Greetings for the new academic year 2011-2012! Much has taken place in the past year and we anticipate another year full of activities and events! – I can only describe a few highlights here, but please do take time to read our third annual WAC/D Fall Newsletter that will be coming out by mid-October. Learn what the department is doing as well as catch up with alumni news and activities by our faculty and students.

A warm welcome to our new students entering our programs—first-year’s, transfers, graduates! The faculty and staff look forward to meeting all at our new and returning students’ gatherings at the beginning of the Fall Quarter.

The department also welcomes a name change effective this fall — the Department of World Arts and Cultures / Dance. The change signifies clarity in recognizing Dance as a discipline at the university and at the same time acknowledges that our study of dance is in partnership with and informed by the interdisciplinary nature of the broader departmental mission – the study of arts and cultures from a global perspective. Our goal is to graduate inventive problem-solvers and creative thinkers so that when they leave the academy they will have the resources and confidence to carve a niche for themselves, one with a place for the arts and culture in their lives. I believe it is this creative thinking and problem-solving set of skills that propels the department as a whole to succeed despite the economic downturn affecting all aspects of our department. The ladder faculty will continue to develop its programs, including revisions of our undergraduate curriculum—watch for more news on these developments later in the year.

Much gratitude goes to all who have contributed to the department. The faculty envisions many possibilities for the future of this department but we must remain vigilant in our efforts to actualize these dreams. This year we have to reduce staffing, and student and program support yet again. Contributions to unrestricted funding sources create opportunities to meet the department’s greatest needs, including student support, faculty recruitment and retention, program improvements, and alumni initiatives. I thank those who have made that contribution and encourage all to do so.

I want to especially acknowledge the Flourish Foundation, whose scholarship contribution provides individual quarterly registration fees for students (over $10,000 in contributions). Also much thanks to parents of our students for your contributions to the department. The generosity of alumni, parents, and friends of the department has been most helpful in offsetting the budget cuts. With contributions made to the department’s unrestricted / Chair’s Discretionary Fund, I was able to provide scholarships as well as program support for our undergraduate students’ production, WACSmash!, along with the Regents’ Lecturer residency activities. There is much more that is needed towards programmatic support.

Initiatives and outreach highlights from last year and Previews of upcoming projects --

Of significance was the department’s Regent’s Lecturer residency with Gregory Maqoma in February, followed by a mini-residency developed with African-based artists Michel Kouakou (Ivory Coast) and Panibra Canda (Mozambique) that culminated in a successful concert at Highways Performance Space. Vice Chair of Undergraduate Affairs Victoria Marks spearheaded the 3-week residency of classes, performances and talks that brought together students and faculty from across the campus, as well as diplomats and members of the community. Learn more about it -- Lailye Weidman (BA 2010) wrote of her experiences participating in the Regent’s Lecturer residency in this newsletter. We have received another Regents’ Lecturer award for this coming year: Meredith Monk will provide a one-week intensive residency early in the spring quarter 2012, and will include her company members during this residency, funded in part by UCLA Live. More information to come!

Vice Chair of Graduate Affairs David Shorter spearheaded the Maso Yi’wa: Yoeme Indian, on May 5th 12:00 noon in the Kaufman Courtyard. This special Deer Dance and accompanying long table discussion on “Dancing Deer in the City: heritage, staging ritual, tourism and Indian identity” took place throughout the rest the day as well as on May 6. This program was funded largely by the School’s Arts Initiative fund as well as partners across campus.
We finished the Spring Quarter—June 3-4—with the presentation of “First Hand” featuring faculty choreographic projects (Harris, Marks, Popkin, Rousseve, Yu) involving over 40 undergraduate and graduate students. This was an initiative led by David Rousseve that we plan to continue on an annual basis.

The department also hosted numerous visitors from schools and prospective students and parents throughout the year—including the Project HeArt students from LA County Schools, Portola Middle School, among others. The School of the Arts and Architecture now has an approved Arts Education Minor for our undergraduate students, many of whom are from this department. This coming year the School received a generous grant from the Gluck Foundation that allowed the program to expand with more course offerings including courses that will be taught by our graduate students Anthony Bodlovic and Sarah Wilbur, and alumni Carolina San Juan and Kevin Kane.

The Art | Global Health Center (A|GH) and Center for Intercultural Performance (CIP) developed exciting programs globally and continue to expand their programming this year. Congratulations go to David Gere and Judy Mitoma, directors of the respective centers, in yet another successful year of programs and outreach! Do view their websites for more highlights and descriptions of their upcoming projects! Coming very soon are the Los Angeles-wide Festival of World Sacred Music and “Water Is Rising” projects that will take place week of October 11-15, both directed by Judy Mitoma. The latter will include an Artists’ Alphabet event (Oct.13) featuring performers from the islands of Kiribati, Tuvalu, and Tokelau, and speakers from campus partners of the UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability (IoES). While David Gere will be on a full-year sabbatical leave, he will continue to direct the many projects that his A|GH center has developed locally and globally, including the next version of AMP it Up! -- congratulations go to David and the Center on receiving a Shaheen Foundation grant that will provide $75,000 to support AMP it Up in 2011-12.

