



2016-17 Season

Berkeley RADICAL Thematic Exploration

SYMPOSIUM

*Layla and
Majnun*

2016-17

BERKELEY RADICAL

I N C L U S I O N



SAT, OCT 1, 2016 2-5 PM

BAMPFA BARBRO OSHER THEATER, 2155 CENTER STREET, BERKELEY

www.calperformances.org

INCLUSION: ENGAGING THE AUDIENCE WITH *LAYLA AND MAJNUN*

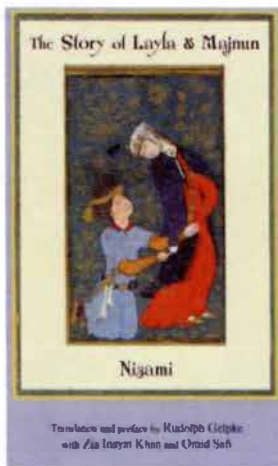
MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP AND THE SILK ROAD ENSEMBLE

ALIM QASIMOV AND FARGANA QASIMOVA, VOCALS

Cal Performances presents the world premiere of *Layla and Majnun*, a co-commissioned work by choreographer Mark Morris, with sets and costumes by British artist Howard Hodgkin, and music performed by the Silk Road Ensemble joined by Azerbaijan's leading mugham vocalists, Alim Qasimov and Fargana Qasimova.

A beloved cornerstone of Middle Eastern culture, *Layla and Majnun* is a classic story of forbidden love most notably expressed by the great Persian poet Nizami Ganjavi. It has traveled through centuries and cultures along the ancient Silk Route from India, Central Asia, and the Middle East to the eastern edge of Europe. It has been reinterpreted in countless poems, paintings, plays, songs, musical compositions, television dramas, and films, but is relatively unknown in western culture.

At this crucial moment in history, when the story's home territory is of current geopolitical focus and concern, it reminds us of our shared humanity, especially in consideration of people of Muslim faith who now live here but are too often excoriated as "other."



Layla and Majnun is thus the ideal work to open Cal Performances' exploration of Inclusion. It has inspired a weeklong residency (find a complete list on the back of this pamphlet) with the Mark Morris Dance Group and Silk Road Ensemble, of

activities that provide opportunities for our community to closely engage and find meaning in this impactful new work.

Today's symposium begins with the story. A staged reading brings us into the protagonists' lives, with the voice of the poet Nizami spoken in the original Persian—different than the new production's Azeri text, yet indicative of this story's wide reach. Then, dancers and musicians will talk about their collaborative process of learning each other's artistic and also cultural languages to work together. Next, we take the story from the culturally specific mugham tradition that is included in this production to the multiple cultures that embrace *Layla and Majnun* as their own, then expanding to a universal, empathetic message in this story of tragic love that illustrates so beautifully the concept of cross-cultural understanding.

SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM

Layla and Majnun

2:00—2:10 pm Welcome and introductions
Rob Bailis, Associate Director, Cal Performances

2:10—2:50 pm *Layla and Majnun* Story Re-enactment
Adapted and directed by Torange Yeghiazarian, Founding Artistic Director of Golden Thread Productions. The script is based on Nizami's poem and is told in an aesthetic inspired by epic story tellers and hakawati of the Middle East. The reading is accompanied by images of Layla and Majnun through the ages, including scenes from the new production.

3:00—4:00 pm Mutual Understanding:
Making art together Across Cultures
Dancers Michelle Yard and Aaron Loux, and musicians Johnny Gandelsman, Colin Jacobsen and Wu Man talk with Rob Bailis about their experience working across genres and cultures while making this production.

4:00—5:00 pm *Layla and Majnun*: Universal Truths from
A Story of Unrequited Love
A discussion with Aida Huseynova, Indiana University, Jacobs School of Music; Fateme Montazeri, UC Berkeley Department of Near Eastern Studies; Karen Barkey, Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society and Haas Distinguished Chair in Religious Diversity, Dept of Sociology; and Sabrina Klein, Director of Artistic Literacy, Cal Performances.

