

UCLA School of Theater, Film & Television

2025 COMMENCEMENT

COMMENCEMENT PROGRAM

Friday, June 13, 2025

PROCESSIONAL

NATIONAL ANTHEM

JANELLE SORIANO

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

CHON NORIEGA

INTERIM DEAN, UCLA SCHOOL OF THEATER, FILM AND TELEVISION

RECOGNITION OF MARSHALS

CHON NORIEGA

CLASS OF 2025 STUDENT REMARKS

ANH QUOC DOAN

DEPARTMENT OF FILM, TELEVISION AND DIGITAL MEDIA UNDERGRADUATE

SARAH SCHECTER

DEPARTMENT OF THEATER UNDERGRADUATE

INTRODUCTION OF COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

CHON NORIEGA

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

DUSTIN LANCE BLACK

SCREENWRITER AND DIRECTOR

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI SPEAKER

BRIAN KITE

THEATER DIRECTOR, DEAN AND VICE PROVOST/GRADUATE EDUCATION

RECOGNITIONS

CONFERRAL OF THE DEGREES

CHON NORIEGA

CLASS OF 2025 DEPARTMENT OF THEATER MUSICAL PERFORMANCE

"ONE LIFE"

BY: JOHN LEGEND, JEFFREY GITELMAN, BRANDON PAAK ANDERSON, JOSHUA KARPEH

PERFORMED BY:

AVERY BECKMAN, MATTHEW BEYMER, IAN CARDAMONE, AMANDA KANG, SETH HOLT, ROBYN MORALES, JANELLE SORIANO, OLIVER STRACHAN, JACK STUHLEY AND SABRINA WILLIAMS

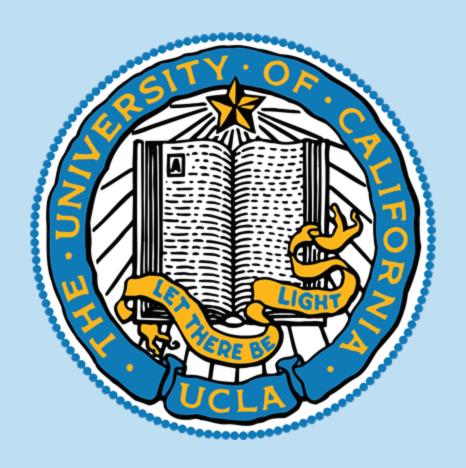
ALMA MATER

JACK STUHLEY

FINAL REMARKS

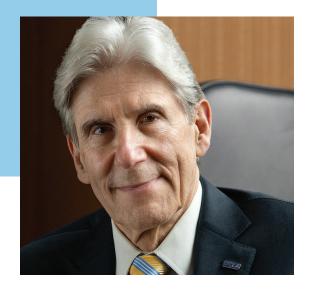
CHON NORIEGA

RECESSIONAL



LETTER FROM THE CHANCELLOR

JULIO FRENK



Congratulations to the Class of 2025!

Today, we celebrate your hard work, your perseverance, and the journey that has brought you to this special moment. I hope you are proud of how far you have come.

Graduation marks both a culmination and a new beginning. It is a chance to look back on your time at UCLA and all of the ways that you have grown and changed. It is also an opportunity to look ahead — with hope and purpose — to all that lies ahead.

To be sure: Your graduation coincides with a complex moment in human history, when the ground appears to be shifting under our feet and we may feel a desire to lower our sights rather than raise them. My challenge to you: Resist that. I can assure you that your UCLA education has prepared you to meet this moment.

The values you have cultivated at our university — kindness, integrity, curiosity, a commitment to service, and a respect for diverse perspectives — will serve as your foundation as you become leaders in your communities and industries. You are now part of a global network of more than 670,000 Bruins who are shaping the future in bold and meaningful ways. Stay connected to your classmates, your mentors, and this university, which will always be your home.

On behalf of the entire UCLA community, I extend my deepest congratulations to you. We can't wait to see all that you will accomplish.

Go Bruins!

JULIO FRENK Chancellor

LETTER FROM THE INTERIM DEAN

CHON NORIEGA



Dear Graduates,

Today, we celebrate your journey—a path shaped by creativity and resilience, and by your commitment to the collaborative arts.

