

UC SANTA BARBARA

# THE *Current*

May 5, 2025

[Shelly Leachman](#)

## **Author Ross Gay caps off UCSB Reads 2025 with appearance on campus**

Culminating the latest season of UCSB Reads, “The Book of Delights” author Ross Gay will give a free, public talk, followed by a Q&A and book signing, presented by UCSB Library in partnership with UCSB Arts & Lectures.

(Registration for the event, being held at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, May 8, in Campbell Hall, is currently full; there will be a standby line in case of no-shows.)

Written daily over one tumultuous year, “The Book of Delights” is a genre-defying collection of short lyrical essays that celebrate the small, ordinary wonders in the world around us. Humorous, poetic and philosophical, the essays cover a wide range of topics that feel familiar.

Among Gay’s “delights”: a high five from a stranger, cradling a tomato seedling aboard an airplane, the silent nod of acknowledgement between the only two Black people in a room. Throughout the book, Gay never dismisses the complexities, even the terrors, of living in America as a Black man, the ecological and psychic impacts of our consumer culture, or the loss of those he loves. The essays reveal how staking out a space for joy brings us closer together.

Gay won the National Book Critics Circle Award for Poetry in 2015, the Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award in 2016 and the PEN/Jean Stein Award in 2021. He is a faculty member in the English Department at Indiana University.

Now wrapping up its 19th year, UCSB Reads brings together the campus and Santa Barbara communities to read a common book that explores compelling issues of our time. Throughout the winter and spring quarters, the selected book is incorporated into curriculum in many courses, and is the subject of talks, book clubs, workshops and other learning, experiential and social events focused on its themes.

A committee of faculty, staff, students and community partners annually convenes to select an intellectually stimulating, interdisciplinary book by a living author that appeals to a wide range of readers and can be incorporated into the UCSB curriculum.

Tags

[Books](#)

Media Contact

**Shelly Leachman**

Editorial Director

(805) 893-2191

[sleachman@ucsb.edu](mailto:sleachman@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.