

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE: Bullock—shown here in a dress rehearsal for a 2015 London production of Henry Purcell's unfinished semi-opera *The Indian Queen*—has organized a series of 2018–19 performances at the Metropolitan Museum of Art that are designed to explore ideas of identity, objectification, and history.

JULIA BULLOCK '09E

'Listening More Closely'

An acclaimed soprano shares her social vision as artist-in-residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Julia Bullock '09E, whose vocal performances often leave classical music audiences in search of superlatives, is bringing more than her voice to her latest high-profile engagement.

Bullock is the 2018–19 artist-in-residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where she has helped organize a series of programs designed to explore not only the artistry of music, but also ideas of identity, objectification, and history.

The first installment, "History's Persistent Voice," which had its premiere last September, featured traditional slave songs and texts by African-American artists in settings by female composers. The series concludes in May with a production of Hans Werner Henze's *El Cimarrón* (*The Runaway Slave*), a work for baritone and small ensemble that's based on the life of an Afro-Cuban slave who escaped and survived to fight Cuban independence from Spain.

Other performances included a chamber version of composer John Adams's Nativity oratorio and a performance of Josephine Baker songs in new arrangements by the composer Tyshawn Sorey that Bullock first performed in 2016. In December, Bullock was joined by soprano **Nicole Cabell '01E** and others for a recital of poems by Harlem Renaissance poet Langston Hughes that Bullock curated.

A native of St. Louis, Bullock earned her bachelor's degree from Eastman in 2009, followed by a master's degree from Bard College. Recognized as one of the rising stars of classical vocal performance, Bullock told *Eastman Notes* last spring that part of her interest in bringing ideas of identity and social conscience to music stems from having to navigate the world of classical music as a woman of mixed heritage, with a biologically white mother and a biologically black father.

"Strangely, deciding to go into a field that is predominantly run, produced, written, and performed by white people helped me want to take ownership of all that I am," she told *Notes*.

Her parents also urged her to be mindful of how she can help those around her.

"I'm grateful that my parents instilled the idea that if I'm not providing a service in my work, then it's not worthy work," she said. "I used to worry that choosing to be a performer wouldn't serve a greater purpose, but then I realized that music helps us listen more closely, it encourages us to engage with one another and ourselves, it asks us to act with intention and make choices, despite not knowing the future outcome. These are all things I think we need to be reminded of on a daily basis, at least I do." 

—SCOTT HAUSER

JASSEN TODOROV '00E (MM)

Heights of Composition

A musician-turned-pilot-turned-photographer captures 'places most people can't see'—and first place in a *National Geographic* contest.

Jassen Todorov had flown his 40-year-old four-seater Piper Warrior over the airport near Victorville, California, many times. But last spring he trained his camera on the ground 2,000 feet below.

There, he flew over rows of Volkswagen diesel cars that had been stored at the site of the one-time Air Force base. They had sat in the desert since 2015, when the German car company began recalling vehicles after admitting to cheating on emissions tests.

Todorov, a professor of violin at San Francisco State University, made several passes over the eerie parking lot. The resulting photo won the 2018 *National Geographic* Photo Contest, the latest of several prominent awards he's received for his aerial photography.

For Todorov, the photograph was a particularly poignant example of his efforts to share his perspective as an artist, both as a musician and a photographer.

"I like to show sites and places that most people can't see and don't have access to. And, hopefully, I can tell a story about them."

