

**Tom Jackson's Artist-Led Series *Almighty Voices* Set to Celebrate Canada Day with Very Special Guests, All in Aid of Music Community Affected by COVID-19**

Final Episode will Feature Governor General Julie Payette, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Lieutenant Governor of AB Lois Mitchell, a Tribute to Canada's First Responders & Song Written by Jackson for the Occasion — "Canada, Canada"



**Wednesday, July 1st @ 10:00 am EST**

*Almighty Voices* is in Benefit of the Unison Benevolent Fund & Has Run for 12 Weeks

[AlmightyVoices.ca](https://almightyvoices.ca)

<https://unisonfund.ca/donations/almightyvoices>

Donate \$10 to Unison Benevolent Fund by texting VOICES to 45678

Following three months of weekly episodes of Almighty Voices, Canadian actor, singer, activist and philanthropic tour de force Tom Jackson is set to be joined by a stellar, stand-out, all-star cast for its grand finale this Wednesday, July 1st!

This includes — but is nowhere limited to — The Prime Minister of Canada - Justin Trudeau, The Governor General of Canada - Her Excellency Julie Payette, The Lieutenant Governor of Alberta - The Honourable Lois Mitchell, Susan Aglukark, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Shannon Gaye & Kristian Alexandrov, The Small Glories, The Travelling Mabels, Beverley Mahood, My My Sugar, Christina Martin, Cynthia Dale, The Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Alex & Tamen Jadad, and more.

Along with a tribute to the nation's First Responders, the Canada Day special will feature the unveiling of a song penned by Jackson just for the occasion, "Canada, Canada" — plus a celebratory closeout with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra.

**The episode will be streamed on Wednesday, July 1st at 10:00 am EST on all major platforms via [AlmightyVoices.ca](https://www.almightyvoices.ca)**

But before the festivities kick off, let's journey back to the initiative's start this past April...

When countless members of the Canadian music community found themselves directly impacted by COVID-19, actor, singer, activist and philanthropic tour de force Tom Jackson took to doing one of many things he does best: helping.

He rallied fellow artists to aid peers with the launch of Almighty Voices — a weekly digital variety series that has inspired, entertained, and informed audiences nationwide for what will be 12 episodes in total, in support of the Unison Benevolent Fund, a non-profit registered charity providing counselling and emergency relief services to the Canadian music community.

Hosted by Jackson, episodes have featured Governor General's Performing Arts Award recipient, singer/songwriter and philanthropist Susan Aglukark, actress and singer Cynthia Dale, actress and singer/songwriter Beverley Mahood, multi JUNO Award-nominee Sarah Slean, Liona Boyd, the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, opera singer Measha Brueggergosman, multi JUNO Award-nominee and April Wine blues rocker/producer Myles Goodwyn, JUNO Award-winner Blackie and the Rodeo Kings, and many, many, (many) more.

"'Almighty Voice' carries in its name the collective will to fight for one's family — blood, or imagined," Jackson shares of the initiative's title, which is also a family name. "Its

Cree translation is Gitchi Manitou Wayo, and was the name of my Great-Great-Great Uncle, a youthful hero whose passion to save his family from starvation turned into tragedy.”

To that, Almighty Voices has shown that “we’re all in this together,” says Jackson of the artist-led project.

“In the wake of COVID-19’s impact on the music industry, we were incredibly grateful to partner with Tom Jackson to announce the launch of Almighty Voices,” says Unison’s Executive Director, Amanda Power. “Now more than ever, members of our music community are depending on the Unison COVID-19 Relief Program, and this initiative allowed us to continue providing direct relief for music-makers and music professionals in this time of great uncertainty and need.”

Additionally, the Unison Benevolent Fund is part of the Spotify COVID-19 Music Relief Project; Spotify has matched donations made via <https://unisonfund.ca/donations/almightyvoices> dollar for dollar up to a collective total of \$10 million across their select partners.

“In addition to music and stories, we have shared the wisdom of our Elders, expressed kindness, and explored essential ways to create health, and put health at the forefront, versus managing disease,” Jackson reflects, considering how Almighty Voices featured such a broad spectrum of Canadian music — and the country’s spirit — at its finest. “While we learned how to determine what is urgent and important in this ever-changing time, the music community engaged people to leap, learn, laugh, and love. In return, the support received has helped ensure our music community survives. It is my hope the program connected us all.”

