



## REVIEW OF THE COLLOQUIUM AND THE WORKSHOPS

### **La rencontre** **Review of the colloquium**

Martin Valiquette, Les Arts et la Ville

On December 4 and 5, 2008 Culture pour tous presented the 5th forum *La Rencontre*. This colloquium was the occasion to gather speakers from different milieus and to reflect on the emergence conditions of cultural mediation, its role and current relevance, and the diversity of its practices, approaches and meanings.

To begin **Louise Sicuro**, the president and CEO of Culture pour tous, recalled that the question of cultural mediation is currently an important issue for the development of Quebecois culture, and that this colloquium seeks to contribute to the advancement of research and the development of expertise in this domain. The following is a review of these two days of exchange and discussion on cultural mediation.

### **Comprehensive repertory of cultural mediation in Montréal**

The first session was dedicated to the first presentation of the results of a study—sponsored by several partners such as the City of Montréal, Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) and Culture pour tous—on over 190 cultural mediation projects carried out as part of the Entente de développement culturel de Montréal 2005-2008. **Louis Jacob**, professor of sociology at UQAM, presented the highlights of the study's first phase, which sought to draw up a typology of the various projects based on their main characteristics.

The result demonstrated that the projects intended, among other things, to introduce the public to various artistic and cultural practices, to foster better citizen participation and to develop the participants' cultural competencies. Moreover, in nearly half of the supported projects, professional artists acted as the sole mediator. The results also revealed that several artistic disciplines can be present within a single project. According to Louis Jacob this is a characteristic mark of cultural mediation activities, in which disciplinary competence is not an end in and of itself. The methods are numerous and seek to go beyond disciplinary, professional or administrative borders.

The diversity of milieus in which these mediations projects were carried out, the fact that the same project can take place in several different places, the mix of tools used, the great variety of activities and their duration are other main observations that Louis Jacob revealed. Finally, he underlined that mediation, as observed in the various cases under study, is expressed mainly through a desire to link institutions, organizations and various community groups.

### **The role of municipalities in cultural mediation**

The question then turned to the role of municipalities in matters of cultural mediation. Experiences in Montréal, Québec City and Saguenay revealed a common view of cultural mediation, which is understood as an accompaniment process and a strategy to provide all citizens with access to arts and culture.

**Paul Langlois**, head of Service, Action culturelle et partenariats, City of Montréal, stated that audience development must henceforth be thought of in qualitative rather than quantitative terms, according to a process which situates itself as a demand driven action. He recalled that access for all to arts and culture cannot be limited to the dissemination of artistic and cultural activities and to the offering of activities for free. Such a strategy has its limits, for it does not necessarily take the diversity of local populations into account and hence isolates entire segments of the population. In a municipal intervention perspective cultural mediation stands out as a global strategy that aims to improve the quality of citizens' lives. Adapted to various municipal contexts (demographics, geographic or socio-economic situation, etc.) it can become an efficient development tool, with each milieu coming up with answers for their particular problematics.

**Rhonda Rioux**, director of the Culture Department, City of Québec, indicated the city's change in cultural development philosophy following the 2005 municipal elections. In seeking to develop a citizen-based approach to culture the new municipal administration had to redefine its role in this regard. It therefore took on the role of initiator and facilitator of exchanges and encounters, in addition to pursuing the objective of including clientele with little access to culture for social or economic reasons. This objective to include excluded clientele was also raised by other participants of the plenary session. Paul Langlois, for instance, underlined that the Ville de Montréal's three financial aid programs for cultural mediation projects stipulate the targeting of clientele with little access to culture.

For **Francine Maltais**, director of the Culture Department at Saguenay City, as well, the role of municipalities in cultural mediation is to be an initiator and facilitator of negotiation, mediation, and activity leading. In following the example of Québec City and Montréal, Saguenay recognizes cultural and community organizations as key actors in a cultural mediation strategy. To obtain satisfactory results all involved milieus must understand their respective roles and act in respect of the rhythm of the targeted partners and clientele.

