

**THE GLAMorous SIDE OF CULTURAL DIPLOMACY
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA
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Thank you, and thank you so much for inviting me to talk about Cultural Diplomacy today. It is a subject which I feel is particularly germane with all that is going on in the world now, and one I have lived from the arts' organizational side for decades.

The role of Cultural Diplomacy has been much studied and written about in recent years, particularly regarding its integral importance to international trade and foreign relations. That importance has been underlined, and it is used effectively by many countries. Yet, in Canada, especially in the last number of years, the role of culture and cultural diplomacy in our international policies and practice seems to have been turned on and off, without properly valuing its benefits. For me, having worked in the field and contributed on a number of international cultural fronts, I contend the role of arts and culture in trade and diplomacy is critically important both tangibly and intangibly. I agree with John Ralston Saul, who in 1995, wrote: "Canada's profile abroad IS largely its culture – the role culture has to play in Canada's foreign policy should not, at any point, be sacrificed."

Culture is an expression of who we are – as individuals, as regions and as nations - it defines who we are, and when allowed, it all adds immeasurably to our economic health.

Vous ne serez donc pas surpris d'apprendre que c'est de moi qu'est venue l'idée de faire une étude sur la diplomatie culturelle au Comité sénatorial permanent des affaires étrangères et du commerce international, dont je suis membre.

L'objectif de cette étude était d'examiner le rôle de la diplomatie culturelle et de ses avantages à court et à long terme. J'étais ravie que mes collègues du comité aient accepté d'entreprendre ce qui, au départ, ne devait être qu'une courte étude. Il se trouve que cette étude a suscité tellement d'intérêt et donné matière à tant d'approches et de réflexions différentes qu'elle a donné lieu à une année complète de témoignages. Le rapport est en cours de rédaction et sera rendu public plus tard au printemps. Quand j'ai accepté de vous parler aujourd'hui, j'espérais que le rapport serait prêt afin que je puisse parler de nos conclusions et recommandations, mais ce n'est pas le cas; alors je ne dirai rien!

Mais je peux vous donner un aperçu des témoignages publics que nous avons recueillis. Beaucoup d'entre vous ont peut-être suivi les audiences du comité. Je vous parlerai également de mes propres expériences sur le terrain, avant ma nomination au Sénat; et je rappellerai quelques-unes étapes marquantes de la diplomatie culturelle au Canada au cours des décennies.

My special interest in the field does come from decades of working in the arts, as a curator, Gallery director and adjunct professor teaching among other things, Canadian Cultural Policy. I have benefited from the once very active cultural diplomacy pillar, and sent many exhibitions and artists abroad to China, Japan, Ukraine, Britain, the US and more. I have been an official guest of Japan, France and Britain, and have travelled to Norway, Iceland, Finland, England, Scotland and the US to lecture, or with exhibitions. The field of cultural diplomacy was alive when I began my career, it built, and it subsided!

I should also declare that my husband, John Bovey, Provincial Archivist of both Manitoba and British Columbia, with the support of George Richardson, Governor of the Hudson Bay Company, negotiated the transfer of the Hudson Bay Archives to Canada – to Winnipeg and the

Provincial Archives of Manitoba. He too was an invited guest internationally on issues of Canadian History and Canadian Studies – which as the Committee heard, is an important aspect of Cultural Diplomacy initiatives.

First, what is cultural diplomacy? The institute for cultural diplomacy defines it as “a course of actions which are based on and utilize the exchange of ideas, values, traditions and other aspects of culture or identity, whether to strengthen relationships, enhance socio-cultural cooperation or promote national interests.”

Now briefly, let me remind us of some milestones in Canadian cultural diplomacy, through many administrations!

Culture played a major part of Canada’s gaining its own sense of identity and of nationhood, starting with the WWI War Artists Program, which continued during WWII and has subsequently. Canada’s artists, including Fred Varley, Arthur Lismer, AY Jackson, Molly Lamb Bobak, Alex Colville, Jack Shadbolt, and many more, undertook first hand documentation of war zones and activities involving Canadians. There were other landmark turning points in Canadian culture, though time allows mention of only some!

In 1945 Radio Canada International was established, followed in 1957 by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO. During the 1960s culture became a focus of foreign policy. In 1966 the Cultural Affairs division in External Affairs was established. Expo 67 gave a huge shout-out to the world culturally for Canada and also brought much work and inspiration to Canadians. In 1970 Canada became part of the Francophonie.

