

**CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY
ANNOUNCES ITS 2020–21 SEASON**

**THE INAUGURAL SEASON OF PROGRAMMING BY JEREMY GEFFEN,
CAL PERFORMANCES EXECUTIVE AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

INTRODUCING

ILLUMINATIONS: Where UC Berkeley Meets the Arts Onstage

New series launches this season with two pressing issues of our time uniting current research and scholarship at UC Berkeley and the performing arts:

MUSIC AND THE MIND

A series of performances and related events exploring the transformative and therapeutic potential of music, featuring public programs with scientists, educators, and performers

Featuring soprano **Renée Fleming and Special Guests;**
Dance for PD[®], created by the **Mark Morris Dance Group** for people with Parkinson's disease;
and performances by the **Tetzlaff Quartet** and jazz pianist **Matthew Whitaker**

FACT OR FICTION

A series of performances and related events—created in partnership with campus departments—that examines how artists and scholars in fields as diverse as

law, journalism, and information science
balance the art of storytelling with questions of historical accuracy

Featuring performances that span multiple genres;
including music by **George Frideric Handel, Julia Wolfe, and Darcy James Argue;**
and theater pieces based on works by writers **Joan Didion and Mary Shelley**

**JEREMY GEFFEN'S FIRST SEASON FEATURES
MANY ARTISTS NEW TO CAL PERFORMANCES**

- Recitalists **Beatrice Rana** and **Seong-Jin Cho**, *piano*; **Mahan Esfahani**, *harpsichord*; **Christine Goerke**, *soprano*; **Jamie Barton**, *mezzo-soprano*; and **Tessa Lark**, *violin*
 - Soloists **Sophie Bevan**, *soprano*; **Avery Amereau**, *contralto*; **Bejun Mehta** and **Jakub Józef Orliński**, *countertenor*; **Michael Spyres**, *tenor*; **Ashley Riches**, *bass*
 - Ensembles the **Dover Quartet**, **yMusic**, and **Nico Muhly and Friends**
 - Jazz artists **Artemis, Jazzmeia Horn, Matthew Whitaker,** and **Darcy James Argue's Secret Society**
 - Popular vocalists **Madeleine Peyroux** and **Paula Cole**
 - Dance companies **Caleb Teicher & Company, Ballet Hispánico, Boy Blue,** and **The Dhamaal Dancers of India**

- Theater troupe **Lars Jan and Early Morning Opera**

SPECIAL ENGAGEMENTS

Season launches on Thursday, August 20, with ***Not Our First Goat Rodeo*** at the Greek Theatre—the return of the all-star ensemble of cellist **Yo-Yo Ma**, violinist/fiddler **Stuart Duncan**, double bassist **Edgar Meyer**, and mandolinist/vocalist **Chris Thile**, with guest vocalist **Aoife O'Donovan**

The **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra**, conducted by **Gustavo Dudamel**, performs three different concert programs in an exclusive West Coast appearance at Zellerbach Hall

Pianist and acclaimed Mozart interpreter **Mitsuko Uchida** makes a rare West Coast appearance, leading the **Mahler Chamber Orchestra** from the keyboard

The **Mark Morris Dance Group** and **Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra & Chorale** reunite in the Cal Performances co-commissioned revival of Rameau's comic opera *Platée*

Early-music ensemble **The English Concert** launches a new multi-season Handel opera/oratorio project with a concert performance of Handel's *Tamerlano*

A GRAND GALA

A Grand Gala celebration and fundraiser benefiting Cal Performances' artistic initiatives and education programs will feature modern Viennese cocktails and a festive pre-concert dinner followed by desserts and waltzing after the Thursday, March 4 concert with **Gustavo Dudamel** and the **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra**