### Art is relationship

This plenary session was the occasion to present various collaborative artistic projects created by artists as a form of cultural mediation. **Bill Coleman**, a choreographer and artistic director of a dance company, presented projects that were held in remote rural places with each being adapted to the specific context where it was applied. For example, during a residency in a Newfoundland national park his company created—along with other artists—a performance that reflects and honours the way of life, traditions and values of the residents of Trout



River and Cow Head, two small villages located in the park. Coleman thereby seeks to create and hold “artistic and cultural events and actions just about anywhere, with limited means, but with the imagination and creativity of the local populations.”

**Caroline Hayeur**, a photographer, underlined that her artistic practice evolved in step with the activities that she participated in. The mediation project that she undertook took place as part of her exhibition *Amalgat – Danse, tradition et autres spiritualités*, shown at the Maison de la culture des Côte-des-Neiges. Inside the gallery, she brought together three immigrants—currently learning to be functional in French—to engage in three creation workshops to trigger encounters

and exchanges according to three artistic disciplines: storytelling, poetry and music. The workshops led to various activities, for example, the composition of a collective poem in the form of an exquisite corpse and writing games which used words inspired by the exhibition's images.

**Edward Little**, uses an engaged theatrical practice to get directly involved in local development. He is particularly interested in cultural democracy, which he defines as “a grassroots community partnership and an approach which embraces the sharing of authority and theatrical creation by, for and about culturally distinct communities.” In his opinion, cultural mediation is neither neutral nor just for “it tends to be concerned by the integration of a dominant culture to the detriment of cultural competence.” He thus seeks to undertake intercultural mediation, i.e. to promote exchanges and intercultural solidarities.

### **Cultural mediation abroad: international experiences**

The afternoon session was dedicated to the presentation of foreign experiences and this by trying to define the specificities of cultural mediation according to various national contexts.



**William Cleveland**, the director of the Center for the Study of Art and Community (US), proposed a vision in which art and culture are among the main vectors of local development, in an approach that he calls arts-based community development. In this approach mediation is defined as “an accompaniment and education process in which art and culture contribute to the individual and collective transformation of local autonomous and responsible communities.” In this case the cultural mediation activities seek to weave strong social and community ties that are based on collective and evolving practices. They contribute to the re-solidification of

human solidarity and the revitalization of communities in decline, as well as helping to re-establish a certain socioeconomic balance in local communities.

According to **Jean Caune**, professor emeritus at Université Stendhal 3 (Grenoble France), cultural mediation is the result of a continuous evolution of cultural action approaches and practices. In the contemporary French context, cultural mediation practices emphasize individual participation and seek to valorize “the individual’s expression through artistic languages.” Art and culture must thus be politicized in order to create social ties. In this process cultural mediation becomes the “unifying link of a being together.”

**François Matarasso**, honorary professor at Gray’s School of Art, Robert Gordon University (Great-Britain), presented three types of projects, each one of which illustrates one of the three main intentions of cultural mediation practice in the UK context. Some projects seek to improve access to culture and to make art available to a variety of audiences. Others use arts and culture as a means of attaining social results and the improvement of difficult social situations, such as delinquency or poverty, for instance. Finally, some projects pursue cultural inclusion, i.e. “to help people become actors in their society’s and country’s culture,[...] independent, autonomous actors who create their own culture and identity and engage this production in the cultural life of the country.”

### **From mediation to mediators. Who are the cultural mediators?**

According to **Adriana de Oliveira**, an art educator, the mediator is not a transmitter of knowledge, his/her role cannot be reduced to the “transmission of knowledge, rather, it consists of constructing it with the other by way of an open and progressive relationship that develops over time.” Adriana de Oliveira’s approach and practice are inspired by a quote from Paulo Freire: “Nobody educates the other, nobody educates himself, humans educate one another together through the intermediary of the world.” In fact, the projects in which she participates aim to develop cultural and artistic actions within a democratic educational perspective, in a process of critical awareness raising and social transformation.



