



# **ceol kids**

**May 23, 2026**

**Lee's Palace**

**Third time's the charm!**



## Notes from the organizer

From our fearless leader Julian Vardy

Welcome to Ceol Kids 2026!

We're thrilled to be back at Lee's Palace for a third time to share an unforgettable night of music and community.

Huge thanks to everyone who sponsored songs—because of you, we raised over **\$13,000** through song donations alone! You helped shape an incredible setlist, and we can't wait to play it for you.

Massive shoutout to the band, who powered through long rehearsals, endless email updates, and last-minute lineup changes with patience and heart. You all rock, and it's an honour to share the stage with you!

Special shout out to all the new band members this year. We are so thrilled to welcome you.

Enjoy the show, make some noise, tip your bartenders—and start thinking about what song you'll nominate for next year!



## Our Special Guest

Tanya Casole-Gouveia

We are so very pleased to see our dynamic host returning for a second year!

Tanya Casole-Gouveia is a creative soul and true lover of music and the arts.

The long-time host of live painting competition 'Art Battle,' she's helped shine a light on up-and-coming talent throughout her career.

She can't wait to bring her energy, charisma and quick-wit to the Ceol Kids Stage...also maybe some juggling.

## Sponsorships rock!

We are so proud to partner with some people, groups and companies year over year.

Thanks to their added generosity, our donations go even farther and have an even greater impact.

If sponsorship appeals to you for our next event, please reach out and we will keep you in the loop.

[sponsorships@ceolkids.com](mailto:sponsorships@ceolkids.com)



# Community Music Schools of Toronto

## About our charity

Community Music Schools of Toronto (CMST) is a registered charity that provides children and youth opportunities to learn music while removing financial obstacles.

Students can study everything from classical and percussion instruments/music to voice, electronic music, songwriting, and recording.

Access is provided to some of Toronto's best music teachers, and a large selection of instruments. Programming also includes leadership and mentorship opportunities.

Areas of focus for the charity include the Regent Park and Jane-Finch areas of Toronto, as well as education to Indigenous students at Wandering Spirit School and young newcomers to Canada.

To date, Ceol Kids has donated over **\$125,000** to this amazing initiative and we are thrilled to continue help the young people of Toronto thrive through music.

If you want to learn more about CMST, please visit their website: [www.communitymusic.org](http://www.communitymusic.org).



# Our unique set list

Part of Ceol Kids' appeal is how we choose our set list. In case you don't already know, it's **100% audience driven**. Yes, you read that correctly and we love it!

In March, we opened our website to song nominations. Then our musicians, dedicated fans, friends and family made suggestions.

Then comes the race! Everyone had to promote their choices to see them up-bid collectively in the hopes it would be one of the top 25 earners.

Nominations closed on April 24 at midnight and changes came down to the wire! Plus this year the cut-off to get into the set list brought the highest threshold ever!

Once our songs were set, the Ceol Kids had about 3 weeks to finesse the tunes for tonight's eclectic and fun-filled concert! Sit back and enjoy the wild ride!



## Notes from our charity

### From Rich Marsella, Executive Director

The Ceol Kids event was born out of love and it's a great example where something very personal can permeate outward into the community at large.

This event, the perfect intersection of music, community and innovation, has become such a pillar of support for us over the years, having raised over \$125,000 from the ground up. That's thanks to each of you reading this, who has put your love of community in the foreground, and deeply affected our incredible students in the process. With your ongoing support, we're able to provide 875 students from Regent Park, Jane Finch, and other communities with free music lessons and leadership programs each week.

On behalf of the students, families, faculty and staff at Community Music Schools of Toronto (CMST), THANK YOU for your incredible support of the Ceol Kids event and us.

The community that has been built around Ceol Kids over the past decade truly embodies what we're all about at CMST: We bring people together with a shared passion for the empowerment, inclusivity and FUN that music provides.

I want to extend a massive thank you to Julian and all of the incredible musicians, donors, sponsors and volunteers for your time and dedication. And thanks to YOU for bringing the energy and making Ceol Kids a night not to be missed.

# Meet the Ceol Kids



**Felicity Alexander**  
Singer, nurse, & "COOL MOM". Spends her free time singing Soprano in a choir and hitting up all the vintage/thrift shops she can find! Helps with sponsorship too!

