

THE

LINK

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Ousted?

Questions surround President
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RELIGION: STUDENT DENIED PRAYER SPACE

Concordia President Quits

Did Woodsworth Resign or Was She Removed?

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

Three days before Christmas and only halfway into her mandate, Judith Woodsworth has stepped down as president of Concordia University for “personal reasons.”

While the embattled president will receive \$703,500—or the equivalent of two years salary—under the terms of her contract, sources in the university claim that Concordia’s board of governors presented Woodsworth with an ultimatum: resign and collect your severance or face an embarrassing public dismissal. If so, she chose the former.

The president’s resignation was similar to that of her predecessor, Claude Lajeunesse, who left Concordia midway into his contract in October 2007 at the board’s urging. At odds with a board staffed overwhelmingly by the same members that saw Woodsworth go, Lajeunesse took the \$1 million remaining in his contract when he walked away.

Woodsworth’s departure did not come as a surprise to many in the administration, as sources close to the board first informed *The Link* in September that the president’s term would be terminated before the end of the year or early in the new year.

“I am deeply grateful to Judith and wish to recognize her leadership,

achievements and commitment over the past two and a half years,” stated Peter Kruyt, the chair of the board, in the university’s press release. “Concordia has thrived under her direction.”

While Woodsworth’s administration may have seen the university’s first strategic framework, the last four months of her term were marked by a series of resignations and stumbles that, according to sources, sealed her fate.

Kathy Assayag, the former VP Advancement and Alumni Relations, who also served as president of the Concordia University Foundation—the body that oversees Concordia University and eConcordia—resigned on Sept. 8 and cited “personal reasons” for stepping down.

As the most successful fundraiser in the university’s history, Assayag’s departure was discussed at a board meeting on Sept. 30—a meeting that started in closed session and remained closed for over an hour. During the open session that followed, a governor alluded to the closed session and stated that Assayag’s vacated position was discussed.

On Sept. 29, VP Services Michael Di Grappa, the architect of the university’s rebranding in the 21st century, announced that he would be stepping down from his position. He

took a senior position at McGill.

At the board meeting the next day, sources claim that Woodsworth was asked to explain how she allowed both VPs, who were widely believed to be the two most powerful people at Concordia after the president herself, to leave.

No explanations were ever shared beyond that room.

In October 2009, the president raised the ire of some students when she told *The Link* that the American model of tuition would be a good model for Concordia. The statement was taken as a sign of support for increased tuition—a position that was clarified in August when the president called for Concordia’s tuition to increase to \$5,000 a year by 2020.

In September of 2009, Woodsworth fired Saad Zubair and Ted Nowak, two of Concordia’s auditors, because they had allegedly charged \$250 worth of restaurant meals to the auditing department’s expense account and concealed it from the president.

The firings would haunt the president, as she was called in front of Quebec’s Labour Review Board on Nov. 2. During a long cross-examination, the auditor’s lawyer, Rolland Forget, made the president admit to engaging in the same behavior that led her to firing the two auditors. The

Labour Review Board also found that Concordia paid for Woodsworth’s husband, Lindsay Crysler, to fly with her on a number of business trips. Other expenses related to the president’s trips to China, India and the 2010 Olympic Games were also questioned.

The Labour Review Board has yet to rule on the validity of the firings of Zubair or Nowak.

“I’ll bet she had a Merry Christmas,” quipped Aaron Green, the president of the Arts and Science Federation of Associations. “I don’t think she resigned, I think she was told to resign.”

The ASFA head was most disturbed by the size of the president’s severance package, especially at a time when students are facing large tuition increases and the university’s budget is being constantly trimmed.

“That money is student money and it should be used towards student projects,” said Green.

University spokesperson Chris Mota was incapable of commenting on the situation or the possibility of clashes in the administration.

“The plan, at this point, is to appoint an interim president fairly soon, whether it is next week or later I don’t know,” said Mota, who added it could take six months to a year to find a permanent replacement.

Meet Your New President

Bram Freedman to Step In for Woodsworth

• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

While Concordia’s board of governors continues to search for an interim president to replace Judith Woodsworth, VP External Relations Bram Freedman will step in as acting president of Concordia.

The board appointed Freedman to his new post following Woodsworth’s resignation on Dec. 22. According to Concordia spokesperson Chris Mota, Freedman will only serve as president for a few weeks. Once an interim president is appointed, the search for a permanent replacement for Woodsworth should take “about six months to a year,” Mota said.

Freedman began working for Concordia in 1992 as assistant legal council. He eventually became the university’s assistant secretary-general and general counsel. He held those posts until his departure from Concordia in 2003.

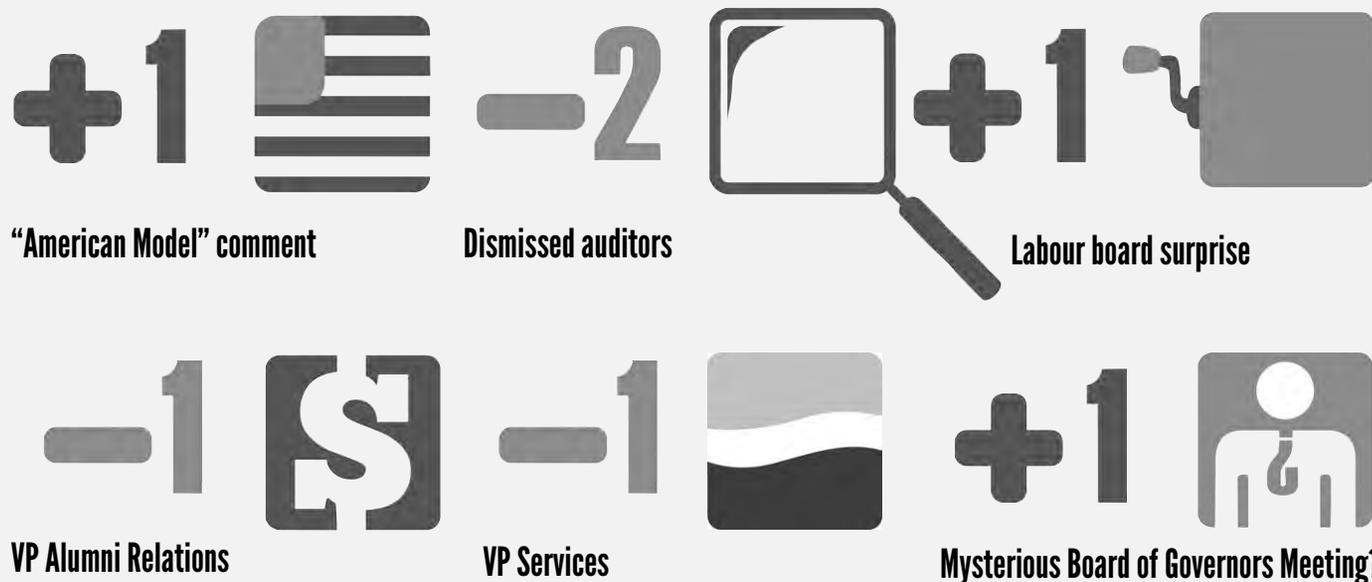
Freedman spent the next four years as the chief operating officer and director of external relations at Combined Jewish Appeal. He left the CJA in 2007 when the university’s board appointed him as VP external relations and secretary general.

The senior administrator remains largely unknown to students and local media, but Freedman became the object of minor scrutiny while testifying before the Quebec Labour Board in October. After investigating receipts from Freedman’s expense account, a lawyer representing two dismissed Concordia auditors found that Freedman had used university money to buy a cordless telephone for his home.

Steps to the End

The Link Outlines How to Get Fired as a Con U President

GRAPHIC JULIA WOLFE



Briefs

New Rules

The Arts and Science Federation of Associations, the group representing all Arts and Science students, tightened up its financial rules at its Dec. 9 council meeting. Budgets will now need to be seen by ASFA members before they vote on it at a council meeting.

Con U Water Bottle Free?

Representatives from PepsiCo, Concordia's administration, the Concordia Student Union and student groups met on Dec. 7 to discuss the future of the sale of bottled water on campus. The issue may be brought to a student referendum in March.

Proudfoot Passes Away

Former Montreal Alouettes Tony Proudfoot passed away on Dec. 30 at the age of 61 after a battle with ALS. After his playing career ended, Proudfoot became a respected educator, coach and football analyst. He gained praise for administering first-aid while in danger to a student shot during the 2006 Dawson shooting.

Rich Get Richer

At 2:30 p.m. yesterday, Canada's 100 highest paid CEOs had already earned what the average Canadian will make during all of 2011, according to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. CEOs in Canada now earn 155 times more than the average, 51 times more than they did a decade ago.

