



BULLETIN

Canadian Conference of the Arts ~ Conférence canadienne des arts

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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2006 FEDERAL ELECTION IS DRAWING TO A CLOSE... AND THE CCA'S WORK HAS JUST BEGUN

Ottawa, January 20 2006 - The last few days of Canada's first winter election in many years has seen political campaigners go into overdrive as they push towards the vote next Monday January 23rd. The media are scrambling to cover the barrage of last-minute repartee and rhetoric, while the country is abuzz with the question: "What will Parliament look like on Tuesday January 24th?"

When one considers that the words "arts and culture" never quite made it past the lips of the party leaders, from the sector's point of view, the campaign has been an expected disappointment. This is not surprising, though unfortunate. Let us find solace in Kim Campbell's famous quote that elections are not the time to discuss serious policy matters, and start focussing on what we will need to do to **make cultural policy a serious matter** starting on January 24!

But the election is not over yet, and as Canada's largest arts advocacy organization, the Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA) continues to work to put arts and culture issues on the agenda of the next government. The CCA continues to provide comprehensive analysis on where exactly each of the five major parties stands on priority issues of concern to our members, member organizations and, indeed, all Canadians. And, no matter the outcome of Monday's vote, the CCA will orient the incoming government as to how it can work for Canada's artists, creators, arts organizations and cultural industries, and for the public, which benefit from the valuable work of our members.

Each of the five major political parties has released its official platform, which respectively dedicates varying degrees of page space to arts and culture issues. Please visit <http://www.ccarts.ca/en/2005ElectionNews1/platformanalyses.htm> for the CCA's Comparison of Party Platforms.

Each of the five major political parties has finally responded to CCA's December 20 2005 Questionnaire of 15 Questions, with the latest coming from the Green Party just yesterday. Please visit <http://www.ccarts.ca/en/2005ElectionNews1/partyresponse.htm> for answers to CCA's questions, which range from detailed and specific responses, to vague and disconcerting.

Certainly, one thing clear to the CCA regarding the current election is the presence of "gaps" when one compares official party platforms to questionnaire responses and public statements. Here are some examples:

- All parties' responses to CCA's Dec 20 questionnaire mention support for the increase of the budget of the Canada Council for the Arts announced on November 23 2005, with the exception of the Conservative Party of Canada. Ms. Bev Oda, the CPC's Heritage critic in the last Parliament, certainly made an encouraging statement about her party's support for the Canada Council increase in a Radio-Canada interview last week. While the CCA is pleased with Ms. Oda's statement, we cannot confirm if it does in fact reflect the CPC's official position on this issue, as CCA's inquiries to the party's election office remain unanswered.

- Unfortunately, none of the major political parties' official platforms includes a commitment to a much-needed new museums policy and increased funding, though certainly some parties' responses to the CCA, as well as our colleagues at the Canadian Museums Association, indicate support for this important initiative.

- Only the Liberal party platform speaks about copyright reform, though the NDP and the Bloc's answers to our survey do address this issue.

- Regrettably, few parties have mentioned support for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. (See: <http://www.broadcastermagazine.com/issues/ISArticle.asp?id=51635&issue=01172006>)

- And last, both the Liberal and Conservative parties have announced promises that could potentially benefit the arts and cultural sector if implemented, but have chosen to not include it in the arts and culture section of their official platforms. For examples of this, see:

http://www.liberal.ca/news_e.aspx?id=11396, or

<http://www.conservative.ca/EN/1738/38178>.

Be sure to vote next Monday and support the party that you feel will best "walk the talk" on cultural issues in the next Parliament. www.elections.ca

There's still time to campaign for culture - email your election candidate today!

CharityVillage.com is using software from AdvocacyOnline.net to help you connect with candidates in ridings across the country.

Just go to their website: action-charityvillage.com and follow their simple instructions. It's as easy as 1, 2, 3:

1. Enter your name, e-mail address and postal code to locate candidates in your riding.
2. Select the candidate(s) that you'd like to contact.
3. Compose your letter and click the button to send your message.

Letter to Candidates

We invite all CCA members and supporters to use the following letter as a template when you send a message to your local candidates. Read and print the letter here:

http://ccarts.ca/en/documents/CCAletterfinal_000.doc

Doorstep Kit

In addition, the CCA has drafted a "Doorstep Kit" that highlights 5 questions to ask local candidates, including a list of what you can do to put culture on the political agenda of the next Parliament. Read more here: <http://www.ccarts.ca/en/documents/CCAdoorkit-final.pdf>

Visit www.ccarts.ca for additional election coverage from the CCA!



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