



25TH ANNIVERSARY

# CAT'S CORNER XCHANGE

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MONTREAL, TIO'TIA:KE

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## MEET CAT'S CORNER DIRECTORS & CCX ORGANIZERS

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*Meghan Gilmore*



She is the master planner for all things around CCX. She did it as a volunteer years ago and she does it now as a codirector of Cat's Corner. She will also Emcee and find the energy to dance her butt off during the weekend. She deserves all the gratitude and appreciation for the party we'll be having!

*Anais Sekine*



*photo credit: Alain Wong*

She makes sure to keep CCX at the heart of its original mission and to renew its spirit, creating new ideas and spaces for the event. That's been her contribution to Cat's Corner for as long as she's been around. Let's get this party jumping!

# OUR STORY

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You might think the X of CCX stands for eXchange, don't you dear friend? Well, here is news for you: the X actually signified the 10th year anniversary of our school, which launched the beginning our annual invitation to party at Cat's Corner Montreal on Halloween weekend!

Since 2008, dancers gather from all around the East Coast and far beyond each side of the continent and across oceans to dance and dance, together day and night, and celebrate what this school has been standing for since its very beginning in 1998.

This year, we celebrate 25 years!



photo credit: Alain Wong

# WE ARE ON A MISSION

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CCX offers the best of the original dance exchanges: a celebration of jazz dance and music through the lens and gems of a local scene. We invite people from around the globe to visit our home and feel inspired to come back year after year, deepening our connections and relationships.

Every year we renew our vision to share with you all who we are, where we're at, what moves us, and showcase our treasures.

CCX is first and foremost about community and hospitality, sharing and celebrating together with you what we love doing the most.

So thank you, from the bottom of our hearts, for accepting our invitation, for filling our venue up to the roof, and for swinging your heart out to our fantastic musicians!

Bienvenue chez nous ! Et for many of you, welcome back! We've missed you!

*Celebration of dance and music*



*photo credit: Caroline Dufour*

*Community and Hospitality*



*photo credit: Caroline Dufour*

*Renewal and Connection*



*photo credit: Caroline Dufour*

## FRIDAY

TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	HOSTS
7:30pm-8:30pm	Lindy Hop Intro	Main Hall	Sylwia B. Adrian WG.
8:30pm-3:00am	Stranger Things Dance Party	Main Hall	Swing Legacy DJ Adrian WG.
12:00am-3:00am	Fast Dance Party	Main Hall	DJ Leah J. DJ Gab K.
11:00pm-3:00am	Late Night Blues	Upstairs	DJ Ariane P. Dj Erica H.

## SATURDAY

TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	HOSTS
11am-2:00pm	Brunch (RSVP)	Rencontre des Saveurs 2275 Rue Sainte-Catherine E	
1:30pm-2:00pm	Jedi M&M Prelim	Main Hall	
2:00pm-3:00pm	Intro to Balboa	Main Hall	Cara D. Phil H.
2:00pm-3:00pm	Inter/adv Balboa	Upstairs	Valrie K. John D.
3:00pm-5:45pm	Social Dance	Main Hall	Andy Mac Hot 6 DJ Chris K.
7:30pm-8:30pm	All Level Class	Main Hall	Anaïs S. Alain F.
9:00pm-12:00am	Social Dance	Main Hall	Taylor Donaldson DJ Maria M.
10:45pm-11:15pm	Jedi M&M Finals	Main Hall	
11:30pm-12:30am	Buffet	Upstairs	
12:00am-late	Social Dance	Main Hall	Emily Estrella & her stardust stompers DJ Susan O.

## SUNDAY

TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	HOSTS
12:00pm-1:00pm	Short films by Mike Thibault	Main Hall	Mike T.
12:30pm-2:00pm	Brunch (trad. bagels & treats)		
1:30pm-3:00pm	Panel: 25 yrs of Community	Main Hall	
3:00pm-3:45pm	Soul & Gospel	Main Hall	Adrian WG. Gab K. Mike T.
4:00pm-6:45pm	Social Band	Main Hall	Soul Legacy DJ Gab K. DJ Mike T.

**RSVP FOR 11AM BRUNCH**

ONLY 38 SPOTS!

FIND THE RSVP LINK IN THE CAT'S CORNER FB PAGE

# JEDI MIX AND MATCH

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## Competition Details:

### Entry fee:

- \$10 payable at the door on Friday
- Please note: signing up for the Jedi competition doesn't grant you access to the Saturday dance events if you don't already have a pass.

