

CONNECT



Claire Trevor School of the Arts Magazine

Arts &
Legacy

UC Irvine

Fall 2025



Former head of ballet David Allan, silhouetted at right, leads a studio rehearsal in this early photo from the UCI Arts Department of Dance.

Photo courtesy of UC Regents

Message from the Dean



Dear UCI Arts community,

2025-26 is a milestone year. UC Irvine celebrates 60 years and the Claire Trevor School of the Arts marks 25 years since its naming. Anniversaries give us the opportunity to pause and reflect. They allow us to honor the visionary artists and advocates who helped shape this school into what it is today — an inclusive and forward-thinking institution of creative excellence. Legacy is not a fixed moment in time; it is an active force. It lives in our students, faculty and alumni who carry forward the transformative power of the arts — whether performing on

international stages, leading inspiring exhibitions or cultivating community on campus.

In this issue, we look back to pioneers like Donald McKayle, Robert Cohen and Claire Trevor herself — individuals whose expertise continues to inspire generations. We share stories about esteemed faculty and alumni artists whose work will be featured in the Hammer Museum's *Made in L.A. 2025* biennial, a testament to our school's impact on the region's evolving visual arts landscape. We celebrate Alison O'Daniel, M.F.A. Art, our 2025 Lauds & Laurels Distinguished Alumni Award honoree, whose powerful work on access and embodiment continues to expand the language of contemporary film and art.

We also reflect on how legacy inspires leadership. Michael Gros, M.F.A. Drama, has spent four decades in arts education and advocacy and recently made a bequest to support future drama students. Dante Puleio, M.F.A. Dance, artistic director of the José Limón Dance Company, preserves Limón's legacy by leading one of modern dance's most iconic institutions. And we highlight the journeys of our recent graduates, like Sloan Ptashek and Abi Mesel, whose worldviews have been shaped by performances and experiences spanning from New York to Dublin.

Finally, we spotlight Aejin Yi, the artist behind this issue's cover collage. Her work, *THE SPACES IN WHICH WE CREATE*, reflects how the everyday architecture of our campus becomes part of the creative process — and how legacy is built, piece by piece, in the present moment.

As we celebrate 60 years of UC Irvine and 25 years of the Claire Trevor School of the Arts, we honor the power of creative legacy to connect generations, fuel new ideas and deepen the impact of the arts at UC Irvine and beyond.

Thank you for being part of this journey and for helping us continue to imagine what's next.

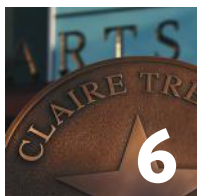
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tiffany Ana López". The script is fluid and cursive, with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tiffany Ana López, Ph.D.
Claire Trevor Dean of the Arts

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CONNECTIONS

A Legacy Worth Celebrating
Anniversaries of UC Irvine and the Claire Trevor School of the Arts offer a moment of reflection and possibility



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CONNECT

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Cover Image

Aejin Yi, *THE SPACES IN WHICH WE CREATE*,
2025, mixed media, courtesy
of the artist.

More information and electronic
copy available at www.arts.uci.edu.
Email questions or comments to
artsmarketing@uci.edu.

Starlit Stages

The Claire Trevor Society (CTS) celebrated summer under the stars with a special evening at UC Irvine's New Swan Shakespeare Festival, where members donned their best western attire for a lively performance of *Much Ado About Nothing* set in the Wild West.

Now in its 13th season, the New Swan Shakespeare Festival continues to excite audiences in its 130-seat, portable Elizabethan-style theater. This year's rotating repertory featured *Much Ado About Nothing*, directed by Eli Simon, alongside *All's Well That Ends Well*, directed by Rob Salas.

By supporting productions like New Swan, CTS members help create opportunities for students and professionals to collaborate, bringing Shakespeare's timeless stories to life.



To learn more about the Claire Trevor Society, visit arts.uci.edu/claire-trevor-society. For membership inquiries, contact Fatima Rizvi-Flores, associate director of development, at frizvi@uci.edu.

Photo: Jesús Enrique López Vargas

IN RETROSPECT

A Legacy **Worth** *Celebrating*

Anniversaries of UC Irvine and the
Claire Trevor School of the Arts offer a
moment of reflection and possibility

By Christine Byrd



Every day, UC Irvine students

and visitors walk by Claire Trevor's Oscar and Emmy awards outside the theater named in her honor — golden reminders of that rare alchemy between artistic excellence and popular success.

This year marks 25 years since the Claire Trevor School of the Arts was renamed for the actor and the 60th anniversary of the founding of UC Irvine — when the department of fine arts was founded with top-notch faculty representing art, dance, drama and music.

"Anniversaries are moments for us to look back and see how we stand within a lineage — who opened the door, and who opened it even wider for us to step through," said Tiffany López, Claire Trevor Dean of the Arts. "They remind us that the evolution of our ideas and our art-making is part of a larger legacy of artists. We get to see what has evolved over the years and what remains as the core of our work: making art that transforms and uplifting voices that matter."

Trevor's seven-decade career spanned theater, radio, television and film, where she earned the title "Queen of Noir" playing opposite such stars as John Wayne, Spencer Tracy and Clark Gable. With less than five minutes on screen as Humphrey Bogart's ex-girlfriend in the 1937 *Dead End*, she earned her first Oscar nod, ultimately winning the Academy Award the following decade for her supporting role in Bogart's *Key Largo*. In 1956, she won the Emmy for best actress in a live episode of *Producer's Showcase*.

Upon retiring, Trevor frequented UC Irvine Arts programs, attending performances and offering encouragement to students. In 1999, she donated to the renovation

of the Village Theater. Now bearing her name, it remains the school's largest venue. Trevor told the crowd gathered in the theater, "I believe in young people today, and the theater is one place to develop your imagination."

Over the years, Trevor's generosity enabled countless imaginations to take flight on stage, in the studio and behind the scenes. After her passing, her sons Peter and Donald Bren made a transformative gift in her honor that created an endowed deanship, three endowed professorships, an educational arts program with local elementary and high schools, and provided crucial discretionary funds, all of which continue to make an impact. Today, Trevor's legacy lives on through others whose work continues to shape, inspire and evolve the arts at UC Irvine.

Image: *Claire Trevor seated in the backyard of her home in Orange County.*



Image: *(left) Claire Trevor Star at UC Irvine.*

Photo: Michelle S. Kim

Nancy Buchanan

Artist and Activist

This summer, *Truthfully*, Nancy Buchanan opened at The Brick in Los Angeles, the first comprehensive retrospective of the UC Irvine alum's decades-long artistic career. To many who know her, it feels like, truthfully, Nancy Buchanan is getting her due.

"As an art student at UC Irvine from 1965 to 1971, Nancy Buchanan emerged from the heart of a dynamic period of experimentation with new media — an experience that deeply informed her continued exploration of the social capacities of art throughout the 1970s," said Kevin Appel, chair of the Department of Art. "I'm especially excited to see her receiving long-overdue recognition in her current exhibition at The Brick. Her contributions are both significant

**"She wants art to
change the world –
and believes it can."**

and richly deserving of this renewed attention."

While earning her 1969 bachelor's and 1971 M.F.A. from UC Irvine, Buchanan was taught by David Hockney, Vija Celmins, Robert Irwin and Larry Bell. However, it was her relationships with fellow graduate alumni that made the deepest impression. She was one of several students who founded F Space, a cooperative gallery where Buchanan staged such provocative pieces as *Hair Transplant*. (F Space was also the site of Chris Burden's notorious 1971

Image: Nancy Buchanan and her dog Baxter, the Irish Wolfhound, 1974.

Courtesy of Nancy Buchanan and The Brick.

Photo: Ransom Rideout



performance *Shoot*.) Ephemera from her early performances and a re-creation of Buchanan's M.F.A. thesis will be on display at The Brick.

"Nancy has never wavered in her dedication to community, activism and art," said Catherine Taft, co-curator of *Truthfully, Nancy Buchanan*. "She is a voracious collaborator and champions the ideas of others alongside her own. I think this is what truly allows her to stand out among her contemporaries."

The 2022 exhibition *how we are in time and space* at the Armory in Pasadena showcased Buchanan's work alongside fellow UC Irvine M.F.A. alumni Marcia Hafif and Barbara T. Smith. How the three women remained in creative conversation with one another over decades intrigued curator Michael Ned Holte, associate dean of the School of Art at CalArts, where Buchanan taught in the School of Film and Video for 24 years.

"Nancy is not just making commentary; she's an activist too. She wants art to change the world — and believes it can," added Holte. "Perhaps that comes out of an idealism in the time and place where she emerged as an artist."

Buchanan's half-century of work spans mediums, often engaging with feminism, nuclear proliferation, economics and environmentalism, and has been shown in exhibitions at MOMA, MOCA, the Centre Pompidou, the Getty Research Institute, four of the Getty-sponsored Pacific Standard Time exhibitions and in the Carnegie International. In 2016, she returned to UC Irvine to organize a piece for *The Art of Performance* in the xMPL.

"Nancy's work feels as relevant and fresh as it did at the time she created it," said Holte. "That's the marker of a great artist."

The retrospective, Truthfully, Nancy Buchanan runs through Sept. 20, 2025. Learn more at the-brick.org.

Donald McKayle Dance's Humanitarian

Donald McKayle was already legendary when he joined the UC Irvine faculty in 1989. By dedicating the last 30 years of his career to the Claire Trevor School of the Arts, the dancer, choreographer and director profoundly shaped the school.

"He was such a treasure for UCI between the steady stream of new work he created and the collaborative energy he brought to the school," said Alan Terricciano, UC Irvine professor of dance, who played piano for at least 500 of McKayle's dance classes and composed scores for some of his later works. "People loved working with him across all departments, and he elevated the reputation of UC Irvine with his presence."

A Primetime Emmy winner and four-time Tony nominee, McKayle brought his stage magic to UC Irvine by choreographing musical productions. Yet McKayle is best known for his concert dance. Today, his works are performed internationally by modern dance troupes such as Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre. Though McKayle's choreography is famously demanding, Dayton Contemporary Dance's artistic director, Debbie Blundin Diggs, remembers him saying, "Anybody can learn the steps, but can they tell the story?"

His early works often told stories of the African American experience, such as *Rainbow 'Round My Shoulder* (1959), about life on a chain gang, and *They Called Her Moses* (1953), about Harriet Tubman, which featured a solo for a young Alvin Ailey. Later, he addressed broader social issues such as police brutality, immigration and refugee crises. McKayle restaged many of his older works for students at UC Irvine and created new pieces using the UCI Etude Ensemble as a choreography lab from 1995 until his passing in 2018.



Image: Donald McKayle choreographing with students in the UCI Arts dance studio.

Photo: Steve Zylus

Among the many current Department of Dance faculty who have performed or taught McKayle's work is acclaimed choreographer Lar Lubovitch, UC Irvine Distinguished Professor of dance, who danced in McKayle's company in the 1950s.

"Donald's memory lives on through the many dancers he helped shape and the colleagues at UCI and elsewhere, who worked with him closely," said Terricciano.

In 2001, McKayle became one of the three inaugural Claire Trevor Professors, and in 2012, he received the Commemorative Claire Trevor Star at a celebrity-studded tribute that raised funds for the Donald McKayle Endowment for Modern Dance. Today, the fund supports scholarships and dance productions, ensuring that even UC Irvine dancers who can never know the beloved artist personally can still be uplifted by his legacy.