Fighting for Community

Citizens of the Snowdon neighbourhood have started a campaign to save a building on Queen Mary Rd. near the Decarie Expressway. The building, with its affordable housing and three eateries that are anchors of the community, will be to be replaced with luxury condos.

"Catastrophic" Pay Cut

Newly named Conservative Senator Larry Smith, the outgoing CEO of the Montreal Alouettes said he has taken a "dramatic, catastrophic" pay cut to serve the public. The comment came after he was asked if it was cynical to use the profile of a senator to run as an MP. Senators earn \$132,000 annually.

'Bradley Manning is a Goddamn Hero!'



Protestors march to the U.S. Consulate in Montreal to demonstrate against the incarceration of alleged whistleblower Bradley Manning. PHOTO JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

March Held to Support WikiLeaks and Alleged Leaker

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

In what may have been the first protest in support of a website in Montreal's history, over 40 demonstrators met outside of the Guy-Concordia Metro station on Dec. 18 to march in support of WikiLeaks.

With the whistleblower website under intense scrutiny from the world's governments due to its slow release of 251,287 confidential U.S. diplomatic cables—only 1 per cent of which has been published so far—the march was meant to boost popular support for the website.

"That turnout was sufficient to prove the point that more than a few people care about the freedom of information," said co-organizer Nadim Kobeissi, a Concordia stu-

dent who is also an employee at *The Link*.

The WikiLeaks march made its way to the U.S. Consulate on St. Alexandre Street where demonstrators pasted "The U.S. is wrong (and desperate)" signs on the building's doors with snow.

"It seems kind of silly to have people on the streets about something that is taking place completely online, but it is important that people care, because this is about censorship and freedom of the press," said Claire Evans, one of the 40 demonstrators.

Walking on Ste. Catherine Street during the busy Christmas shopping season, the protestors chanted "Free Bradley Manning."

Private First Class Bradley Manning, a U.S. Army intelligence analyst, is accused of having leaked

the diplomatic cables to WikiLeaks. Manning was arrested while on duty in Iraq on May 26, 2010 and is currently being held in a military jail in Quantico, Virginia.

Manning is in solitary confinement 23 hours a day, not allowed to exercise in his cell, has been denied a pillow and sheets and is under constant surveillance.

"This march is not just solidarity with WikiLeaks, but also with Bradley Manning, who I think is more a hero than a traitor to the U.S.," said protestor Alexandre Leduc. "He has been in prison for a long time and the U.S. didn't used to jail its leakers, like during the Pentagon Papers, but I see this as a sign that we are becoming more authoritarian."

Leduc compared the jailing of

Manning with that of Liu Xiaobo, a Chinese dissident who received the Nobel Peace Prize last year.

"They both took risks and they are both in jail," said Leduc.

Leaving many confused and amused faces on Ste. Catherine Street, the march seemed to have succeeded in bringing more public exposure to Manning's situation. While the demonstrators held the alleged leaker in high esteem, some understood that his release would be difficult.

"Freeing Bradley Manning would be nice, but I do recognize that he did leak important documents," said Evans. "What is upsetting is that there is so much that the governments of the world have to hide. I think that it is amazing that so much is coming out."



the asterisk

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

Bradley Manning

• Private First Class Bradley Manning

• U.S. Army 10th Mountain Division

• Intelligence Analyst

• Born Dec. 17, 1987

• Accused of leaking classified military and diplomatic documents to WikiLeaks

• Allegedly confided in hacker Adrian Lamo, who then turned him in to the United States government

• Being held in the Marine Corp brig in Quantico, Virginia

• Daniel Ellsberg, who leaked classified Pentagon documents to *The New York Times* in 1971, has spearheaded a campaign for the release of Manning

CSU Shifts Gears

• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

Zhuo Ling Resigns

CSU VP Finance 'Unable to Fulfill Time Commitments

• CHRISTOPHER CURTIS

The Concordia Student Union executive shuffle will continue into the new year as VP Finance Zhuo Ling is set to resign today.

Ling, who was appointed to the CSU's executive after former VP Finance Nikki Tsoflakis resigned soon after her slate was elected in March 2010, announced his resignation at the CSU's Dec. 8 Council meeting.

"He came to me a few weeks ago and was quite honest with me about not being able to fulfill his time commitment anymore," said CSU President Heather Lucas. "It's better he resign now than midway through next semester. It gives us time to prepare."

Ling is the fourth person to resign from the CSU's executive during Fusion's mandate. Tsoflakis and former President Prince Ralph Osei resigned last summer and Lucas resigned as VP Services when she replaced Osei in August.

At the Dec. 8 council meeting, CSU VP Clubs & Outreach Ramy Khoriaty was appointed to replace Ling as of today, when Ling's resignation takes effect. In addition to his current duties as VP Clubs & Outreach, Khoriaty will administer the CSU's \$1.8 million operating budget and serve as the director of CUSACorp, the union's for-profit arm.

Lucas said Khoriaty was "the logical choice" to fill the vacancy because he worked closely with Ling on the allocation of club budgets and handled financial requisitions from the union's 61 clubs.

CUSACorp, which owns and op-



GRAPHIC DAVID BARLOW-KRELINA

erates on-campus bar Reggie's, has undergone a shakeup of its own in recent weeks. On Nov. 24, Lucas resigned as one of the CSU sub-

siary's directors. Since provincial law prohibits a non-Canadian resident from being a director at a company holding a liquor license,

Lucas—an international student from Texas—had to step down when she was notified of this law.

"I only found out about [the law] when one of the CSU's office managers was filing a notice of the appointment of new directors," said Lucas. "It was an innocent mistake and it won't affect any of the decisions I made as director."

CUSACorp's board of directors approved the appointment of Marlow Wilson, a manager at Reggie's, to serve as one of the directors at CUSACorp while the CSU finds a replacement for Lucas. The CSU is expected to appoint a councillor or several councillors to fill the three vacant director positions at CUSACorp during the union's next council meeting on Jan. 12.

During Ling's time as VP Finance, Reggie's raised over a thousand dollars for various local charities by instituting a cover charge on Thursday nights. The student-run bar posted a deficit of \$7,214.40 in October, which Ling attributed to Concordia food policies making it difficult for Reggie's to sell food and a long liquor-license renewal process.

"Reggie's is a service we provide for the students," said Ling at a November council meeting, adding that profit was not the bar's primary goal.

While Ling served as director of CUSACorp, the CSU subsidiary posted profits in September and October. CUSACorp also settled a lease disagreement with one of its tenants in October, netting the CSU's profit-making arm \$20,000 in unpaid rent from Java U.

Students Denied Prayer Space Request in EV Building

• MEAGAN WOHLBERG

Muslim grad students looking for a space to pray in Concordia's EV building have been told they will have to continue their frequent jaunts to the Hall building due to an issue of space allocation.

Robin Drew, the dean of engineering and computer science, rejected the request made by at least 20 grad students, teaching assistants and research assistants to access a currently unoccupied "special projects room" on the fifteenth floor of the EV building four times a day for prayer.

In an e-mail response to the request put forth by the GSA, Drew wrote that while "sympathetic" to the students' needs, the EV building was "built to be used exclusively as a research and teaching building" with no space to be used for student activities.

But GSA Engineering representative Natheer Atawna feels that such an immediate rejection shows no effort to accommodate the needs of students.

"They don't understand the Muslim prayer and because of that, right away they refuse," he said. "They don't even ask to have a meeting to negotiate, to talk about it. They don't have any kind of democracy here in this university."

The walk to the seventh floor of the Hall building from the upper levels of the EV takes roughly ten minutes. Making the trek four or even five times per day for 10 minutes of prayer works out to at least two hours.

Students who raised the issue have started praying in stairwells and other spaces that offer a semblance of privacy in the EV building in order to save time.

But according to Atawna, stairwells are too cramped for 30 people praying at once and can be a safety hazard when blocked.

Robert Sonin, a representative from the GSA and VP Bargaining for the Teaching and Research Assistants at Concordia union, said the university is not doing enough to accommodate these students in a case

where it would be "so easy" to do so.

"They're asking for a hundred square feet out of a building that's almost 700 thousand square feet," said Sonin. "They have plenty of room to do their research without that room. It's not even being used."

The request made was not specifically for an assigned prayer room for Muslims. According to Atawna, the students would like to keep the space neutral to respect others' beliefs. Rather than have it assigned for anything, they want permission to reserve it for 40 minutes per day.

"They are students," said Atawna. "They are paying service fees apart from their tuition. They feel it's in their rights."

Many of them are also employees of the university and members of TRAC. Both the university and the union are responsible for ensuring that the spiritual needs of their employees are met.

