Fall 2008

Creative Connections Reaches Out, In

The Claire Trevor School of the Arts is expanding its arts outreach to the community, thanks to funding from the Segerstrom Foundation, the Bren Foundation, UCI’s Beall Center for Art and Technology, and the UC Office of the President.

The arts outreach program, now called Creative Connections, includes partnerships with K-12 schools in Orange County, with an emphasis on underserved communities, and a long-standing commitment with the Other Lifelong Learning Institute.

Creative Connections builds on the success of the School’s original initiative, ArtsBridge, which integrated art education standards in dance, drama, music and studio art into elementary core curriculum. Creative Connections has piloted arts-focused projects in middle and high schools in Irvine, Fullerton, and Santa Ana, including projects in digital art and new media. A new $15,000 Segerstrom Foundation gift will fund expansion into Costa Mesa schools.

Creative Connections provides opportunities for community engagement and hands-on teaching to qualified UCI Arts students. The program also serves as professional development for public school teachers in a sustainable format. Project lesson plans, materials, and resources are provided for future classes.

“Creative Connections is an investment in the future and a commitment to the community,” says Ana Halland, program director. “It exposes children to University life and establishes concrete connections between their classroom experience and future possibility.”

“Creative Connections transforms the public school students and transforms the scholars, who bring their talents and imaginations into the classrooms,” says Halland. Several scholars have gone on to earn education credentials at UCI, often with MAAs in their particular fields.

Last year, 48 scholars received stipends to create classroom projects with a minimum of 25 classroom hours each. Most projects culminated in a performance or showing.

The K-6 projects included dance as a means to language acquisition for English learners, cultural understanding, physical flexibility and strength; studio art incorporated into history and science units; music as a means for understanding physics, acoustics, and mathematical principles, and drama integrated into history, social studies, and language arts studies.

Middle and high school projects included dance choreography, instrumental master classes, the creation and production of one school’s first musical, and an animation course for at-risk high school students.

“An exciting element in efforts to engage community is a series of Reach-Ins, when we bring children and their families to attend UCI Arts events and tour the campus,” Halland says. Last year, students heard jazz musicians Kei Akagi and Friends, toured the art galleries and campus libraries, and attended “Dance Escape” and “Still Life With Iris” performances. Contact Halland at (949) 824-8976, ahalland@uci.edu.

Faculty Join Dance, Drama, Music

Starting in Fall quarter, three new hires have joined the faculty in scenic design, electronic music composition and dance kinesiology.

Luke Hegel-Cantarella has been hired as an assistant professor of dance and head of scene design. He earned a bachelor degree in theater from Northwestern University and an MFA in stage design from Yale School of Drama.

As an active working member of the professional design community since 1995, he has a long resume of scenic design credits at theaters all over the country, including Pittsburgh Public Theater, Yale Repertory Theater, the Atlantic Theater Company, and the Repertory Theater of St. Louis. His credits include costume design, commercial design, film, television, fine art exhibitions, and grant and fellowship awards.

The Off-Broadway musical he designed, “Make Me a Song: The Music of William Fink,” has been nominated for a 2008 Drama Desk Award for Best Musical Revue.

“Luke’s broad range of experience well suits our Department’s design programs, which are strongly based in a theatrical foundation,” says Eli Simon, chair of the Drama Department.

Kojiro Umezaki, a composer and performer of the shakuhachi (traditional Japanese end-blown bamboo flute), has been hired as assistant professor of music (L.C.I.T., Integrated Composition, Improvisation and Technology). He has a bachelor degree in computer science from Lafayette College and an AM in electro-acoustic music from Dartmouth College. He taught new media, digital audio and interactive music systems at Canada’s McGill University since 2000, and has been a visiting instructor at Dartmouth, Lafayette and Tokyo’s Kunitachi College of Music.

His recordings (including original works for shakuhachi with and without electronics) can be heard on the Healthy Boys, Silk Road Project, Sony Classical and Smithsonian/Folkways labels, among others. He has toured with the Silk Road Ensemble, a collective of internationally-renowned musicians, composers, arrangers, visual artists and storytellers.

Umezaki has also worked as a software designer and engineer for music and media applications. His computer programming and music technology skills can contribute to the School’s new research in interactivity and networked performance, says David Brodbeck, chair of the Music Department.

“There will be good opportunities for rapport with other UCI departments, such as Asian-American Studies, Informatics, ACE, and the Center for Asian Studies,” Brodbeck says.