"Being a legend means more than individual brilliance. It's about putting

creative excellence into motion and shaping the next generation of artists and change-makers," said López, arts dean. "That's the legacy of giants like McKayle, Cohen, and many others whose influence lives on in our students."

Robert Cohen Dramatic Educator

Many know Robert Cohen's name from the prominent gold lettering on Mesa Road, where a theater now honors him. But his legacy on campus began before any theater stood there, back when UC Irvine drama students performed in a converted classroom in the Humanities building.

Cohen arrived before the campus opened in 1965 as one of two full-time drama faculty for a handful of undergraduates. Over the next 50 years, he helped build the Department of Drama from the ground up while also earning international acclaim as a playwright, director, scholar and critic. Above all else,

“Being a legend means more than individual brilliance. It’s about putting creative excellence into motion and shaping the next generation of artists and change-makers.”

he was an educator, impacting just about every single UC Irvine drama student — and many more around the globe.

He published 24 books, many translated internationally, including *Acting Power* and *Acting One*, which was the most widely used acting textbook in the U.S. by the mid-1990s.

Acting Professionally made a lasting impression on current Department of Drama Chair Joel Veenstra, who first read it as an undergraduate in Michigan.

“A long time later, I was able to come to UCI and meet him, and there was kind of this aura around him of knowledge and legacy — almost a divinity in this space,” said Veenstra, who earned his M.F.A. in drama from UCI in 2011 and later joined the faculty.

Cohen was also a generous collaborator, co-authoring books and producing plays with faculty and graduate students, including Veenstra. Nearly all 26 current drama faculty knew or worked with him, and his influence continues to ripple through the department’s almost 300 students. Even today, incoming undergraduate students read Cohen’s *Theater Brief*, now in its 13th edition.

Over the years, Cohen has directly or indirectly impacted the lives of nearly every alum of the drama department. One story Cohen often told was about a father in the 1970s who called to ask if his son had any real future in acting.



Image: Robert Cohen leading a class at UCI Arts.

“...there was kind of this aura around him of knowledge and legacy — almost a divinity in this space.”

The student, Jon Lovitz, would go on to become a celebrated *Saturday Night Live* actor and comedian.

Cohen became one of the first three Claire Trevor Professors in 2001. He and his wife created their own legacy of giving by establishing the Robert and Lorna Cohen Endowment for Excellence in Drama, which continues to fuel excellence in the department. In 2011, the school's Studio Theatre was renamed in his honor, and in 2016, the couple were honored with a Claire Trevor Commemorative Star — both visible reminders of the Cohens' legacy.

“One of Robert Cohen's strengths that is still in our spirit is an entrepreneurial, innovative pursuit of excellence,” Veenstra said. “He had a track record of turning obstacles into opportunities through creativity — and that's alive and well in our department today.”

H. Colin Slim The Scholarly Musician

H. Colin Slim made a habit of ringing a bell outside his office to rally sluggish students before his early morning classes, so vigorously that the clapper made a hole in it. When he retired in 1994, students mounted the bell, engraved it with their names, and presented it to him with heartfelt messages.

“That was very touching,” Slim recalled in a 2016 interview with UC Irvine Libraries. “That was a very beautiful

experience to know that one had made some impression.”

As founding chair of the Department of Music and UC Irvine's first music faculty member, Slim's impact continues to reverberate, especially in the school's commitment to combining music performance with musicology.

“Colin did his best to establish this idea in that the music faculty and students would be well versed both in music performance and in music history and music research, rather than being single mindedly focused on one or the other,” said David Brodbeck, professor of music who remained close with Slim until his death in 2019. “That remains a significant part of Colin's legacy today.”

A renowned musicologist, Slim wrote about Italian madrigals, motets, and keyboard and lute music of the Renaissance. He published definitive editions of Alessandro Scarlatti's *Massimo Puppieno* and Gioacchino Rossini's *La donna del lago*.

Slim was also a noted scholar of Igor Stravinsky — and knew the composer personally. While a student at the University of British Columbia in 1952, Slim met Stravinsky while performing his *Concerto for Two Pianos* on national Canadian TV. He became an avid collector of the Russian expatriate's materials and eventually published the influential *Stravinsky in the Americas*.

After earning his Ph.D. in music history from Harvard, Slim was teaching at the University of Chicago when he was recruited to the brand-new campus at Irvine, where he would initially be the only music professor.

Slim served as chair of the music department for its first 13 years. Unlike colleagues in dance, drama and art, Slim was more scholar than artist, though he showcased his performance chops, too. He soloed Beethoven's First Piano

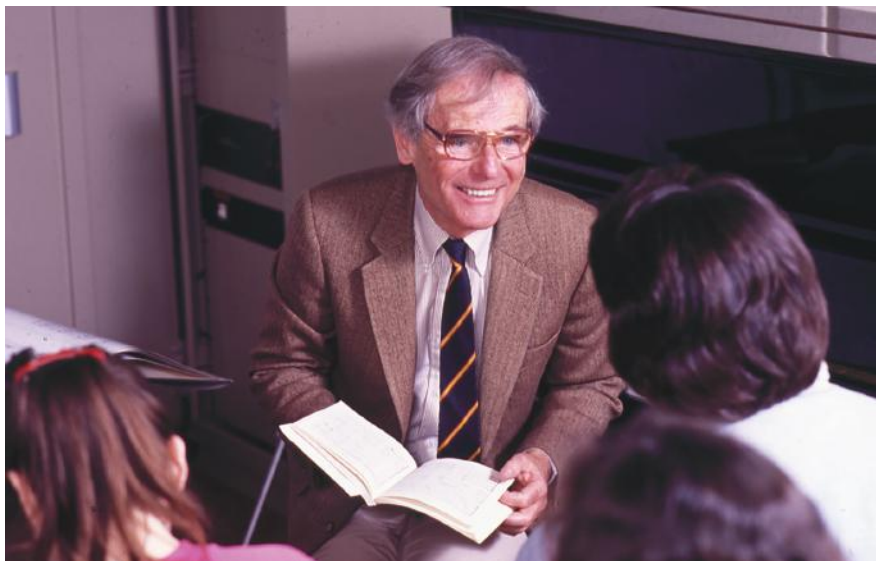


Image: H. Colin Slim with students.

**“People who
invest in the arts ...
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Concerto at UC Irvine and occasionally conducted.

In 1989, Slim was elected president of the American Musicological Society (AMS). Today, thanks to an endowment he created, AMS annually bestows the H. Colin Slim Award for the best musicological article. (An award UC Irvine’s Brodbeck won in 2010.) Slim was elected to the prestigious Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1993.

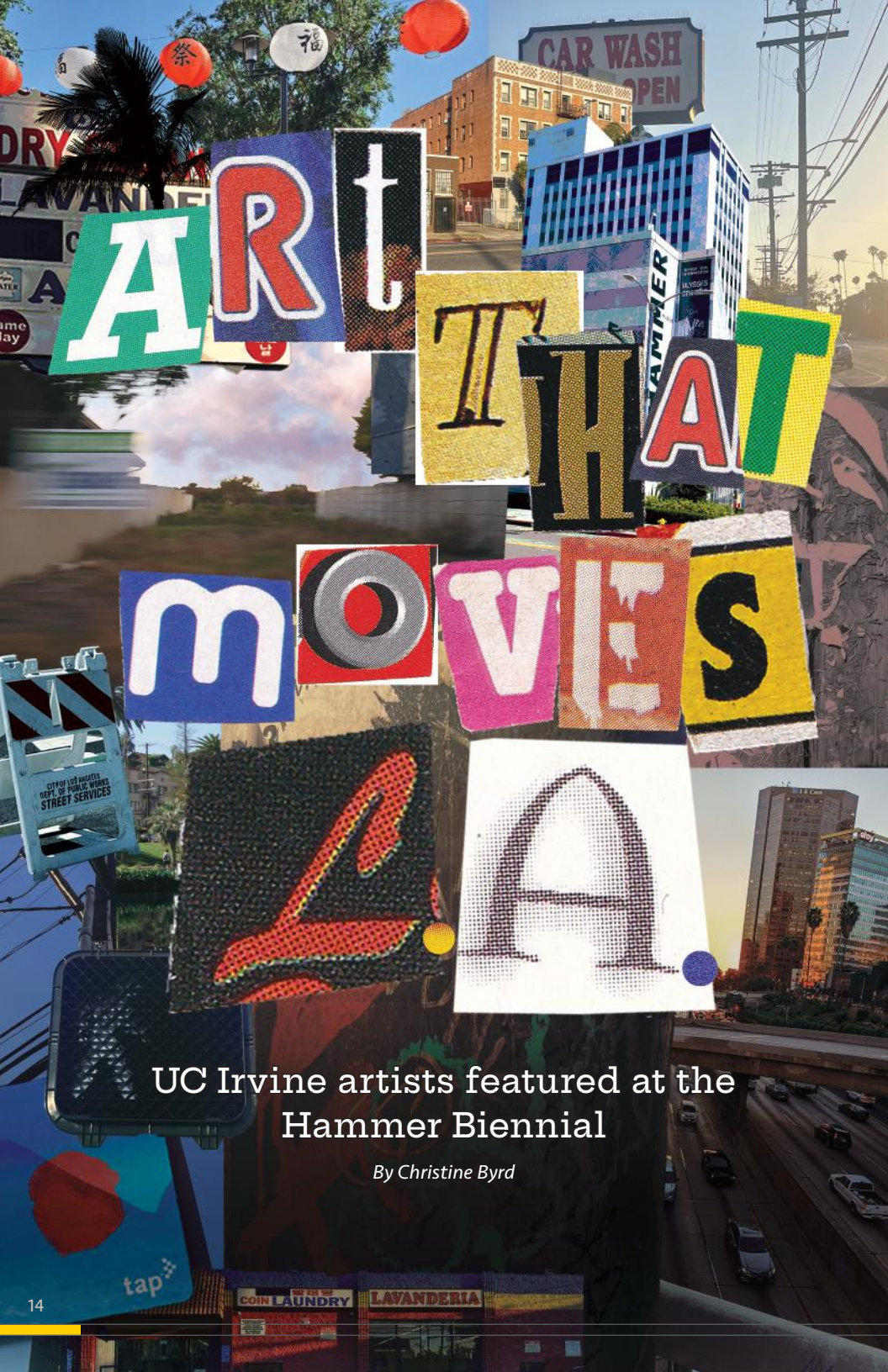
In honor of his parents, who put him in piano lessons at age 4, Slim created the Harry and Marjorie Anne Slim Memorial Scholarship, which today continues his legacy of supporting undergraduate music education at UC Irvine.

Shaping the Future

Slim, Cohen, McKayle, Buchanan and Trevor represent the kind of visionaries whose creativity and generosity have helped define the Claire Trevor School of the Arts. Their spirit endures not only in their work but in the students they mentored, the programs they shaped, and the foundation they laid for future generations to build upon.

“The legacy of artists is deeply connected to the legacy of patrons. People who invest in the arts — by naming a building or endowing a fund — understand that art is transformational,” said López, the arts dean. “Their support shapes what’s possible today and what will be remembered tomorrow.”