According to Sonin, this could have the potential to be filed as a discrimination case within section

18.1 of the code of Rights and Responsibilities at Concordia or a grievance through section 4.01 of the TRAC collective agreement because it deals with freedom of religion.

"I don't know if this is a case of outright discrimination, but it's certainly a case where [the university] should be accommodating," he said.

TRAC president Thomas Leonard agreed.

"Considering the amount of time they spend having to go back and forth, I don't think it's an unreasonable request," said Leonard. "It doesn't seem like too much to accommodate them, considering it is such a large building. At the very least, they could make some sort of immediate accommodations for them until they could figure out something more permanent."

Concordia spokesperson Chris Mota told *The Link* that the university has already set aside Muslim prayer space in the Hall building and in the Campus Centre at Loyola and did not plan on creating new prayer space.

Responding to a petition that calls for the Concordia Student Union to help "rebuild Concordia's student movement," the CSU will hold an Information General Meeting on Jan. 20.

Students, faculty, staff and university administration are encouraged to submit written proposals to the CSU during the IGM to give the union an idea of how they should better represent Concordia's student body.

"I was frustrated with the student movement and the CSU in particular," said graduate student Matthew Brett, who drafted and circulated the petition in late November. Brett is also a member of *The Link's* board of directors.

"There was just a real level of inaction at Concordia."

Brett said he was discouraged to see few Concordia students take to the streets and protest on April 1 after the Charest government announced its controversial budget, which denied new funding for public services and called for university tuition increases as of 2012.

"There was no student union out there that day," he said. "Just [former CSU Presidents] Amine Dabchy and Prince Ralph Osei trying to protect their titles. That's a complete failure for a union trying to organize."

After receiving Brett's petition, the CSU introduced the Momentum Shift Project to Council on Dec. 8, which aims to fight tuition increases and "divest" control of the CSU to Concordia students.

To accomplish these goals, the CSU proposed the creation of a standing mobilization committee comprised of the university's student activists. The group would help mobilize students against tuition increases and "fight for [...] a better education system and the amelioration of student life."

Council approved the project at its Dec. 8 meeting.

"The [petition] was a wake up for the executive," said CSU President Heather Lucas.

The implementation of the project came on the heels of the current CSU's first major political defeat. During a November byelection, students came out in near record numbers to vote against the CSU's proposed student union building fee levy. The fee levies would have cost students \$13.50 per three credit class by the summer of 2012.

For now, Brett remains "cautiously optimistic" about the Momentum Shift Project.

"The petition had its desired effect," he said. "[The CSU] has followed up on this and I'm really looking forward to the meeting."



space issue

Where do you draw the line?

PRIVATE SPACE / PUBLIC SPACE

A spontaneous discussion for The Link's Space Issue

Friday, January 7th at 4:00 p.m. H-649

LOOKING FOR COMEDY IN THE MUSLIM WORLD: MONTREAL COMEDIENNE EMAN FINDS THE FUNNY BEHIND THE FALAFEL



A Ha-ha That's Halal

Montreal's Answer to the Riddle: What's Arab, Muslim and Funny?

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON

The phrase “Muslim comedian” might sound like an oxymoron to some, like “free parking,” or “Mennonite rapper.”

But one person is giving Muslim comedy its proper diction—a young woman who is known on-stage simply as Eman.

Although Eman Al-Husseini claims to love her last name, not many people have the opportunity to be known solely on a first name basis, so why not flaunt it? But unlike Madonna—an idol of hers, coincidentally—things ain't always so easy.

“I have to tackle three stereotypes: Muslims being funny, Arabs being funny and women being funny,” said Eman. “[But] that's why I love doing stand-up.”

Being a comedienne of colour, audiences expect to hear about her exotic upbringing, she said.

“I think every ethnic comedian roots to that at the beginning: describing their family life and how they grew up. And that's what people find humorous, because they're also very curious about it.”

Like many children of Middle-Eastern parents, Eman was pressured to go into one of the “big three” careers: lawyer, doctor or engineer.

“[Me becoming a] doctor, they gave up on quite easily,” she said. “[They'd have settled for me] just being an accountant. My father thinks that I could have been a great politician because he finds me very charismatic.

“Being Palestinian, [however], you're born in the midst of political discussion. It's in our blood, it's in our everyday life. But I'd rather use comedy to express any political beliefs.”

Puns and politics

If people expect Eman's comedy to be political because of her ethnicity—although born in Kuwait, her family hails from Palestine—then they certainly don't expect there to be quite so much swearing.

“I just speak about personal experiences, and if it so happens that something is dirty, I'll mention it,” she says. “But you know, I'm not going to stand there and talk about my sex life unless it's happening in the moment. But I tend not to be vulgar. For a comedian, it's so much more challenging to try to be a clean comic as opposed to being a dirty comic.”

If Canadians are interested in her Middle-Eastern roots, then Middle-Eastern audiences are fascinated with what it's like to grow up Canuck.

A frequent participant in the New York Arab-American Comedy Festival, Eman was invited in 2008 to participate in the first-ever stand-up comedy festival in the Palestinian city of Nazareth, for which she briefly appeared in headlines across the world, including France and Israel.

“We know standup comedy is an American concept,” she says, “but the Middle-East has embraced it so much.

“We have this misconception that they don't necessarily speak English very well, or they don't get what we get. But they watch American TV, [and] a lot of them follow stand-up on the Internet. I felt that they loved my material more than people in North America, to be honest.”

Now with an international reputation, she had a chance to perform last year in Amman, Jordan. Next month, she'll be touring the Palestine Territories, including stops in Nazareth, Jerusalem and Ramallah with fellow Arab comedian Maysoun Zayid.

“Being Arab has helped me travel. Isn't that crazy?” she joked.

Eman discovered her love of comedy from a Kuwaiti sitcom her mother used to tune into.

“I remember my parents, my mother especially, loved theatre shows. She'd buy them on video-cassette and I remember trying to reenact the lead roles. I was so entertained by it, and I tried to reenact the whole thing. I even tried to dress up [to fit the part].”

After moving to Montreal in 1990 during the midst of the first Gulf War and settling into a French school—which is mandatory for all immigrants, although Eman says she's fortunate to have had the experience—it would be years before her thoughts returned to pursuing comedy.

“I was kind of embarrassed about wanting to be in the entertainment industry,” she recalled.

“I feel like everybody wanted to be an actor, everyone wanted to be a singer, everyone wanted to be a celebrity. It's something that I kind of suppressed and tried not to embrace.”

From car crashes to crack-ups

In 2006, while driving home from work in the city to her home in the West Island, Eman's car slipped on some black ice. The culprit? She hadn't purchased winter tires, which were not yet mandatory by law.

Exactly what happened afterwards is difficult to recall, she said. When she regained consciousness, she learned that she had received 32 stitches to her forehead, but didn't suffer any internal injuries. The car, however, was totaled.

“I could have died so easily,” she recalled. “[I realized] I have to embrace what I want to do in life, and so I started doing comedy shortly after my recovery.”

Her parents were disappointed, but nevertheless supportive.

“It broke their hearts at the beginning,” she says. “It's not easy, financially speaking. When you start making money, you're making \$30-40 a set in comedy clubs, and you're not established until you become a headliner, and even then you have to market yourself properly.

“So of course they weren't too fond of the idea, but they've always been extremely supportive. They bought me my first video

camera to record my shows. They just hoped that I could find a really stable nine-to-five job to make sure that I have enough income, and then they'd rather I treat this like a hobby, which is kind of impossible. You need to focus on something like comedy if you want to succeed.”

Since 2007, Eman has been working at the Montreal ComedyWorks, where she hosts BOOM, the Best of Open Mic, monthly.

“The reason I founded the show is because I really believed in the Montreal talent. We have much more than just a Just for Laughs festival that happens once a year. I figured by putting this competition together, it'll encourage Montreal comedians to write more and to want to perform more.”

The thing with comedy, said Eman, is that it's not what you've just done, but what you're about to do next that's important to finding success.

With that in mind, she's decided to focus her efforts on embracing her home and native land: Canada.

“This is my country, this is where I'm from,” she said. “In 2011, one of my resolutions is to start doing stand-up comedy in French—maybe even Arabic.”

You can catch Eman every Monday night at the Montreal ComedyWorks (1238 Bishop St.), where she hosts an open mic. The best two performers as chosen by the audience will have the chance to compete in BOOM, the Best of Open Mic, on the last Sunday of each month.

ART: WE WANT TO SHOWCASE YOUR WORK! SEE INSIDE.

