



# *The* **CORE**

**THE COLLEGE  
MAGAZINE**

Winter 2021 Supplement to  
The University of Chicago Magazine





Tess Teodoro, Class of 2021, created this piece for the Autumn Quarter course Painting Matters: En Plein Air (see "When Art Imitates Life," page 12). The assignment was to apply paint with anything except a brush.

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**Front cover:** Painting by **Mercedes Cardenas**, Class of 2021.

**Back cover:** UChicago Photographic Archive, apf2-05135, University of Chicago Library.

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From the editor

## HOME ALONE

"How can you have a newspaper," an anonymous commentator asked in the October 18, 1918, issue of the *Daily Maroon*, "when the influenza does away with every sort of activity that ever happened?"

After an Autumn Quarter without sports, concerts, or parties, we might ask the same question. Even gossip was canceled, as Dean John W. Boyer, AM'69, PhD'75, observed: "No one gossips on Zoom."

Three-quarters of College students returned to Hyde Park, but they were almost invisible. Everywhere that students usually gather, this year they didn't. But despite the difficult circumstances, the students of 2020-21 still managed to create moments of joy.

Elma Ling Hoffman, Class of 2021, adopted a rescue dove, Pascal, and brought him along when she studied on the quad.

Vera Soloviev, Class of 2023, couldn't play rugby, but the team competed with other schools on fitness challenges. Her push-up max: 62 in two minutes.

Fatou Ndoeye, Class of 2023, couldn't dance with the hip-hop club EX Crew, so she danced in her bedroom by herself. "It's taken a lot of creativity to figure out what I like to do this quarter," she said. Read more about students' resilience starting on page 4.

—Carrie Golus, AB'91, AM'93

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UChiVotes undergraduate voting ambassadors, who encouraged their peers to vote early, pose with one of Jenny Holzer's trucks.

## Art

# VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE

On two days in late October, a small fleet of LED trucks drove around the city, displaying forceful get-out-the-vote messages.

The trucks were part of *YOU BE MY ALLY*, a collaborative art piece by world-renowned artist **Jenny Holzer**, EX'74. More than 70 nonpartisan messages, written by UChicago students, appeared on the trucks anonymously and in all caps—like the text in all of Holzer's works. Here are some examples.—*Carrie Golus, AB'91, AM'93*

THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE  
CANNOT BE SILENCED  
YOU'RE NOT OVERREACTING  
VOTE BECAUSE THEY DON'T  
WANT YOU TO  
HAPPY?

YOUR BIRTHRIGHT IS MY  
LIFE'S DESIRE

DO MORE THAN MAIL IT IN  
LET THE WORLD REVERBERATE  
YOUR VOICE

APATHY IS UNACCEPTABLE

VOTE LIKE NOBODY'S WATCHING  
VOTE IT'S FREE!

DO YOU WANT THE FUTURE  
TO BE DIFFERENT?

AT THIS POINT HOW COULD  
YOU NOT?

I REGRET BELIEVING THAT MY  
VOTE DIDN'T MATTER

IF YOU DON'T USE YOUR VOTE  
NOBODY WILL

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO  
REMAIN VIBRANT

VOTE LIKE YOUR CHILDREN  
ARE WATCHING

VOTE TO DECIDE WHICH WAY  
WE GO NEXT!



## NEIGHBORHOOD CANDLES

**Annie Cantara**, AB'17 (comparative human development), makes soy candles that smell like Chicago neighborhoods.

Here are the top five sellers at her company, Vicinity Candles, and what inspired each one.  
—*Carrie Golus*, AB'91, AM'93



Photo courtesy Annie Cantara, AB'17

### 1. *Hyde Park* (Cantara's neighborhood, 2013–18)

"The nostalgic scent of Hyde Park's many bookstores and libraries, with notes of leather, patchouli, and musk."

### 2. *Lakeview* (where she lived 2018–20)

"The cool summer breeze swirling off of Lake Michigan, with notes of rain water, jasmine, and citrus."

### 3. *Lincoln Park* (her current neighborhood)

"The fresh scent of spring's arrival in Lincoln Park, with notes of grass, bamboo, and bergamot."

### 4. *West Loop*

"The delicious scent wafting from the Blommer Chocolate factory with notes of chocolate, vanilla, and walnut."

### 5. *Pilsen*

"A walk through Pilsen with a cup of Mexican hot chocolate, with notes of cinnamon, vanilla, and cream."

**"I am no longer an  
Episcopal priest. I am  
a content provider."**

—*Maurice Charles*, MDiv'90, PhD'13,  
Dean of Rockefeller Chapel,  
on adjusting to Zoom during 2020



Video courtesy Bucknell University, screenshot by Michael Vendiola



## A DOVE OF MANY NAMES

*Fourth-year Elma Ling Hoffman, an art history and religious studies major, chooses an apt companion.*

At the beginning of an unseasonably warm Autumn Quarter, **Elma Ling Hoffman**, Class of 2021, was occasionally seen studying on the quads with her pet dove, Pascal, aka P.G. Tips, El Greggo, and a growing list of sobriquets.

The Core tracked Hoffman down through Pascal's Instagram account. He was present throughout the Zoom interview, either perched on Hoffman's finger or wandering around his cage.

*Interview has been edited and condensed.*

### *You keep the cage door open?*

Most of the time. When I leave, I'll close it. Otherwise I let him wander as he pleases.

### *Could you explain the difference between a dove and a pigeon?*

They're part of the same genus. In French it's *colombe* for both. He's a bit smaller than a rock pigeon, like you would see under the 55th Street bridge.

He's a ring-necked dove, which is a species that originated in Africa. These guys were bred

to have a white variation. In the wild they're brown.

### *How did you get the idea to keep a dove?*

I nanny for the most wonderful family, and they have four parakeets. I tutor the kids in violin and languages—French, Japanese, and a little bit of Russian.

The seven-year-old is learning violin. When we play together, the parakeets sing along. So I was like, I'm a musician, I need a bird to accompany me. I'm also an art history and religious studies major. You see infinite paintings with the Virgin Mary and a little dove.

