

AD HOC COMMITTEE  
FOR  
VISUAL, FILM, & VIDEO ARTS  
ON  
CULTURAL CAPITAL

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August 8, 1985

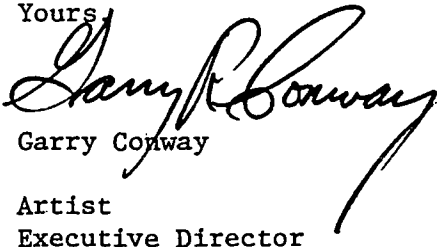
Please find enclosed our submission to the In House Committee of the City of Toronto. This submission is being made by the Ad Hoc Committee of Visual, Film and Video Artists.

Included in the report is a list of active members of this ad hoc committee whom may be contacted for additional information.

At the public presentation Barbara Sternberg from the Canadian Film Makers Distribution Centre will be presenting our submission.

I may be contacted at the above address after August 25 for any further information.

Yours,



Garry Conway

Artist  
Executive Director

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PART A

Presentation to the City of Toronto

## INTRODUCTION

This report is being submitted by an Ad Hoc Committee of Visual, Film, and Video Arts that were drawn together to evaluate the Toronto Arts Council's "Cultural Capital Report". The amendments made to this report specifically address the issues raised by the disciplines of Visual, Film, and Video Art. The paper follows the order of the "Summary of Recommendations" on page 103 of "Cultural Capital, the care and feeding of Toronto's artistic assests.

We would like to thank the Toronto Arts Council for its work and committment to the Cultural Community of Toronto. Their work and initiative has resulted in forming a closer more effective relationship between the Arts Community, City Council and City Staff.

We are especially appreciative for the additional information that Mary Lynn Reimer, Urban Design, City of Toronto and Heather Hatch, Curator of The Market Street Gallery, provided along with their time.

**OVERVIEW**

The concerns represented by this committee are for the further development of cultural life in Toronto, the well-being of artists and their support organizations. In order to achieve this, further communications channels and interaction structures are needed.

The Canadian Visual, Film, and Video Arts are comprised of artists, production facilities, exhibition and distribution organizations, as well as service organizations. Many of the organizations, although city based, are recognized for their work in other parts of Ontario, Canada, and Internationally. Artist-operated galleries in Toronto are members of a national network of artist-run spaces across Canada,(ANNPAC). Filmmakers and Video producers are a part of networks that link Toronto to both coasts and other countries. The institutional galleries, for example the Art Gallery of Ontario, are connected through associations and touring exhibits. Collectively, the contributions of the Canadian Visual, Film, and Video Arts are recognized and respected internationally.

There is, however, a problem. In Toronto, on a local level, the contemporary, investigatory arts are not fully visible. The education system has not been able to successfully introduce students to newer art forms. The general public's view and understanding of art is still limited to the long established and conservative traditions in art. As well, the artistic resource of Toronto - the artist - is in need of support as the costs of materials and facilities rise. At present there are insufficient resources to continue the hand-in-hand relationship between the artistic community and the social fabric of the city.

The "Cultural Capital Report", By Tom Hendry offers Toronto an opportunity to explore some alternate methods of supporting the artistic community and thereby enriching the lives of individuals living in the city. Through developing a communications structure with a willingness and desire to use it, the cultural community and the city of Toronto may easily share in the common resources at our disposal.

#### **A WORKING RELATIONSHIP**

Direct access to City Council is exceedingly important. Within the structure of City Council a direct link to Culture must be made. This may be achieved through a standing committee or subcommittee with the responsibility of Culture as its single concern. The present practice of linking Culture and Tourism is problematic and the structure must be unencumbered by the prioritizing of other Council mandates.

The Visual, Film and Video Arts would like to work with City Council in building this communications structure. It is important that the structure be conducive to effective and immediate action and provide ease of access to City Council and City Staff.

In each section or department of the city we would like a designated staff member appointed as the contact between city staff and the arts community. This person would serve as a liaison to organizations or individuals in the cultural community. In this way available resources may be more effectively utilized.

