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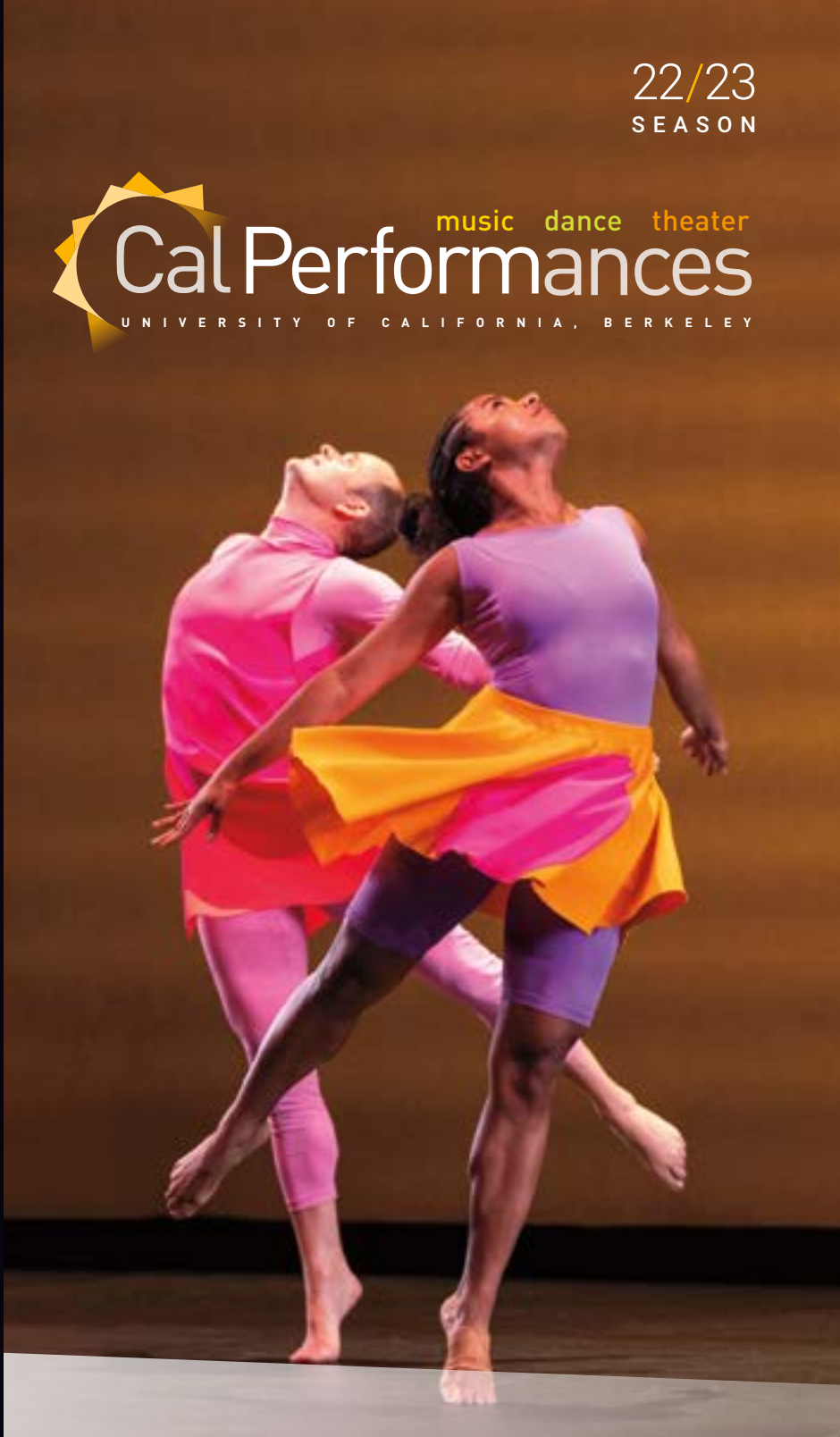

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

5 FROM THE ARTISTIC AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

7 *THE REASSURANCE OF UNCERTAINTY: WILLIAM KENTRIDGE'S PARADOXICAL, ILLUMINATING ART AT BERKELEY* by Thomas May

CP-1 **PROGRAMS**

11 CAL PERFORMANCES STAFF

16 ANNUAL SUPPORT

Cover: Mark Morris Dance Group in *The Look of Love*. Photo by Skye Schmidt.

The legendary **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra** returns to Zellerbach Hall with longtime collaborator Christian Thielemann at the podium, March 7–9. Over the course of three thrilling programs, the orchestra traverses a century of canonic repertoire—from the heroic music of Viennese classicism, through several generations of opulent Austro-German Romanticism, to the expanded sonorities of the Second Viennese School near the turn of the 20th century.

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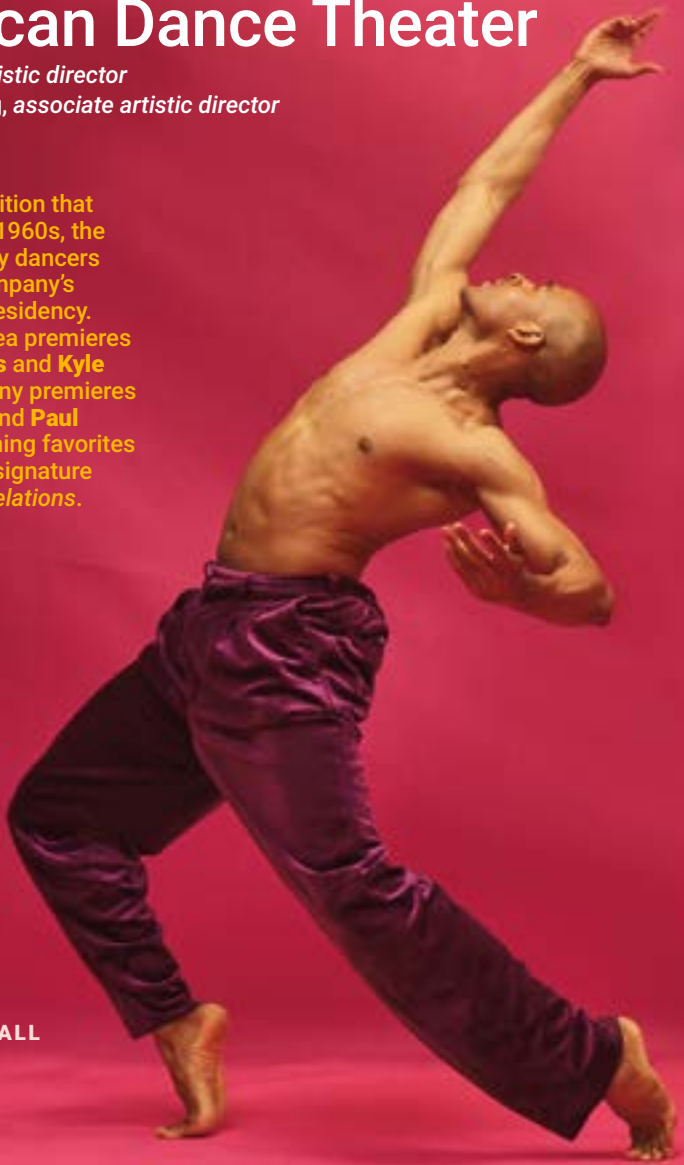

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Friday, March 17, 2023

5:30pm
Cocktail Reception
ZELLERBACH PLAYHOUSE

7pm
Performance – US Premiere of William Kentridge's *SIBYL*
ZELLERBACH HALL

8:30pm
Gala Dinner
PAULEY BALLROOM

Tickets available online at calperformances.org/gala or by contacting the Development office at 510.642.8653.

All proceeds will benefit Cal Performances' artistic and education programs.

For more information, please email donate@calperformances.org.

WILLIAM KENTRIDGE

Jeremy Geffen

We move now into the busiest time of the year at Cal Performances, with a schedule that offers a nearly nonstop celebration of the very finest in the performing arts.