### *Where did you get him?*

A rescue in Waukesha [Wisconsin] called CARE, Center for Animal Rehabilitation and Education. I have a friend who sews sails for boats. He was like, I'm going up there for work anyway. Let's get you that dove for your birthday.

So we walk in and there's birds everywhere. Macaws, cockatiels and cockatoos, lovebirds, parrots. It was super loud. All the parrots screaming.

I go over to the dove section, and I was like, oh yeah. This is a sound I like. I wanted the melodious coo.

### *How many were there to choose from?*

He was number 19. Something in the face told me this is the right bird.

When people meet this guy, they're surprised he's cuddly. He'll coo if he wants attention. He's not that smart though. He'll coo at anything that is vaguely his size and light in color.

Also, doves kiss. They'll gently peck you with their beaks. He'll do that to me, but also when I'm FaceTiming someone he recognizes. He'll bow and coo and peck at them.

They're really very warm pets. Also super inexpensive. This guy cost \$25.

### *Did it take a while for him to adjust?*

When I first got him, my roommate had a cat. He was in a separate room, but the room had a glass door, and the cat would come ... it was like cat television. I think that might have stressed Pascal out.


Doves tend to bond fairly quickly to their owners. They're recommended for children and elderly people—almost like emotional support animals. He just sits and coos and loves. He can't even bite if he tried. Which is a big thing with parrots, because parrots can nip.

### *How do doves wind up at a rescue?*

Sometimes people are careless. If you own multiple doves and keep them together, you're going to end up with baby doves.

And they are often pets for elderly people—like with this guy, his parents were at the shelter too. Their owner had died.



A white dove with a pink beak and feet is perched on an open music book. The book shows a page with musical notation and the title "Allegro assai". The dove is looking towards the left. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

**“When people  
meet this  
guy, they’re  
surprised he’s  
cuddly.”**

**—Elma Ling Hoffman,  
Class of 2021**

A photo of Pascal from  
his Instagram account,  
[@pg.dove](#). Read a  
longer version of this  
interview at [mag  
.uchicago.edu/pascal](#).

### *What does he eat?*

Bird seed mix and mineral grit, which is crushed-up oyster shells, as a calcium supplement. Fresh fruits and veggies at least every other

day. Carrots are good. Apple, lettuce, parsley. You want to make sure they get their vitamins A and C.

### *Does Pascal coo when you play violin, like you hoped?*

Sometimes. Sometimes he'll flutter his wings. Or he'll sit down and be a little loaf of dove bread. Just very fluffy. He'll squint as well. That's a sign he's happy.

—Carrie Golus, AB'91, AM'93





## UChicago history

# A SURPRISE PACKAGE FROM 1950

Songs of the University of Chicago, an unexpected pleasure in a difficult year.

Last September, I returned to Harper Court, where the *Core* has its offices, for the first time since March. I had been granted special permission to retrieve files from my desk.

I almost forgot to check the mail room. There I discovered a package from **Maurice S. Mandel** of New York City, postmarked March 17—four days after our offices closed for the pandemic.

“Dear Ms. Golus,” read the handwritten letter inside, “A search of my archives resulted in this ‘find.’ ... Please accept it as a token of appreciation for all you and your colleagues do to keep us old-timers in the loop.”

The “find” was *Songs of the University of Chicago*, a two-record 78-rpm set dedicated to Amos Alonzo Stagg, famed

UChicago football coach of the Big Ten era. The gatefold album included photos of the two fraternities that recorded the songs: Kappa Alpha Psi, 1949 winner of the Interfraternity Sing, and Phi Gamma Delta, 1948 winner. The lyrics, including “Alma Mater,” “The Song of the ‘C,’” and “1893” (see page 34) were printed inside the back cover.

Mandel, AB’56, AB’57, came to UChicago at age 15 in 1951 (he told me later on the phone) on a half-tuition scholarship from the Ford Foundation. After he joined the yearbook staff, he won a journalism scholarship that covered the rest. He is no relation to the Mandels of Mandel Hall: “I can’t tell you how many times I was asked that question,” he says, “and wished I could have responded positively.”

A stack of the albums had been left behind in Ida Noyes,



The Student Union of The University of Chicago gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Mr. Charles K. McNeil ('25), whose generosity made this album of Chicago songs possible.

Phi Gamma Delta: 1948 I-4 Winners



**“We were very much into singing. Fraternity songs, University of Chicago songs.”**

**—Maurice S. Mandel, AB'56, AB'57**

where the yearbook had its offices. The album, organized by the Student Union and funded by a donation from Charles K. McNeil, PhB 1925, seems to have been a one-off. According to an ad in the October 1950 *University of Chicago Magazine*, it cost \$2.85 postpaid.

When Mandel pledged Delta Upsilon and moved into its house, he brought a few copies of the album with him. “We were very much into singing,” he says. “Fraternity songs, University of Chicago songs,” which they learned from the record. Mandel’s range is somewhere between tenor and baritone. “That’s a hard question to answer when you have a voice like mine,” he says. “I can carry a tune most of the time.”

When the album was made, the University had long since

left Big Ten glory behind: Stagg retired in 1932, varsity football was dropped in 1939. But the old songs were preserved in the annual Interfraternity Sing. “Visions of a gay and colorful crowd overflowing Stagg Field on autumn Saturday afternoons comes [sic] to many moist eyes,” noted a *Chicago Maroon* article on the 1949 IF Sing, which Stagg himself attended. “The so-called collegiate spirit Chancellor [Robert M.] Hutchins booted off the quadrangles along with football was intercepted by the fraternities.”

As for athletic boosterism, Mandel says, “I recall very fondly an evening when our basketball team, which hadn’t won a game in years, was playing Navy Pier.” (The University of Illinois set up

a temporary, two-year campus on Navy Pier after World War II, primarily for veterans on the GI Bill. This later became the University of Illinois at Chicago.) “Navy Pier had a rather weak team that year. Someone got the idea we ought to come out and cheer like we were a Big Ten team.