At TFT, you've created together: across stages, sets, studios, and screens. You've built worlds, challenged conventions, and brought bold ideas to life—never in isolation, but always in conversation with others. Through every script and score, every performance and edit, you've shown the power of storytelling forged through collaboration.

The world you're entering needs artists who know creativity is not a solitary act. It needs storytellers who lead with empathy, see possibility where others see limits, and understand that the strongest visions are shaped together. You are ready—to build, to transform, to lead.

Though your time on campus is ending, you will always be part of the TFT community—a network of artists, thinkers, and changemakers who lift one another higher. Draw strength from that community. Let it remind you that you are never creating alone—and in all you touch, let that community grow as others rise with the opportunities you help make possible.

Congratulations, Class of 2025. Your journey is just beginning—and we are proud to be part of your story.

CHON NORIEGA

Interim Dean

Chan Poruga

ALUMNI SPEAKER

BRIAN KITE
Theater Director, Dean and
Vice Provost/Graduate Education



Brian Kite is a proud double Bruin with a deep connection to the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television (TFT), a community that has shaped his creative, academic, and professional life. He earned his BA in Theater in 1991 and his MFA in 2004, returning to serve as a faculty member, Chair of the Department of Theater, Interim Dean, and Dean of the School. He now serves as UCLA's Dean and Vice Provost of Graduate Education while continuing to teach at TFT.

As a director, Brian has worked extensively in live theater across the country and internationally, known for visually rich productions that engage audiences with clarity and emotional impact. His credits include *American Idiot*, *Billy Elliot*, *Les Misérables*, *Miss Saigon*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Dinner With Friends*, *Steel Magnolias* starring Cathy Rigby, and *Driving Miss Daisy* with Michael Learned. He was honored with the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle's Joel Hirschhorn Award and received an Ovation Award for Best Direction of a Musical for *Spring Awakening*, with additional nominations for *Les Misérables* and *American Idiot*.

Brian has directed national tours for L.A. Theatre Works and staged international productions in China, Poland, and Bermuda, including the first production of *Miss Saigon* in China and the Chinese tour of *Top Secret: The Battle for the Pentagon Papers* at Beijing's National Center for the Performing Arts. Recent projects include the premiere of *Irena*, a new musical in Poznań and Warsaw, and *From Baghdad to Brooklyn* with Michelle Azar, which premiered at the United Solo Festival in New York and continues to tour nationally.

He previously served as Producing Artistic Director of La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts and is Chair Emeritus of the L.A. Stage Alliance Board of Governors. He is also a visiting professor at the Shanghai Theatre Academy.

Being the Distinguished Alumni Speaker is especially meaningful to Brian because TFT has been a constant through every stage of his life—as a student, artist, educator, and member of the School's leadership. He is grateful to be part of this vibrant community and deeply honored to be recognized by the School that has given him so much. As someone whose own career and passion were shaped by the faculty and fellow students at TFT, Brian feels particularly inspired by this year's graduates, knowing firsthand the creativity, resilience, and vision they're ready to bring to the world.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

DUSTIN LANCE BLACK Screenwriter and Director



Dustin Lance Black received his BA with honors in Motion Picture-TV from the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television in 1996. He began his career as an art director before moving into directing documentaries and commercials. His early work, including *On the Bus* (2001) and *My Life with Count Dracula* (2003), led to producing and directing TLC and BBC's acclaimed series *Faking It*.

Black is an Academy Award®-winning filmmaker, LGBTQ+ activist, husband, and father. He earned an Oscar and two WGA Awards for his screenplay for *Milk* (2008), the biopic he also executive produced about civil rights leader Harvey Milk. In 2018, he received the Valentine Davies Award from the Writers Guild of America for his body of work.

Most recently, Black wrote the Golden Globe and Academy Award-nominated feature *Rustin* (2023), produced by Higher Ground, and created, wrote, and directed the Emmy, Golden Globe, and Critics Choice-nominated FX limited series *Under the Banner of Heaven* (2023), starring Andrew Garfield.

His additional credits include the ABC miniseries *When We Rise* (2017), which chronicles the LGBTQ+ rights movement; the Clint Eastwood-directed *J. Edgar* (2011); HBO's *Big Love* (2004–2008); and the play *8*, which dramatized the federal trial challenging California's Proposition 8 and was staged globally. His 2019 best-selling memoir *Mama's Boy* was adapted into an HBO documentary directed by Laurent Bouzereau.

