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(see page 8)

28th Annual



www.markhamjazzfestival.com





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CELEBRATING the 28th Annual Markham Jazz Festival!

Message from the Artistic Director

Welcome to the 2025 Markham Jazz Festival, presented by TD Ready Commitment.

This year's festival is a true celebration of Canadian jazz at its finest, featuring an incredible lineup that spans much of the country – from the west coast of British Columbia to Quebec. We're proud to present 31 outstanding groups, with 30 of them hailing from Canada and one special guest from Europe adding a global spark to the weekend.

One thing we're especially proud of: 15 of this year's groups are led or co-led by women. This wasn't something we set out to engineer – it simply reflects the exciting reality of the Canadian jazz landscape today. The artistry, leadership, and creative vision of these musicians speak volumes about the future of our scene, and we're thrilled to share it with you.

This year also brings a new shape to the festival as we adapt to the temporary closure of Main Street Unionville and our traditional mainstage at the Millennium Bandstand. But challenges often bring opportunity, and we're delighted to present four vibrant performance spaces, including an intimate indoor venue at the Varley Art Gallery – a perfect setting for unforgettable musical moments.

We're beyond excited to welcome three-time Juno Award winner Caity Gyorgy, among many other exceptional artists who will bring energy, soul, and world-class talent to every stage.

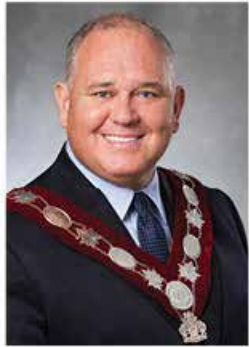
Whether you're a longtime supporter or a first-time guest, thank you for joining us. We can't wait to share the music with you.

See you at the festival!

Ernesto



Ernesto Cervini
Artistic Director,
Markham Jazz Festival



Frank Scarpitti
Mayor

August 2025

MESSAGE FROM MAYOR FRANK SCARPITTI

On behalf of Members of Council and the City of Markham, I am pleased to extend a warm and sincere welcome to everyone attending the **28th Annual Markham Jazz Festival**.

We would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations and sincere appreciation to the entire team behind the annual Jazz Festival. This much-anticipated event has become a cornerstone of our cultural calendar, drawing visitors from across the GTA and beyond, while continuing to captivate our own community year after year. The festival's ability to bring people together through the universal language of music is truly remarkable, and it continues to shine as a celebration of creativity, talent, and community spirit.

This year's lineup is particularly exciting, featuring over 30 performances by more than 130 musicians, including celebrated JUNO Award winners and nominees, as well as some of the most promising emerging artists in the country. Despite the ongoing restoration project on Main Street Unionville, the festival team has once again demonstrated its ingenuity and commitment by adapting the event layout to include a mix of cherished and new venues. From the ever-popular Varley Art Gallery patio and McKay Wine & Beer Garden to the addition of the mobile stage near the Unionville Curling Club, there will be no shortage of great music and vibrant energy throughout the village.

We would also like to extend a special thank you to the dedicated sponsors, tireless volunteers, hardworking organizing committee, and all the supporters whose contributions make this festival possible year after year. Your collective efforts are the reason this event continues to thrive and inspire. Congratulations on another outstanding year!

Sincerely,

Frank Scarpitti
Frank Scarpitti
Mayor



The Corporation of the City of Markham, Anthony Roman Centre, 101 Town Centre Boulevard, Markham, Ontario L3R 9W3
Tel: 905.475.4872 Fax: 905.479.7775 MayorScarpitti@markham.ca www.markham.ca

“ I am proud to support the Markham Jazz Festival and wish everyone a memorable and vibrant celebration of music. ”

