



UTRGV™

Festiba

LIFE'S TAPESTRY: ART AND WORDS



FEBRUARY 20 - MARCH 2, 2025





JEFFREY WARD

Dean

College of Fine Arts

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley College of Fine Arts is proud to bring you FESTIBA 2025! We celebrate the rich literacy, culture, and arts of the Rio Grande Valley and are so grateful to the many partners that we have throughout UTRGV, the cities of Edinburg and Weslaco, and arts and literacy organizations throughout the Valley.

Through FESTIBA 2025, you will experience a broad spectrum of how the Arts and storytelling have a profound impact on our lives and help define our humanity. There are so many wonderful sessions, but I will share a few highlights. . .

The 2024 Texas Poet Laureate Amanda Johnston will read her poetry and answer questions about her work in the Maria F. Monta, PhD Studio Theater next door to the Edinburg Albert L. Jeffers Theatre on February 20 at 6:30 p.m.

An exhibition of the work of contemporary Dominican artist Julia Santos Solomon will be in the lobby of the Performing Arts Complex on the UTRGV Edinburg campus throughout FESTIBA 2025.

The Center for Latin American Arts will host a round table discussion with art historians about the Thoma Collection exhibit at the International Museum of Art and Science (IMAS) on February 21 at 11:00 a.m. in the Center for Latin America Arts on the 2nd floor of the Edinburg campus Library and at 3:00 p.m. at IMAS, located at 1900 W Nolana Avenue, McAllen.

The FESTIBA 2025 Mariachi Festival competition winners will share the stage with our very own Mariachi Aztlán, and Mariachi Sol de México on March 1 at 7:00 pm at the Performing Arts Complex on the UTRGV Edinburg campus.



Shoko Kinsella will perform a piano recital entitled Love and Death, featuring the music of Chopin and Joe Hisaishi, most well-known for his music written for Studio Ghibli animation films, TV commercials, and a movie by Japanese filmmaker Takeshi Kitano. The recital will be in the Brownsville Music Learning and Science Center, 1.217 on March 2 at 3:00 p.m.

UTRGV Theatre will perform Shakespeare's immortal classic Romeo and Juliet, March 7 & 8 at 7:30 p.m. and March 9 at 2:00 p.m. at the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre on the UTRGV Edinburg campus.

I look forward to seeing you at these and all of the amazing events in FESTIBA 2025.

FESTIBA 2025 SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

**FEBRUARY 20 -
MARCH 2, 2025**

LIFE'S TAPESTRY: ART AND WORDS

The Festival of International Books and Arts (FESTIBA) was established in 2006 to promote the importance of literacy, culture and the arts to students, parents, educators and community members throughout the Rio Grande Valley. The Arts, in all their enchanting forms, have the ability to transport us to different realms and ignite our imagination. FESTIBA 2024-2025 will explore the theme of Life's Tapestry: Art and Words. One of the most captivating aspects of poetry is its use of imagery. Through vivid descriptions and sensory details, poets and musicians paint pictures in our minds, allowing us to experience the essence of their sounds and words. Imbuing life with colors, sounds, smells, tastes, and touch, Arts and Words offer a window into the rich tapestry of life.



FESTIBA 2025 ART EXHIBITS

PERFORMING ARTS COMPLEX GALLERY EXHIBIT JULIA SANTOS SOLOMON

Julia Santos Solomon is a Contemporary Dominican artist creating paintings, sculpture, and digital media for over forty years. Her vision shaped generations of successful LatinX artists as a founding member of Altos de Chavon School of Design, and she taught Fashion Illustration and Design at Parsons School of Design in NY. Santos Solomon's work has been exhibited and collected nationally and abroad.

She works in multiple genres drawing, painting, sculpture, fashion design, landscape, mural, and illustration— Much of her work done is done in gold leaf to “re-appropriate” the precious metal taken from its source by conquering Europeans which are themes that flow through her work. Rich Caribbean colors immerse the viewer in the artist's personal world. The name of the exhibit is “El Dorado Despejado” or “El Dorado Stripped”.

