



JEREMY WEBB artistic director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Neptune Theatre posts attendance record and surplus in 2017-2018

HALIFAX, NS - October 23, 2018: Neptune Theatre posted record attendance numbers and a \$65,994 surplus, the first in four years, for the year-ending May 31, 2018.

The President of the Neptune Theatre Foundation, Rebecca Hiltz LeBlanc, shared the news with members attending the foundation's Annual General Meeting today. "Neptune had a solid financial year, recorded a modest surplus and welcomed new Artistic Director Jeremy Webb," said Hiltz LeBlanc. "More than 76,000 patrons attended performances at the theatre during the last fiscal," added Hiltz LeBlanc. "This is remarkable, considering, the theatre's mainstage, Fountain Hall, was closed for renovations for five months."

While the 2017-2018 Season was programmed by former artistic director George Pothitos, Webb arrived in January 2018, and directed the record-breaking musical *MAMMA MIA!* "I was thrilled to make my directorial debut as artistic director with a fantastic creative team, a wonderful cast and the Neptune crew," said Webb. "The result was the most successful show in Neptune's history."

MAMMA MIA! generated more than \$1 million dollars in ticket sales before opening night. The musical was extended twice and played a five-day run at the Savoy Theatre in Glace Bay. Forty of the production's 102 performances were sold out. Another 49 performances reached 95 per cent capacity. A record-breaking 37,000 patrons saw the musical, which featured songs from the Swedish super group ABBA.

"*MAMMA MIA!* contributed significantly to the bottom line," said General Manger Lisa Bugden. "Over the fiscal, management and the Board improved the financial health of the organization and laid the ground work for Neptune to be a more connected and relevant community resource."

Other highlights in 2017-2018 include:

- a strong lineup of productions, featuring five Canadian plays, two local adaptations and three premieres - including an original Atlantic Canadian comedy
- the adoption of diversity and inclusion as an artistic and strategic priority
- new partnerships to support broader outreach and community engagement

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- renewed focus on elevating and celebrating local artists and their work
- expanded programming at the Theatre School
- six of nine productions exceeding revenue projections

The foundation thanked outgoing directors: Tara Erskine, Eric Sande and Jim Spurr for their dedication and significant contributions to Neptune, and welcomed a new slate of Officers and Directors.

The 2018-2019 Board Includes:

Rebecca Hiltz LeBlanc (President)
 Paul Laberge (Vice President)
 Virginia Jones (Secretary)
 Charlene Milner (Treasurer & Chair, Audit Committee)
 Rodney Belliveau (Chair, Programming Committee)
 Mary Clancy (Chair, Advocacy & Education Committee)
 Pete Clive (Chair, Development Committee)
 Chuck Homewood (Chair, Community Engagement Committee)*
 Catherine Bagnell Styles (Director)
 Kelly Boudreau (Director)
 Krista Grant (Director)*
 Anna Grue (Director)*
 Leslie Hawco (Director)*
 Tracey Jones-Grant (Director)
 Shafin Mafuz (Director)*
 Kate Mullan-MacIssac (Director)
 Raymond Sewell (Director)*
 Sara Scott (Director)

***Indicates newly appointed directors.**

Neptune Theatre is the largest year-round theatre in Atlantic Canada. The theatre presents a mix of theatrical works in our two venues: Fountain Hall (458 seats) and the Scotiabank Stage (192 seats). Currently in its 56th year of operations, Neptune aspires to be a cultural cornerstone, valued for stimulating, artistic, social and economic well-being.

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