

**COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF THE ARTS**

305 DODGE HALL, MC 1803

2960 BROADWAY

NEW YORK, NY 10027

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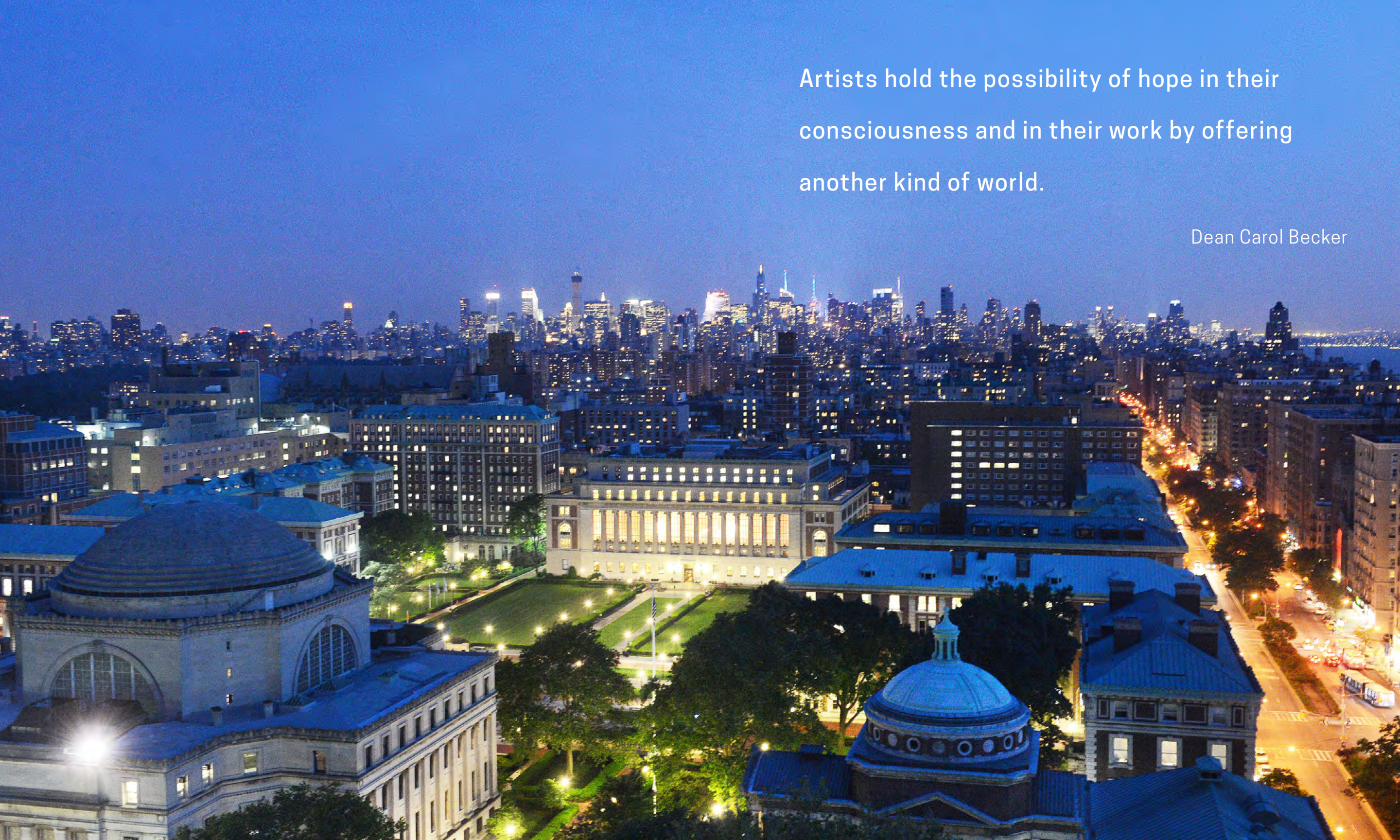
[GIVETOSOA@COLUMBIA.EDU](mailto:givetosoa@columbia.edu)

212-854-4849

**ARTISTS IN THE  
21ST CENTURY**

**A COMMITMENT TO IDEAS**

**COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY** SCHOOL  
OF THE **ARTS**

An aerial night photograph of a city, likely New York City, showing a university campus in the foreground and a dense skyline of skyscrapers in the background. The campus features several large, classical-style buildings with domes and a central green lawn. The city lights are visible in the distance, and the sky is a deep blue.

