



Proxima Caracela

WITH THE
SLO Symphony

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The Performing Arts Center

MAY 21, 2026 • SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA

DOORS: 6:30 PM

SHOW: 7:30 PM

MAKING THIS EVENT POSSIBLE

First and foremost, Próxima Parada and the SLO Symphony would like to sincerely thank all of our sponsors for demonstrating their commitment to collaborations between local artists and arts organizations. By partnering with us for this event, you're supporting the arts in San Luis Obispo and helping make ambitious, community-rooted collaborations like this possible.



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PERFORMING
ARTS CENTER

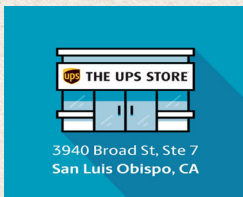


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ABOUT THE BAND

Próxima Parada means 'next stop' in Spanish and Portuguese. As college students at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo taking the bus to school, at every stop, there'd be a recording that said, "Now approaching, próxima parada..." then the street name. They'd hear that 50 times a day. For them, the name is an invitation to the present moment, a reminder to not be too focused on the destination and to appreciate every stop along the way.

Their first stop was January 7th, 2012 at SloDoCo, then they played Linnaea's Cafe, various wineries around the county, many times at SLO Brew, The Fremont Theater, and most venues in SLO CAL. Finally in 2019, they embarked on their first US tour. Since then, they have done dozens of tours spanning every corner of the country from Maine to Florida to Texas to Alaska. They've played their music in major cities from NYC to Chicago to Boston to DC. Their music has also led them to falling in love with smaller cities like Portsmouth, NH and Charleston, SC.

After years of next stops, their songwriting has become a practice of getting out of the way and serving the song, which has yielded many different styles and genres. Some songs are sunny and light-hearted indie soul like *Musta Been a Ghost* or *24 Brand-New Hours*, a giant joyous reset button. Others have a mellow vibe like *Begin Again* or driving and more hip-hop influenced like *So Many Ways to Get Downtown*, all the while speaking to who they are working to be. *Tunnel Through A Mountain* is a fully-acoustic folk song and *Esta Nohecita* is in Spanish. Their songs have become more and more focused on personal growth and groove, where each player adds just what's needed and makes up a piece of the whole.

What began as a group of college friends wanting to spread joy to their local community has led to national tours, their music reaching a global audience, and experiences they never could have imagined while busking on Higuera St, fresh out of college. From the beginning up through the present day, Próxima Parada has received endless support from the San Luis Obispo community. This night could not have existed without the generosity, encouragement, and love of the SLO community. Indeed, none of these songs would exist without San Luis Obispo.

The starting lineup for Próxima Parada tonight:

Aaron Kroeger - drums

Josh Collins - guitar

Kevin Middlekauff - bass

Nico Larson - vocals, piano, and guitar

Val Collins - percussion

ABOUT THE SYMPHONY

The San Luis Obispo Symphony is the premiere symphony orchestra of California's Central Coast. Founded in 1954, they are a cultural cornerstone of San Luis Obispo and the surrounding communities. Since its inception, the SLO Symphony has been an artistic, economic, educational, and community-minded entity on the Central Coast of California. Their mission is to support an outstanding orchestra, to foster symphonic and chamber music education, and to contribute to the cultural and economic vitality of the central coast community.



ABOUT THE CONDUCTOR

The guest conductor for tonight's concert is **Christopher J. Woodruff**. His work with San Luis Obispo Symphony is through their music education mission. He conducts the Youth Symphony Concert Orchestra and has served as guest conductor for Paso Pops and Avila Pops. He also serves on the faculty at Cal Poly, teaching a portfolio of general interest and music education courses.

Woodruff pursued music study at Boston Symphony Orchestra's Tanglewood Music, Louisiana State University and Northwestern University. While in Chicago, Woodruff served conducting appointments with the Spring Valley Concert Band and the Northshore Chamber Orchestra.

He is active as a conductor and clinician for honor bands and all-state groups. He's also active as a freelance trumpet player for orchestras across the Central Coast.

ABOUT THE COLLABORATION

Tonight's performance brings Próxima Parada together with the SLO Symphony at the Performing Arts Center San Luis Obispo for a collaboration years in the making.

