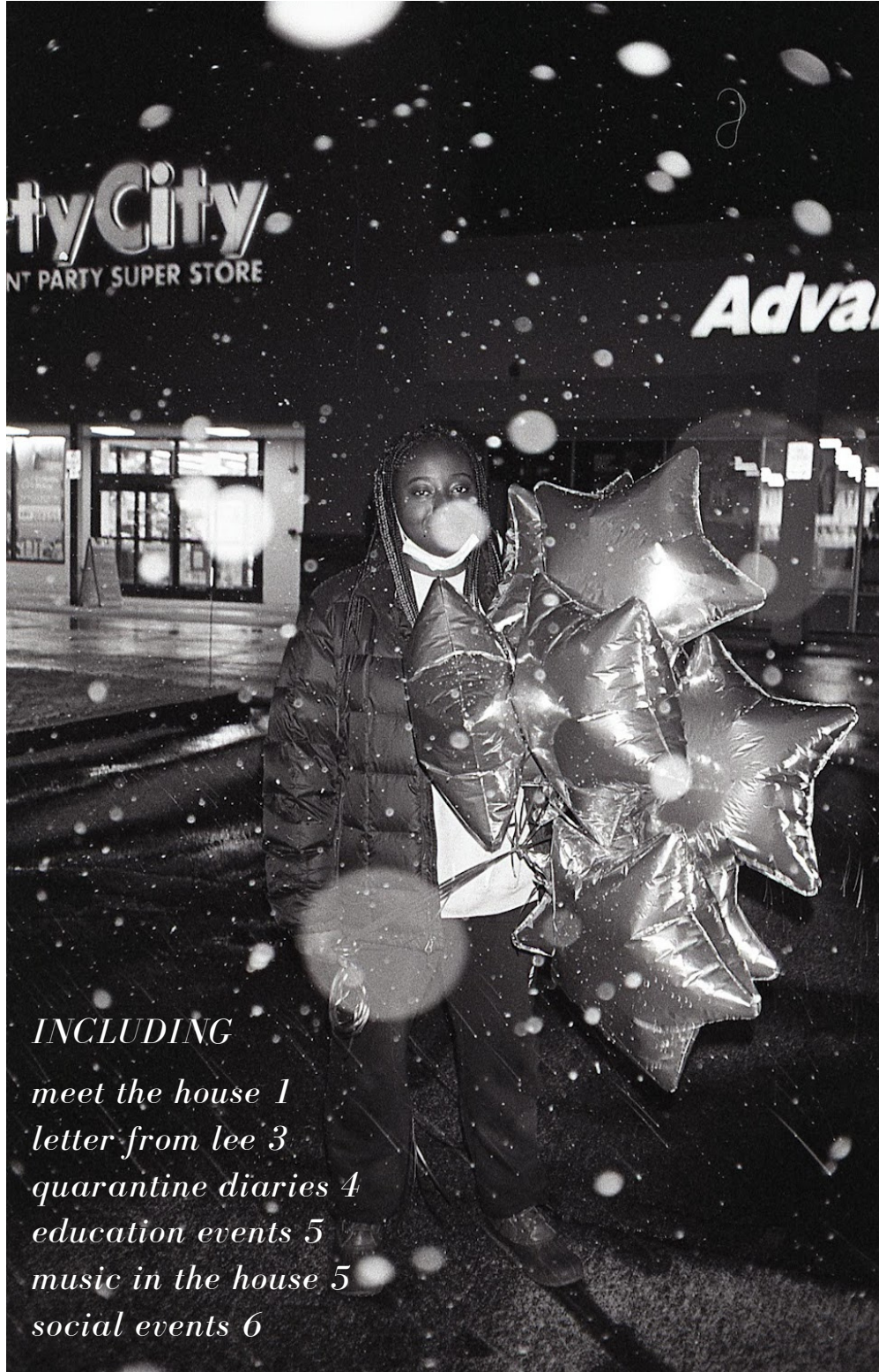


THE MARGINAL

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2022



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MEET THE HOUSE

WATERMARGIN'S FRESH FACES...