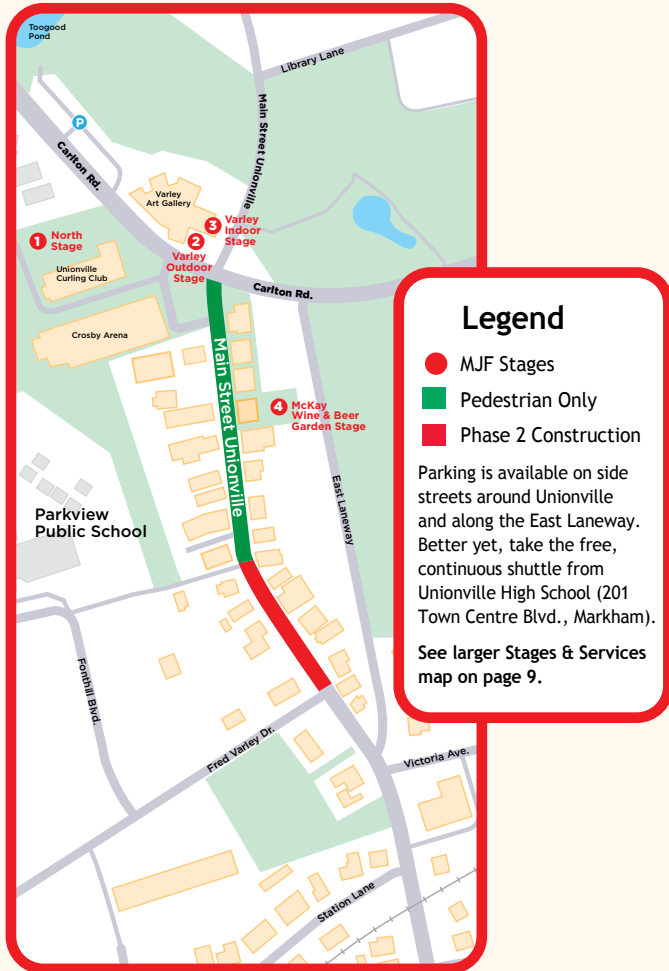
Mayor
Frank Scarpitti



Main Street Unionville

Open for business, closed for traffic!

As historic Main Street Unionville undergoes a major restoration in phases throughout 2025, please support all the merchants and restaurants. And, plan to return in 2026. It's going to be spectacular!



Legend

- MJF Stages
- Pedestrian Only
- Phase 2 Construction

Parking is available on side streets around Unionville and along the East Laneway. Better yet, take the free, continuous shuttle from Unionville High School (201 Town Centre Blvd., Markham).

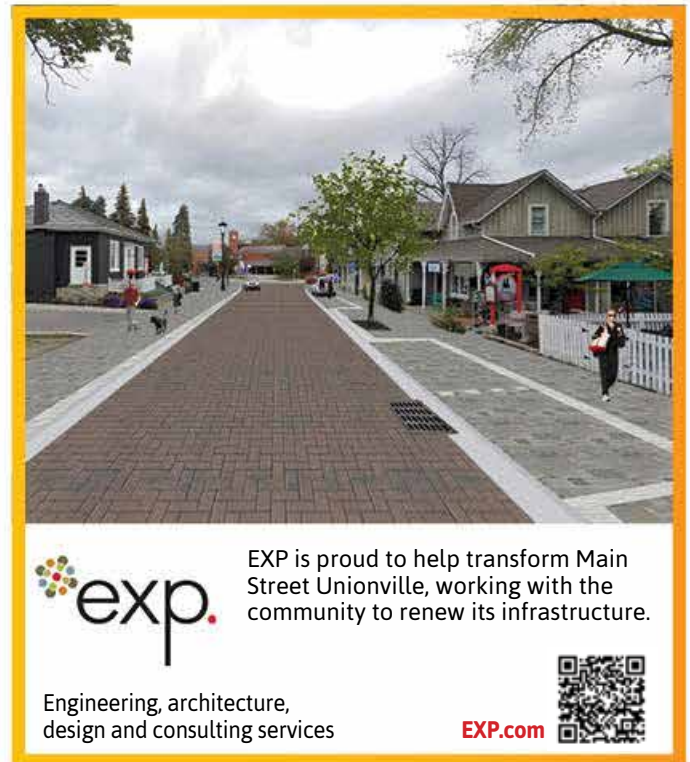
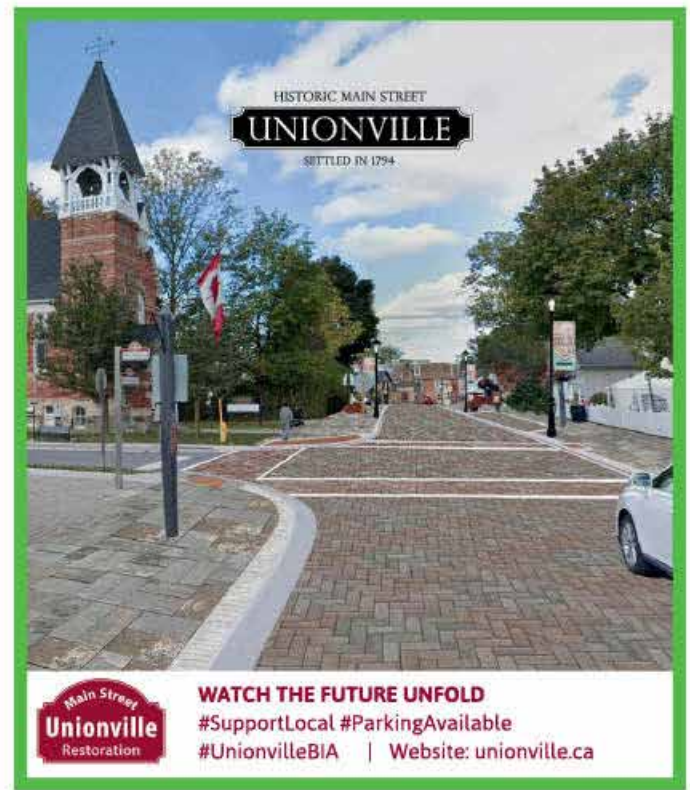
See larger Stages & Services map on page 9.



