



Downtown Yonge BIA's

## Friar's Music Museum

2019 Heritage Toronto Awards - Public History

# Project Summary

- The Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area (DYBIA) in partnership with Shoppers Drug Mart produced the exhibit and partnered with two Toronto historians to bring the exhibit to fruition - music historian/author Nicholas Jennings and Jan Haust Grammy award-winning archivist. Downtown Yonge BIA also employed University of Toronto Museum Studies students to aid in the curation and install of the museum.
- The building where the museum is located is heritage designated and a historical gem in Toronto. However, this project stresses the importance of “Cultural Preservation” based on what happened in the building and other venues on Yonge Street.
- The Friar’s Music Museum is free and accessible to everyone in the community and is dedicated to Yonge Street’s music past. Located on the second floor in the Shoppers Drug Mart Flagship Store (279 Yonge Street) which was previously music venues; the Friar’s Tavern, Nickelodeon and most recently The Hard Rock Café.
- This music museum is imitable and the only one of its kind in Toronto and perhaps Ontario/Canada. The ultimate success is that a retail chain franchise owner donated prime retail space for a non-retail experience. The Downtown Yonge BIA also worked with Shoppers Drug Mart architects and ICON Digital to create a unique space that incorporates video, an interactive digital wall, alongside photos and rare artifacts.
- The aim of the museum is to bring music tourism into the neighbourhood for residents and tourists alike through an interactive and educational experience.

# Friar's Music Museum in the media



» TORONTO STAR «



- <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/toronto/article-shoppers-drug-mart-dedicates-museum-to-yonge-streets-music-history/>
- <https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/music/2018/07/04/above-a-shoppers-drug-mart-theres-a-shrine-to-yonge-streets-musical-history.html>
- <https://www.fyimusicnews.ca/articles/2018/12/10/friars-music-micro-museum-officially-opens>
- <https://www.toronto.com/whatson-story/8743828-micro-museums-to-celebrate-history-of-toronto-s-downtown-yonge-street/>
- <https://torontosavvy.me/tag/friars-music-micro-museum-yonge-st-toronto/>
- <https://torontonewsreview.com/torontos-friars-music-museum-officially-opens-on-site-of-legendary-venues/>
- <http://torontohistory.net/toronto-museums.html>
- <http://campaign.r20.constantcontact.com/render?m=1113321512904&ca=e1675525-93ba-40f0-a4bf-8e97bd13c663>
- <https://www.bttoronto.ca/videos/stella-is-live-at-shoppers-drug-mart-grand-opening-1-of-3/>

DOWNTOWN



# Words of Praise for Friar's Music Museum

- “I stopped in at the end of May. It's a couple of floors up in the Shopper's Drug Mart. The location is perfect when you consider you are standing where Levon and the Hawks once stood. There are some wonderful, nostalgic displays of memorabilia from the era and the neighbourhood. Troiano's suit and guitar are included! Watch the video on the back wall and remember when Yonge Street was Fun Street for music fans!”
- “It shows our great musical heritage in an interesting way”
- “Memorabilia and history timeline to let people know that Yonge Street from Shuter St. to Bloor St. was once nicknamed "Record Alley." and that the local music scene was vital and vibrant before Can-Con and the lowering of the drinking age to 18. That Dylan auditioned the Hawks here and changed the sound of folk music is as historic site worthy as the Cavern Club.”
- “Visit the Museum, devoted to the musicians and clubs of Yonge Street’s vibrant past, on the second floor of Shoppers Drug Mart, corner of Yonge & Dundas Square”
- “It is an important part of Canadian heritage”
- “Well worth the visit. The interactive screen covers a lot of ground. Interesting mini-memorabilia in a few nice cabinets. Jump into a selfie with Rompin Ronnie Hawkins and spot a poster or two you wish you had snagged from a lamp post back in the day.”

# Project Members

- Downtown Yonge BIA (producers)– Mark Garner and Rebecca Stubbs
- Music Historians – Nicholas Jennings and Jan Haust
- Partner – Shoppers Drug Mart – 279 Yonge Street Owner Andrew Yeh
- Curation Assistants – Emily Berg, Bridget Collings, Alexie Brown, Rebecca Jackson
- Museum and Heritage Services – City of Toronto – provided some curation guidance and loaned us some supplies for the exhibit
- Yonge Street Music Legends who participated – Cathy Young, Duff Roman, Robbie Lane, Frank Troiano (brother of guitar great Domenic Troiano), Jon and Lee and the Checkmates, Greg Godovitz of GODDO George Olliver and the Mandala, Jay Douglas, Jay Jackson and many more!
- Items in the exhibit that do not belong to the Downtown Yonge BIA, Nicholas Jennings, or Jan Haust have a place card in the exhibit and acknowledges the person and community that donated or loaned the item



# Named after the original Friar's Tavern

- Was the location where Bob Dylan discovered The Band - an event that *Time* magazine declared "the most decisive moment in rock history." (Time Magazine)



Photo Credit – City of Toronto Archives

DOWNTOWN



# What you'll find in the Friar's Music Museum...



- Domenic Troiano's guitar and jacket
- The original Nickelodeon sign that hung in the tavern
- Rare Oscar Peterson documentary
- A drum wall with exact replicas of drums played during Yonge Street's music scene
- Memorabilia and rare original photographs of Yonge Street's diverse musicians; Jackie Shane, Dianne Brooks, Shirley Matthews, Ronnie Hawkins, Gordon Lightfoot, Glenn Gould, Lonnie Johnson and many more
- Interactive Digital Timeline features very early images of Massey Hall and the Eaton Auditorium
- Robbie Lane and the Disciples fan jacket
- A historical Toronto album wall

