

For Immediate Release

Arts Commons Presents Invites Calgary to Free Party in the Plaza with Canadian Superstars Kardinal Offishall and Kiesza

July 17, 2023 - CALGARY – The greatest downtown summer send-off is coming to Calgary’s Olympic Plaza and it’s going to be one amazing party! In a killer double-bill, Hip-Hop trailblazer Kardinal Offishall and electro-pop dance diva Kiesza light up the front yard of Arts Commons for a FREE concert for the whole crew. Starting the night off are arts and culture amplifiers 10 at 10 who are curating a 50th anniversary Hip-Hop showcase of local artists. Join **Arts Commons Presents** for *Party in the Plaza with Kardinal Offishall and Kiesza* on **Wednesday, August 30, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.** at **Olympic Plaza**. Guests are invited to RSVP in advance for a chance to win an exclusive prize package. Visit artscommons.ca/party for more details!

Toronto native and ground-breaking artist Kardinal Offishall is widely recognized as Canada’s “Hip-Hop ambassador.” His work as a musician, producer and mentor paved the way for a generation of Canadian Hip-Hop artists and rappers, including the legendary Drake, who says about Kardinal, “You gotta understand one of the biggest rappers in the world to me is standing right here. He taught us everything we know.” Kardinal’s music has gained global admiration, claiming a Billboard Hot 100 spot with “Dangerous” alongside his collaborations on hit tracks such as “Numba 1” with Rihanna and “Just Dance” with Lady Gaga. In addition to being a pace-setting musician, he has dedicated his life to lifting up his fellow musicians and collaborators, while using Hip-Hop to educate and empower youth, artists, and music lovers alike, earning himself the 2023 Canadian Music Week’s Social Justice Award. He has also taken his philosophy for mentorship to television, serving as a judge on *Canada’s Got Talent*.

“I think my skill set is that I’m the bridge between generations and artists. That’s just what I do. That’s where my strength has always been,” says Kardinal Offishall. *“This is the energy that I want to bring to Calgary, and I can’t wait to party with the crowd at Olympic Plaza.”*

Born and raised in Calgary, Kiesza took the world by storm in 2014 with her debut album *Sound of a Woman*, which won her three JUNO Awards. The breakaway hit from that album, “Hideaway,” has earned over a billion streams. She was called “one of the decade’s most promising stars” by NME, “a dance diva” by BBC, and “armed with killer pipes” by USA Today. After a life-changing car crash put her on a two-year hiatus, Kiesza returned as an independent artist, releasing her sophomore album *CRAVE* through her own label Zebra Spirit Tribe, in 2020. The new decade marks a promising new beginning for one of the last decade’s biggest Canadian breakouts—and this time, she’s doing it her way.

“I love coming home to Calgary. Home really does give you perspective on how far you’ve come, and the more time goes by the more grateful I become for the city that raised me. I’m proud of where I come from. Calgarians are kind and sensitive beings, but we’re also big dreamers and our wild and free spirits can’t be tamed,” says Kiesza. *“I’ve been going back to my roots a lot lately and it’s coming through in my new music. This upcoming show will mark the end of one chapter and the beginning of another, as I begin to unfold my third album. I think Calgarians will understand this album more than anyone, because the new music holds a big slice of home in it. I’m excited to share some of what’s coming this summer and can’t wait for the show!”*

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Taking place at Olympic Plaza, *Party in the Plaza* invites you to enjoy an outdoor concert, for free! Stretch out on a picnic blanket or a festival chair in the grassy tiered areas or take the party to the dance floor in the pool pad (no water for this party!) Food trucks and gated beer garden will be available on site. For full details, and to sign up to receive event updates and more performer announcements, visit artscommons.ca/party.

Party in the Plaza with Kardinal Offishall and Kiesza is brought to Olympic Plaza by Arts Commons Presents, the presenting arm of Arts Commons. *Party in the Plaza* builds on the love for free outdoor summer concerts on Olympic Plaza like *Showtime: A Live Music Celebration*, a free outdoor concert that welcomed 1,500 socially distanced concert-goers during the pandemic, and ArtsXpeditions, a pop-up performance series from Arts Commons Presents that has energized thousands of Calgarians through free performing arts experiences.

"If you've never been to an outdoor concert on Olympic Plaza, it has an energy like no other – the crowd, the vibe, it's all distinctly Calgarian. It's our immense privilege to host these fabulous Canadian artists free of charge to a community that loves and craves live performing arts experiences," says Joshua Dalledonne, Associate Director of Social Impact at Arts Commons.

"Access to the arts is a basic human right, as recognized by the United Nations, and it is essential that Arts Commons and by extension, Arts Commons Presents, brings accessible arts experiences to our community," says Alex Sarian, President and CEO of Arts Commons. *"Showtime and ArtsXpeditions grew out of that need, and we are pleased to be able to continue to offer these live music experiences that have had such a positive impact on so many members of our community. Party in the Plaza is our way of sharing fabulous Canadian talent with our community in a way that everyone is welcome."*

What: Arts Commons Presents – Party in the Plaza with Kardinal Offishall and Kiesza
When: Wednesday, August 30, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. (Site opens at 6:00 p.m.)
Where: Olympic Plaza, Arts Commons
Tickets: 403-294-9494 or visit artscommons.ca/party

Arts Commons wishes to express our sincere appreciation to the Government of Canada through Canadian Heritage, the Government of Alberta through the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, Alberta Culture through Community Initiatives Program, our friends at The City of Calgary, and our supporting partners the Calgary Foundation and Calgary Downtown Association.

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Arts Commons Presents invites you to discover the transformative power of the Arts. As the programming arm of Arts Commons, the largest performing arts centre in Western Canada, Arts Commons Presents is one manifestation of this mandate, achieved through the programming and presenting of our in-house series: BD&P World Stage, Classic Albums Live, National Geographic Live, TD Amplify Cabarets, as well as the work that we do in the community. Through this work, we are able to do our part to further enrich our city, as well as create opportunities for Calgary-based artists on a multitude of levels.

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