swingtoronto.com

Swing Dancing

Live band swing dance party & classes every Saturday night!



Swing Toronto's favourite swing dance is Lindy Hop, the joyful swing dance of the Swing Era which is the most popular swing dance in the world today. We also love related dances from the 1920s and Swing Era like Charleston, Blues Dances, and Balboa.

There is no need to bring your own dance partners. Beginners and new people are welcome. Subway and parking are close by. Events are organized by and for dancers. No prior experience is needed. Events have big sprung wood dance floors in high ceilinged halls/ballrooms. Most people come to the Dances to dance, but some come just to hang out, hear the bands, and have drinks.

Our Swing and Waltz events are at Dovercourt House, a wonderful dance venue with big sprung wood dance floors and licensed bars one block north of Bloor Street and one block west of the west exit of the Ossington subway stop.

► Saturday Night Swing is every Saturday night at Dovercourt House from 7pm to past 1am featuring a great line up of beginner classes and Toronto's best swing bands!

Beginner classes before the Party 7pm to 9pm, Charleston class at 7pm, Lindy Hop class at 8pm.

Swing Party 9:10pm to 1am or later. Presented by Swing Toronto formerly called Odd Socks.

Dovercourt House, 805 Dovercourt Road, Toronto.

Normal prices: Dance \$13, \$15 with one class, \$18 with both, \$3 off for full-time students.

▶ Friday Night Blues on Yonge! Next one is Friday February 28. Blues band, beginner blues class!

Saturday Night Swing Schedule

- ➤ Saturday February 22 features **Combo Royale** and a **Hawaii Theme** presented by **Toronto Lindy Hop! Dan & Stephanie** of **Hogtown Swing** teach the beginner classes before the Party. **Late Night Blues** follows the band's last set til 3am with **DJs Brooke**, **Eddie** and **Carol!** Dovercourt House, 1st floor. (Late Night Blues is included with admission to Saturday Night Swing, or \$5 separate admission after 12:30am)
- ► Saturday March 1 features the Hot Five Jazzmakers! Teachers: Shannon & Kevin of Bees Knees

► Saturday March 8 features the Tia Brazda Swing Band!

➤ Saturday March 15 is a **double deck night** (two floors, two great swing bands), the Saturday Night Party of the **Toronto Toss Out Balboa Weekend**, and features both **Combo Royale** and the **Heidi Lange Swing Band!** (Special pricing: \$15, \$18 with one class, \$20 with both, \$3 off for full-time students)

► Saturday March 22 features Bertie (Roberta Hunt) & The Gents!

► Saturday March 29 features the Danielle Bassells Swing Band & is a TLH Theme Night!

Friday Night Blues on Yonge at The Hive

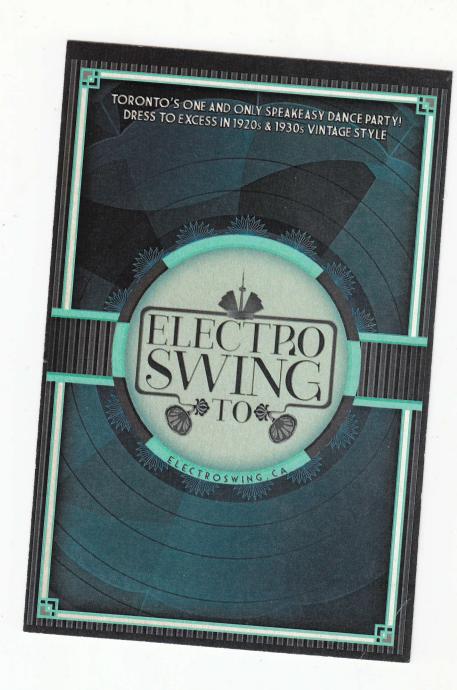
➤ Friday February 28 Blues Dance features the Mike Daley Blues Band!

Blues Dance beginner class at 8pm taught by Brooke Filsinger & partner. Blues Party 9:10pm to 1am. Special blues dance performances by the Saucy Meatballs and the Blues Battlers!

750 Yonge Street, one block south of Bloor. Dance \$10, \$13 with the class, \$8/10 for full-time students.

Waltz Dances, Classes & Workshops

➤ See the Waltz Schedule for details: www.mostlywaltz.ca Location: Dovercourt House.







