



BULLETIN

Canadian Conference of the Arts ~ Conférence canadienne des arts

REGINA "MANIFESTO" GAINING MOMENTUM - SIGN ON TODAY!

Ottawa, January 10, 2005 - At the CCA's national policy conference in Regina, Saskatchewan, on 19 and 20 November, the subject of fair tax treatment of professional artists was raised at the end of the first day. This is not a new subject for CCA members - the struggle for recognition of the unique circumstances in which professional artists work is an issue CCA has been leading for more than two decades.

Given the bizarre taxation situation which evolved at Magnus Theatre this past summer (see CCA Bulletin 55/04; NB: only the initial individual has been returned to independent contractor status - the circumstances of the remaining artists remain unresolved), and current political circumstances (a Minister of Canadian Heritage who understands the importance of the artist, a minority government with two opposition parties favourable to the issue), CCA decided to launch a more coordinated and focussed campaign to bring this issue to the fore once more.

A meeting of the major arts service organizations and labour groups from the cultural community was convened in Toronto on 3 November, at which a full and frank discussion took place. The result of that meeting was a general consensus on two specific problems which professional artists, and the organizations which engage their services, have with Canada's tax system, and the agency which administers it, the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). The first is that CRA is increasingly ruling that self-employed artists should be employees; the second concerns how CRA determines an artist is a "professional".

The aim of the current campaign is to resolve these two issues, by

1. Ensuring that
 - ⇒ all professional artists will be presumed to be self-employed for purposes of their artistic activity
 - ⇒ artists and the organizations which engage them will be free to negotiate a contract of service (employer-employee relationship) if they explicitly agree
2. Having a community-agreed test of "professionalism" replace the "reasonable expectation of profit" test now in use.

To maximize the impact of future representations on these issues, CCA is looking to its member organizations, individual artists and others, to declare official support for the campaign and its objectives.

A one pager - the "Regina manifesto" - was presented at CCA's November conference and delegates were invited to sign on. Many were able to sign on the spot, others needed to confer with senior staff or boards prior to making a commitment.

CCA is now moving the campaign beyond the conference delegates. The Regina manifesto is available on our website (<http://ccarts.ca/en/fairtax.htm>) We invite all CCA members, and others interested in assisting with this issue, to sign on! You can do this by printing the petition from our website, signing it, and faxing, mailing or emailing it back to CCA.

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