

## Let the music play

*Cinco de Mayo is Monday, but today's the day to get out and shake your maracas.*

[Matt Farley](#)

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Tonight, downtown Reno will host performances by the Father of Chicano music, the Mexican Linda Ronstadt and students from Rita Cannan Elementary School.

The shows are part of Cinco de Mayo Reno, which runs until 6 p.m. Sunday. By its conclusion, the festival will include sets from more than 20 acts on three stages.

Cinco de Mayo Reno, a benefit for Nevada Hispanic Services Inc., spans 15 blocks and features events ranging from a five kilometer run to the season's first farmer's market. It is backed by a \$400,000 advertising campaign expected to draw 100,000 to 150,000 people and is being groomed as "the next Hot August Nights."

Still, organizers say the music is perhaps the most important part of the event.

"We've got the three stages at Harrah's, the old Mapes lot (10 N. Virginia St.), and the Silver Legacy (Fourth Street between Center and Virginia streets)," DM Productions president Doug Collins said.

DM Productions will produce Cinco de Mayo Reno for at least the next five years.

### **Norteña, Banda and Spanish rock**

A "Primera Banda" competition held Friday at the Club Cal Neva highlighted two styles of Latin music, Norteña and Banda/Grupera, and a Spanish rock band from Los Angeles is scheduled to play today.

The group Escando won the Banda/Grupera division, with Diferencia de Norteña winning in the Norteña category. Each band won a contract for a two-song demo album with Imarage Studios.

Collins said Norteña music is descended from traditional musica tejana, a style invented by Mexican Texans. Norteña differs in that it prominently features the diatonic button accordion. Banda is somewhat less traditional, with roots in German "oompa," as well as Latino music.

Spanish rock band Lamonyk, the winner of a similar band contest put on by Los Angeles radio station La Estrella, will perform at 11 a.m. today on the TriProperties stage near the Silver Legacy.

"Great rock and roll is so universal you don't even need to understand Spanish to know how good it sounds," Lamonyk writes on its web site. "It sounds like Lamonyk."

### **Classic Latino sounds**

Elsewhere, more traditional Latin music will be played.

"We're going to have Lalo Guerrero here," said Sean Savoy, chairman of the Foundation Orchestra Association. "He's known as the Father of Chicano Music, and the Smithsonian Institution called him 'a national folk treasure.' It's going to be great."

The Foundation Orchestra is slated to perform "Simply Latin: A Celebration of Latin Music" at the plaza at Harrah's casino at 4 p.m. today. In the last show of the festival, the orchestra will play alongside Guerrero,

Rita Cannon Elementary School students, tango musician Daniel Diaz, and Maritza Chavez, a University of Nevada, Reno, student whose music has been compared to Linda Ronstadt's.

"In fact, she covers the song "La Cigarra," which is on (Ronstadt's) album "Canciones de mi Padre," Savoy said. "It's pretty impressive."

This year's festival marks the first time Chavez has performed with the orchestra.

Also joining the group will be 22-year-old violinist Gregory Maytan of Reno.

"The kid is excellent," orchestra conductor Gary Robert Buchanan said. "He's one of the best I've ever heard."

Buchanan said much of the concert was composed specifically for Cinco de Mayo Reno.

"I just finished 'Cinco de Mayo Overture.' This will be a premiere. . . I've also finished another piece, 'Concerto for Violin and Orchestra.'"

Buchanan said he hopes the concert will help the Foundation Orchestra Association gain more visibility.

"We are not in competition with area orchestras," he said. "We actually try to schedule around them. We just want to expose people to some alternative, different orchestral music. We don't want people to come because it's a big cultural thing. We want them to come because the music is enjoyable, and it speaks to people."

To this end, Buchanan said he included some more popular pieces in the concert, including a new arrangement of the Carlos Santana classic "Oye Como Va" and music from the 1997 art film "The Tango Lesson."

"These are some very hot, very jazzy pieces of music," he said. "I think people will like them."

Buchanan said there is only one thing that makes him nervous about the performance.

"Look at the weather report. There's supposed to be a terrible storm. We're expecting thousands of people at an outdoor plaza and it's going to snow on us. I think we'll be okay, though. They'll probably be able to move everything inside."

Cinco de Mayo Reno runs from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. today. It will cover most of downtown Reno, bordered by Fifth, Center and Sierra streets and the Truckee River. Most events are free.