UC SANTA BARBARA

THE Current

September 23, 2015
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A Season of Creative Possibilities

Today marks the first day of fall, and as classes get underway at UC Santa Barbara, so does another season of theater, dance, music, art and film. Many of these events, all of which are open to the public, feature UCSB students doing what they do best, often side-by-side with experienced faculty mentors.

“We are so proud of our thriving fine arts programs,” said John Majewski, the campus’s interim dean of humanities and fine arts. “This fall promises to be filled with exciting events and performances that showcase our extraordinarily talented faculty and students, creating unique experiences for campus and the Santa Barbara community.”

Following is a sampling of fall arts events at UCSB:

Music to Your Ears

Jill Felber, professor and chair of the music department, noted that this season’s offerings “will showcase the diversity of our vibrant music program,” from classical to contemporary.

On October 23, Paul Berkowitz will present Beethoven’s rarely performed “33 Variations on a Theme by Diabelli, Op. 120” at 7:30 p.m. in Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall. Admission is free for UCSB students and children under 12, $5 for non-UCSB students and $10 for adults.

Other performances include the University Wind Ensemble, the University Chamber Orchestra and Chamber Players, the Ensemble for Contemporary Music, Jazz Combos, the Gospel Choir, the Chamber Choir and Women's Chorus and the Middle East Ensemble, whose Nov. 21 concert will feature soprano Isabel Bayrakdarian. Bayrakdarian is also a lecturer in the music department.

Complete information about the upcoming music season is available at http://www.music.ucsb.edu/

Strength in Movement

The theater and dance department's 2015-16 season begins with a production of "Venus" by playwright Suzan Lori-Parks. Directed by Tom Whitaker, an associate professor of theater at UCSB, "Venus" draws from the real-life story of the exploitation of Sarah Baartman, a young black woman who was lured from her home in South Africa to star in one of the most famous freak shows of the 19th century.

Noted Whitaker, "We have a very talented multicultural cast; live musicians directed by Jon Nathan, director of UCSB's jazz ensemble; wonderful designs being developed by our skilled departmental designers; and of course, Suzan-Lori Parks' powerful and theatrical text." The play opens Nov. 6 and continues through Nov. 15 at UCSB's Performing Arts Theater.

Under the direction of dance lecturer Christina McCarthy, the UCSB Fall Dance Concert on Dec. 4 and 5 will feature works by five dance students completing their bachelor of fine arts degrees. They will be collaborating with UCSB art and music students on set pieces and musical compositions for their dances.

In addition, the UCSB Dance Company will perform Cherice Barton's "Oh What a World." Barton choreographed Katy Perry's performance at the 57th Annual Grammy Awards and recently joined the creative team of the television series "America's Got Talent" as choreography associate, following her work with George Lucas.

"The Fall Dance Concert gives us the opportunity to showcase the brilliant choreography of our BFA dance students, as well as the unique talents of our immensely gifted faculty members," said McCarthy. "It also is an illustration of the depth and breadth of UCSB's rigorous dance program."

The concert will be held at UCSB's Hatlen Theater at 7:30 p.m. on Dec. 4 and at 2 and 7:30 p.m. on Dec. 5. Additional information about the theater and dance department's fall season is available at http://www.theaterdance.ucsb.edu.

On the Big Screen

The department of Film and Media Studies presents a host of special screenings at UCSB's Pollock Theater.

On Oct. 1, a showing of "American Beauty" will be followed by a discussion with Academy Award-winning screenwriter Alan Ball. Ball earned additional acclaim, including an Emmy Award, for the HBO series "True Blood" and "Six Feet Under."

"Vamps! Icons of the Silver Screen" will follow with screenings of "Nosferatu" (1922) on Oct. 28; "It" (1927) on Nov. 18; and "Pandora's Box" (1925), complete with live piano accompaniment, on Dec. 2.

All showings begin at 7 p.m. and tickets are $5 for students and $10 for all others. Complete information is available at www.carseywolf.ucsb.edu/pollock.

The Beauty of Shapes

UCSB's Art, Design & Architecture Museum has four fall exhibitions that will continue through Dec. 6.

"Walter S. White: Inventions in Midcentury Architecture" features the work of inventor, builder and architect Walter S. White, known for his midcentury homes in the Coachella Valley.

"Women are Beautiful: Photographs by Garry Winogrand" examines the problematic nature of the male gaze behind the camera lens.

Artist-in-Residence Stephen Westfall will collaborate with UCSB undergraduate art students to install a massive wall painting in the museum's Nachman Gallery. The painting will cover all four walls and include a series of multicolored diamonds.

Finally, in "Talking Back: New Acquisitions," the museum highlights works by Lockwood de Forest, Nancy Power and Andy Warhol, among others.

“I’m thrilled with the fall exhibitions, as they highlight the museum’s teaching mission, treasures from our collection and a terrific alumnus,” said Elyse Gonzales, acting director of the Art, Design & Architecture Museum, as well as its curator of exhibitions. “‘Walter S. White: Inventions in Midcentury Architecture,’ ‘Talking Back: New Acquisitions,’ and ‘Women Are Beautiful: Photographs by Garry Winogrand,’ curated by UCSB undergraduate Xochitl Duenas, all feature works owned by the museum.”

The Art, Design & Architecture Museum is open Wednesday through Sunday from noon to 5 p.m., with additional evening hours from 5-8 p.m. on Thursdays. Admission is free. More information about the museum and about current exhibitions is available at http://www.museum.ucsb.edu.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.