

For Immediate Release: Tuesday, April 15, 2025

[2025–2026 Season Announcement Press Kit](#)

[2025–2026 Season Sizzle Video \(YouTube\)](#)

[2025–2026 Season Brochure \(PDF\)](#)

[2025–2026 Season Brochure \(Interactive\)](#)

CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY ANNOUNCES ITS 2025–26 SEASON

SEASON-LONG *ILLUMINATIONS* THEME EXPLORES “EXILE & SANCTUARY”

Seven performances, with related events featuring artists and UC Berkeley scholars, investigate how experiences of displacement and refuge can shape narratives, identities, and communities:

Angélique Kidjo and **Yo-Yo Ma** in the Bay Area premiere of *Sarabande Africaine*;

Kronos Quartet and *pipa* virtuoso **Wu Man** in *Beyond the Golden Gate*;

Manual Cinema in *The 4th Witch*;

Julia Keefe Indigenous Big Band;

Silkroad Ensemble with **Rhiannon Giddens** in *Sanctuary: The Power of Resonance and Ritual*;

Jordi Savall, **Hespèrion XXI**, **La Capella Reial de Catalunya**, and **Tembembe Ensemble**

Continuo in *Un Mar de Música (A Sea of Music)*;

Lara Downes joined by **Judy Collins**, **Tarriona “Tank” Ball**, the **Invoke Quartet**, and the

Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir in *This Land: Reflections on America*

DANCE SERIES FEATURES MAJOR PRODUCTIONS, NEW WORKS, AND UNIQUE COLLABORATIONS WITH WORLD-RENOWNED CREATORS

Premieres include: **Paris Opera Ballet** in its Cal Performances debut, performing the North American premiere of a new work by **Hofesh Shechter**; and the **Mark Morris Dance Group** in the Bay Area premiere of Morris’ latest work, *MOON*, a Cal Performances co-commission

Continuing residencies offer fresh perspectives:

The Joffrey Ballet returns as part of a multiyear Berkeley residency with **Alexander Ekman**’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, an exuberant work inspired by the traditional Scandinavian summer solstice festival;

the Joffrey’s opening night is the centerpiece of the **Cal Performances 2026 Gala**;

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater returns for its annual weeklong Berkeley residency, its first under the new artistic director **Alicia Graf Mack**

Performances showcase inventive collaborations:

Sadler's Wells and **Shaolin Temple** present *Sutra*, a project by choreographer **Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui**, sculptor **Antony Gormley**, composer **Szymon Brzóska** with the **Monks of Shaolin Temple**;
A.I.M by **Kyle Abraham** makes its Cal Performances debut with works performed to the live music that inspired them

Revered companies make their highly anticipated returns to Berkeley:
Martha Graham Dance Company celebrates its centennial in *GRAHAM100*;
MOMIX performs the Bay Area Premiere of **Moses Pendleton's** *Alice*

PIANIST VÍKINGUR ÓLAFSSON SERVES AS ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

The virtuoso pianist gives three performances: as soloist in two concerts with London's **Philharmonia Orchestra** and Principal Conductor **Santtu-Matias Rouvali**, and a solo recital constructed around Beethoven's Piano Sonata, Op. 109

ANGÉLIQUE KIDJO AND YO-YO MA COLLABORATE AT THE GREEK THEATRE

Kidjo and Ma connect African and European music traditions in *Sarabande Africaine* at the historic outdoor amphitheater on the UC Berkeley campus

TWO WORLD-RENOWNED ORCHESTRAS PERFORM UNDER LEADING CONDUCTORS

The **Chicago Symphony Orchestra** returns with
Music Director Emeritus for Life **Riccardo Muti**;
London's **Philharmonia Orchestra** performs with Principal Conductor **Santtu-Matias Rouvali**
and Cal Performances 2025–26 Artist in Residence **Víkingur Ólafsson**, *piano*

