

# CONNECT

UCI Claire Trevor School of the Arts



Arts and Wellbeing:  
Producing Art in Absentia

Spring 2021 Season

*The 360 VR camera used to create a virtual tour for The Black Index*



Photo by Emily Zheng

# Dean's Message



## Dear Friends,

No — the robot camera is not looking at you, but at the remarkable pieces on display in the Contemporary Arts Center Gallery as part of *The Black Index*, the extraordinary exhibition curated by art history professor Bridget Cooks. In this case, “wellbeing” means not being there: Currently, the show is only

accessible virtually. But we’ve done everything we can to make your experience as compelling and impactful as we can through a pretty incredible video tour. The full story of “Art in Absentia” starts on page 6.

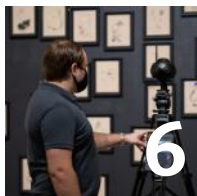
Carefully maintaining our distance is essential to our future wellbeing so that our artists, actors, designers, dancers, musicians and scholars can have long and successful lives in the arts. This is Molly Lynch’s goal in UCI Dance, as the profile of her work clearly shows. Molly herself has such a rich history as a dancer and choreographer. We also feature five CTSA alumni in this issue, each of whom has turned CTSA preparation into extraordinary artistic and professional successes.

We focus on philanthropist Sheila Peterson, a long-term, consistent partner with CTSA. Sheila is a central member of the Dean’s Arts Board, working to find support for scholarships to ensure that no student is prevented from pursuing a dream of being in the arts. Sheila’s children have set a standard for pursuing the arts, so we’re doubly grateful that she’s so passionate about her work with CTSA.

A glimpse at Jesús López Vargas’s multitalented involvement in CTSA reminds us of the central role the arts can play in creating a better society. Jesús has developed so many technical and artistic skills at CTSA (he already had the talent!) that he will excel in many areas of professional work post-UCI. He is precisely the kind of multidisciplinary artist we love to inspire us!

We are delighted to give you another glimpse into the world of CTSA. In a time of generally reduced activity, we’re doing much, much more. Please visit our website to see what’s available to you across our artistic disciplines. Stay artful and stay well.

Stephen Barker, Ph.D.  
*Dean*



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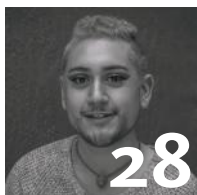
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## CONNECT

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Bruce Warner documents *The Black Index* exhibition in the Contemporary Arts Center Gallery.  
Photo by Emily Zheng.

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).



In memoriam

## William J. Gillespie

July 1, 1941 - December 10, 2020

**Philanthropist William J. Gillespie** was a devoted supporter of the UCI Claire Trevor School of the Arts since 1998.

“Bill was a unique and wonderful friend and supporter of UCI Dance. From his first interactions with the School, Bill devoted time, energy, and support funding to bring top ballet students to UCI, then supporting them during their time to degree,” said Dean Stephen Barker. “Through his scholarships, he helped launch the careers of hundreds of ballet dancers at UCI.”

Mr. Gillespie gave generously to Arts Week at UCI and funded numerous dance programs and scholarships. His most significant contribution was a \$1.5 million pledge in 2008 to create the “William J. Gillespie Endowed Fund for Ballet Studies.” The gift supported scholarships, fellowships, ballet and performances, guest ballet choreographers and international exchange programs with prestigious ballet institutions. In 2009, in recognition of this pledge and his other generous giving over the years to CTSA, the performance studios at UCI were renamed the “William J. Gillespie Performance Studios.” Mr. Gillespie’s generosity will continue to have an impact on the next generation of dancers for years to come.

*Image: William J. Gillespie (flanked by two students) with Prof. Alan Terricciano in 2009, during the dedication of the new building.*

# Art in Absentia

*UCI's first professional exhibition in a virtual format, The Black Index, benefits from processes developed for student showcases during the pandemic*

By Christine Byrd

**When the artists,** curators and preparators painstakingly install an exhibition in one of the Claire Trevor School of the Arts' three galleries today, they know hardly anyone will set foot inside the space to see it.

Instead, a camera with six bug-eyed lenses will snap hundreds of circular photos, which will then be painstakingly stitched together into a virtual tour, and published online. So while the gallery sits empty, day in and day out, the hope is that more people than ever — and from farther corners of the world — will experience what's inside it.

Welcome to the University Art Galleries (UAG) of the COVID-19 era.

## Being Seen

*The Black Index* is debuting in the Contemporary Arts Center Gallery through March 20, curated by Bridget R. Cooks, UCI associate professor of African American studies and art history, and supported by a grant from the Ford Foundation. The exhibition features the work of six professional artists — Dennis Delgado, Alicia Henry, Kenyatta A.C. Hinkle, Titus Kaphar, Whitfield Lovell and Lava Thomas — who use drawing,



performance, printmaking, sculpture and digital technology.

“The show’s artists are working on issues of Black self-representation,” says Kevin Appel, professor and chair of art. “The artworks often act as a source of self-expression that counters prevalent modes of representation of the Black body through photography.”

Cooks and Appel discussed bringing the show to UCI long before coronavirus became a household term, and decided to move forward with the show despite the restrictions on in-person viewers.

“One thing that was clear to me is Bridget’s desire not to delay the show, but to have it produced and seen, period,” says Appel. “So we have robust online programming that’s going to be well attended, and I’m hopeful that eventually more people will be able to see it in person when it goes on tour later this year.”

In addition to the digital viewing gallery and virtual tour, *The Black Index* at UAG features performances that will be posted

online, as well as webinars with artists and scholars hosted alternately by UCI, The Getty, the Palo Alto Art Center and Hunter College.

“*The Black Index* is both timely and timeless,” says Allyson Unzicker, associate director of the UAG. “It is a critical and celebratory project that provides a space for Black representation and experience to thrive.”

## Digital Developments

The UAG plays a critical role in sharing with the public what UCI students are doing, and what professional exhibitions the school supports.

“When everything shut down, we very quickly realized that we needed to have some way for that representation to continue,” says Appel. “Everyone in the art scene was scrambling to get their heads around how to move forward.”

Through both internal discussion and watching how museums, commercial galleries and smaller art spaces were



*Image: Bruce Warner, CTSA Technology Manager, uses a 360 camera to create a virtual tour for The Black Index inside the Contemporary Arts Center Gallery.*

Photo: Emily Zheng

responding, the UAG developed a new approach that relied more heavily on technology and online sharing.

One of the first places UAG and other art institutions turned was to social media. Unzicker says students in the undergraduate honors program had more eyes than ever on their artwork last spring, due to the galleries' push to share both art and student interviews on Instagram — which has emerged as the favorite social platform for art.

“Instagram has had a big influence on fine art viewing,” says Jackson Hunt, M.F.A. '20. “A lot of people see art online now, so there's a consideration to make your work legible on Instagram and on phones. It's a reality you can either embrace or push against.”

