



In moments of crisis, only imagination is more important than knowledge.
- ALBERT EINSTEIN

CULTURE MATTERS – DON'T TORCH THE ARTS!

We are artists, cultural workers and supporters of a civil society, and we call on all those who believe in the value of arts and culture in our communities. Join us in bringing public attention to the recently announced, brutal cuts to our sector by the BC government.

Despite recent announcements reinstating funding to multi-year clients of Gaming grants, **funding to the arts and culture sector has NOT been restored**; the provincial government is planning to cut over 80% of what has consisted of only 1/20th of 1% of the provincial budget.

According to our most recent sources, **85%-92% of core provincial funding for arts and culture will be cut by 2012**, from both tax-based and non-tax-based [gaming] streams. The arts and cultural sector is bearing the brunt of discretionary cuts compared with other areas. During this economic crisis we are willing to make reasonable sacrifices, but cannot accept outright decimation of the sector.

Total support for arts and culture organizations in BC from 2008-2012, including all sources (Gaming, BC Arts and Culture Special Endowment, Direct taxpayer investment) are:

2008/2009 – **47.8 million**
2009/2010 – **42.219 million (as of February)**
2009/2010 – **23.075 million (suddenly, as of September)**
2010/2011 – **3.749 million (not including Gaming funds)**
2011/2012 – **3.675 million (not including Gaming funds)**

No other province in Canada has reduced support for the arts sector, a sector that, according to government statistics, produces significant returns on investment. This is a sector that creates both social and economic capital. The arts are a critical part of many stimulus strategies being enacted around the world.

ART WORKS!

Most Western governments are recognizing the importance of investing in the arts and cultural sector as a significant element of economic stimulus strategies. Our creative economy creates jobs, attracts skilled workers and entrepreneurs. The arts and cultural sector provides many of the skills and professional training to serve the needs of the creative industries. Investing in the arts and culture is investing in our future:

Every dollar invested by the province in arts and cultural organizations returns between \$1.05 and \$1.36 directly to provincial treasuries through tax revenues (http://www.tsa.gov.bc.ca/arts_culture/library.htm)

The City of Vancouver has concluded that every dollar the municipality spends on arts and cultural activity results in almost twelve dollars in economic activity (2007 Cultural Plan).

Of Canada's 10 provinces, BC has the largest percentage of its labour force in arts occupations (www.hillstrategies.com/docs/Artists).

BC arts, culture, and heritage industries generate 80,000 jobs in the Creative sector and \$5.2 billion of annual revenue. (Ministry of Tourism Arts and Culture Service Plans).

Growth in cultural employment in Canada from 1981 to 2001 was 81% higher than the 32% growth in the overall labour force during the same period. (http://artsresearchmonitor.com/arm_details.php?armUID=1100)

The second pillar of the Olympic Games is culture; maintaining investment in the sector will allow BC to fulfill its commitments to the Winter Games and enable it to meet its stated goals of increasing cultural tourism and creating meaningful legacies for communities across the province.

CULTURE MATTERS!

We ask you to consider the ways that arts and culture touch your daily lives at home, in the streets, your children in schools, community centres, on TV, your music, on the internet, in videogames and in theatres, museums and galleries. We ask you to think about culture as part of our individual and community identities, a way to connect with our diverse origins... with who we are today and with what we care about. Arts and culture are woven into the fabric of our daily lives. The arts are **NOT A FRILL!**

Our symbol is a grey and empty rectangle, a metaphor for a world without art and culture. Please join us.

WHAT CAN YOU DO

Write to your MLA describing why culture matters to you. Encourage your friends, family, and colleagues to do the same. Be civil and passionate. Most elected officials are people in our communities who are trying to do a good job and need to be reminded about what is important to us. Help us remind them.

list of MLAs and their contact info: <http://www.leg.bc.ca/MLA/3-1-7.htm>

postal address: Parliament Building, Victoria, BC, V8V 1X4

include Premier Campbell, Minister Krueger and Minister Coleman in your correspondence

Hon. Gordon Campbell (Premier): gordon.campbell.mla@leg.bc.ca

Hon. Kevin Krueger (Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts): kevin.krueger.mla@leg.bc.ca

Hon. Rich Coleman (Minister of Housing and Social Development): rich.coleman.mla@leg.bc.ca

Connect with your local arts and cultural organizations and offer to volunteer or make a donation.

We are all in this together.

Visit www.allianceforarts.com to keep informed and connected.

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