



# clarion

NEWS FROM THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

**UMD**  
College of Liberal Arts  
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA DULUTH  
*Driven to Discover*

**2020**  
**2021**

Features students, faculty,  
donors, and alumni who are  
impacting their world

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# DEAN'S CORNER

Building and sustaining a sense of community is one of the hallmarks of CLA, and the past year has reinforced just how important community is.

From the COVID-19 pandemic to the killing of George Floyd to a bitterly-contested election, our communities have faced incredible pressures. How do we maintain a sense of community when we can't even get together in person? How do we rebuild ties that have been frayed by political divisions? How do we change our communities to make them genuinely inclusive for all? These are difficult questions without easy answers, and we all continue to grapple with them.

At the same time, the past year has shown us how the hallmarks of a liberal arts education—critical thinking, recognizing connections between different issue-areas, the importance of engagement, a commitment to diversity and justice, fostering innovation, and building sustainable systems—give us the tools that allow communities to emerge, flourish, and thrive. We may engage with our communities in different ways these days, but the connections can be just as meaningful.

The stories in this issue of CLArion provide some wonderful examples of how CLA alumni, students, staff, and faculty have found new ways to create and sustain our communities. As you read the stories, I hope that you feel the same sense of hope, admiration, and optimism that I do.

Building and sustaining this sense of community is happening within the college, too. This past July 1<sup>st</sup>, the merger between the College of Liberal Arts and the School of Fine Arts became official—and one of our most important (and ongoing) tasks is creating a sense of community among the students, staff, and faculty in ten different departments in the fine arts, humanities, and social sciences.

As part of this process, the college has spent much of this year engaging with each other around coming up with a new name—something that reflects the diversity and wide range of programs that we provide and celebrates everything that our college has to offer. By the time you read this, the Board of Regents may even have approved our new name. Stay tuned!

Once our new name is official, we'll be working together—as a community—to craft a new constitution for the college, along with a mission statement, vision statement, and strategic plan. These frameworks will help guide us as we move into the future, and they will be developed through collaborative processes that bring us all together to reflect who we are and who we want to be. These discussions are key parts of building our shared community, and I look forward to sharing the results of our efforts with all of you in the coming months and years.

Our CLA community is strong, and I appreciate all of you being a part of it.



**Jeremy Youde**  
Dean, CLA



# EDITOR'S NOTE



*Whitney Jacobson*

**Whitney Jacobson**  
Editor, *CLArion*

Welcome to the 2020-2021 edition of *CLArion!* Academic years always move quickly, but it is remarkable to think how much has changed since I last wrote this column: most UMD courses now take place at least partially online, we have mastered the extra squinty mask smile and staying six feet apart from others in public, vaccine rollout is part of the daily news, and the U.S. both has a new president and is increasingly working to be anti-racist.

Something that hasn't changed? Our desire for connection. And as always, one need look no further than the newly merged School of Fine Arts and College of Liberal Arts to find a thoughtful, creative community listening to, collaborating with, and buoying each other across ages, neighborhoods, identities, departments, occupations, and countries.

Each person I interviewed noted the value of the people in their community—the resources shared, the insight gained, and the enhanced joy brought to life. Their reflections were a pleasant and timely reminder that despite the distances we may face, we are better when we lift each other up.

As a final note, the next time I talk to you, this publication may have a new title. A college name representative of everyone from the former College of Liberal Arts and School of Fine Arts is currently under deliberation—thus, *CLArion*, with its root in CLA, may no longer embody the community of the new college. I'm excited to see what possibilities the new name will bring.

If you have a story, accomplishment, publication, milestone, or comment to share, please email me at [newsedit@d.umn.edu](mailto:newsedit@d.umn.edu). I look forward to hearing from you.

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## COMMUNITY MUSIC

### Dr. Paula Gudmundson Invites Duluth to Listen

On September 16, 2020, Dr. Paula Gudmundson (Music) graced Duluth with not one, but six free mini-concerts set outdoors. The flute concerts were part of the Vagabond Mobile Concert Series put on by the Bach Society of Minnesota.

Gudmundson curated her program to adhere to COVID-19 protocols at the time, which meant each performance could only be 15 minutes in length. Given the Bach Society's focus on Baroque music, her program included "Fantasia in A Minor" by G. F. Telemann, "Rondeau for Unaccompanied Flute" by Michel Blavet, and "Partita in A Minor" by J.S. Bach.

She also purposefully chose the locations of the concerts, which included UMD's Ordean Court, Glensheen's Juliette Balcony, St. Scholastica's Benedictine Living Community, the Clayton Jackson McGhie Memorial, Pocket Park in West Duluth, and the Northland Vietnam Veterans' Memorial. Gudmundson explained, "I felt really strongly the desire to perform in all corners of Duluth—from East to West Duluth—and to select not only venues where there might be people out and about but also places where the audience may be feeling isolated."

The Bach Society provided a map of the 200 total concerts performed that week, and the *Duluth News Tribune* published the concert schedule ahead of time; however, Gudmundson left much of the advertising to organic word of mouth and was pleasantly surprised. "I really enjoyed playing in the Central Hillside neighborhood as people seemed to have the intention of coming to listen, and a FedEx truck even stopped to listen! As a performer, it can be distracting to have so many things going on, but it was a really wonderful way to offer music to every location, and every experience was unique," she reflected.

Gudmundson didn't go through the day alone. Ren Crowder, a UMD flute student, helped provide audience members with materials intended to ensure safety at the concerts during the pandemic. As part of their course, Dr. Jennifer Moore's JOUR 3001: Local Journalism students also conducted interviews with attendees and/or Gudmundson at various concert locations before publishing stories about her performances.

Additionally, Gudmundson collaborated with local DanSan

Creatives to create a video of her performance: "Working with DanSan Creatives allowed me to bring a bit of my vision to his amazing storytelling ability. Duluth offered the perfect backdrop to the performance of J.S. Bach's 'Partita.'"

