



Creative Champions Network Webinar – June 22, 2020

Guidance for Arts Board Confronting a Pandemic:
Fundraising and Funding in the time of COVID

Speakers:

- Jaclyn Rodrigues**, Community Engagement Manager, Toronto Arts Foundation
- Jini Stolk**, Toronto Arts Foundation Research Fellow
- Brett Egan**, Co-Author of *The Cycle: A Practical Approach to Managing Arts Organizations*
- Sandy Houston**, CEO, The Metcalf Foundation
- Michael Trent**, Performing Arts Program Director, The Metcalf Foundation

Transcribed by: Rachel Kennedy, Michelle Parson and Alexandra Loewen

00:00:00 – 00:01:52	Jaclyn Rodrigues	<p>Good Afternoon. My name is Jaclyn Rodrigues and I am the Community Engagement Manager with Toronto Arts Foundation, we are delighted you are able to join us today for this webinar. I'll keep my remarks brief as my role here today is really as a moderator for our Q & A period at the end of the webinar and to help troubleshoot any technical difficulties that may arise. As some of you know, the Foundation is hosting this webinar as part of our Creative Champions Network. Jini Stolk, our Network director, will be giving a brief overview of what that program is in a few moments for those of you who might be new here and have not heard of it.</p> <p>That being said, this is only the third webinar our network is hosting and while we hope for a smooth session and we're grateful for your patience as we troubleshoot any tissues that may come up. Next on my list is to just set the proverbial stage for today's webinar. After some introductory remarks we will proceed with the presentation, Brett will be sharing his screen with everyone as we have a small PowerPoint deck to accompany today's remarks. If you have a question for our presenters, we ask that you use the Q & A function, not the chat function as questions tend to get a little bit buried in there. Please feel free to ask a question at any time during the presentation via the Q & A function. If your question is for a specific presenter, try and identify them in that question to us so that we can direct questions accordingly. We will address questions at the end of the session, so a bit closer to that three o'clock hour and will strive to get to as many of those questions as possible, and will prioritize the most frequently asked questions.</p>
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<p>00:01:53 – 00:07:41</p>	<p>Jini Stolk</p>	<p>Thank you, Jaclyn as always and to Alex Loewen from Toronto Arts Foundation. Its always wonderful to have the support of the team devoted to making all of our Creative Champions activities, including these webinars, so successful and, as you know, I am especially grateful to have your steady hands on the Zoom technology.</p> <p>So as Jaclyn, said, today's webinar is the third in the series <i>Guidance For Arts Boards Confronting A Pandemic</i>. Recordings and transcripts of the previous two are up on the Toronto Arts Foundation's Website under Creative Champions and if you go there you'll also find a very rich trove of resources that we've chosen to be useful to arts board members on topics we've highlighted in the previous 27 workshops and learning sessions we've presented over the past 5 years. And these sessions have definitely, more than once dealt with the board's role in fundraising which is a perennial topic of interest to board members.</p> <p>So as board members, as human beings living in this world, we are definitely living in the eye of a storm. We've gone from fears of illness to the stress of isolation, from missing the habits and patterns of our old lives and wondering if they will ever be back. To real concerns about our economic future and firm reminders that we do not in fact want to return to our socio economic structures that oppress and disadvantage many people. After that, a lot of uncertainty about the future of arts organizations we love and have chosen to dedicate our time, energy and resources to. Only a few months ago people were discussing whether now was the right time to be fundraising for the arts. That didn't stop anyone if my inbox is any indication, from going right ahead and calling for support and assistance to get through these very trying times, and quite rightly.</p> <p>For board members who are the majority if not all of the people in this session I hope and expect vigorous outreach to supporters and stakeholders has been part of your efforts to secure the future of your organizations and some have seen, in some cases an even deeper commitment by senior volunteers to reach out to donors personally and with passion. And it does seem to be one of the most important things we as board members can do right now to safeguard the mission and art of the organizations we have a legal obligation to sustain. Bringing energy, good ideas and passion to the table. Also this is an opportunity, I have found, to match the incredible and</p>