To learn more about how you can make a lasting impact at UCI Arts, visit arts.uci.edu/ways-give.



UC Irvine artists featured at the Hammer Biennial

By Christine Byrd

When Made in L.A. 2025 opens at the Hammer Museum on Oct. 5, the highly anticipated biennial will not only offer insight into the City of Angels' artistic impulses but also UC Irvine's growing influence on the region's art scene.

Of the 27 artists selected for *Made in L.A. 2025*, four hail from the Claire Trevor School of the Arts.

"The inclusion of four members of our art department — faculty and alumni — in the upcoming *Made in L.A. 2025* at the Hammer Museum stands as a meaningful testament to the strength of our program," said Kevin Appel, chair of the Department of Art. "It reflects not only the accomplishments of these individuals but also the ongoing rigor and excellence that continue to shape our broader academic and creative community."

Curators Essence Harden and Paulina Pobocha spent a year visiting studios, artist-run venues, commercial galleries, and museums across Los Angeles County. Ultimately, they chose to bypass a traditional theme for the biennial, instead handpicking a multigenerational group of artists who work across media.

"While there are as many ideas circulating through the show as there are materials, an inquiry into one's relationship to the city of Los Angeles animates much of the work we will present," the curators said in a joint statement. "Neither myth nor monolith, this city is many things to many people, and its cacophonous disorder is, perhaps, its most distinguishing feature."

Meet the UCI-affiliated artists helping to shape — and challenge — the creative contours of Los Angeles today.

Amanda Ross-Ho

The year 2025 is shaping up to be a blockbuster for art Professor Amanda Ross-Ho. In January, it was announced

**"To put it very simply,
I'm proud of our
department."**

she would be included in *Made in L.A.* Then in April, she received the 2025 Marciano Art Foundation Artadia Award — a prestigious honor that includes a \$25,000 grant plus invaluable support, including professional development and networking opportunities. This summer, she received the 2025 Trellis Art Fund Milestone Grant, worth \$100,000. Capping it off, she also celebrated a milestone birthday.

"Careers are long, and they ebb and flow in terms of public reception and productivity," said Ross-Ho. "As I enter a new decade, it is a meaningful and exciting year to experience this momentum."

An interdisciplinary artist, Ross-Ho uses painting, photography, textiles, found objects and sculptures, often favoring immersive, large-scale installations. She's keeping details of her new work for the Hammer under wraps — both to preserve the impact of a theatrical reveal and because the piece was still evolving through the summer. Yet followers of her work can expect something that feels both new and familiar — ambitious in scale and fully engaged with the physical space of the gallery.

Ross-Ho has been making art in L.A. for over two decades, ever since moving from Chicago for graduate school. She found the West Coast to be exactly the right home for her artistic practice and feels a sense of community with the

Collage: Emily Zheng



Image: Amanda Ross-Ho, *Frauds for an Inside Job*, 2008. Partial installation view, 2008 California Biennial, Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA. Courtesy of the Orange County Museum of Art.

other artists in the show, including those tied to UC Irvine.

"To put it very simply, I'm proud of our department," said Ross-Ho. "Such substantial UCI representation in this biennial validates the strength of our faculty and helps reinforce to our students that as teachers, mentors and practicing artists, we demand the same excellence of ourselves that we ask of them."

For Ross-Ho, the show is also a snapshot of the artistic lineage shared by many faculty, alumni and students.

"L.A. is both a big town and a little town," said Ross-Ho. "The older artists in this biennial are part of the collective memory of L.A., and I think you'll be able to see their influences or inheritances that cross between the generations of the show. I'm excited to see how that all teases out discursively — that's part of the magic of an exhibition."

Na Mira

Na Mira created *Sugungga (Hello)* for the 2024 Gwangju Biennale in South Korea, reflecting on the history, mythology and legacy of foreign military presence in the country where she grew up. It's fitting then that Los Angeles — home to more Koreans than anywhere else outside of Korea — will be the site of her video installation this year.

"I'm always curious about what happens when my projects have an opportunity to travel to another context, to see what kind of resonances they will have with other histories," said Mira, who lived in Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea before settling in L.A. "It's particularly interesting to be able to show this in Los Angeles and to engage with the diasporic memory in the region, particularly at this moment in time following the impeachment of the South Korean president."

On this side of the Pacific, situated among work by other L.A.-based artists, Mira anticipates that the piece may take on new implications.

"I'm interested in both myth and propaganda, how symbols and signals are transmitted to carry meaning," added Mira. "Yet these codes can become scrambled through time and distance, providing new meaning."

The piece features film captured on an '80s-era camcorder of the exterior wall of the Yongsan Garrison in Seoul, near where Mira grew up, which was the headquarters of the U.S. military presence in Korea until 2018. The second channel shows an inflatable rabbit she found inside the walls of the base. Projected on both sides of a holographic screen, the clarity and position of the images shift as the viewer moves through the room.

The Hammer exhibition is not the first time Mira's work has been shown alongside UC Irvine colleagues. In 2024, shortly before she came to UC Irvine as

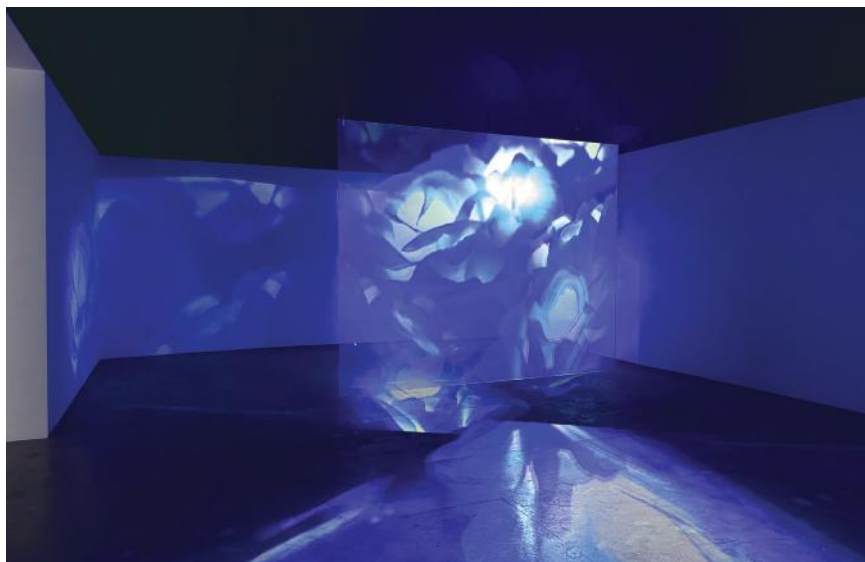
an assistant professor, Mira was included along with Professors Amanda Ross-Ho and Bruce Yonemoto in *Scratching at the Moon* at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

"There has been this kindred collectivity across our faculty that I continue to be inspired by," said Mira. "UCI has a rich history of video art that Bruce has been integral to developing, and I'm honored to be in conversation with him and other colleagues as we continue and evolve that legacy."

Freddy Villalobos

It's not just his art that's made in L.A. Freddy Villalobos was born and raised in the city. When he found out recently that his childhood home was just a few blocks from the notorious 1964 murder of Sam Cooke, he was inspired to make the singer and songwriter the subject of a new work for *Made in L.A. 2025*. The multidisciplinary installation (unnamed at the time of this writing) combines low-frequency sounds, neon signs,

Image: *Na Mira, Sugungga (Hello), 2024, 2-channel Hi8 and HD video, color, sound, holographic glass. Courtesy of Paul Soto Gallery.*



“I truly believe that if I had not gone to Irvine and met those professors, I would not be where I am today.”

traditional fresco painting and a video of the miles-long route up Figueroa Street from the motel where Cooke was shot to the morgue.

“It feels like there’s a strange lineage and history on this one route that holds the past, present and projected future,” Villalobos said of the stretch of road from South L.A. past the gentrified neighborhoods of the Crypto.com Arena. “There’s this tension of overlapping timelines in a space of ambition or mourning, reinvention and forgetting.”

Because he knew L.A. so well, Villalobos’ undergraduate professors at UC Irvine

encouraged him to seek out graduate programs farther afield, which he did, earning his M.F.A. from Yale University in 2021. That time away deepened his appreciation for the subtle indicators of life in L.A., even inspiring him to use slowed down hip hop music known as chopped and screwed, meant to evoke the sound of a car’s booming bass vibrating the vehicles around it.

“I’m excited to show a project like this in a place where everything doesn’t have to be declared,” said Villalobos. “Some things may only be legible to those who are from L.A.”

Since his 2016 graduation, Villalobos has helped with installations for Bruce Yonemoto’s work and stayed in touch with UC Irvine art faculty, including Daniel J. Martinez and Rhea Anastas, Simon Leung and Juli Carson. Being part of *Made in L.A. 2025* with three current faculty has given him reason to consider his own place in the legacy of UC Irvine Arts.

“My experience at UC Irvine gave me a boost to my confidence and encouraged me to see how art could be a place

Image: *Freddy Villalobos, installation view, i seek i seek and can't find but a dream desublimated (2021). Courtesy of the artist.*

Photo: Jackie Furtado





Photo: Jeff McLane

Image: Bruce Yonemoto, *Hanabi Fireworks*, 1999. Courtesy of the artist and O-Town House, Los Angeles.

for discourse and critical thinking,” Villalobos said. “I truly believe that if I had not gone to Irvine and met those professors, I would not be where I am today.”

Bruce Yonemoto

Bruce Yonemoto has been shaping art in Los Angeles for decades. The professor of art officially retired from UC Irvine this spring, but his nearly 50-year creative career is far from over. His inclusion in *Made in L.A. 2025* speaks to his enduring relevance and continued influence on generations of artists, including colleagues and alumni from UCI.

