

News Release

November 29, 2022

CreateTO and TO Live announce shortlist for St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts design competition

CreateTO and TO Live today announced the shortlist for an international design competition to reimagine the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts (STLC).

The landmark building, located at 27 Front St. East in the heart of the St. Lawrence neighbourhood, was constructed by the City of Toronto as a Centennial project in 1970 and has played an important role in the evolution of the City's cultural fabric.

In January 2020, Toronto City Council unanimously voted to reimagine the STLC, which led to an extensive community consultation that determined the facility no longer serves the functional needs of the cultural and creative sector and the local community. Furthermore, the STLC in its current state requires significant investment to address capital improvements for state of good repair as well as upgrades to AODA standards.

The re-imagined STLC will create a cultural ecosystem where renewed cultural spaces, innovative spaces and gathering spaces will combine into a dynamic cultural and civic hub and, along with Meridian Hall and Berczy Park, anchor the Front Street cultural corridor.

On October 14, 2022, a Request for Statement of Qualifications (RFSQ), inviting design teams to participate in the first stage of the two-stage design competition, was released by CreateTO, which is managing the procurement process for this TO Live project.

Five (5) shortlisted teams, each of which includes an Indigenous design partner, are now being invited to develop a concept based on a detailed project design brief. The five shortlisted design teams, listed in alphabetical order are:

- Brook McIlroy | Trahan Architects | Hood Design Studio
- Diamond Schmitt Architects | Smoke Architecture | MVVA
- Hariri Pontarini Architects | Tawaw Architecture Collective | Smoke Architecture | SLA
- RDHA | Mecanoo | Two Row Architect | NAK Design Strategies
- Zeidler Architecture | Diller Scofidio + Renfro | Two Row Architect | PLANT Architect

The design component of the process will be judged by a jury of leaders in the fields of planning, urban design, architecture, Indigenous design and landscape architecture.

Adjudication is scheduled to take place in March 2023, following a public presentation of the final design submissions.

Toronto City Council will consider the results of the design competition along with a business case in the second quarter of 2023.

Further information about the process and reports to date can be found here:

<https://stlcnext.org/engagement-reports/>

Quotes:

“This design competition presents a unique opportunity to reimagine an important civic building and the diversity of the teams included on the shortlist speaks to the exciting possibilities to reimagine the STLC in a way that will honour its legacy, foster a new era of civic participation in the arts, and serve the city for the next 50 years.”

– Vic Gupta, CEO, CreateTO

“This is not just a rebuild of the STLC – we will reconstruct the notion of what a performing arts centre can be. We will for the first time in its existence balance public and creative space to welcome the whole neighbourhood into this civic asset. And we will invert conventional programming – creating a from-the-ground-up creative environment in which underserved and underrepresented communities in the traditional arts can find a home; reinforcing our mission to support and reflect the diverse creative communities of the City of Toronto.”

– Clyde Wagner, President & CEO, TO Live

CreateTO was formed in 2018 as the City of Toronto’s real estate agency. The organization brings together stakeholders, partners and community members to ensure the best use of the City’s real estate assets for today and tomorrow. CreateTO manages the City’s \$27 billion real estate portfolio, develops City buildings and lands for municipal purposes and delivers client-focused real estate solutions – ensuring a balance of both community and economic benefits. For more information, visit www.createto.ca.

TO Live is one of Canada’s largest multi-arts organizations, operating three iconic venues: Meridian Hall, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, and Meridian Arts Centre. In addition, TO Live presents a full range of performing arts, theatrical, and concert events at these venues in both downtown and uptown Toronto. With these two hubs of creativity and content creation, TO Live has a unique place and perspective to activate creative spaces by inspiring local and international artists, connecting audiences with new ideas, elevating artistic potential, and becoming a catalyst for creative expression that is reflective of Toronto’s diversity.

- 30 -

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