

The 2nd Annual Jersey City Latin Jazz Festival Returns on Friday, September 5th and Saturday, September 6th

Two days of free music celebrating Latin Jazz and Salsa from the New York Area. Special tributes to Eddie Palmieri and John "Dandy" Rodriguez.

JERSEY CITY, NJ, UNITED STATES, August 25, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Jersey City Latin Jazz Festival to honor the passing of two musical legends

[Riverview Jazz](#), the Jersey City-based non-profit, has just announced the lineup for the 2nd annual Jersey City Latin Jazz Festival. The event will feature 10 bands, including tributes to [Eddie Palmieri](#) and [John "Dandy" Rodriguez](#),

who include many past members of their groups. The event will take place at Exchange Place Plaza on the Hudson River waterfront on Friday, September 5 from 6 pm to 10 pm and Saturday, September 6 from 2 pm to 10 pm. The festival is free to the public and is presented by Exchange Place Alliance.

“

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Bryan Beninghove



Drummer Bobby Sanabria will be performing with Ascension at the Jersey City Latin Jazz Festival

“This year is incredibly special. We will be honoring two absolute titans of Afro-Cuban music that has left an indelible mark not only on our festival, but a worldwide influence on music in general”, says festival director Bryan Beninghove. “So many musicians in our community have played, recorded, or have been directly influenced by Eddie Palmieri and Dandy Rodriguez. It’s going to be a real honor to have all these members of their bands there to celebrate their lifetimes of music.”

On Friday, September 5, three bands will perform on the

RWJ Barnabas Plaza stage. They include the horn-driven septet Dave Schumacher & Cubeye (6 pm), bassist Alex "Apolo" Ayala & the Bámbula Project (7 pm), and Doug Beavers' "Titanes del Trombón" Tribute to John "Dandy" Rodriguez (8 pm). The early afternoon of Saturday, September 6, will have plenty of kids' activities, including performances by the United Children's Music Project Latin Jazz Ensemble (2 pm) and the WBGO Music for Kids series featuring trombonist Juanga Lakunza's History of the Clave (3 pm). At 4 pm, the great bassist John Benitez (also a Palmieri alum) will lead his ensemble, followed by the hard-hitting percussionist Chembo Corniel's Quintet (5 pm). At 6 pm, the 7-time Grammy nominee, percussionist, and WBGO on-air personality Bobby Sanabria will perform with his group Ascension, followed by the Cuban-born pianist/vocalist and Jersey City resident Melvis Santa (7 pm), fresh off her tour with the iconic saxophonist Kenny Garrett. Closing out the festival will be the Palmieri Experience at 8 pm, presented by Luques Curtis, and will feature many members of the late great maestro's band.

Eddie Palmieri, the dynamic musical innovator who shaped Latin music perhaps more than any other artist, passed away on August 6, 2025. He was a fiery performer who fused jazz, R&B, and traditional Latin music to create the sounds that ushered in the heyday of the Salsa era. Palmieri performed at the 2023 Jersey City Jazz Festival with Sonido Solar. Bassist Luques Curtis had been performing with Palmieri for years and will be leading the ensemble for the tribute.



Alex "Apolo" Ayala and the Bambula Project will perform at the Jersey City Latin Jazz Festival on Friday, September 5th

EXCHANGE PLACE ALLIANCE
presents

2025

JERSEY CITY
Latin
JAZZ FESTIVAL

**THE PALMIERI
EXPERIENCE**
presented by Luques Curtis

**SATURDAY
SEPT 6 @8PM**
**RWJBARNABAS
PLAZA STAGE**

jerseycitylatinjazzfestival.com

The Palmieri Experience, a tribute to the late Eddie Palmieri, will perform at the Jersey City Latin Jazz Festival on Saturday, September 6th at 8 PM

“Everyone in this group has played a vital role in Eddie Palmieri’s legacy,” says Curtis. “He has profoundly shaped each of our careers, giving us all the chance to grow and shine. We’re deeply grateful for the opportunity to present this tribute and honor the greatest bandleader, mentor, and friend anyone could ask for.”

John “Dandy” Rodriguez was one of the world’s leading percussionists, having long played bongo with the likes of Tito Puente, Willie Bobo, Johnny Pacheco, Celia Cruz, and many more. Dandy had performed annually at Riverview Jazz events since 2016 and often with trombonist and Circle 9 record label founder Doug Beavers.

“I met Johnny Rodriguez serendipitously back in 2000 when I was called to arrange for and ultimately perform with Eddie Palmieri’s La Perfecta II band, where he was playing bongos,” recalls Beavers. “What blows my mind now in 2025 is that I was sitting in the midst of so much legacy and history from these two combined icons of salsa music and Latin Jazz – together they performed with all of the founders: Tito Puente, Machito, Tito Rodriguez, Celia Cruz, Cachao, Johnny Pacheco, Típica ‘73...the list goes on and on.”

Beavers continues, “The tradition lives on with all of us who had the opportunity (and luck) to learn from both of these legends of our music. Most interestingly – or perhaps by fate – on September 5th and 6th, we disciples of both Eddie and Johnny will find ourselves in the unique position to celebrate both of these icons here, right here at Jersey City Latin Jazz Festival.” The outdoor festival will feature a Community Zone presented by the Jersey City Free Public Library that will have arts & crafts and programming for kids. Free dance classes given by Salsa Fever on2 will be provided throughout the day on the J. Owen Grundy pier. There will also be a bar, food trucks, and local vendors.

This year’s event is presented once again by Exchange Place Alliance and produced by Riverview Jazz. Other community and corporate partners include RWJ Barnabas Health, the Jersey City Free Public Library, WBGO, NJ PBS, the City of Jersey City, Hudson County, Fifteen, and many more. Funding is also made possible in part through the Jersey City Arts & Cultural Trust Fund, the Hudson County LAP grant, and the Princeton Foundation grant. The official lodging partner is the Hyatt House.

For a full schedule and tickets, visit www.jerseycitylatinjazzfestival.com.

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