



INDIA SCHOOL OF DANCE, MUSIC AND THEATRE INC. EXPLORES THE THIRD SECTOR

Based on a Survey of Individuals, Small,
Medium Sized Players and Ethno-Cultural
Performing Arts Organizations

COMMISSIONED BY THE MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE OF INDIA SCHOOL

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PERFORMING ARTS INDUSTRY. AN INITIATIVE IN THE COVID ERA.

August 2020

COVID. Community of **V**olunteers, **I**nnovators and **D**oers, was an idea inspired by Manitoba women to connect problem solvers over six continents, to turn adversity into opportunity in facing the pandemic. Thus the project Square Metre for Peace was born, to erase borders and bridge distances by sharing stories and experiences. The group aims to improve the quality of life by sharing solutions and facilitating knowledge transfers through new templates created or pre-covid existing models that work.

Two members of the group, Rita Chahal and Tatjana Brkic studied the existing landscape and brought the urgency for a Needs Assessment project to the Executive Director of the India School. A credible organization with a track record of over forty years was well positioned to take the leadership role, but it was the enthusiasm and willingness to take the risk that made this relationship formidable.

The decision to formalize initial findings, find out where the gaps are that need to be filled was discussed, and the initiative to finding coping strategies on the horizon was left to the consultants and the Executive Director.

The India School took on the task of spearheading the movement to ensure the collective voice of the Arts community is included in the planning to build a consensus in the realm of the arts. The story of Cinderella made sense to us. We need mentors and magic that will tap and transform resources like a Fairy Godmother, who symbolizes a beacon of hope. She does not appear until Cinderella was at her lowest and weakest point. May be this is the time, when governments, business and philanthropists realize that the third sector cannot be neglected any longer.

This project is a plea to see the immense value of the arts and how they impact body, mind and spirit. The cover page design by Elijah Robert features our 2020 grads in a strong column with a wand in their hands on the verge of releasing the shakti or inner energy in every human being, a wake up call "not to be weary of doing good."

OM SHALOM SHANTI. PEACE!



Performing Arts Industry Survey - Methodology

- ▶ The research has been performed on a sample of 17 small performing arts organizations, 6 in main stream dance programming and 11 ethno-cultural organizations
- ▶ Performing arts industry in general has been struggling with operational costs and services provision in spite of proactive initiatives to support each other
- ▶ There is a significant effort to exchange knowledge and resources within the sector. However strategies are focused on survival rather than innovation or strategic planning.
- ▶ Ethno-cultural organizations lack resources and skills to develop creative solutions that would ensure their longevity. They appear more vulnerable than the rest of performing arts sector.
- ▶ There is a danger that we may lose our rich cultural heritage and unique artistic expression

Key findings

- ▶ 50% of small performing arts industry players report significantly reduced operations and limited ability to cover even fixed expenses. Further 30% are closed and using reserves
- ▶ 80% of the industry players have maintained focus on teaching and performing. Only 11% have adopted to offer online services. Slow adoption of online services reflects lack of skills and resources
- ▶ Main challenges remain lack of financial resources, adopting services for online delivery and reaching clients online
- ▶ Industry is roughly divided by half in terms of innovation. One group is seeking ways to adopt facilities to deliver traditional services within constraints and other group is looking for funding and resources to develop innovative delivery methods or services all together
- ▶ Performing arts organizations are considering a variety of innovative approaches with strong emphasis on developing collaborative services offerings with other industry players
- ▶ 50% of the industry serves children below 18 and other half focuses on all ages
- ▶ Compared to traditional players ethno-cultural organizations have broader market reach including national and global markets, which represents an opportunity for world wide networking

Key findings cont.

