



## Home on the Fringe

London theater producer Erica Fee '99 spearheads the City of Rochester's first Fringe Festival.

By Karen McCally '02 (PhD)

TALKING WITH **ERICA FEE** '99—AT JAVA'S ON Gibbs Street, adjacent to the Eastman School and in the heart of Rochester's East End—can seem a bit like talking to someone who has just launched a political campaign.

She knows this.

The producer of a major arts festival, Fee says, "There's a lot of politics in theater and

theater in politics. Staging a campaign, producing a festival or a show—they're more similar than they are different."

With the help of a "working board" of 20-some members, Fee (who majored in political science and minored in theater) will be bringing the Rochester Fringe Festival to fruition over five days in September. Taking place at venues throughout the city, supplemented by outdoor performances clustered

in the Gibbs Street neighborhood, the festival will include performances of comedy, drama, music, dance, and displays of visual arts.

It's a venture that has brought together the University, multiple theaters, restaurants, the George Eastman House, neighboring colleges, and big financial supporters, which is why community members will also see the festival billed as the First Niagara Rochester Fringe Festival.

In her mid-30s, Fee has energy and presence. Nonetheless, she says she initially experienced some "pushback" among a few

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UK that she became acquainted with fringe festivals—a unique kind of arts event with a storied history.

The first fringe festival took place in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1947. Entirely unplanned, it was essentially a shadow festival to the much larger, grander Edinburgh International Festival, a juried festival in which multiple theater groups were not invited to participate. They held their own festival—performing at pubs and at rented space at the University of Edinburgh.

Today, the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, which remains unjuried, is the largest arts festival in the world and has spawned the new genre. In 2012, there will be approximately 200 fringe festivals around the world, with 20 in the United States.

“What’s exciting about a fringe festival is the structure,” says Fee. “Unlike a traditional performing arts festival, or even the jazz festival here, where there’s a central artistic board” she says, referring to the Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival held in the city each June, “the venues all decide their own programming.” It’s a structure that allows risk taking by new artists or established talents, by up-and-coming venues, or long-standing community standard-bearers. “They’re really given a chance to succeed and a chance to fail,” she says.

Fee acquired her knowledge of fringe festivals on the job—as both a performer and a producer of shows in the flagship Edinburgh festival. After graduating from Rochester, Fee moved to London to study acting at Arts Educational Schools London, a nearly century-old school that counts among its graduates Julie Andrews and Jane Seymour. In 2001, she won a role in *I Am Star Trek*, a comedy by Rick Vorn-dran about the life of *Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry, as Roddenberry’s wife, Majel. It was that show that brought her to the Edinburgh Fringe.

“I just couldn’t believe how fantastic the Edinburgh Fringe was,” says Fee, who returned to London to continue to work with the producers of the show, the Skulldug-


gery Theatre Company, who became her first mentors. By 2004, she was ensconced in London’s West End with a sole proprietorship, Erica Fee Productions, focused on bringing new works to stage. In 2006, she achieved another breakthrough when she won—for the first time—the Society of London Theatre’s prestigious honor for new producers, the Stage One Award. The award, which she won again in 2007, placed her in a course, gave her funding for productions, and put her and other award winners under the mentorship of veteran London producer Paul Elliott.

All of which meant that Fee’s credentials were irresistible when informal discussions began among community and University leaders about creating a Rochester performing arts festival. Among those participating in those conversations were Joel Seligman, University president, Douglas Lowry, the Joan and Martin Messinger Dean of the Eastman School, and Nigel Maister, director of the University’s International Theatre Program. Fee, who was visiting Rochester in the summer of 2009, attended a few meetings of the then infant effort at Maister’s suggestion.

“They started talking about the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and, of course, I had to open my fat mouth and say that I had a lot of experience with the Edinburgh Fringe,” Fee says, laughing.

By 2010, the momentum was gunning for a genuine “fringe,” and Fee had moved back to Rochester to spearhead the effort.

According to Maister, “there wasn’t a lot of focus” in the early discussions about a Rochester arts festival. “What Erica brought from her experience in the UK crucially helped define the kind of festival we would have. And that’s a major achievement.”

As for Erica Fee Productions of London, Fee says, “I’m not producing anything else right now because this is my morning, noon, and night. I still have my fingers in pies. I still have interests. But right now, all my focus is on the Rochester Fringe.” 

members of the community who wondered about the new face—the woman from “out of town” who would be running the show.

Which is why Fee is quick to note that she is not, in fact, from out of town.

