



19 UCLA 19
BRUINS B

a&e

opinion

Monday, June 6, 2016

DB dailybruin.com/ae



DOUBLE DUTY

Fourth-year film student Shawn Semana begins ROTC's drills at 6 a.m. and practices hip hop dance with Samahang Modern through the night. He will start flight school as a naval student aviator in the fall.

BY SAMANTHA SUMAN
Daily Bruin contributor

Shawn Semana barely had enough time to shower the morning of May 25. Samahang Modern dance rehearsal ended at 5 a.m., and he had to leave for ROTC 30 minutes later.

The fourth-year film student's schedule often looks similar on Wednesday mornings.

He said although his commitments of film, dance and ROTC allow for little down-time, they make him happy and have helped him grow as a leader at UCLA. Semana said he wants to write screenplays while in the Navy and hopes to go to graduate school for film when he is done with his service.

Semana said his father, who previously served as a chief in the Navy, inspired him to apply

to ROTC. Semana said he saw the military service program as a stable job after college and as an opportunity to travel.

Semana's military background has been a launching point for his work in film, he said.

He spent his fourth year working on his film thesis, a movie about a Filipina maid pursuing her dream. Semana gained inspiration for this story from spending time in San Diego this past summer through ROTC, where he met a group of Filipina maids who worked in the hotel he lived in.

"I love telling stories," Semana said. "That's my biggest thing. I had a grandmother that recently passed away who loved telling stories."

He said his grandmother often told accounts of living in the Philippines under Japanese occupation during World

War II. He did not understand the importance of these stories until he realized he derived many of his values from them, such as selflessness and standing up for what is right.

Semana said his grandmother inspired him to become a storyteller, and this passion ultimately led to his decision to become a film major.

After completing his undergraduate work in film, Semana will attend flight school this November in Pensacola, Florida, as a naval student aviator for two years and will continue to serve in the Navy for a total of 10 years. He was selected for the position out of a pool containing more than 1,000 ROTC students in the entire country, he said. A combination of his grades, physical fitness, staff recommendation and standardized test scores landed him the job.

Both ROTC and Samahang Modern have taught him about being responsible and learning quickly, whether that be with drills or dance moves, he said.

"Being a part of a dance team, you learn hard work ethic, how to work with a group of people all towards a common goal," Semana said. "(It's the) same thing with ROTC."

Semana decided to audition for Samahang Modern because he wanted to push himself to do something out of his comfort zone. He said the team is comprised of a strong, talented group of dancers, and he wanted to learn from them. Semana finds dancing a means to express himself, so he is willing to sacrifice his time to be with the community of artists.

"You're dancing for the moment to share on stage with your fellow dancers," Semana said.

Matt Evangelista, a second-year cognitive science student and dancer with Samahang Modern, met Semana at the dance group's audition. He said Semana is constantly supportive and attentive to the mental health of the team. Regardless of whether he is prominently featured in a dance piece, Semana cheers his teammates on and encourages them to improve.

"He doesn't care so much about being seen as doing his part in the team," Evangelista said.

Cody Huber, a fourth-year biology student and a member of UCLA's ROTC program, lived with Semana during their first and second years. He recognized Semana's busy schedule and his resulting habits, like constantly eating on the go and taking quick five-minute naps.

Huber first met Semana during their first year at ROTC orientation in San Diego at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. Both students were required to fold their bedsheets with hospital corners, a specific military folding pattern, but Huber did not know how to do so. Every morning, Huber said Semana would fold both of their bedsheets.

In order to power through drills with ROTC at 6 a.m. and then dance practice with Samahang Modern starting at 8 p.m., Semana relied on friends and family, he said.

"If you are stressed, you have to know your support systems and hold onto that," Semana said. "Find ways to keep you happy and take care of yourself."

Email Suman at ssuman@dailybruin.com or tweet @samanthasuman.

Photographer Nolan Isozaki inspired by the pretty and the gritty

BY KAYLA HAUSMANN
Daily Bruin contributor

Nolan Isozaki clung to the side of a mountain, watching stones dislodged by his backpack tumble down 14,000 feet to the ground. Freezing wind whipped around him as the sun's light faded over the Rocky Mountains, muffling the warning shouts of his friends in the valley below.

Isozaki clasped his Fujifilm X20 camera with frozen fingers, deter-

mined to capture on film what he thought would be his last moments.

The fourth-year English student survived the near-death experience during a hiking trip with friends in the summer of 2015 and continues photographing his adventures both in nature and on the streets of Los Angeles. Isozaki's background in street photography has allowed him to explore adventure and fashion photography since coming to UCLA and after graduation.

Isozaki first began photographing in a high school class in San Francisco and soon after coming to UCLA bought his first camera, the Fujifilm X20. Isozaki said Richard Avedon's blend of fashion and street photography in Vogue magazine inspired him to pursue street photography himself.