CAL PERFORMANCES CO-COMMISSIONS SPAN MUSIC, DANCE, AND THEATER

Cal Performances' support of the creation of new artworks includes co-commissions across genres this season: mezzo-soprano **Joyce DiDonato** with **Time for Three** in **Kevin Puts'** new song cycle, *Emily No Prisoner Be*; the West Coast premiere of a new string quartet by **Clarice Assad**, performed by the **Takács Quartet**; **Theatre of Voices** with the West Coast premiere of **Julia Wolfe's** *Italian Lesson*; **Manual Cinema** with *The 4th Witch*; **Mark Morris Dance Group** in the Bay Area premiere of *MOON*; and countertenor **Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen** and pianist **John Churchwell** with the West Coast premiere of *Oh Children: Three Poems by Margaret Atwood* by **Jake Heggie**

EARLY MUSIC VIRTUOSOS TREAD UNFAMILIAR GROUND AND REVITALIZE ESTABLISHED REPERTOIRE

Conductor and viol player **Jordi Savall** returns with three ensembles—**Hespèrion XXI**, **La Capella Reial de Catalunya**, and **Tembembe Ensemble Continuo**—plus special guests in *Un Mar de Músicas*, a follow-up program to Savall's *Routes of Slavery*

The English Concert returns for its annual engagement with conductor **Harry Bicket** for Handel's *Hercules*; and **Twelfth Night** makes its Cal Performances ensemble debut with Handel's *Aminta e Fillide*

Two performances offer an eclectic survey of early-music repertoire: a recital by violinist **Théotime Langlois de Swarte** and harpsichordist **Justin Taylor**; and a new *Mysteries and Miracles* program from the **Tallis Scholars**

THEATER PERFORMANCES INCLUDE ELEMENTS FROM DANCE, OPERA, AND FILM

Two companies make their Cal Performances debuts: **Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre** in *Gathering*; and **Opera Parallèle** in **Philip Glass'** *La Belle et la Bête* (*Beauty and the Beast*); **Manual Cinema** returns with *The 4th Witch*, a Cal Performances co-commissioned production that combines shadow puppetry, immersive sound design, live actors, and musicians

SIX PIANO RECITALS FEATURE ESTABLISHED MASTERS AND CAL PERFORMANCES DEBUT ARTISTS

Returning acclaimed pianists include: **Víkingur Ólafsson**, Cal Performances 2025–26 Artist in Residence; **Daniil Trifonov**; and **Jeremy Denk**

Rising stars performing in Berkeley for the first time include:
Nobuyuki Tsujii, **Bruce Liu**, and **Alexandre Kantorow**

ADDITIONAL MUSIC HIGHLIGHTS RANGE FROM BROADWAY AND JAZZ TO CLASSICAL AND AMERICANA

Noteworthy engagements across a variety of genres include: an all-Schubert recital by mezzo-soprano **Anne Sofie von Otter** and fortepianist **Kristian Bezuidenhout**; an evening with Broadway star **Kelli O'Hara**; a return to Berkeley by supernova jazz vocalist **Cécile McLorin Salvant**; and a solo concert by mandolinist and vocalist **Chris Thile**

Berkeley, CA, Tuesday, April 15, 2025—Cal Performances Board of Trustees co-chairs Jeffrey MacKie-Mason and Lance Nagel, and Executive and Artistic Director Jeremy Geffen, today announce the organization's 2025–26 season. The expansive and eclectic season of programming features more than 80 performances showcasing the artistry of a wide range of the world's most acclaimed creators and performers in concert music, dance, jazz, theater, opera, and global musical traditions. Highlights of the season include Artist in Residence pianist **Víkingur Ólafsson** performing as soloist with the **Philharmonia Orchestra** in two concerts this fall under the baton of Principal Conductor **Santtu-Matias Rouvali**, as well as a solo recital in spring 2026; a special Greek Theatre collaboration between **Angélique Kidjo** and **Yo-Yo Ma** entitled *Sarabande Africaine* that explores the intersections between African and European music traditions; and the return of the **Chicago Symphony Orchestra** with conductor **Riccardo Muti**. A bold dance series is populated with genre-defining artists and major new productions including the **Paris Opera Ballet** in the

North American premiere of an evening-length new work by choreographer **Hofesh Shechter**; **Martha Graham Dance Company** commemorating its centennial; **The Joffrey Ballet** in a celebration of the traditional Scandinavian summer solstice festival; and the Cal Performances debut of **A.I.M** by **Kyle Abraham**. As Cal Performances continues to invest in longstanding artistic partnerships, the season also demonstrates a strong commitment to the field by presenting noteworthy rising star artists and underwriting co-commissions that span artistic expression in music, dance, and theater.

