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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 1, 2019
[Press Room](#)



Images of the artists performing on Myra Melford's Jazz Platform are available for download from the Cal Performances [press room](#).

**CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS
MYRA MELFORD'S JAZZ PLATFORM
TWO DOUBLE-BILL CONCERTS THIS SEASON
CURATED BY MYRA MELFORD**

**DAVID VIRELLES TRIO & NICOLE MITCHELL'S *SPIDER WEB*
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27 IN HERTZ HALL**

**KRIS DAVIS, *piano* & INGRID LAUBROCK, *saxophone*
MATT MITCHELL, *piano* & TIM BERNE, *saxophone*
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2020 IN ZELLERBACH HALL**

**Free public events related to the series include
artist talks and an improvisation workshop**

Berkeley, October 1, 2019 — Cal Performances at UC Berkeley presents Myra Melford's Jazz Platform, two concerts this season programmed in collaboration with UC Berkeley music professor and internationally acclaimed pianist and composer **Myra Melford**. The series launches on Sunday, October 27 at 7pm in Hertz Hall, with a double bill of the **David Virelles Trio** and *Spider Web*, a collaboration between flutist **Nicole Mitchell** and scholar **Josh Kun**. For the second installment, An Evening of Duos Onstage, Zellerbach Hall is transformed into an intimate listening room, with the audience seated onstage alongside the performers for a performance by two piano/saxophone duos, on Sunday, February 9 at 7pm. Pianist **Kris Davis** performs with longtime collaborator, saxophonist **Ingrid Laubrock**, and pianist **Matt Mitchell** performs with saxophonist **Tim Berne**.

The series is Cal Performances' first curatorial collaboration with Melford, who is among the most respected jazz artists of her generation. A Guggenheim Fellow and recipient of the Alpert Award for Music and the Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, Melford has been a professor of music at UC Berkeley for the past 14 years, teaching improvisation and composition while maintaining a vigorous international career as a touring and recording artist. Melford performed her *Language of Dreams*, an ambitious multimedia work, in Zellerbach Hall as part of the 2016–17 season.

Of the artists she has programmed this season, Melford says, "I wanted to introduce Berkeley audiences to these incredible musicians who are at the leading edge of innovation in jazz and improvisational music. These artists are blending composition and jazz improvisation in exciting, wholly original ways." She continues, "And I want to share where this music is going—we don't have just one style of jazz music anymore. Each composer is making their own unique music, with its own logic and influences—and the brightest players in this genre are able to bring their own voice into this, to express themselves within the context of these original compositions."

Pianist David Virelles funnels folkloric influences from his native Cuba into original compositions that embrace the exploratory ethos of contemporary classical music as well as sounds and sensibilities from the jazz avant-garde. In addition to his own projects, Virelles has also performed and recorded as a sideperson with jazz luminaries Henry Threadgill, Steve Coleman, Andrew Cyrille,

Chris Potter, Wadada Leo Smith, and Ravi Coltrane. Virelles' trio features bassist **Rashaan Carter** and drummer **Marcus Gilmore**.

Acclaimed flutist/composer Nicole Mitchell's *Spider Web* is a new multimedia project created in collaboration with scholar and UC Berkeley alumnus Josh Kun. The work combines spoken word, movement, and acoustic and electronic instruments to address themes of race, history, and politics. Mitchell's work often references Afrofuturism and science fiction, and *Spider Web* connects 1970s Anaheim, where the composer lived as a child, with a pre-apocalyptic Southern California grappling with climate meltdown and racial divides. The music and text revisits Mitchell's family history in the context of Southern California's history of Black musical radicalism and experimental musical thinking, and in the artists' words, explores "music as a language of social reckoning and social action...a way of coming to grips with the limits and possibilities of place." The ensemble for *Spider Web* features **Nicole Mitchell** on flute, voice, and electronics; **Josh Kun**, spoken word; **JoVia Armstrong**, percussion; **Damon Locks**, voice and electronics; **Joshua White**, keyboards; and **S. Ama Wrey**, movement and spoken word. The David Virelles Trio and Nicole Mitchell ensemble perform on Sunday, October 27 at 7pm in Hertz Hall.

Zellerbach Hall will be transformed into an intimate jazz listening room for An Evening of Duos Onstage, on Sunday, February 9 at 7pm. The program features two sets of piano/saxophone duos comprised by some of the most original and well-respected improvisers in New York's jazz community. Pianist Kris Davis and saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock are both accomplished composers and bandleaders as well as incisive improvisers, having performed with Anthony Braxton, John Zorn, Bill Frisell, and Dave Douglas, among others. Their duo music combines a refined chamber music sensibility with fleet improvisational interplay. Alto saxophonist Tim Berne, a key figure in New York's "Downtown" jazz scene for decades, plays in a duo with rising star pianist Matt Mitchell. Mitchell has recorded an acclaimed album of solo piano versions of Berne's compositions, and in their energetic duo performances, the two musicians navigate intricate rhythmic structures, seamlessly blending improvised and composed material.