A founding board member of the American Foundation for Equal Rights and former board member of The Trevor Project, Black also co-founded the Uprising of Love Coalition and helped organize the 2009 National Equality March in Washington, D.C.

He has lectured at UCLA, USC, Harvard, Oxford, and Cambridge, and has appeared on CNN, MSNBC, and the BBC as a political commentator. Throughout his career, Black has used storytelling as a powerful vehicle for social change and LGBTQ+ advocacy.

CHANCELLOR'S MARSHALS

Recognized for outstanding academic achievement and identified by the Blue and Gold Fourragere

THEATER

MARY ELIZABETH BARCLAY BRANDON DE SANTIAGO MICHAELA DUARTE SARAH SCHECTER

FILM, TELEVISION AND DIGITAL MEDIA

KARLY HANAKO KATO BANG ANH QUOC DOAN ROO JOSHI ANDREAS MICKELOPOULOS

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

THEATER

Degree Conferred

ELIZABETH MCQUEEN

Dissertation Title: Acting Edible: The Taste of Performance of a Damaged Planet

YUN-PU YANG

Dissertation Title: The Eroticism of Peking Opera Kunsheng from the 1880 to the 1980s

Degree Candidates

DEVON BAUR

Dissertation Title: Scent Trails: Olfaction in Performance, New Media, and Phenomenology

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

FILM, TELEVISION AND DIGITAL MEDIA

Degree Conferred

FENGYUN ZHANG

Dissertation Title: The Shadow Network: Distribution and Exhibition of Chinese Cinema in the US, 2002-2020

Degree Candidates

SLAVEYA MIROSLAVOVA MINKOVA

Dissertation Title: Haunting Postsocialisms: Media Infrastructures and Mediated Landscapes in South East Europe

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

THEATER

Degree Candidates

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YEJIN ELENA GIM

RYE MANDEL

RUTH IRENE REICHMAN

JEAN YVONNE TYSON

MARIO VEGA

AYEBANENGIYEFA TEPHANIE WABOTE

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

FILM, TELEVISION AND DIGITAL MEDIA

Degrees Conferred

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Degree Candidates

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YUXIN CHENG

HECTOR COLES

CORTNEY LEE COLVIG

GRACE ELIZABETH CRITCHFIELD

DANIEL BROWNING CUMMINS

ALEXANDRIA NICOLE DANIELS

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MARCELLO PAUL FRISINA

BRIDGET MCALLISTER GARRITY

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FELICITY HOPE GIRTY

ATHENA GREENLEAF

VAN HOFMAISTER

ZACHARY CURTIS HOHENSTEIN

ANIKA KAUR HUNDAL

ELLIE SERENA HUNT

RUDY JANSEN

OR KEISAR

GEORGE LANIGAN

MICHELLE L LI

NIKA LITT

TIFFANY JIAOLONG LU

MAYYI MAHAMA

JOHN PATRICK MARCHI DYLAN MELROY MARTIS

ZOE MATHEWSON

FELIX JAMES MCENROY ANDREW MCGOWAN

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SHUCHENG YAN

YOUNGJIE ZENG

MASTER OF ARTS

FILM, TELEVISION AND DIGITAL MEDIA

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JAMIR JOSEPH BOWERS

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NOE CERVANTES

JUSTIN FOSTER

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EDWARD HUANG

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VIVIAN TRAN

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BACHELOR OF ARTS

THEATER

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F MAGNA CUM LAUDE

§ SUMMA CUM LAUDE

^ CUM LAUDE

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WE HONOR THE MEMORY OF BLUU B. LUU, WHO IS RECEIVING A POSTHUMOUS DEGREE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF THEATER.