### Schedule:

- Preliminaries: Saturday at 1:30 pm
- Finals: Saturday at 10:45 pm

### Prizes to win:

- Vernacular Spectacular 2023 in Montreal, QC
- Down By the Riverside 2024 in Beauce, QC
- Lindy Harvest 2024 in Edmonton, AB
- Canadian Swing Championships 2024

### What does a Jedi M&M entail?:

- A Jedi Mix and Match (M&M) is a hilariously entertaining competition where dancers take the floor blindfolded. It's a delightful, silly, and truly mesmerizing spectacle to witness



photo credit: Jessika Duquette



photo credit: Jessika Duquette



photo credit: Jessika Duquette

Everyone is welcome to join the Jedi Mix and Match competition for unforgettable fun, hilarious moves, camaraderie, and the chance to win passes to Canada's most beloved swing dance events. Swing on in for a side-splitting weekend of dance – may the force be with you!

# CCX SPIRIT AWARD

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## *Award Details:*

### **How the award works:**

Everyone will be able to vote throughout the weekend for their favorite 'NEW' person.

A 'new person' can be classified as: new to you or new to the community or new to dance, etc.

### **How to vote:**

- We'll have a box in the entrance hall, where people will be able to put a piece of paper with their vote

### **One Prize to win:**

- Glory and prosperity
- Vernacular Spectacular 2023 in Montreal, QC
- Down By the Riverside 2024 in Beauce, QC
- Lindy Harvest 2024 in Edmonton, AB
- Canadian Swing Championships 2024

*Winners will be  
announced on Sunday*





# SOUL SUNDAY

This Sunday is all about celebrating a big milestone in a lively and soulful way. Here's what's in store:

We'll watch some interesting short films put together by the self made film historian Mike Thibault from Rochester NY. It's an opportunity to see history in motion, immerse our senses in the aesthetics of the era and exchange with our peers about what we see, and how we interpret it.



During and after the films, we'll enjoy the CCX traditional brunch. There will be bagels and other Montreal treats. A relaxed time to spend with new and old friends.

Next, we'll bring together key actors of Cat's Corner Community. 25 years is a milestone! We'll reflect on how things have started, changed and evolved over time. We'll share our collective stories, experiences, and hopes for the future. It's a chance for all of us to connect, build a better understanding of where we are, and collectively push our limits toward our bigger dreams! Former and present directors will open the circle: Debbie Carman, Alain Wong, Sylwia Bielec, Meghan Gilmore & Anaïs Sékiné

Sunday of CCX always promises a soulful experience, both through the relaxed release of all we've given to the dance floor all weekend, and through the music itself.

This year we thought we'd take this experience to the next level. Therefore, Cat's Corner's gift to the 2023 CCX attendees is a full 9 PIECE BAND that will play for our favorite Soul Party of the year! Michaël Srey has built us a repertoire with the help of the magnificent performer and singer Sam I Am Montolla that some of you met last year! We already know it's going to be a blast!

