

musicalcalgary

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CALGARY MUSICIANS ASSOCIATION - LOCAL 547 CFM/AFM

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IS GOOD FOR EVERYONE

BY HASSAN YUSSUFF, AS PUBLISHED IN THE GLOBE AND MAIL. DECEMBER 23, 2019 - PRINTED BY PERMISSION

The holidays aren't solely about gift-giving and spreading good cheer. Many workers find themselves having to walk a picket line around this time of year. Everywhere you look these days, teachers, public transit workers, railway and refinery workers seem to be involved in some kind of job action as contracts expire and end-of-year negotiations fail. It can be frustrating for those affected and may even seem unfair that workers disadvantage the public in pursuit of better working conditions and better wages. But make no mistake, collective bargaining is a fundamental right that helps ensure workers are getting their fair share. This is especially true when we consistently see certain governments, shareholders and corporate CEOs squeezing workers in order to improve their own bottom lines. "Without the right to pursue workplace goals collectively, workers may be left essentially powerless in dealing with their employer or influencing their employment conditions," reads a 2015 Supreme Court of Canada ruling upholding the right of RCMP officers to unionize.

Unsurprising that some employers, private interest groups and opinion shapers insist on back-to-work legislation whenever a group of workers flexes collective muscle. But the reality is that work stoppages are a rarity—with almost all collective agreements in Canada reached and renewed without a strike or lockout. In fact, strikes and lockouts happen far less frequently today than in the past. Days lost to work stoppages in federal private-sector, where CN Rail workers recently struck for several days, are well below levels reached earlier this decade. For instance, in 2019, monthly work stoppages recently dipped to a low of 13 for the entire country. This is well below 2017 and 2018 averages.

Collective bargaining is functioning exactly as intended. Workers leverage their collective strength in order to influence the terms and conditions of their employment. Their efforts to stand up for themselves will often have a ripple effect, improving conditions for non-unionized workers in related industries as well as for the people they serve. When teachers oppose larger class sizes and rail engineers insist on safety improvements, the public directly benefits, too.

The significantly low unemployment rate is also contributing to renewed confidence among workers. More discouraged workers and those overcoming barriers to employment have been able to find work. The number of underemployed workers, like part-timers who prefer but can't find full-time hours, have ebbed.

This is long overdue. For a decade, young people have been graduating into a high unemployment job market with limited prospects. Women and newcomers to Canada have struggled with a shortage of decent jobs. While joblessness remains far too high in oil-producing provinces and the Atlantic region (in Alberta, it hovers at a shocking 20% for males under the age of 25), there are gains elsewhere. In Ontario, Quebec and BC, the improving job market has allowed wages to tick up – finally. Since mid-year, wage growth has begun to pick up, averaging over 4%.

During the last ten years of sluggish growth, high unemployment and weak wage gains, typical workers in Canada have seen very little improvement in their wages, adjusted for inflation. Flat earnings are partly responsible for the fact that debt as a share of household disposable income has doubled in the past 25 years. Furthermore, fewer workers even belong to a union at all which often translates in lower earnings and fewer benefits and little recourse to improve matters. Compounded with the rise of the gig economy and with more companies outsourcing work, it's that much harder for workers to unionize as **we are seeing at corporations like IBM and Amazon**. In the meantime, Canada's top corporate CEOs were paid nearly 200 times what the average worker made in 2017. In 2018, quarterly operating profits reached a post-recession high. Workers have spent the 'recovery' simply fighting to hold onto what they have.

It's not just unions that welcome a stronger labour market and decent wage gains. The Bank of Canada also thinks it's a good idea. Because inflation remains well under control, it has hesitated to raise interest rates. That's a good strategy because it helps reduce inequality and strengthens the ability of households to cope with debt, food and shelter costs.

We must all recognize that even when work stoppages do happen, they are simply evidence that the collective bargaining process is working. Despite occasional work-to-rule and walk-outs, this is actually a very good thing because it ensures workers still have a say – as they should.