Top 10 of 2010

1

**Titus Andronicus - *The Monitor***

This album is the drunk guy that just wants to have a good time. It's the realization that you're just one of millions—but there's power in that. It's the trials and tribulations of a mid-level New Jersey punk band. The line "you'll always/be a loser" never sounded so triumphant.

2

**Gonjasufi - *A Sufi And A Killer***

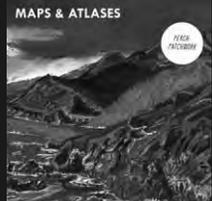
With Gaslamp Killer constructing beats as chilled-out as they are driving, Gonjasufi creates avant-rap if I've ever heard it. In its 19 tracks there are very few misses, with the fusion of blues, funk and jazz creating a framework for Gonja's crackling voice.

3

**Women - *Public Strain***

There's beauty buried in this record, you just have to mind the rough edges. Intertwining guitar twangs are surrounded by reverb-heavy vocals held together by drums sounding off in the distance. But the feeling evoked is so much more than the sum of its parts.

4

**Maps & Atlases - *Perch Patchwork***

Trading in their math rock roots for a more folk approach, Maps & Atlases show a huge amount of growth on this record. With guitars taking a more textural role, singer Dave Davison more than lives up to the challenge of supporting vocal-driven songs.

5

**Menomena - *Mines***

Mines reaches the highest of highs and the lowest of lows with the help of varied instrumentation and all three members sharing lead vocal duties. You can hear the great songwriting and deep collaboration in this record's variety and continuity.

6

**The Besnard Lakes - *Are the Roaring Night***

Jace Lasek delivers some vocal trails early on that remind me of Raphaelle from Blue Hawaii, not just in style but in range too. This record is a spacey rocker, but in no way sounds dated. The band delivers a fresh approach to the guitar-driven epic.

7

**Erykah Badu - *New Amerykah Part II: Return of the Ankh***

I don't think there's a woman in hip-hop who has more vision or soul than Erykah Badu. While not the ear-grabber that Part I was, this record is slow-burning R&B gold. She remains the only Motown artist that lives up to the label's former quality, and deservedly so.

8

**Beneath the Massacre - *Marée Noire***

With madly technical ability this Montreal four-piece creates a little album with a lot of aggression. Elliot Desgagnés' brutal vocals are the lead drum commanding guitar, bass, and kit. With all members pushing the envelope with their playing they create a new palette for death metal.

9

**oOoOO - *oOoOO***

The biggest triumph of this whole witch-house thing seems to be its ability to create really heavy electronic music. Vocal lines saturated with effect filters haunt Greenspan's beats, letting each track seep into the next.

10

**Beach House - *Teen Dream***

The record truly is a dreamscape, sculpted with organ, guitar, and a drum machine. Victoria Legrand's voice gives this record its character, creating a continuous feed of indie bliss. The Baltimore duo delivers an album full of consistently good dream pop.

—compiled by Colin Harris

*Native Speaker*

Braids

• GUILLAUME MORISSETTE

we spent christmas together though you probably don't know that. during the afternoon, I read a book while

listening to you and the book was the collected stories of amy hempel and your cover art was three people calmly

sitting near in a giant ball of fire while hiding behind a tainted patterned glass.

two days later in an e-mail to someone I said, 'I really like that braids album, it sounds like animal collective

except cuter. baby animal collective.'

the first two tracks you seemed excited and pulsating and full of life but then you slowed down and then you

sped up again. not sure why but I was reading at a faster pace when the faster tracks were playing, apparently

termites eat wood twice as fast when listening to speed metal which means that I have the psychological complexity

of a termite probably.

the second track paraphrases a line from a sylvia plath poem (eating men like air) which was nice because it

made me feel as if your entire 'target audience' was english major students and me which is an untapped market

though probably not the most lucrative one. have you ever read 'for sylvia and for cheeseburgers' by ted hughes? it's

a poem in which ted hughes says

that sylvia plath is dead now which means that she'll never get to be a poet

laureate which is 'too bad' because she would probably have been 'a hot one.'

now that I think about it every character in the amy hempel stories was amy hempel herself in some different,

arbitrary fictional context. as the book progressed some part of me really wanted amy hempel to grow bored of her

own style and alienate herself from it and try writing a short story about space goats with perfect night vision and the

main character is jazz poet bob kaufman, just for variety.

there's a track called 'lammicken' and google tells me it means 'clumsy' and 'slouching' which was surprising to

me because up to that point I had pictured a lammicken as some sort of rare lung disease related to chicken. I have

'an inoperable lammicken.' also I keep thinking that 'glass deers' are a magical species of deers that live 'up north'

near 'igloos' and that the mortal enemy of the glass deer is a colored zircon diamond wolf of some kind.

the first track is called lemonade and the last line goes 'all we really want to do is love' I think which is true but

not just people and ourselves but also things, baby animals and abstract concepts. native speaker by braids is a

thing, a baby animal and an abstract concept that feels good to love.

Under an Exploding Sun

Mexican Art and the Borders of Identity



Cai Guo-Qiang's *Sunshine and Solitude* explores the Mexican landscape with a unique medium—gunpowder.

PHOTOS ASHLEY OPHEIM

• ASHLEY OPHEIM

In a city where earthquakes crack open concrete streets to reveal cockroaches and Aztec secrets, where Modernist buildings stand beside temples with gold walls, and where dancers with feathered headdresses wear fluorescent sneakers, the contradictions in Mexico City are plentiful. These paradoxical forces have fertilized the contemporary art scene here, which is brimming with biodiversity, violence and an evolving sense of identity.

I arrived at the Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo after a long and strenuous voyage via the city's expansive transit system—a sprawling, vibrant web of lines and symbols. The National Autonomous University of Mexico offers four separate bus lines to help students and visitors navigate through the campus that boasts 315,000 students and 30,000 faculty members. The largest university in the world, it is built on ancient, hardened volcanic rock overlooking the circular pyramids of Cuicuilco.

Nestled in the enormous green campus of UNAM, the MUAC opened its misted-glass doors to the public at the end of 2008. In true Mexico City spirit, the enormity of the gallery trumps the two disjointed galleries of Concordia University. In fact, MUAC contains nine separate galleries.

Much of the art in the first gallery dealt with themes of poli-

tics, identity, space and time. In a city of 21.2 million people and a country in the midst of a violent and bloody drug war, much of the art was full of anxiety and emitted a sense of unrest.

The exhibition, called *Wandering Position*, came about as a result of a donation of archived Mexican art works by inSite, an organization dedicated to the preservation of Mexican art. The result is something of an activated time capsule.

Dealing with “place based art practices,” the works open a dialogue on the “political-social context of the border phenomenon,” questioning ideals of space and identity.

Completely relevant to the present political climate, *Wandering Position* explores the border between Mexico and the United States, which is at the centre of a gruesome drug war. The art varied in medium and was connected by the works mocking sense towards Mexican power structures.

It was evident through the works that students are actively participating and questioning the failures of their government. Instead of offering solutions to these problems, they instead point them out.

One interesting piece was a balloon installation that would inflate and deflate to reveal political messages stitched onto the balloons. The sculpture seemed to play with ideas of political transparency and the idea of borders

being something that both excludes and includes people.

The most impressive room contained the work of Cai Guo-Qiang's *Sunshine and Solitude*. Guo-Qiang is considered one of the most important figures of the contemporary art scene to have emerged from post-revolutionary China. This exhibit, in particular, was Guo-Qiang's interpretation of Mexico's geographic identity.

Guo-Qiang's work is characteristic in its chosen medium: gunpowder. The works that were featured in the gallery were created with the help of students and with the careful placement of gunpowder onto handmade paper. The fuses are lit to produce a series of controlled explosions on the surface of the paper that “fix” the image.

The gallery floor was flooded with volcanic rocks and there were two small “lakes” filled with the Mexican alcohol mezcal. Fourteen gunpowder drawings sprawled enormously across the walls and up the 20-foot ceilings to reveal elements of the Mexican landscape: mountains, flora and fauna and an immense, exploding sun.

Another captivating room was that of Guatemalan artist Regina José Galindo, entitled *Móvil*. Much of her works dealt with themes of violence and femininity.

Violence is synonymous with the Guatemalan identity; however, Galindo's works insist on an ethics of common memory.

Perhaps the most touching of works were her four framed locks of hair. The hair belonged to murdered women whose bodies had never been claimed. The works were created as an homage to these women.

Another stunning piece was a video of a woman having a plastic surgeon cover her body in blue felt marker to suggest where she would need work to obtain a “perfect body.” The lines drawn on her body was an act that was so bluntly obtrusive that the video was downright disturbing.