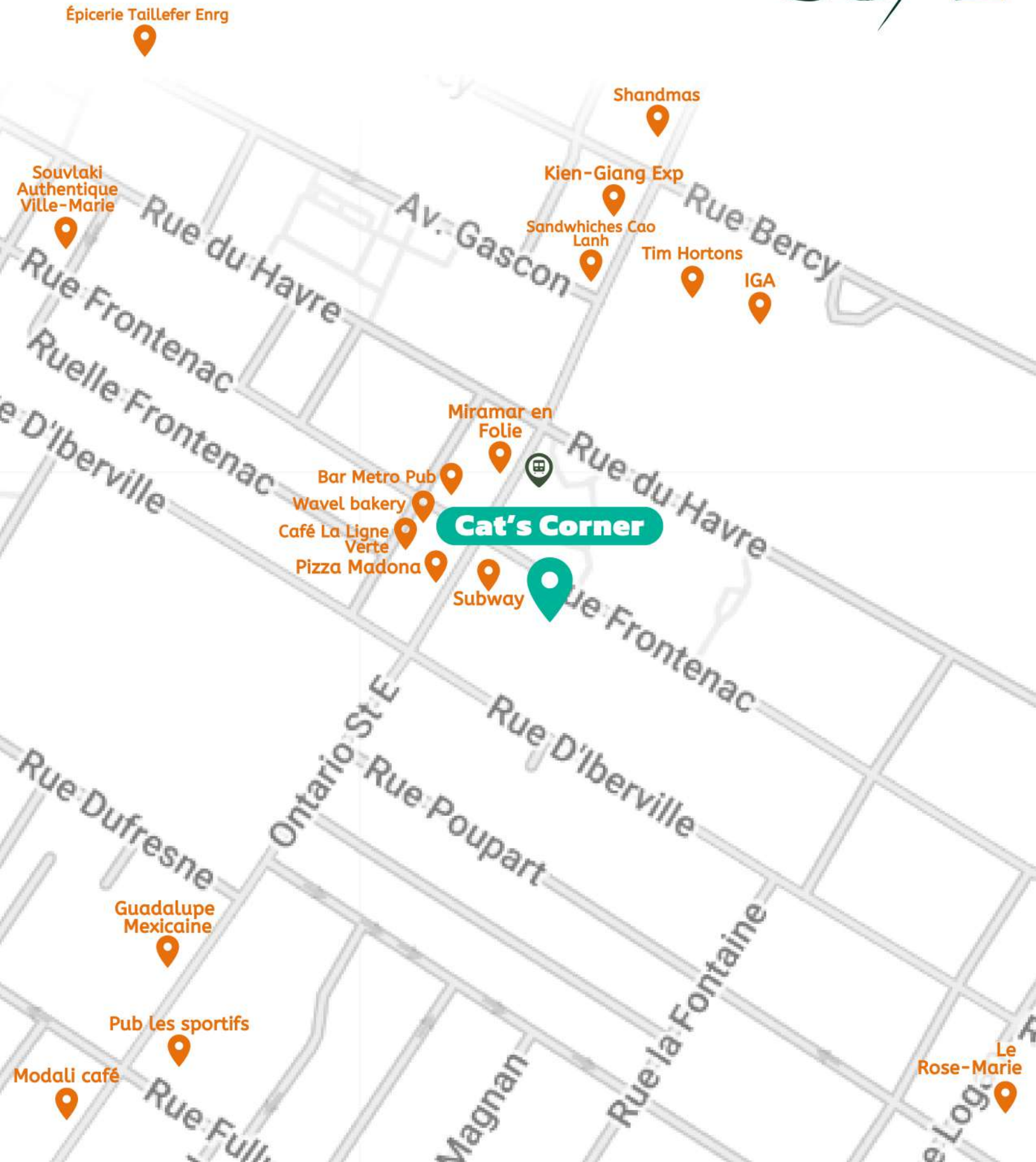
In a nutshell, this Sunday is all about culture, and community. It's a mix of film, food, conversation, and great music. We're in for a day to be remembered!



photo credit: Jessika Duquette

# WHERE TO EAT

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# MEET THE MUSICIANS

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## FRIDAY

### **SWING LEGACY BAND**

Band leader, Piano: Michaël Srey  
Trumpets: Daniel Boisvert-Couture,  
Daniella Heidi Carbert  
Trombone: Laurent Cauchy  
Saxophone Alto, Tenor + Clarinet 1:  
Jeremy Joe Sandfelder  
Saxophone Tenor + Clarinet 2: Alex  
Ambroise  
Guitar, Banjo: Andy Mac  
Bass: Ira Coleman  
Drums: Christina Beaudry

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**DJ ADRIAN WG**

**DJ LEAH JO**

**DJ GAB KERN**

**DJ ERICA HARRIS**

**DJ ARIANE PROTEAU**

## SATURDAY

### **TAYLOR DONALDSON ORCHESTRA**

Saxophones: Caoilainn Power,  
Benjamin Deschamps, Michael  
Johanesik, Melissa Pipe  
Trumpets: Jocelyn Couture, Andy  
King, Lex French  
Trombones: Taylor Donaldson (band  
leader), Dave Grott  
Piano: Marie-Fatima Rudolf  
Bass: Olivier Hébert  
Drums: Jonathan Gagné

### **EMILY ESTRELLA & THE STARDUST STOMPERS**

Emily Estrella: vocals (band leader)  
Piano: Peter Mika  
Guitar: Colin Perry  
Bass: Costa Zafirooulos  
Drums Sergio DiSanto  
Trumpet: Andy King

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### **ANDY MAC'S HOT 6**

Guitar: Andy Mac  
Guitar: Martin Gioani  
Bass: Srikanth Narayanan  
Trumpet: Blanche Moisan Méthé  
Violin: Brenn Dalle  
Clarinet: Aurélien Tomasi