Hassan Yussuff is the president of the Canadian Labour Congress. Follow him on Twitter @Hassan_Yussuff

THE NEXT
GENERAL MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR
MARCH 30TH @ 10:00 AM
AT THE ASSOCIATION OFFICE

DEADLINE for BYLAW CHANGE SUBMISSIONS is MARCH 20TH

calgary musicians



I love the Calgary music community. I have been part of this vibrant and changing scene for over 28 years. It has sustained me, taken care of me and allowed me to do what I love. Teaching, playing live, touring, recording in studios, and running two companies (KLM Backline & KLM Music School) that have supported our community and industry partners for 22 years. I've learned, been mentored, grown, and – struggled. What I have learned is - you can't

have the heart and creativity for this work, if you don't have the business behind it. It is challenging to find balance between art and commerce, but absolutely necessary to respect the relationship of both.

If you know me, you know – I'm a pretty straight shooter. I say how I feel and do my best to 'do what I say I will do'. I've been thinking a lot about my new role as the President of Calgary Musicians Association. I don't have all of the answers, but have been asking myself two main questions – "What do we need as musicians right now?" and "Where do we want to go as a community?"

To answer the first question, I spoke with some of our current members, leadership, and reflected on my own career (especially during times of transition and growth). I would like to outline 4 things that I believe will help members in our current industry, right now. I may go into more detail on each of these in future articles, but for now – here is an overview of each.

1 - Increased Wellness

It all starts here. Mind and body. I'm not a doctor, but I have experienced repetitive strain injuries that threatened my livelihood and - it was scary. We also know that 60% of musicians experience depression and anxiety. The show must go on – even when you're tired, or in pain. Even when the airport and gas station meals are not providing quality nutrition, and when you're stressed or energetically depleted. The expectation is that you will give 100% - all the time. You are a performer. So, if you are unwell - what can you do? Here are a few ideas:

Work it out! - Calgary Musicians Association Membership has perks. For instance - Goodlife Fitness offers memberships at a SIGNIFICANT discount. On this note, discounts are also offered on a variety of products and services such as credit cards, mortgages, home and auto insurance, car rentals, Park & Fly - and more. (Even Disney World – if this brings you joy...?) These savings are made available through our partnership with Canadian Federation of Musicians and AFM. Visit their website and follow links to register with Union Savings.

Call in the pros, for free. Unison Benevolent Fund provides services such as counseling, legal, and financial support to professional musicians in times of hardship and crisis. You just call them. They can walk you through the process and get you help! If you're a musician, they are there for you.

Get by with a little help from a friend – The Stan Brown Benevolent Fund. We administer grants and also interest-free loans of up to \$1000, to help musicians stay well. For more information on this, you can contact our office.

2 - Knowing Your Value

I will keep this short but will say – time is money and you are worth more of it. I believe that there is a power in saying 'no'. Sometimes, your value increases by what you say NO to, not what you say yes to. Musicians have created our own financial heartaches by playing gigs that are not worth the time in exchange for the energy. I have pretty strong feelings about standing up for fair rates, not just for ourselves – but for the impact this has on the whole community. Playing for free or for very little – helps no one. With the exception of a few chosen charities, I just don't do it. It is a personal choice, but overall, I feel it diminishes the quality of product in our scene. There will likely always be people who are willing to play for free, but you don't have to be one of them. Protect your time. Protect your brand. Being a professional has value.

3 - Staying Connected

I recently checked out Alvin's Jazz Club in the south. It felt SO GOOD to get out and hear live music, in a gorgeous venue and celebrate talent in our local scene! I felt like I was in New York and most of all, it was great to cross paths with friends. Maintaining relationships within the music community is key to getting work, to hearing about activity and events going on - and being inspired. It's important to be connected to the community, and to different associations (including Calgary Blues, Calgary Folk, Jazz YYC, Alberta Music Industry, etc.) because we're all in it, and we share the same passion and PURPOSE. After all, what is the connection to MUSIC anyway? Why are we doing this? What and who is it for? I believe that knowing the reasons for being a professional musician helps us stay connected, especially during times of change and adversity.

