

GET INTO YOUR ELEMENT!

Chinatown's Blockbuster Contemporary Art Festival Returns for a Third Year
Alleyways & Streets Are Transformed by Elements Theme: Earth, Metal, Fire, Air & Water



(San Francisco, Calif.) —Edge on the Square (Edge) presents High Five: Exploring the Elemental Forces of Chinatown, its highly anticipated Annual Contemporary Art Festival on Saturday, September 7, 2024 from 3:00-10:00 pm.

This year's theme centers on the five elements: Earth, Fire, Metal, Water, and Air. Five Chinatown alleyways and streets will represent an element that is interpreted by artists in their activations:

Earth 土 | Grant Avenue
Fire 火 | Waverly Place
Metal 金 | Ross Alley
Water 水 | Wentworth Place
Air 气 | Joice Street

Like Edge's previous two festivals, Neon Was Never Brighter ('22) and Under the Same Sun ('23), High Five aims to draw visitors to Chinatown and support the city's collective effort to revitalize the neighborhood's social, cultural and economic landscape. To date, this festival series has attracted thousands of people to the neighborhood. These visitors spend ample time exploring and patronizing Chinatown's art, entertainment, restaurants and shops.

The one-day event spotlights Asian-American and BIPOC artists and their multimedia art activations, installations, and performances throughout the neighborhood. Alongside cultural partners, arts organizations, local restaurants and vendors, and community residents, a collective voice will amplify unity and sing solidarity all over the streets of Chinatown.

A new component premieres at this year's festival — food. The 700 block of Grant Avenue, across the street from Edge, will host an array of culinary journeys created by San Francisco and Bay Area partners. Damansara Malaysian, a woman-owned restaurant from Noe Valley will be there alongside KORNER, the Oakland spot known for its Hawaiian treats. Ube Area will offer all things ube by Ren Pulido and Rina Temporosa, home bakers who taste tested new desserts on their nine nieces and nephews. See our festival program for more food elements from local Chinatown restaurants at High Five.

Edge's Executive Director Joanne Lee says that "with the night markets, new retail shops, Edge's programs and exhibitions, and steady increase of visitors, Chinatown has been on a revival streak. And it's thrilling to see Edge be a part of that rejuvenation. The long view, of course, is to leverage the momentum and turn this streak into fertile roots that keep the neighborhood thriving for decades to come. Our festival is an integral part of that effort."

The innovative theme of seeing Chinatown through the elements underlines Edge’s commitment to artistic creativity and experimentation by and for the community. Head Curator Candace Huey recalled: “When I curated the first festival, we saw the event as a glimpse into the future of not only Edge, but of Chinatown. This year, we wanted to expand the experience of Chinatown by uncovering its alternate realms through the five elements. This approach may seem less literal, but in no way do the results lack substance. The creative collaborators and local merchants have really embraced this theme in their work, and we can’t wait to surprise our festival-goers again.” Like last year’s festival, Huey invited guest curatorial collaborators Aay Preston-Myint, Colin Choy Kimzey and Trisha Lagaso Goldberg to envision Chinatown for High Five together.



Artists & Artwork Highlights (selection):



Joshua Moreno, *sediment sediments*

Earth 土 | Grant Avenue

Inspired by the element of earth, Joshua Moreno will outline and mark objects found on the sidewalks of Chinatown, focusing on both permanent features like cracks and stains and ephemeral items such as fallen leaves. Joshua explores the significance of sidewalks as contemporary archaeological and geological sites

within the urban landscape through the curious, playful markings. Visitors are invited to “find” all these whimsical and curious markings throughout Chinatown and to participate in outlining additional objects on the sidewalks and in Portsmouth Square.

NONSPACE

Metal 金 | Ross Alley

NONSPACE—the band of DARKHEART, is a sci-fi concert narrative by Golda Sargento that plays smoldering torch punk, confession rock, and diaspora blues. NONSPACE is Golda Supernova on acoustic guitar and vocals, Carli Mari on bass, guitar, and vocals, Chris “Burd” Quines on guitar and bass, and Blair Switch on drums.



