

13th edition of Festival TransAmériques

INVENTING A NEW WORLD

Montreal, Thursday June 6, 2019 – Over a period of **14 intense, effervescent and often very moving days**, the 13th edition of the Festival TransAmériques unfolded from **May 22 to June 4** in Montreal. With the phrase “Step Beyond the Self” as the leitmotif of the Festival, the **23 dance and theatre shows** selected by artistic director **Martin Faucher** expressed a thirst to explore geographical regions rarely seen on our stages. This year’s edition featured artists from Burkina Faso, Iran, Lebanon, South Africa and South Korea, while also shedding light on profound transformations in human society and the changing frontiers of the world we live in.

The FTA has always been of the opinion that the spirit and power of the body, along with free speech and the clear-sighted perspective and creativity of artists, all possess the power to question and redefine society. In order to provide the largest possible number of spectators with access to these presentations, we raised our seating capacity this year, which led to a significant increase in the number of tickets available. This year the FTA sold the greatest number of tickets in its history. By the end of this 13th edition **the attendance rate was 93%**, 9 shows were completely sold out, and 65% of all performances played to a full audience. More than **39,000 festivalgoers** made this year’s event rock!

FTA 2019 - Facts & Figures

- 87 performances of 23 shows from 11 countries (South Africa, Germany, Burkina Faso, Canada, South Korea, France, Iran, Italy, Lebanon, Poland, Portugal)
- 344 artists from 17 countries
- 11 co-productions, including one international co-production (*Granma. Trombones de La Havane*)
- 11 new works, 9 of them making their world premières
- 11 North American premières
- 71 activities in the FTA Playgrounds (meet the artists, discussions, films, FTA Clinics, master classes, parties)
- 2209 overnight stays directly generated by Festival activities
- 176 presenters and festival programmers from 24 countries
- 150 accredited journalists, including 20 from outside Quebec
- 707 young people took part in our student outreach program
- \$126,000 invested in our Co-production Fund
- 110 tons of CO₂ neutralized thanks to the FTA Environmental Responsibility Fund
- 17% increase in attendance compared to average attendance over past 5 years



Innervation © Trung Dung Nguyen

Dance
+ Theatre

May 22 to
June 4, 2019

Press relations:
Johanne Brunet
Roy & Turner
Communications
514 844 9678 + 219
Cell. : 514 262 7980
jbrunet@roy-turner.com

Overview of Festival 2019 program

The pressing need to listen to and engage in dialogue with others was front and centre, beginning with the opening show **Tous des oiseaux**. Adopting and understanding the point of view of the enemy, Wajdi Mouawad presented an electrifying work that completely won over audiences.

If the need for a social, economic and political revolution was an underlying theme in many of the pieces presented, it was no doubt because the artists behind **Cuckoo**, **Hidden Paradise**, **Granma**, **Trombones de La Havane** and **Speed Glue** truly wish to see new systems put into place, as do a large number of their fellow citizens, who are also worried about the devastating effects of the current world order.

What new life force will save us? The future must be re-imagined, insist the artists of this 2019 edition. That refusal of the status quo was unequivocal in two impressive dance shows full of dynamic energy: **Kalakuta Republik** and **Bacchantes - Prélude pour une purge**. Taking over a church to present **Other Jesus** or reinventing imaginary links between actors and spectators in **Fantasia**, the artists made use of an incredible variety of theatrical stagings and approaches to performance.

Onstage as in daily life, the present moment, this life that we share, is precious. How to bid adieu to what, as a matter of course, must disappear? Three works dealt courageously with grief and bereavement by way of ancestral funerary rites in **Savušun** and **May He Rise and Smell the Fragrance**, or by creating a temple dedicated to one's beloved in **Put Your Heart Under Your Feet... And Walk!**, a piece that will long be remembered.

Although death is hovering it is important to move forward, to live and persist. **Quasi niente** offered a few examples of resilience in the chaos of the world, while **L'affadissement du merveilleux**, **Fear and Greed** and **UNFOLD | 7 perspectives** offered hope, belief that we can get through anything if we strive to keep our gaze focused on essentials.

The 2019 edition featured nine world premières of Quebec works, a reflection of the force, originality and ambition of local artists. These pieces included **SOIFS Matériaux**, a rich distillation of humanity that casts a shrewd eye on America, **CUTLASS SPRING** and **Rather a Ditch**, where two choreographers pursue their remarkable, radical artistic paths, and **Genderf*cker**, which gives voice to difference in an engaged dialogue with the audience.

The contemporary dance milieu can be justly proud of the astounding success of the outdoor dance performance **Innervision**, co-presented with Agora de la danse. Some 10,000 spectators made their way to Place des Festivals to see a piece that combines technology and nature in an uncompromising, ever-shifting human sculpture.

If there is a message to be gleaned from the adventurous project **Constituons!**, it is that it is unthinkable to conceive of a Quebec constitution without consulting and including our First Nations peoples. **The Canadian Apartheid** presentation and the installation-performance **This Time Will Be Different** were painful reminders of how the Canadian government has failed in its efforts to make amends for the ravages of the past. We must adopt new approaches to building our future.

FTA 2019 featured a new generation of artists that included strong and diverse female voices, as well as a free flow of identities. Previous unexplored realities were brought into focus, boundaries were pushed back.

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CUTLASS SPRING © Jocelyn Michel



This Time Will Be Different © F. Chais



Genderf*cker © Gabrielle Desmarchais

FTA Playgrounds

Throughout the Festival, there was a palpable desire on the part of the audience to broach and discuss complex subjects featured in the Festival program. In post-show chats between artists and audience, in the films presented at the Cinémathèque québécoise and in get-togethers at the Quartier général and the Festival Bar, the FTA Playgrounds encouraged the growing awareness and curiosity of spectators. A sign of the enthusiasm for these satellite activities, this year saw a 15% increase in attendance at FTA Playground events at the QG, as compared to last year.

Dance
+ Theatre

The 14th edition of the Festival TransAmériques will take place from **May 21 to June 4, 2020**.

The Festival wishes to extend sincere thanks to its partners:

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SOIFS Matériaux © Yanick Macdonald