

# CONNECT

UCI Claire Trevor School of the Arts

**Arts and Wellbeing: Empowering  
the Artists of Tomorrow**



Winter 2021 Season



Photo: Emily Zheng

# Dean's Message



## Dear Friends,

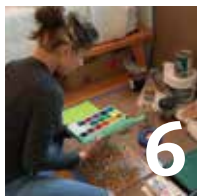
As we head into the traditional holiday season, we're delighted to have you join us in the most ambitious CONNECT ever. You may remember that our theme for the year is "The Arts and Wellbeing," and in the time of Covid nothing could be more important than the physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing

of our students, staff and faculty. Wellbeing is a complex issue, of course, and in each issue of CONNECT we'll be exploring aspects of this theme. This issue is devoted to sharing ways in which CTSA is empowering creative energies in a wide variety of methods.

Even though the UCI campus is largely empty, remarkable things are happening in CTSA; though that "in" is, of course, remote. The photo on the opposite page here tells the tale: We've supplied a large number of portable ballet barres to students to use in their homes, dorms, garages, etc., and this is just one of the many ways we're doing everything we can to give students the kind of rich experience for which they've come to UCI. You'll also notice Kelby Fisher's (pictured) pointed foot, toes touching the Marley flooring: We've distributed nearly 150 of them to dance majors to help prevent injury and to provide a proper base for their work. There's so much in this issue, from profiles of alumni (artist Glenn Kaino, director Beth Lopes, Artistic Producer Ross Jackson — and more) to our great supporters such as Janice Smith, who's been part of CTSA for several decades, and profiles of exciting new faculty (Zachary Price, who's brought a wide background in performance and scholarship to the Drama department).

The arts are the most deeply affected of any area of "normal" life, of course, given our inability to share our work with you face-to-face. But you'll be amazed to see how many events CTSA is still producing, and of course, we hope you'll join us for many of them. We're immensely grateful for your continuing support (particularly in a time without ticket sales) and wish you a safe, healthy journey through this remarkable time.

Stephen Barker, Ph.D.  
*Dean*



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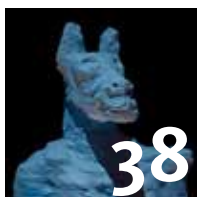


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More information and electronic copy available at [www.arts.uci.edu](http://www.arts.uci.edu). Email questions or comments to [artsmarketing@uci.edu](mailto:artsmarketing@uci.edu).



## Professor Haroutune Bedelian Retires

In 1997, Haroutune Bedelian told a reporter from the *Los Angeles Times*, “I don’t know what it means not to be a musician. It goes with breathing, with living, everything.” That sentiment embodies the tenure of our beloved violin professor.

Bedelian was born in 1945 on the island of Cyprus located in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, where his family were refugees escaping the Armenian Genocide in Turkish Armenia. At 15, he won a scholarship to attend the Royal Academy of Music in London. At 20, he won First Prize in the BBC Violin Competition. His studies continued in New York with Ivan Galamian and later with Nathan Milstein in London, where he began his teaching career as a professor of violin at his alma mater.

Bedelian joined the UCI faculty in 1988 as a lecturer for the Department of Music. He was promoted to full professor in 1993. He has performed concerts in major cities, festivals and concert halls throughout North and South America, the United Kingdom, Europe, and the Middle East, and has appeared in numerous radio and television broadcasts. In 2007, Bedelian released a DVD compilation of J. S. Bach’s 6 Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin. This was followed by the release on CD of the same works with the 1853 piano accompaniment by Robert Schumann with pianist Lorna Griffitt. Among his many professional accolades, *The Times of London* described Bedelian best – “Virtuosity comes to him as second nature, but it is used as a means to the interpretive freedom and sense of style that characterizes his playing above all else.”

Professor Bedelian officially retired on July 1, 2020, and plans to continue performing once the COVID-19 pandemic subsides. He looks forward to reading, practicing, and occasional travels with his wife, Lorna. In his over 50-year career of teaching, Bedelian leaves behind the legacy of musicians Vahan Bedelian (his father) and Manoug Parikian (his cousin), as well as the aforementioned Ivan Galamian and Nathan Milstein who were his foremost teachers.

*Images (left to right): Haroutune Bedelian and Lorna Griffitt performing at the 2015 Siletz Bay Music Festival (Photo: Bob Gibson, The Photography Studio, Lincoln City, Oregon); in concert, 2018 Celebrate Music at UCI; on campus.*

# Empowering the Artists of Tomorrow Amid the Pandemic

*By Christine Byrd*



## ***Theaters, concert halls and art galleries***

have been closed for nearly a year, but the global pandemic hasn't stopped artists from creating. If anything, it's fueling rapid incorporation of technology across all artistic mediums and inspiring new ways to create and share art.

"I look to our students to be the leaders in incorporating technology in the arts," says Molly Lynch, professor and chair of dance. "When we talk about empowering the artists of tomorrow, our students are right on the front edge of this fundamental shift in the arts, and we as faculty are supporting and encouraging them."

Here's a look at how the support of faculty and additional resources from the school are helping student artists thrive amid challenges.

## **Art**

Without access to campus art production studios, students resourcefully carved out spaces at home to make their art, whether in their childhood bedroom, an emptied dorm space, on an apartment balcony, or in a garage. The faculty worked closely with students to help them create tool kits with interesting materials at hand, rethink workspaces, and arrange and equip them to maximize their own creativity and productivity.

"Students have been able to tap into these really personal spaces of making," says Jennifer Pastor, a professor of art who teaches sculpture. "They can't escape meaning. Some are isolated far away from home, or back home with parents, transitioning or coming out in a non-supportive environment, or conjuring spaces they used to inhabit, and they make use of all of it. They blow me away."

Several students are at home on other continents for now, and live classes may occur in the middle of their night. Sarah Awad, who teaches drawing and painting, adjusted to this by recording instructional videos students can watch on demand, and providing personalized critiques on their work via video recordings, as well.

For those aspiring to be professional artists, the pandemic offers a realistic, if premature, look at a professional artist's daily work in isolation.

"I'm so much more self-disciplined than I was before," says fourth-year art major Alexis Miranda. "Also, I've had the opportunity to become more comfortable with myself, figuring out what works for me in my personal

*Image: Drama M.F.A. student Hailey Byerly performs at the beach while being directed by acting professor Andrew Borba.*

Photo: Philip Thompson

space, and what morning routines help me feel better during the day.”

Using videography skills she gained from two courses on performance art, Miranda recorded the process of making an artwork about “cancel culture,” in which she inscribed words on a wooden slab and then plastered it over.

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## “How do you communicate to an audience that no one’s going to be in the presence of?”

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Videotaping the process of making the piece was fundamental to the work itself. This issue of documenting their work has now become essential to student artists, who have to consider how to share their creations with audiences all over the world, according to Pastor.

“How do you communicate to an audience who’s not in the presence of the work?” asks Pastor. She points to artists like Robert Smithson, whose work *Cinema Cavern* and *Nonsites*, and David Hammons’ *Ballroom* where the physical presence of an audience or site is absent and absence itself is meaningful, as newly relevant to students in the pandemic.

“This experience may yield some independent contexts that I’m hoping they invent and take with them as they create their own context as young artists,” Pastor adds.

The art department will leverage technology to allow artists to begin working together on campus, and to showcase installations to remote viewers via the web. An installation space is set up in the Arts Culture Technology building that allows up

to three artists to work together and connect with an entire class via high-speed internet connection, high-res cameras, and a 70-inch screen. Similar portable setups are being developed as well for students to work with at off-campus sites, and faculty make regular “studio visits” to students via Zoom.

## Music

Music students have carried on practicing their instruments and honing their skills thanks to online classes over Zoom, but finding ways to perform together from afar remains a significant challenge.

“Remote teaching has badly affected the music department because we can’t perform together or even rehearse together because there’s always a lag on the internet,” says Kei Akagi, UCI Chancellor’s Professor and director of the jazz program.

In one innovative twist, Darek Oles, professor of music, recorded certain ensemble parts at home and then sent them to his students to dub their parts over.

Soon, though, the department will play together and perform remotely thanks to experimental software called Jack Trip that music professor Michael Dessen has been working with for years. This winter, the school will unveil its first performance using the technology, and on March 3, 2021, UCI will have its first ever virtual jazz concert for the public.

“It’s really a new world where we’re going to rely on this new equipment that’s barely out there, very experimental, and has to be acquired. But we’re getting close to having some combos be able to play together in real time,” says Akagi. “This gives the students something to work for, because they miss performing for an audience. Now, we’re seeing the light at the end of the tunnel.”

One silver lining in the closure of

performance venues and newfound openness to Zoom is that professional musicians and other artists are more readily available to drop by classes virtually for guest lectures. The music department has already brought several world-renowned musicians for guest lectures, including five-time Grammy winner and Guggenheim Fellow Billy Childs, to teach and inspire students at this difficult time.

## Dance

Katherine Lingle and her two roommates are dance majors living together as a Zot Pod, a household group of students who have been tested for COVID-19 and sequestered together. They rearranged the living room furniture in their Irvine apartment to serve as a dance studio on weekdays. The dance department offered 16-square-foot pieces of Marley, a standard dance floor, as well as 4-foot portable ballet barres to students, thanks to funding from the university and CTSA donors.

“Just adding the Marley square and ballet barre this quarter has helped me get into the mindset that ‘OK I’m taking a real ballet class right now,’ even though I’m in my living room and on Zoom,” says Lingle.

