

**Extraordinary.
Fearless.
Live.**

Celebrating 120 years
of LIVE performing arts!

**2026-27
SEASON**



Cal
PERFORMances

Extraordinary. Fearless. Live.

THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET
OSCAR®



Welcome to Cal Performances' 2026-27 season, a celebration capping 120 years of presenting the world's most exciting performers at UC Berkeley.

What began in 1906 with a dramatic performance benefitting those impacted by the great San Francisco earthquake has expanded beyond anyone's wildest dreams—and yet, at its center, Cal Performances has remained true to the spirit that started it all, amplifying the performing arts' power to unite us, inspire us, and create a better future.

I'm proud to unveil wide-ranging programming that demonstrates what makes Cal Performances such a stronghold of artistic excellence. We continue to deepen invaluable relationships with return visits by artists like the **Vienna Philharmonic** with conductor **Yannick Nézet-Séguin** and guest soloists **Elina Garanča**, **Christiane Karg**, and **Yuja Wang**; expansive programs honoring milestones for composers **Philip Glass** and **Steve Reich**; **Wynton Marsalis'** final US tour as artistic director of the **Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra**; two performances and related campus activities by the **Attacca Quartet**, our 2026-27 Ensemble in Residence; and the West Coast premiere of **William Kentridge's** *The Head & the Load*, an epic masterpiece spotlighting African soldiers of WWI and the first performance in a new initiative that will see a Kentridge stage work on each of our next five seasons.

While we honor the familiar, we also promote curiosity and innovation—investing in new works, artists, and ideas. Our season-opening weekend (September 25-27) serves as a strong example of this commitment, featuring the extraordinary dancers of **The Australian Ballet** in the North American premiere of *Oscar*, a bold new creation about Oscar Wilde by famed choreographer **Christopher Wheeldon**. *Oscar* also kicks off the exploration of our 2026-27 *Illuminations* theme, "Innocence & Experience." (For much more on *Illuminations*, please see pp. 6-7.)

And as the following pages amply demonstrate, there is so much more in store! I'm grateful to our community for supporting the live performing arts in the Bay Area. That Cal Performances' programming has inspired countless memories and moments of transformation over our 120 years is not lost on me, and I look forward to all the 2026-27 season will add to our shared history.

Jeremy Geffen
Executive and Artistic Director

There's a seat waiting for you at Cal Performances!

We bring the world's most exciting artists to the Bay Area and share live art at its most powerful, visionary, and entertaining—set in a culture of fearless thinking.

Join us for a season as wide-ranging as your curiosity—and be moved, thrilled, and inspired!

Contents

- 6** *Illuminations*
- 8** **Ensemble in Residence**
- 10** **Theater**
- 12** **Orchestra & Chamber Music**
- 18** **Recital**
- 24** **Early Music**
- 28** **New Music**
- 32** **Dance**
- 38** **Jazz**
- 40** **Vocal Celebration**
- 42** **Family**
- 45** **Seasonal Holidays**

Venue Key

- ZH** Zellerbach Hall
- ZP** Zellerbach Playhouse
- HH** Hertz Hall
- FC** First Church, Berkeley
- HK** Henry J. Kaiser Center for the Arts, Oakland

Our subscribers are the heart of Cal Performances.

Because of your curiosity, enthusiasm, and love of the arts, the world's most exciting artists choose our stages. When you subscribe by bundling as few as four performances, you unlock the very best experience we have to offer!

Serious Savings

Save up to 25% on single-ticket prices plus enjoy 10% off additional single tickets all season long.

Best Seats

We know that seating matters. That's why our Subscribers and Donors get access to the best seats in the house in advance of single-ticket buyers.

Free Exchanges

Plans change? No problem! Subscribers can exchange tickets for free up to a day before the performance.

Freedom

Build a "Choose-Your-Own By Number" package to fit your schedule and mix and match whatever intrigues you most, no matter the genre!

Community

Subscribing means more than great seats and savings—you're joining a community of adventurous arts lovers. Be moved, thrilled, and inspired alongside fellow Subscribers.



Season Subscription Options

Choose-Your-Own By Number Save up to 20%

The widest choice of performances. The more you see, the more you save!

Save 10%

Select 4 or 5 events on a single order.

Save 15%

Select 6 or 7 events on a single order.

Save 20%

Select 8 or more events on a single order.

Choose-Your-Own By Genre Save up to 25%

Immerse yourself in the kinds of performing arts you love! Select four or more performances in the same genre and save 25%.

YUJA WANG

Cal Performances' *Illuminations*—a series of performances, lectures, and conversations—connects extraordinary artistry with groundbreaking scholarship to explore pressing topics of today.

This season's *Illuminations* theme explores “Innocence & Experience” as intertwined forces that transform one another and influence our understanding of the world. Innocence is frequently thought of as a kind of purity or a blank canvas—something to be celebrated or protected, yet vulnerable to disruption. Experience, meanwhile, reflects knowledge—coupled often with intransigence—gained from navigating the complexities of love and loss, of care and conflict.

Join us for poignant and transformative stories—youthful idealism facing power, beauty shadowed by vulnerability, bodies carrying the weight of history—and walk away with a deeper understanding of the forces shaping our humanity.

Cal *illuminations*
PERFORMances

Innocence & Experience



THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET
OSCAR®

The Australian Ballet
Oscar® by Christopher Wheeldon

Fri, Sep 25, 7:30pm
Sat, Sep 26, 1pm & 7:30pm
Sun, Sep 27, 3pm, ZH

See page 32 for full listing.

William Kentridge's
The Head & the Load
With music composed and conceived by Philip Miller with Thuthuka Sibisi

Thu-Sat, Nov 12-14, 7:30pm
Sun, Nov 15, 3pm, HK

See page 10 for full listing.



WILLIAM KENTRIDGE'S
THE HEAD & THE LOAD

Jason Moran and the Harlem Hellfighters

James Reese Europe and the Absence of Ruin

Sat, Nov 21, 7:30pm, ZH

See page 38 for full listing.



JASON MORAN



AMBROSE AKINMUSIRE & ASZURE BARTON
B E N D

Ambrose Akinmusire & Aszure Barton

A a | a B : B E N D

Fri-Sat, Dec 4-5, 7:30pm, ZH

See page 33 for full listing.

Compagnie Hervé Koubi
Sol Invictus

Fri-Sat, Feb 5-6, 7:30pm, ZH

See page 34 for full listing.



COMPAGNIE HERVÉ KOUBI
SOL INVICTUS

A Maria Manetti Shrem
Great Artist Performance

Henry Purcell's
Dido and Aeneas

Joyce DiDonato, mezzo-soprano
Il Pomo d'Oro Orchestra and Choir

Wed, Feb 10, 7:30pm, ZH

See page 26 for full listing.



JOYCE DIDONATO

2026-27

Ensemble in Residence

Attacca Quartet

Amy Schroeder, violin
Domenic Salerni, violin
Nathan Schram, viola
Andrew Yee, cello

Cal Performances welcomes the “exuberant, funky” (*The New York Times*) Attacca Quartet as 2026–27 Ensemble in Residence. A visionary and omnivorous ensemble, the Attacca is defined by an insatiable curiosity for both the established and the unfamiliar, the old and the new. The group moves effortlessly across—and beyond—the traditional boundaries of the string quartet, performing repertoire from iconic classical works to modern electronica, indie rock, and video game music, while also forging innovative collaborations with living composers and guest artists. It’s an ethos that aligns naturally with that of the Cal Performances audience: adventurous, open-minded, and deeply engaged with music as a living, evolving art form. Beyond the ensemble’s two programs, the quartet will expand its residency through campus engagement events (dates to be announced).

ATTACCA
QUARTET

“Along with uncommon vibrancy, [Attacca] brings to the table a wild, almost punk aesthetic as fitting as it is rare.”

The Plain Dealer

Attacca Quartet with Caroline Shaw, voice and violin

Sun, Jan 31, 3pm, HH

In its first appearance this season, the brilliant Attacca Quartet shares the fruits of its auspicious creative partnership with Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Caroline Shaw. The ensemble has won Grammy Awards for both of its recordings of Shaw’s music—*Orange* from 2019 and *Evergreen* from 2022—and continues to engage with her rich explorations of the distinction between art song and chamber music. Shaw joins the ensemble on voice and violin in music that “exudes joy and a sense of wildness” (*Pitchfork*).

Attacca Quartet

Sun, Feb 28, 3pm, HH

JOHN ADAMS *Iron Jig* (Bay Area Premiere, Cal Performances Co-commission)
Selections from *John’s Book of Alleged Dances*
BEETHOVEN String Quartet in A minor, Op. 132

Early in its history and barely out of conservatory, the Attacca recorded composer John Adams’ complete works for string quartet to great acclaim, boldly venturing into musical terrain few string ensembles had dared to explore. Now, as part of a special Cal Performances celebration of Adams’ 80th birthday, the quartet returns for its second visit this season with a program featuring the composer’s new *Iron Jig* and selections from *John’s Book of Alleged Dances*—a sardonic work infused with bluegrass, jazz, and pre-recorded prepared piano loops. “The Attacca have their own distinctive take on this repertoire, and, as a result ... impressively realize the depth and versatility of Adams’ music for string quartet. ... A phenomenal ensemble that plays with a mix of maturity, adventure, and musical insight well beyond their years” (*The Arts Fuse*).

Patron Sponsor: Greg Lutz

Visit calperformances.org/ensemble-in-residence for information about campus events and activities as they are announced.

“A masterpiece...”