Artists hold the possibility of hope in their  
consciousness and in their work by offering  
another kind of world.

Dean Carol Becker



When we want to access the hearts of our fellow citizens, we often turn to the arts to reveal and communicate our deepest concerns effectively, so they might be heard, seen, and understood. Art, in all forms, can be extremely powerful. It is an argument and an encounter that begins between the artist and a chosen form and extends out to the world. Its intent is always to convince us of something, experientially.

Increasingly, artists take on complex problems in uniquely interdisciplinary and unexpected ways. They approach social issues as felt knowledge that comes to them through the senses and helps us all to engage the world directly—reflecting our interiority in relationship to others.

As a result of this immediacy, artists now are increasingly called upon to communicate complex ideas and messages about health, sustainability, climate change, tolerance, and social justice to large populations. Art has become the lingua franca of many emerging societies; it is how we speak to each other across disciplines, geographical/cultural boundaries, language, difference and conventional discourses; it is how we access our individuality and collectivity.

Now is the time to strengthen Columbia University's renowned School of the Arts, so that its artists can emerge uniquely prepared to engage such important global concerns.

*Carol Becker, Dean of Faculty*

Columbia University School of the Arts is proud of its unique position as the only Ivy-League art school located in New York City.

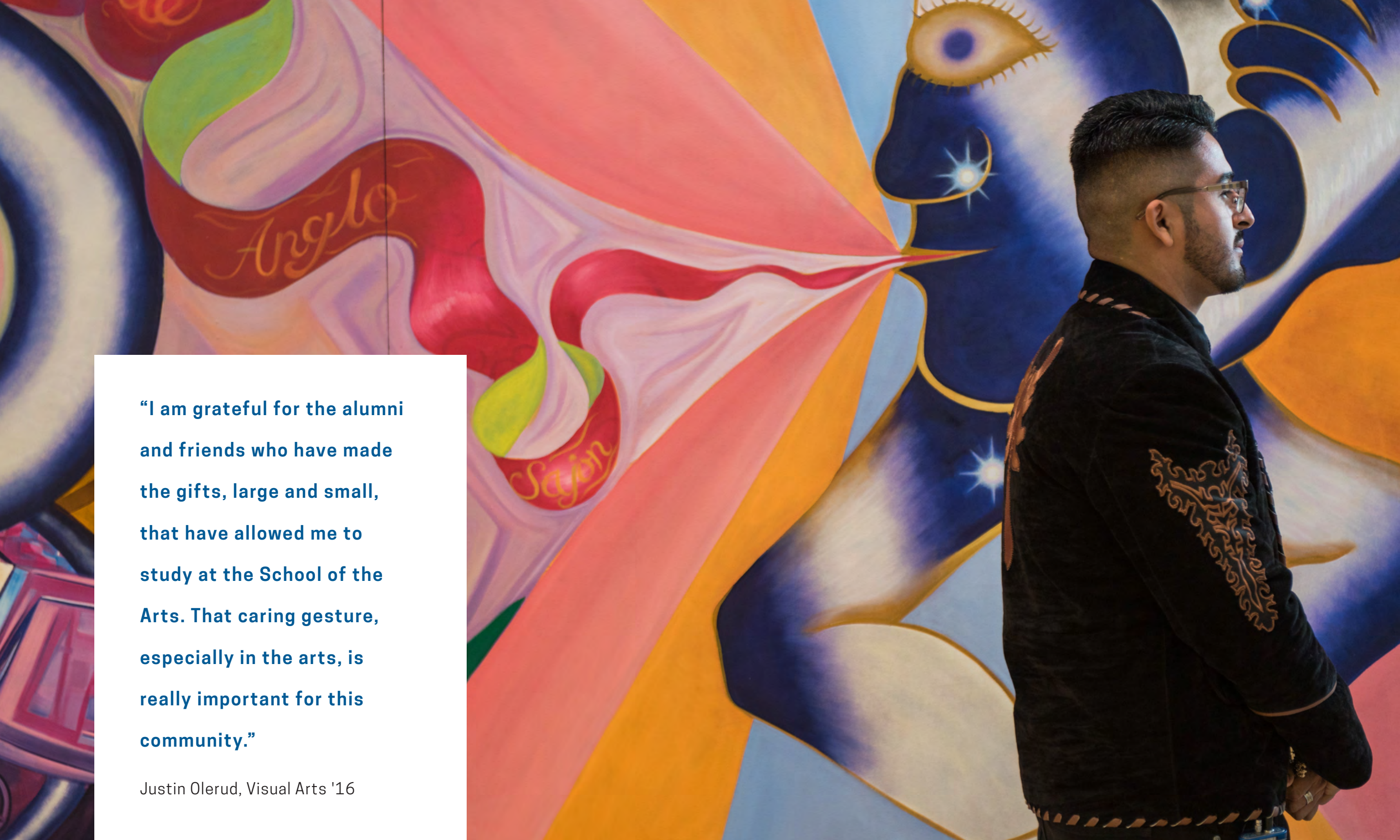
Over the last five decades, the School of the Arts has earned a reputation as one of finest and forward-looking educational environments for artists. Students and faculty alike are confronting vital issues and inventing new forms of creativity and expression. Never before have the successes of faculty, students, and alumni been so visible nationally and internationally.





