

Saanich Workshop – May 15, 2002, 7- 9:30 p.m.  
Garth Homer Centre

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## **Brainstorming on the Vision**

*"We need to develop a vision statement about the arts in the region – looking ahead to the year 2010. What are some key words and phrases, values and concepts that should be included in a vision statement?"*

### **Access and accessibility**

- equal opportunity; affordable; inclusive (people and range of arts); for all ages; accepting (not elitist); diversity

### **Connecting and integrating**

- partnerships; co-ordination; network; form of communication; cooperation; communities of artist 'distinct communities/different disciplines – combine their strengths

### **Innovative and creative**

- vibrant; challenging; strive for 'excellence'; awareness

### **Continuum and continuity**

- youth – education; development for young artists; lifelong learning; closing the gap between emerging artists and the leap to the professional level; professional and professionalism; supporting the artist

### **Community development**

- health; essential; restore arts place in society/ integrate into mainstream society tie in to everyday life; the arts bring communities together ( participation of the greater community; enabling; funding; space

### **Individual development**

- health; balance; holistic; excellence

### **Other**

- 'make it short and forward – looking'

### **An emerging vision from one of the groups**

- Encouraging and supporting arts practices that are inclusive of: the professional and the non-professional, the aspiring and the established, and the innovative and the established by supporting them financially and appropriately in a planned way and ensuring the spaces to develop and perform and exhibit throughout the region. Arts practices that are accessible to the range of our demographics, to diverse communities and age groups, and throughout the region. Facilities that are accessible to the professional and the non-professional; the aspiring and the established; the innovative and the established.

## **The Value of the Arts**

*“Why do you value the arts? What do they contribute to the community, to individuals?”*

### **Quality of life**

- enhance the quality of life; build pleasure into everyday life; fill in sterility in our life; allow us to add dimension beyond the everyday; excitement; uplifting; ‘don’t have to do it to enjoy it’; part of the ‘joy of life’; contribute and can contribute more to our everyday lives; less about making a living, rather about making a life; cornerstone for quality of life; not just a visual pleasure, they are part of reality, e.g. ‘design of this room, part of everyday life – make people see that’; art is life – ‘from the time we are born till we die’

### **Self awareness/personal growth**

- ‘spiritual’ dimension/ each person is able to express themselves in their own way; stimulation; excitement; challenge; encourage imagination; expression ; the essence of our humanity; creative contribution; ‘make a whole person’; energy; make one feel human; integral to human development; the ‘artist in all of us’; fundamental to human character; act of creation itself as a personal experience – nice if it touches someone else too

### **Creativity**

- encourage people to dream and get ‘outside their own box’/ beyond the mundane in life; the creation of art is not limited by the constraints of dollars or space ( ‘often art is created with nothing’); creativity

### **Learning**

- promote whole brain thinking/ enhance the ability to learn and academic subjects/ enhance the ability of youth to learn; ‘look at what it does for children: self esteem, uplifting, healing, great for challenged kids’

### **Community development**

- ritualize and celebrate society; celebrate the community; transform and humanize public spaces; art as a vehicle for the voices of communities who might not otherwise speak; encompass environmental, physical, mental, spiritual; aesthetics; something for everyone; building design; represent unique quality of our community; should be treated as a ‘good’ – recognize artistic expression as a matter of public good; financial contribution is a good argument with general community – selling feature

### **Continuity**

- ‘art endures past the point of creation’; keeps the flame burning so each new generation rediscovers art and reinterprets it which inspires the continuity of life’; art has been here always: recognition and connection; preserve and create; expression of our heritage – of who we are today in our community

### **Understanding/communication**

- reflect society to itself; art is an international language/ removes barriers between peoples; civilizing and calming effect on people; stimulate social comment and raise awareness; artists interpret in a new way; communicates who we are to ourselves and others; bring harmony; create respect

## Arts Development

*To strengthen the arts in the region, their physical and organizational needs have to be understood. They need to have community participation and support. What are the facility needs (e.g. performing/display areas, storage, meeting space, offices)? What are the organizational needs? (e.g. staff, coordination, funding, volunteer support)? How do you build participation in and support for the arts? Are there particular needs in terms of arts education – in the school system, in the broader community? Who can best meet these needs (e.g. CRD/local municipalities/school districts/recreation departments, the private sector)?*