		<p>astounding creativity and courage on display by artists and arts managers.</p> <p>At our last webinar, we learned that resilient organizations are well prepared for change regardless of the type or magnitude of the transformation they may face. We also learned that it's not too late to adopt the lessons of resiliency, wherever your organization stood at the beginning of the pandemic. I have certainly observed that some organizations are doing much, much more than holding on. They're building support by responding to this current crisis with confidence, clear communications and ideas that capture the imagination of a public that I think is yearning for innovative leadership. I think we are very lucky to have two people with us today who are very well positioned to help us understand the environment and practices that are resonating most strongly. Brett Egan, our first speaker, comes with a wealth of experience in providing planning and training to arts organizations in Canada, the US and around the world and he has been very active and involved in responses to the pandemic. And Sandy Houston, President and CEO of the Metcalf Foundation, which has been one of the country's most important private programs of support to performing arts organizations, will share his perspectives and insights into what the funding and philanthropic communities see ahead. Michael Trent is an associate at Metcalf Foundation is also with us and will be available to answer a few questions as well.</p> <p>Before we call on Brett I just want to acknowledge this scared land where we live and work has been the site of human activity for 15,000 years and the traditional territory and gathering place of many nations. As Indigenous people throughout the world know, the earth is a sacred place and we are its custodians. We live on the shoulders of ancestors who survived crisis and devastation and it's now time for us to step up in ways that will enable history to judge this not only as a time of tragedy which it is but also as a catalyst for global awakening and for change to the avoidance and denial that have allowed systemic anti-black racism, shameful inequities suffered by Indigenous peoples and degradation of the land, plants and animals with whom we share this world. That being said, I'm going to ask Brett to begin our webinar, thank you Brett.</p>
00:07:42 – 00:10:11	Brett Egan	<p>Jini, thank you and Jaclyn thank you and big thanks to the Toronto Arts Foundation and to Creative Champions, I am honoured to spend some time with you this afternoon. It's been mentioned that our team has been involved in the response to the pandemic. We are a training and consulting firm based in Washington, DC. We work broadly throughout the country, a bit in Canada, quite a bit in Europe. Over the course of the last 15 years we've been working on every continent except Antarctica, substantially in Africa and pretty substantially in Asia and the middle East. We do a lot of work around capital campaigns, strategic planning, planning for new institutions. But our heart is</p>

		<p>as managers, our entire team including your colleague Ben Diestchi who's in Toronto is part of our team now, all come from running institutions, all come from running arts organizations. I gave a very healthy head of hair to this business as my testament of my dedication to the line of work [laughs], and it's through that lens that we approach this work. It's a fairly no-nonsense approach, we believe that when we produce art and program that is truly special and when we market that aggressively, we built a group of people who want it to succeed. Board members are part of that what we might call family: our donors, our philanthropies, our strategic partners; and we give that group of well-wishers the opportunity to help at moments like this, they do. And produce more revenue to help us create great art again the next year, market that aggressively and that family continue to swell. What we think of as a cycle of commitment that as managers and board members we swear to protect and invest in: meaningful art, strong marketing, a strong and generous family and mechanisms to convert the good will of that family into revenues, whether that be that financial, or labour or strategic partnership or that we need to invest again the next year in great art.</p>
<p>00:10:11 – 00:19:43</p>	<p>Brett Egan</p>	<p>Let's go back to mid-March as we've been thinking about this period and thinking about the role that board members can play, we've defined four phases and I'd like to briefly talk about three of them today, because I think that they're the most critical ones and the hardest ones. The fourth phase really is about what long term lessons can we lay into the fabric of our organizations, coming from this fiery hot cauldron of change and of questioning and of reinvention. If we go back to mid-March, we found ourselves, all of us, found ourselves trying to understand what this meant for all of us and trying to name the gap that remained when business shut down. For many of us that was a gap presented of loss of earned revenues. For some of us that was a gap of that proposed to be lost from contributed revenues or philanthropic revenues. But we were all struggling to find this number, and then putting together a plan to try and bridge it. I state this again, at pains of sounding redundant of what we all know, sadly I'm afraid we are not out of this particular phase. Most organizations are straddling this phase and the next phase which I'll talk about, because the goal post keeps moving.</p> <p>Remember in mid-March, many of us thought we would be back in business by now. We thought how long could this possibly last, how long does this distancing last, how long can our theatres possibly shut, is this thing really that serious? And now here we are in mid-June Most major cultural organizations in North America are saying we're not going to be back before January earliest, possibly February. Nutcrackers are being cancelled, entire seasons are being cancelled. Many of the largest institutions, as I'm sure you all well know, have said we may not be back until the Fall of 2021. So, this tactic of understanding and bridging the gap sadly is something that requires ongoing deliberation and analysis. I'm not going to dwell</p>

