

BERTSOLARI TXAPELKETA NAGUSIA 2017

NATIONAL BERTSOLARIS CHAMPIONSHIP 2017 - FINAL

The 17th edition of the National Bertsolaris Championship began in Baigorri on 23 September. 43 bertsolaris (improvisers) have participated in this edition and on the road to the final there have been a total of 13 quarter-finals and semi-finals.

On 17 December, eight improvisers will sing in the final before an audience of 14,600 people. The performance will be split into two parts, the morning and the afternoon. The morning performance will begin at 11am and the afternoon performance at 4.30pm.

The eight finalists competing in the final are the current champion Amets Arzallus, Aitor Mendiluze, Aitor Sarriegi, Beñat Gaztelumendi, Igor Elortza, Maialen Lujanbio, Sustrai Colina and Unai Agirre.

In recognition of the contribution he has made to the technique and world of bertsolarism over the years, Sebastian Lizaso will be responsible for placing the *txapela* (Basque beret) on the champion from this edition.

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Improvisers



Aitor Mendiluze Gonzalez (Andoain, 1975)

He discovered bertsolaritza at school. He has participated in the bertso schools in Hernani and Andoain. In 1995 and 2007 he won the Bertsolaris Championship of Gipuzkoa. This will be his sixth participation in the National Bertsolaris Championship and he has reached the final on four occasions.



Aitor Sarriegi Galparsoro (Beasain, 1976)

His first public performance was in 1989, in Segura. He has won the Lizardi and Osinalde Competitions and in 2011 he was the winner of the Bertsolaris Championship of Gipuzkoa. This will be his sixth participation in the National Bertsolaris Championship and he has sung in two finals.



Amets Arzallus Antia (Hendaya, 1983)

He grew up in a bertsozale environment and he started singing bertsos when he was very small. He has won the Bertsolaris Championship of Navarre on four occasions and he is a three-time winner of the Xilaba Championship. In 2013, he won the National Bertsolaris Championship and he is the current champion of the Basque Country. He will be taking part in the National Championship for the fifth time.



Beñat Gaztelumendi Arandia (Añorga, 1987)

His love of bertsos runs in the family and he has participated in the bertso schools in Igeldo, Hernani and Santutxu. He won the 2015 edition of the Gipuzkoa Championship and he is the current champion. This is the third time he will be taking part in the National Bertsolaris Championship.



Igor Elortza Aranoa (Durango, 1975)

He learnt to sing bertsos when he was a young boy, in the Kurutziaiga *Ikastola* (a primary or secondary school where lessons are taught in Basque) and the bertso school in Durango. He has won the Bertsolaris Championship of Bizkaia five times. This will be his seventh participation in the National Championship and he has sung in three finals.

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Maialen Lujanbio Zugasti (Hernani, 1976)

She trained in the bertso school run by her *ikastola* (a primary or secondary school where lessons are taught in Basque) and when she was 15 she started performing in villages. In 2003, she won the Championship of Gipuzkoa and in 2009, she was the winner of the National Championship. This will be her sixth participation and she has sung in five finals.



Sustrai Colina Acordarrementeria (Urruña, 1982)

He took his first steps in the school of bertsoaris in Hendaya and his first public performance was in 1992. He has won the Xilaba Championship on two occasions, in 2014 and 2016. He will be taking part in the National Bertsoaris Championship for the fifth time; in his previous four participations he reached the final round.



Unai Agirre Goia (Hernani, 1975)

He began improvising bertsos at the age of 10, in his *ikastola* (a primary or secondary school where lessons are taught in Basque). He won the Lizardi prize for young bertsoaris on two occasions and he won the Orixe Prize once. He is a member of the bertso school in Hernani. This will be his fifth National Championship.

Jury

Ekaitz Elorriaga, Eneritz Azkue, Eneko Bidegain, Joseba Santxo, Mirari Azula, Nerea Bruño and Zigor Leunda.

Presenters and speakers on topics

Maite Berriozabal, Inazio Usarralde, Saroi Jauregi and Joana Itzaina.

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Works

Morning - (16 point-winning bertsos)

Verbal duel in pairs about a given topic, three bertsos in *zortziko mayor*.

Verbal duel in pairs about a given topic, three bertsos in *zortziko menor*.

Solo, three bertsos in *zortziko menor* with *puntuari erantzun*.

Verbal duel in pairs about a given topic, three bertsos in *hamarreko menor*.

'Prison cell intervention': solo, three bertsos about a given topic with the melody and verse form of the competitor's choice.

Afternoon - (10 point-winning bertsos)

Verbal duel in pairs about a given topic, three bertsos in six short *puntus*.

Verbal duel in pairs about a given topic, eight bertsos in *zortziko menor*, starting with *puntuari erantzun*.

Solo, three bertsos about a given topic with the melody and verse form of the competitor's choice.

Head-to-head - (11 point-winning bertsos)

Verbal duel in pairs about a given topic, three bertsos in *zortziko mayor*.

Verbal duel in pairs about a given topic, four bertsos in *zortziko menor*.

