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## Jordan Peimer makes his mark on ArtPower

### First season blurs boundaries between life and art

By [James Chute](#) (/staff/james-chute/) 11 a.m. June 13, 2015



June 4, 2015. San Diego, CA. . .Jordan Peimer is ArtPower's new director, and the 2015-16 season is his first as director. Peimer is photographed on the 7th floor of the UC San Diego Jacobs School of Engineering with the "Fallen Star" artwork (house in the background), which will be one of the locations for one of the ArtPower performances next year... Nancee E. Lewis / Nancee Lewis Photography. No other reproduction allow with out consent of licensior. Permission for reproduction required. *Nancee E. Lewis*

Around the world women are trafficked, denied access to education, barred from participation in the political process and routinely brutalized, according to a Human Rights Watch report. And that's just for starters.

So what's ArtPower director Jordan Peimer going to do about it?

As part of the University of California San Diego-based organization's just-announced 2015-16 season, he's put together a Global Music Series focusing on women.

You'll hear from Mauritania's Noura Mint Seymali (March 3), Israel's Ester Rada (April 27) and Ukraine's DakhaBrakha (May 11).

"I felt like there are so many interesting women who are top-notch performers," Peimer said. "And I really wanted to highlight that, especially as stories come out around the world about all the terrible things that are happening, and especially happening to women. I just felt like, let's look at voices that are positive."

Peimer took over as ArtPower's director last year, so the 2015-16 ArtPower season is the first opportunity to see what the former director of public programs at Los Angeles' Skirball Cultural Center is thinking.

One thing is obvious: Peimer doesn't see a separation between life and art. Whether his engagement of Israel's Idan Cohen Dance Company, which deals with issues of gender and sexual identity, or his inclusion of the Grammy-winning Harlem Quartet, which confounds the persistent stereotypes of white, Western classical music, Peimer shows little interest in the arts as escapism.

"I felt very strongly it was important to bring a group like the Harlem Quartet here," Peimer said. "They are excellent musicians, and to be able to put a group with their background on our chamber series, in front of our audiences, particularly in front of a student body like ours, is just such an important message."

Peimer also believes in drawing back the curtain, in affording students and audiences the opportunity to see how art is made.

Cohen, a highly regarded Israeli choreographer, is also gay and grew up on a kibbutz. He will offer dance workshops, but he'll also meet with the campus gay, lesbian and transgender organization and with Israeli students.

Another choreographer, Huang Yi, is also an inventor and videographer who dances with a robot he's conceptualized and programmed. He'll be meeting with engineering students as well as dancers.

UC San Diego music professor Roger Reynolds, with violinist Irvine Arditti, will present the premiere of a new large-scale work for solo violin and real-time computer processing (in performance executed by computer musician Paul Hembree). They will open the program with a discussion of the music's source material and a demonstration of how it was put together.

Even performers who offer more conventionally formatted programs will, at the very least, engage in a Q&A with the audience after the program.

"Personally, I love all the back stories," Peimer said. "Some people wouldn't dream of staying for a Q&A, but I want us to emphasize the arts are a real and vital part of what a university does. They are a learning experience as well as a form of cultural engagement.

"We as a university need to remember to foreground that the arts are a vital part of life. I think a way of doing that is by demystifying them."

In the 2015-16 season, Peimer is also demonstrating he's not afraid of going out there. ArtPower is presenting Greg Wohead's cutting-edge, site-specific "Hurling" and "The Backseat of My Car (and other safe places)," but those performances are part of a collaborative effort with another organization.

ArtPower is all alone with what could be the year's coolest, most unconventional cultural event: the first live performance in a U.S. airport of Brian Eno's fabled 1998 "Music for Airports."

It's been performed live in a handful of European airports, but never in a U.S. airport. ArtPower is engaging the Bang on a Can All-Stars, arguably the nation's most influential and audience-friendly new music ensemble, to perform it in the ticketing hall of Terminal 2.

"I'm so excited to be able to present 'Music for Airports' in the airport, I can't tell you," said Peimer. "I'm sure I'm not the only one who used to listen to 'Music for Airports' on his Walkman, but to be able to hear it live, I just think it's going to be such an amazing experience."

Peimer points out that "Music for Airports" will also make a grand statement that ArtPower is committed to moving beyond the UC San Diego campus.

"I want ArtPower to serve the students, to serve the university, but I also want us to be a part of the fabric of this city," Peimer said. "This is another opportunity to start moving off site and help people understand what ArtPower is."

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