

CAO Annual Report 2003 - 2004

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

On behalf of the Board of Directors for the CAO, I would like to thank our funding partners: the City of Ottawa, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, and the Ontario Arts Council. The Council has worked very hard to increase its funds raised through events and memberships, but this work is not possible without the support of the funding partners.

On behalf of the Council, I would like to thank *Gowling Lefleur Henderson* for their on-going support of the *Victor Tolgesy Arts Award*.

Thanks is also extended to the very dedicated volunteers, including the Board of Directors, and the exceptional and professional staff, who work and give more than can be expected of a small group of people.

The Board of Directors has met eight (8) times since the last Annual Meeting. The Board carried out its duties being mindful of its responsibilities for funders' and members' monies. During each meeting, the Treasurer presented financial statements that were considered by the Board. Some of these meetings were particularly difficult as the CAO was directly affected by the draft municipal budget released in February of this year. Decisions were made to ensure that the Board carried out its due diligence with respect to governance and its responsibilities to the CAO. Board Committees were active throughout the year and their reports are included in the Annual Report.

The Mission of the Council for the Arts in Ottawa is to intensify public interest in and support for the arts in the Ottawa region. This year stands out as one that the profile of the arts and the CAO was increased in the Ottawa region. The CAO was recognized many times as a key group leading the vocalization of the public's support for local arts in our community. Starting with the ***Join the Crowd*** production and ending with the City of Ottawa's 2004 budget, it was very gratifying to see all the work come to a good end; with Ottawa City Council voting to support almost all of the arts' items in the draft budget. The overwhelming support by the public, the business community, the politicians, and the artists showed that there is a vibrant local arts community that is worth promoting and supporting.

In the coming year it will be important to maintain the momentum of the public support and work to stabilize arts funding in the City and region.

One of the priorities of the CAO has been to support additional arts' venues in the City of Ottawa. Live-work space for artists has also been a concern. During the year ahead, the CAO expects to be active in a pilot program with Artscape and the Creative Clusters group. I was fortunate to be able to attend with the Executive Director, a visionary and stimulating conference entitled ***Creative Places +***

Spaces, held in Toronto last fall and I look forward to seeing how the CAO can participate in these programs.

In closing, I would like to thank the Board, the membership, and staff for giving me the opportunity to serve the Council as President.

Marie Keasey, President

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Following last year's Annual General Meeting the CAO had a sense of guarded optimism as we received the green light from the City of Ottawa to proceed with the **Join the Crowd!** arts awareness campaign. Considering the exhaustive spring review of all City spending, it appeared that the arts had made a breakthrough with respect to the City's expressed priorities and management plans that had been developed over the past few years. In cooperation with the Mayor's Panel for Business and the Arts and the Gloucester Arts Council, **Join the Crowd!** was launched at Ottawa City Hall in September. The atmosphere at City Hall was upbeat as hundreds of artists and supporters celebrated and networked.

A number of Ottawa delegates attended the **Creative Spaces + Places** conference hosted by Toronto's Artscape in October. It was a remarkable two-day event that inspired all of us and demonstrated a range of positive impacts that the arts can have at the municipal level.

Details of the City's financial position began to emerge in the fall and rather than developing the arts potential in our city, the possibility of funding cuts became the reality. The CAO met with representatives from different sectors who were also concerned about how the City would address the 2004 budget. Throughout the winter, consultations and meetings became more frequent. And following the release of the Draft Budget in February, the CAO and numerous other organizations and individuals focussed on actions to address a serious situation that would have had far reaching ramifications to the arts community.

Throughout the highs and lows of the past year, the CAO Board demonstrated their ongoing commitment to the arts in Ottawa. Hundreds of volunteer hours were given without question. A special thanks is due to the Executive Committee members, President, Marie Keasey, Vice-President, Jane Sadler and Secretary-Treasurer, Christian Perry.

On the staff front, we were delighted to welcome Sam Awwad, who joined us in May 2003 and took on duties associated with the **Join the Crowd!** campaign. His placement was made possible through the support of the Cultural Careers Council Ontario. Two student interns also joined us to work on a number of initiatives in the past year. Rupert Allen, a graduating student at Carleton University, and Joanne Guillemette completing her Honours BFA at University of Ottawa, provided positive

energy and hard work. Zoë Ashby continued to provide her creativity, experience, support and good humour. My thanks go to a wonderful team.

