

CELEBRATE SUMMER AT HARBOURFRONT CENTRE

Harbourfront Centre unveils spectacular summer 2023 festival programming with performances by The Strumbellas, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Gina Yashere, Kailash Kher, and more

May 31, 2023 – TORONTO – Harbourfront Centre is the place for bold and diverse programming. With its beautiful lakeside venues, Harbourfront Centre offers the best of summer, where community, creativity and connection thrive. An exciting lineup of live performances in music, comedy and dance by award-winning Canadian and international artists makes Harbourfront Centre the place for locals and visitors alike to visit and enjoy every weekend.

- Kicking off the festival season, the **Toronto Symphony Orchestra, featuring Broadway star Jewelle Blackman**, will play a free pops concert on Canada Day. The July long weekend will be filled with free performances by JUNO award-winning rock band **The Strumbellas, Crystal Shawanda**, the **Toronto All-Star Big Band** and many more. Harbourfront Centre will be bustling with art, comedy, food and activities for kids.
- Returning August 4–7 is the beloved **Island Soul Festival** featuring award-winning **DJ Power and Nailah Blackman** and celebrating the unique blend of Island cultures through music, film and food. Island Soul invites you to a wave of interactive, multidisciplinary arts and cultural activities, as well as performances by **Rayzalution Band**, JUNO award-winning **Kirk Diamond** and more.
- Closing out the summer is the **Hot and Spicy Festival** spotlighting India. Audiences will enjoy Bollywood folk music from Padmashri **Kailash Kher**, backed by his Indian fusion band Kailasa on the Concert Stage, laugh with **Abish Mathew** at his comedy special and indulge in delicious food representing the diverse culinary culture of India.
- Also returning this summer are fan-favourite festivals, **Tirgan 2023, Habari Africa** and **TAIWANfest**, promising a rich exploration of cuisine and culture.

Summer Music in the Garden returns to the Toronto Music Garden most Thursdays and Sundays between June 21 and August 27, with 18 free concerts.

Sharing the Stage, a special collaboration between **The National Ballet of Canada** and Harbourfront Centre, is once again presenting free twilight performances on our Concert Stage by the water's edge, offering audiences the opportunity to experience classical and contemporary dance.

"It is such a gift to invite artists to share their work with audiences at this beautiful lakefront," says Iris Nemani, Chief Programming Officer. "Our programming offers everyone – visitors and artists alike – the opportunity for creative connection by the water. This summer's program – filled with incredible performances by artists from across the globe – is not to be missed."

Detailed information and dates for all summer programming, and food and market vendors can be found at [HarbourfrontCentre.com](https://www.harbourfrontcentre.com).

OPENING WEEKEND

June 30 – July 3

All Free, All Weekend
Performances

HEADLINER: The Strumbellas, with opener Cat Clyde

WHEN: June 30, 8–10:45pm

WHERE: Concert Stage

Formed in 2008, multi-award winning internationally renowned alternative rock band [The Strumbellas](#) have built their career on crafting memorable songs, easily connecting with fans through their honest and relatable lyricism and versatile sound. The two-time JUNO Award winners have spent much of their time on the road, delivering standout performances at notable festivals such as Bonnaroo, Governor's Ball, Lollapalooza, Austin City Limits – and Harbourfront Centre. The Strumbellas take the stage at 9:30pm.

[Cat Clyde](#) is a Canadian folk singer-songwriter. Her third album *Down Rounder* (out now), is a wonder of deeply felt songwriting, a record that finds her marveling at what is around her while considering her place within it all. Cat opens for The Strumbellas from 8–9pm.

HEADLINER: Toronto Symphony Orchestra with opener Martha Chaves

WHEN: July 1, 8–10:30pm

WHERE: Concert Stage

Celebrate the grand finale of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra's Centennial season with a dazzling free outdoor concert at Harbourfront Centre this Canada Day! The evening opens with the hilarity of comedian Martha Chaves, followed by TSO, led by Barrett Principal Education Conductor & Community Ambassador, Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser with special guest Jewelle Blackman, star of the hit Broadway show *Hadestown*, in a program of celebratory classics and familiar favourites. Gather the whole family for a spectacular night of music and merriment with TSO in the heart of downtown Toronto.

IZimba Arts

WHEN: July 1, 12–12:45pm

WHERE: Stage in the Park

IZimba Arts is a music and dance group specializing in Southern African traditional music, Gumboot, Township dances, Afro-fusion and workshops. Enjoy the performance then join them at 3pm in the Lakeside Terrace for an all-ages workshop where they will lead participants in Afro-fusion and traditional Zimbabwe dances and songs/chants.

Polky

WHEN: July 1, 3–4pm

WHERE: Stage in the Park

Toronto's [Polky](#) is composed of singer Ewelina Ferenc, dancer Ala Stasiuk and multi-instrumentalist Marta Solek. Polky, meaning "Polish women," came together through a shared passion for Eastern

European music's enigmatic and upbeat style. They will take guests on a musical journey to Poland with Ukrainian, Jewish and Slovak musical influences.