too much on how that's established, but here's what I would like to say. During this period of time, in respect of bridging the gap, I've seen two very different responses from fundraising campaigns. On the one hand what we might call a dark abyss effort and on the other hand what we might call a finite point effort. By the way I am not writing a book about this, I hope to never use these terms again in my entire career. I hope we can all probably agree we wouldn't necessarily want to revisit this, so I'm not going to spend time branding these terms, but the point I think is important. The dark abyss campaign said "Help! Pandemic!! Help!". It didn't give the donor confidence that by giving, they wouldn't be giving good money after bad. In other words, there was nothing in the message that said, "here's our gap, here is how we propose to bridge the gap, here is what we've done to get this number as low as possible, here is the things we've already brought in, here is what our board is doing, here is what our staff is doing, here is our plan". But rather sent out, in many cases, an email to their email list saying "we need you" and I saw that most of these campaigns, especially in the first few weeks of the pandemic, had some positive outcome but not what was expected and not what was needed. And I'm afraid that in many cases that kind of dark abyss campaign did damage.

What I mean by that is that it conveyed a sense that we didn't have the discipline to do everything in our power before we made the radical ask that somebody make a contribution during this time. In the United States, many of my colleagues, really truly have come to take for granted the philanthropic impulse, I don't. Because I know how hard it is to get the right gift. I'm not interested in getting what I might call "go away gifts" which is I ask you seven times and in order to get me to go away, you give me 100 bucks or 250 bucks, when I know you could be giving me 2500 bucks or 5000 or 10,000 or 25,000; we all know what the go away gift feels like.

But I still believe philanthropy is a radical act of love, I think that's what we're going for here. We are trying to get individuals who have earned money or have come into money that can be spent on anything and make the argument that we are the place they ought to spend it. And right now I think being able to testify that the investment will produce return and the return is the preservation of the beloved asset. People need to see that strategy. So, I have strongly preferred during this period of time – and I'm going over this again now because I think that many of us will find ourselves in several cycles of understanding then bridging the gap, and then having to fund the gap – I strongly prefer what I call a finite point fundraising campaign. Which is to say "look here we are, it's June 22, we've just made the horrible decision to cancel all programming to the end of the year hypothetically. Our gap is 150,000 dollars and 50 cents. And we have taken steps A, B and C to get it down to 150,000 dollars and 50 cents. And we have brought in X, Y and Z monies, including perhaps a seed from our board that can be matched

		<p>etc – matching campaigns very, very successful during this period of time – give people a lot of confidence that the goal can be met and it's not just their money but others money that's being matched and brought in to help solve the problem.</p> <p>Finite point says here is the finite point that we need to get to where we're thinking we might be able to start bringing in new revenues. We need your help to get there so that the donor can see that their 500 dollars or 1000 dollars or 2500 dollars is really moving the needle against a clear goal.</p>
<p>00:19:44 – 00:33:55</p>	<p>Brett Egan</p>	<p>And there was a vast difference I found in the narratives of fundraising campaigns that attempt to reach the public between the dark abyss campaign and the finite point campaign. Now simultaneously in phase 2, what I might call calibration, we are starting to see these pea shoots of innovation. This grappling of how to add value during this period of time. I'm seeing three basic responses: 1) Dormancy. It's organizations, mostly fairly wealthy organizations who have been able to amass institutional wealth in the form of working capital, saying "we aren't going to reinvent ourselves here or scramble too hard. We are going to sit tight, keep our costs low, keep our head down and wait this thing out". the Second response is what I call Digitized Business as Usual. Here's where I'm at online: The space was already super-saturated. Now I find it to be soggy, muddy and a bit treacherous to wade through. I fear that a lot of our organizations rushed instinctively to that space without a clear through line between the investment and the return on the investment. What I mean by that is, as with any programmatic investment, I want to know what the outcome is on that investment. And online for some reason I think we looked at it less critically for that period and I think we're still looking at it with a fairly uncritical eye. But if the organization is able to say, "look, we are an arts education organization, a youth development organization. A choir for instance, and those young people have been coming to rehearsal with us three times a week since September, and here it's March... we are going to keep those rehearsals online from March to June to maintain a momentum and cadence, in order to preserve tuition and keep them involved so that they come back next year. In order to continue to provide value for our constituents who are paying us to do that." That's a clear through-line; to keep the tuition, maintain registration, and attempt to convey for instance to donors that we haven't stopped. A second big investment that took place is trying to engage what I call the "core family" during this period of time. More nuances, intimate gatherings (if you can call a Zoom gathering intimate). Organizations who created backstage-type events or online donor lounges found some success in appealing to the donor mentality by showing that they wanted to remain involved in the inside track of the organization. There were these kind of performances of social theatre, rituals of electronic gathering that did inspire certain donors. These are targeted specifically at engaging core members of the family at this time. By the way, if you look very closely, it's interesting to</p>

