Sac State festival puts spotlight on the arts

Sacramento State’s Festival of the Arts starts with a bang this year and doesn’t let up.

The Festival, April 14-21, celebrates all things arts at the University, including fine art, theater and dance, music, photography, design and literature.

“Our campus, community and region have such rich and diverse creative talents,” says College of Arts and Letters Dean Edward Inch. “Each year the Festival gives us an opportunity to pause, appreciate and celebrate the important and inspiring role they play in each of our lives.”

U-Nite, Sac State’s night at the Crocker Art Museum, will serve as something of an overture for the Festival, spotlighting the faculty and students who make the University’s arts programs vibrant. Each of the Crocker’s galleries will feature one attraction, such as modern dance, classical music, jazz, art, film, photography and interpretive readings. U-Nite, part of the Crocker’s Art Mix series, runs 5-9 p.m. Thursday, April 12, at the Museum.

The Festival officially kicks off Saturday, April 14, when Sac State jazz musicians show the Second Saturday crowd in Midtown the kind of student talent to be found at the University.

That night brings the second weekend of performances of Zoot Suit, Luis Valdez’s fictionalized account of the 1942 Sleepy Lagoon murder in Los Angeles and the ensuing zoot suit riots. Valdez will visit the campus and give a free, open lecture at 11 a.m. Thursday, April 19, in the University Theatre. He will also attend the 6 p.m. performance of the play that day. Sac State’s production of Zoot Suit is directed by Professor Manuel Pickett and runs through Sunday, April 22.

Festival music covers classical, jazz and everything in between.

Gypsy jazz is on the program when the Hot Club of San Francisco performs at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 18. The group performs the music of Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli as well as its own compositions.
Classical pianist Natasha Paremski performs at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, April 14, and Sac State Professor David Wells pairs up with other faculty musicians for a recital of bassoon music at 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 17.

The best of Sacramento’s modern dance will be featured in Dance Sampler, a series of pieces by members of the region’s professional dance troupes. Show times are 7 p.m. April 19-21.

Sac State Has Talent offers a mix of fine art and performances in the University Library Galleries. Each piece – whether painting, sculpture, or music and dance – is created by a member of the University’s faculty or staff. The exhibit runs through Friday, May 18.

Another mix of fine art, music and dance takes place in the Else Gallery with “Making Merit for Southeast Asian New Year: Offering of the Sand Stupas.” The closing reception at 5 p.m. Friday, April 20, will include performances of Southeast Asian music and dance.

There will also be author lectures and interpretive readings, film screenings and folk dancing.

“This is about our imagination and hope,” says Inch. “Through the creative lenses of our faculty, students and guest artists, we imagine how each of us might reinvent the world.”

For a complete schedule of Festival events, visit www.csus.edu/festival. For more information, call the College of Arts and Letters at (916) 278-6502. For media assistance, call Sacramento State’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156.

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