But in the 1969-70 budget, cultural diplomacy decreased by \$7.5M; 7 posts were closed, and 60 officers and 110 support staff lost their jobs.

However, there was a quick turn-around in 1970 as Foreign Policy included culture, and the next year the Prime Minister went to the Soviet Union, with the arts playing a significant role in warming relations! In 1972, with a new policy review, budgets were increased to expand cultural relations linking Canadian arts and culture and foreign affairs policy, though there was no long-term strategy in place, and cultural programs were heavily focused on Europe

More than twenty years later, in 1995, Culture was formally set as the 'third' pillar of foreign affairs, along-side economic growth and international peace and security, and between 1999 and 2005 Canada led the UNESCO Convention on the Protection & Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. At that time, organizations and individual artists in all media seeking grants for cultural events or presentations abroad had to illustrate their relevance to Canada's foreign trade policy.

Simultaneously, the Trade Routes Program between 1996 and 2000 was a tremendous success. According to Stats Can, export of arts and culture goods jumped by 50% and the export of arts and culture services jumped by 30%. Arts and culture became one of the fastest growing sectors in the Canadian economy - third in terms of exports. In 2003 culture was reinforced as part of Foreign Affairs policy.

Though, only two years later, in 2005, Culture as that third pillar was eradicated. The role was certainly teetering, BUT, in 2007 a grant program continued for artists and arts organizations in all disciplines for the promotion of Canadian culture abroad in alignment with Canada's foreign policy and trade priorities, as did a Business Development Program providing information and advice to Canadian exporters. In 2006 the total funding for Canada's arts abroad was \$11.9 Million, and that investment, as Stats Can figures showed, garnered \$4.3 Billion in return.

However, given Canada's deficits, work done, from 2007-2009, to seek a balance between Canadian foreign policy, culture and politics, and between national and international interests. Cultural creators and curators were warned of the gravity of the situation. As a curator and gallery director, I got those warnings of imminent change and in August 2008, the External Affairs Website posted an ominous announcement: "Please note that the Cultural Sector Grant program mentioned below will be concluded as of March 31, 2009."

Since then, programs have been redeveloped, some new ones initiated and the consequential importance of cultural diplomacy is being understood by many, especially those in the arts and culture field. In 2015 Minister Dion spoke of a commitment of "reinvesting dollars to return culture to its proper place in Canadian diplomacy and to promote Canadian creativity and identity onto the international stage".

Since 1952, Canada has participated in the Venice Biennale, first posthumously with the work of Emily Carr, and since with leading contemporary artists, many garnering public awards. For years, Canada's ballet companies have performed to acclaim internationally – and indeed have played key roles over the decades in warming international relations, such as those in the 1970s with Russia and with China. Now, *Come from Away*, is taking the London stage by storm and Ottawa-born star pianist, Angela Hewitt, who lives in London, continues to amaze audiences around the world. I was in Regina last weekend speaking at the opening of the exhibition *Super Screen* at the MacKenzie Gallery, an exhibition celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Grand Western Canadian Screen Shop. That group was invited by Yves Pepin of External Affairs to have an exhibition in Paris in 1978. Artists involved have told me that that international exhibition "validated their work". I disagree – it REVALIDATED what had already been validated at home in Winnipeg – the role of the local in the global is critical!

In our meetings we were told of the importance of staff and artists exchanges, internships and artists' residencies. Our writers are heralded globally; Canada's publishers are being featured in the 2020 Frankfurt book fair; and Canadian developers of video games are creating amazing products famous world-wide.

I am very pleased that the Creative Export Canada Program was launched this past year, replacing the Trade Routes Program in a new form. We were told at the Foreign Affairs committee that the uptake has been huge – far exceeding the monies available. That, for me, talks to the import of arts and culture as a critical part of Canada's face internationally, but, some of our witnesses told us that while the work of our artists may be well-known, the fact that they are Canadian is not!

