

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**THE JAZZSCHOOL COMMUNITY MUSIC SCHOOL
ANNOUNCES
MAY CONCERTS & PUBLIC PROGRAMS**



April 23, 2026, Berkeley, California — The Jazzschool Community Music School in Berkeley, CA announces a full calendar of concerts, workshops, and free public programs in May. In honor of AAPI Heritage Month, the school celebrates the contributions of Asians in Bay Area jazz through a series of informal salons and eclectic concerts organized in collaboration with artists in the AAPI community. The Friday night **AAPI Heritage Month Salon Series** (May 8 & May 22) features insightful panel discussions, live music presentations, light refreshments, and community conversation, and is organized by **Francis Wong, Chris Trinidad, and Noah Rosen**, in collaboration with Asian Improv aRts and Iridium Records. The **Celebrating Asian American Jazz Concert Series** presents performances on four Saturdays, programmed by pianist/composer **Erika Oba**. The series features **Akira Tana TrioCentric** (May 2); the **Ryan Ancheta Quartet + Chris Trinidad's Chroma Tonic** (May 9); **Roopa in Flux featuring Roopa Mahadevan** (May 16); and **WONGWORKS!: Vernaculars Plays the Music of Francis Wong** (May 23).

The **Brown Bag Jazz Hangs** series continues every Wednesday at 12:30pm, inviting Downtown Berkeley neighbors, colleagues, students, and employees for free casual Brown Bag presentations and listening sessions by local jazz luminaries. May presenters are **John Santos** (May 6); **Ben Goldberg** (May 13); **Jayn Pettingill** (May 20); and **Rhonda Sauce** (May 27). The monthly free masterclass series **The B3 Sessions** is presented in collaboration with the Jazz Organ Fellowship, and this month features

organist **Roger Smith** on Sunday, May 17 at 4pm.

The Jazzschool's weekly **Jupiter Jam Session** continues on Wednesday May 6 from 7-10pm in the outdoor courtyard at Jupiter, 2181 Shattuck Ave. Berkeley. Co-hosted by faculty members **Erik Jekabson** and **Remee Ashley** with a professional house band, the session is open to all players, and admission is free. The **Youth Jazz Jam Session** (Sun May 3, 4-6pm, free admission) gives young musicians a platform for honing their craft on the first Sundays of the month, led by a rotating cast of Jazzschool faculty members and offered free of charge at the school's Hardyman Hall. After May, the series takes a break until the fall.

Additional concerts in May include the monthly performance by the Jazzschool's composers big band-in-residence, the **Electric Squeezebox Orchestra**, led by **Erik Jekabson** and featuring **Resident Poet Avotcja** (Sun May 10, 5:30pm; tickets \$25 General / \$15 Youth); and a Student Showcase led by Jazzschool Young Musician Program pianist and composer **Max Roston-Saul** (Sat May 23, 4pm; free admission).

Community Events and Free Programs

Brown Bag Jazz Hangs - Wednesdays in May at 12:30pm; Admission Free

The Brown Bag Jazz Hangs series at lunchtime on Wednesdays invites Downtown Berkeley neighbors, colleagues, students, and employees for free casual presentations and listening sessions by local jazz luminaries. Patrons are invited to bring their own lunch or order ahead from the JazzCaffè across the street at 2040 Addison Street.

Wed, May 6: **John Santos** on *The Profound Well of Cuban Music*

Wed, May 13: **Ben Goldberg** on *Steve Lacy*

Wed, May 20: **Jayn Pettingill** on *Duke Ellington and Radio*

Wed, May 27: **Rhonda Sauce** on *Ella Fitzgerald*

AAPI Heritage Month Salon Series

The AAPI Heritage Month Friday Salon Series features insightful panel discussions, live music presentations, light refreshments, and community conversation. Organized by **Francis Wong**, **Chris Trinidad**, and **Noah Rosen**, in collaboration with Asian Improv aRts and Iridium Records. Pay What You Can (min \$10)

Fri, May 8, 7pm

Filipinos Sounding Everywhere: Pinoy Creativity and Improvisation

featuring Conrad Benedicto, Jinji Sayson, Chris Trinidad, and Jimmy Biala

This session features a panel of Filipino creative musicians exploring a tapestry of Filipino American topics. They discuss their work, backgrounds, and ways their cultural identities have informed their musical direction.

