

Beginning

150 years ago an important dream was born here
It started with the idea of a union between
New Brunswick and Nova Scotia
Later on it included Ontario and Quebec
Later on the dream kept on growing to include
everyone between the two great seas bordering this project,
this country, this dream, this beautiful land called Canada

Beauty comes with love
What we love becomes beautiful
From season to season the land changes renewing
its climate and its landscape

This is why so many artists, so many poets and so
many musicians have been inspired by the life, the
struggles, the rewards that comes with sharing this land

New Brunswick might be best translated and
described by its artists, its musicians, its poets

The First Nations people were the first ones to wit-
ness that beauty of the land

Their knowledge, their wisdom and their presence
have been shaped by a long journey

If you listen carefully you can still hear the beauty
of their drums beating in the forest

A beauty Minku Paul recalls in her Woolostook
vision of the land

You are the story now, ephemeral as the days.

Born here, died here.

The fire's song will call you kin

*The house of dawn will welcome you when that morning
finally opens its eyes.*

This song of the land grew with different colours in
the poems of two Fredericton poets

Bliss Carman and Charles G.D. Roberts, who, at the
time of Confederation, were the finest voices in all Canada
wrote about the dream that was taking place before their
eyes

Charles Roberts welcomed the union in these words :

Here in Canadian hearth, and home, and name, —

This name which yet shall grow

Till all the nations know

Us for a patriot people, heart and hand

Loyal to our native earth, our own Canadian land!

And Bliss Carman seems to answer this love of the
land in the conclusion of his poem on the rivers of Canada

Tobique and Madawaska and shining Gaspereaux,

St. Croix and Nashwaak and St. John whose haunts I

used to know.

*And all the pleasant rivers that seek the Fundy foam,
They call me and call me to follow them home.*

The French and later on the Acadians have inhabited this land for more than 400 years and they have also witnessed its beauty as Leonard Forest in his poem « Former Seasons » :

*mes oiseaux de mer m'inscrivent en certes immenses
par-dessus les quais de mes été réunis
mes étés s'enflent au soleil, se font et se défont
comme marée féconde*

The words of these writers are a tribute to the landscape we admire

Their music is a testimony to our common presence
From First nations to Newcomers we bring our voice to a common song

Each culture along with the passage of time creates its layers of conscience

A reminder of the sharing of this place and of a time that remains with us still

Culture records our intimate and public story

Culture creates a narrative that will stay with us through time and history

Culture is present in words, in paintings, in theatre, in films, in dances and mostly in music

Music travels in our minds, you can hum it along, you can sing it, you can play it, dance to it or you can simply hear it but whatever way you approach it, it will stir your emotions and stay with you as the sound of an era, the score to your very own movie

It could be personal or it can be historical.

To have an idea of what people were like 150 years ago, the way they dressed, what they ate, the way they behaved, what they had in mind, what they feared, what they enjoyed, we looked to what their writers wrote, the music they listened to, the paintings we can still look at

All these works of art blend together to help us create a picture, or picture of what happened, what they were involved in and, yes, what they dreamed

Just like us, they had dreams and those dreams have shaped us.

Just like your dreams will shape the future.

In New Brunswick we have been blessed with such artists

Musicians, storytellers, image makers who have crafted a vibrant vision of our presence on this land and the dreams we carried with us all along

Culture is also where ideas are born

Just like every human being needs to change, to innovate, to create using ideas as his or her guides, so does society in its quest for improving itself

Ideas are the necessary ingredient in the making of every social renewal

Ideas are free, they are fragile and they can easily be discarded but they can also be liable in bringing us major rewards in inspiration, wealth or welfare

Ideas can be very simple, like the clothespin, or trigger civilisation changes, like the internet

Whatever they might be they always transform our lives on a small or large scale

If dreams are more on the emotional side, ideas would be its intellectual counterpart

They both are a product of culture, and both are born outside of the box

Whether you deal with a piece of music or a major breaking mathematical equation, they both are the result of the « what if » world and attitude

What if you would use carbide to design a lighter hockey stick, what if you would use a round disk attached to an axel to move heavy objects, what if you would use oil as a binder for pigment, what if you would use a single instrument to dialogue with the orchestra, what if you would set words to music ... and the list goes on

It reads like a long poem of innovations major or trivial that have shaped the human adventure

Just as it had many artists, New Brunswick has also had many of these inventors or ideators

From the snow blower to scuba diving and from the sardine can to the lollipop, we have had our share of thinking outside of the box

This is the magic of culture and the importance of its presence in our lives

Culture tells our story but it also lives in everyone of us.

