





Walters Art Museum Hackerman  
House, Baltimore, Maryland  
Photo by Robert Zunikoff

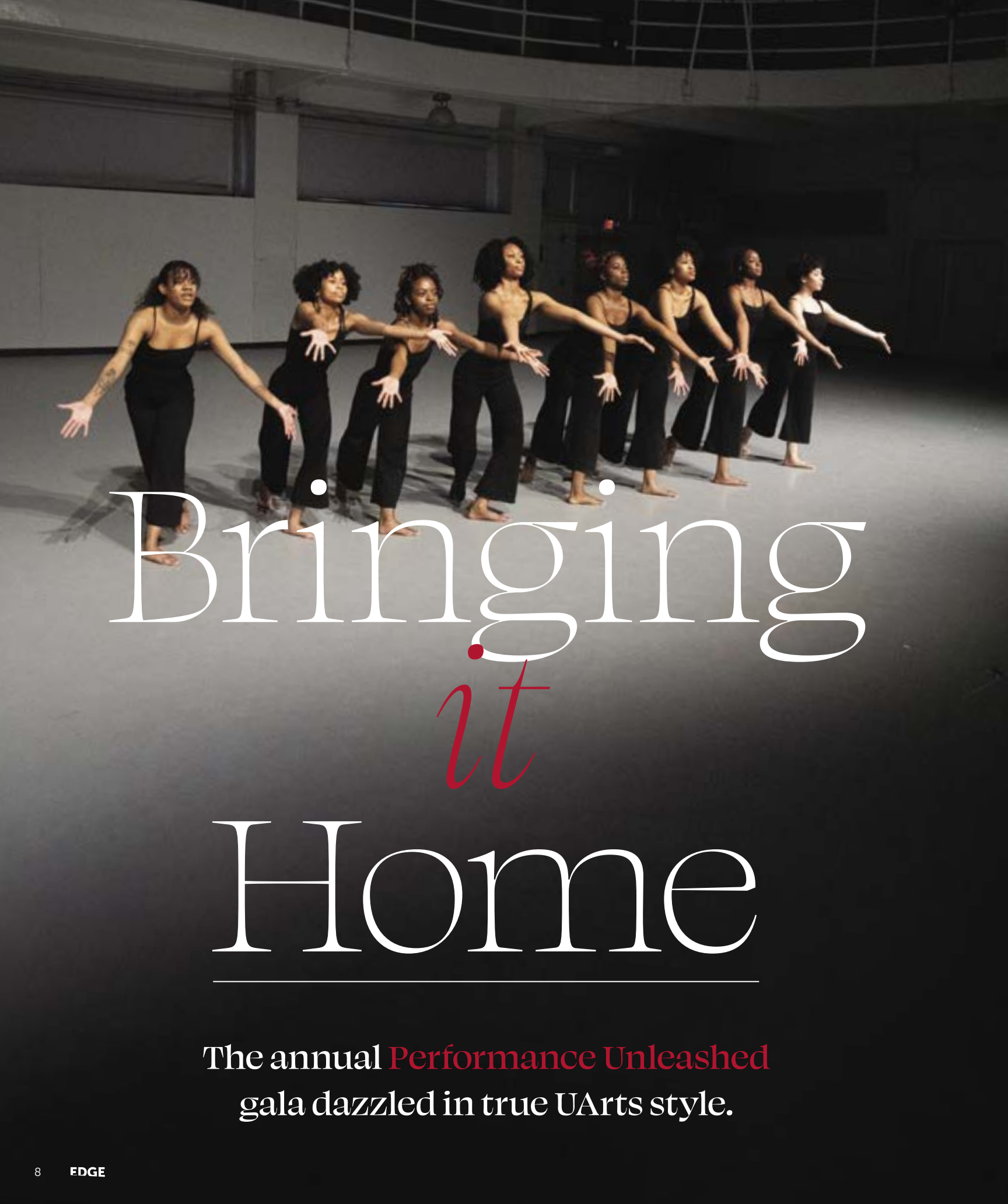
out colors for the walls, and creating the flowchart for how visitors would enter and move through the galleries. That project, she said, helped her solidify her career ambitions. Brown has since worked in museums and design firms, and she currently teaches at Howard University and Prince George's Community College while making and exhibiting her own work. She also runs her own company, which holds "sip-and-paints" and other community art events.

None of this would be possible without the support that got her across the finish line and set her up for success in the years to follow, she noted.

"The internship helped me out economically, so I could graduate," she said. "I also made connections and gained a lot of experience. It gave me the tools I still use today. I'm forever grateful—and very glad that other students at UArts will continue to have the same opportunity." ●







# Bringing *it* Home

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The annual **Performance Unleashed**  
gala dazzled in true UArts style.



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t's easy to throw a memorable party when you have this much creativity in-house, and UArts continues to up the ante each year with its annual gala. Performance Unleashed provides attendees the opportunity to witness the phenomenal talent and hard work of UArts students, while helping nurture the university's next cohorts of artists.




**Corinne Kite-Dean BM '21**  
(Instrumental Performance), musician



Held April 13, 2023, Performance Unleashed began with a cocktail reception in the Student Center (formerly Gershman Hall). That was followed by a School of Dance performance in YGym Dance Theater, where students showcased "ballads of perceptive fallacies," a piece choreographed by **Zoe Miller BFA '23 (Dance)**.



After the cocktail hour and dance performance, guests adjourned to Levitt Auditorium for dinner and the rest of the show. A performance by **Adam Furgal '25 (Musical Theater)**, **AJ Garrett '23 (Acting)**, **Dallas Austin Jimmar '23 (Musical Theater)**, and **Shannon Sullivan '23 (Musical Theater)** covered early jazz and popular music from the Great American Songbook. Finally, School of Music students performed a medley of songs by Emily King from her album *The Switch*.

A black and white photograph of Ed Satell, an older man with white hair, wearing a dark suit and tie. He is standing at a podium, looking down at a document. A name tag is pinned to his lapel. The podium has a microphone and a logo that reads "UNIVERSITY OF THE Arts".

Ed Satell, 2023 Excellence in the Arts  
Hamilton Award honoree

Each year, Performance Unleashed honors two awardees. This year, **Ed Satell** was presented with the 2023 Excellence in the Arts Hamilton Award. A media entrepreneur; business leader; and the founder of the nonprofit Satell Institute, a Think and Do Tank Dedicated to Corporate Social Responsibility, Satell was recognized for his innovative work around responsible leadership and philanthropy.





Adam Blackstone '04 (Instrumental Performance),  
2023 Excellence in the Arts Alumni Award honoree

The second honor of the night went to **Adam Blackstone '04 (Instrumental Performance)**, who was given the 2023 Excellence in the Arts Alumni Award. As a musical director, Blackstone has collaborated with Janet Jackson, Alicia Keys, Justin Timberlake, and other A-list performers. His most recent TV work includes the spectacular 2023 Super Bowl Halftime Show with Rihanna. He has also worked on *The Voice* and broadcast shows for the Oscars and the Grammys. Blackstone was born into a music-loving family in Trenton, New Jersey, and attended UArts on a scholarship. Blackstone embodies the crucial importance of financial support for tomorrow's artists and the transformative potential of a UArts education.

Rounding out the night was a scholarship auction featuring four box seats to Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band; a football from Super Bowl LVI, signed by Dr. Dre and other performers and athletes from the game; and VIP tickets to a Phillies game with an on-field experience, among other desirable items. In total, Performance Unleashed raised over \$400,000 for student scholarships—truly a night to celebrate. ●

SAVE THE DATE

## UArts UNLEASHED

A special edition of our fundraiser  
celebrating the talent and  
artistry of the UArts community,  
will be held **March 21, 2024**.



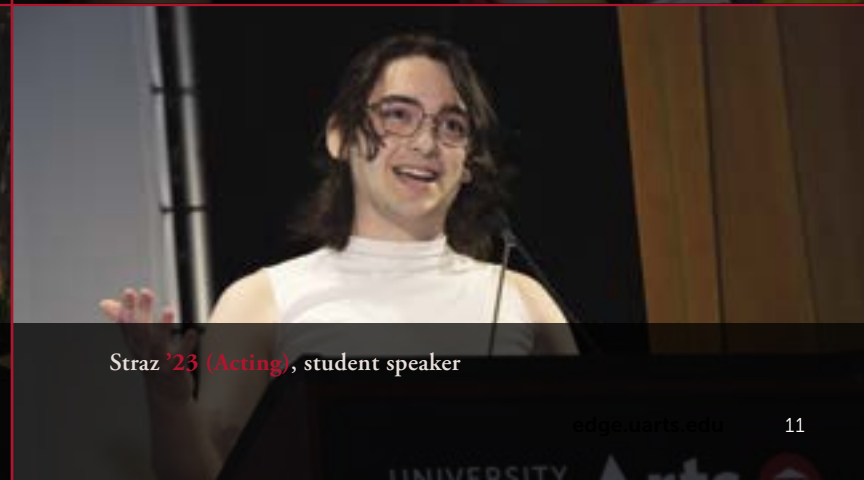
Marc Brownstein, president and CEO of the Brownstein  
Group and Performance Unleashed committee chair



Caroline De Marco (left) and  
UArts Trustee Ebonne Leaphart (right)



Left to right: Larry Weiss, Trustee Harriet Weiss,  
Trustee Nat Hamilton '07 (Photography), and  
Shaina Hamilton



Straz '23 (Acting), student speaker



# A Legacy of Brilliance

A new  
transformative  
theater hub  
on campus  
will honor  
Walter Dallas'  
legacy.



As the first director of the university's Theater program, Walter Dallas literally set the stage for what would become the Ira Brind School of Theater Arts. It's only fitting that since his passing in 2020,

UArts has announced that a new transformative theater hub on campus will carry Dallas' name and honor his legacy.

The Walter Dallas Theater will be housed in the soon-to-be renovated Arts Bank at Broad and South streets. In addition to an updated theater space, the facility will include a new music makerspace and a restaurant, classrooms for youth programs, a lobby gallery/museum, and more. By design, the Walter Dallas Theater will offer LGBTQIA+ teens a safe space, reflecting UArts' commitment to inclusion and honoring its namesake's legacy.



This is another  
way to introduce  
and remind  
young people of  
someone who  
changed the world  
through art.

— KIKAU ALVARO, INTERIM DEAN,  
IRA BRIND SCHOOL OF THEATER ARTS







We can't wait to honor Mr. Dallas, while setting the stage for current and future artists of color to shine.

— EBONNE LEAPHART, UArTS TRUSTEE AND COMMITTEE CHAIR, WALTER DALLAS THEATER PROJECT


In the meantime, plans are in motion to create intentional, publicly engaged programming at the theater, serving Philadelphians of all ages, including enrolled students, community groups, K–12 learners, visitors, and guests. The programming will begin before the renovation is complete.

**Ebonne Leaphart**, member of the UArts Board of Trustees and committee chair of the Walter Dallas Theater project, shared, “The theater’s mission is to elevate, honor, and promote theater and performance practices, both locally and globally, by offering out-of-school activities for Philadelphia students and serving the community with meaningful and accessible theater and music programming. We can’t wait to honor Mr. Dallas, while setting the stage for current and future artists of color to shine.”

The Walter Dallas Theater will also encourage tourism and revitalization of the Avenue of the Arts and offer programming that aligns with the city of Philadelphia’s anti-violence goals.

Dallas served as director of the School of Theater when Philadelphia College of the Performing Arts and Philadelphia College of Art merged in 1983. During his years in Philadelphia, he also directed the Philadelphia Drama Guild at the University of Pennsylvania and Freedom Theatre in North Philadelphia, where he staged a beloved annual production of *Black Nativity*. In 2002, Dallas received an Honorary Doctorate from UArts that recognized his contributions to the nation’s theater culture.