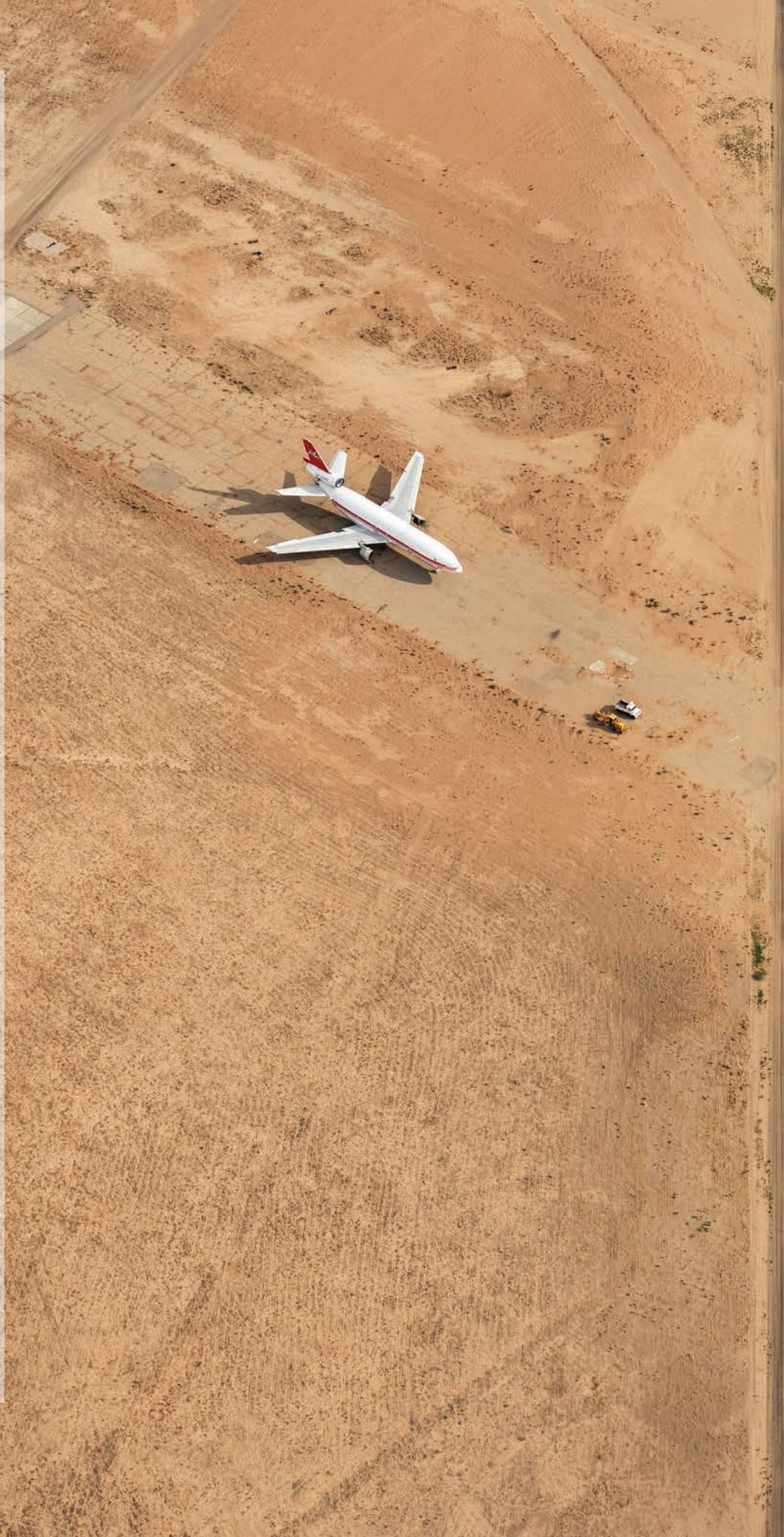
A licensed pilot and flight instructor, Todorov first took to the skies as a graduate student at Rochester as a way to complement his interest in music. The more he flew, the more enamored he became, captivated by the way that flying offered him new perspectives as an artist.

When he landed a faculty position at San Francisco State, he kept up his license. He began taking photos in 2013 with a small digital camera, eventually upgrading to more professional equipment.

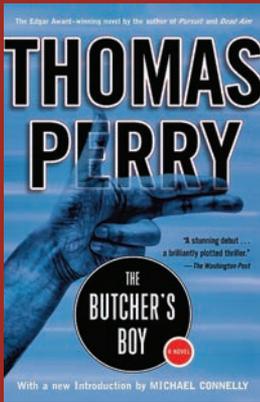
With an active schedule as a concert violinist and teacher, Todorov has traveled to nearly two dozen states and more than 20 countries. Along the way, he makes a point of trying to capture the view from above, and often combines his performances with photo exhibitions or talks about his photographic work.

