

CONTACT

Volume 18, Issue 1, November 2005

montréal
an international city

portrait of a city



Palais des congrès
de **Montréal**





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An exceptional environment
A memorable experience

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Palais des congrès
de **Montréal**

views on the world

montréal an international city

Montréal has long carried the label as an international city, a reputation that holds especially true today. The number-one city in Canada and third in North America for the staging of international conventions, Montréal is also home to the largest concentration of international organizations in the country. A center for four universities and more than 200 scientific research institutes, Montréal is a competitive force in several leading industries including aerospace and new technologies. More than 80 languages are spoken here and its various ethnic communities make it one of the most fascinating cultural mosaics anywhere. Montréal is an original... connected to the rhythms of the world.

And in this world rhythms, it is the Palais that sets the tone. Warm, vibrant, open and embracing, it is an artful synthesis of the Montréal soul and its *joie de vivre*. Firmly established in the beautifully revitalized sector of the Quartier international de Montréal (QIM), the Palais is a vital point of attraction and interest, serving both as a gateway and a meeting point. Its impressive design and inviting and playful character provide visitors a unique and stimulating experience, that echoes throughout the city.

The Palais offers its clientele superior quality services as well as the benefits of an experienced, flexible, creative and professional organization. The Palais team is fully dedicated to making every event, large or small, a success. Working with our partners from the city, universities or the tourism industry, we maintain that same spirit of cooperation and synergy, an approach that has become the key element in Montréal's strategy for success.

This issue of *Contact* is devoted in large part to some of our more important newsmakers at the Palais. We profile four individuals who, by leveraging their positions in their respective fields, have succeeded in bringing major international events to the Palais. They will share their experiences and how they have contributed to enhancing the reputation of the Palais on the world scene. **Gaston Chevalier, Jacques Corcos, David Kendall** and **Emil Skamene**, Montrealers by birth or adoption, reveal in their own words a deep and abiding attachment to the city and observe that Montréal's status as an international city is merited not only because of the major initiatives and projects that have transformed it, but also because of its gracious hospitality and quality of life.

Paul Saint-Jacques
President and Chief Executive Officer



Paul Saint-Jacques



Photo: Pierre Manning

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ISSN-0828-4873
Contact is published by the Société du Palais des congrès de Montréal.
Coordination and graphic design:
Palais des congrès de Montréal
Copywriting: François de Falkenstein, Béatrice Laham,
Pascal Saint-Gelais
Photograph for the cover, Stéphan Poulin

Contact est aussi disponible en français.

a surprising discovery

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Photo: Pierre Manning

We thank Le Toqué restaurant where we held this photo session

When members of the world's medical profession get together for a major congress, it is not surprising that Montréal draws such large attendance, given its reputation for Canadian innovation in the field. Attracted by the credibility of local experts and institutions, international delegates in the thousands flock to the Palais, a preferred venue for information exchange and communication. On the morning after the 35th Annual Meeting of the International Continence Society (ICS), which drew more than 3,000 participants in August 2005, **Dr. Jacques Corcos, Chief of Urology at the Sir Mortimer B. Davis Jewish General Hospital**, shares his recent experience as Congress Chair.

"I have been attending conventions for several years now. So I have a very specific idea of what delegates expect at an international convention and I can tell you that the Palais des congrès de Montréal goes the distance to meet every possible expectation and need. Its key asset is its manageable size. Everything is on a human scale. Nobody wants to spend 15 minutes walking up and down endless corridors between sessions. Here everything is so well organized and conveniently right on site. No time is wasted. It's such an asset!

"One could say that the Palais is a mirror of the city itself, since Montréal is also designed on a human scale. While it is a metropolis of several million people, Montréal boasts an atmosphere that breathes warmth and well-being. Several delegates expected to receive the typical hospitality of major North American cities, but they told me they were pleasantly surprised to discover such a gracious and affable city. Delegates were thrilled with their stay here... as were their families! That's what makes Montréal so different in the North American landscape.

"During their stay, delegates drank up Montréal's unique ambiance and shared a memorable travel experience. Boredom does not exist in Montréal. There are so many interesting districts, good restaurants, and so much to do... and nature is so close!

"All I have to do is read the voluminous e-mails of congratulations I received following the congress to be able to say with conviction that the attractions of this under-appreciated city most definitely contributed to our success."

portrait

A simple stroll downtown is all it takes to feel its subtle charms and charisma. Both American and francophone, proud of its French culture and language, Montréal is also an international city, as its many multicultural communities would attest. And it is in this diverse and stimulating environment that **Dr. David Kendall, Director General, Space Science, at the Canadian Space Agency**, chose to take up residence. One of the organizers of the 37th Cospar Scientific Assembly, expected to attract to Montréal more than 2,000 delegates in 2008, Dr. Kendall harbors an undeniable passion for Montréal and wants the world to know about it.