Dates: Open all of Festiba Week

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus,
Performing Arts Complex Exhibit Hall

VISUAL ARTS BUILDING GALLERY RUBEN LOZANO MFA EXHIBITION

Lozano focuses on impressionistic oil paintings documenting landscapes in the Rio Grande Valley. In their work you will see a variety of landmarks, iconography, cultural practices, and community events. Their artwork is a way to pay homage to his upbringing in the Valley and how its culture and landscapes have provided him with a way to convey his emotions and thoughts.

Dates: February 24 - March 7

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus,
Visual Arts Building (EVABL)

CHARLES & DOROTHY GALLERY NOEL PALMENEZ SOLO EXHIBITION

According to Palmenez, this exhibit, “Find the Extraordinary in the Ordinary,” extends a variety of concepts tied together using medium and play of imagination. It includes works of activism, religion, autobiography, and storytelling. Some of the works have universal themes based on morality and faith, while the vast majority are more regional, exploring what it is to be from “El Valle” and how we coexist with the rest of the world.

Dates: February 24 - March 14

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus,
Charles and Dorothy Clark Art Gallery



RUSTEBERG GALLERY - GUEST ARTIST SUSAN LICHTMAN SOLO EXHIBITION

Lichtman focuses on paintings and drawings representing mundane scenery in an abstract, cubist, and impressionist approach. Their subject matter gives us insight into daily activities frozen in time. Making us wonder when we last took a moment to grasp and observe our surroundings and the interactions taking place.

Dates: February 24 - March 7

Location: UTRGV Rusteberg Gallery,
65 Gorgas Dr., Brownsville, TX

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA - WILD, WILD, WEST!

The ballet Billy the Kid pays homage to the American cowboy with its many songs while musically depicting some of the many adventures in the desperado's life. Kenneth Saxon performs the world premiere of an all-new piano concerto by resident composer Justin Writer. Directed by Norman Gamboa, Director of Orchestral Activities at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus,
Performing Arts Complex

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND FACULTY & STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

**THURSDAY,
FEBRUARY 20**

TX POET LAUREATE 2024 READING & Q&A

Amanda Johnston, Texas Poet Laureate 2024, will read her poetry and hold a Q&A with the audience.

Presenter: Amanda Johnston, TX Poet Laureate 2024, hosted by Department of Creative Writing

Location: Edinburg Campus, Liberal Arts Building South (ELABS 107), Studio Theatre

Time: 6:30 p.m.





FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21

THE CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN ARTS PRESENT A THOMA FOUNDATION RESEARCH ROUNDTABLE

Celebrating Festiba and the CLAA's commitment to community engagement events, you are cordially invited to two free research roundtables.

Presenters: Tom Cummins, Director of Dumbarton Oaks Professor, Harvard University, Kristopher Driggers, Curator of Latin American Art, San Antonio Museum of Art, Carmen Fernández Salvador, Professor, Universidad San Francisco de Quito, Ecuador, Rosario Granados, Marilynn Thoma Curator, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin Veronica Muñoz Nájjar, Curator, The Thoma Foundation and Carlos Limas, Department Chair, STC!

Moderator: Katherine McAllen, Director of the Center for Latin American Arts

Time: 11:00 a.m. Research Workshop

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus, Center for Latin American Arts, ELIBR 2.114

Time: 3:00 p.m. Roundtable

Location: The International Museum of Arts & Science, McAllen, Tx 78504

Event Details: [Paintings from Spanish America \(1600-1800\) from the Thoma Collection - IMAS](#)

EDINBURG BOOK FESTIVAL - CELEBRATING COMMUNITY VOICES

Join us for a fun-filled community event celebrating books, art, and storytelling! Enjoy author presentations, book signings, children's activities, and captivating displays. Plus, free books courtesy of the South Texas Literacy Coalition and Sekula Memorial Library! Don't miss out!

Location: Dustin M. Sekula Memorial Library, 1906 South Closner Boulevard, Edinburg, TX

Time: 6:00 p.m.

