



August 30, 2015

ArtPower 2015-16: A Season of Innovation



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If you haven't already experienced UC San Diego's breathtakingly innovative and artistically comprehensive series, [ArtPower](#), this season is definitely not the one to miss! Now in its twelfth year, ArtPower "engages diverse audiences through vibrant, challenging, multi-disciplinary performances by emerging and renowned international artists". The 2015-16 season features more than 20 internationally renowned artists and ensembles, from places including Spain, Taiwan, Mexico, Israel and Mauritania.

ArtPower 2015-16 will take audiences on a culturally distinct yet creatively harmonious journey through six unique series in the genres of Chamber Music, Film, Innovation, Dance, Global Music, and Jazz. ArtPower's newly appointed Executive Director, Jordan Peimer says, "We are committed to presenting important artists who not only enrich the cultural landscape of our city, but also inspire UC San Diego

students to realize their own limitless creative potential.” ArtPower extends its reach beyond UCSD’s campus by featuring performances in surprising and unexpected places throughout San Diego County, such as the San Diego International Airport.

I recently had the chance to interview Peimer, about ArtPower’s 2015-16 season, which kicks off September 25th, where Peimer candidly shared what inspired this year’s line up and what exciting features attendees can look forward to experiencing throughout the season.

Vanguard Culture:

I understand the 2015-16 season marks your curatorial debut with ArtPower. What attracted you to the program and what are you most looking forward to this season?

Peimer:

I really wanted to have the opportunity to work with University students. Art has the power to educate and create empathy. I felt there were an almost unlimited number of ways we could have artists work with and inspire students.

Vanguard Culture:

As Executive Director of ArtPower what is your vision for the direction of the program, and how can the San Diego community support ArtPower in realizing this vision?

Peimer:

I want to bring the kinds of innovators from around the country and around the world whose work has largely been unseen in our community. I hope that these artists can inspire conversations both across the public and within our own arts community. I’d love to see engagement with ArtPower artists increase exponentially, not only throughout the University but throughout the San Diego community at large. Currently in San Diego, there is not another organization like us.

Vanguard Culture:

How was this season’s line up of artists selected? Who would you like to recognize as being part of the team that makes ArtPower possible?

Peimer:

While there are a few favorite artists returning, the guiding question we asked ourselves was: ArtPower is already a vital series, what can we do that’s new and still honors the legacy of the dozen years of programming? Our answer was to focus on innovators, particularly young voices.

I have to say I love the ArtPower team. I am a lucky man to have inherited such a brilliant and dedicated group of people. They all bring something special to the table, and I believe that everyone should contribute to the programming. A special thanks to my Associate Director of Artistic Planning & Education Molly Clark and Film Curator Rebecca Webb, who hold our history and share a similar aesthetic: the two of them have been terrific in how they’ve welcomed and guided me in my first year. I’d be remiss if I didn’t mention our dedicated student staff and our terrific donors, especially our PowerPlayers, who have supported us and urge us to experiment.

Vanguard Culture:

As a curator for an arts program that highlights diverse art forms, how do you create a sense of cohesion amongst the line up while still allowing each art form, artist and event to stand on its own as a unique and one of a kind experience?

Peimer:

My goal in the future is to develop themes, which we will look at across genres. It will take a few seasons before we get there. This season, some of the genres have very specific ideas—this year's global music is focusing upon women's voices. Overall we've sculpted the year with an eye and ear towards fresh and innovative programs.

I know each art form has its own adherents. Many would never consider something outside their comfort levels. We've worked hard to create opportunities to experience something that might foster audience experimentation—not only is Christopher O'Riley doing a chamber concert, he is also doing an evening of his solo piano settings of Radiohead. People who love R&B but might not think they enjoy live jazz will have the opportunity to hear the brilliant José James honor his artistic mother Billie Holiday.

Vanguard Culture:

Can you share something about this season that is new and unexpected?

Peimer:

I don't think anyone would have expected us to go to San Diego International Airport for the U.S. airport premiere of Brian Eno's Music for Airports performed by Bang on a Can All-Stars. We did this because we are committed to not just being in La Jolla but also being a vital part of the civic and cultural life of the San Diego community. We also wanted to prove that the ArtPower team could connect beyond the confines of a theater. I'm deeply honored at everyone's enthusiasm for this project. We are already at work developing ideas for next season.