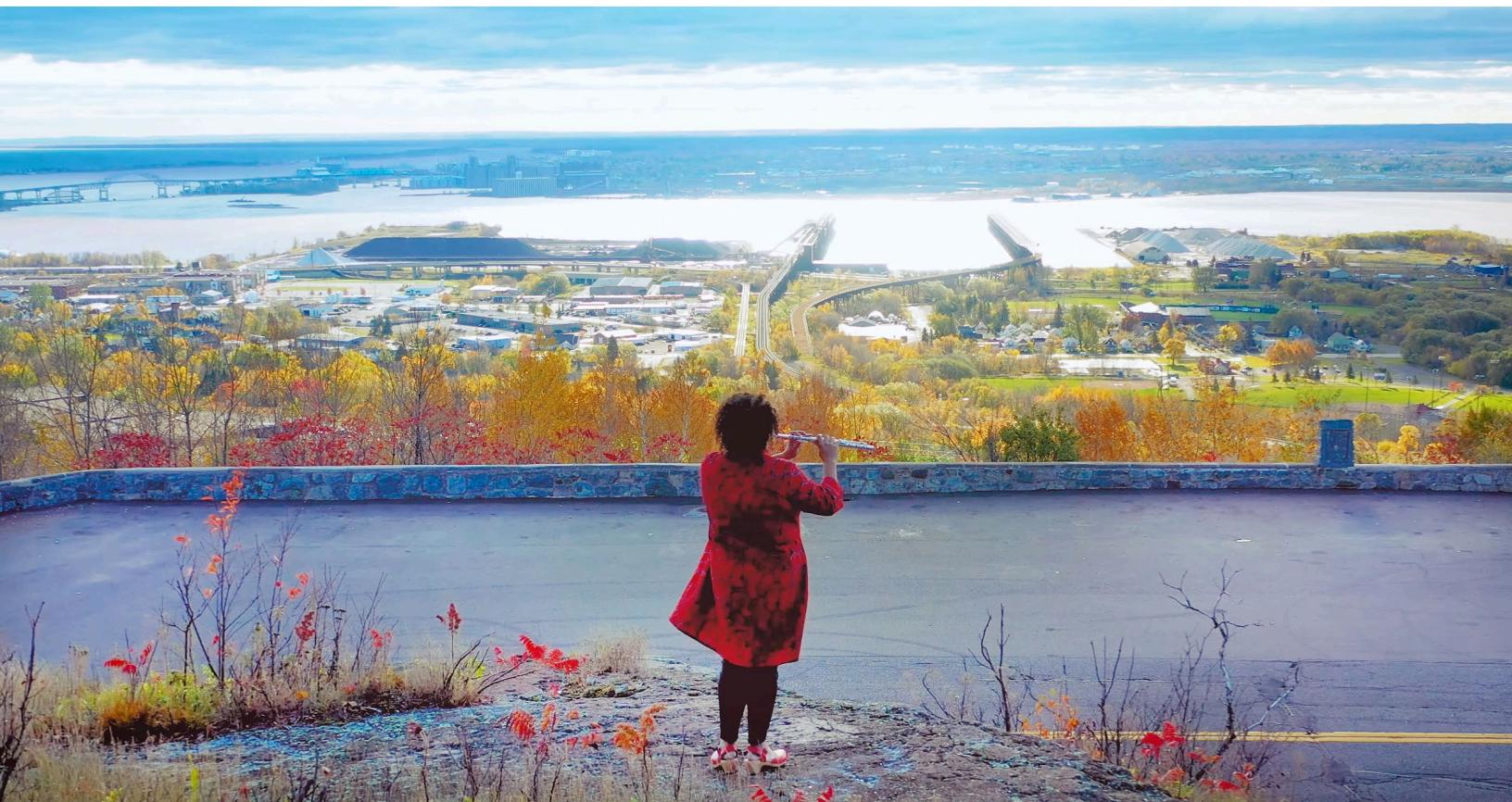
Community is not only at the forefront of Gudmundson's concerts but also her artistry and teaching. She asserted, "We need our community for us to be musicians. Really, we learn music to perform it for our community. COVID-19 has led to a lack of 'traditional' venues to perform for live audiences but has allowed us to explore the variety of ways we can engage with audiences virtually.

"I am interested in instilling in my students a need to remove

barriers to music. Access to music and equity in access to music education is top of mind for me personally. We might think we are providing unlimited ways of accessing music, but there are always barriers—it might be the cost, the location, the type of music, the length of programs, the perception of who performs this type of music....Music has a tremendous level of power to shape and mold our community and its values. Duluth residents really value the arts, and they will show up; they just want to be invited."