In addition, we are interested in a liason office being established at City Hall that would act as an information service, a vehicle for the arts community to city resources, and to provide current information on Toronto's cultural assests to city council and staff. These are the primary routes to information exchange.

#### ARMS-LENGTH APPROACH

The democratic process is complex and sometimes elusive. Closer and more immediate ties between Council and the Arts Community can only enhance and strengthen the system. In some instances, democracy is best served by direct contact with elected officials. However, to protect both an individual community and individual council members from undue political persuasion, a more indirect structure can, in some instances, better serve this governing system. The arms-length approach to funding is one example of responsible protection which serves the governing body and its community equally well. In culture, this process allows the growth and development of the arts to be nurtured with decisions being made on the basis of quality and aesthetic value. We are in full support of this process and would like to see it continued and developed further.

Of equal value to democratic principles the development of an Art Commission with decisive ability. An Art Commission would logically be mainly made up of members of the art community. Also a method of input from local communities to be effected by the decisions of an art commission must also be included. Direct involvement in the commission by Council Members would of necessity be restricted through the voting process within the commission.



## **NON-PROFIT VENTURES**

In the Cultural Capital report there are recommendations of providing facilities and services to the arts. There is a real need to extend services and facilities for production, exhibition, distribution and promotion of visual, film and video art. Artists have developed many facilities and services to date that are an outgrowth of meeting community needs during the last two decades. Many arts organizations are now in a privation position where limited operational money is causing a tremendous drain on resources, staff, and volunteers. In order to work effectively additional support is needed for general operations.

## **SPACE, FACILITIES, AND, RESOURCES - Individual Artist**

In cases where services are not presently being provided on any level, it is important that the concept of hand-in-hand development guide decisions, and be made in cooperation with the arts community. The case of an individual artist who wishes not to be affiliated or working for an arts organization may be hard pressed to finding reasonable studio space or fit the criteria of what or who is a "bonifide visual artist". Caution must be taken in implementing programs effecting visual artists.

## **DISPARITY**

A review of funding allocations made by the Toronto Arts Council shows a disparity of funding allotments across the art disciplines. Visual, Film, and Video, as a combined unit, account for only 3.6% of the total budget. It is imperative that this inequality be corrected as soon as possible.

Visual Film and Video Arts On Cultural Capital

## RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT

In an effort to increase services and facilities to visual arts, we encourage the city to establish an arts foundation. The development of a foundation must take into account existing arts organizations already and/or attempting to gain corporate funding. The goals and objectives of a foundation must be formulated so as not to conflict or create "competition". The structure of the foundation must also include representatives from the contemporary and exploratory arts (particularly visual, film and video).

## INCREASED FUNDING

The tables and statistics contained in the report "Cultural Capital" shows the need for increased funding by the city. Compared to other major cities, Toronto's contribution to culture, on a per capita basis, is low. Examination of Visual, Film and Video Arts organizations will show unreasonable conditions resulting from inadequate operating budgets. This situation continually reduces the ability of organizations to reach out to the people of Toronto. It also forces artists to work without reasonable remuneration for the creative work which is the life blood of the city. In the federal government's Applebaum/Herbert Report on the arts it was stated that by far the greatest subsidy to the arts is not made by government or corporations but by the artists themselves. This statement is particularly true in the City of Toronto.

We would like to thank the members of City Council and City Staff for this opportunity to speak directly to you. The work already accomplished through

the series of meetings and direct contact has been a positive and progressive step, exposing the need for developing a more concrete structure of continued communications.

**AMENDMENTS**

**to**

**CULTURAL CAPITAL REPORT**

**BY**

**VISUAL, FILM, AND VIDEO ARTS**

**AD HOC COMMITTEE**

As a result of the Toronto Arts Council's Cultural Capital Report the Toronto Visual Arts Community has reviewed the recommendations and offers the following amendments to the report. These amendments are specific to requirements of the Visual Arts in the City of Toronto.

#### 1. Motel Tax

There was general agreement to the concept of levying a tax on motel accomodation to be used for supporting culture.

#### 2. Task Force on Education

An arts advisory committee on education in the arts has been set up by the Toronto Arts Council which consists of approximately 30 people from government, school boards and the arts.

