

June 26, 2020.

>> MIKITA: Good morning, Canada and the United States and good afternoon Europe. Welcome to our inaugural international arts conference Culture's Compass, how the industry keeps being day two. My name is Mikita Arlo and I'll be your host for today. I want to thank everyone who joined us yesterday. We had a very saturated day. For those joining us today, we still have access to yesterday's sessions.

Just log in to crowd cast just as you did now and on the top left and select the session you're interested in. I want to thank all of you coming here today. Today we have almost 500 attendees from so many different countries all over the world. And it's almost 100 more than we had yesterday. So the bets are rising. Thanks to every single one of you. And now for a welcome word, I want to invite the director of centre for creative business innovation and Humber galleries, Jennifer Gordon. Jennifer, take it away.

>> JENNIFER: Thank you, Mikita.

Good morning, everyone. I'm so pleased to be here. It's going to be such an exciting day.

I'll just do a little recap from yesterday because we seem to have 100 new attendees here which is fabulous. We are thrilled with this. Welcome all. So I'm the director at Humber's creative -- centre for creative business innovation and Humber Galleries. The concept for this conference came about after COVID hit, and we were looking at some of the impacts happening from the fallout that was happening there. Students weren't able to find placements, live in person and the arts community was struggling with a number of issues across-the-board as everyone tried to adapt, and then, you know, added to that became the antiracist issues that are impacting everyone, and we came together and thought this is a place where we need to have an open space, maybe a safe space for some dangerous dialogue inside here. So welcome, everyone, and we're thrilled that you're here. The CCBI, just so you know is a new centre for innovation within Humber and built around industry bringing us their problems. That can be anything to do with audience, marketing. It can be big questions or small specifics that need a fee for service type of a fix on something. So anything that you have like that, feel free to reach out. I think there's lots of things that are coming up as we move through this conference today to look toward for future. We really need to thank

our partners work in culture. Big thanks to work in culture for supporting us and for mentoring us through this and for doing all the amazing outreach they have accomplished. We would not have the audience we have right now without you onboard and your expertise in assisting us. So big thank you to you. When we looked at university, I had a few thoughts that sort of popped up, and I'm going to run through these in random. If you have the same thoughts, that would be great. If you have different thoughts, we'd love to hear them too. These are things that were sticking in my mind. Everything is so tied together. That's the first thing. None of these sessions stands alone. They all weave into each other with overlapping themes and overlapping concerns. How do we untangle money and power from gaze and access and value? And who determines and evaluates those pieces? They're all woven together quite densely in the systems we currently have set up. So this is a great opportunity to start looking at some of those systems and seeing how we can rebuild and recover in ways that are more healthy, more inclusive and reflect I of who we are and want to be. The second thing I thought of was no one, including the large what we traditionally think of as well-resourced organizations with longer histories have any idea how to measure success right now. In some ways, that's a little daunting, but in a lot of way, it's comforting. We're all struggling with the same thing. We moved everything online. How do we evaluate this? What are the measures of success? What are these metrics? As we have shifted into this digital space. I think there's a lot of opportunity here. The next piece we need to really consider too is accessibility does not equal online. These two things are not the same. Online is one thing. Accessibility is another set of things. They overlap. They interact, but they're not the same thing. And there's no one side fits all solutions for all of this. We need to choose targeted impacts and pursue those ones that are closest to our hearts that we would want to see and attend and be involved with and that build a healthier society for us. I think that's going to help draw the audience.

So I think it's time. It's time to measure multiple forms of capital. Traditionally, we have always measured money as the capital. And it's interesting, because in Humber week had a project going that was involving trying to set up metrics for measuring different types of capital am. It's called triple bottom line. Some governments in Saskatchewan have adopted this. For example, you could have a line that it's your finance. That's your traditional capital. You could have another

line that could be social impact. It could be environmental footprint, different things like that.

It's time we set up a more holistic set of measurements for different forms of capital. Opportunity. I'm excited. The fourth piece is that a lot of people are carrying a lot of weight right now. I'm looking at you BIPOC and other marginalized communities. Hope can be a dangerous thing right now. For those of us in power positions, let's take up some of that burden, do the work for ourselves and really fight for antiracist and antioppression change from within. Thanks to the activism panel for making space in the middle of the pandemic and anti-Black racism.

We know your time is an extremely valuable capital.

This is a nonsec Witter here, but those joining us yesterday, sober, day distance comedy seems to work. It was really interesting and congrats to Ms. Tolev taking the risk and not being able to see her audience and still delivering a bang-up performance. It's interesting to see how performance is affected moving into the digital space and how we can work with those and leverage those. Some artists don't want to perform virtually.

Big love and applause to those who were willing to do that and the performances have been outstanding. We have two more today that will blow everybody away. Money is a tough topic.

That's my next point. A lot of people seem to want to avoid talking about it right now. So thanks again to our panelists today on that finance discussion and on broaching that and what do we do about money in a situation like this that is so challenging for everyone? So and the last point I have is there's a lot of volume online right now. Interestingly one of the discussions we were having yesterday after we wrapped, there's not a lot of activity online with the hashtags, and I was thinking about that. I'm thinking, you know, we're already on a screen. We already see the chat. And it's different from an in real life conference, because that way, you would be embodied and talking to people, and then you might grab your device and start to tweet or get on other platforms. But right now, I think, you know, everyone is absorbed in this screen and doesn't really have the capacity to like double screen it.

That's my guess. Either that or hashtag is so brand-new that people are not familiar with it.

Right? Those are my theories.

Those are my thoughts. I thank you all again for joining us.

Deep thanks to our partners Diane Davey in network and culty and Yomi John and our mentors who helped out, including Yomi John, Colleen Smith, Diane Pelicon and Alexander Johnson.

Without further ado, I'll pass the floor to Regina Hardwick.

Over to you, Gina.

