



Saturday, October 7, 2017, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Matt Groening and Lynda Barry
Love, Hate & Comics—The Friendship That Would Not Die

Cal Performances' 2017–18 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

Matt Groening, creator and executive producer of the Emmy Award-winning series *The Simpsons*, made television history by bringing animation back to prime time and creating an immortal nuclear family. *The Simpsons* is now the longest-running scripted series in television history and was voted “Best Show of the 20th Century” by *Time Magazine*.

Groening also served as producer and writer during the four-year creation process of the hit feature film *The Simpsons Movie*, released in 2007. In 2009 a series of Simpsons US postage stamps personally designed by Groening was released nationwide. Currently, the television series is celebrating its 30th anniversary and is in production on the 30th season, where Groening continues to serve as executive producer.

Originally brought to life in 1987 for short animated interstitials on *The Tracey Ullman Show*, *The Simpsons* was Groening’s introduction into the long-form animation world. He was previously best known for his *Life In Hell* cartoon strip, which was syndicated in more than 250 weekly newspapers for more than 30 years, and the books, calendars, and merchandise based on Groening’s irreverent portrayal of love, work, school, life, and relationships.

Groening’s other Emmy-winning creation, *Futurama*, was launched in 1999 and ran for seven seasons. This included four direct-to-DVD full-length original feature releases: *Bender’s Big Score*, *The Beast With A Billion Backs*, *Bender’s Game*, and *Into the Wild Green Yonder*. *Futurama* enjoyed great success with new episodes on Cartoon Network and then on Comedy Central and continues in widespread syndication. In 2016–17 Groening’s Curiosity Company, in partnership with FoxNext Games, launched a series of *Futurama* mobile games; the most recent is “*Futurama* Worlds of Tomorrow.”

In 1993 Groening formed Bongo Comics Group, for which he serves as publisher of more than 500 domestic and internationally licensed comic books, trade paperbacks, and trade books, in both print and digital form, along with a host of yearly *Life in Hell*, *Simpsons*, and *Futurama* calendars. To date there are more than 15 million of Groening’s publications based on *The*

Simpsons, *Futurama*, and *Life in Hell*. Groening has launched The Simpsons Store app and the Futuramaworld app; both feature online comics and books.

The multitude of awards bestowed on Matt Groening’s creations include Emmys, Annies, the prestigious Peabody Award, and the Rubeen Award for Outstanding Cartoonist of the Year, the highest honor presented by the National Cartoonists Society.

Netflix has announced Groening’s new series, *Disenchantment*.

Lynda Barry has worked as a painter, cartoonist, writer, illustrator, playwright, editor, commentator, and teacher, and found they are very much alike. *The New York Times* has described Barry as “among this country’s greatest conjoiners of words and images, known for plumbing all kinds of touchy subjects in cartoons, comic strips, and novels, both graphic and illustrated.” She earned a degree from Evergreen State College during its early experimental period (1974–78), studying with painter and writing teacher Marilyn Frasca. Frasca’s questions about the nature of images and the role they play in day-to-day living have guided Barry’s work ever since.

In 1979, while pursuing a career as a painter, Barry began drawing a weekly comic strip incorporating stories considered to be incompatible with comics at the time—stories, as Barry puts it, “that had a lot of trouble in them.” Widely credited with expanding the literary, thematic, and emotional range of American comics, Barry’s seminal comic strip, *Ernie Pook’s Comeek*, ran in alternative newspapers across North America for 30 years.

Barry has authored 21 books, worked as a commentator for NPR, and had a regular monthly feature in *Esquire*, *Mother Jones Magazine*, *Mademoiselle*, and *Salon*. She created an album-length spoken word collection of stories called *The Lynda Barry Experience* and was a frequent guest on the *Late Show with David Letterman*. She adapted her first novel, *The Good Times are Killing Me*, into a long-running off-Broadway play, since published by Samuel



French and performed throughout North America. Her book *One! Hundred! Demons!* was chosen as the Freshman all-read title at Stanford University. Her novel *Cruddy* was called “a work of terrible beauty” by the *New York Times*, and has been translated into French, Italian, German, Catalan, and Hebrew.

Barry’s “Writing the Unthinkable” workshop—especially designed for non-writers—was the subject of a *New York Times Magazine* article and is the basis for her award-winning book *What It Is*. She is currently an associate professor in interdisciplinary creativity and director of the Image Lab at the Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery, and the Chazen Family Distinguished Chair in Art at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. At UWM she has also led

writing workshops for the public, and hosted a “Seeing-Eye”-themed series of popular public talks with guests including Ryan Knighton, blind writer and writing teacher; Ivan Brunetti and Chris Ware, legendary contemporary cartoonists; Matt Groening, creator of *The Simpsons*; and Dan Chaon, acclaimed novelist and short story writer.

Barry has received numerous awards and honors for her work, among them two William Eisner awards, the American Library Association’s Alex Award, the Washington State Governor’s Award, the Wisconsin Library Association’s RR Donnelly Award, the Holtz Center for Science & Technology Outreach Fellowship, and the 2017 Milton Caniff Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Cartoonists Society.