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To the Jazz On View Society
RE: Hermann's Jazz Club

Hello:

I have just recently heard about the effort that is underway to support the continuation of Hermann's Jazz Club in Victoria. I am writing to you to add my support.

As a Canadian jazz drummer and bandleader, I am well acquainted with Hermann's, having performed there many times over the past twenty-five years with my own band(s) "The Barry Elmes Quintet", "Time Warp", and with many other Canadian jazz artists. In fact, Hermann's has been THE jazz venue of choice in Victoria for every cross-Canada tour that I have undertaken with my groups. The first such tours that I recall were back in 1993 (Barry Elmes Quintet) and again in 1994 (Time Warp). The Canada Council for the Arts supported both tours and I recall clearly that our sold-out performances at Hermann's were one of the highlights of both tours. There have been many similar return trips to perform at Hermann's over the years; the most recent for my quintet was a CD release tour in 2012.

I don't need to list all the reasons why Hermann's is such a wonderful venue for jazz performance; I'm sure others have done so already, and you are undoubtedly well aware of the club's virtues. For me, Hermann's is the ideal venue to present my quintet. The acoustics are good, the stage can comfortably support a quintet (and groups of various sizes), and the cabaret-style seating provides the best atmosphere for an informal, yet intimate, rapport with the audience. And the place has always been packed with enthusiastic jazz fans every time I've performed there. The staff and volunteers have always been extremely helpful. Past experience performing in various types of venues (everything from large outdoor amphitheatres to soft-seat theatres to tiny coffee houses to private living rooms) has proven to me that jazz is best presented, and received, in a licensed club setting and Hermann's fulfills all the 'club setting' requirements.

All the Canadian musicians I know across this country regard Hermann's as *the* venue for jazz in Victoria. In fact, I recall one cross-Canada tour with my quintet when Hermann's was not available

during the dates of our tour. I could not find another suitable venue for my group in Victoria so we simply weren't able to include Victoria on that tour.

But Hermann's importance goes way beyond being a choice venue for touring jazz artists; it is an important community fixture where local musicians of all generations and music styles can perform to supportive audiences. It is a place that supports artistic growth through jam sessions, workshops, and a variety of other performance events. Hermann's is a rare gem, a vital institution with a long history of fostering musical creativity and artistic development. It is well known to jazz artists locally, nationally, and internationally, and while its loss would certainly be devastating to the arts community in Victoria, it would also be felt deeply across Canada and beyond.

It is of the utmost importance that a solution is found to enable Hermann's to continue.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barry Elmes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'B'.

Barry Elmes
Jazz musician, composer
President, Cornerstone Records Inc.
Associate Professor of Music and
Jazz Area Coordinator, York University
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