



COBBLE HILL PLAYSCHOOL NEWS

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW AT CHP

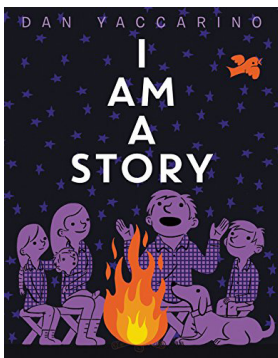
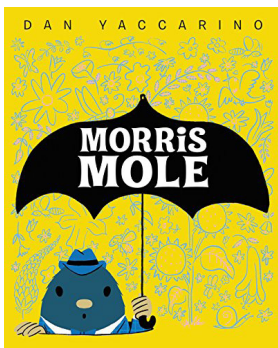
Get Pumped for the 2018 Read-A-Thon

This year's kick-off party will feature Dan Yaccarino, author and illustrator of "Morris Mole," "I Am a Story," "Happy Land," and many other notable children's books.

THE READ-A-THON STARTED because CHP director Carol Troha had a dream. She wanted children to know that books aren't something that you just buy: Someone actually wrote and illustrated them. She started reading every Saturday at the Carroll Gardens library in a program she calls Storytime with Carol & Friends. (Because of this program, there are Storytimes in every Brooklyn Public Library on Saturdays at 10:30am!) She had the idea of asking one of her best author/illustrator buddies, Mari Takabayashi ("I Live in Brooklyn," "I Live in Tokyo"), to come to read to the group.

Carol's daughter, Amanda, was the director of the lower school library at Columbia Grammar and Prep where she had award-winning authors read three or four times a year. Carol wondered if she could introduce such a program here in Brooklyn. She knew Peter Brown was from Brooklyn and had Amanda reach out to him to see if he could come read to the CHP community. Next came Tad Hills ("Duck & Goose"), then Jessica Olien ("The Blobfish Book").

"I thought a Read-a-Thon would be the perfect way to get parents and grandparents to realize how important reading



2018 Read-A-Thon author Dan Yaccarino and two books he wrote and illustrated.

is. Now we don't have to have a separate line item for books on the CHP budget and we have the best preschool library I have ever seen," says Carol.

Emboldened by her past success, Carol reached out to Dan Yaccarino, an author to whom she had no connection but who had read at Amanda's school and who had illustrated two long-time CHP favorites: *Five Little Pumpkins* and *Trashy Town*. As fate would have it, he was transitioning between booking agents and responded to Carol directly. "He told me he'd love to visit the school in March. He's a really nice guy and we're going to be talking a lot about him and his books," says Carol.

One of Carol's favorites is *Morris Mole*, the story of a little mole who learns that even small creatures can accomplish big things. In addition to writing and illustrating many children's books, Dan is the creator of the animated children's TV show, "Oswald," about the adventures of a blue octopus, and he designed the characters for the Nickelodeon show, "The Backyardigans."

Mark your calendar for March 24 at the Carroll Gardens Library to meet Dan Yaccarino and hear him read. Alumni are invited, too!



Introducing: Rebecca Zola Our jazzy new music teacher

WE ARE FORTUNATE to have Rebecca Zola join the CHP faculty this year as the music teacher. Rebecca graduated in May 2017 from The New School where she received degrees from the Jazz Conservatory and the Liberal Arts programs.

Rebecca is passionate about music education and has been enjoying seeing the kids connect with the songs she teaches, like "Puff the Magic Dragon."

Besides teaching at CHP, she also gives private voice lessons, tutors college students in music programs, and performs and tours with two bands. Three years ago, she formed Zolaband (thezola-band.com) which plays original folk rock music with some jazz improvisation. She is also a member of a trio that plays jazz standards.

Rebecca has a strong interest in activism in the arts. She wrote a senior thesis on gender in the jazz community and would like, one day, to pursue a PhD in ethnomusicology. Among her many interests is exploring how gender, race, and class impact access to music education.

Wondering what she listens to on her own? It's a pretty eclectic mix. Right now she is enjoying the new David Crosby album, Peter, Paul and Mary, and Israeli music. Rebecca spent a month in Israel this past summer, where she did some performing and became interested in Middle Eastern harmonies.



Carol's Second Job

We asked Cobble Hill Playschool director, Carol Troha, to tell us about her night gig: teaching graduate students in education at Hunter College.

How did you start teaching at Hunter?

Several years ago, I completed a post-master's leadership program, Children's Programming and Administration Credential, through CUNY's NYC Early Childhood Professional Development Institute (PDI). I was approached by the folks at PDI to ask if I would teach a seminar that was the final part of the process because I was one of a small handful who had actually completed this degree. Then in the spring of 2016 I started teaching the Early Childhood Curriculum, birth to grade 2, at Hunter College's Graduate School of Education. Coincidentally, I had been taking student teachers from Hunter for the past 10 years. I said yes because I wanted to give back to future teachers what I had learned in all my years working in early childhood education.