"Music still takes me all over the world," he says. "And often photography comes into play."

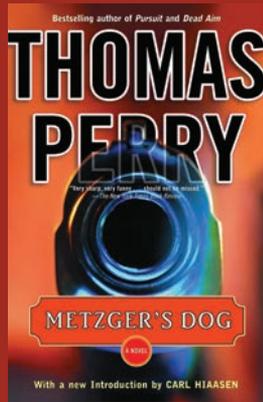
—Scott Hauser







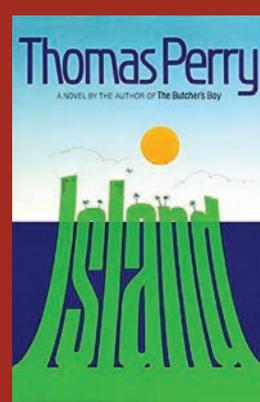
The Butcher's Boy
1982



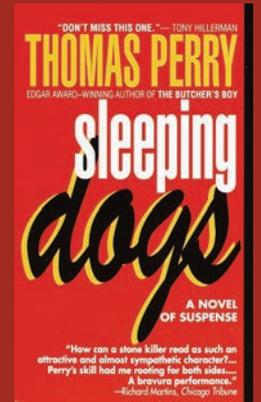
Metzger's Dog
1983



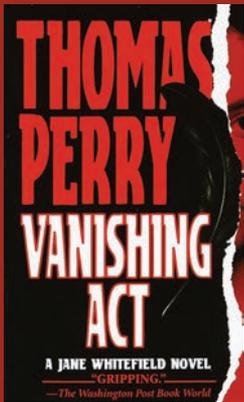
Big Fish
1985



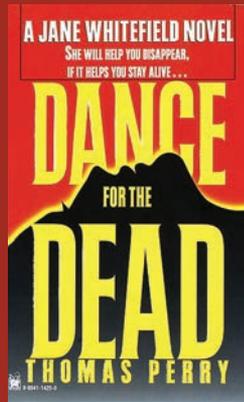
Island
1987



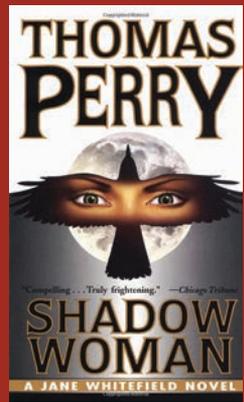
Sleeping Dogs
1992



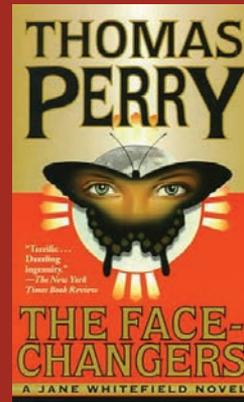
Vanishing Act
1995



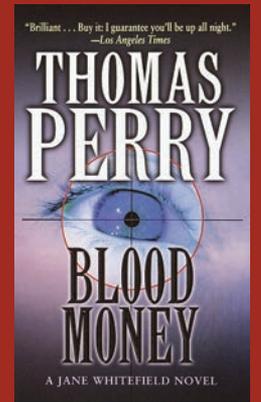
Dance for the Dead
