

BARBRALICA

PRESS KIT

UPDATED: MARCH 2019



BIOGRAPHY

Juno-nominated artist Barbra Lica is fast rising Canadian vocalist and songwriter and has been receiving accolades for a unique approach that stresses subtlety, grace and storytelling. Based in Toronto, Barbra's live show captivates audiences all over North America with her genuine warmth and confident stage presence. A seasoned act on the Canadian and American club and festival circuits, Barbra Lica has performed everywhere from New York City's legendary **Birdland** to Toronto's prestigious **Koerner Hall**. She has also headlined at festivals across the continent including **Festival International de Jazz de Montréal**, **Vancouver International Jazz Festival** and **Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival**, and opened for the likes of **Christian McBride**, **Pat Metheny**, **Bob Dorough**, and **Terence Blanchard**.

Barbra's debut album *That's What I Do* (**Triplet / Universal Jazz Japan**) was released to widespread acclaim in 2012, ranking her in **Canada's Top 5 Jazz singers on the CBC**, as well **Top 5 up-and-coming Toronto jazz artists on blogTO**. Her band made their Japanese debut live at the **Tokyo International Jazz Festival** in 2015 for over 1000 audience members. Her first album with **Justin Time Records**, *I'm Still Learning*, was released September 2016 and subsequently **nominated for a 2017 Juno Award** in the category of "Best Vocal Jazz Album". Barbra is currently promoting her newest project entitled, *You're Fine* (Justin Time Records, November 2018). This album is a collaborative effort between Toronto and Nashville-based musicians, seamlessly blending jazz, country and folk influences. It includes Barbra's touring band of up-and-coming musicians from across Canada with special guests and country music legends, **Paul Franklin** (Vince Gill, Shania Twain, Toby Keith) on pedal steel guitar and multi-instrumentalist **Wanda Vick Burchfield** (Taylor Swift, Trisha Yearwood, Jason Aldean). "You're Fine" was recorded at **Addiction Sound Studios** in the heart of Nashville with award-winning Canadian engineer **David Kalmusky** (John Oates, Journey) and highly-respected Canadian producer/bassist **Marc Rogers** (The Philosopher Kings, Nikki Yanofsky). This is Barbra's most ambitious and personal offering to date – it promises to break all the rules while searching for commonalities between musical genres, human experiences and two sides of one border.



BARBRALICA



WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT BARBRA:

“Lica smiles when she sings. You can hear it. When you see her in concert, you’ll see it too. In a word, refreshing”

– Tim Tamashiro, Host, CBC Radio

“Ella a tout pour réussir.”

– François Lemay, ICI Musique

“Barbra Lica’s voice is infectious.”

– Greg Wells, Music Producer

“It starts and ends with Lica’s voice. It’s a bright, vibrant contralto one minute, laconic and syrupy the next when she lets a phrase die on the vine and trail off”

– Frank De Blase, Journalist, City Newspaper

“With her upbeat lilt and vocal cuteness on covers and originals, Lica offers smiles and sympathy, not blues”

– Brad Wheeler, Journalist, The Globe and Mail



barbralicamusic.com

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS AWARDS ACCOLADES

Called one of Canada's Top 5 Female Jazz Singers, Top 35 under 35 Jazz Artists by CBC Radio 2

Described as one of Toronto's top 5 up-and-coming jazz artists on popular site, blogTO.

2019

Headliner at Port-au-Prince International Jazz Festival (Haiti)

2018

Released "You're Fine" with Justin Time Records (Fontana North/Universal)

Headliner at Montréal International Jazz Festival – Scène Rio Tinto

Northern Ontario Block Concert Tour

Mainstage performances at Festival on the Green (Vermont), Northeast Wine and Jazz Festival (New York), Markham Jazz Festival (Ontario), Ottawa Winter Jazz Festival (Ontario)

2017

Nominated for 2017 Juno Award (Best Vocal Jazz Album)

CAPACOA and Folk Music Ontario 2017 Official Showcase Artist

Performance at New York City's legendary Birdland Jazz Club

Mainstage performance at Focsani Blues Festival in Romania

Coast-to-coast Jazz Festival Tour from British Columbia to Newfoundland & Labrador

2016

Released "I'm Still Learning" with Justin Time Records (Fontana North/Universal)

Performances at Montreal's Upstairs Jazz, London's Aeolian Hall, Burlington's Performing Arts Centre, Guelph's River Run Centre, Brantford's Sanderson Centre, Hilton Beach's Old Town Hall

"Who Knows" album single nominated for Independent Music Award at Lincoln Centre (NYC)

2015

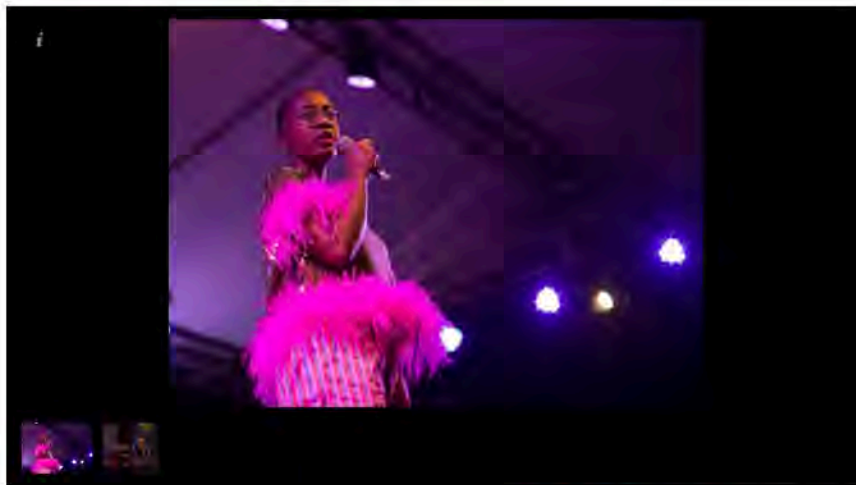
Performed at Tokyo International Jazz Festival in Japan for audience of over 1000

Opening performer for Christian McBride and his Big Band at Nathan Phillip's Square

"Christmas on the Beach" single synced to Hallmark's "Charming Christmas" feature film

Deuxième soirée du Papjazz : un moment d'apothéose

Publié le 2019-01-21 | Le Nouvelliste



Culture -

Il faut dire que toutes les mesures étaient prises et tous les paramètres maîtrisés pour une belle soirée au Karibe le dimanche 20 janvier, deuxième jour du Festival de Jazz. Treize éditions consécutives du Papjazz, ça doit forcément donner de la graine. Même le temps était du côté des organisateurs. Une soirée plutôt fraîche de janvier, sans vraie menace de pluie. Le public avait répondu en grand nombre aussi. L'affiche

était belle : Barbra Lica du Canada, Yogev Shetrit d'Israël et celle, bien sûr, qui est l'une des têtes d'affiche du festival, Cécile Mc Lorin Salvant.

La scène était belle. Le public bon. La sonorisation excellente. C'est à ce moment que vous vous demandez ce qu'est un bon public. C'est un public qui participe, est attentif, apprécie, joue le jeu. Faut-il bien que les propositions soient bonnes. Qu'il soit content, satisfait, il le fut. Nous n'avons pas eu droit à des tests de microphone en direct, des ajustements de dernière minute qui souvent annoncent une certaine indigence dans l'organisation, ni de chanteurs et musiciens qui, entre chaque morceau, racontent leur vie. C'est vrai, il faut l'avouer, que nous n'avons aucun souvenir d'un spectacle du festival où il s'est posé des problèmes de sonorisation, ou du moins nous n'étions pas personnellement à cette représentation. En plus, la soirée a débuté à l'heure. C'était presque trop beau, comme nous l'avons fait remarquer à Milena Sandler, directrice du festival.

Une soirée comme celle du dimanche 20 au Karibe sauve plein de choses. Sauve également de plein de choses. Après une performance pareille, on a déjà un bilan positif de tout l'événement. On se dit que l'on est capable d'aboutissement. Une soirée réussie comme celle de dimanche sauve de la morosité, de la solitude, du désespoir, de l'inaccomplissement, qui semblent être notre lot. Depuis trop longtemps.

