

Editors Column

Teranga Conference Explores Dance as a Culture



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When most people think of dance, many think of TikTok trends, perfectly timed choreography, or the intense grace of a stage performance. But at the Teranga Conference, held at the iconic Alvin Ailey Studios on June 13 and 14, dance was reframed as something much bigger: a living, breathing archive of who we are. Through two powerful lectures by dance scholars Allan Rocero Gitanes and Careitha Davis, the Teranga Conference challenged attendees to look past the physical steps and see dance as a tool to preserve culture, history, and identity across generations.

Gitanes, a dance educator whose work explores how culture and education collide, started his lecture by focusing on how dancers pass down traditions through movement. Pulling from famous modern techniques like Horton and Dunham, he wasn't just talking about getting the technique right; he was talking about lineage and institutional context. Gitanes challenged the audience to think about how dance carries memory in a way textbooks simply can't. He dropped a question that hung in the air for the rest



Allan Rocero Gitanes gives a lecture, "Dance as Living Archive: Ancestral Knowledge, Decolonial Practice, and Institutional Resistance," at the Teranga Conference.
[Source: Author, Summer Park]

of the day: "How do we teach students to carry culture in their bodies?"

For Gitanes, teaching dance isn't just about running through a routine until it's perfect. It's about saving histories and identities that are at risk of being erased. He didn't mince words about the responsibility teachers have, either,

leaving the room with a quote that stuck with everyone: "The classroom is a sanctuary, or it is a site of assimilation. It cannot be both."

The second half of the day shifted its attention to Careitha Davis, a choreographer and educator who dove deep into the spiritual and historical roots of

the art form. She kicked things off with a quick reality check, flashing photos of influential women in dance history and asking the audience if they could name them—a nod to how easily the pioneers of the field get overlooked.

Davis also pointed out that in many Afro-diasporic traditions, the dance doesn't end when the music stops. Even a simple bow is not for the audience applause—it's a quiet thank-you to the ancestors. She noted that many dancers carry this mindset off the stage, keeping that connection alive even as they pack up their gear and head home to everyday life.

If the Teranga Conference proved anything, it's that dance is the ultimate storyteller. Every weight shift, every gesture, and every beat carries the weight of the people who came before us. For any student trying to understand the intersection of art and identity, the Teranga Conference offered a pretty massive takeaway: a performance isn't just entertainment. It's a way to keep cultural memories alive, one step at a time.

Student Reporter

Getty Center Review: Museum's Building Itself Shines



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Tucked away and overlooking the city of Los Angeles sits The Getty Center, a huge art museum, architectural masterpiece, and free space for everyone to enjoy. I recently had the opportunity to go and was thoroughly pleased with my visit, leaving with not only a few goodies from the gift shop but also some newfound appreciation for architectural design.

The superb experience started before I even arrived at the museum. Since the Getty Center is located on a hill, visitors have to ride the museum's tram to get up to it. Do not worry, though—the tram comes by often, making the journey leisurely with lots of space to appreciate the views. As I stepped out of the tram and into the actual museum, I felt like I was transported into another world.

The standout feature of the Getty Center was the architecture. Immediately, I noticed that all the walls were clad in natural stone, and from the museum's guides, I learned that it is a sedimentary rock called travertine. Formed by layers of soft soil building up and compressing for millions of years, fossils became embedded in the museum's

walls. I appreciated how this design choice made even the walls feel like another mini science museum. The light color of the stone also reflected the natural sunlight beautifully, brightening the entire space. Looking out from various buildings and open spaces also delivered spectacular panoramic views of Los Angeles. I saw a lot of people taking pic-

tures of the scenery and admiring the city from above.

The art inside the museum was fantastic as well. Although many exhibitions were closed when I visited, there were still many interesting and valuable pieces to explore. The most famous one was definitely Vincent Van Gogh's *Irises* (1889). Even



The Getty Center offers amazing panoramic views of Los Angeles where you can relax and take pictures.
[Source: Author, Elizabeth Kim]

though there were a lot of people crowded around the painting, I still appreciated seeing the vibrant colors and his dynamic brushstrokes up close. Seeing the piece in person really allowed me to get a sense of the texture in Van Gogh's work. The underrated side of having everyone gathered over to that painting, though, was that it left a lot of space for the other ones in that room. I used this opportunity to examine more artworks, including those of another famous artist, Claude Monet.

Aside from paintings, there was a great variety of ancient Greek and Roman statues. It was captivating to see the technical skill displayed in every one of these creations, and it made me appreciate the long, hard work of the creative process it must have taken so many years ago. There were also some distinguished modern statues scattered alongside the beautiful open spaces of the museum.

Whether you want to appreciate some beautiful architecture or view famous works of art, the Getty Center is definitely worth a visit with its zero-dollar ticket fee.

Student Reporter

Canada Rises to the Global Soccer Stage



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When thinking of Canada, one might envision maple leaves or ice hockey. In June 2026, however, Canada became iconic for another reason: soccer. On June 18, Canada won their first-ever men's FIFA World Cup match in an astounding 6-0 win against Qatar.

