

Illuminations: Where UC Berkeley Meets the Arts Onstage

Fact or Fiction

Illuminations: Overview

Cal Performances' new *Illuminations* series invites the public into the heart of the groundbreaking scholarship and research work for which UC Berkeley is known throughout the world. Featuring performances, discussions, and public programs created in collaboration with campus partners, the series harnesses the power of the performing arts to explore questions that have the power to transform our understanding of the world and shape the future. *Illuminations* aims to bring together a diverse community—longtime Cal Performances patrons, first-time visitors, academics and teachers, students, visiting artists, and members of the wider public—and to present events that pull back the curtain to reveal the dynamic relationship between cutting-edge thinking on campus and the world beyond. The 2020–21 season of *Illuminations* programming focuses on two themes relevant to and resonant with modern life: **Music and the Mind** and **Fact or Fiction**.

Fact or Fiction: Overview

Does something need to be *real* to be *true*? Mark Twain famously said we should never let the truth get in the way of a good story, and arts audiences have long accepted that a compelling performance experience may not be 100% faithful to history. Indeed, a different spin on the details has always played a role in morphing history into mythology and creating legends that amplify the stories of heroes. *Illuminations: Fact or Fiction* examines the tension between this “creative license” and what happens when alterations of the truth—even the deliberate dissemination of disinformation—begin to impact our ability to effectively tell the difference between fact and fiction, and how this challenge is impacting our world today.

Fact or Fiction: Partnerships

UC Berkeley partners include Berkeley Arts + Design, Berkeley Law, Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism, Berkeley School of Information, Berkeley Library, and the Townsend Center for the Humanities.

Fact or Fiction: Related Events

Additional details regarding *Illuminations*-related public events will be announced throughout the season. For more information, visit calperformances.org/illuminations.

Fact or Fiction: Performances

Real Enemies

Darcy James Argue's Secret Society

Friday and Saturday, October 9–10, at 8pm, Zellerbach Hall

An evening-length, multimedia, jazz-fueled exploration of paranoia, Darcy James Argue's *Real Enemies* considers the tricky history of American conspiratorial thought.

Manual Cinema's *Frankenstein*

Saturday, October 24, at 8pm

Sunday, October 25, at 3pm, Zellerbach Hall

Frankenstein, a Cal Performances co-commission, examines the parallels between Mary Shelley's famous fictional "creature" and the actual events of her life.

***The White Album* by Joan Didion**

Created by Lars Jan/Early Morning Opera

Performed by and created with Mia Barron

Friday and Saturday, December 4–5, at 8pm, Zellerbach Playhouse

Mining new lessons for today's audiences from its searing observations, director Lars Jan's multilayered production considers the complexities of Joan Didion's iconic essay about California in the 1960s.

Julia Wolfe's *Steel Hammer*

Bang on a Can All-Stars

Saturday, January 23, at 8pm, Zellerbach Hall

Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Julia Wolfe's *Steel Hammer* weaves more than 200 (often contradictory!) versions of the classic American "John Henry" folktale into a musical allegory exploring the historical truths—and untruths—of the industrial age.

Handel's *Tamerlano*

The English Concert

Harry Bicket, artistic director

Wednesday, April 28, at 7pm, Zellerbach Hall

Sometimes, how a story is told uncovers more about the time (and agents) of its telling than about the actual history on which it is based. Handel's popular 18th-century opera *Tamerlano* reveals what can happen when the history of an actual 14th-century Turco-Mongol conqueror is adapted by storytellers from a radically different time and place. Artistic director Harry Bicket will lead the renowned English Concert and a cast of world-class soloists in this concert performance conveying the power of Handel's masterwork.