

For Immediate Release

## Oakland Symphony Presents W. Kamau Bell's Playlist

Friday, January 19, 2018, 8:00pm  
Paramount Theatre, Oakland, CA

(Oakland, CA, November 1, 2017) - Oakland Symphony launches a new groundbreaking performance series called *Playlist*, an annual concert curated by some of the greatest thinkers of today. *Playlist* will give listeners unique insights into the curator's passions and take audiences on a musical journey to unexpected and uncharted territories. The first *Playlist* will feature the curated musical selections of W. Kamau Bell, the socio-political comedian, activist, and Emmy-winning CNN host. Bell's *Playlist* will present a wide range of his musical inspirations and his favorite music arranged and performed by the Oakland Symphony conducted by Michael Morgan.

Morgan and the Oakland Symphony approached Bell to curate a playlist and Bell could not be more excited to be a part of this project. Bell says, "I remember hearing about Metallica performing with the San Francisco Symphony back in 1999 and I am excited to get a chance to do my thing with the full power of a symphony orchestra."

"Michael and I went back and forth via email compiling a list of songs and we have come up with a list that is a window into my soul and will be full of surprises," Bell continues. "This musical experiment and partnership will hopefully expose the Symphony to a more diverse audience. I hope the conversations the audience will have when they are walking into the theatre will be much different when they are walking out."

"I am a huge fan of the unique vision of W. Kamau Bell," says Oakland Symphony Conductor and Music Director Michael Morgan. "The range of his Playlist from Tears For Fears to Coltrane should make the evening a fascinating journey."

W. Kamau Bell is a critically acclaimed sociopolitical comedian and host of the Emmy Award winning hit CNN docu-series *United Shades of America with W. Kamau Bell*. Kamau's first book, *The Awkward Thoughts of W. Kamau Bell: Tales of a 6' 4", African American, Heterosexual, Cisgender, Left-Leaning, Asthmatic, Black and Proud Blerd, Mama's Boy, Dad, and Stand-Up Comedian*, was released May 2nd, 2017.

Kamau is the host of three podcasts: *Denzel Washington is The Greatest Actor of All Time Period*, *Politically Re-Active*, and *Kamau Right Now!* *Kamau Right Now* also airs live on NPR radio station *KALW*. Kamau's first comedy special, *Semi-Prominent Negro*, was produced and directed by Morgan Spurlock, and the comedy album for the special was released on *Kill Rock Stars*.

For more information, visit [OaklandSymphony.org](http://OaklandSymphony.org), [WKamauBell.com](http://WKamauBell.com), [@wkamaubell](https://twitter.com/wkamaubell) on twitter and instagram.

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