Alumni

C. J. Chivers, Mahir Cetiz, and Other Alumni in the News

Summer 2017



C.J. Chivers

C. J. Chivers ’95JRN, a senior writer for the *New York Times*, won the Pulitzer Prize for feature writing. His piece “The Fighter” follows a Marine’s descent into violence after he returns home from the war in Afghanistan. Chivers, who served in the Marine Corps during the Gulf War, also won a Pulitzer in 2009 as part of a *New York Times* team reporting in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Mahir Cetiz ’13GSAS, a composer and Core lecturer in the humanities at Columbia, won a Guggenheim Fellowship, given in support of exceptional scholarship or creative work. Cetiz was the assistant conductor of the Columbia University Orchestra while studying for his doctorate in musical arts, and his compositions have been performed by the New York Philharmonic and the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

Two Columbians won PEN awards for their contributions to literary magazines. **Crystal Hana Kim ’09CC, ’14SOA** won a 2017 PEN/Robert J. Dau Short Story Prize for Emerging Writers — awarded to twelve writers annually for fiction published in a magazine or on a website — for her story “Solee,” which was published in the *Southern Review*. **Joel Whitney ’02SOA** received the PEN/Nora Magid Award for Editing for his work on the online literary magazine *Guernica*.

Keep the Change, a film by **Rachel Israel ’13SOA** and **Kurt Enger ’07SOA**, won the Founders Award for Best US Narrative Feature at the Tribeca Film Festival in April. The film — a romance about two people with autism who meet at a disability support group — began as a short film for Israel’s thesis at Columbia. Israel met Enger at a School of the Arts alumni breakfast in 2015, and they worked together to turn the short into a feature (they also married last year and had a baby in October).

Donnel Baird ’13BUS and **Matthew Schwartz ’00CC, ’02LAW** appeared on *Crain’s New York Business*’s “40 Under 40” list. Baird is a social entrepreneur bringing affordable energy to low-income neighborhoods (see our Winter 2015 story “Power for the People”). Schwartz spent a decade as an Assistant US Attorney, prosecuting financial crimes (he led the investigation into Bernie Madoff). Now he works for the defense, helping to build the white-collar criminal practice at law firm Boies Schiller Flexner.



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