Street photography records people interacting with their natural environments, so Isozaki said he photographed friends in museums like The Broad and in downtown Los Angeles.

Isozaki joined Flickr, an online forum for sharing and discussing photography, to teach himself basic photography skills, he said. But his photography soon became less about observing rules of composition and more about subconsciously capturing moments while getting coffee with friends or exploring hidden parts of campus.

"Art is learning all the rules and learning which ones to break," he said.

Isozaki began to photograph scenes beyond city streets, documenting UCLA's triathlon team. Since joining the team his freshman year, Isozaki said being a part of the group and photographing its training sessions provided a natural transition to adventure photography.

"I like detailing the training stuff that people usually don't see," Isozaki said. "Like the backroom in triathlon — the suffering is what fascinated me."

Isozaki began to experiment with landscape photography because of his friend and fellow photographer Blake Simpson.

Simpson, a third-year civil engineering student, said Isozaki developed quick thinking by spontaneously photographing candid moments with friends at parties or on campus, capturing moments and telling stories through his photos.

On a backpacking trip through Sequoia National Park in January, Simpson said he struggled to snowshoe through the thick snowbanks, but Isozaki ran up the mountain ahead with camera in hand, trekking through the snow and photographing their journey.

"He just has passion for the adventure," Simpson said. "He'll do things most people wouldn't do, but he'll do

it because he wants to tell the story." Isozaki tries to show a subject's spirit, getting to know someone's story and then capturing it in a photo, Simpson said.

Isozaki said he photographed Fashion and Student Trends' fashion show on campus in May, since fashion initially drew him to photography.

Models striding down the runway to a mixture of techno music create a lively atmosphere similar to street photography, Isozaki said.

Isozaki's photography is distinguished by his curiosity and willingness to explore, said Adam DeBrosse, a fourth-year economics student and former member of the triathlon team. DeBrosse said Isozaki's photos chronicle the intersection of his interests in fashion, the outdoors and music.

"The essence of photography is putting yourself in the right place, taking advantage of the opportunities that you're in to take a photo," DeBrosse said. "(Isozaki) is really opportunistic; he just lives a life that is colorful and takes a camera (along) with him."

After graduating, Isozaki said he wants to pursue photography as a career, working in fashion before hoping to ultimately shoot for National Geographic. He said his background in street photography allows him to capture spontaneous moments, tell stories in his adventure photography and will help him experiment more with fashion photography in the future.

"(Fashion photography) is kind of more sterile, but it is very dynamic because I'm bringing my adventure photography into this," Isozaki said.

Email Hausmann at khausmann@dailybruin.com.



Fourth-year English student Nolan Isozaki bought a Fujifilm X20 camera to shoot street photography of random encounters with people around Los Angeles. He transitioned into adventure photography and then fashion photography, which both allow him to tell subjects' stories.

Veteran HOOLIGAN comedian talks future, working with children

BY SALLY LEE
Daily Bruin contributor

A young man with big-rimmed glasses, a beard and a naked baby doll told puns from center stage as the audience's laughter grew.

Fourth-year linguistics student Landen Baldwin said he tries to be light-hearted during any situation. He has pursued acting since the age of 7. However, it wasn't until he played the Mad Hatter in a play as a freshman in high school that his career in comedic acting took off, he said. It was the first time he was encouraged to be funny.

Since arriving at UCLA, Baldwin has been a team leader in the comedy group Rapid Fire Improv and has written and acted for Spring Sing's Company comedy sketches, including this year's "The 52nd

Imperfection." Baldwin also held several roles as actor and casting director in plays and musicals such as "The Drowsy Chaperone," "Almost, Maine" and "Rent" through HOOLIGAN Theatre Company. He will work as a performer in LEGOLAND Hotel after graduation.

"HOOLIGAN was my first family on campus," Baldwin said.

During fall 2015, Baldwin acted in the musical "Rent" as Mark Cohen, a character who has to move on while his friends are dying. Baldwin said that his role served to provide a feeling of catharsis for the audience. The role exemplifies Baldwin's favorite kinds of roles to act: comedic characters that have real problems, struggles and opinions that the audience can relate to.

"Comedy is always in sea-

son for me," Baldwin said. "There will never be a time when I'll say I'm done with comedy."

Aside from acting and cast directing, Baldwin also works on the HOOLIGAN Education staff. He writes and teaches educational theater workshops at middle schools, high schools and on campus.

"My entire theater career before college was focused on theatrical education," Baldwin said. "I've always had a soft spot in my heart for giving children access to theater learning."

He said teaching these workshops has helped him analyze his own performance skills.

