Welcome to another edition of Ovations! This issue features more exciting news about the faculty, staff and students of the College of Liberal and Fine Arts, and their contributions as UTSA transforms rapidly into a truly premier institution. But while we are busy helping to propel and steer the UTSA “rocket ride,” it is worthwhile to reflect on some constants.

The liberal arts disciplines continue to be perceived as providing the moral and intellectual bedrock for civic life. A new major study by the Carnegie and Teagle foundations seeks to better integrate the liberal arts into business and professional education. “We teach students in most business programs a great deal about the bottom line,” said Teagle Foundation president Robert Connor. “But to really prepare them to become leaders in our increasingly competitive global marketplace, we also need to provide them with the capacity for analytical thinking, the intellectual depth, ethical understanding and creativity that come from a liberal arts education.” While appreciated, there is nothing really new in this view, for it goes back to classical times, and the valuation goes beyond better business to a more perfect citizenry. The artes liberales made and still make, in the words of Quintilian, “The good person, speaking well.”

The first century Roman rhetorician would be pleased to know that this issue heralds the opening of the UTSA Department of Philosophy and Classics in our college, building on strong program excellence to serve the growing needs of the university and wider community, especially in the area of ethics. Political science is another discipline where “the good person” is developed, as exemplified in our profile of San Antonio city attorney and COLFA alum Michael Bernard.

COLFA also produces inquisitive global travelers, as if in answer to the Carnegie charge. In this issue we learn about Russia through the eyes of UTSA historian Bruce Daniels and Russian language expert Marita Nummikoski and 11 of her students. The timeless and fundamental value of the arts in our lives is evinced in the articles about Santiago Daydi-Tolson’s biennial Conference on Food Representation in Literature, Film and the Other Arts, and the four nationally distinguished composers who reside in the UTSA music department. And to further emphasize constancy, “Politics as Usual” could be the title of our feature on the consistencies of presidential electoral rhetoric since the times of Thomas Jefferson.

Finally, Steven Kellman reassures all those students still undecided on their majors, and comforts their parents, by profiling COLFA professors who changed their majors back in the day, often from something outside the arts, humanities or social sciences. Change, it appears, can be good after all.

All of our accomplishments are possible only with the gifts and guidance of liberal and fine arts alumni and friends, many of whom are recognized with gratitude in the following pages.

Welcome to another edition of Ovations! This issue features more exciting news about the faculty, staff and students of the College of Liberal and Fine Arts, and their contributions as UTSA transforms rapidly into a truly premier institution. But while we are busy helping to propel and steer the UTSA “rocket ride,” it is worthwhile to reflect on some constants.

The liberal arts disciplines continue to be perceived as providing the moral and intellectual bedrock for civic life. A new major study by the Carnegie and Teagle foundations seeks to better integrate the liberal arts into business and professional education. “We teach students in most business programs a great deal about the bottom line,” said Teagle Foundation president Robert Connor. “But to really prepare them to become leaders in our increasingly competitive global marketplace, we also need to provide them with the capacity for analytical thinking, the intellectual depth, ethical understanding and creativity that come from a liberal arts education.” While appreciated, there is nothing really new in this view, for it goes back to classical times, and the valuation goes beyond better business to a more perfect citizenry. The artes liberales made and still make, in the words of Quintilian, “The good person, speaking well.”

The first century Roman rhetorician would be pleased to know that this issue heralds the opening of the UTSA Department of Philosophy and Classics in our college, building on strong program excellence to serve the growing needs of the university and wider community, especially in the area of ethics. Political science is another discipline where “the good person” is developed, as exemplified in our profile of San Antonio city attorney and COLFA alum Michael Bernard.

COLFA also produces inquisitive global travelers, as if in answer to the Carnegie charge. In this issue we learn about Russia through the eyes of UTSA historian Bruce Daniels and Russian language expert Marita Nummikoski and 11 of her students. The timeless and fundamental value of the arts in our lives is evinced in the articles about Santiago Daydi-Tolson’s biennial Conference on Food Representation in Literature, Film and the Other Arts, and the four nationally distinguished composers who reside in the UTSA music department. And to further emphasize constancy, “Politics as Usual” could be the title of our feature on the consistencies of presidential electoral rhetoric since the times of Thomas Jefferson.

Finally, Steven Kellman reassures all those students still undecided on their majors, and comforts their parents, by profiling COLFA professors who changed their majors back in the day, often from something outside the arts, humanities or social sciences. Change, it appears, can be good after all.

All of our accomplishments are possible only with the gifts and guidance of liberal and fine arts alumni and friends, many of whom are recognized with gratitude in the following pages.
Il faut changer la vie,” proclaimed Arthur Rimbaud. You must change your life. And he did. At 19, Rimbaud ceased to write the poetry that had secured him a place in literary history and headed off to Africa to become an explorer. As many as 70 percent of college students switch majors at least once before settling on a specialization. Even if you’re famous as Randi Zuckerberg, some students seem to change majors as often as underwear, on average about three times before graduation.

Professors, who once were students, are also changeable creatures. If you dedicate yourself to the life of the mind, why not be of two—or three or four—minds? Whereas some scholars remain faithful to their first love throughout their career—be it painting, politics or paleontology—others are more fickle. After receiving a Nobel Prize for chemistry, Linus Pauling made important contributions to molecular biology while also earning an additional Nobel Peace Prize.

Condeleeza Rice trained as a concert pianist before receiving a doctorate in political science. After graduation, Drinka returned to Italy to teach English and work as a governess. Back in the United States, she worked at the Italian Embassy in Washington, D.C., while studying applied linguistics at Georgetown University. Now an eminent linguist and chair of the Department of English, Drinka observes “People often express surprise that I went from art history to historical linguistics, but the leap isn’t as great as it seems—I still want to figure out why people adopt changes and what they reveal about themselves through the minute details of their language.”

A stint in the Peace Corps took Sara DeTurk far afield. Though she had received her B.A. in psychology, the experience inspired her to pursue a master’s in international education. Her thesis research led to intercultural communication and appointment as an assistant professor in UTSA’s Department of Communication. Ann Hardgrove also made a global leap. Though she describes herself as “a small-town girl” from Northfield, Minnesota, Hardgrove, an associate professor of history, became a specialist in the history and anthropology of India. She was majoring in physics and math at a horrid bug bit her during her junior year.

As if sentenced to perform community service, at least two members of the COLFA faculty moved from courts to classrooms. Mark Brill, an assistant professor of music, used to practice law; as did Stephen Sheff, a lecturer in history. Sports medicine was John Noir’s first love, though he changed his major from pre-med to music. Now an associate professor of music, he specializes in vocalogy, which, he explains, “is essentially the sports medicine of using your voice. What goes around comes around.”

Civil engineering was the starting point for Stephanie Keller, an alumna of UTSA. “I registered late due to lack of money and wasn’t able to get into my engineering classes,” she recalls. She ended up enrolling in an anthropological course to fulfill general education requirements. “Within the semester, I changed my major from civil engineering to anthropology—I just absolutely loved that class [taught by Richard Adams]. A little while after that, I changed it to a dual major in anthropo and psych.” Back at her alma mater, Keller now is a lecturer in psychology.

After graduating from the University of California at Berkeley and a degree in French and English, Debbie Mengel worked for the San Antonio Express-News, the San Antonio Art Institute, and the San Antonio branch of the American Institute of Architects. She also started her own public relations firm, which she still runs, while teaching public relations as a lecturer in the Department of Communication.

As administrative secretary to the superintendent of schools in Tombstone, Arizona, Wendy Barker found herself in effect running the school district during her boss’ prolonged absences. Later, she taught English at Berkeley High School in California. “As I approached 30,” she recalls, “I began to realize that I wanted to teach literary works that weren’t appropriate for 14-year-olds.” She went on to earn a Ph.D. in English. Now a professor of English, she is also UTSA’s poet in residence.

Though Barker now teaches a literary corpus more daring than the one previously permitted her, Shaun F. Hedgepeth abandoned corpses completely. Currently a lecturer in sociology, he explains, “I began my academic journey in the field of mortuary science, but after seeing some pretty gruesome things, I changed my major.” Hedgepeth switched his bent to sociology, but he is also a professional drummer.

After graduating from UTSA in his 20s, Jeffrey Turpin worked as a journalist and an archaeologist. However, he returned to the university in his 50s to pursue a Ph.D. in English and teach what he loves. “I am spending long and happy nights writing chapters for my dissertation, with as much enthusiasm for inquiry and examination and synthesis as I had 30 years ago. My father told me when I was young to work hard, because all work was going to get old at a time, and enjoyment of the task at hand would be the only pallia for some students, to follow their trajectories. Or perhaps an astrobate: Catherine Nolan-Ferrell, an assistant professor of history, began her career in astrophysics but credits her decision to switch to Latin American history to a failing grade in calculus and a tear-gassing in El Salvador.