>> CHARITY: OK. I have to pull up my PowerPoint. So just a quick check. Can everybody see my screen? OK, good. OK. So I wanted to begin by introducing myself and talking a bit about what we're actually here and the context of this part of the presentation to really do, and so we're thinking about the land spaces that we're all connected to, and so and the global scheme, it is the dish. It provides for us and we're all eating out of one spoon. In the context of today, I want to honour additional histories and the traditional territories we're all connected to. So to do that, though, I really need to start with who I am as a person. So I want to begin by introducing myself in my traditiontraditional language which is Anishnabe. Kwey kwey, [Speaking in a language other than English]

That's a traditional greeting where I talk about all those things that shape me. The first thing I talk about, it means

>> MIKITA: I don't have the presentation.

>> Regina: I have the presentation showing. Let me try to share my screen again.

Oh, something weird happened.

Hopefully you can still see my screen when I show it. Can you see my screen?

>> Yes, I can see it now.

>> Regina: Good, thank you.

Going back to introducing myself. I talked about that my name is Gina. Another name is searching eagle. So that tells you about who I am and my path and progression in life. The meaning around my name will change, but at this current moment in my life, it's really about finding my own identity as ainitiateAnishnabe kwey and part of my responsibilityings as a result of the education and teachings I've been given and the experiences I've had throughout my life and where I am in even my identities to feel safe in who they are. Create those instructors and staff and administrators within the context of our institution can feel that safe and can really learn about who they are, learn about the histories that shape them and determine how they're going to move forward. And then to create change on the

ground in Indigenous communities.

That's a big part of my path and progression and my focus in life right now. And so I also come from the Kichi. I'm a member of the partin clan and also related to the turtle clan on my mother's side. Through that little bit there, what you begin to understand is I'm in fact a visitor within a territory that is the treaty and traditional lands of the Mississaugas of the credit. This heart is homeland to Anishnabe, Haudenosaunee and wen dAT peoples. I have to consider what does it mean to be a visitor within somebody else's territory? Because of everything I'm given within this territory, what are my responsibilities to the people and to this place? To begin with, I think a lot about where I am and where I'm situated.

Within Anishnabe traditions, we have an understanding that we are shaped by seven generations.

And so a lot of times, when we're thinking about everything we're doing, we're thinking seven generations into the future. I like to think of myself as being situated in the middle of seven generations.

I'm shaped by my parents. I'm shaped by my grand parents and those ancestors and their experiences, and so looking at the experiences of Algonquin people specifically, I understand that they have been experienced by that historical legacy of colonialism and that legacy has been passed down to my grandfather specifically here. Up at the top here, this is -- it might be hard for you to see. That's little me, and that's my grandfather. And so through my grandfather, he passed teachings down to me. He passed a lot of teachings and experiences and understandings down to my mother. And my mother probably is one of the most important people in my life in terms of passing that knowledge on to me, because I have a mixed background. So on my biological father's side, I'mish Irish but I don't know a whole lot of what that means. I didn't grow up with him. I grew up in an Araganza family. You could call him my stepfather but he's been there since I was 3.

He was always Indigenous. Blood doesn't matter. It's those experiences and people who shape you. Those experiences are a big part of who I am. As a result of these histories, I'm part of a clan. I talked about being part of the Martin clan which is extended beyond my individual family, but I'm also a part of that family. At the centre of it, I land -- my homeland specifically but also the territories I'm part of, they shape me. Me community shapes me. My larger nation.

There's a lot of individual communities within the Algonquin nation, and then

overall, I'm also Anishnabe. So there is a long-standing history of migration and coming into being that I'm learning about. And so on the other side of that, through that history and that legacy that's being passed down to me from those generations before, that history of colonialism is in fact being written into the fibre of my being. But so is the strength and courage of those ancestors and those people who came before. You know, they had to find that strength to move on.

And through them, I learned how to get through the hard times.

And so I think there's a lot of value in those teachings that are passed on to you from previous generations. So I'd like to invite you to think a little bit about those things that have been passed on to you, those values that have been passed on to you and those places that have really meant a lot to you. When acknowledging land, it's not only important to acknowledge the territories that you're on but to acknowledge those territories that have shaped you. And so I recognize that connection, and for right now, you know, I'm sitting within the territory, the traditional and treaty lands of the Mississaugas of the credit.

I've been in this territory for about 15 years. When you're in a territory engaging with people and land for that long, it starts to shape you. I think that's become a large part of who I am as well. And so the missawingas of the credit are the Mitchy sawingyople. A lot of my reactions with them have shaped me. All of those things interacting in myself are also shaping others. I recognize I shape the -- in a very real level, I shape my daughter. So this -- under where it says community right here, this is my daughter Jada and this is -- she was about 8 years old at this time. At this time in my community, we were fighting against uranium exploration, and you know, like we were doing a very public newscast, and they wanted to really hear from the community, and she asked to speak. And you know, she said the most profound thing at 8 years old. She talked about how important land was for her and that she wanted to have, you know, our territory for her for when she grew up. At 7, 8 years old, thinking in that way, it was amazing, and that courage to get up and speak in that way at a time when essentially people within her community are also being criminalized for their actions. That's a big thing for her to have that learning, and so she's had things that I never had, because of colonialism.

These generations now are getting those things back. This her now. Not too long ago.

She's 20 years old now. So she's growing this beautiful you think yo young woman

and I have so much hope for the future, because I see what the youth are doing today. I see the strength in the students that I work with every day. I have an amazing team of staff they work with, and so I have a lot of hope for what the children of the future, you know, possibly my grandchildren away from hopefully a long way from now, and those descendents will inherit, but I do think that we need to really think critically about what we're doing now to really create those futures. So I think a lot about like what am I leaving for generations to come? In that thinking and connecting to land, I always think about what is it that I know about the history and contemporary presence ever Indigenous peoples and the places I work, learn, and call home? So if I am working or going to school or living within a particular territory, and I want you to think about that in the context of wherever you are across the globe, what does it mean to connect? What does it mean to live in places, especially places you're a visitor to that territory. What are your responsibilities? What kind of relationships do you maintain with Indigenous peoples in those territories? If you don't know who those Indigenous peoples in that territory, that's a good place to start.

What relationships do I maintain with the territories themselves?

