

For Immediate Release: August 22, 2023

[Cal Performances 2023-24 Online Press Room](#)

[Cal Performances 2023-24 Season Calendar](#)

**CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY  
LAUNCHES ITS 2023–24 SEASON  
WITH A MONTH OF EXPANSIVE CLASSICAL RECITALS,  
A BAY AREA PREMIERE PRODUCTION,  
FAMILY FUN AND TWO SPEAKERS**

**SUNDAY RECITALS AT HERTZ HALL KICK OFF THE SEASON  
WITH INTERNATIONAL STARS AND EXCITING VOICES,  
MOST MAKING THEIR CAL PERFORMANCES DEBUTS**

including pianist **Tom Borrow** on October 1; soprano **Christine Goerke** and pianist **Craig Terry** on October 8; mandolinist **Avi Avital** and accordionist **Hanzhi Wang** on October 15; and pianist **Michelle Cann** on October 29

**LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE**

performs the Bay Area premiere of **Peter Sellars**' production of Heinrich Schütz's *Music to Accompany a Departure*, a Cal Performances co-commission, Saturday, October 28 at Zellerbach Hall

***THE TRIPLETS OF BELLEVILLE CINE-CONCERT,***

Composer **Benoît Charest** conducts Le Terrible Orchestre de Belleville in a family-friendly live film and music event, Saturday–Sunday, October 21–22 at Zellerbach Hall

***AI WEIWEI'S WORLD OF ART LOST AND FOUND***

The renowned artist and human rights activist will engage in a conversation with **Peter Sellars** and **Orville Schell**, Sunday, September 24 at 2pm at Zellerbach Hall

***EZRA KLEIN: A LIBERALISM THAT BUILDS***

*New York Times* journalist and podcast host speaks on the topic of a book he is currently co-writing, Thursday, October 5 at 4pm at Zellerbach Hall

**Berkeley, CA, August 22, 2023**—Cal Performances at UC Berkeley opens the first month of its 2023–24 season with performances showcasing a wide variety of events, with several acclaimed classical artists making their Berkeley debuts, two unique productions featuring music ranging from serene Baroque choral music to vintage hot jazz, and talks from a world renowned artist and an award-winning journalist. Hertz Hall Sunday recital concerts showcase pianists **Tom Borrow** on October 1 and **Michelle Cann** on October 29; opera diva, soprano **Christine Goerke** with pianist

**Craig Terry** on October 8; and mandolinist **Avi Avital** and accordionist **Hanzhi Wang** on October 15. **Peter Sellars** directs with the **Los Angeles Master Chorale**, conducted by **Grant Gershon**, in the Bay Area premiere of Baroque composer Heinrich Schütz's meditative *Musikalische Exequien* (*Music to Accompany a Departure*), a Cal Performances co-commission, on Saturday, October 28 at Zellerbach Hall. Composer Benoît Charest leads an eight-piece orchestra in a live version of his Oscar-nominated jazz score for the beloved animated film *The Triplets of Belleville* on Saturday and Sunday, October 21–22 at Zellerbach Hall. Renowned artist and human rights activist **Ai Weiwei** will return to the Berkeley campus for the first time in 15 years for a conversation with respected theater director **Peter Sellars** and **Orville Schell**, Director of the Center on US-China Relations at the Asia Society in a talk that takes place on Sunday, September 24 at 2pm at Zellerbach Hall. And *New York Times* columnist and podcast host **Ezra Klein** will speak at Zellerbach Hall on Thursday, October 5 at 4pm.

### **Expansive Recital Series**

Exploring the range from canonic repertoire to new works and rarely performed gems, the 2023–24 season recital series offers more than a dozen concerts featuring both rising-star performers and well-known artists. Five artists launch the series this October. Cal Performances Artistic and Executive Director Jeremy Geffen reflected, “At Cal Performances we celebrate performers at all stages of their careers, from living legends to artists who are just beginning to receive wider recognition. This season, it is a distinct pleasure to introduce our audiences to many artists for the first time, whom we look forward to following and supporting on their artistic journeys well into the future.”

Twenty-three-year-old pianist **Tom Borrow**—who has already won every national piano competition in his native Israel—performs the first recital of the season with his Cal Performances debut on Sunday, October 1 at 3pm. Borrow has been a protégé of Murray Perahia since he was a teenager training as part of the Jerusalem Music Centre's Outstanding Young Musicians program. At Hertz Hall, he performs a program featuring Book 1 of Debussy's *Images*, selections from Rachmaninoff's Preludes Op. 23 and Op. 32, and selections from Chopin's *Études*, Op. 25. The centerpiece of his recital is Prokofiev's Sixth Sonata, the first of his so-called “War Sonatas.” Of his Berkeley debut, Borrow shared, “I'm so thrilled and excited to come to Cal Performances, an institution with an incredible international reputation. I wanted to offer a program worthy of the

occasion—it's challenging for the pianist but also a real and profound journey, for me and for the audience. I can't wait to go on that journey together!"

