

## 2004 Cultural Grant Reconsideration Request

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**Full Figure Theatre Company:**  
Summary and Recommendation  
Applicant's Letter  
Front Page of Application

Office of Cultural Affairs  
City of Vancouver

**Full Figure Theatre Company**

**Grant Request:** \$ 2,500

**Original Staff Recommendation:** \$0

**Original Staff Comment:**

“The society has staged its BusTin’ouT event for five years; however, the choice of venue has limited the size of the audience, and the society was not able to expand the length of last year’s event despite receiving a City grant. The development potential of the festival is unclear at present, especially given the demands of the organization’s other activities involving the original theatre production. No grant is recommended.”

**Applicant’s Basis for Requesting Reconsideration:**

The applicant’s letter states that she would like to clarify some financial information for re-assessment and provide further details on the BusTin’ouT festival. While grounds for reconsideration are not specifically identified, the applicant’s request can be considered under premise (2)(“ the applicant’s financial situation has not been accurately assessed”) as outlined in Council policy. (See applicant’s letter following.)

**Results of Staff Reconsideration:**

In the reconsideration process, staff reviewed Full Figure Theatre Company’s original application and reconsideration letter, and spoke with one of the Co-Artistic Directors. The applicant’s letter elaborated on the history of the festival, which began as a volunteer-run cabaret event, and provided details on venues and attendance.

The society stated that the development of the festival is its primary focus financially. However, in the original application and in conversation with the Co-Artistic Director, it was stated that one of the challenges experienced by the society is to balance producing the festival with producing original work. The 2004 BusTin’ouT festival budget of \$13,260 is only 39% of the society’s annual operating budget of \$34,405.

Full Figure decided to change the venue in 2003 for financial reasons and went back to a one night performance to consolidate resources. However, the basis of last year’s grant was to support the society in its proposal to develop and expand the festival to include more public performances. Not only did Full Figure not expand the festival, but the society cut it back from the previous year. In the applicant’s letter requesting reconsideration, the society acknowledged this and stated that it unfortunately did not have the time to add to last year’s festival.

In reviewing the society’s financial statements from 2003, the society spent a total of \$17,526 and ended the year in a surplus position of \$12,042. The accumulated surplus totaled \$18,120, more than the year’s total expenditures. Therefore, the society was in a healthy position financially and had the ability to mount an expanded festival within its resources.

Upon review of the applicant’s financial information, staff have concluded that there is no reason to change the original assessment of the organization on financial grounds. The society did not use last year’s grant to expand the performance aspects of the festival, despite having a surplus. Since the accumulated surplus also gave the society the resources to mount

the 2004 festival, the question of financial need also arises. In fact, staff recommended funding another festival around International Women's Day for this year.

Therefore, no change to the original grant recommendation is proposed.

March 15, 2004

Office of Cultural Affairs  
City of Vancouver  
453 W. 12<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Vancouver, BC

APPENDIX A  
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To: Alice Niwinski, Lorenz von Fersen  
From: *full figure theatre company*  
Re: **Request for Reconsideration**

I am writing on behalf of *full figure theatre company* to request reconsideration on the results of the most recent, 2004 Cultural Operating and Project Grants competition. We would very much like to take this opportunity to clarify some financial information for re-assessment with further details on how and when the busTin' ouT fesTival came to be and its direction since.

In reference to your letter, dated March 1, 2004, "The society has staged its BusTin' ouT event for five years," we had actually only staged the event for two years at the time of our last application. Please see quotes below:

*'In 2002 the (first annual) busTin ouT fesTival will take place at The Urban Well Downtown with the Cabaret performances, March 8 & 9.'*  
- 2002 Cultural Project Grant Application

*'We improved, expanded and then produced our second busTin' ouT Festival'*  
- 2004 Cultural Project Grant Application

We wanted to make clear that the festival is still relatively a new and establishing event. Briefly, the first three busTin' ouT Cabarets, 1999, 2000, and 2001 were produced and performed voluntarily. The audiences for these three years, at small 60 seat venues in the city, consisted mostly of the artists themselves and their immediate supporters. *full figure theatre company* came on board in 2002 to take this performing potential, find, and then bring it to a wider audience. We started paying the performers, technicians and staff, and what was once a one night benefit became a three day professional festival. Since then, we have been developing our organization, production values and programming choices to best suit the interests of our community.

Referring to your point, "the choice of venue has limited the size of audience" we'd like to detail our venue choices over the three years. Our initial choice of venue was the Urban Well Downtown at 888 Nelson, mainly because it was the venue for the busTin' ouT Cabaret in 2001.

full  
figure  
theatre  
company

*full figure theatre company*  
303-215 N. Templeton Dr.  
Vancouver, BC V5L 3E3  
www.fullfiguretheatre.net



We launched the festival with two cabaret nights (new artists each night) and a forum. We found that this stretched our resources: marketing, administration and artist pool. So we took a lateral step in 2003, changed the venue, went back down to a one night performance, kept the forum and added three workshops. We moved to Chivana at 2340 West 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Please see list below for attendance each year. Note that each house seats approximately 90 people, with 70-75 seats available depending on staff and number of artists.

Size of Houses

2002	Soiree at Urban Well	56%	2004	The Music Nite at Chivana	33%
2002	Soiree at Urban Well	43%	2004	Soiree at Chivana	95%
2003	Soiree at Chivana	94%			

Changing the venue made financial sense, management was more available to us, the location and atmosphere were perfect and the restaurant lounge came forward as sponsors. We produced a one night cabaret to a more streamlined audience. This adjustment helped to direct our resources. The results were a larger more celebratory evening, 94% of the house. The added workshops increased our outreach to better serve our community.

