

**THE REPORT  
OF THE  
ABORIGINAL ADVISORY PANEL**

**Presented to the  
Saskatchewan Arts Board**

**April 1999**

April 1999

Mr. Frank Proto  
Chair  
Saskatchewan Arts Board  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 3475 Albert Street  
Regina, Saskatchewan  
S4S 6X6

Dear Mr. Proto:

We are pleased to present the final report of the Aboriginal Advisory Panel for consideration by the Saskatchewan Arts Board.

The Panel began its work in June of 1997 with a commitment to consider and advise the Arts Board on policies, programs, delivery mechanisms and integrated initiatives in the arts and their impact on Aboriginal peoples in Saskatchewan. The recommendations contained in this report represent the deliberations and discussions which took place over the past nineteen months.

We express our appreciation to the Arts Board for supporting and encouraging us in our endeavours. We trust this report will be rigorously discussed by the Board and staff of the agency, and will foster a change in perspective, will encourage cooperation and new partnership arrangements, and will result in the implementation of policies and programs which are committed to the development and assistance of Aboriginal arts, artists and arts organizations in the province.

While we realize change is not as smooth and painless as we would all wish, we believe a commitment by the Saskatchewan Arts Board to change and enhance the relationship it has with Aboriginal artists, arts organizations and communities will provide new beginnings and new opportunities for all, including the Arts Board. We strongly encourage the Board to seriously consider all the recommendations contained in this report and to recognize the urgency regarding several key issues.

While the members of the panel have all felt the heavy responsibility connected to our task, we have found the work highly rewarding. We thank you for the opportunity to serve our communities and fellow artists.

Respectfully submitted,

Members of the Aboriginal Advisory Panel

# CONTENTS

Aboriginal Advisory Panel Members	3
Beginnings	4
Background	6
History of the Aboriginal Advisory Panel	8
Context for the Recommendations	11
Recommendations	
Preamble	15
Recommendations	15
A. Financial Resources (#1-2)	15
B. Creation of Saskatchewan Arts Board Staff Position (#3-5)	16
C. Aboriginal Advisory Committee (#6-14)	17
D. Special Initiatives (#15-18)	18
E. Grants - Artist in Residence Program (#19-23)	19
F. Grants - Audience Development (#24)	21
G. Communications (#25-27)	21
H. Grants - Application Information/Criteria (#28-37)	22
I. Jurors/Assessors (#38-44)	25
J. Grants - Individual Assistance Grant Program (#45-52)	26
K. Saskatchewan Arts Board General Hiring Practices (#53-56)	27
L. Saskatchewan Arts Board Appointments (#57)	28
M. Grants - Deadlines (#58-59)	28
N. Grants - Travel Assistance (#60)	29
O. Relationships (#61)	29
Appendices	
I. Aboriginal Advisory Panel Policy and Guidelines	30
II. Aboriginal Advisory Panel Terms of Reference	32
III. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Arts & Heritage Section	33

## ABORIGINAL ADVISORY PANEL MEMBERS

Marjorie Beaucage, Saskatoon	Media artist (film and video), writer, curator, teacher
Allen Clarke, Prince Albert	Visual Artist (Painter) <i>(to September 1998)</i>
Greg Daniels, Regina	Literary Artist (playwright)
Constance Deiter, Regina	Writer, teacher, lawyer, anthropologist
Floyd Favel Starr, Paynton	Performing Artist (director, actor), playwright <i>(from October 1997)</i>
Cheryl L'Hirondelle, Meadow Lake	Performance artist (music/voice), video artist, writer
Lyndon Tootosis, North Battleford	Visual Artist (Sculptor)

## BEGINNINGS

*Art and artists existed on the western plains and in the northern parklands long before the place where we live was drawn on a surveyor's map and called Saskatchewan. The landscape, north to south, still resonates with the signs of an artistic hand and spirit, from the Indian rock paintings on the cliffs along the Churchill River to the huge turtle effigy made from field stones west of Minton. The indigenous peoples related spiritually to this place and expressed their insights in sculptures, paintings, music, stories and dance before the arrival of settlers, surveyors and politicians. Over a hundred years ago, the Metis wrote songs to commemorate Louis Riel and the battle they fought along the South Saskatchewan.<sup>1</sup>*

As traditional Indigenous cultures are investigated, it is apparent these cultures and societies included highly valued individuals whose creations reflected a way of living. These individuals, whom we can call artists, were recognized within their communities as having been given a special gift. They were expected to put this special gift to good use. Their objects and skills received unlimited use, and were part of everyday life and the culture as a whole. The created objects were used as everyday household articles, or fulfilled ceremonial or social rituals and functions. Although the work was not art for art's sake, it was symbolic of the peoples' traditions, rituals, customs, practices, concepts, perceptions, opinions, beliefs, ideals, values and ideas. The themes reflected in the work symbolized and reflected the peoples' personal and cultural histories. The work not only expressed personal aesthetic visions but also used inherited cultural traditions as a source of inspiration. The Peoples saw the spiritual and the commonplace as one. Stories, poetry, music, song, dance, craft and the visual arts were all part of their total art expression. Art, as a symbol in action, was incorporated into all areas of life.

The creative work of North American Indigenous peoples was severely altered after contact with Europeans. Much of it was either lost or destroyed. Many European explorers and travellers collected the Indian peoples' sacred objects. During both the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries these items were highly valued by European museums, and public and private collections. These institutions and collectors viewed these objects as examples of items created prior to and during a period of domination and assimilation into the Euro-Canadian culture, and so documented a process of cultural change although it was primarily a process of cultural destruction.

At the same time, due to increased European demands for Indian curios, the traditional object was transformed into a souvenir. It became commercialized and subject to the influences of industrialization, mass production and Western European art. With the prevailing interference and control exercised by

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<sup>1</sup> Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan Arts Strategy Task Force. *Saskatchewan Arts Strategy, Focus on the Future: The Report of the Saskatchewan Arts Strategy Task Force.* n.p., 1990.

government and religious institutions, overwhelming social disintegration, and the disappearance of traditional spiritual support systems, Aboriginal peoples and their traditional objects of utility and spiritual significance were left defenseless. The loss of reference and opportunities for expression meant a loss of culture and identity for Aboriginal peoples.

With the destruction of their communities and lifestyle and the arrival of European settlers, the interpretation of the First Nations peoples world view, perceptions, beliefs and values no longer remained in their hands. Aboriginal peoples were framed by non-Aboriginal parameters and definitions.

*To be an Aboriginal person, to identify with an indigenous heritage in these late colonial times, requires a life of reflection, critique, persistence and struggle.<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>2</sup> McMaster, Gerald and Lee-Ann Martin. Introduction. *Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives*. Vancouver/Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre; Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1992.

## BACKGROUND

At the June 1995 Board retreat and at the October 1995 planning session of the Board the development of an Aboriginal advisory panel for the Saskatchewan Arts Board was identified as a priority and a way of pursuing the following objectives as set by the Board at its October meeting:

- (1) to respond to the diversity of artists and the arts in Saskatchewan;
- (2) to provide broader access to the Arts Board, its programs and services; and
- (3) to ensure productive relationships.

