

Barricades

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Les lilas de Cassandra

THE "GENTLE THE CONDITION"

Special Edition



FONDATION GARCEAU FOUNDATION



Institute for Public Affairs of Montreal

Institut des Affaires Publiques de Montréal

présente
Les Lilas de Cassandra
The “Gentle the condition” concert
Un spectacle bénéfice
Théâtre St-Denis
le 2 octobre, 2008

The Cast

Andrée Ruffo, *présidente d'honneur*
Dennis Trudeau, *animateur*
Brigitte B. Garceau, *présidente Fondation Garceau*
Beryl P. Wajzman, *président IAPM*
Brian Morel, *réalisateur*
Val Prudnikov, *graphics*
Ranee Lee
Meredith Marshall
Sandra Brandone
Sara Diamond
Slim Williams
Nazanin Afshin-Jam
Karalina
Imani Family and Full Gospel Church Children`s Choir
Pierre Gagnon, *direction artistique*
Johanne Pelletier, *direction de production*
François Ranger, *sonorisation et direction technique*
Yannick Laperrière, *éclairage*
Équipements fournis par Sonorisation Ranger



La Fondation Garceau

Chers amis et amies,



C'est en harmonisant mon engagement communautaire et mon travail d'avocate que je peux intervenir de façon plus efficace dans ma communauté.

Mes multiples activités me permettent ainsi de conjuguer les efforts d'un plus grand nombre de personnes et d'améliorer le sort des plus démunis. Parmi les enjeux et dossiers portés à notre attention récemment, les plus poignants concernent les trois principaux maux de notre société : les carences en santé particulièrement chez les enfants, la faim et l'itinérance. Impossible de rester les bras croisés devant tant de misère! Au cours de la dernière année, j'ai pris connaissance des besoins de trois organismes. Reflet des situations les plus criantes en matière de justice sociale, ces groupes ont besoin d'aide.

La Fondation pour la promotion de la pédiatrie sociale fondée par les Drs Gilles Julien et Nicholas Steinmetz met l'accent sur les besoins de santé des enfants démunis. Venant en aide à des milliers d'enfants des quartiers Côte-des-Neiges et Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, la Fondation prend à sa charge les besoins physiques, psychologiques et éducatifs des enfants vivant dans des foyers démunis. La Maison du Partage d'Youville est une cuisine communautaire et une banque alimentaire qui, depuis vingt-cinq ans, œuvre dans les quartiers Pointe-Saint-Charles, Verdun et Petite-Bourgogne. Cet organisme dessert en besoins alimentaires des centaines de personnes à chaque semaine. Actuellement, La Maison doit faire face à un manque d'espace et de ressources. Elle a désespérément besoin des fonds pour des locaux plus grands, mais plus économiques, afin de poursuivre son œuvre essentielle. De la rue à la réussite est un organisme qui, de son côté, accompagne les sans-abris, évalue leurs besoins et les oriente vers des programmes qui les place sur la voie du retour au travail. Ce remarquable organisme, fondé par l'infatigable Sue

McDougall et son regretté époux Jean-Pierre Chartrand, offre du travail et un logement temporaire à ses bénéficiaires et les amène également à reprendre leur vie en main.

La Fondation Garceau a été créée afin de fournir un appui financier, professionnel et organisationnel à l'action communautaire et aux associations de services sociaux qui font face à d'importants défis comme la santé, la faim et l'itinérance. Chaque jour, ces groupes, qui œuvrent déjà dans des conditions précaires, doivent faire face à des besoins de plus en plus pressants.

Des données gouvernementales récentes révèlent qu'un tiers des foyers familiaux

«Aucun parmi nous ne peut rester inactif devant ces réalités»

en milieu urbain se situe sous le seuil de la pauvreté et que le revenu familial moyen n'a augmenté que de 100 \$ par année au cours du dernier quart de siècle.

Les programmes gouvernementaux ne rencontrent pas toujours les besoins essentiels et de plus en plus d'organismes non-gouvernementaux doivent combler les failles du système. Enfin, ils doivent faire face à une croissance constante des demandes de personnes contraintes de se tourner vers eux pour recevoir de l'aide.

À titre de présidente de la Fondation Garceau, je crois qu'aucun parmi nous ne peut rester inactif devant ces réalités. C'est pourquoi, j'ai décidé de mettre mes années d'expérience dans le réseautage politique et communautaire, de même que dans les campagnes de financement, au profit de la Fondation Garceau, dont le premier projet majeur est notre spectacle ce soir Les Lilas de Cassandra «Adoucir les conditions».