So, what is the overriding role of cultural diplomacy? The report *Culture Keeps Doors Open in Difficult Times* aptly concluded:

At times of political difficulty, when diplomats are not even able to sit around the negotiating table together, culture can keep doors open until relations improve. [, p. 54]

Certaines des questions soulevées par notre comité ou dans les témoignages étaient les suivantes : Quelle est l'importance ou quel est le rôle de la diplomatie culturelle? En quoi la diplomatie culturelle sert-elle les artistes, les arts et l'économie en général? Par quels indicateurs peut-on mesurer cela? Quels sont les rôles des missions à l'étranger? Les attachés culturels devraient-ils être envoyés dans les missions du Canada à l'étranger, ou leurs responsabilités devraient-elles être assumées de différentes façons et par d'autres, en fonction des missions et des besoins? Sur cette question particulière, beaucoup de témoins ont déclaré qu'il fallait donner une formation culturelle aux personnes ayant des responsabilités culturelles, et ce chaque année,

parce que la manière et les moyens par lesquels on présente, on offre et on transmet la culture et l'art changent vraiment rapidement, sans parler des industries culturelles.

À quoi ressemble la situation dans son ensemble? Comment le secteur culturel canadien peut-il s'inscrire dans le nouvel ordre mondial?

Étant donné la nouvelle donne sur la scène internationale, le Canada peut et doit se montrer proactif et non réactif. Nous devrions miser sur la participation de nos artistes – dans tous les domaines – artistes visuels, écrivains, musiciens, danseurs et professionnels du théâtre, pour n'en citer que quelques-uns. À quoi devraient ressembler nos relations, commerciales et autres?

Permettez-moi de revenir un instant sur la documentation.

Scholar Lisane Gibson, has done considerable work on 'culture circuits', cultural policy dimensions of bilateral and trade agreements. In addition to economic sustainability, the cultural circuit discourses include social inclusion, social equity, cultural diversity, cultural values and creative innovation. That too was pointed out strongly by the Aboriginal Curators' Collective, who also called for Indigenous cultural rights and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. As Clayton Wyndatt said UNDRIP "could be something where Canada takes the lead on best practices in a global environment". UNDRIP is before the Senate now, and I will be speaking in support of the Bill next week. The work of Canada's Indigenous artists is well-known globally.

The 2008-2013 UNESCO strategy was clear: "UNESCO will promote the potential of dialogue based on music and the arts as a vector for the strengthening of mutual understanding and interaction as well as for building a culture of peace and respect for cultural diversity." Canada is part of that strategy.

But, the literature and our testimony show that cultural diplomacy does more. At the November 30, 2016 Berlin Conference on Cultural Diplomacy, the Chilean Ambassador to Germany, Patricio Pradel, said:

Cultural Diplomacy helps solving issues because culture is always useful in strengthening ties. We've seen around the world, in different instances, popular concerts for peace, concerts for human rights. Culture also helps bring people together for peace.

Culture connects the human in our world – human understanding, human dialogue in international languages of visual art, music and dance, and now video games! The UK Cultural Diplomacy: Report of 2007, by Kirsten Bound, Rachel Briggs, John Holden, and Samuel Jones, argued in its Executive Summary:

More than ever before, culture has a vital role to play in international relations. This stems from the wider, connective and human values that culture has: culture is both the means by which we come to understand others, and an aspect of life with innate worth. ... Cultural exchange gives us the chance to appreciate points of commonality and, where there are differences, to understand the motivations and humanity that underlie them. ... In the future, alliances are just as likely to be forged along lines of cultural understanding as they are on economic or geographic ones.... The value of cultural activity comes precisely from its independence, its freedom and the fact that it represents and connects people.

And, what about the benefits of cultural diplomacy? In his article for Foreign Policy of 2002, Mark Leonard outlined the four purposes for public diplomacy in the twenty-first century. Arts and culture contribute to each by:

- *increasing familiarity and making people think*
- *increasing appreciation by creating positive perceptions of your country and getting others to see issues from your perspective*
- *engaging people, encouraging people to see your country as an attractive destination for tourism and study and encouraging them to buy its products and subscribe to its values*
- *influencing people's behaviour, getting companies to invest, encouraging public support for your country's positions, and convincing politicians to turn to it as an ally.*

Simon Mark a écrit, dans son document intitulé « The Potential of Cultural Diplomacy » :

« La diplomatie culturelle tire sa force du croisement avec la culture nationale, les valeurs nationales, l'identité nationale et la fierté nationale. La culture peut témoigner de la personnalité d'un État d'une manière qui touche autant les adeptes que les auditoires. La "vraie" image projetée par la diplomatie culturelle n'a pas besoin de se limiter à quelques faits et chiffres, à un refrain ou un slogan de promotion touristique. Il ne faut pas sous-estimer la capacité d'un spectacle culturel, d'un film ou d'une bourse de créer des liens. » [P. 37]

DONC, qui avons-nous entendu et qu'avons-nous entendu?

