Welcome to the Spring 2020 issue of Gallatin Today.

The articles in this issue were written before the pandemic changed our world.

We hope you are able to read this from the safety of your home and find some comfort and community in these pages.

We also hope to gather, debate, learn, grow, and celebrate together soon.

Take good care,
NYU Gallatin

[ INSIDE ]

Faculty Feature: George Shulman;
News & Notes; Seniors Sean & Jakiyah;
Alumna Feature: Melissa Bartow;
Faculty Books; Alumni Notes
George Shulman knows that we are the stories we tell ourselves, on a personal level as well as on the American political stage. When we question these narratives of our lives, what changes? When the stories we’ve told ourselves about America are called into question, what new answers are revealed?

A renowned political theorist equally revered as a scholar and a teacher, Shulman has taught at Gallatin since before it was a School of NYU. He came to NYU, and to what was then the Gallatin Division, after studying political theory at the University of California, Berkeley, and teaching at Yale and The New School. One of the early questions he and his Gallatin colleagues sought to answer was what could—and should—interdisciplinary study look like.

"We wanted to teach students to be self-reflective and to bring the full range of liberal arts to bear on their academic inquiries, their artistic practice, and to their future professions and careers," Shulman recalls of his arrival at Gallatin in 1994. At that time, the School was housed on only two floors in the 1 Washington Place building. Shulman and other core faculty developed interdisciplinary seminars to model how students could conceive and shape their own concentrations. "In our view, the ability to be both critical and creative about what we do is the goal of education—and of citizenship," he says.

Because students created an intellectual path that would bring their various interests into genuine dialogue, advising had to become a core Gallatin priority. Students worked with faculty in their interdisciplinary seminars and forged close relationships to their professors. "Students making an individualized program need a lot of input and engagement with faculty to figure out what we now call a concentration that crosses all these disciplinary lines," says Shulman. "That puts advising at the center of the School, which is why it remains unlike almost any other kind of academic institution in the country."

"George cultivated and held space in our interdisciplinary seminars in a way that still feels radical," says Zach Meredith (BA ’08). "He was often teaching and modeling through process—collaboratively co-creating in the classroom the very same reflective and dialectical, small-d democratic political spaces that we were exploring across many political theory, philosophy, literature, and poetry texts."
In the fall of 2019, you could find Shulman leading an interdisciplinary seminar on American exceptionalism with students at 1 Washington Place and, 90 minutes north of Manhattan, at the Wallkill Correctional Facility, examining passages from *Moby Dick* with students from the NYU Prison Education Program (PEP). PEP offers college education to incarcerated individuals at Wallkill, a medium-security men’s prison in New York State’s Ulster County. Now in its fifth year, the college-in-prison program aims to expand access to higher education within communities impacted by the criminal justice system.

In January 2015, Shulman and Bryonnn Bain (MA ’99) organized and ran the first PEP class. "Teaching there is an extraordinary experience," says Shulman. "These men have a deep political understanding of a world that’s structured by race and class. Their reactions are so genuinely spontaneous and often very raw, so the classes are incredibly kinetic and often very raw, so the classes are incredibly kinetic and alive with their honesty about what they’re reading. For them, having an education that is deeply committed to their empowerment is transforming."

Gallatin faculty member Laura Slatkin, a classicist who also taught at Wallkill, recalls that on their rides back to New York, "George would spend those hours in the car reflecting on questions and insights that his students had raised in class and that he found especially illuminating and wanted to share."

Whether at Gallatin or Wallkill, Shulman wants to engage and challenge his students. His teaching, research, and writing bring together political philosophy, critical race theory, American studies, and American literature. Slatkin appreciates that Shulman asks students to historicize their intellectual commitments and urgent questions. She says, "George resists a kind of myopic presentism—a privileging of exclusively contemporary perspectives. He’s pushing back on the assumption that modernity is by definition more enlightened than any earlier era and owes nothing to what came before." Recipient of an NYU Distinguished Teaching Award, Shulman’s current book project title is *Postmortem Life: Theorizing Beyond Impasse* (in progress).