Cal Performances would like to acknowledge partnerships that have enriched the form and content of this event: Mark Morris Dance Group; The Berkeley Art Museum Pacific Film Archive; Sanjyot Mehendale of UC Berkeley's Silk Road Initiative; The Center for Middle Eastern Studies; and the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society.

The presentation of *Layla and Majnun* was made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, with additional support from the National Endowment for the Arts.



THE STORY

Layla and Qays are in love from childhood but are not allowed to unite.

Qays (called Majnun, which means "possessed") is perceived to be mad in his obsession with Layla. Layla is married off to another and Majnun becomes a hermit, devoting himself to writing verses about his profound love of Layla.

Although they attempt to meet, they die without ever realizing a relationship.

This is the libretto used by Mark Morris and the Silk Road Ensemble.

The Golden Thread Productions script created by

Torance Yeghiazarian is a new version of the story.

1. LOVE AND SEPARATION

Majnun:

My soul is on fire because we are apart
I want to join my beloved
My heart is heavy because I am alone
I want to see my beloved
I feel like a nightingale that cries in pain,
trapped in a cage
I want a flower garden.

Layla:

My heart has been breaking since I was
overcome by love
What kind of sorrow is this?
I do not have the strength to describe the
sorrow in my heart
I cannot bear being apart from you

Majnun:

Seeing your face – as lovely as the sun – has
made me weak
I cannot be still
My only wish is to perish in the world of love
I thank God that my wish is granted
I have no more desire

Layla:

My true love knows my heart is breaking
He knows what sadness lives in my heart
There is no need for me to explain my grief
He knows every sliver of sorrow in my heart

Majnun: Yes, I know

Layla: Yes, he knows

Majnun: Yes, I know

Layla and Majnun:

Your movements tantalize me
Your smile – like a flower – makes me weep
Your sweet scent renders me motionless
Your tousled hair drives me mad

2. THE PARENTS' DISAPPROVAL

Both:

You fell in love, desperately in love
And your love is mixed with sadness and grief

Majnun:

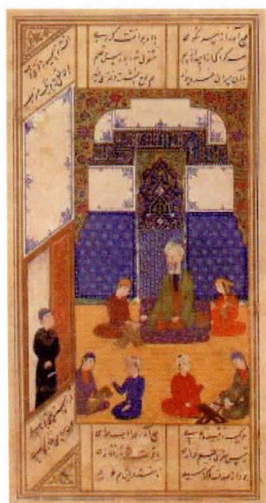
Father and Mother – my soul, my spirit
Father and Mother – my heart
How could I know that falling in love with
Layla
would turn out this way?
What could I say, what could I do?
I cannot control this love
I'm powerless – I have no strength
I can only worship this one idol
until the very end of my life

Layla:

Mother, Father – it's not my fault that I went
to school
I've never done anything to disobey you
I swear this was not my intention
I just wanted to be a carefree schoolgirl
Don't say any more
Have mercy and stop tormenting me

Majnun:

Father, Mother, my love will drive me mad.



"Layla and Majnun at School" An illustration of the poem Layla and Manjun from the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg. One of 13 miniatures in gouache, dated 1431.

3. SORROW AND DESPAIR

Majnun:

Dear God, let me be at peace with my troubles
Let me feel the despair of my love
Have mercy on me in my grief
Let me feel even more despair for my love

Layla:

Your eyes are closed, your heart is broken
Your mind tortured, and your legs are bound
You are burning from head to toe
And your heart smolders

Majnun:

I yearn to feel this sorrow as long as I live
I need this sorrow because this sorrow needs me
I will not surrender
I will not be called unfaithful

Layla:

I am as faithful as you are
Maybe even more so
You are on fire only at night
While I am on fire night and day

Both:

I am inspired. Please, God, let me be.

