

Executive Management Report to the Board

Q4 Activity (Oct-Nov-Dec 2021)

•
T0 Live

PRESIDENT & CEO'S EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Focus on Community

TO Live would like to express our gratitude to the community that we serve for their support and participation in the arts. Throughout the past year, we have invited artists and neighbours to engage in a series of discussions to help us learn and grow as an organization, especially in our strategic plan, operations, health & safety protocols, and redevelopment of the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts. All of these outreach initiatives reinforced the power of collaboration as a cornerstone for everything that we do. Thank you.

Throughout 2021, we continued to fulfill our vision of building a better city through the arts through the following initiatives:

- The TO Live Foundation was launched and it will be vital to creating a sustainable future for TO Live and bringing world-class local and international talent to our stages. It is crucial to fulfilling our commitment to local artists, emerging talent, artistic companies, and the broader community.
- TO Live's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) Committee developed the [IDEA Action Plan](#) outlining its goals, objectives, and specific actions for the organization to accomplish from now until 2023.
- TO Live implemented COVID-19 health & safety protocols, and critical accessibility upgrades across all three venues.
- TO Live supported artists at critical stages of their creative development through research grants like the *explorations* program, commissioning new work, residencies, and producing and presenting multi-disciplinary performances. TO Live has underwritten rent subsidies through the Provision of Space program, including crew and staff costs, making it possible for artists and arts workers to get back to work. This program offered support to Obsidian Theatre, Susanna Fournier + ted witzel, Yolanda Bonnell, Irma Villafuerte, Naishi Wang, David Norsworthy, Nova Dance and DopoLavoro Teatrale (DLT), Canadian Stage, and Luminato.
- TO Live co-commissioned and co-presented the critically acclaimed MULTITUDES by Feist, which was named one of the Top 20 shows of 2020 by the Globe and Mail and was called "a work of genius" by the Toronto Star.
- TO Live reopened the Meridian Arts Centre Gallery with Hamilton-based artist Nathan Carson's first major institutional solo exhibition, Nathan Eugene Carson: Cut from the same cloth.



- TO Live implemented Education & Engagement activities with virtual and in-person events in partnership with Xenia Concerts, Tapestry Opera's Box Concerts, VIBE Arts, and Beyography. TO Live also presented Discover Dance programs with Baycrest@Home, through our Arts & Wellness initiative.

The latter part of the year saw ticket sales rebound to pre-pandemic levels, sending an emphatic message that live performances have been missed. This optimism is tempered with the reality of the impact of the Omicron variant on the calendar year, but we remain optimistic about the future and our recovery.

At the last Board meeting, the new Strategic Plan: "Making Space" was approved. This plan will guide TO Live into the next phase of our development and lay a pathway towards an exciting future for the organization and a sustainable recovery for the sector.

In addition, we have launched our new digital engagement platform alongside a continued rollout of our new brand and creative identity.

As well, the team at TO Live have reached a new milestone for the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts redevelopment project with a presentation to Executive Committee and City Council coming in May.

There is much to celebrate this season as we work together to rebuild the best Toronto; a welcoming, vibrant city we can all be proud to call home.



Clyde Wagner
President & CEO



PROGRAMMING

- Ongoing work to deliver 2021 program and continued planning for 2022-23 programs
- Completion of 2023 Programming calendar for organization 2023 budget process
- Assessment of impact of reimposition of 50% then zero capacity restrictions on rental, corporate/private event, Education and Engagement and TO Live Presents activities including liaison with clients and partners

TO LIVE Presents

[Explorations](#)

- Conducted final meetings with 12 research grant recipients; received research reports; and planned sharing event scheduled for January 2022 (postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions)

Provision of Space (Making Space)

- Resident companies: Hannaford Silver Street Band (1-3 Oct) and Sinfonia Toronto (2 Oct), rehearsals and filming of concerts
- Creative development residencies: DLT for The Spectator's Odyssey (13-30 Oct); (Naishi Wang, choreographer, (12 Oct-12 Nov) for new work, *Hiatus*, and Yolanda Bonnell, for new play *My Sister's Rage* (winner 2021 Playwrights Guild Drama Award) (4-16 Oct)
- Nova Dance, rehearsals (8-10 Nov)
- David Norsworthy, choreographer, workshop (20 Nov)
- Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts AGM (7 Dec)

