

THE

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POLLING PROBLEMS: ASFA ELECTION RESULTS IN QUESTION • PAGE 7

Occupy The Square

Montrealers Set Up Camp in Financial District



Occupiers in Montreal's Victoria Square say they're prepared to remain there for a while.

PHOTOS VINCENT YIP

• JULIAN WARD

Cities across Canada have officially hopped on the Occupy Wall Street juggernaut, which has seen chapters spring up across the western world and as far away as Hong Kong.

Thousands of activists in Montreal took to Square Victoria at the steps of the Montreal Stock Exchange building Oct. 15. They set up tents, tarps and tables and have said that they are not leaving any time soon.

"Across the board, people are realizing that capitalism, as it [stands], isn't working," said Joanne Penhale, one of the occupiers. "I think the Canadian system isn't as fucked up [as the American system], but when

we're talking about a global economy, we're all in the same boat."

"Canada has its own injustices, which will be coming out," she continued. "Some, for example, want Quebec independence. It isn't my thing, but it's important to discuss."

Penhale says that the movement is a work in progress and that it is unreasonable to expect such a wide variety of voices and opinions to have any sort of consensus just yet.

Occupiers wasted no time in setting up what will be their new home for the foreseeable future. While some were setting up tents and tarps to block the rain, which intermittently plagued the day, others were preparing meals to feed the occupiers.

"To sustain an occupation you need food because, well, everyone's got to eat," said William Ray of Food Not Bombs, one of the organizations helping with meals.

Other occupiers spent the afternoon distributing political flyers, playing music, making signs, and creating a carnival-like atmosphere that kept the spirits high throughout the cold and windy day.

Though the set-up in Square Victoria, renamed 'Place du Peuple' by its occupiers, is based on the original encampment in New York City, there are some dramatic differences. Occupiers in Montreal are allowed—at least for the moment—to use megaphones, to pitch tents and to

blast music. At the time of publication of this article, there had also been no arrests of protesters.

"I'm here supporting the American Occupy Wall Street protest," said Marco Montali, an owner and president of a pulp and paper business, dressed in a large yellow raincoat with '99%' emblazoned on the back.

"We've got a long way to go to improve our situation [in Canada]. It could be so easy for us to slide downhill. If we're not careful we could lose it all," he cautioned.

Occupiers held a general assembly in the afternoon wherein everyone gathered around to try and sort out the logistics of the occupation and make plans for further action.

In a nod to the occupiers in New York City, the general assembly made use of the human microphone, which entails one person speaking in fragmented sentences which are repeated in unison by everyone close by so the people on the outside of the crowd can hear.

In the evening, hundreds of protesters took to Ste. Catherine St. and marched through traffic, stopping cars in the middle of the street. A police escort eventually joined the marchers who went to a Bank of Montreal building in the Old Port. While security guards prevented protesters from entering the building, they were not stopped from dancing and chanting "We are the 99 per cent" on the steps of the iconic bank.

Needle Point and Counter Point

Local Injection Site to Open After Syringe Exchange Closure



Cactus community organizer Jean-Francois Mary hopes multiple supervised injection sites will open in Montreal.

• ADAM KOVAC

Montreal and Quebec City may soon be emulating a controversial Vancouver safe drug-injection site program, but another local program aimed at preventing drug-related health problems has seen its provincial funding cut.

“To responsibly do a needle exchange [program], it’s important to have staff that can support and sit down one-on-one with clients and talk to them about safer use beyond just giving needles,”

—Juniper Belshaw

According to a press release from the office of Quebec Minister of Health Yves Bolduc, the minister has “spoken with Cactus Montreal [about the] conditions necessary for the establishment of a super-

vised injection service in Quebec, including the need to have a real consensus for such a project.”

Cactus is an outreach and education centre in downtown Montreal that describes itself as an “autonomous, nonprofit organization, which helps persons who use illicit drugs, or those with potentially risky sexual behaviour, to reduce the risks associated with those practices while improving their quality of life.”

One service already offered at Cactus is a safe needle-exchange program, where users can trade their used syringes for clean ones.

