

Executive Management Report to the Board

Q1 Activity (Jan-Feb-Mar 2022)

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T0 Live

PRESIDENT & CEO'S EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The team at TO Live had planned for a fully reopened season in 2022 so the announced closure, as a result of the increasing COVID case counts in December, came as a blow. Regardless, the ever resilient TO Live staff made the best use of the time this provided to complete several key projects and to prepare for the busy potential opening in March.

- Phase 1 of the ongoing digital transformation project was completed. This included the launch of a single unified website and the retirement of the existing four placeholder sites. Also, a new CRM was engaged for both Marketing and Development that will link to the new online asset allowing, for the first time, both departments to engage with our consumers in a contemporary digital context.
- The new brand identity was also launched at the same time as the website. This work, developed in partnership with Leap Consulting and Underline Creative, sets the company on a new direction completing the transformational journey of amalgamation.
- The staff completed and the Board adopted the new 5-year strategic plan; *TO Live: Making Space* is a roadmap that will see TO Live form meaningful creative community hubs, both uptown and downtown, for the City of Toronto.
- City Council approved moving to Design Competition for the STLC Next project; a milestone for the redevelopment of the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts and an important step, tied to the Strategic Plan, in creating the much-needed community space for the growing downtown core of the city.
- In addition to the above, TO Live continued to serve its purpose by supporting the artists of the City of Toronto and Canada through impactful programs like the presentation of [*In My Body by Crazy Smooth*](#) (a co -presentation with Canadian Stage Co.), [*Kakwité:ne nikahá:wi A Call and Response to Spring by Santee Smith*](#), and the [*Vibe Arts NExT The Future of Art Exhibition: A Celebration of Black Futures*](#) at the Gallery at the MAC.

As we move into Q3 of the year we have seen a huge surge in activity and a return to live events by the public. Even with the challenges in recruitment and retention, TO Live is excited about the potential for the remainder of the year 2022. This time we are hopeful the reopening will stick!

Cheers,



Clyde Wagner
President & CEO



PROGRAMMING

- Cancellation of events due to closure then reduced capacity in all venues had a significant negative impact on revenue
- Planning and communications with promoters, corporate/private clients, and TO Live Presents artists and partners to facilitate the return to 100% capacity on March 1
- Completion of 2023 calendar and budget preparation

TO Live Presents

- Cancellation of contemporary circus company, Circa, and postponement due to COVID restrictions of: Young People's Theatre's *You and I* (to March); and Kid Koala's [*The Storyville Mosquito*](#) (to October).
- Co-presentation with Canadian Stage of dance work, [*In My Body*](#) by Crazy Smooth, 17-19 March, in the Bluma Appel marked the first TO Live Presents in-theatre event for live audiences in 2023.
- [*Kakwité:ne nikahá:wi*](#) : A Call and Response to Spring: film project produced by TO Live with support from Reconnect Ontario fund, directed by Santee Smit and projected on the western wall of Meridian Hall (19-26 March). Still streaming on the TO Live website.
- [*You and I*](#) (30 March-3 April) played to an audience of over 450 'walking babies' and their careers in the Studio Theatre at the Meridian Arts Centre.

Resident Companies and Rentals

- Return to 100% capacity on March 1 rewarded promoters who had decided to neither postpone nor cancel as many had. Meridian Hall audiences proved keen to return to live shows and of the 8 events in that hall, 3 achieved sell-outs and a further 2 over 85%.
- Not all the resident companies returned in March, but Music Toronto and Opera in Concert were able to recommence their subscription seasons in the Jane Mallet, as did Orchestra Toronto in the George Weston Recital Hall, as did other regular hirers including Sinfonia Toronto and Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

Education & Engagement

- Limited activities were able to proceed despite restrictions including the streaming of Xenia Concerts from Meridian Hall lower lobby.
- In March it was possible to also include in-person events including artist talks and workshops in connection with *In My Body* by Crazy Smooth; and an Art & Wellness artist professional training session.
- Partnership event VIBE Arts NExT The Future of Art Exhibition: A Celebration of Black Futures exhibition was installed in the Gallery at the Meridian Arts Centre (16-31 March) with an online iteration still available on the TO Live [website](#).



Corporate and Private Events

- Several events took place prior to the lifting of restrictions including the annual event held by the Association of the Families of Flight PS752 Victims, however others including a large-scale event with a first-time client had to cancel.
- Filming for a high-profile television series took place over a week in the St Lawrence Centre.

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

- In the early part of Q1, provided continued assistance to patrons and clients with shows needing to reschedule, postpone or cancel due to the COVID-19 Omicron variant and the reinstatement of severe restrictions on public gatherings. This included updating events, communicating information to affected parties, processing refunds and exchanges, and ensuring online information was kept up to date.
- In the latter part of Q1, provided Box Office support for the return to in-person events and the lifting of attendance limits and vaccine mandates. Returning staff were re-trained, new staff were onboarded, enhanced safety policies were enforced, and communications to patrons and clients were enhanced to ensure all attendees were fully aware of what to expect at their event.
- Expanded external partnerships through the extension of the ticket services arrangement with the Elgin & Winter Garden Theatre Centre until 2024, and engaging with the Luminato Festival to provide exclusive ticketing & box office services for their 2022 festival lineup.

Marketing and Communications

- Successfully launched tolive.com, TO Live's new digital engagement platform. The site consolidates four websites into one, provides a clear articulation of the TO Live brand, presents a significant amount of events and information in an easy to find format, highlights programming in interesting new ways and provides a richer content experience for users. We continue to rollout new features to the site as we implement the roadmap for 2022.
- Executed a marketing campaign for In My Body which featured significant earned media coverage including interviews with CBC Radio On, Caribbean Camera, Intermission Magazine, Toronto Guardian and a mention in the Globe and Mail.



