

New Addition to the Venice Biennale College of Dance Programme

Montreal, February 23, 2017 – Marie Chouinard, appointed Director of the Venice Biennale's dance section for the next four years (2017-2020), will direct both the International Contemporary Dance Festival and the College of Dance, and has created a brand new choreographers' programme for the college.

Free programme for young dancers

Dancers between the ages of 18 and 23 are invited to apply for the 2017 programme, which combines somatic techniques, and performance training and practice. Fifteen performers will be selected for this free three-month full-time programme, running from April 4 to June 26.

Somatic training will be provided by Judith Koltai (Authentic Movement), Nora Benian (Yin Yoga) and Maria Raffaella Dalla Valle (Feldenkrais) to develop body awareness and inner dance sensations.

This year, the technical training will be based on the Forsythe method. The fifteen selected dancers will have the chance to learn William Forsythe's *Sider* from dancers who have performed in this creation.

In performance, they will work on a new creation under the direction of Benoît Lachambre.

The dancers will present excerpts from *Sider* and Benoît Lachambre's new work at the 11th International Contemporary Dance Festival in Venice in late June.

For details and application: <http://www.labiennale.org/en/dance/collegedance/dancers.html>

Free programme for young choreographers

New this year: Three young choreographers will be selected and received in Venice to develop, as part of a seven-week study and coaching programme (May 16 to July 1), original creations, approximately 12 minutes' long, to be presented during the 11th International Festival of Contemporary Dance in Venice at the end of June.

After a first phase of preparation, devoted to the analysis of an aspect of the Forsythe method, the three choreographers will each work on a new creation with seven professional dancers and the support of experts in dramaturgy and staging: Elizabeth Waterhouse (American Ballet, Forsythe Company), Hildegard de Vuyst (Ballets C de la B) and Catherine Schaub Abkarian (Théâtre du Soleil).

For details and application: <http://www.labiennale.org/en/dance/collegedance/choreographers.html>

Selection of seven professional dancers

In light of the new choreography programme, seven professional dancers will be selected on the basis of their open-mindedness and enthusiasm to participate in this unprecedented creative process. For six full weeks (May 23 to July 1), they will work in Venice with the three choreographers of the 2017 Biennale College. The works created will be performed at the 11th edition of the International Contemporary Dance Festival in Venice. This is a paid contract, with travel and full accommodation provided by the Biennale.

For details and application: <http://www.labiennale.org/en/dance/collegedance/professional-dancers.html>



Press conference

The press conference announcing the 2017 programme for the Venice International Contemporary Dance Festival will take place on April 6 in Rome.

About the Venice Biennale College

Biennale College is an innovative and complex experience that engages all the Departments of the Venice Biennale – to encourage young talents, offering them the opportunity to work side by side with the masters to develop “creations”.

Biennale College - Dance, a project by the Venice Biennale, enjoys the support of the Ministry for the Cultural Heritage and Activities – General Direction for the Performing Arts and the Veneto Region.

About MARIE CHOUINARD

Marie Chouinard is the Executive and Artistic Director of COMPAGNIE MARIE CHOUINARD, Founding Chair of the Prix de la Danse de Montréal, an Associate Dance Artist of the Canada’s National Arts Centre and Director of Dance at the Venice Biennale.

Marie Chouinard is a true cultural ambassador for Quebec. She has won several awards for her contribution to arts, including the Walter Carsen Prize for the Excellence in the Performing Arts (Canada, 2016), the Positano Prize “Choreographer of the year” (Italy, 2016), the Governor General’s Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Achievement (Canada, 2016), the title of Chevalier of the Ordre national du Québec (2015), the Prix Denise-Pelletier (Quebec, 2010), the title of Chevalier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (France, 2009), the title of Officer of the Order of Canada (2007) and the Bessie Award (New York, 2000). The name of Marie Chouinard became a dictionary entry in *Le Petit Larousse illustré* in 2010 and in *Le Robert* in 2011.

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