



SUPPORT FOR LIVE PERFORMANCE INDUSTRY WORKERS

As a coalition of Canada's entertainment unions, representing performers, musicians, designers, and behind-the-scenes artisans and technicians, we would like to express our gratitude for the Government of Canada's efforts to support our industry and the people who work within it. Our coalition is comprised of the IATSE, Canadian Actors' Equity Association, the Canadian Federation of Musicians, and the Associated Designers of Canada. We represent over 50,000 workers across the entertainment industry.

As you have heard multiple times, we were the first to shut down and we will be the last to reopen. There are still restrictions on large crowds and our members are therefore largely prohibited from returning to work. The work that currently exists is not enough to piece together a living, nor will it be for some time.

The Government of Canada has been responsive and supportive of our industry, and we are grateful for that. We have also been repeatedly assured that Canada highly values its arts and cultural sector and wants to ensure the sector is supported. We would therefore like to take this opportunity to urge you to extend the Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB).

The extension of the CRB is our largest and most important priority. We are appreciative of all the arts and culture funding that the federal government has provided – including the proposed Arts and Culture Recovery Program, which would match ticket sales for venues to compensate for reduced capacity. Programs such as this have allowed arts organizations to keep their heads above water, *but funding directed to organizations does not trickle down to freelancer workers.* Freelancers / gig workers make up the majority of the industry's workers and both the structure of the funding and the structure of the industry meant that any funding for arts organizations was simply not accessible to them. **Supporting arts organizations is important and necessary but if, by the time they reopen their doors, many of the workers have had to find work outside the industry to survive, there will not be enough workers left to mount the concerts and productions that Canadians have been craving.** This is why income supports for individual arts workers are critical.

Despite the "good news" announcements you sometimes see from venues across the country, the situation is not a rosy one. A handful of producers were able to mount exterior productions over the summer, but weather has changed. The few venues that were able to mount indoor productions had/have audience size restrictions and these productions were severely scaled back, using very reduced crews and performers. **Below are different metrics to illustrate the industry's continued depression, using the period from August – December of 2019 vs August – December of 2021.** (This necessitates some projections for the latter part of this year, but most agreements are signed months in advance so we don't anticipate things will change much.)

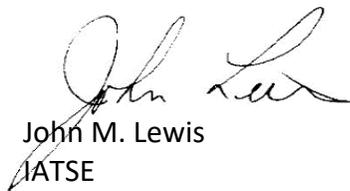
Organization	Aug – Dec 2019	Aug – Dec 2021	2021 vs 2019
IATSE Local 56 (Montreal)	Wages: \$4,616,783.00	\$1,627,498.00	- 65%
IATSE Local 118 (Vancouver)	Wages: \$3,327,260.00	\$917,000.00	- 72%
IATSE Local 295 (Regina)	Wages: \$1,220,286.00	\$337,802.00	- 72%
IATSE 471 (Ottawa)	Wages: \$3,195,343.26	\$864,629.00	- 73%
Canadian Actors' Equity Association	Member Earnings (Aug/Sept only): \$12,205,252.07	\$5,128,161.62	- 58%
Associated Designers of Canada	Contracts filed/signed: 248	Contracts filed/signed: 28	- 88%

In the Liberal platform under Support for Hardest Hit Businesses, the party stated that, if re-elected, they would, “Implement a transitional support program to help bridge workers from the creative industry who continue to be impacted by the pandemic.” **Unless the proposed support is structured virtually identically to the CRB, offers the same level of income support, and launches immediately upon termination of the CRB, it will not be what live performers workers require to stay afloat until their work has returned.**

We have surveyed our employers across the country and we are told that, aside from a few shows, scaled back in size and frequency, they are not looking to return to full, pre-pandemic seasons until Spring of 2022 *at the earliest*. Support for live performance workers will be necessary until venues are fully operational and allowed to host full audiences – who are confident enough in their safety to return.

For many live performance workers, the CRB is the only benefit that allows them to put food on the table. As we approach its termination, we implore you to extend the program. We are grateful to the Government of Canada for all your efforts and thank you for your consideration. We would welcome the opportunity for further discussion.

Sincerely,



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