



Stratford Summer Music 2018 Program Announced!

Stratford, ON – **John A. Miller**, Artistic Producer of Stratford Summer Music, has announced the programming for the music festival's 18th season. Spread over six weeks from July 16th to August 26th there will be 100 events and performances featuring 350 artists. This year's robust line-up has something for everyone, including cabarets at Revival House, Bach Musical Brunches at The Prune Restaurant, free lunchtime BargeMusic, early morning BachWalks, and Play Me, I'm Yours pianos placed throughout Downtown Stratford.

John Miller, who will retire at the end of the 2018 season, spoke about what this season means for him: "2018 will be *special* for me. And with its diversity of artists and ensembles and its variety of repertoire and performances, I'm certain the summer will also be an *exciting* season...for our audiences, and, as I prepare to pass on the leadership baton, for me, too."

Select Highlights:

The Grand Illumination –marks the beginning of the 18th Stratford Summer Music season. Everyone is welcome to Lower Queens Park for this exciting spectacle that lights up the sky to composer Berthold Carrière's ***Music for a Midsummer's Night*** on Monday, July 16 at 9:30 pm.

Jeremy Dutcher is a classically trained operatic tenor, pianist and songwriter, originally from New Brunswick and of Indigenous Wolastoq heritage. He takes every opportunity to blend his Wolastoq roots into the music he creates, merging classical, traditional and pop to form something entirely new. With fewer than 100 Wolastoqey speakers alive today, collecting, preserving and sharing his people's songs have become Jeremy's crusade. This performance offers a rare opportunity to meet one of Canada's most dynamic young First Nation musicians. Jeremy's interview on CBC Radio One's ***q*** in April brought a massive public response from every part of our nation. Jeremy Dutcher will be performing Wednesday, July 18 at 7 pm at the Music Salon at The Avondale.

The Great Pianists Series will be unlike any other keyboard series in 18 years of programming. Two seasoned veterans and two next-generation greats who are all internationally celebrated will take the stage this summer. **Marc-André Hamelin** will be starting off the series performing jazz and classical highlights from his scores of award-winning recordings at 7pm on Wednesday, July 25 at The Avondale. **Angela Hewitt**, known worldwide as the foremost interpreter of J. S. Bach, will be performing **Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier***, BWV 846–893 over two days, Saturday, August 11 and Sunday, August 12 at 3pm at The Avondale. **Jean-Michel Blais'** performance will be of his own compositions, framed by his stories about how the music emerged; this will take place on Wednesday, August 22 at 3pm, in the Music Salon at The Avondale. Rounding out our piano series

will be **Jan Lisiecki**, making his ninth consecutive visit and possibly his last to Stratford Summer Music. Fresh from his 2018 Juno win, Jan will delight audiences here, as he does worldwide, on Saturday, August 25 at 3pm at The Avondale.

Orchestre de la Francophonie is returning for their fifth visit this summer. The outstanding ensemble includes 60 young musicians whose first language is French, representing Quebec, Canada and several international nations all brought together by their commitment to classical music. They will be featuring three emerging soloists from La Belle Province who will perform in two concerts under the baton of Maestro Jean-Philippe Tremblay, Founder and Chief Conductor of Orchestre de la Francophonie. The first concert will be on Saturday, July 21 at 3 pm at The Avondale with guest artists **Stéphane Tétreault**, cello, and **Maxim Bernard**, piano. The second performance will be a free, family-friendly event on Sunday, July 22 at 7 pm in Stratford's Market Square with guest artist **Monika Dongmo**, soprano; the orchestra will be featuring well-known works including **Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture**.

LIVE from THE ROCK. You don't have to fly to St. John's to enjoy the best of Newfoundland music because the best artists from The Rock are coming to Stratford Summer Music! By popular demand, Maureen, Teresa and Karen - **The Ennis Sisters** - are returning, and bringing their Island kin, Bob, Mark, Chris and Billy – **Shanneyganock**. And there will be an after-party at a secret location reserved for only 100 following the concert. The VIP ticket gives you a reserved front-row seat, a tax receipt as a donation to Summer Music's Legacy Fund, and entrance to a traditional East Coast Kitchen Party complete with music, food, likely some screech, and maybe a cod or two for kissing. The fun will start at 7 pm on Thursday, July 26 at The Avondale.

Blind Boys of Alabama are recognized worldwide as living legends of gospel music. Inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame and winners of five Grammys, they have attained the highest levels of achievement in a career that spans over 70 years. Known for their remarkable interpretations of everything from traditional gospel favorites to contemporary spiritual material, The Blind Boys have sung the songs of Eric Clapton, Prince and Tom Waits, shared recordings with artists like Lou Reed, Peter Gabriel, Bonnie Raitt and Willie Nelson, and appeared on Late Night with David Letterman, The Grammy Awards and 60 Minutes. They will be performing at The Avondale on Monday, July 30th at 7pm.

