

Canada is ARTS NATION

We began the year with Canadian artists claiming four of the top five albums on the Billboard charts. The first Oscar of the season was presented to our own Christopher Plummer. The simple truth is that the best known and most celebrated Canadians around the world are our artists; musicians, actors, writers, dancers, directors, choreographers, composers and filmmakers. As a country we punch way above our weight in the arts.

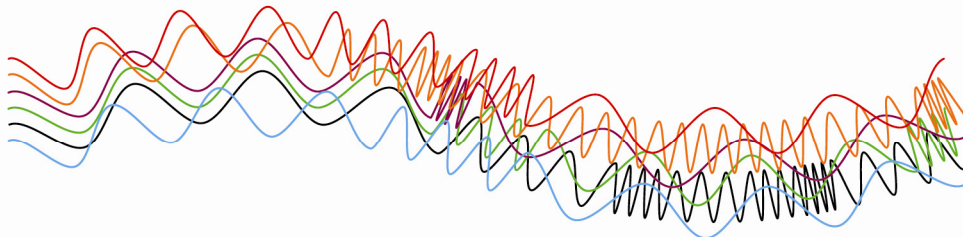
At home ordinary Canadians spend more than twice as much each year attending a live performance in the arts than all sporting events put together. For every mom or dad driving a kid to hockey, there is a mom or dad driving a kid to a rehearsal, a class or a performance.

The arts touch everyone. The Prime Minister famously jammed with Bryan Adams while he was in Ottawa to accept his Governor General's Performing Arts Award. Adams was surprised to find the Prime Minister has a room at 24 Sussex permanently set up with band equipment. The PM was quoted saying, "Playing music is the way the family relaxes."

This year, the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards celebrated its 20th anniversary as the nation's highest honour for our most notable artists with a reception on Parliament Hill, the formal investiture at Rideau Hall and a star-studded gala at the National Arts Centre. Leading up to the anniversary the Foundation that administers the awards set itself an audacious goal. By Canada's 150th birthday in 2017 we want the whole country, indeed the whole world, to know Canada as Arts Nation.

We want every kid who thinks they can do stand-up or hip hop or jam with Bryan Adams to say, "Hey, I'm Canadian and we're good at this." We want them to own it, to be proud of it, to be inspired by it.

We are simply inserting the language into the Canadian conversation where it resonates because it's true. It's true in the heart of every kid with talent and ambition; it's true in every family, school and community in the country. If you listen to music, read a book or watch a film, you are a citizen of Arts Nation. We are inviting you to use it, to own it. It's who we are.



ARTS NATION  NATION EN ART