



Cross-cultural, Cross-media Initiatives: Working Together for Better Programming

CBC/Radio-Canada is the only broadcaster in Canada with the resources and expertise to truly bring together the strengths of Radio, Television and New Media, as well as Canada's English and French cultures, for the purpose of producing excellent, high-impact, cross-cultural, cross-media programming. An important goal for the Corporation is to utilise technology and resources in such a way as to add value to our programming and to increase cultural understanding for our audiences.

■ News Services

The production of CBC/Radio-Canada programming is increasingly the result of our media lines working together. Our English and French News services co-operated on specials, such as the coverage of this year's visits of the Queen and the Pope to Canada, the New Democratic Party convention, the friendly fire hearing in Louisiana, and the Washington sniper shootings. Leading up to and during the conflict in Iraq, there was unprecedented collaboration among English and French Television, Radio and New Media units on assignment desks, daily News and Current Affairs programs, and throughout the foreign bureaux and special field units assigned to Iraq, Iran and the Middle East.

Another example of cross-cultural programming and resource-sharing is seen in our Northern services. In the Northwest Territories, English Radio has ongoing shared coverage of regional News and Current Affairs in English, Dogrib, Chipewyan, North Slavey, South Slavey, Gwich'in, and Inuvialuktun. In Nunavut, English Radio produces bilingual programming in English and Inuktitut. Radio-Canada Nord Québec broadcasts Radio programs in Cree and French, and produces a Television program in Cree.

A very extensive cross-media, cross-cultural undertaking was successfully accomplished in November 2002, when our News services demonstrated leadership and innovation in their seven-day coverage preceding the release of the report of the Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada (Romanow Report). In *A CBC News Inquiry into Health Care: Problems and Cures*, our journalists examined the key issues in the crucial national



Michael Ironside
and Roy Dupuis,
*The Last Chapter II:
The War Continues!*
Le Dernier chapitre II, English
and French Television.



debate on our health care system. Our unique thematic coverage extended over a series of connected programs, and included analysis, interviews, and documentaries. The week's programming culminated in a two-hour live forum with Mr. Romanow from the Ottawa Hospital. This program won an award of excellence from the Canadian Nurses Association. National Online News on *CBC.ca* had journalists in the lock-up before the Report's release, enabling it to break the story before any other online news organisation and to carry the full text of the Report.

Only CBC/Radio-Canada could – or would – mount such an extensive multimedia initiative about a public issue. Only we could experiment with innovative ways to deliver such important information.

Drama

In recent years, our English and French Television services have combined talents to produce original Canadian dramatic series. CBC/Radio-Canada is in a unique position to tell the stories of our cultures with the help of bilingual actors, directors and technicians. We are proud of our efforts to bridge cultural and linguistic gaps and to present stories important to our country.

Trudeau, our four-hour mini-series starring Colm Feore and an exceptional group of French- and English-speaking actors, aired in March and April 2002 on English Television with an average audience of 1.9 million. The same series was broadcast in French, on our French Television network, in November and December 2002.



Colm Feore, *Trudeau*, English and French Television.

The Last Chapter II: The War Continues/Le Dernier chapitre II, our five-part mini-series, picked up where last season's hard-hitting landmark series left off. This production was filmed simultaneously in English and French and broadcast on both our English and French Television networks this year.

Music Hall, our six-part dramatic mini-series first broadcast on French Television was subsequently shown in prime time on English Television, with subtitles.

English Television and French Television this year announced their joint plans to create a six-part dramatic series in English and French about René Lévesque. Filming will begin in 2004 for broadcast in 2005.

CBC Home Delivery

In February 2003, Radio 3 launched *CBC Home Delivery*, a full-screen multimedia magazine that automatically delivers a digital package of some of the best materials from English Television, CBC Newsworld, English Radio, and New Media to subscribers' computers each week. Audiences can find this magazine at www.cbchomedelivery.com.





Véronique Cloutier and Jean Pettitler,
Music Hall II, English and
French Television.

English and French Radio Joint Ventures

During the Summer of 2002, CBC/Radio-Canada allocated \$1.5 million for cross-media special programming between English and French Radio, and approved an additional \$336,000 in November 2002. These funds are for a range of activities and programming, including French-language training for English Radio reporters, secondments for employees into the other language service units and new programming initiatives such as a single production unit developing 20 documentaries called *Ten Meditations for Our Time/Dix questions pour notre temps* for Radio One's *Ideas* and French Radio's *Des idées plein la tête*. Funds also covered unique cultural co-production series such as the following:

- *Trans Canada Zen/Une épinette noire nommée Diesel*: a ten-part Montréal-produced series in which cultural anthropologist Serge Bouchard, a prominent Québec writer and columnist, takes a road trip along the Trans-Canada Highway on the 40th anniversary of its construction.
- *The Creators/Les créateurs*: 20 vignettes about Canada's French and English writers, performers and artists, well-known in their own language community but perhaps new to the other.

The Fund also set the groundwork for a major series of multi-year investigative co-productions between the French and English News and Current Affairs units which began with the high-impact documentary reports called:

- *Cursed by Riches: The Congo Struggles to Survive/Congo : Une république à la dérive* : a special series examining the complexity of the region, tracing the catastrophic effect of the war on people's lives, and identifying Canada's business connections to the conflict.

Our French and English Radio networks also jointly produced broadcasts of concerts in different parts of the country, including, this year, a bilingual program co-hosted by André Rhéaume and David Grierson and recorded at the Vancouver Folk Music Festival.