



THE LEGENDARY HORSESHOE TAVERN CELEBRATES ITS 70TH BIRTHDAY

**SPECIAL 'HORSESHOE 70TH CONCERT SERIES' RUNS  
SEPTEMBER 26 TO DECEMBER 31**

**SECOND PHASE OF B-DAY SHOWS ANNOUNCED FEATURING  
MAX WEINBERG'S JUKEBOX, CONSTANTINES, SKYDIGGERS and MORE**

**NEW BOOK 'The Legendary Horseshoe Tavern - A Complete History'  
By David McPherson TO BE PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 23, 2017**



Link to above photo: <http://bit.ly/2hk6n2Z> | Photo credit: HS Tavern

(September 6, 2017 - Toronto, ON) **The Legendary Horseshoe Tavern** marks its **70th birthday on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017**, and is celebrating with a series of very special concerts billed as *the Horseshoe 70th Concert Series* kicking off **Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup>** and running until **December 31<sup>st</sup>**. The series features notable artists doing multiple night 'underplay residencies', as well as one night stands by artists who have performed at the famed Toronto venue in previous decades.

Announced today is the second phase of the *Horseshoe 70th Concert Series* featuring "**Max Weinberg's Jukebox**" on Tuesday, October 10<sup>th</sup>. The Jukebox is a truly interactive experience from **Rock and Roll Hall Of Fame drummer Max Weinberg** where the audience gets to create in real time the set list he and his crack four piece group will perform that night. Weinberg, the driving rhythmic force propelling **The E Street Band for 43 years**, is also known to millions of fans for his **17-year stint as the bandleader and comedic foil to talk show host Conan O'Brien**. Throughout his 50 year professional career Weinberg has played with some of the biggest and most diverse names in music—James Brown, Paul McCartney, Bob Dylan, BB King, Tony Bennett, Ringo Starr, John Fogerty, Steve Winwood, and Sheryl Crow.

Also announced are shows from Toronto's folk rock outfit, **Sun K**, who will perform a no-cover evening, on Wed October 11<sup>th</sup>, as part of the private industry release for McPherson's new book, JUNO and Platinum award-winning singer-guitarist-banjoist, **Lisa LeBlanc**, dynamic indie six-piece **Fast Romantics**, seminal indie rockers **Constantines**, and beloved veteran roots rockers, **Skydiggers**, who will hold their annual **X-Mas fan lovefest** as part of the Shoe's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations.

Tickets to the licensed/19+ shows go on sale **Thursday, September 7<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am ET** and will be available via **Ticketfly, Rotate This, Soundscapes, and Horseshoe Tavern's Box Office**. See below for more details on each show and ticketing information.

The first phase of the **Horseshoe 70th Concert Series** was announced August 1<sup>st</sup> and features **Billy Bragg**, playing three **SOLD OUT** shows, **DOA, Hollerado, The Pursuit of Happiness, Elliott Brood, and 54.40**.

'The 'Shoe', as it's affectionally known by locals, will celebrate the launch of David McPherson's book, **The Legendary Horseshoe Tavern: A Complete History**, with a **private media and industry launch on October 11<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-8:30 pm**, followed by a no-cover night with **Sun K**.

David spent years talking to artists, managers, staff, and founder Jack Starr's family, gathering decades of stories for the book, which is set for publication by Dundurn Press on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. The **foreword** for the book is written by **Blue Rodeo's Jim Cuddy**. For more information, visit: <http://horseshoetavernbook.com>.

Those interested in media accreditation to the Wed Oct 11<sup>th</sup> 6:30 pm book launch should contact us as per below

**There are more b-day events and concert series to be announced including the once-every-10-years private industry party in DEC 2017, and a special concert by a longtime H-Shoe artist on the actual birthday!**