**Author**

*Postmortem Life: Theorizing Beyond Impasse* (in progress)

*American Prophecy: Race and Redemption in American Political Culture* (University of Minnesota Press)


**Co-author, with Alyson Cole**

*Derangement and Liberalism: The Political Theory of Michael Paul Rogin* (Routledge, 2019)

**Editor, with Romand Coles, Mark Reinhardt**

*Radical Future Pasts* (University Press of Kentucky, 2014)
Shulman knows almost nothing of what he thinks of things. He presents so much knowledge and background without any hint of how it should be thought about. That’s the part he leaves entirely to you, the student. It’s maddening! And an amazing feat—and the mark of a true educator.”

Shulman also stands out as a valued colleague and a well-respected political theorist. He is the author of *Radicalism and Reverence: The Political Thought of Gerrard Winstanley* (University of California Press, 1989) and *American Prophecy: Race and Redemption in American Political Culture* (University of Minnesota Press, 2010); co-author, with Alyson Cole, of *Derangement and Liberalism: Political Theory of Michael Rogin* (Routledge, 2019); and co-editor of *Radical Future Pasts* (the University Press of Kentucky, 2014).

In 2010, *American Prophecy* was awarded the prestigious David Easton Prize from the American Political Science Association, which recognizes a book that broadens the horizons of contemporary political science. Since its inception, the prize has honored celebrated political theorists, including Jurgen Habermas, Sheldon Wolin, Bonnie Honig, Wendy Brown, and Tracy B. Strong.

Shulman’s Gallatin colleague and fellow political theorist—and former student—Rosanne Kennedy notes that “American Prophecy is an extraordinary work that critically and imaginatively looks at the role prophetic language has in American democratic discourse, especially in regard to racial politics.”

Says Kennedy, “I like to read acknowledgments in the footnotes of essays and in the beginning pages of books. If you read these notes and pages, you’ll notice that in almost every important work of political theory (well, of a certain theoretical persuasion) over the past 30 years that George’s name is listed—and not as a minor figure of support, but as the person who read and commented on every page of the manuscript.”

Shulman extends the invitation to listen, think, and work together to his colleagues, co-teaching with Lisa Goldfarb “Poetry and Politics in America” and “Poetry, Prophecy, Politics,” courses that brought political theory and Goldfarb’s field of comparative literature into conversation.

“We would often debate together and in class about the differences between ‘poetic meaning’ and ‘political argument.’ We’d sometimes get tangled up in our debates, and such intellectual wrestling characterized many of our class sessions,” Goldfarb says. “We also challenged each other to ‘teach’ the other’s texts: George would teach a Stevens poem, for example, and I would teach Machiavelli’s *Principe*. It was exhilarating. George is a dynamic, energetic, and challenging teacher, and it was a real gift to teach with him.”

Over the past several years, Shulman has organized Gallatin Global Faculty Symposia, meeting in Berlin and in Paris and bringing together faculty from Gallatin’s global sites to focus on an issue. In the same way, he has put together open study groups that include his Gallatin colleagues, scholars and activists within the greater NYU community, and scholars from other universities.

In addition to his work of engaging Gallatin students in political dialogue, Shulman has organized events around contemporary issues and concerns, including town halls for students, faculty, and staff that were held on the eve of the 2016 election and of the 2018 midterms. Others tackled themes of free speech—one of which was set up in the midst of the 2017 controversy over NYU’s (since rescinded) invitation to Milo Yannopoulos—and centered discussions on race and on the #MeToo movement. All of these forums became opportunities to come together and think through challenging political topics as a community.

Shulman enjoys examining the politics of any given moment, but he always places his inquiry in the broader political context of American society. George introduced me to the work of Michael Rogin, who was George’s mentor and professor at Berkeley, and for whom studying politics means looking at culture, film, and especially literature as essential windows into looking at American life,” says alumnus Adam Epstein (BA ’96). “The idea, George said, is that you can’t just view politics as a political system on its own. He’s a political theorist by training, but he’s an expert at conveying what’s important about the underbelly of America and asking his students to look at it in the context of culture and through a literary lens.”