- Executed a marketing campaign for Kakwité:ne nikahá:wi: A Call and Response to Spring, which included original branding from TO Live and resulted in an interview on CityTV with creator and director Santee Smith. TO Live's profile of Santee Smith has also appeared in the Global Heroes series which lives online and in the print editions of the Toronto Star, Globe and Mail and National Post.
- Extended our brand work to TO Live's Programme, launching a new design and format for the In My Body show. TO Live will continue to use this new look and feel for future TO Live Presents programming.
- Increased TO Live's content marketing presence through initiatives like our new "Back Stage With..." series that highlights artists work and processes in a compelling and engaging way. TO Live also consolidated email marketing and social media strategies to provide greater consistency and quality.
- Partnered with Esie Mensah, Randell Adjei, Syrus Marcus Ware during Black History Month on takeovers of TO Live's Instagram account (@tolivegram). The goal of this initiative was to use TO Live's digital presence as an opportunity to make space for black creators and expose more people to their work.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Finance

- Completed 2021 audit with auditors KPMG, second year done virtually
- Assisted departments with 2023 budget process
- Completed necessary (heavy) City reporting for year-end process

Payroll

- Completed 2021 T4s on time with required COVID-19 reporting
- Completed 2021 year-end OMERS reporting

Information Technology

- Established an internal committee for reviews of our ERP platform to identify areas for process efficiencies and to outline areas where weaknesses need addressed and how best to implement them going forward.
- Returned all amalgamated computer server equipment to its respective venue as prep for staff returning to the offices
- Reset network access controls and bandwidth requirement to pre-covid levels
- Reviewed computer equipment and inventory to establish costs and requirements for staff having equipment at home and at the office,
- Set up desks to use as hotel stations to prepare for staff returning to offices
- Rolled out Microsoft Windows 10 21H2 to all workstations
- Performed Microsoft Windows 11 readiness check on all lines and workstations to determine compatibility



HUMAN RESOURCES & ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

- Hired 7 employees
- Launched Pulse survey, and action items identified
- Implemented COLA/market increases

OPERATIONS

Facilities

- Corrective works carried on Chillers at 3 locations in preparations for the cooling season
- Restorative activities to revitalize the Landscape area commenced at Meridian Hall and Meridian Art Centre
- Fire safety training and fire drills scheduled for Stage Door, Patron Services and all employees at the three locations
- Power shutdown and corrective maintenance carried out on the Main Electrical Panel at Meridian Art Centre

Patron Services and Food & Beverage

- Welcomed back patrons after an extended shutdown in January and Feb
- Department expanded to include Events and Merchandise
- Launched new F&B inventory management system
- Continued search for new Point of Sale software solutions for F&B and merchandise
- Started conversations with Development around product sponsorships

CAPITAL PROJECTS

- **Meridian Arts Centre** highlights include:
 - FOH Washrooms: Work underway; supply chain challenges impacting completion date. Partial occupancy for the Orchestra studio washrooms, and the washrooms by the Lyric including the Coat Check area achieved
 - Boiler and Chiller Replacement: Boiler construction complete
 - Flat Roof Replacement: Project completed
 - Lyric AODA- Doors delayed until Q3 2022, lift installation complete, theatre is fully operational.
 - AODA Work Package 5 (Theatres Phase 2): In procurement
 - AODA Work Package 6 (Offices and Lunchrooms): Drawings in development
 - Roof Replacement Phase 2 (PVC): In procurement. Closing in May
 - Replacement of Chillers/Colling Tower: Retendering. Closing in May
 - Technical Theatres Improvements: Procurement is underway. Final package closing in July.
 - Building Condition Assessment: Complete. Final report is in progress.
 - Performance Portable Lighting Equipment: Procurement is completed. Primary contractor has been awarded.



- **Meridian Hall** highlights include:
 - Door Replacement: Construction underway. Doors in fabrication. First set installed in Aug. Completion in Mid 2023 due to supply chain issues
 - Front of House Heritage Renovation: Construction 90% complete. Waiting for delivery of remaining special-order materials. Delivery completion late summer 2022
 - B1 Audio & Video upgrades: base building is completed. Working on deficiencies. Equipment and system installation underway.
 - AODA Projects - Work Package 4 (Front and Back of House Services): Design development completed. Construction documents due Mid July for the procurement
 - PSVC Systems: Waiting equipment delivery. Additional equipment selection underway
 - Fall Arrest System: Preparing procurement package
 - Exterior Envelope & Site Work: Design documents in progress. Tender 2023.

DEVELOPMENT – Philanthropy & Corporate Sponsorship

Highlights:

- Secured a Canadian Heritage Program recovery grant of \$125,000
- Oversaw the successful completion of the project *Kakwité:ne nikahá:wi: A Call and Response to Spring*, funded by the Government of Ontario in the amount of \$158,000
- Secured venue sponsor from Flow Water

Engagement Metrics

- Submitted 5 grant applications to the provincial and federal governments
- Continued to cultivate potential sponsors and foundation partners
- Hosted three major gift lunches
- Hosted two stewardship events

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

StLC REDEVELOPMENT

- Completed final Staff Report for St. Lawrence Centre Redevelopment project for Executive/City Council review
- Attended pre-Council Meetings with City Staff including Heritage Conservation Services, Corporate Real Estate Management, Transportation, Culture
- Procured/secured Indigenous consultant for organization
- Continued IDEA & Digital Transformation committee work