**THE HORSESHOE 70TH CONCERT SERIES is presented by INDIE88 and EXCLAIM!**

### **MAX WEINBERG'S JUKEBOX**

**DATE:** Tuesday, October 10, 2017

**DOORS:** 8:30pm

**PRICE:** \$49.50 GA - \$79.50 SEATED - \$199.50 VIP MEET & GOLD CIRCLE SEATING

Advance at Ticketfly, HS Tavern Box Office, Rotate This & Soundscapes

**ON SALE:** Thursday, September 7, 2017 at 10:00am

\*Licensed/19+

**Purchase Tickets here:** <https://www.ticketfly.com/purchase/event/1556258>

### **SUN K**

**DATE:** Wednesday, October 11, 2017

**DOORS:** 8:30pm

**PRICE:** No Cover

\*Licensed/19+

### **LISA LEBLANC**

**DATE:** Thursday, November 16, 2017

**DOORS:** 8:30pm

**PRICE:** \$15.50 Advance at Ticketfly, HS Tavern Box Office, Rotate This & Soundscapes

**ON SALE:** Thursday, September 7, 2017 at 10:00am

\*Licensed/19+

**Purchase Tickets here:** <https://www.ticketfly.com/purchase/event/1556275>

## ***FAST ROMANTICS***

**DATE:** Saturday, November 18, 2017

**DOORS:** 9:00 pm

**PRICE:** \$13.50 Advance at Ticketfly, HS Tavern Box Office, Rotate This & Soundscapes

**ON SALE:** Thursday, September 7, 2017 at 10:00am

\*Licensed/19+

**Purchase Tickets here:** <https://www.ticketfly.com/purchase/event/1556280>

## ***CONSTANTINES***

**DATE:** Friday, December 15, 2017

**DOORS:** 9:00 pm

**PRICE:** \$29.50 Advance at Ticketfly, HS Tavern Box Office, Rotate This & Soundscapes

**ON SALE:** Thursday, September 7, 2017 at 10:00am

\*Licensed/19+

**Purchase Tickets here:** <https://www.ticketfly.com/purchase/event/1556288>

**DATE:** Saturday, December 16, 2017

**DOORS:** 9:00 pm

**PRICE:** \$29.50 Advance at Ticketfly, HS Tavern Box Office, Rotate This & Soundscapes

**ON SALE:** Thursday, September 7, 2017 at 10:00am

\*Licensed/19+

**Purchase Tickets here:** <https://www.ticketfly.com/purchase/event/1556291>

## ***SKYDIGGERS – Annual X-Mas Concerts***

**DATE:** Friday, December 22, 2017

**DOORS:** 9:00 pm

**PRICE:** \$39.50 Advance at Ticketfly, HS Tavern Box Office, Rotate This & Soundscapes.

**ON SALE:** Thursday, August 3, 2017 at 10:00am

\*Licensed/19+

**Purchase Tickets here:** <https://www.ticketfly.com/purchase/event/1556294>

**DATE:** Saturday, December 23, 2017

**DOORS:** 9:00 pm

**PRICE:** \$39.50 Advance at Ticketfly, HS Tavern Box Office, Rotate This & Soundscapes.

**ON SALE:** Thursday, August 3, 2017 at 10:00am

\*Licensed/19+

**Purchase Tickets here:** <https://www.ticketfly.com/purchase/event/1556300>

***More Horseshoe Tavern Birthday events and concert series to be announced in the coming weeks.***

### **Photo Links:**

<http://bit.ly/Horseshow60thCraigLaskeyJeffCohen>

(L to R: Craig Laskey, Jeff Cohen)

<http://bit.ly/HScirca1979>

(Photo credit: Patrick Cummins)

<http://bit.ly/HSTavernLastPogo>

(Photo credit: Edie Steiner)

The Horseshoe Tavern: [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#)

**About The Legendary Horseshoe Tavern:**

Although the building at 370 Queen St. W. was erected in 1861 as a blacksmith's shop, the **Tavern's storied music history began in 1947** once provincial liquor laws were ushered in, permitting **longtime owner Jack Starr** to convert the commercial property into a restaurant-tavern. **In the mid-50's Starr** re-converted the bar to the **Country Roots n' Rockabilly Music Tavern**, a 500 seat live music venue featuring country and rockabilly acts. Notorious bank robbers The Boyd Gang were known to be regulars but more noteworthy, the venue began sealing its reputation as a cultural musical institution, **booking country superstars like Willie Nelson, Conway Twitty, and Loretta Lynn** to name a few. **Stompin' Tom Connors** famously built his name at the Horseshoe **playing extended residencies**, and Starr became key in **helping develop Canadian national and local acts like Ian and Sylvia Tyson and The Band**.

Upon **Starr's retirement in the late 70's**, he rented the business to **Toronto music promoters Gary Topp and Gary Cormier** who quickly made a name for the venue by featuring a gamut of cutting edge and eclectic acts. The duo introduced Toronto to punk & new wave music like **The Cramps, The Ramones, Talking Heads, MC-5**, and famously bringing **The Police** to Canada for the first time. Unfortunately the Garys' vision was miles ahead of its time and the **venue closed** under the weight of its own progression. Their final concert at the venue, known as the '**Last Pogo**', became historic both for the music, the scene, and a **documentary by filmmaker Colin Brunton**.

