Québec On Center Stage in Venice



La Biennale di Venezia

7th International Festival of Contemporary Dance May 26 to June 12, 2010

Québec

PHOTO (DETAILS) COVER PAGE:

COMPAGNIE MARIE CHOUINARD – Le nombre d'or (live) choreographer: Marie Chouinard - photo : Sylvie-Ann Paré

LES GRANDS BALLETS CANADIENS DE MONTRÉAL – *Bella Figura* dancers : GBCM – photo : Sergueï Endinian

Legal deposit: 2010

Bibliothèques et Archives nationales du Québec

Library and Archives Canada

ISBN (print version): 978-2-550-58772-9 ISBN (pdf version): 978-2-550-58852-8 © Government of Québec, 2010



Québec's international success on the contemporary dance scene speaks to the vitality of our culture and the creativity of our artists. This global recognition is prompting us to step up our efforts to help dance companies

tour abroad, so they can take their art to new levels and make a better living from it as a result. We are also striving to expand performance opportunities worldwide and enrich our culture through contact with different sensibilities.

As such, Québec has adopted an international policy that gives an important place to culture by recognizing both its social and economic contribution. In this era of the global village, the crossover that arises from cultural exchanges enriches humanity's artistic heritage. We have a piece to add to this vast mosaic and we want it to be visible the world over.

On behalf of the Government of Québec, I would like to thank the Venice Biennale Dance 2010 for its invitation to Québec artists. We feel very proud that the organizers of this prestigious event have shown such an interest in them.

CHRISTINE ST-PIERRE

Minister of Culture,

Communications and the Status of Women

I would like to thank the Venice Biennale for hosting dance companies that are supported by Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec. I am proud of their participation in this prestigious event that showcases boldness, originality, and the unusual.

Despite its short history, Québec contemporary dance has quickly made a place for itself on the international scene thanks to companies that have promoted its wide variety of styles, its intense works, its innovative choreographic talent, and the virtuosity of its performers.

But its scope of influence would not be what it is today without support from foreign partners and international events, which have enabled Québec's companies to become examples in the world of dance.

I therefore warmly invite you to discover the richness of Québec contemporary dance through works by Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal, Compagnie Marie Chouinard, José Navas/Compagnie Flak, and Daniel Léveillé Danse.

I wish everyone an enjoyable Biennale!

YVAN GAUTHIER

CEO of Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec

You goether

Capturing Emotions... Capturer les émotions... For Québec, it's the emotion of finding itself once again on center stage in Venice.

For Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal, it's the emotion of its first time at the *Biennale*; for Compagnie Marie Chouinard, it's the emo-

tion of the great return to the City of Waterways; for Daniel Léveillé Danse, it's the emotion of bringing its trilogy to the beautiful Italian city on the lagoon; and for José Navas/Compagnie Flak, it's the spectacular emotion of the Italian premiere of its *Miniatures*.

The Québec artists who will be bringing emotion to the stage this year in Venice are there as our ambassadors. We are proud of them and moved by their talent, because they embody the powerful innovative current that flows through Québec's artistic community.

Québec contemporary dance has earned itself a place in Italy thanks to faithful partners, including the Venice Biennale Dance. The large Québec presence at this year's event represents a new opportunity to strengthen and enhance cultural ties and friendship between Québec and Italy, and to highlight their value, vitality, and depth.

I wish you an emotion-filled Biennale!

AMALIA DANIFI A RENOSTO

Québec Government Representative in Rome



Dance is like a mirror that shifts the temporal relation to the world. We are living in the global world.

This year the Venice Biennale International Festival of Contemporary Dance introduces as one of its major focuses a picture of contempo-

rary dance that originates and is created in Québec. The focus gathers a comprehensive idea of a group of exceptional choreographers who, with their in-depth research and incredible creativity, are helping transform and enrich dance history in a global scope. Their inspiring work is producing a pool of movement vocabulary with character and personality, in a distinctive and particular way. Yet their diverse artistic identity has heightened and touched on new ideas and concepts. From this specific process rise confrontations, offering the spectator a deep correspondence and physical emotion.

The Venice Biennale International Festival of Contemporary Dance is very grateful for this important cultural cooperation. The art of dance and its universal vocabulary have the unique quality of making communication easier among peoples from all cultural backgrounds. The art of movement ignites our capacity to find emotions and stimulate enthusiasm.

The City of Venice and its international audiences are ready. This year's festival "Capturing Emotions" embraces and welcomes these fascinating artists.

