

CONTACT: **Louisa Spier**
Cal Performances
(510) 919-6649
lspier@calperformances.org

Jeanette Peach
Cal Performances
(949) 378-7338
jpeach@calperformances.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 21, 2021
[Press Room](#)

**CAL PERFORMANCES AND THE UC BERKELEY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM PRESENT**

***FIGHTING THE DISINFORMATION MACHINE:
SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE FUTURE OF JOURNALISM***
**A FREE LIVESTREAMED CONVERSATION WITH
TRISTAN HARRIS AND GEETA ANAND
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10 AT 7PM (PST)**

**This event is presented as part Cal Performances' *Illuminations*: "Fact or Fiction" series,
with an open Q&A session to follow**

**A recording of this event will be available on demand
for three months following the livestream**

Berkeley, January 21, 2021 — Cal Performances, in partnership with UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism, presents *Fighting the Disinformation Machine: Social Media and the Future of Journalism*, an online conversation featuring Graduate School of Journalism **Dean Geeta Anand** and **Tristan Harris**, star of the 2020 Netflix documentary *The Social Dilemma*, former Google Design Ethicist (2013–16), and co-founder of the Center for Humane Technology, on Wednesday, February 10 at 7pm (PST). This free, livestreamed event will feature Anand and Harris discussing the subject of "fact versus fiction," in particular the growing movement to fight back against the challenges posed to journalism by current technology.

"Fake news spreads six times faster than true news," says Harris, who founded the Center for Humane Technology to radically reimagine our digital infrastructure as one that promotes people's well-being, democracy, and a shared-information environment. In this hour-long conversation, Anand and Harris will explore the implications of the widespread sharing of emotionally resonant mis- or disinformation—often weaponized for profit or propaganda purposes—especially when amplified by tech algorithms.

"As leaders in journalism, we have to be involved with those, like Tristan Harris, who seek to reform the ways the American people receive information," said Geeta Anand, dean of the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism. "News sites can be producing the best reporting in the world, but if the vast majority of Americans don't have a chance to see their stories and are instead being fed a steady stream of inaccurate, hyped disinformation, then journalism, democracy and the future of this

world are in grave jeopardy. The misguided assault on the presidential election, and the US Capitol, shows how dangerously our internet enabled news structure can lead people astray. Finding better ways to enable factual news distribution is now most urgent.”

Said Cal Performances’ executive and artistic director Jeremy Geffen, “Through our 2020–21 *Illuminations: ‘Fact or Fiction’* programming, Cal Performances is taking a deeper look at what has clearly become an urgent concern in our society: What happens when alteration of the truth—even the deliberate dissemination of disinformation—begins to impact our ability to tell fact from fiction. When audiences engage with a performance of work based on historical events, they do not assume that the way those events are portrayed on the stage is an accurate representation of what actually transpired. What makes for a compelling evening in the theater is a distillation of the creator’s point of view on a subject. Yet, so often we do not apply the same critical faculties necessary for making this distinction when encountering false or misleading information about our current world. With his brave and prescient work at the Center for Humane Technology, Tristan Harris has established a firm grasp on one of the most pressing issues of our time: how the decisions we make in telling—or in some cases distorting—stories have significant impact on the messages we hope to transmit.”

This event is free and open to the public, with an open Q&A session following the discussion. Advance registration is required at calperformances.org/fighting-disinformation. Following the livestream, this event will be available to view on demand for three months, through May 10, 2021.

More on Cal Performances’ *Illuminations: “Fact or Fiction”* programming can be found at calperformances.org/learn/illuminations/2020-21/#fact-or-fiction

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

LIVESTREAMED EVENT

Wednesday, February 10, 7pm (PST)

Following the livestream, this event will be available to view on demand for three months, through May 10, 2021.

Fighting the Disinformation Machine: Social Media and the Future of Journalism

Program: *Fighting the Disinformation Machine*, a Cal Performances *Illuminations: “Fact or Fiction”* livestreamed event presented in partnership with the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism, will feature Dean Geeta Anand and Tristan Harris, former Google Design Ethicist and star of the Netflix documentary *The Social Dilemma*, in conversation about the movement to fight back against the challenges to journalism posed by current technology.

This event is part of Cal Performances’ *Illuminations: “Fact or Fiction”* programming.

Tickets: *This online conversation is free and open to the public. Advance registration is required at calperformances.org/fighting-disinformation*