

Filmmaker Gary Hanna's 'We're Still Here' Features Adam Nelson's Fight to Save UArts

New Film Series Focused on UArts' Collapse Taps Alumni to Address Sudden Shutdown

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Local filmmaker and UArts graduate [Gary Hanna](#) (Class of 2004, Film Major, Screenwriting Minor) is proud to present the latest vignette in his documentary series, "[University of the Arts](#) – We're Still Here," featuring Adam Nelson, a 1991 UArts Theatre alumnus and Founder & CEO of [WORKHOUSE](#). The project sheds light on the deep impact University of the Arts has had on its graduates and highlights the ongoing fight to uncover the reasons behind the abrupt and shocking closure of the nearly 150-year-old institution.



Watch "University of the Arts – We're Still Here," featuring Adam Nelson here
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZIZTdfv58g>

Gary Hanna has set out to create a platform for UArts alumni to share their experiences, professional accomplishments, and the lasting influence of their arts education. The vignette series, which aims to spotlight alumni who have successfully built careers off of their UArts degrees, directly counters the misguided notion that arts education is an obsolete path. This campaign showcases how an arts degree is not a relic but a vital force shaping industries, communities, and cultures worldwide. Through these vignettes, UArts graduates continue to thrive despite the institution's sudden closure.

"The arts are the cornerstone of American culture, and institutions like UArts are essential to

nurturing the next generation of creative leaders,” said Nelson. “The closure of UArts is not only a loss for the community but a symbolic failure in the broader narrative about the role of arts education in this country.”

Nelson, a seasoned Public Relations executive and recipient of numerous accolades, shares his thoughts in his feature about the importance of preserving institutions like UArts and the questions that remain unanswered in the wake of its closure. “We’re still waiting for answers from the legislative committee hearings concerning the unexplained collapse of UArts. The administration and Board of Trustees must be held accountable for their actions, and we won’t rest until the full story is brought to light,” Nelson said.

The Shocking Closure of UArts: A National Concern
UArts, founded in 1876, has been a cornerstone in

the creative community, both locally in Philadelphia and internationally, nurturing generations of artists, musicians, and cultural leaders. However, in a swift and unexplained move, the Board of Trustees announced UArts’ permanent closure in May 2024, citing financial difficulties. Students and staff were left scrambling, with tuition and salaries hanging in limbo, and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) confirming the loss of accreditation.

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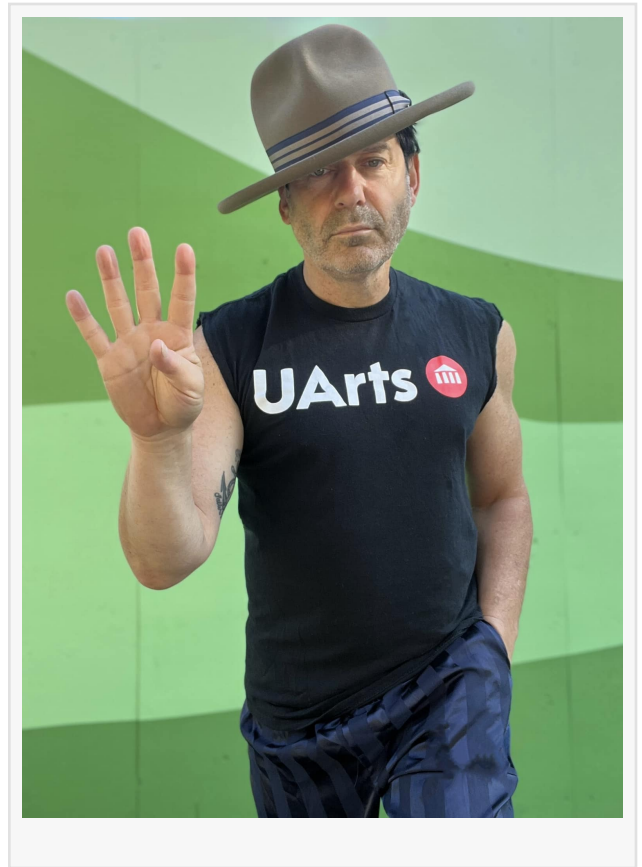
We’re calling on the city, state, & federal government to unveil the results of their investigations. UArts is not just a building—it’s a symbol of what the arts mean. Time to fight for its survival”

*Adam Nelson, CEO,
Workhouse*

cannot be overstated,” said Nelson. “The egregious actions of the trustees, and their utter failure to provide an adequate closure plan, demand full transparency and accountability.”

A Call to Action

Hanna and Nelson, alongside other alumni and advocates, are determined to hold those responsible accountable. Nelson has offered the full resources of his Public Relations agency to push for transparency and help mobilize the alumni network to preserve UArts’ legacy. “We’re



calling on the city, state, and federal government to unveil the results of their investigations. UArts is not just a building—it's a symbol of what the arts mean to Philadelphia and far beyond. It's time to fight for its survival and for the future of arts in America," Nelson continued.



Hanna's University of the Arts – We're Still Here series is a vital reminder that while the institution may be gone, its alumni remain, making significant contributions to the creative world. "No

one wears their alma mater as a name tag in public, but we carry its influence in our work," said Nelson. "This project is about the importance specialized institutions play in fostering creativity."

Expanding the Conversation Across the Country

Hanna hopes that this project will inspire other filmmakers and alumni across the country to create similar vignettes, bringing awareness to local communities and showcasing the contributions of UArts graduates globally. "The closure of UArts is a national issue, and I'm encouraging others to continue this campaign in their cities—California, New York, Japan—wherever UArts alumni are making an impact," said Hanna.

Alumni, students, and community members flood social media, demanding answers for the institution's abrupt collapse. "This isn't something we can let fade away," Nelson stated. "The arts build more than careers—they build culture, drive social change, and inspire generations. When an institution like UArts is erased overnight, we're not just losing a school, we're losing a vital force that fuels creativity and connection. This fight is about safeguarding the spaces where ideas take shape and the boldness to imagine something greater."

Adam Nelson, UArts Class of 1991, has built a formidable career as a leader in public relations and marketing. He is the Founder & CEO of WORKHOUSE, a boutique PR agency known for its stylish and high-impact campaigns. Nelson has received numerous awards throughout his career, including the MarCom Career Achievement Award and Best in Biz "Marketing Executive of the Year" in 2023. A tireless advocate for the arts, Nelson has represented industry icons like The Charlie Chaplin Estate, Francis Ford Coppola, and The Rolling Stones.

Gary Hanna is a Philadelphia based filmmaker, a UArts graduate, and his brand, Psynema, does corporate video production, with an emphasis on documentaries and non-profits. Through his work, Hanna continues to explore the intersection of art, culture, and social justice, with a focus on preserving the stories of marginalized voices. University of the Arts – We're Still Here is his

latest project, blending advocacy with alumni stories to spotlight the ongoing fight for transparency in UArts' closure.

Support the Campaign

For more information and to support the ongoing investigation, visit [WORKHOUSE](#) or follow the hashtag [#SaveUArts](#).

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