

Alain Simard

Chairman of the Board of L'Équipe Spectra, FrancoFolies de Montréal and Festival International de Jazz de Montréal, and Founding President Emeritus de MONTRÉAL EN LUMIÈRE

Founder of three festivals

One of the pioneers and leaders of the Canadian music industry, Alain Simard has been a builder of Quebec's culture for nearly 50 years. His passionate work as a manager, agent, concert and festival promoter, recording and television producer as well as avenue owner has contributed to the development and professionalization of our cultural industry and has generated extraordinary artistic, social, economic and touristic benefits for Montreal and Canada.

The trail-blazing promoter

When he was 18 years old, he opened a live concert café, La Clef, and organized pop festivals featuring the first Montreal underground bands, some of which he managed. From 1971, with Kosmos productions, he was the first to promote British groups Genesis, Gentle Giant, Pink Floyd and Procol Harum in Eastern Canada and initiated the midnight shows in Cinéma Outremont with several international artists. In 1977, he organized Harmonium's *L'Heptade* only arena tour and founded Spectra Scène (which would become L'Équipe Spectra in 1992) with André Ménard and Denyse McCann. Together, they launched the Cinéma Saint-Denis as a venue, followed by El Casino club and soon the legendary Spectrum de Montréal in 1983. Alain Simard and Spectra were also behind the transformation of the Métropolis (formerly a nightclub) into a venue in 1997, the renovation and reopening of the Théâtre Outremont in 2001 and the creation of the L'Astral concert club in the seven-storey Maison du Festival de Jazz.

Alain Simard was the first to present a French-speaking artist top-billing the Montreal Forum with rock band Offenbach on April 3, 1980, followed by the Québec Rock tour, the unexpected return of Beau Dommage for two nights in 1984 (repeated in 1994), the Closing ceremony of the 350th anniversary of Montreal, Oscar Peterson with Charles Dutoit, and then many others at the Bell Centre including Diana Krall, Michael Bubl  and some spectacular broadcast concerts with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra featuring music from *The Red Violin*, Ravel and *Lord of the Rings*. We owe him this year's historic reunion of Charles Dutoit with the OSM and Martha Argerich.

He was also the producer of several successful musicals in Montreal such as *Romeo and Juliet*, *L'Homme de la Mancha*, *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*, *Le Chant de Sainte Carmen de la Main*, as well as the co-producer of *Rain* with Cirque  loize. In Paris, Alain Simard also promoted dozens of shows in L'Olympia, Bataclan and La Cigale, especially with Michel Rivard, Carole Laure, Beau Dommage and Jean Leloup.

The artist manager, record and television producer

Alain Simard acted as a personal manager for several multiple platinum artists including Claude Dubois, Offenbach, Paul Pich , Michel Rivard, Beau Dommage, Jean Leloup and Bran Van 3000. He was an agent and a concert producer for Zachary Richard, Harmonium, Rock et Belles Oreilles, Daniel B langer, Ariane Moffat, Marjo, Stefie Shock, Cirque  loize, Champion et ses G-Strings, Vincent Valli res. He also represented for Quebec touring Pat Metheny, John Lee Hooker, Bruce Cockburn and several prominent artists from France.

In 1978, he launched the Spectra label distributed by CBS records and in 1985, he co-founded with Michel B langer and Rosaire Archambault Audiogram discs, of which he was the main shareholder and president until 1992. After he sold his shares, Alain Simard went on being the producer of several significant albums by artists including Michel Rivard, Jean Leloup and Beau Dommage (with * chapp  belle*). He then created Spectra Musique, one of the largest Canadian

record labels today (Vincent Vallières, Richard Séguin, Michel Rivard, Catherine Major, Zachary Richard, Daniel Lavoie, Susie Arioli, Patrice Michaud, Philippe Brach).