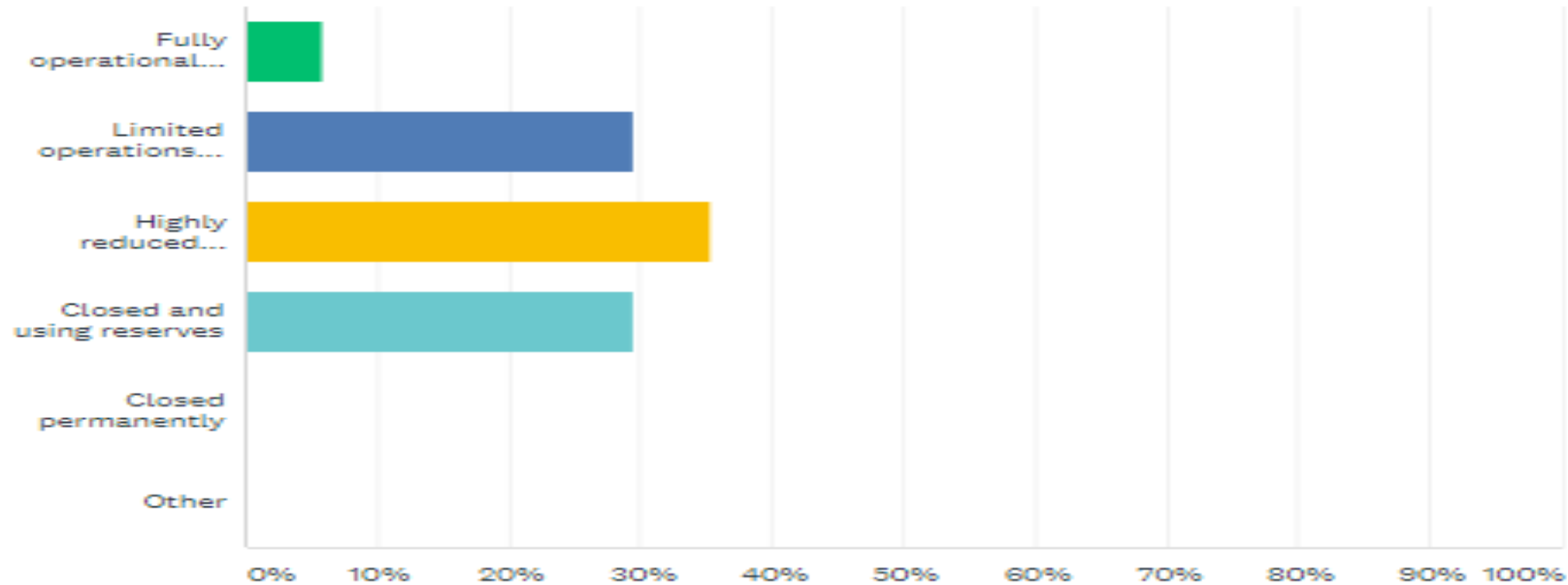
- ▶ Artists and performing arts organizations were the first ones to close due to health directives, and because of the nature of the interactions will be the last to open per dictates of physical and social distancing.
- ▶ Most significant revenue streams in the industry represent income from teaching, performing and ticket sales,
- ▶ There is a lack of resources -- both financial and human
- ▶ Collaboration and quest for additional funding have been identified as essential for survival
- ▶ Most of the industry players are reactive and measured in their responses

