



Dear Friends of Wake the Arts,

This has been an **exceptional semester** for the arts at Wake Forest University — one marked by creativity, collaboration, and a renewed sense of purpose across our disciplines. From the studios and stages within Scales Fine Arts Center to venues across campus and the wider community, our students and faculty have continued to model the vibrancy, ingenuity, and humanistic spirit that define the arts at Wake Forest.

Amid this rich landscape, it was a privilege this semester to highlight the work of the Wake Forest University Choirs. In addition to their semester collaborative concert entitled, “In Every Corner Sing,” the choirs hosted their second alumni reunion, drawing nearly forty former members back to campus for a weekend of renewed friendship and vibrant music-making. The culminating concert, co-directed with Dr. Brian Gorelick — who served Wake Forest with distinction for 36 years before retiring in 2020 — became a moving tribute to the enduring legacy of choral artistry at Wake Forest.

What made the weekend particularly meaningful was the generational connection it fostered. Our current Chamber Choir rehearsed and performed alongside returning alumni, witnessing firsthand how deeply choral music continues to shape the lives of graduates who have gone on to careers in and beyond music. Their return affirmed what so many of us know well: that the

relationships forged through song, discipline, and shared artistry often last a lifetime.

The semester concluded, as it has for more than six decades, with our beloved **Lovefeast** — an annual celebration that remains one of the most cherished expressions of Wake Forest's *Pro Humanitate* mission. Featuring our student choirs and instrumentalists, the service once again invited our community into a moment of shared warmth, gratitude, and human connection through music, Moravian buns and coffee, and candlelight.

As we enter this holiday season, we find ourselves with much to celebrate and even more for which to be grateful. To our supporters — parents, alumni, friends, and partners — your belief in the arts strengthens our mission to educate the whole person and to embody *Pro Humanitate* in all that we do. Thank you for encouraging us toward excellence and for ensuring that the arts at Wake Forest remain a source of inspiration, transformation, and hope.

From all of us who represent the many facets of the arts at Wake Forest University, we extend our warmest wishes for a joyful holiday season. Season's greetings, Merry Christmas, and may the coming year be filled with peace, creativity, and renewed human connection.

Best,

Chris Gilliam

Director of Choral Activities
Assistant Professor of Music



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What's Happening



Wrapping up Fall Semester with Wake the Arts!

Happy holidays from Wake the Arts! Enjoy this visual encapsulation of our vibrant and art-filled semester to get a taste of some of the excitement and energy around the arts on campus this Fall. See you in the new year!

[View Fall 2025 with Wake the Arts](#)

“Inter Alia: North Carolina Trees” in the New York Review of Books

“**Inter Alia**” combined music, poetry, ecology and dance in a one-of-a-kind collaboration. Acclaimed poet Ishion Hutchinson wrote a poem about the trees he experienced at Wake Forest. This poem has now been featured in *The New York Review of Books*.



[Read the poem](#)

Coming Up Soon



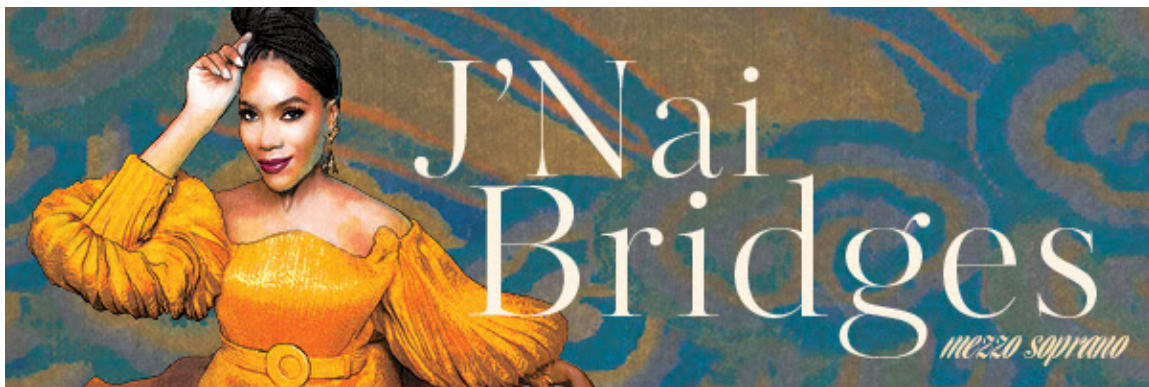
Buy student art for the holidays at stArt Gallery

On view through Dec. 19

stArt gallery, Reynolda Village

Let it Show is a celebratory exhibition at stArt gallery at the end of every fall semester. The show features student works from class assignments to personal projects in a variety of media.

[Learn more](#)



Secrest Artists Series: J'Nai Bridges, mezzo soprano

Thursday, Feb. 5, 2026 @ 7:30 p.m.

Brendle Recital Hall, Scales Fine Arts Center

Two time Grammy Award-winning American mezzo-soprano J'Nai Bridges, known for her “plush-voiced mezzo-soprano” (*The New York Times*), and “calmly commanding stage presence” (*The New Yorker*) has been “marked out at an early stage as a singer headed for top flight” (*Financial Times*), gracing the world’s leading operatic and concert stages “with a voice both voluptuous and statuesque” (*The New York Times*).

