

For Immediate Release: January 16, 2026

[Cal Performances Press Room](#)



Photos of A.I.M by Kyle Abraham are available for download from the Cal Performances [Press Room](#).

A video excerpt of A.I.M by Kyle Abraham performing *The Gettin'* can be viewed on [YouTube](#).

CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS
INNOVATIVE NYC-BASED DANCE COMPANY
MAKING THEIR CAL PERFORMANCES DEBUT
A.I.M BY KYLE ABRAHAM
SATURDAY–SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21–22
AT ZELLERBACH HALL

FEATURING DANCE WORKS INSPIRED BY CLASSIC JAZZ
RECORDINGS OF MAX ROACH AND NINA SIMONE
PERFORMED TO LIVE MUSIC

Berkeley, CA, January 16, 2026—Cal Performances at UC Berkeley welcomes the innovative and acclaimed contemporary dance company **A.I.M by Kyle Abraham** in its Cal Performances debut on Saturday, February 21 at 8pm and Sunday, February 22 at 3pm at Zellerbach Hall. Celebrating its 20th anniversary throughout 2026, A.I.M is known for its signature “lush movement, infectious music and magnetic dancers...” (*The New York Times*.) The company brings three Abraham works to Berkeley—all with live musical accompaniment—including the Bay Area premiere of *2x4*, featuring

original music by composer and saxophonist **Shelley Washington**. Rounding out the program are dances inspired by classic recordings of jazz legends **Nina Simone** and **Max Roach** with new music by **Robert Glasper**.

Based in New York City, A.I.M is the brainchild and artistic canvas of choreographer **Kyle Abraham**, who tells stories at the intersection of Black and queer culture, reflecting on themes of love, isolation, and personal and social change. A.I.M has appeared in many prestigious venues and festivals in the US and abroad, including Lincoln Center, Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Los Angeles Music Center, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Harlem Stage, Théâtre de la Ville (Paris), Sadler's Wells (London), and Tanz Im August (Berlin). Abraham has also choreographed works commissioned by New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater—who as part of their annual Cal Performances residency performed the Bay Area premieres of three Abraham works: *Are You in Your Feelings?* in 2023, *Untitled America* in 2017, and *Another Night* in 2013.

Receiving its Bay Area premiere in this engagement and named for its combination onstage of two baritone saxophonists and four dancers, *2x4* is centered around an original experimental classical score by composer Shelley Washington, using geometrical playfulness to explore such themes as conversation, confrontation, and stillness. Also on the program are *If We Were a Love Song*, a series of dance vignettes inspired by the music of Nina Simone performed by vocalist **Crystal Monee Hall** and *The Gettin'*, whose score by Grammy-winning pianist Robert Glasper is a reimagining of drummer/composer Max Roach's classic 1960 *We Insist! Freedom Now Suite* released amidst the escalating civil rights movement and features live vocals by **Charenée Wade**. Abraham took inspiration for *The Gettin'* from his visit to the Hector Pieterse Museum in Soweto, South Africa.

Drawing both from the past and present, Abraham shared in a recent interview with *Harper's Bazaar*: “What’s charging me right now is trying to persevere and push myself—and hopefully make people feel seen and loved. There is this beautiful space in the abstraction of what dance can represent that allows people to feel empowered. It can also bring up a lot of questions for people and create the space for them to have fun, laugh, cry, and scream.”

CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Saturday, February 21, 8pm
Sunday February 22, 3pm

Zellerbach Hall
Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley

Dance

A.I.M by Kyle Abraham

Charanée Wade, *vocals*

Crystal Monee Hall, *vocals*

Liany Mateo, *bass*

Luther S. Allison, *piano*

Otis Brown III, *drums*

Guy Dellecave, *saxophone*

Thomas Giles, *saxophone*

Program:

Kyle Abraham/*The Gettin'* (2014; music: Max Roach with arrangements and original compositions by Robert Glasper)

Kyle Abraham/*If We Were a Love Song* (2021; music: Nina Simone)

Kyle Abraham/*2 X 4* (2025; Bay Area Premiere; music: Shelley Washington)

Choreographer Kyle Abraham brings his company A.I.M to Berkeley for its Cal Performances debut featuring three works danced to live performances of the music that inspired them. Abraham tells stories at the intersection of Black and queer culture, reflecting on themes of love, isolation, and personal and social change. Max Roach's track "The Gettin'" from his *Freedom Now Suite* infuses the movement on stage with a taut, edgy energy. *If We Were a Love Song* features moody music by Nina Simone sung by Crystal Monee Hall, setting the stage for a series of intimate solos and duets exploring different aspects of love. And *2 X 4*, in its Bay Area premiere, is a collaboration with composer and saxophonist Shelley Washington fueled by contrasts and oppositions and performed with two baritone saxophonists.

For blind and visually impaired audience members, live audio descriptions are available at the Sunday, February 22, 3pm performance. Headsets may be reserved at the time of ticket purchase or by contacting the Cal Performances Ticket Office at (510) 642-9988 or tickets@calperformances.org. More information can be found at calperformances.org/accessibility.

Tickets: \$38–\$86 (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. 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. Information about 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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