4. LAYLA'S UNWANTED WEDDING

Majnun:

Why are you in the garden with a stranger
Enjoying yourself, bestowing favors on him?
How could you break your word?
Did you forget about our vows? How cruel!

Layla:

No, no, my soul mate, please listen to me
If this were up to me I would never want anyone but you
Fate has dealt me a cruel blow
I don't know how this happened

Majnun:

What did I do to make you turn away from me?
How could you choose a stranger to share your grief and happiness?
Is this what you call love?
You are cruel! You broke our vows!

Layla:

God, what torture! What agony!
I was burning with love for you. Now I know the torture of being apart.

Majnun:

Is this is your loyalty, Layla?
Can someone who is unfaithful be loved?

5. THE LOVERS' DEMISE

Layla:

The wheel of fate has not turned the way I wanted. It has not cured the pain of separation. My beloved gave me so much pain. My heart is filled with suffering that has no remedy. My beloved promised to love me forever, But he forgot about his vows and about our love.

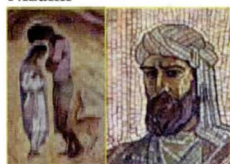
Majnun:

True love means sacrificing one's life for his beloved
A soul that has not been given to a beloved is a wasted soul
Lovers want to be together
But separation brings them joy forever.

IMAGES OF LAYLA AND MAJNUN

Layla and Majnun

Nizami



Images from Nizami
Metro Station, BAKU,
AZERBAIJAN

Majnun the "mad"



1. Painting with calligraphy,
Harvard Art Museums,
19th century, QAJAR.
2. Huseyngulu Sarabski in
the opera Leyli and Majnun,
1909 AZERBAIJAN

Visiting the Ka'ba



Man. W.606, folio 126b, The
Walters Art Museum 16h
century, OTTOMAN

Childhood Friends



1. Miniature Nizami's
Khamsa (Quintet), Bodleian
Library, Oxford; 1504
PERSIA
2. Still from the 1976 film
"Laila and Majnun" INDIA

Majnun in the Wilderness



Miniature painting, W. 611,
folio 109a. 17th century
IRAN

Layla on the Rooftop



Manuscript W.611, folio: 92b,
The Walters Art Museum,
17th century IRAN

Majnun at Layla's Door



Painting by Hamdi, Harvard
Art Museums/Arthur M.
Sackler Museum, Edwin
Binney, 3rd. 16th century
OTTOMAN, Turkey.

Layla in her Garden



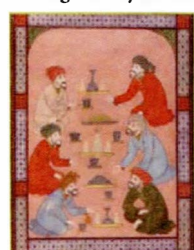
Manuscript W.605, folio 73b,
The Walters Art Museum
Miniature detail,
15th century, IRAN

Battle between the Families



Painting by Hamdi, Harvard
Art Museums/Arthur M.
Sackler Museum, Edwin
Binney, 3rd Harvard Art
Museums. OTTOMAN,
Turkey.

Asking for Layla's Hand



Painting, Safavid, 17th
Century. PERSIA
Private Collection

Majnun Talks to the Raven



Miniature from the Khamsa
by Nizami,. The State
Hermitage Museum. 15th
century, TIMURUD

Layla rejects her husband, Ibn Salam, in the bridal chamber



Manuscript W.604, The Walters Art Museum 15th century, IRAN

Majnun's father visits his son in the wilderness



Manuscript W.608, folio 136b, The Walters Art Museum. 16th century, SAFAVID

Majnun's mother visits



Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY. British Library, Ms. Oriental 12208, folio 150v 16th century, MUGHAL

Majnun receives Layla's letter



Miniature from the Khamsa by Nizami, State Hermitage Museum 15th century, TIMURID

Layla and Majnun faint



Detail of an illustrated manuscript of Nizami's Khamsa, La, Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art; 16th century, SAFAVID

