

For Immediate Release: October 18, 2022

[Press Room](#)



Images of Sō Percussion are available for download from the Cal Performances [press room](#).

A video of Sō Percussion performing on NPR's Tiny Desk Concerts series can be viewed [here](#).

An *Illuminations*: “Human and Machine”-themed video with the members of Sō Percussion, composer Steve Reich, composer/filmmaker Michel Van der Aa, and others, describing the role technology plays in their creative processes, can be viewed [here](#).

CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS
A FEATURED PERFORMANCE OF THE 2022–23 SEASON
ILLUMINATIONS: “HUMAN AND MACHINE” PROGRAMMING
SŌ PERCUSSION
PERFORMING BAY AREA PREMIERES
BY ANGÉLICA NEGRÓN AND NATHALIE JOACHIM
AT ZELLERBACH HALL, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12

While at Berkeley, the musicians of Sō Percussion will give a lecture and demonstration open to the public, a post-performance Q&A free to all ticket holders, and a master class with UC Berkeley students

Berkeley, CA, October 18, 2022—Cal Performances at UC Berkeley presents new-music ensemble **Sō Percussion** in the first of two concerts this season on Saturday, November 12 at 8pm at Zellerbach Hall. The performance features the Bay Area premieres of two works: *gone* and *go back* by Puerto Rican-born composer Angélica Negrón, and *Note to Self* by flutist and composer Nathalie Joachim in addition to Dan Trueman’s *neither Anvil nor Pulley*. The concert is part of Cal Performances’ 2022–23 season *Illuminations*: “Human and Machine” programming, which highlights the roles technology and invention have played in shaping creativity, culture, and communication. Cal Performances’ executive and artistic director Jeremy Geffen will host a post-performance

discussion with the musicians of Sō Percussion—Eric Cha-Beach, Josh Quillen, Adam Sliwinski, and Jason Treuting— that is free to all concert ticketholders. Sō Percussion returns to Berkeley for a second concert on April 20, 2023, featuring collaborator and composer/vocalist Caroline Shaw.

Each of the three works on the November 3 concert program explores the “Human and Machine” theme by introducing invented musical machines, computers, and digital noisemakers into the percussion ensemble to explore complex human emotions such as anxiety, memory, resistance, antagonism, and humor.

Angélica Negrón’s *gone* is composed for percussion quartet accompanied by four solenoid-powered noisemakers, in which different inanimate objects are placed on top of surface poppers to create fast, erratic rhythms. The devices operate as a ghost-like presence, at times creating sound synchronously with the performers, and at other times without any seeming connection to the members of the ensemble. In *go back*, Negrón explores themes of resilience and resistance in the Puerto Rican diaspora through audio sampling and electronic sounds that evoke the pots and pans used in street protests on the island. The pieces were written for Sō Percussion, and will ultimately form sections of a longer suite.

In Nathalie Joachim’s *Note to Self*, the percussion quartet interacts with pre-recorded samples of the composer’s voice, in her words, taking the listener “through different phases of cyclical thoughts and states of being” that she experiences as part of her chronic anxiety. Composed in three short movements, the work uses both recording technology and musical repetition as tools for healing and catharsis.

The third work in the program, Dan Trueman’s *neither Anvil nor Pulley*, explores the often antagonistic relationship between humans and machines in the digital age, in one section pitting the acoustic instrumentalists of the ensemble against digital metronomes, drum machines, and processed sounds. Founding member of the group Jason Treuting explains that, “depending on the night, it’s hard to know who wins... the drum machines play faster and faster and the drummer’s job is to play with them until it’s just physically impossible. So you have a choice; are you going to keep playing with this machine, or are you going to do your own thing? For me, if I’m sitting in the drummer’s seat, and I have enough energy, I try to do my own thing and try to come out on top.”

Illuminations programming takes advantage of Cal Performances' unique positioning as a world-class performing arts presenter at one of the world's top-ranked public universities. Through the 2022–23 season theme “Human and Machine,” *Illuminations* explores the many roles technology plays in both catalyzing and challenging creative expression and human communication. Programming includes performances, public events, artist talks, video and symposia that engage communities on and off campus to examine the evolution of musical instruments, the complex relationships between technology creators and users, technology's impact on the creative process, and the benefits and potential dangers raised by the growing role of artificial intelligence in our society. More information about *Illuminations*: “Human and Machine” can be found at calperformances.org/illuminations-2022-23/.

As part of *Illuminations*, on Sunday, November 13, from 10-11:30am in Zellerbach Hall Sō Percussion will give a lecture and demonstration showing how they use their instruments and trademark noisemakers to bring to life the unique compositions they perform. The presentation is free and open to the public. The quartet will also teach a private master class to invited UC Berkeley percussion and composition students providing hands-on instruction to elevate the students' creative expression.

Sō Percussion is also one of a number of percussion performance offerings this season, which collectively explore a broad range of instruments and musical styles. Other concerts in the genre include those by Colin Currie Group and Synergy Vocals (*A Steve Reich Celebration*, Nov. 3), Kodo (Feb. 4–5), and Zakir Hussain and Masters of Percussion (Mar. 11).

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Saturday, November 12, 8pm

Zellerbach Hall
Bancroft Way at Dana Street,
UC Berkeley campus

New Music, Percussion Festival

Sō Percussion

Program:

Angélica Negrón/*gone* (Bay Area Premiere)
go back (Bay Area Premiere)
Nathalie Joachim/*Note to Self* (Bay Area Premiere)
Dan Trueman/*neither Anvil nor Pulley*

The singular new-music ensemble Sō Percussion plays two concerts at Cal Performances this season. In this, the quartet’s first visit, two short pieces by composer Angélica Negrón explore interactions between the quartet’s percussion instruments and pre-programmed electronic noisemakers, and Nathalie Joachim’s *Note to Self* combines pre-recorded loops of her own voice with percussion writing as a way of processing her chronic anxiety. Dan Trueman’s *neither Anvil nor Pulley* pits the acoustic instrumentalists of the ensemble against digital metronomes, drum machines, and processed sounds. The group will return to Berkeley on April 20, 2023 joined by composer/vocalist Caroline Shaw.

This performance is a 2022–23 season *Illuminations*: “Human and Machine” event. Information about *Illuminations* can be found at calperformances.org/illuminations-2022-23/.

Tickets: \$28–\$48 (prices subject to change). Half-price for UC Berkeley students. Tickets 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 and Saturday–Sunday, 1–5 pm. More information about student tickets and discounts is available at calperformances.org/ucb-students. For information about other discounts, visit calperformances.org/discounts.

COVID-19: Masking is required inside the Zellerbach Hall auditorium, and is strongly recommended, though not required, for indoor lobby/waiting areas as well as outdoor spaces. Up-to-date vaccination is strongly recommended, though not required for entry. The latest information on Cal Performances’ COVID-19 safety policies is available at calperformances.org/safety.

Related Event:

Lecture/Demonstration
Zellerbach Hall
Sun, Nov 13, 10-11:30am

As part of *Illuminations*: “Human and Machine” the musicians of Sō Percussion will give a lecture and demonstration showing how they use their instruments and trademark noisemakers to bring to life the unique compositions they perform. The presentation is free and open to the public. More information including details about how to register will be available at calperformances.org

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