



A YEAR IN REVIEW 2020/21

This season was truly unlike any season in the history of the company. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and public health restrictions that came with it, the theatre remained closed to the public and staff for the duration of the season. However, creative work persevered. We could not safely gather together so we had to adapt and connect with artists and patrons in new and innovative ways.

The HIGH SCHOOL PROJECT moved online and saw 74 students log on from their bedrooms or dining room tables -across the region. This virtual version of HSP was designed and led by Artistic Associate, Megan Watson and Education Coordinator, Meghan O'Hara. Students gathered twice a week on Zoom and explored all aspects of musical theatre making – from choosing the play to what it would take to perform it live.

The online sessions culminated in a pitch to senior staff – where students presented their favourite musicals along with directorial concepts, designs, and whatever else they felt they wanted to share about the work they had researched and explored together. It was a magical way to keep our connection with the valuable students of London.

This year marked the 50th season as a professional company and to celebrate we threw a virtual UN-OPENING NIGHT CELEBRATION. We partnered with local video company web.isod.es to create an online experience that was full of music, sneak previews of our renovations and most importantly, provided a continued connection with our audiences. Musical performances by Tess Benger and Alexis Gordon were included along with conversations with artists, and an opportunity to share all the progress and exciting renovation updates with patrons. This was an historic first - a Grand Theatre online virtual concert experience!

We reached out in another unique online way with a podcast series titled, GRAND WALKS, spear-headed by Technical Director, Daniel Bennett. This interviewbased podcast series encouraged listeners to explore new communities and landmarks in London through the stories of the people who live and work in our neighbourhoods. Guests included President of Western University Allan Shepard and Marie Williams, owner and chef – Reggae's Caribbean Restaurant.

"GRAND WALKS", FALL OF 2020

SPEARHEADED BY TECHNICAL DIRECTOR, DANIEL BENNETT.

Families' tradition of celebrating with the Grand each holiday season was kept alive by live streaming COMFORT AND JOY on December 22. This 45 minute compilation of 9 short videos full of holiday songs, stories, music, and iconic London locations was our love-letter to London during these challenging times.

Comfort and Joy featured multiple directors, including Andrew Tribe and Vanessa Sears. Highlights of the video included and featured a trip to Kettle and Stoney Point First Nation where Anishnaabe father and fisherman, John George, shared his family tradition of cooking fish on an open fire over the holidays. We continued our relationship with the London Food Bank with Jan Alexandra Smith reprising her role as Scrooge.

We filmed Scrooge's visit to the Food Bank and Grand staff and patrons continued the tradition of making donations to the Food Bank during the holiday season. An impressive 5,000 people tuned in as we celebrated the holiday season together in new and different ways.

In the New Year, we launched COMPANY CONVERSATIONS, a pilot project for staff anchored in our on-going Anti-Oppression work. All staff members gathered on Zoom for seven, bi-weekly sessions and took a close look at six plays – ranging from the new musical GROW to August Wilson's MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOT-TOM. Company Conversations also featured a number of guest speakers, including Artistic Director of Indigenous NAC, Kevin Loring, and playwright, Andrea Scott.

The COMPASS new play development program continued with work on projects virtually through the season. Projects included GRAND GHOSTS, by Trina Davies, about historic theatre impresario and the ghost who haunts the Grand, Ambrose Small. Imaginative artist, Jillian Keiley, was added to the team as dramaturge & director. The production will debut in an upcoming season.

HOMES: A REFUGEE STORY based on the novel by the same name by Abu Bakr al Rabeeah & Winnie Yeung, is being adapted for the stage by Yeung. She will be joined by Haysam Kadri as co-writer & director. Featuring Abu Bakr's true story of life as an Immigrant coming to Canada from Syria, it is set to debut in a future season.

This year was marked by creative pivots and reimaginings. No public performance was held inside our theatre. We were able to make this a "discovery" year as we adapted to online performances and experiences. This will certainly be remembered as one of the most unusual years of performance in the Grand's long history.

"COMFORT & JOY", DECEMBER 22, 2020 OUR LOVE LETTER TO LONDON THROUGH THESE CHALLENGING TIMES. PHOTO BY SCOTT WEBB

OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

2020-21 was a year unlike any other in the history of the Grand Theatre. An entire year with zero in-person audiences, no opening nights, no volunteer circle meetings, no cast meet and greets, and most notably, zero earned revenue. Despite all of this, it is truly a significant achievement that we are able to announce a positive year end with a surplus of \$4,619, contributing to an accumulated surplus of \$584,624.

