

# Expressions

## Volume 20

**SJSU** COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES  
AND THE ARTS

# Table of Contents

<i>Spartans Around The World: School of Music &amp; Dance Summer Trips</i> .....	3
<i>Frankenstein@200: The Celebration Continues</i> .....	6
<i>Deep Humanities: Leveraging the Humanities and the Arts to Explore the Most Important Questions of our Time</i> .....	10
<i>Profile: Keenan Norris</i> .....	12
<i>Profile: Elisha Miranda</i> .....	13
<i>Profile: David Malinowski</i> .....	14
<i>Profile: Binh Danh</i> .....	15

# Spartans Around The World: School of Music & Dance Summer Trips

It was an eventful summer for the School of Music & Dance—three groups of students went on great trips around the world. For many of them, it was their first experience traveling, both in the United States and abroad. Welcome back, Spartans!

## Cuba

The Afro-Latin Jazz Ensemble took a step back in time on their trip to Havana. Jeff Lewis, director of the ensemble, calls it a place with “no access.” Little to no Internet, no music stores for guitar strings or drumsticks, no paint for the aging buildings.



“It’s actually like the movies. Old cars, the houses aren’t kept up,” Lewis says, “I kinda expected it, but after ten days, it really settled in. They have so little, but they do so much with what they have.”

With their tech offline, students hung out with each other in their free time, just like the Cubans who spend their weekends socializing on the Malecón, the stone seawall along the Havana coast. They visited night clubs for late night music—some bands didn’t start playing until 1:30 in the morning.

Ensemble members attended lectures on music, dancing, and history, had workshops with local musicians. One night, they performed at the Los Pocitos Community Center, playing Cuban music. The Cuban bands returned the favor, playing American pop music and the blues.

“The people we did have lectures with and the musicians that were put together, I couldn’t have asked for more”, Lewis says. He got more. One night, an activity was cancelled at the last minute. As a substitute, the students found themselves in the home of Rodolfo “Peruchín” Argudín Justiz, a famous Cuban musician known for creating a whole sub-genre of music. “We ended up in his garage! Jamming with him! It’s kinda like if we’re studying pop music and we’re going to Bruno Mars’ house to study pop or something. It was just amazing.”

The Afro-Latin Jazz ensemble plans to make a Cuba trip a biennial affair. In the future, Professor Lewis hopes to schedule private lessons from musicians as well as more opportunities to perform.

*If you want to hear the Afro-Latin Jazz Ensemble perform, check out their concert on **Thursday, October 25, at 7:00 p.m.** For tickets, visit [this page](#).*

## **The Baltics**

The SJSU Choraliers, along with the West Valley College Choirs and the Bay Singers, set off on their 12-day tour of the Baltics, visiting Estonia, Finland, and other countries. In a video with SJSU Music, Choralier Danielle Imai says, "I've been watching the Choraliers perform since I was a freshman in high school. And being able to have this opportunity to fly across the ocean with them and perform in such amazing places is something I've never dreamed of, and I can't imagine a group I'd rather do it with."

The Choraliers performed during church services at St. John's Church in Tartu, Estonia, and at the beautiful Rock Church in Helsinki, Finland, singing songs in English and in Estonian, which was an interesting challenge to sight-read.

They also volunteered at Haiba Children's Home in Tallinn, Estonia, gardening and playing with the kids. At the end of the day, the Choraliers and the children sang and danced together.

The trip culminated with a concert performance of Mozart's "Requiem" to a packed house at the Estonia Concert Hall, located on the outskirts of Tallinn's historic Old Town. In an interview with Perform International, Choir Director and Professor Jeffrey Benson says, "I don't think I've ever been in a concert where the audience demanded two, almost three encores. They just wouldn't stop clapping. It was the most incredible audience of my career."

The SJSU Choirs tour locally and internationally, having performed in Ireland and Carnegie Hall. And they are sure to travel to other places in the future as well. But no matter where they go, the SJSU Choraliers will bring the crowd to their feet.

*Check the [Choral Events Page](#) regularly for information about their events!*

## **Washington, D.C.**

The National College Dance Festival (NCD), held every other year, showcases the dancing talents of 30 schools from across the United States. San José State's

contemporary ensemble, University Dance Theatre (UDT), was one of the 30 troupes invited to NCD 2018.