With dance companies around the world on hiatus, the students are benefiting from a series of remote guest lectures and master classes with a Q&A sessions with highly acclaimed dancers, choreographers and directors including New York City Ballet’s Wendy Whelan, Martha Graham principal dancer Abdiel Jacobson, Lines Ballet’s director Alonzo King, Hubbard Street’s Glenn Edgerton, José Limón’s Dante Puleio, and the namesake of Camille A. Brown & Dancers.

The students are also rapidly developing skills in videography and screen dance, along with the faculty. For this winter’s Dance Visions, the annual faculty dance showcase, students auditioned live on Zoom, and the faculty are collaborating

*Image: Dance major Katherine Lingle gets ready for dance class in the living room she shares with two other students. Students were provided ballet barres, squares of Marley floor and other equipment for home use, thanks to the generosity of donors and the CTSA Student Resource Fund.*



Photo: Katherine Lingle

with the students and the production team to find new ways to share their performance online.

“Many of us came to the conclusion that this has been a good learning experience,” says Cara Laughlin, a fourth-year majoring in dance performance. “I had no prior experience recording myself, working with camera angles, uploading videos or adapting choreography for the screen.”

Her classmate, Lingle, who serendipitously took a screen dance class in the spring, also finds the silver lining in performing online. “It was a huge learning curve, but it’s helping me add footage to my dance reel and preparing me for when I audition for companies in the future.”

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“We’re learning to reach new audiences and connect with different people around the world.”

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The shift toward screen dance and online performances is here to stay, says Molly Lynch, professor and chair of the dance department.

“Yes, certainly we’ll go back to live theater for the visceral and community experience, but there will also be more online videotaping and streaming along with it,” Lynch says. “We’re learning to reach new audiences and connect with different people around the world. That’s not going to go away. This is going to be a reset for dance in the 21st century.”

## Drama

Phil Thompson, professor of drama, points out two main challenges with online learning for actors: Physical

isolation and the delay caused by unreliable internet connections. This wreaks havoc with the very skills that students are trying to learn such as presence, timing and physicality. To minimize these difficulties, Thompson is focusing this year on speech work and accents which are easier to convey across the remote format, especially in one-on-one sessions.

As in all other areas of arts, actors, producers and directors are also rapidly developing their film skills, and creating makeshift recording studios at home, which Thompson says will serve them in the future.

“You don’t have to fly to New York to audition, and if you’ve had to set up a decent home studio, and put in the time to become a confident filmmaker, you’ll be ahead of the competition when the time comes to audition remotely,” Thompson says.

The current challenges also infused new energy into writing and creation of new artworks, according to Juliette Carrillo, associate professor of directing, who turned last spring’s directing class into a course on writing radio plays, or podcasting. In the fall, she teamed up with Vincent Olivieri, professor of sound design, who is teaching students how to build their own sound for the podcasts. Carrillo has also been experimenting with recording original monologues. Following the model of “The 24 Hour Plays,” she had UCI students write monologues and student actors perform them in the course of a single day, posting the readings online.

Soon, Carrillo will begin rehearsing with students currently located in Puerto Rico and Korea in anticipation of her spring production, holding out hope that some form of physically distant but in-person recording will be possible.

Carrillo and her colleagues have made special efforts to support professional



*Image: Student Alexis Miranda painting in a makeshift art studio inside her San Francisco apartment.*

artists and benefit UCI students by arranging guest lectures from such industry leaders as Stephanie McGee, the artistic director of the storied New Orleans’ Junebug Productions, and acclaimed African American playwright Eric Micha Holmes.

“The live theater has been crushed, but the theater lives in people and the people are still there,” says Thompson. “We’re going to be super happy to be back in a room together, but I’m actually looking forward to what we carry out of this current experience — not just resilience and autonomy, but practice in perceiving what each student’s own method of learning is.”

## **Making their way**

Despite the myriad challenges budding artists face right now, many are finding

silver linings, and exploring new avenues of their personal artistic practice.

“My sense is that if you can make — literally make — your way through this moment when it seems to be impossible to create, when we’re faced with the surreal extremes of this crisis, then you will have the most to reap when we come out of it,” says Pastor. “Our students who ‘make’ their way through this are going to come out stronger, more inventive artists.”

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*Students in art, dance, drama and music are facing a host of unforeseen challenges with remote instruction, including access to equipment and technology specific to each field of study. Please consider supporting arts students by contributing to the Student Resource Campaign today. Learn more about how to give at [www.arts.uci.edu/giving](http://www.arts.uci.edu/giving). Learn more about programs, exhibitions, and initiatives at [www.arts.uci.edu](http://www.arts.uci.edu).*



# Zachary Price

*By Richard Chang*

## Combines Scholarship and Drama

*Professor Zachary Price* is fascinated with various modes of performance, from the proscenium stage to the street corner.

He's a new faculty member at UC Irvine, teaching in the Department of Drama. He started his position as assistant professor of doctoral studies in July.

"I focus on Black drama, Black performance," said Price, an interdisciplinary theater scholar and practitioner. "I'm also interested in quotidian forms of performance, like break dancing, MC-ing, carnival,

circus, performance in nightclubs, bars, restaurants, poetry cafes.

"But I'm also interested in 18th and 19th century Japanese theater — how that translates into more contemporary forms of Japanese theater." He added that he's also exploring connections between Asian, Asian American and Black cultures and performance in a new book project that he hopes will be published by the end of 2021.

Before UCI, Price was a tenure-track assistant professor in the Department of Performance Studies at Texas A&M

University in College Station. He also taught in the Department of African American Studies at UCLA, where he was a president's postdoctoral fellow and an assistant researcher in the Bunche Center for African American Studies, where he co-authored the first Hollywood Diversity Report.

He got his Ph.D. in theater studies from UC Santa Barbara, an M.F.A. in drama from the New School in New York City, and his bachelor's degree in performance studies from Northwestern University. He has also acted in, directed and produced a number of stage performances.

Price was born in Middletown, Conn., and grew up in Cleveland, Ohio. It was in Cleveland where he discovered the Japanese martial art aikido, which he still practices and uses as a vehicle for his scholarship.

According to his website, zacharyprice.com, his research examines the relationships between performance, race, gender and power and the epistemological frameworks that such relations produce. Price's scholarly work has been published in *TDR: The Drama Review*, *The National Review of Black Politics*, *Theatre Topics*, *Journal of Asian American Studies* and *The Postcolonialist*.

As a professor of doctoral studies at UCI, he's a member of the faculty responsible for teaching graduate students how to conduct research and how to become scholars. He will be instructing and helping doctoral students in winter quarter 2021.

In the spring, he will teach African American theater and film to undergraduates.

Price is a recent transplant to Irvine, after spending several years in the greater Houston area with his family. (He has a son and a daughter, age 13 and 11, respectively.) For him, it's a welcome return to the University of California system, where he got his doctorate and has taught before.

Yet, moving and transitioning to a new city and university in the middle of a global pandemic has also involved its own set of challenges.

"I'm in a different point in my life and my journey, both personally and professionally," said Price, who turned 45 on Nov. 6. "The pandemic itself, also just very uncertain political times that we're living in. As a person of color and a Black person, you think through your moves two, three, four times in advance. That's just been a lot of stress, to say the least.

"The transition has been relatively smooth. But that required a lot of preparation, planning and mental labor. We've been calculating how to do things. We're building the airplane as we go along."

## Performance, Power, Politics

Price says his interaction with students so far "has been somewhat limited by the pandemic itself."

"There's a certain level of alienation and isolation — not only due to the virus, but to the inability to manage this health crisis," he said. "The tools and the instruments we have are interesting, but as we all know they're very limited. Zoom was always intended as a communication device. But it quickly got adapted and turned into a pedagogical one. We now have

Zoombombing, and Zoom fatigue itself. I've seen my own kids struggle with that.

"It's an unprecedented situation. We've all had to become online teachers. We've quickly learned, and it can look like an absolute mess, in my opinion. But there are some generative things — you can be accessible to your students, regardless of physical proximity. It does depend on you having access to a secure, steady internet connection. Many students and even some professors don't have that."

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**"What distinguishes Zachary Price is his passion to find in performance studies tools for the liberation of oppressed and marginalized peoples..."**

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Price is still fascinated with performance as "one of the predominant methods through which we not only construct our society, but also shape and make the power relations within the broader political sphere."

He cites the late poet Amiri Baraka, co-founder of the Black Arts Movement; Luis Valdez, founder of El Teatro Campesino; Funmilola Fagbamila, playwright and adjunct professor at Cal State L.A.; and Shamell Bell, a lecturer at Dartmouth College, as inspirations who have used performance practices to organize and mobilize people of color.

"What distinguishes Zachary Price is his passion to find in performance studies tools for the liberation of oppressed and marginalized peoples — which means all of us —the world over," said Jeffrey Stewart, professor of Black studies at UC Santa Barbara, who worked with Price when he was a doctoral student

there. "A close student of plays and less-structured improvised performances, Zachary brings a sharp acumen for how performance opens our eyes to unrealized, unexplored dimensions of our everyday lives."

Price's current research project is called "Black Dragon," which he describes as "an intertextual analysis of an intersectional project — Afro Asian performance across a series of platforms, including but not limited to film, theater and new media, bringing to bear of some familiar works of art with a focus on Black masculinity."

He says the cover art for the book is anticipated to be a scene from the 1978 martial arts film "Game of Death," where Bruce Lee is sparring with former Laker great Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. His publisher will be Ohio State University Press.

