

THE FREIGHT

NEWS RELEASE

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The Freight's Legacy Festival Returns to Honor Lalo Guerrero, "The Father of Chicano Music" this November

BERKELEY, CA (July 16, 2026) — Berkeley arts institution The Freight (formerly Freight & Salvage) announces the **Lalo Guerrero Legacy Festival**, the second annual event in the organization's series which seeks to honor under-recognized American musical legends whose contributions have inspired countless other artists. Co-curated by The Freight's Director of Programming PC Muñoz and recording artist Mark Guerrero (Lalo Guerrero's son), this festival features 10 events in two cities across five days from September through November, culminating in concerts on **Friday, November 6 and Saturday, November 7** featuring modern musical icons influenced by Lalo's legacy: La Doña, the Rockin' Jalapeño Band, Mark Guerrero, and Jerry Salas of El Chicano, with emcee Chuy Varela.

Both concerts will be at 8pm and free daytime events will take place all day on Saturday, November 7th. These can be booked at thefreight.org/lalo.

The original Freight Legacy Festival in 2024 for DeFord Bailey led to the landmark honor of the Grand Ole Opry choosing to continue honoring Bailey onstage in 2025, in collaboration with Dom Flemons, our 2024 festival co-curator. This national affirmation of The Freight's mission to bring overdue recognition to artists whose influence has shaped American music has led this series to becoming an annual event at the Freight.

The Freight's Executive Director Clayton Shelvin shares "our vision for The Freight is rooted in the belief that global roots music belongs to everyone because it has always been shaped by everyone. Elevating the stories of musicians of color whose influence has not been widely recognized is essential to honoring the truth of our shared musical heritage. By bringing these voices to the forefront, we're not only preserving history—we're inspiring new audiences, deepening our understanding of one another, and ensuring that The Freight remains a place where every story has the opportunity to be heard. This festival brings these historic figures back to life through music and storytelling."

Eduardo "Lalo" Guerrero (1916–2005) was a Mexican-American artist with roots in Arizona and California who recorded more than 700 compositions beginning in 1939 and has been called "The Father of Chicano Music." His versatility as a songwriter led to remarkable contributions with songs spanning salsa, norteña, banda, rancheras, boleros, corridos, cumbias, mambos, cha cha chas, swing, rock & roll, and blues, along with children's music, comedy songs, and parodies. An accomplished singer and guitarist, his songs have been recorded by legendary vocalists such as Lucha Reyes, Lola Beltrán, Trío Los Panchos, Javier Solís, and José

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Feliciano, and his Pachuco music of the late 1940s and early 1950s provided the soundtrack to Luis Valdez's celebrated play and film "Zoot Suit."

In 1991, he received the nation's highest honor in the folk and traditional arts, the NEA National Heritage Fellowship. His other recognitions include being declared a National Folk Treasure by the Smithsonian Institution, a Nosotros Lifetime Achievement Award, and the National Medal of Arts, presented by President Clinton.

"Our Legacy Festival series intentionally illuminates the work of folk/roots artists who have made significant contributions to their specific musical communities, but who also remain somewhat underheralded in the mainstream" said PC Muñoz, The Freight's Director of Programming. "Lalo Guerrero is a singular artist in the world of American song: a multi-genre, bilingual artist with deep community roots who also happened to earn the most prestigious folk and traditional arts award in the nation, the NEA National Heritage Fellowship. It's been an honor working with Lalo's son Mark Guerrero, a gifted songwriter/recording artist in his own right, to put together the various elements of this festival."

Legacy Festival Concerts at The Freight (2020 Addison Street, Berkeley):

Friday, November 6, 2026 | 8:00PM

Rockin' Jalapeño Band, Mark Guerrero, special guest Jerry Salas of El Chicano. Emcee: Chuy Varela

Saturday, November 7, 2026 | 8:00PM

La Doña, Mark Guerrero, special guest Jerry Salas of El Chicano. Emcee: Chuy Varela

Tickets are \$44 (includes all fees) per show or \$75 for a 2-Day Pass. These can be booked at thefreight.org/lalo or by calling (510) 644-2020.

