

# ACCOLADES

## *For The Arts*

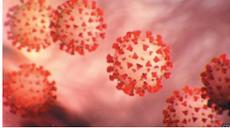
Springfield Area Arts Council

April 2020

## Art in the Time of COVID

Director's Note—by Sheila Walk

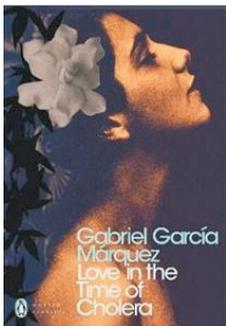
Those of you who read the newspaper in print or online have seen images similar to this one. An artist at the CDC created it.



We all know that, in times of stress, we turn to the arts for comfort and inspiration. Just as musicians are finding ways to use the internet to keep performing, authors and poets (like the one whose work appears below) are continuing to write. Visual artists are producing new pieces. Creative work does not stop – it finds new ways to happen. Just think of all the ways parents and teachers are keeping children engaged with learning.

As for me, well, I'm enabling art as best I can. I know Arts Council members are doing the same, and I am grateful. Please stay in touch.

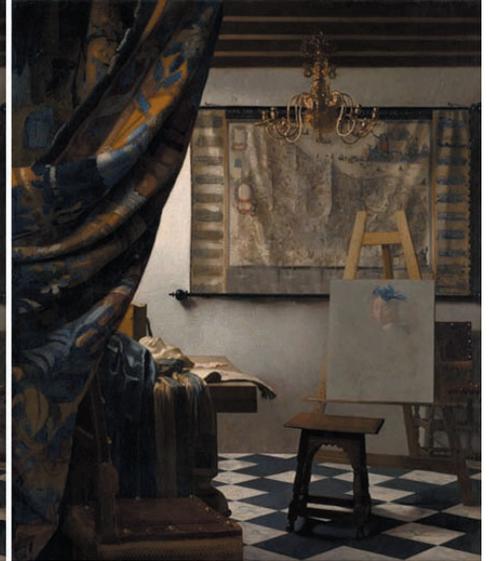
In the title of this note I paraphrased a classic title, so I'll give credit where it's due – and encourage you to read the book or view the movie. *Love in the Time of Cholera*



The International Bestseller and modern literary classic by Nobel Prize-winning author Gabriel Garcia Marquez

In their youth, Florentino Ariza and Fermina Daza fall passionately in love. When Fermina eventually chooses to marry a wealthy, well-born doctor, Florentino is devastated, but he is a romantic. As he rises in his business career,

he whiles away the years in 622 affairs – yet he reserves his heart for Fermina. Her husband dies at last, and Florentino purposefully attends the funeral. Fifty years, nine months, and four days after he first declared his love for Fermina, he will do so again. (Penguin Random House Books)



*The Allegory of Painting* (Jan Vermeer, 1668)

In his "Hidden spaces" (Espacios ocultos) image series, Spanish artist José Manuel Ballester removes the people from classical paintings, revealing unnoticed hidden spaces (hence the name) and objects.

### *Pandemic*

What if you thought of it as the Jews consider the Sabbath—the most sacred of times?

Cease from travel.

Cease from buying and selling.

Give up, just for now, on trying to make the world different than it is.

Sing. Pray. Touch only those to whom you commit your life.

Center down.

And when your body has become still, reach out with your heart.

Know that we are connected in ways that are terrifying and beautiful. (You could hardly deny it now.)

Know that our lives are in one another's hands.

(Surely, that has come clear.)

Do not reach out your hands.

Reach out your heart.

Reach out your words.

Reach out all the tendrils of compassion that move, invisibly, where we cannot touch.

Promise this world your love—for better or for worse, in sickness and in health, so long as we all shall live.

—Lynn Ungar, 3/11/20

# Mayor's Awards for the Arts *by Penny Wollan-Kriel*

It was with great pleasure that on January 13, 2020, the Springfield Area Arts Council and the Office of the Mayor partnered for the 20th time to honor citizens involved in the arts in greater Springfield. The Mayor's Awards for the Arts were initiated in 1985 when Mayor J. Michael Houston, in his first term, joined then-Arts Council Executive Director Kay Feurer in inaugurating a way to bring area-wide recognition to the arts. At that time, awards were presented to an Individual Artist, an Arts Organization, an Arts Volunteer, and a Corporation that supports the arts. Since that time, Arts Educator, Performer, and Arts Student awards have been added.

Nominations were collected through the City's Communications Department, led by Julia Frevert.

Mayor James Langfelder was on hand to present awards in four of the six

categories. William Crook, Jr. received the Individual Artist Award. The Arts Volunteer Award went to Théa Chesley. Downtown Springfield, Incorporated's Design Committee received the Arts Organization Award, and Elizabeth Marcy was given the Arts Educator Award. In addition, a Special Recognition Award was presented to David Shaw for his work as an arts educator, arts volunteer, director, and artist. Please visit our website [[www.SpringfieldArtsCo.org](http://www.SpringfieldArtsCo.org)] to view the event program.

