

For Immediate Release: March 21, 2025

[Cal Performances Press Room](#)



Photos of Grupo Corpo performing *21* (left) and *Gira* (right) are available for download from the Cal Performances [Press Room](#)

Video excerpts of Grupo Corpo performing [Gira](#) and [21](#) can be viewed on YouTube.

**CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS
A FEATURED PERFORMANCE OF THIS SEASON'S
ILLUMINATIONS: "FRACTURED HISTORY" SERIES**

Brazilian Dance Company

GRUPO CORPO

**MAKES ITS CAL PERFORMANCES DEBUT
IN *21* AND THE BAY AREA PREMIERE OF *GIRA*
FRIDAY–SATURDAY, APRIL 25–26
AT ZELLERBACH HALL**

Berkeley, CA, March 21, 2025—Cal Performances at UC Berkeley welcomes Brazil's acclaimed contemporary dance troupe **Grupo Corpo** in its Cal Performances debut, featuring two signature works, *21* (1992) and, in its Bay Area premiere, *Gira* (2017), on Friday and Saturday, April 25–26. Led by the company's founder and artistic director **Paulo Pederneiras**, and featuring choreography by his brother **Rodrigo Pederneiras**, Grupo Corpo is celebrated for a distinctive movement vocabulary that combines classical ballet with Brazilian folkloric and popular dance genres. Over its 50-year history, the company has created more than 40 works, with musical inspiration drawn from European classical composers including Mozart, Schumann, Chopin, and Penderecki, as well as Brazilian luminaries Heitor Villa-Lobos, Milton Nascimento, Gilberto Gil, Tom Zé, and Nelson

Freire. The performance is part of Cal Performances' *Illuminations*: "Fractured History" programming for the 2024–25 season.

In both *21* and *Gira*, Rodrigo Pederneiras' choreography is inextricably entwined with its musical sources of inspiration. The movement in *21* is derived from the rhythmic sequences in the score by **Marco Antônio Guimarães** and Brazilian instrumental group **Uakti**. Geometric shapes and numeric configurations in the score communicate changes of tempo and rhythm to the dancers in the three-part, 40-minute work, which progresses from a clever number game to a visceral physical display. On the second half of the program, *Gira* (*Spin*) is inspired by the syncretic Afro-Brazilian religions of Candomblé and Umbanda and features music by São Paulo band **Metá Metá** that combines ritual chanting with animal cries, bird calls, and saxophone. In Angola-Congo nations and Umbanda gatherings, a congregation assembles to worship deities with chants and ritual dances, usually performed by spinning in circles. As part of the research that informed the creation of this 40-minute work, the creators of *Gira* immersed themselves in the universe of Afro-Brazilian religions through literature and field study, visiting Candomblé and Umbanda sites of worship. *Gira* offers a poetic view of man's primordial need to connect with the divine. Paulo Pederneiras' distinctive set and lighting design for both works lends a bold and edgy character to the productions.

Grupo Corpo's engagement is one of eight *Illuminations* performances this season that investigate collective memory and the complex evolution of historical narratives to consider what role the performing arts might play in restoring nuance to our understanding of the past, and how that understanding shapes our present and future. Visit calperformances.org/illuminations-2024-25 to learn more.

For blind and visually impaired audience members, Cal Performances offers a live audio description—an audio track delivered by a professional describer to audience members through a wireless headset system—at Grupo Corpo's performance on Saturday, April 26. Intended to provide clear and engaging descriptions of the meaningful visual details of a performance, this service is offered at no extra charge and employs headsets that can be reserved at the time of ticket purchase or by contacting the Cal Performances Ticket Office at (510) 642-9988 or tickets@calperformances.org.

UC Berkeley students are eligible to purchase a limited number of \$10 tickets for the best seats in the house for the Saturday, April 26 performance through the [Golden Bear Circle](#) seating program beginning at 12pm on Friday, April 11. Information about all UC Berkeley student tickets and discounts is available at [calperformances.org/ucb-students](#). Information about other discounts can be found at [calperformances.org/discounts](#).

Note: This performance contains nudity.

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CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Friday, April 25, 8pm

Zellerbach Hall

Saturday, April 26, 8pm

Bancroft Way at Dana Street, UC Berkeley campus

Dance

[Grupo Corpo](#)

21 and *Gira*

Program:

Rodrigo Pederneiras/*21* (music: Marco Antônio Guimarães & Uakti)

Gira (Bay Area Premiere; music: Metá Metá)

Brazil's Grupo Corpo makes its Cal Performances debut with two signature works that showcase the dance company's distinctive style, rooted in classical ballet but enriched by folk and popular dance. Under the artistic direction of founder Paulo Pederneiras and performing choreography by his brother Rodrigo Pederneiras, the troupe's dancers are celebrated for their athleticism, versatility, and deep respect for the connections between music and movement. The choreography in *21* is derived from the rhythmic sequences in the score by Marco Antônio Guimarães and Brazilian instrumental group Uakti. *Gira* (*Spin*), having its Bay Area premiere in this engagement, is inspired by the Afro-Brazilian religion of Umbanda and features music by São Paulo band Metá Metá that combines ritual chanting with animal cries, bird calls, and saxophone.

Note: This performance contains nudity.

Live audio descriptions for blind and visually impaired audience members are available for the Saturday, April 26 performance. Headsets may be reserved by contacting the Cal Performances Ticket Office at (510) 642-9988 or tickets@calperformances.org.

An *Illuminations*: “Fractured History” event. Visit calperformances.org/illuminations to learn more.

Tickets: \$38–\$98 (prices subject to change). Tickets for all performances are available at calperformances.org, by phone at (510) 642-9988, or in person at the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, Tuesday–Friday, 12–5:30pm and Saturday–Sunday, 1–5pm. There is a \$15 per order service charge on ticket purchases made by phone or online that are not part of a subscription package. There is no fee for tickets purchased in person at the Zellerbach Hall Ticket Office unless they are part of a subscription. There is a \$20 service charge on all subscription orders.

UC Berkeley students can access exclusive discounts, including half-price tickets in all sections of the theater, and are also eligible to purchase a limited number of \$10 tickets for the best seats in the house for the Saturday, April 26 performance through the [Golden Bear Circle](#) seating program beginning at 12pm on Friday, April 11. Information about all UC Berkeley student tickets and discounts is available at calperformances.org/ucb-students; information about other discounts can be found at calperformances.org/discounts.

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PRESS CONTACT

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