While Cactus may be operating as a safe injection site as early as April, another similar outreach service recently had to cut back its outreach. Head & Hands, located on Sherbrooke St. W. in Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, had to get rid of two street workers in August after its provincial funding was cut by \$75,000.

“They did mobile harm-reduction in NDG, so they would go support clients in parks, metros, bars,” said Head & Hands’ Juniper Belshaw. “They were able to go to people’s apartments, group homes, youth centres, hotels, massage parlours and in those spaces they

talked a lot about harm reduction, so they gave information on safer drug use and safer sex.

“They also ran a clean needle exchange and gave safe inhalation kits as well as tens of thousands of condoms a year.”

Belshaw noted that, while they are still able to hand out condoms on-site, the drug-related materials were no longer available.

“To responsibly do a needle exchange [program], it’s important to have staff that can support and sit down one-on-one with clients and talk to them about safer use beyond just giving needles,” he said.

Cactus’ director of community organization and outreach, Jean-Francois Mary, said he was concerned about what the loss of Head & Hands street workers would mean for the NDG area, citing increased austerity measures in the neighbourhood.

He said that the reason Cactus is able to maintain its operations and open the supervised injection site, while Head & Hands has to cut back, is because the funding is coming from a different organization in the Ministry of Health.

“In general we only receive funding for prevention of STDs, but for a safe injection site, dependency

and substance abuse, the funding should come from the sector in the Ministry of Health [that deals with drug dependence].”

A Sept. 30 ruling from the Supreme Court of Canada marked the end of the eight-year-long court battle over the legality of Vancouver’s Insite safe injection clinic. The clinic provides clean needles and rooms where clients are able to inject pre-bought illicit drugs. It also provides health care services, which its website claims has successfully treated all 1,418 overdoses that have occurred since its opening in 2003. It shares a building with Onsite, a detox centre staffed with counselors, nurses and doctors that help clients aiming to end their drug addiction.

While the Cactus project is still in its infancy, the Quebec government has expressed public support, with a press release stating, “This ruling shows drug addiction is a disease and that supervised injection sites can save lives.”

Though Cactus is so far the only site named by Bolduc in Montreal, he has also approached Point de Repères in Quebec City to set up a similar facility. Mary expressed hope that the supervised injection initiative will eventually have more

chapters in Montreal.

“We won’t be the only promoter in Montreal and we don’t want to be the only promoter in Montreal,” he said. “The context is really different from the Vancouver downtown site. The context is much closer to cities around Europe, where people are scattered and therefore we don’t want to have one central place, but multiple places.”

Mary added that there is much work to be done before Cactus can open as a supervised injection site, including educating the public in the area about what the facility does, organizing and training nurses, setting protocols for dealing with emergencies and other contingencies.

Bolduc ended his press release by saying “Since the supervised injection services can represent an additional tool to fight against the transmission of blood-borne infections, to reduce the harm associated with misuse of drugs by injection, in addition to having several health benefits of people with a drug addiction, I will follow with attention the progress of [Cactus.]”

What that means for places like Head & Hands remains unclear, however—at least for the time being.

Open Seating

Committees Struggle to Find Student Members at Meeting



CSU Council voted to support a sexual assault centre after Laura Ellyn from Concordians for a Safer University Community pointed out the lack of policies on campus.

PHOTO ADAM KOVAC

• ADAM KOVAC

When the Concordia Student Union Council met on Oct. 12, they managed to fill four empty student-at-large committee seats. However, five more positions remained unfilled, as not a single student has submitted themselves for consideration.

The student-at-large seats provide a level of student oversight for the various committees. Chris Webster was named to both the Finance and Policy Reform committees, while Dylan Oberont and Gabrielle Brais Harvey were named to Sustainability and External Campaigns, respectively.

That leaves vacancies on the Clubs & Space, Appointments, Events, Loyola and Ad Hoc

Committees on equity and student space, respectively.

"It's pretty standard that committees aren't always full all the time, and certainly not at the start of the year," said CSU President Lex Gill.

