



## Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade

“The impact and utilization of Canadian culture and arts  
in Canadian foreign policy and diplomacy”

Evidence submitted by The Glenn Gould Foundation, June 7, 2018  
Appearing for the Foundation: Brian M. Levine, Executive Director  
Roger Garland, President

Susan Peterson d’Aquino, Director, appearing to share policy perspectives derived from a distinguished career as a senior public servant in the Ministries of Finance and Canadian Heritage, and engagement with numerous arts organizations

“When any civilization is dust and ashes . . . art is all that's left over.  
Images, words, music. Imaginative structures.  
Meaning—human meaning, that is—is defined by them.”  
- Margaret Atwood

The Glenn Gould Foundation is a Canadian registered charity established in 1983. Our mission is to honour Glenn Gould’s spirit and legacy by celebrating brilliance, promoting creativity and transforming lives through the power of music and the arts. Our reach is global, made possible by the worldwide fame and regard for Glenn Gould. For example, over 85 books on Glenn Gould in 15 languages have been published around the world, more than a dozen feature films and documentaries, along with film soundtracks, works of fiction, popular songs, dance works, thousands of scholarly papers, and articles in news media, with more coming all the time.

Our central focus is the coveted Glenn Gould Prize, Canada’s most internationally significant honour for creative achievement, which is awarded every second year to a person of any nationality who has enriched the human condition through the arts, with special emphasis on innovation and humanitarianism. Chosen by an international jury, the recipient this year is the amazing Jessye Norman. She has sung at the inauguration of three Presidents of the United States and received the Presidential Medal of Art from a fourth. But perhaps the most dramatic recognition of her stature was the choice by France to have her – and her magnificently alone - sing *La Marseillaise* on the Champs Élysée on Bastille Day in 1989 to mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the French Revolution.

Among other outstanding recipients are Leonard Cohen, Oscar Peterson, Philip Glass, Yehudi Menuhin, Robert Lepage and Dr. José Antonio Abreu, whose El Sistema program of free music education for disadvantaged children and youth has transformed – and in many cases, saved – the lives of millions of young people.

In addition to the Glenn Gould Prize and the prominence this brings to Canada, as the host nation of what some have called the “Nobel Prize of the Arts,” we are active internationally with numerous projects, partnerships and creative collaborations around the world. We proudly represent Canada. To cite a couple of examples, last year in Tokyo, we co-presented a five day Glenn Gould multimedia festival curated by the great Japanese musician Ryuichi Sakamoto. It was completely sold out and these concerts will be released worldwide this fall by Sony Music. In 2014 by invitation of the Prime Minister’s Office, we organized a concert by rising young Canadian musicians for the Canadian delegation to the APEC Summit in Beijing.

More than 30 years of international experience has given the Foundation a bird’s-eye view of what cultural diplomacy can accomplish, and also of the areas where we believe proactive policy and strategic investment are most needed.

### **We see Three Key Objectives for Canadian Cultural Diplomacy**

- 1) To communicate a powerful sophisticated message about Canada, its talents, its values and its identity to the world, both through presenting and hosting.
- 2) To strengthen ties with allies and trading partners, and to reduce tensions and suspicions with other countries, by fostering connections based on shared humanity – to “undermine otherness”.
- 3) To expand trade and economic prosperity – going well beyond the creative industries themselves - based on the promotion of a “brand Canada,” focussed on concepts of openness, inclusivity, excellence, and innovation that elevates Canada’s profile to new levels of global prominence.

### **Canada’s Relative Position**

Canada has a rich cultural legacy and enormous wealth of creative talent. Literature, music, dance, theatre, the visual arts and creativity utilizing new and emerging digital technologies. We deserve to be seen much more widely as a global leader.

We all know that artists like Margaret Atwood, Glenn Gould Prize Laureates Robert Lepage and Oscar Peterson, and many others are celebrated around the world and have enjoyed immense success. Yet our Foundation’s decades of experience has shown us that this success does not translate into a perception abroad of Canada as a leading creative nation. Nor has it supplanted an image based on wilderness and resource industries. We need to cultivate a new up-to-date image to advance the objectives we have suggested.

As you know, there has been a decline in the institutional framework needed to build in the global consciousness a direct connection between the works of our creators and the nation that nurtured them. One example has been the elimination of almost all cultural attachés at our missions abroad with their own discretionary budgets, enabling them to respond effectively to opportunities. We and, no doubt, countless others have been affected by this. For example, last year when we worked with an internationally recognized local ensemble to present three Gould-themed Canada 150 concerts in their country, and asked our embassy in their capital city for support to capture high quality video, we were told that

they had no budget allocation, but just might be able to scare up \$100 to cover piano tuning. We've had similar experiences on numerous occasions, and we do not blame our wonderful missions, but rather a failure of policy. Experiences like this, repeated countless times, diminish our standing among nations.

