2026 FESTIVAL GUIDE



From Canada, For the World
Dances of the African Diaspora

IMMERSION *Festival*

ABOUT IMMERSION FESTIVAL

NOVEMBER 8 - 22, 2026
BETTY OLIPHANT THEATRE, TORONTO

SCAN HERE

Canada has never produced an event like Immersion Festival: 24 performing groups, four generations, and performances by internationally-renowned artists of the African Diaspora who have never before gathered together at the same event. Plus, discussions, networking, and an epic closing fête - all in support of the vast impact of African Diasporic cultures in Canada and around the world. Workshops and performances are open to all, and include:

Three Distinct Stage Presentations:

- **Vanguard Presentation** of commissioned duets between seven of Canada's renowned dance artists and musicians.
- **National Presentation** of six exciting Canadian Black-led dance companies from Toronto, Vancouver, Montréal, Nova Scotia, and Calgary
- **Next Gen Presentation** - Our one-of-a-kind Youth presentation, featuring 10 performances by Ontario-based Black-led youth groups on a professional stage.

Workshops for All Levels: Twelve technique workshops for youth, non-professional community members, and professional dance artists.

PLUS three dynamic gathering events to bring artists, audiences, and presenters together in community.

Black dance in Canada carries a wealth of cultural technology - knowledge systems, embodied practices, and ancestral lineages - that have been cultivated, nurtured, and brought to the forefront through decades of connection, conversation, and presentation by many artists and organizations, including *dance* Immersion; **from the African Diaspora, for the world**. Immersion Festival brings this wealth to Toronto, creating a meeting place for dance, music, and community - rooted in the African Diaspora, rooted in that wealth of culture.

Immersion Fest is a sought-after performance opportunity for renowned and aspiring artists, and an eagerly-anticipated celebration of Canadian cultural life for audiences.

CONTACT DANCE IMMERSION: +1 416-203-0666

Visiting Delegates: **Natasha Eck**, Festival Associate Producer - festival@danceimmersion.ca

Visiting Artists: **Zahra Badua**, Production & Engagement Coordinator - zahra@danceimmersion.ca

FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

AT A GLANCE

NEXT GEN
Presentation

November 14 @ 7:30 PM & November 15 @ 2:00 PM
@ The Betty Oliphant Theatre

1. West-Can Folk Performing Company
2. Diversity
3. Creative Connexions Performing Arts Center
4. Lil Afro Krew of L'Académie de Danse de Montréal
5. Fareka Martin
6. DOAHL Dance Academy
7. Edify Dance
8. Jade's Hip Hop Academy Performance Company
9. Canada's National Ballet School
10. NGOMA Dance & Drum Ensemble

NATIONAL
Presentation

November 20 @ 7:30 PM & November 21 @ 2:00 PM
@ The Betty Oliphant Theatre

1. Lua Shayenne Dance Company (Toronto)
2. Mafa Makhubalo & Michael Mortley (Toronto)
3. Liliona Quarmyne (Nova Scotia)
4. N.A.P.P.Y. Dance (Calgary)
5. KasheDance (Toronto)
6. Athena Lucie Assamba (Montréal)

VANGUARD
Presentation

November 21 @ 7:30 PM & November 22 @ 2:00 PM
@ The Betty Oliphant Theatre

1. Travis Knights
2. Rhodnie Désir
3. Nubian Néné
4. Zab Maboungou
5. Mystic Rootz
6. Katlyn Addison
7. 7Starr

WORKSHOP SERIES

@ The Betty Oliphant Theatre
November 8 @ 10:30 AM - 4:30 PM: Youth Series
November 12 & 13 @ 7:00 - 9:45 PM: Community Series
November 17 & 19 @ 7:00 - 9:45 PM: Professional Series

Workshop Facilitators

African Street Dance Fundamentals: Kwasi Obeng-Adjei (Brampton)
Bahamian Caribbean Folk: Reequal Smith (P.E.I.)
Vernacular Jazz: Natasha Powell (Toronto)
Rwandan Dances: Isaac Gasangwa (Vancouver)
South African Gumboot Dance: Mafa Makhubalo (Toronto)

