

Cal Performances at UC Berkeley Education and Community Programs

Introduction

The cornerstone of all of Cal Performances' educational and community programs is a commitment to artistic literacy and access, and the belief that the performing arts are essential and transformative for people of all backgrounds and in all stages of life. Immersive artist residencies, free public programs, and participatory educational activities explore the dynamic intersections of creativity, arts, and learning for local K-12 youth, UC Berkeley students, and lifelong learners. University students and off-campus audiences alike are invited to engage more deeply with works of art through carefully curated programs and events, and to create community through the shared experience of the performing arts.

Artists programmed on the Cal Performances season are asked to make their process transparent to audiences; to mentor student performers, composers, and dancers in their own work; to engage in discussion about their art form and the sources of their inspiration; and be part of the intellectual life of the campus during their visits. With the creation of the position of Director of Artistic Literacy, and a shift in the organization's [mission statement](#) to reflect these values, Cal Performances is poised to carry forward its vision of artistic literacy in the current season and beyond.

K-12 Artistic Literacy Programs

As schools cut arts education from K-12 curricula, Cal Performances continues to see unprecedented demand for its education programs—as an arts provider for dozens of schools across the Berkeley, Oakland, West Contra Costa, and San Francisco unified school districts reaching more than 12,000 schoolchildren and their teachers in a typical season. Through teacher training, access to master teaching artists and participatory workshop opportunities, educational materials, and subsidized tickets to live performances in dance, music, theater, and circus arts, Cal Performances strives to help educators integrate the arts into classroom activities, making the arts a vital aspect of students' education.

The Cal Performances Classroom

Now in its second decade, the Cal Performances Classroom enhances students' experience of the performing arts through a multi-step process that provides tools for teachers and students to engage more meaningfully with the art forms and cultures represented on the stage. The program, part of a partnership with the Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD), ensures that students are prepared to absorb, understand, and enjoy what they see at Zellerbach Hall. Teachers can create their own Cal Performances classroom through any or all of the following artistic literacy programs offered for grades K–12.

- The **Artists in the Schools** program brings artist ambassadors like Wynton Marsalis musicians of the Kronos Quartet, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater dancers, and cellist Yo-Yo Ma to area high schools and K-12 schools, offering young people a chance to converse with international stars in their own classrooms and assembly halls.
- **K-12 Artistic Literacy Engagement Guides** are provided when teachers become a Cal Performances Classroom partner. They receive access to Engagement Guides, step-by-step workbooks designed to situate teachers and their students into the artistic process.
- **SchoolTime Performances** provide unique opportunities for students to experience diverse, hour-long performances of music, dance, theater, and circus arts featuring artists from around the globe. These performances connect to classroom curricula, provide a window into different cultures and perspectives, and inspire a lifelong love of the performing arts. Performances are offered at a highly subsidized rate, and even before they arrive at Zellerbach Hall, students enter the world of the performances via study guides rich with information about the artists, performance genres, and programs, including relevant cultural and historical context.
- **Teacher Workshops** are three-hour immersions into the creative process of performing artists on the Cal Performances season, scheduled in advance of SchoolTime performances to help teachers prepare their students for the performance. Led by Cal Performances' master teaching artists, the workshops focus on investigations of the artist's inquiry, providing hands-on experience in solving the same problems as the artist, using the same creative tools the artist employs. Teachers build artistic vocabulary, cultivate new ways of seeing and making meaning of live works of art, and leave with a workbook that helps extend their students' learning with connections to other classroom teaching and learning goals.
- **Classroom Visits by Master Teaching Artists** are available to teachers who have taken a workshop and wish to invite a Cal Performances Master Teaching Artist to visit their classroom in preparation for a SchoolTime performance. Working alongside classroom teachers, teaching artists give students insight into artistic processes of artists from all over the world through participatory sessions in dance, music, theater, and circus activities. In partnership schools, master teaching artists visit each classroom twice after the performance, to facilitate deeper reflection of the experience and to encourage the students' thoughtful responses to the live works of art using the artists' tools they have learned from their teachers and the visiting teaching artists.
- **Seminarios** are immersive musical sharing events that invite young musicians from local El Sistema music programs to rehearse and perform alongside members of the UC Berkeley Symphony Orchestra or the Youth Orchestra of Venezuela. Young musicians play side by side on the Zellerbach stage as peers with the professional musicians.

AileyCamp is a nationally acclaimed summer program, uses dance as a vehicle for developing self-esteem, creative expression, and critical thinking skills among middle school students ages 11–14. Conceived by Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and run locally by Cal Performances, AileyCamp combines professional-level dance training with personal development activities over six weeks of intensive, tuition-free learning. Students attend classes in ballet, modern dance, and West African dance, as well as personal development classes in nutritional counseling, conflict resolution, drug-abuse prevention, decision making, and goal setting. Now celebrating its 16th year, Berkeley/Oakland AileyCamp at Cal Performances has enrolled nearly 1,000 under-served youth in Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

Reaching for the Stars

The Reaching for the Stars Education Conference, offered bi-annually, is a gathering for educators, teaching artists, and school administrators in K-12 education. Each conference is connected to a performance on the Cal Performances season, and explores relevant themes such as social justice, the intersections of science and art, and access and equity in music education.

