

The logo for Luminato Festival Toronto, featuring the words "LUMINATO FESTIVAL TORONTO" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters stacked vertically on a solid purple rectangular background.

LUMINATO FESTIVAL TORONTO

Luminato Festival Toronto
180 Shaw Street, Suite 308
Toronto, ON, Canada
M6J 2W5
416.368.3100
luminatofestival.com

COLLABORATIONS SHINE AS LUMINATO FESTIVAL TORONTO ANNOUNCES PART ONE OF THE 2023 PERFORMANCE LINE UP

Artistic Director Naomi Campbell's final festival will feature a plethora of live performances

November 22, 2022, (Toronto, Canada) – Luminato Festival Toronto shares its first installment of the 2023 festival program featuring exceptional productions coming to the stage from **June 7th to June 18th, 2023**. With two world premieres, a new vision for a seldom seen opera, a rare revival of a seminal dance work and a hit from the touring circuit, June's upcoming festival will feature an appreciable collection of theatre, dance, and opera.

"We are partnering with thirteen local arts organizations to bring five ambitious works to the 2023 festival. We want to offer Toronto's loyal performing arts audience an early taste of what's to come in June so they can start planning now," says Naomi Campbell, Artistic Director. "Next year's festival is a testament to collaboration and communities, through stories which will inspire us all to keep working together to make our city, this land, and the world, a better more generous place to live for everyone."

Arts and culture lovers will enjoy works that travel through time, reclaim space, and open conversations. Featuring the first all-Black orchestral ensemble in Canadian opera history, **Scott Joplin's Treemonisha** fuses European classical music with ragtime, folk, and gospel to create a thrilling and distinct sound. This reimagined version of Joplin's nearly-lost opera tells the story of a young Black woman's journey to leadership in her deeply divided 1880s community. Deftly combining theatre with radio documentary, **Aalaapi** shares the lives of young women in Northern Canada through sound, silence, and voice. Set on the shore of Lake Ontario, **Dragon's Tale** celebrates Chinese culture against a Canadian backdrop through the history of Dragon Boats and the timeless struggle between love and independence. **Loss**, from writer, producer, and visual artist Ian Kamau, uses multi-media performance to reveal the trauma of intergenerational loss in Afro-Caribbean communities. Celebrating the legacy of Canadian choreography legend Jean-Pierre Perrault is a revival of his fiery seminal work of contemporary dance **Nuit**, not seen on stage in Toronto since 1988.

"We wanted to share with our audiences the theatrical gems we are working on for Luminato 2023. Combined they are a perfect reflection of Naomi's commitment to the artistic community and capacity of live performing arts in Canada," says Celia Smith, CEO of Luminato Festival Toronto. "We encourage you to mark your calendar and join our mailing list. Tickets will be on sale soon. Be sure to claim your seats early."

Since 2007, Luminato Festival Toronto has brought live performing arts to Toronto from the GTA region, Canada, and the world. From June 7-18, 2023 Luminato returns with a dynamic lineup of theatre, dance, visual art, music and more. Luminato's full festival schedule, including free outdoor programming, will be announced in the spring.

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2023 Luminato Festival Toronto Presents

Scott Joplin's Treemonisha **(Opera)**

Presented by Luminato Festival Toronto and TO Live

A Volcano production in association with Moveable Beast, Soulpepper and The Canadian Opera Company

By Scott Joplin with new story and adapted libretto by Leah Simone Bowen with Cheryl L. Davis, co-librettist

Arranged and orchestrated by Jessie Montgomery and Jannina Norpoth

June 6-8 (previews), June 10-11, 14-17, 2023, Bluma Appel Theatre

Ticketed

Originally written by Scott Joplin in 1911, *Treemonisha* is one of the few classical music pieces about the immediate post-slavery era written by a Black person who actually lived through it. Fusing European classical music with the sounds of ragtime, folk, and gospel to create a thrilling and distinct sound, and introducing a young woman protagonist chosen by her community to lead, Joplin's nearly-lost opera was far ahead of its time. It was also entirely ignored by the white opera establishment. Joplin never saw his opera produced. His orchestrations were lost and only a single vocal score survived – thanks to Joplin's own efforts at preservation. Working from this original vocal score and featuring the first all-Black orchestral ensemble in Canadian opera history, the new arrangements and orchestrations by Jessie Montgomery (Sphinx Medal of Excellence and ASCAP Leonard Bernstein Award winner) and Jannina Norpoth (Grammy nominee) merge musical vocabularies, reflecting the major themes of the reimagined version: split identity – African and American – and the role of one's ancestors in coming to terms with the realities of a new land.

Led by a predominantly Black female creative team from across North America, Joplin's compelling story of a young Black woman who discovers the truth of her past and leads her community to a revolutionary future has been reimagined with a new story and libretto by playwright and broadcaster Leah-Simone Bowen (*The Secret Life of Canada*), working with Emmy-nominated co-librettist Cheryl L. Davis. *Treemonisha* is conducted by the first Black woman conductor in Canadian opera history, Panamanian-American Kalena Bovell, and directed by award-winning, internationally acclaimed Canadian stage director Weyni Mengesha.

