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# LUMINATO

## Luminato's evolution continues with first festival programmed by Artistic Director Josephine Ridge, June 14 to 25

Two Canadian-made world premieres: *Bearing*, a dance opera by Michael Greyeyes & Yvette Nolan of Signal Theatre;  
*King Arthur's Night* co-created by Niall McNeil with Marcus Youssef & James Long of Newworld Theatre;  
The National Arts Centre Orchestra performs multimedia experience *Life Reflected*;  
Montreal's Le Patin Libre hits the ice with *Vertical Influences*;  
Acclaimed-choreographer Akram Khan performs in *Until The Lions*;  
les ballets C de la B and NTGent intertwine music and theatre in *En avant, marche!*;  
Jonzi D & Sadler's Wells take over the Sony Centre with hip hop dance festival *Breakin' Convention*;  
and The Famous Spiegeltent lands in David Pecaut Square

Toronto, ON – [Luminato](#) launches its second decade by refocusing its definition of the word festival with an evolved artistic vision designed to include a wider range of artists and audiences. At the core of the 11<sup>th</sup> Luminato festival, the first curated by new artistic director **Josephine Ridge**, is a blueprint for the new directions the festival will travel in the coming years. In 2017, Luminato sets the stage for its future with the intention to explore, celebrate and respond to Toronto's diverse and multicultural make-up. The projects shared from **June 14 to 25** at venues across the city will inspire vital conversations about what is happening in our city, country and society today.

Collaboration, co-presentations and partnerships with local and national arts organizations are key drivers of the projects conceived and presented. In 2017 this includes two Canadian world premieres (one of which is a Luminato commission), and forging relationships with many leading Canadian partners: the Art Gallery of Ontario, Dancemakers, The Theatre Centre, The Drake Hotel, the National Arts Centre and National Arts Centre Orchestra, Newworld Theatre, the Sony Centre, and more.

Toronto-based and Canadian projects are programmed alongside the influential international works which have also been a key feature of the festival. Presenting work by differently-abled artists is also a focus, and this year, Luminato starts a three-year plan to improve accessibility and the festival-going experience for all audiences.

*"For a festival to stay relevant and feel connected to the city in which it's created, it has to be part of the zeitgeist of the city. Luminato should be a festival of and a festival for Toronto. I'm proud to be artistic director of a festival that cares about why it was created, that seeks to explore and reflect the unique qualities of the city and its people, and to show it all off to the world,"* said Ridge. *"Throughout the program this year, and into the future, we will be looking for ways to contribute, to add meaning and to reflect, respond to and to celebrate Toronto. We hope you'll discover a festival that is curious about the*

*world, interested in the vibrant diversity of the communities that comprise Toronto today, eager to engage in discourse and ready at all times to have fun and celebrate this great city.”*

This starts with a respect for the traditional Indigenous custodians of the land as well as for the peoples of the multitude of cultures who now call Toronto home. On June 14, Luminato opens with **Tributaries**, a free, large-scale celebration of contemporary Indigenous music and dance in David Pecaut Square marking June, the month of the Strawberry Moon (Ode’min Giizis). Curated and produced by Creative Producer, Denise Bolduc, and Erika Iserhoff of Native Women in the Arts, the event pays tribute to the immeasurable power, passion, beauty, and resilience of Indigenous women, while honoring the importance of land and water. *Tributaries* is supported by Ontario150 and TD.

*“As a founding partner, I’m pleased that our province can support Luminato as it shines a light on Toronto during our sesquicentennial year. As Luminato enters its second decade, I look forward to an innovative suite of programming that will contribute to the cultural vitality of the province. I’m especially excited for tourists and local residents to come together to celebrate Indigenous art and music through the Tributaries celebration,”* said **The Honourable Minister Eleanor McMahon**, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

