UC SANTA BARBARA
THE Current

May 17, 2016
Shelly Leachman

Table of Silence Project UCSB: We Remember

Moving to the strains of the flute and the beat of the bass drum, the dancers — dozens of them — form patterns of concentric circles. They swirl into a human labyrinth that symbolizes eternity, purity and the continuing cycle of life. The music stops and the dancers extend their arms upward in a moment of silence and a gesture of universal peace.

That message of peace is at the heart of a special ceremonial performance at UC Santa Barbara to commemorate the second anniversary of the tragedy in Isla Vista. Choreographer Jacqulyn Buglisi will stage “Table of Silence,” a dance she originally conceived as a 9/11 performance tribute, on 75 dance majors at UCSB.

The performance will take place Monday, May 23, at noon in Storke Plaza.

Flautist and UCSB alumnus Azeem Ward, UCSB percussionist William Pasley, and vocalists from the campus a cappella group, Naked Voices, under the direction of Patrick Lindley, will provide music.

Created by Buglisi of New York-based Buglisi Dance Theatre, “Table of Silence Project UCSB: We Remember” is sponsored by alumnus and UC Santa Barbara Foundation Trustee John Arnhold. The dance tribute will also stream live beginning at noon on May 23.

“This collaborative performance of ‘Table of Silence’ will be a meaningful way to remember and honor the students who are no longer with us, and to celebrate the strength and resilience of the UCSB community,” said director of dance Christina McCarthy, vice chair of UCSB’s Department of Theater and Dance.

Stronger Than Ever

To be sure, strength and resilience together are the prevailing and ever-growing spirit of the UCSB community, both on campus and off, where solidarity has not only taken root, but also flowered.

“There is a lot of pride at UCSB in the strength and resilience of our students, faculty and staff,” said Debbie Fleming, assistant vice chancellor for student affairs. “There also is a renewed sense of hopefulness and optimism about the community of Isla Vista. The high levels of compassion and caring in our community helped us all to heal and begin to recover after the tragedy, and that compassion and caring are still strong now, stronger even, two years later.”

Memorial Scholarships and Fellowship

Such ideals, and a demonstrated commitment to bettering their community, are reflected in the recently announced inaugural recipients of the memorial scholarships and fellowship honoring the UCSB students killed during the events of May 23, 2014. Meant to memorialize the students and their lasting contribution to the UCSB community, each fund is as unique as the student whose name it bears.

• Taylor J. Stolzfus, recipient of the George Chen Memorial Scholarship, is an economics and accounting major and an active tutor and mentor to fellow students.

• Lindsey Choate, recipient of the Katherine Breann Cooper Memorial Scholarship, is a double major in classics and the history of art and architecture. She has led a team that assisted in preserving important Chumash artifacts.

• Aileen Fullchange, recipient of the James Hong Memorial Research Fellowship, is a doctoral student in counseling, clinical and school psychology. She is working to advance policy that supports at-risk youth in an effort to prevent victimization and violence.

• Joshua Ortiz, recipient of the Christopher Michaels Martinez Memorial Scholarship, is an English major who writes for the Daily Nexus, works with Associated Students

Recycling and contributes to the UCSB Sustainability blog.

• Michael David Carson Teller, recipient of the David Wang Memorial Scholarship, is a double major in biological sciences and mathematical sciences. He volunteers with the outreach program Showers of Blessings, which provides showers and food to the homeless in Isla Vista

• Jennie Christensen, recipient of the Veronika Weiss Memorial Scholarship, has conducted human rights research at UCSB and Stanford. She is active in a crowdsourcing campaign to rid the community of guns and has served as a Violence Intervention and Prevention Intern.

“The scholarships and fellowship, made possible through the generosity and vision of our compassionate donors, memorialize the lives of the students who were lost to us,” said UC Santa Barbara Chancellor Henry T. Yang. “On this special occasion of remembrance and commemoration, we are privileged to recognize the inaugural recipients. Each reflects and honors the values, passions, and unique character of the individuals for whom the scholarships and fellowship are named. They are true leaders who have shown a deep commitment to their education and our community. We congratulate these exceptional recipients who have made such an impact on our UC Santa Barbara campus and in neighboring Isla Vista.”

Collective Dedication

The scholarship recipients are among a diverse group of UCSB students, staff and faculty members and friends who have stepped up to bridge the campus and Isla Vista, and engage with each other, in new and innovative ways.

Kim Yasuda, a professor of art and longtime Isla Vista resident, has been leading a charge to foster such closer connections and inspire action through art. Prime example: In the fall of 2014 she launched IV OpenLab, an arts-centered, hands-on course dedicated to project-based research and practice in Isla Vista for students from any and every discipline as well as community members. It’s been a big success, in more ways than one.

“Without a doubt, I have witnessed significant and positive change in the last two years,” said Yasuda, creator of the upcoming LightWorks Isla Vista festival. “I have worked in Isla Vista for a decade, primarily with my students, and it was the magnitude of inconceivable loss that brought about reckoning on the part of every

member of this campus community.

“The collective dedication at all levels has resulted in a greater degree of communication, transparency, mutual respect and collaboration between students, faculty and UCSB administration in reciprocal partnership with the Isla Vista community,” she added. “The net result has had compelling, visible impact, both internally and externally. More so than ever, the community of Isla Vista and its stakeholders are being heard, respected and engaged as valuable members of this college community, most particularly by student leadership through Associated Students.”

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.