

ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012

Presented to the membership at the 2012 Annual General Meeting June 18th 2012, Banff, AB

IMAA - AAMI

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MANDATE

The Independent Media Arts Alliance (IMAA) is a member-driven non-profit national organization working to advance and strengthen the media arts community in Canada.

Representing over 80 independent film, video, audio and new media production, distribution, and exhibition organizations in all parts of Canada, the IMAA serves over 12,000 independent media artists and cultural workers.

The Objects of the Corporation are:

To promote media arts in Canada on a nation-wide basis by providing a forum for communication and discussion for independent media arts groups, by developing collaborative opportunities/relationships with other organizations who have similar objectives, by representing independent media arts in front of government agencies and the private sector and by publishing a newsletter to educate the public and its members about media arts.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is with great pleasure that I come before you to present my report on the events, achievements, and challenges from the past year during my term as president of the IMAA.

Last year at the AGM in Montreal, I was elected to a one year term, rather than the usual two year term, in order to realign the presidential election years with the conference years. The idea behind this change was to ensure that the election of the president would take place at the event with the highest attendance in order to have greater representation in the voting process. This year at the Source Summit we will begin a new election cycle, where presidents will be elected at the AGM during the conference years for two year terms.

This past year as president of the IMAA was both fulfilling and challenging. I took my role seriously and did my best to work closely with the board and staff, both when it came to maintaining the trajectory and long term goals of the organization and also when it came to responding to issues and concerns that rose suddenly. I maintained regular contact with the staff in Montreal via email and phone conversations, and kept abreast of what was happening at the committee levels via email, skype and teleconferences. My work with the board and the executive was done primarily via teleconference, although we were fortunate enough to have one extended in person board meeting this year, which took place over two days in Toronto. It became apparent at the board meeting in Toronto that while teleconferences can be productive, they are no substitute for meeting in person, where there is more possibility for engaging in clear dialogue and conversation.

This past year was a full one and included advocacy work on regional, national, and international levels. Cuts to media art preservation seemed to be a major theme internationally this year, and the IMAA wrote letters of support of Dutch organizations (such as NIMK and STEIM among others) when their government cut funding to media arts organizations. Here in Canada much advocacy work was done on the national level, in response to cuts to NFB and Telefilm, among others. On regional levels the IMAA responded to various instances as they arose, and also developed a strategic "date your MP" campaign with the goal of mobilizing members on a regional level in order to effect national change.

The IMAA also worked on developing stronger links with other NASOs and PASOs across the country in order to work toward developing a more unified voice from the arts in general. I was pleased to attend and represent the IMAA at the Visual Arts Alliance summit in Kingston, as well as the Association des groupes d'arts visuels conference in Ottawa.

As we face serious threats of major cuts to the arts in Canada, it is important for IMAA members to know that they have the support of a national organization to speak on their behalf. I would encourage all members to stay in close contact with their regional directors who will in turn take their concerns to the board level where the board and staff can strategize and take action in response to issues and concerns across the country.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind members that the IMAA is not only an advocacy organization, but that it is also greatly involved in capacity building through the development of toolkits, reports, and research that members can use within their own organizations. Toolkits such as the Nurturing Diversity and Preservation toolkit are

available on the website and can be used by boards and staffs of media art organizations. Reports, research, and surveys, such as the Employment Standards report published by MDR Burgess and translated into French this year will be very useful for independent media arts organizations as they look at human resource management, development, and capacity building.

I would like to commend the staff of the IMAA on their hard work and dedication to the cause and to the organization. Their commitment and perseverance play a major role in driving the organization forward in its development of the independent media arts sector in Canada. In the past year I have seen them display a great deal of patience and diplomacy in the face of obstacles and challenges on various levels as they worked to advance the cause of the organization with unwavering direction and integrity.

I would also like to thank the board of directors for their dedication and for their time devoted to the IMAA. These are volunteer positions held by individuals with jobs at their own respective centres across the country which require a lot of energy and attention as well. I would like to commend the board members of the IMAA for managing to contribute to their local communities through their work at their own centres while simultaneously contributing to the national sector through their work with the IMAA. Several of these board members are also quite active on various committees which require a significant contribution of time and energy. For those board members stepping down this year, I would like to say a hearty thank you for all of your hard work. For those new board members stepping up this year, I would like to say both welcome and thank you for your desire and energy to contribute to the independent media arts in Canada.