C'est le quintet de Barbra Lica qui a ouvert la soirée. Une auteure, compositrice, interprète d'une grande finesse et d'une grande sensibilité. La chimie avec le public a été immédiate. Elle est originale. On ne lui identifie pas une parenté particulière avec les divas intemporelles que sont Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald, Billy Holliday, Betty Carter, etc. comme on le fait en général avec les chanteuses de jazz. Elle a proposé beaucoup de ses compositions et à chaque fois la magie a opéré.



A LA MINUTE

- 04:35** René Sylvestre prend les rênes de la Cour de cassation
- 01:47** NBA - All Star Game: les futurs retraités Wade et Nowitzki sélectionnés
- 11:09** L'ancien président ivoirien Laurent Gbagbo libéré sous conditions
- 09:46** Coupe du Roi: un clasico Real-Barça en demi-finale
- 09:45** Cardiff: la disparition de Sala a refroidi des candidats au transfert
- 09:04** Lampadaires : Près de 14 millions de dollars entre 2012 et 2013 tirés de PetroCaribe

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LES PLUS LUS

- 6503** Abus sexuel sur mineurs en Haïti : une entente de 60 millions dollars proposée par des Jésuites américains
- 4324** Florence Duré et Blondedy Ferdinand, de collaboration en polémique
- 4197** Lampadaires : Près de 14 millions de dollars entre 2012 et 2013 tirés de PetroCaribe
- 3987** Qu'est-ce que Haïti va gagner en rejetant Maduro ?
- 3430** 190 millions de gourdes pour les festivités carnavalesques
- 3218** Une vingtaine de magasins ferment leurs portes provisoirement à Jacmel

Kiosque

Édition du 2019-02-02

PapJazz 2019 : la bonne ambiance toujours au rendez-vous sur la scène Barbancourt

PUBLIÉ 2019-01-23



L'aventure jazz continue. La scène Barbancourt de l'Université Quisqueya a accueilli dans la soirée du mardi 22 janvier l'artiste guyanais Denis Lapassion escorté d'Etienne MBappé, la chanteuse canadienne Barbra Lica et le groupe Simbi, sans oublier la bande à pied Follow Jah toujours au rendez-vous pour mettre son grain de sel à l'ambiance.



Le PapJazz continue son petit bonhomme de chemin et ceci pour le bonheur des amants de bonne musique. Une fois de plus, la scène Barbancourt de l'Université Quisqueya a drainé un beau petit monde à son deuxième spectacle dans le cadre de la 13e édition du Festival de jazz de Port-au-Prince.

Le pianiste et compositeur guyanais Denis Lapassion a été le premier à gravir le podium pour ouvrir le spectacle. Il était accompagné de la superbe voix de Régine Lapassion, d'Etienne MBappé à la basse et de Félix Sabal-Lecco à la batterie. Ils servent au public des morceaux comme « Prejije » sur le rythme kasekò de la Guyane ainsi que les titres « Introspection » et « Wayino » sur une mélodie de soul attitude.

Le public, très réceptif, n'a pas caché son appréciation. Quant au batteur de la troupe, Felix Sabal-Lecco, sa performance était carrément à couper souffle : il a déchiré avec ses baguettes.

Ensuite est venu le tour de la charmante Barbra Lica Quintet d'émerveiller l'assistance de sa voix rafraîchissante. Véritable coup de cœur avec son mélange de country et de jazz, l'étoile montante du jazz canadien a captivé le public nombreux de l'université Quisqueya. Comme d'habitude, le meilleur pour la fin, le groupe Simbi a clôturé le deuxième spectacle de la scène Barbancourt avec sa musique racine suédoise. Le saxophoniste-percussionniste-chanteur Sten K?lleman et sa troupe ont apporté leurs rythmes explosifs de musique au PapJazz 2019.

Et bien sûr, Follow Jah, fidèle au rendez-vous PapJazz, présent sur toutes les scènes depuis l'ouverture et à chaque édition, a assuré l'intermède en ajoutant une touche rara au festival de jazz. La bonne ambiance... qui durera jusqu'à la clôture prévue pour le samedi 26 janvier.

Les plus lus

1

Florence Duré et Blondedy Ferdinand, de collaboration en polémique

2

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Christelle Tropnas, la boule de feu de la Compagnie de théâtre Ami

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NEWS



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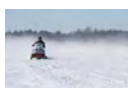


THREE DRYDEN GIRLS HOCKEY TEAMS UNDEFEATED IN

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ICE DOGS GO THE DISTANCE



SUBZERO SNOW DRAG

Saving the best for last: Barbra Lica and band put on the show of the series

Chris Marchand

Chris Marchand served as editor of the Dryden Observer from August 2009 to April 2018.



Barbra Lica and band, from left: Joel Visentin, Lica, Mark Godfrey, Tom Fleming and Will Fraser finish the show off with a soothing version of Edith Piaf's La Vie En Rose, April 12 at The Centre. Photos by Chris Marchand

By Chris Marchand

What's not to lica about Bar...(ugh, I'm sorry. I'll stop this lede right now).

Barbra Lica proved herself the classic example of the conundrum facing Dryden Entertainment Series patrons — the choice between staying home, or taking a chance on a mostly unknown quantity.

Aside from the 100 or so people in the seats, the rest of you who stayed home deserve to know the depth of the mistake you've made.

The Toronto-based effervescent jazz pixie brought with her a band of lost boys (Mark Godfrey on bass, Will

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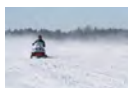
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**THE HARPOONIST
& THE AXE
MURDERER SLAY
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**PICTURES: LIKE AN
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**INAUGURAL BRAD WEST MEMORIAL
TOURNAMENT**

Fisher on drums, Joel Visentin on piano and Tom Fleming on guitar) whose technical virtuosity rivalled the very best of players who have graced The Centre's stage.

That's not to say the evening was a deep dive into the esoteric, freeform experience that jazz can sometimes be. It was a carefully curated evening of standards, originals, even a jazzed up cover cover of 90s hit 'Lovefool' by The Cardigans, made accessible by Lica's flawless voice and a musical precision we rarely get to appreciate in Northwestern Ontario. The outfit struck a nice balance between well-rehearsed arrangements and brief but thrilling forays into instrumental abandon.

A jumpy, Django Reinhardt-style influenced much of the night, giving the evening a 'Paris in the '20s sort of vibe, capped off with a lovely cover of Edith Piaf's 'La Vie En Rose'.

Lica's show capped off the 2017-18 Dryden Entertainment Series, check out what the series has to offer in 2018-19 with a newly announced lineup at www.drydenentertainmentseries.ca.

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Lives celebrated in words and song

Songs of the City brings together musicians with people who have stories of recovery

WhatsOn May 30, 2018 by [Cheryl Clock](/stcatharines-on-author/cheryl-clock/96CAB080-B8BD-4414-A95D-76E11DA26EB8/) [✉\(mailto:cheryl.clock@niagaradailies.com\)](mailto:cheryl.clock@niagaradailies.com) The St. Catharines Standard



Canadian jazz vocalist and songwriter Barbara Lica wrote the song, Rag Doll, after meeting with Elizabeth Bell. She will perform it during Songs of the City, after Elizabeth tells her story. - Special to The St. Catharines Standard

I'm not a rag doll.

I'm flesh and blood.

These are the words of triumph that begin the chorus of her life song.

On Friday, 26-year-old Elizabeth Bell, a former teen drug addict who lived on the streets and stole to support her addiction, will stand on stage at the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre alongside Barbara Lica, a Juno-nominated Canadian jazz singer and songwriter.

Something is created that is so beautiful, so intimate. Because they're willing to share with each other."

Michael James

Songs of the City

Together, they will tell the story of her life in words and song.

Bell will share parts of her journey that are deeply personal: Severe depression at 13; introduction to marijuana and the methamphetamine Ecstasy by her boyfriend at 14; and then stealing money from her family to support her addiction.

And that's only the beginning.

Afterwards, Lica will sit behind a grand piano and, backed up by pianist John Sherwood on keyboard and a trio of local musicians, will let her heart speak through the words of a song she wrote about Bell.

It's called Rag Doll.

Bell's story, along with the life narratives of three other people, will be told during Songs of the City, a program that connects Canadian musicians with people who have received support from United Way funded agencies, in an evening of storytelling to celebrate the human spirit.

