



UC SANTA BARBARA Humanities and Fine Arts

Dear [Salutation \(Letter\)](#),

Out of adversity, comes opportunity...

Welcome to Fall 2020 as faculty, students and staff begin this academic year with passion, energy and enthusiasm. Throughout the challenges of these past months and our transition to remote learning, we move forward with a focus on opportunity and innovation. We thank you, our committed donors, for your generous support ensuring we are able to thrive during this time and continue to provide healing that only the power of the arts can provide to society.

Through these challenging times, the department remains committed to producing dynamic and compelling work. We were gratified many of you joined us – by the hundreds – to watch these productions from your home, including:

- LAUNCH PAD's *Alone Together*, led by Artistic Director Risa Brainin and Professor Annie Torsiglieri, a live Zoom Festival of 39 monologues and short plays commissioned by 24 playwrights, premiered on June 6, 2020. The entire collection, edited by our own Professor Davies King, was published in August by Dramatic Publishing;
- *Naked Shakes*, adapted by Irwin Appel, Department Chair, presented virtual performances of *Immortal Longings*, a work that combines Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra* and George Bernard Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra*.

After these rich experiments, we continue to retool our curriculum to address current issues including the challenges of online learning, COVID-19 and systemic racism and racial justice. We have a schedule of dynamic new work planned and invite you to join us in Fall Quarter for:

- A newly commissioned play by nationally renowned and LAUNCH PAD playwright Brian Otaño, directed by guest artist Shirley Jo Finney;
- Suzan-Lori Parks' seminal work *365 Days, 365 Plays* directed by our undergraduate directing concentration students;

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- Santa Barbara Dance Theater's Brandon Whited, Assistant Professor and Associate Director, will work with the professional company dancers to develop *Harbor: a series*, a compilation of short dance films that combine into an episodic whole;
- AMPLIFY is a new theater initiative led by Professor Annie Torsiglieri which amplifies and supports the voices and stories of underrepresented people in order to promote justice, equity, diversity and inclusion on campus and in our world;
- As part of AMPLIFY, LAUNCH PAD kicks off a reading series of six to eight new plays by BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) writers in collaboration with the National New Play Network;
- UCSB Dance Company, directed by Delila Moseley, will present virtual performances created online in the fall by a New York guest choreographer, faculty and alumni. Virtual, live residency in winter will include setting a work by Donald McKayle, honored as a "Master of African American Choreography" at the John F. Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.;
- Professor Annie Torsiglieri will be directing a devised theater piece for Zoom called *Generations*. The play will be created using research, interview and guided improvisation and will focus on the actors' embodiment and stories of real or imagined past family members;
- UCSB Dance Ether Festival embarks on its first year with short form dance/art films by UC Santa Barbara student creators. These artists will be exploring collage based dance films using archival, found and original footage to build a new dance art form in video format.

Two additional programs focused on *Black Lives Matter* will be presented through *The Wisdom Lab*:

- A virtual exhibit of street photography from Los Angeles, CA and Louisville, KY curated by graduate students Sekani Robinson and Maiza Hixson, and;
- A series of three plenary lectures titled *Jazz and Black Female Corporeality* presented by Guggenheim Fellow, Constance Valis-Hill, with still and moving image media.

These original works, scholarship and dialogues are possible because of you. As we begin the new academic year, we invite our community of donors, alumni and friends to support us by making a gift.

You recently gave:

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Last Gift Allocation 1
Last Gift Allocation 2

Your consideration to match, or exceed, this amount ensures our ability to continue creating dynamic projects for our students, faculty, staff and audiences. Thank you!! You have made our work possible through the years. Join us again to bring vibrant theatricality, cutting edge research, dialogues in social justice and a heightened understanding of our world to UC Santa Barbara now and into the future.

With gratitude,

Irwin Appel
 Department Chair, Theater and Dance

Christina McCarthy
 Vice-Chair, Theater and Dance