

**For Immediate Release**

**Yerba Buena Gardens Festival Announces 2026 Season Programming  
Over 100+ Free Performances from May to November in Downtown San Francisco**

**Hermán Olivera y Orquesta Taíno**, opening sets from **Batey Tambó** and **KALW DJ Wonway Posibul**

**Season Opener, Saturday, May 9, 2:00pm (pre-show at 1:00pm)**

**YBGFestival.org**

(San Francisco, CA, April 1, 2026) - Yerba Buena Gardens Festival announces the programming for its 26th season of free outdoor music, theater, circus, dance, poetry and children's programs and events at Yerba Buena Gardens. The Festival's 26th season opens on Saturday, May 9, at 2:00pm with a salsa dance party and a rare Bay Area performance from **Hermán Olivera y Orquesta Taíno** plus Oakland's-own Batey Tambó and KALW DJ Wonway Posibul. Yerba Buena Gardens is located in Downtown San Francisco between 3rd and 4th Streets and Mission and Howard Streets. For more information, visit [YBGFestival.org](http://YBGFestival.org).

In January 2026, Yerba Buena Gardens Festival lost a dear friend and long-time Festival producer in Marcelo Avilés. Over his 20+ year career in the arts, his tireless advocacy for dancers, musicians and artists of all disciplines made an indelible impact on the Bay Area and beyond. His life is one of kindness and goodness, and we will desperately miss his physical presence in the space of our organization. But his joyous spirit will live on in the work that we do. The 2026 Yerba Buena Gardens Festival is dedicated in honor of Marcelo and his lifelong work of supporting artists.

**Yerba Buena Gardens Festival Highlights**

**MAY**

**Hermán Olivera y Orquesta Taíno**, opening sets from **Batey Tambó** and **KALW DJ Wonway Posibul**, Saturday, May 9, 2:00pm

**Hailu Mergia**, opening sets from **Howard Wiley** and **KALW DJ Charlotte K**, Saturday, May 16, 2:00pm (pre-show at 1pm)

**Las Cafeteras**, opening sets from **Discos Resaca Collective** and **KALW DJ Margarita Azucar**, Saturday, May 23, 2:00pm (pre-show at 1pm)

Community Music Center Neighborhood Choirs, Thursday, May 28, 12:30pm-1:30pm

## JUNE

**Poetry Workshop with Nia Pearl**, Saturday, June 6, 12:00pm-1:00pm

**Gamelan Sekar Jaya**, Saturday, June 6, 2:00pm

**Pride in Yerba Buena! feat. Per Sia**, Sunday, June 7, 2:00pm (Vendor market at 1pm)

**All-Native Comedy Night: Good Medicine**, Friday, June 12, 8:00pm (Vendor market and pre-show music at 6:30pm)

**27th Annual Native Contemporary Arts Festival**, Saturday, June 20, Noon

**Circus Bella's AH HA!**, Friday, June 26, Noon & Saturday, June 27, Noon, 2:15pm

## JULY

**Yerba Buena Salsa Nights with Ricardo Lemvo & Makina Loca**, Thursday, July 2, 6:00pm-7:30pm

**SF Uke Jam's Summer Uke-splasion**, Saturday, July 4, Noon

**SF Mime Troupe**, Sunday, July 5, 2:00pm (pre-show music 1:30pm)

**Lady Wray**, opening sets from **Sundra Manning & KALW DJ**, Saturday, July 11, 2:00pm (pre-show at 1pm)

**"Honoring Our Relatives: An MMIP Gathering" Presented by Indigenous Justice**, Sunday July 12, Noon

**YBG ChoreoFest**, Saturday, July 25 & August 1, 2:00pm

## AUGUST

**Color Your Mind Festival**, Sunday, August 2, Noon-5:00pm

**Yerba Buena Salsa Nights: Edgardo Cambón**, Thursday, August 6, 6:00pm-7:30pm

**33rd Annual Pistahan**, Saturday, August 8 & Sunday, August 9, 11:00am-5:00pm

**Helado Negro + Reyna Tropical**, opening sets from **Camilo y Los Cruzers and KALW DJ Wonway Posibul**, Saturday, August 15, 2:00pm (pre-show at 1pm)

## SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER

**Yerba Buena Salsa Nights: Los Calderones**, Thursday, September 3, 6:00pm-7:30pm

**Yerba Buena Movie Night + KALW DJ Eryka**, Saturday, September 5, 7:00pm

**6th Annual African Arts Festival**, Saturday, October 3, 2:00pm

**Follow the Music feat. Oakland Rising**, Saturday, October 10, 2:00pm

**Yerba Buena Gardens Dance Day**, Sunday, October 11, 10:00am-4:00pm

**Indigenous Peoples Day with Jeremy Dutcher**, Monday, October 12, Noon-4:00pm

**Joe Bataan**, opening sets from **MeloDious and KALW DJ Marcus**, Saturday, October 17, 2:00pm (pre-show at 1:00pm)

**Afro-Filipino Jazz Project**, Saturday, October 24, 2:00pm

**26th Annual Halloween Hoopla**, Saturday, October 31, Noon

### NOVEMBER programs to be announced

#### Yerba Buena Gardens Festival Programs & Series

Thursday Lunchtime Concert Series takes place on Thursdays from 12:30pm to 1:30pm and features local and international performers including **Aireene & The Itch** on May 14, **Larry & Joe** on May 21, **Community Music Center Neighborhood Choirs** on May 28, **Camellia Boutros** on June 11, **Destiny Muhammad Trio** on July 2, **Mae Powell** on July 9, **LA GENTE** on July 16, **Iwa Daiko** on July 23, **Women's Audio Mission Presents: Local Sirens** on July 30, **AfroSolo presents Fely Tchaco** on August 6, **Brazil in the Gardens with Alexandre Ribeiro and Allesandro Penezzi** on August 13, **Quinteto Latino** on October 8, and **Richard Howell** on October 15.

Dance has always been a major part of the Yerba Buena Gardens Festival and this season is no different. **Gamelan Sekar Jaya** brings Balinese dance to the Gardens on Saturday, June 6. **YBG ChoreoFest** returns on Saturday, July 25 and Saturday, August 1 for the two-weekend festival of site-specific work that showcases the extravagant creativity, diversity, and vibrancy of the Bay Area dance scene, co-curated by David Herrera, Artistic Director of David Herrera Performance Company, and PUSH Dance Company Artistic Director Raissa Simpson and Associate Artistic Director Ashley Gayle. Participating companies include La Mezcla, Ishami Dance Company, BrasArte, Yeni Lucero, Spearman & Co., Sharp & Fine, PUSH Dance Company and David Herrera Performance Company. Presented by YBG Festival and Rhythm & Motion, **YBG Dance Day** on October 11 transforms the Gardens into an outdoor dance studio where participants can sample dance in a variety of forms and flavors with some of the Bay Area's most talented teachers. Weekly Dance Outdoors workout classes from **Rhythm & Motion** take place every Wednesday at Noon. The popular Salsa Night Series is back on First Thursdays with performances from **Ricardo Lemvo & Makina Loca** on July 2, **Celebrando 40 Años: Edgardo Cambón y Candela** on August 6, and **Los Calderones** on September 3; each performance is preceded by a 30 min beginner salsa class with **Rueda con Ritmo**.

Yerba Buena Gardens Festival Children's Garden Series features interactive performances specially designed for kids and their adults. The Series runs every Friday from June 5 to August 14 with two performances at 11:00am and Noon in the Yerba Buena Children's Garden at Fourth and Howard Streets. The kiddie-popular series

presents **Manilatown Ancestral Ensemble** on June 5, **Coventry & Kaluza** on June 12, **Chelle! & Friends** on June 19, **Mariachi San Francisco** on July 10, **Toishan Lions Dance Troupe** on July 17, **Rene y Familia** on July 24, **Unique Derique** on July 31, **Eddie Madril** on August 7, **Caterpillar Puppets** on August 14, and the **26th Annual Halloween Hoopla** on Saturday, October 31, Noon-3pm.

Literary arts are a key component of this year's Festival and the programming includes **Poetic Tuesdays**, curated by the award-winning poet, writer, and advocate Nia Pearl, featuring a selection of poets and musicians in Jessie Square on May 12, July 14, and August 11. Pearl will also lead one-of-a-kind **Outdoor Poetry Workshops** on June 6 and August 1 that will allow poets of all ages and skill levels to be inspired by the physical environs of Yerba Buena Gardens, followed by an afternoon reading.

Yerba Buena Gardens Festival is made possible through the generosity of the City and County of San Francisco; Yerba Buena Gardens Conservancy; San Francisco Arts Commission; Walter & Elise Haas Fund; William and Flora Hewlett Foundation; National Endowment for the Arts; California Arts Council, The Svane Family Foundation; Yerba Buena Partnership; San Francisco Foundation; The Kenneth Rainin Foundation; San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development; Gerbode Foundation; Americans for the Arts; John and Marcia Goldman Foundation; San Francisco Grants for the Arts; Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University; CreativeWest; The Hall SF Bar & Billiards; The Flow Fund; The Gonzalez-Garcia Fund; The Burciaga Family; Center for Cultural Innovation; and Generous Individuals who support admission-free performing arts in Yerba Buena Gardens.

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