A venture Price still holds near and dear to his heart is The Odyssey Project, created at UC Santa Barbara during the



*Image: Zachary Price teaches aikido to a student at UCLA in 2016. Price trained with the judo club at UCLA, where he was a president's postdoctoral fellow.*



*Image: Zachary Price (bottom right) with the artistic team from “What It Iz,” a play by Bryonn Bain (far left). Price co-directed and choreographed the martial arts for the UCLA production, which ran at The Los Angeles Theatre Center in 2017.*

summer of 2011. The project is actually a course that partners undergraduate and graduate students at UCSB with incarcerated youth at Los Prietos Boys Camp. The youths, age 13-18 and considered “wards of the court,” learn acting, writing, spoken-word exercises, choreography and martial arts, using Homer’s epic poem “The Odyssey” as their source material.

Price continues to serve as a teacher, researcher and consultant to the project. “It is ... intended to be an offering for those educators, activists, policy makers and cultural workers who take seriously the possibilities of using art for social justice,” he said. It also aims to provide a marginalized and non-university community access to university resources.

So even though he’s still pretty new to UCI, what’s on Price’s wish list for the university?

“One of the things that I would like to see happen is the development of a

Black arts and Black publics platform here at UCI that creates a dynamic space for performance-based research and creative practice — that is also in conversation with many artists and arts scholars throughout the country who are asking the same kinds of questions and doing a similar kind of work,” he said.

“Engaging these kind of abolitionist approaches to pedagogy takes a lot of energy, and one of the challenges is confronting the limitations due to COVID-19. I am thinking about the necessity to engage in long-term study for long-term struggle and that necessitates a willingness to stay disciplined while simultaneously being able to reconceptualize as the facts on the ground shift and change in unexpected ways.”

*To learn more about Zachary Price and the faculty in the Department of Drama, visit [drama.arts.uci.edu](http://drama.arts.uci.edu).*



## She Slays Obstacles

Beth Lopes, M.F.A. '11, is spending the season back at her alma mater in the Department of Drama. Lopes, a frequent principal for UCI's New Swan Shakespeare Festival, is directing the fall production of Qui Nguyen's *She Kills Monsters: Virtual Realms*, a comedic play set in the world of fantasy role-playing games and presented online Dec. 5-13, 2020. Here, we see Lopes in the middle of a rehearsal in her home studio.

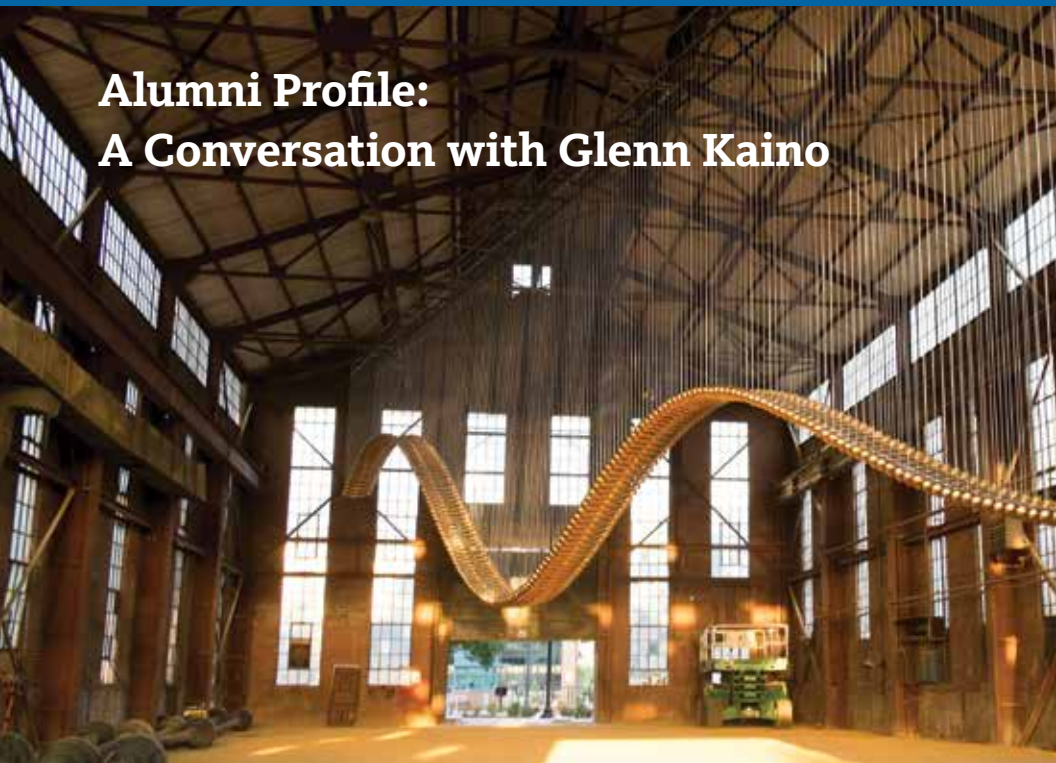
Lopes and her creative team of graduate and undergraduate students have designed digital backdrops and image filters, along with using green screen technology, to produce the play's desired set. "Like the heroine of our story, Agnes, we are all diving headfirst into unknown territory," says Lopes. "As we grapple with the uncertainty of the state of the theater industry, and the nation as a whole, we have been tasked with creating new forms of artistry." They are slaying the many production challenges with being remote and, as a team, will triumph in the end.



Photo: Randolph Thompson

# Anteaters in the Arts

## Alumni Profile: A Conversation with Glenn Kaino



*Professor of Art Simon Leung chats with Glenn Kaino (B.A. '93), an artist who's been at the intersectional forefront of art and activism for more than two decades. Known for his conceptual, activist, and frequently collaborative multifaceted art practice, Kaino occupies a unique place in the art world and beyond.*

**Simon Leung:** Tell us about your time at UCI.

**Glenn Kaino:** UCI was a magical place. I had the fortune to go there in the 1990s when Catherine Lord was transforming the Art Department into the most diverse and impactful team of artists and scholars. The new faces of diversity (Daniel Joseph Martinez, Ulysses Jenkins, Connie Samaras, Karen Carson, Judy Baca, Catherine Opie, Pat Ward Williams and others) were just charging! The undergrads would hear stories about classes and teachers, and the ideas they were championing, and

it felt alive. I transferred in and not knowing any better, set up meetings with every teacher to introduce myself, and met all the student studio rats that were always around and connected with everyone; and ended up helping to create a really productive chemistry during my time there. We self-organized events like an artist basketball league and a drag prom; I organized a group to

*Image:* Glenn Kaino, "Bridge," 2013.  
Fiberglass, steel, wire, gold paint.  
Dimensions variable. Installed at 5x5 in Washington, D.C.

Photo: Glenn Kaino Studio



create a departmental print magazine and the first-ever digital 'zine, and we created a real exhibition series. The byproduct of my time there was that I left with the absolute belief that art was important and could exist as a generative form of scholarship.

**SL:** In the 1990s you co-founded Deep River, an alternative space in downtown LA with UCI Prof. Daniel Joseph Martinez, Tracey Shiffman, and Rolo Castillo. Would you talk a bit about that?

**GK:** Deep River was a space for experimentation and change. It was a five-year plan and we aimed to champion artists we felt deserved a

moment. We had just a few important ideas going into it and we stuck with them. In the beginning we decided that we were going to save our money to make a gallery that was as high-quality as a museum. Operationally, we had a strict budget: \$600 per opening—\$200 on stamps, \$200 on invitations, and \$200 on drinks; we were only open on weekends, and we didn't sell art. Most importantly, on the front door there was a small line of type that read "No Critics Allowed." We didn't want to participate in what we felt to be a rigged system of validation that prioritized an exclusionary art world value system. There were hundreds of people at each opening, and we created a "Deep River Family." At the time, the "Art Center Mafia" as we called them spawned China Art Objects, a commercial gallery. UCLA was very tied in to MOCA, and Cal Arts was everywhere, but nothing much existed for UC Irvine. We hosted annual exhibitions for UCI students, and several of our exhibitions were of artists associated with the program. There were some historic standouts, like Mark Bradford's first exhibition, Diane Gamboa, and the Domantay Brothers' opening boxing match.

**SL:** Last year I went to see two shows of yours: *When A Pot Finds Its Purpose* at BAM in Brooklyn, and *With Drawn Arms* at the San Jose Museum of Art, part of your continuing collaboration with the Olympic gold medalist and civil rights hero Tommie Smith (immortalized for the Black Power salute in the 1968 Summer Games). Both were politically engaged, but different: The first was a kind of political theory *in situ* through

figures of nationalism and patriotism (e.g. American Flag, Liberty Bell). The second resembles an alternative or anti-monument...

**GK:** A central premise of my studio is that to make ideas relevant, we approach everything from multiple angles. In the case of the show at BAM, I was inspired to present works that asked big questions about the state of our democracy while simultaneously offering a critical examination of how systems of symbolic representation and power are out-of-date, but doing so within a framework of hope and inspiration. Rather than dissect a problematic moment as would a scholar, I attempt to frame the overall crisis within a larger, poetic time scale, allowing for the possibility of recovery and transformation in ways that

aren't encumbered with cynicism or desperation. *With Drawn Arms* is a form of praxis. I am still engaging in questions about patriotism, nationalism and a critique of institutional racism, but in an active way — with my work creating conceptual pathways for me to be an active agent. The story of the works in the exhibition are documented in the upcoming film of the same name, so an even larger audience than the museum-going public will see how art can play a reinvigorating role in repairing cultural damage. Art that is visually compelling creates an abstract epistemological space where new ideas can be learned and absorbed in non-didactic ways. Seeing something amazing and being inspired into action is what that's all about for me.

**SL:** Your work demonstrates a deep commitment to racial and social justice, an honoring of Blackness, and a fight against anti-Black racism. Talk a bit about your work as an artist and activist?

