

Topic	Status of Small Venues in Vancouver During COVID-19 and Beyond		
Date	May 6, 2020	Location	Vancouver, BC
Host(s)	Brent Constantine, General Manager, Little Mountain Gallery		
Participants	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brent Constantine General Manager, Little Mountain Gallery 2. Abdul Aziz - Operations Exec, Little Mountain Gallery 3. Zandi Dandizette - James Black Gallery 4. David Duprey - 45 west, betamax, omaha, godzilla, shady acres 5. Sheena Botelho - SLICE OF LIFE 6. Colin Cowan - China Cloud 7. Mark Sutherland - what lab <p>Additional Participation through email during meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Patrick Christie - SPACE 9. Jude Kusnierz - The Beaumont Studios Artist Society 		
Notetaker(s)	Brent Constantine		
Facilitator(s)	Brent Constantine		
Invitation	<p>This is an opportunity for Vancouver’s independent arts and culture spaces to compare situations during COVID-19 (as well as before and after the pandemic).</p> <p>Hopefully this meeting will be able to offer a wider perspective of our community - who is in crisis, who has had success with moving to a digital format, what resources have some of us found that might be helpful to others, etc.</p>		
Perspectives and thoughts	<p>Meeting was largely gauging current situations with a bit of additional discussion on broad arts support topics. Separated by speaker and space details:</p> <p>Zandi Dandizette - James Black Gallery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Was just about to pay a new staff member before this hit <p>Beaumont</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Our tenancy is at 80-85% and dropping each month about 10-15% ● Our venue is closed and represents over 50 of our revenue ● We have laid off 3 full time staff and 10 part time ● Our landlord has agreed to the 50/25/25 [BC Government: rent relief for small business, The loans will be forgiven if the landlord reduces the tenant’s monthly rent by at least 75%. The commercial tenant would be responsible for 		

covering 25%, the property owner 25%, while the federal and provincial governments share the remaining 50%]

Patrick - Signal

- Our revenue is driven entirely from memberships
- As a result we have been able to stay relatively stable during this.
- Before the virus our space had 30 members and we were in the process of leasing 3000sq ft to add another 50.

Brent - LMG

- Little Mountain Gallery has existed as an arts space for around 15 years
- Since I came on board about four years ago we've done all comedy programming as a not-for-profit
- Up until COVID we were running 9-10 shows a week, along with classes during the days and weekends, in our community space which is under 2000 sq feet
- We were operating at our maximum capacity with the space we had
- We don't receive any operating or programming grants
- We're volunteer managed
- Before COVID we had a development application approved with conditions by our landlord which sped up our potential need to find a new home
- Right now we're not running anything in the space. The building is sitting empty while we pay rent.
- Our rentals represent 100% of our income.
- We're hopeful that our landlord will agree to the rent subsidy program through the federal government, but, if not, we'll likely need to shut down and move our equipment into storage.

Sheena

- 60 person capacity - retail shop is open 6 days a week
- decrease in art sales - 50% of income
- Have pretty good relationship with landlord
- Took over secondary building next door as event primary building - all of that has ended with COVID
- Landlords knew were going to forfeit the lease so they dropped rent to operating costs
- But still charging full rent for main building
- Slice operates 5000 sq ft rental space - studio spaces - are keeping that rental income
- Landlord wouldn't qualify for rental subsidy - they don't have the mortgage on the building - so can't access that grant
- Have started making changes as a result of COVID

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Slice has switched to online programming, webshop, life drawing ○ converted 3rd floor gallery spaces into rental studio spaces to make money ○ building next door we've already started slashing rents on the space next door to make money ○ spending a lot of time getting livestreaming going and making money there ○ seen success with raffle tickets on online events ● As long as we don't have renters jumping ship we can maintain this indefinitely
	<p>David</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5 different art spaces - 45 west, betamax, omaha, godzilla, shady acres - all 10,000 sq feet ● Is a space operator - gets long term leases and subdivides into artist studios ● Here representing artists in his buildings ● My buildings don't qualify for rent subsidies, you have to be shuttered or 75% revenue loss and mortgage - hoping that they change the regulations on that ● Had a lot of tenants upset at the onset - 6 people leave in the first week ● Now deferring some rent and encouraging people to stick it out ● Own The Emerald Supper Club as well and directly affected as a live venue ● They are talking about opening things up again, I expect my restaurants to be open again by the end of the month
	<p>Mark</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What lab incorporated as a NFP in 2018 ● Looked into some of the micro grants that are being offered right now as relief for artists - creative BC
	<p>Colin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Just trying to survive ● Landlord is waiving some of rent, because he knows we only have the studio rent - we're just getting by - will pay back later on ● Everyone is still working out of china cloud - record label and a few music studio and printing press studios ● Everyone's just trying to survive and get through projects ● All of our events aren't happening (4-5 a month usually with special cases like jazz fest had many bookings at the china cloud, had all cancelled) ● Everyone is being smart and positive ● Trying to sell merch online

	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What does opening look like again? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ if we could do 10-15 people gathering opening up again it would be a great start/help ● Talking about legality of spaces and asking permission vs asking forgiveness ● The City doesn't want to see these spaces shut down but expectations for upgrades for liquor license for 50 person space unrealistic ● Has the culture at the City changed? ● What are the obstacles for making it easier for spaces to open and operate above board ● David questioned if going through the City processes was worth is at all - has always operated spaces outside city regulations for over a decade with no repercussions ● City admin in culture department maybe more in tune with helping spaces thrive
<p>What research would be useful?</p>	<p>General research into the operational situation of venues and arts spaces in Vancouver - large disconnect between what the city says is the "proper" way to do things and what people are actually doing. This seems to be an administrative issue for the CoV to look at.</p> <p>How can the city make it easier for arts venues/spaces to operate and open? There's a gap that's not being met.</p>
<p>Whose voices are missing around the table?</p>	<p>Had several cancellations/unavailable to meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Red Gate - Black Lab - Toast Collective - BC Alliance for Arts + Culture - City of Vancouver - Rio Theatre
<p>Resources & Links (mentioned during discussion or shared afterwards)</p>	<p>David shared details about the Vancouver Art House Society's initiative to create a Vancouver Art Space Collective which is currently gathering details from a survey, found here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Vancouver-Studio-Collective</p> <p>Later, Zandi Dandizette from the James Black Gallery shared a link with to a "letter from grassroots arts initiatives struggling amid the COVID-19 pandemic" which can be found at the link below: https://www.carfaontario.ca/Support-for-grassroots-arts-initiatives</p>

	<p>Sheena offered help for anyone looking to move to an online business model through merch sales as she's recently set this up.</p>
<p>What next steps were mentioned as a result of the Gathering?</p>	<p>Continue to update on how things are going as all of this develops.</p> <p>Eventually have some sort of shared database of resources and contacts as, like we discussed earlier, we are all dealing with a lot of the same people from the city and other agencies.</p> <p>Independent network of venues/art spaces continues to develop to provide unified voice to city/province/etc</p> <p>What is the procedure for reopening spaces during COVID? How will capacity be calculated for small venues and art spaces?</p>