Próxima Parada dreamed up this collaboration while they were on tour on the other side of the country. The idea grew from the band's shared desire to create something truly special for their hometown, something that would make SLO not feel like another stop on the tour, but rather like the heart of the story.

Once everyone on all sides was onboard, the next step was adapting Próxima Parada's songs for an orchestral setting. Próxima Parada guitarist Josh Collins served as lead arranger for the project, bringing tremendous care, creativity, and musical sensitivity. He invested countless hours, brainpower, and heart into it. His arrangements add even more depth, texture, emotion, and dynamic range to their music. He and Nico met regularly for months obsessing over every nuance and detail until they both felt fully on board with every song.

This concert is a love letter to the place that raised Próxima Parada. They met at Cal Poly, built their first community in SLO, and learned how to be a band here. Since they were students, they have been coming to the PAC and watching the SLO Symphony, so getting to share the stage with them, across the street from where Kevin and Nico first met, is beyond what they ever pictured when they were just getting started.



photo by Ian Sanderson

Saturday, September 5th, 4:30pm • Avila Beach Golf Resort

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A FEW SELECTIONS FROM TONIGHT'S SETLIST

ABOUT TIME IN A CIRCLE

Próxima Parada released *Time in a Circle* in late 2016 as the single from their album *Big Seven*. This was the first song that Nico wrote after starting therapy. He didn't know what exactly the work of therapy would look like and all that it would entail, but he knew that his old ways of seeing himself and the world were no longer working. It was time to tear his house down and begin some reconstruction, so to speak. Riding his bike home from a therapy session, he began singing, "I don't really know what I should see but I'm looking. I decided to open my door up, but I hate the way my house looks now." He rushed home and finished the song at the piano.

The band recorded this song together in San Luis Obispo at their friend Vince Cimo's studio, with Vince engineering and mixing the session and also singing backing vocals on the chorus. The band brought magic to this simple song, and they all agreed it should be the single for the album.

At first, Nico was intimidated to share *Time in a Circle* because it felt too vulnerable and personal, and yet it was this song that really took their music to listeners outside the US for the first time. After being added to several major German playlists in 2017, the top five cities where people most listened to Próxima Parada's music were in Germany and Austria for quite some time. One man in Germany, Jeannot Akono, even recorded himself on Youtube performing his own version of the song. Over the years, people from all walks of life have approached the band and told them that they feel like *Time in a Circle* was written for them and their own lives. People's appreciation of *Time in a Circle* inspired the band to lean heavily into their personal experience in their songwriting, knowing that the more personal they got, the more universal their music would become.



photo by Ian Sanderson

ABOUT TUNNEL THROUGH A MOUNTAIN

Tunnel Through A Mountain is unique from the rest of their music, and this is the only song tonight that was not written in San Luis Obispo. Nico and Kevin wrote it while on a winter tour in Colorado. Nico was driving the van on a snowy highway and Kevin was sitting in the passenger seat with a ukulele. The lyrics flew out of them as they took in the surroundings. They didn't speak about the song's meaning as they were writing it, but they both tacitly understood. They were sitting with how to overcome obstacles that feel insurmountable, and every 'I know we can do it again' is them affirming the support of others.

The band made a demo of it in a cabin in Big Sur, recording it altogether around one mic with just acoustic guitars and vocals. When it came time to record their album *Into the Way* at Sonic Ranch in west Texas, the band decided to keep the demo and use it on the album. This is the most raw and broken-down song *Próxima Parada* has ever released.

