



Sunday, April 24, 2016, 7pm
Zellerbach Hall



Billy Collins and Aimee Mann

An Evening of Poetry, Acoustic Music, and Conversation

*Tonight's performance will be announced from the stage
and performed without intermission.*

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

Billy Collins, former United States Poet Laureate (2001–2003), is an American phenomenon. No poet since Robert Frost has managed to combine high critical acclaim with such broad popular appeal. His work has appeared in a variety of periodicals including *The Paris Review*, *The New Yorker*, and *The American Scholar*, and he is a Guggenheim fellow and a New York Public Library “Literary Lion.” His last three collections of poems have broken sales records for poetry and his readings are usually standing-room-only affairs. The poems themselves best explain this phenomenon. The typical Collins poem opens on a clear and hospitable note but soon takes an unexpected turn; poems that begin in irony may end in a moment of lyric surprise. No wonder Collins sees his poetry as “a form of travel writing” and considers humor “a door into the serious.”

Billy Collins has published numerous collections of poetry, including *Questions About Angels*, *The Art of Drowning*, *Sailing Alone Around the Room*, *Nine Horses*, *The Trouble With Poetry and Other Poems*, *Ballistics*, *Horoscopes for the Dead*, *Picnic*, *Lightning*, *Aimless Love*, and *Voyage*. A collection of his haiku, *She Was Just Seventeen*, was published by Modern Haiku Press in 2006. He has also published two chapbooks, *Video Poems* and *Pokerface*. In addition, Collins has edited two anthologies of contemporary poetry: *Poetry 180: A Turning Back to Poetry* and *180 More: Extraordinary Poems for Every Day*; was the guest editor of *The Best American Poetry 2006*; and edited *Bright Wings: An Illustrated Anthology of Poems about Birds*, illustrated by David Allen Sibley (2009).

Included among the honors he has received are fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Guggenheim Foundation. Collins has also been awarded the Oscar Blumenthal Prize, the Bess Hokin Prize, the Frederick Bock Prize, and the Levinson Prize—all awarded by *Poetry* magazine; the Aiken-Taylor Award in Modern American Poetry; The Hall-Kenyon Prize; and the Mailer Prize for Poetry. In 2004, Collins was selected as the inaugural recipient of the Poetry Foundation’s Mark Twain Award for Humor in Poetry. His poems have been translated into numerous languages.

Billy Collins is a former US Poet Laureate (2001–2003) and New York State Poet Laureate (2004–2006). He is a professor of English at Lehman College of the City University of New York, as well as a Distinguished Fellow of the Winter Park Institute at Rollins College. In March 2016, Billy Collins was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Aimee Mann is one of the most distinguished singer-songwriters of her generation. Her successful solo career has spanned three decades, earning several Grammy nominations and a Grammy Award, and including the release of seven critically acclaimed albums. Her work on the profoundly popular soundtrack for the film *Magnolia* garnered an Academy Award nomination for Best Song (“Save Me”) in 2000, while NPR voted her one of the Top 10 Best Living Songwriters along with Paul McCartney, Bob Dylan, and Bruce Springsteen. *Time* magazine has said, “Mann has the same skill that great tunesmiths like McCartney and Neil Young have: the knack for writing simple, beautiful, instantly engaging songs.”