Finally, I would like to thank the members at large for their participation in the IMAA. Your involvement and dedication is an essential ingredient to the advancement of independent media arts in Canada, be it through networking with other organizations at conferences, serving on a committee, serving on the board, or relaying information from the IMAA back to the members of your organization in your own region.

Thank you all for your participation in this AGM and for your hard work over the past year. It has been my pleasure serving as your president, and I wish you all the best in the year ahead!

Amanda Dawn Christie, IMAA Board President

NATIONAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT

On behalf of the IMAA board and staff, I am pleased to present a report on activities and general directions in preparation for the national assembly and annual general meeting.

In this month of May, as I am preparing this report, many members across the country are organizing meetings with their members of parliament to take place later this month. It makes sense to start my report from this point, looking back to what brought us to this moment. At the 2011 AGM and Open Forum, members clearly articulated a desire to ramp-up advocacy efforts given the current political climate. The idea of "dating your MP" was presented which was an idea supported by those in attendance. The first "date your MP" campaign is now underway and hopefully by the time we meet in June we will have a sense of how it went and be able to find ways to facilitate ongoing relationships between IMAA members and their political representatives in a proactive effort.

Needless to say, this campaign is directly related to the recent cuts to several key programs at the NFB, Telefilm and several programs related to archival practices. The IMAA is drawing attention to the changes within current funding systems and how they impede the not for profit media arts organizations from accessing public funds. The general direction that the federal government is taking related to arts funding is advantageous for organizations that are well positioned to attract alternate revenue streams.

The message that is being disseminated in these meetings is that independent media art is driven by research and development, new models, emerging practices, is experimental in nature. While we strive to build audiences and increase appreciation for what we do, box office totals are not the motivating factor. The government's role should be to support artistic practices that are innovative and have cultural value, which does not always equate to being revenue generating in an immediate sense. The long-term benefits to a society are immeasurable.

This past year the IMAA has continued to send letters and briefs to funders and members of parliament and maintains a presence within several larger umbrella organizations including the Canadian Arts Coalition, the Canadian Conference for the Arts, the Documentary Network, and the Visual Arts Alliance. We have initiated dialogue with what will hopefully become a closer network of the provincial art service organizations that represent media art which include the Alberta Media Arts Alliance, the Media Arts Network Ontario, the National Indigenous Media Arts Coalition and the Conseil québécois des arts médiatiques.

Given the context in which we are all operating, the IMAA is working to improve our communications and messaging system to reach a broader public, to raise awareness and public appreciation of the media arts in all parts of Canada. We are asking:

- How can we promote the good work of the media artists and organizations that we represent?
- What kind of language can we use that encourages support, understanding and demystifies the media arts?
- How can we build relationships with alternate funders, including foundations and private sector to benefit our members?

While this larger picture reflects the overall advocacy direction that the IMAA is taking, there has been quite a lot of work done by the committees. Here are a few highlights:

Under the guidance of its Employment Standards committee, chaired by Tricia Martin (Prairies and Northwest Territories Director) the IMAA commissioned MDR- Burgess Consultants to undertake a comprehensive examination of the employment standards in IMAA member organizations. The report demonstrates that despite the excellent service being provided by artist-run media arts organizations, they face significant human resource challenges because of lack of funding. The report makes recommendations for a rate structure for employment positions for use by members of the IMAA, as well as policies, best practices and other tools.

The Preservation Committee, chaired by Kevin Allen (Prairies and Northwest Territories Director) was tasked to raise awareness of the importance and timeliness of media art preservation, and to share resources, documents and information on best practices. A bilingual best practices guide for organizations and artists collecting and exhibiting media art that was originally created by Vtape is being translated and published in partnership. It includes sample contracts, assessment documents and recommended standards. In addition, a National Collection Survey was conducted to gather information in order to grasp the current state and address this very critical issue. The findings will be presented during the Source Summit during the day dedicated to Preservation, also organized by the Preservation Committee. I would also like to acknowledge the work done by the Alberta Media Arts Alliance on this topic of preservation and for the major contribution that it has made to the Source Summit.

In 2011, the Nurturing Diversity Committee published an online toolkit to promote the presence of media artists and audiences from ethno-racial and Indigenous communities. This toolkit was promoted and circulated and is now being included in a larger toolkit organized by the Cultural Pluralism in the Arts Movement Ontario and published by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. The committee is dedicated to updating and developing the online toolkit and will work to ensure that the IMAA and its members represent the broadest possible range of media arts organizations and media artists.

