



BULLETIN

Canadian Conference of the Arts ~ Conférence canadienne des arts

TOMORROW IS ANOTHER DAY FOR THE ARTS AND CULTURE IN CANADA

Ottawa, February 23, 2005 - Finance Minister Ralph Goodale introduced his second federal budget in the House of Commons late this afternoon, and his first for Paul Martin's Liberal minority government. Many in the arts and cultural sector across Canada have been on pins and needles over what this budget might have in store for the sector. For weeks, the Canadian media has been flush with rumours that this would be a "something for everyone" budget, though the arts, culture, and heritage sector have heard this song before and have rarely been invited to the dance.

Of primary concern to Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA) and its members – would the essential *Tomorrow Starts Today* (TST) funding program, which began in 2001 with \$560 million over three years, and was re-announced as a one year \$192 initiative by Canadian Heritage Minister Liza Frulla this past December, be extended long term?

CCA was pleased to find that *Delivering on Commitments: Budget Plan 2005* does indeed include a substantial extension of the TST funding envelope. Page 99 of the document states:

"Budget 2005 further extends the \$172 million of new funding per year for another four years, for a total of \$688 million. This brings total new funding for Tomorrow Starts Today to \$860 million over five years. This multi-year investment will help create stability within the arts and culture community by providing predictable levels of funding in the years to come."

CCA appreciates this significant investment commitment and applauds Minister Goodale for heeding the advice of his colleagues on the Standing Committee on Finance, whose mid-December report made a unanimous recommendation to extend the TST program. However, it would appear that somewhere along the way, the entirety of the sector's messages to the Finance Committee and the Finance Minister got lost, as the message of increased funding to the sector did not make its way into the budget in a substantial way. In fact, CCA is concerned that the TST program will be reduced by \$20 million annually from 06-07 onwards. What programs will be affected? The estimates will tell, but are still weeks away. In short, yes, the renewal of TST represents much-needed multi-year funding, but the announced level will not adequately address growing financial needs.

"We are grateful for the extension of Tomorrow Starts Today," said CCA National Director Jean Malavoy. ***"We congratulate Minister Frulla and her colleagues on this significant step, and we expect that this five-year extension represents the foundation on which increased funding for culture can be built."***

Overall, arts, culture and heritage still has a long way to go in terms of making itself a priority in the hearts and mind of this government, as Minister's Goodale's Budget Speech made but one reference to the sector when he said, *"(Cities and Communities) are engines of growth, employment and innovation, centres of art, culture and learning."*

Funding for the CBC

Also seeking long-term and sustainable funding was the CBC, who had been rumoured in the media to be receiving a funding bump to help increase its regional programming strategy. What the CBC appears to have received instead is the same single-year, \$60 million funding "top-up" that has been present in the past few budgets. This would not represent any actual increase in core funding for the CBC, but would rather maintain the CBC's funding at current levels for a single year, leaving the CBC unable to make long term programming decisions.

What else is in the budget for arts, culture and heritage?

- \$5 million per year to the Multiculturalism Program

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- \$10 million per year to Celebrate Canada for “community-based events and activities”
- \$46 million over five years to Parks Canada for “the restoration and preservation of Canada’s built heritage” and “to work with partners to implement a national register of historic places and conversation standards”

What is not there?

- No action on a recommendation from the Standing Committee on Finance for the federal government to increase the Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit to 30%
- No specific mention of funding key, though unstable programs, which are essential elements of federal support of arts and culture, including but not limited to: the Canadian Television Fund and the Museums Assistance Program
- No mention of significant changes to EI and income taxation that would positively impact Canada’s professional artists and creators

What is unclear?

- The agenda for “Cities and Communities” and its potential impact on arts, culture and heritage at local and regional levels remains vague at best. The government did announce a five year \$5 billion plan to share gas tax revenues with municipalities and communities, so will citizens locally work to ensure that cultural initiatives are supported as well?
- \$375 million over five years for the three federal research granting councils, which could potentially be accessed by the sector.
- Will increased funding of \$800 million for regional economic development agencies in Atlantic Canada, Western Canada, Quebec and Northern Ontario allow dollars to flow to cultural initiatives?

More to come in the days and weeks ahead...

With Minister of Canadian Heritage Liza Frulla set to make telephone calls to the media and leaders in the cultural sector overnight, CCA hopes to have a clearer idea of the ministry’s intentions by the end of the week. We also anxiously await the release of the Main Estimates later on, so that we might see how the many specific programs that fall under the TST rubric may be affected.

CCA will continue to scrutinize the budget and monitor public statements about its contents, the results of which will be circulated via our bulletins, when necessary. As always, CCA will author a substantial, detailed analysis of the implications of the federal budget on Canada’s arts, culture and heritage sector, which will be available in both official languages in a couple of months.