

**Thinking back I realize that Roberto
was the spark that began my love of Super 8.
I had only worked with 16mm
before going into Lift one day and tentatively inquiring with him.
His enthusiasm and knowledge encouraged me
and now Super 8 is my favourite medium to use and watch.
The film community has lost a really great artist, activist and person.**

Siue Moffat

**I am writing on behalf of SAVAC and myself
to convey our sadness and loss
upon hearing about Roberto's passing.
Please know that he will be greatly missed but not forgotten.
We are happy to have known him and greatly appreciate
all his contributions to our arts community.**

With sympathy and love,

**Rachel Kalpana James
Director**

I wanted to express my deep sorrow at the passing of Roberto Arigonello. I have encountered him several times in Toronto's friendly film community and have been continually impressed with his kindness, intelligence, generosity, and sense of humour. I am sorry that he is no longer with us but I am grateful for having had the chance to know him. I hope that LIFT and its membership will continue his work.

Dawn Dumont

**I would like to send my most sincere condolences to
Roberto's family and friends and those who knew him well.**

D'Arcy MacLean

My deepest condolences to the Staff of LIFT and the Ariganello family. Myself have never met Mr. Ariganello, but I know what it's like to know someone for awhile and suddenly they are no longer around. A couple months ago a volunteering buddy of mine passed away as well. was shocking as some of us was expecting to see him this summer at our usual events.

I empathize. God Bless

Jojo

**The members, Board and staff of the Ontario Association of Art Galleries
join with you in your time of loss and sorrow and express our sincere condolences to you
on the very sad occasion of Roberto Ariganello's untimely passing. It is difficult to believe that he is gone.**

**Roberto will be missed very much by everyone at OAAG. He was a strong advocate for the rights of filmmakers
and visual artists. We appreciated his collegiality and leadership in the ongoing fight against censorship in the arts.**

He was an active, generous, creative man whose work was a positive force for Toronto, Ontario and Canada.

The impact of his work carries on into the future.

**Your loss is profound. We wanted to let you know that we are thinking of you
and hope you will let us know if we can be of service in this difficult time.**

**On behalf of the Ontario Association of Art Galleries,
Demetra Christakos, Executive Director**

**Our Board: Mela Constantinidi, President, Brian Meehan, Past President, Linda Paulocik, Treasurer, Stuart Reid,
Secretary, Bill Kirby, Director, Gordon Hatt, Director, Tobi Bruce, Director, Marcie Lawrence, Director, Nataley Nagy,
Director, Celeste Scopelites, Director, Gesta Abols, Director, Our Staff: Demetra Christakos, Executive Director, Suzanne
Carte-Blanchenot, Professional Development and Public Programs Coordinator, Shay Gibson, Membership and
Publications Coordinator**

We at Planet in Focus are deeply saddened by the tragic death of Roberto Ariganello, LIFT's Executive Director. The arts community has indeed lost a dedicated advocate in Toronto and Canada at large, for whom he worked tirelessly and passionately. When we view the work emerging from LIFT's community of artists at our upcoming festival we will think of Roberto's contribution to their creative effort in enabling them to have the tools, space and place from which their art form could emerge.

We extend our deepest condolences to his family for their loss.

He shall be missed.

**Candida T. Paltiel
Festival Director**

I don't know what to say.

I'm at a loss for words.

My condolences to you guys at LIFT and to his family.

sincerely,

Julius Comia

I just found out.

I'm in shock.

**Roberto was one of the few people that I always felt I could approach
and talk to after a screening or at an event.**

He was kind, funny, and made me feel like I belonged.

It is so unfair that he had this accident.

**I can't really believe that I won't see him around anymore and that we
won't go out for cigarettes together.**

He was always encouraging me, as an emerging film & video artist.

In my experience with him, he always gave more than he took.

Vicky Moufawad-Paul

A Space Gallery

Programming/Exhibitions Coordinator

**When I came to Toronto from Newfoundland,
LIFT was one of my first contacts and Roberto one of the first
to support and encourage my work through various projects.
Even though I have drifted away from film making over the years,
and from LIFT, I somehow managed to stay on his radar. Always
inclusive and encouraging, I'll greatly miss that link I had to film
making here in Toronto.**

My sincerest condolences to his nearest and dearest.

Renee Pilgrim

Please convey NSI's deepest sympathies to the board and staff at LIFT.