ISMAEL IVO

Director of Dance Department La Biennale di Venezia





Distinctive, bold, ground-breaking, and at times even brazen, Québec modern dance is outstandingly original and has a remarkable ability to reinvent itself by incorporating a wide range of technical and visual styles. It stems from the desire of visionary artists to break with past conventions. It owes its vibrancy to the tireless efforts of these artists, and its distinctiveness to the conviction that dance is an art form in which anything is possible.

Québec's modern dance movement was born on the cusp of profound social change. In 1948 a small group of avant-garde artists signed a manifesto called Refus global. Among these groundbreaking artists were poets, painters, and writers, as well as choreographers like Françoise Sullivan, Jeanne Renaud, and Françoise Riopelle. Their statement would prove to be the precursor of a vast emancipation movement. The world of dance was swept up in this artistic upheaval, reinventing and challenging traditional models and norms.

The late 60s saw the founding of two companies that were an outstanding training ground for dancers and choreographers and profoundly influenced the direction of dance performance. Groupe de la Place Royale (1966) and Groupe Nouvelle Aire (1968) became experimental workshops, producing some of the great figures of modern dance like Édouard Lock, Ginette Laurin, Paul-André Fortier, Daniel Léveillé, and the late Jean-Pierre Perrault, to name only a few.

A professional dance community gradually developed in Québec, garnering public and media attention. The first dance companies were founded (Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal, or BJM Danse Montréal as they are known today. O Vertigo, La La La Human Steps, Fondation de danse Margie Gillis, Montréal Danse, and Compagnie Marie Chouinard), extraordinary dancers emerged (Louise Bédard, Daniel Soulières, Andrew de Lotbinière Hardwood, Marc Boivin, and the incomparable Louise Lecavalier), work and performance space



became available (Tangente, Agora de la danse), training programs were introduced (Université du Québec à Montréal, Concordia University, Les Ateliers de Danse Moderne de Montréal - LADMMI), and an organization (which would eventually become Regroupement québécois de la danse) was created to defend the dance community's interests. Perhaps most importantly, Festival international de nouvelle danse (FIND) was founded in Montréal, embodying this vibrant community's burning desire to broaden its horizons and make a name for itself on the international scene.

From its first edition in 1985 to its last in 2003, the festival presented the biggest international names in dance and the most innovative young choreographers from Québec and Canada. Local choreographers were featured alongside William Forsythe, Pina Bausch, Merce Cunningham, Bill T. Jones, Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker, Trisha Brown, Ushio Amagatsu, and Vera Mantero. Audiences were thrilled to discover the astounding depth of Québec's modern dance scene. From the very first edition, the radicalism and audacity of FIND (which was replaced in 2007 by Festival TransAmériques (FTA)) enthrialled local and international audiences by frequently challenging artistic trends and providing a window onto a multitude of expressive styles from around the world. It produced a shockwave that put the Québec dance scene on the map and firmly established Montréal as one of the world's great dance centers.

A new generation of distinctive choreographers like Danièle Desnoyers, Hélène Blackburn, Jocelyne Montpetit, Lynda Gaudreau, Harold Rhéaume, Benoît Lachambre, Pierre-Paul Savoie, and Sylvain Émard arose while young, talented artists including José Navas, Roger Sinha, and Victor Quijada arrived from around the world, inspiring and enriching the work of local choreographers. More recently, artists like Dave St-Pierre, Martin Bélanger, Frédérick Gravel, Jean-Sébastien Lourdais, Julie Andrée T., and Mélanie Demers have proven themselves with works that playfully fuse styles as easily as they shatter conventions. All of these artists perform across the country and beyond, touring the Americas, Europe, and Asia. Québec dance continues to build its reputation while creating partnerships and exchange programs like artist-in-residence positions, co-productions, workshops, and laboratories that benefit artists and the public alike.

Today, modern dance in Québec is multi faceted and has no qualms about pushing the boundaries. The new artists fuse styles, combining classical techniques



Dave St-Pierre

"Dave St-Pierre dances like he lives, with the driving desire to burn the vessels that bind him to lands too well known, to the beaten paths of a contemporary dance that he deems too timid."

FESTIVAL D'AVIGNON 2009

with street dance, exploring new media, incorporating elements of circus arts and live music, reinterpreting butoh and flamenco. The only constant of this maelstrom is the human body—a 21st century body defined by its versatility and adaptability, in turn ingenious, untamed, and pushed beyond its normal limitations. Though it remains firmly rooted in Western tradition, modern dance in Québec is inspired by and incorporates the techniques, styles, and aesthetics of cultures from around the world.