Inspiré du prénom de ma fille, Cassandra, le symbolisme du lilas est

évocateur. Le lilas, comme un enfant, est une belle fleur mais fragile. Ce spectacle a pour but de recueillir des fonds au bénéfice des trois organismes dont je vous ai parlé.

Je voudrais remercier notre présidente d'honneur Madame Andrée Ruffo. Durant plusieurs années, Mme Ruffo a été une voix éclairante non seulement au Québec, mais aussi dans tout le pays, en faveur de la défense des plus vulnérables et des plus démunis. Sa passion particulière était les enfants. En tant que juge au Tribunal de la jeunesse, elle a fait preuve non seulement de compassion à la Cour, mais aussi sur la scène publique.

Un grand merci à notre animateur Dennis Trudeau et à tous nos artistes, bénévoles et contributeurs qui ont données leurs talents et trésors gratuits.

La Fondation Garceau a organisé le spectacle de ce soir avec le soutien de l'Institut des Affaires publiques de Montréal. L'Institut, sous la direction de Beryl Wajzman, est devenu l'un des groupes-parapluie d'action sociale les plus dynamiques au Canada. J'adresse un merci bien spécial à l'Institut et à Beryl.

Ce spectacle ne sera pas seulement une occasion de divertissement. Vous y rencontrerez les piliers de ces groupes de même que les personnes à qui ils viennent en aide. Nous espérons que vous serez assez touchés pour donner de votre temps, de vos talents, aussi bien que de vos ressources. ■

Brigitte Garceau



Beryl P. Wajzman

Les lilas de Cassandra

The "Gentle the condition" Concert

"This story shall the good man teach his son; We few, we happy few, we band of brothers; This day shall gentle the condition; ~Henry V



The most satisfying thing for me about combining the social activism of the Institute for Public Affairs and the journalistic advocacy of media is the ability to help more people more effectively. It has also brought many more people together to do well and gentle the condition. Among the cases and causes we have been able to tackle, no issues are as poignant as those that deal with the 3-H's of society's ills: health, hunger and homelessness. As much as the Institute has done - particularly in expanding Moisson Montreal's capacities, sending paramedics to the SCLC's Delta Relief Project during Hurricane Katrina, assisting Toronto's "Lawyers feed the homeless" program, helping defray expenses for poor kids who needed surgery - there is always more to do. And when a plight is brought to your attention, you cannot remain idle.

Au cours de la dernière année, l'avocate et activiste Brigitte Garceau a porté à mon attention trois organisations, de même que leurs besoins. J'ai d'abord pu focuser l'attention des médias sur les besoins urgents de ces organisations et, en oeuvrant de concert avec notre réseau d'activiste sociaux, nous avons été en mesure de fournir les moyens moraux et matériels requis. Brigitte croit, à mon avis et avec raison, que non seulement ces groupes excellent dans ce qu'ils accomplissent, mais aussi que, considérés en un tout, ils sont emblématiques des préoccupations les plus criantes en matière de justice sociale dans notre communauté.

Dr. Nicholas Steinmetz' and Dr. Gilles Julien's Fondation pour la promotion de la pédiatrie sociale tackles the health needs of poor children. Helping thousands in Montreal's poorest areas of Côte-des-Neiges and Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, the Fondation cares for the physical, psychological and educational needs of children who are products of underprivileged homes. It not only provides immediate help, but follows the children through years of schooling to



Dr. Gilles Julien and children

ensure that the work is having an effect. It is a totally holistic approach to childhood development

La Maison du Partage d'Youville est une cuisine communautaire et une banque alimentaire qui, depuis vingt-cinq ans, oeuvre dans les quartiers Pointe-Saint-Charles, Verdun et Petite-Bourgogne. Cet organisme dessert en besoins alimentaires des centaines de personnes à chaque semaine. Actuellement, La Maison doit faire face à un manque d'espace et de ressources. Elle a désespérément



Board meeting at the *Maison de partage* with Beryl Wajzman, Brigitte Garceau, and labour leader Edward Branden in attendance.

besoin des fonds pour des locaux plus grands, mais plus économiques, afin de poursuivre son oeuvre essentielle. De la Rue...à la Réussite, takes homeless men and women and provides them with the necessary tools and employment



De la Rue... à la Réussite's Brian Morel, founder and president Sue McDougall and Serge Fournier.

opportunities to reintegrate into the workforce. This remarkable organization, founded by the indefatigable Sue McDougall and her late husband Jean-Pierre Chartrand,

doesn't just get people on their feet, it gets them back into life. It understands that it's about more than just getting people a paycheque; it's about giving them back their purpose.