1996



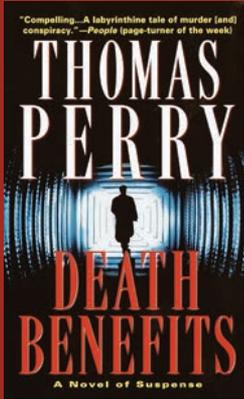
Shadow Woman
1997



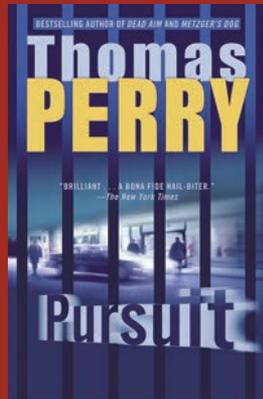
The Face-Changers
1998



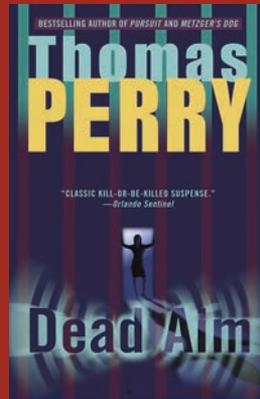
Blood Money
1999



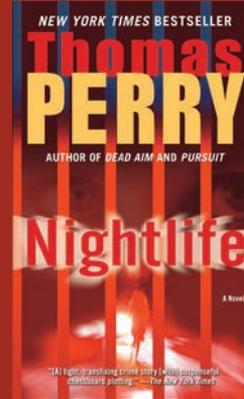
Death Benefits
2001



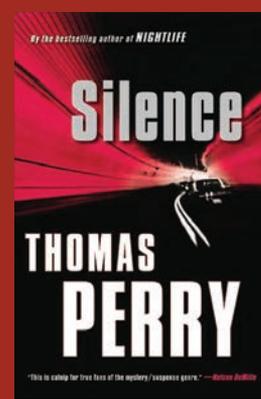
Pursuit
2001



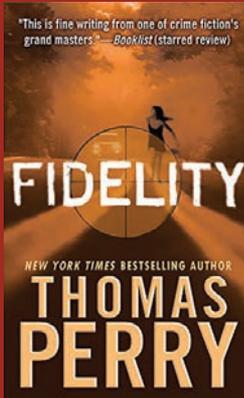
Dead Aim
2002



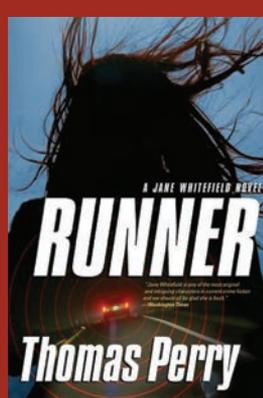
Nightlife
2006



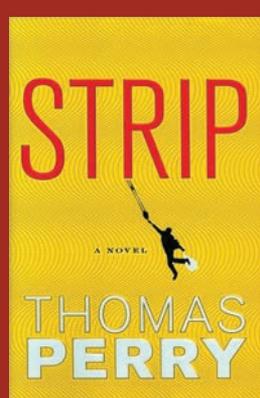
Silence
2007



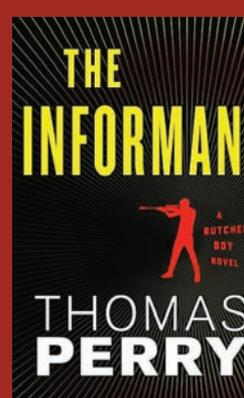
Fidelity
2008



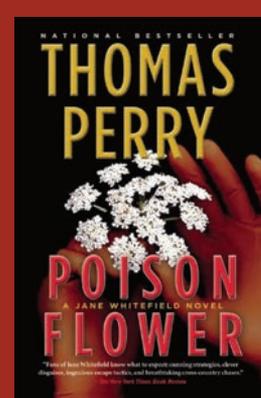