"The committees that have been really active have been filled, like external and campaigns, for example. Things like Loyola and appointments that are a bit more ambiguous—it's difficult to find students that want to get involved."

Gill said that the CSU plans to put up posters advertising the empty positions, and noted that the vacancies are posted on the their official website. She expressed hope that people will step forward by the time of the CSU's November meeting.

The committees are still able to function as, due to the bylaws of the CSU, quorum for a committee meeting is half of all active members.

Besides the appointment of the new committee members, Council was given a presentation by lawyer and Concordia professor Patrice Blais, who had been working in recent months on changes to the bylaws of the CSU.

Most of the changes had been approved in June, but some had been sent to the Policy Reform committee for further review, particularly the section that dealt with removing a member of Council or the president or VPs from office.

"The recommendation of the policy committee is that the

members should be able to carry out an impeachment process against a member of the executive or a member of council," said Blais.

He then outlined a procedure that would involve Council being presented with a petition calling for the resignation signed by 2,500 students in the case of an executive, with differing numbers for councillors from different faculties.

That would be followed by a special general meeting at which students would be able to vote on whether to impeach or not.

"[The process has been] already decided in principle. It was a question of how many signatures you'd need on the petition," said Gill, adding that the number couldn't have been decided be-

fore the CSU acquired statistics on the proportion of students in each faculty.

The changes won't be officially ratified until students vote on them at a referendum, which was announced will take place from Nov. 22 to 24.

Other than voting on whether or not to accept the bylaw revisions, students will also vote on fee levy increase requests from the Frigo Vert and CJLO, as well as filling open councillor seats on Council, which had seen the resignation of four members since the beginning of the year.

There are two vacant positions for representatives of independent students, as well as two for the John Molson School of Business.

TAKING A STAND

CSU Votes in Favour of Centre to Aid Sexual Assault Victims

• JULIAN WARD

Realizing the ongoing threat that sexual assault poses to students, the councillors of the Concordia Student Union voted to create a sexual assault centre for the university at their meeting last week.

"Concordia University does not have a policy that specifically and comprehensively addresses sexual assault," said Laura Ellyn of Concordians for a Safer University

Community, who spoke to council.

"The policies that do exist conflate sexual assault with sexual harassment. There is no distinction, which makes it impossible for us to tell how many cases of sexual assault and sexual harassment happen at Concordia every year," she said.

Between one in four and one in six women experience some sort of sexual assault while attending college or university, according to

a letter from CSUC detailing the improvements they want to see on campus with regards to sexual assault policy.

CSUC has made a list of objectives they hope to achieve within the next year to improve services to sexual assault victims and the entire university community.

The CSUC wants to see the creation of a permanent space on campus for a sexual assault centre, permanent and sustainable funding for the operations of such