Our theatre, our industry and our world has just weathered an unimaginable and historical shut down. Every single plan, program and practice has been upended, lost or transformed, and we have been called upon to pivot, adapt, modify and withstand the unthinkable.

And the Grand has done just that.

We made room — literally and figuratively. We pivoted. We listened. We learned. We changed. We grew. Staff worked from home, we paid artists to develop and work on shows that we streamed to online audiences at no cost, we offered a high school project online, and we kept our people connected. Throughout the entire shut down we kept 47 staff employed and hired 35 guest artists. We held regular zoom meetings with staff and colleagues across the country to stay updated with government regulations and industry news, and sent out monthly newsletters to patrons to keep them updated. We provided learning opportunities for staff through a program we called Company Conversations, and we hired a local Equity, Diversity and Inclusion training company, Shifting Perspectives, to offer a 10-week anti-racist instructional program to 57 staff and board members.

And while of this was happening, we also embarked on a major \$9.5M renovation of our Theatre so that our building would be modernized, upgraded, and well-resourced to welcome staff, artists and audiences back into these transformed spaces when the world opened up.

In addition, we purchased our Scene Shop which we had rented for over 20 years. All to say, that despite having no shows on our stages and no box office revenues, we were busy. We moved forward with major projects, looked after our teams, provided employment for 82 people, shared stories with our patrons, and posted a tiny surplus. Critical to our success and sustainability was the continued receipt of multi-level government support, our purchase of a program disruption insurance policy in November 2019, and the loyal support of key corporate and individual donors.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Each year we receive generous support from the City of London, the Ontario Arts Council (OAC), and the Canada Council for the Arts. In 2020-21, we continued to receive the usual operating grants totalling \$1.13M that accounted for 22% of total revenues (13%, 2019-20) in a year where there were no shows and no box office revenues.

Special government funding through Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy (CERS), and \$297K provided by the Ontario Arts Council in special COVID-19 emergency support, totalled \$1.68M or 32% of total revenue up from 6% in 2019-20.

In aggregate, government funding rose from \$1.38M (23% of revenues) in 2019-20 to \$2.8M (54% of revenues) in 2020-21.

PERFORMANCE INTERRUPTION INSURANCE

Through a Performance interruption insurance policy purchased in November 2019, claims in 2020-21 contributed \$993K (\$505K, 2019-20), accounting for 19% of revenues. Supported by legal counsel, Theatre Management is continuing dialogue with Chubb Insurance regarding ongoing claims for 2021-22.

SCENE SHOP PROPERTY GIFT

In March 2021, the Scene Shop located at 339 Neptune Crescent was gifted by the numbered company 2641612 Ontario Inc. to the Theatre, and subsequently gifted to the Grand Theatre Foundation. This pass- through transaction resulted in compensating entries in gift revenues and gift expenses in the amount of \$784K as seen in our financial statements.

FUNDRAISING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Grand has always built strong and loyal relationships with businesses, community leaders, and philanthropists. Our theatre's sustainability through this yearlong shut down was steadied by sponsors, individuals, foundations, and corporate donors that recognized the lasting value and importance of the Grand to London's cultural and economic landscape. We want to thank and recognize those who continued to support the Grand through these tough and unpredictable times:

2020-21 SPONSORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS:

BMO Financial Group returned as our Season Sponsor

Canada Life was the Title Sponsor for 'Comfort and Joy' – our online holiday presentation. Canada Life's financial support, along with services in kind from web.isod.es, allowed us to offer a holiday concert at no cost to viewers. We would also extend our gratitude to our community partners at Museum London, Boler Mountain and the London Food Bank for sharing their spaces during filming.

Libro Credit Union renewed their support as Lead Community Partner of our Make a Difference youth programming initiatives supporting the Online High School Project as Title Sponsor. The Thames Valley District School Board also provided support of this online MasterClass initiative.

Individual and corporate donors contributed \$601,694 (12% of revenue) during the 2020/21 season, demonstrating the extraordinary allegiance of our stakeholders. In a year with no shows on our stages, loyal patrons understood the gravity of this situation and generously contributed to make sure the Grand weathered this storm.

Unquestionably, the pandemic has impacted and informed everything and everybody. Everything gets measured by pre-COVID, during COVID and just now, the beginnings of post-COVID.

