Dean Jill Beck is often asked to peer into the future of ArtsBridge America, the pioneering education program she founded in 1996 and continues to champion. She has two visions of where it could be in a few years. The first is hopeful and bold, with an accelerating number of universities and K-12 students learning about the world and themselves through imagination and creativity. “I see us partnering with more universities, more campuses,” Beck says, brightening. “I see us having a partner institution in most states as we grow a national network (an ambitious expansion which is reflected in the program’s new name, ArtsBridge America) and find all the support we need to keep moving forward.

But the outcome could be different, and she knows it. A statewide budget crisis and funding cuts shadow the entire program. “Of course, there’s another scenario. It could spiral down. The universities could eliminate the programs as higher education ceases to feel responsible for the arts in primary and secondary education, or to feel the need to give university students opportunities to learn through service. That would be disastrous.

“I’m not saying the nation will decline without something like ArtsBridge, but a chance for growth, a chance for young people to become fuller people, will be lost. We’re doing what we can to prevent that.”

The goal is to make clear to administrators, lawmakers and everyone else how essential ArtsBridge is. Beck enjoys explaining how UCI’s gifted arts students—and those at the program’s 16 affiliate universities across the country—take their expertise and enthusiasm and teach at nearby schools in their disciplines, from dance to music to drama to visual and digital arts. Currently 79 UCI ArtsBridge scholars are completing 146 projects at 44 Orange County schools. Throughout the UC system last year, 607 arts students from campuses including UC Berkeley, Davis, Los Angeles and Riverside, among others, led classes at 228 schools in their area.

Whether talking to U.S. senators or local politicians, Beck emphasizes the need for arts education in K-12 schools. Besides the obvious, that the arts give pleasure to youngsters who are eager for self-expression, she believes creativity nurtures problem-solvers and leaders, no matter if they become actors or scientists on their life paths.

“To believe that anyone will be better without imagination is to get it wrong,” says Beck. “We have to train the mind to grapple with any issue, any problem. The arts teach you how to perceive, how to re-combine components … to arrive at a new solution with new methods.”

To document this, UCI’s da Vinci Research Center for Learning Through the Arts (formerly the Center for Arts Research in Education, or CARE) tests students to see how their thinking evolves when exposed to the arts. The results are fascinating, Beck says, noting it is clear youngsters expand their depth and range of perceptions through imaginative study.

A revealing test called the “Look Again!” survey asks students for opinions on a photo series. Some are familiar and obvious (like a family shot), while others are more abstract and strange (one shows what looks like a natural formation with an icy blue section overlapped by a shadowy yellowish pattern). Students tend to be confused by the non-specific picture and maybe “don’t like it” early on, but as their education moves forward, they appreciate the colors, shapes and textures.

“This shows us that they’re gaining a wider aesthetic palate,” Beck explains. “Their eyes, their minds, are opening up.”

It is the insight gathered from that test and other research that Beck and her staff plan to take to policymakers. In fact, Beck says ArtsBridge and the da Vinci Center have increased their research ten-fold over the past year to document the program’s value and potential.

Beck and her staff are confident it will be well-received in coming months. She was heartened by a visit to Washington, D.C. last year when she met with several leaders including conservative Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) who was warm to the ArtsBridge ideal. “He often says that he thinks music has greatly helped him enjoy life,” Beck recalls. “That’s what we have to inspire in people if we are to find support and continue with our successes.”

Of course, when it comes to success, perhaps the most persuasive evidence is with the ArtsBridge scholars and their classrooms. Here are a few of their stories:

GENOVA McDOWELL
World Dance
Centralla Elementary School, Anaheim
Sharon Osako, host teacher

The playground at Centralla Elementary School is a rush of activity as Genoa McDowell directs. 28 fourth graders in a run-through of Los Concheros, an Aztec ceremonial dance. The youngsters wear ceremonial headdresses they’ve fashioned from colored paper and shake soda can rattles filled with pebbles.

Genoa is proud as her charges execute the complicated dance moves with verve and few mistakes. “That was perfect, well done!” shouts Genoa, a senior dance/drama major and three-year veteran of the ArtsBridge program. She is preparing her students to perform Los Concheros continued on page 2.
The dance and digital art project uses dance choreography in the area of vocabulary, they learn the definitions of at least 25 terms, which I reinforce by having them write the words in their journals, showing them videos of different dance styles and demonstrating the terms in dance movement. They’ve even learned to read and write simple Labanotation (a system of symbolic notation for recording dance steps and movement) They’re absolutely fascinated by the idea that a dance can be re-created by anyone who can read this “new” language. Genoa continues, “It excites me to see the class excited about the Aztec dance and wanting to understand how it relates to Los Concheros. They’re interested in their own heritage and traditions. My goal is to keep them excited and learning from the beginning to the end. And I think I have.”