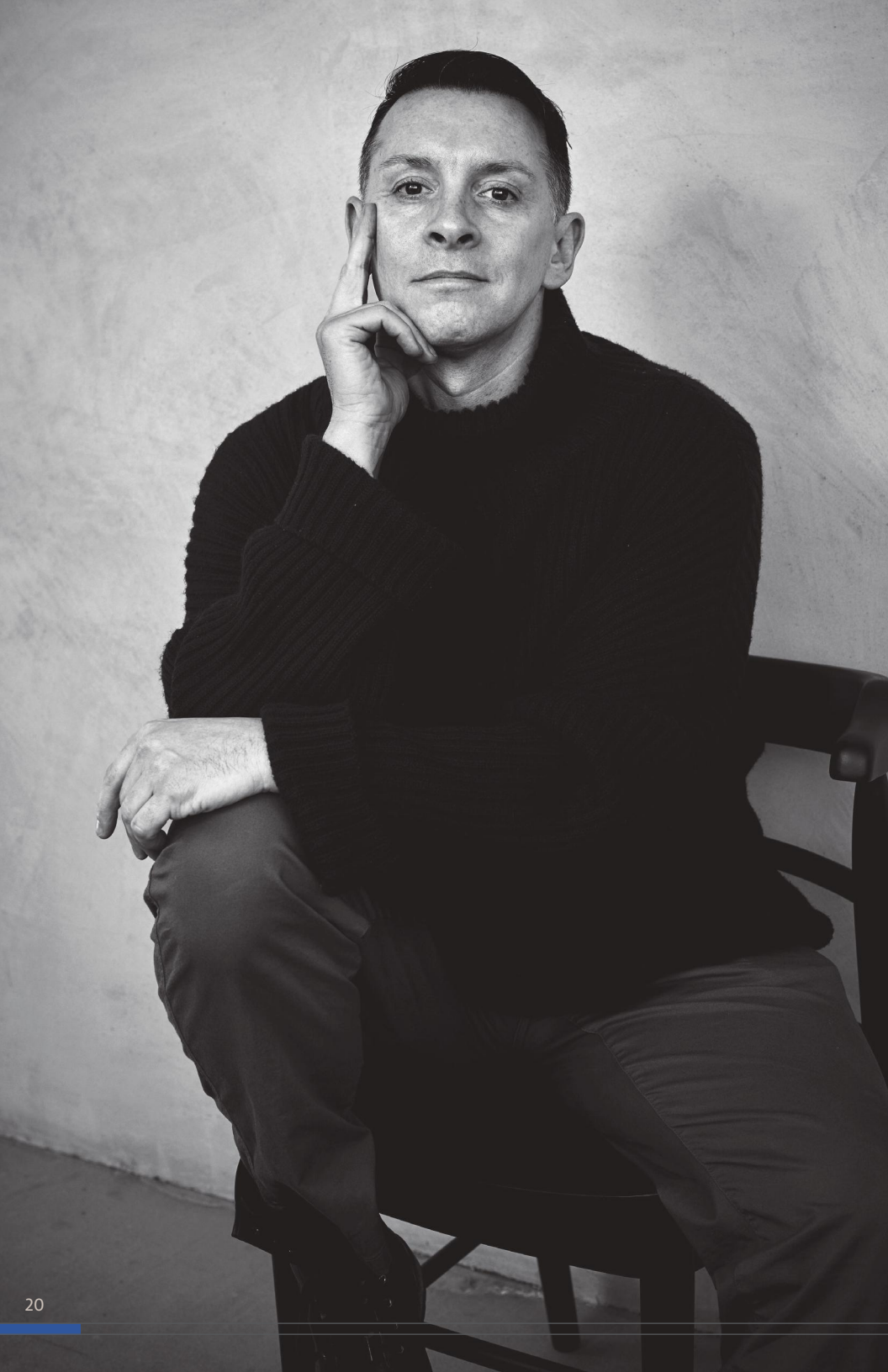
Yonemoto is among the three most senior artists to be featured at the biennial. Born in 1949 to a family incarcerated in Japanese internment camps during World War II, Yonemoto often collaborated with his brother Norman Yonemoto, producing work that explored culture, sexuality, the Japanese American experience and Hollywood.

Yonemoto is known for combining pop culture, politics and personal history

in conceptual work that includes video, digital media, installations and performance. At UC Irvine, he laid the foundation for the department’s video arts curriculum.

In 2022, Yonemoto received a prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship, adding to his plethora of honors including awards and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Film Institute and The Rockefeller Foundation. His work is part of the permanent collections of numerous museums, including the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of Art in New York, the Fonds National d’Art Contemporain and the UCLA Hammer Museum — site of *Made in L.A. 2025*.

For more information about *Made in L.A. 2025*, visit hammer.ucla.edu. To learn more about the art department and upcoming exhibitions, visit art.arts.uci.edu.



Answering the Call to Lead

Dante Puleio (M.F.A. '17) reflects on his path from student to artistic director of the José Limón Dance Company

By Diana Kalaji

If dance showed Dante Puleio

how to move, the José Limón technique taught him how to move through life.

"When I discovered dance, I woke up," said Puleio. "But when I discovered Limón, it woke me up inside the dance world. I understood it physically. And I wanted to live here."

Now in his fifth year as artistic director of the José Limón Dance Company, Puleio is only the sixth person in the company's 75-year history to hold the title. A professional dancer and choreographer who has toured internationally, Puleio credits his time as a graduate student at UC Irvine as a turning point.

"I wouldn't be in this job had I not had my experience at Irvine," said Puleio. "The writing I did, the research I did, the relationships I built — all of it laid the groundwork."

His M.F.A. thesis, *Contextualizing Mid-Century Modern Dance for the Contemporary Audience*, became the foundation of the presentation he gave to the Limón board of directors when he applied for the role.

Image: Dante Puleio

Photo: Kelly Puleio

Raised in central New Jersey, Puleio was bopping around to Donna Summer before he could talk — dancing to "Bad Girls" and "She Works Hard for the Money." But it wasn't until a bar mitzvah at age 13, dancing to Deee-Lite's "Groove Is in the Heart," that he realized others saw what he felt.

"People kept coming up to me saying, 'You're such a great dancer,'" said Puleio.

At the time, dance wasn't part of his plan. He entered college as a psychology major and a theater minor, taking a dance class only to fulfill a requirement. But a professor, Kristin Degnan, pulled him aside.

"She was like, 'You should be doing this,'" said Puleio. "I called my parents, told them I wanted to pursue dance, and they said, 'Do it now. You can be a doctor later.'"

Puleio later trained at Laban in London and the Northern School of Contemporary Dance in Leeds and earned his Limón certification at New York University. After college, he joined the Carolyn Dorfman Dance Company in New York City while his company was

performing at the Limón Studios, and he was offered an audition at the Limón Dance Company.

"Artistic director Carla Maxwell pulled me aside and taught me a solo from *Missa Brevis* for 25 minutes," said Puleio. "Then she offered me a job."

But after years of success — including dancing for the queen of Holland and appearing on the cover of the *New York Times* arts section — Puleio hit a wall.

"The same day that the *Times* came out, Verizon called saying they'd shut off my

**"There was this
incongruity.
I had made it, but
I couldn't make
ends meet."**

phone if I didn't pay," said Puleio. "There was this incongruity. I had made it, but I couldn't make ends meet."



Image: (left to right) Kimiye Corwin, Dante Puleio and Robert Regala perform *Crossroads* in 2000. Choreography by Donald McKayle for the José Limón Dance Company. Courtesy of the José Limón Dance Company.

Photo: Beatriz Schiller

Unsure what was next, Puleio decided to apply to top M.F.A. programs, with UC Irvine standing out — not just for its faculty but because it was home to contemporary dance legend Donald McKayle. McKayle was also the first choreographer Puleio worked with at Limón.

"Starting my career with Donald and finishing my education with him felt intentional and purposeful," said Puleio. "It felt like a calling card."

At UC Irvine, Puleio found mentors in Professors Loretta Livingston and Mary Corey, who encouraged him to explore the questions that kept pulling at him: Why did modern dance lose its accessibility? What could be done to reconnect it with today's audiences?

Now, as artistic director, Puleio carries those questions into his stewardship of the Limón Dance Company, updating Limón's work with care while ensuring dancers can see themselves in the repertory.

"We live in a very different time," said Puleio. "We have nonbinary identifying dancers in the company, and it's important that who is in my audience is reflected onstage."

The ensemble recently restaged *La Malinche*, Limón's first work for the company, using original costumes and music in a historically informed reconstruction. Puleio calls it a tribute to the power of resilience — both Limón's and his own.

"The Limón technique is about falling and recovering, and our relationship to gravity," said Puleio. "The metaphor of that goes beyond what happens in the studio."

On Sept. 25, Puleio returns to UC Irvine with the company for a performance at the Irvine Barclay Theatre, nearly a decade after he first arrived as a graduate student.

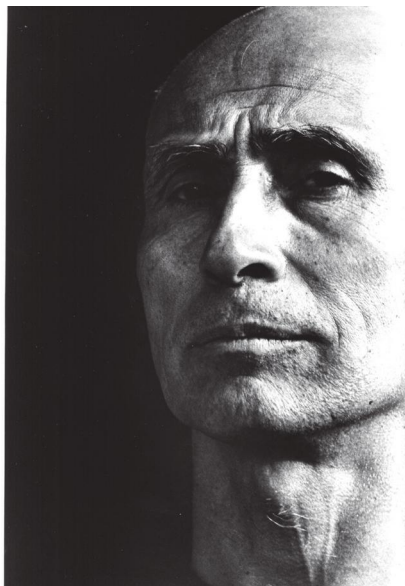


Image: José Limón, founder of the José Limón Dance Company. Courtesy of the José Limón Dance Company.

Photo: Paul Draper

"It feels so exciting," said Puleio. "It's like, hey, I did it. I did the thing education is supposed to do."

He hopes the performance reminds audiences of Limón's enduring relevance as a queer Mexican American immigrant who created an internationally studied dance technique in the 1950s.

"If I can steward this organization and do what José did with his company and hand that off to someone, then I will have done my job," said Puleio. "I will have fulfilled my potential as the bearer of this legacy."

To learn more about the José Limón Dance Company, visit limon.nyc. For tickets to the José Limón Dance Company performance at the Irvine Barclay Theatre, visit thebarclay.org.



Making Space to Redefine

Alison O'Daniel (M.F.A. '10) is changing the game in art and film

By Richard Chang

Alison O'Daniel (M.F.A. art, 2010) has placed Deaf culture at the focal point in her art and film work, and that has positioned her at the forefront of an international cultural movement.

The visual artist and filmmaker won a Guggenheim Fellowship in film and video in 2022. That fellowship money allowed her to finish *The Tuba Thieves*, an independent film that blends documentary with fictional feature-film elements. The movie premiered at the 2023 Sundance Film Festival and won widespread critical acclaim, including an award for best sound design at the 2023 Athens International Film and Video Festival.

O'Daniel is also a college educator, and after teaching art and filmmaking for a number of years at California College of the Arts in San Francisco, she begins an appointment this fall as the Suraj Israni Associate Professor of Cinematic Arts at UC San Diego.

For her work in the visual arts and in film, she will receive a 2025 Lauds & Laurels Distinguished Alumni Award from UC Irvine on Nov. 7. Honoring exceptional alumni and community members is

Image: (above) Alison O' Daniel, *All Component Parts (Listeners)*, Installation at Centre d'Art Contemporain Passerelle, Brest, France, 2016.

Photo: Aurelian Mole



UC Irvine's longest running tradition, and her award also coincides with the 25th anniversary of the Claire Trevor School of the Arts and 60 years of UC Irvine.

"I'm really honored to receive it," said O'Daniel. "I'm grateful to still have the opportunity to reflect on how impactful my time at UCI was, and continues to be, and so I'm very touched by it."

Things haven't always been easy for O'Daniel, who has struggled all her life with hearing and sound. She has also faced the typical challenges of being a visual artist, trying to raise money for films and making it in the world of academia.

"When I got out of grad school, there was a dicey feeling for the first few years," said O'Daniel. "It was precarious. But then I hit the ground running. I was focused, and I have felt it all kind of pay off in the last few years in a way that's been really, deeply gratifying."

O'Daniel's art and film work explores sound, access and complex embodiment through d/Deaf/Hard of Hearing

experiences. She has shown her sculptural, installation and video work throughout Europe, Asia and the United States and participated in the *Made in L.A. 2018* biennial at the Hammer Museum. She has also shown at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis and the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery. She is represented by Commonwealth and Council, a contemporary art gallery located in Koreatown, L.A.

Through her film work, O'Daniel is known internationally for her innovative use of captions, describing sounds and movement in ways that haven't quite been done before.

