



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CAP UCLA presents  
Piper Kerman in Conversation with Rachel  
Kushner**

*January 30 at Royce Hall*



“*[Orange Is The New Black]* is impossible to put down because she could be you. Or your best friend. Or your daughter.” —*Los Angeles Times*

“*[The Mars Room]* is] a major novel, a sustained performance, one that broods on several exigent ideas.” —*The New York Times*

UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance (CAP UCLA) presents Piper Kerman in Conversation with Rachel Kushner on Thursday, January 30, 2020, at 8 p.m. at Royce Hall. Tickets starting at \$28 are available now at [cap.ucla.edu](http://cap.ucla.edu), 310-825-2101 and the Royce Hall box office.

Kerman and Kushner will discuss the challenges incarcerated women face and the serious need for prison reform in America. Kushner thinks of herself as a “girl citizen,” asking questions of the world at large. Kerman in six words – in and out of hot water. Both authors are each activists in their own right, bringing a sense of pathos and humanity to the depiction of incarceration.

“Our Words and Ideas series this season focuses on writers in conversation. The act of writing is a solitary practice, as is the act of reading. But when extraordinary writers are given a forum to have a discussion, the results are often illuminating and inspirational,” said Meryl Friedman, Director of Education & Special Initiatives. “Piper Kerman and Rachel Kushner are stylistically very different from each other, but both explore the possibilities of redemption, especially when personal choices turn out to have dire consequences. We’re so thrilled to welcome Piper and Rachel to CAP UCLA and to engage with them in a passionate discussion.”

After spending 15 months in prison for past crimes, Kerman was struck by the stark inequality she encountered. She wrote about her experience in a memoir, *Orange Is the New Black: My Year in a Women's Prison*, which became a hit television series on Netflix. According to Kerman, those pursued and punished by law enforcement in the U.S. are too often determined by race and class due to the disproportionate amount of police officers in impoverished areas in comparison to middle and upper-class neighborhoods.

In Kushner's book, *The Mars Room*, she also explores life in a prison. Similar to Kerman, Kushner shows that the media's portrayal of prisoners is not a catch-all and that a neighbor, a friend or someone you know is capable of committing a crime. Kushner uses herself as a basis for one of her characters because the perception of her, like Kerman, is that she doesn't 'look' like a prisoner.

Funds for CAP UCLA Presents Piper Kerman in Conversation with Rachel Kushner is provided in part by the George C. Perkins Fund.

CAP UCLA's Words & Ideas series concludes with *Marlon James (Feb 27, Royce Hall)*.

**CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

CAP UCLA presents

**[Piper Kerman In Conversation With Rachel Kushner](#)**

Thursday, January 30 at 8 p.m.

Royce Hall, UCLA

10745 Dickson Court, Los Angeles, CA 90095

**Program:**

Piper Kerman's memoir, *Orange Is The New Black*, was based on her experiences behind bars. Rachel Kushner's novel, *The Mars Room*, is a heartbreaking story set in a California women's prison. Together they will discuss the judicial system and the human costs of mass incarceration.

**Tickets:**

Tickets starting at \$28

Online: [cap.ucla.edu](http://cap.ucla.edu)

Phone: 310-825-2101

UCLA Central Ticket Office: 310-825-2101, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Royce Hall box office: open 90 minutes prior to the event start time.

**Artists website:** [Piper Kerman](#) | [Rachel Kushner](#)

**About CAP UCLA**

[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-platforms — by leading artists from around the globe. Part of UCLA's School of the Arts and Architecture, CAP UCLA curates and facilitates direct exposure to artists who are creating extraordinary works of art and fosters a vibrant learning community both on and off the UCLA campus. The organization invests in the creative process by providing artists with financial backing and time to experiment and expand their practices through strategic partnerships and collaborations. As an influential voice within the local, national and global arts communities, CAP UCLA connects this generation to the next in order to preserve a living archive of our culture. CAP UCLA is also a safe harbor where cultural expression and artistic exploration can thrive, giving audiences the opportunity to experience real life through characters and stories on stage, and giving artists an avenue to challenge assumptions and advance new ways of seeing and understanding the world we live in now.

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**PRESS REVIEW TICKETS/PHOTO PASSES/INTERVIEW REQUESTS:** Contact Geena Russo, Communications Manager, [geena@arts.ucla.edu](mailto:geena@arts.ucla.edu) or 310-206-8744.

**IMAGES:** Available by request or register for download at [cap.ucla.edu/pressimages](http://cap.ucla.edu/pressimages). Photo credit Michael Oppenheim (Piper Kerman) and Chloe Aftel (Rachel Kushner).