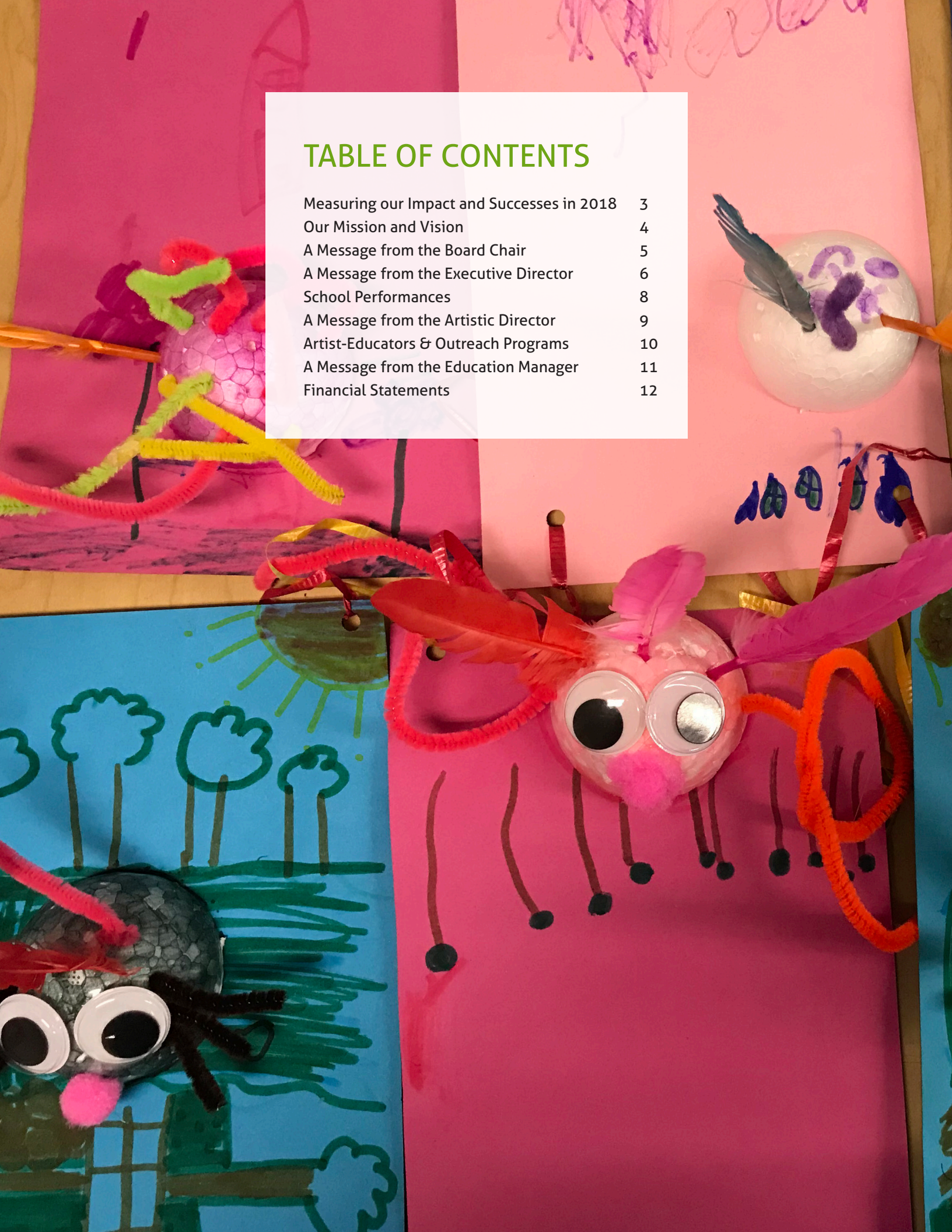


# Annual Report 2018

SUITCASE THEATRE ARTS AND EDUCATION OUTREACH INC.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Measuring our Impact and Successes in 2018	3
Our Mission and Vision	4
A Message from the Board Chair	5
A Message from the Executive Director	6
School Performances	8
A Message from the Artistic Director	9
Artist-Educators & Outreach Programs	10
A Message from the Education Manager	11
Financial Statements	12



