



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Reyes, Levitt Mark 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of MacArthur Park Bandshell with Free Concerts Under the Stars**

*– Thirty weekly-themed evening -- featuring top-notch concerts kicks off TONIGHT at 7 p.m. -- will be staged at refurbished bandshell through Sept. 16*

Councilmember Ed P. Reyes, joined by members of the Mortimer Levitt Foundation and Friends of the Levitt Pavilion MacArthur Park, today announced 30 free concerts at the refurbished MacArthur Park bandshell, marking the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday of the bandshell.

“I’m pleased to stand here with our Levitt partners, community members and musicians to bring something back to the MacArthur Park bandshell that hasn’t been heard in more than three decades -- music,” said Reyes, who was highly active in the band shell renovation and overall revitalization of MacArthur Park. “The band shell has become that symbolic landmark of everything here that was abandoned by the city for years. This is about the rebirth of MacArthur Park.”

Wednesday’s press conference, which featured a preview performance by *Los Pinguos*, an Argentina folk groove band will be followed by a ribbon-cutting ceremony tonight at 7 p.m. The ceremony -- with Reyes, Friends of the Levitt, the Levitt Foundation, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, The Department of Recreation and Parks, actor Tony Plana, and the community -- will kick off the concert series, followed by a 7:30 p.m. performance by *La Internacional Sonora Show*, a Colombian folk band.

“Today, as we reopen this beautiful center of music and community, we also witness another chapter in the rebirth of this great park,” Mayor Villaraigosa said.

The 2007 Summer Concert Series, which runs Aug. 8 – Sept. 16, at the new *Levitt Pavilion for the Performing Arts at the MacArthur Park Bandshell*, includes 30 free weekly-themed evening concerts. The World Music, Dance Rhythms, Música Latina, American Roots and Children's Night concerts begin at 7:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Sunday events begin at 6:30 p.m. More information is available at [www.levittpavilionlosangeles.org](http://www.levittpavilionlosangeles.org).

The Levitt Pavilion bandshell was made possible, thanks to a collaboration between the City of Los Angeles, the Mortimer Levitt Foundation and The Friends of the Levitt Pavilion – MacArthur Park.



“I’ve driven by MacArthur Park for years admiring it, thinking what a beautiful historic park it is,” said Elizabeth Levitt Hirsch, VP Development of Levitt Pavilions/Mortimer Levitt Foundation. “Now the Foundation finds itself in the midst of bringing life and joy to the families of Los Angeles’ Westlake community through music. It is an honor and a privilege to be involved in the new MacArthur Park Levitt Pavilion, an exemplary model of community integration programming and artistic excellence.”

The Mortimer Levitt Foundation, created in 1966 by New York philanthropists Mortimer and Mimi Levitt, donates funds to support performing arts venues nationally that build communities, support diversity and enhance access to the arts throughout the surrounding venues.

The summer concert season at the refurbished bandshell is produced by The Friends of the Levitt Pavilion, a non-profit organization committed to bringing culturally diverse entertainment for all ages, free of charge to the community. The Friends was founded to renovate and preserve the historic band shell in MacArthur Park in the Westlake community.

The \$1.7 million bandshell renovation includes restoration of the 1957 architecture and a state-of-the-art sound and lighting system. The City’s Department of Recreation and Parks have landscaped the surrounding park area to create a pastoral, amphitheater setting.

The current structure dates back about 50 years. On Sept. 29, 1957 then-Councilman Ransom M. Callicott officially opened the MacArthur Park bandshell when he cut an ivy garland. That bandshell, which cost \$40,220, was closed in 2000 because of its dilapidated condition.

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