



11<sup>th</sup> Edition

## Festival Accès Asie

May 4 to 13, 2006

Montreal, March 23, 2006 — In May, discover unsuspected Asian artistic treasures! Due to his success with the public since 1995, Festival Accès Asie remains the single PanCanadian event to underline the Asian Heritage Month with activities and shows that allow to discover the diversity of the Asian cultures. A true invitation to immerse during 10 days in the artistic traditions and avant-gardism which characterize Asia. The 11<sup>th</sup> Edition of Festival Accès Asie will plunge in its celebrations from May 4 to 13 and will splash the public with its rich program in dance, cinema, photo exhibition, music and multimedia reunited under the theme : *Plunging to Emergence*. For this new edition, the Director, Janet Lumb, was inspired by the roots of the words "emergent" and "discovery", often associated in the topicality to this vast continent. She wanted us to discover Asian cultural eclecticism with renowned artists and others that have already captured the attention with their creative et innovative qualities.

Festival Accès Asie will start off with contemporary dance, reign of transitory, but also of ancestral expressions interpreted by two Canadian choreographers inspired by their Asian origins, representing this immigrant generation of new creators. As part of Festival Accès Asie, **Tangente** presents, from **May 4 to 7**, *Thru* by **Chanti Wadge** and *Des racines et des ailes* by **Geneviève La**.

Born in Seoul, raised in Vancouver, **Chanti Wadge** has been living in Montreal since 2002. She has performed internationally for renowned choreographers and is a interdisciplinary creator. Since 1999, she has created pieces which seek to communicate the time escape and the human curiosities, influenced by her trips as well as her studies and interest in social science. Inspired by enigmatic essence of the haiku form, *Thru* is a series of short performances by dance and multimedia artist. With a diverse range of training and performance in both classical and improvisational forms, Chanti's work is marked by a unique marriage of freedom and formality, serious intrigue and moments of luminosity.

Originally Amerisian, **Geneviève La** has been living in Montreal for ten years. She has danced for big name choreographers. Her choreographic and dancer's work is influenced by her studies in modern dance, visual arts, kinesiology and osteopathy. Great improviser, **Geneviève La** is coming back to choreography with the enchantment power that characterize her. In *Des racines et des ailes*, La is bringing you with her in the research of her real vulnerability. Using her own sensitive gestalt moving in distress and grace, she's visiting her Vietnamese part of her origins in a touching and exotic travel, exploring her double identity, passing finally from "Who Am I?" to "I Am!". The realization of this new project marks the necessity to create bridges between different cultures, mostly between America and Asia, between artistic and therapeutic.

Festival Accès Asie makes a duty with **ASI** to promote a new Asian culture as well as the present generation that supports it. After the success in 2005, Festival Accès Asie will present **ASI 2006**, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of the PanCanadian Digital Creation Contest. Unique evening for a singular at the **Society for Arts and Technology [SAT]**, **May 5 at 8pm**. A digital image section is added to this year event. The creations will be inspired by the theme "**Crossroads**" to represent the lives, cultures and identities which

cross perpetually in the XXI<sup>st</sup> century. After the screening of the winning creations selected by a specialised jury, and to celebrate this great evening of digital creation hosted by the charming singer **Athesia, local DJs and VJs of Asian descent** will electrify the evening until dawn with original multimedia audiovisual shows. There will be **DJ Mademoiselle** (Japan), **DJ Tapesh** (Iran), **DJ PhilGood** (Vietnam/Spain), **VJ Cobra** (Vietnam), **VJ DimSum** (Thailand) and **VJ Pillow** (Vietnam).

**May 7 at NFB**, Festival Accès Asie with the collaboration of NFB will pursue its glance on Asian societies with Montreal's Premiere of the documentary film **Chinese Restaurants** by **Cheuk Kwan** and both staggering documentaries **The Day My God Died** by **Andrew Levine** co-presented with Asha for Education Canada, and **Epitaph** from Iranian director **Moslem Mansouri**.

