



**Happy Holidays from**

THE UNIVERSITY  
OF **TAMPA**  
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS

## **Ten Things We Are Celebrating This Holiday Season in CAL...**

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### **1. The Return of (Safe) Live Theatre and Dance**





Two wonderful theatre productions - "Vaudeville" and "Sondheim on Sondheim" were staged this semester in the Falk Theatre. Congratulations to **Paul Finocchiaro**, **Bob Gonzalez** and **Alex Amyot** for safely having what were some of the only live theatre events in Tampa Bay this semester.

Not to be outdone by their departmental colleagues, **Susannah LeMarquand**, **Michael Crotty** and **Amanda Sieradzki** staged both "Dance Happening" and "A Night of Experimental Dance." The dance concerts were both insanely popular - "Dance Happening" turned away audience members in an effort to maintain distancing in Falk Theatre and Experimental Dance was just amazing under the stars with Plant Hall in the background. (*Dance photo by Jaime Aelavanthara*).

## 2. Innovative Student Research



Students in **Stephen Kromka's** Oral Communication class completed a team research class project throughout the semester. Each group created hypotheses, collected data, wrote up a 15-page manuscript, and presented a poster in class. The topics make research especially relevant for students:

- The Science Behind Instagram Influencers - **Maddison Olley & Vreanna Bautista** (Pictured above)

- Creating Catches and Getting Matches: Examining Trends in Tinder Profiles - **Samantha Mannarino & Tara O'Connor**
- The Emotional Impact of Binge Watching - **Tiffany Maziarz, Thomas McMullen, & Lauryn Steed**

Across campus in Museum Studies, **Alex Mattioli** worked with **Rosemarie Trentinella and Jocelyn Boigenzahn** on a project accepted for the College Art Association conference in February 2021. The project is a stylistic analysis of a painting that may or may not be a Picasso.

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### 3. Music Everywhere!



Music students and faculty spread out across campus taking advantage of every square inch of space to do what they do best - safely. From Opera Workshops in the Sykes Chapel (pictured above) to the concert band performing in Fletcher Lounge, music was everywhere this semester - including online. Concerts were beautifully recorded and live streamed thanks to **Troy Cusson** in his new role of Music Technology Coordinator.

You can visit the [Department of Music YouTube channel](#) to see and hear some of this semester's outstanding concerts.

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### 4. Online Film Festivals



# Black Box Film Festival Fall 2020

The screening will feature a selection of student short films including animation, narrative, documentary, experimental films, as well as webisodes, and more. Students explore original themes with evidence of creative solutions of filming during the pandemic. The films are selected by the faculty of Film, Animation and New Media (FMX) with best film awards including animation, directing, experimental, narrative and documentary film categories. To be eligible for the festival the films must be made in a course at UT during May Term, Summer or Fall semesters. Several thesis films will be screened including Taylor Guyton's six-minute animated film "Only for the Prince," and Comme Les Filles, a short 12-minute narrative by Tamsen Simpson. One of the films that has been getting media attention is a documentary by student Nicole Flores, "The Making of Recyclosaurus Rex" (a dinosaur made of recycled materials) at the Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI) in Tampa. Other work includes Daniel Westcott's webisode "Time Loop," Joshua Parrish's documentary "Autocrossing," and music video "Invisible Connection" by Morgan Cameron, among many more. The free event is open to the public via a Vimeo live stream. To access the show please activate the link at 8pm, Friday, December 4th, 2020. For more information, contact Dana Plays, professor and chair of the Department of Film, Animation and New Media at UT at (813) 257-3161 or dplays@ut.edu.

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Share



Not ready to go back to a crowded movie theater yet? The FMX Black Box Festival is online and jammed-pack with cutting-edge student films. You can ["attend" the festival online](#) from the comfort of your couch.

The winner of the best documentary film, Nicole Flores, was [mentioned on WFLA](#) for her film "The Making of Recyclosaurus".

## 5.The Last Semester With No Windows



As soon as finals ended, just about half of the College of Arts and Letters was busy packing, sorting, organizing and getting ready for a move into the spectacular new [Ferman Center or the Arts](#) in January 2021.

Students, staff and faculty in Music and Art + Design were especially busy getting their former headquarters in the Fairgrounds buildings ready for demolition.