“For us, the opportunity to honor Walter Dallas, who was a true pioneer of Philadelphia theater, Black theater, and the School of Theater is an easy one,” said **Kikau Alvaro**, interim dean of the Ira Brind School of Theater Arts. “Alumni far and wide who have gone on to create brilliance in the world consider Walter Dallas and the tools he gave them to be one of the reasons for their success. At this moment, we need to highlight and uplift the LGBTQIA+ community, and this is another way to introduce and remind young people of someone who changed the world through art.”



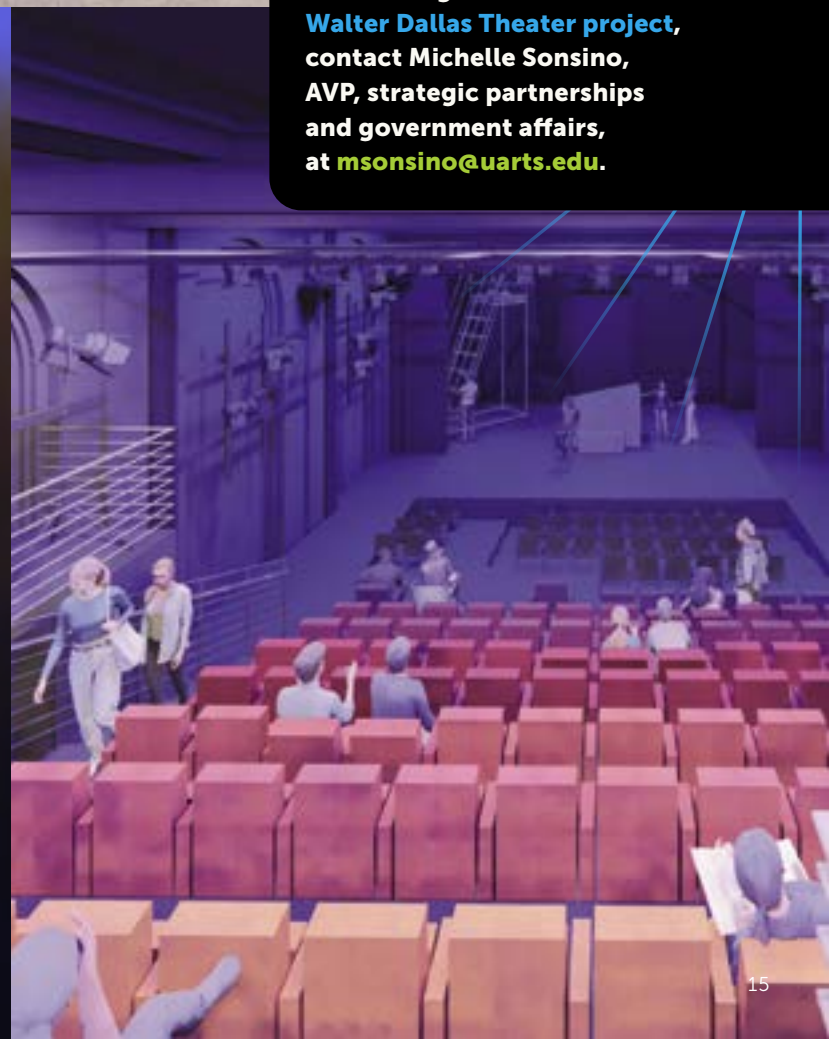
Future renderings of the Walter Dallas Theater  
by JacobsWyper Architects

Over the course of his storied career, Dallas won numerous honors, including an Emmy Award, an Audience Development Committee Inc. National Achievement Award for Excellence in Black Theatre, and two Creative Genius Awards from the Atlanta Circle of Drama Critics. He was a finalist for a Pulitzer Prize for his direction of August Wilson's *Seven Guitars* at Chicago's Goodman Theatre and also received an NAACP Theatre Award nomination.

Crucial to the vision for the Walter Dallas Theater, Alvaro said, is offering a space for diverse artistic voice and expression.

"The Walter Dallas Theater represents an opportunity to bring people together," he said. "It will stand among the Wilma Theater, Philadelphia Theatre Company, the Kimmel Campus, and other performance spaces as a prominent home for artists and a safe and inclusive space for all." ●

To make a gift to the  
**Walter Dallas Theater project**,  
contact Michelle Sonsino,  
AVP, strategic partnerships  
and government affairs,  
at [msonsino@uarts.edu](mailto:msonsino@uarts.edu).





A black and white portrait of Clayton Reilly, a bald man with a beard, wearing a white button-down shirt. He is standing with his arms crossed against a background of green concentric circles.

# Clayton Reilly

## BM '06 (Instrumental Performance), MAT '21 (Music Education)

### 2023 Silver Star Outstanding Alumni Awardee

SILVER STAR AWARDEE

**Clayton Reilly BM '06 (Instrumental Performance), MAT '21 (Music Education)** has built an accomplished career in the music industry. A trumpet player, he spent five years touring and playing with John Legend. He also penned the singer's hit song "Tonight (Best You Ever Had)," which went multiplatinum after spending seven weeks at the top of the Billboard Adult Contemporary chart and earned him Soul Train's Ashford & Simpson Songwriter's Award and a Grammy nomination. In total, he has been nominated for Grammys three times for his production, vocal arrangement, and songwriting work with Ledisi and Miguel.

Reilly returned to UArts to obtain his Master's in Music Education. Today, he works as a music educator in the Bethlehem Area School District in Pennsylvania. When he's not teaching, Reilly continues to work as a studio musician, solo artist, producer and collaborator.





**“I had to work really hard in all of the avenues I was pursuing. This award represents all the blood, sweat, and tears I’ve put into my music over the years.”**

**WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST REACTION WHEN YOU FOUND OUT YOU RECEIVED THE SILVER STAR OUTSTANDING ALUMNI AWARD?**

The notice came in an envelope in the mail, and at first I thought it was some kind of bill. When I opened it, I was surprised and honored to see that it was actually an award. There is no better feeling than being acknowledged by your university.

**YOU CAME TO CAMPUS TO ACCEPT THE SILVER STAR HONOR DURING COMMENCEMENT. HOW DID IT FEEL TO BE BACK?**

Commencement at UArts is very special. I loved feeling that creative, positive energy again. When I was onstage looking out into the crowd, it felt like I was seeing the future. And I just hope that it was an inspiration to students watching, for them to go out and do amazing things in their field. One of the best parts was knowing people who had won the award before me, like **Adam Blackstone '04 (Instrumental Performance)**. To be on the same list of award winners as him is just an honor.

**YOU’VE GOTTEN MANY AWARDS OVER THE COURSE OF YOUR CAREER. HOW DID THIS ONE FEEL DIFFERENT OR MORE MEANINGFUL?**

I would put this one at the top, honestly, because of the journey I was on when I was at school. I was never the top player. I had to work really hard in all the avenues I was pursuing—whether that was playing, producing, or writing—and so this award represents all the blood, sweat, and tears I’ve put into my music over the years.

**WHERE WILL YOU KEEP THE AWARD?**

My home burned down recently, and we just moved into a new place that we built. I am going to make a special place for it in my recording studio, next to my two diplomas from UArts. I think back to when I played for Corinne Bailey Rae and we were doing Jazz Fest in New Orleans, which included a tribute concert to Fats Domino and was recorded as a live album. And I remember one of the band members saying, “Tonight, we become immortal.” I feel that this award is one of those immortal experiences that will outlive me.

# Dotty Attie BFA '59 (Art Education) 2023 Silver Star Outstanding Alumni Awardee

**Dotty Attie BFA '59 (Art Education)** is the rarest of UArts graduates, whose resume includes work in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the National Gallery in London; membership in the National Academy; and the honor of having a punk band named after her. She has won wide acclaim for her paintings and drawings, and she is also celebrated for her role as one of the founding members of A.I.R. Gallery—one of the first women-owned cooperative art galleries in the country. Attie continues to exhibit her work; she is represented by PPOW Gallery.

SILVER STAR AWARDEE





**WHEN YOU LOOK BACK ON YOUR TIME AT UARTS (THEN PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE OF ART), WHAT STANDS OUT TO YOU?**

My father had gone to the [Philadelphia Museum] School of Industrial Art [now UArts], which is how I chose it. I wanted to be an illustrator, although my parents wanted me to have something to fall back on, so I studied Art Education. I felt truly comfortable there in a way I had never felt anywhere in my life. I made very good friends, and my best friend today is someone I met at PCA.

**HOW DID YOU GO FROM A DEGREE IN ART EDUCATION TO A CAREER AS A WORKING ARTIST?**

As I was graduating, my cousin got a teaching fellowship at the Brooklyn Museum, and I thought New York was the place to be. I followed him and started studying at the Brooklyn Museum. By the time I was 24, I was married with two young kids. I was painting, but it wasn't going anywhere. I took a break and went to look at art. I saw two shows that inspired me—one by Joseph Cornell and one by Marvin Harden. They gave me the idea to make drawings instead of paintings. I started making little drawings, just two inches square, and when I had 10 of them, I framed them and hung them in a grid.

**WHAT WAS THE GENESIS OF A.I.R. GALLERY AND YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN FOUNDING IT?**

My husband was a photographer and his assistant, also a photographer, had an artist girlfriend. I showed her my work, and she called me a month later to tell me she had a friend who was starting a gallery. They were looking for other artists to join. At first, I wasn't really interested, until I found out it was a co-op for women artists—I saw then that it was unique and would get a lot of attention, because no one else was doing that at the time.

**HOW HAS YOUR CAREER EVOLVED OVER THE YEARS?**

Well, 13 years after starting the drawings, I woke up one day and realized I felt like a gerbil. If you're an artist, the one thing you have is that you do what you love, and if you don't love it, then it's not worth it. I went back to painting. I have never cared about trends. Even when I was at school, everyone was into abstract expressionism, but I wasn't interested in that. You could say I am drawn to more taboo subjects.

**WHAT DOES WINNING THE SILVER STAR AWARD MEAN TO YOU?**

My four years at PCA were so wonderful. When I heard about the award, I was happy and excited to learn I would be honored by this place that is very dear to me. ●



**“I felt truly comfortable there in a way I had never felt anywhere in my life. I made very good friends, and my best friend today is someone I met at PCA.”**



# GIVING FORWARD

**THE NEXT GENERATION OF  
PHILANTHROPISTS IS ALREADY  
MAKING AN IMPACT ON UArTS.**

UArts relies on its Board of Trustees for leadership, counsel, and financial support. In recent years, UArts' board has become the home for the next generation of young philanthropists. Meet three board members with deep family histories of supporting the arts in the Philadelphia region.

## MEGAN NICOLETTI, TRUSTEE

At age 28, Megan Nicoletti takes her role as an influential young Philadelphian seriously. She has already served as a volunteer with the Philadelphia Ballet, the Barnes Foundation, and Project HOME.

"For any organization, it's really important to get the next generation involved," she said. "Whenever I join a board, I love to connect other younger people to the cause."

Nicoletti grew up outside Philadelphia and has stayed in the city because she loves the region. As a real estate agent at Serhant Societe Select, she enjoys helping others find a home in her beloved city.

Nicoletti has always been interested in design and fashion and has kept sketchbooks of her ideas. Nicoletti's grandmother, Frances M. Maguire, was a well-known local artist—the recently opened Maguire Museum at St. Joseph's University was named in her honor. The Maguire Foundation is also a major contributor to arts in the region.

When Nicoletti met Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations Andrew Pack and other members of UArts leadership for the first time, she was moved by their passion for UArts and was more than happy to support UArts in any way she could.

"Just hearing them talk about UArts inspired me to get involved, because I knew off the bat that I could learn a lot from them."