Misery in math also induced Nancy Membrez to abandon civil engineering was the starting point for stephanie broadcast, though students

transmutations. Eight years ago, she started writing poetry, personal essays, short stories and scripts. She also went back to school to learn digital filmmaking and has since added it to her teaching repertoire. She has completed production on her first digital feature film, Portrait in Sepia Tone, which won awards for Best Feature Film and Best Soundtrack at the International Filmmaker Festival in Kent, England, this past June. Membrez voices no regrets about being an academic chameleon. “Nothing I have ever studied has been lost,” she insists. “Everything is connected. It’s just a matter of finding those connections and drawing conclusions and inspiration.”

Bridget Drinka found her inspiration during a semester abroad in Florence, Italy. She was majoring in art history, but, while studying Italian, became intrigued by the teaching of language. After graduation, Drinka returned to Italy to teach English and work as a governess. Back in the United States, she worked at the Italian Embassy in Washington, D.C., while studying applied linguistics at Georgetown University. Now an eminent linguist and chair of the Department of English, Drinka observes “People often express surprise that I went from art history to historical linguistics, but the leap isn’t as great as it seems—I still want to figure out why people adopt changes and what they reveal about themselves through the minute details of their language.”

A stint in the Peace Corps took Sara DeTurk far afield. Though she had received her B.A. in psychology, the experience inspired her to pursue a master’s in international education. Her thesis research led to intercultural communication and appointment as an assistant professor in UTSA’s Department of Communication. Ann Hardgrove also made a global leap. Though she describes herself as “a small-town girl” from Northfield, Minnesota, Hardgrove, an associate professor of history, became a specialist in the history and anthropology of India. She was majoring in physics and math at a horrid bug bit her during her junior year.

As if sentenced to perform community service, at least two members of the COLFA faculty moved from courts to classrooms. Mark Brill, an assistant professor of music, used to practice law; as did Stephen Sheff, a lecturer in history. Sports medicine was John Noir’s first love, though he changed his major from pre-med to music. Now an associate professor of music, he specializes in vocalogy, which, he explains, “is essentially the sports medicine of using your voice. What goes around comes around.”

Civil engineering was the starting point for Stephanie Keller, an alumna of UTSA. “I registered late due to lack of money and wasn’t able to get into my engineering classes,” she recalls. She ended up enrolling in an anthropological course to fulfill general education requirements. “Within the semester, I changed my major from civil engineer- ing to anthropology—I just absolutely loved that class [taught by Richard Adams]. A little while after that, I changed it to a dual major in anthropo and psych.” Back at her alma mater, Keller now is a lecturer in psychology.

After graduating from the University of California at Berkeley and a degree in French and English, Debbie Mengel worked for the San Antonio Express-News, the San Antonio Art Institute, and the San Antonio branch of the American Institute of Architects. She also started her own public relations firm, which she still runs, while teaching public relations as a lecturer in the Department of Communication.

As administrative secretary to the superintendent of schools in Tombstone, Arizona, Wendy Barker found herself in effect running the school district during her boss’ prolonged absences. Later, she taught English at Berkeley High School in California. “As I approached 30,” she recalls, “I began to realize that I wanted to teach literary works that weren’t appropriate for 14-year-olds.” She went on to earn a Ph.D. in English. Now a professor of English, she is also UTSA’s poet in residence.

Though Barker now teaches a literary corpus more daring than the one previously permitted her, Shaun F. Hedgepeth abandoned corpses completely. Currently a lecturer in sociology, he explains, “I began my academic journey in the field of mortuary science, but after seeing some pretty gruesome things, I changed my major.” Hedgepeth switched his bent to sociology, but he is also a professional drummer.

After graduating from UTSA in his 20s, Jeffrey Turpin worked as a journalist and an archaeologist. However, he returned to the university in his 50s to pursue a Ph.D. in English and teach what he loves. “I am spending long and happy nights writing chapters for my dissertation, with as much enthusiasm for inquiry and examination and synthesis as I had 30 years ago. My father told me when I was young to work hard, because all work was going to get old at a time, and enjoyment of the task at hand would be the only pallia-

for inquiry and examination and synthesis as I had 30 years ago. My father told me when I was young to work hard, because all work was going to get old at a time, and enjoyment of the task at hand would be the only pallia-

for inquiry and examination and synthesis as I had 30 years ago. My father told me when I was young to work hard, because all work was going to get old at a time, and enjoyment of the task at hand would be the only pallia-

for inquiry and examination and synthesis as I had 30 years ago. My father told me when I was young to work hard, because all work was going to get old at a time, and enjoyment of the task at hand would be the only pallia-
Sometimes writing is as basic as parking the seat of your pants in the seat of your chair. The result isn’t always stellar. It doesn’t always produce a bestselling book. And it certainly isn’t perfect the first time.

But it’s the love of words that keeps the writer glued to that seat, writing, hacking, purging and rewriting.

“You have to love language—putting word after word and redoing word after word, and doing that for 300 pages,” says Wendy Barker, UTSA poetry professor and poet-in-residence. “Being a writer is being curious about life and language. You have to be extremely sensitive to language and people, but also tough as nails because you have to be ready to take rejection—even as an established writer. It’s a strange combination.”

It’s that combination of personal attributes that professors like Barker stress to the students in UTSA’s Creative Writing Program. The program began in 1982 with just one class offered to sophomores. It has now blossomed to include degree plans and certifications. There is a bachelor of arts degree in English with a creative writing emphasis, a master of arts degree in English with a creative thesis option and a graduate certificate in creative writing, which is open to all UTSA graduate students and boasts an enrollment of more than two dozen.

The department also supports students outside of the classroom while bringing quality creative writing to the San Antonio community. The Creative Writing Reading Series, which hosts distinguished authors from around the country, and the annual Wordfest, which features the work of creative writing students and faculty, are both free and open to the public.

“We’re very good at what we do,” Barker says. “Our students and my colleagues are truly wonderful. Because we’re a relatively young university, we have a lot of energy.”

Critique

Tapping into that energy is crucial for the students and their instructors. With so many different genres of writing and various skill levels, the approach to each class is different. But there is one constant—critiques.

“You have to have a sense of humor to be in the hot seat,” says Linda Winterbottom, an English doctoral student who also participated in writing workshops as an undergraduate at UTSA. She now leads a sophomore fiction-writing class.

In her class, students delve beyond plot summary to untangle the layers of each individual story. Every student submits two stories and signs up to be a critique leader as well. Critiques focus on critical elements, including characterization, awareness of genre, setting, appropriate diction and the narrative point of view, which is the author’s attitude toward the main character and the reason for telling the story.

She also stresses the importance of active reading. The first half of each class period is spent discussing assigned readings. Presenting students with a diverse array of styles, techniques and genres, Winterbottom hopes to increase their range and help them find one or two authors they admire.

“I tell them to think as a writer when they’re reading, and to consider what’s innovative and which techniques they can use in their own writing,” she says. “It’s great to see students get into the habit of not just passively reading.”

Similarly, the graduate certification program features classes organized as workshops, where students sit in a circle, share their writing with one another and critique each other’s work. They discuss how it affects them, what makes it successful and what would make it better.

“We all take everyone else’s writing as seriously as our own, and we don’t want to make everyone else write like us,” Barker explains. “Classes like this require an enormous amount of trust. We try to provide a growing sense of trust and safety for our students, and we want them to feel free to risk and fail, because it’s in our failures that we grow.”

Barker also writes feedback on drafts the students submit and holds individual conferences. “With writing, you form more of a connection with students,” she says. “A kind of closeness develops, and I find it incredibly rewarding.”

As a published author in both poetry and fiction, Winterbottom understands what her students go through to perfect their writing. “As writers, we’re always so hard on ourselves,” she says. “I tell my students that the process is so important, and you have to give yourself permission to make mistakes. Honor and respect your talent enough to give yourself time to write. Don’t get so hung up on the process that you get paralyzed.”

Award-winning poet and human rights activist Marjorie Agosín was one participant in the UTSA Creative Writing Reading Series.
A HAPPY ENDING

Like Winterbottom, June Pedraza graduated from the writing program and is now teaching at UTSA. She’s just one of many who have completed the various creative writing programs offered by the college and have gone on to become published authors or entered doctoral programs and have begun teaching undergraduate courses themselves.

Pedraza can personally attest to the program’s value and the opportunities it presents students to publish their work. “I’ve been really impressed with the students here,” Winterbottom says. “They want to learn, and they’re very supportive of the program and of each other. They encourage honest critiques, because they really want to improve. It’s incredible to see what can happen when everyone in a community does their best to support each other.”

In 2007–2008, UTSA received a number of significant gifts in support of creative writing:
- Milton Jacobs committed to funding the Pearl Lewinn Endowed Professorship in Creative Writing.
- Joyce (B.A. ’92) and Richard Harris supported the Steven G. Kellman Endowed Award and the publication of the Sagebrush Review.
- Jerry Winakur and Lee Robinson endowed the Wendy Barker Award in Creative Writing.

The Creative Writing Program also benefited from increased giving to the Creative Writing Reading Series, which, thanks to Robert and Loretta Valdez, featured an evening with award-winning writer Benjamin Alire Sáenz at the Plaza Club of San Antonio.

AWARD-WINNING POETRY

Students from UTSA’s Creative Writing Program have gone on to have their work published and have received numerous writing awards. Several have received scholarships to highly competitive graduate writing programs across the country. Here is a sample of some of their work.

PULVERIZED

The jagged, glittery rocks on that white gravel road behind the Snodgrass cabin in Chickamauga Park were my favorite, the kind I pounded into powder, the magic dust of my childhood.

I remember running down that road as fast as my six-year-old legs could carry me, thinking I could escape from their sight, their clutches. With every pounding step threatening to molder my knees and dreams with the sharp objects rolling beneath my shoes and for a moment I could run away, but over my shoulder I see mother, father, slowly plodding towards me, crushing the dust of my childhood.

STERILE

So she looks at me and slowly says,
You don’t have PCOS, you have POF.
Maybe because we live in a world
where medical conditions are reduced
to initials to decrease their unpleasantness,
I was supposed to know what POF stood for.

She sees my uncertainty and softly says,
Premature ovarian failure.
So she looks at me and slowly says,
Maybe because we live in a world
where medical conditions are reduced
to initials to decrease their unpleasantness,
I get one initial right.

MICHÉLLE NEUMANN,
pursuing the master of arts degree in English and the creative writing certificate; winner of the 2008 Wendy Barker Award in Creative Writing

POEM ABOUT A POEM I RUINED

–SO, I WRITE ABOUT BIRDS INSTEAD

The poem I ruined was about birds.
It had nothing to do with swallows circling
a Mudéjar fortress
or running from the swirl
of silent, sleepy dirt.
It was not about
feeling lonely then brave
of silent, sleepy dirt.
It was not about

AMBER DUNCAN, spring 2008 master of arts in English; graduate; first-place winner for creative writing at the 2008 COLFA Spring Research Conference

HOME

aunt come on my mother’s side
wanted her ashes sprinkled
in her garden

uncle lee still
takes to the chrysanthemums
I hear him whisper
her name—

she’s been gone for years now
I don’t wonder
what he’s going to do
he lies in the garden watching

DEVON VALDERAS, spring 2008 master of arts in English; graduate and recipient of the creative writing certificate; winner of the David Ray Vance Award
Makers from within.

David Heuser, an aspiring composer must discover and develop what they can’t teach—creativity. That is something the school, if not earlier. If there’s one thing they agree on, it’s that a composer must have a natural curiosity for how instruments work and can learn how to make things work on the guitar.

Four Music Professors Enjoy Local and National Success

By Rudy Arispe

Each semester, they maintain busy schedules teaching music courses, but James Balentine, Matthew Dunne, David Heuser and James Sylar still find time to pursue another passion—composing music.

Their works—ocfrequently commissions from organizations around the country—have been performed locally and nationally in concert halls, at major music festivals and have been recorded for listeners to enjoy. And their creators have received rave reviews from national critics.

All four seem to have been destined to write music. They started at an early age playing the piano, percussion or guitar, and then began composing short arrangements while in middle or high school. If not earlier. If there’s one thing they agree on, it’s that although they can teach technique, they can’t teach creativity. That is something the aspiring composer must discover and develop from within.

Meet these modern-day Mozarts whose calling is to make sweet music.

James Balentine

James Balentine recalls the many occasions when he and his family sat around the living room in his native Fort Worth singing folk songs and TV commercials—not too surprising considering the Balentines were talented musicians. He strummed guitar, his father was skilled with the violin, and mom played piano.

While in high school, Balentine and his brothers performed at the local folk club, where he honed his skills as a performer. It was also at about this time that he learned to play the clarinet, saxophone and flute.

Growing up in such a musical environment, it only seems natural that Balentine should pursue music, which today has led to him being an accomplished composer, arranger, conductor and performer.

“As soon as I was tall enough to reach the keyboard, I started making things up,” he says.

His music has been performed at international conferences and festivals, including Clarinetfest; the International Double Reed Convention, the Utah Arts Festival and Shanghai International Clarinet Festival, among others. He has received commissions from the Barlow Endowment, College Band Directors National Association and the Krost Symposium.

One of his most recent works, “Esfera da Vida,” is a 10-minute piece he wrote on behalf of colleague Matthew Dunne and which was performed by Musical Offerings, a San Antonio professional chamber music organization, for the series “Jazz Meets Classical.”

“Then Matt asked me to expand it for the Southwest Guitar Festival. It will be a double concerto for classical guitar and horn entitled ‘Triqueta.’ It’s very jazz-oriented,” Balentine says.

The music of Scotland as well as Brazilian dance rhythms and melodies has recently piqued the composer’s interest, thus the added movements, including ‘Circulo Vazio’ and ‘Esferas Infinitas,’ are inspired by that music.

Just as writers occasionally suffer from writer’s block, there are times when he stumbles upon “composer’s block,” Balentine says. “It’s one of my biggest fears that I’ll keep writing the same things over and over,” he says. “I have to be careful with that. I try to let the music lead instead of me leading the music.”

Balentine describes his personal tastes in music as eclectic, ranging from Broadway shows, folk and jazz to Mozart and classical music. He credits the Kingston Trio, a 1960s popula folk group, as one of his earliest musical influences. “I learned ear training by listening to them and translated that to the guitar,” he says. Balentine, associate chair of the Department of Music, teaches music theory and composition, and the history of jazz. He holds degrees from the University of South Carolina and a doctorate from the University of Texas at Austin.

Matthew Dunne

Matthew Dunne has an unusual habit whenever he’s working on a new composition. “I have to use the same pencil from start to finish,” he confesses.

Call it superstition or just plain preference, but it must be working in his favor because the guitarist and composer has continued to produce a number of successful works over the years. Dunne’s works, in fact, are often played and have been recorded by other musicians around the country.

Some of his most impressive works include several commissions for the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet that have been recorded on Telarc International CDs. One of those CDs, “Guitar Heroes,” won a Grammy in 2004. The quartet has performed Dunne’s works extensively throughout America, Europe and Asia.

Dunne also composed the required piece “Appalachian Summer” for the Guitar Foundation of America’s 2005 International Guitar Competition, considered one of the most famous classical guitar competition in the world, he says. “The winner recorded my piece on a Naxos International CD and performed it on a 50-city tour throughout the United States,” Dunne says.

In addition, Dunne composed “Nine Jazz Etudes” for classical guitar, published by Guitar Solo Publications, a leading classical guitar publisher. Those pieces have been recorded several times and are often performed around the country by professional guitarists and advanced students.

Despite the success of his numerous works, Dunne says composing music doesn’t always come easy. “It’s the hardest thing I’ve ever tried to do,” he says. “It takes total concentration. When I get involved in writing a piece, it takes over my life, and I don’t function well in other areas of my life, even if I’m only working on it for a few hours a day.”

Writing for the guitar can also be challenging, he points out.

“There’s a real tradition of guitarists composing music, going back about 500 years,” Dunne explains. “It’s an odd instrument to write for. Today, the guitar has a place in classical music and many different styles of music. But you have to be familiar with how it’s played in order to write effectively for it. Good composers have a natural curiosity for how instruments work and can learn how to make things work on the guitar.”

A native of Albany, N.Y., the assistant professor has been on faculty since 1992 and teaches guitar, jazz and music marketing. He received his doctor of musical arts degree from the University of Texas at Austin, becoming the first guitarist to receive that degree. He obtained his master of musical arts in guitar performance from Florida State University.
David Heuser

David Heuser has the perfect remedy for almost anything that ails him. He simply inserts a recording of Bach into his CD player, then rests for a good 10 minutes. “I think Bach has cured me of many illnesses,” Heuser says with a chuckle, “although maybe it was just the lying down.”

Heuser, however, has no time to get sick. He’s on a tight deadline to complete an as-yet-untitled 20-minute piece for saxophone quartet in imitation of his piano lessons. By the time he was in middle and high school, he wrote music for choral, and concert and jazz bands, as well as pop tunes for local rock bands.

