

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Maryland Folk Festival announces Maryland Traditions Folklife Stage performers, Maryland State Arts Council's support of event**

**SALISBURY, Md.** – Experience the rich, living traditions of Maryland at the Maryland Traditions Folklife Area and Stage during this year's Maryland Folk Festival, set for Sept. 22-24 in Downtown Salisbury.

Performances will range from traditional music to storytelling, spoken word and more.

The Maryland State Arts Council and Maryland Traditions, the state's traditional arts program, have generously sponsored this area with a \$150,000 contribution.

"The City of Salisbury has always been supportive of the folk and traditional arts, and its festival activities over the past five years have put it on the map in a national context," said Chad Buterbaugh, Maryland State Arts Council deputy director. "It's wonderful to see the momentum carrying forward with this year's inaugural Maryland Folk Festival, an event that will value both the local and national music, dance, stories, crafts, and foods that make up our country's living cultural traditions."

The City of Salisbury will host the inaugural Maryland Folk Festival after five years as the host of the National Folk Festival, which was produced in collaboration with the National Council for the Traditional Arts.

Approximately 300 artists—musicians, dancers, storytellers, and craftspeople—will take part in the event, with more than 30 different musical groups performing on four outdoor stages throughout Downtown Salisbury. The Maryland Folk Festival strives to present the nation's finest traditional artists.

The artists announced today for the Maryland Traditions Folklife Stage include:

**Hurlock Community Mass Choir/Water's Edge (Hurlock and Oxford, Maryland) - gospel**

The Hurlock Community Mass Choir is directed by Minister Rayshawn Rich-Vines and includes members from across the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Delaware. This passionate ensemble delivers celestial melodies that uplift spirits and ignite faith.

**Gerdan (Silver Spring, Maryland & Fairfax, Virginia) – World Music/Ukrainian Traditional**

Founded by Ukrainian professional duo Solomia Gorokhivska and Andrei Pidkivka, Gerdan ensemble brings the fire and the edge of melodic ideas and rhythms that capture the listener. Musicians of Gerdan reveal their passion for traditional Ukrainian music in their artistic expression to build cultural bridges in time and distance.

**Lydia and Emily Martin (Boys, Maryland) – Old-time and Irish traditional music**

The Martin sisters of Boys, Maryland – Lydia and Emily – present traditional Irish and old-time repertoire and have performed on both sides of the Atlantic. Emily's daughter, Elora Paul-Martin, is a third-generation member of the Martin Family Band.

**Stoop Stories (Baltimore, Maryland) - storytelling**

“The Stoop” is a Baltimore-based live show and podcast that features everyday people sharing the extraordinary true tales of their lives. The mission of “The Stoop” is to empower individuals and build community through the sharing of personal stories. Since its founding in 2006, “The Stoop” has featured the tales of more than 4,000 people onstage. The podcast is featured on WYPR 88.1 FM.

**Noah Mitchel (Baltimore, Maryland) - Yiddish folk music**

Noah Mitchel is a vocalist, theater performer, Yiddish folk music performer, and culture worker living in Baltimore. He also leads communal song workshops, gives one-on-one coaching to singers, and hosts open mics, cabarets and programs. He currently works at the Jewish Museum of Maryland and does various arts and culture activities at Hinenu: The Baltimore Justice Shtiebl.

**Folk 'Em All (Frostburg, Maryland) - bluegrass / American roots**

Folk 'Em All Trio is a fun, exciting and energetic string trio that covers a vast array of classic American roots music, from bluegrass to western swing, Jimmy Cliff to BB King and original tunes. The group occasionally doubles as longtime Jerry Garcia/David Grisman collaborator Joe Craven’s back-up band, performing together as Joe Craven and the Y’allterations.

**DewMore Baltimore, Sista Big and Amber Green (Baltimore, Pocomoke City and Salisbury, Maryland) - spoken word**

Poets Sista Big, Amber Green, and members of the DewMore Baltimore Youth Poetry Team use poetry as a platform for civic engagement and as a tool to build strong young people who become leaders in their community.

**UMES Fraternities & Sororities (Princess Anne, Maryland) - step dance / university Greek life**

Black fraternities and sororities predominantly recruit Black college students and provide a network that includes both undergraduate and alumni members. These organizations were typically founded by Black undergraduate students, faculty, leaders and institutions.

**Somapa Thai Dance Company (Takoma Park, Maryland) - Traditional Thai music and dance**

Somapa Thai Dance Company, a premier Thai dance and music company based in the Washington, D.C. area, presents traditional Thai music and dances from Thailand. The group has a mission to introduce Thai arts and culture to the public, promote diversity, and encourage understanding and appreciation of the arts.

**Pablo Regis (College Park, Maryland) - Brazilian samba and choro**

Pablo Regis is a charismatic Brazilian singer and cavaco (Brazilian uke) player based in the College Park area of Maryland.

Maryland Traditions Folklife Area demonstrators will be announced soon.

The Maryland Folk Festival will feature individual artists on Facebook ([facebook.com/MDFolkFestival](https://www.facebook.com/MDFolkFestival)) and Instagram ([instagram.com/mdfolkfestival/](https://www.instagram.com/mdfolkfestival/)) throughout the next month. More performers will be announced as they are confirmed.

To learn more about these artists and their stories, please visit <https://www.mdfolkfest.com/maryland-folklife/>.

Performer photos, bios and audio clips may be downloaded here: <https://bit.ly/23mdff-artist-bios>. Photo credits should be listed and can be found in image file names.

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### **About the Maryland Folk Festival**

After five years as the host of the National Folk Festival, produced in collaboration with the National Council for the Traditional Arts (NCTA), the City of Salisbury's Arts, Business, and Culture Department is proud to launch its own legacy festival. In 2023, the City of Salisbury, Maryland will take center stage with the Maryland Folk Festival from Sept. 22-24.

This large-scale, multi-day outdoor event celebrates the roots, richness and variety of American culture. It features hundreds of the nation's finest musicians, dancers, craftspeople and other keepers of culture in performances, workshops, and demonstrations, plus children's activities, non-stop participatory dancing, storytelling, and more. <https://mdfolkfest.com/>

### **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, bringing him in contact with the Wighcocomoco or Wicomico, the Nause, the Kusk'arawack, and the Nantaquack or Nanticoke tribes who had lived in the region for several millennia. 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. 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 Maryland Folk Festival is the perfect catalyst to further a cultural renaissance and urban renewal. <https://salisbury.md/>

### **ABCD Events**

The Arts, Business, & Culture Department is responsible for fostering Salisbury's thriving economic climate through supporting business, expanding economic opportunity, promoting artistic expression, hosting unique experiences, and maintaining regional attractions such as the Salisbury Zoo and Poplar Hill Mansion. By producing signature events, facilitating business incentives, and collaborating with stakeholders, this department strives to make Salisbury a place where arts, business, and culture intersect and flourish. <https://salisbury.md/departments/arts-business-culture>