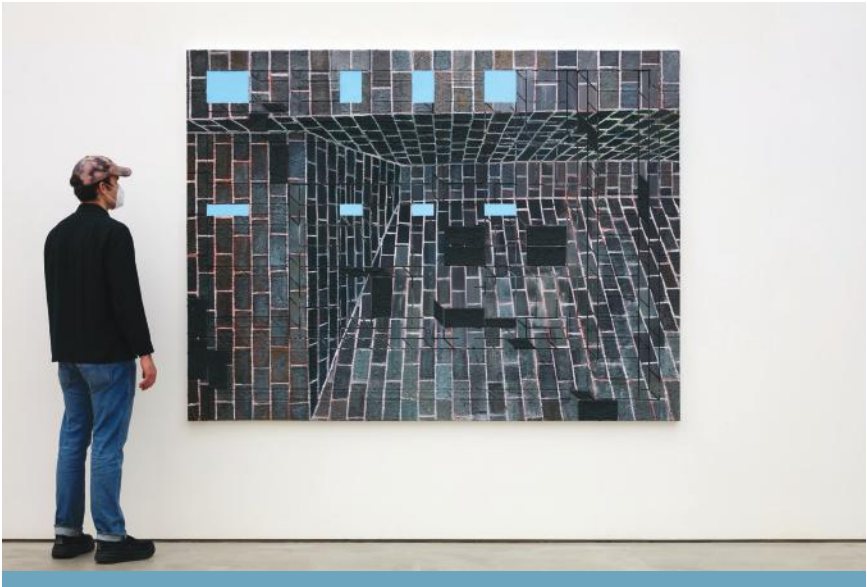
While many other universities continue with entirely virtual shows, the university decided to move forward with having M.F.A. students install their graduate exhibitions in the UAG, after several months of delay for safety. Students in their own cohort and

faculty on their thesis committee were permitted inside the venue to view the thesis shows, but for everyone else, virtual tours were available online.

“Part of the learning process is that final realization of their work in a gallery,” says Unzicker.

As with all things during the pandemic, installing the art required adherence to additional safety protocols. Graduate students who would usually engage a group of fellow artists to help install their show, instead worked solo with the preparator — taking much longer than usual. Although this, too, has a silver lining.

“Because of social distancing, we didn't have to share the gallery with someone else for our M.F.A. exhibition, so a lot of us really got to spread out and present something comparable to a big solo survey of work,” says Hunt, whose post-graduate M.F.A. thesis exhibition was in the Contemporary Arts Center Gallery (one of the UAG's three venues) in fall of 2020.



**Image:** Jackson Hunt (M.F.A. Art '20) stands in front of his painting “Untitled” (2019) installed in his Post-graduate M.F.A. Thesis Exhibition, delayed for several months due to the pandemic.

Photo: Paul Salvesson

While the space affected how much artwork Hunt showed, he says the pandemic also influenced his artwork in other ways. Once in lockdown, Hunt rethought the scale of his paintings, several of which he planned to be very large.

“It’s such a different viewing experience to stand in front of a painting where you’re really aware of the scale of the work in relation to your body, as opposed to mostly experiencing it online,” says Hunt. “I didn’t want to make a bunch of really large paintings that can’t be seen in person for the most part.”

## Here to Stay

Hunt and his cohort were adapting to these changes on the fly last year. But Appel believes the coming months will bring about even more changes for artists at UCI and everywhere.

“One of the elements we can see shifting now is artists are thinking through methods of documentation as part of the creative process,” says Appel. “We’re seeing this start to trickle into the studio now. So, this is a learning opportunity for our students to begin to wrap their heads around this aspect of their work.”

More than a dozen exhibitions have now been produced by the UAG for primarily online viewing. The man behind the camera producing the 3D virtual tours is CTSA Technology Manager Bruce Warner. Unlike a realtor’s virtual tour, an art exhibition’s 3D tour must be carefully calibrated to avoid distorting the art, ensuring text is legible, and capturing the overall placement and scale of the work. Warner collaborates with the artists to ensure the final product reflects their vision for how the show should be viewed online.

“The students are super excited to have something that will live on,” says Warner. “It gives us a digital presence,



*Image: A closer look at the Insta360 Pro 2, a 360 Virtual Reality (VR) camera used to create interactive virtual tours for CTSA.*

Photo: Emily Zheng

so anyone in the world can view these tours and know that our students are doing amazing work here at UCI.”

These changes, both good and bad, do not appear to be going anywhere soon.

“Being in the space is a huge thing, but I will say that the increased focus on sharing art online is not going to go away,” says Appel. “Galleries will seize opportunities for less expensive ways to get works seen, in addition to the in-person shows that they already produce. Like it or not, it’s here to stay.”

*See The Black Index and the M.F.A. thesis shows presented online at [uag.arts.uci.edu](http://uag.arts.uci.edu). Learn more about the Department of Art at [art.arts.uci.edu](http://art.arts.uci.edu).*



# Choreographing the

***Dance department chair and UCI alumna Molly Lynch prepares students for long, diverse careers***

*By Christine Byrd*

**Molly Lynch** wants UCI dance students to envision careers beyond professional dancer — from choreographer to artistic director, and nonprofit administrator to teacher. As professor and chair of the dance department, she’s the ideal person to help them chart these paths: She’s played all of these roles in her own multifaceted career.

“Molly’s sort of a tiny little thing and she does everything quietly; yet she’s a giant,” says Sally Anne Sheridan, an arts advocate who has known Lynch for four decades. “Her impact on dance in Orange County is really greater than anybody gives her credit for.”

Growing up in Orange County, Lynch studied dance and was an avid sailor. Lynch was drawn to UCI’s highly



# Future

disciplined dance program, which she describes as being run “with an iron fist” by nationally acclaimed dancer and choreographer Eugene Loring in the 1970s. Plus, each year, American Ballet Theatre’s Antony Tudor would come to UCI to teach. Studying dance with these greats “was like heaven” for Lynch.

Midway through her time at UCI, Lynch received a full scholarship to study with the Joffrey Ballet. She went on to dance professionally in New York City and with

the Louisville Ballet before returning to Irvine to earn her bachelor’s degree in 1979 and master’s in dance in 1981. Interested in careers beyond dancer and teacher, Lynch became an administrator with the Orange County Arts Alliance (now Arts Orange County), and later an event planner and fundraiser for South Coast Repertory.

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“Molly’s sort of a tiny little thing and she does everything quietly; yet she’s a giant”

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When Ballet Pacifica founder and director, Lila Zali, retired in 1988, she tapped her former student Lynch as her successor. That began a whirlwind 16-year adventure during which Lynch served as both artistic and executive director, growing the dance company from five part-time dancers to 15 full-time dancers with an annual operating budget over \$1.5 million.

The regional company filled a niche in the local dance community between pre-professional schools that put on dance recitals and the big-name touring companies that came to perform full-length story ballets like *Swan Lake*.

“She’s an extremely well organized and effective administrator and executive; she did an absolutely wonderful job with Ballet Pacifica,” says Sheridan, who was Irvine’s mayor when Ballet Pacifica’s home base moved from Laguna Beach to the newly opened Irvine Barclay Theatre in 1990. “She made the ballet into a conservatory of dance with only the very, very best teachers.”