NYU Law School graduate Kate Fritz (BA ’10; JD ’20) recalls, “George helped me cultivate a confidence in my own mind that has served me every day since I graduated from Gallatin, but he never told me what to think. Instead, he modeled what it means to have deeply held moral commitments, and in doing so taught me to develop and live by my own.”

Shulman’s teaching, scholarship, and camaraderie with his colleagues align with the values and pedagogy of the School—and with its spirit. Looking at his work and teaching is an exercise in better understanding what Gallatin is and how the School has evolved. He takes every opportunity to ask his students, former students, colleagues, and members of the Gallatin community to reflect on what we think we know, to remain open to what we do not know, and to never back away from examining what brought us together—and what we can learn from listening to one another. 

In the face of the global pandemic of COVID-19, cafes, restaurants, stores, offices, and universities closed. Doors of enclosed detention centers, prisons, and jails were closed already, of course. Many of these densely populated facilities tightened visitation policies and some released prisoners in order to lower the risk of exposing prisoners to the disease. Disrupting lives and livelihoods, the pandemic also interrupted the studies of student inmates across the country, including those living at the Wallkill Correctional Facility for Men who are enrolled in NYU’s Prison Education Program (PEP).

On March 17, the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision suspended all in-person instruction and visitation in state prisons and jails. Wallkill anticipated the impact this would have on the program and was quick to distribute a course packet to each student and to more classes to remote instruction. The course packet includes resource materials and week-by-week study plans that maintain the students’ academic engagement in the library and computer lab for the remainder of the semester.

Each week, a staff member travels to the prison to collect homework and drop off additional faculty instructions, grades, and assignments. Because remote video instruction is not possible for these students, it is the fast-acting correspondence of PEP’s attentive staff that has maintained the program. The students at Wallkill have continued their studies in small groups, discussing readings and supporting each other to complete assignments, with questions for the instructor submitted in a weekly letter sent to the students and staff.

PEP has been monitoring the situation at Wallkill closely. The program is administering an enrollment survey so that they may continue to prioritize the education of their students under these new pressures. An emergency fund has been set up that directly aids the education of students with books and laptops, as well as their well-being post-incarceration by providing them with student debt relief, Metro cards, and temporary housing. For more information on the program, visit prismeducation.nyu.edu.
—Mary Gonzalez (BA ’20)
**Gallatin Junior Awarded 2020 Truman Scholarship**

Gallatin junior Olùwátọ́nà “Tọ̀nà” Campbell has been awarded the prestigious Harry S. Truman Scholarship, a public service award that recognizes the work of approximately one college junior from each of the 50 states who has demonstrated a strong commitment to leadership and public service. The Foundation received over 700 applications in 2020 and Campbell is one of 62 undergraduates from across the United States to receive an award. He is the 15th recipient ever from NYU.

As a Truman Scholar, Campbell will receive $30,000, which he’ll use to pursue a master’s in public policy with a focus in technology. Campbell’s concentration at NYU Gallatin combines politics and technology in order to understand the impact of Big Data and emerging technologies on marginalized people. His experiences in the fields of policy and social advocacy inspire him to fight against algorithmic bias, data misuse, and surveillance.

“I am truly honored to be selected for the Truman Scholarship. I am so thankful for all the experiences, discussions, and relationships that I’ve had here at Gallatin. They’ve prepared me not only for this scholarship, but for a future in public service,” says Campbell.

Dean Susanne L. Wofford adds, “We are very proud of Tọ̀nà Campbell, who exemplifies that combination of brilliant scholarship and commitment to public service that characterizes the ideal of the Gallatin School. Tọ̀nà’s political advocacy, his use of academic expertise to fight bias and inequality, and his willingness to devote significant time to supporting political campaigns while maintaining his academic commitments makes him a true model. This is a special honor most well deserved by this brilliant interdisciplinary student leader and social activist.”

