

CULTURE

What notable Torontonians are watching, reading and listening to this month—plus a few choice in-person events (remember those?)



A binge-worthy food documentary

HIGH ON THE HOG: HOW AFRICAN AMERICAN CUISINE TRANSFORMED AMERICA

Recommended by Karen Carter, co-founder and director of BAND Gallery



“I am a self-proclaimed foodie, so I quickly binged the show, but I didn’t expect to return to it so often, like an art lover

revisiting their favourite museum for inspiration. I’ve taken notes on places to visit when I can travel again—like Saveurs Du Benin in West Africa—and learned surprising things about American history, like how the first wave of enslaved people in South Carolina worked on rice, not cotton.”

A tragic novel inspired by real-life events

WOMEN TALKING by Miriam Toews

Recommended by Tyler Levine, film producer



“I recently produced a film adaptation of *All My Puny Sorrows* by Miriam Toews, premiering at TIFF this month. I obviously

didn’t get my fill of her unrelenting tragedy and wit, though, because now I’m engrossed in her 2018 novel, *Women Talking*—about a series of brutal assaults set in a Bolivian Mennonite community—which is also being adapted for the screen, by the wonderful Sarah Polley.”



A surprisingly soothing podcast

SLOW RADIO

Recommended by Ulrike Al-Khamis, director and CEO, Aga Khan Museum



“The BBC’s *Slow Radio* carefully curates soundscapes that take me to unexpected places of relaxation. It’s totally

mesmerizing to listen to the minutiae of the recordings. My favourites include footsteps over gravel, the melodious gurgle of a mountain spring and the gradual swell of birdsong at sunrise.”



A trashy dating show

LOVE ISLAND

Recommended by Densil McFarlane, musician and member of the OBGMs



“My guilty television pleasure is watching dysfunctional-relationship-based reality-TV shows with my fiancée. *Love*

Island, *Ready to Love*, *Love and Marriage: Huntsville*, the trashier the better. We argue about who is right or wrong in their wacky situations, but in the end, the shows remind us that we’ve got a good thing going on at home.”

LEVINE BY MELISSA WILLIAMSON, MCFARLANE BY AMANDA PHOTOS



A sitcom about degenerate pub owners

IT'S ALWAYS SUNNY IN PHILADELPHIA

Recommended by Gianni Ferraro, musician and member of Ferraro



“This is pretty much the only show I watch. It’s available on Disney Plus, there are tons of episodes, and it was just renewed

for its 15th season. The story follows a group of degenerates who own a dive bar in Philadelphia, where they launch terrible schemes and are, simply put, awful humans. Their only customers are a few sad drinkers, but an endless supply of money from their wayward financial backer—played by Danny DeVito—keeps their hijinks going.”

A book about a French impressionist

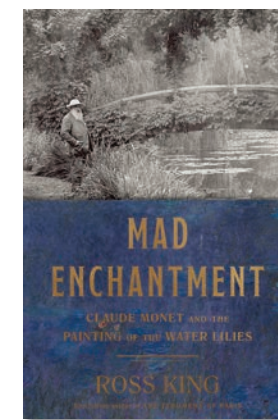
MAD ENCHANTMENT by Ross King

Recommended by Christopher Ward, musician



“I took my last trip before Covid in the summer of 2019 to visit L’Orangerie—home to Monet’s *Water*

Lilies—in Paris with my daughter, Rachel. We had visited Giverny some years before that. This book chronicles the creation of Monet’s late-life masterworks—images of serenity that were made in a time of global upheaval and personal struggle for the artist.”



An educational doc about boxing

THE KINGS

Recommended by Kayla Grey, anchor, TSN



“I love documentaries that paint a vivid picture of bygone eras, and Showtime’s *The Kings* couldn’t have dropped at a

better time. The four-part series is an amazing, educational show, set in the late ’70s and early ’80s, that looks at the post-Muhammad Ali era in boxing. It revisits the impact of Roberto Durán, Marvelous Marvin Hagler, Sugar Ray Leonard and Thomas ‘The Hitman’ Hearns, who ushered in a new era of boxing, in and out of the ring.”



A star-studded renaissance

TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

FILM | Sept. 9 to 18 | various locations

Celebs and their adoring fans are set to descend on the city again, with TIFF rolling out the red carpet along King Street. The festival will screen more than 100 films at all the usual haunts—and a few drive-ins. Highlights include the world-exclusive IMAX screening of *Dune*, starring Timothée Chalamet and Zendaya, and *Jagged*, an HBO documentary on Alanis Morissette. For festival enthusiasts who are still feeling squeamish about large crowds, films, talks and actor Q&As will be available for online viewing.

IRL
Event
Alert



An animated sci-fi about inequality

FANTASTIC PLANET

Recommended by Rajni Perera, artist



"I recently watched this 1973 animated film, about humans inhabiting a planet of giant aliens, with my nine-year-old daughter. While we watched, she started asking questions: 'Why do the aliens treat us like animals? It's not fair.' It was really nice to hear her point out the inequalities and the work we all need to do to make our world better."