Dance currently enjoys greater visibility than ever before in Québec, with performances taking place all across the province. However, Montréal remains the epicenter of this vibrant form of artistic expression. With the city's combination of North American and European style, it continues to defend its status as the country's "dance capital" year after year. Montréal is fertile ground for the next generation and continues to reassert itself with every season as an international dance hub.

This brief overview points to the remarkably fast development and richness of Québec's modern dance scene. It also speaks to its openness to influences from around the world and willingness to constantly challenge its own identity in order to surprise, reinvent, and innovate.

José Navas "... choreography written clearly and elegantly, to perfection. Navas's body is an eclectic harmonic instrument, each muscle a string vibrating with beauty." SARA MARMIFERO, Non solo cinema, October 2009 -Festival Milanoltre

Areadily Le sacre du Printemps

exportable Québec network

In recent decades, the dance community has become one of Québec's greatest cultural ambassadors, drawing on an enviable network with well-established experience to bring its creations to audiences across the country and around the world.

Québec artists have always displayed a natural desire to discover and explore new ground and the most innovative expressions of dance. Since the early 80s that desire has been cultivated and nourished through the creation of FIND and the International Exchange for the Performing Arts (CINARS), a major international organization that produced the world-renowned Off-CINARS festival. In 2007, the first edition of the annual Festival TransAmériques (FTA) was held to replace FIND, once again firmly cementing Montréal's position as a centrifugal force of dance creativity.

Thanks to these events and the efforts of the dynamic and creative people who make them possible, a solid performance, training, and representation network has developed, one that is open to dialogue and committed to carving out a place in international markets for Québec's greatest talents.

DANCE VENUES

Dance festivals and venues are a crucial part of this network. From the very beginning, they have introduced new and bigger audiences to dance, provided visibility for performers, and promoted the art form. Festivals and venues also play an important role in forging and maintaining reciprocal relations by featuring performances by dance companies from around the world every season.

Agora de la danse (Montréal)

Agora de la danse was founded in 1991 and is completely and exclusively devoted to modern dance creation. Most of today's biggest artists have, at one time or another, performed in this space. The little black box with its seating capacity of 250 has also hosted international gatherings like Vooruit en avant!, Montréal-Munich, and two editions of Destinations Danse (Catalonia and France).

www.agoradanse.com

Tangente (Montréal)

Tangente was launched in 1980. It offers an eclectic program of modern dance in a 91 seat space as well as a documentation center. It is actively involved in a number of international networks, tours, and choreography exchanges.

www.tangente.qc.ca

Danse Danse (Montréal)

Since its launch in 1998, Danse Danse has become Canada's most popular modern dance series. Its mission is to promote and develop choreographic art by encouraging the creation of original work and stunning performances by companies from here and abroad.

www.dansedanse.net

Studio 303 (Montréal)

Studio 303 was founded in 1989. It is dedicated to the evolution of living art, mainly through the exploration of the latest developments in modern dance and interdisciplinary arts. It provides a support network and resources to independent artists and hosts the annual Edgy Women Festival.

www.studio303.ca

Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal (GBCM)

This company offers a complete program of classical and modern ballet, presenting one or two performances a year by companies from abroad in addition to its own repertoire.

www.grandsballets.com

La Rotonde (Québec City)

La Rotonde is a veritable arts institution in the Québec City area and eastern Québec's only venue specifically dedicated to modern dance choreography and performance. It was founded in 1996.

www.larotonde.qc.ca

VENUES AND GOVERNMENT CORPORATIONS

Venues and government corporations based in Montréal and throughout Québec also contribute to the development and export of dance by offering dynamic programming that regularly features performers from abroad.

Usine C (Montréal)

This multidisciplinary production and creation center was developed specifically to meet the needs of modern performances. It houses performance venues and residences in two separate locations, including a dividable hall that seats up to 472.

www.usine-c.com



amour, acide et noix

La Chapelle (Montréal)

La Chapelle was founded in 1990. It is a rehearsal space, a 100 seat performance venue, and a dedicated promoter of the performance arts focusing on cutting-edge creativity and young talent through its multidisciplinary program.

www.lachapelle.org

MAI (Montréal)

MAI (Montréal, arts interculturels) is an intercultural, multidisciplinary modern arts venue. MAI features a gallery and a 250 seat theater presenting engaging works inspired by cultures from around the world.

www.m-a-i.qc.ca

Place des arts (Montréal)

Place des arts is a government-owned corporation. In addition to hosting Les Grands Ballets canadiens de Montréal and Danse Danse, it offers a modern arts series called Série Cinquième Salle, which features dance performances in an adaptable performance space.

www.laplacedesarts.com

Grand Théâtre de Québec

Grand Théâtre de Québec is a government-owned corporation in Québec City. Its programming includes a very popular dance series.

