



Photo by Cherylynn Tsushima

d. Sabela grimes
Parable of Portals

Thu, Dec 11, 2025 at 8 pm
Nate Holden Performing Arts Center

**CENTER
FOR THE ART OF
PERFORMANCE
UCLA**

WELCOME TO THE 2025–26 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



Throughout history, in moments of uncertainty and transformation, it is the arts that have helped us hold the line — and imagine the horizon. As we move through a shifting political and cultural landscape, we return to the stage not only to reflect, but to lead.

Artists have long been the truth-tellers, the visionaries, the builders of bridges where none existed. In the face of fear or division, they light the way forward — sparking dialogue, resisting silence and creating the emotional commons where we rediscover our shared humanity. Art doesn't just document history — it shapes it. It asks bold questions. It offers sanctuary. And it dares us to dream.

For our 2025–26 season CAP UCLA invites you into a radical act of gathering across 30 performances with more than 100 artists from around the globe. Imagine a world where strangers become companions in belonging, where performance becomes public square and where artistic voices help us build a more compassionate and courageous society.

This season is more than a series of performances — it is a call to community. Exciting new theater, revolutionary music and dance remind us that unity is not an ideal — it is an act. The stage becomes our platform, our laboratory, our refuge. Here, we witness. We reckon. We rejoice.

Even in tumultuous times — especially in those times — art meets the moment. And so do we.

With hope and imagination,



Edgar Miramontes

Executive and Artistic Director



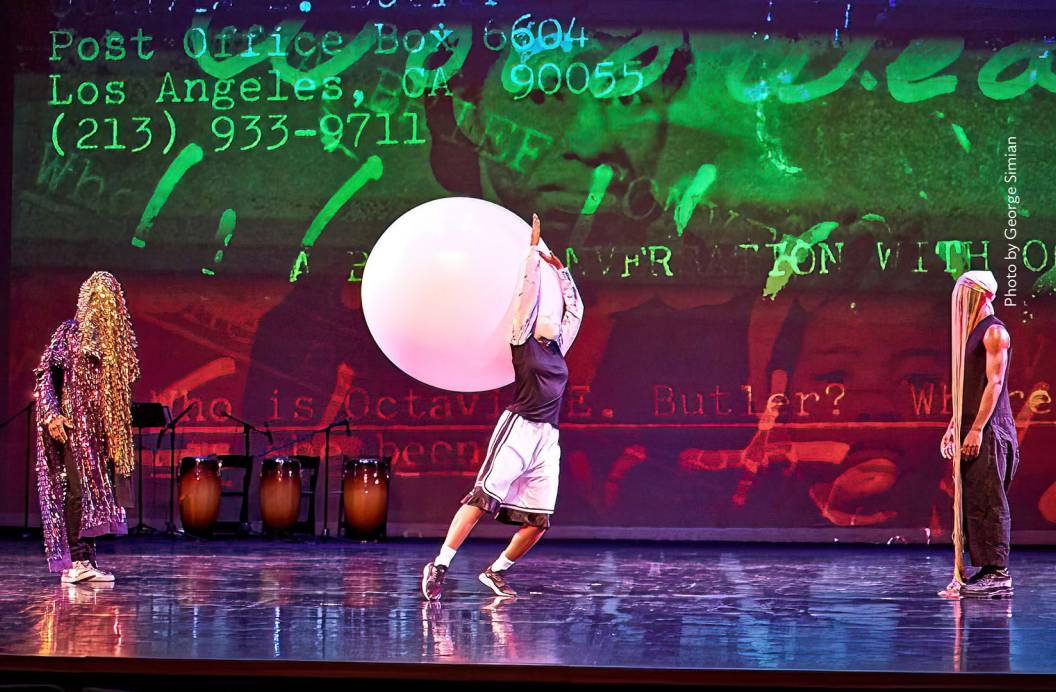


Photo by George Simian

CAP UCLA presents

d. Sabela grimes

Parable of Portals

Thu, Dec 11, 2025 at 8 pm

Nate Holden Performing Arts Center

Program duration: 75 minutes

No intermission



Support provided by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation Endowment Fund.

