



CANADIAN  
ASSOCIATION FOR  
THE PERFORMING ARTS

ASSOCIATION  
CANADIENNE DES  
ORGANISMES ARTISTIQUES

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Honorable Steven Guilbeault, (PCH) [hon.steven.guilbeault@canada.ca](mailto:hon.steven.guilbeault@canada.ca)

Dear Minister Guilbeault,

The Canadian Association of the Performing Arts/l'Association canadienne des organismes artistiques (CAPACOA) serves the performing arts touring and presenting community through its commitment to integrate the performing arts into the lives of all Canadians. CAPACOA takes initiative in providing leadership, knowledge, communications and skills development on behalf of its members and within the arts presenting community.

We are writing to begin by applauding the initiatives taken by the Federal Government of Canada in its response to the COVID-19 crisis. The leadership shown by the Prime Minister in the broader context of Canada and the economy is truly exemplary. And we are thankful for the response of Canadian Heritage and the Minister including the announcement of \$500 million to support the arts and sports sectors, and giving voice and visibility to the arts sector during these challenging times.

As a professional association, CAPACOA strives to be the informed voice of the performing arts sector in Canada. Our national membership is primarily comprised of artist producing organizations, artist agents, artist managers and presenters – both festivals and series. Given the richness of our membership, we are able to provide information and insight into the sector's ongoing evolution and development. And during this time of crisis, we have been busy consulting with our membership and organizing a coordinated response. Some of the significant areas of concern and mobilization are outlined below.

**1) Artist Agents and Managers:** This key and necessary group of professionals in the performing arts ecology is at great risk during this time of crisis. The cancellation of presentations in the short and mid-term have put significant pressure and hardship on this group. Weekly virtual meetings since mid March, when the crisis broke, have been ongoing for this group. In addition to collectively sharing individual implications in the face of the crisis, the group has also been collecting information and data to report on the financial impact of the crisis and to identify next steps.

**2) Presenters – (both Festival and Series):** Performing arts presenters are in the business of convening people, and consequently the banning of gatherings has greatly compromised these entities. Again, a weekly national virtual town hall has been developed to allow presenters to compare current situations and challenges, while at the same time collectively working to develop a strategy and plan for the future. Information collection has also been central to this initiative.

**3) International Market Development:** CAPACOA has become central to the organized and coordinated representation and promotion of Canadian artists in international performing arts markets, reflecting Canadian values on the international stage, while developing economic opportunities as well as opportunities for cultural exchange. Given the restrictions on international travel, much of this work is now in jeopardy, impacting future touring and the economic viability of Canadian artists. We are currently developing virtual Canadian artist discovery programs to maintain momentum in this area and plan for the future.

Given all of the above, we offer our partnership and collaboration as you determine how to best move forward and continue to connect Canadians with arts and culture. As the situation evolves, we offer our support and knowledge of the performing arts and the presentation ecology. We have come to appreciate the good working relationship we have developed with Ms Irene Cheung who has regularly been passing on the information we have been collecting from the sector to your office.

We know that recovery will be a long process for the arts and culture sector. It was the first sector to be shut down and likely will be one of the last to open up again. Many of our members are creating multiple contingency plans, with “worst case” scenarios anticipating a return to normal practice in 18 - 24 months. This is a long period of time to be without performance revenues, and connecting with communities.

Once again, we thank you for the support from the Government of Canada.

Please do not hesitate to call upon us if we can be of service.

.Sincerely,

Michele Emslie



President

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