THE RETURN OF BELOVED, LONGTIME CAL PERFORMANCES ARTISTS

Including **Yo-Yo Ma**, **Stuart Duncan**, **Edgar Meyer**, **Chris Thile**, **Takács Quartet**, **Jordi Savall**, **David Finckel & Wu Han**, **Mark Morris Dance Group**, **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater**, **The 7 Fingers**, **Kodo**, and **Zakir Hussain**

PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING COMPOSER CAROLINE SHAW WELCOMES NEW UNDERGRADUATES WITH GROUP SINGING ACTIVITY

The world-renowned vocalist/composer/violinist will lead UC Berkeley's new undergraduates in an inspiring interactive group singing/composition activity as part of their Golden Bear Orientation

Berkeley, CA, Tuesday, April 28, 2020— Cal Performances' board of trustees co-chairs Helen Meyer and Susan Graham, and executive and artistic director Jeremy Geffen, today announce the 2020–21 season, the first full season of Geffen's curation since he joined the organization in April 2019. Geffen, who previously held the post of senior director and artistic adviser at Carnegie Hall,

brings to Berkeley his own close relationships with an international cohort of esteemed artists, initiating new long-term associations with a dazzling variety of ensembles, composers, and performers.

The 2020–21 season announcement takes place during uncertain times as Cal Performances looks forward to beginning its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, which forced a premature end to the 2019–20 season. “We remain dedicated to our artists, our audiences, and to the UC Berkeley campus,” said Geffen, “and we reaffirm our belief that the arts are now more important than ever in helping people connect with each other and remain emotionally resilient through turbulent, traumatic times.”

Cal Performances announces a new programming initiative this season, *Illuminations*, which invites audiences to explore the connections between UC Berkeley’s groundbreaking scholarship and the performing arts, through the themes of **Music and the Mind** and **Fact or Fiction**.

More than two dozen artists in the 2020–21 season will perform on UC Berkeley’s stages for the first time, representing a wide range of disciplines and genres, and in many cases, introducing Cal Performances audiences to next-generation performers and creators who are now making a name for themselves internationally but may not yet have a large presence on the West Coast.

Longtime Cal Performances collaborators and audience favorites return with beloved and rarely performed repertoire, as well as recent works receiving their West Coast and Bay Area premieres. And several special engagements feature renowned soloists, orchestras, and dance companies presenting specially curated events in Zellerbach Hall. Additionally, a gala event to benefit the organization’s artistic initiatives and education programs is planned in conjunction with a campus residency with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and conductor Gustavo Dudamel.

“The board of trustees is thrilled to share Jeremy Geffen’s vision for Cal Performances with this remarkable collection of performances and programs,” said Graham. “The season honors our history as an organization and also looks ahead to our future, with exciting initiatives and new artistic voices we look forward to sharing with our audiences.”

“This season has been programmed to remind us of everything the performing arts can be—transformative, entertaining, provocative, revelatory, life-affirming,” said Geffen, who grew up and studied viola in Southern California. “For those of us in the audience, the communal experience of being part of a live act of creation has the power to connect, enlighten, and surprise us. Our artists this season promise to bring fresh perspectives and insights to a range of issues that engage us all, as citizens of a complex and changing world.”

Geffen continued, “As the performing arts presenter at one of the world’s most respected universities, Cal Performances has a unique opportunity to use the performing arts as a lens through which we can examine the most pressing issues of our time, and draw connections to the brilliant work that makes UC Berkeley such a vibrant and stimulating community.”

ILLUMINATIONS: **WHERE UC BERKELEY MEETS THE ARTS ONSTAGE**

The 2020–21 season introduces a new series, *ILLUMINATIONS*, which brings the public into the heart of the groundbreaking scholarship and research work for which UC Berkeley is known throughout the world. The series includes two programmatic themes, **Music and the Mind** and **Fact or Fiction**, each featuring performances, discussions, and public programs created in collaboration with university partners and intended to spark diverse campus-wide conversations. *ILLUMINATIONS* demonstrates how the performing arts can help us explore ideas that have the power to transform our understanding of the world and shape the future. The performances and events will bring together a varied community—longtime Cal Performances patrons, first-time visitors, academics and teachers, students, visiting artists, and members of the wider public—pulling back the curtain to reveal the dynamic relationships between current thinking on campus and the wider world.