This month alone, we welcome our great friends at the **Mark Morris Dance Group** for the Bay Area premiere of Morris' latest, *The Look of Love*, a fresh and heartfelt homage to the chart-topping songs of Burt Bacharach. We'll also hear classical masterworks from audience favorites, cellist **David Finckel** and pianist **Wu Han;** a particularly far-ranging concert from the extraordinary pianist **Jeremy Denk**; well-loved solo works by J.S. Bach coupled with new compositions by the best and brightest voices in contemporary music from the insightful young violinist **Alexi Kenney**; and a bold selection of new music by UC Berkeley composers from the university's own **Eco Ensemble**.

Add to that performances with **Kodo**, Japan's ever-popular and soul-stirring *taiko* drummers; an evening with NPR's **Ira Glass** sharing new stories and reflections from his decades-long career; an afternoon conversation with the legendary **Rita Moreno** discussing her fascinating life in Hollywood; and a rousing program with the virtuosic dancers of Washington DC's celebrated **Step Afrika!** troupe as it continues and extends the long tradition of stepping—elaborate and joyful song and dance rituals performed by Black fraternities and sororities since the early 1900s.

And that's just our schedule for February. In March, two events deserve special attention: the return of the legendary **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra** under conductor **Christian Thielemann** (making his Bay Area concert debut), and the US premiere of revered South African artist **William Kentridge**'s astonishing new ***SIBYL*** (part of a major campus-wide residency with this singular artist; for more, see Thomas May's excellent article on Kentridge, beginning on the next page).

Upcoming *Illuminations* programming will continue to take advantage of Cal Performances' unique positioning as a vital part of the world's top-ranked public university. As we've done all season long, we'll be engaging communities on and off campus to examine the evolution of tools such as musical instruments and electronics, the complex relationships between the creators and users of technology, the possibilities enabled by technology's impact on the creative process, and questions raised by the growing role of artificial intelligence in our society.

This concept of "Human and Machine" has never been so pertinent to so many. Particularly over the course of the pandemic, the rapid expansion of technology's role in improving communication and in helping us emotionally process unforeseen and, at times, extraordinarily difficult events has made a permanent mark on our human history. Throughout time, our reliance on technology to communicate has—for better *and* worse—influenced how we understand others as well as ourselves. During this *Illuminations* season, we will investigate how technology has contributed to our capacity for self-expression, as well as the potential dangers it may pose.

Some programs this season will bring joy and delight, and others will inspire reflection and stir debate. We are committed to presenting this wide range of artistic expression on our stages because of our faith in the performing arts' power to promote empathy. And it is because of our audiences' openness and curiosity that we have the privilege of bringing such thought-provoking, adventurous performances to our campus. The Cal Performances community wants the arts to engage in important conversations, and to bring us all together as we see and feel the world through the experiences of others.

Please make sure to check out our brochures and our website for complete information about upcoming events. We can't wait to share all the details with you, in print and online.

Thank you for joining us at Cal Performances!

Jeremy Geffen
Executive and Artistic Director, Cal Performances

The Reassurance of Uncertainty

William Kentridge's Paradoxical, Illuminating Art at Berkeley

by Thomas May

"There will be no epiphany." "Wait again for better gods." "You will be dreamt by a jackal." "Heaven is talking in a foreign tongue."

The oracular messages that course through ***SIBYL***, the most recent performance work by the towering South African artist **William Kentridge**, tease with tantalizing ambiguity. They seem to wryly provoke an irresistible urge to twist whatever information is at hand into interpretations best suited to our desires.

That's a primordial human instinct, of course: indeed, the ancient Greek myths involving oracles—an integral part of Kentridge's familiar network of imagery—underscore the irony of playing into the hands of fate at the very moment we're most convinced that our ingenuity has allowed us to elude it. But this behavior has newfound resonance during an era of curated data and populism-stoked skepticism toward voices of authority in science and the humanities alike.

The art of William Kentridge illuminates such fundamental impulses in a way that seems simultaneously timeless and trenchantly of the moment. His campus-wide Berkeley residency, which is taking place throughout the current academic year, is anchored around the US premiere of *SIBYL* (March 17–19, Zellerbach Hall). Cal Performances is presenting the work as one of the highlights of this season's *Illuminations* programming on the theme "Human and Machine."

"There are very few artists who excel in so many areas simultaneously," according to Jeremy Geffen, executive and artistic director of Cal Performances. Referring to his protean accomplishments in drawing, printing, sculpture, film, and live music and theater performance,

Photo courtesy of Kentridge Studio.

Geffen says that the internationally renowned Kentridge is "the perfect artist for a university"—and, in particular, for a campus-wide residency intended to appeal to students and educators across a wide spectrum of disciplines.

Complementing the March performances of *SIBYL*, Cal Performances is collaborating with the UC Berkeley Art Museum/Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA) and the Townsend Center for the Humanities to highlight various facets of Kentridge's wide-ranging work and further enrich campus-wide discussions around the "Human and Machine" theme. Employing the lecture format—another medium Kentridge approaches as a mode of artistic expression—last November, the artist presented *To What End*, an illustrated talk tracing the development of *SIBYL*. One week before the *SIBYL* premiere, on March 10, Kentridge will offer a live performance (joined by surprise guest artists) of the seminal Dadaist "sound poem" *Ursonate* by Kurt Schwitters. Then, on March 15, soprano Joanna Dudley will perform *A Guided Tour of the Exhibition: For Soprano and Handbag*, the one-woman absurdist play she developed with Kentridge as a protest against the "museification" of art works. And closing out the residency is a BAMPFA retrospective in March and April of Kentridge's remarkable work as a filmmaker, where his use of animation has been especially innovative.

SIBYL, the centerpiece of the residency, is uniquely relevant to the "Human and Machine" theme. Whether the topic is data science, artificial intelligence, or the various geological sciences, "predicting the future is a subject of intense research at UC Berkeley," says Greg Niemeyer, Professor of Media Innovation, who describes himself as a "data artist" and is also a member of the design committee for the *Illuminations:* "Human and Machine" programming.

"Think about the challenges of climate change," Niemeyer continues. "We realize that we have to adapt, but we don't know how. And so we look to science for ideas, but we also need to look to the humanities to figure out how we as humans can cope with the experience of change. And it is exactly this human experience that is at the center of William Kentridge's production. It gives us a chance to reflect on how we as human beings, as individuals, relate to the major changes we're facing."

Illuminating Interactions between the Human and the Machine

In September 2019, Geffen attended the world premiere of *Waiting for the Sibyl*, the culminating second part of *SIBYL*, at Teatro dell'Opera di Roma. He determined on the spot to bring the project to Berkeley. "It's at once compelling, profound, and funny, and in a sort of Shakespearean way is able to appeal as an entertainment on multiple levels simultaneously."

Geffen moreover sensed a special relevance for Cal Performances' spotlight on the interface between human and machine. *SIBYL* plays with the idea of the algorithm as the modern, technological counterpart to the ancient oracles and their messages for humanity. Kentridge's work transforms the ancient myth that underlies its fragmentary narrative into "a metaphor for human interaction with technology—its expressive possibilities, but also the risks that come with those potential rewards."

Likewise germane to questions about the interaction between humanity and the machine are Kentridge's formal and technical methods. They privilege "old-fashioned" figura-

tive content and analog processes over abstraction and digital sleight-of-hand. The pattern of drawing followed by erasure followed by further drawing that is a signature of his animated films, for example—including those shown in *SIBYL*—make the physical labor involved in creating the art visible, emphasizing a "handmade" quality that "carries the human imprint," as Geffen points out. A characteristically Kentridgian paradox is that he uses technology to create these entities while seeming to disguise it—while at the same time encouraging viewers to question that technology.

SIBYL

Stella Olivier

The result is an overriding sense of ambivalence and uncertainty that not only stimulates critical thinking but fully engages the imagination. There is no predictable formula (the essence of the algorithm), no technological wizard-behind-the-curtain to explain how Kentridge produces his art—along with its unique mixture of intuition, poetic collage, and incisive political critique.

