

ARTSELECTS[✓]07

Wednesday, September 12, 2007.

Last July a committee of representatives of ASOs of Ontario was formed to survey the Ontario Registered Political Parties on what was concluded were 5 key areas of concern to the Arts and Culture sector of Ontario. The survey was endorsed by the representatives from the following organizations:

Coprésidente de l'Alliance culturelle de l'Ontario et Directrice générale du MIFO
Artist-Run Centres and Collectives Ontario (ARCCO)
ArtsBuild Ontario
L'Association des professionnels de la chanson et de la musique (APCM)
Bureau des regroupements des artistes visuels de l'Ontario (BRAVO)
Canadian Artists Representation / Le front des artistes canadiens (CARFAC Ontario)
Canadian Music Centre
Choirs Ontario
Community Arts Ontario
Cultural Careers Council of Ontario
Dance Ontario
Dance Umbrella of Ontario
Directors Guild of Canada (Ontario)
Ontario Association of Art Galleries FUSION – The Ontario Clay and Glass Association
Ontario Council of Folk Festivals (OCFF)
Ontario Crafts Council
Executive Director - The Ontario Presenting Network
Réseau Ontario
Théâtre Action
Theatre Ontario
Visual Arts Ontario (VAO)

As of today, we have responses from

Family Coalition Party of Ontario
Freedom Party of Ontario
New Democratic Party of Ontario
Ontario Libertarian Party
Ontario Liberal Party
Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario

As of today's date, we have not received any response from

Green Party of Ontario
Ontario Provincial Confederation of Regions Party
Ontario Communist Party

Please be assured that we have made all reasonable efforts to attract responses from these parties.

It should be noted that despite the fact that each party was written and emailed the survey in both English and French, no party has responded in the French language.

The following pages include the survey questions and the various responses.

It was the decision of the PASO group that we would neither "rate" or "grade" the responses, nor edit them. Neither will we as an umbrella organization dictate to our members or anyone else, how to use

this information. It is instead our hope that the results will be used by the recipients and members of their organizations to assist them in formulating the best way to exercise their political influence and franchise.

For more information please contact John Goddard, Executive Director, Theatre Ontario at 416.408.4556.

Monday, July 16, 2007

To: Ontario Political Party

Dear Sirs:

We are a coalition of Provincial Arts Service Organizations who, collectively, speak on behalf of thousands of Ontario professional and amateur artists and presenters, and through them, reflect the views of hundreds of thousands of Ontario citizens who are the consumers of our collective art.

***Artselects'07* believe that Art and Culture are as integral to the social fabric of Ontario as our health care system and are equally deserving of proper funding and protection. Canadians long ago rejected the concept of a health system based on a user-pay structure; similarly Ontarians have accepted for over half a century the principle that our governments have an *a priori* responsibility to nourish, sustain, foster and promote a vibrant and healthy Artistic and Cultural community within their society.**

In order for our members, clients and supporters to responsibly exercise their franchise next October 10th, we ask that you inform us of your party's official response to the following five questions.

Please restrict your answers to 250 words in length (per question) and respond by July 30th. Your responses will be distributed without editing or editorial comment to the members of our coalition and through them to our membership and clients. Forward your responses to *Artselects'07*, Suite 210, 215 Spadina Avenue, Toronto, M5T 2C7. Should you require an electronic copy, please contact John Goddard at john@theatreontario.org. (Your responses may be returned electronically to this same address).

We thank you in advance for your attention to our inquiries.

Yours Truly,

Ontario Arts Service Organizations

1. ISSUE: ACCESS TO ARTS EDUCATION ACROSS ONTARIO

"Without the arts, education is not education but vocational training...Practicing one's profession successfully calls for skills in dealing with people, for being able to comprehend the connection between cause and effect, and the ability to carry the burdens placed on the individual in a free society. The arts help to prepare the human mind for such needs."

- Norman Cousins

For the past decade steady erosion of resources, both human and financial, has seriously deteriorated the breadth and quality of arts education in Ontario schools. Leaders from all sectors of society have consistently acknowledged the value of well developed and supported arts education programs and curriculum have in producing well-rounded graduates and citizens.

QUESTION: What is your party's policy on arts education in the school system and, if elected, will your government reinvest in substantial and real terms in this vital component of the total education experience?