We carry it around wherever we go and it identifies us.

Along with politics and economy it is one of the three great voices of every sane society

Culture is important for it is where our dreams and ideas are crafted

The world like everyone of us lives on dreams and ideas

Dreaming is what we do when we imagine the future
Dreaming happens every day and everywhere.

Can you imagine someone who would be deprived of such a gift

Such a person would be very unhappy, living in a very grey world

Dreams can be essential or trivial, grand or minimal, noble or crazy

Dreams trigger our imagination and our sense of creation

Dreams are also the motor and the fuel of every artistic activity

Artist dream the world that will later become part of our world

Dreams can concern us as individual but also as part of society

Whatever they are they always involve a possibility of change

Dreams are free but making them real is where the real work begins

Many dreams are born and abandoned but some make it to reality

Youth is the time when we are most sensitive to dreaming

Youth is a time when everything seem possible

A time when dreams are boundless

A time when music surrounds us

Accompanies us in our dream world

We dream of the future where we will live the most part of their lives

We dream of the changes we will operate in our lives

We dream of the world being born in our environment or in our future society

Culture is usually associated with the arts but culture is a lot more than that

Culture is a way of living together, of sharing and working

As Canadians, as New Brunswickers we have inherited a great culture

A culture that has made us one of the most envied country on earth

Every culture finds a way to voice the concerns, the pleasures and the beauty of the place where it lives

This expression of culture is most intense in the arts

Music is probably the most popular form of that expression

Every culture on earth has a form of music born of its environment

From the most primitive to the most sophisticated way of reaching us

From hand clapping to elaborate synthesizer music lives

In our modern world music is everywhere

From elevator to shopping centres and from streaming to telephone playlists music has found a way to reach us whenever and wherever we are

There use to a be time when you had to create and make your own music

You had to be musician or go to a place where
music would happen

In those days music was magic, precious, expensive and eventful

Symphonic music was associated with worship or power

How lucky we are today to have access so freely to that music

Living in a time where culture, the arts, the music are so close to us

Sharing a culture that we own and to which we contribute as artist and as Canadians

Like a symphony our culture is made up of different instruments, different sounds, different notes, but we all come together in a forceful and clear message of freedom for the people of various origins united on this land

This year is an important year for celebrating what has made us who we are

This is a great year to take notice, to appreciate and to admire our culture

The culture that has shaped us just as we have made it to our image

The culture and the arts, the music and the words

150 years ago a very important event took place here

The first of July 1867 we became Canadians

Canadians in our hearts and spirit

Quiet people and peace keepers

Peace is important to us the same as silence is important to music

Canada is a peaceful land here and elsewhere

where our soldiers have maintained peace

This doesn't mean that everything is perfect but compared to other countries we have put forward a will to make sure that everyone has a chance to be heard

It's like making music in an orchestra

An orchestra requires an individual contribution from each musician

But all these efforts are geared to producing a collective sound which would be like the sound of the many voices of this country

We are a huge country, a huge orchestra

We also have a huge dream for we live in a huge land

We are not the first to inhabit this land

We are on the land of the Mi'gmaq, the Woolastook, the Passamquody

They have been here for more than ten thousand years.

We have joined them just as others will join us

They will come from far away to live with us.

To share our peace

They will bring their music

And this music will merge with ours

And together we will create a tribute to a long lasting peace

Our dream, one hundred and fifty years young, will widen

Our music will be more inclusive, more harmonious, more peaceful

We live in a huge land

Its difficult for us to imagine the size of that land

It takes more than five hours for the sun to go across

And on its way the sun carries our light and our music

And every color it awakens, every voice, every
gesture is a note added to this amazing symphony we are
creating

That music is keeping the beat of our common march

There are so many music in the world

The world is changing and so is its music

Listen to what we were listening 150 years ago

Listen to the difference, the style, the words

And you might hear the echo of what's coming

We have to learn to hear like we have to learn to

listen to each other

We have to learn to be curious and let ourselves be
surprised

So as to make this land, this country, this dream re-
sonate across the world

And we will all be aware and proud of that music
we have created together

But ... but... always keep in mind that everything
is not perfect

It's the youth's work to change the world for the
better

The future is always an adventure we imagine

The past is already a story we tell each other

It's a great privilege to live here, to live in this land
where we have gathered in peace since 150 years ago

And remember

Peace is silence and music is born out of silence

Listen...

Can you hear?