Do I get out on the land? Times we get so stuck in our erst lay lives that we forget to get out there and breathe in fresh air and get out and experience nature. I also think about, you know, what is it that I want to learn? I'm going to think that throughout my entire life I'm always trying to learn more.

And then what is it that I need to do right now? There needs to be that action. So a lot of times, people get up and do a land acknowledgement and they'll have a script they speak to, and a lot of times, it's, you know, like this little tiny script that talks about the place and you don't bring too much of yourself into it.

I think we need to get past that and be able to bring ourselves into the context of connecting with land. Because we are at the centre of it, we always bring ourselves. And so I think about that, how I can, you know, help others to support them in their learning journeys. And so one of the really big understandings that has really really guided my thinking about how I connect to land is this dish with one spoon wampum.

These beads are made from the Cohog. They're white and generally a purple colour. This is historically, our governance and stories were contained within these wampum belts.

Traditionally it was between Haudeosaunee and Anishnabe peoples. It's where you share territories. Multiple people are coming together. So I have to recognize from the start that, you know, as I said, I'm a visitor within the treaty lands and traditional lands of the Mississaugas of the credit and this is shared between but now in the contemporary context of today, that it's also about a source of interconnection for all people who live, learn, and work here. This land provides this great dish. You can think of this dish as, you know, this regional territory, or you can think of the dish in the context of the places that you live.

You know, so that dish or even the globe, the globe is our global dish.

What it does it provides everything that we need to be healthy and well. It provides animals, birds, fish, everything, water, everything we need to be well, trees, bees, and so if you think about that, everything that the land gives to us, the land and the water, everything that it gives to us, respically, as human beings, we are expected to only take what we need.

We need to -- in thinking about those relationships, we need to be respectful and give back and ensure we're not taking too much and that we're weaving the land in its abundance and viability so that can provide for generations to come. I think this is especially important to think about in the context of the world that we're living in right now, where you know, there's environmental issues that we're experiencing. There's, you know, social issues that we're experiencing, and you know, like many issues around race and class and so I can't help but think about my daughter. So you'll notice that my daughter, you know, so in here, she's, you know, she's a different colour than me, and the one thing that she has inherited that I -- so we're both Indigenous. The thing she's inherited that I necessarily have not is, you know, a layer of fear of just going out into the world, and you know, worrying that as an Indigenous woman -- so in Canada, there's incidence of increasing numbers of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

As a parent, one thing that I do worry about is how safe she is when she goes out in the world.

I have to say -- and it has a lot to do with the colour of her skin. So her going out into the world, she has worries that I never had, because of the colour of my skin. And so these are things that I hope future generations don't have to worry about. Like, you know, having conversations about how you get pulled over, and how to be safe in that situation. I hope we don't have to have those conversations anymore.

And so that's what I'm thinking about when I'm thinking about connecting with land. I'm also think being what are those social structures that we're creating? What can we learn with land? What does land teach us? And about how we interact with each other. And so one thing that really comes to mind is this quote that actually comes from chief Seattle of Seattle. So this is thinking about that idea of living within seven generations that everything I do now isn't so much about me. It's really about like what am I doing?

What's the legacy I'm leaving for those generations that have yet to come. So this quote seems to have a lot of relevance. And so you know, the ideas that we do not inherit the earth from our ancestors.

We borrow it from our children.

If we are in fact borrowing the earth from our children, what are our responsibilities? What will the next generation inherit? Thinking about the structures that we live in today, is this the world that we want those future generations to inherit? And if it is, you know, so there's really great parts of the world that we live in. So there's a lot of things that we could really build on and grow, and then there's some things that I think we really need to critically look at. We need to look at ways in which we engage with land, and you know, really developing more sustainable ways of connecting to the earth itself. And then connecting to each other, and so what is the legacy that each of us hopes to leave? Those are the two thoughts I want to leave you with and I'll open it within the chat is to really let us know where you're calling in or connecting in from, you know. I know people are connecting in from all around the globe. I'd love to hear where you might be from, and if you do know who the traditional peoplings are within the territories that you're in.

Indigenous peoples are across the globe. It's not just within little pockets. There are Indigenous peoples across the globe. If you don't really know what that traditional relationship might look like, who those Indigenous peoples would be within your territory, I encourage you to learn more.

But feel free to leave some comments in the chat, just to let us know where you're coming in from that, and with that, I want to say Meegwetch that means thank you and thank you for listening. Meek.

>> MIKITA: Thank you so much, Regina for such a detailed blessing. A couple more things before we start. Feel free to comment in the chat on the right-hand side of

the screen.

Please just keep your comments appropriate and on topic. You can also create a discussion outside the conference chat by posting your thoughts on social media. So please just mention our official hashtag cultures compass 2020 when you do so. Please put any questions for the panelists in the ask a question sec, and go through and upvote other questions you want answered. You're more than welcome to participate in any polls that come up -- polls that come up belowment and I want to thank two of our artists, Jacquie Comrie that is providing the artwork we see before every session. And Squamish and Vancouver BC and she's creating a visual artworks and live and you can see them on our website.

We're ready for the first session for today. First presentation is engaging audiences in digital spaces and our speakers are Menon Dwarka member of the Canadian and city of Toronto's economic and cultural thought panel. Andette crAive strategies incubator.

Member of the inaugural of the Toronto Arts Council leaders lab. Member of the Toronto Arts Council's board nominating committee. Menon has led several Canadian organizations includingincluding [not audible] Charity Chan is an arts professional with a long-standing history of working across practices and communities. She's currently the performing arts manager at the Agahan museum. She's worked in Montreal, throughout the United States, Europe and Latin America, including time spent at organizations such as Ontario centre, production and others.

So Menon, Charity, we're ready to welcome you. The stage is yours.

>> MENON: Great. Thank you. I can only see -- I can't see Charity yet. Is she available?

>> JENNIFER: She's just connecting now. She'll be on in a moment.

