

TO SPOIL THE PARTY, TO SET OUR JOY ABLAZE

Montreal, September 27 2016 – The self-run organisation JOURNÉE SANS CULTURE invites you to the launch of a one-of-a-kind publication this Thursday October 20 at 5 pm, at bar Le Ritz PDB on Jean-Talon Street. This edited collection brings together texts produced in the wake of conversations held last October 2015 at Théâtre Aux Écuries during a day of reflection that doubled as a symbolic strike. The publication tackles issues of vital concern to artists and cultural workers, shining a fresh light on the cultural milieu.

Last October 21 2015, more than three hundred arts and cultural workers convened at Théâtre Aux Écuries in Montreal to take part in the first **Journée sans culture (JSC)**. The daylong event marked a moment of collective pause from the frenetic rush that often sidetracks us from a fundamental question: what do we want? Self-organised on a volunteer basis, at a distance from existing institutional frameworks, this unprecedented action was accomplished with the support of more than 50 artists and cultural workers from the artistic milieu.

This publication is an **offshoot of the various discussions** that were held at the tables and thematic spaces throughout that day. Texts from discussion moderators are joined by others commissioned by the editorial team to **explore matters of concern not sufficiently addressed** during the day.



At the core of the issues examined in the book are the precarious and depleting working conditions affecting artists and cultural workers. The fifteen contributions include: *“Between Gift, Resilience and Exhaustion: How to Work and to What Extent?”* by Caroline Blais, Virginie Jourdain, and Mercedes Pacho; *“Only the hardy need apply (with herniated disks),”* a stinging memorandum by ex-dancer Catherine Viau’s to a milieu that favours performance over well-being; *“The Market, Philanthropy, or the State: Who Supports Whom?”* by Edith Brunette and Catherine Lavoie-Marcus, an illuminating analysis of the pressures placed on artists and organisations to secure private funding; *“The Artist-as-Entrepreneur: The Only Remaining Horizon?”* by Pablo Rodriguez, which questions the praise bestowed on entrepreneurial status; and *“Our White Theatre,”* Marilou Craft’s unflinching confrontation with racism in Quebec theatre. In short, **a multiplicity of voices** – some more intimate, others more analytical – that unfurl across this combustive collection.

The publication also includes forms of expression, both evocative and clever: a cartoon spread signed by Julie Delporte, a mind map created by Collectif de la Dérive (Baie-Comeau) during the JSC 2015, a by-the-hour account of the day recorded on the fly at Théâtre Aux Écuries by Priscilla Guy and Arkadi Lavoie Lachapelle, and more. This kaleidoscope of voices lingers resoundingly on a single question: ***What do we hold that is so precious that losing it would be unthinkable, and at the same time so fragile that we dare not raise our voices in its defense?***

The breadth of these critiques must not be allowed to overshadow the affirmation of what moves and matters to us. As regards artists and cultural workers, this publication is equally committed to **setting our joy ablaze**. The upcoming launch on October 20 is organized in that image: beginning with a festive 5 à 7 sprinkled with readings and performances – when the public and press will be able to get copies of the publication – followed by an affordable meal, and capped with a dance party accompanied by invited DJs!

THURSDAY OCTOBER 20 2016 AT THE RITZ PDB
(179 Jean-Talon Street West, Montreal)

5 pm–7 pm / Presentation of the publication, readings and performances
7 pm–10pm / Meal for \$5 and continuation of performances
10 pm / Dance party with invited DJs

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