Soprano **Christine Goerke** and pianist **Craig Terry** present *A Celebration of the American Diva* on Sunday, October 8 at 3pm at Hertz Hall. The program showcases the breadth of Goerke's artistry: the first half focuses on dramatic songs by Richard Strauss and Brahms, as well as arias from Wagner roles she has sung to great international acclaim; and the second half serves as a point of contrast, featuring a selection of lighter American popular music.

A Cal Performances favorite, virtuoso classical mandolinist **Avi Avital** will perform this season with accordionist **Hanzhi Wang** in a duo recital on Sunday, October 15 at 3pm at Hertz Hall. The program explores canonic repertoire by composers including Bach, Saint-Saëns, de Falla, Stravinsky, and Bartók, arranged for the duo's unique instrumentation. A trailblazing voice on her instrument, in 2017, Wang was the first accordionist ever to join the Young Concert Artists roster; she makes her Cal Performances debut with this concert. Of the engagement, Wang shared, "I'm very excited and grateful for the opportunity to perform at UC Berkeley with Avi Avital this coming fall. The accordion and mandolin are unusual instruments in the classical music world—I hope this new sound will bring you a new and joyful experience!"

Pianist **Michelle Cann** makes her Cal Performances recital debut on Sunday, October 29 at 3pm at Hertz Hall. A recipient of the prestigious Sphinx Medal of Excellence, Cann has earned acclaim for excavating, championing, and performing under-recognized works by composer Florence Price. Her recital includes Price's rarely performed Piano Sonata in E minor alongside a 2020 work by Joel Thompson inspired by a James Baldwin essay, titled *My Dungeon Shook: Three American Preludes*; waltzes by Liszt (*Mephisto Waltz* No. 1) and Ravel (*La Valse*); and Ginastera's Piano Sonata No. 1, Op. 22.

### **Los Angeles Master Chorale**

This fall the singers of the **Los Angeles Master Chorale** and conductor **Grant Gershon** return to Cal Performances for the Bay Area premiere of **Peter Sellars'** fully staged production of Baroque composer Heinrich Schütz's *Musikalische Exequien (Music to Accompany a Departure)*. The ruminative work, which explores themes of remembrance and devotion, is performed by 24 singers accompanied by organ and viol da gamba. Schütz composed this deeply personal meditation on

mortality and grief in the 1630s, during the ravages of the Thirty Years' War, and it was dedicated to the memory of one of his dearest friends. The artists of the Los Angeles Master Chorale reunited with Sellars following their acclaimed collaboration on Orlando di Lasso's *Lagrime di San Pietro*, which was performed at Zellerbach Hall during the 2018–19 season. This production of *Music to Accompany a Departure* is a Cal Performances co-commission, and is performed one night only on Saturday, October 28 at 8pm at Zellerbach Hall.

### **Animated Film With Live Orchestra**

When it was released in movie theaters in 2003, the animated French feature film *The Triplets of Belleville* became an international sensation. The story of a captivating caper is told through music and images that involve American gangsters, Tour de France cyclists, and a trio of colorful vaudevillian sisters out to expose a crime ring. Twenty years later, composer **Benoît Charest** leads an eight-piece orchestra in a live version of his Oscar-nominated jazz score to **Sylvain Chomet's** film, evoking the streets of 1920s Paris and featuring live sound effects. *The Triplets of Belleville* Cine-Concert takes place on Saturday, October 21 at 8pm and Sunday, October 22 at 3pm at Zellerbach Hall.

In addition, UC Berkeley students are invited to a reception following the Friday, October 21 performance of *The Triplets of Belleville* Cine-Concert for a casual gathering with light refreshments to welcome them into Zellerbach Hall and provide an opportunity to meet other arts lovers on campus. UC Berkeley students can access exclusive discounts, including half-price tickets in all sections of the theater, and are also eligible to purchase a limited number of discounted \$10 tickets for the best seats in the house for the October 21 performance starting at 12 noon on Friday, October 6 through the [Golden Bear Circle](#) seating program.

### **Two Speakers**

On Sunday, September 24 at 2pm at Zellerbach Hall, artist **Ai Weiwei** will address issues of exile, imprisonment, repression, and advocacy that have infused his personal life and artistic work in a talk with fellow artist **Peter Sellars**—an avid student of Chinese history and culture—and **Orville Schell**, a leading expert on China and the Far East. This program continues a series of campus talks about China led by Schell, who is former Dean at the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism and is co-presented by Cal Performances, BAMPFA, and Townsend Center for the Humanities.

