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Dawn of New Era in the Arts at the University

Staff Report

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Dawn of New Era in the Arts at the University

New institute shines a light on creative arts on campus and beyond

SEPTEMBER 18, 2022 BY STAFF REPORT

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Pianist Bruce Levingston is set to perform Sept. 22 at the Gertrude C. Ford Center for the Performing Arts to celebrate the creation of the University of Mississippi Institute for the Arts. Photo by Michael Poliza

OXFORD, Miss. – Pianist Bruce Levingston and special guest artists will give the first performance in celebration of the **University of Mississippi Institute for the Arts** at 7:30 p.m. Thursday (Sept. 22) in the Gertrude C. Ford Center for the Performing Arts.

Levingston and other distinguished artists are honoring the new organization being created to highlight and support the university’s **Department of Art and Art History**, **Department of Music** and **Department of Theatre and Film**.

“I am grateful to world-renowned pianist Bruce Levingston for his commitment to the arts and his generosity in performing the Sept. 22 ‘Dawn of the Arts’ concert in celebration of the University of Mississippi’s Institute for the Arts,” said Nancy Maria Balach, chair of the music department and director of the institute.

“The evening will feature music, theater, film, sculpture and visual arts, all curated by Bruce Levingston. There has never been a better time to experience and explore the arts at UM.”

The new institute has been made possible by a generous donation from longtime supporters of the university, alumni Jan and Lawrence Farrington. Other major donors are also pledging to promote it.

“It is a particular pleasure to perform here since this evening is the opening concert of the 20th anniversary season of the beautiful Ford Center for the Performing Arts,” said Levingston, the chancellor’s artist-in-residence for the **Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College** and holder of the Lester Glenn Fant Chair. “The university has long been home to some of the finest creative artists in the country and continues to be a preeminent center of study for art, music, theater and film.

“The new institute will be a significant catalyst for the arts. The arts programs are just extraordinary at the university, thanks to the esteemed professors and talented students who come here. The arts are thriving and growing here now more than ever. We will celebrate this exciting era in our arts programs with performances of Handel, Schubert, Chopin, Debussy, Rachmaninoff and more.”

Levingston often has been invited to perform in notable venues around the world, said Lee M. Cohen, dean of the **College of Liberal Arts**.

“As such, this concert will be a special opportunity for friends of the university, as well as members of the Oxford community, to see one of the world’s most highly regarded pianists perform locally,” Cohen said. “It is an honor to have him perform for us while also shining a light on the wonderful arts programs

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Campus Briefs

Donations Sought for 25th Annual Books and Bears Program

OXFORD, Miss. – The University of Mississippi is asking the community to help spread a little joy this holiday season by donating to the 25th annual Books and Bears program. Donations such as toys, books, dolls, bicycles and other children’s play items are being accepted through Dec. 14. All donations will be collected and sorted

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Thank You To Our Donors

Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship Aims to Build Leaders

OXFORD, Miss. – Twenty-five inaugural recipients of the Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship – a program hosted by the University of Mississippi School of Education in partnership with the Mississippi Association of Coaches and the Mississippi High School Activities Association – are expected to increase their impact on student-athletes and their communities. The coaching fellowship

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Ole Miss In the News

Clarion-Ledger: New Essay Collection Tells the Story of Meredith’s Enrollment

Essays celebrate 60th anniversary of James Meredith’s enrollment at University of Mississippi By Lauren Rhoades Oct. 1 marks the 60th anniversary of James Meredith’s 1962 enrollment at the University of Mississippi as the school’s first African-American student.

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A native of the Mississippi Delta, Livingston has long championed the state’s artists. Even while playing regularly at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center and the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, the pianist never loses sight of his home.

His 2015 book, “Bright Fields: The Mastery of Marie Hull,” highlights the distinguished painter’s sensitivity to her home state’s rich but complex history. His 2019 album, “Citizen,” includes works by Mississippi-born composers C. Price Walden and William Grant Still.

Livingston’s solo albums are acclaimed by critics, and he is one of the most frequently streamed classical recording artists in the world, with more than 11 million plays on Spotify, Apple Music and YouTube.

His album “Heavy Sleep” was named one of the “Best Classical Recordings of the Year” by The New York Times, which called the recording “exquisite.” All About The Arts noted: “Bruce Livingston’s magisterial playing of this music reaffirms his position as one of America’s great pianists.”

“Bruce Livingston’s phenomenal talent and countless successes are an immense source of pride for the university and our entire state,” Chancellor Glenn Boyce said. “We are so grateful for his role as an ambassador for the arts in Mississippi and as a vital member of our campus community.

“Having one of the cultural greats of Mississippi and our nation, who continues to bring teaching excellence and national stature to Ole Miss, significantly enhances the learning opportunities and life-changing experiences we offer our students.”

Tickets to “Dawn of the Arts” are \$40, \$30 and \$20, available at the [UM Box Office](#) or by calling 662-915-7411.

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“James Meredith: Breaking the Barrier,” a collection of essays edited by UM professor of journalism Kathleen Wickham, honors this historic milestone with

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