Several free public programs are announced in conjunction with the concert series. A public forum titled *Thinking About Composition* is planned with Nicole Mitchell, Josh Kun, and poet Chiyuma Elliott of UC Berkeley's African American Studies graduate program, on Friday, October 25 at 3pm in the

Geballe Room, Stephens Hall. The talk is presented in association with the Department of Music and the Doreen B. Townsend Center for the Humanities, and is free and open to the public. An improvisation workshop with Melford and renowned jazz bassist and composer Lisa Mezzacappa is offered on Sunday, October 27 at 3pm in Morrison Hall. The workshop is free and open to all ages and abilities; reservations are requested [online](#). Finally, Melford is joined by KCSM Jazz91 music director Jesse “Chuy” Varela for a pre-performance talk about the concert series and the music of David Virelles, on Sunday, October 27 at 6pm in Hertz Hall. The talk is free to concert ticketholders.

Note: Myra Melford does not perform in these concerts.

Ticket Information

Tickets for the *David Virelles Trio and Nicole Mitchell and Josh Kun's Spider Web* on Sunday, October 27 at 7pm in Hertz Hall are \$28. Tickets for *An Evening of Duos Onstage: Kris Davis, Ingrid Laubrock, Tim Berne, Matt Mitchell* on Sunday, February 9 at 7pm in Zellerbach Hall are \$24. All ticket prices subject to change. Half-price tickets are available for UC Berkeley students. Tickets are available through the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, at (510) 642-9988, at calperformances.org, and at the door. For more information about discounts, go to calperformances.org/discounts.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Sunday, October 27, 7pm

Myra Melford's Jazz Platform

David Virelles Trio

David Virelles, *piano*

Rashaan Carter, *bass*

Marcus Gilmore, *drums*

Spider Web

by Nicole Mitchell and Josh Kun

Nicole Mitchell, *flute, voice, electronics*

Josh Kun, *spoken word*

Hertz Hall
Bancroft Way at College Avenue
UC Berkeley campus

JoVia Armstrong, *percussion*
Damon Locks, *voice, electronics*
Joshua White, *keyboards*
S. Ama Wrey, *movement, spoken word*

Program: Cal Performances has invited pianist and composer Myra Melford to co-curate a series of jazz programming this season, with concerts that will introduce Bay Area jazz aficionados to artists who are household names in New York and abroad, but may be less well known on the West Coast. Melford says of David Virelles, “I was struck by how thoroughly his piano playing embodies the traditions of Cuban music, while at the same time drawing in very modern influences from contemporary classical music and the avant-garde.” Of Nicole Mitchell, Melford says, “Her fascinating new *Spider Web* is a collaboration with UC Berkeley alumnus and scholar Josh Kun that explores race and politics in Southern California in the context of Afrofuturism, black experimental music, and her own family history.”

Tickets: \$28 (prices subject to change)

Residency Activities

Public Forum: *Thinking About Composition*

Friday, October 25, 3pm

Geballe Room, Stephens Hall

A conversation with Nicole Mitchell and Josh Kun, with poet Chiyuma Elliott of UC Berkeley’s African American Studies graduate program. Presented in association with the Department of Music and the Doreen B. Townsend Center for the Humanities. Free and open to the public.

Improvisation Workshop

Sunday, October 27, 3pm

Morrison Hall

Myra Melford and jazz bassist Lisa Mezzacappa lead a free workshop on improvisational techniques. Open to all ages and abilities. Presented in association with the Department of Music. Free and open to the public; reservations requested at

<https://secure.calperformances.org/14641/14645>

Pre-Performance Talk

Myra Melford's Jazz Platform

Sunday, October 27, 6pm

Hertz Hall

Myra Melford talks with KCSM Jazz91 music director Jesse “Chuy” Varela about her curatorial choices and the Cuban-based music of David Virelles. Free to concert ticketholders.

Sunday, February 9, 7pm

Myra Melford's Jazz Platform
An Evening of Duos Onstage

Zellerbach Hall
Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley campus

Matt Mitchell, *piano*
Tim Berne, *saxophone*

Kris Davis, *piano*
Ingrid Laubrock, *saxophone*

Program: Cal Performances has invited pianist and composer Myra Melford to co-curate a series of jazz programming this season, with concerts that will introduce Bay Area jazz aficionados to artists who are household names in New York and abroad, but may be less well known on the West Coast. Melford says, “This concert—with the audience right onstage with the players—showcases the wide range of expression and interaction possible with the same instrumentation.”

Tickets: \$24 (prices subject to change)

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