Baldwin's roommate for three years, fourth-year mathematics student Aaron Fish, took part in their first



Comedian Landen Baldwin, a fourth-year linguistics student, will graduate from UCLA Rapid Fire Improv and HOOLIGAN Theatre Company to play a pirate at LEGOLAND Hotel in San Diego, returning to the roots of his comedic career, working with children.

BALDWIN | Page B5

Slam poetry contest gives students creative release

BY GABRIELLA KAMRAN
Daily Bruin contributor

Some friends finish each other's sentences, but Alberto Loaiza and Kevin Yang finish lines of each other's poetry.

Loaiza, a fourth-year English and Chicana/o studies student, and Yang, a third-year world arts and cultures and African American studies student, are two of four members of UCLA's slam poetry team and staff members for The Word on Wednesday, the Cultural Affairs Commission's open-mic poetry group. On April 6, they competed in the College Unions Poetry Slam Invitational at University of Texas at Austin, placing fifth out of 68 competitors.

Loaiza and Yang, who will both graduate in spring, were only acquaintances prior to CUPSI. While preparing for the competition, the two said they formed a closer friendship that allowed them to grow as poets and realize their ability to speak on behalf of the marginalized Latino and Asian communities they represent, respectively.

Loaiza learned English at the age of 8 when he moved from Veracruz, Mexico, to the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles. In high school, he received no grade higher than a C in any of his English classes, he said.

Creative writing was always a hobby for Loaiza, but he said it wasn't until one of his personal essays brought a community college professor to tears that he began to pursue slam poetry. Still, Loaiza said he never won his community college's slam poetry nights, receiving only an honorable mention for stage presence.

"My poetry wasn't good on paper, but my performance was all in," Loaiza said.

Loaiza tried out for the UCLA CUPSI team in the fall of 2015, but was eliminated both times. It was only in March, when multiple members of the 2016 team had dropped out, that the team recruited Loaiza to meet CUPSI's four-member requirement, he said.

Across the world from Loaiza, Yang was born in Southeast Asia, then adopt-



Fourth-year student Alberto Loaiza and third-year student Kevin Yang will both graduate in June after working together on poetry through the College Unions Poetry Slam Invitational.

ed and raised in Barbados. He attended a boarding high school in England, where he said his introduction to poetry was focused on traditional, white poets like Shakespeare and Edgar Allan Poe. "I felt like poetry was an elite thing, rather than a people's art," Yang said. "It was for people who wanted to be like, 'Look at us, we're all about art.'"

In the weeks leading up to CUPSI, the team members spent up to 13 hours per day exchanging life stories to discover shared experiences for group

poems, said Hayley Downs, a third-year English student and CUPSI team member. The teammates often talked until the early hours of the morning, occasionally sleeping over at one another's apartments, she said.

One night, Downs and Yang stocked up on food from Ralphs and shut themselves in Yang's apartment until 4 a.m. to discuss topics such as their families, interests and anxieties, Downs said.

"We just had to throw out any bound-

aries because we didn't have time to follow the natural progression of a friendship," Downs said. "It was like, 'I need to know everything about you right now.'"

The team bonding process allowed Yang and Loaiza to form a mutual sense of trust, Yang said, and the two disclosed secrets and shameful things they felt about themselves.

Loaiza said one shared point of

WORD | Page B4

DELPHI GREEK

WE PROVIDE FULL SERVICE CATERING FOR ALL YOUR OCCASSIONS

WE ACCEPT LVOs

BOOK YOUR GRADUATION PARTY NOW!

DELPHI GREEK

1985 **31 YEARS** 2016

1383 WESTWOOD BLVD.
LOS ANGELES, CA. 90024
PHONE: 310.478.2900

10% OFF GRADUATION PARTIES WITH BRUINCARD

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
8:30 AM - 11 PM

TLT FOOD

WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

UCLA TACO TUESDAYS & LATE NIGHT THURS, FRI, SAT

\$3 for ANY TACO

Dine in & Take Out Only. Not valid with other offers.

ALL OUR DELICIOUS TACOS. \$3 ALL DAY TUESDAY & AFTER 9PM THURS, FRI, SAT

Award Winning Food • Delivery & Catering • Keg & Bottled Wine • Craft Beer • Late Night

TLTFOOD.COM Sun-Wed 11am-10pm • Thur-Sat 11am-11pm • 1116 Westwood Blvd • On Westwood Blvd @ Kinross Ave

WORD

from page B2

shame was the sense of indignity the two felt growing up as people of color in America. He and Yang traded experiences into the early morning, drawing out each other's memories of microaggressions and harmful stereotypes, he said.

Yang, for example, said people were often surprised when they discovered he dabbles in spoken word poetry and college sports, and Loaiza said he faced the same reaction when people heard he took Advanced Placement classes in high school.

