

PRESS KIT

ZONE BY MARCEL DUBÉ

DIRECTED BY **JEAN STÉPHANE ROY**

WITH NICOLAS DESFOSSÉS, DAVE JENNISS, MAXIME LAVOIE, RICHARD J. LÉGER,
FRÉDÉRIQUE THÉRIEN AND JEAN-SIMON TRAVERSY

FEBRUARY 1-12, 2012 AT THE BERKELEY STREET THEATRE – UPSTAIRS, TORONTO.



Illustration : Philippe Béha

A COPRODUCTION OF THÉÂTRE FRANÇAIS DE TORONTO AND THÉÂTRE LA CATAPULTE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 19, 2011 to February 12, 2012

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Zone: A Great Love Story Set Against a Backdrop of Smuggling in the Slums of 1950s Montréal.

Toronto, December 19, 2011 –Théâtre français de Toronto (TfT) is pleased to present *Zone* by Marcel Dubé, in co-production with Théâtre la Catapulte (Ottawa), at the Berkeley Street Theatre, February 1 to 12, 2012.

A long-awaited production, the play received the coveted *Coup de foudre* award at Contact ontariois in January 2011. The actors were treated to a spontaneous standing ovation: the gamble paid off for director Jean Stéphane Roy, who succeeded in moving audiences with Marcel Dubé's script, where love, youth, and death mix in 1950s Montréal. A cross between *Robin Hood* and *West Side Story*, Marcel Dubé's great script never ceases to surprise with its simple poetry and disconcerting topicality.

The play will tour throughout Ontario in the spring of 2012, following a run at Théâtre français de Toronto February 1 to 12, 2012, and at the La Nouvelle Scène in Ottawa on February 25.

Direction: **Jean Stéphane Roy.**

With **Nicolas Desfossés, Dave Jenniss, Maxime Lavoie, Richard J. Léger, Frédérique Thérien** and **Jean-Simon Traversy.**

Production Team: Dramaturge **Antoine Côté Legault** | Set and Props **Dominic Manca** | Lighting **Guillaume Houët** | Costumes **Nina Okens** | Soundscape **Jean-Michel Ouimet** | Stage Management **Alain Lauzon** | Production Management **Lindsay Tremblay.**

A co-production of Théâtre français de Toronto and Théâtre la Catapulte (Ottawa).

Théâtre français de Toronto wishes to thank its sponsors: TD Financial Group, Show Sponsor, and Sun Life Financial, Surtitles Sponsor.

***Zone* by Marcel Dubé, February 1 to 12, 2012.**

Théâtre français de Toronto | Berkeley Street Theatre Upstairs – 26 Berkeley Street

Previews: February 1 and 2, 8 pm – **Opening:** February 3, 8 pm – **Evening performances:** Wednesday to Saturday, 8 pm – **Saturday matinees:** February 4 and 11, 3:30 pm – **Sunday matinees:** February 5 and 12, 2:30 pm – **Surtitled English performances:** Wednesday and Friday, 8 pm, Saturdays, 3:30 pm and Saturday, February 11, 8 pm.

Tickets: Adults: \$33 to \$57 | Seniors (65 and over): \$28 to \$57.

Box Office: (416) 534-6604 or 1-800-819-4981 and www.theatrefrancais.com

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Zone at Contact Ontario

Credit : Sylvain Sabatié

SYNOPSIS

Marcel Dubé was one of the most significant figures during Québécois theatre's emancipation from the dark Duplessis years. His works are typified by an honest and simple poetic voice, reflective of a daily and a social reality that never cease (ceases?) to surprise by their lasting relevance.

Zone is an exploration of misdirected youth.

Moineau, Tit-Noir, Passe-Partout, and Ciboulette form the Tarzan Gang, smuggling along the Canada-US border, until one of them does the unthinkable.

The drama of the piece stems from an unattainable dream: "He wanted out of a certain zone of society where human happiness is almost impossible," explains the chief of police.

