

THE BIG SQUEEZE ACCORDION CONTEST 2019

ENTRY RULES – ALL CITIES

This is the 13th year for The Big Squeeze Accordion Contest and we are so excited to find and showcase young accordionists from across Texas!!

About the Program

The Big Squeeze is a statewide contest where Texan accordion players showcase their performance abilities in three main accordion genre categories: **Polka, Cajun & Zydeco and Conjunto**. The Polka genre will include German, Czech, and Polish traditions. Cajun & Zydeco will include Creole, Cajun and Zydeco musical traditions. Conjunto will include Conjunto, Norteño and Tejano. Please contact Texas Folklife if you are unsure of which category your music fits. Most showcases will be free, open to the public, and feature performances by local musicians.

For those of you who have been following this program, there were changes in recent years. The Conjunto Category now has two age categories (one for ages 17 and under, and one for ages 18-21) and the Polka Category was extended to ages 25 and under. The Conjunto grand prize category for ages 18-21 is named in loving memory of Anthony Ortiz, Jr., a former Big Squeeze finalist and talented professional accordionist who passed away in 2017.

NEW FOR 2019

In 2019, if you live within **20** miles of a showcase, you must audition at a showcase. We will only allow video entries if you do NOT live within 20 miles of an audition location. We will also have the addition of the Conjunto Semi-Finals Round, due to the overwhelming amount of conjunto entries in recent years.

As always, The Big Squeeze Contest and Texas Folklife strive to represent the state's geographic and cultural diversity. Since 2007, over 300 young musicians from more than 35 Texas towns and cities have participated. Contestants represent communities across this great state, including the Rio Grande Valley, Houston, Gulf Coast, Greater Dallas Area, San Antonio, Lubbock, the Permian Basin and more!

The Big Squeeze is supported by the members and board of Texas Folklife and Hohner, Inc.; and by grants from the Texas Commission on the Arts, the Cultural Arts Division of the City of Austin Economic Development Department, H-E-B, Music Water, Texas Music Office, Southeast Texas Arts Council, the City of Houston through the Miller Theatre Advisory Board, and Rancho Alegre Radio. Additional support is provided by regional partners including Ennis Czech Music Festival, Museum of the Gulf Coast, Cajun Sounds Internet Radio, Latino Cultural Center Dallas, .zydecoevents.com, Texas Polka News, Multicultural Engagement & Counseling through the Arts (MECA), La Joya Independent School District, Los Fresnos Consolidated Independent School District, Roma Independent School District, Museum of South Texas History, Conjunto Heritage Taller, the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, Bullock Texas State History Museum, and more!

Read on for the locations for 2019 and/or details on how to enter...

The Three Big Squeeze Categories

Conjunto Category

- Conjunto Grand Prize, Ages 17 and under
- Anthony Ortiz, Jr. Conjunto Grand Prize, Ages 18-21

Cajun & Zydeco Category

- Cajun & Zydeco Grand Prize, Ages 21 and under

Polka Category

- Polka Grand Prize, Ages 25 and under

Big Squeeze Showcase Dates & Locations, as of 1/10/19

Showcases in Houston and the Rio Grande Valley to be announced. Keep checking our confirmed showcase website at texasfolklife.org/bigsqueeze2019 back for new dates / locations announcing!

- 1. Ennis - Ennis Polka Festival - Sokol Activity Center - February 9, 2019
- 2. Port Arthur - Cajun Accordion Workshop (not an official audition) - February 16, 2019
- 3. Dallas - Latino Cultural Center - March 21, 2019
- 4. Houston - TBA
- 5. Houston - TBA
- 6. Roma - Roma ISD Performing Arts Center - April 6, 2019
- 7. San Antonio - Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center - April 7, 2019
- 8. Los Fresnos - TBA
- 9. Palmview - Palmview High School - April 13, 2019
- 10. Conjunto Semi-Finals - Museum of South Texas in Edinburg - April 27, 2019
- 11. Big Squeeze Finals & Concert - Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin - May 11, 2019

Once again, if you can't make it to a showcase, you can submit your songs digitally. Read section above called "How To Enter The Big Squeeze 2019."