Brigitte Garceau wanted to give structure to the help we were bringing to these groups. She realized that many were missing the kind of professional skills she was able to organize and channel. Elle a créé La Fondation Garceau afin de fournir un appui financier, professionnel et organisationnel à l'action communautaire et aux associations de services sociaux qui font face à d'importants défis comme la santé, la faim et l'itinérance. Chaque jour, ces groupes, qui œuvrent déjà des conditions précaires, doivent faire face à des besoins de plus en plus pressants.

Ours is a nation of wealth, but with only a thin veneer of affluence. Recently released government studies demonstrate that one-third of our urban households live below the poverty line and that the median household income in Canada has increased just slightly more than \$100 a year over the past twenty-five years. Government programs do not always meet local needs and more and more non-governmental organizations are filling the gaps with more and more Canadians turning to them for help.



Brigitte croit qu'aucun parmi nous ne peut rester inactif devant ces réalités. C'est pourquoi, Mme Garceau met ses années d'expérience dans le réseautage politique et communautaire, de même que dans les campagnes de financement, au profit de la Fondation Garceau. This evening is the Foundation's first major project, produced in co-operation with the Institute. The "Cassandra's Lilacs" concert.

Inspired by a real-life Cassandra - Garceau's ten year old daughter - who wanted to do something to help the underprivileged, the symbolism of the lilac is poignant and pithy. Like children, the most vulnerable and fragile among us, each lilac flower alone is beautiful but fragile. But together in a bough, lilacs are not only

fragrant, but strong. Each child alone is fragile. But if we look at them together, we are compelled by their needs and find the strength to accomplish the unimaginable. Together, we can gentle the condition.

This concert seeks to raise money for, and awareness of, the three unique organizations in the Montreal community that I have outlined above. I am proud to have helped the Garceau Foundation make this special evening a great success.

This concert is not only about entertainment. You will meet the people behind these groups and you will meet the people they help. We hope you will be touched as you meet the most humble among us who cannot secure the preferences of the

privileged for themselves. We hope you will be touched enough to give of your time and talent as well as your treasure.

I assure you that the music, the words and the images of this concert will pierce your heart. We want you to take away from it a greater ability to see the world through the eyes of its victims. And to understand, intuitively, that the less educated are not less intelligent and that the less affluent are not any less human. That is what Cassandra's Lilacs "Gentle the Condition" concert is all about, and what the Garceau Foundation seeks to achieve. ■

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Ça prend tout un village!

Ayant passé toute sa vie à travailler pour améliorer le sort des enfants dans les quartiers les plus pauvres à Montréal, le docteur Gilles Julien est toujours prêt à continuer son combat pour les droits de l'enfant. Après toute une carrière dans les tranchées de la médecine d'une pédiatrie, il continue à croire que le bien-être de l'enfant devait être la responsabilité de toute la communauté et non pas seulement celle de la famille ou pire, celle de l'unique parent de famille monoparentale.

"Not only must we mobilize the community to respect every child's right for a decent life," Julien said, "but this is how the community can learn to reconsider its own priorities." Steinmetz added: "Early childhood poverty causes disease and an early death. It's that simple,"

Using evidence gathered over 30 years of applied clinical research, they used a power-point presentation to display disturbing results which he believes will result in a social catastrophe implicating fully one third of the city's population.

"It all begins with the pregnancy," Steinmetz said. "When a mother is stressed, the brain reacts with a typical 'fight or flight' reflex, but the mother is trapped so there's no getting out of it. Bad living conditions, abusive relationships, a lack of money, and bad nutrition, do not make a healthy baby and that's the beginning of a slippery slope.

"Stress is toxic," he said. Mothers under perpetual stress produce cortisol, a cortisone derivative which makes its way through the placenta and into the baby. It kills brain cells, eliminates future synapse development and destroys potential neuron connections. At three years old, the affected child's brain is significantly smaller than average and displays abnormal development of cortical, limbic and midbrain structures. At this point, the brain's structural changes lead to altered cognitive and emotional development. "People have to know about this," said Steinmetz. "People have got to know what's happening to these children."

By the time the child is three years old, all the groundwork is laid out for its potential education and its



future social development. If the child was neglected from birth, it will probably display delays in various language, social and motor skills along with a reduced attention span and abnormal activity levels. This will result in isolation and exclusion from social peer groups, which lead to an inevitable isolation and a poor self-image.

Arizona predicts its future prison requirements by analysing its present third grade failure rates. Recent statistics demonstrate how more than 42 percent of the poorest and most vulnerable children in the city are not prepared to start school at the normal age, which will inevitably lead to failing grades in later years.