THE MAGIC OF THEATRE

THÉÂTRE FRANÇAIS DE TORONTO'S ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Over 40 years ago, I was studying at the *Conservatoire d'art dramatique* in Montréal, where I worked on the character of Tarzan from Marcel Dubé's *Zone*. What pleased me the most straight off was the urgency, the fear of being caught by the police, the chance to play a delinquent (which might have kept me from being one) and especially, the love story – not only Tarzan's and Ciboulette's but also the friendship (a kind of love) of the gang. A tight gang of youths who do things together, to feel alive together.

After rereading the play, I see the same urgency again. Three cheers for theatre that lets us experience emotions today through stories from another era. When Théâtre la Catapulte and we decided to make our five-year plan to offer quality theatre on tour throughout Ontario, we hadn't chosen all five plays. And I think that we have played well: we started with *Les Médecins de Molière* and after that, we offered *Les Fridolinades* (closer to us) and then, *Zone* (closer to young people)... but always with the general public in mind.

Why *Zone*? Because of magic. When we do theatre, we can play all sorts of characters. We can play killers without hurting anyone. We can play doctors, without ever operating on anyone. We can play farmers, without ever having to smell cow manure. The magic for us actors also makes us believe that we are those we are pretending to be. And it's up to the audience to agree to believe for an hour and a half the conventions and stories we're telling. With *Zone*, the love story begins but we shall see that stories don't always end well.

Marcel Dubé, in his first plays, *Zone* and *Le Simple soldat*, empowers this magic by painting his era with larger-than-life but yet such human characters that they move us. Tarzan and Joseph Latour have that rebellious (not to mention cocky) side that we recognize, or if not, would like to see a bit in ourselves. They have an uncommon longing for freedom, being cuffed by a world that has clipped their wings.

Why *Zone*? Because ultimately, deep down, it's feelings that count. That makes good drama, especially when it happens close to home!

Think about it: this is magic ...let's enter the ZONE!



Artistic Director, Théâtre français de Toronto

ZONE IS NOT A STREET GANG STORY

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

« I had read *Zone* in high school like almost all francophones in this country. I had retained a vague and tedious memory of it. My teenage memory reminded me of the effort it takes to read theatre. Today, having read thousands of plays over my lifetime, I rediscovered *Zone* with wonder. I am charmed by the young man, just twenty years old, who took the trouble to get out his pencil and dared to commit to paper what was a revolution: a dramatic play written expressly for us, “*les nègres blancs d’Amérique*”: the French Canadians.

The play was for a long time treated as if it was about a street gang. *Zone*'s protagonists are not delinquents, they're outlaws! A band of Robin Hoods who steal from the richest to help the poor. The play speaks not of violence but of dashed hopes. To make us understand how these characters have good intentions, Marcel Dubé transposed, through this band of friends, the story of Christ and his apostles. By making Tarzan the allegoric figure of a French-Canadian Christ, the author helps us to understand the fragility of minorities and the traps ensnaring us. This play captures the universal language of the world's discarded people. This play was written in 1953 in a period of great political and economic darkness. With the decline of French across the country, including in Québec, with the Harper government putting unilingual anglophones in major positions of the parliamentary system, with Air Canada and Canada Post not respecting the official languages law, with the economic crisis that continues to assert itself ... can we say that the situation has really changed?

Marcel Dubé has literally created a work that has touched and still touches our collective unconscious. *Zone* was a cry: today its echo reminds us that we belong more than ever on our continent and that our difference makes us strong. »

Jean Stéphane Roy

Artistic Director, Théâtre le Catapulte

PRODUCTION HISTORY

After *Les Médecins de Molière* and *Les Fridolinades* directed by Jean Stéphane Roy and Perry Schneiderman, respectively, *Zone* is the latest co-production of Théâtre français de Toronto and Théâtre la Catapulte of Ottawa.