Fri, May 22, 7pm

A Community Affair: Asian American Lineages as Bay Area History

featuring Francis Wong, Jon Jang, Scott Oshiro, and Roopa Mahadevan

This session spotlights the history and influence of Asian American jazz — a practice deeply rooted in the Bay Area's multicultural history and unique in its emphasis on Asian American social issues and the fusion of traditional Asian instruments with jazz vocabulary. A panel of musicians discuss their efforts to continue to shape the sound of Asian diasporic expression while engaging in community efforts toward solidarity and equality.

The B3 Sessions - Monthly on Sundays from January–June

The B3 Sessions is a free monthly masterclass series co-presented with the Jazz Organ Fellowship, that features six of the world's greatest Hammond B3 organists in informal masterclasses. Guest artists talk, demonstrate B3 technique, play musical selections, and answer questions from the audience.

Upcoming events in the series:

Sun. May 17, 4pm: Roger Smith

Sun. June 7, 4pm: Sylvester Burks

May Concerts: Celebrating Asian American Jazz

Celebrating Asian American Jazz: Akira Tana TrioCentric

Sat, May 2, 8pm (pre-concert talk at 7:30pm)

Ticket \$25 General / \$15 Youth

Concert series programmed by pianist/composer Erika Oba.

Trio 1:

Wayne de Silva, saxophone

John Wiitala, bass

Akira Tana, drums

Trio 2:

Rumi Abe, piano

John Wiitala, bass

Akira Tana, drums

Versatile and dynamic drummer Akira Tana brings not *one but two* trios to the Jazzschool to launch our month of concerts celebrating the Bay Area Asian American jazz community. Tana has worked with artists such as Milt Jackson, Sonny Rollins, Jaki Byard, George Russell, Sonny Stitt, Art Farmer, Benny Golson, Jim Hall, Jimmy Rowles, Zoot Sims, Cedar Walton, Lena Horne, and many others. With bassist Rufus Reid he leads TanaReid, and has released four recordings with his group, Otonowa, which feature jazz interpretations of Japanese folk and pop melodies. Tana is on faculty at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and hosts the Monday and Tuesday evening radio show Jazz Oasis on KCSM.

Joined by first-call bassist John Wiitala for both sets, Tana features Hawaiian saxophonist Wayne de Silva in the first set, and Japanese pianist Rumi Abe in the second.

Celebrating Asian American Jazz: Ryan Ancheta Quartet + Chris Trinidad's Chroma Tonic

Sat, May 9, 8pm (pre-concert talk at 7:30pm)

Ticket \$25 General / \$15 Youth

Concert series programmed by pianist/composer Erika Oba.

Ryan Ancheta Quartet

Ryan Ancheta, trumpet

Kevin Person, piano

Alan Jones, bass

Jaeden Baclay, drums

Chris Trinidad's Chroma Tonic

Naima Shahoub, voice/keys

Scott Oshiro, flute, quantum electronics

Alex Heigl, guitar/effects

Chris Trinidad, bass guitar/synth bass
Cy Thompson, drum set/percussion

Double bill – An evening of expansive and energetic jazz by two generations of Bay Area Filipino bandleaders! Twenty-year-old trumpet player and composer Ryan Ancheta, a student at UC Berkeley, has moved through the ranks of all the Bay Area's elite jazz training programs, and is an alumnus of the SFJazz High School All-Stars, Marcus Shelby's Teen Jazz Orchestra at the Community Music Center, the Jazzschool's Advanced High School Combo, and Stanford Jazz Workshop's Miles Ahead Big Band. His music combines classic and modern jazz, R&B, funk, soul, hip-hop, and fusion.

Electric bassist Chris Trinidad's latest project Chroma Tonic brings together musicians from wildly divergent backgrounds to concoct intriguing groove music inspired by ambient music pioneers Brian Eno and Robert Fripp, the early avant-garde space psychedelia of Pink Floyd, and the adventurous electric hybrid experimentations of early seventies Miles Davis. Album release celebration!

Celebrating Asian American Jazz: Roopa in Flux featuring Roopa Mahadevan

Sat, May 16, 8pm (pre-concert talk at 7:30pm)

Ticket \$25 General / \$15 Youth

Concert series programmed by pianist/composer Erika Oba.

