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Yerba Buena Gardens Festival Announces 2018 Season Lineup

100 Free Programs from Sunday, May 6 – Sunday, October 28, 2018

Opening Concert Sunday, May 6
Mariachi Flor de Toloache + Diana Gameros

Season Highlights include:
Innov Gnawa + Book of J
Garba in the Gardens
2nd Annual Yerba Buena Gardens ChoreoFest
Gamelan Sekar Jaya
Betsayda Machado y La Parranda El Clavo + VNote Ensemble
Circus Bella
Isle of Klezbos + Fanfare Zambaleta
SF Uke Jam Summer Uke-Splosion!
San Francisco Mime Troupe
Yosvany Terry Sextet
San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band
AfroSolo in the Gardens
Vân Ánh Võ & The VA’V
Manila Disco Fever
Marcus Shelby Orchestra’s Blackball: The Negro League and the Blues

(San Francisco, CA – March 14, 2018) – The 2018 Yerba Buena Gardens Festival today announced the programming for its 18th Season at Yerba Buena Gardens in downtown San Francisco. The Festival begins on Sunday, May 6 with the first all-female mariachi ensemble Mariachi Flor de Toloache and the Bay Area’s Diana Gameros opening the concert to kick off this year’s over 100 admission-free events.

Yerba Buena Gardens Festival presents free music, theater, circus, dance, poetry, and children’s programs with artists from the Bay Area and around the world. Yerba Buena Gardens is a world-renowned cultural destination for Bay Area residents, families, workers, and tourists and is located between Mission Street and Howard Street and 3rd and 4th Street in downtown San Francisco. For more information visit, www.ybgfestival.org or call 415-543-1718.

Yerba Buena Gardens Festival Executive/Artistic Director Linda Lucero says, “Get inspired! Treat yourself and treat your family, friends, and co-workers to the most diverse performing arts experience in the Bay Area. Yerba Buena Gardens Festival is Free, Outdoors, and Fresh!”

The Yerba Buena Gardens Festival opens on Sunday, May 6 at 1:00pm with the first all-female mariachi ensemble, Mariachi Flor de Toloache, as they have blazed a brilliant pioneering path for women in a traditionally male world of Mexican music. Co-led by violinist and founder Mireya I. Ramos and Shae Fiol on the lute-like vihuela, the New York City-based band earned a 2017 “Best Ranchera Album” Latin Grammy for their album Las Caras Lindas. Flor de Toloache made inroads in indie rock circles supporting The Black Keys’ Dan Auerbach on his stylistically expansive side project, The Arcs. Opening the concert is the enthralling Mexican-born Bay Area-based vocalist, composer, and guitarist Diana Gameros.

The Festival includes the very popular Let’s Go Salsa@Jessie! dance series, the family-friendly Children’s Garden Series, Poetic Tuesdays with Litquake, and Thursday Lunchtime Concerts. Each and every week and weekend, the Festival presents a curated lineup of musicians, dancers, poets, and artists from around the world including the Moroccan trance music of Innov Gnawa with Book of J on May 12, northwestern Indian dance with Garba in the Gardens on May 19, the 2nd Annual Yerba Buena Gardens ChoreoFest on June 2 and 3, the most celebrated gamelan ensemble outside of Bali, Gamelan Sekar Jaya, on June 9, powerhouse Afro-Venezuelan vocalist Betsayda Machado y La Parranda El Clavo with VNote Ensemble on June 16, three performances from Festival favorites Circus Bella on June 22 and 23, the all-women klezmer group direct from New York City Isle of Klezbos with San Francisco’s Fanfare Zambaleta on July 7, Ukulenny and Cynthia Lin’s SF Uke Jam Summer Uke-Splosion! on July 14, Cuban saxophonist Yosvany Terry Sextet on July 28, the 40th Anniversary performance of the San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band on July 29, one of Vietnam’s most
celebrated traditional artists Vân Ánh Võ & The VA’V on August 25, Manila Disco Fever on September 1, and the Yerba Buena Gardens Festival commissioned piece from Marcus Shelby Orchestra - Blackball: The Negro League and the Blues on September 8. The Festival closes with the 18th Annual Halloween Hoopla on Sunday, October 28.