AARON BROWN
SOPHOMORE,
COMPUTER
SCIENCE



ALEX SHAPIRO
SENIOR, PHYSICS



HAL REED
JUNIOR, INFO SCI
& HISTORY



BLUE SHAPIRO
SOPHOMORE,
MATERIAL SCIENCE



**KENDRA
COOPER-SMITH**
JUNIOR, GLOBAL
DEVELOPMENT



NABIHA QURESHI
JUNIOR,
INDUSTRIAL &
LABOR RELATIONS



DANIEL LACY
JUNIOR, BIOLOGY



KIKI SHINSATO
SENIOR,
LANDSCAPE
DESIGN



RACHEL LADUE
SENIOR,
ENVIRONMENTAL
ENGINEERING



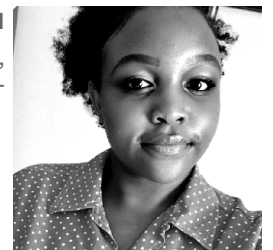
**DARIA DU
MASTERS,**
ADVANCED
ARCHITECTURE
DESIGN



**LEE
SIMPENDOERFER**
JUNIOR,
ASTRONOMY



SIDI OMARI
JUNIOR,
GOVERNMENT



EL ROBECK
SOPHOMORE,
BIOLOGY



LEO MAKEBISH
SENIOR,
PSYCHOLOGY



**SOPHIE
CIANFARANI**
JUNIOR,
ART HISTORY



**EVELYN
KLUEMPER**
SENIOR,
BIOMETRY AND
STATISTICS



**MABEL
ORHIEKHOE**
JUNIOR,
FASHION &
PLANT SCIENCE



TYLER CROSS
JUNIOR,
PHILOSOPHY



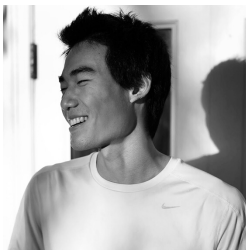
AVI SIMON
SENIOR,
EVOLUTIONARY
BIOLOGY



MEET THE HOUSE

...HOUSEMATES WHO CAME BACK FOR MORE...

JAMES ZHANG
SENIOR,
ENVIRONMENTAL
SCIENCE



LIYING WANG
SENIOR,
ART HISTORY



SARAH COUPAL
SENIOR,
NUTRITIONAL
SCIENCES



VICKY GUEVARA
SENIOR,
BIO & SOCIETY



SARA LIANG
JUNIOR,
BIOLOGY



...AND OUR SPECIAL GUEST FOR THE SEMESTER,

**LUÍS CARLOS
MORAZAN**
PHD,
AGRICULTURAL
ENGINEERING



LETTER FROM LEE

Dear Marginals,

I'm Lee, one of the current co-presidents of Watermargin. I know it's been a long time since we sent out an alumni newsletter, so I'm here to catch you all up and tell you the tale of Watermargin through the pandemic...

It was a fateful, gray day in March of 2020 when we got the email from President Pollack. We had all been reading the news as schools announced their closing one by one. We knew it was bound to happen to us, but I don't think any of us were really prepared for the event. But there it was, that email. I received it as I was walking to a club meeting. As I arrived, the room was dead silent, and full of shocked and grim students. Only two weeks to pack up and leave, to go back to our homes.

Cornell allowed students to petition to stay on campus for the remainder of the semester. People who couldn't go home for any reason were allowed to hang around the quickly abandoned campus. That's how Watermargin managed to stay alive.

I wasn't living in Watermargin at the time, as I was only a freshman that spring and still lived in a dorm. I can only tell the story that has been told to me by the two or so Marginals still here that stayed during the pandemic. At the onset, the population of the house dropped from thirty to twelve. The next fall, many people did not choose to come back to Watermargin because of the safety concern of living with over 20 other people. House occupancy was at ten for the fall semester, and then eight for the spring.