Avant que nous ne commençons cette étude, le ministre du Commerce international de l'époque, l'honorable François-Philippe Champagne, a parlé, le 30 mars 2017, de l'importance des valeurs canadiennes dans nos accords commerciaux, réaffirmant la place centrale de notre culture.

In our Cultural Diplomacy Study, we heard from artists, both emerging and established, arts collectives and organizations in all disciplines, those working in traditional media and new technologies, as well as innovative cultural industries; indigenous, non-indigenous, immigrant and multi-cultural artists and representatives, GLAMS leaders, academics, associations, and cultural leaders representing other countries and their endeavours in the field. We heard from those working in Global Affairs, including former diplomats, Canadian Heritage, the Canada Council of the Arts and the National Gallery of Canada. We looked at statistics, and sought economic impacts, both short and long term.

What did we hear? Many spoke of their international work, tours, performances and exhibitions – much of it done without Federal support, some with Provincial support and most with huge private sector support.

It was Jeremy Kinsman, former diplomat and international trade negotiator, who said: “I can’t think of a more important topic for your committee.... This topic and how we project ourselves in the world is about us”, a comment echoed by many.

He recollected that in the 1990s, when culture, cultural policy and public diplomacy were identified as the third pillar.... “we were actually very effective. ... culture and diplomacy are inseparable. We support our trade goals through projecting our reality on our values. It’s a search for influence on behalf of our interest and nothing could be more important.... Soft power is not a substitute for hard power; it’s a complement.... Projecting the best that Canadians can show. It has to be authentic to work and it always is.” ... Our realities”, he continued, “our values, our creativity, our sense of capacity for innovation are all bound up together.”

Mentioning the Applebaum Hebert Report of the 1980s, he too raised the issue of Canadian Studies, but noted that while Global Affairs controls the missions, they don't have any contacts in the artistic community, suggesting those have to be put together. "Public diplomacy speaks of our values ... is of enormous profile and it assists our reputation and credibility for a whole scope of other interests, including promoting our innovation, technologically advanced cultural industries. The arts directly support industry in people's minds, but the most important thing is that the people who do it are Canadians. We deploy Canadians out there. ... We showcase their talents. ... we present the kind of optimism, energy and innovation that should make our reputation for decades to come."

Colin Robertson, formerly of Global Affairs who served in a variety of positions in a variety of missions, told us: "Cultural Diplomacy is a vital instrument for advancing Canadian objectives in peace and security, trade and investment, immigration and development." One "That draws and collaborates with other levels of government – provinces, territories and cities and private sector. ... [It needs] inspiration from existing initiatives like the Advisory Council on Economic Growth and Business and Higher Education Roundtable. ... dedicated budgets and a minister dedicated to being its champion. ... A tax credit & regulatory environment." In sum, "Canada's missions as 'cultural spaces and exchanges abroad to project Canada's social & economic dynamism".

Mr. Robertson cited the importance of Canadian Studies programs and youth exchanges. However, in the same testimony he cautioned us that "If we continue to treat cultural diplomacy as an afterthought within Canada's international relations, we miss opportunities to use our foreign policy to generate economic, political and security benefits for Canadians." He continued: "The Government of Canada must truly understand the importance of strengthening objectives in the world of commerce. The Quebec Government did this by investing in Cirque de

Soleil and other projects.”

Sarah Smith of Carleton, added: “Cultural Relations allows us to think about people-to-people relations, in addition to state-to-people relations of cultural diplomacy.” And, Simon Brault, CEO of the Canada Council opined that “Sometimes artists can convey messages and content that politicians or diplomats cannot convey.”

I was encouraged by the comments of Stuart Savage of Global Affairs that: “Cultural diplomacy has always been a pillar of public diplomacy to inform and influence governments as well as individuals and communities beyond the traditional channels. ... [It] allows countries to stimulate exchange, improve international cultural understanding and

contribute to prosperity.” He stated further that “From the Global Affairs perspective, the promotion of Canadian arts and culture serves three main objectives: interaction, advocacy and prosperity.” The good news from the 2016 Budget with its additional dollars underlines, as Mr. Savage told us that, “A key component of GAC’s approach to cultural diplomacy is the renewed and enhanced collaboration with other federal arts funders and agencies such as the Canada Council of the Arts and Heritage Canada.”