**GK:** My work attempts to engage an intersectional set of concerns from both social justice and climate justice perspectives. I have been dedicated to fighting against inequality from a young age, with foundational experiences in elementary school all the way through to crafting an intellectual framework as an undergraduate at UCI and in grad school at UCSD. A big part of my effort has indeed been in direct support of fighting anti-Black racism and learning from and working with African American activists and scholars, from Congressman John Lewis and Tommie Smith, to Nelson George and Oprah Winfrey, to my frequent collaborators Jesse Williams and Deon Jones. Discriminatory systems work against all marginalized groups



*Image:* Glenn Kaino

*Photo:* Brian Gaberman



Photo: Kris Graves

*Image: Glenn Kaino, "Blue," 2000, Wave machines, wood shelves, and calibrator. Installed at BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music), Brooklyn, NY.*

and there is no singular methodology to help make change. But by focusing much of my effort as you say, to honor Blackness and fighting anti-Black racism, I try to prioritize contributing to what I believe to be the most urgent concern in social justice in this country, the violence and discrimination against Black Americans, and also model a needed form of solidarity by creating ad hoc coalitions from my position as an Asian American. We must fight for each other, with each other, and know that when we do so, we are also fighting for ourselves.

**SL:** 2020 is what I think of as “The Great Reckoning.” Many people are now talking about issues your work has been engaged in for years. What are your thoughts on this?

**GK:** Don’t call it a comeback, I’ve been

here for years! Ha! In seriousness though, I have to say that I was fortunate to have been inspired by the unique cast of artists and scholars at UCI that inspired me and gave me confidence to create a practice in support of my world view. I joined their party, and they joined the party from the generation before them. This Great Reckoning might be an even bigger expansion of the dialogue and hopefully our work collectively inspires the next generation of artists to keep pushing harder to fight for a more just world.

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*To learn more about Glenn Kaino and upcoming exhibitions at [glennkainostudio.com](http://glennkainostudio.com).*

ALUMNI



# Ross Jackson Named Artistic Producer for the Geffen Playhouse

UCI Alumni Ross Jackson will assume the position of Artistic Producer for the Geffen Playhouse, a prominent non-profit theater company in Los Angeles.

Jackson, a UCI Drama M.F.A. '15, found his way to Broadway three days after graduation with an internship at *Wicked*. He has since become a member of the Actors' Equity Association and traveled the U.S., working at some of the country's top theater organizations. After settling in Los Angeles, Jackson began his work at Geffen Playhouse in August 2017.

After three years in stage management with the company, Jackson will now contribute to performance season selection and oversee the production of several shows as the Geffen's Artistic Producer. Amid the pandemic, the Geffen Playhouse transitioned to digital performances, and with that in mind, Jackson aims to engage audiences in a new way.

"As artistic leadership, what our goal has to be in terms of the foresight of digital theater is generating opportunities to not just create engagement through sitting back and watching entertainment," Jackson says. "It also has to be finding ways to engage people through an area of participation."

Born and raised in New Orleans, Jackson completed his bachelor's degree in theater arts at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock in 2012 before starting UCI's three-year master's program in drama. Studying stage management under the Department of Drama chair Don Hill and Professor Joel Veenstra, Jackson's experiences in the drama program allowed him to explore different realms of theater management and establish relationships with faculty still working in the field.



*Image: Ross Jackson, M.F.A. '15, in class for Stage Management at UCI in 2015.*

Photo: Skye Schmidt

"The moment that I got the job offer, Don was the first person that I called," Jackson says. "I had never negotiated a full-time salary, so when I called him, it was a combination thing of 'I want you to know what just happened but also, help.'"

As Jackson's new position is now underway, he's excited to continue to support communities and cultures that have already been developed and foster a welcoming environment for every person who walks through the Geffen's doors.

"As an artistic leader and Black male in that position, it is incredibly important to me and important within the theatrical community that this is reflected, and should be reflected by other theaters as well."



## Kathleen Y. Clark Publishes New Book

Southern California-based multimedia artist and photographer **Kathleen Y. Clark, M.F.A. '93**, recently published *The White House China*, a provocative new book filled with photographic and mixed media reconstructions based on dinnerware collections at the presidential residence in Washington, D.C.

The project was inspired by a trip Clark took to Washington, DC, back in 2016. After touring the White House, including the official china collection and various museums on the national mall, inspiration struck. "I was looking through an old case of transparencies I have of antique engravings on the history of slavery," says Clark. "The images struck me as looking like toile patterns, and I realized slavery illustrations could combine with china patterns and they would look as though they belonged together. That's when I recalled the presidential china."

Clark's work focuses on highlighting the contradictions within each president's term. Each painstakingly produced image depicts an updated

version of the administrations' official designs. The art and book shine a light on the often destructive events which happened by decision or neglect within each administration, providing a stark contrast to the assumption of civilization and culture set around historic dining tables. Clark's book is receiving noteworthy reviews, including a recent cover story for *LA Weekly*.

In her work, Clark explores themes of environment, language, home, family and history. While at UCI, Clark worked as a teaching assistant for prolific social justice artists and professors, including Daniel Joseph Martinez and Pat Ward Williams. She has exhibited works in galleries such as CoCA in Seattle, the Portland Art Museum, Southern Exposure in San Francisco and LACE in Los Angeles. If you would like more information about the artist and to buy the book, visit: [kathleenclarkphoto.com](http://kathleenclarkphoto.com).

*Image: Kathleen Y. Clark from "The White House China," President No. 45, Southern White House China, Service for 12, Dinner Plates, c. 2020. (Courtesy of Kathleen Y. Clark)*

**For UCI Alumni resources, visit [engage.alumni.uci.edu](http://engage.alumni.uci.edu)**

Are you an Arts Alum? Learn ways to stay connected at [www.arts.uci.edu/alumni](http://www.arts.uci.edu/alumni)  
Questions or stories? Contact [artsalumni@uci.edu](mailto:artsalumni@uci.edu).



## OPPORTUNITY MAKER

# Q&A with **JANICE F. SMITH**

*Janice Smith is a longtime advocate for the arts in Orange County, having served on the board of the Bowers Museum, the Pacific Symphony Orchestra, and the John Wayne Airport Arts Commission. She served on the Claire Trevor School of the Arts Dean's Arts Board from 2005 to 2020 and sponsored numerous students through the Medici Circle Scholarship Program. In 2005, she received the campus's highest honor, the UCI Medal.*

### **Q. How did your passion for the arts start?**

**JS:** Music has always been a love of mine. I was a music major my college freshman year at Wesleyan in Macon, Georgia, before transferring to Kansas State and changing my major to elementary education. My involvement in Orange County's arts actually began on one of my children's school field trips to the Bowers Museum. I enjoyed it so much that I went back and volunteered as a docent, and eventually joined the board of the museum.

*To learn more about ways to support CTSA, contact Sarah Strozza, Director of Development, at 949-824-0629 or [sstrozza@uci.edu](mailto:sstrozza@uci.edu).*

**Q. You support many arts organizations across Orange County. Why do you feel it's important for others to support the arts?**

**JS:** I get so much enjoyment from the arts personally, and I think we all do. It's important to support because the government can't be expected to fully support it, and the arts are not usually a money-making proposition. It depends on people who enjoy the arts to support them. The arts are the joy of life, and that's something that we need more of, especially now.

**Q. How did you become involved with CTSA?**

**JS:** When my husband Ted and I first moved here, we had to go to Los Angeles to see any live performances. But when the university was being built, we were very interested in the programs. I remember we got lost once driving out to try and see the construction of the campus! From the very beginning, we wanted to get involved with UCI, Ted in the business and computer science schools and the UCI Foundation, and me with the arts.

**Q. CTSA's theme for this academic year focuses on arts and wellbeing. What are your thoughts on how arts enrich the human experience and support wellbeing?**

**JS:** I feel very strongly that art plays a big part in wellbeing. Art can be soothing or exciting and connect with emotions in a way that's unlike anything else. Especially now, when we are sheltered at home and cannot do some of the things we like to do, and we have a lot of time on our hands, arts can be helpful. CTSA and the Pacific Symphony have something almost every day for us to enjoy from home. I've even gone back to playing the piano, which I haven't done since I was 7 or 8. It's a good feeling for the soul and the brain.

**Q. You've been a longtime supporter of the Medici Circle Scholarship Program, which provides CTSA students opportunities in our community and around the world. Why is it important to you to support the next generation of creative leaders?**

**JS:** I think the Medici Circle Scholarship Program is a wonderful way to provide deserving students the opportunity to focus on a specific project during their summer vacation. The projects they undertake help them build their portfolios and their artistic vision. The accomplishments they make have an important impact on the creative paths they take. As an example, I followed three Medici scholars this summer. Jesús López Vargas led a creative team to produce a trilingual video project called "Zu Sein." Feyintoluwa Ekisola wrote her play "Ma Binu!" which tells the story of an African immigrant family through the hopeful eyes of a young woman. Paul David Flood wrote the dissertation for his M.F.A., which focuses on Danish composer Per Nørgård and how his musical work in the 1980s was influenced by the schizophrenic painter Adolf Wölfli.

As a Medici Circle supporter I was fortunate to hear these students talk about their plans in June and read their full reports in the early fall.

# Mental and Physical Wellness

*Dance Professor Kelli Sharp Collaborates with Undergraduate Students in an Innovative UCI Research Program*

*By Richard Chang*



Photo: Will Tee Yang

**At most universities,** undergraduates don't typically get opportunities to do serious research with their professors, let alone get published alongside them in professional journals.

But through UC Irvine's Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP), undergrads are getting the chance to do both.