### Facility needs

- Performing Arts ( arts center, not necessarily downtown for small events such as poetry readings and large concerts and dances; small concert halls for up to 100 people/ small theatre space for performances; need affordable accessible spaces for community and local groups ( McPherson is out of reach of community groups who it is supposed to be for;
- Visual Arts ( a new downtown art gallery for both tourists and residents/ new art gallery – many pieces not on display; put art gallery first; a gathering place for artists to meet on a regular basis ( artists ‘drop-in’, not a fancy place, just to encourage face-to-face meetings and invite non-artists; studio space, working space, storage space for individual artists, exhibit space and equipment; need co-operative, shared work centre, administrative support; studio space for training, display, and sales; no room to display art in galleries – retailers should offer space – more community involvement in displaying art; upgrade security systems, atmospheric monitors – art galleries need more than just display space – ‘gallery space’ is key i.e. atmospheric conditions, lighting, seating, etc.
- Other ( two priorities, art gallery and small theatre; office space, meeting space; everything – every group needs something

### Facility planning

- need a plan to rationalize location of arts facilities throughout the region; identifying space, connecting to need; building industry ( how can they connect with artists; provincial government is dropping lots of space – can we convert; inventory ( broaden it for facilities, e.g. Garth Homer is great ( do enough people know about it; utilize what we have got ( rather than trying to build something new

### Funding needs/issues

- decision making: who decides who gets which level of money ( what are the criteria/ should public monies go to arts organizations which are not economically viable/ can we look at other kinds of support say training, not just dollars/ what are the evaluation criteria for money well spent, the ‘yardstick’; a regional funding formula that is fair and equitable; ‘the arts shouldn’t care about financial contribution – should exist and be supported on its own merit’; set aside money for future need, a capital fund (regional) ( need to build community support so that politicians can fund it; more dollars ( provincial, and local government; ability to fund the arts outside the four core municipalities/ participation of more municipalities in activities outside the four core/ balance and fairness throughout the region

### Information/communication

- Arts and Cultural Highway, CEDCO – too many; CAC inventory artists; CRD database; a list of names is not enough ( need to know what an organization or facility offers e.g. existing CRD links to local organizations' websites (people don't know about this: need to promote it)/ umbrella concept; need a regional arts directory of all arts organizations

### Coordination

- existing arts councils aren't coordinated; booking centre for space; connecting artists with local non-art organizations for needed skills; co-ordination of what is happening; network/ information sharing

### **Organizational needs**

- skill development: help with grant applications ( a central pool for non-profits/individuals; mentoring; some or better ways to easily channel volunteer capabilities to those organizations and agencies which may need an art volunteer; improve ability of all areas to influence emergent needs and use of what is already in place

### **Schools and school districts**

- politics involved in usage of space at schools, charges are too high e.g. Esquimalt School (it's jurisdictional, cost recovery ( schools need funds)/ create list of what's available, e.g., school rooms available/ joint use agreements with school facilities – partner in building, in financial support and in usage; new look at use of schools as with school cut-backs it is more difficult to rent/ school could be open on a 16 hour day in partnership with not-for-profits arts groups; artists-in-residence programs at schools; artists into schools; youth mentoring other youth, say between the university and high school and elementary levels; more arts work experience placements in schools; artists to speak at school career fairs; arts co-ops in high schools

### **Arts education**

- emphasis on helping youth ( building the talent pool: mentoring ( need a focus on this; focus on gap where youth leave educational institutions ( then we lose them we don't utilize communications well enough – professional organizations; use parks for the arts throughout the year and expand the arts programming in the arts; educate adults, not just kids – adults have money; 'one study showed increased participation in arts at school led to a decrease in pregnancy in girls'/ 'art is good for us and we love our children so let's fund studies at Harvard'

### **Building participation**

- 'articpaction'; improved linkages between the teaching of art, the doing of art, and the marketing of art/ information about each other is still a problem but too much reliance placed on websites these days; Community Arts Councils are too political and have not reached out very much; build participation and support ( no one entity can do it alone – integrate human resources; education; start in kindergarten; must ask the politicians to support – ask the question ( individuals carry lots of weight – write letters; need factual information to promote i.e. \$ earned for community/ harp on economic impact; cultivate 'champions' for the arts who can talk to groups, politicians; Arts 'welcome wagon'; what about provincial government involvement; Pro-Arts: do some/more youth outreach to the community/ why not some rehearsals or performances at school; Edmonton does well – municipal support, when businesses complained city council supported it ( Victoria is an easy place to find entertainment with our good weather so we have stood on our laurels in promoting the arts; people fund sports cause we know studies show it leads to health, studies should be funded to discover social and health impact of arts/ arts are just as important as sports

### **Service providers**

- use an existing structure: CAC/ProArt; share support staff; CRD feeds to grassroots and local government; services municipality/local government can share: common booking system, shared jury process for local municipal public art programs

