



WORDS IN ACTION 2024

A MULTILINGUAL STUDENT PERFORMANCE
CELEBRATING LINGUISTIC AND
CULTURAL DIVERSITY AT
UC BERKELEY

FRIDAY APRIL 12 • DURHAM STUDIO THEATER • 3-7PM

ORGANIZED AND DIRECTED BY
ANNAMARIA BELLEZZA
DEPARTMENT OF ITALIAN STUDIES

WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF

Amel Belguith, Nathalie Khankan (Arabic), Myrna Douzjian (Armenian), Sophia Luo (Chinese), Chi Leung Chan (Cantonese), Ana Belén Redondo-Campillos (Catalan), Cynthia Abban, Joi Barrios, Karen Llagas (Filipino), Rachel Shuh (French), Ina Choi (Korean), Nikolaus Euba (German), Nora Koa Melnikova (Hindi), Annamaria Bellezza, Cristina Farronato (Italian), Yuriko Miyamoto Caltabiano, Jing Liu (Japanese), Ina Choi (Korean), Reza Ghahramani, Fateme Montazeri (Persian), Ana Claudia Lopes, Derek Allen (Portuguese), Jvala Singh (Punjabi), Oksana Willis (Russian), Anna Rodas (Spanish), Bharathy Sankara Rajulu (Tamil and Telugu), Nataliia Goshylyk (Ukrainian)

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Jamila Cobham - Production Manager, Durham Studio Theater
Emily Fassler - Assistant Production Manager, Durham Studio Theater
Dio Ramirez - Theater Supervisor, Durham Studio Theater
Samantha Celeste Becaria - Backstage Manager
Billy Heidenfeldt - Assistant Backstage Coordinator
Molly Windsor-Marshall - Lighting Technician
Haitham Mohamed - Sound Technician
Keith Hernandez - Recording and Sound Technician
Orlando Garcia and Marina Romani - Program Designers
Emily Ann Hellmich - Publicity Coordinator
Arely Badillo Alvarado - Master Greeter

Kimberly Vinall, Mark Kaiser, Rick Kern, Claire Kramsch, BLC Directors
for their unwavering support and encouragement. **All the volunteers** backstage and
offstage that made this event possible!

WORDS IN ACTION is generously sponsored by
the **Berkeley Language Center** and by a generous donation by
Bruce and Judy Schroffel, lifelong advocates for cultural diversity
and the performing arts

For information, please contact
ambellezza@berkeley.edu

PROGRAM

FILIPINO

Magtanim ay Di Biro (Planting Rice is Never Fun)

"Magtanim ay Di Biro (Planting Rice is Never Fun)" is a Filipino folk song. We revised some of the lyrics to highlight the oppression of landless farmers and peasant workers in the Philippines, the urgent call for land reform, and the need for organized militant resistance.

Performed by students of elementary, intermediate and advanced Filipino

CHINESE

Brave – 阿杰鲁

"Brave" is a Yi ethnic style Chinese dance piece. The long, pleated skirts are a staple for the Yi to dance out their feelings and daily life, with vibrant and energetic music.

Performed by Fei Tian Dancers

ARABIC

Moroccan Family Feud Session

Family feud is a game of two teams, or "families" who are playing against each other to guess the most common responses to a survey of 100 people.

Performed by students of elementary North African Colloquial Arabic

KOREAN

Korean Pop – Culture Class

Students in a Korean popular culture class debate on their favourite aspects of Korean Popular Culture. The students are divided into two groups: K-drama and K-pop and take turns showcasing their favourite aspect. The K-drama group showcases their acting ability with their take on a K-drama scene followed by the K-pop group showcasing their dancing ability with two different K-pop dances.

Performed by students of elementary Korean

ARABIC

If I Must Die

Students of Arabic will recite Palestinian poet Refaat Alareer's poem "إن كُنْتُ عَلَيَّ الْمَوْتُ" ("If I Must Die") before inviting the audience to join them in a collective, multilingual reading of the same poem (postcards with QR code to [translations](#) will be distributed)

Performed by students of elementary Arabic

TAMIL

Day at the Zoo

A young girl and her parents go to the zoo. She is looking for a specific animal - a hippo! She meets a lot of animals on her journey to find the hippo. She learns about each animal, and when she realizes they are not what she's looking for, she is directed to the next animal in hopes of finding the hippo.

