



*Fernand Nault,  
at the core of dance*

*Historical Interview*

*Marie Beaulieu, historian, animator  
Philippe-Olivier Contant, co-producer  
André Laprise, co-producer, consultant*

*« Faire danser le patrimoine »*

*Fernand Nault (1920-2006)  
100<sup>th</sup> anniversary (2020-2021)*



## ***Faire danser le patrimoine***

Initiated in December 2020 to mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of the late emeritus choreographer Fernand Nault, “Faire danser le patrimoine” offers a unique opportunity to live continuously the heritage in dance that has been bequeathed to us.

### **Fonds chorégraphique Fernand Nault**

Fernand Nault is the first Canadian choreographer to ensure his artistic succession during his lifetime. The Fonds chorégraphique Fernand Nault (FCFN) aims to ensure the sustainability of the choreographic repertoire and the moral rights of its author. FCFN organizes and coordinates “Faire danser le patrimoine”, a program of commemoration and enhancement activities, since 2020-2021 and beyond.

### **Fernand Nault**

#### **An international career at multiple levels**

Fernand Nault first had an important American career before returning to settle in Quebec. He had a brilliant career as a choreographer and artistic director at Les Grands Ballets Canadiens in Montreal and in the United States, especially in Louisville, Kentucky and in Denver, Colorado. His remarkable works have enabled Les Grands Ballets Canadiens to become “Grands” in Quebec, Canada and internationally. Many of his works have been acquired and produced abroad, in the United States, Asia and Europe.

#### **A great Quebecer, a great Canadian, a dance giant**

Fernand Nault had the chance to learn from “Masters” who were writing the history of dance. For the Quebec of its time, he was the link between tradition and innovation. His Work, whose universality and contemporaneity remains, embodies a significant page in our socio-cultural history, the affirmation of our identity. His ballets tell, among other things, the societal breakup of a historical era.

#### **A remarkable contribution to Quebec’s status**

A recognized artist of the Quiet Revolution, Fernand Nault was very much involved in terms of creation and interpretation. The success from his creations have, among other things, enabled dance to take a “place” in Quebec culture in addition to contributing greatly to the financial health of several organizations. Creator, builder and important teacher, he was, until the end, a man of firsts, of very constructive initiatives for the Quebec and Canadian cultural milieu.

### **Heritage to build our current and future identity**

In Quebec, in Canada, whether in research, creation or repertoire, dance has reached a good maturity. Its rich and unique heritage makes it possible to transmit and recreate its activities, write stories and build identities. Contact with a heritage, whether living or documentary, promotes an interest in the discipline it represents or to which it testifies and nurtures the next generation. The Work of Fernand Nault is without a doubt an important, essential element of the choreographic heritage of Quebec and Canada.



## ***Fernand Nault, at the core of dance***

Taking place in the **Bibliothèque de la danse Vincent-Warren**, historian **Marie Beaulieu** and production-director **Philippe-Olivier Contant** met through the eye of the camera, creating a lasting reference material highlighting an important part of our artistic heritage.

### **Enhancement**

The historical interview *Fernand Nault, at the core of dance* is available in its full version and in excerpts. These audiovisual documents can accompany various activities of the program *Faire danser le patrimoine* and can also be used as reference material.

### **Objectives**

Allows you to get to know a significant artist to:

- better understand its influence on our culture, on our society;
- get to know the individual better, his personality, his career;
- assemble a rigorous memory of his path, his achievements

### **Content**

Fernand Nault in Quebec, in America and contemporary culture.

### **Context**

Quebec, its era, America and its contemporary culture.

### **Themes**

Fernand Nault, the artist, the performer:

- his desire to become a dancer,
- his environment,

Fernand Nault, the creator, the choreographer:

- his inspiration,
- his teachers and coaches
- his creations;

Fernand Nault, the pedagogue, the master:

- his talent as a teacher,
- his legacy.



