



ORGANIZATION OF SASKATCHEWAN ARTS COUNCILS

## Organization of Saskatchewan Arts Councils Touring the Performing Arts in Saskatchewan

### I. Who Are the OSAC Presenters?

- OSAC community presenters are volunteers in communities that range in size from 500 to 200,000; the majority live in communities of less than 3,000.
- Every season, roughly 35 OSAC community presenters put on a series of three or more shows—*Stars for Saskatchewan* for adult audiences, or *Konzerts for Kids* for families/young audiences.
- Both series are presented in some communities.
- Some communities present single events during the season.
- Over 100 school performances, known as *Junior Konzerts*, are presented annually in urban, rural, and reserve schools.

### II. What Types of Programs Does OSAC Present?

#### ***Stars for Saskatchewan***

- Shows for adults, usually 90 minutes in length (plus an intermission).
- Presentations can be of any performance discipline.

#### ***Konzerts for Kids***

- Shows for families or children, usually 60 minutes in length (no intermission), that are scheduled for early evenings, weekend afternoons, or during school hours.
- Presentations can be of any performance discipline.

#### ***Junior Konzerts***

- 50-60 minute school shows.
- Performers, representing a variety of disciplines, are selected for their artistic excellence and special ability to interact with and relate to student audiences.
- Shows presented provide the very best in educational, entertaining programming.
- Artists have study guides that further enhance the learning opportunity.

### III. Who is OSAC's Audience?

- Performers have remarked on the age of adult audiences in rural Saskatchewan. Apparently, they are somewhat older than patrons in other parts of the country.
- The audience size can range from 50 to 60 (in a community of 500 that represents 10% of the population!) to 800.

- At *Junior Concerts* performances, the age of the student audience depends upon the program being presented.
  - some shows are recommended for elementary audiences, i.e. K-8
  - some shows are recommended for high schools only
  - some shows are recommended for K-12.

#### **IV. How Does OSAC Do Business?**

##### **Showcase**

- Showcase is an annual, weekend conference held in late October.
- Featured showcases include adult, children, and family performers.
- Arts council members and delegates watch showcases and talk to performers and managers in the contact room.
- At a members' only booking meeting held at Showcase, presenters work together to block book after choosing artists for their *Stars for Saskatchewan* and/or *Koncerts for Kids* series.

#### **V. How Are Performers Chosen to Showcase?**

- In January, showcase applications are sent to performers, managers, and agents across Canada and beyond.
- Applications are submitted with video, audio, and press documentation.
- A Showcase Selection Committee reviews applications in early June.
- The committee makes their showcase selections based on a number of criteria, including quality, professionalism, marketability, and fee schedule.

#### **VI. How Are Performers Chosen to Tour?**

- A Price List of performers who want to tour Saskatchewan is compiled and distributed to OSAC presenters prior to Showcase.
- Presenters make their programming choices in the fall for the following year for the *Stars for Saskatchewan* and *Koncerts for Kids* series.
- Requests for tours are sent to the OSAC office where tour coordination takes place (i.e., all tour dates and fees are finalized.)
- The Performing Arts Coordinator acts as a liaison between presenters and performers.
- OSAC contracts the performers on behalf of the presenters, for all performances on the tour.
- Presenters begin communicating directly with the performers to recommend accommodations, etc.
- The OSAC office takes on the role of trouble-shooter, assisting presenters if they have any problems with their series.

##### ***How Are Performers Chosen To Tour For Junior Concerts?***

- Showcasing is not a prerequisite to be selected for a *Junior Concerts* school tour.
- Applications to tour for *Junior Concerts* are sent to performers, managers, and agents in April.
- Applications are submitted with DVD, CD, study guide, and press documentation.
- A *Junior Concerts* Selection Committee reviews applications and support material.

- The committee makes tour selections for the following year based on professionalism, quality of performance, ability of the artist to connect with a young audience, educational content, and entertainment value.
- OSAC contracts the performer, prints promotional information that is distributed to schools across the province, coordinates the bookings, and routes the tours.

## VII. What Does OSAC Provide for Performers?

Performers enjoy the OSAC block booking system for the following benefits:

- A network of presenters.
- One contact person means significant savings in expense and time.
- Tours are routed logically with regard to travel and dates.
- Free listing in the annual Price List which is circulated to all presenters.
- *Junior Concerts* tours are guaranteed a minimum of 15 school shows.

