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## Towards recognition: **Forum on the professional status of the artist in New Brunswick**

**Moncton, May 29, 2013** – From May 31 to June 2, 2013, more than 150 artists from all communities will participate in the **Forum on the professional status of the artist in New Brunswick**, which will be held in the region of Shippagan and Lamèque. This is the first time since 1987 that artists from all New Brunswick communities are convened to such a gathering.

Today, 23 years after its inception, still faithful to its original mandate which is to promote and protect the interests of artists, the Association acadienne des artistes professionnel.le.s du Nouveau-Brunswick (AAAPNB) is bolstered by the deep conviction that artists, like all other workers in New Brunswick, have the right to official recognition and decent working conditions.

The process which was launched a decade ago during the États généraux on Arts and Culture in Acadian Society in New Brunswick, which had, at its core, a central and overriding concern: the recognition and improvement of the social and economic status of artists in the province. At the end of this process, as they imagined the future, the participants articulated the following vision statement: "Professional artists in New Brunswick, whether they are emerging, ethnocultural or established artists, are recognized, appreciated, and fully integrated as highly specialized workers who contribute to the life of their community and promote their province. They receive an annual revenue comparable to that of professionals employed in New Brunswick and have access to the tools they need to express their diversity and creativity and to cultivate artistic excellence."

In order to fulfil this vision, it was recommended that the Province of New Brunswick form a **Premier's Working Group on the Status of the Artist**. Consisting of established, emergent and ethnocultural artists, economists, tax specialists and legal specialists, and any other specialist with relevant expertise, this Working Group would advise the government on the adoption and implementation of legal measures and other measures and programs which would serve to ensure the full recognition of professional artists, their ability to reach their full potential, and the improvement of their socioeconomic status.

When the David Alward government came into power in fall 2010, the Premier committed to forming a Working Group on the Status of the Artist. The group is expected to be created and begin work soon.

So it is with the intention of offering input to and support for the Working Group that the AAAPNB has organized this Forum. We intend for it to be one of the landmarks on the journey towards recognition of the professional status of artists in New Brunswick. By providing information and sharing insights on issues and possibilities for action, the organizers of this Forum hope that the arts community will become better equipped for the work which will begin soon. This event is intended to be a major event where artists are invited to express their needs and discuss their realities. The participants will have a chance to hear about different status of the artist laws and measures that exist in Canada, both at the federal level and in various provinces, as well as other models and programs which have been introduced around the world to acknowledge and improve the specific working conditions of artists.

During this historic gathering, participants will be able to discuss, debate, determine solutions but also celebrate the priceless contribution artists have made and continue to make to the enrichment of New Brunswick.

The Forum on the professional status of the artist is made possible with the help of the Province of New Brunswick, in particular through the Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture and the Regional Development Corporation.

The Association acadienne des artistes professionnel.le.s du Nouveau-Brunswick is an Acadian arts service organization for professional artists. The mission of the association is to protect the rights and represent the interests of artists, and to promote the recognition of their contributions to society. [www.aaapnb.ca](http://www.aaapnb.ca)

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