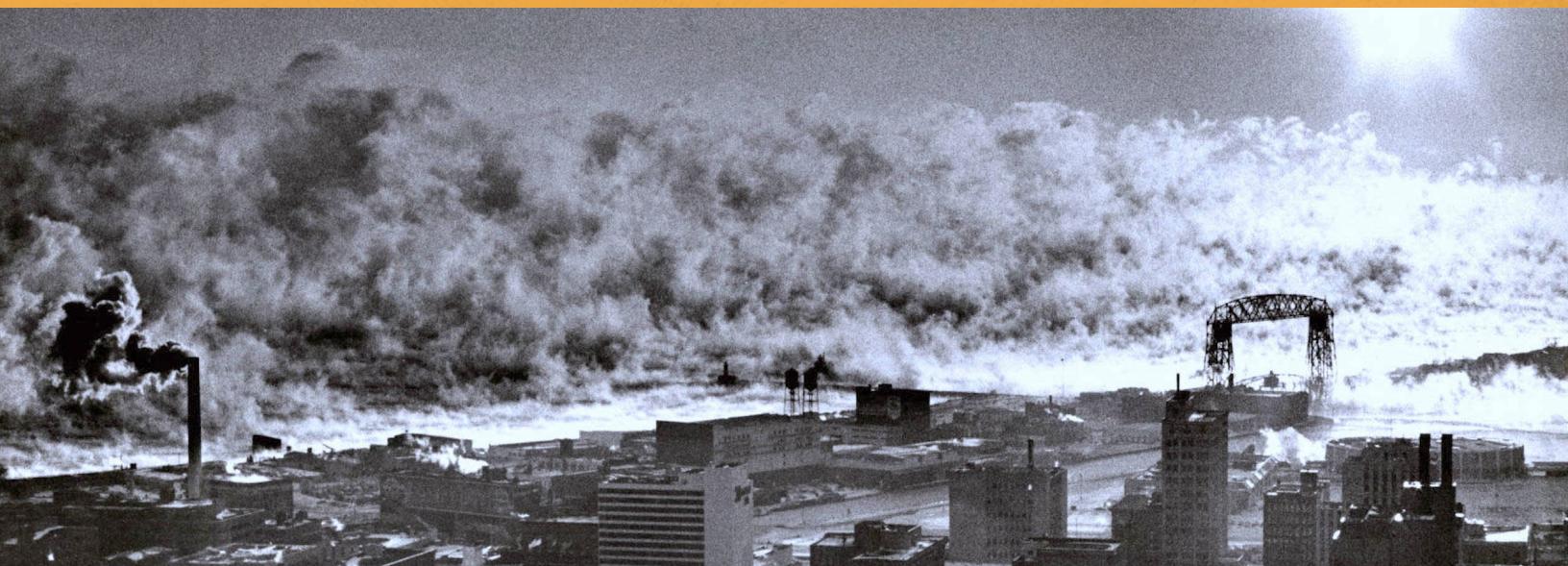
At the time of this writing, Gudmundson hopes to participate in the Bach Society's spring concert series and is exploring the possibility of student outdoor concerts in Ordean Court, also this spring.

*Image stills from video production by Daniel Oyinloye of DanSan Creatives*



***“...Music has a tremendous level of power to shape and mold our community and its values.”***

# “SEA SMOKE ON GITCHIGAMI”



A 1978 photo of sea smoke by Duluth photographer, Charles Curtis (1936-2002)  
courtesy of the Archives and Special Collections, Kathryn A. Martin Library, University of Minnesota Duluth.

## Jefferson Campbell and Linda Grover Collaborate on a New Creative Work

By: Jack Harrington and Cheryl Reitan

Jefferson Campbell, associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts and music professor, received a University of Minnesota Imagine Grant to commission a new composition for bassoon in a chamber music setting.

As events unfolded, he found himself working with two talented and creative women on, as he says, “an amazing” composition entitled, “Sea Smoke.”

Campbell’s choice of internationally known Jenny Brandon for the composer and Linda LeGarde Grover (American Indian

Studies) as the lyricist turned the piece into “deeply personal... and deeply spiritual” music.

Campbell was only “focusing on the weather phenomenon” when he thought of a musical composition that expressed sea smoke. He had seen photos and experienced it in person. When he tried to describe Duluth to people who had never been to the city, he showed them pictures of sea smoke. He thought it “could be an interesting image to try to describe musically.”

The more he considered the project the more he wanted to

know. "I wondered if there was any historical writing about it," and he looked for "an indigenous peoples connection" he says. He came across someone, Linda LeGarde Grover, on the UMD campus, "just two buildings over from me."

At the very first meeting between Campbell and Grover, the work took shape. Grover says, "I was born in Duluth and so the lake has been present all my life. I'm conscious of the changing of seasons, because that's a basic Ojibwe way of looking at the weather, but also at our existence as human beings."

Sea smoke, also called sea fog, is an unusual and rare occurrence. It takes form as barely visible hovering mist to towering walls of rising clouds. Sea smoke is formed when cold air hits the warmer water of Lake Superior, creating a layer of water that cools rapidly, condenses, and forms vapor.

In that first meeting, Grover says she pictured the lake, the rocks, and the trees in the sky. "They are massive and a very strong presence here." She says that images appeared to her as

she and Campbell talked. "The beings who exist in and around [the lake] have a story also, and so it was not much of a surprise to me... that I thought about the very old story about the woman who had encountered one of the lake spirits." That woman is part of Grover's "Sea Smoke" narrative.

The result of the collaboration will be a commissioned work "Sea Smoke on Gichigami" for soprano voice, bassoon, and marimba. The music will be composed by Jenni Brandon and the text by Linda LeGarde Grover.

Campbell says it has been an "extraordinary and fulfilling experience." However, the project has had its difficulties. Working "across the country during a pandemic has been challenging," he says, "but it gave us something positive to work on during the trying time."

The pandemic is still causing logistical issues, and Campbell hasn't set a firm date for the release. However, he is making a promise. "This piece will be premiered later in 2021," he says.

Linda Grover



Jefferson Campbell



# CRAFTING AN ARTISTIC COMMUNITY

## An Interview with Fine Arts Academy Director Kathy Neff

If you haven't heard of the Fine Arts Academy at UMD, it's an honor to introduce you to a program that has opened its metaphorical arms again and again to the community.

The Fine Arts Academy, established in 2005, grew out of the Music Academy, a community music program administered by UMD's Department of Music. Now a professional unit within the College of Liberal Arts, the Fine Arts Academy offers high quality arts instruction to students ranging from children to adults and encompasses all skill levels. Its mission is to deepen

the lives of its students and enrich the communities it serves through programs centered in arts education and engagement.

Kathy Neff, the director of the Fine Arts Academy since its inception, was first hired as a teaching specialist for the Music Academy in 1994. A few years later, she joined the Music Department faculty as an adjunct instructor to pursue her passion for teaching.

I recently conversed with Neff about the Fine Arts Academy.

