



BULLETIN

Canadian Conference of the Arts ~ Conférence canadienne des arts

The CCA urges the new Government of Canada to strengthen our arts and culture on national and international fronts

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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Ottawa, January 24 2006 - The Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA) congratulates all new and returning Members of Parliament for their election to the 39th Parliament of Canada, and welcomes the new government chosen by Canadians. As an important first order of business for the cultural sector, the CCA asks the new government to honour the planned increase to the budget of the Canada Council for the Arts announced last November 23.

"Increasing the Canada Council's budget by \$150 million over three years was not a mere pre-election promise", says Alain Pineau, CCA National Director. "This decision has received the support in the last Parliament from MPs of all political parties, including the Conservative culture critic Bev Oda. It has received Cabinet approval to go to Treasury Board before election call. Now that this much needed increase is finally in the governmental machine, with identified financing, it would clearly require a conscious decision of the new government to revoke or delay it."

This long-overdue investment in the Canadian cultural sector has been the object of numerous Finance Committee presentations on the part of the Canadian business and cultural sectors. "There will be ample time to review processes and programs," Pineau adds, "but given its crucial importance to supporting Canadian creativity and given the relatively small amount involved in the first of a well-thought out three year process, we urge the Conservative government to confirm the previous Government's decision."

The CCA notes that the new Conservative government has been elected precisely at a time when it is imperative to assess the national policy framework of the cultural sector at large. Important aspects of this policy framework have been put in place by previous federal Conservative governments, which enacted status of the artist legislation, initiated revisions to the Copyright Act, and established a series of task forces and other legislative initiatives in support of the arts and cultural industries.

The CCA wants to work closely with the new government to help refocus and frame 21st century Canadian cultural policies to face current technological and international trade challenges. "In the last Parliament, the CCA worked constructively with Conservative Heritage critic Bev Oda" says Pineau, "and we are sure that whatever role she may play in the next government, her understanding of the sector will provide guidance to her colleagues on the government side of the House".

Other immediate priorities the CCA will ask the new government to address include:

- Restoring arts and culture as the "third pillar" of Canada's international diplomacy and add additional financial resources to Foreign Affairs in support of this sector.
- Developing clear policies to ensure the fair tax treatment of artists by the Canada Revenue Agency, including improved tax exemptions, income averaging, and access to social benefits without jeopardizing the status of self-employed contractors.
- Maintaining policies that protect existing Canadian ownership of our media and cultural industries; restricting both foreign ownership and the concentration of ownership in the cultural industries; and strengthening domestic cultural expressions with policies that encourage Canadian investment in the cultural industries.
- Increasing funding to the CBC on a multi-year basis and upholding the cultural objectives of the Broadcasting Act in the 21st Century.
- Revising the Copyright Act to enhance the moral and economic rights of creators and copyright owners and licensees.

- Introducing a new federal museums policy, which would include the investment of new monies in sustained, multi-year, predictable programs

The Canadian Conference of the arts is the country's largest assembly of individuals and organizations engaged in arts and cultural issues, whose combined numbers represent close to a quarter of a million Canadians. As a non-partisan organization that strives to contribute to the unique character of Canadian society in the cultural sector, the CCA will work closely with all political parties and MPs represented in the new House.

The CCA's mission is to contribute to a clear-headed debate about Canadian arts and culture, and how best to make our artists and cultural institutions and business thrive for the benefit of all Canadians. As part of delivering this mission, the CCA is organizing an important conference to map the current federal cultural policy environment and establish actions plans for the future, which is scheduled for March 2-4 2006 in Ottawa.



Mapping Canada's Cultural Policy
Tracer la politique culturelle du Canada

The Canadian Conference of the Arts presents:

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/NPCCChalmers2006registration.htm

For more information, visit:
www.ccarts.ca/en/events/NPCCChalmers2006.htm