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Discipline: Theatre

The act of creating an original handmade candlestick to honor the contribution of women in theatre was for me an opportunity to highlight women's fight for their creative freedom. Through this commemorative project, my intention is to celebrate and honour the important changes in theatre by focusing on a period of interest through the lens of my French-Canadian Québécoise roots and heritage. As a way to explore transformative practices and theory in the larger field of art, I took a close look at the emergence of experimental theatre in Quebec in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Experimental theatre's new strategies and processes from this period became a way for women involved in the field to live and express feminist ideas. The rise of awareness towards gender equality clashed with the under-representation of women in the theatrical landscape. The widespread social injustice around the condition of women drove them to create new representations and new symbols for themselves. Women wanted a fictional depiction that originated in their own imaginations and also referenced their own lived experiences.

Their reality began to manifest itself in the cultural sphere and it provoked collective responses. It inspired women to come to the foreground as creators moving away from patriarchal references. In theatre, this shift translated as: 'women write, women produce, women play.' They appropriated the language of performance to invest in women's history. Forced to observe the rarity of feminine roles, strategies such as the feminization of language and the non-gendered adaptation of roles were employed to reinvent theatrical classics and create a more inclusive space for women. The desire for disobedience mirrored the social context of civil disobedience, which expressed the artistic responsibility of women socially involved in both feminism and theatre.