

SPRING 2015  
THE MOVEABLE FEAST



# IN SITU

## The Moveable Feast

Concocted by a De Propere Fanfare delegation

Presented by Curtain Razors Theatre, Common Weal Community Arts, Cathedral Village Arts Festival and Dunlop Art Gallery

### Picnic Concert

MONDAY, MAY 18, 12:00 PM

Les Sherman Park

### Parade Spectacle

SATURDAY, MAY 23, 11:00 AM

13th Avenue

## And the walls come tumbling down

by Dr. Kathryn Ricketts, University of Regina

We all remember the joys of the marching band, the red double breasted jackets with brass buttons, the polished white boots and glistening instruments refracting the sun back into our eyes and the knees lifting high propelling this neatly rhythmic procession through freshly washed urban streets. This crisp organized energy usually marshals in the football season, the national exhibition or even the arrival of the Easter bunny. I must admit to me there was always something sad about these events, perhaps because even as a small child I could read the vacancy in the eyes of the paraders and the staid quality of their mechanic waves. Fast forward to another kind of marching band...a large-scale, carnivalesque street performance called *De Propere Fanfare*.



Here is a parade, but with everyone wearing mismatched clothes, playing mismatched instruments, with mismatched body types, just about everything mismatched, performing with chaotic energy. Wonderful! They are all playing the same song (I am almost sure of it) and they are weaving a serpentine pattern in and around their spectators. They all seem to have a joyous and ironic smile as if to say, “you may be enjoying this but not as much as me!”

There are 150 paraders that come and go, most of the time making their regular rehearsals for two hours every week. They are based in Ghent, Belgium, but frequently load into buses and tour, performing in Spain, Wales, France, Holland, or Slovenia. A few composers are responsible for making musical sense of the performers’ diversity of experience, the range of instruments they play, and the scope of their physical abilities. Clearly there is one very common thread, they come together to feel the potential of a collective voice, a voice that is powerful, playful, and political. Ries de Vuyst, one of the collective’s members speaks poetically and endearingly to the genesis of this group. Smacking of an old fable, he explained that a group of them decided to take the music that they regularly played in a local inn to the streets, specifically to the local art gallery. They decided they had nothing to do the next day, so they would play as hard as they could, circumscribing the building seven times to see if the walls may tumble down. I understand this act as more than quaint mischief or merrymaking, but rather, as a pointedly political act, intending to dismantle the traditional edifices that privilege theory when it comes to art making. *Fanfare* is all about the practice, the joy of making and doing together.



JUPITER

Pedestrian

Pha

NEW LEANS

Theatre director Augusto Boal, considered a cultural activist in his work in 1960s Brazil, moves into this space and dissolves the reverence of these distinctions, claiming, “Theatre is a vocation for all human beings: It is the true nature of humanity.”<sup>1</sup> This notion turns the conventions of audience and performer on its head, allows for duality between fact and fiction, and creates a hybrid space, an active, dynamic forum inviting self-reflection and a consideration of alternative ways of living and being in the world. This call to reexamine and trouble conventional methods and viewpoints is what infuses *Fanfare* with its power. The performances also call to mind the Agitprop Theatre of the 1920s (its name a portmanteau of “agitation” and “propaganda”), a form of temporal caravan theatre that problematized social norms via ridicule. Boal notes that this kind of kind deconstruction is driven by the need to create dialogue. In the case of *Fanfare*, their dialogue encourages people to join in with song, stamping feet, and joyous abandon.

de Vuyst reveals that it is working out of a historical stigmatization of this political work, that they have been coined *De Vieze Gasten* (The Dirty Guys). With raucous spirit, they rename their tour de force *The De Propere Fanfare* (*The Clean Marching Band*). But it is not enough to have sparkling philosophies, they are coupled with cleaning implements: plungers and brooms and dishrags that are manipulated about in street dance and then offered up to delighted onlookers.



There is a complexity of spirit in this collective of street musicians and dancers. We see an embrace of the individual and collective voice with a politic that remains fierce and courageous in the face of hegemony. Although comprised of doctors, teachers, bakers, psychologists, shop assistant, policeman, soccer players to name a few, who all (by the way) have something to do the next day, I still see them playing as hard as they can and circumscribing the walls of conventions seven times just to see if they may crumble down.

In Regina, de Vuyst will be joined with two other artists from Ghent – Koen de Ruyck and Miranda Dielemen. Working in residence with local artists, they will create a Regina version of *De Propere Fanfare* for the 2015 Cathedral Village Arts Festival. Here they will bring their distinctive language to meet our prairie spirit, fusing two place-based sensibilities to create a hybrid entity with a common pumping heart.

<sup>1</sup> Augusto Boal, *Legislative Theatre: Using Performance to make politics* (London: Routledge: 1998), 14.





## CREDITS

THE MOVEABLE FEAST, 2015.

All photos: Gerry Ruecker, courtesy of Common Weal Community Arts



DUNLOP  
ART  
GALLERY

## Central Gallery & Mediatheque

2311 - 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue

### HOURS

Monday through Thursday  
9:30 am - 9:00 pm  
Friday 9:30 am - 6:00 pm  
Saturday 9:30 am - 5:00 pm  
Sunday 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm  
*Closed statutory holidays*

## Sherwood Gallery

6121 Rochdale Boulevard

### HOURS

Monday 9:30 am to 6:00 pm  
Tuesday & Wednesday 9:30am to 9:00 pm  
Thursday & Friday 9:30 am to 6:00 pm  
Saturday 9:30 am to 5:00 pm  
Sunday 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm  
*Closed statutory holidays*

## Office

2311-12<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Regina, Saskatchewan  
Canada S4P 3Z5

### HOURS

Monday through Friday  
9:30 am to 5:00 pm  
*Closed statutory holidays*



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