

Artists Announced for for 39th edition of the Lowell Folk Festival July 24-26

A stunning sweep of living traditions,- performers playing traditional music from Asia, Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean, and right across North America.

LOWELL, MA, UNITED STATES, June 8, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Lowell Folk Festival](#) announced additional artists to its lineup of performers from around the world, showcasing the rich tapestry of traditional music set to take place from July 24-26 in downtown Lowell, Massachusetts. This year marks the 39th edition of one of America's most popular free music festivals, and will feature a broad array of exceptional talent, including artists both rooted in North American traditional music and dance as well as world class performers sharing their rich traditions from Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

Members of Alash are among the most exciting artists carrying on one of the world's oldest and most striking vocal traditions, xöömei (throat singing) from Tuva, a tiny republic in Central Asia, situated between Siberia and Mongolia. Throat-singing is a unique style of overtone singing in which a single singer produces two, three, or even four notes of different pitches simultaneously—a continuous low drone, and harmonic tones several octaves higher which are shaped into a melody. The music is colored with sounds embedded in the history of the Tuvan people, who, for centuries, were nomadic herdsman. Largely unknown beyond Tuva until the 1990s, Tuvan throat-singing expanded western conceptions of the capacities of the human voice and quickly became a worldwide sensation.

Authentic Unlimited may be a new star in the bluegrass firmament, but they carry on a storied legacy. The ensemble was founded by banjo player Eli Johnston, fiddler Stephen Burwell, and



The 2026 Lowell Folk Festival Opens Friday July 24 with the traditional Parade of Flags culminating at Boarding House Park

bassist Jerry Cole, three of the core members of the celebrated band Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver after the legendary bandleader announced his retirement in 2021. “We didn’t have to think about if we wanted to continue on, we just knew we had a good team and relationship with each other, so that’s what we’d do,” says Burwell. Along with three-time International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) Mandolin Player of the Year, Jesse Brock, and up-and-coming guitarist and singer Colton Baker, formerly of Illrd Tyme Out, the group has been busy since their inception with five albums, one Grammy nomination, and IBMA awards for Song of the Year, Best New Artist of the Year, Music Video of the Year, and three consecutive awards of Vocal Group of the Year starting in 2023.



Catherine Russell, considered one of the great interpreters of the Great American Songbook

“

Every year, the free Lowell Folk Festival shows that a weekend-long immersion in traditional music, dance, and food can be as entertaining as it is enriching.”

Boston Globe

A native New Yorker born into jazz royalty, Catherine Russell is the daughter of Luis Russell, Louis Armstrong’s longtime musical director, and Carline Ray, a trailblazing vocalist, bassist, and educator. Drawing on this rich legacy while forging her own path, Catherine has become one of today’s most captivating interpreters of the Great American Songbook. She established herself as an in-demand backup and session singer, touring and recording over 200 albums alongside such greats as David Bowie, Cyndi Lauper, Paul Simon, Roseanne Cash, and many

more. But standing twenty feet from stardom wasn’t enough and Russell finally stepped into the spotlight in 2006, at the age of 50, with her debut solo album, *Cat*, which was a critical success, garnering Russell rave reviews earning her comparisons to Dinah Washington. *Cat*’s success paved the way for a successful solo career that has spanned eight albums so far, including her most recent release, *Send for Me* (2022).

The Chankas of Perú carry on the legendary danza de las tijeras (scissors dance), an ancient, highly acrobatic indigenous ritual dance from the southern Andes of Peru. This dance is a powerful symbol of the perseverance of Andean traditions in the modern world, recognized by UNESCO as an expression of the “Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.” The name “scissors dance” refers to a pair of polished iron rods resembling scissor blades that are held in the dancer’s right hand and provide a percussive accompaniment to the intricate and acrobatic

steps. Performing in dazzling, carnivalesque embroidered outfits, scissors dancers (called danzaq in the Quechua language) are ritual specialists whose traditional role was to bring balance to their community by mediating between the human, natural, and spiritual worlds. As Peru transformed into a mostly urban society, the scissors dance also took root in migrant communities in Lima. Dancer Walter Velille learned the tradition from his father while growing up in Lima and travelled the world performing before settling in Port Chester, New York, in 2005. There, in the large Peruvian community of Westchester County, he and fellow dancer Luis Aguilar formed The Chankas of Peru. The other members of this celebrated cuadrilla are Alejandro Velasques and Jorge Gonzales, playing harp and fiddle respectively, dancer Jorge Astuyauri, and Carlos Ferndandes on guitar and quena, a small wooden flute from the Andes.

