

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS NETWORK DOUBLES MEMBERSHIP
Enters 2nd annual AGM with 750 members and high profile on Quebec arts scene

“In our first year we opened our doors and invited Quebec’s English-language artists to come in and work with us,” says ELAN director Guy Rodgers, “and the results have been extraordinary. Artists from all disciplines have been joining to help build the community and to find new ways that we can work together and with our Francophone colleagues.”

As ELAN heads toward its second Annual General Meeting (AGM) it’s membership, which includes writers, musicians, theatre people, dancers, visual artists and television and video artists, has increased to more than 750. The AGM will be held at the Kola Note 5240 Avenue du Parc (between Fairmount and St-Viateur) on Monday, November 13, 2006. The agenda includes a review of 2006 accomplishments, current projects and a brainstorming session to set the course for 2007. As part of the ELAN goal of strengthening cooperation with the majority culture in Quebec, ELAN organizers have invited Yvan Gauthier, president and director general of the Conseil des arts et des lettres du québec (CALQ), to address the assembly.

Among other AGM events are the official launch of ELAN’s new website that offers a directory of Quebec’s English-language artists, a showcase of their work and an arts calendar of English-language artistic activities across the province.

The ELAN board will also be reporting on their successful partnership with the Regroupement des artistes en arts visuels du Québec (RAAV), which worked with ELAN to increase services to their English-language members. Similar partnerships with the Regroupement québécois de la danse and other professional artists organizations in Quebec are planned for 2007. “We were very heartened by our experience with RAAV,” says Rodgers. “They were instantly open to the idea of improving services to their English-language members and they welcomed the idea of working with us.”

There will also be an information session on the Arts Services Kit (ASK) project, which helps Quebec English-language artists to pool their resources and provides them with a database of service providers—from translators to bookkeepers and tax specialists—who can help them in their professional life.

An important part of the AGM will be the caucuses before the business part of the meeting. Members of each artistic discipline will gather to look ahead at ways they can build their own networks and promote their work in Quebec, Canada and internationally. “There are a lot of ideas floating around,” says Rodgers, “and this year we will be looking at how, with our increased numbers and the ingenuity of artists, we can work together to raise our profile and to find new audiences for our work. Year One focused on building our membership and a cyber network. Now we can truly begin building the human network.’

The final item of business will be the election of a new board and executive. Most of the existing board will be standing for re-election this year, but president Lin Snelling has announced that, while she would like to continue as one of the dance representatives, new projects make it difficult to continue with the additional duties on the executive. Members are currently going through a nomination process to replace her.

The AGM will not be all business, however. As is the tradition at ELAN meetings, artists will take to the stage after the business is complete to entertain one another. “It’s one of the benefits of ELAN,” says Rodgers. “Our members include some of Quebec’s finest performing artists and an important part of our get-togethers, and of ELAN itself, is a celebration of the things we do.”

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