

Jeremy Geffen
Executive and Artistic Director

Jeremy Geffen joined Cal Performances as executive and artistic director in April 2019. Reporting to Carol T. Christ, the chancellor of UC Berkeley, he provides the overall artistic vision and executive leadership for Cal Performances, with direct decision-making authority and responsibility for planning all programs, functions, and activities of Cal Performances and Student Musical Activities (SMA). This includes initiating and imagining new and existing artistic and educational ventures, including those in association with national and international performing arts centers and festivals, and supporting the educational and research mission of the university through the performing arts program. He also works closely with the board of trustees.

Before coming to Cal Performances Geffen was senior director and artistic adviser of Carnegie Hall. His responsibilities at Carnegie Hall included overall program planning and thematic development for the entirety of the approximately 160 performances comprising the Carnegie Hall concert season, as well as the creation of a wide range of audience education programs.

During his 12-year tenure at Carnegie Hall Geffen oversaw the expansion of festivals, multi-disciplinary citywide explorations devoted to a specific topic ranging from the geographic (Berlin, China, Japan, Latin America, and Vienna), to the retrospective (Leonard Bernstein 90 years after his birth), to the historical (South African culture 20 years after the election of Nelson Mandela, the Venetian Republic, the United States in the 1960s, and the impact of large-scale migrations on American culture). Through its acclaimed festivals, Carnegie Hall partnered with cultural, academic, and media organizations around New York City—and, increasingly, across the country—attracting many new audience members (over 60% for the South Africa Festival alone). Geffen led Carnegie Hall's increased investment in the presentation of early music, resulting in two critically acclaimed and popular festivals of music from the Medieval to early Baroque periods, as well as establishing an annual residency by The English Concert focused on Handel operas and oratorios. Immensely successful, these events have become artistic highlights of the New York cultural season. In addition, Geffen steered Carnegie Hall's ambitious 125 Commissions project marking the Hall's 125th anniversary with at least 125 new works co-commissioned or commissioned between the 125th (2015–16) and 130th (2019–20) seasons.

At Carnegie Hall Geffen shared oversight of the artistic presentations budget and was responsible for maintaining key creative relationships between established artists and ensembles, identifying and cultivating associations with artists and ensembles that expand Carnegie Hall's programmatic scope, and actively seeking out those performing and compositional voices who play an important role in Carnegie Hall's future. In addition to developing Carnegie Hall festivals, Geffen was responsible for selecting artists for two other season-long and large-scale artist-curation projects—Carnegie Hall Perspectives and the Debs Composers Chair—and supporting the artists programming these series. Under his guidance, both series were expanded from being focused almost exclusively on classical music to include jazz, world music, American Roots, pop, and other non-classical forms of music. A passionate advocate for giving emerging

talent the defining opportunities necessary for high-level careers as performers and educators, he was part of the team responsible for the auditioning, selection, programming, and creation of career development curriculum for Ensemble Connect, Carnegie Hall's two-year fellowship program for the highest-caliber young artists-advocates.

Geffen led multiple audience development initiatives, including programming and delivering pre-concert lectures, and hosting symposia, special events, and public discussions with some of the world's great artists and thinkers. He moderated and hosted donor-appreciation and development events, and from 2007 until its end in 2013, served as on-stage host for Carnegie Hall's *Making Music* concerts, each devoted to the works of a single living composer. As both on-screen personality and off-screen interviewer, Geffen was integrally engaged in the creation of programmatic and historical videos produced by Carnegie Hall's Digital Content and Engagement department.

Prior to his appointment at Carnegie Hall in 2007, Geffen was Vice President of Artistic Administration for the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra (2005–07) and Artistic Administrator of the New York Philharmonic (2000–05). From January 1998 until September 2000 he was Associate Artistic Administrator for the Aspen Music Festival and School where, beyond his regular scope of activities, he taught courses in music at Colorado Mountain College, hosted a weekly classical music radio show on KAJX, and at age 26 became the Aspen Institute's youngest-ever seminar moderator in February and March 2000.

Geffen currently serves on the advisory entities for the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's Bowers Program (previously CMS Two) and the Avery Fisher Career Grant; on the advisory boards of the Fondazione delli Arti Venezia, the National Advisory Council of the Music Academy of the West; and on the board of trustees of The House Foundation, devoted to the preservation and future of Meredith Monk's artistic legacy. A frequent adjudicator of competitions, Geffen served on the juries of the 2015 Honens International Piano Competition, the 2011 Wigmore Hall/Kohn Foundation International Song Competition, and the 2012 Pulitzer Prize in Music (nominating jury), and for the district, regional and national final levels of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. In addition, Geffen chaired the nominating jury for the 2013 Pulitzer Prize in Music, awarding the honor to Caroline Shaw, then the youngest recipient in the Prize's history. In June 2015 Geffen was honored at Bang on a Can's annual gala with their Visionary Award, and in April 2019 he will be honored at Sō Percussion's annual benefit.

A native of Cape Town, South Africa, Geffen was raised in Newport Beach, California. While pursuing a bachelor of music degree in viola performance at the University of Southern California, Geffen developed problems with his right hand that led him away from performance and into arts administration, which combines his curiosity for and love of the breadth of artistic expression, the artists who bring that work to life, and the transformative ways in which the arts enrich all of our lives.

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