**Culture of Canada**

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**Canadian culture** is an umbrella term that encompasses the artistic, musical, literary, culinary, political and social elements that are representative of Canada, not only to its own population, but to people all over the world. Canada's culture has historically been influenced by European culture and traditions, especially British and French. Over time, elements of the cultures of Canada's Aboriginal peoples and immigrant populations have become incorporated into mainstream Canadian culture. Canada's culture has also been strongly influenced by that of its linguistic, economic, and cultural neighbour the United States. These four influences have combined over centuries to form the modern culture of Canada, that will be discussed in more detail in this article.

Canada's federal government has influenced Canadian culture with programs, laws and institutions. It has created crown corporations to promote Canadian culture through media, such as the [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Landscape_art) (CBC) and the [National Film Board of Canada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/July_20) (NFB), and promotes many events which it considers to promote Canadian traditions. It has also tried to [protect Canadian culture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Academy_Awards) by setting legal minimums on [Canadian content](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coat_of_Arms_of_Canada) in many media using bodies like the [Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana_Krall) (CRTC).[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Canada#_note-0).

Canada’s culture, like that of most any country in the world, is a product of its history, geography, and political system. Being a country mainly of immigrants, Canada has been shaped by waves of migration that have combined to form a unique blend of customs, cuisine, and traditions that have marked the socio-cultural development of the nation. In this article, several aspects of Canadian culture will be discussed. Though this article attempts to feature a variety of subjects pertinent to the culture of Canada, it is in no way exhaustive, and to gain a much deeper knowledge of Canada and its culture, one must also consult the other articles pertaining to Canada and its peoples.

 **Development of Canadian culture**

[Canadian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Just_for_Laughs) [culture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terri_Clark) is a product of Canada's [history](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cape_Breton_Island) and [geography](http://www.nfb.ca/e/index_about.html). Most of Canada's territory was inhabited and developed later than other [European](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Guess_Who) [colonies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dan_Aykroyd) in the [Americas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Same-sex_marriage_in_the_Netherlands), with the result that themes and symbols of pioneers, trappers, and traders were important in the early development of Canadian culture.[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Booker_Prize#_note-pioneer_lit) The [British](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Great_Britain) conquest of [Quebec](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battlestar_Galactica_%28re-imagining%29) in 1759 brought a large [Francophone](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Canada) population under British rule, creating a need for compromise and accommodation, while the migration of [United Empire Loyalists](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F%C3%A9lix_Leclerc) from the [Thirteen Colonies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bryan_Adams) brought in strong British and [American](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/This_Hour_Has_22_Minutes) influences.

Although not without conflict, Canada's early interactions with [native](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarah_McLachlan) populations were relatively peaceful, compared to the experience of [native peoples](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ottawa_River) in the [United States](http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/spmc-scmp/conference/index_e.cfm). Combined with relatively late [economic development](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronnie_Hawkins) in many regions, this peaceful history has allowed Canadian native peoples to have a relatively strong influence on the national culture while preserving their own identity.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jack_Bush#_note-cultural_influences)

**Bilingualism and multiculturalism**

[French Canada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Canada)'s early development was relatively cohesive during the 17th and 18th centuries, and this was preserved by the [Quebec Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discovery_Channel) of [1774](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acadian), which allowed Francophone culture to survive and thrive within Canada.[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glenn_Gould#_note-quebec_culture_survival) In [1867](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Anka), the [British North America Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Big_Sea) was designed to meet the growing calls for Canadian autonomy while avoiding the overly-strong decentralization that contributed to the [Civil War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steppenwolf_%28band%29) in the United States.[[5]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Band#_note-civil_war) The compromises made by [Macdonald](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joni_Mitchell) and [Cartier](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claude_Jutra) set Canada on a path to [bilingualism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feist),[[6]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Canada#_note-early_bilingualism) and this in turn contributed to an acceptance of diversity that later led to both [multiculturalism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yann_Martel) and tolerance of [First Nations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tragically_Hip) culture and customs.[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bruce_Cockburn#_note-bilingualism_to_multiculturalism)

Multicultural heritage is enshrined in [Section 27 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ren%C3%A9_Lussier). In parts of Canada, especially the major cities of Montreal, Vancouver, and Toronto (for example, in Toronto's [Kensington Market](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shania_Twain) area), multiculturalism itself is the cultural norm and diversity is the force that unites the community.[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cowboy_Junkies#_note-kensington)