Intimations of the Sibyl

The process behind the creation of *SIBYL* epitomizes how so many disparate elements converge in Kentridge's artistic practice. His early-career experiences in Apartheid-era Johannesburg, where he was born in 1955, revolved around activities in the theater (as an actor,

continued on p. 12

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22/23 SEASON

A NOT-TO-BE-MISSED SEASON HIGHLIGHT

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

Christian Thielemann, *conductor*

Tue, Mar 7, 7:30pm

SCHOENBERG
Verklärte Nacht for string orchestra, Op. 4

R. STRAUSS
Eine Alpensinfonie, Op. 64

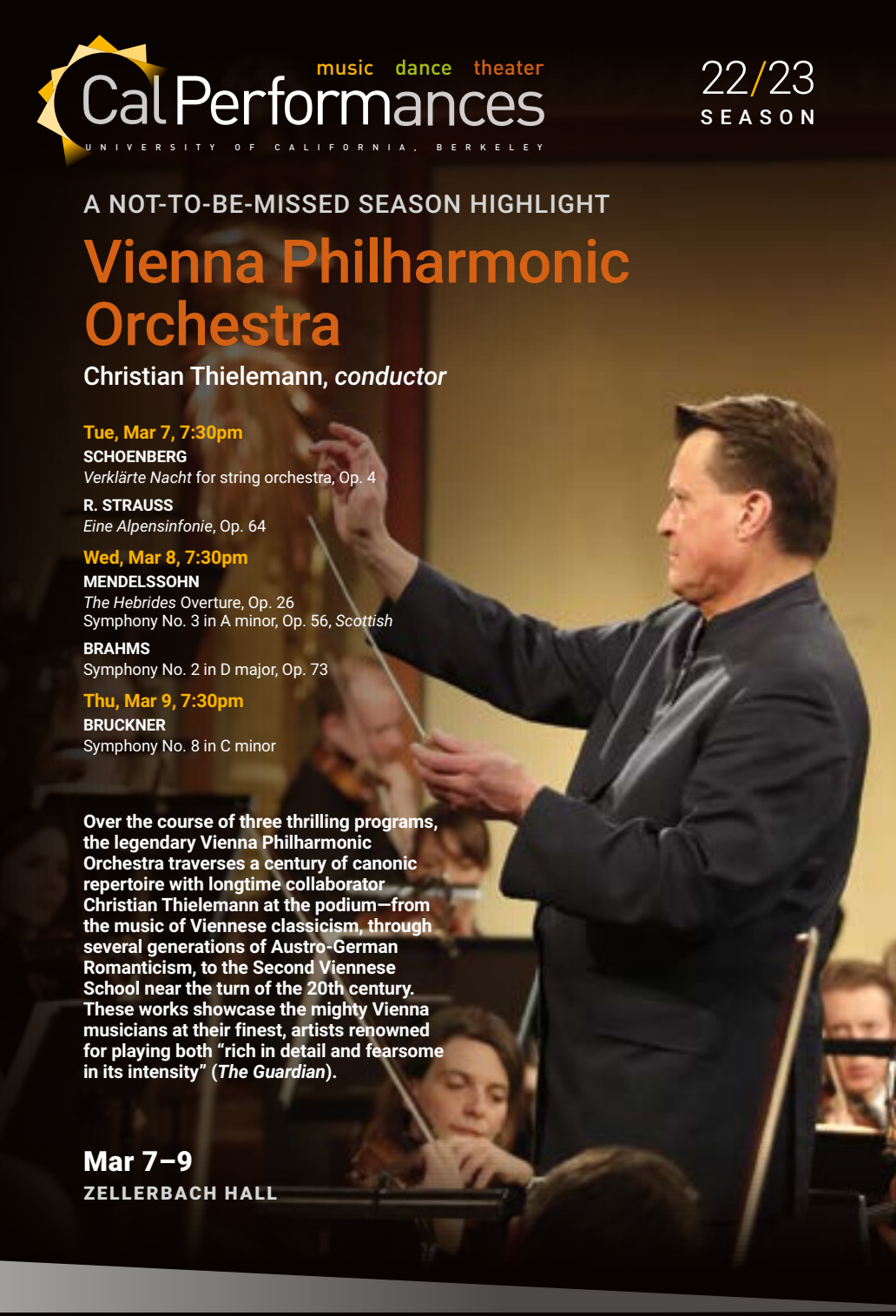
Wed, Mar 8, 7:30pm

MENDELSSOHN
The Hebrides Overture, Op. 26
Symphony No. 3 in A minor, Op. 56, *Scottish*

BRAHMS
Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 73

Thu, Mar 9, 7:30pm

BRUCKNER
Symphony No. 8 in C minor



Over the course of three thrilling programs, the legendary Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra traverses a century of canonic repertoire with longtime collaborator Christian Thielemann at the podium—from the music of Viennese classicism, through several generations of Austro-German Romanticism, to the Second Viennese School near the turn of the 20th century. These works showcase the mighty Vienna musicians at their finest, artists renowned for playing both "rich in detail and fearsome in its intensity" (*The Guardian*).

Mar 7–9

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Christopher Duggan

Friday, February 17, 2023, 8pm
Saturday, February 18, 2023, 8pm
Sunday, February 19, 2023, 3pm
Zellerbach Hall

Mark Morris Dance Group

MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP

Jane Abbott† Mica Bernas Karlie Budge Brandon Cournay
Domingo Estrada, Jr. Courtney Lopes* Taína Lyons Matthew McLaughlin
Dallas McMurray Brandon Randolph Nicole Sabella Christina Sahaida
Billy Smith Noah Vinson Malik Q. Williams

**apprentice † understudy*

MMDG MUSIC ENSEMBLE

Clinton Curtis Jonathan Finlayson Marcy Harriell Ethan Iverson
Blaire Reinhard Vinnie Sperrazza Simón Willson

Artistic Director
Mark Morris

Executive Director
Nancy Umanoff

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COVID-19: Masking is required inside the auditorium, and is strongly recommended, though not required, for indoor lobby/waiting areas as well as outdoor spaces. Up-to-date vaccination is strongly recommended, though not required for entry. The latest information on Cal Performances' COVID-19 safety policies is available at **calperformances.org/safety**.

Photographing and/or recording this performance is strictly prohibited.

Christopher Duggan

The Look of Love

(Bay Area Premiere)
Music by Burt Bacharach
Lyrics by Hal David
Lyrics from "The Blob" by Mack David
Arranged by Ethan Iverson

Choreography by Mark Morris
Costume and Production Design by Isaac Mizrahi
Lighting Design by Nicole Pearce
Costume Associate, Marla Wonboy

Alfie
What the World Needs Now
I'll Never Fall in Love Again
Message to Michael
Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head
Do You Know the Way to San Jose
Anyone Who Had a Heart
Walk on By
Don't Make Me Over
Are You There (With Another Girl)
The Blob
Always Something There to Remind Me
The Look of Love
I Say a Little Prayer

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Marcy Harriell, *lead vocals*; Ethan Iverson, *piano*; Jonathan Finlayson, *trumpet*;
Simón Willson, *bass*; Vinnie Sperrazza, *drums*;
Clinton Curtis and Blaire Reinhard, *background vocals*

Mica Bernas, Karlie Budge, Domingo Estrada, Jr., Courtney Lopes, Dallas McMurray,
Brandon Randolph, Nicole Sabella, Christina Sahaida, Billy Smith, Noah Vinson

The Look of Love *is a production of the Mark Morris Dance Group; Cal Performances, UC Berkeley; BAM; BroadStage, Santa Monica; The Jay and Susie Gogue Performing Arts Center at Auburn University; and Hopkins Center for the Arts at Dartmouth in association with Arizona Arts Live, University of Arizona; Harriman-Jewell Series; The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; Modlin Center for the Arts at University of Richmond; Moss Arts Center; Tennessee Performing Arts Center; UC Santa Barbara Arts & Lectures; and Virginia Arts Festival.*

