



# ART MATTERS VIRTUAL BENEFIT INTERACTIVE PROGRAM

Saturday, May 2, 2020 | 6:00 p.m.

Honoring Sarah Solotaroff Mirkin  
*with the Leadership and Legacy Award*

Co-Chairs Marina Claudio and Nora Fleming



WELCOME TO THE ART MATTERS VIRTUAL BENEFIT!

Dear Friends,

Thank you for joining us for the 2020 Art Matters Virtual Benefit!

Much has changed about our lives in the last seven weeks: the logistics of work, the nature of school, and — as we simultaneously manage isolation and close proximity — the dynamics of friends and family.

Two things that have not changed are the power of the arts, and the necessity for community. For nearly 40 years, Academy students have cultivated a sense of community that has transformed the lives of those within it, and have gone on to create work that has impacted audiences around the world. Tonight, we celebrate that legacy.



Our guest of honor tonight is a legend in the Chicago arts and culture space, renowned for her transformational work and vision. Sarah Solotaroff Mirkin is one of the reasons that some of our city's most important arts institutions and organizations exist, and the reason that many more continue to thrive. Sarah has been a powerful presence in the Academy community for decades, and we are thrilled to present her with the 2020 Chicago Academy for the Arts Leadership and Legacy Award.

The 2020 Art Matters Virtual Benefit would not be possible without our friends and supporters, advocates, and allies, including our Co-Chairs Nora Fleming and Marina Claudio; the entire Benefit Committee; our patrons and sponsors; our parent volunteers; and you, our guests. On behalf of the entire Academy community, I thank you for your extraordinary commitment and support.

Welcome, and enjoy!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason Patéra". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jason Patéra  
Head of School

ART MATTERS BENEFIT CO-CHAIRS

Marina Claudio  
Nora Fleming



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**Make sure to go "fullscreen" in your zoom app during the show!  
If text is blue, click to learn more!**

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

Special thanks to Patty and Ken Hunt, on behalf of the T. Kendall Hunt Family Foundation, who have offered a matching grant of up to \$150,000 for tonight's benefit.

***Virtuoso Circle \$25,000***

Barbara Levy Kipper

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***Artist Circle \$2,500***

Don Steffen

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## LEADERSHIP AND LEGACY AWARD RECIPIENT

Sarah Solotaroff Mirkin joined The Chicago Community Trust in 1990 as the program officer responsible for all of the Trust's grants in arts and culture. In October of 2000 she was appointed Vice-President for Programs at the Trust, a role which she held until her retirement in 2007. At the Trust, Sarah is particularly remembered for her role in the creation of the Harris Theater for Music and Dance. During her time at the Trust, Sarah became acquainted with The Chicago Academy for the Arts. Since 2012 Sarah has worked as Strategic Advisor to Dan Epstein, President of the Epstein Family Foundation, a foundation that supports the artistic development of talented young people who do not have the personal means to develop their own talents.



Portrait by Thomas Mohr Photography

Sarah has served on multiple Boards, including Grant Makers in the Arts, Alliance Francaise de Chicago, and Eighth Blackbird. She is a founding board member of the Harris Theater for Music and Dance. Additionally, she has received several awards, including "One of the 100 Women in Chicago Making a Difference" in the July 2001 issue of Today's Chicago Women and the first Distinguished Service to the Chicago Dance Field award by Audience Architects, the dance service organization for the Chicago area.

Sarah holds a BA in Music from Oberlin College, a BM in Piano from Oberlin Conservatory, and an MA in English from the University of Chicago. She was married to the late Dr. Bernard L. Mirkin, Head and Director of Research for Children's Memorial Institute for Education and Research, now a part of the Lurie Children's Hospital. She has three children –Jennifer Solotaroff, Rachel Solotaroff, and Jacob Solotaroff – and five grandchildren: Esther, Joseph, Solomon, Jada, and Joel.

## QUARANTINE FRIENDLY MENU

While we weren't able to share a meal with you in person, we hope you enjoy this pantry friendly menu inspired by what we would have served at the hotel.