Meridian Arts Centre Gallery

- Nathan E Carson exhibition [Cut from the same cloth](#), (7 Oct- 28 Nov), a transfer from The Power Plant

[Multitudes by Feist](#)

- Seasons in Ottawa presented by the [National Arts Centre](#) (14-17 Nov) and Toronto performances on [Meridian Hall](#) stage (20-30 Nov)

[Fall For Dance North: The Signature Program](#)

- TO Live co-presented on demand season of The Signature Program and the in-person screening in Meridian Hall (14 Oct), marking the first occasion a live audience returned to a TO Live venue for a ticketed event since March 2020

[DLT: The Spectator's Odyssey](#)

- Completion of stage two creative development and presentation of season (13 Oct-14 Nov) at the St Lawrence Centre and St Lawrence Market



Outside the March: Lessons in Temperament

- In-person screening (13 Nov) in the Lyric Theatre presented by TO Live, marking the world premiere of this film of a play by James Smith, much of which was filmed at the Meridian Arts Centre supported by TO Live

Why Not Theatre: What You Won't Do For Love

- On demand digital presentation (3-26 Dec) of film about the lifelong commitment between David Suzuki and Tara Cullis. Produced with support from TO Live; co-presented with Souleppper Theatre

Resident Companies and Rentals

- The brief return to 100% capacity (8 Oct – 18 Dec) enabled some resident companies and clients to present performances for live audiences. First full capacity Meridian Hall show was Ru Paul's Night of the Living Drag (16 Oct)
- Welcome return of long-term clients such as the Bravo Academy (4 weeks in the Studio Theatre) and a digital installation [MRI](#) by Naomi Jaye (Greenwin Theatre)

Education and Engagement

- [Discover Dance](#) - 3 public streams and 3 Arts & Wellness [Baycrest@Home](#) streams
- [Xenia Concerts](#) - 2 public streams and 2 streams with Alzheimer's Society of Toronto
- Culture Days Poster Making workshop with posters digitally exhibited in STLC windows
- Vibe Arts Networking event for NExT Artists (16 Dec)
- E&E participated in 5-week workshop series "Art of Neighbouring" with Homes First

Corporate and Private Events

- Hockey Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony (13 Nov) – first large scale private event in Meridian Hall since March 2020

Producing and Production

- Continued support for current activities/future planning of Programming department
- Director of Production continues to lead renegotiation of Union agreements

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Ticketing Services

- Provided Box Office support for the return to in-person events across all venues. Re-trained returning staff, deployed updated technologies (new scanners and pedestals, new computers and sales software, new microphones/speakers), implemented enhanced safety policies for staff, and communicated policies and procedures to patrons through welcome emails, client info packets, and website updates.



- Created solutions for online sales and in-person support where events required unique setups, including pod-based socially distanced events (Fall For Dance North, Sinfonia Toronto 21/22, others), the truly unique *Spectators' Odyssey*, and the streaming film *What You Won't Do For Love*.

Digital Transformation

- Continued work on the website including quality acceptance testing and uploading content; pushing our vendor to have any fixes complete in order to launch in early Q1 of 2022
- New content created for the website including a number of engaging blogs and a “Backstage with...” artist profile series

Marketing and Communications

- Commenced rollout of our new brand by refreshing digital and print signage; included experimenting with the programmatic application of the new look and feel for the Nathan E. Carson exhibit and The Spectators' Odyssey. New brand well received by partners and the public
- Returned to live in-person shows with the critically acclaimed *Multitudes* by Feist. The show received extensive media coverage and was referenced in [Now Magazine](#) as the “right experiment at the right time” that “...made the audience and the moment a part of the show.”
- Marketing support for projects including Fall for Dance North, the premieres of *What You Won't Do for Love* and *Lessons in Temperament*, as well as support for rental clients to achieve their marketing objectives

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Finance

- Created 5-year Strategic Plan budget
- Interim audit took place virtually in November 2021

Information Technology

- Continued with Digital Transformation Project and Implementation
- Implemented initial setup of Network Auditing software
- Implementation of Windows 10 21H1 initiated with completion due end of Jan Q1 2022
- Implemented new Unitrends Backup Appliance
- Completed infrastructure changes for new Ticketmaster TM1 Entry scanning platform

Payroll

- Continued with employee data maintenance for preparation of 2021 annual reporting
-