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PAST HONOREES

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1990	June Wayne	2012	Penelope Spheeris
1991	Bella Lewitzky	2013	Dustin Lance Black
1992	Jack Valenti	2013	Kristin Hanggi
1993	James Earl Jones	2014	Wendy C. Goldberg
1994	Peter Guber	2014	Darren Star
1995	Quincy Jones	2015	Donna Deitch
1996	Debbie Allen	2015	Sarabeth Grossman
1997	Warren Littlefield	2016	Robert L. Friedman
1998	John Frankenheimer	2016	Gina Prince-Bythewood
1999	Annette Bening	2017	Justin Lin
2000	Joe Roth	2017	Michael Stuhlbarg
2001	Eva Marie Saint	2018	Judy Kaye
2002	Martha Coolidge	2018	Allison Anders
2003	Terry Semel	2019	Julie Dash
2004	Sherry Lansing	2019	George Takei
2005	Fay Kanin	2020	Patricia Cardoso
2006	George C. Wolfe	2022	Amy Aniobi
2007	Larry Gelbart	2023	Rachel Hauck
2008	Colin Callender		
2009	Oliver Stone	COMN	MENCEMENT DEDICATION
2010	Peter Guber	2012	Gilbert Cates
2011	U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer	2015	Samuel Goldwyn, Jr.
2012	Ron Meyer		• •
2013	Cathy Schulman	UCLA	MEDAL
2014	Jane Fonda	1985	Carol Burnett
2015	Kevin Beggs	2009	Haskell Wexler, A.s.c.
2016	Channing Dungey	2017	Peter Guber
2017	Ava DuVernay		
2018	Carl Franklin	CHAN	CELLOR'S MEDAL
2019	Pierce Brosnan	1993	James Earl Jones
2021	Nilo Cruz	1994	Francis Ford Coppola
2022	Troy Kotsur	1995	Quincy Jones
2023	Gina Prince-Bythewood	1996	Neil Simon
2024	Tarell Alvin McCraney	1998	Edie Wasserman
		2002	Kirk Douglas
ALUN	INI AND HONOREES	2005	Sir Anthony Hopkins
2000	Army Archerd	2006	Samuel Goldwyn, Jr.
2001	Louis J. Horvitz		
2003	Moctesuma Esparza	DISTIN	IGUISHED SERVICE AWARD
2004	Gregory Nava	2017	Nadja Swarovski
2005	Geoffrey Gilmore		
2007	Gene Reynolds		
2008	Fred Roos		
2009	Ellen Geer		
2010	Felicia D. Henderson		
2010	John Rando		
2011	Charles Burnett		
2011	Mariska Hargitay		

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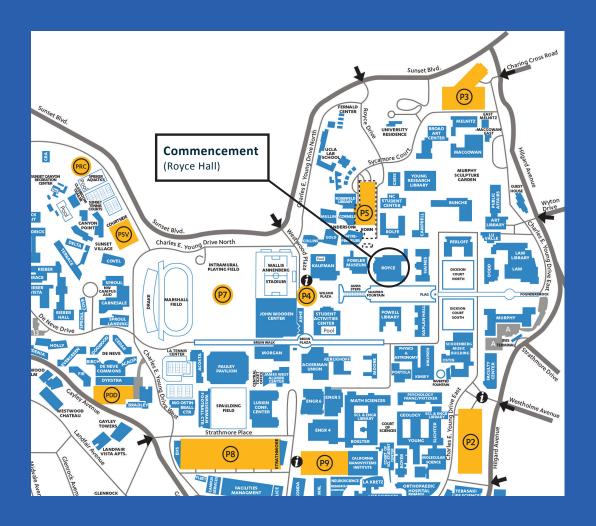
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ACADEMIC PERSONNEL
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DEPARTMENT OF THEATER
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
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"Hail to the hills of Westwood to the mighty sea below;
Hail to our alma mater, she will conquer every foe.
For we're loyal to the Southland, her honor we'll uphold,
We'll gladly give our hearts to thee, to the Blue and to the Gold."

- Jeane Emerson '29

WELCOME, NEW UCLA TFT ALUMNI!

FRIDAY, JUNE 13, 2025

Welcome to the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television (UCLA TFT) alumni family! We are thrilled to have you join our vibrant community of Bruin alumni. Please keep us updated with your exciting journeys and achievements — we can't wait to see you at our programs and events, and share your successes with pride! Stay connected with us to make the most of your alumni experience:

- Email devo@tft.ucla.edu to update your email and mailing address to receive communications, news and alumni event invitations.
- Connect with us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Also, expand your network, connect with fellow TFT alumni, and explore job opportunities through the new TFT Directory on BrightCrowd. To get started, scan the QR code or email TFT Development at devo@TFT.UCLA.EDU.

Join the UCLA TFT community on BrightCrowd, our new online alumni directory. To register please email us at devo@tft.ucla.edu.

We eagerly look forward to celebrating your accomplishments in the days, months, and years ahead. Congratulations and welcome!

Warm regards,

AARON DANIEL CERVANTES, J.D.

Executive Director of Development