The New Hampshire-based Eastern Sound Orchestra is one of New England's most popular and enduring Polish polka ensembles. For over 50 years they have been entertaining audiences from Montreal to Miami with their exuberant and high energy

East Coast style music. All of the members of Eastern Sound Orchestra grew up with polka, and three of them sing in Polish. They are drummer and founding member, John Sobczak, Tony Malionek on accordion and keys, Lee Elmowitz on trumpet, Mike Petrishen on clarinet, saxophone, and fiddle, with Peter Sylvester on bass and fiddle. Polka originated in the 1830s and 1850s from lively couple dances in Eastern Europe. As Eastern European immigrants brought the music with them to the American Midwest in the late 1800s, varied ethnic and regional styles developed; though named for the country and culture of origin, the musical styles often differed markedly from their respective old world traditions. Polish American polka split into two regional



The Chankas of Perú perform the acrobatic Andean scissors dance recognized by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.



Geno Delafosse & French Rockin' Boogie is one of the nation's leading zydeco bands in the country

styles: East Coast and Chicago. East Coast style developed in the 1940s, a decade earlier than Chicago, and is faster than its counterpart and typically boasts a larger reed and horn section.

One of the nation's leading performers of zydeco, Geno Delafosse heats up clubs and honky-tonks throughout Louisiana every weekend with this irresistible dance music—that is, when “The Creole Cowboy” is not busy operating his Double D Ranch in Eunice. For Geno Delafosse, life is divided equally between being a cowboy at home and a world-class zydeco accordionist on stage leading

Geno Delafosse & French Rockin’ Boogie. Hailing from the small prairie town of Eunice, LA, Delafosse grew up on his father’s farm and still makes his home there today, breeding cattle and raising quarter horses. “I’m just a country boy, quiet,” he says, “but my other job takes me in front of a lot of people.” Indeed, with his charismatic Louisiana cowboy spirit and lively presentation, he’s become one of zydeco’s international stars.

The roots of Indian classical music go back millennia, and yet this tradition remains vibrant because artists never stop seeking ways to perfect its sound. Celebrated Boston-based musicians Kunal Gunjal and Amit Kavthekar bring a duo to the Lowell Folk Festival which features the tabla, a percussion instrument long central to the tradition, and the santoor, a Kashmiri folk instrument which was only adapted to classical music in the last generation. An award winning santoor artist, Gunjal fell in love with this one hundred-stringed instrument as a child. He was invited to become the student and then disciple of Pandit Shivkumar Sharma, who brought the santoor into the classical tradition. Indian-born tabla player Kavthekar is known as the last ganda-bandhan (ordained disciple) of legendary tabla player Alla Rakha (Ravi Shankar's longtime percussionist) and a prominent disciple of Alla Rakha's famous son and tabla icon, Zakir Hussain. Amir Kavthekar and Kunal Gunjal's musical partnership goes back two decades to performances in Mumbai while they were still both college students. This long association, strengthened by the subtle attunement they must find between the santoor and tabla in performance, creates ideal conditions for both performers and audiences: onstage, says Kavthekar, “We look at each other, and we know exactly where we are and where we’re going.”

Michela Musolino & Rosa Tatuata's debut CD, *Sotto le Stelle*, translates to “under the stars.” It’s an apt recording title for an ensemble whose founders met at a garden party where the three zampogna players regaled guests with the sound of the southern Italian bagpipes. The album



Internationally renowned Haitian dancer, choreographer, drummer, and educator, Peniel Guerrier has dedicated his life to preserving and promoting Haiti's rich cultural heritage.

name reflects their musical philosophy as well: singer and bandleader (and garden party hostess) Michela Musolino says the recording focuses on beloved folk songs of Sicily that were sung outdoors, whether fishing, washing clothes, or at celebratory festas. “The cornerstone of our music is, it’s interactive. Our daily lives had a soundtrack—that’s how we passed the time. Music didn’t just belong to the performers, everybody participated.” Musolino’s garden-party meeting with guitarist, organetto (accordion) player, and folklorist Phil Passantino led to a collaboration playing traditional songs of Sicily, Calabria, and the Meridione (southern Italy). Michela provided the music for a Broadway benefit performance of Tennessee Williams’s beloved play about Sicilian-Americans, *The Rose Tattoo*; this experience gave both impetus and a name to her next project, *Rosa Tatuata*, a quartet made up of Musolino, Passantino, and multi-instrumentalists Charlie Rutan and Izzy Butera.

New England is widely considered the heartland of fife and drum music in the United States. The region is known for its “ancient” corps, which play traditional military field music and dress in period clothing. The Middlesex County Volunteer Fife & Drum Band (MCV) was formed in the early 1980s after members were inspired by military history and culture that had been showcased during American bicentennial celebrations. Forty years on, the Middlesex County Volunteer Fife & Drum Band is still thriving, with members as young as 16 years old. All who join are dedicated to preserving traditional American and European music, dance, and culture while also expanding their repertoire with other compositions from the 17th and 18th centuries and beyond. MCV plays in a variety of settings, including alongside orchestras such as the Boston Pops. In Lowell, this beloved fife and drum band will lead the opening parade on Friday night, kicking off the festival in a fitting ode to America’s 250th birthday.