### How has COVID-19 affected the Fine Arts Academy's work?

*With COVID-19 related safety measures in place, we have created distance-learning programs that still give the feeling of an engaged learning experience while maintaining safe environments for our families and teachers. However, much about learning to do an art form is experiential. You feel the clay in your hands as it spins on a wheel; you hear and respond to an exquisite phrase played by a member of your quintet. When we are not able to collaborate or learn in communal spaces, it can be challenging to fully absorb all that the artistic moment has to offer. It's not like teachers can reach out and correct a hand position or posture when they can't see the whole student.*



Likewise, without the opportunity to rehearse with their friends and enjoy the joys of concerts, competitions, and tours, some students are experiencing great losses. We had to put our Digital Art Workshop on hold this year, but I am maintaining relationships with our partners at Lincoln Park Middle School in order to continue to work with them when the time is right.

### Please tell me more about the Digital Art Workshop.

In the Digital Art Workshop, the brainchild of Associate Professor Joellyn Rock (Art and Design), Rock teaches a course integrating digital art tools and techniques into pedagogy for the next generation of art teachers. During their course, art education majors mentor and guide middle school youth while designing storyboards, and their themed collages are later turned into animation shorts. Students also have a terrific opportunity to work with Lisa Fitzpatrick and Dan Fitzpatrick in the MMAD Lab, putting stories to life with green screen technology, creative tools, and the imaginative synergy of college students working with area youth.



After six weeks of guidance and teamwork, we celebrate with a public showcase in the Tweed Museum of Art. Family, friends, and students come together for a premier screening of student work, demonstrations of animation techniques, and a celebration of creative accomplishments.

**Are there any showcases that stand out in your memory?**

The 2018 Digital Art Workshop was spectacular in that our showcase ended up on the same night as a Tweed exhibition opening. We held our celebration, demos, and showcase in classrooms but came down to the Tweed to see an out of this world exhibition of contemporary Native American artists. The kids were in awe of Jonathan Thunder's room size animation, as well as the Intersection exhibition featuring close to twenty additional Native American artists.

What was so special about attending that opening with the kids is that the Museum was packed full of people, many of them Native Americans. A few of the workshop kids were also Native American, and we were all there to celebrate the work of these incredible artists.

The Academy has had a longstanding partnership with Lincoln Park Middle School through the Community School Collaborative, so to see the kids at UMD with their parents, as well as their school art teacher, Chrissy Valento who is a UMD alumna, after they celebrated their own exhibition of work was something I'll never forget. It was an evening of joy, artistry, family connections, and pride; it really encapsulated the essence of community.



\*Interview edited for space constraints.

Photos are courtesy of Kathy Neff

*“...putting stories to life with green screen technology, creative tools, and the imaginative synergy...”*



# COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS NEWS

Share your news here—recent research, publications, events, achievements, and/or accolades.  
Email your announcements to [newsedit@d.umn.edu](mailto:newsedit@d.umn.edu).

**Dr. Teresa Bertossi** (Geography and Philosophy) and UMD's Land Lab collaborated with **Dr. Abigail Clarke-Sather** (Engineering) to provide produce to residents within Morgan Park, a food desert in Duluth, for six weeks during the summer of 2020, after plans for a community garden fell through.

The article "Being the Woman They Wanted Her to Be: Cornelia Schleime Performs Her Stasi File" by **Dr. Sara Blaylock** (Art and Design) is forthcoming in the academic journal *Third Text*, issue 139 (vol. 35, no. 2), which is a leading international journal dedicated to the critical analysis of contemporary art in the global field.

**Dr. Anja Chávez** began her work as the new director of the Tweed Museum of Art in January 2020.

*Breaking Waves* (CD) released on MSR Classics (2019) features **Dr. Paula Gudmundson** (Music) on flute. This project was made possible by the Grant in Aid program of the University of Minnesota.

Professor **Tom Isbell** (Theatre) directed William Shakespeare's *Henry V* in the beautiful outdoor setting of UMD's newly renovated Ordean Courtyard between September 24–October 3, 2020.

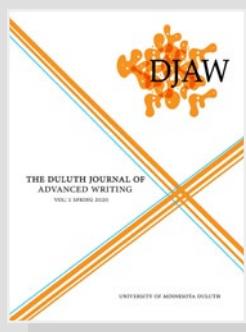
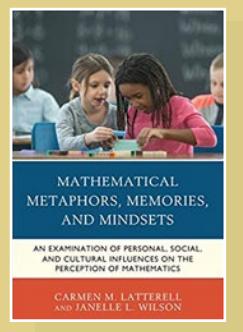
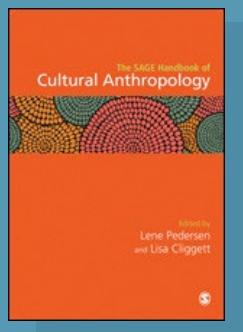
**Dr. Olaf Kuhlke** (Geography and Philosophy) will receive \$10 million in funding from the National Defense Authorization Act beginning in October 2021 to do research in the Arctic on climate change and climate adaptability.

**Dr. Richard Robbins** (Music) had an article selected for publication in *The Choral Journal*. The article, "The Capitalistic Machine Against a Radical Individual: A Consideration of Marc Blitzstein's Choral Opera, *The Condemned* (1932)," has received the support of the Kurt Weill Foundation, marking the first time that music from this unknown Depression-era work has appeared in print. Additionally, choral performances conducted by Dr. Robbins have recently been broadcast by American Public Media on the nationally-syndicated show, *Pipedreams*.

**Dr. David Syring** (*Studies in Justice, Culture, and Social Change*) completed a chapter for the SAGE Handbook of Cultural Anthropology (forthcoming spring 2021). Entitled, "Humanistic Anthropologies: Diverse Weavings About the Many Ways to Be Human," the chapter outlines a foundational approach to anthropology that treasures human diversity and experience in all its variety. Syring also published, "Golden Animals: A Lyric Essay on Animacy and Resilience" in *Anthropologica: Journal of the Canadian Anthropological Society*. The essay emerges from collaborative research with Benigno Cango, a Saraguro (Ecuador) indigenous farmer and thinker.