## VIII. What Does this Service Cost Performers?

- A commission of 5% to a maximum of \$140.00 plus GST per *Stars for Saskatchewan* and *Konzerts for Kids* performance is charged to performers for the block booking service.
- Saskatchewan performers are exempt from this fee.
- There is no commission charged to *Junior Concerts* touring artists.

## Questions?

Give OSAC a call and we will be happy to answer:

### Performing Arts Coordinators:

Showcase, *Stars for Saskatchewan* &  
*Konzerts for Kids*  
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ORGANIZATION OF SASKATCHEWAN ARTS COUNCILS

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## Surprise Free Touring

### Tips Compiled as a Result of Discussions with Presenters

#### I. Performance Fees

##### *Stars for Saskatchewan and Concerts for Kids*

- Presenters like to know the whole picture before they book a performance.
- It is advisable to calculate a price that includes everything—no add-ons for meals, accommodations, or transportation.
- It is *very* unsettling to be informed of extra costs in riders at the contracting stage.
- All information regarding hospitality and technical requirements should be made known at the Price List stage rather than later.
- It is OSAC's policy to charge the same price to all presenters for performances, regardless of community size or location or size of venue.

##### *Junior Concerts*

- Fees quoted for *Junior Concerts* school tours must be per performance and include travel and accommodations.
- Two, sometimes three, performances will be scheduled each school day.

#### II. Exclusivity

- An exclusivity clause is included in the contract for all out-of-province performers.
- Performers may not accept dates with other Saskatchewan organizations for one month prior to and one month after an OSAC tour for the following reasons:
  - This avoids overexposure of performers in areas with small audience bases. The clause may be waived in special circumstances but permission must be obtained in advance from OSAC.
  - Problems have even occurred when performers book shows **outside** the exclusivity time frame in a community.
  - The onus is on the performer to consider the size of the town and the consequences of booking another show, which may seriously damage the relationship with the arts council (especially if they discover that the price is lower!) or make for a poorly attended event.
  - This is true especially in the case of a performer playing a school show and then expecting a family audience to attend an evening performance. In that case parents may be reluctant to buy tickets for something their children have already seen.

### III. Publicity and Promotional Materials

- As stated in the OSAC contract, promotional materials must be sent to presenters and the OSAC office 7 weeks prior to the first date of the tour.
- Presenters need to have the materials in their hands at that time and feel frustrated if they cannot begin their campaigns that far in advance.
- We always request flyers and posters, although we know that perhaps one or the other is not available.
- If this is the case, it is best to let OSAC know so that presenters are not looking for materials that do not exist.
- Requests for these materials are individualized on the contract so that an appropriate number can be sent to each arts council according to its needs.
- The performer incurs the cost of shipping materials directly to the communities.
- For the electronic media, it would be helpful to have DVD's made available to OSAC, which maintains a library for the presenters.
- Promotional materials for *Junior Concerts* tours are required 7-8 months in advance of the tour.
- Brochures, printed at OSAC's expense, are sent to schools throughout the province in September (for spring tours) and February (for fall tours) to promote *Junior Concerts*.
- School packages which include tour information, performance evaluation and a study guide are sent approximately one month prior to the start of a *Junior Concerts* tour.

### IV. Hotels

- As you may have heard, the Saskatchewan economy is among the hottest in Canada. Make your reservations early. OSAC will provide touring artists with a Saskatchewan accommodation guide to assist with booking hotels/motels. If you prefer, there are also a number of Bed and Breakfasts throughout the province.
- Presenters will book accommodations (at performer's expense).
- Presenters have been burned when they are asked to guarantee the reservation and performers change plans at the last moment and move on to the next town.
- If presenters have been involved in helping with the arrangements, it is imperative that performers let them know of any change in plans as soon as possible.
- In some communities, poor relationships between presenters and their local hotels have resulted from the carelessness of performers.
- OSAC will book accommodations for *Junior Concerts* touring artists, either in motels/hotels (at the artists' expense) or arrange for billets.

### V. Pre-Performance Calls

- All arts council members are volunteers and it is sometimes difficult to reach them.
- Give yourself lots of lead-time in order to accomplish these calls, which are crucial to ensure a smooth set up and performance.

- If you require help to unload and set up (of course the arts council will be made aware of this at the booking stage!) it is necessary to call two weeks in advance so that presenters can organize a team for you.
- Please arrive at the agreed-upon time—many presenters have to pay for the help and care-taking staff so it is frustrating if the time they are paying for is not used.
- If your group produces a tour book, please send a copy to the OSAC office so that we can get in touch with the performers on the road, should the need arise.
- *Junior Concerts* performers do not need to call each school in advance, but it is a courtesy. Once the tour is underway, many performers call ahead to confirm arrival time or billets, but the OSAC office handles all scheduling.

