

FTA 2021: Art never rests!

The 15th Festival TransAmériques has come to a close, the last one led by Martin Faucher, who has been the event's Artistic Director since 2014. From May 26 to June 12, 2021, festival-goers and artists were overjoyed to be together at last, sharing the belief in the act of creation as a regenerative balm. Since the closure of cultural venues in the fall of 2020, the FTA was the first major festival to take place, ushering in the return of the summer events for which Montreal is famous.

Serving art and artists

Despite the constrained context and extremely limited venue capacities, the 2021 FTA was ambitious, with 27 dance and theatre works presented over 18 days at 18 sites, for a total of 486 performances. Serving art and artists more than ever, the Festival affirmed its structuring role in a fragile ecosystem. It gambled on a large-scale event, putting to work 379 artists, artisans, designers and conceptualists, as well as 167 cultural workers, technicians and video makers hired directly by the Festival for this atypical edition.

This commitment to the community would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our public and private partners and donors, who support the Festival's mission and believe in the role of artists in these uncertain times. Our heartfelt thanks.

"Throughout this terrible pandemic year, the FTA has bet on life and won. It was with great emotion that I saw Antonin Artaud's magic chain reborn between artists and audiences during my final edition. This rebirth is perhaps my most valuable legacy for the future of the FTA. Long live tomorrow!"

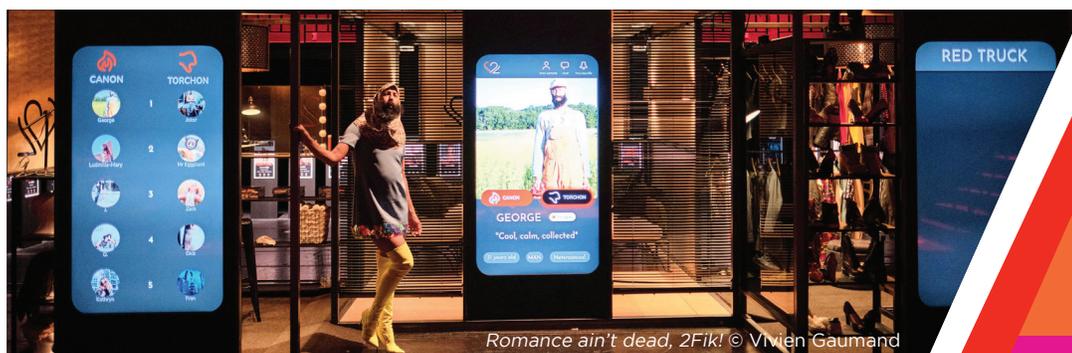
— Martin Faucher



© Vivien Gaumand

26 dance and theatre performances

The 2021 FTA took place in unusual outdoor settings: the thirty-odd dancers from **O₂**, led by Sarah Dell'Ava, took over Baldwin Park and the square in front of St. James United Church, while Rhodie Désir's **BOW'T Tio:ti'a'ke** questioned the history of Place D'Youville in Old Montreal. For the first time, the FTA made use of the garden of the Musée d'art contemporain, an oasis generously lent by the museum. Across the street, **La ville, des artistes** was projected on the façade of the Wilder Building. Conceived by HUB Studio, the work featured large-scale portraits of the artists on the program, which hovered over the city for 16 days.



Romance ain't dead, 2Fik! © Vivien Gaumand

Press Relations:
RuGicomm

Bénédicte Jutras
514 651 1523
benedicte.jutras
@rugicomm.ca

Laurence Rajotte-Soucy
514 512 1235
laurence@rugicomm.ca

In 1985, Ondinnok inaugurated the very first Festival de théâtre des Amériques. Thirty-six years later, in a moving opening ceremony, the company revived key moments from *Le Porteur des peines du monde*. With **Meshtitau** and **Them Voices**, Soleil Launière and Lara Kramer, each in their own way, developed a profound work of memory to connect us with our past, present and future ancestors. With a similar aim, Rhodnie Désir transcended Montreal's slavery legacy through music and dance in the triptych **BOW'T-Tio'tia'ke**.