The Evening Standard

WILLIAM KENTRIDGE'S
THE HEAD & THE LOAD

William Kentridge's *The Head & the Load*

With music composed and
conceived by Philip Miller
with Thuthuka Sibisi

West
Coast
Premiere

Thu–Sat, Nov 12–14, 7:30pm
Sun, Nov 15, 3pm, HK

William Kentridge, *concept and director*
Philip Miller, *composer*
Gregory Maqoma, *choreography*
Thuthuka Sibisi, *music director and co-composer*

Visionary South African artist William Kentridge returns to Cal Performances following two extraordinarily well-received previous visits (which featured *Sibyl* in 2023 and *The Great Yes, The Great No* in 2025) with a seminal work that chronicles—through dance, projection, speech, song, shadow play, costume, and music—the untold history of the more than two million Africans who labored, fought, and died during the First World War. *The Head & the Load* takes its name from a Ghanaian proverb, “The head and the load are the troubles of the neck,” and continues Kentridge’s exploration of history, language, and artistic and political movements through richly layered and inventive performance works.

Praised as “a fiercely beautiful historical pageant” by the *New York Times*, Kentridge’s production unfolds on a massive stage, weaving together texts by anticolonial authors and Dada poets in multiple languages, with original music by Philip Miller and Thuthuka Sibisi that intermingles traditional African songs with quotes from WWI-era European music by Satie, Hindemith, and Schoenberg.

An Illuminations: “Innocence & Experience” event.
Visit calperformances.org/illuminations for details.

Support for this performance is provided
by The Council for Kentridge.

Title Sponsor: Brenda Potter

Series Sponsor: Jonathan Logan Family Foundation

Lead Sponsor: Spaht Family Foundation

Additional Support: John Atwater and Diana Nelson;
Howard & Sarah D. Solomon Foundation

Major Support: Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation

Patron Sponsor: Nadine Tang (11/15)

The Head & the Load was originally co-commissioned by 14-18 NOW: WWI Centenary Commissions, MASS MoCA, Park Avenue Armory, Ruhrtriennale, and Yale Schwarzman Center with additional support from Holland Festival.

Lead support for the development of *The Head & the Load* has been provided by Brenda R. Potter, Daniel R. Lewis, the W.L.S. Spencer Foundation, and Jennifer & Jonathan Allan Soros, with further support from Alessia Bulgari, Agnes Gund, and Wendy Fisher. Additional support has been provided by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, JKW Foundation, the Mellon Foundation, Simeon Bruner, Robert Gold, Sarah McNair, Randal Fippinger, John and Cynthia Reed, Bill & Sako Fisher, Quatenaire, and donors who wish to remain anonymous.

Created in residence at MASS MoCA, North Adams, 2018, and Kentridge Studios, Johannesburg, 2017–2018. *The Head & the Load* was developed in collaboration with the chamber orchestra The Knights, based in New York.

The Maria Manetti Shrem
and Elizabeth Segerstrom
California Orchestra Residency

Vienna Philharmonic
Yannick Nézet-Séguin, conductor

Tue, Mar 2, 7:30pm, ZH

MAHLER Symphony No. 9

Yuja Wang, piano
Christiane Karg, soprano

Wed, Mar 3, 7:30pm, ZH

PROKOFIEV Piano Concerto No. 3
MAHLER Symphony No. 4

Christiane Karg, soprano
Elina Garanča, mezzo-soprano
San Francisco Symphony Chorus
Jenny Wong, director

Thu, Mar 4, 7pm, ZH*

MAHLER Symphony No. 2, *Resurrection*

*Gala performance

A highlight of the season! The ravishing Vienna Philharmonic returns to Berkeley for three concerts led by dynamic maestro Yannick Nézet-Séguin. The revered 185-year-old orchestra and star conductor—who together brought down the house at their last Zellerbach Hall performances in March 2025—have enjoyed a close partnership over many years, a relationship finely honed through numerous tours and recordings. For this visit, the focus is Mahler, a particularly important figure in the Philharmonic's history whose Ninth Symphony received its posthumous premiere by the orchestra in 1912. The composer's unforgettable music is a perfect match for the towering musical institution, which will be joined by a selection of internationally acclaimed guest artists throughout the Berkeley residency.

The first performance features Mahler's poignant final completed symphony, one of the most profound and emotionally complex works in the orchestral repertoire. The second night features both the serene charms of Mahler's Fourth Symphony, with Christiane Karg as soprano soloist, and Prokofiev's rambunctious Concerto in C major, with superstar pianist Yuja Wang joining at the keyboard. In the final program, Mahler's mighty *Resurrection* symphony takes the listener on a journey through earthly trials to ultimate transcendence, and features vocalists Christiane Karg and Elina Garanča, and the San Francisco Symphony Chorus.

The Maria Manetti Shrem and Elizabeth Segerstrom California Orchestra Residency

Patron Sponsors: Nadine Tang (3/3);
Jerome and Thao Dodson (3/4)

VIENNA PHILHARMONIC
YANNICK NÉZET-SÉGUIN,
CONDUCTOR



ELINA
GARANČA



CHRISTIANE
KARG



YUJA
WANG

SAVE
THE DATE
THU,
MAR 4,
2027

Cal Performances'
2027 Gala with the
Vienna Philharmonic

5:30pm Cocktail Reception, Lower Sproul Plaza
7pm Performance, Zellerbach Hall
9pm Gala Dinner, Zellerbach Playhouse

Cal Performances invites you to join us on Thursday, March 4, 2027, for an unforgettable evening with the Vienna Philharmonic. All proceeds from this event will support Cal Performances' artistic initiatives and education programs. The best seats for the performance will be reserved for gala guests. Seating will be limited, so we encourage you to save the date and plan to be part of this festive, high-profile event. More information will be available soon. In the meantime, contact Cal Performances' Development Office at 510.642.8653 or donate@calperformances.org with any questions.

“The Vienna Philharmonic sound is so sumptuous it takes a rare conductor to resist its advances. ... The Viennese fondness for [Nézet-Séguin] may well be that, in his exuberance, he lets them live it up.”

Los Angeles Times

Takács Quartet with Jeremy Denk, piano

Sun, Oct 11, 3pm, ZH

MENDELSSOHN String Quartet in F minor
GABRIELA LENA FRANK *Quijotadas*
FRANCK Piano Quintet in F minor

Takács Quartet

Sun, Jan 24, 3pm, HH

MOZART String Quartet in F major, K. 590
CARLOS SIMON *Warmth from Other Suns*
BEETHOVEN String Quartet in B-flat major,
Op. 130, with Finale

Cal Performances audience favorite, the superlative Takács Quartet returns to Berkeley in two performances this season, welcoming the ensemble's newest member, cellist Mihai Marica. In the fall, the stellar combination of pianist Jeremy Denk—winner of a MacArthur “Genius” Fellowship and the Avery Fisher Prize—and the Grammy-winning quartet promises music-making of unparalleled virtuosity and deep emotional intelligence. The program features a work by Berkeley native Gabriela Lena Frank—named Composer of the Year in 2026 by *Musical America*—that explores the extravagant delusions of Cervantes’ *Don Quixote*. And the Romantic composer César Franck’s searing and sensual Piano Quintet in F minor showcases Denk’s passionate side.

In its January visit, the Takács balances Beethoven’s innovative and deeply personal Opus 130 quartet—played here including the dance-like finale with which the piece was published—with a recent work by American composer Carlos Simon, whose *Warmth from Other Suns* is inspired by stories of Black Americans’ resettlement northwards during the Great Migration of the 20th century.

Patron Sponsor: Carol T. Christ (10/11)



JEREMY
DENK



TAKÁCS
QUARTET

Attacca Quartet with Caroline Shaw, voice and violin

Sun, Jan 31, 3pm, HH

See page 9 for full listing.

Attacca Quartet

Sun, Feb 28, 3pm, HH

See page 9 for full listing.



ATTACCA QUARTET



DANISH STRING QUARTET

Danish String Quartet

Sun, Feb 21, 3pm, HH

GABRIELLA SMITH *Carrot Revolution*
SHOSTAKOVICH String Quartet No. 14 in F-sharp major
BEETHOVEN String Quartet in C-sharp minor, Op. 131

The Danes are back! Celebrated for its uncanny ensemble chemistry and profound interpretive insight, the Danish String Quartet has charmed Berkeley audiences with a seductive blend of cherished masterpieces and contemporary chamber works. This season, the quartet plays Berkeley native Gabriella Smith’s grooving, dynamic *Carrot Revolution*; Shostakovich’s fourteenth quartet, which centers the cello as soloist; and Beethoven’s dramatic, moving late-period Opus 131 quartet. “They could be grounded in their tone or mystical. They allowed time to stand still, and they could assume the pose of excitingly aggressive rockers. They did it all!” (*Los Angeles Times*).

Major Support: Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation

Patron Sponsor: The Lynne LaMarca Heinrich and Dwight M. Jaffee Fund

“What lingered most after the final chord was not just the refinement of the playing, but the sheer vitality the Takács Quartet continues to bring to the stage. They play not like a group looking back, but like musicians still in love with the act of discovery.”
Seen and Heard International

Le Concert des Nations
Jordi Savall, director
Beethoven Symphonies Nos. 3 & 5

Fri, Apr 23, 7:30pm, ZH

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 3, *Eroica*
Symphony No. 5

In Jordi Savall's fascinating programs, Berkeley audiences have come to expect the unexpected—painstakingly curated works by lesser-known and often anonymous composers that explore history and reveal connections between people and cultures. The venerable viol master and conductor is still full of surprises! This season, he puts his personal stamp on iconic works of the early 19th century—Beethoven's third and fifth symphonies. This concert is part of Savall's project (and lifelong dream) to record and perform all nine of the composer's symphonies on period instruments, an approach that has received widespread praise for its "electricity and freshness," "its roaring energy and its humanity" (*The Times*, London).