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**2020 Guggenheim Fellowship in US History for Phillips-Fein**

Gallatin professor Kimberly Phillips-Fein was one of three NYU faculty members awarded a 2020 Guggenheim Fellowship, which honors scholars and artists of various fields for their prior achievements, awarding them for their exceptional promise in continuing innovative work. Phillips-Fein’s fellowship is in the category of US history.


“We often think of the United States as having American political culture that celebrates economic mobility and a sense of equality for all, or a kind of common prosperity,” says Phillips-Fein. “However, there is another strong tradition that values economic hierarchy and defends it as a good thing in its own right. This is important to understand because it helps explain the tenacity of inequality in American history and the difficulty that political movements have in challenging it.”

Her other publications include *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan* (WW Norton, 2009) and *Fear City: New York’s Fiscal Crisis and Rise of Austerity Politics* (Metropolitan Books, 2017), which was listed as a finalist for a 2018 Pulitzer Prize in History.
Stephen Duncombe was awarded a 2019–2020 NYU Distinguished Teaching Award, the highest honor for NYU faculty. The award recognizes faculty members who have contributed significantly to the intellectual life of the University through their teaching. The nominations are made with letters of support sent in by students and colleagues. Duncombe, upon learning about the award, was touched by the letters he read.

“As much as my colleagues’ generosity moved me, it was really the students’ letters that helped me see what was important to them,” recalls Duncombe. “The thing which they appreciated the most was that I took them seriously. They said that I treated the students as intellectuals, and therefore our conversations were intellectual conversations. That’s what I have tried to do—to take students and their ideas really seriously.”

Duncombe is the creator of Open Utopia, an open-access, open-source, web-based edition of Thomas More’s Utopia, and is the co-founder and co-director of the Center for Artistic Activism, a research and training institute that helps activists to create more like artists and artists to strategize more like activists, themes that are reflected in his classrooms and his publications. As a member of the Engaged Urbanists Working Group, Duncombe co-published The Copenhagen Experiment in 2019 to measure the relative effectiveness of creative activism over conventional forms of activism.

He is the author of Dream or Nightmare: Re-Imagining Progressive Politics in an Age of Fantasy (The New Press, 2007) and Notes From Underground: Zines and Politics in an Age of Fantasy (Verso, 1997), editor of the Cultural Resistance Reader (Verso, 2002), co-editor of White Riot: Punk Rock and the Politics of Race (Verso, 2011), and writes on the intersection of culture and politics for a range of scholarly and popular publications.

Healing Trauma Through Art
Founder and Executive Director of Children of Peace Uganda
Jane Ekayu Visits Gallatin

Beginning in the mid-1980s and continuing for nearly two decades, a guerrilla campaign in northern Uganda was waged by members of the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) with the aim of overthrowing the Ugandan government. Over that time, one of the most disturbing tactics employed by the LRA was the forced conscription of children.

In 2006, in response to this crisis, Jane Ekayu, a child trauma therapist who had her own childhood experiences with the LRA, founded Children of Peace Uganda, a rehabilitation practice in post-conflict zones that uses dance, music, spoken word, and art therapy as a healing agents for former child soldiers, orphaned children, and any others affected by the LRA. Through her organization, Ekayu strives to help children forgive those who harmed them and to unite as a community and to continue their education, which was often cut short by their war experiences.

On November 13, 2019, Ekayu and four of her students joined Gallatin to discuss how the arts have helped children of war heal from trauma. Ekayu was brought to Gallatin by alumnus John Ridley (BA ’87; 12 Years A Slave, Let It Fall, Guerrilla, American Crime, CEO, Nō Studios), who introduced her. In 2019, Ridley and Aviva Feuerstein (former director of global intelligence analytics, National Basketball Association), and their film crew traveled to Lira, Uganda, to document the work being done by Ekayu and the 14 volunteers who have helped over 3,000 children reintegrate into Ugandan society.

