



March 16, 2020

The Honorable Arnie Roblan
The Honorable Paul Holvey
The Joint Special Committee on Coronavirus Response
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs Roblan and Holvey and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for your leadership in response to the outbreak of COVID-19. On Friday, March 13, 2020, the Portland Art Museum and Northwest Film Center (NWFC) made the decision to close to the public and cancel all community programs and events through at least March 31. The purpose of this email is to request emergency assistance from the state or federal government to ensure that we can emerge from this crisis.

The Museum and NWFC estimate a fiscal loss in excess of \$1 million per month by forgoing revenues from admissions and ticketing, rental spaces, cafe, and store. In other words, closing means we forgo at least 5% of our annual \$18 million budget each month. We are aware of the hardship that our community faces at this time. We also know that this extraordinary situation hits at a time when arts institutions, artists and freelancers are already financially vulnerable.

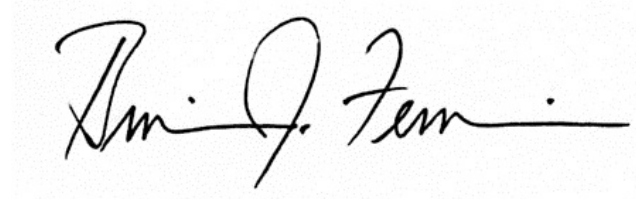
We are unable to sustain a \$1 million loss for long - it will have reverberating consequences for arts and culture in Oregon. The Museum is a critical safeguard in an eroding arts landscape, and our value is reflected in the collection, the 450,000 annual visitors, and the dozens of schools and arts organizations that depend on us for inspiration, curriculum, and partnership. As other institutions have shuttered, including the Marylhurst University Art Gym and the Oregon College of Art and Craft, the Museum has stepped up to absorb and integrate their archives and programs into our work. We will continue to be a key economic driver for decades into the future, but now we are asking you to help us manage through this difficult time.

The Portland Art Museum and NWFC respectfully request at least \$800,000 in initial emergency Funding from the state, which is equivalent to the Museum's monthly payroll. The Museum and NWFC currently

employ 257 people, and we are committed to paying their salaries through March and would like to prevent future furloughs. The Museum also supports the Cultural Advocacy Coalition's efforts to support the cultural ecosystem, including Portland's five anchor institutions. We are also pursuing the other limited emergency funding opportunities available for cultural organizations, and would appreciate consideration of future requests for government support in excess of this amount after we can assess the real impact.

Co-Chairs Roblan and Holvey and Members of the Committee, I appreciate your consideration of this urgent request. I know this is just one of many you are receiving. Oregonians are strong and we will get through this crisis. When we do, we will want to have protected our artistic heritage and spirit. As a steward of our shared humanity, our Museum and Film Center will play an essential role in our community's healing and restoration. Thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brian J. Ferriso". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Brian Ferriso
Executive Director and Chief Curator