“It was terrific to have teachers willing to allow me to do that, and for friends to play my music,” he says. Heuser is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music and Indiana University School of Music, where he earned his doctorate in music composition in 1995. Among his many achievements was the November 2007 premiere of his work “Something Miraculous Burns” by the San Antonio Symphony.

James Syler

While in high school, James Syler was torn between his passion for playing baseball and his interest in music, which explains why he half-heartedly attended his after-school piano lessons, which he began at age 16. “I thought I was going to be in the major leagues,” Syler says. “Eventually music won out. But the discipline and rigor from sports was the perfect preparation for music, when it came time to do the hard work.”

Still, Syler’s foray into music was a gradual process, and even though he says he trivialized writing arrangements while in school, he never really considered composing music as a career. It wasn’t until he graduated from Northern Illinois University in 1983 with a music degree that he knew he wanted to write music. “After college, some musicians told me if that’s what I wanted to do, then go back to school and get training for it. So I went to graduate school and never looked back,” he says.

Since then, the 47-year-old New York native has had more than 200 performances of his works. His most recent was “American Dances,” written for the Houston Chamber Orchestra. Syler says his style is similar to American vernacular music and infusing it with classical music; he says, “One of the movements was a mixture of bluegrass and fiddle styles mixed with the virtuosity of classical string playing and a little bebop jazz. I have an interest in mixing and matching to create hybrid types of music.”

Two years ago, he received a commission from 20 university wind ensembles for a new work called “Tattoo,” which he explains as “not as in body art, but as in repetitive tapping. It’s based on minimalist ideas and repeated fragments.” Although today he doesn’t compose as often as he used to, Syler produces about one or two major pieces per year and focuses on quality rather than quantity, he says. “I used to think I had to write a lot of music to be successful. There’s nothing in the works right now. But that’s OK because I know deep down in my viscera or psyche, something is bubbling up,” he says, laughing.

Syler says there is almost no greater feeling in the world than hearing his music performed in concert. “I don’t have children,” he says, “so it’s close to going to a Little League game and watching your kid not strike out, maybe even driving one over the fence. It feels good when you create something, and people enjoy it.”

Syler earned a master’s in music from the University of Miami in 1988. He has been an adjunct professor at UTSA since 2001 and teaches composition and appreciation courses, such as American Roots Music, Masterpieces of Music and the History and Styles of Rock.
Daniels is the author of Living with Stalin’s Ghost: A Fulbright Memoir of Moscow and the New Russia (Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2008). The book is simultaneously a travel diary, a tribute to the country and its people, and a lesson in cultural and comparative history. It began as a collection of private musings composed for his children, but has instead become a public snapshot of post-Communist Russia.

Using a mixture of humor and sober commentary, Daniels tackles the complexities of economic privatization coming after four generations of communism. He also explores Russia’s political relationship with the United States. In Daniels’ view, President George W. Bush and Vladimir Putin, now prime minister, are each “gun players” with real security concerns, and both display a tendency toward heavy-handedness. “I understand both, but Putin plays his cards a little closer to his chest,” Daniels says. His book is sprinkled with humorous anecdotes, like the story about a Moscow cable company employee who arrived at Daniels’ apartment on time, compared with American service providers who generally promise only to arrive within a multi-hour block of time. But there are also darker stories, such as descriptions of the older population’s fear about retirement security under the supply-and-demand vagaries of capitalism.

Daniels notes that the people scooping up Louis Vuitton fashions in Red Square are not everyday Russians. Government clerks earn $160 a month at the high end. It’s about the same for police recruits. The new buyers consist mostly of the instant multimillionaires born to turn a profit through the sale of Soviet enterprises when the empire collapsed, he explains. “The people shopping in these luxury stores are the relatively few who have either, depending on your point of view, (1) shown themselves to be the successful capitalists that Russia needs, or (2) looted the country through licensed criminal enterprise,” Daniels writes.

Not a speaker of Russian, Daniels draws information for his book from conversations with his English-speaking Russian students during his stay in 2005. He also uses information collected from colleagues at Moscow State University, where he served as the Nikolay V. Sivachev Distinguished Chair in U.S. History and American Studies, as well as from a testy barber and two police officers. Everyone, it seems, is grappling with the challenges and opportunity of a more open society provides.

Daniels posts a warning for a place now unencumbered by personal debt, even mortgages. Where university educations were once based upon student merit, tuition paid through college loans likely will be a thing of the future. “Look out for a society giddy with credit-card fever a decade from now,” he writes.

Among Russians, there’s “widespread pessimism coexisting with pockets of optimism. Most Russians are still very pessimistic but see glimmers of a better future occasionally,” he says.

And that, Daniels adds, is why Americans should get to know this evolving country. “Russia is potentially one of America’s most influential and best friends.”
Daniels published Living with Stalin's Ghost: A Fulbright Memoir of Moscow and the New Russia (Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2008). He describes the book as "part political commentary, part observant friend."

Eleven UTSA students traveled to Moscow State University as part of the UTSA in Russia Summer 2008 program. It was the sixth trip to the country since Marita Nummikoski, chair of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, began organizing it to combine classroom instruction with real-life lessons.

Through the program, students earn 3 credit hours for attending Russian language classes at Moscow State University, exploring Russia’s capital city and absorbing Russian culture and traditions. Four days are also spent in St. Petersburg with visits to the country’s historical sites, including the State Hermitage Museum, which holds the largest collection of Russian art in the world; Peterhof, the island home of Peter the Great; and St. Isaac’s Cathedral, considered to be one of the most impressive cathedrals in Russia.

With all the experiences, it is nearly impossible to single out one impression with which the students return, says Nummikoski, the program’s primary organizer since its inception. She is author of two popular textbooks, Troika: A Communicative Approach to Russian Language, Life and Culture (John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1995) and News From Russia (Yale University Press, 2004).

“It’s hard to mention only one change,” she says, adding “San Antonio will feel so tiny and provincial compared with Moscow.”

But there are some things that do stand out, she says. For one, there’s a stark difference between the rich and poor. The number of extremely wealthy people is enormous, illustrated by the incomparable number of Porsches, BMWs, Mercedes Benzes and other luxury vehicles, she says. Another marked difference is the cost of living. As capitalism expands, prices continue to soar.

“Everything is very expensive,” Nummikoski says.

Students also are impressed with the country’s long history. On their trips, they see places of worship dating to the 1200s, whereas the roots of the colonial United States are traceable from the 1600s.

And there are idiosyncrasies from the fledgling service economy, where decades of government institutions mean the welcome mat is not always out.

“No excuse-me,” Nummikoski quips. “Our students actually learned to like the fact that they can bump into people and just keep going.”

Each time she travels to Russia, Nummikoski, who has been at UTSA since 1988, also learns more about the country. One constant impression, she says, is that “most changes are for the better.”
More than 200 years ago, President Thomas Jefferson managed to master communications with the American people by creating his own favorable media coverage while seeming to stay above the fray of daily political prattle. You certainly would not have found him addressing gymnasium-sized crowds, kissing squirming babies or allowing his children to answer questions about his personal habits.

In fact, two centuries before the nonstop banter of blogs and 24-hour news, Jefferson used his own presidentially sponsored newspaper, which carried friendly but anonymous commentaries written by the paper’s editor and prominent Jeffersonian Republicans (including Jefferson himself), to promote his policies to the public, all the while coyly professing to defer to Congress on all matters of public policy. Even though Jefferson thus got his way with Congress, he did it without making the kind of public speeches expected from presidents today.

“Today we kind of expect immediate contact between presidents, presidential candidates and the public,” says Mel Laracey, associate professor in UTSA’s Department of Political Science and Geography. “We like to think that’s the way it’s always been. But when I looked at the 19th century, I found that there were actually two competing expectations for presidents today. One said presidents should be connected to the people and involved in the public policy-making process. The other said that Congress was the only legitimate maker of public policy, and so presidents should not be making speeches to the people about policy matters.”


In his research, Laracey explores the role of the mass media in politics. He says the 2008 presidential campaign was a historic one, featuring the oldest candidate in U.S. history, Sen. John McCain (R-Arizona), and the first African American nominee, Sen. Barack Obama (D-Illinois). Sen. Hillary Clinton’s (D-New York) run for the presidency in the Democratic primaries was also momentous. In contrast to Jefferson (1801–1809), who relied on his newspaper and political allies to carry the campaign fight publicly, seasoned modern-day politicians have appealed to voters using pop culture and every media outlet available to them, reaching celebrity status in the process. Jefferson, in comparison, trumped his counterparts of 2008 by avoiding public speechmaking, thus appearing as stately and contemplative. His secret: having his own presidential newspaper to promote and defend him. In this way, Jefferson could sell himself and his policies to the public without offending those who thought presidents should not engage in what is now called “going public”—presidents making speeches to go "over
the heads of Congress” and appeal directly to the American people. Long before Bill Clinton played the saxophone on late-night television and talked about what kind of underwear he preferred in an MTV interview, presidents maintained a measurable decorum, reaching Americans (mostly property-owning, Anglo males) by putting quill pen to paper and using the printing press to put out their own newspapers. Back in that day, though, the idealistic notion of “freedom of the press” did not connote the dispassionate objectivity often touted today. In fact, Jefferson’s newspaper, and those of other 19th century presidents, were avowedly partisan, making no attempt at journalistic objectivity.