Survey Results



Please describe your current situation

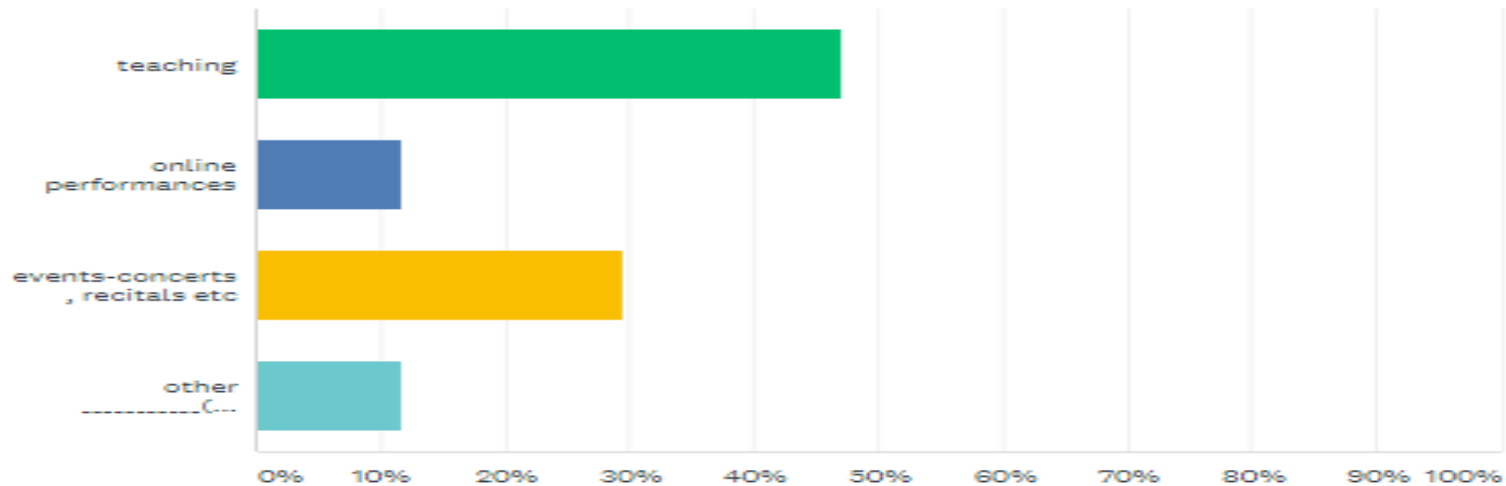
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Fully operational online with a healthy revenue stream	5.88% 1
Limited operations online and breaking even	29.41% 5
Highly reduced operations and able to cover some fixed expenses	35.29% 6
Closed and using reserves	29.41% 5
Closed permanently	0.00% 0
Other	0.00% 0

Please describe your current services

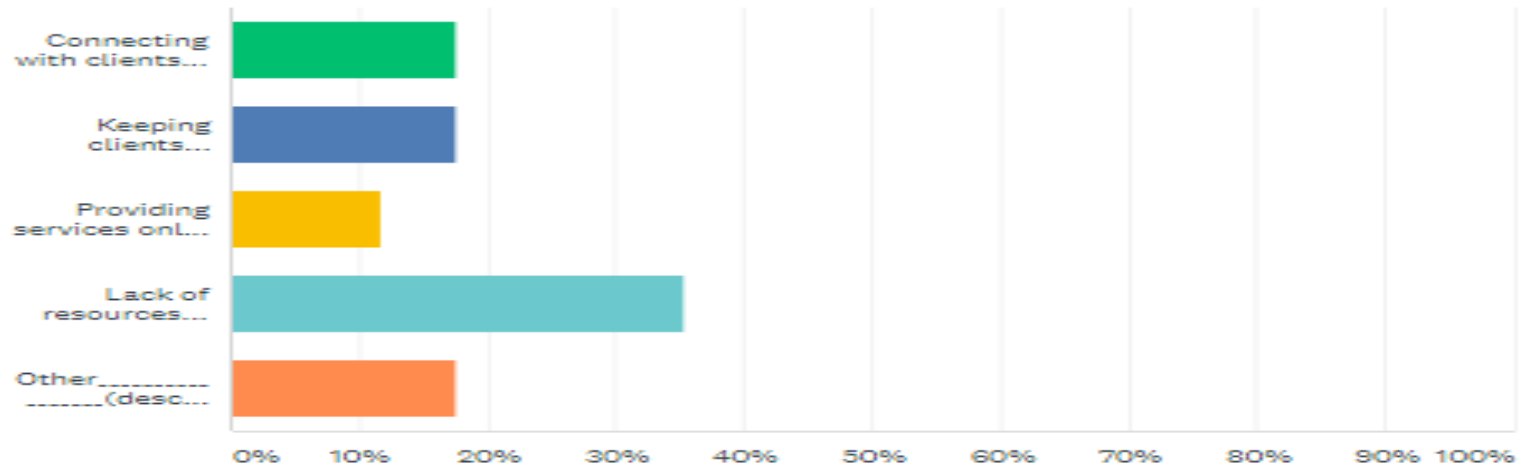
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
teaching	47.06%	8
online performances	11.76%	2
events-concerts, recitals etc	29.41%	5
other (describe)	11.76%	2
TOTAL		17

What are your main challenges?

