

Sandra O'Connor Named Co-Executive Director and Administrative Director of Festival TransAmériques

Montreal, May 1, 2024 – Festival TransAmériques is proud to announce the appointment of Sandra O'Connor as its co-executive director and administrative director. She will succeed the current executive director, David Lavoie, who is stepping down from his position at the organization's helm following the event's 18th edition. Upon taking up her new role on June 28, O'Connor will set to work preparing FTA's 2025 edition.

"On behalf of the Board of Directors, I'm delighted to announce the arrival of Sandra O'Connor as co-executive director and administrative director of FTA," stated Michèle Lefavre, president of the Board of Directors. "Her outstanding experience and in-depth knowledge of various arts sectors make her the ideal candidate for this role, along with her eagerness to support the vision of our co-artistic directors, Jessie Mill and Martine Dennewald. The selection committee emphasized the quality of the candidates with whom it met, which speaks to the Festival's strong appeal."

"I've had the pleasure of attending FTA for many years," said O'Connor. "It's an amazing showcase for exceptional talent and powerful works of dance and theatre from Quebec and elsewhere, inspiring us to dream and ask questions both individually and collectively. The excellence of its program and its international reputation make it a unique and essential event. I therefore feel truly proud and privileged to join the FTA team. I am passionate about helping to promote it, develop it, and ensure its long-term success, and I thank the Board of Directors for putting their trust in me."

Sandra O'Connor's Background

O'Connor has devoted almost 20 years to working in the cultural and community sectors, including various leadership positions. She is a manager who is attentive to artists' needs and possesses extensive knowledge of cultural and social issues in Quebec, along with practical experience in the political sector, which will be a valuable asset to the Festival and its communities.

After working at TOHU and the Regroupement québécois de la danse, O'Connor managed marketing and communications departments at large organizations such as Culture Montréal, Moisson Montréal, Foundation of Greater Montreal, and the National Theatre School of Canada.

In 2016, she was appointed as director of Monument-National, a heritage performing arts venue located in the heart of Montreal's Quartier des spectacles. In 2020, she joined the office of Quebec's Minister of Tourism, where she was notably in charge of "sustainable development of tourism."



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In this role, she led the development of the first *Plan d'action pour un tourisme responsable et durable* (“Action Plan for Responsible and Sustainable Tourism”). Since October 2022, she has been a political advisor on mental health and homelessness for Lionel Carmant, Quebec’s Minister Responsible for Social Services.

O’Connor is actively involved in the arts community, serving as a member of various boards of directors over the past 15 years for organizations such as the dance company Parbleux, the Quartier des Spectacles Partnership, Le Grand Costumier, and, more recently, the theatre company Les 2 Mondes.

A change accompanied by an organizational realignment

Chaired by Olivier Collin-Perron, the selection committee was comprised of FTA board members Michèle Lefavre, Sophie Corriveau, Simon Tabah, and Marie Brassard. The recruitment process was coordinated by the consulting agency Morgan Philips.

FTA is returning to an organizational model in which executive director positions are held by both administrative and artistic leadership. Accordingly, Martine Dennewald will become a co-executive director effective June 2024. The duo of Dennewald and Jessie Mill will continue to serve as FTA’s co-artistic directors.

The 18th edition of Festival TransAmériques will take place from May 22 to June 5, 2024.

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