Martin Freeman as the socially tortured Lester Nygaard in Farm the TV series, which debuts on FX and FXX Canada Tuesday.

British actor Martin Freeman adopted a different accent and culture for the television version of Fargo

PHILIP BROWN SPECIAL TO THE STAR

From his performance as the affably befuddled Tim on the original version of The Office to his work in projects as diverse as The Hobbit and Sherlock, Martin Freeman has proven himself to be one of the most charmingly embarrassed actors around.

This week he stars in the FXX new series Fargo (Tuesday at 10 p.m., FX and FXX), playing the socially tortured Lester Nygaard, whose life of small-town failure and mockery gets worse when a murderous Billy Bob Thornton comes to town.

Based on the Oscar-winning film by the Coen broth-

another project of Freeman's that expectations from a pre-ex-Isting for base. Yet the actor told the Star that's news something he considers.

Time treally easy to shut that out, to be hones. If never an issue," Freeman says. I kind of wonder why it would be and then people say why and I go, Oh yeah, I suppose Obviously I'm very aware of the Firm and I like it because they're fantastic filmmakers. But that wasn't enough to make me scared because I thought Noah Hawley wrote a fantastic script and we made that, not the film

Fargo the TV series takes the surpolite and passive aggressive Minnsetting, and a milieu of darkly comcrime and violence from the film. Bethose touchstones, it's an entirely di ent beast, yet one that should please one who appreciates the cultural pe liarities of the original.

For the decidedly British Freeman, turing that specific accent and cult was a challenge and one he enjoyed.

"Of course the character is informed where he's from because we all are, but didn't want to end up with a two-dime sional ripoff of an 18-year-old film," sz Freeman. "You see certain phrases on t page and you know this guy could not

Getting back into the swing of things

Once popular dance craze is making a comeback thanks to shows like Dancing With The Stars

DYLAN C. ROBERTSON SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Six strangers form a circle in a dance studio above a Yonge-Bloor shoe shop. They exchange some nervous

"Before we start, what image that comes to mind when you think of swing dancing?" asks Mandi Gould, founder of Bees' Knees Dance.

Responses vary. A middle-aged man in a suit mentions energy, while a teenager in a T-shirt is excited by jumps and swings.

"You do see some crazy moves with advanced dancers at competitions," Gould tells the group. "But you'll see that anyone can do Lindy Hop," the original form of swing dance.

Gould turns on a Louis Armstrong classic and leads the group through some simple movements. Within minutes, the suited man sways his hips, and a timid woman starts snapping her fingers.

DANCE continued on E4



HENRY CHAN JR./BEES' KNEES DANCE

Swing dance classes at Bees' Knees Dance, a Yonge-Bloor swing dance studio.

IT WHIS EASY! WE

Marmaduke



Students at Bees' Knees Dance show their stuff during a swing dance lesson.

Swing is becoming the thing again "I really like the dance; it's a lot of

DANCE from E1

The six congregated here are among hundreds of Torontonians who try swing dancing each year.

Studios and dance groups have noticed a recent uptick in those who catch the jitterbug.

"I do think it's become more popular recently," says Gould. She expanded Bees' Knees Dance into a permanent, full-time studio in 2012, after sharing a space for three years and renting rooms for 10 years. "More people are entering the

Cultural historians believe swing scene." dancing originated in the 1910s across African-American communi-

A partnered dance in Harlem called Lindy Hop gained mass media attention in 1927. The fast-paced jazz dance quickly spread across North America, sparking variations like the Charleston and the jitterbug.

Swing dancing gets its name from the variations or "swings" thrown into the rhythms of performed jazz music. Rock n' roll took over dance clubs after the Second World War. But swing saw a revival in the late '90s, when movies like Swingers or the Gap's "khaki swing" commercial brought the style to a mass audience.

"Groups and events have built up a Toronto community since the '90s," says Brian Gottheil, who co-founded UT-swing, a University of Toronto club, in 2007. "I think you now see the results of that, together with swing in the media."

Swing dancing is featured prominently in the recent Great Gatsby remake, and appears in shows like Boardwalk Empire and Dancing with the Stars. Meanwhile, the recent electro-swing genre has DJs combining old recordings with new sounds.

You do see swing dancing around more in the last few years, but I think it's really this welcoming community that brings people in," says UT-swing vice-president Hannah Bild-Enkin. "You get active, you meet people and you can be a total geek about it."