Yang and Loaiza poured their experiences into a joint slam poem about racial identity called "People of Shame."

"When we wrote our CUPSI poems, our goal was, 'What story can we tell that no one else can tell?'" Downs said. "Being people of color who aren't black is a narrative you don't often hear in slam poetry."

Yang said he initially lacked the bravery to write about himself, and chose to write about the universal emotion of love. He said he refused to explore his identity crisis as an Asian-born Barbadian in England and denied responsibility to his heritage.

Through CUPSI, Yang said

he met Southeast Asian poets who felt their voices are not heard in the poetry community. Yang realized he could reflect on social issues in front of a willing audience, and felt it was his duty to serve the communities he represents, he said.

"Poetry is going to be political if you really care about the message you carry," Yang said. "It's about how raw you can go inward before you can look outward."

During the writing process, Loaiza and Yang adapted to one another's writing styles, benefitting from the other's strengths as a result. Yang's forte is metaphors, Loaiza said, which helped him layer his writing with poetic devices that can draw in the audience. Loaiza said his favorite metaphor from "People of Shame" is his comparison of the Los Angeles Latino community with "the first hit off an ice cold Mexican coke."

Yang said Loaiza's direct and straightforward approach to writing poems kept him from getting lost in obscure metaphors.

Downs noticed Loaiza's easygoing personality also balanced Yang's anxious and self-critical tendencies, she said.

"(Loaiza) is very good for (Yang)," Downs said. "(Yang) just needed someone in his life to tell him to relax."

Michelle Portillo, a fourth-year political science and Chicana/o studies student and the director of The Word on Wednesday, said Loaiza's edge in slam poetry has always been his enthusiasm. Even when Loaiza first came to The Word, he masked his nerves with a loud and proud voice, she said.

"It's a good balance," Portillo said. "(Loaiza) pulls (Yang) into his confidence with him, and (Yang) has definitely stepped out of his shadow and towards the mic to tell his story the way it should be told."

After graduating in June, Loaiza will teach high school English for Teach for America in Las Vegas starting in the fall. Although he is walking in graduation, Yang plans to stay at UCLA for two more quarters. He said he will serve as co-director of The Word and continue his internship at photography studio Graphics Metropolis.

Both Loaiza and Yang said they will continue writing poetry. The poets hope to compete individually in National Poetry Slam, the largest-scale poetry competition in the United States.

"I write because a poem is never completely done," Loaiza said. "It reminds me I don't have to be either."

Email Kamran at gakamran@dailybruin.com.

Act III Bruin whirls her way to Hollywood Bowl performance



BY LENA SCHIPPER
Daily Bruin contributor

Maggie Darago exhaled deeply with a timid smile as she rattled off her upcoming 10-day routine for "A Chorus Line" — a 10-hour dance and voice rehearsal, a drive home and a personal practice in her room before turning in for the night.

Darago, a fourth-year theater student graduating in June, will perform in the musical from July 29 to 31 at the Hollywood Bowl.

While she auditioned at the end of winter quarter, Darago said she will have about 10 days starting July 18 to memorize choreography and lyrics, and understudy two lead roles. Her background in performance, studying at UCLA's theater department and participating in student theater organizations have prepared her for the show, she said.

Darago fell into the world of performance at a young age, beginning dance at age 4 and voice lessons in the fourth grade. However, she did not begin to formally study theater until she enrolled in the theater program at UCLA in fall 2012.

UCLA theater alumna Megan

Fitzgerald worked Darago's first audition for the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television. "Even now, in everything she does, she still has that wide-eyed, energetic freshman feel," Fitzgerald said.

Darago joined the student-run Act III Theatre Ensemble during her first year. She participated in production, but mainly focused on choreography throughout her four years. Her favorite annual event was Act III's production Bruins Care, a 24-hour musical to benefit those with AIDS.

Rodd Farhadi, a third-year theater student, met Darago through his involvement in Bruins Care. He immediately connected with Darago because of his interest in choreography and looked to Darago as a mentor, he said.

"She comes to rehearsal with an idea and her song already memorized," Farhadi said. "She spends so much time in all three aspects of performing rather than only focusing on what she's best at."

The collaborative spirit of the students in Act III resonated with Darago.

"Student groups are just completely a lesson in professionalism and patience while

interacting with others," Darago said. "Being able to respect each other and feed off each other's energy — being able to learn from each other — is the most pleasant lesson you can take away from a student production."

Darago is not new to the stage, but "A Chorus Line" will push her limits, she said. The premise of the musical centers on dancers auditioning for an intensive Broadway jazz production. She said auditionees wanted to throw up because the show is so athletic.

Darago will dance in the eight-minute-long opening number, the choreography of which has remained exactly the same since the musical's first production, Darago said. Dancers will fill the stage and perform countless repetitions of kicks and leaps while the audition director shouts out steps and critiques.