The presentation of *Parable of Portals* was made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Foundation and the Mellon Foundation.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

This performance is part of *Mapping Los Angeles*. Celebrating the vibrant multiplicity of communities across the city, *Mapping Los Angeles* is envisioned as a practice of “urban acupuncture,” as inspired by artist Faustin Linyekula’s choreographic work. *Mapping Los Angeles* is a series of relationship-building collaborations and new, artist-led engagements across the city that expand CAP UCLA’s cultural production in creative entrepreneurial activities. This season the series features d. Sabela grimes and his creative constellation of dance, transmedia storytelling and music based on the writings of Octavia E. Butler.

PERFORMERS

Leroy Olamina Butler: Brianna Mims

Quantum aka Quan: d. Sabela grimes

The String Theory Twins: G’bari GQ Gilliam, Shantel Urena

The Olamina Oversouls: RootedXChange (Janae Holster, Ambar Matos Ortiz, Andrea Rodriguez, Leeann “GodLee” Ross)

CREDITS

Creative Direction: d. Sabela grimes, Meena Murugesan

Poetry, Choreography, Original Music: d. Sabela grimes

Choreography exists in caring collaboration with the performers

Video design: Meena Murugesan

Animation: d. Sabela grimes

Costume design: d. Sabela grimes, Kia McCormick

Stage Manager: Erin Newsome

PARABLE OF PORTALS

Braiding Earthseed Invocation Portal

CHANGE^{nth}

Leroy's Landing (Spiral Down!)

Leroy's Landing (Grounding Up)

Juicy Space Time

Situate Yo'Self Portal

Reality/Obvious Lie

Cosmoglam

TIME-TIME-TIME!

Parable of PassAge Portal

All Goodness In

Ball Call

Ancestral Morph

Dreamin' a Recurrence

Keep Goin' (Acorn ReFix)

Top Down California (Orion Sun Drenched Remix)

NATE HOLDEN PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Executive Director: Gayle Hooks

Technical Director: Courtland Trapp

Lighting design: Miranda Richards

Sound engineer: James Humiston

Tech Assistants: Marvin Sims, Michael Blendermann

SPECIAL THANKS

To our beloved and overlapping communities of extraordinary people who have traveled with us, through many manifestations and portals, offering both caring and critical support. To Gayle Hooks and Edgar Miramontes, who said "YES!" to this project when it was only a fertile dream. To the vibrant communities of Altadena/Pasadena, Seattle, and Leimert Park Village, where

the majority of the movement material was created (shout-out to our inspirational brother Ben Caldwell/KAOS Network, who watched me, in the character of Quantum, cut up in Peoples Plaza right outside his front door). And to the eternal life and enduring legacy of Octavia E. Butler.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Parable of Portals is made possible with generous support from the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project.



PROGRAM NOTES

Parable of Portals ain't nothin but an obnoxious love letter to Octavia E. Butler.

A trans-media movement manuscript. An imagining; where Butler's Radio Imagination aligns with our Kinetic Vision. A deep groove, a real-time reckoning, an embodied shout of praise, a glimpse into and through worlds of wonder. We speaking in tongues. We turning ourselves inside out. We be. In the continuity of refusal. We embrace GOD as change, change as a divine force.

We be/lieve
Motion *is* change.
Change *is* motion.
We still.

Forging a collective path through the nowness of recurring
futures.

For we, too, are Earthseed and our bodies are the books of the
living.