The elements which the Board considered prior to establishing the Aboriginal Advisory Panel included:

Cabinet had directed the Saskatchewan Indian and Metis Affairs Secretariat (SIMAS) to work cooperatively with government organizations to update broad strategic directions and identify priorities with respect to Aboriginal matters. As part of the process SIMAS released a report entitled *Government of Saskatchewan Aboriginal Policy Framework: Toward a Shared Destiny*.

< The report stated the Aboriginal population in Saskatchewan is growing rapidly, with trends indicating that it could double over the next thirty years and comprise up to one-fifth of the overall population in the province. Statistics also indicate that 43% of the Aboriginal population is under 15 years of age, compared to 24% of non-Aboriginal people, and that the unemployment rate among Aboriginal peoples aged 15 and over is about four times higher than for the non-Aboriginal population.<sup>3</sup>

< In the document government states its commitment to developing new processes and new relationships in working with this expanding population of Indian and Metis peoples. It envisions a 21st century in which these peoples are able to experience and develop their own distinctive cultures and participate as full partners in the processes and benefits of social and economic development. Included in the principles of the Aboriginal Policy Framework are statements that refer to the government's commitment to fairness and inclusiveness in our society, and a responsibility to communicate with Aboriginal communities on important decisions affecting social and economic development.

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<sup>3</sup> Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan Indian and Metis Affairs Secretariat. *Government of Saskatchewan Aboriginal Policy Framework: Toward a Shared Destiny*. n.p., 1994.

< As a agency of government, the Saskatchewan Arts Board is included in this vision and statement of principles. The Saskatchewan Arts Board, because of its specific expertise, also is expected to play a significant role in achieving these goals and in the development of mutually beneficial partnerships.

- The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) developed a separate arts and cultural portfolio which focussed on access for Indian peoples to funds and programs to support arts and cultural activities. Officials were considering a paper which outlined the need for FSIN to develop policy and program delivery mechanisms for First Nations arts, cultural activities, cultural industries and heritage sites. This action was in response to the frustration being felt by all Aboriginal communities concerning the perceived lack of attention being paid by the Saskatchewan Arts Board and other arts organizations to the expansion of access to arts programs and funds that encourage self-reliance and self-determination among these peoples.
  - A precedent for the establishment of mechanisms for seeking advice concerning the arts from the various Aboriginal communities was put in place with the appointment of representatives of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and the Metis Society of Saskatchewan to the legislative working group for a single arts agency and to the committee which established a constitutional framework for SaskCulture.
  - The Arts Strategy Task Force Management Implementation Committee recommended that an Aboriginal Advisory Panel be a permanent part of the structure of the new single arts agency.
- C By establishing an Aboriginal Advisory Panel, the Saskatchewan Arts Board undertakes a consultative approach to obtaining advice on arts program policy and funding policy, on delivery mechanisms and on integrated initiatives. This approach also applies to aspects of the vision, principles and priorities as stated by government. It also, in part, addresses some of the concerns about access raised by various Aboriginal peoples and groups.
- Statistical data needs to be collected and analyzed regarding the history of the Saskatchewan Arts Board's funding of Aboriginal artists and arts organizations.

## HISTORY OF THE ABORIGINAL ADVISORY PANEL

In 1995 the Saskatchewan Arts Board approved the development of an Aboriginal Advisory Panel to consider and advise the agency on policies, programs, delivery mechanisms and integrated initiatives in the arts and their impact on Aboriginal artists and Aboriginal peoples in Saskatchewan.

The Board determined the advisory panel is constituted as follows:

- This panel is a standing committee of the Saskatchewan Arts Board constituted in much the same manner as other panels currently appointed by the Board to give it advice on various matters.
- It consists of six members from various constituencies in the Aboriginal communities and will have a balance of gender and geographic representation. (A staff representative will serve as a resource and liaison to the panel.)
- It is a temporary panel in that it will exist only until the establishment of a single arts agency, projected for the Spring of 1997, or for two years, whichever term is shorter.
- The Aboriginal Advisory Panel will meet on two occasions only each year during its two-year term.
- A call for the names of interested individuals of Aboriginal ancestry with a background, history and expertise in the arts is distributed to Aboriginal organizations, bands and tribal councils, Wanuskewin Heritage Park, senior Aboriginal artists in all disciplines and other relevant organizations or individuals. The list of organizations to be contacted includes FSIN, the Metis Society of Saskatchewan, Circle Vision Arts Corporation, the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College and the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre in Saskatoon.
- A four-person selection committee will review the resumes and select a six-person Aboriginal Advisory Panel for the Board's approval.
  - < The selection committee will be comprised of a SAB Board member, the Executive Director or a staff member, and individuals from the Aboriginal community with a background and expertise in the arts.
- The Board will review and consider the selection committee's recommendations and make final appointments to the Aboriginal Advisory Panel.

, In March of 1996 the Saskatchewan Arts Board distributed a request for the names of individuals who could be considered for the Aboriginal Advisory Panel.

C 165 letters were sent to 88 Indian Bands and Tribal Councils in Saskatchewan, 30 Aboriginal organizations (including Aboriginal arts organizations), and 47 individuals of Aboriginal ancestry creating art or working in the arts.

C The names of 32 individuals were suggested by various individuals and organizations.

C A letter of appreciation for the suggestions was sent in June 1996.

C The list of participants from the Aboriginal focus group session hosted by the Arts Strategy Task Force Implementation Management Committee in the spring of 1992 was also reviewed for suggestions for the panel.

, The policy, guidelines and terms of reference for the Panel were considered and approved by the Board at its meeting in December 1996.

, In 1996 six individuals were appointed by the Saskatchewan Arts Board to the Aboriginal Advisory Panel for a two-year term. These individuals were from various constituencies in Aboriginal communities. The Panel also had a balance of gender and geographic representation.

C The Panel members initially appointed were:

Marjorie Beaucage, Saskatoon - media artist (film and video), writer, curator, teacher  
Allen Clarke, Prince Albert - visual artist (painter) (*to September 1998*)

Greg Daniels, Regina - literary artist (playwright)

Connie Deiter, Regina - literary artist (writer), teacher, lawyer, anthropologist

Cheryl L'Hirondelle, Meadow Lake - performance artist (music/voice, video), writer

Lyndon Tootoosis, North Battleford - visual artist (sculptor)

Commitments related to his work resulted in Greg Daniels not being able to attend meetings of the Panel after December of 1997. Personal circumstances resulted in Allen Clarke's resignation from the Panel in early September of 1998.

C At the Panel's request, the following individuals were invited to attend meetings to provide additional comments and information:

Floyd Favel Starr, Paynton - performing artist (director, actor), playwright (*from October 1997*)

Robin Brass, Regina - performing artist (actor)

Bradlee LaRocque - arts administrator, visual artist (Executive Director, Circle Vision Arts Corporation)

A variety of circumstances did not allow Bradlee LaRocque or Robin Brass to attend any of the meetings.

C Other individuals who participated in the advisory process included:

Valerie Creighton, Executive Director, Saskatchewan Arts Board  
Burton SmokeyDay, Board Member, Saskatchewan Arts Board

C Gail Paul Armstrong, Literary and Multidisciplinary Arts Consultant at the Saskatchewan Arts Board, served as a resource and liaison to the Aboriginal Advisory Panel, but did not sit as a member of the Panel.