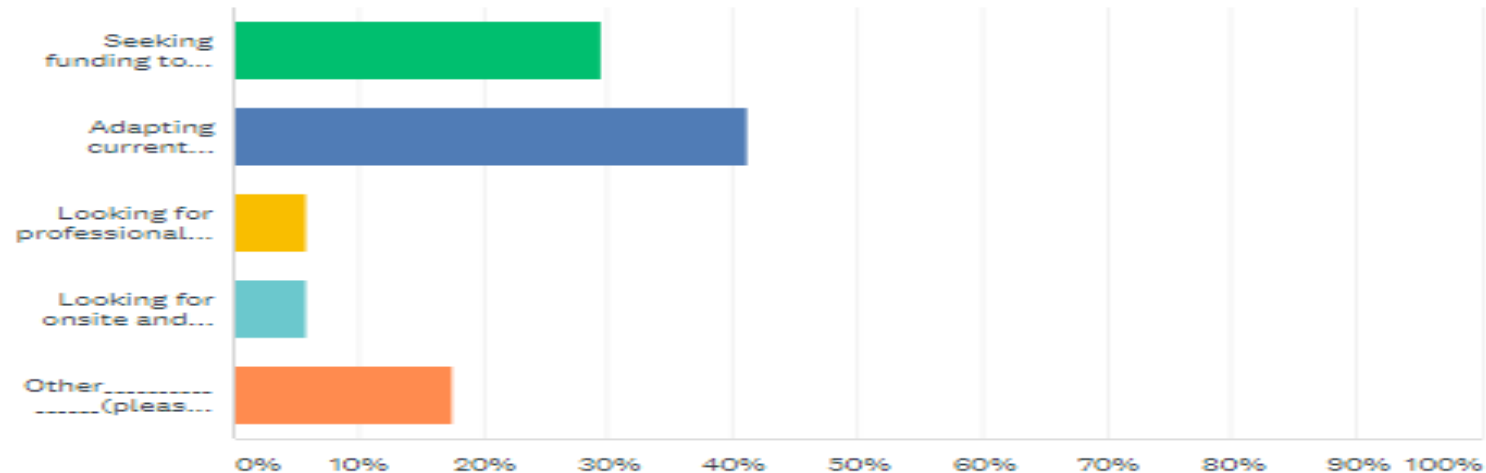
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Connecting with clients online -lack of various resources and infrastructure to connect	17.65%	3
Keeping clients interested in our services	17.65%	3
Providing services online – lack of front line staff/volunteers/administration	11.76%	2
Lack of resources (financial and human) and capacity to revise strategy to innovate and to adapt to COVID crisis	35.29%	6
Other.....(describe/list)	17.65%	3
TOTAL		17

Please describe innovative measures you are considering implementing and adapt to a prolonged crisis

