



Canadian Conference of the Arts' Annual General Meeting

Ottawa June 18, 2012

President's Report

- Welcome – This is my fourth annual report as Chair of the Board and what a year it has been!
- A year ago, we had the first unofficial indication that the federal government had decided to put an end to 46 years of funding to the CCA. Since such funding has represented over the years anything between 50 and 70 % of our resources, the news was obviously of major importance to the organization.
- According to the Chinese, “Never let a good crisis go to waste!” So, as soon as we found out, the Board and the Secretariat agreed that this was an opportunity not to be missed: to reinvent the business model of the CCA and to make it an independent voice and instrument serving the vast Canadian arts, culture and heritage sector in Canada.
- But this could not be done unilaterally. The first thing to do was to confirm with members and stakeholders whether they shared our conviction that this unique organization still had a role to play in the new environment. Longevity is not a proof of relevance!
- Accordingly we launched a thorough in-depth consultation to see if the need was there for such an organization, what its priorities should be and how it could go about delivering a renewed mandate.
- We were privileged throughout the process to be accompanied by a real professional consultant who did an incredible job, mostly on a pro bono basis – and I will open a parenthesis here to publicly thank Michel Langelier formerly of the University of Ottawa, for his generosity, his dedication and the great quality of his work. He has given us a roadmap which we could never have afforded to buy.
- But let me get back to the consultation process. In just under three months, our National Director toured the country, meeting with over five hundred people in seventeen cities. He met with members and non members from the not for profit sector and from cultural industries; from the traditional art forms and the not so traditional art forms. He met with provincial and municipal government representatives and with arts funders from Victoria to St.-John's. These face to face meetings were coupled with an on-line consultation which over 200 people participated in.



- We were able to test our vision, our mission and to get a feel for what should be the priority issues and activities. What came out of this process was the solid confirmation that there is indeed a need for an overarching organization like the CCA bringing together the vast number of individuals and organizations in the Canadian art, culture and heritage sector. And the information gathered allowed the preparation of a comprehensive business plan.
- We now have plan, we have started implementing it as the National Director will say in his report. We have projects underway. What is in short supply is time, particularly with regards to putting in place the transition funding needed to shift gears to a new business model. As you know, we had indicated to officials at the Department of Canadian Heritage early in the process last year that we would require some support as we develop new sources of revenue to ensure the financial sustainability of the organization. With their support, we put in a request for such funding to be until 2012-13. It is not until April 11 that we learned of the government's decision to limit such funding to six months. Need I say that this focuses the mind?
- We have already taken a number of steps to gauge the possibilities of success. The first one was to check if our membership is still with us in this venture. Renewal date for the majority of our members is April 1, and I am glad to say that given what people know about our challenge, the response has been most encouraging. Not only have renewals come in at a regular pace, but some ten organizations said that upon checking, they were underpaying their membership. Some old members have come back, and I have every reason that more will as the movement picks up steam. Last of all, we are heartened by the fact that we now count seven provincial governments as Affiliate members, Nova Scotia having just joined for the first time.
- We have launched the Founders' Circle which is comprised of those individuals, unions, associations and corporations who, over the next three years, will support the activities of the CCA. We are looking for specialized assistance in preparing a membership and a donation campaign and in finding corporate support and sponsorship.
- As you can see, over the past year, the Board and the Secretariat have been steadily pro-active in facing the challenge thrown at us to re-shape this unique collective instrument to the new realities. I can tell you today that we are ready to continue our efforts. We currently build our financing quarterly but given our plan, we hope to move progressively to longer periods, starting late fall.
- But we cannot do this alone, we cannot do this for you. We can only do it with you all. If you believe in the need for a collective and independent voice for Canadian culture, if you believe that working together makes us more efficient



and strong, come participate in the rebuilding. Renew your membership if you have not already done so. Help us recruit new members. Respond to invitations that we will make to you to participate in committees and forums.

- This is the only way we will be able to do it: together!
- Before I conclude, I would like to thank and congratulate our Board colleague Erika Beatty for her contributions to the CCA since she joined the Board in 2010. Erika is stepping down because of her workload as CEO of Symphony Nova Scotia, but also because of her having received this year's John Hobday's Award for cultural management. So Erika, thank you and congratulations on your exciting project!
- And finally, I would like to express my warmest thanks to the full team of the Secretariat for their incredible dedication and loyalty in these challenging times.



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National Director's Report

Dear colleagues,

- I find it hard to believe, but this is my seventh report to the Annual General Assembly of Members of the CCA. As our President said, what a year it has been! And what a year the next one promises to be! In this year's report, I will talk about both.
- Although it has been a dominant theme of the past year, the CCA has not been solely preoccupied with its own future. We fulfilled our commitment to knowledge sharing through the publication of some thirty bulletins on almost as many different issues. In January, we launched our new website, designed to suit our upcoming needs. This was followed immediately with the first edition of our new monthly e-Magazine. And of course, we published our Annual Analysis of the Federal Budget from the arts, culture and heritage perspective, a document widely used by a number of organizations, governments, universities and journalists.
- Still under communications, we have refreshed the style and presentation of our bulletins and continued enriching the content of the website, a never-ending activity.
- We are increasing our use of social media. During my tour of the country in January and February, we published a series of blogs which, to my surprise, got quite a readership. As for Twitter, an art discipline I have finally embraced, we have nearly doubled our following over the past year. We are now at 5 265 follower, an increase of 33% over the past four months alone!
- On the government relations front, our main activity as convener and catalyst has undoubtedly been our continuing role in the Copyright file. As soon as Bill C-32 was reintroduced word for word as Bill C-11, we renewed our regular conference calls with the strategic committee. There have been some thirty since September. This has led to a consensus on a common list of twenty amendments signed by 68 cultural organizations. These amendments were presented to the government and Parliamentarians in January as a clear expression of the needs of Canadian artists and creators as business people. That none of those amendments was accepted by the government does not diminish the validity of the effort.