Canada automatically qualified for the games this year because they were one of the co-hosts of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, along with the U.S.A. and Mexico. This was a significant moment for Canada to redeem their reputation as a soccer nation, given that they had only qualified twice in the past and had never won a World Cup match before. However, times are changing, and soccer is quickly gaining popularity in Canada amongst the youth. Paulo Senra, the Chief Communications and Content Officer of Canada Soccer, explained in an article at canadasoccer.com that soccer is one of Canada's "Strongest and fastest-growing opportunities to engage and inspire young people" due to its lower financial barriers and safe, inclusive environments. Thus, the FIFA World Cup 2026 presented an amazing opportunity to further boost participation in the sport.



Fifty percent of Canadian youth participate in soccer, making it Canada's most widely played sport amongst children.
[Source: Author, Evalyn Yu]

As fans from all across the world flocked to Toronto and Vancouver to watch World Cup games, Canada's team faced heightened expectations to bring home wins on home soil, and their team rose to the occasion.

Their diverse team set the example that anyone, no matter their country of origin or their immigrant status, can play at the highest levels of sports.

Canada's first FIFA World Cup

match win on June 18 set off a domino effect of success. Despite midfielder Ismael Kone devastatingly breaking his leg during the game, Canada's team stayed resilient, cruising to a 6-0 win over Qatar. Although Canada lost their next match 2-1 to Switzerland, they still secured a position in the knockout round for the first time in history. After a 1-0 win over South Africa, Canada advanced yet again to the round of 16. Canada's victory was described as "The day that changed the course of the sport across the nation, one that saw a new generation of fans take soccer into their hearts," according to ESPN reporter Beth Lindop.

Canada's run ended on July 4 with a loss to Morocco, but one defeat could not diminish what the team had already accomplished. Throughout the World Cup, Canadian fans witnessed exhilarating games that defied the status quo and cemented the nation's emergence as a soccer powerhouse. Regardless of the outcome, Canada had already made history—by reshaping expectations, inspiring a new generation of fans, and proving Canadian excellence.

Editors Column

Finding My Way Back to Korean



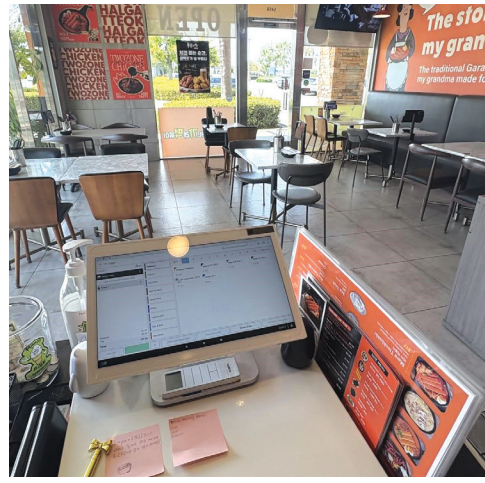
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“영어가 더 편하세요?”

With this single question, I knew that the customer had caught on to my broken Korean. I froze and stuttered, unsure of how to respond. Growing up as a Korean American in Southern California, I had always identified as Korean and certainly looked like one, but I never realized how much of the language and culture I lost until I started working at a Korean restaurant situated within a deeply rooted Korean community.

Although I have lived in the United States all my life, my Korean-speaking skills were not always this rusty. When I was young, my family and I lived with my grandparents for nearly two years, where Korean was the only language I heard at home, in daycare, and in everyday conversations. My first real exposure to English was when I moved to Fullerton and began school there. I struggled to understand my peers, but as I adjusted to the new lingo and formed friendships with classmates from different backgrounds, English replaced Korean in my daily life.

After eleven years in American public schools, I never really needed to speak Korean because no one around me did, and even my parents were fluent in English. I still



Author Emily Lee's point of view from the register that overlooks the Halgatteok restaurant. [Source: Author, Emily Lee]

took Korean courses in middle and high school, but those classes were too surface-level for me to realize that my vocabulary had shrunk significantly, and that my pronunciation and ability to keep up in regular conversations had faded. Therefore, when I was asked about my Korean-speaking skills during my job interview, I blindly expressed my confidence in understanding and saying basic phrases.

My first few shifts were not the smoothest. As a server for Halgatteok, a spicy rice cake shop, my job is to seat customers, serve food,

and clean the store. The most immediate challenge was engaging with the people around me, as the majority of customers, as well as my coworkers, all spoke Korean to each other. When a customer would walk in, I would barely be able to greet them without feeling self-conscious of my clear American accent and noticeable lack of confidence. Taking phone orders made me anxious because I frantically tried to keep up and translate in my head while the customer rapidly blurted out their order, causing me to sometimes forget or add an

item. I also struggled opening up to my coworkers at first because although they can speak English, Korean was the language they naturally used with each other, and I was worried that talking in English would burden them or make conversations feel less natural.

Despite these early struggles and insecurities, I channeled my frustrations into improvement by reviewing Korean phrases and practicing them before my shifts. I also tried my best to be helpful around the restaurant, and I am fortunate to have workmates who have taught me useful expressions and encouraged me. Tasks that once seemed overwhelming became a part of my routine. I no longer panic every time the phone rings, and I am becoming better at welcoming customers and answering their questions.

