



MEDIA RELEASE

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First Six Performers Announced for 81st National Folk Festival

SALISBURY, MD (March 1, 2022) – Today the National Folk Festival revealed the first six performers who will take the stage in Downtown Salisbury, August 26-28, 2022. The 81st National Folk Festival in 2022 moves to a new weekend in August and marks the final year of the event's residency. In 2023, the festival will transition to the Maryland Folk Festival in Salisbury.

"The past few years have shown us to be prepared for the unexpected and change. After all of that uncertainty, it is reassuring to get to spend one more year among friends in Downtown Salisbury at the 81st National Folk Festival," said Lora Bottinelli, executive director of the National Council for the Traditional Arts (NCTA). "This first announcement provides a small glimpse of the excitement, joy, and dizzying diversity of artistic excellence that will visit the city this August—on our new weekend!"

Approximately 350 artists—musicians, dancers, storytellers, and craftspeople—will take part in the National Folk Festival, with more than 20 different musical groups performing on four outdoor stages throughout Downtown Salisbury.

The National Folk Festival strives to present the nation's very finest traditional artists. Music and dance traditions from every part of the country are represented—blues, rockabilly, gospel, jazz, polka, tamburitza, cowboy, bluegrass, klezmer, R&B, old-time, Cajun, rhythm and blues, mariachi, beatbox, breakin', western swing, honky-tonk, and zydeco, as well as traditional music and dance from Native American, Celtic, Acadian, Middle Eastern, Caribbean, East Asian, Appalachian, Latino, Eastern European, West African, and Pacific Island cultures, among others. The six artists announced today include:

Dale Ann Bradley (Middlesboro, Kentucky) – bluegrass

Raised in a Primitive Baptist family in the mountains of eastern Kentucky, this acclaimed bluegrass singer transports listeners with her shimmering voice and personal songwriting.

E.U. featuring Sugar Bear (Washington, D.C.) – go-go

Led by dynamic front man Gregory "Sugar Bear" Elliott, this legendary group is synonymous with the funky, quintessentially Washington, D.C., dance music known as go-go.

Himalayan Heritage Band (Boston, Massachusetts) – Nepal

This virtuosic ensemble provides a vital link for Boston's growing Nepalese community, bridging their new lives in New England with their homeland high in the Himalayas.

Rogelio Ortiz with Eduardo Betancourt (Laurel, Maryland) – *música llanera*

Lively, fiery, and heartfelt tradition from Colombia and Venezuela has a champion in this singer known as *el caballero del canto nacional* ("the gentleman of the national song").

Walter "Wolfman" Washington & the Roadmasters (New Orleans, Louisiana) – funk and R&B

The Crescent City's preeminent funk master is another in that city's long line of singular musical personalities, adding touches of soul and jazz to his distinctive rhythm and blues sound.

Wylie & the Wild West (Conrad, Montana) – cowboy and western music

This world-class yodeler and cowboy singer still lives the life of a working rancher and cutting-horse champion—and is one of America's most popular western entertainers.

Over a dozen people of different backgrounds, and with a deep knowledge of music and art forms, came together from across Delmarva to serve as the local Musical Programming Advisory Committee. This committee's role is to consider—and help the NCTA select—the artists who will perform at the National Folk Festival each year. To learn more about these artists and their stories, please visit <https://nationalfolkfestival.com/performers/>.

The National Folk Festival will feature individual artists on Facebook (facebook.com/NFFMaryland), Twitter (twitter.com/NFFMaryland), and Instagram (Instagram.com/nffmaryland) throughout the next month.

More performers will be announced as they are confirmed.

Performer photos, bios, and audio clips may be downloaded here: <https://bit.ly/81nff-artists-030122>

Photo credits should be listed and can be found in image file names.

The National Folk Festival will provide safety measures that comply with local, state, and federal guidelines. Details will be updated on the festival website.

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About the National Folk Festival

Since it was first presented in St. Louis in 1934, the National Folk Festival, the NCTA's flagship event, has celebrated the roots, richness and variety of American culture. Championed in its early years by Eleanor Roosevelt, it was the first event of national stature to present the arts of many nations, races, and languages on equal footing. It was also the first to present to the public musical forms such as the blues, Cajun music, polka, Tex-Mex conjunto, Peking Opera, and many others. Today, the National is an exuberant traveling festival, produced by the NCTA in partnership with communities around the country, that embraces the diverse cultural expressions that define us as a people in the 21st century. <http://www.nationalfolkfestival.com/>

About the National Council for the Traditional Arts (NCTA)

A leading non-profit in the field, the National Council for the Traditional Arts (NCTA) is dedicated to the presentation and documentation of folk and traditional arts in the U.S. Stressing excellence and authenticity, the NCTA presents the nation's finest traditional artists in major festivals, tours, concerts, workshops, demonstrations, exhibitions, media productions, school programs, cross-cultural exchanges, and other activities. It works in partnership with American communities to establish new, sustainable traditional arts events that deliver lasting social, cultural, and economic benefits. Over 7,000 hours of the NCTA's archival audio recordings dating from the 1930s are permanently housed at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. The NCTA champions the interests of folk and traditional artists and organizations in the arena of public policy. <http://ncta-usa.org/>

About the City of Salisbury, Maryland

Founded in 1732, Salisbury is the county seat of Wicomico County, a place where John Smith touched land in 1608 during his exploration of the Chesapeake Bay. Situated on Maryland's historic Eastern Shore at the crossroads of the Delmarva Peninsula, Salisbury is now one of the region's largest cities, and serves as the capital of the Eastern Shore, a rural area defined by its agricultural and maritime traditions, landscapes, and industries. The Chesapeake Bay is central to this distinctive identity. Though a relatively small city, Salisbury is the geographic and economic hub of one of the nation's fastest-growing Metropolitan Statistical Areas. Led by a dynamic mayor, the City of Salisbury is working to build its reputation as an arts and culture destination and is aligning its downtown development and revitalization efforts with the arts. Salisbury believes hosting the National Folk Festival is the perfect catalyst to further a cultural renaissance and urban renewal. <https://salisbury.md/>