**Festival Programs & Series**

**Let’s Go Salsa@Jessie!,** the open-air salsa dance party in Jessie Square (near the Contemporary Jewish Museum), takes place on the third Thursday of each month from May to September from 6:00pm – 7:30pm. Performers are the ‘New Mambo Retro Salsa’ group Cabanijazz Project on May 17, the nine-piece combo Bululú led by Venezuelan-born percussion master and vocalist Lali Mejia on June 21, the Bay Area’s inventive Cuban band Pellejo Seco on July 19, the U.S. State Department-sponsored Latin Jazz Ambassadors and the Mission’s own Annette A. Aguilar & StringBeans on August 16, and Los Mocosos vocalist and master salsero Manny Martinez y la Rebeledia on September 20.


**Thursday Lunchtime Concert Series** takes place most Thursdays from 12:30pm to 1:30pm and is a favorite destination of downtown workers, shoppers, tourists, and students. This year features the very best of local and international musicians including New World String Project on May 10, Community Music Center Older Adult Choirs on May 17, Dogon Lights on May 24, Kitty Pak on May 31, Latin Jazz Youth Ensemble of San Francisco on June 6, the Swedish Consulate’s Jenny Lind Concert on June 21, Dalia & the Big Violin on June 28, Manning Kassin Burr on July 5, Maikaze Daiko on July 12, Solate on July 19, Soi Development with Mino Yanci on August 2, LINES Dance Center on August 9, Highest Ani on August 16, Faun Fables on August 23, La Paternal on August 30, John Brothers Piano Company on September 6, Daniel Riera: Future Flutist with Electric Ensemble on October 4, and Rice Kings on October 11.

The Yerba Buena Gardens Festival proudly hosts annual cultural celebrations: the 21st Native Contemporary Arts Festival on June 17, the 18th Annual AfroSolo in the Gardens featuring a Tribute to Duke Ellington featuring Denise Perrier and Nina Causley with David Hardiman’s San Francisco All-Star Big Band on August 4, the 25th Annual Pistahan on August 11 and 12, and Brazil in the Gardens: Pragandaia with special guest Margareth Menezes on August 18.

Yerba Buena Gardens Festival presents Poetic Tuesdays on the second Tuesday of each month. Guest curated by Litquake, Poetic Tuesdays run from 12:30pm-1:30pm and feature an array of poets and music.

The Festival also presents three performances of a new one-ring circus from Circus Bella on June 22 and 23. Conceived and directed by Abigail Munn and Joel Baker for Circus Bella, the show includes static trapeze, rope walking, juggling, contortion, unicycle, original clowning, acrobatics, and more. Circus Bella is partnering with Prescott Circus Theatre, a youth development and performing arts program based in West Oakland as a pre-show and opening act. Circus Bella performed at the 2017 Smithsonian Folklife Festival's celebration of Circus Arts.

**Yerba Buena Gardens Festival Commissions**

Continuing a longstanding commitment to commissioning new works, the Yerba Buena Gardens Festival has commissioned the following projects:

**YBG ChoreoFest** is a site-specific dance festival on June 2–3 curated by RAWdance’s Wendy Rein and Ryan T. Smith. The second annual YBG ChoreoFest features nine local companies and leads audiences on an exciting journey throughout the lawns and architecture of Yerba Buena Gardens.

The Festival’s resident composer and bassist, bandleader, and award-winning composer Marcus Shelby leads his Orchestra on September 8 to perform the Yerba Buena Gardens Festival commission Blackball: The Negro League and the Blues. Shelby delves into the glorious, uplifting, and heartbreaking story of African-Americans and the national pastime during the Jim Crow era with “Blackball: The Negro League and the Blues.” An 80-minute composition written for the Marcus Shelby Orchestra, vocalists, and narrator, Blackball is inspired by the character,
love, courage, brilliance, failure, and humor of Negro League players who made far-reaching but often overlooked contributions to American life during the years from Reconstruction through the 1950s.