Runner
2009



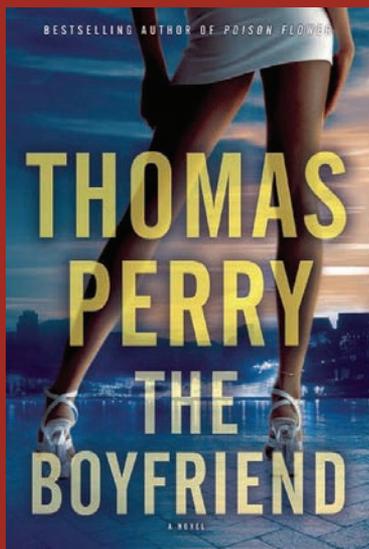
Strip
2010



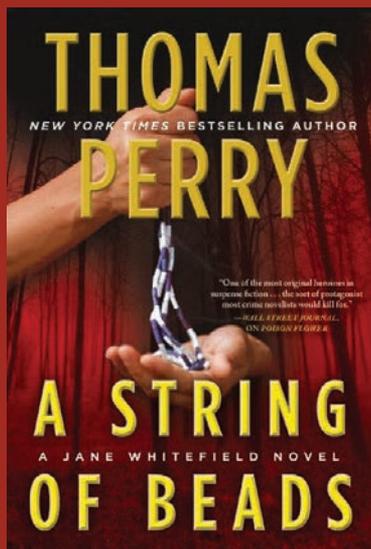
The Informant
2011



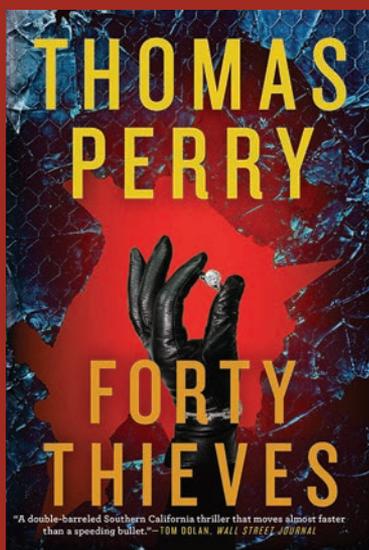
Poison Flower
2012



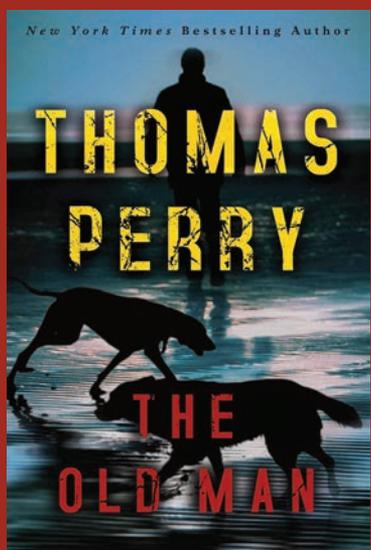
The Boyfriend
2013



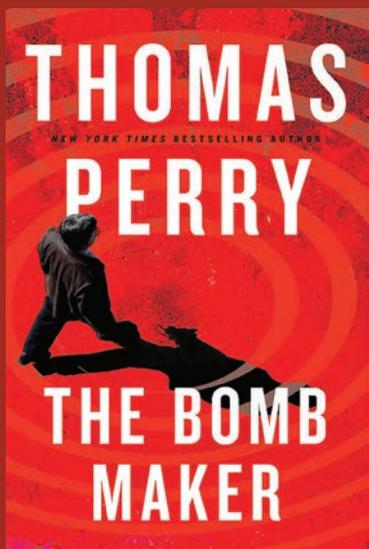
A String of Beads
2015



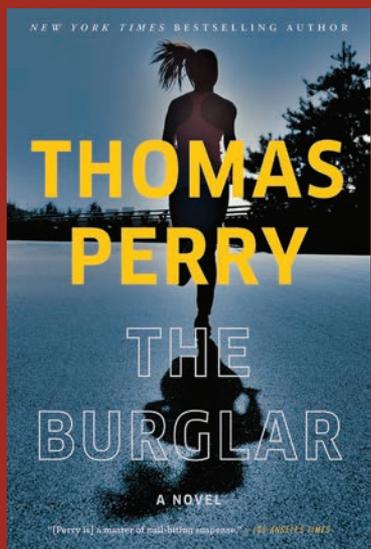
Forty Thieves
2016



The Old Man
2017



The Bomb Maker
2018



The Burglar
2019

5 FAVORITES

Master of Mystery

Crime-stoppers: Award-winning novelist Thomas Perry '74 (PhD) on some of his favorite literary detectives.

