



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate distribution

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN QUÉBEC! THE RÉSEAU QUÉBÉCOIS D'ACTION POUR LA SANTÉ DES FEMMES PRESENTS: A UNIQUE TOOL TO PROMOTE A HEALTH-CONSCIOUS FASHION INDUSTRY!

Montréal, March 29, 2011 – Today, the Réseau québécois d'action pour la santé des femmes (RQSAF) hosted a lively and magnificent event to launch the first leaflet (look book style) aimed at making ALL OF US more responsible—individually and collectively—for the health consequences of fashion..

RQASF director, Lydya Assayag, was accompanied at the event by four influential women who lent their generous participation to the project: Graziella Battista, chef-owner, Restaurant Graziella; Michelle Blanc, senior partner, Analyweb Inc.; France Geoffroy, contemporary dancer and artistic director, Corpuscule Danse and Amina Gerba, CEO, Afrique Expansion and co-founder, Kariderm.

Changing mentalities

The leaflet is part of a lengthy research program on the complex issue of the body image of women and young girls. RQASF is responding to the fact that everywhere we look, we see a single image of women's beauty. It deplores that the cult of youth, hypersexualization and lack of diversity (ethnicity, age, physical ability, etc.) underpin a standard of beauty that is disconnected from reality.

"To be beautiful, all women, aged 7 to 77, must always be young, thin to an extreme, white, and sexy—at a cost to their health," emphasized Ms. Assayag.

What can we do? RQASF is using this leaflet to demonstrate that beauty can be expressed in other ways and it is offering a guide to encourage us to act for healthy and diversified body images.

Illustrated with superb fashion photos, the leaflet also gives a voice to the women and men who contributed to its production and who believe that change is possible: the four well-known figures who acted as models; clothes designers Louise Daoust (Lili les bains), Denis Gagnon, Mirmonde Phildor and Marie Saint Pierre; jewelry designer Anne-Marie Chagnon; and Sandrine Belleteste (stylist), Richard Bouthillier (hairstylist-makeup artist) and Marc Montplaisir (photographer).

Individual and collective responsibility

The leaflet will be distributed broadly, to all players in the fashion industry (designers, manufacturers, distributors, etc.), fashion schools and the general public.

"We're using this launch to invite all practitioners in the world of fashion or image-making to innovate in their own way so that we can see men and women who are more representative of the diversity of our population on the runways and before the camera.

We also encourage consumers who are fed up with toxic images to make themselves heard with their consumer power," said RQASF director, Ms. Assayag.

If you want to do more, come and find out how:
<http://rqasf.qc.ca/information/image-corporelle>

About the RQASF

Since 1997, RQASF has striven for the improvement of women's physical and mental health and living conditions. It is particularly concerned about the situation of women who have been marginalized, for example, due to their socio-economic status, sexual orientation, language, colour, ethnic background or disability. Prevention is a key focus in all of its action areas (research, information, awareness-raising, training and mobilization).

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