### *Hors d'oeuvres*

Roasted pepper and goat cheese sandwich  
(View the recipe [here!](#))

### *Entree*

Parmesan crusted cauliflower  
(View the recipe [here!](#))

*or*

Lemon chicken breast  
(View the recipe [here!](#))

*or*

Skirt steak with chimichurri sauce  
(View the recipe [here!](#))

### *Dessert*

Recipe from Golda Grais (Media Arts, '20) and her family  
(see poem on page 18)

#### **Raspberry Bars**

2 ¼ cups flour  
1 cup sugar  
1 cup chopped pecans  
1 cup softened butter  
1 egg  
1 jar raspberry preserves

Grease a 9 x 13 inch pan. In a bowl, combine all but raspberry preserves. Beat at a low speed until the mixture is crumbly. Set aside 1 ½ cups of the crumb mixture. Press the rest of the crumb mixture into the greased pan. Spread the preserves to within ½ inch of the edge, crumble the remaining crumb mixture over the preserves. Bake in a preheated 350° oven for 40-42 minutes or until lightly brown.

## DINNER PROGRAM

### **“What You Know”**

Music and Lyrics by Alex Trimble, Kevin Baird, and Sam Halliday  
Vocals - Jack Romero (Music, '20)  
Guitar - Sam Fodor (Music, '23)  
Bass - Matt Jazwinski (Music, '20)  
Drums - Declan Beyer (Music, '20)  
Video mixed, edited and, produced by Jack Murray

### **Welcome Remarks**

Ben Dicke, Host  
Marina Claudio and Nora Fleming, Gala Co-chairs

### ***Last Day of School***

Written, performed, and produced by Theatre Department Seniors:  
Claudia Mead, Grania McKirdie, Olivia Leger, and Mark Cristofanilli

### **Message from Academy Advocate and Board Member**

Rusty Hernandez-Sanfilippo

### **“Fly Again”**

Choreography by Randy Duncan  
Music by Sounds of Blackness with additional composition, arrangement,  
integration, and production by Andy Mitran of Mitran Mitran Music  
Vocals by Annie Mitran, Louise Dimiceli-Mitran,  
Dan Masterson, and Andy Mitran  
Costume design by Jeff Hancock  
Coaching by Harriet Ross

Dancers: Briley Boersma, Jackson Bradford, Mary Campbell,  
Alyssa Crowley, Isaiah Day, Jaylin Denwood, Lucia Faust, Julia Foley,  
Dyani Gandarilla, Quinn Kuch, Arayah Lyte, Brianna North,  
Dylan Sengpiel, Lincoln Seymour, Isabella Silvercase, Sadie Straub

Understudies: Christian Ayala, Nina Chrusfield, Rudolph Davis,  
Lola Falbo, Arnon Gafni-Kane, Katherine Hocker, Demi Mutz,  
Havana Stein, Arielle Wood

DINNER PROGRAM CONTINUED

Message from an Academy Parent

Tamara Jazwinski

“Candy Poison”

Poetry and Animation by Golda Grais (Media Arts, '20)

*It wasn't until I met you,  
(and got to know you, there is a difference)  
that I learned candy poison exists,  
and, most importantly, that you are devoid of it.  
Still, you paint your skin in its color,  
a loud pink screaming bright glitter,  
streaming insistently down your cheeks.  
You hide fragility behind fierceness,  
a blue green set deep in your eyes,  
shimmering and clear as a broken bottle.*

*(If you would let me,  
I would count the fractals of glass in your irises.)  
It is not up to me to decide which color most becomes you.  
but know if you were to extend a painted palm to me,  
I would take it and stain mine to match.*



**DINNER PROGRAM CONTINUED**

**The Academy is...**

Jason Patera

**The Academy Fund-A-Need**

**Presentation of the Leadership and Legacy Award  
Honoring Sarah Solotaroff Mirkin**

Jason Patera

**Raffle and Silent Auction Winners Announced**

**“Morning Glow”**

from the Broadway musical *Pippin*

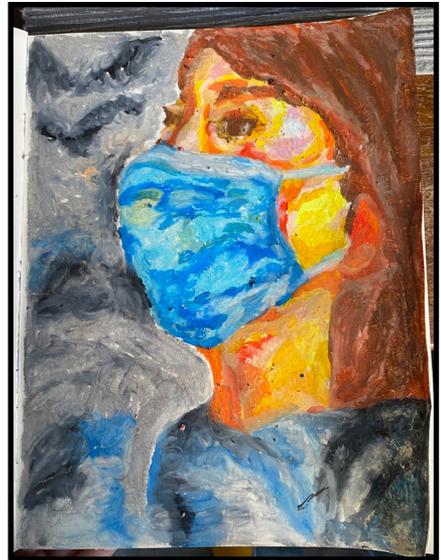
Music and Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz

Book by Robert O. Hirshon

Directed by Joey Stone

Featuring: Christian Engelhardt, Alani Gross-Roberts, Princess Isis Lang,  
Lily Ryan, Ethan Alonzo, Ben Eble, Abbie Jacobson, Jodie Lloyd,  
Isabel Newman, Austin Peyton, Asher Ramaly, Madelaine Steffen,  
Bianca Burz, Isabella Claudio, Kendel Graham, India Rose Renteria

## SELECTED WORKS: VISUAL ARTS



### Riley Jursa, Visual Arts '23

During the first semester, I had the opportunity to explore the idea of identity through the use of masks, specifically the masks that people were wearing in the Hong Kong protests. I made colorful drawings with the use of markers and explored how people use their masks to conceal their identity, in fear of being arrested. With the spark of coronavirus, masks are now being worn as an everyday accessory to protect against the virus, instead of protecting their identity. People who wear masks can be seen as smart, and people who do not can be seen as irresponsible. Political standpoints are changing rapidly, as you can be seen as following guidelines or not listening to them, changing the way people see your identity as a good citizen. My drawings consist of different types of masks, how people are wearing them, and how well they work. These new guidelines not only conceal your face but show your political identity.



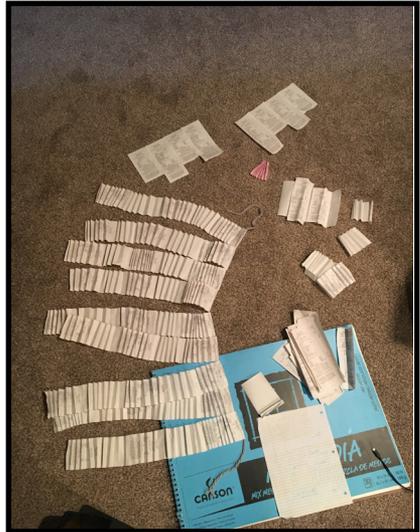
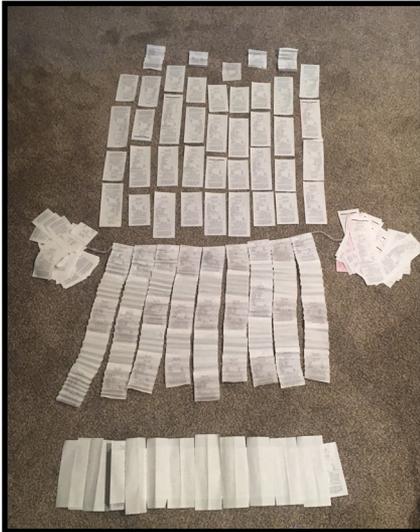
**Deedee Kinzie, Visual Arts '22**



Over the last few weeks, I've been working on paintings and drawings that contain figures that exist within strange, ambiguous atmospheres. I want to capture the claustrophobic feeling of being stuck at home and being stuck doing the same thing every day while it feels like time has stopped. I deliberately made the space in my works abstract and unidentifiable because everything in the world feels precarious and I don't know how the spaces I used to inhabit will change during this crisis.

## Madeline Farinas de Leon, Visual Arts '21

A while ago I made a dress out of plastic bags. It was a callback to a childhood 'game' and dreams of princesshood that I'd often had and acted out. The bags were entirely collected from my home. Now I'm onto receipts. The receipts are collected from my best friend, who works at a Dunkin' Donuts. That is altogether inconvenient and yet, busier than ever during this time of quarantine and isolation. So does this mean America is running on Dunkin'? Or rather turning to it? The receipts require an inordinate amount of time to fold meticulously and to document the amount of money spent per transaction. However the process is very repetitive, and once I get into a rhythm, time flies. But it also turns out I'm probably being poisoned (as most receipts are coated in environmental toxins like BPA) by the dress. I wonder if it'll be worth it?