"It'll just be cool to be part of (a show) that has so much history, so much prestige," Darago said. "I'm pretty sure I'm one of the youngest people in the cast, so it's always very intimidating from that standpoint."

Darago said the production

DARAGO | Page B5

FOR OUR FINAL TRICK



HANNAH YE/DAILY BRUIN SENIOR STAFF

Magic and Illusion Student Team president, fourth-year student Mike Li (left), will go on to study industrial/organizational psychology at NYU. Treasurer of the magic group, fourth-year student Ada Yu (right) will not pursue magic after graduation.

BY SADIA KHALID
Daily Bruin contributor

A student magician walked onto the Northwest Campus Auditorium stage with a bag full of newspaper clippings. He shook 10 clippings and the audience gasped as the pieces took the form of an unscathed issue of the Daily Bruin.

The trick launched the 2015 annual show for UCLA's Magic and Illusion Student Team, a student club in which students discuss and practice magic.

Mike Li, the president of MIST and a fourth-year neuroscience student, started their journeys as magicians in their first year at UCLA with MIST. They will graduate in June.

Li discovered his interest in magic five years ago while living in China. In high school he watched the Taiwanese "Big Magic Competition" on TV. Around the same time, a famous Taiwanese magician Lu Chen performed on national television in China for the Spring Festival Gala — which is like the Super Bowl in China, Li said.

"To have this extremely famous magician perform in this super important traditional festival made magic much more popular in China, and I got more and more interested," Li said. When Li came to UCLA in 2012, he joined MIST to get to know like-minded magicians. In the year he joined, MIST had 15- to 20-minute performances in between shows of other clubs at UCLA.

The same year, Yu found MIST as a first-year, when she approached their booth at the Enormous Activities Fair on seeing one member perform a magic trick. She said the fantastic and mysterious aspects of magic with

a themed performance and story are what attracted her to the art form, but she never practiced it before.

Yu said a lot of the mystique of magic comes from not knowing how the tricks are done. But when existing MIST members train the new members, their secrets are exposed.

Last year, Li and Yu performed card tricks at MIST's annual show, which ended with one member tearing a string into many pieces, then putting them back together, all while telling a story of how students separate after graduation but their shared experiences and memories tie them in a single string.

"Mike is a very knowledgeable magician. His style is theatrical. It transcends tricks," said Shijun Huang, a third-year computer science student who joined MIST in 2013.

After graduation, Li and Yu don't

plan to take up magic as a profession, they said.

"Magicians are entertainers," Yu said. "It's hard to break into that field. You have to come up with your own stuff, work really hard for your material, get good at it, then put your name out there."

Instead, Yu said she will take a gap year and will not pursue magic because she's not comfortable performing in front of people. She performs in the annual MIST shows and she enjoys practicing and talking about magic, but the performance part is nerve-racking for her. Her fascination with magic is not primarily in performing in front of a large audience.

"Ada is shy when it comes to performing, but she is very supportive," Huang said. "She practiced a lot in the last two years and performed really well at our shows."

Email Khalid at skhalid@dailybruin.com.

gayley & LINDBROOK APARTMENTS
1122 GAYLEY AVENUE • LOS ANGELES • CA 90024

MODERN LIVING

(310) 709 6228
gayleyandlindbrook.com

MANAGED BY

MOSS & COMPANY
REAL ESTATE SERVICES

Located in the heart of Westwood Village, and designed by renowned Nadel Architects, Gayley & Lindbrook Apartments is an exclusive lifestyle community featuring a dramatic and highly-articulated limestone and brick exterior with luxuriously appointed interiors in a variety of floor plans, along with handy amenities like a rooftop pool, secured subterranean parking and social spaces, all within walking distance of nearby cafes, and shops.

Studios starting at \$3,495
1 bedroom \$4,195
1+den \$4,795
2 bedrooms \$5,295
2+den \$4,895

A haiku about studying for the LSAT:
No no no no no
No no no no don't want to
No no no no no



BLUEPRINT CAN HELP.
Summer courses for the September LSAT begin **June 12, June 26, July 11, July 12, and July 16.**

888-4BP-PREP
blueprintlsat.com

Use code **UCLA300** to save \$300 on a UCLA Class!

DEL FRISCO'S GRILLE

CONGRATULATIONS 2016 GRADS!

CELEBRATE GRADUATION AT DEL FRISCO'S GRILLE - AVAILABLE FOR PRIVATE DINING & REGULAR RESERVATIONS.

