

UC SANTA BARBARA

THE *Current*

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Celebrating diverse voices, identities and perspectives with dance

Since its formation in 1976 as a vehicle for creative research by dance faculty, Santa Barbara Dance Theater (SBDT) has sparked, and spotlighted, innovative and original works. Also woven into its legacy is a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion that plays out on stage as the UC Santa Barbara-based company lifts up the creative voices of all artists with its performances.

The group's new season continues this tradition, featuring works by two guest choreographers of Latino heritage — Cuban-American Rosie Herrera and Colombian-American Eric Parra — who draw deeply from their personal stories, intersectional identities and unique perspectives. Their 2023 fall show, "[The Ties that Bind/Los lazos que unen](#)," runs through Sunday, Oct. 22 at Hatlen Theater.

"This is a dance theater performance that draws from the personal experiences, identities and perspectives of the choreographers, but also from the dancers as they breathe life into the work and bring it to the stage," said Artistic Director Brandon Whited. "We are continuing the legacy of Santa Barbara Dance Theater, while furthering its history of centering important voices in the field and introducing the campus and the Santa Barbara arts community to incredible guest choreographers and dancers."

Parra, a first-generation Colombian-American artist from Union City, New Jersey, draws on his Colombian heritage and personal family history and uses group form to illustrate a rich narrative centered on personal and collective struggle and perseverance in a new premiere “La Luz | The Light.”

Miami-based guest choreographer Herrera brings back a vibrant, poignant and expressive work with her re-staging and expansion of “Querida Herida” (2018) — originally commissioned by the Limón Dance Company.

Whited also will premiere a new work, “Miles to Go,” a duet that reflects on the ongoing and increasing violence and discrimination endured by the LGBTQ+ community.

Performances will feature company dancers Paige Amicon, Derion Loman, Dalya Modlin, Niki Powell and Calder White; with apprentices Riley Haley, Tiersha Lin, Sky Pasqual, Gabi Smith and Chloe Swoiskin; and will feature production lighting design by Michael Klaers.

Santa Barbara Dance Theater is the longest continuously running contemporary dance company in the South Coast region and the only resident professional company in the University of California system. SBDT has commissioned choreographic works by Joshua Beamish, Josh Manculich, David Maurice, Stephanie Miracle, Charles Moulten, Andrea Giselle Schermoly, Yusha-Marie Sorzano and others; restaged works by established choreographers José Limon, Remy Charlie, Jane Dudley, Louis Falco, Lucas Hoving, Jennifer Muller and David Parsons; and has premiered works by UCSB faculty members and three previous artistic directors — Alice Condodina (1976-1990), Jerry Pearson (1991-2010) and Christopher Pilafian (2011-2020). The company has performed in New York City and toured internationally in the Czech Republic, Ireland, China and South Korea, and regionally in San Francisco, San Diego and Los Angeles. Under the direction of Whited (2021-present) the company begins a new chapter, honoring the SBDT’s history and legacy while continuing to engage audiences with forward-thinking and cutting-edge dance performance.

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About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.