There was a real sense of community at the MUAC, one that extended beyond borders and one that attempted to make sense of identity within a climate of violence and fear. There were plenty of brochures, zines and postcards created by students that were offered free to visitors to take home with them.

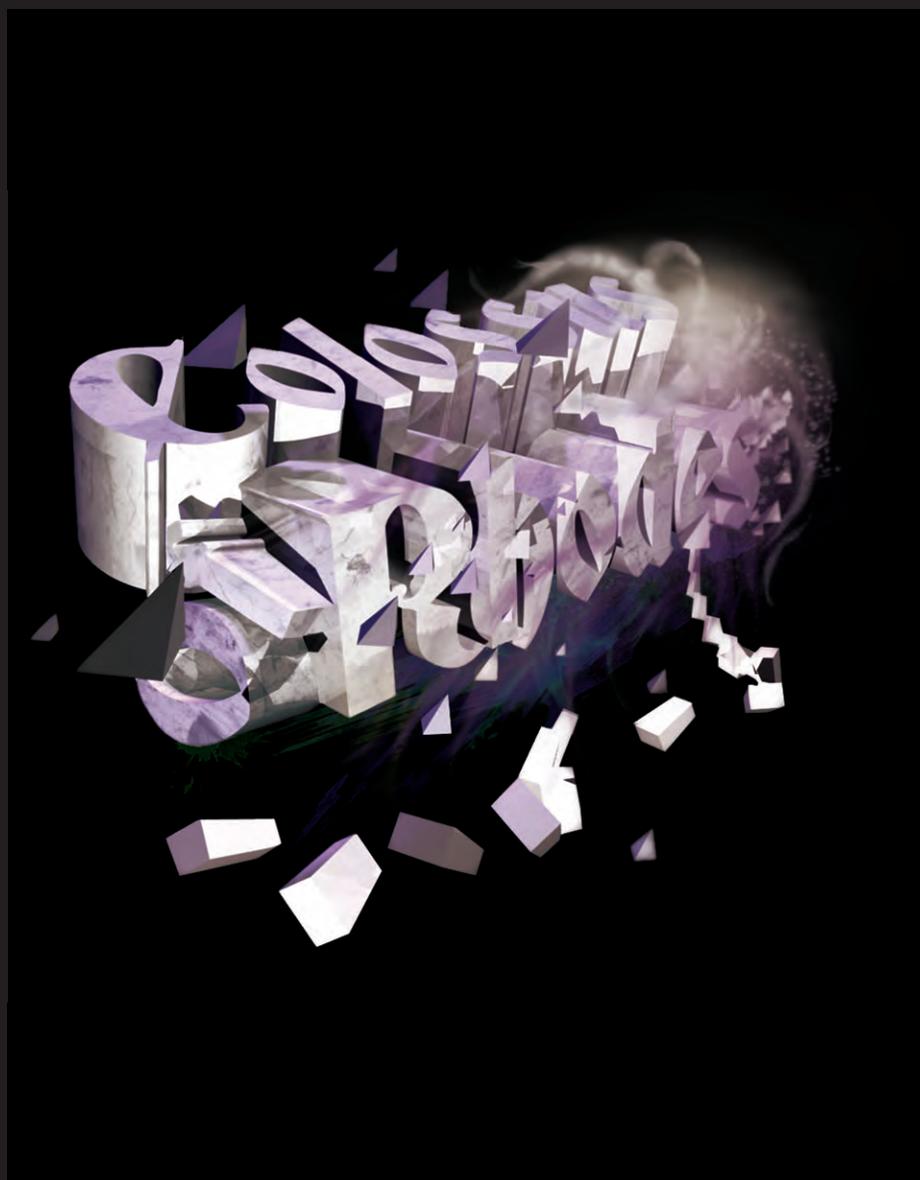
I left the MUAC with a feeling that Mexican art is in the process of a revolution that involves an acute consciousness of technology, politics and how it transforms the self. All the art resonated with me in the sense that all the work seemed to deal with borders—geographic borders, the borders of politics, the borders of our bodies and, most importantly, the invisible borders that separate us from one another.

To see more photos from the MUAC, visit thelinknewspaper.ca



Galleria

Art matters. That's why we have decided to dedicate a page each week to Concordia-based artists. Send your photography and visual art work to fringe@thelinknewspaper.com.



NAME: ALEX B. O'DOWD

WEBSITE: ALEXBODOWD.DAPORTFOLIO.COM

It Still Matters

Professionalism in Practice at the 11th Art Matters Festival

• **CHRISTOPHER OLSON**

"Art is sometimes the only vehicle of communication and expression available to artists," said Helen Arceyut-Frixione, a coordinator for this year's Art Matters Festival.

Now in its 11th year, the annual student-run festival aims to highlight the professionalism of this year's applicants, rather than the decidedly humble origins of its contributing artists.

"I think Art Matters provides an idealistic glimpse into what [an artistic career] could be like,"

said Stephanie Bokenfohr, the festival's special events coordinator.

"Our festival exists in a learning body," she continued, "and so it's proud to remain an exploratory opportunity for current undergrad fine arts students to 'take the ball and run with it.'"

"In the past we feel that there has been a strong emphasis on the student-run aspect of the festival which overshadows the festival itself," said Arceyut-Frixione. Although photography is her forte, she said organizing this year's festival has quickly

become her primary artistic activity.

"Art Matters has been around for 10 years, and in our 11th year we want the festival to become [more] recognized within the Montreal community."

Over the last decade, the festival has also garnered a reputation for some of its memorable parties. This year in particular, the organizers said, they are working to "go really big" for all the events, which include vernissages, an opening party, workshops and a speakers series.

While the city has a great

number of galleries and artist-run centres, Arceyut-Frixione said it's still difficult for artists to get their work shown—though hard work and persistence lead to the biggest pay off.

"This goes hand in hand with getting to know your artistic community and building strong bonds," she said. "By getting to know the available resources, opportunities become visible."

So what does it take to become a part of this year's Art Matters?

"It really is all about persistence, curiosity and willingness,"

said Bokenfohr. "The students that make up the festival—from curators to artists—are given an opportunity to discover their own unique praxis. To actually live through [this festival] is an invaluable exercise in professionalism: working in the real-world setting of commercial galleries."

The Art Matters Festival is looking for undergraduate student applications. For more information, visit artmattersfestival.com. The deadline for applications is Wednesday, Jan. 5 at 8:00 p.m.

Phò Beauty

Gibb's Book Steeped in Vietnamese Cuisine, Culture

• CHRISTINA BELL

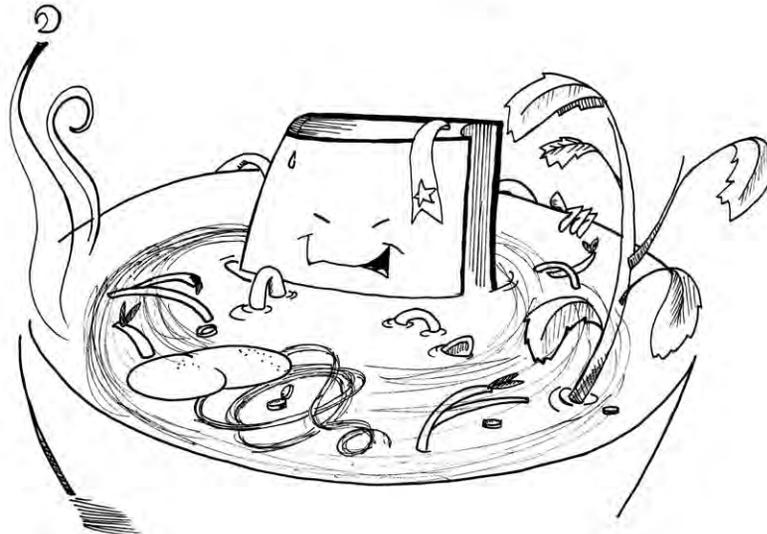
If you find yourself looking for a way to warm up during the next few months, consider curling up with Camilla Gibb's *The Beauty of Humanity Movement*. Gibb knows how to draw in a reader hungry for a good book—with food! She describes bowls of beef and chicken Phò with so much care and detail, you can almost feel the heat of the soup through the book's pages.

Gibb's latest novel, set in Vietnam, is a story of culture, family and Phò, loosely based on true events. Food is considered a cornerstone in most cultures, so it is fitting that the novel begins with Hung, an elderly Vietnamese man, who makes the best soup in the city. In his younger days, Hung's restaurant served as a gathering place for revolutionary intellectu-

als and artists who created Nhân Văn, or *The Beauty of Humanity*. The novel sways between Hung's youth and his days as an elderly man, telling a story of steady progression in Vietnamese culture.

Nhân Văn, a literary newspaper created and published by a small group of Vietnamese intellectuals, brings the characters in the novel together. The paper was a response to the oppression of free speech and a call for human rights during the controversial political instability in Vietnam from 1955-1958. Gibb successfully elaborates on these historical details for her own fictional purposes without damaging the power of the real events she's using. In fact, some of the most beautifully written pieces in the novel are actual quotes from Nhân Văn.

That being said, the references to Vietnam's history are perhaps



GRAPHIC DOMINIQUE CÔTÉ

the most interesting part of the novel. The subplots of love and lust Gibb creates for her characters are mediocre. Other than a handful of passages, the dialogue between characters is uninspiring. Perhaps it is because the characters tend to fall into cliché roles that can be unsatisfying.

Gibb does do a decent job of showing the vulnerability in her characters. For example, when American foreigner Maggie is introduced, cultural differences between Maggie and the others draw out the insecurities of the Viet-

namese men. The novel does touch on raw human emotion but not in a particularly original way.

The Beauty of Humanity Movement prompts the reader to turn its pages without demanding too much thought. The novel is a lovely lazy afternoon read.



The Beauty of Humanity Movement
Camilla Gibb
Doubleday Canada
304 pp.
\$32.95

The Unscience of Sleep

Nothing What It Seems in Hall's *Certainty Dream*

• ALEX MANLEY

Kate Hall's poetry collection *The Certainty Dream*, which won her the 2010 Quebec Writers Federation's A.M. Klein Prize for Poetry on Nov. 23, is a strange beast.

Though there is little from Hall or the people in her poems to suggest that all the poems are actually dream poems—poems whose narratives take place within a dreamscape, real or imagined—that seems to be the point. We never seem to know we're dreaming until later, upon awakening, and considering the dream in retrospect.

Hall's poems work much in the same way. They often seem vague and incomprehensible at first glance, but later on, it is hard not to believe there is a strange, nigh inscrutable logic at work behind the words.

This is an approach that may be jarring and even grating to some readers, but, if you're the type to be reading a poetry collection in the first place, you really have no excuse not to stick it out. Poetry is the dream to fiction's waking life—short, hard to grasp, everything magnified and all significance at

once more and less important than it should be, and perhaps that is why, out of context, many of these poems could even pass for non-dream poems.

As they add up, however, the continuing absence of the real becomes damning. The more one reads of *The Certainty Dream*, the more one becomes certain of being trapped in a dream world. This makes navigating the poems both easier and slightly less interesting, however, as the process by which every physical object, every interaction that goes on loses its reality also lowers the stakes on everything.

Why, one might ask, should I care about someone else's dream-poem, if I wouldn't even care about their dream? There is already a fairly culturally ingrained tedium associated with listening to other people talk about their dreams. How could a dream-poem collection sidestep this?

Hall's answer is in providing the reader with something that must be experienced for oneself. It is one thing to hear about her capacity to effortlessly render that strange dreamlike confusion, but unless you actually read these



GRAPHIC ALEX MANLEY

poems, the impressiveness will not translate. To read these poems is to be caught in a dream; to read this collection is to be caught in a series of them. That they are not your dreams makes them all the more alienating and frustrating. Hall has re-imagined Richard Linklater's 2001 rotoscoped masterpiece *Waking Life* as poetry, and the results are similarly frustrating, exhilarating, confusing and thought-provoking.

This is a book that will certainly prove challenging to the average reader—perhaps even to the average reader of poetry. Nevertheless, it is impossible to deny Hall's talent for marrying concrete language and action with the

absurdity and vague narrativelessness of dream, the same way dreams are built with the blocks of our waking lives.

In the poem "Insomnia," Hall poses this hypothetical situation: "If I were to sleep, I'd sleep on an iron bed." If you're going to sleep, however, don't sleep on *The Certainty Dream*. This one is worth having.



The Certainty Dream
Kate Hall
Coach House Books
96 pp.
\$16.95

Lit Writ

Narcissist on the Esoteric Radio

• ALEX DI PIETRO

For the purpose of this program, we will attempt to engage in extemporaneous, and dare I say sagacious discourse.

However, without being too grandiloquent, I'd like to first rescind some ostensibly "egregious errors" I committed while recounting a recent story that reported foals were gorging on venison in South West Africa.

Ahem...

Firstly, and most significantly, I must strongly emphasize the illogicality in hypothesizing that such a pungent carcass would attract quadrupedal mammals.

(Pause)

Instead, I'll genuflect before my God — my mirror...

(Pause)

Applaud; that's what you should do.

But, of course, I have been placed here to deliver the news.

So, without further ado...

(Pause)

I am charming.

(The end)



GRAPHIC ALEX MANLEY

HOCKEY



The Concordia Stingers played an exhibition match in the Ed Meagher Arena last night against Queen's University Gaels. They lost after overtime in a shootout. PHOTO ESTHER BERNARD

Women's Hockey Back in Action

Lady Bees Let Exhibition Go in Shootout

Concordia 2

Queen's 3

• LAURA BEESTON

Skating off the holiday cobwebs, the Concordia Stingers women's hockey team faced the Queen's University Gaels last night in exhibition play at Ed Meagher Arena, losing narrowly in a shootout after three tough periods and a five-minute overtime.

"It was more a get-back-in-shape game than anything else, so no matter how it went on the ice, it's just good that we got out there before our [league] game this weekend. I mean, you can practice all you want, but you need a game to get that feeling back," said right-winger Keely Covo.

Covo gave her team a 1-0 lead with five minutes remaining in the first period. The Stinger forward skated into the slot and tipped a pass from Concordia centre Catherine Rancourt between goaltender Karissa Savage's pads.

The Gaels struck back when Queen's left wing Megan McHaffie scored the equalizer with just two minutes left in the period.

Each team took to the ice with increased intensity as the game wore on. Almost immediately, Queen's came back strong in the second, breaking the tie in the period's opening minute. Gaels' assistant captain Kelsey Thomson worked around three Stingers rearguards, collecting a pass from right wing Brittany McHaffie—twin sister of Megan—and roofing a shot.

Seventeen minutes later, the

"It was more a get-back-in-shape game than anything else,"

—Keely Covo

Stingers Right Winger

Stingers responded with a top shelf goal of their own, as left winger Emilie Bocchia connected on a dish from Stinger centre Moira Frier and tied it up 2-2 heading into the final period.

Showing off an undeniable hustle in their first game in nearly a month, the Stingers' crisp passing and movement along the boards kept the game neck-and-neck and the spectators on the edge of their seats with many

close calls. The Lady Bees failed to capitalize, however, and found the net only once on their nine power play opportunities—including eight through the last two periods.

Stingers goaltender Audrey Doyon-Lessard delivered a solid performance in stopping all but two of the shots she faced, but after a no-score, five-minute overtime, the game was finally decided by Gaels' centre Becky Conroy during the shootout, spoiling her strong effort.

"We didn't do a lot of good things out there today, but I know that we're going to get some good work done this week and get ready to play when we get back into the league this weekend," said head coach Les Lawton after the match.

"It's going to be a tough go of it [for the rest of the season], as all the teams are really tight. I don't know if we have any [New Years] resolutions, but there's some hope that we can work hard enough and make the step forward for our program this year."

The next women's hockey game takes place on Saturday, Jan. 8 at 2:30 p.m. versus McGill in their first league game of the semester.

Scoreboard



WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

W 86-62 v Ryerson

weds

W 66-59 v Memorial

thurs

MEN'S BASKETBALL

W 90-84 v Saint Mary's

fri

L 88-77 v St. FX

sat

W 75-55 v Acadia

sun

schedule

MEN'S BASKETBALL

@ Laval

8:00 p.m. FRIDAY, JAN. 7

v UQAM

6:00 p.m. SATURDAY, JAN. 8

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

@ Laval

6:00 p.m. FRIDAY, JAN. 7

v. UQAM

8:00 p.m. SATURDAY, JAN 8

MEN'S HOCKEY

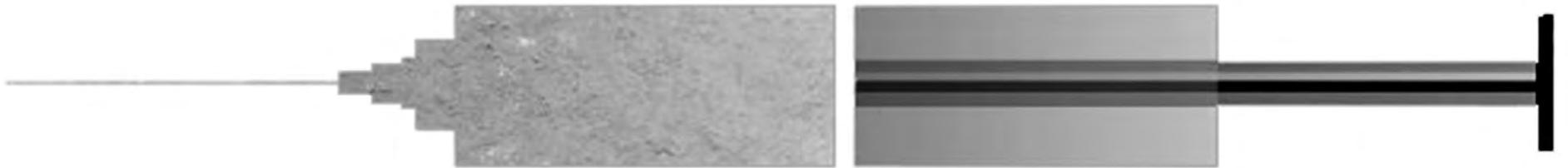
v McGill

3:00 p.m. SUNDAY, JAN. 9



TREMENDOUS TALES: "IT IS TIME TO TELL YOU OF MANY THINGS, MY SON, OF TALES BOTH TREMENDOUS... AND TRUE."