Amai Kuda et Les Bois

WHEN: July 1, 5–6pm

WHERE: Stage in the Park

[Amai Kuda et Les Bois](#) is not a band or a solo act: They prefer to call themselves “a movement.” Whether Afro-soul or pop, soothing acoustic ballads, alt-rock or hip hop–infused political tracks, this boundary-breaking performance is not to be missed.

Crystal Shawanda

WHEN: July 1, 7–8pm

WHERE: Stage in the Park

JUNO award-winning blues powerhouse [Crystal Shawanda](#) takes the Stage in the Park for the first time in an unforgettable performance showcasing the power of her full-throttle voice.

Toronto All-Star Big Band

WHEN: July 2, 12:30–1:30pm, 3-4pm

WHERE: Stage in the Park

[The Toronto All-Star Big Band](#) will get people moving as they revive the spirit, style and sound of the '30s, '40s and '50s with not one but two performances. Swing dance lessons by Swing Toronto are offered before each set.

Janice Jo Lee

WHEN: July 2, 5–6pm

WHERE: Stage in the Park

[Janice Jo Lee](#) (she/they) is a poet provocateur, drawing inspiration from her island-dwelling family roots in South Korea to offer folk songs with rousing melodies supported by expansive jazz harmonies.

OKAN

WHEN: July 2, 7–8pm

WHERE: Stage in the Park

Fusing Afro-Cuban roots with jazz, folk and global rhythms in songs about immigration, resistance and love, [OKAN](#) takes their name from the word for heart in their Afro-Cuban religion of Santeria.

Rommel

WHEN: July 2, 8–9pm

WHERE: Concert Stage

Multiple award-winning artist [Rommel](#) is a Brazilian singer-songwriter, guitarist and producer whose talent and versatility has him mixing elements of popular Brazilian music with Afro-Beat, Reggae, Funk and Jazz.

Kalàscima feat. Andrea Ramolo

WHEN: July 2, 9:30–10:45pm

WHERE: Concert Stage

[Andrea Ramolo](#) with [Kalàscima](#) is an exciting new international collaboration of world music featuring southern Italian electronic/folk band Kalàscima and multiple Canadian Folk Music Award nominee and alternative songwriter Andrea Ramolo.

Inn Echo

WHEN: July 3, 12–1pm

WHERE: Stage in the Park

A Celtic fusion export from Prince Edward Island, [Inn Echo](#) weaves hundreds of years of traditional tunes with contemporary originals and arrangements, making them the talk of the national and international folk music scene.

Lula All Stars

WHEN: July 3, 3–4pm, 5–6pm

WHERE: Stage in the Park

Lula All Stars are a high energy, hard-hitting salsa ensemble made up of the very best musicians of Toronto's Latin music scene. Get ready to move and groove and join the band's salsa lesson at 4:30pm.

Workshops & More

Red Phone

WHEN: June 30 – July 3

WHERE: West Corridor Bays

Part theatre and part social intervention, [Boca del Lupo](#)'s Red Phone is an audience-to-audience performance that utilizes the intimacy of a phone call and the technology of a teleprompter. Two at a time, from within a bespoke constructed phone booth, audience members partake in a five- to ten-minute dialogue about some of the day's big questions as written by a prominent Canadian playwright. With a Canadian catalogue of over two-dozen scripts, Red Phone is a truly national project.

Power Kids Craft

WHEN: July 1, 1–5pm

WHERE: Harbour Kids Tent

Join Power Kids and make some 3-D art! This activity is inspired by Jen Aitken's exhibition at The Power Plant Contemporary Gallery.

Sankofa Stories (Decolonization 101 Series) with Amai Kuda

WHEN: July 1, 1:30–2:30pm

WHERE: Lakeside Terrace

Through an African-centred retelling of human history, participants will take part in collective music-making, learn about African deities and lore and explore an African Indigenous approach to connecting more deeply with nature.

INCIRQUE Site Performers

WHEN: July 1–3, various times between 12–5pm

WHERE: North Orchard

[INCIRQUE](#) inspires smiles with their joyful performances, including:

- **July 1 & 2: Bex in Motion** (a dazzling show that combines comedy, acrobatics, juggling and hula hoop tricks)
- **July 1 & 2: Dawn Dreams Circus** (stilts performer)
- **July 3: Lucky Barber** (juggler, crowd performer and dad jokes aficionado)

Bead Art Painting/Dot Art Inspired by Métis Beadwork

WHEN: July 2 & 3, 1–4pm

WHERE: HarbourKids Tent

This workshop is fun and educational for kids – and the kids in us all! Led by [Marissa Magneson](#) (Cree Métis, Citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario), artist, photographer, educator and workshop facilitator, participants will learn about the traditional floral beadwork of the Métis people through bead painting/dot art, after which they are invited to create their own work of art.

Aperitivo Workshop! Meet-and-Greet with Kalàscima and Andrea Ramolo

WHEN: July 2, 6–7pm

WHERE: Lakeside Terrace

Join southern Italian world music supergroup Kalàscima and Andrea Ramolo for a pre-show meet-and-greet to explore southern Italy-s ancestral music, dance and folklore.

