Fall Tapestry
Mary B. Martin School’s season melds music, dance, interactive visual art, stories into rich montage of events

Cultures coalesce, visual arts blend activity and history and music, dance, theater and storytelling comingle this fall for a tapestry of more than a dozen events from the Mary B. Martin School of the Arts.

The School of the Arts’ fall season will start very visually in September with a public art project and residency by Dennis McNett and the opening of a photographic and historical exhibition on DeVault Tavern. During McNett’s 10 days at ETSU, the artist, known for his bold woodcut prints from folk tales and Nordic lore, will work with students to create a piece of art inspired by the hanging of Big Mary the elephant in Erwin.

The DeVault Tavern Exhibition will overlap the residency, running from Sept. 11-Dec. 11 at ETSU’s Reece Museum and include a reception and talk with curator and photographer Paul Kennedy on Sept. 11 from 5-7 p.m. and related activities, such as a talk about history, a workshop on family archive and a discussion about contemporary photography.

On Monday, Sept. 22, the School of the Arts kicks off its returning South Arts Southern Circuit Tour of Independent Filmmaker series of three films each semester. Each film is free and followed by a talkback and reception with the filmmaker, all at ETSU’s Martha Street Culp Auditorium. The first fall screening is My Toxic Backyard about the residual effects of the CTS Superfund site in south Asheville, N.C. Emmy award-winning writer and director Katie Damien and editor Jaime Byrd will travel with their documentary.

Valentine Road, a look back at a teen’s murder by a classmate and the individual and community repercussions, is set for Monday, Oct. 20, with filmmaker Marta Cunningham attending; and Good Ol’ Freda, the story of The Beatles’ loyal secretary’s long-secret decade of adventures with the legendary band, will be screened on Monday, Nov. 10. Good Ol’ Freda herself, Freda Kelly, will attend and participate in the Q&A afterward with producer Kathy McCabe, an award-winning photographer and Beatles expert.

November will intertwine visual artistry, music, dance, stories and more cultural explorations with the Mystical Arts of Tibet Monday, Nov. 10, through Friday, Nov. 14; storyteller Ariana Ross’ Story Tapestries on Sunday, Nov. 16 and five performances of the pioneering American classic stage musical Oklahoma!

The Tibetan monks of Drepung Loseling monastery will begin their visit to ETSU on Monday, Nov. 10, at noon, with a ceremony initiating a four-day mandala sand painting project in Reece Museum. The museum will be open for all to observe the process and artistry 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day through Thursday, Nov. 13, 5 p.m., when the closing ceremony – also open to the public – takes place.

On Friday, Nov. 14, at 7:30 p.m., the monks will combine music, dance and bold, traditional costuming for Sacred Music/Sacred Dance, in which each of the main chantmasters simultaneously intones three notes, thus each individually creating a complete chord. The Tibetans are the only culture on earth that cultivates this vocal ability, also known as “overtone” or “multiphonic” singing.

Story Tapestries on Sunday, Nov. 16, at 3 p.m. will also be a blending of multiple arts and cultures, as well as a family-oriented performance. Based on her work as storyteller and teacher in India, Brazil and Vietnam, Ross founded Story Tapestries, which interweaves acrobatics, dance, history, storytelling and music from countries around the world.

Concluding Mary B. Martin School of the Arts’ fall 2014 season will be Rodgers & Hammerstein’s Oklahoma!, melding the talents of ETSU’s Department of Music and Division of Theatre & Dance. The romantic musical comedy will run Wednesday-Saturday, Nov. 19-22, at 7:30 nightly and Sunday, Nov. 23, at 2 p.m.

For information about the ETSU Mary B. Martin School of the Arts, call 423-439-TKTS (8587) or visit www.etsu.edu/martin. Please “Like” ETSU Mary B. Martin School of the Arts on Facebook and follow it on Twitter and Instagram @ArtsAtETSU.