

Executive Management Report to the Board

Q1 Activity (Jan-Mar 2023)

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T0 Live

PRESIDENT & CEO'S EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our amazing VP of Finance & Administration, Bill Milne, always reminds me to limit expectations on a first quarter forecast. The fiscal year having just begun, and January being a traditionally slow month, can lead to strange assumptions in a business that inherently has wild swings. In addition, along with our global colleagues, we are still trying to adjust to post pandemic consumer behaviour and the changes it brings to the way we program for, engage with, and market to our audiences.

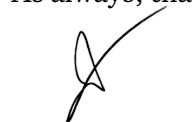
TO Live's programming season which began in September 2022, continues this quarter with an ongoing mandate to represent and support the diverse voices of the city of Toronto through local, national and international work. It brought us great pleasure to bring back *Alvin Ailey Dance Theater* to Meridian Hall after a four year break, and our audiences responded with equal enthusiasm. TO Live programs for this quarter, along with the associated press and media coverage, are all detailed in the report below. With the incredible work from our program and marketing teams, we continue to grow the TO Live brand and in doing so, we uplift the many diverse stories of the city.

What we did find this quarter was a dramatic softening of sales as we went into the beginning of the year. The team is still working through these results, but we seem to be on the other side of the "dip" and admittedly struggling for a clear explanation. One supposition we all seem to support is that the exuberance with which we saw audiences race back to live performance in the fall of 2022 was met with a short exhaustion in the spring of 2023. We hope that after this momentary rest, audiences will find their legs again.

The dip above, combined with an in-year sudden request from the City to significantly reduce its City investment to Live, have sent the team into several months of work on forecasts and adjustments to the 2023 and 2024 budgets (see the note above with the warning on first quarter forecasts!). The results of this work; the effort to find a new balanced and sustainable operating model, will be discussed at our June board meeting as we outline the programmatic and community service adjustments that have been put into place to reach a balanced budget.

Finally, and after many years of work, TO Live completed its international design competition for the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts. The finalist presentations, both online and in person, at the Jane Mallett Theatre (StLC) were attended by over 1000 people. After much deliberation by our amazing jury, the winning design team of Hariri Pontarini Architects, LMN Architects, Tawaw Architecture Collective, Smoke Architecture, and SLA was greeted with a huge cheer and much celebration. The design can be found on stlcnext.org and it fully represents all the community and stakeholder feedback/guidance received over many months of research and discussion. The next step, to move to the last phase of the stage gate process and detailed design, will be the required approval at the July City Council meeting. Thank you to both Leslie Lester, our VP of StLC Redevelopment and Gabriella Sicheri, VP of Development at CreateTO for all their hard work. Exciting days ahead!

As always, thank you to our Board, and our partners at the City, for their ongoing support!



Clyde Wagner
President & CEO



PROGRAMMING

TO Live Presents

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

- [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#) returned to Meridian Hall with 2 popular programs on the first stop of their 22-city North American Tour.
- There is a running theme throughout 2023 of pairing international and local artists to amplify their impact in Toronto and community engagement:
 - Christian McBride's [Movement Revisited](#), a musical tribute to civil rights icons featuring local Toronto Mass Choir and four narrators. Opening the program was Joe Sealy's *Africville Stories*, the story of Canada's oldest Black community, with Jackie Richardson.
 - Exploring the relationship of the colonizer and the colonized, South Africa's Gregory Maqoma Industries presented [Broken Chord](#) with That Choir, and dance and music combined to powerful effect.
 - [Colossus](#), Stephanie Lake Dance Company, taught 42 graduating-year dancers from York and Toronto Metropolitan Universities in preparation for their performances of her work in the Greenwin.
- Fusing Arabic, Western African, Latin, jazz, funk and blues, [Yemen Blues](#) brought infectious energy to the George Weston Recital Hall.
- Again proving its perennial popularity, [Jurassic Park](#) featuring TO Live Orchestra had 2 performances on its 30th anniversary world tour.
- TO Live provided in-kind and financial support for 2 co-presentations:
 - Tapestry Opera and Obsidian Theatre's opera, [Of the Sea](#) received its world premiere season in the Bluma Appel Theatre.
 - Soundstream's concert, [Steve Reich, Now & Then](#) also included the world premiere screening of a filmed performance of [Clapping Music](#), featuring Steve Reich and Russell Hartenberger, directed by Atom Egoyan, for which TO Live provided commissioning support.