In the second speaker event presented this season, *New York Times* journalist **Ezra Klein** will reflect on “liberal governance that routinely fails to achieve liberal outcomes” in a talk informed by the forthcoming book he is co-writing with *Atlantic* journalist Derek Thompson that explores the difficulties Democratic governments encounter when working to build real things in the real world. Focusing on what he defines as California's deepest problems—skyrocketing housing costs, lagging developments in clean energy, and constant traffic—Klein asks, how did we get here? And what can we do about it?

The event taking place on Thursday, October 5 at 4pm is co-presented by Cal Performances and UC Berkeley Graduate Lectures as part of the [Jefferson Memorial Lecture Series](#).

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**CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE, CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS:**

**Sunday, September 24, 2pm**

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

*Speaker*

***Ai Weiwei's World of Art Lost and Found:***  
**A Conversation About Life, Art, and Politics**  
**Ai Weiwei with Peter Sellars and Orville Schell**

Program:

Renowned artist and human rights activist Ai Weiwei discusses life, art, and politics in a conversation with respected director Peter Sellars and Orville Schell, Director of the Center on US-China Relations at the Asia Society. Ai's unprecedented installation on Alcatraz in 2014–15, *@Large*, left an enduring mark on the Bay Area's cultural landscape. In this talk, Ai will address issues of exile, imprisonment, repression, and advocacy that have infused his personal life and artistic work with fellow artist Sellars, himself an avid student of Chinese history and culture, and Schell, a leading expert on China and the Far East.

Co-presented by Cal Performances, BAMPFA, and Townsend Center for the Humanities.

Tickets: \$36–\$56 (prices subject to change); \$15 for UC Berkeley students and \$25 for UC Berkeley faculty and staff.

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**Sunday, October 1, 3pm**

**Hertz Hall**

Bancroft Way at College Avenue,  
UC Berkeley campus

*Classical Recital*

**Tom Borrow, piano**

**Program:**

Debussy/*Images*, Book 1

Chopin/Études Nos. 1, 6, 10-12 from Op. 25

Rachmaninoff/Preludes No. 2, 4, and 5 from Op. 23 and Prelude No. 10 from Op. 32

Prokofiev/Piano Sonata No. 6 in A major, Op. 82

Recently named a BBC New Generation Artist, Tom Borrow has performed with all the BBC orchestras, at Wigmore Hall, and on multiple BBC broadcasts. A protégé of Murray Perahia, at 23 years old, he has won every national piano competition in his native Israel. Borrow's US debut with the Cleveland Orchestra two seasons ago has put him on the map stateside. The centerpiece of his Berkeley debut recital is Prokofiev's Sixth Sonata, the first of the composer's so-called "War Sonatas."

**Tickets:** \$72 (prices subject to change)

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**Thursday, October 5, 4pm**

**Zellerbach Hall**

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

*Speaker*

**Ezra Klein: *A Liberalism That Builds***

**Program:**

*New York Times* columnist and podcast host Ezra Klein reflects on "liberal governance that routinely fails to achieve liberal outcomes" in a talk informed by a book he is currently co-writing that explores the difficulties Democratic governments encounter when working to build real things in the real world. Focusing on what he defines as California's deepest problems—skyrocketing housing costs, lagging developments in clean energy, constant traffic—Klein asks, how did we get here? And what can we do about it? As an award-winning journalist, Klein combines traditional opinion writing with reporting to bring clarity to policy debates often mired in complexity.

*Co-presented by Cal Performances and UC Berkeley Graduate Lectures as part of the [Jefferson Memorial Lecture Series](#).*

**Tickets:** \$26–\$58 (prices subject to change); \$25 for UC Berkeley students, faculty, and staff

Tickets are available at [calperformances.org](https://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, 1–5pm. More information about student tickets and discounts is available at [calperformances.org/ucb-students](https://calperformances.org/ucb-students). For information about other discounts, visit [calperformances.org/discounts](https://calperformances.org/discounts).

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**Sunday, October 8, 3pm**

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

*Classical Recital*

**Christine Goerke**, *soprano*

**Craig Terry**, *piano*

*A Celebration of the American Diva*

**Program:**

Wagner/“Dich, teure Halle” from *Tannhäuser*

R. Strauss/Selected lieder

Brahms/Selected lieder

Wagner/“Du bist der Lenz” from *Die Walküre*

Alan Louis Smith/*Letters to Evelyn from George*

Jacobs-Bond/*Half-Minute Songs*

McArthur/Night

Shapiro/He’s Home For A Little While

Sargent/Hickory Hill

De Rose/Deep Purple

La Forge/Hills

Delugg and Stein/Orange Colored Sky

Multiple Grammy-winner Christine Goerke visits with a recital that showcases two different sides of her musical personality. The first half of the program consists of songs by Richard Strauss and Brahms, and arias from Wagner roles she has sung to great international acclaim. The second half is made up of a selection of American popular music.

