



Statement

NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE FLAGS FLY AT HALF-STAFF IN HONOUR OF CANADIAN THEATRE ICON JANINE SUTTO

March 28, 2017 – OTTAWA – It was with great sadness the National Arts Centre (NAC) has learned of the death of actress Janine Sutto, one of Canada's most celebrated and respected actresses. A prolific artist, she appeared in many productions at the NAC, including *Tout comme elle*, in 2006, directed by the Director of the NAC French Theatre, Brigitte Haentjens.

"She had the type of vitality that would put to shame anyone who dared complain about being overworked," said Brigitte Haentjens. "She always performed with an exacting precision. She was a consummate professional [...] and generous to a fault."

In a career spanning over 70 years, this brilliant artist has played hundreds of roles on stage, radio and television. She appeared at major theatres across Quebec in productions ranging from classics by Molière and Shakespeare to works by modern Quebec playwrights, and is well known to radio and TV audiences for her starring roles in numerous dramas and series.

Janine Sutto had a significant impact of the cultural life of Canada, having received in 2014 her country's highest distinction in the performing arts, the [Governor General's Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Artistic Achievement](#).

The National Arts Centre has lowered its flag to half-staff to honour Janine Sutto's work on the stage, screen and television.

BIOGRAPHY

Janine Sutto was born in Paris in 1921 and moved to Montreal with her family in 1930. She began her professional acting career in her teens. "In those days, there were no theatre schools," she recalled. "Our theatrical education took a lot longer because we had to figure it out as we went along, with the help of our elders." She was quickly hailed as one of the bright lights of the emerging Quebec theatre, and enjoyed hugely successful engagements at such leading companies as the Montreal Repertory Theatre, the Théâtre Arcade, Théâtre du Nouveau Monde, and Théâtre du Rideau Vert. Among her many triumphs, she appeared in the original 1968 production of Michel Tremblay's iconic play *Les Belles sœurs*; over four decades later, in 2010, she performed in the musical adaptation *Belles sœurs*, a huge hit in Montreal, on tour across Quebec, and in Paris (five-week engagement).

An icon of Quebec television, she has appeared in some 70 series and dramas, notably *Les Belles Histoires des pays d'en haut*, *Joie de vivre*, *Septième nord*, *Symphorien*, and *Poivre et sel*. Selected film roles include *Kamouraska* (1973), *Congorama* (2005), *La Capture* (2006), and *Route 132* (2010).

Ms. Sutto was a Companion of the Order of Canada (1991) and a Knight of the National Order of Quebec and of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres de la France. Her other awards and distinctions include the RIDEAU Hommage award, Géméaux Award Grand Prix de l'Académie, Gascon-Thomas Award, and Quebecor Prize. Her biography, *Vivre avec le destin* (written by her son-in-law, Jean-François Lépine), was published in 2010.

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