“That spirit spread like wildfire across the campus. There was a bonfire in the main quadrangle, a conga line, and lots of singing. Bartlett Gymnasium filled with fans. There were cheers going up: ‘Beat Navy Pier, beat Navy Pier.’ And the U of C won for the first time in years. That was a good fun time.”

**—Carrie Golus, AB'91, AM'93**



## Faculty

# A HANNA GRAY MISCELLANY

*Seven anecdotes from a barrier-breaking academic career.*

In November UChicago president **Robert J. Zimmer** announced the renaming of the library's Special Collections Research Center in honor of **Hanna Holborn Gray**, the Harry Pratt Judson Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus of History and president emeritus of the University. It's the latest in a career of accolades for the Renaissance historian, Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient, and author of *An Academic Life* (Princeton University Press, 2018) and *Searching for Utopia: Universities and Their Histories* (University of California Press, 2012). To celebrate the latest feather in her cap, here are a few of our favorite stories about the inimitable Mrs. Gray.

### 1. Making an entrance.

In the 1950s women could enter Harvard's faculty club only through the side door. As a young assistant professor of history, Gray recounts in her 2018 memoir, *An Academic Life*, she simply flouted the rule when attending departmental meetings, entering through the main door alongside her male colleagues. No one stopped her.

### 2. She got used to being a Hyde Park celebrity.

"Much interest was shown in my domestic life and arrangements," she writes in *An Academic Life*. At the grocery store, shoppers would "look with undisguised curiosity into my shopping cart." She once spotted "a distinguished professor of law" looking into her garage, "presumably to find out what kind of car we drove."

### 3. She essentially held two roles at once: president and president's wife.

For University events, she writes, "I did the planning and oversight of dinners and receptions, selected the menus, and arranged the seating"—traditionally the bailiwick of the presidential wife. Gray was unbothered: "I like doing those things."

### 4. She worked to preserve the work of another pioneering woman, Marion Talbot, the first dean of women for the entire University.

Gray asked the University of Chicago Press to reissue *More than Lore: Reminiscences of Marion Talbot* (1936), Talbot's history of the University's early days, and wrote the 2015 edition's introduction.

### 5. The University was on the brink of fiscal disaster when she arrived.

An economic downturn had the University's budget stretched to its limits. In response, Gray raised tuition, expanded College enrollment, increased financial aid, and created a centralized budget office, measures that helped the University weather a perilous moment.

### 6. Convocation got to her too.

Presiding over convocations was a highlight of her presidential calendar, she said in 2017. "There's a dignity and beauty about the ceremony that I always enjoyed. Each time I saw that student in front of me, to whom I was going to hand a degree, it was a joyful occasion."

### 7. About that portrait in Hutchinson Commons ...

She appreciates the gesture but has never been a fan, she admitted in 2017. "I feel it makes me look meaner than I am. ... It was kidnapped twice, and I thought it was a pity it was recovered."

—Susie Allen, AB'09



Hanna Holborn Gray,  
UChicago's tenth  
(and first woman)  
president, walking  
to her inauguration  
in Rockefeller  
Chapel in 1978.



## WHAT IF CITIES TOOK THE LEAD?

*Two College alumni, working in New York City, sparked a global trend in tracking sustainability.*

Ending hunger and poverty. Achieving gender equality worldwide. Tackling climate change on a global scale. These are just a few of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals—also known as the Global Goals—adopted by all United Nations member states in 2015.

Meeting these ambitious targets by 2030 as planned will require action and cooperation, not only from nations, but also from local governments—especially in major cities. The fact that more and more cities are tracking their progress on the Global Goals can be credited in significant part to the work of two College alumni: **Alexandra Hiniker**, AB'02, and **Daniel Steinberg**, AB'00.

Four years ago, when Hiniker and Steinberg were colleagues at the City of New York, they created something new: a Voluntary Local Review (VLR). The idea was inspired by the Voluntary National Reviews that many countries were already submitting to the UN on their sustainability efforts. But a review like this had never been done at the city level.

Launching the project from their respective arms of the city's bureaucracy—the Mayor's

Office of International Affairs (Hiniker) and the Office of Operations (Steinberg)—took their combined skills and savvy.

"Alex galvanized this effort," Steinberg says. "The Mayor's Office for International Affairs has been around for a while, managing the city's relationship with the UN and diplomats.

... Alex transformed it into a clearinghouse for global policy ideas, and that was a prerequisite for the city taking on something of this magnitude."

"The city was already doing its own report on sustainability," Hiniker says. "Why not produce a report for the whole world to learn from? I approached Dan about it first, because he was a mastermind about metrics. We went to our bosses, and they met and agreed to it."

New York City released its first VLR in 2018. Focusing on the five Global Goals the UN had set as priorities that year—clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, and life on land—the report's methodology and findings are available for anyone to read. The report explains not only what policies worked but also why.

"The VLR process was immensely valuable for identifying our strengths and relative weaknesses as a city," Steinberg says. In addition, says Hiniker, "This is meant to be an opportunity for NYC to learn from other cities, not just a way to show off what the city is doing well."

The idea quickly spread: as of 2020, at least 30 localities had conducted VLRs, including cities such as Los Angeles and Mexico City and regions such as Spain's Basque Country and several counties in Kenya.

In contrast, the United States has not committed to a Voluntary National Review. (Last year 47 countries submitted national reviews, with many of the world's most powerful notably absent.) Indeed, one benefit of the local reviews is that they allow cities to step up and coordinate with other global actors, even when their home countries do not. "Now there are more than 200 local governments around the world that have committed to Voluntary Local Review," Hiniker says. "This is the way the world is communicating using the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals."

In 2018 Alexandra Hiniker, AB'02, and Daniel Steinberg, AB'00, represented New York City at a conference in Guangzhou, China, where the city's Voluntary Local Review program was awarded the Guangzhou International Award for Urban Innovation.



After graduating from the College with a degree in history, Steinberg worked for a New York state senator, then completed a master's in urban planning at Columbia University. He says that "the pandemic has been all consuming" in his current work at the City of New York: "In many ways, we're still in response mode." Although this year's VLR has been delayed, the city is still committed to producing one.