Roopa Mahadevan, vocals

TBA, violin

Frank Martin, piano

Isaac Schwartz, drums

Hailed as a "stirring voice" by *The New York Times*, Bay Area vocalist Roopa Mahadevan combines South Indian Carnatic singing with jazz, soul/R&B, and adventurous improvisation in her ensemble Roopa in Flux. Her energetic music conveys emotional depth through humor and storytelling, celebrating the power of individual expression and immigrant musical traditions.

Celebrating Asian American Jazz: Vernaculars plays the Music of Francis Wong

Sat, May 23, 8pm (pre-concert talk at 7:30pm)

Ticket \$25 General / \$15 Youth

Concert series programmed by pianist/composer Erika Oba.

Francis Wong, tenor saxophone

Karl Evangelista, guitar

Chris Trinidad, electric bass/synth

Jimmy Biala, drums

Saxophonist Francis Wong celebrates 50 years as a Bay Area musician, activist, and educator with Wong Works, a retrospective project featuring music from his long and influential musical career. In the ensemble Vernaculars, he is joined by a who's-who of local improvisers for a set of freewheeling and powerful music. Album release celebration!

More May Concerts

The Electric Squeezebox Orchestra

Led by **Erik Jekabson** and featuring *Resident Poet Avotcja*

Sunday, May 10, 5:30pm

Tickets \$25 General / \$15 Youth

The Electric Squeezebox Orchestra is the Bay Area's own 17-piece big band, led by trumpeter Erik Jekabson, playing music composed and arranged by its members. The composers and arrangers, some of the very best in the Bay, draw from a wide variety of influences but always come up with powerful music with groove, beauty and subtlety. The band plays every second Sunday at the Jazzschool, and has collaborated with a number of special guest artists, including John Santos, Kenny Washington, Alan Ferber, Dayna Stephens, Mads Tolling, Sandy Cressman, Kellye Gray, Avotcja and Ben Goldberg.

Student Showcase: Max Roston-Saul Sextet

Saturday, May 23, 4pm

Free admission

Oren Cohen, alto saxophone

Victor Taraboukhine, tenor saxophone

Sai Ray, trumpet

Max Roston-Saul, piano

Milo Kolesas-Stolzenberg, bass

Lucas Quan, drums

Pianist and composer Max Roston-Saul, a member of Peter Horvath's award-winning Advanced High School Workshop and the (also award-winning) Jazzschool Studio Band, leads a stellar sextet of young Bay Area jazz musicians in this special student showcase concert. The performance features Roston-Saul's original compositions, which have been recognized by *Downbeat* Magazine and the YoungArts Foundation.

About the Jazzschool

The Jazzschool, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, was founded in Berkeley in 1997 and provides music education and performance opportunities for people of all ages and abilities. Consisting of the Adult Music Program and the Young Musicians Program, the Jazzschool operates year-round on a quarterly basis, offering an array of courses, ensembles, performance opportunities, and workshops to build all aspects of musicianship. Students are frequently featured in concert performances, free to the public. With a formidable faculty of renowned musicians and educators, the Jazzschool is a cornerstone of the Bay Area's thriving jazz community.

TICKETS

Tickets are available at jazzschool.org and at the door for concerts. Online advance registration is suggested but not required for free events.

INFORMATION

The Jazzschool is located at 2087 Addison St. in Downtown Berkeley. Street metered parking is available. Additional parking is available at the Center Street Parking Garage, located at 2025 Center Street, Berkeley. The Jazzschool's facility is fully ADA-compliant and accessible to people with physical disabilities. Visit jazzschool.org or call 510-845-5373 for more information.

CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE

Celebrating Asian American Jazz: Akira Tana TrioCentric

Date: Saturday, May 2, 2026

Time: 8pm

Price: \$25 General / \$15 Youth

Tickets: concerts.jazzschool.org/celebrating-asian-american-jazz-akira-tana-triocentric/

Youth Jazz Jam Session

Session Leader: Colin Hogan

Date: Sunday, May 3, 2026

Time: 4-6pm

Price: Admission Free

Info: concerts.jazzschool.org/free-youth-jazz-jam/

Brown Bag Jazz Hangs: John Santos *The Profound Well of Cuban Music*

Date: Wednesday, May 6, 2026

Time: 12:30-1:30pm

Price: Admission Free

RSVP:

concerts.jazzschool.org/free-brown-bag-jazz-hangs-john-santos-the-profound-well-of-cuban-music/

