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## Bringing the Magic to Yonge Street for the Holidays

*After more than a century in the heart of Toronto, Thornton – Smith co-produces and sponsors Winter Glow while lighting up for the holidays to the delight of the millions of pedestrians on Yonge Street.*

Toronto, ON – The historic Thornton – Smith building on Yonge Street went live this evening with a world class lighting experience to celebrate its role in co-producing and sponsoring Winter Glow on Sankofa Square, while showcasing the unique façade and architectural features of one of Toronto’s most prestigious heritage buildings on Yonge Street.

With Toronto’s downtown businesses slowly recovering from the pandemic and many Torontonians experiencing significant economic challenges, Ken Rutherford, the owner of the Thornton – Smith building for the past 40 years, has partnered with Sankofa Square, Astro Amusements and Epilepsy Toronto to develop and sponsor the third annual Winter Glow festival to bring the spirit of the holidays to Yonge Street.

Winter Glow and the innovative façade lighting of the world - class Thornton – Smith building are part of a larger initiative “**Forever Yonge – Reimagining the Experience**”, to support the transformation of Yonge Street and recreate the excitement and energy that the street has historically been known for. “**Forever Yonge** is a feeling that embodies our collective memories and experiences accumulating over hundreds of years on Yonge Street.” **states Ken Rutherford.** “The **Forever Yonge** brand was developed to keep these feelings alive while we actively support the transformation of the historic heart of Toronto in a way that celebrates the past while building the foundation for centuries to come.”



**Mr. Rutherford continued,** “I have been experiencing the vibrancy of Yonge Street since 1967 when as a 10 year old I would spend my weekends at Toronto Camera, my family’s retail camera store in the Thornton-Smith building. I believe that through initiatives like **Winter Glow** and **Forever Yonge** we will encourage both new innovative experiential retailers and more traditional retailers to open world class stores on Yonge Street to be closer to their customers and to provide much greater exposure and flexibility for promoting their brands.”

The building was designed in 1922 by architect John M. Lyle (1872 – 1945) for The Thornton – Smith Company, a British antique and interior design firm. Lyle, who was one of the pre-eminent architects in Canada at the time, was very vocal about the many false storefronts and unregulated billboards on Yonge Street. Through the design of the Thornton – Smith building he was given the

opportunity to inject an architectural gem amongst much less distinguished buildings in the increasingly crowded Yonge Street retail corridor. In 1926 Lyle’s design received the first gold medal awarded by the Ontario Association of Architects, along with recognition in international architectural journals in London and New York.

While the surrounding area has witnessed a century of transformation, the world class Thornton – Smith building has remained true to its original architecture. With a new world class experiential retailer on the ground floor and the second floor occupied by Salad King, a Toronto “landmark” that has been serving Thai food in the neighbourhood for 35 years, the building has maintained its’ position in the heart of Toronto as the city has evolved around it.



But the crowning jewel for this property is the Aperture Room, a stunning event venue that keeps the 100 years of history on Yonge Street alive by boasting exposed brick, hardwood floors, three magnificent skylights and original windows that have seen Toronto celebrate so many milestones on Yonge Street over the past century.

The Aperture Room, which opened in 2015, is also part of the master plan to transform Yonge Street by hosting world class events for international brands such as Google, Amazon and Foot Locker, lavish galas for the likes of Luminato and Buskerfest, cultural events for the likes of First Nations University of Canada and the country of Iceland, and intimate concerts for the music connoisseur. Mr. Rutherford stated “We have always wanted to transform the third floor of the Thornton – Smith building, so rich with Toronto’s history, into something that would celebrate the legacy of the building’s prominence on Yonge Street. The name is also very close to my heart as it evolved from Toronto Camera, the family business that occupied the building for many years and was the country’s largest photographic store at the time.”

The century old Thornton – Smith building truly has brought the magic to Yonge Street this holiday season and continues to maintain its role in the transformation of the heart of the city.

For more information, images or to arrange an interview or site visit, please contact the owner:

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