

# Performance, Dance & Film Festival in CDMX

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There is a particular discipline required to build a festival around time-based art, a form that resists the logics of the fair booth and the collector visit, that cannot be photographed into permanence or reduced to a wall label. For four years running, [TONO](#) has been doing exactly this, threading performance, dance, music, and moving image through the institutional fabric of [Mexico City](#) and *Puebla* with a clarity of purpose that feels increasingly rare on the [international cultural circuit](#). The fourth edition, running March 6 through 22, unfolds across seven venues in Mexico City, **Casa del Lago UNAM**, **Museo Jumex**, **Museo Universitario del Chopo**, **Museo de Arte Moderno**, **Museo Casa Estudio Diego Rivera y Frida Kahlo**, **La Laguna Bodega**, and **Casa de la Acequia**, and continues through late April at **Museo Amparo** in Puebla. The scope is measured rather than sprawling; each programming choice reads as deliberate.

## TONO 2026 Across Mexico City and Beyond



TONO 2026 Closing. Photo by Adonay Sanchez.

“2026 was the fourth edition of TONO Festival,” says founder and director [Samantha Ozer](#). “I’m excited that we worked with some new venues this year, such as Museo Estudio Diego Rivera & Frida Kahlo and Casa Acequia. For the last two years, we’ve collaborated with Museo Amparo in Puebla on an exhibition, and this year we’re expanding our work together, they are presenting our exhibition by **Ho Tzu Nyen**, in addition to hosting our annual international screening program.” The closing weekend captured the full range of TONO’s ambitions: a concert by **Eli Keszler** in collaboration with **Rafael Lozano-Hemmer** at Museo de Arte Moderno, the premiere of a new dance performance by Kiani del Valle at Casa del Lago, and a closing celebration and panel with TONO artists co-hosted with the Neue Nationalgalerie Berlin and Museo Estudio Diego Rivera & Frida Kahlo. “TONO is a global, nomadic project,” Ozer adds. “The Festival is just one of the things that we do, beyond Mexico, we work directly with artists to commission new works and with institutions to curate projects and tour works.” The anchor of this edition is [Tino Sehgal](#), whose “This Joy” will be presented over multiple days at **Casa Estudio Diego Rivera y Frida Kahlo**, a setting whose architecture of lived creative labor feels entirely apposite for an artist whose constructed situations depend so precisely on the quality of attention a space can hold. Sehgal, who has shown at the **Guggenheim** and **Tate Modern** and has built a practice that leaves no object behind, is among the artists for whom the question of what performance is and what it

leaves remains genuinely open. Also at Casa Estudio: the opening of the festival itself, and its closing celebration, the latter co-hosted with **Klaus Biesenbach** and the **Neue Nationalgalerie Berlin**, and with a performance by Mexico City-based **Avantgarde**. Biesenbach, whose institutional career has traced a particular arc from **KW Berlin** to **MoMA PS1** to **MOCA Los Angeles**, brought with him an understanding of what it means to build an audience for live and time-based work outside its traditional European and North American circuits.

## Artists, Collaborations, and Global Dialogue

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Alexa West, “Jawbreaker.” Still from performance. Photo by Roy Freiha. Courtesy of the artist and TONO.

“Klaus Biesenbach was in Mexico City during TONO 2025 and came to many of the events,” Ozer recalls. “Over the months, we spoke about the history of performance and contemporary threads and imagined a project together. During the closing of TONO 2026, we announced a collaboration on the upcoming edition of **PERFORM!**, the Neue Nationalgalerie’s annual in-house performance festival during Berlin Art Week, so save the date.” The closing drew **Hans Ulrich Obrist** and members of the **Serpentine International Council**, a gathering that placed TONO in a conversation about institutional ambition and global collecting that the festival has been quietly building toward. “TONO is celebrating artists in Mexico City and at the same time exploring the

unique texture and diversity of one of the greatest cities of our times. It is connecting artists and audiences, locations, generations and the past, present and future,” said **Klaus Biesenbach**, Director, **Neue Nationalgalerie Berlin**.

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*Klaus Biesenbach, Director, Neue Nationalgalerie Berlin*

Ozer hosted Obrist and the Serpentine International Council for several TONO events, including a tour with Rafael Lozano-Hemmer of his retrospective “Jardín inconcluso” at Museo de Arte Moderno, followed by a public concert with Keszler. “While the thousands of lights usually flicker to the heartbeats of the audience,” Ozer explains, “they instead responded to the beat of Eli’s drumming, creating a shimmering effect in the garden.” “‘Jardín inconcluso’ transforms the garden of **Museo de Arte Moderno** in Chapultepec Forest into a nocturnal parcours, interactive installations, activated by the presence, voice, heat, and pulse of visitors. The forest becomes a living instrument. The night becomes a medium,” said **Hans Ulrich Obrist**, Artistic Director, **Serpentine Galleries**.

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**Ho Tzu Nyen**, recently appointed as Artistic Director of the 2026 **Gwangju Biennale**, brings “Hotel Aporia” to Museo Amparo, a multilayered audiovisual work rooted in the colonial and mythological histories of Southeast Asia, refracted through machine learning and scripted narrative. His presence here connects TONO’s programming to some of the more searching conversations currently happening in global contemporary art about how a region represents itself and is represented.

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## Performance, Sound, and Moving Image in Dialogue

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Ho Tzu Nyen, Installation View of “Hotel Aporia,” 2019. Courtesy of the artist.