Engagement Events Held @ Jarvis Mansion, 504 Jarivs Street

- **ROUNDTABLE ON DANCE EDUCATION**: **Monday, November 9 from 5:30 PM - 9:30 PM**
- **ARTIST-DELEGATE LUNCH** (by invitation): **Thursday, November 19 from 12:30 PM - 2:30 PM**
- **DELEGATE ROUNDTABLE** (by invitation at 400 Jarvis Street): **Friday, November 20 from 1:15 PM - 2:45 PM**
- **FESTIVAL CLOSING PARTY**: **Sunday, November 22 at 3:30 PM**. Featuring an intimate performance by Montréal's renowned **Ebnflōh Dance Company!**

PERFORMANCES AND WORKSHOPS TAKE PLACE AT
THE BETTY OLIPHANT THEATRE
404 JARVIS STREET, DOWNTOWN TORONTO





VISITING TORONTO FOR IMMERSION FESTIVAL

HOTELS NEAR THE FESTIVAL

Holiday Inn Toronto Downtown Centre by IHG
Address: 30 Carlton Street, Toronto, ON M5B 2E9
Phone: (416) 977-6655
Booking Link
$300/night (approximately)
*8-minute walk from the Betty Oliphant Theatre/National Ballet School

Chelsea Hotel
Address: 33 Gerrard Street, Toronto ON M5
Booking LInk
$264/night
*4-minute drive or 15-minute walk from the Betty Oliphant Theatre/National Ballet School

Town Inn Suites
Address: 620 Church Street, Toronto ON M4Y 2G3
Booking Link
$265/night
(the suites have a kitchenette included in the rooms)
*4 minute-drive or 12-minute walk from the Betty Oliphant Theatre/National Ballet School

Getting to the Festival Hotel (French version follows)

Holiday Inn Toronto Downtown Centre, 30 Carlton Street
An 8-minute walk to the Betty Oliphant Theatre

Arriving at Toronto Pearson (YYZ)

Uber or Lyft (simplest option)

Rideshare costs about $65 to the hotel, but prices can rise at busy times. Follow the “Ride App Pickup” signs: at Terminal 1, go to the ground level, below Arrivals; at Terminal 3, use the Arrivals level. Your app will show your exact pickup zone. You’ll need the app and a data or Wi-Fi connection, and Pearson’s Wi-Fi is free.

Pick-up locations: torontopearson.com – Ride sharing

Taxi (2nd simplest option)
Official airport taxis wait on the Arrivals level of Terminals 1 and 3. They charge a guaranteed flat rate straight to the hotel door, about $60–75 plus tip, with taxes included. There's no surge pricing. A $15 surcharge applies for 4 or more checked bags. The ride takes 30–45 minutes.
Check your exact fare: torontopearson.com – Taxi and limo estimate

UP Express train + subway (the best value)
From Terminal 1, the UP Express takes 25 minutes to Union Station and costs $12.35, or $9.25 with PRESTO. If you land at Terminal 3, take the free Terminal Link Train to Terminal 1 first. At Union, take Line 1 northbound four stops to College Station, and the hotel is steps from the exit. The whole trip takes about 50 minutes.
Schedules and fares: torontopearson.com – UP Express

TTC bus + subway (the budget option)
Take the 52A or 952 Lawrence West bus to Lawrence West Station, then Line 1 southbound to College Station. It's a single TTC fare and takes about 75 minutes. This route is best if you're travelling light. Routes and bus stop locations: ttc.ca – Service to Toronto Pearson

Arriving at Billy Bishop (YTZ)

Taxi
Taxis wait at the mainland pavilion. The ride to the hotel takes 15–20 minutes and costs about $20–30.

