



Dancing Opens Doors at Canada's National Ballet School's Free Summer Block Party

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Dust off your dancing shoes and grab your friends and family - Canada's National Ballet School's (NBS) Block Party is back and better than ever! The school's second annual community celebration (which is free of charge) will take place at its iconic Toronto campus on **Saturday, June 3 from 11:00am to 5:00pm.**

The Block Party promises to give the Toronto community an all-access pass inside the school and energize the 400 Jarvis Street block with fun, family-friendly festival programming such as dance workshops for all ages and skill levels, pop-up dance performances, a live DJ, scavenger hunt, games, and more!

"The much-anticipated annual Block Party is part of our vision to open NBS' doors to the wider community and make the power of dance accessible for everyone," said Mavis Staines, Artistic Director and CEO of Canada's National Ballet School. "Whether this is your first time trying dance, or you have years of experience, we look forward to coming together for a day of fun and festivities to celebrate the many ways that dance can be shared to advance well-being and build connection."

Join supporters, community members, dancers, NBS alumni, families, volunteers, partners and more for the following:

Drop-in introductory dance workshops for all ages in NBS' award-winning studios:

- Ballet with Bartira Barretto and Phillip Payne
- Contemporary with Zachary Caldwell
- Hip Hop and Dancehall with Edz Gyamfi
- Indigenous Hoop with Feryn King
- Nova Dance Technique with Nova Dance
- Vogue with Snoopy
- Behind-the-scenes rehearsals on the Anna McGowan-Johnson Stage at the Betty Oliphant Theatre, featuring students from NBS' Company Life Program

Pop-Up Dance Performances:

- Students from NBS' Professional Ballet Programs and Young Dancers Program performing [Sharing Dance Day 2023 choreography](#)
- [Feryn King](#)
- [Bboyizm](#)
- [Ritmo Flamenco Dance & Music Ensemble](#)

See the full event schedule and programming descriptions [here](#). Want a sneak peek at what to expect? Check out [photos](#) and a [highlights reel](#) from last year's inaugural NBS Block Party.

NBS Block Party is the keystone event of Dancing Opens Doors—the principal fundraising campaign for Canada’s National Ballet School over three years (2022-2024). The Dancing Opens Doors fundraising initiative helps make dance more accessible to people and communities across Canada and beyond. Charitable donations make a vital impact through all NBS programming, including:

- Providing Olympic-calibre training and financial assistance to students in professional training programs, giving students the opportunity to pursue their dreams while building the future of ballet and dance. Program costs for all students in the Professional Ballet Programs are partially subsidized, with 73% of students receiving additional financial assistance.
- Reaching kids in hundreds of classrooms across Canada, giving them the opportunity to discover how dance creates engaging learning opportunities across subject areas.
- Creating a sense of connection, encouraging social inclusion, and challenging stigma through dance for thousands of older adults across the country, including people living with dementia.

“With Dancing Opens Doors, we want to bring the fun to traditional methods of fundraising, and provide as many opportunities as possible for people to experience the transformative powers of dance,” said Tessa Bulham, NBS’ Chief of Advancement. “Last year’s Block Party really showed this mission in action, with over one thousand people from our community and neighbourhood dancing and celebrating together—crowds cheering on breakdancers in front of the School, families taking a ballet class together, and friends laughing as they battle it out in one of our retro games. The atmosphere of pure joy was truly extraordinary—we are so excited to experience it again this year in an even bigger way.”

NBS’ Block Party is a true community hub for families, friends and neighbours—made possible by the generosity of the following sponsors, partners and donors: Media Sponsor: The Globe and Mail; Artist Sponsor: Sobey’s; Rental Sponsor: Chair-man Mills Corporation; Catering Sponsor: *elle cuisine*; Print Sponsor: The Printing & Promotion Group; Merchandise Sponsor: Cotton Candy Inc.; Event Sponsors: Pomp & Circumstance PR, Power Corporation of Canada, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, Reuven International Limited, Torys LLP; Event Workshop Supporters: Canso Investment Counsel Ltd. Bradley & Hilary Hennick.

Thank you to the following generous supporters who have made an important contribution to Block Party through Dancing Opens Doors: Presenting Supporter: A gift in honour of Anna McCowan-Johnson*; Lead Supporters: The Delaney Family Foundation, The Lawrence Schafer Foundation; Community Champions: John A. Baker & Family, Cadillac Fairview, Fabio Mascarini Foundation, Dr. James D. Fleck CC, Gurney M. Kranz Charitable Foundation, Sandra & Jim Pitblado, Michael Vels & Pam Davidson.

Special thank you to the Block Party Committee Chair Hilary Hennick and members Allison Freeman, Ratika Gandhi, Angela Greenberg, Kulin Matchhar, Tyler Reaume and Anisa Tejpar.

**fondly remembered*

About Canada's National Ballet School

At Canada's National Ballet School (NBS), programming excellence, access and inclusion fuel our belief in sharing the transformative power of dance to change lives for the better. Since 1959, this is what has driven our commitment to making dance a part of all Canadians' lives— from the Olympic-calibre dancer training for a professional ballet career on the world stage to the young child or older adult who may be embracing the joy of dance for the first time. Learn more at www.nbs-enb.ca.

Available for interview:

- **Tessa Bulham**, Chief of Advancement, Canada's National Ballet School
- **Mavis Staines**, Artistic Director, Canada's National Ballet School
- **John Dalrymple**, Executive Director, Canada's National Ballet School
- **Phillip Payne**, Block Party Ballet workshop teacher
- **Feryn King**, Block Party Indigenous Hoop workshop teacher and performer
- **Edz Gyamfi**, Block Party Hip Hop and Dancehall workshop teacher
- Canada's National Ballet School Students
- Other Special Guests as available

For Dancing Opens Doors assets, click [here](#).

For more information, contact:

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