, During its two-year term the Aboriginal Advisory Panel met five times. The first meeting was held in Regina on June 9, 1997, the second meeting in Saskatoon on December 6, 1997, the third meeting in Regina on June 6 and 7, 1998, the fourth meeting in Regina on September 19 and 20, 1998, and the last meeting in Regina on April 9, 1999.

## CONTEXT FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

In recent years the creative skills and work of Aboriginal peoples have been regenerated and reasserted with considerable enthusiasm. As contemporary Canadian Aboriginal artists examine the complex history of their peoples, and their beliefs, values, perspectives, traditions, rituals, language and identity, a suppressed vibrant energy emerges and is expressed in a variety of art forms. Some of these artists are self-taught while others have received art school or university education.

Many of these artists employ modern approaches to art making but are acutely aware of their Aboriginal heritage and inherited cultural traditions. They have a level of understanding and a source of inspiration available only to those immersed in the traditions and contradictions of contemporary Aboriginal life. They often use irony and double-entendre references to challenge the prevailing stereotypes about Aboriginal peoples while revealing their own personal aesthetic vision.

Other artists of Aboriginal ancestry continue to create traditional Aboriginal art forms. One of the barriers for these artists is that public funding agencies and other institutions tend not to see these art forms as legitimate art. There are a number of reasons for this situation. These institutions usually attempt to assign a definition to traditional Aboriginal art. The difficulty with this is that the use of the word traditional suggests a black-and-white situation when in fact the reality is much subtler. When using the word traditional, care must be taken to not assign the common stereotype of a changeless, one dimensional Aboriginal culture or cultural expression.<sup>4</sup>

Another barrier for these creators and their work is that these agencies and institutions tend to see the traditional art forms, such as baskets, beading, moccasins, etc., as craft produced for commercial sale only. While it is true many of these objects are sold commercially, this has become the reality for many artists of Aboriginal ancestry who have been unable to surmount the obstacles barring access to arts grants, and exhibition and performance opportunities.

It is difficult for institutions and the public to know and comprehend the range and diversity of experiences of those artists of Aboriginal ancestry working in urban centres and those living on reserves, and of those living in the southern parts of the province and those in more northern remote areas. It is vastly different. Often those in urban centres are creating work which is concerned with the place and that experience, while those on reserves and in remote northern areas are creating work in the place. In spite of the range of differences, it is important to remember imagination is not connected to or confined by place or time.

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Wade, Edwin L. "Introduction: What is Native American Art?" *The Arts of the North American Indian: Native Traditions in Evolution*. New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1986.

*The harmonious coming together of heart, mind, and spirit of the creator ensures a personal style that is nurtured in the aboriginal context...what makes an Indian painting “Indian” is not the choice of subject matter-that is, Indian scenes-but rather the mentality that is used in the process of creation.<sup>5</sup>*

Having knowledgeable jurors adjudicating applications from artists of Aboriginal ancestry becomes integral to providing access. An understanding and insight based on Aboriginal experiences, beliefs and values will provide, for all intents and purposes, unbiased recommendations. A disinterested jury may experience difficulty during the adjudication process. For example, if a jury lacking the necessary knowledge was adjudicating an application from an Aboriginal dance group which was incorporating mask making into its dance, the jurors might believe the project included both performing and visual arts components. They would not understand the mask is the dance and the dance is the mask. Cultural awareness is key in the process.

The list of obstacles facing artists of Aboriginal ancestry is long. As well as lack of access to adequate funding and exhibition and marketing opportunities, other barriers include a lack of education or educational opportunities, language differences, literacy issues, lack of specialized equipment, lack of administrative and marketing expertise, lack of awareness of opportunities and supporting institutions or agencies, exploitation of the work, poverty, and so on.

As Aboriginal art and artists challenge the prevailing stereotypes and project a vitality through a contemporary approach, a new threat emerges on the horizon, that of cultural appropriation. After 500 years of cultural suppression and suffering, and living lives determined, controlled and interpreted by non-Aboriginal people, Aboriginal artists are not willing to be hurt or watch the misuse of precious spiritual objects again. Aboriginal artists do not wish to limit those wishing to study Indian art, but the right to make Indian art must be earned through living a life in the culture.

However, what appeared hopeless at one time now is promising. The re-emergence of Aboriginal arts and artists reflects the struggle against enforced assimilation, a process of self-determination, rediscovery of Aboriginal identity and reclaiming of Aboriginal culture.

At the same time as we began to see the emergence of Aboriginal arts and artists in contemporary society, other forces and activities signaled change. In 1982 the *Constitution Act* became law. Section 35(1) of the Act recognized and affirmed the existing Aboriginal treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada, and section 35(2) described the Aboriginal peoples of Canada as the Indian, Inuit and Metis peoples.

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<sup>5</sup> Irwin, Rita L. and Ruby Farrell. “The Framing of Aboriginal Art.” *Visions of the Heart: Canadian Aboriginal Issues*. Ed. David Alan Long and Olive Patricia Dickason. Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Company, Canada, 1996.

In 1990 the Saskatchewan Arts Strategy Task Force, appointed by the Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Recreation, presented its final report. During the course of its work, the Task Force consulted with artists, individuals, groups and organizations involved in the arts across the province, including representatives from Aboriginal communities and organizations.

The report states Aboriginal representation on a number of bodies, including the Saskatchewan Arts Board is inadequate and indicated it is imperative to rectify this situation in any restructuring of arts organizations and mandates. The report also recommended that work be done at an advisory level in the development of the Aboriginal arts, and in the awarding of community and education grants.

In 1990 Canada's Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples convened. The Royal Commission tabled its report in 1996 and dedicated one section to recommendations concerning arts and heritage issues.

In 1993 the Working Group on Indigenous Populations submitted its Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to the United Nations. While the Declaration addresses all freedoms and rights assigned to Indigenous peoples, several articles refer to rights regarding cultural, spiritual and artistic development and freedoms. Of particular interest is a statement included in Part VII, Article 38:

Indigenous peoples have the right to have access to adequate financial and technical assistance, from States and through international cooperation, to pursue freely their political, economic, social, cultural and spiritual development and for the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms recognized in this Declaration.<sup>6</sup>

In Saskatchewan, in 1994, the Saskatchewan Indian and Metis Affairs Secretariat released its report which provided an update on broad strategic directions and identified priorities with respect to Aboriginal matters. As a agency of government, the Saskatchewan Arts Board is included in the vision and statement of principles included in the report.

In 1995 the Saskatchewan Arts Board approved the development of an Aboriginal Advisory Panel to consider and advise the agency on policies, programs, delivery mechanisms and integrated initiatives in the arts and their impact on Aboriginal artists and Aboriginal peoples in Saskatchewan. The Panel began its work in 1997.

During the time the Panel has been involved in its activities new legislation respecting the Saskatchewan Arts Board was introduced into law. Although *The Arts Board Act, 1997* in its totality has an effect on Aboriginal artists, arts organizations, communities and peoples as citizens of the province, newly included sections will have a direct impact. These include:

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<sup>6</sup> Venne, Sharon Helen. *Our Elders Understand Our Rights: Evolving International Law Regarding Indigenous Rights*. Penticton: Theytus Books, 1998.