Gabby Miller, *SKY MEDITATION*

Fire 火 | Waverly Place

This work will create a temporary refuge in the midst of bustling Chinatown. A platform will be available and an invitation will be offered for a guided meditation that invites passersby to “sky gaze.” In Dzogchen, a school of meditation in Tibetan Buddhism, sky gazing is a core practice. Nearby, a golden neon symbol of a Wheel of Joy

spins continuously, melding the glow of the sun with the possibility of freedom for our minds. As the meditation begins, we are invited to sit or recline together, generating a momentary unity of practice that attunes us to a kind of fire energy, which generates heat and the awareness of being alive.

Ashwini Bhat, WISH YOU WERE HERE

Earth 土 | Grant Avenue

In *WISH YOU WERE HERE*, an interactive performance invites the public to join the artists in creating a collaborative ephemeral installation involving a tree, thread, and clay. The prompt is simple: call to mind someone or something you love, shape clay into a small offering, and thread it to the tree. We'll begin and end this assemblage of intimate gift-objects with a question: Can we move through our world more tenderly, in a way that is open to other living and non-living beings who share this space with us?



uta tamate weiss, fragmented moon 🩸 🩸 *blood vessel*

Water 水 | Wentworth Place

Water simultaneously separates Chinatown’s diasporic community from their homeland and connects them to it. In *fragmented moon* 🩸 🩸 🩸 *blood vessel*, uta tamate weiss and kai tseng explore water’s paradoxical role as a both a pathway and a boundary, geographically and generationally. Performing with

taiko drums and guzheng zithers, uta and kai ask the viewers to contemplate the channels connecting memories of the body, from generation to generation, through what they refer to as “blood waterways”. Through these waterways, each one of us as blood vessels/water bearers carry and transmit the stories of our human and nonhuman ancestors.

Sofía Córdova, GUILLOTINÆ WannaCry, Green:

Savage Sauvage Salvaje

Air 气 | Joice Street

Sofía Córdova’s multimedia practice illuminates the joyous survival and righteous anger of indigenous people and people of color around the world, in the face of the violence of racism, classism and climate change. Córdova’s video, *GUILLOTINÆ WannaCry, Green: Savage Sauvage Salvaje*, is set in lush forests and silver waters, but also invokes the power of air through its focus on speech, movement, and invocation. Media snippets, poetry, and historical accounts are intermittently beamed across a jungle landscape as brown bodies dance, chant, and struggle against invisible forces. This new ritual, according to the artist, “approaches ‘wilderness’ as a collaborator in revolt and rejoicing.” It is both commentary and protest against global economies of extraction and exploitation.



AstraLogik

Metal 金 | Ross Alley

AstraLogik is a Queer Pinay musical duo from the Bay Area, California, known for their chill-folk-R&B-soul music that reflects their Filipino-American, queer, and healing identities. They discovered soundbaths as a healing modality, blending digitally produced frequencies with

traditional sound bath instruments. Initially a solo therapy during the pandemic, their sound baths evolved into virtual and now in-person community events. These sessions have deepened their empathy, compassion, and reflection, benefiting diverse communities. Charito focuses on

trauma and mental health in her music, while Chen, an experienced body worker, emphasizes energy and holistic body health.

See all [High Five Festival Artists & Program](#)

High Five festival takes place Saturday, September 7, 2024 from 3:00 – 10:00 pm. It is free and open to the public.

Press is happily invited to a “behind-the-scenes” with festival artists by appointment.

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Festival Artists & Bios ([click here](#))

AstraLogik, Audiopharmacy, Eliza O. Barrios, Sharmi Basu, Ashwini Bhat, Sofía Córdova, champoy, Sylvia Hughes-Gonzales, Vida Kuang, LionDanceMe, Gabby Miller, Joshua Moreno, Nihar, NONSPACE, redbeans, Charlene Tan, Kai Tseng x uta tamate weiss, Yiu Yiu Chinatown Records, Yoriko Yamamoto, Minoosh Zomorodinia, among others.

Edge on the Square

Located at the heart of San Francisco Chinatown and the first project envisioned by Chinatown Media & Arts Collaborative ([CMAC](#)), Edge on the Square is a year-round contemporary art hub for activists, artists, designers, educators, entrepreneurs, scholars, and technologists. Cultivating an inventive and collaborative model for contemporary art experimentation and visitor experience, our programs will harness the energy and excitement of art and media to expand the neighborhood’s dynamic artistic and cultural diversity, as well as our understanding of our collective history and the full spectrum of American pluralism. We believe that the transformative power of art is critical to strengthening communities and catalyzing positive social change. **800 Grant Avenue, San Francisco**

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