**Cheuk Kwan** was born in Hong Kong and grew up in Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan. After earning his master's degree in systems engineering in the U.S., he immigrated to Canada in 1976 where he embarked upon a successful career in information technology. Back home in Canada, the community activist founded **The Asianadian**, a magazine dedicated to the promotion of Asian Canadian arts, culture and politics in 1978. The following year, he helped lead a nation-wide fight for equality for Chinese Canadians. Kwan took a film workshop at New York University in 1998 before establishing his own production company, **Tissa Films**. **Chinese Restaurants** is a documentary series which bring together his personal experiences, love of travel and appreciation of Chinese culture worldwide.

**Moslem Mansouri** was born in 1964 in Iran. In 1981, because of his political views against the tyrannical regime of Iran, he was arrested and imprisoned for two years. He began working in Iranian cinema magazines in 1991, and published a book, "Cinema and literature". In the same year he studied film studies in the Faculty of Art, Azad University, for one year. From 1994 to 1998, Mansouri, under the pretext of media work and outside the control of the Iranian regime, **secretly produced eight documentary films** about the lives of the **people in the theocratic rule of Iran**. Moslem Mansouri came to the United States in 1999 and sought political asylum there. He has been active in these years to organize and form underground cinema in Iran. **Epitaph** is a striking documentary about prostitution in Iran today. Many married women, widows, young and underage girls, and even female university students have to sell their bodies to make a living. While the religious government in Iran is stoning women to death for sex out-of-marriage and imposing compulsory veiling or 'Hejab', medias talk about a lucrative sex trade market for the authorities in place.

Director and producer **Andrew Levine** has traveled the world and spent the past three years working on **The Day My God Died**. Andrew has worked in **Hollywood with Norman Lear, Once Upon A Time Film Productions and at the Sundance Film Festival** in Park City, Utah. **The Day My God Die** is a shocking documentary about the infantile prostitution, filmed in the streets of Bombay, the queen city known for its sexual tourism. It is a shocking documentary on the daily sexual constraint of girls extirpated from their village and sold like Gina or Anita at the age of 7 and 12 years to satisfy the phantasms of a perversion without name.

Festival Accès Asie collaborates with **Maison de la culture Plateau-Mont-Royal**, as part of the Asian Heritage Month, to present from **May 10 to June 10**, the original exhibit **Mémoires de lentilles** by **Babak Salari, May Truong and Will Lew**. Unique opportunity for the local public to take a glance at three distinct Asian communities through the lenses of those three photographers originating from Iran, Vietnam and China.

**Babak Salari** is a documentary photographer and a cultural activist. He is presenting **Children of Diaspora** which documents the "post-exile" experience of second generation Iranian Canadians. Salari has worked with Médecins du Monde using photography as a tool to bear witness to the aftermath of the war in Afghanistan and the occupation of Iraq and its daily effects in people's lives particularly the environment, children and women.

For her part, **May Truong** presents **Waiting for Sunday** which reveals loneliness related to ageing. "As my grandmother has aged, her dependency on others has grown. The roles have become reversed." Her work has been touring in **Europe and North America** along side work by Annie Leibovitz, Tierney Geron and Peggy Sirota in the Beauty Beyond Compare exhibit brought to you by Dove.

**Will Lew** is a product of Chinese immigrants and the North's most vibrant city - Montreal. After his diploma in photography, Will immediately gained the attention of the local photography community, winning a finalist nod in the prestigious **LUX-Graphica** photography competition. Just two years later he would be awarded a **Grand Prize**. With his project **Lonely China**, Will Lew wants to make us realize that even with a population of over a billion people in China, it's easy to get lost and alone.

**Montreal's premiere**, Théâtre La Chapelle with the collaboration of Festival Accès Asie will make Montreal's heart beat from May 11 to 13 with the vertiginous sounds of the Japanese drums of the group

**On Ensemble** from Los Angeles and the percussions of **Patrick Graham** from Montreal in the show **Go - Projet Taïko**.