Hiniker, who majored in international studies, completed a master's in Central and Eastern European studies at Jagiellonian University in Poland, then worked for land mine and cluster bomb

**"The city was already doing its own report on sustainability. Why not produce a report for the whole world to learn from?"**

**—Alexandra Hiniker, AB'02**

removal in Laos, Cambodia, and Lebanon. More recently she earned a master's in urban policy from Hunter College.

In early 2020, Hiniker left the City of New York to pursue sustainability initiatives at Carnegie

Mellon University in Pittsburgh. Within the year, she had overseen Carnegie Mellon's production of the world's first Voluntary University Review and helped Pittsburgh produce its first VLR.

**—Lucas McGranahan**





# WHEN ART IMITATES LIFE

During a quarter when everything was different, a professor known for installation art took her painting class outside.

By Carrie Golus, AB'91, AM'93

12 / The Core



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12 / The Core





Last quarter **Jessica Stockholder** was supposed to teach the course *Painting Matters*. When COVID-19 upended everything, Stockholder, the Raymond W. and Martha Hilpert Gruner Distinguished Service Professor of Visual Arts, had the idea of adapting her syllabus for an open-air painting course.

At the beginning of Autumn Quarter, the College offered three-week intensive courses—the equivalent of a standard 10-week course. “It struck me,” says Stockholder, “that an en plein air class would work for that three-week period, when the weather might accommodate it.”

Her adapted course, *Painting Matters: En Plein Air*, met in the morning until noon, three times a week. During the first week, when all College classes were remote, students painted at home. For the in-person classes, they gathered at the Logan Center, then found a spot to paint on the Midway. Most of the 14 students were nonmajors, though they all had taken a painting course before.

Traditional landscape paintings, created from observation, are not the type of work that Stockholder is known for—although sometimes she does create work that involves the outdoors. For an early piece, *My Father’s Backyard* (1983), Stockholder hung a spray-painted





**“Consciousness is constructed to edit our perceptions. So art is an opportunity to slow down and ask questions about the editing.”**

**—Jessica Stockholder**

mattress on the side of her father’s garage and mounted a cupboard door on the roof with chicken wire. In 2009 she created an installation, *Flooded Chambers Maid*, in New York’s Madison Square Park, that included a brightly colored triangular platform and blue rubber mulch. Office workers took breaks there, and the local children played on it. Some artists might not have appreciated that, but Stockholder “enjoyed the variety of audiences that intersected the work.”

In her site-specific installations Stockholder uses lots of paint, but she applies it “evenly and opaquely, as a housepainter would do it,” according to the monograph *Jessica Stockholder* (Phaidon Press, 1995). She had never taught a plein air class before, or even taken one. Nonetheless her students raved about the course and her teaching—“excellent,” “amazing,” “incredible”—and were deeply grateful, during this strange and unprecedented quarter, for the “break from isolation” and “the much-needed sunlight.”

*The following interview with Stockholder has been edited and condensed.*

*How was your course different from a traditional plein air painting class?*

It wasn’t focused on how to become a mimetic painter. About halfway through I said to my students, you might be wondering what the course has to do with landscape, given the assignments. The assignments were very formal in nature, asking students to pay attention to the artifice of picture making.

When you move through life, you can’t notice everything. Consciousness is constructed to edit our perceptions. So art is an opportunity to slow down and ask questions about the editing. Why do we edit, and how do we edit?

I’m interested in visibility and how thinking and ideas are formally related to embodied experience. In the fall, the landscape changes so quickly. All the trees were changing color. It was a way of being in time, collectively, and noticing that shift. I hadn’t foreseen that, but it was really lovely.

*What was the hardest thing about teaching the course?*

It was difficult—and at a distance, where they’re not all together—to challenge the

**Jessica Stockholder with *Rose’s Inclination*, an installation in the lobby and sculpture garden of the Smart Museum. Stockholder has exhibited her work at the Renaissance Society, the Whitney Museum, the Venice Biennale, and the Centre Pompidou in Paris, among many other venues.**



students' preconceptions of what plein air painting should be.

When you are in a classroom gathered together, it's like parallel play among babies. Babies don't talk to each other, but they are very responsive to each other. An art classroom is like that. The students are always seeing what the others are doing and in this way they learn from each other. So that's a real loss in this COVID moment.

*Do you tell the students about your own work, or assume they're going to google?*

I don't usually; only if they ask. I tell them I really love color, because I do.

I don't think they usually google me, actually. At the undergrad level, they're swimming in such complications of their own.

*For one at-home assignment, you had them tape a sheet of acetate on a window and draw on it.*

I learned that from **Laura Letinsky** [professor of visual arts]. She uses it in relation to photography.

The acetate frames a view. Then, with a marker, you draw what you're seeing. But of course, if you move even a fraction of an inch, everything changes. And each of your eyes sees something different. Many of the students ended up using just one eye.

It's an assignment that lets you see that realistic depictions—what we call realistic depictions—have nothing to do with how we actually see the world. You're always seeing the world with two eyes, so your point of view is already multiple, and no one stays absolutely still without moving their head a

**Clockwise from top left: Collin Amelsberg, Class of 2023; Defne Anlas, Class of 2021; Tess Teodoro, Class of 2021; and Stephanie Valencia, Class of 2021, focus on their work. The course benefited from unusually mild autumn weather.**



## ARTIST STATEMENTS

*Students explain their work.*

### *Top row*

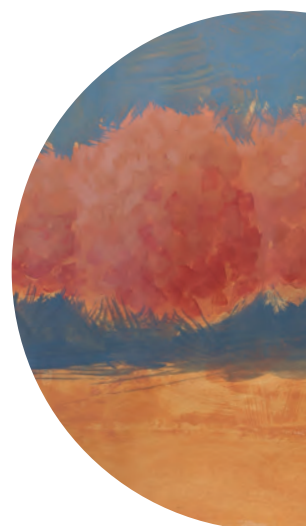
**Timnah Rosenshine**, Class of 2022: "This painting was a study on scale. It was one of the more challenging assignments of the quarter—to both represent scale and invert it." For the same assignment, **Tess Teodoro**, Class of 2021, focused on the Logan Center and leaves, "flattening both objects into 2D line drawings, overlaid upon one another, in hypersaturated versions of the colors."