**Nicoletti helmed a committee to host an event at the Philadelphia Art Alliance called Young Collector's Night, a partnership with Friends of Rittenhouse Square to bring together the next generation of collectors, artists, and art enthusiasts.**

**The event was a success and drew people from her personal network and beyond to learn more about UArts. Nicoletti plans to continue looking for ways to activate the Art Alliance, getting young professionals in the city involved, and bringing fresh ideas and energy to Philadelphia.**

"There can be some stigma for younger people when you're talking about traditional arts organizations," Nicoletti said. "But we need to help these organizations stay relevant and appeal to newer generations."

# We need to help these organizations stay relevant and appeal to newer generations.

— MEGAN NICOLETTI, TRUSTEE



It's really about appreciating what you have, and not taking the arts for granted, she said. The arts are always evolving, but artists need the support of institutions, schools, foundations, and individual donors to continue moving their disciplines forward.

"The way the world is going these days, the arts could easily slip through the cracks. But there's no limit to how we can help expand them and continue to make a positive impact."



**NATHANIEL P. HAMILTON**  
**BFA '07 (PHOTOGRAPHY),**  
**TRUSTEE**

For as long as **Nat Hamilton BFA '07 (Photography)** can remember, UArts has been part of his life.

"Growing up, I was very close with my grandmother Dodo, who was a board member for many years," Hamilton said. "She was involved in many ways, but she hosted several fundraising events—I remember seeing [former Pennsylvania governor] Ed Rendell and other political figures at her house. I also got to witness live student performances, which instilled in me at a young age what art was and what the arts can do."

Years later, Hamilton was midway into an education at the University of Pennsylvania and pursuing photography as a hobby when an advisor encouraged him to take his creative inclinations more seriously. He earned his BFA from UArts in 2007, and the experience made a deep impact, both personally and on his work.

"My UArts professors showed me critical connection points, and they really helped me think about my work in a different way," he said.

Today, as both an alum and a trustee, Hamilton has a valuable perspective to contribute to the university. He is also especially interested in issues of board governance and takes an active role in UArts' financial stewardship.

In addition to managing investments, Hamilton continues to pursue some commercial photography on the side. He also serves on the board of a Connecticut boarding school, his family's private foundation, and the Philadelphia Zoo. An avid arts lover, Hamilton enjoys live music, performance, and visual art whenever he can. He particularly loves jam bands, improv jazz, and attending artist talks, on campus and elsewhere in the city. And every year, he eagerly anticipates returning to UArts for Commencement.

"There's nothing quite like it. Even after all these years, it's such a good experience every time," he said.

As a parent, Hamilton has been working to instill the same love of the arts in his own children, aged six and three. Continuing a family tradition started by his grandmother, he takes his kids to see *The Nutcracker* at the Philadelphia Ballet every year, and his older child has recently developed an interest in woodworking.

**When he's among his peers, Hamilton often urges others to do their own part in supporting the arts and ensuring that future students have opportunities to learn and develop their work.**

**"It's easy to overlook art schools, but people need to realize that the arts are a pivotal part of society. It's all about finding ways to inspire others to get involved."**



**My UArts professors showed me critical connection points, and they really helped me think about my work in a different way.**

— NAT HAMILTON '07 (PHOTOGRAPHY), TRUSTEE

## PETER HAAS, TRUSTEE

A high school teacher at Devon Preparatory School in Tredyffrin Township, Pennsylvania, Peter Haas first got involved with UArts a few years ago through his colleague Trustee Nat Hamilton.

"When UArts' board was expanding and wanted to include some younger members, he approached me to ask if I wanted to join," Haas said.

Supporting arts education was a natural fit for Haas, whose family foundation has long been a core funder of the arts in Philadelphia. A lifelong creative in his own right, Haas studied theater in college and served as the director of the Theater program at Devon Prep.

**"Artists make our experiences richer and more profound," he said. "This world needs creative thinking to solve many of the complex problems that we face."**

**Haas sees firsthand how exposure to the arts expands the worldview of his own students to include empathy and a deeper understanding of other perspectives. He believes that UArts has a critical mission, not only in educating artists in both formal disciplines and critical thinking, but also in enriching the city of Philadelphia.**

"As a university set in an absolutely diverse city that has had a strong cultural presence since its founding, we face all kinds of unique challenges and opportunities," he said. "Our students can take advantage of the breadth of offerings, and they can also contribute to the life of the city in a much larger way."

At the same time, recent shifts in the cultural landscape wrought by COVID-19 and associated economic hardships have endangered local arts organizations and arts education. **The call to support the arts, he said, is more urgent than ever before.**

"Arts organizations are much more vulnerable than they were a few years ago, and arts programs in schools are often first on the financial chopping block," he continued. "Strengthening arts

# Strengthening arts organizations can help make Philadelphia a more genuinely integrated city and a more beautiful place to live.

— PETER HAAS, TRUSTEE



organizations can help make Philadelphia a more genuinely integrated city and a more beautiful place to live."

Haas is eager to see UArts grow under the leadership of its new president, Kerry Walk. As a trustee, he's committed to helping the university reach its goals. Whether at UArts or elsewhere, there are countless ways for emerging philanthropists to make a difference in the arts, he said, and the work is immensely gratifying.

"Find your passion. Develop a long-term vision, and work with grantees or organizations to help them achieve their own goals. Connect with as many different artistic media as you can—all the art you experience will end up influencing you in ways you couldn't have imagined." ●

# SHARING THE WEALTH



## UARTIST DAY OF GIVING PUTS INSPIRATION INTO ACTION.

A

ny community is built on the enthusiasm and dedication of individuals. For the past four years, UArts has demonstrated how powerful individual contributions can be during the **UArtist Day of Giving**. The annual event took place Feb. 28, 2023, and was a great success.

In all, approximately 1,140 members of the UArts community participated in the fundraising endeavor, a 23.78 percent increase in the number of donors since 2022. That number included students, faculty, staff, and alumni across 38 states.

The Day of Giving is about showing up for UArts and donating what you can. The average gift amount was \$79, but the total came to an impressive **\$246,186**, all designated to support student aid.





Dean of the School of Art  
Sheryl Oring (left) and Assistant  
Dean Jessica Kahle (right)

As usual, the Day of Giving included a bit of friendly competition, spurring the university's schools and departments to vie for the highest number of donors. The top three schools that received the most individual gifts unlocked additional scholarship funds, courtesy of Trustee **Nat Hamilton BFA '07 (Photography)**.

Thanks to the hard work of each school's team of volunteers, the schools of **Dance, Art, and Film** secured the most donations, received additional matched funds, and took home the coveted UArtist Day of Giving awards.

**The School of Art** also won the 2023 Alumni Giving Challenge, which unlocked a \$50,000 challenge gift. On the staff side, Student Financial Services also unlocked \$50,000.

**Mark your calendars: The next UArtist Day of Giving will be held Feb. 27, 2024!**



Participants were rewarded with the knowledge that their donations will help future students access a UArts education and all the opportunities that come along with it.

And with a gift of \$25 or more, donors received UArtist socks designed by then-student **Holly Jansen BFA '23 (Illustration)**—a reminder that being part of a supportive community is something everyone can carry with them. ●

Holly Jansen BFA '23 (Illustration)





**avid W. Schoner Jr.**, pictured below with his son, **Christopher Schoner '24 (Animation)**, is leading the Parent and Family Council into the future.

You could say Schoner is more than an actively involved parent of a rising senior at UArts: He's actually a UArts superbooster. As associate director of the New Jersey Motion Picture and Television Commission, Schoner has long been involved with both the arts community and his children's school district, where he serves on the Cedar Grove Board of Education in New Jersey.

Today, as chair of UArts' Parent and Family Council, he leads a group of parents and guardians of current students dedicated to advancing the university's mission through enrollment, fundraising, and awareness-building.

MODEL  
DAD





Christopher Schoner '24 (Animation)

When his first child applied to art schools on the East Coast, Schoner recognized that UArts was special right away. Schoner and his son attended an event on campus and asked if Christopher could be a “freshman for a day.” By the time they had driven back to their home in northern New Jersey, an Admissions officer had already left a message with a date and time for the visit. Struck by UArts’ responsive staff and hyper-nurturing environment, Schoner was ready to enroll his son and hit the ground running as an active parent.

“I’ve always found that the best way to accomplish things is to get very tactile, so I just started by doing what I could,” he said.

Schoner became a member of the Parent and Family Council when his son was a freshman, and he joined a group of highly motivated parents and guardians who liked to take the same approach. From engaging admitted parents event during the recruitment process to hosting a Bands and Beer Garden event during UArts Weekend, the Parent and Family Council has been a vital part of UArts’ success over the years.

//  
**ANY FREE TIME,  
ANY VACATION  
TIME, I MAKE THE  
DRIVE DOWN TO  
PHILADELPHIA.  
I’M HERE BECAUSE  
I LOVE IT.”**

— DAVID W. SCHONER JR.  
CHAIR, PARENT AND FAMILY COUNCIL

Beyond his efforts on the council, Schoner took it upon himself to encourage students from local school systems to visit UArts, take classes, or attend performances on campus—at times by the busload. To date, at least six students have discovered UArts as a result of his efforts and then chose to enroll.

Schoner likes that the council is a way to stay connected (but not interfere with his child’s day-to-day life), promote, and advance UArts—and beyond that, help nurture opportunities for working artists.

“Artists are special,” he said. “They are really a different breed of person as far as I am concerned. And the artist community runs deep—you want to help other artists because they, too, are different from others.”

For the upcoming school year, Schoner aims to grow the annual UArtist Day of Giving and achieve record fundraising totals. He will continue to interact with current and prospective parents, answering questions and supporting their experiences at UArts. He also plans to bring more high school students to campus to see what UArts has to offer.

In the meantime, you can probably expect to see Schoner on campus for events any given weekend.

“Any free time, any vacation time, I make the drive down to Philadelphia. I like to say that I drank the Kool-Aid, and I’m here because I love it.” ●



# + 4 UARTS DEGREES = 1 TALENTED FAMILY



ou could say that UArts is not just an alma mater for the Taylors—it was the staging ground for their future. **Arthur Taylor BFA '90 (Theater)** and his wife **Shawnta Smith-Taylor BFA '94 (Modern Dance)** first met during Shawnta's freshman year. Both alumni of Duke Ellington High School in Washington, D.C., they were matched at UArts through an incoming student mentorship program.

Clockwise from left:  
Brazil, Viola **BFA '23 (Dance)**,  
Rhapsody **BFA '20 (Dance)**,  
Shawnta Smith-Taylor **BFA '94**  
**(Modern Dance)**, and  
Arthur Taylor **BFA '90 (Theater)**



# “At UArts, we got to study with pioneers like **Walter Dallas** and dancers who had performed with **Alvin Ailey** and **Philadanco**.”

— SHAWNITA SMITH-TAYLOR BFA '94 (MODERN DANCE)

“I was four years older, so I didn’t know her,” Arthur said. “Later, we realized I had actually seen Shawnta perform a Janet Jackson impersonation at a high school talent show. But we officially met in Philadelphia, and that’s when Cupid’s arrow struck.”

That first meeting led to a beautiful friendship, romance, marriage, parenthood, and creative partnership. The Taylors eventually co-founded Imagine Dance Theatre, a highlight in their respectively distinguished arts careers. (When their children were old enough, they performed as a family at the Kennedy Center.)

Through it all, UArts has remained an important foundation and a touchpoint.

“At UArts, we got to study with pioneers like Walter Dallas and dancers who had performed with Alvin Ailey and Philadanco,” Shawnta said. “At one point, I was offered the chance to dance with Alvin Ailey myself, but I decided to stay at UArts and finish my degree. I am so glad I did and had that background, so I could later teach.”