*Image: Molly Lynch instructing students in an advanced ballet class in 2015.*

Photo:Skye Schmidt

## Pioneering Choreography

When Lynch left the company and joined the faculty at UCI, she launched the National Choreographers Initiative, a spinoff of a program she had established at Ballet Pacifica.

Each year, Lynch invites emerging and established choreographers from around the country to come to Irvine for three weeks to develop new creations with professional dancers. Then, professional dancers perform their work — even if unfinished — at the Barclay Theatre. With audience feedback, the artists can later refine their work and sell it to a dance company.

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**“Molly is truly a pioneer in the realm of encouraging, developing and supporting new choreography.”**

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“My work with NCI keeps me informed and involved with presenting and producing dance, which is where my heart is,” says Lynch. “It became nationally important because we were bringing together dancers and choreographers from all over to come together in this creative laboratory, not to build a repertory for a company, but to support the dance community in developing new works.”

One of the dancers who has worked with Lynch for years is Gillian Finley '89, who danced professionally for Ballet Pacifica before serving as its school director under Lynch.

“Molly is truly a pioneer in the realm of encouraging, developing and supporting new choreography,” says Finley, who now teaches ballet and pilates at the University of Southern California. “Molly herself has created some beautiful work. Her creative process is a lot like her administrative

process: thoughtful and organized with tremendous attention to detail.”

## New Era

Lynch has always been “the calm in the eye of the storm,” says Finley — which is especially useful in the year since the COVID-19 pandemic upended the arts world. This year is the first time Dance Visions, UCI’s annual showcase of new choreography by faculty, has been performed exclusively for remote audiences.

“Choreographing with dancers over Zoom is a whole different way of working, but it’s just another way of being creative, and that feels wonderful,” says Lynch, who is the co-artistic director for the show and creating a new work as well. “In rehearsals with dancers, we look at the space they’re dancing in and might say, “There’s a couch over there, let’s use that.”

The shift to online performances also opened up the dance department to new viewers all around the world. For the 2021 Dance Visions in February, viewers reserved a free ticket online to enjoy streaming pre-recorded performances, and a Q & A with the choreographers following each performance.

“Eventually, we will get back to live performances because people do want to be a part of a community, but right now, we’re learning a lot about how we can reach new and different audiences.”

## Diverse Futures

Lynch staunchly supports maintaining the conservatory model of dance that first attracted her to UCI as a student. Yet, she has also helped usher in changes to modernize the program and keep up with changes in the art form. That includes recently hiring the first two dance faculty focused on hip-hop.

“Dancers get the best of both worlds with our conservatory model housed



*Image: Molly Lynch's choreography "Elgar's Serenade," which premiered during the 2011 performance of Dance Visions, the annual faculty showcase concert.*

Photo: Rose Eichenbaum

within a research university," says Lynch, who minored in math when she was a student. "That's what stood out about UCI when I went to school here, and it's still what I think is great about it now."

Alumni of UCI's dance program have gone on to dance professionally with Cirque du Soleil, MOMIX, Nashville Ballet, Hubbard Street and more. But others have gone on to careers in arts marketing, arts journalism, stage lighting or choreography. Lynch insists on introducing students to the full range of careers available to them and, in the senior seminar she teaches, students are required to develop 5- and 10-year career plans.

"I want to open their eyes to the myriad of things they can do with a dance degree: choreography, history, writing about dance, arts management, running

an organization, physical therapy," she says. "We give the students a good broad dance education in terms of kinesiology, music and Laban, but also open their mind to other things they can do, stay in dance and be fulfilled by dance, not just by being a dancer, which can be a relatively short career.

"It's about giving students a full and broad education that encompasses all the different areas of dance and being able to allow them to make those choices within that," she adds. "I try to pass on to my students all that I've learned and experienced and stress that it is a journey."

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*To learn more about Professor Molly Lynch and the faculty in the Department of Dance, visit [dance.arts.uci.edu](http://dance.arts.uci.edu).*

# Anteaters in the Arts



## Rachel Fine discovers her calling by leading arts organizations

By Richard Chang

**Not everyone who studies** piano and music in college grows up to be a world-class, professional artist.

Some grow up to be world-class, professional arts executives.

Rachel Fine attended UC Irvine in the 1990s as a transfer student, graduating magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from UCI in 1994.

After training for many years as a classical pianist, she briefly considered

an academic career in musicology. However, thanks to her broad education at UCI, she expanded her field of vision and became an arts administrator and leader for various arts organizations. She's now CEO and executive director of the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts in Beverly Hills,

*Image: Rachel Fine at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts.*

Photo: Luke Fontana

a post she's held since 2018. (She was managing director there since 2015.)

"I knew nothing about UC Irvine when I chose to move down south," said Fine, who was born and raised in Berkeley, and initially attended college at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y. At Eastman, the young classical pianist suffered from repetitive stress injuries in her wrists, and needed to take a leave of absence.

UCI "ended up being a wonderful place for me, a place where I could not just study music," Fine said. "It opened up my eyes and my world to other professional opportunities outside of music. I took a lot of classes outside of my department."

At UC Irvine, Fine studied under Nina Scolnik, professor of teaching and a veteran member of the piano faculty. She also happened to be an expert in rehabilitating musicians with injuries.

"I think Nina cultivated a very supportive piano studio," Fine said. "I think to have a professor who's not only an outstanding teacher, but an excellent performer and musician — it's critical, but it's also inspiring.

"Piano teachers come in all different shapes and sizes. The strict Russian stereotype would never have worked for me. I respond much better to a loving, caring, nurturing approach."

Scolnik, who started teaching at UCI in 1979 and still teaches today in the Department of Music, said Fine was an ideal student. Under Scolnik's holistic, whole-body tutelage, Fine recovered most of her playing abilities.

"She was clearly a musician of incredible imagination, intellect and creativity," Scolnik said of her former student and current friend. "She just had the kind of polished maturity, grace and vitality in her playing. All of those things were there. She had a warm, expressive sound, a radiant sound.

"It has great bearing on what she does now, and what she has done. It takes imagination, and it takes a lot of creativity to be successful at what she's doing."

## From Academia to Administration

Upon graduating from UCI, Fine won a full scholarship to pursue a Ph.D. in musicology at Yale. But after just a few classes, she knew she "did not want to be an academic." So she took a leave of absence and wound up back in the San Francisco Bay Area, where she started volunteering for the Oakland East Bay Symphony and the San Francisco Opera. She also met her husband in the Bay Area, Christopher Hawthorne, former architecture critic at the Los Angeles Times and now chief design officer for the city of Los Angeles.

Fine had stints in New York as an associate administrative director at The Juilliard School, and in New Mexico as a rehearsal administrator at the Santa Fe Opera. She wound up with her husband and family in Pasadena, serving as executive director of the Los Angeles Children's Chorus from 2007 to 2010, and executive director of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra (LACO) from 2010 to 2015.



In 2015, she served as a consultant to the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, then joined as managing director that same year. She was promoted to CEO and executive director in 2018.

As CEO at the Wallis, Fine oversaw a staff of 55 full-time employees before the pandemic, plus dozens of part-time workers. Her pre-pandemic budget was approximately \$10.5 million annually.