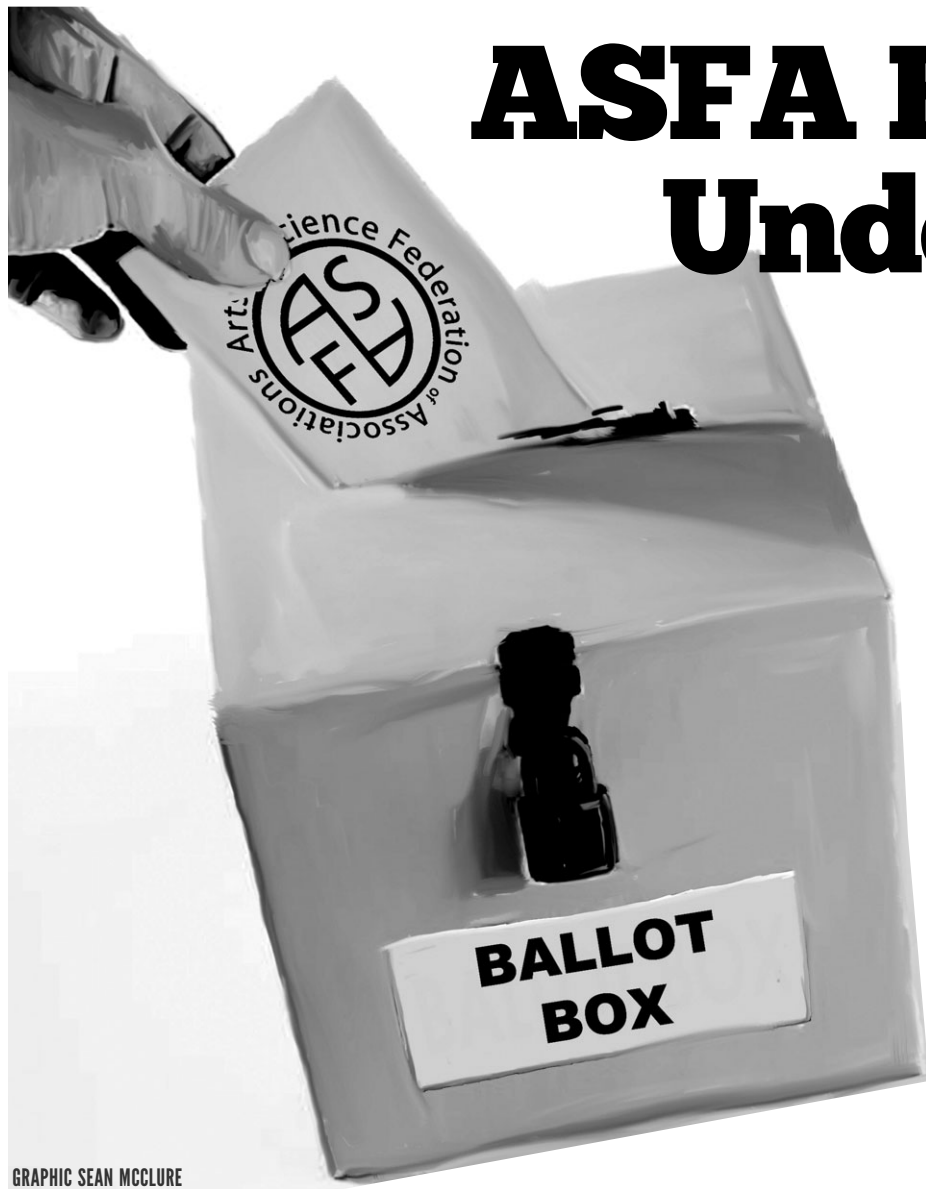
a centre, the implementation of mandatory sensitivity training programs for security, counseling and development staff, and the creation of a clear and accessible policy dealing with sexual assault on campus.

The sexual assault centre would be funded by Concordia's administration.

"In the course of working this campaign, we've studied a lot of great policies of universities that we know it's possible to have bet-

ter policies than this," Ellyn said. "We actually sat down with professionals who look at university policies and the first thing they said to us was, 'This is the most unclear policy we've ever seen.'"

In addition to voicing support for the centre, the CSU will be creating a directory of organizations that provide assistance or information to survivors of sexual assault and sexual harassment, which will be accessible from their website.



GRAPHIC SEAN MCCLURE

ASFA Elections Undermined

ASFA to Hold General Assembly, Vote on Student Strike

• JULIAN WARD

If you're an arts and science student, you are going to get the chance to vote on whether or not to strike.

At a meeting of the Arts and Science Federation of Associations Council, a motion was introduced calling for a special general assembly at which students will decide whether to strike and participate in the Nov. 10 Day of Action against tuition hikes.

"[We're trying] to mobilize arts and science students to get on board and on the same track as the Concordia Student Union [with regards to fighting tuition increases]," said ASFA President Alex Gordon.

A minimum of 370 students need to show up to make quorum at ASFA's general assembly, which will be held in the first week of November, said Gordon.

The CSU, unlike ASFA, will not be seeking a strike mandate from its members at this point in time.

"It's our perspective that it's significantly more effective for the CSU at this point to mobilize directly for the Nov. 10 action [and not for a one-day strike]," said CSU President Lex Gill. "We're much more interested in encouraging and supporting faculty associations and department level associations to have their own strike mandates."

Gill stressed that there is no difference between having a strike mandate for students protesting on Nov. 10 and not having one.