## Students attend Columbia to study Film, Theatre, Visual Arts, and Writing at the graduate level.

They are inspired by the important contributions of faculty and alumni, including professor of Visual Arts Sarah Sze, who represented the United States at the Venice Biennale in 2015 and whose work challenges people to think deeply about form, space, and process; playwright and professor of theatre Lynn Nottage, who won the 2017 Pulitzer Prize in Drama for *Sweat*, a play that encourages debate about identity, class, and race; professor of film Ramin Bahrani whose films, such as *99 Homes* tackles important issues of the future of the United States and the situation of democracy; and professor of writing Gary Shteyngart, whose books inspire reflection on displacement, the immigrant experience, and the resilience of spirit. These are a few of the prominent artists and teachers at the School of the Arts whose work challenges students to think about how their own work might impact society.



**“I am grateful for the alumni and friends who have made the gifts, large and small, that have allowed me to study at the School of the Arts. That caring gesture, especially in the arts, is really important for this community.”**

Justin Olerud, Visual Arts '16



## The School of the Arts attracts students from throughout the US and over 50 other countries.

This creates an exciting blend of cultures in conversation with each other in the classroom and studio. Students go on to build communities in film, visual arts, theatre, and writing throughout the world, inspired by their access to the multitude of art-making and art-viewing opportunities that exist in New York City. The vibrant resources of this great city are crucial to the pedagogy of the School. They allow it to assemble an incomparable faculty of artists who choose to live at the center of the multifarious New York contemporary art worlds. Prominent voices also include Pulitzer Prize-winning author Richard Ford, Tony Award-winning playwright David Henry Hwang, film historian and curator Richard Peña, Pulitzer Prize-winning *New Yorker* theatre critic Hilton Als, National Book Award-nominated poet Lucie Brock-Broido, as well as iconic visiting artists such as Joan Jonas and Kiki Smith.



**“The program made a huge difference in my career, and I felt it was right to give back. To make a difference in students’ careers and give them an extra boost feels like an incredibly great way to help.”**

Barbara Whitman, Theatre '05



As modes of artistic expression become increasingly interdisciplinary, the School of the Arts benefits tremendously from the investigations and scholarship undertaken in academic departments throughout Columbia University. A painting student interested in depicting images of the galaxies visits with scientists in Columbia's astronomy laboratories; a film student whose short film explores scientific themes is mentored by a Nobel Laureate in Chemistry. The School also regularly collaborates with renowned arts organizations to broaden students' experiences, including Lincoln Center, the Tribeca Film Festival, the Shubert Organization, the Sundance Institute, Roundabout Theatre, the Cannes Film Festival, the Jewish Museum, the Studio Museum of Harlem, the New Museum, MoMA, PSI, and many others. These collaborations prepare students with invaluable internship and apprenticeship opportunities. Substantive, hands-on experience is critical for bridging classroom learning and students' eligibility for more challenging positions when they graduate.