### *Middle row*

**Defne Anlas**, Class of 2021, painted "one of my favorite views in Chicago, Grant Park overlooking the skyline. I wanted to experiment with points and textures." An abstract piece by **Mercedes Cardenas**, Class of 2021, was inspired by the trees on the Midway. She omitted their trunks, creating a "floating line of what looked like cotton candy." (See full painting on the cover.)

### *Bottom row*

**M. J. Harvey**, Class of 2021, had fun "messing with perspective by combining two and three dimensions. The most challenging thing about creating this collage was stopping the process—I kept wanting to add more elements." **Perri Wilson**, Class of 2021, painted the stairs of Taft House. "Since we had to paint a few quick pieces that day, I had to rush and couldn't overthink," she says. "I liked how unstable the final product turned out, like the stairs might blow away."





## “Realistic depictions—what we call realistic depictions—have nothing to do with how we actually see the world.”

—Jessica Stockholder

fraction. You’re always putting together a whole bunch of views of the world.

*During one of the outdoor sessions, you had students lay down a background color. Some chose really bright backgrounds, like hot pink. That seems challenging, to start with a color that’s not even in the landscape.*

It’s arbitrary to start with a white background, and it’s a very traditional practice in oil painting to start with a background color. It’s not usually a bright color. It’s usually a more subdued color that inflects the painting moving forward.

What happened in this class—it’s always challenging to order materials—the students needed to be able to carry their materials, so they each had a set of small tubes. I realized they were all leaving lots of white in their paintings as they were being very careful about not using too much paint. They didn’t say that to me; I could just see it.

So we found some huge leftover bottles of paint at the Logan Center. That’s where the bright backgrounds came from. They no longer had to conserve paint.

*What was the mood of the class like?*

I think there was a sort of mellow sadness. But they were all very present and involved and worked hard.

*During the final critique, which was remote, you mentioned how different art looks on-screen. You can’t see the*

*brushwork at all, and the colors are different for everyone, depending on their screens.*

Entirely different. That’s always a problem teaching art. At least they usually get to see each other’s work. But teaching about the history of art and trying to share contemporary work with them—right now you can’t even ask them to go to a museum. That’s not a fair ask.

*Were there any unexpected challenges, beyond the initial lack of paint?*

I didn’t really think through what we would do if the weather was horrific. I imagined an intrepid group of students who would be out there rain or shine.

But one student had really poor circulation and one day it was so cold, she asked if she could leave early. When I polled them about how they felt about working in the rain, they didn’t seem too excited.

I am a little allergic in the fall. Not obviously—not like sneezing and coughing allergic. But there was a lot of mold the last week. At the end of three hours of being outside, the rest of the day was gone for me.

*But you would teach it again?*

Oh yeah. In non-COVID times, it would be really great to teach it again, and be able to move in and out of the Logan Center easily—use the classroom and be outside. The students could store things and work there after class. ❀





**“I realized masks can be the new thing.”**

*Fatou Ndoeye, Class of 2023, is an economics major from Dakar, Senegal.*

# THROUGH STUDENT EYES

Two photographers show us what Autumn Quarter was like.



**As told to Carrie Gokus, AB'91, AM'93**

**T**his quarter the Core had two Micro-Metcalf interns, **Fatou Ndoeye** and **Vera Soloview**, both Class of 2023. Together they captured the defining aspects of life under COVID-19: masks, surveillance tests, social distancing, and the ever-present Zoom.

*Interviews have been edited and condensed.*

**L**ast year, I was a photographer for MODA, the fashion RSO [recognized student organization]. When we first started having to wear masks, I was like, oh no. I can't match my outfits with this. But later on I realized masks can be the new thing. There are so many styles. When your face is covered, you can find another way to express yourself—with your mask. And I love that my face stays warm.

Autumn Quarter has been better than I expected. All my classes were online, and personally, I enjoyed that. Online classes allow me to stay focused and organized, and going back to the recordings of the lectures was great.

When COVID hit in the spring, I had to move out of the dorm into an apartment by myself. That was really hard. Now I have two roommates who have been my source of support. They're my best friends, and we have a great relationship.

I have not been home to see my family in Dakar for over a year. They're trying to put up a good front, but I know they want me home. I was going to go home for Christmas, but the number of cases in Senegal started rising a little bit. The rate in Senegal is very low, a lot less than the United States. But the main thing is the fear of not being able to come back, even if I have a visa, because the borders can be closed. I didn't want to take the risk.

Before COVID I was able to go so many different places and engage in different activities—have different escapes from the stress. It's taken a lot of creativity to figure out what I

Opposite: Ndoye wears one of her favorite masks. Right: Ndoye's roommate Agnes Palmstierna, Class of 2023, who is a designer for MODA this year. Below: Fiorella Robinson, Class of 2023, a friend Ndoye ran into on 53rd Street.



like to do this quarter. Taking pictures has been great. Sometimes I would dance in my room. And honestly, my workload has been a kind of pleasure. When school started, it was such a relief. Seeing how much I have learned, things that I didn't understand at the beginning of the quarter, and now I get them. It's really boring, but that's how good it gets right now.

I want to say I learned different skills like cooking, but to be honest, it was like, one time. I order out a lot or cook basic things like spaghetti. There was one day when I cooked, and I was really proud, and I was like, this is me now, I'm a cook. And it never happened again.

I've definitely had my hard days, but I like to think about the things I've learned. Being alone is really good in terms of reflecting on yourself, growing as a person, figuring out what's important to you. I loved that aspect of quarantine overall. Spring Quarter last year was so hard, but I'm such a different person now and I love that. 🌸





## “I can’t even put a single label on how I felt.”

*Vera Soloview, a second-year from Anchorage, Alaska, is majoring in biology with a specialization in microbiology.*

**A**utumn Quarter was strange. I can’t even put a single label on how I felt. Some of it was great, some of it was really challenging and difficult.