Can you tell us what you're teaching at Hunter? We study many NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) practices, such as De-

velopmentally Appropriate Practice, an approach we take at CHP. Basically, it calls for us to follow theories of child development, assess each student's strengths and needs, and keep in mind her cultural and family background in order to nurture her socio/emotional, cognitive, and physical development.

I'm not always speaking from a straight academic background, I often share what it's actually like in the classroom. I talk about common mistakes,

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I teach my students about the importance of being kind, to each other, to their students and to parents.”

problems that come up, my school philosophy, lesson planning using a project approach, and how the emergent curriculum approach comes in. Everything is well-trod ground for me and I try to give my students an eye on reality.

I teach my students about the importance of being kind, to each other, to their students and to parents. My entire life at CHP we have had parent involvement in the classroom. Many schools keep parents on the outside, and even most cooperatives I have known do not have parents actually participate in the classroom. This makes me so sad.

My grad students learn how important the socio-emotional component is: teaching children to feel good about themselves, resolving conflict, making a friend, taking turns. I teach my students that children learn best when what we're studying is all a part of the same learning process. In math, you can count trees and leaves. In literacy, you can write about them. You can draw pictures of them, sing songs about them, and act out a story about them. Each one of the disciplines should be related.

What do you bring from your work at Hunter into the classroom? As faculty at Hunter, I'm privy to certain perks. When visiting academics come in, I'm invited to receptions where I meet some of the bigger names in education. I learn about conferences where I can send some of my staff for good staff development. I have the opportunity to host student teachers. (Lizzie was one of my student teachers from Hunter, by the way.)

It was an honor to be asked to teach at Hunter. The administration is kind to me, they value what I offer, they value my experience and knowledge in the field, and I think that's really nice. I think that at a certain time in life when you have so much accrued, it's nice to give back.

Where Are They Now? Gabby Sevillano CHP '05

Winter Sings can be great training for Carnegie Hall

GABBY GRADUATED FROM Cobble Hill Playschool's Fours program twelve years ago, and carries with her a love of music that she developed during her formative early childhood years at the school.

After graduating from CHP, she went on to P.S. 58 in Carroll Gardens, and then to the Institute for Collaborative Education in lower Manhattan for middle school. Now in her senior year at The Bronx High School of Science, Gabby is enjoying the opportunity to choose her coursework, which includes college-level political science and philosophy.

She plays the viola as part of the New York Youth Symphony orchestra as well as another smaller ensemble. While she



began learning the viola in the third grade, she has played the piano for as long as she can remember, and encourages young CHP students interested in music to create a foundation for musical education through learning the piano.

Outside of her busy academic and extracurricular calendar, Gabby enjoys reading, writing, drawing and spending time with her two beloved cats. She still lives in Carroll Gardens, not far from CHP—a school that inspires fond memories for her and her family, and that served as a strong foundation for her future successes!

Above: Gabby with her parents at Carnegie Hall, in May 2017. Left: Painting with Nancy at Cobble Hill Playschool in 2003.



What's Up with Hilary? Music, marriage, and more

IT WAS TOUGH to say goodbye to Hilary Hawke, who taught music at CHP for nine years. We asked her for an update:

"After school ended in June, I went up to Bethel Woods (the original site of Woodstock) and taught a month long summer camp to kids interested in composing and performing music. After that, I taught the next young round of folk musicians at another summer camp here in Brooklyn at the Jr. Folk School at the Jalopy Theatre in Red Hook.

Then on September 7, Brian and I had a wonderful, 'small' (it felt huge) wedding in Williamsburg at the Mymoon Restaurant. Shortly after, we went on our honeymoon to Morocco! We did a five-day dessert and Atlas mountains excursion, visited coastal towns, and the bigger cities. It was an adventure, and I always appreciate leaving the country to gain perspective on your own life.

Now that we are back in Brooklyn, I have been teaching private and group lessons, working at the Folk school at the Jalopy Theatre, as well as performing as much as possible with a variety of bands. My band, Dubl Handi, is re-branding as the Wild Goats (thewildgoats.com) and we just shot a video. In February, I will be heading out and touring all of Israel with the Dead Sea Sisters (deadseasisters.com). I miss you and your children very much and look forward to seeing you somewhere in Brooklyn soon!"

Hilary Hawke and her husband, Brian Geltner.



CALLING ALL ALUMNI FAMILIES: Have a CHP grad (or two or three)? Carol would love to hear from you—or them! Please write her at alumni@cobblehillplayschool.com and let her know what's new with your children. Be on the lookout for emails and mailings from the school with ways to stay involved in the CHP community.

This newsletter was brought to you by the CHP Alumni Committee: Courtney Ambrose, Kelly O'Neill, and Rebecca Stewart. Special thanks to Gary Stewart.