

The Digital Fringe Showcases Toronto to the World

The 33rd annual Toronto Fringe Festival sees digital attendance from all corners of the globe and gives back \$35,500 to festival artists

August 25, 2021 (Toronto, ON) The Digital Toronto Fringe Festival was an 11-day online festival that featured four series: Fringe On-Demand, KidsFest On-Demand, Fringe Primetime, and POSTSCRIPT Live(stream). It ran July 21 – 31, 2021 on fringetoronto.com. After the festival closed, Fringe On-Demand and KidsFest On-Demand were extended until August 22, 2021, to give audiences a chance to see and support more shows.

During the festival, Toronto Fringe welcomed international artists and audiences, Fringers danced in virtual reality on the gather.town patio, audiences were amazed by the elevated digital storytelling of the 2021 festival artists, and we all felt the Fringe Movement was alive and well. The community was moved by the ability of the Fringe spirit to thrive online.

fringetoronto.com was a hub of activity and creativity, earning more than 180,000 pageviews in under two months. The website saw traffic from 48,000 unique users in July and August alone, with 79% of those being new users.

The Digital Toronto Fringe Festival was an international festival. **17% of website visitors were from countries outside of Canada, with audiences tuning in from the United States, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Ireland, India, South Korean, Iran, Pakistan, Australia, and many more.** We asked audiences to “Fringe Where You Are” and they did – from around the world.

The Toronto Fringe in the past has been a very local, very Toronto-based festival, with a venue map that has been expanding in recent years but still very much located in downtown Toronto. **This year our audience traffic was surprisingly broad. In fact, only 37% of our audiences were tuning in from Toronto.** The rest were turning in from the rest of Ontario (26%), the rest of Canada (20%), and the world (17%). We were so pleased to welcome these new audiences to the Toronto Fringe and see them embrace this digital model, and we look forward to deepening those relationships in the years to come.

From Executive Director, Lucy Eveleigh: “For the second year in a row, Toronto Fringe and festival artists have risen to the challenges we have been faced with during this ongoing pandemic. I could not be prouder of the resilience and persistence shown by our artists and the team behind the scenes. We offered an incredible amount of work to our community members, both loyal and new, and audiences once again showed up to support. This allows us to keep rebuilding for the future and imagine how Fringe will grow in the years to come.”

There was great support for the Fringe and KidsFest On-Demand series. The videos in those series were watched 5,750 times. **Over the course of the festival, the total time watched for the videos in Fringe On-Demand was: 72 days, 19 hours, 26 minutes, 18 seconds. That’s a lot of Fringing!**

We also had 339 viewers tune in for the live digital theatre experiences in our Fringe Primetime series. And finally, the shows in our POSTSCRIPT Live(stream) series of free online events were viewed 1,851 times.

We were so grateful to our community for their support of the artists in this festival. Thanks to their generous contributions to each show they watched, and combined with Fringe’s recent announcement to give 100% of Membership fees back to our artists, **we are able to pay \$35,595.35 back to the artists in this festival.**

Congratulations to the Award Winners!

Staff, artists, and volunteers gathered at Fringe's virtual patio space in gather.town for an Awards Ceremony on the closing night of the festival. The following awards were announced:

Best Digital Pivot Award, presented by TO Live

Winner: *At the End of the Day* (End of Day Productions)

Runner Up: *Broken Hearted Girl* (She's So Vyle)

Second City Comedy Award

Winner: *CRINGE* (Champagne Boyfriend)

Honourable Mentions: *Orange Chicken: A Sketch Show* (Send Noods), *Good News Toronto* (Good News Toronto)

New Young Reviewers Award, supported by the Jon Kaplan Legacy Fund

Winner: *At the End of the Day* (End of Day Productions)

David Seguin Memorial Award

This honorarium was presented to eligible productions in the festival that featured the work of an artist or artists with disabilities.

Award Dispersed To: *ComMUTE* (Deaf Spirit Theatre), *Sound of Space* (Morgan Touch), *Time Limit Drops on Easter Sunday* (Wonder Jones Productions)

Audience Choice Awards

KidsFest On-Demand Winner: *Ship-Shape* (Playtime Playhouse)

Fringe On-Demand Winner: *Circle Back* (Good Idea Bad Show)

Primetime Winner: *My ~~Korean~~ Canadian Friend* (Lunar Way Studio)

To learn more about all our awards, [please visit our awards page](#).

What's Next for Fringe?

Fringe's dedicated staff and board of directors are hard at work planning the organization's next adventures. Toronto Fringe will be announcing full details a new micro-festival, coming this fall, called The Primetime Festival. Fringe will also be announcing the full line-up of the 2022 Next Stage Theatre Festival, which will be a hybrid of in-person and digital events. Announcements coming mid-September.

Media Inquiries:

Claire Wynveen

Toronto Fringe, Communications Manager

communications@fringetoronto.com