**Mikael Watkins, Visual Arts '21**

Transitioning from working at school was a challenge, particularly because I could not rely on the school for supplies like I used to. But I think what makes an artist is making due with what you have, not just when the circumstances are in your favor. To kick-start a productive mentality and adapt to a more self-governed process of art making, I started a few projects on unconventional surfaces. Things anyone can find in an alley like a tire, sheetrock, a punching bag, etc. This made way for a more free way of making art, as I was not concerned about wasting the surface that is usually at someone's cost, with something I was not proud of. This made it more about the process than the final product.



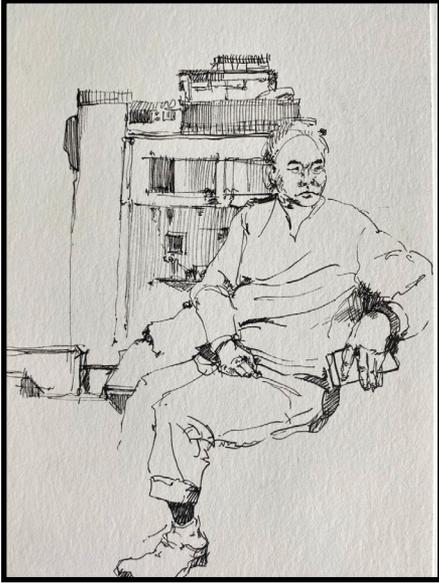
## CJ Murphy, Visual Arts '21

I am currently working on creating a series of messages, as communicated through bouquets. I asked people what messages they'd like to send someone during this time, and I chose some of the responses and attempted to translate them using old Victorian flower language. I was interested in the way that we assign meaning to miscellaneous subjects, so much so that the symbolism of different kinds of flowers is still utilized today. But, I realized that this way of sending a message is, for the most part, not commonly known anymore. Without access to flower shops, I could not obtain actual flowers to create the bouquets, so I decided to paint them as they would be.

I began making clothing out of a lack of technical skill. While I have been sewing for years now, both by hand and using a machine, I've never been formally taught. When I realized that much of the material I have at my house already would not be useful in this pandemic, as they would not be the proper material for masks, I decided to practice my sewing for the future using what I had. And what started out as making some simple shirts and skirts quickly turned into becoming more adventurous with the clothes. I used any material I could find, making clothes that I would never wear outside—it's not like I have anywhere to go right now. From items that just aren't my typical style, to clothes that would be incredibly impractical to actually wear outside, I plan to keep making as much as possible.



**Amy Li, Visual Arts '20**



My works are about the connection between myself and my childhood.

Recently, I've been pushing that connection deeper to find a way to tie myself to the memories that I

grew up in, how I am able to express myself, and even the

connection I have with my culture through my drawings.

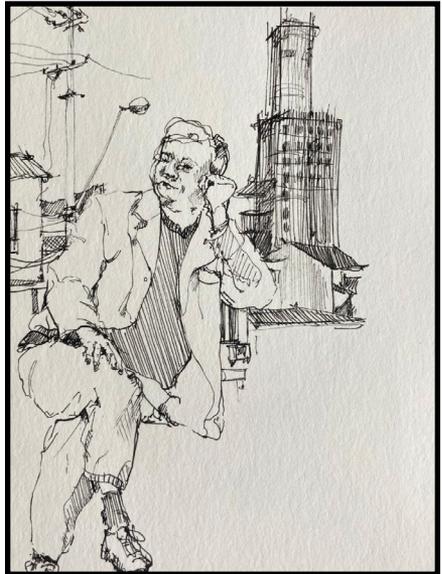
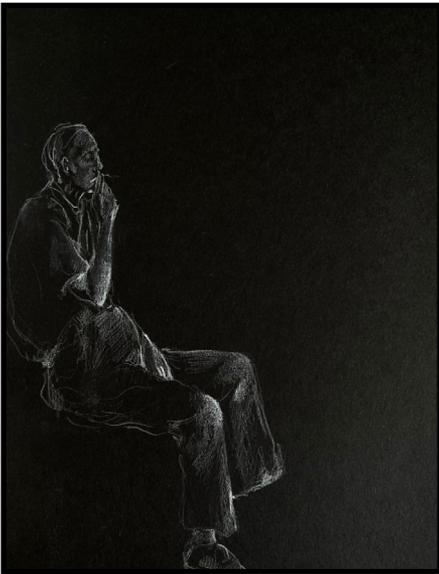
My recent drawings, to be honest, are made just for fun to carry out

the long-running interest I have with old people and old buildings.

