



RIP, TAY

Drake pays tribute after his young producer found dead at home at age 29

WE READY

After World Cup 2026, Toronto is ready to welcome the world again for Carnival 2026

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Ready for the CARNIVAL PARADE

North America's Largest Caribbean Carnival is back for 2026. Toronto Caribbean Carnival Grande Parade returns on Saturday, August 1st, 2026. Most of the parade is free along Lakeshore Boulevard.

Since 1967, North America's biggest Caribbean Carnival happens in Toronto every year.

The road becomes the stage for the masqueraders and steelpan performers. It truly is something you can't miss. Toronto Caribbean Carnival's Grande Parade continues to attract local, regional, national, and international attention by visitors and media as it is the highlight of the three-week Festival. This event continues to draw millions from all over the world to see the live performing street art year after year and on live streaming.

After months of preparation the city welcomes masqueraders in colourful and striking costumes as

they wind their way from the assembly area at Exhibition Place along Lake Shore Boulevard. Although most of the parade is free, admission applies to Exhibition Place where patrons have the opportunity to enjoy the parade of the Mas Bands. Masquerade bands end up in Exhibition Place where masqueraders can party until 6PM.

Most of the parade is held on Lakeshore Boulevard which is free but nightlife tickets are not.

Venue & Address: Exhibition
Place & Lakeshore Boulevard - 15
Saskatchewan Road, Toronto, ON

Date August 1, 2026

Time 8:00 AM - 8:00 PM

The festivities at CNE/Exhibition Place can be easily accessed by GO Train, with Exhibition GO Station located right next door.

Transit riders can also use their PRESTO Card to get a 20% discount on tickets to carnival events.



The Caribbean Children Foundation
www.tccfangel.com

Back to School

Name of child/patient- Shamoya Milton
Child/Patient's diagnosis- Scoliosis
Name and Address of Hospital-University Hospital of the West Indies, Mona, Kingston, Jamaica

The Caribbean Children Foundation is proud to let our supporters and friends know that we have successfully intervened in another case.

Shamoya Milton is a 13 year old student and athlete from Manchester, Jamaica. She loves track and field and dreams of one day representing her school—and even her country.

Shamoya was suffering from a severe spinal curve which caused significant pain and majorly hindered her functioning and wellbeing.

Her case was taken up by the United Rosetta Miriam Project Limited in Manchester, Jamaica, which began seeking donations for her treatment.

After TCCF and others stepped forward, Shamoya was successfully treated for Scoliosis, which corrected the painful curve in her spine.

In a letter to TCCF, Chaplain Dr. Hewton Fider, Director of United Rosetta Miriam Project, said, “We are writing to extend our deepest gratitude for your donation which led to successful Scoliosos surgery for young Shamoya.

“Shamoya was suffering from a severe spinal curve which caused significant pain and hindered her functioning and wellbeing.

“You answered the call for assistance without hesitation and with great care and compassion, making the vision for Shamoya’s healing a reality.

“Through your generosity, you have truly changed the



course of a life.

“From the first “cold call” outreach we placed to you seeking critical help for Shamoya, hope was alive and we were inspired by the personal responsiveness and incredible efficiency you showed in support of Shamoya and her family.

“You treated Shamoya’s need with urgency, which brought great encouragement to the family and those working on Shamoya’s behalf.

“Our sincerest thanks to your Board members who made this outcome possible. Your act of kindness and human service will be remembered always. May blessings be returned to you and multiplied.”

At TCCF, we’re very happy we were able to make a difference in young Shamoya’s life. We’ll continue to send positive thoughts and love across the miles to Jamaica, where this angel is now back in school.

Thank you for your support. Without it, we could not make a difference in lives like Shamoya’s. We wish her all the best for a healthy and positive future.



She’s back in school!

RIP, TAY

Drake pays tribute to collaborator Tay Keith, found dead at 29

Drake is paying tribute to his late collaborator, Tay Keith.

The Toronto rapper took to Instagram over the weekend to honour the Memphis-born producer, who on Thursday was pronounced dead at 29.

In a post, Drake expressed his “endless and eternal gratitude” for Kay’s spirit and contributions to hip-hop, sharing a black-and-white photo of the chart-topping hitmaker shrouded by illustrated roses.

“You will be deeply missed,” added the rapper.

Keith’s production credits with Drake span multiple hits, including 2018’s “Nonstop” and “Sicko Mode,” the Travis Scott smash featuring Drake.

The Grammy-nominated producer, born BryTavious Chambers, was found dead Thursday in his Nashville apartment during a welfare check, according to the Metro Nashville Police Department. Authorities said there were no



Tay Keith — found dead at home. Below, Drake



signs of foul play.

The Tennessee native also produced songs for Beyoncé, Eminem, 21 Savage, Miley Cyrus and several other musicians.

More recently, he worked on “What Did I Miss?” from Drake’s album “Iceman.”

A statement released by Keith’s family commemorated the producer for his achievements both in and out of the studio.

“BryTavious was a visionary producer, songwriter, entrepreneur, philanthropist, and

cultural force whose work helped define the sound of a generation,” read the statement.

“From Memphis to the global stage, he shaped countless hit records and left a lasting mark on music and culture.”

The cause of Keith’s death is pending autopsy results.

Keith hailed from Tennessee and worked with music’s biggest stars, including Beyoncé and Drake. His career included four No. 1 records on the Billboard Hot 100.

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WHEN THE WOUND Still Speaks

There are moments in life when something happens in the present, but what rises in you feels older than the moment itself. I know what that feels like, and maybe you do too. Someone says something, someone pulls away, someone overlooks you, someone disappoints you, and suddenly what comes up in you feels deeper than what just happened. It is not only frustration. It is not only sadness. It is something more tender than that. It is like a younger part of you has been touched and is suddenly awake.

That is why I wanted to talk about the inner child, but not in a way that sounds heavy or far removed from real life. I want to say it simply. The inner child is the part of you that still carries the feelings, hurts, fears, and memories from earlier experiences, especially the ones that shaped you deeply. It is the part of you that remembers what it felt like to be hurt, ignored, rejected, frightened, judged, left out, or not loved in the way you needed. That younger part does not disappear just because you get older. You may grow stronger, wiser, more capable, more independent, more accomplished, or more guarded, but that does not always mean the old pain is gone. Sometimes it just goes quiet until something touches it.