Sincerely,

**Glynis Corkal
National Screen Institute**

**Many knew Roberto better than I.
But much of what is good in my own experiences with LIFT
over the years had something to do with him.**

**He will be missed by many like me whose brief encounters
left lasting impressions, and whom never got a chance to thank him.**

Victor Fan

**The Staff and Board of Tribe send our condolences to
Roberto's family and everyone at LIFT.
We will keep you all in our thoughts and prayers.**

**Sincerely,
Lori Blondeau
Executive Director**

I am completely shocked and overwhelmed to learn of the tragic passing of your fearless leader, a pillar of the Toronto arts community and my friend Roberto. As I will be out of Toronto on the date of the memorial service, I wish to extend my sincere condolences to LIFT, Roberto's Family and his many, many friends. I will be there in spirit.

**David Liss
Director/Curator
Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art
Toronto, Canada.**

All the best to Roberto's family and for their loss. Roberto was a great motivator, enthusiastic about film life and development in Toronto (and elsewhere), and never too busy to say hello to a LIFT member in the corridors of LIFT. He will surely be missed by all.

Ryan Burt

**I wish to pass on our sincerest condolences on behalf of staff
and the directors of Artspace. This truly is tragic news.**

My kindest regards,

**Iga Janik
Director
ARTSPACE**

**I am in Ecuador right now, working on a documentary, and I just received the very tragic news about Roberto. Please send my deepest condolences to the family and his close friends and colleagues.
This is very, very sad news.**

Malcom Rogge

I heard the sad news that Roberto Ariganello has passed away today, and felt a need to express my admiration for and thoughts on this wonderful man.

I did not know Roberto very well, but I knew him well enough to know what an incredibly giving and generous human being he was, with such a passion for the arts and filmmaking in particular. His generosity was of the spirit, but it was also very concrete and practical.

Roberto was kind to me as an individual, but he was especially kind to CineVic, the artist run film co-op I work for in Victoria BC. When he had heard we were having troubles a few years ago, he was full of good advice and worked with former executive director Erin Brown to try and find solutions. When he and I met again at the last IMAA conference in St. Johns, he extended this hand to me, reassuring me about my abilities and the tasks ahead at a time I was just learning the ropes in a new position. Roberto went so far as to email me sections of LIFT's past grant applications so I could look at a successful model of application structure. And I didn't even ask him for the help. He offered of his own time (and work) because he was a caring human being who wanted others to succeed as well. More than anyone else outside our city Roberto had the best interests of our co-op, and how we could fit into the national film continuum that he loved so much, at heart. This is from a letter he wrote me earlier this year:

Hello Bryan ,

I hope you are well. I would like to offer my services if you are interested in applying for a Flying Squad grant. I am interested in helping Cinevic in any way possible... ..Let me know what you think. We can discuss in greater detail the approach that I would take.

*Kind regards,
Roberto*

Kind of says alot about what kind of a person he was. It is an honour to have met him, and I regret not having gotten to know him better. On behalf of myself and CineVic: Society of Independent Filmmakers, I offer condolences to his family and friends. He will not be forgotten but certainly will be missed.

Sincerely,

**Bryan Skinner
Executive Director**

It is with incommensurable sadness that I learned about Roberto's tragic death. I have been thinking quite a lot about him, and would like to express to all who knew and loved him all my regrets and sympathies. Roberto was a fiercely committed member of the independent media arts community, and I will miss him greatly. His honesty as well as his passion about filmmaking, touched me very much in the few years I knew him, and I find myself quite saddened by the thought that I will never again have the privilege of sharing thoughts and ideas with him. I will remember him, always.

Josette Bélanger

I am sure somewhere out there he is chatting up film theory with the great ones ... where he belongs.

Norma Garcia

I can't imagine LIFT without Roberto. He embodied the spirit of the co-op and was always on hand, willing to help. One night, after hours, when I was editing away my first 16mm film, Roberto stopped in and had a chat with me about editing on film vs. digital. He was excited about the fact I chose to edit on film and said "When you edit on film you spend more time thinking about your choices." Those simple words that were common knowledge to him are now the words I hear each and every time I work on a project. Thank you Roberto.

Nathan Fleet

L.I.F.T. Member from 1998–2005

I've just received the shocking and devastating news of Roberto's sudden, untimely death. It is very hard to take in. Roberto was such a vibrant, larger than life character. Though living in Toronto, his warmth and influence were felt across the country and Cineworks and the other film coops will especially mourn the loss of a friend, and ally. His passing leaves a terrible emptiness at the heart of the media arts community.

Please pass our condolences on to those close to him and to all of you at LIFT who will miss him so dearly.

In sympathy,

Meg Thornton

Executive Director

Cineworks Independent Filmmakers Society

I was so sad to hear of Roberto's passing. He was such an influence for me and I always knew that if I needed an answer to a question I had I could call him. I've been the Operations Coordinator for the Calgary Society of Independent Filmmakers for four years and I can't even remember the first time I spoke to him: it seems like years and it also doesn't seem that long ago. I do remember that from the beginning, Roberto had much to teach me about being a tireless and vocal advocate for artists and for film. If you were feeling tired or jaded about a lack of funding, you could call him up and he'd get you all riled up again and ready to keep on fighting.