see the online work focused on donors which really maps out 4 different donor types: mission driven, access driven, socially driven, and status driven. Mission driven responds very well to the core work that we do. They are our favourite donors, by the way, they don't ask for a lot in return, they are very loyal, they will go to the mat for us when we say "we believe this and we need your help to achieve it". Access driven wants access to people, places, power brokers, artists... renting access to experiences or people through the organization. Socially driven would like a call on their birthday. They don't need to go to all the fancy parties, but they would really appreciate it if we remember their granddaughter's name and where their granddaughter went to school. It's a very different kind of social relationship that needs to be authentic. And the Status driven, they want their name carved into a wall. These are people who you saw underwriting major online activities during this time, getting their names on the proverbial marquee. Mission, Access, Social, and Status - even online, those four laws of engaging donors still really ring true. Organizations that were able to draw a through-line between investment and return on investment make sense to me. A less specific strategy (which I might call a Spray & Pray strategy; of spraying as much out there and praying someone pays attention to it), I worry there about that investment.

But there were also these Startling Innovations during this period of time, where you see children's museums going to food shelters saying "the kids can't come to us right now, but you're seeing the kids every day because they're picking up their lunches from you, because they can't get them from school anymore. We're going to create a Happy Meal box, a museum in a box, and we're going to put the food inside of that box and send the young person with that museum in a box." They rethought how to distribute their content at this period of time. It's the same instinct as the modern dance company in New York City that rents out an old drive-in movie theatre on the Hudson River Valley and says "get in your car. We're going to give you a song to download on your phone, you're all going to park in an abandoned drive-in and we'll have you all press play at the same time and our dancers are going to create a world around you for 60 minutes. It's going to be unlike anything you've ever seen but it's going to be totally safe, socially distant, excellence. It's innovation in our form." We see these relentless Artistic Directors saying it's not good enough for them to just sit still, they're going to continue to add value. From a board member perspective, my 1-2 strategy would be a finite point fundraising campaign on the back of a startling innovation. That would be my preference - to go out to my family saying "I need you involved for this specific reason, for this specific campaign to bridge us from point A to point Z. We don't need a cent more, but we do need this money. When we get it, we will be okay. This strategy is to get us to January 1st. Look how this organization is doing - look how relentless, furtive and agile they have been during this period of time. Going down to the magma hot core of our mission and reinventing what delivery can look

like." It's during this time that we saw which organizations really took pain to invest in the cultivation of Family and those who had not. There's an expression "you don't see who's swimming naked until the tide goes out". Well during this period of time, people who have invested in family have found themselves in many cases sitting here stronger at this time than they were last year on June 22nd. It's not too late, by the way, to invest in Family. That practice is something that goes on all the time. Right now is the time to use our under-employed artists. There have been so many gut-wrenching conversations over the past 3 months. We did a pro bono initiative here in the States where we invited any arts, culture or heritage institution in the United States to apply for free consultations. We did free consultations with 450 organizations over 8 weeks. If I had any hair left to give, it would have been gone over that period of time. But what we learned was that a lot of people were struggling with whether or not to keep their dancers and their actors engaged. I said "look, I realize this is a special time and these are not laws that we would want to perpetuate all the time, but if you can pivot them into a way to cultivate the Family and possibly be involved in helping to fundraise by writing personal notes or by making phone calls. Instead of writing a big e-blast to all of your mailing list, to take 42 people from that list who can make a big difference and have a letter written to them by an artist or have that artist call them to tell them what's going on, what a world of difference that would make to take care of our Family in that way." Some of them have done that, and I'm continuing to encourage that. Almost certainly this fall and next spring we are going to need those people closer than ever than ever. People who are not paying attention to that, I think, are wasting time. That is, perhaps, the highest priority right now.

