

# BANDURA

2026 CONCERT SERIES

## ON BLOOR



**JULIAN KYTASTY**

MERITED ARTIST OF UKRAINE

**OLHA PETELKO**



**FRIDAY, JUNE 12, 2026**  
**ROYAL YORK ROAD UNITED CHURCH**  
851 ROYAL YORK ROAD, TORONTO

CONCERT PROGRAMME

# TORONTO BANDURA FESTIVAL



## GLORY TO UKRAINE! СЛАВА УКРАЇНІ!

Welcome to Bandura on Bloor! Today, we host our fifth Bandura on Bloor concert since the launch of this project by the Toronto Bandura Festival in March of 2025!

Tonight, we are honoured to welcome one of the foremost interpreters of the kobzar and bandura traditions in North America – Julian Kytasty, as well as Olha Petelko, an accomplished bandurist from Sambir, Ukraine, who has recently found a home here in Toronto, Ontario. We hope you will enjoy today's versatile musical programme, featuring Ukrainian baroque pieces, instrumental music, contemporary pieces, and experimental music performed on the bandura.

We respectfully request that you silence your electronic devices during the performance. Non-flash photography is permitted; however, we ask that you take photos discreetly, without disrupting the experience for other guests, and with respect for the performers. If you do take photos and short videos to post on your social media, we encourage you to tag Toronto Bandura Festival in your stories and reels on Instagram and Facebook, and to drop us a follow and a like on those platforms!

In the fourth year of Russia's brutal, genocidal full-scale invasion of Ukraine, a war that really began 12 long years ago in 2014, the Toronto Bandura Festival continues to donate the net proceeds from all of our events to various humanitarian and charitable efforts supporting Ukraine and Ukrainians, until Ukraine is victorious and rebuilt. Today's concert is a fundraiser for Project Soniashnyk - a Ukrainian-Canadian non-profit organization that hosts Summer & Winter recreational rehabilitation camps in Ukraine for children whose parents are Active or Fallen Members of Ukraine's Armed Forces.

*From the bottom of our hearts, we want to thank all of you for attending and supporting this cause and bandura art in Toronto, and we hope you enjoy the show and join us for the post-concert reception!*

**Orest Chornomaz**  
**Director**  
**Toronto Bandura Festival**

# TORONTO BANDURA FESTIVAL

The Toronto Bandura Festival (TBF), established in December 2024, is a music festival devoted to growing the reputation and popularity of the bandura, supporting the development of talented bandurists, and promoting Ukrainian music, culture and identity in the Greater Toronto Area through the medium of bandura art.

The primary mission of TBF is to establish a biennial bandura festival featuring bandura performances and a biennial bandura music competition in Toronto, Ontario, and to host various bandura-related musical concerts and events throughout the year.



FIRST BIENNIAL TORONTO BANDURA FESTIVAL (OCTOBER 25, 2025)

The vision for the Toronto Bandura Festival (TBF) includes three fundamental aims:



- Grow the reputation and popularity of the bandura in Toronto's vast multicultural music scene.
- Support the development of talented bandurists in the Greater Toronto Area.
- Promote Ukrainian music, culture and identity in Toronto through the medium of bandura art.

# BANDURA CONCERT SERIES

## ON BLOOR

Presented by the Toronto Bandura Festival, Bandura on Bloor is a musical concert series in Toronto showcasing solo bandura performers, small ensembles, and bands featuring the bandura. The conception of Bandura on Bloor was inspired by the “Bandura Downtown” concert series in New York City, directed by Julian Kytasty. Performances take place on Friday evenings, featuring one or two headliners, followed by a reception for all the guests and performers. Bandura on Bloor is a delightful opportunity to spend your Friday evening with your friends and loved ones with the magical sounds of the bandura in downtown Toronto!



*BANDURALICIOUS (DECEMBER 19, 2025)*



*DIVKA (MAY 30, 2025)*



*MARIJA SMOLINSKA (MAY 30, 2025)*



*TERYN KYTASTY-KUZMA (MARCH 21, 2025)*

# FEATURED ARTISTS



## JULIAN KYTASTY

MERITED ARTIST OF UKRAINE

Julian Kytasty was born in Detroit, Michigan, into a family of Ukrainian refugees who came to the United States after World War II. He is a third-generation player of the bandura. He first learned the instrument from his father and grandfather, and from his great uncle Hryhory Kytasty, a renowned composer and conductor. In 1980, he moved to New York to be the music director of the New York Bandura Ensemble and began a career that has taken him all over the world. As a performer, recording artist, composer, teacher, and ensemble leader, he has redefined the possibilities of his instrument.