This program will be performed without an intermission

Mark Morris was born on August 29, 1956, in Seattle, Washington, where he studied with Verla Flowers and Perry Brunson. In the early years of his career, he performed with the companies of Lar Lubovitch, Hannah Kahn, Laura Dean, Eliot Feld, and the Koleda Balkan Dance Ensemble. He formed the Mark Morris Dance Group (MMDG) in 1980 and has since created over 150 works for the company. From 1988 to 1991, he was Director of Dance at Brussels' Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, the national opera house of Belgium. In 1990, he founded the White Oak Dance Project with Mikhail Baryshnikov. Much in demand as a ballet choreographer, Morris has created 22 ballets since 1986 and his work has been performed by companies worldwide, including San Francisco Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Ballet am Rhein, Dusseldorf, and the Royal New Zealand Ballet. Noted for his musicality, Morris has been described as "undeviating in his devotion to music" (*The New Yorker)*. He began conducting performances for MMDG in 2006 and has since conducted at Tanglewood Music Center, Lincoln Center, and BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music). He served as Music Director for the 2013 Ojai Music Festival. He also works extensively in opera, directing and choreographing productions for the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, English National Opera, and The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, among others. He was named a Fellow of the MacArthur Foundation in 1991 and has received 11 honorary doctorates to date. Morris has taught at the University of Washington, Princeton University, and Tanglewood Music Center. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society, and has served as an Advisory Board Member for the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative. Morris has received the Samuel H. Scripps/ American Dance Festival Award for Lifetime Achievement, the Leonard Bernstein Lifetime Achievement Award for the Elevation of Music in Society, the Benjamin Franklin Laureate Prize for Creativity, the International Society for the Performing Arts' Distinguished Artist Award, Cal Performances Award of Distinction in the Performing Arts, the Orchestra of St. Luke's Gift of Music Award, and the 2016 Doris Duke Artist Award. In 2015, Morris was inducted into the Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney Hall of Fame at the National Museum of Dance in Saratoga Springs, New York. Morris opened the Mark Morris Dance Center in Brooklyn, New York, in 2001 to provide a home for his company, subsidized rental space for local artists, community education programs for children and seniors, and a school offering dance classes to students of all ages and levels of experience with and without disabilities. Morris' memoir, *Out Loud*, co-written with Wesley Stace, was published in paperback by Penguin Press in October 2021.

The **Mark Morris Dance Group** was formed in 1980 and gave its first performance that year in New York City. The company's touring schedule steadily expanded to include cities in the United States and around the world, and in 1986 it made its first national television program for the PBS series *Dance in America.* In 1988, MMDG was invited to become the national dance company of Belgium and spent three years in residence at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels. The Dance Group returned to the United States in 1991 as one of the world's leading dance companies. Based in Brooklyn, New York, MMDG maintains strong ties to presenters in several cities around the world, most notably to its West Coast home, Cal Performances in Berkeley, California, and its Midwest home, the Krannert Center for the

Performing Arts at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. MMDG also appears regularly in New York, Boston, Seattle, and Fairfax. In New York, the company has performed at New York City Center's Fall for Dance Festival, regularly performs at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts' Mostly Mozart and White Light Festivals, and collaborates yearly with BAM on performances and master classes. From the company's many London seasons, it has received two Laurence Olivier Awards and a Critics' Circle Dance Award for Best Foreign Dance Company. Reflecting Morris' commitment to live music, the Dance Group has featured live musicians in every performance since the formation of the MMDG Music Ensemble in 1996. MMDG regularly collaborates with renowned musicians, including cellist Yo-Yo Ma, pianist Emanuel Ax, mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe, and jazz trio The Bad Plus, as well as leading orchestras and opera companies, including the Metropolitan Opera, English National Opera, and the London Symphony Orchestra. MMDG frequently works with distinguished artists and designers, including painters Robert Bordo and the late Howard Hodgkin, set designers Adrianne Lobel and Allen Moyer, costume designers Martin Pakledinaz and Isaac Mizrahi, and many others. MMDG's film and television projects include *Dido and Aeneas, The Hard Nut*, *Falling Down Stairs*, two documentaries for the UKs *South Bank Show*, and PBS' *Live from Lincoln Center*. In 2015, Morris' signature work *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* had its national television premiere on PBS' *Great Performances*. While on tour the Dance Group partners with local cultural institutions and community organizations to present arts and humanities-based activities for people of all ages and abilities.

The **MMDG Music Ensemble,** formed in 1996, is integral to the Dance Group. "With the dancers come the musicians…and what

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a difference it makes" (*Classical Voice of North Carolina*). The ensemble's repertory ranges from 17th and 18th century works by John Wilson and Henry Purcell to more recent scores by Ethan Iverson, Lou Harrison, and Henry Cowell. The musicians also participate in MMDG's educational and community programming at home and on tour. The Music Ensemble is led by Colin Fowler, who began to collaborate with MMDG in 2005 during the creation of *Mozart Dances*.

Burt Bacharach is one of the world's most acclaimed, award-winning composer/songwriters. His music is as diverse as his audiences, spanning generations and continents, as he is celebrated both as a pop culture icon and one of the world's greatest contemporary composers. Bacharach's credits read like the world's favorite radio stations' playlist: "Alfie," "Arthur's Theme," "Close To You," "Do You Know The Way To San Jose," "I Say A Little Prayer," "I'll Never Fall In Love Again," "This Guy's In Love With You," "Walk On By," "What The World Needs Now Is Love," and "Wishin' And Hopin'" are among just his 48 Top 10 hits and nine Number One songs. Bacharach and Hal David were the recipients of the 2012 Library of Congress Gershwin Prize for Popular Song. The prize is awarded to musicians whose lifetime contributions in the field of popular song exemplify the standard of excellence associated with the Gershwins. Bacharach and David received the Library's Gershwin Medal in May 2012 at an all-star tribute in Washington, DC. Bacharach's memoir, *Anyone Who Had a Heart*, was released in May 2013. For the first time in his long and astonishing career, Bacharach tells his story of love, heartbreak, success, failure, and unbridled ambition in *Anyone Who Had a Heart*, which is named after one of many songs Bacharach and David wrote for Dionne Warwick. The memoir was published by HarperCollins. Bacharach composed his first film score in 16 years for John Asher's autism-based drama film *Po* (released in April 2016). *Po* tells the story of a recently widowed father struggling to raise his 10-year-old son who has autism. Bacharach and Daniel Tashian released two new songs—"Moon Over Wichita" and "Heartbreak Storms"—via Big Yellow Dog Music in April 2022. The songs are a continuation of their Grammy nominated *Blue Umbrella* EP, released in 2020, and *Blue Umbrella (The Complete Recordings)*, which was released in 2021 and featured four never-before-heard songs. Bacharach and Steven Sater's *Some Lovers*, featuring vocal performances from some of Broadway's most beloved co-stars, was released on November 26, 2021. The album was nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Musical Theater Album.

Hal David (1921–2012) is known for his award-winning lyrics, which have been featured in films, Broadway shows, and music charts throughout his career. Honored with numerous Grammys, the NARM Presidential Award, and more, he is most known for his collaborations with composer Burt Bacharach, who he met in 1957. The two wrote their first hit, "The Story of My Life," and then continued to write iconic American pop songs throughout the 1960s and '70s. In 2012, David and Burt Bacharach received the Gershwin Prize for Popular Song. But the duo was not just known for the pop songs they created. They also wrote for movies, with four of their songs being nominated for Academy Awards: "What's New, Pussycat?," "Alfie," "The Look of Love," and "Raindrops Keep

Fallin' on My Head," the latter of which won the Oscar in 1970. Lincoln College bestowed a Doctor of Music degree on David for his contribution to American music. In October of 2007, David received an honorary degree from the Five Towns College in Long Island; in addition, they named their new music library building the Hal David Music Library. David is a member of the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame and was the first non-British person to receive the Ivor Novello Award from the British Performing Rights Society.