In addition, and this is highly technical, but we have given up on trying to plan for the entirety of next year. We are very strong advocates of long-term planning. We insist when we work on a strategic plan that a 5-year artistic plan is built because it is not possible to fundraise for programming unless you have the time to develop new relationships around new ideas. If you're constantly planning on an 11 or 12 month cycle then you're not going to get anywhere because you're always talking about the next most urgent thing with the same people you talked about the next most urgent thing about last year. You haven't given yourself the time to dream, to air out and find new people. But right now, we are continuing to write quite a few strategic plans during this period of time. It's an incredibly exciting time to think long-term, but practically speaking we are budgeting on a quarterly basis. We are looking at go and no go dates for each quarter. What that means is if I'm thinking "I have a January 15th performance, I know that in order to get that performance where it needs to be, I will have to have a go or no go decision by November 15th." I find that those quarterly budgets with quarterly programming plans, with very clear trigger dates can produce a sense of ease on the staff side and can produce a sense of consensus between staff and board. It's a lot more

		<p>work. Nobody wants to do it. We're all swimming in scenarios. But that is the scenario in which we find ourselves - we have no choice. It's not uncommon to have 3 or 4 scenarios for every quarter between now and June 2021. It's remarkable how much work it is, but it's also critical.</p> <p>Before I move on, Phases 1 and 2; Triage and Calibration, we should expect to find ourselves going back and forth between those 2 phases for the next 3 or 4 months until things become clear. The bottom line is, until there's a vaccine, the large performing and visual arts institutions are not going to be able to convey confidence. I'm not an epidemiologist or a financial expert. I'm reading all the same information that you are, but I think that's basically what it's boiling down to. Or that herd immunity is achieved. Nobody wants to truly admit it, but the lingering fact is that until one of those two things is achieved, our business will not be back to usual. By the way, I think our smaller or mid-sized institutions - let's say under \$5Million, are almost functioning as Research and Development laboratories right now. When a big institution turns their light on, they start going through \$10K bills every hour after opening. It is harder to experiment with form. But our small-to-midsize organizations have some first-mover advantage and a little more flexibility to help show us the light and help show us how to work around some of the constraints that we are facing. I'm seeing some of the most important and exciting innovation coming from that part of our sector.</p>
00:33:56 – 00:35:15	Jini Stolk	<p>Brett - I'm wondering whether this is a good moment to bring Sandy and Michael in? What you've had to say is incredibly rich and incredibly indicative of what many of us have been observing in Canada. The challenges are huge. Could we bring Sandy in and then go back to the Recovery ideas that you have? I'm sure they are just as challenging and inspiring as what you have just said. So, can we have Sandy, as a major funder with a big focus on arts and cultural organizations, particularly performing arts organizations, what are you seeing and how are you seeing foundations, individuals and the world of philanthropy? What's the inside scoop?</p>
00:35:16 – 00:43:29	Sandy Houston	<p>The impact of that has been enormous uncertainty, impact on people and I think maybe more tellingly, a challenge of trying to determine the path forward, and I want to touch a little bit on this piece and then connect it to some broader trends that I think philanthropy more generally is looking at right now.</p> <p>One of the things that's emerged in a lot of the conversations I'm in around what emerges out of COVID is the tension between how quickly can we get back to the way things were before, versus how fundamentally do we have to re-imagine and re conceptualize the way forward. And there are many in the not for profit and philanthropic world who are deeply interested in the potential that this crisis represents for structural and systemic</p>

change, and view it as having brought into high relief a whole set of challenges which are now being illuminated in a way they weren't before, and presenting an opportunity for change. The cultural sector and the performing arts in particular are not immune from that I think, there are all sorts of questions that underlie, or issues that underlie cultural practices in Toronto, everything from precarity of employment to inequity to diversity and inclusion to larger societal issues which maybe deserve a larger role in the performing arts ecosystem than they have right now that can be part of the way forward. When I look at where a lot of the philanthropic energy I think is going, it's trying to think about how philanthropy addresses those larger conversations and what role they could play in enabling a robust examination of possibilities. And it seems to me that's something that arts and culture may want to connect with more robustly than perhaps they're doing now. Maybe it isn't appropriate for your arts organization and maybe that makes no sense, but I would suggest that some of those larger issues more explicitly brought into the arts conversation is the place where it might be possible to grow your constituency or grow your tent and ecosystem in a way that the circumstances pre-COVID may not have made so obvious.