Photo Credit – Downtown Yonge BIA

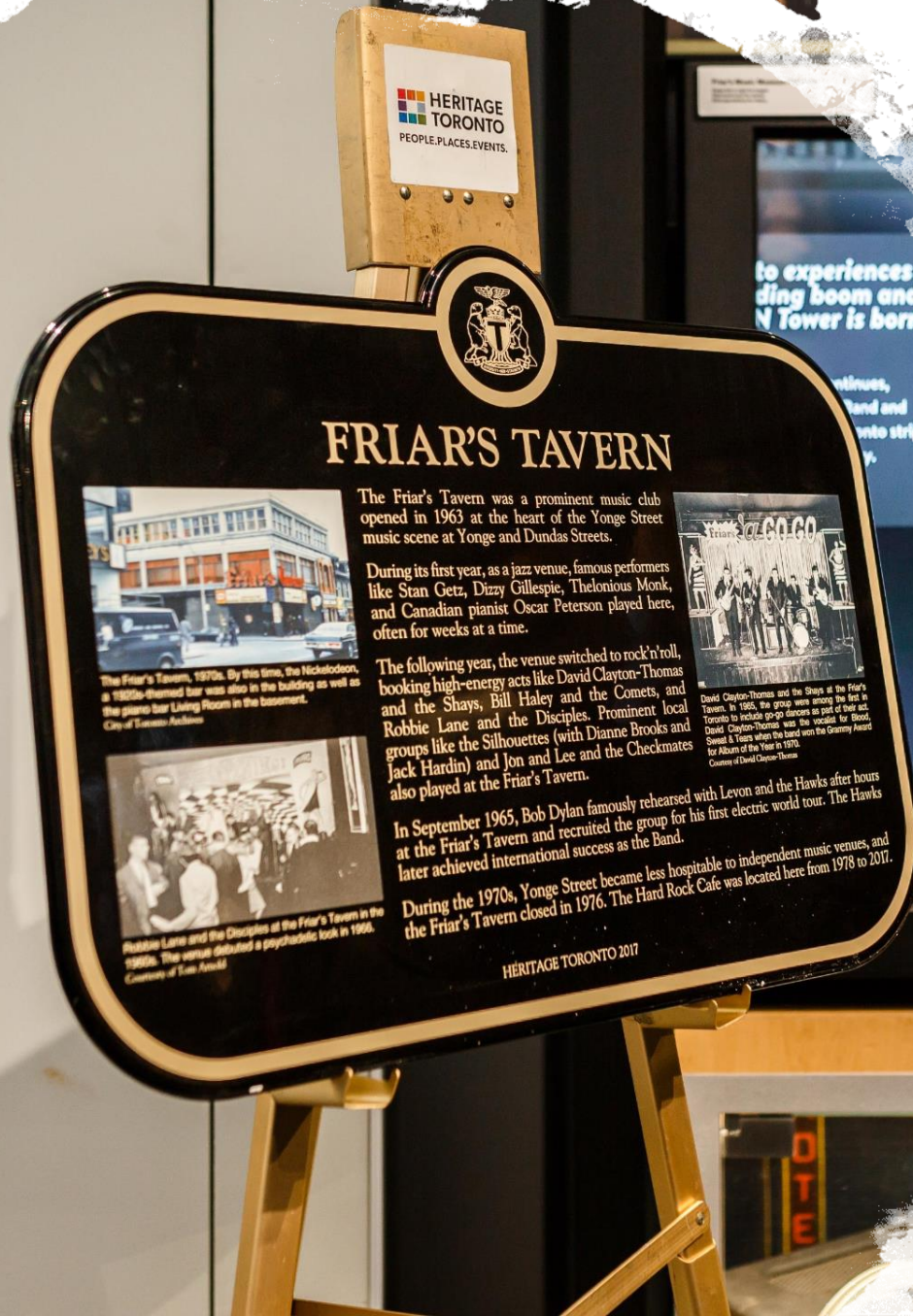




## Our University of Toronto curation assistants

Photo Credit – Downtown Yonge BIA





Downtown Yonge BIA, in partnership with Heritage Toronto, has installed the Friar's Tavern plaque outside the store.



Photo Credit – Downtown Yonge BIA





Launch party with  
Shoppers owner Andrew  
and many Yonge Street  
music legends



# Cathy Young and Duff Roman



Photo Credit – Downtown Yonge BIA

DOWNTOWN







Nicholas Jennings, Mark Garner, Frank Troiano, George Olliver and Jan Haust



Yonge Street music legends leaving their autographs on a vintage reel to have displayed in the museum



Photo Credit – Downtown Yonge BIA

DOWNTOWN







Yonge Street music legends leaving their autographs on a vintage reel to have displayed in the museum

Photo Credit – Downtown Yonge BIA

DOWNTOWN







Andrew, second from left, owner of the Shoppers, was excited to give back to the community and is happy that the museum seems to be good for business

Photo Credit – Toronto Star

DOWNTOWN



## Winning the TABIA (Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas) Award for the Friar's Music Museum for Best Creative Solutions



Photo Credit – TABIA

DOWNTOWN



# Friar's Music Museum in lectures

The museum has been featured in the lecture series “Curious Minds” by Dr. Mike Daley, which is currently being held at Hot Docs.



**Curious Minds // The Toronto Sound: The Music of Yonge St. and Yorkville**

Photo Credit – Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema

DOWNTOWN







Ryerson University class trip –  
Music Cultures of the City

Photo Credit – Downtown Yonge BIA