4. *(Mandate and purposes)*
  - (f) *to support and encourage the arts of both Aboriginal peoples and the ethnic communities of Saskatchewan;*
  
5. *(Principles)*
  - (e) *respect for Aboriginal traditions and protocols governing the use of traditional names, stories, songs and other art forms;*
  - (f) *respect for the cultural diversity of Saskatchewan people.*
  
6. *(General powers)*
  - (b) (iii) *the development, commissioning and acquisition of Saskatchewan-based resources related to the arts, including materials representing cultural diversity and Aboriginal arts;*

This is the history and environment which the Aboriginal Advisory Panel held in its collective memory and which framed the recommendations included in this report. While the Panel was dedicated to the terms of reference set out by the Saskatchewan Arts Board, the following recommendations mark a beginning only. The work is by no means complete.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Preamble

The Aboriginal Advisory Panel met on only on five occasions during its two-year term. As a result, there simply was not enough time to address all of the issues relative to Aboriginal art and artists.

For example, the Panel did not have sufficient time to develop specific strategies which will assist the Arts Board in increasing the awareness of Aboriginal art and artists. This would be an important discussion for a new Panel. However the Panel is of the opinion the Arts Board's exploration of partnerships and cooperative ventures, and the implementation of programs which assist the development of Aboriginal artists and the production and presentation of their work will be key to the building of awareness.

The Aboriginal Advisory Panel also did not develop technical criteria for the recommended programs. The Panel has made comments as to the intent of these programs but is of the opinion it is the Arts Board's responsibility to develop criteria which achieves the intended purposes and corresponds to its other grant programs.

The Aboriginal Advisory Panel believes there are fundamental principles to which the Saskatchewan Arts Board must give priority as it addresses the issues and obstacles facing artists of Aboriginal ancestry and Aboriginal arts groups, organizations and communities in the province, especially those in remote areas. The Board must commit to a policy of inclusion, and must develop and implement programs and governance policies which are relevant, responsive, provide opportunities for development and full participation, and ensure access to all artists and peoples or organizations working in the arts or presenting programs in the arts. It must implement programs and adopt governance policies which ensure Aboriginal traditions, protocols and copyright are respected and honoured. Policies and programs must ensure the work and its content, and all arts activities of artists of Aboriginal ancestry remain at arms length from the Saskatchewan Arts Board, tribal councils, bands and arts organizations.

### Recommendations

#### A. Financial Resources

1. **That the Saskatchewan Arts Board ensure funds available to support the work of artists of Aboriginal ancestry, and Aboriginal arts activities, organizations, groups and collectives are increased to address the diverse issues and barriers facing the Aboriginal arts community.**

The Panel has identified lack of access to adequate funding and exhibition and marketing opportunities, lack of education or educational opportunities, language differences, literacy issues, lack of specialized equipment, lack of administrative and

marketing expertise, lack of awareness of opportunities and supporting institutions or agencies, and exploitation of the artists' works as only some of the issues and barriers facing those working in the Aboriginal arts community.

The Panel stresses the importance of immediate action regarding this recommendation.

2. **That the Saskatchewan Arts Board establish a relationship with SaskCulture Inc. to ensure grant funds previously directed to Circle Vision Arts Corporation remain available to Aboriginal artists and arts groups, collectives and cooperative ventures.**

The Panel stresses the importance of these funds remaining available to the Aboriginal arts community to assist with the creation of work by individual artists of Aboriginal ancestry, and the production and presentation of work by Aboriginal art collectives and groups.

The Panel recommends this action begin immediately to ensure the continuation of this support in the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

#### **B. Creation of Saskatchewan Arts Board Staff Position**

3. **That the Saskatchewan Arts Board create and fill a Community Development Consultant position and provide the necessary resources to assist with salary, administrative support, travel and communications.**

The Panel is of the opinion this position is a key element in implementing the recommendations in this report, and in developing and delivering the recommended programs.

The Panel underscores the need to have sufficient resources to develop communications tools and to carry out appropriate communications with communities and artists, particularly in the northern part of the province.

The Panel recommends this position be created and filled during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

4. **That the Saskatchewan Arts Board employ an individual in the Community Development Consultant position who is of First Nations ancestry; who has the ability, knowledge and expertise to work with First Nations, Metis, Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal, urban, rural and reserve communities; who is able to speak a First Nations language; and who has strong communications, consultative and analytical skills.**

The Panel recommended this individual be of First Nations ancestry at this time as the two Consultants currently employed by the agency who are of Aboriginal ancestry are both Metis.

5. **That the Saskatchewan Arts Board create the Community Development Consultant position as one that serves the whole province but one which focuses on building awareness in the northern part of Saskatchewan.**

The Panel members are of the opinion the most immediate need is in the northern part of the province although they recognize there is much work to be done in the southern areas as well.

C. **Aboriginal Advisory Committee**

6. **That the Saskatchewan Arts Board continue to support an Aboriginal Advisory Panel on a permanent basis.**

The Panel emphasizes the activities it completed marks only a beginning to the work which needs to be done in addressing the policies, programs, delivery mechanisms and integrated initiatives in the arts and their impact on Aboriginal peoples in Saskatchewan. This is the first time there has been an opportunity for these issues to be addressed through an advisory process and the Panel members were able to meet only on four occasions during their term.

The Panel recommends an Aboriginal Advisory Committee be established on a permanent basis immediately.

7. **That the Saskatchewan Arts Board rename the Aboriginal Advisory Panel and that in the future it be referred to as the Aboriginal Advisory Committee.**
8. **That the Saskatchewan Arts Board appoint seven (7) individuals to the Aboriginal Advisory Committee who are of Aboriginal ancestry.**
9. **That the Saskatchewan Arts Board appoint a minimum of three (3) individuals of First Nations ancestry and a minimum of three (3) individuals of Metis ancestry to the Aboriginal Advisory Committee.**
10. **That the Saskatchewan Arts Board ensure individuals appointed to the Aboriginal Advisory Committee have a background, history and expertise in the arts.**
11. **That the Saskatchewan Arts Board ensure the membership of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee reflect a balance of constituency, discipline, gender and geographic representation.**
12. **That the Saskatchewan Arts Board appoint individuals to the Aboriginal Advisory Committee for a period of two years with the option to be re-appointed for an additional term of two years.**

13. **That the Saskatchewan Arts Board change no more than one-half of the members of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee at any one time.**
14. **That the Saskatchewan Arts Board provide for a transition from the existing Aboriginal Advisory Panel to a new Aboriginal Advisory Committee by appointing no more than one-half of the current membership to the new Committee.**

**D. Special Initiatives**

15. **That the Saskatchewan Arts Board establish an Apprenticeship and Mentorship Program.**

The Panel suggests this program will provide project assistance to Aboriginal artists, groups, organizations or communities and groups organizations or communities presenting activities specifically targeting Aboriginal peoples. It will encourage skill development, training and professional development. It will provide the opportunity for emerging artists to work with established artists or arts organizations; will allow them to begin, develop or complete specific projects while receiving knowledgeable feedback; and will encourage them to move to a professional level. The program will provide an opportunity for established artists in the Aboriginal community to develop mentoring skills. It also will support a transfer of skills (e.g., a carpenter learning theatre set construction skills, or theatre and film companies accepting Aboriginal peoples in training programs). This program is especially important in developing and encouraging artists of Aboriginal ancestry who often work in isolation and in remote areas.

