

Executive Management Report to the Board

Q3 Activity (Jul-Aug-Sept 2025)

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T0 Live

PRESIDENT & CEO'S EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There was a magical moment this past August when Susan Aglukark was performing on the Scott Street stage for the UpFRONT Festival. The sun was still up, and it was a beautiful warm summer evening. Then people began to dance. Seeing our community, young and old, toddlers and teenagers, moving and celebrating in the open air in our beautiful city just fills me with joy. For me, it was a wonderful affirmation of the work that TO Live does. The feedback we received was incredibly positive, and the team here, like our neighbours, can't wait for next year's festival to showcase the wealth of Indigenous talent this land holds.

In addition to UpFRONT, we had a busy Q3 with an electric performance from Kailash Kher, the return of the Best of Fringe up at the MAC, and one of the final talks from the singular Dr. Jane Goodall. TO Live continues to be the place for exciting experiences that enliven and reflect the cultures of our great city.

As we move into the holidays and pull out our winter coats, we've already started work on the 2027 budget and plan. This holiday season, we hope to see you out at the theatre. Let's raise a glass to celebrate the beauty of living in Toronto and the friends and community that make it so special.

Happy Holidays!



Clyde Wagner
President & CEO



PROGRAMMING

TO Live Presents

- South Asian superstar Kailash Kher performed at Meridian Hall to an enthusiastic audience
- TO Live Orchestra presented live soundtrack performance for anime hit *One Piece*, drawing significant fan engagement
- UpFRONT Festival of Indigenous Arts, Music and Culture
 - three-day free outdoor festival at Berczy Park with featured artists: Susan Aglukark, Sebastian Gaskin, Shawnee Kish, Adrian Harjo, Wolf Castle, among others
 - Programming included music, dance, puppetry, a visual arts showcase and an artisan market; attendance exceeded 24,000
- Meridian Arts Centre
 - *Best of Fringe* showcased five standout Fringe Festival productions in the Studio Theatre
 - *Tewaka:wes*, Indigenous art exhibition displayed in the Gallery throughout August
 - New Studio Sessions series launched, featuring Toronto-based artists in partnership with local music organizations, in a cabaret-style setting; opening event: LINK Music x Studio Sessions.

Communities & Outreach

Making Space

- Provided free space for 5 companies (Doormouse Productions, Côté Danse, Inkloosiv Voices, SaMel Tanz, Rose Theatre)
- Supported 2 dance festivals (Dance Made in Canada and Toes for Dance)
- Supported 3 independent artists (Mitali Baruah Sarma, Theo Crocker and Travis Knights)
- Engaged 375 individual artists, total in-kind support valued at \$20,000

explorations

- 7 artists selected by Jury (308 applications)

Community Classes & Programs

- Expanded [Collage Connections](#) in July
 - led by local artist [Mash Vass](#); included collage history from the dada art movement to present-day, techniques, and a participant sharing session
 - Aphasia Canada joined for the final class with 21 participants, highlighting the importance of offering accessible programming
- **Summer Camp**
 - back for a second year, with [3 weeks of creative adventures](#) for ages 5-12
 - Week 1: Afro Dance and Music, Week 2: Visual Art & Theatre, Week 3: Zine-Making and Hip-Hop Dance



- programs led by professional art educators with collaborative cross-medium planning, and end-of-week showcases for family/friends
- [Xenia Concerts](#) presented Juno Award-winning Jeremy Ledbetter with Eliana Cuevas (MAC)
 - explored storytelling and emotions through playful, spontaneous, and moving songs, all performed in Spanish
 - accompanied by musical ASL interpretation and neurodiversity-inclusive design
 - therapy dogs onsite from One Health Partners
 - partnered with North York Arts to present [The Colours of Armenia](#), a 4-week painting workshop taught by [Tamara Harutyunyan](#)

