

Milly Ristvedt
RCA Advocacy Representative
May 1, 2015

RCA Advocacy began as a committee in 2005 with the mission of responding to issues affecting the arts and artists in Canada. Although the committee proved too difficult to maintain, I continue as Advocacy Representative to work on behalf of the RCA and its artists primarily through partnership with the Visual Arts Alliance, the consortium of national visual arts organizations formed in 2006.

More information on the history of RCA Advocacy and the last Advocacy Report of February 2015 can be found on the RCA website. Within those reports you will find links to the websites of the Visual Arts Alliance <http://visualartsvisuels.ca/en/> and the Canadian Arts Coalition, <http://www.canadianartscoalition.com> the all-sector group formed to lobby for improved funding in the arts.

The Canada Council's proposed changes to its funding model and the Report on the recent Visual Arts Sector Consultations and Survey are two items that have been the subject of much discussion by the Alliance. As to the new funding model, the Alliance has written to the Head of Canada Council for the Arts, Simon Brault, requesting a preview of the draft for study and input before the final version is rolled out in June.

The Alliance held a teleconference with Sylvie Gilbert, Head of Visual Arts at the Council shortly after the publication of the Report on the consultations, at which time our initial thoughts on the Visual Arts Report were requested. At the time we were not prepared to respond in detail. The Alliance has since produced a thorough analysis of the 5 Insights gleaned by the Canada Council's Visual Arts Section in preparation for a second meeting with Ms. Gilbert.

The Alliance is also committed to move forward with recommendations in the Bellavance report, (available on the Alliance website) for a comprehensive study of the visual art market in Canada. To this end we held an initial meeting with members of Research and Planning at the Department of Canadian Heritage on April 8th in Ottawa, and are working towards a second meeting that will include members of the Canada Council's Visual Arts Section.

These are difficult times for the Canada Council as they are for most sectors of the arts in Canada. The Alliance is heartened to receive increasing recognition from funders and policy makers on the importance of working with us to improve the climate for all members of the visual art sector, especially our artists.