



**Publicity Final Report**  
**Submitted by: Jodi Smith, JLS Entertainment**  
**To: Theatre for Living**  
**March/April 2016**

## Overview

Overall, we had a successful publicity campaign for Reclaiming Hope.

Targeted advertising, strong sponsorship opportunities and timely mainstream media coverage resulted in a wide awareness of the project but didn't always translate into full houses for each event. The people who attended Reclaiming Hope all seemed to get so much out of the events and some people came back to multiple events, but this type of event (theatre without a play) seemed to be a harder sell than traditional theatre (an actual play). Also, Theatre for Living has always had an in house publicist and was their first time hiring someone to do PR remotely. I felt this worked out well as communication is key and feel like we all worked well together and kept each other in the loop, even though I wasn't right in their offices. I spent **\$11,921.71** of my total \$12,000 budget, so just came in under budget. In addition, sponsorship deals, price negotiation and cultural initiatives, such as the transit shelter subsidy (from the City of Vancouver) resulted in Reclaiming Hope receiving **\$66,069.50** in free advertising.

When I started working on the project, it was going to be an actual play called "Freedom". It was all based on Harperism and our past federal office, so when Trudeau got into power and things around "Freedom" started to shift, the project was cancelled and then morphed into "Reclaiming Hope...from a culture of fear. Therefore, whatever had already been decided on, including the dates, theme, etc. all changed and the events took on a new angle and was not a conventional play. Everything we had planned to date changed, including the marketing budget, which was initially 20k so that changed the marketing campaign. It was also decided that the production wouldn't be in just one venue but would now tour Metro Vancouver, and the dates moved from April to a March 10<sup>th</sup> start.

## Materials

When I started working on "Freedom" the photo by Zack Embree had already been chosen for the marketing materials. When the project shifted direction, we needed to find an entirely different graphic for "Reclaiming Hope" as the original photograph no longer worked – Dafne and David were able to source out a different image of Zack Embree's from his online work (David Diamond chose the new image) and TFL's in house Graphic Designer Dafne Blanco then manipulated the image (colours, background, etc) and designed the layout for the various marketing materials. Dafne did a wonderful job with designing all of the materials including the poster, postcards, programs, etc. and was always a quick turnaround for any suggested revisions that I made. We included all of the tour dates whenever possible in the materials as well as one of the Georgia Straight ads.

For printing our irregularly sized postcards and posters we went through RR Donnelly who the company has worked with many times in the past. The budget went up quite dramatically because of the irregular size as they had to be printed offset instead of digitally and also took longer to print because of this, but they still delivered everything on time. There was a new person dealing with our account so estimates sometimes took longer than usual. We decided to print only 15,000 postcards which was unfortunate, because we ended up running low and having to order an additional 3,000 postcards in the middle of the run which cost way more than it would have been if ordering 18,000 all at once.

RR Donnelly also handled our program and production posters (printed 800) with a quick turnaround. We were happy with the finished product with the exception of some of the photos on the program being quite dark. For the Transit and Scotiabank Dance Centre large format posters we had them printed at Image West. They do a great job and deliver on time.

## **Media Sponsorship**

I reached out to various media re. sponsorship when the project was still “Freedom”. I had initial interest from Shaw TV and CKNW but once the project shifted they both decided to pass.

I did secure print sponsorship with the Georgia Straight and online sponsorship with The Tyee and received discounted ads, online digital coverage, Georgia Straight, blog, etc. The Georgia Straight provided us with an excellent package to our target demographic and we received \$19,182 worth of advertising for \$5,000, resulting in **\$14,182** in savings. They also threw in an additional comp ad when we thought of forgoing our ad in their Spring Arts Preview issue. This allowed us one larger ad for our campaign which included all of our venues and dates. We were also able to receive a large amount of online coverage including a blog post and leaderboard on the site that helped to further our impact with Straight readers. Since most of our events were “by donation” we weren’t able to offer the readers a contesting blog, which had been offered to us as part of their package. Laura Moore and Maya Beckersmith were both very supportive of the project and easy to work with throughout the process.

The Courier and Westender gave us discounted ads (without sponsorship) for their Spring Arts Previews and Vancity Buzz gave us discounted online advertising as well.

## **Distribution**

Poster and postcard distribution began in February 2016. David Ng was instrumental in distributing the posters and postcards through volunteers and to our co-presenting partners. Perry Giguere (The poster guy) was also hired to distribute the remaining posters and postcards to mostly indoor locations.

## **Social Media Initiatives**

David Ng managed our Facebook page and all social media so will let him comment on this.

## **Advertising**

I ran a very traditional print advertising campaign taking out ads in The Georgia Straight, The Westender, The Vancouver Courier, Vancity Buzz and The Tyee. I initially was going to take out ads in Metro, 24 Hours, etc. but when the budget decreased by \$8,000 was unable to.