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Watching Bexy rock her fiddling in 2024 from back stage. Even I was sweating!



**Dean Armstrong**  
2 years on Broadway in **Rent** and series reg in the upcoming 4th season of **Reacher**. This one night with so many incredible musicians remains a highlight every year!

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
THE TRAGICALLY HIP CONCERT!! Incredible unity supporting the Canadian legend Gord Downie.



**Ben Birchard**  
Guitar and Vox - member of **The Lustre**. Ceol Kids is a great hang for a great cause.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Can't get enough of Tim Evan's costume changes



**Eric Brazier**  
Each year the Ceol Kids indulges his delusions of hip-hop grandeur allowing Eric to dust off his flow and rap an Old Skool classic for an always welcoming audience.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
2016: Master T joined in to help me serenade my wife with an impromptu rendition of "Happy Birthday To You".



**Christian D**  
Singer, songwriter, guitar abuser from **Christian and the Sinners**. The band's sound is like Joe Strummer and Nick Cave in a knife fight at Johnny Cash's house.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
The backstage antics & getting to know new people. A real community coming together for a great cause!



**Graeme Drinkwalter**  
He is, in fact, one to toot his own horn. Trumpet, specifically.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Mastering the horn lines in "Rosanna" by Toto in 2019 was a highlight!



**Tim Evans**  
Sings. Love the people. Love the vibes. No better experience in life than seeing the people you love make beautiful music together.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Singing back ups for Bryan who performed Matador by **Los Fabulosos Cadillacs**. It was boss.



**Basil Flanagan**  
Has been involved for almost a decade. Travelled from the quiet town of Smith's Falls to be here. He is always grateful for the opportunity to play with such talented musicians.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
First rehearsal: showed up & jumped right in and sounded incredible! I knew these cats were for real.



**Brendan Browne**  
Former **Plaid Daddy** and **Declan Niner**. Guitar, vocals - been here since the first show! Many shows and many years ago. Always a good time.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Playing "Save it for a Rainy Day" in 2019 because it was a special song for my daughters.



**Matty Burns**  
Artist & educator; loves Jalapeño Cheddar Dipping Sauce. He is excited to be back after missing 2023 to get hitched. Longtime member of **Players**.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Tragically Hip Show!!!



**Mark Chandler**  
A guitar player and nerd from Toronto; Ceol Kids is his favourite show to play in as he has zero responsibility for picking the set.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Playing "**Paradise by the Dashboard Light**" with Andrew and Joan.



**Gia Como**  
Has her dream job by day, but misses singing in a band. Ceol Kids is a great way to get that performance fix while also raising money for a great organization.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Singing "Bohemian Rhapsody" with the biggest group of backup singers ever. EPIC!



**Vince Galante**  
Guitarist, singer, mandolinist, & fiddler for **The Plaid Daddys** and **Declan Niner**; now plays regular shows to his two kids, who, sadly, don't yell "Freebird!" between each song.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Embracing his inner Ronnie Van Zant and leading a rousing rendition of...(wait for it)...Freebird. Go figure.



**Tyson Galloway**  
Freelance; Passion for jazz/swing and R&B. Plays bass (upright & electric), guitar, mandolin, tenor & 5 string banjos, most of which feature in his band **Madman's Window**.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Debut year. As a father, I love any organization that helps kids. They are the future.



**Chris Greenough**  
Formerly from Northern Ontario, currently based in Toronto. He is delighted to be a part of Ceol Kids for another year.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Playing with so many kind, enthusiastic & talented people is a highlight of the year!



**Ale Guerrero**  
Piano player. Ceol Kids its an amazing group of talented music lovers that get together to have fun, please the crowd and help a good cause!

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Tragically Hip Tribute 100%!

# Meet the Ceol Kids



**Peter Hinton**  
Regular job by day, trombonist by night. Former teacher at CMST & has seen impact for young people making music & how important fundraisers are!

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Third year and ready for more!



**Ziyan Hossain**  
10 years in; awed by the talent (& Julian's spreadsheets!) Guitar/bass/sound designer. Played with **Sundecay**, **Plastic Galaxy**; co-founder of **Space for Grief**.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Manamana!



**Brad Hotson**  
Has known Julian since high school and has done many of the Ceol Kids shows. Favourite bands are **Sabbath**, **Tool** and **Clutch**.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Learning **Tool**'s "Schism" & having the lights go out in the intricate middle part and not seeing my guitar or band!