## ***Fernand Nault, at the core of dance***

### **00.30 Being a dancer**

#### **00.49 Taboos**

- 00.55 1) The clergy
- 01.45 2) Social classes
- 02.23 3) Virility

#### **03.13 Modest origins**

- 03.39 1) Dance in Montreal in 1930-1940
- 05.45 2) A deep rooted passion
- 06.39 3) From Fernand Noël Boissonneault to Fernand Nault

### **08.43 Towards a new world of dance**

#### **08.51 His masters**

- 09.02 1) George Balanchine, abstraction in dance
- 11.09 2) Anthony Tudor, narration, and theatrical expressiveness
- 12.15 3) David Lichine, the accessibility of dance
- 12.50 4) Return from the war
- 13.20 5) Man's dance

### **14.16 His inspirations**

- 14.26 1) Spirituality
- 15.52 Political and social issues
- 18.05 2) Music
- 20.09 3) The formal movement
- 22.35 4) Between tradition and modernity
- 23.30 5) Spirit of the times

### **25.00 A dance legacy**

#### **25.09 Societal impacts:**

- 25.19 1) The enhancement of the dancers
- 26.26 2) Large-scale productions
- 27.27 3) Canadian and Quebec pride
- 29.00 4) A dance heritage
- 30.58 5) Tommy: a success and a major impact
- 32.52 6) Boys and dance

#### **34.45 The pedagogue**

- 34.54 Transmitting a passion
- 37.22 The importance of technique
- 38.38 Allow his people to dance



## Actors

**Marie Beaulieu**, *dance historian, professor in the dance department at the University of Quebec in Montreal (UQAM)*

Marie Beaulieu has devoted her life to dance: first a performer for the Entre-Six company and rehearsal for the Ballet de Montréal Eddy Toussaint, she held the position of director of the Ballets de l'Opéra de Nice to finally complete her career as a researcher and director of the dance department at UQAM. In 2008, Marie Beaulieu completed her doctoral thesis under the supervision of Rose-Marie Lèbe, professor in the Department of Kinesiology at the Université de Montréal. The approach to her subject and the structure of her dissertation are unique, and her research is broad and rigorous. It is not surprising that Mrs Beaulieu received an honorable mention for the exceptional quality of all of her doctoral research.

« *Je crois qu'il est essentiel de savoir d'où l'on vient. Le passé influence nos choix et la manière dont on agit, de même que la façon dont on pratique son art. Si on ne connaît pas son histoire, on ne peut pas se connaître soi-même* ». **Excerpt from an interview** with Carolyn Clare, DCD Metcalf Foundation Intern, February 2011.

Free English translation: *"We can't know who we are if we don't know our history... and we can't project ourselves into the future if we don't know our history"*.

**Philippe-Olivier Contant**, *coproducer*

Having worked for several years as a director, director of photography, producer, press photographer, cameraman, editor and graphic animator, Philippe-Olivier Contant has developed a varied experience that allows him to fully grasp the different facets of a project and undertake it with confidence.

### Experience

2002 - present	Freelance producer and director
2013 - 2016	Director, <i>Le 16 heures / Ça fait un bye</i> , TÉLÉ-QUÉBEC / ARTV
2010 - 2015	Press photographer / Visual content consultant, QMI Agency
2010	Director, <i>Le goût d'une chanson</i> / CANOE.CA et CASA
2009	Trainer in video production, SUN MEDIA / QUEBECOR MEDIA
2008 - 2016	Graphic Animator, BAZZO.TV / TÉLÉ-QUÉBEC



## Collaborators

**Marie Beaulieu**, Dance Historian, Professor in the dance department at the University of Quebec in Montreal (UQAM)

**Philippe-Olivier Contant**, Co-producer

**André Laprise**, Co-producer, Advisor, Fonds chorégraphique Fernand Nault's Trustee

**Marie-Josée Lecours**, Librarian at the Bibliothèque de la danse Vincent-Warren, Professor of dance history at the École supérieure de ballet du Québec

**David Massé**, Assistant to the Co-producer

**Sandra Kelly, Clara Van Doorn, Robert Watson**, help with the English translation

**Sofia Ababii**, Assistant to the Trustee

**Marie-Claude Laprise**, Advisor to the Trustee

**Frédérique Racine**, editing Assistant

## Partners

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## Original music

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