Another disturbing statistic demonstrates how a child born in Montreal's poorer east-end districts can expect to live for barely 59 years as opposed to a child born in the west end where one can expect to live until they're at least 77 years old. That is to say children born in Montreal's West Island, only 20 kilometres down the road, can expect to live more than 20 percent longer than the child born in the Hochelaga- Maisonneuve district.

« On doit promouvoir un environnement autant stimulant qu'il soit accessible pour les enfants au cœur de leurs propres communautés, » dit le docteur Julien.

"This is unacceptable," the doctors state emphatically. They believe the economic status quo is condemning a serious percentage of children to a dull and mostly



desperate life of poverty and imminent physical decrepitude. They advocate that the government should consider the Convention of the Rights of the Child adopted by the United Nations in 1989. Julien and Steinmetz point



Dr. Nicholas Steinmetz

out how respect for the rights of a child as defined by the United Nations closely resembles the minimum conditions required for what paediatric specialists consider being a healthy child. "Once everybody begins to understand this situation," they said, "the sooner we can get around to doing something about it."

The foundation takes concrete steps. In the short term, children who are victims of both neglect and abuse must first be rescued. Within the context of the constant failure and the exclusion created and caused by poverty, they propose an inclusive social paediatrics model that includes all the services required by children in need. "Education must no longer be elitist and become popular knowledge," Steinmetz said.

He believes coherent leadership and mass participation at the local level may help alleviate some of the damage poverty does to children. "Knowledge has to be linked to values, then emotion because it's not reason that moves us to action," he said. "It's emotion."

The Fondation has had many remarkable successes including a very interesting recent one. Public and private partnerships (PPP) took on a whole new dimension as two city neighborhoods decided to do what they could for children. The central city along with the CDN/NDG borough council agreed to set up a new summer parks project for the borough's kids. "It's all about providing an accessible and stimulating environment for children within the heart of their own communities," said Dr. Julien. "We're very happy to see the community mobilized around this project."

Two teams of child-care workers will organize a summer-long series of events in two CDN parks. Activities in both the Kent as well as the Darlington Place Park will include theatre, assorted games, road trips and other initiatives as a means to create a pro-active and community-based environment for local children as proposed by the Fondation. Julien said the province's social services would have to change its priorities if it wants to get serious about solving serious problems affecting many of the province's children, "especially poor children." Julien believes an ounce of social prevention at every level of a child's young

life is worth a pound of whatever society considers the cure whenever its welfare is concerned.

« Dès qu'on appelle la DPJ (Département de Protection de Jeunesse) c'est presque toujours trop tard, " dit-il. « Le dommage est fait. » His ideas about social paediatrics arose out of decades on the front lines of pediatric medicine in the poorer quarters of Montreal. He is convinced that a child's welfare should be the community's responsibility and not just that of its parents or worse – its single mother.

« On ne doit pas seulement mobiliser la communauté pour qu'elle respecte les droits de chaque enfant pour une vie normale, dit le docteur, mais c'est une bonne façon de voir comment une communauté peut apprendre à reconsidérer ses propres valeurs. »

Le docteur croit que la déclaration des droits de l'enfant tel que rédigé par l'ONU (Organisation des Nations Unis) serait un bon commencement si on croit vouloir faire de quoi pour résoudre les problèmes de la pauvreté chez les enfants du Canada.



Dr. Gilles Julien started Fondation pour la promotion de la pédiatrie sociale in 2005

The Fondation encourages local community organizations to work with assorted city universities and local political organizations to help provide suitable environments for children. As a working example, it has already managed to get the city's school commissions to open summer sessions for children who were already having problems with school work. Both he and the province's DPJ are discussing recent judicial decisions as related to children and their immediate family relationships, and the doctor thinks people will have to reconsider traditional family relationships if anything is to be done about the problems faced by single parents and especially single mothers. After years of taking care of the city's children, the doctor has seen more than enough blame passed around when a child's life is ruined, but not enough responsibility to have made sure the child wasn't harmed in the first place.

« C'est le devoir de la communauté de prendre la responsabilité du bien-être de ses enfants. Ce ne devrait pas être le travail d'un gouvernement, dit le docteur. On devrait voir ça comme un défi et non pas comme une corvée » Pour Julien et Steinmetz ça prend tout un village! ■

Un peu de dignité, s.v.p. ...please, a bit of dignity!

