



The Toronto Jazz Orchestra Dance Party
With KC Roberts, Abdominal, Allison Toffan and Justin Bacchus
Monday, December 3, 2012, 9:30 pm
The Rex Hotel, 194 Queen Street West

For immediate release – Toronto, November 15, 2012: The Toronto Jazz Orchestra (TJO) is assembling an all-star cast for its first ever Dance Party, Monday December 3, 9:30 pm at The Rex Hotel in Toronto. Celebrating dance music through the ages – from classic swing to contemporary pop – Dance Party features the TJO's 17-piece ensemble joined by rapper Abdominal, tap dance artist Allison Toffan, funky vocalist and guitarist KC Roberts, and soul singer Justin Bacchus. Repertoire will range from original Count Basie and Duke Ellington charts to arrangements of pop and funk tunes created specifically for the event by local composers Mike Downes, Chris Hunt, Rebecca Pellett, Christian Overton and Josh Grossman. Admission for the Dance Party is \$10.

"This show is all about fun," said Toronto Jazz Orchestra Artistic Director Josh Grossman. "The evening should be a blast. But as a bonus, it also provides an opportunity to add new repertoire and new arrangements to our library, and to work with four guest artists for the first time – a great way to explore the potential for future artistic collaborations."

The Dance Party's two sets will be broken up roughly along chronological lines: the first set will start with classic swing tunes like "In the Mood" and "Sing Sing Sing", and will trace the evolution of danceable big band music into the repertoire of bands like Stan Kenton and Buddy Rich – music influenced more by rock and funk. The evening's second set will feature contemporary pop, rock and funk tunes – the dance music of the past 30 years. Each guest artist, invited to add his or her own personal touch to the evening, will perform two tunes with the ensemble.

Hip-hop artist **Abdominal** has been involved in Toronto's music scene for over fifteen years. He has worked celebrated local musicians such as DJ Fase, D-Sisive, Elizabeth Shepherd and Ivana Santilli, as well as internationally acclaimed artists including the UK's DJ Format, Cut Chemist from Jurassic 5 and Young Einstein from Ugly Duckling. Abs has released three albums: *Flowtation Device* (2001), *Escape From the Pigeon Hole* (2007) and *Sitting Music* (2012); the song "Pedal Pusher" from *Escape From the Pigeon Hole* won the 2007 SOCAN ECHO songwriting prize for best Canadian song of the year. He also featured prominently on DJ Format's two highly successful albums, *Music For the Mature B-Boy* (2003) and *If You Can't Join 'Em...Beat 'Em* (2005). In addition to performing regularly around Toronto and across Canada, Abs has toured around the world, with performances in England, France, Germany, Japan and Australia, among others.

KC Roberts is the leader, guitarist and vocalist of KC Roberts & The Live Revolution (KCLR), a 9-piece band known for their fusion of funk, jazz and rock with hip-hop, house, electronic and Drum n' Bass. KCLR won the 2007 Toronto Independent Music Award for best live act and, according to Matt Bauer of *Exclaim!* magazine, "If one needed proof of the vitality and authenticity of new Canadian funk music, they need look no further." In late 2011, KCLR launched a pre-sales campaign for their double LP, *Parkdale Funk 2* (SIDES), and raised over \$26,000. The album will be released in 2013, and follows the success of their first two independent releases, *Good Life* (2010) and *Parkdale Funk 1: The Pillage of Bloor West Village* (2009). Formed in 2004, KCLR have enjoyed consistent success both on stage and in the studio. In 2005, the band opened for the Black Eyed Peas at the Molson Amphitheatre, making such an impact that they were invited back in 2006. Since then, KCLR have become mainstays at large festivals including the Distillery Jazz Festival, Beaches Jazz Festival, Fairbank Streetfest, Wasaga Beachfest, and the TD Toronto Jazz Festival, among others.



Rhythm tap dance artist **Allison Toffan** has been awarded grants as an emerging dance artist and a developing musician by the Canada Council for the Arts and FACTOR. Her mentors include world-renowned artists Heather Cornell, Brenda Bufalino, and Max Pollak. In 2011 Allison founded the Toronto Rhythm Initiative, a platform she created for Toronto's professional tap dance community to voice their artistry through consistent collaboration with live music. In 2010, Allison was honoured to perform as a featured tap dancer in the Olympic Opening Ceremonies. She is on the dance faculty at Sheridan College and Randolph Academy and has taught and performed in various locations across North America and Europe. As a percussionist she plays with the Woodchoppers Association, and has been a guest artist with the Boxcar Boys, The Maisies, Griffith-Hiltz Trio, Sly Juhas Quintet, and The Roaring Girl Cabaret to name a few.

Vocalist **Justin Bacchus** brings versatility, style and soul to each performance. He has had the honor of performing with many great Canadian artists including Joe Sealy, Jackie Richardson, Dionne Taylor, Matt Dusk and Deborah Cox. Justin performs regularly at a variety of venues around the city, with regular shows at The Rex Hotel. With his unique, funky, soulful sound and accompanied by the finest musicians this city has to offer, the Bacchus brand is now well established. Justin is currently working on a full length original album for release in 2013.

The **Toronto Jazz Orchestra (TJO)** was formed in 1998 by Artistic Director and Conductor Josh Grossman and is made up of some of the top emerging jazz talent in Toronto. The TJO performs regularly at the Rex Hotel, has released three CDs and has collaborated with such artists as Kurt Elling, Seamus Blake, Ingrid Jensen and Geoffrey Keezer. Special presentations have included the music of Phil Nimmons, the Stan Kenton Orchestra, Duke Ellington, Buddy Rich, Gil Evans' *Miles Ahead*, the Radiohead Jazz Project and their recent tribute to the music of Thad Jones.

For more information on the December 3rd Dance Party please call (416) 899-5299, email thetjo@mnsi.net, or visit www.thetjo.com.

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