Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance - Chair’s Update, Spring 2015
March 26, 2015

I hope everyone had a productive winter and well-deserved rest during the spring break-- ready for new beginnings this Spring Quarter!

As always, much gratitude goes to all who have contributed to the department. Since the beginning of the year we have received a number of contributions that will add to the department’s efforts to support our students and programmatic needs. With the generosity of alumni, students, parents, faculty, and friends last year we were able to fund over $25,000 in scholarships as well as supported significant programs such as those run by the Art and Global Health Center. This year we have received slightly less as of this “Update” publication (approximately $20,000 total for WACD General Scholarships). Please continue your support through contributions this academic year, so that we can build our fund to at least $25,000. With the department’s unrestricted scholarship and Chair’s Discretionary Fund, the department is able to provide scholarships as well as program support for our diverse series of courses such as our Fall Quarter Regents’ Professor residency, our graduate student-directed projects and related activities, our undergraduate students’ production, WACSmash’d!, along with numerous guest residency activities with internationally known artists, scholars, and activities. I thank those who have already made contributions, especially those who have committed to contribute on a regular basis, and encourage all to do so.

Congratulations go to faculty and students who have achieved significant recognitions through invited presentations! Many of their achievements are posted on our website throughout the year. If you missed hearing the news, please do check out our department’s website. In the News and Our Community sections include further information on these recognitions and events –alumni news are included as well. A recent snapshot includes the following:

WACD faculty members -- Polly Nooter Roberts was invited to give the Keynote Survivor Speaker speech at the opening ceremonies of the 2015 Komen Los Angeles Race for the Cure on March 7th at Dodger Stadium (with 15,000 people in attendance!); Lisa Sigell from CBS did a feature story on Polly’s teaching in WACD in advance of the Race for her Health Segment. Al Roberts’ monograph, A Dance of Assassins: Performing Early Colonial Hegemony in the Congo, was a finalist for the Herskovits Prize of the African Studies Association, recognizing it as one of the five best African Studies volumes of 2013. Janet O’Shea is featured in the April issue of UCLA Magazine; the article Movement and the Mind by B.Flaherty, describes her current research on the relationship between cognitive processes and martial arts training (see also: http://magazine.ucla.edu/depts/forward-thinker/movement-and-the-mind/; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cys_UbNB_NQ) and below for additional events associated with her research in the spring. David Shorter’s film Lutu Chuktiwa, was chosen as a Jury Selection for the Ethnografilm Festival in Paris taking place April 6-14th. Victoria Marks was honored with a Fulbright Distinguished Scholar Award for travel and work with Concurepos, a fledgling mixed-ability dance group in Bogota, Columbia.

WACD students -- PhD student Carmen Cebreiros received the 2015-16 Elaine Krown Klein Fine Arts Award, and PhD student Elaine Sullivan received fully funded fellowship for 2015-16 from the Belgian American Educational Foundation, which supports advanced study or research for Belgian and American scholars through its exchange fellowship program; the fellowship will enable Elaine to do archival and object research at the Royal Museum of Central Africa in Belgium. MFA student Julio Medina presented his solo, I Gotta, for the American College Dance Association Conference adjudicated concerts (March 19-21) hosted by Cal State University at Long Beach, and received outstanding feedback from the adjudicators for his work. MFA student Bernard Brown presented at the Informal Concerts his trio, Break, performed by WACD dance students Kaiya Gales, Daniela Herrera, and Darrían O’Reilly. There were many UCLA WACD alums at the conference and it was a great opportunity to catch up and network for our students. MFA candidate Laurel Tintendao was invited to teach Trisha Brown’s work with Lance Gries and Diane Madden in the second phase of a three-year partnership with P.A.R.T.S. (Performing Arts Research and Training Studios) in Brussels; she will return to finish her MFA studies this spring quarter. WAC major Merima Tricic received a Turkish Coalition of America (TCA) Study Abroad award to fund her summer research work in Bosnia.

