



September 26, 2018

Dear WACD Community,

Welcome, Freshmen! Welcome, Transfers! Welcome, new M.F.A. and PhD students! And a hearty welcome to our returning students and faculty. I hope you have had a productive, rejuvenating summer and are ready to dive into a challenging year full of new experiences, ideas and colleagues. I know I am.

We begin this academic year with a poignant reminder of the preciousness of life and the urgency of our work. **Professor Mary “Polly” Nooter Roberts**, our dear friend, colleague and mentor, who lived and worked with stage four metastatic breast cancer for more than eight years, passed away earlier this month at age 59. As we gather this fall, full of inspiration and excitement for the coming year and beyond, we do well to embody Polly’s joyful quest for knowledge and discovery, as well as her ardent desire to share that joy.

This summer we said a fond farewell to our Undergraduate Advisor **Hayley Safonov**. Hayley held down the fort with her bright energy and warmth for 6 ½ years, and is now applying her Student Affairs talents in the History Department. Come back to visit, Hayley!



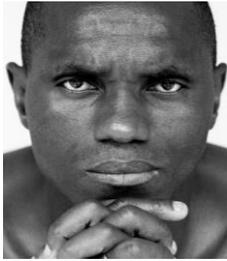
Meanwhile, we are thrilled to introduce **LaDonja Horn** as our new Undergraduate Advisor. Born and raised in South Central LA, LaDonja is a first-generation college student and the first in her family to achieve a graduate degree, a Masters of Student Affairs from UCLA. LaDonja is a well-connected member of the Bruin family. She served as a Student Affairs Officer for the Dean of Students Office and as Student Conduct Coordinator for the Office of Student Conduct. I hope you get a chance to stop in and introduce yourself to LaDonja. You can find her in the Student Affairs suite under the grand staircase. She can’t wait to get to you know you!

You are not going to believe the lineup of guests and events in WACD this fall. I hope you are able to take advantage of this dynamic array of people and presentations. This quarter brings a focus on contemporary West African dance:

- At the end of Week 1, UCLA’s Center for the Art of Performance presents the legendary 74 year-old Senegalese master dancer and choreographer **Germaine Acogny**, who will perform Olivier Dubois’s profound solo, *Élue Noire – Sacre #2* here in Kaufman Hall. You won’t want to miss this one! Students in DAN 117B and DAN 106A/406A will be treated to a workshop with Acogny herself!
- WACD is proud to host choreographer and dancer **Salia Sanou**, originally from Burkina Faso, as our inaugural Alma Hawkins Memorial Chair. Salia has received awards from Association



Française and the Trophée Cultures France des Créateurs Sans Frontiers. He was voted 2003 artist of the year by the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, and was named an officer in the order of Arts and Letters by the French Ministry of Culture.



Salia founded the Centre de Développement Chorégraphique La Termitière in Burkina Faso, and the dance company Mouvements Perpétuels. In 2008, he authored the book *Afrique, danse contemporaine*, published jointly by the Cercle d'art and the Centre National de la Danse de Pantin. Salia will be presenting an evening of his work on Thursday, October 25 in Kaufman Hall.

Details to come! **There are still a few spots left in Salia's courses, WL ARTS 174A and DAN 117C. I strongly encourage you (grads and undergrads) to grab them while you can. Don't miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to work with this world-renowned artist.**

- We welcome West African dance instructor, **Aimée Wodobode**. Born in the Central African Republic and raised in Paris, Aimée studied the performing arts at the University of Paris XII. She performed in Bill T. Jones's critically acclaimed musical, *Fela*, off-Broadway, on Broadway, in Africa, Europe and around the United States.
- And finally, watch for the *African Epistemologies Sacred Movement Workshop* on Fri Oct 26, time TBD, presented by **Katherine Smith** with guest artist **Yanique Hume**.



We're also looking forward to:

- Israeli Dance Studies scholar **Hannah Kosstrin's** talk on *Honest Bodies: Methods for Transnational Dance Analysis* on October 9 (organized by PhD candidate **Melissa Melpignano**)
- On October 24, a screening of *Beauty Bites Beast*, a documentary on empowerment self-defense, followed by panel discussion and reception, hosted by **Prof Janet O'Shea**
- *Ten Questions*, both a course and a series of public events, takes place every Tuesday 6:30-8:30 p.m. in Kaufman Hall. Created and curated by WACD Prof and Associate Dean **Victoria Marks**, and hosted by School of Arts and Architecture Dean **Brett Steele**, Ten Questions features conversations with leading scholars from across the University. Every Tuesday evening for ten weeks, four UCLA faculty members from disciplines as diverse as dance, medicine, photography, astrophysics, athletics, Chicano studies, law, philosophy, religious studies, and more will join Dean Brett Steele to explore one question each week, stimulating dialogue and exchange, and seeding a greater understanding of the profoundly interdisciplinary nature of knowledge production in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

...And all that is in addition to our usual fall happenings, such as **AGHC's World AIDS Day** event, **showings of WAC and Dance student work**, and much, much more.

