CI Choral Director Joseph Huszti has long known what a popular fixture the Madrigal Dinner is during the holidays. But just how popular was underscored earlier this year while attending a concert at the Orange County Performing Arts Center.

Huszti, in the ticket line with his wife, Melinda, perked up after noticing “madrigal” and “dinner” tossed into the conversation of a couple nearby. “They were saying how much they missed it and wondering what happened,” Huszti recalled. “I didn’t recognize them but they recognized me. It was a little amusing.

“From there, they joked, ‘Why did you ruin our Christmas [by not having it] and ‘Hey, so when is that Madrigal Dinner coming back anyway?’”

Madrigal Dinner Returns: Long Live the Feaste!

Just in time for Yule. The perennial favorite returns to the Claire Trevor Theatre December 12 after a three-year absence, bringing its usual mixture of Tudor-styled feasting and merriment.

“Hey, so when is that Madrigal Dinner coming back anyway?”

Performed by the UCI Chamber Singers, the Madrigal Dinner recreates the aura of Renaissance England during the reign of King Henry VIII. The stage is turned into Henry’s court and a seven-course “royal feaste” is served, accompanied by strolling minstrels, serenading servants, authentic period dances and a concert of seasonal music.

“We’re all working hard to make our return a success,” said Huszti, the dinner’s artistic director since its inception in 1978. “We feel this gives us an opportunity to bring it back with real gusto.”

Why the delay? Major renovations to the Claire Trevor Theatre put the dinner out of a home. There was talk about moving to another UCI location — and even hosting it off-campus — but patience prevailed. Although they could have rushed in last year, when the theatre opened with a fresh interior and cutting-edge technology, Huszti and the production crew wanted to fine-tune the event for its new space.

A two-story set, built by Technical Director Keith Bangs and his staff, will be the centerpiece, utilizing the theatre’s qualities to make the banquet seem even more real. “We’ve got the high ceilings, even the catwalk, that lend to the atmosphere we’re trying to create,” Huszti explained. “This sounds funny, but even the cement walls evoke something of a castle feel.”

Finding Your Inner Wolf at the Beall Center

The Beall Center for Art and Technology has opened its new season with a howl. The keening of wolves — virtually and literally — resonates through an exhibit bringing two acclaimed digital-media artists together for the first time. Through the Eye of the Wolf features Bill Tomlinson’s award-winning artificial intelligence work on AlphaWolf and Sam Easterson’s surveillance techniques in his unique Animal, Vegetable, Video: Pack of Wolves project.

“The way you howl, growl, whine or bark into your microphone affects how your pup interacts...”

“By showcasing both projects, we open the season with one evocative installation that truly puts the viewer inside the daily social lives of wolves,” said Eleanore Stewart, Beall’s director and the assistant dean for technology and research initiatives for the Claire Trevor School of the Arts.

Projected onto screens, AlphaWolf offers a virtual pack — three new pups and three adults — on the bonding path. For each pup to find a place in the group hierarchy, three people must interact by playing the role of one of the pups. Participants move them around with a mouse but can only control their behavior by making wolfish sounds.

“The way you howl, growl, whine or bark into your microphone affects how your pup interacts with its packmates,” said Tomlinson who worked on the project as part of his PhD thesis with the Synthetic Characters Group at the MIT Media Lab.

Tomlinson recently joined UCI as an assistant professor in the Arts, Computation and Engineering (ACE) graduate program. Technically, AlphaWolf is deceptively complex, integrating

Continued Page 5
As interim dean, I am committed to helping the School continue the high level of academic, artistic and scholarly excellence for which it is known. Our talented faculty and staff guide students in the arts toward careers as professionals by providing a solid foundation in both traditional practice and innovative methods. As you read these pages, I hope you are gratified by the myriad achievements of our faculty, students and alumni, and that you will attend our superb performances and shows.

As the 2003-2004 academic year begins, we continue to define the future by valuable principles: excellence in artistry and research, innovation through technology, creative thinking, diversity and collaboration at all levels.”

