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[Press Room](#)

CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS

***OJAI AT BERKELEY* 2016
PETER SELLARS, MUSIC DIRECTOR
FESTIVAL TO FEATURE POWERFUL WOMEN'S VOICES
THURSDAY-SATURDAY, JUNE 16–18, 2016**



Left to Right: Dina El Wedidi, Peter Sellars, Kaija Saariaho, Julia Bullock, and Joana Carneiro. Photos available for download [here](#).

***LA PASSION de SIMONE* by KAIJA SAARIAHO
About the Life of Simone Weil
DIRECTED BY PETER SELLARS
ICE (INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY ENSEMBLE)
VOCAL ENSEMBLE ROOMFUL OF TEETH
Joana Carneiro, Conductor**

***JOSEPHINE BAKER: A PORTRAIT*
Music by Tyshawn Sorey, **Text by Cladia Rankine**, Performed by ICE and Tyshawn Sorey**

**SOPRANO JULIA BULLOCK TO PORTRAY SIMONE WEIL
AND JOSEPHINE BAKER**

***THE SOUNDS OF TAHRIR SQUARE, CAIRO*
Dina El Wedidi and Band**

***Ojai at Berkeley* Follows the 70th Ojai Music Festival
June 9–12, 2016, Ojai, California**

#WhyOjai

Berkeley, April 4, 2016—Cal Performances executive and artistic director Matías Tarnopolsky announced today the sixth season of *Ojai at Berkeley*, curated by music director Peter Sellars, to take place at Cal Performances, June 16–18, following the 70th Ojai Music Festival in Ojai, California. As two entities with similar artistic values, Ojai and Berkeley are known for intrepid artistic discovery, spirited intellect, and enduring engagement in the arts—*Ojai at Berkeley* celebrates the dynamic nature of the Ojai Music Festival and of Cal Performances.

Music director Peter Sellars' vision for *Ojai at Berkeley 2016* is to present voices of powerful women, each unique from various perspectives, “generations of women who created and are creating voices for the future.”

Ojai at Berkeley 2016 will open Thursday, June 16, at Zellerbach Playhouse with composer Kaija Saariaho's *La Passion de Simone*, about the life of the 20th-century French radical philosopher Simone Weil. Sellars calls the work, “a memorial to one of the most courageous and progressive philosophers in history, a difficult and determined freedom fighter.” Written originally for chorus and orchestra, this new chamber version—which will receive its American premiere in Ojai, and Bay Area premiere in Berkeley—will be performed by soprano Julia Bullock, ICE (International Contemporary Ensemble), and the vocal ensemble Roomful of Teeth, and conducted by Berkeley Symphony music director Joana Carneiro.

On Friday, June 17, Dina El Wedidi and her band will perform *The Sounds of Tabrir Square, Cairo* in Zellerbach Hall. Sellars calls El Wedidi's work, “the sound of the Arab Spring, and its echo. Her irresistible voice is an important part of the future of Egypt.” El Wedidi first appeared at Cal Performances to acclaim in February 2015 as part of The Nile Project.

On Saturday, June 18 at Zellerbach Playhouse, Julia Bullock will portray one of the greatest vocal and dance artists of the 20th century, Josephine Baker, whom Sellars sees as “a pathbreaking avatar of social, sexual, and racial liberation.” The work, with music by Tyshawn Sorey and **text contributed to by Claudia Rankine**, was commissioned by ICE and will feature members of the ensemble. *Josephine Baker: A Portrait* receives its world premiere at the Ojai Music Festival this year, and its Bay Area premiere in Berkeley.

A pre-performance artist talk with *Ojai at Berkeley* music director Peter Sellars and Cal Performances director Matías Tarnopolsky will take place on Friday, June 17, and is free to ticketholders attending that evening's

performance. Videos with Peter Sellars speaking about the programming can be viewed on the [Cal Performances YouTube channel](#). In one, he and Matías Tarnopolsky talk about [composer Kaija Saariaho](#). In another, Sellars describes contemporary music ensembles [Roomful of Teeth and ICE](#). He discusses women's voices [here](#) and Kaija Saariaho's *La Passion de Simone* [here](#).

Each summer the Ojai Music Festival explores the interests of its music director, selected annually to recognize unique musical visions. Cal Performances' partnership with the Ojai Music Festival for co-commissions and co-productions creates leveraged support for unusual and new musical presentations and brings performances from Ojai to Cal Performances' stages. More than just a sharing of resources, *Ojai at Berkeley* represents a joining of artistic ideals and aspirations and is Cal Performances' own iteration of the Ojai Music Festival. The organizations' shared legacies of artistic innovation and groundbreaking productions create a joint force that allows artists to achieve more than would be possible by each institution separately. The programs of *Ojai at Berkeley* 2016 are created by Peter Sellars, in collaboration Thomas W. Morris, artistic director of the Ojai Music Festival, and Matías Tarnopolsky, artistic and executive director of Cal Performances.

PETER SELLARS

Opera, theater, and festival director Peter Sellars has gained international renown for his groundbreaking and transformative interpretations of artistic masterpieces and for collaborative projects with an extraordinary range of creative artists. He has staged operas at the Dutch National Opera, English National Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Opéra National de Paris, Salzburg Festival, and San Francisco Opera, among others, and has established a reputation for bringing 20th-century and contemporary operas to the stage, including works by Hindemith, Ligeti, Messiaen, and Stravinsky.

