DESTINATION STRATFORD EXTENDS MUSIC POP-UP PROGRAM FUNDING THROUGH SUMMER AND FALL, SUPPORTING 13 LOCAL INITIATIVES

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(STRATFORD, ON) Building on the ongoing success of the Music Pop-Up initiative, Destination Stratford has announced the program's extension into summer and fall 2025, now part of the newly launched Stratford After Dark campaign. This community-driven program offers funding to local businesses, organizations, and artists to deliver live music and spoken word experiences. Destination Stratford is pleased to support 13 local businesses/venues that will host many local musicians and poets through this latest round of funding.

Launched in 2023 alongside the Lights On Stratford Winter Festival of Lights, the Music Pop-Up Program quickly grew, expanding each year to showcase the winter season and now year-round—bringing even more vibrant musical and cultural experiences to life across the city.

Destination Stratford encouraged applicants to demonstrate bold, creative, and innovative approaches in designing memorable evening music performances for both residents and visitors during the summer and fall of 2025. The 13 successful local businesses and organizations were awarded

between $500-$1000 in funding for their experience for a total amount of $10,000.

The successful applicants include:

- 53 North Restaurant
- Bluebird Restaurant
- The Bunker Performance Lounge & Cafe
- Gallery Stratford
- Here for Now Theatre / Heidi Sander
- The Livery Yard
- The Lost Key
- Mercer Hall
- The Relic Lobby Bar
- Street Party on York Street
- The Starlight
- Stratford Perth Museum
- Stratford Public Library

"*Stratford's music scene is evolving in exciting ways, and the summer and fall Music Pop-Up program is a reflection of that momentum,*" says Zac Gribble, Executive Director of Destination Stratford. "*The program fosters meaningful collaborations between artists and venues, helping to amplify Stratford's cultural and nightlife scene throughout the entire year.*"

Megan Jones from The Starlight had this to say about their Music Pop-Up participation: "*As a small venue that focuses on showcasing local musicians, this funding allowed us to support a local musician, build our reputation as a musical venue in Stratford and provide our patrons with an exciting evening of music. Supporting live music and live music venues in Stratford is a great way to keep the arts alive in this vibrant city while supporting local businesses to do so.*"

Full details for the 13 selected experiences will be posted on Destination Stratford's event calendar and promoted across social media platforms. The next Music Pop-Up program for winter and spring 2025/26 will be launched later this fall.

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For more information, please email hello@visitstratford.ca.