Children of Peace Uganda is a safe haven for thousands under Ekayu’s guidance, and her dedication offers the possibility of a peaceful future. After the visit to Gallatin, Ekayu and her students traveled to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to join the inaugural Nō Studios Social Justice Summit, “Art Activated,” a two-day event that ran from November 15-16, 2019, attended by Gallatin faculty members Michael Dinwiddie (BA ’80; TSOA MA ’83), Kristin Horton, and Millery Polyné. To learn more about Children of Peace Uganda, please visit their site. —Mary González (BA ’20)
In February 2020, Gallatin Today checked in with student government heads Sean Oh (BA '20; NYU Gallatin Student Council president) and Jakiyah Bradley (BA '20; NYU Student Government Assembly Chairperson) to learn about what brought them to Gallatin and to student government. Both are highly motivated students interested in changing the world for the better, one initiative at a time.

For Sean Oh, Gallatin offered the freedom and resources to speak to his curiosity. He recalls, "Even before entering college, I wanted to study international law and realized it was not a field of study commonly offered at the undergraduate level. At Gallatin, I could explore it through the different intersections of international relations, law, economics, development, and politics, evolving with each semester. My knowledge of quantitative facts in law and economic practice were constantly being enhanced and brought into dialogue with one another."

In his sophomore year, he took Alejandro Velasco’s "(Re)Imagining Latin America," a class that examined the inequities of the global order. Says Oh, "Critiquing its current flaws was the first step to imagining a new, more equitable system of global order."

The course led Oh to apply for the Gallatin Global Human Rights Fellowship (GGHRF) which allowed him to intern at the Esperanza Immigrant Rights Project in Los Angeles and to work directly with undocumented immigrants and with asylum cases. "The fellowship required a heightened awareness of both human rights and invidious power structures," says Oh.

With the aim of correcting those dynamics, Oh stepped into a leadership role on campus, joining the GSC as a sophomore and, in 2019, moving on to head the GSC as the president.

"Despite the plethora and diversity of students," he remembers, "I struggled to find my community. I joined the Gallatin Student Council to both find a community for myself and create one for students in similar situations. I created Gallatin’s first-ever Spirit Week and Student Leaders Retreat as respectively bottom-up and top-down methods of community engagement."

Jakiyah Bradley developed the concentration Urban Policy and Social Change. "The first half of my concentration was inspired by University of Chicago’s Urban Policy Initiative (UPI)," says Bradley. "I’m from the Chicago area and became interested in urban policy issues in high school because of them. While I decided to not go to UChicago, I wanted to honor my home in my concentration name: the latter half of my concentration, Social Change, comes from my dream for a better world that needs deep social change."

"It was in Kwami Coleman’s “Hearing Difference: The Commercial Music Industry and the American Racial Imaginary” course that Bradley’s interest in race and music were brought together, along with a lesson about history through case studies. In terms of student leadership, Bradley says, "I have always tried to get involved with leadership opportunities to make college life easier for students like me, who are historically underrepresented. It’s also a great way to make friends who have a shared value system as you."

"I try to listen to my body if I’m tired, mentally or physically. I’m not afraid to cancel meetings sometimes—obviously with two or three days of notice. I have to be really honest with others and myself, especially because there are a lot of meetings I do have to attend—and I want to be productive!"

Seniors Sean and Jakiyah

Gallatin Today sat down in the Gallatin lobby and wondered how these two dynamic students set boundaries to protect their energies when doing so much volunteering.

Oh "The reason why I’m doing a lot of what I’m doing is for the community in this building. I sometimes ask myself: If I do this other thing, how much am I sacrificing to the promise that I made to Gallatin’s community? I also try to recognize the limits of my personal bandwidth. The main reason why all of us are here is for school. There’s so much happening—that’s why it’s amazing."

Bradley "I try to listen to my body if I’m tired, mentally or physically. I’m not afraid to cancel meetings sometimes—obviously with two or three days of notice. I have to be really honest with others and myself, especially because there are a lot of meetings I do have to attend—and I want to be productive!"

