Xpressions: An Exploration of Culture through Dance

Xpressions is designed to allow students to express their different identities through the arts. The first Xpressions program of the year was aimed at bringing students together to explore the richness and relevance of dance across cultures.

On October 9th, in collaboration with Visceral, BODACIOUS, Scoil Rince, Caribbean Student Association, and Adelante, we were able to bring a mix of dance instructions and dance history to Macalester students. The event was set up to allow each participant a chance to explore three of these groups’ dance traditions.

If you missed the event, do not fear! The Xpressions team got a lot of positive feedback and comments from participants suggesting the event be annual.

Tapas: Re-framing Family

The Tapas Series is a signature program of the Lealtad-Suzuki Center that engages the Macalester community on a variety of pertinent topics.

This semester’s Tapas Series event was titled “Re-framing Family,” and focused on how we define "family" and how being students at Macalester affects relationships with our family. Our guest panelists were Rev. K.P. Hong and Dr. Sonita Sarker. K.P. and Sonita shared their insights about notions of family both conceptually and personally. In the ensuing group discussion, many students shared their own experiences and struggles on the matter.

Thank you to everyone who attended and participated; it was a huge success and we know that the conversations did not end at the conclusion of the event. Keep your eyes out for another Tapas Series event to come in the spring semester!
"What makes us who we are? How can we know one another? How can we make our community a more welcoming place for all?"

These three questions guide the Department of Multicultural Life programming this year as we investigate individual and community identities in relation to social justice.

It is easy to judge someone you do not know. We make assumptions based on appearance, speech, mannerisms, and other surface-level characteristics. But we must realize that these things do not define us; we are not our clothes, our friends, our incomes, our hometowns — we are so much more. Human complexity and depth are not always easy to see, but that does not mean they are not worth uncovering.

This year, the DML is challenging Macalester to reframe discussions of identity so that we recognize human complexity. Identities change, conflict, overlap, and intertwine, and recognizing this intricacy is essential in promoting social justice.

*Just Layers.* We’re more than what is on the outside, and we must explore our layers of identity as we pursue a more just society."
DML Corners!

LSC Issue Areas research current events and policies, locally, nationally and internationally.

Gender & Sexuality
(By Daimon Hardy ’13 and Raynise Cange ’14)

North Carolina joins Minnesota in Gay Marriage Ban
Last month, North Carolina legislators introduced a bill, if approved by voters in 2012, will define marriage as a union between a man and a woman in the state constitution.

Topeka decriminalizes domestic violence
Topeka, Kansas has decriminalized domestic violence. City officials made this decision to save money as they argue that the city cannot afford to try the cases, keep the abusers behind bars, and house victims. By removing the domestic abuse ordinance from its books, the city no longer has to pay the price. The state will bear the cost. This leaves people vulnerable to domestic violence, because the state of Kansas only intervenes when a weapon is involved.

Economic Justice
(By Yuris Martinez ’13 and Wayne Lee ’14)

“We are the 99%”
People all over the United States are coming together to protest the economic injustice held in place by the economic elite that make up 1% of our population, and have helped to create the current economic collapse. The “Occupy Wall Street” movement has now spread to over 100 cities including Minnesota. Some events from OccupyMN in the Twin Cities have included a student-initiated rally at The People’s Plaza and a march to Wells Fargo and TCF Bank.

Religion & Spirituality
(By Jocelyne Cardona ’14)

Multi-Faith Counsel
October 13, 2011
“Complicating Your Faith With Love”
A conversation took place at the CRSL this past month about interfaith relationships, family situations and multiple faith traditions, etc.

Racial/Ethnic/National Identities
(By Gabi Deal-Marquez ’12 and Dadri-Anne Graham ’13)

A doctoral candidate in psychology at MSU suggests that the more a black person identified with being black, the happier the person was with their life as a whole.

Somali and Latino immigrants protest against Wells Fargo for investing in private prison corporations.

"Lost in Detention" highlights the ramifications of the Safe Communities program on immigrant families, paying close attention to the detention and deportation of undocumented immigrants.

A play entitled “My Secret Language of Wishes” will be held at the Mixed Blood Theatre through November. The play explores the meaning of unconditional love without distinctions of race, class and sexual orientation.

By the Lealtad-Suzuki Center’s Program Assistants

The Lealtad-Suzuki Center’s Team
DML Corners!

What’s Up! Emerging Scholars Program

To kick off the Emerging Scholars Program’s Faculty Lecture Series, students in the Emerging Scholars Program, Bonner Scholars Program, and Pluralism & Unity Program all gathered on October 5th, to hear a lecture given by Professor Jane Rhodes.

The lecture centered around scholarship and activism in academia and how they can work together to further the causes of both sides. Following the lecture was a constructive discussion where the students discussed their own personal experiences and shared their stories in navigating the two aspects of academia. Even though I wasn’t a first year like the majority of the other students attending the lecture, I appreciated the opportunity to rethink my focus in college. I was also impressed by many of the insights that other students had to offer, and definitely came away from the lecture with many new ideas and possibilities to consider.

LGBTQ @ Mac

You may have noticed that the DML website has a new look, including some new pages.

The LGBTQ@Mac web page is now located on the DML website, and I’ve been working with Alina Wong to make sure the page is as comprehensive and up to date as possible.

Designed to be a resource for current members of the college community, the site is also a great way for prospective students to find out how Macalester is working to support its lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer community members.

The page is the new home to the Out and Proud faculty and staff list, includes a listing of all single-stall and all gender bathrooms on campus, and also includes information about LGBTQ-friendly spaces, orgs, and events on campus and in the community.

The Department of Multicultural Life led an initiative in the spring of 2011 to convert a number of gendered restrooms on campus to all-gender restrooms. The Kagin Commons lower-level restrooms have now been converted to All Gender restrooms. Look for the sign in the lower level of Kagin and in additional locations around campus over the next year.
What to Look For...

- Tuesdays @ 6:00pm: “In the Kitchen With…” (C-House, 37 Mac St.)
- Thursday, November 3 @ Noon: Soup & Substance—“Teaching for What? Perspectives on Charter School Education” (Kagin Commons, Lower Level)
- Saturday, November 5 @ 8pm: 17th Annual Cultural House Poetry Slam (Cultural House, 37 Mac Street)
- Friday, November 11 @ 7pm: SPEAK! Series “Performance, Expression, and Social Justice” with Sarah Kay (John B. Davis Lecture Hall, Campus Center)
- Saturday, November 12 @ 8pm: Holla Back Café—Hip Hop and American Regions— (Cultural House, 37 Mac Street)
- Thursday, November 17 @ 10am: Allies Project Training Workshop for New Allies (Campus Center, # 215)

DML Contact Information

Christopher MacDonald-Dennis
Dean
Multicultural Life
cmacdona@macalester.edu

Karla Benson Rutten
Director
Lealtad-Suzuki Center
benson@macalester.edu

Alina S. Wong
Assistant Director
Lealtad-Suzuki Center
awong3@macalester.edu

Afifa Benwahoud
Department Coordinator
Multicultural Life
benwahoud@macalester.edu

Sedric McClure
Multicultural Counselor
Macalester Academic Excellence Center
mcclure@macalester.edu

For questions and suggestions, please contact us at x6243, Monday through Friday, 8:00am-4:30pm or email Afifa Benwahoud at benwahoud@macalester.edu.
Web: www.macalester.edu/multiculturalism