

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 22, 2023

[Press Room](#)



Photos of Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp are available for download from Cal Performances' [online press room](#).

**CAL PERFORMANCES PRODUCES THE 21ST
BERKELEY/OAKLAND AILEYCAMP
ON THE UC BERKELEY CAMPUS
JUNE 20–JULY 28, 2023**

**Offered completely free of charge,
Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp is Cal Performances'
six-week dance and personal development program for youth ages 11–14**

***Points of View*, the final showcase performance inspired by this year's
national AileyCamp theme of "Perspective," takes place on
Thursday, July 27 at 7pm at Zellerbach Hall**

Berkeley, June 22, 2023—This summer, Cal Performances produces the 21st annual Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp, June 20–July 28, on the UC Berkeley campus. The full-scholarship, six-week summer program promoting personal development through dance for select middle school students from the Berkeley, Oakland, Richmond, and Albany unified school districts is the product of Cal Performances' nearly 60-year relationship with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Outside of its hometown of New York City, the Ailey company has performed in Berkeley longer

and more often than anywhere else. Through AileyCamp, the organization further deepens its ties with the Bay Area community. Every spring, when the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater returns for its annual engagement at Cal Performances, AileyCamp alums reunite to take a master class with an Ailey dancer and to see the Ailey company perform.

This summer over 70 Berkeley/Oakland AileyCampers will attend classes in four dance techniques—modern, West African, jazz, and ballet—as well as in creative communication and personal development that delve into topics such as goal-setting, conflict management, media literacy, positive self-image, and leadership development. New this year, there will be an increased number of leadership roles for returning campers with the intention of cultivating mentorship skills and fostering an increased sense of community within the camp.

“AileyCamp gives young people an opportunity to have a quality arts experience, make friends, express themselves, and recognize that they matter,” says [Nasha Thomas](#), National Director of AileyCamp/Arts In Education Spokesperson & Master Teacher. “Every year, it is a joy to witness the campers’ transformation from the first day to the final performance, and it’s incredibly special to watch our former campers step into leadership roles that pay it forward to the next generation—it’s a testament to Alvin Ailey’s mission of enriching the lives of youth through dance.”

As is true every year at Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp, throughout the six-week program, campers are provided with dancewear and shoes; breakfast and lunch in the university’s dining commons; and round-trip transportation for Oakland residents. At the conclusion, campers will demonstrate their new skills with a final dance performance inspired by this year’s national AileyCamp theme, “Perspective.” Featuring professional staging, lights, costumes, and live music, this year’s showcase performance entitled *Points of View* takes place on Thursday, July 27 at 7pm at Zellerbach Hall and is free and open to the public.

The camp, one of 10 AileyCamps nationwide, is locally produced and offered free of charge by Cal Performances to local youth, thanks to the generosity of individual and institutional donors. Originally conceived by Alvin Ailey and the Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey, the first AileyCamp took place in 1989 and came to the West Coast in 2002. Since its start, Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp has touched the lives of more than 1,200 young people in the Bay Area. Families whose children have participated in the intensive program describe how AileyCamp has positively impacted

the lives of the entire family as campers demonstrate new teamwork and leadership skills; exhibit qualities of discipline and perseverance; and take pride in who they are.

Brenda Scott, whose multiple grandchildren have attended the camp explains, “They say it takes a village to raise a kid, and we had seven! I don’t think we could have done it without [AileyCamp’s] help. Each child in their own way found their inner strength and bloomed from there, and they still carry a lot of what they learned at AileyCamp to this day. Because it was in the form of the arts, it helped them realize there were other aspects of themselves, and it gave them a confidence that didn’t get across any other way. I’m not sure how they all would have turned out if they hadn’t had this transformational experience.”

Holding AileyCamp on the Berkeley campus has allowed the program to build a long-term partnership with the UC Berkeley School of Education’s Principal Leadership Institute (PLI). PLI cohorts are made up of school teachers and administrators who, each summer, study AileyCamp as an arts education model with cultural relevance for Bay Area students. Cal Performances and AileyCamp in turn gain important feedback on the camp’s pedagogical effectiveness from these experts in the education field. This ongoing connection between AileyCamp and PLI also allows the camp to build relationships with future school principals who share information about AileyCamp in their school communities.

This year, returning AileyCamp director Patricia West and returning associate director Spencer “SPULU” Pulu, a 2005 AileyCamp alum, will lead Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp. Both have a deep history and experience with the camp. West, an educator and performing artist, directed AileyCamp in person last summer and virtually in 2021; and, prior to that, held Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp’s Managing Director position in 2017. In addition to her leadership of AileyCamp, she performs with the Alayo Dance Company, Zaccho Dance Theater, and Fog Beast; and since 2006, has been a collaborating artist and serves as Assistant Director and Creative Engagement Lead for Joe Goode Performance Group. West also co-founded DAP, a performing arts collective, in 2017. SPULU has served as a volunteer, group leader, and group leader supervisor for Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp for 14 years. SPULU uses the arts and movement as a form of resistance and protest. Their artistic work, informed by social issues facing the Tongan community and Pacific Islanders worldwide, has been showcased internationally. This year, SPULU was chosen as one of the artists to perform in the

26th annual United States of Asian America Festival's Sunday Streets Tenderloin Reimagining Horizons event, which took place on June 4.

More details about Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp can be found on Cal Performances' website at calperformances.org/aileycamp. Media opportunities and open houses take place on select days throughout the six weeks of AileyCamp. Journalists are welcome to attend by appointment.

**CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:
CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS**

**Thursday, July 27, 7pm
Zellerbach Hall
Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley Campus**

**2023 Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp at Cal Performances
Points of View
Patricia West, *director*
AileyCamp campers, junior leaders, accompanists, and instructors**

Program: More than 70 Berkeley/Oakland AileyCampers, ages 11–14, will perform their final showcase on this year's theme of "Perspective" in a 90-minute performance complete with professional staging, lights, costumes, and live music, on stage at Zellerbach Hall.

Tickets: Admission to the final performance of Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp is free and subject to availability. Advance tickets will be available starting Tuesday, July 18 at noon at calperformances.org/aileycamp. Limit four tickets per person. For Ticket Office summer hours, visit calperformances.org/ticket-office.

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