

Executive Management Report to the Board

Q4 Activity (Oct-Dec 2022)

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T0 Live

PRESIDENT & CEO'S EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As Tom Kerr, our wonderful Director of Ticket Services, will point out below, Q4 of 2022 was one of the top sales quarters since 2018 for TO Live, and with that in the near rear-view mirror, it's easy to forget that we started the first quarter of the year closed for the pandemic. Last fall was the real beginning of the first full season for TO Live since the COVID 19 closure, and with an enormous amount of work on behalf of the entire staff, we were able to launch with a thrilling season, a balanced budget, and a continuation of the deep community support that we provide to the City of Toronto.

I am grateful for everyone who is a part of our extended family and plays a role in the success of TO Live. Our staff, artists, patrons, donors, Board members, neighbours, and supporters are all invaluable in creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for great art to thrive. Your efforts in making our spaces safe and accessible for all are greatly appreciated!

In 2022, TO Live took steps towards realizing its goal of building a better city through the arts by establishing creative community hubs in Toronto's uptown and downtown neighbourhoods. With the support of our Board and the City, we hope to continue this work and provide a welcoming and creative space for people to gather every day of the year.

Critical to the success of this ongoing journey will be the development of the plan for the St. Lawrence Centre. In early March of 2023, we will have the opportunity, along with the public, to see the potential of the site through the eyes of our design finalists. This is the next exciting step towards really maximizing the value of this important site for the neighbourhood and the creative community. Stay tuned!

Below are some of the highlights from TO Live in 2022.



Clyde Wagner
President & CEO



PROGRAMMING

TO Live Presents

It was a busy quarter for TO Live Presents activity which illustrated the breadth and inclusive intentions of TO Live's curated program in keeping with our Vision and Mission:

- [Rite of Spring / common ground\[s\]](#): a significant presentation by TO Live of a new work as well as the iconic interpretation of Stravinsky's Rite of Spring by Pina Bausch produced by Senegal's Écoles des Sables, the Pina Bausch Foundation and Sadler's Wells. The evening was marked by an outstanding performance that concluded with an instant standing ovation. A large and joyous post-performance reception followed.
- Kid Koala's [The Storyville Mosquito](#) and [World of Bugs](#) : season of live show with broad appeal, and workshops aimed at families.
- [My Sister's Rage](#) : offsite world premiere of new work by Yolanda Bonnell at Tarragon Theatre. TO Live had supported the creative development and then this season.
- [Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows \(part 2\)](#) with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra: fun-filled conclusion to the Harry Potter franchise presentations.
- [Hiromi](#) : an extraordinary display of technical and artistic brilliance enthusiastically received by the audience, many of whom had purchased their tickets in 2019.
- ['da Kink in My Hair](#) : this co-production/co-presentation with Soulepper Theatre was an important moment in Toronto's theatre calendar at the end of the year. Twenty years on, TO Live and Soulepper reimagined this seminal work in the Canadian cannon for the contemporary black Jamaican community and wider audience to both critical and audience acclaim.
- In October, we continued our collaboration with Fall for Dance North by co-presenting the [2022 Signature Programme, Arise](#), in Meridian Hall.

Making Space

Continuing TO Live's narrative as a meaningful and active contributor to Toronto's cultural life through provision of space, residencies, and other support:

- Choreographer [Naishi Wang](#) undertook a 4-week residency, his third with TO Live, on a new work, *Eyes, Wide Open*, that we hope to present in 2024. (scroll down in link for information)
- Côté Danse undertook a workshop on a new piece, the first of 3 planned.
- Playwright/Director, Susanna Fournier continued her creative development on *heart/body*, a process TO Live has been supporting since 2020.
- Mid-process check in meetings were held with the seven [explorations](#) artists who continue their research through to the end of February. As part of their grant, if required, we offer space, and Aria Evans was in residence for 2 weeks in support of her research.



- Luke Welch recorded his new album [Samuel Coleridge-Taylor: Piano Works](#).
- Michael Etherington filmed a video of his song, [Bring the Children Home](#) in Meridian Hall for which TO Live provided both the venue and production costs. This song was written as an international call for unity and commemoration for Indigenous children who never returned home from the residential schools.

Rentals

Highlights included:

- Jeff Beck in what sadly proved to be one of his final concerts, with special guest Johnny Depp, and Bono's book publication tour in Meridian Hall.
- Canadian Stage's production of Choir Boy in the Bluma Appel, and a range of productions by other residents in the Jane Mallett including Toronto Operetta Theatre, Music Toronto and the Hannaford Silver Street Band. Toronto Symphony Orchestra in George Weston Recital Hall, and the month-long residency of the Bravo Academy in the Studio Theatre.

