

PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

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CAYFEST 2026 - Global Threads

A Celebration of Culture Without Borders

CAYFEST 2026 is where Cayman meets the world. Under the theme Global Threads, this year's festival sparkles with stories, rhythms, flavours, and creative voices woven across borders, generations, and traditions. From powerful performances to cinematic premieres and immersive heritage experiences, CAYFEST invites audiences to experience how culture connects us all.

Presented by the Cayman National Cultural Foundation (CNCF), CAYFEST is more than a festival - it's a launchpad for ideas, talent, and global dialogue. CNCF proudly champions Caymanian creativity while welcoming international artistry, ensuring our cultural identity continues to shine on the world stage.

The Journey to CAYFEST 2026

CAYFEST on Film: Call for Submissions

Lights, camera - Cayman! Filmmakers from across the islands and the diaspora are invited to submit up to two films for CAYFEST on Film 2026. Inspired by *Global Threads*, this curated showcase celebrates stories of connection, migration, memory, and identity - but filmmakers are free to submit work in any style or theme.

Not every film will make the final cut, but every submission becomes part of CNCF's growing creative archive for future programming.

The full CAYFEST on Film screening schedule and venue lineup drops in February via cayfestonfilm.ky and our socials - mark your calendars.

March 2026 - CAYFEST TAKES THE STAGE

Cayfest Opening Night: Caribbean Royalty Arrives

National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica (NDTC)

CAYFEST 2026 opens in spectacular fashion with the legendary **National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica** - a cultural icon with over six decades of global acclaim. Founded in 1962, NDTC fuses African-Caribbean traditions, Jamaican movement, and classical and contemporary ballet into electrifying dance-theatre that pulses with Caribbean soul.

Led by Artistic Director **Marlon Simms**, NDTC's opening performance is a powerful statement of regional unity and artistic excellence.

“To be part of CAYFEST is to be in dialogue with the spirit of the Caribbean - its people, its stories, and its enduring creativity.”

— **Marlon Simms**

This event is an event not to be missed. A fundraising initiative, tickets are ticketsplus.ky at \$100 or limited seating in the mezzanine for \$80 and is a glamorous night – all tickets are a VIP experience. Welcome drink, canapes, a glam affair. Children are \$50 – dress to impress, enjoy the night.

CAYFEST on Film Screening Sponsored by DART Camana Bay

Cinema takes centre stage with **CAYFEST on Film 2026**, a curated celebration of Caymanian and Caribbean storytelling. Building on 2025’s acclaimed *Splice*, this year’s programme explores how our lives and histories intertwine across oceans and generations.

Screenings:

- **14–15 March | Camana Bay** | Free to the public, more information online

Expect bold voices, intimate stories, and cinematic moments that linger long after the credits roll.

Red Sky at Night 21 March 2026 Closing Cayfest

A beloved festival tradition returns as Red Sky at Night takes centre stage as the grand closing event of CAYFEST 2026. This signature celebration transforms the festival grounds into the vibrant Caymanian Village - a dazzling, immersive space dedicated to living heritage, island craftsmanship, and community connection.

Throughout the day, audiences will experience Cayman’s cultural traditions brought to life through hands-on demonstrations, storytelling, music, and performance. The Caymanian Village will feature:

- Peppermint and swanky-making demonstrations, inviting visitors to engage with traditional practices.
- Conch blowing, quadrille, maypole dancing, and folk singing, celebrating the rhythms and rituals of Caymanian life.
- Thatch-rope demonstrations and heritage displays, showcasing ancestral skills passed down through generations.
- Cultural booths with over 100 local artists and vendors, offering handcrafted goods, culinary treats, storytelling sessions, and live performances throughout the day.

Red Sky at Night is not only a celebration - it is a vital platform for cultural preservation, entrepreneurship, and intergenerational exchange.

Festival Highlights Throughout March

- **Cayman National Choir and Orchestra** concert at the Harquail Theatre on 13 March
- **Poetry Night** and spoken-word by Hylton Grace
- **Improv workshops** led by the world-renowned *Baltimore Improv Group* visiting schools and hosting an adult improv theatre workshop

- Family-friendly children's events and more

Why CAYFEST Matters

CAYFEST 2026 is where **tradition meets innovation**, where Cayman's creative heartbeat resonates globally, and where the next generation of artists, storytellers, and cultural leaders take their place in the spotlight.

This is **culture, celebrated boldly**.

This is **CAYFEST 2026**.

For More Information

For further details about the grant and application process, please contact theatremgt@artscayman.org.

About CNCF

The Cayman National Cultural Foundation (CNCF) is a leading non-profit arts organisation in the Cayman Islands, working with artists and creative partners to present a dynamic annual cultural programme at the F.J. Harquail Cultural Centre, Mind's Eye Centre, and beyond. CNCF is dedicated to celebrating Caymanian heritage, fostering the creative arts, and cultivating a strong national identity.

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