Raised in the nearby town of Victor, she traces her family’s roots in the area to the early 19th century. But for the past 11 years, she’s been making her way in the theater scene in London’s West End. It was in the

**▲ STAND OR FALL:** Fee says the fringe format invites experimentation and freedom—“a chance to succeed and a chance to fail,” for emerging artists and professionals alike. “That’s what sets it apart.”



## The Next Weave

What you can't Google today, you'll Weave tomorrow, says Georges Grinstein '76 (PhD), technical director of a "game-shifting" data visualization tool.

By Karen McCally '02 (PhD)

IMAGINE, SAYS **GEORGES GRINSTEIN** '76 (PhD), that you've graduated from Rochester with your bachelor's degree and you want to move to San Diego—a sensible proposition, perhaps, after four years of lake-effect snowstorms.

Then imagine you're in the market for a place to live. You want to be somewhere safe, and you want to be close to work.

"Right now, if you start searching in Wikipedia or Google, you'll get documents that are somewhat related to what you're looking for," says Grinstein.

But imagine that instead of entering key

▲ **LET'S SEE THE DATA:** Grinstein predicts the data visualization program Weave will help democratize the use of data. The program's interactivity "can spark debate," he says. "You might find some patterns that people haven't noticed."

terms into an existing search engine, you entered them on a web page that would produce for you a customized map—as fast as Google might now serve you up a long list of links. And that map would show you exactly where you might look for your apartment or your house, to meet all of the criteria you've named in your search.

In the next two to four years, you'll be able to do exactly that, says Grinstein. And the program that will allow you to do it is a free, open source application called Weave.

Grinstein earned his doctorate from Rochester in mathematics and is now a professor of computer science at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell. He's also the director of the university's Institute for Visualization and Perception Research, where the Weave project is centered.

Weave is already making an impact among community-based nonprofits that partnered with social scientists at Lowell and with Grinstein—and his team of more

than 20 computer science graduate students—to develop the program. Over four years, the project that started with a few stakeholders grew to include nearly 20 nonprofits around the country—from the Boston Foundation to Metro Seattle to the South Florida Regional Planning Council—that now comprise the Open Indicators Consortium. The consortium members, the Barr Foundation, and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation are the chief funders of the project.

Charlotte Kahn, the senior director of the Boston Foundation's Boston Indicators Project, calls Weave "a game-shifting technology."

"When people can see it, they can see how valuable it is for their work—especially people who want to use data to drive social change."

The Boston Indicators Project website features an expanding "visualization gallery" of Weave-generated maps, scatter-plots, and other visual aids that use a vast array of data sets to answer specific questions about the region: To what extent is public transportation serving the most populous census tracts? Has the population in

your census tract been getting older, younger, or staying about the same?

The most exciting aspect of Weave, Grinstein says, is its interactivity.

“It can spark debate,” he says. “You might find some patterns that people haven’t noticed.” In other words, once Weave becomes widely accessible, it’s possible that entities such as governments, corporations, universities, and nonprofits will determine to a lesser degree the uses of data.

“Georges and his team are working, it seems, around the clock,” says Kahn, with users “all over the country, whose needs are really different.” And by developing the program in partnership with organizations whose needs vary, Kahn says, Weave “literally becomes better every day.”

Private companies are starting to notice, says Grinstein, as are entities such as the United Nations, the Census Bureau, the Department of Commerce, the Centers for Disease Control, and the National Endowment for the Arts, all of whom have approached Grinstein about Weave.

But these are organizations with information technologists on staff. When will Weave be accessible to the ordinary person on the street? By the end of the summer, Grinstein says, the installation of the program will be simplified to the extent that anyone with some data to share should be able to set up a web page using Weave without the assistance of an IT administrator. Grinstein expects it will take another two to four years before the program will reach its ultimate goal of enabling general queries.

The whole project is detailed at [www.iweave.org](http://www.iweave.org). And although you’ll read there that Weave is an acronym for Web-based Analysis and Visualization Environment, Grinstein confides a more poignant origin of the program’s name. It’s named for his late wife, **Janet Coutu ’76**.

“She was a weaver,” says Grinstein. After earning her degree in geology, she turned to art. “Throughout her career, she did lots of weaving and fiberwork.”

After meeting at Rochester, the couple traveled all over the world, spending two summers in China, where Georges was teaching computer graphics to college students, before they returned to the States and raised four children.

