

Music Festival Happenings

A Delicious Start to the 32nd Moab Music Festival

The Moab Music Festival (MMF) opens its 32nd season of bringing *music in concert with the landscape* with “A Moveable Musical Feast” on August 28th. A new event and collaboration with Easy Bee Farm, a local CSA providing produce to the Moab area for over twenty years in scenic Spanish Valley. Concert attendees will sample a garden of audible and edible delights as they walk between different sites on the property. Musical offerings include beloved masterpieces by Bach, Mozart, and Brahms, and recent works by Andy Akiho and Italian composer Giovanni Sollima and edible delights created by Confluence Custom Catering using fresh produce. A free shuttle will take patrons to the event, due to limited parking at the farm.

This year’s signature Grotto Concerts, Music Hikes, Floating Concerts and Musical Raft Trips, are joined by a line-up including film screenings, panel discussions, author readings, and six world premieres, four of which are newly commissioned pieces of work partially funded by MMF. MMF Co-Founders Leslie Tomkins and Michael Barrett, respectively, chose and curated this year’s events around the central theme of the Colorado River, and water’s complex relationship with the West.

August 30th “The Hopi Tradition” is a free community event, featuring Howard Dennis and a group of Hopi dancers, using traditional dance and song to illustrate water’s many meanings through ancient stories, costumes, dances, and prayers on the sacredness of water. You can also see “The Hopi Tradition” on August 31st at the Colorado Currents Concert and on **Labor Day, Monday September 2nd at Old City Park** during MMF’s annual free Community Concert.

The Colorado Currents Concert on August 31st at Red Cliffs Lodge continues our relationship to water with three newly commissioned pieces. Two quickly rising brilliant young composers, Maya Miro Johnson and Roydon Tse, will premier their pieces titled, respectively, “Portraits in Geologic Time” and “Living Waters”. Roydon and Maya were chosen out of a national applicant pool of composers with Utah ties, from MMF’s Colorado River Commissioning Project. The third commission, funded by MMF and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), titled “Sacred Currents,” is



Richard Bowditch photo

from Navajo pianist and composer Connor Chee, known for combining his classical piano training with his Native American heritage. Don’t miss the pre-concert panel discussion with the composers as they discuss their interpretation of rivers, water and the landscape. Joining the composers panel will be special advisor to MMF this year, John Weisheit, a Colorado River Keeper and Co-Founder of Living Rivers, and Howard Dennis, a Hopi Elder and Flute Chief, who



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is also advisor to Waterkeeper Alliance, a board member of Black Mesa Trust, and representative of Native Waters.

Be sure to enjoy the sounds of indie-pop sibling trio **BAILEN**, at **Red Cliffs Lodge on September 1st**. BAILEN first appeared at MMF last summer and we are thrilled to have them back. The NYC-based band—brothers Daniel (vocals, bass) and David (vocals, drums), and younger sister Julia (vocals, guitar)—perform a mix of originals and 70s pop/rock classics. BAILEN’s album *Tired Hearts* was heralded as “a sumptuous blend of adventurous songwriting, wistful melodies and youthful spirit” by *The Indy Review*.

A **Robert Black Tribute Concert** will be at **Star Hall on September 7th**. For over three decades, trailblazing bassist Robert Black was a staple Festival artist, collaborator, and friend. Notable composer and friend of Robert, Eve Beglarian, will unveil her newly commissioned piece, “Inundated by Night,” made possible by a grant from the NEA, and the MMF Commissioning Club. The MMF Commissioning Club (you can become a member with a minimum donation), was created to get in on the artistic action by supporting the inception of brand new chamber music works composed by today’s most notable living composers.



BAILEN Dery Keretic photo

Join us at the 2024 Moab Music Festival, running August 25 through September 14. To find out more, head to moabmusicfest.org or call 435-259-7003. And be sure to mention you ready about the Moab Music Festival in *Moab Happenings*.

Moab Music Festival Concert Schedule

Aug 25 Film: *A River Out of Time*- Free at 7pm, Star Hall.