## Now is the time to think expansively about the School and its role educating future artists.

In 2017 Columbia University deepened its engagement with New York City when it opened a new 17-acre campus in Manhattanville, north of 125th Street and west of Broadway. The arts are central to this new campus; a building dedicated to showcasing the arts was one of the first to open. Designed by Renzo Piano, the Lenfest Center for the Arts—named in honor of Gerry and Marguerite Lenfest—is a cultural nexus in northern Manhattan. For the first time, Columbia University School of the Arts has a space grand enough to welcome the city to experience what it does best: produce new artwork and educate the next generation of cultural innovators. With a film screening room named for alumna Katharina Otto-Bernstein, a flexible performance space, The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery, and a fabulous multi-arts presentation venue, there are numerous opportunities to engage the public and the campus in the work of students, alumni, faculty, and renowned visiting artists representing all fields.

The opening of this new building creates a thrilling and opportune moment in Columbia University School of the Arts' 50-year history—one full of potential.



**“Devoting two years to exploring your creative potential is an opportunity few people get to have. I feel truly privileged for my time at the School of the Arts, and financial gifts paid for my fellowship. I'd like to extend that privilege to other student artists.”**

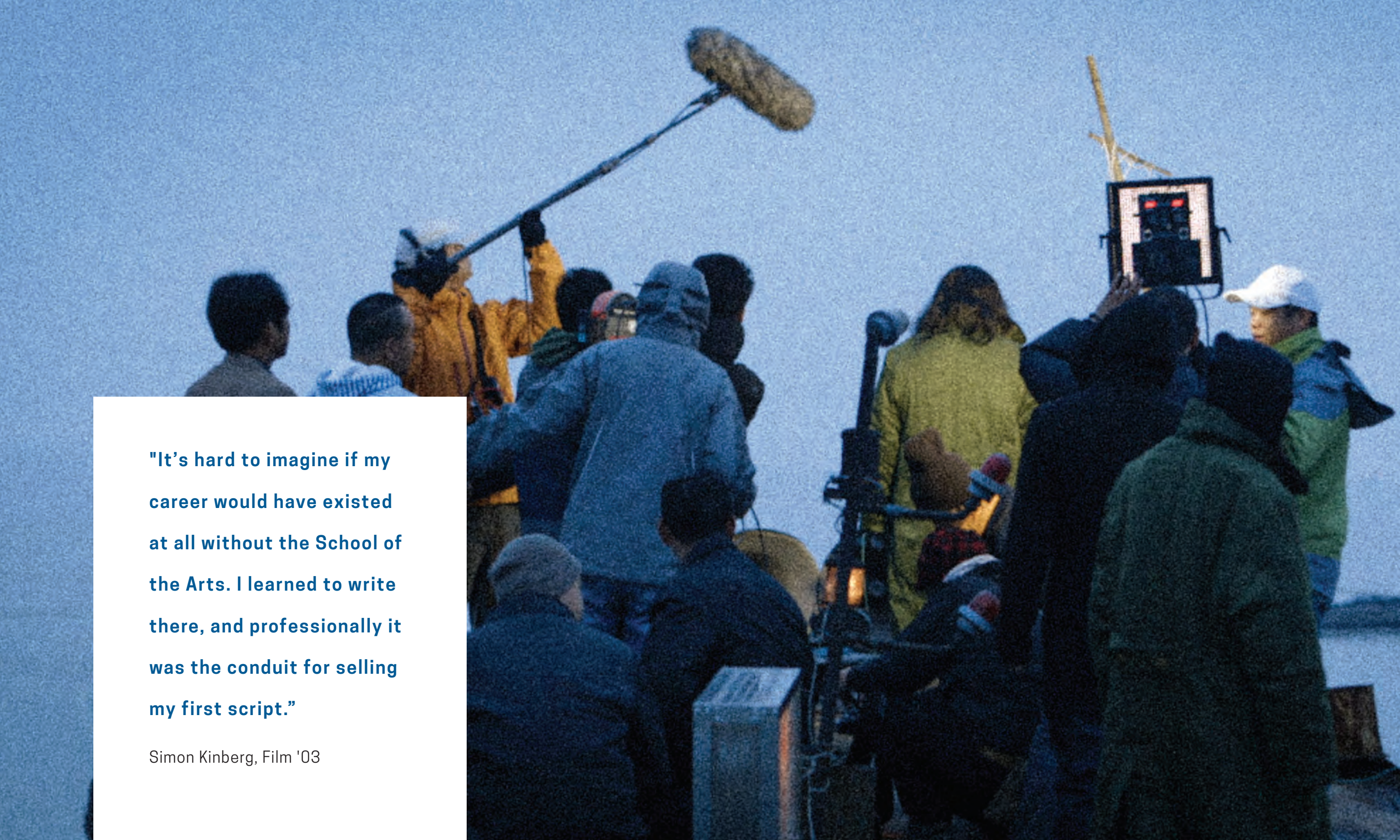
Sarah Hsu, Writing '11

## We cannot do this alone.

Columbia is seeking extraordinary partners who care deeply about the arts and the vital role they play in society to commit transformative support for the School of the Arts, ensuring a vibrant future for generations of artists.

This support will allow the School to greatly expand global opportunities for all MFA students; enhance the curriculum to more completely explore the significance of creativity in addressing 21st-century problems; increase the ranks of outstanding faculty who champion the engagement of artists in a challenging world; modernize the facilities where art-making takes place across campus; improve offerings for undergraduates in the arts; and—most importantly—ensure that talented artists are able to attend Columbia University School of the Arts regardless of financial circumstances.



A photograph of a film set at dusk. The scene is dimly lit with a blueish tint. In the foreground, several crew members are visible, some wearing winter jackets. A boom microphone is suspended in the air, and a piece of equipment with a red light is visible on the right. The background shows a dark sky and a body of water.