I lived with three of my closest friends in an apartment. Emotionally that was supergreat—just having people that I could see without a mask. We were able to be there for each other, making sure we took breaks so we didn’t work all day. Somebody would finally be like, hey, let’s have an ice cream break.

The thing I missed most was going to the dining halls to eat with friends. After class we would always meet up for lunch. It was our way of relaxing. I miss that so much, because I can’t see those friends easily anymore, and now when I have lunch, I find myself thinking, I could still be doing work. I make a quick sandwich in the kitchen, and then I get right back to it.

Going to RSO [recognized student organization] meetings was a really big part of Autumn Quarter last year. I was involved with Phoenix Biology, Women in Science, women’s rugby, and the Crew Ministry Group. This year it was all on Zoom.

Rugby was superinteresting. The conference we play in

had a tournament with other schools. Every week we had a set of exercises to do. How long can you hold a plank or a wall sit? How many push-ups or squats can you complete in two minutes? I think we ended up in second or third place. I wouldn’t say I’m in really good shape, but I was fortunate enough not to gain the quarantine 15. My max was 62 push-ups. I kept trying to beat that, but I never could.

The COVID surveillance testing was once a week. My time slot was Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 12. I would have to go at 8 a.m., because I had classes from 9:40 to 12. The day I had a midterm in chemistry, I was running to go get my test and then running back home. Fortunately they were forgiving if you did miss it—you could go on Sundays.

I had heard these horror stories of the stick being forced into your nose all the way into your brain. It was nothing like that. It was a little swab and it barely went in—this is kind of gross, but almost like a picking-your-nose kind of feeling. It went in each nostril, turned to collect as much of a sample as possible, and that was it. 🌸







Clockwise from top left: The lab where Soloview was a teaching assistant, marked for social distancing; a quiet campus; a quiet campus; on the way to weekly COVID testing; reviewing for a final on Zoom.





# “WE SHALL EVERY ONE BE MASK'D”

Classes outside and in tents.  
Masks worn everywhere, even  
by the grotesques. Scenes from  
an Autumn Quarter that  
required some improvisation.



By Carrie Golus, AB'91, AM'93

**S**ince last March, our sense of space has been off. Although personal space varies by culture—Americans prefer to keep 3.1 feet between themselves and a stranger, according to a 2017 study—no culture in the world thinks six feet between friends is normal.

For the students who returned to campus last fall, the normal rhythms of College life were also off. The quarter began with two weeks of quarantine, when all classes were remote, even those with an in-person component. At Thanksgiving, students who went home stayed there. The quarter ended all remote, just as it began.

In these less than ideal circumstances, students still did normal-ish things: they went on field trips, did labs, studied on the quads, played games with their friends. Here's a look at what Autumn Quarter in Hyde Park felt like this year. 🌸

Photography by Jason Smith







Ecology and Conservation students on a field trip to Jackson Park, where they collected aquatic invertebrates in the Columbia Basin, behind the Museum of Science and Industry. The course also included trips to Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie and Indiana Dunes National Park.









Clockwise from far left: A near-empty campus on a misty afternoon; a Cobb Gate grotesque models correct mask positioning; a class held in one of the Quadrangle Club tents; students on the first day of in-person classes; an art class in one of the Logan Center tents; students in a genetics lab wear masks along with the usual goggles and gloves.











Divinity School Teaching Fellow Russell Johnson, AM'15, PhD'19, teaches Human Being and Citizen on the quad, using a bit more space than would be typical in fifth century Athens.

Photography by Jason Smith



Clockwise from left: Collegiate Assistant Professor Brinton Ahlin, AB'09, teaches Self, Culture, and Society in a Quad Club tent; masked spikeball on the quad; two Quad Club tents, used for class meetings and office hours; students in College camp chairs, supplied to faculty who taught outdoors; Ahlin bearing the message "We shall every one be mask'd," a Shakespearean quote/UChicago Health Pact requirement; an outdoor study session.















# MOUNTAIN TIME

First-year cross-country runners start the academic year off with an altitude adjustment.



By Jeanie Chung

**L**ydia Lo and Catherine Wimmer were excited for their first year at UChicago, eager to take classes and run for the Maroons' cross-country and track teams. But as the summer of 2020 wore on and COVID-19 showed no signs of letting up, they got worried. Schools across the country started switching to remote learning. Fearing the same thing would happen in Hyde Park, they wondered: Why not get a group of first-year runners together to live, study, and run at altitude for Autumn Quarter

and what would have been cross-country season?

"We thought it would be a good way to train," Wimmer says, "and it might be nice to go somewhere secluded."

They scoured the web for rentals, looking in Colorado, Wyoming, even Hawaii. They finally found an affordable four-bedroom, four-bath townhouse in Park City, Utah (population 8,500)—not quite secluded, but certainly less crowded than Chicago and offering necessary amenities like Wi-Fi, nearby grocery shopping, and abundant open trails for running. With a destination





**“We thought it would be a good way to train, and it might be nice to go somewhere secluded.”**

**—Catherine Wimmer,  
Class of 2024**

From left: Karis Ertel, Lydia Lo, Evelyn Battleson-Gunkel, Cara Chittenden, and Catherine Wimmer, all Class of 2024, on a hike in Deer Valley.

in mind, they reached out to as many of their first-year teammates as they could.

Although some people took a little bit of convincing, and their parents took even more, “everyone was pretty down,” Wimmer says.

And so the weekend before classes started, six runners from the Class of 2024 arrived in Utah: Lo from Texas, Wimmer and **Evelyn Battleson-Gunkel** from New Jersey, **Cara Chittenden** from California, **Karis Ertel** from

western New York, and **Lucy Groothuis** from Michigan. All had received negative COVID-19 tests and were careful about masks and social distancing before and after their stay.

None had ever been to Utah or trained at altitude. That alone, Lo says, was “very different from anything we’ve ever experienced.” They were also getting used to college classes, Zoom—most of their high school classes in the spring involved only asynchronous

assignments—and living with people they’d just met.

They learned to give each other space and share chores. They didn’t draw up a chore chart, though Lo admits, “that might’ve been a good idea.”

