

## ***ATTENDANCE AT ARTS PERFORMANCES, MUSEUMS AND ART GALLERIES IN CANADA AND THE PROVINCES***

January 21, 2004

Two reports, prepared in 2003 and released to the public for the first time today, examine national and provincial trends in Canadian arts attendance in the 1990s.

The performing arts report shows that over 9.1 million Canadians 15 years of age or older, or 37.6% of Canadians in this age range, attended a live, professional performing arts event in 1998. Theatre is the most popular live performing arts activity, followed by popular forms of music, classical music and dance.

The museums and art galleries report shows that 7.8 million Canadians 15 years of age or older visited a museum in 1998. This represents about one-third of Canadians in this age range. Public art galleries, attended by about one-quarter of Canadians 15 or older, are the most popular sub-group of museums, followed by science and technology museums as well as general and community museums.

Thanks to the support of the Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Ontario Arts Council, the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, the reports have been translated and will be made available free of charge at the websites of these organizations as well as Hill Strategies Research Inc.'s website. (Please see below for a list of the download sites.)

The reports are based on Statistics Canada's General Social Survey data from 1992 and 1998. Unfortunately, these surveys remain the most current broad-based estimates of arts attendance in Canada.

Reaching Canadians who speak languages other than English or French is a significant challenge facing Canada's performing arts organizations. In contrast, museums are more successful in reaching Canadians who speak languages other than English or French at home. The reports examine attendance rates by sex, urban/rural residence and marital status.

The reports demonstrate how Canadians who attend performances, museums or art galleries have high attendance rates at other arts events, volunteer in their communities, and participate in sports activities.

The attendance rate at performing arts events decreased during the 1990s. However, due to significant population growth, about 100,000 *more* Canadians attended a performance in 1998 than in 1992. The attendance rate at museums also decreased during the 1990s, but the attendance rate at public art galleries *increased* significantly. The reports include a detailed examination of the changes in attendance for each discipline and for various demographic groups during the 1990s.

An important feature of the two reports is the extensive provincial information provided, including attendance profiles, trends and comparisons between the provinces. Because provincial attendance rates vary significantly, the performing arts report concludes that there appear to be performing arts “have” and “have-not” provinces. Performing arts *preferences* also vary significantly between the provinces. This means that a variety of different provinces have the highest attendance rates at theatre, classical music, pop music and dance performances.

Provincial museum and art gallery attendance rates also vary significantly, but museum attendance is *not* highest in the provinces with the largest populations.

Hill Strategies Research Inc., publisher of the Arts Research Monitor, is an arts research company based in Hamilton, Canada. Please visit <http://www.hillstrategies.com> for more information.

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Report download sites (available on or shortly after Jan. 21, 2004):

- Culturescope.ca: <http://www.culturescope.ca>
- Canada Council: <http://www.canadacouncil.ca/artsinfo/research/>
- Ontario Arts Council: <http://www.arts.on.ca>
- Ontario Trillium Foundation: <http://www.trilliumfoundation.org>
- Alberta Foundation for the Arts: <http://www.affta.ab.ca>
- Hill Strategies Research Inc: <http://www.hillstrategies.com/resources.html>

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