She had to cut her staff to 25 during the depths of the pandemic, but she says the Wallis is starting to hire again.

Fine keeps her eye on the budget and day-to-day operations, and now plans and oversees online programming. She's also in charge of partnerships and fundraising for the institution, which opened in 2013 in the building that used to be the Beverly Hills post office.

"We are doing everything we can to keep our patrons and donors engaged and create relevant content," Fine said about leading the Wallis through the coronavirus pandemic.

"Again, this goes back to being a person with many different interests, and an insatiable curiosity. As a lifelong learner, a job would not be interesting if it didn't consistently present challenges and opportunities for me to be a better leader.

"I wouldn't wish this pandemic on anybody. At the same time, I have learned so much more about managing an organization in a crisis, to ensure that we're going to persevere. You have to be endlessly creative, resourceful and flexible — you have to call on all of those things."

Fine said she has experience leading

nonprofit organizations through crisis, taking two other SoCal institutions — LACO and the L.A. Children's Chorus — through the Great Recession.

"People aren't giving as much," she acknowledged. "It's a big challenge to be completely shut down with no end date in sight. But it is absolutely making me a better leader, there's no question."

Edgar Gamino, a senior product manager for Amazon Web Services, worked at the Wallis from 2014-2017, first as a marketing coordinator, then as a digital marketing manager. Also a UCI graduate, Gamino (B.A., '10) worked with Fine from 2015-17.

"She intuitively understands the importance of marketing in growing the influence of the Wallis in Los Angeles," Gamino said of his former boss.

"She has a love and passion for the arts, but is also just a very strong business leader. She's a leader who's generous with her time. She had an open-door policy. She's dedicated to the growth of her employees. I'm just a testament to that."

About Fine's leadership style, Gamino said, "She has a very calm demeanor. I think that's a very positive attribute in a leader. There are certainly times when things get very stressful in the performing arts."

While working at the Wallis, Gamino applied to business school, and says Fine helped him through the process.

"She certainly is a mentor," he said. "The thing I remember is when she said, 'Focus on people.' That was the thing that she is very focused on in her role — how do you keep people challenged, motivated, fulfilled? I took that to heart."



**Image:** The Wallis in partnership with Los Angeles Magazine presented “Center Stage: Women Leaders @ the Arts in L.A.” in Sept. 2017, featuring (from left to right): Rachel Fine, Debbie Allen, Ann Philbin, Marielle Wakim (Los Angeles Magazine, moderator), Danielle Brazell and Carolina Miranda.

Photo courtesy of The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts

## Arts and Wellbeing

Fine sees a deep connection between the arts and mental, physical and emotional wellbeing. (That’s also the theme for the Claire Trevor School of the Arts this academic year.)

“For me personally, no community is complete or well without rich and robust arts offerings,” she said. “I feel that way about my own life, and my family’s life too. Whether or not my children go into music or the arts, that’s up to them. But I want them to have the understanding that the arts are an integral part of wellness.

“It’s not just physical exercise and diet. The arts are equally important. I would not be where I am today without studying and pursuing piano at a very young age.”

Despite the tony town’s reputation for luxury, humongous estates and high-end boutiques, Fine said the Wallis has connected to “the soul of Beverly

Hills.” She has fostered educational programming that has welcomed more than 10,000 students of various backgrounds to visit and perform at the Wallis.

“What I’ve come to love and appreciate about the city is how interesting it is,” she said. “It’s an incredibly intricate, interesting city.”

And despite the uncertainties of the economy and the pandemic, Fine says she remains “optimistic, hopeful and passionate.”

“I know some are feeling depleted. I want to assure them that we are going to make it, and this is worth fighting for, and in the end, this is going to be a better organization in the long run.”





## Ryan Rost, M.F.A. '14

Jazz musician and UCI Music alumnus **Ryan Rost** released his jazz trio album, “I Was Here,” on Oct. 29, 2020.

The album features Doug Carter on piano, Peter Buck on drums and Rost leading on bass, and explores Rost’s curiosity through a unique compositional framework.

“I’m constantly asking myself compositional questions like, ‘Can I write something that I like that has no melody?’ or ‘can I make this weird time signature groove, and will I still be able to improvise over it?’ Then I set out to see if I can. I don’t often just write a piece of music that doesn’t have some sort of internal challenge to it,” Rost said.

Rost received his bachelor’s degrees in English and Jazz Performance from UCI in 2000 and 2002, returning to earn his M.F.A. in Integrated Composition, Improvisation and Technology (ICIT) in 2014. In 2019, Rost decided to set up a recording studio in his own home, a feat that he accomplished using the skills learned in the ICIT program. It was there that he recorded the entirety of “I Was Here” over the course of two days.

When reflecting on the album’s title, Rost attributes its name to the

inspiration behind the work as a whole: legacy.

“I wanted a document of the work I had been doing — something that I can come back and be proud of, hopefully I wanted something that my family, my kids, could one day listen to as a piece that I created and executed from start to finish,” Rost said.



*Image:*  
The album cover for “I Was Here”

As Rost grew as a musician during his years at UCI, he now cites Kei Akagi (head of the UCI jazz program), his bass teacher Darek Oles, and ICIT professor Christopher Dobrian as his biggest influences.

Rost’s album is available on Spotify or his website, [www.ryanrost.com](http://www.ryanrost.com).

*Image (top):* Ryan Rost making music in his home studio.

Photos courtesy of Ryan Rost

## Taylor Fagins, B.A. '17

UCI alumni **Taylor Fagins** won 1st Place in American Songwriter's 35th Anniversary Song Contest with his original song, "we need more." in January 2021.

For his victory, American Songwriter awarded Fagin \$10,000, a Martin guitar, and a personal meeting with a music publisher and record label. Fagins can also be seen in American Songwriter's January/February magazine issue, titled "Legends Issue."

Fagin's work, which draws inspiration from his personal reflection on the Black Lives Matter movement, was written in a single day. This song acts to express Fagin's emotions surrounding his struggles, fears and life as a Black man in America.

"It all started with a thought, something my mom said," Fagins tells American Songwriter in an interview. "She was complaining about my little brother doing something wrong, and she said, 'Little boys don't do that.' That phrase came up in my head when I sat down to write."

After graduating with a B.A. in Drama in 2017, Fagins left Irvine and moved to New York City in 2018 to begin his professional career as a playwright. In addition to his playwriting, he also learned about music production through his friend, Paul Chang, and began producing his own music and lyrics. When Fagins created "we need more," Chang worked with Fagins as the producer.

Out of hundreds of entries, Fagins' poetic lyrics and powerful message make "we need more" a standout song that uniquely draws attention to racial injustice through a vulnerable, personal lens.

To view the award-winning song and learn more about Fagins, visit [www.taylorfagins.com](http://www.taylorfagins.com).

*Image: Taylor Fagins*

Photo courtesy of Taylor Fagins



## Headed to the Grammys: Shabnam Kalbasi, B.Mu. '10 and G. Thomas Allen, M.F.A. '14



Photo by Tasha Locke

### Two UCI Vocal Arts alumni, Shabnam Kalbasi and G. Thomas Allen, can be heard on recordings nominated for awards at the 2021 Grammy Awards.