Point/Counter-Point



GRAPHIC CLÉMENT LIU

Safe Injection Sites Harm

• CLAY HEMMERICH

Say what you will about the safe injection site slated to open in Montreal next summer—with or without the approval of the provincial government—but doing heroin takes a certain irresponsibility that this city should not support.

I get that the sites are meant to curb overdoses and the proliferation of diseases like HIV, Hepatitis C and other infections caused by sharing a needle, but Montreal is a place with reachable resources to quit chasing the dragon, so why make the vehicle for drug abuse easier to access?

Though the needle exchange site may potentially be a positive thing, no one knows for sure because it still hasn't been proven that these centres work to reduce the rates of infection in users. Where is the physical data proving that people who do heroin in these places suffer a lower infection rate than those who shoot up in public? The facts are unquantifiable.

Vancouver—the first city in North America to offer intravenous drug users a safe IV injection space—pays about \$2 million annually to operate the facility, with only 31 per cent of users interviewed saying that they would actually use it. It's a hefty price to pay for something that only a third of heroin users are going to take advantage of. Also, what's the use if there are already places that give out free, clean needles? And where do the homeless who do dope go once they're high? They're still going to be on the streets.

Addiction isn't a joke—it's a heartbreaking reality that good-hearted and successful people sometimes fall into it. I can't imagine how people spend their entire life getting high and throwing it all away, but at a certain stage of addiction drug use isn't a choice anymore. It just seems like there isn't a way out. Why not spend the \$2

million that would be spent on this project on something that would help people get off the dope and on their feet?

As morbid as it sounds, nothing works better than utter fear to make people comply.

Montreal offers some rehabilitation sites, but these facilities are costly. For instance, Addington House—a drug treatment and addiction centre—costs roughly \$18,000 for a three-month program. They do provide some financing, but they don't hand it out like flyers. What if the \$2 million was allocated to places like these to help get drug users back on their feet?

I've lived in places where heroin is frequently used and places where a little bit of pot will put you straight to prison or the gallows. Quite frankly, the latter works much better to curb people from trying to catch a buzz. As morbid as it sounds, nothing works better than utter fear to make people comply.

Montreal has one of the highest percentages of drug users in the world, and I'm not saying that we should put the death penalty on people that are afflicted with addiction, I'm just wondering how on earth is a safe injection site a positive step in stopping people from doping up on Ste. Catherine Street?

I'm all about choice, but creating safe injection sites is just a poor choice for Montreal. Even if drugs are easy to find in this city, a safe injection site will just make it that much easier to use them.

The Opiate Double Standard

• DIEGO PELAEZ GAETZ

Several advocacy groups in Montreal are pushing for the establishment of three safe-injection sites for intravenous drug users. We are told by the Conservative government that we shouldn't support these types of initiatives, because this would be tacitly approving of drug use in general. Instead, we should be focused on prevention, not spending millions on supporting a bunch of degenerates.

Besides, doesn't it send the wrong message to allow people to safely shoot-up harmful, illegal drugs?

If the cost-efficiency of a project with normative benefits that include lowering deaths from overdoses and curtailing diseases like HIV (according to the Vancouver Coast Health Authority) must be addressed, for a project that is relatively inexpensive, the sites in Vancouver also saved the city approximately \$2.8 million in healthcare-related costs.

But more blatantly, the argument against safe-injection sites also fails to recognize the completely artificial distinctions we draw between different groups of drug addicts in our society. Consider the following two subsections of addicts:

One group makes us uncomfortable. Their condition not only fails to generate sympathy, but they are also stigmatized and ostracized systematically. Any tax dollars spent on them is wasted revenue that could have been spent on more discerning citizens able to avoid the dismal world of drug addiction.

Another group of addicts garners the ever-sincere sympathy of those in power. Their addiction, while certainly not desirable, doesn't carry the same social stigma and the Conservatives certainly wouldn't be against meas-

ures that help prevent disease and death in their communities.

The problem of these addicts is not some sort of moral defect that is dangerous to society, but simply ignorance of some of the more dangerous properties of an otherwise perfectly laudable and acceptable form of medication.

Both groups are addicted to the same drug, fundamentally. The two drugs have a relatively similar chemical make-up, and very similar side effects and addictive properties.

The great wheels of law and justice turn on, harassing and jailing one type of opiate user while sympathetically extending the olive branch of education and prevention to the other.

The first group is, of course, the heroin addicts that the advocacy groups in Montreal are trying to help with safe-injection sites.

The second group I'm talking about is the frightening number of OxyContin addicts in this country.

There were over 2.8 million prescriptions for the pain drug sold in Canada in 2007, and a University of Victoria study found that there were more OxyContin addicts than heroin addicts. Health Canada allowed a potent form of this drug to become available—and subsequently over-prescribed—to a large portion of the population.

Let us consider for a moment

the difference in how the government views these two classes of addicts. Health Canada is "concerned" about OxyContin abuse, but the drug remains legal while their conscience is cleansed with those time-tested "education" and "awareness" campaigns—without making a meaningful dent in the amount of OxyContin prescribed, or the amount of black-market OxyContin available.

Someone might get sued eventually, and a company worth billions may have to pay a fine that, for them, is ultimately the equivalent to a speeding ticket, but everyone gets to keep selling and taking their drugs in peace.

Heroin addicts on the street aren't afforded the same benign distinction. Heroin is an evil to the community. Heroin users are routinely harassed by police and imprisoned, and heroin dealers are parasitic influences on our communities that should be dealt with harshly.

All the while, the great wheels of law and justice turn on, harassing and jailing one type of opiate user while sympathetically extending the olive branch of education and prevention to the other. One group of pushers is beat up, jailed and deprived of establishing a legitimate place in "civilized" society. While the pushers of the other drug, like American pharmaceutical giant Purdue Pharma, pay off the government with hundreds of millions of dollars and avoid jail while continuing to profit massively off their drug. Purdue Pharma also provides OxyContin to Canada, and naturally the same civil litigation strategy is being pursued.

Alleviating the pain of homeless heroin users is not seen as a priority by the Conservative government. Unless, of course, they're interested in a new, generic, cheaper form of a certain Health Canada approved drug...

Tremendous Tales

by Christopher Olson

Nah'msayin?

Welcome Back, Motherfuckers

Okay, someone's got to ask what everyone is thinking: what the hell are we all doing here? It's January 3rd! Why are we back in school already?