## **The Program**

- Award-winning choreographer **Akram Khan** combines kathak, one of the eight forms of Indian classical dance, and contemporary movement in ***Until the Lions***, a theatrical retelling of a story of female power drawn from the *Mahabharata*, one of the two major Sanskrit epics of ancient India. Akram Khan is joined by Ching-Ying Chien, Christine Joy Ritter and musicians performing an original score. Presented from June 15 to 18 in the round, in a custom theatre space created in the Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Opera Centre (in the Canadian Opera Company Complex). Tickets from \$54.
- At Luminato for one night only following a sold out premiere performance in Ottawa in 2016, ***Life Reflected*** is an immersive, multi-media symphonic experience created and commissioned by the National Arts Centre Orchestra featuring works by four Canadian composers, each one a musical portrait inspired by a remarkable Canadian woman: Alice Munro, Amanda Todd, Roberta Bondar and Rita Joe. Conducted by Alexander Shelley, directed by Donna Feore with visual and stage design by multimedia wizards Normal, at the Sony Centre on June 18. Tickets from \$39.
- From Montreal's five-member collective Le Patin Libre, the family-friendly ***Vertical Influences*** binds together the attitude of street dance and the athleticism of competitive skating at rinks around the city for an entirely new contemporary dance experience, with part of the program seating spectators right on the ice as performers fly by. June 22 to 23 at Ryerson’s Mattamy Athletic Centre (formerly Maple Leaf Gardens) and June 24 to 25 at Don Montgomery Arena in Scarborough. Tickets from \$29. Check the website for information on additional public workshops and a DJ Skate Party. *Vertical Influences* is presented by BMO.

- The world premiere of a Canadian work, Signal Theatre's ***Bearing*** is a dance opera for nine performers, soprano Marion Newman, a choir and live chamber orchestra, that explores the impact of Canada's residential school system. By acclaimed choreographer Michael Greyeyes (Plains Cree) and playwright/director Yvette Nolan (Algonquin) with librettist Spy Denommé-Welch who wrote the commissioned score with Catherine Magowan. Other music by Claude Vivier and JS Bach; with the participation of the National Youth Orchestra. June 22 to 24 at the Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Opera Centre (in the Canadian Opera Company Complex). Tickets start at \$39.
- A hit of the 2015 Edinburgh International Festival, ***En avant, marche!*** is a genre-defying tragicomedy from acclaimed Belgium choreographer Alain Platel of les ballets C de la B, one of the most influential performing arts companies in Europe, and NTGent co-director Frank Van Laecke and composer and music director Steven Prengels. The North American premiere of features nearly 40 performers on stage, with four actors and seven musicians joined by 30 members of Toronto's Weston Silver Band - a true celebration of the power of making music together. June 21 to 24, Bluma Appel Theatre. Audio Described performance on June 24. Tickets from \$39.
- Commissioned by Luminato, ***King Arthur's Night*** is a unique musical theatre production; the world premiere of an ambitious and radically inclusive production featuring a cast of actors living with and without Down syndrome performing alongside a live band and choir. Co-created by Niall McNeil with Marcus Youssef and James Long of Newworld Theatre, with original music by Veda Hille. June 15 to 18, Berkeley Street Theatre. Relaxed Performance on June 18. Tickets from \$39.
- The world's biggest hip hop dance theatre festival, ***Breakin' Convention***, comes to Canada for the first time. This festival within a festival features three days of high octane performances by local and international companies, spilling off the stage into workshops, free-style sessions and more, culminating in a free Park Jam. June 23 and 24 at the Sony Centre; June 25 at David Pecaut Square. A Sadler's Wells production presented by the Sony Centre in association with Luminato. Tickets \$20.
- Building off their sold out performance during the globally celebrated Red Bull Music Academy, ***Cascades*** is a stunning collaboration between two Montreal-based musicians: acclaimed pianist Jean-Michel Blais and genre-defying Grammy Award-nominated electronic producer Mike Silver (aka CFCF); plus opening acts. June 24, Longboat Hall at The Great Hall. Tickets \$35. *Cascades* is produced in association with Red Bull Music Academy.
- Following a sold-out run in London's West End, Moscow's Vakhtangov Theatre makes a triumphant return to Toronto with its award-winning production of Anton Chekhov's ***Uncle Vanya***. Winner of the Golden Mask award, Russia's equivalent of the Tony Awards, it preserves

every word of the text but doesn't look or sound as you'd ever expect. ShowOne Productions in association with Luminato. June 24 and 25, John Bassett Theatre. Tickets from \$65.

