

# **culver city academy of visual and performing arts** **avpa spotlight**

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Inspiring and empowering students to build a compassionate and creative community through innovative and challenging arts education.

## **Welcome to the Academy of Visual and Performing Arts, 2009-2010!**

With the beginning of a new school year, we would like to welcome back all returning AVPA members, as well as extend a warm welcome to all our new students and their families.

We are pleased to announce a new faculty member, Sheila Silver, coming on board as our Creative Director of Theatre. We are excited to have such an energetic and experienced teacher on our staff, and we know all our students will get a tremendous amount of experience and education with Ms. Silver.

As many of you know, the state of the economy in California and across the nation has resulted in damaging budget cuts, especially in education. AVPA has not been completely spared from the worst of these cuts, though we are fortunate to be able to offer a full program in the midst of such ongoing issues. West Los Angeles College continues to support the AVPA and CCHS with ongoing classes for the Fall semester.

It has never before been so imperative for our program to rely on the generous support of our students, parents, and community members. Our AVPA Foundation has done a tremendous job in raising funds so that we may continue to offer the highest quality arts education program our students deserve. We hope every parent and supporter of AVPA will continue to work to help raise money, to volunteer for our various events and fundraisers, and to open up more resources that can help our program succeed.

There are many exciting opportunities for our program, some of which will be announced in the coming months. We are looking forward to another fulfilling year of artistic accomplishment and educational growth. It is with your partnership in this endeavor that will allow us to grow, succeed, and provide our students the very best.

Sincerely,

**Dr. Tony Spano**  
Co-Executive Director  
Creative Director of Music

**Kristine Hatanaka**  
Co-Executive Director  
Creative Director of Art

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### **An AVPA Orientation and Information Meeting will be held on Thursday, Sept 10, 7 pm, in the Robert Frost Auditorium**

Auditions/Interviews  
Continues through Sept 18

Classes/Workshops Begin  
Week of Sept 21

West LA College Registration/K-12 Forms will be due on the first day of the class.

**A Full Schedule of AVPA Events and Performances will be in the next issue of the *Spotlight***

# AVPA's Theatre Department Gets A New Creative Director

An Interview by: Janine Hattem, AVPA Foundation Theatre Department Representative

Sheila Silver, the new Theatre Director comes to CCHS and the AVPA with excellent experience in directing and teaching in educational and regional theatre. In fact, this is Ms. Silver's 31<sup>st</sup> year of teaching Theatre/Drama and English. (she does not look old enough...) Ms. Silver grew up in Southern California and has a MA in Theatre Arts from California State University Fullerton. Her entire career has been dedicated to helping students find their most creative and expressive selves in theatre. Upon accepting the position at CCHS, Ms. Silver relocated "from behind the Orange Curtain" (where she has spent her entire life!) to West Los Angeles. She has two grown sons; Joshua is a working actor who graduated in 2008 from San Francisco State University, and Adam, who recently graduated from the Adult Transition Program at Orange Coast College, where as a Young Adult with Autism, he has achieved success in the working world. Her sons are her best friends and her proudest accomplishments. They share her passion and love for the arts.

Ms. Silver shared that she is very happy to have this opportunity to join the staff at CCHS and the AVPA. She has felt welcomed and supported by everyone so far and can't wait for the year to begin. "I am so lucky to be here!" She said to me at least 4 times, "I can't wait to meet the kids!"

"I come to you with the drive, enthusiasm and creative energy to build upon our outstanding program. From classroom to workshop to production, I am committed to providing an ensemble approach to theatre where the contributions of all are honed, honored and respected. I look forward to sharing my experience, strength and oomph for a FABULOUS first year! I dedicate this important work to the students and families who believe in the importance and vitality of the arts!"

She has several visions for this year in the Theatre Department. "I believe that an ensemble approach best prepares our students for life as an actor. Our workshops and productions will allow our students to develop their tools as an actor and as patrons of the theatre. I believe in creative expression for all. As their director, my role is to excavate their talent and feel empowered. AVPA will give them roots and the confidence to fly."