2018 Yerba Buena Gardens Festival Programming
Visit www.ybgfestival.org or call (415) 543-1718 for more detailed information.

All events are free.
The Yerba Buena Gardens Festival IS NOT part of YBCA.
All programs take place outdoors in Yerba Buena Gardens, off Mission Street between 3rd and 4th Streets, San Francisco.

MAY
Mariachi Flor de Toloache + Diana Gameros, Sunday, May 6, 1:00pm-3:00pm
Poetic Tuesdays with Litquake, Tuesday, May 8, 12:30pm-1:30pm
New World String Project, Thursday, May 10, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Innov Gnawa + Book of J, Saturday, May 12, 1:00pm-3:00pm
Community Music Center Older Adult Choirs, Thursday, May 17, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Let’s Go Salsa@Jessie! Cabanijazz Project, Thursday, May 17, 6:00pm-7:30pm
Garba in the Gardens, Saturday, May 19, 1:00pm-3:00pm
Dogon Lights, Thursday, May 24, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Tom Rigney & Flambeau, Saturday, May 26, 1:00pm-2:30pm
Kitty Pak, Thursday, May 31, 12:30pm-1:30pm

JUNE
2nd Annual Yerba Buena Gardens ChoreoFest, Saturday, June 2 & Sunday, June 3, 1:00pm-2:30pm
Latin Jazz Youth Ensemble of San Francisco, Thursday, June 7, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Gamelan Sekar Jaya, Saturday, June 9, 1:00pm-2:30pm
Poetic Tuesdays with Litquake, Tuesday, June 12, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Betsayda Machado y La Parranda El Clavo + VNote Ensemble, Saturday, June 16, 1:00pm-3:00pm
21st Native Contemporary Arts Festival, Sunday, June 17, 12:00pm-3:00pm
Jenny Lind Concert, Thursday, June 21, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Let’s Go Salsa@Jessie! Bululú, Thursday, June 21, 6:00pm-7:30pm
Circus Bella, Friday, June 22, 12:00pm-1:00pm; Saturday, June 23, 12:00pm-1:00pm & 2:15pm-3:15pm
Dalia & the Big Violin, Thursday, June 28, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Music of the Banned, Saturday, June 30, 1:00pm-3:30pm

JULY
Manning Kassin Burr, Thursday, July 5, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Isle of Klezbos + Fanfare Zambaleta, Saturday, July 7, 1:00pm-3:00pm
Poetic Tuesdays with Litquake, Tuesday, July 10, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Maikaze Daiko, Thursday, July 12, 12:30pm-1:30pm
SF Uke Jam Summer Uke-Splosion!, Saturday, July 14, 1:00pm-3:00pm
San Francisco Mime Troupe, Sunday, July 15, 2:00pm-4:00pm
Solate, Thursday, July 19, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Let’s Go Salsa@Jessie! Pellejo Seco, Thursday, July 19, 6:00pm-7:30pm
Yosvany Terry Sextet, Saturday, July 28, 1:00pm-2:30pm
San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band, Sunday, July 29, 1:00pm-2:30pm

AUGUST
Sol Development w/ Mino Yanci, Thursday, August 2, 12:30pm-1:30pm
AfroSolo in the Gardens, Saturday, August 4, 1:00pm-2:30pm
LINES Dance Center, Thursday, August 9, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Pistahan, Saturday, August 11 & Sunday, August 12, 11:00am-5:00pm
Poetic Tuesdays with Litquake, Tuesday, August 14, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Highest Ani, Thursday, August 16, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Let’s Go Salsa@Jessie! Annette A. Aguilar & StringBeans, Thursday, August 16, 6:00pm-7:30pm
Brazil in the Gardens, Saturday, August 18, 1:00pm-2:30pm
Faun Fables, Thursday, August 23, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Vân Ánh Võ & The VA’V, Saturday, August 25, 1:00pm-2:30pm
La Patronal, Thursday, August 30, 12:30pm-1:30pm
SEPTEMBER
Manila Disco Fever, Saturday, September 1, 1:00pm-2:30pm
John Brothers Piano Company, Thursday, September 6, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Marcus Shelby Orchestra’s Blackball: The Negro League and the Blues, Saturday, September 8, 1:00pm-2:30pm
Poetic Tuesdays with Litquake, Tuesday, September 11, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Let’s Go Salsa@Jessie! Manny Martinez y la Rebeldía, Thursday, September 20, 6:00pm-7:30pm