— d. Sabela grimes

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

d. Sabela grimes (writer, choreographer, performer, original sound, video animation, costume design) is a choreographer, transmedia storyteller, writer, composer, costume designer and educator. Improvisation and collaboration are central to his practice, weaving sound, visuals, and movement into multisensory experiences. Sabela's creative practice invests in Black cultural epistemologies, the poetics of assemblage, the matters of mutability, and the magic misuse. His current collaborative work, *Parable of Portals*, co-created with Meena Murugesan, dreams Octavia E. Butler's body of work, including personal writings and unfinished manuscripts, into a modular, constellation of transmedia performance. As a faculty member at USC's Gloria Kaufman School of Dance, he teaches courses in composition, Hip Hop and street dance histories, African and Afro-diasporic traditions, fashion and materiality, and his original system, *Funkamental MediKinetics*. He is the recipient of the 2023 USC Associates Award for Artistic Expression, the 2021 Bessie Award for Outstanding Performer, the 2017 Los Angeles County Performing Arts Fellowship, and the 2014 United States Artists Rockefeller Fellowship. Sabela loves pancakes, speculative fiction, and his kinfolk.

Meena Murugesan (video design) are an interdisciplinary artist based on Tongva-Kizh land, colonially known as Los Angeles. Meena creates art installations at the intersection of video art, textile art, live performance and social issues. Their work grapples with multimedia collage, contemplative documentary, textile art, improvisation, somatic bodywork, collective creation and brahminized bharatanatyam. Meena centers an anti-racist, anti-caste, feminist, queer, land back, liberatory creative practice. They research interlocking systems of apartheid - across caste, race, gender, religion, ethnicity and species - to interrogate hierarchical structures of power. This inquiry informs their current project, *Dravidian Futurities*, a speculative multimedia installation examining Dravidian-African connections, casteism, colorism, trance rituals and the ancient submerged landmass of Kumari Kandam / Lemuria. Meena's solo work has been supported through grants and artist residencies, including The

Mellon Foundation, CHIME, Pieter, UCLA, Canada Council for the Arts, CALQ and SODEC. Their video art has been presented at The Getty Museum, Broad Museum, MOCA LA, BlackStar Film Festival, 651 Arts, Jacob's Pillow, SOPHIENSÆLE, Underground Museum, REDCAT, ODC, Abrons Arts Center, NYLA, EMPAC, ICA Philadelphia, MCA Chicago, Danspace, Wesleyan University, UCLA, Tangente, and MAI, among others. vimeo.com/meenakshi
Brianna Mims (performer) is an artist, abolitionist and facilitator based in Los Angeles. Her work spans performance, advocacy, public art, social practice and the creation of fine art objects. She experiences the body as a site of liberation and approaches it as her first place of inquiry. Grounded in embodied knowing, her practice explores relationships between self, community, land and more-than-human life. She is deeply interested in questioning as a tool for collective understanding, the role of interpersonal relationships in building healthy communities and the sacred wisdom held in cultures and ecosystems around the world.

She is the founder of Marooning Bodies, an immersive worldbuilding game and artistic ecosystem rooted in maroon histories, biomimicry, and communal imagination. She is also the creator of Uncle Ronnie's Room, an installation and advocacy project centering her uncle's incarceration and the collective labor of abolition.

Mims' work has been supported by the California Arts Council, Converse, the NYU Center for Ballet and the Arts, and residencies in Senegal and Ghana. She is currently commissioned by the LA County Department of Arts and Culture as part of the Public Artists in Development (PAiD) Artist Council.

Janae Holster (performer) is a multi-hyphenate artist from Alexandria, Virginia who developed a deep passion for the arts at a young age. Early exposure to local festivals and parades with their mother, and print-making workshops with their grandmother instilled a deep appreciation for creativity.

Janae's dance training across the DMV area, including ballet, jazz, hip-hop and musical theater at Adagio Ballet, Joy of Motion and Capital Movement, along with their time as a member of Mighty

Shock and Future Shock D.C., fostered a strong appreciation for both social and classical dance forms.

Before high school, Janae relocated to Orange County, California, where they attended the California School of the Arts in the Commercial Dance Conservatory. During this time, they traveled nationally as an assistant for faculty at DanceMakers, Hollywood Vibe and Monsters, the latter of which they performed with as part of the 2022 Freakshow cast.

