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A Newsletter of the ARTS, HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES at the University of Denver

## NEW THEATRE SCHOLARSHIP

November 2015

### Daughter of Alumna Leaves Major Estate Gift to DU

The women in the Gabelman/Whelan family were seemingly born to dance and to educate.

Cyprienna Gabelman, a native Coloradan born in 1896, was a school teacher who spent a decade abroad with her young family before returning to Denver to become a state politician. She strongly advised her children to follow their passions.

Her daughter, Cyprienne Gabelman Whelan (BA '77 and MA '78, theatre), heeded the advice. Born in 1924 in the Philippines, she moved from Denver to NY to become a Broadway dancer at the age of 17, appearing in many productions before transitioning into academia as a theatre professor. Her passion was passed on to her daughter, Susan Whelan, who is a former ballet dancer and stage manager in NY.

When Susan Whelan's mother passed away, she inherited the family house located minutes away from DU in the historic Hilltop neighborhood. To honor her mother and grandmother's passion for helping young women pursue their dreams, Susan Whelan signed a DU estate bequest to endow a scholarship for students studying theatre, particularly young women from the Denver area. Recipients will be designated Gabelman Whelan Scholars. [Read more...](#)

## DU FACULTY & STAFF AWARDS

### AHSS Colleagues Receive Awards

Three AHSS colleagues were recognized for their outstanding contributions to the University during the 2014-2015 academic year. The awards were presented at the Faculty and Staff Awards Luncheon in October.

Jeanne Abrams, professor in the Center for Judaic Studies and University Libraries, was

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named University Lecturer. This award is given in recognition of superlative creative and scholarly work. Richard vonFoerster, Lamont School of Music, received the Ruth Murray Underhill Teaching Award for excellence in teaching by an adjunct faculty member. And Brooke Rohde, curator of collections at the University of Denver Museum of Anthropology, received the staff Crimson and Gold Award for outstanding commitment to and support of the University.

“These colleagues are superb examples of the extraordinary work of our faculty and staff. I congratulate Jeanne, Brooke and Richard for receiving such well-deserved awards,” said Danny McIntosh, dean. [Read more...](#)

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

### Writing Prize Endorses Alumna’s Passion for Her Craft

When Amanda Rea came to the University of Denver as a freshman, it was only the second time she had ever seen a city.

“I came to Denver once, when I was 14, for the state spelling bee,” she says. “My English teacher brought me, and that was the first time I ever saw a city. I remember seeing the skyline, and I couldn’t breathe because I was so excited.”

Rea grew up in Marvel, CO, a tiny town in the southwest corner of the state. She came to DU to pursue her love of creative writing, and she graduated in 2000 with a BA in English. She has since earned an MFA in creative writing from the University of California Irvine, and her stories have appeared in *Kenyon Review*, the *Missouri Review* and the *Sun*, among others. A memoir piece, “A Dead Man in Nashville,” won a Pushcart Prize in 2011.



In September, Rea was one of six female authors to win a prestigious Rona Jaffe Foundation Writers Award, which comes with a \$30,000 grant to finance writing time and to provide assistance for everything from child care to research and travel. Rea currently is working on a novel set in the Four Corners region during World War II. [Read more...](#)

## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

### Professor’s Writing/Teaching Sheds Light on American Politics

In this era of partisan politics, when a political candidate considers the opposing party the “enemy,” one may believe that the political party system is beyond repair. Not so, says DU political scientist Seth Masket. Although the media and political pundits may lead us to believe that the system is broken, Masket says it’s actually a great time to be observing, and participating in, politics.

“Many of today’s pundits long for us to return to the politics of the mid-20th century, when the parties weren’t fiercely ideological and when party leaders could get together for drinks and hammer out compromises,” said Masket. “But all that comity came at some major costs. Important issues like civil rights often went unaddressed so that the parties could continue to get along.”



Elections today are more meaningful, noted the chair of the political science department.

