

Vitality in the performing arts has occurred at all levels, amateur as well as professional. Greater numbers are not only attending but becoming actively involved for recreation. The proportion who go to live theatre, much higher than average in the 15-19 age group, drops to the average in the 20-24 age range, and decreases with advancing age. Those in the 65-69 age range attend almost as frequently as the younger theatre-goers. The participation rate generally increases with higher education. More women go to live theatre than men, and women attend more often than men. A greater proportion of English-speaking Canadians attend than French-speaking Canadians. A small proportion of bilingual Canadians who go to theatre performances attend far more frequently than either their French- or English-speaking compatriots.

Just 20 years ago the Canada Council was funding 13 theatre companies and festivals. At last count there were more than 220 professional theatre companies in Canada and 160 of them received funds from the council.

The number of arts organizations fluctuates constantly. There are always organizations either expiring or coming into being. The 153 organizations surveyed in 1978 by Statistics Canada include nearly all the major companies.

For this annual survey the organizations included 92 theatre companies as compared to 78 in 1977, 34 music organizations (37 in 1977), 21 dance companies (22 in 1977) and six opera companies (six also in 1977). The following information is based on 1978 data.

During 1978 the 153 companies gave a total of 20,166 performances to combined audiences of 7.36 million people. The revenues earned amounted to \$34.8 million. The remaining gap was mainly filled by grants from the public and donations from private sectors totalling \$38 million. These were supplemented by revenue from program sales, bar and concession sales, and other sidelines. More precisely, grants accounted for 41% of all revenue for theatre companies, 28% for opera companies, 41% for music organizations and 46% for dance groups. In descending order the principal contributors were the federal government, provincial governments, private sector donations and municipal or regional governments.

On the expenditure side, personnel costs accounted for 32% to 54% of the budget for theatre, dance or opera companies and rose to 67% for music groups. Publicity accounted for 7% to 9% of total expenses, and administration from 10% to 15%. Other production costs, for sets, costumes, props, technical equipment and printing tickets, accounted for 17% for theatre, 8% for music, 24% for dance and 18% for opera.

To make a valid comparison between 1978 and 1977, only data from companies surveyed in both years are shown in Table 17.2. These are 126 organizations comprising 71 theatre companies, 33 orchestras, 16 dance companies and six opera companies.

For this subset of companies in 1978 compared with 1977 the number of performances was up 4%, earned revenue was up 14%, public subsidy was up 13% and total revenue was up 12%. This makes it sound like a good year for the performing arts but that is only one side of the story. Total attendance was down 4%, expenses were up 17% and all disciplines showed deficits, while in 1977 theatre and music each showed a surplus.

Professional theatre is the most prevalent of the performing arts in Canada. In 1978 more professional theatre companies gave more performances before more Canadians than all the professional music, dance and opera companies combined.

Second most pervasive of the performing arts is serious music, dominated by the symphony orchestra. Most major Canadian cities now support symphony orchestras and several, including the Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver symphonies and the National Arts Centre Orchestra, have achieved international status. Since 1972 classical music concerts have grown in popularity among Canadians more than any of the other performing arts.

Dance is also growing in popularity. Three major Canadian dance companies, the National Ballet, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens have been enthusiastically acclaimed. Recent years have produced several smaller professional groups usually called chamber or concert ballet companies, often comprised of lead dancers from the major companies.