When I visited Toronto in September 2004 I had called up Roberto to see if he had time to show me around LIFT when I was in town. When I arrived he was really busy but he made time for me and gave me an extensive tour of LIFT and then took me over to CFMDC. It was clear from his tour that he loved LIFT and cared about every inch of the place and cared for the people who worked and practiced their art there. That he worked at a media arts centre for such a long time and that he always talked excitedly about its plans for the future ... wow! He was a special guy and from the tour he gave me, he showed me what a special place LIFT is, and CFMDC, too. He was also really interested in what was happening at CSIF and at other centres around the country. I never felt that he was competitive, he was more of a collaborator that wanted good things to happen around the country.

One of the many accomplishments Roberto made was to ensure that filmmakers that practice at the media arts centres received an equivalent discount that students receive from Kodak. Last September, he successfully made the argument that filmmakers were learning their craft at the co-ops across the country and should be

able to receive the same 20% discount that film students at universities and colleges received. As many of you know, he could be so persuasive in so charming a fashion, that no one stood a chance of resisting if he wanted to convince you of something. So many artists who never knew Roberto are benefitting from his work and will continue to do so.

I have learned much from Roberto and am saddened to know that he is no longer going to be available to talk to on the phone or at conferences. I do know that I will think of him every time I see a really cool film; every time I talk to a filmmaker that is passionate about what they do; and every time I think of Toronto and LIFT and the media arts centres there and realize how interconnected and strong the arts community is.

To all of you who knew Roberto well, my thoughts are with you. I hope that the many tributes and legacy projects will give you all some comfort in the days and years ahead.

Best wishes,

Melody Jacobson

Operations Coordinator,

The Calgary Society of Independent Filmmakers (CSIF)

Prairie & Northwest Territories Region Director, Independent Media

Arts Alliance / Alliance des arts médiatiques indépendents

(IMAA/AAMI)

I just wanted to extend my deepest condolences to you on behalf of everyone at Reel Asian — I can't imagine the sadness you must be feeling over there. From the moment I met Roberto, he made me feel so welcome in the arts community, and was an endless source of advice and help — support that I sorely needed since I was so new at my job. He always managed to calm me down and make me see that my job didn't need to take over my life. He was that friendly face at stuffy OAC receptions and arts org. meetings. I feel I've been cheated out of the chance to get to know him better, and I think you were lucky to have worked with such a wonderful person. I can't believe he's gone. I'll miss him terribly.

**Sincerely,
Deanna Wong
ReelAsian**

We in Edmonton's media arts community are very sorry to hear the news of Roberto's passing. Many of the members, staff and board of FAVA & Metro Cinema have known Roberto over the years, and he was held in high esteem.

He was a very good man; always knowledgeable, helpful, and generous. It's heartbreaking to learn that he's no longer with us; the media arts community across the country will feel the loss. Our deepest sympathies are with his family, his friends, and his colleagues in Toronto.

Take care, everyone.

Sincerely,

Alison Turner & Marsh Murphy

Executive Directors of FAVA & Metro Cinema

On behalf of the members, staff & board of FAVA and Metro Cinema

On behalf of Spirafilm and all its members I would like to express our sincere sympathy at the loss of your friend, fellow artist and executive director Roberto Ariganello. Roberto's reputation as a good natured and extremely enthusiastic film advocate stretched all across Canada, and even though most of us here personally did not know him, many of us feel your loss.

Respectfully.

**Martin Brouard
executive director
Spirafilm
Québec City**

I'm still in shock over the news.

Life is tenuous and you must live it to the fullest, like Roberto did.

He encouraged me and my fellow recent film school graduates to FINISH our projects. He said that the work of film had value in any stage; but the COMPLETED project had much more weight. He encouraged us to use LIFT's facilities to enhance and improve our films. At the Cinecycle event, he was the grill master and ultimate host-making sure everyone had enough to eat.

At the Ward's Island BBQ, he was the voice of reason and judge for the hula hoop contest. His vivacious spirit and joie de vivre will be sorely missed.

Mere words can not express the depths to which he touched my life in such a short time; but I hope that the values he stood for, carry on at LIFT. My condolences and sympathy to his family, friends and the LIFT staff.

