



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

January 18th, 2008

Robert Sirman, Director
The Canada Council for the Arts
350 Albert Street PO Box 1047
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5V8

Dear Mr. Sirman,

We would like to update you on recent developments within the National Indigenous Media Arts Coalition (NIMAC) and to put forward a recommendation to the Canada Council for the Arts to institute a program that furthers networking between Indigenous artists and the larger media arts community.

NIMAC, a region within the IMAA represents Indigenous media arts organizations, collectives and individuals across the country. At our AGM this past fall, there was discussion about current challenges that the Indigenous community faces, in addition to talk about how the larger IMAA membership can build networks with Indigenous media artists and organizations.

While there is a critical need for increased funding for Indigenous organizations, it was determined that there is also a need to increase support to organizations that aim to share resources and outreach to Indigenous artists.

In other words, we would like to see funds that are allocated to Indigenous organizations for the purpose of strengthening their resources, and at the same time we would like to see an Indigenous residency program that supports the production and exhibition of media art work in various cities and communities across Canada.

Given that tools, equipment and resources are not readily available in all parts of Canada, with an emphasis on rural Indigenous communities, we feel that it would be important to strengthen connections to media arts organizations that do have such resources and are eager to share them.

Following the IMAA AGM, several members approached NIMAC with a proposal of collaborating on a residency program that invites Indigenous artists to produce work and exhibit within their centre. Most recently, Oboro, an artist-run centre in Montreal, approached NIMAC for this purpose.

In the process, we discovered that the programs currently in place that can be accessed by Oboro and NIMAC do not address the needs of such an initiative and would prevent NIMAC from accessing those funds for other essential projects (NIMAC currently receives a mere \$20,000/year for operating.)

The Council, in its strategic plan identified that it must address inequities of all kinds including Aboriginal inequities, we hope that you will consider our recommendation to institute a program within the media arts section that encourages networking between Indigenous and all media arts organizations.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and Youssef El Jaï to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Dorner, National Director
Independent Media Arts Alliance

Cc: Youssef El Jaï, Media Arts Section Head