FREE Satellite Events Include:

Saturday, September 5, 11:00AM PST (Online): Dom Flemons' Mexican-American Roots and Celebration of Lalo Guerrero

Roots music legend Dom Flemons and wife/partner Vania Kinard explore Dom's Chicano roots, the music of the American Southwest, and Lalo Guerrero's long-enduring influence.

Thursday, October 8, 7:00PM, Medicine for Nightmares (3036 24th St., San Francisco): Poetic Reimaginings of Lalo Guerrero Songs

Poets Josiah Alderete, soledad con carne, Louis "El Panadero" Gutierrez, and Marisol Cadena reimagine the songs of Lalo Guerrero. Curated by Josiah Alderete.

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Saturday, October 17, 7:00PM, Medicine for Nightmares (3036 24th St., San Francisco): Lalo Guerrero Platica y Vinyl Listening Party with Chuy Varela

Longtime KCSM Music Director Chuy Varela leads a *platica* and listening party focusing on the music of Lalo Guerrero. Curated by Josiah Alderete.

FREE Daytime Festival Events on Saturday, November 7 at The Freight:

11AM: Yvonne Martinez – Author/activist Yvonne Martinez presents a stirring monologue about Southern California Chicano culture and growing up in East LA, near Lalo Guerrero's nightclub.

12PM: Emcee Infinite – San Francisco hip-hop artist/actor/theater phenom Emcee Infinite offers a Pachuco-flavored hip-hop set with musical nods to Lalo Guerrero and other Chicano legends.

1PM: Christian O. Paiz – Author/UC Berkeley professor Christian O. Paiz leads a deep dive into his book **The Strikers of Coachella: A Rank-and-File History of the UFW Movement** as well as Lalo Guerrero's connection to the movement and the Coachella valley.

2PM: Miguel Govea and Susan Peña – Longtime music educators Miguel Govea and Susan Peña lead an interactive workshop exploring the diasporic African influence on Chicano music-making and Lalo Guerrero's work.

3PM: Mark Guerrero and PC Muñoz – The Freight's Director of Programming PC Muñoz interviews Lalo Guerrero's son, recording artist and festival co-curator Mark Guerrero, about Mark's decades-long career, creative relationship with his father, Chicano music historian work, and putting together the festival.

Also available in the Freight lobby on Saturday, November 7 between 11:00AM and 4:00PM: a participatory Lalo Guerrero ofrenda, a marigold-making station, and free snacks while they last.

Tickets for the November 6 and 7 concerts, along with full festival information, are available at thefreight.org. All satellite and daytime festival events are free.

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About The Freight

The Freight has been a beloved Berkeley institution since 1968, when it opened its doors as an 87-seat coffee house on San Pablo Avenue. Now based in the heart of Downtown Berkeley, we welcome audiences and artists from around the world to a venue renowned for its world-class sound, intimate atmosphere, and rich musical legacy. The Freight is a vital home for music with

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deep roots from around the world that celebrates cultures, connects communities, and inspires creativity.

About Mark Guerrero

Recording artist Mark Guerrero began playing in rock & roll bands at age 12. He led the popular East Los Angeles band Mark & the Escorts, who recorded two singles for GNP Crescendo Records. Mark has also recorded as a solo artist for Ode Records (produced by Rock & Roll Hall of Famer Lou Adler), Capitol Records, and for A&M Records with his group, Tango. His songs have been recorded by artists such as Herb Alpert, Trini Lopez, Chan Romero, and Lalo Guerrero, and his historic Chicano pride song "I'm Brown" was featured in the Grammy Museum in 2008 in the exhibit "Songs of Conscience, Sounds of Freedom."

Mark has performed with Redbone, Eric Burdon, El Chicano, Tierra, Lalo Guerrero, and many others. He has performed in venues such as the Cavern in Liverpool, England, Cite de la Musique in Paris, France, and the Roxy Theater in Hollywood. As a Chicano and East L.A. music historian, Mark has written over a hundred articles, hosts a radio podcast, been a guest on radio and television programs, consulted for museums, and lectured at universities.