Michelle Smith was commissioned to create this year's distinct awards in pencil. Each was based on photographs she took in Springfield's Washington Park. In addition to her pieces going to awardees, another became part of the Arts Council's collection while another was added to the collection in the Office of the Mayor. Please visit the Arts Council office to see

our wonderful award assortment in a variety of media – from pastels to pottery, from paper to photography.

The Awards Ceremony was dedicated to Midge Langfelder, the mayor's recently-deceased mother. Mrs. Langfelder was a life-long artist and arts educator. Ryan Cannon, Arts Council board president, hosted the ceremony.

The selection committee deserves thanks for making the difficult final award decisions. Those committee members included Becky Collins, John T. Crisp, Jr., Jim Huston, Alexandria Rockford, and Janet Seitz. The Arts Council also thanks pianist Ed Clark for providing music for the awards ceremony and Steve Rambach, photographer.

Former Arts Council staffers and board members contributed to the 20th Awards ceremony:

- ♦ Blanca Bernasek, former board member and chair of 2013's On My Own Time (preparing artwork for presentation)
- ♦ Christine Ramirez-Campbell, former executive director (floral arrangements);
- ♦ Maria Robinson, former board president (floral arrangements); and
- ♦ Penny Wollan-Kriel, former executive director (program coordinator).

The Arts Council acknowledges those who submitted nominations this year and asks that you begin thinking of others who deserve this honor so you can nominate them for Mayor's Awards for the Arts in 2022.



Left-to-right: Paul O'Shea, Erin Svendsen, Scott Troehler, Alex Block, Jim Langfelder, Corrin McWhirter, Théa Chesley, Steve Myers, Elizabeth March, Michelle Smith, Dave Shaw, William Crook, Jr., Lisa Clemmons-Stott, Kayla Cravens, Penny Wollan-Kriel. Photographer: Steve Rambach

## Poetry Out Loud Regional and State Contests

*by Carey Smith*

*Words mean more than what is set down on paper.*

*It takes the human voice to infuse them with the shades of deeper meaning.*

–Maya Angelou

State finalist Alishiana Uyao's Poetry Out Loud journey began with a poetry unit in her AP Literature class. "It intrigued me," she said, "and I wasn't honestly sure if it was something I was able to

do. I picked a poem that I thought I could bring justice to." Practices both before and after school brought her through her school and regional contests to the Poetry Out Loud state competition.

Poetry Out Loud is a national poetry recitation program created by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. It began in 2005 with a pilot program in Washington D. C. and Chicago and launched nationally in 2006.

Since then, Poetry Out Loud has grown to reach more than 4 million students and 65,000 teachers from 16,000 schools in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U. S. Virgin Islands.

Poetry Out Loud begins in the classroom, where students like Uyao work with teachers across the country to learn poetry for recitation. Schools hold their own contest, with two students from each

Continued next page

# Poetry Out Loud (continued from previous page)

school advancing to the regional competition. Illinois has eight regions: Central, Chicago-City, Chicago-Metro, Eastern, Northern, Southern, Southwestern, and Western. The organizers of the regional contests are Lisa Janssen, Carbondale Community Arts; Kate Kilgore, Rockford Area Arts Council; Timothy Rey, Chicago Poetry Center; Amy Brockman, Southwestern Illinois College; Sheila Walk, Springfield Area Arts Council; Merry Mitchell, 40 North/88 West; and Tracy Alan White, Quad City Arts.

The Central Illinois Regional Contest, held at the Hoogland Center for the Arts in February, showcased 18 students from 10 area schools. Sylvia Hughes, the first-place winner, is from Eureka High School and was coached by Courtney Lowe. Hughes recited “The Albatross” by Kate Bass and “Ways of Talking” by Ha Jin. The second-place winner, Grace Lambert, attends Sacred-Heart Griffin High School in Springfield. Coached by Brent Judd, Lambert recited “After a Rainstorm” by Robert Wrigley and “Love Song” by Dorothy Parker. Both advanced to the Illinois state contest. Third-place winner Joy Brown of Springfield High School was named the alternate and recited the “warm up” poem at the state contest.

The state contest was hosted by the Springfield Area Arts Council in March. A total of 16 students from around the

state competed at the Hoogland Center for the Arts, with Susan Dickson, a program manager for the Illinois Arts Council Agency, on hand to deliver the opening remarks and to present awards (created by local graphic artist Jensine Stickley) to the top finishers.