**DJ MARIA M.**

**DJ SUSAN OLSON**

**DJ GAB KERN**

## SUNDAY

### **SOUL LEGACY BAND**

Singer: Sam I Am  
Piano/Band leader: Michaël Srey  
Trumpet: Scott Nevins  
Saxophone: Alex Ambroise  
Trombone: Margaret Donovan  
Guitar: Ryan Nadin  
Bass: Fred Doston  
Drum: Paulo Max Riccardo  
Percussion: Mikhael Daoudi

**DJ GAB KERN**

**DJ MIKE THIBAUT**

# MEET THE EVENT COORDINATORS

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**ARIANE PROTEAU**  
Deco, Food



**MÉLANIE LEBLANC**  
Deco



**GABRIELLE KERN**  
Music, DJs



**ALYSSA BEARD**  
Housing



**CHRISTOPHER KUDO**  
Volunteers



**JILLIAN COOLIDGE**  
Volunteers, Food



**MARIA M**  
Jedi M&M



**PHILIPPE GAUTHIER**  
Bar



**SKYLAR LAIDMAN**  
Bar

# MEET THE ARTISTS

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photo credit: Emmanuel Baquero

**MICHAEL SREY**  
band leader, pianist



**TAYLOR DONALDSON**  
band leader, trombonist



photo credit: Morgan Petroski

**EMILY ESTRELLA**  
band leader, singer



photo credit: Emmanuel Baquero

**ANDY MAC**  
band leader, guitarist



**SAM I AM MONTOLLA**  
guest singer



**MIKE THIBAULT**  
DJ, Film presenter

# MEET THE ARTISTS

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**MEGHAN GILMORE**  
Organizer, Emcee



**SYLWIA BIELEC**  
Teacher, Emcee



**ADRIAN WARNOCK GRAHAM**  
Teacher, DJ



**ANAÏS SÉKINÉ**  
Organizer, Teacher



**ALAIN FRAGMAN**  
Teacher



**CARA DEGRANDPRE**  
Teacher



**PHILIPPE HOLAS**  
Teacher



**VALERIE KITCHELL**  
Teacher



**JOHN DESCHENEAU**  
Teacher

# MEET THE ARTISTS

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Photo credit: Marc Montplaisir



**GABRIELLE KERN**  
DJ, Coordinator



**SUSAN OLSON**  
DJ



**LEAH JO**  
DJ



**ARIANNE PROTEAU**  
DJ, Coordinator



**ERICA HARRIS**  
DJ



**MARIA M.**  
DJ



**CHRISTOPHER KUDO**  
DJ, Coordinator

# MEET THE DESIGNERS

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**CAROLINE DUFOUR**  
Photographer



**VANESSA ERVIN**  
CCX booklet designer,  
Photographer



**YOULIA RAINOUS**  
CCX Logo Designer



**ALAIN WONG**  
Photographer



**NOURIT MASSON SÉKINÉ**  
Drawing of figures



# MEET THE AMAZING VOLUNTEERS

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None of this would be possible without you all.  
!!!THANK YOU!!!

Maria Sotirakos  
Mary Timmons  
Robyn Robichaud  
Mélanie Pasquarelli  
Bree Vought  
Sylwia Bielec  
Larian Hernandez  
Andreanne Leveillé  
Sybille Camblan  
Azi Wallmeyer  
Maria M.  
Annick Robert  
Bridget Foley  
Philippe Holas  
Erica Harris  
Cassie Anderson  
Valérie Savard  
Skylar Laidman  
Theo Mekondongo  
Vanessa Ervin  
Megan Sydiaha  
Simon Gauvin  
Aronne Clarke  
Stephanie Taylor  
Daphna Harel  
Felix Rioux Sabourin

Claudia Joyal Laplante  
Davis Thurber  
Manon de la Durantye  
Christopher Kudo  
Alcina Chiu  
Oshean Juneja  
Shay Logan  
Grey Cooper  
Justin Chan  
Marie-Josée Lebel  
Keijo Jacobs  
Laia Fibla  
Alyssa Beard  
Jade Menard  
Jillian Coolidge  
Diana Halfpenny  
Arianne Proteau  
Gabrielle Kern  
Melanie LeBlanc  
Cara De Grandpré  
Skylar Laidman  
Phil Gauthier  
Hawley Jean  
Eileen Jones  
Kofi Arthiabah  
Tanya Teal

...

and everyone else who gave us a hand  
this weekend.