“Voters don’t follow politics closely but they have a better idea about the differences between Democrats and Republicans and they are better able to hold elected officials accountable,” he said. “And issues don’t get ignored like they used to. The fact that there’s

news

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so much fighting means that important issues are actually being debated. Disagreement is a very healthy thing for a democracy.” [Read More...](#)

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

### Musician Hits the Right Note in DU/Denver Jazz Scene

Musician Camilla Vaitaitis doesn't wait for opportunity to knock – she goes out and finds it. The jazz pianist, a senior in Lamont's Jazz Studies and Commercial Music program, is a member of six performing groups on and off campus, acting as a pianist, vocalist, arranger and composer.

“I'm passionate about finding all forms of new music,” said Vaitaitis, “especially locally.”

At Lamont, a piece she wrote for the jazz-fusion FLEX ensemble, ‘Backward Thinking,’ was professionally recorded and posted to the DU Jazz Ensemble [YouTube channel](#). Outside the university, her band Specific Ocean is active on the Denver scene and has released multiple tracks.



Her varied and prolific output attracted the attention of KUVU, Denver's jazz station. They named Vaitaitis as one of their '30 Under 30' area musicians in August. She is one of nine Lamont students and alums who made the list. [Read More...](#)

## VISIT WITH CHANCELLOR CHOPP ON THE ROAD

**CHOPP TALK: November 2, 3 & 16, 6-8 p.m.**— The Listening and Learning Tour  
Chancellor Rebecca S. Chopp has packed her bag and is hitting the road to speak directly with alumni, parents and friends across the country. Next stop is **Seattle** (Mon, 11/2), followed by **Portland, OR** (Tues, 11/3) and **Fort Collins** (Mon, 11/16). Join us for an opportunity to hear from the Chancellor and ask her questions about the future of DU. This event is free. [RSVP here](#), or call 303-871-2777.

**NYC CHAPTER NIGHT: November 12, 5:30 p.m.** — Night Out at The Metropolitan Opera: *Turandot*  
Join Chancellor Chopp and the University of Denver's New York City Chapter for a night out at the Metropolitan Opera! Experience the magnificence of Puccini's *Turandot*, featuring DU alumnus Hao Jiang Tian (MA '87) as we celebrate his 20th anniversary at The Met. [Click here](#) for more information and to register.

## FEATURED EVENTS

**EXHIBITION: through November 15 - Annabeth Rose: the whole is equal...**  
This exhibition features pieces from an ongoing series of collected and bundled handmade ceramic “found” objects. Also included in the show are large-scale drawings relating to the ceramic artwork. Rosen, who is the Robert Arneson Endowed Chair in ceramic sculpture at University of California Davis, is a widely exhibited artist with works in many major art museums. The exhibit is located in the Vicki Myhren Gallery, [Shwayder Art Building](#).

**FACULTY LECTURE: November 5, 4:00 p.m.** - Archeological Adventures in Northern Kenya: In Search of the Ancient Turkana People  
Unusual standing stone circle monuments, reminiscent of small “Stonehenges,” were discovered in the vast desert of northern Kenya. An integration of excavations and ground-

penetrating radar mapping showed that these circles were the locations of thousands of human burials 5,000 years ago. At this lecture you'll hear from Anthropology Professor Lawrence Conyers about ancient human behavior as well as the reconstruction of the ancient landscape and environment, which was much different than we experience today. Located in the [Anderson Academic Commons](#) Special Events Room. [Register today](#).

**THEATRE: November 5-7, 12-15, 7:30-9:30 p.m. - *Two Rooms***

An American teacher is held hostage in a dark room while his wife holds a vigil for him in an empty room in their house. As they interact with one another in their minds, their imagined conversations affect their real life actions. Written by Lee Blessing, and directed by Prof. Rick Barbour. Performances will be held in the Byron Theatre in the [Newman Center for the Performing Arts](#). Tickets are \$10. Purchase tickets [here](#).

**SEMINAR: November 9, 7:00-9:30 p.m. - Ignite! Art-Branding & Creative Placemaking**

Join us for a distinctive one-time seminar for artists, arts advocates, academics, entrepreneurs, business executives and community leaders. Now for the first time you can learn directly from the people who have turned both art-branding and creative placemaking into an unquestionable success story in Europe, and who are visiting select U.S. cities this fall to share their insights, offer training and develop long-term strategic partnerships. Held in the [Anderson Academic Commons](#), room 290. [More information](#).

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