Aalaapi | ᐱᐱᐱᐱ **(Theatre)**

Presented by Native Earth Performing Arts and Le Théâtre français de Toronto,
in association with Luminato Festival Toronto

Production: Collectif Aalaapi

Original Idea: Laurence Dauphinais and Marie-Laurence Rancourt

Direction: Laurence Dauphinais

June 8 - 10, 2023, Ada Slight Hall, Daniels Spectrum

Ticketed

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In Inuktitut, *Aalaapi* means “Choosing silence to hear something beautiful”. Immerse yourself in a theatrical performance which combines the sounds of the North - creaking snow, whistling winds, and voices in Inuktitut, French and English - with radio documentary, to reveal the daily lives of women in Northern Quebec. Drawing on radio’s central role in the North, *Aalaapi* steps into the world of two friends, Nancy and Ulivia, sharing a cabin in a small village in Nunavik. As images scroll across the cabin, an intimate portrait of young women in Northern communities, depicted through speech, sound and silences, reveals the richness of their history and the power of their future.

Aalaapi is an invitation to listen deeply.

Dragon’s Tale **(Opera)**

Co-produced by Tapestry Opera and Soundstreams, and realised in partnership with Luminato Festival Toronto and Harbourfront Centre

Music Director: David Fallis

Stage Director: Michael Hidetoshi Mori

Music: Chan Ka Nin

Libretto: Mark Brownell

World Premiere

June 15-17, 2023, Harbourfront Centre Concert Stage

Ticketed (free and outdoors)

A beautiful new opera performed on Toronto’s waterfront celebrating the origin of Dragon Boat racing.

In ancient China, poet and politician Qu Yuan dedicated his whole life to the King and the Chu kingdom until exile changes his world forever. In present-day Toronto, Chinese-Canadian Xiao Lian yearns for liberty and independence while her father desperately tries to hold her close. Reaching across time, the Dragon Boat’s drum beats to the rhythm of their hearts as both Qu Yuan and Xiao Lian struggle with the power of love and the desire for freedom.

Experience this operatic celebration of Chinese tradition with a Canadian backdrop, soaring music, and magical storytelling. Created by the world-renowned team behind Soundstreams’ *The Weaving Maiden* and Tapestry Opera’s smash-hit *Iron Road* including accomplished Chinese-Canadian composer Chan Ka Nin and award-winning playwright and librettist Mark Brownell. Directed by Tapestry Opera’s Artistic Director Michael Hidetoshi Mori.

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Loss

(Multimedia Performance)

Presented by Luminato Festival Toronto
Produced by The Theatre Centre Production
Created by Ian Kamau
World Premiere
June 14-18, 2023
Ticketed

Written by Ian Kamau and his father Roger McTair, *Loss* is a live-art, multi-media performance that explores the trauma of loss in Afro-Caribbean communities. This intergenerational family story begins with Ian's own winter of depression and slowly unravels the mystery surrounding the death of Ian's paternal grandmother Nora Elutha Rogers. Featuring live music, video, and storytelling in an immersive and intimate experience, *Loss* is a healing ritual shared with the audience.

Nuit

(Dance)

Presented by Luminato Festival Toronto
Choreographed by Jean-Pierre Perreault
Remounted by Compagnie de la Citadelle
Original Lighting: Jean Gervais
Original Music, Set Design and Costumes: Jean-Pierre Perreault
June 8-10, 2023, Fleck Dance Theatre
Ticketed

Nuit is legendary Canadian choreographer Jean-Pierre Perrault's seminal work exploring the individual within the collective through fiery, demanding contemporary dance. During the harsh night, eight performers grapple with the hurly-burly of everyday life, pushing themselves to the limit where tensions emerge and a troubling, subterranean vulnerability is expressed.

In *Nuit* dance becomes a "sculptural material endowed with mobility", which makes this a major work, not only in Perreault's legacy but in the history of Canadian choreography.

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About Luminato Festival Toronto

Luminato Festival Toronto is a convenor and catalyst for big, bold contemporary works of art. Each June, Luminato kicks off the summer with a festival to welcome the world to Toronto, commissioning, producing, and presenting exceptional Canadian and international artists. Throughout the year Luminato works with artists from the diverse cultures and communities of the city region, supporting creative development, and bringing their art to the world stage. We connect local voices with global conversations and ground our work in equity, inclusion, accessibility, and sustainability. Most importantly, we believe in the power of art to start conversations and inspire audiences.

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For media information, visuals and to book interviews with Celia Smith and Naomi Campbell, please contact: Deanne Moser, DMPUBLIC, (+1) 647-888-9388, deanne@dmpublic.com