



Associated
Designers of
Canada

Simon Brault
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Via email: director@canadacouncil.ca

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To Simon Brault, Director and Chief Executive Officer:

The Associated Designers of Canada is one of the country's oldest arts service organizations, and is officially recognized under the federal Status of the Artist Act as the representative of designers for live performance throughout Canada (outside Quebec).

At this time of great disruption to our sector and our economy, we are critically aware of the particularly catastrophic impacts to the arts, culture, and tourism sectors. Designers of all disciplines are critical players in these broader sectors, and are being impacted by the COVID-19 crisis in extraordinary ways. For many members of our sector, the spring months are a key time for work: many producers are cancelling the end of their spring seasons; large summer festivals are considering cancellations; and work routinely tapers off in the live-performance sector over the summer months. As a consequence, we are estimating that the economic impact on the livelihoods for the majority of designers in this country is likely to be equivalent to six months of work and earnings.

As a nationally-recognized arts service organization, we are working with our stakeholders to record the direct economic losses within our membership and sector. We are also actively working to remind arts organizations and arts councils at all levels of government of our membership's importance to the broader arts sector.

As the process of determining how best to provide help to arts workers continues, we are asking to be included in that discussion. As the national representative of a unique subset of contract art workers, our input is essential in addressing the response to this element of the broader arts sector.

Many designers in our sector live on the knife's edge of economic precarity, and the loss of income for even a small period of time can be catastrophic. The precariousness of this moment is amplified every day as more productions are cancelled or postponed, and designers face the uncertainty of whether or not they'll be paid for any or all of the work that's been done.

Among the basic mandates of arts councils include the duty to foster and promote the study and enjoyment of, and the production of works in, the arts. In this moment, the actions of arts councils throughout the country are critical to, and reflect their support for, these mandates and communities. Without the strong and

direct leadership and support of arts councils, we will see catastrophic outcomes for the sector and for arts workers across the country.

We ask that the Canada Council for the Arts make a clear and public statement that the organizations and individuals that receive your funding must make full payments to their contracted designers. During this time of great uncertainty, this would go a long way to generate some sense of security and clarity for all parties. We have seen government announcements starting to offer relief to small businesses in the country - which includes funded arts organizations - and we assert that it is critical for these relief efforts to extend all the way down to the individual artists engaged by these organizations. We also believe that throughout the recovery period, established and incorporated arts organizations will be better situated to apply for and receive government relief than individual, unincorporated artists.

We fully understand that, in the avalanche of cancelled activity throughout the nation, the economic losses can't yet be tallied. However, we recognize that swift action and guidance is our best hope at creating certainty and mitigating the economic damage.



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