LE CONCERT DES NATIONS
JORDI SAVALL, DIRECTOR



DAVID FINCKEL & WU HAN

David Finckel, cello
Wu Han, piano

Sun, Mar 14, 3pm, HH

MYASKOVSKY Cello Sonata No. 2
PROKOFIEV Cello Sonata
RACHMANINOFF Cello Sonata

Superstars of the chamber music world, the husband and wife duo of cellist David Finckel and pianist Wu Han has had a singular impact on American concert music for more than a quarter century, with the artists recognized as elite performers, committed educators, and respected impresarios. This all-Russian program features Rachmaninoff's rhapsodic Cello Sonata along with Prokofiev's mercurial Cello Sonata and Myaskovsky's Second Cello Sonata, which was inspired by a particularly memorable performance of the Prokofiev work by Finckel's one-time teacher, the great Mstislav Rostropovich. "A performance in which lyricism and virtuosity shared equal roles, but what made it particularly memorable was the degree of exquisitely intimate ensemble achieved by Finckel and pianist Han, with spontaneity, vigor and seamless melody" (*The Washington Post*).

Dover Quartet

Sun, Apr 4, 3pm, HH

MOZART String Quartet in B-flat major, K. 458, *The Hunt*
SIBELIUS String Quartet in D minor, *Voces intimae*
BRAHMS String Quartet in C minor, Op. 51, No. 1

Praised for a "full and glowing sound" (*BBC Music Magazine*) and the "depth, color, lucidity, power, and grace" (*San Francisco Classical Voice*) its players bring to a wide range of repertoire, the Dover Quartet has been on a wild ride since its stunning sweep of all the prizes at the Banff International String Quartet Competition a little more than a decade ago. In the interim, the group was nominated for two Grammy awards and named one of the greatest string quartets of the last 100 years by *BBC Music Magazine*. The Dover returns to Berkeley with a substantial program of contrasting temperaments, ranging from Mozart's ebullient Quartet in B-flat major and Sibelius' spare and brooding Quartet in D minor, to Brahms' sumptuous first quartet.



DOVER QUARTET



LESTER LYNCH

Lester Lynch, baritone
Kevin Korth, piano

Sun, Sep 27, 3pm, HH

→ Works by Mahler, Schubert, Barber, and Mussorgsky, as well as arrangements of select traditional songs by Gordon P. Getty†

A regal presence on stages the world over, dramatic baritone Lester Lynch has tackled many of the most iconic opera roles to great acclaim: Crown in *Porgy and Bess*, Wotan in *Das Rheingold*, the Conte di Luna in *Il Trovatore*, and the title roles in *Macbeth* and *Rigoletto*. He can sing with both great power and silken subtlety, and brings dramatic flair and gravitas to his rare recital performances. For his Cal Performances debut, Lynch lends his “vocal beauty and emotional honesty” (*San Francisco Classical Voice*) to selections exploring love, loss, and mortality, including Samuel Barber’s brooding *Dover Beach*, written at just 21 for baritone and string quartet, as well as a delightful selection of traditional songs and spirituals.

Ben Bliss, tenor
Christopher Allen, piano

Sun, Oct 18, 3pm, HH

The “honeyed lyric tenor” (*The New York Times*) and master Mozartean Ben Bliss has dazzled fans at the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, and grand halls in Vienna and Paris with his expressive, agile voice. Recent seasons have found him at the Met in Jeanine Tesori’s *Grounded* and singing Don Ottavio in Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Bliss visits Berkeley with pianist Christopher Allen—“a thrilling collaborator, finding orchestral colors in his virtuosic playing” (*Opera Today*)—for a rare and intimate recital. “You’ll seldom hear a finer performance” (*The New York Times*).



BEN BLISS



TOM BORROW

Tom Borrow, piano

Sun, Oct 4, 3pm, HH

MOZART Piano Sonata in A minor, K. 310
LISZT *Réminiscences de Don Juan*
Piano Sonata in B minor

Named a BBC New Generation Artist by age 22—an honor that has led to performances with all the BBC orchestras, at Wigmore Hall, and on multiple BBC broadcasts—Tom Borrow’s star is on the rise. Borrow is a protégé of Murray Perahia, and his debut with the Cleveland Orchestra several seasons ago put him on the international map: the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* raved, “Borrow stands out with a touch that’s both light and powerful, and supremely incandescent.” Here he plays Mozart’s Sonata in A minor alongside Liszt’s “operatic fantasy” based on Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*, plus his notoriously complex and harrowing Sonata in B minor.

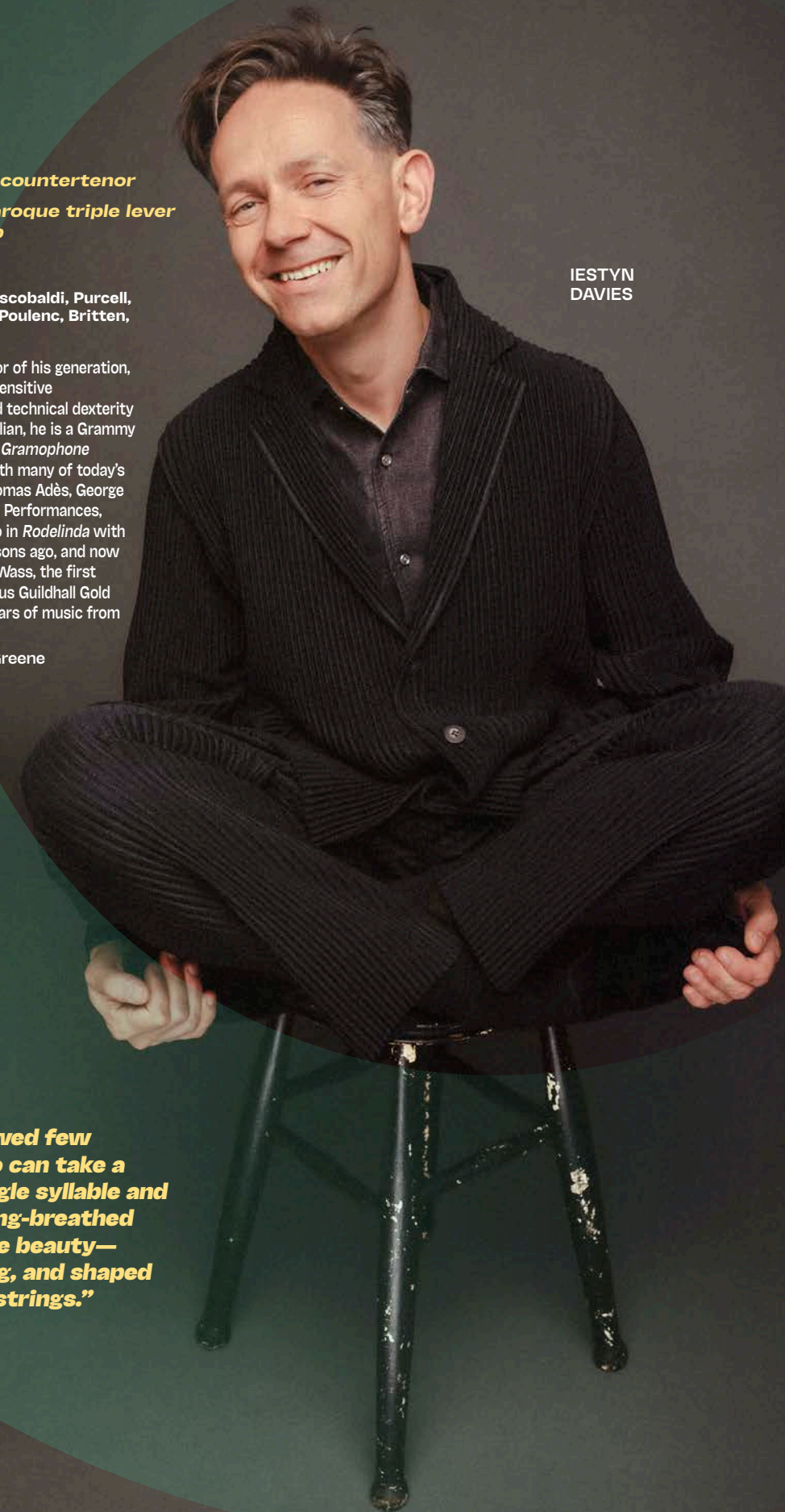
Iestyn Davies, countertenor
Oliver Wass, Baroque triple lever harp and modern harp

Sun, Oct 25, 3pm, HH

→ Works by Monteverdi, Frescobaldi, Purcell, Handel, Schubert, Debussy, Poulenc, Britten, Beach, and Nico Muhly†

The most respected countertenor of his generation, Iestyn Davies is praised for his sensitive musicianship and the beauty and technical dexterity of his voice. An esteemed Handelian, he is a Grammy winner and recipient of multiple *Gramophone* awards, and has collaborated with many of today’s leading composers, including Thomas Adès, George Benjamin, and Nico Muhly. At Cal Performances, Davies sang the role of Bertarido in *Rodelinda* with The English Concert several seasons ago, and now he returns in recital with Oliver Wass, the first harpist ever to win the prestigious Guildhall Gold Medal, for a ride through 400 years of music from the Old and New Worlds.

Patron Sponsor: Bernice E. Greene



IESTYN DAVIES

“One of those hallowed few countertenors who can take a single note on a single syllable and spin it out into a long-breathed thing of immaculate beauty—shifting, modulating, and shaped to tug at the heartstrings.”

Bachtrack

Ema Nikolovska,
mezzo-soprano
Sean Shibe, guitar
Orlando Variations

Sun, Nov 1, 3pm, HH

Mezzo-soprano Ema Nikolovska returns to Berkeley following her memorable 2024 debut—this time joined by acclaimed guitarist Sean Shibe—in an eclectic concert weaving together acoustic and electric music across genres and centuries. *Orlando* riffs on the character and energy of Virginia Woolf’s groundbreaking novel, with echoes of the medieval *Chanson de Roland* and Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso*. Exploring love, conflict, and identity, the duo performs works by Schubert, Dowland, Bob Dylan, Laurie Anderson, and others alongside new commissions by Sasha Scott, Nahre Sol, and more. “The experience felt like being awake in a vivid dream... their shared artistic purpose and daring made it gel” (*The Times*, London).