I think this is why certain things can hurt more than they seem they should. Being left out may not only feel like being left out. It may touch the old ache of not feeling chosen. Being criticized may not only feel like feedback. It may touch the old ache of never feeling good enough. Being ignored may not only feel upsetting. It may touch the old ache of feeling unseen or unimportant. A person pulling away may not only feel disappointing. It may wake up the old fear of being left. When that happens, the wound is not just sitting in the past. In that moment, it is speaking right now.

So many people are hard on themselves when this happens. They think, I should be over this by now. Why does this still bother me? Why does this still hurt? I understand that, because it can feel frustrating when something touches you so deeply and you thought you

had moved past it. But pain does not always leave just because time has passed. Some wounds stay quiet until something stirs them. And when they are stirred, they do not always show up looking soft or obvious. Sometimes they show up as anger, defensiveness, shutting down, going quiet, overreacting, people-pleasing, over-explaining, acting like you do not care, or pulling away before anyone can get too close.

That is why this matters. Not because it is a phrase people like to use, but because it helps explain why certain feelings can feel so immediate and so personal. A younger part of you may still be carrying the emotional memory of what happened, and when something in the present feels similar, that part reacts. It does not stop and say this is different now. It just feels the ache and responds. That is why you can know, as an adult, that something should not hit this hard, and still feel it all through your body. Your adult mind may know one thing, but the younger hurt part of you may still be feeling something else.

Sometimes that younger part is still carrying hurts and needs that did not get the care they needed. The need to feel safe. The need to be seen. The need to be heard. The need to be comforted. The need to be chosen. The need to know that you mattered without having to perform, prove, please, or be perfect. If those things were missing, even in small ways over time, it leaves a mark. Then a person grows up still reaching for some of that in different ways. That can look like needing reassurance all the time, fearing rejection, over-giving, struggling with boundaries, staying in painful situations too long, or constantly looking outside of themselves for the comfort they did not fully receive.

I have seen how easy it is for people to think they are just like this, when really they are living from old pain. A person may say, I always overthink. I always expect the worst. I always pull back first. I always need reassurance. I always struggle to trust. But underneath those patterns, there is often a younger wound still trying to protect itself. It learned something

early, and now it keeps expecting the same kind of hurt. Not because you are broken, but because some part of you is still bracing.

And let me say this gently, because I think it matters. The wound is not always created by one big dramatic moment. Sometimes it is. But sometimes it comes from little moments repeated over time. A child who is constantly dismissed learns something. A child who feels emotionally alone learns something. A child who has to be the strong one learns something. A child who gets love more easily when they are performing, pleasing, or being useful learns something. A child who is corrected more than comforted learns something. Those small moments build messages over time, and those messages shape how that child sees themselves, other people, and the world.

That is why healing is not only about understanding what happened. It is also about learning how to respond differently to the part of you that still hurts. So many people keep trying to push past their pain, talk themselves out of it, or shame themselves for still feeling what they feel. But the younger wounded part of you does not heal by being scolded. It heals by finally feeling safe enough to be seen, heard, understood, and cared for.

Sometimes that begins with something very simple and very honest. This hurts more than I want to admit. This touched something old in me. This is not only about today. There is something in me that still feels small, scared, rejected, unseen, or alone. That kind of honesty can feel uncomfortable, but it can also be the beginning of real healing. Because once you stop denying the wound, you can start tending to it with more truth and more care.

That may mean asking yourself what that younger part of you needed and did not receive enough of. Comfort. Protection. Encouragement. Gentleness. Reassurance. Permission to be yourself. Sometimes even asking those questions opens something important, because it shifts you from self-judgment to self-understanding. You stop standing over yourself with



HEART
& SOUL

with
Dianne Ojar



criticism, and start sitting with yourself with a little more compassion.

It also helps you recognize when you are reacting from the wound instead of only from the present. That does not mean your feelings are false. They are real. But it does mean you can begin to separate the now from the then. You can begin to say, this is what is happening right now, and this is what it is touching in me. That kind of awareness creates space. And in that space, you get to choose something different. Maybe instead of abandoning yourself, you stay with yourself. Maybe instead of pretending you do not care, you admit that you do. Maybe instead of making yourself wrong for feeling deeply, you meet yourself with a little more kindness.

I do not believe healing the inner child means living in the past. I believe it means finally bringing care to the places in you that did not get enough of it before. It means recognizing that some of your strongest reactions may be carrying old pain, and that pain does not need more shame. It needs tenderness, truth, and support. So if certain things still hit deeply, if certain patterns keep repeating, if some part of you still feels small in moments that should not make you feel that way, please know this. It does not mean you are weak. It does not mean you are too much. And it does not mean you have failed at healing. It may simply mean that a younger part of you still needs your attention. And once you begin meeting that part of yourself with more kindness, more honesty, and more care, something starts to soften. And when that starts to soften, real healing has room to begin.

About the Author

Dianne Ojar is an author, speaker, transformational guide and Kuan Yin Lineage Holder with professional credentials through the American Board of Hypnotherapy and the American Board of Neuro-Linguistic Programming.

STOP IT!

Leonard Cohen's estate slams Trump for use of 'Hallelujah' at Freedom 250 rally

The estate of legendary Canadian singer-songwriter Leonard Cohen says it did not authorize the use of his iconic song "Hallelujah" prior to its live performance at a rally for U.S. President Donald Trump.

In a statement posted to social media Wednesday, the Leonard Cohen Estate said it has learned that the song "Hallelujah" was scheduled to be performed at a Trump rally on Wednesday.

"This use is not authorized, and the Estate does not support or approve of this or any similar usage," the statement read.

Trump's rally, also commemorating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Declaration of Independence on July 4, took place at the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

Master Gunnery Sergeant Kevin Benier and opera singer Christopher Macchio performed the song together - signalling the third time the song has been played at Trump's rallies.

The Cohen estate's legal representative Michelle L. Rice released a statement in 2020 denouncing the use of the song at the Republican National Convention.

Rufus Wainwright, whose cover of the song was included in the 2001 film "Shrek," said in 2024 says he was "horrified" to learn that Trump played his cover version during a presidential campaign event in Pennsylvania.