Last quarter we particularly enjoyed getting together for the Graduate and Undergraduate Mixer, which provided some decompression from the stress of the quarter’s end. Please make a note that the Spring End of the Year Celebration will be held May 28th, from 5:30 to 7:30. All staff, faculty, adjuncts, graduate and undergraduate majors are welcome to this recognition event and crowd-sourced DJ’d dance. Although more information will be coming, save this date in your calendars!
This Spring we welcome back...Adjuncts, lecturers, and visiting professor Ann Carlson, Nick Duran, Leigh Foaad, Cari Ann Henderson, Ginger Holguin, Michel Kouakou, Jackie Lopez, Ana Maria Alvarez-Lowe, Elena Phipps, Patrick Polk, Willy Souly, Natsuo Tomita, Jason Tsou, and Ros Warby. We also welcome back Professor Peter Sellars.

Many thanks go to our WACD staff who provide the much needed technical and administrative support—Arsenio Apillanes, Marcia Argolo, Mark Goebel, Ginger Holguin, Tiffany Long, Will O’Loughlen, Lisa Parks, Hayley Sfonov, Lynn Tatum, as well as our Art and Global Health Center’s staff—Lakhilya Hicks, Elisabeth Nails, Meena Murugesan, and Ivy Hurwit. Earlier this year we welcomed Latana Thaviseth and Natalie Dickson, who has served to assist our Student Affairs Office (a very welcomed presence especially during our admissions cycle in the winter!).

Last but not least, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone who have made my tenure as Chair of the department so productive and positive. At the end of June I will be stepping down as Chair and will resume my faculty position teaching in the department. During this past year I have been working with Lionel Popkin who will step in as the Chair starting July 2015. Do welcome Lionel to his new post!

Please 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, Lynn Tatum, in the main office of Kaufman Hall. I wish you all good health and well-being.

Warmest regards,

Angelia Leung, Chair
Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance
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p.s. Heartfelt appreciation goes to the “Friends of WACD”, alumni, and wonderful parents of our students for their support! Unrestricted contributions to the Chair’s Discretionary Fund create opportunities to meet the department’s greatest needs. I thank those who have made that contribution and your commitment to do so on a regular basis. Please continue to add to these gifts to develop further our scholarship and program support fund.

For more information on how to support our department through your generosity, visit: https://giving.ucla.edu/Standard/NetDonate.aspx?SiteNum=37&Fund=614220

Teasers of upcoming events and projects for Spring Quarter 2015 -- Please see attached for more information!
Upcoming events and projects for Spring Quarter 2015

Polly Nooter Roberts and Allen F. Roberts have a full schedule of projects including presenting a talk at the Cleveland Museum of Art. They will have travelled during the spring break to work closely with the Wellin Museum of Art at Hamilton College in upstate NY to prepare their upcoming major exhibition and publication on A Global Saint in a Virtual World, scheduled for Fall 2016. They also are co-authoring Spiritscapes of the Indian Ocean World: Reorienting Africa/Asia through Transcultural Devotional Practices, for a forthcoming collection called Africa/Asie: Reseaux, Echanges, et Transversalites published by the Press of the Universities of Rouen and Le Havre in France. Polly Roberts will oversee a stunning exhibition on African Textiles and Body Adornment and is also busy co-curator a contemporary exhibition for LACMA, for the fall entitled About Time: Temporalities in Video and Film-Based Arts of Africa. Al Roberts wrote Visual Citizenship in Senegal: Contemporary Contests of Cultural Heritage, for Heritage Practices in Africa: Activation of the Past in the Present and Future, as a special issue of Senri Ethnological Studies, Osaka; and an essay on Mask for the forthcoming volume Keywords in Material Religion to be published by Bloomsbury London. He also serves as an NEH Consultant to World on the Horizon: Sahili Arts Across the Indian Ocean, an exhibition being planned at the Krannert Museum of the University of Illinois, and he was brought to a brainstorming sessions for Regarding Spirituality, as an exhibition being planned at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City. He is also working closely with colleagues at the UCLA Fowler Museum as they prepare and submit an NEH Exhibition Planning Grant for Striking Iron: Art of African Blacksmiths for which he is one of four curators.