Pianist, composer, and writer **Ethan Iverson** (*arranger, piano*) first came to international prominence as a founding member of The Bad Plus, a game-changing collective with Reid Anderson and David King. The *New York Times* called TBP "Better than anyone at melding the sensibilities of post-'60's jazz and indie rock." During his 17-year tenure, TBP performed in venues as diverse as the Village Vanguard, Carnegie Hall, and Bonnaroo; collaborated with Joshua Redman, Bill Frisell, and the Mark Morris Dance Group; and created a faithful arrangement of Igor Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* and a radical reinvention of Ornette Coleman's *Science Fiction*. Since leaving TBP, Iverson has kept busy. In 2017, he co-curated a major centennial celebration of Thelonious Monk at Duke University and premiered the evening-length *Pepperland* with the Mark Morris Dance Group. In 2018, he premiered an original piano concerto with the American Composers Orchestra and released a duo album of new compositions with Mark Turner on ECM. In 2019, he released *Common Practice* with Tom Harrell on ECM, standards tracked live at the Village Vanguard. In 2021, he released the big band work *Bud Powell in the 21st* Century and was featured on the March cover of *DownBeat*. In 2022, he released *Every Note is True* on Blue Note records, an album of original music with Larry Grenadier and Jack DeJohnette. Iverson has also been in the critically acclaimed Billy Hart quartet for well over a decade and occasionally performs with elder statesmen like Albert "Tootie" Heath or Ron Carter or collaborates with noted classical musicians like Miranda Cuckson and Mark Padmore. For almost 20 years, Iverson's website Do the Math has been a repository of musician-to-musician interviews and analysis. *Time Out New York* selected Iverson as one of 25 essential New York jazz icons: "Perhaps NYC's most thoughtful and passionate student of jazz tradition—the most admirable sort of artist-scholar." Iverson has also published articles about music in *The New Yorker, The Nation,* and *JazzTimes*, as well as on NPR.

Isaac Mizrahi (*costume and production design*) has worked extensively in the entertainment industry as a performer, host, writer, designer, and producer for over 30 years. He has an annual residency at Café Carlyle in New York City and has performed at various venues across the country, including Joe's Pub, the Regency Ballroom, and several City Winery locations nationwide. The *New York Times* noted, "he qualifies as a founding father of a genre that fuses performance art, music, and stand-up comedy." Mizrahi is the subject and co-creator of *Unzipped*, a documentary following the making of his fall 1994 collection, which received an award at the Sundance Film Festival. He hosted his own television talk show, *The Isaac Mizrahi Show,* for seven years, has written three books, and has made countless appearances

in movies and on television. He also served as a judge on *Project Runway: All-Stars* for the series' entire seven-season run. Mizrahi has directed productions of *A Little Night Music* and *The Magic Flute* for the Opera Theatre of St. Louis. Annually, he directs and narrates his production of the children's classic *Peter and the Wolf* at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. Mizrahi has his own production company, Isaac Mizrahi Entertainment, under which he has several projects in development in television, theater, and literature. His *New York Times* bestselling memoir, *I.M.*, was published in February 2019.

Nicole Pearce (*lighting design*) is a multidisciplinary artist living in Queens, New York. Her work has been seen across the United States, Cuba, England, Germany, Japan, Korea, Italy, New Zealand, and Russia. The *New York Times* has stated: "The glow of Nicole Pearce's lighting on center stage creates a feeling of magic, as if the dancers are circling an unseen grail." Selected dance credits, along with Mark Morris Dance Group, include work with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, American Ballet Theater, Atlanta Ballet, Dance Heginbotham, Dance Theater of Harlem, Gallim, Houston Ballet, Hubbard Street, Joffrey Ballet, Malpaso, Nederlands Dance Theater, and New York City Ballet. Selected theater and opera credits includes work with Arena Stage, Arizona Opera, Hartford Stage, Long Wharf Theater, McCarter Theater, Minnesota Opera, The Play Company, The Playwrights Realm, Philadelphia Theater Company, Opera Montreal, and Pittsburgh Public Theater. *Tiny Paintings for Big Hearts*, her installation of 1,000 paintings, is open to doctors, nurses, staff, and patients of Elmhurst Hospital in Elmhurst, New York. (@nicolepearceart/www.nicolepearcedesign.com).

Colin Fowler (*music director*) began his musical study at the age of five in Kansas City and went on to study at the prestigious Interlochen Arts Academy. He continued his education at the Juilliard School, where he received his bachelor's degree in music in 2003 and his master's in 2005. While at Juilliard, he studied piano with Abbey Simon, organ with Gerre Hancock and Paul Jacobs, harpsichord with Lionel Party, and conducting with James dePriest and Judith Clurman. A versatile musician and conductor, Fowler works in many areas of the music scene in New York City. He is a veteran of numerous Broadway shows, most recently performing in the Tony Award-winning musical *Jersey Boys.* A seasoned church musician, Fowler has led services at numerous houses of worship, including Trinity Wall Street, St. Thomas Church, Marble Collegiate Church, and Park Avenue Synagogue. As a classical soloist and collaborative artist, he has performed and recorded with many world-renowned musicians and ensembles, including Deborah Voigt and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He began to collaborate with the Mark Morris Dance Group in 2005 and has since then performed over 40 pieces with the company on almost every keyboard instrument possible, including the harmonium and toy piano, and has conducted performances of *Mozart Dances*, *Acis and Galatea*, *The Hard Nut,* and *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato.* Praised by the *New York Times* as "invaluable" and "central to Morris' music," he was appointed Music Director in 2013.

Sam Black (*company director*) is originally from Berkeley and received his BFA in dance from SUNY Purchase. He first appeared with MMDG in 2005 and danced with the company until 2019, when he became Rehearsal Director. He was promoted to Company Director in 2021.

Jane Abbott is a New York native who spent her early years training at the Alvin Ailey Scholarship Program and The School at Jacob's Pillow. She graduated in 2018 with a BA in dance from Columbia University, where she had the opportunity to perform works by Mark Morris, Chase Brock, Trisha Brown, John Heginbotham, Caitlin Trainor, and Twyla Tharp. Abbott is a proud member of the Chase Brock Experience, with whom she has performed in multiple Off-Broadway productions, including the revival of *The Four Seasons* as well as in the original casts of *The Girl with the Alkaline Eyes* and *Big Shot*—the latter of which she also worked on as Associate Choreographer and Dance Captain. Additional favorite credits include: *The Hard Nut* and *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* with MMDG, Diavolo: Architecture in Motion, General Mischief Dance Theater, Olivia Palacios Dance, North Shore Music Theater, The Joyce Theater, and the Fire Island Dance Festival. She wishes to thank her incredible parents for the endless support, inspiration, and love.

Mica Bernas, originally from Manila, Philippines, received her training at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Dance School. She later joined Ballet Philippines as a member of the corps de ballet and rose up the ranks to Soloist. While at Ballet Philippines, she also studied at De La Salle University, graduating with a bachelor's degree in organizational communication in 2006. Upon graduating, she moved to New York and joined Carolyn Dorfman Dance. She was a guest artist with the Limón Dance Company and worked with Karole Armitage, Gallim Dance, Marta Renzi, and Connecticut Ballet. As an educator, she has taught all levels of dance, including after-school programs, preprofessional, and master classes. She has taught at the Limón Institute and formerly ran the dance program at BIMA at Brandeis University. Bernas joined MMDG as a company member in 2017.

Karlie Budge grew up in Knoxville, Tennessee, training and performing with the Tennessee Children's Dance Ensemble. She attended Case Western Reserve University on a full scholarship from the department of dance, graduating *magna cum laude* in 2016 with a BA in dance and a BS in statistics. Budge has performed with Graham 2, Merce Cunningham Trust, and in her own solo and duet choreography. She joined MMDG as an apprentice in September 2018 and became a company member in November 2019.

