

BACKGROUNDER
INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL RELATIONS

Canadian government support for international cultural relations (ICR) is a relatively recent phenomenon. Compared to most major nations, Canada is a latecomer to the field, incorporating ICR programs in its foreign policy only for the last 20 years. Current program funding to arts, academic and sports activities worldwide stands at \$10 million annually.

The increase announced today by the Secretary of State for External Affairs represents a vote of confidence in Canada's arts, academic and sports communities. It also reaffirms the importance of international cultural relations in contributing to foreign policy objectives by making Canadian excellence better known outside of our borders.

Through its arts programming, External Affairs aims to showcase Canadian artistic achievement, increase visibility and access to commercial markets for artists. The department provides advice and financial support for tours by artists and companies in music, dance and theatre. The Toronto Symphony's recent tour of Europe illustrates the collaboration between governments, private backers and arts companies that allows major tours to occur and excite attention among critics and audiences. Increased funds will expand the opportunities for artists, groups and promoters to build audiences, primarily in the US, Japan, other key markets in Asia and to maintain their presence in Europe. External Affairs funding will help to make Canada better known in the popular recording field.

In the visual arts, External Affairs will work to ensure that exhibitions of Canadian art and artefacts take place regularly in major museums and galleries. Commercial galleries will be encouraged to exhibit Canadian contemporary art to their clients. Canada is the centrepiece at the Cologne art fair in November, and the additional resources just announced will assure our presence at other major fairs, festivals and showcases.

New directions in literature programs will stress the translation and publishing of works in third languages, such as Japanese and Spanish, where the promotion of Canadian literature and scholarly publications depends on a greater supply in the language of new key markets.

Additional funding for academic relations will be directed towards increasing the number and value of Government of Canada Awards. The department can now pay greater attention to reinforcing the science and technology aspects of research and