

Hour

dance ()

DE L'ART DEHORS

DYNAMIC PRODUCTION COMPANY SETS THE STAGE
IN CARRÉ ST-LOUIS THIS WEEKEND

story BY PHILIP SZPORER

It's not your typical walk in the park. *The Art* (pronounced as the French "dehors"), produced by La 2e Porte à Gauche, brings together 13 dancemakers and a mobile phalanx of dancers in an experiment situated among the greenery of Carré St-Louis. The in situ performances, located at 12 different sites, will blossom throughout the Labour Day last-gasp-at-summer weekend.

A production company of next generation choreographers, 2e Porte's previous big concept event was last year's *Projet Vitrine*. The task for the dancers was to stimulate passersby from within Simons' storefront windows. It pretty much stopped traffic.

The Art's mix-and-match formula has six configurations of performers trading off between noon and 6 p.m., changing locales in the square. Each dance sequence lasts about 15 minutes, followed by 10 minutes of chat with onlookers and another five to get to the next space. Each work will be presented at least 12 times a day. The idea, says Marie Béland, a 2e Porte founder, is to demystify contemporary dance and, by extension, "meet people who don't really take the time to watch dance."

Dancers will congregate to test their abilities way off centre stage and feed off the buzz of strollers and cyclists, not to



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mention the square's firmly planted drug- and alcohol-stoked habitués. The bustling park activity will surround the dancers and envelop observers, everyone collecting information with their eyes and ears.

At the core of the project: a diffused focus over the urban public space, and the mingling of artists and audiences. "To change things you have to take the risk to try," says co-founder Frédéric Gravel. Speaking for a generation of

emerging dance artists, Andrew Tay, one of the choreographer/performers, adds, "If you can't find opportunities, you make 'em."

No guided tours are necessary for the site, but a handout with a postcard-sized map lets people know where things are happening.

() **THE ART**

At Carré St-Louis, Sept. 1-4,
noon to 6 p.m.