



Photo by Jeremy Cowart

**Béla Fleck,
Zakir Hussain,
Edgar Meyer, featuring
Rakesh Chaurasia**

As We Speak

Sat, Nov 18, 2023 at 8 pm
Royce Hall

**CENTER
FOR THE ART OF
PERFORMANCE
UCLA**

WELCOME TO THE 2023–24 SEASON

UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance (CAP UCLA) is dedicated to the advancement of the contemporary performing arts in all disciplines – dance, music, spoken word and theater, as well as emerging digital, collaborative and cross cultural platforms – by leading artists from around the globe.

Our mission aligns with UCLA's mission of education, research and civic engagement by providing cultural and experiential programs that provoke inquiry and facilitate connection and creativity.

cap.ucla.edu





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CAP UCLA Presents

Béla Fleck, Zakir Hussain, Edgar Meyer, featuring Rakesh Chaurasia

As We Speak

Sat, Nov 18, 2023 at 8 pm
Royce Hall

Program duration: 120 minutes
No intermission



Funds provided by the Royce Center Circle Endowment.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

The first time banjo legend Béla Fleck, tabla master Zakir Hussain, and double bass virtuoso Edgar Meyer got together to make an album, it was to write, not to play.

When Fleck and Meyer were looking for a third partner for a triple concerto they had been commissioned to write to mark the opening of Nashville's Schermerhorn Symphony Center, they thought of Hussain, who was quite interested in orchestral writing. "We thought we could learn a whole lot from this guy!" says Béla. The result was *The Melody of Rhythm* (2009), recorded with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra under Leonard Slatkin.

It wasn't until the three began touring to promote the album that the trio's true potential became apparent. Although each had a base in a different musical realm – bluegrass for Fleck, Indian classical music for Hussain, and Western classical music for Meyer – they shared a gift for improvisation as well as an ability to reach across musical genres as casually as neighbors might chat over a backyard fence." When we are performing on stage, in composing mode or creating mode, we are basically having a conversation," says Hussain. "So the music emerges *as we speak*."

Hence *As We Speak*, a three-time Grammy nominated album that not only showcases the group's breathtaking abilities as instrumentalists, but underscores the wide range of musical influences at their command. Across a dozen tracks, the group glides easily between the cerebral complexity of Indian rhythm and the gut-level groove of a funky bass line, sounding equally at home with the rigors of raga.

Adding to that magic is Rakesh Chaurasia, who plays

bansuri, an Indian bamboo flute. When the trio was touring India, Hussain – who knew Rakesh through his uncle, Indian flute legend Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia – invited the younger flautist to sit in, and the chemistry was immediately apparent. “I think we wanted to see if we could do something a little more organic with just a small group,” says Meyer. “And to have somebody who plays as beautifully as Rakesh join us really opened it up to a more lyrical and melodic situation.”

“What I think is good about this quartet is that everybody has to stretch in the direction of the other people,” adds Fleck. “To me, a collaboration where nobody changes is not a collaboration. It’s a mashup. And there’s nothing wrong with that. But I like a collaboration where I have to learn a bunch of new things from the other people. And in this case, I’m learning like crazy.”

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Béla Fleck

Few musicians in any category seem as uncategorizable as Béla Fleck. After initially making his mark with the progressive bluegrass group New Grass Revival, Fleck proceeded to take his instrument, as *New York Times* critic Jon Pareles noted, “to some very unlikely places.” He formed the Flecktones, a groundbreaking group whose repertoire ranged from fusion to Bach; the group celebrates its 46th anniversary this year. In addition, he has played jazz with Chick Corea, American roots with his partner, banjoist Abigail Washburn, written concertos for banjo and orchestra and created a documentary film and album, *Throw Down Your Heart*, that examined the banjo’s African roots. Along the way, he has won sixteen Grammys across ten categories.

Zakir Hussain

The pre-eminent classical tabla virtuoso of our time, Zakir Hussain is appreciated as one of the world's most esteemed and influential musicians, one whose mastery of his percussion instrument has taken it to a new level, transcending cultures and national borders. A child prodigy, accompanying India's greatest musicians and dancers from his early years, and touring internationally while still in his teens, Zakir has been at the helm of many genre-defying collaborations including *Shakti*, *Remember Shakti*, *Masters of Percussion*, *Diga*, *Tabla Beat Science*, *CrossCurrents*, *Sangam* and Grammy-award winners *Planet Drum* and *Global Drum Project*. A revered composer and educator, Zakir is the recipient of countless honors, most recently the 2022 Kyoto Prize in Arts and Philosophy, the 2022 Aga Khan Music Award for Lifetime Achievement, and in January, 2023, the title of *Padma Vibhushan*, India's second highest civilian award.

Edgar Meyer

Aptly described by *The New Yorker* as “the most remarkable virtuoso in the relatively un-chronicled history of his instrument,” double bassist and composer Edgar Meyer is at home in a broad spectrum of musical styles. A MacArthur Fellow and Avery Fisher Prize winner, he is eminently at home within classical music, both performing traditional works and also his significant catalog of original solo, chamber, and orchestral pieces. His 30-year relationship with Yo-Yo Ma has yielded seven recordings together, and his upcoming projects include a duo recording with jazz bassist Christian McBride and a recording of all four of his concertos with the Knights and the Scottish Ensemble, produced by Chis Thile.