Imagine your worst moving memory, quadruple the complications, throw in some grand pianos and toxic chemicals, add in a pandemic and termites, and you'll have a sense of what the last few weeks have been like. But, everyone rose to the challenge and we are ready and excited for our new home.

Music students let out some end-of-the-semester stress painting on walls and leaving memories in the Ferman Music Center. But it wasn't obscenities -- students left tributes to, and quotes from, their favorite professors. Several Music alumni/ae even stopped in to say a final goodbye to a building where so many spent so much time. But the mood was joyous as everyone looked forward to not just a cutting-edge new facility, but having *windows* - something the reliable yet dowdy Fairgrounds buildings lacked.

The faculty, staff, students (and the Dean) are especially grateful for the help from everyone in UT Facilities and Construction and Design who now understand what "artist temperament" means.

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## 6.Hi-Tech Partners in the Tampa Community



FMX Professors **Gregg Perkins**, **Dana Plays** and Dean **David Gudelunas** visited the new Vu Studio in Tampa in November. Tampa-based Diamond View Studios, a multiple-E Emmy award winning video production company, recently unveiled the new 10,000 square foot facility that features one of the largest LED Volumes in the world. The giant curved LED screen uses extended reality (XR) technology popularized recently by LucasFilms "Mandalorian" series and promises to revolutionize how film and video is created.

[Diamond View is an educational partner](#) with the **Department of Film Animation and New Media (FMX)** that offers internships to UT film students and also allows students to come to the facility for educational experiences of all kinds including in-class visits and virtual production workshops. FMX students will also shadow production crews and learn this bleeding-edge technology that is too new to be included in any existing curriculum. Several FMX graduates are working with the company full-time as well.

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## 7.Students Passionate About Social Justice





**Communication and Speech Studies** students in **Kristen Foltz's** Speech for Social Justice class collaborated with students in the dance program to present a special performance as part of the Fall "Dance Happening" that featured a spoken word piece in five parts dealing with important social justice issues such as human trafficking, sexism, ableism, classism and Black Lives Matter.

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## 8.Friends Who Support CAL Students and Programs



The Fall semester meant fewer visitors on campus than we'd like, so it was a special treat to have members of the **CAL Advisory Board** on campus for a special concert featuring **Hein Jung** and **Grigorios Zamparas** (that [you can watch online](#)), and to partially see (well, masks!) faces like UT Trustee and CAL Advisory Board chair **Charlene Gordon** at theatre productions. We are also grateful to CAL Advisory Board member **Stanton Storer** who served as the juror for the 2020 BFA in Art + Design student show (*show pictured above*).

## 9.Exceptional Faculty



College of Arts and Letters Faculty are continually innovating and striving for excellence. Just a few recent examples:

- **Devon Johnson**, Philosophy and Religion, has a forthcoming book with Rowan & Littlefield titled *Black Nihilism and Antiracist Racism*.
- **Santiago Echeverry**, FMX, is exhibiting his experimental short film *BOGUE* at San Francisco's Another Hole in the Head Independent Film Festival.
- English and Writing and MAPC Professor **Aimee Whiteside**'s co-edited book *Social Presence in Online Learning: Multiple Perspectives on Practice and Research* (Stylus) won first place for Association for Educational Communications and Technology's Distance Education Book Award.
- Part-Time English and Writing Professor **Matthew Diomedes**' book manuscript *For Father and Many Other Things* was accepted for publication by Finishing Line Press. His previous book *Pietro DiDonato, The Master Builder* was published by Bucknell University Press.
- **Communication and Speech Studies** faculty (pictured above) presented research with students as part of the (virtual) National Communication Association's prestigious Teachers on teaching series that recognizes "innovative, impactful, and inclusive communication faculty."

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## 10.Cross-Disciplinary Holiday Cheer



What would have been the tenth anniversary of the extremely [popular UT Holiday Concert](#) was placed on hold due to COVID-19, but that doesn't mean your holiday at home has to be without music. WEDU-PBS will re-broadcast the 2019 concert that was filmed in the Sykes Chapel and Center for Faith and Values as part of the Damron Concert series.

The entire production was produced, recorded, edited, and performed by UT students and faculty from the College of Arts and Letters. A real holiday miracle to see coordination and cooperation across four different academic departments and multiple disciplines!

**You can watch the concert on WEDU at 9 PM on Christmas Eve (Dec. 24) and at 3 PM on Christmas Day (Dec. 25).**

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Support the Arts + Humanities at UT!