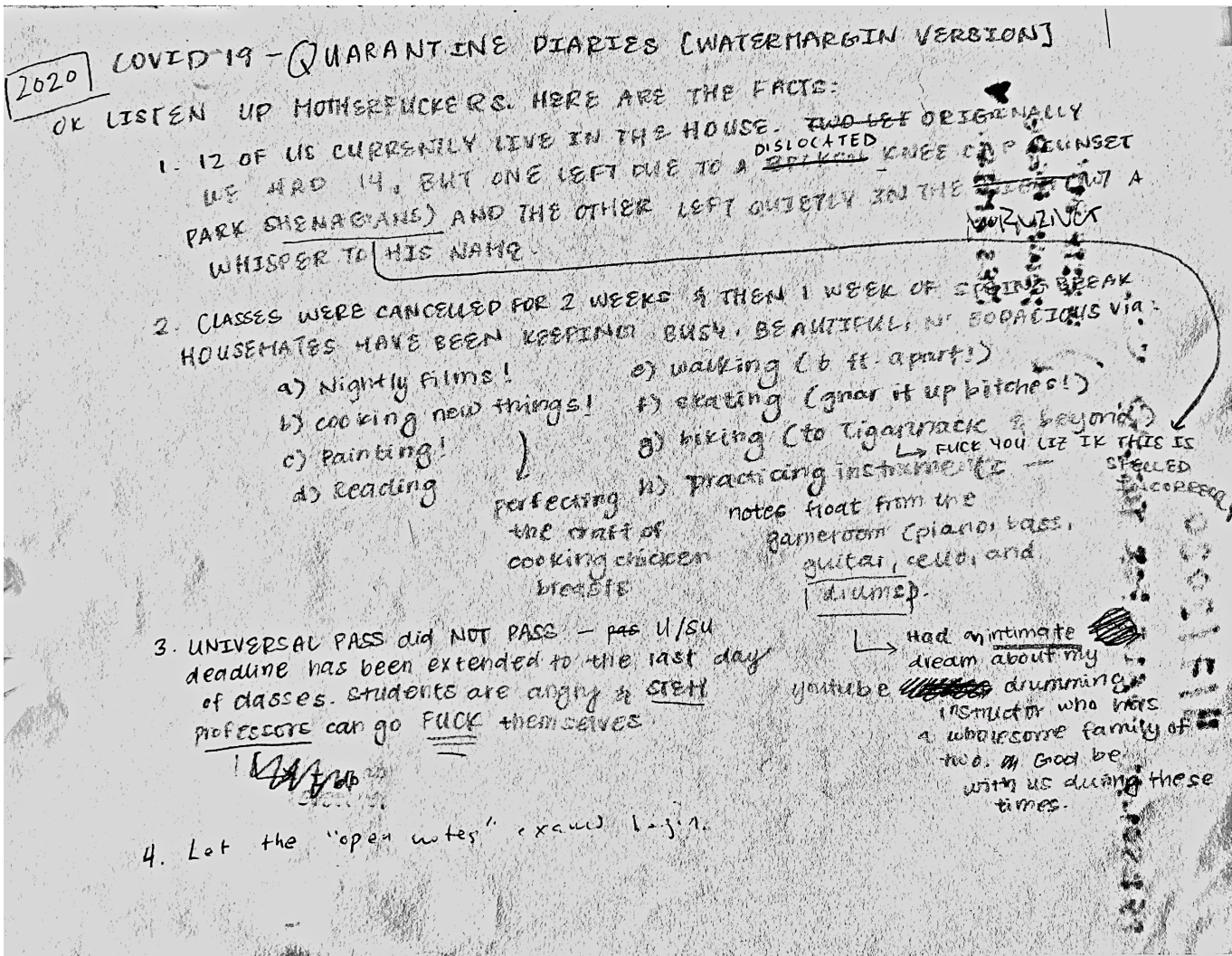
Many things fell to the wayside during the pandemic, for lack of people, or lack of funds, or lack of ability to gather with others. The whole world was frozen, and, in some ways, so was Watermargin. During those years, we did not have the capacity to keep up with alumni communication, education events, connection with other coops, or even house repairs.

However, even if the pandemic was difficult for Watermargin, I would not call any part of this house lost. The community and spirit of the house stayed ever the same. From what I know, Watermargin was a life raft for the people that lived here. A place that staved off the isolation so many of us experienced during the pandemic.

This fall, in 2021, people flooded back into the house. We were back at 24 residents. Four returning members, and twenty fresh faces. It was my first semester here too, having only moved in at the beginning of the summer. We are rebuilding. Of course, we've had some rocky moments as we all are learning how to keep this house up and running, but we are mobilizing. In the last semester, we have had some smaller parties and education events as we learn to navigate the waters of hosting social events during the pandemic. We completed a lot of housework to clean and fix all the little dusty corners. We built strong ties with each other and found safety in our new home. It is a year of regrowth for the house, and we are so excited to share it with you all!

