



ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES

Québec is currently a leading digital entertainment hub in North America. It is home to training centres such as the National Animation and Design Centre (NAD) and the Institut national de l'image et du son (INIS). Softimage and Discreet Logic, firms that are synonymous with technological innovation, designed software programs used to create special effects in the films **Jurassic Park** and **Titanic**. Ubisoft's Québec office is one of the world's main electronic game designers and publishers. The Québec company Hybride Technologies also worked on the 3D animation for James Cameron's blockbuster hit, **Avatar**, and the Québec City-based Beenox Studios (Activision) is among the world's *Top 50* best video game designers.

A DYNAMIC NETWORK OF MUSEUMS

The expertise and dynamic character of Québec museums are recognized abroad. They collaborate with the world's most renowned international institutions, especially with respect to loaning works of art, participating in co-productions and assisting in the circulation of Québec's travelling exhibitions. The Centre de conservation du Québec, which specializes in preventive conservation as well as the restoration of Québec's moveable heritage and art works, has put together a multidisciplinary team of experts recognized beyond Québec's borders.

PRESTIGIOUS RECOGNITION

Québec City is the cradle of French civilization in North America and the only fortified city north of Mexico. These two criteria resulted in the addition of Québec City's historic district to UNESCO's world heritage list in 1985.

Picture : GNU



MAJOR EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

Around 400 events and festivals take place in Québec annually, spotlighting all artistic disciplines. The Montréal International Jazz Festival, Québec City's Summer Festival, the FrancoFolies de Montréal, the Just for Laughs Festival, the Festival TransAmériques and the Carrefour international de théâtre, the Mondial des Cultures de Drummondville, the Mondial Choral and the Festival de Lanaudière are just some of the many events that enliven Québec's towns, cities and regions each year.

Québec is also frequently invited to festivals, book fairs and similar activities as honorary guest. Cultural events showcasing the quality and originality of Québec productions include the **Festival Internacional Cervantino**, which took place in Guanajuato, Mexico, **Québec Now!**, in Toronto, Ontario, **Imagina Québec**, which was held in Barcelona, Spain, and **Spotlight Québec** presented within the context of Showcase Scotland in Glasgow.

A CULTURE ON THE MOVE

Each year, Québec invests several million dollars to support the presence of Québec artists abroad. The Québec Government Offices in various countries are also instrumental in promoting Québec culture in the regions within their mandate.

Québec culture is an unquestionable illustration of Québec's uniqueness as the only territory on the entire North American continent with a French-speaking majority. As such, Québec culture serves as its ambassador on stages around the world. The originality and boldness of its productions, the quality and talent of its creators, and the vibrancy of its artistic communities are all assets that enable Québec to attain international visibility.



Picture : Québec City

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THE EXCELLENCE OF QUÉBEC’S ARTISTS AND CREATORS IS A MAJOR CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TO THEIR WIDE INTERNATIONAL ACCLAIM. THEIR VITALITY IS EXPRESSED IN A NUMBER OF ARTISTIC DISCIPLINES AND QUÉBEC PRODUCTIONS CAN BE ENJOYED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

CULTURE: A STANDARD BEARER

Québec’s numerous European roots, North American way of life and keen desire to live in French make it a staunch advocate of cultural diversity. Québec has always extended a warm welcome to newcomers. This pursuit has become even stronger in recent decades as Québec takes on an increasingly cosmopolitan profile and demonstrates a high degree of openness to the world as well as to the dynamic nature of the many cultural communities within its borders.

FRENCH ACCENTS IN NORTH AMERICA

Québec is the only territory on the North American continent with a French-speaking majority. Indeed, Québec has a population of over 7.7 million, nearly 80% of which is French-speaking.

A PROMOTER OF THE DIVERSITY OF CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS

A forerunner in defending and promoting cultural diversity, Québec was the world’s first government to approve the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

Today, Québec boasts an extraordinary cultural vitality. More than half of the performances by Canadian artistic companies abroad originate from Québec. Its high level of creativity and international outreach are all the more remarkable considering Québec’s relatively small population. These artistic endeavours have directly contributed to the development of Québec’s brand image abroad and are one of the most important reflections of its identity.