Dan Froot inaugurates eight months of interviews for book-length oral histories with families living with hunger in Miami, Cedar Rapids and South Central Los Angeles. The oral histories will become the basis for a new performance project, Pang! This project is scheduled to premiere in all three cities in 2017.

Vic Marks leads her course, “Desire on Campus” giving Sorority and Fraternity students a voice and an opportunity to become thought leaders on issues of Sexual Violence.

Cheng-Chieh Yu has started working on a choreographic commission with the Taipei Dance Circle that will premiere at the Taipei National Experimental Theater in Sep 2015, and also will be touring Displacements, Part II, this summer to the Beijing Dance Festival.

On April 10 we will host the department’s Open House for newly admitted students as part of the School-wide Open House day. Organized by our SAO, Hayley Safonov, the department will have a presentation of current undergraduate students’ projects and a student panel discussion, along with introductions to some of our faculty members.

On April 11, 8 pm in Kaufman Theater room 200, the department presents MFA candidate Joe Small’s final project concert Spall Fragments. The project is an original 90-minute dramatic ‘action concert’ that reckons with hyper-masculine culture in Japan and America. Performers include choreographer/composer Joe Small, members of the collegiate taiko drum group UCLA Yukai Daiko; and a member of the professional Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble; and WACD’s PhD student Barry Brannum. http://tinyurl.com/WACDtx

April 13, 6-8 pm, location TBA: WACD faculty Janet O’Shea is co-organizing a panel discussion in conjunction with Bruins for Consent and the Counseling Center entitled Self-Defense and the Movement to End Sexual Violence: Systemic Change or Individual Resistance? Supported by SOAA, she will bring in guest speakers Susan Schorn, author of Smile at Strangers and Other Life Lessons from the Art of Living Fearlessly, and Lisa Gaeta, director of IMPACT Self Defense.

On April 16, 4-7pm, Kaufman Theater room 200: there will be a special screening of The Mask You Live In by Jennifer Siebel Newsom, a film about performing masculinity, presented by Victoria Marks in coordination with ASPIRE (Academy for social Purpose in Responsible Entertainment), Undergraduate Education Initiatives, and the Healthy Campus Initiative. There will be a conversation with Director Newsom following the screening.

April 18: The Arts and Global Health Center presents Project U performance project Lafayette Theater room 200, 7 pm.

April 24: the quarterly Dance Majors Workshop will take place 12-1:30 in Kaufman Theater room 200; topic tbd.

On April 27, 1-3pm, Kaufman Theater room 200, there will be a public showing of ON THE ROAD: A RENACTMENT OF THE 1988 ADA CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS, a staged reading of this documentary theater workshop presented by Dr. Victoria Lewis, University of Redlands In association with UCLA’s Disability Studies Program and Department of World Arts & Cultures/Dance, coordinated by WACD faculty Victoria Marks and Disability Studies/UEI faculty Sara Wolf (also WACD PhD alum).

April 30th, 5-8pm, Covel Commons: The Healthy Campus Initiative (HCI) first annual symposium will be held as part of Wellness Week. Of particular interests are presentations by WACD faculty regarding their HCI funded projects: David Gere/AGHC ‘s Sex Squad performance project; Janet O’Shea’s Martial Arts and Cognitive Training project; and fun fitness/health activities and student posters on their funded projects will be coordinated by WACD PhD student, Sarah Wilbur, who is one of several GSR’s working for HCI. WACD PhD student Ellen World Arts & Cultures/Dance, 3
Gerdes will join Sarah this spring to assist Angelia Leung who serves on the HCI Steering Committee. The event will include presentations by all the pods—Eat Well, Move Well, Mind Well, Be Well. Check out the HCI website for all the various components everyone can take part in for your health and wellness: www.health.ucla.edu

On May 3rd, Victoria Marks will be performing in HOME LA, showing a new duet with WACD alum Alexx Shilling and Lecturer Willy Souly. They will also perform Solar Duplex (2014). Performances occur through the day at 3pm, 5pm, and 7pm. The address of the performance is: 815 Elyria Dr, Los Angeles, CA 90065

May 7th: Thursday 12-1pm, 160 GKH: Grad Brown Bag – conversations with Vice Chair of Graduate Affairs, David Shorter.

