

Le Grand Continental® Review Excerpts

MONTREAL

"[...] a moment of dance, of beauty, of solidarity and emotion." Claude Deschênes on Twitter, September 17, 2017

"What caught the eye above all, when glancing across the massive dance floor, were the smiles and sincere joy animating the dancers. In light of such heartfelt commitment, the spectator feels deeply engaged by their gaze, by bodies energized by rhythm, caught up in the movement of these great dancing chains that intertwine and overlap, harmoniously complementing each other." Mélanie Carpentier, *JEU*, Montreal, Canada, September 16 2017

"[...] expansive, fun-loving, extrovert choreography... Émard's latest *Grand Continental* had smoothly coordinated lines of dancers moving happily to popular tunes. It was a grand sight. Both music and choreography were as infectious with community spirit as a holiday parade." Victor Swoboda, *The Gazette*, Montreal, October 21, 2011

"[...] *Le Grand Continental*, a "swing your partner" line dancing extravaganza, a square dance full of contemporary zest that is performed by passionate amateurs who, since 2009, have been taking the public arena by storm. Infectious and festive, it has proved to be a big hit, and Sylvain Émard has been riding the rising swell of the irresistible *Continental* wave." Catherine Lalonde, *Le Devoir*, Montreal, October 16, 2011

"Two hundred people dance their hearts out. What's not to like?" Paula Citron, *The Globe and Mail*, Toronto, May 30, 2011

"Delicious!" Georges Nicholson, *Je l'ai vu à la radio*, Première Chaîne, Radio-Canada, Montreal, May 28, 2011

"An artistic experience that has an undeniable social, human and collective impact. 210 dancers form a huge breaker, a wave that is sometimes caressing and sometimes wild and boisterous, but always captivating. A veritable feast with energy that is contagious." Christian Saint-Pierre, voir.ca, Montreal, May 27, 2011

"People can't get enough of it!" Pierre Landry, *Daybreak*, CBC Radio, Montreal, May 25, 2011

"Its spirit [*Le Continental XL*] is as wide as the sky above the esplanade on St.Urbain St. [...]" Victor Swoboda, *The Gazette*, Montreal, Canada, 21 mai 2011

"[...] it touched something deeper than the mere desire to put on a show – the sheer pleasure people get from dance." Alexandre Vigneault, *La Presse*, Montreal, May 21, 2011

"[...] magical [...] The words *playful*, *festive* and *public event* take on their true meaning here [...] a little splendour [...] the spectators roared with joy [...]" Georges Nicholson, *Je l'ai vu à la radio*, Première Chaîne, Radio-Canada, Montreal, Canada, June 5, 2010

"[...] It was as though an entire village had assembled to tread the ground with infectious rhythms. [...] this *Continental* combines styles (disco, rock, waltz) in a festive and lively blend. [...] The pleasure of movement spreads into the crowd of onlookers and throughout the urban surroundings. [...] an experience not only of the joy of dance and movement, but a social experience as well." Ariane Fontaine, *JEU*, Montreal, Canada, January 2010

"When the final pulsing *Techno* dance begins, the crowd swings with the performers, and it barely requires the encore invitation before Émery Street is a throbbing mass of dancing Montrealers." Richard Simas, *The Dance Current*, Toronto, Canada, December-January 2009-2010

"An outdoor presentation by the Festival TransAmériques (FTA), [...] Sylvain Émard's *Le Grand Continental*, met with great public and critical acclaim." Fabienne Cabado, 2009 year-end review, *Voir*, Montreal, Canada, December 24, 2009

"An enormous wave of pleasure flows from Sylvain Émard's *Le Grand Continental*. [...] a true declaration for dance at the very heart of the pleasure that it attains, both traditional and festive." Marjolaine Zurfluh, *Danser*, Paris, France, October 2009

"It was a fun performance, rigorously choreographed with intricate arm and upper body phrases, and the dancers were extremely committed to their expression. The crowd loved it [...]" Megan Andrews, *thedancecurrent.com*, Toronto, Canada, July 20, 2009

"Turning Émery St. into an open air dance space for Sylvain Émard's line-dancing demo, *Le Grand Continental*, was a stroke of genius that should be repeated." Pat Donnelly, *The Gazette*, Montreal, Canada, June 6, 2009