"My colleagues abroad are simply astounded when they come to Montréal, especially when they see the business district downtown still teeming with people at the end of a workday. We are so fortunate to live in a city that does not become a ghost town after 5 p.m., a walking city that you can discover in complete safety, even at night.

"In Montréal, there is an energy that is palpable and very expressive. Have you ever noticed how much people smile on the street? Here, people take the time to live and it shows. The city is brimming with festivals and events of all kinds, and there are so many restaurants! There is something for every taste, from the most traditional, to haute cuisine to the most exotic at prices that are still affordable. It is such a treat to be able to explore the very heart of a city that is so multicultural.

"This international character is a real asset in the convention industry. Montréal is ranked the third host city in North America for international events. That's saying something! In the case of COSPAR, we persuaded the representatives of some forty member-countries to come to Montréal in 2008. The Palais team did some exceptional promotional work in support of our candidacy. I felt a real sense of enthusiasm on the part of my colleagues at the prospect of discovering a city that remains still largely unknown despite its indisputable reputation in the field of space sciences. Let's not forget that Canada was the third country in human history to have a satellite in space. Since then, many distinguished leaders in aerospace have settled in the Montréal region, and the Canadian Space Agency and Montréal universities are now widely recognized for their innovative programs. Montréal was obviously the logical choice!"



Photo : Pierre Manning

For 34 years, **Dr. Gaston Chevalier** has been teaching **cellular biology and toxicology at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQÀM)** with the same passion. “Obviously, I have changed my course curriculum over the years; I feel it is my duty to stay abreast of the latest developments!” affirms Chevalier, a pioneer in toxicology-applied cellular biology. Ambassador by Appointment of the Palais des congrès de Montréal, Chevalier has been a critical partner over the years in bringing three major conventions to Montréal. His impressive career and list of achievements have earned him a place in the *Canadian Who’s Who* since 2005.

A seasoned Ambassador

The 4th International Congress of Cellular Biology in 1988, which drew 4,000 delegates from 60 countries, was one of the first major conventions at the Palais. “Eight years earlier, we went to Tokyo to present Montréal’s bid. At that time, we only had mock-ups to support our presentations. Later, when I presented other bids, I could benefit from the support of the Palais team. They are experts in developing and preparing candidacy presentations. During the Christmas holidays of 1998, we prepared an impressive bid that we had to present on January 9 to the International Union of Toxicology congress in Israel. Three years later, our efforts bore fruit, when we went to Australia and received the green light for the July 2007 congress.”

No other city like it

“Montrealers do not realize it, but our city offers an extraordinary quality of life. SETAC’s President was impressed that he could walk the streets in complete safety late at night. And he didn’t hesitate to grant us the Annual Meeting in November 2006.

“With four universities including UQÀM – which is directly linked to the Palais – and some 200 research facilities, Montréal is a hub of intellectual activities and pursuits. According to my calculations, 1% of the world’s scientific publications is based here. It might seem trivial, but in reality, it is quite significant, relatively speaking.”

Embracing the world

“Montréal is home to some 80 cultural communities that have contributed to our city’s development. In fact, 15% of Montrealers speak three languages. And in my choir group, Chorale Amabilis, to which I have belonged for 20 years, we sing in ten different languages. We have yet to include Japanese or Arabic in our repertoire, but that’s not far off...”

Portrait

the pull of montréal

Is the appeal of a destination a determining factor in the selection of a host city for an international convention? As **Director of Research at the McGill University Health Centre**, specializing in health and biomedical sciences, **Dr. Emil Skamene** is certainly well qualified to know. His diligent efforts succeeded in bringing two major international conventions to Montréal: the 12th International Congress of Immunology in 2004, which attracted 7,000 participants and the 12th International Congress of Human Genetics, scheduled for 2011, to which no fewer than 10,000 delegates are expected. Dr. Skamene shares his thoughts.

“The appeal of a destination is certainly not the only selection criterion, but it can tip the scales in your favor. Success in securing a convention first depends on the reputation and influence of members of the local organizing committee within their professional association. Then comes the appeal of the destination. With Montréal, we have an ace up our sleeve, because it’s a city that boasts a certain magnetism for delegates from different continents. For Europeans, Montréal’s appeal is that it is North American, for Asians, it is the city’s European flavor, for Americans, it is the convenience of our location. Whatever their nationality, delegates love Montréal.