Brandon Cournay is originally from Walled Lake, Michigan, and received his BFA from the Juilliard School. As a freelance artist, he has performed with the Radio City Christmas Spectacular, the Mark Morris Dance Group, Morphoses, the Metropolitan Opera, New York Theatre Ballet, The Chase Brock Experience, Schoen Movement Company, Dance Heginbotham, and KEIGWIN + COMPANY. TV/film/industrial credits include PBS' *Great Performances*, *Musical Chairs* (HBO), Puma, *Sesame Street*, and Target. As an educator and répétiteur, he has worked with the Pennsylvania Ballet, Whim W'Him, the Juilliard School/Nord Anglia Education, and universities nationwide. Offstage, he has worked with companies in capacities ranging from artistic direction to administrative management. For many years, he was Rehearsal Director and Associate Artistic Director of KEIGWIN + COMPANY. In addition, he has assisted numerous choreographers on creative projects in theater, film, and dance. He joined MMDG as a company member in 2018.

Clinton Curtis (*background vocals*) is a multi-genre singer, musician, and songwriter originally from Key West, Florida. As a choral singer, he has worked with many of the world's best conductors and orchestras, most recently including engagements with the New York Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, and San Francisco Symphony. March 2016 marked his operatic debut in *Curlew River* for the Mark Morris Dance Group. As a popular songwriter and frontman for the Clinton Curtis Band, he has toured internationally as a cultural ambassador with the US Department of State. Curtis has released five original studio albums, available at music.clintoncurtis.com.

Domingo Estrada, Jr., a native of Victoria, Texas, studied martial arts and earned his black belt in 1994. He danced ballet folklorico with his church for 11 years. Estrada earned his BFA in ballet and modern dance from Texas Christian University and had the honor of working with the late Fernando Bujones. During his undergraduate studies, he attended the American Dance Festival, where he had the privilege of performing *Skylight*, a classic work by choreographer Laura Dean. Estrada debuted with MMDG in 2007 and became a company member in 2009. He would like to thank God, his family, and all who support his passion.

Jonathan Finlayson (*trumpet*) is an accomplished trumpeter, composer, and band leader. Named a rising star by *DownBeat* magazine, Finlayson has been an integral part of the creative music scene in New York since relocating in 2000. He is widely admired for his ability to negotiate cutting-edge material while bringing a strong sense of individuality and verve. Finlayson has garnered critical acclaim and recognition for his three recordings as a leader with his group Sicilian Defense. He has also received much recognition for his contributions as a sideman with cutting-edge artists such as Steve Coleman, Henry Threadgill, Steve Lehman, and Mary Halvorson.

Marcy Harriell (*lead vocals*) is a singer, actress, and designer. Music was as mandatory as air for the daughter of a truck-driving trumpeter and a gardening artist. In her childhood home, she delighted in drilling arias while jazz greats played in the background. Her ability to passionately embrace diverse vocal styles has made her a standout in New York theater. She jumps easily amongst opera, rock, jazz, and R&B, and the *New York Times* recently hailed her as a vocalist who "demolishes the furious torch song" with a "rafter rattling intensity." Broadway star turns include Tony Award-winning musicals *In the Heights*, *Rent*, and her nightly showstopping performance in *Lennon*, where the *New York Post* declared this "wildcat kitten" a "star in the making." Throughout her career, she has had the honor to work with numerous industry legends: Stephen Sondheim, who guided her performance of Marta in *Company* at Lincoln Center and the Kennedy Center; Athol Fugard, who directed her in the world premiere of his play *Sorrows & Rejoicings*; Jerome Robbins and Arthur Laurents, under whose supervision Harriell deepened the role of Maria in *West Side Story*. "Superfriend" Lin-Manuel Miranda recruited her to record early demos for Disney's *Moana*, tapping Harriell's emotional interpretations for the soundtrack. Enamored by another interpretation, Quentin Tarantino wrote the role of "Marcy" for her in his film *Death Proof*. On the small screen, Harriell has been a series regular on NBC's *Ed*; HBO's *Nurse Jackie*; and CBS' *Queens Supreme*; and has guest starred in numerous episodics, including *Manifest*, *NCIS*, *Law & Order*, and *Search Party*. When she's not onstage, onscreen, or in-studio, Harriell takes a happy audience on a colorful ride alongside her husband Rob in the hit YouTube series *@TheHandmadeHarriells*, creating couture garments for everyday life. In fact, she'll be wearing one of her creations tonight. @marcyharriell/thehandmadeharriells.com.

Courtney Lopes is originally from Bermuda and attended the University of North Carolina School of the Arts for her high school education. She graduated *magna cum laude* with a BFA in dance from SUNY Purchase in 2012 and studied in Taiwan at the Taipei National University of the Arts. As a student, she performed works by Paul Taylor, Jessica Lang, Lar Lubovitch, and Huang Yi of Cloud Gate Dance Theater. In addition to performing with Dance Heginbotham for over nine years, she has worked as a freelance artist with Megan Williams, Sameena Mitta, Kathryn Alter, Sue Bernhard, and Robert Mark Burke. As an educator and répétiteur, she has worked with the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University, Ballet Tech, 92Y Harkness Dance Center, Dance for PD®, and the José Limón Institute. She first performed with MMDG in 2018 and officially joined as an apprentice in 2022.

Taína Lyons is a San Pedro, California, native who began her dance training at the San Pedro Ballet School at the age of four. Her professional dance training started at the Debbie Allen Dance Academy, eventually being mentored by Debbie Allen herself. She graduated from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts with a BFA in dance and a minor in Spanish in 2020. There she performed in guest works by Ronald K. Brown, Wayne McGregor, and Lar Lubovitch. In the

spring of 2019, she also had the pleasure of studying abroad at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, Czech Republic. Since graduating, she has had the honor of being a founding member of the Limón Dance Company's Limón2 (L2) company, an apprentice with Ronald K. Brown's Evidence, and a performer touring with Kyle Marshall Choreography. She joined MMDG as a company member in 2022.

Matthew McLaughlin discovered movement at age one and danced hula in Hawaii until age four. As a child with parents in the military, he moved and traveled frequently and explored many different sports and art forms. He graduated from SUNY Purchase with a BFA in dance. During this time, Matthew performed works by Aszure Barton, Kevin Wynn, Kyle Abraham, George Balanchine, and Doug Varone. In 2018, he had the opportunity to perform in the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company's 50th anniversary celebration. Matthew joined MMDG as an apprentice in 2019 and became a company member in 2021. He would like to thank his family for their love and inspiration.

Dallas McMurray, from El Cerrito, California, began dancing at age four, studying jazz, tap, and acrobatics with Katie Maltsberger and ballet with Yukiko Sakakura. He received a BFA in dance from the California Institute of the Arts. McMurray has performed with the Limón Dance Company in addition to works by Jiří Kylián, Alonzo King, Robert Moses, and Colin Connor. He danced with MMDG as an apprentice in 2006 and became a company member in 2007.

Brandon Randolph began his training with the School of Carolina Ballet Theater in Greenville, South Carolina, under the direction of Hernan Justo. At age 14, he was accepted into the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities, where he studied with Stanislav Issaev and Bobby Barnett. Randolph received his BFA in dance from Purchase College in 2012. There he had the opportunity to perform with Dance Heginbotham as well as repertory by Stephen Petronio, Lar Lubovitch, Paul Taylor, and George Balanchine. Randolph began working with MMDG in 2013 and became a company member in 2014.

Blaire Reinhard (*background vocals*) is thrilled to be joining the MMDG Music Ensemble in *The Look of Love*. Her voice and original compositions have been featured in hundreds of television shows, films, radio spots, and commercials, with credits including *Feel the Beat*, *So You Think You Can Dance*, *The Friend*, *Inside Amy Schumer*, *Dance Moms*, *The Young and the Restless*, *One Life to Live*, *Lincoln Heights*, *The Voice*, *Silver Bells*, *High School Musical*, *The Namesake*, *Cow Belles*, and *The Merry Gentleman*. She has also worked as a music supervisor on series including *Younger* and *Chappelle's Show*. For over a decade, she has managed and directed the Blaire Reinhard Band, performing as lead vocalist and keyboardist at events around the greater New York City area (blaireband.com).