**Dr. Janelle Wilson** (*Studies in Justice, Culture, & Social Change*) published "Future Imaginings: Nostalgia for Unrealized Possible Selves," in *Nostalgia Now: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives on the Past in the Present* (Routledge, 2020), edited by Michael Hviid Jacobsen. Additionally, Wilson was second-author with first-author **Dr. Carmen Latterell** (Mathematics) on "Preservice Elementary Education Majors' Attitudes about Mathematics: A Semantic Differential," published in *The Language of Mathematics: How the Teacher's Knowledge of Mathematics Affects Instruction* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2020), edited by Patrick M. Jenlink. Most notably, Latterell and Wilson published the book, *Mathematical Metaphors, Memories, and Mindsets: An Examination of Personal, Social, and Cultural Influences on the Perception of Mathematics* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2020).

DJAW, an online peer-reviewed journal publishing articles written and edited by undergraduate students and recent undergraduate alumni from UMD, was distributed in Spring 2020 for the first time, under the guidance of **Dr. Elizabethada Wright** (English, Linguistics, and Writing Studies). The mission of the publication is to represent the work of undergraduate students as well as publish innovative, original work that advances the field of professional writing.





## A Message from the CLA Development Team

Your generosity of spirit has been a lifeline to our students this year. Thank you for all you continue to do for UMD; from mentoring students to offering financial support to just being a fan, we are grateful for you. The challenges our students faced this year were unlike any other. Every bit of financial support awarded to our students boosted their spirits and gave them the space needed to concentrate on their studies.

This past year we initiated several new ways to support students.

**Emergency support:** Through our general CLA Dean's Excellence Fund we have provided emergency support for students across the college this year. These awards, ranging between \$250 to \$1,000, have bridged the gap for students and families that lost employment or faced a financial hardship for another reason. Gifts to this fund will continue to help students through this crisis.

**UMD's Scholarship in Honor of George Floyd Jr.:** UMD established this meaningful scholarship to help enhance the diversity of the student body at UMD. Students who have financial need and have been the victims of police violence are also encouraged to apply for this scholarship. This year's recipient, Mahjur Ahmed, is a computer science major and photography enthusiast who took to the streets to document the protests in Minneapolis over the summer.

**CLA's Experiential Learning Opportunities Fund:** Dean Youde established this fund to help students wishing to pursue opportunities outside of the classroom. Too often students are faced with having to turn down an internship or a chance to study abroad because they don't have the financial means. We also know that these are the very sort of experiences that set our students apart and give them a leg up in the job market. By providing monetary assistance, we hope to open up these opportunities to all of our students, regardless of financial situation.

Your gift to any of these funds furthers our mission to provide equal opportunities for all of our students. If you would like to talk more about how to best make an impact at UMD, please give me a call at 218-726-6708 or email me at [jberges@umn.edu](mailto:jberges@umn.edu). I would love to talk with you.

Warmly,

**Jennifer Berges**  
Director of Development, CLA





Photo of a September 2020 protest against racial injustice at UMD by student Bailey Misura

## A CHANGING UMD Addressing Systemic Racism

By Cheryl Reitan

Nineteen days apart, two groups at UMD each made a statement with a similar theme. On August 28, 2020, the Anti-Racist Subcommittee (ARC)—a subcommittee of the Employees of Color and American Indian Mentoring Group (EOCAI)—delivered a statement to the UMD administration requesting three

transformative initiatives aimed at addressing racism and inequity at UMD. On September 16, 2020, 19 days later, a student group, Black Men Serving Excellence (BMSE), welcomed the entire campus to a peaceful protest against racial injustice.

*“The bottom line is that the university must do something.”*

## Bold Initiatives

The initiatives addressed in the ARC memo include the hiring of a Vice Chancellor of Equity and Diversity at UMD; the cluster hiring of 50 faculty members who are Black/African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, or Hispanic/Latino over a three year period, and a 3-credit academic course on social and racial justice to be required of every UMD undergraduate student within the first three semesters of their schooling.

ARC came together to write the memo in the summer of 2020 in response to the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis in May. Their research is thoughtful and data driven. It shows that in 2019, Black/African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Hispanic/Latino faculty accounted for only five percent of UMD's faculty. That's very low when compared to the population of the state of Minnesota and lower yet, when compared to the United States.

The world is changing and the future financial health of the university requires UMD to recruit and retain a diverse student population. Yet, in fall 2019, UMD graduated only 103 students belonging to non-white groups—a mere 4.5% of the 2,256 graduating student population.

## Showing Solidarity

The BMSE group emphasized peace. "The march...is meant to show solidarity with everyone at UMD, faculty, staff, students, and the community," said Javien Versey, a psychology major and member of the football team. Defensive Secondary Football Coach Marcus McLin, the group's advisor, agreed. "This is a peaceful protest against injustice. It's not anti-white, and it's not anti-police." Versey's sign said it clearly, "This is not white vs. black. It's everybody against racism."

The march was indeed peaceful. Over 200 students, faculty, staff, and community members joined with chants and signs.

## What's Next?

The COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement have made an impact on UMD. In a July 2020 email to campus, Chancellor Black identified seven diversity and inclusion action steps focused on making lasting and significant change at UMD. Administrators are seriously looking at the ARC proposal. UMD faculty and staff, especially within the student life programs, have made a commitment to make UMD a safe place for everyone.

"The response by so many different constituencies on campus is crucial. Change will only come if multiple people raise their voices and demand it," said Jeanine Weekes Schroer, member of ARC and associate professor of philosophy at UMD.

The bottom line is that the university must do something.

"We need to take action in order to make sure that UMD lives up to its commitment to be a place where our students, staff, and faculty of all backgrounds can thrive," CLA Dean Jeremy Youde said.

# A NATIONAL ENDOWMENT for the Humanities Program Helps UMD Gather Stories of Survival

By: Michaela Stram with Cheryl Reitan

Ivy Vainio, a Duluth area photographer, said that once the pandemic hit, she wasn't taking photos like she used to. "I have felt lost," she said. "I see other photographers out and doing things like photographing protests... which I would love to be doing. But I ban myself, even though I support them. I don't want to be in harm's way with COVID-19."