A long-awaited production, the play was named *Coup de foudre* at the 2011 Contact ontario festival. The audience was moved by the actors' performances (Richard Léger, Anie Richer, Nicolas Desfossés, and Maxime Lavoie) showcased on Friday, January 14, 2011 at the Shenkman Arts Centre in Orléans, where the cast enjoyed a standing ovation! After just a ten-hour rehearsal period, director Jean Stéphane Roy managed to touch the audience with this Marcel Dubé script, where love, youth, and death dangerously collide against a backdrop of smuggling in 1950s Montréal.



Credit : Sylvain Sabatié

The play will tour throughout Ontario in the spring of 2012, following a run at Théâtre français de Toronto, February 1 – 12, 2012, and at La Nouvelle Scène, Ottawa, on February 25.

BIOGRAPHIES

MARCEL DUBÉ – THE PLAYWRIGHT



Since his debut as a young playwright in the 1950's, Marcel Dubé has been a tremendously important figure in Canadian theatre history. He has written a staggering number of dramatic scripts for the stage, television, and radio and has widely contributed, as a journalist, to numerous francophone periodicals. His brilliant career has inspired many.

He was born in Montréal's East End [...]. Dubé began writing and producing plays that enjoyed remarkable popularity while still a post-secondary student at the Université de Montréal. In 1951 he founded a theatrical troupe with friends called La Jeune Scène. He also received a grant to study theatre in France.

His early plays including *De l'autre côté du mur* (premiered 1952), *Zone* (premiered 1953) and *Un Simple soldat* (premiered 1958) characterize working-class Québécois life. The plays were innovative and very well received by an enthusiastic populace. Dubé has been credited with laying the groundwork for a regional Québécois theatre. [...]

Marcel Dubé is an ardent supporter and activist for the preservation of the French language in Canada and abroad. In 1979 he co-founded the Secrétariat des peuples francophones. He also served on the board of the Conseil de la langue française and was president of the Rencontres francophones du Québec.

His many awards include le Prix Athanase-Davide (1973), la Médaille de l'Académie des lettres du Québec (1986) and multiple Governor General's Awards (1962 and 2005).

Source: Athabasca University website, athabascau.ca.



JEAN STÉPHANE ROY – DIRECTION

Since finishing the theatre program at Collège Lionel Groulx in 1988, Jean Stéphane has acted in more than sixty productions, including as Cuirette in the Michel Tremblay play *Hosanna*, with Pleiades Theatre in Toronto. In addition to acting, he writes and has over a hundred productions to his credit. He has received several awards including the Masque for outstanding Franco-Canadian production for *L'Avare* by Molière, staged at Théâtre français de Toronto. In 2007/08, he directed Molière's *Le Misanthrope*, also at Tft. His versatility has led him to explore all aspects of his craft: lighting, costumes, set design, writing, and soundscape. Since 2008, he has also taught acting and directing at the University of Ottawa. Most of his work today centres around directing.



NICOLAS DESFOSSÉS – TARZAN

Originally from Hearst in Northern Ontario, Nicolas grew up in Gatineau. He received his theatrical training at the University of Ottawa. Over the years, he has appeared in various productions around the National Capital Region. Last winter, he was a part of the *Zurbain* acting/reading team, during the Théâtre Le Clou portion at the National Arts Centre. As an actor, he has trod the boards of Théâtre de l'Île on a few occasions, notably in Oscar Wilde's *L'Importance d'être Constant* and last summer, in the Michel Marc Bouchard comedy *Les Papillons de nuit*. He has been seen in *Gatineau by night* by Luc Moquin, a Théâtre Dérives Urbaines workshop, which received a full production in the fall. He was also in Théâtre Belvédère debut production, *Autopsie de biscuits chinois*, a co-production with Théâtre du Trillium from Ottawa. He is delighted to play Tarzan this year in Marcel Dubé's *Zone*, a Théâtre La Catapulte/Théâtre français de Toronto co-production. Their performance at Contact ontariois earned them the 2011 *Coup de foudre* award.