Fond farewells took place at the end of the 2010 Spring Quarter— to retiring faculty Don Cosentino, Irma Dosamantes, and adjunct faculty Lynn Daily. We wish them the very best in their next chapters. Don will go to Italy having received the prestigious Rockefeller Residency Fellowship at Bellagio. Irma plans to return to her home in New Mexico, to continue her writing projects, while Lynn prepares for her company’s (Jazz Tap Ensemble) tour to Africa as part of the invited group of artists representing the State Department. Lynn recently gave an informal showing of her work at the Nate Holden Performing Arts Center — company members included two of our current undergraduate students, B’Jon Carter and Kenji Igus.

During this summer the department hosted its 5th Annual High School Dance Theater Intensive with its full enrollment of 44 students from very diverse backgrounds and geographic locations engaged in eight very intensive days of classes, workshops, collaborative project-making. 20 of the students were scholarship students funded by the Flourish Foundation (thank you!!). Directed by Kevin Kane, assisted by alums Jackie Lopez and Ally Gray with returning faculty members Keali’I Ceballos, Derrick Jones, Breeze Leigh, Carolina San Juan, Nehara Kalev, Olivier Tarparga, new faculty Nina Flagg, and student counselors and assistants Leanne Iacovetta, Kenji Igus, Genna Moroni, Myrrhia Reed, Chantal Valenzuela, Harry Weston—all drawn from the department. Read Harry’s brief report and view the photos from this intensive in the WAC/D Newsletter.

The department also collaborated with UCLA’s First Star UCLA Bruin Guardian Scholars Summer Academy, directed by Wally Kappeler of the UCLA Department of Student Affairs, and funded by First Star, Inc., the Mario Batali Foundation, the Hasbro Children’s Fund, the Stuart Foundation, the California Community Foundation and the College Board, best known for administering the SAT. Sage Publications, an independent publisher, also donated. In all, benefactors contributed $305,000. We provided space and two of their instructors for this first time offering which brought 30 ninth grade foster youths onto campus for an intensive 5-week residential summer program. The purpose of this program is to provide academic support, enrichment and encouragement needed to assist them in becoming competitive applicants for subsequent admission to two and four year colleges, including those within the UC system. WACD adjunct faculty Jason Tsou and Cari Ann Henderson taught Tai Chi and Social Media respectively to these young students.

Many thanks go to our staff who provide the much needed technical and administrative support throughout the year—Arsenio Apillanes, Tony Arias, Larry Blanco, Ginger Holguin, Daniel Millner, Mimi Moorhead, Silvily Thomas, Lorrie Snyder, and Lilian Wu.

Events and projects for 2011-12: Please do note that many events, guest speakers, presentations, and residencies will take place throughout the year -- participate in as many as possible! There will be ones taking place shortly after the Fall Quarter begins – the aforementioned World Festival of Sacred Music: Oct 1-16, http://www.festivalofsacredmusic.org/calendar and
HOT OFF THE PRESS: Through the vision and generosity of donor Brad Tachbach-Banks who committed a substantial contribution towards the development of a series of three artist residencies every year, the department will launch its first residency in the Spring Quarter 2012. The intent of this project is to bring a new generation of outstanding choreographers to Kaufman Hall. Under the direction of Victoria Marks (Vice Chair of Undergraduate Affairs), the pilot residency will bring performer Faye Driscoll’s newest work, “Not...Not (if you pretend to be drowning I will pretend I am saving you)” to UCLA’s Kaufman Hall for a west coast premiere. Workshops with our students and outreach into LA schools in under-served areas will take place before and after the performances. The impact of this initiative will provide the public an opportunity to enjoy performances by small dance companies not typically seen in Los Angeles, offer hundreds of students an opportunity to work with leaders in the field of dance and attending performances on a college campus, and elevate the stature of dance within UCLA and throughout Los Angeles. For more information on how you can play a role in this exciting initiative, contact UCLA Arts Development, development@arts.ucla.edu.

I hope everyone had a productive and fun summer. To those returning to campus I wish you the best for your new academic year; and I wish all good health and well-being. Do know that my door is open and if you need to meet with me please sign up. I will post sign-ups at the desk of my assistant, Lilian Wu, in the main office of Kaufman Hall.

Warmest regards,

Angelia Leung, Chair