At the UCI Claire Trevor School of the Arts, Dr. Kelli Sharp, an assistant professor in the Department of Dance, has teamed with two undergraduate students, Jessica C. Ruth and Andrea D. Valentini, to pursue a research project

*Image: Dr. Kelli Sharp (center) directs a team of interdisciplinary researchers during a previous study in 2019.*

titled “Mental and Physical Wellness in Collegiate Dancers amid the COVID-19 Pandemic.”

It’s a survey of collegiate dancers at UC Irvine and other colleges and universities in the region to determine the effects of quarantine, isolation, not being able to attend dance classes in person and a crashing performing arts economy. At the time of this writing, no live indoor performances with audiences can occur in Southern California and most parts of the United States, due to the coronavirus. The cessation of live performances is expected to last well into 2021.

Before the pandemic, Ruth and Valentini had Dr. Sharp in a kinesiology class. Initially, the students, both double majors in dance and another field, sought to explore some of the motion-capture technology Sharp has in her lab.

But then the coronavirus pandemic happened, shutting down in-person classes at UC Irvine and campuses across the nation. Nearly everything shifted to online, virtual instruction.

“We decided to follow the path of how dancers were responding to COVID-19 within their physical and mental wellness,” said Valentini, a third-year who is double-majoring in dance and anthropology, with minors in digital arts and economics.

“We saw a lot of disparities among students, and aspects causing them stress and struggle compared to the non-dance majors.”

Challenges for dance students include the environment they are dancing and practicing in. They are stuck at home, or in their apartments, or in some cases, in their dormitories.

“Very few people have spaces specifically designated for dancing,” Valentini said.

Dance students are experiencing cramped environments, she said, family members or other people around during lessons, and floors that are not equipped for dancing. Typically, a standard dance studio would feature a sprung wooden floor, which allows for some elasticity and bounce, aiding dancers in their movements and preventing injuries.

“We’re forced to train in our own homes,” said Ruth, a senior double-majoring in biological sciences and dance. “We don’t have a sprung floor, so (dancers) are more prone to knee, ankle and hip injuries.”

During this pandemic, Ruth has attended UCI virtually from her home in Hayward, in the East Bay of Northern California. She said she lives with 10 family members, and it’s a challenge to attend class without someone getting in the way.

Valentini is from Rocklin in Placer County, about 30 minutes from Sacramento. But during school, she is living in Irvine near campus with one of her best friends.

“Being in a house is not at all an ideal environment to learn, especially with ballet and modern dance, with all the turns,” she said. “So many of the basic needs have been taken away with regards to safety. It’s harder for (dancers) to create, to have pride in what they’re doing, when they’re so focused on not hitting their furniture.”

## Addressing the Basic Needs

According to Ruth, the UROP-funded study and survey are using Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs as a template to

assess what needs are being met or ignored during the pandemic.

Sharp added that the notion of “wellness” they’re exploring is based on the psychological principle that there are different types of wellness.

So far, they have already discovered that for many dance students, basic, physiological needs — such as food and rest — and safety needs — such as security and a sense of not being in harm’s way — are not being fulfilled.

“Our concern is how we can address the needs of these students from a simple basic-needs perspective,” Sharp said. “Even having food is an issue. We added in a bunch of additional questions to try to address these concerns.

“I’m concerned as a scientist, what are the effects of COVID,” Sharp continued. “We should delineate more what’s really bothering them and why. Hopefully, we will come up with a plan, another grant or a community ask to aid these particular students, or produce some kind of outreach. We want to figure out how we can help them the best.”

In order to meet some of the needs for students, the department of dance distributed various tools to students registered for classes, including 4-by 4-foot Marley squares (flooring), portable ballet barres, mini tripods for screen dance and mini skeletons for Dr. Sharp’s courses in injury prevention and kinesiology.

The students plan to survey about 1,200 to 1,500 students. The majority will most likely be UCI students; however, Valentini and Ruth will reach out to other schools, including Cal State Fullerton and Chapman University, and possibly Irvine Valley College, Saddleback College, Orange Coast College, USC and UCLA.

“Because of this pandemic, students have been really affected financially,

therefore physiologically,” Ruth said. “Parents and students have been laid off from their jobs, so money is tight. Out-of-state students are paying extra money for online classes, and their parents, a lot of people’s parents, had to do a career switch, or had to deal with not having a job.”

And the impact upon dancers, who rely on each other’s physical presence during practice and performances, as well as a sense of community, cannot be overstated.

“As an art form, dance is so reliant on relationships and human contact,” Ruth said. “It’s literally a human art form. If we rely solely on screen dance, we can’t feel each other’s energies anymore. And that is an integral pillar of the dance education here at UCI.”

## Creating Opportunities

On the bright side, the UROP program will include an end-of-the-school-year symposium, during which students and faculty will get to present their work. In addition to Dr. Sharp and her students, five other faculty members from the Claire Trevor School of the Arts and eight undergraduate students are receiving funding and support from UROP this year.

Plus, there is the distinct possibility that Ruth and Valentini could get their work published, which would be a step ahead toward graduate education, which they both said they intend to pursue.

“I am extremely excited and grateful,” Ruth said. “I hope our work is a really great contribution to the community of psychology, and mental health in general. But we also want to give back to our dance community, and the community that UCI has made. Also, we may be able to even suggest how we can aid this problem.”

Sharp says she has seen many bright, motivated students like Ruth and



*Image: Andrea D. Valentini (left) and Jessica C. Ruth (right), two student researchers working alongside Dr. Kelli Sharp on a survey of the effects of quarantine on collegiate dancers.*

Valentini since she started working with undergrads in 2005. (She originally started her UCI career in the School of Medicine in 1999.) She's happy to share her lab, knowledge and access to resources, academic and otherwise.

"We're at a very high-level research institution," she said. "I think the quality of undergrads that you get is extraordinary. Also we cultivate a pretty high bar and expectation, and everyone works together well."

About her students Ruth and Valentini, Sharp commented, "They've done a majority of the work. And they're both fantastic artists. They've taken a really unfortunate situation and are turning it into a positive one. It's pushing them to be multi-modal."

Valentini said she has already learned a lot through this UROP experience. "I discovered how interdisciplinary the arts are, especially here at UCI," she said. "To have research projects like

this one can ultimately create a good impact on the students and the school in general. I'm super thankful I'm a part of it. It has truly enriched my experience within Claire Trevor and UC Irvine."

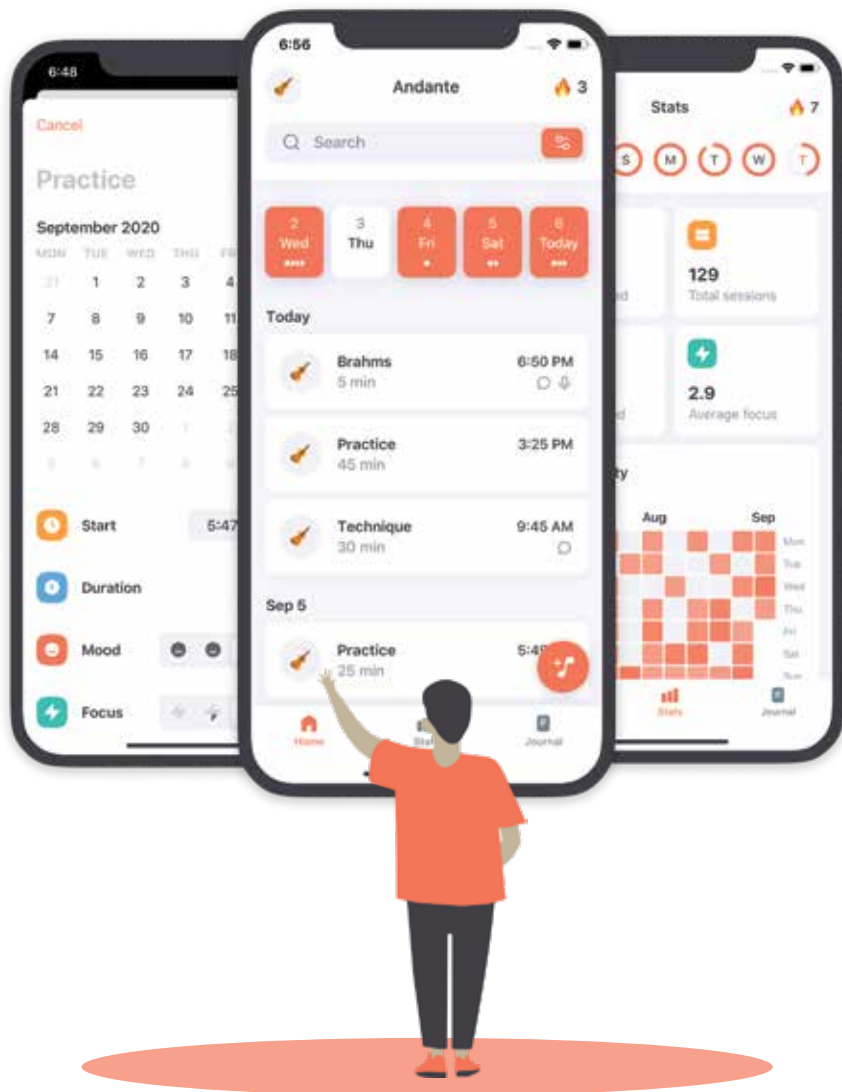
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*For more information, or to learn more about giving to the Claire Trevor School of the Arts, please visit [brilliantfuture.uci.edu/claire-trevor-school-of-the-arts](http://brilliantfuture.uci.edu/claire-trevor-school-of-the-arts) or contact Sarah Strozza at [sstrozza@uci.edu](mailto:sstrozza@uci.edu) or (949) 824-0629.*

# Practice Makes Perfect

*Miles Vinson created an app for musicians with help from the Medici Scholarship Program*

*By Christine Byrd*





**Violinist Miles Vinson** wanted to replace his handwritten practice journal with an iPhone app to help him track his practice sessions, similar to a fitness app that might help a runner train for a marathon.

