



Contact:

Public Relations

San Francisco Symphony

415.503.5474

publicrelations@sfsymphony.org

www.sfsymphony.org/press

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SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY IS JOINED BY LYLE LOVETT AND HIS ACOUSTIC GROUP TO CELEBRATE HARDLY STRICTLY BLUEGRASS, SEPTEMBER 13, 2025, AT DAVIES SYMPHONY HALL

Presented in partnership with Hardly Strictly Bluegrass, the concert celebrates the iconic San Francisco music festival's 25th anniversary

Tickets, starting at \$49, go on sale July 19 at sfsymphony.org

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—Presented in partnership with Hardly Strictly Bluegrass (HSB), the San Francisco Symphony and singer, composer, and actor Lyle Lovett join forces Saturday, September 13, for a celebration of the iconic San Francisco music festival's 25th anniversary. Lovett and the San Francisco Symphony will be joined by conductor Edwin Outwater, and Lovett's Acoustic Group.

“Hardly Strictly Bluegrass has been an important part of the cultural soul of San Francisco since the very first free festival in Golden Gate Park in 2001,” said San Francisco Symphony CEO

Matthew Spivey. “It has been a joyful celebration of music, community, and the spirit of San Francisco for 25 years, and we are honored to help celebrate the festival’s anniversary this fall in collaboration with HSB and Lyle Lovett. This concert also gives us an opportunity to remember and honor Nancy Hellman Bechtle—a beloved member of both the Symphony and Hardly Strictly families—whose enthusiastic support of the arts and deep love for San Francisco had a profound impact on the cultural life of our city.”

Nancy Hellman Bechtle, president of the San Francisco Symphony from 1987 to 2001, was the younger sister of Hardly Strictly Bluegrass’s founder, Warren Hellman, who created the free music festival in 2001. Bechtle performed at the festival with her band, Nancy & the Lambchops, from 2015 to 2019, and as part of the Go To Hell Man Band, which features family and friends of Warren Hellman, from 2014 to 2019. In addition to her work at the San Francisco Symphony, Nancy Bechtle was a noted force for good in San Francisco for many years and served as vice chair for the National Park Foundation, president of the War Memorial Board of Trustees, chair of the Presidio Trust Board of Directors, chair of the Sugar Bowl Corporation, and board member for the Charles Schwab Corporation, among other positions. She passed away in 2021.

In May 2012, banjo players Bill Evans, Scott Nygaard, and Jody Stecher performed three pieces for banjo in Tribute to Warren Hellman on a San Francisco Symphony program titled “Barbary Coast and Beyond: Music from the Gold Rush to the Panama-Pacific Exposition” following Hellman’s death in December 2011. San Francisco Symphony violinists Paul Brancato, Jeremy Constant, and Sarn Oliver and bassist William Ritchen also appeared at Hardly Strictly Bluegrass in 2007, performing bluegrass standards and original compositions as the Symphony Bluegrass Ramblers. Members of the San Francisco Symphony family, including Concertmaster Alexander Barantschik and Michael Tilson Thomas’s husband Joshua Robison, have also performed at the festival, joining Bechtle on stage with Nancy and the Lambchops.

“The San Francisco Symphony has been a cornerstone of live music in the Bay Area for over a century. Hardly Strictly Bluegrass is honored to mark our 25th anniversary with its world-class musicians and the one-and-only Lyle Lovett, while also supporting the Symphony’s Music and Mentors program, which nurtures the next generation of musical artists in our public schools,” said Hardly Strictly Bluegrass Executive Director John Caldon. “This first-ever collaboration brings the meadows of Golden Gate Park to the stage of Davies Symphony Hall, uniting two beloved San Francisco institutions in a celebration for the entire community. It’s a beautiful way to honor the legacy of our dear friend Nancy Hellman Bechtle—and an uplifting reminder that music, in all its forms, brings us together.”

Hardly Strictly Bluegrass’s 25th anniversary festival takes place October 3–5, 2025, in Golden Gate Park. The festival lineup will be announced starting July 23 at hardlystrictlybluegrass.com.

Singer, composer, and actor **Lyle Lovett** has broadened the definition of American music in a career that spans 14 albums. Coupled with his gift for storytelling, the Texas-based musician fuses elements of country, swing, jazz, folk, gospel, and blues in a convention-defying manner that breaks down barriers. Whether touring as a duo or with his Acoustic Group or his Large Band, Lovett’s live performances show not only the breadth of this Texas legend’s deep talents but also the diversity of his influences, making him one of the most compelling and captivating musicians in popular music. Since his self-titled debut in 1986, Lovett has evolved into one of music’s most vibrant and iconic performers. In addition to winning four Grammy Awards, Lovett received the

Americana Music Association's inaugural Trailblazer Award in 2007 and was named Texas State Musician by the Texas Commission on the Arts in 2011. His works, rich and eclectic, are some of the most beloved of any artist working today.

Tickets for Lyle Lovett with the San Francisco Symphony, starting at \$49, go on sale Saturday, July 19, at 10:00am. Tickets will be available online via sfsymphony.org or by calling the Davies Symphony Hall box office at 415.864.6000 beginning at 12:00pm the same day. Patrons have the option to save up to 25% over single tickets when selecting any three concerts from the 2025–26 season as part of a Compose Your Own subscription package. Subscribers and donors also have the option to purchase tickets before the general public beginning July 1.

Two dollars from every ticket purchase will go towards the San Francisco Symphony's Music & Mentors program, which provides vital services to orchestras, bands, and world music instrumental programs in San Francisco United School District (SFUSD) middle schools and high schools.

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

Tickets

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Location

Davies Symphony Hall is located at 201 Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco.

SPECIAL EVENT

Celebrating Hardly Strictly Bluegrass: Lyle Lovett and his Acoustic Group with the SF Symphony

Saturday, September 13, 2025, at 7:30pm

Edwin Outwater conductor

Lyle Lovett guest artist

San Francisco Symphony

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