

# Supporting Canadian arts and culture

NDP **BACKGROUNDER**

**Canadians are proud to see our own artists flourishing**, here at home and abroad. So often these days, our musicians, filmmakers, writers and visual artists are the ones pushing boundaries at the top of their fields. But for younger artists following their lead, Stephen Harper's funding cuts and gag laws have thrown up new barriers.

Arts and culture are the bedrock of our identity. Museums and festivals teach us about our diverse heritage. Cultural creators of all sorts help us build on that and explore new directions. And how many of these Canadian voices could have developed without vital programs and institutions like the CBC, PromArt and Telefilm Canada?

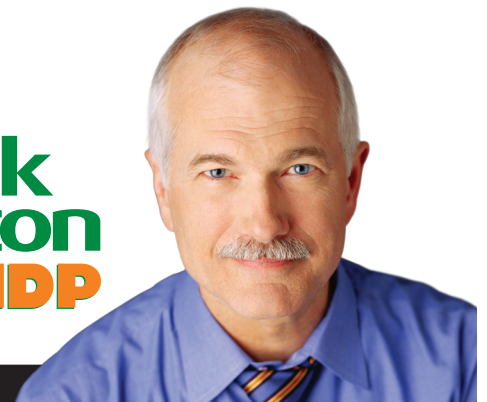
Through years of hard work, Canadians have built a multi-million-dollar arts and film industry. This sector now sustains thousands of well-paying jobs, but Stephen Harper is ready to risk that too. He'd leave the future of Canadian artists to the whims of a North American cultural marketplace dominated by American media giants.

It doesn't have to be this way.

It's time for a Prime Minister who respects our artists and cultural institutions, and who'll give them the support they deserve. Jack Layton will be that Prime Minister.

**Don't let them tell you it can't be done.**

**Jack  
Layton**  
NDP



## Stephen Harper can't be trusted.

- He has cut millions in crucial funding for arts and culture programs such as the Museums Assistance Program, Trade Routes, PromArt, the Canadian Independent Film and Video Fund, the Canadian New Media Fund, the National Training Schools Program, and the the A-V Preservation Trust.
- His film censorship bill (C-10) threatens artistic freedom in Canada's film industry by giving his Heritage Department new powers to deny funding for film and television productions it deems "offensive."
- His DMCA-style copyright legislation (C-61) places undue power in the hands of US-based media conglomerates—not artists—and criminalizes consumers for reasonable personal use of digital material.
- He broke his \$3-million commitment to hire summer museum interns, placing many local museums at risk; and his government jeopardized summer festivals across the country by delaying \$30 million in promised funding.

## Stephane Dion is not the change we need.

- He told his Liberal MPs to sit on their hands rather than defeat Bill C-10, Harper's outrageous film and television censorship legislation.
- With Dion at the cabinet table, the Liberals cut \$8-million from the CBC's budget, \$1.4-million from Telefilm Canada, and \$25-million from the Canadian Television Fund—one quarter of the budget of this agency that helps create, finance and broadcast Canadian TV productions.

## Jack Layton's New Democrats: Supporting Canadian arts and culture.

This election, Jack Layton and his team of New Democrats will release a plan offering artists and cultural institutions the support they need to flourish. Layton's team has already led the way in Parliament:

- Consistently **opposed Harper's narrow-minded cuts** to programs that support Canadian artists, cuts to local festivals, and cuts to museums.
- Defended **freedom of expression** and cultural diversity by opposing and exposing the implications of Harper's film and TV censorship bill (C-10).
- Led the charge against Harper's DMCA-style **digital copyright bill**—advocating a wide consultation process to develop better legislation that protects consumers and ensures fair compensation for artistic creators.
- Exposed and opposed the practice of Internet "throttling," and advocated the concept of **net neutrality** to prevent a two-tiered Internet and stop the big telecoms from ripping off creators and consumers alike.
- Successfully pressed **CBC** management to shelve a decision to axe its in-house capacity to produce Canadian drama—and called for stable funding for the CBC and Radio Canada to strengthen public broadcasting.
- Alone in Parliament, tabled and supported a motion to review the misguided decision to sell off the international rights to 135 CBC programs to a British firm.