Today, the Taylors’ three daughters—**Rhapsody BFA '20 (Dance)**, **Viola BFA '23 (Dance)** and **Brazil**—are performing artists, too. Rhapsody and Viola followed in their parents’ footsteps to UArts, and to their delight, studied with some of the same faculty members who taught their parents.

Rhapsody said her parents never pressured them to go into the arts, but simply being immersed in their world and watching them perform and teach inspired her to follow a similar path.

“It’s about much more than dance—it’s about Black excellence, and that has motivated me to keep going,” Rhapsody said. She currently lives in Los Angeles, where she is pursuing a multi-hyphenate career as a choreographer, dancer, actor, and model.

Viola, now dancing with Contemporary West Dance Theater in Las Vegas, chose UArts on the strength of its ballet program and after seeing firsthand her sister’s inspiring performances on campus.

**“Hearing about my parents’ and sister’s experiences at UArts held nothing but positivity,”** Viola said.

Now artist educators working in New Jersey, the Taylors still return to campus whenever they can—not just to see their children, but also to cheer on their high school students who enrolled at UArts and teach master classes. They continue to stay connected with faculty and fellow alumni, both professionally and personally. And, they look forward to seeing where their children’s careers take them.

“We gave our kids everything we had, but you don’t choose this path because your parents did,” Shawnta said. “You have to do this because you love it, because you have a passion for it. And we all do.” ●



**The new Student Center is the heart of UArts' campus already.**





ast spring, UArts' new Student Center was completed—it was one of the most eagerly anticipated capital projects on campus. Formerly known as Gershman Hall, the Student

Center is the first-ever official student activity hub in the university's history. To students, it already feels like home. Designed by JacobsWyper Architects in partnership with Galia Solomonoff of New York's Solomonoff Architecture Studio, the new addition took two years to complete.



**Vanessa Dinh BFA '23 (Graphic Design)**  
had her design featured on the walls of the Student Center.

UArts students use the student lounge and the Collaboration Hub to work on projects, exchange ideas, and create community.



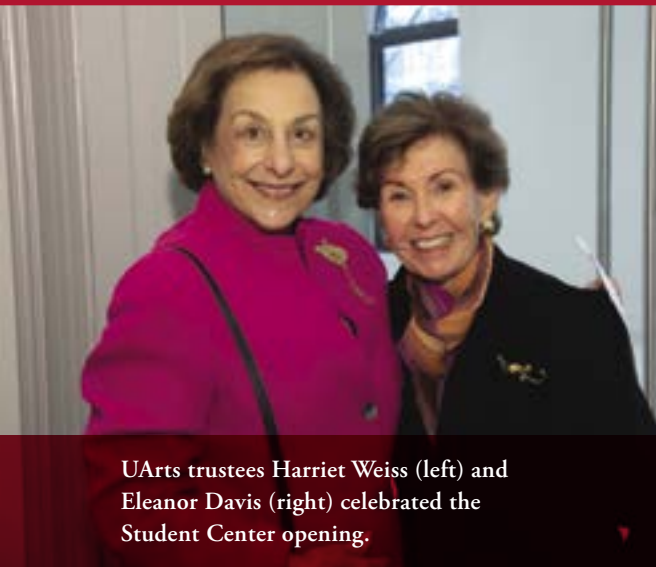
Thanks to \$1 million in grants from Pennsylvania's Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program, as well as a lead gift from longtime UArts supporters Harriet and Larry Weiss to establish Harriet's Place: Larry's Gift on the first floor, the Student Center is a one-stop-shop for social interaction, study, and recreation. Students are especially enjoying the addition of a student-run Saxbys Experiential Learning Cafe, which incorporates student designs in the cafe's interior and gives students a distinct opportunity for hands-on entrepreneurial learning.



Lee Wright '24 (Graphic Design) contributed work to the Student Center.



Pennsylvania Rep. Jordan Harris, of the 186th District, addressed guests at the Student Center opening celebration.



UArts trustees Harriet Weiss (left) and Eleanor Davis (right) celebrated the Student Center opening.

A brand-new School Store offers supplies, books, university gear, student and alumni designs and art, gifts, and more. Rounding out the new spaces on the first floor are student lounges and the Collaboration Hub, a communal workspace. The Student Center is truly the heart of campus, designed to encourage creativity and interaction within and across artistic disciplines.



Left to right: Carl Dranoff, CEO and founder of Dranoff Properties; Laura Burkhardt, executive director, Avenue of the Arts Inc.; and Anthony Luker, southeast regional director for Gov. Josh Shapiro, attended the opening of the Student Center.





"I've found the new Student Center to be a place I gravitate to on rainy days," said **Ariana Padilla-Rogers '23 (Screenwriting)**. "I like to sit in the corner lounge space by the windows and watch Broad Street while I work on my schoolwork or play *The Sims*. It's also nice to know that it's a huge common space where I can meet and hang out with other UArtists and see people in all majors."

Currently the home of Lightbox Film Center, the Student Center will also eventually house UArts' state-of-the-art screening room. Additional construction phases will include an expanded and updated dining hall and a more accessible entrance from the street to the building.



**Zakye Rothmiller '24 (Graphic Design)**  
contributed a mural to the new space.



Faculty, staff, and students now enjoy Saxbys coffee in the Experiential Learning Cafe, led by Student Cafe Executive Officer **Kristin Vendel '23 (Dance)**.

In all, the renovation and additions to the building are more than an architectural upgrade—they improve quality of life and nurture a sense of community for students.

"The Student Center is a really cozy and inviting place," Padilla-Rogers said. "Between Saxbys and all the new spots to sit and hang out, it's definitely become one of the busier spaces on campus." ●



Select student work from *Sizzle: New Works from the School of Art*, curated by faculty members, was on display during the opening of the Student Center.



**INTRODUCING  
THE FIFTH  
PRESIDENT OF  
UARTS**

**KERRY  
WALK**

// UArts' mission, to advance human creativity, has never been more important or more compelling than it is today. ... Artists and creative thinkers are at the forefront of innovation and meaningful social and economic change. //

K

erry Walk, PhD, became University of the Arts' fifth president in August. A champion of student learning and success in the arts, President Walk is the first woman to assume the UArts presidency—in fact, the first woman to lead the university since 1876, when the first school that would evolve into UArts was founded. Over the past few months, her energy and enthusiasm have been palpable on campus and in the Philadelphia community.

"Kerry is a proven dynamic leader in higher education who espouses the values that shape UArts' extraordinary university community," said **Judson A. Aaron BM '81 (Saxophone)**, chair of the Board of Trustees. "As a highly experienced college president passionate about arts education, she is the perfect person to capitalize on our momentum as UArts embraces its next chapter. Perhaps more importantly, it is clear she believes deeply in our cross-disciplinary educational imperative, which aims to nurture our students' ability to think, adapt, and innovate in preparation for professional success and a rich, creative life."

Through 10 questions, President Walk discusses UArts, its community and talent, and her background and relationship to the arts.

**Q: What is your favorite aspect of UArts so far?**

**A:** At UArts, everyone is living and breathing creativity, and it's invigorating to be in this kind of environment. Plus the quality of student work is astonishingly high. I walk around campus in a constant state of awe at what our students are making and doing.

**Q: Where did you attend college, and what did you study?**

**A:** I went to Wellesley College, outside Boston. I was a molecular biology major until I got bitten by the theater bug in my junior year, and I was hooked. My senior thesis was about the literary influences of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and also about a production a classmate and I directed and produced. It was thrilling.

**Q: What compelled you to study Shakespeare?**

**A:** Really the question is *who* compelled me to study Shakespeare. I have to thank many teachers and mentors who guided me along the way. I've seen so many productions, I've lost count. The most recent was a hilarious UArts production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. It was fabulous! I went to graduate school specifically to study Shakespeare and ended up focusing on the cultural outpouring related to Shakespeare's works since his death. It's staggering, including fine art, music, film, animation, dance, creative writing, and of course theater. There's even a video game based on Shakespeare.

**Q: What was your first position in higher education?**

**A:** My first job out of grad school was at Harvard, where I taught and also took my first steps into higher education leadership. A few jobs later, I was the provost of an art and design college in Los Angeles, and from there I became the president of a college in New York with nationally ranked programs in dance and theater. And now I'm at UArts—the dream job! It puts it all together for me.

**Q: Why is a degree in the arts important?**

**A:** UArts' mission, to advance human creativity, has never been more important or more compelling than it is today. As UArts students and alumni have demonstrated over the university's nearly 150-year history, artists and creative thinkers are at the forefront of innovation and meaningful social and economic change.







**Q: What are your top three priorities for academic year 2023-24?**

**A:** UArts has a distinctive mission, and my overall goal is to tap into the university's potential as the most compelling destination for arts education in the world. As I've shared with faculty and staff, for me that means doubling down in three areas. First, ensuring that the education students receive erases the boundaries between the arts. Like most professional artists, our students want to fuse artistic media and disciplines to create work that's fresh, provocative, and unique. Second, I'm focused on strong professional outcomes for UArts students. That means expanding the pipeline to internships and jobs in our region's booming creative economy. Third, I want UArts to become brightly visible, considered to be the gold standard in arts education.

**Q: When and where are you most inspired?**

**A:** Immersive spaces inspire me—spaces in which I can forget myself and become fully engaged in experiences that transcend my day-to-day life. As a scuba diver, I take immersion literally and have found inspiration around the world, from the ocean waters off the Jersey shore to the glacial waters of Iceland to the depths of the South Pacific. Arts spaces are equally immersive for me. I fell in love with books at a very early age, but any kind of art form can transport me almost instantly to another realm. It's magic.

**Q: What's your all-time favorite play?**

**A:** Oh, please. *Hamlet*. Of course.

**Q: What advice would you give to a young artist?**

**A:** Tell your family to calm down, you're going to be employed! The Philadelphia area is an arts and culture powerhouse, and there are tens of thousands of jobs in the region's \$4 billion creative economy. The arts rule!

**Q: What has your favorite meal in Philly been so far?**

**A:** I know you think I'm going to say Philly cheesesteak, but I have to say—Philly pizza. There's nothing else like it. ●