“The astonishing diversity of creative work represented in our 2025–26 season is a reflection of the curiosity and adventurous spirit of our Berkeley audiences,” said Executive and Artistic Director Jeremy Geffen. “The artists and the projects they are bringing are a reminder that the performing arts are here for us all, in all moments of our lives—whether they call for reflection or inspiration, joy or release. I welcome our patrons to find comfort in the familiar, and energy and stimulation by new revelations from the stage.”

As the performing arts presenter at one of the world’s leading public educational and research institutions, Cal Performances also invites audiences to engage with bold ideas and wide-ranging perspectives each season by attending its *Illuminations* series. Through seven performances and related public events, the 2025–26 theme of “Exile & Sanctuary” connects the work of world-class artists to the intellectual life and scholarship at UC Berkeley. Reflecting on the 2025–26 season’s *Illuminations* theme of “Exile & Sanctuary,” Geffen said, “It is more important than ever to create opportunities for thoughtful and civil discussion about the most pressing issues of our day. The arts can and should provide a safe haven for the exchange of ideas and the affirmation of community values.” He continued, “Our programs this season exploring the themes of exile and sanctuary invite brilliant and engaged artists from around the world, and across disciplines, to share their perspectives with the Berkeley community and enrich our conversations on campus and beyond.”

Illuminations: “Exile & Sanctuary”

This season, *Illuminations* explores the theme of “Exile & Sanctuary” through thematic programming that connects seven of the performances during the 2025–26 season to the academic research thriving on the UC Berkeley campus. Exile is defined in this context as more than physical displacement, but rather may present as a rupture of identity, a stripping away of the familiar that leaves an individual or community without a sense of belonging. Sanctuary, alternatively, can represent both a refuge and a creative space where new forms of belonging are forged. This season’s theme is an invitation to explore how people who have experienced exile find comfort in new identities and narratives in the midst of uncertainty, and how the arts can give voice to these important stories. Through performances and public programs, *Illuminations* events will consider how exile reshapes culture, how sanctuary helps imagine new communities, and how artistic expression offers a vital space for resistance, healing, and reinvention.

In a special Labor Day weekend presentation at UC Berkeley’s historic Greek Theatre, vocalist **Angélique Kidjo** and cellist **Yo-Yo Ma** perform the Bay Area premiere of *Sarabande Africaine*, a

program that traverses continents and centuries to draw connections between the musical traditions of Africa and Europe (Aug 30). Known for their work as both artists and activists, the two luminaries of the international music scene use the Baroque *sarabande* dance form—and its possible African antecedent, a dance to worship the Congolese spirit Zarabanda—as a springboard to explore repertoire from Bach and Ravel to George Gershwin and Florence Price.

And in another highlight of the *Illuminations* series, Chicago's **Manual Cinema** gives the Bay Area premiere of its newest production, *The 4th Witch*, an immersive fable that follows a young girl, orphaned during wartime, who becomes unwittingly apprenticed to the three witches from Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. The Cal Performances co-commissioned work explores themes of war and generational conflict through shadow puppetry, actors in silhouette, sound design, and live music (Nov 22).

Several artists featured in the *Illuminations* series make their Cal Performances debuts this season. The **Julia Keefe Indigenous Big Band**, fronted by the acclaimed Nez Perce vocalist, celebrates and extends the contributions of Native musicians, composers, and bandleaders throughout jazz history, and features a “who’s who” of Indigenous musicians from a range of tribal affiliations across North and South America (Mar 6). Classical pianist, NPR host, and San Francisco native **Lara Downes** is joined by folk legend **Judy Collins**, Grammy-winning singer **Tarriona “Tank” Ball** of Tank and the Bangas fame, the **Invoke Quartet**, and the **Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir** for *This Land: Reflections on America*. The program includes a selection of classical and popular music—by Aaron Copland, Woody Guthrie, Nina Simone, George Gershwin, Duke Ellington, Margaret Bonds, Scott Joplin, and others—exploring the richness and complexity of the American experience as the country’s 250th anniversary approaches (May 9).