New Faculty Appointments

Richard Brestoff, assistant professor of drama, worked for Joseph Papp’s New York Shakespeare Festival and appeared on Broadway in Michael Rudman’s production of Hamlet starring Sam Waterson. In Los Angeles, he has acted in more than a dozen feature films and over thirty network television shows. Brestoff has served as a three-time primetime Emmy Awards Blue Ribbon Panel judge and was on the 1991 ballot for a guest star performance on the CBS series, thirtysomething. He has taught at the University of Washington and written three books on acting: The Camera Smart Actor, The Great Acting Teachers and Acting Under the Circumstances; Variations on a Theme of Stanislavski. Professional affiliations include the American Association of Television and Radio Artists, Actors Equity Association and the Screen Actors Guild. Brestoff studied at the Professional Actors Workshop at UCLA and was an associate director at the Old Globe Theatre. He holds an MFA degree in Acting from New York University.

The Camera Smart Actor, The Great Acting Teachers and Acting Under the Circumstances; Variations on a Theme of Stanislavski. Professional affiliations include the American Association of Television and Radio Artists, Actors Equity Association and the Screen Actors Guild. Brestoff holds a BA degree in Dramatic Art from UC Berkeley and an MFA degree in Acting from New York University.

John Coplans, who died on August 21 at the age of 83, was the founding director of the UCI Art Gallery and, along with Tony DeLap, a founding member of the UCI faculty in Studio Art.

Beatriz da Costa, assistant professor of studio art, electrical engineering and computer science (see New Graduate Program Expands Art’s Vision, page 5).

Jennifer Fisher, assistant professor of dance, has taught dance history, theory, criticism and ethnography at York University and UC Irvine. She received her MA degree in Dance at York University and a PhD in Dance History at UC Riverside.

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Finding Your Inner Wolf continues

real-time computer animation and sophisticated artificial intelligence algorithms. Tomlinson, who began his career as a biologist, and his MIT colleagues observed gray wolves in an Indiana wildlife preserve to understand their true behavior. That led to realistic software programs that incorporate learning, emotion, perception and social development.

"On the surface, AlphaWolf is a study of pack social behavior," Tomlinson said. "At a deeper level, though, the project explores ways of building richer, more complex interactive systems by appealing to the social abilities that we all share. I would like my work to help build computer systems that we can trust, that learn from us, from which we can learn and with which we can form relationships."

For his part, Easterson transforms the virtual pack experience by outfitting real wolves with miniature camera and audio from the animal’s point of view. These digital sights and sounds are then edited into three-to-six minute segments that approximate the wolves’ daily lives. "If you can step into these animals’ perspectives you are far less likely to harm them or their habitats," Easterson said. "I see myself as a sort of ambassador whose mission is to demystify the Little Red Riding Hood perceptions we all have of wolves."

Through the Eye of the Wolf runs through Oct. 26. Admission is free and open to the public noon to 5 pm, Monday through Saturday, and Friday until 8 pm. For more information, call (949) 824-4339 or visit http://beallcenter.uci.edu.

Claire Trevor School of the Arts Recognizes Its Own

Three of the many extraordinary members of the Claire Trevor School of the Arts team were honored this fall with special service awards. Lisa Naugle, assistant professor of dance, received the first Dean’s Faculty Service Award, and Toby Weiner, assistant production manager, received the Dean’s Staff Service Award. Naugle was selected for her exemplary and willing service in support of research and educational processes. Weiner was recognized for her unfailing professionalism and dedication to the School’s success. In addition, Sharon Harlan, member of the dean’s staff and coordinator of the Arts, Computation and Engineering program, received the Inspiration Award.
A Successful Summer For Rawlins Scholar

Senior music major and Rawlins Scholar Kevin Loucks had an unforgettable summer, taking his piano skills on the road, participating in two major music festivals and playing on National Public Radio.

Kevin came to UCI as a freshman from Santa Rosa, CA, on the recommendation of his piano teacher, and was soon offered a Rawlins Scholarship. The Rawlins Scholarships, generously given by Marjorie Rawlins and her late husband, Robert, support music majors studying piano, violin, viola, and cello. The scholarship helped Kevin decide that UCI was the ideal place for him to continue his education. “It’s very important to me that [prospective] students realize how lucky they could be if they were involved with this wonderful program and environment,” Kevin said of his experiences at UCI.

“The immersion... provides young artists like Kevin with the most effective bridge between training and the professional world.”