Sellars has been a driving force in the creation of many new works with longtime collaborator John Adams, including *Nixon in China*, *The Death of Klinghoffer*, *El Niño*, *Doctor Atomic*, *A Flowering Tree*, and *The Gospel According to the Other Mary*. Inspired by the compositions of Kaija Saariaho, Sellars has guided the creation of productions of her work that have expanded the repertoire of modern opera. Sellars' production of *Desdemona*, a collaboration with Nobel Prize-winning novelist Toni Morrison and Malian composer and singer Rokia Traoré, has been performed in major cities across Europe and the United States, including at Cal Performances in Berkeley, which co-commissioned the work.

Recent Sellars projects include a production of *The Indian Queen*, combining Henry Purcell's music, text, and dance, and a concert staging of *Pelleas et Melisande* with the Berlin Philharmonic. In 2015, Sellars collaborated with flex dance pioneer Reggie Gray and a group of 21 dancers from the New York City flex community to create *Flexn*, a powerful work confronting issues of social injustice in America. Upcoming projects in 2016 include a concert staging of Orlando di Lasso's *Lagime di San Pietro* with the Los Angeles Master Chorale.

Peter Sellars has led several major arts festivals, including the 1990 and 1993 Los Angeles Festivals and the 2002 Adelaide Arts Festival. In 2006, he was artistic director of New Crowned Hope, a month-long festival in Vienna for which he invited artists from diverse cultural backgrounds to create new work in the fields of music, theater, dance, film, the visual arts, and architecture for the celebration of Mozart's 250th birth anniversary.

He is a Distinguished Professor in the Department of World Arts and Cultures at UCLA, a resident curator of the Telluride Film Festival, and was a Mentor for the Rolex Arts Initiative. In 2014–2015, he was director-in-residence at the English National Opera and he is currently director-in-residence at the Berlin Philharmonic. His awards include a MacArthur Fellowship, the Erasmus Prize for contributions to European Culture, the Lillian Gish Prize for outstanding contribution to the beauty of the world and to mankind, and the Polar Music Prize. Peter Sellars is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL

The Ojai Music Festival, under the leadership of artistic director Thomas W. Morris, presents broad-ranging programs with an eclectic mix of rarely performed music, refreshing juxtapositions of musical styles, and new music. The four-day festival in the picturesque Ojai Valley, north of Los Angeles, is a complete immersive experience with concerts, free community events, symposia, film screenings, and gatherings. Considered a highlight of the summer season, Ojai has remained a leader in the classical music landscape. The Festival was founded in 1947, and each year the artistic director appoints a music director to curate the season's programming. Acclaimed conductors, composers, and artists who have led the Festival in the past include Aaron Copland, Igor Stravinsky, Ingolf Dahl, Pierre Boulez, Robert Craft, Michael Tilson Thomas, Dawn Upshaw, Calvin Simmons, Kent Nagano, Mark Morris, Jeremy Denk, and John Adams, among many others. The 2016 Ojai Music Festival takes place June 9-12, 2016. Visit OjaiFestival.org for a complete listing of events and performances.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for *Ojai at Berkeley*, June 16–18, are \$20. A Festival Pass good for all three *Ojai at Berkeley* performances is \$45. Half-price tickets are available for UC Berkeley students. Tickets go on sale to the public Saturday, April 9 at 1pm and will be available through the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, at (510) 642-9988, at calperformances.org, and at the door. For more information about discounts, visit 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 AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS
OJAI AT BERKELEY
JUNE 16–18, 2016
IN ZELLERBACH HALL AND ZELLERBACH PLAYHOUSE**

**Peter Sellars, music director
Thomas W. Morris, artistic director, Ojai Music Festival
Matías Tarnopolsky, executive and artistic director, Cal Performances**

SCHEDULE AND PROGRAMS:

**Thursday, June 16, 2016 at 8pm
Zellerbach Playhouse
Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley Campus**

**Kaija Saariaho
La Passion de Simone
Text: Amin Maalouf**

**Julia Bullock, soprano
ICE (International Contemporary Ensemble)
Roomful of Teeth
Joana Carneiro, conductor
Peter Sellars, director**

Ben Zamora, lighting designer

Tickets: \$20. *Ojai at Berkeley* Festival Pass good for entry to all three performances \$45. On sale Saturday, April 9 at 1pm.

Friday, June 17, 2016, 6:30-7:30pm

Zellerbach Hall

Bancroft Way at Dana Street

UC Berkeley Campus

Pre-performance Talk

Artist talk with *Ojai at Berkeley* music director Peter Sellars and Cal Performances director Matías Tarnopolsky

Tickets: The pre-performance talk is free to all ticketholders for the concert that evening.

Friday, June 17, 2016 at 8pm

Zellerbach Hall

Bancroft Way at Dana Street

UC Berkeley Campus

Dina El Wedidi and Band: *The Sounds of Tahrir Square, Cairo*

Turning Back

Eight Nayikas

Tickets: \$20. *Ojai at Berkeley* Festival Pass good for entry to all three performances \$45. On sale Saturday, April 9 at 1pm.

Saturday, June 18, 2016 at 8pm

Zellerbach Playhouse

Bancroft Way at Dana Street

UC Berkeley Campus

Josephine Baker: A Portrait (commissioned by ICE)

Arrangements and new music: **Tyshawn Sorey**

Julia Bullock, soprano

ICE (International Contemporary Ensemble)

Tyshawn Sorey, piano and drums

Claudia Rankine, text

Tickets: \$20. *Ojai at Berkeley* Festival Pass good for entry to all three performances \$45. On sale Saturday, April 9 at 1pm.

– Cal Performances –