For Immediate Release: October 22, 2026 / Updated October 29, 2026
Cal Performances Press Room






Photos (from top left to bottom right) of Lise Davidsen, Cirque Kalabanté, The Hot Sardines, and San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus are available for download from the Cal Performances Press Room. Videos of Lise Davidsen, The Hot Sardines, and San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus in performance can be found on YouTube.

# CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS SEASONAL HOLIDAY PERFORMANCES, NOVEMBER–DECEMBER 2026

## Lise Davidsen, *soprano*
## James Baillieu, *piano*
## Thursday, November 19 at Zellerbach Hall

## Cirque Kalabanté
## *WOW (World of Words)*
## Saturday–Sunday, November 28–29 at Zellerbach Hall

## The Hot Sardines
## *Holiday Stomp*
## Thursday, December 17 at Zellerbach Hall

## San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus
## *Holiday Spectacular 2026!*
## Saturday, December 19 at Zellerbach Hall

**Berkeley, CA, October 22, 2026—**This holiday season, Cal Performances presents a diverse array of performances at Zellerbach Hall. On Thursday, November 19, soprano **Lise Davidsen**, accompanied by pianist **James Baillieu**, will perform music ranging from classic art songs by Wagner to traditional Christmas favorites sung in English, German, Italian, and Davidsen's native Norwegian. The precise and energetic **Cirque Kalabanté**, led by Guinean multidisciplinary artist Yamoussa Bangoura, will deliver two Thanksgiving weekend matinee performances, fusing traditional African movement and music with the Montreal circus arts tradition to create a spectacle for the whole family. For those seeking the lively energy of a swinging jazz band, **The Hot Sardines** will take the stage on Thursday, December 17, filling Zellerbach Hall with their holiday program, with repertoire inspired by popular holiday films as well as classic jazz repertoire. And, in a recently minted Berkeley tradition, **San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus** will perform a matinee and evening show at Cal Performances on Saturday, December 19, singing a mix of holiday carols and popular songs, infused with original sketches that showcase the group's signature blend of humor, camp, and charm.

Tickets for all performances are available at calperformances.org, by phone at (510) 642-9988, or in person at the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall. Ticket Office hours are Tuesday–Sunday, noon–5pm.

There is a $15 per order service charge on ticket purchases made by phone or online that are not part of a subscription package; there is no fee for tickets purchased in person at the Zellerbach Hall Ticket Office. There is a $20 service charge on all subscription orders.

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 $10 tickets for the best seats in the house for Lise Davidsen's recital through the Golden Bear Circle program. Information about all UC Berkeley student programs and discounts is available at calperformances.org/ucb-students; information about other discounts can be found at calperformances.org/discounts.

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**CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE: Cal Performances presents**

**Thursday, November 19, 7:30pm** — **Zellerbach Hall**
Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley campus

*Recital*
**Lise Davidsen**, *soprano*
**James Baillieu**, *piano*

**Program:**
Hailed by the *Telegraph* as "the greatest soprano in the world," Lise Davidsen returns to Cal Performances following her acclaimed performances as Lady Macbeth at the Metropolitan Opera this fall. In this recital, Davidsen and her esteemed recital partner James Baillieu offer a program that moves from the great art song tradition to beloved music of Christmas. Works by Bach, Reger, and Richard Strauss, along with Wagner's Tristan-imbued *Wesendonck Lieder*, lead to a selection of traditional Christmas favorites sung in English, German, Italian, and, of course, Davidsen's native Norwegian.

**Tickets:** $70-175 (prices subject to change)

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**Saturday, November 28, 2pm**
**Sunday, November 29, 3pm**
**Zellerbach Hall**
Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley campus

*Family/Seasonal Holidays*
**Cirque Kalabanté**
***WOW (World of Words)***

**Program:**
Led by Yamoussa Bangoura—a multidisciplinary artist of Guinean origin who founded both a school of circus arts and a company specializing in African arts—Cirque Kalabanté brings together traditional African movement and music with the Montreal circus arts tradition in a work that communicates its story almost entirely through dance, acrobatics, contortion, music, and

clever staging in place of dialogue. Their new production, *WOW (World of Words)*, explores the transmission of knowledge, the meeting of cultures, and the magic of shared respect.

**Tickets:** $38–$98 (prices subject to change)

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**Thursday, December 17, 7:30pm**

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

*Jazz*
**The Hot Sardines**
***Holiday Stomp***

**Program:**
Retro jazz band The Hot Sardines brings a sassy, swinging holiday show to Zellerbach Hall in a raucous yuletide extravaganza inspired by beloved holiday films like *White Christmas* and *It's a Wonderful Life*, plus timeless jazz and popular music classics associated with Louis Armstrong, Édith Piaf, Duke Ellington, and more.

**Tickets:** $35–$110 (prices subject to change)

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**Saturday, December 19, 1pm**
**Saturday, December 19, 5pm**

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

*Vocal Celebration*
**San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus**
***Holiday Spectacular 2026!***

**Program:**
In what has quickly become a Cal Performances holiday tradition the 270 singers in the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus are joined by dancers and a live band to perform a mix of holiday carols and popular songs, infused with original sketches that showcase the group's signature blend of humor, camp, and charm. A special highlight of this year's *Holiday Spectacular* is a medley of songs popularized by Dolly Parton.

**Tickets:** $50–$135 (prices subject to change)

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