For **Anne Mozzo-Lemarchands**, vice-president of the Association Médiation culturelle (Lyon, France), cultural mediation is what is “in between.” It represents a dialogue, an ensemble of interwoven links between three poles: individuals, institutions and objects. The cultural mediator’s role in this view is closer to the bringing about, or maintaining of an encounter, of an exchange of experiences between the three poles.

**Melanie Fernandez**, director, community and educational programs at the Harbourfront Centre (Toronto), insisted on the importance of fostering conditions that stimulate people’s expression and creativity. She postulated that the role of community arts is to enable everybody to express this creativity, to provide access to a place where everything becomes possible, where everyone can speak. She also pointed out that organizations should place more emphasis on the process rather than the final product.

### **Mediation in cultural institutions: from audience development to commitment in the community**

During this workshop the participants underlined the commitment and participation of cultural institutions in their community. These institutions are well established in their milieu and now view visitors as actors rather than mere spectators, and try to let them speak by providing them with the means to act on their life; in rebuilding their self-esteem, as in the cases presented by **Michel Vallée**, director of the Musée des Deux-Rives (Salaberry-de-Valleyfield), in which the arts have become effective social development tools that enable youth at-risk to make a place for themselves in the community. Here again, rather than being a means to widen a client base, cultural mediation defines itself as an action that helps individuals in their development. Its foundation is the willingness to lay down and develop the conditions for a dialogue with the other where a space is left open for exchange and discussion, a space that dialogue by its very nature implies. **Hélène Pagé**, of the Musée de la civilisation de Québec, however, pointed out that in such an approach one runs the risk of losing full control over the results.

### **Mediation practices in artistic organizations**

Several observations were made in this workshop. The creation of co-creation projects within communities as a form of cultural mediation is promising, but difficult because organizations often don’t have the necessary time. Also, projects realized in close proximity with the community require considerable personal input. The need for flexibility and compromise among all those involved in the projects was also underlined. Given that the projects create a tension between the social and the artistic, how can one enter a community, respect the needs of people, while at the same developing an artistic practice? According to **D. Kimm**, artistic & general director of Les

Filles électriques (Montréal) the main objective underpinning this kind of project is to give the excluded a voice, to allow them to use creation to speak about themselves and become visible in public space.

### **How to strengthen the links between education and culture?**

This workshop made it possible to get an overview of what is necessary to establish solid ties between education and culture. According to **Claire Voisard**, general director of L'Illusion Théâtre de marionnettes (Montréal), what one needs is time and consistency. It is important to understand the world from an early age, and to experience arts and culture, for instance, through school visits to a museum or music lessons in school.

**Denise Hébert**, a teacher, summed it up by saying that school must be a cultural place. A visit to the theatre, the museum or the library should form part of a cultural context, for if the events are isolated and occasional, one does not make the connection." One also needs teachers who are passionate about arts and culture. School is cultural if there is a desire for it to be so, both on the level of discussions and decision making. It is often the school administration that sets the tone and makes propositions to parents and teachers. Many cultural activities take place in schools, but few among them leave traces: little is written and published on these experiences. Yet, if we had more tangible traces of carried out activities others could be inspired by them. It is in a way the question of transmitting knowledge that is raised here: is there a way of transmitting this knowledge, this cultural mediation expertise, which could foster its perpetuation?

