

# The Pioneer

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Photo by Damon MacLean

Jake Clemons brought his new album *Eyes Set on the Horizon* to Belleville. “For me, the show is about catharsis, to put out something that is bigger than the music and bigger than ourselves and hopefully impact people on a deep level.”

## Jake Clemons has his *Eyes on the Horizon*

By Damon MacLean

When people see the name Clemons on a poster outside the Empire Theatre, they may subconsciously connect the dots to Clarence Clemons. Clarence Clemons may not be the man pictured or name that appears on the poster, but the last name pops out like a ray of light.

Clarence is uncle to Jake Clemons, a multi-instrumentalist based out of Montreal. His uncle Clarence was arguably the most influential saxophonist of all time, playing for Bruce Springsteen’s band, The E Street Band.

It is clear to anyone in attendance at the beautiful Belleville theatre on a chilly Friday night in October, that Jake is not living in his uncle’s footsteps, but rather making his own unique path and defining himself as a true rock star. From radical stage antics of rolling around on the floor, jumping off the kick drum and running through the crowd, the energy his live show delivered at the Empire Theatre in October was the equivalent of using jumper cables on an old engine waiting in a storage shed to finally be brought back to life.

“Our live show is an experience within itself. We try to make as significant a mo-

ment as possible. We try to take the energy in the room and make it special to that night,” said Clemons.

The crowd was prepared to take in the concoction Clemons had been brewing secretly over the past year and a half, *Eyes on The Horizon*.

“Lyrically, it has to do with the issues in the world I see today. We come from a culturally divided society. [The album] is a lot about recognizing where we are [as a society] and not letting a lot of these problems take over. Remembering what it means to be a people and who we want to be as a people.” Clemons describes the creative process behind the debut album to be unconventional. “It’s kind of all over the place. A handful of the songs were written lyrics first and a handful were written instrumentals first. Some were a combination of both.”

The creative process, however, was sporadic.

“From track one to the end, they were all part of the bigger story.”

As for what makes Clemons stand out in the digital age, he says, “I come from a very analog era. I grew up with an organic style working with piano and saxophone. It took me a long time to come around to with dealing with the digital realm. Also

note, professionally speaking I’ve very much come up on my own through the avenue of the E street band, one of the greatest rock ‘n roll bands around.”

Following the influences on the album may be a little bizarre. At times the tracks feel like a 70’s rock tune rolling down the train tracks until the conductor pulls the brake lever, but he’s too late and the train slams into a ‘90’s grunge anthem.

Tom Morello is featured on the first single released off the album *Consumption Town*. Clemons became acquainted with the former Rage Against the Machine guitarist through his time in the E street band.

“Tom Morello toured with E street a couple of years ago, two and a half at least. We ended up getting really close from there and he is very much family to me now like a big brother. We spend a lot of time together and it felt natural to have him on the record.”

Clemons has a deep connection to the live show.

“For me, the energy in the room is the most important. There is a sense of connection. My hope is that people come out with whatever they have in their lives, and I understand the sacrifice it takes for a lot

of people to get out to a show. The fact that someone might work a certain number of hours that week and buy a ticket and then go out of there way to get here, we really appreciate that. I absolutely go out of my way to make sure people get their money and times worth. For me, the show is about catharsis, to put out something that is bigger than the music and bigger than ourselves and hopefully impact people on a deep level. I saw my first show when I was eight years old. I don’t remember the music but i do remember the feeling of the entire room being connected.”

The importance of the live show is something Clemons cannot stress enough.

“On the [current tour], opening acts are different for the most part. Two shows we have the same person opening, and the other ones are different.” Clemons said before their Belleville performance. That same night, Jake Clemons and his band would play and have Stephen Stanley and his band open. Formerly from the act The Lowest of the Low, Stanley and band attracted the attention and friendship of Clemons and the band and were invited to join for Friday’s show at The Empire.