As we emerge from the 2004 budget experience, artists and arts groups have shifted their energies back to producing their art and developing their programs. We learned some valuable lessons over the past year and in the year ahead we need to build on our collective efforts to move the arts forward in this community.

Peter Honeywell, Executive Director

ADVOCACY REPORT

The advocacy committee met throughout the year on a monthly basis to monitor arts support and provide leadership with respect to promoting the arts in Ottawa. One of the priorities for the committee in the past year was to develop a more strategic and long-term approach to our advocacy efforts. In cooperation with the Gloucester Arts Council and CARFAC, ArtsVote 2003 was produced in October 2003 to provide a record of municipal candidates views on local arts issues.

Significant attention was paid to the preparations and release of the City of Ottawa Budget 2004. With close to \$3 million in cuts to the City's cultural programs, a number of actions were taken including:

- Presentations by CAO Executive Director and President to the City of Ottawa's Health, Recreation and Social Services Committee (HRSS) during the public consultation of March 4, 2004.
- Meetings with Jocelyne St Jean, General Manager of People Services and member of the senior staff team that authored the Draft Budget.
- Preparation of a letter to Councillors for use by artists and supporters. Summary facts were provided in the body of the letter.
- Coordination of and availability for media interviews. The CAO Executive Director participated in 25 interviews over a three-week period.
- Discussions with City of Ottawa Councillors including Diane Holmes, the Chair of the HRSS Committee.
- Meeting weekly with a city-wide Community Working group that includes a coalition of leaders representing child-care, housing, environment, faith community, health, poverty and the arts, to coordinate and support each other's actions in response to the budget.
- Planning activities to coincide with the March 4th meeting of the HRSS committee, including a rally of the city-wide coalition at 12:00 noon which attracted 1,200 to City Hall.
- Arranging logistics for the March 4th Rally including: speakers representative of various sectors, technical requirements, security briefings and media notification.
- Meeting with the Chair of the Ottawa Centre for Research and Innovation to examine actions of mutual benefit.

- Co-ordination of 5,000 arts supporters names that appeared in a full-page ad donated by the Ottawa Citizen on March 4, 2004 in support of the arts in Ottawa.
- Provision of budget details to representatives of arts organizations and individual artists who were encouraged to take part in the delegations to speak to the HRSS committee or take part in the March 4 rally at Ottawa City Hall.
- Financial support for The Sign project (*My Ottawa Includes Culture*) and provided speaker for a special fundraising event held at the Mercury Lounge on February 25, 2004.
- The Loonie Envelope Project - Enough is enough! Here's my Buck! Send a loonie to the Mayor. Distribution of envelopes, collection and participation at the Media Conference.

As we end our programming year, the committee is pleased to have recently hosted a workshop on June 5, 2004, ***Municipal Investment in the Arts - Where do we go from here?*** Former Somerset Ward Councillor Elisabeth Arnold facilitated the workshop session that assisted in understanding the municipal decision-making processes and helped to build the first steps of a strategic approach to future advocacy action.

Jérôme St Denis, Advocacy Committee Chair

MEMBERSHIP/FUNDRAISING EVENTS REPORT

Membership

This past year was not about growth in numbers but about growth in dedication. It was a year that made membership with the CAO a very relevant advantage for many individual artists and groups. Using an established connection with a developing rapport, many members turned to the CAO for help during a very difficult time for many in the arts community. In times of need, this special relationship of mutual concern and support can be a very real force for change.

The CAO recognized the extra financial stress that groups were anticipating with the City's 2004 budget proposal. Although this led to a lag in membership renewals we were heartened that these groups responded with a resounding yes! to continue their support and membership with the CAO. Many members expressed their appreciation for the continued efforts of the CAO to represent their interests and concerns at the municipal level.

The CAO continued to offer our popular piggy-back service for individuals and organizations in our bi-monthly mailout. We have also kept members informed of matters of interest in our newsletters and *e-news*. Many members took advantage of the use of our boardroom that continues to offer an excellent space for meetings and workshops. Our annual Members' Open House held during the CAO's Holiday

Wreath Silent Auction was a splendid way for members to get together and visit the CAO's office space while it looked its finest!

After a tumultuous year the CAO has maintained a membership base that is stronger than ever. It has been a year when both the organization and its members have had a stake in strengthening bonds and strengthening resolve.