"I've been deaf or hard of hearing my whole life, so when I realized I could kind of focus on the sound, that was a big shift for me," said O'Daniel. "I had a series of very empowering experiences



Image: Alison O'Daniel

Photo: Caitlin Dennis

that allowed me to recognize the value of being deaf and hard of hearing and gave me expansive ideas about sound, hearing and listening from an embodied, physical space, because often I'm trying to free myself literally from my ears and focus on vibration, or sub-bass frequency, or visual details."

Looking back, she deeply values what she learned and experienced at UC Irvine, especially her interactions with the Department of Art faculty.

"I very much connected with the painters — Monica Majoli, Kevin Appel — he was dear to me conceptually in my work," said O'Daniel. "Simon Leung was faculty across the entire program and works in five different mediums, which was inspiring. Bruce Yonemoto totally changed my life. I got to practice a bunch of film strategies with him. He also outfitted the film program with a bunch of equipment. I'm making films really because of him."

She also credits Juli Carson for giving her a foundation in theory and ideas, and supporting her decision to become an educator. "I was always very challenged

Image: *Alison O'Daniel, Still from The Tuba Thieves, 2023.*

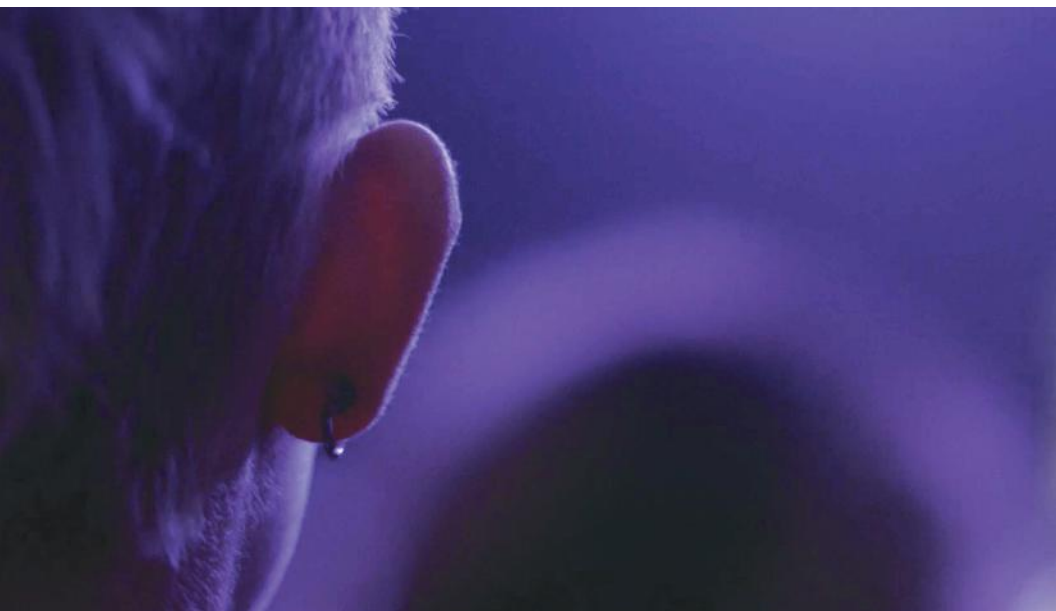
“...when I realized
I could kind of
focus on the sound,
that was a big shift
for me.”

by her in a good way," said O'Daniel. "She gave me a boost to start teaching."

O'Daniel keeps busy with her film, visual art and academic work while also carving a space in what she calls "a contemporary disability justice movement."

"I'm excited to be working alongside a lot of these artists, whom I would describe as being very empowered," said O'Daniel. "We benefit from disability activists who came before us, and there's something about the way that all of us are taking up space in the art scene, in the global art community."

O'Daniel is working on a new film about "the weaponization of sound." She also continues to work on software called Opening Captions that she has been developing with help from other



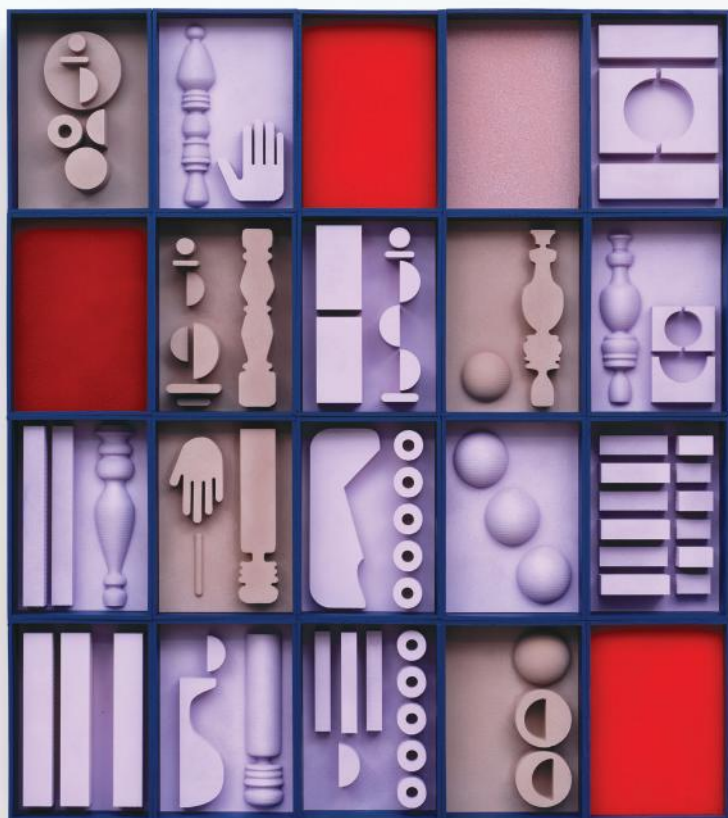


Photo: Derek Howard

Image: *Alison O' Daniel, The Elephant Test, 2024. Courtesy of the artist and Commonwealth and Council.*

Photo: Paul Salveson

academic institutions. Her work has revolutionized the way captions are being used in film and video and is capturing the attention of filmmakers and scholars worldwide.

"It's like when they put the cut in the curb for disabled people, it actually wound up benefiting all. That's what I'd like to do."

To learn more about Alison O'Daniel, visit alisonodaniel.com. To learn more about *Lauds & Laurels*, visit engage.alumni.uci.edu.

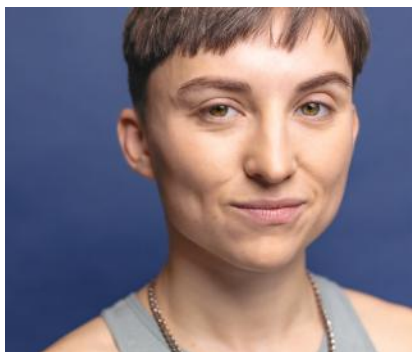
Class Notes



Department of Art alumna **Stacy Kranitz (M.F.A., '14)** is a documentary photographer whose work blends investigative journalism and fine art. She was awarded the 2025 Pulitzer Prize for Public Service for her contributions to *Life of the Mother*, a ProPublica series examining the consequences of restrictive abortion laws. Her photo essay, *The Year After a Denied Abortion*, served as a central visual element of the investigation. Kranitz received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2020 and has had solo exhibitions in France, Italy and Tennessee. Her photographs are held in the collections of Harvard and Duke and have appeared in The New York Times and Vanity Fair.



After earning an M.F.A. from the Department of Art, **Noritaka Minami (M.F.A., '11)** has established a career as a photographer and educator. Minami's work was recently featured in *The Many Lives of the Nakagin Capsule Tower* at The Museum of Modern Art in New York, highlighting his decade-long documentation of the landmark building. The project, which began while he was a graduate student at UC Irvine, earned him the Architectural Book Award from the Deutsches Architekturmuseum. Minami is an associate professor at Loyola University Chicago, with work held in the collections of SFMOMA and the Center for Photography at Woodstock.



Since graduating from the Department of Drama with an emphasis in acting, **Soph Metcalf (M.F.A., '21)** made their Off-Broadway debut in *Machinal* at Manhattan Theatre Club and continues to build their career in New York as an actor, singer, musician and physical theater artist. Regional theater credits include Fool in *King Lear* (Santa Cruz Shakespeare), Feste in *Twelfth Night* (The Acting Company) and Ariel in *The Tempest* (Utah Shakespeare Festival).



Maple Lam (B.A., '04) is an award-winning author and illustrator whose latest middle-grade graphic novel, *Monkey King and the World of Myths: The Battle of the Beasts*, was recently published by Penguin Random House. Lam has published nine books with major publishers and credits UCI with shaping her creative path — from her first paid comics to an internship that launched her illustration career.



Jessica Leyva (B.F.A., '19) is a professional dance artist and non-profit leader based in Chicago. A Department of Dance graduate, Leyva received the 2025 Dance/USA Emerging Leader Award for her work as executive director of Chicago Dance Crash. Leyva also serves as an institutional giving consultant with Artistic Fundraising Group. Leyva is classically trained in ballet and contemporary dance and proudly represents Chicana women in performance and arts administration.

For UCI Alumni resources, visit engage.alumni.uci.edu

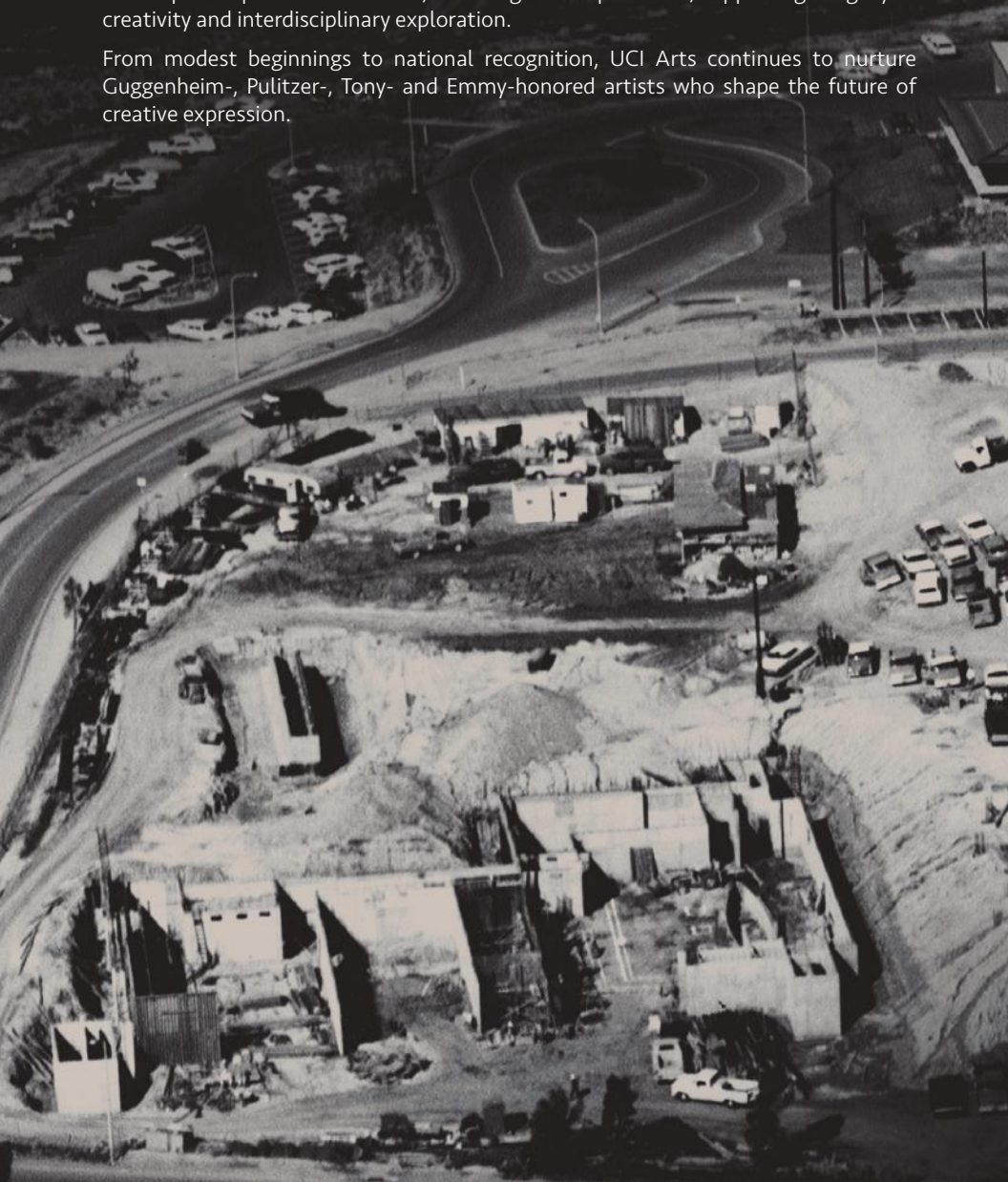
Are you an Arts Alum? Learn ways to stay connected at www.arts.uci.edu/alumni.
Questions or stories? Contact artsalumni@uci.edu.