Songs of the City started in 2014, the concept of Michael James, an actor turned entrepreneur who became a volunteer with the United Way in Toronto. His vision was to marry deeply personal life narratives with musical interpretations, as part of an evening of celebration to thank and help donors understand the impact of their philanthropy.

United Way agencies in eastern Canada have embraced the program, and for the first time, the United Way of St. Catharines.

In the spirit of appreciation, the events are always free and open to the public, however the Friday program is sold out.

Musicians Jackie Richardson and Shakura Saida will also tell stories through song. And woven around these narratives are other musical performances that will include the Laura Secord Secondary School Concert Choir, led by teacher Dave Sisler.

The stage will be like an emotional sponge, saturated with stories of courage and defeat, tragedy and triumph, joy and loss.

"Something is created that is so beautiful, so intimate," says James. "Because they're willing to share with each other."

In each case, a singer/songwriter is paired with a speaker through a process that matches characteristics such as personality and their style of expression. A singer carries a weight of responsibility to create lyrics and music that exemplifies an often painful part of a speaker's life.

One vocalist told James: "I will never get these people out of my head."

When Lica and Bell met, there was an instant human connection. Lica scribbled notes as she listened to Bell tell her story. Bell was refreshingly candid and open, she says.

When Bell was 17 years old, she was sexually assaulted at a party. When her boyfriend heard about it, he ridiculed her. Blamed her. Then he called her a "f---ing rag doll."

His words, disparaging, degrading and deeply hurtful, became her internal voice. Slut. Whore. Worthless. "I was nothing," she said.

She started stripping for fast cash, and using crystal meth to forget about her broken, out-of-control life. "She (the drugs) made me feel like everything was perfect," says Bell.

Over the years, those words lost their power. Bell went into rehab, and regained control of her life with help from Hope House, an emergency homeless shelter since closed in Welland, and the YWCA Niagara Region which gave her housing and support.

She earned her high school diploma, and enrolled at Niagara College. These days, she has made amends with her family, is in a healthy, long-term relationship and works as a hair stylist in St. Catharines.

Her strength is the essence of Lica's song, Rag Doll. A belittling insult, transformed into a source of empowerment.

"I wanted to reclaim the words that had hurt her," says Lica. "I wanted something more triumphant at the end.

"I'm using a word that had hurt her so much and I was afraid of putting her back in a bad place.

"But as humans, we persevere."

Indeed, the last line of the chorus, a line often repeated: *I'm stronger than you'll ever know.*

Bell cried when she read the lyrics

"I'm not a piece of fabric," says Bell. "I'm not something to be thrown away. I'm a person who deserves love."

She will hear her song in its entirety for the first time during a private rehearsal this week.

And on Friday night, it will be public.

She has shared parts of her story before with smaller audiences because she sees it as an opportunity to work on herself spiritually.

"The more you talk about something the less power it holds over you."

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Music Notes: How do you pronounce Korpiklaani?

Matt Olson recommends some concerts to see in Saskatoon this upcoming weekend: Barbra Lica, Hattie and Korpiklaani

MATT OLSON ([HTTPS://THESTARPHOENIX.COM/AUTHOR/MAOLSONPOSTMEDIA](https://thestarphoenix.com/author/maolsonpostmedia)) Updated: November 7, 2018



Billboard Live Music Summit 2018 Highlights

FEATURED BY 

Having just returned from a vacation to New Orleans, I've been a bit behind on the goings-on of the upcoming week. But from a music fan note: New Orleans is a great place to go to just take in music all the time. Everywhere you go in the French Quarter, someone is playing something and it's pretty much all good. Also, New Orleans is about 35 degrees warmer than Saskatoon right

now. Getting home was a huge bummer, but the music's still plenty good in Saskatoon.

Barbra Lica

When: Friday, Nov. 9

Where: The Bassment

What: In case anyone who reads this wasn't sure, I am a fan of good jazz music. I'm not sure how you could miss that, since I endeavour to include a jazz performer every time this column goes up. Anyways, how good is Barbra Lica? A JUNO nominee, excellent singer and songwriter, once ranked among the top five jazz singers in Canada by CBC — Lica has the accolades appropriate for her talent. We really are fortunate to have such a robust jazz music scene in Saskatoon to be able to attract quality performers like Lica to the city. If there are still tickets left, this is a night of great music waiting to happen.

Hattie

When: Saturday, Nov. 10

Where: Black Cat Tavern

What: Hattie genuinely has a genre that I'm not sure how to describe. It's not a case of being a slightly esoteric style of folk rock or anything — he's just got a neat combination of grunge-style pop beats to go along with smoky and laid-back vocals. It's a really effective musical style that succeeds through that contrast: There's a relaxed vibe to the vocals and a driving energy to the electric rhythms that back up the singing. Maybe this is one of those cases where we don't need labels. And I'm sure that I'll get a message from someone that tells me the exact style, but frankly it's just really cool to see something this new and creative from a Saskatchewan artist.

Hottest tickets in Canada: Five things to do across the country



In this Oct. 27, 2017, file photo, actress Rose McGowan speaks at the inaugural Women's Convention in Detroit. McGowan visits Toronto for a book signing.

PAUL SANCYA, FILE/AP PHOTO

BRAD WHEELER >

PUBLISHED JANUARY 30, 2018

Hubcap Comedy Fest

Now based in Saint John, the gifted stand-up comedian James Mullinger is Berkshire-born, with an accent and impish wit to prove it. He's delighted with his new home, even if he's frustrated by such things as the peculiarities of Maritime directions. He won't be lost next week, however, as all comic roads lead to a bilingual comedy festival headlined by Steve Patterson, Tom Green and one blimey-saying import. *Feb. 7 to 17, at various venues in Moncton.*

The Humans

Jackie Maxwell, for 14 years creatively in charge of the Shaw Festival, directs a Canadian co-production – thank you, Canadian Stage and Citadel Theatre – of Stephen Karam's Tony-winning 2015 hit that last month made its Canadian

TD Ottawa Winter Jazz Fest

There's no rule that jazz hangs need to happen in warm months, no matter what they tell you in Newport, Montreux or Montreal. In Ottawa, heat comes in the form of vocalist Barbra Lica, progressive drummer Jim Black, guitar high-flier Paolo Angeli, Latin-jazz maestro Hilario Duran and the inspiring American pianist Fred Hersch. *Feb. 8 to 10, at various Ottawa venues.*

Sarah Jane Scouten

The latest long play from the rootsy singer-songwriter Sarah Jane Scouten is *When the Blooms Falls from the Rose*, a melodic affair of country-leaning Americana music that manages to be respectful, thoughtful and playful, often all at once. An adventurous tour of Alberta (with one detour to Elkford, B.C.) has the up-and-coming Canadian artist playing house concerts in cities and remote rural communities. *Feb. 2 to 14; info at sarahjanescouten.com.*

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Toronto police officer to be charged in connection to Bruce McArthur investigation

Barbra Lica

Yardbird Suite Edmonton



November 10, 2018

By Janice Stobie-Rushton

Walking into the Yardbird Suite for the first time, I found myself pleasantly surprised. Once inside the volunteer run venue, you are transported back to the old intimate Bourbon Street style room - minus the smoke! Barbra Lica took the stage and kept the room enthralled. The audience listened intently until she finished her songs to rounds of applause.


Barbra is touring to promote her newly released album *You're Fine*. She entertains with her wonderful sense of humour, which is clearly evident in the song "Let You Go". She revealed that she wrote it for her cat, Cookie, during a bout of homesickness. She uses her life experiences as her song material, and another great example is her epic first date song, "Coffee Shop".


Barbra switched it up a little later in the show as she used her pure voice with a little country swing for the tune "Slow Dancing", and it worked wonderfully. The band had the crowd singing along to "The Birds and the Bees", which earned her a Juno nomination for the first time.

She surrounded herself on stage with a group of extremely talented musicians who complimented her style wonderfully. What a great show!



Fresh Air with Nana aba Duncan

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November 4: Barbra Lica's new 'countrified jazz' album

Nov 4, 2018

Barbra Lica went to Nashville to record her latest album, but she's still a jazz vocalist at heart.



