

School of Fine Arts Faculty and Staff Retreat

Dean's Updates
August 25, 2021

SFA Snapshot



Four academic departments

650 undergrads at Storrs/100 at Stamford

110 graduate students

Art & Art History

Digital Media & Design

Dramatic Arts

Music



Three Institutes/Interdisciplinary Programs

Greenhouse Studios (UConn Libraries/CLAS/SFA)

Krenicki Arts and Engineering Institute (SFA/SoE)

Arts Leadership & Cultural Management (grad program)



Seven exhibiting and performing-arts venues

Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry

Benton Museum of Art

Connecticut Repertory Theatre

Contemporary Art Galleries

Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts

von der Mehden Recital Hall

von Schlippe Gallery (Avery Point)

Covid impact

- SFA faculty and staff pulled together to address an unprecedented challenge:
 - Both virtual and on-site programming at exhibiting and performing arts venues
 - Adapting to health & safety challenges in on-site teaching environments
 - Innovating for successful remote teaching in the arts



Human Rights/SFA Collaboration

- Three joint hires between SFA and Human Rights Institute:
 - Theatre Studies
 - Art History (also part of the University-wide anti-racism cluster hire)
 - Film & Video
- We will have the most comprehensive arts component of any university's human rights program
- Creates possibilities for unique curriculum and programming



**UConn HUMAN RIGHTS
FILM SERIES**

2020-21 Series
Presented by Dodd Human Rights Impact, the Human Rights Institute, and Digital Media and Design at the University of Connecticut.

This year we spotlight new work by UConn Digital Media & Design faculty who address human rights issues through film, animation, and game design and a winter focus on UConn's partnership with PBS Frontline.

Winter
Oscar Guerra, *Love, Life, and The Virus*
Thursday, December 3, 5 PM
Ramona S. Diaz, *A Thousand Cuts*
Thursday, February 11, 7 PM

Spring 2021
Heather Cassano, *The Limits of My World*
Tuesday, March 16, 6 PM screening, 7:15 PM panel
James Coltrain, *Blackhaven*
Tuesday, April 6, 7 PM
Tanju Ozdemir, *Intentions*
Tuesday, April 20, 7 PM
Heejoo Kim, *Hidden*
Tuesday, April 27, 7 PM

Free and Open to the Public. Registration Required.
For more information: s.uconn.edu/hrfs

UConn
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

Arts Leadership & Cultural Management program at the Wadsworth Atheneum

- Our dedicated space was opened for ALCM faculty and graduate student use in Spring 2021
- Enhances opportunities for partnership with arts institutions in Hartford and the state
- Expression of our land grant mission in SFA – to support the state’s cultural life by engaging its arts institution
- Research projects and internships





Krenicki Arts and Engineering Institute

- Co-directors appointed
 - Ed Weingart, SFA
 - Jorge Paricio Garcia, SoE
- Space renovation – former Dean’s Offices in Art Building
- Industrial Design and Entertainment Engineering Minors open for enrollment
- KI faculty have received two NASA grants for 2021-22



Research productivity - symposia

- "Joni Mitchell's Blue at Fifty" (Music)
- "Puppetry's Racial Reckoning" (Puppet Arts/Dramatic Arts and Ballard)
- "Amplifying Black Voices in Hollywood" (DMD/Jorgensen)

Research productivity - grants

- MELLON FOUNDATION – Greenhouse Studios, Sourcery app
- LUCE FOUNDATION – Benton Museum, collaborative exhibition with American Museum of Natural History
- NASA – Krenicki Arts and Engineering Institute, Mars design projects
- NEH – Digital Media & Design and History Dept, Digital Public History Minor



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- DEI Task Force
 - listening sessions for SFA students, faculty, staff facilitated with cultural centers
 - surveys on SFA climate for faculty, staff, students
- Diversity roundtable with alumni and Frank Tuitt
 - Professional development as a diversity issue
- New diversity hiring guidelines implemented that increased diversity in candidate pools and improved outcomes
- Curricular reforms
 - Music history intro redesigned, DMD course “Toward Equity”
- New Anti-Racism Research Fund

Alumni engagement, development

- Founded Recent Alumni Council (RAC)
 - Four members, one from each department
 - Will grow to twelve
 - Alumni programming, career networking
- Offered multiple virtual events for UConn Alumni
- Highlights of philanthropy
 - Barri Marks Career Readiness Fund (\$100K endowment)
 - Marsden Family Scholarship (\$100K endowment) for underrepresented students
 - Gift in progress to support a new Human Rights Film Festival (\$65K/year for three years)

Challenges and Opportunities for 2021-22

- Restore undergraduate admissions processes disrupted by pandemic
 - ~10% decline in freshman admits in 2020, 2021
 - Engaging diverse prospective students – Stamford auditions, magnet schools
 - Covid limitations – need to increase video resources, virtual engagement
- Strategic planning
 - Will be concluded in 2021-22
 - Includes strategic plan for DEI initiatives
 - Nomenclature issues to be resolved
- Increase grant-writing in the School
 - Mitigate impact of rescissions
 - Enable ambitious teaching, research, community engagement
 - Hiring a dedicated grant writer for the School
- Foster the HRI/SFA collaboration
 - Develop curriculum and programming
- Signature Programming for 2021-22
 - “Year of Sendak” – calendar year 2022, year of thematic programming includes exhibitions and performances
 - Human Rights Film Festival, Fall 2022
 - SFA 60th Anniversary – “60 for 60” a celebration of our distinguished alumni