**Go** corresponds to the number five, it also relates to the language and the communication. **Go - Projet Taïko** is a unique, vibrant and audacious show originating from the mixture of the musical and dance talents of the four members of On Ensemble (pronounced "ohn") and their encounter with percussionist Patrick Graham, an exploratory occasion and a musical exchange between those five exceptional artists. For the Montreal's public enjoyment, they will present for 3 nights only, pieces of their respective repertory as well as the fruit of their encounter.

In their **50 years of combined taiko experience**, the **On Ensemble's** four young musicians have studied and performed with renowned masters of traditional and contemporary music and dance in the **United States and Japan**. Current works feature these drums in conjunction with dance, bamboo flute, koto (Japanese zither), and Tuvan overtone singing. With musical experience ranging from centuries-old Noh and Kabuki, to contemporary, experimental composition, the On Ensemble has crafted a repertoire of ground-breaking taiko music. After a successful debut concert in northern Japan and its first western-US tour in the spring of 2002, the group received the **Duane Ebata Memorial Fund Award** in Los Angeles.

**Patrick Graham**, was born in Montreal, and his highly personal approach to percussion is a fusion of his training in Western classical music, a variety of frame drumming disciplines, and his explorations of Japanese, South-Indian, Mediterranean and Irish rhythms. Patrick has studied with **Glen Velez** (New York), **Pierre Béluse** (Montreal), **D'Arcy P. Gray** (Montreal), **Trichy Sankaran** (Toronto), and **Taichi Ozaki** (Tokyo). Patrick can be found performing, touring and recording regularly with a variety of artists and ensembles, including **La Nef**, **Ganesh Anandan** (as **GaPa**), **FingerWorks**, **Catherine Lambert**, **Norouet**, **Ramasutra**, **Duo Frank**, and the **Nishikawa Ensemble**.

OBORO presents **8 Moments**, multimedia bridge for the ultimate moment of the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of Festival Accès Asie with multimedia performances by pianist **Lee Pui Ming** based in Toronto meeting on line the sound king **DJ Mana** and visual wizard **VJ Pillow** in Montreal. **8 Moments** pushes the boundaries to meet the challenges of creation in cyberspace. This improvisation across two cities on two stages continues to boggle the minds of artists and public alike.

**Lee Pui Ming** is a creating and performing artist. As a performer, she has toured Canada, Europe and Asia with appearances in numerous festivals such as **Montréal International Jazz Festival**. She has five recordings to date. Her composition credits include commissions from The Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, Vancouver New Music and The Yoko Ono Project.

**DJ Mana** is an undisputed turntable and scratch virtuoso. He began his DJ career in 1993, quickly turning to hip-hop and collaborating with Under Pressure, KoolOut.com, Mr. Lif and Swollen Members, among others. Winner of **Montréal's DMC scratch contest in 2003 and 2004**, he was in residency at the Blue Dog and founded a Djing school.

**VJ Pillow**, a.k.a. Thien Vu Dang, left Vietnam on a boat with his parents when he was six years old, and arrived one year later in Montreal where he discovered cinema. His collaborations with **Ned Bouhalassa**, **Yasuko Tadokoro**, **Christelle Franca** and other great artists have been an inspiration for him.

To conclude the festivities at the Society for Arts and Technology [SAT] on May 18, Festival Accès Asie will present sultan pop R&B **Kashif**, **Canadian singer, song writer and composer** of Asian descent, member of the Quebecois group INMOTION known for their hits *Sauve-moi* et *Où, quand, comment*. Kashif will be accompanied by **The Bilz** (DJ Vicious and Master D), with whom he recorded numerous mix's. An evening who will certainly end at dawn!!!

Festival Accès Asie is honored to offer the public 10 days of intense and diversified programming, illustrating perfectly the Asian cultural diversity, mixture of myths, exoticism and avant-gardism. The **Director, Janet Lumb, and the Festival Accès Asie's team** wish the public an excellent festival. They will be amazed by the discovery of a continent that made its mark centuries ago with its creative evolution and which is able to give the impulse to the art of the XXI<sup>st</sup> century.