>> MENON: I apologise for that super long bio of mine at the front. But I should say and we'll probably do a proper intro when Charity is here, that part of why I have a lot of those things is that you know, I went abroad for grad school to New York and stayed there for about 20 years and came back after the passing of my mother. With all that experience in international connectionconnections, when I returned back to Toronto, I had a lot of invitations to be parts of different organizations. So I see -- that's great, Kyla. And I also should say I feel super blessed to be connected with Humber, because they've been super supportive of many of the initiatives that

I've been taking on since I returned to, I think we started working together when I was at arts Etobicoke. Here's Charity.

>> CHARITY: Sorry about that, Menon.

>> MENON: No worries. I had a bump-off too. I'm not sure what happened. So I've been rambling until you got here. Why don't we do -- should we ask the polls. Is that what we should do, Charity?

>> CHARITY: Let's start with the polls. We had something we wanted to open with originally, which is that when we had started talking, when Menon and I first got together and started discussing the presentation and our chat, one of the things we wanted to make sure and sort of give advanced notice of to our audience, lovely audience from around the world is that this particular conversation we're about to have isn't really going to cover a how-to for audience engagement on digital platforms.

We're both very happy and open to having conversations afterwards and in private or after this conference either by e-mail or chats elsewhere.

Questions to the audience through the Q&A section. So...

>> MENON: I think, too, just to frame that, that it's not a how-to. Many of you, if you've been following cultural industries in Canada for the last few years, you might have seen when we had our SEFK question centennial situation, there was an organization that toured immerseve 3D film experiences and what was really interesting, because of the long time lines of government procurement, they bought a bunch of equipment and it was on the leading edge of what was available. By the time the project arrived, most of the technology had already been outdated. I think what we want to do -- and I think that was only a year on the outside.

What we want to focus on is not the particulars of today, but how we can actually discuss some strategies and thinking around digital presentation that could be ongoing. So it's not just tied to this moment, although I'm sure Charity and I are both very interested to talk about our experiences with COVID-19.

We want to give a broad framing of what's going on in the world right now with digital.

Also, charity, maybe -- they did have a little intro of both of us in terms of our jobs. Maybe while the votes are coming in, could you speak a little about yourself first.

>> CHARITY: I'm work as a performing arts manager. My background was in performance, academic research, composition, creative production. It was the arts

has a tendency to attract people who enjoy wearing many hats. I've now had the opportunity to wear several different hats for this. Since COVID has started, and the shutdown has taken place here in Toronto, one of the new hats I've been wearing is as a creative producer and programmer for performing arts for the museum without walls program and I oversee the creative production and digital production for our current content. So it's been a very interesting three months, three and a half months of change and growth and development. I know on the other hand, Menon has also been actively busy working with the Soundstreams and the changes that have taken place there.

>> MENON: Yes. I should apologise to my marketing manager who is probably watching this, that the original intro did not include my Soundstreams moniker. I'm the executive director of Soundstreams as well as all those other things.

There are two people online today who will talk about digital culture who are in effect trained musicians and composers and there's probably some tie-in between what we do as musical thinkers and structure builders in sound as well as this essential -- this is essentially one about visual organization and dissemination.

So I think we're going to -- if anyone can chime in with the hard of hearing, maybe charity, we can have a quick look at what's come in already. I think it's really interesting with one of the questions -- has anyone discovered any new artists or artwork since the shutdown? 88% have said yes, much higher than I thought. If anybody can chime in with who they've discovered in the chat, that would be really great. Charity, maybe you want to read out one of the other ones.

>> CHARITY: How many people have used a digital platform for arts consumption since the shutdown from COVID in mid-March and which platforms? One of the questions was other. Without too much surprise there's quite a lot of -- there's a few votes for social media platforms. Out of curiosity, which were the other platforms that people have made use of? If you can make use of the chat.

>> MENON: I've seen a couple of Instagrams which is surprising.

One is as a visual artist.

That's interesting to think about. There's another Instagram. That's great. So why don't we begin talking --

one of the things, Charity and I had a prechat before this and one of the things we found is that Charity's work in music has also been tied to specific cultural groups.

>> CHARITY: It is currently with the mesoup because of the work on Islamic art and

artists. We've got a social mandate for promoting pluralism, cultural exchange and building bridges between cultures. It tends to touch base on a lot of different cultural communities both here in Toronto because Toronto is one of the most -- the most diverse city in the world and elsewhere abroad too.

>> MENON: I think before we kind of -- I think it's important for the two of us to acknowledge something in what we speak about and Jennifer at the top of this broadcast today talked about the differences between online and accessible, and I think that one of the things that we should talk about, Charity, is the kind of aesthetics and culture that actually is assumed in this digital space. Do you have any thoughts about digital space in general being connected to a specific vantage point?

>> CHARITY: One of the elements I know Jennifer brought up and I believe was touched on briefly yesterday in a conversation between Devyani, Julie and Gaetane, we have think of digital spaces as being fully accessible, as being something that anyone from any part of the world at any point can have access to, and there's a presumption that there's a built-in level of equitability.

Part of the conversation has to do with what Menon and I were speaking about is that digital platforms are fundamentally socialized. Who has access, how they have access, a lot of times, our presumption for digital platforms is also that it's internet-based. And a lot of how we think about technology tends to be very two dimensional. We don't necessarily think of it as being in a social or cultural sphere that has just as much breadth or detail or form of availability for forms of engagement for experience. Menon and I work very much in the realm of live performance and live production.

And we're fortunate in that when we do those presentations, a lot of that work is -- a lot of our work is already inherently -- the socializations and props are visible because we have spent more time thinking about how those socializations take place, how audience members interact or consume with what is being present on the stage and because we have moved to effectively a 2-dimensional space, it's not just about sound or performance or presentation. Is that we have to sort of now reconsider, where is the depth that exists on these digital platforms.

When we want to talk about audience engagement and interaction, you can't really address it in a very impactful or meaningful way without thinking about how a

person's relationship with that platform, with that medium is or currently exists.

>> MENON: And I'll add that I think one of the big things for everyone to really consider as they are moving into the digital space, and I think oftentimes, our leadership, whether it's executive directors or boards or donors, there's often a knee jerk reaction to digital space.

