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# BON DÉBARRAS

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## Press review



Photo : Vitor Munhoz

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### Biography

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**Bon Débarras** was born from a chance encounter between 3 dynamic artists from the music, dance and poetry worlds. Drawing their inspiration from the rich traditions of French-speaking North America, the band was nominated for their self-titled début for an ADISQ award in the 'Traditional music album of the year' category; and again in 2013 for *Errance*, their second opus. Changes have occurred among the members, but the trio remains true to their roots, while exploring composition and music styles including folk, trad and slam... an American cross-roads where tradition and modernity meet.

With their latest album, *En panne de silence*, **Bon Débarras** moves boldly into a repertoire that is almost entirely original, steeped in poetry and rhythmic urban sounds – and even a touch of First Nations influence. More innovative than ever, the trio remains true to

the rhythms of French-speaking America with those unambiguous Quebec flavors supported by a new-comer – the fiddle. And that's how, over the years, this warm-hearted band has been able to carry on an identity, a style and an energy-filled zest for life quite unique and beautifully served by the versatility of the musicians as well as their daring jiggling and vivid body percussion.

**Bon Débarras** drew the attention of European presenters in 2014 after receiving the *Lynda Lemay Award* at the Festival de la chanson de Granby. The group performed some twenty concerts in France on their 2016 Granby-Europe tour. Since its birth, the band has played throughout Canada, the United States, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom as well as making regular appearances in France.

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## **En panne de silence** - The show

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*En panne de silence* by **Bon Débarras** takes us on a journey where anything is possible. While a solitary kitchen party is on, an opinionated dance caller, a mad dancer, a theatre ghost and a lover inspired by the seasons show up.

You need a live performance of the trio to fully experience the many traditions of francophone America which coexist in their swing and in a repertoire now mostly made of original compositions sometimes overflowing with rhythmic poetry. The stage is set for jigs, dances and some blazing body percussions, because their distinctive physical atmosphere embedded in their music is definitely **Bon Débarras'** trademark.

And you need the heartfelt warmth of **Dominic Desrochers**, **Jean-François Dumas** and third and not least **Marie-Pierre Lecault** when they slow down their mad tempo for a tender love song, a quiet folk tune or a foray into Innu traditions, touching upon some of Québec's deepest roots. The depth of the musical atmospheres on the album is carried by the musicians' versatility and proficiency on a panoply of instruments – guitar, banjo, fiddle, viola, harmonica, Jew's harp, ukulele, rhythmically supported by the cajon and podorythms.



**Bon Débarras'** music is not only an antioxidant for the soul, it will tickle your inner silence with a compelling energy calling for foot stomping and dancing!

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## About **En panne de silence**

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*We were used to the band drawing on the memory of French-speaking America, all the way to Louisiana, as well as incorporating elements of American roots music. Although these influences can be still be felt here, **Bon Débarras'** gift with this fresh 3rd album is a bunch of original songs – almost all of them. The trio resolutely highlights songs and lyrics – poetic, traditional in its inspiration, or a place where slam meets other forms of definitely urban rhythmic poetry. That's one of the band's trademarks associated to their very physical musical atmosphere. So, don't worry, there is plenty of jigging, dancing, hand drumming and vivid body percussion.*

Yves Bernard, Le Devoir

*In their first recordings, you could perceive them deeply rooted in Québec and French North America's memories all the way through Louisiana, with a dash of Americana. In their latest creation, **Bon Débarras** bets mostly on original compositions, in addition to a new cover of the *Rill pour rire* popularized by Diane Dufresne. Here, it is sung by Marie-Pierre Lecault, the gifted new band member, violinist and violist, who has answered the call of "folk trad" in recent years. Her instruments play the part that used to be for the Double Bass, which gives a new swing to*

*their music sometimes overflowing with rhythmic poetry. Ready for this kitchen party, the trio dares slow down for a tender love song or a more intimate folk song, to end up exploring Nitassinan, Innu territory. Somewhere between folk sound and songs, traditional roots and contemporary beat, **Bon Débarras** has succeeded one more time in seducing us.*

