

le Temps des arts de la rue

Presentation of the programme
promoting street arts,
initiated in 2005 by
the Ministry of Culture
and Communication (Department of
Music, Dance, Theatre and Shows)

Street arts

Shows and artistic events held outside specifically earmarked venues – theatres, concert halls, museums – generally come under the term «street arts». This therefore means in the street, in squares or along the banks of a river, in a railroad station or a port, as well as possibly in an abandoned factory, a building under construction or even backstage. From a solo performance to monumental scenography, from a stroll with a provisional plan or a controversial parody to a wondrous event, the forms and challenges of street arts are varied, and artistic disciplines come together in them and blend.

The text that follows is taken from an article by Sylvie Clidière that appeared in *Le Goliath*, the 2005-2006 directory-guide of street arts and circus arts, published by *HorsLesMurs* in March 2005

Genesis of «le Temps des arts de la rue»

In April 2003, the Federation of Street Arts, a professional organisation, requested that the Ministry of Culture and Communication establish an impactful period for street arts.

At the conclusion of four working sessions of a group created on the initiative of the Federation, in collaboration with the Ministry's Department of Music, Dance, Theatre and Shows and HorsLesMurs, a road map of «le Temps des Arts de la Rue» was drawn up to serve as a basis for reflection on how best to turn the idea for this impactful period for street arts into a reality.

In February 2005, in Marseilles, Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres, the Minister of Culture, launched «le Temps des Arts de la Rue» («the period for street arts»).

Two million euros have already been allocated for 2005 and additional financing will be made available for the remaining two years of «le Temps des Arts de la Rue».

A few examples of measures instituted in 2005:

- The consolidation of new national production centres and venues run by the companies.
- The support of artistic teams in the street arts (employment assistance, new agreements and increased number of agreements).
- The promotion of new programming methods (ONDA).
- The launch of the FAI AR (Advanced and Itinerant Training in Street Arts) in Marseilles.
- The development of knowledge in the street arts sector (commission of two studies on publics and aesthetics, support for publishing and multimedia projects, etc.).

An impactful period for street arts

By Yves Deschamps,
president of the National Steering Committee

In his speech presenting and opening «le Temps des Arts de la Rue» in Marseille, Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres, Minister of Culture and Communication, explained the challenges that this period represented in terms of consolidation, development and structuring for him and the central as well as the devolved departments in his ministry.

«Street arts have turned the agora into a space for games and challenges. Wherever they are present, they take part in the influence of geographic areas as well as that of our country in Europe and throughout the world. (...) Over two hundred shows are created each year and nearly 900 companies are currently listed in this artistic sector (...) which has reinvested the public space, invented new types of artistic writing, crossing and interweaving several disciplines, revisited codes and languages and offered the different publics an original and dynamic relationship with art and the world. (...)

Street arts are at the very centre of the three-pronged ambition for live performances that I presented at the National Assembly and the Senate:

- putting artists back into the heart of the city,
- broadening publics and reaching new populations by going beyond cultural and social divisions,
- transforming the perception of the arts by promoting the breaking down of barriers between disciplines...»

In co-operation with the profession, represented by the Federation of Street Arts and HorsLesMurs, the national structure for the development of street arts and circus arts, the Minister also wanted this «impactful period for street arts» to be a long period that favours, over the years, the development of street arts through reflection, research, structuring and the consolidation of creation teams, creation centres, venues run by companies, the National Creation Centre and programming and training organisations. «le Temps des Arts de la Rue» is therefore a time for collective mobilisation, actions, exchanges and dialogue with all the partners, equally concerned with the artistic and cultural issues that generate civic challenges, social links and sharing: professional teams, communes, cities, administrative departments and regions.

«It is during this long period that we will consolidate the six creation centres by transforming them into national production centres so that they strengthen, even further, the links between creation teams, geographic areas and populations.

Public places, which have been playing this role for over 10 years, will have their resources and actions reinforced. We will consolidate about 30 venues run by companies: mooring points or places of refuge, these creation and residence centres now form havens that are absolutely necessary for street art creators. And we consider it of utmost importance that these independent teams, companies without hearth or home, also be accompanied from their very beginnings to the point where their development is stabilised by a multi-annual agreement.

Lastly, you can count on me to develop programming efforts (to support tours and to include street shows in the scheduling of general theatres in cultural action networks) to support training actions because not a single training system, structured over the long term, has, until this date, been implemented in this sector where learning takes place over a lifetime. (...)

All these new measures require concerted implementation, on a case-by-case basis and consequently necessitate exchanges, responsiveness, dialogue and, often, crossed subsidies that can ensure the stability of the teams and their artistic independence.

In this spirit, the Minister has established, jointly with the various partners, a «national steering committee» which set to work as soon as it was created and which «represents» the partners: elected officials, professionals, artists, etc. In order to be as efficient as possible, nine working groups were formed, based on nine themes that seemed the most urgent to develop in terms of depth and greater detail.

These groups are moderated by rapporteurs who sum up and report to the steering committee on the progress of their reflection and proposal work.

The groups are «open» to all those who wish to make concrete proposals either in writing or by any other means. All the information gathered will be put on line on the HorsLesMurs and Federation sites.

As of September, meeting, exchange and dialogue actions are envisaged in several regions in co-operation with the DRACs, public sector partners and artistic and professional teams.

This impactful period for street arts is a genuine opportunity. But the corollary of this opportunity is vigilance, the mobilisation of all the parties and the obligation to succeed in the framework of concerted work, attentive to the diversity of expectations that must be listened to, debated and taken into account as of now so that the first year of this impactful three-year period will be fertile and enriched by the contributions of all those involved.

Twelve years after the establishment of the first plan promoting street arts, «le Temps des Arts de la Rue» offers us an immense step forward, a step that all the actors can take pride in being part of.

Steering committee

The committee is made up of about 30 representatives of State administrations and local governments, institutions, professionals and qualified personalities. A debate and incentive authority, it plays a consulting and relay role between institutions and the profession. Jacques Higelin is honorary president of «le Temps des Arts de la Rue». Yves Deschamps, former inspector general of theatre, creation and artistic education at the Ministry of Culture, is the president of the National Steering Committee. The association HorsLesMurs is secretary general.

Working groups

The co-ordinators of nine working groups which will develop specific thinking on certain themes and issues were appointed by the steering committee. These co-ordinators will report on the progress of the working groups and their proposals to the entire steering committee.

Production centres

co-ordinated by Claude Morizur

Writing for the public space

co-steered by Éma Drouin and Françoise Vuillaume

Consolidation, establishment, structuring of companies

co-ordinated Alain Taillard

Programming

co-ordinated by Philippe Saunier-Borrell

International action

co-ordinated by Pierre Sauvageot

Training and professions

co-ordinated by Michel Crespin

Getting to know street arts better and making them better known

co-ordinated by Philippe Chaudoir

Federating event(s)

co-ordinated by Jean-Raymond Jacob

The occupation of the public space, the technical environment, safety

co-ordinated by José Rubio