- Award-winning Australian contemporary choreographer Antony Hamilton presents his most recent work, created in residence at Toronto's Dancemakers with local dancers in collaboration with Alisdair Macindoe. **Natural Orders** investigates life's curious loops through an exploration of machine-generated movement. June 22 to 24, Dancemakers. Tickets from \$25.
- A work-in-progress production from Alon Nashman and Theaturtle, **CHARLOTTE: a Tri-Coloured Play with Music** is a genre-bending chamber musical which brings to life Charlotte Salomon's graphic novel, depicting her coming of age in France during the rise of Nazism. June 16 to 18, The Theatre Centre. Tickets from \$20.
- In Australian artist Shaun Gladwell's latest video installation, **Skateboarders vs Minimalism**, the world's best freestyle skateboarder, Rodney Mullen, creatively misuses American minimalist sculptures. Set within a museum environment and scored by the music of Philip Glass, the film runs continuously at The Drake Hotel from April 18 to July 11. On June 24, at The Drake Commissary (128A Sterling Road), check out a live performance of the installation, featuring a rollerblading performance by Le Patin Libre. FREE!
- Mohawk photographer and writer Jeff Thomas transforms the façade of the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts with a project called **Imposition of Order** commissioned by the Art Gallery of Ontario and co-presented by Luminato. FREE!

### The Famous Spiegeltent

The heart of the festival returns to David Pecaut Square, this time featuring a pop-up venue with historic flair: **The Famous Spiegeltent**. This ornate 1920s travelling pavilion from Belgium, one of only a handful of its kind remaining in the world, provides a unique, intimate performance space for music, theatre, spoken word, and cabaret. A fixture at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, it has travelled from Melbourne to Montreal to Brighton and now lands in Toronto, where artists from Toronto, Canada and around the world will perform nightly.

The ornate, atmospheric "tent of mirrors" plays host to a variety of intimate free lunchtime and ticketed evening and weekend performances. Activities in David Pecaut Square are supported by OLG and the Province of Ontario through Celebrate Ontario. Events in The Famous Spiegeltent on June 16 are **free to the public**, made possible by OLG.

The line-up is still evolving so check [luminato.com](http://luminato.com) for updates. Confirmed shows include:

- **Notes of a Native Song**, a spirited rock n roll meets spoken word song-cycle by Stew and longtime collaborator Heidi Rodewald (creators of the Tony Award-winning musical *Passing*)

*Strange*), inspired by novelist, essayist, poet and civil rights activist James Baldwin. June 15 to 18. Tickets from \$29.

- Montreal pianist **Jean-Michel Blais** whose debut album of original compositions, *//* (Arts and Crafts 2016) condenses two years of daily improvisations into a blindingly bright exploration of piano textures that bridges ethos and musical styles. June 15. Tickets from \$29.
- Toronto-based composer and operatic tenor **Jeremy Dutcher** incorporates his Wolastoq First Nation roots into the music he creates for an entirely new blend of classical, contemporary, and jazz. June 16. FREE!
- Composer for *King Arthur's Night*, singer-songwriter **Veda Hille** breaks into The Famous Spiegeltent for a rare performance of personal songs, drawing from her latest album *Love Waves*, but also, in honour of the historic tent surroundings, her covers of Brecht's 1930s protest songs. June 16, FREE.
- Recognized for their support of social justice movements including Black Lives Matter and issues that face Queer/Trans, BIPOC, and allied communities, Toronto-based music duo **LAL** blend soulful electronics with West Indian and African rhythms, live digital imaging and lyrical content, for a Fela Kuti meets Massive Attack politically-charged dance party. June 17. Tickets from \$20.
- Inspired by Chaplin, Keaton, and the stars of silent films, two modern-day clowns take to the stage in Italy's Compagnia Baccalà's **Pss Pss**, wowing audiences with enthralling physicality and exquisite expression. Age suitability 9 years and up. June 17 and 18. Tickets from \$20.
- **Ghost Rings** tells a story of friendship and family-making, unfurled through a pop song cycle from the critically-acclaimed, Obie award-winning theatre ensemble Half Straddle. Inspired by live band dynamics, with text and lyrics by Tina Satter and music by Chris Giarmo and Erin Markey, performed by Satter, Giarmo, Markey and Kristen Sieh. June 20 to 22. Tickets from \$20.
- Hip hop meets electronic trio, Ireland's **Rusangano Family**, made up of two African-born MCs and an Irish DJ, explore issues of identity and belonging, laying their double-edged lyricism over skewed soul samples, 808 beats and sliced breaks. June 23 to 25. Tickets from \$20.
- Story-driven stand-up scored by sensual, home-made pop, **Boner Killer** is an intimate musical conversation between what Erin Markey, recently named one of Brooklyn's 50 funniest women (Brooklyn Magazine), thinks she can't have and how she'd have it if she could. June 23. Tickets from \$20.
- Toronto-based spoken word artist and musician **Ian Kamau**, a participant in The Theatre Centre's Residency Program, performs at The Famous Spiegeltent. Full details of **The Residents**