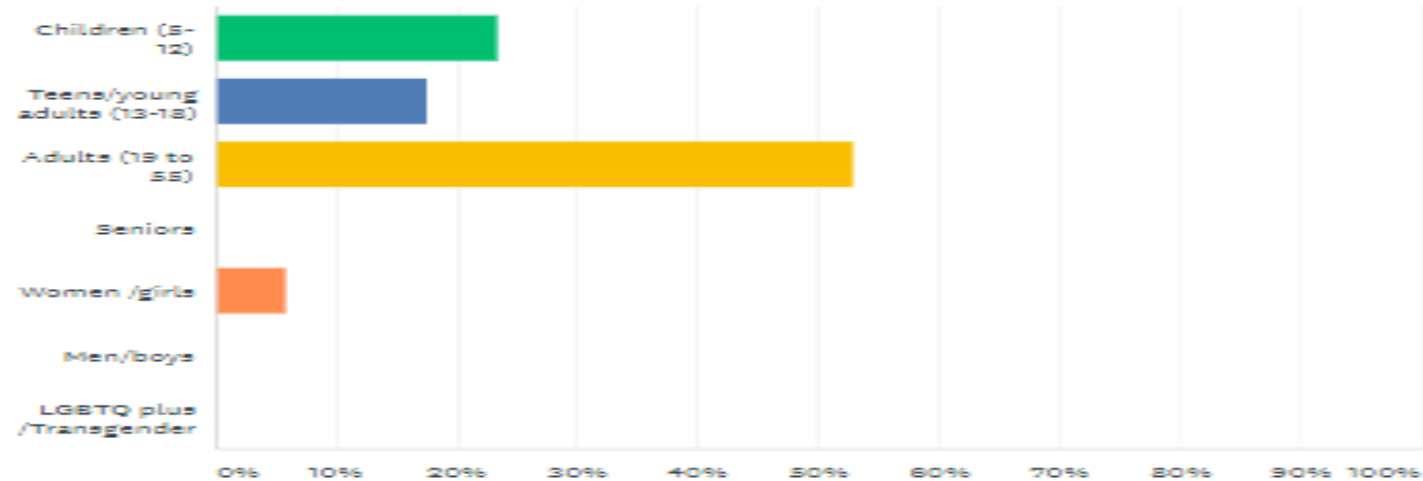
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Seeking funding to revise strategy – infrastructure, curriculum, staff, equipment etc	29.41%	5
Adapting current physical space to new health guidelines-eg PPE /signage	41.18%	7
Looking for professional expertise to assist with transition and reboot	5.88%	1
Looking for onsite and online volunteers	5.88%	1
Other.....(please describe)	17.65%	3
TOTAL		17

Please describe your current target markets/demographics

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Children (5- 12)	23.53%	4
Teens/young adults (13-18)	17.65%	3
Adults (19 to 55)	52.94%	9
Seniors	0.00%	0
Women /girls	5.88%	1
Men/boys	0.00%	0
LGBTQ plus /Transgender	0.00%	0
TOTAL		17

Suggestions for revised or modified strategy

- ▶ Some organisations added following ideas:
 - ▶ Sharing offices and studio space
 - ▶ Changing schedules to allow smaller groups of participants
 - ▶ Considering buffer zones of 15 minutes between classes for cleaning, sanitization, and escorting students to and from classes.
 - ▶ Seeking technical and financial support to transition to online delivery
 - ▶ Amalgamating needs, combining and working together to offer services under one umbrella
 - ▶ Using technology such as zoom to reach people in the community that would not be able to attend events, or holding special teaching or lectures

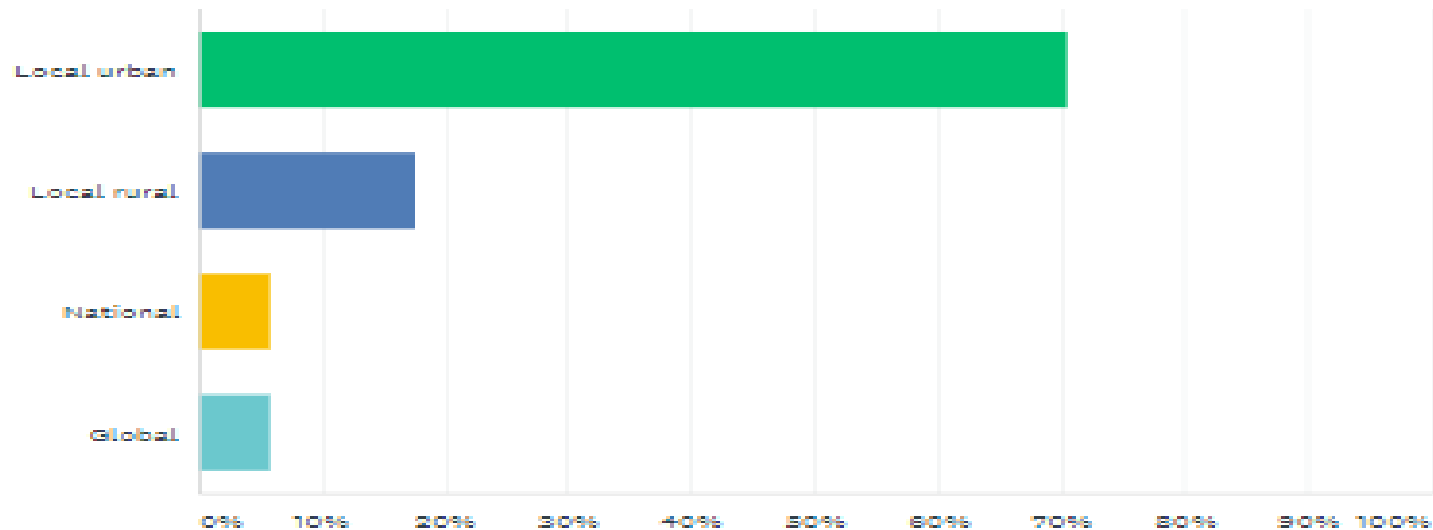
These measures may result in increased workload which would translate in an ask for extra assistance and fundraising.