Fondation de la Rue... a la Réussite



Tandis que de milliers d'itinérants continuent à errer de jour en jour dans les rues de la ville, des centaines de citoyens se demandent ce qu'on doit faire pour résoudre ce problème. « Tout ce qu'il faut faire, c'est d'offrir à ces gens un peu de dignité, » dit Serge Fournier. « De là, le reste devient possible. »

While thousands of homeless continue to wander the streets of Montreal and hundreds wonder what can be done about it, some know what it takes to make the difference between a life well lived as opposed to a dull and desperate existence on the streets of Montreal. "All it takes is a bit of dignity," said Serge Fournier. "That's when the rest begins to take care of itself."

Ayant passé la plus grande partie de sa vie dans la rue, Fournier habite maintenant son propre petit logement. Tandis qu'il continue de gagner sa vie avec des emplois occasionnels, il espère se trouver une situation régulière comme journalier dans l'industrie de la construction. Mais il est assez réaliste car il sait qu'à son âge, de tels emplois ne se trouvent pas au coin de la rue

« Ceux qui veulent s'en sortir peuvent le faire ...et ceux qui peuvent le faire le feront, » dit son amie Sue McDougall.

When McDougall met film-maker Pierre Anthian, she not only knew what she wanted to do, she also knew she could do it. Anthian is the creator and musical director of the Accueil Bonneau choir, Montreal's famous itinerant street choir made up of dozens of homeless men who frequented the Accueil Bonneau shelter on a regular basis. As people began to hear them on streets, parks and in the city's metro stations, the choir began to carve its own niche within the city's cultural community. Inspired by its success, Anthian began to work on a script for a film about the homeless and how music could make such a difference in their lives. When McDougall read about Anthian's project in one of the city's local newspapers, it took all of five minutes to get in touch with him and, after a short 15-minute discussion, she decided to help him make *Recyclage*. Three years later, the film is almost ready and should be released for distribution early in the new year.

"Recyclage is about saving what's precious," said Anthian. "It's all about finding treasures in the trash, about finding out what's valuable before it's gone forever."

When the word went around that Anthian was making a film about Montreal's homeless, McDougall had no trouble finding what help she needed to make the film. Dozens of actors and celebrities in the city's film and theatre communities offered their time and talent to help



Brian Morel, Sue McDougall and Serge Fournier

make the movie. While McDougall is grateful for all of their contributions, she also mentions how dozens of homeless men and women volunteered their time and efforts and without whom Anthian could never have made his film. She also recalls how her actors would show up day after day for hours at a time after having spent all night in the corner of a fast food restaurant because of the cold. Some would walk several miles to the set as they couldn't afford a bus ticket.

« Tout le monde voulait voir que ce film soit complété. » dit McDougall. « Tout les gens impliqués ont donné tout ce qu'ils pouvaient et, en retour, ils sont tous sortis avec plus qu'ils avaient avant d'y participer. »

Serge Fournier agrees with McDougall. "This movie is all about people and their share of common dignity," he said. He also mentioned how working on Anthian's film was the best thing that ever happened to him.

But this is more than about a movie. Once *Recyclage* is finally released, McDougall intends to work up some new projects based upon the model she developed while working with Anthian. Now that former McGill communications professor Brian Morel has joined her organization, she believes Montreal's professional and business communities will be ready to help the less



fortunate once they know there are realistic solutions available to deal with the problem.

With that in mind McDougall and her late husband Jean-Pierre Chartrand set up the Fondation de la Rue à la Réussite. Building on the models of the Old Brewery, Maison du Père and Bonneau, the Fondation will offer those down on their luck every chance to get back into the workplace. This will include psychological and career counselling. In addition, the Fondation hopes to offer skills retraining as part of a unique multi-faceted program it has developed. It envisions a complete holistic approach to the problems of the homeless from shelter to rehabilitation to job placement. The pre-requisite will be that the people applying really want it.

Morel is already discussing the possibility of producing a documentary television series to explain and describe what life on the streets was really like and what could be done to alleviate the problems.

And the quality of people coming on board is already being noticed. One of the most effective is well-known community activist Brigitte Garceau. Garceau, an attorney at the law firm of Robinson, Sheppard, Shapiro

and president of the Westmount Federal Liberal Association, was immediately taken with the project, particularly when Morel demonstrated the Fondation's multi-disciplinary approach to helping the disadvantaged. Though very familiar with government programs, and with experience in fundraising for the Montreal Children's Hospital, Garceau feels deeply that private initiatives are critical to tackling the problems of the jobless and the homeless.

Garceau believes that "as much as government can do, it inevitably misses many who fall through the cracks. As much passion as we bring to our political work we need to have an equal devotion to our volunteer and charitable activities. That's where we can make a visible difference. Touching people one to one. It's the immediacy that's so rousing. As engaged citizens we need to keep the balance between public policy and private purpose."