# STUDENT WORK SPOTLIGHT!

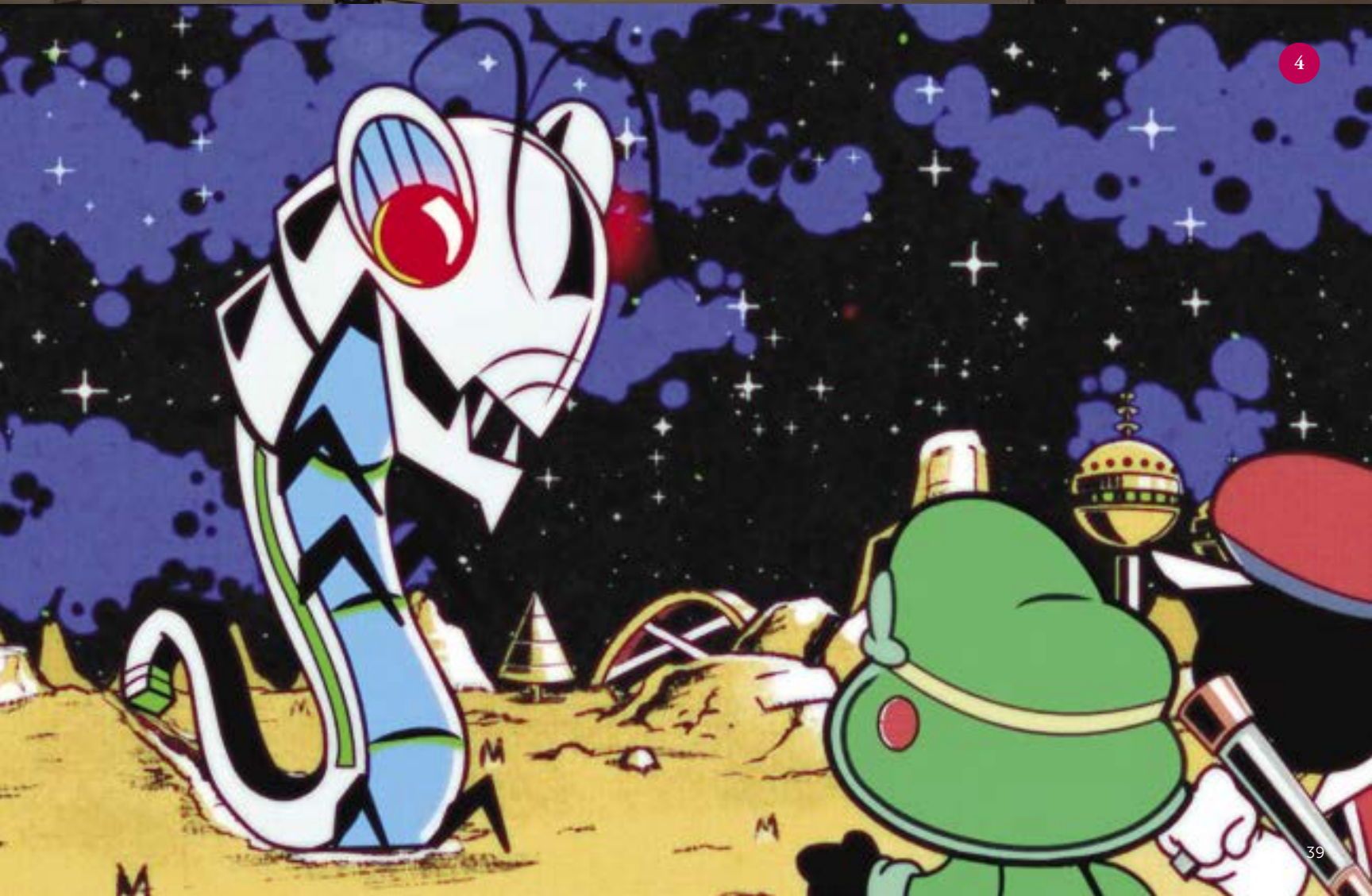
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1. Maddy Wendell '24 (Musical Theater) and Isabella Salvatore '25 (Musical Theater) in "A Midsummer Night's Dream"
2. Sarah Golczewski BFA '23 (Film), "Mantis Shrimp"
3. Aaron Michael Foreman BFA '23 (Dance) and Amanda Boyer BFA '23 (Dance) in Martha Graham's "Dark Meadow Suite"
4. Gavin Walters BFA '23 (Animation), "Gam Galaxy"



2



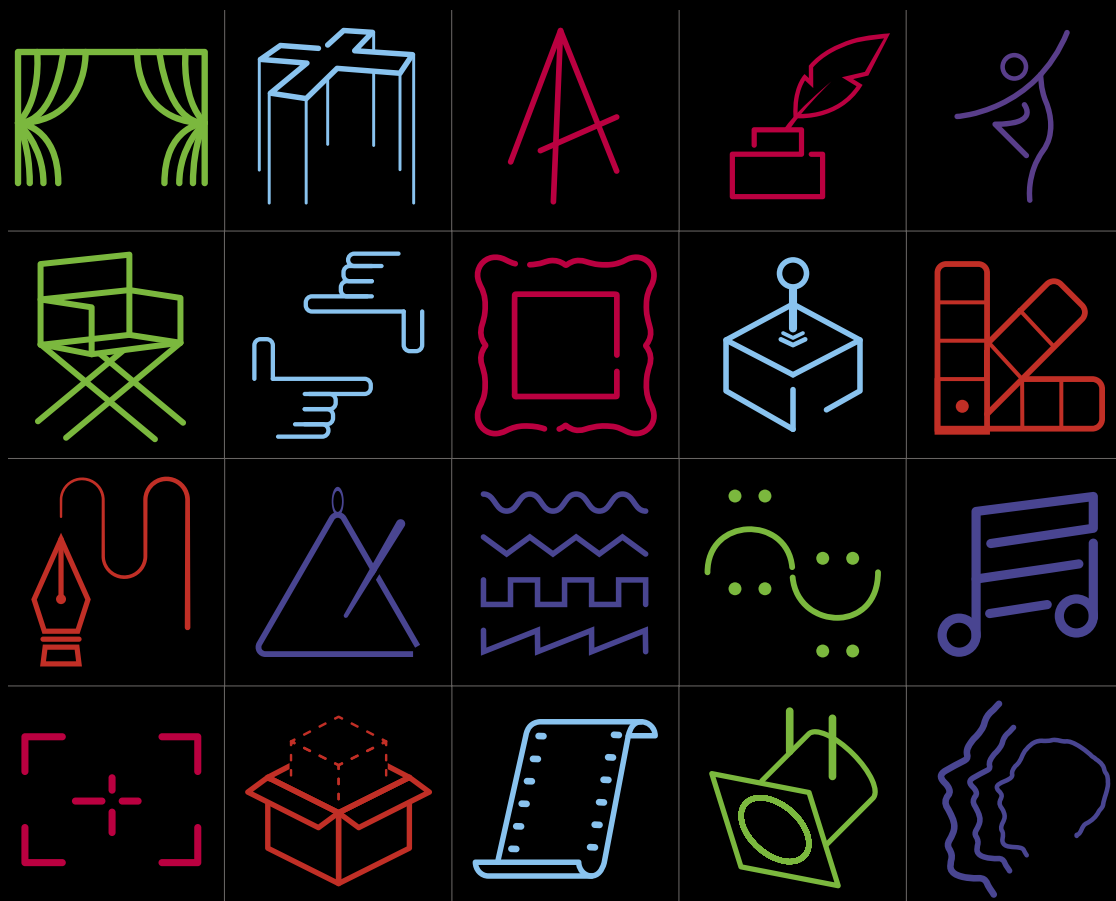




In case  
you  
missed  
it!



Zakye Rothmiller '24  
(Graphic Design)



## With Honors

When University of the Arts celebrated Commencement on Thursday, May 18, at Philadelphia's Academy of Music, it honored five members of its artistic community who have significantly impacted our broader cultural dialogue.

Alum, artist, curator, educator, and author **Deborah Willis BFA '75 (Photography), PhD**, received an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts and delivered the Commencement address. Joining her in this recognition were **Michael Forman** and **Jennifer Rice**, the couple who launched the Forman Arts Initiative in Philadelphia, a program that has connected and provided vital support to artists across the Philadelphia region.

In addition, the university presented Silver Star alumni awards to visual artist **Dotty Attie BFA '59 (Art Education)** and musician and educator **Clayton Reilly BM '06 (Instrumental Performance), MAT '21 (Music Education)**.

## Welcome, Saxbys!

University of the Arts and **Saxbys** collaborated on a student-run cafe in UArts' new **Student Center**. With the arrival of the Saxbys Experiential Learning Platform on campus, UArts students are empowered to gain real-life business and entrepreneurship experience while earning college credits and a salary.

Saxbys' student CEOs run and lead all aspects of their cafes, from team development and community engagement to responsibility for the entire profit-and-loss statement.

Through a class led by Graphic Design Program Director **Angela Riechers** and designers **Virginia Gehshan** and **Melinda Beck**, the students in the Graphic Design, Product Design, Illustration, and Museum Exhibition Planning and Design programs worked collaboratively to develop the cafe's look and feel and polish the overarching design of the space. Graphic Design students also created murals that energize the space with their individual aesthetics.

"UArts students will hone essential power skills, such as emotional intelligence, critical thinking, and resilience to build upon their classroom experience," said Nick Bayer, founder and CEO of Saxbys. "This holistic experience will benefit them in their cafe, community, and careers."



“  
*UArts students  
will hone essential power  
skills, such as emotional  
intelligence, critical  
thinking, and resilience to  
build upon their  
classroom experience.*  
”

— NICK BAYER, FOUNDER  
AND CEO, SAXBYS







Nicole Marte '24 (Graphic Design) stands in front of her mural, which is installed inside the Broad Street entrance to the new Student Center.

## Did you know?

All of University of the Arts' 2023 Commencement branding—programs, web assets, banners, and more—was the brainchild of **Leon B. Baker II** BFA '23 (Graphic Design).



*My thought process for this campaign centered around the themes of diversity and inclusion, which I aimed to convey using colorful and abstract forms. The abstract shapes resemble the ripples that emanate from a pebble being dropped into water and serve as a metaphor for the waves of life we all encounter.”*

— LEON B. BAKER II BFA '23 (GRAPHIC DESIGN)

## UArts Announces 2023 Creative Research & Innovation Grants

In April, UArts announced the recipients of the 2023 Grants for Creative Research and Innovation program, which provides funding to 12 innovative projects led by faculty and staff.

Supported through the President's Fund for Excellence, the grant program covered over \$68,000 to realize the 12 projects.

The program's second round of funding allowed UArts staff and faculty members to explore identity and history through video, audio, and performances; build DIY vehicles; develop several multimedia performances; and create an immersive virtual reality narrative.

The grant recipients began to conduct research, travel, and execute their projects immediately, with many resulting performances, installations, production periods, and travel taking place over the summer and in the fall.

To view a list of recipients and learn more about the projects, visit [uarts.edu/research-innovation-grant-2023](https://uarts.edu/research-innovation-grant-2023).



Kevin Merinsky, “Betaverse,”  
an interactive VR narrative (in progress)





## School of Dance Dean Knighted in France

In recognition of her global contributions to dance, **Donna Faye Burchfield**, dean of the School of Dance, was awarded the rank of **Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters** from the French Ministry of Culture. The recognition, one of the primary distinctions from France's ministerial orders, is bestowed upon those who have distinguished themselves through their creativity in the cultural realm and their dedication to advancing the distribution of arts and culture.

The Order of Arts and Letters (*Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*) was established by France in 1957, in order to recognize eminent artists and writers, as well as people who have contributed significantly to furthering the arts in France and around the world. The Order of Arts and Letters is awarded three times per year.

"Traveling to France over the past three decades has shaped my career in profound ways," Burchfield said. "The relationships I have formed there over the years have helped me to understand the great lessons bound up in lifelong, loving friendships in dance. I am humbled by this honor."

## Sheryl Oring Joins UArts as Dean of the School of Art

**Sheryl Oring**, a renowned artist, educator, activist, and advocate for the arts, joined UArts as dean of School of Art in January 2023.

"UArts has an extraordinary creative legacy and an ambitious mission, so I could not be more thrilled to join this university community," Oring said. "As a leader in visual arts education, I draw inspiration from amplifying others' work and vision, something I am eager to continue at UArts and throughout Philadelphia. I look forward to engaging and collaborating with the many students, faculty, and staff who make the university such a diverse hub of creativity and innovation."

In 2004, Oring began *I Wish to Say*, through which she has typed nearly 4,300 postcards at dozens of locations across the country and has sent them to four different U.S. presidents. Across the project's more than 100 performances, Oring dons 1960s secretary attire and establishes a makeshift office—complete with a vintage manual typewriter—in a public place. Passersby are



invited to dictate postcards to the sitting president. After typing them verbatim, Oring sends the original postcards to the White House and keeps a copy for her project archive, hosted by the University of North Carolina at Greensboro Library.

Photo credit: Dhanraj Emanuel



## Oscar-Nominated Director Hosts ‘Live Cinema’ Event

On Saturday, Oct. 15, 2022, Oscar-nominated director **Sam Green** visited UArts for a screening of his 2022 Sundance Film Festival hit documentary, *32 Sounds*. The film, which asks audiences to reconsider their relationship to sound, was presented as a “live cinema” event at Lightbox Film Center, and Green provided live narration.