"There's nothing that legally protects students who are on strike at all. There's nothing in the law. Unlike a labour union, [a student union] going on strike really means nothing other than you don't go to class and you suffer the consequences," she said.

Other undergraduate student associations on campus have either decided to officially not take a stance on tuition increases, or have yet to formulate an official position.

The Concordia International Students' Association and the Fine Arts Student Alliance will be meeting with their respective councils in the coming weeks to decide their official stances on the Nov. 10 Day of Action.

The two other major undergraduate student associations on campus, the Engineering and Computer Science Association and the Commerce and Administration Students' Association, have decided to remain neutral on tuition increases.

Controversy Swirls Over Potential Violations of ASFA Electoral Bylaws

• ADAM KOVAC

A seemingly routine by-election to fill vacant VP and councillor seats in the Arts and Science Federation of Associations has resulted in questions about the validity of the vote.

Former ASFA Chief Electoral Officer and current Concordia Student Union Council Chairperson Nick Cuillerier has filed an official complaint with ASFA's Judicial Committee, citing what he called "Numerous violations that took place and the general lack of oversight."

"I don't find that there is any malicious intent involved here. But what is clear is that there is gross negligence, a questionable understanding of [election bylaws found in ASFA document] Annex A, and a lack of oversight regarding [current CEO Marvin Cidamon]."

One of the most serious allegations put forth by Cuillerier is the hiring of former ASFA VP Internal Nicole Devlin as a polling clerk and ballot counter. Cuillerier said that, as CEO last year, he had recommended a change to the bylaws that would prohibit former executives from holding paid positions in ASFA elections.

"I needed polling clerks," said Cidamon, who acknowledged that he knew hiring Devlin would violate the bylaws.

"It was kind of short notice. I ended up planning that entire election in about a week. Time was against me and I had other

choices, but she seemed like someone who knew her stuff, and knew how to deal with an election."

Devlin, who had been on the ASFA executive when the reforms were passed, said she did not remember that particular change, and could not find it when looking through the online version of the bylaws before applying to be a clerk and counter.

"Throughout the entire elections I saw many executives and people and no one said anything, so I thought it was okay," she said.

Cuillerier said he, too, looked at the online bylaws and annexes, and found that the updated version of Annex A, which was voted on by ASFA council in April, was missing.

"I had assumed the most updated version of Annex A had been up on the website," he said. "When this was not the case, I soon realized that the one on the website is from Dec. 10 and not April 14. I was then sent a recent version of Annex and upon receiving it, I realized there were components missing."

"Annex A is currently missing some major components, and not only is it not readily available to the public, it's not readily available to the executive, because they have not updated it."

However, ASFA President Alex Gordon said that is not the case.

"As far as the website update, I think it's a little self-explanatory that we didn't have a VP Communication, and as much as we at-

tempted to learn the application of the website, that's one thing that unfortunately didn't get updated in a timely manner. We do have an updated version that we're consulting."

He added that the hiring of ineligible polling clerks was "an oversight by a few different bodies," and that Cidamon and ASFA VP Internal Schubert Laforest had jointly and voluntarily filed a request for an opinion with the Judicial Committee about the matter.

Cuillerier also cited violations as varied as a student hired as a ballot counter posting the results of the election on Facebook before they were official, to hiring polling clerks and counters who were ineligible to perform those duties due to recent reforms to the ASFA bylaws.

The Link has also learned of potential problems in the training of polling clerks, which may have resulted in students being able to cast multiple votes after one student admitted to having had the opportunity to vote multiple times after going to several polling stations.

Clerks are supposed to enter the names of students who have voted into a database, and if they attempt to vote again, an 'ineligible' message is supposed to pop up.

Cuillerier had asked the JC to consider whether the results of the election should be valid, whether the CEO, deputy electoral officer

and ineligible polling clerks should face disciplinary actions, to look at the hiring process of the CEO, and to consider dismissing the CEO over the byelection.

"I do this under great frustration," said Cuillerier. "I spent many hours last year trying to help improve the system and correct some of the errors that were within the system."