Following the 2011 Open Forum and AGM in Montreal, the IMAA developed an action plan that assembled the recommendations presented by the members which were reviewed by the board and included into various committees within a three-year timeline. Priorities for the coming year will include:

- Diversifying revenue streams for the IMAA as an organization as well as for its members.
- Communicating its activities to its members and the broader media arts sector, as well as how IMAA communicates about and promotes the sector to the larger cultural sector and public.
- Re-engaging members in advocacy initiatives and will look into holding the 2013 AGM in Ottawa for a Media Arts Day on the Hill.
- Continuing to build on work overseen by all committees.
- Responding to member recommendations as presented at the 2012 Source Summit.

The IMAA board and staff are always eager to have support from IMAA members whether this is participation on the various committees or within the region. I wish to thank all those who have contributed so much over the past year, and I welcome all newly elected regional directors and all those who are joining committees to assist with this very important work.

Jennifer Dorner, National Director

IMAA Reports, Briefs and Letters 2011 – Present (available at www.imaa.ca)

- Letter to The Honourable James Moore, Minister of Canadian Heritage (April 2012)
- Letter to Youssef El Jaï, Head, Media Arts Section: Concerns about Grants to Film and Video Artists (November 2011)
- Letter to Hon. Darrell Dexter, Premier of Nova Scotia and Hon. Marilyn More, Minister for Education and Labour (November 2011)
- Report from meeting between the IMAA and the NFB (December 2011)
- Letter to Cecilia Ramirez, Manager, Partnerships and Events | National Film Board (November 2011)
- Letter to Halbe Zijlstra, Dutch Secretary of state for culture (July 2011)
- Letter to Robert Sirman: Petition for the Bell Canada Award in Video Art (April 2011) List of the petition's signatories
- Press release on the Elimination of the NB Film Tax Credit (April 2011)
- Letter to the Honourable David Alward, Premier of New Brunswick (April 2011)
- Letter to Youssef El Jaï re: IMAA acknowledgement on processing the grant requests within the new program for media arts organizations. (March 2011)
- Letter to the Honourable Stephanie Cadieux, BC Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development (December 2010) + Response (February 2011)
- Letter to Youssef El Jaï re: IMAA feedback on the Grants to Media Arts Organizations. (January 2011)
- Report on the Grants to Media Arts Organizations. (January 2011)
- Letter to Robert Sirman: the Bell Canada Award in Video Art (January 2011)

Strategic Partners: 2011 – Present

Canadian Arts Presenting Association (CAPACOA)

Canadian Arts Coalition (CAC)

Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA)

Cultural Human Resources Council (CHRC)

Documentary Network

Visual Arts Alliance (VAAAAV)

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VIVO Media Arts 1965 Main Street Vancouver, BC V5T 3C1 Phone: (604) 872-8337 info@vivomediaarts.com http://www.vivomediaarts.com VTape 401 Richmond Street West, #452 Toronto, ON M5V 3A8 Phone: (416) 351-1317 Fax: (416) 351-1509 info@vtape.org http://www.vtape.org

Western Artic Moving Pictures (WAMP) 4916 - 49th Street BOX 2487 Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P8 Phone: (867) 766-2586 wamp@wamp.ca http://www.wamp.ca

Western Front 303 East 8th Avenue Vancouver, BC V5T 1S1 Phone: (604) 876-9343 Fax: (604) 876-4099 media@front.bc.ca http://www.front.bc.ca

White Water Gallery 143 Main St. P.O. Box 1491 North Bay, ON P1B 8J6 info@whitewatergallery.com http://www.whitewatergallery.com/ (705)476-2444 Winnipeg Aboriginal Film Festival (WAFF) 82 George Avenue Winnipeg, MB R3B 0K1 Phone: (204) 774-1375 or (204) 880-5381 Fax: (204) 772-0910

Winnipeg Film Group 100 Arthur Street, #304 Winnipeg, MB R3B 1H3 Phone: (204) 925-3456 info@winnipegfilmgroup.com http://www.winnipegfilmgroup.com

info@aboriginalfilmfest.org

http://www.aboriginalfilmfest.org

Workman Arts / RendezVous With Madness Film Festival 651 Dufferin Street Toronto, ON M6K 2B2 Phone: (416) 583-4339 Box Office: (416) 583-4606 Fax: (416) 583-4354 info@rendezvouswithmadness.com http://www.rendezvouswithmadness.com