**Kalbasi** (B.Mu, '10) performed as a soloist and with the Los Angeles Master Chorale on "IVES: Complete Symphonies," nominated for Best Orchestral Performance. **Allen** (M.F.A., '14) performed on "Choirmaster" by Ricky Dillard, which has been nominated for Best Gospel Album.

Kalbasi is a SAG-AFTRA and AGMA classical vocalist who has worked with the Los Angeles Master Chorale, Santa Fe Opera, and more. She is an award-winning musician who has performed on some of the country's most prestigious stages, including the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and Walt Disney Concert Hall.

Allen is a multi-genre singer/songwriter with experience in jazz, blues, Gospel, R&B, opera, and more. In July 2020, he released his self-titled album that hit No. 1 on the iTunes charts for jazz albums. In addition to his work on "Choirmaster," Allen has taught master classes, guest lectured at the Peabody Conservatory, and presented at the 85th National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses. Currently, Allen works as a Private Lessons Instructor at Columbia College Chicago.

The 63rd Annual Grammy Awards ceremony will take place on March 14, and will air on CBS at 5 p.m. PDT/ 8 p.m. EDT.

*Image (from left to right): Shabnam Kalbasi, vocalist. G. Thomas Allen, countertenor, performed in UCI Music's production of Stabat Mater with the UCI Symphony Orchestra in Jan. 2014.*

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

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

# Letter From a Senior:

*I never knew my favorite college experiences would be rooted in performance*

By Lauren Knight

**As someone who joined** the Department of Drama during their third year at UCI, my biggest fear was feeling like an outsider amongst a tight-knit group of drama majors who all knew and bonded with each other prior to my arrival. I spent my entire first year of college in Mesa Court's performing arts dorm, staring at the arts campus just outside my window and debating whether or not I had any business in a college-level theater class. I thought my inclination to pursue entertainment news writing instead of an acting career would make me a strange fit for this program, and I didn't know if I would even like being in the classes I was required to take if I joined. The one thing I knew is that I wanted to steer clear of anything that would prevent me from feeling like a mere observer.

My perception of where I fit — or didn't — in this program was immediately shattered in the very first drama class I took.

During my first week of finals as a drama student, I sat in my apartment at 1 a.m. covered in Scotch tape and cheap acrylic paint, attempting to crank out a full set of 15 costumes in one night with a freshman named Rachel. Our final for Drama 10 was a group project that amounted to a 10-minute performance at the end of the quarter, and — thinking we were clever — Rachel and I opted to have our contribution to the group be costume design and production. With my insane junior year course load and Rachel's overpacked schedule, we

figured that costuming was probably the easiest option. As a result of that thought process, we also figured we could pull it off last-minute.

Cut to 1 a.m. at my apartment, where we discovered that creating costumes was a refined talent that both of us lacked. Overcaffeinated and loopy from hours of constructing horrible costumes, we laughed hysterically at every minor error we made that showed our inexperience in costuming. We'd gotten to know each other over the course of 10 weeks, but Rachel and I became close friends that night when we swore that we'd get through this mini-production and all of its preparation together.

Neither of us remembers the performance that happened the next day, but I'll never forget the memories that came from working together to create something with my newfound friend.

## Fast Friends

Truth be told, when it came to completing my Drama 101 units, I signed up to work on the run crew for *Hoodoo Love* solely because my friend from freshman year was an assistant stage manager on the production. As usual, I hardly knew anyone, but I soon learned that nothing brings theater students together like teching a show.

It was backstage in the Little Theater where I was introduced to a whole new type of bonding experience: 10-hour days shut in a dark theater during tech rehearsals. With a lot of downtime between run-throughs and a pretty strict ban on phones, I turned to the people sitting beside me and chatted as

if we hadn't been perfect strangers two days prior. When it constantly felt like nighttime in that dark theater, every exchange seemed to morph from small talk to a late-night conversation that you would have with a close friend. Tack on the exhaustion from running quick changes and scene transitions for hours on end, and 2 a.m. topics turn into a 2 p.m. conversation among people I was spending every waking moment with. I don't think I've ever gotten to know a group of people as quickly as I did in that week, and somehow, contributing even slightly to the overall functioning of this production made me feel more connected to this department than ever before.

I never got to see *Hoodoo Love* in its entirety, but I still smile thinking of the moments I associate with that week of insane rehearsals and performances.

## Coping with a Pandemic

When the pandemic hit, I had never felt more distanced from the creation of any sort of art. I wrote a piece for OnStage Blog that let out of all of my frustration surrounding the plans for online theater education, and when it came time to sign up for spring



*Image:* Rachel and Lauren after working on a performance.

Photo courtesy of Lauren Knight



*Image: Lauren Knight (second from right) and her classmates from the Directing Class Project.*  
Photo courtesy of Lauren Knight

quarter classes, I hesitated to enroll in even a single drama class. At the very last second, I added Jane Page's Top-Rated Shows class with a very minimal understanding of what it would entail, and suddenly, I was in a course centered around collaborative art. Each week, we were assigned a new group to create a short skit or presentation with, and each week, I wondered if I'd feel out of place in a class full of actors.

Every Friday, my fears subsided as I met new people who were just as excited to collaborate with me as I was with them.

Although we were all on Zoom, I always looked forward to rehearsing and devising new performances. I've never considered myself an actor, but this class forced me out of my comfort zone as I participated in each skit or presentation with a handful of other actors. I trusted my classmates to not make me feel silly or embarrassed, and even though many of them had just met me, they made me feel so supported that I ended up loving this class more than any drama class I've ever taken. Being part of a group that was excited about creating something new every week took me out of my creative slump that the pandemic had forced me into; something as small as a weekly Zoom rehearsal was a significant turning point in my sense of belonging at CTSA.

That's the thing about bonding over the creation of art: Sometimes the moments that bring everyone together have very little to do with the actual show itself. It's not always the grand performances that remind us all why we love creating art; it's the late-night costume constructing, or tiresome tech rehearsals, or the hours poured into making art that in some way contributes to the larger scheme of things. I fit in the drama program more than I ever thought I would, and it was through these moments that I realized I was every bit as welcome as those who may have been there longer than me. It didn't matter that I was newer to the program, what mattered was that I had a passion for creating art.

Every way that CTSA has become a home to me over the past few years can honestly be traced back to creating art with others in some capacity, and I can't believe that I ever wanted to be "just an observer" of something that wonderful. As I prepare to graduate, I know I would do anything to be back in one of those moments, sitting backstage — or in my apartment at 1 a.m. — to work on creating art with those around me.

*Lauren Knight is a communications assistant in the marketing and communication office for the CTSA. You can follow her on Instagram @llaurenknight.*



*Nick Ezpeleta*



*Tyler Dukes*



*Matthew Nelson*



*Adam Mun*



## Time to Shine for UCI Jazz

UCI Music undergraduate students in the jazz program continue their tireless rehearsals and education in a remote environment. The students perform their first concert of the year on March 3 in realtime to an online audience.

Learn more about upcoming concerts on the Department of Music website at [music.arts.uci.edu](http://music.arts.uci.edu).