4 - Playing the Long Game

As musicians, and creators we tend to live in the 'here and now'. I'm passionate and all about 'the feels' – and like everyone, I often forget that at any given moment, circumstances can change. Whether it's a sudden physical ailment, a change in a gig (or cancellation), changes in family or relationship circumstances, or just the inevitable aging process. Many of us do not PLAN for it.

I don't mean to generalize, but through many discussions over the years especially in the freelance music community, I feel we are not set up for the future financially. I admire the dedication of the musicians who invest and make regular pension contributions. I have been excited in my new role to share with the music community at large – that it is a very healthy pension. We should ALL be taking advantage of it and the union is able to create individual, customized pension contracts, to suit a variety of circumstances. Everything from gigs, sessions, teaching, producing and more. More on this to come.

So. That's it for 'right now'. And with respect to reflection on the question of "Where do we want to go?" - I mostly want to know your thoughts. I will say, from my perspective, I want the Union to be relevant. This is not meant to undermine, or disrespect current systems or in anyway discount the hard work and dedication of my local. It is just to say –what's next? I want a community that is educated about the benefits of the Union. I want a community that is more connected, supportive and collaborative. I want our technology to reflect today's current reality. We live in a city that is resilient, strong and evolving. We should all be proud of a music community that reflects the same.

I truly appreciate the support in my first few weeks as President, and I look forward to hearing from you. What are the elements that have helped you be successful? What benefits or support would you like to receive from this Union? How can we work together to increase membership and continue to build our community? Let's figure this thing out together.

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ASSOCIATION HOURS
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Musicians' Pension Fund of Canada
Caisse de retraite des musiciens du Canada

things you need to know about pension...

- *Contributions that the Musicians' Pension Fund of Canada receives on your behalf can make all the difference in the pension benefit you will receive.*
- *Even if you don't work under a collective agreement where pension is mandatory, contributions can be made on your freelance/casual and recording engagements.*
- *Our Local Tariff of Fees does not provide for mandatory pension on certain engagements, but it is possible for members to negotiate pension on those contracts. Please contact the office for further information.*
- *Pension contributions are based on a percentage (%) of scale. The pension rate is set out in the contract and cannot exceed 18%.*
- *The Pension Fund is an employer contributing pension plan. Contributions are made by the employer or 'on behalf of' the employer only. Members can not make contributions on their own behalf.*

Are You Missing Out?

- ✘ The AFM has several media agreements covering everything in electronic media (radio, TV, film & documentary, commercials, sound recordings).
- ✘ Unfortunately, members continually perform in videos, film, commercials, on TV & radio and on records that are not covered by an AFM agreement.
- ✘ Even more unfortunate, there is no paperwork in the event of a dispute, reuse or new use of the recorded works; there is also no limitation on how the recording can be used. That means no AFM protection.
- ✘ Consequently, members are missing out on one of our best and most important benefits; pension.
<http://www.mpfcanada.ca/>
- ✘ If you record under the AFM Sound Recording Labor Agreement (SRLA), you are also eligible for distributions from the Special Payments Fund.
<http://www.sound-recording.org>
- ✘ Dark recording dates make it harder for the Union to negotiate scales and benefits for the members because there is no perceived support to make fees and working conditions better for the working musician.
- ✘ This is a detriment to growing a healthy and successful music industry and reinforces the adage that performing and recording music has no value.
- ✘ When asked to perform on any electronic media, make your first call to the Association to fully understand what benefits are available to you as a member.
- ✘ Don't miss out, make your media performances work for you.



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2020 RICHARD COWIE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

JazzYYC and the Calgary Musicians Association are offering a \$1,000.00 scholarship to an individual who is a professional performing jazz musician. This scholarship is to be used to further the applicant's studies in jazz (i.e. tuition fees, private lesson fees, workshop fees etc.).