Professor Heather Cooper, Associate Director of the School of Music and Dance, says that this is the first time in the history of the Dance program that SJSU has been invited to NCD.

The dancers arrived in D.C. on June 5th and spent 4 days there—busy days filled with dance classes, rehearsals, sightseeing, and dressing room hijinks.

On Friday, June 8th, UDT performed Exoskeleton, choreographed by Kara Davis of UC Berkeley, a dance routine called by adjudicators, “Surreal. Very smart and sophisticated with so many messages nestled inside it.”

“We were very fortunate to be able to work with Kara this year. She is one of the most sought-after dance artists in the Bay Area”, Cooper says. “And it was incredibly exciting to have the opportunity to perform at the Kennedy Center, one of the most prominent venues in the country. It’s a big honor.”

Congratulations, UDT for a great showing at NCD 2018! We’re looking forward to 2020!

*UDT will be performing **November 1-3, starting at 7:00 p.m.** This is a free event! Learn more [here](#).*

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*The School of Music & Dance provides students with excellent opportunities to learn and to share their skills through performance. But they can’t do it without talented performers! If you’d like to apply to be a Music or Dance Major, visit <http://www.sjsu.edu/musicanddance/>.*

*Or, sign up for Music Major for a Day on October 30th and 31st.*

*For Dance Major for a Day, reserve space by sending an email to [dance@sjsu.edu](mailto:dance@sjsu.edu) or call (408) 924-5041.*

*The Music department also has ensembles open to all majors. Check them out [here](#).*

*The School of Music & Dance’s annual show **Kaleidoscope!** is coming soon! Visit this [page](#) for tickets and more information.*

# Frankenstein@200: The Celebration Continues

*by Cristina Shannon*

In 1818, Mary Shelley published Frankenstein. Born from a ghost story crafted in response to a parlor game, Shelley's novel has remained immensely relevant 200 years later. In celebration of this anniversary, members of SJSU, Santa Clara University, and the University of San Francisco have spent this year bringing several themed events to the Bay Area. This fall, the Frankenstein Bicentennial continues with events located at the Hammer Theatre in downtown San José, an extension of the SJSU College of Humanities & the Arts.



## **Frankenstein@200 Kicks Off at the Hammer!**

### **Frankenstein Panel Discussion – Monster or Creature?**

On September 18th, the Frankenstein@200 series kicked off the fall season with the Frankenstein Panel Discussion. This event featured talks from SJSU President Dr. Mary A. Papazian, Dr. Anand Vaidya, and Dr. Adrienne Eastwood, and was moderated by Jonathan Gill. Dean Shannon Miller of the College of Humanities and the Arts at SJSU introduced the panel with a brief history of the novel's origin.

Dr. Papazian began the lecture with an analysis of the creature through the frame of Early Modernism, drawing comparisons between the characters in Paradise Lost and the creature.

"Paradise Lost was one of the most important pieces of literature for the creature as he learned about the world in which he had come into being," Papazian began. "Like Adam and Eve, he is created outside of the natural process. But where God created mankind out of love, Victor created the creature out of pride." She further illustrated this point by delving more into the creature's feelings as he read the novel. "Frankenstein's creature really moves in the course of the novel from

identifying with Adam and Eve to seeing himself identified as Satan....he recognized that like Adam, he had come forward as a perfect creature of God, but when he came forward, no longer innocent, he realized with experience, that he was in fact like Satan."

Dr. Vaidya, a professor of history and philosophy at SJSU, focused on a comparison of what he calls the "Phenomenal Zombie" vs the "Moral Zombie". He describes a phenomenal zombie as "something that is just like you, in every single sense, except one—it doesn't have any phenomenal consciousness." Vaidya then introduces the philosophical idea of panpsychism, the view that consciousness is a universal feature of all things. "The idea is that, to a certain degree, everything is conscious, and because everything is conscious, everything has a claim to justice. So the monster has the right to ask Frankenstein to create a bride for him because he's in the realm of moral persons. Why is he a moral person? Because he is a conscious being. Why is he a conscious being? Because everything is conscious."

