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April 12, 1999

Al Loney
 Chair, Arts Committee
 Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton
 RMOC
 111 Lisgar St.
 Ottawa, Ontario K2P 2L7

Dear Mr. Loney,

We are writing on behalf of SAW Video Co-op and IFCO to express our concern over the recent announcement of RMOC Arts Awards.

While the chronic underfunding of the media arts has long been an issue in the region, the effects of underfunding have hit the community particularly hard this year. Of the 25 artists who applied this year, only three artists received grants. To compare to other disciplines, 1 in 4 writers applying to the 1999 RMOC Arts Award programme received grants, while only 1 in 8 media artists received grants. More alarming is the fact that, despite the increased demand in the media arts in the past few years, the number of artists receiving funding has been decreasing - 5 in 1997, 4 in 1998, to an all-time low of 3 in 1999.

The media arts community in Ottawa is a growing one. Over 100 independent film and video projects were produced here last year alone. These projects, distributed across Canada and around the world, have an impact upon our community both artistically and economically. Small grants received from the Region are often used by filmmakers to leverage more dollars - a \$6,000 grant received for Penny McCann's film, *The Fires of Joanna* in 1996 leveraged \$114,000 in additional financing, 85% of which was spent in the Ottawa-Carleton region! Despite this contribution, the media arts continues to be the lowest funded discipline at the RMOC after new media and multidisciplinary projects. With a total envelope of \$56,400 in 1999, media arts organizations and artists receive less as a discipline than some individual arts groups.

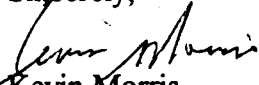
In the hopes of improving this situation, we would like to recommend several policy changes:

- that the funding to the media arts be increased;
- that a minimum of 30% of funding in each discipline be dedicated to funding individual artists and artists' projects;
- that 10% of the global Arts Awards budget be "freed up" to address historical funding imbalances between disciplines

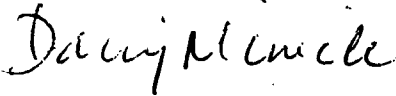
• that jurors rank highly recommended projects numerically, in order of priority so as to better guide the final funding decisions of the Arts Advisory Committee.

We formally request to make a joint presentation to the Arts Advisory Committee on April 19th to discuss our concerns and recommendations in more detail,

Sincerely,



Kevin Morris
Administrative Coordinator
SAW Video Co-op



Darcy Minick
Administrative Coordinator
IFCO

cc. Georgette Houle,
Manager, Arts Program