**Warmly,
Dionne Raines**

**On this Summer Day,
The Big Screen became Dark,
The Film has snapped,
The Poet in Motion
Left the Stage ...
We can not Splice it
Or can We,
By perpetuating His Legacy
To Alight a Passion
He Shared with All of Us
He leaves Us with His Flow
and I THANK YOU ROBERTO
We'll Keep Rolling for You.**

Paula

**Although I did not know Roberto very well,
I knew of the impact of his work at Lift, his talent as a filmmaker
and his generosity of spirit.**

**I am writing to express my deepest sympathy to his family
and to acknowledge the meaningful loss that all of us in the Toronto
and national artist communities now feel.**

In celebration of a life that touched many,

**Warmest Regards,
Michelle Mohabeer**

It Roberto's spirit, compelling him to personally assist people with their individual projects and interests in film, that I will always remember.

He was very excited about the Manifesto Project: "Film is Dead! Long Live Film!" that LIFT is producing to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the co-op. I was waiting to him to return my calls so that we could meet to discuss film stock selection and winding for my project, to be shot with a 100 year old, hand crank camera.

Roberto leaves behind him a strong and marvelous family who endowed him with that generosity of spirit and genuine interest in people that enabled him to be who he was. He was always immensely proud of them. He will be missed by many in a diversity of communities, here and in the wider world in the world.

James Loran Gillespie

Pleasure Dome's open screening 2005 was a memorable event for me.

It was the first time any person — who I had never met previously - approached me immediately following a screening of one of my works with the warmest of smiles saying “I liked your film”.

in a few short moments — I felt the most encouraging and constructive energy I have ever experienced as an emerging artist here in Toronto.

Not only did he like my work — Roberto Ariganello, at that moment, also knew how much I needed to hear it.

the energy he gave me in those moments was enough to sustain me over many months afterward — and in all honesty — continues to inspire, comfort, and enlighten to this day.

Even though my one-on-one moments with him could be counted on two hands — never have “moments” felt so genuine and real.

His time was clearly of utmost value to him — and it was my privilege to have received some so selflessly.

With his passing, I deeply mourn the loss for his loved ones - and Toronto on a whole.

but this tragedy is only serving to remind me - as he did in person - just how precious time is and should be.

**John “blazingpaddles” Forget
producer-arranger, Toronto**

I just met Roberto, maybe about 5 times or so, and I quickly realized what a kind human being he was.

Every time I went to LIFT for volunteering, I noticed what a great leader he was, always smiling, encouraging his team and treating everybody with sweets. He was indeed a wonderful man.

LIFT will never be the same without him.

Good bye Roberto, you will be missed.

Leny Bayda

it has taken me a couple of days to what happened to Roberto to sink in. yesturday as i read the news from you i was in total disbief. i still can't believe it. i could hear his voice when thinking back about him.

(his calm soft speech) he was it my monday and tuesday papers lay unopened.so i read them searching for the true story? swimming? why. was it foul play? not fair and too soon came to my mind. i did'nt know him as a close friend but my first reaction was to cry. he was a much needed person for LIFT and the people he touched. we 'll miss him.much heart felt condolences to his family.

jeanalexis

I was so deeply saddened to hear about Roberto's tragic passing. I saw him just a short while ago when I was picking up a camera... "Oh, shooting something?" "Cool!" He said. If I had known then that that would be the last time I'd get a chance to speak with him I would've told him that his enthusiasm and confidence in indie filmmaking gave me the momentum I needed to take the steps towards making my own stuff. I would've thanked him for his down to earth nature, his approachability, his advice and expertise, and most of all his tireless effort to make things easier for independent artists like myself. To no longer see him in the office is unimaginable! I only hope he knew the vast number of dreams he helped make a reality...

... you'll never be forgotten, Roberto.

Heather Rudynski

People like Roberto never die. In Toronto there may be about a thousand people that every time they had an idea for a shoot, they sit down and make a list of people to pull favors from. Guess who was at the top of those thousand lists? In my case, thanks to Roberto I was able to shoot a short which made it to this year's Montreal Festival, just a couple of weeks from today. I was also lucky to have known part of his art and I always wanted to know more about it. Are we going to have the fortune of having the city of Toronto organizing a retrospective of his works? A multitude of other artists will gather in an event like that. He deserves that to say the least. It is just a little idea so the city of Toronto gets to celebrate Roberto's life and art.

Sincerely,

Walter Pacifico

(writing from Buenos Aires, which I believe is the city of Roberto's grandfather)

I was heartbroken to hear of Roberto's tragic death. The news brings tears to my eyes and I still don't want to accept the fact that he has gone. It just can't be.

His passing has left a void in our lives. He was a man I truly admired and looked up to. We can all attest to his generosity and support. He was personally instrumental in getting me started in making films and owe him a debt of gratitude.