So I remember many many years ago when everybody was entering the digital space, boards were excited to have websites for their organizations but they had no thoughts about the content or how that actually pushes out there, their branding and their messaging. I think it's safe to say right now that everybody who is in a performing arts organization, there's this real strong -- well, you can't go to a theatre now, so let's just transfer this over to digital.

I think kind of just addressing what Charity was saying that this is a different animal. And many of the ways that these performers were constructed, were never intended to be shown on a small screen. You know, this is a -- I'm assuming that this is a PG-rated talk. If anyone is interested, there's a YouTube video of someone asking David Lynch about what his thoughts are about seeing a movie on a phone. It's pretty short, but it's pretty brutal.

I think one of the things we really need to keep in mind is that digital accessibility is not like TV with a keyboard attached to it. And there are tremendous opportunities, I think, for different way of communicating with our audiences and seeing material. Not just because it's interaction.

There's just -- television was an adaptation of theatre and most television came out of New York city which was the centre of theatre. We have the opportunity to reinvent some things that will be truly engaging. Charity, I would be curious to hear if that review of material broadcast, have you been beginning that conversation as well?

>> CHARITY: We have to some extent. We had originally planned to have a virtual museum, but the time line for rolling out this project was fast forwarded very rapidly in the last couple of months. I got the feeling that many arts organizations over the first few weeks during COVID during the shutdown had a lot of scrambling to see what they did, how they did, how they could continue reaching their audiences and donor members and the arts ever los that make up their community. A lot of the initiatives that grew out were artist led. A number of projects such as urgent and other programs where artists would just take their cell

phones and do recordings of themselves performing, and you got an opportunity -- T.O. lives and opportunity performances.

You had a lot of opportunity to sort of have a more behind-the-scenes look for what you can actually produce. And one of the things that for us internally at the museum that's come up we are looking to present the entirety of the museum online as an experience so we can talk about how everything -- so that the experience when you walk into the museum. So many people talk about it being a transformative space that they feel like they've been transported to a different area. That in turn becomes a fundamentally educational experiential for us, moving to a digital platform, you don't always have that same opportunity, but it gives us a chance to showcase elements that we're not always able to before. Intimate curator talks, discussions about how it's constructed and how performances are curated and programmed and put up on the stage.

>> MENON: Charity, is it visual arts and music? Are there other things you were thinking about pushing out digitally?

>> CHARITY: We've been doing predominantly visual arts and music. We should elements of theatre we've been discussing as well. The different demographics and genres and disciplines forms what kind of content we can use. Menon, when we were speaking, we ended up with the conclusion that in many respects in the past three and a half months in Canada and the past six months around the world, there hasn't necessarily been any substantive technological innovation. A lot of the platforms that we're using, whether that's Spotify or augmented reality, all those platforms and technologies are already present. And so part of the interesting thing about this current experience is that there has been a scramble on the part of the consumer, and the audience as well to make use of and figure out how to use these platforms and these opportunities. One of the challenges we have faced at least for us at the museum in terms of reaching an audience is social media platforms are not necessarily accessible around the world.

We have a strong international audience.

>> MENON: I think you were saying what's app is part of your contribution. Is that right?

>> CHARITY: It is. Often time when we talk about technology, we think of it high tech. We think about the internet and laptops and cell phones and social media. We think about it as virtual reality, augmented realities. 3d printing.

Technology is also, again, to go back to what we were talking about earlier. It's socialized. It's a social form of communication.

One of the things we've realised is relying on a very personal and what might be considered more low tech form of communication has been much more effective and engaging. In addition to social media channels or newsletters and websites, we have a team that sends out the information for our programming every week through what's app channels to various what's app groups.

>> MENON: And are you able to see the reach of those easily?

How do you know if those --

>> CHARITY: It's interesting.

One of the things we had talked about is how do you track it?

How do you measure success in the digital world? You can go to Facebook and YouTube and get stA tittics. You have click through rates and open rates.

Is that a measure of engagement?

>> MENON: I think that's an issue that we've been grappling with at Soundstreams, because you know, because of where performance organization, and we have paused our season because, you know, we're still trying to figure out what's feasible next year. We thought what can we do to take the place of concerts that would keep our subscribers connected to us? And so we're launching this insider program. And in many ways, Charity, it addresses something you've been saying about it doesn't use any new technology.

And really it's a way -- we've communicated to a small group of people that we want to rereenvisage a new way forward for sound streams and we want input from the people who care about us. What this digital initiative is really going to do is put me and my team in a room with a small group of people so we can have real connection. I think when it comes down to this, and I'm very interested in issues of digital connection and I have a long history of dealing with technology and the arts. But you know, it's kind of like talking about the hammers and nails instead of talking about the architecture of your dream house. Right? I think that it's good to have people who are versed in those things, but what we really need to do is at the end of the day, say how much engagement are we going to get?

When I mean engagement, it's not something I can roll up into a caddeck form or something like that.

I really want to know was someone able to better understand where we think we're

goinggoing? And can I better understand who is on the receiving end of this thing? And I think before, there were genuine efforts about measuring seat numbers and having public talk backs and things like that.

But I think understanding what our fans are desirous of and where they want us to lead and really engaging with feedback, that's where we've been leaning.

I can something if I can take a minute to talk about a specific example. Like many organizations, you know, obvious to the 477 people online right now, I'm a person of colour, visible minority here in Canada, and when the events of Mr. Floyd's murder happened, there was a lot of pressure on organizations to say something publicly. But I also wanted to make sure that there were a number of organizations that put things out -- they used their social channels to say they were in solidarity but said nothing about their hiring practices.

If anyone is curious, I worked with the Canadian opera company to craft their response and I think it's a mea culpa. We did some stuff that was wrong.

Here's how we're going to fix it going forward. We want to be part of this. We did something where we publish someday content in a newsletter in our social channels about Steve Reish who is a composer who normally would associate with us. We presented lots of Steve Reish. We're looking to celebrate his 85th birthday next season. We picked a very specific piece to talk about in that newsletter and it's called come out.