**AMBER KANDARIAN**

**Digital Arts**

Golden Hill Elementary School, Fullerton

Huntington Beach Academy of the Arts

Benyi Waisanen and Jeff Hendrix, host teachers

Amber Kandarian is a busy ArtsBridge scholar. The senior Studio Art major recently participated in the “Imagine Mars Project,” an interactive web-cast at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena. Hosted by “The Science Guy” Bill Nye and a team of scientists, artists and educators, the program asked school children to use arts, science and technology to come up with clever ways to live on Mars.

Amber’s new ArtsBridge classes include working with fourth graders at Golden Hill Elementary on a project designed to study an art form and increase their vocabulary through the use of digital photography. Their work will be part of the exhibition, *Look Again: Digital Photography by ArtsBridge Children*, at UCI’s Beall Center for Art and Technology, June 9-13 (see ArtsBridge Highlights).

Amber is also showing eleven dance students from Huntington Beach Academy of the Arts how to use and ultimately apply sophisticated digital technology to an art form like dance. “What I love about this project is that the students are already artist-in-training,” Amber says. “It’s exciting to introduce them to new technologies and see how it’s opening avenues for their expression.”

The dance and digital art project uses dance choreography in combination with motion capture (the animation technique of capturing movement in 3D space and organizing the data inside a computer) and 3D Studio Max, software that translates the images into a cohesive whole.

“First the students choreographed a dance and created a storyboard for it,” she says. “We’re working in UCI’s motion capture studio where they execute the choreography. Sensors are attached to their bodies which record movement information that is sent as data to the computer. “Then they learn to use the 3D Studio Max program to manipulate and transform [that data in image form] into movement. We’re also experimenting with digital photography and learning to manipulate those images in Photoshop. The final product, Molding Shapes in Space, will be a multimedia presentation incorporating live performance and digital art.”

**ANNA LARSEN**

Music

Diamond Elementary School, Santa Ana

Turtletock Elementary School, Irvine

Carolyn Hashiba, Nathalie Minelles and Amber Smith, host teachers

Teaching comes naturally to Anna Larsen, a third-year vocal performance major working at Diamond and Turtletock elementary schools, “I love teaching,” she says. “It’s exciting to share a love of music with children who have not experienced it.”

Anna is also showing four dance students from Huntington Beach Academy of the Arts how to use Labanotation and Labanotation, a system of symbolic notation for recording dance steps and movement. They’re interested in their own heritage and traditions. Anna says, “They’re moving, smiling and delightfully uninhibited.” Being an ArtsBridge scholar has given her the opportunity to learn a lot about the commitment and discipline it takes to be a good teacher. “I’ve been a thrill for me to share my passion for music with children who have not experienced it.”

Anna hopes to pursue a professional singing career after graduating. But she also sees a teaching credential in her future. “This is something I can see myself doing for the rest of my life.”

**JASMINE YEP**

Social Studies and History

Lowell Elementary School, Santa Ana

Linda Matzger-Campbell, host teacher

“The lion dance is an ancient tradition in China. It’s performed at festivals like the Chinese New Year and is believed to bring good luck and happiness,” explains Jasmine as she helps her Lowell Elementary fourth graders decorate the lion’s head and make the mane out of a plastic laundry basket and flannel cloth.

She continues, smiling as the makshift lion takes shape. “Learning the lion dance is fun because one student handles the head and the other plays the body and tail under the cloth attached to the head. It’s also instructive because they learn about the art and history behind it and even some kung fu moves.”

Jasmine, a senior dance major and third-year ArtsBridge scholar, is teaching the dance as part of the students’ study of California history. Anna Larsen and Jeff Hendrix grew up in Sacramento where I was very involved in Asian arts and culture. I studied ballet and Chinese classical and folk dance. My parents organized festivals for Chinese New Year, which included traditional dances from Japan, Korea, Laos and Vietnam. “California’s heritage is cross-cultural,” she adds. “It is the sum of the history and contributions of many cultures, and I want these children to learn how rich and diverse our heritage is. The majority of the students in my class are Hispanic. Many of them know something about the history of the California missions, but they have very few formal lessons.”
ArtsBridge America Annual Spring Conference

**Building Comprehensive Sustainability: Emerging Strategies for ArtsBridge America**

May 9-10, Beckman Center, University of California, Irvine

The conference will address the growing strength of the ArtsBridge America national network of research universities engaged in locally responsive learning through the arts and highlight substantive research demonstrating the impact of the arts on pupils, teachers and university students. Nationally recognized arts education researchers, James Catterall and Robert Horowitz, and researchers from UCI da Vinci Research Center for Learning through the Arts will present the latest cross-disciplinary research and perspectives on the relationships between the arts and learning. Directors of ArtsBridge America sites in seven states will reflect on their experiences with the growing national ArtsBridge America network, and a program officer from the Federal Department of Education will explore the potential of ArtsBridge in whole-school and education reform. Participants will discuss opportunities for strengthening the network through dissemination to additional states, partnerships with local school districts and the importance of building strong relations with state and federal policymakers.