Tonight, they invite you to sing Tunnel Through a Mountain with them:

How do you build
a tunnel through a mountain?
How do you build
a pier out in the ocean?
Somebody did it
I know we can do it again

How do I clean up
this mess I'm in?
Guess I better start
by getting outta bed
Somebody did it
I know we can do it again

Chipping away at a rock
is better than sleeping
The snow on the red rocks
is getting pretty thin
Somebody did it
I know we can do it again

So how do you build
a tunnel through a mountain?
How do you build
a pier out in the ocean?
Somebody did it
I know we can do it again

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WHALE ROCK MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL

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BIG MABLE & THE PORTHOLES CATE ARMSTRONG SAMBA LOCA

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ABOUT MUSTA BEEN A GHOST

On December 9th, 2022 music curator Matt Firestine (@fuegostine) posted a TikTok video about Musta Been A Ghost. The video immediately went viral and continued growing, reaching 23 million views. In turn, people from all around the world began listening to it on Spotify, amassing over 67 million plays to date. The song reached #1 on Spotify's Viral 50 - USA, as well as #1 in the UK, Denmark, Norway, Ireland, Australia, and New Zealand, charting in 33 countries total. It also reached #3 on Spotify's Viral 50 - Global. It was an exciting moment, and funny enough the song had already been out for three years. Musta Been A Ghost was the first single from their album, Kind Reminder, in 2019.

Sometimes, people would rather say nothing than show up and say that they're not interested or that there is someone better for the job. They can be afraid to disappoint or disagree with people directly, so they'll avoid the conversation/other person altogether. Musta Been A Ghost is an invitation to show up and be honest with people, even if it may be difficult for someone to hear in the moment. And for the person being ghosted, it is a reminder to know themselves and their own worth and not waste energy trying to prove it to others.

Nico wrote musta been a ghost sitting on the floor of his bedroom with a guitar. When the band came over to play the song together for the first time, Josh seemed to play the iconic intro guitar riff out of thin air. All that was left was to record it at the Sauce Pot with their friend Vince Cimo in San Luis Obispo.



photo by Ian Sanderson

MUSICIANS AND SPONSORS

Violin 1

Emily Lanzone, Concertmaster
Sponsored by Susan Minker

Alex Fager, Assistant Concertmaster
Sponsored by The Dutto Family

Grace Seng
Sponsored by Castoro Cellars

Eva Werner
Sponsored by Fred & Rochelle Friedman

Violin 2

Tanya Stredler, Principal
Sponsored by The Rice Partnership

Valarie Koos
Sponsored by Sichuan Kitchen SLO

Ingrid Kovacs
Sponsored by Jeff & Andi Portney

Hannah Thompson
Sponsored by the Rossi Family

Viola

David Hennessee, Principal
Sponsored by Mark Alonzo

Peggy Whitson
Sponsored by Stephen & Patricia Rappaport

Kim Wilkins
Sponsored by Left Coast T-Shirt Company

Cello

Luba Soloyova, Principal
Sponsored by the SLO Museum of Art

Jeanne Shumway
Sponsored by Good Medicine Presents

Flute

Marley Eder, Principal
Sponsored by C.M. Florence Charitable Gift Fund

Clarinet

Richard Dobeck, Principal
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Oboe

Jessica Hoffman, Principal
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Bassoon

Lisa Naufal, Principal
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French Horn

Allen Smithson, Principal
Sponsored by Sharon & John Dobson

Larisa Vredevoe
Sponsored by Ryan Orr & Jessica Rost Orr

Trumpet

Rich Ward, Principal
Sponsored by Adam Montiel & Audrey Tito

Trombone

Michael Dolin, Principal
Sponsored by Mike & DD Patrick

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2026/27 Season

Defining Moments From Start to Finish

Pops by the Sea: Symphony Remix | September 5, 2026

Brass Mash joins the SLO Symphony with a remix of mashup hits.

Rites of Passage | Sunday, October 4, 2026

*Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* opens our 26-27 season.*

Keys of Grandeur | Saturday, November 7, 2026

Hyunjin Roh, the 2025 Paderewski International Piano Competition Winner, performs.

Experience Fantasia | Thursday, December 31, 2026

*Ring in the New Year with Dukas' *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Tchaikovsky's *Waltz of the Flowers*, and more.*

Among the Pines | Saturday, February 6, 2027

*Nature comes alive with Chris & Dave Brubeck's symphonic tribute, Ansel Adams: *America*.*

Grand Overtures | Saturday, March 6, 2027

*Feel the power of Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* and Guilmant's organ masterpiece performed by Felix Hell.*

Springtime Reverie | Saturday, April 24, 2027

*Pianist Sylvia Jiang performs Shostakovich's *Piano Concerto No. 2*.*

2026-2027
SEASON

