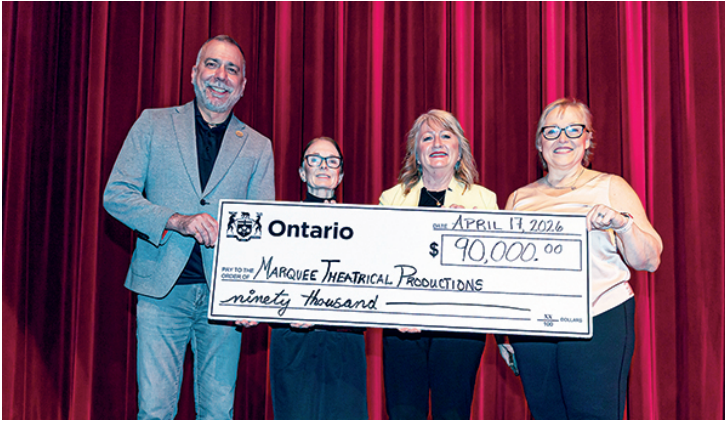


Marquee Theatrical Productions gets boost from the Province to increase accessibility, opportunities



As the curtain lifted on Marquee Theatrical Productions' Jesus Christ Superstar on Friday evening, so too did it lift on an enhanced new future for the local theatre company.

Newmarket-Aurora MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy and Mayor Tom Mrakas joined Marquee members and representatives of the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) on stage at Newmarket's NewRoads Performing Arts Centre to celebrate a Marquee's \$90,000 OTF grant.

The seed grant will support accessibility, inclusion and intergenerational participation in the arts, according to the Industrial Parkway North-based organization, and enable them to bring on a production coordinator, music director, music theory instructor, videographer, and an American Sign Language interpreter.

"Tonight's recognition is truly about honouring the impact that you make every single day, because this \$90,000 seed grant [enables] Marquee to pilot new programs and enhance existing ones as well, all with the purpose of expanding accessibility, inclusion, and intergenerational participation in the arts," said MPP Gallagher Murphy. "The grant is also helping with rental costs, sheet music, royalties?this is a lot for a \$90,000 recovery. It reflects the government's continued commitment to support organizations that enrich our lives through the arts, culture, and heritage, and it ensures that more children, youth, adults, and seniors, all alike, really come together and have a meaningful community-based arts program, and it helps address a powerful need: the need for local spaces where people of all ages can create together, learn from one another, and have that sense of belonging."

Both MPP Gallagher Murphy and Mayor Mrakas thanked the Marquee team, and particularly its founder, Sheryl Thomas, on the impact they have had on the community.

"We're so grateful for everything that they do," said Mayor Mrakas. "For so many young people, especially young people, Marquee is where they first fall in love with performing, where they build confidence, make new friends, and discover something new about themselves. Those experiences really do matter? not just for individuals, they shape confident, creative, and connected communities? and that's why support like this from the Province and the Ontario Trillium Foundation is so important.

"It helps Marquee keep doing what it does best, and that's creating opportunities and bringing people together through the arts."

The importance was also underscored by Janice McGuigan, a member of the OTF's Simcoe-York Grant Review Team.

"Usually, I speak a lot about the Trillium Foundation, but tonight I'm going to speak about this group, and what they do, and why

they're so important. Three things. First of all, when you put on live stage productions, you give people something to which they can look forward. They pick a play, and they look forward to going to see it. Secondly, they go to see the play, and when they're there, they're transported to what's on stage, the people, the setting, and you can take on another life and enjoy yourself. Thirdly, what they do is they create a memory, so that you can say to your friends and family, remember the time we saw that play here? That's why this is so important," she said, leaving the audience with a quote from Julie Andrews: "The arts create a bridge across the world like nothing else."

By Brock Weir
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