



«In a free state, all is related and each element leads to another; legislation, commerce, industry, the arts, the sciences, letters are all part of the same body – *le corps social* ... When there is an abuse in one part, the whole social body will be more or less paralysed....» Sir Wilfred Laurier in 1871

WHO WE ARE

The Department of Culture is a growing community of Canadian citizens who are artists, arts professionals and cultural workers concerned about ensuring the social and cultural health and prosperity of our nation in the face of a Federal Government that is aggressively undermining the values that define Canada.

We are the painters, architects, dancers, writers, actors, designers, filmmakers, sculptors, performers, photographers, ceramicists, directors, curators, musicians, archivists, fashion designers, producers, weavers, choreographers, editors...

WHAT WE STAND FOR

The Department of Culture was founded on the following objectives to:

- ENCOURAGE A MULTIDIMENSIONAL VISION OF CULTURE that emphasizes living interactions between the artistic, cultural, social, political and economic aspects of society.
- PROMOTE A VIEW OF CITIZENSHIP in which all Canadians are active participants in the creation of culture rather than simply as passive receivers of it.
- ENSURE THAT GOVERNMENTS, AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS ARE ACCOUNTABLE for their social and cultural agendas.
- SUPPORT THE CREATIVE AGENCY OF ARTISTS to make political change through all forms of artistic production.

OUR CURRENT CAMPAIGNS

SWING TEAMS

In the impending election, the DOC will support *Swing Teams* of committed artists and individuals to collaborate and intervene directly in the election and, in a very public, serious, fun and spectacular way, to target vulnerable Conservatives in the so-called swing ridings in which the sitting MP holds a slim majority. If a Conservative MP has a seat, a *Swing Team* will try to take it away, if a Conservative looks close to getting a seat, a *Swing Team* will ensure that they never get to sit down. The Department of Culture is focusing its first energies on Jim Flaherty Member of Parliament for Whitby-Oshawa, Finance Minister and Minister Responsible for the GTA and another near-by yet-to-be-determined incumbent. The *Swing Teams* will use their imagination, their wit, their community resources, their political savvy and their artistic skills to create and distribute an abundance of graphic materials, videos, postcards and other creative materials. These will all focus on the shortcomings of the Conservative Party of Canada, Stephen Harper, and the Conservative candidate running in specific ridings. The *Swing Teams* will not necessarily work to promote other parties but rather through their actions, they hold other parties and candidates answerable for their social and cultural agendas.

The Department of Culture will make *Swing Team* kits available on our website that can be used as templates in other ridings across the country. As we continue to organize, we will further our partnerships with like-minded initiatives across the country. We will also post photos, videos, graphics and stories on our website and on our Facebook page.

GONE IN 30 SECONDS

Canadians are invited to produce and submit a 30 second video spot in a national contest in response to the Conservative government's dramatic dismantling of arts, cultural and social programs since 2006. Submissions will be posted on our website and reviewed by a panel of celebrity judges. There will also be a viewer's choice award. Please consult our website at departmentofculture.ca for details about this campaign on or before 12 September 2008 for details.

\$20 FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

The Canadian \$20 bill includes a quote from Canadian author Gabrielle Roy (1909-1983) that reads: «Could we ever know each other in the slightest without the arts?» / «Nous connaîtrions-nous seulement un peu nous-mêmes, sans les arts?» To direct attention to the place of the arts in our society as a means of both economic and cultural exchange we encourage you to recite the quote every time you pay for something with a \$20 bill. Postcards will be available from our website at departmentofculture.ca that you can use to send to the media, family, friends and to the politicians in your community to remind them about the value of the arts in our culture.

WHAT WE ARE FIGHTING FOR

This is not a fight about money. This is not a fight for the inherent value of cultural expression. This is not a fight about this or that ideology. This is not a fight about what percentage of GDP should go here or there. This is not a fight to save our national reputation. This is a fight for all of the above. It's about how all of these things serve each other – arts, healthcare, sports, education, agriculture, the environment, immigration. We are battling the false dichotomies espoused by the Conservative government and their ilk. This is a movement to fight *for* progressive social and cultural values through artist-initiated actions that employ the skills, experiences, collaborative methods and imagination that define artists' work. When it comes to the current government specifically, we don't like their priorities, we don't like their values, we don't like their secrecy, we don't like the many cuts to our allies and we don't like the cuts to the arts.