Free shuttle + subway
Cross to the mainland through the pedestrian tunnel, or take the short ferry. From the mainland pavilion, a free shuttle runs every 15 minutes to the Fairmont Royal York, across from Union Station. At Union, take Line 1 northbound to College Station.
Shuttle, tunnel and ferry details: billybishopairport.com – Getting to and from YTZ

Good to know: You can tap a credit or debit card to pay on both UP Express and the TTC, so there's no need to buy a PRESTO card for a short stay. Fares are current as of October 2026.

Comment se rendre à l'hôtel du festival

Holiday Inn Toronto Downtown Centre (Centre-ville), 30, rue Carlton
À 8 minutes à pied du Théâtre Betty Oliphant

Arrivée à l'aéroport Toronto Pearson (YYZ)

Uber ou Lyft

Un trajet en covoiturage coûte environ 65 $ jusqu'à l'hôtel, mais les prix peuvent augmenter aux heures de pointe. Suivez les panneaux « Ride App Pickup » : à l'aérogare 1, rendez-vous au rez-de-chaussée, sous les 'Arrivées' ; à l'aérogare 3, au niveau des 'Arrivées'. L'application vous indiquera votre zone de prise en charge exacte. Vous aurez besoin de l'application et d'une connexion de données ou Wi-Fi ; le Wi-Fi de Pearson est gratuit.

Lieux de prise en charge : torontopearson.com – Covoiturage (en anglais)

Taxi ou limousine (l'option la plus simple)

Les taxis et limousines officiels de l'aéroport attendent au niveau des 'Arrivées' des aérogares 1 et 3. Ils appliquent un tarif fixe garanti jusqu'à la porte de l'hôtel, d'environ 60 à 75 $ plus pourboire, taxes comprises, sans tarification dynamique. Un supplément de 15 $ s'appliquera à partir de 4 bagages enregistrés. Le trajet dure environ 30 à 45 minutes.
Vérifiez votre tarif exact : torontopearson.com – Estimation taxi et limousine

Train UP Express + métro (le meilleur rapport qualité-prix)

Depuis l'aérogare 1, l'UP Express rejoint la gare Union en 25 minutes, pour 12,35 $ (ou 9,25 $ avec PRESTO). Si vous arrivez à l'aérogare 3, prenez d'abord le train gratuit 'Terminal Link' jusqu'à l'aérogare 1. À la gare Union, prenez la ligne 1 en direction nord sur quatre stations jusqu'à la station College ; l'hôtel se trouve à deux pas de la sortie. Durée totale : environ 50 minutes.
Horaires et tarifs : torontopearson.com – UP Express (en anglais)

Autobus et métro de la TTC (l'option économique)

Prenez l'autobus 52A ou 952 Lawrence West jusqu'à la station Lawrence West, puis la ligne 1 en direction sud (via station UNION) jusqu'à la station College. Le trajet coûte un seul tarif TTC et dure environ 75 minutes. Idéal si vous voyagez léger. Ou bien, vous pouvez prendre le bus 300 express à la station Kipling, puis vous prenez la ligne 2 en direction Kennedy jusqu'à la station Yonge-Bloor, puis changer vers la direction sud sur la ligne 1 après deux arrêts pour se rendre à la station Collège. Trajets et arrêts d'autobus : ttc.ca – Service vers Toronto Pearson (en anglais)

Arrivée à l'aéroport Billy Bishop (YTZ)

Taxi

Les taxis attendent au pavillon situé sur la terre ferme. Le trajet jusqu'à l'hôtel dure de 15 à 20 minutes et coûte environ 20 à 30 $.

Navette gratuite + métro
Rejoignez la terre ferme par le tunnel piétonnier ou par le court traversier. Depuis le pavillon, une navette gratuite part toutes les 15 minutes vers l'hôtel Fairmont Royal York, en face de la gare Union. À la gare Union, prenez la ligne 1 du métro en direction nord vers FINCH jusqu'à la station College.
Navette, tunnel et traversier : billybishopairport.com – Se rendre à YTZ (en anglais)

Bon à savoir : Vous pouvez payer l'UP Express et la TTC directement avec votre carte de crédit ou de débit sans contact. Inutile d'acheter une carte PRESTO pour un court séjour. Tarifs en vigueur en octobre 2026.