- It is recommended that the Task Force address itself to finding ways and means of making educational programs effective - not concentrating on why education programs are not working. The Task Force needs to find ways of bridging the gap, between the arts and the educational institutions, and to find vehicles for implementing effective educational programs.

- There needs to be more concentration on using the available art resources and artists in the community; bring the children to the existing facilities (including artists' studios, rehearsal spaces, artist-run centres, galleries, etc.).

### 3. Division of Cultural Grants

It was felt that the "Cultural Capital Report" was strongly theatre-based. The information related to visual arts, film and video was misleading. The report listed 6 galleries in Toronto and 77 performing arts organizations. This is inaccurate, (Pg. 30). The report excludes film and video for the most part and, as a result, limits the scope of the report. Breakdown in No.1 is not appropriate and must be revised.

- Rather than giving small grants to larger cultural institutions, it would be more beneficial to give operating money to the smaller cultural organizations. Operating grants should be given priority over project grants. Particularly in visual arts, film and video who have been underfunded. Organizations with limited funding sources (such as those unable to get corporate funding) need to be given additional assistance from the City. It was also pointed out that visual arts do not have the means or the opportunity to raise self-generated income, which is an additional reason why outside funding is hard to secure for visual arts organizations.

- As a source of revenue for culture, the admission fee to movie theatres could be taxed, and that money could go back into developing our own culture. The make-up of a theatre ticket needs to be examined to find what taxes are included and where they go.

- The 1% of capital budgets for all municipal development should be extended to include private and corporate sectors as well, and extended to existing buildings which are being renovated or redeveloped.

- It was pointed out that the City does not have many buildings at its disposal. Therefore, it is even more important that a program be set up where the City would forgive taxes to artists' studios and arts organizations.

4.(i) Arm's Length

There is general agreement tht the arm's length relationship between the City and the Toronto Arts Council should be continued. This method of operating is extremely important and is in the interest of both City Council and the Toronto arts community.

(ii) Toronto Arts Council

A body such as the T.A.C. being the funding body for the arts was agreed upon. However, it was felt that the T.A.C. is in need of some restructuring. Given its present makeup, it was felt that the T.A.C. does not reflect art disciplines in a true manner. Film and video should be included with visual arts and board members should be selected appropriately for these 3 disciplines, as well as for other disciplines.

- It is recommended that T.A.C. use a jury system similar to Canada Council and the Ontario Arts Council.
- Broaden the arts policy advisory committee.
- The Arts discipline committee needs to be broadened to include visual arts, using the advice of more people active in the arts.
- Restructure the T.A.C. board for more frequent changes of Board Members with no more than a two-year term.

### Recomendations 5, 6 & 7

There was general agreement with /these rcommendations although the following concerns were expressed:

- It is important in examining potential cultural uses of "city or private" space that an attitude of the arts filling in existing voids not be fostered. The attitude must stand on a foundation of providing needed facilities to the arts through communications that are based on existing needs.

- The arts community should review the criteria agreed upon by the City and Toronto Arts Council in Recommendation No. 5

- There is a need for an ongoing working relationship between the arts community and City Planning re: Recomendation No. 7

### 8. Facilities

Priority needs to be given to expanding facilities for cultural activities in Toronto. The visual arts including film and video, place tremendous demands on existing facilities and, in some cases, expansion is necessary, and, in other cases, new space needs to be found.

The following is a list of points which must be taken into account:

- a) the city should take action to support existing facilities, and that this be considered a priority.
- b) the list of cultural facilities in the Hendry report should not be considered an exhaustive list.
- c) the city of Toronto provide information to the arts community regarding



their assets. This may have potential use to the cultural community and put in place a means of information sharing between the city and the arts community.

d) the city encourage more corporate responsibility in the arts, in particular the visual arts, by providing mechanisms to accept corporate donations, and by providing encouragements to the corporate sector to provide funds to the arts community.

Facilities for visual, film and video arts are at present unstable. Changes in market values of properties results in organizations continuously moving from their rented premises in order to keep escalating costs to a minimum. As well, each mmoves requires renovations which which are usually done on a volunteer basis, reducing available people resources and increasing the landlords' property value. In order to make long-term decisions, which would enable the arts organizations to reduce or stabilize their facility overhead, the ability to purchase is essential.

