

## Les Filles électriques

Les Filles Électriques (LFÉ) has as its mission to create, disseminate and archive interdisciplinary events and works related to text in performance. The organization was founded in 2001 by artist D. Kimm who wanted a space to reflect the spirit of experimentation and research that characterizes her own work as well as the work she does as an artistic director. Of course, the organization does not organize and work only with “girls” (*les filles*) but is concerned with making room for a diversity of voices.

The LFÉ’s annual flagship event is the Festival Voix d’Amérique (FVA), created in 2002 and devoted to performance, poetry in performance, and vocal experimentation. The FVA will present its 10th annual event from February 11 to 18, 2011 with Melissa Auf der Maur and Michel Faubert as Guests of Honour. The Conseil des Arts de Montréal has twice recognized the high quality and vibrancy of the FVA (in 2004 and 2010) nominating it as a finalist for its Grand Prix. Over the years, our Guests of Honour have been poet Patrice Desbiens, singer-songwriter Urbain Desbois, singer Chloé Sainte-Marie, Aboriginal playwright Tomson Highway, singer-songwriter Richard Desjardins, New York poet John Giorno, Acadian-born singer Marie-Jo Thério, and American performer Ursula Rucker.

The Festival Voix d’Amérique (FVA) is a bilingual, hybrid, original and festive event, a place for authentic speech, risk-taking and daring. Giving pride of place to transgression and the blending of genres, the FVA makes room for out-of-the-ordinary voices and artists with unusual backgrounds, making it possible to bring established and emerging artists together on the same stage. Poets, performers, musicians, singers, dancers but also drag queens, community activists, the marginalized and the new. Interdisciplinary and undisciplined, the FVA specializes in original productions created for the occasion. The shows are mounted at the Sala Rossa, La Tulipe and Théâtre La Chapelle with very affordable ticket prices and for free at the Casa del Popolo and the Divan Orange.

Les Filles Électriques offers a platform for authentic, distinctive and emerging voices. The organization is an umbrella group for a number of interdisciplinary collectives, including the “spoken noise” music and performance duo Mankind, the music poetry group Erlenmeyer, the interdisciplinary Brahmin Collective, the *La Mariée Perpétuelle* project, and video poetry productions, all presented in a context of linguistic plurality. Les Filles Électriques also mentors young artists and maintains an Internet site featuring information on more than 700 artists. LFÉ presents poetry and text performed by its author in a lively and accessible way, whether in a stage show, performance, book, video or CD.

In addition to its arts productions, the company uses its expertise and networks to make room for the voices of people not in the mainstream or traditionally excluded such as those of women at risk, the homeless and those caught in the legal system. Three books have been published in partnership with shelters for women at risk: *Écrire et sans pitié* (Passage/L’Arrêt-Source, 2006); *L’ABCd’art de La rue des Femmes* (Remue-Ménage, 2007); and *Passagères: Voix de changements* (Planète Rebelle 2010). A fourth CD-book entitled *Temps d’agir* will be released by Planète Rebelle in partnership with the Elizabeth Fry Society and Engrenage Noir/ LEVIER. We are now editing Planète Rebelle’s “Traces” collection, designed to showcase different and traditionally excluded voices.

Since its inception, the organization has

- produced 9 annual Festivals Voix d’Amérique and more than 150 shows and welcomed hundreds of different artists.
- produced the CD and shows of the *Band de poètes*



- produced the DVD *Écrits et chuchotements / Page vs Stage* featuring the work of fourteen Montreal spoken word artists
- produced the shows and CD for *Le Silence des hommes*
- presented touring shows at Montreal's Maisons de la culture
- presented *La Salle des pas perdus* in Berlin at the Poesie Berlin Festival, in Montreal at the Ex-Centris, and in Victoriaville at the FIMAV.
- presented the Mankind Duo at various festivals including the Victoriaville International New Music Festival, the Edgy Women Festival, and Suoni Per Il Popolo; and outside Canada at the Poesie Berlin Festival (Germany), Donau Festival (Austria), Musique Action (France), and Howl (United States)
- produced the CD *Ice Machine* by the *Mankind* duo on the Ambiances Magnétiques label
- presented the videos *En attendant Corto Maltese; Si tu veux me garder, tu dois t'éloigner; Qui est là?;* and *Mlle Clara dompteuse de lapins* at the Festival du Nouveau Cinéma and the Rendez-Vous du Cinéma Québécois
- presented the interdisciplinary show *La Mariée Perpétuelle* at the Off Festival TransAmériques (Off-T.A.)
- presented the group Erlenmeyer at various festivals (Francofolies, FIL, Marché de la poésie)
- sponsored Jeunes Volontaires projects

#### D. Kimm, artistic director

Interdisciplinary artist D. Kimm has published four collections of poetry including *La Suite mongole* (book/CD-ROM, Planète rebelle, 2001). She made the CD *Le Silence des hommes* in collaboration with guitarist Bernard Falaise. Her “spoken noise” duo Mankind (with performer Alexis O’Hara) has appeared at various festivals in Canada (Festival International de Musique Actuelle de Victoriaville, Edgy Women, Suoni Per Il Popolo) and overseas (Poesie Berlin Festival in Germany, Donau in Austria, Musique Action et Montevideo in France). The duo’s first CD, titled *Ice Machine*, came out in 2009 on the Ambiances Magnétiques label. D. Kimm has also made three short films: *En attendant Corto Maltese* (2007); *Si tu veux me garder, tu dois t'éloigner* (2008) in partnership with the late Patrice Duhamel; and *Mlle Clara Rabbit-Tamer* (2010) in collaboration with Brigitte Henry. All three screened at the Festival du Nouveau Cinéma and Rendez-vous du Cinéma Québécois. She is currently working on *La Mariée perpétuelle*, a sweeping interdisciplinary project spread over several years. A first version was presented in May 2009 as part of the OFF.T.A. (Off Festival TransAmériques). She’s just back from a six-month stay as an artist in residence at Quebec Studio in New York (CALQ).