### **What's next?**

**Jean Caune** and **Jean-Marc Fontan** made the closing remarks. According to Mr. Fontan, professor of sociology at UQAM, one of the main impressions left by the colloquium is that what is put front and centre through mediation is the idea of the group and the collective: "everybody is an active actor with shared roles. What is more difficult to define is what precisely belongs to one or the other, and in this regard there is a need for ongoing learning." The question of the relationship to power is also something that Fontan took note of: it's curious that power relations and conflicts were not directly named. We are working on social problems, on lack of equipment, on different dimensions that involve both politics and markets, but we are not getting to the heart of the matter, to the fundamental tensions that one finds in society on the level of the great inequalities that are there within it." To conclude, **Jean Caune** raised the question of what's next. How is one to think of the next step? Beginning with a concept which was omnipresent during the colloquium, that of time: "one must take the time to develop a strategy to acquire the power to master one's time. There is the time before and the time after." The time after calls for the need to leave a trace of what was done, so that future generations can benefit from past experiences. Caune concluded with the following words: "Let us not spend too much time asking if what we are doing is mediation. Let us focus less on the effects and more on the processes we set into action. Mediation cannot be social orthopedics, it cannot straighten out what society has broken, but it can be one of its actors."



### **Martin Valiquette**

Educated in city planning and urban design, Martin Valiquette is interested in the design of cities' physical form, the composition of collective public space as well as the place of art and culture in contemporary city planning practices. A researcher for Les Arts et la Ville network since 2008, he has previously worked, among other things, as a researcher for the Musée de la civilisation du Québec's exhibition Urbanapolis and as a city planner intern at Daniel Arbour & Associés.

## Mediation and cultural institutions: from audience development to commitment in the community

### Summary of Workshop I

Nathalie Casemajor



Workshop 1 gathered four cultural institution<sup>1</sup> representatives around the theme of audience development and community commitment. On one hand, the speakers' presentations testified to the represented institutions' strong community commitment, and on the other, to the will to offer audiences an open and renewed space for exchange.

Several speakers set out to clarify the notion of mediation and its articulation with audience development objectives. **Hélène Pagé** underlined that cultural mediation is a flexible notion that can lend itself to a

marketing or advertisement interpretation in which mediation is conceived as a simple tool to widen one's clientele, when it can ultimately also enable the viewer or visitor to become an active agent. The speakers tended to view mediation in a more qualitative sense: it should allow the audience to cast a different gaze on the objects that it engages with.

In this perspective, the role of the cultural institution is to create the conditions for an encounter between audiences and the proposed contents. The speakers presented different means of building this space of encounter and exchange. **Anna Guarro** explained how the Centre de Cultura Contemporània (CCCC) works on alternative encounter modes between audiences and specialists. Through its activity program NOW the centre seeks, among other things, to explore new forms of sharing knowledge, by reflecting on how to arrange encounter spaces so that they promote dialogue, exchange and sharing.

The mediation project the Cirque du Soleil implemented for its employees is another example of an alternative means of organizing encounter situations. This project aims to make art a part of its employees' lives, notably through an exhibition program at the company's head office. **Sylvie François** described how a mediation space was set up in a head office hall so that this passageway could stimulate encounters between the works and the workplace audience.

Each one of the speakers insisted on the idea that in order to create good encounter conditions it is necessary to respect the audience's experience and intelligence by making sure that the encounter situation sets space aside for these resources. **Michel Vallée** called for a rethinking of the content transmission model that would go beyond a communicational scheme in which messages are controlled by specialists. For her part, Sylvie François underlined the importance for people to participate and make sense of things.

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<sup>1</sup> Hélène Pagé, Director, Cultural action and public relations service, Musée de la civilisation (Québec); Sylvie François, Director, Cultural action, Cirque du Soleil (Montréal); Anna Guarro, Project Manager, Department of Cultural Activities, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (Spain); Michel Vallée, Director of the Musée des Deux-Rives (Valleyfield).

The development of the individual's critical competencies and self-esteem can have positive effects on the community on a whole. Michel Vallée's presentation was particularly illuminating in illustrating this idea of how mediation actions spread in the community. In fact, the Musée de Deux-Rives organizes social intervention projects with youth at-risk, who subsequently participate in the organization of new mediation actions in the city's public spaces. In this context, youth serve as a tool to reach the community at large and to contribute to social cohesion. In the case of the Cirque du Soleil, a small group of employees participates in choosing the works of art to be acquired for the organization's collection. This small group plays the role of ambassador for the company's workplace audience and thus helps to spread the mediation project.