He was a trendsetter and worked diligently to make LIFT a welcoming place and the local Toronto filmmaking community a diverse and vibrant community.

My deepest condolences to the staff who have lost their beloved captain, to his family who has lost a beloved member, and to the members and the many filmmakers who have lost a mentor and friend.

My grief is compounded because I am out of the country now and wish I could be with you all in your hour of need.

I am fortunate to have met Robert. LIFT won't be the same place without him.

**Roberto, Roberto, you will be truly missed!
Stefan Chiarantano**

I wish to express my sincerest condolences on Roberto's passing. I was shocked and dismayed at hearing of his accident. As the former National Director of the Independent Media Arts Alliance I had often had cause to talk and collaborate on common issues with Roberto, when he was starting as Executive Director at LIFT, and he was a pleasure to work with. Most importantly he was a person of such character and sincere commitment to independent filmmaking that I am proud to have been his acquaintance and colleague.

Yours,

**Peter Sandmark
Executive Director
MediaNet
Victoria, BC**

I'm so sorry to hear about this tragedy.

Please accept my heart felt condolence from this email as I will not be able to make it to the funeral,

I will be there in spirit to wish Roberto and You all peace and healing from this loss of this wonderful Life force of Roberto Ariganello

Yours Truly

TK Workman

On behalf of Barry Choi and myself, I would like to extend my heartfelt condolences to the family, friends and co-workers of Roberto Ariganello who passed away in a tragic drowning accident in Nova Scotia on August 13TH.

He was 45 years old. Roberto was the Executive Director of LIFT (The Liasion of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto), of which I was a member throughout my years as a student in York University's Film Production Program. Roberto was instrumental in the making of our two films "Anamnesis" and "Mantis". He helped us get in contact with crew that enabled us to shoot on film, a medium that was dear to his heart and a passion shared between myself and Roberto. He also supported "Anamnesis" through LIFT's 2004 Salon Des Refuses: one of our first film festivals that paved the way for the over 30 film festivals worldwide in which the film has screened. Roberto was an easy-going sprit, always very warm, generous and supportive, and his absence is going to be acutely missed in the Toronto filmmaking and film student community.

Thank you, Roberto.

Brendon Foster-Algoo and Barry Choi

We have to make a movie.

Assemble every film, or video clip we can find of Roberto and all the photos and assemble them into a edit them together.

**Steven Lungley
Predecessor desk, Reorg Department**

Everyone here at SAW Video is thinking about you. Please let us know if there is anything that we can do to help you over this difficult time.

Roberto was a friend and a brother - he will be terribly missed.

From everyone at SAW Video, our deepest condolences,

**Penny McCann
Director
SAW Video Association**

I am very grateful to have known Roberto. I met him in 1999 when I took my first workshop at LIFT and prepping for my first short film. Over the years he has helped me one way or another in all my short films. Regardless of how busy he was he always had time to say hello and listen and encourage if not to volunteer his talent. And Roberto does this for so many people. He was one of the kindest and most generous person I know who cared for fellow filmmakers and the arts community. Thank you Roberto. You are dearly missed.

Siu Ta

It is with great heart-felt sadness that we learned of Roberto's sudden passing. He was a great friend of our organization and its members.

On behalf of every member, staff and the Board of Directors of the Independent Film Cooperative of Ottawa (IFCO), I would like to express our condolences and sincere regrets for your loss. I would also like to extend our support and assistance to LIFT in any way possible.

I know that Roberto's spirit will continue to inspire us as artists and filmmakers.

**Sincerely,
Aimee Britten President,
Independent Film Cooperative of Ottawa (IFCO)
(613) 238-2058**

I am shocked and deeply saddened by this news. I was always touched and inspired by Roberto's enthusiasm and passion for the arts, and by his tireless efforts to support other filmmakers in getting their imaginations onto film. I'm going to miss his sense of humor, his easy-going nature and his endless capacity for seeing the artistic genius in everyone. I'm going to miss him very much.

Kristina

Tribute to Roberto from Hope Thompson and Simone Jones

I will always remember - and greatly miss - Roberto,s easy smile and gentle charm and above all, his generosity. Unmotivated by politics or personal gain, he was simply willing to help people make their films ^ by sharing his knowledge, passion for filmmaking and always, his time. After spending hours in the Optical Printing room at LIFT helping me with my titles, I left but he stayed on, spending many more hours working on his own films. Roberto as filmmaker and friend was always there to show the way through the complexities and expense of filmmaking to make it accessible for all. He was a tireless champion of the filmmaker and I will always remember him as the champion he was himself.