Nicolas Mouchel, Le Pays d'Auge

*Moving from inspired and dazzling original pieces whose energy is contagious to more mellow and poetic, even melancholic ones, **Bon Débarras** found the right pace for *En panne de silence*. A sense of lightness and free spirit exudes from this album, with its lively songs and beats made for foot stomping – an authentic call to dance!*

Pauline Banchereau, FrancoFans

*Still faithful to the rhythms of French-speaking North America and well rooted in the Québec folk trad repertoire, **Bon Débarras** trio has succeeded over the years in imposing their close to unique style and identity, with their energy beautifully served by the jig and the percussive dancing.*

Bernard Letissier, La Manche libre

# LE DEVOIR

LIBRE DE PENSER

## « De la cuisine à la lune avec Bon Débarras »

Yves Bernard, Le Devoir, 24 février 2017

<http://www.ledevoir.com/culture/musique/492563/de-la-cuisine-a-la-lune-avec-bon-debarras>

Jeudi soir, le groupe montréalais proposait le spectacle du lancement de « En panne de silence », du nom de son nouvel album, devant un public très enthousiaste au Lion d'Or. D'entrée de jeu, une nouveauté s'impose : l'arrivée de la violoniste altiste Marie-Pierre Lecault, ce qui modifie beaucoup la personnalité du groupe. Elle remplace le contrebassiste Cédric Dind-Lavoie, joue, chante, tape du pied et invite le Quatuor Trad avec lequel elle s'est fait connaître. Avec elle, Bon Débarras se rapproche davantage du son québécois.

Le groupe a toujours puisé principalement dans l'Amérique francophone, jusqu'à la Louisiane, en intégrant des éléments de roots américain, mais avec ce troisième album, et bien que ces influences soient toujours présentes, Bon Débarras offre dorénavant un répertoire presque complètement original en mettant l'accent sur la chanson : la chanson poétique, celle d'inspiration traditionnelle, ou cette autre qui intègre le slam et d'autres formes de poésie rythmée, urbaine.

Il s'agit là de l'une des marques de commerce du groupe, en plus du caractère physique, aussi intégré dans la musique. On gigue, on danse, on se frappe le corps et on rend très vivantes les percussions corporelles. Le mouvement va même au-delà du trad et on a l'impression à un moment d'être presque rendu dans un tablao espagnol lorsque Dominic Desrochers se met à marteler le plancher. Il a l'habitude d'explorer plusieurs formes de danses contemporaines qui nous projettent ailleurs.

Il joue aussi de la guitare et du ukulélé en chantant. Durant le spectacle, on n'est jamais bien loin de la chanson, même si des passages instrumentaux « groovent » et « rillent » fort. On pénètre aussi dans d'autres atmosphères : en valse délicatement habillée par le quatuor à cordes ou en folk avec un violon rythmique qui confère un effet hypnotique. Ailleurs, on turlutte et on harmonise les turluttes. On les rend même mélodiques. On sait aussi se faire très drôle en faisant « riller » le chant, surtout dans l'interprétation par Marie-Pierre du Rill pour rire que Diane Dufresne avait rendu célèbre. Ici, on a même trouvé le moyen de siffloter et de finir la pièce avec du chant jazz, toujours avec le sourire en coin.



Photo: Mario Faubert

Bon Débarras offre dorénavant un répertoire presque complètement original en mettant l'accent sur la chanson.

Les choses sont devenues plus émouvantes lorsque les spectateurs ont commencé à simuler des battements de cœur en se frappant légèrement sur le corps pour annoncer Makusham en hommage à la culture innue. Tout y était : le sentiment, la langue et la présence de Joséphine Bacon qui s'est permis de danser sur la scène avec sa canne, tout cela précédé d'un extrait d'un poème de Natasha Kanapé Fontaine. Ici, les racines ancestrales et moins anciennes du Québec se rejoignent le plus naturellement du monde. La lenteur de l'espace se transmettait dans l'offrande.