I liked Brett's phrase about startling innovation, and plans about startling innovation and I think that one of the things that Boards and organizations may want to think about through this period, particularly in a period oddly enough, where so many things are quieted and slowed down, there is perhaps a greater opportunity for thinking, planning and imagining than there would be typically. What are the innovations that are going to carry the arts and culture sector forward robustly? Is it a distinct possibility that we are not actually going to come back to something that looked like what it was before entirely? That we will actually have to function in some way differently, that we may need to carry a different set of conversations and priorities than we did previously, and what might organizations need in order to enable them to meet those kind(s) of challenges in ways that they haven't been asked to before? So I think some of those things are interesting, I think there's a whole piece in the broader philanthropic world around innovation and innovation's connection to positive social change where the arts have an enormously important role to play, and where again it may be a possibility as arts organizations look forward to think about how they get more explicitly into those conversations.

I think one thing we'd say at Metcalfe, and we work in the environmental sector and we work in poverty reduction as well, is the arts are incredibly innovative and resilient and extraordinarily good at managing and creating and thriving in adverse circumstances but curiously there's a lot of larger tables that grapple with the larger issues that are typically set in any sort of societal roundtable, or for whatever reasons art organizations are not there. They are often not seen as being fit... they are just forgotten in the larger conversation about

		<p>social finance or social innovation where a lot of energy is being devoted to this reinvention conversation, the arts organizations tend to be overlooked (a bit) and I think that coming out of this, if we're going to be in a time where a lot of new things are going to be in play and everyone's going to be asked to work differently and we're all going to be needing a new set of tools, crucially important that arts and culture be at those tables, be in those conversations, be invited into the room where they have an enormous amount to contribute. And it is something that strikes us at Metcalf where we've looked across the sector and are struck again and again at the places where the arts are thriving and leading the way and then at other places where they seem to have been forgotten. So, Michael Trent who actually runs our performing arts program is here with us today and I think it would be great to have his perspective on some of these things quickly as well recognizing that Jini's tight on time so over to you Michael.</p>
00:43:30 – 00:45:22	Michael Trent	<p>Thank you Sandy and I'll just say a couple of things that are coming to mind as I'm listening to both Brett and Sandy speak about their respective work. Some of the things that Brett said to me which really resonated was around this notion of storytelling in ways of building relationships with folks, and this notion of showing and not telling. I think you gave a beautiful example of not just saying we need the money but here's why we need the money, here's the thing that we do that [follows?] our mission, that heightens it, that raises it up. And I think the power of that storytelling is really what's going to keep those close relationships, what you call "Brett family" really close at hand. In one of the programs that we did, part of our multi-year strategic funding programs was called Creative Strategies Incubator and it was a focus issue designed program and one of them was on building audiences and developing communities. One of the outcomes of the work that this cohort did was this notion of looking at reach and depth as a kind of a dual matrix to sort of understand how to build those things and one of the conclusions that they came up with and I think this is reflected in what Brett is saying is that you need first of all to go in to depth, and from depth, broad reach will occur.</p> <p>Because you build those very close allies who are able to be your, to quote Jini, be the champions at your service. And so this resonated a lot for me in terms of that. I think Sandy's notion around what we could do in Arts and Culture around that systemic piece, is usually important, it's an exciting space for arts and culture, and I think that Boards could really bring that set of knowledge and that set of expertise to the table in really interesting ways, and it's something that I hope we see more of and we hear more of and really start to engender that conversation in a much more proactive way.</p>
00:45:23 – 00:45 35	Jini Stolk	<p>Thanks so much Michael and thank you everybody. Jaclyn, I seem to completely have no timepiece here at all so I have no idea what time it is and no idea how much time we have left.</p>