Nicole Sabella is originally from Clearwater, Florida, where she studied at the Academy of Ballet Arts and the Pinellas County Center for the Arts at Gibbs High School under Suzanne B. Pomerantzeff. In 2009, she graduated from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, earning her BFA in modern dance performance and the Outstanding Performance in Modern Dance Award. She was a performer with Zane Booker's Smoke, Lilies, and Jade Arts Initiative. Sabella first performed with MMDG in 2013 and became a company member in 2015.

Christina Sahaida grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and began her early dance training at the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre School. In 2012, she graduated with honors from Butler University, receiving a BFA in dance performance. She has worked with Ballet Quad Cities, Texture Contemporary Ballet, and, most recently, the Big Muddy Dance Company in St. Louis, Missouri. Sahaida joined MMDG as an apprentice in 2017 and became a company member in 2019.

Billy Smith grew up in Fredericksburg, Virginia, and attended George Mason University under a full academic and dance talent scholarship. He graduated *magna cum laude* in 2007 and received achievement awards in performance, choreography, and academic endeavors. While at George Mason, he performed the works of Mark Morris, Paul Taylor, Lar Lubovitch, Doug Varone, Daniel Ezralow, Larry Keigwin, Susan Marshall, and Susan Shields. Smith's own piece, *3-Way Stop*, was selected to open the 2006 American College Dance Festival Gala at Ohio State University, and his original choreography for a production of *Bye Bye Birdie* garnered much critical praise. An actor as well, Smith's regional theater credits include Tulsa in *Gypsy*, Mistoffelees in *CATS*, and Dream Curly in *Oklahoma!* Smith danced with Parsons Dance from 2007–10. He joined MMDG as a company member in 2010.

Vinnie Sperrazza (*drums*) is a Brooklyn-based jazz drummer. He has made a mark on the New York jazz community with his swinging, enthusiastic playing and his commitment to original projects. Sperrazza has released three full-length albums of his original compositions for Loyal Label and Positone Records. In 2023, he will release a trio album with pianist Ethan Iverson and bassist Michael Formanek, and a new suite of music composed for a group with guitarist Brandon Seabrook and saxophonist Loren Stillman. Additionally, he has played on over 80 albums as a sideman. Notable recent touring has been with saxophonist and composer Ohad Talmor's Subway Lines; Stew and Heidi Rodewald in Stew and The Negro Problem; MMDG's *Pepperland*, composed and led by Ethan Iverson; the Michael Formanek Drome Trio, featuring new extended compositions by Michael Formanek; and the jazz collective Ember, featuring saxophonist Caleb Curtis and bassist Noah Garabedian. Sperrazza is a member of the Hank Roberts Sextet and Hank Roberts Trio, and tours and records with the groups Landline, the Choir

Invisible, Ember featuring Orrin Evans, Matt Bauder's Hearing Things, Vinnie Sperrazza–Jacob Sacks–Masa Kamaguchi PLAY, and trioTrio meets Shelia Jordan.

Noah Vinson is originally from Springfield, Illinois, and received his BA in dance from Columbia College Chicago. Named a *Dance Magazine* "Dancer on the Rise" (2009), he assisted Mark Morris in the creation of *The Letter V* for Houston Ballet. Vinson began dancing with MMDG in 2002 and became a company member in 2004.

Malik Q. Williams is a native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and was awarded the Lynn Swann Scholarship to attend the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre during the 2006–07 season. In 2013, he graduated from the Alexander W. Dreyfoos School of the Arts in West Palm Beach, Florida, as a dance major, where he worked with Troy Powell, Christopher L. Huggins, Billy Bell, and Margo Sappington. He then went on to the Juilliard School, where he graduated with a BFA in 2017 under the direction of Lawrence Rhodes. At Juilliard, he worked with the choreographers Takehiro Ueyama, Loni Landon, Zvi Gotheiner, Matthew Neenan, and Gentian Doda. Williams has performed works by Martha Graham, Paul Taylor, and Nacho Duato. Since graduating, he has danced with the Limón Dance Company,

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the National Dance Company of Wales, and Lydia Johnson Dance. During this time, Williams performed works by José Limón, Caroline Finn, Yin Yue, Caitlin Javech, and Lydia Johnson, among many others. He joined MMDG as an apprentice in 2020 and became a company member in 2021.

Simón Willson (*bass*) is a Chilean-born, New York City-based bassist, composer, and improviser. As an eclectic and in-demand sideman, he has toured with a host of different artists in Europe, the United States, Canada, and South America. His wide-ranging interest in different realms of jazz and improvised music has led him to work with a diverse pool of established artists such as Dave Douglas, Ethan Iverson, Steve Cardenas, George Garzone, Jason Palmer, Rodney Green, Michael Blake, Pablo Held, Jim Black, Tim Miller, and Frank Carlberg, among many others. He also plays in bands of contemporaries such as Kevin Sun, Max Light, and Jacob Shulman. In addition to his sideman work, Willson co-leads the bands Great on Paper, Family Plan, and Earprint. The latter won the "best debut album" category of the NPR Music Jazz Critics Poll in 2016, and Family Plan released its debut album in September 2021, after receiving a generous grant from the Chilean government. Willson can be heard on over 25 records for labels such as Tzadik, Steeplechase, Newvelle, and Endectomorph, in addition to a number of self-releases.

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continued from p. 9

director, and designer) and the studio (experimenting with multimedia, including drawing and charcoal and pastel prints as well as producing protest posters). This background naturally led Kentridge to incorporate the ultimate interdisciplinary genre—opera—into his prolific oeuvre. Over the past two decades, he has presided over stagings of repertoire such as Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and the two operas of Alban Berg (*Wozzeck* and *Lulu*), as well as rarities like Dmitri Shostakovich's early opera *The Nose*—in Kentridge's treatment, a mordantly absurdist satire of totalitarianism.

While Kentridge was residing in Rome in 2017 to direct a production of *Lulu* at the Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, the company commissioned him to create a "companion piece" for its 50th-anniversary revival of *Work in Progress*, a short but potently modernist theatrical production by the American artist Alexander Calder that premiered in Rome in 1968. It combines balletic cyclists with his signature mobiles, all accompanied by a soundtrack of avant-garde electronic music by a trio of Italian composers.

Kentridge characteristically drew together several interrelated threads as he conceived *Waiting for the Sibyl*, his contribution to the double bill—much as Calder had done in *Work in Progress*, a kind of live performance testament to his aesthetic. Calder's rotating mobiles reminded Kentridge of a series of sculptures he had created for Venice's La Fenice to visualize the process of an orchestra tuning before a performance. As the sculptures turn about, the seemingly random pieces suddenly cohere into a recognizable (musical) image—but only for an instant. "So you have a chaos, and then a moment of coherence, and then further chaos," Kentridge explains. That pattern—the transitory alignment of fragments into a moment of clarifying recognition that fades back into the surrounding ambiguity—is a central idea in *SIBYL*. Something about that moment seems to echo the "Eureka!" phase of the scientific method, which by nature cannot remain fixed knowledge.

For the Bargello National Museum in Florence, meanwhile, he had created a series of films with music by frequent collaborator Philip Miller to create a song cycle. Kentridge's recollection of one of the songs, titled "Waiting for the Sibyl," prompted him to think of the symbolic resonance of this ancient prophetess. The Sibyl has several manifestations as a priestess of Apollo, an oracular voice of knowledge from beyond the mortal realm. The most famous is the Sibyl at Cumae near Naples, the legendary passageway where Aeneas begins his journey to the Underworld to learn what his (and Rome's) fate has in store. The prophetess also makes an appearance at a crucial moment in Dante's *Paradiso*.

Kentridge's imagination was specifically sparked by the Sibyl's odd modus operandi: she would write her prophecies on oak leaves and leave them to be retrieved at the mouth of her cave at Cumae, where the winds would arbitrarily blow them about. This image of the swirling leaves reminded the artist of the revelatory rotations of Calder's mobiles and of his own Venetian sculptures. The source oak tree in turn linked the myth to the artist's long-standing reference to trees across his oeuvre: the tree and its leaves became an organizing image for *Waiting for the Sibyl*. Kentridge is fascinated by this process of assembling and recycling originally unrelated fragments and impressions into a new, unexpected coherence and compares the process with the mechanism of dreams as elucidated by Sigmund Freud.