Big Squeeze 2019 Prizes

- Category Finalists win:
 - Hotel accommodations and meals in Austin for two nights;
 - Promotional support and performance opportunities from Texas Folklife;
 - \$100 cash and other special gifts;
 - Other items TBA.
- The Grand Prize Winners win:
 - Promotional support and performance opportunities from Texas Folklife;
 - Additional cash award;
 - 2019 performance opportunities in Austin and Houston;
 - Additional sponsorship opportunities & prizes forthcoming.

All selections, contest outcomes and prizes are awarded at the discretion of Texas Folklife and Big Squeeze judges. This contest may be canceled at any time at the sole discretion of Texas Folklife.

How to Enter The Big Squeeze 2019!

Want to participate in the Big Squeeze 2019? Follow these steps!

***Accordianists can enter by performing two songs at any of the below showcases where they will be videotaped by Texas Folklife **OR** they can submit a video entry digitally, by mail or e-mail. **NEW FOR 2019:** if your home residence is located within 20 miles of a scheduled Big Squeeze audition, you must attend a live audition.

We allow digital submissions for those living further away from local showcases. However, if they make it to finals, they must travel to Austin to compete at the Finals at the Bullock Texas History Museum.***

1. Read the entry rules....so, please finish this document!

2. **Fill out the entry form.**
 - a. For the paper or online version, go to: texasfolklife.org/bigsqueeze2019. Print and mail to us or submit Google form, if using online version.
3. **Decide if you are going to perform at any of the showcases above in person or submit two songs digitally.** For the most current list of showcases, go to: texasfolklife.org/bigsqueeze2019. Keep checking back for new dates / locations announcing!
 - a. Applicants can enter by performing two songs at a showcase where they will be videotaped by Texas Folklife or submit a video entry digitally, by mail or e-mail. **They do not have to do both.**
 - b. If there is not a showcase scheduled in your area, you can still enter by submitting your song performances digitally by doing ANY of the below. Make sure you indicate on your form how we should expect your submission.
 - i. To submit a digital submission of your two songs with your online form, go to: texasfolklife.org/bigsqueeze2019.
 - ii. Mailing a USB Drive with video and photo to The Big Squeeze at: Texas Folklife c/o The Big Squeeze 1708 Houston Street Austin, TX 78756
 - iii. Mailing a DVD with my video and photo to The Big Squeeze at: Texas Folklife c/o The Big Squeeze 1708 Houston Street Austin, TX 78756
 - iv. E-mailing a YouTube Link with my video and a photo to bigsqueeze@texasfolklife.org(link sends e-mail)
 - v. E-mailing a video from my phone and a photo to bigsqueeze@texasfolklife.org

Big Squeeze 2019 Judging & Rounds

- **Round 1:** All entrants submit their songs either digitally or in the mail and/or perform at one of the roaming accordion showcases. The three main accordion genre categories: **Polka, Cajun & Zydeco, and Conjunto.**
 - After receiving submissions in the mail, digitally and seeing performances at each regional showcase, a panel of esteemed musicians and music industry judges will use a numerical ranking system to select up to ten Conjunto semi-finalists and later, three finalists in each musical category.
 - **Judging criteria will include: Technical Proficiency, Song Interpretation, and Stage Presence. Details and scoring weight of each judging criteria section:**
 - **Technical Proficiency: Accuracy, Execution, & Chops (40%)**
 - **Song Interpretation: Stylistic Choices, Innovation, & Originality (40%)**
 - **Stage Presence: Level of Comfort on Stage, Engagement of Audience, Poise (20%)**
- **Semi-Finals Round:** FOR CONJUNTO ONLY - Semi-Finals will be conducted in Edinburg on Saturday April 27, 2019 at the Museum for South Texas History. Six (6) contestants from each of the two Conjunto age categories will be chosen to perform with accompanying musician(s) and three Category Finalists from each age category will be chosen to advance to the next round in Austin. Semi-Finalists **MAY** bring one accompanist of their own, if that is preferred. Accompanist must arrive in the same vehicle and plan on rehearsing at the **SAME TIME** as the contestant.
- **Round 2:** Three Category Finalists in each of the three main accordion genre categories (**Polka, Cajun & Zydeco, and Conjunto**) will be announced in early May 2019. Category Finalists will perform for prizes at the Big Squeeze Accordion Finals on Saturday May 11, 2019 at the Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin (hotel provided by Texas Folklife on May 10-11).
 - Category Finalists will perform their two songs accompanied by a house band of professional players provided by Texas Folklife.
 - Category Finalists **MAY** bring one accompanist of their own, if that is preferred. However, Texas Folklife will not cover that person's hotel room or travel costs. Accompanist must arrive in the same vehicle and plan on rehearsing at the **SAME TIME** as the contestant.