## VI. Technical Requirements

- Performance spaces vary greatly in the province.
- Some are very well equipped while others operate with only minimal equipment.
- If there are basic requirements and standards on which you are unable to compromise, it may necessary for you to bring your own equipment on tour in order to maintain a level of performance that is satisfactory.
- Rental equipment is not always available in small communities.
- *Junior Concerts* school tours must be very portable with minimal technical requirements and set up time.

## VII. Sound Complaints

- This is an area of great concern for community presenters.
- In some instances, venues will be difficult to play because of poor acoustics.
- Presenters know their audiences' preferences for volume levels.
- It is in the best interests of performers to consider seriously all requests to improve sound quality or adjust the volume.

## VIII. OSAC Booking Cycle

<b>January</b>	Applications to showcase in October for touring commencing the following year (Sep-Jun) are emailed to performers, agents, and managers.
<b>February</b>	Brochures for Fall <i>Junior Concerts</i> tours are mailed electronically to schools and arts council contacts.
<b>March</b>	Contract details for <i>Stars for Saskatchewan</i> and <i>Konzerts for Kids</i> tours in the coming season (Sep-Jun) are discussed and finalized.  Brochure production begins for <i>Stars for Saskatchewan</i> shows in the coming season.

<b>May</b>	<p>Deadline to apply to <i>Showcase</i>.</p> <p>Mid-month application deadline for <i>Junior Concerts</i> fall tours.</p>
<b>June</b>	<p>First of the month application deadline for <i>Junior Concerts</i> tours.</p> <p>Contracting of performers for <i>Stars for Saskatchewan</i> and <i>Konzerts for Kids</i> tours in coming season (Sep-Jun) is completed.</p> <p>Performers chosen by Showcase Selection Committee for fall showcase conference.</p>
<b>July</b>	<p>Performers chosen by Junior Concerts Selection Committee for next year's school tours.</p>
<b>August</b>	<p>Price List deadline for season 12 months away.</p>
<b>September</b>	<p>Early bird registration deadline for Showcase.</p> <p>Brochures for spring <i>Junior Concerts</i> tours are mailed electronically to schools and arts councils.</p>
<b>October</b>	<p>Showcase usually held in late October or early November.</p> <p>Maximum of 15 showcases for season 10 months away.</p> <p>Booking Meeting held at Showcase.</p>
<b>November</b>	<p>Deadline (30<sup>th</sup>) for presenters to finalize programming for season that starts in <b>September of the following year</b>.</p>
<b>December</b>	<p>Booking and negotiations begin.</p> <p>Beginning of month deadline for schools to book <i>Junior Concerts</i> spring tours.</p>
<b>January</b>	<p>Applications for next year's Showcase sent out—cycle begins anew.</p>

## IX. Sample for Calculation of Fee Structure

- It is OSAC's policy to present performers in each community at the same price.
- The following is an example of a possible tour routing and calculation of travel costs you should include in your fee:

Starting in Regina and travelling to:

Estevan	204 km
Yorkton	258 km
La Ronge	629 km
Battlefords	442 km
Swift Current	304 km
Regina	245 km
<b>Total</b>	<b>2082 km</b>

@ \$.35/km with 5 communities sharing the cost, the cost per Presenter is approx. \$146.00

- Accommodation and per diem costs must be pro-rated on a per arts council basis as well.
- In the case of the above routing, it may be necessary to spend an extra night on the road because of the distance from Yorkton to La Ronge.
- Obviously the fees need to be set before the tour is actually booked; performers from outside the province should include the cost of getting to Saskatchewan as well.
- Many other variables have to be considered: number of vehicles, type of vehicle, etc. There is a fair bit of estimating involved.
- **Rental of any equipment must be included in the fee.** Equipment that is readily available in large centres may not be available in small rural communities. It is advisable for performers to obtain these items themselves.
- OSAC's fee schedule is based on a price per performance for 1 show, 2-5 shows, 6-9 shows, and 10+ shows, with a significant reduction in cost expected for more bookings.
- Once the fee has been set and presenters have booked based on that information, it is impossible to increase the amount.
- Remember that OSAC provides one contact person for you so that your time and telephone and postal costs are reduced.
- Tours are tightly routed to maximize efficiency and can include the performer (and union) preferences for number of days off and distances traveled per day.

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