

# NEWS RELEASE

2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90049-6833

TEL: (310) 440-4500  
FAX: (310) 440-4595

E-MAIL: [communications@skirball.org](mailto:communications@skirball.org)  
WEBSITE: [www.skirball.org](http://www.skirball.org)



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**Media Contacts:**

David Monnich, LC Media, (210) 422-1764, [david.h.monnich@gmail.com](mailto:david.h.monnich@gmail.com)

Laura B. Cohen, LC Media, (310) 867-3897, [lcmediapr@gmail.com](mailto:lcmediapr@gmail.com)

Mia Cariño, Skirball Cultural Center, (310) 440-4544, [communications@skirball.org](mailto:communications@skirball.org)

Skirball Cultural Center announces its  
twenty-second annual FREE summertime outdoor concert series

## SUNSET CONCERTS AT THE SKIRBALL

Thursday evenings, July 26–August 30, 8:00 p.m.

Featuring multifaceted, genre-bending artists who build upon  
traditional and vintage styles to create distinctive, new music

LOS ANGELES, CA—The Skirball Cultural Center announces the lineup for its twenty-second annual free summertime live music series, Sunset Concerts. This year's artists showcase local and global influences from Malawian Nyanja Vibes, socially conscious R&B, psychedelic dream-pop, and Afro-Americana to experimental indie rock and Ethiopian funk. In addition to pioneering new sounds inspired by their own cultural identities and traditions, they utilize their art to bridge communities. Presented every summer since 1997 in the Skirball's picturesque hillside setting, Sunset Concerts features both emerging and established talents, drawing music fans from across greater Los Angeles.

The 2018 Sunset Concerts schedule is as follows: **Goapele** (July 26); **Peter Mawanga** (August 2); **The Marías** (August 9); **Ranky Tanky** (August 16); **Kishi Bashi** (August 23); and **Gili Yalo** (August 30) in his LA debut.

"For this twenty-second season of Sunset Concerts, we wanted to celebrate the wonderfully layered cultural identities and personal journeys of musicians from around the globe, across the country, and here at home in Los Angeles," remarked Adele Lander Burke, Vice President and Director of Programs. "The musicians featured in this year's lineup—whether rising stars, mid-career, or seasoned veterans—have built upon the styles of both traditional world and American music to create a contemporary sound that reflects the popular music they've grown up with. We invite Angelenos to our idyllic hillside setting for a cozy, friendly night of great company and outstanding music."

The six Thursday night concerts are presented free of charge. Music fans of all ages are invited to arrive early to enjoy food and drink under the stars and also explore the museum galleries. The exhibitions *Leonard Bernstein at 100*, *The Jim Henson Exhibition: Imagination Unlimited*, and *Spotlight: Selections from Kehinde*

Wiley's The World Stage: Israel are currently on view through September 2. They will be free and open to all concertgoers until 10:00 p.m.

### About the Artists:

**Thursday, July 26, 8:00 p.m. (Doors and DJ set at 6:30 p.m.)**

#### **GOAPELE**

Lauded singer-songwriter, activist, and mother **Goapele** kicks off the twenty-second season of Sunset Concerts with her deeply personal take on R&B, soul, funk, and hip-hop. The Oakland-born and now LA-based artist debuted her first single, "Closer," in 2001, which has racked up over nine million Spotify streams and has been sampled by accomplished rappers Drake and YG. Since her explosive start, she has released four full-length albums, landed high-profile syncs in *Sparkle*, *Honey*, and *90210*, and collaborated with famed artists Snoop Dogg, E-40, Eric Benét, and Soulive. Goapele released her most recent EP, *Dreamseeker*, in 2017, which "features seven songs and three interludes that soulfully and thoughtfully relay the singer/songwriter's perspectives on motherhood, sensuality, social consciousness and self-love" (*Billboard*). As she evolves as an artist, Goapele also devotes herself to activism, acting, and fashion. In 2006, she received the first-ever Human Rights Cultural Hero Award, from the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, for her inspiring performances at political rallies and events in the US and abroad. She recently partnered with the AIDS Healthcare Foundation as an official ambassador. Goapele—whose name means "to move forward" in the African language Setswana—is the daughter of a South African activist father and a New York-born Israeli Jewish mother. In the midst of all her projects, Goapele is currently recording a new album, expected for release later this year.