Cheers,

Lee Simpfendoerfer (Co-president)



QUARANTINE DIARIES: WATERMARGIN VERSION

The Watermargin Book was revived in 2019 after a brief hiatus. These are some excerpts from 2020-2021 as Watermargin, small in numbers, weathered the pandemic. After the university had sent most students home, Watermargin continued to be a place that marginalized students could stay when they had no place to go. The house continued to practice Watermargin's core values by providing critical rent-free housing during the height of the pandemic and supporting direct action and mutual aid efforts within the larger Ithaca community. While the day-to-day life within the house was turned upside down by a global pandemic, marginals were still able to maintain a sense of community that was healing for all those who were in it.

EDUCATION EVENTS



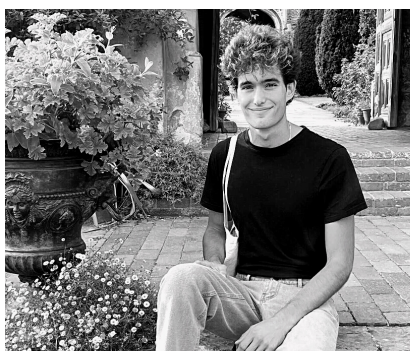
PROFESSOR ANTONIO DITOMMASO

Early this fall semester, Watermargin had the pleasure of welcoming Antonio DiTommaso, a Cornell professor and the chair of the School of Integrative Plant Science. After doing some learning, house members prepped the plot and put many late fall/early winter hearty seeds like spinaches, kale, and radish varieties. We can't wait to see what the garden rears!



MELODY COOPER

In October, Melody Cooper - a screenwriter, producer, and mother of house member Kendra - detailed for attendees her transition from acting and playwriting, to attending writer's residencies around the world, winning grand jury accolades, and Sundance episodic awards for television and film. Melody offered house members the chance to inquire about their own artistic endeavors, and her presence in Watermargin brought a very welcomed and fitting creative energy to our home.



SAM SPIEGEL

Sam Spiegel, a recent Cornell alumni from the landscape architecture department who began his own landscape design business at 20 years old, had a unique perspective to share with an audience not much younger than himself. His emphasis on the pursuit of passion while in college and forging your own path through education struck a chord for many.



MUSIC IN WATERMARGIN

FANCLUB COLLECTIVE

In October, Fanclub Collective held an outdoor concert to 300+ people in the backyard! Fanclub member Bryan and housemates Tyler and Evelyn built a DIY stage on the porch. The concert featured student bands Skip Tracer and House Husbands, which includes lead singer and housemate Leo. The headliner bands were Horse Jumper of Love and Lightning Bug, who were awesome performers and great company.



OPEN MIC NIGHT

In November, we held our own Open Mic Night featuring student bands Silas Brainard et al. and House Husbands, followed by spoken word and poetry.

WATERMARGIN PARTIED HARD AND SAFELY, OF COURSE.

With the pandemic still going on around us, Watermargin was not able to throw any big indoor parties for our own and campus safety. However, we still managed to have a vibrant semester full of small and intimate social events for the house and our close friends (and one very big outdoor concert).

H A L L O W E E N P A R T Y



H O L I D A Y D I N N E R

HOUSE MANAGEMENT UPDATE

After a few years of sole sparsity, the floors are creaking happily under the feet of a full house. As you all know well, each year comes with its own set of maintenance challenges - this Fall, we saw carpenter bees, leaky ceilings, and boiler busts - but for all the security given to us by the house we return, equal and opposite, attention to the needs of the wood and steel that shelters us.

Our roof wants this attention the most today, so we continue to pursue its health. We want to offer our most sincere gratitude to those who helped us with fundraising efforts this Giving Day - these efforts are invaluable for the safety and comfort of current housemates and those to come. While there is still a lot of work to do to ensure this future replacement project, the house stays warmed by the support and confidence of our alumni and the alumni board. We will keep you posted on this project in future newsletters and our social medias, but in the meantime, we thank you for all the work done - past, present, and future - to make this house a home.

Hal & Sara
House Managers



Watermargin
P.O. Box 3834
Ithaca, NY 14852-3834

WE'RE UPDATING OUR ALUMNI CONTACT LIST!
PLEASE SEND YOUR CURRENT MAILING ADDRESS
TO WATERMARGIN@CORNELL.EDU