



# BULLETIN

Canadian Conference of the Arts ~ Conférence canadienne des arts

## A NEW CANADIAN CULTURAL POLICY

**Ottawa, January 21, 2005** - The Minister of Canadian Heritage, Liza Frulla, has frequently mentioned her interest in developing a federal cultural policy for Canada:

*"Let us talk about cultural policy. It has three objectives. The first and most important one is to put the creator at the core of our concerns. The second one is to strengthen our Canadian identity. Finally, the third objective is to promote accessibility. We want to ensure that people not only appreciate what our creators do, but that they have access to their work."*

(Committee of the Whole, November 16, 2004).

The Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA) has been involved in the federal cultural policy debate for decades. In June 1998, it published the *Final Report of the Working Group on Cultural Policy for the 21st Century*. As the Working Group stated in the Executive Summary, it viewed "the implementation of a federal cultural policy as an essential affirmation of the sovereign right of Canada to manage its domestic cultural affairs in the way it best sees fit". The Report's recommendations remain relevant today. For your information in the current debate, CCA has posted the Executive Summary and recommendations on CCA's website, at <http://www.ccarts.ca/en/advocacy/publications/policy/workinggroup.htm>.

### Why now?

There has probably never been a better time in Canada to re-assess the federal policy framework. There is a minister in charge of Canadian Heritage with an expressed interest in the issue. DCH is currently developing a Green Paper on the issue. Also, in a rare show of solidarity, all parties are currently demonstrating a common interest in culture (witness their support for the renewal of Tomorrow Starts Today).

### What will a cultural policy do?

It will provide a framework of coherent principles, objectives and means to knit together the many threads that exist today in the cultural arena. Our current cultural policies are a piecemeal affair, and there is very little dialogue to create a common vision. A cultural policy will display a long-term vision for those who control the public purse - ministers, MPs, and bureaucrats.

Measures which relate to culture are not only housed in the Department of Canadian Heritage; departments such as Finance, Industry, National Revenue, Foreign Affairs, and Human Resources and Skills Development also need to be consulted.

### Tell us what you think

Development of a federal cultural policy is a very important next step for Canada. Consequently, CCA's next national policy conference, scheduled for November 2005 (exact date and venue TBA), will focus on this issue, with strategic study sessions for certain specific issues. What are your thoughts on a federal cultural policy? How should it be developed? What are the key elements? Please direct your comments over the next few weeks to [info@ccarts.ca](mailto:info@ccarts.ca); deadline for submission: 14 February 2005.

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