By Jim Mandelaro

Going into his 36th year as a writer and his 26th mystery, **Thomas Perry** '74 (PhD) knows a lot about compelling characters. He created the groundbreaking detective Jane Whitefield, a Native American woman with a knack for helping people disappear when they most need to. The *Boston Globe* calls Perry “the best suspense writer in the business.” His 2018 book, *The Bomb Maker*, was named one of year’s best thrillers by *New York Times* reviewer Marilyn Stasio. His newest novel is *The Burglar*, which *Entertainment Weekly* calls one of 2019’s “biggest new thrillers.”

Perry picks his five most important crime novel protagonists in history:

Sherlock Holmes, the often-imitated model of deduction created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in 1887. “Holmes is a step forward, because in him the thinker becomes heroic.”

Hercule Poirot is Agatha Christie’s most famous character, appearing in 33 novels and more than 50 short stories between 1920 and 1975. “He’s Christie’s variation on earlier detectives, a foreigner with charming quirks.”

C. Auguste Dupin made his first appearance in Edgar Allan Poe’s *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1841), widely considered the first detective novel. “Dupin is important because he’s the original professional puzzle-solver.”

Philip Marlowe is a hard-drinking private eye created by Raymond Chandler in the novel *The Big Sleep* (1939). “Marlowe is the American tough guy and inspired thousands of imitators.”

George Smiley is a career British intelligence officer created by John le Carré for his first novel, *Call for the Dead* (1961). “Smiley has inspired almost everyone who writes suspense today.”

BRANDON ISOBE '10

'Closed Captioning for Personal Conversations'

A son sets out to make an iPhone app to communicate with his father.

By Kristine Thompson

When **Brandon Isobe** '10 was growing up in Honolulu, his family used simplified speech so that Brandon's father, Gerald, who is deaf, could read their lips.

The process was frustrating at times, particularly for Gerald, who had grown up in a hearing household and didn't learn much about the culture of the deaf community or about American Sign

says Isobe, who majored in economics at the University. "It works best in one-on-one conversations."

The app's built-in technology displays spoken words as text in real time without a lag, so users don't have to simplify or slow down their speech. Isobe collaborated with a friend, California Institute of Technology student Andres Gutierrez, to create the app.

Gerald, a financial management analyst in Honolulu, designed and tested it. His father's participation was critical, Brandon says, because having the perspective of a deaf person helps ensure that the app works best for those it's intended for.

To develop the app, Isobe drew on his experience working with the network security team at Salesforce.com in the San Francisco area and his time at the University.

Having learned about Rochester from his father, who graduated from RIT, Brandon was drawn to the



FAMILY PLAN: "We communicate on a whole new level now," Isobe says of conversations with his father using an app that the two developed to render speech to text.

Language until he was in college. Brandon knew there must be a better way to communicate.

"I thought I had to become a doctor to help my dad," he says. "Now, I see how technology can improve life for the deaf and hard of hearing and help us all understand each other better."

The result is App MyEar, an iPhone application Isobe spearheaded that allows the deaf and hard of hearing to communicate with others. It works simply: once someone opens the app, they speak into the phone, and the app translates their words into text.

"It's essentially closed captioning for personal conversations,"

writing has improved, too, because the app helps them see how people talk in conversation.

Isobe says App MyEar has increased the depth of conversations he has with his father, and he hopes it will do the same for others, both inside and outside the community of deaf and hard of hearing people.

"We communicate on a whole new level now," he says. 



University's academic programs and to the golf team, a sport that both he and his dad love.

At Rochester, Isobe also took ASL classes to improve his communication with his father. Deciding not to pursue medicine, he majored in economics, thinking that someday he would have a career in technology and banking.

Launched last year, App MyEar continues to add features to increase usability, including new default background colors (for people with low vision), larger font sizes, and languages such as Mandarin and Japanese.

Isobe says the primary audience will remain the deaf and hard of hearing, but the idea of taking speech to text could be useful to speech therapists and TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) instructors. Users have told him the quality of their

What's Next?

Brandon Isobe, Gerald Isobe, and Andres Gutierrez have also developed App MyGroup to help deaf users connect with certified ASL interpreters.



MUSIC MAKER: *Mary Poppins Returns* features music orchestration by Douglas Besterman '86.