Cal Performances favorites also return with new and recent productions that engage with the *Illuminations* theme. **Kronos Quartet**’s two-part program features works by an international cohort of women composers, including world premieres by **Dai Wei** and San Francisco sound artist/composer **Victoria Shen**; plus a special presentation of *Beyond the Golden Gate*, a hybrid performance-discussion-screening with *pipa* virtuoso **Wu Man** and Bay Area community activist **David Lei** that explores the impact of Chinese Americans on American culture (Oct 11). **Silkroad Ensemble** and **Rhiannon Giddens** return with their new program *Sanctuary: The Power of Resonance and Ritual*, an interactive presentation that explores music as a medium for healing and connection across cultures. Giddens leads a collection of performers steeped in American, South Asian, West African, and southern European musical traditions, held together with the signature organicism and collaborative ethos that has defined Silkroad’s performances since its founding 25 years ago (Mar 19–20). Catalan viol virtuoso **Jordi Savall** leads his ensembles **Hespèrion XXI** and **La Capella Reial de Catalunya**, the Mexico City’s **Tembembe Ensemble Continuo**, along with an international cast of guest musicians from Canada, Guinea, Guadeloupe, Mali, Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, and Venezuela for *Un Mar de Músicas (A Sea of Music)*, the follow-up to his *Routes of Slavery* program (Apr 21).

Illuminations performances across the season will be complemented and amplified by related public programming engaging UC Berkeley scholars and other experts on pressing questions and perspectives raised in each work, to be announced.

A Kaleidoscopic Season of Dance Features
Major Productions, New Works, and Novel Collaborations;
as well as Company Debuts and Return Engagements by Longtime Partners

The 2025–26 dance series showcases major new works by internationally acclaimed creators. The legendary **Paris Opera Ballet** makes its Cal Performances debut with the North American premiere of a new evening-length work by in-demand London-based choreographer **Hofesh Shechter** performed to live music (Oct 2–4). The hugely influential **Martha Graham Dance Company** celebrates its centennial with *GRAHAM100*, featuring two programs that combine classic Graham works such as *Appalachian Spring*, the psychological thriller *Night Journey*, and the anti-war protest *Chronicle*—all using Isamu Noguchi’s original sets—alongside newly commissioned dances by **Jamar Roberts**, **Baye & Asa**, and **Hope Boykin** (Feb 14–15). **Mark Morris Dance Group** returns to its West Coast “home-away-from-home” with the Bay Area premiere of *MOON*, Morris’ latest work and a Cal Performances co-commission (Jan 23–25). *MOON* is a poetic and playful reflection on humankind’s attempts to understand its enigmatic celestial neighbor, and is danced to live and recorded music, from folk song to pop hits to concert works.

Dance companies returning to Cal Performances as part of multi-year residencies continue their commitment to Berkeley audiences with signature works and recent creations. **The Joffrey Ballet** performs **Alexander Ekman**’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, an exuberant work inspired by the traditional Scandinavian summer solstice festival (rather than the Shakespeare play with a similar name) with a musical score by composer **Mikael Karlsson** performed live by Swedish indie rock sensation **Anna von Hausswolff** and an on-stage band (Apr 17–19). The Joffrey’s opening night is the centerpiece of the **Cal Performances 2026 Gala**, planned for Friday, April 17, with all proceeds supporting Cal Performances’ artistic initiatives and education programs.

In 2023, Cal Performances announced its latest multiseason residency with the Joffrey, with four Berkeley residencies planned by the company over eight years. The 2025–26 performances mark the second installment of the series. The partnership builds on a longstanding relationship between Cal Performances and the Joffrey, which resided on the UC Berkeley campus each summer during the 1970s in a project that culminated in the Berkeley Ballets, a series of dances still part of the company’s repertoire.