Where the Arts Took Root

This rare aerial view from 1970 captures the earliest stages of construction for what would become UC Irvine's Claire Trevor School of the Arts. Taken just five years after the university's founding, the image shows a sparsely built landscape — an arts village still in formation. Today, more than five decades later, that early vision has expanded into a thriving artistic ecosystem.

UCI Arts now encompasses 25 facilities across campus, including 14 buildings in the main Arts Complex and 11 additional sites near key campus landmarks. Together, these spaces span more than 182,000 assignable square feet, supporting a legacy of creativity and interdisciplinary exploration.

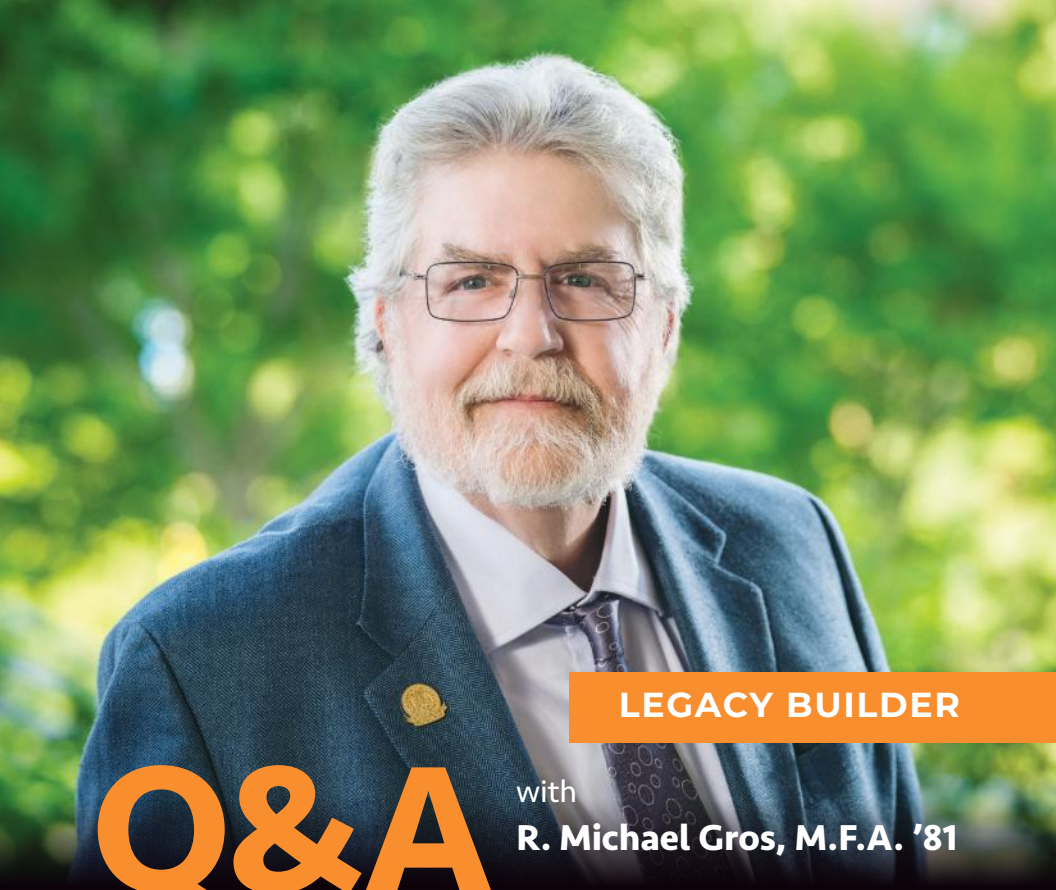
From modest beginnings to national recognition, UCI Arts continues to nurture Guggenheim-, Pulitzer-, Tony- and Emmy-honored artists who shape the future of creative expression.





*Image courtesy of UCI Libraries, Special Collections and Archives.
Learn more at special.lib.uci.edu.*

To read our Land Acknowledgment, visit arts.uci.edu/land-acknowledgement.



LEGACY BUILDER

Q&A

with

R. Michael Gros, M.F.A. '81

For over 40 years, R. Michael Gros, M.F.A. '81 has been a director, producer, artistic director, educator and arts advocate. He is a professor emeritus of Santa Barbara City College and has served as co-artistic director of PlayFest Santa Barbara and artistic director of PCPA Theaterfest. Recently, he made a bequest to support future UC Irvine drama students.

Q. What legacy has your M.F.A. from UC Irvine created in your own life?

RMG: My professional career could not have happened without my UC Irvine education. My preparation as a director was exceptional, but it also trained me to think critically about the place of the arts in our society, my own role within the field, and ultimately how I intend to give back.

Q. How was the late Robert Cohen, Claire Trevor Professor of Drama Emeritus, influential to you?

RMG: Robert remained a mentor, a friend, a colleague for nearly 50 years. He helped me and Jeff Meek '83 develop PlayFest Santa Barbara, and he was the person I called for advice when I was getting disillusioned working in TV. He always encouraged my academic and professional endeavors unhesitatingly.

Q. Do you have a favorite anecdote about him?

RMG: Here's how I met Bob — he was "Bob" my first year and later "Robert." The weekend before school began, my friends said, "Hey, the department's going to have a softball game, so come on down." My dad was a Little League coach, and I had played catcher for seven years and coached baseball as well, so I was very aggressive on the ball field. I hit a ground ball, and I'm booking it down to first base. Robert was playing first base, standing on the bag, and I knocked him on his can. Literally sent him flying. And at that moment I thought, "Oh, my God, I'm going to get kicked out of grad school before I've even had my first day."

Q. What did he do?

RMG: Imagine, I'm standing up and I'm looking down at him. He's still laying there, mad. Then, he takes one deep breath, exhales slowly and says, "I was on the bag. That was a fair hit." And I helped him up.

Q. Today's students will never get to meet Robert Cohen, but is there one thing you'd want to pass on to them about him?

RMG: He was demanding. He was supportive. He was passionate. His legacy to all the students he personally trained was his side coaching. He interrupts and challenges you throughout a monologue, which can be incredibly annoying. But by the time you are done, your monologue is transformed. It was tremendously impactful, and a technique all of us who knew him still use.

Q. Looking at the decades since you graduated, what are you most proud of in terms of how arts education at UC Irvine has evolved?

RMG: When I graduated, we were sent out to go make art, go start your own theater company. Today, drama students are much more informed about professional societies, how to put together a cover letter, how to get a job. They are taught so many more aspects of show business. The arts side is about putting on a show, but if you don't take care of the business, there will be no second show. Having a career in the arts means being able to do it again and again.

Q. You've established a planned gift that will support drama students. Why was it important to you to leave a legacy at UCI Arts with this gift that will champion future dramatic artists?

RMG: I didn't have a lot of support from my family. Student loans and my teaching assistantship got me through school, but it was a \$500 grant from the student body association that made my thesis project something completely different than it would have been. My gift will support a student's professional development or creative research or project, and the amount may not be life-changing, but it might transform a student's creative experience directing a show, as it did for me.

To learn more about ways to support CTSA, contact Sarah Strozza, executive director of development, at (949) 824-0629 or sstrozza@uci.edu.





World Stages

Two recent graduates channel their training across the globe's most exciting stages

By Diana Kalaji

For Abigail Mesel (M.F.A. music '25) and Sloane Ptashek (B.F.A. music theatre '25), studying at UC Irvine Claire Trevor School of the Arts meant having access to the world's most exciting stages, from Broadway's newest premieres to historic cathedrals in Ireland. The two artists, who recently graduated, are not only rising performers in their fields but thoughtful stewards of UC Irvine's creative legacy, carrying forward the vision of their faculty mentors and pushing the boundaries of where performance can take them.

Onstage Breakthroughs

For Sloane Ptashek, a recent B.F.A. music theatre graduate from the Department of Drama, musical theater was never just a pastime. Raised by a mother who played the viola and danced hula, she was surrounded by music and performance from an early age.

"I grew up in New York, going to Broadway shows," said Ptashek. "I saw *Wicked* when I was 9, and years later, I got to meet Idina Menzel at a book signing in 2014. I never imagined I'd meet her again years later while at UC Irvine."

She began voice lessons at 8, performed in school productions and found her calling onstage. When it came time for college, UC Irvine stood out for its rigorous training and the chance to build a well-rounded education.

"I liked that I could take classes outside the arts, and that I'd be surrounded by students who cared about more than just making it in the industry," said Ptashek.

At UCI Arts she found both challenge and community. "The training is no joke," said Ptashek, crediting mentor Professor Myrona DeLaney for refining her acting and vocal technique, and choreographer Professor Andrew Palermo, a performer in the original cast of *Wicked*, for broadening her vision of a professional path.

DeLaney directed her in *9 to 5: The Musical* at the Irvine Barclay Theatre, where Ptashek starred as Violet. The role proved pivotal — not only

Image: UCI Chamber Singers performing in the Igreja de São Roque in Lisbon, Portugal.



Photo: Jeanine Hill

Image: (left to right) Ashlyn Filippone, Sloan Ptashek and Ruby Lapeyre in a performance of *9 to 5: The Musical* in the Irvine Barclay Theatre.

artistically but professionally, leading to a connection with the agent who saw her in the show.

"Violet is the kind of woman I want to be; she's tenacious and self-assured," said Ptashek. "That show meant everything to me."

Soon after, she joined the department's New York Satellite Program, a full-credit, four-week immersion that places students in Manhattan for industry training. Ptashek took dance and acting classes, attended professional workshops and saw live performances — all while living with fellow students.