Yukon Film Society 212 Lambert St. Whitehorse, YT Y1A 1Z4 Phone: (867) 393-3456 Fax: (867) 393-3445 yfs@yukonfilmsociety.com http://www.yukonfilmsociety.com

HISTORY AND PRINCIPLES

HISTORY

As a result of several formative meetings by representatives of a number of film production, distribution and exhibition groups from across Canada, the Independent Film Alliance was founded in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, in November 1980. Subsequently incorporated as a non-profit organization, the Alliance saw its mandate and its membership grow. To better reflect these mutations, the organization's name changed in the mid-1990s to Independent Film & Video Alliance (IFVA). Later, at the Annual General Meeting in 2002, the membership - now also constituted of audio art and new media groups - voted for the organization's name to be changed to Independent Media Arts Alliance/Alliance des arts médiatiques indépendants (IMAA/AAMI). The mandate of the Alliance hasn't changed; its work, undertaken with recognized expertise and diplomacy, has become wider and diversified.

FOUNDING PRINCIPLES

Our groups are distinct from one another and we value these differences. Just as we, as individuals, are able to pool our resources to mutual advantage in organizations that protect and promote individual free expression, it is possible and desirable to unite film, video and electronic media groups, each with its own character, in an Alliance. The Alliance does not limit itself to one genre, ideology or aesthetic but furthers diversity of vision in artistic and social consciousness.

IMAA members make a commitment to take anti-racist, anti-sexist and anti-homophobic positions in terms of hiring, distribution, production and representation. Also they respect and support the autonomy of native cultural representation.

The Alliance believes that independent film, video and electronic media are valuable and vital forms of expression of our respective cultures, which can uncover the prevailing illusions and expose the formulas that underlie the vast majority of commercial and institutional messages.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE AGAINST CENSORSHIP

"In face of the legitimate threat of censure by media classification boards, as well as the potential for self-censure by artists as a result of the classification process, the IMAA affirms the right of media artists and organisations to present media art works to the public and the right of the public to experience that work. The requirement that works of film, video, and other media arts be approved before the public is allowed access to them can rarely, if ever, be justified: it denies the right of the artist on the one hand, and of the public on the other - the protection of which they are entitled within the laws and before the courts of this country; it obliterates that exercise of responsible judgement which is the right and duty of every citizen in a free society."

STRUCTURE

At the Annual General Meeting members meet to set the Alliance's policies and to determine priorities for the organization's activities. Implementation of AGM decisions is carried out by the National Director, under the direction and supervision of the Board of Directors, elected by the membership to reflect a balanced regional representation. The IMAA president is elected by the General Assembly.

REVENUES

- -Canada Council for the Arts (operational funding)
- -Membership fees

Historically, project grants have been received from:

-Canada Council, National Film Board, Department of Canadian Heritage, Telefilm Canada As of 2005, project grants are only received from the Canada Council and The Department of Canadian Heritage

ACTIVITIES

- National Conference and media arts showcase held biennially in a different city in Canada
- Annual General meeting
- Networking, co-ordinated through the national office
- Advocacy, including necessary research
- Monthly electronic newsletter
- Consultation with federal and provincial government departments and agencies
- Acting as a liaison and exchanging information with other organizations with objectives similar to the Alliance's

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to any organization in Canada whose mandate is to encourage, promote and facilitate the independent production, distribution and exhibition of films, videos and electronic media works. The Alliance defines an independent production as being a work over which the artist maintains full creative and editorial control at all stages, from production to exhibition. Membership applications are submitted to the national office. All members must support the creation, distribution or presentation of media arts and:

- be not-for-profit organization, a member-driven co-op, or an artist collective,
- be artist initiated and controlled.
- pay fees to artists,
- support sexual and gender equality in their organization,
- support cultural equity.
- share the aims and objectives of the IMAA.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

The annual membership fee varies according to the size of the organization's operating budget:

Less than \$100,000 \$ 100.00 \$100,000 - \$300,000 \$ 200.00 Over \$300,000 \$ 300.00

The IMAA is firmly committed to actively assuring full participation in the organization and in access to its resources to all people, regardless of gender, race, language, sexual orientation, age or ability. This commitment will be reflected throughout the organization in IMAA personnel, policies, practices, membership recruitment, recruitment of the Board of Directors, committees and positions of responsibility in the organization and in all other activities of the organization. It is the responsibility of the Board of Directors to ensure that members of the organization understand and adhere to this commitment in all of their activities pertaining to the IMAA.