Cal Performance also welcomes back **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** for its 58th annual weeklong Berkeley residency, and its first campus performances under the leadership of new artistic director **Alicia Graf Mack** (Apr 7–12), presenting new commissions from next-generation creators and iconic works by Ailey himself.

Several dance performances during the 2025–26 season showcase novel collaborations between choreographers, designers, composers, and musicians. **Sadler’s Wells** and **Shaolin Temple** bring *Sutra*, a project by choreographer **Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui** in collaboration with sculptor **Antony Gormley**, composer **Szymon Brzóska**, and the **Monks of Shaolin Temple** (Nov 8–9). *Sutra* explores the Shaolin *kung fu* tradition in the context of contemporary culture, inviting a cadre of modern-day practitioners to lend their martial arts skills to a humorous fable about a European outsider learning about their monastery. In addition, **A.I.M** by **Kyle Abraham** makes its Cal Performances debut with three recent Abraham works featuring music performed live by vocalists **Charanee Wade** and **Crystal Monee Hall**, bassist **Liany Mateo**, pianist **Luther Allison**, drummer **Otis Brown III**, saxophonist **Guy Dellacave**, and other musicians to be announced (Feb 21–22).

Also this season, **MOMIX** returns to perform the Bay Area premiere of artistic director **Moses Pendleton**’s *Alice*, a theatrical, acrobatic romp inspired by the characters in Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland*, over Thanksgiving weekend (Nov 29–30).

Pianist Víkingur Ólafsson, Artist in Residence

Cal Performances welcomes back international classical music sensation, Icelandic pianist **Víkingur Ólafsson** as 2025–26 Artist in Residence, with three engagements. Ólafsson is praised for his performances of works by composers from Rameau, Bach and Beethoven through Phillip Glass and John Adams. He returns to the UC Berkeley campus after his extraordinarily well-received Cal Performances debut recital of Bach’s *Goldberg Variations* in May 2024.

Jeremy Geffen said, “I am overjoyed to have the opportunity to welcome Víkingur Ólafsson back to Berkeley as our 2025–26 Artist in Residence. Both a piano virtuoso and a keen musical mind, Ólafsson is that rare musician who values history and tradition, but is also unafraid to question orthodoxy in the pursuit of his own artistic truth. He is nothing short of a visionary and it is an honor to be able to present him in these three concerts, spotlighting his singular artistry.”

This fall, Ólafsson is soloist for two concerts with **London’s Philharmonia Orchestra**, with Principal Conductor **Santtu-Matias Rouvali** at the podium in his Cal Performances debut (Oct 18–19). The two programs feature Ólafsson in Beethoven’s *Emperor* concerto and Ravel’s Piano Concerto in G major.

In his spring recital at Zellerbach Hall, Ólafsson turns his attention to Beethoven’s Piano Sonata Op. 109, using its tonality as a point of departure for side-trips through works of other composers, including Bach and Schubert (Apr 29).

World-Renowned Orchestras, Revered Conductors

The 2025–26 season boasts performances by two of the world’s most esteemed orchestras, led by conductors considered among the leading lights of their generations. The **Chicago Symphony Orchestra** returns under the baton of Music Director Emeritus for Life **Riccardo Muti** in a program of Brahms’ Fourth Symphony; Stravinsky’s suite from the ballet *The Fairy’s Kiss*; and Ravel’s

Boléro (Jan 17). London's **Philharmonia Orchestra** performs two concerts with Principal Conductor **Santtu-Matias Rouvali**, and guest pianist, Cal Performances 2025–26 Artist in Residence **Víkingur Ólafsson** (Oct 18–19). In addition to two piano concertos with Ólafsson, the orchestra also performs Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony, Sibelius' Fifth Symphony, and his tone poem *Finlandia*, as well as the Bay Area premiere of a new work by Mexican composer **Gabriela Ortiz**.

