



**SOULPEPPER**

YOUNG CENTRE  
FOR THE  
PERFORMING ARTS

DISTILLERY  
HISTORIC  
DISTRICT

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## STRENGTHENING WORKPLACE CULTURE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

October 1, 2018

As leaders of this company, we have been very heartened by how the Soulpepper community, including our artists and arts workers, our donors, our patrons, and our Board of Directors have stepped forward in a remarkable demonstration of support and belief in this company, voluntarily giving time, energy and financial support to help ensure a vibrant future for Soulpepper. The continued support of our many constituencies and the service of our Board is a testament to their commitment to the company and the role it plays in our community.

This past year has been a challenging time, but it has also been a time of learning, listening, and transformation. We have all learned the value of strengthening multiple avenues of robust communication, and to actively seek out and invite many voices to be at the table. A shift in corporate culture does not happen overnight, and so we are thankful to everyone who has stood by us during this time. Thank you for taking the time to send in your emails and letters, and stopping us for a moment to say a few kind words. Thank you for sharing your memories of your favourite performance, and how long you've been a patron, and what Soulpepper has meant to you. This has been the fuel that has kept us going.

The Human Resources Committee of the Board has led the most recent review of the company's policies. Following discussions with artists, arts workers, and outside advisors, and the review of examples from other sectors and theatres, the committee has put together a new **Code of Conduct**, which Soulpepper has adopted September 10, 2018. Within this document is a **Statement of Promises** – a powerful pledge that we make as a board, as arts workers, and as artists, to one another, and to our community.

This document is posted publicly on our website and has been shared with all company members. We also recognize this Code of Conduct is a living document. We are committed to reviewing, discussing, and updating it annually, and will look to our leadership to embody, shape and improve these principals. Our committed Board is more engaged than ever and if you have feedback or suggestions, please share them at: [HR.Committee@Soulpepper.ca](mailto:HR.Committee@Soulpepper.ca)

We acknowledge that policies are only as good as they are lived within the workplace, and so we want to share some of the **steps we have taken to help ensure stronger communication and a vibrant, positive work environment** – listed below. We acknowledge that this list is not comprehensive and not a destination in itself. We commit to the ongoing work this journey represents, and approaching it together.

In the midst of this transition, there have been many moments of great excitement – a successful transition campaign with 100% Board participation raising over \$800,000, the openings of amazing



shows, strong box office returns, the programming of an upcoming season that allows for a diversity of voices, and the appointment of Emma Stenning as our incoming Executive Director. We anticipate making an announcement of the Artistic Director role shortly.

Taken collectively, these are the indicators of a company moving confidently into a new chapter. We are a company facing forward. We recognize our past successes and challenges, and are determined to build on those experiences. We are confident in the vision of our leaders, and the abilities of our artistic community. We thank you again for your past support and invite you to be a part of this exciting future.

Vanessa Morgan  
Chair of the Board

Emma Stenning  
Incoming Executive Director

Alan Dilworth  
Acting Artistic Director

Lisa Hamel  
Interim Executive Director  
Director of Finance & HR

## STRENGTHENING WORKPLACE CULTURE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE 2018 INITIATIVES

Since January 2018, the Board, Management and members of the Soulpepper company have taken a number of important steps to enhance safety and inclusion, strengthen the workplace culture, and strive to achieve 'best practice' governance structures and policies. The following is a list of the major initiatives that have been implemented to date. With our new leadership, this work will continue to expand.

### ENHANCING SAFETY AND STRENGTHENING INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE

- New Code of Conduct and Reporting Policy, including a powerful Statement of Promises, has been approved by the Board. This is being implemented across the organization
- Policies on Workplace Violence and Harassment have been updated, following an external legal review and HR Committee search for best practices
- Training in Workplace Violence and Harassment policies has been extended beyond full-time staff and artists, to include independent contractors
- New Whistleblower line: C.A.R.E. hotline (Confidential Anonymous Reporting for Employees) has been implemented through a third party, with anonymous complaints shared directly with



the Chair of the HR Committee of the Board or the Chair of the Finance Committee of the Board, as appropriate

- CAEA ‘Not in our Space’ information materials are reviewed by Equity representatives on site, at the start of every rehearsal process
- Anti-oppression workshops have been held for the full company (with keynote Rania El Mugammar)
- Intimacy coaches are available for all directors
- An artist/staff driven group was formed to hear concerns focusing on equity and diversity, research possible solutions, and make recommendations to Management.

### **BUILDING A STRENGTHENED WORKPLACE CULTURE**

- Post-production anonymous feedback surveys have been implemented (circulated to the artistic cast/crew of each production)
- Anonymous Employee surveys are conducted periodically
- Human Resources Committee co-chairs and members have met extensively with artists and staff at all levels, including members of the Academy
- Soulepper’s LifeWorks Employee Assistance Program continues to be available to all members of our Company and their families, and continues to provide ongoing counselling services (including on-site counselling when appropriate)
- HR notices are posted in locations throughout the building
- KPMG has conducted a 3-month pro-bono diversity and inclusion assessment of workplace culture. This assessment included a survey that was sent to all artists and staff. The preliminary KPMG report is being reviewed by the HR Committee, and a detailed implementation plan will be developed before the end of 2018, in consultation with staff and artists
- Various Community Programming workshops are available to all staff and artists, including:
  - Working with Queer and Trans Youth: Awareness and Sensitivity, led by The 519
  - Creating a Framework for Inclusion Workshop, led by actor and playwright Kawa Ada
  - Disability Inclusion Awareness workshop, led by Rosalyn Cosgrove
  - Disability Conference Training, led by Alex Bulmer
- Alan Dilworth and Sascha Cole have been conducting one-on-one confidential “Core Values” conversations with everyone in the community hearing what individuals value about Soulepper and to provide an opportunity to voice concerns
- Smudging Ceremonies have become a regular part of our community



- Healing Circles were led by Shirley Horn, Resident Elder
- Company social events and cabaret sharing were encouraged and scheduled (ie. Cabarets, BBQs, season launches)
- Acting Artistic Director Alan Dilworth and Associate Academy Director Leah Cherniak, conducted exit interviews with the graduating Academy Members
- Regular company-wide meetings continue to be held to share updates and ensure everyone is working towards the same shared objective.

#### **STRIVING TO ACHIEVE “BEST PRACTICE” GOVERNANCE – BOARD AND MANAGEMENT**

- Search for new Artistic Director and Executive Director: The Board struck a Search Committee consisting of six Board members. Consultations were held over several months to seek input on the job profiles and skill sets of these leadership roles, and two Artist Advisors and the recent interim Executive Director were invited to participate at various points in the process. Searchlight Consultants was retained to provide professional search services
- Amendment of the By-Law of the company such that the Artistic Director and the Executive Director will now each report equally and directly to the Board. This new structure was confirmed after the HR Committee conducted a review of best practices in the performing arts sector
- The new By-Law also ensures staff and artist participation and representation at Board meetings and Annual General Meetings and any other meetings of members
- Contact information for Board members and senior management made available to all staff and artists, to enhance accessibility
- Once in place, the Artistic Director and Executive Director will begin a Strategic Planning process in the very near future. The process will seek input from internal and external stakeholders, and will include an environmental scan, to help Soulpepper review its mission, vision, values and plans for the next five years.