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:

- Ian Kamau, composer, writer, director and filmmaker, technical residency in the Greenwin Theatre for, [Loss](#), to be premiered by Luminato this year.



- Esie Mensah, Lua Shayenne and Throwdown Collective residencies as part of our continued support for artists creating new work for Fall for Dance North.
- SaMel Tanz were in residence developing their new work.
- Final meetings were held with the seven 2022 [*explorations*](#) artists who had received TO Live research grants.

Rentals

Following the usual pattern, the first quarter was relatively quiet compared to later quarters in the year. Highlights included:

- *Lord of the Rings*, film live in concert, (GFN Inc Productions) the success of which accents the popularity of this genre.
- Canadian Stage continued the return to heavier use of the Bluma Appel with their two-part adaptation of *Fall on Your Knees* by Ann-Marie MacDonald, and an international presentation by Belgium company Ontererend Goed.
- Toronto Symphony Orchestra performed Mozart's Requiem at the George Weston Recital Hall.
- Activity by other resident companies in the St Lawrence Centre and Meridian Arts Centre followed regular patterns.

Communities and Outreach*

- *Department name changed from *Education and Engagement* to *Communities and Outreach* to more effectively reflect its purpose and activities.
- Vibe Arts held their annual NExT exhibition, showcasing young black artists in the Meridian Arts Centre Gallery, supported by TO Live.
- TO Live expanded its role as a Program Partner to Paprika Festival providing increased access to space to support their Indigenous Arts Program, workshops began in Q1.
- Community classes returned and included a new offering of art & craft classes, beginning with embroidery, that proved to be hugely popular.
- Pre- and post-performance talks and masterclasses were held around all *TO Live Presents* programming.

Corporate and Private Events

- US based, International Association of Blacks in Dance held their annual conference and festival in the Jane Mallett Theatre with local partners *dance* Immersion and support from TO Live.
- Annual Association of the Families of Flight PS752 Victims fundraiser was held at the Meridian Arts Centre, attendees included the Prime Minister.
- The education sector continued to be strongly represented in all venues.



Production

- Taking advantage of the low season, extensive maintenance and continued upgrading of technical equipment undertaken across all venues.
- First participant in TO Live's mentorship program started their internship; program is focused on increasing diversity and inclusion in the production workforce.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Marketing and Communications

- Marketing efforts for the quarter centred around promoting 8 *TO Live Presents* shows, a series of Communities and Outreach events including Xenia Concerts, Discover Dance, and other partnerships including VIBE Arts Next: The Future of Art Exhibition 4.0. Additional support was also provided for the STLC design presentation town hall through marketing, communications and events logistics, as well as the announcement of the winning design.
- Highlights included an extensive marketing campaign for Alvin Ailey which included the creation of a series of [5 videos](#) to provide [context for Ailey](#) and the company, and to profile [Hannah Alissa Richardson](#). Hannah is a Toronto-based dancer in the Ailey company who was inspired to pursue a career as a dancer when she saw Ailey perform at Meridian Hall as a youth. Read more about her story in this TO Live [interview](#).
- Other content highlights include:
 - *Backstage with...*
 - Q&A profiles of [Stephanie Lake](#), [Christian McBride](#), [Thuthuka Sibisi](#), and [Chad Lawson](#)
 - a video of [conductor Evan Mitchell](#) talking about the score for Jurassic Park
 - a series of videos featuring the creative team of *Treemonisha*, talking about what the show is, why it's important for Black women to tell their own stories, and shadeism in the dance industry
 - a [series of videos](#) promoting Colossus featuring the [student dancers](#) and [Stephanie Lake](#)
 - Engaged dancer Ming-Bo Lam and multidisciplinary artist Jasmine Vanstone to "take over" TO Live's Instagram account for International Women's Day.
- **Media coverage/highlights:**
 - Alvin Ailey
 - **Globe & Mail** [Alvin Ailey's masterpiece Revelations among the must-see dance productions this spring](#)
 - **Globe & Mail** [Dancer Hannah Alissa Richardson returns to Toronto with Alvin Ailey to live out her childhood dreams](#)
 - **Toronto Star:** [Alvin Ailey company returns to Toronto with a dance work about Nelson Mandela](#)
 - **Q with Tom Power - Hannah Alissa Richardson** [Hannah Alissa Richardson is living out her childhood dream - and she's only 24](#)