Stage Rentals

- Meridian Hall
 - Basement Yard hosted a live broadcast of its popular podcast series.
 - Dr. Jane Goodall delivered an inspiring talk with wide community attendance
 - Families enjoyed energetic return of Danny Go!
 - Just for Laughs festival returned to TO Live, featuring Sarah Millican, Dropout Improv, and Al Madrigal.
- Meridian Arts Centre
 - The Toronto Timepiece Show attracted regional watch collectors and enthusiasts
 - *A Moonment to Remember* celebrated the Mid-Autumn Festival, featuring the China Conservatory of Music Symphony Orchestra, Ottawa musicians, and a 100-member choir.
 - Reza Sadeghi, Farsi singer/songwriter, performed to a devoted audience.
 - Resident orchestra Sinfonia continued its regular concert programming.

Corporate and Private Events

- Delivered 8 corporate and private events, including 3 new clients
- Generated exceptional August results driven by the Korean Cultural Expo, a new 3-day event that significantly exceeded forecast
- Secured two new partners: Korea Heritage Agency and ECOM North (confirmed future conferences at Meridian Hall)
- Maintained strong September activity with recurring clients: Milestone Church, Equitable Bank, Mulvey & Banani, and Song Shul, signaling the start of the fall busy season

Production Services

- Supported capital projects work in the GWRH, Lyric Theatre, and Meridian Hall
- Completed work on a new LED video wall for Meridian Hall
- Supported IATSE 58 in training sessions at the St. Lawrence Centre and Meridian Hall
- Ongoing negotiations continue with IATSE Local 58, Stagehands, for both Meridian Arts Centre and the St. Lawrence Centre. Initiated negotiations with IATSE Local 822, Wardrobe for the St. Lawrence Centre



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Marketing and Communications

- Recognized holidays of national and social/cultural importance on social media and digital signage, including Canada Day, Rosh Hashanah, and the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (with a [video recap of UpFRONT 2025](#)).
- Created and shared content to highlight TO Live Presents shows, including:
 - UpFRONT artist interviews and content with [8 videos in playlist, including:](#)
 - Trailer
 - What's in my bag? Festival edition with Susan Aglukark (featuring partner Cheekbone Beauty)
 - How to attend UpFRONT as an ally
 - Celebrating Indigenous beauty (featuring partner Cheekbone Beauty)
 - Say it with us: Learning Indigenous words
 - This or that: Festival edition
 - Get excited for the UpFRONT Festival!
 - Reels featuring individual artists:
 - [Classic Roots favourite song to perform](#)
 - [MR. SAUGA favourite song to perform](#)
 - [Sebastian Gaskin favourite song to perform](#)
 - [Susan Aglukark favourite song to perform](#)
 - [What to expect TikTok](#)
 - Reels featuring Cheekbone Beauty partnership:
 - [Spotted in St. Lawrence neighbourhood](#)
 - Get ready with me ([Beatrice Deer](#))
 - Get ready with me ([Kaeley Jade](#))
 - Instagram takeover showcasing Best of Fringe juror (Shannon Murtagh)
- TO Live created video content highlighting *making space* artist [Sandra Laronde](#)
- Video reels spotlighting summer camp instructors:
 - [Celine Tchang](#)
 - [Edz Gyamfi](#)
 - [Morgan Kagesheongai](#)
 - [Annick Robledo Morales](#)
 - [Frannie Potts](#)

Earned media highlights included:

- **One Piece Music Symphony**
 - TORJA INC. | Toronto+Japan Magazine + Online [One Piece 25th Anniversary Orchestra Concert](#)
- **UpFRONT Festival of Indigenous Arts, Music and Culture**
 - Global News Toronto's Liem Vu interviewed Dawn T. Maracle [UpFRONT Festival returns with celebration of Indigenous culture](#)



