

For Immediate Release

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***Influential Community-Powered Festival Life is Living Returns with
In-Person Celebration in Historic Lil Bobby Hutton Park after
2-year Virtual Chrysalis***

LIFE is LIVING establishes a new model for partnerships between diverse and under-resourced communities, green action agencies, and the contemporary arts world.

[Oakland, CA] — On Saturday, October 8, celebrated literary arts organization [Youth Speaks](#) in partnership with the **Anonymous Fund at the East Bay Community Foundation, Cal Shakes, the Oakland Athletics, and a cohort of over 100 partner organizations** will host the 15th annual [Life is Living Festival](#) at Lil Bobby Hutton Park in West Oakland as they return from a 2-year virtual hiatus.

“Life is Living has been a model and prototype for many Oakland festivals that have developed over its 15 years of service. The foundation is built on the collaboration of communities, artists, organizers, activists, and entrepreneurs who gather in this historic park to celebrate legacies and life. It honors our presence in this city, and affirms the future we want to see, the Oakland we want to be. This is a nexus for the next generation's Black Arts Movement with dancers, musicians, and visual and performance artists, sharing their styles and their talents, affirming a purpose to the art. It is a family reunion when those who have been driven out return to share memories and make new ones. Life is Living is more than a festival — more than a community gathering, more than a Black-centered artistic experience— Life is Living is an imperative, a reminder that the survival programs of the BPP were successful because, despite all that we have endured in this city, we are still here, we are still living.” **Hodari B. Davis**, Life is Living Co-Founder, Partner for Edutainment 4 Equity.

Since 2008, Life is Living has grown from a festival that uses art to foster environmental justice to a mobilized campaign much larger in scope. Currently led by the Life is Living Cohort, Co-Founders **Hodari B. Davis, Chinaka Hodge, Marc Bamuthi Joseph**, and Producing Director **Joan Osato**, Life is Living serves as an incubator for a multigenerational community of local and national artists including **Brett Cook, Theaster Gates, Estria Miyashiro**, and a host of others.

Life is Living is bigger than the festival it has grown into over the last 15 years. This event marks a monumental moment where we have the privilege of **honoring, celebrating, and**

acknowledging the incalculable contributions of the Black and Brown artists and cultural workers in Oakland who have been on the frontlines keeping us safe and sane through the toughest parts of the pandemic. This festival is the physical manifestation of the belief that **artists are an essential** part of Oakland's economic and social vitality.

“Through years of the pandemic and the hard losses we’ve all experienced — now more than ever our community needs the collective space of joy, active participation, creativity and communion that is Life is Living. I’ve never been so humbled by such feats of love and greatness brought to you by so many.” **Joan Osato**, Life is Living Co-Founder, Youth Speaks Producing Director.

After pivoting to online programming for the last two years, organizers are ecstatic to return to their roots in Lil Bobby Hutton park inviting **hundreds of vendors and community organizations** to celebrate everything that is beautiful about Oakland. The festival also includes curated zones for children and youth, a skate park, a free breakfast program in the spirit of the Black Panther Party, an immersive sound experience, an REI rock climbing wall, an arts and culture town hall featuring nine mayoral candidates, [YBCA Gardeners of Belonging](#) installation, and the unveiling of [Exhibit-A](#). The coveted main stage is packed with an all-star lineup including Grammy-Nominated Los Rakas, Grammy-Award winning Alphabet Rockers, Jordan Hawkins, Vikter Duplaix, and more.

WHO: Bay Area artists, activists, Oakland community leaders, West Oakland residents, social impact organizations, Youth Speaks staff, youth performers, musicians

WHEN: Saturday, October 8, 2022, from 10am-6pm

WHERE: Lil Bobby Hutton Park - 1651 Adeline Street, Oakland

WHAT: Community-powered celebration and eco-urban arts festival, live music, live poetry performances, DJs, free breakfast program, Oakland mayoral candidates town hall, skate park, crafts, vendors, youth dance battle, rock climbing wall

VISUALS: Captivating performance images, community gathering, joy, expression, art installations, celebrating, dancing, cheering,

COVID POLICY: Masks required at all times indoors, social distancing

RSVP: [Eventbrite](#)

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***Youth Speaks** creates spaces that challenge young people to develop and amplify their voices as creators of social change. By providing free arts education to youth with limited access, Youth Speaks programs empower young people with opportunities to discover and develop their own*

voices. As the leading literary arts and spoken word organization, Youth Speaks has served hundreds of thousands of youth in the Bay Area and across the nation over the last 25 years.