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We greatly appreciate being able to relocate our large stage to the UCC property this year.

For group events and celebrations, contact the Club Manager info@unionvillecurlingclub.com • 905-477-2711



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SATURDAY Aug 16 11:00 am – 11:00 pm
SUNDAY Aug 17 11:00 am – 8:00 pm

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LEGEND

Welcome to an adapted site for this year's Markham Jazz Festival, as Main Street Unionville continues its restoration project.

- Performance stages (see pages 22 & 23 for full schedule)
- Hot Spots along Main St. Unionville (see pages 36 & 37 for full HS schedule)
- Information booths
- Washrooms
- First aid station
- Restricted or no vehicle access
- Drop-off point for free, continuous shuttle bus from Unionville High School (201 Town Centre Blvd.)

Waleed Kush Afro-Jazz

12:00 pm

Members of Waleed Kush Afro-Jazz refer to their music as a healing art form, and to themselves as "humanity practitioners." This Toronto-based quintet is fronted by Waleed Abdulhamid, a Sudanese multi-instrumentalist, composer and vocalist. His compositions blend African rhythms with contemporary jazz harmonies, embracing a spirit of exploration, inclusivity and accessibility. Performances are not just a show but an invitation to join a shared musical journey. They are characterized by energetic rhythms, soulful melodies and intricate harmonies.

www.waleedkush.ca



Presented by



Rachel Therrien

2:00 pm

Trumpeter Rachel Therrien plays jazz that is not for sitting down. With her Latin Jazz Project, she performs a festive repertoire featuring original works and Afro-Latin jazz classics. A native of Rimouski, Quebec, Rachel has released eight albums since 2011. She draws from a wide range of influences across North and South America, the Caribbean and Europe. "Jazz is a philosophy of conversation between musicians from different backgrounds through improvisation," she says. "And it is our mission to keep that spirit alive for future generations."

www.racheltherrien.com



Presented by



Lester McLean Band

4:00 pm

Looking for the full entertainment experience at MJF? Come to hear the Lester McLean Band, a high-energy Toronto group of musicians who have mastered styles as diverse as fusion, funk, R&B and reggae. Lester is a versatile multi-instrumentalist and singer/songwriter who moves seamlessly from smooth to dynamic. Featured with him will be nine-time Juno nominee (and former artistic director of the Markham Jazz Festival) Michael Occhipinti on guitar and vocals, Nikku Nayar on bass guitar and Mark McLean on drums.

www.lestermclean.com



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Shuffle Demons

6:00 pm

Wild stage antics are not the only reason the Shuffle Demons have been jazz stars for 40 years. All their stunts are backed up by high-quality professional playing. Their style is on display in their 10th album, "Are You Really Real," which was released this year. Shuffle Demons have won several music awards, done numerous TV and radio appearances and have toured nationally and internationally, including 25 cross-Canada tours. Expect lively romps in the crowd, free jazz moments, danceable funk, poetry, ground-breaking solos and more.

www.shuffledemons.com



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Caity Gyorgy

8:00 pm

It's a big year for Caity Gyorgy (pronounced George). In March, she received her third Juno award, for her album "Hello! How Are You?" In April, she released "Asking For Trouble," featuring the music of Frank Loesser played with pianist Mark Limacher. And, on August 22, just after the Markham Jazz Festival ends, her next album will appear – "Caity Gyorgy with Strings: Arranged and Conducted by Mark Limacher." Calgary-born Caity composes songs in the style of the Great American Songbook. Come early for her show!