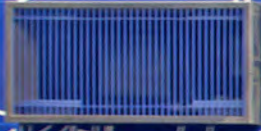
**"It's hard to imagine if my career would have existed at all without the School of the Arts. I learned to write there, and professionally it was the conduit for selling my first script."**

Simon Kinberg, Film '03



Far more than any single piece of art, support for the School of the Arts will serve as an investment in many works of visual art, theatre, film, and writing that will be produced by future generations of students. Such an investment will accrue great value as graduating artists go on to make influential work to address the important questions affecting the evolution of multiple societies.

We cannot envision new structures for society if we do not know how to access the imagination. It is the vehicle through which we envision what does not yet exist. The world is in great need of creative, talented citizens fearless enough to embrace its complexity in original ways. Artists are such people. They will help to shape a global consciousness and imagine a transformed future. Columbia University School of the Arts, educating the next generation of creative practitioners, is where such profound thinking begins.



← **Exit** 94 Street & 2 Avenue  
SW corner

## CREDITS

(p 1–2) Photo by Columbia Creative; (p 3) Photo by Columbia Creative; (p 5–6) Thesis work by Filip Lav '16, photo by Joel Jares; (p 7–8) *Salar*, 2011, directed by Nicholas Greene '10, produced by Julie Buck '11 and Roberto Lanza; (p 9–10) *More Americans than gringos*, 2017, by José Delgado Zúñiga '17, oil on canvas, 240" x 72", photo by Joel Jares; (p 11) Mitchell Jackson at the Creative Writing Lecture Series, 2017, photo by Joel Jares; (p 13–14) *1001*, directed by Carl Cofield '14, with Marcelo Carrascosa '17 and Cassandra Nwokah '17, photo by Carol Rosegg; (p 15–16) Participant in The Big Draw event, 2016, photo by Joel Jares; (p 17) The Lenfest Center for the Arts, photo by Nic Lehoux; (p 19–20) Timothy Donnelly's poetry workshop, photo by Joel Jares; (p 21–22) Theatre students with faculty member Steven Chaikelson at graduation, photo by Joel Jares; (p 23–24) *Grand Canal*, 2013, written and directed by Johnny Ma '14, produced by Jie Chen '13 and Sarah Stallard; (p 25–26) Theatre students in rehearsal for *Joan of Arc: Voices in the Fire*, photo by Matt Dunivan; (p 27–28) *Blueprint for a Landscape*, 2017, by Sarah Sze, porcelain tile, photo by Metropolitan Transportation Authority; (p 29–30) Photo by Columbia Creative.

