

"IF IT ISN'T LEGISLATED, IT AIN'T WORTH ANYTHING"

December 1, 2000 - Lawyer **Arthur Drache** did not mince words as he emphasized the importance of tax law at the inaugural session of the **Chalmers Conferences** held last Wednesday November 22 at the National Gallery of Canada. Over 50 representatives of national arts service organizations (NASOs) from across the country gathered for a stimulating discussion on common (and uncommon) issues on the subject of taxation of the artist; a list of the organizations attending is attached. The Year 2000 Chalmers Conference is the first in a series planned by the CCA to encourage discussion and collaboration among Canadian arts service organizations.

As one of the keynote speakers, Mr. Drache QC, a specialist in taxation in the charitable sector who has generously assisted the CCA in particular and the arts community in general over the past few decades, opened the Conference with an overview of the development of tax law affecting the arts which was both erudite and entertaining. In the afternoon, Mr. Drache joined with Niall Brady, Secretary of the Embassy of Ireland; Betty Webster, Executive Director, Orchestras Canada; Anne-Marie Desroches, Union des Artistes; and Paul Rémillard, Director of Policy Development Section, CPP/EI Eligibility Division at Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) for a panel discussion. Under the excellent guidance of moderator Bruno Jean, Senior Policy Analyst at the Department of Canadian Heritage, the panel outlined various existing tax problems within the sector, solutions which might be explored, and what we can learn from other countries.

Mr. Drache proposed a solution to the problem of employment status which has been a particularly difficult one for orchestral musicians and managers: that self-employed individuals be allowed to self select as employed or self-employed when they sign on with a particular orchestra - a proposal which prompted considerable discussion. He also recommended the federal government examine a return to a system of income averaging for all Canadians. At the end of the session, the NASOs expressed an interest in signing an open letter to the next Minister of Finance highlighting their interest in revisions to the *Income Tax Act* and drawing the Minister's attention to the CCA's brief on the subject which was submitted to the Standing Committee on Finance in the Fall. The letter and a list of the signatories will appear on the CCA's website shortly; the brief, *Seeking out the Creators*, is already posted.

Other interesting points which arose during the Conference were:

- In response to a suggestion that CCRA develop sector profiles for culture in order to better understand the peculiarities of artists' work, we learned that this is already in the early stages. A preliminary document will be presented to CCA and others for discussion in due course.
- The exact parameters and perspectives of what it means to be self-employed differ greatly even within the various disciplines of the cultural sector.
- A preliminary version of a discussion paper on status of the artist legislation was presented by consultant Mireille Watson. The paper is available from the CCA secretariat.

It was agreed that NASOs are a potent advocacy force which, individually and collectively, provide a voice that can effectively advise the Federal Government on policy issues. Developing the collective voice and a consensus on policy advice is an activity that the Chalmers Conference is intended to further.

A Steering Committee consisting of Pat Bradley (PACT and CAPDO, and CCA President), Eleanor Dawson (ACI), Peter Feldman (CAPACOA), Kathe Lieber (PWAC), Jean-Philippe Tabet (CHRC), and Sandra Tulloch (arts consultant and CCA Board member) was formed and will put

together the agenda for next year's Chalmers Conference, which is scheduled for November 22, 2001, in Toronto. The 2000 Chalmers Conference was made possible through funding from the Samuel and Saidye Bronfman Family Foundation and the new CCA endowment fund.

SHUFFLING ON

Speculation continues regarding a Cabinet shuffle as the new Cabinet is expected to be sworn in next week. In a new round of rumours, **Allen Rock**, formerly Minister of Health, is touted as changing places with Heritage Minister **Sheila Copps**.

Donna Scott OC, CEO of the Ontario Arts Council, has announced that she will be leaving the organization at the end of March 2001, with one year left to run on her contract. Ms. Scott says her resignation represents a protest against ongoing cuts to arts funding in the province; she has already seen the budget of the OAC cut by more than 40%, although the press release from the OAC was neutral in that regard. Previous to April 1999, during her tenure as Chair at the Canada Council, Ms. Scott also oversaw severe budget reductions with resulting staff and program cutbacks.