A project called, "Stories of Wisdom from Bodies in Separation: Archiving the Coronavirus Pandemic Through the Lens of Humanities," documented the concerns of Vainio and others. Her experience of feeling lost isn't unique.

Vainio is a 1992 B.A. graduate from UMD and a 2011 M.A. grad from the University of Wisconsin-Superior. She is now the climate and cultural resiliency program coordinator at the American Indian Community Housing Organization.

Over 100 people, including Vainio, participated in a \$175,745 National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) project directed by UMD's Devaleena Das, principal investigator and David Beard, co-principal investigator.

Ivy Vainio at the AICHO building. Photographer: Mike Scholtz



## A Year of Interviews

Beard and Das created an online format to share the COVID-19 Stories interviews. More than a dozen area residents were chosen to assist with the project organization, take photos, and conduct the interviews. People from towns the size of Finland, Minnesota to towns as large as Duluth were approached. People of all ages, professions, and backgrounds participated. Some have lived in Duluth their whole life, while others have been in the United States for less than five years.

Project support came from across campus from UMD's Kathryn A. Martin Library, Tweed Museum of Art, and the College of Liberal Arts. Professional consultants from UMD's writing center, the Writers' Workshop, met online with individual writers on the team to review early drafts of their pieces. Matthew Rosendahl, the UMD library director, pointed out the value of archiving this moment in time. "Libraries collect stories to help us understand our lives and our world."

## Art and "Creating Apart"

Part of the "Stories of Wisdom from Bodies in Separation" project included a Tweed Museum of Art exhibit called "Creating Apart: Local Artists Respond to a Global Pandemic." The exhibition showcased the work area artists created during 2020. It was curated by Anne Dugan, and a description of the work called attention to the recent proliferation of art.

The narrative states, when "almost all activities outside the home halted, community members turned towards the arts." Six area artists contributed to the show in the Tweed: Brian Barber, Sarah Brokke, Joe Klander, Karen Savage-Blue, Ivy Vainio, and Moira Villiard.

The name of the show, "Creating Apart," highlights how artists dealt with the pandemic alone, and on an intensely personal level. As its description states, it promotes "public health and social justice through public service campaigns, public art, and activism."

## Documentation for the Future

Beard was pleased with the project's reach. "It's a wildly diverse group of people," he says. "I am still amazed at the breadth of human beings and the diversity of narrative perspectives this project [has] brought together."

The project was conceived and carried out within just a few months in 2020, and Rosendahl applauds the effort. It's a "rich document of our history."

Learn more about the project at [covidstories.d.umn.edu](https://covidstories.d.umn.edu)

*"Libraries collect stories to help us understand our lives and our world."*

-Matthew Rosendahl

*"Almost all activities outside the home halted, community members turned towards the arts."*

- "Creating Apart"

*"I am still amazed at the breadth of human beings and the diversity of narrative perspectives this project [has] brought together."*

-David Beard

# A COMMUNITY ENDEAVOR

## Dr. Emily Woster Curates the L.M. Montgomery Exhibit

### *Exploring a National Treasure*

In summer 2022, the Confederation Centre of the Arts, located in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada, plans to open the virtual doors to their newest exhibit: *Exploring a National Treasure: L.M. Montgomery's Anne of Green Gables Manuscript*. The exhibit, curated by Dr. Emily Woster (English, Linguistics, and Writing Studies) with Dr. Elizabeth Epperly (L.M. Montgomery Institute founder and Professor Emerita from the University of Prince Edward Island) as a consultant, will provide museum visitors with access to a digitized version of Montgomery's handwritten *Anne of Green Gables* (1908) manuscript.

With the digitization of the 800+ double-sided pages, visitors will be able to flip through the manuscript and click on icons set up within the pages, allowing them to read a transcript of the writing, view associated pictures, hear an opening paragraph in a variety of languages, or study annotations. Access to the digital manuscript will anchor the exhibit, with four surrounding "rooms" presenting artifacts and other material leading to the manuscript's creation or resulting from the book's publication.

A transcript needs to be paired with the digital manuscript because Montgomery's handwriting is notoriously difficult to read. She also used an extensive alpha-numeric numbering system for her revising and editing notes. However, Woster relishes working with this manuscript in particular because it is considered Montgomery's most extemporaneous one—in reading it along with Montgomery's revisions, one can see the book take shape. In particular, Woster believes the notes are where Montgomery really developed her characters, and many of the notes are some of the most memorable lines to fans.

If her notes were not enough to pore over, Montgomery wrote her manuscript on the backs of shorter works, such as poems and short stories, demonstrating the economy of her paper use. The shorter works embedded within the manuscript are random chunks and crossed out, but one can still read them, making for a captivating find opposite *Anne of Green Gables* that will also be available for viewing in the exhibit.

Curating and preparing any exhibit is challenging, but this one has a community behind it. The L.M. Montgomery community is unique in that both average fans and scholars regularly converse and share materials. Any time Woster's team has wondered if an artifact existed, the community has helped, and then some, ultimately providing more material than they could ever use in the exhibit.



Kevin Rice, Confederation Centre Art Gallery

Given the logistics of digitizing the manuscript and curating the exhibit, one may question why anyone would take on such a daunting task. However, when Woster speaks about the project, one should be more worried she will spontaneously combust from the excitement she contains for the intense work than her collapsing under the workload.

Woster first entered the L.M. Montgomery community when her mother, Christy Woster, an avid collector of Montgomery books and ephemera, brought Emily\* (age 17 at the time) and Emily's sister, Anne\* (age 12), to the biennial L.M. Montgomery Institute Conference. Attending the conference introduced Woster to her future career. Her graduate studies focused on Montgomery's reading lives and textual worlds, and from 2017-2019 she was the L.M. Montgomery Institute Visiting Scholar. Since her mother's passing in 2016, Emily retains her mother's collection, one of the top L.M. Montgomery collections in the world.