# MEASURING OUR IMPACT AND SUCCESSES IN 2018

## Increase of paid classroom workshops

▲ **300+%** 65 workshops vs. 15 (2017)

With the launch of two new mental health workshops called *Emotions in Motion* and *Dance Your Way*, we saw a tremendous increase in the number of workshops Suitcase Theatre’s arts educators led in schools and care centres.

## Revenues from public programs

▲ **19.5%** \$46,582 vs. \$38,979 (2017)

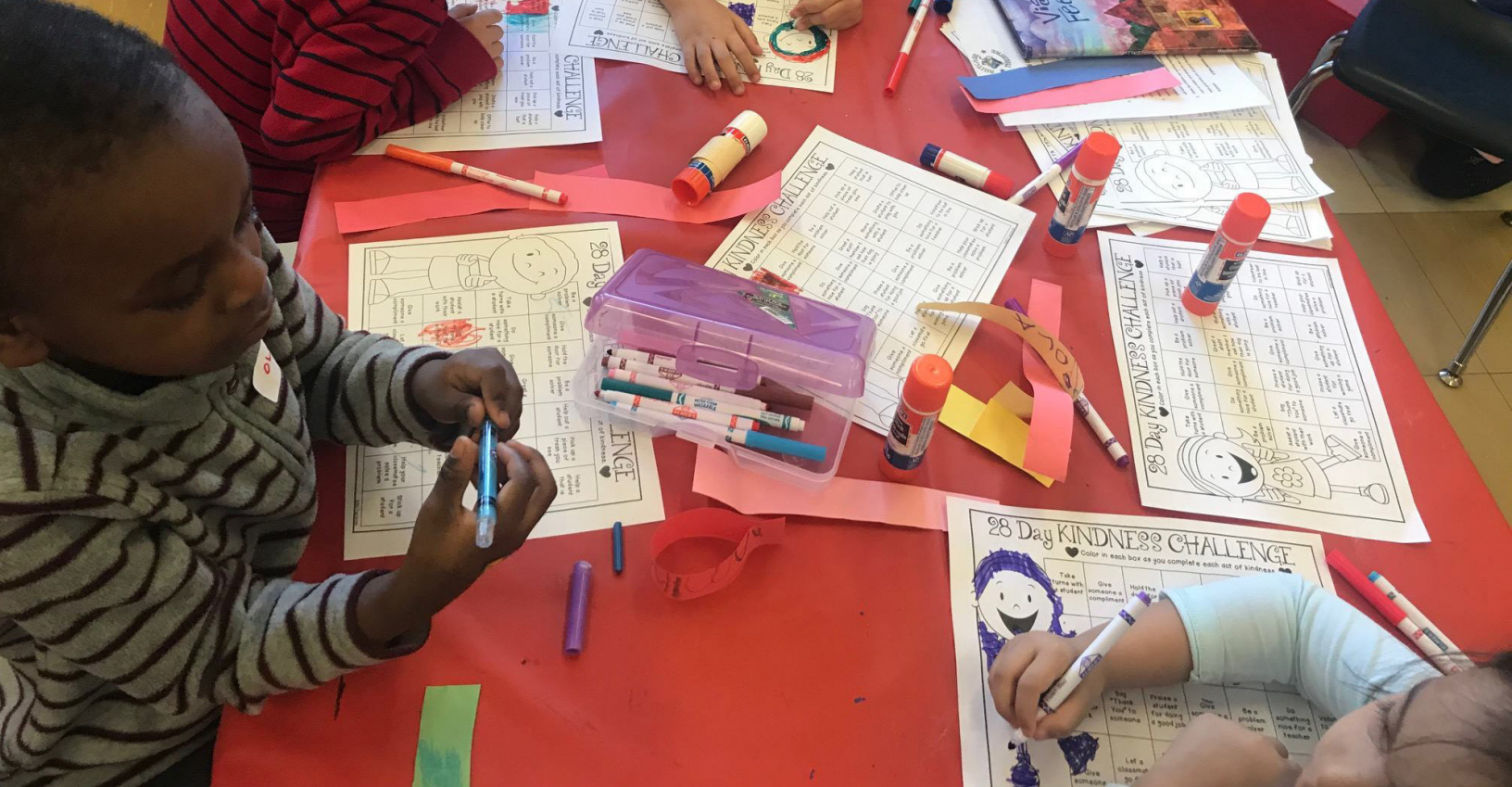
Our March Break and Summer Camps continue to increase in popularity, creating an important stream of revenue to cover our administrative costs.

## 2018 DONORS

- Johanna Weaver
- The MacLellan/Jay Family
- Dr. Bernard Lawless
- Rosedale United Church - Agency Outreach Committee
- Anonymous donors

Suitcase Theatre achieved incredible organizational growth, and made a huge impact in the lives of thousands of children this year, thanks to the generosity of our sponsors and donors.





Students explore their feelings and kindness in our Emotions in Motion classroom workshop.

## OUR VISION

Inspire children and youth to develop confidence, character and kindness.

## OUR MISSION

Create and facilitate theatre experiences that are accessible to all and provide a positive and lasting influence on children and families.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Provide children and youth outstanding experiences in all aspects of live theatre production and creative activities.
- Deliver creative outreach programs for children in priority schools and neighborhoods.
- Nurture healthy well-being through inclusive messaging about timely social issues such as bullying, appreciation for diversity and creative problem-solving.
- Explore and develop relationships with strategic partners to ensure program sustainability.
- Create, develop, and implement interactive curriculum-based programs with arts professionals and educational consultants where everyone has a place in a fun, nurturing environment.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Bernard Lawless, Chair  
 Ann Duggan, Treasurer  
 Tiffany Jay, Secretary  
 Julian DeZotti  
 Brian Jamieson

## OUR TEAM

Suitcase Theatre recognizes the inspiring talents of our part-time cast members and artist-educators. Without their commitment, skills and professionalism, Suitcase Theatre would not have inspired joy in as many children as we have.

Jessica Vandenberg, Taylor Lavigne, Allison Lavigne, Nicholaas Visscher, Anna Wheeler, Dan Bryne, Jacques St. Pierre, Elijah Manolo, Morgan Joy, Nicola Elbro, Grace de Madeiros, Shannon Hancocks, Alanna Balicki, Warren Bain, Dina Cipin, Katie Ryerson, Adam Bailey, Joan Barrington, Alexander Mantia, Tyler Check & Tristan Hernandez.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



I grew up in a very rural area – farmhouses separated by acres; no transit system, no mall. Our elementary school didn't have a band – unless you count one of the teachers with a portable pedal reed organ and box of sundry instruments like shakers, triangles and cymbals.

We had vivid imaginations. We would spend hours in a basement or hayloft playacting. We were pirates on the high seas, superheroes leaping tall buildings or reviving *Anne of Green Gables* with a completely different storyline than the original. A blanket on the clothesline was our stage curtain and the whole backyard our theatre.

Individually I'm certain that we had some worries, anxieties; maybe we were teased or taunted. I'm not sure if anxiety, depression, or struggling emotionally was not common, or if it was just not common to openly discuss it. Today, colleagues and friends describe experiences that detail an increasing incidence of children and youth experiencing issues related to mental health and wellbeing. More broadly, this also affects families, teachers, coaches, peers; anyone who interacts within the sphere of the child.

In a September 2018 report on adolescent mental health, the World Health Organization notes that mental health issues account for 16% of global disease burden and injury for those aged 10-19. Despite most cases going undetected and untreated, half of all mental health conditions have origins before the age of 14. On a more positive note, a study of teachers in inner-city schools with no arts programs report positive changes in mood, communication skills, confidence and classroom culture when their students (Grade 1-4) were exposed to an arts education program one hour a week for a total of 15 hours (Brouillette, 2010). Other studies report a clear relationship between participation in creative arts with improvement in psychological and physical wellbeing.

As Suitcase Theatre grows into our 11th year, we strive to be responsive and relevant to real issues being faced by today's children and youth. With the increasing awareness of mental health issues in children, and the positive benefits on overall

mental health that participation in creative arts can have, Suitcase Theatre has introduced themes and content specifically related to mental health in children and youth.

This past year has been a year of both growth and development for Suitcase Theatre and 2019 will see the launch of a new production *Stronger Together: Opening Doors to Mental Health*. Tremendously entertaining and thoughtful in original writing and lyrics, the play will showcase common challenges or feelings faced by children and reveal behaviours to help tackle these. We are forever grateful to the George Hull Centre for Children and Families for enthusiastically agreeing to partner with Suitcase Theatre in this endeavor and being abundantly generous with expert content advice.

We are enormously thankful for the tremendous work, dedication and passion that our Executive Director, Lucie Grys, brings to Suitcase Theatre. There would be no success in what Suitcase Theatre is able to deliver without the vision, determination, talent and boundless imagination that Lucie and her dedicated team bring to the organization. This is also made possible by the generous donations from government funders, foundations, organizations, companies, and individuals for which we are extremely grateful.

Looking ahead, we are excited to be touring our new production. Already there is significant interest with school and other venue bookings well on the rise. The demand for workshops and participation in camps continues to grow. We continue to be encouraged and excited by the positive feedback we hear from parents, teachers and the children. We look forward to forging new partnerships, complementing the Board membership with additional skill based members and establishing sustainable funding strategies; all of which will support ongoing success of Suitcase Theatre.

It could not be more true that we are "stronger together" and in this way we will continue "opening doors" to benefit children and youth.

Dr. Bernard Lawless

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Suitcase Theatre turned 10 this past year.

When I reflect on Suitcase Theatre's growth, it is rather humbling. Just like the "little engine that could," we have always moved forward, built momentum, forged new community partnerships, dreamt new dreams and put the programs and plans in place that stay true to our organization's vision to inspire children and youth to develop confidence, character and kindness.

Our supporters continue to see the merit in our work. The Tachane Foundation has supported Suitcase Theatre for the past six years and their belief in our outreach to schools has helped us reach more than 100,000 children with our school plays and workshops. We simply would not be where we are today without their support, trust and encouragement.

Our monthly curriculum-linked workshops at Ronald McDonald House and our partnership with their educators has meant that children and their brothers and sisters who live at the house while receiving treatment in Toronto can laugh a little louder at an improv program or perfect a new dance move at a dance workshop. I would like to thank Johanna Weaver for supporting our monthly programs at RMH for the past three years.

We have our very own television program called 'The Imagination Station' that we film at Sick Kids Hospital in Marnie's Studio. Our talented arts educators, therapeutic clowns and puppeteers create a sense of joy and bring humour to children and their families experiencing a health crisis. Filmed live and aired across the hospital, children who can't visit the studio in person can still sing-a-long, call in and do the simple art activities from their beds while receiving treatment. Supported for the past three years by Boehringer Ingelheim Canada Inc., we have reached thousands of critically ill children with a smile – and brought care and compassion through the arts.

Rosedale United Church has generously supported our outreach programs at Sick Kids and at Art City Toronto in St. James Town. As Canada's lowest

income, most densely populated community, we have offered free after school dance and drama programs to children at Art City since our successful pilot program launched in 2015. The average household income in St. James Town is \$26,000 and 48% of the children and youth live in poverty. 56.5% of the residents are recent immigrants to Canada and cope with settlement issues, unemployment, access to healthcare, mental health concerns, isolation, a lack of social capital all while learning English as a third, fourth or even fifth language. Suitcase Theatre's programs help to build confidence through the arts in an inclusive and safe space. We continue to reach out to the Ontario Arts Council to support our program but cutbacks might impact its future.

Our school program which brings plays and workshops into school gyms and classrooms has also grown substantially. The amazing success of *All Aboard: An Adventure Across Canada for Kids* carried into 2018 where we visited 28 schools. Our class workshop program, led by professional artists and art educators, jumped from \$2,715 in 2017 to \$11,852 in 2018. We estimate that we reached 1300 children in Toronto-area schools with our class workshop program. I invite you to read more on pages 10 and 11.

The #playitforward program that we launched in 2017 where we donate a school show to a school-in-need continues to be very well received. This initiative is supported by The Tachane Foundation and the Toronto Arts Council. We work directly with the Toronto District School Board, Toronto Catholic District School Board and Peel District School Board to help us identify qualifying schools.

The March Break and Summer Camp program at All Saints Kingsway Anglican Church continues to grow each year through word of mouth and we often hear from parents that we are their child's all-time favourite summer camp. Our camps also provide much needed revenue to implement our outreach programs and support the organization's limited infrastructure. We employ arts educators and offer volunteer opportunities for community youth as well as providing rental income for the church. The



Children from our Art City Outreach Program in St. James Town have fun with drama and visual art.

support of All Saints since our creation is essential to our growth and I can't thank the church's leadership enough for the opportunity to serve our community but also to help fund outreach initiatives such as our Art City programs in St. James Town.

With the support of a Compass Grant from the Ontario Arts Council in 2017/2018 and under the guidance of arts consultant Jerry Smith, we were able to look at the growth potential of Suitcase Theatre over the coming years. Continuing to partner with community groups, increasing our fundraising efforts and building committees to help grow Suitcase Theatre were key findings. The infrastructure for the organization remains small with the operations being handled by four key part-time individuals and a number of freelance arts educators and performers. Recognizing the need for operational funding and putting the stepping stones in place to qualify for larger grants is a direction the organization must take in the coming year.

So, as the little engine that could reached the hill, we too continue to chug along with a clear path ahead. I would like to personally thank Suitcase Theatre's Board of Directors, dedicated staff and volunteers who all share the vision for the organization's future and work with integrity to reach beyond. Suitcase Theatre continues to pack up and travel and inspire children and youth to be more confident, to show their character and be kind and compassionate to others – all using the arts as their guiding light.

Lucie Gryś

"Suitcase Theatre's production of Imagination Station has been a welcome addition to Sick Kid's child and family centred programming. Each performance is uniquely crafted to bring forward issues and experiences faced by our patients and their siblings in the hospital. During each show I have witnessed a true impact on the children's hospital experience, whether they have been brought joy, laughter, distraction, inspiration for the arts and drama, or brought together for special time with their family. Not only does the in-studio audience benefit from the shows, but Morgan and her team engage with our patients and families watching in their rooms, through our closed-circuit television station, who are not able to attend in person. These shows are also shown daily as re-runs for our audience's enjoyment. Morgan and her team, bring warmth, understanding, humour, and child-like wonder to the stage. We are so grateful to have this program available to our patients and families. Thank you!"

Rachael Cale, CCLS, Child Life Specialist  
Centre for Innovation and Excellence In  
Child and Family-Centred Care  
The Hospital for Sick Children



Taylor Lavigne, Dan Bryne and Allison Lavigne in *All Aboard*.

## SCHOOL PERFORMANCES

In 2018, we wrapped up our initial run of *All Aboard!* with 35 performances in the first half of the year. We performed in schools in the Toronto District School Board, Toronto Catholic District School Board the Peel School Board as well as private schools with a mix of paid and sponsored shows, thanks to our PLAY it Forward program and the support of the **Tachane Foundation**.

"The level of professionalism of the members of the company was inspiring. Both actors and crew were fully engaged in their presentation and were able to extend their obvious enthusiasm and love of what they do to all participants."

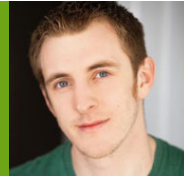
~Grade 2/3 Teacher, TDSB

## 2018 SCHOOLS

Giles School  
 Shoreham Public School  
 Armour Heights PS  
 Gracefield PS  
 Cordella PS  
 Highfield Jr. School (2 Performances)  
 Eastview PS (2 Performances)  
 St. Margaret PS  
 HJ Alexander (2 Performances)  
 Thorndale PS  
 Chalkfarm PS  
 Silverthorn PS  
 Roselands Jr. PS  
 Our Lady Of Sorrows  
 Pelmo Park  
 John English JMS (2 Performances)  
 Seventh Street PS  
 St Ambrose  
 St. Stephen  
 Holy Trinity (2 Performances)  
 Blaydon PS  
 George R Gauld JS  
 Driftwood PS (2 Performances)  
 St. Andrew (2 Performances)  
 Kingsway College School  
 Clarkson PS  
 JLR Bell  
 Stuart Scott PS



## A MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



As Artistic Director of Suitcase Theatre, my goal has been to help explore new creative ways that we can continue to extend our artistic outreach to as many children as possible regardless of their economic standing.

2018 has been an exciting year of growth and transition for Suitcase Theatre. After a very successful launch of "All Aboard" in 2017, the momentum for the show carried itself over into the first half of 2018 with us doing another 35 shows in schools across the GTA. The responses to All Aboard have been sensational and have helped us pave the way into the hearts of new audiences leaving a lasting impression of Suitcase Theatre in the TYA (Theatre for Young Audiences) space.

This naturally however leads to the question. "What next?"

Bringing together many of the creative team members from *All Aboard*, Suitcase Theatre has now begun development on our next show. This show will seek to tackle some of the issues surrounding the mental health, wellbeing and mindfulness of our young audiences. We have partnered up with the George Hull Centre for Children and Families to help guide us through the creation process, as we strive to develop a new work that will both align with current issues surrounding these topics and also deliver a fun, animated, and exciting musical production. This production will continue in development throughout the next year with an estimated launch of September 2019.

I have also had some large personal shifts this year which has relocated me overseas to New Zealand. There are exciting things afoot within the company, however at this time I have decided that it is best for me to step away from the role of Artistic Director and continue to support the company from abroad in whatever way I can. My past four years with Suitcase Theatre have been an incredible journey and I am extremely proud of where we have taken the company over that time.

As we begin 2019, Tyler Check, will be taking over the creative reins and stepping into the role of Artistic Director. Tyler is an energetic, talented and

artistically minded individual whom I believe will not only be a creative asset to the company, but will also continue pushing the vision of Suitcase Theatre forward towards new audiences across Canada.

Tyler Check is an actor, musician, teacher, and writer originally from Kingston Ontario. Tyler is a graduate of the Sheridan College Bachelor of Applied Arts Music Theatre Performance program and has been working across Canada as a performer in shows such as Million Dollar Quartet, Forever Plaid, and Spamalot.

As a writer, Tyler's show *Liam: the Musical* about an 18-year-old boy with non-verbal autism has had several workshops at Buddies In Bad Times Theatre in Toronto and the Stephenville Theatre Festival in Newfoundland as well as a full production in Toronto through No Strings Theatre and a school tour in Burlington. Tyler was most recently commissioned by George Brown College to write the music and lyrics for a TYA show based on the stories of Robert Munsch. He has also worked in the George Brown theatre department as the Head of Music working with the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year acting students on vocal technique and musical theatre performance.

Tyler was also instrumental in Suitcase Theatre's creation of *All Aboard!*, having written the music and lyrics alongside writing partner and current Suitcase Theatre Musical Director Tristan Hernandez.

As Artistic Director of Suitcase Theatre, Tyler will continue to build and foster new connections with schools and communities both in Toronto as well as across the country. Through this new show and in partnership with The George Hull Centre of Children and Families, Tyler plans to create opportunities for dialogue and constructive conversations around the challenges facing today's youth through fun, engaging, and uplifting theatrical experiences.

We have once again had an extremely exciting year and we look forward to continuing this growth as we move into the future.

Ryan Jacobs

## OUR ROSTER OF ARTIST-EDUCATORS



Adam Bailey  
THEATRE



Dina Cipin  
DANCE &  
IMPROV



Morgan Joy  
MOVEMENT &  
DRAMA



Warren Bain  
THEATRE



Tereka Tyler  
Davis  
DANCE



Alexander  
Mantia  
DRAMA



Alanna Balicki  
DANCE &  
IMPROV



Shannon  
Hancocks  
DANCE



Najla Nubyanluv  
DRAMA &  
WRITING



Joan Barrington  
THERAPEUTIC  
CLOWN



Michael Iliadis  
DRAMA



Victoria Snell  
WORKSHOP  
MANAGER

## WORKSHOP LOCATIONS

Allenby Daycare  
Corpus Christi Separate School  
Driftwood Public School  
First Portuguese  
Hawthorn School  
Kingsway College School  
Ledbury Park Elementary and Middle School  
Nativity of our Lord Separate School  
Norseman Junior Public School  
North York Little Prints Daycare  
Princess Margaret Junior School  
Regal Road Public School  
Royal York Road Nursery  
St. Kateri Tekakwitha Catholic School  
St. Marcellus Catholic School  
St. Nicholas of Bari Catholic School  
St. Pius X Catholic School  
Sunnylea Childcare Centre  
York Humber High School  
486th Girl Guide Sparks Unit

## OUTREACH PROGRAMS

### HOSPITALS & COMMUNITY CENTRES

Due to the support of new and returning donors and sponsors, including **Boehringer Ingleheim Canada Inc.**, realtor **Johanna Weaver** and **Rosedale United Church Outreach Committee**, we were able to build stronger relationships with Sick Kids Hospital and Ronald McDonald House.

We also offered weekly after-school workshops for free in partnership with Art City in St. James Town through the generous three-year donation from the Rosedale United Church Agency Outreach Committee.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EDUCATION MANAGER



As predicted, 2018 showed tremendous growth in Suitcase Theatre's paid workshops, jumping from 15 in 2017 to a whopping 65 in 2018! My role as Education and Workshop Manager is rewarding to say the least; it's amazing to see how we've grown since launching our in-class workshops in 2014.

The four performance-based workshops we recently added for older students are proving popular, and our latest workshop *Dance Your Way* — a non-judgemental movement workshop promoting positive body image — encourages mental health and well-being, while celebrating personal creative expression. Last year's most popular workshop, *Emotions in Motion*, — also promoted mental health and well-being. Its play-based interactivity opens the dialogue for feelings, leading children to identify feelings, foster greater self awareness, and better manage difficult situations while treating themselves and others with respect.

"Our students love this workshop! We have found it really helpful in supporting children's mental health and well-being. The parent volunteers expressed their appreciation for bringing this program into our school. Excellent selection, interactive activities, and a worthwhile purpose. Thank you."

~Senior Kindergarten Teacher  
Kingsway College School

With the dramatic growth of our programs we have hired two more workshop leaders: Shannon Hancocks is an Ontario Certified Teacher and a certified teacher/groove dance instructor who spearheaded our *Dance Your Way* workshop; Adam Bailey is an experienced arts educator

whose many talents include working with special needs children. His customized "Glee" workshop is extremely popular with Ronald McDonald House students. Our continued growth has us looking to engage more art educators in the near future as we expand our workshop programming to coincide with new play currently in development.

2018 also saw our expansion into more independent schools in the Toronto area and we are expanding our database to include more private schools.

Meanwhile, we continue to deepen our relationships with the Toronto District School Board and Toronto Catholic District School Board, daycares, community centres, children's hospitals and The Girl Guides/Boy Scouts of Canada. In 2018, we visited a school in the York Region Catholic School Board and they have already invited us back.

With the continued generous support of donors and grant money, we were able to offer monthly workshops at Ronald McDonald House and kicked off our monthly recording at Sick Kids — an interactive program filmed in Marnie's Studio where patients are invited to watch live in studio or call in from the comfort of their hospital beds as it is aired on the hospitals television network for all to enjoy and engage in.

We are absolutely thrilled to be launching a new play in the Fall of 2019, and we're currently revamping our workshop brochure to highlight workshops focusing on mental health and well-being. We're also developing both a clowning workshop and a spoken word workshop for older students that will promote confidence, expression and well-being. We feel a mental health package of workshops is strongly needed to build healthy mindsets in today's youth. Our bookings are still going strong and we suspect 2019 to be another breakthrough year. Thank you to all arts educators for their commitment and support of our programs.

Victoria Snell

# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

SUITCASE THEATRE ARTS AND EDUCATION OUTREACH INC.  
 Summarized statement of income, expenses and surplus  
 Year ended December 31, 2018

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
Performance Revenue	\$ 6,990	\$ 25,663
Program Revenue (Camps, etc.)	46,582	38,979
Birthday Party Revenue	-	322
Workshop Revenue	11,852	2,715
Fundraising / Donation Revenue	68,242	77,780
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>133,666</b>	<b>145,459</b>
<b>DIRECT PROGRAM COSTS</b>		
<b>Total Direct Program Costs</b>	<b>56,117</b>	<b>65,681</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>	<b>\$ 77,549</b>	<b>\$ 79,778</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
New Content Development	\$ 2,550	\$ 15,167
Salaries and Payroll Costs	41,616	42,772
General and Administrative Expenses	19,522	10,262
Advertising and promotion	2,509	3,263
Insurance	4,618	6,101
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>70,815</b>	<b>77,565</b>
<b>SURPLUS</b>	<b>\$ 6,734</b>	<b>\$ 2,213</b>

SUITCASE THEATRE ARTS AND EDUCATION OUTREACH INC.  
 Summarized balance sheet  
 Year ended December 31, 2018

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
Current:		
Cash and cash equivalents		
Savings	\$ 2,010	\$ 2,000
TD Cash	51,638	44,620
Total accounts receivable (A/R)	4,410	3,240
	<u>\$ 58,058</u>	<u>\$ 49,860</u>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>		
Liabilities:		
Deferred revenue	\$ -	\$ 20,080
Equity:		
Opening Balance Equity	10,452	
Retained earnings	40,872	27,567
Profit for the year	6,734	2,213
	<u>\$ 58,058</u>	<u>\$ 29,780</u>
Total Liabilities and Equity	<u>\$ 58,058</u>	<u>\$ 49,860</u>



Earth Day Parade created by students through our Art City Outreach Program in St. James Town.



SUITCASE THEATRE ARTS AND EDUCATION OUTREACH INC.

Email:  
info@suitcasetheatre.com

Twitter: SuitcaseTheatre

Mailing address:  
2336 Bloor Street West  
P.O. Box 84553  
Toronto, ON M6S 4Z7

Charitable registration number: 81769 5190 RR0001

Phone:  
647-654-7529 (PLAY)

Facebook: SuitcaseTheatreToronto

Location of camp programs:  
All Saints' Kingsway Church  
2850 Bloor Street West  
Etobicoke, ON