

For Immediate Release: January 3, 2024

[Cal Performances Press Room](#)



Images of *common ground[s]* by Germaine Acogny and Malou Airaudo (left) and *The Rite of Spring* by Pina Bausch (right) are available for download from the Cal Performances [Press Room](#).

A trailer for *common ground[s]* by Germaine Acogny and Malou Airaudo and *The Rite of Spring* by Pina Bausch is available on [YouTube](#).

A video of rehearsals for *The Rite of Spring* by Pina Bausch held at the École des Sables in Dakar, Senegal, is available on [Vimeo](#).

**CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS**  
**A FEATURED PRESENTATION OF THE 2023–24 SEASON**  
***ILLUMINATIONS: “INDIVIDUAL & COMMUNITY” SERIES***

**THE BAY AREA PREMIERES OF**  
***THE RITE OF SPRING* BY PINA BAUSCH**  
**AND**  
***COMMON GROUND[s]* BY GERMAINE ACOGNY & MALOU AIRAUDO**  
**FEBRUARY 16–18, 2024,**  
**AT ZELLERBACH HALL**

**Bausch’s seminal 1975 work to be performed for the first time in the Bay Area,  
by more than 30 dancers from 14 African countries**

**Post-performance discussions follow each presentation**

**Berkeley, January 3, 2024**—Cal Performances at UC Berkeley presents a special Bay Area premiere program of *The Rite of Spring* by Pina Bausch and *common ground[s]* by Germaine Acogny and Malou Airaudo at Zellerbach Hall on Friday, February 16 at 8pm; Saturday, February 17 at 8pm; and Sunday, February 18 at 3pm. Bausch’s seminal and towering *The Rite of Spring* (1975)—staged in the

Bay Area for the first time ever—is performed by an ensemble of more than 30 dancers from 14 African countries, assembled through a collaboration between Germany’s Pina Bausch Foundation, Senegal’s École des Sables, and the UK’s Sadler’s Wells theater. In this powerful work, Stravinsky’s score takes on new meaning through visceral choreography as a “chosen one” is sacrificed as a means of preserving and protecting the group. The program’s companion piece *common ground[s]* is a new duet co-created and danced by septuagenarians Germaine Acogny, known as the “mother of African contemporary dance,” and Malou Airaud, a longtime dancer with Germany’s renowned Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch. The work contemplates the performers’ lived experiences, their relationship to dance, and their identities as mothers, daughters, grandmothers, and granddaughters. A video of Acogny and Airaud discussing the creation of the work can be viewed [on Vimeo](#).

The performance of *Rite of Spring* by these dancers aims to preserve Pina Bausch’s legacy, introduce her work to new audiences, and engage in a different artistic approach. Salomon Bausch, Pina Bausch’s son and the Executive Director of the Pina Bausch Foundation, shared, “This is the first time that *Sacre [du printemps]* is done not with an existing company, but with dancers who came together specifically for this piece. I’m very excited to see the impact of their personalities and their diverse dance backgrounds on the piece but also vice versa; how the piece influences the dancers, both as artists and as human beings. This project is very important to us; I expect it to open our eyes to a new way of thinking about the future of Pina Bausch’s work.”

Alistair Spalding, Artistic Director and Chief Executive of Sadler’s Wells, said, “I remember having conversations with Pina about the series of productions she had been creating for her company, each inspired by a residency in a different world city, back in 2008. We spoke of the fact that Germaine Acogny’s École des Sables would be an ideal partner for a new work co-produced by Sadler’s Wells, which would have been the first created by Tanztheater Wuppertal in an African country. We arranged a trip to Senegal in the autumn of that year, but Pina’s health began to deteriorate, and the trip never happened. “Following her death, when Salomon Bausch came to me with the idea of co-producing this program with École des Sables, he had no knowledge of the original 2008 discussion. This completed a beautiful circle of serendipitous events that is very much in harmony with the spirit of Pina. I am so excited by the opportunity to present such an amazingly unique collaboration to audiences across the world.”

This presentation adds to a rich history of Pina Bausch’s works appearing in Berkeley. Cal Performances presented Bausch with her company Tanztheater Wuppertal in performances of *Nur Du (Only You) A Piece by Pina Bausch* in 1996; the Bay Area premiere of *Nelken* (“Carnations”) in 1999; and *Ten Chi* in 2007. Tanztheater Wuppertal returned for performances of Bausch’s *Danzón* in 2011, following the choreographer’s death in 2009.

This program was originally due to premiere in March 2020 but was delayed by the pandemic. Its world premiere took place in Madrid in September 2021.

### **ABOUT *ILLUMINATIONS***

*Illuminations* programming connects groundbreaking UC Berkeley scholarship to themes addressed by the world-class music, dance, and theater presented by Cal Performances. The series includes performances, panel discussions, lecture demonstrations, Q&As, and more, shedding light on pressing topics that have the power to transform our understanding of the world and shape the future. This season’s theme, “Individual & Community,” explores the tensions that come into play while balancing the interests of the individual with those of the group. For the 2023–24 season, UC Berkeley’s [Othering & Belonging Institute](#) serves as *Illuminations*’ lead partner. A list of *Illuminations* performances for the 2023–24 season can be found at [calperformances.org/illuminations](https://calperformances.org/illuminations), and more information about related community events and campus partners is available at [Beyond the Stage](#).

A moderated post-performance discussion takes place on Friday, February 16, and post-performance community conversations will be held on Saturday and Sunday, February 17 and 18; free to all ticket holders.

Lead support for *Illuminations* is provided by the Koret Foundation.

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

Friday, February 16, 8pm  
Saturday, February 17, 8pm  
Sunday, February 18, 3pm

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

*Dance*

***common ground[s]* by Germaine Acogny & Malou Airaudo** (Bay Area Premiere)  
***The Rite of Spring* by Pina Bausch** (Bay Area Premiere)

**Program:**

In this special double-bill, Bay Area premiere production, Pina Bausch's 1975 masterpiece *The Rite of Spring* receives its first local performances ever, performed by an ensemble of more than 30 dancers from 14 African countries and assembled through a collaboration between the Germany's Pina Bausch Foundation, Senegal's École des Sables, and the UK's Sadler's Wells. In this powerful work, Stravinsky's score takes on new meaning through visceral choreography as a "chosen one" is sacrificed as a means of preserving the group.

The companion piece *common ground[s]*, also receiving its Bay Area premiere, is a new duet co-created and danced by septuagenarians Germaine Acogny, known as the "mother of African contemporary dance," and Malou Airaudo, a longtime dancer with the Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch.

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[An Illuminations: "Individual & Community" event.](#)

**Tickets:** \$38–\$86 (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 this performance which go on sale at 12 noon on Friday, February 2 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).

Tickets for all performances are available at [calperformances.org](http://calperformances.org), by phone at (510) 642-9988, and in person at the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, Tuesday–Friday, 12–5:30pm and Saturday–Sunday, 1–5pm. For information about discounts, visit [calperformances.org/discounts](http://calperformances.org/discounts).

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*common ground[s]* by Germaine Acogny & Malou Airaud and  
*The Rite of Spring* by Pina Bausch  
February 16-18, 2024

### **Live Audio Description**

For blind and visually impaired audience members a live audio description is available for the Friday, February 16 performance. Headsets may be reserved by contacting the Cal Performances Ticket Office at (510) 642-9988 or [tickets@calperformances.org](mailto:tickets@calperformances.org). Additional information about services available for patrons with disabilities can be found at [calperformances.org/accessibility](https://calperformances.org/accessibility).

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