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[Press Room](#)



Images of *Front Row* participants are available for download from the Cal Performances [press room](#). From top left: Daniel Handler (aka Lemony Snicket), Yosh Han, Thao Nguyen, Cecile Richards, John Vanderslice, and Matthew Zapruder.

**CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY
AND THE STUDENT CURATORS OF CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENT**

FRONT ROW WITH DANIEL HANDLER AND FRIENDS

**AN EVENING OF PERFORMANCE AND DISCUSSION FEATURING
INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED ARTISTS AND ACTIVISTS
SELECTED BY AUTHOR DANIEL HANDLER (AKA LEMONY SNICKET) –
YOSH HAN, THAO NGUYEN, CECILE RICHARDS, JOHN VANDERSLICE,
AND MATTHEW ZAPRUDER**

FEBRUARY 22

#CALFRONTROW

Berkeley, January 24, 2017—Cal Performances at UC Berkeley presents the second annual *Front Row* event, February 22 at 7pm in Zellerbach Hall. Presented in association with the Student Curators of Cal Performances, a group of UC Berkeley students mentored by Cal Performances associate director Rob Bailis and staff, *Front Row with Daniel Handler and Friends* will feature best-selling author **Daniel Handler (aka Lemony Snicket)** alongside a diverse group of his peers and friends in fields ranging from music to storytelling, healthcare advocacy to perfumery. In an evening of lively discussion and collaborative performance, *Front Row with Daniel Handler and Friends* will explore the common threads between the wide-ranging group: sustained, one-of-a-kind careers; innovative approaches to creativity and storytelling; and a shared passion for activism. Handler will be joined on stage by perfumer **Yosh Han**; singer/songwriter and The Get Down Stay Down frontwoman **Thao Nguyen**; president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America and Planned Parenthood Action Fund **Cecile Richards**; musician, songwriter, producer, and Tiny Telephone recording studio founder **John Vanderslice**; and poet, editor, and Wave Books co-founder **Matthew Zapruder**.

Front Row is a key program of Cal Performances' Berkeley RADICAL (Research and Development Initiative in Creativity Arts and Learning) initiative, which cultivates the artistic literacy of future audiences and connects some of the most innovative artists in the world with the intellectual capital of UC Berkeley. *Front Row* is made possible with the support of a generous multiyear grant from The Wallace Foundation under the Building Audiences for Sustainability initiative, and through support from Chevron.

The show will kick off with a musical performance by Thao Nguyen and John Vanderslice, followed by a discussion with poet Matthew Zapruder. Perfumer Yosh Han will collaborate with Handler to create a custom Front Row scent while discussing the art of perfumery, and Handler will engage in a one-on-one discussion with Cecile Richards, president of Planned Parenthood. The event will be closed by a rousing musical performance by Thao Nguyen. Handler will moderate a series of discussions with the artists, including fielding questions submitted by the general public via Twitter using the hashtag #CalFrontRow. The lobby of Zellerbach Hall will be transformed into an interactive environment, open to ticketholders for an hour after the event, which will enable participants to interact with the work of each *Front Row* participant. Complimentary non-alcoholic beverages and snacks will be served in the lobby following the event.

“Every day I sit alone at my desk gasping in amazement and muttering to myself in admiration over the artists and activists who inspire me,” said Handler. “For one night, I get to gasp and mutter onstage and I hope many gasping and muttering people will join me.”

“With *Front Row*, Cal Performances seeks to build bridges to the arriving generation through collaborative programs that engage current students in the curatorial process and in artistic practice,” explains Cal Performances associate director and *Front Row* mentor Rob Bailis. “At Cal Performances, we feel strongly that a great way to genuinely engage a student audience is to invite them into the process of envisioning and producing performing arts events. The collective intelligence, dedication, and cultural literacy of the Student Curators of Cal Performances has shown us how well suited they are to become the next generation of performing arts enthusiasts and professionals. We in turn are inspired by their work on *Front Row*.”

The Student Curators of Cal Performances conceived and participated in all aspects of producing *Front Row*, an annual event now in its second year aimed at engaging the UC Berkeley student population in cultural issues that interest and concern them. Under the mentorship of Cal Performances staff, student curators selected and recruited the headliner from among all the talented and high profile artists who call the Bay Area home. With Handler on board, the students designed and implemented an interview process for working with their headlining talent to help bring their shared vision to the stage. Handler presented the student curators with a handful of his peers for consideration, and working closely with the author the student curators carefully selected and secured guests to join Handler on stage to explore their diverse passions and activism as well as what it takes to sustain non-traditional careers. *Front Row with Daniel Handler and Friends* is the realization of this five-month-long process.

The Student Curators of Cal Performances are a diverse group of 13 undergraduate students at UC Berkeley representing a wide range of academic pursuits. The declared majors of those on the curatorial team include American Studies, Anthropology, Business, Celtic Studies, Economics, Environmental Science, History, Integrative Biology, Marine Science, Mathematics, Microbial Biology, Music, and Theater, Dance & Performance Studies. This year’s group includes three

returning members from *Front Row's* inaugural year (2016); other members were recruited in an open call to campus by Cal Performances, and all students on the curatorial team volunteer their time.

About Daniel Handler

Author Daniel Handler is widely known by his pen name, Lemony Snicket, under which he has written the best-selling series *All The Wrong Questions* as well as *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, which was the basis for a feature film (2004) and the current Netflix series (2017). Under his own name, Handler is the author of six novels, among them *The Basic Eight*, *Watch Your Mouth*, *Adverbs*, and, with Maira Kalman, *Why We Broke Up*, which won the Michael J. Printz Honor. His books have sold more than 70 million copies, have been translated into 40 languages, and have been adapted for screen and stage. His criticism has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Newsday*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and *The Believer*. Handler also established, in partnership with the American Library Association, the Lemony Snicket Prize for Noble Librarians Faced With Adversity. He works extensively in music, serving as the adjunct accordionist for the music group The Magnetic Fields and collaborated with composer Nathaniel Stookey on a piece commissioned and recorded by the San Francisco Symphony, *The Composer Is Dead*, which has been recorded, published as a children's book, and performed all over the world.