“Given its geographic and geopolitical context, Montréal is an international city with a host of assets. On the one hand, there is the famous *joie de vivre* of its residents, a thriving cultural

life and the gastronomic flair of its restaurants; on the other, there are esteemed institutions, the reputation of its research facilities and a well-established biomedical industry. Adding to the mix of these intrinsic qualities is the Palais des congrès de Montréal whose experienced and professional team is trained to meet every expectation of organizers; a site whose planning and design are ideally suited to host major international congresses.

“Is it a city of industry or pleasure? Both. That is what makes it a magnetic attraction. Delegates always develop new professional contacts in Montréal and some of them even plan to live here, eager to take advantage of Canada’s productive research sector.”

top of a city

A powerful symbol of Montréal's international character



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At the heart of the Quartier international de Montréal (QIM), the Palais des congrès has become a powerful symbol of Montréal's international character.

Constructed in the early 80s in an architectural style typical of the period, its initial integration in the surrounding sector was somewhat hampered by the construction of the Ville-Marie Expressway. However, the Palais expansion, which began in 2000, folded harmoniously into the urban revitalization and development plan of the Quartier international, one of Canada's most important civil engineering projects giving Montréal a tourism infrastructure of world caliber.

"The original Palais looked like a space ship that had landed in a trench in an area which gave Montréal a negative image," recalls Clément Demers, General Director of the

Quartier international de Montréal. The sector did, however, offer considerable potential and a number of assets to make this dysfunctional district one of the most attractive in the city. Only twenty minutes from Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport, accessible by the Ville-Marie Expressway and serviced by three métro stations, the Palais is at the center of major tourism zones: Chinatown, Old Montréal and the business core. "We knew there would be a good return on investment in this potential. The only thing missing was a concept to exploit these assets, a concept that would promote quality and the quality of life for pedestrians."

major hotels close to the Palais des congrès

- 1 InterContinental Montréal Hotel
- 2 Le St-James Hotel
- 3 Delta Montréal
- 4 Hilton Montréal Bonaventure
- 5 Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth
- 6 Montréal Marriott Château Champlain
- 7 Hyatt Regency Montréal
- 8 Travelodge Montréal Centre
- 9 Holiday Inn Express
- 10 Days Inn
- 11 Holiday Inn Select
- 12 Hôtel Place d'Armes

- Old Montréal
- Chinatown
- Business core
- Quartier international



MOSSAIC

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Gravitas in medicine brings physicians from around the world

The 13th World Gastroenterology Congress, held at the Palais from September 4 to 10, 2005 drew more than 6,000 delegates, representing one of the largest meetings of physicians specializing in the field. Montréal proved to be the ideal venue for the event, given its four universities (two with excellent medical faculties), more than 200 research centers, as well as flourishing pharmaceutical and biomedical industries. This concentration of medical expertise gives Montréal an enviable edge when competing for major international conventions. And it is always with great pride and pleasure that Montréal's medical and scientific community and the team at the Palais welcome some of the world's most prominent specialists and scientists.

Youthful expression in Montréal

Montréal and its Palais des congrès hosted the 15th World Congress and Festival of the Arts for Young Audiences from September 20 to 30, 2005. The festival program included 36 shows designed to showcase the diverse artistic expression of the Americas thanks to the work of artists and creators from Québec, Canada, the United States, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Peru and Bolivia. The triennial event attracted participants from 80 countries for a program of activities rich in laughter, adventure, discovery and excitement.

The world's travel industry meets in Montréal

With its countless attractions and the renowned hospitality of its residents, Montréal represents a first-class destination that deserves to be promoted, especially with travel agents. From November 6 to 11, the Palais is hosting the 2005 World Travel Congress organized by the American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA).

Some 5,500 travel agents and other "destination vendors" will have the chance to come here to experience first hand the joys of visiting Montréal. The ASTA decided to hold its annual convention in Montréal for a number of reasons: Montréal receives more than 10 million visitors a year; is centre stage for some 40 festivals and varied international events (jazz, comedy, fireworks, dance, theatre, Formula 1, tennis, etc.), has a rich heritage and unique culture and is easily accessible from the U.S.

Thanks to this congress, travel agents from the world over will now understand why a visit to Montréal is a memorable experience that should be enjoyed at least once to fully appreciate its unique beauty and charms.