The Rawlins Scholarship has allowed Kevin to concentrate more fully on preparing to be a professional musician—coursework, practicing, solo performance, and participation in chamber music groups. It has also made it easier to take part in summer music festivals. These summer opportunities are important for students, noted interim dean Noehma Fernández. “Such experiences are invaluable for the formation of a musician,” she said. “The immersion in the intense musical environment of a festival provides young artists like Kevin with the most effective bridge between training and the professional world.”

This summer, Kevin attended the prestigious Aspen Music Festival, where he worked closely with Gabriel Chodos (Piano Chair at the New England Conservatory), and nationally renowned string quartets, including the Emerson String Quartet and the St. Lawrence String Quartet. Kevin also worked with a member of the Cleveland String Quartet. His Aspen experiences enhanced his interest in participating in chamber groups, as he collaborated closely with music students from around the world. Kevin was one of the few students of Aspen’s eight hundred asked to play on NPR’s Performance Today show.

Kevin then played at the Music at Menlo summer festival on the San Francisco peninsula. As part of a select group of eight students, Kevin performed every three days and learned to give pre-concert lectures, a skill he feels is essential for musicians. At the festival, he played selections from composer Gabriela Frank’s newest work, Sueños de Chambi: Snapshots from an Andean Album. Another NPR highlight came when he was invited to take part in the St. Paul Sunday show, which offers an insider’s view of the latest in classical music. Kevin enters his senior year inspired and energized by his summer of study and performance with professional musicians and top students from around the world. His plans for the coming year include applying for graduate school, where he’ll pursue a master’s degree and then a doctorate in piano performance. Congratulations, Kevin, on a summer well spent!

Lisa Roetzel
Director of Development
lroetzel@uci.edu

Would you like more information on ways to contribute to Student Scholarships?

Scholarships help UCI Arts students focus on what a university education in the arts is really about—academics, creative exploration, and practice of an art form. Scholarships and graduate fellowships enable some of our most talented students to attend UCI, regardless of need. They also help students participate in additional educational opportunities necessary for the training of tomorrow’s leaders in the arts.

This year we are announcing a new membership program called the Medici Circle. Many learning opportunities in the arts take place beyond the classroom. Taking part in conferences, workshops, and festivals allows students to work with master teachers, gain professional connections and build bridges into the working world of professional artists. The Medici Circle provides scholarships so students can pursue these opportunities.

UCI Arts Student Scholarships

☐ Yes, please send me more information on Scholarships to the address below.
☐ Not at this time, but please update my mailing information:

Name:
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Are you a UCI Alum? ☐ Yes ☐ No
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Mail to:
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101 HTC
Irvine, CA 92697-2775

Or email your contact information to:
dconnoll@uci.edu

Fall 2003

UCI Arts
Claire Trevor School of the Arts
Madrigal Dinner Returns

Bangs added that the set, which took three weeks to
finish, replaces worn, often-used scenery and should
give the dinner a revitalized appearance. “We are
trying to evoke a festive castle or perhaps a noble
setting to develop AlphaWolf, a computer-based wolf pack where people can play at
being puppies and form social relations with other puppies in the group.

The latest incarnation of Tomlinson’s AlphaWolf bows at the Beall Center for
Art and Technology in “Through the Eye of the Wolf,” which runs
through Oct. 25. He joins with video artist Sam Easton,
who added digital footage of wolves to the exhibit (see
Finding Your Inner Wolf at the Beall Center page 1).

Da Costa has also been testing the limits of new technol-
ogy. Robotics is one of her interests and she’s had vari-
ous installations—including a robot cello that plays
itself. Next April, da Costa and fellow interdisciplinary
artists Brooke Singer and Jamie Schulte bring “Swipe to
the Beall. This “data-veillance” show explores just what
personal information is on those ubiquitous magnetic strips
found on the back of our driver’s licenses and credit cards.

Along with da Costa, Tomlinson and the rest of ACE’s faculty, Penny hopes to
inspire students to expand on what they’ve already learned while growing up in the
digital age.

“One, they’ve been playing computer games since before they could talk. And writing
code, and doing computer animation, and building their local area
networks in their dormitories and bedrooms for years,” he noted. “They’ve been
doing engineering and computer science and the fine arts all at the same time.

Penny continued, “Those students will go on to shape the digital cultures. It’s the
people who are freshmen and sophomores right now. They’re going to be the
Spielbergs, the Leonardos and the Shakespeares” of that culture.

