

Expression of Condolence for Jaime Royal "Robbie" Robertson by Toronto City Council

Moved By: Mayor Olivia Chow

Seconded By: Deputy Mayor Ausma Malik

The Mayor and Members of Toronto City Council are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Jaime Royal "Robbie" Robertson, OC – a world-renowned singer, songwriter, musician, composer and producer – who died on August 9, 2023, at the age of 80.

Robbie Robertson was born in Toronto in 1943 and was raised in Toronto on his mother's Indigenous reserve, where he learned to play guitar. He developed a passion for rock and roll, as well as rhythm and blues music at a young age. In his early years, he formed several local bands in Toronto. Throughout the early to mid-1960s, he played with Ronnie Hawkins and the Hawks, and also performed and recorded with Bob Dylan.

In the late 1960s, Robbie found success with The Band, and is perhaps best known as The Band's singer, songwriter, guitarist, and engineer. Records such as their debut release, *Music from Big Pink* (1968), and a self-titled sophomore album (1969), helped garner The Band widespread critical and commercial acclaim. Through The Band, Robbie helped pioneer Americana music as a genre with classic songs like "The Weight", "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down", and "Up on Cripple Creek", which blended the use of rock, folk, blues, rockabilly, and country music.

Following the success of The Band, Robbie frequently collaborated with director Martin Scorsese. Robbie contributed significantly to the soundtracks of many of Scorsese's films including *The Last Waltz* (1978), *Raging Bull* (1980), *The King of Comedy* (1983), *Casino* (1995), *The Wolf of Wall Street* (2013), *The Irishman* (2019), and *Killers of the Flower Moon* (2023). Outside of his film work, Robbie also enjoyed an extensive solo career and worked as a producer, and session musician. He was also a published author.

Robbie was the recipient of many awards and honours throughout his life. He received multiple accolades from Indigenous communities including the Inspire Lifetime Aboriginal Achievement Award in 2003 and the Six Nation's first-ever Lifetime Achievement Award in 2017. He also received the Governor General's Performing Arts

Award in 2008. In addition to being inducted into many Halls and Walks of Fame, both as a member of The Band and as an individual, Robbie was appointed as an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2011. He was also presented with a Key to the City of Toronto in 2019, recognizing his enduring contributions to music and the arts. Robbie's work continues to inspire and influence recording artists of all genres both within Canada and around the world. His musical legacy will live on through his life's work.

The City Clerk is requested to convey, on behalf of Members of Toronto City Council, our sincere sympathy to Robbie's wife, Janet; his children, Alexandra, Sebastian, and Delphine (Kenny); his grandchildren, Angelica, Donovan, Dominic, Gabriel, and Seraphina; and all those whose lives he touched through his music. He will be greatly missed.

September 6, 2023