Currently reflecting, I initially applied to this job simply for a paycheck and to be more productive this summer. Unexpectedly, I walked away with something much more meaningful: a newfound confidence in myself. It has only been about a month since my first shift, but I am motivated by how much more there is to learn and excited by the opportunity to continue reconnecting with the Korean community.

Student Reporter

The World Cup and the Legacy of a Wholesome Bond



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In the game of soccer, fans support their countries, wear their colors, and cheer on their teams for ninety minutes. They are devoted to their team and fiercely defend their country until the very end, although sometimes there can be an unlikely relationship like that of Mexico and South Korea. What started as a desperate match became one of the most endearing and cross-cultural connections throughout World Cup and sports history.

This brotherhood did not come out of nowhere, but rather a match of the World Cup Russia 2018, on June 27. Mexico had played very well early on, but suffered a loss to Sweden in their final group stage match. In order to move on to the round of sixteen, Mexico was desperately relying on a heavily unfavored team, South Korea, to defeat or at least draw with the reigning World Cup champions of the time, Germany. Defying all expectations, the South Korean team pulled off a 2-0 victory and eliminated Germany, sending Mexico to the round of 16 while not advancing themselves. The reaction of Mexican fans was extremely joyous



A shot of Korean and Mexican fans gathering to watch a World Cup game together in their neighborhood. [Source: Author, Paisley Park]

and thankful to the Koreans, and not only did they celebrate in their community, but they marched to the South Korean embassy in Mexico City. The fans brought tequila, waved Korean flags, and lifted the Korean Consul General, Han Byung-jin, onto their shoulders and paraded the streets. From that day on, a new phrase was created: “Coreano, hermano, ya eres mexicano!”, which trans-

lates from Spanish to “Korean brother, you are now Mexican!” Since then, that friendship has stayed intact between the two fanbases, and has only blossomed for the later World Cups.

Though these two cultures seem vastly different, Korean fans have since been embraced by Mexican fans. Rather than being hostile to one another, many

Koreans who find themselves in larger Mexican fan crowds are joyfully accepted and celebrated. This bond is not just a temporary trend, but a true cultural connection built on years of mutual respect. With many matches being hosted across areas in North America, South Korea has played games in Mexico as well, such as in Guadalajara. In these matches, there were not just Korean fans, but local Mexican fans attending to cheer on their South Korean brothers with the same respect they had on June 27.

In an era where sports and sports fans tend to be opposed to other teams, the bond between Mexico and South Korea showcases what the World Cup is truly about. It highlights that sports can connect countries from across the world, across language barriers and cultures as well. Ultimately, this brotherhood has continually transcended traditional rivalries and turned strangers into best friends over one match in Russia. In a world that often can feel divided, this alliance serves as a reminder that the world's game of soccer brings fans and countries together.

Student Reporter

Music For Sharing: Musicians Perform at Carnegie Hall



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For young musicians, performing at Carnegie Hall can feel like a dream. This June, members of the nonprofit Music For Sharing were able to turn their dream into a reality after earning recognition through the American Association for Development of the Gifted and Talented competition. In a moment where talented student performers from the nonprofit organization came together, a memorable set on one of the world's most respected stages was created.

Music For Sharing, a student-founded nonprofit dedicated to improving lives through music, has helped to serve communities in healing through the arts. Through concerts at hospitals, senior living facilities, community centers, and charitable events, the organization has worked to make music accessible to people who may not otherwise have opportunities to experience live performances. In addition to performing, the club has also organized fundraisers in collaboration with local organizations in order to bring people together across different communities.

The nonprofit's commitment to service has enabled young mu-



Music For Sharing members pose in front of Carnegie Hall before their June 14 performance in New York City. [Source: Author, Halyn Kim]

sicians to grow in their artistic abilities and in a deeper sense of how sound and song can truly help other people's lives. Performing at Carnegie Hall was not only a big milestone for the organization, but also a reminder of the dedication, teamwork, and community spirit Music For Sharing has been working towards since its founding. For each individual musician, it became a chance to show years of hard work while representing an organization that is built around the belief that music can heal and connect people from all aspects of life.

As someone who took part



A Music For Sharing student practices on the piano at Carnegie Hall during the June 14 concert. [Source: Author, Halyn Kim]

in the performance, I can say that walking into Carnegie Hall was an unforgettable experience. The historic venue has a level of prestige that immediately stands out, even before I could start thinking about sound checks. From rehearsal on to the final show, a charged feeling could be felt and was shared by all of the performers. Months of preparation had been building up to this, and everyone seemed ready to make the most of the opportunity and stage.

On top of that, New York City had its own kind of electricity running through it. The night

before the performance, the New York Knicks had won the NBA Championship. The celebration was not quiet, and the buzz could be felt in the streets and in the conversations happening around the city. The excitement from fans, plus the overall upbeat mood, made the lead-up to the event feel even more intense.

For Music For Sharing, the Carnegie Hall performance was a celebration of the dedication and growth that music can create. For those who performed, it was an experience that will remain a highlight of their musical journeys for years to come.