- CP24 Breakfast in-studio with Candace Scott-Moore and Susan Aglukark
[UpFRONT Festival of Indigenous Arts, Music and Culture kicks off](#)
- CTV Your Morning interview with Festival Partner [Jenn Harper, Cheekbone Beauty](#)
- **Kailash Kher**
 - Kailash Kher interview by Radhika Sharma for OMNI TV - [Kailash Kher & Kailasa band's soulful music coming to Toronto | OMNI News Punjabi](#)
 - Weekly Voice - [Kaleidoscopic Kailash Kher to Perform in Toronto](#)
 - Hello Namaste - [Kailash Kher Live in Toronto: Truth, Tunes, and Teri Deewani](#)
- **Best of the Fringe**
 - [Mixtape Projects' "Iris \(says goodbye\)" – An Unforgettable Flight of Fancy at the Fringe](#)
 - ["David Lynch's Seinfeld" – A Surreal Bite of Comedy Brilliantly Between a D'oh and a Dilemma](#)
 - [A Joyful Leap: Exploring Friendship in and on the "Playground": A New \(and Wonderful\) Family Musical](#)
 - [Mom & Pop Productions' "Things My Dad Kept" – A Heartfelt Paper Trail of Love](#)
 - ["My Pet Lizard, Liz: The Shakespearean Existential Crisis that Led to His Ultimate Demise" – Gaz, Shakespeare, and a Puppet's Journey Through Grief](#)

Ticket Services

- Ticket Services providing box office support and customer service for ticketed activity roughly 10% higher than Q3 of 2024, coming in at over 70K ticketed attendees and over 90K new tickets booked within the quarter, in addition to putting over 150 distinct performances and nearly 90 productions on sale.
- TO Live's continued expansion of Ticketmaster Account Manager use continued in Q3, with improvement to checkout pages and troubleshooting payment errors, further improvement of package sales flows, and a very successful first implementation of self-service ticket exchanges for use with the Best of Fringe Festival.
- In recognition of the continuing increase of customer service inquiries coming directly to the Box Office's team phone/email support channels, and anticipation of deepening need to manage these channels outside regular daytime hours, a rotation plan was developed to ensure partial coverage of these channels on weekends in Q4.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Finance

- Started the preparation for interim audit
- Completed 2026 City Budget submission
- Completed City's submission of quarterly reports

Payroll

- Successfully launched (Sept) payroll portion of new software platform Workforce Now
 - Started the reviews for Year-End preparation
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Information Technology

- Completed plans for phone migration project from Mitel to Microsoft
- Completed transition to Microsoft Windows 24H2
- Started preparations for Wireless Replacement Project at Meridian Hall
- Started preparations for Switch Replacement Project at Meridian Arts Centre
- Finalized planning and quotations for updating Reports and Templates in our ERP platform
- Started framework for moving on-premises file shares to Microsoft Teams
- Led Artificial Intelligence Working Group; developed onboarding documents, draft AI policy

HUMAN RESOURCES & ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

- 143 non-recoverable FTEs at the end of Q3 which was 1 (1%) more than the 2025 budgeted non-recoverable FTE of 141.8. The recoverable FTEs was at 110 at the end of Q3 which was 5 (4.5%) less than 2025 budgeted recoverable FTE of 115. The restructuring of the STLC redevelopment resulted in most of the reduction in the recoverable FTE.
- Employee turnover was 7.2% in Q3 compared to 3.5% the same time last year. 46% of those who left had less than 1 to 3 years of service. Most of the turnover occurred in July in the part-time category.
- 11 positions have been filled in Q3, with 1 position currently open

Training

- Compliance training (online)
 - 329 employees - Addressing Racism in the Workplace Training for Employees
 - 334 employees - AODA Customer Service Standards Training (Comprehensive Content, Immersive)
 - 324 employees - Demonstrating Respect at Work Training
 - 207 employees - Unconscious Bias Training for All Audiences
 - 316 employees - Workplace Violence and Harassment Refresher Training for Employees & Supervisors (Ontario, Immersive)
 - 61 employees – WHIMS Training Comprehensive and New WHIMS Training
- Other Training
 - First Aid Certification Training – in-person for 46 employees.