FOOD

A selection of the many restaurants a short walk from the Holiday Inn:

Thirty Restaurant & Lounge (Inside the Hioliday Inn Downtown Centre)
Address: 30 Carlton Street, Toronto Hours: 6:00 AM – 10:00 PM
Menu Link: https://digital.ihg.com/is/content/ihg/holiday-inn-toronto-10960578587-original?fmt=pdf

Oeb Breakfast Co (Breakfast and brunch)
20 Toronto Street, M5C 2B8
Opening hours: 8am to 3pm (on weekends they are open until 4pm) Menu: https://eatoeb.com/menu/toronto/

Le Petit Déjeuner (Brunch and breakfast)
Address: 191 King St. East, Toronto, Ontario M5A 1J5 Canada
Opening hours: 8am to 9pm Menu: petitdejeuner.ca

Beer Bistro (Gastropub)
Address: 18 King St E Ste 110, Toronto, Ontario M5C 1C4 Canada
Opening hours: 11:30am to midnight Menu: https://www.beerbistro.com/eat-1-1

Pearl driver (Seafood and oyster bar)
Address: 100 Adelaide St E, Toronto, Ontario M5C 1K9 Canada
Opening hours: 4:30pm to 11:00pm Menu: pearldiver.to

The Keg – (Steakhouse & Bar)
Address: 26 The Esplanade, Toronto, Ontario M5E 1A7 Canada
Opening hours: 4pm to 1am Menu: https://www.thekeg.com/en/locations/esplanade/menu

Hot House (International)
Address: 35 Church St, Toronto, Ontario M5E 1T3 Canada
Opening hours: 11:30am to 9pm Menu*:* https://www.hothouserestaurant.com/

Carbon Bar (BBQ/Southern-Inspired + Cocktails)
Address: 99 Queen St E, Toronto, ON M5C 1S1, Canada
Opening hours: 3pm to 10pm Menu: thecarbonbar.ca

Gyu-Kaku Japanese BBQ (Japanese)
81 Church Street, Toronto ON M5C 2G2
Opening hours: 11:30 am to 8:30pm Menu:gyu-kaku.com

The Corner Place (Assorted)
Address: 11 Jarvis Street, Toronto Ontario M5E 1N3
Opening hours: 11am to midnight Menu: https://www.thecornerplace.ca/

FOOD

A selection of the many restaurants a short walk from the Betty Oliphant Theatre:

***The Blake House** (Pub Food – Brunch on weekends only)
449 Jarvis St. Toronto, ON, M4Y 2G8
Hours: weekdays- 11:30 am – 10: 00 pm | weekends- 10:00 am – 11:00 pm Menu: https://www.theblakehouse.ca/
***The Blake House is directly across the street from the Betty Oliphant Theatre, and will provide a 15% discount on food when you show your Immersion Festival ticket between November 14-22, 2026!**

The Keg Mansion (Steakhouse & Bar)
515 Jarvis St, Toronto, ON M4Y 2H7; Phone: (416) 964-6609
Mon.-Fri: 4:00 pm – 12:00 am Menu: www.thekeg.com

Si Lom Thai Bistro (Thai Street Food)
534 Church St, Toronto, Ontario – M4Y 2E1
Hours: 12:00 pm – 11:00 pm Menu: https://silom.ca/

Constantine Toronto (Mediterranean)
15 Charles St. East at the Anndore House Toronto ON M4Y 1S1
Breakfast: Mon to Fri 7am-10am | Sat & Sun 9:30am-2pm | Dinner 5pm-10pm Menu: https://constantineto.com/

The Churchmouse: A Firkin Pub
475 Church St, Toronto, ON M4Y 2C5
Mon- Sun: 12:00 pm – 12:00 am Menu: https://www.firkinpubs.com/thechurchmouseandfirkin/menus/