UT-swing has around 60 registered members, and 30 people usually show up for weekly drop-ins - half of whom are students. But the city's biggest weekly event happens at the Dovercourt House, where Swing Toronto holds a dance every Saturday

Shirqille Williams has come with two other U of T students to practice some basic steps. It was the Gatsby movie that originally led her to UTswing, and now the Dovercourt House.

fun and you feel like you're going back to the 1920s, which is really glamorous," she says.

For an hour, 50 strangers are paired together to learn or practice a sequence of standard moves. When dancing, these moves can be repeated and mixed.

By 10 p.m., training's over and the regulars arrive, some wearing top hats, suspenders or ball gowns. A live band serenades the crowd with trumpets and a bass violin.

"We've seen more people coming out on Saturdays over the past five years," says Simon Threlkeld, who leads Swing Toronto.

He estimates 100 people attend each Saturday's dance, with about 50 more for occasional competitions.

Scattered across the thumping floor, a handful of people wear red T-shirts marked "dance ambassador."

The non-profit group Toronto Lindy Hop sends volunteers to the city's events to help beginners perfect their technique.

"Swing dance is collaborative," says Threlkeld, peering across the dancefloor. Experienced couples chop their feet, while giggling beginners twirl back and forth.

"It makes it a lot of fun."

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essie Smith da Vinci James (1843)

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Normal prices: Dance \$13, \$15 with one class, \$18 with both, \$3 off for full-time students.

► Friday Night Blues on Yonge! Once a month, features a beginner class and usually an excellent live blues band! Blues beginner class at 8pm, Blues Dance Party 9:10pm to 1am. Band Night prices: Dance \$10, \$13 with the class (f/t students \$8/\$10).

Saturday Night Swing Schedule

► Saturday April 26 features Alex Pangman & Her Alleycats!

- ► Saturday May 3 is a Big Band Night featuring the swinging 18 member Toronto Jazz Orchestra! And featuring a Jill & Jack Theme presented by TLH! Dancing the opposite or both roles is encouraged, but is of course totally optional. (Big Band pricing: Dance \$18, \$20 with one class, \$22 with both, \$3 off for fulltime students.)
- ► Saturday May 10 features Bertie (Roberta Hunt) & The Gents!
- ► Saturday May 17 features Danielle Bassels Swing Band!

Friday Night Blues on Yonge at The Hive

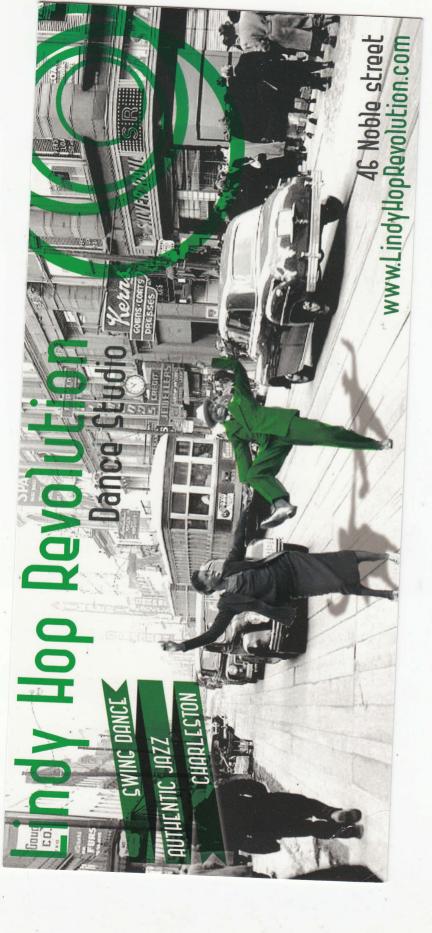
- ► Friday May 9 features the Mike Daley Blues Band!
- ► Friday June 13 features the Patrick Tevlin Blues Band!,

The Hive, 750 Yonge Street, Toronto, one block south of Bloor.

▶ Blues Battle Weekend! June 20-21-22 in Toronto (not at The Hive).

Waltz Dances, Classes & Workshops

▶ See the Waltz Schedule for details: www.mostlywaltz.ca Location: Dovercourt House. The next Friday Night Waltz Dance & beginner classes is May 16, 7pm to 11:30pm!





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