EMA NIKOLOVSKA



SEAN SHIBE

Lukas Sternath, piano

Sun, Jan 17, 3pm, HH

SCHUBERT/arr. LISZT Selected song transcriptions†
SCHUBERT *Wanderer Fantasy*
LISZT *Années de pèlerinage*,
“Deuxième année: Italie”

A protégé of both Igor Levit and Paul Lewis, 24-year-old pianist Lukas Sternath has burst onto the international concert stage following a stream of high-profile competition awards. As a boy chorister, Sternath toured the world with the esteemed Vienna Boys Choir; since then, he has gone on to perform with leading European orchestras, making his debut with the Vienna Philharmonic during the 2025–26 season. His Cal Performances program features the second book from Liszt’s extraordinary *Années de pèlerinage*, which includes Liszt’s famous *Petrarch Sonnets* and his *Dante Sonata*; a beguiling selection of Schubert songs arranged by Liszt; and Schubert’s epic, restless *Wanderer Fantasy*.

Patron Sponsors: Art Berliner and Marian Lever



LUKAS STERNATH



Mitsuko Uchida, piano

Fri, Jan 29, 7:30pm, ZH

HAYDN Variations in F minor
SCHOENBERG *Six Little Piano Pieces*, Op. 19
MOZART Rondo in A minor, K. 511
KURTÁG *Márta ligatúrāja*
SCHUBERT Piano Sonata in A major, D. 959

Revered for her unmatched sensitivity and deep musical insight, and performing today at the height of her considerable powers, pianist Mitsuko Uchida returns to Berkeley in a solo recital of masterworks by composers with whom she has been closely associated over decades of performances and recordings. She was named *Musical America’s* Artist of the Year in 2022 and has been a vital part of the leadership of the Marlboro Music Festival for more than 20 years. Additionally, her 2022 recording of Beethoven’s *Diabelli Variations* was nominated for a Grammy Award and won the *Gramophone* Piano Award. Uchida’s program explores a kaleidoscope of sentiment and character, from Haydn’s inventive Variations in F minor, to a playful Mozart rondo, to Schubert’s transcendent late-period Sonata in A major.

Major Support: Anonymous

Additional Support: Diana Bersohn

“She captivates both the ear and the emotions with one exquisitely turned phrase after another.”

The Standard, UK

MITSUKO UCHIDA

Blake Pouliot, violin
Henry Kramer, piano
Follow the Lieder

Sun, Feb 14, 3pm, HH

- DVOŘÁK/arr. POULIOT** *Zigeunerlieder*
- JIMMY LOPEZ** *New Work (West Coast Premiere, Cal Performances Co-commission)*
- SCHUBERT** *Fantasy in C major, D. 934*
- FAURÉ/arr. POULIOT** *Selected song transcriptions from Op. 7 & Op. 23*
- CHAUSSON** *Poème*
- HUBAY** *Carmen Fantasie Brillante*

Rising star Canadian violinist Blake Pouliot and close collaborator, American pianist Henry Kramer (a recipient of an Avery Fisher Career Grant), present the West Coast premiere of a newly commissioned work from in-demand California composer Jimmy Lopez—a graduate of the UC Berkeley music department whose acclaimed *Dreamers* oratorio was commissioned by Cal Performances several seasons ago. The duo also showcases its remarkable musical interplay in Schubert's *Fantasy in C major*—a monumental opus from the composer's last year—and a series of works devoted to the influence of art song on instrumental music.



HENRY KRAMER

BLAKE POULIOT

“One of those special talents that comes along once in a lifetime.”
 Toronto Star



BEHZOD ABDURAIMOV

Behzod Abduraimov, piano

Sun, Mar 7, 3pm, HH

- BRAHMS** *Four Piano Pieces, Op. 119*
- CZERNY** *Variations on a Theme by Rode, Op. 33*
- LISZT** *Après une lecture du Dante: Fantasia quasi Sonata*
- DEBUSSY** *Suite bergamasque*
- STRAVINSKY** *Three Movements from Petrushka*

Uzbek pianist Behzod Abduraimov returns following his rousing Cal Performances recital debut during the 2024–25 season. Abduraimov is admired for combining power and delicacy in performances as both an orchestral soloist and recitalist. His program sparkles with underperformed gems of the repertoire, including Debussy's *Suite bergamasque*, Brahms' introspective and wistful Opus 119, and Stravinsky's diabolical piano arrangement of music from his ballet, *Petrushka*.

Paul Lewis, piano

Sun, Apr 11, 3pm, HH

- MOZART** *Piano Sonata in D major, K. 284*
- MENDELSSOHN** *Variations sérieuses*
- COPLAND** *Piano Variations*
- MOZART** *Piano Sonata in A major, K. 331*

Paul Lewis' arresting performances have been praised for their “total fidelity to the music's structure and inner spirit, and an emotional response that never suffocates or distorts” (*The Times*, London). Revered for his interpretations of canonical works of the Classical and Romantic periods, Lewis makes his long-awaited return to Cal Performances with a pair of timeless Mozart sonatas, matched with Mendelssohn's virtuosic *Variations sérieuses* and Copland's rarely performed, enigmatic *Piano Variations*, which Leonard Bernstein once described as “sharp as nails ... so prophetic, harsh and wonderful, and so full of modern feeling and thinking.”

Patron Sponsors: Jeffrey MacKie-Mason and Janet Netz



PAUL LEWIS



IESTYN DAVIES

Iestyn Davies, countertenor
Oliver Wass, Baroque triple lever harp and modern harp

Sun, Oct 25, 3pm, HH

See page 19 for full listing.

Jean Rondeau, harpsichord
All-French Baroque Program

Sun, Nov 8, 3pm, HH

L. COUPERIN Suite in D major

RAMEAU Prelude in A minor
 Suite in A major

F. COUPERIN Prelude in C major, from *L'Art de toucher le clavecin*
La Ténébreuse
La Favorite

ROVER *La marche des Scythes*

Returning to Cal Performances following his memorable 2023 recital, French harpsichordist Jean Rondeau—truly a global ambassador for his instrument—visits with a characteristically ambitious and insightful program exploring the marvelous keyboard works of the French Baroque. “It’s an exciting time for the harpsichord. Today’s musicians can draw eclectically from a rich tradition of historically informed performance without being beholden to ‘authenticity.’ The best harpsichordists working in the 21st century have a keen excitement about using the Baroque instrument in new and imaginative ways. At the forefront of this movement is the French musician Jean Rondeau” (*San Francisco Classical Voice*).



JEAN RONDEAU

The Tallis Scholars
Slings and Arrows...

Peter Phillips, director

Fri, Apr 16, 7:30pm, FC

DES PREZ *Missa Fortuna desperata*

BUSNOIS *Fortuna desperata*

MOUTON *Nesciens mater*

LAMBE *Nesciens mater*

GOMBERT *Magnificat III*
Regina caeli for 10 voices

The Tallis Scholars have come a long way since founder Peter Phillips first gathered a group of fellow undergraduates to sing Renaissance songs at Oxford University more than 50 years ago. The peerless ensemble, a pioneer of this century’s early-music revival, is celebrated far and wide for its uncanny vocal blend, pristine clarity, and purity of tone in a range of Renaissance polyphony. The Tallis singers return to Berkeley with a program centered on one of Josquin des Prez’s true masterpieces, his *Missa Fortuna desperata*, as well as works by Jean Mouton, Walter Lambe, and Nicolas Gombert. “Hearing The Tallis Scholars live is a trip. When the 10 singers open up in two and a half or three octaves of spacious polyphony, you have the aural sense of a cathedral in sound” (*San Francisco Classical Voice*).



THE TALLIS SCHOLARS

Théotime Langlois de Swarte, Baroque violin
Thomas Dunford, lute

The Mad Lover: Works by the Eccles, Purcell, and Matteis Families†

Sun, Mar 21, 3pm, HH

Two of the most exciting young voices in historically informed performance return to Cal Performances to play a hauntingly expressive recital exploring the 17th-century English notion of melancholy. Violinist Théotime Langlois de Swarte and lutenist Thomas Dunford use John Eccles’ *Mad Lover Suite* as a springboard to draw connections between works by three musical families—the English brother-composers Daniel and Henry Purcell, John and Henry Eccles, and the Italian father-son composers Nicola Matteis and Nicola Matteis Jr.



“The duo swerves between daydreaming optimism ... to bruised turmoil. The performances from both are imaginative, quick in colour, corporeal, sexy.”
 The Guardian

THÉOTIME LANGLOIS DE SWARTE & THOMAS DUNFORD

Opera & Oratorio

A Maria Manetti Shrem
Great Artist Performance

**Henry Purcell's
Dido and Aeneas**

Joyce DiDonato, *mezzo-soprano*
Il Pomo d'Oro Orchestra
and Choir

Wed, Feb 10, 7:30pm, ZH

Maxim Emelyanychev, *conductor and harpsichord*
Joyce DiDonato, *mezzo-soprano* (Dido)
Nick Phan, *tenor* (Jephte and Aeneas)
Beth Taylor, *mezzo-soprano* (Sorceress)
Hugh Cutting, *countertenor* (Spirit)
Song Hee Lee, *soprano* (Belinda)
Jiayu Jin, *soprano* (Second Woman and Filia)
Massimo Altieri, *tenor* (Sailor)
Alena Dantcheva, *soprano* (First Sorceress)
Anna Piroli, *soprano* (Second Sorceress)

CARISSIMI *Jephte*
PURCELL *Dido and Aeneas*

In a true season highlight, star mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato returns to Berkeley with the Italian period-music ensemble Il Pomo d'Oro in a program of Baroque music presented with exquisite freshness and flair. This time, DiDonato and company bring tragedy, performing Purcell's brilliant and beloved opera *Dido and Aeneas* and Carissimi's deeply emotive oratorio *Jephte* in concert. DiDonato has triumphed in opera houses worldwide as the tragic Queen of Carthage in Berlioz's *Les Troyens*, but it wasn't until 2024 that she first performed Purcell's opera in its entirety. To hear her lend her "astonishing vocal prowess" (*The Classical Review*) to highlights like Dido's famous lament, "When I am laid in earth," with these telepathically sensitive accompanists promises to be a rare treat.