The Northern Kentucky Brotherhood Singers are passionate and joyous practitioners of the deeply spiritual art of unaccompanied gospel harmony singing. The group has emerged onto the national gospel scene during a revival of interest in this venerable vocal tradition, and one listen to its glorious harmonies makes it clear that this renewed popularity is long overdue. The gospel quartet style has its roots in spiritual traditions of the American South. Enslaved Africans combined English hymns with West African rhythms and vocal traditions to create a musical form that expressed both Christian devotion and the desire for freedom. The Northern Kentucky Brotherhood Singers have performed at major national festivals and in Washington, D.C. at the Library of Congress. They are also trusted performers to deliver their soulful rendition of the National Anthem at sporting events all over the Midwest, including NFL and NBA games.

Internationally renowned Haitian dancer, choreographer, drummer, and educator, Peniel Guerrier has dedicated his life to preserving and promoting Haiti's rich cultural heritage. His captivating energy, undeniable talent, and deep spiritual connection to his craft shines through in every performance, dance class, and lesson. The vibrant colors of the attire worn on stage and the infectious rhythm of the drum infuse to create a space where the spirit (and spirits) of Haitian Voodoo will come alive during Guerrier’s performance at the Lowell Folk Festival. His deep passion and dedication to the practice of Voodoo is apparent in every step. “Voodoo is like light, it’s everything. Your connection with yourself ... ’cause when you hear the drum, the drum

means something to you," says Guerrier.

Trío romántico, a gorgeous music tradition from northern Mexico and the Rio Grande Valley, is often performed by groups with tres in their name, since the style is performed by three musicians. Tres en Punto, a trío romántico from Mission, Texas, adds a cheeky layer to this naming tradition, using a phrase with an everyday meaning of "three o'clock on the dot" to suggest that their trio is exactly on time as well. In their stylish attire—whether sharp traje suits or pressed white guaybera shirts and crisp slacks—and with their impeccable harmonies and fingerings, trio Tres en Punto is precisely the band to carry on the impassioned tradition of this elegant and romantic music.

The Wampanoag Nation Singers & Dancers herald from the Cape Cod, Aquinnah, and Herring Pond regions of Massachusetts, and the members view their dancing as a means to teach others about the values, perspectives, and culture unique to "the people of the first light." Wampanoag tribal member Jonathan Perry explains, "All of our songs, all of our dances, have to do with what lives here, the environment. It's what makes us who we are." The Wampanoags once lived across sixty different tribal villages in southeastern Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. Today the Mashpee Wampanoag has thousands of members who are dedicated to carrying the culture, including a robust language revitalization program. They also have an annual powwow that has been going strong for over 100 years and attracts visitors from all over the region. They have performed across the U.S., including at Jacob's Pillow, the Kennedy Center, and an appearance in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

Previously announced artists for the 2026 Lowell Folk Festival, Elida Almeida, Melissa Carper & Emily Gimble, Dat Mighty 9, John Doyle & Friends, Fabiola Mendez, and Super Chikan & the Fighting Cocks, join these musicians to comprise the remarkably diverse line-up of traditional music makers.

The Lowell Folk Festival has become one of America's most popular free summer events, welcoming both traditional music, and their enthusiastic fans to Lowell Massachusetts, which is celebrating its Bicentennial this year. In addition to the dozens of musical performances on four different stages over the festival's three day schedule, the Lowell Folk Festival offers something for everyone in the family.

The Discovery Lowell Playspace, anchored by the award-winning Discovery Museum in Acton (MA), is a fun and inclusive area where young festival goers have the opportunity to engage in a wide range of interactive activities. Global Foods, which can be found at 3 locations throughout downtown Lowell, offers hungry festival goers a world of options as cuisines from a variety of cultures are prepared and sold by local non-profits representing different cultures found in New England. The Experience Lowell Marketplace, in partnership with Mosaic Lowell, features artists, craft makers, and arts organizations from the area, enabling festival attendees to experience everything that Mill City's arts and culture community has to offer.

The Lowell Folk Festival is produced by the Lowell Festival Foundation, City of Lowell, Greater Lowell Community Foundation, Lowell National Historical Park, [National Council for the Traditional Arts](#), and [Revolutionary Valley](#).

Adam R. Klein

CK Communications Group Inc

+1 617-504-6156

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

[YouTube](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/917632576>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.