Incentive capital grants to visual, film, and video arts have the potential of relieving the economic strain that organizations are currently contending. Capital grants by the City of Toronto would allow arts organizations to take advantage of other capital grant programs that require matched funding.

#### **9. Institute of Contemporary Visual, Film, and Video Arts**

Such an institute could play an important role in the development of the arts community in Toronto. However, the costs to cover such a facility would, of necessity, have to come from "new money" and not from cultural financing currently in place.

## 10. Art Commission

There was general agreement with the concept of an art commission. The following points were discussed:

- Have a strong representation from the contemporary arts.
- Include a means of direct, rotating, community input, when a specific community may be affected by a decision.
- The commission must be arm's length from the City.
- It must have the authority to approve or deny building permits on art related matters.
- There must be visual artists (including film and video makers) on the commission.

Among the many topics discussed at the meeting, there was concern expressed as to the method and procedure of decision-making which was not addressed in this report. It is imperative that a structure or organizations be developed that are an outgrowth of the existing cultural organizations in Toronto. The reference to facilities in number 8 must have as its working base organizations that are already providing or attempting to provide the facilities.

## 11. Staffing

As the city has already taken steps to hire for this position, additional recommendations are as follows:

- that the staff person spend equal amounts of time implementing the recommendations and creating policy;
- that through this position, direct access to City Hall elected staff not be limited to the arts community.
- that visual, film and video arts be given priority consideration within the job description.
- consider other alternative methods of access and information.

## 12. Ways and Means

1. That City Hall implement their recommendations with inclusions and amendments being presented here. (In particular, see amendments to Recommendations 3 & 4).

2. Interaction between various levels of government is essential. The City of Toronto can act as a leader in establishing vehicles for communication.

13 & 14: Refer to amendments in Recommendation no.4.

The visual arts are inadequately represented at present and funding to the visual arts is at an unequitable level when compared to other disciplines.

**15. Arts Foundation**

In considering the structure and objectives of an art foundation, these considerations should be taken into account:

1. That it is not in competition with other arts organizations for the same financial aid.
2. The foundation must be supportive of contemporary visual, film and video arts.
3. It must include representatives from the contemporary arts (particularly visual, film and video) within its structure.

**16. Toronto Arts Council Operating Budget**

Although fixing operating at 10% of TAC's overall budget was thought to be a reasonable amount, the committee recommends that, rather than a fixed percentage, a specific formula be worked out where administrative services could be more directly related to the overall TAC budget and general services.

**17. Financial Procedures**

The method described in this recommendation is appropriate to an "arm's length" organization such as the TAC.

18., 23. - 24. St. Lawrence Centre

There is an inequality in Toronto Arts Council funding to the various art disciplines. As a Visual Arts Committee, we feel that a complete review of funding allocations is necessary.

As the primary focus of the review, the funding disparity between art disciplines must be addressed. The goal of the review would of necessity be to find an equitable solution to allocations of city funds across all disciplines. Considerations in examining the situation would include a review of procedures in granting funds to the prime tenants; the creative and aesthetic value of grant recipients; ways of equalizing the current imbalance considering existing and potential additional resources; and increased accessibility of the site and its increased availability for usage by groups in other disciplines.

19. City Council and Culture

There is a need for a direct link between City Council and the cultural community. A link that will allow information to be accessed without excessive translation through overstructuring. We ask that City Council appraise its own structure and find an appropriate process that will provide this link on an ongoing basis. The Visual Arts Committee would like the opportunity to explore the possibilities directly with Council members.

**20. Per Capita**

An increase of the Per Capita expenditure on culture is immediately necessary. The amount of \$15.00 is considered a reasonable amount as a starting point. However, this is a beginning point and it must be reviewed after an initial trial period.

**21., 22. Metro Council Support**

The Visual Arts Committee is supportive of these recommendations and feels that the Toronto Arts Council must receive an equitable funding base from Metro Council.