The Panel recommends the immediate and pressing need for this program result in its establishment and implementation during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

16. **That the Saskatchewan Arts Board establish a program to support the production and presentation of work by Aboriginal artists, groups, collectives and organizations.**

The Panel proposes this program will assist Aboriginal artists, groups, organizations or communities as well as groups, organizations or communities presenting activities specifically targeting Aboriginal peoples. It will support the activities of artists of Aboriginal ancestry who wish to have their work presented, performed, exhibited, produced, etc. The projects may be community or culturally based and may include projects which offer professional development opportunities. The program may support the travel of a group to workshops, conferences, trade fairs or symposia; tours and exhibitions of the work of Saskatchewan artists of Aboriginal ancestry; and artist or arts gatherings and events. These projects will encompass all disciplines and art forms, and will include traditional work such as beading, dance, etc.

The Panel suggests this program will provide opportunities for training in a variety of areas. This may include training in a specific art form, such as film or video production, but also will include opportunities for artists to learn about documenting, marketing or distributing their work; about grantsmanship; about industry associations, guilds or unions; etc.

The Panel advises an important aspect of this program is the presentation, performance, exhibition, production, etc. of the work of Aboriginal artists who have never had this opportunity. It is the Panel's opinion there is significant need for these "first time" opportunities and suggests this be identified and targeted specifically and separately within the context of this program.

The Panel recommends the immediate and pressing need for this program result in its establishment and implementation during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

- 17. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board seek the advice of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee, the Community Development Consultant, Aboriginal arts organizations, artists of Aboriginal ancestry and the arts community regarding specific criteria and guidelines for special initiatives such as the Apprenticeship and Mentorship and Production and Presentation Programs.**

The Panel recommends this consultation process take place during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

- 18. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board commit a minimum of \$250,000 to support projects in the Apprenticeship and Mentorship and Production and Presentation Programs during its 1999-2000 fiscal year.**

The Panel suggests this amount is appropriate for the first year to start up the two programs but recommends funds be expanded in each succeeding year to match the demand which it anticipates will emerge.

The Panel recommends the immediate and pressing need for these programs result in the commitment of these funds during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

#### **E. Grants - Artist in Residence Program**

- 19. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board request an additional \$250,000 from SaskCulture Inc. and the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund to support the Artist in Residence Program.**

The Panel recognizes this program assists residencies in communities and schools around the province. The Panel suggests this amount reflects an immediate need only and recommends funds be expanded in each succeeding year to match the increasing demand.

While the Panel identifies and underscores the need for residencies in Aboriginal communities, and in communities which have high Aboriginal populations, it recognizes there is a significant need for residencies in many other communities. Therefore, it does not recommend that these additional funds be directed only to Aboriginal communities.

The Panel recommends the additional funds be directed to the Artist in Residence Program during the Arts Board's 2000-2001 fiscal year.

- 20. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board revise its Artist in Residence Program guidelines so that the artist to be employed in a specific residency does not have to be from outside that community as long as she/he meets the employment criteria.**

The Panel recognizes the intent of this criteria is to offer communities the opportunity to work with an individual who will bring new insight, the fact is that most Aboriginal communities have had no opportunity for development in the arts at all. As well, accomplished artists living within these communities have had no opportunities to work as mentors or instructors. Allowing these artists to work within their own communities provides the building of capacity and a unique opportunity for all.

The Panel suggests the recommended revisions to the Artist in Residence Program be part of any review of the program to be undertaken by the Arts Board and further suggests these revisions be implemented in the Arts Board's 2000-2001 fiscal year.

- 21. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board revise its Artist in Residence Program guidelines so that a sponsor and host may submit an application which identifies a specific individual as the resident artist.**

The Panel recognizes there may be specific and worthy proposals for residencies which are based on the attributes, expertise and skills of particular artists. The Panel is of the opinion that if a community has identified a need which can be met through a specific residency and an identified artist it ought to be eligible to present the proposal for adjudication.

- 22. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board ensure the Artist in Residence Program grants it approves reflect a balance in regional allocations across the province.**

- 23. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board ensure the artists hired for Artist in Residence Program residencies reflect a balance in gender.**

**F. Grants - Audience Development**

- 24. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board establish and implement a grant program which facilitates audience development in Aboriginal communities.**

The Panel advises this program will provide assistance for artists and arts groups to tour and present their work on reserves and in remote northern communities. Through projects supported by this program, Aboriginal communities, especially children, will have the opportunity to learn about various art forms; to see and hear the work of professional artists, such as symphony musicians; and to learn how to look at art forms in a critical way. The program will encourage non-Aboriginal arts groups to work with artists of Aboriginal ancestry to present programs and events featuring their work, and will promote cultural exchange. It will assist in the presentation of critical comment regarding the work of artists of Aboriginal ancestry, especially those living in northern parts of the province.

The Panel recommends this program be established and implemented during the Arts Board's 2000-2001 fiscal year.

**G. Communications**

- 25. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board ensure information about its grant deadlines and programs is disseminated in a timely manner, especially for more northern or remote areas of the province.**

The Panel informs the Arts Board that it most often takes some time to distribute information in the more northern or remote areas of the province. Currently the deadline often has passed before the information is received in these areas. Sporadic mail delivery and remote residences are contributing factors.

The Panel recommends all activities regarding communications be implemented during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

- 26. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board develop and commit resources to a communication plan and tools which ensure appropriate communication takes place with Aboriginal communities and organizations and artists of Aboriginal ancestry; and which provides for intensive outreach into more northern or remote areas of the province.**

The Panel suggests the Saskatchewan Arts Board make extensive use of Aboriginal newspapers, northern radio and television stations, etc. For example, Panel members indicate it usually is quite easy to obtain free air time or a commitment to advertise events and programs as most of the radio stations in the north are eager to obtain material they can use on their stations.

- 27. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board provide assistance to collectives, groups or organizations wishing to sponsor a gathering of artists of Aboriginal ancestry for the purpose of sharing information and work, developing, celebrating, planning, organizing, etc.**

The Panel suggests the Arts Board develop partnerships with appropriate Aboriginal organizations to encourage this type of activity. It also suggests the Arts Board provide assistance for the presentation of these gatherings and the dissemination of appropriate information. The Panel believes this is an important component in the development, encouragement and promotion of artists of Aboriginal ancestry. The Panel believes this kind of opportunity also will facilitate and encourage the traditional guilds and societies of Aboriginal peoples regarding traditional art practice.

#### **H. Grants - Application Information/Criteria**

- 28. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board revise and simplify its Individual Assistance and Project grant application material.<sup>7</sup>**

The Panel proposes the material explaining the process be brief [no more than three (3) pages] and written in clear language using terms which may be understood by individuals with all levels of education. In particular, the Panel members find the Individual Assistance Grant Program package onerous and the application form difficult.