Funding for artist touring, participation in book fairs and festivals, and the like has been reinstated. But our own experience is that sending good artists to appear abroad on an occasional basis without an underlying and continuous Canadian "narrative" is an approach that can use a lot of money and provides welcome income to individual artists, but produces little lasting effect. Such efforts are forgotten quickly by audiences abroad, while long-standing stereotypes endure. We desperately need a unifying structure and narrative designed to serve national goals so that our trading partners are more inclined to think of Canada first when it comes to innovation, creative industries, sophistication and excellence.

How does Canada stack up against other nations in this regard? Other countries maintain permanent institutions around the world to promote their culture, their image and their presence, based on an understanding that the old saying "out of sight, out of mind," is more true than ever. Think of the Japan Foundation, the British Council, the Alliance Française and the Goethe Institute to see why the Canadian presence lags behind, to our detriment.

We talk about "Brand Canada," but is that talk backed by policy, strategy and investment?

Compare Canada, for a moment, with the UK's GREAT Britain campaign, established in 2012 "to inspire the world to think and feel differently about the UK now and in the future, demonstrating that it is the best nation to visit, invest in, trade with and study in."

The program is active in 144 countries and 252 diplomatic posts and Britain's government auditor has projected it to yield direct and indirect annual economic benefits of at least £1.6 billion on an initial three-year investment of £113 million – and that funding was over and above all existing programs.

In contrast, may we ask, what was Canada's total *international* program spend on Canada 150? Was there a careful strategy for that investment, framed well in advance, and if so, was it designed to meet the kind of objectives we have suggested?

Until we get this right, is it surprising that we are better at exporting our creators themselves – bringing untold economic benefits and prestige to other countries – than we are at exporting the creative *work* of our artists?

## A Framework for Cultural Diplomacy

### 1) Continuity is Key

Penetrating global consciousness takes time, consistency and a concerted effort because entrenched perceptions cling stubbornly in the consciousness of people.

Long-term thinking, regular messaging and reinforcement, and initiatives with predictable, repeated cycles produce a cumulative impact. Occasional efforts undertaken on the basis of specific opportunities have value, but a consistent, continuing program with a repeated message will have the greatest impact. A Canadian orchestra may need to fundraise for years to undertake a tour of Europe, while its European counterparts tour internationally every year. Is it surprising that the public abroad thinks of London, Paris, Vienna, Berlin and St. Petersburg as centres of musical excellence, even though our orchestras may be playing at a comparable level?

### 2) Define the message

The effective message is a clear and simple one. The shapes of Canadian culture may be innumerable but our message about how culture informs the Canadian brand needs clarity and simplicity. We suggest the establishment of a Creative Canada Campaign with a message targeted for global audiences. The narratives for the home market may not be the ones that resonate abroad, and we need to be mindful of that.

### 3) Recognize and Play to Our Strengths – Seen Through the Eyes of the World, not our Own

Nelson Mandela said, “*if you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.*” This does not imply that Canada needs to build a policy based on emulating the national art of China, Japan, Germany or France, but it *should* reflect what those nations value in cultural expression so that we can show our strengths in fields that are meaningful to them. For example, in China, there are 60 million students studying classical piano, a symbol of family success and upward mobility. Certain other genres of music are frowned upon. What can we learn about shaping our cultural diplomacy campaign in that vital country?

When Angela Merkel hosted the G20 in Hamburg, she hosted the world leaders at a performance of Beethoven’s 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony. Emmanuel Macron studied for 10 years to become a concert pianist before going into business and politics.

Can we see a pattern emerging?

To be more clear, noted Canadian advertising guru Terry O’Reilly wrote to us, “years ago, I was in Bermuda doing work for the Bank of Bermuda. I took the client out for a dinner, and asked her, at one point, what she knew about Canada. Her only answer was Glenn Gould. I never forgot that.”

#### 4) Forget “Best Practices” – Creative Canada Requires Originality, Imagination and Leadership

Doing what others are already doing – especially if they are doing it with a bigger budget than Canada’s – won’t raise our visibility, and won’t secure a position of leadership.