Music and the Mind examines the transformative and therapeutic potential of music and features performances and public programs with artists and scientists from the campus community and beyond. The series includes a special performance and discussion by soprano **Renée Fleming** (Apr. 18), who has made the relationship between music and the human mind the subject of recent work. Fleming’s event will include both live performance and discussion, and will be developed in collaboration with the Berkeley Brain Initiative, the UC Berkeley faculties of Molecular & Cell Biology and Psychology, Berkeley Public Health, UCSF’s Weill Institute for Neurosciences, and the

Weill Neurohub. The **Mark Morris Dance Group's** *Dance for PD*[®] program offers dance classes for people with Parkinson's disease, exploring the relationship between movement, wellness, and social connection. (For more on the company's performances this season, see *Platée*, May 7–9.) Two other performances probe the relationships between the brain and music composition and performance: the **Tetzlaff Quartet** (Dec. 5–6), performing four late Beethoven string quartets, composed when the composer was profoundly deaf; and virtuosic jazz keyboardist **Matthew Whitaker** (Dec. 19), whose brain scientists are studying in an effort to understand how he “visualizes” music as a blind performer.

Fact or Fiction investigates how artists and scholars in fields as diverse as law, journalism, and information sciences balance the art of storytelling with questions of historical accuracy, exploring the tension between “creative license” and what happens when alterations of fact impact our ability to tell the difference between what is true and what is false. The expansive series features artists from a range of genres, performing works that span centuries in the realms of jazz, theater, new music, and opera, with related programs created in collaboration with campus partners from Berkeley Arts + Design, Berkeley Law, Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism, Berkeley School of Information, Berkeley Library, and the Townsend Center for the Humanities.

Jazz composer **Darcy James Argue's** multimedia production *Real Enemies* (Oct. 9–10) considers the role of conspiracy theories in American culture, and in the Cal Performances co-commission *Frankenstein* (Oct. 24–25), the innovative Chicago-based troupe **Manual Cinema** examines the parallels between Mary Shelley's famous fictional “creature” and the actual events of her life. In *The White Album* (Dec. 4–5), director **Lars Jan** and **Early Morning Opera** consider the complexities of Joan Didion's iconic essay about California in the 1960s, and **Bang on a Can All-Stars** performs Pulitzer Prize-winning composer **Julia Wolfe's** *Steel Hammer* (Jan. 23), which weaves more than 200 versions of the traditional American folktale of “John Henry” into a musical allegory about the industrial age. And Handel's opera *Tamerlano*, performed in concert by early-music ensemble **The English Concert** and a world-class cast of vocal soloists (Apr. 28), demonstrates how the true story of a 14th-century Turco-Mongol conqueror was reimagined by European storytellers of the 18th century.

CAL PERFORMANCES 2020–21 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

New Artists this Season

Making their first campus appearances this season in recital are young pianists **Seong-Jin Cho** (Dec. 11) and **Beatrice Rana** (Apr. 11); harpsichordist **Mahan Esfahani** (Feb. 14); vocalists soprano **Christine Goerke** (Feb. 21) and mezzo-soprano **Jamie Barton** (May 2); and violinist **Tessa Lark** (Nov. 8).

The acclaimed early-music ensemble **The English Concert** launches a new multi-season project in collaboration with Cal Performances with its production of George Frideric Handel's *Tamerlano* (Apr. 28). Each of the ensemble's future annual visits will focus on a concert performance of a complete Baroque oratorio or opera, usually by Handel. And while the English Concert has appeared at Cal Performances in the past—most recently in 2006—this season's *Tamerlano* performance will feature a group of acclaimed soloists who are making their first Cal Performances appearances: countertenor **Bejun Mehta** in the title role, tenor **Michael Spyres** as Bajazet, soprano **Sophie Bevan** as Asteria, countertenor **Jakub Józef Orliński** as Andronico, contralto **Avery Amereau** as Irene, and bass **Ashley Riches** as Leone.