In Quebec, [cultural identity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Canada) is strong, and many [French-speaking Quebecer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stratford%2C_Ontario) commentators speak of a [Quebec culture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ontario) as distinguished from [English Canadian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inuit) culture, but some also see Canada as a collection of several regional, aboriginal, and ethnic subcultures. [[9]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Canada#_note-cultures)

While [French Canadian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Our_Lady_Peace) culture is the most obvious example, [Celtic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rush_%28band%29) influences have allowed survival of non-English dialects in [Nova Scotia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Goulet) and [Newfoundland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hank_Snow); however, the influence of [Ulster](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_of_Canada) immigrants to [Toronto](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1992) has had the effect of minimizing [Irish](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php) influences in [Ontario](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_X-Files)'s culture, and highlighting British influences instead, until the [1980s](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1980s). Canada's Pacific trade has also brought a large [Chinese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madame_Bolduc) influence into [British Columbia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Days_Grace) and other areas.

Canada's cultural diversity also creates an environment much more accepting of [gay](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Winnipeg_Ballet) and [lesbian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gordon_Lightfoot) people than one finds in the [United States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trooper_%28band%29) or most other countries.[[10]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Canadian_Navy#_note-gay) Canada has always placed emphasis on equality and inclusiveness for all people. For example, in [1995](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulster), the [Supreme Court of Canada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Cronenberg) ruled in [*Egan v. Canada*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Fly_%281986_film%29) that [sexual orientation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_content) should be "read in" to [Section Fifteen of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Section_Fifteen_of_the_Canadian_Charter_of_Rights_and_Freedoms), a part of the [Constitution of Canada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quebec_Act) guaranteeing [equal rights](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Beaver) to all Canadians. Following a series of decisions by provincial courts and the Supreme Court of Canada, on [July 20](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture), [2005](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nova_Scotia), [Bill C-38](http://www.craigmarlatt.com/canada/symbols_facts%26lists/symbols.html) received [Royal Assent](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Canada), legalizing [same-sex marriage in Canada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gilles_Vigneault). Canada thus became the fourth country to officially sanction gay marriage worldwide, after [The Netherlands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_science_fiction_television), [Belgium](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Canada), and [Spain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anne_Murray). Furthermore, by [2005](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2005), sexual orientation was included as a protected status in the human rights laws of the federal government and of all provinces and territories.

**Aboriginal influences**

There were, and are, many distinct Aboriginal peoples across Canada, each with its own culture, beliefs, values, language, and history. Much of this legacy remains celebrated artistically, and in other ways, in Canada to this day. Part of the emblem of the [Vancouver](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Canadian_Mounted_Police) [2010 Winter Olympics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Empire_Loyalist) is an [inukshuk](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lesbian), a rock sculpture that is made by stacking stones in the shape of a human figure that is a part of [Inuit](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Canadian_Air_Force) culture.

**Multicultural elements**

Multiculturalism, officially endorsed in [Section Twenty-seven of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harold_Town), has a large influence on Canadian culture, which is post-ethnic and trans-national in character. According to the [Department of Canadian Heritage](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Snow). [[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Radio-television_and_Telecommunications_Commission)

Canada's ethnic, racial and religious diversity is rapidly increasing. According to the 2001 census, more than 200 ethnic origins are represented in Canada. About 13.5 percent of the population is a member of a visible minority group and that proportion is expected to reach 20 percent by 2016. Immigration now accounts for more than 50 percent of Canada's population growth, with immigrants coming mainly from Asia and the Middle East. It is projected that, after 2025, Canada's population growth will be based solely on immigration.

**Influence of American culture**

Easy access to broadcast media has brought many American influences into Canadian culture since the mid-20th century. In reaction to this, Canadian broadcasters, in cooperation with the federal and provincial governments have attempted to emphasize Canadian culture and values on the airwaves. One example of this is the Heritage Moments commercials on television (which act as mini-history lessons). Defending and enhancing national culture is a major priority for the Canadian government. The [Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States) (CRTC) and the Department of Canadian Heritage having responsibility for promoting Canadian culture.

In certain regards, Canada and the United States share a similar culture, which can be defined as "North American." Canadians are exposed to much American culture, due to the proximity of the United States, a common linguistic bond shared between a majority (75%) of Canadians and their neighbours to the south, and the fact that both countries are multi-ethnic immigrant societies that have shared populations for centuries. Most Canadians are familiar with American fast-food restaurants, television shows, music, sports, and retail brands/stores. Some of these cultural elements (especially fast-food restaurants, television, and music) are available in Canada, but their existence does not imply that equivalent domestic "Canadian versions" do not exist.