www.grandtheatre.qc.ca

FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

Festival TransAmériques (Montréal)

Festival TransAmériques (FTA) is an international modern art event offering programming that combines various dance and theater styles and disciplines. Held every year in June, the FTA introduces the public to the latest works by some of the most avant-garde artists.

www.fta.gc.co

Canada Dance Festival (Ottawa)

This festival of Canadian dance is held every other year and is a prime showcase for Québec performers. Coproduced with the National Arts Centre, which also presents an international dance series every year (www.nac-cna.ca/en/dance), the Canada Dance Festival is an opportunity for Canada's dance community to engage in dialogue and networking.

www.canadadance.co

Festival international de Danse Encore (Trois-Rivières)

Every year in June, this festival offers dance lovers a range of performances, shows, and training activities.

www.festival-encore.com

Festival des arts de Saint-Sauveur

Since 1992, this annual music and dance festival has been held every summer in the Laurentians. It presents a host of performances and shows that appeal to a wide audience.

www.fass.co

CINARS (Montréal)

CINARS is held every other year in November. By transforming Montréal into a hub for the export and exchange of international culture, it has made an invaluable contribution to the development of the dance market.

www.cinars.org

ASSOCIATIONS AND NETWORKS

Regroupement québécois de la danse (Montréal)

Founded in 1984, Regroupement québécois de la danse represents all dance professionals and defends the interests of the dance community on the public and political scene. Its site provides a host of information on current events on Québec's dance scene.

www.quebecdanse.org

RIDEAU

Québec's multidisciplinary venues and many regional networks are members of this Québec association that has been supporting the presentation of performing arts for 30 years, most notably through its annual Bourse RIDEAU fair.

www.rideau-inc.qc.ca

La danse sur les routes du Québec

In 1998 Regroupement québécois de la dance created La danse sur les routes du Québec to support the presentation of performing arts outside of Montréal. This network brings together venues interested in dance performance and development.

www.ladansesurlesroutes.com

Accès Culture (Montréal)

Accès Culture is Montréal's network of local venues and cultural institutions. It helps provide greater exposure for dance by hosting performances and in-residence programs, which are usually free.

www.ville.montreal.qc.ca

ARTIST RESIDENCES

Several partners of this diverse network provide concrete support for artists by making residences available. Agora de la danse, Tangente, La Rotonde, Usine C, La Chapelle, Cinquième Salle, Accès Culture, and a number of multidisciplinary venues in outlying regions like the Centennial Theatre in Lennoxville and Théâtre de Baie-Comeau offer these types of accommodations.

Circuit-Est (Montréal)

This choreography center broadened its mandate in 2007 by moving into the magnificent institution founded by the late Jean-Pierre-Perreault. It offers year-round residencies to member companies and young artists

www.circuit-est.qc.ca

O Vertigo (Montréal)

O Vertigo has granted artists access to its space since its center first opened its doors.

www.overtigo.com

Par B.L.eux (Montréal)

Par B.L.eux, headed by director Benoît Lachambre, is currently working to create an international research and creation center for dance and related arts in Sutton, in the Eastern Townships.

www.parbleux.qc.ca

Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec (CALQ)

CALQ also contributes to the development of a network of residences, some of which are devoted specifically to the field of dance. Thanks to its efforts, TanzWerkstatt Berlin offers a residence during the Tanz im August festival, and choreographers are invited in collaboration with Les Ateliers de Danse Moderne de Montréal and the City of Montréal as part of the residencies program of the Pépinières européennes pour jeunes artistes cultural organization.

www.calq.gouv.qc.ca

TRAINING

Québec dance also owes its success to an enviable professional training network that contributes actively to the development of the art of movement: a number of institutions, including universities, provide training for performers, choreographers, and renowned instructors.

Dance Department, Université du Québec à Montréal www.danse.uqam.ca

Contemporary Dance Department, Concordia University (Montréal)

http://dance.concordia.ca

École supérieure de ballet contemporain de Montréal www.esbcm.org

LADMMI, l'école de danse contemporaine (Montréal) www.ladmmi.com

École de danse de Québec www.ecolededansedequebec.qc.ca

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

The Québec dance scene enjoys financial support from the three levels of government, with each providing programs that complement the others'. The unfailing support of public funding agencies has made it possible for artists and organizations not only in dance but in all artistic fields to pursue research, develop new artistic vocabularies, create unique works, and present the results to audiences in Québec and throughout the world.