While the Panel recognizes there is a need to include an applicant profile (with signature), it suggests the other requirements be simply outlined in the form of points or questions. These points might include a description of what the applicant wishes to do, a budget, letters of support or recommendation, and other support material. The applicants then will answer the points or questions in their proposals.

The Panel recognizes some of the recommended actions regarding application information and criteria have been implemented but suggests the Arts Board review this material each year to ensure clarity, simplicity and transparency is maintained at all times.

- 29. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board accept applications for Individual Assistance and Project grants and letters of support/recommendation in an oral format presented on audio or video tape.**

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<sup>7</sup> It is noted that while the Aboriginal Advisory Panel is aware of the development of new Global Grants Programs (Program and Organization Assistance) by the Saskatchewan Arts Board, it did not review these programs in detail. The Panel also is aware the Arts Board recently introduced a revised description of its project grant programs.

The Panel submits this recommendation is important in recognition of the specific challenges facing many artists of Aboriginal ancestry. Many of these individuals have had no educational opportunities. While some of them will require assistance in reading and understanding the Arts Board's material, through a video tape they will be able to respond to the questions and tell their story in their own way. Otherwise they must rely on someone to write their application for them and on these occasions the information does not always accurately reflect the artist's vision. This also may be the case of some individuals who are providing letters of support/recommendation for grant applications.

By allowing the applicants to present their application orally, the Arts Board also is recognizing the oral tradition of Aboriginal cultures and peoples. As well, in Aboriginal cultures there are accomplishments which cannot be written down but can only be transmitted orally. The Arts Board must be sensitive, understanding and respectful of these cultural differences.

The Panel recommends this action be initiated during the Arts Board's 2000-2001 fiscal year.

**30. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board provide assistance to applicants of Aboriginal ancestry who do not speak and/or read the English language.**

The Panel considers the task of translating all of the Arts Board's material into the various First Nations languages too onerous and costly as there are so many different languages and/or dialects in use across the province. Therefore, the Panel suggests the Arts Board compile a list of interpreters in various languages who may be employed by the agency when required. The Panel recommended this list and service be coordinated by the Community Development Consultant.

The Panel recommends this action be initiated during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

**31. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board clearly indicate in its grant information that hand written, as well as typed, applications will be accepted.**

The Panel notes many artists of Aboriginal ancestry have no access to typewriters or computers, and may believe the Arts Board will not accept handwritten applications.

The Panel recommends this action be initiated during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

**32. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board clearly indicate in its grant information that traditional art forms and work such as beading, mocassin making, birch bark biting, basket making, pow-wow dancing and singing, etc. are eligible to be considered for Arts Board grants.**

The Panel recommends this action be initiated during the Arts Board's 2000-2001 fiscal year.

- 33. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board allow visual artists to provide evidence of their work and support material on video tape if they do not have slides.**

The Panel recognizes that many artists of Aboriginal ancestry do not own cameras or do not have access to cameras with which to make slides. As well, it often is very difficult to have film processed into slides as artists living in northern or remote areas must send the film to a southern location. This is a time-consuming process and can take two or more months. However bands, tribal councils or schools often do have video cameras.

The Panel recommends this action be initiated during the Arts Board's 2000-2001 fiscal year.

- 34. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board include information in its grant material which lists businesses artists may contact if they wish to have audio or video tapes copied.**

The Panel recommends this action be initiated during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

- 35. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board include a statement in its grant material which advises applicants to contact the appropriate agencies to obtain income tax advice or other information about how an Arts Board grant may affect employment insurance payments or other revenue received from government.**

The Panel recommends this action be initiated during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

- 36. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board develop a short training seminar and video tape which may be used together or separately to provide information to artists and other potential grant applicants about the application process.**

The Panel recommends this action be initiated during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

- 37. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board create a website which includes all of its grant information and application forms so applications may be submitted to the agency through the internet.**

The Panel recognizes that many artists, groups and organizations, include those in Aboriginal communities, have access to sophisticated computer technology.

Therefore it recommends that the Arts Board prepare itself for the millennium by creating a website which can provide full service to these individuals and organizations.

The Panel recommends this action be initiated during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

## **I. Jurors/Assessors**

- 38. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board include the names of individuals on its lists of jurors and assessors who have specialized knowledge regarding traditional Aboriginal art forms, cultural practices, protocols, etc.**

The Panel recommends all action regarding jurors and assessors be initiated during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

- 39. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board establish a mechanism which allows the Aboriginal Advisory Committee to put forward the names of individuals for appropriate lists of jurors and assessors.**
- 40. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board make every effort to ensure jury panels it convenes include individuals of Aboriginal ancestry.**
- 41. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board make every effort to ensure each jury panel it convenes includes both experienced and inexperienced jurors.**

The Panel emphasizes this kind of activity is important to artists and their development. It not only encourages informed adjudication but provides the artists with valuable information they can use as they prepare their own grant applications. As a result, there is a rise in the quality of applications received by the Arts Board and other funding agencies.

- 42. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board invite artists of Aboriginal ancestry to observe the jury adjudication process in order to develop the adjudication skills of these individuals.**

The Panel suggests this approach is invaluable to the artists. The reasons are as set out in Recommendation #39. As well, this procedure informs artists who may not understand or be familiar with the Arts Board's adjudication process. The Panel advises the Arts Board that it is appropriate to reimburse these observers for their expenses but that they should not be paid an honorarium.

- 43. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board ensure its call for jurors names also be targeted to Aboriginal communities, organizations, and electronic and print media.**

The Panel suggests the Arts Board make provisions in its call for jurors names for self-identification by artists of Aboriginal ancestry.

- 44. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board enlist the aid of its Community Development Consultant in suggesting the names of individuals of Aboriginal ancestry appropriate for its lists of jurors and assessors, and in training and developing potential jurors.**

**J. Grants - Individual Assistance Grant Program**

- 45. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board develop clear and transparent criteria for each of its categories in the Individual Assistance Grant Program (A, B, C).**

The Panel is of the opinion the current lack of clear criteria is confusing for potential applicants.

The Panel recommends all action regarding the Individual Assistance Grant Program be initiated during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

- 46. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board consult with and seek advice from the arts community, including individual artists, artists of Aboriginal ancestry and the Aboriginal Advisory Committee regarding the development of clear and transparent criteria for each of the categories in the Individual Assistance Grant Program (A, B, C).**
- 47. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board develop criteria for its categories which are sensitive to the fact that many artists of Aboriginal ancestry have no formal education, especially those working in traditional art forms or participating in activities such as beading, mocassin making, birch bark biting, basket making, dancing and singing, etc.**

The Panel suggests that while these individuals may not have a B.F.A., for example, the training they have received from elders or others in the community working in these art forms is indeed "formal training" and should be recognized by the Arts Board.

The Panel recognizes that a resume of an artist of Aboriginal ancestry may at first glance appear similar to another artist in a particular discipline however the training, situation, experience, emotion, sensations and history of achievement will be very different (e.g., a pow-wow dancer and a contemporary dancer). There must be an understanding and sensitivity to these differences by Arts Board staff and adjudicators.