The lovers meet



Miniature detail, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. 16th century, PERSIA

The lovers embrace



Oil on canvas, illustrated single work, Bequest of Charles K. Wilkinson, 1986, The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Mid-18th century IRAN,

The lovers meet



Keshan Rug, private collection 19th century, IRAN

Majnun dies at Layla's tomb



Miniature detail, manuscript W.605, folio 112b, The Walters Museum of Art 16th century, SAFAVID

Imagined Graves of Layla and Majnun



Binjaur Village, Rajasthan, INDIA

PARTICIPANTS

SESSION 1: STORY RE-ENACTMENT OF LAYLA AND MAJNUN

Torange Yeghiazarian is the Founder and Artistic Director of Golden Thread Productions. She wrote the script for and directed the dramatic reading by actors **Dina Zarif**, **Adrienne Shamszad**, **Majd Murad** and **Munaf Alsafi**. Golden Thread Productions, founded in 1996, is the first American theatre company focused on the Middle East. They produce passionate and provocative plays from and about the Middle East that celebrate the multiplicity of its perspectives and identities, bringing the Middle East to the American stage, creating treasured cultural experiences for audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

Sanjyot Mehendale specializes in trade and cultural exchange of the early Common Era. A professor of Silk Road Art and Archeology and program coordinator of the Silk Road Initiative at UC Berkeley, she teaches in the dept of Near Eastern Studies. In 2007, she worked with the National Geographic Society on the exhibition *Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures from the National Museum, Kabul*. She currently conducts archaeological research in Sri Lanka and is working on the excavation of a shipwreck carrying merchandise from the ancient Near East.

SESSION 2: MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING: MAKING ART TOGETHER ACROSS CULTURES

Johnny Gandelsman (violin, composer and and musical arrangement) came to the Silk Road Ensemble from Moscow via Israel. Gandelsman's musical voice reflects the artistic collaborations he has been a part of since moving to the United States in 1995.

Colin Jacobsen, (violin, composer and musical arrangement). A founding member of two game-changing, audience-expanding ensembles, the string quartet Brooklyn Rider and orchestra

The Knights, Jacobsen is a touring member of Yo-Yo Ma's venerated Silk Road Ensemble.

Together, Jacobsen and Gandelsman, along with vocalist Alim Qasimov, arranged the traditional Azerbaijani music used in this *Layla and Majnun* production.

Wu Man, a composer and the world's premiere pipa virtuoso, is an ambassador of Chinese music, creating a new role for her lute-like instrument in both traditional and contemporary music. She frequently collaborates with the Kronos and Shanghai Quartets and has performed as a soloist and with major orchestras. The best measure of her achievement is that her instrument, which dates back 2000 years, is no longer an exotic curiosity.

Michelle Yard was born in Brooklyn, NY. She began her professional training at the NYC High School of the Performing Arts and continued her studies as a scholarship student at Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. She graduated from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and joined MMDG in 1997.

Aaron Loux grew up in Seattle, WA and began dancing at the Creative Dance Center as a member of Kaleidoscope, a youth modern dance company. He began his classical training at the Cornish College Preparatory Dance Program and graduated from the Juilliard School in 2009. Loux danced at the Metropolitan Opera and with Arc Dance Company before joining MMDG in 2010.

Rob Bailis (moderator) is Associate Director of Cal Performances. Musician, writer, and performing arts curator, he has performed widely as a classical clarinetist. He was Director of ODC Theater from 2003-2011, where he was instrumental in expanding the facility, elevated the theater's platform to national and international visibility, and received awards for his presenting, advocacy, and residency programs. He has been the lead designer of Berkeley RADICAL, leads the artistic

PARTICIPANTS CONTINUED

programming team in dance, theater, and world stage, and oversees fundraising, communications, and education. Bailis holds degrees from Northwestern University and Yale School of Music.