The question of audience development is closely linked to that of citizen participation and community engagement. The institution's modes of engagement in the community depend on several factors. Firstly, the institution's mandates provide it with an action framework. Hélène Pagé underlined that as a public museum the Musée de la civilisation is already defined as a social actor, and that the heart of the cultural action is not the collections, but the individual. On the contrary, the Cirque du Soleil is not defined as an institution, but as an arts company: its mediation projects therefore do not arise from a formalized framework but rather from a desire to promote encounters within the organization.

Secondly, these action modes are also defined by the institution's social and political history. Anna Guarro showed how the CCCB is the product of a socialist government that sought to break with the Franco years and to implement culturally progressive projects. The institution's mooring within a particular urban and social context can also call forth a sense of responsibility towards the population, and promote an engagement with a neighbourhood audience.

Finally, the institution's understanding of culture and mediation plays an important role in how it positions itself within the community. In the case of the Musée des Deux-Rives, the museum's understanding of cultural mediation was influenced by its difficult social environment. The museum opted for a strong commitment to the community through its engagement for social change. Michel Vallée, the organization's director, advocates the idea of a social intervention-based museum practice.

The speakers presented other action modes, notably, collaboration with artistic and social groups from the city or neighbourhood, or the implementation of participative activities. At the Musée de la civilisation, the creation of the *Potager des visionnaires* on the museum's roof made it possible to include the audience in a reflection process on the use of water resources, and on how to share with the less privileged.

These various intervention modes, each in their way, make the institution a social actor. For all that, the institution must be careful to carry out its work as a social actor without losing sight of its cultural mission. The important thing, despite all, is to build a work with continuity that can be translated into a renewable and sustainable commitment, especially when one is working with communities at risk.

**Nathalie Casemajor**

Nathalie Casemajor is preparing a doctorate in Communication Studies at Université du Québec à Montréal conjointly with Université Lille 3, France. Her research subject focuses on the digitization of photographic heritage and its dissemination on the internet. She also holds a MA from Université Lille 3 in professional arts and culture practices.

## Mediation practices in arts organizations

### Summary of Workshop II

Ève Lamoureux



The workshop on mediation practices in arts organizations was dedicated to the presentation of four projects created by markedly different organizations, as well as to a discussion period with the audience about the questions and issues that this artistic-social approach raises.

**D.Kimm**, an artist and director of the Filles électriques (Montréal), an organization dedicated to the creation of interdisciplinary artistic events linked to oral poetry and spoken word presented the project “Les mots appartiennent à tous...et à toutes !”. For several years now this project has enabled homeless women to participate in group writing experiences in collaboration with the artist Diane Trépanière. The women are contacted through a number of shelters. This process has resulted in several books: *Des pas sur l'ombre*, *Écrire et sans pitié* and *l'ABCd'art*.

**Angèle Séguin**, an author and theatre director, shared her experiences with “La Grande cueillette des mots” an initiative of the Théâtre des petites lanternes which she runs in the Eastern Townships. The sought after goal is to give people’s raw words a space on stage, a voice for outsider writers who are usually not heard or appreciated in art and society. Over a 100 persons from various circles expressed themselves on the subject of five things, which are according to them the most essential. They then worked from these gathered texts to collectively stage a performance. An international co-creation is being prepared for 2010.

**Lucie Carmen Grégoire**, a dancer and choreographer, described “Ôse avec nous” a mediation project created in 2008 with the Krea Movo company, dedicated, among other things, to making contemporary dance accessible. Viewing the body as an essential instrument for expression, she engaged in a bodily exploration in collaboration with a multicultural group made up of individuals from all generations, all of who are members of the Carrefour populaire de Saint-Michel (Montréal). Thanks to dance there was exchange and sharing.

