

Many people wonder how musicians and bands are chosen to perform at the August festival. It's pretty straightforward yet at the same time, the process has its twists and turns.

First of all, each stage has its own theme and the bands selected should reflect those themes. The Blues stage and the Latin stage are pretty evident as to the type of music that we try to program on the stage. The Salsa stage is meant not only to showcase great music, but the music needs to be danceable. More intimate, straight ahead jazz needs to be on one of the inside stages, so the Jazz at the Rep stage and the Smith Dobson stage (both inside) are designed for those musicians. The Silicon Valley stage is dedicated to local musicians and the R&B stage is for contemporary R&B and local musicians as well. The Future of Jazz Stage is where we present student musicians from middle school all the way up through college. That stage is to encourage the next generation of artists who are going to entertain and thrill us in the next decades.

That leaves the Main Stage in the Plaza de Cesar Chavez. We try to present higher energy musicians from all genres. Some of the quieter acts won't work there so we look for great music, high energy, and thrilling improvisation. In a way, it represents a sampling of what you would hear on all the other stages.

Starting this time of the year, we get about 20-40 CDs a week in the office from artists. We try to listen to some music on all of them. We also work with other producers and people in the industry to look at bands who are on tour in our area in August. It helps get great acts and reduces the travel for the musicians. Recommendations from people are a great way to find musicians. One note, if you are a musician wanting to submit your music, please don't email a 10mb mp3 file. It will get deleted. CDs are best, since we can share them.

Finally, there are the budget constraints. We want to keep the festival a community event with a low admission fee. That places some musicians out of reach for us. In this economy, we find that we want everyone to come out and enjoy the music.

Any questions, please post them here.

Geoff Roach