It is clear that Ms. Silver is a committed educator with a wealth of knowledge and experience. She is enthusiastic and her caring personality glows. She is a hugger! "I love what I do and I hope that I can help the students find what they love. I am open to all ideas and questions because I am all about new and different."

We can expect a new and exciting year with the passion that Ms. Silver brings to us. "I love all aspects of theatre; I want to explore the classic and traditional as well as the avant-garde. I believe that students should work hard and play hard." With anything new comes challenge and Ms. Silver plans to begin immediately to develop the theatre family. "Being a family means that there are times that are not so fun but in the end everything can be worked out. Family means love, understanding and respect."

If you have not already had a chance to meet Ms. Silver, please stop by to welcome her and get a hug.



***Sheila Silver: AVPA's  
new Theatre Director***

# AVPA Art News

## **AVPA Artists Accepted to Ryman Arts at USC**

Congratulations to the following art students on being selected by application only to Ryman Arts at USC: Angela Bac, Daniel Foster, Slaveya Minkova, Melany Monge, and Berkeley Ocegueda. Currently, Charlene Amarasekara, Marisa Okano, and Sequoyah Madison have been promoted to the next level of Ryman Arts. Each of these students will be attending college-level art classes for free.

The prestigious Ryman Arts program issues an \$8-10,000 art scholarship to each accepted applicant which covers the cost of materials, instruction as well as transportation to the University of Southern California. Ryman classes are held during three hour sessions every Saturday for 12 consecutive weeks of the Fall 2009 semester. Ryman Arts was created in the commemoration of Walt Disney artist and designer, Herbert D. Ryman. To celebrate his legacy, the goal was to establish creative opportunities for young artists of the new generation. Ryman strongly believed in the consistent fostering and development of artistic skill. AVPA Art students have continued to thrive in Ryman Arts for over a decade.

## **Idyllwild Summer Program for AVPA Artist**

AVPA Art Student, Sequoyah Madison, attended Idyllwild Arts Academy for a 2-week summer intensive program set in the San Jacinto Mountains of California.

Ryman Arts recommended Sequoyah for the merit scholarship she received. Sequoyah enrolled into a Masters Art class designed to help her create a portfolio for college. Of the experience, Sequoyah, is excited to share her enthusiasm.

The bonds which are made at Idyllwild are both unbreakable and unforgettable. When I first arrived at Idyllwild I was scared but extremely excited. Being in the middle of the forest secluded from any major cities, made me appreciate the calm beauty of the campus as I took in the sensory. Other than two, most of the students were new and had never attended Idyllwild Arts. Most onlookers would never guess because the small class of seven developed friendships quickly. When the teacher, Richard Godfrey, arrived he took us on a hike through the trees and up to a clearing, where tree covered mountains, large and small cities, a beautiful sky and unfamiliar sounds could be viewed and heard. It was extraordinary--an instantaneous place for inspiration.

As days passed the routine of eating, working, hiking and working again with little sleep became second nature. All students were devoted and completely immersed in the art they made. This is what made Idyllwild such an amazing place. Everyone was open, accepting and even appreciative of the conversation and the debates. No one was ever right or wrong. We all took each other in as close friends after only two days. Life drawing was a major part of the daily routine. All the students were most excited and eager to create the concentration part of their portfolio. Idyllwild Arts was a once in a lifetime experience I will always remember.

