

## Gerardo Contino y Los Habañeros



PHOTO CREDIT:  
GIGI DE LA TORRE

Cuban singer/songwriter Gerardo Contino will make his first appearance at the American Folk Festival in 2016, along with his band Los Habañeros. If Contino's energetic performance doesn't captivate the crowd, his tendency to pull the audience into "call and response" and provoking the audience into what he calls "hip-shaking abandon" certainly will.

"I feel the need and almost the duty to show younger people that this is very vibrant music and we can't only have it as a museum piece," Contino told the New York Daily News in a 2014 interview.

Contino makes it a goal to get people dancing during his shows, and the sub-goal would be to encourage dancers of all ages to stand up and let loose. The enthusiasm and energy from Contino and his band are contagious. In fact, Gerardo Contino y Los Habañeros was selected by NPR/WNYC as Manhattan's best band of 2015. Contino's energy is organic, although his experience comes from home. He has been a part of renowned Cuban bands in Havana since his youth. He left Cuba in 2009 and started the band with Los Habañeros in New York City in 2012. He has toured all over the world, and plays frequently in his new hometown of New York City.

Like many artists performing a tradition that has decades-old roots, Contino wants to connect the past to the present and bridge the generation gap.

"Because the idea they have about Cuba is the old School music and I respect old school, but people have to understand that there is an evolution," Contino told the New York Daily News. "We respect the old songs and old styles, but also they have to allow the new generation to show our work."

**Gerardo Contino y Los Habañeros perform:**  
Friday, 9:45 p.m. BDN Railroad Stage  
Saturday, 1:45 p.m. Dance Pavilion  
Saturday, 7:30 p.m. Dance Pavilion  
Sunday, 12:15 p.m. Dance Pavilion

## Tribu Baharu

Tribu Baharu comes to Bangor from the Colombian Caribbean. The group is an afro-champeta music crew, with a goal of bringing the joy of being Caribbean through dance, using music as a vehicle to drive that dance. Performing at a festival like the American Folk Festival gives Tribu Baharu the opportunity to spread that joy far and wide for Festival-goers to experience and bring home with them.

"In larger festivals, we expect people to smile, dance and forget about the bad times," said Pocho, the drummer for Tribu Baharu. "The mission of Tribu Baharu's music is to make people happy."

The Champeta term from "afro-champeta" refers to a knife used by fishermen to remove fish scales. Champeta is a fishermen music with influences including Soukous (congo), Calypso, and reggae. Its origins come from relatively recent times, being traced back to the early 1980s with inspiration coming from recorded music brought into the port of Cartagena from Africa and other Euro-African settlements. During the 1990s, Champeta underwent some changes with the introduction of digital sources of sound. In champeta music, typically the rhythmic bass dominates over the melodic and harmonic lines, resulting in music that is easy to dance to and enjoy.

"People will experience, since the very first song, how we live all the tradition of the sound system culture that we have in Colombia, specifically in the Caribbean," said Pocho. "Everybody will enjoy dancing in a free mood, this [is] due to the energy we have on stage and the power of music."

Bangor and the Colombia Caribbean are separated by about 2,500 miles. Tribu Baharu are making their first trip to Maine and are excited to perform at the American Folk Festival while taking in some of the sights.

"We have never been to Maine," said Pocho. "This is our first time and we look forward to seeing the people enjoying the nice energy we are going to share."

### Tribu Baharu performs:

Saturday, 5:30 p.m. BDN Railroad Stage  
Saturday, 9 p.m. Dance Pavilion  
Sunday, 1:30 p.m. Dance Pavilion  
Sunday, 5:30 p.m. BDN Railroad Stage