This year, WACD is proud to welcome two professors to our full-time faculty:

**Tria Blu Wakpa** is a scholar and practitioner of Indigenous contemporary dance, North American Hand Talk (Indigenous sign language), martial arts, and yoga. Her research combines community-based, Indigenous and feminist methodologies with critical race theories to examine the politics and practices of dance and embodiment historically and contemporarily in

educational and carceral institutions for Indigenous peoples. Tria will begin her teaching duties this winter.

No stranger to WACD, **Bryonn Bain** now has a joint appointment between our department and the Department of African American Studies. The son of Caribbean immigrants to Brooklyn NY, Bain is a performing artist and scholar using the arts and activism to build movements for justice, criminal justice reform, prison education, and abolition. The founding director of the UCLA Prison Education Program, Bain has drawn on his three decades of work in prisons to establish opportunities for higher education, the arts, and research in two southern California prisons.

In the midst of this whorl of activity, let's remember that the midterm elections are upon on us. Production Manager **Ginger Holguin** is leading our departmental effort to get out the vote. We will have voter registration forms and sample ballots available in the main office and elsewhere so that everyone can perform their civic duty with confidence!

And so it begins, a year like no other. Do drop by the main office and say hello. I'm looking forward to reconnecting with those of you I know, and getting to know those I have yet to meet.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Froot', written in a cursive style.

Dan Froot  
Professor and Chair  
Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance  
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UCLA's Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance acknowledges the Tongva peoples as the traditional land caretakers of Tovaangar (Los Angeles basin, So. Channel Islands) and are grateful to have the opportunity to work for the taraaxatom (indigenous peoples) in this place. As a land grant institution, we pay our respects to Honuukvetam (Ancestors), 'Ahihirom (Elders), and 'eyoohiinkem (our relatives/relations) past, present and emerging.

# Summer 2018

## A Partial List of WACD Faculty Research and Projects

Tria Blu Wakpa

Tria Blu Wakpa is grateful to be a guest on Tongva and Tataviam lands. In June, *Race and Yoga* journal published her interview, "Yoga Brings You Back to Who You Are: A Conversation Featuring Haley Laughter," Tria presented her paper, "Critiquing the Omissions, Subordination, and Criminalization of Native American Martial Arts and Artists: Adrian Roman's Tushka Homa (Red Warrior) System," at the Dance Studies Association Conference, held in Valletta, Malta in July. In August, two of her poems, "Butterflies, Bones, Languages" and "The Politics of Love and The Politics of Blood," were published in *Literary Hub's* series on "New Poetry by Indigenous Women". Tria's co-written article with Jennifer Musial, "Going Carceral? Analyzing Written and Visual Representations of Prison Yoga Programs" is forthcoming in *Carcerality Locally and Globally: Feminist Critiques of State Violence*. Tria looks forward to sharing some of her poetry at the Warrior Spirit Conference and Ceremony, held at the Viejas Resort and Casino in Alpine, California in October.



Congrats to Bryonn Bain for Los Angeles Theater award in SOLO PERFORMANCE , Lyrics From Lockdown, at The Actors' Gang.

Bryonn Bain

Victoria Marks

Vic(toria) Marks has spent the past year working as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for our School of Arts and Architecture. Her newly designed course, AA100: 10 Questions will run this fall, placing the arts at the center of interdisciplinary conversations in the University. Vic misses being in Kaufman Hall, but continues to support WACD students, faculty and staff from her office in Broad.

Peter Sellars

Peter Sellars directed *Dr. Atomic* at the Santa Fe Opera from July 14-August 16. The Los Angeles Times published an overwhelming positive review noting "Nothing could stop the making and detonating of the bomb. Nothing has been able to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons since. And nothing stopped a performance of the most significant, I'd say the greatest, opera of our time.," Peter also participated in the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco by presenting a musical working session with operatic soprano Ying Fang at Coal + Ice.,

David Shorter

Photo by Ken Howard

Earlier this year, David was accepted to study in Japan with Hiroshi Doi Sensei, the current president of the Usui Reiki Ryoho Gakkai. A teacher of preeminent status, Doi Sensei oversees the archives of the original Usui method's international reiki organization; and he attuned the first four presidents of the Gakkai after the passing of reiki's founder, Dr. Mikao Usui. After four years of study, and an intensive training in Ashiya, Japan in May of this year, Doi Sensei attuned David to Gokui Kaiden, the highest level of Gendai Reiki Ho. David is now licensed by Ryoho Gakkai to provide Byosen Reikan Ho, Tanden Chiryō Ho, and Ketsuieki Kokan Ho, as well as to train and bestow master-level attunements to his own students.

