



STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF GENERAL SERVICES  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**SALSA LEGEND JOSE 'EL CANARIO' ALBERTO TO HEADLINE HISPANIC HERITAGE  
CELEBRATION PRESENTED BY SONYMA ON SEPTEMBER 13**

**Event Will Take Place Inside the Empire State Plaza Convention Center**

New York State Office of General Services (OGS) Commissioner RoAnn Destito today announced the Empire State Plaza Convention Center in Albany will be transformed into a family-friendly Latin dance party for the New York State Hispanic Heritage Celebration presented by SONYMA. The event will be held from 5 to 10 p.m. on Saturday, September 13.

"This great annual event gives us an opportunity to celebrate the history, culture, and contributions of Hispanic New Yorkers," Commissioner Destito said. "It's a perfect ending to our 2014 Summer at the Plaza season of events, and I want to thank SONYMA and all our generous sponsors for making this event possible."

Darryl C. Towns, Commissioner/CEO of New York State Homes and Community Renewal, said, "The State of New York Mortgage Agency is proud to sponsor the Hispanic Heritage Celebration. We look forward to this exciting family-friendly event and we hope that people of all ages will enjoy the food, entertainment, and special activities for kids sponsored by SONYMA, as well as important information on SONYMA programs that help people achieve the dream of homeownership."

Headlining the festival, Jose "El Canario" Alberto is a master improviser and one of Latin music's most influential vocalists. His voice is widely adored by salsa fans, and his exceptional whistling abilities led fans to give him the nickname "**El Canario**" (The Canary). As a pioneer of a new style of salsa called salsa romántica, which arose at a time when classic, big-band salsa, was losing popularity on the Latin record charts, El Canario focused mainly on the romantic, softer aspects of the music, creating a mixture of earlier salsa brava and the ballad style.

In addition to the music and dancing, visitors to the Empire State Plaza will be able to enjoy delicious food and beverages as well as family friendly activities throughout the event. A SONYMA Welcome Home New York exhibit will feature information for first-time home buyers, and a children's building workshop hosted by Home Depot, arts and crafts, and face painting for fun for the whole family.

The festival will kick off at 5 p.m. with a performance by Alex Torres and His Latin Orchestra. Formed October 1980 in Amsterdam, N.Y., this 12-piece orchestra is led by the Bronx-born bassist Alex Torres. They perform an original blend of Afro-Caribbean rhythms such as salsa, merengue, cha-cha, bomba, plena, and Latin jazz.

New York-born singer Brenda K. Starr will take the stage next. Starr had the opportunity to make her first demo at the age of 12. Two years later, Starr was signing up for her first record deal and climbing music charts with the Grammy-nominated pop ballad "I Still Believe" and a club/dance song called "What You See Is What You Get." She decided to turn to tropical music and made her Spanish-language debut with the release of "Te Sigo Esperando."

### **Performance Schedule**

5:00 Alex Torres and his Latin Orchestra  
6:45 Brenda K Starr  
8:30 Salsa Legend Jose "El Canario" Alberto

Free parking will be available in the cathedral lot off Madison Avenue and in the East Garage on the corners of Madison Avenue, Eagle Street, and Philip Street. Parking is also available for \$5 at the visitor or V lot underneath the plaza.

No alcoholic beverages, coolers (defined as rigid insulated containers), or glass containers of any kind; animals or pets (excludes ADA-defined service animals) will be allowed. Alcohol will be served by vendors to adults with proper identification.

Additional sponsors of the event include Hannaford, New York's 529 College Savings Program, United Healthcare, NY State of Health: The Official Health Plan Marketplace, Brotherhood – America's Oldest Winery, JAMZ 96.3, Holiday Inn Express, Metroland, and Albany.com.

For event updates, follow @plazaevents on Twitter or Empire State Plaza Events on Facebook, or call (518) 474-0549. For additional information, including ground rules, visit our website at [www.ogs.ny.gov](http://www.ogs.ny.gov).

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