Photo by Veronica Liow

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FACULTY BOOKS

SINAN ANTOON
Book of Collateral Damage (al-Fihrist), translated by JONATHAN WRIGHT (Yale University Press, 2019)

SINAN ANTOON — translator, The Book of Disappearance (Syracuse University Press, 2019)

SAUL AUSTERLITZ
Generation Friends: An Inside Look at the Show That Defined a Television Era (Dutton, 2019)

KATE BOLICK
Becoming A Hairstylist (Simon & Schuster, 2019)

KATE BOLICK — with JENNY ZHANG, CARMEN MARIA MACHADO, and JANE SMILEY, March Sisters: On Life, Death, and Little Women (Library of America, 2019)

STEPHEN DUNCOMBE
Dreams or Nightmares: Re-Imagining Progressive Politics in an Age of Fantasy (The New Press, re-issued 2019)

ROSALIND FREDERICKS

SHARON FRIEDMAN, co-author with CHERYL BLACK
Modern American Drama: Playwriting in the 1990s: Voices, Documents, New Interpretations, Volume 7 in Decades of Modern American Drama (Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 2018)

D. B. GILLES
BITTEN! My Days as Donald Trump’s White House Dog (2019)

SCOTT HIGHTOWER
Tartessos (Devenir, 2019)

ALEX HALBERSTADT

JOSHUA JELLY-SCHAPIO
Cuba Then, Cuba Now (Canongate Books, 2019)
MIDGET JOACHIM, with MARIA AIOLOVA and TERREFORM ONE
Design With Life: Biotech Architecture and Resilient Cities
(AC/TA/AR, March 2019)

MEENA KANDASAMY
Exquisite Cadavers

ALI MIRSEPASSI
Iran’s Quiet Revolution: The Downfall of the Pahlavi State
(Cambridge University Press, 2019)

MATTHEW STANLEY
Einstein’s War: How Relativity Triumphed, Abrid The Violent Nationalism of World War I
(Dutton, 2019)

LARA VAPNYAR
Divide Me by Zero
(Tin House Books, 2019)

LARA VAPNYAR, with LYNN FREED and ELIZABETH STROUT, edited by LAURA FURMAN
The O. Henry Prize Stories 100th Anniversary Edition: 2019 Best Short Stories of the Year
(Anchor, 2019)

LAUREN WALSH
Conversations on Conflict Photography
(Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2019)

EDITED AND CO-EDITED VOLUMES

EMILY FRAGOS
Poems of Paris
(Everyman’s Library, 2019)

HANNAH GURMAN, co-editor with KAETEN MISTRY, Whistleblowing Nation: Disclosing US National Security and the Challenge of Dissent
(Columbia University Press, 2020)

GEORGE SHULMAN, with ALYSON COLE
Derangement and Liberalism: The Political Theory of Michael Paul Rogin
(Routledge, 2019)

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(Routledge, 2019)
How did your concentration evolve during your time at Gallatin?
I started with fashion marketing but moved on to merge business strategy with creative direction, using brand identity as the vehicle for change by the end of my sophomore year. The evolution really came down to things I experienced during my jobs and internships over the years. I realized that I actually hated fashion and retail pretty early and soon discovered a love for the start-up hustle.

Favorite Gallatin or NYU course(s) taken
Moya Luckett and Harold Brooks’s “Fashion Business Practicum” course—and anything taught by Eugene Vydrin!

Favorite memory of Gallatin
Studying abroad at NYU Florence!

On January 12, 2020, you appeared on the TV show Shark Tank and accepted an offer from Mark Cuban to invest in your company, Wanna Date?

How did Shark Tank end up happening?
Right when I started my company, I applied on ABC.com. To my surprise, a producer reached out about five months later after having read my application. They began asking me details about my company, me, my story, and from there, it was a lot of paperwork and sending in audition tapes, week after week, until one day, I was on a plane headed to California.

