

THE MANDATE

The mandate of the NAC is described in Section 9(1) of the *National Arts Centre Act* as follows:

to operate and maintain the Centre;

to develop the performing arts in the National Capital region; and

to assist the Canada Council in the development of the performing arts elsewhere in Canada.

The mandate of the Centre is as pertinent today as it was in 1966 when the legislation was enacted. The Committee believes that a national institution devoted to the development of the performing arts in the region of the national capital is a unique reflection of our country to visitors from Canada or elsewhere. In this way, it complements the other national cultural institutions located in the capital region.

The drafters of the 1966 legislation regarding the National Arts Centre were aware that a national cultural institution in the capital region should serve the cultural needs of Canadians everywhere and, thus gave the Centre a complementary national mandate. The Centre has striven over the years to fulfill its national mandate, in part by touring its orchestra and its now defunct theatre companies, by commissioning or co-producing works, by broadcasting or recording its productions, and, by showcasing Canadian artists and companies from every region of the country.

The Committee notes that since the appointment of a new Board and a new Director General in 1988, the Centre has indicated its willingness to make it more national in scope and relevance, as conveyed in the policy document made public in 1989 and entitled *The Third Decade and Beyond: The Cultural Mandate of the National Arts Centre of Canada*. In his presentation to the Sub-Committee on 13 June 1990, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Robert Landry, spoke of the new vision contained in this policy document and added that it requires the Centre to focus its energies on a number of important priorities, one of which is "ensuring all parts of the country have more direct access to NAC performances through co-productions, touring and electronic distribution."⁽⁵⁾

The Centre is the national showcase for the performing arts and should represent the pinnacle of excellence in the performing arts in Canada. A national mandate can be fulfilled in a variety of ways, one of which is the recognition by the Centre of Canadian artists who have achieved national or regional success. These artists could be invited as NAC guests at galas, special performances or receptions. It would be a way of recognizing the many contributions of Canadian artists to the development of the performing arts in Canada. It could also act as an inspiration to struggling young performers and, in some way, perhaps,