## **OTIS Scholarships for AVPA Artists**

By Charlene Amarasekara

This summer, I attended one of the best art classes I have ever taken. Sony Pictures Entertainment generously provided Culver City High School art students with full scholarships to take observational drawing classes at OTIS College of Art and Design. As many as 20 students from our high school were accepted. Its purpose being to create a well-developed portfolio, these classes are especially useful for those who plan to attend art school in the future. This class helps students hone their skills at drawing objects from life and building fine compositions to create artwork they can use for college portfolios. With Instructor Scott Zaragoza's direction and demos, we learned to create traditional still lifes by experimenting with different mediums. Taking the class on the OTIS College campus, I was given a true experience of taking a college art class. I learned and grew so much this experience. On behalf of all the AVPA art students, I would like to thank Sony Pictures Entertainment and OTIS College of Art and Design.

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AVPA Foundation [www.avpafoundation.org](http://www.avpafoundation.org)



## Dance Departments Highlights New Faculty, New Class This Fall

We are excited to announce that Chelsea Wolfson, a recent graduate of the Loyola Marymount University dance department, is joining the AVPA Dance Department this fall. She will be teaching the ballet workshop; core curriculum for a Dance Major or Minor. Chelsea comes to the AVPA with a rich dance background. Her resume features a Bachelor of Arts degree in dance with honors, several years of experience with the American Pacific Youth Ballet Company, and performances in the American Ballet Theater's productions of Cinderella and Sleeping Beauty. In addition to specializing in Ballet technique, Chelsea also has experience in classical and contemporary forms of Modern dance and Jazz.

For all you Dance Majors and Minors, it's time to pull up your tights and head for Studio 305! Ballet class is offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:15 - 4:45.

Students should plan to take the Ballet and Musical Theater workshops in conjunction for WLAC Dance 814 credit.

We reluctantly said good-bye to our ballet teacher from 2008/09, as Alison Bory moved to Texas after accepting a post as a Visiting Assistant Professor.



## Modern Jazz Class Offered Monday/Wednesday After School

The Dance Department is delighted to offer Modern Jazz this year, which will be a shift from the studies that have been offered in Modern for the last few years. The Dance Department requires all Dance Majors and Minors to study at least 1 year of core courses: Modern Dance and Ballet. In addition to these courses, dance students must also study Modern Jazz, Jazz, or Tap. This year presents the important opportunity for all Dance Majors and Minors to take this very important class.

Modern Jazz is offered on Mondays and Wednesdays after school (M: 3:15 PM, W: 1:15 PM) in the Frost Auditorium.

The class will be taught by Julie Carson, Creative Director of Dance. Julie brings her vast experience of modern, jazz, and theater dance forms to this very special class. The students will be dancing to jazz, rhythm & blues, and contemporary music, while they learn and practice this dance which will include study of powerful dynamic, strong line, and vibrant rhythm.

## Workshops, Master Classes In Dance

In the works for the fall is a Master Class taught by Maestro Luiz Badaro and Linda Yudin, directors of Viver Brazil, the premiere Afro-Brazilian dance company in Los Angeles. All AVPA dancers will want to be there for this Master Class!



## AVPA Foundation News

Welcome back to returning and new AVPA families and to all the supporters and contributors who made last year's AVPA Foundation fundraising efforts so successful! The AVPA Foundation is a 501c3 nonprofit corporation that was started in 2005 by AVPA parents to generate much needed resources for the Academy of Visual and Performing Arts (AVPA) at Culver City High School. This year the funding challenges are greater than ever so you'll be hearing from us throughout the year about ways you can help! Here's a couple of reminders:

Buy books, electronics, even gift certificates on-line at AMAZON.COM - but go to [www.avpafoundation.org](http://www.avpafoundation.org) and click on the amazon logo to get there and a portion of your spending will support AVPA.

Get an AVPA 2009-2010 Season Pass when you make a donation of \$250 or more (2 Season Passes for \$500 or more) but donations in any amount are appreciated. All donations are tax deductible! You can donate through PayPal at [www.avpafoundation.org](http://www.avpafoundation.org) or mail to AVPA Foundation, P.O.Box 3530, Culver City 90231.

Do you know of a business or organization that might want to be the named sponsor of a particular AVPA production or event? Contact us at [info@avpafoundation.org](mailto:info@avpafoundation.org) if you have questions or suggestions!