Cultivating and Championing New Works of Music, Dance, and Theater

Cal Performances continues its longstanding commitment to commissioning new works across artistic disciplines, with several significant dance, theater, and music creations coming to fruition this season. Mezzo-soprano **Joyce DiDonato** returns to Zellerbach Hall with her latest full-length project, *Emily – No Prisoner Be*, a Cal Performances co-commissioned song cycle by **Kevin Puts** that sets a selection of 24 poems by Emily Dickinson (Feb 7). DiDonato is joined by the award-winning ensemble **Time for Three**—a string trio of violin, viola, and double bass with each instrumentalist also providing vocals—in its Cal Performances debut. Later that month, the **Takács Quartet** plays the West Coast premiere of a newly commissioned string quartet by Brazilian American composer **Clarice Assad**, on a program that also includes Haydn's *Rider* quartet and the Debussy quartet (Feb 22).

Paul Hillier's **Theatre of Voices** makes a rare US appearance with the West Coast premieres of two recent vocal works by **Julia Wolfe** and **Michael Gordon**, both luminaries of American contemporary music (Apr 26). Wolfe's *Italian Lesson*, a Cal Performances co-commission composed specially for these singers, is a setting of a Cynthia Zarin poem while Michael Gordon's *A Western* is inspired by the 1950s Hollywood western *High Noon*, starring Gary Cooper and Grace Kelly. And finally, countertenor **Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen** is joined by pianist **John Churchwell** in a recital that features the West Coast premiere of *Oh Children: Three Poems by Margaret Atwood*, a Cal Performances co-commissioned work by **Jake Hoggie** (Sep 27).

Mark Morris Dance Group performs the Bay Area premiere of the Cal Performances co-commissioned work, *MOON* (Jan 23–25), and **Manual Cinema** presents the Bay Area premiere of *The 4th Witch*, a Cal Performances co-commission inspired by Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (Nov 22). (Read more on these performances under headlines specific to dance and *Illuminations*, respectively.)

An International and Intergenerational Cohort of Early-Music Virtuoso **Explore Unfamiliar Ground and Revitalize Familiar Repertoire**

A robust early-music series shines the spotlight on established international stars and a new generation of interpreters offering fresh insights into Baroque and Renaissance repertoire. **The English Concert** returns for its annual engagement with conductor **Harry Bicket** in a concert performance of Handel's *Hercules*, with acclaimed mezzo-soprano **Ann Hallenberg** in the lead role of Dejanira and featuring New York's **Clarion Choir** (Mar 8). **The Tallis Scholars** offer an Easter season program, *Mysteries and Miracles*, featuring works inspired by miraculous events in the biblical

story of Jesus' life, centered on Victoria's seminal *Missa O magnum mysterium* (Apr 24). And viol player and conductor **Jordi Savall** returns with three ensembles—**Hespèrion XXI**, **La Capella Reial de Catalunya**, and **Tembembe Ensemble Continuo**—plus special guests in *Un Mar de Músicas*, a follow-up program to Savall's *Routes of Slavery* that explores connections between European music and traditions from across the African diaspora (Apr 21).

Next-generation early-music ensemble **Twelfth Night**, celebrated for its fresh interpretations and superlative musicianship, makes its Cal Performances ensemble debut with a concert performance of Handel's *Aminta e Fillide*, featuring soloists **Nicoletta Berry** singing the role of Aminta and **Megan Moore** singing the part of Fillide (Nov 9). The group was co-founded and is directed by rising star performers, violinist **Rachell Ellen Wong** and harpsichordist **David Belkovski**, who made their Cal Performances debuts in recital with cellist Coleman Itzkoff during the 2022–23 season. Up-and-coming violinist **Théotime Langlois de Swarte** returns to Berkeley after his scintillating performance with Les Arts Florissants in March 2025, this time with his ensemble partner from Le Consort, harpsichordist **Justin Taylor**, for a program of Baroque showpieces by Bach, Vivaldi, Biber, and Vitali (Mar 22).

