

Jazz festival lineup from east, west

A Canadian media icon and a rock music heavyweight helped promote the fourth annual Markham Jazz Festival this week.

CITV news anchor Lloyd Robertson, a director of the festival, and singer/guitarist Jeff Healey, attended a press conference Tuesday at the Markham Civic Centre.

Healey played trumpet at the kick-off with Alex Pangman and her Alleycats, one of the featured acts at the festival, Aug. 17 to 19.

The festival will open the evening of Friday, Aug. 17, with the Gala Concert at the Markham Theatre, the only ticketed event of the festival. The festival theme of 'East meets West' is also the theme of the gala double bill, featuring Pangman and her Alleycats from Toronto and Juno winner Michael Kaeshammer from Vancouver. Both of these two young artists blur the lines between jazz, ragtime, gospel, blues and pop.

Vocalist Pangman puts a cool, swinging and luscious spin on early jazz forms, while pianist and vocalist Kaeshammer thrills with his dynamic performance on neo-boogie, woogie and original compositions. Tickets for the gala evening are on sale at the Markham Theatre box office (905-305-7469).

The festival will continue Saturday, Aug. 18, with a festival tradition—a rousing parade that will be led by traditionally inspired "Trillium Jazz Band". The parade will also involve a number of additional musicians, groups and personalities. The parade will begin at 11:30 a.m. and will originate at the Unionville GO station and proceed up Main Street to the main stage, outdoor location at Toogood Pond Park.

The scheduled headliners on Saturday will represent many forms of jazz, from bop to big band and beyond. Saturday's lineup includes Main Street performances by The Trillium Jazz Band, The Don Thompson Project, featuring Terry Clarke, The Tracey Wilkins Big Band with a world jazz tribute to reggae legend Bob Marley, The PJ Perry Quartet, blues vocalist Michael Pickett, featuring Doug Riley and Michael Occhipinti and NOJO, featuring special guest Sam Rivers.

The Saturday Night Jazz event will feature performances by a variety of local and national artists at 10 Markham area pubs and restaurants.

On Sunday, Aug. 19, the main stage will be located at the gated lakeside community of Swan Lake Village, and will feature The Club Django Sextet of Toronto, and vocalist Tommy Ambrose

in a Rick Wilkins arranged big band tribute to Frank Sinatra, 'Songs Sinatra Taught Me'.

Also on the Sunday will be the third annual Bell Canada Jazz Stars of the Future competition. The competition will be adjudicated by celebrity judges, and involve student contestants from numerous Toronto and Markham area universities, colleges and music conservatories. The artists will receive awards and grants from the festival sponsors.

Also, in its third year, is The Markham Jazz Festival 2001's Jazz in the Schools program. Headed up by CKLN on-air personality Colin Smith, the program will involve performances and work-

shops by professional jazz artists at a number of York Region schools.

Artistic director Hal Hill and the board of the Markham Jazz Festival also announced a winter series of jazz concerts and lectures to be presented at the Frederick Horsman Varley Art Gallery in Unionville. Gallery director/curator, Sharon Guam-Kuchar, education coordinator, Katerina Atanassova, Linda Mara, director of corporate communications and culture (Town of Markham) and Hill will coordinate the series, which will run from October 2001 through May 2002. On Nov. 30, the festival will present a Christmas concert at the Markham Theatre.

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