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Photo: Martin Girard



Photo: Martin Girard

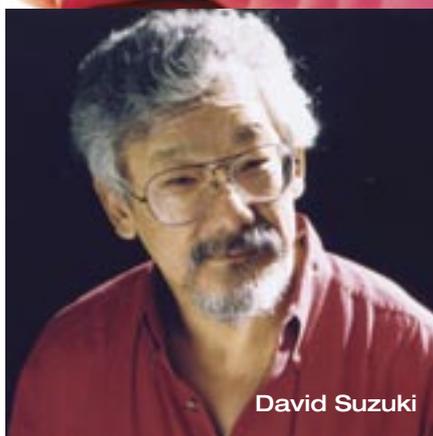


The Palais hosts United Nations Conference

From November 28 to December 9, 2005 the Palais will be host site to the United Nations Conference on Climate Change. More than 10,000 delegates, members of the media and observers are expected to attend this high profile event, putting Montréal, Québec and Canada in the international spotlight.

It is on occasions like these that the necessity for the Palais expansion is borne out. In hosting thousands of international delegates, the Palais can now ensure they receive a memorable experience and superior quality services. And the entire Palais team is proud to contribute to the success of this historic summit, whose purpose is to define the mandate of negotiation for the second phase of the *Kyoto Protocol*, whose application will ensure a cleaner environment for future generations.

This is not the first historic summit on environmental protection hosted by the Palais. It was in Montréal in 1987 that ministers of the environment from around the world came together to limit the use of substances that deplete the ozone layer by adopting the *Montréal Protocol*.

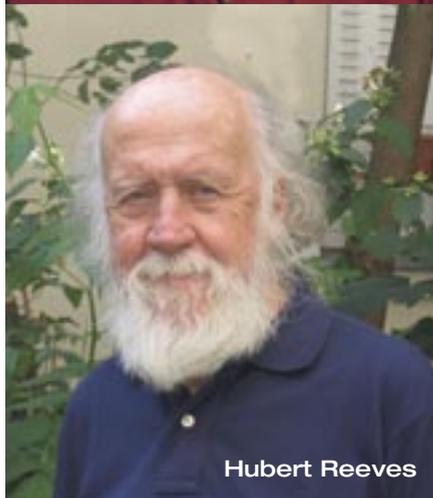


David Suzuki

A meeting of the minds

For the first time, two of Canada's most prominent environmentalists and populizers of science, Hubert Reeves and David Suzuki, will meet on the same podium to voice their concerns regarding the upcoming United Nations Conference on Climate Change. Entitled, *Climate Alert*, the meeting on October 26, 2005 is organized as part of the mandate awarded by the UN to the firm of Equiterre to set up the secretariat for Québec, Canadian and international environmental groups participating in the United Nations Conference.

Born in Montréal, **Hubert Reeves** has a Ph. D. in Nuclear Astrophysics which earned him a post as science advisor to NASA, then professor and Director of Research at the prestigious Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) in France. Passionate for literature and poetry, this eminent scientist has published several major works. For more than three decades, **David Suzuki** has been Canada's environmental conscience. A passionate and effective communicator, he is also a broadcaster, author of several works, environmental activist, geneticist and professor.



Hubert Reeves

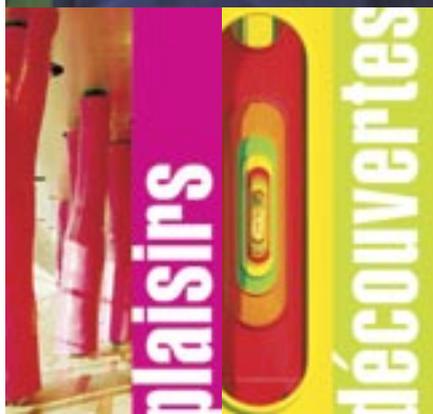
For every taste and interest

Once again, the exhibition season at the Palais des congrès de Montréal is offering an eclectic lineup of events to satisfy every taste and interest. With 20 events on the 2005-2006 calendar and more than 500,000 visitors expected, it promises to be an exceptional season.

The Palais is the ideal site for such events. Thanks to its expanded capacity, including exhibition space of 200,000 square feet (18,587 m²), the flexibility and functionality of its facilities as well as the professionalism and dedication of its staff, the Palais has become the preferred venue for public exhibitions and trade shows.

The highlight of the season, with anticipated attendance of more than 250,000 visitors from January 20 to 29, 2006 is without question the 38th Montréal International Auto Show which, for the first time, will feature upscale manufacturers on the same level.

Since the completion of the Palais expansion, visitors can take advantage of its interior commercial mall on ground level, which features a range of convenient products and services like restaurants – both traditional and fast-food – post office, convenience store, car rental, women's fashion and men's clothes, travel agency, photo lab and art gallery. For more information on events, please consult the Palais des congrès web site at www.congresmtl.com.





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