DAVE JENISS – MOINEAU

Born to a Métis father, Dave Jeniss's artistic path is tinged with Native culture. Since 2004, he has been seen onstage in such productions as Théâtre Ondinnok's *Hamlet le Malécite* by Yves Sioui-Durand and Jean-Frédéric Messier (directed by Jean-Frédéric Messier) and, at Théâtre Prospero, in *Wulustek* (directed by Peter Bataklijev), a play that he wrote in 2008 and which was remounted at the same theatre in the spring of 2011. In 2010, he finished writing his first feature film, *Chaman* (produced by Alouki Films Projeks); at the same time he began writing his second theatrical play, *Takuatshin*, under the supervision of Théâtre de la Catapulte. Moreover, he was part of the cast of *Contes urbains 2009* by Yvan Bienvenue at Théâtre de la Licorne. His comic side was on display this summer at Théâtre l'Île de Gatineau in the production *Les Papillons de nuit* (directed by Mathieu Charrette). On television, he has most notably appeared in *La Grande bataille 2* (directed by Alain Chicoine, produced by Zingaro Film) and as *Mouki*, in the series of the same name, directed by Sonia Boileau on APTN, the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network.



MAXIME LAVOIE – PASSE-PARTOUT

Maxime Lavoie is a student at the University of Ottawa and will complete his bachelor's degree in theatre in two years. Over the course of his studies, Maxime has had the opportunity to take part in several productions such as *Turcaret* by Alain-René Lesage (La Comédie des Deux Rives, 2008), *Lavalléville* by André Paiement, and *Rappel* by Patrick Leroux (Théâtre Tremplin, 2008 and 2010, respectively). In 2011, Maxime, taking his first professional steps in his career, appeared onstage in March for the company Dérives Urbaines in the Luc Moquin play *Gatineau by Night*, and in June with Théâtre de Dehors in *Retour à Pripyat* by Philippe Landry as part of the Ottawa Fringe Festival. Last September, he also acted with the group 6_TEM in an adaptation of *Woyzcek* in the festival FOÉ.



RICHARD J. LÉGER – THE POLICEMAN

Actor and playwright, Richard has appeared onstage in Michel Marc Bouchard's *Le Désir* at Théâtre de l'Île, Luc Moquin's *Et si on tuait l'ennui ?* with Dérives urbaines à Gatineau (a part for which he received a nomination for actor of the year – male from the *Prix Rideau 2009*), *Iphigénie en trichromie* by Michel Ouellette, a co-production of Théâtre la Catapulte and Théâtre du Nouvel Ontario, and in *Plaisirs de l'intelligence : Montaigne* at the National Arts Centre. He has also been artistic director of Dramamuse, resident theatre company of the Canadian Museum of Civilization. On television, he has acted in *Légendes urbaines à Canal D*, *Histoire Max* I and II, and *Sciences point com* on TfO, where he can be seen in the new series for 9-to-12-year-olds, *Motel Monstre* beginning January 2012. Richard was a 2001 Trillium Awards finalist for his play *Faust : chroniques de la démesure*. He premiered his humorous tale *L'Alphabet du parfait mari* in February 2010 for the *Contes nomades* series at the NAC Fourth Stage and later in 2010 toured Eastern Ontario. He is currently collaborating on *Pop Fiction*, a new play for Théâtre Groupe des deux.



FRÉDÉRIQUE THÉRIEN – CIBOULETTE

Soon to graduate from the University of Ottawa with a specialization in theatre, this up-and-coming young actor began her professional career in full force in a Théâtre La Catapulte production, *L'Illusion comique* by Pierre Corneille in the fall of 2009. She continued her studies while working as a rehearsal manager for some companies in the Ottawa-Gatineau region before landing a major role at Théâtre de l'île in *La Cousine Germaine* in the summer of 2010, a production for which she received a *Prix Rideau Award* nomination in the emerging artist, acting, category, in the spring of 2011. She was seen this past summer in a Théâtre Belvédère comedy, *Adieu Beauté*, by François Archambault. Working in theatre for more than ten years, Frédérique is a versatile young actor who has followed a long course of training and workshops touching on several artistic spheres (singing, dancing, playwriting, stage acting). She is proud to be a part of the superb *Zone* team.



