

October 11, 2010

Dear Alan,

I wanted to write a quick letter in support of the proposed Santa Barbara Center for Art, Science and Technology (SBCAST). It was a pleasure to meet with you and your team several weeks ago and to discuss the ways in which the University can partner with you to make the center a space for world-class art/science residencies and a true incubator for new work and ideas.

The facility you propose promises not only to enliven an under-developed area of downtown Santa Barbara, but will also to provide a critical link to other arts and culture spaces in the immediate area, transforming the lower Garden area in the process.

As you know, the University of California Institute for Research in the Arts has a special interest in the intersection of art and science. Through our Integrative Methodologies initiative, we support a wide range of activities and see great potential for future partnerships with your center. Integral to this particular initiative is the fact that UC faculty appointments in digital and media arts over the past fifteen years have created unparalleled strengths in connecting the arts to science research.

UC has created a premier, international program in art and technology with a network of faculty drawn from across the globe that now constitutes the most important center for new media research in the world.

Artists generate unconventional and imaginative knowledge systems that emerge from aesthetic reflection and risk-taking processes. Their creative energies and skills can be used to catalyze, visualize and recontextualize the work of scientists, encouraging alternative investigative methods and oblique approaches to problem solving. Through our Integrative Methodologies initiative, UCIRA supports art/science and artist/scientist collaborative configurations designed to facilitate new, hybrid, and fusion models of exchange, co-creation and research practice. Outreach to a public understanding of science through the arts, and a public understanding of the arts through science is also a key priority.

I look forward to seeing the progress of the Center and to working with you and your team in future.

With best wishes,
Holly Unruh

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