

CANADIAN CONFERENCE OF THE ARTS – 5 QUESTIONS TO ASK CANDIDATES

What you can do to put culture on the political agenda of the next Parliament:

1. Join the debate and make your voice heard. *Send your comments and questions to your local candidates via this online tool: www.action-charityvillage.com*
2. Ask the candidates in your riding where they stand on arts and cultural issues and, where possible, demand specific answers, not just promises (see suggestions hereafter). *Please let CCA know their answers so we can follow-up with them if they make it to Parliament Hill.*
3. On January 23rd, make sure to cast your ballot! Find out how at: www.elections.ca
4. Plan to attend the March 3-4 2006 National Policy Conference and add your views and priorities to these and other matters of importance to artists, creators and arts professionals through the unified voice of the CCA. For information: www.ccarts.ca/en/events/NPCCChalmers2006.htm.
5. Add your voice to ours and become a member of the CCA. Visit www.ccarts.ca/en/members/join/ for more information.

1. Invest in Canada's Arts and Culture

Background: On November 23, just days before the federal election was called, the Government of Canada announced a multi-year increase in federal funding for the arts and culture. The proposed International Policy unveiled this past spring has eliminated the third pillar of Canadian foreign policy, the promotion of Canadian culture. 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.

This election, demand that candidates “walk the talk” and work to invest in Canada’s arts and culture, at home and abroad. Ask your candidates:

Will you and 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 in the Department of Foreign Affairs, will be reflected in the 2006 Federal Budget?

2. Equitable Treatment For Canadian Artists and Creators

Background: 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.

This election, demand that candidates “walk the talk” and work to ensure fair and equitable treatment for Canadian artists and creators. Ask your candidates:

Will you and 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?

3. Bring Canada's Broadcasting System into the 21st Century

Background: As innovations in broadcasting and cultural content distribution increasingly impact our lives, it is important to know how the next Government of Canada will deal with the modernization of our broadcasting and communications systems in a manner that will bolster Canadian cultural content and investment in new programming.

This election, demand that candidates “walk the talk” and work to ensure the modernization of our broadcasting system. Ask your candidates:

Will you and your party provide long-term, stable funding for the CBC, and ensure that the cultural objectives of the Broadcasting Act are respected in the face of challenges posed by new communications technologies?

4. Sustain Distinctive Canadian Cultural Industries

Background: 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. Yet, Canada faces increasing pressures to extend more liberal trade measures to our cultural enterprises.

This election, demand that candidates “walk the talk” and ensure that existing policies are kept and that healthy domestically-owned and controlled cultural industries remain Canadian. Ask your candidates:

Given that Canada recently ratified the UNESCO Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, will you and your party develop policies to protect Canadian ownership of and encourage more investment in our cultural industries by Canadians?

5. Honour Canada's Past, and Look To Our Future

Background: Before Parliament was dissolved, the Government of Canada was working on a new federal museums policy, which would include a substantive commitment to honouring and preserving Canadian heritage. A new museums policy, which was last updated in the 1970s, would provide a solid financial base for our museum and heritage communities and increased access by Canadians in all regions to our shared national treasures.

This election, demand that candidates “walk the talk” and ensure that Canada's heritage is preserved and accessible to all. Ask your candidates:

Will you and your party commit to the development of a new Canadian museums policy, which would include the investment of new monies in sustained, multi-year, predictable programs?