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[Cal Performances Press Room](#)



Photos of Njioma Chinyere Grevious (left) are available for download from the Cal Performances [Press Room](#). A video of Njioma Chinyere Grevious performing the first movement of Coleridge-Taylor's Concerto for Violin in G minor is available on [YouTube](#).

Photos of Julia Bullock (right) and the performers in AMOC*'s *Harawi* are available for download from the Cal Performances [Press Room](#).

A video excerpt of the AMOC* artists rehearsing *Harawi* can be found on [YouTube](#).

**CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY
OPENS ITS 2024–25 SEASON WITH
A FEATURED PERFORMANCE OF THIS SEASON'S *ILLUMINATIONS*
“ FRACTURED HISTORY” SERIES
2024–25 ARTIST IN RESIDENCE, SOPRANO
JULIA BULLOCK
IN THE US PREMIERE OF
AMERICAN MODERN OPERA COMPANY'S NEW PRODUCTION OF
OLIVIER MESSAIEN'S *HARAWI*
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 AT ZELLERBACH HALL**

**RISING STAR VIOLINIST
NJIOMA CHINYERE GREVIOUS
PERFORMS HER CAL PERFORMANCES DEBUT
WITH PIANIST ANDREW GOODRIDGE
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 AT HERTZ HALL**

Berkeley, CA, August 19, 2024—Cal Performances at UC Berkeley launches its 2024–25 season of performing arts this September with an opening weekend featuring performances by soprano **Julia Bullock** and violinist **Njioma Chinyere Grevious**. Bullock lends her star power to a new interpretation of a rarely heard 20th-century masterwork, while Grevious brings a program featuring canonic repertoire and one less-familiar work. Bullock is Cal Performances’ 2024–25 artist in residence, and in this, her first of two appearances this season, performs in the US premiere of a new production of Olivier Messiaen’s song cycle *Harawi*, created by **American Modern Opera Company (AMOC*)**, on Friday, September 27 at 8pm at Zellerbach Hall. Directed by **Zack Winokur**, the performance also features pianist **Conor Hanick** and choreographer/dancers **Bobbi Jene Smith** and **Or Schraiber**. AMOC*’s new production of *Harawi* combines music with movement, expanding the score’s duo instrumentation to a quartet with dancers to explore themes of love and loss. Bullock is a founding member of the company, a collective of multidisciplinary artists dedicated to creating new works and reimagining existing ones through collaboration. Grevious, a 2024 winner of the Avery Fisher Career Grant and a featured performer in the prestigious Sphinx Soloist Program, makes her Cal Performances debut in a recital with pianist **Andrew Goodridge** on Sunday, September 29 at 3pm at Hertz Hall. Her *Influences* program takes up works of significance in her performance career, including *Blue/s Forms*, a rarely performed solo work by Black American composer Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson, along with Beethoven’s *Kreutzer* sonata and Mozart’s E minor sonata.

Cal Performances Executive and Artistic Director Jeremy Geffen said, “It is both exciting and meaningful to open the season with the work of our fascinating, magnetic artist in residence, Julia Bullock, and her colleagues at AMOC* with their inventive staging of Messiaen’s song cycle, *Harawi*. *Harawi* also marks the first performance in our *Illuminations: “Fractured History”* series this season, providing a compelling lens through which to consider a crucial topic in the arts and the world around us.” Geffen continued, “Later during the opening weekend, we are thrilled to welcome the spectacularly talented violinist Njioma Chinyere Grevious for her Cal Performances debut recital with pianist Andrew Goodridge. This weekend of performances is a true celebration of the next generation of performers, artists who harness their spirit of curiosity, collaboration, and ingenuity—values that in many ways define what it means to be a Cal Performances artist—to explore the classical repertoire and its resonance for audiences of today.”