Campus Programs

Cal Performances provides rich experiences and exclusive opportunities for UC Berkeley students, offering access to international artists through master classes, class visits, and workshops; annual dance and orchestra residencies; and programs for students to engage with their peers and create community around the arts on campus, as performers and as audience members. In addition, half-price tickets are available to UC Berkeley students for all performances, and many additional discounts are also available through campus and curricular partnerships.

- **Front Row** is a curatorial mentorship program for Cal students, who, under Cal Performances guidance, produce a high-profile annual performance at Zellerbach Hall for the campus community.
- **Master classes** presented in collaboration with the Department of Music offer student musicians, conductors, and composers an opportunity to hone their skills under the tutelage of internationally acclaimed artists.
- **Cal Performances Mellon-funded Courses**, now in their fifth year, help connect students in departments across the campus to the performing arts and deepen teaching practice among UC faculty. Through an eight-year grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Cal Performances invites UC Berkeley faculty members to propose new courses each year, designed around Cal Performances' programming. Up to four courses are selected for funding each semester of the grant period.
- The **Join Me** program invites students participating in Mellon-funded courses to

- bring a friend for free to the performances relevant to their classes.
- **Open rehearsals** with chamber ensembles, orchestras, and recitalists offer a window into how visiting artists work together to prepare new commissions and canonical works for performance.
 - [SAFTA \(Student Ambassadors for the Arts\)](#) is a student-led committee of dedicated student arts ambassadors sponsored by Cal Performances. SAFTA arranges special events and student promotions, including meet-and-greet opportunities with artists, student night-out parties, and more, ensuring that Cal students feel welcome and at home with the performing arts.
 - **Speakeasies** are informal social events organized and staffed by students that help to build community around Cal Performances' presentations through post-performance discussion, refreshments, and grassroots outreach to diverse student groups.
 - [Student Musical Activities \(SMA\)](#), a department within Cal Performances, is a thriving center for extra-curricular music on the UC Berkeley campus. SMA is home to the University of California Marching Band, the UC Jazz Ensembles, and the UC Choral Ensembles, which include the UC Men's Octet, California Golden Overtones, Cal Jazz Choir, Perfect Fifth, UC Men's Chorale, UC Women's Chorale, Noteworthy, BareStage Productions, and UC Alumni Chorus.
 - **WhimsiCals** are brief pop-up performances by visiting main-stage artists, organized by SAFTA students in unusual campus locations to publicize campus residencies and recruit participants for campus engagement activities.
 - **Flex Pass, Student Discounts, and Rush Tickets** provide discounted tickets to UC Berkeley students. Offers include the \$60 Flex Pass good for four performances, 50% off ticket prices to any performance, and limited numbers of \$10 rush tickets.

Lifelong Learning

Berkeley and its East Bay neighboring cities are known for their culturally and civically engaged, informed, and open-minded citizenry. Cal Performances strives to be a resource to its off-campus community members, whether they are season subscribers, occasional attendees, or individuals who prefer to take advantage of a multitude of free or low-cost programs that enhance the experience of the interacting with the performing arts. Programs range in scale and scope from hands-on dance, drumming, and singing activities; to symposia, lectures, and artist talks; to intimate book club conversations.

- **Academic Symposia, Forums, and Round Table conversations** are organized in collaboration with UC Berkeley faculty and research centers connected with artists and themes in the season programming, and draw on the intellectual resources of the campus to involve resident and visiting scholars in events lasting from one afternoon to entire weekends.
- **Artist Talks and Panel Discussions** before and after main stage performances offer insights into the creative process, the development of new works, and

- collaboration across disciplines.
- **Community Dance Classes** taught by members of visiting dance companies offer amateur and professional dancers an opportunity to learn choreography and signature movement vocabulary from current productions.
 - **Interactive Performance Opportunities** such as community “sings” and drumming classes provide further opportunities for audiences to work within a chosen artistic practice and connect with fellow music and dance lovers.
 - **Lectures and Demonstrations** with visiting artists and scholars of the performing arts provide historical and cultural background, as well as explanations of diverse artistic practices to enrich the live performance experience.
 - **Listening Parties**, led by visiting composers, conductors, and performers, provide members of the community with a glimpse at an iconic artist’s record collection (or iTunes playlist), offering a chance for the curious to both broaden the scope of their musical horizons, and experience a deeper immersion into significant works performed as part of the season.

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