Spotlight on the Arts festival offers breadth of events, activities

When the UGA Arts Council—composed of directors and department heads from various arts units on campus—was convened in February 2011, discussions by the units on campus—were focused on how to make the arts at UGA more visible to the university community, especially students, and to the surrounding community as well.

“We talked about the fact that we have these marvelous arts programs and venues, but they needed a higher profile,” said Morris. “We discussed ways to raise awareness with various audiences on and off campus of the special opportunities that the university provides to experience the full spectrum of the arts—from music to dance to theater to the visual and literary arts.”

During spring semester 2012, a group of public relations majors in a PR Campaigns class taught by Masog Professor Lynne Sailer in the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication researched what other colleges and universities were doing to promote the arts and also conducted focus groups with fellow students. The stunning news was that many students were unaware that the state museum of art is located on campus, while others had no idea that student tickets to most events at the Performing Arts Center were available for only $5.

“It’s important that students—particularly our incoming students—learn about the opportunity to take art classes beyond the classroom,” said Provost Jere Morehead. “We hope that faculty, but particularly those teaching First-Year Odyssey seminars, will encourage students to visit the Georgia Museum of Art or attend a theater performance or dance or music concert on campus.”

Among the recommendations from the PR class to entice students to do that was to hold a campus arts festival, an idea readily embraced by the Arts Council units. Thus the Spotlight on the Arts festival was born.

“We started by identifying a week during fall semester when a few big events were already planned,” said Morris. “Once we had set the dates, then the council members began filling in other events and activities. It mushroomed to the point where we are now offering more than 50 events over the nine-day period of Nov. 3-11.”

To get word out about the festival—and about the arts in general—a State of the Arts newsletter was created and published in June. Twitter and Facebook pages were launched in July; and The Arts at UGA website followed in early August.

“While many of our individual arts units were doing an excellent job of promoting their own events and activities, there were no sources for overall information about the arts at UGA,” said Morris. “The idea was to make it possible for people to get an overview of all the university’s offerings in one place and then to be able to access more details about specific areas of interest.”

Other institutions around the country are also beginning to take that approach, according to the research conducted by the students. “In some instances, we found that universities are putting together strategic plans and ‘brands’ for the arts,” Morris said.

At the same time, the role of the arts in economic development has become a topic of interest nationally, regionally and locally. At a September meeting at the Lyndon House Arts Center, community leaders and members of local arts organizations heard presentations about the national Arts & Economic Prosperity IV study, in which a number of local groups participated. The results show that the arts are a self-reliant industry that pumps millions of dollars into the economy every year.

But beyond economic value, the arts are widely regarded as enhancing the quality of life in Athens-Clarke County. As President Michael F. Adams noted recently, “It’s not accidental that this community is on virtually every list of great places to live for everyone from millennials to retirees. A great part of that is the cultural life here in Athens. There are few if any places of 100,000 people in population in America where you have the breadth of art, music, dance and drama available to you that we have in Athens.”

The Spotlight on the Arts festival proves that point. See inside for a complete schedule of events and activities sponsored by the UGA Arts Council. In addition, several student arts organizations are planning “impromptu” performances at the Tate Center and in front of the Fine Arts Building at the corner of Baldwin and Lumpkin streets during the festival.
A reading by nationally recognized poet Jacqueline Oehlers, author of several collections including Wintering In (2013) and People's Opinion (2013) commissioned by The Georgia Review.

Historic Campaign Speeches Re-enacted

2 p.m. Auditorium, Russell Special Collections Building

A special event of the 150th anniversary of the University of Georgia Libraries. The Liveatre UGA will re-enact classic campaign speeches from a bygone era in the lobby of the Russell Library Gallery.

Blue Man Group

8 p.m. Classic Center Theatre, 300 N. Thomas St., downtown Athens

Accompanied by a live band. Blue Man Group creates a new form of entertainment with a combination of theater, music, visual spectacle, and period performance.

Cochlear Center Fellows Lecture

4 p.m. Room 214 Miller Learning Center, Dance Building

Dr. Michael Oliveri, Lamar Dodd School of Art, presents a talk on his Cochlear Center Fellowship Project “Invisible: Infrared Space Images from the Macros to the Micros.”

Georgia Museum of Art Exhibit

2 p.m. Georgia Museum of Art

An exhibition of work by students pursuing bachelor of fine arts and master of fine arts degrees in ceramics, drawing, printmaking, and sculpture. An additional exhibition is in the Building Storage Vault.

Georgia Museum of Art Reception and Lecture

5:30 p.m. reception, 6:30 p.m. lecture, Griffith Auditorium

Contemporary artist Chakaia Booker will present a lecture on her artwork. Booker's work involves using car tires, body, street-art costumes, abstract fiber installations, and abstract paintings in her installations.

Willson Center/Peabody Awards Film Series

7 p.m. Classic Center Theatre, 234 W. Hancock Ave., downtown Athens

A screening of the Peabody Award-winning documentary Coming Out Class (documenting life in Ohio and Kentucky) and the Emerging Short Film Award-winning documentary LennoNYC (a screening of John Lennon’s journey from New York to the White House).

UGA Trombone Ensemble and Choir Concert

8 p.m. Hodgson Hall, Performing Arts Center

Concert by the UGA Trombone Ensemble and Choir, conducted by Dr. Michael Oliveri, Lamar Dodd School of Art, presents a program of music by Burana and Carmina Burana.

Georgia Museum of Art Family Day

10 a.m.-1 p.m., second floor lobby, Hugh Hodgson School of Music Recitals

The public is invited to participate in or observe an open class offered by the Center for Ceramics, UGA Dairy Cattle, and student art exhibits in the School of Art and the School of Music with hands-on craft activities.

