



First Peoples Festival celebrates its 25th anniversary

Montreal, June 17th 2015. Towering over First Peoples Festival's 25 years, seven thousand years of human presence in this place looks down upon you...

The First Nations festival returns to Montreal in 2015 in a spectacular setting that will spread its wings at Place des Festivals: thrilling concerts, an exacting selection of films and videos, the great multicultural parade along Saint-Catherine Street and many indoor venue and gallery events.

Grand concerts

Blues Blanc Rouge remix takes us back to First Peoples Festival's inaugural activity; a benefit concert in Spring 1991 that succeeded in bringing in the funds needed to hold the very first edition of our festival. Florent Vollant and Richard Desjardins are back together onstage 25 years later to mark this anniversary and knock our socks off! Such a stellar alignment only occurs once every 25 years.

Another exceptional event is a great gift of friendship for the festival's silver anniversary: The *Transcestral* concert, a creation concocted by Moe Clark and Katia Makdissi-Warren, featuring 22 performers. It promises to be an ecstatic event for the audience gathering at Place des Festivals on Sunday August 2nd. We want to emphasize that organizing a show of such an exceptional scope has been made possible thanks to generous support Québecor provided for its presentation, becoming a major partner of First Peoples Festival. So thank you, Québecor.

And another grand thank you to Rise Kombucha, presenting the evening with DJ Mad Eskimo and Inuit singer Sylvia Cloutier. The MEG festival taking part in the event brings us DJ Psychogrid, all the way from Reunion Island. This promises a young and lively evening, with voices from the ends of the earth, chilling and blazing.

As we can see, the Loto-Québec stage on Place des Festivals has a lot to offer to everyone who comes to be immersed in the First Nations Festival's magic.

Young, tuned in, eclectic: Our film and video selection

Two Nobel Prize winners have graced the history of our festival's 25 years and its international outreach: J.M.G. Le Clézio who visited in 2000 to share his attachment to Indigenous cultures and Rigoberta Menchu who came in 2001, the year commemorating the Great Peace of Montreal, her visit inspiring a film award that is among our very coveted major prizes in the film and video competition.

Several world premieres will take place during the festival. Among these, we can mention: *Antigone Documentary* about Floyd Favel and his troupe who perform and adaptation of the Greek tragedy, set on an Amerindian reserve and *Nallula* from director Christian Mathieu Fournier, a sensitive depiction of an Inuit community in its world premiere screening.

Mexico has come with a strong showing, bringing films such as *Café* about a young Nahuatl man has to carry out a ritual ceremony for his dead father at the same time as his university graduation, and *Chaparake*, about crafting a traditional Raramuri instrument. These are great documentaries in the tradition of the best direct cinema productions, as young filmmakers rediscover their power.

From Greenland, *Some the Sound of the Revolution* presents the Inuit cultural awakening with the 1970s Rock music that would transform their society.

As for feature films, *Yvy Maraey*, a Mexican – Bolivian – Norwegian superproduction, a philosophical and picaresque tale between *Don Quixote of La Mancha* and *Tristes Tropiques*, revisits concepts of identity and differences, burning issues these days. Also, a special non-competition screening of the Chilean feature film *La Niñas Quispe* by Sebastian Sepulveda (photo direction prize at 2014) Venice film festival).

Not to overlook the many shorts, which include new productions from Wapikoni Mobile, a creative platform targeting Aboriginal community youth.

APTN is a major First Peoples Festival partner. For the second year in a row, Aboriginal Peoples TV network has offered a recognition award to an Aboriginal filmmaker who has particularly distinguished him or herself during the year. In 2015, APTN will lead four master classes with First Nations filmmakers. And the Aboriginal TV network will also take part in the Festival Opening Night and the Montreal premiere of *Circus Without Borders*, a film that accomplishes the tour de force of transporting viewers between Nunavut and Guinea-Conakry.

A partnership with Isuma will also make webcasting of certain works possible: details will be communicated later.

This formidable involvement of partners such as Canal D, la Fabrique culturelle (Télé-Québec), the *Séquences* journal, etc. bears witness to how First Peoples Festival has taken root in the country's cinematographic life.

An abundance of events

The *Nuestroamericana* friendship parade will take on a larger scope than ever before. More than 700 costumed dancers will move through the streets of Montreal, on Saturday August 1st. The current cultural diversity of our metropolis will join in, in a spirit of friendship and solidarity, with the very first diversity of this place. The emblematic figure of Atahensic, the first woman in the world, will accompany her many children in a ceremonial bringing people together.

Street theatre returns with a new creation, *Eskoumina, la création des petits fruits, (How Berries Were Created)*, inspired by a tale by Michel Noël. Atikamekw teens, who made the trip from Wemotaci, will be in the cast.

The *Banc d'essai* show lets young artists among Aboriginal new talent to take part in their first Place des Festivals, in a show offered by Maison des cultures nomades with the aim of promoting emergence of new Amerindian talents on the Quebec artistic scene.

At Espace Ashukan, an exhibit on the wampum theme will welcome artists from different nations. At the Canadian Guild of Crafts: a spotlight on work by Shane Perley Dutcher, a Maliseet silversmith and jeweller. And at Galerie Carte blanche, works by four Inuit sculptors living in Montreal will be shown. Michel Despatie and his large-scale photo project will be along on the adventure with an exhibit at Maison de la culture Frontenac and mural projections in Quartier des Spectacles. On Sainte-Catherine St., works by Jeff Veregge fuse "Comic Book" art and traditional Salish design.

The product of a new partnership at Place des Festivals, a book stand will be a new addition this year in partnership with the bookshop *Zone libre*, and authors will be doing public readings.

Round tables will bring together scholars who are always happy to come to the festival to foster close contacts with the reality of Aboriginal arts. Moreover, a new partnership with the Department of Comparative Literature at Université de Montréal will get underway this summer. And Emergency and Development Architects will host a workshop on how to integrate First Nations ancestral knowledge into contemporary habitat.

Demonstrations of skills of yesteryear, traditional dances, Amerindian foods to grill on an open fire, an initiation in archaeology, and superheroes with an Amerindian touch... We could go on endlessly, describing the many faces of an event that has become a "must" among Montreal's summer activities.

Everyone is welcome.

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