

Dance



free Silk Road Dance Company

This troupe is one of the highlights of the Tirgan Iranian Festival, the four-day party devoted to Persian art, culture and cuisine. The company explores Persian folkloric dance, as well as women's dance traditions that flowered along the legendary trade route known as the Silk Road—Afghan, Uzbek and Azerbaijani choreographies take centre stage. July 23 and 24. *WestJet Stage, Harbourfront Centre, 235 Queens Quay W., 416-973-4000, tirgan.ca.*

Al Khaima—The Tent

The country's leading exponent of Middle Eastern music and dance invites audience members inside an Arabian tent (itself located inside the company's downtown headquarters) for a performance featuring an orchestra and a team of 15 bendy belly dancers. July 16. \$20. *Arabesque Studio, 1 Gloucester St., Suite 107, 416-920-5593, arabesquedance.ca.*

Carmen

The Simon Chamber Ballet is as much a school as it is a company, offering out-of-the-box classes such as Ballet for Skaters. For this show, artistic director Simon Sylvain Lalonde has turned to opera and to performers better known as figure skaters (2011 Canadian ice dancing champion Paul Poirier, for one), for his take on Bizet's fiery, ill-fated gypsy. Also on the program: *Romantica*, to the music of Russian composer Ludwig Minkus, and *Lakmé*, which repurposes that opera's lovely Flower Duet. July 15 and 16. \$20. *Xing Dance Studio Theatre, 452 College St., 416-413-0957.*

free Irie Music Festival

The Irie fest has been celebrating the music and dance of the African diaspora for a decade now, bringing soul, salsa, reggae and more to downtown. Featured performers at this year's Dance Immersion Summer

Showcase include New York's always-ebullient Harambee Dance Company, voguing genius Matthew Cuff and the irrepressible Tamsir Seck, a master of Senegalese dance and drumming. July 31. *Queen's Park, 905-799-1630, iriemusicfestival.com.*

Toronto Burlesque Festival

Though the emphasis is on Canadian talent this year—hence the name, Canadiana-rama—performers from around the world will be stripping down to their jiggles at the city's big burlesque fest. The once moribund art form's renaissance is still going strong: local headliners include Scarlett LaFlamme, Molly Misshap and the troupes Saucy Tarts and Glamour Puss Burlesque. July 22 and 23. \$35. *Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen St. W., and Mod Club, 722 College St., torontoburlesque.com.*

The Toronto Fringe Festival

The city's massive theatre fest is fertile ground for both unexpected pleasures and ghastly half-hours, and it draws thousands of people to sample 150 productions scattered over dozens of venues. Eight dance troupes will also be vying for the audience's attention; among them are Kinetic Elements, Metamorphosis Dance Theatre and LastName FirstName Productions. July 6 to 17. \$10. *Various locations, 416-966-1062, fringetoronto.com.*

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Honda Indy Toronto

It's all in the numbers: 2.84 kilometres of track, 11 turns, 1,000 concrete barriers, 1,200 fences, and 5,000 metric tonnes of asphalt. And here's another one: hundreds of thousands of racing fans watching celeb drivers Danica Patrick, Helio Castroneves and Will Power rip it up alongside homegrown talent that includes Alex Tagliani and Paul Tracy. July 8 to 10. Up to \$423. *Exhibition Place, 200 Princes' Blvd., 416-588-7223, hondaindytoronto.com.*

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free Corso Italia
Turn off those reruns of *Jersey Shore* and head to the fest that offers legit Italian nosh, arts and entertainment. Musicians play everything from classical to salsa, buskers bust out their acts, and rides and games give harried parents a moment of reprieve (and the opportunity to check out the goods at the sidewalk sale). July 2 and 3. *St. Clair Ave. W., from Westmount Ave. to Lansdowne Ave., 416-698-2152, torontofiesta.com.*

The Films of John Cassavetes
Indie giant John Cassavetes gets a full-on retrospective this month at the TIFF Cinematheque. Heavy-hitting flicks include *A Woman Under the Influence*, in which the late director's wife, Gena Rowlands (who will appear to discuss their collaborations on July 14), portrays a mentally unstable housewife, and *Faces*, a portrait of middle-class malaise and the hunt for sexual fulfillment. July 14 to 31. \$12. *TIFF Bell Lightbox, 350 King St. W., 416-599-8433, tiff.net.*

free Open Roof Films
The new darling of Toronto's cinematic scene is just like a summer fling: short and sweet. Launched last year, this warm weather-only outdoor fest merges movies, music and booze for film buffs who love a good party. Local bands set the mood before screenings, which include Bruce McDonald's *Trigger* (July 7), the mash note to superhero movies, *Kick-Ass* (July 21), and the artist doc *Waste Land* (July 28). To Sept. 1. *Amsterdam Brewing Company (parking lot), 21 Bathurst St., 647-857-0748, openrooffilms.com.*

free ROM Walks
Rediscover the city's past through a series of guided walks led by those in the know, who helpfully pinpoint the architectural and historical merits of various 'hoods. Standout sites range from famous graves in the Necropolis to Victorian mansions on Jarvis Street to the political hot spots at Queen's Park. There are 10 walks total, two of which are also offered in French. Various dates (Wednesdays and Sundays). *Various locations, 416-586-8097, rom.on.ca.*

free Tirgan Iranian Festival
The world's largest Iranian fest—named after an ancient rain festival—fetes all things Persian through music, dance, art, lit and cinema. Shop for handmade carpets, specialty instruments (long-necked lutes and hammered dulcimers) and books before sampling some traditional cuisine. July 21 to 24. *Harbourfront Centre, 235 Queens Quay W., 416-973-4000, tirgan.ca.*

Toronto Caribbean Carnival
Famous for its feathers and flounce, the exuberant fest formerly known as Caribana kicks off in style at Yonge-Dundas Square on July 14. On July 16, the Junior Carnival draws the younger set, while an art exhibition featuring African-Canadian artists opens at the ROM; a formal gala at the Liberty Grand calls for some spit and polish on July 22. The best steel pan drummers will compete at Lampport Stadium on July 29, setting the tone for the big draw—the parade!—the following day. July 14 to Aug. 1. Up to \$30. *Various locations, 416-391-5608, caribanatoronto.com.*

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