

PRESENTATION by Anne Bertrand, director, Artist-Run Centres and Collective Conference (ARCA), with artist, curator, and cultural worker Jason St-Laurent, director/curator, SAW Gallery, Ottawa, before The House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, Tuesday, October 30, 2018, in view of its study of *Remuneration Models for Artists and Creative Industries in the Context of Copyright*.

The motion mandating the study, adopted on March 29, 2018, read as follows:

That the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, following the letter from the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology conduct a study on remuneration models for artists and creative industries, including rights management and the challenges and opportunities of new access points for creative content; that the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage call upon a broad range of stakeholders and experts on such matters; and that it provide the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology a summary of testimonies and recommendations related to the items mentioned above for the parliamentary review of the Copyright Act.

Addressing the economic precarity of artists timely and necessary!

In response to the Committee's mandate, the Artist-Run Centres and Collectives Conference (hereafter referred to as ARCA), represented here today by myself and Jason St-Laurent, are thankful to appear before you, to address remuneration models through the unique perspective of artist-run centres, also known as ARCs, an infrastructure of 180 organizations located across Canada. ARCs provide multiple access points to the arts for both art professionals (creators of material protected by copyright) and the public (users of material protected by copyright). I will not, in the short time available, speak to the tensions that arise when identities oscillate between creators and users of copyrighted material in the digital era.

EXHIBITION ROYALTIES

Artist-run centres (ARCs) are non-profit organizations governed by artists. ARCs support the production and public presentation of new and innovative practices, and are committed to paying artists the recommended minimum CARFAC exhibition royalty of \$1,996 for exhibitions lasting on average 4 weeks (this is the recommended amount for organizations with annual operating budgets of less than \$500,000 – the royalty amount is based on organizations' annual operating budgets). In 2015–16, artist-run centres presented the work of over 4,000 Canadian artists across the country in more than 900 exhibitions, attended by some 1.5 million visitors.¹

¹ Canadian Art Data / Données sur les arts au Canada (CADAC), 2015–16.

A statistical study conducted in 2010 by l'Observatoire de la culture et des communications du Québec de l'Institut de la statistique du Québec on a sample of professional artists in the visual arts, revealed that only one-third (32%) of artists received royalties, and in a median annual amount of approximately \$ 890.² Although this source of income is important to artists, it is far from providing a living wage.

It is impossible to establish with certainty the amount of exhibition royalties paid by artist-run centres to artists with the current Canadian art data (CADAC) system, as there is no clear differentiation between fees and royalties in financial reporting.

SALARIES & HONORARIA

Because royalties represent such a small proportion of revenues, salaries and honoraria are important sources of income for artists. Artist-run centres actively work toward providing adequate pay for curatorial and administrative staff, half of whom are also practicing artists. This labour force plays a key role in integrating new generations of artists and cultural workers by bridging the gap between higher education training and professional artistic practice and cultural management.

In 2015–16, only 77 artist-run centres received core funding from the Canada Council for the Arts, representing less than half of our members. With total revenues of over \$21 million (71% from the public sector), the median annual operating budget of these 77 centres was less than \$250,000.

Approximately \$5.5 million of these revenues were paid in salaries and professional fees, representing over half of total “artistic” expenses with the remaining portion dedicated to production costs, special projects, publications, professional development, outreach, etc. Only 35% of the overall workforce positions were full-time, a decrease of 2.7% since 2010, likely due to the growing freelance and part-time workforce for which we only have anecdotal data.

Further, and owing to inadequate levels of funding, organizations systematically operate with fewer paid staff than what is needed.

² Christine Routhier, *Les artistes en arts visuels – Portrait statistique des conditions de pratique au Québec, 2010* (Quebec City: Institut de la statistique du Québec, Observatoire de la culture et des communications du Québec, 2013), 105 p. Online: www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/observatoire.

ARTIST AS RESOURCE

Artist-run culture draws from an exceptional, highly specialized labour force. Designers, copy editors, translators, technicians, often artists themselves, are experts in the production of cultural programming. Exhibiting artists are encouraged to give public talks and facilitate workshops alongside their exhibitions. This labour, whether related to production or exhibition, provides additional revenues in the form of honoraria; payment of these honoraria, however, can vary considerably according to organizational budgets.

PROPOSAL

The current data, despite its gaps, suggests that current copyright-based remuneration falls short in providing artists with a living wage. Artist-run centres are currently providing additional sources of artistic income, on shoestring budgets.

In light of the above presentation, we ask the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage to consider recommending the following to the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology:

- 1/ Strike a partnership between the Department of Canadian Heritage and Statistics Canada to develop and fund new statistical tools to better gauge today's complex visual arts sector according to key indicators, and monitor the evolution of the socio-economical conditions of artists and cultural workers over time with greater granularity than the current Culture Satellite Account can currently provide.
- 2/ Before developing programs for the *Cultural Hubs Infrastructure*, examine the current challenges faced by the existing Canadian artist-run network, representing a cross-section of artists/curators/managers who have been making Canadian art happen locally, nationally, and internationally for over forty years.

In closing, ARCA wishes to express its gratitude to Members of Parliament for their part in approving the doubling of the Canada Council for the Arts budget allocation. In the first round of core funding results since the Council's increase in 2017–18, artist-run centres received an overall funding increase of 30%. Further increases are expected after this year's second round of applications.

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The Artist-Run Centres and Collectives Conference / Conférence des collectifs et des centres d'artistes autogérés (ARCC-CCCAA, aka ARCA) is the national voice that advocates for artist-run centres in Canada. Artist-run centres are a networked infrastructure of approximately 180 not-for-profit organizations federated through ARCA – by way of geographic, identity and disciplinary based artist-run associations that form its membership. ARCA's members include the following associations: Alberta Association of Artist-Run Centres (AAARC), Association of Artist-Run Centres from the Atlantic (AARCA), The Aboriginal Region (ABO), Artist-Run Centres and Collectives of Ontario (ARCCO), l'Association des groupes en arts visuels francophones (AGAVF), Manitoba Artist-Run Centres Coalition (MARCC), Pacific Association of Artist-Run Centres (PAARC), Plains Association of Artist-Run Centres (PARCA) and Le Regroupement des centres d'artistes autogérés du Québec (RCAAQ).