Performed by students of elementary Tamil

PUNJABI

The Tragic Story of Mirza and Sahiban

Similar to Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, this Punjabi folk tale (kissa) tells the story of two lovers who are kept separated by their families due to social norms. The lovers eventually decide to elope only to be tracked down by Sahiba's family, resulting in the tragic and untimely death of both Sahib and Mirza.

Performed by students of elementary and intermediate Punjabi

ARMENIAN

One Drop of Honey – Hovhannes Tumanyan

Hovhannes Tumanyan's "One Drop of Honey" (1909) is a ballad based on a medieval Armenian fable by Vardan Aygektsi. The poem tells the story of a shepherd who goes to a shop in a neighboring village to buy honey. As the shopkeeper pours the honey, one drop spills to the floor. This spilled drop of honey becomes the catalyst for an absurd string of events that spirals into violence between the shopkeeper, the shepherd, and their pets. The bloodshed between the two individuals then leads to a battle in which their respective villages wipe each other out. And, finally, the local battle becomes the impetus for a horrific war between the two kingdoms to which the neighboring villages belong. The few people who remain alive in the end wonder, "What caused this great catastrophe?" Though Tumanyan's poem was written in reaction to the events of his own day, its critical perspective on violence and war remains as contemporary as ever.

Performed by students of intermediate and advanced Armenian

CATALAN

Two scenes of the play Morir (un moment abans de morir) – Sergi Belbel

Morir/To die part: seven stories that culminate with a fatal ending for one of the characters. No morir/Not to die part: the same seven stories intertwined, and with a less dramatic ending. The students of Catalan 102 are representing one of the stories with its two different endings.

(Please note that there will be a flashing police light used in this performance)

Performed by students of intermediate Catalan

ITALIAN

Mediterraneo, Casa Mia Casa Tua

A celebration of multicultural Italy focusing on the theme of Italian identity, inclusion, and the meaning of home. With songs by Ghali, Mahmood, and Måneskin and a monologue by a Tunisian immigrant we hope to bring to our audience a critical reflection on border politics, social equality and counter-culture through our performance. The first song, *Casa Mia* by Ghali, will be followed by the monologue, *Mi chiamo Mohammed* by Giuseppe Calabrese which will transition into the third song, *Medley 'Italiano vero'* by Ghali. The third and last song, *Zitti e Buoni* by Måneskin will rock you out of your seats.

Performed by students of elementary and advanced Italian

JAPANESE

A Catch in the Night

After an argument with his mom, a son takes a stroll on the night streets to clear his mind. He puts on his headphones to listen to J-pop music. He stumbles upon a traditional fishermen's dance which captivates him, making him rethink his stubbornness with his mother in the argument earlier.

Performed by students of elementary Japanese

SPANISH

Poema Para el Niño del Volcán de Agua – Luis de Lión

The poem describes the town of San Juan del Obispo that rests underneath the Volcán de Agua in Guatemala. The Volcán de Agua, also known as Junajpu, is a volcano named for one of the divine twins that appears in the sacred Maya text Popol Wuj. Despite the difficult conditions facing the residents of San Juan del Obispo, the poet's community is nourished by the volcano, earth, the sky, and the surrounding nature.

Performed by heritage speakers of Spanish

Romance del prisionero – Anonymous (Medieval Period)

A prisoner narrates his experience living in total darkness, not knowing whether it is night or day, except for the bird that sings to him at dawn.

Performed by students of elementary Spanish

Huelguistas – Luis Váldez (Teatro Campesino)

The year is 1970 in Delano, California. The farm workers are on strike. They are demanding better working conditions, better pay, bathrooms in the fields, and a union contract. The rancharo and the coyote are conspiring against the farmworkers. However, the farm workers are united in their struggle and the strike will continue until their demands are met.

Performed by students of elementary and heritage speakers of Spanish

BLC REMARKS

Announcing the "Exploring the Boundaries of Translation" Contest Winners

This contest, organized by the Berkeley Language Center (BLC) and sponsored by the Found in Translation (FIT) working group, encourages UC Berkeley undergraduate students to critically explore the boundaries of translation and the relativity of cultures. Participants name an "untranslatable word" of their own choosing and write a thoughtful passage that engages with this boundary.