Dr. Eastwood, a professor of English at SJSU, explored the homosocial relationships between the men in the novel and the absence of female companionship. Instead, Nature is given female characteristics throughout the novel. "When it comes to themes of science and discovery, nature is described as a feminine entity in relation to the masculine pursuit of obtaining knowledge," Eastwood says. "Robert Walton is on an expedition of discovery, hoping to find a way to 'pierce the ice with his little boat' in order to get through to the warmer waters and other countries. Robert's expedition serves as a metaphor for ambition and the relation of men in the story to the natural world." Eastwood explains Victor's own relation to nature and how he "characterizes his interest in the natural sciences in similar terms. Early in his story, he states 'I have described myself as always having been imbued with a fervent longing to penetrate the secrets of nature.'"

## **Frankenstein Coming to the Hammer**

### **National Theatre Live - *Frankenstein***

In October, the Hammer Theatre will screen the National Theatre Live productions of Frankenstein, featuring Benedict Cumberbatch and Jonny Lee Miller alternating the roles of Victor Frankenstein and his monster.

### **Frankenstein Goes to the Movies**

On October 18th, the SJSU Department of Film & Theatre will present an evening of film and discussion. This event will host a variety of scholars and experts including

Katherine D. Harris, Scott Fosdick, J. Todd Ormsbee, and Kirsten Brandt to discuss the wonder and legacy of Frankenstein in all forms of media.

### ***Frankenstein!!***

The SJSU School of Music & Dance will bring H.K. Gruber's Frankenstein!! to the Hammer stage. Gruber's "pan-demonium" for chansonnier and orchestra balances the comic and the macabre in a 20th-century musical language. Gruber draws from a collection of poems from H.C. Artmann's *Allerleirausch: Neue Schöne Kinderreime* (Noises, Noises, All Around: Lovely New Children's Rhymes) to create a chaotic, musical narrative. Vocalist Eugene Brancoveanu will join the symphony orchestra to sing/narrate this spectacular performance.

### ***Frankenstein: The Radio Play***

This spooky production will mark the end of Frankenstein season at the Hammer Theatre. It will be performed to a live audience in the Hammer 4 on October 26th and recorded for broadcast. On October 31st, this recording will be broadcast on KSJS.

To learn more about the remaining Frankenstein events happening at the Hammer Theatre, check out the series page at [hammertheatre.com/frankenstein-series-page/](http://hammertheatre.com/frankenstein-series-page/)

### **Want More *Frankenstein*?**

University of San Francisco FrankenFest

The University of San Francisco will host two panels discussing the intersections of Frankenstein, the social sciences, and the humanities.

### **Dissecting the Modern Man: Frankenstein Across the (Social) Sciences**

Join USF Faculty (AI, Cognitive Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Environmental Science) for an exploration of technology, innovation, humanity, and ethics across time and space through the lens of Mary Shelley's seminal work, Frankenstein. This panel will explore the groundbreaking novel from the perspectives of psychology, the environment, artificial intelligence, and beyond, looking at the challenges posed by scientific advancement.

### **From Fire to Film: Frankenstein Across the Humanities**

Join USF Humanities faculty (Classical Studies, Philosophy, Literature, Film Studies) for a discussion of the lurking presence of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein throughout intellectual traditions from antiquity to today. Drawing on the perspectives of philosophy, literature, classical mythology, and film, this panel will consider how a grotesque act of human creation quite literally raises from the dead age-old questions of morality, responsibility, and power.

To find even more Franken-themed events in the Bay Area, check out the dedicated blog, [frankenstein200yrs.wordpress.com](http://frankenstein200yrs.wordpress.com)

# Deep Humanities: Leveraging the Humanities and the Arts to Explore the Most Important Questions of our Time

by Cristina Shannon

San José State University's College of Humanities & the Arts welcomes several distinguished professors and authors to the Hammer Theatre as part of a new series to discuss important topics like the history of Silicon Valley and the Bay Area, anthropology, gender, equality, and other thought-provoking topics.