Focusing on academics was a challenge at times, Wimmer says, especially with the temptations of a “runner’s paradise” like the Park City area. “It’s hard to not think I have an obligation to go outside and see something cool.” Eventually their days settled into



# FIRST-YEAR CUISINE

*Healthy, inexpensive, simple, and quick.*

a routine: classes and schoolwork in the morning, a run in the afternoon, grocery shopping or other errands, more schoolwork, dinner, often a movie at home. They had more time to explore on the weekends; a trip to the Bonneville Salt Flats was a highlight.

They took turns cooking. Wimmer made brussels sprouts and salads, Lo made chicken, Chittenden whipped up pancakes and smoothies, Battleson-Gunkel made macaroni and cheese. “We all have our specialties,” Lo says.

As the group bonded, they kept in regular contact with their teammates and coach **Chris Hall**, who helped them adjust their workouts and expectations to account for the altitude. “It’s more a matter of knowing you’re breathing heavy because it’s high altitude,” Wimmer says, “rather than being worried you’re out of shape.”

They also discovered students from other schools—Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, more—living nearby and spending their fall the same way. COVID-19 restrictions meant they couldn’t meet up, but Lo says they connected on social media, establishing “a unique sense of community.”

Although they were looking forward to seeing their families for the holidays and then being on campus in January, the runners were a little sad to leave when their rental ended before Thanksgiving. “Everyone is happy we made this decision in the end,” Wimmer says, “not only for our athletic and academic sides, but for our mental state.” ❁

*First-years don’t usually have to worry about cooking. They show up at the dining hall, choose their meal, eat, and leave the dirty dishes behind. The six student-athletes living*

*together in Park City, Utah, had no choice but to figure it out. Here’s one of the dinnertime meals they enjoyed eating together.*  
—Carrie Golus, AB’91, AM’93

## Basic (but Delicious) Pan-Seared Chicken Breast Recipe: College Student Edition

By Lydia Lo, Class of 2024

1. Defrost the boneless, skinless chicken breasts.
2. Generously season both sides of the chicken with salt, ground pepper, and garlic salt to add a nice zing of flavor.
3. Heat vegetable oil in a medium-large skillet.
4. When the oil is hot, add chicken to the pan. Only cook a few pieces at a time so you don’t overcrowd your skillet.
5. Let the chicken cook over medium-high heat until golden brown (refrain from moving them around for at least a full five minutes).
6. Flip the chicken over and cook for a few more minutes until golden brown.
7. If you’re feeling fancy, finish with butter to add some flavor and color to the chicken.
8. Serve with sautéed vegetables and potatoes and enjoy!



Photography by Coral222/iStock



F. Frank Steigmeyer, PhB 1897, in his track team uniform.



## Lyrics

# 1893

By F. Frank Steigmeyer, PhB 1897

Oh, we came here in the autumn  
of eighteen ninety-three;

A half a dozen buildings, had  
then the U of C.

Cobb Hall was then the only  
place where we could daily flunk

And in the dear old Drexel "Dorm.,"  
was the only place to bunk.

### CHORUS

O Chicago, O Chicago,  
How great you've grown to be  
Since fir t we cast our lot with  
thine in eighteen ninety-three.

Oh, there were more profs than  
students, but then we didn't care;

They spent their days in research  
work, their evenings at the Fair;

And life upon the campus was  
one continual swing;

We watched the Ferris wheel go  
'round and we didn't do a thing.

### REPEAT CHORUS

Oh, the commons started up that  
year, this was their bill of fare:

Sauce with mold, weak coffee  
cold, and a hunk of grizzly bear;

And the man who caught the most  
roaches, at breakfast or at tea,

Was deemed the hero of the  
hour, thereafter wore a "C."

### REPEAT CHORUS

Oh, the girls were mostly twenty-  
eight, and after Ph.Ds.

They took four hours in those old  
days; there were no extra fees;

And all the men were mostly  
married, which proved a great  
hoo-doo

To all society events; what could  
the poor girls do?

### REPEAT CHORUS

The baseball and the football teams  
were poor when at their best,

But now they're great, defying  
fate as champions of the West;

To Morgan Park was quite a trip  
for teams when we fir t came,

But now we go from coast to  
coast and seldom lose a game.

### REPEAT CHORUS

Then Stagg was catcher, pitcher,  
coach, shortstop, and halfback, too,

For in those days of "auld lang  
syne" our athletes were few;

But now three men with brawn and  
brain are trying for each place,

And these three persons with A.  
Stagg, decide the pennant race.

### REPEAT CHORUS

Oh, the Glee Club took a trip that  
year, they made it in a day;

The second stop was Downer's  
Grove, the fir t was Aurora;

But now we feast and dance  
and sing; through distance fast  
we're whirled,

And when the Glee Club's air ship's  
done, we'll tour around the world.

### REPEAT CHORUS

1893.

by F. FRANK STEIGMEYER.

*Moderato*

1. Oh, we came here in the au - tumn  
2. Oh, there where more profs. than stu - dents,  
3. Oh, the oom-mons started up that year,

half - a - doz - en build - ings, had  
spent their days in re-search work, their  
Sauce with mold, weak cof - fee cold, and

Hall was then the only place  
life up - on the cam - pus  
man who caught the most roach - es

in the dear old Drex - el  
watched the Fer - ris wheel  
deemed the he - ro of t

CHORUS

O Chi - ca - go, O



Arr by R. W. ATKINSON.

