



July 14, 2010

The Honourable Lindsay Blackett  
Minister of Culture and Community Spirit  
107 Legislature Building  
10800 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Blackett,

Now that the dust has settled after the Banff Television Festival, I would like to take this opportunity to write to you on behalf of the Canadian independent media arts community. I appreciate the opportunity that this occasion creates to offer you our community's thoughts and perspectives on the development on Canadian expression in contemporary media.

The Independent Media Arts Alliance represents over 80 non-profit, artist-run organizations that help Canadian artists create, produce, distribute and exhibit independent artistic productions in film, video, sound and new media. Our member organizations serve a community of over 12,000 artists and cultural producers across the country. We have 10 member organizations in Alberta that serve a combined membership of over 1,400 individual Albertan artists and media creators. Many of these organizations have been in existence for decades, and act as vital points of engagement in their communities, providing equipment access, training, mentorship and professional development. Most importantly, the independent media art, films and videos that our member artists create put culture and ideas first to express individual points of view.

Very little of this work finds its way onto mainstream broadcast television, or into the commercial production contexts that you were addressing in your recent panel at the Banff Television Festival. We'd like to think that there's another side to the points you made there, which is that there is a great deal of creative innovation and artistic creation going on in Alberta's communities and across the country. This creative work is supported by organizations and individuals who try hard to make the strongest, most intelligent productions that they can with the resources at their disposal.

One undeniably positive aspect that has come out of recent events is a greater public focus and awareness on the creation of Canadian productions. We'd like to encourage you to think about the independent media arts sector, and the unique contributions it makes to Albertan and Canadian culture. Alternative points of view are important: tomorrow's innovations often come from the edges, where ideas and creative expression play a primary role. We would encourage you to consider the independent sector's role in building and sustaining the qualities of innovation that contribute to the advancement of culture. With your support our members can help their artists and communities grow as and develop as active contributors to today's - and tomorrow's - multi-media society.

Sincerely,

Timothy Dallett  
Interim National Director

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