



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 24, 2026

**Holla Jazz Explores the Life and Legacy of John Coltrane in  
Electrifying World Premiere of  
– *The Room Upstairs* –**

***Featuring jazz and lindy hop, The Room Upstairs honours Coltrane’s influence  
on the 100th anniversary of his birth***

**Toronto, ON** — In celebration of 10 years, **Holla Jazz**, in partnership with **DanceWorks** and **Toronto Dance Theatre**, presents the world premiere of ***The Room Upstairs***, on stage at the **Winchester Street Theatre**, on **April 29 to May 2, 2026 at 7:30pm**. Choreographed by Holla Jazz Founding Artistic Director Natasha Powell, *The Room Upstairs* is an ode to the indelible impact of John Coltrane, as one of the most influential musicians in the history of jazz—and a fitting tribute in the year that marks what would have been his 100th birthday. Through the vocabulary of black vernacular dances, and set to a live score of some of Coltrane’s most celebrated songs, Powell’s choreography ruminates on the inspirational beauty of Coltrane’s creative process—honed in a special room in the upstairs of his family home.

"For any jazz artist, Coltrane stands as one of the most towering figures of 20th-century music—his influence on my personal practice has been profound and lifelong," says Powell. "It feels deeply meaningful to be honouring his legacy in the same year we celebrate Holla Jazz's 10th anniversary—two milestones that speak to the enduring power of this art form and the artists who shape it. In creating *The Room Upstairs*, I was inspired not only by his music, but his creative process. He was an artist who prioritized his spiritual practice and deeply collaborative relationships with colleagues and family alongside the development of his craft. I wanted to explore the embodiment of Coltrane's special room through jazz dance — to find that creative space where the boundary between art and life dissolves."

*The Room Upstairs* marks Holla Jazz’s third full-length production, following the company’s Dora Mavor Moore Award-winning production of *Floor’d*, lauded for its “choreographic brilliance...exciting, yet cool, powerful and smooth” (*The Dance Current*). Fueled by a foundational movement of rhythm, improvisation, and personal expression, the work features four Toronto-based dancers: Raoul Wilke, Caroline “Lady C” Fraser, Hollywood Jade, and Miha Matevzic. Musicians Tom Richards (trombone), Thompson Egbo-Egbo (piano), Eric West (drums), Scott Hunter (bass), Colleen Allen (saxophone), and Rebecca Hennessey (trumpet) will bring Coltrane’s legendary music to life, with a score featuring “Syeeda’s Song Flute,” “Lazy Bird,” “Giant Steps,” “Naima,” “Aisha,” and “My Favourite Things.”

Additional creative credits for *The Room Upstairs* include: Jacob Gorzhaltzan (Music Director), Taylor Zalik-Young (Production and Stage Manager), Emerson Kafarowski (Lighting Designer), James Kendal (Scenic Design), and Seika Boye (Dramaturg).

*More...*

Powell is a Toronto native who has been working in the dance industry for 20 years. Through Holla Jazz, she has created award-winning productions, presenting historical jazz dances in a contemporary aesthetic. In addition to *The Room Upstairs* and *Floor'd*, she choreographed *Margarita*, commissioned by Fall for Dance North, and has collaborated with the National Ballet of Canada, and on theatre projects for Canadian Stage productions of *Choir Boy* (2022), and *Fall on Your Knees* (2023). She is the recipient of the 2023 Johanna Metcalf Prize in the Performing Arts, which celebrates Ontario artists across multiple disciplines.

For tickets and further information, visit: [hollajazz.com](http://hollajazz.com) and [tdt.org](http://tdt.org)

### **About Holla Jazz ([hollajazz.com](http://hollajazz.com))**

Holla Jazz is an award-winning dance company based in Toronto that explores soulful and funky approaches to jazz dance. The Holla Jazz experience is marked by their cool and contemporary way of producing fresh dance works, all while inspiring a lasting love and appreciation for jazz dance and music. The company's first full-length work, *FLOOR'D*, garnered a Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding Ensemble Performance, while *Young Gifted and Jazz* took home a Dora for Outstanding Production.

Established in 2016 by Artistic Director Natasha Powell, Holla Jazz was founded as a forum for developing and presenting artists that work and improvise together, to create harmonious and transformative experiences. The company aims to reinvigorate jazz dance with its sister dances including hip hop and house, as innovative and important vehicles for expression, while showcasing freedom and one's own identity through the spirit of jazz.

### **LISTING INFORMATION**

**Holla Jazz, in partnership with DanceWorks and Toronto Dance Theatre, presents *The Room Upstairs***

Dates: April 29 to May 2, 2026 at 7:30pm

Ticket Price: From \$15

Address: Winchester Street Theatre  
80 Winchester Street, Toronto

Box Office: [hollajazz.com](http://hollajazz.com)

Website: [hollajazz.com](http://hollajazz.com) and [tdt.org](http://tdt.org)

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