Cidamon denied that the results of the election are in doubt, saying, "All the results are fine. It's not really a question whether the results have been tampered with in any way."

Cuillerier also filed complaints concerning the lack of a formal ratification of Cidamon by Council—Cidamon says he was busy counting ballots, as the night where the ratification was to take place was also an election night—and the lack of an updated election section on the ASFA website.

The byelection winners included Alexis Suzuki as VP Communications and Paul Jerajian as VP External & Sustainability, as well as Yasmeen Zahar as an independent councillor.

In emails sent to *The Link*, the ASFA Judicial Committee announced separate hearings stemming from the election.

One, to be held on Oct. 19, will discuss questions about election violations brought to the JC jointly by Cidamon and Laforest. The other, on Oct. 24, will be to discuss the allegations put forth by Cuillerier.

80 Decibels = \$1,500

The City Cracks Down on Concordia Noise (Again)

• LAURA BEESTON

Last week, the Office of the Dean of Students sent a missive to all Concordia student clubs and groups on behalf of the City of Montreal, telling us to keep the noise down—or else.

According to the notice, during this year's Orientation, the city reportedly received a number of noise complaints.

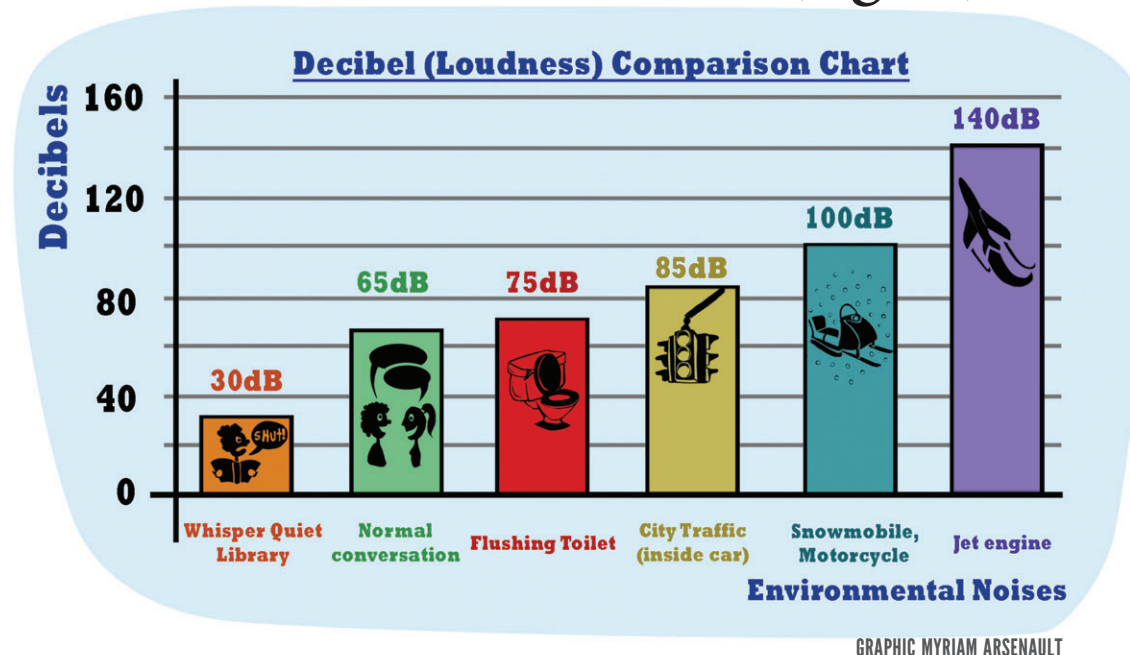
Authorities then reminded the Concordia administration that “no noise registering above 80 decibels is allowed on public or private property,” and that if the noise level exceeds this limit, fines between \$1,500 and \$12,000—plus a \$375 administration fee—may be imposed on the group responsible for the racket.

Eighty decibels, however, is roughly the noise produced by a flushing toilet.

“As far as I'm aware, during Orientation we only received one noise complaint [downtown] on the day that the Reggie's terrace hosted the electronic DJ night,” said CSU VP Student Life Laura Glover.