Forgetting short stints as both another country club, and a strip club, an historic turn for the building occurred with the synthesis of **Ken Sprackman closing the Hotel Isabella**, deciding to drive cars to Florida while in-between occupations, and the building sitting empty. True story, Starr, an avid 'snowbirder' needed his car driven to Florida, **Ken answered the call, they struck up a friendship, and before you know it, Ken became the next operator of the 'Shoe. Really you can't make this stuff up!**

After Kenny modernized the bar for Starr, he was offered to buy the business, on one condition, **Sprackman had to take Kingston resident Michael (X-Ray) Macrae, on as a partner**. He had been bugging Starr for years to operate the venue. X-Ray introduced Kenny to his local friends **Dan Aykroyd, and Richard Crook**, and the **four became the second generation owners of the H-Shoe Tavern**.

**Kenny and X-Ray re-invented the venue as we know it today**. Sprackman managed the bar and revised venue operations, some of which impacted the entire Canadian Music industry. The duo introduced the '**artist takes the door - the venue takes the bar**' **booking policy** - a radical move at the time which ultimately became the standard for local bookings in practically every original live music venue in the country. Similarly X-Ray focused on booking the music, he welcomed developing artists from St. John's to Victoria, including **The Watchmen, The Odds, Amanda Marshall**, and with a **focus on one emerging band from X-Ray's hometown of Kingston, The Tragically Hip**.

As the **Toronto music scene began to coalesce** next door at the Cameron House (which featured **Handsome Ned and Jack Dekeyzer**) and **on Queen St** with former punks like **Greg Keelor, Jim Cuddy, and Bazil Donovan**, who had a keen interest in Americana and Canadiana roots music. X-Ray also began importing the newest and best bands from Austin, Texas and the South. The Horseshoe quickly became the preferred touring showcase for new roots music, indie promoters, and was the go-to hangout for locals, music industry types and visiting celebrities.

Fast forward to the **90's**, when **Jeff "JC" Cohen was hired by Kenny and X-Ray** to lead the venue into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Cohen had the distinction of opening the country's first dedicated all-ages venue, '**One Step Beyond**' (in Ottawa) and his punk-a-fied alternative music bio includes stints as a **booking agent (Rheostatics, One, Lowest of the Low, Big Sugar, Malhavoc, Mahones)** working alongside Ralph James, **talent buyer** (Apocalypse Club and El Mocambo), and **management consultant. (The Bourbon Tabernacle Choir, 13 Engines, Big Rude Jake)**

Along with his then 'assistant' - and now 'partner' - **Craig Laskey**, the Horseshoe was given a shot of Garys like music adrenaline, cemented with initial bookings like **Dick Dale, Link Wray, Olivia Tremor Control, the Oblivians, Neutral Milk Hotel, Wilco, the Old 97's, Sunvolt, Neko Case, the Jayhawks, Golden Smog, and Whiskeytown/Ryan Adams**, while re-committing to being a national showcase for emerging Canadian artists like **Nickelback, Great Big Sea, Joel Plaskett Emergency, and Big Wreck**.

"I honestly thought Kenny and X-Ray would give us about the same short leash Starr gave the Garys," says Cohen. "I thought our musical taste might be far too progressive for the venue, and Craig was always nervous about continually filling an entire week's worth of bookings, but Kenny was extremely supportive from the get-go. He let us update the way the 'Shoe ticketed shows and promoted its brand, and X-Ray loved our re-commitment to cutting edge roots music from Texas. He literally made us to go to our first SXSW in 1996, picked up Steve Jordan

and us at the airport, insisted we head over to the Green Mesquite for our first ever Texas meal, and taught us where and what we should be seeing. SXSW became our primary source of A&R; it's been like 22 years, and we haven't missed one yet.'

By 1998, the venue's reputation had evolved into the quintessential local venue to catch emerging artists like **The National, Death Cab For Cutie, Spoon, and Frank Turner, new recording release showcases for Billy Bragg, Bad Religion, The Dropkick Murphys, Soundtrack Of Our Lives, and Foster The People**, and surprise performances from industry heavyweights like the **Rolling Stones, Foo Fighters, Bryan Adams, Melissa Etheridge, The Tragically Hip, Blue Rodeo, and Dead Weather**.

Click [HERE](#) for a 'short list' of performers that have graced the venue over the years.

In the fall of 1998 Cohen was brought in as managing partner, Laskey took over the talent buying, before he too became an owner in the mid 2000's, along with in house comptroller Naomi Montpetit.

Says Cohen, "We're 3rd generation owners, having been given the opportunity by X-Ray and Kenny [Sprackman] to guide the venue into modern times, and not fuck it up. It's been close to 23 years now and I think I did ok. The 'Shoe is not just still in business, but the venue is just as relevant, musically, and culturally speaking, as it ever was, if not even more so."

Read more about the venue's history and various incarnations here: <http://www.horseshoetavern.com/our-history/>.

**For Horseshoe 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday Press Inquiries, contact:**

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