

For Immediate Release

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Gerardo Calderón, late Latin American master musician, honored by artists and community at the Chehalem Cultural Center on April 27; celebration of life is open to all



Monday, April 8, 2024- Portland, Oregon

The late maestro Gerardo Calderón will be honored by artists and musicians on Saturday, April 27, 2024, from 4 to 7 p.m. at Chehalem Cultural Center (415 E Sheridan St, Newberg, OR). This celebration of life is free and open to the public.

PROGRAM

- 4-4:30 pm Community Arrival and Welcome
- 4:30-5:30 pm Main Program: A Celebration of Gerardo Calderón's Life and Music
- 5:30-7 pm Tributes by Musicians and Poets

About Maestro Gerardo Calderón

Gerardo Calderón, a composer, teaching artist, producer, and multi-instrumentalist, was born into the vibrant world of music, dance, and culture in Mexico City. As the musical director of

Grupo Condor and co-founder of Nuestro Canto with Nelda Reyes, he has deeply explored traditional Mexican music, Latin American folk, and Pre-Colombian sounds.

With over 25 years of experience, Gerardo has dedicated himself to nurturing the northwest community through teaching and performing. His commitment extends to playing therapeutic music in elder care facilities, nursing homes, recovery centers, and for youth at risk and mental health facilities, bringing moments of joy and unique comfort.

Beyond his roles in performance, education, and research, Gerardo also specialized in creating custom musical instruments. His craftsmanship extended to a diverse array of items such as pan flutes, rain-sticks, water drums, turtle boxes, cajon Peruano, and bombos (bass drums).

Gerardo's volunteer efforts have enriched the Portland International Airport, where his healing performances with acoustic guitar and pan flutes have welcomed visitors. Gerardo was a founding and prominent member of the Instituto de Cultura Oregoniana and has been instrumental in fostering creative community-based intercultural exchanges and supporting fundraising efforts for a wide range of local and regional artists and nonprofit organizations.

"Gerardo Calderón exemplifies the beautiful power of an artist, a culture bearer, and a community builder through his creative achievements, leadership, and community engagement. He has filled the City of Portland and the state of Oregon with 'orgullo'—pride. His music lives on in the heart of our Latin American arts community," says Joaquin Lopez, a music and community engagement artist who currently serves as the Creative Laureate for the City of Portland.

"Master musician Gerardo Calderón is a pivotal figure within Oregon's cultural landscape, bridging local traditions with the vast array of Latin American cultural expressions through his artistry. His work not only enriches our understanding of Oregonian identity but also 'steers it towards new directions,' encouraging ongoing intellectual conversation," states Matías Trejo De Dios, Executive Director of the Instituto de Cultura Oregoniana and Commissioner of Oregon Heritage.

Friends and family of Gerardo are planning this celebration of life: Nancy Ayala-Johnson (Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs), Rosa Floyd (Oregon Teacher of the Year, 2023), Sherman Floyd (founder of Cosecha Mestiza), Blanca Forzan (theatre artist), Cindy Williams Gutiérrez (poet-dramatist and founder of GRITO Poetry/Productions), Matías Trejo De Dios (Executive Director of the Instituto de Cultura Oregoniana), Alejandra Cornejo (creative artist), Joaquin Lopez (Creative Laureate of the City of Portland), among many others.

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