American Modern Opera Company performs Olivier Messiaen’s *Harawi*

The presentation of *Harawi* is part of the 2024-25 season's *Illuminations* programming, which explores the idea of “Fractured History” through eight performances and a series of related public and classroom programs created with visiting artists and university partners. Through this series, Cal Performances investigates collective memory and the complex evolution of historical narratives to consider what role the performing arts might play in restoring nuance to our understanding of the past, and how that understanding shapes our present and future. Campus programs, academic encounters, and public events related to Cal Performances' *Illuminations* programming, including *Harawi*, will be announced soon. Visit calperformances.org/illuminations-2024-25/ for more information about *Illuminations* programming this season.

Written in 1945, Messiaen's hour-long work weaves together layers of culture, language, history, and place by fusing elements of the Peruvian art style *harawi* with the myth of Tristan and Iseult, with text that combines the composer's native French with Quechua onomatopoeia and Andean poetic structures.

Of this production, Julia Bullock shared, “This work is one I dreamt to perform for 10 years, and it took another five years to find the team and the time to gather the forces together to support this iteration of the piece. Why is that a reason to come see it? Well, the dedication is fierce from everyone involved, and I do feel it radiates off of all aspects of this work.

“The poetry and the music by Messiaen shook me to a fundamental core the first time I heard it—even though I didn't fully grasp the depths of the content and the references on first listen. But it's a rare thing to encounter works of art like that; it's inspiring—and I feel the extremes of what is explored when it comes to the themes, tones, emotional shifts, and physical gestures will resonate with anyone who attends.

“Bobbi [Jene Smith], Or [Schraiber], and Conor [Hanick] are some of the artists that I adore most in the world.... I jump at every opportunity to witness their craft in public performance, and can't wait to share the stage with them again!”

Choreographer/dancers Bobbi Jene Smith and Or Schraiber are former members of the Batsheva dance company who practice choreographer Ohad Naharin's style of movement language coined Gaga. They make their Cal Performances debuts in this performance of *Harawi*. Conor Hanick last appeared at Cal Performances accompanying tenor Paul Appleby in January 2022.

In two campus visits as 2024–25 season artist in residence, Julia Bullock will interact with the UC Berkeley campus and broader community in a series of conversations and public programs in conjunction with her performances. Among the most admired artists working today, Bullock is in demand as a performer in a wide range of repertoire, from chamber music to major opera roles, from Baroque-era works to contemporary music composed specifically for her. She enjoys close collaborations with many of the world’s leading composers and creators, including John Adams and Peter Sellars. Recently, she won a Grammy Award for Best Classical Solo Vocal Album, for *Walking In The Dark*, a collaboration with conductor and pianist Christian Reif that was also named one of NPR Music’s 10 Best Classical Albums of 2022. Bullock previously appeared at Cal Performances in recital (2017–18 season) and in the *Cal Performances at Home* streaming series (2019–20 season), and was a featured performer portraying both Simone Weil and Josephine Baker at the 2016 *Ojai at Berkeley* festival.

Bullock returns for a second engagement on Sunday, January 19, 2025, at 3pm at Zellerbach Hall, joined by the famed period-instrument ensemble, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. Operating as a leaderless collective, the chamber orchestra brings a fresh approach and a spirit of inquisitiveness to Baroque music performance. The program features Bullock in arias from operas by Handel, Lully, Rameau, and Purcell in Italian, French, and English, as well as instrumental showpieces by Vivaldi, Bach, Pachelbel, and Handel.

In a video on [YouTube](#), Cal Performances Executive and Artistic Director Jeremy Geffen interviews Julia Bullock about her connection to the programs she is bringing this season, her philosophy on the *Illuminations* “Fractured History” theme, and her excitement about engaging the UC Berkeley campus community.

Njioma Chinyere Grevious and Andrew Goodridge

In a journey from Boston to the international classical music stage, Njioma Chinyere Grevious has emerged as a formidable talent. Inspired by her mother's passion for classical music, Grevious began studying the violin at age four and performed in volunteer concerts alongside her siblings. Her dedication led to a scholarship with Project STEP, a rigorous program nurturing string musicians from Black and Latinx communities, which she joined at age five and participated in throughout her childhood. Through Project STEP, she came to [perform at the White House](#) as a high school senior. She subsequently graduated from the Juilliard School, where she was a founding member of the

Abeo Quartet. Grevious recently completed her graduate studies at the University of Delaware, where she was a member of the school's quartet in residence.