Immersive Theatrical Experiences Include Elements of Opera, Dance, and Film

The 2025–26 season offers a wide range of theatrical works that embrace elements of opera, film, dance, puppetry, and inventive multimedia design. Two companies make their Cal Performances debuts in spring 2026. First, **Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre** presents *Gathering*, a full-length work conceived, written, and directed by choreographer **Samar Haddad King** that uses movement, text, song, and puppetry to tell the fictional story of a village under siege, and one woman's struggle to reconcile her fragmented memories. Part staged work, part interactive experience, *Gathering* invites audiences to join as participants and witnesses in an exploration of love, loss, trauma, and dislocation (Feb 27–Mar 1). Later on, San Francisco's **Opera Parallèle** presents **Philip Glass' *La Belle et la Bête* (*Beauty and the Beast*)** in an acclaimed production that blurs the distinctions between film and live opera by merging Jean Cocteau's 1946 film with Philip Glass' 1994 score. Glass composed the music as a new soundtrack to the film, transforming the original spoken French dialogue into sung libretto. Artistic Director **Nicole Paiement** conducts an ensemble of seven musicians accompanying the cast of vocalists including baritone **Hadleigh Adams** as La Bête/Avenant, with others to be announced (Mar 13–14).

Manual Cinema returns to Cal Performances with the Bay Area premiere of *The 4th Witch*, an immersive presentation combining silent film, shadow puppetry, live music, sound design, and live acting (Nov 22; read more under the *Illuminations* section above).

Artist Debuts and Returning Masters Featured in Six Piano Recitals

The 2025–26 recital series boasts a wealth of star pianists, with six performances that showcase both established masters and promising new talent. Among international luminaries, Cal Performances 2025–26 Artist in Residence **Víkingur Ólafsson**, in his spring recital at Zellerbach Hall turns his

attention to Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 109, using its tonality as a point of departure for side-trips through works of other composers, including Bach and Schubert (Apr 29). **Daniil Trifonov** also returns to Berkeley with interpretations of two virtuosic sets of variations by Brahms, to themes composed by Robert Schumann and Handel (Sep 28). And **Jeremy Denk** performs the complete set of Bach's six partitas for solo keyboard (Nov 14).

Three rising-star pianists who have already established significant international careers perform in Berkeley for the first time. Japanese pianist **Nobuyuki Tsujii** (who goes by "Nobu") makes his Cal Performances debut with Beethoven's *Appassionata* sonata, Mikhail Pletnev's piano adaptation of music from Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*, and Prokofiev's seventh sonata (Oct 30). Chopin Piano Competition first prize-winning pianist **Bruce Liu**'s debut Cal Performances program features a selection of Chopin Nocturnes and Impromptus, Liszt's *Rhapsodie espagnole*—signature repertoire for him—and Beethoven's *Moonlight* sonata (Feb 10). And French pianist **Alexandre Kantorow**'s program is anchored by Beethoven's Opus 111 and also features Liszt's haunting piano variations on themes from Bach's twelfth cantata, Chopin's C-sharp minor Prelude, and Scriabin's restless Sonata No. 10, contrasted with Nikolai Medtner's rarely performed first sonata (Apr 23).

More Music Stars in Jazz, Broadway, and Classical Recital

Across all genres of music, the 2025–26 season welcomes leading lights for return engagements and debut performances: Renowned Swedish mezzo-soprano **Anne Sofie von Otter** is joined by fortepianist **Kristian Bezuidenhout** in an all-Schubert program with the composer's *Schwanengesang* song collection at its center (Oct 5); Broadway star **Kelli O'Hara** makes her Cal Performances debut in a cabaret-style evening of show tunes and classics from the Great American Songbook (Jan 31); award-winning jazz vocalist **Cécile McLorin Salvant** returns to Zellerbach Hall (Feb 5); and mandolinist and vocalist **Chris Thile** plays a solo recital with selections drawn from *Laysongs*, his 2024 solo recording, which features original songs as well as arrangements of Bach and classic bluegrass repertoire (Feb 27).

Ticket Information

Subscription packages for Cal Performances' 2025–26 season go on sale to the general public beginning Tuesday, April 22, at noon PT, and single tickets go on sale Tuesday, August 5. More details can be found at calperformances.org.

PRESS CONTACT:

Louisa Spier
Media Relations Manager
Cal Performances
lspier@calperformances.org
(510) 643-6714