**Tyler Irving**  
Normally on keys, but is capable of playing the Great Highland Bagpipe if the situation calls for it. Hire him for your wedding!

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
This.



**Ilena McDonald**  
Teaches music at an all boys school. Has arranged the horn charts for the past 3 shows (a challenge and a highlight) Being here with such talent and raising \$ for kids is an honour!

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Thumbs up from Chris Murphy of Sloan for plethora of band licks I threw into his song!! My soul left my body!



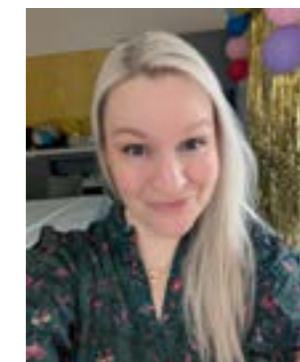
**Deanna McDougall**  
Originally from Toronto, but now lives in Ottawa where she teaches violin and plays in the alt country band **Cornflower Blue**.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Playing strings for "Bittersweet Symphony" in 2016, and Bexy killing the solo in "Thunderstruck".



**Eslin McKay**  
Violinist and all around amazing person. Taking a few minutes from being on tour to join Ceol Kids for a spell.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Debut year!



**Eila McLeish**  
A nerdy librarian with a love of performing. Excited to be back with Ceol Kids after a few years off!

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
My favourite is a toss up between **Just a Girl** and **The Muppet Show** theme song!



**David Kochberg**  
Plays guitar and sings in his band **Goodnight Sunrise**, but loves to jam on bass or drums too. Stoked to be part of this awesome night!

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Debut year!



**Jamie Lamb**  
Has a ton of fun on keys each year at Ceol Kids! Member of **The Lustre**.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Thank you for your acceptance of the keytar.



**Meg Mack**  
Singer and silly person who is very lucky to have performed with a number of the Ceol Kids through **Players**.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Performing fun, live music for charity with a group of awesome people is the BEST!



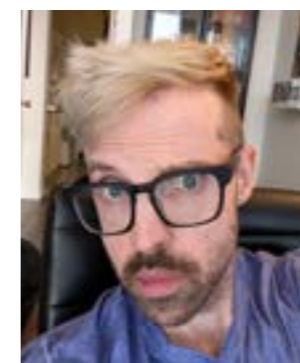
**Dan "Banger" MacKay**  
Primarily a bass player, but has also contributed as a turntablist and percussionist. He first joined in 2014 & has participated every year since.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
El Mocambo, 2014: Shocking the sound guy with huge gear needs! A quick trip to L&M solved the issue!



**Laura Moniz**  
Special education teacher by day and rocks out by night. She's been a part of Ceol Kids since 2018, and is super excited to be back!

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Singing "Final Countdown" with Tim holding up gigantic silver wings!



**Andrew Parrett**  
Has played guitar since the age of 12 and recently added bass. Been into music his whole life; First discovered Ceol Kids in 2025.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
First show attended was in 2025, got to watch my partner perform for the first time.



**Staci Patten**  
Guitar Player. Producer. Designer. Beardo. Works at Accurate Audio, offering vinyl & CD pressing, and other artist services. Located in **Noble Street Studios**.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Performing "Creeping Death" in 2023. This will be my third year & looking forward to it!



**Rich Pauptit**  
Half bear, half man & vocals exactly as described. Roars with his band **Sundecay**. Vocals only for this fella, bears can't play instruments, come on!

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Backup! Friends to hit the notes you can't & get the cues you forget, including when you forget to come onstage!

# Meet the Ceol Kids



**Craig Reid**  
Plays bass, makes inappropriate comments and that's about it really. 2025 was a challenging year and he is pretty happy to be able to be a Ceol Kid again.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Playing with all these other wonder people is the best!



**Bexy Sancton**  
Fiddler with **Old Man Flanagan's Ghost**, retired Suzuki violin teacher, and proud Suzuki parent.

(Photo credit: Fable Studios)

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
"Devil Went Down to Georgia" was epic, and let's not forget the time I got to shred on "Free Bird"!



**Brian Scott**  
Guitarist, metal enthusiast and horror movie nerd. Been a part Ceol Kids from the start. Loves the fundraising AND-connecting with old friends/musicians to bring so much joy!

