

Open Letter to the LIPLO™ Viewing Community,

It has come to my attention that, through recent efforts to open up **a new revenue stream** for PICT Theatre and for those involved with the making of live theatre, new media and live streaming pose great challenges to the unions who seek to claim stake to the enormous financial potential it may yield. As a result, the LIPLO™ project to live stream of *The History Boys* by Alan Bennett became a liability when the two unions could not agree to move forward together, and one was not going to act without the others consent.

However, it is my hope that the silver lining in this temporary setback would be AEA and AFTRA start a meaningful dialogue to create a framework by which live streaming can be tested and/or developed and finally brought to “market.” As discussed at the initial actor meeting, we can already site the enormous upside potential such as reaching the elderly and handicapped, students at schools unable to afford busing, out-of-town theatre junkies who can’t physically be in town, and those who have lost their jobs or have had to tighten their spending but would love to see live theatre as it happens. And, of course, theatres small and large would greatly benefit from the increased audience and revenue potential by having a legitimate online presence, and actors, designers, stage managers, etc. would benefit by having their work streamed live for any potential employer to see. So, there is really very little downside.

I encourage any of you (whether you are a union member, SPT theatre staff or patron) who care enough about this to communicate with the leadership at Actors Equity Association asking them to please work with AFTRA to come to an equitable agreement that will allow professional actors to participate in live online streaming activities. The appropriate parties to contact are as follows:

Actors Equity Association - Filming and Taping Department

Larry Lorczak 212-869-8530 x340 llorczak@actorsequity.org

Dwane Upp 212-869-8530 x341 dupp@actorsequity.org

Actors Equity Association – Business Representative, Developing Theatres

Dragica Dabo 212-869-8530 x394 ddabo@actorsequity.org

Feel free to forward this to anyone you told about the LIPLO™ so they understand why the show was not streamed live as advertised.

From
Stephanie Riso
Operations Director, PICT Theatre
Lead Developer, LIPLO™ live entertainment portal