Other artists new to UC Berkeley include the **Dover Quartet** performing Haydn, Ligeti and Dvořák (Oct. 11), and contemporary music ensemble **yMusic** performing a program including a Cal Performances co-commissioned work by composer **Andrew Norman** (Mar. 13). And composer/pianist **Nico Muhly** is joined by established new-music artists, including violist and *Meet the Composer* and *Living Music* podcast host **Nadia Sirota**, in a performance of lesser-known works by **Philip Glass** (Apr. 16).

Jazz artists new to campus this season include **Darcy James Argue's Secret Society** (Oct. 9–10); pianist and Hammond B3 organist **Matthew Whitaker** (Dec. 19); the all-star, all-woman quintet **Artemis** (Feb. 27); and vocalist **Jazzmeia Horn** (Mar. 11). Popular vocalists **Madeleine Peyroux** and **Paula Cole** also appear for the first time at Cal Performances, in a shared concert of music from their hit recordings (Oct. 16).

Cal Performances welcomes **The Dhamaal Dancers and Musicians of India** (Nov. 13) for the first time, in a performance inspired by the colorful Hindu festival of Holi, as well as **Ballet Hispánico** (Nov. 21–22) in a program of works by women choreographers of Hispanic descent that

includes the Bay Area premiere of Michelle Manzanales' *Con Brazos Abiertos*. Director **Lars Jan** and his **Early Morning Opera** company perform the Bay Area premiere of *The White Album* (Dec. 4–5), an acclaimed theatrical and musical reflection on Joan Didion's seminal essay. Tap dance star **Caleb Teicher**, previously a member of Michelle Dorrance's famed Dorrance Dance, visits with his own ensemble (Dec. 12–13) in *More Forever*, a collaboration with composer **Conrad Tao**, who returns to Berkeley to perform his score for Teicher's work on piano and other keyboard instruments. And the East London company **Boy Blue** performs the layered work *Blak Whyte Gray: A Hip-Hop Dance Triple Bill* (Mar. 5–7) as part of its first West Coast tour.

Special Engagements

Three special engagements this season bring renowned international performers and ensembles to the UC Berkeley campus in rare appearances unique in their scope and scale—including exclusive West Coast engagements, a major commissioned production, and programs specially selected for Cal Performances audiences. Some of these artists are regular visitors returning with beloved but infrequently performed works, while others have chosen to perform in Berkeley as part of extremely limited touring schedules.

The **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra**, conducted by **Gustavo Dudamel**, appears in an exclusive West Coast appearance at Zellerbach Hall, with three orchestral performances March 2–4, 2021. Conductor and orchestra have collaborated extensively in recent years, and both have previously appeared separately at Cal Performances—but these concerts mark their first performances together in Berkeley. In 2017, Dudamel became the youngest-ever conductor to lead the Vienna Philharmonic's annual New Year's Day concert, which was broadcast to nearly 50 million people across the globe, and the following year, he conducted the orchestra on a friendship tour of the Americas. The 2021 Berkeley performances prominently feature Russian masterworks—Stravinsky's *Firebird* Suite, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*, Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony, and Prokofiev's First and Fifth Symphonies—as well as major works by Schubert, Ravel, and Haydn.

Revered pianist **Mitsuko Uchida** visits Cal Performances for one concert only, performing two Mozart piano concertos and directing the **Mahler Chamber Orchestra** (MCO) from the keyboard, in their only West Coast appearance together (Mar. 28). Uchida is currently an artistic partner of the

MCO and recently has been collaborating closely with the orchestra on this repertoire. She tours the West Coast rarely and has not performed in Berkeley since the 2013–14 season.