PERFORMING ARTS

If there is one field in which Québec has made an unparalleled mark, it is undoubtedly the circus arts. The major innovator, Cirque du Soleil, has quite simply reinvented the genre. Its success has paved the way for other artistic companies, including Cirque Éloize and The 7 Fingers, as well as for the founding of the National Circus School of Montréal and the École de cirque de Québec.

In music, an ever-growing number of composers and performers are contributing to Québec’s impact on all musical genres. A new generation has emerged that includes Ariane Moffatt, Patrick Watson and groups such as Les Cowboys Fringants and Mes Aïeux, to name but a few. Some, like Céline Dion and Simple Plan, have even risen to megastardom.

The Orchestre symphonique de Montréal and its conductor Kent Nagano, the Orchestre symphonique de Québec under the direction of Yoav Talmi, Bernard Labadie and his Violons du Roy, the young conducting prodigy Yannick Nézet-Séguin, classical singers Marie-Josée Lord, Marie-Nicole Lemieux and Karina Gauvin, and musicians Alain Lefebvre and Marc-André Hamelin are among those who have contributed to heightening the prestige of classical music.

Québec doesn’t miss a beat in contemporary dance with such talented choreographers as Dave Saint-Pierre and Marie Chouinard and dance companies like La La La Human Steps and O Vertigo. Since its founding in 1957, the Grands Ballets canadiens de Montréal has consistently given audiences both here and abroad an opportunity to discover the many facets of dance.

Québec theatre is also enjoying growing recognition the world over. Works by a host of Québec playwrights have been performed abroad. Michel Tremblay was the first to move into the international spotlight. Following in his footsteps are Wajdi Mouawad, Associate Artist at the 2009 edition of the renowned Avignon Theatre Festival, as well as Carole Fréchette, Daniel Danis and Lise Vaillancourt, whose works have been staged in Europe. A veritable one-man band, Robert Lepage has garnered wide acclaim abroad for his productions. Indeed, his theatrical productions are known around the world. Québec is also recognized as a vibrant centre of theatrical creation for young audiences. Québec companies specializing in this field perform their highly original productions on stages around the world. And when it comes to puppet theatre, Québec is famous for knowing how to pull all the right strings!

VIEWING AND READING

The innovative experimentation and creativity of Québec’s visual artists have resulted in fascinating works that have won over audiences here and abroad. David Altmejd, Jocelyne Alloucherie, Jana Sterbak, Geneviève Cadieux and Dominique Blain clearly demonstrate the exceptional prowess of our artists working in numerous forms of artistic creation.

In literature, several authors, including Claude Beausoleil, Marie Laberge, Marie-Claire Blais and Nicolas Dickner, have achieved success through the excellence of their works, which have been translated into several languages and distributed internationally. The literary talent of our authors continues to gain recognition, as evidenced by the fact that writer Dany Laferrière was awarded the highly coveted Médicis literary prize for a foreign novel in 2009.

TELEVISION AND FILM

Television holds a special place in Québec culture. Québec has actually developed its own unique style of television. The domestic market’s strength is a clear indicator of the viewing habits of Quebecers. But this success is not simply local. Series produced in Québec have aired in other countries and a number of programs have even been adapted.

The talent of Quebecers in the film industry is also recognized and rewarded at international festivals. Directors Denys Arcand and Frédéric Back were awarded Oscars by the prestigious Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences: Arcand for ***The Barbarian Invasions*** and Back for his animated film ***The Man Who Planted Trees***. Many Québec filmmakers have received an impressive number of major awards, ranging from the Palme d’or for short films at the Cannes Film Festival to the Golden Bear in Berlin. Xavier Dolan, a rising young director, has won a multitude of awards for his first film ***I Killed My Mother***.

SUPPORT FOR CULTURE

The Minister of Culture, Communication and the Status of Women manages an annual budget of \$672 million earmarked to support Québec culture. Two government corporations report to the Minister: the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec (CALQ), a body mandated to support creation, experimentation, production and outreach abroad in all Québec cultural fields, and Société de développement des entreprises culturelles (SODEC), an organization dedicated to developing the industrial aspect of artistic life. Both are particularly active in supporting Québec culture at the international level.