I utilized a lot of online supplements for our print advertising including leaderboard ads with The Georgia Straight and Vancouver Courier. We also took out a Vancouver Theatre Guide listing with the GVPTA and a preview page with Vancouverplays.com.

The City of Vancouver provided amazing support for the project through the Transit Shelter Subsidy program. Dafne secured 5 weeks of space for transit shelter advertising that ran 15 faces from February 29 –April 3, 2016, providing ideal coverage of the show for 10 days leading up to and throughout the run. We also secured a large format poster space at the Scotiabank Dance Centre from March 21 – April 3, 2016 in the Davie Street window. When our dates shifted we were only able to secure a shorter time in their window,

## **Coverage**

I was quite happy with the amount of coverage that the events received from mainstream and online outlets. The timing of many articles and radio appearances coincided well with opening and facilitated great awareness of the project. I was concerned when the show direction changed but we still managed to get the exposure I was hoping for. Reviews were not encouraged because of this not being traditional theatre, but I did invite The Peak (SFU) and Outlook TV to the show to report on their observations. The pre-show coverage was mostly radio and print with the exception of Outlook TV and Shaw TV's Around Town PSA that aired on Go! Vancouver.

Sheryl MacKay, host of North by Northwest on CBC, did an interview earlier on and chatted with David about the company's anniversary year as well as Reclaiming Hope.

Alexander Varty was assigned to write a preview of the production for The Georgia Straight and wrote a very thorough full page article that ran on the opening day March 10. Stuart Derdeyn at the Province also did a preview as well as the Jewish Independent. There was also coverage in the Spring Arts Previews, listings, and various other publications (see attached media report). We were also a featured show in the Courier's Centre Stage issue including a picture of David Diamond, which the media really connected to.

Theatre for Living staff appeared on the radio including several Coop Radio shows, Roundhouse Radio and CJSF Radio. We received a lot of positive feedback especially from David's appearance on Roundhouse Radio's Sense of Place with Minelle Mahtani – a very informative and interesting interview.

I was unable to secure coverage in The Globe & Mail, The Vancouver Sun, Metro News, or 24 hours despite numerous follow-ups.

## **In Conclusion**

Overall, our media coverage was widespread and quite targeted during the essential weeks leading up to and during the run. I believe that the strong subject matter of the play and history of the company (and its anniversary year) facilitated a lot of interest in the project. There was also a fantastic grassroots outreach effort done by Outreach Coordinator David Ng and his assistant Tstia, that also helped to garner interest, but was still a harder sell to get the audience out. We also had to do everything twice when the project shifted, redo the marketing campaign with the revised budget and dates, rewrite the press release as the content of the project morphed into "Reclaiming Hope" It was also a challenge to make people aware that this type of theatre is fun and exciting and not to be scared off by the interactive nature of it. But people who did come out gained a lot from the event and Theatre for Living continues to be an invaluable voice in the community. I thoroughly enjoyed working with the TFL team!

# FINAL MEDIA REPORT

## Reclaiming Hope

Prepared by Jodi Smith, JLS Entertainment

For Theatre Living Living

Dates: March 10 – April 2, 2016 Concrete Action Day: April 3

### Print:

Vancouver Sun	Scene Calendar
Georgia Straight	Preview with photo
Georgia Straight	Weekly listings
Georgia Straight	Spring Arts Preview
Province	Preview with photo
Province	Weekly listings
Playboard	Calendar Listings
Jewish Independent	Preview with photo
Jewish Independent	Weekly Calendar Listings
Westender	Calendar
WestCoast Families	Time Put Out Calendar
Vancouver Courier	Centre Stage: Spring Arts Preview with photo
24 Hours	Listings
The Peak (SFU)	Review

### Radio:

CBC, NXNW	Interview David Diamond – 35 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Reclaiming Hope
Roundhouse Radio	Sense of Place with Minelle Mahtani: Interview David Diamond

## Radio cont:

Coop Radio, CFRO	Media mornings show: Interview David Diamond
Coop Radio, CFRO	Arts Rational: Interviews David Diamond: March 31 (Reclaiming Hope) and April 20 (35th It Takes
Coop Radio, CFRO	It Takes a Village: Interview David Ng
CJSF Radio (SFU)	Interview David Ng
Coop Radio, CFRO	The Rational: Interview David Ng

## Television:

Shaw TV	Around Town PSA: David Diamond
Outlook TV	Review

## Web Site:

Vancouver Plays	Preview with photo
Vancouver Plays	Home Page
Alliance for Arts	News and Announcements
Local Drama Queen	FB posts
GVPTA	Vancouver Theatre Guide
Kitsilano Neighbourhood House Preview	
Act Out	Newsletter
Out on Screen	Preview
Georgia Straight	Highlights of the Week
Vancity Buzz	Ads
Inside Vancouver	Things to do in Vancouver
Media Democracy Days	Review
Georgia Straight	Things to do Today blog

## Sponsorship:

Georgia Straight

Discounted Ads, blog

The Tyee

Ad Campaign