# MEET OUR PARTNERS

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**APÉRO BALBOA MONTREAL**  
Saturday Bal event



**BARRELHOUSE CLUB**  
Friday Blues Late Night



**AVANT GARDE**  
Beers for the Bar

# YOUR NEXT VISIT AT CAT'S CORNER

## VERNACULAR SPECTACULAR

APRIL 11-14, 2024

Cat's Corner has built a new event in 2019 to put into action some key elements of our vision for our dance community.

As guests in the culture, our intention is to re-center the Africanity of Jazz dance by inviting artists who embody its original values. Jazz is revisited from a broader cultural context, from multiple lived experiences, from its deep cultural memory. What is jazz in its blackness, its transgenerational & diasporic context? And who are we within this space?

The festival aims at immersing the participants in the form and opening a whole new meaning to our collective experience.

In 2024, we will welcome back artists who've already shared space with us, so we can deepen our learning with them:

The Lord of Swing himself, Chester A. Whitmore, Award winning Holla Jazzdirector Natasha Powell and former Nyata Nyata dancer, Sarah Elola.

Obviously, we'll be expecting you!  
Mark your calendar!

<https://www.catscorner.ca/en/vernacularspectacular2024/>

Natasha Powell



photo credit: Alvin Collantes

Chester A. Whitmore



photo credit: Emmanuelle Baquero

Sarah Elola



photo credit: Stacy Ann Lee

NATASHA POWELL

CHESTER WHITMORE

# VERNACULAR SPECTACULAR

AN IMMERSIVE JAZZ DANCE EXPERIENCE

APRIL 11-14, 2024

SPECIAL CLASS WITH SARAH ELOLA

# OUR LOCATION AND CONTACT

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OCTOBER 27 - 29, 2023

1956 rue Frontenac, Montreal, QC, H2K 2Z1

For more information, call or email us at:

☎ 514-874-9846

✉ [info@catscorner.ca](mailto:info@catscorner.ca)

🌐 [www.catscorner.ca](http://www.catscorner.ca)

📷 @catscornermontreal



# CODE OF CONDUCT

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We consider that it's the responsibility of all Cat's corner staff to participate in the creation of safe spaces at our venue and within the activities we organize. We also believe that it takes a village to sustain and stand by values of mutual respect and inclusion. We invite everyone to be active participants in making everyone feel safe, seen and heard.

## ZERO TOLERANCE

We do not tolerate any form of harassment or violence, may it be physical, verbal or emotional. We put a great care in creating a hospitable space for all. However, we won't allow any expression of hate, discrimination or disrespect.  
----- No racism - No sexism -No homophobia - No transphobia -----  
----- No ageism - No ableism -----

## CONSENT

Consent is at the heart of all our relationships. You are allowed to refuse an invitation or to communicate your discomfort to your dance partners. If for any reason, you do not want to act on your own, you are highly encouraged to ask for support to a friend or to any of our staff members. We will do our best to act as mediators or find more adequate support depending on the context. At any given time, we invite everyone to deescalate an issue using non violent communication and kindness.

## PERSONAL HYGIENE

Social dancing involves getting in physical proximity. We ask you to care for your personal hygiene so the experience is enjoyable for everyone: shower, brush your teeth, bring a change of clothes, freshen up regularly in the bathroom.

## ALCOHOL & DRUGS

We reserve the right to refuse access to our venue or to ask someone to leave the premises. We will enforce this rule when someone is visibly under the influence of alcohol, drugs, causing discomfort to the members of the community or any other reason at our discretion.

## WALKING HOME ALONE

Although Montreal is generally a safe city, there are many reasons why you might not want to walk alone at night. Do not hesitate to communicate with our staff and we will help you find a crowd to walk with or a ride home.

More:

<https://www.catscorner.ca/en/code-of-conduct/>

# DANCE AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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We believe dance to be a spiritual experience.

It is an opportunity for everyone stepping onto the dance floor to connect to something greater than themselves.

We dance to music created a hundred years ago that expressed a time and place in human history.

We enact the movements of a dance form that was fiercely expressed by a people, at a specific time and place in human history.

This dance form was ahead of its time. It paved the way for equal say between partners, for self-determination, for reclaiming body and soul, for defiant joy.

