

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 22, 2016
[Press Room](#)

**CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY
#BERKELEYRADICAL**

**KRONOS QUARTET
PERFORMS *SUN RINGS*, TERRY RILEY'S MULTIMEDIA WORK FOR
STRING QUARTET AND CHOIR, MAY 1, 2016**

**Pre-performance talk with composer Terry Riley and David Harrington, Kronos Quartet violinist
and artistic director**

BERKELEY, March 22, 2016 –Cal Performances presents [Kronos Quartet](#) performing Terry Riley's *Sun Rings* (2002), "a major, moving work" (*Los Angeles Times*) from one of the ensemble's most prolific and creative collaborators. The 10-movement composition features celestial sounds and images culled from NASA recordings, with visual design by Willie Williams. The Bay Area new music vocal ensemble **Volti** joins Kronos for the performance on Sunday, May 1, at 7pm in Zellerbach Hall.

"The music's intentionally accessible beauty works hand in hand with gripping visuals to impart a sense of wondrous, transcendent unity," wrote the *San Francisco Classical Voice*.

Kronos Quartet and Terry Riley share a musical partnership that dates to the late 1970s at Mills College, where Riley taught composition, improvisation, and Hindustani classical music, and where the quartet was ensemble-in-residence. Since then, Kronos has commissioned 27 works by Riley, more than from any other single composer in the ensemble's 41-year history. Riley describes the movements of *Sun Rings* as "spacescapes," where eerie, percussive pre-recorded sounds of outer space interact with live string quartet and choir. Riley composed the piece around the time of the attacks of September 11, 2001, and in his decision to incorporate poet and novelist Alice Walker's mantra, "One Earth, One People, One Love," in the work's final movement, contemplates earthly human strife via the expansiveness and wonder of outer space.

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Kronos's performance of *Sun Rings* is the culmination of the inaugural year of Cal Performances' Berkeley RADICAL *Natural World* focus. Cal Performances' Berkeley RADICAL (**R**esearch **A**nd **D**evelopment **I**nitiative in **C**reativity, **A**rts, and **L**earning) initiative was announced in February 2015 and launched in September, with performances, symposia, and master classes with conductor Gustavo Dudamel and the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela. (For original digital content related to the Inaugural Residency, see Cal Performances' Berkeley RADICAL Revisited page at calperformances.org/about-berkeley-radical.) Berkeley RADICAL, a multiyear initiative, is designed to cultivate the artistic literacy of future audiences and to connect the world's most innovative artists with the intellectual capital of the UC Berkeley campus. Through carefully crafted public programs and creative artistic residencies, Berkeley RADICAL serves as a framework to expand the reach of Cal Performances by providing audiences with multiple access points to a single work of art or artist. Three strands of artistic exploration in the 2015-2016 season join together traditional genres with contemporary forms, encouraging Bay Area audiences to reimagine conventional ideas of the performing arts. They are *The Natural World*, *ReVisions*, and *ZellerBACH*. In addition to the performance of Terry Riley's *Sun Rings*, the *Natural World* programs for 2015-16 included performances of **David Robertson** and the **St. Louis Symphony Orchestra's** performance Olivier Messiaen's *Des Canyons aux Étoiles*, with multimedia by Berkeley photographer **Deborah O'Grady**, and Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan's performance of pioneering Chinese choreographer **Lin Hwai-min's** *Rice*.

Terry Riley first came to prominence in 1964 with his groundbreaking composition *In C*, which became the seminal work of minimalism. In the late '60s and early '70s he became known for weaving dazzlingly intricate music from improvisations on organ and synthesizer, and studied North Indian vocal techniques under the legendary Pandit Pran Nath. Riley's three-decade-long relationship with Kronos has yielded 27 works for string quartet, including *The Sands*, a concerto for string quartet; *Sun Rings*, commissioned by NASA; and *The Cusp of Magic*, for string quartet and *pipa*. Kronos' album *Cadenza on the Night Plain*, a collection of music by Riley, was selected by both *Time* and *Newsweek* as one of the 10 Best Classical Albums of the Year in

1988. The epic five-quartet cycle *Salome Dances for Peace* was selected as the #1 Classical Album of the Year by *USA Today* and nominated for a Grammy Award in 1989.

For more than 40 years, **Kronos Quartet**—David Harrington (violin), John Sherba (violin), Hank Dutt (viola), and Sunny Yang (cello)—has pursued a singular artistic vision, combining a spirit of fearless exploration with a commitment to continually reimagining the string quartet experience. In the process, Kronos has become one of the most celebrated and influential groups of our time, performing thousands of concerts worldwide, releasing more than 50 recordings of extraordinary breadth and creativity, collaborating with many of the world's most intriguing and accomplished composers and performers, and commissioning more than 850 works and arrangements for string quartet. In 2011, Kronos became the only recipients of both the Polar Music Prize and the Avery Fisher Prize, two of the most prestigious awards given to musicians. The group's numerous awards also include a Grammy for Best Chamber Music Performance (2004) and "Musicians of the Year" (2003) from Musical America. With a staff of 11 based in San Francisco, the non-profit Kronos Performing Arts Association manages all aspects of Kronos' work, including the commissioning of new works, concert tours and local performances, education programs, and more.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for Kronos Quartet on Sunday, May 1, at 7pm in Zellerbach Hall range from \$30 to \$76 (price subject to change). Half-price tickets are available for UC Berkeley students. Tickets are available through the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, at (510) 642-9988, at calperformances.org, and at the door. For more information about discounts, go to calperformances.org/buy/discounts.

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Cal Performances' 2015-2016 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Sunday, May 1 at 7pm

**Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at Dana Street, Berkeley**

New Music

Kronos Quartet

Program:

Terry Riley/*Sun Rings* (2002), with visual elements by Willie Williams

Tickets: Prices range from \$30–\$76 (prices are subject to change). They are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, at (510) 642-9988, at calperformances.org, and at the door.

Sunday, May 1, 6-6:30pm
Pre-performance Talk

Zellerbach Hall
Bancroft Way at Dana St., Berkeley

Composer Terry Riley and violinist and artistic director David Harrington talk about their creative and personal collaboration over many years, centered on a discussion of *Sun Rings*.

Free to ticketholders.