Ce qui précède a également été rendu possible par l'excellent multi-instrumentiste Jean-François Dumas. En plus d'être de tous les rythmes avec sa podorythmie et son cajon, il incarne le troubadour du voyage en s'accompagnant à la guitare, au banjo, à la mandoline et à l'harmonica. Au banjo, il est l'un des héritiers de Jean-Paul Loyer par sa façon aventureuse d'utiliser l'instrument. Il « groove » en toute complicité avec Marie-Pierre pendant que Dominic se laisse souvent aller à la parole originale. Quelques lignes de Déclunaison paraissent d'ailleurs résumer la démarche poétique et musicale du groupe : « Je me fais un party de cuisine. Dans ma tête en sourdine. C'est la lune qui me répond ». Un exemple de l'originalité de Bon Débarras.



# LE DEVOIR

LIBRE DE PENSER

## « En panne de silence, Bon Débarras »

Yves Bernard, Le Devoir, 17 février 2017

<http://www.ledevoir.com/culture/musique/491877/en-panne-de-silence-bon-debarras>



Sur les premiers disques, on a perçu les racines du Québec et de l'Amérique française jusqu'à la Louisiane, mais avec un peu de roots américaine. Ici, Bon Débarras mise sur des originales, en plus d'une version de Rill pour rire rendue célèbre par Diane Dufresne et interprétée ici par Marie-Pierre Lecault, la nouvelle venue, violoniste-altiste de formation, qui est tombée dans la marmite trad dans les dernières années. Ses instruments remplacent la contrebasse, et cela

transparaît beaucoup dans le swing de cette musique parfois gorgée de poésie rythmique dans le party de cuisine. On peut aussi ralentir vers une tendre chanson d'amour ou un folk plus intime. Dans quelques pièces, le quatuor trad confère des couleurs plus classiques et vers la fin, le groupe s'aventure vers le Nitassinan, le territoire innu. Entre folk, chanson et trad, Bon Débarras réussit un autre bon coup. Spectacle-lancement au Lion d'Or le jeudi 23 février.

# FrancoFans

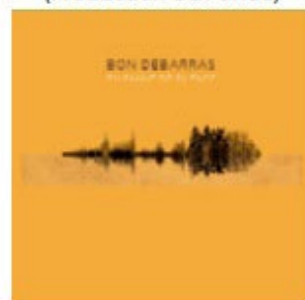
LE BIMESTRIEL INDÉ DE LA SCÈNE FRANCOPHONE

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### BON DÉBARRAS

*En panne de silence*

(Production de l'Onde)



Porteur d'un son traditionnel, ce trio n'a pas eu de panne d'inspiration pour son troisième album empreint de son origine, que vous allez très vite deviner grâce au bel accent... québécois ! Loin des clichés, la musique folk de Bon Débarras s'ouvre à d'autres horizons spacio-temporels, nous transportant tantôt en Irlande, tantôt dans la cale d'un bateau de Vikings (*La grondeuse à la fille*). Il faut dire que les matelots sont bien équipés pour le voyage et la fête : banjo, violon, harmonica, percussions corporelles, exaltés par des passagers invités tel que l'accordéon. L'alternance entre les morceaux à l'énergie contagieuse et d'autres plus doux, remplis de poésie, de mélancolie (*Le théâtre de la ville*) rythme judicieusement *En panne de silence*. Un sentiment de légèreté et de liberté se dégage de cet album aux ritournelles faisant taper du pied, un véritable appel à la danse !

[www.bondebarras.ca](http://www.bondebarras.ca)

**Pauline Banchereau**



## « Quebec's high energy folk trio Bon Débarras in concert Aug. 20 & 21 »

Daily Bulldog, Maine (États-Unis), 16 août 2014

<http://www.dailybulldog.com/db/arts/quebecs-high-energy-folk-trio-bon-debarras-in-concert-aug-20-21/>

SOUTH CARTHAGE - New England Celtic Arts with the support of the American Folk Festival and Folk Quebec will present Bon Débarras. Performances are at Skye Theatre Performing Arts Center in South Carthage on Wednesday, Aug.20; and at Phillips Area Community Center in Phillips on Thursday, Aug. 21. Curtain is at 7 p.m. at both locations and a jam session at Skye will start at 6:15 p.m.

