Alumni

Ai-jen Poo, Beau Willimon, and Other Alumni in the News

Fall 2014

Labor Lion

Labor organizer Ai-jen Poo ’96CC is the recipient of one of this year’s MacArthur Fellowships. Poo is the director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance, codirector of Caring Across Generations, which is a national coalition of more than two hundred advocacy organizations, and the cofounder of Domestic Workers United, an organization of home caregivers in New York. The $625,000 awards, commonly known as “genius grants,” recognize creativity, originality, and long-term potential in the recipients’ fields.



Ai-Jen Poo. Photo courtesy of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

Artistic Spaces

Andrew Byrne ’99GSAS was named artistic director of Symphony Space, a performing- arts center on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. The Australian-born Byrne originally came to New York on a Fulbright scholarship in 1993. He joins Symphony Space after ten years at Carnegie Hall.

Minsuk Cho ’92GSAPP won the Golden Lion award for best pavilion at the 2014 Venice Architecture Biennale. He designed the Korean pavilion, which was praised for presenting new knowledge of architecture within a highly charged political landscape.

Televisionaries

Several Columbia College and School of the Arts alumni were nominated for Emmy Awards. Beau Willimon ’99CC, ’03SOA was recognized for his hit Netflix series *House of Cards*, which received thirteen nominations and won in the sound-mixing category. *Orange Is the New Black*, created by Jenji Kohan ’91CC, was nominated for twelve awards and won in three categories: casting, guest acting (by Uzo Aduba), and editing. The HBO thriller *True Detective*, co-produced by Jessica Levin ’02SOA, racked up twelve nominations, while *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, co-produced by Kahane Cooperman ’91SOA, received six. Composer Tom Kitt ’96CC (with lyricist Lin-Manuel Miranda) took home the 2014 Creative Arts Emmy for original music and lyrics for writing Neil Patrick Harris’s showstopping opening number from the 2013 Tony Awards.

Superhuman

President Barack Obama ’83CC bestowed the National Humanities Medal on fellow Columbian Wm. Theodore de Bary ’41CC, ’53GSAS, ’94HON. Long revered for his service and his scholarship in East Asian studies, the ninety-five-year-old John Mitchell Mason Professor Emeritus and Provost Emeritus is one of ten recipients this year.



Wm. Theodore de Bary '41CC, '53GSAS, '94HON

King of Queens

Félix V. Matos Rodríguez ’94GSAS was appointed president of Queens College by the trustees of the City University of New York. Matos Rodríguez is a historian and an authority on women’s issues in Puerto Rico. He was most recently the president of Hostos Community College, also a part of CUNY.



Félix V. Matos Rodriguez (Edna Barth)

High and Long

Carl Hart, an associate professor of psychology at Columbia, won the PEN/E. O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award for his book *High Price*. The $10,000 award recognizes literary excellence in writing about the physical and biological sciences .

The UnAmericans, the debut story collection by Molly Antopol ’07SOA was long-listed for the 2014 National Book Award in fiction. At last year’s awards ceremony, Antopol was selected as one of the “5 Under 35” best writers. School of the Arts professor Mark Strand’s *Collected Poems* was also on the poetry long list this year.

Guide to school abbreviations

All categories >