

## Press Release: 15 YEARS OF ELAN

On Monday, August 26, ELAN (English Language Arts Network) will be celebrating 15 years of serving the English-speaking arts community of Québec!

ELAN was created in 2004, when 150 English-speaking artists from multiple artistic disciplines gathered to examine the state of the arts in Québec. After decades of decline and departures, the post-1995 referendum arts scene was experiencing a remarkable renaissance. Young artists were choosing to stay in Québec, and other artists were returning after living away. Artists, particularly musicians, from across Canada were flocking to Montréal because of cheap rents and a vibrant art scene, in what was described as the “Arcade Fire Effect”.

ELAN’s first challenge was to make contact with thousands of artists working in multiple disciplines who were living in different parts of Montréal across different regions of Québec. Monthly schmoozers in popular bars proved a simple and effective way to connect artists. The RAEV (Recognizing Artists: Enfin Visibles!) project provided public visibility by creating profiles and videos about life in Québec for minority English-speaking artists. Guernica Essays published *Minority Report*, a collection of essays on the history of English-language artists in Québec. ELAN’s *Made au Québec* website aggregated an impressive volume of media coverage from around the world, demonstrating the impact of Québec’s English-speaking artists.

ELAN has worked closely with communities around Québec in many ways. Arts Alive! Québec festivals (2014-2018) produced dozens of performances, presentations and hand-on-workshops, employing hundreds of artists in Hudson, Knowlton, Wakefield, Huntingdon, Québec City, and Montréal’s West Island. ELAN’s ACE Initiative project enabled artists and students to connect creatively in dozens of communities around Québec. The new multi-million-dollar ArtistsInspire Grants will allow students in every English-language public school in Québec to work creatively with artists for the next four years.

During the past 15 years, ELAN has offered hundreds of professional development workshops in Montréal and many regions of Québec, and has produced showcases for artists in Montréal, across Canada, in the US, and in the UK. ELAN’s advocacy work with CRTC, in collaboration with the Québec English-language Production Council, has contributed to bringing millions of dollars in new production to Québec. ELAN has established itself as the leading advocate and interlocutor for English-language artists in Québec.

Created by artists for artists, ELAN’s board of directors has featured many of Québec’s leading artists and cultural workers from first president Susie Arioli and veteran CBC producer Frank Opolko; to dancers Andrew Tay, Helen Simard and Roger Sinha; musicians Tim Brady and Rob Lutes; spoken word artists Ian Ferrier and Fortner Anderson; and filmmaker Karen Cho. Founding Executive Director Guy Rodgers and ELAN’s first office manager, visual artist Nadia Myre, have both been appointed as companions in Québec’s prestigious Order des arts et des lettres du Québec.

ELAN's 15th anniversary AGM and party at the Rialto Theatre will be a celebration of Québec's flourishing English-language arts community, featuring a slideshow of memorable moments and people, performances by ELAN members, and a booklet of photos and stories commemorating ELAN's first 15 years.

"ELAN is an organization for artists, by artists, and as a result, our projects and advocacy work address the real needs of our community," says ELAN Board Director Bettina Forget.

"ELAN has steadily attracted members, partners and resources that make it possible to do things we could only dream about fifteen years ago," says ELAN's founding Executive Director Guy Rodgers.

## **ABOUT ELAN**

The **English-Language Arts Network (ELAN)** is a not-for-profit organization that connects, supports, and creates opportunities for Québec's English-speaking artists and arts communities. ELAN members are individuals and organizations from a wide array of artistic disciplines, cultural and geographic backgrounds, and linguistic and cultural communities.

ELAN was conceived in November 2004 at the Québec Arts Summit in Montréal. More than 200 artists, government officials, and other representatives of the English-speaking arts milieu came together for the first time to discuss supporting artists and cultural workers in Québec's official language minority community (OLMC). Participants at the Québec Arts Summit concluded that an English Language Arts Network could help meet this challenge. With the support of sister organizations the Québec Drama Federation (QDF), the Québec Writers' Federation (QWF), and the Association of English-Language Publishers of Québec (AELAQ), the wheels were set in motion. ELAN was incorporated in April 2005 with initial funding from the Canada Council for the Arts and the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) through the Interdepartmental Partnership with the Official Language Communities (IPOLC) program.

**[www.quebec-elan.org](http://www.quebec-elan.org)**

## ELAN 15<sup>TH</sup> AGM & ANNIVERSARY PARTY

*The AGM and the Anniversary Party are open to both members and the public.*

August 26, 2019

6 – 10 pm

Rialto Theatre, 5723 Park Ave Montréal

6:00 – 6:30 PM: Welcome and Registration

6:30 – 8:00 PM: Business Meeting and Elections

8:00 – 10:00 PM: 15th Anniversary Party

### **Featuring performances by:**

Urban Science Brass Band

Greg “Krypto” Selinger & Travis Knights

Irem Bekter

TITTERS (Janis Kirshner & Laura Mitchell)

Carolyn Fe

Andrea Peña & Artists

Kevin Harvey

### **CONTACTS**

For info, or to RSVP to  
ELAN’s 15<sup>th</sup> AGM & Anniversary:  
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