ALEX SANZO, DR. MIGEUN CHUNG FACULTY RECITAL

Dr. Alexander Sanso and Dr. Migeun Chung will be presenting a recital of some new and old trumpet solo literature. Kick back and enjoy works by Fasch, Wood, Bernofsky, and McKee.

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus, Performing Arts Complex



**SATURDAY,
FEBRUARY 22**

SOUTH TEXAS LITERACY SYMPOSIUM AT FESTIBA

FESTIBA's Librarians and Educators Day collaborates with Texas Literacy, and the South Texas Literacy Coalition to present the South Texas Literacy Symposium, a professional development conference for local literacy providers. This free conference is sponsored by Literacy Texas. This symposium is offered free of charge to educators, volunteer tutors, ESL teachers, and other library and nonprofit professionals who work in the fields of adult and family literacy. Featuring Keynote Speaker and FESTIBA 2025 Distinguished Artist – Amanda Johnston, poet and award-winning author.

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Location: UTRGV
Edinburg Campus, Ballroom

To register, visit:
literacytexas.org/SouthTX

JOEL PAGAN, VIOLA

Join us for an incredible viola performance by our very own UTRGV School of Music Faculty, Joel Pagan.

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus,
Performing Arts Complex

MONICA MARTINEZ FACULTY RECITAL

Join us for an incredible performance by our very own UTRGV School of Music Faculty, Monica Martinez.

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus,
Performing Arts Complex





MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24

BRENDAN KINSELLA, PIANO

UTRGV Faculty artist Dr. Brendan Kinsella presents an enchanting recital dedicated to the music of Frédéric Chopin. Known as the “Poet of the Piano,” Chopin’s beautiful and exquisite piano works have delighted and inspired audiences for centuries. This program will feature some of his best-known pieces, ranging from his virtuosic Études to his elegant Waltzes to his soulful Nocturnes.

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus, Performing Arts Complex

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

THIS LAND: HISTORY, LITERACY, AND IDENTITY IN THE JUNIOR ENGLISH CLASSROOM

Presenter: Dr. Kyung Lee, UTRGV Department of Literatures and Cultural Studies.

Time: 11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus, ELABS 259

POETRY READING: THE DAY’S HARD EDGE

Poet and memoirist, José Antonio Rodríguez, will give a reading from his new poetry book THE DAY’S HARD EDGE with Q&A.

Presenters: José Antonio Rodríguez, hosted by UTRGV Department of Creative Writing.

Time: 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Location: Brownsville Campus, Interdisciplinary Academic Building (BINAB) 1.205

COOKING EVERYTHING FRENCH

Featuring a movie screening with Meryl Streep and Amy Adams in the 2009 American biographical comedy drama “Julia & Julia”, based on two books: My Life in France, Child’s autobiography written with Alex Prud’homme, and a memoir by Powell, Julie & Julia: 365 Days, 524 Recipes, 1 Tiny Apartment Kitchen (later retitled Julie & Julia: My Year of Cooking Dangerously).

Presenters: Dr. Irina Armianu, Department of Literatures and Cultural Studies and Design.

Time: 3:05 p.m. - 4:20 p.m.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus, ELABS 303



LISTENING AS AN ACT OF MUSICAL ANALYSIS

This interactive presentation will explain how to begin to analyze music through listening. UTRGV music faculty Dr. Katrina Roush will guide attendees through listening to different musical examples, putting their listening experiences into words, and connecting these experiences to interesting insights about the music. Accessible for everyone from musical experts to amateur musicians to people who just enjoy music, this method can help listeners understand and appreciate music more deeply.

Presenter: Dr. Katrina Roush, UTRGV School of Music

Time: 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus, Library (ELIBR) 1.104, Shary Room



UTRGV SYMPHONIC WINDS

Oh, The Places, You'll Go!

Come enjoy a lively performance by UTRGV Symphonic Winds featuring music old and new, crafting a vibrant program of excitement and beauty!

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus, UTRGV Performing Arts Complex.