"It was surreal," said Ptashek. "I lived with my best friends in a tiny apartment, took classes with Broadway professionals and

saw 15 shows. I met Idina Menzel when we came back to perform for our B.F.A. showcase, and she generously spoke to us for almost an hour about the industry and her recent production, *Redwood*. It was a full-circle moment."

Now preparing to return home to New York City, Ptashek is eager to begin auditioning. As a queer, Filipina, Jewish actor, she's committed to representation onstage and hopes to one day originate a role of her own.

"I didn't always see people who looked like me on Broadway," said Ptashek. "It's powerful to see yourself reflected onstage. Now, I want to help make that space for others."



Image: (left to right) Idina Menzel and Sloan Ptashek in 2014 and together again in 2025. Courtesy of Sloan Ptashek.

**“It’s powerful to see
yourself reflected
onstage.”**

As Ptashek steps into the next chapter of her life, she carries not only professional accolades but a deep belief in the power of performance — and in the communities that shaped her.

“I’ve learned that you don’t have to wait until you’ve made it to start creating your own legacy,” said Ptashek. “You just have to begin.”

Familial Harmony

Raised in a musical household in the Bay Area, Abigail Mesel sang before she could talk and grew up harmonizing with her father at the piano.

“He was self-taught and could play anything by ear,” said Mesel. “We would sing along to Disney songs and start making up harmonies.”

With a mother who played all the woodwinds and siblings who beatboxed, played cello and picked up the baritone horn, Mesel was immersed in music from an early age — even if she didn’t initially see a future in it.

In high school, she was preparing to study chemistry until a conductor from the I Sing Silicon Valley choir encouraged her to consider voice more seriously. She enrolled at UC Irvine, double majoring in music and chemistry. When deciding to pursue a master’s degree, Mesel found herself drawn to the Department of Music’s faculty and vocal training.

“It felt like the right place to be,” said Mesel. “Professor Darryl Taylor and Professor Irene Messoloras supported me in ways I’d never imagined. I wanted to keep learning from them.”



Image: Abigail Mesel

Photo: Jeanine Hill

Mesel went on to complete both her undergraduate and graduate degrees at UC Irvine, earning recognition as a soloist and ensemble singer with the UCI Chamber Singers. She traveled internationally with the ensemble, performing at Kylemore Abbey in Ireland, *Twilight Mass* at Carnegie Hall and most recently in Portugal. Each performance, she said, was both a cultural and artistic exchange.

“You understand that music is a global language,” said Mesel. “And each place you perform, it changes you a little, and you carry that into the next piece.”

Of all her travels, Ireland left a lasting impression. She recalled the electrifying acoustics of Kylemore Abbey, where the music filled the space with unexpected resonance. “When we opened our mouths for the very first note of our first song, which is a big chord, it created a big boom in the small church,” said Mesel. “By the end of the concert, the entire church was packed. It was beautiful.”



Image: (left to right) Abigail Mesel and Professor Irene Messoloras inside the Igreja de São Roque in Lisbon, Portugal.

“UC Irvine gave me the tools and the confidence.”

Though she deeply values her time in choirs and chamber groups, Mesel has continued to expand her solo repertoire with encouragement from Taylor. She performed at the Barcelona Festival of Song and recently sang the role of Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus* in Weimar, Germany.

“Professor Taylor pushed me to explore international opportunities as a soloist,” said Mesel. “It’s not just about performance; it’s about connecting cultures through art.”

Now able to sing in more than 10 languages, Mesel hopes to join a young artist program in Europe, where public funding often helps singers build their careers.

“UC Irvine gave me the tools and the confidence,” said Mesel. “More than that, it gave me people who believe in me.”

To learn more about the Department of Music, visit music.arts.uci.edu. To learn more about the Department of Drama, visit drama.arts.uci.edu.

SEASON EVENTS — FALL 2025



Tickets & Info



Scan the QR code to view upcoming events, purchase tickets and explore the full fall season lineup.
arts.uci.edu/tickets | artstix@uci.edu | (949) 824-2787

2025-26 Season-At-A-Glance

Fall 2025

Sept. 13-Oct. 11	<i>25 Years at Beall Center for Art + Technology</i>	BC
Sept. 27-Dec. 13*	<i>The Inoperative Community: Exhibition X Practice, UC Irvine 1965-2025</i>	UAG, CAC, R
Oct. 1*	Joint Music Faculty Recital: <i>Legacy of Sound</i>	WSH
Oct. 26-Dec. 28*	<i>25 Years at Beall Center for Art + Technology</i>	GPG
Oct. 29	Music Artist Series <i>Memory of the Future:</i> Mari Kimura	WSH ●
Oct. 31*	UCI Symphony Orchestra Express	WSH
Nov. 12*	UCI Jazz Combos	WSH
Nov. 15-Feb. 28*	<i>Against Outer Space</i>	BC
Nov. 20-23	<i>Little Women: The Broadway Musical</i>	IBT
Nov. 25	UCI Symphony Orchestra	IBT
Dec. 1	UCI Wind Ensemble	WSH ●
Dec. 3	UCI Jazz Orchestra	WSH ●
Dec. 4*	Tenth Thursday Undergraduate Student Exhibition	AC
Dec. 4*	UC Irvine Choral Concert: <i>Sounds of the Season</i>	BCH
Dec. 4-6	<i>New Slate 2025</i>	CTT ●
Dec. 5-13*	<i>The Green Knight</i>	xMPL
Dec. 6*	UCI Opera Workshop	WSH
Dec. 8*	UCI Chamber Music Concert	WSH

Winter 2026

Through Feb. 28*	<i>Against Outer Space</i>	BC
Jan. 24-April 4*	<i>The Neganthropocene (part 1)</i>	CAC
Jan. 31*	<i>Listen to the Motion: Works by ICIT Ph.D. Students</i>	xMPL
Feb. 7-8	Music Artist Series <i>Sounding Iran: Musical Pasts, Presents and Futures</i>	WSH ●
Feb. 7-28*	M.F.A. 2nd Year Exhibition	UAG, R
Feb. 11*	UCI Symphony Orchestra Express	WSH
Feb. 13	Music Artist Series: <i>Songs About Love and Sorrows</i>	WSH ●
Feb. 18*	UCI Jazz Combos	WSH
Feb. 19-21	<i>Dance Visions 2026</i>	IBT
Feb. 25	UCI Jazz Orchestra	WSH ●
Feb. 28	Music Artist Series: <i>Song and Wind</i>	WSH ●
March 5	UCI Symphony Orchestra	IBT
March 6-14	<i>Noises Off</i>	CTT ●
March 9	UCI Wind Ensemble	WSH ●
March 10	UC Irvine Choral Concert: Mozart's Requiem	IBT
March 12*	Tenth Thursday Undergraduate Student Exhibition	AC
March 12*	Art of Performance @ UC Irvine – 11th Edition featuring Meredith Monk	WSH
March 12-21*	21st Annual Guest Juried Undergraduate Exhibition	UAG, R
March 16*	UCI Chamber Music Concert	WSH

Spring 2026

Through April 4*	<i>The Neganthropocene (part 1)</i>	CAC
April 4-June 27*	<i>Disruptive Cultures: Affects and Effects of Social Media</i>	BC
April 5*	Music Honors Concert	WSH
April 10*	Vocal Arts Concert <i>Echoes of England: Henry Purcell, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Benjamin Britten</i>	WSH
April 18	Music Artist Series <i>The Art of the Viola: From Poland With Love</i>	WSH ●
April 18-May 2*	M.F.A. Thesis Exhibition (part 1)	UAG, CAC, R
April 21	UC Irvine Giving Day 2026	ONLINE
April 30-May 2	<i>Physical Graffiti 2026</i>	CTT ●
May 7-16	<i>at the very bottom of a body of water</i>	RCT
May 9	UCI Opera Workshop: Gian Carlo Menotti's <i>The Old Maid and the Thief</i>	IBT
May 9-23*	M.F.A. Thesis Exhibition (part 2)	UAG, CAC, R
May 13*	UCI Jazz Combos	WSH
May 16*	ICIT Showcase Concert	xMPL
May 20	UCI Jazz Orchestra	WSH ●
May 29	UC Irvine Choral Concert	WSH ●
June 1	UCI Wind Ensemble	WSH ●
June 3*	UCI Guitar Ensemble	WSH
June 4*	Tenth Thursday Undergraduate Student Exhibition	AC
June 4-13*	Undergraduate Honors Thesis Exhibition	UAG, R
June 5	UCI Symphony Orchestra	IBT
June 8*	UCI Chamber Music Concert	WSH

Box Office Information

Hours

Wednesday & Thursday, noon-4 p.m.

1 hour before performances at venue box office

with seasonal/intermittent closures; check www.arts.uci.edu/boxoffice

Contact

(949) 824-2787 | artstix@uci.edu

UAG University Art Gallery

(949) 824-9854 | gallery@uci.edu

Tickets

www.arts.uci.edu/tickets (24/7) | Phone | CTSA Box Office Window

Venues

AMP	Arts Plaza Amphitheatre	NS	New Swan Theater
AC	Arts Campus	RCT	Robert Cohen Theatre
BC	Beall Center for Art + Technology	R	Room Gallery
BCHΔ	Bethel Church	ONLINE	Live or recorded event presented online
CAC	Contemporary Arts Center	UAG	University Art Gallery
CTT	Claire Trevor Theatre	WSH	Winifred Smith Hall
GPGΔ	Great Park Gallery	xMPL	Experimental Media Performance Lab
IBTΔ	Irvine Barclay Theatre		Check website for specifics.

Δ Venue not on CTSA campus. Consult CTSA website maps: www.arts.uci.edu/directions

Dates, venues, titles are subject to change.

Please check our online events calendar (www.arts.uci.edu/calendar) for the most current information.

* indicates free event / ● indicates tentative shuttle availability.

Fall Quarter 2025 Highlights

Welcome to the 2025–26 season! This year, we proudly celebrate UC Irvine's 60th anniversary, 25 years since the naming of the Claire Trevor School of the Arts and 25 years of creative innovation at the Beall Center for Art + Technology. Discover a season of events that will inspire, engage and celebrate the enduring impact of the Arts at UC Irvine. Look for events marked in honor of UCI's 60th anniversary throughout the season.

BEALL CENTER FOR ART + TECHNOLOGY



25 Years at Beall Center for Art + Technology

David Familian and Gabriel Tolson, curators

Sept. 13-Oct. 11, 2025, at Beall Center for Art + Technology

Soft Opening Reception: Saturday, Sept. 13

Opening reception/Anniversary celebration: Saturday, Oct. 11

Oct. 26-Dec. 28, 2025, at City of Irvine's Great Park Gallery

Opening Reception: Sunday, Oct. 26

Celebrating 25 years of boundary-pushing innovation, this milestone presentation revisits seminal artworks that have shaped the Beall Center's legacy as a hub for experimental media arts.

The exhibition will be on view at the Beall Center for Art + Technology, on the UC Irvine campus on Sept. 13-Oct. 11, 2025, and at City of Irvine's Great Park Gallery, not on the UC Irvine campus, from Oct. 26-Dec. 28, 2025.