About Yosh Han

In 2004, scent artist [Yosh Han](#) created a collection of perfumes inspired by chakra energy. Her eponymous perfume collection is sold in haute parfumeries throughout the world, including Barneys New York, Liberty, London and Isetan, Tokyo. Her men's fragrance König won the Golden Pear award for Best Fragrance from the Institute for Art and Olfaction in 2014. Her scent art has been featured in San Francisco at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts and the Asian Art Museum, among others.

About Thao Nguyen

Singer/songwriter [Thao Nguyen](#) is the frontwoman of San Francisco-based band Thao & The Get Down Stay Down. Her work includes collaborations with artists including Joanna Newsom, Andrew Bird, Merrill Garbus, Mirah, and The Portland Cello Project. Thao has worked extensively with the California Coalition for Women's Prisoners, and her album *We The Common* (2013) was largely inspired by her volunteer work.

About Cecile Richards

As president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America and Planned Parenthood Action Fund, [Cecile Richards](#) leads a movement that has worked for nearly 100 years to build a healthier and safer world for women and teens. Since joining Planned Parenthood in 2006, Ms. Richards has expanded its advocacy for access to health care and ensured that Planned Parenthood played a pivotal role in shaping health care coverage and services for women under the Affordable Care Act. In 2004, she founded and served as president of America Votes, a coalition of national grassroots organizations working to maximize registration, education, and voter participation. She began her career organizing low-wage workers in the hotel, health care, and janitorial industries throughout California, Louisiana, and Texas.

About John Vanderslice

[John Vanderslice](#) is a songwriter, musician, and producer. In 1997 Vanderslice founded Tiny Telephone, an all-analog recording studio in San Francisco. Bands that have recorded in the studio include Death Cab for Cutie, Sleater-Kinney, The Magnetic Fields, Tune-yards and Spoon.

About Matthew Zapruder

[Matthew Zapruder](#) is the author of four collections of poetry, most recently *Come On All You Ghosts*, a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year. He has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, a William Carlos Williams Award, a May Sarton Award from the Academy of American Arts and Sciences, and a Lannan Foundation Residency Fellowship in Marfa, TX. In fall 2012, his poetry was adapted and performed at Carnegie Hall by Composer Gabriel Kahane and Brooklyn Rider, and in February, 2014, composer Missy Mazzoli, along with Victoire and Glenn Kotche, performed *Vespers for a New Dark Age*, a piece commissioned by Carnegie Hall for the 2014 Ecstatic Music Festival. An Associate Professor and Director of the MFA Program in Creative Writing at Saint Mary's College of California, Zapruder is also editor at large at Wave Books, and editor of the poetry column for the *New York Times Magazine*.

About the Cal Performances Wallace Foundation Multi-Year Initiative

Cal Performances is one of 26 U.S. performing arts organizations chosen by The Wallace Foundation in 2015 for a prestigious new Building Audiences for Sustainability initiative. With the

support of a generous multiyear grant from The Wallace Foundation, Cal Performances seeks to deepen and increase participation by UC Berkeley students, ages 18-25, in creating performing arts experiences that appeal to them. This generation is predicted to soon comprise over a third of the American population and represents a powerful segment of the performing arts' potential audience base. Through *Front Row*, exclusive student-artist interaction events, and SpeakEasy post-performance social events, Cal Performances is taking steps to engage students on their own terms and welcome first-time arts participants into a lifelong relationship with the performing arts.

About The Wallace Foundation

Based in New York City, The Wallace Foundation is an independent national philanthropy dedicated to fostering improvements in learning and enrichment for disadvantaged children and the vitality of the arts for everyone. It seeks to catalyze broad impact by supporting the development, testing, and sharing of new solutions and effective practices. More information can be found at wallacefoundation.org.

About Cal Performances

Cal Performances is the performing arts presenter and producer of the University of California, Berkeley, fulfilling its mission by presenting, producing, and commissioning renowned and emerging artists in music, dance, and theater. Cal Performances reaches more than 150,000 people annually through concerts and campus and community events, including talks, symposia, lecture demonstrations, and academic courses based on Cal Performances' season. Under the leadership of Matías Tarnopolsky, the organization launched Berkeley RADICAL (Research and Development Initiative in Creativity Arts and Learning) to cultivate the artistic literacy of future audiences and connect some of the most innovative artists in the world with the intellectual capital of UC Berkeley. The 2016/17 season is the second season for Berkeley RADICAL, and embraces three strands of artistic exploration: *Inclusion*, *Innovation*, and *Immersion*. More information on Berkeley RADICAL can be found at calperformances.org/berkeley-radical.

Ticket Information

Tickets for *Front Row with Daniel Handler and Friends* on Wednesday, February 22, at 7pm in Zellerbach Hall are \$5 (prices subject to change) and will be available exclusively to current UC Berkeley students and a limited number of faculty and staff. There is a ticket limit of one per person

online at calperformances.org or via telephone at (510) 642-9988. An additional ticket may be purchased (for a maximum of two per person) in person at the Zellerbach Hall Ticket Office with a valid UC Berkeley ID. Tickets are general admission.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Wednesday, February 22 at 7pm

Zellerbach Hall

Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley campus

Berkeley RADICAL

Front Row with Daniel Handler and Friends

Daniel Handler

Yosh Han

Thao Nguyen

Cecile Richards

John Vanderslice

Matthew Zapruder

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