Tickets at: [UTRGV ARTS ShowPass](#)



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26

GEAR UP DAYS AT FESTIBA 2025

FESTIBA partners with UTRGV GEAR UP program to host hundreds of Gear Up students at the UTRGV Edinburg campus. The students attend inspirational presentations and sessions on the power of creativity, development of literacy skills and self-expression for life success, and tips on college-readiness.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus, Performing Arts Complex

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

LITERATURE, ART AND TRANSFORMATIONAL LIFE EXPERIENCES: -LAS DESPEDIDAS- BY JACOBO BERGARECHE

Dr. Cristina Sánchez-Conejero, by means of the novel -Las despedidas- by Jacobo Bergareche explores the relationship between literature and art and how certain life experiences related to both can transform someone's life.

Presenter: Dr. Cristina Sánchez Conejero
Department of Spanish, UTRGV

Time: 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Zoom: <https://utrgv.zoom.us/j/3230882414?omn=81767760167>

FURIA, AWARD-WINNING YA NOVEL

The Texas Book Festival and UTRGV Department of Creative Writing will co-host a reading, Q&A, and book signing with Yamile Saied Méndez, author of the award-winning YA novel, Furia.

Presenter: Yamile Saied Méndez, author

VIP Reception: 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus, Room: Borderlands Room, EEDUC 3.204

UTRGV WIND ORCHESTRA

Join us for a performance by UTRGV's own Wind Orchestra featuring UTRGV tuba professor, Dr. Scott Roeder and Latin Grammy Nominated clarinetist, Manuel Martínez, from Barcelona! Works will include: An Outdoor Overture-Copland; Reflections on the Mississippi-Daugherty (featuring Dr. Scott Roeder, tuba); The Factory-Castañeda (world premiere featuring Manuel Martínez, clarinet); Symphony No. 5, "Elements"-Giroux.

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus, Performing Arts Complex

Tickets at: [UTRGV ARTS ShowPass](#)



THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27

CREATING ARTISTIC INTERPRETATION OF CULTURE RELEVANT REPERTOIRE FOR CAMERA ENSEMBLE

Dr. Varlamova and students of Piano Class 2 will explore the strategy and methods of working with artistic contrast interpretations of Culture Relevant Repertoire of Mexican and American Songs arranged for camera ensembles – piano and voice, piano and instruments.

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus, EPACB 1.131

Zoom Link: Contact liudmila.varlamova@utrgv.edu to request Zoom link.

SPANISH AND LATIN AMERICAN ART SONG

UTRGV School of Music Alumna, soprano Hannah Moreno, and pianist Dr. Chelsea Whitaker of the Eastman School of Music present a sample of their program of Spanish and Latin American Art Song, Canciones de mi Tierra, followed by a Q&A session on the program.

Time: 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Presenters: Ms. Hannah Moreno (UTRGV Alum) and Dr. Chelsea Whitaker (Eastman School), guests of the UTRGV School of Music

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus, EPACA 1.308

LAST POET IN THE WOODS: ECO-TAPESTRY OF ART AND POETRY

“Last Poet in the Woods” is inspired by the contemporary classic Last Child in the Woods by Richard Louv. Through the vibrant colors, expansive landscapes, and wooded trails in these watercolor paintings by Reefka and the poems written in response to them by Professor Schneider, this ekphrastic exhibit inspires a positive and salutary encounter with the natural world. For this special presentation Professor Schneider will discuss the literary traditions of ekphrasis and eco-writing as well as the social, pedagogical, and ecological goals of “Last Poet in the Woods.”

Presenter: Dr. Steven Schneider, Creative Writing Department, UTRGV

Time: 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Location: Quinta Mazatlán, McAllen, TX

THURSDAY-FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27 - 28

READING ROCK STARS VISITS TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH BOOK DISTRIBUTIONS

“Reading Rock Stars” program in collaboration with the Texas Book Festival, is a popular mainstay of FESTIBA. Children receive a reading and signed book by an author of national repute.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28 - MARCH 1

DISTINGUISHED ARTIST SERIES: MARIACHI SOL DE MÉXICO DE JOSÉ HERNÁNDEZ

will be the featured mariachi at the FESTIBA Mariachi Festival 2025, on March 1, 2025. José Hernández is a master of mariachi music. An internationally recognized musician, composer and arranger, he is the leading mariachi educator in the nation. He has recorded with the most respected and recognized names in the industry, including Selena, Vicente Fernandez, Luis Miguel, and the Beach Boys, and has received four Grammy nominations.