The answer isn’t to win by outspending – that is a race we will lose. When building and executing strategies about creativity and innovation, our nation must exemplify exactly those qualities. An investment is needed, certainly, but the key is to spend smart, in a targeted, strategic way. Learn from our success stories and encourage those who exemplify success and excellence – rather like our \$60+ million annual investment in the Own the Podium program. “Best Practices” is the study of others’ experiences with a view to emulating *their* success stories, which means that the parade has already passed by the time we decide to join it. But when it comes to capturing attention and changing attitudes and consciousness, there is only one option: chart an original course. The goal for Canada should not be to find a place in the comfortable “middle of the pack” but rather, out in front in easy reach of the Winner’s Circle.

#### 5) The Power of Symbols and Signature Projects

We believe that significant investments in the expansion of Canada’s cultural diplomacy are overdue. We believe that over time, they will pay not only significant prosperity and trade dividends, but can build much-needed bridges – bridges we need now more than ever, bridges that span walls.

Senior officials in the Ministry of International Trade have expressed to us their agreement with these views. The investment could also be targeted to advance Canada’s other priorities such as a seat at the Security Council.

A significant investment does not mean exorbitant – it means strategic, targeted investments with defined spending limits, high likelihood of impact, and clearly designed to serve the kind of objectives we have suggested.

In this context, let me share with you a proposal we have made to the Government of Canada.

It connects the dots between Canada’s creative excellence today and the legacy of the Canadian artist most universally recognized for over 60 years, Glenn Gould. Gould continues to stand as an icon – one of the very few genuine Canadian global legends – an artist associated the world over with artistic excellence, groundbreaking innovation and the embrace of the technological future. In the mind of the world, this particular artist *is* inseparably linked to Canada. He is the Canadian cultural icon *par excellence*.

We have proposed to expand The Glenn Gould Prize into the world’s most visible and respected award for artistic achievement. The present prize for Artistic Excellence would be joined by parallel Prizes for Creative Innovation and for Cultural Humanitarianism, a suite of awards that really does present the possibility of standing comparison to the Nobels, but in an entirely original and creative way,

worthy of Gould himself. This is a distinctively Canadian way for our nation to own the podium – quite literally.

Our goal is to make Canada home to the world’s premiere honours in creative achievement and thereby bring to Canada an enduring stature as the Nobels have to their host countries, while promoting innovation and arts-based humanitarian initiatives of real social value at home. This can be done – it has already been proven! In another domain altogether, the Government of Canada greatly elevated our standing in medical science in 2008 with its one-time endowment grant to the Gairdner Foundation for the expansion of the Gairdner Prizes.

Each and every one of our Foundation’s international projects is designed to reinforce the message that Canada is a creative leader – *that we are a creativity and innovation powerhouse.*

To date, we have encountered unqualified expressions of enthusiasm for our plans from ministers, deputy ministers, the Prime Minister’s Office, and ministerial officials. But to date, no funding mechanism has been put in place to advance this mighty project. The policy framework and political will simply haven’t been there.

A synopsis of the Foundation’s plans for the expansion of The Glenn Gould Prize along with its powerful benefits for Canada can be seen here:

<https://vimeo.com/151911800/9ecde2567a>

When viewing it, please consider how this project aligns with the cultural diplomacy objectives identified at the beginning of this testimony.

## 6) Aim High

In conclusion, we encourage you to embrace a bold, expansive vision for what we can achieve through cultural diplomacy - we should refuse to settle for anything less than the summit of achievement, recognition and global positioning. When Glenn Gould pierced the Iron Curtain in 1957 to become the first Western artist to perform in the Soviet Union at the height of Cold War, he became our first towering cultural diplomat. He was not held back by diffidence, and he produced an impact that remains vital to this day.

In championing our cultural achievements as a nation, let’s set aside our cherished Canadian modesty, and adopt a touch of the swagger that the Prime Minister has advocated. Our artists electrify audiences around the world, but we do too little to reflect that glory back onto the amazing country that produced them. Be bold, seek the summit, and in formulating your recommendations, please remember the wisdom of Goethe who wrote:

“Dream no small dreams, for they have not the power to move the hearts of men” – or women!



Appendix:

The Value of Philanthropic Prizes in Today's World

“Philanthropists and governments have long used prizes to drive innovation and engagement to produce societal benefit, but the use of this powerful instrument is undergoing a renaissance. Philanthropic prizes are growing in number and size, are appearing in new forms, and are being applied to a wider range of societal objectives by a wider range of sponsors than ever before . . . prizes are a unique and powerful tool that should be in the basic tool kit of many of today’s philanthropists. Their recent renaissance is largely due to a new appreciation for the multiple ways in which they can produce change: not only by identifying new levels of excellence and by encouraging specific innovations, but also by changing wider perceptions, improving the performance of communities of problem-solvers, building the skills of individuals, and mobilizing new talent or capital. These change competitive, and media-friendly attributes of prizes to stimulate attention and drive innovation in a highly leveraged and result-focused way . . . A prize is an old idea that remains surprisingly powerful today. We believe that leading philanthropists should consider how they can best use prizes as part of their philanthropic portfolio, and should accept the challenge of finding innovative ways to harness the potential of this powerful instrument.” (pp. 7-8)

