



IDEAS Event: Measuring the Dream



Guest Speaker: Victoria Petrovich,
Yolande Snaith, Ryan Welsh

Date: October 20th, 2016

Time: 5pm-7pm

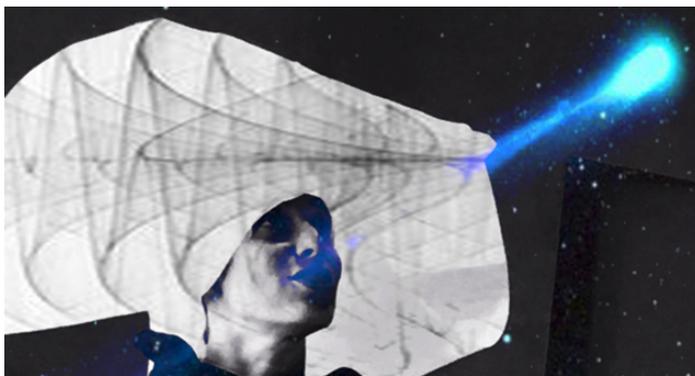
Location: Calit2 Theater, Atkinson
Hall, UC San Diego

Host: Shahrokh Yadegari,
Director, IDEAS

ABSTRACT:

In the 2016-2017 season of the Initiative for Digital Exploration of Arts and Sciences (IDEAS), three artists present *Measuring the Dream* in the Calit2 Theater, Atkinson Hall. The three include production designer and UC San Diego design faculty member Victoria Petrovich, UC San Diego dance faculty member Yolande Snaith as artistic director and choreographer, and UC San Diego Ph.D. student and composer Ryan Welsh.

The production of *Measuring the Dream* is based on text, choreography, music and the visual world from the tragic life of Sor Juana Inez De La Cruz and her written works, in particular *The Dream*. "The poetic landscape of images, emotions and the feminine philosophy that her work expresses provide a rich, universal and timeless theme for this multimedia production," says production designer Petrovich who has previously been involved in Qualcomm Institute performances (including Prof. Mark Dresser's *Telematic* concerts, *Crossing Boundaries* with Shahrokh Yadegari, and the opera workshop for *Lilith* with Anthony Davis and Allan Havis, which was part of the IDEAS series). "This remarkable young Mexican woman of the 17th century lived her entire life in the closed, authoritarian society that was the colonial empire of New Spain, and displayed an extraordinary independence of spirit for a woman living in such a male-dominated society. The Mexican Church effectively silenced Sor Juana because of the provocative and controversial nature of her writing. Clearly a feminist ahead of her time, her philosophical, theological and creative writings were rediscovered by women scholars at the beginning of the 20th century. Sor Juana is now recognized as a true genius, a visionary, and a feminist symbol. Her sonnets have been hailed alongside such masters as Shakespeare, Quevedo and Donne."



Measuring the Dream draws on work, including the book "The Dream", by Sister Juana Inez De La Cruz

In *The Dream* Sor Juana enters into a fantastical confrontation with her own questions concerning the meaning of existence and the nature of the universe.

Through sleep and dreaming she journeys through a landscape of powerful metaphorical and symbolic images that ascend to the very peak of her imagined obelisk, but then she falls without attaining understanding. Upon waking she is renewed and filled with wonder. The structure and content of this poem provides a potent and multidimensional field of possibilities for creative exploration, and the evolution of a unique, vivid and transformative performance experience. "This project will be a multidimensional synthesis of visual imagery, sound, text and choreography," notes artistic director and choreographer Yolande Snaith. "The collaborative team aims to create a poetic synthesis between our respective disciplines through the integration of dance, music, text, voice and visual design, in order to merge the essence of Sor Juana's unique, historic voice with the invention of a new, highly contemporary artistic language using the new technologies at the Qualcomm Institute."

In addition to production designer Victoria Petrovich and artistic director and choreographer Yolande Snaith, composer Ryan Welsh is partnering with them on the project. Welsh is working on his Ph.D. in music (composition) at UC San Diego. "In contrast to the rambling and ever-unfolding nature of the text by Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, the musical score will emphasize the spoken text as a unified sonic object, alongside other processed and manipulated vocal sounds," explains Welsh. "The Qualcomm Institute's black-box Theater provides the opportunity to surround the audience in an immersive and evolving sonic landscape. The audience will travel into the imaginative writings of Sor Juana through the narrow and claustrophobia-inducing cloisters of her native Mexican convent and arrive at the expansive universe of the sister's mind."