This year was even better, 95% houses on a Monday night. In 2005 we could either move to a larger venue or expand to two cabaret nights. If we add a night we will engage the same artists for both evenings. We also hope to add a one-act play production night in 2005. Taking a cue from The Women in View Festival, which folded in 1998 due in part to over expansion and under funding, we will adhere to a 'slow but sure' strategy by growing no more than an event a year, not exceeding our financial grasp. Establishing administrative, production and marketing procedures over the last three years has much to do with the financial stability of this festival, past, present and future.

To clarify your reference to, "the society was not able to expand the length of last year's event despite receiving a City grant," unfortunately, we had no time to add to last year's festival. Instead we expanded this year's festival by adding The Music Nite, an evening of singer/songwriters. This event was also at Chivana, and played to a satisfactory capacity of 40%, increasing our overall attendance by 37%.


In response to your point, "especially given the demands of the organization's other activities involving the original theatre production," and to offer more information, at present, we have no plans to develop new scripts. Rather we are directing our energies and finances towards the stability and growth of the busTin' ouT fesTival. Re-mounts of prior productions for profit would be considered, but only those with a strong indication of revenue potential. How producing a festival and producing other projects meet takes focus at a discussion planned for March 27<sup>th</sup> with Board Member and Facilitator Phaedra Burke. This meeting will generate a report for a current Arts Partners in Operational Development proposal. We also have a festival proposal in with Heritage Canada's Arts Presentation Canada program. The busTin' ouT fesTival and its development is the society's number one financial focus.

We believe that there continues to be an interest in live performances and in the social context of women's and other marginalized voices. This festival encourages women artists to continue creating their own work, and links them closely with their audience in the overall celebration and growth of the performing arts.

Thank-you, we appreciate your time and consideration. Sincerely,

Sharon Heath  
phone: 604-532-3738  
[SharonHeath@shaw.ca](mailto:SharonHeath@shaw.ca)

Signed by,

  
Anne-Marie Sleeman, Chair

On behalf of the staff and board of full figure theatre company.



# 2004 Project Grants

Office of Cultural Affairs, City of Vancouver

Fall deadline:  
December 8, 2003

APPENDIX A  
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## 1. Applicant -

full figure theatre company Society

↑ Organization name and, if different, name of registered non-profit society applying for/sponsoring grant		
206 5765 Glover Rd. Langley, BC V3A 8M8	604-532-3738	604-532-3798
Mailing address	Telephone	Fax
Sharon Heath, Co-Artistic Director	\$ - 30931	
Contact person and title	Society no.	
SharonHeath@shaw.ca	www.fullfiguretheatre.net	
E-mail address of contact person	Website address	

Participating group(s) if different from above

## 2A. Activity Summary

Briefly describe your organization, and list your current and proposed projects for the next 12 months. Please indicate the project(s) for which you are requesting a grant. Type answers directly on this form. (A copy of this page is given to City Council.)

full figure theatre company Society was registered on August 16, 1993. Since then many highly accessible shows and events of social interest have been written, produced and toured, notably: too blonde, way too blonde, the "f" word, WUMPA, Help Wanted, Around the Bend, and The Big Map. The company has performed at festivals across Canada, in the United States, Hong Kong, Adelaide, Melbourne, Auckland, Wellington, London and Edinburgh. In 2002, full figure theatre company produced busTin' ouT four: The fesTival, an expansion of the busTin' ouT Benefit, three years running. Artists and audiences joined together on the theme 'bustin' out of the norm' celebrating women as well as other marginalized artists. Last year, the company produced busTin' ouT: Festival Five with even greater success. Currently full figure is working on three projects:

- ▶ busTin' ouT: Festival Six \* 2004 Project Grant Requested

We are in the implimentation stages, with emphasis on improving and expanding last year's festival. As always centred around International Women's Day, March 8, this years' festival, March 5, 6, 7 & 8, 2004, will present the newly programmed Music Nite and busTin' ouT Soirée Cabaret at Chivana's in Kitsilano, plus the A Day Away Workshops and The Forum at The Roundhouse Community Centre. Artists, Panelists and Workshop Leaders will again be sought out from Vancouver's diverse cultural scene.

- ▶ the "f" word

Written by full figure theatre company 10 years ago this piece, under the guidance of Micki Maunsell, has been updated, workshopped, and recently produced at The Haven on Gabriola Island. Plans to tour in the Spring are underway with interest from Shadbolt Centre for the Arts and Richmond Gateway.

- ▶ way too blonde

This touring show has been re-mounted for upcoming dates.

We are working towards producing the busTin' ouT Festival plus one other production each year.

## 2B. Financial Summary (from Expense Budgets)

Fiscal year [mm/dd]	01-Sep	to	[mm/dd]	31-Aug
Last actual annual budget	\$ 29,568		Current annual budget	\$ 34,405
Project budget*	\$ 13,260		Project grant requested	\$ 2,500

\*Proposed expense budget(s) for project(s).

Civic cultural grant history	2000	2001	2002	2003
Project				1,000

### Comments & Recommendation

The society has staged its BusTin' ouT event for five years; however, the choice of venue has limited the size of the audience, and the society was not able to expand the length of last year's event despite receiving a City grant. The development potential of the festival is unclear at present, especially given the demands of the organization's other activities involving the original theatre production. No grant is recommended.

Cultural Planner	Grant Recommended	Type	Approved by Council
LVF	\$0	Project	\$