A Brazilian record for road-tripping

FLORES TAMBORES E AMORES
by Aline Morales

Recommended by Maya Annik Bedward, filmmaker



"Morales's music hits straight to the core. She is an incredible percussionist with one of the most powerful voices I have ever heard live. Her debut album, a melancholic yet playful mix of Brazilian roots rhythms and bossa nova references, is perfect listening for long road trips."



An amateur baker's baking show

THE GREAT BRITISH BAKE OFF

Recommended by Katharine Hayhoe, writer and scientist



"During lockdown, I watched this entire show, promptly followed by the American and Canadian versions. I didn't just watch—I learned. Macarons? I thought only Julia Child could make those. Now I know the secret: bang that cookie sheet before you slide it into the oven. And the perennial mystery of how much to knead bread? Just stretch that dough until you can see through it. So satisfying."



A provocative park performance

IS MY MICROPHONE ON?

THEATRE | Sept. 2 to 19 | High Park Amphitheatre

Canadian Stage's summer-long socially distanced live performances at High Park come to a provocative climax this month with a new work by playwright Jordan Tannahill. *Is My Microphone On?* takes its cue from Greta Thunberg and other young eco-activists, and is based on Tannahill's conversations with teenagers in Canada and Europe. The cast is a group of young Torontonians aged 12 to 18 who confront the adult audience in a protest song about the climate catastrophe their generation will inherit.

IRL Event Alert

PERERA BY DIMITRI LEVANOFF, BEDWARD BY AISHA JAMAL, HAYHOE BY ASHLEY RODGERS

A historic look at women and art

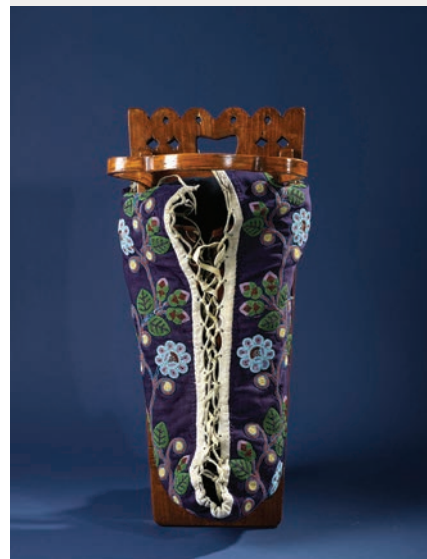
UNINVITED

ART | Sept. 10 to Jan. 16
McMichael Canadian Art Collection

IRL Event Alert

More than a century after the founding of the Group of Seven, this comprehensive exhibition takes a look at the women left out of that sacrosanct canon of Canadian art. It features more than 200 pieces by painters, architects, photographers, sculptors and movie makers, including members of the Beaver Hall Group (Lilias Torrance Newton and Anne Savage) and Emily Carr, whose painting was largely inspired by Indigenous peoples in the Pacific Northwest. Indigenous artists highlighted by the exhibition include Elizabeth Katt Petrant from Bear Island, Temagami, and Mrs. Walking Sun from Saskatchewan's Carry the Kettle Reserve.

CRADLEBOARD BY ELIZABETH KATT PETRANT COURTESY OF THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM, SIDDIQI BY CHRIS FRAMPTON, TOBI BY KJOHN L'ASOUL



A gritty L.A.-based crime drama

SNOWFALL

Recommended by Pressa, musician



"This FX crime drama about the crack epidemic in the '80s is my go-to show. The fast-paced storylines are riveting, the characters are well-written and the dialogue comes from an understanding of the streets—it never feels corny."



A Tina Fey comedy about a '90s girl group

GIRLS5EVA

Recommended by Liem Vu, co-host, *Global News Morning*



"I grew up in the '90s obsessing over pop groups and collecting Spice Girls bubble gum stickers, so I was delighted by Tina Fey's newest comedy. It combines the snappy surrealism of *30 Rock* with the heart of *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt* in a show about the unlikely reunion of a disbanded one-hit-wonder girl group."

A therapeutic role-playing game

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

Recommended by Kris Siddiqi, actor



"I'm that guy who says, 'Everyone should be playing D&D!' It's been one of the few saving graces throughout this pandemic—I started playing with a small group of close friends before, and we found a great way to continue our journey on Zoom. I could go on about the fun of killing goblins or finding magic swords, but what I truly love is stitching a story together with my friends."



A thought-provoking YouTube speaker

KHADIJA MBOWE

Recommended by Tobi, musician



"I recently stumbled upon this Canadian YouTuber and was instantly hooked. Mbowe can tackle topics like colourism and cancel culture and still make it feel light-hearted. Their video about the male gaze in hip hop caught my attention—it forced me to check myself and my role in the industry."

