



(a).

August 10, 2004

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur  
Minister of Culture & Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs  
The Executive Council of Ontario  
Whitney Block, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
99 Wellesley St. West  
Toronto, Ontario  
M7A 1W3

Dear Ms. Meilleur:

On behalf of the Toronto Public Library, our Board and patrons, please accept my sincere congratulations on the creation of the Minister's Advisory Council for Arts and Culture. I am confident that the Council will become an indispensable resource to support vibrant cultural communities in the province.

The Toronto Public Library has recently identified cultural activity as a key strategic priority in our 2004-2007 Strategic Plan. After extensive consultation with Toronto's many communities, broadening access to the City's rich cultural life of the city emerged as one of the Library's four priorities for the next three-year period.

The Library is recognized as more than just a repository of books. Toronto residents place a high value on the free access that the Library provides to accomplished writers, artists and performers through its creative agenda of programs and activities, its gallery and exhibit space, and of course its rich collections of books, magazines, and electronic resources.

Given the diverse and relevant experience that the library community can bring to the Council, I ask you to consider additional library members who can add significantly to the talent and experience of your current membership. I would be pleased to assist with the recruitment of participants from the library community.

.../2

## Library Board

### Chair

Gillian Mason

### Vice-Chair

William Booth

### City Librarian

Josephine Bryant

Meyer Brownstone  
Councillor Gay Cowbourne  
Councillor Janet Davis  
Rick Goldsmith, CA  
Mizan Ibrahim

Mark Nightingale  
Councillor Kyle Rae  
Councillor Karen Stintz  
Councillor Sylvia Watson  
Mitchell Weisberg

Nancy Marshall at 416-393-7215, can arrange an appointment at your convenience, if you would like to have further discussion.

Once again, we applaud the Ministry's important initiative and look forward with considerable enthusiasm to the work of the Council.

Best regards,

Gillian Mason  
Chair

Ministry of Culture

New Arts and Culture Council to build strong communities

Minister's Advisory Council Recognizes Role and Contribution of Ontario's Artists

TORONTO, July 27 /CNW/ - The Ontario government is involving artists in building strong and vibrant cultural communities by establishing a Minister's Advisory Council for Arts and Culture, Minister of Culture Madeleine Meilleur announced today.

"Our government is committed to creating an open forum for discussion and to listening to the culture community," said Meilleur. "The advisory council will give us an opportunity to hear the views and seek advice from the arts and cultural community."

The council will focus on building and sustaining strong and vibrant culture communities specifically through the arts, cultural industries, heritage and library sectors. The council will recognize the importance of Ontario's artists and help create a new respect for their social and economic contribution.

The council is composed of 13 members who represent the culture community throughout Ontario and reflect a range of backgrounds and interests.

"I look forward to working with the minister and the council members to help build and sustain strong and vibrant culture communities across Ontario," said Dr. Jim Fleck, council chairman.

"This council will allow the Ontario government to make Ontario's artists part of building strong and liveable communities," said Meilleur. "Ultimately, this means a higher quality of life for the people of Ontario."

-30-

For further information: Guy Lepage, Minister's Office, (416) 325-1689;  
Gary Wheeler, Ministry of Culture, (416) 325-8391

## **Backgrounder Document d'information**

---

Ministry of Culture    Ministère de la Culture

July 27, 2004

### **MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR ARTS AND CULTURE**

The Ontario government has established the Minister's Advisory Council for Arts and Culture to advise the Minister of Culture on strategies to help promote and enhance Ontario's culture sector.

#### **Mandate**

The Council's mandate is to advise the Minister of Culture on policies and programs that support strong and vibrant cultural communities through the arts, cultural industries, heritage and libraries sectors, as well as create an open forum for discussion with the culture community. The Minister of Culture will set the priorities in consultation with the council chair.

The council will have the powers of an advisory agency. Council members will report to the minister through the council chair.

#### **Composition of the council**

The council will be composed of up to 15 members, including the chair, all appointed by the Lieutenant Governor. The council will be comprised of individuals who have demonstrated their commitment to the culture community in Ontario. The council membership will represent a range of sectors in the culture community, a range of regions in the province, and a range of backgrounds and interests.

#### **The following are the first members of the Minister's Advisory Council for Arts and Culture:**

**Dr. Jim Fleck, Chair of the Minister's Advisory Council for Arts and Culture -**  
Toronto

Dr. Jim Fleck is Chairman of the Council for Business and the Arts in Canada, President of the Art Gallery of Ontario Foundation, Chairman of the Art Gallery of Ontario's Building Committee overseeing the Frank Gehry renovations and extension, and past Chairman of the Board and President of the Art Gallery of Ontario. He was founding president of The Power Plant, Contemporary Art at Harbourfront, and director, treasurer and vice-President of The National Ballet of Canada. He was the 2003 winner of the

**Piers Handling** - Co-Director of the Toronto International Film Festival - Toronto

Piers Handling joined the Toronto International Film Festival as a programmer in 1982, becoming Programming Director five years later, Deputy Director in 1990, Artistic Director in 1993, and Festival Director and CEO in 1994. Mr. Handling has attended or worked at 23 of the past 25 festivals. In his 22 years at the festival, Handling has organized numerous programs including major retrospectives of Canadian, Latin American, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, and Hungarian cinema, and co-founded Perspective Canada. Prior to the film festival, he worked at the Canadian Film Institute (CFI) for a decade, reaching the position of Deputy Director. After leaving the CFI, he taught Canadian Cinema at Carleton University in Ottawa and Queen's University in Kingston.