Pre-COVID, it was business as usual with all of the excitement and challenges of choosing, building, and producing live theatre and the irreplaceable sharing of these stories with unmasked audiences, people comfortably shoulder to shoulder, in a darkened theatre unafraid to hug a friend and shake hands in meetings.

During COVID, all of that disappeared.

Post COVID, we are wary and cautious - masked and vaccinated – hopeful and anticipatory.

And we are deliberate. Deliberate in our choices and in our commitments.

COVID has not been the only reckoning that our world has seen. As individuals, as organizations, and as industries, we have been called out for our participation in systemic racist practices that went unseen and unnamed by us. Whose stories?

We must acknowledge our participation in the production and reproduction of these socially constructed choices, answers, and commitments that have privileged some, while excluding others. We must be deliberate and intentional as we deconstruct and reconstruct these answers, choices, and commitments by embracing and centering alternative perspectives and stories if we are to become and deliver a more equitable, diverse and inclusive Grand Theatre.

Last year at the AGM, we made some promises. We spoke of making room in our building with renovated lobbies, a transformed box office, an expanded wardrobe and millions of dollars spent on new sound, lighting and fly floor equipment. We also promised to make room with our programming and our people to tell new stories, include new artists, and reach new audiences.

Our Re-Opening Festival that just closed on November 6 was the beginning of us delivering on that promise of change. We commissioned four local artists to bring their art to our stages: to center their stories and their realities and use the Grand as a venue to share their work. It is a start. It is a beginning of change.

And on the note of change, I would be remiss if I did not mention to you that this is my last annual general meeting as Executive Director of the Grand Theatre. I know there will be many opportunities to express my gratitude and say goodbye between now and my exit in June, but Annual General Meetings are special times, times for accountability and reflection.

On reflection, we could never have seen a year like 20-21 coming ... but we weathered it and came out stronger, wiser and maybe even kinder for it. As we all move on, in one way or another, I would recommend we hold fast to all the strength, wisdom, and kindness that we learned this last year as we all lean into our futures ... wherever they may take us.

The Grand Theatre is so ready to make some room, make some changes, and make a difference.

We are, and we stay, World Curious and London Proud. Onward.

Thank you.

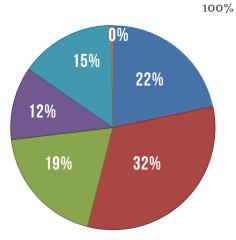
Deb Harvey Executive Director



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2020/21 SEASON RESULTS

	\$5,198,905 \$5,194,286 \$4,619
	\$584,624
22%	\$1,129,308
32%	\$1,677,401
19%	\$992,905
12%	\$601,694
15%	\$783,542
0%	\$14,055
100%	\$5,198,905
	32% 19% 12% 15% 0%



SALARIES (PERMANENT/SEASONAL, FULL/PART TIME)		
Artistic Salaries & Fees (Guest Artists)	35 people	\$97,248
Production /Technical Salaries & Fees Administration/Marketing/Fundraising/Operations	26 people 21 people	\$1,399,575 \$953,892
Total Salaries & Benefits	82 people	\$2,450,714
GOODS AND SERVICES PURCHASES		
Purchased Locally	40%	\$250,508
Purchased outside of region	60%	\$381,532
Total Goods & Services	100%	\$632,040

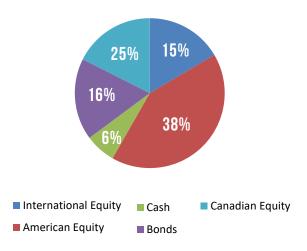
SELECTED 2020/21 STATISTICS

	Productions	Performances	Attendance
Spriet Stage (839 capacity)	-	-	-
McManus Stage (144 capacity)	-	-	-
Presentations	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-

Market Value of OAC and London Community Foundation Endowment Funds as at June 30, 2021: \$3,158,560

Interest revenues from the Endowment funds are included in Fundraising: \$115,050

GRAND THEATRE ENDOWMENT FUND	
London Community Foundation	\$2,395,675
Ontario Arts Foundation	\$762,885
Total	\$3,158,560



DONORS

The Grand Theatre thanks the following donors whose generosity in this pandemic year, provided vital support to the theatre. The following made donations between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021.

GRAND VISIONARIES – DIRECTOR'S CIRCLE (\$20,000+)

Tom Burnett
Lynn Davis
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Caroline and Rodney Hancock
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Dr. Nicole LeRiche and Dr. John Howard
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GRAND CHAMPIONS – LONDON PROUD CLUB (\$2500 to \$4999)		
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