

September 17, 1984

Tom Hendry
Chairman
Cultural Policy Advisory Committee
Toronto Arts Council
Toronto, Ont.

Dear Mr. Hendry:

The enclosed proposal was put forward to Harbourfront a few years ago, however, we received absolutely no response. Recently, it was resubmitted to Howard Cohen, the Director of the Harbourfront Corporation, directly, as we were encouraged by one of his associates of his probable interest.

This is an opportunity for Toronto to have a profound effect on the growth of visual arts in our city, while providing the community collaboration with Toronto's artists. It is, in fact, the next most essential step in the cultural growth of this city. The development of this program would provide Toronto with a profile of international cultural depth.

We are aware that the public is intimidated by contemporary art and artists. Our aim is to create a greater understanding between these two groups.

Since the city of Toronto, via the Toronto Arts Council Cultural Policy Advisory Committee is looking for ways of stimulating the cultural growth of Toronto, of increasing public awareness of our cultural resources, and of developing an international focus on the cultural aspects of this city, we felt this concept could well do just this. Possibly the opportunity is at hand for a collaboration that could have great potential for Toronto and our artists.

The enclosed brief is a skeleton of our idea. The facets it could encompass are many and varied. We hope you will give this your serious consideration. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you, to discuss our proposal in greater detail at your earliest convenience.

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Tom Hendry

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Yours truly,

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PROPOSAL

Submitted by:

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This proposal is being put forth by two independent and professional artists, residents of the city of Toronto, and cognizant of the problems faced by Toronto artists in particular and artists in general. We put forward this proposal as a way of addressing some of these issues. Toronto artists have always been in the forefront of the Canadian Art scene, yet have received minimal recognition for this achievement. It is our hope that by initiating this project we can not only aid Toronto artists in their work, but be able to present them to the public and private sectors in a manner befitting their talents.

This project will encompass the following:

- 1) Working spaces for individuals working in various art forms in related fields. A working space should be approximately 1,000 square feet per artist. Spaces should have good light, ventilation and height, and access to water.
- 2) A small committee will be formed composed of experts in various disciplines that are applicable. This committee will invite "artists" to participate in this project, by occupying the working spaces. Their projects will determine the length of time that they occupy the space.

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- 3) As this is a working community (by the nature of the space), this will give an opportunity for the artists of various fields to interrelate, creating a harmonious atmosphere for this learning and growing experience.
- 4) On a regular basis, the studios will be opened to the general public. At that time, the artists will be present to display and discuss their art forms and ideas. In the past, given the isolated nature of the artist's studio, it has not been possible to allow for opening studios to the public. Therefore, the public has never been able to partake in a dialogue that would open understanding to the artists' life and goals within the context of today's society.
- 5) Future possibilities will include the opening of a program that will expand the horizons beyond Toronto. Select artists from other countries will be invited to come and be a part of this community for a specified time period. This will introduce to the Toronto artists and the Toronto public new ideas. We use as our example, the program already established in Berlin, and working to Berlin's advantage. In fact, it is noteworthy that Berlin is now considered the Art Capital of Europe.
- 6) If the public indicates a desire to learn more from the artists that the one regular public day allows, then

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there is the possibility of establishing classes within the context of the studios.
- 7) Supplementary programming, i.e. lectures, forums, interactions between disciplines will be incorporated in the overall operation as the need arises. This would require a lecture hall of approximately 2,000 square feet. Should the studios be located at Harbourfront, then perhaps one of Harbourfront's facilities will be used. Should they be located in Toronto, then perhaps one of the city's public facilities could be made available.
- 8) Various disciplines may include printmakers, sculptors, painters, filmmakers, performance artists, video artists, etc., who will bring in their own professional equipment, to set up professional shops, i.e. a print shop, a sculpture workshop, etc. On the other end of the spectrum, it could include a scientist who may be studying colour, or a computer technician who is developing new techniques that can be used by the visual artist.
- 9) It is anticipated that the cost to this project will be minimal, provided that the space and utilities are given at no charge.
- 10) We will then offer these studios to the "artists" in

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return for a tangible gift indicative of their term of residence. In the case of artists not working in a visual medium, substitutes will be worked out. The ensuing collection will become the property of the city of Toronto. There is not a collection that is specifically a contemporary Toronto collection. Given the nature of this proposal, the implications are far-reaching. It will be, given a chance, a dynamic and exciting project in which the public can become involved in what has been previously considered a secluded and private world.

Respectfully submitted,



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