Jazzschool Jazz Jam at Jupiter

Date: Wednesday, May 6, 2026

Time: 7-10pm

Price: Admission Free

Info: concerts.jazzschool.org/jazz-jams-at-jupiter

AAPI Heritage Month Salons: Filipinos Sounding Everywhere

Date: Friday, May 8, 2026

Time: 7pm

Price: Pay What You Can (min \$10)

Tickets:

concerts.jazzschool.org/aapi-heritage-month-salons-filipinos-sounding-everywhere/

Celebrating Asian American Jazz: Ryan Ancheta Quartet + Chris Trinidad's Chroma Tonic

Date: Saturday, May 9, 2026

Time: 8pm

Price: \$25 General / \$15 Youth

Tickets:

concerts.jazzschool.org/celebrating-asian-american-jazz-ryan-ancheta-quartet-chris-trinidads-chroma-tonic/

Electric Squeezebox Orchestra

Date: Sunday, May 10, 2026

Time: 5:30pm

Price: \$25 General / \$15 Youth

Tickets: concerts.jazzschool.org/electric-squeezebox-orchestra-2/

Brown Bag Jazz Hangs: Ben Goldberg on Steve Lacy

Date: Wednesday, May 13, 2026

Time: 12:30-1:30pm

Price: Admission Free

RSVP: concerts.jazzschool.org/free-brown-bag-jazz-hangs-ben-goldberg-on-steve-lacy/

Jazzschool Jazz Jam at Jupiter

Date: Wednesday, May 13, 2026

Time: 7-10pm

Price: Admission Free

Info: concerts.jazzschool.org/jazz-jams-at-jupiter

Celebrating Asian American Jazz: Roopa in Flux featuring Roopa Mahadevan

Date: Saturday, May 16, 2026

Time: 8pm

Price: \$25 General / \$15 Youth

Tickets:

concerts.jazzschool.org/celebrating-asian-american-jazz-roopa-in-flux-featuring-roopa-mahadevan/

The B3 Sessions with Roger Smith

Date: Sunday, May 17, 2026

Time: 4-6pm

Price: Admission Free

RSVP: jazzschool.org/concerts/free-the-b3-sessions-with-roger-smith/

Brown Bag Jazz Hangs: Jayn Pettingill on Duke Ellington and Radio

Date: Wednesday, May 20, 2026

Time: 12:30-1:30pm

Price: Admission Free

RSVP:

concerts.jazzschool.org/free-brown-bag-jazz-hangs-jayn-pettingill-on-duke-ellington-and-radio

Jazzschool Jazz Jam at Jupiter

Date: Wednesday, May 20, 2026

Time: 7-10pm

Price: Admission Free

Info: concerts.jazzschool.org/jazz-jams-at-jupiter

AAPI Heritage Month Salon Series

A Community Affair: Asian American Lineages as Bay Area History

Date: Friday, May 22, 2026

Time: 7pm

Price: Pay What You Can (min \$10)

Tickets:

jazzschool.org/concerts/aapi-heritage-month-salon-series-a-community-affair-asian-american-lineages-as-bay-area-history/

Student Showcase: Max Roston-Saul Sextet

Date: Saturday, May 23, 2026

Time: 4pm

Price: Admission Free

Info: jazzschool.org/concerts/student-showcase-max-roston-saul-sextet/

Celebrating Asian American Jazz: Vernaculars plays the Music of Francis Wong

Date: Saturday, May 23, 2026

Time: 8pm

Price: \$25 General / \$15 Youth

Tickets:

jazzschool.org/concerts/celebrating-asian-american-jazz-vernaculars-plays-the-music-of-francis-wong/

Brown Bag Jazz Hangs: Rhonda Sauce on Ella Fitzgerald

Date: Wednesday, May 27, 2026

Time: 12:30-1:30pm

Price: Admission Free

RSVP:

jazzschool.org/concerts/free-brown-bag-jazz-hangs-rhonda-sauce-on-ella-fitzgerald

Jazzschool Jazz Jam at Jupiter

Date: Wednesday, May 27, 2026

Time: 7-10pm

Price: Admission Free

Info: concerts.jazzschool.org/jazz-jams-at-jupiter

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