- CTV News Channel [Interview with Angie Seth](#)
- CTV News Toronto [Interview with Andria Case](#)
- Other media hits include ETalk, CTV's "Your Morning", AM740 and Classical 96.3FM
- Christian McBride
 - Toronto Star [Christian McBride and Joe Sealy double bill mixes Black history with the music](#)
 - CBC Radio Q with Tom Power ['This man's a little paranoid': When Christian McBride met his hero James Brown, this is what happened](#)
- StLC Design Competition
 - Globe & Mail [TO Live's St. Lawrence Centre project sets a precedent for high design](#)
 - CBC News [Toronto's St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts could get a stunning new redesign](#)
 - Toronto Star [St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts is getting a \\$400M facelift. Here's how it will look](#)
 - Urban Toronto [CreateTO and TOLive Announce Winning Submission for St Lawrence Centre Design Competition](#)
 - Architectural Record [Hariri Pontarini Architects-Led Team Wins Design Competition for Toronto's St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts](#)
 - Construction Connect [Hariri Pontarini team wins St. Lawrence Centre competition](#)
 - Archinect.com [Hariri Pontarini Architects-led team will transform Toronto's Brutalist landmark into Canada's first zero-carbon performing arts center](#)

Ticket Services

- Although less hectic than Q4 of 2022 (which was the busiest quarter for ticketing & box office since 2018), Q1 of 2023 saw Ticket Services providing box office support and customer service for the second-busiest quarter of activity since the pandemic closures, with over 90K ticketed attendees and over 100K new tickets booked.
- A significant portion of activity arose from support at the Elgin & Winter Garden Theatre (EWG), seeing through the end of Ross Petty Productions' final holiday pantomime run and the start of the near-100-performance run of *Rock of Ages*. This upswing in activity led to continuous staffing of daytime Box Office at the EWG (previously intermittent).
- Special ticketing requirements from several distinct event setups that went on sale during Q1 led to significantly increased use of Ticketmaster Account Manager, the alternate TM online sales platform previously used in a much more sparingly and simplistic fashion, setting the stage for enhanced use of this platform for external festival support in 2023 (i.e., Luminato Festival, Fall For Dance North).



FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Finance

- Successfully completed 2022 audit with auditors KPMG (third year done virtually), all with significant turnover/new staff in Finance dept
- Assisted departments with 2024 budget process
- Completed 2022 City year-end Reporting; FIR and Intercompany reconciliations with city continue to be a challenge.

Payroll

- Achieved year-end processes and timely manner delivery of all annual 2022 T4 slips and all other statutory annual reporting requirements.
- Completed 2022 annual OMERS reporting and launched OMERS enrollment work for all Non-Full-Time employees eligible as of Jan 1, 2023.
- Finalized review of new HR/Payroll software and vendor selection.
- Continue to build effective team goals and mentoring of staff to better adapt for staff changes and organizational constraints.