In the coming years, Grinstein expects to hear a lot more about weaving. Already, he says, among the nonprofit users, “Just like people say, ‘I’m going to Google it,’ they say, ‘I’m going to Weave it.’” **R**

## Commencement Honorees

As it does each year, the commencement season offered the chance to honor extraordinary achievements and service among the University’s extended family. Five Rochester alumni—honorary as well as degree holding—were recognized in 2012.

### **ROGER FRIEDLANDER ’56:**

#### **CHARLES FORCE HUTCHISON AND MARJORIE SMITH HUTCHISON MEDAL**

A retired vice president of Staples and a University trustee, Friedlander was the cofounder of Spectrum Office Products, one of the largest office supply businesses in the Northeast before it was sold to Staples in 1994. From 1996 to 2000, he chaired the board of the Golisano Children’s Hospital, and from 2000 to 2004, he chaired the board of the Medical Center. He’s been a trustee since 1997, and also serves on the executive advisory committee of the Simon School and the Eastman Dental Center Foundation Board.

### **ROBERT HURLBUT:**

#### **HONORARY DOCTOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE**

The president of the Hurlbut Trust and a University life trustee, Hurlbut is a leader in the business of providing dignified elder care. In 1968, he founded Vari-Care, which oversaw 24 long-term health care facilities and retirement complexes in several states. In 1994, he created the Hurlbut Trust, which offers financial and consulting services for health care facilities and rental properties. Hurlbut has served as the chair of the board of the Medical Center, vice chair of the Eastman Dental Center Foundation Board, and an inaugural member of the School of Nursing National Council.

### **ARTHUR MOSS ’62M (RES):**

#### **EASTMAN MEDAL**

A professor of medicine at the School of Medicine and Dentistry, Moss is one of the nation’s most influential cardiologists. His clinical and scientific research focuses on the treatment and prevention of cardiac arrhythmias (irregular heart beats), heart failure, and long QT syndrome, a rare, genetic disorder that makes the heart particularly susceptible to arrhythmias. He led the first large study proving implantable defibrillators saved the lives of patients who suffered a heart attack and were prone to arrhythmias. His discovery of three genes involved in the disease led to the creation of a diagnostic blood test.

### **GEORGE WALKER ’56E (DMA):**

#### **HONORARY DOCTOR OF MUSIC DEGREE**

A Pulitzer Prize-winning composer, Walker has published more than 90 works that have been performed by virtually every major orchestra in the United States and by many abroad. In 1996, he won the Pulitzer Prize in music for *Lilacs for Voice and Orchestra*, which was premiered by the Boston Symphony under conductor Seiji Ozawa. Walker’s most recent work, *Sinfonia No. 4*, premiered in March. He’s a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the American Classical Music Hall of Fame.

### **GLENN WATKINS ’53E (PHD):**

#### **ROCHESTER DISTINGUISHED SCHOLAR AWARD**

The Earl V. Moore Professor Emeritus of Music History and Musicology at the University of Michigan, Watkins is a distinguished musicologist whose scholarly impact ranges from his pioneering studies of Renaissance composer Carlo Gesualdo to his influential books on musical modernism and its postmodern consequences. Watkins’s book *Gesualdo: The Man and His Music*, with a preface by Igor Stravinsky, was a 1974 National Book Award nominee.

# Sound Advice

What's the difference between a CD and an MP3? An AAC file and one that's "Mastered for iTunes"?

By Karen McCally '02 (PhD)

VINYL RECORDS HAVE BECOME VINTAGE items, and with the proliferation of downloadable music files, many think compact discs are headed in the same direction.

Arguably, only one thing has prevented the extinction of CDs: Many a music aficionado has claimed that the sound quality of downloadable music is inferior.

Apple has begun offering an upgraded version of its downloadable files on iTunes. The new format—"Mastered for iTunes"—is billed by the company as "Music as the Artist and Sound Engineer Intended."

All of which leads us to ask: How is sound produced on these various formats, and what does it mean for sound quality?

We asked **Bob Ludwig** '66E, '01E (MM)—winner of a 2012 Grammy Award for his role as mastering engineer on the Super Deluxe Edition of *Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs* (Polydor) by Derek and the Dominoes and mastering engineer for the "Mastered for iTunes" version of *Mylo Xyloto* (Capitol Records), the latest album by Coldplay—to help us sort it out.

## Vinyl

### How sound is produced...

"Sound is produced from vinyl records as a mechanical stylus—attached to some magnets or coils, generating a faint amount of electricity—moves through the grooves in the vinyl. That sound is greatly amplified through your speakers."

