



February 9, 2009

Hon. James Flaherty  
Minister of Finance  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

*By email and regular mail*

Dear Minister Flaherty,

On behalf of the Board of Governors of the Canadian Conference of the Arts, I am writing to express our appreciation for the treatment of the arts and culture sector in the 2009 Federal Budget.

The Economic Plan clearly recognizes the vulnerability of the arts and culture sector as well as its value to Canadians. The investment of \$ 335 million in existing programs and in a few new initiatives are welcome validations of the contributions that the arts and culture make to Canadian life, our economy and our image around the world. We are grateful that your government has seen it fit to ensure the economic stability of the arts and culture sector in these times of uncertainty. We are also very satisfied to see that no further reductions have been made to finance the new investments included in the budget.

It would seem that you and your Cabinet colleagues are prepared to consider additional stimulus measures as the full brunt of the recession is felt. We would recommend for your consideration additional investments in the aging cultural infrastructure in communities across the country, as has been done for sports and recreational facilities.

We also continue to encourage your government to respond to the importance of the development a strategic program to support the development of new markets for our artists, cultural institutions and industries, both in Canada and internationally. While we recognize that some programs of this nature exist within the Canadian Heritage portfolio, they lack a strategic focus vital for successful expansion of audiences and markets.

The full impact of the recession has yet to be fully felt. Arts organizations, as well as charities and not for profit organizations rely heavily on their endowments. These endowments were created to provide stable income, and are already reporting challenges stemming from a lack of revenue generation from funds. Film and television productions also seem to be declining, especially those from foreign producers working in Canada. The CCA will be monitoring the situation closely and will keep you and your officials apprised of what additional measures may be necessary to further stabilize the sector.

Nonetheless, it is most reassuring to see our federal government recognize the value of our artists, creators and arts and heritage professionals as well as the responsibility it has towards this important sector of Canadian activity. We appreciate the commitment that you and your colleagues have demonstrated with regards to this important component of the Canadian creative economy.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alain Pineau". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alain" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Pineau".

Alain Pineau  
National Director

Cc The Hon. James Moore, Minister of Canadian Heritage