« Ce n'est pas compliqué, dit Fournier. D'abord on doit faire son possible pour accorder un peu de dignité à ceux qui se trouvent dans la rue, parce que cette vie est dure et vous serez surpris jusqu'à quel point il est facile de s'y retrouver. » ■

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Answered prayers

Last year, when La Maison du Partage announced it was being forced to close its doors only four days before Christmas, some believe Montreal's own Saint Marguerite d'Youville went out of her way to save the Pointe St. Charles food bank opened in her name some 24 years ago. Others say it could be due to the work of a small group of concerned citizens who know the value of good work when they see it.



Maison du Partage staff member replenishes shelves.

In 1984, inspired by the memory of the 18th century Montreal widow known for her charity and work among the poor, the city's Grey Nuns decided to open a food bank in the basement of their empty and obsolescent school located on Centre Street in Pointe St. Charles. Twenty-four years later, more than 370 families in Montreal's Sud-Ouest use the food bank on a regular basis while hundreds of others come to the centre for clothes, furniture and other services. While La Maison du Partage has managed to keep up with the shifting demands of the city's new economic conditions, new priorities have forced the food bank to expand its services to meet the new and growing demands of Montreal's poor. Unfortunately, the food bank's revenue could not keep up with its growing demand.

"It's always the same story", said Madeleine Daoust. "After 20-some years with some kind of a steady job, some company is forced to close and somebody's world is turned upside down."

Daoust is the food bank's manager. She described a grim cycle of damaged pride and shattered lives as resumé

keep being posted and nothing shows up in the mailbox except bills and overdue rent notices. While most resumé remain unanswered, some applicants are told they have too much experience while others are told they don't have enough. Some employers make excuses while others tell lies. One middle-aged woman was actually told she was too old for a company's "corporate culture" while another was told she didn't have the right "look". Both women knew this was code for "you're too old!". Confidence is lost, people get desperate, families suffer and marriages break down. People cash in their retirement plans, savings run out and before they know it, they're on the street with everyone else in the same predicament.

"People still think they can catch the train," said Daoust, "but the train left the station a long time ago."

Daoust described La Maison du Partage as the kind of place where people get help when they need it the most. With only five full-time employees, 55 volunteers and 56 workers doing community service, La Maison du Partage continues to provide, feed, help and support the destitute and the desperate in Montreal's Sud-Ouest. However, as of last year, it still cost \$250,000 to maintain their operating budgets and as of last December, they were still caught with a \$30,000 deficit that was only going to get worse over the winter months.

"We had no choice but to close the doors," said foundation president Michelle Bourget. "We couldn't go on like this."

While the provincial government and Centraide used to provide almost 40 percent of the food bank's operating expenses, the food bank managed to raise another 20 percent while various charities, religious orders and other organizations made up the difference. Unfortunately, due to a faltering economy and the acute rise in demand for their help, all of the city's foundations, its charities and assorted religious orders began to have problems of their own. As of last year, La Maison du Partage could no longer depend upon their complete support and as of last December, the food bank was effectively bankrupt.

Once made aware of the emergency, local MNA Madeleine Blais, one of Jean Charest's better cabinet ministers, found a quick \$25,000 which, along with a



From left to right: Maison executive director Michelle Bourget, Institute for Public Affairs president Beryl Wajsman, attorney and community activist Brigitte Garceau, union executive Edward Brandone, reporter Albert Sevigny

further \$25,000 from the Marcelle and Jean Coutu Foundation, helped keep the food bank open for another year.

“Madeleine Blais helped us out a lot,” said Daoust. “She’s a good woman, a fine MNA, and she does a lot for the area. But let’s face it. The government knows what we’re doing, and they know we’re doing it for pennies on the dollar. Think of what they would have to deal with if we weren’t here to care for these people.”

After more than a decade in the trenches, Daoust is still not ready to give up the fight against poverty in Point St. Charles.

“When everything looks bad, I often have a little chat with “Madame d’Youville,” she said. “She never lets me down.” After 10 years in the business of helping the poor, Daoust said Madame d’Youville taught her all she needs to know about helping the poor.

“You never need more than enough just as long as you’ve got everything you need,” said Daoust.

Last week, Madame D’Youville must have been listening. Beryl Wajsman in his capacity as president of the Institute for Public Affairs of Montreal brought together Rev. Darryl Gray, attorney Brigitte Garceau, an experienced community activist and fundraiser, FTQ union executive Edward Brandone, and other social action leaders who met with the food bank’s board of directors in order to work out their plan to save the food bank.