Holster holds a BFA from USC's Glorya Kaufman School of Dance and is currently working as a dance teacher in the Los Angeles area while pursuing commercial work. Some of their performance credits include being a featured dancer in Disney's *Descendants: The Rise of Red*, Doechii's 'Anxiety' music video, among others. In the future they aspire to combine their passions for dance and visual art through creative direction in film and stage, creating cross-generational experiences that unite people through the joy of artistic expression.

Leeann "Godlee" Ross (performer) grew up as a creative in the Metropolitan Atlanta area. While attending DeKalb School of the Arts for theater and dance, Leeann had her television debut as Young Dora in HBO's *Lovecraft Country*, before appearing in Showtime's *The First Lady* and Disney Plus' *Just Beyond*. In 2021, Leeann moved to Los Angeles to earn her Bachelor's Degree of Fine Arts at the USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance (2025).

Currently based in Los Angeles, Leeann performs professionally in many dance styles including hip hop, house, heels, contemporary and experimental freestyle, along with theatrical acting shows. She had her feature film debut in *The Boogeyman* (2023). Then in 2024, Leeann earned her 200-Hour yoga teacher certification by studying in Rishikesh, India, which informs her teaching practices and original wellness events like 'Sensory Sound Bath' (Apr. 2025) and 'Move Into Stillness' (Nov. 2025).

[instagram.com/leeannross](https://www.instagram.com/leeannross)

Ambar Matos Ortiz (performer), born in Sabana Perdida, Dominican Republic, is a multidisciplinary artist devoted to

Self-expansion through authentic expression. After immigrating to Maryland at age seven, she found her voice at the New Hope Youth Dance Company, where movement helped her flourish into herSelf.

She trained throughout the DMV with Baltimore Ballet, City Dance School & Conservatory, and the Flowers High School POMS Dance Team, studying Horton, Limon, Ballet, Jazz, Liturgical, Umfundalai, Hip-Hop, and Improvisation. Her dedication led her to the USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance.

At USC, Ambar performed works by esteemed choreographers such as Nina Flagg, Hope Boykin and d. Sabela Grimes. She immersed herself in LA's Street Dance scene, mentored by Toyin Sogunro, attending sessions, battles and classes. Also a DJ and stylist, she weaves music, fashion, and movement into raw, multidimensional creations. She founded [@RootedXChange](#) to amplify marginalized voices through dance, dialogue and community-centered events.

Andrea Rodriguez (performer) is from from Queens, New York. Andrea discovered her love for music and movement through her mother, who nurtured her connection to her Dominican and Ecuadorian heritage. Proud of being a Latina from New York City, her cultural practices and city's vibrant pace continue to inspire her creativity and constant pursuit of growth. Experiences with diverse cultures and versatile movement languages have shaped Andrea's distinctive artistic voice.

Beginning her training in freestyle and breaking at a young age, Andrea spent time in community spaces where she embraced improvisation as a practice of shared creativity. She further developed her craft at LaGuardia High School, building a strong foundation in concert dance forms, before pursuing her BFA at the USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance.

At Kaufman, she has performed in world premieres by Kyle Abraham, Josette Wiggins, Caili Quan, Nina Flagg and Tessandra Chavez, as well as Achinta S. McDaniel's *100 Seconds to Midnight* at the Ford Theatre, touring the production to Cincinnati.

She also immersed herself in the L.A. street dance community through classes, battles and Hip Hop and House sessions. Her professional experience extends beyond the stage, including film, music, immersive projects, fashion, and modeling such as the Cross Colours x Black Radiance Fashion Show and the Soul Food Candle Company Bodega Campaign.

Passionate about health and wellness, Andrea plans on receiving her personal training certification and physical therapy doctorate, striving to merge artistry, recovery, and community care, believing that dance and wellness together hold the power to heal and connect. [@andreax.rodriguez](https://www.instagram.com/andreax.rodriguez)

Shantel Ureña (performer) is a dancer, choreographer, filmmaker, and educator from Tampa, Florida, based in Los Angeles, CA. She began her movement journey at age two in her grandparents' home, surrounded by the sounds of Palo and Merengue. Trained in Ballet, Contemporary, and Modern, she later fell in love with Street and Club styles such as; House, Hip Hop and Animation. Later she began blending these languages with Latin styles such as Salsa, Bachata and Merengue. Shantel has performed with Heidi Duckler Dance Theatre Company and toured nationally with the Hip Hop Nutcracker and internationally with Contra-Tiempo's 'JoyUS JustUS'. Her latest independent work, 'Las Pequeñas Cosas', was featured at Club Jeté.