After building, rebuilding, and fine-tuning the idea for nearly two years, Vinson, a fifth-year student double-majoring in music and informatics, recently launched the app with the support of a Medici Circle Scholarship from the Claire Trevor School of the Arts. Today, the Andante app is available in the Apple App Store to musicians around the world.

“I believe that practicing is a beautiful and integral part of music making, and my hope is that my app will help musicians achieve calm, focused practice,” Vinson says.

### **A Natural Talent**

Vinson didn't always feel this way about practicing. He started playing the violin as a very young child, but stopped late in elementary school. When he got to high school, he joined a small string

orchestra and found that playing with others made him more passionate about the instrument itself.

Because Vinson always loved video games, he planned to study computer science and applied to a number of UC campuses with this goal. But by taking a private violin lesson with Haroutune Bedelian, professor emeritus of music at UCI, Vinson got a glimpse into what studying music and performing at the college level might feel like. That inspired him to audition for the Claire Trevor School of the Arts music program.

“In my opinion, Miles is a natural talent both as a musician and a performer,” says Bedelian. “He is born with those exceptional gifts that will basically need guidance for development. He happens to have a ‘searching mind’ and also the advantage of being a quick learner. The rest comes to hard work.”

Vinson says that in addition to the supportive faculty — Stephen Tucker, the director of the UCI Symphony Orchestra; Sarah Koo, cellist and lecturer; and Bedelian — he was drawn

*Image (opposite page): The interface of Andante, an app created by music student Miles Vinson. (above) The Andante app allows musicians to track and analyze their practice sessions.*

Photos: Courtesy of Miles Vinson



*Image: Miles Vinson (left) and students from the UCI Department of Music assemble to play music at the Route 91 shooting memorial site in Las Vegas.*

to the students and friends he made at CTSA. One of his best friends is a violist who also studies informatics at UCI's Donald Bren School of Information and Computer Science.

"Music and computer science are surprisingly related, in the detail-oriented and the solitary aspect of it," says Vinson. "You have to spend time on your own working away at something to make it worth sharing with others."

One of Vinson's most memorable performances was an unexpected one. The day after the Route 91 mass shooting in Las Vegas in 2017, Koo invited a few students to go with her to play at the memorial site.

"It was such a beautiful experience, and really inspired me to keep doing music," says Vinson.

He recalls that it was so windy that the sheet music wouldn't stay on their stands, so they each took turns playing solos from memory. "There was one

elderly man who said thank you while I was playing, and it was so different than when someone joyously thanks you after a performance," he says. "That was very impactful to me."

### Practice and Persistence

Vinson had a habit of using a practice journal to track and make notes about things he wanted to work on. He realized it would be nice to have that all in one place on his phone, but none of the existing music practice apps offered quite what he wanted.

So he decided to build it himself.

"It's interesting because I always tell people I keep music and informatics separate," he says. "I never expected that a music app would be the thing that would bring them together in my life."

Over the course of two years, he would build the app, test it with friends, get feedback, tear it down, and start again from scratch.

“I ‘accidentally’ learned a lot in the process of creating this app,” he says. Not only did he become fluent in the iPhone app programming language, but learned about user experience (or UX), web development, marketing, budgeting and product lifecycle.

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“I always tell people I keep music and informatics separate. I never expected that a music app would be the thing that would bring them together in my life.”

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When he heard about the CTSA’s Medici Scholarship Program, Vinson jumped at the opportunity. Funded by donors, the program annually gives a total of \$20,000 in scholarships to 10 students to pursue artistic collaborations outside of their day-to-day school experience. While students often travel abroad for research or performance opportunities, the program was limited in 2020 to projects that could be completed without travel. The app was a perfect fit, and it gave Vinson the opportunity to finally finish the longstanding pet project.

Vinson’s faculty mentor was Matthew Bietz, Ph.D., an assistant researcher in the Donald Bren School of Information & Computer Science, who is also a cellist.

“This is an impressive project for an undergrad to undertake, and Miles has done a great job with it; it’s a really nice app,” says Bietz. “Miles’ motivation was very organic, too. He had an idea that he thought could be useful, and he wanted to put it out there to make the world a bit better through his work.”

In addition to allowing users to log and audio record practice sessions, the

app includes a metronome, timer, and a way to make notes on your work. More advanced features allow users to track their mood and focus during the practice session, and glean insights from that data; set daily practice goals; and create calendars.

## Andante

When the app became available in November 2020, it was downloaded more than 300 times in the first three days, and earned 25 five-star reviews.

“It feels surreal,” says Vinson. “I’ve been blown away by the support and positive feedback from my friends, family, and people who I don’t know coming across the app.”

The app’s name, *Andante*, is a musical term that means a walking pace. “I like the idea of calm, but steadily moving forward, that the name *Andante* evokes,” he says.

That feeling is especially important for students and musicians right now. Vinson is living at home with his parents in Oakland, Calif., as he takes classes online as he prepares to graduate from UCI in June 2021.

“Part of why I’ve worked so hard to finish up the app this year is that it’s especially helpful since we’re all at home and we don’t have our friends regulating our practicing,” he says. “Practicing itself can be a really meditative and beautiful thing, and I hope that the app can help other musicians experience that.”

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*To learn more about our faculty and students in the Department of Music, visit [music.arts.uci.edu](http://music.arts.uci.edu).*

*Read more about the Medici Circle program, and how you can get involved, at [www.arts.uci.edu/medici-circle](http://www.arts.uci.edu/medici-circle).*

# Is A Career In Dance Worth All

*Sometimes, there's a struggle between your passion and a longing for financial stability. At other times, your practical grandmother has the answer.*

*By Sydney Leong, a feature from Dance Major Journal, Volume 8, 2020*



Photo: Skye Schmidt

**“Are you impressed, Lola?”** I always showed video clips of rehearsal to my Lola, which is Filipino for grandmother. She looked at me and said, “Not really.” Brutally honest woman. “But you are so flexible and strong ... you would make a good nurse!”

Throughout her life, my grandmother always prioritized being able to provide for her loved ones and did so through nursing and juggling her many sidelines. Her comment was mildly discouraging, but I know she just wanted me to build a secure future. I took a look at my dreams outside of dancing. Someday, I want to own a home, celebrate more holidays with my family, maybe even

start my own family. Can I do this while working as a dancer?

Growing up in the Bay Area, the moderate success and/or bankruptcy of local dance companies laid out bleak prospects for a stable future. “How much do dancers make?” I tell my dad it depends on the company and its resources. He is concerned. “What are the numbers? These are things you need to know.” But I did not want to ask those questions. As a teenager, I only wanted to prove that I had enough drive, passion, and willingness to work hard to fuel a professional dancer’s life. My first dance teacher announced to us every day: “99.9% of y’all won’t

# The Sacrifices?

become dancers” because Dance (with a capital D) was apparently only for those who were ready to demonstrate their dedication through tough sacrifice.

“Dancers are crazy.” My dad says, “You have to give so much of yourself just to be given so little. Is it worth it to you?” When I was 13, insecure in my goals, and the resident expert of dance in my family, my parents could offer me no reassurance that our investment would pay off. Although my mother was more than willing to reach into her savings to support my training, that question hung over me: “Is it worth it?” I was skeptical whether the Vaganova school I was enrolled in was as invested in me as I was in them, so eventually, I ended up quitting my classical education.

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“True love is loving  
without expecting to be  
loved back.”

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For eight years I continued to ask the same question as my dance life challenged me to make decisions. Is it worth missing all the summer birthdays as I train out of town each year? Is it worth transferring school districts three times in three years when it would be unnecessary otherwise? Is it worth asking my dad to pay out-of-pocket for a surgery that would not compromise my health but was needed for dancing? Is it worth working 24 hours a week while taking 32 quarter units so I can attend that summer intensive? Is it worth the

sharp pains in my spine and pelvis and ankles? Is it worth it?

My first dance teacher would preach: “True love is loving without expecting to be loved back.” And I believed it, past the point where I had nothing left to give. Throughout middle and high school, I hung onto the hope that someday I would see my goals materialize. Finally, during my first year at university, I realized that somewhere in the waiting, I had severely neglected many other aspects of myself; I graduated high school not knowing how to talk or relate to others, and I missed out on so much personal growth.

Then there was the fact that I wasn’t the only one investing time and money in my dance practice; my family also made sacrifices for me to excel. However, I did not seem to be improving fast enough to justify the means. Finally, I decided: “It’s NOT worth it.” I quit dancing with a heavy heart, blaming dance for taking too much from me, and sometimes blaming myself for not having enough passion to follow through with my goals.

A year later, while denouncing my love for dance in the streets of Taipei, I suddenly saw how the art form consisted of more than status-seeking individuals. I saw dance as being able to pour life and spiritual strength into a community. I fell head over heels all over again. The long break gave me perspective and with it a genuine love for dance that is neither blind nor unconditional. This new love, however, has new conditions. In order to make it work, I needed to set some boundaries — in order to dance, I would not be willing to sacrifice my physical, spiritual, mental, or financial wellbeing, nor risk anyone else’s.

