

Coming to an arts 'neighborhood' near you

Wolfe Center for the Arts

BGSU HAS THE POWER TO TRANSFORM LIVES. And not just on campus. With our talented faculty and students, we have the opportunity—and responsibility—to reach beyond our University borders to improve the well-being of people and communities throughout Ohio.

“With the new Wolfe Center for the Arts, BGSU has a tremendous opportunity to build on its history of service to the community and enrich the lives of Ohio’s citizens. Engaging the community has become a campus-wide priority, with a focus on using our wonderful intellectual, human, technical and physical resources to improve Ohio’s economic, educational, social and cultural climate,” explains Dr. Richard Kennell, dean of the College of Musical Arts.

The Wolfe Center for the Arts will be the new home of the Department of Theatre and Film. It will also be a communal facility for the arts at BGSU—from talks and performances by visiting artists to presentations by faculty and students, from the showcasing of traditional art to the latest explorations in digital design. Within this environment, the center will assume a central role in realizing the University’s vision to:

- Research, develop and market new ideas and technologies—with the latest technology for digital art, design and film production.
- Improve primary and secondary students’ academic achievement—by providing opportunities for primary and secondary students to participate in the arts, supporting teachers’ efforts to develop curricula that incorporate the arts and enhancing instruction for BGSU students who aspire to the teaching profession.
- Foster innovation, creativity and the entrepreneurial spirit—with public space for theatrical performances, music recitals, poetry readings, exhibitions and workshops as well as visits from distinguished artists.
- Develop an appreciation for the arts—with an open invitation for the public to interact, connect and engage with the arts.

Encompassing the existing buildings of the College of Musical Arts and the School of Art, this new arts “neighborhood” will position the arts physically and symbolically at the heart of the BGSU experience.

Perrysburg residents Frederic D. and Mary T. '68 Wolfe and the Wolfe Family Charitable Foundation have announced a lead gift to support the Wolfe Center for the Arts. Their gift will help provide for an emerging architect to create a landmark facility on the Bowling Green campus for students, faculty and the community. More details will appear in the summer issue.



“It will be a wonderful new arts neighborhood with no barriers to the community. In one visit, people may see a theatrical performance, attend a poetry recital, view a gallery exhibit and participate in a costume design workshop—all with an ease of transportation and facility design that is welcoming and sustainable,” says Dr. Katerina Rüedi Ray, director of the School of Art.

Dr. Ronald Shields, chair of the Department of Theatre and Film, agrees with Ray, further explaining, “In addition to the wonderful arts opportunities made available to the community, this neighborhood setting will allow BGSU faculty and students to think and work more collaboratively. For example, perhaps as an arts neighborhood we could present an examination of the Holocaust. Musical arts students could sing Yiddish folk songs, Department of Theatre and Film students could perform the *Diary of Anne Frank*, digital arts students could produce a digital video presentation and fine arts students could create paintings, drawings and etchings that convey their feelings about the Holocaust. What a powerful experience this would be for our students and faculty as well as for the visiting community.”

With groundbreaking anticipated during the next year, the Wolfe Center for the Arts will offer new possibilities for BGSU and Ohio’s citizens. ■

—Terri Carroll '88

If you are interested in learning more about the center or contributing to the building fund, please contact the Office of Development, 419-372-2424.



Daniel Williams

Filmmaker brings experience to teaching role

“I have to make films. If I do nothing else, I must make films.” Daniel Williams, assistant professor in BGSU’s Department of Theatre and Film, regards his teaching position as a kind of filmmaker-in-residence. “I bring real-world experience in all phases of independent film production to my students—from scriptwriting, casting, directing, cinematography and editing, on through to raising money, marketing and distribution.”

Williams began making his own films in high school. “I come from a talented family nurtured by supportive parents,” he recalls. “They encouraged all of us—my brother, three sisters and me—to explore the creative and performing arts. But it was seeing George Lucas’ *Star Wars* that sparked my interest in the actual filmmaking process.”

After two years of working full time while pursuing film studies on his own, Williams, who earned both a B.A. and an M.F.A. from Howard University in Washington, D.C., decided to attend an African-American university and ultimately to make films about African-Americans.

“African-American cinema today lacks stories about how we individually live, struggle and survive,” Williams states. “Two major influences on my storylines are directors Charles Burnett, an independent African-American filmmaker who has worked in film and television; and especially John Cassavetes, whose films illustrate the difficulties people have trying to love each other.”

Williams has completed five films which have garnered numerous awards including Best of Show in the Washington, D.C., Rosebud Film Festival and Best Experimental Film in the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame. With two more films currently in production, three story ideas in the planning phase and his teaching schedule, the prolific young filmmaker and professor is well on his way to achieving his stated career objective, “...to teach in a challenging environment where I can explore cinematic ideas and help others create visual images that inspire the soul and feed the mind.” ■

—Virginia Clarke