Wajsman has already organized commitments from the Institute’s network to cover the immediate problem of the Maison’s rent for this year. Garceau is planning permanent fundraising events and setting up a fundraising committee. Brandone said the Maison will be adopted as the beneficiary of several union-sponsored charity events. “It shouldn’t be much of a problem,” said Brandone. “They do have serious challenges, but we can help to get this place out of critical condition.”

Others are listening and many agree. Daoust remains confident Madame d’Youville will see that they will work something out so that others may work among the city’s poor as she did some 260 years ago. ■

“You never need more than enough just as long as you’ve got everything you need,” said Daoust.



Andrée Ruffo, *présidente d'honneur*



Le spectacle aura lieu sous la présidence d'honneur de Madame Andrée Ruffo. Durant plusieurs années, Mme Ruffo a été une voix éclairante non seulement au Québec, mais aussi dans tout le pays, en faveur de la défense des plus vulnérables et des plus démunis notamment les enfants. En tant que juge au Tribunal de la jeunesse, elle a fait preuve non seulement de compassion à la Cour, mais aussi sur la scène publique. Son livre, intitulé *Parce que je crois aux enfants*, n'est pas seulement un réquisitoire contre l'apathie, mais aussi un éloquent appel à l'action.

Ruffo was not just seen in courtrooms, she was heard in public. She lent her voice and vision in support of aiding abused youths and reforming the system that has failed them so spectacularly and so often. In a society that runs between the raindrops, populated by citizens that dare not care, ruled by governors who can no longer tell right from wrong, hers has been a voice of clarity and compassion.

Dennis Trudeau, *animateur*



Dennis Trudeau graciously agreed to contribute his talent as MC for this evening. He was for many years the news anchor at the CBC in Montreal. Most recently he hosted the morning talk show on 940 Montreal.

Throughout his 35-year career, Trudeau has done just about everything there is to do in media, starting off in print before moving on to radio and television. He is perhaps best known for having spent 18 years as the local supper time anchor of CBC Television's Newswatch.

The fluently bilingual broadcaster has kept up regular TV and radio appearances as a commentator and analyst in both official languages. Aside from Newswatch, Trudeau also hosted CBC Radio's Daybreak, and As it Happens, CBC Radio's national evening news and current affairs broadcast. Trudeau is much in demand in corporate work and as an animator for business, government, non-governmental institutions and not-for-profit groups.

Ranee Lee



Ranee Lee est une des plus grandes chanteuses de jazz au Canada. Peu de chanteuses et de chanteurs exaltent le public comme le fait Ranee Lee. Elle est réputée pour son interprétation magistrale des grands standards, avec un style qui passe de la sensualité chaleureuse à la verve endiablée.

Lauréate d'un prix Dora Mavor Moore en tant que comédienne, Ranee a tenu le rôle principal dans *Lady Day*, la première production canadienne traçant un portrait musical de Billie Holiday. Le spectacle a bénéficié de prestations supplémentaires à Toronto et à Montréal. Le 27 février 2003, *Stormy Weather* a été présenté pour la première fois sur le réseau CBC. Cette production télévisée de Rhombus raconte l'histoire du compositeur américain Harold Arlen. Lee a joué le rôle de Mrs. Owens dans ce film qui est régulièrement diffusé à travers le Canada et les États-Unis.

Le dernier projet de Ranee, intitulé *Just You, Just Me* (juin 2005) a été enregistré avec Oliver Jones. Comme beaucoup s'en souviendront, les deux formaient un duo hors pair sur *Deep Song*, un enregistrement de Ranee qui a été très bien accueilli. Le bassiste Eric Lagacé et le batteur Dave Laing apportent une contribution énergique et inspirée à l'album, un mélange attrayant de nouvelles compositions de Ranee et Oliver, agrémenté d'interprétations brillantes de plusieurs standards, y compris des œuvres de Hoagy Carmichael et Horace Silver. *Just You, Just Me* a été salué Album jazz de l'année lors de l'édition 2006 des National Jazz Awards et a aussi été mis en nomination pour un prix JUNO.

Le 31 août 2005, il a été annoncé que Ranee Lee deviendrait Membre de l'Ordre du Canada, la plus haute décoration civile donnée par le pays. Le titre lui a été accordé le 17 février 2006.



Meredith Marshall



Texas-born Marshall now makes Montreal her home. She has garnered gold and platinum records worldwide and won International Song Festivals in many countries. While living in Los Angeles, she jammed and wrote with the likes of the Doobie Brothers and Pink Floyd. Marshall has performed and sung in a number of films including “White Sands” in which she appeared alongside Mickey Rourke, Samuel Jackson and Willem Dafoe. She sang

“Mon Paradis” in the Bruce Willis film *The Whole Nine Yards*. In 2004, Meredith was given the honour of closing the Blues Festival at Tremblant, which was hosted by her friend and colleague, Dawn Tyler Watson. Having taken a couple of years to work on a long-term project — Liam, her son with partner Guy Fauré - Meredith is now working on a new album that blends the spirit of her new home, Montreal, and her soulful Texas roots.