Roberto was a constant inspiration and someone who was always willing to help you with your projects. He was a gifted filmmaker who was always working. His wonderful personality will be greatly missed. I always felt like he was a true friend ^ someone with whom you could always fall into conversation, despite the fact that time would go by between our visits with one another. Roberto,s tragic passing will be deeply felt by all who knew him. His influence as a thinker, advocate, artist and friend was wide-reaching. Roberto taught by example; his commitment to his work and community has helped to shape my understanding of what it means to be an artist and teacher.

We will miss him very, very much.

Simone Jones and Hope Thompson

“Roberto made our film dreams come true!”

Michelle Messina

I wish you all the best in this terrible time. My own feeling of loss for Roberto is so great that I can only imagine how great it is for those who worked with him so closely.

You can't sum a person that expressive and gregarious and adventurous so easily, but one of the things that sticks out so strongly is how much of an enabler and encourager Roberto was. His mantra was how easy and possible it was to make a film. I witnessed Roberto work his magic on friends who weren't planning to ever make a film - after some insistent encouragement, they were that much closer to making a project. And for those of us who really wanted to make films in the first place, he got us that much closer to finishing one.

Every talent could be used and every resource was an opportunity. One of the things that really made him sparkle in the past few years was his belief that the death of film in the industry was really the chance of the lifetime for the artisan. Every discarded piece of film equipment was worth salvaging, either for

LIFT or any other interested co-op, because it expanded our opportunities to make work. He provided opportunities to use up the last rolls of Regular 8mm at the same time as he encouraged us to finish in 35mm.

I'll miss him dearly as a friend, as a colleague and as a mentor. The film community here is blessed with the fact that we can often be those three roles congruently. But we are more blessed to have people like Roberto, whose energy enables us to continue to create and show work despite the disinterest of the industry that supplied the tools. Unfortunately, Roberto showed us that this energy isn't tireless even though he put on a good show that it was. He left us too soon.

Take care,

Chris

I was very sorry to hear of Roberto's death, shocked, too, because I have been in regular email contact with him this year. I first met him in 2005 at the Images Festival, where he introduced himself and invited me to undertake a residency at LIFT. This year we met again and the invitation was firmed up.

In all this, Roberto was notably supportive, enthusiastic and encouraging.

Although I only knew him briefly, I will remember him as a friendly, informed and energetic person whose dedication to artists' filmmaking in Toronto is evidenced for me in the exceptional facilities at LIFT.

Nicky Hamlyn, U.K. Filmmaker.

I am truly and deeply saddened by this tragic news. I was away and just returned home today. I regret that I missed Roberto's and will be at the memoriam on the 24TH. We, at the Female Eye will miss Roberto very, very much.

Best,

Leslie Ann Coles, Female Eye Film Festival

I want to convey my deepest sympathies to Roberto's family, friends and colleagues in Toronto and across Canada. To know Roberto was truly to love him, he had an unbounded joy for life that was so infectious. He has had such a significant impact on so many lives, and he has lead a truly inspiring life, so fully engaged in the world and with the people around him, always so quick to offer his support and true friendship in work and in play. I spent my last birthday in April with Roberto in Ottawa, he cooked a wonderful meal and later the 5 of us danced around the living room like teen-agers, an unforgettable celebration of life that came so easily to Roberto. I returned to Toronto in late July to apply for the position of executive director of CFMDC and Roberto called me just before I went in for the interview to offer me his full support as a colleague and a friend. After I was offered the position Roberto was right there to lead the celebration, throw a BBQ, have friends over, and we shared a mutual excitement that we would be working together every day at the Liberty building. We talked

at length about exciting projects and directions that CFMDC and LIFT could accomplish together.

Roberto's generosity, dedication, and commitment is an inspiration that will guide me in my work and life. He really is one of the most exceptional men I have known. There are no words to ad quately express how deeply he will be missed, but to know he will live on in our hearts with the limitless spirit Roberto brought to our world.

In peace,

Lauren Howes

Distribution Coordinator

Video Out Distribution

Roberto will be greatly missed.

He left his personal, indelible mark in the film community and in so many of us. With his passion, honesty, friendship, motivation, humour, optimism, and culinary ability he was always there to give us a helping hand.

I feel a deep, deep, deep sadness flickering at 24 f.p.s. on a film loop.

Ruben Guzman

Some of us have had the chance to meet Roberto through the AAMI, or while visiting our colleagues in Toronto. Even if we don't know him much, we know how active he was, we've felt the energy, the enthusiasm that was inside of him. It's so difficult to accept the sudden departure of someone like him.

In the name of the board, the members and the staff of Vidéographe, I would like to say our sympathies to all those who feel this loss and who are grieving him.

