



FESTIVAL
INTERNATIONAL DE
CASTELIERS



LOCO
Compagnie Belova-Iacobelli (Belgique)
Photo : Pierre-Yves Jortay

PRESS RELEASE

19th FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DE CASTELIERS

March 6 to 10, 2024

Montréal, January 24, 2024 – The 19th edition of **Festival international de Casteliers, March 6 to 10, 2024**, will celebrate the 11th art in all its forms. This major annual event devoted to puppetry arts welcomes works from Québec, Canada, the United States, France, Belgium, Finland, and South Korea, to the delight of young and old alike!

The 2024 **Festival international de Casteliers** lineup is a celebration of the creativity of puppeteers, composed of an assortment of playful, philosophical, and introspective moments, through narrative and experimental approaches. Whether superlative messengers or magnificent mirrors, puppets embody our humanity, with sublime wisdom or delightful folly.

The 19th **Festival international de Casteliers** features **11 shows** for adults and children, short-form pieces, short films, a documentary, professional networking events, exhibits, and free community outreach activities for all.

LOCO (Belova-Iacobelli Theatre Company, Belgium) opens the festival on Wednesday, March 6 at Théâtre Outremont. Inspired by a short story by Nikolai Gogol, **LOCO** is an absurdist, surrealist tale about the uncertain boundary between madness and sanity. Two puppeteers masterfully interpret and manipulate the same character, in a surrealist ballet that leaves the audience speechless. **14 years +**

BLOCK THEATRE (KO-KOO-MO, Finland) is a visual and sculptural puppet show in which wooden blocks are brought to life and take the audience on an exploration of different worlds. A skillful puppeteer and a lively original soundscape create a multisensory experience for all ages. A wooden block is chock full of possibilities. Both a finished shape and an unfinished form, it evolves as the imagination takes over! **3 years +**

The assortment of characters in black and white in **TO SLEEP WELL** (MECANIKA, France) intrigues with its singular strangeness, reminiscent of childhood fears, those of the night, the dark, and dreams. Once the lights are turned off, everything comes alive! *To Sleep Well* is a deep dive into a poetic encounter with these whimsical, endearing, and unusual beings, so close to our fears, temptations, and desires. **5 years +**

A SHOW WITH STRINGS (Long & Short Company, South Korea) is a joyful blend of object theatre, puppetry, and clowning. At times mischievous, at times tender, the artist charms the audience by intertwining, untangling, and cutting up strings and stories. A moment of delight and complicit smiles. **4 years +**

LUNCH WITH SONIA (Loco7 Dance Puppet Theatre Company, New York) is a joyful mix of dance, puppetry, music, and video. Inspired by the true story of the company's founder, Federico Restrepo *Lunch with Sonia* recounts the artist's relationship with his aunt who, at age 72 and after a long illness, decided to end her life with dignity. Themes of life, love, and loss run through this tender work. **13 years +**

MÉMOIRES D'UN VOLCAN (Ubus Théâtre, Québec) draws the spectator into the confidences of a creator inhabited by the peregrinations of a woman and her mysterious black notebook. A tribute to the creative force and the transformative power that pulse within each of us, and an intimate work of great humanity, *Mémoires d'un volcan* is presented aboard a yellow bus transformed into a miniature mobile theatre. **8 years +**

EPIDERMIS CIRCUS (SNAFU Society of Unexpected Spectacles, British Columbia) will undoubtedly be the weirdest puppet show you will have ever seen! A seasoned television puppeteer makes a live puppet film right before your eyes, using only household objects, a camera, and her bare hands. This cheeky puppet cabaret delivers a generous dose of comedy and mind-bending illusions. Give your brain a surrealist twist! **13 years +**

A strange, playful show, **A COMME ANIMAL** (Marie-Pascale Bélanger, Montréal) combines dance, mask, and puppetry. Freely inspired by the lectures of French philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1992-1995), it explores the themes of dreams and metamorphosis through the language of philosophy and symbolism. Between human and animal, between high heels and altered voices, the audience is immersed in a surreal universe that evokes the world of cartoons. **13 years +**