JEAN-SIMON TRAVERSY – TIT-NOIR

Jean-Simon Traversy graduated from the Conservatoire d'art dramatique de Montréal in 2007. Since then, he has acted in *Les Fourberies de Scapin* by Molière (Repercussion Theatre), *Tendres Totems et Croquis Cruels* by Francis Monty (Théâtre Juré Craché), *De l'amour et des restes humains* by Brad Fraser (Théâtre à 4 pattes), *Pour faire une histoire courte* by Frédéric Blanchette (La Parade sans originaux), *Macbett* by Eugène Ionesco (Absolu Théâtre), *Cap sur Feydeau* (La Parade sans originaux) et *Le Père Noël est une ordure* (La Parade sans originaux). In 2008, he formed the company La Parade sans originaux with Stéphanie Labbé and Anne Trudel. With his company, he staged the play *Super Poulet* by Stéphanie Labbé and *Farragut North* by Beau Willimon. *Zone* is his third collaboration with the Tft after *Fragments de mensonges inutiles* by Michel Tremblay and *L'École des femmes* by Molière, both directed by Diana Leblanc.



ANTOINE CÔTÉ LEGAULT – DRAMATURGE

Originally from Gatineau, Antoine Côté Legault is a true lover of theatre and writing. He received his BA in theatre from the University of Ottawa in 2009 and is currently completing his masters in theatre theory and dramaturgy there. At the same time, he enjoys playwriting, slam poetry, and sometimes likes to think he is an actor. He is co-author of *Autopsie de biscuits chinois* (2011, Théâtre Belvédère and Théâtre du Trillium) and has made his mark on Outaouais slam poetry scene in recent years. He advanced to the regional finals in 2008/09 and 2009/10, where he ranked third; thereby representing Outaouais in the 2010 Grand Slam. He is also included in the book *Slam poésie du Québec* (2010, Vent d'Ouest). In the summer of 2010, he took part in the creation of *Spa Normand* (co-op production), presented onstage at the Hearst Festival and appeared in *L'@mour2.com* (Montréal Fringe). Antoine will be dramaturge for *Zone* (2011/12, Théâtre la Catapulte), which will allow him to have a hand in both of his two passions in theatre, research and practice.



GUILLAUME HOUËT – LIGHTING

Involved in dance and theatre for over a dozen years, Guillaume has appeared onstage, worked in stage management, technical direction, and production management, both in house and on tour, but is first and foremost a lighting designer. In fact, he frequently designs for many Ottawa-area companies such as Théâtre la Catapulte, Cie Vox Théâtre, Théâtre du Trillium, Théâtre de la Vieille 17, GCTC, Théâtre Dérives Urbaines, Théâtre Français at the NAC, and lately Third Wall Theatre and Mi Casa Theatre. He also travelled to Rwanda in October 2009 as stage manager for *Goodness* by the Toronto company Volcano Theatre. Recipient of an award of excellence in 2007 from the *Fondation pour l'avancement du théâtre francophone au Canada*, Guillaume has received two consecutive awards from the *Prix Rideau* for lighting design of the year in 2010 and 2011.



ALAIN LAUZON – STAGE MANAGEMENT

Originally from Moonbeam in Northeastern Ontario, Alain Lauzon graduated from Laurentian University with a degree in arts expression. Most recently, Alain served as operations coordinator for the Greater Sudbury 2011 Canadian Francophone Games. As a stage manager, he has participated in the tours for *Médecins de Molière* (Théâtre français de Toronto and Théâtre la Catapulte) and *Rage* (Théâtre la Catapulte). As an actor, Alain has taken part in the children's show *Flagabou l'enfantôme et la bombe à bonbons* by Normand Renaud and the public reading of Sylvie Maria Filion's script *Mary Jane la tueuse*. Alain was also in the cast of *Bouillon de clowns* (2008), directed by John Turner, and has acted in the travelling show *Le Parcours littéraire* directed by Miriam Cusson (2006/2007).