Ms. Bridges’ concert at Wake Forest will be an all-French program featuring works by composers such as Ravel, Bizet, Chausson, Duparc, Berlioz, and

Debussy.

Join us at 6 p.m. in Scales M201 for a pre-concert gathering to celebrate new faculty members, hosted by Wake the Arts.

[Read more](#)

Afrofuturism: From Sun Ra to Wakanda

BLACK PANTHER (2018)

Saturday, Feb. 7, 2026 @ 2 p.m.

Brendle Recital Hall, Scales Fine Arts Center

Free Screening (**RSVP**)

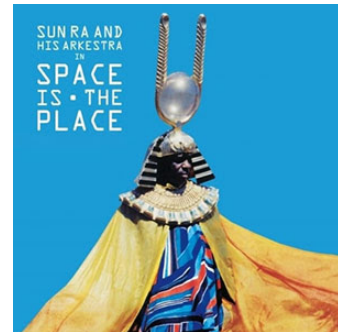


SPACE IS THE PLACE (1974)

Thursday, Feb. 12, 2026 @ 6 p.m.

a/perture cinema

Tickets \$15



“Afrofuturism: From Sun Ra to Wakanda” is a two-part film series exploring the influential genre through screenings and panel discussions of *Space is the Place* (1974) and *Black Panther* (2018). This collaboration between a/perture cinema and Wake Forest University will bridge academic and community audiences to illuminate the enduring power and cultural significance of Afrofuturism. We invite you to engage in conversations that connect these two landmark films, showcasing the movement’s evolution and its ongoing relevance in arts, culture, and society. All are welcome.

[Read more](#)

Who’s Making Things Happen

Why We Support Wake the Arts: Ryan and Cindy Schwarz

On December 7, prior to the beloved Lovefeast tradition in Wait Chapel, Ryan and Cindy Schwarz (P '26, P '29) hosted a reception for families and special guests of our remarkable choir. They offered their perspectives on the impact of the choral program and all that inspired them to make a transformative gift to elevate the Tour endowment started several years ago by Frank and Kathy Bragg ('61, P '88, '90, '93, '97, GP '20, '23, '24, '25, '27).



We've established an endowment, complementing the inspiring Thane McDonald Fund established by Frank and Kathy Bragg, to support the annual choral Tour and to invite other families and alumni to support it as well. We've seen first hand the wonderful impact touring has had on our daughter Marley (class of 2026) and her fellow choir members and friends.

In her words, "Tour is, without a doubt, the experience that turns our group from friends into a family. While we naturally get very close rehearsing frequently throughout the week, the shared moments of touring bond our choir in an inexplicable way. Tour is the unique space in which we are traveling together, sharing incredible meals, seeing new places, and getting to make music together, which above all is our favorite thing to do. Everyone who goes on tour is approaching the week with the same passion for the craft that allows what we sing to be that much better. It absolutely shapes our ensemble in terms of sound and allows us to sing with so much more unity in our voices."

As parents, we love the honor that representing Wake Forest both nationally and internationally gives to the Chamber Choir, and we are inspired to help the students, who make such a significant commitment to it, embrace the experience each year without financial concerns.

We hope others who recognize the impact the choral experience has on Wake Forest students and how it empowers them to represent Wake Forest on campus and in cities nationally and internationally, might consider joining us in supporting the choir, the Tour program and in helping to showcase the beautiful collective talent of these Wake Forest students led by Dr. Chris Gilliam.

— Ryan and Cindy Schwarz (P '26, P '29)

Katharine McEnery Pittman ('07) uses Theatre to bring history to life

Katharine McEnery Pittman ('07) teaches visitors to Colonial Williamsburg about the independent wife of George Washington. “I use the lessons of the theatre department at Wake Forest every single day, whether researching abilities, writing abilities, education, talking with children or adults, or just basic history,” she says.

She credits Professor of Acting and Directing Cindy Gendrich, also department chair, and Professor of Acting Brook Davis ('90, P '23), saying her career is built on what she learned from them and other faculty members.



[Read more](#)

The shepherd of Robinhood Road

“Seeking Pasture” is a social practice project, movie, and art installation by Professor Art Joel Tauber about our relationships to our yards, our ecosystems, and the species who live here with us. Tauber asks questions about the grass in his yard and in that of his neighbors. You may have seen him and his urban flock around town! Read more about this project in WFU News.

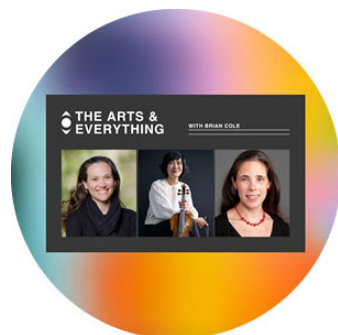


[WFU News article](#)

[View the photostory](#)

The Arts & Your Brain: podcast episode

What do the arts actually do to the brain? In the second episode of UNCSA’s podcast “The Arts & Everything,” Dr. Christina Hugenschmidt, Christina Soriano and Grammy-winning violinist Jennifer Koh speak with UNCSA Chancellor Brian Cole to explore how music and dance shape memory, movement and cognition. From Jennifer’s recovery after a concussion to new research on the optimal “dose” of dance, this episode offers a fascinating look at the



growing science behind creativity and brain health.

Listen to “The Arts & Your Brain”



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