### ...and what it means for sound quality.

"The record player has evolved for more than 125 years and delivers superb sound when everything is clean and the vinyl pressings are good. In fact, it can reproduce sounds beyond the range of our hearing. However, every play deteriorates the grooves slightly, and scratches and pops accumulate easily."



## Compact Discs

### How sound is produced...

"Compact discs store music in the form of data. That is, they contain digital representations of sound waves. The digital information stored on a CD results from sound wave samplings taken at a rate of approximately 44,000 times per second, measured in more than 65,000 gradations. The CD player contains a digital-to-analog converter and amplifier, which allow us to 'hear' the data as sound."

### ...and what it means for sound quality.

"CDs offer a pretty high-fidelity representation of analog. They record a very wide dynamic range, reproducing sounds that are very loud, to sounds so soft you can barely hear them. And unlike vinyl records, CDs don't deteriorate with every play."



**THE MASTER:** Grammy Award-winning mastering engineer Ludwig says Apple's "Mastered for iTunes" format is "a big step forward."

## Downloadable Files

*The MP3 and Apple's AAC (Advanced Audio Coding)*

### How sound is produced...

"The MP3 and AAC digital music files that you download onto your computer, MP3 player, or iPod are called 'lossy files.' This means that the files lose much of the data contained in a CD. The advantage is that this makes them easily downloadable and makes it possible to carry an entire music library on a single device."

### ...and what it means for sound quality.

"Because of the loss of data, most MP3 and AAC files have subtle distortions in them."



## In the News

### ILENE BUSCH-VISHNIAC '76 NAMED PRESIDENT OF UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

**Ilene Busch-Vishniac** '76 has been named the ninth president of the University of Saskatchewan and is the first woman to hold that job at the Canadian university. A mechanical engineer, Busch-Vishniac has held key administrative posts at several top research universities. Most recently, she was the provost and academic vice president at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. Prior to that role, she served as dean of the school of engineering at Johns Hopkins University. Her term begins July 1.



**Ilene Busch-Vishniac '76**

### FORMER AMBASSADOR TO LIBYA NOMINATED AS U.S. AMBASSADOR TO GHANA

In April, President Obama nominated **Gene Cretz** '72 as U.S. ambassador to Ghana. From December 2008 until December 2010, Cretz, a career diplomat, served as U.S. ambassador to Libya, the first American ambassador to the north African nation in 36 years. In September 2011, following the late president Muammar Qaddafi's flight from Tripoli and the installation of a new interim Libyan government, Cretz returned to Libya as an envoy. He held that post until May.

### CARRIE JOHNSON ADELMAN '97: A 'FUTURE LEADER' IN CANCER RESEARCH

**Carrie Johnson Adelman** '97 has helped identify the role of a tumor suppressor gene, *HelQ*, in the development of some inherited cancers, including ovarian cancer. Her discovery won her a Future Leaders of Basic Cancer Research Award from the American Association of Cancer Research. Adelman, a postdoctoral fellow at the London Research Institute of Cancer Research UK, and three other winners received the international award in April.

### AMIT GOYAL '91 (PHD) NAMED FELLOW OF MATERIALS RESEARCH SOCIETY

**Amit Goyal** '91 (PhD), a materials scientist at the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory, has been named a 2012 fellow of the Materials Research Society. The society, which has more than 16,000 members worldwide, is an interdisciplinary professional alliance to promote materials research. A specialist in high-temperature superconductivity and one of 28 fellows selected this year from around the globe, Goyal was cited for "seminal and sustained contributions to the field of small-scale mechanical behavior of materials" as well as professional leadership in materials science.

### BERNARD FERRARI '70, '74M (MD) NAMED A JOHNS HOPKINS DEAN

**Bernard Ferrari** '70, '74M (MD), a surgeon-turned-business consultant who served as a partner at McKinsey & Company before establishing the Ferrari Consultancy, has been named dean of the Johns Hopkins University Carey Business School. Ferrari, who is also a University trustee, becomes the second dean of the business school, which was established in 2007.



**Bernard Ferrari '70**

## AAC 'Mastered for iTunes'

*Downloadable files*

### How sound is produced...

"'Mastered for iTunes' files are made from higher fidelity sources than CDs. In addition, the distortions that you hear on traditional MP3 and AAC files are measurable and removed on the new format."

### ...and what it means for sound quality.

"'Mastered for iTunes' is a big step forward. Even when you listen to pop music—music that's loud, where dynamic range isn't nearly as important as it is in classical music, for example—you can hear the difference even on small computer speakers." 