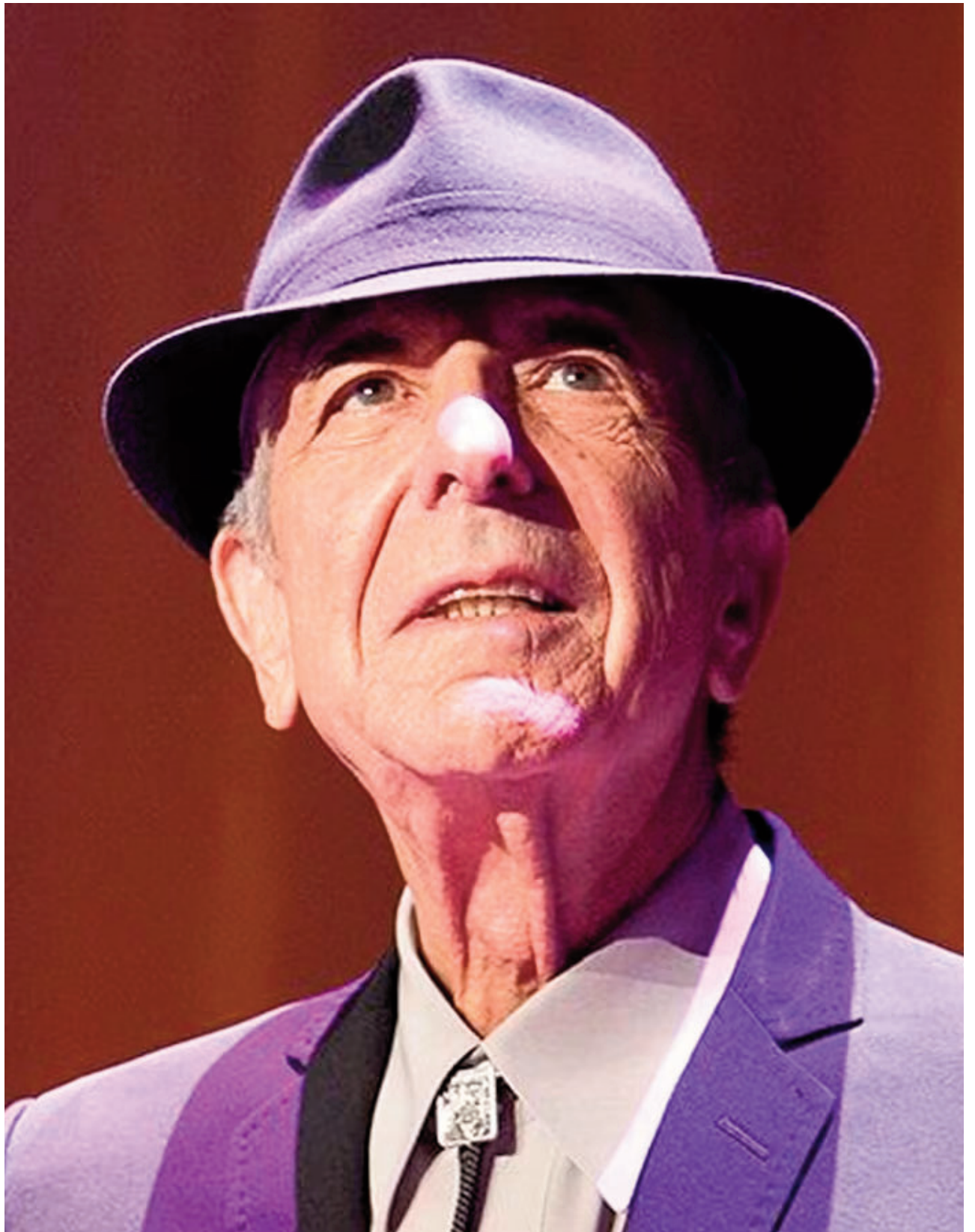
The Cohen estate did not specify whether the estate had taken legal action to prevent its use.

"Hallelujah" was originally written and recorded by Cohen for his 1984 album "Various Positions."

Along with Wainwright's version, Jeff Buckley's 1994 acoustic cover is also widely known and featured on his album "Grace."

The Cohen estate's objection highlights a long-running tension between political campaigns and musical artists over the use of copyrighted songs at rallies and campaign events.

Celine Dion, her management team and record label Sony opposed the use of her award-



The late Leonard Cohen - wrote Hallelujah in 1984

winning song "My Heart Will Go On" at a Trump and U.S. Vice-President JD Vance rally in 2024. Also in 2024, Rock band Foo Fighters did not give Trump's campaign permission to play their song "My Hero" at campaign rally.

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Barack's my man

Michelle Obama says her love is a light she's grateful to carry

Michelle Obama's love for Barack Obama has been a light she's grateful to carry.

More than three decades after the former president of the United States met and tied the knot with the former first lady in her native city of Chicago, she posited what her life would have looked like had the couple not married.

"We are each other's counterbalance," Michelle—who shares daughters Malia, 27, and Sasha, 25, with Barack—told People in a joint interview with her husband published June 24. "The truth is, I probably would have been someone who stayed more put. I think I would have had a beautiful life here, but it would have been smaller."

"But because of who my husband is, he offered all of us—our girls, my mom, my family—a broader sense of what's possible in life," she continued. "He made me think more broadly about what I could do with this Harvard law degree besides be a lawyer. He gave me the courage. He was my ballast."

Plus, through the ups and downs of their relationship and Barack's historic political career, the 62-year-old could always count on her husband's encouragement.

"You provide the forward push that sometimes some of us don't have," she said to the former politician. "I think it's been good for me to be a little shaken, to be pushed to do more than what I thought I could do."

For Barack's part, he shared insight into how his wife's strength laid the foundation for their lasting marriage.

"She grounds and anchors me," the 64-year-old reflected. "We've been together for 34, going on 35 years. I knew almost immediately and it looks like I made a pretty good bet. This was a one-of-a-kind woman with the integrity and character, smarts and values to make me better. Just being with her made me better, and she still does."

The *Becoming* author and Barack have al-



The Obamas

ways been sure to show their love out loud, with the matriarch most recently paying tribute to her husband on Father's Day.

"He shows our daughters every day what it truly means to be a man," she wrote on Instagram June 21 with a photo of their family. "Thank you for setting the bar high for them."

Meanwhile, Barack honored Michelle on Mother's Day one month earlier with his own loving message.

"I'm grateful for all the ways you've shown up for our daughters and our family over the years," he captioned the May 10 message alongside a snap of a throwback photo of the couple kissing. "We love you."

The future President and First Lady met when Barack took a job at the Chicago law firm Sidley & Austin to help pay off his student loans. Michelle was assigned to be his advisor for his summer job.

"I remember being struck by how tall and beautiful she was," Barack recalled of his first impression of Michelle to O, The Oprah Magazine in 2007. "She, I have since learned, was pleasantly surprised to see that my nose and ears weren't quite as enormous as they looked in the photo I'd submitted for the firm direc-

tory."

After their first meeting, it took a while for Michelle to agree to go out on a date with Barack.