In addition to receiving the 2024 Avery Fisher Career Grant, her accolades include the 2023 Grand Prize at the Concert Artist Guild and Young Classical Artist Trust CAG Elmaleh Competition, and multiple awards at the prestigious Sphinx Competition. She also won concerto competitions at the University of Delaware and the Newark Symphony Orchestra in 2022 and was awarded the Music Academy of the West's Keston-Max Fellowship, allowing her to study and perform with the London Symphony Orchestra. Grevious also claimed first prizes for performance and interpretation at the 2018 Prix Ravel. Beyond the stage, she regularly performs for medically vulnerable audiences and engages with NYC students from underrepresented communities through the Opportunity Music Project, where she teaches composition and collaboration.

Pianist Andrew Goodridge has performed with leading artists including James Buswell, Roman Totenberg, and members of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, and Boston Symphony Orchestra. He is on the faculty at the New England Conservatory Preparatory School and has taught piano accompaniment at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, music appreciation at the Cambridge Center for Adult Education, and music history at the New England Conservatory School of Continuing Education. This recital marks his Cal Performances debut.

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CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Friday, September 27, 8pm

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

New Music

[Olivier Messiaen's *Harawi*](#)

An American Modern Opera Company Production (US Premiere)

Zack Winokur, *director*

Julia Bullock, *soprano*

Conor Hanick, *piano*

Bobbi Jene Smith, *choreographer and dancer*

Or Schraiber, *choreographer and dancer*

Program:

Harawi, an American Modern Opera Company production, realizes Olivier Messiaen's deeply affecting hour-long song cycle for voice and piano in a newly physicalized and dramatized dimension featuring company members soprano Julia Bullock, pianist Conor Hanick, and choreographers/dancers Bobbi Jene Smith and Or Schraiber, with direction by Zack Winokur. Moving from duet to quartet, the production breaks open Messiaen's cycle, connects the relationship between movement and music, and grapples with the intensity of love and loss in the human experience.

An *Illuminations*: "Fractured History" event. Visit calperformances.org/illuminations-2024-25/ for details.

Tickets: \$36–\$78 (prices subject to change)

Sunday, September 29, 3pm

**Hertz Hall
Bancroft Way at College Avenue,
UC Berkeley campus**

Recital

[Njioma Chinyere Grevious](#), *violin*

Andrew Goodridge, *piano*

Influences

Program:

Perkinson/*Blue/s Forms for Solo Violin*

Mozart/Violin Sonata No. 21 in E minor, K. 304

Beethoven/Violin Sonata No. 9 in A major, Op. 47, *Kreutzer*

Dynamic violinist Njioma Chinyere Grevious makes her Cal Performances debut in a recital that demonstrates her impressive technique and versatility. A 2024 winner of the Avery Fisher Career Grant, the up-and-coming artist is a featured performer in the Sphinx Soloist Program, which showcases top Black and Latinx string players who are laureates of the prestigious Sphinx Competition. The solo work *Blue/s Forms* is a rarely performed work by Black American composer Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson, who was active in New York's classical and jazz music worlds from the 1950s through the '90s. Beethoven's brilliant *Kreutzer* sonata and Mozart's elegiac E minor sonata round out the program.

Tickets: \$74 (prices subject to change)

Tickets for all performances are available at calperformances.org, by phone at (510) 642-9988, or in person at the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, Tuesday–Friday, 12–5:30pm with more extended weekend hours beginning after September 3. To verify Ticket Office hours, see calperformances.org/ticket-office. More information about student tickets and discounts is available at calperformances.org/ucb-students. For information about other discounts, visit calperformances.org/discounts.

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PRESS CONTACT

Louisa Spier

Cal Performances

(510) 643-6714

lspier@calperformances.org