1893 (CONCLUDED).

of eigh-teen nine - ty - three; A  
 out then we did - n't care; They  
 this was their bill of fare:

then the U of C. Cobb  
 eve - nings at the Fair; And  
 a hunk of griz - zly bear; And the

where we could dai - ly flunk, And  
 was one con - tin - ual swing; We  
 at break - fast or at tea. Was

"Dorm", was the on - ly place to bunk.  
 'round and we did - n't do a thing.  
 ne hour, there - aft - er wore a "C"

Chi - ca - go, How great you've grown to

be Since first we cast our lot with thine in eigh -

three, O Chi - ca - go, O Chi - ca - go, How great you've grown to

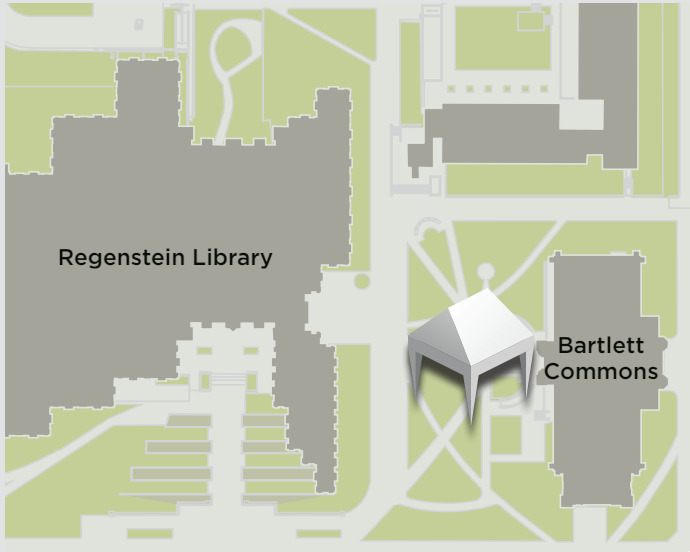
first we cast our lot with thine in eigh - teen nine - t

4. Oh, the girls were mostly twenty-eight, and after "Ph. Dh."  
 They took four hours in those old days; there were no extra fees;  
 And the men were mostly married, which proved a great hoo-doo  
 To all society events; what could the poor girls do?
5. The base-ball and the foot.ball teams were poor when at their best,  
 But now they're great, defying fate as champions of the West;  
 To Morgan Park was quite a trip for teams when we first came,  
 But now we go from coast to coast and seldom lose a game.
6. Then Stagg was catcher, pitcher, coach, shortstop, and halfback, too,  
 For in those days of "auld lang syne" our athletes were few;  
 But now three men with brawn and brain are trying for each place,  
 And these three persons with A. Stagg, decide the peimant race.
7. Oh, the Glee Club took a trip that year, they made it in a day;  
 The second stop was Downer's Grove, the first was Aurora;  
 But now we feast and dance and sing; through distance fast we're whirled,  
 And when the Glee Club's air ships done, we'll tour around the world.





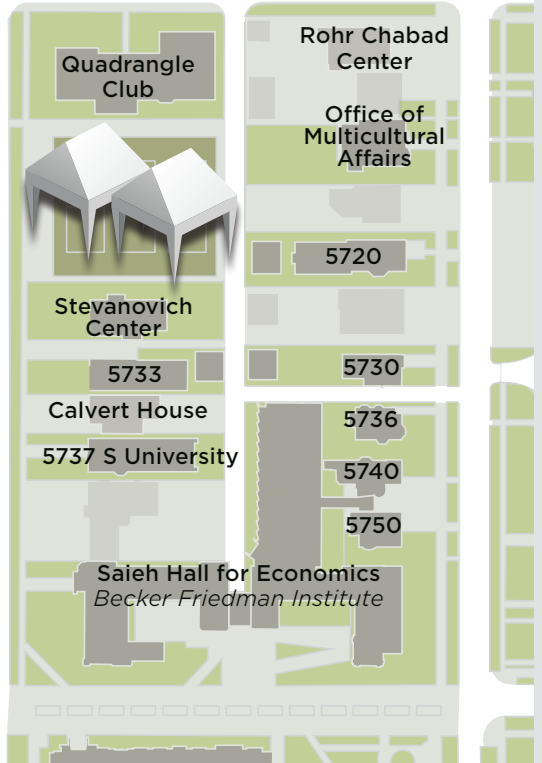
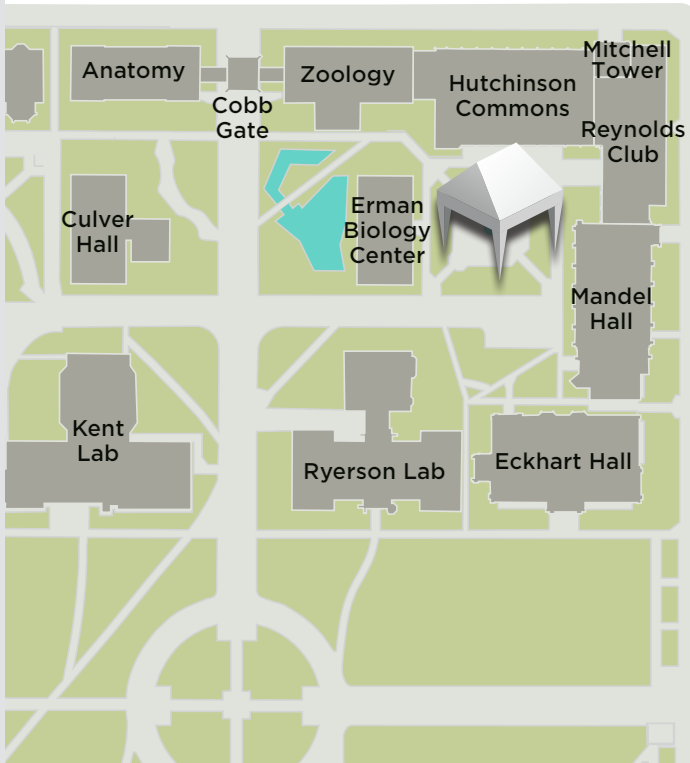
## BIG TENTS ON CAMPUS



S UNIVERSITY AVE

During Autumn Quarter the University installed seven heated tents on campus. Two tents on the Quad Club's tennis courts were used for classroom instruction and office hours. Tents outside Ratner (not shown), near Bartlett, and in Hutch Court were available for eating, study space, and approved extracurricular gatherings. Two tents near the Logan Center (not shown) were used for classroom instruction and approved extracurricular gatherings.

S WOODLAWN AVE





## Strange Planet

By Nathan W. Pyle





*Ibidem*

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**MIDWAY STUDIOS, 1962**



*“All art is autobiographical; the pearl  
is the oyster’s autobiography.”*

—Federico Fellini