This exhibition is presented by the Beall Center for Art + Technology with generous support from The Beall Family Foundation.

Beall Center for Art + Technology

Free admission

Gallery Hours: Tuesday-Saturday, noon-6 p.m.

City of Irvine Great Park Gallery (off-campus)

Free admission

Gallery Hours: Thursdays & Fridays, noon-4 p.m.

Saturdays & Sundays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Image courtesy of the UC Irvine Beall Center for Art + Technology





Nov. 15, 2025-Feb. 28, 2026
Opening reception: Saturday, Nov. 15

Against Outer Space

Valerie Olsen and Zachary Korol Gold, curators

Against Outer Space engages an ancient paradox: Earthly life unfolds against and within unearthly space. Artists in the exhibition present this paradox both *with and against* dominant technoscientific ideas about outer space. In doing so they work otherwise to government agendas, military-industrial powers and space capitalism. For these artists, outer space is not separate. It is an intimate extension of ancestry and becoming. Its vibrant outsideness allows new questions, new recognitions, new ways of being. Through their work we enter *open space*.

This exhibition is presented by the Beall Center for Art + Technology with generous support from The Beall Family Foundation.

Beall Center for Art + Technology

Free admission

Gallery Hours: Tuesday-Saturday, noon-6 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF ART / UNIVERSITY ART GALLERIES



Sep. 27-Dec. 13, 2025

Opening reception: Saturday, Oct. 11, 2 p.m.

The Inoperative Community: Exhibition X Practice, UC Irvine 1965-2025

Juli Carson, Kevin Appel and Sasha Ussef, curators

The Inoperative Community: Exhibition X Practice, UC Irvine 1965-2025 — an archival exhibition of the University Art Galleries (UAG) from 1965 to the present — provides an unprecedented look at the gallery's evolving curatorial and artistic legacy, highlighting its significant role in shaping the artistic and academic communities at UC Irvine and beyond.

Lead support for *The Inoperative Community: Exhibition X Practice, UC Irvine, 1965-2025* is provided by Tom Nielsen. Additional generous support is provided by Lucy Sun and Warren Felson, The Victor Klein Fund and Claire Trevor Society.

Presented by the UC Irvine Claire Trevor School of the Arts Department of Art.

University Art Gallery, Contemporary Arts Center Gallery, Room Gallery

Free admission

Gallery Hours: Tuesday-Saturday, noon-6 p.m.

Image: Photograph of Tony DeLap's *Floating Lady* performance, Duchamp Festival, 197-. Tony DeLap papers, circa 1950-2015. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.





Thursday, Dec. 4, 2025, 6 p.m.

Tenth Thursday Undergraduate Student Exhibition

Organized by Professor Deborah Oliver in collaboration with the participating students and faculty

Join us for Tenth Thursday, an evening celebrating the creativity of the Department of Art's talented undergraduates through a vibrant showcase of exhibitions and projects. Explore a wide array of works — including painting, drawing, ceramics, photography, video, sculpture, performance and installations — and connect with the artists as they present the culmination of their end-of-quarter class projects.

*Arts Campus
Free admission*

DEPARTMENT OF DANCE



Dec. 4-6, 2025

New Slate 2025

Tong Wang and Ariyan Johnson, artistic directors

Discover original choreography by the talented M.F.A. candidates from the Department of Dance. Join us for a series of compelling and imaginative performances that showcase the artistry and skill of UC Irvine's choreographers and dancers. Witness the fusion of creativity and passion as the future of dance comes to life on stage.

Claire Trevor Theatre

Dec. 4, 5, 6

8 p.m.

Dec. 6

2 p.m.

\$ 25 / 22 / 20 / 21 / 10



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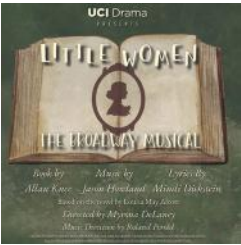
Please note: Tickets purchased at the Barclay Box Office will incur a \$3-5 fee per ticket.

Service is available for guests with disabilities or mobility issues, from the Mesa Parking Structure to select shows. Shuttle service will begin one hour before showtime and will meet patrons on level two near the elevator. Advance notice is appreciated. For more info, please call the Arts Box Office at (949) 824-2787, email artstix@uci.edu, or visit www.arts.uci.edu/shuttle. Schedule is subject to change.

Tickets

**Complimentary
Shuttle Service**





Nov. 20-23, 2025

Little Women: The Broadway Musical

Book by Allan Knee
Music by Jason Howland
Lyrics by Mindi Dickstein
Based upon the novel by Louisa May Alcott

Based on Louisa May Alcott's beloved novel, *Little Women* follows the lives of the March sisters as they grow up, dream big and navigate love, loss and self-discovery in Civil War-era America. This musical celebrates the strength of family, the power of storytelling and the resilience of young women determined to find their place in the world.

This production opens UC Irvine's Department of Drama's 60th season led by the innovative director Myrona DeLaney.

Major support is provided by Robert and Lorna Cohen Endowment for Excellence in Drama, the Theatre Guild and the Claire Trevor Society.

Little Women is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. <https://www.mtishows.com>.

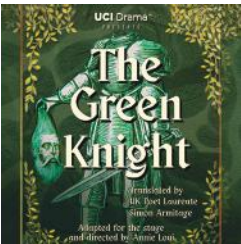
Irvine Barclay Theatre

Nov. 20, 21, 22 8 p.m.

Nov. 22, 23† 2 p.m.

† Open captions are available for this performance.

\$ 30 / 26 / 26 / 24 / 10



Dec. 5-13, 2025

The Green Knight

Based upon the translation by Simon Armitage, UK Poet Laureate
Adapted for the stage by Annie Loui

In the signature style of CounterBalance Theater, director Annie Loui brings Simon Armitage's *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* to life through dynamic theatricality and expressive physical movement. This modern, accessible translation of the medieval classic follows Sir Gawain as he accepts a mysterious challenge from the formidable Green Knight, a towering, emerald-skinned figure who serves as both adversary and moral examiner. Gawain's journey becomes a test of his values.

Major support is provided by Robert and Lorna Cohen Endowment for Excellence in Drama, the Theatre Guild and the Claire Trevor Society.

Experimental Media Performance Lab (xMPL)

Dec. 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13 8 p.m.

Dec. 6, 7*†, 13 2 p.m.

** Please join us after the performance for a talkback with company members and scholars.*

† Open captions are available for this performance.

Free admission



Wednesday, Oct. 29, 2025, 8 p.m.

Artist Series | *Memory of the Future*: Mari Kimura

Featuring UC Irvine Professor Mari Kimura

Violinist and composer Mari Kimura presents a program that explores the intersections of classical tradition and contemporary innovation. Featuring works from the standard repertoire alongside original compositions, the recital highlights Kimura's distinctive artistry and forward-thinking approach to performance.

Generous support is provided by the Marjorie and Robert Rawlins Endowment Fund.

Winifred Smith Hall

\$ 20 / 17 / 17 / 15 / 10



Tuesday, Nov. 25, 2025, 8 p.m.

UCI Symphony Orchestra

Dr. Geoffrey Pope, conductor

Ring in the season with the Symphony Orchestra's opening concert, featuring festive orchestral masterpieces by celebrated composers. As one of Orange County's premier large-performance ensembles, the Symphony Orchestra has been a cornerstone of the Department of Music since 1966, bringing together students, faculty, and community members to perform symphonic works spanning the centuries.

Join Maestro Geoffrey Pope for a Pre-Concert Conversation at 7 p.m.

Generous support is provided by Charlie and Ling Zhang, Friends of UC Irvine Music and the Marjorie and Robert Rawlins Endowment Fund.

Irvine Barclay Theatre

\$21 / 18 / 18 / 16 / 10



Monday, Dec. 1, 2025, 8 p.m.

UCI Wind Ensemble

Kevin McKeown, conductor

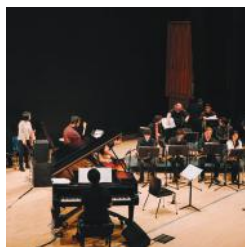
The UCI Wind Ensemble presents a dynamic program of traditional and contemporary works for wind band. Showcasing a wide range of styles, the concert reflects the ensemble's commitment to artistic exploration and musical excellence within the genre.

Generous support is provided by the Marjorie and Robert Rawlins Endowment Fund.

Winifred Smith Hall

\$10





Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2025, 8 p.m.

UCI Jazz Orchestra

Jerry Pinter, director

Enjoy an evening of large-ensemble jazz with the Jazz Orchestra, featuring everything from big band classics to contemporary works. This dynamic concert showcases the orchestra's versatility and rich expression within the jazz tradition.

Generous support is provided by the Marjorie and Robert Rawlins Endowment Fund.

*Winifred Smith Hall
\$10*



Thursday, Dec. 4, 2025, 7:30 p.m.

UC Irvine Choral Concert: *Sounds of the Season*

Featuring the UC Irvine Chamber Singers, Concert Choir and Voces Chamber Ensemble

Dr. Irene Messoloras, conductor

Celebrate the season with the UC Irvine Choirs in an evening of joyful music and festive cheer! This heartwarming program features an eclectic blend of timeless carols and contemporary gems – spanning classical, folk, jazz and pop traditions. Enjoy music by Shawn Kirchner, Ola Gjeilo, Morten Lauridsen, Rosephanye Powell and more in a celebration sure to uplift audiences of all ages.

Generous support is provided by Friends of UC Irvine Music and the Marjorie and Robert Rawlins Endowment Fund.

*Bethel Church (off-campus)
18700 Harvard Ave, Irvine, CA 92612
Free admission*



Tickets & Info



To see all 15 events for the fall 2025 quarter in the Department of Music, visit arts.uci.edu/events.

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UC Irvine
Claire Trevor School of the Arts

CONNECT Cover Design Student Spotlight

Aejin Yi '25, Department of Art

THE SPACES IN WHICH WE CREATE



In celebration of the 25th anniversary of the naming of the Claire Trevor School of the Arts, CONNECT magazine invited current students to design an original cover with Claire Trevor's portrait for the "Arts & Legacy" issue. A recent Department of Art graduate, Aejin Yi, was selected as the winner for her thoughtful mixed-media collage, *THE SPACES IN WHICH WE CREATE*.

"Legacy is not something that lives in the past, but something that is always growing in the present," said Yi.

Her work incorporates architectural elements from across the UC Irvine Arts campus, from the windows by the box office to the bold yellow of the drama stairwell, layered with fragments from past issues of CONNECT and textured with images reminiscent of the trees surrounding the Winifred Smith Hall.

"Some people don't even have studio spaces, but we still find ways to create," said Yi. "I wanted to highlight the places we walk around every day, spaces we don't always stop to appreciate but that shape who we are as artists."

For Yi, UC Irvine Arts' legacy is alive in the spaces that students adapt to, transform and grow from. Through this piece, she honors the act of creating meaning within these evolving environments and the generations of artists who continue to uplift the school.

"While at UC Irvine, meeting other artists and seeing everyone's different practices opened my eyes to how important art is in our lives," said Yi. "It's everywhere, and it can be applied to everything."



Image: Aejin Yi

To learn more about the Department of Art, visit art.arts.uci.edu.

UC Irvine

Claire Trevor School of the Arts

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Claire Trevor School of the Arts
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