Bon Débarras is the result of the unexpected meeting of three dynamic creators involved in music, dance and poetry. The trio opens a door to their recollections of America and their music is at the intersection of various traditions. Their energy taps into the rhythms of today and ventures boldly on the multi-faceted road to tomorrow's dreams.

Folklore (from folk, meaning "people," and lore, meaning "knowledge") refers to all collective productions by the people that are orally transmitted from generation to generation (tales, stories, songs) or through example (music, dance, rites, beliefs, savoir-faire).

Folklore defines who we are and traces our origins. Bon Débarras' inspiration comes from their home base, Montreal, one of the most cosmopolitan cities in North America. While remaining true to their roots, the three musicians, who are equally passionate about music, dance and poetry, are drawing on living traditions and various influences to explore new avenues.

Bon Débarras' folk music is deeply rooted in the memory of French-speaking America. On their guitars, banjo, mandolin, accordion, washboard and harmonicas, and integrating foot percussion, jig and body percussion, the trio creates musical atmospheres that transcend boundaries and ages.

The American Folk Festival is Maine premier Folk event held Aug. 22 thru 24 on the Bangor Waterfront. This years schedule is available at <http://www.americanfolkfestival.com>



**Bon débarras**

Bon Débarras are featured throughout the festival with performances and workshops.

More information is available at:  
<http://www.necelticarts.com>



# “St. Albert Children’s Festival fun for all ages”

Colin Maclean, Edmonton Sun, Alberta, 28 mai 2014

<http://www.edmontonsun.com/2014/05/28/st-albert-childrens-festival-fun-for-all-ages>

When the final yellow bus filled with happy kids drove away and the final volunteer wearily went home June 1<sup>st</sup> of last year, 57,137 patrons had turned up to sample the many pleasures of the St. Albert International Children’s Festival. And over 23,000 of those paid to see a show.

Much like the Fringe, the quality of entertainment at the St. Albert Festival has drifted upward over the years. This year with a banquet of entertainments to choose from, let me lead you through the feast with a few morsels you might consider.

On the streets (and free) consider Phileas Flash and Dan The One Man Band. Both of these fast-talking entertainers feature snappy patter, and an act that holds the attention of children — of all ages. Flash is a motor-mouthed

Brit with an amazing facility with balloons. His act includes a hypnotizing device you stare at — and when he moves it away — his head blows up like, well, a balloon. Dan The One Man Band walks around the Festival dressed in a suit of instruments — drums, triangles, cymbals and the like while playing a guitar, a kazoo and a mouth organ and working the audience like a vaudeville clown.

On the (also free) outdoor stage, my favourite act is Kimberly and Daniel Craig who are a complete circus all by themselves — juggling, fire juggling, hand-to-hand acrobatics and a stunning turn by Daniel on a spinning hoop. He gives the impression he will go out of control at any second but he rules the stage. You’ve probably seen these kinds of acts before but never better or performed by just two people.

On the mainstages, I was particularly impressed with the French Canadian trio Bon Debarras (“Good Riddance”). The act is based on traditional French Canadian folk music but the manic trio certainly blow the doors off anything fusty or old-fashioned. First of all, they are superlative musicians playing in many styles and on many instruments. That includes the human body. At one point they had an entire sell-out audience of young people syncopating various rhythms by slapping sundry parts of their bodies. (“The most accessible instrument in the world. And the cheapest.”)

My favourite was a simple, yet continent spanning rhythm, first played on an Inuit drum that morphed into a French Canadian two-step and finally into a barn burning Cajun melody. You leave Bon Debarras with a goofy smile on your face and a spring in your step.