00:45:36 – 00:45:40	Jaclyn Rodrigues	We have about twelve minutes left and we have one question so far.
00:45:41 – 00:47:09	Jini Stolk	One thing I just want to throw in the mix because what I've heard from everybody today has been so interesting and so true, and you are breaking my heart Sandy because the reason I stayed actively involved in the Ontario Nonprofit network for a good eight years was just to be sure that the arts were at the center of all these conversations and maybe I'll have to join the Board again. The one thing I just want to lay out there without asking for questions or necessarily new comments is: What does all of this mean for the role of the Board? What does it mean around governance and what does it mean around the kinds of Boards that we have and the work they do and how they think about their work and their real responsibilities, not just to the organizations, certainly there but also to the community and the world at large, and how does that change habit, practice and action and choices. I will say that but perhaps there would be a couple of questions that Jaclyn can highlight that might have something to do with that and get some further thoughts?
00:47:10 – 00:47:30	Jaclyn Rodrigues	[False start] There is one question right now, the question is: What is the intersection of the pandemic issues and the tension related to diversity right now? What challenges or opportunities may exist that can be related to that confluence of events?
00:47:31 – 00:47:38	Jini Stolk	Indeed.... I think I'll call on Sandy to speak to that one.
00:47:39 – 00:49:49	Sandy Houston	<p>It's a very timely question. I mean, it could be answered many different ways, and I am no expert on this at all. I think what many people are realizing is that there's a lot more work to be done in this space, than what's ??? in the conversation for [some time now??] I think one of the ways that some people are trying to respond to that is to think about where equity led and equity focused groups are in front of the system, in terms of their access to resources, in terms of how funding systems work is one way to think about it, I think it goes to what do our boards look like, what does our leadership look like, what is the behaviour of funders in this space. There's certainly a view in some circles, many circles, that much more work needs to be done on responding to those challenges in a more enlightening and constructive way.</p> <p>There's certainly been a profound shift in attention and rhetoric recently and I think a lot of people in those communities are waiting to see what actions, funds and changes, follow up behind that and I think a lot of people of good will are trying to figure out how they and their organizations do things differently to respond to what's been identified, that would certainly be of Metcalf where we are certainly going to try to do more and better in the space. One thing we have done just as our organization is a small illustration of this, we are creating a new funding stream within our Covid related arts funding bucket which was created this year which is explicitly aimed at equity led and equity</p>

		<p>focused performing arts organizations in recognition of the fact that those organizations probably have not received the same degree of benefit and support from Metcalf and a lot of other arts organizations historically than circumstances warrant, that readjustment needs to happen and we're studying to make those readjustments right now. Your question is much larger than that and I think lots of people are working their way through it.</p>
<p>00:49:50 – 00:50:08</p>	<p>Jini Stolk</p>	<p>Brett, can I ask you if you could make a connection between what Sandy just said and with the role of Boards and future of Board activities and Board thinking about their responsibilities?</p>
<p>00:50:09 – 00:54:42</p>	<p>Brett Egan</p>	<p>I think that the role of the Board remains primarily to function as an ambassador for the mission of the organization, I use the word ambassador Very specifically. The role of the Board can be thought of as either internally focused or externally focused. Many Boards are too internally focussed in my view. We spend a lot of time meeting together, talking with each other, looking at pieces of paper, I'm not saying due diligence is not important. Right now however the critical role of the Board is to build the family of the organization which requires organization external to the internal affairs of the organization. I'd like to think that Board members over the course of the next year that would pick a project, pick one specific thing that the organization is doing, learn about it, go deep in it, be mindful of the fact that staff is usually the one who needs to design and execute the project and to know for very specific ways, and listen to the ways in which staff are saying look, we need partners, we need connections to community we need yes money, but we are going to provide you with some additional tools to be able to bring that in. But pick something concrete that builds a bridge between the organization and the outside world and do one big thing rather than 100 smaller things I think that's a really important pivot that Boards need to be considering as we move forward into this expectant climate where money is going to be tougher very likely than it has been in a generation to come by. And in terms of justice and in terms of equity, in such a critical conversation I see two opportunities.</p> <p>One is sadly, we've lost workforce in arts and culture and I think our situation in the States might be a bit better or a bit worse than it is in Canada I don't know, I imagine, we're pretty much in the same place. People have lost jobs, so when were thinking about rehiring and that moment will come, how can we be thinking about that through a lens that is more equitable, and how can we be thinking about the connections that we have right now and the connections that we might need in 3, 6 ,9, 12 months in order to be recruiting from different pools of individuals. That is a role that Board members could be thinking seriously about. And the last thing I would say is, and I think about comments from a few minutes ago, about actions following words are very important. I think everybody with a conscience is understandably enraged right now. Specifically,</p>

