

## Molly Johnson



Her work for The Pro Bono Group

“Zoe” - Feed Ontario

Recognized as one of Canada’s greatest voices, jazz vocalist Molly Johnson is a mother, singer-songwriter, artist, and philanthropist.

She started her career in the mid-1960s when, as a young grade schooler, she and her brother were tapped by Toronto producer Ed Mirvish to appear in *Porgy and Bess* at the Royal Alexandra Theatre. By age 17, Johnson was fronting a disco band named *A Chocolate Affair*. She became lead vocalist for two rock bands, *Alta Moda* in the 1980s and *Infidels* in the 1990s. In 1993, Johnson established the *Kumbaya Festival* as a benefit for Canadian charities working around HIV and AIDS, contributing directly to the birth of Toronto’s *Casey House*. *Kumbaya* remains the largest music fundraiser in Canadian history.

As the founding artistic director of Toronto’s *Kensington Market Jazz Festival*, Molly has introduced hundreds of performers and, in her own words, built a “local jazz festival that reflects the cultural depth” of the immediate music community.

Johnson has two JUNO Awards, the Governor General’s Award, the Order of Canada - and has performed for Prince Charles and Princess Diana, Nelson Mandela and Quincy Jones.

From 2008 to 2013 you may have heard Johnson on CBC Radio 2’s *Radio 2 Morning* as a host.

She is currently working on *The Black History Project: Canada* - an initiative she has started to update Canadian history to include its impact and involvement with regard to Black Canadian history and the Underground Railroad.