Laracey has spent hundreds of hours poring over Library of Congress microfiche studying the political messages in these newspapers. Jefferson’s newspaper, the Washington, D.C.-based National Intelligencer, is a great example of the genre, he says.

“Jefferson said as a matter of course, ‘it’s up to Congress to legislate,’ then behind the scenes, he was directing things to support his opinion and influence opinion through his party newspaper,” Laracey says. “You had newspapers, but they were always aligned with one political party or another and so took that party’s viewpoint in everything they said.”

In fact, the printed material read with the edginess of what might be heard today on MSNBC’s Countdown with Keith Olbermann or Hannity and Colmes on Fox News. Newspapers were appendages of political parties. And they promoted their philosophies in a vigorous manner similar to what might now be found on the White House Web page, a presidential candidate’s Web site, or the programs of Rush Limbaugh or Jon Stewart.

Even when he was serving in George Washington’s cabinet, Jefferson joined with James Madison to convince a Princeton classmate of Madison’s to start up a newspaper to take on another newspaper that had been started up by their opponent Alexander Hamilton. “This sounds a lot like what Rupert Murdoch and Roger Ailes did when they decided to create the Fox News Channel,” says Laracey.

By the time of his election to the presidency in 1800, Jefferson knew that, with his own sponsored newspaper in the nation’s new capital, he would have a media outlet that would consistently hail the chief. He thus had an effective defense against his opponents, many of whom also spoke through the media.

“All of this stuff has been relegated to the back room in history and political science because these historic newspapers don’t meet current standards of so-called ‘journalistic objectivity.’ But these are not really, as one critic called them, the ‘dark ages of journalism’ but sharp political commentary in the mainstream media of those times,” Laracey says.

The medium of multiple and obviously partisan newspapers served their political purpose then, just as media-savvy pundits, political talk-show hosts and their legions of “dittoheads” do now, he adds.

Case-in-point: Jefferson used the media in 1801, during the first test of the Electoral College, to advocate that the results of the Electoral College system for electing a president should always reflect the popular vote. When Aaron Burr, Jefferson’s vice-presidential running mate, took advantage of a quirk in the Electoral College system to throw the election of 1800 into the hands of the House of Representatives, Burr hoped to be selected president instead of Jefferson. Jefferson’s newspaper responded with a series of long commentaries arguing that the only legitimate option available to the House was to follow the obvious results of the popular vote and elect Jefferson president.

Laracey’s research powerfully suggests that the relationship of the president to the people is similar to what existed generations ago. “Yes, the more things change, the more they stay the same,” Laracey says. “The more I watch current media, the more I’m struck by how it’s like the media back in that day. Newspapers are really turned into theater for so much media coverage, whereas in the ’50s, ’60s and ’70s, you sort of had this sameness under the mask of objectivity.”

Republican strategist Karl Rove understands that, from a political standpoint, “biased” media reporting is better than “unbiased,” at least if the bias is in your side’s favor. This explains the tight message control exercised by the George W. Bush White House, and the White House’s sometimes controversial attempts to achieve favorable media news reporting on issues like the war in Iraq and global warming.

Laracey says, “In both periods, it is a case of looking for the most effective voice for your side. If you think your message isn’t getting out one way, create something new. Andrew Jackson, president from 1829 to 1837, did it very creatively in 1830, when he dumped one newspaper that didn’t support him enough and set up a new one more to his liking,” Laracey says.

Clearly, studying political media strategies of the past provides insight into the present. Indeed, Laracey sees the media world moving since the 1990s more toward this older style of journalism and away from the mid-20th century objective model, embodied by CBS News anchor Walter Cronkite, nicknamed “Uncle Walter.”

“The stars of political reporting today,” he says, “are people like Matt Drudge, Olbermann, Limbaugh, Sean Hannity and a whole host of Internet bloggers who trumpet their political beliefs to all, just like the editors of those 19th century political newspapers that I’ve been studying did.”

“How to decipher presidential politics and policy coverage

• Listen to multiple voices. “It’s better to get a multiplicity of views.”
• Realize what you’re hearing may not be true. “Or it may be irrelevant.”
• Think critically. “Political scientists figured out many years ago that many Americans don’t pay close attention, so there are always these ongoing attempts to manipulate public opinion among those who don’t pay attention all the way to the very sophisticated people.”
• Remember that political rhetoric can matter. “Rhetoric can affect real lives.”
• Ask, what’s the strategy behind this statement or this campaign ad? “Understanding the strategy can help in evaluating the message.”

Source: Mel Laracey, associate professor, UTSA’s Department of Political Science and Geography

—

“Those are not really, as one critic called them, the ‘dark ages of journalism’ but sharp political commentary in the mainstream media of those times.”

Source: Mel Laracey, associate professor, UTSAs Department of Political Science and Geography
In August 2004, Robin Loving Rowland and her husband, Ken, were planning a vacation to San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, when on a whim they decided to retire and move there. After selling their house in Austin, they told their family, friends and neighbors they were moving to a place they had never been before.

“They asked what we were going to do with our furniture,” Robin, who owned a public relations firm before retiring, said during a phone interview from San Miguel de Allende. “We sold everything and packed 40 boxes of stuff, put it in storage and drove to San Miguel, arriving Dec. 22, and have been living happily ever after.”

The Rowlands are among a growing number of American retirees who have migrated to Mexico to spend their golden years, according to a recent study, “United States’ International Retirement Migration: Reasons for Retiring to the Environs of Lake Chapala, Mexico,” by UTSA faculty members Thankam Sunil, associate professor of sociology, and Viviana Rojas, assistant professor of communication.

They conducted a study to explore the reasons U.S. retirees migrate to Mexico, Sunil says, adding that they were particularly interested because it is unusual for a group of people to move from a highly developed country to a less developed one.

“This type of migration is quite contrary to our general notion of migration,” he says, “because when we talk about migration, we talk about people migrating from a poor country to a rich country.”

Sunil and Rojas also were interested in learning how expatriates are able to build a life in a foreign country, with a different culture and environment, after spending their lives in an American society with family and friends. The research predicts the trend of U.S. retirees relocating to Mexico will continue to grow, especially as the Baby Boomers, born 1946 to 1964, are expected to leave the workforce in droves between 2010 and 2030. Many are already retiring.

More than 200 U.S. retirees were surveyed using a self-completion questionnaire that included items about the decision to move to Mexico, the quality of life at the destination, cultural adaptation, and aspects of personal identity, financial security and health care. The criteria for inclusion were that respondents be non-Hispanic whites, ages 55 and older, and living in Mexico for at least six months.

The study found that the four major reasons for migrating to Mexico were financial circumstances, the natural environment, a sense of community and friendship, and a better quality of life.

In addition to surveying retirees in Lake Chapala of Jalisco state, Sunil and Rojas also collected data from those who settled in San Miguel de Allende in Guanajuato state. Much of the latter data is still being analyzed. The Mexican Office of Tourism has also identified other areas of Mexico that attract U.S. retirees, Rojas says, including Baja California and Baja California Sur.

According to the 2000 Mexican Census, Baja California and Baja California Sur account for 21 percent of U.S. seniors, 55 and older, living in Mexico. Twenty-one percent reside in Jalisco, and 7 percent live in Guanajuato.

The No. 1 reason retirees gave for their decision to relocate to Mexico is the low cost of living. In fact, nine out of 10surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “My income allows me more leisure spending than if I were in the U.S.” The respondents’ median annual income before retirement was $46,000–$49,999 and $21,000–$25,999 after retirement. Their median monthly household expenditures now range from $801 to $1,500.

“There they can afford a gardener and a maid, especially for retirees with no savings,” Sunil says, “and they can afford to eat out every night if they want, whereas in America, it can be expensive.”

One male retiree wrote in his questionnaire: “The cost of living is less and the quality of life is better. I never could afford a gardener in the United States. I could never afford a cleaning lady every day or every other day. The cost of labor is cheaper... to get your car fixed is cheaper to get your TV fixed is cheaper.” Related to the low cost of living, affordability also is important for retirees. Three out of five respondents agreed with the statement, “I live here because health care is affordable.” Many of them with a permanent residence permit, and who are 65 and older, are enrolled in the Mexican medical insurance program offered by the Mexican Institute of Social Security. Some retirees said they paid the equivalent of only $250 to $300 per year for full health care, including medications for diseases such as diabetes.