<p>Family Coalition Party of Ontario</p>	<p>We agree that arts (music, drawing, painting, theatre) in school are an effective and necessary means to “educate” the youth and give them a wider perspective that will greatly help them in life. Our party, by implementing the Parental Choice system, will give parents more saying and will allow for a better co-operation between schools, teachers and parents. Parents will be able to insist in good art education in the school of their choice, or may choose a school that is specialized in art education.</p> <p>With our system, the provincial money (approximately \$7500/child per year) will follow the decisions of the parents, thus guaranteeing good funding for the selected school and programs, and direct administration of those funds by the teachers and parents involved.</p>
<p>Freedom Party of Ontario</p>	<p>Freedom Party is in favour of choice in schooling. Our policy is founded on the fact that a school will place top priority on satisfying the demands of those who fund the school. Tax funded schools put first priority not on satisfying the parents of their student body, but upon satisfying a government whose chief concern is re-election.</p> <p>To ensure that the satisfaction of parents be made first priority (instead of making the satisfaction of the government top priority), we propose that Ontarians no longer be taxed to pay for education, and that neither publicly-owned nor privately-owned schools be funded with tax revenues. Under our proposal, parents would retain the money they need to pay tuition directly to the government-owned or privately-owned school to which they choose to send their child(ren). In this way, a school will continue to operate only so long as the quality of the educational experience it offers – including its art curriculum – meets the demands of the parents of children attending that school.</p> <p>A Freedom Party government will not spend tax revenues on education. Just as we regard it as morally wrong for ones neighbour to take ones money by force and to spend it on art, we regard it as wrong for the government to do so on behalf of the neighbour. We are committed to ensuring that parents get only the type of education they choose to pay for, and that they pay only for the type of education they choose to get.</p>
<p>New Democratic Party of Ontario</p>	<p>Howard Hampton and Ontario's NDP believe every child in Ontario deserves an excellent education – and that education in music and the arts is a vital part of that. Unfortunately, the McGuinty Liberals refusal to fix the inadequate education funding formula means that parents continue seeing cuts in the classroom. The arts has been hardest hit. A recent study by People for Education found that only 46% of elementary schools have music teachers, 54% of elementary schools report fundraising for arts enrichment in their schools, 58% of secondary schools charge fees for Art classes, and 29% charge fees for Music classes. Ontario's students shouldn't have to pay or fundraise for an arts education. The funding formula needs to be adjusted to fix these shortcomings.</p>

<p>Ontario Libertarian Party</p>	<p>The Ontario Libertarian Party believes the fundamental problem with education in Ontario is that it is funded and therefore controlled by government bureaucrats. We believe it should be controlled, and therefore funded by, parents. Schools should be free to determine their curriculum and to specialize in arts, science, athletics or academics. Parents will choose the school they deem best suited to the interests and talents of their children. The only role of government (until charities take over) would be to help those unable to pay for their children's education.</p> <p>Organizations such as the Ontario Arts Council would be able to offer services and programs to any and all schools wishing to include an arts programme as a vital component of their curriculum. Time and money currently spent lobbying politicians and bureaucrats will be put to better use.</p>
<p>Ontario Liberal Party</p>	<p>Ontario Liberals want students to have every opportunity to succeed. That is why we have invested in the arts for young people. We know that, if children explore their creativity, there is no limit to the success they can achieve. One way to encourage their creativity is through a strong arts curriculum. Learning about, and through, the arts leads to higher academic achievement and improved cognitive development. That is why, over the past four years, the McGuinty government invested over \$25 million in arts education programs for children and youth in the province. This includes the \$4-million Arts Education Partnership that matches money raised by arts organizations from private sector donors. In addition, we have expanded training and apprenticeship programs for our young people in film, TV and new media. In the coming weeks, we will be issuing a separate culture platform that will further expand arts education opportunities.</p>
<p>Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario</p>	<p>Ontario Youth and Culture Passport</p> <p>The Ontario Youth and Culture Passport Program would enable any youth under the age of 20 to access cultural institutions such as: the Royal Ontario Museum, The Art Gallery of Ontario, Royal Botanical Gardens, Science North, the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, the Ontario Science Centre, the Grand Theatre in London, the Woodland Cultural Centre in Brantford, and other important regional arts and cultural institutions around the province. We will consult selected institutions about how best to implement such an initiative in advance. In addition to providing free access to institutions, the program will also create a Youth and Culture Ticket Clearing House. In supportive urban centres across the province, we will establish clearing houses to distribute donated tickets to youth who would not otherwise have access to cultural events. Modeled after a suggestion in the City of Toronto's 2003 <i>Culture Plan for a Creative City</i>, we realize there are several cities across Ontario with the cultural density to support such an initiative. The guiding principles for youth and culture must be: exposure and accessibility. The Youth and Culture Passport Program has been crafted with these principles as guides. Such initiatives mark the necessary direction we must travel to instill and awaken the creative capacity of our youth.</p>

2. ISSUE: IMPROVING FUNDING FOR THE ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL

There is now a large body of research which reveals communities that encourage and attract creative people generate both economic growth and social cohesion. Since 1962, The Ontario Arts Council has been at the forefront of nurturing and supporting Ontario's creative class.