"I asked her out. She refused. I kept asking. She kept refusing," he admitted to O nearly two decades later. "'I'm your advisor,' she said. 'It's not appropriate.' Finally, I offered to quit my job, and at last she relented."

For their first date, the two saw went to the movies to see Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing* followed by a trip to Baskin-Robbins for a post-movie treat, where they shared their first kiss.

"He played it real smooth," Michelle told 20/20 in 2018. "He just leaned in for a kiss and that really was it. From that kiss on we were — it was love, and he was my man."

Two years later, Barack popped the question over dinner at a Chicago restaurant, catching Michelle off-guard as she didn't think they were on the same page about marriage.

"He reached for my hand and said that as much as he loved me with his whole being, he still didn't really see the point," she wrote in her memoir *Becoming*. "Instantly, I felt the blood rise in my cheeks...Really? We were doing this now?"

After all, the couple had gone back and forth debating the concept of marriage over dinner only for their conversation to come to a halt when the waiter delivered their dessert. Instead of a piece of chocolate cake sitting on Michelle's dessert plate, however, there was a dark velvet box with a diamond ring inside.

More than a year after the date night proposal, Barack and Michelle tied the knot on October 3 in Chicago's Trinity United Church of Christ.

"Twenty five years later, we're still having fun, while also doing the hard work to build our partnership and support each other as individuals. I can't imagine going on this wild ride with anybody else."

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Soccer Loss

Young French player drowns during Paris heatwave

The French soccer community is mourning the loss of a rising star.

Kenzo Kies, an athlete who played for En Avant Guingamp and trained with AS Saint-Étienne, died June 22 after drowning in the Rhône river near Lyon, France, the city's prosecutor's office told French outlet BFMTV. He was 21.

Kies, who was swimming with two friends in an area of the river where swimming is prohibited, was pulled from the water just after 5:30 p.m. local time on June 22, prosecutors told the outlet.

While the others in Kies' party were not harmed, authorities told BFMTV, the athlete was taken to the hospital where he was declared brain dead.

Following the tragedy, AS Saint-Étienne, where Kies was part of a youth

training program, shared a touching tribute.

"The Green Generation is in mourning," AS Saint-Étienne wrote in a social media statement translated from French. "A resident of the Robert-Herbin Sports Centre for seven years—a talented player and a quiet young man liked by all—Kenzo Kies has lost his life in tragic circumstances."

The soccer club added that it "extends its deepest condolences to his loved ones, as well as to the teammates and coaches who shared part of his journey at the club."

Meanwhile, EA Guingamp, where Kies signed last summer, also spoke out after learning of their young player's death.

"En Avant Guingamp extends its most sincere condolences to Kenzo Kies' family as well as to all his loved ones," the team wrote in its statement.



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Rihanna joins Shakira and Elton Jon on the list of star philanthropists

STAR POWER

Rihanna named to Time Magazine's Top 100 Philanthropy List

For years, Rihanna has dominated headlines through music, fashion, and business, but her latest recognition spotlights her humanitarian impact across the Caribbean and beyond.

The Barbadian superstar has been named to TIME magazine's inaugural TIME100 Philanthropy list, alongside global figures such as Elton John and Shakira for her ongoing charitable work through the Clara Lionel Foundation.

Rihanna earned her place in the publication's "Trailblazers" category, making her the only Barbadian artist on the prestigious list and solidifying her status as one of the Caribbean's most influential global figures.

While the world often associates Rihanna with chart-topping hits, a billion-dollar beauty empire in Fenty Beauty, and her Super Bowl halftime performance, TIME's recognition highlights another side of the entertainer—one dedicated to service, resilience, and regional uplift.

Founded in 2012 following the death of her grandmother from

cancer-related complications, the Clara Lionel Foundation was named in honor of Rihanna's grandparents, Clara and Lionel Braithwaite. Its first major initiative was deeply personal: donating a modern radiotherapy machine to the Barbadian hospital where her grandmother received treatment.

Over the years, that act of giving evolved into one of the Caribbean's most impactful philanthropic organizations. According to TIME, the foundation has directed more than US\$100 million toward causes including climate resilience, healthcare, education, arts and culture, and women's entrepreneurship across the Caribbean, the United States, and East Africa.

The publication also noted Rihanna's efforts in disaster preparedness throughout the region. Following devastating hurricane seasons in 2017 and 2018, the Clara Lionel Foundation began strengthening Caribbean health clinics by reinforcing infrastructure and introducing solar-powered systems to help communities better withstand future storms.



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GIFT CARD FLYING

Caribbean Airlines launches flexible way to pay for travel



Caribbean Airlines has rolled out a new Digital Gift Card program aimed at giving customers a more flexible way to pay for and share travel across its network.

Launched on June 24, 2026, the feature allows customers to purchase digital gift cards through the airline's dedicated platform, giftcards.caribbean-airlines.com, and redeem them toward eligible services, including airfare, extra baggage, pre-ordered meals, and preferred seating.

The airline said the initiative is part of broader efforts by Caribbean Airlines to improve customer convenience and expand payment options for travellers.

"We are continuously looking for ways to enhance customer experience and make travel

more convenient," said Chief Executive Officer (Ag.) Varma Khillawan. "The introduction of digital gift cards provides customers with a practical and flexible way to support travel for themselves or others, whether for special occasions, family visits, business travel or future travel planning."

The digital gift cards will be delivered electronically via email and can be redeemed online, through the airline's reservations call centre, as well as at airport and city ticket offices.

Customers will also be able to store multiple gift cards and travel vouchers in a digital wallet system, designed to simplify management and use across bookings.

Available year-round, the program is positioned for both personal gifting and corporate use, including incentives and employee rewards.

Additional details, including denominations, terms, and redemption rules, are available via the airline's official gift card portal.

Daily flights direct to Guyana

Caribbean Airlines will introduce daily non-stop flights between Toronto and Georgetown beginning July 1, increasing capacity on a route supported by growing business, leisure and family travel.

The airline said the expanded schedule will provide passengers with greater flexibility during the peak summer travel season while strengthening links between Guyana and Canada.

Guyana is one of Caribbean Airlines' most important and fastest-growing markets, according to acting Chief Executive Officer Varma Khillawan.

"The introduction of daily Toronto-to-Georgetown flights reflects our commitment to meeting customer demand and strengthening

connectivity between Guyana and North America," Khillawan said.

He added that the service will accommodate passengers traveling for business, leisure, education and family visits.

The route is also expected to support travel by members of the Guyanese diaspora in Canada while facilitating tourism, trade and other economic activity between the two countries.