Marking the beginning of this year’s water themed Moab Music Festival. 150 years after John Wesley Powell, this documentary follows a diverse team of whitewater enthusiasts, educators, scientists, and artists as they set out to raft in Powell’s footsteps in an effort to reevaluate his legacy, absorb the unquantifiable power of place, and articulate what the future may hold for water in the American West. Released in 2022, it is the winner of the Paddling Film Festival 2022 People’s Choice Award and the Durango Independent Film Festival 2022 Audience Choice for Best Adventure Film.

Aug 28 A Moveable, Musical Feast- A feast for the eyes, ears, and palate awaits you at Easy Bee Farm. Experience classical favorites by Mozart, Bach, and Brahms alongside recent works by Andy Akiho and Giovanni Sollima.

Aug 29 Grotto I: 19th Century Classics- Two of the greatest German masterpieces, by Schumann and Brahms, fill the perfect acoustics of the magical Grotto. An exhilarating jet boat ride down the Colorado River brings listeners to a pristine wilderness grotto carved from the surrounding red rocks for an inspiring “once-in-a-lifetime” experience (*Fodors*).

Aug 30 Floating Concert I: Keyboards on the Colorado-

Aug 30 The Hopi Tradition- Hopi Nation performers from Second Mesa, Arizona share their ancient stories, dances, and prayers on the sacredness of water.

Free community concert on the back lawn at the Gonzo Inn. 6:30 pm.

Aug 31 Music Hike I: Mozart in the Morning-

Aug 31 Red Cliffs I: Colorado Currents- Perspectives from living artists examine the stewardship of the Colorado River, including world premieres of two Moab Music Festival commissioned works. Just before the Colorado Currents performance at 7pm, attend a free panel discussion at the Red Cliffs Lodge Colorado Room from 5:30-6:30 pm. Discussion will include the Moab Music Festival’s two world premieres, stewardship of the Colorado River, and the importance of water in the Hopi culture. Panelists include: Moderator, Serah Mead; John Weisheit, Co-Founder at Living Rivers and the Colorado

Riverkeeper; Howard Dennis, Native American flutist and Hopi Elder, and Moab Music Festival commissioned composers Connor Chee, Maya Miro Johnson, and Roydon Tse.

Sep 1 Music Hike II: Just Breath(e)- Voice and percussion join the flute in a trio of the world’s oldest instruments in this theatrical program.

Sep 1 Red Cliffs II: BAILEN- The indie-pop trio known for their flawless harmonies performs hits from their latest album, *Tired Hearts*.

Sep 2 Rocky Mountain Power FREE Community Concert, Old City Park Enjoy programmatic highlights from across the festival—favorites from the American Songbook, Diné composer and pianist Connor Chee, a special performance by artists from the Hopi Nation, indie-pop sibling band BAILEN, and more at 2:00 pm. Bring the family and a picnic.

Sep 3 Film: *Maestro*- Leonard Bernstein was a global force during his life and has influenced and shaped the Moab Music Festival. **FREE screening at Star Hall, 7 pm.** Watch the movie & hear from his daughter Jamie Bernstein in a Q&A.

Sep 4 House Benefit Concert: Bernstein, An Intimate Portrait- A dinner with Jamie Bernstein contextualizing Leonard Bernstein’s piano Anniversaries and more at a spectacular private home.

Sep 5 Red Earth: Mid-Century Modern America-

Sep 6 Grotto II: J.S. Bach And Sons-

Sep 7 Music Hike III: Unusual Quartets—Sacred and Profane-

Sep 7 Robert Black: A Joyful Musical Life from the Bass Line Honors the memory of the trailblazing bassist, who performed at the Moab Music Festival for more than three decades. Tickets: “Pay what you wish” **Star Hall 7:00 pm**

Sep 8 Floating Concert II: Red, White and Blues-

Sep 10 Ranch Benefit Concert: Stradgrass- Grammy-nominee Tessa Lark performs her bluegrass-inspired compositions on a Stradivarius

Sep 11 Grotto III: Vienna at the Turn of the Centuries- Music from the gravitational center of Western music at the close of the 18th and 19th centuries