Rakesh Chaurasia

Like Zakir Hussain, Rakesh Chaurasia comes from Indian classical music royalty. His uncle, Pandit Hariprasad

Chaurasia, is widely considered the greatest bansuri player in India, and Rakesh – who started playing at age five – is deemed his most brilliant student. Not only has he mastered the techniques of Indian classical music, he has developed additional techniques allowing him to venture into other styles of playing, particularly with his crossover band Rakesh and Friends. A composer as well as flautist, he has written and performed on numerous Indian movie soundtracks, and in 2007 was awarded the Indian Music Academy Award.



Photo by Jeremy Cowart

DESIGN FOR SHARING (DFS)

Each year, Design for Sharing (DFS) brings thousands of K-12 public school students from across Los Angeles to CAP UCLA venues for free performances and interactive workshops with professional artists.

DFS programs are open to any public school in greater Los Angeles, and are always free to attend.

cap.ucla.edu/dfs





Alarm Will Sound Featuring the music of **Nathalie Joachim,** **Alyssa Pyper** and **Eartheater**

Sat, Dec 2, 2023 at 8 pm
The Nimoy

Alarm Will Sound is of “one of the most vital and original ensembles on the American music scene” delivering innovative performances ranging from arch-modernist to pop-influenced with energetic virtuosity. They are joined by performer and composer Nathalie Joachim and violinist Alyssa Pyper.

“...one of the most vital and original ensembles on the American Music scene.” – *The New York Times*

cap.ucla.edu/alarm-will-sound



UCLA NIMOY THEATER

CAP UCLA has a new home for live performance
in Westwood!

Located near the UCLA campus on Westwood Boulevard,
The Nimoy is a reimagining of the historic Crest Theatre as a
flexible, state-of-the-art performance space.

This dynamic and intimately scaled venue immerses
audiences in a profoundly engaging experience of live
performance – while providing contemporary performing
artists from Los Angeles and around the world expanded
opportunities to develop and present new work.

cap.ucla.edu/nimoy



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We at UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance acknowledge the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples as the traditional land caretakers of Tovaangar (the Los Angeles basin and South Channel Islands).

As a land grant institution, we pay our respects to the Ancestors (Honuukvetam), Elders (Ahihirom), and relatives/relations (Eyoohinkem) past, present and emerging.

There is no room for racism, intolerance, or inequity.

Anywhere

Not on our stages, in our offices, on our loading docks, in the box office lines, or on the dance floor.

With anyone

Not with our staff, crew, artists, volunteers, ushers, audiences or fans.

We uphold and embrace principles of antiracism, equity, diversity and **AUTHENTIC** inclusion as integral to our mission.

We must **EMPOWER** the historically underrepresented.

We must **UPLIFT** excluded voices.

We must **RESIST** structural racism.

We will **COMMIT** fiercely to our responsibility to observe, absorb, consider, contemplate, endure, share and engage in this change.

We **STAND AGAINST** all forms of discrimination.

We will **STRIVE** to make our organization more equitable and inclusive.

As part of UCLA's School of Art & Architecture (SOAA), we – UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance (CAP UCLA) and Theater Management Services (TMS) – are committed to connecting and creating space for the arts and for all communities.

We acknowledge our organizations' histories as being predominantly white institutions. We are facing uncomfortable truths about systemic racism as we work to make the deep changes necessary to transform the organizational dynamics in our work culture and business practices and dismantle existing oppressive structures. We know there will be shortcomings, which we will face head on. We commit to continually addressing and adapting to changes as they arise. It is only in an improved, supportive work environment that everyone can be fully present, and respected as their true authentic selves.

This statement was drafted by a committee of staff members from both the Center for the Art of Performance and Theater Management Services, from a variety of backgrounds, viewpoints and perspectives.

Together we stand with UCLA's School of Art and Architecture's EDI statement.





UnCabaret

The UnHoliday Show!

Sat, Dec 16, 2023 at 8 pm
The Nimoy

Hosted by Beth Lapidès, UnCabaret is a legendary forum for wildly fun, idiosyncratic, intimate, conversational comedy. Arguably the original “alt comedy” show – and a Los Angeles institution – UnCabaret is an incubator for a roster of hilarious storytellers and special musical guests – and a must-see experience for comedy lovers.

cap.ucla.edu/unholiday

CAP UCLA COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

CAP UCLA Executive Producer Council

The Executive Producer Council is CAP UCLA's philanthropic leadership group, which develops and contributes resources vital to CAP UCLA's programming and mission. The Council champions the creative development and presentation of live programs and public dialogue with contemporary performing artists by providing direct support for CAP UCLA's annual programming. The Council is engaged in dialogue about the artistic and curatorial practices that inform annual programs, long-term initiatives and collaborative planning efforts which stand at the heart of CAP UCLA's mission and public purpose.

Design for Sharing (DFS) Council

The Design for Sharing Council is a group of dedicated supporters whose efforts help to resource the K-12 arts education programs of DFS.

cap.ucla.edu/councils



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The opening of The Nimoy offers donors a rare opportunity to create a lasting legacy while celebrating their passion for contemporary performing arts at UCLA. Learn more about naming a seat in The Nimoy – CAP UCLA's newest home for live performance – and other opportunities to become a part of this state-of-the-art theater.

cap.ucla.edu/give-nimoy



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We invite you to become a CAP UCLA Member and support our ability to create a space for shared experiences, extraordinary artistry and the exchange of ideas.

- Enjoy priority access and discounts
- Support extraordinary artistry
- Deepen relationships with artists and other arts enthusiasts

Become a member
cap.ucla.edu/membership

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