

Anderson

Independent-Mail

10Best: Be a star on 'Make Music Day'

Larry Bleiberg

Even if you can't carry a tune, you can still make music on Thursday. Amateurs are invited to join jam sessions, drum circles and even a boom box parade in celebration of Make Music Day (makemusicday.org), which includes 4,500 events in more than 70 U.S. cities. The celebration, which started in France in 1982, has since spread to 120 countries. "It's all about turning people into musicians," says Aaron Friedman, who organized the first U.S. celebration in New York in 2007. "It's very friendly, free and open." He shares some favorite experiences with Larry Bleiberg for USA TODAY.

Chicago Philharmonic Side-by-Side, Chicago

Even if you haven't played since middle school, anyone with an orchestral instrument gathering dust at home is invited to join with some of the city's top musicians. The Philharmonic's conductor will lead a rehearsal in the afternoon and then a performance that evening at 6 p.m. at the Humboldt Park Boathouse. makemusicchicago.org

Boom Box Marching Band Parade, Fullerton, California

This community celebration pays homage to the days when bringing your own music often meant carrying a cassette-playing boom box. Organizers will distribute copies of the Talking Heads' song "Road to Nowhere" and will instruct everyone who brought a box to press play, providing a soundtrack to the parade. Costumes, kazoos and tambourines are also welcome. "It's a very exuberant event," Friedman says. thedayofmusic.com/

Bucket drumming lessons, Hartford, Connecticut

Music company Vic Firth is distributing 2,500 pairs of drumsticks on Make Music Day, and many will end up in Connecticut's capital, where a professional jazz drummer and teacher will lead bucket drumming lessons. "There's a lot that one drummer can do, but if you get 10 or 20 or 30 people, you can start to put more complicated things together," Friedman says.

makemusicday.org/hartford/

Bells, Bells, Bells, Boston

No skills are required to join in this concert inspired by Edgar Allan Poe's poem "Bells." An ensemble will distribute 50 bells to attendees to perform a musical piece near Poe's statue by Boston Common. "There's a conductor that cues. It's a very beautiful sound and it's a nice example of the power of musical collaboration," Friedman says. makemusicboston.org

Usher-Themed Carpool Karaoke, Chattanooga, Tennessee

Attendees are encouraged to release their inner Usher in the pop superstar's hometown. Inspired by the singer's 2017 Carpool Karaoke appearance on "The Late, Late Show with James Corden," visitors can settle into a parked car and jam. Although performances will be streamed on Facebook, it's not meant to be a performance, Friedman says. "The car doors will be closed. It's more of a personal experience." makemusicday.org/chattanooga

Louie, Louie Play-a-Long, Issaquah, Washington

Although the lyrics are a mystery to most, fans of the Kingsmen's 1963 hit *Louie, Louie* will gather on the steps of city hall for an all-instrument flash mob

performance. "There's something about this song that really speaks to people even if they can't understand what the words actually are," Friedman says. downtownissaquah.com/world-music-day/

Ukulele jam session, Mt. Rushmore National Park, South Dakota

As the founding fathers watch, the Black Hills Ukulele Orchestra will bring their island-sound performance to Mount Rushmore. Beginners are welcome, although they will need to bring their own instrument, Friedman says. "The ukulele had a resurgence a few years ago and it really hasn't let up."

makemusicday.org/black-hills/

Shower Singing, Portland, Maine

Some of the best musical performances happen when no one is watching. Organizers in Portland have planned a work-around by setting up a claw-foot tub and shower complete with a sound system in the city's Lobsterman Park. People will be able to close the curtain and belt out their favorite songs, Friedman says. "You have the feeling that you're by yourself and you can sing as loudly as you want."

makemusicportland.org/

Street studios, New York

Most hit songs are crafted by engineers, who massage and manipulate sound on mixing boards. The public can give it a try by recording a brief vocal or instrumental performance, or even talking. Volunteer DJs and producers will then loop the audio sample and invite others to harmonize with it, building a multi-layered piece of original music. "Any sound can become part of a musical piece if it's filtered through the mind of a creative producer," Friedman says.

makemusicny.org

Harmonica lessons, Allen, Texas

The often-overlooked mouth organ gets its moment in the sun during Make Music Day, as the Hohner company plans to donate 4,000 harmonicas to events in 40 different cities. In the Dallas suburb of Allen, a blues musician will lead a literal blow-out jam session. waterscreek.com/event/make-music-day-allen/2145507791/



In Chicago, the Philharmonic will play alongside amateurs on Make Music Day.
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