**World Dance Day**

June 6, hundreds of elementary school children from across Orange County will gather at UCI’s Aldrich Park for World Dance Day. Reflecting the rich and diverse heritage of Orange County, the students will perform folk dances from Mexican, Vietnamese, European and Native American cultures. ArtsBridge World Dance scholars provide pupils and teachers with training in the dances, in addition to comprehensive histories and cultural backgrounds. For many students and parents, attending World Dance Day is their first experience on a university campus. The event makes this experience a celebration of the children’s achievement and presents higher education as close and accessible for these students and their families.

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Janice Gudde Plastino, Professor of Dance and ArtsBridge Mentor, has been named University/College Teacher of the Year for 2002-03 by the National Dance Association. Plastino will present a special ArtsBridge America session for the National Convention of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance in Philadelphia, April 3. The session includes instruction in world dance and discussion of ArtsBridge’s nationwide program.

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**LIFE BY DESIGN: EVERYDAY DIGITAL CULTURE**

April 1-20

*Opening Reception:
Friday, April 1, 6-8 pm
Conference: April 1-10
Organized by UCI students and Antoinette LaFarge

The exhibition features works that move beyond the confines of traditional art practices toward topics that arise from "everyday digital culture". Those in game, interface, media and transportation design, performance and time-based media, architecture, communication and engineering. The three-day conference features papers, discussions, demonstrations and核桃 screenings by digital arts practitioners.

*Conference information:
(949) 824-2787
Hours: Tues.-Sun., 11 am-
5 pm; Thur., 11 am-8 pm.
Admission is free. Information:
(949) 824-6206

**Drama UCI Stage 2**

**THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE**

by Bertolt Brecht

Translated by B. Bartley

Joshua Hsu, director

Thursday, April 10-12, 8 pm
Matinees: Sat., April 12, 2 pm
Humanities Hall Little Theatre, $10/9/8

Brecht’s masterpiece is a saga of compassion and justice. A Brecht’s masterpiece is a saga

in which love is the true test to reveal the natural rights of a child. Only to have the natural mother return to claim her baby and its inheritance. Justius is determined when a wily judge sets a test to reveal the true mother’s love.

**Drama at UCI Mainstage**

**LADY WINDERMERE’S FAN**

by Oscar Wilde

J.R. Sullivan, director

Friday, April 15-18, 8 pm
Saturday, April 16-23, 8 pm
Matinees: Sat., April 15 & Sat., April 16, 2 pm

Claire Trevor Theatre

Full price: $15/14/13 Sat., $10/9/8 Sun.

**CHALK CIRCLE**

4/3: $17/15/9

**PHYSICAL GRAFFITI** New works by undergraduate choreographers

Thursday, May 15-17, 8 pm
Matinees: Sat., May 17, 8 pm

Humanities Hall Little Theatre, $10/9/8

**UCI Chamber Series**

**LES DEUX AMIS**

Richard Savino and John Schneiderman, guitarists & lutes

Saturday, May 17, 8 pm

Winifred Smith Hall, $12/10/8

**BOOKS IN BURST**

Edited by Rob Sexton

Published by Claire Trevor School of the Arts

March 2003, No. 8

UCI Arts Quarterly

UCI Arts Box Office: (949) 824-2787

IN PERSON **UCI Arts Box Office, Claire Trevor School of the Arts, 10 am-3 pm weekdays and one hour before the performance (949) 824-2787
**Briar Event Centers: 10 am-6 pm weekdays (949) 824-5000 (except for IBT events)**

Irvine Barclay Theatre, 10 am-6 pm Mon.-Sat., noon-4 pm, Sun. (949) 654-4646 (for IBT events only)**

UCI Arts Box Office: (949) 824-6206 for reservations.

UCI Opera

**OPERA ONE-ACTS**

Robin Buck, director

Friday, May 31, 8 pm

Winifred Smith Hall, $12/10/8

World Premieres: UCI Professor Bernard Gilmore’s Coffee Date, a one-act opera for soloists and instrumental ensemble, and UCI graduate composer Jason Barabba’s ‘Denis Crisi, a one-act opera for soloists, chorus and instrumental ensemble.

Performed by UCI students and members of Southland Opera.

Drama at UCI Undergraduate Production

**HAIR**

Music by Galt MacDermot

Book and Lyrics by Gerome Ragni and James Rado

Directed by Keith Fowler

Dance production designed by Richard Savino

Saturday, April 19 & Saturday, April 26, 8 pm
Winifred Smith Hall, $11/10/9

Other Events:

**UCI Jazz Orchestra**

All That Jazz

Charles Owens, conductor

Guest Artist: Jazz vocalist Ernie Andrews

Wednesday, June 5, 7 pm

Irvine Barclay Theatre

$12/10/8

**UCI Symphony Orchestra**

All Brahms

Stephen Tucker, conductor

Guest Artists: Marietta Simpson, mezzo-soprano

Friday, June 6, 7 pm

Pre-Concert Conversation: Friday, June 6, 7 pm

Irvine Barclay Theatre

$12/10/8

Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80

Alto Rhapsody for Mezzo-Soprano, Orchestra and Chorus, Op. 53

Winifred Smith Hall, $12/10/8

UCI Jazz Orchestra

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UCI Campus Map:

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