The applicant's proposal will:

- present in a clear and concise manner, the applicant's artistic vision.
- show leadership in the Calgary jazz community.
- show some originality of concept.
- outline how the funds will be used, including a complete budget that includes the Calgary Musicians Association/JazzYYC scholarship funds as part of the overall funds needed for the project and a timeline for when the funds will be used. A written report that includes the actual expenditures will be required at the completion of the project.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS; May 15th, 2020

All submissions (*) must include the following:

- contact information.
- a short personal biography, including your artistic vision.
- a description of the planned use of the funds, including a timeline for the usage.
- a complete budget for the project, which includes the use of the scholarship funds.
- a copy (CD/Album), link or .mp3 of your most recent representative work (please label CD submissions on the CD).

*Submissions that don't meet the requirements will not be considered.

Mail, Email or drop submissions to:

Calgary Musicians Association

#5 - 606 Meredith Rd NE, Calgary, AB T2E 5A8

info@calgarymusicians.org

The successful applicant will be announced on or before June 5th, 2020.

A performance by the winner

will be sponsored and scheduled with JazzYYC.



Leader	Location	Date	#Mscn
Ilana Dahl	Monterey Park School	Mar 4	5
Ilana Dahl	Colonel Fred Scott School	Mar 9	5
Chris Morrison	CUPS	Jan 21	5

Projects Approved (Jan - Mar)

Requests for Project Funding (RFPF) are still being accepted for the current allocation year, which ends April 30th, 2020. If you have a project that you think qualifies, please contact the Sec-Treasurer with the details and to submit requests. Requests are considered on a first come, first served basis and require proper timelines for approval. MPF projects must be free and open to the public and will be funded at 50% of scale wages for approved projects.

▼ **Ben Gallant** (gtr/vocals) – aka Ben Chase. With the soul of a Travis Tritt classic and the spirit of a Thomas Rhett hit, Calgary's award winner Ben Chase is the future of country music. Ben is currently writing and recording his debut EP with JUNO award-winning producer, Matty McKay. In January 2019, Ben released his first single "All Over It" to Canadian country radio. The song reached number one on the Canadian iTunes country chart within 24 hours. The song went on to be featured nationally on the Casey Clarke Country Countdown across Canada as "The Next Big Thing". He now has 3 singles released to all streaming platforms with a combined amount of over 500,000 streams and two songs that have reached #1 on Canadian iTunes Charts. Ben Chase has a dynamic and engaging live show and loves nothing more than being on stage. <https://www.benchasemusic.com/>

▼ **Gabrielle Comeau** (synth/vocals) – aka Eva X, a robot girl singing about human things, OR synthpop to feed your ears and brain with haunting vocals, reflective thoughts and danceable beats. <https://eva-x.bandcamp.com/>

▼ **Nat Lazzarotto** (tromb/comp/arr) – born and raised in Western Canada, Nat is a growing name as a composer, arranger, and trombonist. Recently relocated back to Calgary, he has studied with some of Toronto's most notable trombonists such as Al Kay and William Carn and performed onstage with the likes of Chris-tian McBride, Emilie-Claire Barlow, John Scofield, and Larry Goldings. As a composer and arranger, he has arranged the works of Pat Metheny and several others while developing his own characteristic sound. Nat has received several awards in recognition of his work and dedication to music such as the Dave Stillwell Arranging Award (2017) and the Gordon and Ann Wragg Scholarship (2018). His latest project is the Nat Lazzarotto Jazz Orchestra, developing a fresh and energetic new sound through performing original works by up and coming Canadian composers, as well as new arrangements of revered songs from the jazz idiom.

<https://natlazzmusic.bandcamp.com/>



MONTH OF THE ARTIST

On December 4, 2019, Honourable Leela Sharon Aheer, Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women announced that the government updated the Month of the Artist proclamation through Order in Council so that the month will now take place in September annually. The next **Month of the Artist** will be in **September 2020**.

Month of the Artist in Alberta was announced in 2018 and was created to celebrate and increase awareness about the value Alberta's artists bring to our province. The first Month of the Artist was celebrated in January 2019. Our government is moving the month to September in response to stakeholder feedback received about logistical difficulties in planning promotions and events in January, and to align the Month of the Artist with Alberta Culture Days.