STAGE & SCREEN

Hear It Now: The Music of *Mary Poppins* and *Anastasia*

Douglas Besterman '86 has been playing key roles in bringing the music of prominent stage and screen productions to life. A Tony Award-winning orchestrator, Besterman was part of the orchestration team behind the music of this winter's film *Mary Poppins Returns*.

Starring Emily Blunt as author Pamela Travers's magical nanny, the movie has been nominated for several industry awards, including recognition from the American Film Institute as one of 10 films of the year "deemed culturally and artistically significant."

Besterman, who won a 2001 Tony for his work on the Broadway hit *The Producers*, was also the orchestrator for the Broadway production of *Anastasia*. Continuing its run this spring at the Broadhurst Theatre, the production is a

stage version of the 1997 animated Disney film, which re-imagines the legend that a member of Imperial Russia's tsarist family escaped execution during the Russian revolution of 1917. For his work as the orchestrator for *Anastasia*, Besterman was nominated for a Drama Desk award, one of many nominations received by the production.

Regularly recognized for his work, Besterman was the orchestrator for the recent Broadway productions of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, which ran from 2017 to 2018, and *A Bronx Tale*, which ran from 2016 to 2018. He also was the song orchestrator for the 2017 film *Beauty and the Beast*, starring Emma Watson in a live-action version of the 1991 Disney animated story of a selfish prince who is cursed to be a beast unless he learns how to love.

Notable on Netflix: An Alumna's Influential Shadow

The work of **Shirley Jackson**, Class of 1938, continues to set spines tingling. Last fall's hit Netflix series *The Haunting of Hill House* was based on the novel by the pioneering writer.

Among Jackson's many novels and collections, the 1959 novel *The Haunting of Hill House* is considered an influential work, setting a modern standard for the "haunted house" story as part of the literary and cultural imagination.

Born in California, Jackson and her family moved to the Rochester area when she was a senior in high school. She enrolled at the University as a member of the Class of 1938, but left as a sophomore to focus on her writing. She eventually graduated from Syracuse. Widely acclaimed for her 1948 short story "The Lottery," Jackson, who died in 1965, has remained an influential spirit when it comes to mysteries, horror, and stories with a Gothic bent. Also in 2018, the film *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, based on



'HAUNTING' SCENES: A hit Netflix series is based on a novel by Shirley Jackson '38.

Jackson's 1962 novel, was released.

And in 2016, the 100th anniversary of Jackson's birth, biographer and *New Yorker* staff writer Ruth Franklin published *Shirley Jackson: A Rather Haunted Life*, which won the National Book Critics Circle Award for Biography and was named to several best-of lists for the year.

NOMINEES

The Grammy Goes to . . .

The Eastman School of Music is well represented among the nominees for the 61st edition of the Grammy Awards, presented by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. The ceremony to announce the winners takes place in February.

Best Contemporary Instrumental Album: Steve Gadd '68E, *The Steve Gadd Band*

Best Jazz Vocal Album: *The Subject Tonight Is Love*, with Gary Versace, associate professor of jazz studies and contemporary media

Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album: John Hollenbeck '90E, '91E (MM), *All Can Work*

Best Musical Theater Album: *Carousel*, featuring Renée Fleming '83E (MM)

Producer of the Year Classical: Blanton Alspaugh, credits include *Paterson: Three Way—A Trio Of One-Act Operas* (by Rob Paterson '95E); David Frost, credits include *Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier*, with Renée Fleming '83E (MM) and Erin Morley '02E

Best Opera Recording: John Adams, *Doctor Atomic*, with Julia Bullock '09E; Strauss, *Der Rosenkavalier*, with Renée Fleming '83E (MM) and Erin Morley '02E

Best Solo Vocal Album: Schubert *Winterreise*, with Randall Scarlata '92E; *Songs of Orpheus*, with Karim Sulayman '98E

Best Contemporary Classical Composition: Mazzoli, *Vespers for Violin*, with Olivia De Prato '05E

Eastman also has several alumni included in the orchestras that played on nominated albums, including the Pittsburgh, Seattle, Boston, and San Francisco Symphonies. And D.J. Sparr '97E played a guitar concerto on *Kenneth Fuchs: Piano Concerto 'Spiritualist'; Poems of Life; Glacier; Rush*, which is a nominee for Best Classical Compendium.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Up Close with Christina Seid '02

Seid mixes it up—ice cream, entrepreneurship, and deep roots in Manhattan's Chinatown.