Additional Concerns

- ▶ Seniors and other high risk categories may require special services
 - ▶ Since Seniors are confirmed as high risk and vulnerable, scheduling to avoid busy times
 - ▶ Increase in online and one to one activities may be helpful in overcoming this problem
 - ▶ Recreational stream may be introduced for high risk groups
 - ▶ Post Covid 19: there is a concern that people will not be able to pay to attend events
 - ▶ Not being able to have a recital at the concert hall was a huge financial loss

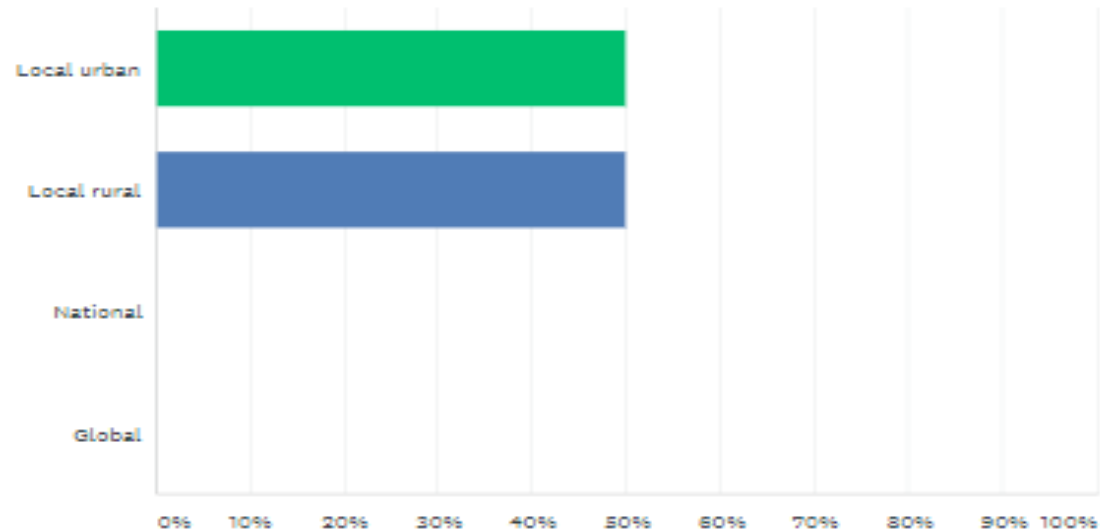
Geographic market characteristics of ethno-cultural organisations

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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Local urban	70.59%	12
Local rural	17.65%	3
National	5.88%	1
Global	5.88%	1
TOTAL		17

Geographic market characteristics of traditional players



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Local urban	50.00%	3
Local rural	50.00%	3
National	0.00%	0
Global	0.00%	0
TOTAL		6