**Geneviève Matteau**, an artist and general director of Praxis art actuel in Sainte-Thérèse, described the organization’s new orientation. 3 month residencies are offered to artists to foster a better intersection between artistic practices and the community. They are pursuing a dual mediation goal: to promote awareness of contemporary art among the various actors of the regional milieu, and to invite artists to discover this region by exploring it through art, the environment and the territory.

Several common and transversal ideas merged from the talks. Cultural mediation experiences are very rich for the artists and the cultural organizations, but they are also very demanding. They require the luxury of “taking your time,” time that very few artists and organizations have at their disposal, even when one takes volunteer contributions into account. They also place co-creation, or collective creation, at the heart of their projects in which a decisive place needs to be given to the development process of the work. Who ultimately decides on the form of the project? How does one negotiate each one’s role? How can one ensure that the participants play a real role? Furthermore, the projects deeply shake up the artist’s modern role as a genius-creator isolated in his/her studio. In this sense, artists are taking an important “risk” by “plunging

themselves into the unknown” where they must constantly “decentre” themselves. They are also “torn” between their double mandate: on one hand, to implement adequate creation conditions for a specific milieu with its needs, ways of operating, and vision of art; and on the other hand to pursue an artistically worthy exploratory process. Finally, the speakers insisted on the importance of using creation to provide a space of expression for people who often have little contact with art and who have no visibility or voice within society; the idea being that they express themselves directly.

Several questions for future elaboration were also put forth on the subject. Firstly, that of cultural organization’s assuming mandates that were traditionally given over to community groups. Is this really their role when their workforce is just as overburdened, and their finances equally precarious? What goals are being pursued here? What is the impact on cultural funding given that it is being diverted to other ends? The question of the initiatives’ sustainability was broached by D. Kimm when she raised the importance of developing an “ecology of the milieu.” What happens when artists leave social organizations? What remains of the projects? How can the vacuum be filled? How do members react? More generally, how can the numerous cultural mediation projects be better disseminated and supported?

Finally, several issues linked to language differences and means of operating between the artist, community organization, the core members of the groups and the other actors involved in the artistic projects (fundraisers, bureaucrats, municipal workers, etc.) were mentioned. How does one negotiate the tension between the artist’s creative drive and the constraints imposed by the partners (organization’s operating mode, grant selection criteria, city bylaws, etc.)? Does the artist need to develop a very well defined project and then target an organization or a community? Or, on the contrary should s/he choose with who s/he wishes to work and then develop the project in partnership? How does one give a clear idea of the work to be created when the persons addressed by the artist are not necessarily familiar with art? How do the persons working in the groups explain the project among the members and make them excited about it? How do they go about selecting the participants? How do the participants explain and share their experience with their peers, particularly in view of attracting new persons? Finally, how can one ensure that the artist—who is not a social facilitator—has the necessary tools to handle the effects that the his/her creative project may have among the participants?

**Ève Lamoureux**

Ève Lamoureux is an adjunct professor in political science at Université Laval. She is specialized in the analysis of the relationship between art and politics and her doctorate explored the ramifications of Québec visual artists’ current political engagement. Her dissertation was awarded the first prize from the Fondation Jean-Charles-Bonenfant of the Assemblée nationale du Québec for a thesis focusing on politics in Québec.

## How to reinforce the links between education and culture?

### Summary of workshop III

Marie-Claude Plasse



This roundtable on the subject of strengthening ties between culture and education began with a talk by Louise Julien, a professor in the department of education and vocational training at Université du Québec à Montréal. She said that school is cultural when there is a willingness to this end among the administration, who will consequently make choices to integrate culture in the children's' educational development. She recalled that in the Quebec ministry of education's teacher-training certification program there is barely any instruction regarding culture's role as an educational tool. Finally, Mrs. Julien remarked that few evaluations of these activities are

published despite the fact that they are very important for the actors in both milieus.