In 1979, he created one of the first independent Canadian television production companies: Spectel Video, to which we owe hundreds of musical performance recordings with the first broadcast in multitrack stereo. In the '90s, L'Équipe Spectra also acquired Sogestalt and Amérimage television companies from Guy Latraverse and Pierre Touchette, becoming one of the largest cultural and musical television producers in Canada, and presenting special programs on CBC and Radio-Canada like Oscar Peterson, Diana Krall, the OSM, La La La Human Steps and Cirque du Soleil. In 2001, he was a co-founder of ARTV cultural TV station.

The inventor of the unique Montreal free festivals formula

Alain Simard is best known internationally for being the creator and president of the Festival International de Jazz de Montréal (in 1979 with André Ménard and Denyse McCann), the founder of the FrancoFolies de Montréal in 1989 and of the MONTRÉAL EN LUMIÈRE festival in 1999, all NPOs characterized by an important free outdoor program which overall generates each year over \$100 million in tourism benefits for the city of Montreal. In 2003, he launched the first Nuit blanche in North America, which is still today the event that attracts the most participants in a single day in Montreal.

On June 30, 2009, to celebrate the Festival's 30th edition, he presented for free Stevie Wonder as the opening show of the new Place des Festivals, of which he was the original ideaman, having claimed it since 1999 from the various levels of government. Moreover, his concept of a "festival belt" of public places around Place des Arts (which he has been suggesting to save the Montreal prime festival site) has been fully included in the City plan for the development of its Quartier des spectacles.

In addition to L'Équipe Spectra, its subsidiaries and festivals of which he was CEO, Alain Simard has long served on the boards of directors of ADISQ, of Tourisme Montreal, the Institut québécois du cinéma, PQDS, ARTV, REMI, FAME and X3 Production, as well as community organizations such as the Institut des troubles d'apprentissage.

In 2013, he sold his L'Équipe Spectra shares to Geoff Molson, who committed to continue the cultural mission of the famous company, now a separate subsidiary within CH Group.

In 2016, at age 66, Alain Simard took a well-deserved retirement, as part of a transition planned for five years. Jacques-André Dupont, his collaborator for 27 years, succeeded him as CEO of L'Équipe Spectra and of the three festivals he founded, while his daughter, Catherine Simard, has been leading Spectra Music as vice president.

Distinctions:

- Alain Simard participated in the founding of l'ADISQ and was elected to represent concert producers on the first board of directors in 1979.
- Awarded the Félix for Producer of the Year at the gala de l'ADISQ (1981)
- Successor to Charles Dutoit as Grand Montréalais of the Future in the music sector at the 6th annual Grands Montréalais Gala in 1983.
- Named Personality of the Week by La Presse on four occasions (1985-1998-2001-2004)
- Named Man of the Month by *Commerce* (August 1986)
- Honoured by the Cercle des Bâtisseurs Molson (1986)
- Honorary diploma awarded by the Graduates Association of the HÉC (1986)

- Chosen to represent Canada in Japan to receive the TOYP (Ten Outstanding Young Persons) award. Awarded the keys to the city of Osaka and welcomed by the Minister of Culture and granted an audience with the Emperor in the Imperial Palace (1987).
- Winner of the Trophée Grand Ulysse at the Gala du Tourisme (1988)
- Awarded the Certificat du leadership québécois (1989)
- Winner of the Félix Imprésario of the Year at the gala de l'ADISQ (1990)
- Winner of the Canadian Tourism Silver Medal (1990-91)
- Named to the Chevalier des Arts et lettres in France (1993)
- Awarded the Félix Hommage at the gala de l'ADISQ for the Festival International de Jazz de Montréal (1996)
- Awarded the Prix Hommage by the Société des Fêtes et Festivals du Québec (1997)
- Ranked 34th in the annual standings of the most important and influential businesspeople in Quebec, published annually in *Commerce* (1999).
- Listed among the 100 Most Eminent Montrealers of the Millennium by readers of the *Montreal Gazette* (1999)
- Awarded the special Mérites du français dans le commerce 2000 by the Office de la langue française
- Named 5th most influential personality in the Quebec cultural sector by *La Presse* on January 26, 2002.
- Alain Simard receives the honorary title Ambassadeur du programme en gestion du tourisme et de l'hôtellerie from UQAM, awarded by the Association étudiante du baccalauréat en gestion du tourisme et de l'hôtellerie (GTH) (April 2002)
- Named a delegate to the Sommet de Montréal by the mayor in 2002.
- Awarded the Prix Gérald-Dame 2002 by the Regroupement des centres-villes et des artères commerciales (commercial development society) for his exceptional contribution to the development of downtown areas in Quebec.
- Chosen #1 among the 25 most influential personalities in January 2003 by *La Presse*.
- Honoured as a Grand Entrepreneur at the Gala Les Nouveaux Performants in February 2004.
- Awarded the grade of Chevalier de l'Ordre de la Pléiade in 2004
- Chosen 7th most influential personality in the Quebec cultural sector by *La Presse* on January 31, 2004.
- Awarded the title of Entrepreneur of the Year 2004 by the Groupe Perform, February 9, 2004.
- Alain Simard and Guy Laliberté are jointly named Personalities of the Week *La Presse* (underscoring the twin celebrations of the 25th anniversary of the Festival International de Jazz de Montréal and the 20th anniversary of the Cirque du Soleil).