www.caitygyorgy.com



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SATURDAY
August 16

STAGE
2

VARLEY OUTDOOR STAGE
Amica Unionville

Mark Decho

1:00 pm

Electric bass player Marc Decho, in the words of saxophonist Jane Bunnett, is "one of the best bassists you will find anywhere!" His second album, "Forget the World," was released in June this year, featuring Afro-Cuban jazz combined with experimental electronic

music. Montreal-born Marc composed all the tracks, to be performed at Unionville with keyboardist James Hill and percussionist Marito Marques. Marc leads multiple groups and is a longstanding member of the Latin jazz orchestra led by Cuban pianist Miguel de Armas.
www.marcdecho.bandcamp.com



Duncan Hopkins Quartet

3:00 pm

British/Canadian double bassist, composer and arranger Duncan Hopkins can be heard on more than 50 albums, including seven recordings as a leader and several others as co-leader, as well as numerous television recordings. He has toured extensively throughout Canada, Great Britain, Europe, Brazil and the United States. His band includes guitarists Reg Schwager and Ted Quinlan along with drummer Ted Warren. They will feature songs from Duncan's recording "Who Are You? The music of Kenny Wheeler."

www.duncanhopkins.com



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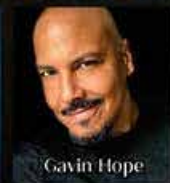
Simone Denny



John Finley



Kyrre Vibrant



Gavin Hope

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2025**

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Show 8pm

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SATURDAY
August 16

STAGE
2

VARLEY OUTDOOR STAGE
Amica Unionville

Karl Silveira

5:00 pm

Trombonist Karl Silveira has multiple musical identities. He is a composer, bandleader, jazz freelancer and teacher. He leads several bands in Toronto and is a member of half a dozen others. He frequently plays in musical theatre orchestras and is a trombone



instructor at St. Michael's College School. Karl is well known for his album "A Porta Aperta," which has received widespread radio play. Dan McClenaghan, writing for the website All About Jazz, called the album "a superbly played jazz sound coming out of Toronto." www.karlsilveira.com

Michel DeQuevedo

7:00 pm

Mexico, with its historic contributions to jazz, deserves representation at any jazz festival. Percussionist Michel DeQuevedo is the jubilant flag-bearer this year. Born in Mexico City, Michael came to Canada in 2005 and now resides in Hamilton.

Through his original music, a unique Afro-Latin pop-rock mix, Michel shares stories and experiences that create an uplifting listening experience. His album "Michelada" was released in 2024 and is available on SoundCloud. www.micheldequevedo.com



Dizzy & Fay

12:00 pm

For a jazz experience that is all about emotion, you'll want to hear Dizzy & Fay. They are a songwriting duo based in Toronto featuring pianist Mark Lalama and vocalist Amanda Walther. They create jazz melodies that are fresh yet familiar, drawing listeners into their whimsical world. Their two albums have received extensive airplay. Singer Jill Barber says of them, "Dizzy and Fay's skillfully crafted songs sound like timeless classics; their combined musicianship and vocal delivery are delightfully refreshing and pleasing to the ear!"

www.dizzyandfay.com



David Occhipinti Camera Ensemble

2:00 pm

Guitarist and composer David Occhipinti creates a unique blend of jazz and chamber music. The Toronto native, a recipient of multiple Juno nominations, will present new music from his forthcoming CD "Camera Lucida." The recording features Virginia MacDonald, clarinet; Aline Homzy, violin; Michael Davidson, vibraphone and Dan Fortin, bass. David has performed and toured across Canada, the U.S., Europe, and Japan. His compositions have been commissioned or recorded by a wide range of artists and featured on the CBC and BBC.

www.davidocchipinti.com



Elisa Thorn

4:00 pm

Meditative, psychedelic and equally as introspective as it is energizing, Elisa's music lures listeners into a trance, keeping them engaged with her charming off-the-cuff humour and banter. Elisa has been described as "a radical harpist, composer and interdisciplinary artist." Her just-released "XIIIC" recording features James Meger (Sick Boss), Dan Gaucher (Dan Mangan), with guests Anh Phung, Ted Crosby, and Trent Freeman (The Fretless). Find it on Spotify, YouTube and through her website.

www.ElisaThorn.com



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Sat., Nov. 29 / 8PM

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SATURDAY
August 16

STAGE
4

MCKAY WINE & BEER GARDEN
Unionville BIA

Ana Lía

12:30 pm

Ana Lía is a must-see for fans of spicy Latin Jazz pop fusion. A Dominican-Canadian, her charming, vibrant performances deliver an unmistakable experience for every audience. The singular blend of Rhythmic Dominican and Latin songs, jazz, pop, flamenco, and even hip-hop shape the way she crafts music today. Her bright, rich voice makes her music enjoyable beyond language. At this year's Markham Jazz Festival, Ana Lía will ignite the McKay Wine & Beer Garden stage with her energetic, flamenco-inspired performances.
www.analiaofficial.com