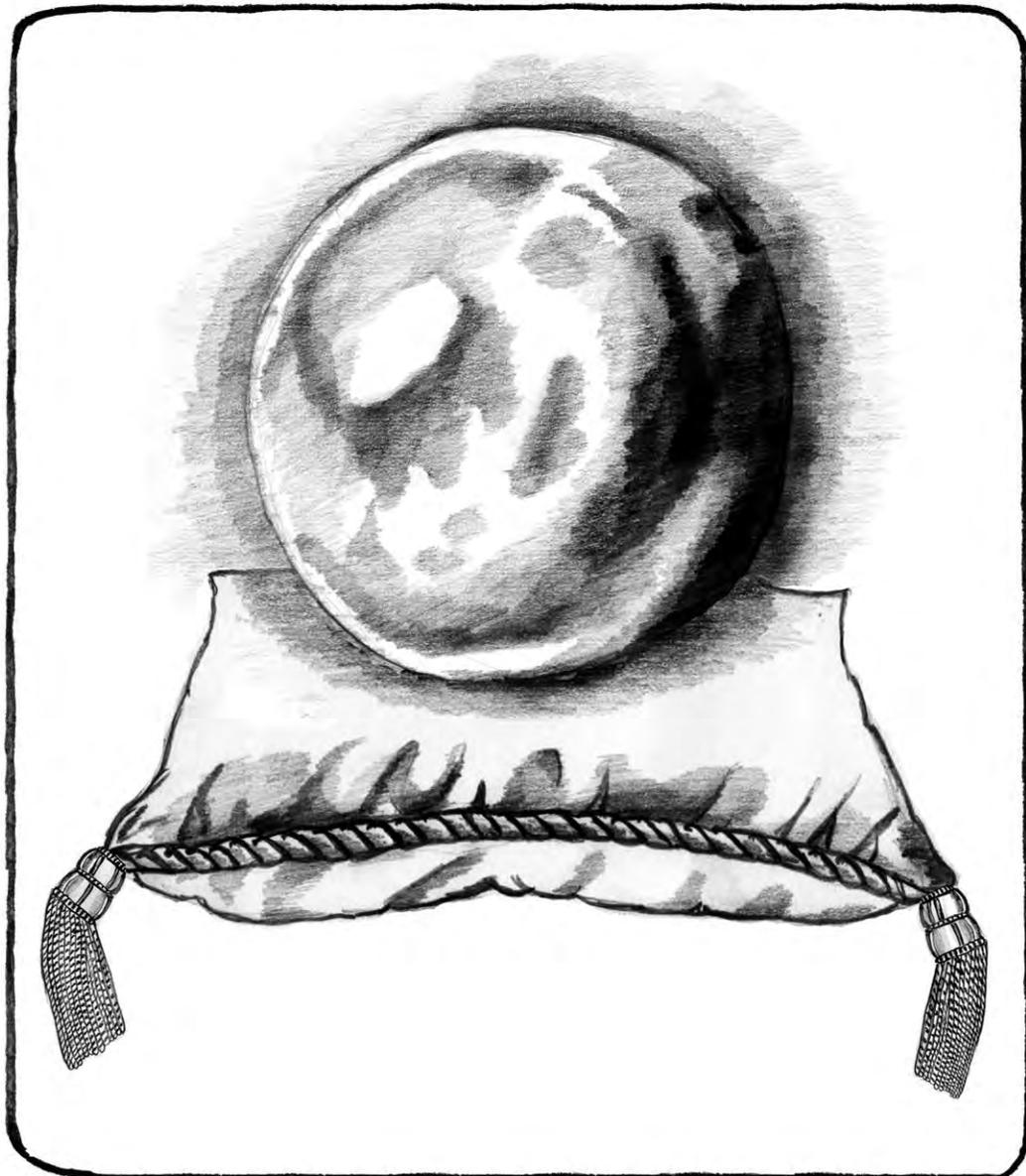
I still feel slightly nauseous from an excessive New Years. I am overfed and underslept. I still have holiday guests crashing on my couch and wouldn't mind basking in the holiday lifestyle (read: in sweatpants and eating Christmas cookies) for at least another week. Wouldn't you?

Whose bright idea upstairs was it to start classes again so soon? Give your head a shake, whoever you are. Students would wayyy rather have an extra week of class tacked onto the end of April than show up to another semester before the hangovers are even gone. It's just cruel.

—Laura Beeston,
Managing Editor



Notice something that just doesn't make sense?
Got an axe to grind? Send in a rant to Nah'msay-
ing? 300 words max.
opinions@thelinknewspaper.ca



Just as the image inside the crystal ball was coming into focus, and his future was laid out before him, the gypsy's fake nose fell off.

Beardo and the Bear

BY MATT MAROTTI



editorial cartoon



GRAPHIC MITCH DIXON

editorial

Transparency Needed at Concordia's Board

The fall semester claimed a final victim before students returned to university this week, clearing out the last of Concordia's big names.

First Kathy Assayag, the fundraising whiz, departed under a cloud. Then Michael DiGrappa, the master builder, was lured away, and now President Judith Woodsworth's chair is empty.

For the second time in three years, Concordia is without a president.

With the senior administration gutted and VP External Relations Bram Freedman keeping the president's chair warm for whoever can be convinced to take the post, the university's board of governors has never been so powerful.

A club of successful businessmen and cultural elites, the 40 members of Concordia's board sit at the apex of the university's power structure. While the board has the power to manage and oversee all decisions affecting the university, this power is normally tempered by the presence of a president and a capable administration. All internal checks on the board's power have now been swept aside.

Having dismissed its second president—the first, Claude Lajeunesse was fired in October 2007 for erratic behaviour and arrogance—the board is now acting like the corporate board of directors it is more familiar with. Senior administrators are now being retained and dismissed based on immediate results and public relations as much as they used to be chosen based on vision and academics.

The reasons for Woodsworth's dismissal are not as clear as those for dismissing Lajeunesse. While the president made mistakes during her tenure, the decision to drive her away was not academic and the board will not explain itself to the students whose best interests it claims to serve.

The cost of buying the silence of the past two presidents now nears \$2 million. Whatever can be said about Woodsworth's dismissal, the decision was clearly not in the interest of students.

The worrying question now is not why Woodsworth was let go, but who is next? A senior VP at Power Corporation, the CEO of Montreal's Airports Authority, the chairman of a major property development firm and the president of BMO Financial Group now have the power to decide who will lead this university next.

What will their criteria be?

Woodsworth set out a clear vision, balanced the books and spoke publicly in favour of raising tuition to \$5,000 by 2020—a figure closer to \$10,000 per year when you include the ancillary fees. What more could the board want?

Instead of demanding a clear vision from the presidents they appoint, perhaps it is time that the board sets forth its own vision of how it thinks Concordia should be run. Any perspective president would need an intimate relationship with the board, or a contract that provided near dictatorial powers, to even think of taking the position.

With the terms of 32 of the 40 governors set to expire by the end of the year, the decision made about who will take over the university's depleted upper ranks will be a more important one than most.

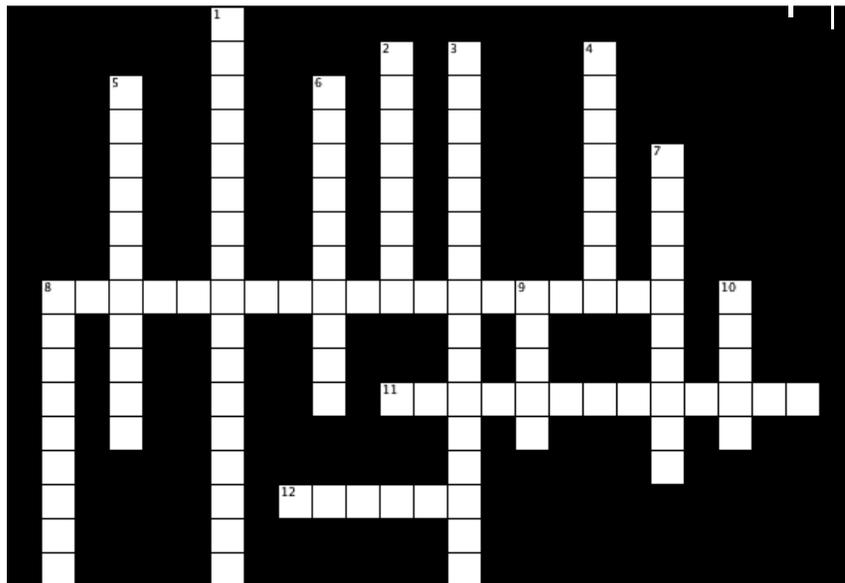
By 2012, Concordia could be a very different place. The process of choosing who will lead the university needs much more transparency than the closed sessions of the past.

—Justin Giovannetti,
 Editor-in-chief

Quik-X

"Famous Bears"

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON



Across

- 8. Christopher Walken stars in this film adaptation of a despicable Disney theme park attraction.
- 11. The only real bear on this list. Also the inspiration for a Disney character who spawns millions of dollars in merchandise every year.
- 12. "Wacka, wacka, wacka" originated in a time when catchphrases didn't need to make sense.

Down

- 1. Toy bears are invariably named "Teddy" after this American President for his refusal to shoot a black bear that was tied-down to a tree, as it was unsportmanlike. He instructed that the bear be killed anyway to put it out of

its misery.

- 2. The authorities who investigate child porn trafficking mistook this harmless internet meme as an international mascot for depravity.
- 3. When Conan left NBC, he briefly renamed this classic character the "self-pleasuring panda" to avoid a lawsuit.
- 4. This horror/comedy features a bear of abnormal intelligence who stalks a nature park, stealing lunches.
- 5. Back when toys were required to give children nightmares, this bear would lipsink to whatever cassette tape you placed in his back. Smart-ass kids immediately borrowed their parent's copies of Blue Öyster Cult's

"Don't Fear the Reaper."

- 6. This sugary bear will stick to the roof of your mouth.
- 7. Leave your lighters and lighting fluids at home when you decide to go for a walk in the woods, or else this government mascot will be very, very displeased.
- 8. This cartoon/toy line pulled the wool over children's eyes: bears are actually nature's nihilists.
- 9. This bear headlines *Sesame Park*, the Canadian iteration of *Sesame Street*.
- 10. Who says Disney drastically alters their source material? For instance, this bear from *The Jungle Book* obviously needed his own cartoon series where he flies a cargo plane.

issue 16 crossword solutions



THE LINK
 CONCORDIA'S INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

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