FRENCH

Le Legs (The Bequest) – Pierre de Marivaux

A couple of scenes from this romantic comedy in which 3 couples are trying to sort out who should marry whom or if they should marry at all. Hortense pressures the Marquis to send for a notary to seal the marriage contract between them. However, no one in fact desires this marriage of convenience which will bring the Marquis a small fortune (due to the titular "bequest"). The Marquis hopes rather to marry the Comtesse, but struggles to express his feelings to her, while Hortense herself hopes that the Marquis will refuse the stipulated marriage, bequeathing her a portion of the sum, and allowing her to wed the less financially endowed Chevalier. Since it's a comedy, it all ends well!

Performed by students of advanced French

PORTUGUESE

Salve o Verde – Quarteto em Cy

"Salve o Verde" is an ode to protecting the environment

"No Meio do Caminho," "Retrato," "Último Poema," "O Tempo," "Que Este Amor Não Me Cegue Nem Me Siga"

Short compositions written by some of the most notorious 20th-century Brazilian poets.

They all deal with universal themes such as love, loneliness, and the brevity of life.

Performed by students of intermediate and advanced Portuguese

RUSSIAN

Cock-The-Roach – Korney Chukovsky

Students of Russian will perform a dramatization of a popular children's fairy tale poem "Cock-The-Roach" (1921) by Korney Chukovsky. The story is about the cheerful animals who surrendered to a cockroach. Eventually, terrified and tortured animals are liberated by a brave sparrow.

Performed by students of intermediate and advanced Russian

TELUGU

Attaarintiki Daareedi – Parody

It is a comedic sequence from a Telugu film 'attaarintiki daareedi'. The humor from this scene comes both from its use of physical comedy as well as its re-mixing of an old myth, the story of Ahalya*. In this film, we have a group of people putting on a play based on Ahalya. *Ahalya : One day Indra - regent of the heavens - comes down to earth to see Ahalya in the guise of Gautama - Ahalya's husband - while Gautama is off to bathe in the river. The real Gautama returns just in time to catch Indra in the act, and as many of these stories go it is blameless Ahalya who bears the brunt of her husband's wrath.

Performed by students of elementary Telugu

GERMAN

Zwerg Huckepack – Hermann Wanderscheck

A band of dwarfs looking for bounty and sharing some.

Überschrift Doppelpunkt Diktat – Michael Schönen

A poem about the writing of a love letter with the help of a very active spell check.

Performed by students of advanced German

UKRAINIAN

What We Live For, What We Die For

This collage of contemporary Ukrainian poems responds to the challenges of the time by forging a new poetic writing. The poems talk about life and death, light and darkness, resilience, and the hope of the people of Ukraine.

Performed by students of elementary and advanced Ukrainian

CANTONESE

Classical Medley

Cantonese is a tonal language. We will use four Cantonese numbers "3, 4, 2, 0", which have a different tone, to sing some classical pieces and connect with the audience.

Performed by heritage speakers of Cantonese

HINDI

I'm Never Gonna Be Yours

A guy wants to ask a popular girl out.

Performed by students of elementary Hindi

PERSIAN

The Clothes Make the Man

A man is ridiculed for dressing poorly at a fancy party. He comes back dressed in very fine clothes and is treated with respect. The man starts giving his food to his clothes, saying that the only reason that he is respected is because of his clothes. Therefore, he is thanking his clothes because they got him respect.

Performed by students of elementary Persian

Arash the Archer

A contemporary rendition of the heroic story, Arash the Archer, in Iranian mythology. According to this myth, the boundary between Iran and her neighbor, Turan, is set by the arch launched by Arash, who put his own life and soul into the arch. The arch traveled for days before landing on the other side of Oxus River hundreds of miles away from the original launch site.

Performed by students of intermediate Persian

CHINESE

Fearless – 霍元甲

"Fearless" encapsulates the intricate balance of the soft yet sharp elements inherent in Chinese culture, featured prominently in Hantang dynasty dances. The style's dual nature is celebrated with a modern song celebrating Huo Yuan Jia, a famous martial artist in the early 20th century.

Performed by Fei Tian Dancers