**Drew Hayden Taylor** - Playwright and Script Writer - Toronto

Drew Hayden Taylor's worked as Playwright-In-Residence for Native Earth Performing Arts in the late 1980s and served as Native Earth's Artistic Director from 1984-1991. Since then, he has won numerous awards including the Chalmers Canadian Play Award for Best Play for Young Audience for his *All Dreamers Rock/ Education is our Right*, and the Canadian Authors Association Literary Award for Best Drama for *The Bootlegger Blues*. His play *Only Drunks and Children Tell the Truth* won the Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding New Play in 1996. He has written, directed, or worked on numerous film and video documentaries about Native issues and written scripts for many television shows including *Street Legal* and *North of Sixty*.

**Tim Jones** - Executive Director, Toronto Artscape Inc. - Toronto

Tim Jones has worked as a management consultant, developer, grants officer, theatre and festival producer, capacity building specialist, activist, CEO, and board president. As Executive Director of Artscape since 1998, Jones has explored the relationship between creativity and place and been a champion of arts-driven revitalization through projects such as The Distillery Historic District, Gibraltar Point Centre for the Arts, and the Creative Places + Spaces Conference. Jones was also Program Officer in the theatre division of the Canada Council for the Arts and General Manager of Buddies in Bad Times Theatre in Toronto.

**Avon Macfarlane** - Fundraiser, University of Toronto - Toronto

Avon Macfarlane is in charge of major gifts at the University of Toronto's Division of University Advancement. Prior to her work at the university, Macfarlane worked as a development officer and project coordinator at Toronto's Harbourfront Centre. She has been a judge of the Prism Award, a national children's writing competition; Board Member, Campus Cooperative Community Daycare; Chair, Programming Committee of Artsweek; and Volunteer Coordinator of the Toronto Arts Awards.

**Dr. Ross H. Paul** - President and Vice-Chancellor, University of Windsor - Windsor

Dr. Ross H. Paul has been President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Windsor since 1998, after serving nearly seven years as President of Laurentian University in Sudbury. Paul was a founding member of the Edmonton Summerfest Board, which created the Edmonton Fringe Theatre Festival. A former President of Montreal's Island City Singers, he was co-composer of *Festival Folk Mass* recorded on Laurentian Records and performed throughout Quebec and Ontario. Paul has also been a National Governor of the Shaw Theatre Festival since 2002.

**Gina M. Remy** - Director of Legal and Business Affairs, Corus Entertainment Inc. -Toronto

Gina M. Remy was recently promoted to Director of Legal and Business Affairs for Corus Entertainment Inc. in Toronto, after several years as Manager of Legal and Regulatory Affairs. Remy is responsible for the legal affairs of YTV Productions Inc. She is currently a member of the Board of Directors, Reel World Film Festival; was co-organizer of the 2003 Salome Bey Tribute Committee; former member of the Board of Directors, Black Film and Video Network; and co-organizer of the 2003 Primary Abstractions Art Exhibition.

**Dr. Peter C. Simon** - President, The Royal Conservatory of Music - Toronto

Dr. Peter C. Simon has served as President of The Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) since 1991. Under his guidance, the RCM has since re-fashioned its mission to: "develop human potential through leadership in music and arts education." Rejoined the Royal Conservatory of Music in 1986 as Director of Academic Studies. In 1989, he was appointed President of the Manhattan School of Music in New York City, where he initiated several projects. Dr. Simon has studied at the Royal Conservatory of Music, New York's Juilliard School and in London with Louis Kentner.

**Veronica Tennant** - Television producer and former Prima Ballerina - Toronto

As Prima Ballerina with the National Ballet of Canada for 25 years, Veronica Tennant won hearts and accolades as a dancer of extraordinary versatility and dramatic power. She has danced on stages across North America, Europe and Japan with the greatest male dancers of our time, including Rudolf Nureyev and Mikhail Baryshnikov. Lauded as a Canadian icon and role-model, Tennant is now an established and award-winning television director, producer and writer. She has choreographed and served as an associate director for Tarragon Theatre, Canadian Stage and The Stratford Festival. Tennant is Canada's National Ambassador for UNICEF, which accorded her the 1999 Danny Kaye Award, and was inducted into Canada's Walk of Fame in 2001. The first dancer to be appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1975, she was elevated this year to Companion of The Order of Canada, the country's highest honour. Most recently, Tennant was the 2004 recipient of the Canada Council's Walter Carsen Prize for Excellence in the Performing Arts.

- 30 -

Contacts:  
Guy Lepage  
Minister's Office  
(416) 325-1689

Gary Wheeler  
Communications Branch  
(416) 325-8391

*Disponible en français*

[www.culture.gov.on.ca](http://www.culture.gov.on.ca)