



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 28, 2026

[Cal Performances Press Room](#)



Photos of Angela Davis (left), Michael Pollan (right), and Christof Koch are available for download from the Cal Performances [online press room](#).

CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY ANNOUNCES TWO NEWLY ADDED SPEAKER EVENTS:

Michael Pollan & Christof Koch

A Journey into Consciousness

Tues, Oct 13 at 7:30pm at Zellerbach Hall

**Co-presented with the UC Berkeley Center for the Science of
Psychedelics**

**Angela Davis in conversation with Poulomi Saha
Program in Critical Theory's 20th Anniversary and
Jefferson Memorial Lecture**

***"I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to Be Free":
Movements for Liberation and Transfigurations of Freedom***
Wed, Oct 28 at 7:30pm at Zellerbach Hall

Tickets for all 2026–27 season events go on sale to the general public on Tuesday, August 11

Berkeley, CA, July 28, 2026—Today, Cal Performances announces the addition of two speaker events to its 2026–27 season: journalist and author Michael Pollan will appear in conversation with neuroscientist Christof Koch for a discussion entitled *A Journey into Consciousness* on Tuesday, October 13 at 7:30pm; and activist, author, and educator Angela Davis will present “*I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to Be Free*,” inspired by Nina Simone’s Black liberation anthem of the same title, on Wednesday, October 28 at 7:30pm. Both events take place in Zellerbach Hall. Pollan and Koch’s conversation is co-presented by the UC Berkeley Center for the Science of Psychedelics, and Davis’ talk is co-presented with UC Berkeley Graduate Lectures as part of the Jefferson Memorial Lecture Series, and the Program in Critical Theory. These announcements come in advance of the sale of single (non-subscription) tickets for Cal Performances’ [entire 2026–27 season](#), which will be available beginning at noon on Tuesday, August 11.

Tickets for all Cal Performances events are available from calperformances.org, by phone at 510-642-9988, or in person at the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall. Ticket Office hours through August 16 are Tuesday–Friday, noon–5pm; beginning August 17, hours will extend Tuesday–Sunday, noon–5pm.

Michael Pollan and Christof Koch

Michael Pollan has spent decades revealing truths about what it means to be human, exploring everything from the politics of food to the science of psychedelics. In his latest book, *A World Appears: A Journey into Consciousness*, the *New York Times* bestselling author tackles what may be his most ambitious project yet, tracing consciousness through radically different perspectives: scientific, philosophical, literary, spiritual, and psychedelic. For this October 13 event, Pollan joins renowned neuroscientist Christof Koch, who has spent decades conducting investigations into the areas of neuroscience and consciousness science. Koch’s latest book, *Then I Am Myself the World: What Consciousness Is and How to Expand It*, proposes when and where consciousness exists, and uses that discussion to confront major social and scientific questions. Together, they’ll have a wide-ranging conversation about the intersection of consciousness and psychedelics, addressing what is currently known about consciousness and what makes the subject so challenging to study; how psychedelic research can uniquely advance our understanding of consciousness; and what various disciplines and worldviews teach about subjective experience. This conversation is the kick-off event that launches the

conference [States of Consciousness: Psychedelic Discovery and the Edge of Uncertainty](#) taking place on the UC Berkeley campus October 14–15.

Angela Davis

Activist, author, educator, and cultural icon Angela Davis has been a leading force in the Black liberation, feminist, queer, and prison abolitionist movements for more than 65 years. Thrust into the national spotlight in the 1970s when she appeared on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted Fugitives list and was subsequently imprisoned, Davis then became the focus of the international "Free Angela Davis" campaign. In the decades since, she has remained at the forefront of movements for racial and social justice—as a professor in the History of Consciousness Program at UC Santa Cruz; as an activist involved with numerous social justice organizations; as a public speaker across the globe; and as the author of 11 influential books, including *Women, Race, and Class*; *Freedom is a Constant Struggle*; and *Abolition: Politics, Practices, Promises, Volume 1*.

In this event, Davis reflects on Nina Simone's iconic song "I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to Be Free" and considers how its themes suggest ways of imagining freedom that can be particularly meaningful when considered within our current social context. A conversation with Poulomi Saha, UC Berkeley Associate Professor of English and Co-Director of the Program in Critical Theory will follow.

CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Tuesday, October 13, 7:30pm
Zellerbach Hall
Dana Street at Bancroft Way, UC Berkeley campus

[Michael Pollan & Christof Koch: A Journey into Consciousness](#)

Co-presented with the [UC Berkeley Center for the Science of Psychedelics](#)

Program:

Best-selling author Michael Pollan has spent decades exploring what it means to be human, from the politics of food to the science of psychedelics. In his most recent book, *A World Appears: A Journey into Consciousness*, he examines the mystery of consciousness through scientific, philosophical, literary, spiritual, and psychedelic perspectives. Pollan will be joined for this event by renowned neuroscientist Christof Koch, and the two will discuss what consciousness is, why it remains so difficult to study, and how psychedelic research is reshaping the field.

Tickets: \$25–\$68 (prices subject to change)

Wednesday, October 28, 7:30pm

Zellerbach Hall

Dana Street at Bancroft Way, UC Berkeley campus

Angela Davis in Conversation with Poulomi Saha

“I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to Be Free”: Movements for Liberation and Transfigurations of Freedom

Co-presented with UC Berkeley Graduate Lectures, as part of the Jefferson Memorial Lecture Series, and the Program in Critical Theory

Program:

In this lecture, activist, author, educator, and cultural icon Angela Davis reflects on Nina Simone’s iconic song “I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to Be Free,” one of the great anthems of the mid-20th-century Black liberation movement, and considers how its themes suggest ways of imagining freedom that can be particularly meaningful when considered within our current social context. A conversation with Poulomi Saha, UC Berkeley Associate Professor of English and Co-Director of the Program in Critical Theory will follow.

Tickets: \$25–\$68 (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. Ticket Office hours through August 16 are Tuesday–Friday, noon–5pm; beginning August 17, hours will extend to Tuesday–Sunday, noon–5pm. Tickets to both events may be purchased now as part of a subscription; tickets to individual events go on sale at noon on August 11.

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, beginning August 21. 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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