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Wu-Tang Clan's RZA announces free L.A. show for his classical album, 'A Ballet Through Mud'



RZA (Danny Hastings)

By Kailyn Brown
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Wu-Tang Clan mastermind RZA leaped into new territory when he released his first orchestral, “A Ballet Through Mud,” this summer. Now, the hip-hop legend is bringing the album to life with a free live performance on Nov. 4 at the Los Angeles Theater.

The show made its grand ballet debut in 2023 with the help of the [Colorado Symphony](#), which performed on the studio album. Composed and scored by RZA, “A Ballet Through Mud” is billed as a dynamic coming-of-age story that delves into the complexities of life, friendship and personal growth. Featuring characters named for Greek musical scales, the composition traces his own journey from Staten Island project housing to performing at concert halls.

“After two nights of standing ovations, we saw that the music and dances were transformative and inspiring,” says RZA, who produced the soundtracks for films including Quentin Tarantino’s “Kill Bill” volumes 1 and 2. “I’m over-elated for the chance to share ‘A Ballet through Mud’ with the L.A. audience, and I look forward to more audiences getting a chance to experience it.”



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The one-night-only event, which is in partnership with Platoon, 36 Chambers and Classical California KUSC, will be conducted by Oliver Zeffman and performed by USC Thornton School of Music students and alumni, along with a ballet performance by Sorzano Dance Works. Tickets are [available to reserve now](#).

“A Ballet Through Mud” stands as a powerful testament to the transformative potential of collaboration and experimentation,” says choreographer [Yusha-Marie Sorzano](#), who also choreographed the Colorado show. “By merging the distinct realms of concert dance and hip hop, it not only forges a groundbreaking platform but also cultivates entirely new artistic languages.”

[Released on Aug. 30](#) via Platoon and 36 Chambers, “A Ballet Through Mud” was created after RZA found an old notebook during the pandemic filled with lyrics he’d written as a teen.

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"I have been composing my whole life, although I didn't know initially that was what I was doing," RZA says about the 11-track album, which was heavily influenced by his philosophical journey towards Chan Buddhism.

"The inspiration for 'A Ballet Through Mud' comes from my earliest creative output as a teenager, but its themes are universal — love, exploration, and adventure. I hope people use it to score their own lives, to transform a drive to the grocery store or sharing a meal with loved ones into something magical, to be inspired and let their imaginations take them into a different chamber, if only for a moment."

The live show arrives just a few months after RZA and the rest of the Wu-Tang Clan made history as the [first hip-hop act to launch a Las Vegas residency](#).



Kailyn Brown

Kailyn Brown is a lifestyle reporter for the Los Angeles Times. Previously, she worked as a staff writer for Los Angeles Magazine and the Las Vegas Review-Journal. When she's not penning an article, she's DJing at events and parties around the city.