University Theatre: The Darker Face of the Earth

8 p.m. Fine Arts Theatre, Fine Arts Building

Play by former Poet Laureate Rita Dove combines the Greek Oedipus myth with the reality of slavery. It follows Augustus of Athens, who is forced to run away from Italy to escape his father’s wrath.

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8 p.m. Classic Center Theatre, 234 W. Hancock Ave., downtown Athens

A screening of the Peabody Award-winning documentary LennoNYC (documenting life in Ohio and Kentucky) and the Emerging Short Film Award-winning documentary LennoNYC (a screening of John Lennon’s journey from New York to the White House).

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Support for the performing arts at the University of Georgia (UGA) has expanded to incorporate the study of digital media as a form of dramatic art. To reflect its expanded mission, the Theatre and Film Studies department was created in 1995.

Theatre and Film Studies is housed in the Fine Arts Building, renovated in 2010 and renamed in honor of the late Lamar Dodd, who was a young artist when he came to New York to be part of the Art Students League. He returned to head the art department at UGA from 1939 until his retirement in 1974.

The Fine Arts Theatre, renovated in 2010, and the 100-seat Caffin Theatre, as well as classrooms for the theatre department. Tickets to productions in the Fine Arts Theatre are sold through the Performing Arts box office immediately prior to performances.

Department of Dance

(www.dance.uga.edu)

Address: Dance Building, 325 Sanford Drive, Athens 30602

Location: Across Sanford Drive from the Georgia Hotel and Conference Center

Parking: Parking deck adjacent to the entrance just off Baxter Street

The dance department in the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences offers both B.A. and B.F.A. degrees. Full-time faculty are joined by visiting faculty and guest artists to serve undergraduate dance majors and minors, with several hundred students in core and elective courses each year. The department provides a variety of performance company options focused toward pre-professional training, student choreography and student performance. The department hosts the Young Choreographers Series and other annual performances at the New Dance Theatre, which has a professional-sized stage and state-of-the-art theatrical lighting. Tickets for dance productions are sold at the cashiers’ window in the Tate Student Center and at the door of the New Dance Theatre prior to performances (subject to availability).

Special Collections Libraries

(www.lib.uga.edu/scl)

Address: 300 S. Hull St., Athens 30602

Location: Bounded by S. Hull St., Waddell St. and Florida Ave.

Parking: Hull Street parking deck, with easy entrance just off Baxter Street

The special collections libraries moved to their new $46 million home in the Richard B. Russell Building, with formal dedication in February. Named in honor of the long-serving U.S. senator from Georgia, the new facility is designed to help the university preserve and share its vast archive of books, documents and audiovisual material focused on the history and culture of Georgia. The special collections include the Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the Walter J. Brown Media Archives and Peabody Awards Collection, and the Richard B. Russell Center for Political Research and Studies. Three galleries provide space for exhibiting materials from the collections.

The special collections exhibit galleries are open Monday-Friday 9 a.m.-3 p.m. and Saturday 1-5 p.m. Guided tours are available to the public every Tuesday at 2 p.m.

The Georgia Review

(www.garev.uga.edu)

Address: Main Library, 320 S. Jackson St., Athens 30602

Location: North Campus

Parking: North Campus parking deck on S. Jackson St.

Founded at UGA in 1947 and published continuously since then, The Georgia Review has been one of the South’s most highly regarded journals of arts and letters. Each issue offers vigorous short stories, general interest essays, poems, reviews and visual art. The Georgia Review has twice taken a top prize in the annual National Magazine Awards competition and has been a finalist 18 times in various categories. The journal marked its 65th anniversary with the publication of an anthology of 28 short fiction works from rugged UGA Press titled Stories Waiting to Be Heard.

The Georgia Review offices are located on the seventh floor of the Main Library. Subscriptions can be purchased from the journal’s website, and special gift subscriptions are offered for the holidays.

The UGA Press

(www.ugapress.org)

Address: Main Library, 320 S. Jackson St., Athens 30602

Location: North Campus

Parking: North Campus parking deck on S. Jackson St.

Since its founding in 1938, the primary mission of the University of Georgia Press has been to support and enhance the university’s reputation as a major research institution by publishing outstanding works of scholarship and promoting its research and writing throughout the world.

The UGA Press is the only scholarly publisher within the University System of Georgia. A full member of the Association of American University Presses since 1946, the Press is also the oldest and largest book publisher in the state, producing some 80 new books a year, more than 1,500 titles in print.

This past summer, the UGA Press moved from its small office on Research Road to the Main Library on North Campus. Books can be ordered from the website, which also includes a schedule of author events.

The Willson Center for Humanities and Art

(www.willson.uga.edu)

Address: 110 Hooper Street, Athens 30602

Location: Lower level of the Psychology Building

Parking: Tate Center Parking Deck off Lumpkin St.

The mission of the Willson Center is to promote scholarship on the humanities and arts. The center presents world-class speakers, exhibitions, workshops and performances by visiting artists and scholars as well as UGA faculty. These events are held in various venues on campus and in the community. A calendar can be accessed on the Willson Center website, which was recently redesigned.

Founded as the Humanities Center in 1987, it was renamed the Center for Humanities and Arts (1997), then the Willson Center for Humanities and Arts (2005), in honor of UGA benefactors and Georgia business leaders Jane and Harry Willson.

The Willson Center wishes to express its appreciation to the new campus partners for their assistance with the Spotlight on the Arts festival:

Office of the President

Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

Division of Student Affairs

Division of External Affairs

UGA Alumni Association

UGA Athletic Association

UGA Hotel and Conference Center