Despite the close ties, Canadian culture can also sometimes seek to differentiate itself from that of the United States. This sometimes takes the form of mocking or insulting Americans, or embracing certain stereotypes of "American-ness" in the popular media, for example the television shows *An American in Canada* or *Talking to Americans*, or the popular "[I am Canadian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Canada)" ad campaign of Molson Breweries. The reverse is also practiced, with many Americans and American media mocking or insulting Canadians, or otherwise exaggerating stereotypes. A certain degree of rivalry—usually friendly—often exists between the two countries.

Regardless of American influence and a high level of cultural mixing, the vast majority of Canadians are fully aware of their cultural achievements. The Canadian music and television industries are strong and vibrant, and Canadian theatre and literature are very much respected, not only domestically, but internationally as well. Canadian culture often has political overtones, though not necessarily of a partisan nature. Canadian idealism makes many Canadians critical of government, social, and cultural institutions and traditions, comparing the status quo to their idealized view of what Canada should and could become.

**Art**

The arts have flourished in Canada since the 1900s, and especially since the end of World War II in 1945. Government support has played a vital role in their development, as has the establishment of numerous art schools and colleges across the country.

The works of most early Canadian painters followed European trends. During the mid 1800s, [Cornelius Krieghoff](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Radio-television_and_Telecommunications_Commission), a Dutch born artist in Quebec, painted scenes of the life of the habitants (French-Canadian farmers). At about the same time, the Canadian artist [Paul Kane](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_of_Canada) painted pictures of Indian life in western Canada. A group of [landscape](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1774) painters called the [Group of Seven](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Milne) developed the first distinctly Canadian style of painting. All these artists painted large, brilliantly coloured scenes of the Canadian wilderness.

Since the 1930s, Canadian painters have developed a wide range of highly individual styles. [Emily Carr](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Silver_Mt._Zion) became famous for her paintings of totem poles of British Columbia. Other noted painters have included the landscape artist [David Milne](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Canada), the abstract painters [Jean-Paul Riopelle](http://198.103.98.49/en/showdoc/cs/N-10.7/20070114/en) and [Harold Town](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_North_America_Act) and multi-media artist [Michael Snow](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Europe).

The abstract art group [Painters Eleven](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sum_41), particularly the artists [William Ronald](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spookey_Ruben) and [Jack Bush](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_Mother_Earth), also had an important impact on modern art in Canada. Canadian sculpture has been enriched by the walrus ivory and soapstone carvings by the [Inuit artists](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Candy#Modern_Inuit_culture). These carvings show objects and activities from the daily life of the Inuit.

**Literature**

Canadian literature is often divided into French and English-language literature, which are rooted in the literary traditions of France and Britain respectively, However, collectively this literature has become distinctly Canadian. Canada’s literature, whether written in English or French, often reflects the Canadian perspective on nature, frontier life, and Canada’s position in the world, Canadian identity is closely tied to its literature. Canadian literature is often categorised by region or [province](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provinces_of_Canada); by the status of the author (e.g., literature of Canadian women, [Acadians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Bubl%C3%A9), [Aboriginal peoples in Canada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Nations), and [Irish Canadians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amon_Tobin)); and by literary period, such as "Canadian post-moderns" or "Canadian Poets Between the Wars."

In the [1980s](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Section_Twenty-seven_of_the_Canadian_Charter_of_Rights_and_Freedoms), Canadian literature began to be noticed around the world. By the 1990s, Canadian literature was viewed as some of the world's best, and Canadian authors began to accumulate international awards. [[11]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Nations#_note-1) In [1992](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metric_%28band%29), [Michael Ondaatje](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roch_Voisine) became the first Canadian to win the [Booker Prize](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alanis_Morissette) for *The English Patient.* [Margaret Atwood](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Margaret_Atwood) won the Booker in [2000](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nickelback) for *The Blind Assassin* and [Yann Martel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_Good) won it in [2002](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Canadian) for *The Life of Pi.* [Carol Shields](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Horse)'s *The Stone Diaries* won the [1995](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2005) [Pulitzer Prize for Fiction](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newfoundland_and_Labrador), and in [1998](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Civil_War).