From India, by way of L.A., a dance company called Blue 13 comes with Ghungroos and Whistles, a very practiced and precise high energy company of seven that celebrates the exuberance of Bollywood dancing. The costumes are gorgeous, the music infectious and the dances are diverse — much like India itself.

The Edmonton Sun is proud to present Train Theatre — an Israeli puppet theatre in the riveting A Touch of Light. It’s the story of Louis Braille, who lost his sight when he was three and at the age of 15 invented a method of reading and writing for the blind. It doesn’t sound like much of a gripper but in the hands of master storyteller Patricia O’Donovan, there wasn’t a sound in the hall until the audience broke into enthusiastic applause at the end. The very basic puppets are all made of paper but with music, lighting and use of shadow this story of a little boy who changed the lives of blind people everywhere becomes very real and touching.

And finally, a spectacular production on the mainstage of the Arden Theatre. There may be just three actors on stage but the Austin, Texas company The Robot Planet presents a cast of dozens in The Intergalactic Nemesis, a lurid, melodramatic 1933 comic book about an intrepid (female) reporter and her faithful sidekick who undertake a dangerous intergalactic journey to save the earth. (Of course!) There’s music, sound effects and over 700 huge comic style drawings. The production was a bit leaden but the audience loved it.

The shows are available right through the week but Friday night and all day Saturday the buses full of kids stop and families are more apt to find tickets available. But beware — many shows are sold out already. The St. Albert International Children’s Festival runs through May 31.



## “Joyful, energetic music with Bon Débarras”

Anna Borowiecki, St. Albert Gazette, Alberta, 7 mai 2014

<http://www.stalbertgazette.com/article/20140507/SAG0302/305079978/joyful-energetic-music-with-bon-d%C3%A9barras>

Every year the Northern Alberta International Children's Festival books a lively foot-stomping group. And this year the bouncy, up-tempo Bon Débarras fills the slot.

The Montreal-based trio's name roughly translates into “Good Riddance.” But in an odd paradox, the group's energetic traditional step dancing generally evokes a “wow.”

Bon Débarras spokesperson Jean-Francoise Dumas patiently explains that the choice of their quirky moniker was based on two things.

“Bon Débarras has two meanings. One is ‘good riddance’ and good riddance is about getting rid of sorrow, anger and all negative energy. We let it go when we play music. We let it out. Also in French, débarras is a place to keep old stuff you don't want to get rid of. We are like a storage closet where we can go and find traditional influences and inspiration.”

Dumas is the trio's drummer, even though snare, kick and cymbals are not part of his toolkit. He specializes in podorythmie – a popular French form playing percussion using only feet and the floor.

His longtime band mate Dominic Desrochers, a well-known Quebecois singer and step-dancer, also plays banjo, guitar and washboard. Rounding out the ensemble is virtuoso Cedric Dind-Lavoie on upright bass and accordion.

Together they are a high-powered trio melding American and Quebec influences to form a distinct sound of their own.

Bon Débarras was born after three dynamic creators pooled their energy. While remaining true to their roots, they also tapped into the rhythms of today creating a one-of-a-kind fusion that has echoes of Scottish, country, bluegrass and rockabilly.

In 2013, the ensemble dropped its second album, *Errance*, meaning “wanderer.”

“It was inspired by the francophone memory of America. We are like the Acadian, the Cajun. We all have a French connection. We wander all over the map.”

Unlike other Quebec-based bands such as *Le Vent du Nord* that use the traditional fiddle, strings and accordion, Bon Débarras prefers banjo, piano and accordion.

“And we include dance. Dominic comes from a tap dancing background. He went looking for more vocabulary in his research and discovered a gum boot dance, Hungarian dance and body percussion.”

Unlike Bon Débarras' first self-titled album that hinged mostly on traditional works, *Errance* is mainly original tunes each with their own vibe.

*Reel facile* has a strong start right out the gate and is loaded with tight harmonies, a funky harmonica and serious banjo action.

