



# BULLETIN

Canadian Conference of the Arts ~ Conférence canadienne des arts

## What if CCA asked the questions in the federal leaders' debates?

### CCA's Federal Election Advocacy 2006

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 21, 2005** – The first round of party leaders' debates for the 2006 federal election have come and gone, and media pundits and party "war roomers" continue to weigh the merits and drawbacks of the new format while sipping their holiday eggnog. The Canadian Conference of the Arts is focused primarily on the content of both debates and not surprisingly, arts and culture issues were absent from the four hours in total of televised statements. (Unless one counts Paul Martin's passing reference to Quebec's "artists and writers" in response to a viewer question late during Friday evening's live broadcast.)

In Bulletin 52/05 [www.ccarts.ca/en/electionbulletins.htm](http://www.ccarts.ca/en/electionbulletins.htm) the CCA unveiled its five broad priorities for the current federal election campaign and beyond. We are asking all federal parties to articulate how, if elected, they plan to "walk the talk" for Canada's arts and culture. More to the point, the CCA has since broken down its five key issues into three detailed questions for each priority area.

All 15 questions have been formally sent to the offices of the federal political parties and we will share their responses when they are available. The CCA encourages its members and supporters to use and circulate any or all of these questions in your own communications with the parties, with individual candidates in your ridings, and at all-party debates. Here then are fifteen questions the CCA would have asked the leaders, if we could convene our own national televised debates:

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

- a) Will your party ensure that new federal funding for the arts and culture announced on November 23, which included an increase to the budget of the Canada Council for the Arts and other key investments, will be reflected in the 2006 Federal Budget?
- b) Does your party support a review of Canada's new international policy statement to restore arts and culture as a key aspect of public diplomacy? Would your party support increased financing for the Department of Foreign Affairs' cultural programs?
- c) Does your party intend to extend the Department of Canadian Heritage's "Tomorrow Starts Today" funding package beyond the current timetable? Would your party increase financial commitments to its component programs?

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

- a) Does your party support the objectives of CCA's "Fair Tax Treatment of Professional Artists Campaign", which are:
  - To establish a policy that all professional artists will be deemed to be carrying on a business for purposes of their artistic income (independent contractor status) unless
    - o in the case where there is no collective bargaining relationship, an engager and the artist enter into a contract of service (employer-employee relationship) that is explicit and unambiguous, or
    - o an engager and an association representing a group of artists negotiate a provision that artists governed by a collective agreement are in a contract of service relationship.
  - To have a community-agreed test of "professionalism" replace the "reasonable expectation of profit" test now used by the Canada Revenue Agency.
- b) Does your party support the development of a program by which self-employed workers, dependent contractors, and Canadians in other non-standard work could access full social benefits without the loss of their self-employment status?

- c) Does your party intend to introduce further revisions to the Copyright Act? Will your party commit to enacting legislation that enhances the moral and economic rights of creators and copyright owners?

### **3) Canada's Broadcasting and Communications Systems in the 21st Century**

- a) Does your party support CBC's request for new monies for regional and local services and for Canadian television drama? Would your party provide long-term, stable funding for the CBC?
- b) Will your party ensure that the cultural objectives of the Broadcasting Act are respected in the face of challenges posed by new communications technologies, such as: Internet, satellite radio, pod-casting, and television-enabled cellular phones?
- c) What are your party's plans to ensure a more transparent and guaranteed revenue flow from all media, but particularly from digital media, to the owners and licensees of copyright materials?

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

- a) Will your party commit to maintain the current level of 53 % Canadian ownership rules in our media, broadcasting, and telecommunications systems, and ensure that Canadians will always own our own airwaves?
- b) What is your party's position on the concentration of ownership in Canada's cultural industries? What quantifiable limits to the concentration of ownership and vertical integration within the various cultural industries will your party propose?
- c) Given that Canada recently ratified the UNESCO Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, will your party develop policies to protect Canadian ownership of and encourage more investment in our cultural industries by Canadians? What would those be?

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

- a) Does your party support the development of a new Canadian museums policy, which would include the investment of new monies in sustained, multi-year, predictable programs?
- b) What are your party's specific plans to provide incentives and opportunities for young Canadians to become more active in the arts and culture?
- c) Would your party commit to a national mentorship strategy to facilitate skills development for Canadians who want to pursue careers in the arts and cultural labour force?

Finally, work continues on a number of other election-related advocacy fronts:

- A "Flashback / Flash forward?" follow-up to our own 49/05 bulletin "Reality Check: Where Business Left Off in the House of Commons". This bulletin will profile what positions parties took on arts and culture issues during the May/June 2004 federal election campaign, and what progress (if any) was made during the 38th Parliament. What issues remain un-resolved and may return after January 23rd?

- The CCA will provide analyses of all political parties' platforms pertaining to arts and culture issues. To date, the Bloc Quebecois is the only party that has officially unveiled their full election platform, but a flurry of pre-holiday announcements and promises are flying around like snowflakes.
- The CCA will provide one-page backgrounders of "facts and figures" to help make the case for each of our five overarching priority issues. In turn, we will prepare a "doorstep kit" of questions you can raise about arts and culture when candidates come knocking, looking for your vote.

Last, please note that the Broadcasting Consortium (CBC/Radio-Canada, CTV, Global Television and TVA) confirmed last week that the second set of federal party leaders debates will be held on January 9 and 10 2006 in Montreal at La Maison de Radio-Canada. The English-language debate will take place on January 9 and the French-language debate will take place on January 10 between 8:00 pm ET and 10:00 pm ET. The Consortium plans to announce details regarding debate themes at a later date, and as always, the CCA encourages our members to "stay tuned" to their bulletins. We plan to keep our members informed about how they might participate in this and other election-related forums, with the aim to work collectively to get our issues on the agenda!

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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**

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