**Canadian theatre**

Canada has a thriving stage theatre scene. Theatre festivals draw many tourists in the summer months, especially the [Stratford Festival of Canada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom) in [Stratford](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monarchy_in_Canada), [Ontario](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tegan_and_Sara), and the [Shaw Festival](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shaw_Festival) in [Niagara On The Lake](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Broken_Social_Scene), Ontario. The [Famous People Players](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multiculturalism) are only one of many touring companies that have also developed an international reputation. Canada also boasts the world's second largest live theatre festival, the [Edmonton Fringe Festival](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gay).

**Film and television**

The Canadian film market was dominated by the American film industry for decades, although that film industry has since inception seen a prominent role for actors, directors, producers and technicians of Canadian origin. In the 1960s [Michel Brault](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Forces), [Pierre Perrault](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States?title=Pierre_Perrault&action=edit), [Gilles Groulx](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kensington_Market), [Jean-Pierre Lefebvre](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Forces_Land_Force_Command), [Arthur Lamothe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Forces_Maritime_Command?title=Arthur_Lamothe&action=edit), [Claude Jutra](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rufus_Wainwright) and other filmmakers from Quebec began to challenge [Hollywood](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voivod_%28band%29) by making innovative and politically relevant documentary and feature films.

Among the important English-speaking filmmakers from this period are [Allan King](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allan_King), [Norman Jewison](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niagara_On_The_Lake) and [Robin Spry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equal_rights). [Michael Snow](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Film_Board_of_Canada) continues to be one of the most respected experimental film makers in the world. Norman Jewison received an Irving Thalberg [Academy Award](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emily_Carr) in recognition for his lifetime achievement in film in 1999.

Canada has developed a vigorous film industry that has produced a variety of well-known films, actors, and auteurs. In fact, this eclipsing may sometimes be creditable for the bizarre and innovative directions of the works of such auteurs as [Atom Egoyan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_C-38) ([*The Sweet Hereafter*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1998), 1997) and [David Cronenberg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_identity) ([*The Fly*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economic_development), [*Naked Lunch*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Quebec), [*A History of Violence*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Her_Majesty%27s_Canadian_Ship)). Also, the distinct French-Canadian society permits the work of directors such as [Denys Arcand](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denys_Arcand) and [Denis Villeneuve](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Columbia).

However given Canada's small population and perhaps, because of the closeness of the giant American TV and film industries, distinctively Canadian productions such as those in the TIFF Canada's Top Ten Films of All Time are relatively thin on the ground, compared with the situations in the [United Kingdom](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010_Winter_Olympics).

However, Lion's Gates Films and Alliance Atlantis are two film production companies headquartered in Canada which have grown large enough to compete with larger American productions down south. In addition, because of the intricate relationship between the American and Canadian film industry, numerous films such as David Cronenberg's *A History of Violence* (2005) are often credited as both Canadian films by Canadian publications and as American films by American publications due to differing definitions of what constitutes a Canadian or American film by each country.

A number of [Canadian pioneers in early Hollywood](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inukshuk) significantly contributed to the creation of the motion picture industry in the early days of the 20th century. Over the years, many Canadians have made enormous contributions to the American entertainment industry, although they are frequently not recognized as Canadians.

Canada's film industry is in full expansion as a site for Hollywood productions. Since the 1980s, Canada, and Vancouver in particular, has become known as [Hollywood North](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inuit). The American [*Queer as Folk*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Canada) was filmed in [Toronto](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toronto). Canadian producers have been very successful in the field of [science fiction](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_A._Macdonald) since the mid-1990s, with such shows as [*The X-Files*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Forces_Air_Command), [*Stargate SG-1*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stargate_SG-1), the [*new Battlestar Galactica*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_Canadian), [Smallville](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Kane), and [*The Outer Limits*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2002), all filmed in Vancouver. As with its southern counterpart in [California](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Group_of_Seven_%28artists%29), USA, many Canadians are employed in the film industry, and celebrity-spotting is frequent throughout many Canadian cities.

Montreal, due to its [European](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Paul_Riopelle) appearance, has served in a great variety of mainstream movies, attracting the loyalty of industry people such as [Bruce Willis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pulitzer_Prize_for_Fiction); there are plans to build the world's biggest film studio on the outskirts of the city. The choice of location is allegedly due to cost, rather than a requirement for a 'Canadian atmosphere'. The frequent question of a Canadian, seeing a film crew on his or her local streets, is 'Which bit of the States are we pretending to be today?'.

Canadian television, especially supported by the [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1995), is the home of a variety of locally-produced shows. French-language television, like French Canadian film, is buffered from excessive American influence by the fact of language, and likewise supports a host of home-grown productions. The relative success of French-language domestic television and movies in Canada often exceeds that of its English-language counterpart.