*Chanson du forcat* translated into the “song of the convict” creates a tempo with a chain-gang feel whereas *Vagancia* is more delicate with the use of a mouth harp and good support from the double bass.



**GOOD RIDDANCE – Bon Débarras, the Montreal-based trio whose name roughly translates into “Good Riddance,” is coming to this year's children's festival.**  
Supplied photo

Humour is a big part of *Chien fidèle*, a song about the singer's dying dog, which you might think would bring on a rush of tears. But after the dog dies, the percussion gears up and the singer dances a jig on the car that killed his dog and stomps the hell out of it.

Yes, Bon Débarras is promising a lot of fun.

“Come, you'll feel better. Music is joyful and there's a lot of energy in it. It makes me feel alive when I play and it makes you feel alive. Hopefully you will dance too.”

## “Bon Débarras offers up a foot-stomping party”

Alexander Varty, The Georgia Straight, 22 février 2012

<http://www.straight.com/music/bon-debarras-offers-foot-stomping-party>

Bon Débarras's name translates as “Good Riddance”, but that's the last thing anyone's likely to say when the Montreal-based trio leaves a stage. “Wow!” is the more usual response, thanks to the group's energetic fusion of traditional step-dancing, Québécois folk music, and influences from around the globe.

Most of all, audiences are going to be knocked out by the fancy footwork of Jean-François Dumas. In addition to playing harmonica, banjo, and guitar, he's effectively Bon Débarras's drummer, even though snare, kick, and cymbals are noticeably absent from his musical toolkit. That's because he specializes in podorythmie—playing percussion using only his feet and the floor.

“It's very typical of Quebec, this kind of art, but when we go out of Quebec, in France or the United States, people are very fascinated by it,” says Dumas's bandmate Dominic Desrochers, an acclaimed singer and step-dancer who also plays banjo, guitar, and washboard. On the line from a Winnipeg tour stop, he explains that in Québécois folk music, foot percussion predates the 19th-century introduction of the piano and the 20th-century adoption of the guitar.

“It's the original accompaniment to fiddle or accordion music,” he notes. “You're dancing, sitting on a chair, and playing percussion—and with Jean-François, he's playing banjo and harmonica at the same time, as well as singing. It's really impressive.”

Add Luzio Altobelli's accordion virtuosity and you've got what Desrochers calls “acoustic rock groove music”, but even that's a misleadingly reductive explanation of what Bon Débarras has to offer. As documented on its eponymous debut, the band combines elegant original songs with the considerably more rustic sounds that Desrochers was exposed to during his family's multigenerational jam sessions. As well, it draws on the melting-pot reality of contemporary Montreal.

“Traditional French-Canadian music was inspired by immigration—the old immigration, with Irish music, Scottish music, English music, and music from France, too,” the multi-instrumentalist stresses. “And today the immigration's still going on, with African and Latin American



**The members of Bon Débarras model the type of ensembles that pass as formal evening wear among fans of traditional French-Canadian folk music.**

people, people from around the world. So we're inspired by all these cultures, and want to integrate them into our culture.”

To bolster his argument, Desrochers points out that Dumas will make a bonus appearance at this weekend's Festival du Bois, tapping his feet along to Argentine-born guitarist Juan Sebastian Larobina's innovative take on the tango. Don't think that Québécois folk music has entirely abandoned its national-treasure status in favour of international exploration, though. Giving the Straight an impromptu French lesson, Desrochers explains the secondary meanings of his band's punning name.

“Débarras also means a storage room: it's a place where we store old memories and old things in case we need them one day,” he says. “But sometimes those things can grow in value. That's why we search for old songs that can also be a reality today. That's why we go into the archives or draw on family repertoire.

“And, too, débarras can mean a release or deliverance from something,” he continues. “In that way, we see music as kind of an antioxidant of the soul. It makes us feel good when we play so, yeah, it's good riddance—good riddance to sad feelings.”

Bon Débarras plays the Festival du Bois in Maillardville's Mackin Park on Saturday and Sunday (March 3 and 4).