



The Actors' Fund of Canada
The lifeline for Canada's entertainment industry

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The Actors' Fund of Canada More Than Applause Campaign Background Information and Sample Curtain Speech

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Thank you for participating in the Actors' Fund of Canada's More Than Applause fundraising campaign. The success of this campaign depends on theatre artists taking the lead and working with theatre managements to organize curtain speeches for their shows. More Than Applause is the only way the Fund has to reach out to audiences who appreciate the work of Canadian theatre artists and want to help those who have fallen on hard times. With a little effort you can make a big difference – all you need is teamwork and an audience that's willing to give.

Money raised in the campaign will help the Fund provide emergency relief in the form of rent money, utility payments, healthcare costs and groceries to over 250 entertainment workers and their families experiencing financial hardship this year.

If you would like to compose your own speech, please try to include the following important information:

- This is "More Than Applause" week at the theatre What the Actors' Fund does
- **The Fund is a registered charity** and receives all of the money donated at the performance
- Entertainment workers income is quite variable – entertainment workers often go weeks or months between gigs and most do not have the kind of government or employer benefits that would sustain them through long periods of unemployment.
- Directions about how to give (i.e., volunteers at the door).

Style suggestions:

From experience, we know that the speech is more effective if delivered by one of the leading performers.

Whether you use the sample speech or not, keep it short and to the point. Humour is very powerful - begging and whining is not. It is most effective if the cast can take the collection themselves.

Alternatively, you might wish to work from a sample text we've written. To follow is a suggested speech but feel free to improvise or alter the wording.

Sample Curtain Speech:

"This is a very special week all of us working on this show, a week devoted to the More Than Applause campaign to raise money for the Actors' Fund. You may not have heard of the Fund, but I can tell you that for all the people who work in the world of entertainment, it can literally be a lifeline.

If we get sick, sustain an injury, have a crisis in the family or simply can't find work for a while, we don't qualify for government benefits. And since we don't exactly earn the big bucks - contrary to some rumours, we don't get the salaries of Tom Cruise or Julia Roberts! - it is not always possible to have a lot of savings to draw on in times of difficulty.

So we have to look after ourselves - and that's where the Actors' Fund comes in. Despite its name, the Actors' Fund is an organization that ensures that ALL members of the entertainment industry have somewhere to turn to cover the cost of basic necessities: medications, phone and utility bills, rent, even food. Requests for emergency assistance have more than doubled in the last six years, with over half a million dollars distributed in the last year alone.

Throughout the year, the Fund's income comes largely from our own professional donations and from theatres such as this one. Just once a year, though, during this special week, we are asking if you would join us in making a contribution. That way, the Fund can continue to give help to people when they need it most, so that they can do what we all want to do - be the best we possibly can.

Thank you so much - there are volunteers who will be happy to take your contributions."

The Fund can supply program inserts that provide testimonials and additional information for distribution to audience members at the performances where you will be making the speeches. We also have signage and other promotional materials available should you need them.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!