## **Science, Gender, and Equality - Cordelia Fine**

The series kicks off this fall with a lecture from Dr. Cordelia Fine, a Professor in the History & Philosophy of Science program at the University of Melbourne. Science has long shaped understanding of the feasibility and desirability of workplace gender equality. This talk will explore themes at the contested and controversial intersection of science, gender, and equality. Dr. Fine's latest book, *Testosterone Rex*, was the winner of the

prestigious Royal Society Insight Investment Science Book Prize in 2017 and was shortlisted for the Orwell Prize for political writing.

## **Silicon Politics - Margaret O'Mara**

The series continues on November 7th with a lecture featuring Professor Margaret O'Mara. O'Mara will be discussing themes from her upcoming novel, *THE CODE: Silicon Valley and the Remaking of America*, including the relationships between the Valley, Sacramento, and Washington D.C. that reshaped American politics and finance in the modern age. Dr. O'Mara is Professor of History at the University of Washington. Her books include *Cities of Knowledge* (Princeton, 2005), *Pivotal Tuesdays* (Penn Press, 2015), and a forthcoming history of the American technology industry and its relationship with the worlds of politics and



finance. She received her MA and PhD from the University of Pennsylvania and her BA from Northwestern University. Prior to her academic career, she worked in the Clinton White House and served as a contributing researcher at the Brookings Institution.



### **The Human After “The Human” - Tobias Rees**

On November 26th, the series ends with a lecture on the concept of The Human After “The Human” with Professor Tobias Rees. The modern concept of ‘the human’ was invented by European philosophers between the 17th and 19th century. Today, fields like AI and biotech have rendered this philosophical concept radically insufficient. Dr. Rees discusses the repercussions for the human sciences. Dr. Rees is

Director at the Berggruen Institute, Reid Hoffman Professor at the New School of Social Research, and a Fellow at the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research. His expertise lies at the intersection of anthropology, art history, the history of science, and the philosophy of modernity, and concerns the study of knowledge and thought. His second book, *After Ethnos*, aims to decouple anthropology and ethnography—and the human from society and culture. *After Ethnos* will be released fall 2018.

To learn more about the lecturers that will be featured, visit the Deep Humanities Series page at [www.hammertheatre.com](http://www.hammertheatre.com)

## Profile: Keenan Norris

by Mark Thompson

Keenan Norris joins our English Department as an Assistant Professor in Creative Writing. Coming to us most recently from Evergreen Valley College, Keenan is the author of the novel *Brother and the Dancer* and *By the Lemon Tree*, a collection of stories recently published by Nomadic Press. Setting his stories in the Central California countryside and the Southern California desert, Keenan says, "*By the Lemon Tree's* old school stories chronicle the collision of wide-eyed childhood with the end of lives



human and animal." His works have appeared in *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Oakland Noir*, *Inlandia: A Literary Journey Through California's Inland Empire*, *Abernathy: A Magazine for Black Men*, and *BOOM: A Journal of California*.

Keenan is happily adjusting to San José State, where he will teach Creative Writing and American Literature. "I'm really enjoying my new Spartanhood," he says. "As long as I'm not given a truncheon and conscripted into battle or sacrificed to the gods, I think this will go well." Keenan is also glad to be working in San José. He says, "SJSU's downtown campus environment brings together the elements of research, teaching, and community work right in the heart of one of America's great cities. I've looked forward to working in just such an environment for a long time—now I'm here." Keenan notes, however, that there is room for improvement. "I have ideas about how to improve parking. Someone should ask me about this."

Join us in welcoming Keenan to the College of Humanities and the Arts!

## Profile: Elisha Miranda

*by Mark Thompson*

Our College is happy to welcome filmmaker, writer, director, and educator Elisha Miranda to the Department of Film and Theater, where she joins us as Professor of Radio, TV, and Film and as a new Chair of the Department. Born and raised in the Mission District of San Francisco, Elisha received her BA from the University of California at Berkeley and her MCP from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where she was also a New Media Fellow. Finally, she received her MFA in Film Directing and Screenwriting from Columbia University. Elisha lived in New York City for 16 years—where she taught film at Rutgers University and NYU—directing commercials, and producing independent features. Moving back west, Elisha taught film directing, producing, and screenwriting at Eastern Washington University, was co-director of the film & theatre program and general manager of the college radio station, before joining us in San José.