All of the drawings in the series are drawn differently because I have yet

to find a way to present the mood I want to express through the way I

draw them.



## RASPBERRY BARS

### “Raspberry Bars”

A Poem by Golda Grais (Media Arts, '20)

To make your great-grandmother's raspberry bars, you'll first need to ask someone for the recipe, because you only remember half of it by heart. Everyone half remembers it, your grandmother, your aunt, your sister, and conveniently, none of the parts each person remembers match up. You still need the recipe, the words in front of you. You need the recipe because you remember the ingredients but not the exact amounts. You remember the faces but not the words spoken.

You'll be handed the card out of her old recipe box. The recipe box with the butter logo on the top, the woman sitting with her knees tucked under her. The card is decorated with a gaudy 50's print, yellowed edges, and slanted handwriting. Laugh at the outdated terminology, (“What's ‘salad oil?’” you'll ask.)

You'll need flour, butter, sugar, eggs, pecans, raspberry jam. For the jam it has to be Smuckers. It has to have seeds in it. The jar is not quite big enough with the red and white checkered cap. You know the jar because there's always a half empty one in the fridge. Buy a new jar so at the end there'll be another half empty one in the fridge for next time.

Take out the nut chopper that has been collecting dust at the back of the cabinet. There'll be two, and they're only used to make raspberry bars. Take out the white and red one with the crank handle, it's more efficient. Toss a few pecans into the green one with the manual slap chop top for the resident small child, (a cousin, probably,) to entertain themselves.

Try not to think about how said small child will never know your great-grandmother, whose handwriting you are following. So talk with the child about how it's the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, and aren't they excited?

## RASPBERRY BARS

Make an off handed remark about how your great-grandmother's birthday was close to Thanksgiving, so you would celebrate it then. Wonder how old she'd be now. Calculate the age she was when she died. You were eight? Nine? In third grade? Fourth? Try to add up the years. Stop before you reach the answer. It's time to make the dough.

Take the nuts you've either over- or under-chopped and mix them into the butter, sugar, eggs, and flour. The dough should be soft but crumble apart. Eat a third the dough raw, because it tastes so damn good and you'll make do anyways. You always manage to. Press half of the diminished dough supply into the glass baking pan that you've coated with cooking spray. You know that no matter how much you put in, it will always stick.

Your grandma will hand you three different spatulas to get the jam out of the jar. Only use one of them or all three, it doesn't matter. They'll all end up in the sink anyways.

"We'll need to open the other jar," your grandma will say as she takes the fresh jar of jam out of the fridge. Try to open it. Take a dish towel and try to open it. Wet the dish towel and try to open it. Take a jar opener and try to open it. Try to open it with your bare hands again. It should pop right open.

Spread the jam over the crust. Have the small child help you crumble the rest of the dough on top when the layer is perfectly uneven. Giggle as they sneak small pinches of raw dough from the bowl. It's like they're moving through your old motions, and you find yourself moving through your aunt's and you don't know to feel about that.

"There won't be enough if you keep eating it," you or your aunt might say. But have everyone take another pinch anyway. Put the baking pan in the oven and let it cook. Turn on the oven light.