## MOTHER OF ARTISTS

# Q&A with SHEILA PETERSON

*Sheila Peterson is passionate about arts education and student support — in part because she raised children who became artists. In addition to serving on the Dean's Arts Board for the last decade, she co-chairs the CTSA Scholarship Committee and is a member of the Claire Trevor Society Leadership Committee. She is also a UCI Foundation Trustee and chair of the Susan Samuelli Integrative Health Institute's advisory board.*

**Q. As co-chair of UCI's \$2 billion Brilliant Future Campaign, can you share how you see arts contributing to the overall vibrancy of the campus community?**

**SP:** Art is one field where there's a natural and beautiful interface between UCI and the community. CTSA puts tremendous effort into arts outreach programs each year, making sure that the community knows what the school has to offer, whether its dance or Shakespeare, the orchestra or art galleries. Arts is one of the best ways for people to become aware of UCI, enjoy the campus, and ultimately become involved.

**Q. You're also involved with UCI's Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute. Do you feel art plays a role in health and wellbeing?**

**SP:** Some of the amazing art in UCI's collections has been put up not in a museum, but at the hospital, because art and healing go hand in hand. For example, we know listening to certain music changes your brain waves and that dance can be used as therapy. There's a special crossover between art and healing, mindfulness, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

**Q. As co-chair of CTSA's scholarship committee and a longtime supporter of CTSA's Medici Circle Scholarship program, which helps fund educational student projects, why do you feel it's important to support the next generation of creative leaders in the arts?**

**SP:** Some of my own children make their living in the arts, so I know that as a mother, when your child says they're going to be a doctor or lawyer or M.B.A., you're excited and see a brilliant future for them. But when your child tells you they're going into the arts, you explain how they need to be practical to support themselves. So I know the students in CTSA have chosen a difficult path. They are here for true passion and love of what they do. I believe artists make our life richer, and student artists need all the encouragement they can get.

**Q. Why do you feel it's important to continue supporting student artists during the pandemic, when it is inherently difficult to share art with the community?**

**SP:** Feedback is so important in the arts, and artists are really suffering without that now. CTSA has done a great job pivoting and offering venues online for students to perform. One of the Medici Scholarships I gave last year supported a student working with technology to overcome that split-second delay over the internet so that musicians can actually rehearse together. If anything, this pandemic offers students challenges that will make them more creative and inspired to overcome problems.

**Q. If someone is interested in getting involved in some small way with supporting the CTSA, what would you recommend as an ideal way to dip their toe in the water?**

**SP:** Last year, the Claire Trevor Society started, and even with a small donation, members are invited to all the performances and social events each year to go meet other like-minded people. CTSA amazes me with all it has to offer, and is always looking for people who want to be social, get involved and come to shows.

*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).*

# Renaissance Man

*Graduate student Jesús López Vargas reflects a new generation behind the scenes in theatre*

*By Christine Byrd*



**Director, stage manager, producer, poet, photographer, videographer, designer, and an advocate for underrepresented voices:**

Jesús López Vargas wears many hats. As an M.F.A. candidate in stage management, López keeps things humming behind the scenes in productions at the Claire Trevor School of the Arts — whether on stage in front of live audiences or, for the last 12 months, online.

“My direct theatre community is having an existential crisis. They wonder what it means to be a theatre maker, if everything they do is no longer safe,” says López.

His role during the pandemic has been not only to guide fellow students to emerge stronger and better equipped for the future, but to help reshape the post-pandemic theater world to be more inclusive.

## Everything Changed

As an undergraduate at the University of Texas at El Paso, López studied language and translation. That is, until the night he attended a macabre student production called *Bloody Shakespeare*, directed and produced by Jay Stratton, an immersive show featuring a series of rooms where the Bard’s most gruesome scenes were reenacted. López was hooked.

“My entire life changed,” says López.

He switched his major to technical theatre and started studying lighting design. It wasn’t just an academic change: López eventually married the show’s lighting designer. The pair came to UCI in 2018, each to pursue M.F.A. degrees in the CTSA.

López became a leader and manager for the Brown Bag Theater Company,

a UCI student theater group focused on empowering Latinx communities. He swiftly helped reshape the group to include more undergraduates in leadership roles, with mentorship from graduate students and faculty.

“Shifting from a graduate-driven group to an undergrad driven group allowed the BBTC to grow and give significant educational experiences to undergrads, while allowing graduate students to be most effective as mentors,” says Lonnie Alcaraz, professor and head of lighting design, and one of the founders of the company. “This has reinvigorated the work BBTC has done and made it more current and impactful.”

## Spiritual Roots

For nearly a year, López worked with BBTC and UCI Illuminations, the chancellor’s arts and culture initiative, on a feature-length production involving more than 50 students from dance, drama and music. *Tzaqik: a tale of many*, which López wrote and co-directed alongside Shelby Caughron ’20 and Piper Bockstahler, is based on the Mayan myth the “Popol Vuh,” the story of how the universe was created.

“I wanted to reconnect with my spirituality, to pay respect to the native people of America, to honor them and share their story,” says López. “I want to say to people, ‘This story of the ‘Popol Vuh’ has as much merit as the Greek myths.”

More than half of its scheduled performances were sold out when, two weeks before its premiere, the show was cancelled due to COVID-19.

At that moment, López did not have time to grieve. He was stage manager for the student choreography showcase

*Image: Jesús López Vargas*

Photo courtesy of Jesús López Vargas

*Physical Graffiti*, which would become the CTSA's first streaming show during the pandemic.

"I was so sad and disheartened that the show that the students had created was not going to be able to come to fruition," says López. Yet he watched them channel their emotion into updating their dances for their new reality. "There were some pieces, where I could feel what they were feeling. I could sense their mourning, their passion, their drive to keep going," he says.

With his experience in design and media, López not only managed the behind-the-scenes for *Physical Graffiti*, but also mentored some of the dancers on techniques for translating their performances to video — adding animation, digital manipulation, and cinematography as part of the choreography.

"It was such a beautiful experience," says López. "I could see students evolving in their artistry and exercising new skills that make them even more marketable in the industry," he says. "Ever since the pandemic has started, the most successful projects I've watched are the ones started by the youngsters. Students are coming up with these really clever ideas for how to tell stories."

## Creative Adaptations

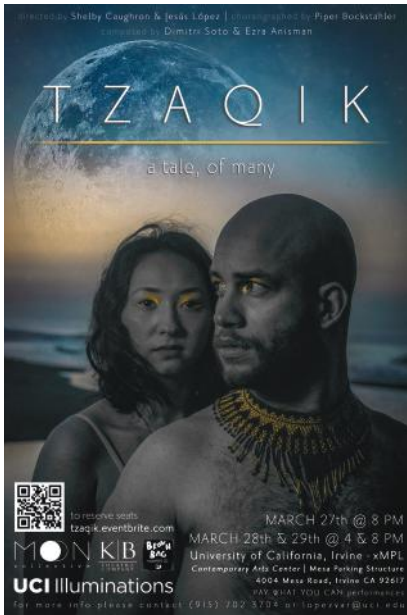
López, too, needed to quickly readjust to his new reality. In an act of self-preservation, López and his husband moved back to El Paso to save money and to return to friends and family.