For every dollar the OAC has invested in artists and arts organizations, there is a \$20 return to the Ontario economy. In 2001, culture in the province contributed almost \$18 billion to Ontario's GDP (4% of the GDP - and 47% of the Canadian Culture GDP) and there were 253,1000 jobs in the culture sector (4% of the workforce in Ontario and 40% of the artists in Canada.) Despite these impressive figures, Ontario ranks as seventh of the provinces in per capita provincial arts council spending (behind Quebec, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and New Brunswick).

The allocation to the Ontario Arts Council in 1994/1995 \$35,300,343; in 2006/2007 it was \$36,418,360 – an increase of only 3.2% or .25% per year.

QUESTION: If elected, will your government support on-going and increased funding to the Ontario Arts Council?

<p>Family Coalition Party of Ontario</p>	<p>Our party would review the funding currently granted to OAC and determine if government funding is appropriate, under what condition these investments benefit Ontario, and whether the money for this type of funding should be raised by other means.</p> <p>The government should not so much worry about “economic return on investment”, but “human return on investment”. We would promote those types of artistic endeavors that promote “humanity” and a culture based on the principles of life, freedom and individual responsibility.</p>
<p>Freedom Party of Ontario</p>	<p>Freedom Party of Ontario is of the view that art should be paid for only by those individuals who choose freely to do so. We regard it as morally wrong to force a person to pay for artistic works or efforts if/when they would not otherwise do so voluntarily. We hold government to the same moral standard as that to which we hold our neighbour, and we cannot agree it to be moral for ones neighbour to take ones money by force and give it to the Ontario Arts Council. The Ontario Arts Council, in our view, should be funded on a strictly voluntary basis.</p>
<p>New Democratic Party of Ontario</p>	<p>The Ontario Arts Council budget must be increased to reflect the scope of creativity we have in this province. Although Ontario is home to 40% of this country's artists, Ontario ranks as seventh of the provinces in per capita provincial arts council spending. Ontario should set a goal of reaching at least the national average.</p>
<p>Ontario Libertarian Party</p>	<p>For most people, spending on arts comes after food, shelter, clothing, health care, education, transportation, tools, and other essentials. And for most people, taxes come before all of those. Taxes from all levels of government consume almost 50 per cent of the average Canadian's income.</p> <p>The Ontario Libertarian Party would substantially reduce the size of government and the taxes they collect, leaving citizens with substantially more discretionary spending for art and other things that make life more enjoyable. It is hard to understand how some bureaucrat can decide how much of the taxpayers money should be allocated to education, health care and art. In every case, it is not enough, although taxpayers believe they are taking too much.</p>

<p>Ontario Liberal Party</p>	<p>Between 1995 and 1998, the former Conservative government slashed funding to the Ontario Arts Council by 42 per cent. The cost of such Conservative “efficiencies” was felt throughout the arts community. When the Ontario Liberals were elected, we restored funding to the arts. We committed to increasing the funding to the Ontario Arts Council to almost \$55 million by 2009-2010. This represents a 38 per cent increase to funding to the OAC that will impact hundreds of individual artists and arts organizations across the province. Working together, we have ensured that thousands of artists, including Francophone and Native artists, have benefited from the funding OAC provides and, as a result, the arts are flourishing in Ontario.</p>
<p>Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario</p>	<p>Since its inception in 1963 under Premier Robarts, The Ontario Arts Council has been the primary funding body for professional arts and culture activity in the Province. In 2005-2006, OAC funded 1,268 individual artists and 836 organizations for a total of \$35.7 million. Across a variety of service areas, including touring strategies, arts education, aboriginal and Franco-Ontarian support and direct funding to artists and service organizations, the OAC is the lead provincial organization fostering and supporting arts and culture with demonstrably impressive economic and artistic results. To support and grow the work of the OAC, we would protect the current and future funding commitments (increased funding by \$15 million by 2009-10). We will also ensure the OAC receives three-year tranche commitments from the government. Such an investment and funding pledge will ensure the Council has the ability to continue its valued programs, and position the Council for sustained growth and influence.</p>

3. ISSUE: IMPROVING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE ARTIST IN ONTARIO

Earlier this year a comprehensive report was published on the Socio-Economic Status of the Artist in Ontario in the 21st Century. The Report was the result of two years of consultation and research that included input from 3,600 survey respondents and five Roundtables attended by a large and representative group of artists, and other cultural workers and managers. The culmination of this work was the Status of the Artist Act.