His discography includes tributes to the bandura's deep tradition, innovative ensemble recordings, World Music collaborations, a duo with Free Improvisation master Derek Bailey, electroacoustic projects, and recent recordings of his own solo instrumental music. He has worked cross-culturally with such artists as Chinese pipa player Wu Man, klezmer revivalist Michael Alpert, and Mongolian master musician Battuvshin. Julian Kytasty has composed music for theatre, modern dance, and film, including an award-winning film score for the National Film Board of Canada's feature documentary, *My Mother's Village*. His work on Yara Arts Group's 1917-2017 earned two New York Innovative Theatre Awards, for Best Original Score and Best Musical.

In 1989-90, Julian Kytasty first toured Ukraine, performing over 100 concerts as a soloist and with a bandura ensemble. He has returned many times since, performing across the country as a solo artist, in Yara Arts Group theatre projects, and in collaborations with Ukrainian artists. In September 2021, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy awarded Julian Kytasty the title "Honoured Artist of Ukraine" in a ceremony in New York City. Most recently, Julian has collaborated with Victor Pushkar on the recording "Bandura Road" and with pipa player Min Xiao-Fen on "Boundless".



## OLHA PETELKO

Olha Petelko, a native of Sambir, Ukraine, is a bandurist and a bandura and vocal educator. She is a graduate of Drohobych State Pedagogical University of Ivan Franko, specializing in bandura, vocal performance, and conducting. During her time in Sambir, Olha was the director of the Chervona Kalyna Women's Folk Choir, an active performer and soloist with various bandura trios and duets, and a member of the vocal group Impresia. She is also the founder of a private vocal studio, "Spivay", having numerous students who have won prizes in various competitions in Ukraine. Recently, Olha has moved to Toronto, Ontario, where she has been an active member of the Crescendo Musical Group, the Malvy Bandura Trio, and the church choir at the Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Holy Protection. Music plays an important role in her life, giving her strength, inspiration and the desire to create and move forward.

# CONCERT PROGRAMME

## **Introductory Remarks**

*Orest Chornomaz - Toronto Bandura Festival*

## **OLHA PETELKO**

### **1 HALLELUJAH**

*Music & words by L. Cohen*

### **2 IT'S EVENING OUTSIDE (Вечір надворі)**

*Melody from a Ukrainian Folk Song, Arr. D. Didenko*

### **3 I'M DYING, DEAR MOTHER (Умираю, моя мати)**

*Ukrainian Folk Song, Arr. by O. Popov*

## **Oksana Hrycyna**

*Project Soniashnyk (Executive Director & Founder)*

## **JULIAN KYTASTY**

## **Closing Remarks**

*Orest Chornomaz - Toronto Bandura Festival*

# PROJECT SONIASHNYK DESIGNATED FUND UNDER BCU FOUNDATION

As Russia's mass invasion continues and the war rages on, increasing numbers of children across Ukraine are experiencing acute trauma due to the unthinkable atrocities they witness and experience daily. Many children are separated from parents serving on the frontlines. Those wounded spend months in hospitals healing from war-inflicted wounds while others are killed, as they defend the sovereignty of Ukraine.



Project Soniashnyk is a non-profit organization that hosts Summer & Winter recreational rehabilitation camps in Ukraine for children whose parents are Active or Fallen Members of Ukraine's Armed Forces. In addition to camping, connecting to nature, fun team-building and leadership-training activities, bonding with new friends over campfires, the camps provide essential Trauma Therapy and Mental Health Support for children impacted by the war. That therapy and support continue throughout the year in between camps via group and individual counselling.

Soniashnyk - the Ukrainian word for sunflower, a flower inextricably linked with Ukraine. It is a symbol of resistance, hope, joy & growth and nutrition. The camps are offered at no cost to the families and are made possible by the generous support of BCU Foundation and public donations.



*All net proceeds from today's concert will be donated to the Project Soniashnyk, Designated Fund under BCU Foundation.*

To donate additional funds to Project Soniashnyk:

1. Visit <https://bcufoundation.com/donate-soniashnyk/>
2. Make sure "Project Soniashnyk" is selected in the dropdown menu
3. Write "Bandura on Bloor June 12" in the Donation Memo

*It costs roughly \$500 CAD to sponsor a child to attend Project Soniashnyk's program, we urge you to please give generously!*

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## BANDURA ON BLOOR 2026-27 CONCERT SEASON

### SAVE THE DATES

OCTOBER 23, 2026

DECEMBER 18, 2026

MARCH 19, 2027

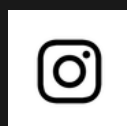
MAY 14, 2027

**The full details will be released soon, so stay tuned!**

For ticket and events about upcoming concerts visit us at  
[torontobandurafestival.ca/events](https://torontobandurafestival.ca/events)

**Thank you to all of our volunteers!**

**Follow us on our social media accounts!**



[torontobandurafestival.ca](https://torontobandurafestival.ca)