Anecdotal evidence

- ▶ Small and medium run arts organizations (mainstream and ethno-cultural) are not receiving adequate support for their continuing operations. They have reported revenue losses ranging from 25% to 40% from fees and recitals that occur during the Spring and Summer months.
- ▶ Performing arts industry in general has been struggling with operational costs and services provision in spite of proactive initiatives to support each other
- ▶ Strategies are focused on survival rather than innovative strategic development
- ▶ Ethno-cultural organisations lack resources and skills to develop creative solutions that would ensure their longevity. They appear more vulnerable than the rest of performing arts sector.
- ▶ There is a danger that we may lose our rich cultural heritage and unique artistic expression

Field notes shared from India School of Dance, Music & Theatre

- ▶ India School has a membership of aspiring artists from the Indian diaspora.
- ▶ There are musicians and dancers from the Tamil Cultural Society of Manitoba, the Malayali Association, Sai Baba Temple, Hindu Society, Sikh Gurudwars, Punjab Association, Gujarati and Maharashtra region, Bengali Organizations, Pakistani Community, West Indian- Indo- Caribbean groups.
- ▶ Most have shelved their activities till the fall, except for online yoga classes.
- ▶ For the artists, technology has come to the rescue. The soul of the artist feels the human need to connect, but also welcomed the slow pace, for pure silence, for discernment in every day affairs. Creativity surfaced in various ways. The wonder of the human spirit- resilience, resolution, reimagining the future. It also exposed the frailties of the system, the open wound of racism.
- ▶ TEACHABLE MOMENTS. Echoes of lessons learned.
- ▶ Wisdom in strategic planning, and a realization that we need to rely on others to help and pull us through the pandemic. A movement from minding one's own business to caring about my neighbors and coworkers.
- ▶ As a changed society, we need to be proactive in looking after the weak and vulnerable.
- ▶ Stress, Anxiety, Fear hit and hurt all segments of our society. A wake up call to a generation, used to being entitled and unable to cope. A credit card society has led to over spending, and a stark realization that the pampering is gone, and every individual needs to build an emergency fund to span three months.
- ▶ Working from home and the ability to get the job done. Sharing space and tasks, has brought greater satisfaction and comfort. There is an unwillingness to trade the closeness of family, unscheduled breaks, casual clothes for large offices, fast transportation, and imposed deadlines.

Conclusion

- ▶ The Indigenous Artists and Organizations, have not been included in this analysis because of their special needs and separate funds made available
The major mainstream organizations and festivals have had their say and included in the Probe Research report.
- ▶ There is a strong desire to collaborate and combine resources and ideas
- ▶ India School is willing to take the risk by spearheading programs and projects that will benefit most arts groups. By articulating the needs and concerns of others, they have assumed a leadership role.
- ▶ We believe that Manitoba should take a global leadership in preserving ethno-cultural expression and maintaining the presence of performing arts industries to create a more resilient, more inclusive and supportive model
- ▶ Our preliminary results indicate the potential to develop truly unique, innovative and collaborative ways for sharing space, resources and personnel towards the arts flourishing in the province. Given the financial assistance necessary, we can navigate a path to a futuristic Canada, free of discrimination, sustained by the Arts.

Credits

Consultants

- ▶ Rita Chahal and Tatjana Brkic

Data Collection Credit

- ▶ Ms. Sofia Constantine
and Ms. Sharan Tappia

Anecdotal Evidence Credit

- ▶ Ms. Pamela Rebello, O.M. and
members of the India School of
Dance, Music and Theatre Inc.

Complete Survey Respondents

- ▶ India School of Dance, Music & Theatre
- ▶ Manohar Performing Arts of Canada
- ▶ Nepali Cultural Society of Manitoba
- ▶ African communities of Manitoba Inc
- ▶ Company Viva Brasil Canada Inc
- ▶ U Multicultural
- ▶ Asian Women of Winnipeg
- ▶ India Canada Cultural and Heritage Association
- ▶ Caribbean Canada Heart Health Education
- ▶ Canada Pakistan Trade and Cultural Association
- ▶ Drewitz Dance Productions
- ▶ Space Inc.
- ▶ Royal Dance Conservatory
- ▶ Aurora Dance Academy
- ▶ Evolution Dance Company
- ▶ Hyperformance Dance Productions