Education & Engagement

- [Community classes](#) and partnership activities continued strongly including: [Xenia Concerts](#), and [Discover Dance](#) co-presented with Nova Dance and in partnership with Baycrest Health. The relationship with Vibe Arts continued with another exhibition supported by TO Live in the Meridian Arts Centre Gallery: [Converge](#).

Corporate and Private Events

- Return of annual bookings for: RGD Tradeshow, Sick Kids Foundation, Hockey Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, RBC Town Halls, and a number of end of year events for schools, illustrating again the importance of the education sector for this department.

Production

- Director of Production concluded St Lawrence Centre for the Arts IATSE Local 58 negotiation (see separate report) and continues to lead renegotiation of other Union agreements.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Marketing and Communications

- Content in this quarter centered around *'da Kink in my Hair* and shining a spotlight on Black women's stories. It included 5 videos featuring the cast and director sharing their [experiences at the salon](#), [having Black hair](#) in a world that privileges straight white hair, and lighter topics like their [favourite things to do in Toronto](#).
- Also for *'da Kink in my Hair* was an editorial interview piece with Director Weyni Mengesha on the importance of showcasing diverse stories in the performing arts, which appeared online and in print (Toronto Star, Globe, National Post) via our content marketing partner [Global Heroes](#).



- Other highlights focused on the fall 2022 season, including a video describing the [history and importance of The Rite of Spring](#) using historical footage from the Pina Bausch Foundation and new video of the contemporary African dancers now bringing it to life.
- Q&A interviews with Montreal's [Kid Koala](#) (The Storyville Mosquito) and [dancers in The Rite of Spring](#), and video interview with Harry Potter in concert conductor [Evan Mitchell](#) rounded out our multimedia content offerings.
- The quarter also saw significant media coverage of TO Live and the TO Live Presents shows including over 3,000 media mentions.
 - *Rite of Spring* / common ground[s] saw a feature in [Toronto Star](#) by Michael Crabb, and an outstanding review, “Dance simply does not get more mesmerizing than this.” The show was also named one of “Eight dance events from around the country that are worth the trip” by the Globe and Mail
 - *The Storyville Mosquito* was featured in the [Toronto Star](#), and Kid Koala was interviewed on [CP24](#).
 - *‘da Kink in my Hair* received extensive media coverage, highlights included an interview and performance on CITY TV Breakfast Television, and coverage on The Social, [Caribbean Camera](#), FLOW, [Toronto Star](#), [Globe and Mail](#). The show was named a “Critics Pick” by the Globe and Mail and received Four Stars (out of four) from the Toronto Star.
- In November, TO Live launched a new season (January – June) with a full marketing campaign under the umbrella theme of “Global Reflections”. The campaign is an invitation to experience world-class international acts and award-winning local talent that is a reflection of cultures and art forms across the globe. The [Toronto Star](#) covered the launch and the season trailer can be viewed [here](#).

Ticket Services

- Provided box office support and customer service for busiest quarter of 2022 for ticketed activity; included over 165K ticketed attendees (nearly 65% higher than Q2, the next-busiest quarter, and TO Live’s highest since 2018) and over 150K new tickets booked within the quarter.
- For the first time since before the pandemic, the Ticket Services full-time team was grown with the creation and hiring of a new Manager of Ticket Services role, as well as the hiring of a new Assistant Manager with principal purview over the increasingly active Elgin & Winter Garden Theatre Centre.
- In addition to support for TO Live’s home venues, Ticket Services took further strides in providing ticketing and box office for external organizations, including supporting the run of Fall For Dance North 2022, signing contracts to provide support for FFDN as well as the Luminato Festival in 2023, and managing a significant increase in active at the Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre Centre with the run of the final Ross Petty pantomime.



FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Finance

- Presented Q3 financial results to Audit Committee.
- Provided two company-wide PO Training sessions including a live demo. Distributed training deck and video of training session for staff unable to attend, and new staff onboarded after the training.
- Continued training for 3 new staff members and onboarding for 1 additional hire.
- Successfully completed the 2022 interim audit with KPMG, with added pressure of a higher volume of testing requirements and new staff.
- Preliminary year-end work started with review of all 2022 purchase orders and closure of all service orders for all events and stage activity.
- Conducted annual review of reporting requirements with City of Toronto Accounting Services, in preparation of 2022 year end reporting packages and intercompany reconciliations.
- Worked with City of Toronto Financial Planning to complete 2023 budget and budget notes and FPARS submissions for capital.