This year's edition was predominantly Québécois, but festival-goers were also able to hear Toronto's Jordan Tannahill pay a vibrant tribute to his mother in **Declarations**, and to experience Vancouver choreographer Sarah Chase's **The door opened west**, a poignant biographical solo created for Marc Boivin. Despite the impossibility of inviting foreign artists, the FTA nevertheless presented three works from abroad: **Worktable** by New Zealand's Kate MacIntosh delighted both young and old, inviting audiences to disassemble and reassemble objects of their choice. Omar Abusaada and Mohammad Al Attar, two of the creators of **Aleppo. A Portrait of Absence**, were unable to accompany their show to Montreal, since the Canadian government did not issue their work permits in time. This staggering production, performed by 11 Montreal actors, was so popular that additional performances were scheduled. Via Instagram, the heartfelt cry of **_jeanne_dark_**, by French director Marion Siéfert, also resonated with our audiences.

The Festival provided a forum for strong voices that shake up our preconceived notions. The **Port-Royal Readings** series, featuring the spoken words of An Antane Kapesh, Pierre Lefebvre and Réjean Ducharme, took an uncompromising view of our history, our relationship with the First Nations and the dynamics of power. Evoking various taboos, Gerard X Reyes freely questioned the body and its representations in **Public/Private Parts ou L'Origine du monde**.

Two great theatrical adventures finally saw the light of day: Marie Brassard's **Violence** ingeniously found a way for the Japanese artists to share the stage with the work's creator, while Laurence Dauphinais and Maxime Carbonneau's **Dans le nuage (First Draft)** plunged spectators into the thrilling aerospace adventure of the Voyager probe and its Golden Record.

We would be remiss not to salute the extraordinary performance of 2Fik, who in **Romance ain't dead, 2Fik!** embodied a swarming gallery of characters in search of love—for 8 days, 8 hours a day, meeting and chatting with suitors ready to do anything to seduce him. Equally inexhaustible, Manuel Roque set the floor of the Balcon - St. James United Church reverberating with **SIERRANEVADA**, an hypnotic score involving repeated jumps. To close the Festival, the incandescent Louise Lecavalier set the Théâtre Maisonneuve ablaze with **Stations**, a solo eagerly awaited by Quebec audiences.

After months without concerts, fans of live music were undoubtedly delighted with Mélanie Demers' **La Goddam Voie Lactée**, whose musician Frannie Holder accompanied the powerful cast of female performers. The same jubilant vibrations were felt on the stage of Théâtre Maisonneuve, which was converted into an intimate setting for Sovann Rochon-Prom Tep's **Un temps pour tout**, in which electrifying performance by two musicians fuelled the energy of the hip-hop dancers.



BOW'T-Tio'tia'ke © Vivien Gaumand

Press Relations:
RuGicomm

Bénédicte Jutras
514 651 1523
benedicte.jutras
@rugicomm.ca

Laurence Rajotte-Soucy
514 512 1235
laurence@rugicomm.ca

As is often the case at the FTA, several shows called for audience participation. In **Anything Whatever**, co-presented by La Chapelle Scènes Contemporaines, Katie Ward handed the microphone to the audience, creating an agreeable space for our shared imaginations. **PHOSPHOS**, by Paul Chambers, rolled out a luminescent carpet for the wanderings of audience members and performers alike.

Among the 18 new creations presented this year, audiences will not soon forget the explosions of energy sparked by Clara Furey's **Dog Rising**, or the intimate celebration of chiaroscuro in **La jamais sombre** by Michel F Côté, Marc Parent and Catherine Tardif.

Two repeat performances were presented: **Anima / Darkroom** by Lucy M. May and 7Starr, magnetic practitioners of Montreal krump, and **Aalaapi | ᐱᐱᐱ** by the collective of the same name, a contemplative plunge into the intimacy of a generation of young Inuit women.

Playgrounds

FTA's **Playgrounds** were designed to repair damaged social rituals and revive essential knowledge. The **Greetings**, delivered by nine guests, were held in the city in the early morning. At the QG, Mohammad Al Attar, Rhodnie Désir and Marion Siéfert gave insightful interviews, while the series **Habiter la vie** examined the present and future in the company of Dalie Giroux, Pierrot Ross-Tremblay, Jordan Tannahill, Backxwash and Robert Lalonde. To close his final edition, Martin Faucher paid tribute to the FTA in **Ce FTA qui a changé ma vie**, a poetic look back at his 15 years with the Festival. After an enforced hiatus in 2020, the **FTA Clinics** returned. Five guest playwrights offered some twenty consultations to Montreal creators.

