



23 au 26 avril '09
**secondes états
généraux de la danse**
professionnelle du québec

**Press Release
For Immediate Release**

The time has come to decide the future of professional dance in Quebec!

Montreal, February 2, 2009 – With great enthusiasm, RQD has officially announced that it will be holding the Second Estates General of Professional Dance in Quebec in less than 80 days – from April 23 to 26, 2009. The event will bring together some 300 dance professionals and partners at Circuit-Est centre chorégraphique, l'Agora de la danse and the Département de danse de l'Université du Québec à Montréal. It represents an occasion for the discipline's diverse talents of all ages to rally together and address areas of common interest. In October 2007, RQD began Les Grands Chantiers de la danse, a vast initiative to consult with and encourage dialogue in the discipline. So far, over 250 dance artists and workers have contributed to Les Grands Chantiers, and RQD expects that the Estates General of Professional Dance will allow the community to focus its energies squarely on its future and generate much new hope.

The future of dance needs some serious thought!

The ultimate objective of Les Grands Chantiers is the publication, in 2009-2010, of a Master Plan for Quebec Dance as one of the outcomes of the Estates General. A large assembly of dance artists and workers will vote on a series of proposals that will be used to guide work on the discipline's directions and strategies for the next 10 years. We should point out that the Second Estates General will be entirely based on the work of five issue committees comprised of some 60 dance professionals. From March to December, 2008, the committees held over 50 meetings, organized several issue tables and conducted many interviews. As part of their mandates, they contributed to a dozen research projects in their specific issue areas, projects that were conducted or supervised by RQD. Five issue areas were identified for investigation, reflection and recommendations: *Emerging artists: continuity and change; Paradoxes and challenges in a qualified work force; Conditions of practice and artistic requirements; Consolidation and regeneration of the dance infrastructure; and Dance territories: anchors and nomadism.*

Following eight months of work, on December 18, 2008 the committees submitted 150 recommendations to the Steering Committee. This committee consists of nine dance artists and workers representing different aspects of the practice and the various generations, and since December 2008 it has been very actively directing activities in the Grands Chantiers de la danse. The Committee has analyzed and discussed issue committee recommendations, distilling a list of close to 60 recommendations to be debated at the Estates General. Among the many important concerns raised by the issue committee reports are: health and ethics; the quality of professional, intergenerational and intersectoral relations; the challenge of artistic excellence in the face of emerging international dance practices; dance history, memory and artistic heritage; how to transfer our artistic, educational and management assets and know-how to younger generations; investments in geographical, cultural and symbolic territories; and how to consolidate structures and reinforce complementarities. These and other issues require the collaboration of political, governmental and funding authorities, in addition to the community itself, in a search for workable solutions.

Important steps

The first Estates General of Professional Dance were held in 1994, with Jeanne Renaud as Honorary President. It was an unprecedented move in the history of dance in this country. The 80 recommendations

voted on at the plenary session formed the basis for the first *Three-Year Plan for Quebec Dance (1994-1997)*. Fifteen years later, we can see just how productive this exercise was, and how this determined, self-aware and action-directed community went on to blaze an extraordinary trail. Think of the enviable reputation that Quebec dance has built, both nationally and internationally; the ever-growing number of Quebec dance schools; the recognition received by over 40 dance companies, presenters and services from a range of funding authorities; the creation of La danse sur les routes du Québec; the acquisition of dance equipment, l'Espace Jean-Pierre Perreault and La Rotonde – Centre chorégraphique contemporain de Québec; and the realization of projects that met specific needs in the community, such as l'Agora de la danse, and Diagramme, gestion culturelle.

All these achievements bear witness to the vitality and creativity of our community, its inventiveness and its ability to work together toward common goals. But they also demonstrate its resilience and its ability to adapt to changing circumstances. Given that all this development has occurred through a period marked by three economic recessions (1980-1981, 1990-1992 and 2000-2001), it is easy to imagine the challenges that lay ahead, given the conditions and requirements of today's international dance practices. In an environment characterized by globalization and global communications, on the one hand, and major political and economic instabilities, on the other, the challenges are indeed daunting. There is a need to remain humble, yet at the same time to be wonderfully audacious.

Voices that will be heard

RQD's call for mobilization and collective action is engaging, and it brims with confidence. Given the quality of work performed by our issue committees and the many overlapping observations and recommendations, the Second Estates General of Professional Dance in Quebec hold great promise. When the Grands Chantiers de la danse project began, RQD suggested that the community should take control of its destiny, give itself the means to act collectively, and develop a plan for the future of Quebec dance. Now, in just three months the community will gather together and lay its cards on the table. An invitation is extended to come and exchange, reflect, debate and act as a community.

Over the coming weeks, as our plans take shape, you will be receiving more information on the event. When we launch the registration campaign on March 9, you will receive information on how to register for the Second Estates General on Dance, on the status and rights of delegates and observers, on the three-day schedule of activities, and on the program of workshops and a plenary session. At the beginning of April, all registered delegates and observers will receive the Official Catalogue of the Second Estates General of Professional Dance in Quebec.

So stay posted, more information is coming!

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Source: Regroupement québécois de la danse

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