Chair’s Update, Winter 2013. 

Welcome to 2013! I hope everyone had a good winter break and is now ready for new beginnings and a positive, productive new year.

This past Fall 2012, we welcomed numerous events that reflected the diversity and mission of the department - - from Professor Emeritus Don Cosentino’s curated exhibition (with Patrick Polk), In Extremis: Death and Life in 21st Century Haitian Art that opened on September 16 (runs through January 2013) at the Fowler Museum; the co-sponsorship with Disabilities Studies (WACD faculty Vic Marks, DS Faculty Chair) in bringing the Axis Dance Company and panel presentation on sign language early in October; the Cunningham Trust Residency with guest faculty Susanna Hayman-Chaffey that culminated in a showing of Merce Cunningham’s work Scramble; to an invited presentation by Professor Susan Foster at the John Cage Centennial presented by the School of Music and many more. By the end of Fall, we presented Culture Crossing (new works by students and faculty); Art|Global Health Center’s 48 Hours to Action on World AIDS Day performances by the “Sex Squad”; congratulated our graduate students advancing in their respective degree work (MA/PhD in Culture and Performance, MFA in Dance) and congratulated our faculty for their exceptional achievements (please go to their faculty information links on the WACD website to learn more!).

I look forward to seeing you during this Winter Quarter at the many events and activities featuring the diverse talents and interests of our students and faculty members. Starting almost immediately will be our continued partnership with the Center for the Art of Performance (CAP UCLA) in which our students and community artists who worked with the department’s Regents’ Lecturer Meredith Monk (last spring) will be able to take part in her CAP UCLA project that premieres January 18-20 at UCLA’s Freud Playhouse. On January 17, MA/PHD graduate student Anna Creagh, adjunct faculty Patrick Polk, and Max Brooks will be speakers on The Walking Dead: Zombies in Haitian Vodou and Contemporary Popular Culture held at the Fowler Museum. We will also serve as one of the hosts for Catherine Turocy, Distinguished Visiting Scholar with the Center for Medieval & Renaissance Studies (CMRS). Organized by WACD Professor Emerita Lew Thomas, Turocy’s residency, January 14-19, will include workshops, lectures, and master classes on Baroque dance for WACD, Theater, Music, CMRS, and off-campus with ARC (A Room to Create) students in Pasadena. The department is also co-sponsoring (with USC and the University of Paris) the Politics in Art Forms Conference, Feb.7-8. WACD faculty Anurima Banerji serves as lead organizer for the Feb.7th day of presentations on the UCLA campus and will include presentations by her and WACD faculty members Janet O’Shea, Sabela Grimes, among others.

During January and February we will conduct the graduate MFA admissions auditions and the undergraduate dance majors auditions alongside the MA/PHD and undergraduate WAC majors admissions processes. Thank you to all our volunteers assisting in the admissions processes! During that time period we will have our undergraduate organization, WACUS, produce their 2013 WACSMASH! (Feb. 8-10) event. The MFA2 concert featuring two of our second year MFA students, Chankethya Chey and Samantha Goodman, will take place March 1st. The department’s and the Art|Global Health Center’s community partnership with Project HeArt will bring high school student presentations on Feb.15th. To finish up the winter quarter we have Professor Emerita Elsie Dunin participating in the
Fowler costume exhibition Resplendent Dress that opens March 9th, and we’ll have our 10th week Culture Crossing presentations on March 12th. In between there will be guest lectures/master-classes in our various courses, the Chew on This presentations by our graduate students and faculty (Tuesdays at noon), David Gere’s Art | Health Center project, Amp It Up! visiting LAUSD high schools, and WACUS’ undergraduate presentations of their “Bite Size” and “Open Marley” forums.

Later in the winter announcements about Spring Quarter events will be posted. There will be David Roussève’s announcement of faculty choreography projects (guests and faculty) for students to perform in the spring, with auditions taking place during winter quarter. MFA3 Concert (Alexx Shilling and Carson Efird) and other events will also take place in the spring as will our Senior Projects presentations. In process throughout this year is faculty Aparna Sharma’s Arts Initiative funded project, Documenting Cultures: LA Art Worlds, in collaboration with Fowler Museum and guest faculty Emily Zeamer. This Winter Quarter Sharma will teach part 2 of a two-course sequence on documentation, which will culminate in an exhibit at the Fowler Museum in the Spring Quarter. Also in process is faculty David Roussève’s new evening-length project, Stardust, which includes numerous WACD student and alumni performers and collaborators – scheduled to premier in 2014, and faculty Mary (Polly) Nooter Roberts’ work as consulting curator at the L.A. County Museum of Art-- she is organizing an exhibition on Luba masterworks, Shaping Power, which will open in July 2013. This exhibition was noted in The Los Angeles Times (December 30, 2012) Faces to Watch in 2013.

As you can see, there is much to look forward to this coming quarter and beyond. Please do check on announcements and postings from time to time for specifics and more. And, while the department (the UC in general) continues to have budget cuts and increased expenses affecting its programs, we are all trying to make a difference to ensure its well-being. Many thanks go to our staff members who are more than doing double duty in supporting our many needs, making up for positions lost to budgetary cuts. Unrestricted contributions create opportunities to meet the department’s greatest needs, including student support and program improvements. I thank those who have made that contribution and I encourage all to do so.

Wishing all the best for your new year,

Angelia Leung, Chair

HOT OFF THE PRESS! The department received a generous gift renewal from the Cliff family— designated to assist in restoring our budget to hire live musicians for our dance practice courses. As you may know, recent years of budget cuts reduced our budget severely, cutting over 50% of our musician staff. Last year the Cliff family donated a gift that allowed the department to bring back some of our musicians to play for our dance classes. With this generous gift the department will be able to have at least all our advanced classes covered and partially our intermediate level classes for the remainder of the year. The department also received a generous gift renewal from the Lee family, whose designation for the Chair’s Discretionary Fund will provide much needed scholarships and programmatic support for the coming year. Please add to their gifts so that we can provide for full funding of all our classes, and further grow our scholarship and program support fund. This would be a most welcomed gift! For information about making a secure gift online, visit us at: www.arts.ucla.edu/giving