The **Mark Morris Dance Group** reunites with **Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra & Chorale** (PBO) for the Cal Performances co-commissioned revival of Jean-Philippe Rameau’s comic opera *Platée* (May 7–9). The production, with memorable costumes by Isaac Mizrahi, received its critically acclaimed US premiere at Zellerbach Hall in 1998 and has not toured since 2004. *Platée*, the story of a homely and vain swamp nymph who falls prey to a prank set by the gods, was among the most highly regarded of Rameau’s operas during his lifetime. These performances, which will be co-produced by PBO, mark **Nicholas McGegan**’s first major project as music director laureate of the orchestra, as he is set to step down as PBO music director at the end of the 2019–20 season. Soloists in these performances of *Platée* include haute-contre **Mathias Vidal** (Platée); soprano **Chantal Santon Jeffery** (L’Amour/La Folie); soprano **Jennifer Zetlan** (Thalie/Clarine); mezzo-soprano **Sara Couden** (Junon); haute-contre **Aaron Sheehan** (Thespis/Mercure); baritone **Philippe-Nicolas Martin** (Satyr/Cithéron); and baritone **Douglas Williams** (Momus/Jupiter).

A Grand Gala

A Grand Gala, planned to support Cal Performances’ artistic and educational programs, accompanies the **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra** and **Gustavo Dudamel**’s concert on Thursday, March 4, 2021. The celebration and fundraiser will take place in the Pauley Ballroom on the UC Berkeley campus and feature cocktails and a festive pre-concert dinner, with modern Viennese cocktails and waltzing afterwards. More details about *A Grand Gala* can be found at calperformances.org/grand-gala.

“With this festive benefit event the board of trustees celebrates Jeremy Geffen’s inaugural year of programming and invites Cal Performances patrons to invest in our continued future as one of the pre-eminent arts presenters on the West Coast,” says Helen Meyer, co-chair of both the Cal Performances board of trustees and the gala committee. “Our fundraiser events are always wildly popular, and also offer donors a chance to interact off-stage with some of our most fascinating artists.”

Returning Collaborators

Longtime Cal Performances collaborators and friends return this season with both new and familiar repertoire. Cellist **Yo-Yo Ma**, violinist/fiddler **Stuart Duncan**, double bassist **Edgar Meyer**, and mandolinist/vocalist **Chris Thile** reunite in *Not Our First Goat Rodeo*, Cal Performances' season-opening concert (Aug. 20) at the Greek Theatre. Early-music polymath **Jordi Savall** joins two of his ensembles, **La Capella Reial de Catalunya** and **Le Concert des Nations**, for selections from Monteverdi's seminal eighth book of madrigals, the *Madrigals of Love and War* (Nov. 12). The chamber music power duo of cellist **David Finckel** and pianist **Wu Han** performs all five of Beethoven's sonatas for cello and piano (Nov. 15). **Takács Quartet** performs works by Mozart, Brahms, Haydn, Debussy, and Britten over two concerts (Jan. 17 & 24), and the 15 drummers of **Kodo**, Japan's renowned multigenerational *taiko* troupe, invoke centuries of history and culture with each blow to their massive drums (Feb. 6–7). *Tabla* virtuoso **Zakir Hussain** assembles percussionists from diverse musical traditions for one of his popular Masters of Percussion performances (Mar. 20), and the **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** visits for its annual campus residency (Apr. 6–11), bringing new and recent works by revered and up-and-coming choreographers, and work that celebrates both the African American experience and the sheer beauty of dance. And longtime artistic partners the **Mark Morris Dance Group** and **Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra & Chorale** reunite for the Cal Performances co-commissioned revival of Jean-Philippe Rameau's comic opera *Platée* (May 7–9.)