Jeff Russell joins the faculty as assistant professor of dance science. He earned his bachelor and master degrees in physical education with emphasis in sports medicine from Rice University and University of Arizona, respectively. He will defend his PhD dissertation on anatomy and biomechanics of the ankle and foot in classical ballet this fall at the University of Wolverhampton, UK.

Russell was director of performing arts medicine at Belhaven College in Jackson, Mississippi, where he started and directed the Performing Arts Medicine Service. He also led the Joe W. King Orthopedic Institute in Houston and is a certified athletic trainer with the National Athletic Trainers’ Association and a communications consultant to the British Association of Sport Rehabilitators and Trainers.

Acting Dean Allan Terricciano says that Russell’s hire allows the School to resume its leadership position in dance kinesiology and injury prevention, a field pioneered 30 years ago by now-retired Professor Janice Piastino.
Ready to Dance? Dance-IT Shows You How

Build a Dance-IT and they will dance. That’s what John Crawford discovered when he presented his Dance-IT interactive dance machine last spring at the San Francisco Public Library, sponsored by the San Francisco Ballet.

Parents and kids removed their shoes and entered an open-sided kiosk containing video screens showing multiple dance styles. Touching the screen to make a choice, they watched an expert dancer perform Afro-Cuban, Japanese, Kathak, Mexican Folkloric, Tahitian, West African, modern, ballet or hip-hop styles. When the video ended, they pushed a button to record themselves dancing with the expert.

“People loved Dance-IT. They immediately jumped right in, lost their inhibitions and got active with the system,” says Crawford, associate professor of dance and media arts.

“They were captivated by the video images of professional dancers and loved the opportunity to dance along. Some people imitated the on-screen dancers and learned new moves. Others improvised their own spontaneous response to the music.”

Screens outside the kiosk replayed a montage of the dances recorded by visitors. Passersby watched a continual loop featuring everyone who had danced in Dance-IT.

The new media technology combined with dance evoked strong emotions in some participants. “One woman was so moved because Dance-IT brought back memories of a folk dance that she learned in childhood and hadn’t seen performed in years,” Crawford says.

The purpose of Dance-IT is to help people connect with dance by becoming active participants. Children and adults alike can experience a variety of dance styles and learn about different cultures.

Crawford’s, whose media and projection design firm created the Dance-IT kiosk. Also, I’m very proud that Dance-IT features stellar performances from UCI students Summer Bowie, Gabriela Estrada and Armando Yearwood.”

This year Crawford will continue his development of the Dance-IT Network in the new eMedia Studio located in the Calit2 building, a 2,500-square-foot high-tech performance space that is a UCI Arts outpost in the science and engineering complex across campus. The arts will have always been closely linked to technology development, Crawford says. “From the piano and the printing presses to today’s digital media, one of the most important roles of an artist in society is to experiment, follow curiosity, see what can be done with different forms of technology,” he says. “Innovation is important, but only to the extent that it enables us to hold ‘the mirror up to nature’ and perhaps see the world in a new way.

“The arts can be a great showcase for advances in technology. As an artist I feel I have the obligation to show how technology can be used in ways that are life-affirming, to help people connect and become inspired in ways they didn’t expect.”

John Crawford and UCI dancers Justin Keats, Amanda Prince-Lubaway, Ching Ching Wong, Hope Bataclan, and Jay Carbon, with projection from collaboration with UC Santa Cruz.

Dear Colleagues,

It is an honor and a privilege to be writing to all of you in this new role. I am entering my 15th year here at UCI and have always considered myself extraordinarily fortunate to be surrounded by and engaged with such an interesting, passionate and dedicated group of people. I take on this service with enthusiasm and deep commitment, embracing the opportunity before me to support all of you in the way that you have supported me.

Dean Noheima Fernández stepped down on July 15th, after seven years of administrative service, first as Associate Dean and then as Dean. She will take a well-deserved leave of absence after which she will return to the faculty. I will serve as Acting Dean through this academic year while the campus conducts a nation-wide search for a new dean. I am delighted to report that Professor Lisa Naugle has accepted the role of chair for the Dance Department.

I wish to honor Dean Fernández for her accomplishments, contributions and extraordinary dedication to the school during her tenure both as Associate Dean and Dean. She oversaw the dynamic growth of the School’s four departments during this time, and played a key role in their advancement, bringing the school to higher levels of national acclaim for our creative and scholarly endeavors. As an advocate for the School’s programs and mission, Dean Fernández developed and strengthened relationships with community leaders and organizations. She increased the size and scope of the Dean’s Leadership Council and invested a great deal of time and energy in the design and planning process of the new building. Her efforts in this area, in particular, were vital in guaranteeing that the project will be realized in a way that ensures its future value to the arts community both on campus and in Orange County and beyond.