The first FTA online

The Festival embraced the spirit of the times, going online for the first time with five webcasts. Audiences from France, Italy, Japan, Quebec and other Canadian provinces thus joined the ranks of Montreal festival-goers, providing even greater exposure to the artists and their works. The Festival also wished to perpetuate the rich space for reflection that its Playgrounds activities provide, and has therefore made all of these activities available online for the public to view and review at fta.ca.

Our commitment to the community

Thanks to the generosity of 117 individual and corporate donors, the festive online evening **Confidences, guinguette et FTA** raised \$70,000 for the Festival's Creation Fund, which finances, among other things, the FTA Breathing Space program. Special thanks go to the 20 members of the honorary committee, the 6 guest artists and the 4 associated partners who contributed to the event's success.

Finally, we must mention the dazzling success of **FTA at school**, a new initiative offering a series of in-class and online workshops given by experienced mediators accompanied by inspirational artists. This year, more than 29 workshops were given in 8 Quebec schools, reaching 517 elementary, high school and CEGEP students.

The 16th Festival TransAmériques will take place from May 25 to June 9, 2022.



Press Relations:
RuGicomm

Bénédicte Jutras
514 651 1523
benedicte.jutras
@rugicomm.ca

Laurence Rajotte-Soucy
514 512 1235
laurence@rugicomm.ca

Alep. Portrait d'une absence © Vivien Gaumand

2021 in numbers

- 23 shows
- 3 readings
- 1 projection
- 486 performances
- 39 creators and 379 artists
- 14 co-productions and 4 productions by FTA
- 18 world premieres
- 2 North American premieres
- 39 activities comprising the Playgrounds activities (meetings with the artists, opening ceremony and closing event, film, FTA clinics)
- 57 national presenters and professionals
- 47 accredited journalists

The Festival would like to thank its partners:

PUBLIC PARTNERS LE CONSEIL DES ARTS ET DES LETTRES DU QUÉBEC + DEPARTMENT OF CANADIAN HERITAGE + SERVICE DE LA CULTURE DE LA VILLE DE MONTRÉAL + CANADA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS + CONSEIL DES ARTS DE MONTRÉAL + SECRÉTARIAT À LA RÉGION MÉTROPOLITAINE + TOURISME QUÉBEC + MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE ET DES COMMUNICATIONS + MINISTÈRE DU TRAVAIL, DE L'EMPLOI ET DE LA SOLIDARITÉ SOCIALE **MAJOR PARTNERS** TOURISME MONTRÉAL + LA PRESSE + CAISSE DE DÉPÔT ET PLACEMENT DU QUÉBEC + HYDRO-QUÉBEC + PARTENARIAT DU QUARTIER DES SPECTACLES + ICI ARTV **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS** GOETHE-INSTITUT MONTREAL + GERMAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS + INSTITUT FRANÇAIS + SERVICE DE COOPÉRATION ET D'ACTION CULTURELLE DU CONSULAT GÉNÉRAL DE FRANCE À QUÉBEC **PRINCIPAL PARTNERS** THE COLE FOUNDATION + CŒUR DES SCIENCES-UQÀM + FUGUES DISTRIBUTION PARTNERS MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN DE MONTRÉAL + PLACE DES ARTS + UQÀM + THÉÂTRE ROUGE DU CONSERVATOIRE + LE BALCON + MAISON THÉÂTRE + CENTRE DU THÉÂTRE D'AUJOURD'HUI + LA CHAPELLE SCÈNES CONTEMPORAINES + THÉÂTRE PROSPERO + POINTE-À-CALLIÈRE, CITÉ D'ARCHÉOLOGIE ET D'HISTOIRE DE MONTRÉAL + FONDS GB + AGORA DE LA DANSE + TANGENTE **CULTURAL PARTNERS** CENTRE CULTUREL CANADIEN À PARIS + UNION DES ARTISTES + COMPÉTENCE CULTURE + TRANSFORMATION DANSE + PRODUCTIONS MENUENTAKUAN **MEDIA PARTNERS** PUBLICITÉ SAUVAGE + PROMOTION PROPAGANDA **ASSOCIATE PARTNERS** APL + CAISSE DES JARDINS DE LA CULTURE + HOTEL MONVILLE + GEORGE LAOUN OPTICIEN + LICKSTATS + BEANFIELD METROCONNECT



Press Relations:
RuGicomm

Bénédicte Jutras
514 651 1523
benedicte.jutras
@rugicomm.ca

Laurence Rajotte-Soucy
514 512 1235
laurence@rugicomm.ca

Un temps pour tout © Vivien Gaumand