Despite media coverage in recent days of major reductions in **tobacco sponsorships** (specifically the fireworks competitions), CCA has learned that four major jazz festivals across Canada will continue to receive be sponsored by du Maurier in 2001; unless existing legislation is changed, sponsorships will cease by 2003. The du Maurier Arts Council, which is a separate granting agency, confirms it will continue to provide grants for the foreseeable future. Mary Moulton of Halifax has just been named to the Council; she was the Executive Director of the New Neptune Theatre Campaign from 1995-1997. She joins honorary director Maureen Forrester CC, Roberta Beiser, Liza Frulla, Lonsdale Holland, Oliver Jones OC, Marie Lambert CM, Don Shipley, and Marg Southern OC.

STATEMENT ON ARTS AND CULTURE

The CCA has finally received the **cultural policy** which Deborah Grey, Canadian Alliance's culture critic, approved on November 4. We reprint it in its entirety; due to the fact that it arrived post-election, the CCA will not comment on it at this time:

"The Canadian Alliance believes that art and culture can represent the best of our country's creative energy and expression. Throughout Canada's history, distinguished painters, writers and musicians have interpreted Canadians to themselves and to the world. We view this creative heritage as a trust to be protected and fostered for future generations.

We believe that the federal government should continue to play a role in creating an environment that stimulates and encourages artistic endeavour and excellence.

We believe that hard working Canadians have a right to see their tax dollars treated with respect. When public funds are entrusted to talented individuals for artistic endeavour, we believe Canadians should be able to say they are proud of the result. Grants and

contributions must be awarded impartially and fairly, with greater transparency and accountability.

We believe that lower taxes - as well as other incentives to be provided through the tax system - would contribute significantly toward stimulating voluntary sponsorship of the arts that would create the maximum opportunity for artists to strive for excellence. In this way we will strive to increase corporate and voluntary sponsorship of the arts.

The Canadian Alliance is committed to strengthening local and aboriginal artistic heritage, museums, historic exhibits and libraries across Canada, including remote and isolated communities."

NATIONAL ARTS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS ATTENDING THE 2000 CHALMERS CONFERENCE INCLUDED:

Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists Performers Guild (ACTRA)
American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada (AFM)
Association des réalisateurs et réalisatrices du Québec (l'ARRQ)
Association des théâtres francophones du Canada
Association for Native Development in the Performing and Visual Arts (ANDPVA)
Canadian Actors' Equity Association (CAEA)
Canadian Alliance of Dance Artists (CADA)
Canadian Artists Representation Ontario / Le Front des artistes canadiens (CARFAC)
Canadian Artists Representation Copyright Collective Inc. (CARCC)
Canadian Arts Presenting Association / l'Association canadienne des organismes artistiques (CAPACOA)
Canadian Association of Photographers and Illustrators in Communications (CAPIC)
Canadian Association of Professional Dance Organizations (CAPDO)
Canadian Crafts Federation
Canadian Music Centre (CMC)
Conseil québécois des arts médiatiques
Conseil québécois du théâtre
Cultural Human Resources Council (CHRC)
Fédération culturelle canadienne-française
Gilde des musiciens du Québec
Independent Film and Video Alliance (IFVA)/Alliance de la vidéo et du cinéma indépendant (AVCI)
League of Canadian Poets
Orchestras Canada
Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians (OCSM / OMOSC)
Periodical Writers Association of Canada (PWAC)
Playwrights Union of Canada
Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT)
Professional Opera Companies of Canada (POCC)
Regroupement des artistes en arts visuels du Québec (RAAV)
Société de droits d'auteur en arts visuels (SODART)
Société professionnelle des auteurs et des compositeurs du Québec (SPACQ)
Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada (SOCAN)
Union des artistes

Union des écrivains et écrivaines québécois (UNEQ)
Writers' Union of Canada