Under the new schedule, Flight BW616 will depart Georgetown daily at 9:20 a.m. for Toronto. The return service, Flight BW617, will leave Toronto at 4:50 p.m. for Georgetown.

Tickets are available through the airline's website, mobile app, reservations center, ticket offices and travel agents.

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THE REAL FLIPPA MAFIA

US prosecutors say dancehall singer ran a fentanyl ring in NJ, PA

Federal prosecutors say a drug trafficking organization linked to Jamaican recording artist Flippa Mafia “flooded communities” across New Jersey and Philadelphia with fentanyl, methamphetamine and cocaine, following the arrest of five alleged members and associates in a long-running federal investigation.

The case, announced by the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of New Jersey, stems from what authorities describe as a coordinated probe involving wiretaps, controlled drug purchases, surveillance and search warrants conducted by federal and state law enforcement agencies.

At the center of the allegations is Andrew Davis, also known as “Flip Mogella” and “Floss King,” a Jamaican citizen living in Pennsylvania. Prosecutors say Davis played a central role in the alleged operation and is known in Jamaica’s music scene as Flippa Mafia.

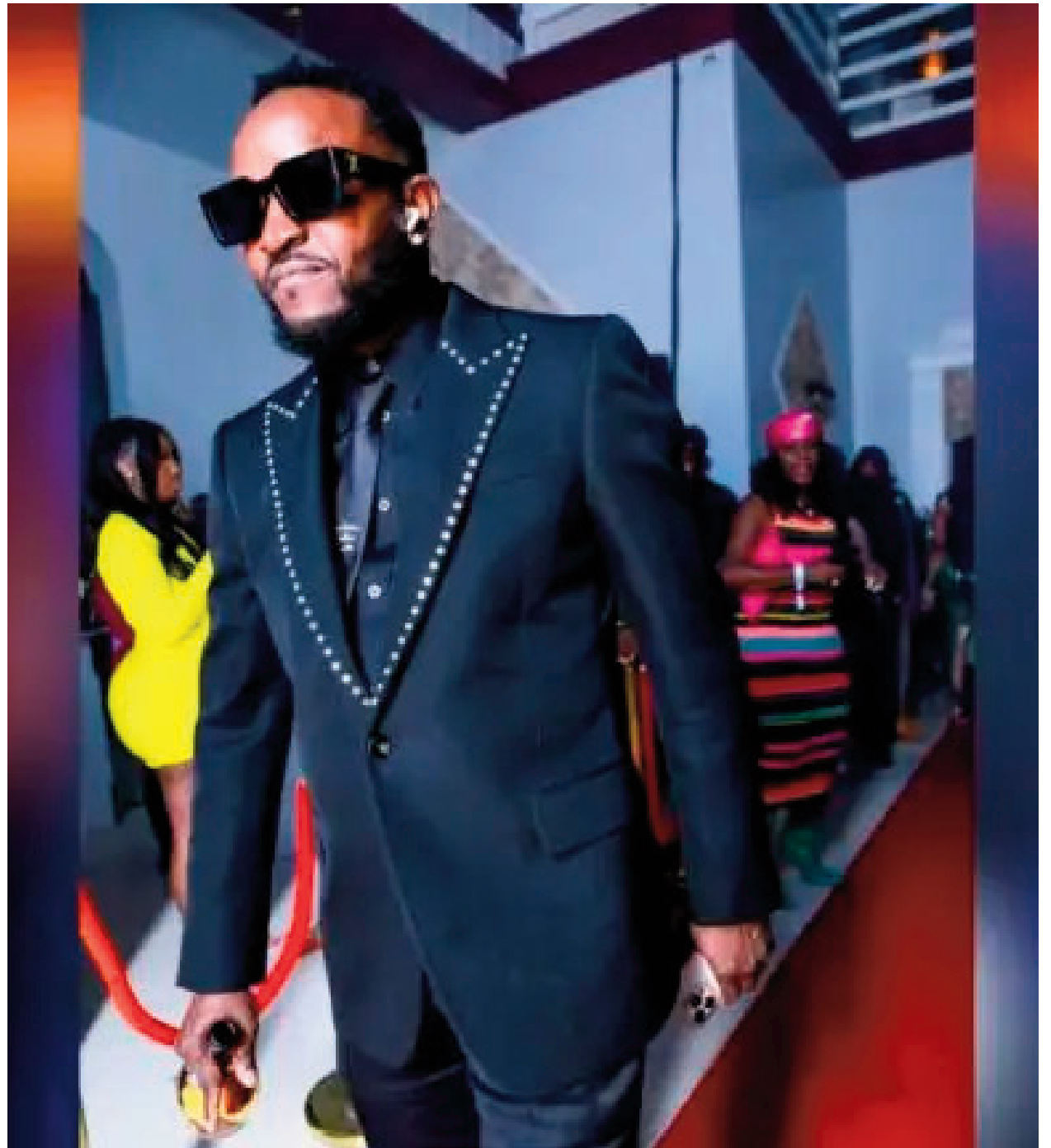
Authorities allege the group operated across state lines and used package deliveries to supply narcotics to addresses they controlled in southern New Jersey and Philadelphia, before redistributing them throughout the region.

Officials say the investigation resulted in the seizure of significant quantities of drugs, including more than 38 pounds of suspected methamphetamine, more than 7.5 kilograms of suspected cocaine and nearly one kilogram of fentanyl or fentanyl analogue.

The five defendants — Davis, Clifford Brown, Damion Jones, James McBride and Jule Stubbs — were detained following initial appearances in federal court in Camden.

Prosecutors say the case reflects broader efforts to dismantle transnational drug networks operating in the United States.

U.S. Attorney Robert Frazer said: “As alleged, this drug trafficking organization distributed large quantities of fentanyl, methamphetamine, and cocaine throughout southern New Jersey and Philadelphia while operating across state and national borders. Working through the Homeland Security Task Force and alongside our federal, state, and local partners, this Office is committed to dismantling transnational drug trafficking networks that flood our communities with deadly narcotics and



Flippa Mafia: remanded into custody

fuel violence and addiction.”

DEA New Jersey Field Division Special Agent in Charge Towanda R. Thorne-James also emphasized the impact of the investigation, saying:

“This investigation dismantled a drug trafficking organization responsible for flooding communities across southern New Jersey and Philadelphia with dangerous quantities of fentanyl, methamphetamine, and cocaine. The seizures in this case represent lives potentially saved from the devastating impact of these deadly narcotics. DEA and our law enforcement

partners remain committed to targeting transnational criminal organizations that profit from addiction and violence, and we will continue using every investigative tool available to identify, disrupt, and dismantle these networks operating in our communities.”

