SOCIETY OF CANADIAN ARTISTS (SCA)

Code of Member Conduct

PREAMBLE

The SCA has, on rare occasions, been hampered in resolution of dispute or conflict by a lack of a behavioural Code of Conduct for its general membership. Such Codes are common in Business, Non-profit Organizations and Clubs, and are an essential component of governance documentation. The SCA is no exception.

This Code of Conduct defines the **behavioural and ethical standards**, principles and professional expectations required of all members contractors and representatives acting on the SCA's behalf. (Definitions and scope follow below.) It contains specific, observable standards for how members should treat each other, be respectful to the SCA and its membership, and contains reporting and disciplinary mechanisms, if required. While the SCA has provision in its By-Laws for the rare case of termination of membership for various reasons, this serves as the necessary documented baseline to facilitate consistency and procedural fairness for handling significant behavioural breaches.

This policy is intended to be a good-faith commitment that benefits members, the SCA at large, and the governing body (Board of Directors). As such, it contains commitments *to* members and *from* members in the context of mutual trust.

The Board of Directors is governed, as well, by a Code of Conduct for Board Members, which reinforces additional standards appropriate for effective conduct of their fiduciary responsibilities.

MEETING MEMBER EXPECTATIONS

The ethical commitment of the SCA to its membership includes, *inter alia*:

Integrity: a commitment to honest, fair, ethical principles in all SCA actions;

Objectivity: Making decisions without personal bias, favouritism or outside pressure;

Competence: doing tasks with proper skills, knowledge, and necessary care;

Confidentiality: keeping member data and other information safe and used for official business only;

Professionalism: treating all members and colleagues with respect, courtesy and appropriate behaviour;

Openness: The SCA welcomes respectful debate, diverse opinions and good-faith complaints, which members should feel free to voice without fear of retaliation. Diverse points of view on important operational or governance issues are normally resolved with full information by the membership at the Annual General Meeting (AGM);

Reflection and continuous learning: taking stock of errors, experience and feedback on its various activities to improve services and support for members;

Transparency and due process; a clear, confidential channel, if required, for reporting complaints, disputes and significant behavioural breaches, and a graduated disciplinary process, if required, in the case of confirmed significant breaches of the Code.

SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

The Code of Behaviour applies to Associate and Elected members, contractors, representatives and volunteers (including standing and *ad hoc* committee members), and henceforth in this policy are referred to collectively as '**members**'.

It applies to conduct in SCA meetings, exhibitions and events, and communications with members of, or about the SCA, including on-line activity.

The concerns covered by this Code are material violations of respectful, ethical behaviour. Material violations of concern are those that are non-trivial, intentional (non-accidental), or of real consequence to reputations, working environment or legality.

Harassment refers to unwanted or unwelcome behaviour, comments or conduct that demeans, humiliates, intimidates, defames or creates a hostile environment for the conduct of SCA business.

Discrimination refers to treating a group or a person unfairly or worse than others based on characteristics (e.g., race, gender, origin, religion, age or ability, or other personal traits) other than merit.

EXPECTED MEMBER BEHAVIOUR

The following are expected standards of behaviour for all members to ensure a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for all SCA members. They are based on an expectation of a professional and ethical attitude among the membership, and the foundational expectation that *one should treat others as one would expect others to treat oneself*. These standards, which are aimed at respectful **behaviour**, are not intended to stifle good faith complaints, disagreements or differences among members.

Core Principles of Member Conduct and Mutual Trust

It is expected that members will:

- act with dignity, integrity, honour, respect, moderation, fairness and courtesy;
- act in good faith, and be open, transparent and honest in dealing with other members and the Board;
- respect other members' opinions and contributions;
- refrain from personal verbal attacks, vindictive statements, threats, interpersonal hostilities and other explicit inappropriate or disruptive behaviour – including in events or meetings -- that interfere in SCA business and activities;
- refrain from any remarks that reflect characteristics-based or other discrimination or harassment;
- refrain from use of confidential information, data or other assets of the SCA other than for strictly official SCA purposes;
- undertake no actions explicitly intended to interfere with the operations of the SCA and its Board; and/or
- undertake no actions intended to deliberately undermine the reputation, name or trust in the SCA or its membership.

Operational Guidelines

- Members cannot speak or act on behalf of the SCA without prior authorization;

- Collective decisions made by the membership at the SCA AGM are to be respected, even when individual members may disagree and especially when they have been afforded an opportunity to voice contrary opinions;
- The Board may identify, on its own, breaches of this Code. While expected to be rare, other complaints and disputes are to be directed to the Board orally or in writing to the President or Vice President or other member of the Board, rather than through the court of public opinion. Ideally, they will be both validated with credible information and resolved confidentially. If a complaint concerns a specific member of the Board, that person shall recuse from any deliberations.
- The Board may decide to engage third-Party assistance (e.g., auditors) in validating and resolving disputes or complaints, especially where Board members or Board wrong-doing may be involved;
- Members are expected to refrain from defamatory or deliberately harmful public or social-media criticism regarding the SCA, other SCA members or Board members, especially regarding confidential matters. This includes, knowingly false statements unauthenticated hearsay or rumours, unlawful harassment, defamation, improper disclosure of confidential information, or other demonstratively malicious conduct;
- Members are expected to share information in an objective manner, avoiding exaggeration, misrepresentation, disinformation etc;
- No recording of Board activities or meetings is allowed without prior authorization;
- Members must comply with applicable local or other laws in dealing with SCA businesses including harassment, defamation and anti-spam legislation. Any member costs associated with legal recourse are to be borne by the member.

Violations and Enforcement

- Verified and material violations of the Code will normally be handled through a graduated approach of informal consultation, formal warning, suspension and finally, in rare occasions and if deemed necessary, expulsion;
- The Board reserves the right to adjust its reaction depending on the gravity of any breaches. Breaches are cumulative and records of past actions and/or letters will be kept on file;
  - Frivolous or minor issues will be dealt with through private communication, as required;
  - Any warnings, if warranted, may be verbal or in writing, offering an opportunity for explanation or other response by the respondent. Membership dues will not be refunded;
  - If necessary, the Board may, alternately, recommend temporary suspension of member privileges. An opportunity for appeal is to be accommodated. Membership dues will not be refunded;
  - In rare cases, the Board may recommend SCA expulsion and revocation of credentials in cases of severe or repeated violations of member conduct. Such decisions are permanent and to be taken only in serious cases of misconduct. Such an action is both enabled and prescribed in the SCA ByLaws. An opportunity for appeal is to be accommodated. Membership dues will not be refunded;
    - In such cases, there will be no post-membership access to open SCA activities (e.g., open shows and exhibitions) and no recourse to attend future SCA governance bodies (Committees, consultations etc);
    - Expelled members' personal information shall be removed from the SCA data base. Information regarding any expulsion may be kept for future SCA reference.

- The President, on behalf of the SCA Board, may involve a legal authority, as appropriate. Any member costs associated with such recourse will be borne by the member.