## RASPBERRY BARS

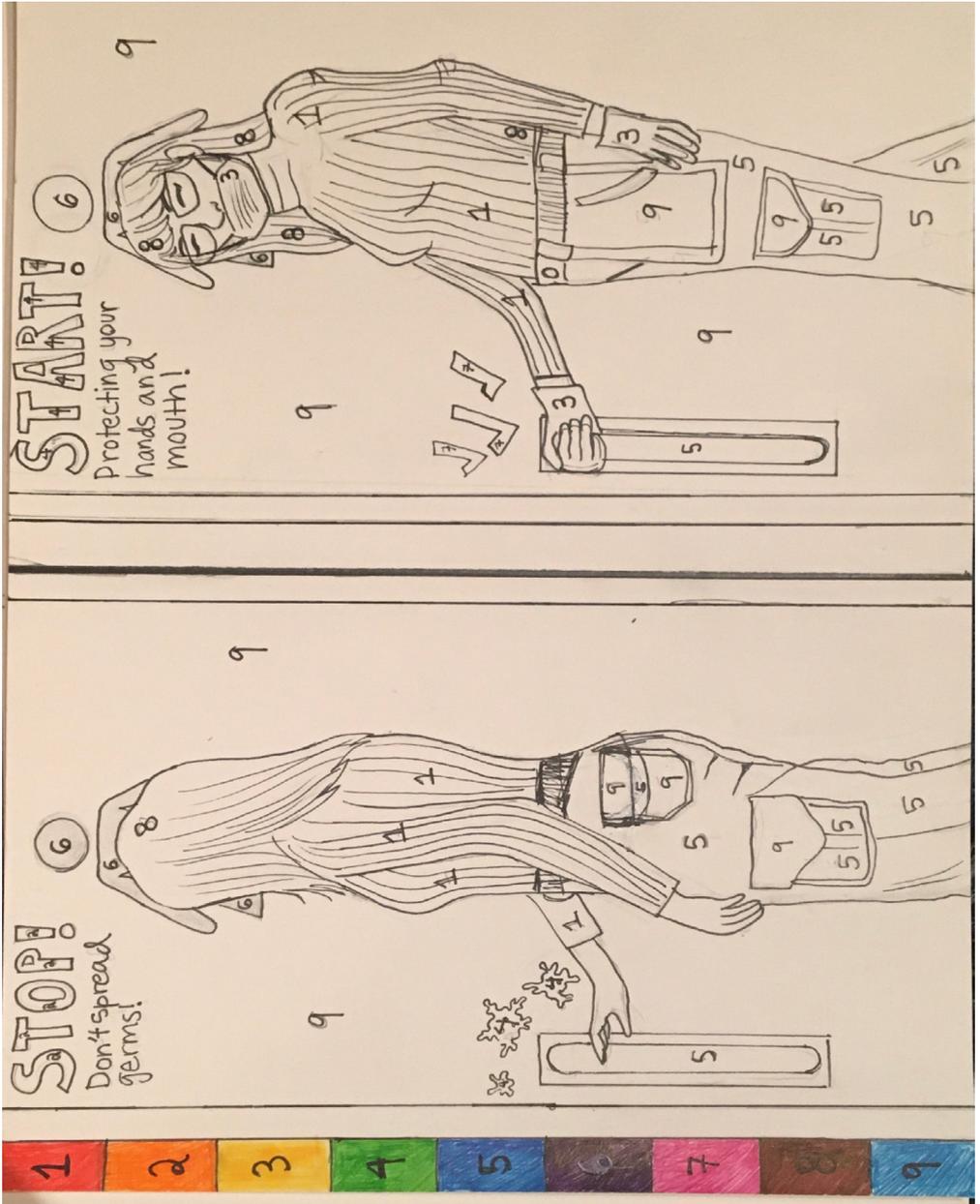
Sit at the kitchen table with your flour-caked apron. Lie your head down on the cool marble and ask about how it was when your great-grandmother made the raspberry bars. Your aunt will start talking, but you'll only half listen. You'll be too busy thinking about how strange it is that you never knew her the way your aunt knew her, the way your grandma knew her. Because they remember her occupying the kitchen with homemade cookies, and you remember her in a wheelchair at the nursing home with fun size Hershey bars. Someone will pull out photos and you'll be struck by the strangeness of seeing everybody younger with smoother faces and outdated clothes. Poke fun at the 60's hair and 80's pants and share a laugh.

Look down at the child playing on the floor with the toys you used to play with, the Tinker Toys and stuffed bulldog named Lane who's the perfect hugging size for them. Lane is too small for you now. They'll never know your great-grandmother just like you never knew her. Wish that you got to cook with her just once, instead of standing next to your sisters and mother at the nursing home.

Instead of thinking about how isolated you felt when your family shared stories of her at the funeral, go and check the raspberry bars. Take them out of the oven when the jam boils at the edges. It'll get chewy as it cools. It's the best part. Cut out a corner before they're set and taste it even though you'll burn your tongue. Because you can taste the same taste your great-grandmother did, even if you didn't have the chance to make them together. You can hold onto her face, her handwritten words even as her spoken ones fade away.

PAINT BY NUMBERS

Join us in an arts collaboration with Maxine Rhodes (Visual Arts, '22) by printing and coloring her piece!



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*All performance photos by Thomas Mohr Photography  
Honoree and Academy video filmed and produced by Forward Motion Media*

# The Chicago Academy for the Arts