## **The Arts and Economic Development**

*The arts and artists contribute to the economy of the region. What are some practical ways that the arts can make a greater contribution to the region's economy? How can the economic benefits of the arts be spread throughout the region?*

### **Events/activities**

- summer festivals; off-season festivals, retreats, residencies ( work on the fact that artists from eastern Canada love to come here in the winter; marketplace for artists targeting the cruise ships; arts 'avenue' like antique row; public art to enhance our communities to make them unique

### **Facilities**

- major hub/ entertainment centre (so people don't spend their money in Vancouver ( on big shows like Showboat; theatres for small community groups; space that is affordable for new and emerging artists; facility for visual arts

### **Partnerships**

- explore unlikely partnerships, e.g. 'artists working with Building Association to make them aware of handcrafted tiles, stain glass, etc. for use in new homes, then build capacity so they know they can get them from local artists'; groups working together to promote the arts

### **Tourism**

- more liaison/ communication between tourism and arts ('Victoria as a New Orleans north'); tourism – cultural attraction/ cultural tourism; tourism is key (e.g. 'Salt Spring and Chemainus are organized – we already get educated and wealthy tourists, let's draw them in); identify what makes us unique ( 'what we have that other cities don't have ( climate and lots of artists'; Tourist Authorities: develop arts-oriented logo-'Victoria, the Culture Capital of Canada'/ marketing plan for the arts linked with Tourism Victoria/ extended tourist season all for summer school for the arts through the winter

### **Information/communication**

- produce an arts directory; look at Benchmarking Project in Oregon; arts and cultural highway; website – CRD

### **Arts development**

- 'its important to look after youth and non-professional groups ( they are part of the whole picture and the larger groups grow from them'

### **Funding support**

- regional taxation to support the arts throughout the region (but arts' facilities would have to be more widely distributed/ arts investment made throughout the region on a per capita basis); 'have to prime a pump before it will work'; needs to be acknowledgment of need for funding; examples ( 'per capita funding is significantly less than Prince Rupert ( majority of budget raised through donations'; 'Oregon festival asked for \$20 million – got double because they asked for funds and capital reserve at the same time'

### **Economic development**

- money invested is money spent locally; movement of \$ within the community; demonstrate its economic viability; 'we have less support from corporate offices in Victoria cause we have less of them'

## **The Arts in the Region and Local Communities**

*Some arts organizations play a “region-wide” role; others a more “local area” role. Similarly, public sector support for the arts is both regional and local. What arts organizations/ activities play a regional role? What arts organizations/ activities are more locally based? What should the role of local government be – at the regional level, at the municipal level? How can the arts play a role in strengthening regional and community centres?*

### **Regional facilities/organizations**

- art gallery; Royal/McPherson Theatres; Isabel Reader Theater; Mary Winspear; Conservatory; Symphony

### **Rationalization for regional role**

- there is a duplication of facilities, competitiveness between communities, and unmet needs at local levels because regional policy is not in place; municipalities do not cooperate with each other; Arts Strategic Plan will not work without cooperation between municipalities; regional formula for roads and sewers, why not for arts; distinguish our region if support comes from the whole region

### **Rationalization for local role**

- local is important for grass roots; local bylaws affect all activities; locally: artists create a sense of place and community that is unique to a community

### **Regional role**

- CRD administrative support for public art jury process that is directed by municipal policy/ Saanich would like to see the CRD undertake the coordination of arts projects and administration and coordination of a public art jury process; there needs to be a focal point for the arts in the CRD – coordinator; one stop shop; publicity and co-ordination assistance; identify the region-serving organizations ( those that are unique to the region and serve a broad public base for regional funding; should have a long term plan, stable funding and decrease unhealthy competitive tensions between art groups; every arts organization is looking for new facilities – regional body to issue request for proposal for arts facilities for regional use – coherent plan; regional: combine facilities, include tourism, annex to multiplex

### **Local/regional relationship**

- without regional, local falls apart and vice versa/ ‘the two should be married ( one can’t survive without the other’

### **Suggested initiatives**

- a creative use of government offices outside regular hours; municipal sponsored art symposiums, say once every two years; municipal artsweek; ‘Arts on the Galloping Goose’; income tax breaks for artists; neighborhood level banners that incorporate art; public spaces to work/perform

### **Strengthening centres throughout the region and the community**

- mixed land uses ( including schools – use them for arts; urban centres can get dangerous, arts will draw in people, thus be more safe; build a square in town – central area for people and arts; bring people into centre and decrease drug problem; arts as a destination; promote art; art creates good urban design; people will come if events are created; creates life and fun in a town; public art, community and civic art; promote use of art in the development process