**Tickets:** \$82 (prices subject to change)

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**Sunday, October 15, 3pm**

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

*Classical Recital*

**Avi Avital**, *mandolin*

**Hanzhi Wang**, *accordion*

**Program:**

Kreisler/Praeludium and Allegro “in the Style of Pugnani”

Stravinsky/*Suite Italienne*

J.S. Bach/Chaconne from Partita No. 2 in D minor, BWV 1004 (mandolin solo)

Bartók/Romanian Folk Dances  
De Sarasate/Romanza Andaluza from Spanish Dances, Op. 22  
De Falla/Danse Espagnole No. 1 from *La vida breve*  
Saint-Saëns/Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso

Israeli-born mandolin virtuoso Avi Avital performs with concert accordionist Hanzhi Wang in her Cal Performances debut, exploring canonic repertoire by composers including Bach, Saint-Saëns, de Falla, Stravinsky, and Bartók, arranged for the duo's unique instrumentation.

**Tickets:** \$72 (prices subject to change)

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**Saturday, October 21, 8pm**

**Sunday, October 22, 3pm**

**Zellerbach Hall**

Bancroft Way at Dana Street,  
UC Berkeley campus

*Family*

***The Triplets of Belleville* Cine-Concert**

**Benoît Charest, *composer and conductor***

**Le Terrible Orchestre de Belleville**

**Program:**

The animated French feature film *The Triplets of Belleville* was released in movie theaters in 2003, receiving dozens of awards and nominations. Through music and images (and almost no dialogue), writer-director Sylvain Chomet tells a story of a caper involving American gangsters, Tour de France cyclists, and a trio of colorful vaudevillian sisters out to expose a crime ring. Composer Benoît Charest leads his eight-piece orchestra in a live version of his Oscar-nominated score, evoking the streets of 1920s Paris and “Le Jazz Hot” and featuring live sound effects.

**Tickets:** \$50–\$78 (prices subject to change). UC Berkeley students can access exclusive discounts, including half-price tickets in all sections of the theater, and \$10 tickets for a limited number of prime seats for the Saturday, October 21 performances of *The Triplets of Belleville* Cine-Concert as part of Cal Performances' Golden Bear Circle program. More information about student tickets and discounts is available at [calperformances.org/ucb-students](http://calperformances.org/ucb-students). For information about other discounts, visit [calperformances.org/discounts](http://calperformances.org/discounts).

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**Saturday, October 28, 8pm**

**Zellerbach Hall**

Bancroft Way at Dana Street,  
UC Berkeley campus

*Early Music*

**Los Angeles Master Chorale**

***Music to Accompany a Departure*** (Bay Area premiere, Cal Performances co-commission)

**Grant Gershon, *conductor***

**Peter Sellars, *director***

**James F. Ingalls, *lighting designer***

**Danielle Domingue Sumi, *costume designer***

**Program:**



Following their collaboration on Orlando di Lasso's *Lagrimae di San Pietro* during Cal Performances' 2018–19 season, Peter Sellars, Grant Gershon, and singers of the Los Angeles Master Chorale reunite in a meditation on what it means to say goodbye during times of struggle. The music of Baroque composer Heinrich Schütz's *Musikalische Exequien (Music to Accompany a Departure)* serves as inspiration for a fully staged ceremony of remembrance and devotion, performed by 24 singers accompanied by organ and viol da gamba. Schütz composed the work, an exploration of mortality and grief, in the 1630s, during the ravages of the Thirty Years' War, and it was dedicated to the memory of one of his dearest friends.

**Tickets:** \$60–\$90 (prices subject to change)

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**Sunday, October 29, 3pm**

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

*Classical Recital*  
**Michelle Cann**, *piano*

**Program:**

Ginastera/Piano Sonata No. 1, Op. 22  
Joel Thompson/*My Dungeon Shook: Three American Preludes*  
Ravel/*La Valse*  
Price/Piano Sonata in E minor  
Liszt/*Mephisto Waltz* No. 1

American pianist Michelle Cann has made a name for herself by performing under-recognized works by the great composer Florence Price. Last year, Cann became the first African American appointed to the piano faculty at the Curtis Institute of Music, as well as the recipient of the Sphinx Medal of Excellence. She has earned praise for her programs connecting the music of Black women pianist-composers Price, Hazel Scott, and Margaret Bonds, and here performs her Cal Performances debut recital featuring Price's formally inventive Piano Sonata in E minor alongside a 2020 work by Joel Thompson inspired by a James Baldwin essay, plus works by Liszt, Ginastera, and Ravel.

**Tickets:** \$72 (prices subject to change)

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