QUESTION: What priority does your party place on the following socio-economic undertakings outlined in the Status of Ontario Artists' Act, 2007 and what resources are your party prepared to commit to them?

- a. **Training and professional development opportunities**
- b. **Municipal cultural planning**
- c. **Artist health and safety**
- d. **Strengthening arts and culture organizations**

<p>Family Coalition Party of Ontario</p>	<p>Our party would give very high priority to training children in schools, so that they can express and develop their artistic potential later in life. As far as professional development, cultural planning, health and safety and supporting cultural organizations, our party has no specific policies.</p>
<p>Freedom Party of Ontario</p>	<p>Freedom Party regards it as morally repugnant to force people to pay for the promotion of art by spending tax revenues on such organizations and efforts as that listed in a-d. Freedom Party does not put any priority on using the government's taxation powers to do immoral things. Freedom Party regards the role of government as the protection of every individual's life, liberty and property. Were an art association or organization to resort to mugging, burglary, or bank-robbing in order to fund its executive and its efforts, the proper role and duty of government would be to arrest, try, and imprison those engaged in the wrongdoing. Accordingly, a Freedom Party government will not use the power of taxation to steal money on behalf of any association or private organization, no matter how high or noble the association/organization regards its activities to be.</p> <p>Similarly, a Freedom Party government is not prepared to commit any "resources" (i.e., by which your questionnaire is referring to money taken from those who earn it, without their consent) to the organizations and efforts listed in a-d. Organizations and efforts seeking money will have to obtain that money by providing a good or service that people find valuable enough to pay for voluntarily.</p> <p>The safety accorded to artists is precisely the safety that we expect the police to provide to all individuals in Ontario, whether or not they are artists.</p>
<p>New Democratic Party of Ontario</p>	<p>Ontario's NDP supports meaningful Status of the Artist legislation that meets the diverse needs of professional artists and other cultural workers. Status of the Artist Legislation should include labour standards and taxation measures to immediately improve the working lives of artists in Ontario as well as: creating a collective bargaining framework for Ontario's artists protections for child performers; access to training and professional development programs and funds (training programs specifically for artists should be made available and not be contingent on EI eligibility as many artists are currently not EI eligible).</p> <p>Howard Hampton and Ontario's NDP have also been at the forefront of the fight for a better deal for municipalities. Too many costs have been downloaded onto municipalities leaving many Cities too cash-strapped to invest in the arts.</p>

<p>Ontario Libertarian Party</p>	<p>The Ontario Libertarian Party would expect that organizations such as yours and individual patrons of art would be responsible for doing what they can to improve the social and economic status of artists. All the government can do is take money (under threat of force) from one group of people to give to another. We believe this is immoral. The only money artist should get is money voluntarily given in exchange for art or as a gift. When people have more disposable income as a result of lower taxes, more money will flow to the arts in a voluntary way.</p>
<p>Ontario Liberal Party</p>	<p>For the arts to flourish, artists must be supported. That simple fact is central to our culture agenda. We listened to the community and implemented initiatives to support our artists. This included the development of www.ontarioartist.ca — which provides artists with information and business training seminars in Small Business Enterprise Centres across the province. Working with the community, we also passed the Status of Ontario’s Artists Act in 2007, which, for the first time in our province’s history, formally recognized the importance of Ontario’s artists. This act supports the province’s first arts and culture strategy and establishes the first weekend of June as “Celebrate the Artist Weekend.” Our culture platform will outline the steps we will take concerning training and professional development opportunities, municipal cultural planning, and strengthening arts and culture organizations.</p>
<p>Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario</p>	<p><i>Income averaging</i> The cyclical and sporadic nature of the artistic business model is prevalent across the sector and creates further financial barriers to the sustainability of the artistic economy. To relieve artists in this situation, a John Tory PC Government would work to implement an income-averaging or averaging tax credit regime. The goal of this program is to smooth out the tax burden of the artist between years of wildly fluctuating income. Several jurisdictions, both within Canada and internationally, have experience with such programs. We will work with the Federal Government to provide tax relief to full-time artists. Failing federal support to implement income averaging, a John Tory government will work with artists and their representative organizations to develop a credit program to address the unique income flows of their profession.</p>

4. ISSUE: INVESTING IN CAPITAL FUNDING FOR SMALL TO MID-SIZED ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

A 2006 Ipsos Reid survey of facility needs and issues in small and mid-sized performing and visual arts organizations across Ontario reveals a disturbing picture of arts organizations struggling to create artistic excellence in the midst of inadequate or non-existent facilities. Investment by the Province of Ontario in a capital funding program would trigger other investment, both public and private. The current excitement in several large urban centres around major new facilities and the value added they generate in these centres can be replicated across Ontario with a renewed commitment to accessible, cultural infrastructure funding.