*32 Sounds* was designed to be a participatory documentary that can be experienced in several different ways. Each audience member is provided with a pair of noise-canceling headphones that help shape the direction of the film’s sound and eliminate rustling, whispering, and other typical movie theater distractions.

Throughout the film, Green explores 32 discrete sound explorations to, as he ponders, “understand time and time passing and loss and the ephemeral beauty of the present moment”—consistent themes that appear in his work.

In advance of the screening, Green spent much of that Friday with students from UArts’ School of Film.

## *The Innerview* Restored by Lightbox Film Center

*The Innerview*, written, produced, and directed by **Richard Beymer**, is the second film to receive a complete restoration through Lightbox Film Center’s burgeoning preservation program.

The 1973 avant-garde film, an unclassifiable and thought-provoking documentary, was digitally restored in partnership with Northeast Historic Film; the National Film Preservation Foundation; and Corpus Fluxus, with generous support from UArts donors **Ron and Suzanne Naples**.

The film returned to the screen for the first time since the mid-1970s as part of the International Film Festival Rotterdam in early February.

*The Innerview* features found footage presented as a stream-of-consciousness assemblage and has remained in a state of flux for nearly 50 years. Beymer continues to work and rework it, bleaching segments of the original 16mm footage or inserting new footage in

different formats. The version screened in Rotterdam is the oldest-known iteration and is understood to be the closest to the film’s original form. Beymer remains at work on a director’s cut, which will be featured in the 2024 Rotterdam festival. Both versions will be screened at Lightbox later this year.





## Lightbox Film Center Awarded 2023 Project Grant from The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage

**Lightbox Film Center** has been awarded a 2023 Project Grant from The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage for a sweeping survey of the art of Susan Kleckner, a pioneering and under-recognized photographer and filmmaker of the late 20th century.

The exhibition, ***Raw Material: The Art and Life of Susan Kleckner***, will be held in fall 2025 and will be the first survey of Kleckner's work, featuring approximately 100 artworks, films, videos, and additional ephemera accompanied by a film and video screening series and a scholarly monograph. *Raw Material* will be curated by art historian William Kaizen, PhD, who conceptualized the exhibition in collaboration with Lightbox Film Center Director and Curator **Jesse Pires**.

Kleckner was a pioneering feminist artist who participated in Women Artists in Revolution—an organization that aimed to topple the race and gender exclusivity of New York's art scene in the late 1960s and early 1970s—and founded the Women's Interart Center, a multidisciplinary space for women's art and education that was active at the same time. She also directed films, including *Another Look (At the Miami Convention)*, an intersectional examination of Shirley Chisholm's landmark 1972 U.S. presidential campaign.



Susan Kleckner, *Untitled* (n.d.)  
b&w photograph

## Faculty Member Wins Grant for Devised Theater Institute

**Quinn Bauriedel**, associate professor and director for UArts' Devised Performance MFA program, recently received a **\$157,998 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)** to create a two-week residential institute focused on devised theater. The institute—titled Preserving and Transmitting American Ensemble-Based Devised Theater—was held in June at Pig Iron Theater Company's headquarters in Philadelphia's Kensington neighborhood. It assembled 25 higher education faculty members from across the country for an intensive study of this form of theater-making, including exploring its history and enduring impact.

The institute bridged the gap between devised theater's historical and critical study, expediting the scholarship and criticism that lags its sustained impact.

"There's an ephemerality to our art form that may be hard to bind," Bauriedel said. "But hopefully, the discourse surrounding it will be something that appears more and more in higher ed."



A still from Pig Iron's 2021 production of  
*Love Unpunished*; Image credit: Mimi Lien

in memoriam



## 1940s

**Lenore Millhollen**

'47 (Continuing Education/Advertising)

## 1950s

**Earl Blust**

'54 (Advertising Design)

**Nomi (Raia) Weinstein**

'56 (Fashion Illustration)

## 1960s

**George Mossman Greenamyre**

'62 (Dimensional Design)

**William Wareham**

'64 (Dimensional Design)

**Alphonese Mattia**

'69 (Wood)

## 1970s

**Joel C. Levy**

'70 (Painting and Drawing)

**Wayne Spector**

'74 (Fine Arts)

## 1980s

**Lillian 'Libby' Newman**

BFA '80 (Printmaking)

## 1990s

**Craig Minella**

'91 (Industrial Design)

## 2000s

**Ariana (Kampanelas) Sutton**

'09 (Dance Education)

## 2010s

**Caroline Johnston Blasius**

BFA '11 (Acting)

## Faculty and Staff

**Patricia Cruser**

associate dean of liberal arts, Philadelphia College of Art  
(now University of the Arts)



# A L N U M N I T E S

## 1950s

Diana Soorikian

**BFA '50 (Art Education)**

was included in a group exhibition called *Amalgamation of Voices* at Riverside Gallery in Hackensack, New Jersey, in September 2023. Soorikian's work features abstract portraits that often reveal the imperfections of the human figure (and psychology).



# 1960s

Alan Goldstein

**BFA '62 (Painting)**

had the work he has created over the past 40 years featured in a solo exhibit titled *Alan Goldstein: Elemental* at the Michener Art Museum in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, from April 15 to Sept. 24, 2023. In his extensive body of work, Goldstein explores nature, human identity, and cycles of growth and decay in his large abstract paintings, drawings, and sculpture.

Toni Silber-Deliverie

**BFA '69 (Painting and Drawing)**

had her work included in *The Roundtable Exhibit*, which was on view in the Trask Gallery at the National Arts Club in New York City in June 2023. Her painting offers "a stylized impression of her grandmother and her friend." She said, "While tastes and fashions do change, the most basic of human needs, desires, and dreams are timeless."



Photo by Frank Stewart

Ruth Fine

**'62 (Painting)**

retired curator of special projects in modern art at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., was recognized with the Lawrence A. Fleischman Award for Scholarly Excellence in the Field of American Art History. She served as curator for the National Gallery from 1972 to 2012 and worked on dozens of exhibits that featured artists such as Georgia O'Keeffe, Helen Frankenthaler, Jasper Johns, Romare Bearden, Jim Dine, and others.

# 1970s

Pictured from left to right:

John Polanco  
Rob Rutigliano  
Mark Allen  
Ed Shea  
Bob Surttman



C Bangs

**BFA '70 (Painting)**

had an exhibit, *Postcards from Earth: Holograms on an Interstellar Journey*, with her husband, Greg Matloff, at the Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum in New York City. It opened Feb. 16, 2023.

Ed Shea

**BMed '71 (Percussion/Education)**

performed in the national Broadway tour of *Tina: The Musical* at the Academy of Music in November 2022 (see adjacent photo). It featured four generations of UArts alumni in the band, including **Mark Allen BM '10, MM '11 (Saxophone, Jazz Studies)**; **John Polanco BM '22 (Trumpet)**; **Rob Rutigliano BM '22 (Saxophone)**; and **Bob Surttman BM '83 (Trombone)**.

Lesia Sochor

**BFA '74 (Painting)**

had a solo exhibit from Jan. 17 to March 2, 2023, at L/A Arts in Lewiston, Maine. Additionally, she had a solo exhibit from May 19 to Sept. 2, 2023, at Zillman Art Museum, University of Maine, Bangor, titled *Body Language*. It is a retrospective of the evolution of her Threads series, which depicts women, sewing, fashion, and the multilayered narratives they have conveyed through history. Visit Sochor's website at [lesiasochor.com](http://lesiasochor.com).

Paul Hosch

**BFA '75 (Illustration)**

recently launched his first of three memoirs, which includes a chapter about his experience at Philadelphia College of Art (now University of the Arts). The book, titled *Undercover in India*, contains 20 original illustrations and was released as an e-book in April. It reached no. 1 on Amazon in the Biographies of Social Activists section.

Tom Judd

**BFA '75 (Painting)**

exhibited *Garden of the Mind* at Cope House Galleries in Philadelphia's Germantown neighborhood from June through July 2023. His work explores our relationship to nature.



Deborah Willis

**BFA '75 (Photography)**

received the Don Tucker Prize for the Advancement of American Art from Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, Arkansas. Willis is a celebrated photographer, author, educator, and scholar. Her groundbreaking images and scholarship explore the representations and history of Black people, life, and culture, with a particular emphasis on women. Willis was also awarded a Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts during UArts' Commencement ceremony in May. Yale University also recognized Willis with an honorary Doctor of Humanities degree.

Jennifer Baker

**BFA '79 (Sculpture)**

was featured in a short film about one of her exhibits by filmmaker John Thornton. Additionally, Baker's exhibit, *Lamentations: Paintings by Jennifer Baker*, was on view at Rosemont College's Patricia M. Nugent Gallery from Nov. 10 to Dec. 4, 2022.

Gary Schwartz

**BFA '79 (Animation)**

is an animation director and performed a Cantastoria cranky at the Detroit Cantastoria Fest 2022, a festival of two longtime street art forms, Cantastoria and cranky. A cranky features a scroll of artworks that are revealed as a musical or storytelling performance unfolds.

RL Washington

**BFA '79 (Illustration)**

exhibited his works in his solo show *Flashbacks* at the Moody Jones Gallery in Glenside, Pennsylvania. The show is a reflection on his life and everyday Black life.



Deborah Willis

Image credit: Laylah Amatullah Barrayn



Anna Fine Foer, "Hybrid"

Anna Fine Foer

**BFA '80 (Fibers/Craft)**

exhibited her work in a solo show titled *Compensation for Loss* at the Peale Museum in Baltimore. Through collages, Foer explores climate change and issues related to it.

Susan Ottaviano

**BFA '82 (Illustration)**

published *The Green Witch's Guide to Magical Plants & Flowers: 26 Love Spells from Apples to Zinnias* with Skyhorse Publishing. Equal parts practical guide and beautiful keepsake, the book—co-authored with Chris Young—shows how to bring more love and contentment into your life using elements of nature. Young and Ottaviano, two green witches, transform everyday flowers, fruits, and plants into bath salts, herbal infusions, soaps, sachets, tinctures, and more.

John David Simon

**BM '82 (Music)**

has two original compositions, "Inwood" and "Saying Goodbye," in the new second edition of *Real Philadelphia Book*, compiled by Jazz Bridge and editors David Dzubinski and Suzanne Cloud and published by Temple University Press. It is available at Barnes and Noble and many other retailers.

Miriam Sushman

**BFA '82 (Graphic Design)**

was included in the juried show *All Creatures* at the Gallery of Contemporary Mosaics in Chicago; her work "Red-tailed Hawk" was featured. Sushman has been a mosaic artist in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, for 10 years and has exhibited artwork, taught mosaics at a variety of institutions, and led community projects. To see more of her work, visit [mosaicmirm.com](http://mosaicmirm.com).



Miriam Sushman, "Red-tailed Hawk"

Hratch Babikian

**BFA '83 (Metals)**

was one of three artists who exhibited in the 2022 Wind Challenge 3 series at Fleisher Art Memorial in Philadelphia. Babikian's exhibit was titled *Hiraeth* and comprised four hanging sculptures. The exhibit was held from March to April 2022.

Bob Surttman

**BM '83 (Trombone)**

performed in the national Broadway tour of *Tina: The Musical* at the Academy of Music (see photo on page 52). It featured four generations of UArts alumni in the band, including **Mark Allen BM '10, MM '11 (Saxophone, Jazz Studies)**; **John Polanco BM '22 (Trumpet)**; **Rob Rutigliano BM '22 (Saxophone)**; and **Ed Shea BMed '71 (Percussion/Education)**.

Maria Josenhans

**BFA '86 (Illustration)**

had a solo exhibition, *The Quality of Light*, at the Avenue Gallery, Oak Bay, British Columbia, Canada, in October 2023. Her painting focuses on natural landscapes.