Andrea Superstein

2:00 pm

There's plenty of Canadian music to savour at this year's Markham Jazz Festival, with Andrea Superstein giving us one of the best reasons why. Andrea has come all the way from Vancouver to present songs from her third album, "Oh Mother," which was nominated for the 2025 Juno Award for Vocal Jazz Album of the Year. Based on conversations with almost 100 mothers, the recording examines the challenges and joys of parenthood. Andrea, a vocalist, composer and arranger, has completed multiple tours across Canada.
www.andreasuperstein.com



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Host **Jaymz Bee**

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Host **Sahir Jamal**

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Host **Tammy Mang**

SATURDAY AUGUST 16

NOON			
12:30	Waleed Kush Afro-Jazz 12:00 pm		Dizzy & Fay 12:00 pm
1:00			
1:30			
2:00	Rachel Therrien 2:00 pm	Marc Decho 1:00 pm	
2:30			David Occhipinti Camera Ensemble 2:00 pm
3:00			
3:30		Duncan Hopkins Quartet 3:00 pm	
4:00	Lester Mclean Band 4:00 pm		Elisa Thorn 4:00 pm
4:30			
5:00			
5:30		Karl Silveira 5:00 pm	
6:00	Shuffle Demons 6:00 pm		
6:30			
7:00			
7:30			
8:00	Caity Gyorgy 8:00 pm	Michel DeQuevedo 7:00 pm	
8:30			
9:00			
9:30			

Check
**JAZZ
HOT SPOTS**
on pages
36, 37 and 38

SUNDAY AUGUST 17

NOON			
12:30	Rob Tardik Band 12:00 pm	George Crotty Trio 12:00 pm	
1:00			Isabella Hallia 12:30 pm
1:30			
2:00	William Carn's CHOICES 2:00 pm	Oddgeir Berg Trio 1:00 pm	
2:30			Turbo Street Funk 2:00 pm
3:00			
3:30		Josh Cohen Quintet 3:00 pm	
4:00	Little Magic Sam 4:00 pm		Lauren Bush 3:30 pm
4:30		Kate Wyatt Trio 4:00 pm	
5:00			
5:30			The Vaudevillian 5:00 pm
6:00	Jay Douglas & His All-Stars 6:00 pm	Kae Murphy Quintet 5:00 pm	
6:30			
7:00			

Maya Killtron

3:30 pm

Maya Killtron creates music that is fun and makes you want to dance. Her songs, full of infectious grooves, blend jazz with funk and R&B. She has released two albums and has toured around the world. Beyond her singing, Maya is a violinist, producer and arranger. She also is a co-founder of Bowed Arts, a performance collective and string school committed to fostering accessibility and equity in music education and performance.

www.mayakilltron.com



Nastasia Y

5:00 pm

"I tell people about Ukraine through music," Nastasia Y says. She is a Ukrainian-born global fusion artist inspired by the multicultural city of Toronto, which she now calls home. Nastasia wrote and released her first album in 2013 (under the name Stacey Y) after completing her jazz piano degree at Humber College. She fuses funk, R&B, electro and jazz with Slavic folk music. Now the singer and keyboardist has released *Kyiv Soul*, exploring themes of ancestral magic, love and resistance.

www.nastasiay.com



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Irene Torres

6:30 pm

Born in Lima, Peru, Irene Torres moved to Canada with her family when she was six years old. Now a proud Canadian citizen, she is an in-demand member of Toronto's diverse music scene. Her evocative solo album, *"Travesía,"* explores themes of adaptation, nostalgia and enduring connections to one's roots. Irene started the original blues and soul group Irene Torres & The Sugar Devils, has toured with Battle of Santiago, and is featured in Jaymz Bee's Music for Secret Agents project.

www.irenetorres.com



Rob Tardik Band

12:00 pm

Guitar virtuoso Rob Tardik is a regular contributor to the smooth jazz world. His 10 recordings since 2020 have spawned six U.S. Billboard charting singles, two of which went to the top 10 on U.S. contemporary jazz radio. His last release, "Diversity," is a four-volume compilation in various musical styles. A new album, "Perspective," was released digitally in May. Rob and his band of Toronto-based musicians will feature songs from the album in their performance, designed to bring the audience to their feet. www.robhardik.com