Another former Canadian Diplomat, Mr. Barban, commented, and I quote him directly: “I can attest to the significant value that Canadian art and culture bring to the achievement of our global trade and foreign policy objectives. ...Art and culture is a human activity that generates wealth”.

Ce qui s’est dégagé clairement des témoignages de tous les représentants gouvernementaux que nous avons entendus, ministères et organismes confondus, c’est qu’il y a eu et qu’IL Y A encore des programmes et des actions, pendant toutes les périodes de hauts et de

bas, mais, comme on l’a très bien expliqué, il n’y a pas toujours eu de planification ou de coordination de ces programmes entre les ministères. Les chiffres ont révélé que les budgets étaient modestes, bien que répartis entre de nombreuses enveloppes, certaines connues des utilisateurs et d’autres, pas. Il est aussi ressorti clairement que, même si certaines provinces peuvent compter sur la participation d’artistes ou d’organismes artistiques dans leurs missions commerciales, ce n’est pas le cas de toutes, mais si cela donne de très bons résultats quand c’est effectivement le cas. Cela fait écho à mes propres expériences.

J’ai aussi compris la nature évolutive de cet exercice quand M. Sabbagh a fait remarquer : « Le commerce des produits et services culturels est de plus en plus numérique, comme nous le savons, ce qui crée des défis liés aux mesures sur lesquels nous travaillons avec Statistique Canada. » Le travail des jeunes innovateurs canadiens dans le domaine du jeu et les revenus qui en résultent sont vraiment importants. Christa Dickenson, présidente d’Interactive Ontario, a déclaré qu’aujourd’hui, le secteur des jeux vidéo et des médias interactifs emploie plus de 26 000 personnes et génère 3,8 milliards de dollars – cela inclut les créateurs de contenu. Elle a souligné la valeur de la collaboration, de l’innovation, de la diversité et de l’inclusion et des débouchés commerciaux à l’échelle internationale.

Je pense donc que nous devrions voir d’un bon œil les nouvelles entreprises qui sortent des sentiers battus!

The call for renewed investment and strategic collaborations and planning was heard many times. Simon Brault put it succinctly: “There is tremendous potential for the arts and culture to play a huge role in public diplomacy, but we need more expertise, better coordination and more targeted investments. It is not so much a question of money but rather of the will and professional organization.” He continued: “There

are platforms everywhere in the world where Canada could have a stronger, more visible and more impactful presence. We need to be clear on the image we want to project worldwide. We need different approaches depending on the region of the world. Canada could certainly meet the challenge of having a better and more robust international presence through arts and culture.”

We also heard of the policies, experiences and achievements of other nations, all of which provided context for our work. I could go on and cite much more of the thoughtful and compelling testimonies we heard, and I assure you there was a great deal of excellent insight, but time this afternoon precludes that, and it is all in the public domain.

So, what might the NEXT STEPS for Canada’s Cultural Diplomacy be? Several witnesses spoke of need of a strategy and suggested what that strategy might entail. All those comments are currently being analyzed as we develop our Committee’s report. They include the need for an increased understanding of who we are and the many initiatives undertaken in silos across the country and the substance of that work and its impacts. They articulated ideas as to how Canada can lead, the types of collaborations and programs which might be inspirational moving forward, and the practical need for more money, training, and having connectors and plans at all levels. You will have to stay tuned for the final report.

The report itself will only be the next stage of this important discussion. Today’s deliberations will unquestionably add to the depth of the issues and opportunities, as will the post release analyses of and reactions to the report. I am sure over the ensuing months and years, with whatever rolls out, that more perspectives will be heard. We only had two meetings a week with hearing during the Senate sitting periods, and this topic was interrupted when legislation came before us.

It is clear that there are many actors who will have to work in partnership to make real and lasting impacts – individuals, organizations, especially GLAMS, associations, governments at all levels, civil servants in every jurisdiction, and academics to name some. Innovation in arts and culture is an exciting ever-evolving reality and one that can lead, and be harnessed simultaneously to ensure Canada IS on the international stage, prominently, honestly, and with commitment.

I look forward to this afternoon's deliberations, and as a Senator from the arts community, the first from the visual arts, my engagement in this issue is real! I know we can strengthen Canada's profile abroad. I know the potential contribution of arts and culture, and that of Canada's galleries, libraries, archives and museums, from across the country, in building that profile is huge – a simple tool to develop!

Thank you!