



*The meeting of the heads of state: Governor and Mrs. Mulroney of Canada and President and Mrs. Reagan of the U.S. at the Grand Theatre du Quebec reception at which Les Sortileges performed. Inset is photo of Jimmy di Genova, founder and director of Les Sortileges.*

## FOLKLORE ENSEMBLE LES SORTILEGES

Dedicated to the preservation and promotion of folklore, the National Folklore Ensemble Les Sortileges was founded in 1966 at the initiative of general and artistic director, Jimmy Di Genova.

For 15 years, all depended on volunteers. Since 1981, the company has achieved professional status, making it the only professional folklore group in Canada.

Les Sortileges, an expression of a culture movement unique in America, has visited numerous countries throughout the years: France, England, Israel, Bulgaria, Turkey, Martinique, Japan, the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

Equipped with a repertory of dances particular to the province of Quebec, the company has largely surpassed the limits of its homeland to express the folklore of other international communities such as Rumania, Russia, the Ukraine, Israel, Italy, Turkey, Poland, Armenia and Mexico.

Les Sortileges preserves a history and traditions that risk being lost and forgotten by bringing them to life on the stage. It is with great energy that the director passes on his passion for folklore to the younger generations. The dancers, ages 18-25, are trained at Les Sortileges which consists of, in sorts, a national folklore school, since there is no other place for this professional training in Canada. The company has a vast costume collection from 23 different origins as well as from nine regions of Quebec. Each costume has been designed from an authentic model; however, some have been changed slightly to adapt them for the stage.

In February, 1985, the ensemble represented Canada for a month at Disney's Epcot Center in Florida for the "World Showcase Festival," and in March performed in ten towns around the Island 24/VILTIS



*Les Sortileges ensemble at EPCOT in Florida, shown in their Quebecois costumes.*

of Montreal. This series was made possible by the financial support of the Arts Council of the Montreal Urbain Community as well as aid from the towns. In August the company sent four dancers to Japan to represent Canada at the international exposition in Tsukuba and achieved great success with their *gigues* and *cotillions*. During all of 1985, preparations were underway for celebrating the 20th anniversary of the ensemble's founding.

In November, Les Sortileges danced for the second time on the stage of Place des Arts in Montreal. The main goal for the 20th anniversary gala was fundraising while at the same time introducing the business community to the importance of a cultural reality in Montreal.

In March, 1986, Les Sortileges danced at Carnegie Hall, New York. That summer they danced at the Canadian Pavillion at Expo '86 in Vancouver. It was with great spirit they accepted this two-month challenge and did up to five shows a day, six days a week.

Upon arrival from the west of Canada, the company worked to prepare a completely new show for an October tour of ten Mexican towns. From Mexico City to Toluca, from Morelia to Guanajuato, the Mexican people were in agreement that Les Sortileges were first-class ambassadors and won the hearts of over 20,000 spectators in 8 performances. One of these was live on Mexican national TV.

This tour, "Festival Cervantino" was subsidized by the Minister for Cultural Affairs, the Quebec Minister for International Relations and the Federal Minister for External Affairs.

In December the dancers presented a series of performances for school children in Montreal.

Les Sortileges will be traveling in the region of Windsor, Ontario as well as Detroit, Michigan, in 1987.

At Les Sortileges, it's not ideas that are lacking, but rather, the director of the company must sometimes slow down his ambitions due to lack of funds



*Les Sortileges performing a Ukrainian dance at the Canadian Pavillion during Expo 1986 in Vancouver, B.C.*

necessary for the completion of these ideas. Despite obstacles, the National Folklore Ensemble Les Sortileges continues forward with its plans, both national and international.

For further information and/or auditions, write The National Folklore Ensemble Les Sortileges, 6560 Chambord St., Montreal, Quebec, H2G 3B9, Canada. (514) 274-5655.