Fundraising Events

Over sixty artists, organizations and individuals contributed to the CAO's 3rd Annual Holiday Wreath Silent Auction. The CAO surpassed its fundraising goal for this event. It was a triumph of inventiveness as the holiday theme was translated in a vast array of wonderful creations. The New RO staged their noon show at the event on December 3rd and interviewed a number of participants at that time. Artists are already planning for this year and we look forward to building on this popular fundraiser's success.

Geraldine Taylor and Shebah Tatz rose to the challenge of co-chairing the 14th Annual Mayor's Sweetheart Lunch for the Arts. Timing placed our major fundraising event two days after the announcement of the City of Ottawa's 2004 draft budget. With the draft budget heralding disastrous news for the arts community, the Mayor's attendance at the luncheon was highly anticipated. The traditions of the event and the signature professionalism of its organization ensured that a potentially difficult occasion was in fact the launch of a successful campaign to safeguard city grant funding for support of the arts.

The media coverage on the day profiled both the event and the CAO's commitment to the arts in Ottawa. The luncheon was the perfect occasion to celebrate the arts. Artists whose work was showcased included Lorne Finley, Adrienne Herron, Claude Latour and Ruth Secunda. Toe-tapping Celtic music was provided by Banned from Dunleary. Artist Robert Hyndman graciously accepted the Victor Tolgesy Arts Award and Business Award recipients Mercury Lounge and KPMG LLP were presented with plaques in recognition for their support of the arts in Ottawa.

Many thanks go to our event sponsors the Canadian Museum of Nature and Thyme and Again Creative Catering plus the many event and balloon draw donors. In addition we had a stellar group of volunteers who enthusiastically helped in both the planning and execution of this event.

Warmest thanks go to all the volunteers who have generously donated their time and talents to the CAO's endeavours over the past year. Of particular mention are Rupert Allen, Sam Awwad and Joanne Guillemette who prove that passion for the arts continues to be fuelled by the fresh air of youthful enthusiasm.

Geraldine Taylor & Lisa Pai, co-chairs

OUTREACH REPORT

Last year, the CAO and the Outreach Committee laid out a vision for the organization for the next five years. This year, the Committee continued to define that vision.

Most Outreach highlights revolved around the *Communications Audit* of all CAO communication activities. This audit, highlighted as a priority by last year's committee, is a review of all communication vehicles and tools that the CAO uses to convey information and advocacy issues to its members and the community at large while defining the organization itself. An interim report was presented to the board at the May board meeting. The final audit will be presented to the board at the July board meeting.

Other CAO Outreach highlights included:

- Recommendations to redesign and maintain the CAO's Web site
- Continuation of our monthly mail-outs of arts events to members
- Updates of art events and links to member's sites on our Web site
- Sent timely e-news announcements on arts events and advocacy issues to members

The CAO produced the following workshops in cooperation with a number of partners:

- Making Art Your Business - October 4, 2003 with CARFAC
- Marketing and Cultural Tourism with the Ontario Ministry of Culture and the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund - December 5, 2003
- City of Ottawa Grants Information session - December 9, 2003
- Working with Equity in cooperation with Canadian Actors' Equity Association - February 25, 2004

The committee's annual awards programs involved presentation to the following recipients:

- The Victor Tolgesy Arts Award went to teacher and visual artist, Robert Hyndman. The presentation took place at the Mayor's Sweetheart Lunch for the Arts and was co-presented by the award sponsor, Gowlings.
- The Business Recognition Awards were presented to KGMP LLP and the Mercury Lounge. The awards were also presented at the Mayor's Sweetheart Lunch.
- Three Corel Arts Endowment Award recipients were chosen in 2004. The jury chose projects by poet Anita Grace, dancer Juliana Pulford and visual artist Khalia Scott.

The future tasks for the committee include:

- Finishing and implementing recommendations laid out in the *Communications Audit*, depending on resources. Of primary importance is the redesign and upkeep of the CAO Web site.
- Encouraging arts programs that educate the arts community about marketing and dealing with the media both to best promote themselves and how to deal with controversy.

- Developing a future workshop and forum on Artists Live/Work Space

We would like to sincerely thank the many individuals who contributed to all of our activities this year, most notably the CAO staff and its contractors: Sam Awwad, Zoë Ashby, and Peter Honeywell.

Nichole McGill, Chair

Members: **Jean Fortier, Jane Sadler & Karen Murray**