Both responding quickly to an unexpected crisis and inviting peers to contribute towards a notable cause are natural instincts and extensions of Jackson’s long-time philanthropic and fundraising efforts; to date, he has helped usher more than \$230 million in funds and in-kind services to various charities and relief organizations.

Almighty Voices launched with support from Universal Music, the Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards, The Walrus, CPO, Joe Media Group, Eric Alper Public Relations, Echohill Web Sites, and Mobile Giving Foundation, in an effort to raise funds for the Unison Benevolent Fund.

## **// ABOUT UNISON**

Unison Benevolent Fund is a non-profit, registered charity that provides counselling and emergency relief services to the Canadian music community. We are here to help professional music-makers in times of hardship, illness or economic difficulties.

For many, a career in music is a dream come true; however, the reality is that many members of the Canadian music community do not have access to the services that can make all the difference in a time of need: sick leave, medical benefits, pension plans, and unemployment insurance. Music makers can easily find themselves unprepared to deal with the financial and emotional burdens of an unforeseen emergency or illness. The Unison Benevolent Fund provides a lifeline in these times of crisis, and is there to ensure in the health of our friends, colleagues and collaborators.

The Unison Benevolent Fund is an assistance program – created and administered for the music community, by the music community – designed to provide discreet relief to music industry professionals in times of crisis. There are two distinct types of support available through the fund.

**Financial Assistance:** The Unison Benevolent Fund will provide emergency financial support to Canadian music-makers recovering from an illness, injury or other circumstances that result in an inability to work, severe economic or personal hardship.

**Counselling and Health Solutions supported by RBC Foundation:** Through voluntary and confidential support services, eligible Canadian music makers are able to access qualified professionals who can provide counselling and other resources to support individuals and their immediate family members dealing with mental health, legal guidance, family and relationships counselling, or work-related concerns.

The Unison Benevolent Fund is funded by support from individuals and industry organizations. All services and information is provided in English and French.

Unison will never charge dues or fees for membership or for access to any assistance program.

## **// ABOUT TOM JACKSON**

“I am of the opinion that art is the single most powerful vehicle for change in the history of the human race.”

There are entertainment legends, and then there is Tom Jackson, a triple-threat actor, musician, and activist whose achievements in each discipline are downright head-spinning. His career is unparalleled, not to mention wildly acclaimed, abundantly decorated, and almost ridiculously interesting. Heck, he could be a pub night trivia category all by himself.

It's impossible to regard Tom's music separately from the other aspects of his remarkable career which include (but are not limited to) countless marquee TV roles on hit shows like *North of 60*, *Shining Time Station*, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, and

Law & Order. Guest roles in season four of Outlander and season three of Cardinal aired in early 2019, and season three of Red Earth Uncovered is due in 2020. There are also movies, most notably the dark comedy thriller Cold Pursuit, opposite Liam Neeson; other film compatriots include Eric Bana, Olivia Wilde, Kris Kristofferson, and Sissy Spacek (in 2012's Deadfall), Bruce Greenwood (2005's Mee-Shee: The Water Giant), and Bryan Brown (1999's Grizzly Falls).

2018 marked the release of The Essential Tom Jackson, a dazzling two-disc, 21-track retrospective spotlighting his inimitable talent as a folk-pop singer/songwriter of the highest order and an artist intrinsically linked to the world around him, both the real and the ethereal.

Tom is understandably proud of all that. Yet it is his extensive charitable work — in particular, helming the long-running Huron Carole Christmas concert tours — that is arguably his crowning achievement. With \$230 million in combined cash/in-kind value for food banks and disaster relief raised to date, it's no wonder Tom, currently an Ambassador for the Red Cross, has been inducted as an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2000, and received the 2007 Juno Humanitarian Award, and the Governor General's Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Artistic Achievement in 2014.

For Tom, the act of giving comes naturally and spreads easily with his indefatigable energy to be on the look-out for those in need. He volunteers regularly with Calgary's DOAP Team (Downtown Outreach Addiction Partnership) that provides outreach to street impacted men and women caught in a cycle of addiction. Sometimes known as a Minstrel with a Mission, Tom can be seen at various locations in Canada volunteering as an ambassador for the Canadian Red Cross.

Multiple additional honours, including the 2007 Gemini Humanitarian Award, have been bestowed on him over the years contributing to his status as one of Canada's most influential, distinguished, and revered sons.

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