- The house band will receive copies of each finalist's songs and rehearse in advance. Contestants will be 5-10 minutes to go over the selection with the band during rehearsal on the morning of the event.
- **Round 3:** One Grand Prize Winner in each of the three main accordion genre categories (**Polka, Cajun & Zydeco and Conjunto**) will perform at the Accordion Kings & Queens Festival Saturday, June 1, 2019, at the Miller Outdoor Theatre in Houston (hotel and dinner provided).
 - The four (4) Grand Prize Winners will perform one of their songs live at Accordion Kings & Queens on June 1, 2019 at Houston's Miller Outdoor Theatre, accompanied by the house band.
 - Grand Prize Winners **MAY** bring one accompanist of their own, if that is preferred. However, Texas Folklife will not cover that person's hotel room or travel costs. Accompanist must arrive in the same vehicle and plan on rehearsing at the **SAME TIME** as the contestant.

Big Squeeze Criteria For Entry

- Applicants must fit age requirements of applicable category as of May 11, 2019. Applicants that turn do not fit age requirements of applicable category on or before May 11, 2019 are not eligible.
- Entrants confirm that if under 18 and picked as a finalist, they are required to provide written permission from a parent or guardian.
- Applicants **MUST** currently be a resident of the State of Texas.
- Applicants **MUST** include press-worthy photo with entry form to be considered.
- Applicants **MUST** submit complete entry form to be considered.
- Applicants can enter by performing two songs at a showcase where they will be videotaped by Texas Folklife or submit a video entry digitally, by mail or e-mail. **APPLICANTS DO NOT HAVE TO DO BOTH**
- If chosen for the contest, the two songs submitted with their application or showcase performance **MUST** be performed.
- If selected as a Conjunto Semi-Finalist, contestants **MUST** come to Edinburg on Saturday, April 27, 2019 to perform/compete at the Museum of South Texas History.
- If selected as a Category Finalist, entrants **MUST** come to Austin on Saturday, May 11, 2019 to perform/compete at the Bullock Texas State History Museum.
- If selected as a Grand Prize Winner, entrants will be required to perform on Saturday, June 1, 2019 in Houston at Accordion Kings & Queens.
- Entrants agree to participate in video, audio, archival and social media documentation of the contest.
- Entrants grant Texas Folklife or its representatives the right to record and reproduce their performances and allow the use of their names and likenesses in promotion. Texas Folklife upholds all copyright laws, the contestants will not be held liable for any rights infringement.
- Entrants have read and understand the Big Squeeze Accordion Contest 2019 Official Rules.
- Entrants confirm that my contact information will be provided to Texas Folklife for future years of this program and for our Public Relations and Community Outreach efforts within the participating communities and their media outlets.
- Entrants authorize the verification of the information provided on this form.
- Entrants understand I can be disqualified at any time, at the sole discretion of Texas Folklife.
- Entrants understand that all selections, contest outcomes and prizes are awarded at the sole discretion of Texas Folklife.
- Entrants understand that this contest may be canceled at any time.

Questions? Comments? Concerns? Send an email to bigsqueeze@texasfolklife.org.

We can't wait to see you at the Big Squeeze!