

WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS INTERNATIONAL-MONTREAL 2021

FROM YOUR HOST COMMITTEE, ANN LAMBERT & LAURA MITCHELL

Dear Friends and Friends to be,

The planning of the **12th Women Playwrights International Conference** which will be held in **Montreal in June, 2021** is well underway!



- We have our Conference venue already--**Dawson College**—who have generously offered us the free use of this historic and influential Montreal college.
- The dates will be **June 20-25, 2021**. This means we are less than 2 years away from the opening of the Montreal Conference. From early June until mid-July Montreal hosts the amazing, bilingual (English & French) Montreal Fringe Festival and the Just for Laughs Comedy Festival, so there will be no shortage of things to do outside the conference, and much of it is free or inexpensive.
- The world-renowned Montreal Jazz Festival takes place from July 1-10, 2021, so extending your trip might be a terrific idea.

- Dawson College will offer us a beautiful 183-seat theatre for some of our mainstage productions, a black box rehearsal theatre and an auditorium for fully staged readings and larger workshops, an intimate café space, a full cafeteria and many classrooms. It is centrally located on a beautiful campus with direct service on the metro. Dawson College has already offered to cover the costs of our technicians in the theatre spaces, and may well assume other costs. They have also committed to helping us in fundraising.
- We are looking to partner with different cultural institutions and theatres in the city as well, both English and French-speaking. Emma Tibaldo at Playwrights Workshop Montreal has already offered their space for a workshop!
- The **main language** of the Montreal Conference will be **English**, but we will also be inviting our French-speaking colleagues to participate. We hope and anticipate that a significant amount of the work presented will be of French language origin from Montreal, Quebec, Canada and other parts of the Francophone world.
- We also hope to have significant participation from our Indigenous theatre artists. We are working on **outreach initiatives** with both Indigenous and French groups.
- We are now working actively with **Marcia Johnson, Beverly Cooper** and **Rebecca Burton** in Toronto, as well as with the wonderful Women Playwrights International Management Committee. (ManCom), and we are starting to build our **WPIMontreal Team**. We have started to discuss the programming possibilities, as well as funding possibilities to make it all happen.

OUR THEME:

We invite the playwrights of the world **to write about anything that explores the spectrum of identity**, be it about **racialization, sexualization, class, gender, age, dis/ability, language** and so forth. We invite you to think of these questions:

- What does racialization and sexualization mean now? What does gender mean? How do we accommodate our evolving ideas of gender and sexual identity in our writing? Is there a post-gendered future looming?
- What does it mean to be a woman playwright? What does it mean to be a feminist writer ?
- What does the idea of class mean and imply now ?
- What is the experience of dis/abled writers ?
- How does the body we inhabit inform our writing ?
- Do all stories have to be told through lived experience?
- Who gets to tell whose stories?

The structure will be similar to past WPI Conferences:

- There will be opening and closing keynote speakers, multiple daily workshops, roundtable discussions, multiple daily readings of excerpts from adjudicated plays, and nightly full performances of adjudicated plays.
- We hope to offer live musical performances open mics soirées, and maybe a dance party or two !
- We are also starting to organize a trip to Canada's capital city, Ottawa, and hope to plan a visit to gorgeous Quebec city.
- The conference will be funded in part by the accreditation of participants. We are hoping to draw between 150 and 300 people.
The accreditation fee is still to be determined, but should be similar to the amount from past conferences. The registration fee will be put toward covering the costs of the opening and closing ceremonies, lunch for 5 days, morning coffee and afternoon snacks, free access to all the workshops and performances.
- As in previous versions of WPI, participants must personally finance their registration fees, as well as travel costs to Montreal, all accommodations, all breakfasts and suppers.
- Information regarding accommodation will be provided to participants in a timely fashion. We will try to obtain reduced prices in hotels and restaurants near the Conference, as well as approaching local artists to offer billeting for some of our participants.

We will of course be seeking funding from major arts funding sources in Canada, including:

- The federal Canada Council for the Arts, the provincial Conseil des arts et lettres de Quebec, and the municipal Conseil des Arts de Montreal.
- We will also be looking for funding from a variety of other sources, both public and private, including donations in kind.

You can check out and join our **Facebook page: Women Playwrights International Montreal 2021**

- Our email address is: wpimontreal2021@gmail.com

JURY SELECTION AND PROCESS:

- The **regional jury committees** from North America South America, Africa, Asia, Europe, Oceania have been created.
Each region will read and evaluate submitted plays, which will be offered a reading of a 20-minute excerpt, a staged full reading, or for about 10 plays, we will invite a company to bring a full production. We are hoping that 50 plays in all will be presented.
Each regional committee **will select a certain number of finalists** (depending on how many submissions there are, and how many will be allotted to each region. We are still working on those numbers.)
- A Canadian jury will then adjudicate the international submissions sent from regional committees and will then make the final selections for the Conference.
- Each region will also need people to **evaluate and select workshop submissions, and round-table presentations.**

PROPOSED TIMELINE FOR PLAY SUBMISSION PROCESS:

- **Sept. 18, 2019--Requests for formation of regional juries to go out.**
- **Oct. 15, 2019 – Official call goes out for plays/workshop submissions**
- **December 15, 2019-- DEADLINE for submissions to regional juries**
- **December 15, 2019- February 15, 2020 Reading and Deliberation period (First Round/Regional)**
- **February 15, 2020—Regional Juries submit finalists to Canadian Jury**
- **February 15- April 15, 2020 –All submissions from regions read and considered**
- **April 15. 2020—WRITERS ARE NOTIFIED (14 months before WPIM.)**

Finally, we are of course aware SO MUCH more needs to be considered, developed, organized and made into reality!

This includes finding:

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS! VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS! FRENCH TRANSLATORS!

TECHNICAL PRODUCTION PEOPLE! DIRECTORS! ACTORS! ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD!

and last but not least, SWAG.

Well, that's all for now. Start thinking, dreaming, (and fundraising)!

Until next time ! À la prochaine ! Hasta la proxima !

Ann and Laura