**Project**, Luminato's partnership with The Theatre Centre will be announced at this event. June 24. Tickets from \$20.

### **Artistic Development, Accessibility and more**

Luminato's commitment to local collaboration is expressed through a series of artistic development initiatives, designed to create opportunities for local artists to further develop their practice and to support ambitions of innovation and scale. This includes a new ongoing partnership with The Theatre Centre through their Residency Program (full details to be announced on June 24), a collaboration with Directors Lab North, the presentation of works-in-progress, and the RBC Emerging Producer Program, all which will create strong long term relationships with local and national artists. The work of emerging artists at Luminato is underwritten for the next three years by an anonymous couple, longstanding friends of the festival and the first of a group of people supporting specific strands of Luminato's work.

New accessibility initiatives this year include offering specialized performances: a Relaxed Performance for patrons with sensory sensitivities, learning disabilities, an Autistic Spectrum condition, or anyone who would benefit from a more relaxed environment; an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreted performance; and an Audio Described performance for patrons who are blind or have vision loss. Supported by the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

*"Since Josephine's arrival in July 2016, the Luminato team and Toronto's wider artistic community have all been inspired by her compelling artistic vision, long-term programming plans, and the painstaking dialogues with partners across the city and around the world which are the core of the way she works," said CEO Anthony Sargent. "I am confident Luminato's existing friends will find many treats here to enjoy, and we are also greatly looking forward to sharing our 11<sup>th</sup> festival with an expanded circle of artists and audiences, as together we all explore these exciting new strands and flavours that will become signatures of Luminato's second decade."*

**Luminato runs June 14 to 25. Tickets are now on sale. For more information, pricing, times, venues, and more, visit [luminato.com](http://luminato.com).**

### **More information:**

- To download the **Luminato 2017 Festival Guide**, click here: [https://issuu.com/luminato/docs/luminato\\_2017\\_festival\\_guide](https://issuu.com/luminato/docs/luminato_2017_festival_guide)
- Watch the 2017 festival trailer here: <https://youtu.be/F23VUBfswZs>

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## **About Luminato:**

Luminato is Toronto's international multi-arts, multi-platform festival dedicated to performance, visual art, music, theatre, dance, and programming that cuts across traditional art form boundaries. The 2017 festival runs June 14 to 25, launching Luminato's second decade. In its first decade, Luminato has become one of the preeminent international arts festivals in North America, having commissioned close to 100 new works of art, with more than 3,000 performances featuring 11,000 artists from over 40 countries.

Curated by Artistic Director Josephine Ridge and led by CEO Anthony Sargent CBE, Luminato is a charitable, not-for-profit, globally connected cultural organization proudly based in Toronto.

Luminato gratefully acknowledges the generous support and vision of its Founding Luminaries, Pillar Supporters, SuperNova Supporters, our annual members and our co-founding partner, the Province of Ontario.

Luminato gratefully acknowledges the generosity and friendship of its supporters:

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And the many dedicated individuals who have given their unstinting support to Luminato this year and throughout our first decade.

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