What was it like being on the show?
Did you feel prepared? Nervous? I was so pumped. Nervous, too—yes—but it’s a dream come true for any entrepreneur, so the excitement and opportunity overrode my nerves. It’s like being a quarterback headed to the Super Bowl; I was ready for it.

What was that moment like when you received an offer from Mark Cuban and had to decide quickly whether to take it or not?
Considering that all of the other sharks were out, I was relieved when Mark made an offer. He asked for more equity than I wanted to give up, but I love Mark, and I was there to make a deal. The moment I said yes was one of the happiest moments of my life.

What has been the response after the show? From fans or new supporters?
The response from Shark Tank fans was overwhelming. I had people twice my age calling me an inspiration, people telling me how proud they were despite having never met me, people I didn’t know from my hometown reaching out, and viewers who bought a date spread, despite having never tried dates before, simply because of how passionate and convincing I was.

What's next for you? For the company?
My goal is to get these date spreads into a big retailer by the end of the year as I grow my web presence and build an online community. Wanna Date? is still a start-up. I’m the only employee, and this is just the beginning. Five years from now, I want Wanna Date? to be a household name. I want to see Wanna Date? frappés on the Starbucks menu, launch more date-based products I have in mind, and essentially make dates mainstream!
For “Modern Aging,” Mona Kedden (BA ’98, GSAS MA ’93) and Paul Lipton were interviewed in “Dating After 60: Find True Love at 70: How to Fall in Love Again.”

Kathryn Posin (MA ’94), professor of dance at Gallatin, adapted her World Dance course to reach students through NYU Zoom amid the university’s precautionary measures against COVID-19. Posin’s course was among the first of its kind to experiment with a physical practice online, utilizing distance learning as a new medium—a new instrument—for dance.

Vera Wegman (MA ’95) is directing Petit Rat, a family documentary about how her mother’s dream to become a dancer was cut short due to World War II. Roberta Grossman, director-producer of Who Will Write Our History, is the executive producer.

2000s

Award-winning writer, filmmaker, and human rights activist Isabella Alexander-Nathan’s (BA ’07) book, Nigerian’s Europe’s Border, was published by Oxford University Press on January 20, 2020, with her documentary film, The Buring, due to be released in the summer of 2020.

Author and activist Susan Anglada Barley (BA ’00) appears in the winter 2020 issue of Playboy in an article about antifascist organizing in Portland.

Sarah Best (BA ’02), CEO and chief strategist of Sarah Best Strategy, was featured in In Business Madison’s “40 Under 40,” an annual recognition of 40 of the most successful and civic-minded young professionals under the age of 40 in the greater Madison area.

Ashahe Bhalia (BA ’06) earned a master’s of public health from Columbia University and is currently working at the Office of the Attorney General in Nevada. Bhalia helped establish and served as the founding president and chairman of Skatetian, a school in Kabul, which was the subject of the Oscar-winning film, Learning to Skateboard in a Warzone (If You’re a Girl).

Malachi Black’s (BA ’04) poem “Bildungsmann” will be published in the 2019-2020 winter issue of Phosphohorus.

Playwright Gregory Bossong’s (BA ’05) screenplay for Can You Tell Me How was named in this year’s issue of The Black List as one of the best scripts of 2019.


Faith Pennick’s (MA ’00) book Peptalk: You gods, a new addition to the “33⅓” book series, about the 2000 album by the R&B singer/songwriter, was released March 2020 by Bloomsbury Press.

In November 2019, Candace Lunn (BA ’01) held a women's festival in Seoul in collaboration with KU, “U SHE/YOU!” where she screened a selection of international and Korean films about women.

The head of Instagram, Adam Mossert (BA ’05), was featured in the January 17, 2020, New York Times article “This Is the Guy Who Is Taking Away Likes”.

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Liz Suman (BA ’06) is Playboy’s new executive editor and was quoted in the 2019 New York Times article “Will the Millennials Save Playboy?”

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consider themselves dancers or use dance as a tool for their own artistic and personal practice.