A major milestone for Québec was the 1994 creation of Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec (CALQ), which has since helped support dance through a host of research, creation, production, and performance programs. CALQ, like the Canada Council of the Arts, provides grants to artists and companies for national and international tours. Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine du Québec (MCCCF) is also very active, providing assistance for equipment, training schools, and market development—through support for programming missions and showcases at major events and festivals—and also in promoting Québec culture through its network of international offices. For 30 years, CALQ and MCCCF have been attentive to the needs and initiatives of Québec's contemporary dance scene and have been key partners in its development and export to international markets.



HIGHLIGHTS

Québec contemporary dance stands apart for its

- Conceptual, gestural, and aesthetic eclecticism
- Unique signature at the crossroads of European and American influences
- Boldness, intensity, and sensory and emotional impact
- Dazzling expansion and presence on stages worldwide

The heart of Québec's dance scene is Montréal, a major international choreographic hub featuring

- Some 50 professional companies of all sizes
- More than 1,000 artists and craftspeople
- A large annual contemporary dance festival, five venues specializing in dance, and a number of multidisciplinary venues offering year-round dance programming
- A number of high-caliber professional training institutions, including universities, for performers, choreographers, and instructors
- An increasingly developed network of in-residence positions
- A large international dance and performing arts market

But the Québec dance scene is also known for its

- Satellite network of presenters, festivals, and companies working to develop dance throughout Québec
- A Québec-wide association that represents the entire profession
- International network of key partners that fosters the creation of new works and stimulates coproductions and the export of Québec excellence
- Regular tours in more than 20 countries worldwide
- Passionate, creative, and open-minded dance community

Québec on Center Stage in Venice

La Biennale di Venezia

7th International Festival of Contemporary Dance

May 26 to June 12, 2010

CAPTURING EMOTIONS Directed by Ismael Ivo

WITH SUPPORT FROM Regione del Veneto

IN COLLABORATION WITH

Fondazione Teatro La Fenice di Venezia

Comune di Venezia – Attività e Produzioni Culturali – Teatro Toniolo

Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine

Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec

Québec Government Office in Rome Canada Council for the Arts

WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF Embassy of Canada to Italy

MEETINGS

May 27, 4 p.m.

Ca' Giustinian

Bold Creations: Focus on Québec

Contemporary Dance

Round table organized by Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec and La Biennale di Venezia, with support from the Québec Government Office in Rome Facilitator: Susanne Franço

-acilitator: Susanne Fra

May 28, 6 p.m.

Ca' Giustinian

DANIEL LÉVEILLÉ, CRYSTAL PITE Facilitator: Susanne Franco

Québec Government Office in Rome

www.quebec-italia.it

May 26 and 27, 10 p.m.

Teatro Piccolo Arsenale
WEN WEI DANCE COMPANY (Canada)
Unbound
European premiere
Choreography by Wen Wei Wang

May 27 and 28, 8 p.m. and May 29, 6 p.m.

Teatro Malibran

LES GRANDS BALLETS CANADIENS DE

MONTRÉAL (Québec)

The Rite of Spring Italian premiere

Choreography by Stijn Celis

Bella Figura (1995) and Six Dances (1986) Concept and choreography by Jirí Kylián

May 28 and 29, 9 p.m.

Teatro Toniolo

COMPAGNIE MARIE CHOUINARD (Québec)
The Golden Mean (Live) European premiere
Concept and choreography

by Marie Chouinard

May 28 and 29, 10 p.m.

Teatro Fondamenta Nuove
JOSÉ NAVAS/COMPAGNIE FLAK (Québec)
Miniatures
Italian premiere
Choreography and dance by José Navas

May 30, 5 p.m.

Teatro alle Tese – Arsenale DANIEL LÉVEILLÉ DANSE (Québec) Amour, acide et noix Choreography by Daniel Léveillé

May 30, 10 p.m.

Teatro alle Tese – Arsenale
DANIEL LÉVEILLÉ DANSE (Québec)
The Modesty of Icebergs Italian première
Choreography by Daniel Léveillé

May 31, 8 p.m.

Teatro alle Tese – Arsenale
DANIEL LÉVEILLÉ DANSE (Québec)
Twilight of the Oceans Italian première
Choreography by Daniel Léveillé

May 30, 8 p.m. and May 31, 10 p.m.

Teatro Piccolo Arsenale
KIDD PIVOT FRANKFURT RM (Canada)
Dark Matters
Choreography by Crystal Pite

May 31 and June 1, 9 a.m.

Sale Apollinee, Teatro La Fenice di Venezia COMPAGNIE MARIE CHOUINARD (Québec) Morning Glories European premiere Choreography by Marie Chouinard