Pauline Beaudin, the coordinator of the Centre muséopédagogique, Musée de la civilisation de Québec, was the first speaker. She discussed how the institution decided to work directly with teachers by offering them a space and personalized teaching support in order to counter a certain resistance by the school milieu and to remedy the fact that teachers receive little support for the management of cultural activities. The Centre muséopédagogique provides an accompaniment program, a documentation centre, continuing education, as well as the possibility of consulting the Museum's specialists who can guide the educators in the development of their pedagogical projects. However, during this collaboration between the professors and the Centre, it is the teacher who is in charge of- and responsible for his/her project. In closing Mrs. Beaudin presented the integrative project developed by the teacher Jean-Pierre Verville and his ethics and religious culture study class who collaborate with the Centre in order to set up a humanities museum-class.

Denise Hébert, a musician and teacher at the Antoine-Girouard primary school in Boucherville, gave the second talk. She reminded us that early childhood is a crucial period for the development of the child's cultural heritage and that it is very important to act early on in order to develop behaviours that will follow into adulthood. Furthermore, Mrs. Hébert discovered that if the child is the actor during these cultural activities, i.e. if it is s/he who works with the contents and engages with them to understand the information, the impact will be far more enduring. She also took note of the importance that recurrence, consistency and time play in fostering durable cultural behaviours among the students. In conclusion, Mrs. Hébert stated that the educator must promote an encounter between the students and culture so that the latter can make a lasting impression on them.

The third speaker was Manon Potvin, the director of the educational workshops and conferences at the Louvre museum in Paris. In order for education to make a greater contribution to pupils' cultural learning the Louvre's educational service developed a small collection called *Visites Jeunes Publics* which provides the visitors with guideposts to better dialogue with the museum's works. The thematic documents are put together in partnership with the Museum's department curators who are invited to choose among the works and to write texts that are accessible to a school audience. Special attention has also been paid to this collection's document layout. The Italian style format (landscape) was chosen to facilitate the relation between the images and explanatory texts, and the spiral binding provides easy handling and use

for both students and teacher. These documents begin with an explanatory summary that gives the teacher an overview of the theme. The first chapter then develops the theme, and the second offers examples from Antiquity up until contemporary art. In closing, the third chapter is addressed directly to the teacher and students and proposes exercises to prepare the visit or to retrospectively reflect on what they saw during their trip to the Louvre. Finally the Louvre offers teachers training on how to use these educational documents, the mission of which is to make them aware of the activities that they can undertake with their classes.

The workshop's last speaker was Claire Voisard, the director general of the Montréal-based L'Illusion, Théâtre de marionnettes company. As part of her talk, Mrs. Voisard told the story of how this small cultural company ended up collaborating with the neighbourhood primary schools. By way of introduction she recalled the importance of continuity and consistency when implementing cultural projects in collaboration with schools. She related how during the summer of 1996 this company, located in a small venue on a Plateau Mont-Royal Street, developed a workshop-performance concept for day camp audiences. The 90 minute activity consisted of puppeteers who presented a 15 minute show that the children had to then complete by inventing the rest of the story. The following autumn the students, who had participated in the seasonal activity, talked to their teachers about it, who began, timidly, to come to the theatre to ask questions about its activities. Mrs. Voisard stated that it is by valorizing time, continuity and consistency that the company created links with the educators from the schools in the theatre's neighbourhood. In conclusion, she pointed out how little support there is for these educators in the school structure, and she mentioned the pressing need for the two milieus to obtain a professional status for cultural mediation positions so as to value these approaches and to remedy the lack of financial resources

#### Marie-Claude Plasse

Marie-Claude Plasse is an artist-photographer by training who holds a BA from Concordia University. She is currently completing a MA in museum studies at Université du Québec à Montréal and has begun a graduate diploma program in post secondary education. She is specialized in designing educational activities for school groups and educational programs for various museum institutions