“ . . . governments themselves may be re-entering the arena. For much of the 20th century, the U.S. federal government’s preference was to pay for innovation through grants, competitively-bid contracts, and the patent system. But now there are signs of a shift back to prizes, driven by the belief that inducement prizes can be as—or more—effective at catalyzing innovation. A widely-cited 2006 Brookings Institution report highlighted prizes’ strengths relative to traditional government instruments: they reduce risk, engage a large and diverse pool of problem-solvers, and can be managed more efficiently than traditional grants. The author proposed hundreds of millions of dollars in potential government prizes . . .” (p. 29)

- McKinsey and Company:  
“And the Winner is . . .”  
*Capturing the Promise of Philanthropic Prizes*, 2009

## Appearing before the Committee

### **Roger Garland**

#### **President, The Glenn Gould Foundation**

Roger Garland commenced his professional career with Price Waterhouse, followed with eight years of diverse experience in treasury, finance and accounting responsibilities with several public companies. He joined Citibank, Toronto which was just starting its Canadian finance operations. He joined Four Seasons Hotels Inc in 1981 and was appointed to its board of directors in 1984, and later appointed executive vice-president and vice-chairman. Mr. Garland was the founding chair (and Chair Emeritas) of the 2015 Pan American Games in Toronto and is past Chair of the YMCA of Greater Toronto. Mr. Garland is the founding Chair of the board of Soulpepper Theatre Company, and a past director of the board Young Centre for the Performing Arts, director of The Council for Business and the Arts in Canada and a director of a number of public and private corporations.

### **Susan Peterson d'Aquino**

#### **Director, The Glenn Gould Foundation**

Susan Peterson d'Aquino was a senior executive in the public service of Canada for 28 years. She served Prime Ministers Pierre Trudeau and Brian Mulroney in the Privy Council Office, and five successive Ministers of Finance as Assistant Deputy Minister. Ms. d'Aquino subsequently returned to her first love – culture – when she served as Associate Deputy Minister of Canadian Heritage. She has taught on corporate governance at the Canada School of Public Service, has served on the board of the Banff Centre for the arts and of the Canadian Television Fund, and presently serves on the board of the National Arts Centre Foundation and chairs the Friends of the Print Room at the National Gallery of Canada.

### **Brian Levine**

#### **Executive Director, The Glenn Gould Foundation**

Since 2007, Brian Levine has brought strategic vision to repositioning the organization and its signature project, The Glenn Gould Prize, as a leading world-level arts institution. He was co-founder of The Dorian Group, Ltd., an award-winning independent classical and world music label based in the United States. A native of Toronto, he studied at University College and University of Toronto Faculty of Law. At The Glenn Gould Foundation, he has led a dramatic expansion of The Glenn Gould Prize, going from audiences of a few the hundred to 23,000 and a peak of 50 million media impressions in a single Prize cycle. During his tenure, the Foundation has become a vital practitioner of Canadian cultural diplomacy, collaborating with artists, scholars, arts organizations and media organizations on five continents. In January 2013, Mr. Levine was awarded a Diamond Jubilee Medal from The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada and The Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario. The Medal honoured Brian's achievements in music education for children and building The Glenn Gould Foundation into an internationally acclaimed arts organization.



## The Glenn Gould Foundation

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### **Mission Statement**

The mission of The Glenn Gould Foundation is to honour Glenn Gould's spirit and legacy by celebrating brilliance, promoting creativity and transforming lives through the power of music and the arts with the Foundation's signature activities, including The Glenn Gould Prize.

La Fondation Glenn Gould a comme objectif de célébrer l'esprit et l'héritage de Glenn Gould. Elle met en valeur le génie, et elle vise à promouvoir par ses activités, en particulier le Prix Glenn Gould, la créativité et le pouvoir transformateur de la musique et des arts.

### **Vision Statement**

The Glenn Gould Foundation will, in the spirit of Glenn Gould, inspire, support and celebrate artistic endeavour by globally implementing the Mission.

La Fondation Glenn Gould se veut, dans l'esprit de Glenn Gould, d'inspirer, favoriser et soutenir les initiatives artistiques par la mise en oeuvre, au niveau global, de la mission décrite ci-dessus.