To craft an audience experience that elicits questions, to cultivate a focus on the humanistic elements of live performance and to foster empathy that inspires viewers to manifest change in their communities. Such are the aims of the choreographers behind “Within Existence | Existence Within,” a fall concert by UC Santa Barbara’s Department of Theater and Dance.

Curating original and imaginative pieces into one holistic contemporary production, the show will debut Dec. 1–3 at Hatlen Theater. It features choreography by five senior dancers — each culminating three years of dance curriculum — and a faculty work by former Alvin Ailey dancer Christina Sanchez. Directed by Christina McCarthy, it is also the first performance of the season for the UCSB Dance Company.

Among the student choreographers, who have been experimenting with cutting edge and modern rehearsal practices, is Bailey Dodgion. Her contemporary ballet work, “Experience,” uses fast-paced virtuosic and athletic movement juxtaposed against a mysterious duet that emerges and disappears throughout the piece.

“I like to be really in tune with how my dancers are receiving the movement,” Dodgion said. “Oftentimes I ask them for a certain step and they add their own individuality to it which sparks my imagination further.”

The same dancer-centric model is also exhibited by choreographer Jazz Hayes, who created the minimalistic and highly detailed movement piece “Threshold, excerpt
“Within Existence | Existence Within” runs Dec. 1-2 at 7:30 p.m. and Dec. 3 at 2 p.m., in Hatlen Theater. Tickets and information are available via theaterdance.ucsb.edu, or by calling (805) 893-2064.

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.