

Minister of
Small Business
and Tourism



Ministre de
la Petite Entreprise
et du Tourisme



**Message from the Honourable Bardish Chagger, P.C., M.P.,
Minister of Small Business and Tourism
and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons,
to celebrate the 16th Canada International Children's Art Festival
August 19 to 23, 2018**

On behalf of the Government of Canada, I welcome you to the 16th Canada International Children's Art Festival! Congratulations to Organizing Committee Chairman, Mr. Weiqi Zhou, on this wonderful event.

Tourism is a major driver of Canada's economy. It is our largest service export and represents more than 2% of our gross domestic product. One in 10 Canadian jobs—almost 1.8 million—depends on the tourist economy, and total tourism revenues from domestic and international travellers were \$97.4 billion in 2017.

Events like art festivals provide an opportunity to showcase Canada's artists, promote our cultural industries, attract international tourists, and build people-to-people ties. They help generate economic benefits for the municipalities where they are held and for the tourism sector in general, and they can help support job creation.

In May 2017, I announced Canada's Tourism Vision. It includes a whole-of-government, 20-point action plan focused on supporting enhanced marketing of Canada internationally, improving access for tourists who come to and travel through Canada, and enhancing our tourist product offerings. It includes three overarching targets, including increasing the number of international overnight visits to Canada by 30% by 2021.

We are making great progress toward our goals! Canada welcomed a new record high of 20.8 million tourists in 2017, surpassing the previous record of 20.1 million established in 2002.

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I am pleased to recognize events like yours that are contributing to Canada's diverse tourism sector, promoting connections between Canadians and travellers, and developing international cultural exchanges.

Please accept my best wishes for an enjoyable event and for every success in 2018 and the years ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bardish Chagger".

The Honourable Bardish Chagger, P.C., M.P.