Charles Hsu of Deerfield High School, coached by Jeff Berger-White, came in first with spectacular recitations of “Learning to Love America” by Shirley Geok-Lin Lim; “To Autumn” by John Keats; and “I Am Offering This Poem” by Jimmy



Illinois 2020 Poetry Out Loud winner Charles Hsu with Susan Dickson, Program Director, Illinois Arts Council Agency. Photographer: William Richards

Santiago Baca. This was the third state showing by Hsu, having placed in the top five in 2019.

The second-place winner, Elizabeth Weidner of Teutopolis High School, was coached by Elizabeth King. She recited “How to Triumph Like a Girl” by Ada Limón; “Invictus” by William Ernest Henley; and “Siblings” by Patricia Smith. Weidner shared with the audience her being diagnosed with Stage IV High Risk Neuroblastoma four years ago, and many in the audience were brought to tears with the ending lines of “Invictus:” “I am

the master of my fate/I am the captain of my soul.”

Rounding out the top five at the state contest were Sylvia Hughes, the Central Region winner; Jada Cox of Jefferson High School in Rockford; and Scottlynn Ballard of Edwardsville High School, who was last year’s Illinois State champion and second-place winner at the National Poetry Out Loud Contest.

Hsu received a cash prize of \$200 for his first-place win, along with an all-expenses paid trip with a chaperone to travel to Washington, D. C., to compete for the national championship. Deerfield High School received \$500 to buy poetry resources for the school library. Weidner, who serves as alternate, was awarded \$100, and Teutopolis High School will receive \$200 for poetry resources.

Sadly, Hsu will not travel to Washington, D.C., in late April since the national competition has been cancelled due to the pandemic.

This year in Illinois, a total of 42 high schools, 210 teachers, and more than 10,000 students participated in Poetry Out Loud.



Illinois 2020 Poetry Out Loud second place winner Elizabeth Weidner. Photographer: William Richards

## SAAC Mission

The Springfield Area Arts Council enriches the community by promoting and supporting all art forms and providing creative opportunities to participate in and enjoy the arts.

## Accolades for the Arts

*Accolades for the Arts* is published by the Springfield Area Arts Council. Your comments are welcome. Call the Arts Council office at (217) 753-3519.

Design by past board president, Mark Pence.



Contestants in the Poetry Out Loud Central regional competition. Front Row, L-R: Augusta Harris-Patel, Katie George, Keirstan Horton. Middle Row: Rhythm Moss, Liv Brown, Elijah Wiegand, Grace Lambert, Madden Delaney, Grace Hunsley, Joy Brown, Sylvia Hughes, Amie Ainsworth. Back Row: Demariye Lewis-Tiner, Eliot Dineen, Cassandra Bradbury, Bethany Bergschneider, David Swift, Aidan Bergschneider, Kayla Stukins. Photographer: Kari Bedford



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This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency

## SAAC Annual Meeting Delayed

Springfield Area Arts Council  
 Enriching the community through the arts

ANNUAL MEETING

Please join your Arts Council and support our annual meeting.

Date: Thursday, April 9, 2020

Time: 6:00 P.M.

Place: Salkin Glass Studio, Springfield Art Association campus

With the exception of artist Mario Clarke will give a glass blowing demonstration. Refreshments will be provided. No cost to attend.

Please RSVP to 217-753-3519 or office@springfieldartsco.org.



The Springfield Area Arts Council's Annual Meeting has been postponed. We're doing our part to keep everyone safe during this time of social distancing. We'll announce a new date as soon as we can!

## Uptown Friday Night

Uptown Friday Night is the Arts Council's free performance series, taking place from 5:30 to 7:30 on Friday evenings. Join us at Robbie's Restaurant on Old State Capitol Plaza South and start the weekend with outstanding jazz and blues, excellent food and drinks, and great company – all while supporting the Springfield Area Arts Council. Here's our tentative schedule, social distancing requirements permitting....

### APRIL

No concerts in April 2020

### MAY

- 1 Angel Brown Trio
- 8 Stone Cold Blues Band
- 15 Denise LaGrassa Trio
- 22 CLOSED
- 29 Samba Llamas

## A Win for Arts Education in Illinois

Following three years of intense work led by Ingenuity and Arts Alliance Illinois, Illinois made history last month by becoming the first state in the nation to include the arts as a distinct, weighted indicator of K-12 success in its school accountability system.

The arts – defined in Illinois as including dance, media arts, music, theatre and visual arts – now stand alongside subjects such as math and science as the state measures the performance of every public school in Illinois. Inclusion of the arts indicator affirms that arts are core and incentivizes schools to include the arts in a well-rounded education.

The Arts Council's interim executive director, a former high school teacher, often attended ISBE meetings and offered testimony, and many Arts Council members were strong advocates for this issue.

How about giving your kids fifteen minutes of classical music each day? [www.yourclassical.org/listen/kids-classical](http://www.yourclassical.org/listen/kids-classical)