- Continued with completion of ROE requests

Human Resources

- Held Town Hall meeting on December 7th, approximately 80 staff in attendance
- Recalled remaining furloughed staff, with return date starting in January 2022

OPERATIONS

Facilities

- Continued support of COVID-19 measures in support of welcoming audiences back
- “Poppy,” TO Live’s pathogen sensing and detection network became fully operational across all venues with no instances of COVID-19 or other alerts across the network’s 40 sensors
- Waste management program reviewed; new waste management initiatives coming online in early 2022
- Substantial painting work required on Meridian Hall ceiling auditorium due to water damage caused by falling metal from above. The roof itself will need to undergo an extensive repair due to water penetration in the spring. All costs covered by insurance.

Patron Services and Food & Beverage

- Welcomed FOH/FB staff back with ability to have 100% house capacity in October
- Implemented Patron Services Covid-19 plan including establishing processes to check vaccinations of up to 3192 patrons
- Continued investigations into new Point of Sale software solutions

CAPITAL PROJECTS

- **Meridian Arts Centre** highlights include:
 - Sounds Isolation: Project complete. Waiting for acoustic testing and final elevator cab
 - FOH Washrooms: Work underway; supply chain challenges impacting completion date
 - Boiler and Chiller Replacement: Boiler construction complete. 2 VFDs to be installed in Jan 21 (supply chain issue). Chiller and Cooling tower procurement to begin early 2022
 - UV-C Lamps in HVAC: Project complete
 - Performance Rigging, audio, and drape: Project substantially complete
 - Flat Roof Replacement: Substantial Completion in October
 - Lyric AODA- Doors delayed until 2022 Q2 or Q3, lift installation in progress, theatre available for use in the meantime
 - Program and Paging: procurement to begin in 2022 Q1
 - Lyric Sound System Replacement – procurement to begin in 2022 Q1
- **Meridian Hall** highlights include:
 - UV-C Lamps in HVAC: Project complete



- Door Replacement: Construction underway; supply chain issues delayed completion into 2022
- Administration Offices, Security and West Ramp: Project substantially complete
- Back of House Stairs and Guards: Project complete, permit closed and closeout received
- Front of House Heritage Renovation: Box office demolition completed, import of materials continues to be an issue with delays of specialty metals and hardware. Work commencing on stairwells and drinking fountains with completion by end of Q1 of 2022
- B1 Audio & Video upgrades: Construction 95% complete, Final commissioning to be completed. Door, Hardware, Operators and Fire-rated glass outstanding with ETA in Q1 of 2022
- East Lounge: Construction is 90% complete; walls up and painted, flooring to be installed followed by new millwork. Entrance door on order, due to be installed in April 2022 pending supply issues
- **St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts** highlights include:
 - UV-C Lamps in HVAC: Project Complete
 - Performance Dimming: Project Complete

DEVELOPMENT – Philanthropy & Corporate Sponsorship

Highlights:

- Launched the TO Live Foundation and website
- End of year campaign resulted in 50 TO Live Foundation founding donors
- Secured expired venue Sponsors and engaged and secured new Gift-in-Kind sponsors

Engagement Metrics

- Hosted major gift donors and government officials at MULITITUDES by Feist and The Signature Program with Fall for Dance North
- Hosted our local MP at Meridian Arts Centre showcasing Federal funding AODA renovations and the Nathan Carson exhibition
- Held first TO Live Foundation meeting and announced new board member
- Submitted three grant applications: government; corporate and foundations
- Submitted two major gift proposals late in 2021 for 2022 programming.

TO Live Foundation and TO Live fundraising are separate entities. TO Live philanthropy and sponsorship staff are currently working on both.



StLC REDEVELOPMENT

- Gap Analysis completed by Net+Gain (lead Consultant Doug Simpson)
- Heritage Consultant completed draft of the heritage impact assessment for potential plans of redevelopment (lead consultant Philip Goldsmith)
- Contracted AMS Planning and Research to collaborate on developing Business Model (consultants: Steven Wolff, Michele Walter)
- DTAH (architect) and NOVITA (theatre) consultants developed a (draft) Test Fit for program (consultants: Megan Torza, David Joliffe)
- Continued engagement with SLN BIA to connect neighbourhood Master Plan and STLC NEXT
- Ongoing involvement on Digital Transformation and DEI Committees

