

ARTS & HUMANITIES

# Free Thursday evenings? Like theater? Mixed media? Dance?

ArtsThursdays kicks off weekly free events highlighting University arts scene



Museum visitors enjoying Harvard Art Museums at Night in the Calderwood Courtyard.

Photo by Tara Metal

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**B**eginning this week you can start easing into your weekends at ArtsThursdays, a free showcase of Harvard’s vibrant arts scene, from dance and theatrical performances to artist talks and exhibit openings, sponsored by the Harvard University Committee on the Arts.

The first event will take place at the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts and feature an opening reception and discussion of “Please Stay Home,” an exhibition of works by Bronx-born, mixed-media artist Darrel Ellis (1958-1992). In perhaps his best-known work, Ellis experimented with images created by his father, Thomas, a photographer who captured the lively scene in Harlem and the South Bronx in the 1950s and was killed by an act of police brutality shortly before Ellis was born.

“Access to the arts is a portal to possibility and building community,” said Robin Kelsey, dean of arts and humanities, Shirley Carter Burden Professor of Photography, and co-chair of the arts committee, known as HUCA. “At Harvard we have amazing artists and institutions, and we look forward to highlighting them through ArtsThursdays.”



“Harvard’s semesters have always had an abundance of arts of this caliber,” said Sarah M. Whiting, dean of the Graduate School of Design, Josep Lluís Sert Professor of Architecture, and co-chair of HUCA. “By highlighting each Thursday as ArtsThursdays, we hope to gather audiences from across the University as well as the outside community to experience these events, each of which promises to provoke and expand new ways of seeing, hearing, moving, and being in the world.”

A staple of the series will be free access on the final Thursday of each month to the Harvard Art Museums, Harvard Museums of Science and Culture, and the Carpenter Center. This expanded access to the museums was inspired by the popularity of last year’s monthly Harvard Art Museums at Night program.

On Feb. 9, ArtsThursdays will continue with the Harvard Dance Center presenting a workshop, panel discussion, and freestyle battle at the ArtLab in Allston. The event will feature Ashton “Stiggity Stackz” Lites, a Boston freestyle dancer, educator, curator, and community organizer. The event, “Infinite Possibilities Part 1,” is the first in a two-part free series organized by the Harvard Dance Center.

A week later at ArtLab, Valeria Luiselli, award-winning writer and visiting professor of ethnicity, indigeneity, and migration in the English Department, will perform “Echoes from the Borderlands,” a “sonic essay” she has been developing in the ArtLab studios. Luiselli worked with several Mexico-based collaborators on the piece, which blends field recordings with written narration about the U.S.-Mexico borderlands. She will be accompanied by sound artist Ricardo Giraldo.

A.R.T. will provide 200 free tickets to the March 9 performance of “The Wife of Willesden,” the first play by renowned fiction writer Zadie Smith. Adapted from “The Wife of Bath’s Tale” from Geoffrey Chaucer’s “The Canterbury Tales,” Smith’s bawdy, beautiful new production revolves around Jamaica-born Alvita, who regales her companions in an 18th-century London pub with stories of her five marriages, rewriting her mistakes into triumphs and pain into parables.

On April 6, critically acclaimed novelist Tommy Orange will give the Harvard University Native American Program’s (HUNAP) Annual Lecture. Orange’s 2018 debut, “There There,” became a national bestseller that won the PEN/Hemingway Award, the National Book Critics Circle John Leonard Prize, the Center for Fiction First Novel Prize, and the American Book Award.

The following week, Mexican visual artist Abraham Cruzvillegas will deliver the spring 2023 Rouse Visiting Artist Lecture, “Centring: A Definitely Unfinished and Temporary Structure for Art Making,” at the Graduate School of Design. Cruzvillegas will show recent art projects and speak about his diverse approaches to methodology, language, materials, and narratives.

The ArtsThursdays calendar will be continually updated with upcoming HUCA-sponsored programs.

HUCA is a University-wide collaboration, charged with advising the president and provost on developing policies and plans that will enhance the presence of the arts at the University and make the arts a central component of the University’s educational mission.

## Editor's Picks

ARTS

### Plea from 1980s New York: ‘Please Stay Home’

With themes of family history, identity, loss, Darrel Ellis exhibition at Carpenter Center looks back yet feels of the moment

SCIENCE

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Researchers uncover personality traits that guide fashion choices

HEALTH

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Researcher hopes findings signal new treatment option amid surge in mental health cases

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