The [Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Painters_Eleven)'s Canadian content regulations dictate that a certain percentage of a domestic broadcaster's transmission time must include content that is produced by Canadians, or covers Canadian subjects. This also applies to [US](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Ronald) [cable television](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexual_orientation) channels such as [MTV](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MTV) and the [Discovery Channel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quebec), which have local versions of their channels available on Canadian cable networks. Similarly, [BBC Canada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vancouver), while primarily showing [BBC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aboriginal_peoples_in_Canada) shows from the United Kingdom, also carries Canadian output.

[National Film Board of Canada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadians_of_Irish_descent) [[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1980s), is 'a public agency that produces and distributes films and other audiovisual works which reflect Canada to Canadians and the rest of the world'. The agency helped to pioneer the concept of the documentary.

The [Toronto International Film Festival](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gilles_Groulx) (TIFF) is considered by many to be one of the most prevalent film festivals for Western cinema. It is the premiere film festival in North America from which the Oscars race begins.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Same-sex_marriage_in_Canada)

In addition, many popular political documentaries such as Noam Chomsky's [*Manufacturing Consent*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Ondaatje), [*The Corporation*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George-%C3%89tienne_Cartier) and [*Bowling for Columbine*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_am_Canadian) involved Canadian production and funding. Some of other more notable documentaries include: [Nanook of the North](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nanook_of_the_North), [Final Offer (film)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maple_leaf), and [Canada: A People's History](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robin_Spry).

**Comedy**

The [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carol_Shields) is noted for political satire such as [*This Hour Has 22 Minutes*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1995), [*Rick Mercer Report*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atom_Egoyan), and [*Royal Canadian Air Farce*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Department_of_Canadian_Heritage).

Canada has produced many eminent national humorists. The [Kids in the Hall](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stratford_Festival_of_Canada) were a popular Canadian sketch group. Also the [Second City Television](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francophone) show originated in the Toronto [*Second City*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ontario) operation, which produced many comedians that went on to success worldwide, including [John Candy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bilingualism), [Rick Moranis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rick_Moranis), [Eugene Levy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Famous_People_Players), [Dave Thomas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmonton_Fringe_Festival), [Catherine O'Hara](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michel_Brault), and others. The team of creators for SCTV, including [Lorne Michaels](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php), were later transplanted in New York City to create [Saturday Night Live](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Assent).

Other notable Canadian comics and comedy groups include [Jim Carrey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Pierre_Lefebvre), [Mike Myers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manufacturing_Consent%3A_The_Political_Economy_of_the_Mass_Media), [Martin Short](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hollywood_North), [Tom Green](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queer_as_Folk_%28US%29), [Dan Aykroyd](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toronto), [Leslie Nielsen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_people), [*CODCO*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Same-sex_marriage_in_Belgium) (the precursors to *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*), [Maggie Cassella](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Same-sex_marriage_in_Spain), and [Elvira Kurt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elvira_Kurt). The [*Just for Laughs*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denis_Villeneuve) Festival in [Montreal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom) is the world's largest comedy festival.

Canadian humour is often described as being not as 'punchline-friendly' as its American counterpart, but not as 'off-the-wall' as its UK counterpart.

**Music**

Canada has developed its own brands of traditional music, including the French, Irish and Scottish-derived [Cape Breton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_pioneers_in_early_Hollywood) fiddle music of the [Maritimes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Europe), the Franco-Celtic styles of [Quebec](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Section_Twenty-seven_of_the_Canadian_Charter_of_Rights_and_Freedoms) that often include foot percussion and a scat style called *turlutte*, and other national styles from the [Ottawa Valley](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Sweet_Hereafter) to the west. Noted proponents are [Buddy MacMaster](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kids_in_the_Hall) and his niece [Natalie](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egan_v._Canada) of [Cape Breton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naked_Lunch_%28film%29), and [Madame Bolduc](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_History_of_Violence_%28film%29) of Quebec, whose recordings in the [1930s](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norman_Jewison) lifted her people through depressing times.

The Canadian music industry has been helped by government regulation designed to protect and encourage the growth of distinct Canadian culture. The Canadian Content (CANCON) regulations force all radio stations in Canada to play at least 35% Canadian music. This has enabled Canadian artists to garner success on the airwaves which were once dominated by American and European acts. Now it is common to hear several Canadian songs on the radio every hour you listen.