An *Illuminations*: "Innocence & Experience" event. Visit calperformances.org/illuminations for details.

Major Support: Maria Manetti Shrem

Patron Sponsor: Helen Berggruen for Five Arts Foundation

JOYCE DIDONATO



MONTEVERDI CHOIR & ENGLISH BAROQUE SOLOISTS

**J. S. Bach's
St. Matthew Passion**

Monteverdi Choir
English Baroque Soloists
Masaaki Suzuki, *conductor*

Sun, Feb 21, 5pm, ZH

Cast to include:
Nick Pritchard, *tenor* (Evangelist)
Florian Störtz, *bass* (Jesus)

BACH *St. Matthew Passion*

Sister period-music ensembles the English Baroque Soloists and the Monteverdi Choir—the gold standard in Baroque performance for decades—join forces with conductor Masaaki Suzuki for a very special US performance of Bach's crowning masterpiece during its 300th anniversary year. The majestic and powerfully dramatic *St. Matthew Passion* sets the 26th and 27th chapters of the Bible's Gospel of Matthew to music with interspersed chorales and arias, and is scored for massive forces: a double choir, double orchestra, and vocal soloists. Bach's transcendent oratorio conveys the story's intense human drama and moral dilemma, as recounted here by featured soloists Nick Pritchard as the Evangelist and Florian Störtz as Jesus.

Patron Sponsor: Susan Graham Harrison



THE ENGLISH CONCERT

**The English Concert
Handel's Alessandro**

Harry Bicket, *conductor and harpsichord*
Sun, Apr 25, 3pm, ZH

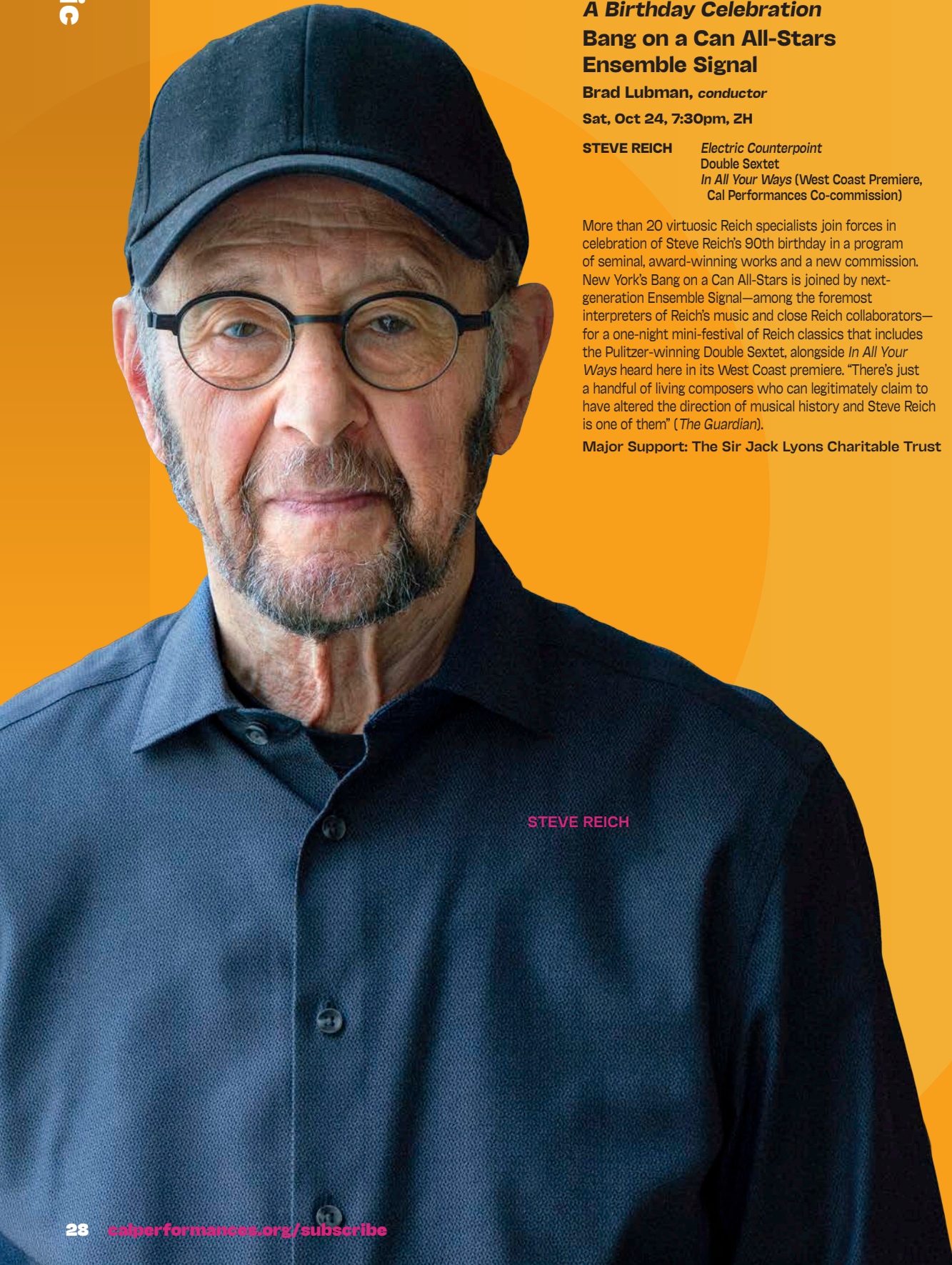
Christophe Dumaux, *countertenor* (Alessandro)
Joëlle Harvey, *soprano* (Lisaura)
Xenia Puskarz Thomas, *mezzo-soprano* (Rossane)
Ashley Riches, *baritone* (Clito)
Alexander Chance, *countertenor* (Cleone)
Anthony Gregory, *tenor* (Leonato)

The superlative musicians of The English Concert return for their annual Berkeley engagement with a concert presentation of Handel's 1726 opera *Alessandro*. The lively, charming score explores the romantic life of conqueror Alexander the Great, focusing less on Alessandro's acts of war and more on his turbulent love triangle with the two women who vie for his affection. French countertenor and Handel specialist Christophe Dumaux is Alessandro; American soprano Joëlle Harvey plays Lisaura, and mezzo-soprano Xenia Puskarz Thomas is her competitor, Rossane.

Major Support: Taube Family Foundation

Patron Sponsors: Anonymous;
The Estate of Ross E. Armstrong

"This ensemble sets a standard for Handel performance in the 21st century. ... Like a good wine, this music is savored, not gulped. No interlude is rushed, no aria taken for granted."
The New York Times



STEVE REICH

Steve Reich at 90
A Birthday Celebration
Bang on a Can All-Stars
Ensemble Signal

Brad Lubman, conductor

Sat, Oct 24, 7:30pm, ZH

STEVE REICH *Electric Counterpoint*
 Double Sextet
In All Your Ways (West Coast Premiere,
 Cal Performances Co-commission)

More than 20 virtuosic Reich specialists join forces in celebration of Steve Reich's 90th birthday in a program of seminal, award-winning works and a new commission. New York's Bang on a Can All-Stars is joined by next-generation Ensemble Signal—among the foremost interpreters of Reich's music and close Reich collaborators—for a one-night mini-festival of Reich classics that includes the Pulitzer-winning Double Sextet, alongside *In All Your Ways* heard here in its West Coast premiere. "There's just a handful of living composers who can legitimately claim to have altered the direction of musical history and Steve Reich is one of them" (*The Guardian*).

Major Support: The Sir Jack Lyons Charitable Trust



PHILIP GLASS

The Complete Philip Glass
Piano Etudes

Fri, Nov 20, 7:30pm, ZH

Pianists to include Timo Andres, Aaron Diehl, Daniela Liebman, and Jason Moran

Philip Glass' Piano Etudes, "portals into Glass' world of whirling arpeggios, shocking rhythmic and harmonic turns, and meditative discipline" (*The New York Times*), represent the composer's most personal body of work, a self-portrait of a life's practice representing some of his most intimate and inventive music. Cal Performances hosts a marathon tribute to the prolific and hugely influential composer during his 90th birthday year, inviting 10 accomplished pianists from all corners of the music world—both longtime Glass interpreters and special guests—to reflect on this remarkable music. "It works best, therefore, to think about the Etudes... as sketches of a creative force whose work will outlast any single one of us, including the artist who made it" (*The Guardian*).

Please note: Philip Glass will not be present for this performance.



CAROLINE SHAW

Attacca Quartet with Caroline Shaw, voice and violin

Sun, Jan 31, 3pm, HH
See page 9 for full listing.

