

LE PORTE-VOIX

At the heart of relational health



♥ LA RUE DES FEMMES: A HOUSE... A HOME... THAT EXUDES WARMTH AND SECURITY

Celebrate life... with you and them!

Because life is both resilient and vulnerable; because it is precious.

Because it takes the security and warmth of a nest, of a home, for life to reach out, to give of itself, to bud and to flourish... in good relational health.

And for it to finally provide healing.

What is life? It's what makes everything possible!

It's a smile or a tear.

It's happiness and harmony.

It's health... it's relational health.

Our houses make life livable; this life that we celebrate every day at La rue des femmes.

By offering safe, loving, truly home-like places, we try to give the best of ourselves, day after day, providing essential care that makes hope possible.

Inside, outside... we have worked hard to give our houses everything that can make them places of solace, of healing.



Photo : Kathleen Girard / Studio Kat Kennedy

La rue des Femmes' three houses are Home Sweet Home for our participants.

Twenty-eight years ago (can it be?!), La rue des Femmes was born: a house brimming with warmth, security, love and kindness for those who no longer have a home, so they can (re)build their lives, reconnect with their relational lives, find or reintegrate into a community, regain their relational health and heal the traumas, the violence, that compromise and threaten their lives, that freeze their lives in a state of post-traumatic stress, a state of homelessness and misery.

That's why La rue des Femmes is there, time and again: together, with them and with you, to welcome and care for women... to celebrate life.

Léonie Couture, C.M., C.Q.

Fouding President and Executive Director at La rue des Femmes

THE VELAN FAMILY: A TRADITION OF COMMITMENT TO LA RUE DES FEMMES!



La Rue des Femmes' first shelter and day centre, Olga House, which was established to accommodate and care for women experiencing homelessness, celebrated its 20th anniversary on October 7. Philanthropy has been a core value for generations of the Velan family, and La rue des Femmes is privileged to be among the causes it supports.

"Twenty years already! Time flies!," recalls Tom Velan, former Chair of the Board of the Velan Foundation and a member of La rue des Femmes' Board of Directors since 2017. "I clearly recall that day, which was the culmination of a lot of hard work! And I remember how emotional and proud my mother was."

The reason that his mother, Olga Velan, was so moved on the day of the official opening is that the house at the corner of Jeanne-Mance and de la Gauchetière streets was named in her honour.

Mr. Velan continues: "For over 20 years, there has always been a member of the Velan family on the Board of La rue des Femmes. First it was my father, then my nephew, Rob [Velan], and now me. The cause of women's homelessness is dear to our hearts, because it's hard to see women in a country like Canada in such a vulnerable situation."

Mr. Velan adds that he and his father were impressed when they met Léonie: "Her determination to get women off the street permanently, to not leave anyone out there, touched us. Homelessness is much more than a housing problem! Ms. Couture understands this and the relational approach she has developed is innovative and effective. It is a major step forward in healing homelessness."

Tom Velan

Director and Advisor to the Chairman

CEO and President

Velan Inc. and Velan Foundation

Thanks to our printer



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♥ **ÉRIC FILION: A MAN WITH HEART**

It was through a colleague who has long been involved with La rue des Femmes that Éric Filion, Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating and Customer Experience Officer at Hydro-Québec, first heard about the organization founded by Léonie Couture: “It was in 2019. I was invited to the Gala for Relational Health and to tour Olga House,” he recalls. “I remember, during my visit, suddenly realizing the full extent of the distress of women living in a state of homelessness and all the challenges they face on a daily basis.”

Following an enlightening meeting with the founder, president and executive director, Mr. Filion readily agreed to become Honorary Co-chair of the *More than a Roof... Healing Homelessness!* major fundraising campaign. “The approach based on relational health really makes the woman—the human being—the focus of the intervention,” Mr. Filion says. “It goes far beyond immediate needs like shelter and food! Making the people in my circle aware of the state of homelessness, how to heal it, it and introducing them to the organization is my way of helping La rue des Femmes with its important mission.”

Mr. Filion has enthusiastically taken on the role of Honorary Co-chair of La rue des Femmes Foundation’s fundraising campaign,

alongside Jean-Yves Bourgeois, Senior Vice-President, Business Services, Mouvement Desjardins; Andrée-Lise Méthot, founder and Managing Partner, Cycle Capital; and Maarika Paul, Senior Vice-President and Chief Financial Officer, Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec. La rue des Femmes and its Foundation would like to thank him sincerely for his contribution to this campaign.



It is worth noting that, thanks to the engagement of the campaign team, the *More Than a Roof... Healing Homelessness* campaign is now 93% of the way to reaching its \$8 million goal!

Éric Filion
President Distribution and Shared Services
Hydro-Québec

♥ **11th EDITION OF THE GALA FOR RELATIONAL HEALTH**

The annual La rue des Femmes gala raised \$340,000 for La rue des Femmes Foundation. It was an unparalleled success that delighted the 480 guests in attendance. All donations are used to further La rue des Femmes’ mission of healing the relational wounds of women experiencing homelessness and help them, one by one, return to a normal life.

That \$340,000 represents care and services for 100 women for a year!



♥ **CATHERINE OP DE BEECK: PROUD TO CONVEY THE LA RUE DES FEMMES MESSAGE**

Nearly five years ago, Catherine Op de Beeck was looking for a new challenge in the field of philanthropy. A friend told her that La rue des Femmes was looking for a philanthropic development advisor for its Foundation. So she went to speak to Léonie Couture, with no expectations... and was blown away by this first meeting: “I absolutely fell in love with Léonie! She made me discover what homelessness is like for women, the immense difficulties and traumas that these women have gone through to end up on the street. She changed my vision of homelessness: it is a condition that can be healed by rebuilding one’s relational health. I immediately wanted to follow this inspiring woman and contribute in my own way to the recovery of some of our society’s most wounded women.”



Catherine has been Director of Philanthropic Development for La rue des Femmes Foundation for two years now. “Every morning I wake up knowing that my day is going to be meaningful,” she says. “It’s rewarding to help rally people around supporting La rue des Femmes’ mission. My real ‘pay’ is knowing that my actions are tangibly helping the workers to welcome and care for women living in a state of homelessness!”

As head of her department, Catherine has a front-row seat to the successful results of the relational health approach: “I have the opportunity to see and hear from participants on a regular basis and each time I realize the strength of the bond that is created with the workers is and how crucial it is to their healing process. The workers’ unconditional love is palpable. In fact, everyone I invite to visit one of La rue des Femmes’ houses comes away with the impression of having discovered a parallel universe; a universe inhabited by love, compassion, benevolence and listening.”

Catherine Op de Beeck
Director of La rue des Femmes’ Foundation

DID YOU KNOW...

There are many ways to support La rue des Femmes: donating time, goods or services, cash or shares. You can make a gift of publicly traded shares, savings bonds or mutual funds. This form of donation can be very advantageous from a taxation point of view.
Want to know more about donating shares? Contact Miriem Mkinsi, Advisor, Philanthropic Development, at La rue des Femmes Foundation: 514 284-9665 or mmkinsi@laruedesfemmes.org.