Rojas says that for those retirees who do not have Mexican medical insurance, at least 30 percent are enrolled in Medicare and return to the United States if they need to see a doctor. Also, a network of private hospitals where foreigners can go for services is available in Mexico. The cost of surgery is 30 percent to 50 percent less than in the United States, she says. The weather and natural environment ranked second as to why retirees migrate to Mexico. In their personal narratives, all those living on the Lake Chapala Riviera praised the year-round spring climate—averaging about 75 degrees—because it allows them to stay active with outdoor activities.

A man living in Guadalajara wrote of his satisfaction with the climate: “I find the weather extremely pleasant. The need for air conditioning and heat is very limited...you just don’t need it. And, of course, the humidity here is not nearly so bad, so it makes it more comfortable.”

A sense of community and friendship was listed third as a reason for living south of the border. About 91 percent of the respondents meet with fellow Americans every day or every week. Many depend on other American residents and organizations to adjust to adapting to the local culture.

Many expatriates, Sunil says, are actively involved in giving back to the communities in which they live, such as volunteer work at orphanages, teaching English to Mexicans and organizing toy and food drives for families during Christmas. “They’re passionate about wanting to do things for their community,” he says. “It makes them happy and feel energized.”

Moreover, most retirees reported that they felt welcome in Mexico and agreed with the statements, “I moved here because Mexicans are friendly to Americans,” “I have never been the subject of abuse or hostility in Mexico” and “I have never felt like an outsider in the Mexican community.”

Enjoying a better quality of life ranked fourth among the reasons for relocating to Mexico. A majority of retirees agreed with the statements, “My lifestyle here matches with my expectations of retirement lifestyle.” Overall, the expatriates were comfortable and happy with their lives in Mexico.

One female retiree said she was content living in a supportive community in a mild exotic environment and enjoyed “the warm, friendly, smiling faces of the Mexican people, the incredible climate, flowers everywhere, the bonding of all the expats and the feeling of an adventure all the time.”

Adds Rojas, “They live among other Americans, so they don’t have trouble communicating. Those who do come back, it’s because of family and their grandchildren, or they get sick with major illnesses.”

Despite the many advantages to living in Mexico, there are some disadvantages, Sunil says. “There was some mention about their personal safety living in Mexico, particularly chances of them getting mugged or in an accident because of poor safety regulations and so forth,” he says. “While the local authorities put a lot of effort in keeping the neighborhood safe for all citizens, there were a few incidents of theft and burglary, which made the residents more vigilant about their surroundings, particularly in San Miguel.”

Robin Loving Rowland, 55, and Ken Rowland, 60, have found San Miguel de Allende to be a quaint community some 50 years behind the rest of the world. She raises resources for orphans, is helping to develop a nonprofit management assistance center and publishes a monthly newsletter, San Miguel Community Connections. He opened an akido studio and serves on the boards of Democrats Abroad and the local library.

The former Austin residents believe they made the right decision to move to Mexico. “The Mexicans are such beautiful people, and here everyone is happy,” Robin says. “If I were to be in an accident tomorrow, I could call one of my Mexican friends, and they would be here in a minute. We truly have a family here.”

There they can afford a gardener and a maid, especially for retirees with no savings,” Sunil says, “and they can afford to eat out every night if they want, whereas in America, it can be expensive.”

“The warm, friendly, smiling faces of the Mexican people, the incredible climate, flowers everywhere, the bonding of all the expats and the feeling of an adventure all the time.”

Adds Rojas, “They live among other Americans, so they don’t have trouble communicating. Those who do come back, it’s because of family and their grandchildren, or they get sick with major illnesses.”

Despite the many advantages to living in Mexico, there are some disadvantages, Sunil says. “There was some mention about their personal safety living in Mexico, particularly chances of them getting mugged or in an accident because of poor safety regulations and so forth,” he says. “While the local authorities put a lot of effort in keeping the neighborhood safe for all citizens, there were a few incidents of theft and burglary, which made the residents more vigilant about their surroundings, particularly in San Miguel.”

Robin Loving Rowland, 55, and Ken Rowland, 60, have found San Miguel de Allende to be a quaint community some 50 years behind the rest of the world. She raises resources for orphans, is helping to develop a nonprofit management assistance center and publishes a monthly newsletter, San Miguel Community Connections. He opened an akido studio and serves on the boards of Democrats Abroad and the local library.

The former Austin residents believe they made the right decision to move to Mexico. “The Mexicans are such beautiful people, and here everyone is happy,” Robin says. “If I were to be in an accident tomorrow, I could call one of my Mexican friends, and they would be here in a minute. We truly have a family here.”

REASONS FOR RETIREMENT MIGRATION TO GUADALAJARA AND CHAPALA, MEXICO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost of living</td>
<td>88.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment/leisure activities</td>
<td>86.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of inexpensive labor</td>
<td>65.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural beauty</td>
<td>65.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of foreigners</td>
<td>54.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of large American community</td>
<td>52.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of inexpensive health care</td>
<td>46.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental (or climate)</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of health care</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian country</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married to a local/national</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of sexual partners</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Thankam Sunil and Viviana Rojas

Illustration by Ken Coffelt

Retiring South of the Border

BY RUDY ARISPE
A s a boy in Chile, Santiago Daydi-Tolson often passed time on the coast searching for clams in the sandy shore. Or he was inside, enjoying conversation and coffee at the dining table. While these may seem like disparate activities, there is one common denominator: food.

The use of food in that childhood memory gives the story more detail and poignancy, Daydi-Tolson says. “What seems everyday and kind of mundane can and does have a lot more meaning.”

Daydi-Tolson, a professor of Spanish in the Department of Modern Languages and Literature, has researched and written about the prevalence and meaning of food in art and literature for more than 10 years. The representation of food in the art world is fundamentally the celebration of people and their place in the world, he says. “It just shows how art is involved in so many subtle ways with human nature. It is something that weighs strongly in the way people live, think, feel and react.”

To more deeply explore the function of food in art, Daydi-Tolson has organized five food conferences since 2000, composed of people who, like him, believe that it reveals an abundance of information about the way people live.
DAYDI-TOLSON STRESSES THAT FOOD IS NOT USED BY ARTISTS AS AN AFTERTHOUGHT; IT IS A DELIBERATE THEME. IT IS THERE FOR SOME PARTICULAR REASON—FOOD BECOMES ANOTHER CHARACTER IN THEIR WORKS.

Participants also have created an electronic journal, Convivium Artium, which means “Banquet of the Arts” in Latin, to further explore the subject. In the magazine, participants can electronically publish studies on food and the humanities.

Daydi-Tolson says people don’t have to be food connoisseurs or scholars to understand the interest. Even a cursory look shows how artists apply food to convey religious, ideological, cultural, political and economic perspectives.

Consider Vincent Van Gogh’s dark depiction of the poor eating a scant meal of potatoes during a time of famine in “The Potato Eaters.” Subtle details in the painting, such as an oil lamp as the sole lighting source, the thin and rough hands of those that are gathered around the table and the use of potatoes as the lone food in the meal, are used to illustrate the depth of the people’s poverty. Leonardo da Vinci’s use of leavened bread in his depiction of the momentous “Last Supper” has been used by researchers to determine whether the historic event took place during Passover.

Daydi-Tolson stresses that food is not used by artists as an afterthought; it is a deliberate theme. “It is there for some particular reason,” he says. In essence, he says, food becomes another character in their works.

Daydi-Tolson has focused on famous writers. For example, he noted that the classic novel, Don Quixote by Miguel de Cervantes, “talks about food and eating in practically every chapter.” Charles Dickens took a similar tack, particularly in “A Christmas Carol.”

He noted that the working world has its own food ties, such as a “A head is sometimes called a noodle, and cauliflower ear as communication and literature, to make life worth living.

WEB EXTRA: Listen to the NPR podcast of “The Splendid Table,” featuring the UTSA food conference at, www.utsa.edu/today/2008/02/SplendidTable2-23-08.mp3.
A Broader View of the World

CITY ATTORNEY PRAISES THE VALUE OF A LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION

By Lisa Chontos

“A liberal arts education gives you a broader view of the world we live in,” says Michael Bernard, San Antonio’s city attorney and UTSA College of Liberal and Fine Arts 1979 alumnus. “It’s hard to convey that to a student looking toward a future in computer programming or science, where everything goes down to a mathematical formula or depends on scientific discoveries. But, in my career, my liberal arts education has been of incalculable benefit. I wouldn’t be where I am and able to help the way I do without that background, which gives me an understanding of the larger picture.”

“You won’t have to take a history test or a political science test 20 years from now, but you will have to process those problems in the way you learned in your liberal arts education.”

ALUMNI PROFILE: MICHAEL BERNARD

“A liberal arts education gives you a broader view of the world we live in,” says Michael Bernard, San Antonio’s city attorney and UTSA College of Liberal and Fine Arts 1979 alumnus. “It’s hard to convey that to a student looking toward a future in computer programming or science, where everything goes down to a mathematical formula or depends on scientific discoveries. But, in my career, my liberal arts education has been of incalculable benefit. I wouldn’t be where I am and able to help the way I do without that background, which gives me an understanding of the larger picture.”

“You won’t have to take a history test or a political science test 20 years from now, but you will have to process those problems in the way you learned in your liberal arts education.”
The Graduate Certificate in Security Studies program began in January 2007. The program seeks to expand student awareness of domestic and global conditions that can reasonably be expected to impact homeland security and defense in a democratic society, and to deepen their awareness of how political systems address particular types of threats that arise from natural disasters, external attacks and other types of challenges to internal stability.

Art and Art History and Music

Garrison, New Department Chair

Gregory Elliott became chair of the Department of Art and Art History effective Aug. 1, 2008. Elliott served the last five years as chairman of the Department of Art at the University of Texas at El Paso. During his tenure, the number of art majors grew by approximately 50 percent, and he was instrumental in developing and implementing UTEP’s Quality Enhancement Plan. Elliott also served as head of the sculpture area and graduate coordinator at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. La., from 1998 to 2002. Elliott comes to UTEP as a widely acknowledged leader of the arts in the El Paso region, and is credited with being instrumental in accomplishing the opening of the Staple and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts Center, the cornerstone of cultural activities at UTEP. As a tenured professor, he has shown dedication to making education a priority and is committed to improving teaching and learning in the visual arts. Elliott also has a long list of artistic and scholarly awards and exhibitions and has received numerous grants and fellowships. He earned his B.F.A. degree in 1988 from Southern Methodist University, where he also received his M.A. degree in 1990.

David Frego, Roland K. Blumberg Professor, became chair of the Department of Music on July 1, 2008. Frego received his Ph.D. from Florida State University in 1996 and has obtained both a license and certification in Dalmas Eurythmics from Carnegie Mellon University. He received his master of music education degree and master of music degree, with an emphasis in choral performance, from Florida State University. Frego is considered a first-rate musician. He is a pianist, a conductor, a dancer and singer. He is supportive of choral and vocal programs and is committed to music performance and education. As an expert in Dalmas Eurythmics, Frego has received international recognition for his research.

Frego comes to UTSAnet from Ohio State University, where he served as associate director of the School of Music and associate professor of music education and Dalmas Eurythmics. He is credited with increasing the scholarship budget and has been successful in developing community financial support. Frego is admired nationally and internationally as a Dalmas clinician and performs numerous workshops per year, including workshops in Bosnia- Herzegovina, France, Japan and Egypt. He has been widely published in major research journals, and is an expert clinician. Membership in the society requires significant research contributions beyond the doctoral dissertation. The main function of the society is to distribute scientific information. It publishes six journals and holds an annual research conference. The governing board oversees all of the operations and finances of the society. Members also serve as special guest editors for refereed annual issues.

David Frego

Ovations Receives High Praise

COlFa’s First Security Studies Certificates Awarded

The Department of Political Science and Geography honored the first four graduates of the Graduate Certificate in Security Studies program on May 14, 2008. The inaugural graduates were Harvey Clark, Donnond Johnson, Thomas Retzlaff and Nicholas Santoro.

David Frego

ALUMNI

David A. Hendricks, M.A. in English 1981, a columnist for the San Antonio Express-News, has been named one of the top business columnists in the country by Society of American Business Editors and Writers. He and two other columnists were selected in the median newspapers category—those with daily circulations between 125,001 and 250,000.

Some of its notable columns have focused on the silence of businesses in the immigration debate; the legacy of the late Enron Corp. chairman Kenneth Lay; and on the political maneuvering that once threatened the future of the San Antonio–based North American Development Bank.

Elizabeth R. Ingalls, B.A. in French 2006, is achieving her goal of becoming an actress. She has a role in the upcoming Star Trek movie as well as a role in the movie Garamon, released in 2006. Ingalls also received a shared award for Director’s Pick, won at the Hollywood MiniDV Festival, for Garrison.

Linda Arrendondo, B.F.A. 2008, was accepted into the M.F.A. program in painting at Yale University. Yale has a rigorous application and admissions process with more than 1,000 applications reviewed, of which only 75 are invited to bring examples of their work and interview with faculty and the dean. Arrendondo was among approximately 20 applicants admitted at the end of the process.

Frego comes to UTSAnet from Ohio State University. Frego is considered a first-rate musician. He is a pianist, a conductor, a dancer and singer. He is supportive of choral and vocal programs and is committed to music performance and education. As an expert in Dalmas Eurythmics, Frego has received international recognition for his research.

Frego comes to UTSAnet from Ohio State University, where he served as associate director of the School of Music and associate professor of music education and Dalmas Eurythmics. He is credited with increasing the scholarship budget and has been successful in developing community financial support. Frego is admired nationally and internationally as a Dalmas clinician and performs numerous workshops per year, including workshops in Bosnia- Herzegovina, France, Japan and Egypt. He has been widely published in major research journals, and is an expert clinician. Membership in the society requires significant research contributions beyond the doctoral dissertation. The main function of the society is to distribute scientific information. It publishes six journals and holds an annual research conference. The governing board oversees all of the operations and finances of the society. Members also serve as special guest editors for refereed annual issues.

Students Students Students Students Students Students Students...
Thanks to the generous support of our alumni and friends, the College of Liberal and Fine Arts is the leader in many areas of education, research, creative activity and outreach in San Antonio and South Texas. On behalf of our students, faculty and staff, we extend our gratitude to each and every donor who support our mission. We are honored by their generosity and caring.

As a state-assisted university, UTSA receives only 30 percent of its budget from the State of Texas, making every gift vital to our continued growth and success. Your gifts to the College of Liberal and Fine Arts ensure that we continue to build excellent programs to serve the growing needs of the university and wider community.

Please join us in celebrating the following individuals, businesses, foundations and organizations that, through their contributions, enhance our college’s outstanding programs and activities. We especially want to thank the many alumni who continue to designate their gifts to our college.

Although we are grateful for each and every gift we received, due to space limitations, the report below lists donors of $1,000 or more for the fiscal year Sept. 1, 2007, to Aug. 31, 2008.