OCTOBER
Daniel Riera: Future Flutist with Electric Ensemble, Thursday, October 4, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Rice Kings, Thursday, October 11, 12:30pm-1:30pm
Poetic Tuesdays with Litquake, Tuesday, October 16, 12:30pm-1:30pm

CHILDREN’S GARDEN SERIES
Yerba Buena Children’s Garden is located at Howard & Fourth Streets. Two performances each day: 11:00am-11:30am and 12:15pm-12:45pm, except Circus Bella and Halloween Hoopla.

Non Stop Bhangra, Friday, June 1
Māhealani Uchiyama, Friday, June 8
Parangal Dance Company, Friday, June 15
Circus Bella, Friday, June 22, 12:00pm-1:00pm; Saturday, June 23, 12:00pm-1:00pm & 2:15pm-3:15pm, Yerba Buena Gardens Esplanade
Unique Derique, Friday, June 29
Caterpillar Puppets, Friday, July 6
Chelle! & Friends, Friday, July 13
Pi Clowns, Friday, July 20
Alphabet Rockers, Friday, July 27
Red Panda Acrobats, Friday, August 3
Venezuelan Music Project, Friday, August 17
Crosspulsé, Friday, August 24
Ka-Hon, Friday, August 31
18th Annual Halloween Hoopla, Sunday, October 28, Noon-2pm

Yerba Buena Gardens Festival is the proud recipient of the Yerba Buena Community Benefit District’s 2018 Award for Community Placemaking, in recognition of their efforts to attract visitors to the neighborhood to enjoy outstanding arts programming.

Yerba Buena Gardens Festival is made possible through the generosity of the City and County of San Francisco, National Endowment for the Arts, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Yerba Buena Community Benefit District, San Francisco Arts Commission, MAP Fund, Bemard Osher Foundation, Fleishhacker Foundation, Zellerbach Family Foundation, Target, Metreon, The Craft Foundation, Association of Performing Arts Professionals, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, Western Arts Alliance, Southern Exposure, and Generous Individuals who support admission-free performing arts in public spaces.

Program Partners: AfroSolo, American Indian Contemporary Arts, California Brazil Camp, Children's Creativity Museum, Community Music Center, Filipino-American Arts Exposition, Litquake, MoAD, SFJAZZ, Consulate General of Japan, Consulate General of Sweden, Red Poppy Art House, Yerba Buena Community Benefit District, MELA Arts Connect.

Pro-bono contributions: InterContinental Hotel; MJM Management Group; Millennium Partners; Crunch Yerba Buena; Manatt, Phelps & Phillips; The Keystone Social House; SF Giants; Cole Fox Hardware; Trader Joe's; Whole Foods Market SOMA; Bill Martinez; Tom Ehrlich; Amal Bisharat Photography; Jim Watkins Photography; David Tau.

Media sponsors: KPIX, BART, KPFA, KPOO, Where Magazine, 7x7, FunCheapSF, SF Station, PlazaCUBA, Fusicology, All About Jazz, ArtsEarth, International Salsa Magazine, Red Curtain Addict, JazzWest.

Yerba Buena Arts & Events, producer of the Yerba Buena Gardens Festival, is located at 760 Howard Street, San Francisco, CA 94103. Phone (415) 543-1718; website: ybgfestival.org.
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