It's a piece in which he was using audio that he collected from New York City court system, and it was part of an interview of a young man who had been wrongly accused of murder. He and a group of -- I can't remember the name, but if it was the Harlem 6 or something like that. It was in the late 60s.

And he took this loop of dialogue where one of the boys said, I had to poke myself to show the police where the bruisebruised blood -- to come out to show them. And so that phrase come out to show them was interesting in its rhythmic pattern. The context of that piece, and it was another context of another young African American male being used accused and beaten by police. We didn't put ourselves in the middle of the context of that piece or the background. We just shared that. It was really interesting.

We had a tremendous amount of feedback of people saying hey, this was really brave. This is a lot of information, and I had no idea, and kudos to you for finding something that was connected to the moment that wasn't just, you know, a hot-

button topic, something that we or a statement that would have just easily aligned us and let us off the hook. So I know that was a long response to that thought, but I really feel that there are ways to connect with people, and the digital is just a means of doing this. But having opportunities to actually hear back from the people that support us are really important.

Any thoughts or response to that, Charity, about those points I made?

>> CHARITY: It's funny. As you were -- right before you were speaking, one of the thoughts that was going through my head is was how do we define interaction.

We've talked about it a little bit and from a grant reporting or financial or administrative perspective, there might be statistics. How do we value it? How did we measure interaction even in the real world?

>> MENON: Yeah.

>> CHARITY: And how do you --

because really when you're in the arts, you're not doing it to sell tickets. You're not doing it to have the number of seats:

You have to collect and report those stA -- statisticsics? Is it an accurate measure of engagement? Is it an accurate measure of what the intention, whether it's Steve Reish piece or a digital replication from the folio of a manuscript? What is the intention behind it? Art is supposed to educate and transform and broaden horizons and a digital platform and audience engagement means in some cases we might not see that interaction and might not see that impact. Social media has the capacity to offer so much easy access for calls to action, whether that's for addressing social injustice, for addressing engagement with the arts. But what does that -- how does that reflect in terms of actionable -- in term ever real-life actions. One of the things that's come up is if you have a digital platform that presumably offers equal access to people around the world at any given point in time and that gives you the opportunity to present artwork or artists even that represent different heritages, different cultures that might not have the same degree of access elsewhere, because we are speaking about systemic imbalance and systemic injustice, then -- what happens with those changes and that access and opportunity on the digital platform isn't reflected in real-world institutions?

>> MENON: No.

When you were talking about how do we measure engagement, you looped it back to the actual essence of what it is. I think how I am hoping to measure engagement

is that when the community gathers, is there a sense that there's someone missing at the table if we aren't there? I think that's the real test of -- now we're in a crisis. But even before this, if their decision is made on how we organize ourselves as a society and what kind of resources, if they're not saying where are those guys? I think that's a real measure of who is part of the discourse of the day? Many times we measure those successes in ticket sales and the number of zeros after our operating grants. And I think that you and I both have seen many organizations that receive quite a lot of support and have a lot of ticket sales but when it comes down to actually shaping how we build the world, many even those organizations aren't there. In fact they're notably absent from what's going on. We can keep a moving target of what engagement really is, but when I think about how we measure connection, right, it sounds corny and maybe shows that I am -- I have a good like 20 years on you. Think about family. I think about how do we measure the connection of our mothers and fathers and our siblings. Right? And I think how we know we have family is when there's a crisis, they're there. They're actually present and willing to give and support and share all the things they've had from whatever contact they've had. I would hope as art-enlightened people when people need us or organizations that they the artists over the history of art making that we can bring that light into these conversations in a way that's not measured in the way it's failed us so often, the things you have talked about.

It's not about ticket sales or, you know, it's about can we support others beyond our specific work.

>> CHARITY: It's supporting, and it's also, I feel, we've had many conversations, you and I, and also just the industry in general, about more broadly about that this is an opportunity for people to rebuild, to reimagine, to recreate a new future. And we do have a tendency to think that -- OK, we can replicate what's happened before in our day to day experience, in our lived experience of the physical realm and move it virtual and that somehow that becomes the new normal online. If we have this opportunity to say OK, well, we have these new technologies and these opportunities for connection, what can we do with it? And is it necessarily on as broad reaching a scale as we might like to think. There's 20 different people tuning in from 20 different countries. And one of the interesting things that is taking place is a few months ago, our education department at the museum launched a school field trip, a virtual field trip tour with an organization in Mobasa and they were able

to bring a group of school children who were otherwise physically not be able to visit the museum into the space to have an engaged 1-on-1 Interac with a curator touring our galleries.

Another project that one ever our partner and IT team has been working on is working through mixed reality and augmented reality and 3D printing for our objects and artifacts. Speaking for other organizations in town, someplace like tapestry opera has launched a virtual opera experience.

All of those, I think a couple ever years ago, the city of Toronto presented a piece of virtual reality piece where they imagined what would happen if nature took over Toronto, the world. And what's exciting in all those instances, those projects had the opportunity to engage audiences in a way that wasn't just about numbers. It physically or quite literally dropped them into a new reimagined reality. And that's one of the benefits of a digital platform especially when talking about interaction and engagement. Sometimes there's very -- low stakes engagement.

You send an emoji and type a comment. Thank you very much for the comments, everyone. So there's a level of low stakes engagement. Then there's the higher stakes engagement is once you have the opportunity to see something different than what you have access to otherwise, how does that shape or change what you know? The web hasn't gotten any larger or smaller necessarily in the last three months. It's been more focused on it. And our value judgments and value systems for what we see and consume and interact with digital technology has also substantially increased.

>> MENON: I want to make sure that one very simple low-tech example of technology's use in connecting us which is -- and I think you came to one of the last ones before COVID shut us down. Me and Kelly at the conSebconSeb conservatory run this gathering where we could meet other people. When COVID hit, we couldn't do it. We took it online. The first initial ones were good.

But after George Floyd's murder, I made a concerted effort to invite a number of my American friends on. I realised for a lot of us in Canada, this was looking through the glass at something that was evolving over there, and there wasn't a touch point to actually make it real in a lot of ways. And so we had this now finally the technology allowed us to have people from all over the world be there.