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long-mcquade.com

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William Carn's CHOICES

2:00 pm

CHOICES, a group that combines analog and digital aspects of music making, is the latest project of Juno-winning trombonist and composer William Carn. He is a faculty member at the University of Toronto Jazz Studies program who has performed and taught internationally. He calls CHOICES a "project of reflection." It began in 2020 during the pandemic as a recording that was created remotely by William and five other jazz musicians in Toronto, including members of the ensemble Turbopop. www.williamcarn.com



Presented by Long & McQuade
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www.long-mcquade.com

Little Magic Sam

4:00 pm

Hailing from St. Thomas, Ontario, Sam Taylor has been performing blues and soul music as a singer, guitarist and songwriter internationally since the age of seven. He has released two extended-play albums and is working on a full-length original blues album. Reviewing a show by the Little Magic Sam Band, Ken Wallis of The Sound Café said, "His stage presence kept the audience captivated and it didn't hurt that he had a rockin' harp player along with him." www.littlemagicsam.com



Presented by York Region

Jay Douglas and His All-Stars

6:00 pm

Play it loud! That's what Jay Douglas loves to do. After a lifetime of struggle, the charismatic singer has earned his reputation as a key figure in the history of Caribbean and Canadian music. The recent TVO documentary "Play It Loud! How Toronto Got Soul" tells Jay's story, and his latest album "Confession" is a testament to his connection with blues and jazz. Jay will be joined in performance by his long-time band, the All-Stars. He likes to share the stage with the best.

www.jaydouglasmusic.com

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Oddgeir Berg Trio

1:00 pm

While jazz is a universal language, it can sometimes sound like Norwegian. At least it does when the Oddgeir Berg Trio takes the stage. This Oslo-based piano trio has been touring the world since the release in 2024 of its fifth album, "A Place Called Home." It is a concept album about the magic of nature, the spaces hidden in memory and the bonds that family provides. Berg's compositions are inspired by the tiny island of Rolla, population 900, where his father was born.

www.oddgeirbergtrio.com



Josh Cohen Quintet

3:00 pm

When is a bass guitar more than a bass guitar? When it's in the hands of Josh Cohen. Josh can play melody, chords, bass lines and percussion all at once. He holds a master of arts in music composition from York University and a bachelor of music from Humber College. His Toronto-based quintet includes Rob Christian on woodwinds, Lucian Gray on guitar, Mateo Mancuso on drums and Todd Pentney on keys. The group will play songs from their forthcoming debut jazz-fusion album, "We Are Home."

www.themusicofjoshcohen.com



Kae Murphy Quintet

5:00 pm

Kae Murphy is a non-binary trumpet player and multi-instrumentalist originally from Owen Sound and now based in Toronto. They have toured across North America and Europe with a variety of bands. Kai received the Toronto Arts Foundation Emerging Jazz Artist Award of 2023. Concerning jazz, Kae says: "There doesn't have to be any limit on any aspect of improvisation, meaning that one can be free to explore and push further in any aspect within the music. This inspires me on a daily basis."