$1,000 or more

Estate of Lota Rea Wilkinson
$50,000 to $99,999
Charlotte and Charles R. Walker
$25,000 to $49,999
82 Westminster Fund of the Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta
Elizabeth Huth Coates Charitable Foundation of 1992
Express-News Charitable Foundation
Joyce (B.A. ’92) and Richard E. Harris
Richard and Joyce Harris Sapience Foundation
Milton S. Jacobs
Sue and John S. Jockusch
National Research Council
Kathleen Weir Vale and Albert Vale
$10,000 to $24,999
Anonymous
The George W. Brackenridge Foundation
Capital-Cement Company
Yolanda M. (B.A. ’92) and Robert J. Crittenenden Sr.
Helen K. Groves
Opera Guild of San Antonio
Marianne C. and Stewart R. Reuter
Stewart R. and Marianne C. Reuter Fund of the SAFF
The USA Foundation
Lee Robinson and Jerald Winukar
$5,000 to $9,999
Anonymous
Rassoul Hill Rogers Fund for the Arts
San Antonio Area Foundation
Marilyn L. Sheer
Time Warner Cable
Loretta and Robert E. Valdez
$2,500 to $4,999
Anonymous
Consulate General of Switzerland
HACENDOS Scholarship Foundation
H-S-B
Istituto Italiano di Cultura
Mission Pharmacal Company
Jane Cheever and Thomas L. Powell Jr.
The Presser Foundation
San Antonio Municipal Club
Security Service Federal Credit Union
Beverly and Neill B. Waldorf Sr.
Sheila (B.A. ’96) and Wayne Wight
$1,000 to $2,499
Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer and Feld, L.L.P.
Alamo Music Center, Incorporated
Arts & Letters Fund of San Antonio
ArtSpace, San Antonio
Helene J. (M.B.A. ’06) and Julio (B.A. ’81) Benitez
 Kiev Art Museum
Jenn D. Mitchell (B.A. ’79, M.A. ’81) and David S. Hardy
Linda (B.A. ’97) and James E. Montgomery Jr., PC
Cynthia Y. Munza (B.A. ’88)
Munoz Public Relations, L.L.C.
Magdalena M. and Ray J. Gwin Jr.
The Harris K. and Lois G. Oppenheimer Foundation
Lori G. Oppenheimer
Vickie and DoJan A. Perese
Prime Conservation, Inc.
Program for Cultural Cooperation Between Spain’s Ministry of Culture & United States Universities
The San Antonio Grand Opera & Musical Club
Melinda K. (B.A. ’81) and Louis Schultz
Nekla D. (M.A. ’10) and A.P. Shepherd Jr.
Patricia J. (B.A. ’76) and Bud Smothers Smothers Foundation
Southern Texas Archaeological Association
Allie S. Stokes
Taggart
Toyota Motor Manufacturing Texas, Inc.
Lita D. Tsutsumi
Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico
University of South Carolina
University of Tennessee Management Company
Jenny L. Utinger
Wal-Mart
Jo Ann P. Wigdogay
The Foreign Service Group
Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center
Theresa M. and Arthur B. Garety
Marie and Hugh Half Jr.
Linda C. and Weldon W. Hammond Jr.
Joanne P. (B.A. ’96) and Richard L. (B.A. ’97) Hathaway, L.D.
Angelica C. Jansen and Robert Brown
Mary O. Kelly
Constance A. Lowe
Constance Lowe-Donor Advised Fund of Hutchinson Community Foundation
Marilyn Mason
The Marilyn Mason Foundation
Gayle A. Grisham and John F. McFall (B.A. ’92)
McNay Art Museum
Jeri D. Mitchell (B.A. ’79, M.A. ’81) and David S. Hardy
and David S. Hardy
Linda (B.A. ’97) and James E. Montgomery Jr., PC
Cynthia Y. Munza (B.A. ’88)
Munoz Public Relations, L.L.C.
Magdalena M. and Ray J. Gwin Jr.
The Harris K. and Lois G. Oppenheimer Foundation
Lori G. Oppenheimer
Vickie and DoJan A. Perese
Prime Conservation, Inc.
Program for Cultural Cooperation Between Spain’s Ministry of Culture & United States Universities
The San Antonio Grand Opera & Musical Club
Melinda K. (B.A. ’81) and Louis Schultz
Nekla D. (M.A. ’10) and A.P. Shepherd Jr.
Patricia J. (B.A. ’76) and Bud Smothers Smothers Foundation
Southern Texas Archaeological Association
Allie S. Stokes
Taggart
Toyota Motor Manufacturing Texas, Inc.
Lita D. Tsutsumi
Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico
University of South Carolina
University of Tennessee Management Company
Jenny L. Utinger
Wal-Mart
Jo Ann P. Wigdogay

Your gifts make a difference in the UTSA College of Liberal and Fine Arts

Friends who are making a difference

HARRIS FAIRLEY CONTRIBUTES TO ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
Joyce Harris (B.A. interdisciplinary studies ‘92) always wanted to be a teacher, but had to put her dream on hold and work in real estate in order to raise two children as a divorced parent. After her sons were grown, Joyce decided to pursue her dream and become a teacher after all. She entered the UTSA graduate program in English but halted her studies again when she and husband Richard Harris, who received his B.A. and M.A. in business from Texas Christian University, adopted their daughter from Romania.

However, Joyce’s love for literature continues unabated. Both Joyce and Richard Harris believe strongly in the vital importance of literary studies. In keeping with their beliefs, the couple recently made significant gifts to UTSA to benefit the Department of English, including the annual Richard and Joyce Harris Sapience Foundation Graduate Fellowship in English, the Steven G. Kollman Award Endowment, to be presented to undergraduate students in recognition of outstanding writing ability in the category of nonfiction essay; and a gift to support the Sogebuch Review, a literary magazine edited and published entirely by graduate students.

When asked why they give to UTSA, Joyce explains: “Richard and I are enormously impressed by the quality of the programs offered by the UTSA Department of English, and we are pleased to be able to expand the opportunities for other students to study with its superb faculty.”
Have you been in touch lately? The UTSA College of Liberal and Fine Arts is building its alumni network. Please send your name and current contact information to deborah.thomas@utsa.edu. We also are interested in your unique or fascinating stories or those of other COLFA alumni you may know. Please share them with us for possible publication.

---

**LEAVING A MUSICAL LEGACY**

Lota Rea Wilkinson and her mother, Lota M. Spell, saw music as a gift to be shared for generations. To honor her mother, a Texas musician and educator, Lota Rea made an investment that will inspire children through the ages and offer them life-changing experiences. Her estate gift to UTSA will ensure that the legacy of her mother is carried on through children’s music education and teacher training.

Estate gifts to UTSA, such as this one, leave a lasting legacy for generations. The Sombrilla Society at UTSA honors and recognizes planned gifts through estates, wills and bequests.

---

**REUTERS SUPPORT GRADUATE STUDENTS IN ART AND ART HISTORY**

Marianne and Stewart Reuter recently established the Stewart R. and Marianne C. Reuter Endowed Scholarship in Art to benefit graduate fine arts students in the Department of Art and Art History. The Reuters have been long-time advocates for the college through Marianne’s service on the Advisory Council. And the couple’s record of giving, which includes support of annual scholarships in the departments of art and art history and modern languages and literatures, as well as to the Dean’s Circle, reflects their varied interests and strong belief in the importance of liberal and fine arts education, research, creative activity and outreach. Additionally, the Reuters provide the following statement about their motivations for giving: “We support UTSA because, having lived in both Ann Arbor, Mich., and La Jolla, Calif., we have experienced firsthand the cultural and economic impact a university of first class has on the community.” UTSA is grateful to the Reuters for their service, both gifts will enhance COLFA fine arts programs, which provide enrichment opportunities for UTSA students and the community.

---

**COLLEGE OF LIBERAL AND FINE ARTS 2007–2008 ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The COLFA Advisory Council is committed to promoting excellence in the arts, humanities and social sciences, and develops support for the scholarly and artistic efforts of the college.

**EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

Chair
Doğan A. Perese
Vice Chair
Maria-Eugenia Cossio-Amenduri

**COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Betty Lee Birdsell
Olle Bryant
Colleen Casey
Maria-Eugenia Cossio-Amenduri
Lisa Dollinger
Bjorn Dybdahl
Albert Estrada
Alfredo L. Flores Jr.
Mary Ann Françoise
Janie Groves
Martha Hicks
Sally Hoffman
Angélica C. Jensen
Mary Q. Kelly
Roxi McCloskey
John McFall
Joaquin G. Mira
Michael Francis Nealis
Amparo H. Ortiz
Jane Cheever Powell
Rajam S. Ramamurthy
Marianne C. Reuter
John Santikos
Ernsteine Studer
Mary Pat Stumberg
Clinton Wright

To learn how you can make an investment in UTSA that will inspire future generations and ask about becoming a member of the Sombrilla Society, contact Helene Benitez, CFRE

COLFA Development Officer
The University of Texas at San Antonio
One UTSA Circle
San Antonio, TX 78249-0641
Phone: (210) 458-4404
E-mail: helene.benitez@utsa.edu

UTSA GIVING ON THE WEB: www.utsa.edu/development
OVATIONS
UTSA COLLEGE OF LIBERAL AND FINE ARTS

DEAN, Daniel J. Gelo
ASSOCIATE DEAN, Student Affairs
Christopher Wickham
ASSISTANT TO THE DEAN, Deborah D. Thomas
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER
Helene Benitez
EDITOR, Lety Laurel
ART DIRECTOR, Karen Thurman
ASSOCIATE EDITORS, Rebecca Luther, Lorna Stafford
CONTRIBUTORS, Rudy Arispe, Lisa Chontos,
Lesli Hicks, Steven G. Kellman
PHOTOGRAPHERS
Patrick Dunn, Mark McClendon
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PUBLICATIONS
Frank Segura
DIRECTOR OF PUBLICATIONS
Elton Smith
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS AND CREATIVE SERVICES
Craig Evans
ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING
David Gabler
VICE PRESIDENT FOR UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT
Marjie French

College of Liberal and Fine Arts
One UTSA Circle
HSS 4.01.23
San Antonio, TX 78249-4350
(210) 458-4350
(210) 458-ARTS (for arts events information)
http://colfa.utsa.edu/colfa/

©2008 Ovations is the annual publication of the College of Liberal and Fine Arts (COLFA) at The University of Texas at San Antonio. Ovations is for our patrons, faculty, staff, alumni and friends to highlight some of the achievements and activities of the college.

The University of Texas at San Antonio
One UTSA Circle
San Antonio, TX 78249-0641