**Thursday, August 2, 8:00 p.m. (Doors and DJ set at 6:30 p.m.)**

#### **PETER MAWANGA**

Dubbed "the voice of the voiceless" in his home country of Malawi, **Peter Mawanga** uses both traditional and contemporary instrumentation—from thumb pianos, shakers, and xylophones to electric guitars and bass—to create a modern take on the Malawian Nyanja Vibes musical genre. In addition to touring across the globe and recording three studio albums, Mawanga is an active humanitarian: he established Talents of the Malawian Child in 2004, which helps train and mentor orphans and at-risk children through music workshops and recording opportunities. Mawanga has produced three albums for these children: *Ana a SASO* (2005), *Vingoma na Visekese* (2006), and *Sounds of Lilongwe* (2008). Further using his musical talents as a vehicle for social change, Mawanga produced the acclaimed album *Mawu A Malawi*, which features stories about AIDS. The album was launched at the University of North Carolina and the United States Department of State, making Mawanga the first African musician to perform at the office of the Secretary of State. Mawanga is currently working on a new full-length release.

**Thursday, August 9, 8:00 p.m. (Doors and DJ set at 6:30 p.m.)**

#### **THE MARIAS**

Fresh off performances at Coachella and the 10th International Kampoeng Jazz festival in Indonesia, LA locals **The Marias** take the stage for the third concert of the season. The psychedelic-soul lovechild of LA native **Josh Conway** and the Puerto Rican-born and Atlanta-raised lead vocalist **Marfa**, the five-member band performs a blend of influences rooted in 1970s psychedelia, funk, and romantic pop—"a vibe as vintage as it is fresh and new" (*Remezcla*). After forming in 2016, they quickly generated buzz with a SoundCloud demo that gained

airplay on KCRW and led to a debut performance at KCRW's School Night. The Marías released their first EP, *Superclean Vol. I*, in the fall of 2017, which will be followed by *Superclean Vol. II* this year.

**Thursday, August 16, 8:00 p.m. (Doors and DJ set at 6:30 p.m.)**

**RANKY TANKY**

Named after a Gullah expression that roughly translates to “work it” or “get funky,” **Ranky Tanky** builds upon the musical traditions of the South Carolina Low Country with gospel-style vocals, jazzy trumpet solos, and African rhythms. The Charleston-based quintet released their self-titled debut in October 2017—which shot to the #1 position on the *Billboard*, iTunes, and Amazon jazz charts—and was described as “lively, soulful honey to the ears” by NPR. Led by accomplished vocalist and South Carolina native **Quiana Parler** (who appeared on season two of the popular TV program *American Idol*), Ranky Tanky performs playful, emotional, and spiritual songs that are steeped in the Low Country's Gullah culture, which traces its roots back to West Africa and the transatlantic slave trade.

**Thursday, August 23, 8:00 p.m. (Doors and DJ set at 6:30 p.m.)**

**KISHI BASHI**

**String Quartet Live!**

**Kishi Bashi** is the stage name of singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Kaoru Ishibashi. His music has been described as “a radiant, uplifting soundscape” (NPR), and his loop-based performances have captivated audiences across the globe. In addition to releasing three albums as a solo artist, Kishi Bashi has recorded and toured internationally as a violinist with renowned artists Regina Spektor, Sondre Lerche, and most recently Of Montreal, the Athens, Georgia-based indie rock band. The Seattle-born, Norfolk-raised artist is currently working on a songfilm titled *Omoiyari*, in which he embarks on a personal quest to come to terms with Japanese American incarceration by performing music in locations that are relevant to this dark period in US history. Its Indiegogo campaign drew 744 supporters, who have raised more than \$102,000. For his performance at the Skirball, Kishi Bashi will be performing selections from his work-in-progress *Omoiyari* against a video backdrop, as well as other tracks from his repertoire.