Payroll

- Department employee changes in the last quarter provided the opportunity to empower and train other staff. Training and learning continue for the near future.
- Evaluation of software platforms for an all-in-one solution for HR/Payroll & Time Management with an aim for selection in Q1.2023.
- Concluded OMERS prep work to allow immediate enrollments for eligible Non-Full-Time employees starting January 1, 2023.
- Completed first review of T4's and annual information in preparation for year end reporting.

Information Technology

- Undertook Lead for Digital Transformation Internal Committee – EBMS phase.
- Undertook Lead for Cybersecurity Risk Assessments with City for Toronto for Ungerboeck EBMS Cloud Platform. Expected completion Q1 2023.
- Cloud Platform setup & testing for Multi-Factor Authentication Project – Cisco Duo.
- Onboarding and Training for new employee.
- Drafted and created Cybersecurity Policies, submitted for review.

HUMAN RESOURCES & ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

- Filled 12 positions in Q4: Year end of 2022 122 filled with 53 to fill
- 288 employees at end of Q4 (+31 compared to Q3 2022)
- Employee turnover 0.3% in Q4: Year end 2022 11.4%, averaging 0.9% per month



OPERATIONS

Facility Services

- Concluded annual fire system testing and inspection at all locations.
- Completed fuel system upgrade works at MAC.
- Completed asbestos reassessment, abatement & air sampling at STLC & MH.
- Completed replacement of refrigerant leakage detector, as per MOL instruction.
- Replaced old exit lights with “running person” exit signs at MAC lobbies.
- Completed contract negotiations with SEIU Local 2.
- Ordered new company-wide garbage and recycling containers to support new waste diversion initiatives.

Patron Services and Event Services

- Continued work on a unified training process and onboarding procedure.
- Completed survey of staff to determine preferences in planned 2023 uniform refresh.
- Continued work on POS upgrade.
- Conducted Team building initiatives in all areas of the department.
- Very busy quarter with private events (RBC, Pre/Post show, Development).
- Procured rooftop garden infrastructure for installation in spring of 2023 at MH.
- Ordered “waste digester” (installation early 2023) to reduce organic waste to nearly 0%.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

- **Meridian Arts Centre** highlights include:
 - FOH Washrooms: Completed.
 - AODA Work Package 5 (Theatres Phase 2): Contract was awarded. Start date April 2023.
 - AODA Work Package 6 (Offices and Lunchrooms): Tender award. Start date early January 2023.
 - Performance Portable Lighting Equipment: Installation continues. Lead times are significantly longer than initially anticipated.
- **Meridian Hall** highlights include:
 - Door Replacement: Doors in fabrication and installation commenced.
 - Front of House Heritage Renovation: Completing installation of long lead items.
 - B1 Audio & Video upgrades: Finalizing termination, system integration, and testing.
 - AODA Projects - Work Package 4 (Front and Back of House Services): Project differed to 2023. Funding reallocated.
 - PSVC Systems: Installation and configuration are ongoing.
 - Exterior Envelope & Site Work: Project in design development. Material selection has been commenced.



DEVELOPMENT – Philanthropy & Corporate Sponsorship

Highlights:

- **Sponsorship**
 - secured \$40,000 in evening sponsorships for 'da Kink in My Hair
 - increased venue sponsorships through renewals with Arterra
 - commenced conversations with several new potential sponsors
 - introduced new program for local businesses to promote themselves through our venue spaces
 - Meridian (naming sponsor) utilized our spaces for three key events, including two activations and their AGM
- **Stewardship** - hosted 6 stewardship events including 4 sponsor nights for 'da Kink, a private event for a donor and two legacy events that focused on information strengthening future commitments to TO Live
- **Grants** - completed two submissions to the federal government
- **Campaigns** - a busy fourth quarter focused on end of year campaigns and year end giving
- **TO Live Foundation** - confirmed 2 new board members and updated website and materials to new brand guidelines. AGM scheduled for early January.

Engagement Metrics:

- Continued outreach, meetings, and proposals to prospective programming sponsors
- Ongoing activations with naming sponsor Meridian
- Engaging potential venue sponsors to offset costs of Food & Beverage

TO Live Foundation and TO Live fundraising are separate entities. TO Live Philanthropy and Sponsorship staff are currently working on both.

StLC REDEVELOPMENT

- Adjudicated RFSQ competition
- Awarded Five Finalist Teams / public announcement of short-list
- Prepared and announced RFP Phase 2 competition
- In situ Ottawa meetings with various Government Officials to assist with Funding
- Groundwork for Funding Strategy, capital campaign: Case for Support and Government Relations

