



Toronto, January 14, 2021

Toronto's Francophonie Week returns in March 2021 with virtual programming

The programming for the 2021 edition of Toronto's Francophonie Week will be entirely virtual and the theme will be *20 ans tous ensemble !* (20 years together!).

Last March, due to the pandemic, the programming that was meant to mark the 20th edition of this annual festival was cancelled only a few days before the festivities could get underway.

The 20th edition will therefore be celebrated virtually from March 20 to 27, 2021.

On Saturday, March 20, 2021, the weeklong celebrations will start with a launch party, presented by the Francophonie Week organizing committee, for all Francophones and Francophiles, young and old.

The evening begins at 6:30 p.m. with words of welcome from several well-known figures. At 7:00 p.m., *Blizzard*, produced by Quebec-based circus company FLIP Fabrique, will take the audience on a crazy, poetic and gentle journey in the dead of winter. With performers at the peak of their art and outstanding visual poetry, *Blizzard* promises to blow away everything in its path.

At 8:00 p.m., five Ontarian singer-songwriters will be showcased. Representing Toronto's *francophonie*, they will present a succession of intimate mini-concerts. This musical event will put forward the rich diversity of influences and genres that make up Toronto's Francophone music scene. Music lovers are sure to be delighted by this incredible opportunity to celebrate International Francophonie Day in song.

On Saturday, March 27, Family Day programming will include activities for all ages. Video contests, trivia games, and an online hunt-for-answers are but a small sample of activities that will allow the whole family to celebrate all the colours of the Francophonie.

Further information on the programming will be unveiled over the coming weeks. Francophones and Francophiles are invited to take part in numerous cultural, artistic, literary and scientific events, many of which will be free to attend.

Toronto's Francophone community comes together to celebrate its culture and diversity

Held annually on or about March 20, International Francophonie Day, Toronto's Francophonie Week is a celebration of the French language and Francophone cultures in Toronto.

Since 2018, Collège Boréal is coordinating the event. Under the leadership of Chair Lise Béland, the coordinating committee includes representatives of a dozen Francophone organizations who bring their contribution to the festivities.



The organizing committee encourages Francophone community partners to take part in the celebrations of this 20th edition by organizing their own events within the week's programming and to promote them on the Semaine de la Francophonie website.

To stay informed on all developments and programming announcements, visit semainefrancophonietoronto.com or the Facebook event [Semaine de la Francophonie de Toronto 2021](https://www.facebook.com/Semaine-de-la-Francophonie-de-Toronto-2021).

Members of the organizing committee

- Collège Boréal (coordinator)
- Bureau du Québec à Toronto
- Ontario Ministry of Francophone Affairs
- Théâtre français de Toronto
- Centre francophone du Grand Toronto
- Francophonie en Fête
- York's University Glendon Campus
- Alliance Française de Toronto
- ACFO Toronto
- Oasis Centre des Femmes
- Toronto French School
- MOFIF

Quotes

"Collège Boréal is privileged to celebrate our Francophone community and showcase our language and culture alongside so many community stakeholders. Francophonie Week is above all a celebration, but it is also a great opportunity to raise awareness of the importance and the evolution of Toronto's Francophone community. And this year's virtual programming will be amazing!"

– Lise Béland, Chair, La Semaine de la Francophone and vice-president, Toronto and CSO, Collège Boréal

"La Semaine de la Francophonie gives the public an opportunity to show its connection to the French language by celebrating its richness and diversity and sharing its appreciation of diverse Francophone cultures. The Alliance Française, Toronto's Francophone cultural centre, is happy to contribute once again to the organization of this unmissable event."

– Jean Grenier Godard, Director, Alliance française de Toronto

Quick facts on La Francophonie

- French is the 5th language most spoken across the world: 300 million people in 102 countries (up by nearly 10% since 2014) speak French and by 2065, there will be more than 700 million French speakers throughout the world;
- 32 States and governments have French as an official language;



- In Ontario, there are approximately 744,000 Francophones and 1.5 million people with some knowledge of French, which represents 11.5% of the province's total population. Ontario has the largest number of Francophones in Canada outside of Quebec.

About

La Semaine de la langue française et de la Francophonie (The French Language and La Francophonie Week) is a cultural event held annually in many countries and many Canadian provinces and cities, with the support of the *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie*, on or about March 20, International Francophonie Day.

Toronto's *Semaine de la Francophonie* (Francophonie Week) in its current form was launched in 2001. Every year, under the leadership of an organizing committee made up of local Francophone institutions, the community is invited to develop a series of cultural, artistic, literary or scientific events aiming to celebrate and promote French language and culture in all its forms and all its diversity.

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For further information

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