

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Summer Jam

From the Celtic fusion sounds of Dannsair to the classical melodies of Aperture Duo, the UC Santa Barbara Summer Music Festival features a creative mingling of diverse artists in an expanded three-day format.

Beginning Thursday, August 17, the celebration will showcase musicians and composers with wide-ranging styles, including UCSB students, alumni and faculty — like Scott Marcus, chair of the music Department, who will perform with his son, Ziyad Marcus, drummer for the Middle Eastern group the Sfinks.

“Ziyad grew up in my Middle East ensemble,” the elder Marcus said, noting he taught his son how to play the drums (tabla and darbukka) and lute (oud). “This will be the first time I’ve performed with his group.”

Launched last year as a one-day event by UCSB graduate composition student Federico Llach, the festival is intended to bring live music to campus and to engage with musical communities in Southern California. Free and open to the public, the festival kicks off at 3:30 p.m. Thursday with Andrew Tholl and his Los Angeles group performing experimental and improvised music at the Art, Design & Architecture Museum.

“The variety of music and performers for this festival represents the collaborative and inclusive spirit of our music department,” Marcus said. “By expanding to three days, we were able to include more events and artists.”

Assuming festival oversight from Llach, UCSB doctoral student Marc Evans said: “I think no concert will really be like any of the others. I’m also happy to have been able to involve so many of my colleagues and friends, especially in the Music Department Showcase on Thursday night.”

Among the new elements is the world premiere of six compositions by UCSB students — Evans, Llach, Scott Perry, Mason Hock, Rodney DuPlessis, and Heena Yoon. For his composition, “Leaf Loops,” Evans said he used computer algorithms and intuition. “I start with an idea, write a computer program to explore it, generate music from it,” he said, “and then refine that music into a real piece.”

As a composer, Evans said he is looking forward to hearing the Aperture Duo — violist Linnea Powell and violinist Adrienne Pope — a mainstay in the music scene in Los Angeles. With a repertoire that stretches from Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart to Salvatore Sciarrino, Powell and Pope have performed at Tuesdays @ Monk Space, Carlsbad Music Festival, Music at Boston Court, L.A. Signal Lab and many other venues.

The festival this year has added a Children’s Concert, set for 11 a.m. Saturday, August 19, during which children can hear live music and play instruments with artists, including Aperture Duo and Ziyad Marcus.

“Evans has taken great care to expand on Llach’s original concept by scheduling artists from Los Angeles and including more performance opportunities for our own students and alumni,” Marcus said.

Coordinating the festival was no easy feat for Evans, who had to apply for a grant, plan the programming, recruit artists, arrange the performance venues and organize the concerts. “I’ve been very fortunate to have help from a lot of people,” he said, noting particularly Patrick Chose, the music department’s operations manager.

Made possible by grant funding from the UCSB Office of Summer Sessions, the festival is presented in collaboration with the UCSB’s Art, Design & Architecture Museum, MultiCultural Center and College of Creative Studies.

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.