Information Technology

- Represented TO Live at City meetings for Cybersecurity Risk Assessments regarding Ungerboeck EBMS Cloud Platform
- Completed Multi-Factor Authentication Project – Cisco Duo
- Completed Migration from Update Compliance to Windows Reports for Business within Microsoft Azure
- Submitted the Cybersecurity Incident Response Plan for internal review, which required updates to be in line with City's plan
- Commenced initial framework draft for Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery
- Set up campaigns for cybersecurity training and phishing simulations for Q2 release

HUMAN RESOURCES & ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

- 10 positions were filled in Q1
- 354 employees at the end of Q1 (+101 compared to Q1 2022)
- Employee turnover is 0.9% in Q1 compared to 2.7% the same time last year
- Engagement Survey launched in Q1; current response rate is 45% to close in Q2

OPERATIONS

Facility Services

- Annual Facility condition assessment was conducted
- Review of annual preventative maintenance plan
- Re- introduction of Hippo, TO Live Computerized Maintenance Management System
- Landscape preparation for Spring & Summer planting season
- Procurement of housekeeping equipment and consumables in prep for the spring and summer season



Patron Services and Event Services

- Extended use of Bamboo HR, TO Live HR SAS, to part time patron services staff
- Continued onboarding of new POS hardware/software for full implementation in Q2
- Reduced use of temporary agency staff with continued recruitment drive

CAPITAL PROJECTS

- **Meridian Arts Centre** highlights include:
 - FOH Washrooms: project completed
 - Lyric Accessibility Work Package 3 - Door installation ongoing, the theatre is fully operational
 - Accessibility Work Package 5 (Theatres Phase 2) work has begun with completion by September
 - Accessibility Work Package 6 (Offices and Lunchrooms): mobilized in January, construction ongoing with completion in June
 - Accessibility Work Package 7 (Back of House support Phase 1): Phase 1 of project awarded and started. Phase 2 awarded and will start in April
 - Roof Replacement Phase 2 (PVC): project completed except minor deficiencies which will be addressed in Q2 2023
 - Replacement of Chillers/Colling Tower: project ongoing
 - Technical Theatres Improvements: project awarded, and vendors engaged
 - Performance Portable Lighting Equipment: dimmer installation ongoing, estimated completion for end of June 2023
- **Meridian Hall** highlights include:
 - B1 Audio & Video upgrades: project completed, working on minor deficiencies
 - Accessibility Projects – Work Package 3 (Front of House Heritage Renovation): working on minor deficiencies
 - Accessibility Projects - Work Package 4 (Front and Back of House Services): awarded, with construction starting in May
 - Accessibility Projects – Work Package 5 (Lobby Washrooms Phase 2): project awarded, submittals to be received. Commencement in May
 - PSVC Systems: project completed, working on minor deficiencies
 - Fall Arrest System: installation completed
 - Exterior Envelope & Site Work: Tender issued, closing May 3, 2023



DEVELOPMENT – Philanthropy & Corporate Sponsorship

- Launched preparations for a lead generation campaign (set to roll out end of Q2)
- Installed tap-to-donate kiosks at Meridian Hall and Meridian Arts Centre
- Commenced outreach to Consulates that align with TO Live’s international programming priorities
- Collaborated on Canada Council Foreign Artist Tours grant submission for 2024 programming
- Launched Phase 4 work for Audience Analytics Collective project with Nordicity Group
- Continued to cultivate potential venue and programming sponsors, donors and Foundation partners

- Major Gifts & Foundations
 - \$30k committed in new major gifts
 - 20+ priority major gift prospects
 - Spring campaign(s) planning in development
 - Continued stewardship of donors through newsletters, reports, and special events

- Sponsorship
 - \$20k expected in venue sponsorship
 - Identified approximately 50 Program sponsorship prospects, email/phone campaigns in progress
 - LinkedIn Sponsorship campaign underway

- Stewardship and Retail
 - Hosted receptions for Alvin Ailey, Christian McBride, Broken Chord
 - Retail opportunity: new marketing partnership set for the Fall (advertisement)
 - Contra opportunity: ongoing conversations for potential sponsorship

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

StLC REDEVELOPMENT

- Completed design competition
- Produced Public Town Hall March 7 (live/virtual)
- Participated in Jury adjudication and announcing winning team
- Continued managing Government Relations outreach/meetings with all orders of Government