Along with her teaching, Elisha has a long list of production credits. Her feature film “Outside the Wall” was a Sundance Feature Screenwriting Lab finalist, was a Nicholl’s finalist, and was a winner of the Tribeca Film Institute’s All Access Award. She’s also the writer of two young adult novels, short stories, and a series of non-fiction essays. Elisha’s work powers through mainstream media barriers and stereotypes to explore the Latinx condition, and hopefully to inspire the newest generation of artists to become the architects of authenticity through fearless imagination and activism. When she isn’t juggling her many new duties, she is writing for television and directing her webseries, the “Go Girl Chronicles,” about an immigrant Dominican girl who is cartographic and discovering her powers as she comes of age in an anti-dreamer world.

Join us in welcoming Elisha to the College of Humanities and the Arts!

## Profile: David Malinowski

*by Mark Thompson*



David Malinowski joins us as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Linguistics and Language Development. Coming most recently from Yale where he was a Language Technology and Research Specialist in the Center for Language Study, David notes that SJSU is a sort of homecoming, having earned a Master's at San Francisco State in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and a Ph.D. in Education from UC-Berkeley. "After several years working on the East Coast, I'm excited to be back in my home state of California, where I can contribute to the

public education mission of the CSUs," he says. "And it means a lot to me to be teaching and studying about language and language teaching on a campus as diverse as San José State." Along with TESOL, David's teaching experience includes Korean and Japanese. His academic background spans language and literacy education, multimodal communication, and technology-enhanced learning. His publications address the role of place in language teaching and learning—both in the challenges technology brings to the traditional face-to-face classroom, and in the politically-charged, multilingual landscapes of everyday public space.

Chances are you'll see David around campus: he literally lives here. "I'm enjoying serving as Faculty-in-Residence with the Global Village and Joe West residential communities," he says. "Planning and attending events, spending unstructured social time together in the halls, and having meals together in the dining commons are all activities that have opened my eyes to the diversity of students' experiences outside of the classroom while helping me to understand students' interests and needs in class too. I'm blown away by the dedication, perceptive insights, and passion that so many SJSU students bring to their studies.

When he's not on campus, you'll find him on his bike. "Riding a bike for exercise and fresh air is great, of course, but I also discovered that I do my best thinking when I'm on two wheels, pedaling up a hill or across town. I just have to remember to bring a notepad and pen along for the ride."

Join us in welcoming David to the College of Humanities and the Arts!

## Profile: Binh Danh

*by Mark Thompson*



Binh Danh is an incoming Assistant Professor of photography in the Art and Art History Department. Graduating with his BFA from SJSU in 2002, Binh received his MFA from Stanford University in 2004 and has since emerged as a photographic artist of national importance. Binh's photography uses alternative printing methods to investigate both his Vietnamese heritage and our collective memory of the war in Vietnam and Cambodia. Artist and innovator, Binh developed a printing technique which uses chlorophyll to embed documentary photographs from the Vietnam War

onto the leaves of plants and trees. His newer work focuses on the daguerreotype process, which he has used on prisoner photographs of the thousands of Vietnamese and Cambodian victims of the brutal Khmer Rouge's dictatorship, giving them "a proper homage to the legacy of their life." His most recent work uses the same process to capture the beauty of Yosemite. His work is in the permanent collections of the National Gallery of Art, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the DeYoung Museum, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Center for Creative Photography, the George Eastman Museum, and Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. He received the 2010 Eureka Fellowship from the Fleishhacker Foundation, and in 2012 was a featured artist at the 18th Biennale of Sydney in Australia.

Binh is happy to return to his alma mater as a professor. "As a product of SJSU, I'm thrilled to be coming home after six years teaching in the Sonoran Desert," he says. "As I walk into my classroom, I'm inspired by the many faces that stare back at me. I see myself in my students, as once upon a time I was in their seats, wanting to better myself and contribute to our humanity."

"In the coming years," he says, "my goal is to develop a good rapport with my colleagues and students, continue my art practice, and teach what I love doing—living a creative life."

Join us in welcoming Binh Danh to the College of Humanities and the Arts!