

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY™

School of Music, Theatre and Dance



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News and updates from the School of Music, Theatre and Dance

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Working in the Arts: SMTD Alumni News

Dance alum [Matt Wagner](#) (BFA '15) and his [DIAVOLO](#) dance company colleagues performed an acrobatic routine with an abstract dome structure to Harry Styles' "Sign of the Times" on the finale of [America's Got Talent](#) and finished in the top 10. Under the artistic direction of Jacques Heim, the company's diverse team of dancers, designers, choreographers and engineers "create visceral and awe-inspiring works that reveal how we are affected emotionally, physically and socially by the spaces we inhabit," according to [diavolo.org](#). While advancing through the audition, judge cut, quarterfinal and semifinal and final rounds of the competition, DIAVOLO consistently received standing ovations from the audience and judges.

[Read more](#)

Music, Theatre and Dance News



[Ali Woerner](#) and [Thayer Jonutz](#) of [Take Root](#), a non-profit dance company-in-residence at OU, held their season opening concert on Oct. 14 at Red Bull Art House. The concert also featured the debut of Take Root's underwater dance

film, "Ripples From The Skin We Shed," which featured all eight company members underwater.

[Read more](#)

James Isabirye:

Planting the seeds for rebirth of Uganda's royal music traditions





Using the seeds of a nearly extinct gourd, Oakland University graduate student **James Isabirye** is helping the people of Uganda rediscover their musical roots by reintroducing instruments, songs and traditions that were almost lost forever following decades of conflict and political upheaval.

"These are the traditions that drive the Ugandan people to be who and what they are," said Isabirye, a lecturer of music and drama at Kyambogo University in Uganda who is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in Music Education at Oakland University. "These traditions are the essence of the community, and when they are lost, the people are lost as well."

[Read more](#)

Our Season 17-18 Brochure is available on our website

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