If convicted, the defendants face mandatory minimum sentences of 10 years in prison and up to life imprisonment.

Officials said the case is part of the Homeland Security Task Force initiative, which coordinates federal, state and local agencies in targeting transnational criminal organizations.

THE LAST TUNE

Trinidad Steelpan icon Robert Greenidge dies at 76

Pan Trinbago has paid tribute to legendary pannist Robert Greenidge, describing him as one of the most influential figures in the history of the steelpan movement, following his death in the United States in late June at the age of 76.

In a statement, the national steelpan organisation said it “honours his life, his legacy, and his immeasurable impact on the steelpan fraternity,” adding that his music and influence would continue to resonate across panyards and stages worldwide. It extended condolences to his family, friends, and the wider cultural community.

Greenidge, who had been ailing following a stroke, was born in Success Village, Laventille, Trinidad and Tobago, and began playing pan at the age of eight with The Savoy Steel Orchestra under the guidance of his uncle, pannist Carl Greenidge. He later performed with the Desperadoes Steel Orchestra under Rudolph Charles and musical director Emmanuel “Corbeau Jack” Riley.

Over the course of a career spanning more than five decades, Greenidge became one of the most internationally recognised steelpan musicians, helping to bring the instrument into global mainstream music.

From the 1970s onward, Greenidge performed extensively abroad, appearing on American television programmes including Saturday Night Live and the Jackson Five Special, as well as contributing to film soundtracks and commercial recordings.

He also performed at the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland, where he shared the stage with jazz greats such as Stan Getz and Jimmy Smith, further cementing his reputation as a global ambassador for the steelpan.

Greenidge’s recording career included work with major international artists such as Grover Washington Jr., Robert Palmer, Ringo Starr, Earth, Wind & Fire, Carly Simon, and John Lennon, among others.

One of his most widely recognised contributions was on Grover Washington Jr.’s “Just the Two of Us,” produced by Ralph MacDonald, which became an international hit and remains a defining recording of the era.

He was also a long-time member of Jimmy Buffett’s Coral Reefer Band and the instrumen-



Robbie Greenidge — began playing pan at the age of 8

tal group Club Trini, further expanding his influence across Caribbean, jazz, and popular music circuits. Beyond his international work, Greenidge remained closely tied to Trinidad and Tobago’s Carnival culture, performing regularly at Panorama competitions and winning national titles with Desperadoes Steel Orchestra in 1991

and 1994 with his own compositions.

His passing has prompted an outpouring of tributes from across the Caribbean cultural community, with Pan Trinbago highlighting his role not only as a performer but as a cultural ambassador whose artistry helped elevate the steelpan onto the global stage.

WASN'T ME

Naomi Campbell blames lawyer for 'fraud and deception' at charity

Naomi Campbell has said that "identity fraud and deception" by a fellow trustee of her former charity was to blame for a serious misuse of funds.

Speaking at an appeal hearing to overturn a charity ban against her, Campbell alleged that co-trustee and lawyer, Bianka Hellmich, forged her signature and impersonated her using a fake email address to misdirect money that was intended for the charity, Fashion for Relief.

Her "only mistake" was trusting Hellmich, Campbell told the tribunal on Tuesday.

In 2024, Campbell was banned from running a charity for five years after a UK watchdog found widespread evidence of financial misconduct. She has always denied any wrongdoing.

Bianka Hellmich, who has previously told the Guardian there is "absolutely no truth to the allegations", was banned for nine years and a third trustee, Veronica Chou, was disqualified for four years.

The watchdog found that several thousands of pounds which should have gone to the charity was instead used on luxury hotels, spa treatments, cigarettes and security for the supermodel.

In written submissions, Campbell's lawyer, Andrew Westwood KC alleged that Hellmich "carried out a long-term and consistent scheme of mismanagement and deception in relation to the running of the charity" which she concealed from others.

Campbell, 56, also accused Hellmich of lying about her credentials as a charity lawyer, admitting that she did not do reference or credential checks because Hellmich "came across as a lawyer" and had worked in "official positions".

"I trusted the wrong person, what more do



Naomi Campbell

you want?" Campbell told the court, when pressed as to whether she should have done more due diligence.

"You trusted her too," she said, referring to The Charity Commission, "because you were in communication with her until we let you know that you were deceived."

When it came to their various roles as trustees, Westwood said that Hellmich had advised Campbell that she could "confine herself to a limited role" within the charity, "in effect, acting as a figurehead – while Ms Hellmich assumed responsibility for those regulatory and financial functions."

But in a written submission, the Charity Commission's lawyer, Faisal Sadiq argued that Campbell could not "abdicate" her responsibilities as a trustee to simply be a figurehead.

The tribunal heard that both Campbell's legal team and The Charity Commission have referred the forgery and fraud allegations to the police.

The Commission clarified that no individual had been reported, but rather a report was made on allegations of fraud and providing false or misleading information to the Commission.

FEELIN' BETTER

Lil Nas X says he's doing well after rehab and bipolar diagnosis

The pop star Lil Nas X has said he is "doing much better" and feels "less fear in my heart" after a mental health episode that culminated in his arrest last August.

In a moving, three-minute video statement, the musician shared that he had "been in rehab for a few months", after which he returned home to Atlanta to be with his family.

It was the star's first major update since last summer, when he was charged with attacking Los Angeles police officers after being found walking the streets in his underwear. He pleaded not guilty.

In April, a judge allowed the 27-year-old, whose real name is Montero Hill, to enter a mental health programme that will eventually lead to the charges being dismissed.

The Grammy Award-winner was eligible because of a subsequent diagnosis of bipolar disorder, with the judge noting Hill's behaviour at the time of his arrest had been "aberrant from his normal conduct".

Bipolar disorder is a lifelong mental health condition characterised by alternating periods of intense emotional highs and deep emotional lows.

Speaking on Instagram, Hill acknowledged that his diagnosis had been long overdue.

"I feel like I had known for like the past few years, but I didn't want to admit to it because I didn't want to have to take medication and, I don't know, have people think different of me," he said.

The musician said he had previously felt that his life posed enough challenges without the addition of a mental health problem.

"I mean, I'm already black and gay, like, damn, God," he joked. "Gay, bipolar, like I'm living life on extreme hard mode.

"But on a serious note, I'm doing much better, I'm feeling better, I'm creating freely, and there's less fear in my heart. I'm just smelling the roses."