ONoir Toronto (French/Italian Experience in the dark)
620 Church St PH Level, Toronto, ON M4Y 2G2
Sunday, Monday-Thursday 6:30pm – 7:15pm | Friday 6:30pm – 7:30pm https://www.onoirtoronto.com/menu/

AFURI ramen + dumpling Toronto (Japanese Cuisine)
411 Church St Unit 1, Toronto, ON M4Y 2C2, Canada
Mon- Sun: 11:00am - 10:30pm Menu: https://www.afuriramen.com/locations/toronto

POCHA 1989 (Korean Cuisine)
542 Church St, Toronto, ON M4Y 2E1
Mon- Tues: 6 pm – 2:30 pm | 12 pm – 2:30 amMenu: https://pocha1989.com/#drink-beer

Sambucas On Church (Italian)
489 Church St, Toronto, ON M4Y 2C6
Mon -Fri: 11:00 am – 9:00 pm | Sat- Sun: 10:00 am – 9:00 pm https://www.sambucas.ca/

TRANSPORTATION

LYFT, **UBER** or **HOPP** are readily available through their respective apps.

Or you can call BECK **Taxi** at +1 (416) 751-5555

TTC - Public Transit Subways, Buses & Streetcars
CAD $3.35 per trip, valid for 2 hours
Get a physical Presto Card
(or)
Pay directly on streetcars, buses or the subway with your credit or debit card
(*additional charges may apply for International cards)
Visit www.ttc.ca for more information.
You can use Google Maps or the Toronto Transit App to plan your trip:
https://transitapp.com/en/region/toronto

Bikeshare
24/7 Bike access around the city
Pay as you go or Day passes available through the App or the website:
www.bikesharetoronto.com

HEALTH & SAFETY

- First Aid Responders: Toronto EMS - 911
- Toronto Fire Services/Paramedic Service - 911
- St. Michael's Hospital: 30 Bond St, Toronto, ON M5B 1W8 - 416-864-5094
- Toronto General Hospital: 222 Elizabeth St. Toronto, ON M5G 2C4 - 416-340-3131
- Michael Garron Hospital: 825 Coxwell Ave, Toronto, ON M4C 3E7 - 416-461-8272
- Mental Health Supports: Toronto Distress Centre (24/7); Anishnawbe Health Toronto (24/7) ; Community Crisis Service (24/7) - 416-408-4357 (HELP); 1 855 242-3310 (Indigenous Clients); Call 211 to be connected

Check out these Black-owned arts & culture spaces in Toronto - They are worth a visit!

Africana Village Museum: www.africanavillage.com
A Visionary Social Enterprise Celebrating 400+ Years of African-Canadian History & Culture

Black Artists' Networks In Dialogue (BAND) Gallery: www.bandgallery.com
A charitable organization dedicated to supporting, documenting and showcasing the artistic and cultural contributions of Black artists and cultural workers in Canada and internationally.

Blackhurst Cultural Centre: www.blackhurstcc.org
A nonprofit hub offering experiences that celebrate the rich culture of African and Caribbean Canadians.

It's OK Studios: www.itsokworld.com
Ensuring equitable representation and creating opportunities for Black Artists and Black Arts workers.

Oddside Arts: www.oddsidearts.ca
A cultural arts not-for-profit that fosters a space for Afro-descendants, most especially women, gender-expansive and LGTBQ+ folks, to theorize, create, and contribute to the development of the equitable future.

Nia Centre for the Arts: www.niacentre.org
A charitable organization - Canada's first professional Black arts centre - working to advance Black artistic expression to enrich our collective identity.

Wildseed Centre for Art & Activism: www.wildseedcentre.com
A vessel that seeks to nurture Black creativity and experimentation. The Centre was birthed by Black Lives Matter artivists who hope to build an enduring space that could cultivate the most transformative and radical ideas.