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IN PHOTOS – Barbra Lica in Toronto, ON

By *Orest Dorosh* on November 6, 2018

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SONG OF THE WEEK



Who: Barbra Lica
When: November 4, 2019
Where: Hugh's Room Live, Toronto ON

Barbra Lica is a fast-rising Canadian jazz vocalist and songwriter and has been receiving accolades for her unique vocal ability that stresses subtlety and grace. Based in Toronto, Barbra's live shows have captivated audiences all over North America with her genuine warmth and confident stage presence.

Hot on the heels of her 2017 Juno-nominated recording, *I'm Still Learning*, Barbra Lica is back with her fifth and most ambitious offering to date – *You're Fine* (November 2018). Having spent the last couple of years touring clubs and festivals, Barbra found herself in Nashville where she was blown away by the sounds of old country and western swing. She dedicated the next year to songwriting trips between Nashville and Toronto, collaborating with new songwriters and work-shopping with her band to find a new space for contemporary jazz, one that borrows and fuses elements of American country music.

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I shoot live music performances and concerts. I love the excitement of entering a venue, knowing that I'll be photographing a concert and enjoying the energy of the crowd.

There's nothing like being in a venue and looking at the expressions on the faces of people who are all transfixed by the talent onstage. I shoot about 120 shows each year, averaging 2 bands per show, as well as several all-day and weekend festivals in and around Southern Ontario. From the large venues to very small ones, bright lights or barely lit stages, I hope that my photos capture the enjoyment the artists have in doing what they love to do.

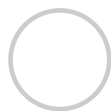
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Five to see: Canadian Jazz Festival

ERIC VOLMERS ([HTTPS://CALGARYHERALD.COM/AUTHOR/EVOLMERS](https://calgaryherald.com/author/evolmers)) Updated: November 6, 2018



Sharks Can Recognize Jazz Music?

FEATURED BY 

Kodi Hutchinson's friend was hiking in Tibet recently when she heard something unexpected.

"She heard jazz violin coming out of a yurt or something," says Hutchinson, artistic producer of JazzYYC and the Canadian Jazz Festival. "It was some Chinese kid who was really into Stephane Grappelli. People love music and the thing about jazz is that it's all about improvisation. You can bring any culture into improvisation. That's when the flavours get so exciting and broad."

The Canadian Jazz Festival runs from Nov. 8 to 11 at various venues in Calgary. This idea of jazz having no borders is a nice primer for the festival, which this year includes crossover acts, traditional jazz and one project that celebrates Canada's Indigenous cultures.

We asked Hutchinson about these five performers:



Barbra Lica. *TARANOELLE*

Barbra Lica, Nov. 11 at 7 p.m. at the Ironwood Stage & Grill

Toronto singer Barbra Lica is considered one of the most promising new voices in Canadian jazz, picking up a Juno nod for her 2016 release *I'm Still Learning*. Still in her 20s, Lica sings straight jazz but also gives a jazzy swing to modern pop songs.

"Because she's younger, there's going to be more backbeats and swing in her repertoire," says Hutchinson. "Anyone who has seen her can tell you she is delightful. She is a great personality, she is a lot of fun and musically she is excellent at what she does."

The Canadian Jazz Festival runs from Nov. 8 to 11 in various venues. Visit jazzyyc.com (<http://jazzyyc.com>).

You're Fine
Barbra Lica
Justin Time JUST 260-2
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► Barbra Lica is on a songwriting and album-releasing tear. Her fifth CD in six years has just come out and it's populated by all original songs, almost all written

or co-written by Lica. For this album, she travelled to the mecca of American music, Nashville, where she collaborated on songwriting, enlisted players and recorded tracks, all under the tasteful oversight of Toronto bassist and producer Marc Rogers. So while this album is a bit of a departure from Lica's previous jazzy records, it's still true to her signature, sunny style. Even when she's singing about heartbreak and longing, such as in *Everybody Else*, you need to listen closely to know it, since the songs are so consistently upbeat.

Besides Lica's pretty, lithe voice, guitars are the stars of *You're Fine* courtesy of Tom Fleming and Nashville session players Paul Franklin and Wanda Vick Burchfield, whether it's the acoustic on the opening track *Before I Do*, which sets the tone for the album with its lovely simplicity, or the pedal steel, dobro and mandolin that enrich a number of the tracks. Heck, a banjo even makes an appearance on one song (*Jolie Oiseau*)! Joel Visentin's keyboard work deserves mention as it subtly supports throughout the album then shines on the closing track, *When I'm Gone*, a lovely lilting number featuring piano and the instrument that's most dear to this reviewer's heart, accordion. Aaahh.

Cathy Riches

gamut from Bach and Shostakovich to Gypsy and Eastern European folk music. The ten original tracks on *Bushes and Bombshelters* cover the themes of longing and belonging, nostalgia, connection, homeland and new beginnings, and are crafted with the passion of someone who has experienced them all, intimately. Accompanying Popovic on her musical journey are pianists Saman Shahi and Perry Maher, double bassist Jesse Dietschi, trombonist Don Laws, percussionist Max Senitt, violist Nikray Kowsar, cellist Stuart Mutch and flutist Jamie Thompson. Popovic sings on three tracks; John MacLean lends vocals on one.

With the spirited clippity-clop of the

voyage, the mood shifts from sombre to celebratory, brilliantly depicted by Popovic on electric 5-string violin with outstanding contributions from Laws and Senitt; this titular first track sets the tone for the entire album. From the evocative violin and piano duo, *Sketches From Serbia*, to the plaintive, prayer-like *Blue* for solo violin, and *Memory's* exquisite interplay of flute, violin and cello, Popovic's *Bushes and Bombshelters* is a journey worth taking.

Sharna Searle

Concert Note: February 10, 2pm, *Bushes and Bombshelters* CD Release Party at Gallery 345.

Something in the Air

CD Reissues help define the massive musical changes of the 1960s and 1970s

KEN WAXMAN

As the advances, musical and otherwise, that transformed the 1960s and 70s recede into history, new considerations of what happened during those turbulent times continually appear. Reissues of advanced music recorded during that time, some needlessly obscure, some better known, help fill in the details of exactly what transpired.

Probably the most historically relevant set to become available for the first time on CD is *Bäbi* (Corbett vs. Dempsey CvsDCD052;



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SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2017

Jazz Fest

Jazz Fest 2017, Day 1: Frank reviews Barbra Lica, Joss Stone, and St. Paul and the Broken Bones

POSTED BY FRANK DE BLASE ON SAT, JUN 24, 2017 AT 4:00 AM

Well, the 16th edition of the Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival took off its clothes and did a cannonball. The energy in the thick arid air was surprisingly electric; a vibe this strong at Jazz Fests past usually didn't get this feverish so quickly. It must have been the battle for souls raging on two different stages last night ... but first let's take a look at the show I knew we'd all enjoy: a confection of a swingin' band and a swingin' ma'am, Barbra Lica.

It starts and ends with Lica's voice. It's a bright, vibrant contralto one minute, laconic and syrupy the next when she lets a phrase die on the vine and trail off. Lica's songs are little, self-deprecating vignettes about drunken first dates and finding an ex-lover on social media. She peppered her originals with some Duke Ellington ("Just A-Sittin' and A-Rockin'"), some Cole Porter ("Just One of Those Things"), and a version of "A Spoonful of Sugar" -- however, the way Lica pulled it off, light and airy and delivered at hyper speed, earns it the new title of "A Spoonful of Trucker Speed." Her band was tight and a vision of precision. Lica was charming through and through. Her voice was beautiful ... heart-breaking, really.

Barbra Lica will play again Saturday, June 24, at Montage Music Hall. 6 p.m. and 10 p.m. Tickets are \$30, or you can use a Club Pass. barbralicamusic.com.

I'm convinced now more than ever that soul wants your soul. Soul music isn't for the betterment of your soul or to lift your spirits high; it wants you to feel it deep in the fissures of your fevered brain all the way down to your naughty parts. Me? Hell, I'm down with it and will go along willingly. I'm the devil in Miss Jones after all. And I witnessed the devil in Miss Stone with 1800 other lost souls in Kodak Hall to see **Joss Stone**.

click to enlarge



PHOTO BY FRANK DE BLASE
Barbra Lica played Max of Eastman Place on Friday night.