Eco Ensemble

Sat, Feb 6, 7:30pm, HH

UC Berkeley's acclaimed new-music ensemble in residence is praised for its nuanced and attentive interpretations of contemporary chamber music. Specialists of timbre and sound with a keen affinity for electroacoustic music, Eco Ensemble has performed works by luminaries such as Kaija Saariaho and Toshio Hosokawa in recent years, and often devotes its programs to new and recent work by faculty and alumni of the Music Department's distinguished composition program. The ensemble is directed by faculty member David Milnes, who "never draws attention to himself, but the technical and musical excellence of his performances speaks volumes about his superb leadership" (*San Francisco Classical Voice*).



ECO ENSEMBLE

LUNA LAB@10:

Celebrating a Decade of Young Composers

Missy Mazzoli and Ellen Reid, *composers and hosts*

Fri, Feb 26, 7:30pm, ZP

**Dutt & Campbell Duo
Friction Quartet
The Living Earth Show**

Credited by the *New Yorker* for "changing the playing field" in contemporary music, Luna Composition Lab—founded in 2016 by acclaimed composers Missy Mazzoli and Ellen Reid—is reshaping the future by mentoring a wide range of female, nonbinary, and/or gender nonconforming composers ages 13 to 18. With LUNA LAB@10, the organization launches its most ambitious project yet: a 10th-anniversary celebration featuring 75 world premieres by 50 alumni, commissioned and performed by leading ensembles across the United States and abroad. This special performance spotlights three of these world premieres alongside music by Mazzoli—the Grammy-nominated composer deemed "one of the more consistently inventive, surprising composers now working in New York" (*The New York Times*)—and Reid, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for her opera *prism* (2019).



ELLEN REID



MISSY MAZZOLI



AGA KHAN MASTER MUSICIANS

Aga Khan Master Musicians with Vincent Peirani and Vincent Ségal

Fri, Apr 16, 7:30pm, ZH

Feras Charestan, qanun
Abbos Kosimov, doira
Wu Man, pipa
Vincent Peirani, accordion
Basel Rajoub, duclar, saxophone
Vincent Ségal, cello
Yurdal Tokcan, oud

The Aga Khan Master Musicians is an artist collective performing new music inspired by old traditions. Originally hailing from Central Asia, China, and the Middle East, its five core members—Feras Charestan, Abbos Kosimov, Basel Rajoub, Yurdal Tokcan, and Wu Man—all virtuosic in their own right, are joined here by two special guests from France, accordionist Vincent Peirani and cellist Vincent Ségal. The septet performs a program of jointly created works inspired by the ancient routes that connected trade and culture between Asia and the Mediterranean. "Their music is a beguiling expression of converging traditions and timbres" (*The Scotsman*).

Patron Sponsors: S. Shariq Yusufzai and Brian James

**Niladri Kumaar
The Space Between the Notes**

Sat, Apr 17, 7:30pm, ZH

Niladri Kumaar, sitar
Satyajit Talwalkar, tabla
Charlie Lindner, keyboards
Dèmitrio Albano, drums

Maverick instrumentalist and composer Niladri Kumaar is among the most compelling and innovative artists in Indian classical music today. A gifted sitarist, he was an admired collaborator and longtime protégé of the late *tabla* virtuoso Zakir Hussain—appearing multiple times with him at Cal Performances—and their special musical relationship is explored in Sumantra Ghosal's documentary film *The Space Between the Notes*. To honor his friend and mentor, Kumaar has created a new ensemble of Indian and North American musicians that will perform a program combining his own original compositions with works that he and Hussain used to play together. "I remain focused on finding my distinct voice within the continuum of luminaries who have shaped Indian classical music," says the sitarist. "Thus, my creative journey continues, guided by tradition yet open to innovation."

Patron Sponsors: Dr. Rupali Das-Melnyk and Dr. Ostap Melnyk



NILADRI KUMAAR

“The truth is... never simple”

Oscar Wilde



North American Premiere

The Australian Ballet

Oscar® by Christopher Wheeldon

Fri, Sep 25, 7:30pm
Sat, Sep 26, 1pm & 7:30pm
Sun, Sep 27, 3pm, 2H

→ Synopsis by Christopher Wheeldon and Joby Talbot based on an original idea by Alexander Wise and Christopher Wheeldon

Christopher Wheeldon, *choreography*
Berkeley Symphony Orchestra
Joby Talbot, *composer*
Jean-Marc Puissant, *stage and costume design*
Jon Goldman, *lighting design*
David Bergman, *video design*

Inspired by the legacy and lore of one of literature’s most extraordinary minds, Christopher Wheeldon’s visionary ballet blends awe-inspiring choreography with the story of Oscar Wilde. *Oscar* explores themes of romance, sacrifice, and forbidden love, weaving elements of Wilde’s biography together with references to his timeless stories and characters. Admired for both its artistic vigor and the emotional nuance of its programs, The Australian Ballet returns to Berkeley for the first time since the company’s memorable performances of *Swan Lake* more than a decade ago. Joby Talbot’s lush orchestral score is performed live by the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra, and designer Jean-Marc Puissant’s intricate set and costume designs complete this thrilling production. “A trailblazing masterpiece, rich with thought-provoking meaning, stirring emotion, unashamed hedonism, and breathtaking wonderment” (*Australian Arts Review*).

An *Illuminations*: “Innocence & Experience” event. Visit calperformances.org/illuminations for details.

Lead Sponsor: Anonymous

Major Support: Beth DeAtley; Rockridge Market Hall

Tour Partners of The Australian Ballet: Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer and Macquarie Group. *Oscar* has been generously funded by Lady Potter AC CMRI and The David Hallberg Fund for Artistic Aspiration, and The Robert and Elizabeth Albert Music Fund.

THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET
OSCAR®

*You were my
I had
the lowest and
passions, hatred
I had thrown it away. In*



Ambrose Akinmusire & Aszure Barton

A a | a B : B E N D

Fri-Sat, Dec 4-5, 7:30pm, 2H

Aszure Barton, *choreographer and director*
Ambrose Akinmusire, *composer, electronics, and trumpet*

Two leading lights in their fields—choreographer Aszure Barton and composer Ambrose Akinmusire—create an urgent, intimate yet wildly provocative world in which dancers and musician come together onstage in a thrilling embrace of human friction, tension, and explosive beauty. Barton is known for mining complex emotional terrain in her works, as in her smash hit *Mere Mortals* at San Francisco Ballet in 2024. She “offers an entire world, full of surprise and humor, emotion and pain, expressed through a dance vocabulary that takes ballet technique and dismantles it to near-invisibility” (*The New York Times*). Oakland’s own Akinmusire, “a trumpeter of deep expressive resources and a composer of kaleidoscopic vision” (*NPR Music*), performs his instrumental and electronics score live. “It’s magical. You can’t take your eyes off it. ... [In B E N D] the soul finds enough air to listen carefully” (*tanznetz*).

An *Illuminations*: “Innocence & Experience” event. Visit calperformances.org/illuminations for details.

Major Support: Nadine Tang

World
Premiere

MARK MORRIS
DANCE GROUP



Mark Morris Dance Group

Holidayland

A Cal Performances Co-commission

Fri, Dec 11, 7:30pm
Sat, Dec 12, 2pm
Sun, Dec 13, 3pm, ZH

Mark Morris, *staging and choreography*
Nico Muhly, *music*
R. L. Stine, *story*
Allen Moyer, *set design*
Elizabeth Kurtzman, *costume design*

From classical music-inspired creations like *L'Allegro, Il Penseroso ed il Moderato* (Handel) to pop music-drenched romps like *Pepperland* (The Beatles) and *The Look of Love* (Burt Bacharach and Hal David), Mark Morris has proven he can do it all. Up next is *Holidayland*, a celebratory, family-friendly work that brings to life the tale of a magic village that bursts into light, music, and dancing for one day each year. Created in collaboration with *Goosebumps* author R. L. Stine, this brand-new production features a score by acclaimed composer Nico Muhly performed live by the MMDG Music Ensemble and an imaginative visual world by Obie Award-winning scenic designer Allen Moyer. This lighthearted holiday confection is perfect for anyone who is young at heart!

Patron Sponsor: Helen and John Meyer

Compagnie Hervé Koubi

Sol Invictus

Fri-Sat, Feb 5-6, 7:30pm, ZH

Under the visionary direction of French Algerian choreographer Hervé Koubi, 17 extraordinary dancers from around the world unite to defy gravity in *Sol Invictus*. The dancers, who the *New Yorker* raves “could be mistaken for gods,” blend contemporary dance, the raw athleticism of hip-hop, and the precision of martial arts, creating a visual language like no other. As the dancers hurl themselves with hypnotic speed through the air in high-flying arcs and spins, they come to embody Koubi’s profound message: that despite the fractures of the world, community is humanity’s saving grace. *Sol Invictus* is propelled by a driving, cinematic score featuring compositions by Mikael Karlsson and Maxime Bodson, woven together with the iconic minimalism of Steve Reich.

An *Illuminations*: “Innocence & Experience” event.
Visit calperformances.org/illuminations for details.

COMPAGNIE HERVÉ KOUBI
SOL INVICTUS



Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo

Sat, Feb 27, 7:30pm
Sun, Feb 28, 3pm, ZH

Few performers can deliver a joke just as perfectly as they land a *grand jeté*—and the outrageously talented male performers of Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo do it with style and sass. Beguiling to ballet insiders and dance world newbies alike, the “Trocks” have been serving up their smart, *en pointe* satire of classic dance repertoire—pirouetting in lavish costumes and with just a hint of five o’clock shadow—for more than 50 years. “It’s the dancers’ serious unseriousness, their full commitment ... that grounds the work and allows us to escape into their world” (*The Ballet Herald*).

