

TORONTO LIFE

Canadian cities becoming pop music powerhouses: Richard Florida



Toronto's Broken Social Scene (Image: Vincent van der Pas)

Canada is getting lots of celebrity love these days: **Paul Giamatti** [saluted](#) our home and native land at the Golden Globes, while **Arcade Fire** [thanked](#) Montreal in their acceptance speech at the Grammys. **Justin Bieber** [thinks](#) Canada is the best country in the whole world, and **Woody Harrelson** [named](#) Toronto as his favourite city in North America. Now, a recent **Richard Florida** blog post on *The Atlantic*'s website argues that Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver have become music industry centres rivalling New York, Los Angeles and Nashville.

Florida and his team came to this conclusion by measuring the concentration of music business establishments—including record labels, distributors, recording studios and music publishers—in American and Canadian urban centres with populations over 500,000. Not surprisingly, Nashville and Los Angeles took first and second place, respectively. But a trio of Canadian cities—Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver—took third, fourth and fifth, ranking over New York, which came in sixth.

According to Florida, Canada's emerging prominence in the international music industry is part of a shifting landscape of popular music developing away from long-established commercial centres. He says that Canadian cities attract musicians because of their music-friendly culture, openness and affordable real estate. "Places with flourishing music scenes have underlying economic and cultural systems that are open to new ideas and that enable technology entrepreneurs, as well as musicians and artists, to mobilize the resources they need to realize their dreams and visions," Florida writes. Need further proof? This year's [rundown](#) of Juno Award nominees reads like a who's who of pop today, with bands like Arcade Fire, **Broken Social Scene**, **Drake** and **Michael Bubl **.

- [Grammy's Big \(City\) Winner \[The Atlantic\]](#)