Rescheduled from the 2019–20 Season

The Summit: Manhattan Transfer Meets Take 6, a special program celebrating the Manhattan Transfer's 45th anniversary, has been rescheduled for January 30, 2021, at Zellerbach Hall after their spring 2020 concert was cancelled due to the Covid-19 crisis. The performance features the combined strengths of the two influential, Grammy-winning vocal ensembles, with the groups singing separately and together—both *a cappella* and backed by a live band.

**Pulitzer Prize Winner Caroline Shaw
Welcomes New Berkeley Undergraduates with Group Singing Activity
Celebrating the Value of Connecting through Creativity**

In August, Cal Performances will treat new UC Berkeley undergraduates to an unusual—and uplifting—participatory activity as part of the annual Golden Bear Orientation on campus. Vocalist, composer, and violinist **Caroline Shaw**—who in 2013 became the then-youngest recipient of the Pulitzer Prize in Music—will lead the class of 2024 and other students new to Cal in a revelatory group singing and composition exercise, helping the new classmates connect and bond by raising their voices in song. The exercise is brief but has been known to have a transformational effect on a room filled with nervous strangers—Shaw teaches sections of the group different parts of one of her works, and then conducts the individual groups to layer the sections together, creating a new piece of music in the moment. Shaw’s activity underscores the creativity inherent in each individual, helps break the ice during a stressful moment for new students, and is a powerful example of the ways that Cal Performances and its artists have the ability to impact student life through the arts.

Recent studies conducted by Chorus America and other organizations have shown that group singing can be linked to better mental and physical health, a sense of belonging and connection to others, better social and leadership skills, and increased civic engagement. In addition, singing has been shown by scientists to induce neurological changes in the brain that contribute to feelings of joy and relaxation. Jeremy Geffen, who has participated in Shaw’s past song-building events, says he invited Shaw as a gift to the university’s incoming students, to give them “the opportunity to start their undergraduate careers with a powerful and joyous moment of connection.”

150 Years of Women at Berkeley

In 2020, Cal Performances joins a university-wide, year-long celebration of 150 years of women at UC Berkeley. Activities and programs throughout campus will commemorate the resolution unanimously approved by the Board of Regents, on October 3, 1870: “That young ladies be admitted into the University on equal terms in all respects with young men.” As part of these activities honoring the remarkable women who have studied at, worked for, and contributed to UC Berkeley, Cal Performances will honor the life and legacy of Betty Connors, class of ’45, the first staff administrator to bring the professional performing arts to campus. Connors ran the Committee for Arts and Lectures—which later became Cal Performances—for 35 years, retiring in 1979.

A leader in her field, Connors was instrumental in founding the Western Arts Alliance (WAA) and an early member of the organization now known as the Association of Arts Professionals (AAP). She brought many artists to Berkeley for the first time, some—including the Alvin Ailey American

Dance Theater and Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo—who continue to be a regular part of Cal Performances’ programming.

As part of this reflection on influential women who have shaped the organization’s history, Cal Performances will also celebrate the career and legacy of legendary actress Sarah Bernhardt. On May 17, 1906, Bernhardt performed *Phèdre*—one of her greatest roles—to a rapt, capacity audience at UC Berkeley’s Greek Theatre, launching the performing arts series that later became Cal Performances. Bernhardt’s performance was so well received by fans and critics, and so uniquely suited to the open-air amphitheater’s acoustics and environs, that it helped establish the venue as one of the nation’s most respected outdoor performance spaces, ushering in an era of world-class performing arts presentations in Berkeley.

On Sale Dates

Subscription packages for Cal Performances’ 2020–21 season go on sale Tuesday, May 5, at noon. Single tickets for *Not Our First Goat Rodeo* go on sale to the general public Friday, June 12, at noon. Single tickets for the rest of the 2020–21 season go on sale on Tuesday, August 4, at noon. Tickets to Cal Performances are available through the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, at (510) 642-9988, and at calperformances.org.

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