

**Victoria** is a multidisciplinary and multimedia stage production designed for all ages that has a particular impact on anyone who has a loved one who's lost their memory. Over our nearly 20 years of international touring, hundreds of testimonials have confirmed that this character, who lives the present moment with great intensity, brings her audience a new capacity for tolerance and acceptance that lightens the heart. Dulcinea Langfelder presents us an elderly Victoria who we learn to laugh with and to cherish for her generosity and her empathy. When we leave the theatre we want to hug our loved ones, especially those who are most vulnerable. As long as people grow old, *Victoria* doesn't!

## The *Victoria* Project

**The Victoria Project** consists of creating a community-oriented event around the performance. In tandem with our presenters, we reach out to various community organizations dealing, directly or indirectly, with elder care, gathering the major players confronting the subject matter of *Victoria*. In order to get this target audience to see the show, we first go to them, offering workshops designed with their immediate needs in mind. The most pertinent and popular workshop addresses non-verbal communication: a must when dealing with people who can no longer speak. We also offer a movement workshop for seniors, a lecture about the 'making of' *Victoria* - exploring the relationship between humour, creativity and dementia.



The presenter is our first partner in this project. With our support and the expertise our company has acquired, the presenter gathers additional partners in their communities, institutions and organizations (from the local Alzheimer's Society to rest homes to the local police or fire departments) who share similar objectives in terms of caring for seniors and/or sensitization to Victoria's situation. The scope of the project depends on the complicity we manage to create with various players in the community. We invite these participants to set up kiosks in the lobby to inform people of their services (many people don't recognize themselves as family caregivers and are unaware of supports available to them). We invite specialists to participate in post-performance discussions. Before (or after) the performance, we offer the following workshops:



### **Improving Communication: non and para-verbal communication**

The look in the eye, the tone of voice. . . so many unconscious signals betray our best intentions when we are dealing with delicate situations. This theoretical and practical workshop gives participants tools to better master the messages we send and receive, beyond words. Those who interpret Victoria (be it Dulcinea Langfelder or Anne Sabourin) are experts in the field! Designed for family and/or professional caregivers.

### **Corporeal Expression: reconnect with your body at any age**

(Anne Sabourin or Dulcinea Langfelder)

'User friendly' movement to bring energy, pleasure and self-assurance in a convivial atmosphere. . . making everything else a bit easier. Designed for seniors.

### **The Making of VICTORIA: a seminar on creativity, humour and dementia**

The piece was 4 years in the making, and nourished by audiences from around the world for 16 years. How the artist struggled, learned and succeeded in applying her art and her desire to uplift the world with this most difficult subject matter. Delivered with Dulcinea's charm, grace and humour. Designed for all audiences.

### **Post-performance panel discussion:**

Invited specialists in the subject matter or in public service (police, firefighters, politicians) can be invited to join the artists, allowing the audience to ask questions and express their own experiences. This also allows the panelists to inform the audience about their work.



## The philosophy behind the Victoria Project:

Our approach reflects that of Naomi Feil; her **Validation Method** helps reduce stress, enhance dignity and increase joy for both the elder and the caregiver. Since its inception in 1989, Validation has helped thousands of professional and family caregivers improve their relationships with residents and loved ones with dementia by acknowledging older adults' expressed feelings rather than focusing on disorientation and confusion.



## Comment from a presenter:

"The workshops were a stretch for me to organize as I had no previous experience with this faction of our community. It opened up a whole new world to us in terms of outreach. On a personal note, your workshop helped me open up my imagination and heart, even more, with my son, Ted (who has autism). I love thinking that our communication is built on so much more than words. I am forever grateful to you for this insight and for how it has deepened my daily experience with Ted." *Theresa Paterson, Imperial Theatre, St-Johns, N.B.*



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