



Featuring the award-winning Live at Massey Hall films, these free films offer insight into the Canadian music scene, with behind the scenes interviews with artists, stellar performances, plus short curriculum connected guides with pre- and post-viewing activities for select films. Activities can be completed synchronously or asynchronously, in-school or at-home.

Suggested age: Secondary school, some concerts contain explicit language. See specific details, notes, and highlights in the "Concert Highlights" section below.

ZAKI IBRAHIM



Zaki Ibrahim is a Canadian-born South African British-Scottish globally distinguished singer, producer, and songwriter. Her music combines many different elements and genres, including spoken word, hip-hop, soul, house, 70's pop, and more. Together, these elements in her music create a soundscape described as "a retro-Afrofuturist vision sending listeners on a journey through 40 years of electronic music" (Nuvo). Using theatrics and spontaneity in her shows, she is known for her excellent stage presence. She has had several songs nominated for multiple awards, including nominations for JUNO Awards, the Polaris Music Prize awards, and a South African Music Award for best R&B/Soul Album of the year. She has also collaborated and played with Erykah Badu, Saul Williams, and The Roots.

TALKING POINTS

What emotional effect does the opening piece have when it starts without an intense instrumental background? How does that change when the wall of sound from the instruments comes in? How are dynamics used in this opening song?

In some of the songs in the set, Zaki uses vocables (sounds instead of words in music). Do you know any other pieces that use this technique?

Zaki's set makes use of a combination of more musicians than a traditional band setup (singer, two electric guitars, bass, and drums). What musicians and instruments are included throughout this film? As you watch, keep track of the singers, backup singers, and instruments you see and hear in this film. Compare your list with a classmate.

Zaki embraces her Canadian and South-African culture in her music through her lyrics, instrumentation, and set. How do you or others you know to represent and embrace culture through art.



CONCERT HIGHLIGHTS AND NOTES

- 0-1:00** Zaki practices harmonies with her backup singers
- 14:23-16:26** Zaki talks about the significance of Massey Hall while guitarist solos and sings
- 27:32- 28-10** Vocables used in the music

ACTIVITY 1

Listen to a list of songs that use vocables: Ella Fitzgerald – “How High the Moon”, Fleetwood Mac – “Second Hand News” Scatman John – “Scatman (ski-ba-bop-ba-dop-bop)”, ABBA – “As Good as New”, The Proclaimers – “I’m Gonna Be (500 Miles)”, Blink-182 – “All the Small Things”, Stevie Wonder – “Living for the City”, DNCE, Nicki Minaj – “Kissing Strangers

How are vocables used in the songs? What instruments do you think the vocables are imitating? Do any of your favorite songs use vocables? Please make a list of those songs and write how the vocables are used in them.

ACTIVITY 2

Zaki Ibrahim often aims for spontaneity in her performances. Find your spontaneity! Find a simple instrumental track and try improvising some vocables over top. (Example: La la la, be bop ba bow, zip a zip a zabba za) Try and take inspiration from the tracks in activity one.

ACTIVITY 3

Dynamics (the variation in loudness between phrases or notes in a song) are essential in creating buildup, tension, and interest in music. As you listen to each of the songs in the film, draw a line when the dynamics are loud draw the line higher than the middle of the page; when the dynamics are softer, draw the line below the middle of the page. Notice when the line changes and how often it does.

ACTIVITY 4

Embrace your own culture! Find a song or style of music that comes from your culture of origin. Re-create your own song in that style. You can sing, play an instrument, or write lyrics that best represent your culture. You can have other elements from different types that you enjoy, but your cultural style of music must be dominant.



STAFF INTERVIEW Nancy Beaton, *Events Manager*

- *What is your role at the Corporation of Massey Hall and Roy Thomson Hall?*

I am the Events Manager, so I oversee the Events department which is comprised of event coordinators. Each event that takes place in either Massey Hall or Roy Thomson Hall has an event coordinator assigned to it. The event coordinator works with clients, artists and their management and MH/RTH staff to organize the tasks, schedules and logistics involved in staging and executing an event (concerts, receptions, corporate meetings, screenings, etc.). The event coordinator communicates event details and requirements to all involved and oversees activities on the event day to ensure that everything goes as planned and on schedule.

- *How did you get in the world of Event Management?*

I started working at Massey Hall as an usher part-time while I was in school. That position in Front of House led to a position in Box office and then a full-time position in the Administration office at Massey Hall. There I learned a lot about show business in general - how promoters book venues, how to budget for events, the technical requirements, marketing, ticketing, artist requirements, catering, transportation, crowd control, etc. In other words, I worked my way toward event management by learning as much as could about everything involved in producing an event.

- *Tell us more about your education, career path, and interests?*

I studied film at university thinking that I would make films one day. However, when I started working at Massey Hall part-time, I fell in love with the live event industry. It became apparent that this was where I wanted to be, so I focused on working at Massey Hall & Roy Thomson Hall.

- *How were you involved in Zaki Ibrahim's Live at Massey Hall?*

At the time of that show, I was the Venue Manager at Massey Hall, so I coordinated the efforts of the various departments involved in staging the concert and film shoot (see the Event Coordinator job description in question 1.) as well as generally overseeing venue operations - working both backstage attending to artists and front of house supporting the staff that service the patrons. I was also responsible for the financial reporting associated with the event.

- *Who do you work with at the Corporation of Massey Hall and Roy Thomson Hall??*

I work most closely with the Programming & Bookings departments who bring the events to us, and the Production department, who take care of all the technical aspects of events, but ultimately, depending on the event, I work with every department in the Corporation (Box office, Front of House, Food & Beverage, Security, Building Services, Marketing, Finance, I.T., Development, Partnerships, and Education & Outreach).

- *What is some advice you have for someone interested in pursuing a career in Event Management?*

Get involved in organizing any type of event you can find because every event is a learning experience and working on an event (whether you are being paid or volunteering) is the only way to learn how to manage an event. Hands-on experience is the best.

- *What is your favourite part of your job?*

My favourite part of my job has always been watching an audience appreciate a performance, and feeling the great satisfaction associated with knowing that my efforts helped to make the event a success. There is nothing more satisfying than seeing happy patrons, artists and clients at the end of the day.

- *What is your favourite memory of the Halls?*

There are hundreds of special memories - seeing Sinead O'Connor perform is one of my favourites, meeting Paul Weller, chatting with Bruce Springsteen right before he went on stage for a sold-out solo performance, Billy Idol, Feist, Tragically Hip, Elvis Costello, The Stray Cats, Stéphane Grappelli, Erasure, Tegan and Sara, riding in a limo with Tony Bennett, Bill Clinton and his Secret Service, the Dalai Lama, Tom Jones, Sting, Iggy Pop, Patti Smith, kd lang, The Cranberries, Joni Mitchell, etc. etc. etc...but I have to say that my most memorable moment to date was when the entire staff of MH and RTH all gathered on stage to sing together and celebrate Massey Hall in 2018 before we had to say goodbye (for a few years) and close the Hall for renovations. It was much more emotional than you would expect. I'm sure the re-opening celebration at the end of 2021 will be even more memorable.

- *Are there any other comments you would like to share with student readers?*

Be sure to attend live concerts as soon as you can and as often as you can - nothing compares to the live experience.

Photos by Malcolm Cook

