



**Independent
Media Arts Alliance**
**Alliance des arts
médiatiques indépendants**

July 6th, 2009

Honourable Kevin Krueger
Room 301
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Honourable Kevin Krueger,

On behalf of the Independent Media Arts Alliance, a national network of independent media arts organizations, representing over 12,000 artists and cultural workers, I would like to express our opposition to the proposed 40% cuts to the BC Arts Council.

We understand that the BC Provincial Government has invested in arts and cultural programs including Olympic related grants which prove that there is recognition of the positive effects of supporting the arts.

The move to severely cut the BC Arts Council would be contrary to what is needed in an economically challenging time. Investing in arts and culture creates jobs, generating economic spin-offs far greater than the initial investment. When looking at the trends in other provinces and countries, governments have recognized the value in increasing support to the arts within their stimulus budgets. We have found that BC media arts funding is second lowest on a per capita basis compared to all other provinces. Not only does funding to the arts support artists, but numerous other professions including electricians, technicians, carpenters, ushers, and many others. A 40% cut to the BC Arts Council will affect the stability of arts organizations, compromising their ability to maintain essential programming.

Here are some facts that reflect the national cultural industry:

- ▶ Currently, government investment in the performing arts sector earns a positive return of over 200% based on direct and indirect benefits;
- ▶ The real beneficiaries of cultural investment are Canadian communities. The multiplier effect on a region's economy is 8.5 when induced benefits are included;
- ▶ As a conservative estimate, \$700 million of the tourist dollars spent in Canada can be considered an indirect benefit of culture;
- ▶ \$46 billion is contributed to the GDP by our cultural sector;
- ▶ \$1.00 invested, directly or indirectly, in cultural activities, generates \$3.20 in economic activity; and
- ▶ Two-thirds of all our international tourists participate in a cultural activity.

Not only does investing in the arts have economic benefits, it enhances the lives of its citizens. We are calling upon you to assure sustained, stable funding to the BC Arts Council, so that the arts may best continue to contribute to the social and economic well-being of the province.

Sincerely yours,

Jennifer Dorner, National Director

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