

FTA Executive Director David Lavoie to Depart after 2024 Edition

Montreal, September 27, 2023

David Lavoie, executive director of Festival TransAmériques, will step down as head of the organization following the event's 18th edition in June 2024, after more than a decade at the helm. The result of careful consideration on his part, the decision reflects a desire to explore new horizons.

“Announcing my departure from the leadership team of an event that’s unlike any other in Montreal, and for which I feel deep affection, fills me with a sense of pride and strong emotions. From my first edition in 2013 to the final work we will present in June 2024, I am indescribably grateful toward all the artists and their teams who produce such extraordinary works. My time at FTA has made me a stronger, wiser person who better understands how to live in the world, and I will always be drawn to challenges that require me to demonstrate my tenacity.

I want to thank each member of the extended FTA family for their support, passion, and trust over the years. Our paths will continue to cross, and I’m convinced that the Festival has an incredible future ahead. Our local artists have a vital role to play at the international level, and our audiences are hungry to discover the voices of artists from all over world on our local stages. FTA is a promise to engage in this dialogue between nations which is more necessary than ever.”

— **David Lavoie**, Festival TransAmériques Executive Director



@ Hamza Abouelouafaa

Lavoie joined FTA in January 2013, when the Festival’s co-founder, Marie-Hélène Falcon, was planning her departure. Upon succeeding Falcon in June 2014, he formed a new joint director team with Martin Faucher. Under their leadership, the Festival enjoyed ongoing success, consolidating its standing in North America while expanding its influence beyond our borders.

Over the years, the collaborative work led by Lavoie within the arts world and the political sector, along with his strategic vision, helped affirm the importance of the arts and cultural events within the Montreal ecosystem. There was a diplomatic mission to Poland in 2017 to save FTA’s presentation of the show *Des arbres à abattre*, directed by Krystian Lupa. Lavoie took a stand on multiple occasions to address the difficulties in obtaining visas faced by foreign artists, who he supported on various levels. Last January, together with the directors of numerous Montreal events, he also raised public awareness of the challenges faced by festivals in the context of high inflation and the end of the pandemic.

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Lavoie guided the Festival in a sensitive, thoughtful manner throughout the public health crisis and the relaunch that took shape beginning in 2022, when Jessie Mill and Martine Dennewald took over the reins as co-artistic directors. FTA's audiences are more than committed, with attendance rates of over 90%. The Festival's financial situation remains healthy, with the team's numerous accomplishments helping the institution firmly establish itself within Montreal's cultural landscape while also building up an extensive global network. Lavoie has maintained a focus on excellence and attention to detail, trusting in the passion and curiosity of Montreal audiences as well as the commitment of presenters, donors, and FTA's many reliable partners.

Heavily involved in the cultural sector for 25 years, Lavoie is well-known for his relentless, impactful support for the performing arts and its emerging artists. During the course of his mandate at FTA, he sat on the board of directors of the Quartier des Spectacles Partnership and the Caisse de la Culture. From 2016 to 2018, he was co-president of the Conseil québécois du théâtre, along with director Brigitte Haentjens. He currently serves as president of Écoscéno, an organization dedicated to developing sustainable practices in the cultural sector. Holder of a degree in business administration from the École des hautes études commerciales in Montreal, he recently earned a degree in international diplomacy from the École nationale d'administration publique.

"Thanks to his exceptional contributions over the years, David provided FTA with inspirational leadership and visibility. An executive of his calibre is a priceless jewel for any organization. His impact will be felt for years to come. On behalf of the board of directors, I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to David, who consolidated the Festival's foundation through his expertise and dedication, providing a platform for us to build on as we begin a new chapter."

– **Michèle Lefavre**, President, Board of Directors

The 18th edition of Festival TransAmériques, taking place from May 22 to June 6, 2024, will be Lavoie's last as executive director. A selection committee overseen by the Board of Directors is currently planning the recruitment process for his replacement, with an application period beginning this fall.

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