

DOWNTOWN



## MUSIC MURAL TO TOWER OVER YONGE STREET

### Downtown Yonge BIA commissions 22-storey fresco celebrating Toronto's musical heritage

TORONTO September 28, 2016 – A 22-storey tribute to Toronto's vaunted music history will soon tower over Yonge Street, in the form of a mural commissioned by the Downtown Yonge BIA.

The soaring mural will cover the entire north face of the Toronto Community Housing building at 423 Yonge Street. It features the faces of 1950s and '60s music luminaries like Ronnie Hawkins and Gordon Lightfoot – who both attended today's launch – plus marquees from legendary venues such as Le Coq d'Or and Massey Hall, and the dual neon discs of the famed Sam the Record Man sign.

"This mural will be a dazzling sight to celebrate decades of amazing sound," says Downtown Yonge BIA Executive Director Mark Garner. "There is a long, vibrant history of music in Downtown Yonge, which continues today."

Artist Adrian Hayles has begun work on the 70-metre-tall mural and is expected to take about three months to complete the project.

"Adrian's design was chosen based on his spectacular vision of the music icons and totem idea," Garner explains. "He was also selected based on his partnership with Concrete Labs that makes murals interactive through a unique smart phone app."

Details of the interactive app will be announced when the mural is complete.

The new mural is part of the Downtown Yonge BIA's Music Strategy, an ambitious, multi-pronged plan to re-establish the area as a 'Music Mecca.'

"Music is obviously a big part of our past, but Downtown Yonge's musical presence is not just historical," Garner says. "There are currently 14 live performance venues in the area, and we are delighted to add to the sweet sounds of the neighbourhood through *Play the Parks* – music programming in parks and public places."

Last year, the Downtown Yonge BIA undertook the *Yonge Love* campaign, an unprecedented consultation on how people feel about Yonge Street and what they would like to see as future improvements. One of the findings of *Yonge Love* – which was recognized globally with a prestigious Pinnacle Award from the International Downtown Association – was a desire for more public art.

"Great cities all over the world have murals as part of their public realm. We think the music mural fits perfectly with the vision for a vibrant Yonge Street – combining visual and musical artistry," Garner says.

*Renderings of the mural are embedded below, and available at <http://downtownyonge.com/>.*

## About Downtown Yonge

The Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area (DYBIA) is a catalyst for creating vibrant urban experiences and events in the heart of downtown Toronto. Representing more than 2,000 businesses and their employees, as well as the broader community of residents, students and visitors, the DYBIA champions attractive public spaces, popular events, safety and cleanliness. It plays an active role both at street level and in boardrooms, advocating for a thriving and diverse community of retailers, restaurants and services.

- 30 -

### Contact:

Mark Garner

Executive Director, Downtown Yonge BIA

Phone: (416) 597-0255 x225

Email: [mgarner@downtownyonge.com](mailto:mgarner@downtownyonge.com)

### Renderings of Mural for 423 Yonge Street





Toronto music icons (top to bottom):

- Ronnie Hawkins
- Glenn Gould
- Diane Brooks
- Jackie Shane
- Muddy Waters
- Shirley Matthews
- B.B. King
- Gordon Lightfoot
- Oscar Peterson