WWW.DELFRISCOGRILLE.COM

SANTA MONICA
1551 OCEAN AVE. SANTA MONICA, CA 90401 | 310-395-7333
@DFGRILLES

PASADENA
55 S. LAKE AVE. PASADENA, CA 91101 | 626-765-9913
@DFGRILLEPASA

Former Bruin customizes graduation caps

BY SARAH AHERN
Daily Bruin contributor

Leanna Maaz embarks on a scavenger hunt every time she travels abroad. In each city she explores, she collects a souvenir that contains the name of the city and arranges the items in a scrapbook to document her journey.

"For any restaurant I go to, I collect the menu, and I grab a napkin with the city's name and the tour guide pamphlet," Maaz said. "When you put these things in a scrapbook and decorate it with ribbons and everything, it all just comes alive."

Maaz, a UCLA alumna, incorporated her passion for crafting into a business this year, decorating personalized graduation cap toppers for students. She collects craft pieces such as jewels, flowers and sticker letters over time from large craft stores in downtown Los Angeles. She then uses the pieces as custom decorations for students' caps, she said. She has sold more than 50 cap toppers via UCLA Facebook groups for \$25 each.

When Maaz watched her sisters graduate from UCLA a few years ago and eyed

the line of caps moving across the stage, she envisioned her own graduation cap the following year as one specially decorated to fit her own style.

Maaz's graduation cap last year was the first she designed and embellished, with its large gold letters that spelled out UCLA. She also bordered the cap with fake sunflowers and a polka-dotted yellow ribbon, layered onto a sparkly, white background.

After designing her own cap in June 2015, Maaz posted a photo of it on Instagram. The photo garnered comments from her friends, who asked her if she had time to make theirs as well. Maaz made cap toppers for some friends for free but didn't have time to make more during school, she said.

In March 2016, Maaz put an advertisement on the UCLA Free & For Sale Facebook page that displayed photos of a series of caps she made, to see if other students wanted her to design their cap toppers. Maaz created these caps based on designs she found on Pinterest and other do-it-yourself websites. Some of her favorites read "game of loans," "I'm psyched!" and "thanks mom, dad and coffee," and were

decorated with the craft pieces she collected and customized for the buyer.

At the end of March, Maaz set up a one-day booth on Bruin Walk that displayed her premade cap toppers.

Brittney Tabel, a fourth-year sociology student, said she chose one of Maaz's premade cap toppers decorated with the words "UCLA graduate" on a sparkly, blue-paper background bordered with jewels.

"Decorating grad caps is about the whole personal touch, and I love how even though they were all made by one person they still reflected very individual personalities," Tabel said. "As I looked through all of her designs, I found so many that, though they weren't perfect for me, they seemed perfect for friends that I knew."

Chigo Anene, a fourth-year sociology student, said she asked Maaz to make a custom cap order in memoriam of her father, who had passed away two days before her senior year began.

The cap featured the words "Daddy, I did it" embroidered across the surface along with the dates of her father's birth and death. In the center of the cap, Maaz placed three photos of Anene and her father, held in place by clips from Maaz's collection.

"He couldn't be there for her that day and she did it all for him, so it was really special, and it felt good to give her that cap," Maaz said. "It was the nicest feeling when I gave it to her. You could see in her eyes that it was something she really, really appreciated."

Maaz said while she enjoys the process of making the caps, the rewarding part of the experience is making designs for people that know what they want in a design, but either don't have the time to make one or are not sure how to make it themselves. She said the more caps she designs, the better she becomes at organizing the layout to make it more eye-catching and learning what colors work well together.

Though she is currently pursuing her teaching credentials and is interested in obtaining her master's degree next year, she hopes to keep the cap-making business as a hobby, she said.

"It's nice to help people who have that vision of what they want, and I enjoy making it for them, so it's a win-win," Maaz said.

Email Ahern at sahern@dailybruin.com.



UCLA alumna Leanna Maaz started decorating graduation caps after her friends saw her own personalized cap when she graduated last year. This year Maaz sold grad cap toppers to seniors through Facebook.

BALDWIN

from page B3

HOOLIGAN show together. As a current managing director of HOOLIGAN, Fish said he admires the amount of hard work and dedication Baldwin puts into his creative projects.

"We've been in nine to 12 shows together," Fish said. "We got attached to the characters and became very close friends."

Fish said his and Baldwin's shared sense of humor leads to plenty of back-and-forth puns and jokes.

"We go on and on and are just having a blast while the

people around us are slowly complaining about how terrible the puns are," Fish said.

Through his experiences, Baldwin said he realized that presenting comedy is about fine-tuning what he finds funny, and how to best connect to and entertain his audience.

"Things will not be funny sometimes. You will hit a roadblock," Baldwin said. "It's important to not hold onto those things, and think about how I can change, how I can adapt."

Baldwin said creating a connection with the audience is the most important part of performing.

"Jokes get applause and truths get laughter," Bald-

win said. "I will always want to bridge the gap between the audience and me."