DOMINIC MANCA – SET AND PROPS

Dominic always greatly looks forward to the next project where he gets to work with the TFI team. Since arriving in Toronto in 2006, Dominic has worked as TFI's stage manager for the productions of *Bonbons assortis*, *Apocalypse à Kamloops*, *Le Misanthrope*, and *Des Fraises en janvier*. He has also had the opportunity to work as a designer for *Et si on chantait*, *Le Dîner de cons*, *Les Médecins de Molière* and *Zone*. When not at the theatre, Dominic can be found just down the hall from TFI, in TFO's the props department.



NINA OKENS – COSTUMES

Nina has made costumes for *The Merchant of Venice*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Much Ado About Nothing* for Shakespeare in the Rough. Her costume credits also include *The Awakening*, *Orchidelierium*, and *Medici Slot Machine* for Pea Green/Theatre Voce. Living in Toronto since 1996, Nina has also made costumes at Theatre Sheridan, and has been Tft's regular wardrobe designer for several years. At Tft, she has worked on, among other productions, *Le Collier d'Hélène*, *Jeux d'amour et de folie*, *Le Visiteur*, *Un Air de famille*, *La, la la, mine de rien*, *Grimm Grimm*, *La Critique de L'École des femmes*, and *Le Mariage forcé*. Nina's most recent projects at Tft are *Le Dîner de cons*, *Les Médecins de Molière*, *Fragments de mensonges inutiles*, *Les Fridolinades* and *À toi, pour toujours, ta Marie-Lou*.



JEAN-MICHEL OUIMET – SOUNDSCAPE

A graduate from the prestigious École nationale de la chanson in Granby (Qc), and from the University of Ottawa (B.A. in Media Communication), Jean-Michel Ouimet is production director and owner of Klash média, a media production studio. He is a producer, composer, audio designer, multi-instrumentalist, skilled guitarist, sound engineer, video editor and communication adviser. His works can be seen and heard at the theatre, on radio and television, on music albums and at museum exhibits. His hybrid training and experiences, his unique skills and creative approach makes him a leader in the field of audio, media, and music production. He is respected for his versatility and avant-garde artistic flair. Jean-Michel Ouimet is an active member of the arts and culture community. He was president of APCM (Association des professionnels de la chanson et de la musique) from 2006 to 2010. In 2011, he was made a member of the Compagnie des Cent-Associés francophones. Jean-Michel is a native of Ottawa.

ABOUT THE COMPANIES

Théâtre français de Toronto

In its forty-three years, Théâtre français de Toronto (TfT) has become one of the most important French-language theatres outside of Québec, with nearly 240 productions to its name. Today, TfT has almost a thousand subscribers and welcomes nearly 11,500 spectators each season from all over the GTA and Southwestern Ontario. TfT's season consists of five productions for the general public, as well as shows for adolescents and children. TfT has played at the Berkeley Street Theatre since 1990. It offers its francophone and francophile public a varied repertoire that includes new work, Canadian and international pieces, and the great classics.

From comedy to tragedy, from new creations to the greats of the classical and modern repertoire, the reservoir of theatrical works in French from which TfT draws the pieces it presents is vast. An eclectic company, TfT produces and presents theatrical productions from both here and away. Original works occupy an important place in the company's artistic process: they are a source of collaboration, discovery and reflection. TfT's artistic choices are driven by the need to tell, surprise and move French theatre enthusiasts, be they children, adolescents or adults.

Théâtre la Catapulte

Théâtre la Catapulte is a Franco-Ontarian theatre company based in Ottawa.

Founded in 1992 by Patrick Leroux and a group of young artists, Catapulte has since presented over 30 productions and held at least as many readings and public theatre labs in Ontario and across Canada.

Today, Théâtre la Catapulte is considered one of Canada's foremost artistic francophone theatres. It has received numerous awards, local and national, with productions regularly touring throughout Ontario and Canada.