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The Slaight Family Foundation commits \$15M to rejuvenate theatre companies
*This transformational sectoral gift is the first of its kind for the theatre sector
and will provide direct support to theatres and artists recovering from pandemic closures*

TORONTO (SEPTEMBER 28, 2022) – The Slaight Family Foundation is pleased to announce it will donate \$15 million to 22 Canadian theatre companies to support the performing arts industry as it continues to recover from pandemic-related closures. The sector has been disproportionately affected by the pandemic – being the first to close and the last to reopen – and continues to experience major disruptions.

This initiative will enable theatres to take the artistic risk needed to bring back audiences and reignite creative processes, funding artists fees, production development and marketing costs over the next two years.

“This is the support our sector needs right now, a vote of confidence to think big and make bold art that will bring audiences back,” said **Gideon Arthurs, Executive Director of Soulpepper Theatre**. “This truly is a first of its kind, a transformational gift to a sector deeply in need. Without exaggeration, the Foundation’s support will change what we imagine to be possible in the coming two years and set theatres up to emerge stronger and with more resilience once this awful chapter finally closes.”

“The forced closure of theatres because of the pandemic has devastated the theatre industry,” said **Gary Slaight, President and CEO, The Slaight Family Foundation**. “Even now, with audiences nervous to return since reopening, we are still seeing shows being rescheduled and cancelled, sometimes the same day. We’re very happy to support these organizations so they can focus on the work of creating & bringing back audiences.”

“Live theatre is a crucial way we tell our stories to each other and provide opportunities for artists,” said **Toronto Mayor John Tory**. “Gary Slaight and The Slaight Family Foundation know it takes time and investment to mount a theatrical production and that is an even bigger challenge post-pandemic. As usual with everything The Slaight Family Foundation does, these donations will play a big role in building a city which supports artists and the arts. Another stellar performance!”

The organizations receiving funding from this initiative are primarily Toronto based and nationally recognized theatre companies that develop and promote a full season of theatrical productions and are major providers of employment in the sector. The initiative also includes other theatre companies creating culturally specific work and leading conversations on equity, diversity and inclusion as well as supporting Canada’s major theatrical training institutes.

The Slight Family Foundation Theatre Initiative Recipients:

Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity	\$750,000
Buddies In Bad Times Theatre	\$250,000
Canadian Stage	\$750,000
The Coal Mine Theatre	\$250,000
Crows Theatre	\$1,500,000
Factory Theatre	\$250,000
Luminato Festival Toronto	\$125,000
The Musical Stage Company	\$250,000
National Arts Centre	\$1,500,000
National Theatre School	\$1,500,000
Native Earth Performing Arts	\$250,000
Obsidian Theatre	\$250,000
Shaw Festival Theatre	\$1,500,000
Smile Theatre	\$250,000
Soulpepper Theatre Company	\$1,500,000
Stratford Festival	\$1,500,000
Tarragon Theatre	\$250,000
The Theatre Centre	\$250,000
Theatre Passe Muraille	\$250,000
Toronto Fringe Festival	\$125,000
Why Not Theatre	\$250,000
Young People's Theatre	\$1,500,000

The different levels of support are reflective of the history of the organizations with The Slight Family Foundation, support to smaller theatres with full season productions and those companies focusing on equity, diversity and inclusion.

This announcement, coupled with a recent announcement of \$10M to Unison Benevolent Fund to support music artists in need, amounts to \$25M committed to the arts sector from The Slight Family Foundation to help in pandemic recovery efforts.

About The Slight Family Foundation

Since 2013, The Slight Family Foundation has funded several strategic initiatives to multiple organizations. These initiatives started with gifts to five Toronto hospitals to support priority healthcare issues, followed by programs to address global humanitarianism, the healthy development of children and youth across Canada, support for Indigenous issues, a seniors' initiative to help keep seniors in their homes and communities, supporting mental health challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and most recently support for women and girls at risk in Canada. This gift of \$15 million brings the collective support for these strategic initiatives to \$185 million.

The Slight Family Foundation was established in 2008 by John Allan Slight. Allan Slight (1931-2021), known as Canada's broadcast pioneer, was a leader in the music industry and a prominent Canadian philanthropist. Through his generosity, the Foundation proactively supports charitable initiatives in the areas of healthcare, at-risk youth international development, social services and culture. Allan's son, Gary Slight, oversees the foundation as President & CEO, The Slight Family Foundation.

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