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LATEST IN MUSIC BLOG



Jazz Fest 2017, Day 9: Frank reviews Danielle Ponder and the Tomorrow People and The Hooligans

by Frank De Blase



Jazz Fest 2017, Day 9: Daniel reviews Balkun Brothers and Bonerama

by Daniel J. Kushner



Jazz Fest 2017, Day 9: Ron reviews Donny McCaslin, Matthew Stevens Trio, and Benny Green

Jazz Sensation Barbra Lica Returns to New York for Performance at Birdland

by BWW News Desk Apr. 24, 2017

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Acclaimed Canadian jazz singer/songwriter and first runner up in the 2013 [Sarah Vaughan](#) International Jazz Voice Competition Barbra Lica will be returning to New York on Sunday, June 11 with her quintet to perform songs from her new album, "I'm Still Learning" at legendary jazz club, Birdland.

A seasoned live act on the Canadian club and festival circuit, Lica routinely dazzles in intimate spaces and prestigious auditoriums alike. She has supported jazz giants including [Christian McBride](#), [Pat Metheny](#) and [Terence Blanchard](#) and performed internationally at the Tokyo International Jazz Festival. Whatever the stage, Lica's deep passion for jazz and the music of classic American vocalists is evident.

I'm Still Learning follows Lica's celebrated 2012 debut *That's What I Do* and its 2015 follow-up *Love Songs*, the latter a collaborative effort with noted producer/guitarist/songwriter [James Bryan](#) ([Nelly Furtado](#), [Olly Murs](#)).

A mix of original tunes as well as standards, *I'm Still Learning* earned Lica a 2017 JUNO Award nomination (Canadian Grammy) for Vocal Jazz Album of the Year. Stream the complete album [here](#) or listen on Spotify [here](#). Also check out Barbra's newest music video "London Town" [here](#).

Barbra Lica will be performing from 6 pm to 7:15 pm. Tickets are \$30 + \$10 minimum for food/drinks.

Friday's JunoFest festivities recap



LYNN SAXBERG, OTTAWA CITIZEN

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Published on: April 1, 2017 | Last Updated: April 1, 2017 10:13 AM EDT



The Devin Cuddy Band performs at the Juno Cup Jam at the Bourbon Room on March 30, 2017. *CHRIS DONOVAN / OTTAWA CITIZEN*

Unless you live under a soundproof rock, you know that the 2017 Juno Awards are being held in Ottawa this weekend.

While the main event is on Sunday night, there are a slew of other events.

The Juno Express rolled into town Friday carrying a trainload of Canada's best musicians.



Peter Hum

@peterhum

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[#junoawards](#)

12:54 AM - 1 Apr 2017

Barbra Lica brings JUNOFest jazz showcase to a crowd-pleasing close

Friday's JUNOFest jazz showcase ended with a poppy, wry and effusive set from Toronto singer Barbra Lica.

During a set split between stylized covers and witty, well-crafted originals, Lica and her band offered the night's most accessible and forthrightly entertaining set.

Lica was a focused, expressive singer with an appealing flutter to her voice and a deceptive amount of power backing her usually smooth and nuanced delivery.

Her material was tightly plotted and measured and it kept her and her witty personality squarely in the foreground.

Among her covers there was a backbeat-y, groovy version of Cole Porter's So In Love and a light, Latin-tinged rendition of the Cardigan's Lovefool. More conventionally, Lica sang A.C. Jobim's How Insensitive true to its original mood and groove, and Visentin took his most expansive piano solo of the set.

Lica's own song Coffee Shop was droll and bubbly. Her piece, Who Knows, which was set up with a funny, Facebook-related anecdote, became a more touching story about about seeing an ex with someone new.

For her country-gospel waltz Top Flight, Lica bumped Visentin off the piano bench and sang one of the night's most moving songs while she played.

For the set's penultimate tune, singer Matt Dusk joined Lica on stage. After some gags about their competition in the Juno Awards' best vocal jazz album category, Dusk and Lica sang the old, lightly kitschy tune Je t'aime.

The singing in French could have been better, which it was when Lica and her band huddled on stage to perform the Edith Piaf classic La Vie en Rose.

Peter Hum (<http://domain.com//platform.twitter.com/widgets.js>)

JUNO AWARDS ([HTTP://OTTAWACITIZEN.COM/TAG/JUNO-AWARDS](http://ottawacitizen.com/tag/juno-awards))

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Drake, Weeknd, Shawn Mendes get five Juno nominations each

Brampton's Alessia Cara gets four nominations for Canada's top music awards, being held in Ottawa on April 2.

Toronto artists featured heavily in the 2017 Juno Awards nominations, announced Tuesday, with big names like Drake, The Weeknd and Shawn Mendes sweeping up five nominations each and local favourites sprinkled throughout several category.

The nominees for one of Canadian music's biggest awards ceremony — now in its 46th year — were announced at a ceremony at Toronto's REBEL nightclub Tuesday morning.

Several Toronto artists also received their first Juno nods Tuesday, including electronic musician Harrison and jazz singer-songwriter Barbra Lica.

"I'm feeling on top of the world — I feel amazing, seriously," said Harrison, whose album, *Checkpoint Titanium*, is up for Electronic Album of the Year. "It's been a goal of mine, a nomination was all I wanted, right?"

Lica, contending for Vocal Jazz Album of the Year with *I'm Still Learning*, said the nomination was totally unexpected: "It really hit me like a truck, I had no idea, a good truck."



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Juno Awards Nominees Hold Court

By Kerry Doole Wed, 02/08/2017 - 07:56

The Juno Awards nominations event in Toronto attracted a large contingent of nominees covering a wide range of award categories.

They ranged from some artists who already have multiple Junos in their trophy case to first-timers wearing broad smiles as their names were announced.



2016 Juno Award winners Whitehorse

FYI corralled many of the nominees for comments on what a Juno nomination means for their career, as well as updates on what they are now or will soon be working on.

Here's a random selection of their answers:

Barbra Lica – Vocal Jazz Album of the Year: (*I'm Still Learning*). "It's my first nomination and I'm like a tourist here, taking photos! I just sent one to my mum. It is awesome cos you always want to be in the big pond. I want to get on the Juno train to Ottawa, I've never partied on a train before!"

"I am going to Banff in March for a songwriters program. I have five new songs already and am looking ahead to a 2018 release."

Home » Arts » Music



Toronto jazz singer Barbra Lica offers smiles and sympathy — not blues

BRAD WHEELER
The Globe and Mail
Published Thursday, Sep. 29, 2016 3:36PM EDT
Last updated Thursday, Sep. 29, 2016 3:38PM EDT

Comments

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AA

With her new album *I'm Still Learning* (her first on Justin Time Records), the graceful jazzier Barbra Lica announces her ability to absorb the teachings of those singers who came before her.

A fan of Betty Hutton, Peggy Lee and Nat King Cole, Toronto's Lica is comfortable in spry and breezy situations.

Her investigation into Ron Sexsmith's *Secret Heart* leads to whistling and lighthearted reggae ideas; elsewhere there are casual bossa nova invitations.

With her upbeat lilt and vocal cuteness on covers and originals, Lica offers smiles and sympathy, not blues. Maybe that is still to come – we understand she is still learning.

Barbra Lica launches I'm Still Learning on Oct. 3, 8 p.m., \$40, Old Mill, 21 Old Mill Rd., 416-236-2641 or barbralicamusic.com.

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Barbra Lica Set to Release New Album!

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Submitted by cashbox on Sat, 09/24/2016 - 03:17

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Submitted to Cashbox Canada

Barbra Lica is a fast-rising star in the Canadian Jazz scene and has been receiving accolades for a unique vocal ability that stresses subtlety and grace. Based in Toronto, Canada, Barbra's live show captivates audiences all over North America with her genuine warmth and confident stage presence. She has announced her third album, *I'm Still Learning* will be released through Justin Time Records on September 30, 2016.



A deep passion for jazz and the music of classic American vocalists like Doris Day, Ella Fitzgerald, Peggy Lee, Nat King Cole, and Betty Hutton led Barbra to pursue a Bachelor of Music specializing in Jazz Voice Performance at the University of Toronto, where she simultaneously studied Human Biology. She laughingly recalls, "I'd be doing my jazz combo rehearsals in my lab coat then running down to the sciences building!" She honed her performance chops on historic Toronto stages such as The Rex Hotel and The Old Mill with the likes of the John MacLeod Big Band and the Dave Young Sextet. In 2013, Barbra was runner-up in the prestigious Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition in New York City.


