

LA TOHU

The non-profit organization originally called Cité des arts du cirque was created in November 1999 as an initiative of En Piste (circus arts national network), of the National Circus School and of Cirque du Soleil. In June 2003, the organization changed its name from Cité des arts du cirque to TOHU in order to illustrate the diversity of its mission, the uniqueness and originality of the project, as well as the wide range of actions the organization is taking to fill its cultural, environmental and social objectives. TOHU comes from the francophone term "tohu-bohu".

The predicted location of TOHU: at the corner of Jarry and d'Iberville, right next to the Saint-Michel Environmental Complex. The decision to develop this complex in the impoverished neighbourhood of St. Michel, and at the entrance of an urban landfill site, was the first manifestation of the commitment to the tripartite nature of the mission : establish Montreal as an international circus arts capital; to take part in the rehabilitation of the largest urban landfill sites in North America, namely the SMEC; and to contribute to the revitalization of the neighbourhood of Saint-Michel in Montréal, one of Canada's most sensitive neighbourhoods, in partnership with community organizations.

La TOHU's Public Pavilion's grand opening was celebrated in June 2004. In accordance with its mission, TOHU is programming an array of cultural, environmental and community activities. Through its programming, TOHU aims to become a genuine matrix of convergence for the creation and showcasing of projects and works of individuals, companies and organizations active in the fields of culture, environment and community development.

La TOHU assembles a critical mass of circus arts creation, training, production and performance infrastructures. With the first circular stage in Canada!, TOHU's Pavilion acts as the neighbourhood's very first performance hall, a place where residents can converge to enjoy circus shows and culture at large.

Its mission also consists in informing and raising environmental concern amongst visitors. La TOHU's Pavilion is Gold-certified by the Canada LEED building program (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), so it has to be a model of environmentally sound construction. Also, to fulfill its role as the SMEC's welcome pavilion, the building is also home to exhibits and guided tours on environmental issues.

In all of its activities and programs, in every domain of its mission, TOHU is emblematic of invention, risk-taking, imagination and sustainability.

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www.tohu.ca