Sincerely,

**Marie-Dominique Bonmariage
Directrice générale, Vidéographe
mdbonmariage@videographe.qc.ca**

My name is Roach, I did SPIT with Daniel Cross and a great help from Roberto during this time. This is a shock for me and I have a hard time to express myself regarding his death. This guy was one of the best person I knew. When I met him in 1998, he treated me like a human being, which was rare back then due to my condition as a street kid, people usually treated me like garbage. And received me at his place several times for a nice dinner and little party with couples of friends, a guy that really had the “the joie de vivre”, you know what I mean?!

Roberto was always ready to help. I remember one time, during the shooting of SPIT, we filmed a scene with Roberto as operator of the 16mm camera, in Toronto, behind LIFT I think and that was and this is where I saw is real passion for cinema. It was my debut, and Roberto, that day, made me realize that I can actually have a passion in my life, that future was possible, and Daniel made me realize that this passion would be, for me too, filmmaking. He also helped me out on my birthday, in 2000, at the Toronto International Film Festival against the cops... To make a short story (because I need to talk about it, I am alone and need to write), OCAP was doing a demonstration against the Hollywood

celebrity and the cops tried to put me in the demo, but I wasn't part of it. Mila and Roberto kinda convince the cops that I was ok, and I was able to film the cops. For me this is brotherhood.

I will miss Roberto a lot.. I have to say that a have a tattoo on my left forearm with tombstones, it's a cemetery. On each tombstones I have a name of passed away friends. 19 friends tombstones on my arm and 4 nameless tombstones. I never thought I would have to tattoo his name on my arm... It is a sad day for me, and I will mourn his death and get tattooed in his honor, that is brotherhood in my punk community.

RIP Roberto, you will never be forgotten...

With all my respect,

Eric”Roach”Denis

Remembering Roberto

I returned yesterday from attending Roberto's funeral in Toronto. Meeting his family, and joining his many, many friends gathered to mourn him, made his sudden, shocking passing seem more real.

Roberto was a colleague, a peer, and a friend. I saw him last a month ago in Toronto. We talked a lot about the stresses of running media art centres, of trying to maintain an art practice and of what the future would hold. Roberto was working too hard and wanted to work less. He was looking forward to taking time off later in the year to travel to Argentina to work on a film. But first he was going to Nova Scotia for a few days. A half-work/half-holiday road trip he was looking forward to.

Roberto's dreams and future have been extinguished suddenly and searingly but his generous spirit has not. It was there in the standing-room-only funeral service and at the outdoor screening of his work. The community's reaction to Roberto's passing demonstrates that the media arts in Canada is one grand, eccentric and far-flung family. Our family has lost a brother and we shall miss him tremendously.

**Penny McCann
Director
SAW Video (Ottawa)**

I can not claim to have known Roberto for a long time. We never went for drinks or social interaction, and aside from the Ward's Island Picnic (where he encouraged me to hula hoop) we only met when I was attending a workshop. I did however in these short summer months, in the path of classroom and coffee break, experience Roberto's kindness, generosity, and full throttle support.

Filled with apprehension and apologetic for my technical ineptitude, he was the first to wave his dismissive arms with a "that doesn't matter." At my last workshop he was only too pleased to remind me of how, after only shooting video, my super 8 he assured, would look so beautiful." "Stunning, and you'll have fun." He then pointed to the canisters of his own films that he planned to show in Halifax. When I told him my niece was headed to Dalhousie he was more than happy to regale me with film related happenings he thought to be of interest. And then there was that smile...the perfect balance of mischief and warmth. I'll miss it. I'll miss him ...I already do.

Maggie Mortimer

The Conseil québécois des arts médiatiques - CQAM extends their sincere condolences to the staff of Lift, to Roberto's family and friends and to all those who will surely miss his incredible dedication to the independent film practice as well as his endless determination to foster and safeguard the creativity and the independence of the media arts practice. Although we in Quebec did not know him well, his reputation as a staunch ally was a fact we were all aware of.

May peace be with him and may the independent film community gravitating around LIFT remember his spirit as one that never gave up.

Sincerely,

**Barbara Ulrich, Executive Director CQAM
for the Board of Directors**

Martine Beaurivage, présidente

Marie-France Thérien, trésorière Aaron Pollard, secrétaire

Nicolas Paquet, administrateur

Laurence-Amélie Montpetit, administratrice

I first met you at an AGO screening 7 years ago (I was just arrived to Toronto as new immigrant) We had a brief talk and you encouraged me to visit LIFT, which I did in the following day. Since then, you made me discover the art of independent filmmaking, to volunteer, to help and encourage others in their projects.