Interview by Kristine Thompson

Christina Seid '02 co-owns the Chinatown Ice Cream Factory, or CICF, an unofficial New York City landmark that has made the pages of several Big Apple guidebooks. People come from near and far to enjoy scoops of the factory's homemade red bean, lychee, and green-tea ice creams.

Running a business is in her genes. Her grandfather was a merchant in China and her father started CICF



DELICIOUS BLEND: Ice cream equals happiness, says Seid, who believes food introduces people to other cultures and brings people together.

more than 40 years ago. She grew up within CICF's small yet familial 500 square feet, where she saw how ice cream could make people happy.

Seid says she's completing a circle—a symbol for unity and fulfillment—around her family business. Although her father has yet to put down his ice cream scoop completely, he is in the process of passing it on to her. And, just as she spent much of her childhood there, her two young daughters now do the same.

What do you love about the ice cream business?

Ice cream is fantastic—in fact, we consider it a major food group in our family. It's all about giving people a delicious, great experience and making them happy. It's also about community, and we've been part of Chinatown for decades.

What are your favorite memories at CICF?

So many things! Coming to work with my dad, having my first birthday cake here, and remembering how much my grandma loved it here. And being a part of some very important occasions for people, including engagements and family get-togethers.

Did you always know you'd be part of the family business?

No. After graduating with my psychology degree from Rochester, I went on to get my master's in teaching. I taught for a few years while continuing to work at CICF on weekends, vacations, and during the summers. But the business took off, and it made sense for me to play a bigger role. I couldn't be happier with that decision.

What's next for the business?

We recently opened a location in Flushing and are opening another one in the new Lower East Side development Essex Crossing this spring. Our mission at each location is consistent: to offer great tasting ice cream based on flavors that feel like home to our customers. Our new Lower East Side Ice Cream Factory features flavors that resonate with the Jewish, Polish, Italian, and Hispanic communities there. Think horchata, tiramisu, and even pickle.

What's your most unusual flavor?

I'll say Durian. In Asia, Durian is known as the king of fruits. It's also known for its strong, complicated flavor. We were the first to offer Durian ice cream in New York City, and now others do. Andrew Zimmerman—the host of the Travel Channel's *Bizarre Foods*—did a short segment here a few years ago. Up until then, he never liked Durian. He really liked our ice cream, which felt like a big win to me!

How did your time at Rochester prepare you for your life and career?

I transferred to Rochester as a sophomore and fell in love with it right away. I thrived on being around a lot of very smart people. My fondest memory is of Dean Paul Burgett and an inspiring talk he gave to transfer students. He made me and everyone else feel special, confident, and capable of doing anything. I'll never forget that. He helped infuse the spirit of *Meliora* in me, of always wanting to do more and do it better. **R**

Learn more about Seid and CICF at chinatownicecreamfactory.com.

On the Menu

In addition to flavors from ginger to pumpkin pie, Chinatown Ice Cream Factory offers innovative blends and ice creams based on ingredients native to China and other Asian nations.

Almond Cookie:

Chinese almond cookies soaked and blended into ice cream

Black Sesame:

Ice cream spiked with black sesame seeds

Coconut Fudge:

Chocolate fudge swirled in coconut ice cream

Don Tot:

Light, creamy Chinese egg custard

Lychee:

Ice cream blended with lychee, a tropical fruit native to China

Pandan:

Ice cream flavored with Malaysian leaf

Red Bean:

Ice cream featuring a sweet Chinese bean paste

Taro/Ube:

Ice cream blended with purple tuber

Thai Iced Tea:

Ice cream featuring this classic Thai beverage

Zen Butter:

Peanut butter ice cream with toasted sesame seeds