- 48. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board provide clear direction as to the specific discipline appropriate for each of the various Aboriginal art forms.**

49. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board develop a sensitive and appropriate process for the adjudication of applications which include Aboriginal art forms.
50. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board consult with and seek advice from artists of Aboriginal ancestry and the Aboriginal Advisory Committee regarding the identification of appropriate disciplines for Aboriginal art forms, and the development of a sensitive and appropriate adjudication process and criteria.
51. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board seek the advice of its Community Development Consultant prior to declaring any application from an artist of Aboriginal ancestry, or Aboriginal arts group or organization ineligible, particularly if the work to be undertaken is a traditional Aboriginal art form.

The Panel recommends this action to ensure a sensitive approach is taken regarding the work and the proposed activity.

52. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board clarify the statement in its Individual Assistance Grant Program which indicates ineligible activities include, “Projects which include the presentation, re-creation, or interpretation of existing works...”

The Panel suggests this statement is not sensitive to traditional Aboriginal art forms. The Panel asks the Arts Board to clarify and modify this statement so that it is sensitive and respectful towards these traditional works.

#### **K. Saskatchewan Arts Board General Hiring Practices**

53. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board ensure that its staff complement of individuals of Aboriginal ancestry meet the requirements of the Saskatchewan Government Employment Equity Policy at all times.

The Panel recommends all actions regarding general hiring practices be initiated during the Arts Board’s 1999-2000 fiscal year.

54. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board ensure that its staff complement of individuals of Aboriginal ancestry include a balance of:

- C** Metis and First Nations, rural/urban and reserve, gender; and
- C** individuals with the ability and expertise to work with First Nations, Metis, Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal, urban and rural communities.

55. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board utilize the services of members of its Aboriginal Advisory Committee to review applications for staff positions which are from individuals of Aboriginal ancestry.

- 56. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board establish partnerships with organizations in Aboriginal communities so that it may participate in staff exchanges and secondments for positions at all levels and for a variety of time periods in order to facilitate the cultivation of skills, knowledge and community development opportunities.**

The Panel recommends this action be initiated during the Arts Board's 2000-2001 fiscal year.

**L. Saskatchewan Arts Board Appointments**

- 57. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board ensure that the advisory mechanism for appointments to the Board include nominations from Aboriginal communities which can be put forward through the Aboriginal Advisory Committee to the Minister.**

The Panel recommends this action be initiated during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

**M. Grants - Deadlines**

- 58. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board accept grant applications sent by facsimile provided they are received by the grant deadline time and date.**

The Panel encourages the Arts Board to accept these grant applications provided the original copy is received by mail prior to the jury meeting. Sporadic mail in remote northern areas may lead to a grant application arriving after the grant deadline in spite of the applicant's best intentions.

The Panel recommends this action be initiated during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

- 59. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board recognize that its October 1 and 15 grant deadlines are difficult for artists living in northern areas of the province.**

The Panel recommends that the Arts Board's information clearly indicate grant applications will be received throughout the year although they will be considered only at the March and October deadlines. The October deadlines are particularly difficult for artists in the northern or remote areas of the province. This is a time of gathering and preparation for winter survival.

The Panel recommends this action be initiated during the Arts Board's 2000-2001 fiscal year.

**N. Grants - Travel Assistance**

- 60. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board ensure any grant awarded to an applicant for travel assistance is adequate to support the activity appropriately so that the individual may be able to take advantage of the opportunity.**

The Panel advises that when an applicant requests a grant of \$1,000, for example, and an amount of \$200 is granted, for example, this will not enable the individual to take advantage of the opportunity. The Panel suggests the Arts Board consider not offering the grant if it will not support the activity in a reasonable manner.

The Panel recommends this action be initiated during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

**O. Relationships**

- 61. That the Saskatchewan Arts Board explore partnerships and cooperative ventures with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN), the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan (MNS), the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre (SICC), the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (SIFC), Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI), Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Circle Vision Arts Corporation, Sakewewak, Tribe, Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology (SIIT) and the Saskatchewan Indian and Gaming Authority (SIGA), tribal councils, bands, Aboriginal arts organizations and collectives, and other arts organizations to assist, support and encourage the creation, production and presentation of the work of artists of Aboriginal ancestry, as well as the development of these artists.**

The Panel recommends this action be initiated during the Arts Board's 1999-2000 fiscal year.

## APPENDIX I



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## ABORIGINAL ADVISORY PANEL

### POLICY

*(December 1996)*

The Aboriginal Advisory Panel serves as an advisory committee to the Saskatchewan Arts Board.

### GUIDELINES

#### PROCEDURES

1. The Aboriginal Advisory Panel considers and advises the Saskatchewan Arts Board on policies, programs, delivery mechanisms and integrated initiatives in the arts and their impact on Aboriginal peoples in Saskatchewan.
2. The Aboriginal Advisory Panel provides a way for the Board to pursue its objectives as follows:
  - to respond to the diversity of artists and the arts in Saskatchewan;
  - to provide broader access to the Arts Board, its programs and services; and
  - to ensure productive relationships.

#### CONVENES

The Aboriginal Advisory Panel meets twice a year or as otherwise determined to be necessary by the Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Arts Board.

## **COMPOSITION**

1. The Aboriginal Advisory Panel consists of six members from various constituencies in the Aboriginal communities and has a balance of gender and geographic representation.
2. A staff member of the Saskatchewan Arts Board serves as a resource and liaison to the Aboriginal Advisory Panel, but does not sit as a member of the panel.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

1. Individuals are appointed as Aboriginal Advisory Panel members for a period of two years and may be re-appointed for an additional term of two years.
2. Individuals appointed as Aboriginal Advisory Panel members are Aboriginal peoples with a background, history and expertise in the arts.
3. The Saskatchewan Arts Board will issue a call for nominations to the Aboriginal Advisory Panel which are sent to Saskatchewan's Aboriginal organizations and governments, bands, tribal councils, Wanuskewin Heritage Park, senior Aboriginal artists in all disciplines, and other relevant organizations or individuals.
4. A four-person selection committee reviews the resumes of the individuals recommended for appointments and recommends six individuals for appointment to the Aboriginal Advisory Panel.
5. The four-person selection committee is comprised of the Saskatchewan Arts Board's Executive Director or a staff member, a Board member, and individuals from the Aboriginal community with expertise and backgrounds in the arts.
6. The recommendations are then considered by the Saskatchewan Arts Board before final appointments are made to the Aboriginal Advisory Panel.

## APPENDIX II



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### ABORIGINAL ADVISORY PANEL

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE

*(December 1996)*

1. To review existing programs, policies, delivery mechanisms and initiatives of the Saskatchewan Arts Board, and suggest revisions or additions which address the needs and concerns of Saskatchewan's Aboriginal artists and communities in the context of the following Board objectives:
  - to respond to the diversity of artists and the arts in Saskatchewan;
  - to provide broader access to the Arts Board, its programs and services; and
  - to ensure productive relationships.
2. To identify programs, policies, delivery mechanisms and initiatives which can be introduced by the Saskatchewan Arts Board, are appropriate to the Arts Board, meet the Board's identified objectives and encourage the creation of art in the Aboriginal communities.
3. To identify statistical data to be collected and analyzed regarding the history of the Saskatchewan Arts Board's funding of Aboriginal artists and arts organizations.
4. To identify the appropriate role of the Saskatchewan Arts Board in the development of Aboriginal arts, cultural activities, cultural industries and heritage sites in Saskatchewan.
5. To identify the appropriate process for the Saskatchewan Arts Board to seek advice concerning the arts from the various Aboriginal communities in Saskatchewan.