LES BALLETS TROCKADERO
DE MONTE CARLO



Ballet Folklórico de México de Amalia Hernández

75th Anniversary Tour

Sat, Feb 13, 7:30pm
Sun, Feb 14, 3pm, ZH

Salvador López López, *general director*
Viviana Basanta Hernández, *artistic director*

Culture bearers and global ambassadors, the artists of Ballet Folklórico de México have forged a reputation for excellence by introducing audiences worldwide to the artistry of Mexican folklore from pre-Columbian civilizations to the modern era. The company was founded 75 years ago in Mexico City by choreographer Amalia Hernández, a visionary who revolutionized the concept of Mexican traditional dance through both stunning original works and her research of regional folklore, music, costumes, and movement styles. The company has reached more than 45 million spectators worldwide and has received countless awards and accolades, positioning itself as one of the world’s premier folkloric dance ensembles.



BALLET FOLKLÓRICO DE MÉXICO
DE AMALIA HERNÁNDEZ



ALVIN AILEY
AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

**Alvin Ailey
American Dance Theater**

Tue–Fri, Apr 6–9, 7:30pm
Sat, Apr 10, 2pm & 7:30pm
Sun, Apr 11, 3pm, 2H

Alicia Graf Mack, Daria L. and Eric J. Wallach Artistic Director
Matthew Rushing, associate artistic director

The revered Ailey company returns in its eagerly anticipated annual residency, with renewed energy and vision under the artistic direction of celebrated former Ailey dancer Alicia Graf Mack. Elegance and strength, abstraction and soulfulness—the Ailey dancers’ movement is guided by a spiritual core that makes this company distinct, whether performing canonical Ailey masterworks like *Revelations* or bringing to life brand-new work by some of today’s most compelling choreographers. Graf Mack promises to carry Ailey’s legacy into the future, as evidenced by her own words: “We march boldly forward, dancing without fear, dreaming without limits, and conquering every challenge, every tomorrow with revelatory transcendence. So let’s dance!” Patron Sponsors: Janice and Nicholas E. Brathwaite (4/10, 2pm)



**MOMIX
Botanica**

Fri, May 7, 7:30pm
Sat, May 8, 2pm
Sun, May 9, 3pm, 2H

Moses Pendleton, artistic director

A magnificent tour of the seasons unfolds in *Botanica*, as the visual wizards of MOMIX combine acrobatics, extraordinary costumes, giant puppetry, and a dreamy, pulsing score that ranges from birdsong to Vivaldi. The ever-popular troupe—founded more than three decades ago by Pilobolus co-founder Moses Pendleton—creates a spellbinding theatrical world sure to delight audiences of all ages and described as “a fantasia of flora and fauna collaged together with creaturely humor” (*The Seattle Times*).

MOMIX
BOTANICA



JASON MORAN

Jason Moran and the Harlem Hellfighters

James Reese Europe and the Absence of Ruin

Sat, Nov 21, 7:30pm, ZH

The Absence of Ruin is innovative jazz pianist and composer Jason Moran's multidisciplinary meditation on the life and legacy of James Reese Europe, the underrecognized Black American composer and bandleader who landed in France with the Harlem Hellfighters on New Year's Day 1918. The celebrated all-Black unit helped break the stalemate on the Western front during the First World War, while composer Europe's finely honed military music ensemble popularized the new spirit of jazz in a war-torn France fascinated with Black culture. Praised by the *Washington Post* as a "beautiful, poignant, reverent" tribute to Europe with a "stark, sublime beauty," Moran's layered work explores the idea of memory in Black culture, augmenting his longstanding Bandwagon bandmates—bassist Tarus Mateen and drummer Nasheet Waits—with a seven-piece horn section and visuals by Oscar-nominated cinematographer Bradford Young.

An *Illuminations*: "Innocence & Experience" event. Visit calperformances.org/illuminations for details.



AMBROSE AKINMUSIRE

Ambrose Akinmusire & Aszure Barton

A a | a B: BEND

Fri-Sat, Dec 4-5, 7:30pm, ZH

See page 33 for full listing.



THE HOT SARDINES

The Hot Sardines
Holiday Stomp

Thu, Dec 17, 7:30pm, ZH

As the cold winter of December sets in, the Hot Sardines promise to warm things up with their sassy, swinging holiday show at Zellerbach Hall. The retro jazz band throws a raucous yuletide extravaganza inspired by beloved holiday films like *White Christmas* and *It's a Wonderful Life*, plus timeless jazz and popular music classics associated with Louis Armstrong, Édith Piaf, Duke Ellington, and more.

Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis

Fri, Feb 19, 7:30pm, ZH

In a landmark event, artistic director, trumpet virtuoso, and Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Wynton Marsalis brings his final tour as managing and artistic director of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra to Berkeley. Marsalis has been celebrating milestones of late, which reflects his superhuman efforts over the past 40 years to establish jazz as "America's classical music" and create a framework for its enduring support. Expect to be dazzled by a display of unparalleled versatility in sleek original compositions and arrangements, gutbucket New Orleans swing and blues, bouncing bebop, and majestic Ellingtonia.

Patron Sponsors: Beth DeAtley; Nadine Tang

"You can play Ellington differently than this ... but I can't imagine it being played better."
The Arts Fuse

WYNTON MARSALIS



Judy Collins

Sweet Judy Blue Eyes: The Farewell Tour

Sun, Oct 18, 3pm, ZH

A living legend of American music, Judy Collins returns to Berkeley with a retrospective concert that looks back on her six-decade-long career and pays tribute to the generations of artists she has influenced. A contemporary of Bob Dylan and Joan Baez, the beloved folksinger, songwriter, and activist became a household name with hit renditions of Joni Mitchell's "Both Sides Now" and Stephen Sondheim's "Send In the Clowns." She has recorded 55 albums and, as a testament to her impact on the music world, artists such as Rufus Wainwright, Shawn Colvin, Dolly Parton, and Leonard Cohen honored her legacy with the album *Born to the Breed: A Tribute to Judy Collins*. "A lovely trip down memory lane, allowing Collins, an ever-engaging raconteur, to weave together songs with stories and remembrances from across her legendary career" (*Toronto Guardian*).



JUDY
COLLINS



SAN FRANCISCO
GAY MEN'S CHORUS

San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus

Holiday Spectacular 2026!

Sat, Dec 19, 1pm & 5pm, ZH

In what has quickly become a cherished Cal Performances holiday tradition, the mischievous singing elves of the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus wrap Berkeley in a warm sonic hug at the annual *Holiday Spectacular*. With tra-la-la-ing and ho-ho-ho-ing galore, it's a uniquely Bay Area pageant with universal appeal! Expect year-end cheer in the form of seasonal earworms and campy sketches, served up with delicious slices of satire and sprinkled with plenty of charm.

Cheyenne Jackson

That Guy From That Thing

Sat, Mar 6, 7:30pm, ZH

Actor and vocal powerhouse Cheyenne Jackson makes his Cal Performances debut with a show that combines the glamour of cabaret with the intimacy of a musical memoir. Through evocative songs and magnetic storytelling, Jackson shares how "a super-tall, super-queer, super-Christian kid from northern Idaho" found his way to Broadway, television, and a national solo tour. Jackson was an original cast member in *Xanadu* on Broadway; appeared in television shows *American Horror Story*, *Glee*, and *30 Rock*; and earned a Grammy nomination for his collaboration with the San Francisco Symphony as Tony in *West Side Story*. "A carefully shaped self-portrait, told through music, memory, and a voice that knows how to fill a room. ... It was camp, pride, sincerity, and joy braided together" (*Stage and Cinema*).



CHEYENNE
JACKSON

AUDRA
McDONALD



An Evening with Audra McDonald

Sat, Mar 20, 7:30pm, ZH

A "once-in-a-generation soprano megastar" (*The New Yorker*) and winner of a record-breaking six Tony Awards, two Grammy Awards, and an Emmy, Audra McDonald is the whole artistic package. With her gleaming voice and incomparable gift for musical storytelling, McDonald is equally as mesmerizing in the concert hall as she is on Broadway or television. Critics described something akin to a spiritual awakening on experiencing her breathtaking transformation as the domineering Mama Rose in the most recent revival of *Gypsy*. Don't miss the return of this singular sensation performing her signature mix of songs from Broadway, the Great American Songbook, and beyond.

Patron Sponsors: Janice and Nicholas E. Brathwaite; Rachel and Matthew Scholl



MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP

Mark Morris Dance Group
Holidayland

Fri, Dec 11, 7:30pm
Sat, Dec 12, 2pm
Sun, Dec 13, 3pm, 2H

See page 34 for full listing.

Cirque Kalabanté
WOW (World of Words)

Sat, Nov 28, 2pm
Sun, Nov 29, 3pm, 2H **THANKSGIVING WEEKEND**

A high-energy visual spectacle for the whole family! Cirque Kalabanté brings traditional African movement and music into the Montreal circus arts tradition with *WOW (World of Words)*, a new production exploring the transmission of knowledge, the meeting of cultures, and the magic of shared respect. The troupe is led by Yamoussa Bangoura, a multidisciplinary artist of Guinean origin who realized his dream by founding a school of circus arts and directing a company specializing in African arts. "Between explosive drumming and dance routines, the group delivered mind-blowing acrobatic sequences with extraordinary precision" (*VICE Magazine*).



CIRQUE KALABANTÉ
WOW (WORLD OF WORDS)



KODO

Kodo
**One Earth Tour 2027:
Luminance**

Fri-Sat, Jan 22-23, 7:30pm
Sun, Jan 24, 3pm, 2H

Supreme athleticism, astonishing choreography, earth-shattering sounds drawn from enormous drums that conjure ancient rituals: the awe-inspiring drummers of Kodo return to Berkeley by popular demand! The new production *Luminance* celebrates both the troupe's 45th anniversary and *taiko's* ability to stir the soul. The show features highlights from Kodo's most popular tours, including the mighty *o-daiko* drum solo and climactic "Yatai-Bayashi" finale and a tribute to Maki Ishii's dynamic and beloved *taiko* composition "Monochrome," which involves 10 drums and two large, deeply resonant gongs. "A phenomenal performance by artists who appeared to have moved into a fantastical realm where the usual limits to human endeavour do not apply" (*Financial Times*).