Michael Brick (BA ’14) earned a master’s in higher education administration from Baruch College, City University of New York, and currently works as a senior research analyst at the Institute for Higher Education Policy in Washington, DC.

Earlene Cruz (MA ’17) was invited to co-teach a class at NYU’s College of Global Public Health. Cruz’s organization, Kitchen Connection, hosted Food Network chef Grace Ramirez and Chef Hanan Rashied at the UN during the Climate Summit.

Martha Diaz (MA ’10) was invited to be a MacArthur Civic Media Fellow at the USC Annenberg Innovation Lab. The fellowship will support her community archiving project and the development of the first online hip-hop school.

Stacey Ferreira (BA ’11), CEO and co-founder ofForge, joined Workhuman as director of digital workplace. Prior to founding Forge, Ferreira founded MySocialCloud (password storage and SSO technology), which was acquired by Reputation.com in 2013. She has been recognized on Forbes’ 30 Under 30, co-authored best-selling book 2 Billion Under 20, and has spoken at a number of prestigious events, including TEDx and Women’s Summit, among others.

Allison Flom (BA ’17) won the Tikkim Alam Award the Jewish Council for Public Affairs at the annual ICPA Conference, February 8-11, 2020, in Washington, DC, for her book Laulu and the Rhinoceros.

Michael Frazier (BA ’17) was named poet of the week for January 13-19, 2020, and was interviewed by Brooklyn Poets.

Ashley Glasgow-Crockett (BA ’10) earned her master’s in criminology from St. John’s University.

Libertad Guerra (MA ’11) was named the new executive director of the Clemente Soto Véllez Cultural and Educational Center. She is the recipient of the Torres Torices Village Community Hero Award and the NYacker Award for Arman-Garde Excellence in 2019.


Sudhanshu C. Kaushik (BA ’17) founded the Young India Foundation, India’s first youth-centric advocacy and political action committee to help young people below the age of 25 run for elections in the country, which was the subject of Kaushik’s TEDx talk.

Erik Kim (BA ’15) authored Letters, Mugs, a print magazine of love letters from around the world.


Brenda Lou (BA ’16) received acceptance to the master’s degree program in urban planning at Hunter College, City University of New York, and will begin graduate school in fall 2020.

Christina Marinis’s (BA ’18) article “Detecting opioid content on Twitter” was published in the Drug and Alcohol Review (March 2020).

Kate McBride (BA ’10) co-founded a landmark exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston called Women Take the Floor, which is on view through May 3, 2021. The show curates a selection of quotes for the entrances to the exhibition alongside the galleries.

Justin McDevitt (BA ’13) had a public reading of his new full-length drama, Honey Fitz, at the Stonewall Inn on February 3, 2020.

Katie Mears (MA ’18) is writing for Vultury, covering their stand-up content, as an expansion on her Gallatin work on the history of American stand-up comedy.

Bassist Karina Rykman (BA ’16) was interviewed by Grateful Web.

Madeleine Saaf (BA ’16) recently completed a master’s degree in professional writing in the UK. She is currently working at Netflix and helped launch the new publication Queue.

Anya Tchoupakov (BA ’17) earned a master’s in book history and material culture from the University of Edinburgh and was recently named the managing editor of the magazine Off Assignment.

Soprano vocalist Alice Waller (MA ’17) released her first EP, Same Hidden Terrain, in February 2020, after hosting a release party at Rockwood Music Hall.

Jake Weinstein (BA ’12) and Sarah Naughton returned to Feinstein’s/54 Below to present Javanka! in January 2020.

Alexis Williams (BA ’17) is an associate producer on the Netflix documentary The Pharmacist, which began streaming in February 2020, and is also the associate producer for The Ned with Brittain and Flick, a podcast turned digital show for Quibi, which premiered April 6, 2020.

Carter Altman (BA ’20) presented at the kickoff of New York Fashion Week: Men’s and was featured in “Men’s Wear Flies Its Freak Flag” in the February 5, 2020, issue of The New York Times to highlight his clothing brand, Carter Young.