



CARFAC
ONTARIO

August 2, 2011

Mayor Rob Ford
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mayor Ford,

CARFAC Ontario (Canadian Artists' Representation/le Front des artistes canadiens) is the association of professional visual and media artists. We have been working for over 40 years on the legal and economic issues facing artists and we speak on behalf approximately 350 members in the City Toronto. We feel that it is important to explain to you why cultural funding should not be decreased as part of the current budgeting process.

One of Toronto's advantages is the amount of creative talent it has. As a whole, Toronto spends only about 1% of its net operating budget on culture, yet this small investment goes a long way. The statistics below demonstrate how important the arts are to Toronto's economy:

- Toronto is Canada's top tourist destination, drawing over 18 million tourists each year.
- There are more than 21,000 artists living in the City of Toronto
- Over 130,000 Torontonians are directly employed in the culture sector (or 8% of the workforce)
- The culture sector in Toronto employs six times more workers than Ontario's aerospace industry and is roughly equivalent to the 135,000 people employed in Ontario's automotive sector.
- In 2009 8,900,000 people attended exhibitions, performances and festivals supported by the Toronto Arts Council
- 80% of artists in Toronto agree that Government investment in arts in public spaces and other forms of city beautification improve the local economy by, for example, making Toronto a more attractive tourist destination or encouraging residents to go out more often.
- Toronto's cultural economy contributes more than \$9 billion annually to Toronto's GDP

These statistics are sourced from reports published by The City of Toronto, The Toronto Arts Council, an EKOS poll for The Beautiful City Campaign, and the Creative Capital Gains Plan spearheaded by Councillor Michael Thompson. These statistics show how cutting cultural investments can actually hurt rather than protect the economy and colour of Toronto.

In addition, Toronto faces competition from other cities to be a thriving cultural centre, and a vibrant great tourist attraction. Not only does Toronto house the ROM, the AGO, the Royal Conservatory of Music, the National Ballet School, the Gardiner Museum, the Ontario College of Art and Design, but it is also home to hundreds of smaller art galleries. Richard Florida, whom many recognize as a highly respected researcher on the value of creativity feels that "Toronto is at an inflection point, to strive for greatness as one of the world's magnet creative cities or to be a really good second-tier city. All the ingredients are here." Ontario's visual and media artists want to continue to lead Toronto to greatness.

We appreciate and acknowledge your previous show of support for the arts as a past board member on Waterfront Toronto and as a donor to the arts; we also recognize your show of

THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS

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support for the *Creative Capital Gains Plan* for Toronto. We hope that you will be consistent in your approach, and take a leadership role in recognizing the arts as a key industry. Your show of support is essential for Toronto's cultural climate to continue to flourish.

We encourage you to defer to the expertise of individuals like your former Arts Advisor Jeffrey Melanson, who is a leader in his field, and to take into consideration the value that arts and culture has to both the economy and the quality of life to residents and visitors to the city of Toronto.

Sincerely,

Kristian Clarke
Executive Director
CARFAC Ontario

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