\*Their names are, indeed, drawn from L.M. Montgomery's titular characters.

Put simply, Woster was prepared both personally and professionally. Woster became curator of the exhibit in 2020 when the \$250,000 project proposal she helped re-envision was funded by Digital Museums Canada, “the largest funding program in Canada dedicated to online projects by the museum and heritage community,” along with in-kind donations. The Confederation Centre of the Arts is involved because they already own many of Montgomery’s manuscripts, including the Anne of Green Gables manuscript being digitized.

Ultimately, Woster hopes the exhibit enhances the L.M. Montgomery community and spurs further scholarship. A large focus of her own research is intertextuality, which considers the relationships between texts and their production. Given her background, it should be no surprise that Woster expects

her students at UMD to go to the primary source and consider the intertextuality of course readings. For example, her fall 2020 WRIT 3100 students read *The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing* by Matthew Tobin Anderson, which contains numerous references to Locke, Rousseau, and other figures from the Enlightenment period. The students’ assignment was to locate the original source material referenced and find out how that source influenced Anderson’s text.

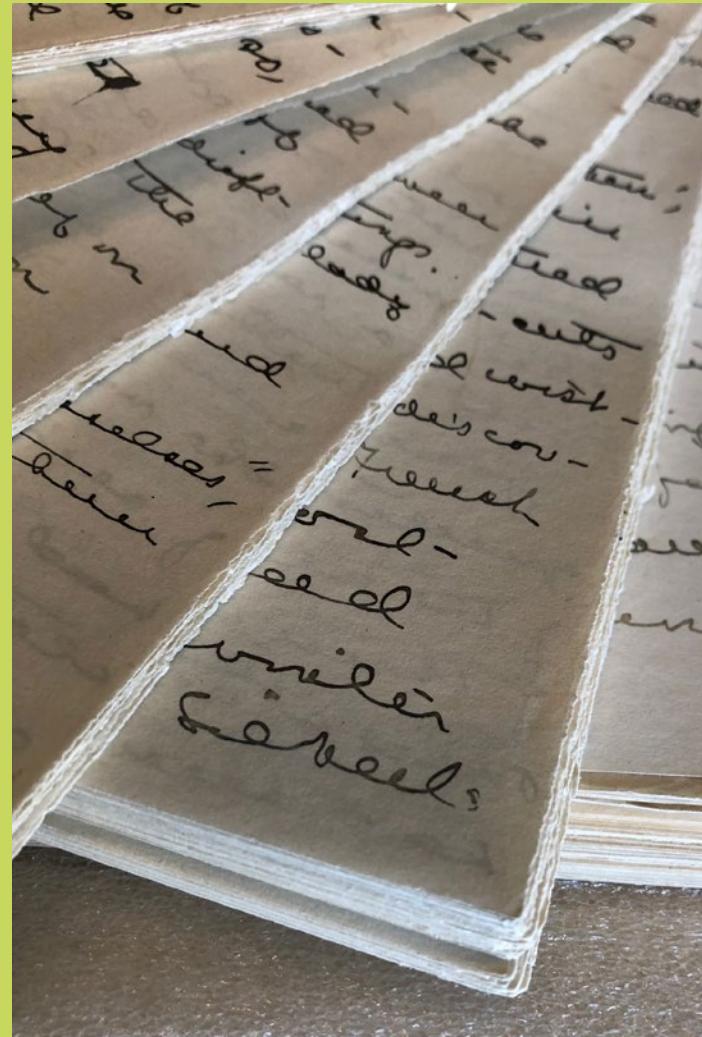
“I want them to be curious. I want them to nerd-out about whatever it is that they’re passionate about and find that primary text and analyze that community and their influences,” Woster said.

Woster’s zeal for studying Montgomery’s writing certainly provides an excellent model to follow.

Emily Woster, Anne Victoria Photography



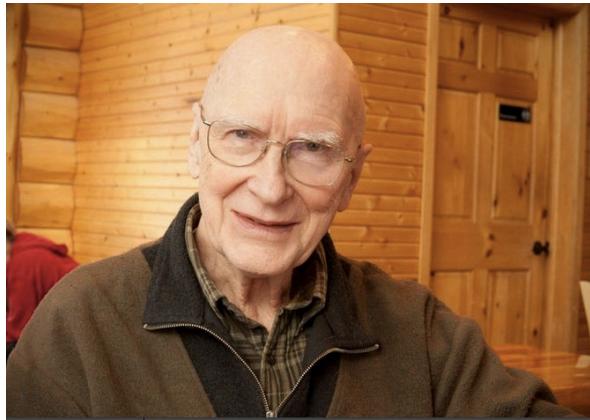
Kevin Rice, Confederation Centre Art Gallery



# THE SECRETS OF FRANCE

## Three Alumnae Remember UMD's Milan Kovacovic (1942-2020)

By: Cheryl Reitan



Paris in the summer... quiet walks on the banks of the Seine River; hikes through flower-filled parks; and croissants, rich Camembert, and hearty cassoulets in a cozy apartment on a narrow lane.

Those were memories from 1980 when Mikki Atsatt '80, Marlys Dewor '81, and a few other UMD students, traveled with UMD Associate Professor Milan Kovacovich and his family to Paris and other areas in France.

Atsatt said, "Milan could make the simplest things entertaining." She remembers spending "an entire rainy afternoon" with him and his family in their second floor apartment, "watching people come and go from the boulangerie (bread bakery) on the street below." She recalls images of "solidly built elderly women emerging with baguettes placed in rolling baskets" and a young man with several baguettes "dropping them in the street, retrieving them, hopping on his bike, and riding away." They absorbed the French culture by watching people. "It was as important as visiting museums and reading French literature," she says.

Dewor has a memory of being taken to a "fair" in one of the Paris suburbs where numerous political parties and interest groups "had set up information stands." At first "Milan... did all the talking," but when he left them to check things out on their own, she realized, they "were not ready yet to discuss political issues, and certainly not in French!"