		<p>about what has been happening in the States, but I know it's not limited here, I understand in Canada you're working through many similar issues. But here it's just an unending nightmare and I say that from a position of privilege and knowing that I do not know the half of it, or the tenth of it. But it is a nightmare for the country. And in our part of the world, our sector, I think the point made earlier about arts and craft, about arts not being at the table, I think that's fallen to us in many cases because we have not taken pains to explain exactly how we could be necessary in the fight toward increased justice. And I have on the third bullet point here necessary and extraordinary, one path in coming back into this world is to be a necessary organization that builds systemic, not just surface level, systemic responses to issues of equity in our community.</p> <p>For instance, look at Philadelphia Mural Arts Organization. Philadelphia Mural Arts Organization has a restorative justice program that works with young people that are coming out of the justice system - gives them a job, fixing walls, putting scaffolding up, then being involved in a discursive process of creating a mural that is a pipeline to employment in itself. A systemic response is necessary, a systemic response is possible, I think as we are rethinking our value proposition moving forward looking for ways that we are organizations and then together as an aggregate, our sector can be an important and systemic response to the inequities that our communities are facing. And I think Board members can be helpful in thinking about the architecture of that. And be helpful in encouraging not just a superficial response but an actual how will a multi-year program make a significant difference in some of the things that we all care about.</p>
00:54:43 – 00:55:59	Jini Stolk	<p>Thank you and one of the things that I've been thinking about because I have been reading the occasional common about the arts has not been as essential as other issues in society right now, I understand where that comes from, but I would like to point out that every single one of us in each of our countries is spending all of their spare time watching videos of Performances, listening to music, downloading films, participating in Stratford's Shakespeare live public gatherings and private gatherings. So in a way, there's every opportunity to speak up that we are in actual fact entirely essential, and are in continuation and thriving in our community and the artists speak from our stages that it's totally essential to the recovery and to the world.</p> <p>Jaclyn, are there any other questions that we can get to in the time that we have left?</p>
00:56:00 – 00:56:15	Jaclyn Rodrigues	<p>There's one more question I think we could try and hit in the minute we have left here. I don't know if this question is exactly for you Sandy but you were talking about artists getting to the tables - those discussions and the question is how can Artists get to these tables?</p>

00:56:16 – 00:57:13	Sandy Houston	I'm not sure that I have a precise formula. I think the point I was trying to make is that when those large sorts of tables are set to address the larger structural social issues the fact that the arts are not automatically there speaks to something that we need to address. And they should be and they must be and the fact that they aren't means somehow there's a perspective around relevance or contribution or something else which is precluding that despite the efforts of Jini and many others to try and push against that we do continue to see that and I think as I said coming out of this is really going to be terribly important that we see that we change that and ensure that the relevance and contribution and insights and all the extraordinary things the arts can bring to all of these issues is front and centre.
00:57:14 – 00:57:31	Jini Stolk	Yes, there's a blind spot that we need to address, and break through, although...to me it seems obvious but that's just me. Is there anything else, Michael did you have one final thought? Brett did you have something that you wanted to leave us with?
00:57:32 – 00:59:32	Brett Egan	[Michael passes question to Brett] I would just respond to that last question briefly because I think it's a critical one. I think it starts with listening and stopping talking so much. I think that in the arts - and I say this with a heart full of love for our sector, I've given my entire career to it. We have a tendency to become quite intoxicated with our own ideas, about the future of our sector of the form of the world and when it comes to being at the table, it's not what it's about. I know when it comes to being on the table is not what it's about When it comes to being at the table where social services where education is where sports is where infrastructure is the job there is to solve a problem the job there is to be a problem-solving partner to a city or to a network or to solve a systemic challenge and there we will use the tools that we have which I think we are better equipped may be than anybody we are creative we don't take anything for granted we question everything we think around every angle we are problem solvers de facto that's what we do artist do that as a way of being but we have to find a way to stitch together that instinct with a specific issue or challenge that the person with the money is asking to have solved and that's not what I'm seeing that the entirety of creative practice needs to be but when we're talking at the table with other sectors our job is to listen and solve a problem with our craft and I think if we can make that strategic pivot get out there and have conversations with city Council people and with people who are running big departments inside of our city and saying what are the three issues that seem intractable why don't we get together a focus group of artists and put together workshops two weeks and let's come up with a solution to that see if you want to fund it that type of more customer centric approach I think I am really sounding like I'm from the states I apologize but I think that that's what this is about when we're saying being at the table we have to be geared towards solving a problem
00:59:33 – 01:01:10	Jini Stolk	So much to discuss so many absolutely important things to talk

	<p>about today, I am thrilled and I thank you all everybody who spoke today everybody who tuned in to listen and participate and to allow the ideas we bring to the table to tumble around in their brains and help them come up with new insights and new ideas about how to be a board member and what their role is and what the role of the arts is, a very rich conversation I'm very grateful to everybody. Jaclyn is there anything else that I'm forgetting in terms of final comments? I think we're going to put together I think we're going to make an attempt to have one more webinar before we all go to our respective cottages for the summer or backyards, which will be around our human resources because it's so much not just about money it's about people and we're thinking that one through right now and will let you all know when we've got that one pulled together but until that time, thank you everybody and it's been an incredible delight to be on this call with you all.</p>
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