A performance-installation featuring various types of bio-inspired robotic swarms, **DESSAIM** (Collectif DESSAIM, Montréal) invites the audience to “Agora du Cœur des sciences de l’UQÀM” to wander among creatures imagined and set in motion by expert engineers in robotics, computer science, and biomechanics; artists in dance, movement, puppetry, and shadow theatre; and specialists in movement analysis and learning. Free, **8 years +**

Casteliers presents **AN EVENING OF SHORTS** featuring three original short works. Three completely different worlds of paper theatre, folk songs, and post-apocalyptic despair create a wonderful opportunity to (re)discover the thematic and technical diversity of the 11th art in an intimate setting. **13 years +**

To close the festival, the Great North comes to Théâtre Outremont with **RADIO SILENCE** (Open Pit Theatre, Yukon). This whimsical, heartwarming show, brimming with humanity and compassion, takes place in Dawson City in the 1920s. Mesmerizing and deeply moving, **Radio Silence** features full-face masks, puppets, and projections, and original music. **5 years +**

Complementing the live shows, **CINÉ-CASTELIERS** offers an extensive program of six short films and a documentary, featuring new and acclaimed works, by artists from Québec, Alberta, and the United States. **13 years +**

Other activities:

The festival’s programming is rounded out with a range of free, community outreach activities for the general public, as well as a number of professional networking opportunities that foster discussion and reflection on artistic practice:

MARIONNETTES EN VITRINE !

Eagerly awaited each year by passersby, this walkabout exhibit in Outremont shop windows presents more than 50 magnificent puppets by **Patrick Martel** (Montréal) and a selection of puppets made by his students and by Québec’s emerging puppet makers. This **MASTER AND MENTEE** exhibit will run from **February 12 to March 12, 2024**.

EXHIBITS: Galerie d’Outremont presents **CHEMINER ENTRE LE THÉÂTRE ET L’ART VISUEL** by **Sylvie Gosselin** (Longueuil) from **March 7 to 31, 2024**. L’Illusion, Théâtre de marionnettes invites us into the world of Micheline Legendre, with a selection of magnificent characters created by this acclaimed Montréal puppetry artist, from **March 2 to 9, 2024**.

The festival program also includes a **CAFÉ-CAUSERIE** presentation of works-in-progress, a roundtable discussion, and workshops for the whole family. The **MARCHÉ INTERNATIONAL DE CASTELIERS (MIC)**, an international professional networking event, as well as the meeting of members of the Executive Committee of the **UNION INTERNATIONALE DE LA MARIONNETTE (UNIMA)** bring together a large professional delegation of festival presenters, journalists, and researchers from here and around the world.

A true celebration of the 11th art, Festival international de Casteliers presents a curated portrait of contemporary puppetry, on both large and small stages in Montréal.

Welcome to all!

Make way for the puppets!

Festival program and tickets: festival.casteliers.ca

Partners:

Casteliers wishes to thank its major partners, the Caisse des Versants du Mont Royal and REALTA real estate agency, as well as all its public, private, cultural and media partners for their valued support. Together, they help make this 19th edition a success.

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Casteliers

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The 19th Festival international de Casteliers, celebrating the 11th art!

... *Shows at a glance*



Shows for adults and teens

LOCO – Compagnie Belova-Iacobelli, Belgium

LUNCH WITH SONIA – Loco7 Dance Puppet Theatre Company, New York

EPIDERMIS CIRCUS – SNAFU Society of Unexpected Spectacles, British Columbia

A COMME ANIMAL – Marie-Pascale Bélanger, Montréal

EVENING OF SHORTS – Mark Sussman, Great Small Works,
Alexandra Gorlin-Crenshaw and Aluma, Montréal

CINÉ-CASTELIERS – Short films and a documentary,
from Québec, Alberta and the USA



Shows for all audiences

BLOCK THEATRE – KO-KOO-MO, Finland, 3 years +

TO SLEEP WELL – MECANIKA, France, 5 years +

A SHOW WITH STRINGS – Long & Short Company, South Korea, 4 years +

MÉMOIRES D'UN VOLCAN – Ubus Théâtre, Québec, 8 years +

DESSAIM – Collectif DESSAIM, Montréal, 8 years +

RADIO SILENCE – Open Pit Theatre, Yukon, 5 years +

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