



Sulyma Productions Inc.

6620 -124 Street
Edmonton, Alberta.
T6H 3V3, Canada

Telephone:
1.780.448.5979

E-mail:
mhs@sulyma.com
Website:
www.sulyma.com

November 12, 2012

Sent Via Email to: exc@toronto.ca

Executive Committee Secretariat
10th Floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

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

I am the producer for the 53 year old company, The Ukrainian Shumka Dancers of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada; resident dance company of the Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium. I have been pleased to present this world reknowned dance company in Toronto at the Sony Centre since 1982. This valuable cultural venue has most recently presented our shows (Cinderella and Shumka at 50) and was an anchor for Shumka performing shows in 14 cities in China and 11 other cities in Canada in their most recent tour of Shumka at 50, 2011/2012. Working with this wonderful group of culturally relevant professionals at the Sony Centre not only benefits Toronto, but all of Canada, bringing international attention to your great city. The significance of a venue as a gateway to culturally relevant works, the Sony Centre is without a doubt important to the Canadian and international cultural scene, especially now with their current presentation mandate and how it benefits all of our communities. Toronto needs to lead in this most necessary and important concern. I therefore am writing to express concern regarding the Report on the Future of the Three Major Civic Theatres and I wish to address specifically the results of the Report as it relates to the Sony Centre for the Performing Arts.

The Report's conclusion that the Sony Centre should be divested by the City fails to acknowledge the significant contribution that the Sony Centre makes to the fabric of Toronto. Not only is it a historic venue but, most importantly, it is the only venue that programmes artistic performances from around the world to honour the thousands of people from multiple cultures that have come to call Toronto their home. We are a global City and the Sony Centre is the epitome of our motto Diversity Our Strength.

The City should continue to fund the Centre's great work. If however the City decides that, despite the good work the Centre does, it should not receive taxpayer dollars, at the very least, any divestment to a third party should require that the venue continue to be run not only as a theatre but a theatre whose primary mandate is the presentation of multicultural programming. The Report's reference to divest the theatre for some sort of "adaptive reuse" would run the risk of losing the one venue in the City that unites and celebrates all of our cultures on a grand scale. It would be disgraceful for our City, which prides itself on being the most multicultural city in the world, to even be seen as considering this as a viable option.

I urge the Executive Committee to:

1. reject the Report's recommendation to divest the Sony Centre or at the very least
2. amend the Report to:
 - a. eliminate the possibility of "adaptive reuse"
 - b. require that the theatre be maintained as such and
 - c. require that any divestiture be made only to a third party who would commit to continue the Centre's multicultural programming mandate that has come to perfectly exemplify the very essence of what makes Toronto so unique throughout the world.

Sincerely,

~~Michael~~ H. Sulyma, B.Com.
President
Sulyma Productions Inc.

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
Councillor Peter Milczyn
Councillor Denzil Minnan-Wong
Councillor Cesar Palacio
Councillor Jaye Robinson
Councillor David Shiner
Councillor Michael Thompson