



WHILE HAVING SOUP

Annie Roy and Pierre Allard - ATSA

A public area

A stage emerges

Chairs are arranged in pairs

Several people are sitting, chatting...

As a backdrop, a slide show featuring portraits of different duos

I am approached, and invited to hold a conversation with a stranger

over a bowl of soup—the soup, you guessed it,

servicing to “nourish” the conversation

I go for it!

The MC (Master of Conversation) introduces me to my companion

A rare experience, and a special moment

Our assigned topic is an important one: living in harmony within the public space we all share

Creating ties with one another as we banter over a simple soup (Le temps d'une soupe)

présente

Touched by this experience,

my guest and I capture our brief encounter for posterity,

our portrait contributing to an amazing bank of peaceful human ties.

WHILE HAVING SOUP

A relational mechanism in the public realm, featuring pairs of participants engaged in spontaneous conversation on current issues and leaving behind them a collective trace of *poetic portraits* that convey a heightened sense of humanity.

The stage is laid out as a restaurant terrace, with pairs of chairs facing one another. Each pair is identical, but all the pairs are different. Artists play the role of maître d' and seat the participants with a surprise companion. The duos are served a bowl of soup and are proposed a menu of conversation starters, intended to get a dialogue going.

Once the meal is over, the participants are photographed together and guided in composing a short title related to their conversation. The photo and caption will constitute their poetic portrait, bearing witness to their encounter.

Each new poetic portrait will be added to the thousands of others already compiled and will be screened live on-site as well as on the Web.

MENU: A "THREE-COURSE" DIALOGUE EXPERIENCE

STARTER: Meet your dinner companion

MAIN DISH: Savour your conversation

DESSERT: Create your poetic portrait



The art work becomes a societal project, namely that of making the public space a place for civic expression.

"The world is changing: tensions are flaring up, be they for economic, cultural or other reasons. All too often, we evolve in isolation from one another, through virtual conversations that ultimately leave us disconnected, and incomprehension forms a great divide between us. The unprecedented flow of refugees, together with various other crises, has polarized public discourse, shaking our sense of social harmony to its core. We need to speak to one another, on a human scale, one to one, in order to reappropriate the public space for ourselves." Annie Roy and Pierre Allard



1-Montreal premiere, October 2015

The impact of the work is revealed through the accumulation of *poetic portraits* from each territory being added to the preceding ones, conveying its particular issues and its own faces.

This induced exchange enables people to broach important topics face to face, outside their usual circle of acquaintances: the role of women in society, cultural diversity, the fear of terrorism, freedom of expression, redistribution of wealth, access to food, gentrification, the role of nature and art in our lives, social exclusion, and so on.

This art intervention helps make our human interactions more dynamic and our public spaces more democratic.

IN PRACTICAL TERMS

Duration per duo: 20 to 30 minutes

Chairs: 15 to 20 pairs

Hours of operation: one 4-hr block + optional additional 3-hour block daily for 3 to 6 days

Capacity: 90 to 120 persons per hour, according to crowd size

On any public space with passersby: in front of an entertainment venue, youth centre, sports centre, public market, city hall, place of worship, library, pedestrian street, park, concourse, etc.

Personnel during representations:

ATSA: 4 or 5 artists.

Local team to be trained on the spot by the artists:

1 or 2 mediators

1 representative from the local event producer to greet the public

6 assistant positions (volunteer citizens).

Language : French, English, Spanish



2-Mediator in action, Escale Improbables, Montréal 2016

A TAILORED PROJECT EDUCATIONAL AND IMPACTFUL

The menu of conversation topics is concocted according to a number of methodologies: a three-hour workshop involving people who live, work and think the territory; discovery walks; interviews.

The questions are not leading, nor do they require any specific knowledge. They can be adapted to **all types of publics**.

The soup may be prepared on-site or be sourced from a neighbourhood restaurant or a community kitchen.

You will reach a **new public**, and create **direct ties** and a sense of belonging. **The poetic portraits** will provide you with **numerous possibilities** for acknowledging the value of public involvement before, during and after the event.



3-Volunteer serving soup, Escale Improbables, Montréal 2016

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

For three representations or more, ATSA could take charge of:

- our team's travel expenses
- shipping of the installation components
- lodging and per diem.

We require of you:

- guaranteed compensation
- appropriate technological support
- promotion of the project.



4-Lively discussion, Escale Improbables, Montréal 2016



5-While Having Soup, Escales improbables, Montréal 2016

CONTACTS

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DIRECT LINK

<http://atsa.qc.ca/en/le-temps-d-une-soupe-on-tour>



6-Annie Roy and Pierre Allard

AWARDS AND HONOURS

- Honoric mention at the 2013 Prix du maire de Montréal en démocratie;
- the 2011 Giverny Capital prize;
- the 2010 Pratt & Whitney Canada Nature de l'Art Prize awarded by the Conseil des arts de Montréal;
- the 2008 Citoyen de la Culture award from Les Arts et la Ville for État d'Urgence;
- the 2008 Artistes pour la Paix 2008.

Amnesty International Canada's Francophone branch chose ATSA as one of Québec's 50 supporters of its initiatives.

ABOUT ATSA, When Art Takes Action

Annie Roy and Pierre Allard are artists living and working in Montreal, Québec. For 20 years, they have called into question the status quo of the urban landscape in order to make the public space once again a place open to encounter and dialogue.

A couple in life as well as in art, they create cutting-edge, unifying and transdisciplinary works encompassing events, interventions, installations, trails, and relational mechanisms, all with the aim of building citizen awareness of causes of vital importance and concern. They generate citizen involvement and mobilization among the public.

Their works are aimed just as much at the mainstream public as they are to persons already acquainted with or interested in the themes broached. In complementarity with their works, they regularly take part in colloquiums, and provide workshops and seminars where they share two decades' worth of experience and expertise in creating for the public space.

Photo credit: cover Debie Lyra | 1 to 6: JF Lamoureux

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