Now a seasoned live act on the Canadian club and festival circuit, Barbra consistently performs at venues from intimate spaces to prestigious auditoriums, such as Toronto's Jazz Bistro and Koerner Hall. Most recently, she has been billed as an opening act for such acts as Christian McBride, Pat Metheny, and Terence Blanchard.

As a songwriter, she remains resolutely upbeat and optimistic, concentrating on the minutiae of day-to-day life: "I keep my personal life drama-free," she explains. "I read my sci-fi novels and manga, build puzzles, and get up at 6 a.m. to train for my next marathon." Her personality comes through in her singing, delivering jazz pop songs and heart-wrenching ballads with an equal measure of positivity and genuine emotion. "I know life can be hard and stressful," she explains, "but I feel art exists so beauty can exist." These are songs from the perspective of the 21st Century woman, addressing themes of love and the complicated realities of modern relationships in a way that is uplifting and authentic.

Her debut album *That's What I Do* (Triplet / Universal Jazz Japan) was released to widespread acclaim in 2012, ranking her in Canada's Top 5 Jazz singers on the CBC, as well Top 5 up-and-coming Toronto jazz

artists on blogTO. Her second album, Love Songs (Do Right! Music Japan), was a collaborative effort with noted producer/guitarist/songwriter James Bryan (Prozzak, Nelly Furtado, Olly Murs) made it's Japanese debut live at the Tokyo International Jazz Festival on September 5th in front of over 1000 audience members at the Tokyo International Forum.

One listen to her newest album, I'm Still Learning, and it's easy to hear that Barbra smiles when she sings. Her versatility as a performer continues to grow along with her fanbase. "Lica smiles when she sings. You can hear it. When you see her in concert you'll see it too", says Tim Tamashiro (CBC).

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Barbra Lica, jazz music's Little Miss Sunshine

Valerie Hill

Waterloo Region Record | Dec 08, 2016

WATERLOO — A university professor once told Barbra Lica that one day she would have a major heartbreak and after that, she would sing so much better.

It was an odd comment and though Lica doesn't think of herself as perpetually happy or bouncy the singer/songwriter has managed to earn the nickname Little Miss Sunshine and she's been known to wear a huge, gold "Love" necklace.

"I've tried to be earnest," she said in an interview from her Toronto home, remembering one song in particular about the pain of lost love. "I'd get to the chorus and everyone would laugh. That's not what I was going for."

Even when she went to London, England to visit the jazz label Decca, apparently they said to her "don't you have anything a bit glass-half-empty?"

Lica may not sing from a place of angst but she does sing from a place of feeling and on Dec. 9, the singer and her quintet return to the stage at Waterloo's Jazz Room, a venue she loves.

The singer is funny, sincere and down to earth, the kind of performer who gives her all with each song, something she partly learned from her parents, who were both musicians.

Lica's mother was a professional singer, immigrating to Canada from Romania. Her father, a pianist, was Russian born. The met in a band and in Lica's formative years, the house was always filled with music, mostly popular. Her parents divorced when she was young, but rather than hurting her musical education, it actually launched her in the direction of jazz.

"Mom remarried an accountant," she said. "He had this giant jazz collection."

Her stepdad even built a little sound booth in her bedroom so she could listen to music, undisturbed and without disturbing anyone else.

It was her stepdad who always encouraged Lica to pursue her dreams. He knew what it was to have a dream unrealized and he didn't want her to suffer the same fate.

Lica's mom also encouraged her to pursue her dream, but understood first hand the difficulties of a career in music. She wanted her daughter to have an alternative, just in case.

"She was always unbelievably supportive, but she was scared," said Lica. "My mom is so pragmatic."

Lica chose science, studying jazz performance at the University of Toronto with a minor in human biology. It was a lot of work, studying music all day then hunching over lab equipment in the evenings.

After graduating, her mother asked hopefully "are you going to be a scientist?" to which the response was not unexpected.

"I said 'no.'"

While still in university, her music had been getting airplay on radio so she thought "OK, let's go for it."

That decision was a good one for the singer who earned her musical stripes performing on iconic Toronto stages such as The Rex Hotel and The Old Mill.

Lica's early influences included Doris Day, Ella Fitzgerald, Peggy Lee, Nat King Cole and Betty Hutton and she was named one of Canada's top upcoming female jazz artists as well as the first runner up in the 2013 Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Competition.

To date, the singer has released four albums: "That's What I Do" in 2012, "Kissing You" in 2015 and a Christmas album in 2015. Her most recent album, "I'm Still Learning" was released this year, her first record deal with Justin Time Records.

This new album is reflective and about "making many, many mistakes" in life.

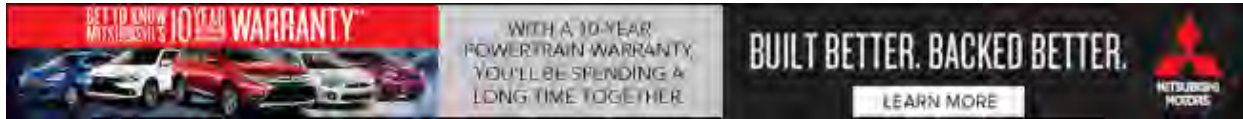
She said, "You think that as you get older, it's about wanting to learn."

Lica will perform songs from her most recent album but said an actual coast-to-coast tour won't officially begin until June.

She is pleased with the public reaction to her music thus far.



Barbra Lica is bringing her sunny jazz to The Jazz Room on Friday.



ENTERTAINMENT LOCAL

Jazz singer Barbra Lica performs Friday as part of Ontario Contact in Peterborough

By Kennedy Gordon, Postmedia Network
Thursday, November 3, 2016 10:57:43 EDT AM



Barbra Lica

Every one of the dozens of performers coming to Peterborough this weekend for the Ontario Contact conference and workshop has something different going on.

Barbra Lica is no exception. She's often billed as a jazz singer, and understands that that's the best way to encapsulate what she does. "I feel like I end up falling into the category of jazz," says the Toronto-based singer. But, she adds, there's more going on, and always has been.

Lica performs Friday night at Showplace in one of the musical showcases that are part of Ontario Contact. Visit showplace.org

or stop by the box office for ticket information on these events.

Ontario Contact, centred at the Holiday Inn Waterfront this weekend, is an industry conference aimed at people who work in the field of touring entertainment, and will feature showcase performances by musicians, dancers and more.

Lica's music harkens back to the colourful world of '60s pop - not the British Invasion stuff, but the more grownup music that came out of jazz and swing, like Doris Day and Peggy Lee. This spills over into her personal style, which has a vintage sort of charm without any snark. "There's no hipster irony here, sorry," she laughs.

Lica, still in her mid-20s, has quickly emerged as one of Canada's top up-and-coming performers, with two albums out - That's What I Do, 2012, and Kissing You, 2015 - and a steady touring regimen.

But it wasn't always the plan - she originally had other ideas.

"I was intending to be a doctor right up until my last year of university," she says. That was at the University of Toronto, where she studied music while majoring in medical sciences, eventually earning a degree in jazz singing.

Part of that original decision came from growing up with parents who were both professional musicians.



"I saw their struggles and I thought I would have to be more pragmatic," she says.

In the early years of her career, she used what she calls the "black book" method to gig - teaming up with different musicians at different times for different performances. That allowed her to refine her approach and to adapt to different styles, she says.

Eventually, she ended up with a permanent band, which will be with her when she performs in Peterborough Friday night.

When Ontario Contact is done, Lica returns to the road while working on new songs for her next record. She has ideas for shows in the U.S. and overseas - she's performed in Japan and would love to keep up the global journeying.

"I want to play as far-reaching as we can," she says.



