

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

With this fifth issue of *L'Attaché culturel/Cultural Attaché*, we begin the cycle of a new year in Canadian cultural and academic activities abroad. On the first anniversary of the publication, it seems appropriate to review its objectives and its accomplishments.

L'Attaché culturel/Cultural Attaché is published 3 times a year by the *Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's International Cultural Relations Bureau* in the Fall of 1995. Its initial objective was to inform Canadians, including the media, about Canadian cultural and academic activities abroad. As broad as this objective appeared before the birth of the publication, it now seems faint when compared to what the magazine has become in just one short year. The nature of such a means of communications, and the implications of its content have triggered responses which in turn have activated a whole new spectrum of responsibilities and concerns.

While the Canadian cultural community continues to constitute the pool of our readers, specialized groups now increasingly rely on the information put forth in the magazine. Journalists have come to consider the publication as a reference for future and past events; Canadian Embassies and Consulates around the world find it a useful promotion tool; and the Canadian cultural industry and the academic communities look to *L'Attaché* for additional exposure.

The publication aims to inform on two key sectors: the cultural and the academic. *L'Attaché culturel/Cultural Attaché* reports on the three fundamental aspects of the Third Pillar implementation: cultural and academic relations as instruments of Canadian diplomacy; export and marketing assistance for products and services of the two sectors; and encouragement of and assistance with the internationalization of higher education in Canada.

Canada has emerged as a leader in the field of high technology and the new media. These components can no longer be ignored in every day activities; they are becoming fundamental to both the cultural and academic sectors. This is especially evident in the academic world where new learning technologies are changing the paradigms of education and providing radically new opportunities to link internationally. This was clearly demonstrated in a round table with senior officials from the World Bank and representatives of the Canadian distance learning community co-hosted by the *Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Prime Minister's Office* in October.

From the first issue, which contained only 12 pages, to the fifth issue which contains 24, we have reached our cruising speed and developed many systems to bring you as useful a publication as possible. Nonetheless, improvements will continuously be made as suggested by readers' responses. Canadian Embassies and consulates around the world have been most cooperative throughout this trial year and we appreciate all their input and support.

L'Attaché culturel/Cultural Attaché can now be located on its web site where the Calendar of Events can be accessed at www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca.

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