The collaboration with Dance Reflections by **Van Cleef & Arpels** brings **Alessandro Sciarroni** and his company to Mexico City. Sciarroni, recipient of the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement in Dance at the 2019 *Venice Biennale*, will present “Save the Last Dance for Me” at Museo Universitario del Chopo, with accompanying workshops. “Last year, we began a collaboration with Dance Reflections by Van Cleef & Arpels when we worked together on bringing **Adam Linder**’s ‘Mouthing the Tongue’ to TONO,” Ozer explains. “We’ve continued our work together on TONO 2026 to present Alessandro Sciarroni’s ‘Save the Last Dance for Me,’ a duet that explores the Polka Chinata, an Italian folk dance dating back to the early 20th century that was a courtship dance typically performed by men, who embrace and spin while bending their knees to the ground. We hosted the performance and two workshops, with a mix of amateurs and also some professional dancers and past TONO collaborators, such as **Ana Zambrano**.” **Alexa West**’s “Jawbreaker,” touring with 99 Canal out of New York, rounds out the dance programming at *La Laguna Bodega* and *Casa del Lago*. At Museo de Arte Moderno, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer presents a live program with Grammy-nominated composer and percussionist Eli Keszler, on the occasion of Keszler’s retrospective. Their collaboration in “Jardín Inconcluso” places two practices in productive tension: Lozano-Hemmer’s participatory light-based systems and Keszler’s precisely notated, rhythmically complex sound work, both concerned in different ways with the borders

between body and environment. The most structurally ambitious thread of this edition may be the *Bangkok Kunsthalle* program, curated by moving-image specialist **Rosalia Namsai Engchuan**. “Training Grounds” gathers films by **Oat Montien, Montika Kham-on, Harit Srikhao, Tulapop Saenjaroen, Chulayarnnon Siriphol, Wannawat Suwannarath, and Jeanne Penjan Lassus**, a generation of Thai filmmakers and video artists whose work has circulated through **Berlinale, Locarno, the New York Film Festival, and MoMA’s Doc Fortnight** without yet being widely seen in Latin America.



Alessandro Sciarroni, Image still of the dance “Save the Last Dance for Me,” 2019. Still from performance. Photo by Garcia Jauregui. Courtesy of the artist and TONO.

“This collaboration between Bangkok Kunsthalle and TONO was a great opportunity to center perspectives from the Global South, in fields where artistic language precedes dominant discourse. I am interested in practices that attune to experience before it is fully named. While Thailand and Mexico may be geographically distant, there is a strong proximity on a cosmological and experiential level. This program feels like the beginning of a beautiful and ongoing dialogue,” said **Rosalia Namsai Engchuan**, Moving-Image Curator, **Bangkok Kunsthalle**.

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TONO's invitation to Engchuan to shape this selection represents a curatorial model that is increasingly meaningful: not a survey but a position, one rooted in long-term institutional relationships rather than opportunistic programming. Engchuan found an unexpected resonance in the Puebla screenings, pointing to "future TONO screenings at *Bangkok Kunsthalle* as part of my continued curatorial focus on positions from the Global South." **Frankie (Franziska Aigner)** and **Kelman Duran** close out the music program at *Casa del Lago*. Duran, best known internationally for his contributions to **Beyoncé's** *Renaissance* and his work at the intersection of club music and contemporary art institutions, and Aigner, whose solo cello and vocal performances carry traces of her years working with **Anne Imhof**, make for a pairing whose logic is atmospheric rather than obvious. *Space Afrika's* "YOBS" rounds out the music programming, the Manchester duo's post-club sound finding, as it consistently has, an audience that spans festival circuits and institutional spaces alike.

## Positioning Mexico City Within a Global Context

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Frankie (Franziska Aigner) and Kelman Duran. Still from performance. Photo by Garcia Jauregui. Courtesy of the artist and TONO.

TONO was founded as a US 501(c)3 with an explicit commitment to institutional partnership, it has worked with the [Pérez Art Museum Miami](#), [Pinacoteca de São Paulo](#), the [Serpentine Galleries](#), and [La Biennale di Venezia](#), among others, and this edition continues to position

Mexico City not as a peripheral venue for international work but as a site where that work is genuinely tested and transformed by context. “The city itself is always an inspiration and often a driver of many projects. For Tino Sehgal, it was important to present the piece ‘This Joy’ in a house, and in the end, we offered audiences two incredible spaces, Museo Estudio Diego Rivera & Frida Kahlo and Casa Acequia: the former, the studios of Diego and Frida designed by Juan O’Gorman in the San Angel neighborhood, and the latter, one of the oldest private homes in the historic center of the city,” said **Samantha Ozer**, Founder & Director, TONO Festival.

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The festival’s footprint traced the city’s geography with intention, from San Angel and the centro histórico to Casa del Lago in Chapultepec Park, Doctores, and Polanco. As for what comes next: **Bárbara Sánchez-Kane**’s TONO Festival 2025 commission travels to **Performance Space** in *New York* on April 17th and 18th, and in the fall, TONO’s collaboration for PERFORM! Festival opens at the Neue Nationalgalerie in *Berlin*. For visitors traveling to Mexico City this month, the festival operates on museum time rather than fair time, which is to say, it rewards patience, return visits, and a willingness to sit with work that does not resolve quickly. [TONO 2026](#) ran March 6–22 in Mexico City and through April 27 at Museo Amparo, Puebla.



Kiani del Valle. Still from performance. Photo by Garcia Jauregui. Courtesy of the artist and TONO.



TONO Opening 2026. Photo by Roy Freiha.