

FROM: CHILLIWACK ARTS & CULTURAL CENTRE SOCIETY
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High-Resolution photo: [Five Alarm Funk.jpg](#)

Description: Eight men strong and over a decade deep into a career that has seen the release of five acclaimed albums and six national tours. Five Alarm Funk is all about intense epic arrangements, heavy groove and tons of fun.

Photo Credit: Brendan Meadows.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vancouver Based Funk Sensation Arrives In Chilliwack - *Five Alarm Funk!*

CHILLIWACK, BC – Eight members, drum kit, timbales, congas, bass, guitars, trumpet, saxophone, and an absurdly wild collection of outfits? Welcome to *Five Alarm Funk!*

On March 21, this Vancouver-based band will hear up the Chilliwack Cultural Centre with their intense epic arrangements, heavy groove and a whole lot of funk.

Gypsy-rock, afro-funk, Latin, ska and punk, *Five Alarm Funk* is over a decade deep into their career and have created their own specific brand of music. With costume changes, character cameos and enough energy to fuel the entire night, their theatrics are what make their live shows such an experience!

In 2003, first time drummer Tayo Branston and guitarist Gabe Boothroyd met at a Vancouver house party where they played, which was the start of something incredibly special. They went from playing parties to playing gigs locally to a bus tour across Canada and into the States. Along the way, other musicians started showing up and joining them and the crowds continued to grow.

“We all loved heavy funk like James Brown and Tower of Power” Branston explains. “But we were also inspired by everything from Tito Puente to Antibalas to Frank Zappa. Their fantastic musicianship and the amount of fun they had was incredible. We wanted that for ourselves too ... but it just wasn’t going on in Vancouver at that time.”

They gathered other musicians who shared their love of adventurous groove-driven players and called themselves *Five Alarm Funk*. Their lineup expanded to include Eli Bennett on the saxophone, Oliver Gibson on the guitar, Jason Smith on the bass, Tom Towers on the congas, Ricki Valentine on the timbales and Kent Wallace on the trumpet. The additions had their sound exploding with fiery rhythms and punchy horns that perfectly combined with the gang-chant vocals. They took shape organically, and found their sound by picking up their instruments, kicking off a beat and winging it.

“It was never a structured thing,” Branston says. “There was no rehearsing, no writing. We were just improvising and having fun. If we ended up stumbling across something really cool, we’d maybe work it out to see if it might turn into a song. But we weren’t thinking about shows. We weren’t thinking about where this might lead us. We were just playing grooves.”

Their audience urged them to put together a set for an actual gig, and while it took time, Five Alarm Funk officially debuted at The Fairview Pub to an audience of three hundred people. From there, the band moved to Richards On Richards, where Five Alarm packed their eight hundred capacity again and again, until closing night. Word spread, and they started doing van tours that eventually grew into a thirty-six day, cross-continental trek involving thirty shows from Vancouver to Fredericton. They

continued to grow, pushing as far south as Chattanooga, where they took the Riverbend Festival by storm, and as far as Taiwan.

Some bands want to change the world. *Five Alarm Funk's* goal is much simpler. They want you to sweat. So join them for what will be an unforgettable evening of punchy grooves and a frenzy of funk!

Five Alarm Funk is coming to the Chilliwack Cultural Centre on **March 21 at 7:30 pm**. Tickets are \$35 for adults, \$32 for seniors and \$30 for youth, and can be purchased at the Centre Box Office, online at www.chilliwackculturalcentre.ca, or by calling 604-391-SHOW(7469).

Five Alarm Funk is sponsored by: *Gidney Signs and Decals, The Coast Chilliwack Hotel, The Chilliwack Progress, Classic Hits 89.5 The Drive, The City of Chilliwack, The British Columbia Arts Council, The British Columbia Touring Council, Province of British Columbia, and the Department of Canadian Heritage.*

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For additional information and to arrange interviews, contact:

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Chilliwack Cultural Centre

Owned by the City of Chilliwack, the Cultural Centre houses two unique performance venues, an art gallery, music instruction studios, arts and crafts studios, meeting rooms, offices, and is home to the Chilliwack Academy of Music and the O'Connor Group Art Gallery. Since opening in 2010, over 360,000 tickets have been sold through the Centre Box Office, with a value close to \$6,000,000. The Centre is overseen by The Chilliwack Arts & Cultural Centre Society on behalf of the City.

Chilliwack Cultural Centre highlights:

- 597 seat performance theatre
- 168 seat recital hall / rehearsal space / dance studio / meeting space
- Chilliwack Art gallery (22-foot high display area)
- 21 music instructional rooms
- Arts, crafts and performance studios

- Storage and Archival Resource Room

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The Chilliwack Arts & Cultural Centre Society is registered under the British Columbia Society Act as a not-for-profit society (society number S-54973), and is a registered Canadian charitable organization under the Canadian Charities Directorate. (Charity number 805742897 RR0001)

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