Indigenous Report Update

- Built great allyship with Ontario Native Women's Association and Canada Council of Indigenous Business; both participated in the UpFRONT Festival of Indigenous Arts
- Engaged with Circadia Indigena to explore future opportunities for community-building



- Provided free space to Paprika Theatre festival's Indigenous Arts Program, Red Sky Performance, the National Arts Centre's Indigenous Theatre's Production of Rose with John Alcorn + Tomson Highway and Tanya Tagaq
 - five out of 27 successful applicants were Indigenous
 - Red Sky returning in 2026 with residency, space for a rehearsal
- Celebrated National Day of Truth and Reconciliation with all-staff education session (What You Say Matters) focusing on importance of language, communication, and relationship-building with Indigenous people and communities

OPERATIONS

Capital Projects

- **Meridian Arts Centre (MAC) highlights include:**
 - Completed and activated new stage door entrance and security
 - Continued with renovation of north basement, dressing rooms, first aid room and rehearsal hall kitchenette
- **Meridian Hall (MH) highlights include:**
 - Completed exterior site work, including new stone paving and exterior lighting
 - Advanced accessibility renovations in lower offices, dressing rooms and green rooms
 - Completed carpet installation
 - Continued redevelopment of Catering/Events offices, targeting year-end completion

Facility Services

- Delivered emergency response training and orientation to all staff
- Conducted second fire drill at Meridian Hall with supervisory staff
- Reviewed and analyzed software options for migration to new work order system
- Performed emergency pipe-rupture repairs at MAC
- Achieved 41% waste diversion in Q3; targeting 50% by year end
- Retained new waste management service following a tender process

Patron and Event Services

- Welcomed approximately 94,960 visitors
- Held refresher training across all venues on AODA compliance, customer service, emergency response, and operational readiness
- Reintroduced weekly cross-venue management meetings to strengthen consistency and teamwork
- Launched new F&B partnerships, expanding beverage offerings for patrons
- Supported two major new client events; K-Expo Canada 2025 (Korean cultural showcase) and the Timepiece Gala & Tradeshow



DEVELOPMENT – Philanthropy & Corporate Sponsorship

- Grants
 - Secured \$117,000 in funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Government of Ontario's *Experience Ontario* program, and the Canada Council for the Arts to support the *UpFRONT Festival of Indigenous Arts, Music and Culture*.
 - Received a \$18,000 Canada Council for the Arts grant to support TO Live's commissioning of *A a / a B : B E N D*.
 - Secured \$175,000 from the National Creation Fund for the development of *A a / a B : B E N D*.
- Major Gifts & Foundations
 - Secured \$414,000 in major gifts supporting programming, the BIPOC Production Mentorship Program, and TO Live's new *Indigenous Song* Project. Gifts include multi-year commitments, providing meaningful long-term stability.
 - Submitted proposals to individual donors and foundations totaling \$76,000.
- Annual Giving
 - Developed TO Live's End-of-Year Campaign, Giving Tuesday initiative, annual renewal campaign, and Legacy Giving outreach all of which launch in Q4.
- Sponsorship
 - Secured \$20,000 in confirmed corporate sponsorships for *UpFRONT Festival*
 - Submitted \$131,000 in new sponsorship proposals for upcoming programming.
 - Secured \$5,500 through the newly launched Corporate Champions program.
- Stewardship
 - Hosted two receptions for TO Live audiences to deepen donor and patron engagement.
 - Launched partnership with the Mark Anthony Group as official RTD sponsor.
 - Delivered venue sponsor activation, enhancing partner visibility and value.
 - Hosted a special Meridian Hall 65th Anniversary Open House, celebrating the venue's legacy with community members and supporters.
- Continued active cultivation of prospective sponsors, donors, and foundation partners across programming and venue initiatives.

TO Live Foundation and TO Live fundraising are separate entities.