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Playing a wide range of genres with a group of people more qualified than me to be on that stage!



**Chip Snider**  
Horns. Horny stuff.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
I got to pay rock'n'roll clarinet!

# Meet the Ceol Kids



**Julian Vardy**  
Here since the start, originally inspired by a surprise concert for his wife. Has performed with many Toronto area bands including **Christian D and the Sinners** & **Sundecay**.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Playing "Paradise By The Dashboard Light" & seeing Chris Murphy rocking out in the audience.



**Miki Velemirovich**  
Guitarist and blues lover, Thrilled to support Ceol Kids! Helping kids find their voice through music education is a cause so special him.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Second year, so back for more!



**Snow Wauna**  
Keeps her love for heavy music forever flowing by singing and guitar playing in **Lousy Riders**. So inspired by Ceol Kids' selflessness in supporting local budding musicians.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Performing "Barracuda" with the venerable Joan Smith.



**David Wencer**  
Performs inconsistently, both in the frequency & in the quality of his playing; Is nine feet tall & will tell you where he buys his clothing if you stand downwind.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
That one rehearsal when a live bird landed on his head. Still not all clear on the how or why of it.



**Steven Suepaul**  
Vocals, keys. Third time in the anarchy that is the Ceol Kids setlist! There's something here for everyone!

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Nachos at Sneaky Dees post show & it being my first time there. A true "You're now a Torontonians" moment!



**Kyle Teixeira**  
Bassist who can be seen around town playing with bands like **reklaws**, **Lolo**, his amazing partner **Michelle Treacy** & other various artists.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Debut year!



**Michelle Treacy**  
Groundbreaking queer artist whose career started with a spontaneous duet with Lady Gaga; Add to her over 3 million Spotify or see her on CTV's The Launch or American Idol.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Second year for this passionate mental health and anti-bullying advocate, music & songwriting teacher.



**Niah Vardy**  
Has played cello since the age of ten. Currently with the **Ottawa Pops Orchestra**, playing classical music, film soundtracks, & music from video games.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Third year!



**Bryan Williston**  
With a killer setlist & cool friends who are brilliant musicians, Ceol Kids is one of the highlights of my musical year. Thanks to all, for supporting music instruction for young people.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
You never forget your first: "Ice Ice Baby" at the ElMo, doing backup vox with Rich! Good times.



**Marcus Wong**  
Guitarist, vocalist, & music educator. Been in many bands including **Wing Night The Band**, **Vanderpark**, **The Junction**, & **Marcus & the Mountain** to name a few.

**Fave Ceol Kids Memory:**  
Debut year! Music is for everyone; supporting CMST helps make music more accessible within our city.



## Tips for a little boost!

Check out the QR codes around the venue to tip us, or to throw a few more bids into our raffle.

Our prize has been generously gifted by our sponsors.

# Side projects

Check out what else our crew is working on.



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space  
for  
grief

# Thank you! Thank you!

Ceol Kids would like to thank:

Our fantastic sponsor for making this year's show possible:  
Sheri and Jordi @ Long & McQuade;

Our official roadie crew for the following:  
Nikki EatKS; Chris Steffler from **Platinum Blonde**; Rich @ Flash Reproductions for rehearsal space; Mark @ TorontoDND and Ziyang for perfecting and programming our guitar sounds;

As well as:

Julian, for being the driving force of our music, the show and website design; Julian & Felicity for taking on Sponsorship this year; Matt Wells & the rest of the crew @ Lee's Palace for an amazing venue experience; Bill & Jesse King from **The Bill & Jesse King Show** on CIUT FM for a live interview/promotion; Carol from **Ruby Slippers** on CIUT FM for show promotion; Felicity for program and sponsorship package design; Eric & Felicity for photography; And of course, all the special people in our lives who have helped us find the time to bring Ceol Kids to the stage.

And finally: YOU, our dear audience, for donating and for coming out to support us!

## Stay in touch

We've got the Ceol-ist socials!

Interested in helping out next year? Want to keep tabs on what we're up to?

Follow us on social media for updates and/or send us an email and we'll make sure you're in the know!

-  [ceolkids.com](http://ceolkids.com)
-  @CeolKids
-  @CeolKids
-  [info@ceolkids.com](mailto:info@ceolkids.com)



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