The video statement saw Hill looking healthy, addressing the camera in front of a clear blue sky. He read from pre-prepared notes, acknowledging that he felt "awkward" and nervous to be talking after an extended break from social media.



Lil Nas X — posted an earnest and moving message to his Instagram page

The Atlanta-raised artist is best known for his breakout hit *Old Town Road* - a mixture of country and rap that spent a record 19 weeks at number one on the US charts, and won him two Grammys.

He followed it up with a series of genre-confounding singles like *Montero (Call Me By Your Name)* and *Industry Baby*, that established him both as a queer icon and a master manipulator of TikTok's algorithm. In 2023, Elton John hand-picked the musician to perform ahead of him on Glastonbury's Pyramid Stage.

Towards the end of his video statement, Hill

said he wasn't ready to return to pop stardom "just yet" - but promised there was "new music on the way"

"I've been doing music for seven years now," Lil Nas X said in switching gears near the end of the clip. "I wanted to let you guys know there is new music on the way."

He finished by addressing his fans directly. "We've been through so much together. Thank you guys for holding me down.

"I love you and all I want to do is continue to try to make you proud and make myself proud."



Gene Shalit (left) appeared on TV with his bushy moustache, comically pulled here by Italian actress Sophia Loren

END OF A CRITIC

Popular US movie reviewer Gene Shalit dies aged 100

Wisecracking veteran US movie critic Gene Shalit has died aged 100, his family has confirmed to his former network NBC.

The moustachioed reviewer became known for his playful humour, celebrity interviews and animated reviews in his personalised segment Critics Corner on NBC's flagship morning programme the Today show.

Shalit's family wrote that he "passed away peacefully today after 100 years of an amazing life". No cause of death was provided.

"The 'TODAY' Show was an extraordinary era for him," his family said in a statement shared with NBC News.

Shalit became a popular fixture in American households from the 1970s through to his retirement in 2010, stylistically standing out with his

thick-framed spectacles, polkadot bowties and frizzed hair, suffusing his segments with pun-filled wordplay.

Marking his 100th birthday earlier this year, the Today programme compiled a montage of famous celebrity interviews over his years, including Hollywood stars like Carol Channing and Liza Minelli, and director Steven Spielberg.

Presenters remarked that he would eke out personal confessions and emotional reactions from his guests through his skilful questioning.

He also interviewed the leading cast of Star Wars, Carrie Fisher, Harrison Ford and Mark Hamill, at the crescendo of the sci-fi franchise's popularity in the 70s.

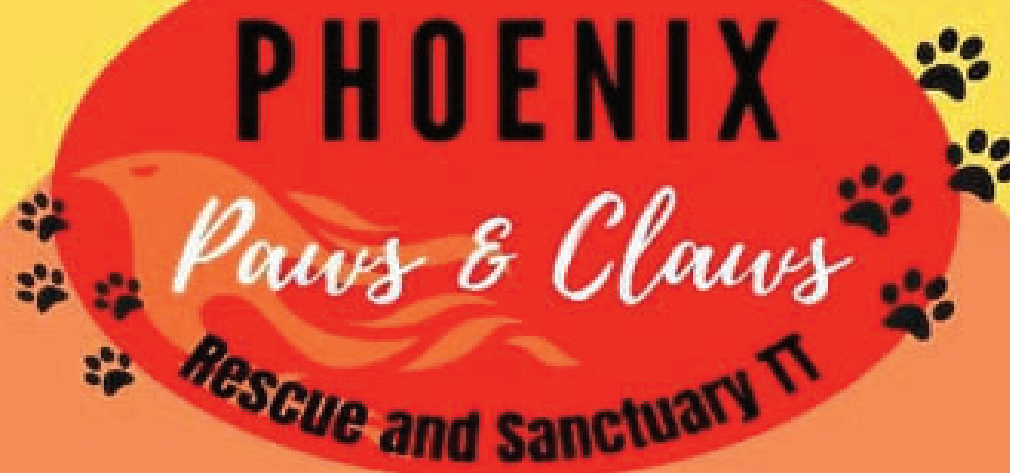
Prior to his TV career, Shalit was a senior film critic for Look Magazine, and continued to

spend years penning columns in the New York Times, Ladies' Home Journal and TV Guide.

In 2002, his book Great Hollywood Wit was published, an anthology he wrote features a "glorious cavalcade of Hollywood wisecracks, zingers, japes, quips, slings, jests, snappers, & sass from the stars", as teased on the front cover featuring a caricature in his unique likeness.

Shalit planned to write a book titled Procrastination is a Full Time Job upon retiring from the Today show, according to his network profile. It was never published.

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More Tears, less Blood & Sweat

Legendary Canadian rocker David Clayton-Thomas passes

David Clayton-Thomas, the Canadian front-man of Blood, Sweat & Tears, has died aged 84.

The Grammy Award-winning singer and songwriter passed away peacefully at a Toronto hospital on Wednesday, his publicist, Eric Alper, said. No cause of death was provided.

Clayton-Thomas is a Canadian Music Hall of Fame inductee, known for voicing hits like You've Made Me So Very Happy and Spinning Wheel.

The music legend sold more than 40 million records and helped shape the sound of jazz-rock in a career that started in the streets of Toronto and led to major stages like Woodstock.

As a teen, Clayton-Thomas lived on the streets and passed through a series of jails and reformatories. There he taught himself to play the guitar, finding his passion while performing concerts in jail.

Clayton-Thomas joined the jazz-rock band Blood, Sweat & Tears in 1968, becoming a crucial members of what became one of most popular groups of the late 1960s.

The same year, the band's self-titled album sold ten million copies worldwide, topping the Billboard chart for seven weeks. It won five Grammy Awards, including Album of the Year, beating the Beatles' Abbey Road.

They had three other signature hits that each reached No 2 on the Billboard Hot 100: You've Made Me So Very Happy, And When I Die, and Clayton-Thomas's own composition, Spinning Wheel.

In 1970, the band became the first rock group to break through the Iron Curtain, touring eastern Europe at the request of the US state department.

A 2023 documentary, What the Hell Happened to Blood, Sweat & Tears", later reported that the Nixon administration had given Clayton-Thomas an ultimatum to go on the tour in exchange for US permanent residency, or be forced to leave the country.

The band faced blowback at the time for associating itself with the administration, particularly from antiwar activists.



David Clayton-Thomas, lead singer of Blood, Sweat & Tears

Clayton-Thomas left the band in 1972, attributing his departure to exhaustion from years of relentless touring.

He later released more than a dozen solo albums and toured by himself before rejoining the band that brought him to fame in the early 1980s.