We thank Dean Fernández for her years of service and leadership and extensive contributions to the arts at UCI.

I look forward to this year as Acting Dean and I will be tireless in furthering the mission of the School as an impassioned advocate for the arts, proud of our commitment to excellence, celebratory of our achievements, and excited by our potential. With your help, we will succeed. Thank you for your support during this time of transition.

Also,

Alan Terricciano
Acting Dean
In the Spotlight

Amy Bauer (Music) delivered her paper, “Ligeti’s Wellness Songs,” as part of the music, text and memory session at the American Comparative Literature Association’s annual meeting in Long Beach, Calif. and “The Impossible Charm of Messiaen’s ‘Chromonomies’” at the Messiaen 2008 International Centenary in Birmingham, England.

Music faculty members Haroutune Bedelian and Lorna Griffitt presented violin/piano recitals in Beilstein, Lebanon and Nicosia, Cyprus. Bedelian gave performances and master classes at the Schilcken International Music Festival, Voals are Schilcken, Italy, Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival, Alaska, with UCI Music Scholar Peter Flores violin, and Rio International Chamber Music Festival, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Griffitt also participated in the Schilcken International Music Festival, with UCI students and an alumni. Music scholars Evangeline Wang (MFA candidate) and Natalie Laskowski, Hua Mu Wang, Julie Wang (BAM ‘08), and Grace Liu, who won honorable mention.

Nina Scolnick (Music) and colleague Teresa Delykty in May presented their work on pianists with dystonia at the Ergonomics and Music: 12th Annual Conference held at the University of Manchester, Manchester, UK. The conference was organized by Linda Goodman Smeets and Eric Gentry and was attended by 200 people from all over the world. They presented their research on the effects of piano playing on the human body and the potential for ergonomic design in the piano. Their presentation was well-received and received positive feedback from the audience.

Cliff Faulkner (Drama) directed “Hamlet” in UCI’s Grotowski Barn. An intimate production in the round with only ten cast members, the company featured undergraduate, MFA graduate students, faculty, and a recent PhD alumna in the cast.

Phil Thompson and Cynthia Basich played Claudius and Gertrude, while Hamlet and Ophelia were played by MFA ‘08 graduates Ethan Sawyer and Katie Drachen-Thommen. Polonius and Claudius were played by Greg Uggar (PhD ‘10).

UCI Choirs Score Top Awards in Wales

UC Irvine choral ensembles, under the direction of Joseph Haxton, won top awards at the International Elizeloffed competition in Llangollen, Wales, one of the world’s most prestigious choral competitions. Dozens of choral groups participated from universities and music conservatories representing 34 countries. UC Irvine’s Women’s Chorus won first place in their division, female choirs. They also won prize money for best performance of the pieces tailored of all contestants, “Wellspur,” commissioned by revered Welsh composer Hilary Taw. The Concert Choir placed second in the youth choir competition and sixth in mixed competitions.

Bryan Reynolds directed his play “Wish,” with music by Alan Terricciano, at the Millikin Theater in the Church and Flemish National Theater Festival in Amsterdam. Mike Hooker designed sound and MFA candidate Christa Mathis designed costumes. Reynolds also wrote “Lumping in Fargo,” performed at the UCI Transversal Theater Company’s Poland tour, with these UCI arts colleagues: Mathis and fellow MFA candidate Josh Steadman. Stephanie Phillips and Gary Mack, MFA candidates, directed “The Impossible Charm of Messiaen’s ‘Chromonomies’” at the Messiaen 2008 International Centenary in Birmingham, England.

For Alumni News, see www.arts.uci.edu/alumni

Beall Center Council

Beall Center for Art and Technology, directed by Assistant Dean Eleanore Stewart, is gearing up for a high-energy year, with a new leadership council and co-sponsorship of a public lecture series (see page 4). The six council members will serve two-year terms ending in 2010. Dean Chris Harreton, vice president of strategy and business development, Toshiba America. Other members are: Simone Chapman, CEO, STC Communications; Vivian Goldschmidt, project director, Orange County Animation Project; Daryl G. Polk, vice president, engineering and technology, Advanced Systems, Boeing’s Integrated Defense Systems; Aradale St. George, partner, St. George & Cameron law firm, specializing in intellectual property, technology and business; and Robert Allen Schramen, specialist in high-tech materials and retired chair of the plastics department, California State University at Long Beach.

