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I.V. Arts Program Goes Academic

By Bill Schlotter

Catherine Cole is a firm believer in the transformative power of art. The UC Santa Barbara associate professor of drama and dance has recently put that conviction and her concern for students to the test, creating Isla Vista Arts (IVA). This endeavor will enrich Isla Vista's diverse student community, with the dynamic potential of music, film, drama, comedy, and visual arts.

"Throughout the world, the arts have served as the vanguard of social change," Cole said. "The arts build community, reformulate patterns of interaction, and stimulate people to imagine new realities."

Officially, Isla Vista Arts will operate as a research subunit under UCSB's Interdisciplinary Humanities Center. In practice, it serves as an umbrella to a variety of weekly film, theater, and visual arts events and classes in I.V., home to about 40 percent of UCSB's students.

Among the arts projects IVA already promotes are:

- Associated Students Program Board films (every Tuesday night, I.V. Theater)
- Magic Lantern Films (every Friday night, I.V. Theater)
- Improvability improvisational troupe (every Friday night, Embarcadero Hall)
- I.V. Live variety show (every Saturday night, Embarcadero Hall)
- Middle Eastern Center Film Series (every Wednesday until June 8, Embarcadero Hall)
- Art Symposium (every Wednesday night, I.V. Theater)

A calendar of events is available on the IVA Web site <www.islavista-



Drama and dance professor Catherine Cole directs Isla Vista Arts, a research subunit under the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center.

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[arts.org](#)>.

Cole said there is room for many more programs. “We did this not only to bring coherence and greater impact to the existing programs,” she said. “We also want to stimulate new ideas.”

But most important, Cole said, are the UCSB students living in I.V. and the bridge IVA builds between their community and the campus. “As much as Isla Vista has vexed the campus, it is actually a very, very interesting community,” she said. “I believe it can become a great asset to the campus.”

Cole, who authored the proposal to create IVA, is the director. She is assisted by graduate students Jason Davids Scott and John Carnwath. Isla Vista Arts is affiliated with Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life, a national consortium of colleges, universities and cultural institutions dedicated to supporting the civic work of university artists, humanists and designers.