"I was one of the lucky ones. I accepted the fact that what we're used to doing is not what we're doing, early on," he says. "I come from a literature, photography and sociology background. I study what's around me and change what I can change; adapt how I can adapt; but don't beat myself up for the things I have no power over."

Over the summer, López and colleagues put on a virtual conference "Recreating the Stage, a Roundtable for Our New Reality," to address the challenges theater youth face, both in terms of the immediate pandemic and the longstanding lack of inclusivity and accessibility within the theatre community. The project was supported by the drama department's Creating Art in Challenging Times Award and UCI's Inclusivity Excellence Fellowship, which López won.

"Although Jesús faced some real disappointments when the country shut down, he immediately jumped into other creative endeavors, organizing nationwide workshops of artists of color in the country," says Alcaraz.

"Jesús collaborates extremely well, his creative visions are amazing and he has the drive and skills to see them through.



*Image: The poster for Tzaqik: a tale of many, a feature-length production written and co-directed by López. It was cancelled due to the pandemic.*

Photo courtesy of Jesús López Vargas



*Image:* López with members of the Brown Bag Theater Company, a UCI student theater group.

Photo courtesy of Jesús López Vargas

I am confident that he will be a leader in this industry and will change it for the better.”

López also received a Medici Scholarship from CTSA to develop a short film over the summer. *Zu Sein*, which means “to be” in German, is a series of over 3,000 black and white printed photos which he sliced, painted and manipulated, then re-photographed and edited together as a video, in which the narrator wonders aloud and in writing, using three languages, why he keeps telling stories and making art, when doing so is painful. López says his mantra while editing the film was, “When I create art, why do I kill pieces of me?”

“It was through this film that I mourned and came to understand the pain caused by losing *Tzaqik* due to the COVID-19 pandemic,” he says.

## Looking Forward

López is managing the dance department’s choreography showcase,

*Dance Visions 2021*, which will be online, featuring dances created by UCI faculty. Stage managing a virtual show from afar is not entirely different than in-person: it requires organization, adaptability and foresight.

“My No. 1 job is still to anticipate a problem in the production before it becomes a real problem,” he says. “The stage manager makes sure everyone stays safe.”

That often means being a shoulder to cry on for other artists and performers.

“All these stresses add up, and the truth is that our students are hurting at the moment, and their leaders are tired and also hurting,” he says. “I’m trying to spread the idea that we need to lift each other up.”

The theatre community needs that now more than ever.

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

UCI Claire Trevor School of the Arts

# SUMMER ACADEMIES LITE

*A modified, virtual summer program*

*Focused on college admissions preparation and professional development for high school and transfer arts students*

## Summer 2021

### DANCE

July 12-July 16, 2021

### DRAMA

July 26-July 30, 2021

**Learn More:**

[www.arts.uci.edu/summer-academies](http://www.arts.uci.edu/summer-academies)

**SPRING 2021**



Photo: Couresty of Matthew Nelson

**SEASON EVENT**

# Spring Quarter 2021 Events

## The Show Went On!

**Spring marks one year** since our students started to produce dance and theatrical productions along with art exhibitions and special guest artist series online. The idea of creating art in the absence of our campus community and performance spaces was unfathomable as we grabbed our bags and shut our doors. It was an unforeseeable future of how our close-knit community would cope. Now, it is a matter of keeping up with the production listings and making sure our students and faculty have enough support for their projects.

Join us this quarter for a virtual production to celebrate the immense creativity and resilience of UCI Arts!

## Spring 2021 At-A-Glance

March 15-June 25	Graduate Student Performances in the xMPL
TBA*	MFA 2nd Year Exhibition
TBA*	The 17th Annual Juried Undergraduate Exhibition
TBA*	Undergraduate Honors Exhibition
April 15-17	UCI Dance: Dance Escape
April 26-May 7	How to Gently Unpack an Empire Critical & Curatorial MFA Thesis Exhibition
April 28	UCI Giving Day
April 29	Gassmann Electronic Music Series: Alain Bonardi: Electroacoustic Music from Paris 8
April 29-May 1	UCI Dance: Physical Graffiti
May 21	ICIT Student Concert
May 26	UCI Jazz Small Groups
June 3	The Art of Performance @ UCI 6th Edition
June 3	12th Annual DigiFilm Festival
June 3-6	The Coup de Comedy   Global Improvisation Initiative 2021
Coming 2021*	UCI Drama: A Devised Piece
Coming 2021*	UCI Drama: Human Error

**All events will be presented online**

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

### Tickets

**All Spring 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.*

## RESEARCH



**March 15-June 25, 2021**

### Graduate Student Performances in the xMPL

Join CTSA graduate students from each of the four departments for a series of virtual performances in the Experimental Media Performance Lab (xMPL). The xMPL is a black-box space with a focus on interdisciplinary and experimental projects. Below are the residency dates for students. Performance dates will be announced online.

*March 15-19, 2021 – Evan Lugo (Drama)*

*March 29-April 9, 2021 – Omar Costa Hamido (Music)*

*April 12-16, 2021 – Adib Ghorbani (Music)*

*April 19-23, 2021 – Marc Spaulding (Dance)*

*May 3-14, 2021 – Tomoko Ozawa (Music)*

*May 17-21, 2021 – Gosia Wojas (Art)*

*June 7-11, 2021 – Rachel Levine (Art)*

*June 14-25, 2021 – Laura Solomon (Art)*

*Online*

*Free admission*

*All events are subject to change.*

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

## ART



**Dates TBA**

### MFA 2nd Year Exhibition

### The 17th Annual Juried Undergraduate Exhibition

### Undergraduate Honors Exhibition

University Art Gallery, Room Gallery

*Online Exhibitions*

*Free admission*

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

## DANCE



**Apr. 15-17, 2021**

### Dance Escape

*Chad Michael Hall, Artistic Directors*

M.F.A. candidates in the Department of Dance present a series of screen dances from modern to jazz and ballet, highlighting the graduate and undergraduate dancers in the Claire Trevor School of the Arts.

*Online*

*Evenings: April 15, 16, 17                      8 p.m. PDT*

*Matinee: April 17                                      2 p.m. PDT*

*Free admission*

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

## ART



**April 26-May 7, 2021**

### **How to Gently Unpack an Empire Critical & Curatorial MFA Thesis Exhibition**

*Curated by Aziz Sohail*

CAC Gallery

*Online*

*Free admission*

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

## SPECIAL EVENT



**Wednesday, April 28, 2021**

### **UCI Giving Day**

Join the Claire Trevor School of the Arts for Giving Day in a charitable day of giving. Giving Day contributions support students in Art, Dance, Drama and Music by awarding the Dean's Scholarships. Follow us on social media for spirited Giving Day content.

*Online*

*For more information, [www.arts.uci.edu/events](http://www.arts.uci.edu/events)*

## MUSIC



**Thursday, April 29, 2021, 11 a.m. PDT**

### **Gassmann Electronic Music Series Alain Bonardi: Electroacoustic Music from Paris 8**

Composer Alain Bonardi curates a concert of music for instruments and electronics by French composers affiliated with Paris 8 University, including works by Jean-Claude Risset, Horacio Vaggione, Anne Sèdes, Yoko Konishi, Ariadna Alsina, Aline Gorisse, and Alain Bonardi.

