

**INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF THEATRICAL STAGE EMPLOYEES, MOVING PICTURE TECHNICIANS,  
ARTISTS AND ALLIED CRAFTS OF THE UNITED STATES, ITS TERRITORIES AND CANADA**

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November 9, 2012

Executive Committee Secretariat  
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**Re: Executive Committee Item EX24.8: Future of the Three Major Civic Theatres  
Directions Resulting from REOI No. 9101-12-7008**

I am writing both as a concerned citizen and as an International Vice President of the IATSE. We represent over 16,000 workers in the cultural and entertainment industry across Canada, and over 4,000 of these workers are residents of Toronto and the GTA. I would like to express my concern with regard to the Report on the Future of the Three Major Civic Theatres; specifically, the results of the Report as they relate to the Sony Centre for the Performing Arts.

The Report has concluded that the Sony Centre should be divested by the City. This conclusion does not take into account the fact that the Sony Centre is a major cultural contributor to the City of Toronto - a city that prides itself on its reputation of being one of the most culturally diverse in the world. The Sony Centre is the only venue in Toronto that offers this type of diversity to the hundreds of thousands of Toronto residents who came from elsewhere but now call Toronto home.

I would hope that the City will continue to provide funding to the Sony Centre. I do recognize, however, that these are tough economic times and hard decisions must be made. If the Executive Committee determines that the Sony Centre is to be sold, I would urge you to stipulate that the venue must continue to operate as a theatre. Ideally, the venue would continue as a theatre with a focus on diverse cultural productions, but a theatre at the very least.

Many of the workers I represent are or have been employed at the Sony Centre, some on a full-time basis and others catching calls as each production cycles through the venue. If the Sony Centre ceased to be a theatre, it would mean a loss to Toronto's culture, but it would also mean a loss of jobs for working, tax-paying citizens; the kind of jobs that no city, particularly these days, can afford to lose.

In light of the above, I recommend that the Mayor and the Executive Committee hold on to this asset that is the Sony Centre. If the Committee feels this is not a viable option, I would urge them to eliminate the possibility of "adaptive reuse" as outlined in the Report, and require that the venue be maintained as a theatre and cultural event centre.

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Even from a strictly business perspective, this is the decision that makes sense. Not only do you save local jobs, but for example, when big business is considering re-location options, or local business is trying to recruit top global talent from around the world, the way any city sells itself to the outside world is by what it has to offer culturally - our entertainment, our culture, our sports, and our art. That's what makes Toronto an attractive option for business and top business talent. If we surrender that, what else sets Toronto apart?

Sincerely,

John Morgan Lewis  
Director of Canadian Affairs  
International Vice President

cc: Executive Committee Members  
Mayor Rob Ford (Chair)  
Councillor Paul Ainslie  
Councillor Michelle Berardinetti  
Councillor Mike Del Grande  
Councillor Doug Holyday  
Councillor Norman Kelly  
Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti  
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