

HONK!

FESTIVAL OF ACTIVIST STREET BANDS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HONK! Festival (save the dates Oct. 9-11)

23 July 2026

Street Music Festival

(activist street bands /

variety of styles /

unplugged DIY music /

held outdoors rain or shine /

free and open to all)

HONK! Festival: more specifics made available by mid-September.

HONK! Festival media contact:

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[Representative full band images from last

year can be found at honkfest.org/pr/, representative

videos at youtube.com/honkfestival.]

[Photo: courtesy of [DC Activist Street Band](#)]

HONK! FESTIVAL 2026



[DC Activist Street Band, followed by the 700-foot-long
"We the People" preamble banner, during the We The People
250 March, held in DC on July 4, 2026]

TWENTY FIRST ANNUAL

Festival of Activist Street Bands

SAVE THE DATES

October 9-11, 2026
(rain or shine)

based in
Davis Square,
Somerville
and
Harvard Square,
Cambridge

**FREE AND
OPEN TO ALL**

(Somerville & Cambridge, MA) Heads up! The 21st annual **HONK! Festival** is already in its fine-tuning stage, preparing to raise a merry impossible-to-ignore ruckus during this year's Indigenous Peoples' Day weekend, with the Festival covering Friday thru Sunday, October 9-11. When the initial call went out in the Spring for activist street band participation, over 65 bands applied, hailing from all over the country. It will take a while to narrow down the participation to a manageable size. But suffice it to say that this year's Festival will indeed be very robust. All prompted by the urgency to loudly convene and joyously perform. With a common goal, to gather in support of "No justice. No peace."

If you are not familiar with HONK! – really? – It was initiated in Somerville back in 2006 by members of what was then called the Second Line Social Aid and Pleasure Society Brass Band. Then, with a formal name change in 2024, the **Good Trouble Brass Band** continues to be the local organizing host band for the HONK! phenomenon, an international movement. Feel free to check it all out at HONK!'s own source: honkfest.org. Followed by perusing en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HONK! for the full scope of HONK! world-wide.

“By describing HONK! bands as
activist, we are referring to
bands which are socially engaged
— some in direct action
and outright political protest,
others in community building,
be it performing for social justice
or community-based

organizations or conducting workshops in the public schools.

Further, by performing at street level, usually for free, without sound amplification and with very little distance between artist and audience, HONK! bands create a participatory spectacle to reclaim public space in ways that place them at the heart of activist politics.”
(honkfest.org/about/)

In years prior to 2025, **HONK! outdoor band concerts**, held rain or shine throughout Somerville and its adjacent cities, included activist bands travelling in from beyond our U.S. borders. However, given the signs of these unsettling times, the bands selected this year will all come from the United States. In a gesture of solidarity with street bands from around the world, and inspired by its success last year, HONK! will once again host a video livestream of international bands, outdoors on Elm Street on Saturday, October 10th.

Other initiatives that will give more chances for locals to actively participate include **ArtHONK!**, which offers artists, activists, and community groups an opportunity to be directly involved in creating free interactive art-making activities for the public during HONK! Saturday in Davis Square. Plus, this year's HONK! will be offering new opportunities for audience vocal participation, inspired by the **Singing Resistance** movement born out of Minneapolis shortly after the killing of Renee Good.

Other gatherings planned throughout Somerville's neighborhoods will be familiar to annual attendees of HONK!, including lantern-making workshops and parades on Friday evening, band showcases in Union Square also on Friday evening, and the huge upbeat “**Reclaim the Streets for Horns, Bikes, and Feet**” **Parade** that spreads out its robust vibe as it makes its way into Harvard Square for the 47th annual Oktoberfest on Sunday. In other words, lots of ways to get involved.

The Somerville-based **HONK! organizing committee** is made up of many local social and political activists, including members of HONK!'s founding and host band, the Good Trouble Brass Band. Updates for this year's 21st annual HONK! will be posted on the following sites: honkfest.org, [instagram.com/honkfest/](https://www.instagram.com/honkfest/), and [facebook.com/honkfestival](https://www.facebook.com/honkfestival).

At this early stage, the HONK! Festival committee would like to give special thanks to the City of Somerville, the Somerville Arts Council, Davis Square businesses and residents and the Harvard Square Business Association for their continued support.

More details on all of this year's Festival initiatives will be available by mid to late September. In the interim, here is the basic listings information for reference:

HONK! Festival

21st Annual Festival of Activist Street Bands. October 9-11, 2026.

Held throughout Somerville, Cambridge, and adjacent neighborhoods.

Outdoors rain or shine. Free and open to all; if interested in volunteering,

visit <https://honkfest.org/help/> and contact volunteer@honkfest.org.

For further information: honkfest.org, honkfest.org/contact/, info@honkfest.org, (617) 702-2977.

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