

Singer Leela James to Headline the 10th Annual Lyons Avenue Renaissance Festival in Houston's Fifth Ward

Fifth Ward Forever is the Theme of this Year's Family-Friendly Community Outing

Houston, March 7, 2023 – R&B soul singer, Leela James, will get the crowd at this year's 10th Annual Lyons Avenue Renaissance Festival on their feet as she belts out her hits with her sultry-raspy voice. The highly anticipated event happens Saturday, April 1, from noon to 5:00 p.m. in the 3800 to 4000 blocks of Lyons Avenue. *Fifth Ward Forever* is the theme of this year's family-friendly outing, hosted by the [5th Ward Cultural Arts District \(5th Ward CAD\)](#). The sultry singer will perform on the LAR stage, one of four stages featuring some of the city's best musicians. Festival goers can also expect food, folks, and lots of fun, including a kids-zone – complete with a helicopter egg drop, face painting, and plenty of games.

“We are extremely excited to host singer Leela James at this year's festival. Her music and voice exude a soulful, rich sound that matches the mood and the passion of Fifth Ward. I know everyone in attendance will be mesmerized” says Harrison Guy, director of 5th Ward.

James was born and raised in South-Central Los Angeles but claims Houston as her current home. In 2019 she told *Houston Style Magazine* that, “Houston has totally embraced me, it has definitely become my new home, my second home.” The soul singer loves this city so much she shot a music video in Fifth Ward for her “See Me” album in 2022. The video titled “Break My Soul” showcased area landmarks, including the Fifth Ward JAM - an art installation made of wood from an old house and was gifted to the [Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation \(FWCRC\)](#) in 2011 - the JAM will be one of the four stages at this year's event.

The annual festival attracts between 6,000 to 8,000 people yearly. The four stages of live music will feature gospel, zydeco, Tejano, and R&B beats. At 3:00 p.m., 50 thousand goodie-filled plastic eggs will fall from the sky for the ultimate helicopter egg drop. Comfort foods like barbecue, fried fish, gumbo, funnel cakes, lemonade, slushies, and more will be provided by some of the best food trucks around. Artists, small businesses, and community providers will be on hand offering everything from paintings, jewelry, handbags, and t-shirts to financial services, homebuying workshops and healthcare services.

“The theme of this year's festival, *Fifth Ward Forever*, reflects the resilience of the area residents. The families here have been through a lot, but we always come back strong, and we never lose faith in the people of this historical neighborhood,” says Kathy Flanagan Payton, president, and CEO of FWCRC. “This event not only entertains the community, but it also introduces people to services they might not know are available to them,” explains Payton.

“We'd like send a special thanks to our sponsors, community partners, and volunteer - members of the 2023 Lyons Avenue Renaissance Festival,” says Guy. “This joyous occasion couldn't be done without their support.”

Sponsors include: Amegy Bank, Asakura Robinsons Bank of America, Bank of Texas, BB's, Blessed to Be A Blessing, Buff City Soap, Cargill, Chase Bank, Coats Rose, El Tiempo, Frost Bank, GO3 Vodka, Gringos, Habitat for Humanity, Harris Health, HEB, Houston Endowment, Legacy Community Health,

Mayberry Homes, Midway, NeighborWorks America, PNC Bank, Saint Arnold Brewing Company, and Stellar (formerly Allegiance) Bank,

Community partners are Pleasant Hill Ministries, National Association of African American Corvette Club, 5th Ward Chamber of Commerce, Mayor's office of Cultural Affairs, the Office of City Council Member Tarsha Jackson, and a host of volunteers from neighborhood service providers and businesses.

To become a sponsor or a vendor, contact Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation at 713-674-0175 or visit www.fifthwardcrc.org. For media inquiries, contact either Damali Hill at 281-947-2447, email damali@dhillpr.com or LaShawn McCoy at 713-674-0175.

About 5th Ward Cultural Arts District: The 5th Ward Cultural Arts District received formal designation from Texas Commission for the Arts in September 2020, which established Lyons Avenue as a Cultural Arts District to celebrate and share the neighborhood's 150+ year-old heritage, improve quality of life, provide opportunities for community engagement, and invite and nurture new artists and community groups.

Houston's Historic 5th Ward community is one large masterpiece. It is a place where art is a way of living, from its food, music, and art; to its historic buildings and gathering spaces like the Deluxe Theater; to its iconic stoops, its language and its corner jam sessions. Fifth Ward CRC's partners in this endeavor are the Houston Arts Alliance, the City of Houston, and national and local artists.

Visit the Website: <https://www.5thwardarts.com/>

About Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation: The non-profit 501(c) 3 organization was started in April of 1989. The organization was started by educators, clergy, residents, and business owners. For 30 years FWCRC has built and sold homes, provided affordable housing, and worked to make the community a great place to live, work and play.

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