

BERTSOLARI SAIOA



Bertsolari Exhibition

Sunday, March 8th, 2026
Basque Cultural Center



SOTO



ZUBELDIA



AZURTZA



GOICOEHEA



AJURIAGOJEASKOA



PASTOR



ECEIZA



Meet Our Bertsolaris



Julio Soto Ezkurdia

Julio Soto (Gorriti, 1987) is a bertsolari from Navarre. Trained at the bertso-eskola (bertsolari workshop) in Pamplona, he was the Navarre champion in the inter-school championships of 2003, 2004, and 2005. He holds degrees in Agricultural Engineering and Basque Philology. He has been champion of the Navarre Bertsolari Championship six times (2010, 2011, 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2023). He has participated in several editions of the Great Bertsolari Championship (Bertsolari Txapelketa Nagusia).



Iker Zubeldia Katarain

Iker Zubeldia (Zegama, 1981) is a bertsolari from Gipuzkoa. At the beginning of his career, he won the Osinalde award. This humorous bertsolari has participated in the Gipuzkoa and Basque championships, as well as in the Great Bertsolari Championship (Bertsolari Txapelketa Nagusia).



Martin Goicoechea

Martin Goicoechea lives in Rock Springs, Wyoming, but was born in Gorriti, Nafarroa in 1948. He came to Wyoming in 1966 and worked for the Magagna Brothers, first as a sheepherder for eight months and then as a manager for almost nine years. He is the owner of Wyoming Trucks in Rock Springs, in business for over twenty years.

Goicoechea is not a newcomer to bertsolaritza. He began composing verses as a boy, and later even sang with well-known improvisors. In 1966, he was scheduled to take part in Nafarroa's txapelketa (championship) in Lakuntza, but thirteen days earlier he decided to come to the United States. After a twenty-two-year-long drought without singing poetry, Goicoechea yielded once again to his bertsolari impulses, and since 1991 he has participated in most Euskal Kantari Eguna celebrations in Gardnerville as well as in other poetry gatherings. In the summer of 1993, when Goicoechea was visiting the Basque Country, Euskadi Irratia (Basque Radio) broadcast two of his bertso performances with Joxe Lizaso and Joxe Agirre of Gipuzkoa.

Goicoechea has been active in the Rock Springs "Elkartasuna Southwest Basque Club" serving as President and N.A.B.O. delegate for years, and had served as N.A.B.O.'s Euskara Chairman for over twenty years. He has worked for the preservation of his native culture and for Basque unity. (Joxe Mallea-Olaetxe, *Shooting from the Lip*, 2003)



Meet Our Bertsolaris



Ibon Ajuriagojeaskoa Garmendia



Ibon Ajuriagojeaskoa Garmendia was born in Gernika, Bizkaia, in 1977. He is a bertsolari, and an English and German teacher. He comes from a family of bertsolaris and has reached twice the finals in the Bizkaia Bertsolari Championship. He lived in Florida until he was six years old, his father was a pelotari. When he was 21, he continued his studies in Germany where he lived for four years. He has always felt passionate about bertso and music as a means of developing his creativity.

Todor Azurtza Sorrondegi



Todor Azurtza Sorrondegi was born in Caracas and raised in Donostia, where his family is from. At 20, he left the Basque Country to build an international career in finance, working primarily in London and Paris, with additional assignments across Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and the United States.

From 2016 to 2025, he lived in Boise with his wife, Geneva, where he taught Euskara and pilota and played an active role in North American Basque Organizations (N.A.B.O.), helping lead its Bertsolaritza program and Bertso Eskola. Since 2025, he has returned to Donostia, where he continues to support and promote Basque language and culture while remaining involved with the U.S.-based Bertsolaritza initiatives he helped develop.

Oier Pastor Alonso



Oier Pastor Alonso is a Neuroscientist who lives in San Francisco since 2021 and works as a researcher at UCSF. During his time in the U.S., he has enjoyed the opportunity to be involved in different pilota events as a player in California and other states. He has been a fan of bertsolaritza all his life, but started singing when he joined N.A.B.O.'s Arnas Berri Bertso Eskola in 2022. He found in bertsolaritza a passion and source of joy that he is determined to continue developing.



BERTSOLARI SAIOA

XALBADOR GOGORATUZ



Remembering Xalbador

Saturday, October 24th, 2026

Basque Cultural Center



The San Francisco Basque Club and the North American Basque Organizations will hold a second Bertsolari Saioa to remember the renowned bertsolari Xalbador, on the fiftieth anniversary of his passing and of the publication of his landmark book *Odolaren Mintzoa* (The Call of Blood). The U.S. based Bertsolaris will be featured along with special guest Bertsolaris from the Basque Country.



The Aire Ahizpak (Aire Sisters) Basque folk singing group and granddaughters of Xalbador will sing bertsos of their grandfather and then will sing a special concert after the dinner.

5:00pm Bertsolaritza | 7:30pm Dinner | 9:30pm Aire Ahizpak Concert

www.BasqueClub.com



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