Sandra Brandone



Sandra Brandone grew up in a close-knit family, very involved in her community and city. It was as a pre-teen that she fell in love with singing. She very quickly began writing her own songs. She wanted to make music that spoke to people, that wasn't complicated and that was melodious and warm. Words

that bring back memories and make people dream became the foundation of a lot of her lyrics. Love, of

course, has always been a timeless inspiration for Sandra - as with many artists. She enjoys writing about romance as much as regrets in her music. Sandra's production team composed of some of the best professionals in New York and Montreal helped weave a melodious fabric of rich classical and contemporary soundscapes with folk-rock female vocals in order to produce her first full EP: *Nothing Feels As Good*. Sandra wants to enter many people's living rooms, quiet dinners and long drives with her solo compilation.

Sara Diamond



Sara Diamond is a brilliant young talent born and artistically nourished in Montreal. Even at her tender age she is already being compared to the likes of Judy Garland, Alicia Keys and Christina Aguilera. Sara's soulful voice, charm and warm stage presence leave audiences enraptured. She recently performed at the Bell Centre and had the audience of more than 10,000 people on their

feet cheering before she had finished the first half of *A Moment Like This*.

A diverse talent, Sara is equally at home with other skills including ballet, tap, jazz, hip-hop, figure skating, skiing, gymnastics and more.

Her talent is already valid, authentic and professional, and extends far beyond her young years. She combines her young, bright spirit with exceptional maturity.

Slim Williams



Slim Williams est un musicien qui repousse toujours les limites. Sa grande curiosité spirituelle et son appréciation de la diversité culturelle lui ont permis de créer de la musique de divers styles avec une multitude de collaborateurs. Au fil de sa carrière, il a partagé la scène avec des artistes aussi variés que les Neville Brothers, Joe Cocker, Oscar Peterson et Smokey Robinson.

À l'âge de neuf ans, Slim jouait déjà de l'orgue dans l'église baptiste de son père en Caroline du Nord. Mais sa

carrière prend son envolée lorsqu'il déménage à Détroit à l'âge de 18 ans. S'est ici qu'il a collaboré avec des légendes telles que The Spinners, The Drifters et The Temptations parmi tant d'autres.

Le hasard a conduit Slim Williams jusqu'au Québec, dans un studio des Laurentides, pour enregistrer un album avec sa formation Tchukon. Cette formation, lauréate du concours télévisé «StarSearch» en 1986, devait sa renommée internationale en grande partie aux efforts de son claviériste et chanteur, Slim.

Nazanin Afshin-Jam



Née en Iran pendant la révolution Islamique, bien qu'elle ait été Miss Canada et Première Dauphine Miss Monde 2003, ce n'est certainement pas pour ses titres de gloire qu'on se rappellera de Nazanin Afshin-Jam. Cette chanteuse s'est en effet surtout fait connaître pour son engagement en faveur des défavorisés et persécutés, en particulier pour Nazanin Fatehi, jeune

Iranienne de 18 ans condamnée à mort pour avoir tué l'un des trois hommes qui tentaient de la violer.

Nazanin a tourné dans plusieurs films au Canada, et a été mannequin.

En juin 2007, Nazanin a sorti son premier album, *Someday*, où elle se révèle en tant qu'auteur et chanteuse. La musique est pour elle une nouvelle plate-forme, grâce à laquelle elle espère toucher d'autres coeurs au-delà des frontières et délivrer un message d'espoir à tous ceux qui en ont besoin. *Someday*, le single qui porte le même nom que son album, fait référence à son passé en Iran. "Je voudrais dédier cette chanson à tous ceux qui doivent fuir leur pays" explique-t-elle. "70 pourcents de la population iranienne à moins de 30 ans. Ils ont grandi avec Internet et connaissent leurs droits. Ils ont en eux une soif de liberté...".

Imani Family and Full Gospel Church Children's Choir



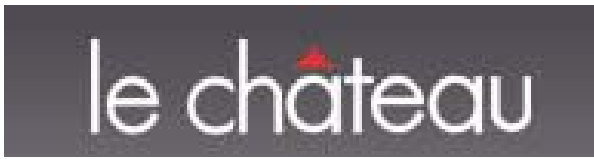


Cassandra

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Mille merci! Many thanks!



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