SPEAKER BIO:

YOLANDE SNAITH, Dance Faculty in UC San Diego Theatre & Dance department, trained in theatre and dance at Dartington College of Arts, UK, graduating in 1983. Over the past 30 years she has been performing, choreographing and teaching internationally, winning several awards including Digital Dance, Time Out/Dance Umbrella, Barclays new Stages and Bonnie Bird Choreography Awards. In 1990 Snaith formed her own company with financial support from the Arts Council of England; Yolande Snaith Theatredance produced 11 full-length works, touring throughout the UK and to international venues and festivals in 18 countries. In 1998 *Blind Faith* won the Prix D'auteur du Conseil Generale de la Seine-Saint-Denise. Throughout her career Snaith's choreography has been commissioned by dance, theatre, opera, film and television companies, including the English National Opera, 3 Birmingham Dance Exchange, Transitions Dance Company, Ricochet Dance Company, The Verve, BBC and Channel 4 Television. In 1997 Snaith created the choreography for Stanley Kubrick's final film *Eyes Wide Shut*. She joined the faculty of Theatre and Dance at UC San Diego in 2002. Since its inception in 2006 IMAGOmoves has created six full-length dance theatre works and several shorter pieces, including large group site-specific events in urban city locations, to intimate smaller group and solo work presented in a range of venues, from the Hungarian State Theatre of Cluj, Romania, to San Diego's alternative performance spaces such as SUSHI Visual and Performing Arts and Space4art. Recent projects include: *Ruins True* (2010 - 2011), a dance theatre collective creation between theatre director Gabor Tompa, co-performer/choreographers Yolande Snaith, Liam Clancy and Mary Reich, composer Shahrokh Yadegari, and scenic/projection designer Ian Wallace. Inspired by the work of Samuel Beckett, *Ruins True* toured to international theatre festivals in Romania, Hungary and Avignon, France. In 2012 Snaith was commissioned to choreograph a re-creation of *Ruins True* with performers from the Hungarian State Theatre of Cluj, Romania, and the piece (*Ruins True Refuge*) is now performed regularly as part of the company's repertoire, touring to international theatre festivals. *One Hundred Feet* (2011-13) was a full-length multimedia solo work choreographed and performed by Snaith, created in collaboration with video artist Natalia

Valerdi, sound designer Nick Drashner and lighting designer Wen-Ling Liao, presented at UAG San Diego, Space4art San Diego and the UCSD Department of Theatre and Dance's 'Dance Series'. <http://yolandesnaith.com/>

VICTORIA PETROVICH, a design faculty member in the UC San Diego Theatre and Dance department, is a production designer working in scenic, costume and projection design. She has collaborated with such artists as Luis Valdez, Bill Irwin, Ben Krywosz, Anne Bogart, David Schweizer, Tim Dang, Jose Luis

Valenzuela, and Robert Castro. Her works have been produced internationally at the Singapore Repertory Theatre, International Opera Theater in Italy, and regionally at the Roundabout Theatre, Music Theatre Group's St. Clemens Church, The Mark Taper Forum, Santa Monica Museum, The Hammer Museum, Minneapolis Children's Theater, Minnesota Opera, LA Opera, Nautilus Musical Theater, The Alley Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, South Coast Repertory Theater, EastWest Players, and San Diego Repertory Theater. Recent collaboration with Yolande Snaith was *The Mapping Games 2/Soma Lux* at the White Box, Liberty Station. Previous projects in the Qualcomm Institute include *Telematic* concerts with professors Mark Dresser (UCSD) and Michael Dessen (UCI), the opera workshop for *Lilith* (Anthony Davis, Allan Havis) supported by IDEAS and COR, and multiple public performances with the interdisciplinary student-faculty research group, *Crossing Boundaries*, led by Shahrokh Yadegari.
www.victoriapetrovich.com

RYAN WELSH is a San Diego-based composer, theorist and arranger at UC San Diego, where he is working toward a Ph.D. in music composition, mentored by Pulitzer Prize winner Roger Reynolds. Welsh graduated with honors from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music in 2008 and received his M.A. from UC San Diego in 2010. He has studied composition with Lewis Neilson, David Smooke and Rebecca Saunders. Welsh has also worked with many other composers, including Harrison Birtwistle and Helmut Lachenmann. Beside his active pursuits of original composition, Welsh has been teaching and sharing his passions for music since 2004, seeking ways to engage young musicians in theoretical listening, aural training, and creative musical interpretation.
<http://www.ryanwelshcomposer.com/>

MORE INFORMATION:

All performances in the IDEAS series are open to the public and free of charge.