

Music – Rhythm POSITIVE

This musical jam session series will feature local, national and international musicians and singers from all four directions of our globe.

Strength of Africa Concert Presented by Bristol Myers Squibb Canada

This overall program aims to blend modern & traditional African rhythms, patterns and melodies; from a cappella to 'sinewy Malagasy guitar' to chimurenga (the Shona word for struggle). Diverse local talents of Soul Influence, Donné Roberts come together with the internationally renowned "Lion of Zimbabwe", Thomas Mapfumo, create a compelling music program aimed at connecting with audiences and promoting awareness on HIV/AIDS.

Soul Influence

Soul Influence is an a cappella group comprised of seven young people from at least 4 African countries, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Against a backdrop of Western Culture, Soul Influence produces a fusion of distinct African spiritual sounds of Zulu, Shona, Ndebele, Bemba, Lingala, Luganda, Tonga, Taita and Swahili origin with contemporary Christian gospel music. Soul Influence sings richly layered vocal harmonies, combining the intricate beat and rhythm of the motherland with the sounds and sentiments of sacred music. Compelled to be involved in the promotion of HIV/AIDS awareness because, "everyday we are prompted by the perennial questions of; why Africa, why us, what is happening to our generation, who can help or what can we do to help on this crisis". They have performed in several fundraising events and have been involved in community based programs to support those affected by HIV/AIDS including; Motherly care Children's Home Kajiado Girls, YRC4SLF (York Region Committee for Stephen Lewis Foundation) and King'eero Community. Proceeds of their current CD will go to the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

Venue : Harbourfront Centre Concert Stage

Date : Monday 14 August, 2006

Time : 19:30

Country: Canada

Donné Roberts

Donne Robert's full name is Rakotomamonjy Dieudonne Roberts. He was born in Madagascar but moved to Russia as a young boy. In 1997, he produced Mama Africa, one of the largest and most unique African festivals to grace Russian culture. And, in 1998 he became the first black person to host a show on MTV Russia. His music represents a fusion of traditional African contemporary influences of funk, rock and blues. Donne Roberts works with a collective of musicians from different cultural backgrounds and sexual orientation. Their collective musical mission is to "to motivate people to respect each other no matter what race, sex, social position, sexual orientation and religion", this theme described in his song, "Sadecake". On his HIV/AIDS involvement Donne explains, "having witnessed the lack of education and general awareness about the illness among the population, which in turn

contributes to the spread of the infection and triggers other societal problems, I know how important it is to draw public attention to the problem." His song "Las" speaks to the enormous impact on families of this far reaching epidemic.

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Thomas Mapfumo

Thomas Mapfumo was born in Marondera, Zimbabwe in 1945 and is also referred to as 'the Lion of Zimbabwe'. He is responsible for blending traditional Shona mbira music with western instruments and his lyrics tackle the injustices of apartheid, racism and colonialism. He established the musical style, chimurenga (the Shona word for struggle). He has become a national Zimbabwean hero by singing these songs to the Zimbabwean people about their culture and the challenges they face. Mapfumo has dedicated himself to raising awareness by singing about HIV/AIDS. He was the first Zimbabwean musician to sing and dedicate songs to a cause most people were afraid to address. In the early 90's, Mapfumo was singing "Mukondombera," a prophetic song which "urged to be cautious of HIV/AIDS and to change our ways or we would perish". Honored as 1999 Artist of the Year by the American World Music Awards, Mr. Mapfumo was named Zimbabwe's Person of the Century in the Arts in 2000. After over thirty albums, his music continues to evolve, adapting to the struggles of the times.

Venue : Harbourfront Centre Concert Stage

Date : Monday 14 August, 2006

Time : 19:30

Country: USA

Youth On It!

Presented by Bristol Myers Squibb Canada

A dynamic urban hub attracting the youth in the City of Toronto's downtown centre, Dundas Square will be showcasing diverse young talented performers. This program opens with the exciting sounds of North American taiko drumming followed by the engaging sounds of hip hop music culminating in a Latin American dance band finale of traditional latino rhythms with cutting edge beats.

Time Up

SPIT plays written and performed with hip hop demonstrating how dance style can be used to accelerate awareness campaigns in East Africa.

Venue : Yonge-Dundas Square

Date : Wednesday 16 August, 2006

Time : 17:30 – 18:00

Artist : SPIT

Country : Canada

Shuketsu-do

The theme of this conference, ***Time to Deliver***, will resonate throughout this performance. This piece will awaken the viewers' senses, thrilling them with the visual, auditory and physical vibrations of Taiko and leaving them with the message that anything is possible by demonstrating a collective spirit through the music.

Venue : Yonge-Dundas Square

Date : Wednesday 16 August, 2006
Time : 18:00 – 18:30
Artist : Raging Asian Women Taiko Drummers
Country : Canada

Emmanuel Mabe (Kikijiko)

Emmanuel Mabe, originally from Sudan but now living in Toronto, uses hip hop music to address the current challenges facing our youth including the creating awareness around HIV/AIDS and gun violence in Toronto. While in Kenya he organized youth to perform during the AIDS day celebrations in Kakuma Refugee Camp in 2003. This experience spurred the creation of his song AIDS Real now released on his current CD Hard to the Core. He also participated in a concert dubbed "Hip-hop for Africa" organized by CAP AIDS and the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund Canada earlier this year at the Rivoli in Toronto.

Emmanuel also authored a song speaking to the issues of gun violence in Toronto titled "gunz down". This song performed during the "BLING" summit at the University of Toronto in January of this year was intended to create an anti-violence awareness among youth. He will be releasing a new CD this summer entitled, 'Guns Down'. Emmanuel's lyrics are performed in English, Swahili and Arabic.

Venue : Yonge-Dundas Square
Date : Wednesday 16 August, 2006
Time : 18:45 – 19:45
Country: Canada

Plan C

This group headed by Juan Carlos Valencia, a classically and Jazz trained artist from Bogotá, Colombia. Plan C's repertoire of Afro-Latino rhythms mixes contemporary musical styles such as jazz, funk, soul, hip-hop and electronica with powerful lyrics of social commentary addressing the challenges our youth face today.

Venue : Yonge-Dundas Square
Date : Wednesday 16 August, 2006
Time : 20:00 – 21:00
Country: Canada

Rhythm of Roots

This program aims to reflect the rhythmic fusion of diverse traditional roots with soulful contemporary and bold jazz sounds along with some dance grooves to keep you moving through the night.

Rez & Kiran

Rez Abassi is considered to be one of today's foremost modern jazz guitar players. He has honed his skills with performances throughout the world including multiple tours in Europe, Canada, the U.S. and India. Kiran Ahluwalia was born to sing, she is possessed with a voice that could wring tears from a stone. This 2004 Juno Award winner is an exponent of one of the world's great vocal traditions.

Venue : Workman Theatre
Date : Thursday 17 August, 2006
Time : 20:00 – 20:45
Artists: Rez Abassi and Kiran Ahluwalia
Country: Canada

Digging Roots

Digging Roots is collaboration between Indigenous artists Raven Kanatakta and ShoShona Kish, they have been together since 2004. Their self-described style of "Odenimin Music" or heartbeat music pulls the rhythm of this land base into bold, moving and at times, defiantly an honest voice.

Venue : Workman Theatre

Date : Thursday 17 August, 2006

Time : 21:00 – 22:00

Artist : Digging Roots

Country : Canada