



BULLETIN

Canadian Conference of the Arts ~ Conférence canadienne des arts

UPDATE ON ARTS AND CULTURE ISSUES IN THE 2006 ELECTION PLATFORMS

Sixty years strong, the Canadian Conference of the Arts is the national forum for the arts and cultural community in Canada. It serves as a leader, authority, and catalyst to ensure that artists can contribute freely and fully to a creative, dynamic, and civil Canadian society.

For more information on the CCA's current advocacy work, please visit our website at www.ccarts.ca

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Bulletins are provided as a benefit to our members. If you would like to receive the CCA Bulletin directly, please visit our membership page at www.ccarts.ca and become a member of the CCA.

Ottawa, January 9, 2006 – In Bulletin 53/05 www.ccarts.ca/en/electionbulletins.htm the Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA) announced it had sent fifteen specific questions to the offices of the five major political parties. We continue to encourage our members and supporters to use and circulate any or all of these questions in your own communications with the parties, with individual candidates in your ridings, and at all-party debates. The CCA is asking all federal parties to articulate how, if elected, they plan to “walk the talk” for Canada’s arts and culture. Unfortunately, as of 9 January 2006 the CCA has yet to receive any official responses to our questionnaire, due in part (perhaps) to the campaigning moratorium over the holiday break.

The Liberal Party of Canada did take the initiative to respond to our earlier Bulletin 52/05 www.ccarts.ca/en/electionbulletins.htm of their own volition, wherein the CCA unveiled its five broad priorities for the current federal election campaign and beyond. Their letter dated 21 December 21 2005 is available in English only on our website at www.ccarts.ca/en/2005ElectionNews1/partyresponse.htm. Last week the CCA wrote to the President of the Liberal Party of Canada to ensure that they will also respond to our fifteen specific questions, though the 21 Dec letter is insightful, in that it provides a detailed account of pre-election accomplishments and some election promises of things to come.

As of 9 January 2006 neither the Liberal Party, nor the Conservatives or the NDP, have released their full election platforms of policies and promises.

Le Bloc Québécois’ election platform as it pertains to arts and culture appears on pages 55 through 59 at www.bloc.org/archivage/plateforme_2005-2006.pdf, which is available in French only.

The Green Party have a section of their 2006 Election platform entitled “Sharing our Stories: Arts, Culture and Communication”, which can be viewed at: www.greenparty.ca/our_stories.html.

The CCA will provide analyses of all political parties’ platforms pertaining to arts and culture issues in the coming weeks as the platforms are unveiled. We will be monitoring the final two leaders’ debates televised from Montreal, as well as news releases and public statements. Please continue to visit www.ccarts.ca/en/2005ElectionNews1.htm for ongoing CCA election updates.

MINORITY REPORT: CCPA REPORT CARD ON THE 2004-05 MINORITY GOVERNMENT

On 5 January 2006 the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) released “Minority Report: A Report Card on the 2004-05 Minority Government”. The entire report can be downloaded in English from the CCPA web site at: www.policyalternatives.ca/documents/National_Office_Pubs/2006/AFB_Minority_Report.pdf

“Minority Report: A Report Card on the 2004-05 Minority Government” outlines the problems, grades the efforts, and outlines an unfinished agenda for the next government. The report was put together with input from numerous civil society organizations representing millions of Canadians.

The CCA has been involved with the CCPA’s Alternative Federal Budget project for the last few years and authored the piece on “Arts and Culture” in “Minority Report”. We acknowledge that the federal government made some good progress on arts and culture issues in the last eighteen months, but much more needs to be done, including:

- Honouring the November 23 funding commitment, which includes an increase to the Canada Council for the Arts, in the 2006 Federal Budget.

- Introducing policies to ensure fair tax treatment of artists by the Canada Revenue Agency, including improved tax exemptions and access to social benefits without jeopardizing the status of self-employed contractors.
- Maintaining policies that restrict foreign ownership of media and cultural industries, and curb the concentration of ownership to strengthen domestic cultural expression.
- Increasing funding to the CBC on a multi-year basis and uphold the cultural objectives of the Broadcasting Act in the 21st Century.
- Restoring arts and culture as the “third pillar” of Canada’s international diplomacy, and add additional financial resources to Foreign Affairs.