Jazz emerged within the black experience of the middle passage. It reflects the experience of exile, annihilation, resilience, hope, and the coming together of individuals, sharing in good and bad time, perfecting a craft, elevating it.

Jazz is eloquent, sophisticated, profound, emotional, multifaceted. A form that is free and disciplined, building on what came before and adding anew. A living cultural testimony of human creativity and genius against all odds.

As time has passed, leading toward some changes and victories for social justice, struggles and violence still remain, taking on new forms.

"My humanity is bound up in yours." - Desmond Tutu.

"I am not free while any woman is unfree,  
even when her shackles are very different from my own." - Audre Lorde

We dance so we can connect.

Therefore we must seek knowledge, awareness and actively stand up.

It is natural then that we must open our eyes to what we benefit from and not take for granted what seems given.

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# DANCE AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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The land that we dance on also has a history and a present. It is more than ever the center of ongoing struggles. First Nations, Inuit and Metis people are going through some of the most devastating consequences of human imperialism, thirst to conquer, to control and possess. Beyond truth and reconciliation, there is a fight for one thing:

"Land Back"

Let's sit for a moment with that thought and reality, and how much it would impact our daily lives. The path forward demands a price to our comfort. And that goes with all forms of participation toward social justice for all.

We begin with the invitation to a ritual.

In a land acknowledgement, we acknowledge the physical territories, the names of the lands as they were and are called by their first inhabitants. We acknowledge the name of the people and what those land allowed them to do. Before Jacques Cartier, the Christopher Columbus of Canada, Montreal was known as Tiohtiake (Joh-jah-Gé). It was a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee (more specifically the Kanyen'kehà:ka) and Anishinabeg nations. It is since not only a land, but also cultures, languages, social structures that have been ripped away.

We must not remain indifferent. One by one, we learn the names, we make space within ourselves to create a relationship. We honour who came before us on this land, and we seek ways to reconcile our heritage and our common existence.

It is our commitment.

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# DANCE AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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## RESOURCES #1

<https://reseautlnetwork.com/>  
<https://native-land.ca/>  
<http://nfc.m.org/>  
<https://www.rcaa.q.info/>  
<https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/>  
<https://nctr.ca/documents/rapports/>  
<https://resilienceproject.ca/en/>  
<https://www.caut.ca/content/guide-acknowledging-first-peoples-traditional-territory>  
<https://www.orangeshirtday.org>  
<https://www.torontoindigenoushr.com>

Chelsea Vowel, *Indigenous writes : a guide to First Nations, Métis & Inuit issues in Canada*, Highwater Press, 2016

Chelsea Vowel, *Écrits autochtones : comprendre les enjeux des Premières Nations, des Métis et des Inuit au Canada*, Varia, 2021

Bob Joseph, *21 things you may not know about the Indian Act. Helping Canadians Make Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples a Reality*, Indigenous Relations Press, 2018

## RESOURCES #2

<https://blacklindyhoppersfund.org>  
<https://www.frankiemanningfoundation.org/archive-of-early-lindy-hop-2/>  
<https://www.collectivevoicesforchange.org>  
<https://pacificswingdancefoundation.org/movetogether/>  
<https://www.taplovetour.com>

## AUTHORS TO SEEK (AMONG OTHERS):

- Albert Murray,
- Norma Miller
- Katherine Dunham
- Frankie Manning
- Brenda Dixon Gotschild
- Katrina Hazzard Gordon
- Jacqui Malone
- Moncell Durdon
- bell hooks
- Audre Lorde
- Patricia Hill Collins
- Thomas De Frantz
- Angela Davis
- Langston Hughes
- Malcolm X
- Jayna Brown
- Robyn Maynard
- Lawrence Hill.
- Richard Wright
- Ralph Ellison
- Zora Neale Hurston
- Sadiya Hartman
- Maya Angelou
- James Baldwin
- Toni Morrison

Thank you Kateri Aubin Dubois, translator of the Indigenous Ally Toolkit, for bringing the Réseau's work to Cat's Corner's attention a few years ago, and sharing your beadwork art with the community.

Thank you Sylwia Bielec, for regularly sharing reflections and learnings from your experience working with the Cree School Board. Thank you Valérie Savard for offering to review the writing of our first land acknowledgement and helping with the list of resources.

Land and culture acknowledgement written by Anaïs Sékiné.





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CAT'S CORNER  
COMMUNAUTÉ SWING & TAP  
25<sup>th</sup>  
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