

Action taken by the GMMQ during the crisis

From the end of March (when our activities came to an abrupt halt) until now (as activities are gradually resuming), there have been positive developments on various fronts in which the GMMQ is actively involved.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

CERB: At first, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit of \$2000 per month did not allow claimants to earn any additional income. In mid-April, it was expanded to include individuals earning up to \$1,000 per month. Over the summer, we continued to advocate alongside other associations and unions to eliminate this income limit, which we felt was unfair and counterproductive. After the CERB was extended until September, the Prime Minister announced new legislation in late August to introduce the CRB (Canada Recovery Benefit), which will replace the CERB effective September 27. The CRB will provide \$500 per week for up to 26 weeks to workers who are self-employed or not eligible for employment insurance (EI), who still require income support and who are unable to work for reasons related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Note: for the new CRB, self-employed workers will be able to earn income while receiving the benefit. However, if their net annual income is over \$38,000, they will be asked to repay \$0.50 for each dollar of income above this threshold through their income tax return. The benefit is currently pending the passage of legislation in the House of Commons.

Recovery of the cultural sector: we have put forward several ideas to Canadian Heritage for a sustainable recovery and participated in a round table for the music sector on September 10:

- Extending the private copying regime to all digital platforms or implementing a rights regime to ensure that all performers receive royalties for the use of their work, regardless of the platform or streaming method, including making protected content available via web platforms.
- Subjecting foreign online music services to Canadian regulatory and tax obligations.
- Ensuring that online music services contribute to the cultural ecosystem.
- Ensuring that internet service providers pay royalties to rights holders of the music to which they provide access.
- Greater transparency and more equal access to federal funding for businesses and organizations.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Health measures for musicians: we continue to work with the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec, the public health authorities and the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité au travail (CNESST) for a gradual return to work.

The [CNESST guide](#) for the performing arts sector was recently updated:

- Artists may now be at least 1 metre from other people without a surgical mask or protective eyewear if they are working on a single number or show and form a stable team of less than 10 people.
- For a cumulative period not exceeding 15 minutes per day, these artists may be within one metre of each other without a surgical mask or protective eyewear.
- Each singer and wind musician must maintain a minimum distance of 2 metres from other people or be separated by a physical barrier (full partition). The other musicians must be seated 1.5 metres apart and remain 2 metres away from the conductor.

Health measures for performance venues: On August 3, the limit for indoor gatherings was increased from 50 to 250 people. Thanks to these changes, a number of concerts and shows have been scheduled. At the time of writing, the government of Quebec has announced a new closure of performance venues on October 1, for 28 days. We disagree with this measure. The public health authorities are tracking the spread of the virus closely and we are in constant contact with them. We will keep you informed on the latest developments.

Music education in schools: Since the early summer, we have been working closely with the FAMEQ, FHOSQ, Alliance Chorale, CQM, Arts en mouvement Québec, Jeunesses Musicales Canada and the Centre des Musiciens du Monde in light of serious concerns about the continuation of music education during the COVID-19 pandemic. After calling attention to the issue in a number of ways, including an open letter, we were able to meet with the Minister of Education's office to voice the community's concerns and offer potential solutions. It was subsequently announced that extracurricular activities (including music activities) would be allowed to resume on September 14 if there was no significant spike in the number of COVID-19 cases in the province. However, it remains unclear whether all educational institutions will still be offering music classes this year. There has also been some confusion about health regulations in the school system, which has complicated the resumption of classes. We asked the Ministère de l'Éducation for a Guide to Music Teaching, to clarify the guidelines.

MCCQ EMERGENCY FUND

In June, the Quebec government announced a \$2 million emergency fund to assist freelance performers who have been worst hit by the health crisis. It will be jointly managed by the GMMQ and the Union des artistes (UDA). The fund should be up and running soon and will be distributed via the Fondation des Artistes. We will let you know about the allocation criteria once we get the go-ahead from the Quebec government.

Luc Fortin, GMMQ President.

OVERVIEW: ACTION FROM MARCH 13 TO AUGUST 19, 2020

LOBBYING

Government meetings:

- 7 meetings with the federal government: 4 meetings with Minister of Canadian Heritage Steven Guilbeault or members of his office, 1 meeting with a member of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's office, 1 meeting with members of Minister of Finance Bill Morneau's office, and 1 meeting with Scott Brison, President of the Treasury Board. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the CERB and a social safety net for the cultural community.
- 1 invitation to address the Parliament of Canada via teleconference on April 3.
- 9 meetings with the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec (MCCQ), or with the MCCQ, public health authorities and CNESST.
- 1 meeting with Quebec Minister of Education Jean-François Roberge, in partnership with 4 other associations.
- 9 meetings with members of parliament and representatives from various federal and provincial parties.

Coalition meetings:

- 8 inter-union meetings (GMMQ, UDA, IATSE, AQTIS, DGC, ARRQ, SPACQ, ACTRA, SARTEC).
- 2 meetings with the RAM (Regroupement des Artisans de la Musique, with the UDA and SPACQ).
- 2 meetings with the Coalition for Culture and Media.
- Constant communication with our counterparts at the UDA, SODEC, FTQ, CALQ, AQPM, MCCQ performance venue committee, CQM, FAMEQ, CNESST, TRACE, FNCC-CSN, APASQ and AJIQ.
- Creation of a coalition to advocate for music education in secondary schools: FAMEQ, FHOSQ, Alliance Chorale, CQM, Arts en mouvement Québec, Centre des musiciens du monde and JM Canada: 8 meetings.

Invitations to various round tables:

- Orchestras Canada and Quebec
- La Vitrine Culturelle
- Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians
- International Federation Of Musicians
- Coffee with the CQM

Special internal meetings:

- 17 special meetings with members of the GMMQ board of directors
- 9 meetings with the Jean-Carignan Fund
- 6 special meetings with our AFM and CFM counterparts
- 2 virtual meetings with GMMQ members (Instagram Live and Zoom) to address current concerns

Media:

The GMMQ's lobbying also involves appearances in the Quebec media:

- 49 media appearances and mentions
- Print, web, TV and radio
- In the following publications: Radio Canada (radio news, local TV news, web), Le Devoir, Le Soleil, La Presse, La Tribune, La Voix de l'Est, enbeauce.com, Le Journal de Québec, Le Journal de Montréal, Radio 98.5, Montreal Gazette, Le Nouvelliste, Huffington Post, L'Actualité, Journal Métro, Livres Hebdo, Entrepren'arts, L'aut'journal, Artistes pour la Paix.

CERB Survey

A survey was sent to Quebec musicians to find out how many were ineligible for the CERB (following the Canadian government's April 15 announcement extending the CERB to individuals earning up to \$1,000 per month).

The survey also provided us with an overview of how musicians were adapting to the situation.

LABOUR RELATIONS

- Telephone support for members for all types of pandemic-related issues (cancellations, health measures, streaming, webcasts, etc.).
- Estimating lost income by Quebec musicians: on March 16, musicians were invited to send us their information by email using a form. Between March and July, Quebec musicians incurred \$4 million in lost income. This number helps us advocate to the Quebec and Canadian governments on behalf of musicians.
- Our team compiled a document with health guidelines for the resumption of music activities. This document was sent to the MCCQ on May 18 and to the CNESST to develop their own health standards guide.