Clayton-Thomas is survived by his daughters, Ashleigh Clayton-Thomas and Christine Graham.

A memorial concert celebrating his life and

music will be held at a later date, with proceeds benefiting Peacebuilders Canada, a cause he cherished, his publicist said.

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RIP, CLIVE

Music mogul behind Whitney Houston and Bruce Springsteen, dies aged 94

Clive Davis, one of the most influential music executives in the history of rock and pop, has died at the age of 94.

A former head of Columbia and Arista Records, he signed and shaped the careers of artists including Aretha Franklin, Bruce Springsteen, Billy Joel, Whitney Houston, Santana, Janis Joplin, Christina Aguilera, Alicia Keys and many others.

He had recently been in hospital with respiratory problems and was recovering at home in Manhattan, New York, when he died, his family said.

"To the world, our father was the iconic music legend whose vision, instincts, and relentless pursuit of excellence shaped the soundtrack of countless lives," they said in a statement.

"He discovered, mentored, and championed the greatest artists in modern music history, leaving an indelible mark on culture that will endure for generations.

"To his family, Clive was Dad and Granddaddy, the steady presence at the centre of our lives, the source of wisdom, strength, encouragement, and unconditional love."

Among those paying tribute was Bruce Springsteen.

In a post on Instagram, the Born in the USA singer said that he was mourning the death of "the great record man" and a "close friend".

"At 22 years old, he changed my life when he signed me to Columbia Records," Springsteen wrote. "He treated me with the same respect and kindness as a 22-year-old nobody as

he did after all my success. A great man."

Another former client and rock iconoclast Patti Smith also posted on Instagram following news of his death.

"Thanking Clive Davis for transforming music, and on a very personal note, for believing in me, shepherding my efforts and a half century of your love and support."

Davis signed Whitney Houston in 1983, when she was just 19 years old, then spent years hunting for producers and writers who could make the most of her voice.

And Davis signed a 50/50 deal with Sean "Diddy" Combs' label, Bad Boy Records, which added acts like Notorious B.I.G. and Faith Evans to the roster in the 90s, before Diddy's conviction on prostitution-related charges last year.



Sebastian has been a hero for gay men over the centuries

Sebastian, the gay icon

A Roman soldier who was killed for his Christian beliefs, Sebastian has been a hero for gay men over the centuries – from Oscar Wilde to Keith Haring. Here's why.

Sebastian's emergence as a gay icon can be traced back to the culturally transformative Renaissance period of the 14th to 17th Centuries, when prominent artists including Guido Reni, El Greco and Sandro Botticelli depicted his arrow-pierced body with a smouldering homoerotic subtext.

Daniel Fountain, a senior lecturer in art history and visual culture at University of Exeter in the UK, tells the BBC that these arrows are generally perceived by art historians as a phallic "symbol of penetrative sex and queerness". People's History Museum director Clare Barlow, who curated Tate Britain's 2017 exhibition *Queer British Art 1861–1967*, believes the arrows "take on a huge psychosexual significance" in a lot of

these paintings whether this was the artist's intention or not. "And the fact that Sebastian is often painted as a very beautiful youth only makes him more entrancing," she adds.

During the Renaissance period, when attitudes towards homosexuality were much less tolerant, artistic depictions of Sebastian's lithe, desirable body became fashionable and fascinatingly ambiguous. Much like Michelangelo's 16th-Century masterpiece *David*, which crystallised an ideal of male beauty in marble form, paintings of this beautiful, persecuted saint served as an acceptable conduit for gay male desire.

Still, Barlow points out that it is "often very hard to track whether this was a particular artist's overt intention, or whether it was simply read into their work by a community of viewers who were hungry for representation". In some cases, it may well be a little of both.

Sebastian's gay icon status has burned just

as brightly since the 1969 Stonewall uprising ignited the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement.

In 1976, the influential artist, film-maker and gay rights activist Derek Jarman celebrated him in *Sebastiane*, a film deemed groundbreaking for its unselfconscious male nudity and positive depictions of gay sexuality. While Sebastian (Leonardo Treviglio) is lusted over by his commanding officer (Barney James), who eventually kills him, two fellow soldiers are shown enjoying a loving gay relationship. And Sebastian is still inspiring LGBTQ+ artists and performers and artists today. Having been painted by artists and embraced by queer thinkers for centuries, Sebastian's gay icon status is now as complex as it is unequivocal. But at this point, there is nothing marginalising about the way he is perceived. On the contrary, this historical figure, whom we know very little about, has become a bottomless wellspring of strength and creative inspiration.

EUROVISION TIME

Canada now eligible to join legendary competition

When countries from around the world take to the stage to participate in Eurovision next year, they could see a new competitor.

Canada is now eligible to take part in the song contest after CBC/Radio-Canada became a full member of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), a requirement to compete.

Prime Minister Mark Carney, who has been seeking closer political and economic ties with Europe since taking office last year, raised the idea of Canada joining the song contest in his 2025 budget.

Canada would not be the first non-European country to join the contest; Israel and Australia regularly compete, and Morocco competed in 1980.

The Carney government said in November that it was working with the CBC, Canada's public broadcaster, "to explore participation in Eurovision". His government's budget included C\$150m (£80m) in funding for the broadcaster.

Eurovision's rules state that participation in the contest is open to countries with broadcasting organisations that are members of the EBU.

Before Thursday, the CBC had been an "associate member".

"Canada's voice in this community makes us stronger," Noel Curran, director general of the EBU, said.

Even though Canada has not formally competed in Eurovision, Canadians have, and they have even won.

In 1988, Céline Dion, a Canadian from the province of Quebec, won the contest competing for Switzerland. The victory helped jumpstart Dion's storied career.

Other Canadians have since competed, including Natasha St-Pier, an Acadian New Brunswicker who represented France in 2001, and La Zarra, a singer from Montreal who represented France in 2023.

Other acts that went on to international stardom by winning Eurovision includes ABBA, which won the Eurovision Song Contest in 1974 representing Sweden with their hit song "Waterloo". This victory served as a massive launching pad for their international success, propelling the group to become one of the best-selling pop acts in music history.



ABBA: won Eurovision in 1974

ABBA's Eurovision win is often cited as the most famous moment in the competition's history. While the contest has launched many careers, ABBA remains widely regarded as the most successful group to emerge from Eurovision, transcending generations with their music.

ABBA split in 2018, and 35 years later released their first new music some 8 years ago.

While the members do not perform together, they released a cutting-edge digital avatar concert, ABBA Voyage, to support the new album of the same name.

The concert was performed in London at a special purpose-built venue.





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