Plan to join us at FESTIBA 2025!! It will be a great workshop, competition and concert!



MARIACHI FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

FRIDAY-SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28 - MARCH 1

For more information and
workshop registration, visit:

[FESTIBA Mariachi Festival](#)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28

WORKSHOPS

8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.: Registration

9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.: Presentation:
Mariachi Sol de México de
José Hernández & Mariachi Aztlán.

10:00 a.m. - 12 p.m.: Instrumental
Workshops.

10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.: Directors'
Masterclass.

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.: Lunch on
your own

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.: Student
Masterclass.

2:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.: Instrumental
Workshop

5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.: FESTIBA 2025
Mariachi Festival Vocal Competition for
Middle School and High School Semi-
Finals. Winners announced at the end,
followed by a presentation featuring
Mariachi Aztlán with Middle School first
place winner and five High School Vocal
Competition Finalists.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus,
Performing Arts Complex

Tickets at: [UTRGV ARTS ShowPass](#)

\$6 Admission



SATURDAY, MARCH 1

9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.: FESTIBA
2025 Mariachi Group Competition
Division winners and Grand Champion
announced at the end.

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus,
Performing Arts Complex

Tickets at: [UTRGV ARTS ShowPass](#)

\$6 Admission

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.: FESTIBA 2025
Mariachi Festival Grand Concert:
Middle and High School Vocal and
Ensemble Competition winners, Mariachi
Aztlán, and Distinguished Artist Series
Mariachi Sol de México de
José Hernández.

**Workshop Registration includes free
ticket to Grand Concert.**

Location: UTRGV Edinburg Campus,
Performing Arts Complex

Tickets at: [UTRGV ARTS ShowPass](#)

THIRD ANNUAL MAYOR JOE V. SANCHEZ MEMORIAL BOOK FESTIVAL

Mayor Joe V. Sánchez was a longtime mayor of Weslaco, superintendent of schools, a veteran, and an author. The annual book festival was created in his memory to promote literacy, the arts and culture throughout the community and beyond while celebrating creativity. The itinerary includes author panels, children's story time, read-alongs, arts and crafts, games and video games, and t-shirt giveaways, with a free book distribution by The South Texas Literacy Coalition.

Time: 1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Location: Mayor Joe V. Sánchez Public
Library in Weslaco

SUNDAY, MARCH 2

LOVE AND DEATH: PIANO MUSIC OF CHOPIN AND JOE (HISAISHI)

Piano faculty Dr. Shoko Kinsella will explore the wonders of love and death through exquisite piano music by Frédéric Chopin and Joe Hisaishi. The program will include a melancholic Nocturne and the dramatic "Funeral March" Sonata by Chopin, as well as beautiful selections from Joe Hisaishi's piano solos written for Studio Ghibli animation films, TV commercials, and a movie by Japanese filmmaker Takeshi Kitano.

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Location: UTRGV Brownsville Campus,
Music, Science & Learning Center
(BMSLC) 1.217

Free Admission





POST FESTIBA

ROMEO AND JULIET

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Dr. Brian Warren

"Step into the timeless world of Romeo and Juliet, where passion and fate collide in Shakespeare's most famous love story. Witness the heart-wrenching tale of two star-crossed lovers caught between family feuds and societal expectations. This classic tragedy explores the beauty and tragedy of young love, proving that true romance defies all odds. Don't miss this unforgettable experience of love, loss, and enduring devotion!"

Genre: Classic, Drama

Ages: 10+

Dates and Time:

March 7-9, 2025

March 7, 7:30 p.m.

March 8, 7:30 p.m.

March 9, 2:00 p.m.

Location: Edinburg Campus,
Albert L. Jeffers Theatre

Order Tickets: [UTRGV ARTS ShowPass](#)

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