'Prison cell intervention':

Solo, the topic is given in one word and the competitor continues with a bertso nine short *puntus*.

Three bertsos about a given topic with the melody and verse form of the competitor's choice.

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Previous winners of the Championship

Year	Place	Winner
1935	San Sebastián	Iñaki Eizmendi "Basarri"
1936	San Sebastián	Manuel Lujanbio "Txirrita"
1960	San Sebastián	Iñaki Eizmendi "Basarri"
1962	San Sebastián	Manuel Olaizola "Uztapide"
1965	San Sebastián	Manuel Olaizola "Uztapide"
1967	San Sebastián	Manuel Olaizola "Uztapide"
1980	San Sebastián	Xabier Amuriza
1982	San Sebastián	Xabier Amuriza
1986	San Sebastián	Sebastian Lizaso
1989	San Sebastián	Jon Lopategi
1993	San Sebastián	Andoni Egaña
1997	San Sebastián	Andoni Egaña
2001	San Sebastián	Andoni Egaña
2005	Barakaldo	Andoni Egaña
2009	Barakaldo	Maialen Lujanbio
2013	Barakaldo	Ametz Arzallus

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Sebastian Lizaso (Azpeitia, 1958)

Son of the improviser Joxe Lizaso, he became a bertsolari in his parent's tavern in the district of Landeta.

Unlike many of his contemporaries he is, therefore, a self-taught bertsolari. He did not compete in youth competitions and championships, but when in 1982, at the age of 24, he appeared as a finalist he was already very well-known and had gained significant experience, acquired through his performances in squares throughout the country.

He was a finalist in the 1982 championship, champion in 1986 and runner-up in 1989 and 1997.

Sebastian Lizaso, in addition to being one of the great figures of bertsolarism, has managed to adapt and sing with the younger generations. This is why for many years he has been the bertsolari who has sung in performances the most.

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Schedule

9am – Doors open at the Bizkaia Arena

11am - Start of the morning performance

2pm approx. - Lunch

- The Bizkaia Arena will be emptied until the afternoon performance
- Lunch will be served in Hall 6.
- Those who bring food can use the chairs and tables available in Hall 6.

4.30pm - Start of the afternoon performance

8pm approx. - Award ceremony

Half an hour after the end of the final - Press conference with the participants

Bus service

Bertsozale Elkartea has organised a bus service to the final from all across Euskal Herria. Around 2,400 fans will use this option to travel to the BEC. Bus stops and timetables will be published on the website www.bertsozale.eus

Other fans are advised to use public transport.

Lunch

Once the morning performance has finished, the Bizkaia Arena will be completely emptied. Fans will have lunch in Hall 6. Around 600 people have purchased the lunch service. Those who bring food will also be able to use the chairs and tables available in Hall 6, and there will be a bar service.

Childcare service

During the final we will offer a childcare service, provided that there is a minimum number of users. This service will be located in Hall 6 and will be open for the duration of the final. It is a free service, but it is essential to book it in advance.

A team of 450 people

There will be more than 450 people working to ensure that everything runs smoothly during the final. The employees will be properly identified and will help fans before, during and after the performance. This is a qualified team made up of Bertsozale Elkartea employees and volunteers, and the organisation asks that their instructions be followed at all times.

Mintzola Terraza

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For several years, Mintzola Ahozko Lantegia has been establishing relationships with experts, researchers and improvisers from different parts of the world. As an example of this work, in the final there will be an area called the Mintzola Terraza. This will be used by representatives from other parts of the world, along with experts from Euskal Herria.

Among the experts and researchers from the field of oral tradition will be the Americans John Zemke and Jacqueline Urla and Karin Barber from Britain. In addition to the foreign researchers, the Mintzola Terraza will also have representatives from the UPV/EHU, the Mikel Laboa chair and the chair of Intangible Heritage at the Public University of Navarre.

Along with the researchers, the Mintzola Terraza will also have representatives of other types of improvised singing: *glosadores* from Catalonia and Mallorca, troubadours from Andalusia, *cantadoris* from Cerdeña, *regueiferos* from Galicia, *dengbêja* from Kurdistan, and the rapper Invert from the freestyle category will also watch the final from there.

Finally, various foreign media organisations will also follow the final from the Mintzola Terraza.

The guests in the Mintzola Terraza can follow the final through simultaneous translation into Spanish and English.

A programme of the final for all attendees

Bertsozale Elkarteak, in collaboration with newspaper Berria, will publish a special programme of the final. The attendees will find a 32-page publication on their seats, in which they will find details about the final, along with information about Bertsozale Elkarteak and various projects related to bertsoism.

The final will be broadcast live by Euskal Telebista and Bertsoa

Tickets for the final on the 17th sold out several weeks ago. Those fans who cannot enjoy the final live will have the opportunity to watch it through other means.

ETB1 will broadcast a special programme and offer full live coverage of the final. Aitzol Barandiaran, Uxue Alberdi and Ilaski Serrano will be the presenters of the live broadcast.

As it has done throughout the entire championship, the digital portal Bertsoa will also offer a live broadcast of the final on its website www.bertsoa.eus

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