NEW ARTS AND CULTURE CAMPAIGNS ACTIVE IN THE 2006 FEDERAL ELECTION (in alphabetical order) www.ccarts.ca/en/ElectionLinks.htm

Friends of Canadian Broadcasting – "Defend Our Airwaves"
www.friends.ca/defendourairwaves-cca

Friends of Canadian Broadcasting is an independent, Canada-wide, non-partisan voluntary organization supported by 66,000 households. Its mission is to defend and enhance the quality and quantity of Canadian programming in the Canadian audio-visual system. The latest in a series of Friends of Canadian Broadcasting’s internet-based election campaigns focuses on the issue of maintaining Canada’s restrictions on foreign ownership.

CCA members and supporters are encouraged to visit the Friends web action centre at www.friends.ca/defendourairwaves-cca and join with thousands of other Canadians to send a powerful message to candidates of all political parties urging them to defend Canada's airwaves. CCA bulletins will continue to circulate news of future Friends election advocacy campaigns as they are unveiled throughout the remainder of January.

Our Public Airwaves – “Support CBC”
www.supportcbc.ca

Our Public Airwaves (OPA) is the initiative of concerned Canadians who believe a strong public broadcasting system is essential to provide a broad range of innovative programming in the public interest, independent of commercial considerations. OPA advocates for the revitalization of public broadcasting to expand public airspace in which Canadians can share their ideas, meet their neighbours, and tell their stories.

Our Public Airwaves has launched the “Support CBC” campaign to make the CBC an issue in this federal election www.supportcbc.ca. OPA is asking supporters to visit its campaign website to send a message to all the party leaders in order to, “Tell them you want a firm commitment to increased funding for Canada’s most important cultural institution.” OPA’s campaign website has a full page of important information about CBC and the financial problems it faces. There is also a page with questions you can ask at election meetings or when candidates arrive at your door.

Should you or your organization know of any current advocacy efforts not mentioned in this bulletin or on our website, including (but not limited to): questionnaires sent to and responses received from the political parties; all-candidates debates that discussed arts and culture issues; and pertinent statements by candidates and/or party leaders, please keep us informed so that we can echo them info@ccarts.ca.

IMAGINE CANADA URGES PARTY LEADERS TO SUPPORT HEALTHIER CHARITABLE AND NON-PROFIT SECTOR

On January 6 Imagine Canada delivered a letter to the four party leaders emphasizing the critical contribution of Canada's 161,000 charities and nonprofit organizations. The letter asks the parties to consider three recommendations that would strengthen the ability of the sector to serve those who need it most. Imagine Canada is a national organization that supports Canada's charities, non-profit organizations, and socially conscious businesses and champions the work they do in our communities. Their letter to the party leaders can be read at: www.imaginecanada.ca/Files/issuealerts/federal_election_release_jan_6_2006.pdf

The charitable and nonprofit sector employs two million people and contributes 7.8% of Canada's GDP, which is larger than the mining, oil and gas extraction, automotive manufacturing, and entire retail trade industries. However, the sector is not a prominent part of any party's platform leading up to the federal election later this month.

According to Statistics Canada's September 2004 National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations, of the estimated 161,000 incorporated nonprofit organizations in Canada, 13,770 are involved in the arts and culture, representing 8.5% of the total. Total revenues of these arts and culture organizations amounted to \$3.4 billion, or 3.1% of all nonprofits. Compared with other nonprofits, arts and culture organizations receive much lower funding from government (28% for arts and culture vs. 49% for all nonprofits), much higher revenues from earned sources (50% for arts and culture vs. 35% for all nonprofits), slightly higher revenues from gifts and donations (17% for arts and culture vs. 13% for all nonprofits) and roughly similar revenues from other sources (5% for arts and culture organizations vs. 3% for all nonprofits).

Hill Strategies Research Inc.'s useful summary of the September 2004 Statistics Canada survey can be found at www.hillstrategies.com/docs/ARM_vol3_no7.pdf.

The Canadian Conference of the Arts presents:



Mapping Canada's Cultural Policy

Tracer la politique culturelle du Canada

**Mapping Canada's Cultural Policy: Where do we go from here?
March 2-4, 2006
Sheraton Hotel, Ottawa**

REMINDER: Early bird registration to the conference ends February 10, 2006!

Register now at: www.ccarts.ca/en/events/NPCChalmers2006registration.htm

For more information, visit: www.ccarts.ca/en/events/NPCChalmers2006.htm