About La Doña

La Doña is a solo artist, music educator, activist and cultural worker from San Francisco, CA. La Doña, born Cecilia Cassandra Peña-Govea began her career at age seven playing trumpet, strings and percussion in her family's conjunto. She is a student, teacher and preservationist of Latinx traditional arts like corrido, bolero, cumbia, and mariachi. In her compositions, she combines these ancestral traditions with contemporary diasporic musics like reggaeton, hip-hop and jazz. La Doña's live performances are grounded in ceremony and social mobilization; she and her audiences sing, dance, cry and chant together, for collective healing and political action.

La Doña's roles as a teaching artist within San Francisco and Oakland Unified School Districts via SFJazz and Community Music Center inspire and inform her work as a composer, arranger, and band-leader. As a young, queer Latina, La Doña is concerned with representing stories not often told in the mainstream music industry, and providing amplification and audience to other young artists of color.

La Doña was chosen as one of YouTube's Foundry Artists (2019) and she has performed at Lollapalooza and Outside Lands music festivals. Her song, "Quién Me La Paga" was the first of the New York Times Magazine's "19 Songs that Matter Now," for 2020, and her EPs, Algo Nuevo and Can't Eat Clout have been selected by the San Francisco Chronicle as two of the best albums of 2020 and 2023, respectively. La Doña was awarded the San Francisco Arts Commission Individual Artists Grant in 2021 and was the recipient of the YBCA's Guaranteed Income Program in 2022. La Doña is a 2023-2024 apprentice in zapateado with the California Alliance for Traditional Arts, and recipient of the East Bay Fund for Artists Grant '23. She is releasing her debut album in Summer of 2024 through her fellowship with the California Arts Council's California Creative Corp.

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About Rockin' Jalapeño Band

The Rockin' Jalapeño Band proudly continues the musical vision of its founder, José "Dr. Loco" Cuéllar, whose groundbreaking work helped define a uniquely Chicano sound that blended music, culture, and social consciousness.

Founded by Dr. Loco in the late 1980s, the Rockin' Jalapeño Band was created to celebrate the rich diversity of Chicano music and culture. By fusing rock, traditional Mexican music, Caribbean rhythms, and R&B, the band developed an energetic and unmistakable style that reflected the many cultural influences of the Chicano experience. The band includes Chris Gonzalez Clarke, Charlie Montoya, Chuy Cobarrubias, Brian Andres, Mark Rendon and Camilo Landau in the rhythm section as well as Charly Gurke, Luke Kirley and Glenn Appel on the horns.

More than a musician, Dr. Loco was an educator, cultural advocate, and activist whose songs championed social justice, community, and cultural pride. His lyrics embodied a lifelong commitment to the Chicano movement, inspiring audiences through music that entertained while delivering a powerful message.

Today, the Rockin' Jalapeño Band has reunited to honor Dr. Loco's extraordinary legacy and ensure that his music continues to resonate with audiences of all generations. Through dynamic live performances, the band celebrates the spirit, joy, and purpose that defined Dr. Loco's career while introducing his timeless music to new listeners.

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The Freight's Lalo Guerrero Legacy Festival FACT SHEET

WHAT: The Lalo Guerrero Legacy Festival — 10 events in two cities across five days

WHERE: The Freight, 2020 Addison Street, Berkeley, CA; Medicine for Nightmares, 3036 24th St., San Francisco, CA; and online

WHEN:

Concerts: Friday & Saturday, November 6 & 7 at 8:00 PM

Nov 6th: Rockin' Jalapeño Band and Mark Guerrero with Jerry Salas of El Chicano

Nov 7th: La Doña and Mark Guerrero with Jerry Salas of El Chicano

Satellite events: Saturday, September 5, Thursday, October 8, and Saturday, October 17

Free daytime events: Saturday, November 7, 11:00 AM–4:00 PM

COST: Concert tickets are \$44 (includes all fees) per show or \$75 for a 2-Day Pass; all satellite and daytime events FREE

LEARN MORE: thefreight.org