Alongside being an actor and director in HOOLIGAN Theatre Company, Baldwin took his acting energy to the UCLA comedy club Rapid Fire Improv during his first year and became the team captain two years later.

Marie Osterman, a first-year theater student, said Baldwin has served as both a helpful mentor and an accepting friend during their work together in Rapid Fire Improv.

"He is like our weird, gruffy, joyful dad," Osterman said. "I learn from him by watching him on stage and from him encouraging us in making dis-

tinct choices about characters."

After graduation, Baldwin said he will perform at LEGOLAND Hotel in San Diego, a job he heard about from a friend. Baldwin will continue his passion for comedic improvisation as a pirate character in a medieval theme setting and entertain kids who are visiting the hotel. He said the job brings him back to his initial passion for working with kids.

Comedy will never stop for Baldwin. "You carve out a place, make a niche for yourself," he said. "Audience laughter is a thrill I'll never be able to get over."

Email Lee at slee@dailybruin.com.



MIRIAM BRIBIESCA/PHOTO EDITOR
Fourth-year theater student Maggie Darago was cast in the ensemble of the Hollywood Bowl's summer production of the musical "A Chorus Line."

DARAGO

from page B4

will be much greater in scale than any show she's ever performed in. She will face challenges in terms of adjusting to a highly professional acting job, she said.

"At school you're still all students and all peers, and I'm always involved in multiple aspect of productions," she said. "When you get casted in a professional production, performing is your only job."

Yet Darago said she feels confident in her abilities, which she credited to her

upper-division theater courses. She has seen a widespread growth in everything from her foundational dancing, acting and singing to specific mannerisms such as audition etiquette. She plans to pursue theatrical performance as a career in the future.

"To a certain extent if you've done your homework, your body knows what to do, your mouth will say the words you rehearsed because you've gone over it so many times," Darago said. "If you start second-guessing yourself, you're guaranteed to mess up."

Email Schipper at lschippier@dailybruin.com.

VIDEO dailybruin.com/video

Getting into character

JUSTINE STO. TOMAS/VIDEO PRODUCER

Fourth-year theater student Maggie Darago enjoys becoming each character she sets out to play, be it a mundane person or a villainess. But before getting into any role or on stage, Darago must warm up both her voice and dance muscles. Watch as she shares some of the warm-up routines she does before she gets into character. Darago will be performing in the summer production of "A Chorus Line" at the Hollywood Bowl.

Members of different a cappella groups harmonize for graduation

BY SUZIE PAPANTONI
Daily Bruin contributor

Six seniors hailing from different a cappella groups will unite to take center stage at Pauley Pavilion as their last hurrah before graduation.

Under the ensemble name Views from the Six, a cappella singers Hannah Bannan, Matt Driver, Lashon Halley, Isaac Mirzadegan, Nisha Nalamala and Kelly Noe will perform their rendition of the national anthem and the alma mater songs at the College of Letters and Science graduation ceremony at 2 p.m. Friday.

The name of the group was influenced by the title of Drake's recent album, "Views." The group had not decided on a name until their audition for commencement when they were asked to state their name on the spot. After a few seconds of consideration, members agreed that Views from the Six would be a fitting name for the six of them, who state Drake as a prominent influence of their work.

Parents might not catch the reference, but it might bring a few chuckles to other students, said Noe, a fourth-year music and social institutions student.

Views from the Six united a month ago when Noe, Brennan, Halley and Nalamala from

Signature A Cappella decided to audition to sing the national anthem at graduation. Halley, a fourth-year art history student, said she originally considered auditioning individually.

"I love singing the national anthem and I wanted to do it solo," Halley said. "But it is less stressful as a group and it actually sounds more energized, like a choir."

Fourth-year psychology student Mirzadegan from a cappella group ScatterTones messaged Noe asking if any girls from Signature A Cappella were organizing a commencement performance, and was welcomed into Noe's group.

Mirzadegan said he wanted to perform at commencement ever since he witnessed previous seniors from his a cappella group perform when he first joined.

The group sought an additional male voice in order to balance the other four female voices, Noe said. The group achieved its desired sound after adding Mirzadegan's friend Driver, a fourth-year statistics student who used to sing with Deviant Voices A Cappella.

Even though Driver left his a cappella group last year, recruiting him into Views from the Six was easy because

the a cappella community at UCLA is tight and all groups frequently perform together, Noe said.

Nalamala, a fourth-year biology student, recalled watching the boys perform before with their respective a cappella groups but only met them in person at the audition for the commencement performance. After hanging out with them backstage during Spring Sing 2016, they bonded instantly, she said. Commencement rehearsals turned into relaxing evenings with the six friends.