Equipped with these ideas and intuitions, Kentridge embarked on what he calls "the real work" of creating *Waiting for the Sibyl*—which, significantly, entailed close collaboration in a series of workshops with his fellow artists back in his studio in Johannesburg. Together with a group of musicians, dancers, actors, and video artists, they collectively began an intensive process of improvisation. Much of the time, according to Kentridge, the work in theater is about finding the most effective answer to the question: "How can we bring the excitement that all the participants feel in those first improvisations and rehearsals onto the stage?"

Opposite: Photo by Stella Olivier

Several years ago in Johannesburg, Kentridge cofounded an initiative he calls the Centre for the Less Good Idea, borrowing the name from a Tswana proverb: "If the good doctor can't cure you, find the less good doctor." He explains that the Centre is based on a political and artistic anti-dogmatism. The sweeping political ideas of the last century proved disastrous, in Kentridge's view, because they derived from people being "certain they know what is best for other people." As a creative corollary, he asserts that the most creatively effective way to work in the studio involves "keeping a doubt and uncertainty about your first idea such that other things can come in and shape and inform it."

Crafting Music and Libretto

Kentridge's original commission gave him free rein as to theme while stipulating that his stagework should use pre-recorded music in lieu of an orchestra, chorus, and full cast of opera singers. But it became apparent early on that live music was an indispensable element. Several composers came to the first workshop during the improvisational stage of the creative process. Kentridge narrowed them to two, inviting Nhlanhla Mahlangu and Kyle Shepherd to stay on as the project grew.

Mahlangu is a renowned choral composer, singer, dancer, and choreographer who came to know Kentridge through the Centre for the Less Good Idea and collaborated with him on his 2018 "historical pageant" of forgotten African victims of the First World War, *The Head & the Load*. Also credited as *SIBYL*'s associate director, Mahlangu built a soundscape for the work together with his fellow singers by drawing on South African vocal traditions. Shepherd, a trailblazing jazz pianist, contributes original improvisations that complement and serve as a modern counterpart to the tradition-rooted vocal music. *SIBYL* has no written score, but the music is closely linked to the specific performers who are part of the cast. "The music is always the same every night," says Mahlangu. "We may feel it differently, but it is set in the body like a ballet." Overall, according to Kentridge, "if the music is working well, it adds a depth to what we see on stage that is, as it were, below the stage surface, below the immediate image."

"I bring the traditional and the visceral and Kyle Shepherd brings the classical and the technical," Mahlangu observes. "He's an amazing jazz player who works a lot with African ritualistic sounds and aesthetics. I work in a very visceral way because I'm a choreographer. So, I make the singers move to discover the sound and work with their somatic memory to trigger certain things which we can respond to in movement. The dancers carry the music with their bodies." Mahlangu adds that he adapted the ancient Greek concept of a prophetess into terms that make sense in a South African cultural context: "*SIBYL* is about a person who has spiritual power, so for this project, I invited singers who are spiritually gifted as well—people who have some kind of ancestral spiritual gift."

There is no conventionally sung libretto in *Waiting for the Sibyl*. The text is projected as an integral part of Kentridge's animated film, the words taken from a book of quotes he has been collecting over the years. These are sayings or poetic phrases that have captured his interest for one reason or another, ranging from African proverbs to brief quotes from writers in various languages, which are translated into English. (Only a few derive from English sources.) The sayings are overlaid on pages of old reference books, data sources once prized but outdated in the internet age. Kentridge transforms these texts into implied oracles that structure each of the work's brief scenes. The process, he points out, "is not random, but it's not planned."

Following the Roman premiere of *Waiting for the Sibyl*, Kentridge discovered that it was not possible to tour with *Work in Progress*, its pre-existing "prelude," because Calder's sculptures and props were too expensive to insure and could not be copied. So, in its sub-

sequent iterations, Kentridge decided to pair *Waiting for the Sibyl* with a film he was simultaneously making, *City Deep*, which has "indirect links to the idea of the Sibyl"—but in an expanded version renamed *The Moment Has Gone*, accompanied by a live score by Mahlangu and Shepherd. *The Moment Has Gone* (22 minutes) and *Waiting for the Sibyl* (44 minutes) together comprise Parts One and Two, respectively, of the work titled *SIBYL*.

The Moment Has Gone directly addresses the tumultuous transition in South Africa from Apartheid to a democracy still troubled by lingering social injustice. His depiction here of the greedy mine owner and property developer Soho Eckstein is contrasted with the fate of the "zama zama" miners (Zulu for "test your luck") of South Africa's informal economy, who toil in decommissioned mines, illegally and under perilous conditions.

Mahlangu says that the interaction between his response to social problems and that of Kentridge generates "an interesting conversation, with different points of view." For *The Moment Has Gone*, he draws on elements of the all-male *isicathamiya* style (made internationally famous by the group Ladysmith Black Mambazo). This, he explains, originated as a quieter, "suppressed" form of singing "to steal a moment of joy when you have been removed from your homeland and put in places where noise is not allowed by white people." Traditionally, *isicathamiya* is performed a cappella, but he and Shepherd are "breaking the rules and creating a new form" by combining the four male voices with piano.

Starving the Algorithm

Kentridge is intrigued by the fact that *SIBYL*'s catalyst, Alexander Calder's *Work in Progress*, originated in 1968—famously, a year of momentous turmoil in Berkeley but also a year, he says, that emanated "a sense that questions were going to be solved and fixed, that a new world was possible," suggesting "a kind of innocence and optimism that seem impossible 50 years later." He finds that innocence reminiscent of the clarity of emotions recalled from childhood, when the "sense of injustice" burns with an intensity that doesn't seem capable of being revived after we've become jaded.

What seems to attract Kentridge so strongly to the material he explores in *SIBYL* is myth's paradoxical combination of childhood clarity—its innocent expectation of answers that make sense of the world—with a profound ambivalence. The consolidating image of the leaves in motion that drew him to the myth of the Cumaean Sibyl also conveys an underlying insight about the human condition. According to the myth, supplicants seeking answers to their problems could never be certain whether the oracular "answer" they retrieved was the "correct" one or a prediction intended for someone else.

"The fact that your fate would be known, but you couldn't know it, is the deep theme of our relationship of dread, of expectation, of foreboding towards the future," according to Kentridge.

The algorithm is the contemporary version of a fate we want to control but that ends up controlling us. "The algorithm is of necessity a highly authoritarian way of thinking about the world," observes the artist, "because it takes statistics from a huge number of individuals the way a totalitarian state would and from that makes rules which it enforces with great assiduity against the individual. What the human offers is uncertainty, doubt—even while we all continue to use algorithms in our daily lives, to look at the weather for the day ahead."

Thomas May is a writer, critic, educator, and translator. Along with essays regularly commissioned by the San Francisco Symphony, the Juilliard School, the Ojai Festival, and other leading institutions, he contributes to the New York Times *and Musical America and blogs about the arts at www.memeteria.com.*

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in memory of Rosalind H. Graham
Victoria Nakamura
in memory of Jonathan Aldrich Poet
Rossannah Reeves
in memory of Alan Leslie Reeves
Barbara Sholtz in memory
of Robert Sholtz and Glen Jackson
Edie Silber in memory of Stephen Bomse

"[A] highly entertaining comedy of kitchen nightmares."
—The Washington Post

CLYDE'S

BY **LYNN NOTTAGE**
DIRECTED BY **TAYLOR REYNOLDS**

JAN 20–FEB 26

NOMINATED FOR THE 2022 TONY AWARD FOR BEST PLAY!

"Yee has made her characters so joyfully and ridiculously human that it's impossible—to a heartbreaking degree—not to identify with them."
—Los Angeles Times

CAMBODIAN ROCK BAND

WRITTEN BY **LAUREN YEE**
FEATURING SONGS BY **DENGUE FEVER**
DIRECTED BY **CHAY YEW**

FEB 25–APR 2

GUITARS TUNED. MIC CHECKED. GET READY TO ROCK!

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