



23<sup>e</sup>  
édition

**PRÉSENCE  
AUTOCHTONE**

**MONTRÉAL FIRST PEOPLES FESTIVAL**

**23<sup>rd</sup> First Peoples' Festival Program – July 30 – August 5 2013**

Montreal, June 18, 2013 – André Dudemaine, President and Artistic Director of Présenceautochtone/First Peoples' Festival, today unveiled the program of the 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of our Festival. This is a cultural event that, as its name indicates, is a presence, and a constant one. Our festival's 23<sup>rd</sup> edition flows from a far more ancient presence and constancy, the millennial cultures of the original peoples of this part of the planet. Despite many efforts to erase these peoples' indelible mark or relegate them to invisibility, a festival in Montreal can still bear the name Présenceautochtone, in dignity and pride.

Nowadays, the hatchet has become a metaphor and poetry hits hard and loud, as we can see in Pierre Bastien's *Paroles amérikoises*, the opening film presented in world premiere, on July 30, in the Grand Bibliothèque auditorium. The film gives pride of place to the poets Rita Mestokosho has summoned to Ekuanitshit, for a summit of intelligence and culture, or everything mass media have turned back on and subsists, far from "people press" items, in oases of fully assumed voices where thought can take centre-stage in full freedom.

From an ancient imagination, artists doggedly conjure up a new imagery. By deepening the ancestral trail, they open the road to the present and horizons of the future.

Richard Desjardins will join us to take his last bows in *l'Existoire ultime* before going on a long leave from performing. Thus the first peoples will be the last stop on the journey of this unforgettable show. This will be a historic moment, an apex in the career of a great poet coming to encounter a great civilization. Inuit artist Beatrice Deer will head up the evening. At Club Soda, August 3 at 8:30 pm.

*Fiddle no more* is a war cry to say out loud that the bullshit is over and that Amerindians are here to stay and that their presence will be felt with even more strength and determination. The first of two major free concerts at Place des Festivals, with the groups CerAmony and Digging Roosts, a young, rocking, committed show on Thursday, August 1<sup>st</sup>, at the Loto-Québec stage of Place des Festivals.

The day after, on the same Loto-Québec stage, *Électrochoc* zaps us with an electro evening pumping up vibrant pulsations at Montreal's very heart. A show that kicks off by premiering a new piece by Katia Makdissi-Warren for throat singers, DJ and chamber musicians, directed by its author. Next in the line-up is Shauit, with his reggae in the Innu language, performers from Sous le Ground (flying in from La Martinique) and the rhythms emanating from DJ Poirier's magic fingers. An explosive evening co-produced with MEG festival and presented by Quebecor.

Place des Festivals will once again become an enchanted place, beneath the sumptuous setting for *Présence autochtone/First Peoples' Festival* (great teepee, mythical animals, dances and drums, where we can fully experience an immersion into Amerindian culture.

Ataensic, the first woman, will be honoured there by a choreographed ritual commemorating her fall from heaven, her rescue by the Birds, her landing on the Turtle's back. There, with the help of sea mammals, the Earth's crust will rise, where humans can live and sing. This will be a revival, in an urban, festive setting, of an ancient Iroquois propitiatory rite to salute the nourishing Earth and give thanks for its bounty. On Saturday, August 3, the *Nuestramericana* friendship parade enters the space of this festive ceremonial, underlining humans' belonging to the same mother, the Earth, who now faces a state of urgency. First Peoples' Festival is also a time to lay claim to ideals of peace, justice and sustainable development that are the only possible remedies for the problems we humans all face now and that we must overcome together.

The long walk of Innu women to Montreal, where they were in the front ranks of the memorable 2012 Earth Day march, is evoked by a photo exhibition at Place des Festivals, where we can also observe Inuit sculptors at work, (thanks to a new partnership between Ville-Marie borough, Quebec Inuit associations, First Peoples' Festival and PQDS); a food stand where you can savour specialities with tastes from Amerindian lands (in partnership with restaurant Le Contemporain, which will for its part offer a gastronomic menu of Amerindian inspiration at its celebrated table); a cinema space in the Longhouse where the public can stop off to discover works by young First Nations filmmakers (an activity presented by Canal D); for kids, a playful introduction to archaeology, organized by Archéo-Québec; songs and dances from the Iroquois tradition with the Kahnawake Keepers of the Eastern Doors and from the Kali'na tradition with the group Senuka and singer Marty Anoevarita (thanks to support from the municipality of Saint-Laurent du Maroni). As well as varied live events, all taking part in providing a glimpse of some of the vast range of cultural practices among Aboriginal peoples from here and elsewhere.

We will have the opportunity to discover recent works by Malecite artist Ginette Aubin in an exhibition titled *Le chemin des appartenances*, at the Canadian Guild of Crafts, from July 17 to August 10, and view an anthology exhibition of prints created by young Mohawk artists from Kahnésatake during CIEM's creative internship sessions; *Là où est notre maison*, at Maison de la culture Verdun, from July 24 to September 1<sup>st</sup> (a Conseil des arts de Montréal touring activity).

A discovery tour of Aboriginal Montreal is another event for our festival visitors, in partnership with l'Autre Montréal. At Cinémathèque québécoise, at the Grande Bibliothèque, at McCord Museum, at Centre Simon-Bolivar and the Kahnawake Legion Hall, original works are vying for film awards, including Rigoberta Menchu Grand Prize and Teueikan Grand Prize; the film and video segment has the support of Télé-Québec, which awards its Coup de Coeur prize every year.

These include *Mitchif* (a world premiere) by André Gladu on the memory of Riel and Dumont in Western Canadian Métis communities; *Xingu*, a Brazilian feature-length film based on the lives of the Boas brothers, veritable South American Schindlers, who saved many lives by the creation of the first officially-recognized Indian territory in Brazil; *Heart of Sky, Heart of Earth*, a sumptuous German production on contemporary Maya cosmovision facing off against the destruction of natural spaces and the hopes from the new era which has just begun; *Survival Prayer*, a journey to the ends of the Earth in the universe of Pacific island Haidas.

Two feature films screened will be a must for film lovers: *Polvo*, a story of revenge and rough justice in post-civil-war Guatemala, and the Argentine film *Belleza*, a diabolical intrigue involving three women, the mother, the daughter, and the young Indigenous housemaid.

Finally, at an international premiere, following its screening at the Los Angeles Film Festival, *Winter in the Blood* will be featured as our closing film. It is an adaptation of the great Blackfoot author James Welch's novel. First People's Festival is proud to offer the Montreal audience the Canadian premiere of a film that will be a landmark.

First Peoples' Festival 2013 runs from July 30 to August 5 and the full calendar of activities will soon be up at the site [www.presenceautochtone.ca](http://www.presenceautochtone.ca).

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