



March 14, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tumon Bay, Guam, USA

## **GPF to dedicate conductor batons made of ifit at 2024 Tumon Bay Music Festival Finale on March 16**

**What: Ifit Baton Dedication and Blessing Ceremony**

**Date:** Saturday, March 16, 2024

**Time:** 1:30pm

**Location:** Center Court, Agana Shopping Center

As the 2024 Tumon Bay Music Festival comes to a close on March 16, the GPF will host a dedication and blessing ceremony for ten (10) conductor batons made of the wood of Guam – ifit as a prelude to the Festival Finale Concert.

The role of the modern symphonic conductor has been credited to German composer Felix Mendelssohn, who also reviving many of the music from the Baroque period, especially the works of Bach.

Historical records show that European music (mainly church music) was introduced to Guam shortly after Magellan's arrival in 1521. Early music groups did have musical leaders however, baton wielding conductors may have arrived after the arrival of the Americans at the end of the Spanish-American War as US Navy Band leaders.

The purpose of the dedication and blessing ceremony is two-fold:

First, to bless these symbols of musical leadership from three perspectives: first, from the people of this land – the CHamoru; the Abrahamic faith perspective, and an Asian Philosophical perspective. Music is very powerful and those who get the privilege of being musical leaders should lead with honor and integrity.

Second, with the batons made from the wood of the land (ifit) which normally takes decades to grow before being transformed, it is through this dedication ceremony that we ignite the flame and bestow on those who get to use these symbols of musical leadership with the pride and spirit of the people of the Marianas at every performance both locally and abroad.

It is through these efforts that we empower our current and future musical scholars with the support of our people and that they engage in efforts that will preserve and perpetuate the CHamoru culture locally, and abroad.

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**GUAM PHILHARMONIC FOUNDATION, INCORPORATED**

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Saina Frank Rabon, Master of CHamoru Dance will kick off the ceremony with a chant and the singing of the Bindesion

Reverend Irene Maliaman, Vicar of the Episcopal Church of Saint John the Divine will also provide a blessing and some words from scripture.

Mr. Danny Nagashima, a former General Director of the Sokka Gakkai International-USA and former board member of Soka University of the Americas who is visiting from California will provide some remarks as an advocate for peace around the world.

The ifit batons were each handcrafted by N. Guy Lake a baton maker and music educator from California. The ifit wood blanks were provided by Robert Taitano, Jr. from the Ifit Shop in Yigo. For more information you can visit [www.glcustombatons.com](http://www.glcustombatons.com)

The ifit batons will be made available to established and aspiring conductors for their use at any upcoming concert locally and abroad. For more information, you can contact the GPF at [info@guamphilharmonic.org](mailto:info@guamphilharmonic.org)

Following the Ceremony will be the 2024 Tumon Bay Music Festival Finale Concert featuring soloists and representative ensembles from various genre. Additionally, the Festival Orchestra, Choir and Band joined by musicians from across the globe (including members from the Air Force Band) will perform. This is the *must-attend* event to get a snapshot of the 10-day festival in just a few hours.

For the full schedule of the Tumon Bay Music Festival visit [tbmfguam.org](http://tbmfguam.org)

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