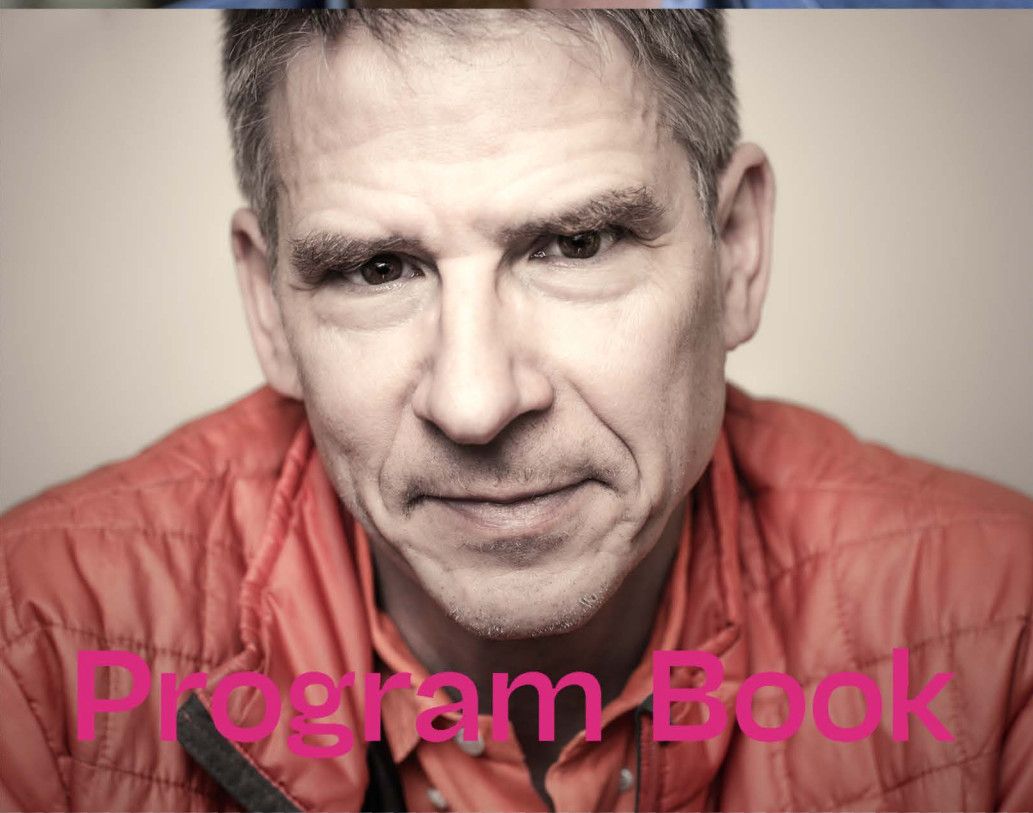




Program Book

Tuesday, October 13, 2026, 7:30pm
Zellerbach Hall

Michael Pollan & Christof Koch *A Journey into Consciousness*

with
Shayla Love, *moderator*

*This event is presented in partnership with
the UC Berkeley Center for the Science of Psychedelics (BCSP)
and is supported by the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation.*

Speakers' views are their own and are not endorsed by the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation.

There will be an audience Q&A towards the end of the program.

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ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

Michael Pollan is a writer, teacher, and activist. He is most recently the author of *A World Appears: A Journey into Consciousness*. Pollan is the author of nine previous books, including *This is Your Mind on Plants*, *How to Change Your Mind*, *Cooked*, *Food Rules*, *In Defense of Food*, *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, and *The Botany of Desire*, all of which were *New York Times* bestsellers. *The Omnivore's Dilemma* and *How to Change Your Mind* were named among the 10 best books of the year by the *New York Times*. Pollan teaches writing in the English department at Harvard and for many years served as the Knight Professor of Journalism at UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism. Several of his books have been adapted for television: series based on *How to Change Your Mind* (2022) and *Cooked* (2015) are streaming on Netflix and both *The Botany of Desire* and *In Defense of Food* premiered on PBS. In 2010, *Time* magazine named Pollan one of the 100 most influential people in the world. In 2022–2023, he was a Guggenheim Fellow. Pollan lives in Berkeley with his wife, the painter Judith Belzer.

Christof Koch, PhD, is known for his work exploring the substrate of consciousness in humans, animals, and machines, starting with his collaboration with Francis Crick from 1988 until his death in 2014. A physicist and neurobiologist, Koch was, for more than a quarter of a century, a professor of biology and engineering at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena. He became Chief Scientist at the Allen Institute for Brain Science in Seattle in 2011 and President in 2015. Koch remains at the Allen Institute, now as a Meritorious Investigator. He is also Chief Scientist of the Tiny Blue Dot Foundation in

Santa Monica. Koch's last book is *Then I Am Myself the World*. A vegetarian, cyclist, and a fan of big dogs and *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, he lives on an island in the Pacific Northwest. For more information, visit his website at www.christofkoch.com.



Shayla Love is a science journalist based in Brooklyn, NY, who writes about science, health, and the mind. She is a regular contributor to the *New Yorker*, along with other magazines, and

has a master's degree from Columbia University. Love was previously a staff writer at the *Atlantic*, *Vice*, *Psyche*, and the *Guardian*. She received the Carter Journalism Institute's Matthew Power Literary Reporting Award in 2024 and the Ferriss-UC Berkeley Psychedelic Journalism Fellowship in 2022.

The **UC Berkeley Center for the Science of Psychedelics (BCSP)** is a multidisciplinary academic center dedicated to advancing psychedelic discovery for the public good. The center's work spans four pillars: basic science, journalism, applied research and policy, and culture and community (educating and connecting people through public programming and events). This evening's conversation explores fundamental questions of mind, brain, and consciousness and the relationships among them. How do we construct our subjective experience of reality, and what insights can we obtain about the nature of consciousness through research on psychedelics?