

# The Future of Busking: Cashless Payments and an Interactive Map of Live Shows at Toronto International BuskerFest

**BuSK, an app created by advocacy organization The Busking Project, will show audiences what performances are happening, live, on an interactive map of the festival, and give people not carrying cash another way to donate.**

Toronto, ON (DATE OF RELEASE) - A new app, BuSK, will be used by some of the best entertainers in the world at the Toronto International BuskerFest from September 2 to 5 in Woodbine Park. The app promises to transform the way audiences find, interact with and tip the festival's street performers.

[77% of Canadians](#) prefer to make card payments, and cash accounts for [only 40% of transactions](#) in Canada, one of the top countries in the world for plastic payments. Without a technical solution – and audiences willing to use it – the crazy, anarchic, wildly entertaining street shows that Canada is famous for could come to an end.

BuSK offers audiences the opportunity to view an interactive map of BuskerFest, where all the shows appear, live. “People can first track down their favourite performers using the app, then once the show is over, it takes just a couple of clicks to donate and become an online fan,” says The Busking Project co-founder **Nick Broad**. “We’re joking that it should be called Buskemon Go – you gotta tip them all!”

“Digital streaming services, the death of the CD, the infinite media dump on YouTube; in many ways the internet has broken the traditional business plan for artists,” says The Busking Project co-founder **Liliana Maz**, “so we’re trying to harness the internet’s power for good, by giving those artists an extra revenue source.

“This is important because street performance has huge positive benefits: it invigorates towns and cities, is a huge draw for tourists, gives people of all backgrounds access to live performances and launches huge careers,” she says. “Performers who started their careers busking include Canadians such as the Crash Test Dummies, Barenaked Ladies, Joni Mitchell and Cirque du Soleil. What we are trying to do with BuSK is to show people that street performance is a legitimate and inclusive way of earning a living.”

“Getting involved with the Toronto International BuskerFest for Epilepsy is an absolute honor,” says co-founder Nick Broad, “and not just

because I have epilepsy and love the work they do. The Toronto BuskerFest is also one of the few, really legendary street performer festivals, the one where the very best entertainers turn up and blow everyone's minds. Where better for us to bring people, busking and technology together than here?"

"If we can convince governments to stop arresting performers," says co-founder Liliana Maz, "and instead encourage them to continue to make their cities unique, we can help spread the vibrant festival atmosphere to cities worldwide. So, we'd like to invite everyone in Toronto to take a leap with us into the world of 21<sup>st</sup> Century busking by downloading the app and using it in Woodbine Park."

Audiences will be connecting with performers with BuSK at the Toronto International BuskerFest at Woodbine Park over the Labour Day weekend, September 2 to September 5.

The app was created by Nick Broad and Liliana Maz at [The Busking Project](#), a social enterprise and community network that aims to challenge negative stereotypes about buskers and showcase their talents as well as their contributions to the cultural fabric of cities. So far, 2,900 buskers are part of the network in over 1,000 cities in 88 countries around the world.

Their app, BuSK, is available for FREE download on both the [Apple](#) and [Android](#) app stores.

For more information on the BuSK app, please visit <http://busk.co>

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### **About The Busking Project – [busk.co](#)**

The Busking Project is a social enterprise, and the world's largest community of street performers. We promote, celebrate and defend buskers with advocacy work, a digital toolkit and engaging media. The Busking Project started off as an idea for a documentary back in 2010. We realized that buskers all over the world were being arrested for performing, and were at risk of dying out thanks to cashless payments. Our efforts are directed towards keeping busking alive in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Co-founder Nick Broad was diagnosed with epilepsy when he was 17, and has been living with it ever since. He is very proud to be working with the Toronto International BuskerFest, in support of Epilepsy Toronto.

### **Toronto International BuskerFest for Epilepsy – [torontobuskerfest.com](#)**

It's spontaneous, it's outrageous; it's fun, funny and fabulous - there is literally something for everyone at the Toronto International BuskerFest for Epilepsy. The festival features spectacular circus artistry, non-verbal shows that can be understood by all, and one-of-a-kind entertainment that will have you questioning your very eyes. Music, magic and mime; feats of the impossible, and the ridiculous performed by comedians, fire jugglers, acrobats, aerial artists, clowns, daredevils, beat boxers, break-dancers and much more. Four days of non-stop, action-packed fun!

This world-class festival not only supports a local charitable organization, Epilepsy Toronto, but is actually organized and run by them as their largest fund raiser of the year. "We wanted to create a unique and memorable experience that brought epilepsy out of the shadows and into the public eye; an entertainment extravaganza that supports a greater purpose in aid of people with epilepsy and their families," says Geoff Bobb, Executive Director of Epilepsy Toronto. "One in every 100 Canadians experiences some form of epilepsy and this amazing festival is the single-largest fundraiser for Epilepsy Toronto."

**The 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Toronto International BuskerFest for Epilepsy**  
**Friday, September 2 – Monday, September 5, 2016**  
**Woodbine Park in The Beach (1695 Queen Street East)**  
**Friday, noon – 11 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m. – 11 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. – 10 p.m.;**  
**Monday, 11 a.m. – 8 p.m.**

Admission by donation to Epilepsy Toronto  
For Advance Tickets or information, visit: [www.torontobuskerfest.com](http://www.torontobuskerfest.com)

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**For BuskerFest photo downloads:**

[torontobuskerfest.com/mediaresources](http://torontobuskerfest.com/mediaresources)

login: media; password: epilepsy