



# BULLETIN

Canadian Conference of the Arts ~ Conférence canadienne des arts

## CCA asks federal parties: Will you "walk the talk" for Canadian arts and culture?

From the Desk of Alain Pineau, National Director

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](http://www.ccarts.ca)

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**Ottawa, December 14, 2005** – During the current federal election campaign the CCA will report on the commitment of each federal political party to the arts and culture. We have established a list of five broad priorities of vital interest to the arts and cultural sector and will assess each major party's commitment to these issues by asking them how, if elected, they plan to "walk the talk" on cultural issues.

These five broad priorities will also be reflected in the detailed questions we are sending to the parties and will also be part of the "door-step tool" mentioned in CCA Bulletin 50/05. We will tell you if our political candidates "Walk the talk" by keeping an updated reality check on each type of issue. This "Walk the talk" feature of our election-related bulletins will be constantly updated on CCA's website at: [www.ccarts.ca/en/2005ElectionNews1.htm](http://www.ccarts.ca/en/2005ElectionNews1.htm)

Here are five major areas of interest for the CCA, for the current federal election and beyond. Our March 3-4 2006 conference "Mapping Canada's Cultural Policy: Where Do We Go From Here?" will provide a timely opportunity to shape advocacy strategies on these and other cultural policy issues of concern to our members and all Canadians.

### **1) Honouring our Commitment to Diversity: Investing in Canada's Arts and Culture at Home and Around the World:**

On November 23, just days before the election was called, the Government of Canada announced its ratification of the UNESCO Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, as well as a multi-year increase in federal funding for the arts. The February 2005 budget included a historic fiscal investment in culture, as the "Tomorrow Starts Today" program was extended through March 2010.

The proposed International Policy unveiled this past spring has eliminated the third pillar of Canadian foreign policy, the promotion of Canadian culture and values. The cultural sector needs to understand the impact of this realignment of our international policy and its impact on the presence of Canadian artists and creators on the world stage.

The CCA is asking all political parties about their commitment to these initiatives if they are elected as our next government.

### **2) Equitable Treatment for Canadian Artists and Creators:**

Canada's artists and creators continue to face challenges in having government recognize and respect their rights as self-employed workers, access to social benefits, moral and economic rights, and federal labour standards that accommodate non-standard working arrangements.

The CCA is looking to the next potential government to address these issues with concrete and durable solutions.

### **3) Bringing Canada's Broadcasting and Communications Systems into the 21st Century:**

As innovations in broadcasting and content distribution elbow their way into our lives, the CCA wants to know how the next government will deal with the modernization of our broadcasting and communications systems in a manner that will bolster Canadian content and investment in new programming.

Will the next government address the chronic under-funding of the CBC and when? Will you commit to maintain the current level of 53 % Canadian ownership rules to our broadcasting telecommunications system, and ensure that Canadians will always own our own airwaves? Is the current Broadcasting Act sufficient to address new communications technologies such as satellite radio, iPod broadcasting and television-enabled cellular phones to ensure that they respect and

contribute to the objectives of legislation?

The CCA is asking for detailed responses on this issue from all political parties.

**4) Sustaining Distinctive Canadian Cultural Industries:**

Globalization is a phenomenon that has radically altered how business is conducted around the world. Canadian cultural policies have sought to implement measures that promote sustainable enterprises in book and magazine publishing, film and television production, sound recording and new media.

Canada faces increasing pressure to extend more liberal trade measures to our cultural enterprises. It is reasonable to assume that such pressures will continue. The CCA is asking political parties what instructions they will give to Canadian trade negotiators on this issue.

The CCA is asking what a new government would do to continue these policies and enhance them to ensure healthy Canadian owned and controlled cultural industries.

**5) Honouring Canada's Past, Looking to Our Future:**

Before Parliament was dissolved, the Minister of Canadian Heritage was working on a new Canadian museums policy. The proposed policy would be a substantive commitment to honouring and preserving Canadian heritage. The CCA is asking all political parties about their intentions regarding a new museums policy, which would provide a solid financial base for our museum and heritage communities and increased access by Canadians to our national treasures.

The aging of the Canadian labour market is a concern for the cultural sector. Many artistic directors, senior administrators and performers will soon retire. The CCA is asking all parties what plans they would implement to address succession issues in a coherent manner across the Canadian labour force in general and the cultural sector in particular.

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**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**

**Register now at:** [www.ccarts.ca/en/events/NPCCChalmers2006registration.htm](http://www.ccarts.ca/en/events/NPCCChalmers2006registration.htm)

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