Monday, February 29, 2016

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Barbra Lica sparkles in downtown jazz concert

By [Glen Silverthorn](#)
Thursday, February 25, 2016 12:07:14 EST
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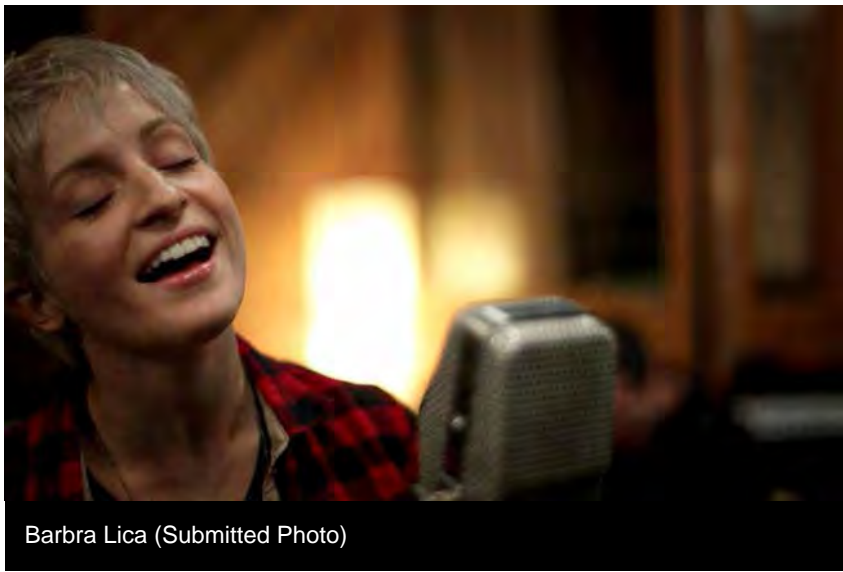


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Barbra Lica (Submitted Photo)

I was only too happy to accept an invitation from Frank DiFelice, director of the Brantford Downtown Jazz Concert Series, to hear Toronto jazz vocalist Barbra Lica in the Sanderson Centre's main lobby.

Unfortunately, due to a previous commitment, I was only able to catch the second half of her Feb, 8 show but what I was amazed by what I saw and heard.



Lica delivered sparkling arrangements of tunes by Duke Ellington, Cole Porter, Irving Berlin and others.

She also has written a number of original songs, some of which she performed during the evening. One was the slow romantic ballad, Five o'clock Lullaby, which revealed how talented she is at bending the straight notes coming into a warm vibrato at the end of her phrases. We also heard excellent creative guitar work from Tom Fleming on this one.

Lica's love of singing was conveyed to the audience by the joy that always seemed to be present in her facial expressions as she performed. Her intonation and dynamic voice control on all of the pieces were phenomenal. Between each tune, she explained why she liked a certain composer or what situation prompted her to write a certain song. such as Coffee Shop or Fishies.

The rest of her backup jazz ensemble consisted of pianist Joel Bisentin, bassist Marc Rogers and, on drums, Will Fisher. These four high-calibre musicians have only worked as a unit backing Lica since May but their tight cohesive sound and excellent individual solo work were exemplary.

Fisher and Bisentin studied at Humber College, Fleming and Lica at the University of Toronto and Rogers attended the University Of Texas.

An up tempo swinging Cole Porter piece, So In Love, featured everyone doing some solo work, especially Fisher doing some great drumstick work on the rim. On the Ellington tune Just Settin' and a Rockin', Lica tells about waiting for her man who doesn't get home on time. On one fast tune, Bisentin rose to the occasion on the keys as his fingers danced up and down the keyboard with superb jazz runs punctuated with block chords. Rogers did some fancy walking bass runs on the high strings on this one. Love In The Old Fashioned Way was an up tempo piece which again featured Bisentin with some excellent cascading piano passages with Rogers employing some excellent slap bass technique at various moments. Fishes, another medium tempo original happy tune about finding a date on the Internet, had a kind of funky rock beat to it.

To slightly alter the scene and the sound the four instrumentalists collected around Lica who stayed at the mic. This time, Bisentin had strapped on an accordion and Fisher brought out his snare drum. With a Latin rhumba style the group performed Why Don't You Pretend, with Fisher executing some clever brush work on the snare. The second piece, La Vie En Rose, I felt was the best version of this song I'd ever heard. Lica's interpretation was flawless, and had the added extra of the accordion sounding like a concertina. It made me feel as if I was in Paris -- France, that is!

After completing the evening with the classic Cole Porter song, It's Just One Of Those Things, and receiving a loud standing ovation, Lica sang as an encore one of her favourites, Irving Berlin's Careful, It's My Heart.

During an interview after the show, Lica told me about her busy touring schedule and participation last September at the International Jazz Festival in Tokyo.

She said that she is working on her fourth album. Her debut album, That's What I Do, was released in 2012 with a live to air concert broadcast on Jazz FM 91.1. In November 2013, she was first runner-up in the Sarah Vaughan International Jazz voice competition in New Jersey. Her second full-length album, Kissing You, was officially released in January 2015. She has been rated as one Canada's top female jazz artists.

She performs in Guelph this weekend and, during March and April, in Hamilton and London.

The downtown jazz series continues April 18 with Luis Mario Ochoa Quintet and on June 6 with Charles Di Raimondo. General admission tickets cost \$30.

E-Editions

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December 2015

BARBRA LICA

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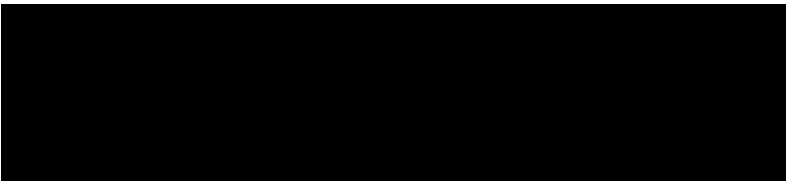
TORONTO

Christian McBride Big Band / Barbra Lica

Nathan Phillips Square, Toronto ON, June 23

By *Kerry Doole*

Published Jun 24, 2015



CHRISTIAN MCBRIDE BIG BAND

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Photo: Kevin Jones

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The choice of a vivacious and sweet-voiced young jazz-pop singer to open up a big band show may have been unorthodox, but local songstress Barbra Lica seized the moment with authority. She mixed breezy original tunes with such standards as "I Get A Kick Out Of You" and "Don't Get Around Much Anymore," the latter confirming she can convince in delivering deeper emotions, not just light tunes about food, sugar and dating. Helping her cause was an ace band featuring keyboardist Lou Pomanti and guitarist James Bryan. The latter found pop success in *Philosopher Kings* and *Prozzäk*, and he impressed here with tastefully melodic playing. A charming performer, Lica is one to be watched.

Christian McBride gave something of a master class in how to pace a big band performance. All too often, the strength in numbers of a large ensemble can result in something of a sonic horns-led bludgeoning, but McBride and his ace accompanists (17 in total) struck just the right balance between restraint and power. As a bassist, the four-time Grammy winner has shone in a wide variety of musical settings, but it was his skill as a composer, arranger and bandleader that shone through here.

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MUSIC

'A good start': Canadian jazz singer Barbra Lica headlines CNY Jazz Central cabaret finale

Jonathan Monfiletto | jonathan.monfiletto@lee.net May 5, 2015



Photo provided

Canadian jazz singer Barbra Lica is preparing for her first concerts in the United States, which will include headlining

When Barbra Lica's name was announced during her graduation ceremony from the University of Toronto, it came with the designation that she earned a Bachelor of Music with an additional major in human biology.

At the time, the Toronto-born jazz singer and songwriter knew she had the talent for singing and performing but didn't yet feel that she had the passion for making a career out of it. Her degree, in fact, reflects a compromise with her parents that she would pursue music school.

But, it was that moment in which Lica realized she wanted to strive to become a performer instead of a doctor — her childhood dream, she said, was to become a singing doctor along the lines of the real-life Patch Adams made famous by Robin Williams' portrayal in film.

"I was doing music school, trying it out because they knew I was good at it," she said. "I was doing other things, and I was fighting it. ... I started realizing that even though I loved the science courses, I really was going to end up dedicating myself to music."

In a speech, one of her professors termed it "the monkey on your back," she said: "You can ignore it, and you can do what you want. You can try to hide it, but periodically you have to feed this thing or it's going to claw your eyes out," Lica said.

For the Canadian artist, that was music. And now, she is preparing to perform in the United States for the first time.

After a Saturday, May 2 concert in Easton, Pennsylvania as part of the Mercantile Home's Live at the Gold Room Distinctive Music Series, Lica is slated to head to Syracuse Sunday, May 3 to close out the CNY Jazz Central's 2014-15 cabaret season.

The doors at the Sheraton Syracuse University Grand Ballroom, 801 University Ave., Syracuse, are set to open at 4 p.m., and Lica is set to hit the stage at 5 p.m.