What was really interesting, we were able -- we did it over zoom and we were able to use breakout rooms. For those 20 minutes, people got to know each other much

better than if we did it in person. That protected space of we're four people and here for however many minutes, and what I do know is that it built really sense of community for those moments we were able not able to do in person, because the dynamics of us moving towards the biggest fish in the room is always a temptation at these events and we stopped that in this thing and allow people to connect in the random breakout rooms. So even though that's not groundbreaking to anybody, what I would say to anyone that's listening is that this is so needed now to pull people together into rooms and talk about what's happening. Because I think as Charity was saying, I think from those chats we're building will naturally occur that we won't go back to the way that things were beforehand.

>> CHARITY: I don't think it will go back to how it was beforehand and it's also a good time for us to reflect on what kind of choices digital technology offers us. Because that's been foregrounded. Every day we make multiple choices, what we're going to attend to, what we're going to wear, how we listen, who we're going to invite, whether we pay for a ticket or the ticket is so expensive. So many choices and that informs the type of engagement we look for or measure or seek in term of arts and arts production. When you have a digital platform and in theory, everything is always accessible, those decisions and that decision making is foregrounded. And it goes back a it is bit to speaking about this concept of digital culture, and digital content as being a brand-new stage, something that we need to program and curate and create specifically for, and not just simply treat it as a substitute for a live experience during this time when we can't host something in person.

>> MENON: Uh-huh. Charity, can I ask you, and we talked a little bit about this earlier too. We asked the audience about what they were watching and what they are connecting with digitally. Do you want to share anything that you may have seen or you're doing in these COVID times in term of digital arts access?

>> CHARITY: I have to admit a lot of the videos I've been watching have to be the ones I review for posting are if our museum website. Something I really enjoyed taking a look at is the Alvinile products and there are groups that have been facilitating live streams of performances specifically from India as well. For me, one of the great opportunities is that you can see what people try to create given the current constraints. I love that right now, artists are really working to see how they can push those boundaries, change the shape of what we understand and what we

experience, and to sort of --

they, on their own are redefining the terms and expectations to what we think of as live performance for music.

>> MENON: What I was saying, it's interesting that even though Charity and both come out of a music space, we've been watching a lot of Aley on YouTube. What was shocking to me, I'm a huge fan of Alvin Aley and the New York City ballet and thought of them as coequal EverestEverests in the mountain range of dance. But gosh, Aley has spent so much more time thinking about capturing their dance in video that the production itself is of a much higher quality.

But I have to say, shockingly to me, the level of dance that was coming out of Aley was shocking to me about how much more incredible it was than even the heights of the New York City ballet. For me, that was a really interesting thing. On the downside of that, I'm kind of glad to see -- initially, there were a lot of bedroom composer or bedroom musicians kind of doing things online, and man, it was just like -- OK. I remember why I don't go to these shows. I do have to say surprisingly, and she's not someone I would have thought would have been delivering at such a high level, but the singer -- American singer and pianist Nora Jones is doing a daily YouTube cast, and she's destroying in that thing too.

It's so amazing to see someone -- anyone with talent being able to deliver at such a personal and direct way. So yeah. I'm kind of surprised about that too. Charity, do you think -- I think we should talk really quickly, because we're probably going to the end, just about how digital has rolled out in an organization. We talk a little bit about that regard to job description and work-life balance and things like that.

>> CHARITY: Right now, it is the case of all hands on deck at our organization. And I chuckle, because I think that tends to always be the case at arts institutions in general. But for us moving forward, one of the main questions we've had is what do we look to -- how is this new reality we're all dealing with sustainable for the future? Right? Is it a staffing resource? Is it a creative resource? Is it a rereconceptualization of how we occupy space? Because the reality is that we will virtual and [not audible] never diminish. It may not grow at the same speed or rate we've come last to in the last several months but we'll be moving everybody towards a hybrid reality where there's a physical museum and performances and you can visit and take a look at art and listen to some music but there's also going to be a virtual one where in some ways, the possibilities are limitless.

But in other ways, they're not, because we are bounded by certain restrictions that are in place, whether that is internet access available around the world, whether or not certain social media platforms are easy to navigate for individuals of different demographics or abilities, whether or not social media platforms or various platforms period are accessible in different geographies. We were discussing and one of the comments that did come up, it tends to be used very much enteringly but not so much within Canada. It was one of the discussions that one of our conversations a thought came up which was in Canada and North America, the United States, Canada, we tend to think of certain ways of connecting with people as being the norm.

Facebook messenger, e-mail, Zoom calls now. But in so many other regions of the world, that's not necessarily the case.

>> MENON: I think, too, and Charity and I did speak about this offline, and I think it's important for all of us, especially the folks that are kind of emerging outing colleges like Humber, that what's going on right now is that we're entering this new medium in which almost nobody who is working in these organizations is trained or understands the language they're speaking. It's almost as if on and I spoke about this easier.

When people made the leap from theatre to TV. It would be like shooting TV with no one who has knowledge of how cameras or lighting works. Because these platforms are so user friendly, we often skip the step of -- OK, well, how does this program or how does this initiative translate digitally? How does it feel? What are we actually saying? I don't want to put too finite a point on this. The fact that Charity and I are locked into two separate boxes.

It's actually -- it's a choice that someone has made to divide us here and allow us a way to be less conversational than if we were looking at each other, if there was another vantage point.

But I think oftentimes, decisions being made about what happens in digital are made by people that if you asked around the table, and I would really urge everyone to do this. Are you guys actually watching any of this on your own? Are you in part of this conversation? Or is this something that you just think we should be doing?

Because I hope we all have the courage to say we don't actually know what we're doing here.

And we need some help. Maybe there's room for people who have audio and visual vocabulary that translates well into the digital space and maybe we should get those people in our company, consult with them or whatever.

What I will say is this thing of Charity and I looking at that, I hope that's not going to be --

that somehow, we'll be able to have a much more interactive --

we are sharing space on your screens. But clearly it's delineated and that's so against, I think, what this medium should be doing.