In the realm of popular music, Canada has produced a variety of internationally successful performers, including (alphabetically): [Arcade Fire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Broadcasting_Corporation), [Bryan Adams](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Snow), [Paul Anka](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Film_Board_of_Canada), [Akufen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lorne_Michaels), [Bachman-Turner Overdrive](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toronto_International_Film_Festival), [The Band](http://www.wstudio.ca/en/media/film_festival.shtml), [Barenaked Ladies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mike_Myers_%28actor%29), [Billy Talent](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Corporation), [Paul Brandt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Brandt), [Broken Social Scene](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_people), [Michael Bublé](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BBC_Canada), [Terri Clark](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BBC), [Bruce Cockburn](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California), [Leonard Cohen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_cultural_protectionism), [Stompin' Tom Conners](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bruce_Willis), [Cowboy Junkies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Broadcasting_Corporation), [Céline Dion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Supreme_Court_of_Canada), [D.O.A.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Radio-television_and_Telecommunications_Commission),[Feist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cable_television), [Nelly Furtado](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nelly_Furtado), [Matthew Good](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Final_Offer_%28film%29), [Godspeed You Black Emperor!](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Outer_Limits), [Glenn Gould](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dave_Thomas_%28actor%29), [Robert Goulet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catherine_O%27Hara), [Great Big Sea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Short), [The Guess Who](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saturday_Night_Live), [Hawk Nelson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim_Carrey), [Ronnie Hawkins](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Nielsen), [I Mother Earth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Second_City), [Diana Krall](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hollywood), [k.d. Lang](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K.d._Lang), [Avril Lavigne](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eugene_Levy), [Félix Leclerc](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canada%3A_A_People%27s_History), [Gordon Lightfoot](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Broadcasting_Corporation), [René Lussier](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maritimes), [Sarah McLachlan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rick_Mercer_Report), [Metric](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Canadian_Air_Farce), [Joni Mitchell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddy_MacMaster), [Alanis Morissette](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_City_Television), [Anne Murray](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bowling_for_Columbine), [Nickelback](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornelius_Krieghoff), [Oscar Peterson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1930s), [Our Lady Peace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avril_Lavigne), [Rush](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Montreal), [A Silver Mt. Zion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History), [Hank Snow](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography), [Steppenwolf](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Green), [Sum 41](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawk_Nelson), [Spookey Ruben](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Americas), [Tegan and Sara](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CODCO), [David Clayton Thomas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Clayton_Thomas), [Nomeansno](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2000), [Three Days Grace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oscar_Peterson), [The Tragically Hip](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arcade_Fire), [Amon Tobin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirteen_Colonies), [Trooper](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States), [Shania Twain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quebec), [Gilles Vigneault](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_Americans_in_the_United_States), [Roch Voisine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celine_Dion), [Rufus Wainwright](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natalie_MacMaster), [Voivod](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cape_Breton_Island) and [Neil Young](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neil_Young).

Although often overshadowed by the success of Canada's popular musicians, Canada has also produced many notable composers who have contributed in a variety of ways to the history of western classical music.

**Symbols**

Official symbols of Canada include the [maple leaf](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nomeansno), [beaver](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canada), and the [Canadian Horse](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celt) [[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1867?command=search&caller=SI&fragment=canadian%20horse&search_type=all&day=14&month=1&year=2007&search_domain=cs&showall=L&statuteyear=all&lengthannual=50&length=50)[[5]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akufen). Many official symbols of the country such as the [Flag of Canada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bachman-Turner_Overdrive) have been changed or modified over the past few decades in order to 'Canadianize' them and de-emphasise or remove references to the [United Kingdom](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colonies). Symbols of the [monarchy in Canada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barenaked_Ladies) continue to be featured in, for example, the [Coat of Arms of Canada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billy_Talent) and armed forces [Her Majesty's Canadian Ship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maggie_Cassella). The designation '[Royal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monarchy)' remains for institutions as varied as the [Royal Canadian Mounted Police](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francophone) and the [Royal Winnipeg Ballet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Godspeed_You_Black_Emperor%21), though with the 1968 unification of the three armed forces into the [Canadian Forces](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Canada), the [Royal Canadian Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leonard_Cohen) and [Royal Canadian Navy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stompin%27_Tom_Conners) ceased to exist. However, certain [Canadian Forces Land Force Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Canada) (army) units carry "Royal" titles, [Canadian Forces Maritime Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States) vessels are still styled "HMCS" and [Canadian Forces Air Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/D.O.A._%28band%29) squadrons still use a Royal Air Force-derived badge surmounted by the Queen's Crown as their official crests.