Atsatt, Dewor, and their friend Gabriela Gold '81 all had taken French language classes from Kovacovic. On their travels and in their classes, they learned about French culture, as well as literature, history, and politics.

### The Scholarship

The three friends did not forget those lessons. As they embarked on their careers, they united in a commitment to help students at UMD. They named a scholarship in honor of their teacher. "We named it Friends of Milan Kovacovic Scholarship Fund in French Studies," says Dewor.

Kovacovic made an impression on his students. He made learning the French language memorable by weaving stories into the vocabulary lessons. Many recollections made their way into his memoir, *Ma's Dictionary: Straddling the Social Class Divide*, which included accounts of his journey from Saint-Aquilin, France, to Paris, to Chicago, and San Francisco. He shared stories of his military service in Germany, and the events that eventually brought him to Duluth, Minnesota.

Sadly, Professor Kovacovic passed away in March 2020. Atsatt, Dewor, and Gold feel comfort in the knowledge that the scholarship in his name lives on.

He will be remembered for his "intellectual curiosity, and for encouraging his students to question assumptions and expand their horizons," says Atsatt. Dewor agreed. "I came to UMD from a small town in Minnesota," she said. "Milan had a tremendous impact on me because he was, among other things, culturally sophisticated and worked to make it possible for his students to have various cultural experiences," Dewor says.

Atsatt is retired from her career in the U.S. Department of Justice. Gold is a management strategist at the LchoesGroup in Virginia, and Dewor is retired from civilian service with the U.S. Army and continues to live in Germany.

One weekend retreat remains memorable to these UMD alumnae. On the first weekend of May, the intermediate French class stayed in cabins in northern Minnesota. "That year it snowed in May, and there wasn't any heat," said Dewor. "We still had a great time." And they spoke only French the entire time.



## ALUMNA HNEDÉ JOSHUA

### Takes a Leap of Faith into Her Community

When she graduated in 2016, Alumna Hnede Joshua (Communication) was uncertain about her broad liberal arts degree and what she wanted to do. In 2019, things began to come into focus. She enrolled in graduate school at Concordia University in Saint Paul and landed a job at U.S. Bank, where she now holds the position of Project Manager on the Diversity and Inclusion Team.

Working for U.S. Bank has changed the way Joshua views community: “The bank has shown me that when people come together for a common goal, from all backgrounds, you can truly create change and make a difference in our respective communities.”

While U.S. Bank offered new insights, recent events in Minnesota also shaped Joshua’s career path. She explained, “After George Floyd was senselessly killed, I reflected on my life and realized that I needed to do something to impact change. I could no longer stand by and watch the injustices any longer.”

So, in 2020, she took a leap of faith and applied for the Humphrey Fellowship Program, a fellowship program for young professionals who want to make an impact by discussing social issues and developing projects to change problems within their communities. Her risk was rewarded, and she was accepted.

Currently enrolled, Joshua reflected, “I’ve gained a lot of knowledge about the political world and what I can do individually to impact change. I’ve also gained a network of people who share my passion for helping others.”

The fellowship additionally teaches students a host of skills and goes in depth about Minnesota’s civic community. She’s currently working with other fellows in the program to recommend a new policy that she was unable to give further details about due to confidentiality.

Joshua advises students seeking to make an impact to “start with educating yourself about the community you live in and your experiences within the community. Once you acquire the knowledge, figure out what your personal contribution will be, and then decide what your impact within the community will be.”

It seems fair to say that the uncertainty she experienced after graduation was a gift in disguise. “I never imagined in my wildest dreams I would be in this position,” Joshua said. “To any communication major? Pursue the degree—the beauty of the degree is the broadness of it, because you never know where you’ll land. It will eventually make sense, in your own way, on your own path.”

# UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA DULUTH

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## A SELECTION of Former School of Fine Arts and College of Liberal Arts Collaborations

**2014** Justin Rubin (SFA, Music) played an improvised score on organ to a film presentation of *Nosferatu*, coordinated by Olaf Kuhlke (CLA, Geography and Philosophy), in the Masonic Temple Theater

**2014** Burke Scarbrough (CLA, English) & Jenna Soleo-Shanks (SFA, Theatre) collaborated to incorporate the Theatre Department's production of Sam Shepard's *Buried Child* into the English Department's Literature Appreciation Course

**2014-2018** CLA faculty joined SFA, LSBE, CEHSP and SCSE faculty in UMD's VizLab speed research presentations

**2015+** SFA coordinated with CLA to produce the initial Sieur du Luth Creativity Conference. SFA and CLA hosted the conference again in 2016 before it was later taken over by the Chancellor's office. In March 2018, the name changed to Sieur du Lhut for all future usages

**2016** Tom Isbell (SFA, Theatre) worked with John Hatcher and Jennifer Moore (CLA, Journalism), building off their "One River, Many Stories" initiative to create UMD Theatre's production, *One River*

**2016** English faculty Krista Sue-Lo Twu (CLA) and Kathryn A. Martin Library Director Matthew Rosendahl led the effort to bring Shakespeare's First Folio to Duluth, with museum director Ken Bloom agreeing to host the exhibit in the Tweed Museum of Art

**2017-2019** CLA faculty joined SFA and SCSE faculty in VizLab/MMADLab Interdisciplinary Residency summer programs

**2018** The Writing Studies program (CLA) cosponsored a reading from a collection of poems inspired by Kathy McTavish's "chance" exhibit in the Tweed Museum of Art

**2018** Asami Hagiwara (SFA Music), Cindy Christian (Alworth Institute), and Jennifer Gómez Menjívar (CLA, World Languages and Cultures) organized a lunch hour lecture, "Brazil and its Piano Repertoire: Friction and Confluence of National Identity and Individual Freedom," with Brazilian pianist and Professor of Piano, Germano Mayer

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*Many thanks to the faculty and staff who helped compile collaborations for this timeline.*