**Thursday, August 30, 8:00 p.m. (Doors and DJ set at 6:30 p.m.)**

**GILI YALO (LA debut)**

Singing in both English and Amharic, Ethiopia's official language, **Gili Yalo** creates a rich patchwork of contemporary soul, funk, psychedelic rock, and traditional Ethiopian music for the closing concert of this year's Sunset Concerts. Drawing inspiration from his experience as an Ethiopian Jew who fled war and famine in 1984 to eventually re-settle in Israel, Yalo learned the motivational power of music from a young age. He has since performed on revered international stages as both a soloist and as a member of the Israeli world-reggae band Zvuloon Dub System. In 2017, he released his self-titled first album, which PopMatters described as “one of those rare debuts with a clear sense of purpose and style.” Yalo's vibrant music represents his own personal triumph while giving new meaning to traditional Ethiopian music. His LA debut performance at the Skirball is part of his first US tour as a solo artist.

**Editors, please note:**

2018 SUNSET CONCERTS

Skirball Cultural Center  
2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90049  
(310) 440-4500 • skirball.org

All concerts begin at 8:00 p.m. Check-in and FREE admission to the Museum and Skirball campus open at 5:30 p.m. Doors to the concert venue open at 6:30 p.m.

FREE concert admission  
Parking: \$10 per car (cash only)  
Carpooling and ridesharing are encouraged. Street parking is strictly prohibited.  
Or take Metro Rapid 734/234.

All Skirball exhibitions (except Noah's Ark) are free and open until 10:00 p.m. during Sunset Concerts, including *Leonard Bernstein at 100*, *The Jim Henson Exhibition: Imagination Unlimited*, and *Spotlight: Selections from Kehinde Wiley's The World Stage: Israel*. Audrey's Museum Store is open until 8:00 p.m.

Grab-and-go light fare, full bar service, and specialty food items will be available for happy hour and throughout the show. Guests may bring their own food. Note: No outside alcoholic beverages or chairs are permitted.

THE 2018 SUNSET CONCERTS ARE MADE POSSIBLE IN PART BY:

**Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles**  
**Los Angeles County Arts Commission**  
**U.S. Bank**

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### **About Sunset Concerts at the Skirball**

Marking its twenty-second season in 2018, the longstanding summer concert series kicked off just a year after the Skirball Cultural Center opened to the public in 1996. During that inaugural year, the institution drew nearly 300,000 visitors, far surpassing an initial expectation of 60,000. In winter/spring 1997, seeking to build upon this early success, the Skirball began to hold monthly dinnertime concerts inside its restaurant, Zeidler's Cafe. The concerts were so well attended that the staff immediately rethought the event space. The following summer, upon popular demand, the Skirball launched a free four-concert series on Thursday nights. These performances took place in the Skirball's much more spacious central courtyard, offering a view of the hillside at dusk. The series was soon named Sunset Concerts at the Skirball. For several seasons in those early years, along with Grand Performances downtown and Santa Monica Pier's Twilight Concerts, Sunset Concerts represented one of the city's few free outdoor summer music series. Noteworthy Sunset Concerts performers over the years have included Lila Downs, Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars (US debut tour), Bassekou Kouyaté, Yasmin Levy (US debut), Hugh Masekela, Vieux Farka Touré (LA debut), Natacha Atlas, Red Baraat, Conjunto Chappottín y Sus Estrellas (US debut tour), Thao & The Get Down Stay Down, Novalima, and Daymé Arocena.

### **About the Skirball**

The Skirball Cultural Center is a place of meeting guided by the Jewish tradition of welcoming the stranger and inspired by the American democratic ideals of freedom and equality. We welcome people of all communities and generations to participate in cultural experiences that celebrate discovery and hope, foster human connections, and call upon us to help build a more just society.

### **Visiting the Skirball**

The Skirball Cultural Center is located at 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90049. Museum hours: Tuesday–Friday 12:00–5:00 p.m.; Saturday–Sunday 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.; closed Mondays and holidays. Admission to exhibitions: \$12 General; \$9 Seniors, Full-Time Students, and Children over 12; \$7 Children 2–12. Exhibitions are always free to Skirball Members and Children under 2. Exhibitions are free to all visitors on Thursdays. For general information, the public may call (310) 440-4500 or visit [skirball.org](http://skirball.org). The Skirball is also home to Zeidler’s Café, which serves innovative California cuisine in an elegant setting, and Audrey’s Museum Store, which sells books, contemporary art, music, jewelry, and more.

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