## APPENDIX III

### ROYAL COMMISSION ON ABORIGINAL PEOPLES<sup>8</sup> ARTS AND HERITAGE SECTION (selected passages)

...The emergence of a distinct Aboriginal literature has not, unfortunately, been met with much openness by Canadian publishing houses and bookstores. While the major publishers have published numerous books *about* Aboriginal people, Aboriginal authors, almost without exception, have been published by small independent presses. In major bookstores, creative works by Aboriginal authors are usually found in the Aboriginal studies section, not the literature section...

...There are about 20 Aboriginal Publishers in Canada. Most are in a precarious financial situation and have had little success in obtaining funding from government programs. While almost all Canada's established non-Aboriginal publishers obtain Canada Council block grants, only two Aboriginal presses do so. In 1992, the federal department of communications established the Book Publishing Industry Development Program (BPIDP) to provide substantial annual block funding to eligible publishers, and the Publishing Distribution Assistance Program (PDAP) which provides more modest funding to help meet the costs of mailing and distribution. These are now administered by Canadian Heritage, which also offers publication project funding through its Heritage Cultures and Languages Program. According to reports from Aboriginal publishers, only one Aboriginal publisher received BPIDP and PDAP funding; in 1993-94, it lost the more substantial BPIDP grant.. No funding from the Heritage Cultures and Languages Program has ever gone to an Aboriginal publisher, although an average of 12 publishers receive funding each year. Most provinces also have modest block and project funding programs, but the story is no different; only two Aboriginal presses have ever received funding. In March 1995, the Canada Council acknowledged the need to improve its support for Aboriginal arts and literature by establishing a First Peoples Secretariat and a First Peoples Committee to advise the council. It also adopted a series of objectives and initiatives intended to assist Aboriginal artists in new and traditional forms of expression. In particular, it undertook to ensure that its programs are relevant and inclusive and that Aboriginal perspectives are better reflected in the council's program guidelines and criteria and through the appointment of Aboriginal people to juries, advisory committees and staff.

While the Canada Council's initiative is certainly welcome, much more needs to be done to provide an adequate and fair level of support for Aboriginal writers and publishers. Although Aboriginal languages and culture remain deeply rooted in the oral tradition, literary expression of the Aboriginal voice is vital to affirming the identities of Aboriginal peoples: first, because literature presents an authentic voice to the majority population in a medium with which it is familiar; and second, because it presents that same authentic voice and mirror for their identity to Aboriginal people themselves.

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<sup>8</sup>

Canada. Government of Canada. *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1996.

To survive in the dominant culture, Aboriginal people are becoming more and more conversant with the literary tradition and the Aboriginal stereotypes with which it is replete. The dissemination of authentic Aboriginal voices is essential to educate Canadians about the rich heritage, knowledge and culture of Aboriginal peoples and to expose misrepresentation and misappropriation of Aboriginal identities...

...Historically, the Canadian arts community has had the support of individual patrons, private charitable foundations, and a variety of small, medium and large corporation. Although Canadian corporations do purchase Aboriginal visual art, their support for the performing arts is generally directed to non-Aboriginal forms of expression such as performances by symphony orchestras and ballet and opera companies. The impetus to do so is twofold. First, more and more corporations link their support of marketing of their products and services. Aboriginal people tend to be ignored as a potential market because they are a widely dispersed and economically disadvantaged minority. Second, the lack of support for Aboriginal arts from public agencies means that a corporation must make a far larger contribution to achieve the same ends. The National Ballet of Canada, for example, receives core funding from the Canada Council, the Ontario Arts Council and local arts councils. When it produces a new ballet, it may require corporate sponsorship only for discrete items such as new sets and the choreographer's fee. It also has a substantial subscription list from which a sponsor may benefit. The ballet company and sponsor can readily agree on the value of the ballet and the level of sponsorship; in fact, market prices already exist for a variety of mainstream productions. Aboriginal companies have none of these advantages. When the Canadian Native Arts Foundation produced its major dance production, *In the Land of Spirits*, in 1988, it had to raise the entire \$1 million needed to stage it.

Other barriers to recognizing and affirming the role of Aboriginal arts in defining the cultural identities of Aboriginal peoples and Canada generally are systemic. Art education, for example, should be an important part of elementary, secondary and adult education in both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. But many experienced Aboriginal artists have been excluded from teaching because they lack formal academic credentials. The artist's talents should be recognized as valuable, not wasted. One successful model to which other provincial governments might look is Alberta's Artists in Schools program.

Aboriginal artists also need access to better training in an environment that nurtures and celebrates their distinct cultural endeavour. The Institute for American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico, was often suggested to the Commission as a model by Aboriginal artists.

Addressing these issues requires the support of governments, cultural agencies and institutions, and the private sector. But although the creative process needs their support, its integrity demands that patrons remain at arm's length and respect the cultural and artistic autonomy of the artists and performers. This is especially true of Aboriginal arts, which must overcome marginalization and stereotyping to become a mirror for their own peoples and an expression and affirmation of identity for Aboriginal people relative to the larger society. In other words, those who assume the role of patron also assume a responsibility to listen carefully as Aboriginal artists and performers express their experience, dreams and aspirations in their unique voices.

Because the fostering of Aboriginal artistic talent has been woefully neglected in Canadian institutions, and because the distinctive expression of Aboriginal voice, rooted in a spiritual world view and ceremonial performance, has been actively suppressed, we see the need for active support of Aboriginal arts for at least a generation while Aboriginal arts, literature and performance are being revitalized. Such support should be over and above the recognition of Aboriginal arts by mainstream cultural granting agencies.

## **Recommendations**

The Commission recommends that

- 3.6.19** Federal, provincial, territorial and Aboriginal governments co-operate to establish and fund an Aboriginal Arts Council, with a minimum 20-year life span and an annual budget equivalent to five per cent of the Canada Council budget, to foster the revitalization and development of Aboriginal arts and literature.
- 3.6.20** Governments, public agencies and private organizations that provide support for the visual and performing arts, in co-operation with Aboriginal artists and performers, review all aspects of their programs to ensure that
- (a) criteria for grants and awards are relevant to Aboriginal arts and artists; and
  - (b) Aboriginal people and perspectives are adequately represented on decision-making bodies, juries, advisory committees and staff.
- 3.6.21** Federal, provincial, territorial and Aboriginal governments, in co-operation with Aboriginal artists, writers and performers, support and promote the revitalization and development of Aboriginal literary, visual and performing arts through
- (a) support of training programs in schools, cultural institutions and professional associations, and participation of Aboriginal students in professional studies in the arts; and
  - (b) accommodating requirements for appropriate display and performance of Aboriginal arts in the design of public facilities in Aboriginal communities and the community at large.