She is signed with Bloc Talent Agency and has worked with artists and brands including Bad Bunny, Dua Lipa, Christina Aguilera, Ozuna, Spotify, and more. She is a passionate storyteller, her most recent short film, *Yesterdays News* explores the connection between the Latino vote to immigration raids. You can find this on her social media platforms. Follow her social media to stay up to date! [@shantismira](https://www.instagram.com/shantismira)

Gbari Gilliam (performer) is a professional dancer hailing from the San Francisco Bay Area and is currently based in Los Angeles, CA. He pursued his passion for dance at UCLA, obtaining a BA in Dance in 2016, and has since excelled in an array of styles, including West African Dance, Ballet, Modern, Hip-Hop, House,

Waacking, Locking and more. Gbari's career as a dance artist includes collaborations with esteemed companies like Versa-Style Dance Company, A Nance Dance Collective and Rennie Harris Pure Movement, as well as appearances in films such as *The Color Purple* and *A Jazzman's Blues*, commercials for Adidas and more, and performances alongside renowned artists such as Bad Bunny, Michaela Jae, Mariah The Scientist, Janelle Monae, Mya and Yolanda Adams. Notably, he has also shared his expertise by teaching at institutions like UCLA, Cal State Long Beach, and Santa Monica College.



Photo by Alon Koppel

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.

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**CAP
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**Seth Parker Woods, Julia Bullock
and Conor Hanick**
From Ordinary Things

Thu, Jan 15, 2025 at 8 pm

The Nimoy

Powerhouse musicians Seth Parker Woods, Julia Bullock and Conor Hanick unite for an evening that showcases titan composers of lyricism and storytelling. The musicians perform works by George Walker, John Tavener, Maurice Ravel, Andre Previn, Nina Simone and Tania Leon.

cap.ucla.edu/ordinary-things



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





Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company ***Still/Here***

Thu, Mar 5, 2026 at 8 pm

Royce Hall

Thirty years after its premiere, the groundbreaking dance theater work *Still/Here* by Bill T. Jones returns to the stage. Created during the AIDS epidemic, the piece broke boundaries of American dance theater. Though the world has rapidly changed since its premiere, *Still/Here*'s exploration of mortality remains relevant.

"An American Classic" — *The New York Times*

cap.ucla.edu/still-here

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.



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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General Questions

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The Nimoy Rental Information

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Royce Hall Rental Information

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roycehall.org

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

CAP UCLA gratefully acknowledges our donors, sponsors and members.

This list reflects donations and commitments to the UCLA Nimoy Theater campaign as well as annual gifts made from Jan 1, 2024 to Aug 31, 2025.

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Over time, many generous individuals have initiated leadership gifts to establish endowments that support the performing arts at UCLA in perpetuity. We gratefully acknowledge:

Barbara and Bruce Dobkin, James A. Doolittle, Arthur E. Guedel, Kevin Jeske, Henry and Ginny Mancini, Merle & Peter Mullin, José Luis Nazar, Evelyn & Mo Ostin, Beatrix F. Padway, Mimi Perloff, Lloyd E. Rigler, Sally & William A. Rutter, Shirley & Ralph Shapiro, Roslyn Holt Swartz & Allan J. Swartz, and Mimi & Werner Wolfen.

NAME YOUR SEAT

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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Membership is an invitation — to be closer to the creative process, to champion new ideas and to help the arts thrive.

Members receive priority access, ticket benefits and invitations to special gatherings that deepen the experience of our shared journey.

Join today at cap.ucla.edu/membership