- Awarded an honorary diploma, *Honoris causa*, by the ITHQ for his contribution to the promotion of gastronomy and his support for the cultural and tourism industries as founder of the MONTREAL HIGH LIGHTS Festival – November 23, 2004
- Chosen #3 among the 25 most influential personalities in the arts sector by *La Presse*, January 29, 2005.
- Awarded the Ernst & Young Grand Prix de l'Entrepreneur 2005 (Media and Entertainment categories, Quebec) in October 2005.
- In the summer of 2005, Alain Simard celebrates his 50th festival!
- Male winner of the Prix de la réussite Entreprendre 2005, presented at the 9th annual dinner-gala held by the Cercle Entreprendre du Québec
- Alain Simard named a *Grand Montréalais* for the second time.
- L'Équipe Spectra receives special mention for *Excellence in Marketing at the National Level* at the national banquet held for the Ernst & Young Grand Prix de l'Entrepreneur 2005.
- Alain Simard is named a Grand Montréalais, entering the inner circle of the Académie des Grands Montréalais.
- Alain Simard, wins the Grand Prix de l'Entrepreneur 2005 (Media and Entertainment categories, Quebec) at the Ernst & Young Grand Prix de l'Entrepreneur 2005 Gala.
- Alain Simard is male winner of the Prix de la réussite Entreprendre 2005 at the 9th dinner-gala held by the Cercle Entreprendre du Québec.
- Alain Simard receives honourable mention for Excellence in Marketing at a National Level on behalf of L'Équipe Spectra, at the national banquet held for the Ernst & Young Grand Prix de l'Entrepreneur 2005 for Canada.
- Named Businessman of the Year 2006, a title presented during the 19th award ceremony gala for the Consumers' Choice Awards, held in April in Montreal.
- Awarded the McGill Management Achievement Award from the McGill University Desautels Faculty of Management for his exceptional contribution to culture and the community.
- Alain Simard is considered by Quebecers as one of the 10 greatest builders, according to a 2007 survey conducted by the Canoë.com website.
- In summer 2007, *Montréal Centre-ville* lists Alain Simard among its 50 leaders of Montreal.
- In 2009, the results of a CROP-Les Affaires-Knightsbridge poll list Alain Simard among the Top 10 leaders who most inspire Quebecers
- Alain Simard receives the Reconnaissance 2009 award from Destination Centre-ville Montréal for his contribution to the development of downtown Montreal
- The Jazz Fest des jeunes du Québec awards its 2010 Prix-Hommage to Alain Simard
- In 2015, he was awarded the rank of Chevalier de l'Ordre national du Québec

- In 2016, he was inducted in the Canadian Music Industry Hall of Fame
- In 2016, he was awarded the rank of Commander of the Ordre de Montréal.
- He is the winner of the first RÉMI award, created in 2017 to recognize the exceptional contribution of an actor in the Quebec event industry.
- In October 2017, he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the Université de Montréal Faculty of Music.
- In 2018, he was named Compagnon des arts et des lettres du Québec.