SESSION 3:

LESSONS FROM A STORY OF UNREQUITED LOVE

Aida Huseynova has a PhD in musicology and teaches at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. Her publications include *Music of Azerbaijan: From Mugham to Opera* (2016). Huseynova also serves as a research advisor for the Silk Road Project under the artistic direction of Yo-Yo Ma. Her numerous awards include an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant (2016) and a Fulbright scholarship (2007-08).

Fateme Montazeri is a PhD student of Persian studies. She received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the University of Tehran. She completed the Master's program of Islamic Arts at the Graduate Theological Union in which she focused on Persian illustrated manuscripts of middle ages. Her thesis, "Why Death? An Inquiry into Text and Context of Persian painting," deals with a 15th century manuscript of Layla and Majnun. Her research includes Persian medieval literature, Sufi literature, codicology, early manuscripts of the Quran, and Islamic arts of the book—particularly calligraphy, Persian painting, and text-image relationship within manuscripts.

Karen Barkey, joins UC Berkeley this year as Haas Distinguished Chair of Religious Diversity and Professor of Sociology. She was born in Istanbul, Turkey, and attended Bryn Mawr College (BA); The University of Washington (MA) and the University of Chicago (PhD). Her research focuses on the Ottoman Empire, in comparison with France, the Habsburg, and the Russian Empires, with the Roman and Byzantine worlds as important predecessors.

Author of *Empire of Difference* (2008), a study of the flexibility and longevity of imperial systems, Prof. Barkey is now engaged in projects on religious co-existence and toleration. Her edited book, *Choreography of Sacred Spaces: State, Religion and Conflict Resolution* (with Elazar Barkan, 2014) explores the history of shared religious spaces in the Balkans, Anatolia and Palestine/Israel, all once under Ottoman rule. The book looks at politics and culture of conflict and cooperation, and provides historical antecedents to help us understand the contemporary accommodation and contention around specific sites. She represents the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society on this panel.

Sabrina Klein, (moderator) is director of Artistic Literacy at Cal Performances, and a long time teaching artist and trainer working as an arts and education consultant since 2006. Prior to that, she was Executive director at the Julia Morgan Center for the Arts. She received her PhD at UC Berkeley in Dramatic Art and has taught at Berkeley and Harvard, and has led dozens of professional development workshops for teachers, teaching artists, and administrators throughout the country.

MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP AND THE SILK ROAD ENSEMBLE

Mark Morris, Director & Choreographer, has been called the “the most prodigiously gifted choreographer of the post-Balanchine era” (*Time*). He has created over 150 works, including 20 ballets, and 20 operas. He has been described as “an innovator and a conservative, a satirist and a romantic” (*New Yorker*) who “easily ranks among the top five American choreographers... and has already carved a major place for himself in the history of modern dance” (*The Denver Post*). Renowned as an intensely musical choreographer, Morris is undeviatingly devoted to music. He has conducted MMDG performances since 2006, served as music director of the 2013 Ojai Music Festival, and works extensively in opera, including the Metropolitan Opera and the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. Morris was named Fellow of the MacArthur Foundation, and has received twelve honorary doctorates. He 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 International Society for the Performing Artists’ Distinguished Artist Award, the Benjamin Franklin Laureate Prize for Creativity, the Cal Performances Award of Distinction in the Performing Arts, and the Orchestra of St. Luke’s Gift of Music Award.

The Mark Morris Dance Group was founded and gave its first performance in New York City in 1980. In residence as Belgium’s national dance company at the Théâtre Royal de La Monnaie from 1988-1991, MMDG returned to the US as one of the world’s leading dance companies. Now based in Brooklyn, MMDG maintains strong ties to presenters around the world, notably its West Coast home. The relationship between MMDG and Cal Performances has played a major part in fulfilling our commitment to presenting important dance at Zellerbach Hall. Since 1987, Cal Performances has presented 57 Mark Morris works; Layla and Majnun marks the 13th MMDG world premiere here, our 10th as commissioner.

The Silk Road Ensemble

Inspired by the exchange of ideas and traditions along the historical Silk Road, cellist Yo Yo Ma established Silkroad in 1998 to explore how the arts can advance global understanding. Since 2000, the musicians of the Silk Road Ensemble have led Silkroad’s efforts to connect the world through the arts, focusing in three areas: musical performances, learning programs, and cultural entrepreneurship. Representing dozens of nationalities and musical traditions, the musicians of the ensemble model new forms of cultural exchange through performances, workshops, and residencies. The Music of Strangers: Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble, a documentary by Academy Award-winning filmmaker Morgan Neville premiered at the Toronto Film Festival in September 2015. Learn more at silkroadproject.org.



P R E V I E W

BERKELEY RADICAL

2016-17 INCLUSION-THEMED PERFORMANCES AND RESIDENCIES

Layla and Majnun marks the first event in Cal Performances' exploration of "Inclusion," a Berkeley RADICAL* thematic strand that spans multiple genres from September 2016 – February 2017.

INCLUSION

Performances and activities in this thematic strand seek to explore how universal themes arise from diverse, culturally specific artists or ensembles, and how artists use the idea of inclusion in their creative process. Regardless of cultural backgrounds, audiences can see themselves in such works because the artists intentionally aim for inclusion.

MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP AND THE SILK ROAD ENSEMBLE: *LAYLA AND MAJNUN*

Sept 24-Oct 2, 2016

KRONOS QUARTET: *FIFTY FOR THE FUTURE*

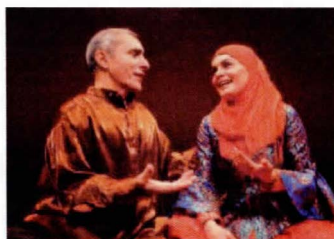
Bay Area premiere of Mary Kouyoumdjian's *Silent Cranes*, a memorial to the Armenian Genocide built on Armenian folk songs
Dec 1-3, 2016

BLACK ARM BAND: *DIRTSONG*

Musical theater work addresses
Aboriginal struggle
Feb 12-13, 2017

THE NILE PROJECT

Musical Communities joined by the
shared resource of water
Feb 16-18, 2017



* Berkeley RADICAL (Research And Development Initiative in Creativity, Arts and Learning) celebrates artistic innovation and creative process through curated public programs and creative residencies. By connecting the world's most innovative artists with the intellectual capital of UC Berkeley, audience members make meaningful personal connections by engaging with the art on our stages.

MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP AND
THE SILK ROAD ENSEMBLE

*Layla and
Majnun*

World Premiere Sept 30-Oct 2, 2016
Zellerbach Hall



Residency at Cal Performances

BAMPFA Cinema mon amour film series curated by Mark Morris

Presented at BAMPFA Barbro Osher Theater

Sat, Sept 24, 5:30pm *Through the Olive Trees*

Sun, Sept 25, 4 pm *The Wishing Tree*

Fri, Sept 30, 4 pm *Ashik Kerib*

Sat, Oct 1, 5:45 pm *Eliso*; silent with piano accompaniment

Mon, Sept 26, 6 pm Berkeley Forum interviews Mark Morris, Moffitt Library

Tue, Sept 27, 6 pm Whimsical pop-up with percussionist Shane Shanahan
and shakuhachi player Kojiro Umezaki

Wed, Sept 28, 1:30 pm Whimsical pop-up with vocalists Miralam Miralamov
and Kamila Nabiyeva, with Zaki Valiyev (tar) and
Rauf Islamov (kamancheh)

Fri, Sept 30-Sat, Oct 1 Reaching for the Stars Education Conference
Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life

Sat, Oct 1

11 am Dance with MMDG / Community Class, Bancroft Studio

2-5 pm

Layla and Majnun Inclusion Symposium
BAMPFA Barbro Osher Theater