Autonette LaForge (Studio Art) in March premiered her new media performance work, “Playing the Rapture,” at the Baltimore Theater Project. It involves two characters who create, test, and control a computer game set in a post-Christian Rapture world. The stage environment is largely made up of “machinima” (machine cinema) video projections.
Meyer Sound Gives $300K to Sound Design

I am pleased to report that our sound design program has received a generous $300,000 gift from Meyer Sound Laboratories, a premier audio company with customers and offices worldwide. The gift includes $200,000 for state-of-the-art equipment and $100,000 to establish an endowed fund to help support talented students – the next generation of sound design professionals – to train with Meyer equipment.

Acting Dean Alan Terricciano states that the gift will have a transformational impact on the sound design program, boosting it to higher levels of professional excellence, for the forthcoming sound design studio in the New Media Arts Building, scheduled for completion in 2010. "We now have the best of everything – equipment, facilities and faculty," says Terricciano. "The gift solidifies the school’s relationship with a corporation that is a leader in the industry. MFA candidates can learn sound design on the same equipment that they will use when they work in the industry.

In 1979, John and Helen Meyer established Meyer Sound in Berkeley, Calif. – the first manufacturers to provide high-quality, concert-level loudspeakers, playback and control systems. Today Meyer Sound is one of the most advanced companies in the audio industry, with international offices and a place in the Technology Hall of Fame.

Many thanks to Mia Martinez, our associate director of development. She and Michael Hooker, professor of drama and founder and head of the program, are responsible for engaging the Meyers to the point of philanthropy. Sound design graduates are in one of the most employable fields in the entertainment industry. All 15 students whom Hooker taught at programs that he created at the University of Cincinnati and California Institute of the Arts are employed in the sound design industry.

The sound design program, part of the Department of Drama, accepts only two MFA candidates per year and will have six in the upcoming academic year. The full-time faculty consists of Hooker and Assistant Professor Vincent Olivier, with Scott Collins providing staff support.

The MFA candidates in this three-year program will work on an average of five fully supported productions and several smaller workshops, from dramas to music concerts. Sound design is more than just creating special sound effects for films, theatrical productions and theme park attractions, says Hooker. Sound designers are key components in any production, working closely with directors and stage managers. They compose and record music, reinforce sound, and create mood and ambience for productions.

Hooker worked as senior media designer for Walt Disney Imagineering in all phases of creating sound for attractions in six years at Disney’s new theme parks in Tokyo, Paris and Hong Kong. His notable sound designs include Tokyo DisneySea’s Mermaid Lagoon, an entire underwater home the size of two football fields for heroine Ariel; the film “Cinemagique” starring Martin Short at Walt Disney Studios, Paris, and “Haunted Mansion Holiday” at Tokyo Disneyland.

For Hong Kong Disneyland, Hooker produced an environmental soundscape for Adventureland, featuring sounds of jungle animals, birds and insects; “The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh”, the jungle riverboat cruise, and Taran’s Treehouse.

The National Endowment for the Arts has awarded UCI and Orange County Museum of Art (OCMA) a $15,000 grant to present Contemporary New Media Arts, a series of 15 public lectures and a one-day symposium.

“The lecture series combines the curatorial strengths of the University and Orange County’s contemporary arts museum,” says Eleanor Stewart, Beall Center director. “It will bring added depth and vitality to our teaching and to the community dialogue on the relationships between the fine arts, new media and arts criticism.”

The collaborative project explores the increasingly blurred boundaries between fine art, new media and art criticism. Professional artists from California, New York, Europe, and elsewhere will present free lectures at OCMA, 850 San Clemente Dr., Newport Beach, Calif.

The lecture series reflects the curatorial perspectives of each partner, Beall Center Associate Director David Familian will organize three lectures in conjunction with the Beall Center’s 2008-09 exhibits, “Constant World,” “Scalable Relations” and “EV-02.”

OCMA Deputy Director of Exhibitions and Programs Karen Moss will organize five lectures based on artists from the 2008 California Biennial and The Projected Image. The UCI-OCMA Colloquium, co-organized by Julie Carson, director of University Art Gallery, and Bruce Yonemoto, chair of the Department of Studio Art, will present a bi-weekly series of six lectures featuring artists who work in film and video.

The project culminates with a one-day symposium in May, “Art in the Post-Medium Condition,” organized by the University Art Gallery.

NEA Funds Media Arts Lectures

“Scalable City World” by Sheldon Brown is part of an upcoming Beall Center exhibit.

Development Directions

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