**25. Standing Committee**

The Visual Arts Committee would like to explore the best mechanisms for bridging the gap between the cultural community and City Council with Council members. That this investigation takes into account the effectiveness of the Task Force on Arts and Tourism, the Toronto Arts Council, and the temporary position of Ron Evans.

As culture is an extremely important part of Toronto, the means of communication between City Council and the cultural community is, of necessity, a major consideration. While examining communication methods, it is important to consider a means of communication between City staff and the cultural community as well.

PART C

Funding Allocations

The Visual, Film, and Video Arts  
Re: PART C - Funding Allocations

The following provides comparative information on Funding by Toronto City to Visual Arts. The primary source for this information is The Toronto Arts Council.

The figures are presented here to show the disparity in the funding allocation to visual arts.

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Of the recommended funds to be given to 99 small or medium sized professional groups by the Toronto Arts Council in 1985 only;

3.6% will go to 20 Visual, Film and Video Arts groups.

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3.6% represents 56,750 to 20 visual arts groups  
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In comparison: 198,000 to 36 theatre groups

and 722,000 to major theatres  
(3 groups)  
in city owned premises

Theatre Total 920,000 This represents more than half of the  
recommended budget.

The expenses of creating, producing and exhibiting the visual arts are significantly greater than the above comparisons imply. Fees payed to artists for their work are inadequate. The organizations attempting to support visual arts are unable to find the financial resources to make payment more equitable. Organizations are understaffed and the work load can not be met.

The present situation is such that the visual arts community is in fact losing ground. Increasing costs will force most art spaces in the Queen St. area to move. Artists studio space and production space becomes more difficult to obtain as occupancy becomes more expensive.



PART D

Members of the AD HOC Committee

PART D  
AD HOC COMMITTEE  
VISUAL/FILM/VIDEO ARTS

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Toronto Photographers Workshop  
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TORONTO, M6G 2L1

Carla Murray  
Woman's Art Resource  
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TORONTO, M5V 1R5

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TORONTO M5X 1E7

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Visual Arts Ontario  
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TORONTO M5V 1E7

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Toronto, M6K 1G1

Clara Haraittay  
Art Gallery of Ontario  
317 Dundas Street West  
TORONTO M5T 1G4

Beaty Popescu  
Mercer Union Education  
71 Pendrith Street  
TORONTO, M6G 1R8

The Funnel  
507 King Street East  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5A 1M3

V/Tapes  
Kim Tomczak  
489 College Street  
5th Floor  
TORONTO M6G 1A5

PART E

Toronto ANNPAC Galleries

ANNPAC - Toronto addresses

ANNPAC / Parallelogramme  
489 College Street, 5th floor  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6G 1A5

Gallery 44  
109 Niagara St. Suite 202  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5V 1C3

V/Tape  
489 College Street, 5th fl.  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6G 1A5

A Space  
204 Spadina Avenue  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5T 2C2

Interference Hologram Gallery  
008 - 1179A King Street West  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6K 3C5

Voicespudence  
c/o 32 Lauder Avenue  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6G 3E3

A.R.C.  
658 Queen Street West  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6J 1E5

Partisan Gallery  
1140 Queen Street West  
Toronto, Ontario

YYZ  
116 Spadina Avenue, 2nd fl.  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5V 2K6

Art Metropole  
217 Richmond Street West  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5V 1W2

Mercer Union  
333 Adelaide Street West  
5th floor  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5V 1R5

Canadian Filmmakers Dist-  
ribution Centre  
67A Portland Street  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5V 2M9

The Arts Television Centre  
142 George Street  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5A 2M7

Music Gallery  
1087 Queen Street West  
Toronto, Ontario

CARO  
67 Mowat Avenue, Rm 345  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6K 3E8

The Eye Revue  
255 Shaw St. Basement  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6J 2W7

The Theatre Centre  
The Poor Alex  
296 Brunswick Avenue  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5S 2M7

Ontario Association of  
Art Galleries  
38 Charles Street East  
2nd floor  
Toronto, Ontario  
M4Y 1T1

The Funnel  
507 King Street East  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5A 1M3

Toronto Photographers Workshop  
300 Jones Avenue  
Toronto, Ontario  
M4M 3A6

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