May 8-9: Not to be missed is our Senior Projects Showcase, Narratives, 8 pm (Friday and Saturday) and 3pm (Saturday) shows at Kaufman Hall. Directed by Dan Froot, he also has organized a series of Life after WACD panels that will serve our WAC and Dance majors covering a wide array of topics – watch for announcements and dates on topics and guest panelists.

On May 12th: the Coleman Memorial Lecture Cultures in Transnational Perspective will be presented by the African Studies Center and co-sponsored by the WACD department, with coordination by WACD faculty Al Roberts. Lecture will be at 4:30 in Kaufman Theater 200, followed by a reception in the Rainbow Lounge.

On May 14th: 11:30-1pm, in Kaufman Theater 200, we will have a departmental Town Hall – Save the date and time! This is an opportunity to bring together everyone to discuss our Self-Review project that we’ve been working on throughout the year. Thank you to all who have thoughtfully participated, providing input in this process.

May 18-21: Through support from the Chinese Studies/UCLA and the Taiwan Academy, Cheng-Chieh Yu will be hosting Ming-Shen Ku, Dean of the School of Dance, Taipei National University of the Arts for a one-week teaching residency in WACD.

May 23 – 25, 8:30pm, Victoria Marks will present her own work in concert at the Highways Performance Space in Santa Monica. Details forthcoming!

May 28, 5:30-7:30pm: WACD End of Year Celebrations! More information to be posted – join in celebrating our graduating students and other transitions in the department.

June 5-6, 8pm, Kaufman Theater room 200: Finishing the quarter with a bang will be our annual faculty choreography works-in-progress showcase – First Hand, 8pm Kaufman 200. Directed by faculty Cheng-Chieh Yu, the presentation will include works by Yu, and faculty members and guest artists Ann Carlson, Jackie Lopez, Ana Maria Alvarez-Lowe. Works developed by Carlson and Alavrez-Lowe are part of their UCLA projects that will premiere in the 2015-2016 season of the Center for the Performing Arts at UCLA. Over 50 students auditioned and most of them have been cast to work with one or sometimes two of the choreographers.

On a regular basis, the department continues its presentations of Chew on This series (graduates present on-going research), and our collaboration with artworxA LA whose engagement with L.A. County High School students and teaching artists bring their culminating work to share once a quarter, inspired by the AGHC’s AMP it UP program and this year’s theme: Exploring Representations of Gender.

June 11 and June 13: Ph.D. Hooding Ceremony and the SOAA Commencement respectively for our graduating students take place – looking forward to congratulating all our students at this culminating time of their lives!

Summer plans have taken place for the department and include the following –

- 6-week course offerings through the regular Summer Sessions A and C
- The High School Summer Dance Performing Arts Intensive: June 22-June 29 directed by faculty and alum Jackie Lopez, in partnership with alums Leanne Iacovetta and Harry Weston, along with a full complement of current students serving as counselors and assistants in the program as well as our faculty who will be teaching in the program.
- The UCLA Travel Study Abroad intensive program with WACD, July 10-August 8: study Arts and Culture of Brazil, and Theater of the Oppressed, at Rio de Janeiro, directed by faculty and alum Bobby Gordon.
- Summer Hothouse, directed this year by Victoria Marks, a four-week residency for choreographers and body based performance artists, utilizing our studios and informally sharing their works in progress (August 17 to Sept.4).
- Go to the WACD website for more information! http://www.wacd.ucla.edu/summer-2015

As you can see from the above, there is much to look forward to this coming quarter and beyond. There will be on-going postings of events, funding and internship opportunities throughout the quarter—watch for our department’s e-blasts and check the website’s calendar listings. If you are a WACD student, visit your respective CCLE module (grads and undergrads have their own to view).

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