



**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Union Square Alliance Annual Bloom Fashion Show Presented by Levi Strauss & Co. to Feature Original Designs from Academy of Art University Students**

*Part of the organization's ongoing In Bloom celebrations, the designs will be part of a fashion competition in collaboration with legacy institution With Love Halston*

**San Francisco, CA** — The [Union Square Alliance](#) will host a special fashion design competition together with the With Love Halston program featuring original designs from students from the Academy of Art to determine its winning Bloom Design. The Bloom Fashion Show is a highly anticipated annual tradition that celebrates Mother's Day weekend as part of the district's ongoing [Union Square In Bloom](#) Presented by JPMorganChase campaign.

The Bloom Fashion Show Presented by Levi Strauss & Co. will take place on Friday, May 8, with the fashion students receiving guidance and mentorship from [With Love Halston](#), a non-profit organization founded by Halston's niece Lesley Frowick and fashion industry experts Audrey Schilt, Scott Vogel, and the late Steve Gold.

Dedicated to sustaining the memory and legacy of the legendary fashion designer Halston, the With Love Halston team council students as they undergo a rigorous design challenge that includes learning the history of Halston and his impact on American Fashion, guiding them to a final Halston floral themed design that will be showcased at the public May 8th event in Union Square. The winner will receive a scholarship award from With Love Halston, made possible through the generosity of the Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation.

"Union Square's Bloom Fashion Show is an opportunity to celebrate San Francisco's mothers and support local artists in one of our city's great public spaces," said **Mayor Daniel Lurie**.

"Events like this bring people back to the heart of our city and play a critical role in accelerating our economic recovery and driving San Francisco's downtown comeback."

This year's official Bloom Design will be selected by a panel of fashion experts assembled by With Love Halston, including world-renowned supermodel Pat Cleveland, Jad Racha, designer of the 2025 Bloom dress, Nancy North, an original Halstonette, and Simon Mahoney, Head of Marketing & Creative Talent Acquisition at Gap Inc.

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“Our annual fashion show is always a highlight of our district's Bloom campaign and celebrations, but this year will be extra special,” said **Union Square Alliance CEO Marisa Rodriguez**. “Through our partnership with Academy of Art and With Love Halston, we are helping to inspire the next generation of fashion designers in San Francisco, and there is no better place than the heart of San Francisco’s premiere retail destination, Union Square. These talented students will receive the full red-carpet treatment here in Union Square, as we transform the heart of San Francisco into a center of cutting-edge fashion. It will be a great event for everyone!”

“I am incredibly proud of the ten designers who have taken on the Halston challenge—honoring an iconic legacy while bringing a bold, original perspective to their work. Each garment reflects a deep respect for Halston’s vision and the confidence to redefine it for today,” said **Academy of Art University President Elisa Stephens**. “We are deeply grateful to the With Love Halston Foundation for their mentorship, and to the Union Square Alliance for helping bring this experience to life. At Academy of Art University, we are proud to be a driving force in San Francisco’s revitalization—a global creative hub where bold ideas lead, innovation thrives, and the freedom to create isn’t just encouraged, it’s expected. These designers embody that spirit—and they are just getting started.”

“The team at With Love Halston strives to honor and uplift Halston's incredible legacy and talent, celebrating the man and genius who pinned American fashion on the map,” said **Brook Frowick Drummond**. “We are honored to have the opportunity for us to bring the With Love Halston design challenge to San Francisco in collaboration with Union Square Alliance's Union Square in Bloom initiative, cementing our role in uplifting San Francisco's creative community. We aspire to inform the next generation of aspiring fashion designers about Halston's lasting style and elegance that was transformative for American Fashion. We see talent and creativity in each of the students we worked with and appreciate their hard work and dedication to interpreting this challenge.”

Every year, Union Square Alliance hosts a series of events as a part of Union Square In Bloom, a multi-month celebration that highlights the neighborhood’s vibrancy through stunning floral displays, with fashion playing a starring role.

The Bloom Fashion Show Presented by Levi Strauss & Co. uplifts local talent and reinforces Union Square’s place as the intersection of style, culture, and seasonal beauty. Last year’s Bloom Dress was created by local designer Jad Racha, an Academy of Art fashion design graduate whose couture dress was inspired by his unique interpretation of Spring in Union Square.

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This year's In Bloom celebrations kicked off with Tulip Day on March 21. For that event, Union Square was transformed into a tulip garden with 80,000 colorful American-produced flowers grown from Dutch bulbs. An astounding 110,000 visitors were in Union Square on that day—more than doubling the 50,000 who came by for the 2025 Tulip Day festivities.

"As Spring brightens San Francisco, I'm excited for the In Bloom Fashion Show to bring fashion and creativity to Union Square," said **District 3 Supervisor Danny Sauter**. "This partnership celebrates fashion and the brilliant minds who bring it to life in the heart of our city. This is yet another reason to visit Union Square and see the renaissance taking place."

"Born in San Francisco 173 years ago, Levi's® has always drawn inspiration from the city's creative energy and sense of possibility," said **Jill Guenza, Vice President Women's Denim and Accessories**. "Bringing this event to Union Square allows us to champion youth designers, craftsmanship, and thoughtful design - spotlighting a new generation that is as intentional about process as they are about creativity."

"Union Square is and has always been an iconic destination for the latest fashion, and we love that it is also now the launchpad for the next generation of fashion talent to come out of San Francisco," said **Anne Taupier, Executive Director Office of Economic and Workforce Development**. "It was an honor to kick off Union Square in Bloom at Tulip Day, and this event continues the celebration of spring, high design and the incredible small businesses that make the heart of our city thrive."

### **About the Union Square Alliance:**

The Union Square Alliance serves members and creates a high-quality visitor experience by managing and activating public spaces, attracting new investment, and advocating for the district's future success. Union Square is the vibrant heart of San Francisco and an international destination where visitors come to enjoy exceptional retail experiences, luxury hotels, world-class cultural institutions, and great public spaces found only in the City by the Bay. A lively 27-block community surrounding Union Square Park in the heart of San Francisco makes up the Union Square Alliance. It is bordered on the north by Bush Street, on the east by Kearny Street, on the south by Market Street and the west by Taylor Street. For more information on the Alliance, go to [www.visitunionsquaresf.com](http://www.visitunionsquaresf.com).

### **About Academy of Art University:**

Established in 1929, Academy of Art University is one of the largest private, accredited art and design schools in the nation. As one of the oldest art schools located in San Francisco, the epicenter of culture and technology, Academy of Art University offers more than 129 accredited degree programs—available online and on-campus—spanning 70 areas of study, including



entertainment arts, advertising, fashion, architecture, game development, music, communications, photography, and more.

**About With Love Halston:**

Halston personally appointed his niece Lesley Frowick as guardian of his archives. Her mission is to disseminate the Halston legacy on the highest level. The [With Love Halston](#) Foundation was founded together with fashion industry experts Audrey Schilt and Scott Vogel and the late Steve Gold to launch the scholarship initiative. Together, they honor and uplift Halston's incredible legacy and talent. The man and genius who pinned American fashion on the map. With Love Halston Foundation student scholarships are implemented with the financial assistance of the Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation. The views expressed herein do not, in any way, reflect the official opinion of the Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation.