**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

ALBERTA PLAYWRIGHTS’ NETWORK

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – April 29, 2019

The Playhouse - Edmonton

Lunchbox Theatre – Calgary

I first of all want to thank the board for their incredible efforts, commitment, and support of your organization. I want to specifically thank Linda Wood-Edwards who is leaving us. Linda was instrumental and tireless in the work she did for APN. She guided us through a much needed bylaw review, revamped a lot of our governance materials and models, and steered the organization into a position of strength.

I also want to thank Blaine Newton for his work and dedication to APN. Blaine also championed the organization and always provided clarity and sound judgment when called upon. He made me think a lot of big thoughts and he will be missed.

Thank you both for your time and effort. You have both left indelible marks on the organization and we are all stronger for it.

Thank you to Neil Fleming, who is always there when you need him. Your work and guidance cannot be overlooked and I look forward to continuing to work with you for the duration of your term.

Thank you to Charlotte Nixon. For someone with very little time, it feels like you have given every spare moment to APN.

Maria Colonescu and Andrew Torry have been working on our Equity, Inclusivity, and Diversity committee and have been doing a fantastic job approaching the work and challenges with thoughtfulness and grace. Thank you. You will have made the organization stronger with your efforts.

And to our first year members, Chantal Perron & Meg Braem, thanks for jumping in and rolling up your sleeves. I look forward to working more closely with you now that you have your feet wet.

***Programming***

In 2018 we provided resources and assistance to over 100 Alberta playwrights and assisted in the development of over 45 plays. We are currently looking at all of our programming in terms of expense vs. revenue with an eye to keeping the programs that we offer accessible while balancing our need for revenue in order to offer the services that we do. In 2018, 50% of our revenues was put towards programming and services for our membership.

**APN RBC Emerging Artists Playwright Mentorship Program** – 2018 was our fourth year partnering with the RBC Emerging Artists Program to provide this opportunity. We were able to place 11 mentees and provided 2 mini mentorships as an addition to the program. We have received funding in 2019, but due to some changes in the application process, we took a small cut from RBC. This did not change the program and we were able to provide 11 mentorship placements this year. To date, 3 plays that had their start in this program have gone on to full productions.

**Alberta Playwriting Competition** – In 2018, after a five-year run of Edmonton recipients, Calgary playwrights Ellen Close and Braden Griffiths received the Grand Prize for their play *Cipher* (which will be premiering at Vertigo Theatre in 2019-20). The Novitiate Prize went to Edmonton playwright Christine Lesiak for her play *The Space Between Stars*, which will also be receiving a production in 2019-20. We had 43 entries and the jury had a challenging time selecting the recipients as there were 4 plays that were in the running.

**YouthRiot -** YouthRiot is a program for LGBTQ teens focusing on the creation of their voices as artists. It is an incredible program that culminates in the performance of their work by professional actors. The stories created and told were moving, raw and very powerful. The program had been funded by an anonymous donor, but in 2018 they were no longer able to support the program in 2019. We were able to secure funding from the B Family Fund through the Calgary Foundation and so the program is continuing in Calgary.

We have wanted to launch a similar program in Edmonton and thanks to the hard work of Bevin Dooley, we will be launching the program in the fall of 2019. Bevin secured funding for the program from two public funders in Edmonton and we are very excited about launching this program in Edmonton.

***Administration***

We have begun to realize that the organization is operating a maximum capacity. With the new civic funding in place, we will be looking to increase our operational funding from Calgary Arts Development in the hopes of hiring a part time administrative assistant in Calgary.

As we move forward in 2019 we are looking to create a more peer-to-peer networking system to put programming execution into the hands of our membership. Specifically this would relate to our Act One and Wordshed services and allow us to utilize senior level and experienced members to provide more dramaturgical services than they have in the past. This potentially will remove some of the load off of the Executive Director’s desk and allow me to focus more on strategic planning and execution of the vision.

***Financial***

In 2018 we ran a modest surplus, as we have for the past three years. The funding for the organization remains stable, but the staff and the board recognize the need for a strategic approach to fundraising and meeting those targets. We have been able to take the surpluses and invest them in some short term guaranteed investments (those do not show up in the 2018 financials as they were purchased in 2019). As noted in the President’s report, we did receive a large project grant from the Canada Council for the Arts. The project is a 12 – 16 month project doing nationwide, sector-wide research into new play development and production models. While the project itself is going to be a very important undertaking, now that we have received a project grant from Canada Council, we have the opportunity to apply for operational funding.

Finally, I want to thank the board and membership for their continued confidence in me. I have and continue to enjoy my time and the work on behalf of the membership and the playwriting community in general. I look forward to continuing to serve you, your artistic pursuits, and the community at large as the representative of APN.