Tickets cost \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door or \$10 with a student identification card. Tickets can be purchased at cnyjazz.org/subscribe, and more information can be found by calling (315) 479-5299.

After finishing runner-up in the 2013 Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Voice Competition in Newark, New Jersey in her first appearance in the states, Lica said she is "super excited" to perform her first real show in America after cabaret organizer Larry Luttinger approached her.

"I've been trying to do it more," Lica said. "It's a good first concert in the states, as oppose to just going and doing a showcase or something. He's (Luttinger) bringing over the whole band. We're going to do this with the people I'm used to playing with and the stuff we've been playing up until now. I feel like it's going to be a good start."

As CNY Jazz Central concludes its season, Luttinger said Lica fits in with the kinds of acts the organization looks for in its concerts and the types of audiences that typically turns out to see those acts.

"We always try to bring in very accessible acts, very popular acts suitable for all ages," he said. "We don't want anything to be difficult to understand. We always try to feature veteran talent along with emerging talent, sometimes on the same bill."

JAZZ AND IMPROVISED

Kissing You - Barbra Lica

□ Cathy Riches □ [Current Reviews](#) □ [Jazz and Improvised](#) □ 02 February 2015



Kissing You

Barbra Lica

Independent BLM-1401C (barbralica.com)

It's encouraging to see good, young singers emerge in the jazz realm. It's even more encouraging to see them thrive and grow as [Barbra Lica](#) has with her second album *Kissing You*. That said, Lica may not satisfy jazz purists, as she has strong pop elements in her work, especially in her original material. Similar to her first

album, *Kissing You* alternates between clever originals (eight of the 11 tracks) and imaginative reworkings of standards. Genre aside, what Lica is consistently very good at is getting a story across. Her pretty, girlish voice (shades of Stacey Kent and Blossom Dearie) is well-suited to her material. Her lyric writing amuses on the lighter songs such as *Canoe* ("You're no dreamboat but you're a really nice canoe") and touches us on the more serious *That's What I Hate*, about the end of a romance. The reworkings of the standards really stood out for me as genuinely fresh approaches, in particular on Cole Porter's *I Get A Kick Out of You*, where the George Martinesque take gives us a renewed and charming song.

Author: [Cathy Riches](#)



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MUSIC

5 up and coming jazz artists in Toronto

Posted by **Jacob Thompson** / AUGUST 21, 2014

11 Comments



While many fans lament the end of the golden age of [jazz in Toronto](#), there has undoubtedly been an influx of young local talent within the last decade. Some come from respected post-secondary music programs, while some seem to come out of nowhere with their own DIY projects.

The result is a diversity in sound; classical, fusion, lounge, and free form are all well represented here in the city with a plethora of bars and festivals to support it. Peak your interest? Here are five Toronto jazz artists to keep an eye on.

Barbra Lica

Recently selected as one of Canada's top 5 jazz singers by CBC, the Toronto born Lica sings an upbeat, easygoing brand of jazz but with a soulful twist behind it. This summer she's been touring the festival circuit with stops in Toronto, Markham, and an upcoming show in Niagara.



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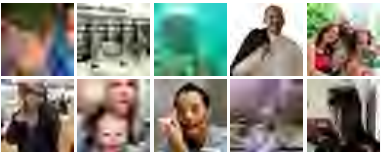
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Barbra Lica sings heart out on new jazz record

Published on Wednesday January 16, 2013

Trish Crawford

Entertainment Reporter

As a 16-year-old auditioning for a place on *Canadian Idol*, Toronto's [Barbra Lica](#) sang, "I can't give you anything but love."

The jazz oldie, written in 1928, seems like an odd pick for a teenager in a singing contest.

"I really like jazz," explains Lica, 24, who has just released her debut album *That's What I Do* and will be among the headliners at "Bacharachattack" a sold-out tribute to songwriters Burt Bacharach and Hal David at the Old Mill on Monday.

Possessing a cheerful, upbeat persona that has earned her the nickname "Little Miss Sunshine," she is nevertheless savvy about the business and somewhat of an old soul, say those involved in producing her first album.

After all, she spent her childhood listening to Ella Fitzgerald, Doris Day, Louis Armstrong (she does a hilarious imitation) and Betty Hutton. They were in her dad's record collection she played in her bedroom; pop tunes were just for dancing.

"I have high hopes for her," says pianist Joe Sealy of Triplet Records Inc. "In the classy world of jazz, she has the potential of Ella Fitzgerald and Peggy Lee."

Lica has a music degree in jazz singing from the University of Toronto as well as a major in medical sciences, and is well-schooled and respected by the musicians who play with her, Sealy says. She also writes many of her own songs.

"She writes good stuff," says Sealy, who used her on his own 2009 album, *Songs*, to sing a saucy, torch song, "You're Gonna Miss Me."

"I can't sing that song without blushing," Lica says. "The lyrics are scandalous."

Sealy was searching for someone to sing the song when his recording company partner, bass player Paul Novotny, heard Lica singing with a student ensemble.

"I was shocked," says Novotny. Her skill is in delivering clear tones and distinct lyrics, he says.

"She made me listen to the lyrics. Beyond her technical abilities, she was telling me a story."

They decided to have her record "You're Gonna Miss Me" and, Novotny says, "I was thunderstruck, she sounded so mature."

Both Sealy and Novotny perform with Lica often, and praise her preparation and work ethic as well as her level-headed attitude about the business.

"For someone so young, she has an impressive level of musical maturity," says Ross Porter, CEO of Jazz.FM91. "Many singers spend years trying to find their vocal 'sweet spot.' Barbra's already there."

Lica picks and chooses her gigs because "I don't mind playing less often and be in better places with nice stages."



Barbra Lica is turning heads with her debut jazz album *That's What I Do*. She plays the Old Mill on Monday.

BARBRA LICA PHOTO

It is difficult to sing over the noise of people talking, she says, and she's had the undignified request to "stay away from the salad bar."

"People make a big deal of not feeding you," she says, adding she's very aware of the dark side of the jazz world where there can be lots of late nights and lots of partying too hard.

But there's the sunny side too with singing around a fire at a summer camp with Robi Botos or laughing uproariously with singer Heather Bambrick, her former teacher.

Lica says she's not interested in money or fame, but has a burning desire to sing, just for the joy of it.

It's a talent she hid from her parents — her mother is a former singer and her father is an accountant. Lica says if they knew she could sing, she'd have been hauled out to perform for guests. She and her brother, both of whom played the piano, were already "performing monkeys" putting on shows in the living room, she says. Entering the *Canadian Idol* contest revealed her talent to her parents.

They were so determined she have a music career, they balked at her going to university to study sciences, she says, adding, "They said you can always be a doctor later."

As a compromise, she majored in both music and human biology. But medicine has faded from her dreams, she says, adding, "I like to sing. It makes me happy."

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MEET 2013 SARAH VAUGHAN VOCAL FINALIST BARBRA LICA

October 8, 2013. Posted by Tim Wilkins.

Add new comment | Filed under: Jazz Alive, Sarah Vaughan International Vocal Competition, TD James Moody Jazz Festival

WBGO congratulates Barbra Lica, one of five finalists in the 2013 Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition (SVVC): Click [here](#) or on the image below to hear her sing.


Along with four other finalists, Barbra was chosen from hundreds of singers from around the world to perform November 10 at 3 p.m. at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center's Victoria Theater for this year's "Sassy" Award, named in honor of legendary jazz singer and Newark native Sarah Vaughan, and prizes of up to \$5,000. She will sing for judges Al Jarreau, Janis Siegel, and Gretchen Parlato, WBGO music director Gary Walker and JAZZ ROOTS producer Larry Rosen.

Barbra was born and raised in Toronto, Ontario. She discovered jazz for the first time at the age of six while shuffling through her dad's CD collection and immediately began to sing along to the music of Doris Day, Ella Fitzgerald and Peggy Lee. In 2012, Barbra's debut album, "That's What I Do," was released with a live-to-air concert celebration on Toronto's Jazz.FM91. She performs regularly in the Greater Toronto area, presenting a wide repertoire of both jazz standards and original music, and was recently named one of Canada's top five female jazz singers by CBC radio.

WBGO will interview Barbra on-air before the competition.

Like what you hear? Click [here](#) to let us know, and bookmark WBGO.ORG/SASSY for all the latest festival updates.

Congratulations, Barbra, and see you in November!




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