ACE welcomes eight new graduate students this fall. The candidates, some of
whom already have graduate degrees, come from near (two are Californians) and
far (a Fulbright Scholar hails from Canada and another of the students is from
Japan). The others have journeyed from Maryland, New York and Mississippi.

They’ve studied fine arts, media studies, computer science, psychology and
robotics, among other disciplines.

For more on ACE, visit http://www.ace.uci.edu

grad program debuts

New Graduate Program Expands Art’s Vision

Where do the arts connect to the wired world of
computing and engineering? A graduate
program fittingly named Arts Computation
Engineering (ACE) will debut this quarter to help
find the answers.

ACE’s director is Simon Penny, a self-described “
gizmologist” who’s been at the
forefront of defining links between the disciplines.

Penny—a professor of electrical engineering and
computer science and studio art—refers to the
field as “a profoundly new techno-social
phenomenon” where “digital cultures” become
ever more important in our lives.

“We’re bringing together areas that are at oppo-
site ends of the academic spectrum,” he said of
ACE’s mandate. “Engineering is all about proof, mathe-
matically based rationalism. The arts are grouped with
metaphysics and emotions, and all the things that
don’t fit into the scientific method.

“But it’s all coming together in our society now. That’s precisely the challenge of
digital cultures—that kids don’t distinguish in that way. They grow up
digital.

They’ve studied fine arts, media studies, computer science, psychology and
robotics, among other disciplines.

For more on ACE, visit http://www.ace.uci.edu

Madrigal Dinner Returns

Banged added that the set, which took three weeks to
finish, replaces worn, often-used scenery and should
give the dinner a revitalized appearance. “We are
trying to evoke a festive castle or perhaps a noble
residence that Henry VIII is favoring with a visit,” he
said. “Essentially, we want the audience to feel that
they are a personal guest of the royal family—you are
about to party with King Henry.”

As always, authentic atmosphere is a key to the
success. Huszti and those involved are painstaking in
their research and delivery. Besides looking the part in
elaborate period costumes and jewelry created by
Melinda Huszti, the nearly 100 singers, musi-
cians and performers (both volunteers and
students, many from the music department)
must chat in what passes for old English and
know something of the era’s history. Or at
least be ready to improvise.

“The students must be quick on their
feet, that’s for sure. Someone might say,
‘Where are Henry’s other wives?’ and
the students have to be aware and play
along,” Huszti continued.

Most of the evening, however, unfolds with a
scripted menu of food and song, including a few
fantasies that Henry VIII wrote himself. As in
past seasons, the Madrigal Dinner marks an
important year in the King’s reign. It’s a big one
this time—Henry’s coronation in 1509 at the
tender age of 18. Huszti said there’s much
opportunity, from the gala flair to the courtly
intrigues, to make for an entertaining evening.

Besides, Huszti is well practiced when it comes
to the coronation dinner. He’s done it three times
before. “We like to make it different [for those who
come each year] but you have to do some years
again,” he noted. “We really get into the history of the
coronation. The audience even does a loyalty oath, a
short incantation, for Henry. It’s all in good fun.”

For information on the UCI Madrigal Dinner, see the
Calendar on page 6 or visit
http://music.arts.uci.edu/madrigal
Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4
Barber: Violin Concerto
Walker: Lyric for Strings

UCI Chamber Series
Prokofiev: A Requiem on Fifty Years After His Death
Sat, Nov 8, 8 pm
Winifred Smith Hall, $12/10/8

HorOUNTe Bedelian, violin
John Scanlon, viola
Margaret Parkins, cello
Amanda Walker, clarinet
Loma Griffitt, piano
Francois Young Bennett, soprano
Five Songs Without Words,
Op. 35
Sonata No. 1,
Op. 35

Sonata in C Major,
Op. 80 for Violin and Piano
Sonata No. 1,
Op. 35

Five Songs Without Words,
Frances Young Bennett, soprano
Lorna Griffitt, piano
Amanda Walker, clarinet
Margaret Parkins, cello
Haroutune Bedelian, violin

Fifty Years After His Death
UCI Chamber Series
Guest artist: violinist Alyssa Walker

Tchaikovsky, Barber and From Russia to America:
UCI Symphony Orchestra
Barber: Violin Concerto
Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4

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Box Office, Center, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. weekdays
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Tickets are available at the door one hour before the performance, subject to availability.

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