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[Press Room](#)



Images of John Malkovich ©redesign and Aleksey Igudesman ©Julia Wesely are available for download from the Cal Performances [press room](#).

***JUST ADDED!***  
**CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS**  
**JOHN MALKOVICH**  
***IN THE MUSIC CRITIC***  
**WRITTEN AND CONCEIVED BY ALEKSEY IGUDESMAN**  
**THURSDAY, APRIL 30 IN ZELLERBACH HALL**

**Berkeley, February 18, 2020** — Cal Performances at UC Berkeley announces a performance by acclaimed actor and two-time Academy Award nominee **John Malkovich** in *The Music Critic*, written and conceived by **Aleksey Igudesman**, in Zellerbach Hall on Thursday, April 30 at 8pm. Equipped with a collection of historically documented yet frivolous musical insults, Malkovich plays the role of the evil critic who believes that some of the greatest works from the classical canon—including music by masters like Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Schumann, and Brahms—are dreary. Theater and music share center stage when a quintet of superb musicians surrounds Malkovich, accompanying

his harsh critiques, until the grand finale. At that point, the ensemble decides to fight back with “The Malkovich Torment,” an appalling review of Malkovich himself, set to music in ways both ironic and humorous.

The onstage musicians include violinist Soyoung Yoon, violist Molly Carr, and cellist Andrew Janss. Flautist, composer, and writer Aleksey Igudesman and pianist Hyung-ki Joo, known for their work as the comedic music duo Igudesman & Joo, round out the quintet, performing music by Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Brahms, Schumann, Debussy, Prokofiev, Ysaÿe, Kancheli, Piazzolla, and Igudesman.

In *The Music Critic*, Aleksey Igudesman has created a sardonic mix of some of the most negative music critiques written about some of the greatest works of music of the last centuries. The play includes snide comments from reviews that depict some of the most revered composers in history in a humbling light: Schumann “fancying himself a composer,” Brahms as a “giftless bastard,” and Debussy as “simply ugly.” *The Music Critic* will have its US premiere on April 28 at the Kennedy Center in Washington (DC). Cal Performances’ presentation of the work is one of only four performances scheduled in the United States, and the only one on the West Coast.

John Malkovich, the celebrated actor both on stage and in films, began building his career at Chicago’s Steppenwolf Theater and won his first major prize, an Off-Broadway Theater Award, in the company’s 1982 production of Sam Shepard’s *True West*. Malkovich’s success continued in cinema when his first role—as a blind lodger in *Places in the Heart*—led to an Academy Award nomination. He later won an Emmy Award for his role in *Death of a Salesman*. Malkovich has appeared in more than 80 films, including *The Killing Fields* (1984), *The Glass Menagerie* (1987), *Heart of Darkness* (1993), and *In the Line of Fire* (1993), for which he was nominated for both the Academy Award and the Golden Globe. His most famous role came in *Dangerous Liaisons* (1988), where he starred opposite Glenn Close. Malkovich’s fame was immortalized in the 1999 film *Being John Malkovich*, where he played a fictional version of himself. He currently stars as the title character in the HBO series *The New Pope*, alongside Jude Law. Malkovich also has his own fashion company, Mrs. Mudd, for which he designs clothing. A classical music enthusiast, he previously appeared at Cal Performances in *The Infernal Comedy: Confessions of a Serial Killer* with Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra in October of 2011.

Aleksey Igudesman, 46, was born in Saint Petersburg, Russia and was accepted at the age of 12 to the prestigious Yehudi Menuhin School in England. From 1989 to 1998 he studied violin with Boris Kuschmir at the Vienna Conservatory. He has published several violin sonatas and his compositions have been performed by internationally renowned soloists, ensembles, and orchestras. As both a solo violinist and conductor, he has performed his own works with ensembles including Kremerata Baltica and the Lucerne and Belgrade Symphony Orchestras. Igudesman also writes, arranges, and records film music, often collaborating with the Academy Award-winning film composer Hans Zimmer. In 2010, Igudesman conducted the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra in a program of Strauss, Beethoven, and his own works, including the world premiere of his *Waltz of the World*.

Inspired by Victor Borge and Dudley Moore, Aleksey Igudesman and Hyung-ki Joo formed the comedic music partnership Igudesman & Joo in 2004. Together they created *A Little Nightmare Music* and performed it internationally, garnering praise from critics and audiences alike. The two have since toured their creations *A BIG Nightmare Music* and *And Now Mozart* and enjoy over 20 million views on their YouTube channel. Igudesman & Joo have performed their project *Being Gidon Kremer* with Gidon Kremer and Kremerata Baltica since 2008 in Asia, Europe, and Russia. *The Music Critic* marks both of their debuts appearing at Cal Performances.

### **Ticket Information**

Tickets for *The Music Critic* on Thursday, April 30 at 8pm in Zellerbach Hall range from \$30–\$150 (prices subject to change) and go on sale at noon on Tuesday, February 25. 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](http://calperformances.org), and at the door. For more information about discounts, go to [calperformances.org/discounts](http://calperformances.org/discounts).

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### **CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

#### **CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS**

**Thursday, April 30, 8pm**

#### ***Theater***

**John Malkovich in *The Music Critic***

**Aleksey Igudesman, *violin***

**Soyoung Yoon, *violin***

**Zellerbach Hall**  
Bancroft Way at Dana Street,  
UC Berkeley campus

**Molly Carr**, *viola*  
**Andrew Janss**, *cello*  
**Hyung-ki Joo**, *piano*

Acclaimed actor and two-time Academy Award nominee John Malkovich returns to Cal Performances in Aleksey Igudesman's *The Music Critic*. Equipped with a potpourri of frivolous musical insults, Malkovich plays the role of the evil critic, believing that some of the greatest works from the classical music canon are weary and dreary. Theater and music share center stage with a quintet of superb musicians surrounding Malkovich and accompanying his harsh critiques, until the grand finale, when the ensemble decides to fight back. Featuring music by Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Brahms, Schumann, Debussy, Prokofiev, Ysaÿe, Kancheli, Piazzolla, and Igudesman.

**Tickets:** \$30–\$150 (prices subject to change)

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