“Big round of applause for Jake invit-

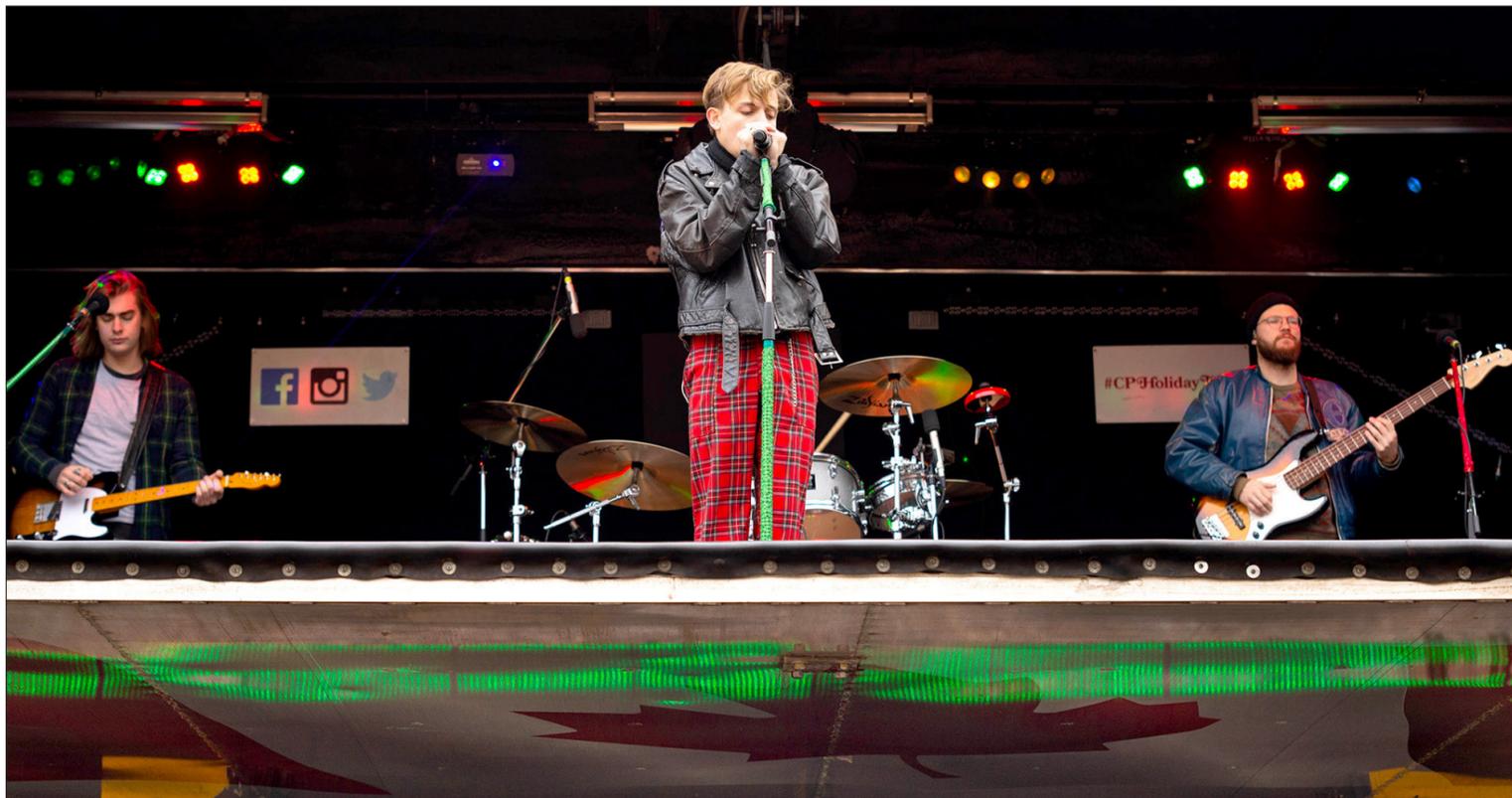
ing us out to play for Belleville, already people are listening to our set instead of talking through it.”, Stanley jokes to the audience.

With Belleville being the place of birth of *Eyes on The Horizon*, Clemons and band would finish a song and receive a standing ovation. The crowd was under the impression that the show was finished three times before it was.

The band brought out Andy Forgie and Mark Rashotte along with Stephen Stanley and his band to play the classic Beatles track, *With a Little Help from My Friends* to a crowd that sang along to every last word. “People have been really connected to the experience of our live show and its been overall amazing”, Clemons said. The show left fans in pure awe and amazement, longing for the day Clemons returns to the city he spent the past year in.

viva Bellevegas.

(04/10/19) Jake Clemons brings his new album *Eyes Set on the Horizon* to Belleville. “For me, the show is about catharsis, to put out something that is bigger than the music and bigger than ourselves and hopefully impact people on a deep level.” The concert brought life to The Empire Theatre on a chilly October night.



Singer-songwriter Scott Helman from Toronto both performed his top hits as well as some Christmas-themed covers for the hundreds of attendees of the Holiday Train which pulled into Belleville last week. For more photos, see page 2. Photo by Caleb Seguin



Mr and Mrs Claus pose in front of the CP Holiday Train as Scott Helman performs. The Holiday Train stops at over 107 communities across the rail network and has helped raise over \$15.8 million and 4.5 million pounds of food since 1999.



Alexa Neuman tells Mrs. Claus about the tree she decorated at home and what she wants for Christmas this year at the Holiday Train event.

# Holiday train makes pit stop in Belleville

Photos by Caleb Seguin



(Above) Madeline Merlo performed on the Holiday Train. The train stretched along Keegan Parkway.



(Right) The train, during its stop in Belleville last week, made a \$7,000 donation to Gleaners Food Bank. In addition to the donation from CP, Gleaners Food Bank also uses the event as a way to drive donations from the community.



The whistle of the Holiday Train has been blowing for 21 years, with a train packing 14 rail cars and 1,000 feet in length. Hundreds came out last week to enjoy the entertainment.