David returned to the States in July to present a paper to the Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI) working group, "Making Contact," which met in Berkeley, California. This conference marks the first time in twenty-five years that SETI reached out to social scientists and scholars in the Humanities for consultations on the methods, theories, and ethics of ET contact.

Janet O'Shea

Janet completed copyedits and page proofs of her book, *Risk, Failure, Play: What Dance Reveals about Martial Arts Training*. Her book will be published by Oxford University Press in November 2018.

Janet, along with faculty members Anurima Banerji and Tria Blu Wakpa, attended the Dance Studies Association conference in Malta. She gave a presentation as part of the closing plenary. In addition, she taught several martial arts classes at the National Women's Martial Arts Federation special training in Naperville, IL and trained for her completion of Empowerment Self Defense Instructorship.

Janet also launched her new research project, *Bodies on the Line: Physical Risk and Social Justice*, with a week of volunteering at Catskill Animal Sanctuary in New York State.

Lionel Popkin

Photo by Naomi Harris

Choreographer Lionel Popkin's new evening-length choreo-play, *The Oedipus/Antigone Project*, is inspired by the gap between two of Sophocles' best known plays, *Oedipus Rex* and *Oedipus at Colonus*. The multi-media performance follows two outcasts, Oedipus and Antigone, traveling between lands and between plays, invoking topographical maps, a personal exploration of immigrant histories, and a flexible and at times farcical narrative, to question contemporary notions of displacement, exile and homeland.

Dan Froot

Dan continued his work as a group mentor in the Leadership Fellows Program of the Association of Performing Arts Professionals (APAP) this summer. He also showcased his performance piece, "Pang!" at the Western Arts Alliance conference in Las Vegas. "Pang!" is an evening of three short plays based on the oral histories of families around the country who are living below the poverty line and hungering for change.

Art & Global Health Center

Photo by John Pemble

Of the many projects AGHC has worked on, their annual performance of *This is Bruin Life* took place on September 23rd at Pauley Pavilion and was a huge success.

Each year, the UCLA Art & Global Health Center, under the leadership of Assistant Director Bobby Gordon, takes UC students to Rio de Janeiro to study the methodology of *Theater of the Oppressed* in its birthplace. This year, 11 students from UCLA participated in the project, spanning from August to September of 2018. Students in the program studied *Theater of the Oppressed* with practitioners and leaders, while learning experientially about the arts and cultures of Brazil.

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ARTS



World Arts  
and Cultures / Dance

# What have YOU been up to this summer? Here is what some of WACD's graduate students told us:

Check out this eclectic, far-reaching list of accomplishments, reduced here to the bare bones for brevity, but impressive all the same:

Shweta Saraswat became Digital Media Specialist for the Alliance for California Traditional Arts (ACTA). She and her guru were awarded a grant from the CA Arts Council for Kathak programming in Los Angeles.



Amy Alterman joined the Lady Parts Justice League Vagical Mystery Tour for her fieldwork. The tour traveled to Bethlehem, PA, Charleston, WV, Columbus, OH, Nashville, TN, Detroit, MI, South Bend, IN, Minneapolis, MN, and Milwaukee, WI.  
<https://ladypartsjusticeleague.com>

Letty Bassart and her son connected with family in the mountains of rural VA. She studied Chicano/x literature and Latin American Art history during Summer Session C at UCLA.



Marianna Varviani choreographed Ahtikos: a dance of liberation for the Arc for Dance Festival in Athens.

Mika Lior continued her Fulbright-funded research in Bahia, Brazil. She spoke at the Federal University of Bahia's graduate Dance and Sociology departments, and taught contemporary dance for youth at the Pierre Verger Foundation



Joey Navarette is now a married man, and is collaborating with husband Jobel Medina of Ate9 Dance Company on a series of solos to be presented in December. He will also present work at the National Dance Education Organization's 2018 conference in La Jolla.

Supported by the U.S. Department of State, Christina Novakov-Ritchev studied Eastern European languages through The Critical Language Institute in Sarajevo. She presented a paper at the International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR) conference in Belgrade, and conducted interviews and field research for her dissertation.



Sanchita Sharma performed in The Lost Wax Project by Preethi Athreya and Pray choreographed by Mandeep Raikhy at Goethe Institute Max Mueller Bhavan in Chennai, and developed a new work at the National School of Drama in Delhi.

Jingqui Guan conducted fieldwork in Beijing, Shanghai, and Hong Kong, while participating in the Jumping Frames Video Dance Festival. Her article Choreographing "ChinAfrica" through Transnational Encounter was published in the International Journal of Screendance. Jingqui's dance films were presented at American Dance Festival, and at festivals in Santa Barbara, North Carolina and Portland, OR.



Emily Barasch was in artist-in-residence in Kassel, Germany this past year, where her most recent work, Hysterical Realness, premiered this past summer.

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