soundcloud.com/kaelin-murphy1834

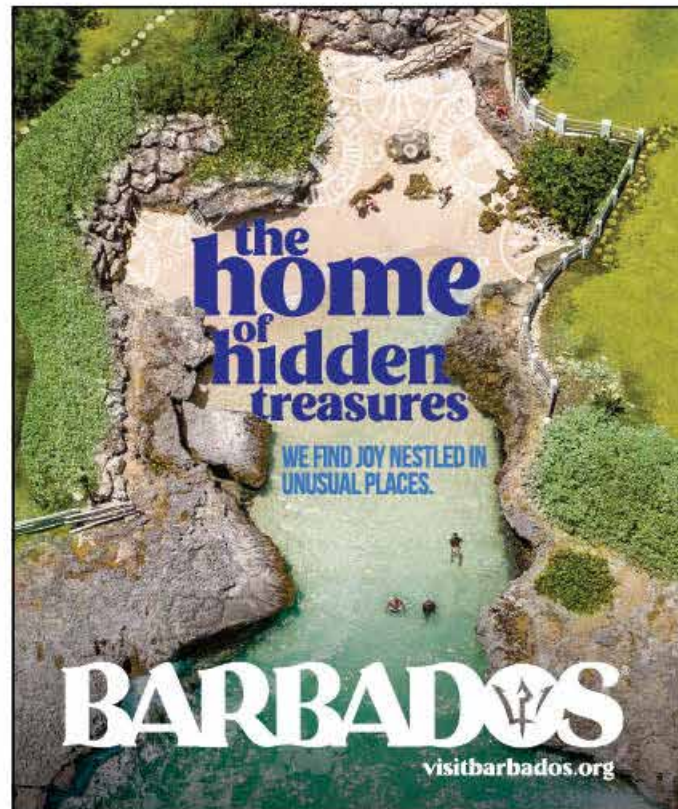


George Crotty Trio

12:00 pm

Jazz fans might never have seen this before – a trio with a cello! George Crotty collaborates with bassist Jonathan Chapman and percussionist Matias Recharte to create a unique musical brew. Since 2019, when they released their first of three albums, the trio has been touring in North America and Europe. They play modal jazz and draw on Arabic and Indian influences. Their latest album, released in June this year, is called "Heart Music" and is inspired by European jazz, Hindustani raga and contemporary chamber music.

www.georgecrotty.com/trio



Whitney Ross-Barris

2:00 pm

Whitney Ross-Barris is spirited and funny onstage, maybe even a bit distracted. She describes her life in Uxbridge as "trying to keep up with her three adorable hellions while balancing a late-night life in the arts." Whitney has released three albums and plans a fourth later in 2025. In addition to her career as a jazz singer and composer, Whitney has acted professionally for almost 25 years. This background in theatre gives her an engaging and fearless approach to every jazz performance.

www.whitneyrb.com



Kate Wyatt Trio

4:00 pm

Pianist Kate Wyatt has been a mainstay of the Montréal jazz scene for more than 20 years. This year she has been touring British Columbia with quartet and trio performances that have garnered positive reviews as much for her sunny personality as for the music. Kate's compositions and playing style, as displayed on her album "Artifact," have been highly praised. Reviewer Saku Mantere, writing on the Bandcamp website, described Kate's playing as: "Playful, contemplative, probing, intense, passionate; all contained in a deep pocket."

www.katewyattpiano.com





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Isabella Hallia

12:30 pm

She is only 25, but singer Isabella Hallia is already well known among jazz fans in Quebec. She is a headliner at jazz venues and has appeared with the Isabella Hallia Trio recently at the Montreal International Jazz Festival and the Festi Jazz Mont Tremblant. She is a graduate of McGill University with a bachelor of jazz performance and is working on her first jazz album. Come and see Isabella at the beginning of what promises to be a star's career.

www.isabellahallia.com



Lauren Bush

3:30 pm

Lauren Bush has built a career that spans the Atlantic Ocean. The Canadian-born, London-based singer enhances traditional jazz with contemporary flair through her enchanting delivery. Lauren's third album, "Tide Rise," had its debut at the iconic Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club. In recent months, Lauren has toured the U.K., Belgium, Luxembourg and Germany, as well as Western Canada. Her quartet features Liam Dunachie on piano, Dave Manington on bass and David Ingamells on drums.

www.laurenbushjazz.com



Turbo Street Funk

2:00 pm

Jazz began on street corners, and some bands still like it there. One of them is Turbo Street Funk. This exuberant quintet, formed on the streets of Toronto by university students in 2011, has a performance style rooted in the New Orleans horn band tradition. They combine top 40 hits with original numbers composed by guitarist and vocalist Casey Van. After hundreds of performances in North America and Europe, the band has gained a reputation for bringing audiences to their feet.

www.turbostreetfunk.com



The Vaudevillian

5:00 pm

Jazz fans who come to see The Vaudevillian will enjoy not just a performance but a learning experience. Ever play a washboard? Or musical spoons? Well, Jitterbug James and Norah Spades, collectively known as The Vaudevillian for the past 15 years, will teach you during their performance/workshop. And while they're at it, they will sing you some foot-stomping ragtime and dance numbers from the 1930s prohibition period. This vintage duo delivers high-energy jug band music with infectious charm.

www.thevaudevillianmusic.com





Jazz Hot Spots around Markham



50 Bullock Drive, Unit 8
Markham
905-209-1236
rougeriverbrewingcompany.com

Friday, August 8 7:30 – 9:30 pm **Paul Mifsud Quartet**



DRACO

Lobby of the Toronto
Marriott Markham Hotel
170 Enterprise Blvd.
Markham
437-777-3496
dracomarkham.com