*Image: Sydney Leong performs in “Get Down at Grace Hill,” a piece choreographed by Jehbreal Jackson for New Slate 2018.*

I used to cry whenever my dad asked me practical questions about my career because I felt as if he was pressuring me to realize how selfish my goals were. But I finally understand he only wants to prepare me to succeed. Thanks to his persistence, I can finally give up comparing my work ethic or opportunities to those of others, and I no longer believe that passion alone can fuel a dancer's life. I can finally ask, "When will dance start to support me?" I can look for programs and companies that meet the needs of their artists. I used to feel so ridiculous for questioning whether "luxuries" such as medical insurance, physical therapy, paid vacation, and retirement plans even exist in the United States for professionals. Now I know that I need a clearer idea of the costs and benefits in order to understand whether a career in dance is worth the investment.

Last year at our Christmas party, my grandmother hosted a karaoke competition, which I won (hee hee). I remember her clasping my hands, clearly surprised, and saying, "Wow, you will definitely get hired." Turns out, it was to be her last Christmas with us. Before she passed, I called my mom, letting her know I was on my way back home. She told me through her tears, "I'll be fine. Lola would want you to stay in school. Dance well, so that she will be impressed OK?" But I went home and spent her final unconscious days with my family. Her visiting friends approached me, asking if I was the granddaughter she was bragging about after Christmas. I smiled thinking about how my little karaoke performance gave her more confidence in me than my BFA. Although simple news, it became a great comfort to know that she was indeed convinced that all my work at school was not a waste of time or money.

Thanks to the stability my parents and grandparents have built, I can relish in



*Image: The author as a young dancer with her grandmother, Catalina.*

the freedom to pursue dance. My financial wellness might be less predictable than my cousins' who are pursuing nursing degrees, but if one day, I need to give up dancing full-time in order to pursue other dreams, I can give myself the freedom to do so. In the meantime, I plan on being generous with the magic I learn from dance, to bless those around me. I do not have all the answers yet, but I am determined to make my career worth all the sacrifices I and my family made along the way.

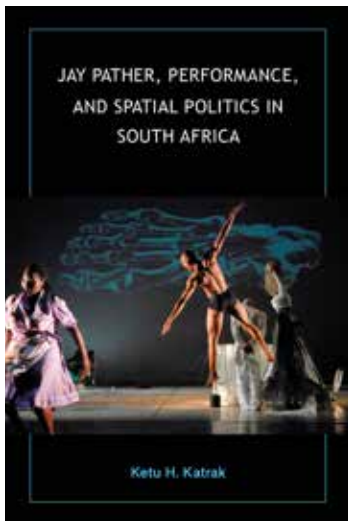
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*Sydney Leong expects to complete her B.F.A. in the fall of 2020 and looks forward to continuing her training at State Street Ballet's pre-professional track program, hoping to dance professionally abroad. She also wants to explore how indigenous dance and movement traditions are kept alive and bring meaning to practitioners in Taiwan and the Philippines.*

*Dance Major Journal (DMJ) was founded in 2010 in the Department of Dance. It features writing focused on the interests, issues, experiences, and concerns of dance majors, aimed at sharing information, research, advice, and points of view. More at [dance.arts.uci.edu](http://dance.arts.uci.edu).*

# Faculty Books

New books from faculty in the Claire Trevor School of the Arts



## Jay Pather, Performance and Spatial Politics in South Africa

By Ketu H. Katrak, professor in the Department of Drama

*Jay Pather, Performance and Spatial Politics in South Africa* offers the first full-length monograph on the award-winning choreographer, theater director, curator, and creative artist in contemporary global performance. Working within the contexts of African studies, dance, theater, and performance, Ketu H. Katrak explores the extent of Pather's productive career but also places him and his work in the South African and global arts scene, where he is considered a visionary.

Pather, a South African of Indian heritage, is known as a master of space, site, and location.

Katrak examines how Pather's performance practices place him in the center of global trends that are interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, collaborative, and multimedia and that cross borders between dance, theater, visual art, and technology.

*Jay Pather, Performance and Spatial Politics in South Africa* offers a vision of an artist who is strategically aware of the conjuncture of race and space during apartheid and post-apartheid; who understands the human body as the repository of the nation's collective history; and who recognizes the resilience of the human spirit through various struggles.

Available in hardcover, paperback and eBook. March 2021, 436 pages; Indiana University Press. ISBN: 9780253053688.

Professor of Drama Ketu H. Katrak is the author of *Contemporary Indian Dance: New Creative Choreography in India and the Diaspora* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, 2014); *Politics of the Female Body: Postcolonial Women Writers* (Rutgers UP: 2006), *Wole Soyinka and Yoruba Tragedy* (Greenwood Press: 1986) among other co-edited books and published essays. Scholarly expertise in African Drama and Performance, Postcolonial Literature and Theory, Performance and Feminist Theory. Recipient of a Bunting Fellowship (Radcliffe), Fulbright Research Award to India.

WINTER 2021



SEASON EVENTS

# Winter Quarter 2021 Events

## Innovation and Entrepreneurship

**March will mark a year that COVID-19 changed our worlds forever.** In that time, our faculty, staff and students have persevered to create and invent new ways of presenting art in the virtual realm. They have overcome latency issues, in-person connection, and limited access to the vast resources typically offered to them on the Claire Trevor School of the Arts campus. They continue to push against adversity, and the creativity that has ensued is incredible. This season, we celebrate our artists' innovation and entrepreneurship and hope you can join us for one of the following offerings to experience their work during the season.

## Winter 2021 At-A-Glance

Winter 2021	Towards a Raw Materialism	Art
Jan. 13	Celebrate Women and Design with Faculty Author Antoinette LaFarge	Art
Jan. 14 - March 20	The Black Index	Art / UAG
Feb. 25-27	Dance Visions 2021	Dance
Mar. 3	UCI Jazz Concert	Music
Mar. 10	Gassmann Electronic Music Series Miolina: Unisonus	Music
Coming 2021	"The Jubilee and Me" — Songs I never got to sing.	Drama
Coming 2021	Human Error	Drama

**All events will be presented online**

**View the full schedule of events at [www.arts.uci.edu](http://www.arts.uci.edu)**

*Image (opposite page): Ethan Philip McGinnis,  
"Out of Egypt, into the Great Laugh of Mankind,  
and I shake the dirt from my sandals as I run"  
Room Gallery, UC Irvine © 2020.*

Photo: Paul Salvesson

## ART: ILLUMINATIONS



### Winter 2021

#### **Towards a Raw Materialism**

*Curated and Organized by Simon Leung*

*Towards a Raw Materialism* is an experimental project with artists Patty Chang, David Kelley, Ravi GuneWadena, and Miles Coolidge. The event consists of an exhibition in the xMPL (Experimental Media Performance Lab) and several online events with artists and scholars. This project collects contemporary artists working across numerous media (film, performance, photography, and ikebana), each dealing with the raw material of the earth – metal, water, wood, coal, etc. – simultaneously as the content and the physical medium of their work.

*Online*

*Free admission*

*Updates: [www.arts.uci.edu/events](http://www.arts.uci.edu/events)*

*Co-sponsored by the Department of Art, the Department of Asian American Studies in the School of Humanities, with faculty participation from the School of Social Sciences, and UCI Illuminations.*

## ART



### **Wednesday, Jan. 13, 2021 at 5 p.m. PST**

#### **Celebrate Women and Design with Faculty Author Antoinette LaFarge**

*Moderated by Julia Lupton, Department of English, UCI Humanities*

Join Antoinette LaFarge, professor of art and author of *Louise Brigham and the Early History of Sustainable Furniture Design*, in conversation with her colleague Jesse Colin Jackson, associate dean of research and innovation from the Department of Art. Take a peek into the past and future of sustainable design in this lively conversation featuring an unsung heroine from furniture history.

*Online*

*Free admission*

*Registration links: [www.arts.uci.edu/events](http://www.arts.uci.edu/events)*

*Sponsored by UCI Illuminations*

### Tickets

**All Winter 2021 events are free and open to the public. To register for your free link to specific events, please visit us at [www.arts.uci.edu/events](http://www.arts.uci.edu/events).**

*Please note: Some events will require passwords and the use of third-party digital services.*

## ART: ILLUMINATIONS



**Jan. 14 - March 20, 2021**

### **The Black Index**

*Curated by Bridget R. Cooks*

*The Black Index* exhibition features works by artists Dennis Delgado, Alicia Henry, Kenyatta A.C. Hinkle, Titus Kaphar, Whitfield Lovell, and Lava Thomas. They build upon the tradition of Black self-representation as an antidote to colonialist images. Using drawing, performance, printmaking, sculpture, and digital technology to transform the recorded image, these artists question our reliance on photography as a privileged source for documentary objectivity and historical understanding.

*Online*

*Exhibit space (closed to public): Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) Gallery*  
*Free admission*

*Updates: [www.arts.uci.edu/events](http://www.arts.uci.edu/events)*

## DANCE



**Feb. 25-27, 2021**

### **Dance Visions**

*Molly Lynch and Tong Wang, Artistic Directors*

UCI Dance presents their annual premier dance concert drawing upon the fusion of dance, music and theatrical elements. The dance faculty will choreograph and reveal new and exciting works through this virtual medium and live-stream.

*Online*

*Evenings: Feb. 25, 26, 27                      8 p.m. PST*

*Matinee: Feb. 27                                      2 p.m. PST*

*Free admission*

*Registration links: [www.arts.uci.edu/events](http://www.arts.uci.edu/events)*

## MUSIC



**Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at 8 p.m. PST**

### **UCI Jazz Concert**

*Announced and Conducted by Kei Akagi*

UCI Music undergraduate students in the jazz program will perform in small groups and as individuals for the first virtual show of the year. The concert will be performed in real-time.

*Online*

*Free admission*

*Registration links: [www.arts.uci.edu/events](http://www.arts.uci.edu/events)*

## MUSIC



**Wednesday, March 10, 2021 at 5 p.m. PST**

### **Gassmann Electronic Music Series**

#### **Miolina: Unisonus**

*Organized by Christopher Dobrian*

Violin duo Miolina, Mioi Takeda and Lynn Bechtold, perform a concert of rarely performed new works for violin(s) and electronics, including works by French composer Jean-Baptiste Favory, UCI professor Mari Kimura, Lynn Bechtold, and others.

*Online*

*Free admission*

*Registration links: [www.arts.uci.edu/events](http://www.arts.uci.edu/events)*

## DRAMA



**Coming 2021**

### **“The Jubilee and Me” — Songs I never got to sing.**

*Directed by Karole Foreman*

*Sound Design by JJ Margolis*

*Visual Consultation by Jesús López Vargas*

*Stage Management by Lyla Flashman*

*Music Direction by Leslie Wickham*

Join us for a new musical revue feature students from the Department of Drama presented entirely online!

*Online*

*Free admission*

*Updates: [www.arts.uci.edu/events](http://www.arts.uci.edu/events)*



### Coming 2021 **Human Error**

*Written by Eric Pfeffinger*  
*Directed by Jane Page*  
*Assistant Directed by Audrey Napoli*  
*Dramaturgy by Scott Stone*  
*Vocal Coaching by Cynthia Bassham*  
*Scene Design by Melissa Tobar*  
*Costumes by Denise Larsson*  
*Lighting by Erik Alkire*  
*Sound Design by JJ Margolis*  
*Stage Management by Avery Evans*

Madelyn and Keenan are NPR-listening, latte-sipping blue-staters who are planning a family. Or they were, anyway, until the fertility clinic screwed up and accidentally implanted their fertilized embryo in another uterus — a uterus belonging to a small-government churchgoing NRA cardholder. Can these ideologically hostile couples make it together through nine months of gestation without killing each other?

*Online*  
*Free admission*  
*Updates: [www.arts.uci.edu/events](http://www.arts.uci.edu/events)*

**All Winter 2021 events are free and open to the public. To register for your free link to specific events, please visit us at [www.arts.uci.edu/events](http://www.arts.uci.edu/events).**

*Please note: Some events will require passwords and the use of third-party digital services.*

Tickets

# CLAIRE TREVOR SOCIETY

**Join as a Charter Member today!**



The Claire Trevor Society provides a front door to the arts at UCI for alumni, parents and friends to participate in exclusive experiences and network with fellow art enthusiasts, while receiving special recognition and opportunities to engage in the school's growth.

With your support the Claire Trevor Society enhances the academic and creative excellence at the Claire Trevor School of the Arts. Contributions to the Claire Trevor Society enable the Dean to provide essential support for:

- Student scholarships and fellowships
- Cutting-edge arts research
- Innovative exhibitions and productions

Each Claire Trevor Society member has a direct impact on the lives of our students and helps ensure a brilliant future in the arts at UCI.

We invite you to engage with the Claire Trevor School of the Arts in a meaningful way by joining the Claire Trevor Society today.

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For more information, visit us at:  
[www.arts.uci.edu/claire-trevor-society](http://www.arts.uci.edu/claire-trevor-society)

Or contact us at  
[artsdevelopment@uci.edu](mailto:artsdevelopment@uci.edu)  
(949) 824-0629

A close-up photograph of a person's face, focusing on their green eye. The person has colorful face paint, including blue and green, around their eye and on their forehead. The background is dark and out of focus.

# MEDICI CIRCLE

## SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

**IGNITE A PASSION THAT LASTS A LIFETIME**

**Scholars create the project, you provide the opportunity.**

When you support the Medici Circle, you play an important role in a scholar's creative development. Talented scholars in Art, Dance, Drama and Music propose ambitious summer projects that are supported by a community sponsor like you. Join the Medici Circle now to make a lasting impact on one of our future creative leaders.

**Contributions to The Medici Scholarship program will:**

- Support student projects that creatively participate in digital platforms
- Fund research or creative projects that focus on diversifying audiences or fostering inclusivity
- Provide financial support for project-specific educational opportunities

For more information about becoming a Medici Circle sponsor, please visit [www.arts.uci.edu/medici-circle](http://www.arts.uci.edu/medici-circle) or contact Keryn Sovella at (949) 824-8750 or [ksovella@uci.edu](mailto:ksovella@uci.edu).

**UCI** Claire Trevor  
School of the Arts

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Irvine Barclay Theatre is more than just a venue... it's an important local resource dedicated to finding new and creative ways to present the performing arts and engage with the community.

*Great things are yet to come.*

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תודה

Danke

شكرا لكم

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감사합니다

Merci

Takk skal du ha

Salamat

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Mahalo

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[www.thebarclay.org](http://www.thebarclay.org)

the **30**  
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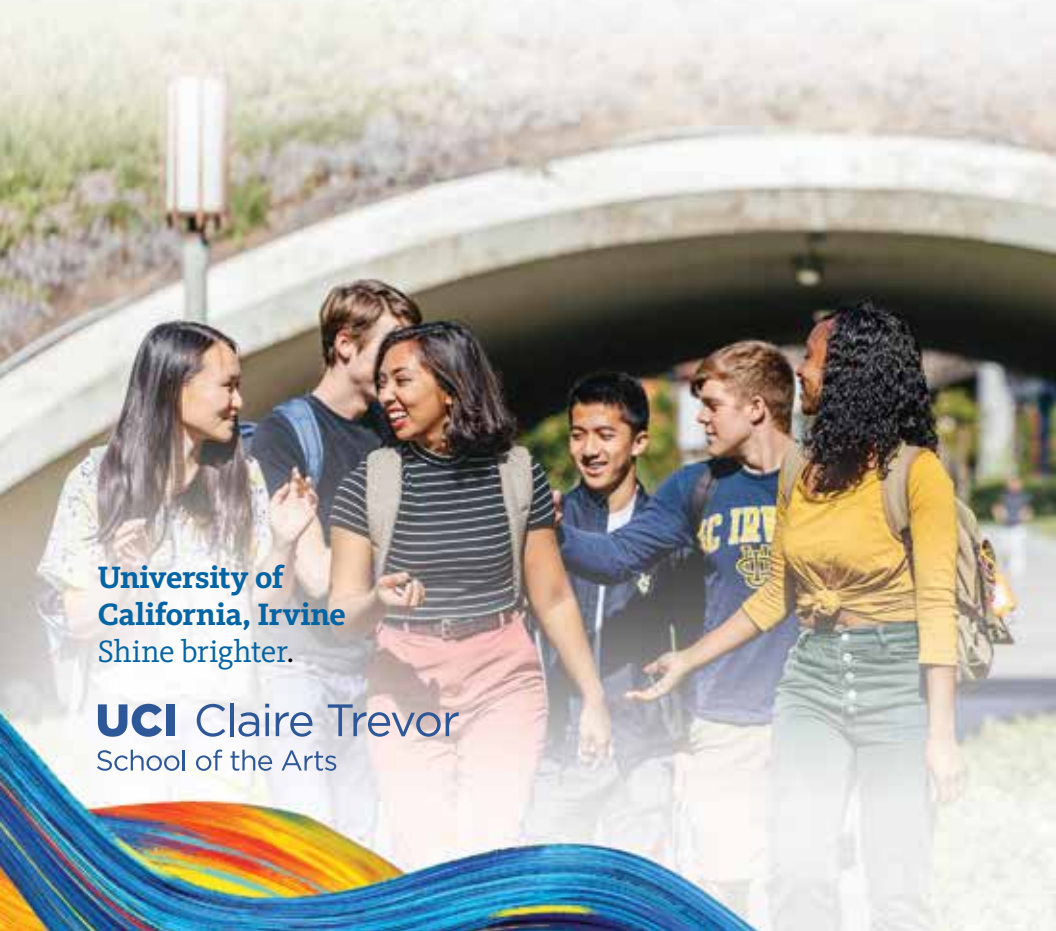
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Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Box Office service offers limited hours. Service is available every Tuesday and Thursday from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Please check the website for seasonal/intermittent closures.

[www.arts.uci.edu/boxoffice](http://www.arts.uci.edu/boxoffice)

## Contact

(949) 824-2787 | [artstix@uci.edu](mailto:artstix@uci.edu)

## Tickets

[www.arts.uci.edu/tickets](http://www.arts.uci.edu/tickets) (24/7)

## Stay Connected While Physically Distancing

Stay updated on our alternative programming, which includes online readings and live streams, virtual workshops, behind-the-scene exclusives, social groups, and much more.

[www.arts.uci.edu/join](http://www.arts.uci.edu/join) | [www.arts.uci.edu/events](http://www.arts.uci.edu/events)



Photo: Steve Zylitus

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<b>AMP</b>	Arts Plaza Amphitheatre
<b>AC</b>	Arts Campus
<b>BC</b>	Beall Center for Art + Technology
<b>CAC</b>	Contemporary Arts Center & Gallery
<b>CTT</b>	Claire Trevor Theatre
<b>IBT▲</b>	Irvine Barclay Theatre
<b>LT▲</b>	Little Theatre/ Humanities Hall
<b>RCT</b>	Robert Cohen Theatre
<b>R</b>	Room Gallery
<b>UAG</b>	University Art Gallery
<b>WSH</b>	Winifred Smith Hall
<b>WG</b>	William J. Gillespie Performance Studios
<b>xMPL</b>	Experimental Media Performance Lab

▲ Venue not on CTSA campus

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## Maps

[www.arts.uci.edu/directions](http://www.arts.uci.edu/directions)

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# UCI Claire Trevor

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