

For Immediate Release: January 9, 2026
[Cal Performances Press Room](#)



Photos of Joyce DiDonato and Time for Three are available for download from the Cal Performances [Press Room](#).

[A short trailer about *Emily – No Prisoner Be*](#) can be viewed on YouTube.

[A video of Joyce DiDonato and Time for Three performing “Her Face” from *Emily – No Prisoner Be*](#) (YouTube) is available for streaming and embedding.

Joyce DiDonato and Time for Three were recently interviewed on [Good Morning America](#) (YouTube) and performed “Because I could not stop for Death” from their *Emily – No Prisoner Be* project.

CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS

JOYCE DIDONATO AND TIME FOR THREE IN *EMILY – NO PRISONER BE* A SONG CYCLE BY KEVIN PUTS

AND CAL PERFORMANCES CO-COMMISSION

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2026
AT ZELLERBACH HALL

Berkeley, CA, January 9, 2026—Cal Performances at UC Berkeley presents star mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato and acclaimed classical/roots string trio Time for Three in *Emily – No*

Prisoner Be, a new work by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer **Kevin Puts**, on Saturday February 7 at 8pm at Zellerbach Hall. The semi-staged, evening-length song cycle, co-commissioned by Cal Performances, is a setting of 24 poems by **Emily Dickinson**, with evocative lighting design by **Andrew Staples** that magnifies the emotional terrain of Dickinson's poetry and Puts' score.

Making their Cal Performances debut in the performance, each member of the classically trained, genre-crossing trio Time for Three—**Nicolas Kendall**, viola and violin; **Charles Yang**, violin; and **Ranaan Meyer**, bass—also accompanies DiDonato on vocals. A Berkeley audience favorite and frequent visitor to Zellerbach Hall, DiDonato brings this, her latest innovative project, to Cal Performances following her well-received collaborations with the early music ensemble Il Pomo d'Oro: *Eden* (2023) and *In War & Peace: Harmony Through Music* (2016).

Joyce DiDonato is a globally renowned performer, celebrated for her vocal prowess and extensive repertoire, ranging from Baroque and bel canto to contemporary works. Beyond her appearances at prestigious venues like the Metropolitan Opera and Carnegie Hall, she is a dedicated arts advocate, whose stated vocation is bringing “the transformative, healing power of music to as many people as I can – whether on stage, in prisons, refugee camps, or the classroom.” Her project *Eden* exemplified this activist pursuit with a moving program emphasizing the importance of nature, brought to life by herself as well as children’s choirs she worked with around the globe, including locally with the Piedmont East Bay Children’s Choir. Her distinguished career has earned her numerous honors, including multiple Grammy Awards and the 2018 Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in Opera.

In *Emily – No Prisoner Be*, DiDonato continues her long creative partnership with composer Kevin Puts, having previously portrayed Virginia Woolf in his celebrated opera adaptation of *The Hours*. Puts has also collaborated with Time for Three who won a Grammy Award for their recording of Puts’ triple concerto *Contact* in 2023. DiDonato and Time for Three’s studio recording of *Emily – No Prisoner Be* is set to be released on January 30 with four songs from the recording already available: [“Because I could not stop for Death —”](#) (Spotify), [“There is another sky”](#) (Spotify), [“Her Face”](#) (Spotify), and [“They shut me up”](#) (Spotify).

Emily Dickinson (1830–1886) is known today as much for her poems as for her unorthodox approach to writing and living. Though she was reclusive—rarely leaving her bedroom—the world within her poems extends far beyond those four walls, and touches frequently on concepts of

nature, life and death, and emotional connection to oneself and to others. Her poetry is revered for being both impactful as well as brief and to-the-point. By lifting her poems off of the page and into the world of music and performance, Joyce DiDonato and Time for Three provide a new way to immerse oneself in this profound writer's work.

Learn more about the inspiration for *Emily – No Prisoner Be* in this Cal Performances *Beyond the Stage* [blog post](#) about stories reimagined for the stage.

CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Saturday, February 7, 8pm

Zellerbach Hall
Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley campus

New Music

Joyce DiDonato, mezzo-soprano

Time for Three, string trio

Emily – No Prisoner Be (Cal Performances Co-commission)

Nicolas Kendall, violin, viola, and vocals

Charles Yang, violin and vocals

Ranaan Meyer, bass and vocals

Program:

Mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato's latest immersive program is a collaboration with Pulitzer Prize winning composer Kevin Puts and Grammy-winning chamber ensemble Time for Three. In a series of 24 intimate songs, DiDonato and the eclectic singing instrumentalists of Time for Three traverse selected poetry of Emily Dickinson in a dramatically lit, semi-staged, evening-length song cycle that magnifies the emotional terrain of Dickinson's poetry and Puts' score.

Tickets: \$36–\$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, and are also eligible to purchase a limited number of \$10 tickets for the best seats in the house for *Emily – No Prisoner Be* through the [Golden Bear Circle](#) program beginning at 12pm on Friday, January 23, online only. 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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