Friday, August 15 3:00 – 5:00 pm **The Kuah Collective**



**Unionville
Arms
Pub & Grill**



189 Main St. N.
Unionville
905-470-8831
unionvillearms.com

Friday, August 15 9:00 – 12:00 pm **Sugar Rush**



202 Main St. N.
Unionville
905-470-6955
jakesonmainunionville.com

Saturday, August 16 2:00 – 5:00 pm **Angela Pincente Trio**
Saturday, Aug. 16 6:00 – 9:00 pm **Matt Sorley Band**
Sunday, August 17 2:00 – 5:00 pm **Andre Soares Trio**



Il Postino
RESTAURANT

186 Main St. N.
Unionville
905-940-1555
unionvillearms.com

Saturday, August 16 9:00 – 11:00 pm **The Commodities**



watercolour

166 Main St. N.
Unionville
905-266-6877
watercolour.ca

Saturday, August 16 9:00 – 11:00 pm **Full Moon**



**THE
DUCHESS
OF
MARKHAM**



53 Main St.
Markham Village
905-294-3181
duchessonline.com

Sunday, August 17 3:00 – 5:00 pm **One Reason**

Enjoy these Hot Spot performances!



Savour a little jazz with your afternoon or evening out. Reservations are recommended at most Jazz Hot Spots.

Rouge River Brewing Co.

50 Bullock Drive, Unit 8, Markham

905-209-1236 • rougeriverbrewingcompany.com

Friday, August 8 7:30 – 9:30 pm Paul Mifsud Quartet

Draco Restaurant, Toronto Marriott Markham Hotel

170 Enterprise Blvd. S., Markham

437-777-3496 • dracomarkham.net

Friday, August 15 3:00 – 5:00 pm The Kuah Collective

The Unionville Arms

189 Main St. N. Unionville

905-470-8831 • unionvillearms.com

Friday, August 15 9:00 – 12:00 pm Sugar Rush

Jakes on Main

202 Main St. N., Unionville

905-470-6955 • jakesonmainunionville.com

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AWARD 2025

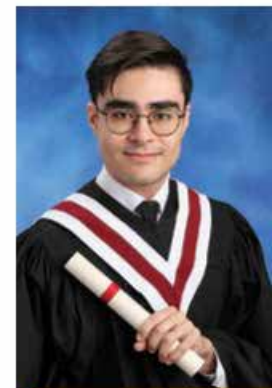
Message from the Markham-Unionville Rotary Club



George "Mitch" Mitchell

Each year at the Markham Jazz Festival, the Mitch Mitchell Award is presented to an up-and-coming young jazz musician by the Markham-Unionville Rotary Club. Mitch co-founded the MJF and was past president of the Rotary Club chapter. An accomplished musician himself, Mitch loved life and especially jazz.

This year's plaque and cash prize go to **Artin Mirshahi**. Since arriving from Iran in Grade 10, Artin has been an exceptional presence in the Unionville High School music program and community. He immediately immersed himself in every ensemble available, embracing challenges with curiosity and determination. When he learned the Jazz Band needed a tenor saxophonist, Artin – originally a flutist with some piano experience – taught himself the saxophone within a week and became one of the band's most expressive soloists. His natural ear for jazz, along with relentless self-driven practice, allowed him to improvise with sensitivity and style.



Artin Mirshahi

Artin also mentored beginner saxophonists with patience and enthusiasm. His guidance, often through one-on-one demonstrations and call-and-response improvisation, deeply impacted our younger students' love for jazz.

Congratulations, Artin!

Best of luck as you move on to Queen's University and beyond!

28th anniversary T-shirts

\$25



Take our survey!

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MASTER of CEREMONIES

NORTH STAGE

"The Markham Jazz Festival continues to be my favourite jazz festival in Ontario, and I'm thrilled to be back as emcee."



Artist, bandleader and broadcaster Jaymz Bee, a beloved personality on Jazz.fm91 radio for 20+ years, now focuses on writing, directing and producing for film and television.

Jaymz has been featured on most Canadian TV networks, has fronted several bands, produces albums for Vesuvius Music and continues to work as a private international tour guide.

Bee created a book with illustrator Charles Hackbarth (available at the Festival). It is a colouring book describing his encounters

with celebrities. The book is also available on Amazon.

Jaymz's first film, "Wild Music," has picked up 32 awards at international film festivals. His second film, "Beat Speak," and third, "Artists & Aliens," continue to hit festivals around the world. He just finished his first feature film, "MagicLand." He is based in Toronto and continues to produce and emcee special events and festivals.

Jaymz Bee



ALAN DIRENFELD, LL.B.

Barrister and Solicitor

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General inquiries:
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Play on!

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COMMITMENT**



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