- And our work is not over: tomorrow, a communiqué will be released simultaneously in Toronto and Montréal, signed by over 75 organizations from over the country, calling on the Senate to debate and adopt at least three amendments, two of which are crucial for the cultural sector to deal with the new legal environment created by C-11. I will let you evaluate our chances of success.
- Still, I will dwell a little more on this file as it is the perfect illustration of what an instrument a reinvented CCA can be for the cultural sector. By supporting and coordinating the work of over a two dozen of its member organizations, the CCA has made possible what has been described by the same members as an unprecedented consensus and pooling of resources around an issue of common interest. Moreover, CCA's direct intervention has led to one of the few victories regarding C-11: convincing Opposition parties not to present an amendment we feared could pass and which would have made matters worse for artists and creators.
- In August 2011, the CCA took part once again to the federal budget consultation process and was one of a handful of cultural organisations invited to appear in front of the Standing Committee on Finances. After presenting an overview of the budget from the cultural perspective, we put forward the three recommendations based on a broad consensus amongst our members. The top recommendation was to spare the budget of the Canada Council, and if possible to augment it in the coming two years.
- At the end of May, we were one of three cultural organizations called by the same parliamentary committee to comment the abolition of the Canadian Artists and Producers Professional Relations Tribunal included omnibus bill C-38. We used the second half of our time to comment on other cultural impacts of the budget and their cascading effects concerning negative job growth, particularly the cuts to vital cultural institutions like the CBC, the NFB, the National Archives, Statistics Canada and Parks Canada, the latter notably no longer a part of the Department of Canadian Heritage.
- A considerable amount of energy at the Secretariat has been focussed on the national consultation and the development of our business plan. My tour of the country was really inspiring and confirmed that the Canadian cultural sector recognizes the need for a tool *like* the CCA. The question is how to make it sustainable without governmental support.
- In response to the consultation process, we have developed a challenging but achievable business plan, which the Board adopted on March 30th. The new business model calls for a completely different mindset to CCA's activities and



governance models. The plan is aligned on four strategic pillars: Leadership and Networking, Knowledge Sharing, Government Relations and Public Engagement.

- From now on, each activity or product must be clearly aligned on one or more of those four strategic pillars; it must be planned under full-costing and undertaken only once funding has been secured. While the plan identifies eight sources of revenue, I would like address the largest single component of the projected revenue and that is membership. The plan proposes to increase membership as a source of CCA's revenue from the current 12 or so percent to 41%. This will be accomplished in three different ways:
 - Through a sustained national membership drive to expand the base
 - Through discussions of the fee structure with organizational members of levels 4 to 8
 - Through the creation of non-voting Corporate Members within the framework of a sponsorship program.
- And now, a snapshot of where we are today. Here are the main initiatives we have been working on during the past two months to implement our business plan:

In the pursuit of financial stability:

- We have secured the front-end payment of the transition money granted by Canadian Heritage;
- We have ensured significant membership renewals;
- We have developed and launched the Founders' Circle;
- We have developed and repackaged some key activities to make them suitable for sponsorship and advertising;
- We are preparing a grant application for support as we our transit to the new business model;
- We have secured funding for an internship beginning in September and have just heard that we may repeat last year's very positive experience of offering a 2-month internship to a senior graduate student from the European Community. Better still, it seems we may double the number this year given the level of interest.



- Finally, we are laying the ground for a major membership drive in the fall.
- On the knowledge sharing front, we are working in partnership with the Centre of Governance and the School of Politics of the University of Ottawa, on preparing an annual analysis of the provincial and territorial budgets from the perspective of arts, culture and heritage. This new publication, which will complement our long-standing Analysis of the federal budget, is scheduled to come out in January, just in time for the next budget season. Both publications will be offered to sponsors and will be sold to non-members and to members at reduced rates.
- What the Board and the staff of the CCA present to you today is a roadmap built on what we heard from you.
- A lot of changes are in store in the coming year. The revenue-generating model must be developed fully and implemented. The governance model should be detailed and implemented in the course of the year. Many other issues remain to be addressed as we move forward. Today we invite you to make this possible by engaging in this process. As our President said, it cannot be done for you, it has to be done by us.
- In closing, I would like to express my warmest thanks to my colleagues at the Secretariat for keeping at it in what are obviously difficult and uncertain times. And many thanks to CCA Board members, particularly to the Executive Committee which has been accompanying and guiding us over the past three months.
- Thank you for your attention.