Alberta's Artist in Residence program, announced in conjunction with the province's first Month of the Artist celebrations in January 2019, will also be moving to September. More details about the program will be announced soon.

Alberta Culture Days is an annual three-day celebration held on the final weekend in September, and provides opportunities for Albertans to discover, experience, and celebrate arts and culture through local events and activities across the province. Aligning Month of the Artist with Alberta Culture Days is intended to provide more opportunities for planning, collaboration, and promotion between government and the arts sector.

The government is developing an Arts Professions Act to further recognize artists, their economic and contractual rights, and their significant contributions to our province. More information about the development of the Arts Professions Act will come later in 2020.



UNION SAVINGS

Exclusive discounts for union members & their families

The **CFM Discount Program** provides our members and their families with more savings and benefits. In partnership with Union Savings, a not-for profit program, we join 70 fellow unions across Canada in this program which greatly benefits our collective members.

Discounts are offered in a vast range of products/services from credit cards, mortgages, home and auto insurance, clothing, car rentals, concerts and more. Some vendors include Canada's Wonderland, LG, Adidas, BMO, RBC, Park'N Fly, the ROM, 1800Flowers and Swarovski.

Of interest to our touring musicians and their families, is our updated, world-wide Travel Medical Insurance Program, which is more comprehensive and cheaper than ever! \$138.99 annually gets you coverage for a year world-wide (previously it was USA only) and is applicable to as many single trips as you like if each trip is 60 days or less. So, for example, you can obtain coverage for 3 (or more) trips under 60 days in length.

How to Register

- 1) Register online at <https://unionsavings.ca/en/register/>
- 2) Select Canadian Federation of Musicians, then select Calgary Musicians Association, Local 547 in the dropdown menu
- 3) After logging in, select the products/services of interest

For questions on your account, how the discounts work or on any of the products/services please contact Union Savings at 1-800-418-2990.

2020 Canadian Folk Music Award Nominees

New/Emerging Artist of the Year

T. Buckley - "Miles We Put Behind"

Alberta Country Music Award Winners

Fans Choice Award

Ben Chase

JUNO Nominees

Jazz Album of the Year: Group

Al Muirhead Canadian Quintet - "Undertones"

Country Album of the Year

Dean Brody - "Black Sheep"

Classical Album of the Year: Large Ensemble

Jan Lisiecki with Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, "Beethoven: Complete Piano Concertos"

Metal/Hard Music Album of the Year

Kobra and the Lotus - "Evolution"

Canadian Music Hall of Fame Inductee

Jann Arden

WHERE THE
MUSIC BEGINS



Long & McQuade

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS 

l o n g - m c q u a d e . c o m

225 58 Avenue SE • 403.244.5555

3404 5 Avenue NE • 403.245.3725

10 Royal Vista Drive NW • 587.794.3195

membership information

NEW MEMBERS

CANN, Mike	ebass
CLIFFORD, Dallas	drums
COMEAU, Gabrielle 'Eva X'	synthesizer/voice
GREGORY, Drew	gtr/vocalist
LAZZAROTTO, Nat	trombone
O'BRIEN, Wesley	viola
SHIRE, Jesse	ebass
WONG, Cameron	oboe

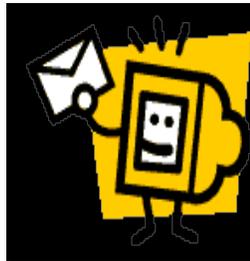


2019-20 DUES RENEWAL

MEMBERS WHO HAVE NOT RENEWED THEIR ANNUAL DUES AND WDBUYOUT WILL BE REMOVED FROM MEMBERSHIP ON FEB.29TH. It is contrary to the AFM/CMA Bylaws to perform with expelled, suspended or non-members without clearance from the Secretary-Treasurer. Please consult your Bylaws for further details.

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER - SAVE OUR TREES -

If you would prefer to have the newsletter delivered electronically by email – please call or email the office.



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