Amanda Maishman

**BFA '88 (Graphic Design)**

was named the Rutherford County (North Carolina) Visual Artist Guild Artist of the Month in April 2023.

A.J. Casperite

**BFA '89 (Illustration)**

had work included in the juried Society of Illustration annual exhibit in New York City titled *S/65*. The piece, titled "Young Sidney Poitier in Harlem NY," was made with mixed media/Procreate.



# 20s



Scene directed by Musa Brooker from *The Boys*

## Adam Nelson BFA '91 (Theater)

is founder and CEO of Workhouse, a publicity firm based in New York City. In July, Nelson was featured on Los Angeles Magazine's website in an article titled "How Adam Nelson Became the Class Clown of Creative Communications."

## Stacy King BFA '93 (Painting)

was invited to speak at Delaware Valley University's Watson Executive-in-Residence program. King is the general manager of Watson Adventures, a company that creates team-building activities such as scavenger hunts.

## Musa Brooker BFA '95 (Animation)

directed a surprise animation component for the most recent season of *The Boys*, a gritty live-action superhero show on Prime Video. Brooker is also the show's creative director.

## Will Brock BM '97 (Instrumental Performance)

was music director of *Hymn*, a play by Lolita Chakrabarti that tells the story of the relationship of two brothers who meet as adults. It was presented by Inis Nua Theatre Company and premiered in Philadelphia at the Louis Bluver Theatre at the Drake from April 12 to 30, 2023.

## Ryan Hancock BFA '99 (Theater)

was named a 2023 Pennsylvania Super Lawyer for his work as a labor and employment attorney at Willig, Williams, & Davidson, Philadelphia.



Andrew Wheeler, cinematography, *God's Country*

**Anne Kraybill**  
**MA '01 (Museum Education)**

was named CEO of Wichita Art Museum, Kansas. The museum's collection focuses on American art and includes works by Mary Cassatt, Edward Hopper, Winslow Homer, Andrew Wyeth, Thomas Eakins, Dale Chihuly, and many other artists.

**Daniel Kushner**  
**BFA '01 (Industrial Design)**

designed a new drum accessory called Drops for his company, Tandem Drums, and has launched via Kickstarter. The campaign reached its goal in its first 12 days and has been building daily. Learn more at [tandemdrums.com](http://tandemdrums.com).

**Andrew Wheeler**  
**BFA '01 (Film)**

received an American Society of Cinematographers Spotlight Award nomination for his stunning work in *God's Country*. The award recognizes exceptional cinematography in smaller feature films.

2000s



Left to right: Loveis Wise, German Vazquez, Kerry Walk, Jayson Musson, and Jeannine Cook



Alumni Awards ceremony

Image credit: Adam Hunger/AP/Shutterstock.



Adam Blackstone, Super Bowl LVI Halftime Show



Laurin Talese, Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill

Jayson Musson  
**BFA '02 (Photography)**

exhibited *Jayson Musson: His History of Art* at the Fabric Workshop and Museum from July to November 2022. The exhibition centered around a video series that is part satire and part educational exposé of the art world and stars Musson and his puppet sidekick, Ollie. He was also honored at UArts with the inaugural Distinguished Alumni Award during UArts Weekend in October 2023.

Jeffrey L. Page  
**BFA '02 (Jazz Dance)**  
and

Laurin Talese  
**BM '04 (Vocal Performance)**

were among those who brought to life the mesmerizing musical *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*. Talese played Billie Holiday and Page directed the production, which painted a portrait of Holiday's later life through her music. **Adjunct Associate Professor Thom Weaver** was also scenic and lighting designer. *Lady Day* was staged in April by Philadelphia Theatre Company at the Suzanne Roberts Theater, just one block from UArts.

Maryanne Buschini  
**MAT '03 (Visual Arts)**

held an exhibition titled *Kensico Dreams* at the Harrison Public Library in New York in September 2023. The show's works investigate the long history of the people and the land of the Kenisco Reservoir in Westchester County.

Adam Blackstone  
**'04 (Instrumental Performance)**

brought his one-of-a-kind musical direction to Rihanna's Super Bowl LVII halftime performance. This followed a 2022 Emmy win for his musical direction of the previous year's halftime show.

Jeannine A. Cook  
**BS '05 (Communications), MA '14 (Art Education)**

owner of Harriett's Bookshop in Philadelphia and Ida's Bookshop in Collingswood, New Jersey, led a discussion in fall 2022 at UArts about activism, art, and literature with **Loveis Wise BFA '18 (Illustration)** and bestselling author of *How to Be an Antiracist* Ibram X. Kendi, who collaborated on *Magnolia Flower*. The book, published by HarperCollins in 2022, is a reimagined version of a story by lauded 20th century writer Zora Neale Hurston. Cook was also honored with the inaugural Alumni Service Award during UArts Weekend in October 2023.



Alex Da Corte, *The Street*



Jaclyn Siquett, *Loud Mouse*



Iquail Shaheed

## Alex Da Corte

### BFA '04 (Printmaking)

A large-scale solo exhibition of the work of Alex Da Corte was presented at Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery at UArts from Friday, Jan. 13 to Friday, March 10, 2023. Alex Da Corte's *The Street* comprised a suite of his recent, large-scale reverse-glass paintings, shown for the first time and hung against a background mural of his own design in an environment including masonry columns, neon, and placards.

## James Boyle

### BFA '05 (Illustration)

was among the illustrators who contributed to the Eagles Game Day Poster Playlist. The project paired visual artists and musicians to create a poster and a song for each home game. Boyle and **Sharif Lacey BFA '00 (Writing for Film and Television)**, known as Reef the Lost Cauze, collaborated for a poster commemorating a game against the New York Giants.

## Monica Zimmerman

### MA '05 (Museum Communication)

was appointed executive director of Fleisher Art Memorial in October 2022. Zimmerman formerly served as vice president of public education, engagement, and museum operations at Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

## Daniel Joseph

### BS '06 (Industrial Design)

is principal illusionist integrator at Walt Disney Imagineering and was a 2023 inductee in the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame for his innovations in special effects that influenced immersion and interactivity.

## James Moore

### MM '06 (Jazz Studies)

was appointed president of West Virginia Wesleyan College, Buckhannon, West Virginia, in March 2023.

## Kate Quinn

### MFA '07 (Museum Exhibition Planning and Design)

made history in fall 2022 by becoming the Mütter Museum's first-ever executive director. Previously, she spent 14 years at the Penn Museum as director of exhibitions and special programs. Quinn is also an adjunct professor in UArts' Museum Studies MA program.

## Iquail Shaheed

### BFA '07 (Dance)

made history by becoming the first Black male to earn a PhD in Dance from Texas Woman's University in Denton. Shaheed's research has roots in Philly: His dissertation centers around choreographer Milton Myers, who has been a visiting artist at UArts, and the joy his work evokes.

## Jason Chen

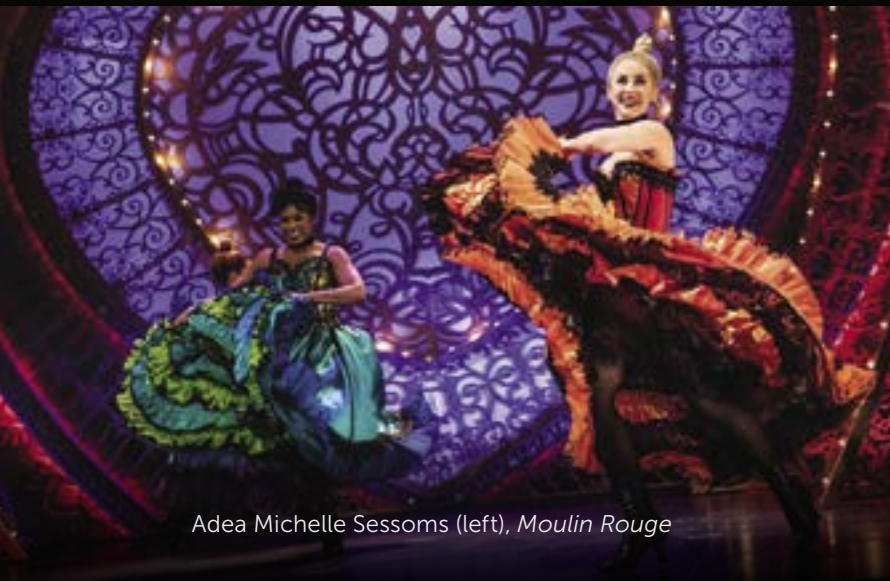
### BFA '08 (Animation)

worked with Fuentes and Group X to direct a documentary about the creation of "Alpha: Sacred Beings (The Origin of Creation)," a monument at the Philadelphia Navy Yard that was created by Marianela Fuentes and symbolizes and celebrates the bridging of two Indigenous Nations.





Tatyana Fazlalizadeh, "Flight"  
Photo credit: Steve Weinik



Adea Michelle Sessoms (left), *Moulin Rouge*

## Alexander Diaz

### BFA '08 (Theater Management and Production)

was appointed executive director of the Bergen Performing Arts Center, Englewood, New Jersey. Previously, Diaz was the center's director of education and outreach for its Performing Arts School, for which he steered classes through the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Tatyana Fazlalizadeh

### BFA '08 (Illustration)

worked with Mural Arts Philadelphia to create "Flight," a remarkable mural located 100 feet up on UArts' Spruce Hall. Unveiled in fall 2022, "Flight" explores what it means for Black people to be free to transcend their environment. Additionally, **Megan Barnes '24 (Painting)** was a painting assistant for the project.

## Lee Edward Colston II

### BFA '09 (Acting)

wrote *The First Deep Breath*, a play about family dynamics and secrets that was staged at Geffen Playhouse in Los Angeles from Feb. 1 to March 5, 2023. Colston also played Abdul-Malik, the family's eldest son.

## Tony Jackson

### BFA '08 (Ballet)

is a dance educator at Brooklyn Park Middle School and was named Maryland Dance Educator of the Year.

## Jaclyn Siquett

### BFA '08 (Illustration)

recently collaborated with *Frozen* star Idina Menzel and Menzel's sister Cara to illustrate the children's book *Loud Mouse*. The story follows a mouse with a knack for singing who learns to embrace her voice. It was released by Disney Hyperion in September 2022.

## Diane Sanders

### MFA '09 (Museum Exhibition Planning and Design)

was named assistant director of University of Southern Indiana Historic New Harmony, a historic communal living site. Previously, Sanders worked as exhibits specialist for the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center in Washington, D.C.

## Adea Michelle Sessoms

### BFA '09 (Jazz Dance)

was a part of the ensemble for *Moulin Rouge*'s national tour. It was staged in Philadelphia in July.

Jonathan Lyndon Chase, T: The New York Times Style Magazine  
Photo credit: Shikeith



Mark Allen

**BM '10 (Saxophone), MM '11 (Jazz Studies)**

performed in the national Broadway tour of *Tina: The Musical* at the Academy of Music (see photo on page 52). It featured four generations of UArts alumni in the band, including **John Polanco BM '22 (Trumpet)**; **Rob Rutigliano BM '22 (Saxophone)**; **Ed Shea BMEd '71 (Percussion/Education)**; and **Bob Surttman BM '83 (Trombone)**.

Anthony Akanbi

**BFA '11 (Illustration)**

was selected to show his artwork alongside other artists in the exhibition *Cross Cultural Perspectives* in the Newark Museum of Art for the 2023 Newark Arts Festival in New Jersey. Akanbi's piece is titled "Sun Wukong Confronts Buddha" and depicts the mythical battle of wits between the unrepentant Monkey King and the great Buddha. The exhibit was held Sept. 27–Oct. 29, 2023. Follow him on Instagram: [@rackthecrown](https://www.instagram.com/rackthecrown).