There never was a Canadian quite like Stompin' Tom Connors. The lad from Skinner's Pond, P.E.I. became a Canadian legend who spent his life touring our country and singing, in his own unique way, about the pleasures of being Canadian. That spirit and those songs are what our **Salute to Stompin' Tom Connors** celebrates, with **Whiskey Jack**, the band that crisscrossed the country with him, along with a rare singing appearance by Tom's wife, **Lena Connors**, and special guest, **Cindy Church**, a genuine fan of Tom and the performer whom Ian Tyson called 'the best female singer in the land'. This exciting performance will happen on Friday, August 3 at 7 pm at the Masonic Concert Hall.

Tanya Tagaq is an experimental vocalist and painter, the 2014 laureate of the distinguished Polaris Prize, and a forceful advocate for her Inuit brothers and sisters. Her creativity blends Inuit throat singing with electronic, classical, punk and rock. For her performance she will be singing

throughout the pioneering silent docudrama, ***Nanook of the North***, to express and interpret the modern expression of Inuit culture, formed by her upbringing in Cambridge Bay/Iqaluktuutiaq, Nunavut on the south coast of Victoria Island. This unforgettable event will be at The Avondale on Monday, August 13 at 7 pm.

The Museum of the Moon. Making its Canadian debut, this Moon is a 23' diameter reproduction of the exact surface of the moon, based on photographs taken by NASA cameras from lunar space crafts, then assembled by the British futurist/inventor, Luke Jerram, whose other unique contributions to Stratford Summer Music have been the *Sky Orchestra* (2007) and *Play Me, I'm Yours* pianos. The Museum of the Moon will be on Tom Patterson Island from August 16 to 25. More information about this will be released in the next few weeks, stay tuned!

ORIGINS -The Canadian Arabic Orchestra with Laura Grizzlypaws and Whirling Dervishes is a forceful, inclusive demonstration of the harmonies possible within our world and our country. Side by side in this unique presentation are the music of the Indigenous peoples of Canada and the music of the nations of the Eastern Mediterranean known as The Levant: Cyprus, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, and Turkey. In this performance, the interface is represented by the St'at'imc artist/dancer, **Laura Grizzlypaws**, from British Columbia who sings of her culture beside members of the **Canadian Arabic Orchestra**. Envoys of the mystical Turkish meditative community, **Sufi Whirling Dervishes**, will complete the experience. This performance will be on Sunday, August 19 at 3 pm at The Avondale.

Juno award-winner **Ron Sexsmith** is one of the finest songwriters of his generation. For his latest project, he published ***Deer Life***, a fairy tale centred around a boy named Deryn Hedlight and his mysterious transformation into a deer at the hands of an evil sorceress. In this concert presentation, Stratford Summer Music presents the première performance of Ron Sexsmith's new ***Songs from Deer Life*** with orchestrations by Ben Bolt-Martin. To spin this musical tale of magic, deception and bravery, Sexsmith teams up on stage with musicians from Stratford's **INNERchamber**, Music Director **Andrew Chung**, vocalist **Barbara Fulton** and narrator **Mike Nadajewski**. There will be a VIP package that includes reserved front-rows seating and an after-performance party with the musicians. Performance and after-party will take place on Monday, August 20 at 7 pm at The Avondale.

For a full schedule of performances and to purchase tickets visit stratfordsummermusic.ca, call (519) 271-2101 or via the Box Office at 25 Ontario Street (second floor). Tickets will be on sale to the general public on May 8th, 2018.

Stratford Summer Music acknowledges with thanks the support of the following major sponsors.
Season Sponsor: Bard's on Market Square

Major Government Sponsors: Canadian Heritage, Canada Summer Jobs, Ontario Arts Council, Province of Ontario (Celebrate Ontario) and City of Stratford

Major Corporate Sponsors: Bell, BMO Financial Group, CIBC, CTV, Magest Inc., QuadReal, Scotiabank, Stikeman Elliott LLP, Stratford City Centre, TD Canada Trust, The New Classical

96.3fm, University of Waterloo, Xerox Canada and Yamaha

About Stratford Summer Music

Stratford Summer Music is an annual multi-week music festival in indoor and outdoor venues throughout downtown Stratford. With an artistic vision to produce, to the highest standards possible, a program of diverse and exciting musical performances by Canadian and international artists and to provide the widest possible range of musical genres on its stages, Stratford Summer Music offers audiences a standard of musical excellence and experiences difficult to find outside large urban centres. In 2017, more than 50,000 people enjoyed the music festival's ticketed or free concerts and events.

Stratford Summer Music 2018

July 16th to August 26th

Website: <https://stratfordsummermusic.ca>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StratfordMusic>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/stratfordmusic>

- 30 -

For immediate release: May 7th, 2018

For more information, please contact:

Judy Matheson, General Manager
jmatheson@stratfordsummermusic.ca
(519) 271-2101

Drea Kerr, Marketing and Development Manager
dkerr@stratfordsummermusic.ca
(519) 271-2101