Their cover of the national anthem and the alma mater is based on arrangements that Mirzadegan borrowed from his a cappella group ScatterTones. Each member of Views from the Six was assigned a specific part, which they practiced individually before rehearsing as group with music professor Michael Dean.

A choral arrangement is different than a solo, Nalamala said, since everyone needs to blend their voices because only the soprano melody, sung by Bannan and Noe, may stand out.

A cappella is team-oriented by nature, Driver said, and the goal is not to stand out but to synchronize with the other members.



MIRIAM BRIBIESCA/PHOTO EDITOR

Six graduating students from three different a cappella groups merged to form Views from the Six, a singing ensemble that will perform the national anthem and the alma mater at commencement Friday.

The dynamic of the group lightens the pressure of their emotional performance, Nalamala said.

Their last moments on stage at Pauley Pavilion are about putting on a show for their families and peers in the audience, Halley said. Halley will be holding back tears during

the performance, since it will be her last time performing on a UCLA stage as a student, she said.

Commencement by itself is emotional, Noe said, but singing in front of families, student speakers and the chancellor is an incredible way for her to exit college.

"At this point I'm mostly excited to be done with college and start the next chapter," Noe said. "But I feel like when I am actually up there performing it will definitely hit me that it is really over."

Email Papantoni at spapan-toni@dailybruin.com.

MONK

from page B3

Bassist Alex Boneham moved from Sydney, Australia, to join the ensemble. He said although the members know each other well now, a huge part of the program is learning to work with strangers.

"It's not uncommon to get on a gig and not know anyone in the band before you play the first gig," he said. "And so (the program) is like a really intensified extension of that. It's like being on tour for two years, being on the road, staying in the same hotel room every day."

Boneham said having music as a common language helped the students work together.

Being in the program helped both Boneham and Staaf see jazz as a global art form connecting people across cultures. Staaf did not realize how broad the focus of her education at the institute would be until she got there.

"(The Monk Institute) isn't just about the music and about me," Staaf said. "It's about a vision for how I can live my life as a human who's doing music but with this sense of it being relevant to the world at large."

The students' disparate backgrounds influence the way they approach their music, Staaf said. Boneham said the ensemble's tenor saxophonist Daniel Rotem is from Israel, and as a result, much of his music draws on Middle Eastern folk music.

Boneham said musicians are

also influenced by their previous instructors in addition to their home scene and background, which shows in their work with the ensemble.

Christian Euman, the ensemble's drummer, grew up in Chicago playing in the church, but he studied with influential instructors like Maria Schneider, who caused him to incorporate the big-band tradition into his work, Staaf said.

Each player's background and influences come together when the band refines a player's original composition.

"One player brings in a piece of music that they've composed, which is their idea, their concept, and then it gets workshopped by the group," Boneham said. "The music by nature is inherently collabora-

tive." All the players also have their own strengths, Boneham said. In the past, he has turned to the ensemble's singer, Michael Mayo, to help him write lyrics.

After graduation, the members of the ensemble hope to get back into the jazz scene with more confidence in their artistic visions, Boneham said. Staaf said the institute helped validate her interest in many different styles of music in addition to jazz.

"I feel more at home with myself as a 'jazz plus' musician," Staaf said. "So (my) artistic vision ... is a conversation with other cultures where jazz is the moderator."

Email Nyren at enyren@dailybruin.com.

VIDEO dailybruin.com/video

Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz Performance graduating class speak about their experiences



NICK O'BRIEN/DAILY BRUIN

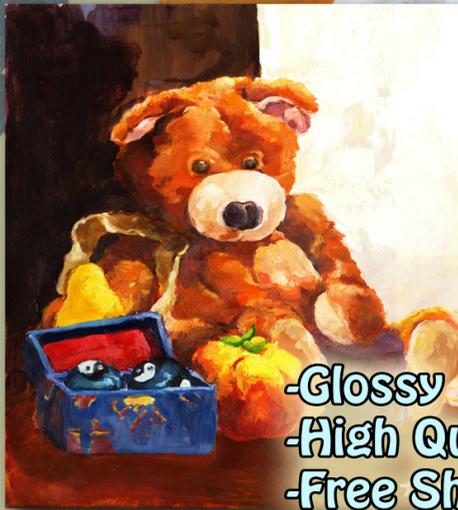
The 2016 graduating class from the prestigious Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz Performance at UCLA's Herb Alpert School of Music spoke to Daily Bruin video about their experience in the program and their plans after graduation.

ROYCE SEBASTIAN BROWN on ETSY.COM

This Contemporary Genre Portraitist and Los Angeles native finally has his prints available for purchase at: [www.Etsy.com!](http://www.Etsy.com)



© Royce Sebastian Brown 2016
All works



**-Glossy
-High Quality
-Free Shipping !!**

-16 x 20" \$19.99

-18 x 24" \$21.99