Play Play: Music and Theatre Games Jam with Janice Jo Lee

WHEN: July 2, 2–3pm

WHERE: Lakeside Terrace

Join Janice Jo Lee for a fun and interactive workshop with body percussion, improvisation, harmonies, rhythm and poetry. It is a cypher (jam) for people of all ages and experience.

Harbourfront Centre Summer Festival Season

Island Soul

The Caribbean Current

WHEN: August 4–7

During the August long weekend, Harbourfront Centre presents the 25th edition of the Island Soul Festival. This year's theme, the Caribbean Current, is inspired by the many different flavours of the islands; how one palette delicately flows to another – adequate and subtly distinctive. The festival will showcase the creative dynamism of these identities, highlighting the seamless flow from one ripple to the next, celebrating the unique blend of cultures through music, film, food, comedy and creating a wave of interactive and multidisciplinary arts and cultural activities.

In addition to delicious eats and a vendor market, audiences can expect to see performances from:

- **August 4:** [The Recipee Band](#)
- **August 4 and 6:** [Carnival Spice](#), Canada's top provider of Caribbean dance and fitness
- **August 5:** **Empress Mashup** featuring female reggae band and solo performers [Tiffanie Malvo](#), Donna Makeda, [Chelsea Stewart](#) and [Natural Fyah](#)

- **August 5:** [DJ Starting From Scratch](#)
- **August 6:** [Kirk Diamond](#), JUNO award-winning, singer, songwriter, producer and social activist

Island Soul also offers art exhibitions and film screenings, including [Kelly Fyffe-Marshall](#)'s debut feature film, *When Morning Comes*, on August 5. Additional events to be announced. Visit harbourfrontcentre.com for the most up-to-date information.

Hot and Spicy

Reflections on India: Celebrating 75 years of independence

WHEN: September 1–4

Over the Labour Day long weekend, Hot and Spicy returns to Harbourfront Centre with thought-provoking multidisciplinary arts, food and more. Enjoy performances by:

- **September 1:** [JoSH The Band](#), Canadian Indo-Pakistani Bhangra music group
- **September 2:** Mausiqui, where viewers will be taken on a journey of the world in search of love through the strings of the sitar
- **September 2:** [Autorickshaw](#), a refreshing blend of jazz, folk, pop, Indian classical music and originals
- **September 2:** Padmashri Kailash Kher and Kailasa Live
- **September 3:** Comedy act ABYYZ ([Abish Mathew](#))

Hot and Spicy will also feature exhibitions, such as *Matters of India* (working title), which explores contemporary design through materiality, process and technique crafted by hand, and *Drawing Say Dhaga*, an international textile arts collaboration between Canada and Pakistan showcasing the multi-sensorial richness of embroidery. Additional events to be announced. Visit harbourfrontcentre.com for the most up-to-date information.

MORE TO CELEBRATE THIS SUMMER

Harbourfront Centre presents the return of its beloved annual concert series, ***Summer Music in the Garden***. Curated by Gregory Oh with associate curator Rebecca Cuddy, it features 18 free concerts in the Toronto Music Garden on most Thursdays and Sundays throughout the summer, from June 21 to August 27, 2023. Visit harbourfrontcentre.com for the most up-to-date information.

A major showing of work by the **celebrated costume designer Machine Dazzle** is also coming to the gallery at Harbourfront Centre – details to follow!

New **Artists-in-Residence** will be hard at work within Harbourfront Centre's Craft & Design Studios. Watch them work and see what they've created within the display vitrines throughout Harbourfront Centre's main building at 235 Queens Quay West.

Partner Festivals at Harbourfront Centre

Harbourfront Centre is delighted to welcome back our longtime partners for more rich, diverse and exciting festival programming.

[Tirgan](#)

WHEN: July 20–23

This summer, the world’s largest celebration of Iranian art and culture, Tirgan, returns to Harbourfront from July 20 to 23 with 250+ artists, and 140+ performances, talks, presentations and workshops.

[Habari Africa](#)

WHEN: August 11–13

Batuki Music Society brings Habari Africa – the multidisciplinary art and music festival that highlights Africa’s rich and diverse cultures – back to Harbourfront Centre from August 11 to 13.

[TAIWANfest](#)

WHEN: August 25–27

From August 25 to 27, the Asian-Canadian Special Events Association brings TAIWANfest to Harbourfront Centre for a weekend full of music, art, food, conversations and more.

About Harbourfront Centre

Harbourfront Centre is a leading international centre for contemporary arts, culture and ideas, and a registered, charitable not-for-profit cultural organization operating a 10-acre campus on Toronto’s central waterfront. Harbourfront Centre provides year-round programming 52 weeks a year, seven days a week, supporting a wide range of artists and communities. We inspire audiences and visitors with a breadth of bold, ambitious and engaging experiences, and champion contemporary Canadian artists throughout their careers, presenting them alongside international artists, and fostering national and international artistic exchange between disciplines and cultures.

Harbourfront Centre gratefully acknowledges its Programming Partners: Government of Canada, Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council and City of Toronto, as well as its Corporate Site Partner: Labatt.

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