## AVPA Fall 2009 Class/Workshop Schedule

Department	Class/Workshop	Time	Location	Teacher(s)
Dance	Modern Jazz (Dance TQ 463, WLAC)	3:15-4:45pm, M, 1:15-2:45, W	Frost	Julie Carson
Dance	Improvisation/Choreography (Dance ST 814, WLAC)	3:15-4:45 pm, WF	Frost	Julie Carson
Dance	Ballet (Dance Study 814 credit in conjunction with Mus Th Wkshp)	3:15-4:45 pm, Tu/Th	MS Rm 305	Chelsea Wolfson
Dance	Musical Theatre Workshop	5-6pm, Tu/Th, (6 weeks)	Frost	Julie Carson
Dance	Company Meeting	12:24-12:59 pm, Tu	Frost	
Music	Film Scoring and Composition	3:30-5:15pm, M, 4-5:45pm, W	Rm 94	Chris Thomas
Music	Chamber Singers	3:15-5:00 pm, Tu, Th	Rm 94	Lisa Michel
Music	Jazz Ensemble (Music 775, WLAC)	6-7:25 pm, MW	Room 94	Tony Spano
Music	Instrumental Ensemble (Music 701, WLAC) [for all chamber ens]	Various TBA	Room 94	Tony Spano
Music	Drumline (Instrumental Ensemble credit)	1:15-3:00 pm, W	Rm 94	Matt North
Music	String Chamber Ensemble (Instrumental Ensemble credit)	3-4 W, 12:24-12:59 Th	Rm 94	Tony Spano
Music	Jazz Combos (Instrumental Ensemble credit)	TBA	Rm 94	Tony Spano
Music	Additional ensembles TBD (Brass, etc.)	TBA	TBA	TBA
Music	Music Technology Film Scoring Lab and/or Music Tech Lab	5:30-7:30 pm, Tu, possibly Th	Rm 7	TBA
Film	Currents in Motion Pictures (Cinema 18, WLAC)	3:15-5:30 M, Lab TBA	Rm 7	Geri Ulrey
Film	Intro to Motion Picture Production (Cinema 1, WLAC)	3:15-5:30, Th, Lab TBA	Rm 7	Matt Harrison
Theatre	Directing Seminar (WLAC)	3:15-5 pm, MW	Rm 9	Sheila Silver
Theatre	Actors' Gang	4-6 pm, F	Ivy	Actors' Gang
Theatre	Lighting (WLAC)	3:15-5 pm, Tu/Th	Rm 9	François-Pierre Couture
Theatre	Movement	3:15-5 pm, MW	TBD	TBD
Art	Drawing I (Art 201, WLAC)	3:15-5:30, Tu/Th	Rm 1	Steve Bankhead
Art	Acrylic Painting (Art 304, WLAC)	3:15-5:30, Tu/Th	Rm 3	Matt McFarland
Art	MOCA First Visit & Beyond (9/21 to 10/28)	3:15-5:45, M, 2:15-4:45, W	Rm 1	Elana Mann
Art	LACMA Internship Program (TBA)	4-6 pm, Th	LACMA	
Art	MOCA Internship Program (TBA)	4-6 pm, Th	MOCA	
Art	Ryman Arts (TBA)		USC	
Art	TOCA @ MOCA (TBA)	Sunday/each month	MOCA	

**NOTE: All AVPA students will be required to attend a once-a-month convocation in the Robert Frost, 1:15-2:00 pm, on the following dates:**

**Sept 23, Oct 14 or 28, Nov 18, Dec 9, Jan 6 or 20, Feb 3 or 17, March 10, April 7 or 21, May 5 or 19, June 2**

\*\*Additional classes, workshops, field trips, and special events are announced throughout the year.

\*\*Classes and locations may change due to schedule changes and faculty availability.