>> Just a quick friendly reminder that you have ten more minutes.

>> MENON: OK. Thanks.

>> CHARITY: Thank you. I'll keep this short. One of the things I was going to say is in terms of this delineation, Menon, you're speaking about, one of the interesting things is that digital culture doesn't allow us -- digital platforms doesn't currently allow us to make up for the richness of a real-world experience.

That doesn't make it a poorer experience, but if you and I were sitting down in a café or at one of your gatherings, we would have the opportunity to not only speaking to each other.

We would be jumping in. Would be someone else coming by and sight and sound and texture and those experiences are not just -- those elements are not just missing from the digital platform in many respects.

Those Lepps -- elements can't be replicated. The intimacy you assume you have -- I remember having an interesting conversation yesterday with one of the performers that's going to be part of our flamenco festival this fall and we were discussing how the experience ever production had to have a live component which could be live streamed or recorded and edited to present online as well as to an in-person audience assuming we're able to do this in November. But also it had to be virtual she was speaking about how she had tried to create a sense of intimacy with the audience during some of her live performances and livestreams from home. You can't do it the same way. You can't reach out and touch somebody. You can't choose to turn away, to not look, to make a whisper, to your partner beside you.

Oh, I really love when that happened. And one of the things that this digital medium takes away from us in some regards, and while also offering is the option of choice.

Right? I think about product products like, for example, the met opera or Alvin Avey. How is this framed?

Which section of the choreography are you capturing?

Do you see the conductor? Is this a wide angle shot? Even the behind-the-scenes moment.

Who you film and who do you talk to? The real-world experience going to a live production or art experience has those elements, the sight, the sound, the smell, the feeling of the chair. Those are all part that add value elements towards the live experience. When you're on a screen, you as the audience member do not have that agency.

Right? It doesn't matter --

right now, unless someone is --

I don't know if you can do it.

You are stuck with two windows and there's Menon and there's myself. If you choose to look somewhere else issue there's really no -- you're not looking at the presentation anymore.

And so it's interesting that digital platforms, while in many respects increase audience agency, they also decrease audience agency simultaneously, just in different formats. One of the interesting things I did find was that as soon as the shutdown started, it became fairly apparent in the first four weeks -- and this is one of the reasons we have this poll is asking how did you choose what you wanted to see? And did you discover anything new? Because social media, especially if that's our primary form of arts consumption these days is a little bit of a self-created bubble.

>> MENON: Uh-huh.

>> CHARITY: So your interests on Facebook. You follow these people on Instagram. We've heard of TikTok and they tell you what you might see first and foremost. You end up being in a self-created bubble that's a feedback loop. One of the exciting things about live performance even as an audience member, you make what do I see?

Do I buy this ticket? Who do I go with? There's always that element of the unknown. It's hard to leave in the middle of a performance. You can, but it's challenging. So you are routinely in the real world and live performance, you're routinely confronted with something you don't know, something that is new. And currently, digital platforms, especially as we've been using them in the last few months hasn't necessarily foregrounded that.

>> MENON: Yeah, I think it's a big huge piece that is missing.

I'm thinking of a couple of things -- when my brother, when we were teenagers, sometimes he would bring home records and I would say where did that come from? He would say I don't know anything about this band but look at this cover. They might be interesting. That we could run into stuff that's a huge problem to figure out. Also the ability for us to step away from content in the middle if we're having a momentary dip. I saw a video yesterday about the film "Magnolia." If you're watching it online, you might click away before the plague of frogs falls on everyone in the film. You would really miss a huge thing, and also I just wanted to say when you're talking about things surrounding performance. With digital scoops out like smell and other things, I'm thinking about the Indian performances you were talking about recollect, and if you couldn't smell incense, how strangely disembodied that would be. I remember going to lots of dance performances in New York and one being the last Cunningham company show and being in that space and seeing all those people in the dance community hugging each and crying and realising this huge era is ending. How would that be replicated online. Right now they just put the show up. You wouldn't have any other connection to it. So I think how people will come together in a loose way where they have choice about how they move and interact. That would be a huge opportunity. I know it's so nerve-racking for people to walk up to people at a concert you don't know and hey hey, you're interested in this and so am I. Maybe we need to figure out how to do that in a messy space.

>> CHARITY: Speaking of messy spaces, it's a fanciful notion, one of my dream realities for purchasing arts and arts in -- performing arts and arts in general, the Pokemon, one of my favourite things to see were groups of five to 20 people in person out in public chasing down Pokemon together, chasing down virtual Pokemon together.

I know it's silly because it's a video game, but part of it is also, well, how do you create community and how do you create a shared experience that makes the virtual as real as the real world?

>> MENON: Uh-huh. When I first went back to Canada, my first gig was on Bathurst. I remember it was a Pokemon go site and people started showing up. The board was like should we do something about this? We're a gathering space. People are coming and stepping in and splitting. So it was -- it's something like that. We have to

figure out how to add to what we're currently offering. That would be great.

>> CHARITY: I do think Pokemon go is a great place to sort of end this conversation.

>> MENON: Maybe, yeah.

>> CHARITY: But again, if anyone has questions afterwards, happy to answer or address offline or through questions or chat.

>> MENON: We're easily findable on social media. I'd love to connect with anyone, and I have to say this opportunity has been really great for me, because I didn't know Charity that well before. I think she's an incredible person. I'm looking forward to seeing her career develop. We're so lucky to have her in Toronto.

>> CHARITY: I have to say Menon, I've had a really great experience working with you, talking with you. These conversations we've had especially in the last week or so have been some of the most illuminating and insightful and fulfilling.

>> MENON: That's great.

>> CHARITY: Thank you.

>> MIKITA: Thank you. I'm personally a Pokemon go fan. It was good to bring it up. Thank you. So now please I want to say to all of you that we're staying right where we are now, and there's no need to go to another station because my colleague Amanda will now introduce our artists for today.

She'll call you there. So please stay here. Stay tuned.

See you soon.