

# Arts Day

at the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick



Fredericton NB  
December 8, 2011

*A time to re-imagine New Brunswick and the shape of our future!*

PHOTOGRAPHY: DENIS LANTIERNE

**N**ew Brunswick possesses a rich artistic, cultural and patrimonial heritage that has contributed to building the province and making it a unique place to live. David Adams Richards, Antonine Maillet, France Daigle, Measha Brueggergosman and Herménégilde Chiasson are all artists who are recognized on our shores and beyond. Voices from around the world are heard at the Harvest Jazz and Blues Festival, in Fredericton; at SappyFest, in Sackville and the Miramichi Folksong Festival. Frye Festival in Moncton unites authors from different backgrounds; the Festival acadien de Caraquet has been celebrating arts and culture for 50 years; Éloizes Awards highlight Acadian artistic excellence; *Sistema NB* offers a music program that was developed in Venezuela, established in the United States and is now in Moncton and Saint John, where it's transforming the lives of young people; *ArtSmarts* gets students involved in the creative process, with artistic projects covering a variety of different subjects and fields.

Joël Boudreau,  
*Visiting Orpheus*, 2008

Éloizes Award  
winner 2010



The cultural and artistic fabric of New Brunswick is woven of many different threads. But, regardless of the language or community of origin, through their works and commitment to the community, artists share common realities, face similar challenges and actively participate in the province's growth and the population's wellbeing.

This is why three organizations – **ArtsLink NB**, the **Association acadienne des artistes professionnels du Nouveau-Brunswick (AAAPNB)** and **artsnb** – representing the arts and culture sector decided to come together to make our political representatives aware of the vital, invaluable contribution of arts and culture to the development of the citizens of this province. We start with the premise that we contribute to each other other's work and projects. For instance, ArtsLink NB supports the extraordinary societal initiative that led to the creation of the *Global Strategy*, developed under the leadership of the AAAPNB.

It goes without saying that each cultural community has somewhat different priorities; but we share the common concern of bringing arts and culture to all sectors of New Brunswick society for the wellbeing of all citizens, whether in the field of education, economics, collective identity or the promotion of the province beyond our borders.

To stand out in the creative economy and compete in today's world, the Government of New Brunswick must imagine new ways of contributing to the prosperity of our province, retaining the population, attracting and integrating new citizens and companies, while improving the quality of life of New Brunswickers. The arts and culture sector addresses all of these challenges.

**Arts + culture = innovation, prosperity and quality of life**

## When you consider that:

- Arts and culture improve the quality of life of the citizens of New Brunswick, by making them proud of who they are and where they come from;
- Arts and culture represent an essential service in the province, much like health and education;
- Arts and culture make a significant contribution to the New Brunswick economy – a creative economy that retains the population in the province and attracts newcomers;
- Arts and culture strengthen our communities, by fostering the citizen's **ingenuity** and **ability to innovate, create** and **imagine**, leading them to work together towards common goals and objectives.

## Commitments made by the government

Within the framework of the AAAPNB annual general meeting in May 2011, **Premier David Alward** confirmed the following commitments for creating favourable conditions for artists:

- Review of the *Cultural Policy for New Brunswick*;
- Establishment of a premier's committee on the status of the artist;
- Establishment of a new support program for the media industry;
- Elaboration of a cultural industries and enterprises development strategy;
- Support for the implementation of the *Strategy for the Integration of the Arts and Culture into Acadian Society in New Brunswick*, by injecting the funds required to ensure its full implementation;
- Support for the territory's cultural development.

## In light of these commitments, we specifically ask that the government:

- Review the *Cultural Policy for New Brunswick* by taking into consideration the entire approach of the *Strategy for the Integration of the Arts and Culture into Acadian Society in New Brunswick* by:
  - ◆ Creating a working committee that includes the bipartisan participation of the community and the government;
  - ◆ Establishing a timetable over a one-year period, in order to take into account the scope of the work to be accomplished;
  - ◆ That the review lead to changes in the current programs of the department's concerned;
- Invest the human and financial resources required so that work on the *premier's committee on the status of the artist* may move forward. Its primary objective should be that of legally recognizing the profession of the artist, through legal, social and fiscal measures, along the same lines as other professions that are recognized in New Brunswick;
- Establish an advisory board that would be responsible for establishing a cultural industries and enterprises development strategy, ensuring that cultural sector leaders are involved in the process;
- Continue to be a key partner in the establishment of the *Strategy for the Integration of the Arts and Culture into Acadian Society in New Brunswick*, by injecting the funds required to ensure its full implementation;
- Prepare an action plan annual report, detailing interventions and efforts made for the fulfillment of commitments.

## Conclusion

Arts and culture have the power to develop and promote the province's unique, modern character and develop constructive dialogue between the different cultural and linguistic communities of the province.

Arts and culture connect us to the past; they enrich our present and open up a world of possibilities for the future. Creativity is a skill that is transmitted and shared. What we learn from the complex mechanisms of artistic creation can be transferred to other environments: the sciences, business, technology, etc.

Moreover, the artistic community is a true engine that supports government efforts to improve public good and provides the community and the province with essential services. Communities that provide young people with artistic activities are known to have lower drop-out and violence rates.

**If arts and culture are to continue to contribute to the economy and quality of life of New Brunswickers and allow the government to fulfill its commitments to this sector, it must receive political and financial support.**

**We need an open, creative, integrated approach to meet the challenges faced by our province. A strategic funding initiative for the arts can help us imagine a viable, diversified future!**

*"Human creativity is the ultimate economic resource. The ability to come up with new ideas and better ways of doing things is ultimately what raises productivity and thus living standards."*

Richard Florida,  
*The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002)

## Partners



**ArtsLink NB** is a non-profit organization that works to advance the arts in New Brunswick by linking and unifying artists and art organizations. Currently we have 515 Anglophone members, including 63 art organizations from a variety of disciplines including visual arts, literary arts, performing arts, music, along with native arts. Our mandate includes advocacy for issues relating to professional artists and the arts community, the promotion of arts education, and the fostering of a community culture that acknowledges the arts with value and respect.

**ArtsLink NB**  
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*“Culture is a measure of the vitality, quality of life and health of a society. Cultural heritage and artistic activities play a significant role in sustaining and enhancing the social, educational, economic and intellectual life of each New Brunswicker”*

excerpt from the *Cultural Policy for New Brunswick* (2002)



**The Association acadienne des artistes professionnels du Nouveau-Brunswick** is an arts service organization for professional artists. Its mission is that of protecting the rights and representing the interests of artists, as well as promoting the recognition of their contribution to the development of society. As such, its primary role is that of defending the profession of artists, advocating on their behalf with political and community decision-making bodies that influence their socio-economic situation. The association helps consolidate different arts disciplines and – more broadly – it fosters an ecosystem that encourages the growth and enhances the visibility of the artist. Lastly, it develops strategic partnerships with other sectors, in order to better position artists and the arts in all spheres of activity in society.

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Moncton, NB E1C 4X5  
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**The New Brunswick Arts Board (artsnb)** is an arm's length arts funding agency with a legislated mandate to facilitate and promote the creation of the arts as well as administering funding programs for professional artists in the province.

**artsnb**  
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Fredericton NB E3B 3T2  
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*“Nous connaissons-nous seulement un peu nous-mêmes, sans les arts? / Could we ever know each other in the slightest without the arts?”*

Gabrielle Roy (1909-1983),  
quotation printed on  
the \$20 bill