Thanks for the inspiration you transmit ... you'll live on our minds.

goodbye,

Madi

**I was shocked and saddened to hear of Roberto's tragic passing. May he
be at peace now.**

**Roberto not only contributed immensely to the independent film com-
munity of Toronto, he had a radiant warm soul. He touched people
greatly by his caring heart, his warmth and his passion. He will be
sadly missed.**

Roberto yours was a short life and it touched many.

rest in peace

**fondly,
Daria Stermac**

I was shocked when I heard. I don't even know what to say.

Please give all my love and sympathy to the LIFTERS you see.

Wow, what a year.

David W Scott

After shooting our first 16mm film, tangly wood, we needed an optical job done to recover a few shots. At the time, the equipment didn't exist in Calgary so I phoned around in Toronto to find out who the experts were. We would pay. After some long and informative conversations with John Kneller about the process, our little job gets handed over to Roberto ('cause John got busy). Roberto was also very busy with life, LIFT and his own films and, after many months of emails, pesky phone calls, shipping tests and other stuff, the anxiety continues to rise at our end. We run out of money, borrow some, then find some more. But Roberto is calm. "Don't worry, we are going to this done". The film got done, it all worked out and it was particularly gratifying that a print of tangly wood played at LIFT's Salon de Refuse in 2003. I only ran into Roberto a few times the next couple of years, once raving about super-duper8 and another time, after a LIFT tour, giving us a 35mm end roll (that waits in our fridge). I talked to him on the phone a few weeks ago about the "...Long live Film" project and his enthusiasm and encouragement was beaming into my ear same as ever....a shining example of an artist, teacher and advocate.

Peter Stinson

i left toronto 3 weeks ago to tour america for my new cd. but since hearing about the death of roberto i am frequently drifting through memories of what i loved about him. roberto was disarming because there was no snobery about him. he was approachable, relaxed, wanting to laugh and eager to be friends.

he also made me feel like i had permission to be a filmmaker even though i am new to it and without formal training.

in his memory i will try to be, like him, a helpful guide to my friends and colleagues.

**bob wiseman
(st. louis, missouri)**

On behalf of Toronto Arts Council I would like to offer my condolences to the family and the many friends and colleagues of Roberto Ariganello. My thoughts are particularly with you, his “LIFT family”. Roberto touched the lives of a tremendous number of people in the Toronto arts community and beyond, and his memory will continue to do so. His life and work truly deserves a celebration.

He was a generous, caring person whose energy, passion and dedication to the arts was an inspiration.

He encouraged countless media artists while at the helm of LIFT and was a tireless advocate for the arts.

His legacy as an artist remains, and will only continue to grow through the work of the many artists he mentored and inspired.

Roberto’s role as a volunteer cannot be underestimated. He leaves a legacy through helping to shape policies and programs at organizations such as the Cultural Careers Council of Ontario, the Advisory Board of Humber College Film & Television Program, and the Independent Media Arts Alliance. His cultural leadership and advocacy will be sorely missed.

Roberto will be remembered in the community with much love and respect.

**With deepest condolences,
Claire Hopkinson
Executive Director
Toronto Arts Council
Toronto Arts Council Foundation**

**First time I met Roberto was 2005 at IMAGES festival.
He kindly took me to LIFT and introduced LIFT to me.
I remember he was so kind to communicate with me, in spite of my
poor English.**

**This Spring, thanks to Roberto, I and Takashi could visit LIFT to make
films. For us as filmmakers, that experience was so important. We
learned many things. Roberto was always kind to us, and we always
felt him like a reliable older brother in Canada. Though both our race
and religion were different, we really felt him like an older brother.**

I am sorry that I don't have enough ability to express my feelings..

**best,
Yuiko and Takashi**

I have met Roberto for the first time a few years ago on the way to Gibraltar Point (to visit artists that resided there through the Artscape program). I was still new in the Toronto arts community. Roberto came up to me just before we boarded the ferry and introduced himself, and made me feel at ease right away. He kept me company through the day and later on suggested that we work together on a project involving poetry and film (which ended up being Poetry Projections). He also invited me to the LIFT offices and showed me around, and was very enthusiastic about working together-it was very inspiring. Over the years that I've known Roberto and worked with him, he was always a true friend, ready to help and offer advice. I will never forget his warmth and passion. I will miss him greatly.

Joanna Poblocka

I do not think it is going to be easy to find a leader like Roberto. His grassroots philosophy defied the most obnoxious trends now present in the Canadian film industry. His allergy to square politics and bureaucracy made him fight for freedom of artistic speech, for the development of genuine artists, for the preservation of ethics.

Although away for a long time from Toronto, and preparing a film Summit in Madrid; tomorrow I'll be with you.

Irene Lopez Kuchilan