Marvel Studios
BLACK PANTHER
in Concert

Sun, Jan 31, 2pm & 7pm, 2H

Some movies virtually demand to be watched on a big screen, among friends and family! Experience all the drama and majesty of Marvel Studios' *Black Panther*, presented with a live music score in Zellerbach Hall. Marvel heroes come to vivid life accompanied by a unique onstage music ensemble of African percussion instruments, flutes, and indigenous instruments performing highlights from Ludwig Göransson's Oscar- and Grammy-winning score. "The film lights up the screen with a full-throttle blast of action and fun. But what sneaks up and floors you is [its] racial conscience and profound, astonishing beauty" (*Rolling Stone*).

Presented by Marvel Studios, Disney Concerts, and AMP Worldwide.

BLACK PANTHER is rated PG13.



BLACK PANTHER



UKULELE ORCHESTRA
OF GREAT BRITAIN

**Ukulele Orchestra
of Great Britain**

Sat, Apr 24, 7:30pm, ZH

From Motörhead, the Muppets, Paul Simon, and Tchaikovsky, to Nirvana, Shirley Bassey, the Beach Boys, and Johnny Cash—no genre of music, from any era, is safe from the four-string renegades that comprise the Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain. Like a cover band in an episode of *Monty Python*, these strummers have been serving up clever arrangements with a side of self-deprecating British humor for 40 years. No drums, no pianos, no guitars, no backing tracks—just seven ukuleles and a lot of sass! “An exuberantly zany evening of fun” (*Santa Barbara Independent*).



MOMIX
BOTANICA

**MOMIX
Botanica**

Fri, May 7, 7:30pm
Sat, May 8, 2pm
Sun, May 9, 3pm, ZH

See page 37 for full listing.

**Cirque Kalabanté
WOW (World of Words)**

Sat, Nov 28, 2pm
Sun, Nov 29, 3pm, ZH THANKSGIVING WEEKEND

See page 42 for full listing.

WORLD PREMIERE
**Mark Morris Dance Group
Holidayland**

Fri, Dec 11, 7:30pm
Sat, Dec 12, 2pm
Sun, Dec 13, 3pm, ZH

See page 34 for full listing.

**The Hot Sardines
Holiday Stomp**

Thu, Dec 17, 7:30pm, ZH

See page 39 for full listing.

**Mariachi Herencia
de México**

**La Nueva Generación Tour
Día de los Muertos**

Fri, Oct 23, 7:30pm, ZH

Celebrate Día de los Muertos with Chicago’s rousing next-generation *mariachi* ensemble! Mariachi Herencia de México has taken the Latin music world by storm since it was founded 10 years ago by César Maldonado, then a member of the Mariachi Heritage Foundation, a nonprofit organization that promotes *mariachi* education in Chicago public schools. The band fuses traditional repertoire with influences from other Mexican, Caribbean, and Central and South American genres such as *salsa*, *bolero*, *bossa nova*, *son jarocho*, *huapango*, and *cumbia*—held together with deep emotion and bold storytelling. This is not your grandfather’s *mariachi* band!

**San Francisco
Gay Men’s Chorus
Holiday Spectacular 2026!**

Sat, Dec 19, 1pm & 5pm, ZH

See page 40 for full listing.

**Ballet Folklórico de México
de Amalia Hernández
75th Anniversary Tour**

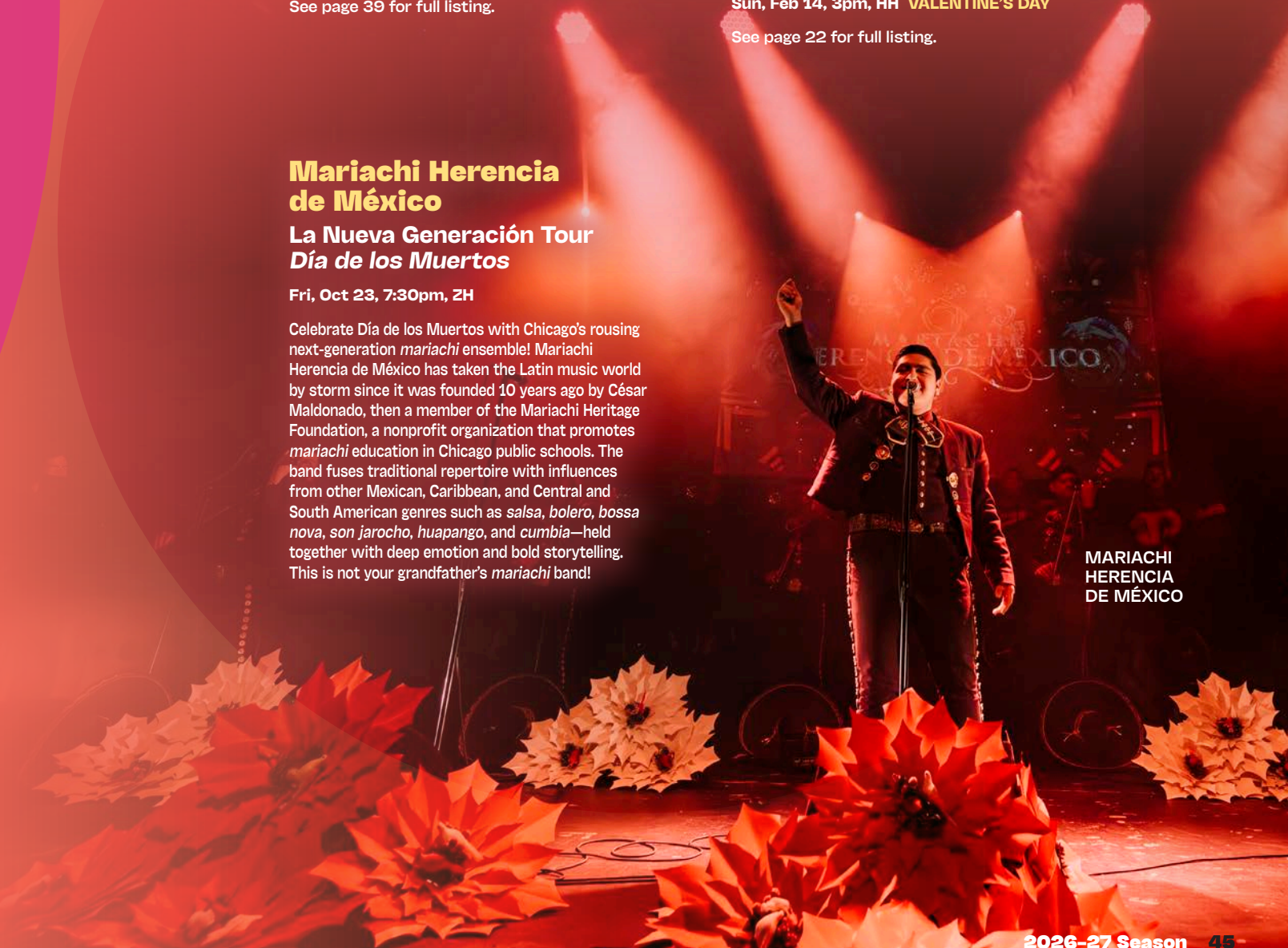
Sat, Feb 13, 7:30pm
Sun, Feb 14, 3pm, ZH VALENTINE’S WEEKEND

See page 35 for full listing.

**Blake Pouliot, violin
Henry Kramer, piano
Follow the Lieder**

Sun, Feb 14, 3pm, HH VALENTINE’S DAY

See page 22 for full listing.



MARIACHI
HERENCIA
DE MÉXICO

Cal Performances thrives through your support.

Powered by our generous donors, Cal Performances has become an internationally recognized leader in the performing arts—bringing today's most exciting performers together with UC Berkeley's culture of fearless thinking.

You make everything we do possible.

You ensure that we can share the world's most renowned artists with the Bay Area—including exclusive performances by artists with few other, if any, US engagements. You enable us to present great art across centuries, genres, styles, and themes—and to invest in bold new voices and groundbreaking work.

When you include a gift with your subscription order, your benefits can include:

- Priority subscription seating
- Early access to purchase single tickets
- Waived service fees
- Priority reserved parking
- Exclusive Donor-only events
- And much more!

To learn how you can support Cal Performances, please visit: calperformances.org/support.

WILLIAM KENTRIDGE'S
THE HEAD & THE LOAD

With Thanks

Cal Performances extends our deepest appreciation to the many individual and institutional donors who make it possible for thousands of people to experience live performing arts in the Bay Area—to be moved, thrilled, and inspired.

Lead Foundation Partners

Koret Foundation
Jonathan Logan Family Foundation
Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation
Spaht Family Foundation
Zellerbach Family Foundation

Lead Corporate Partners



Zellerbach Hall's state-of-the-art Constellation acoustic system is generously provided by Meyer Sound.



Beyond the Stage



Visit our blog to explore season highlights and more!

calperformances.org/beyond-the-stage

Connect with Us



Connect with us through social media and email.

calperformances.org/connect

Did you know?



Cal Performances offers professional venue rentals on the UC Berkeley campus. Our flexible spaces and expert staff support events of all kinds.

calperformances.org/venue-rental

THE HEAD & THE LOAD

WILLIAM KENTRIDGE'S
THE HEAD & THE LOAD

CalPERFORMances

University of California, Berkeley
101 Zellerbach Hall #4800
Berkeley, CA 94720-4800



NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA
BERKELEY

**Join us for a season
as wide-ranging
as your curiosity!**

calperformances.org/subscribe

**WILLIAM KENTRIDGE'S
THE HEAD & THE LOAD**