QUESTION: If elected, will your government invest in a new multi-year capital infrastructure program for small to mid-sized arts organizations?

Family Coalition Party of Ontario	Our party will review the current funding to justifying continuation or increase of capital funding to the arts, under condition that the money is allocated for the promotion of a culture based on the principles of life, freedom and individual responsibility.
Freedom Party of Ontario	<p>Freedom Party is of the view that a strong and vibrant arts community is not the result of funneling tax revenues to committees, associations, organizations. It is the result of artists expressing their own sense of life through any of a wide variety of media, and of creating art that people value enough to pay for <i>voluntarily</i>.</p> <p>By taxing Ontarians to fund the salaries and grants of arts committees, associations and organizations, the government transfers - from the taxpayer to the committee/association/organization - the power to decide what is valuable artistic effort and what is not; the power to decide which artists will continue to provide art and which will not be able to afford to do so. Artists whose art is not deemed worthy of a grant by such tax-funded organizations can turn only to individuals who – having been taxed to fund the organization – have less money to offer to the artist. We regard that as immoral and unjust, and as a wrong done both to artists and to those who would like to pay them for their art. We reject the notion that the direction and development of artistic expression should be steered, controlled, censored, etc. by the moral, political and esthetic values of tax-funded arts committees, associations and organizations.</p>
New Democratic Party of Ontario	The Ontario government needs to ensure access to capital grants for small to mid-sized arts organizations and funding for repairs, renovations and the creation of new small and mid-size performing arts and art spaces.
Ontario Libertarian Party	It is a mistake for any organization to rely on government for ongoing funding. The government has changing priorities and faces many demands for money that isn't theirs to give. The Ontario Libertarian Party seeks to reduce the role of government and its use of force in society to protecting the life, liberty and property of its citizens.
Ontario Liberal Party	Over the past four years, we have made significant advances on the issue of capital funding for cultural organizations. Our investments have included \$25 million to community capital projects like the Ottawa Chamber Music Society, the Great Canadian Theatre Company and the Orleans Arts Centre and Town Centre Project. We followed that up with a \$6.8-million investment in small and mid-sized museums, heritage, libraries and theatre facilities. Our culture platform will build on these investments and provide capital support for smaller communities around the province.
Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario	No specific answer to this question.

5. ISSUE: ENHANCING THE ONTARIO TRILLIUM FOUNDATION'S IMPACT ON THE ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR

The Ontario Trillium Foundation supports the work of the voluntary sector in building healthy and vibrant communities across Ontario by enhancing long-term capacity of organizations in the arts and culture, environment, human social services and sports and recreation sectors. Recent budget announcements have confirmed increased annual allocations to the Foundation's operating budget, but it is still unclear what part of this new funding will be apportioned to arts and culture.

QUESTION: What will your party do to further support and enhance the work of the Ontario Trillium Foundation in the arts and culture sector across the province?

Family Coalition Party of Ontario	Our party thinks that the source money for the Trillium Foundation (OLGC) is often obtained from people who are poor or may be addicted to gambling. Thus we think that arts and culture in Ontario should not be dependent on this type of funding, but should be funded by a positive decision by taxpayers, recognizing the importance of arts and culture for today and for the future.
Freedom Party of Ontario	To further support and enhance the work of <i>artists</i> across the province, we will free artists and art consumers from the monetary and political power of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, and leave Ontarians with more of their own earnings so that <i>they</i> – rather than the Ontario Trillium Foundation's board and employees, and those to whom the Ontario Trillium Foundation gives tax revenues – can decide which artistic efforts are worthy of payment.
New Democratic Party of Ontario	Ontario's NDP will work with the arts and culture community to ensure they get a fair share of Trillium grants.
Ontario Libertarian Party	The Trillium Foundation is one of the many agencies competing for taxpayers' money that the Ontario Libertarian Party will seek to eliminate. Why should we pay bureaucrats to decide how "best" to spend our money? If you would not hire pick pockets and thieves to obtain your funding, why would you ask politicians to do it for you?
Ontario Liberal Party	Over the past four years, we have made significant enhancements to the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF). In the next four years, we will increase funding to the OTF to \$120 million by 2009-2010. This will represent an increase of 20 per cent from 2006-2007. This funding will be used to build healthy and vibrant communities across Ontario while supporting government priorities and building the capacity of Ontario's volunteer sector. The OTF has become an important institution in assisting those organizations that have become the lifeblood of our communities.
Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario	No specific response to this question.