*Online*

*Free admission*

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

*This event is made possible by a grant from the French American Cultural Exchange (FACE) Foundation.*

### Tickets

**All Spring 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.*

## DANCE



**April 29 - May 1, 2021**

### **Physical Graffiti**

*Lindsay Gilmour and Loretta Livingston, Artistic Directors*

Undergraduate choreographers press the boundaries of dance through original new works presented in the medium of screendance. Join the Department of Dance for this annual concert brimming with young talent.

*Online*

*Evenings: April 29, 30, May 1 8 p.m. PDT*

*Matinee: May 1 2 p.m. PDT*

*Free admission*

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

## MUSIC



**Friday, May 21, 2021, 5 p.m. PDT**

### **ICIT Student Concert**

The 11th annual concert presenting original new works by Ph.D. students in Integrated Composition, Improvisation, and Technology (ICIT) in the UCI Music Department.

*Online*

*Free admission*

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

## MUSIC



**Wednesday, May 26, 2021, 8 p.m. PDT**

### **UCI Jazz Small Groups**

*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 realtime.

*Online*

*Free admission*

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

## ART



**Thursday, June 3, 2021, 7 p.m. PDT**

### **The Art of Performance @ UCI 6th Edition Ritual, Performance, Utopian Consciousness and the Videophone**

*Co-Curated and Co-Directed by Ulysses Jenkins and Deborah Oliver*

*Featuring Barbara T. Smith and Ulysses Jenkins, with Kit Galloway and Sherrie Rabinowitz of Media Image*

The sixth edition of The Art of Performance features pioneering artists who were early experimenters with still-frame videophone technology of the early 1990s. The evening focuses on the artists' inquiries into the past, present and future of telecommunications through performance and dialogue in a cultural art context.

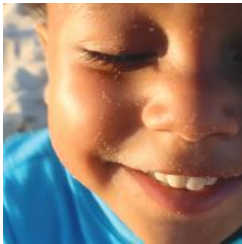
*A Virtual Performative Event in the xMPL (Experimental Media Performance Lab)*

*Online*

*Free admission*

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

## ART



**Thursday, June 3, 2021, 8:30 p.m. PDT**

### **DigiFilm Festival**

UCI DigiFilm presents their 12th annual movies under the stars.

The film festival features the best student work produced in the Minor in Digital Filmmaking. The event is free and open to the public. Please note, some film works may contain adult themes and content.

*Online*

*Free admission*

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

*DigiFilm Festival 2021 is made possible through the generous support of UCI Illuminations – The Chancellor's Arts & Culture Initiative, and produced in partnership with DigiFilm Society at UC Irvine.*

## DRAMA



**June 3-6, 2021**

### **The Coup de Comedy | Global Improvisation Initiative 2021**

*Hosted by Improv Revolution*

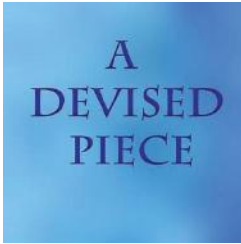
UC Irvine's Improv Revolution (iRev) continues its tradition of The Coup de Comedy Festival 2021, a four-day celebration of free fun for the community, featuring some of the best comedic talent in the world. This year also brings The Global Improvisation Initiative (GII), an international exploration of the art and impact of improvisation.

*Online*

*Free admission*

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

## DRAMA



### Coming Spring 2021 **A Devised Piece**

*A Devised Theatre Project by the Ensemble*

*Directed by Juliette Carrillo*

*A Co-Production with: Brick Theatre Company, Black Door Theatre Company, Brown Bag Theatre Company and Theatre Woks.*

How can we come together to form a more perfect, equitable society? Students from four diverse drama clubs representing underserved populations — Black American, Latinx, Asian American, LGBTQ — create a performance piece that illustrates their desire for, and struggle to build, a more fair and just community.

*Online*

*Free admission*

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

## DRAMA



### Coming Spring 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*

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

**All Spring 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  
[ctsdevelopment@uci.edu](mailto:ctsdevelopment@uci.edu)  
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WITH GRATITUDE



# Looking forward to welcoming you back

The Barclay is bustling these days. We are busy making plans to re-open the theater and bring it back to life. So, stay tuned and sign up for our email list to get the latest news.

Meanwhile, visit the website to see a variety of digital programs and livestreaming options.

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**UCI** Claire Trevor  
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## Animals in My Classroom

By Marcy Froehlich, associate professor of costume design in the Department of Drama

**The little yellow bird** was hopping across her head, which made my student's presentation even more cheerful. The subject was hats, so was the bird itself becoming a moving, breathing hat, or perhaps instead protesting the overuse of feathers on hats in the past? Peep had definitely become a member of our class. Did I need to issue it a grade?

The more we have become ensconced in our home schoolrooms during the pandemic, the more my students' pets have become daily parts of our classes and meetings. From Nova, the Doberman, wiping her large handsome curious nose over the camera, to Tigger, the spotted cat, assisting with homework. Cuddles and Baby have left their furry calling cards on various projects, Jack has verbally disapproved of the day's topic, and Story has either napped on top of a new creation or chased its composite parts across the room.

But don't think that it's just the students who bring their pets to meetings. Faculty and staff host howling dogs and cuddling cats. Moments of distracted cooing interrupt meaningful discussions, paws step on computer keys, which alter emails, and concentration is sometimes broken with the spotting of a surreptitious moving creature in the background.

I try to run an organized class, an organized meeting. But these creatures have been plotting to overthrow the well-oiled machine. I finally submit... and admit I will sorely miss our furry feathered friends when we return to teaching in person again.

---

*Image (from left to right):  
Denise Larsson with her bird Peep,  
Brianna Eckhaus in full PPE gear with her cat  
Tigger.*

Photos courtesy of Denise Larsson and Brianna Eckhaus

# 2020-21 Box Office Information

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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)

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

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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)

## UAG

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(949) 824 9854  
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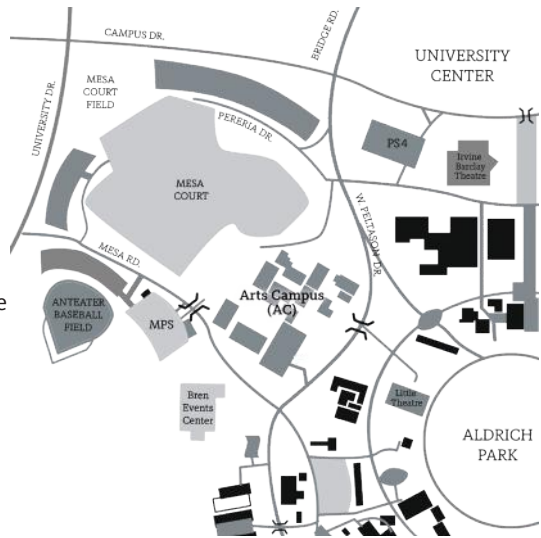
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# UCI Claire Trevor

## School of the Arts

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