Danielle Lovier

**BFA '11 (Musical Theater)**

and

Nicholas Rahn

**BM '11 (Instrumental Performance)**

toured in support of their indie rock band Grocer's six-song EP *Scatter Plot*, which was released in March 2023. The EP is a followup to Grocer's 2022 album, *Numbers Game*.



Jason Piperberg, Eagles Game Day poster



## Brandon J. Pierce

**BFA '12 (Acting)**

played the role of Junior in the world premiere of *Eternal Life Part I*, which was staged at the Wilma Theater in Philadelphia from April 11 to 13, 2023. Written by Nathan Alan Davis, the play explores parenting, generations, and legacy.

## Jason Piperberg

**BFA '12 (Illustration)**

was among the illustrators who contributed to the Eagles Game Day Poster Playlist. The project paired visual artists and musicians to create a poster and a song for each home game.

## Charles P. Way

**BFA '12 (Dance)**

served as assistant dance captain and swing in the musical *Jagged Little Pill*, which was staged at Kimmel Cultural Campus in January.

## Jonathan Lyndon Chase

**BFA '13 (Painting)**

graced the cover of the Sept. 18 issue of *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*. Chase joined other multidisciplinary artists for a shoot celebrating the Black queer community and its trailblazers.



Julie Woodard, *Pockets of Light*

## Sarah Nguyen

**MFA '13 (Painting)**

was selected as the Martin Shallenberger Artist in Residence at Cheekwood Estate and Gardens in Nashville, Tennessee. Nguyen uses layered and cut paper to depict nature and natural elements. Her residency includes an exhibition at Cheekwood from Nov. 18, 2023, through Jan. 7, 2024. She also exhibited her work in a solo show called *Trinity* at the Branigan Cultural Center, Las Cruces, New Mexico, May 5–July 1, 2023.

## Hannah Agosta

**BFA '14 (Illustration)**

was among the illustrators who contributed to the Eagles Game Day Poster Playlist. The project paired visual artists and musicians to create a poster and a song for each home game.

## Kit Kouveras

**BS '14 (Industrial Design)**

was hired as a graphic designer at Hoffman Planning, Design, and Construction in Appleton, Wisconsin.

## Julie Woodard

**MA '15 (Museum Education)**

is a career development advisor in Career Services at UArts. With funding from the Delaware Waterfront Corp., Woodward created *Pockets of Light*, an interactive public art installation along the waterfront, on view from July to Sept. 2023. The works, which varied in media, were on display on four piers along the river and were made from post-consumer materials. The installation also included interactive elements at each exhibit location.



Lavett Ballard, Time magazine

Lavett Ballard  
MFA '17 (Studio Art)

created a powerful artwork for the Feb. 13–20, 2023, issue of Time magazine—her second cover for the magazine in two years. The collage-like work comprises images of Black life from the past and present for a cover story titled “Division and Destiny: How to Build a Truly Equal American Democracy” by Isabel Wilkerson, bestselling author of *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America’s Great Migration* and *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*.

Jessica Claypool  
BFA '17 (Animation)

is shop manager of The Painted Lady LA, a queer Black woman-owned tattoo shop in Los Angeles. The Painted Lady LA was featured in the Los Angeles Sentinel in December 2022.

Olivia Jia  
BFA '17 (Painting and Philosophy)

had her work displayed at the famed Armory Show in New York in 2022. Each year, the three-day art fair features work from galleries from around the world and is one of the epicenters of the arts in New York. In spring 2023, the gallery Margot Samuel exhibited Jia’s work in a solo show titled *Perimeter*.

Jason Corn  
BFA '18 (Acting)

and

William Sander  
BFA '17 (Acting)

have a small business, Sandcastle Fun Co. in Philadelphia, which offers early childhood classes and birthday parties for babies through six year-olds. Learn more at [sandcastlefunco.com](http://sandcastlefunco.com).



Olivia Jia

Amber Malmstadt  
BFA '18 (Dance)

was hired after graduation by Montgomery Ballet as a company member and worked her way up from corps de ballet to soloist. After leaving the ballet in 2021, Malmstadt joined Tallahassee Ballet as a corps de ballet member.

Sean Rynkewicz  
BFA '18 (Illustration)

and

Madison Claus  
BFA '17 (Musical Theater)

were engaged on Dec. 20, 2022, at Jose Pistola’s [owned by Casey Parker '97 (Musical Theater)]. They will be married on Jan. 27, 2024, at St. Luke and the Epiphany Episcopal Church—just around the corner from several UArts buildings. Rynkewicz and Claus were both resident assistants in Juniper Hall during the 2016–2017 academic year. Claus is now senior administrative assistant in the Brind School of Theater Arts, and Rynkewicz is an adjunct assistant professor in the School of Design. The couple also shares yet another UArts touchstone: They both received the Resident of the Year Award, one year apart.

Loveis Wise  
BFA '18 (Illustration)

teamed up with bestselling author of *How to Be an Antiracist* Ibram X. Kendi in 2022 to create a reimagined version of a Zora Neale Hurston story in a picture book titled *Magnolia Flower*. In fall 2022, the pair visited UArts for a discussion about activism, art and literature, led by **Jeannine A. Cook BS '05 (Communications), MA '14 (Art Education)**, who is the owner of Harriett’s Bookshop in Philadelphia and Ida’s Bookshop in Collingswood, New Jersey. Wise was also honored at UArts with the inaugural Young Alumni Award during UArts Weekend in October 2023.



# 2020s

Mikaela Rada



Kyle Tanguay  
**BFA '20 (Dance)**

who, as a rising senior, became the Philadelphia Eagles' first male cheerleader in more than three decades and later appeared on *American Idol*, joined the production of *Awakening* at Wynn Las Vegas casino and hotel. Through dance, the show follows its heroine and her two companions as they "seek to restore beauty and love to the world." It's performed in a custom-designed, 360-degree theater made especially for the show.

Mikaela Rada  
**BFA '20 (Dance)**

is performing in *Mean Girls'* national tour, which is playing in theaters across the country through May 2024. She is in the ensemble and is understudy for the role of Gretchen.

German Vazquez  
**BFA '20 (Photography)**

was honored with the inaugural Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Alumni Award during UArts Weekend in October 2023.

Isabelle Cress  
**BFA '21 (Illustration)**

was selected to create a sustainability-themed mural for the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal no. 17, Partnerships for the Goals: Revitalizing Global Partnerships for Sustainable Development. The mural was installed at St. Mary's Interparochial School in Philadelphia.

Vero Gilman  
**BFA '21 (Illustration)**

was among the illustrators who contributed to the Eagles Game Day Poster Playlist. The project paired visual artists and musicians to create a poster and a song for each home game.



Isabelle Cress, Global Philadelphia's 17th sustainable goal mural

## Xenia Matthews

**BFA '21 (Film)**

was selected for the 2023 Sundance Film Festival. Her 2022 film *OURIKA!* was screened at the celebrated film festival after its world premiere at the Philadelphia-based BlackStar Film Festival in summer 2022. It also earned Matthews a feature in Filmmaker Magazine's 25 New Faces of Independent Film roundup.



## Abel Aranda

**MM '22 (Jazz Studies)**

was featured in Jazz Times in the story "Abel Aranda's Jazz Journey: The Mexican guitarist wanted to study jazz in the U.S.—and found help in a surprising place," published Dec. 8, 2022.

## Hap Haggelgans

**BFA '22 (Illustration)**

was among the illustrators who contributed to the Eagles Game Day Poster Playlist. The project paired visual artists and musicians to create a poster and a song for each home game.

## Victoria Hamersky

**BS '22 (Music Business, Entrepreneurship, & Technology)**

created her own management company, VH MGMT, when she was just 18. Its mission is to make the music industry more inclusive. Her time at UArts further shaped this vision and turned into a thriving, full-service artist management and development company. In April 2023, she headed out on the road as tour manager for musician Isabel Pless.







Zeinab Diomande, "Deli Delight"

Jack Hopewell

**BFA '22 (Musical Theater)**

played Jesus Christ in the North American tour of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, which started in fall 2022. He was hired only a few months after graduation.

Lily McKown

**BS '22 (Music Business, Entrepreneurship, & Technology)**

released the music video for her latest single, "Yarko's House." Her debut album, *Backseat Driver*, came out in 2020 and was well-received, garnering attention and praise from WXPN.

John Polanco

**BM '22 (Trumpet)**

performed in the national Broadway tour of *Tina: The Musical* at the Academy of Music (see photo on page 52). It featured four generations of UArts alumni in the band, including **Mark Allen BM '10, MM '11 (Saxophone, Jazz Studies)**; **Rob Rutigliano BM '22 (Saxophone)**; **Ed Shea BMEd '71 (Percussion/Education)**; and **Bob Surtman BM '83 (Trombone)**.

Carolyn Quick

**BFA '22 (Museum Exhibition Planning & Design)**

produced a museum exhibit called *A League Apart*, about the Philadelphia Negro Leagues with Brian Michael, founder of Phillies Nation and co-owner of Shibe Vintage Sports. It was hosted at the Cherry Street Pier, Philadelphia, during July and August 2023. Using memorabilia, stories from the past, and the audio baseball is known for, *A League Apart* focused on the players who stepped up to the plate to change the biases and traditions of baseball.

Rob Rutigliano

**BM '22 (Saxophone)**

performed in the national Broadway tour of *Tina: The Musical* at the Academy of Music (see photo on page 52). It featured four generations of UArts alumni in the band, including **Mark Allen BM '10, MM '11 (Saxophone, Jazz Studies)**; **John Polanco BM '22 (Trumpet)**; **Ed Shea BMEd '71 (Percussion/Education)**; and **Bob Surtman BM '83 (Trombone)**.

Zeinab Diomande

**BFA '23 (Fine Arts)**

created the eye-catching "Deli Delight" in Fishtown for a collaboration among Streets Dept, Living Walls, and the Adult Swim Festival. Diomande also premiered her first solo exhibition, *Wildest Dreams*, at Philadelphia's Magic Gardens in fall 2023.

# GET CREATIVE WITH YOUR SUPPORT OF UArTS.

What if we told you that you could make a difference at UArts today while also enhancing your finances for the future? Join the dozens of 1876 Society members who have included UArts in their estate plans, and you could receive lifelong income and immediate tax benefits.

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Visit [uarts.edu/planned-giving](https://uarts.edu/planned-giving) or call 215-717-6149 to let us know you've already included UArts in your estate plans or to learn more about any of these options. As always, consult your financial or tax advisor about what's best for your specific situation.

The 1876 Society recognizes those who have included UArts in their estate plans. Members receive invitations to exclusive events and special recognition. To join, simply inform us that UArts is a beneficiary of your will, retirement plan, or life insurance policy. You can also work with us to make an investment that both benefits UArts and earns you income during your lifetime. Inquiries are confidential and carry no obligations.

# 1876



University of the Arts gratefully acknowledges the following donors, who made generous contributions in fiscal year 2023. Their personal commitments to the university were truly impactful and deeply appreciated.

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Named in honor of John Haviland, the legendary architect of Dorrance Hamilton Hall, the Haviland Society recognizes dedicated benefactors who make annual gifts of \$1,000 and greater to UArts. Their support ensures that the university continues to advance the creativity of new and cutting-edge artistic talent in visual arts, performing arts, and media and communications. Haviland Society members receive insider access, invitations to exclusive events and networking opportunities, special recognition in Edge magazine, and more.

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ONE DAY. ONE GIFT.

**I GAVE**

TO UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS

ADVANCING HUMAN CREATIVITY

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We extend our deepest thanks to the many members of the UArts community who participated in the UArtist Day of Giving, Feb. 28, 2023.

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