

Submitted on Thu, 06/18/2020 - 16:57

Dear Government of Ontario,

The impact of CoVid on Artist-run organisations

Investment in the arts – and artists – is essential for the recovery of Ontario society, communities and citizens.

I am writing to request the provincial government focus and invest in the Ontario Arts Council to support artists to do their work.

Please support small arts organisations through Rent Relief for small businesses, specifically arts businesses.

I am on the Board of Directors of a small, innovative Artist-run Studio in Artscape Youngplace, on Shaw Street in downtown Toronto. We are a group of 8 independent artists – dancers, choreographers, performers – who have successfully run this small business together for 6 years, but the organisation has a 20 year history before us. Artists lives are tenuous at the best of times.

Our organisation – the Intergalactic Arts collective (IGAC) - last year alone, serviced over 2275 people through classes, performances, rentals, events, fundraisers for local, provincial, national and international artists and patrons. We provide service to a wide range of communities – babies, elderly, nondisabled and abled bodies, community and professional artists alike.

The effect of CoVid19 has closed our business entirely. We cannot afford to pay our rent. Our income comes from rentals for rehearsals, classes, performances, training, film shoots, and various private and public events.

We will not survive without support.

The impact of CoVid19 Pandemic on the Performing Arts is substantial and potentially devastating to artists' careers and small organisations.

Artist-run centres are vital hotspots for art to happen, artists to congregate and work with our communities.

It takes years to build an art institution.

Ontario needs its artists NOW more than ever. Artists are innovative thinkers, excellent problem solvers. We help society know who we are, what we need, how we live. We nurture, challenge, support and give comfort. We educate and help people grow. We make new things – out of nothing.

Invest in artists – We will help rebuild society!

Art is not a luxury, but is essential to the well-being of individuals and communities.

Art energizes, comforts, restores and nurtures individuals and communities.

Life is hard right now. Netflix is getting boring. We need each other and spaces to make Art.

Please return funding to the Ontario Arts Council and Rent Relief for Small Arts Organisations.

Thank you.

Sara Porter (Board of directors, secretary)

Intergalactic Arts Collective

180 Shaw St.

Toronto.