"[...] the formula is a unifying and indeed energizing force. We immediately identify with the dancers, with the way they respond to the music and the rhythm, either on their own or with their partners." Josée Blanchette, *Le Devoir*, Montreal, Canada, May 29, 2009

NEW YORK

Best moments in dance 2012 "... when the hundred and fifty participants in Sylvain Émard's *Le Grand Continental* filed onto the plaza at the South Street Seaport, as part of the River to River Festival, and began dancing in unison. You knew it was going to happen, but, when it did, it was pretty impressive." Andrew Boynton, *The New Yorker*, United States, December 17, 2012

"Seeing people from all walks of life dancing together brings out powerful energy that is fascinating for the spectators looking on in open-eyed wonder. The dancers – amateurs for the most part – glow with the pleasure of dancing in communion with each other and with the audience." Émilie Côté, *La Presse*, Montreal, Canada, June 25, 2012

"[the dancers] are delightful to watch. [...] And the shy, flirtatious smiles many of them presented to the audience were absolutely winning." Claudia La Rocco, *The New York Times*, United States, June 25, 2012

PHILADELPHIA

"The roar from hundreds of spectators seated on the museum steps or temporary bleachers went from loud to deafening as the choreographed dance began to take energetic life with full-body gestures and synchronized shouts. It left the audience cheering for more." Jonathan Lai, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, United States, September 10, 2012

"*Le Grand Continental* is a blast." Patrick Rapa, *City Paper*, Philadelphia, United States, September 8, 2012

"It was fantastic [...]" Ellen Dunkel, *philly.com*, site du *Philadelphia Inquirer*, United States, September 9, 2012

PORTLAND (OREGON)

"Émard, a French-Canadian choreographer, has staged variations of the piece [*Le Grand Continental*] in Montreal, New York City, Mexico City and Philadelphia, earning international raves for the way it elevates line dancing into exuberant art. [...] a delightful half-hour performance." Marty Hughley, *The Oregonian*, Portland, United States, September 28, 2012

BOSTON

"Members of this all-volunteer troupe, *Le Grand Continental*, showcased their new moves in Copley Square Plaza over the weekend. Ranging in age from 11 to 73, they put on three free shows for the public in celebration of the arts, their community and, well, just for fun. What an innovative way to celebrate one's own anniversary [Celebrity Series of Boston's 75th anniversary]. Considering the goal of Celebrity Series of Boston is 'to present world-class

performing artists who inspire and enrich our community', we'd say it succeeded" *The Enterprise*, Boston, United States, May 19, 2014

VANCOUVER

Best of 2015, Top 5 dance : "Sylvain Émard's epic community dance project was unlike anything else we saw in 2015. [...] Martin Tetreault's mash up of pop music and cutting edge technology provided successive changes in mood and rhythm, and the joyful participants made the whole thing shimmer." Deborah Meyers, *The Vancouver Sun*, Canada, December 30, 2015

NEW ZEALAND

"150 amateur dancers, trained by Sylvain, were on their feet and strutting their stuff, proving to the crowd they could all move like the best of them. Combining the sheer joy on the face of the small boy in the football jersey, with the slick style of the woman in the leopard skin top and black tulle skirt, followed by the smiles of satisfaction on the handful of pensioners performing in the group, it really was a 'kick up the arts' start to the festival." Donna Banicevich Gera, *theatreview.org.nz*, New Zealand, February 27, 2016

CHILE

"The premiere of the dance show *Le Grand Continental* at Santiago a Mil was hailed as a major succes." Max Duhalde, *biobiochile.cl*, Santiago, Chile, January 4, 2018

POTSDAM

"*Le Grand Continental* has brought together the most important dance public in Potsdam for the past 28 years." Von Christin Iffert, *Märkische Allgemeine Zeitung*, Potsdam, Germany, May 28, 2018

"*Le Grand Continental*, by Canadian choreographer Sylvain Émard, exceeds all expectations." Astrid Priebströger, *Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten*, Germany, May 25, 2018

TORONTO

"Gordon's [92-year-old] just one example of what makes *Le Grand Continental* special – it brings together people who would likely never have met, from different places in the world, different histories and vastly different ages (the youngest is only 11). Fusing all of these personalities in dance creates an energy that's quite rare – and even more magical." CBC Arts, Canada, July 9, 2018

"[...] a skilful and irresistible half-hour line extravaganza [...]" Sylvie St-Jacques, *The Globe and Mail*, Toronto, Canada, June 24, 2018