“We were asked to turn the music down, we did, and everything was fine. The security agent on site even confirmed that it was at a healthy noise level.”

While Glover has no idea who



called in the noise complaint, she doesn't think it's necessarily fair.

“It's important for students to hold and participate in events and sometimes it might get a bit noisy, but students are a huge part of the downtown community,” she said. “I also think that the university needs to take a little bit of responsibility and defend student life on campus in these types of situations.”

“From a financial perspective, the university does make a bit of money off orientation events—[the CSU] paid nearly \$18,000 into

security expenses,” Glover said. “But they also benefit from Orientation in that student life and community building are huge components of how Concordia wants to be perceived locally and internationally.”

Concordia spokesperson Chris Mota explained that while there have been discussions between the administration and the city in the past, the determination of appropriate noise levels and associated fines are “not within our parameters.”

“It's a long running issue, it's something we talk to student leadership about fairly regularly,” explained Mota, adding that the city really started cracking down on noise control a couple of years ago.

“[We tell] student leadership to be aware. Even though Concordia is getting the phone call and complaint, these are student events and they are the ones who are liable. We just inform students that there are massive fines hanging over them. So they absolutely have to re-

spect those bylaws.”

In 2010, former CSU President Prince Ralph Osei contacted *The Gazette* to bring what he called a “double standard of what constitutes noise in the downtown core” to light.

Why else, he asked, is it okay to close major downtown thoroughfares—for events the Formula 1 concerts on Crescent St., to fashion festivals, to parades—but not okay to organize outdoor events on the downtown campus?

“Dazzled by the hypocrisy” of the city for blocking the Orientation concert the CSU was planning at the time, Osei said he found it “shameful” that Ville-Marie makes so little effort to accommodate student initiatives, as student activities and presence bring a ton of money into the downtown core.

“Montreal should have a single policy that applies to all, regardless of status or political clout,” he said.

While *The Link* made numerous attempts to contact the City of Montreal spokesperson and Cultural Development officer to inquire about acceptable noise levels and fines—as well as the “double standard” of Crescent St.—they were unable to respond by deadline

AIDS in the Internet Age

Annual Lecture Series Brings in Alexandra Juhasz

• JACOB ROBERTS

When Alexandra Juhasz, a professor in media studies, addressed ConU as part of the Concordia University Community Lecture Series on HIV/AIDS, she did so in a manner not typically seen in an academic presentation.

The Oct. 13 talk followed an intentionally non-linear progression through the thoughts and feelings of HIV-positive people. Her entire presentation served to illustrate a metaphor that connected the widespread HIV virus with the free flow of information on the Internet.

“A lot of what I was doing, intentionally, was throwing out really complicated ideas that were often in contradiction with each other,” said Juhasz.

She showed documentary clips of AIDS victims telling their tales of survival, focusing on efforts to stay positive in a grim situation.

As part of her intentionally disorienting style, she would skip quickly away to something else entirely, such as samples of artistic photography from an HIV-positive artist to a slide prominently dis-

playing a quote from author and AIDS activist Gregg Bordowitz that coldly states, “...beings are born and then they die.”

With the birth of the Internet and the explosion of information coming from it, Juhasz said she wanted to do something for AIDS awareness that wouldn't become another video on YouTube that people watch a portion of and then click away from.

Instead, she decided to incorporate a “short attention span culture” into her presentation, by amassing a huge amount of information herself and showing it in a chaotic way that mimics the way that people now take in information from the Internet.

By doing so, she hoped to draw a symbolic parallel between the high-speed information age and HIV/AIDS.

“Do I think of the Internet as a disease?” she said during an interview with *The Link*. “If you think about it as an external agent, that enters the flows of the biological unit that is human being and societies, then sure. Perhaps the question is, if you think about other agents that enter the body that

aren't going to make the body sick then yeah, that is the Internet.”

Juhasz cautioned the audience about the dangers of being exposed to the unrestricted flow of information on the Internet.

“This free flow—this free connectivity—which we think of as [the] democratic possibility of the Internet, ends up moving information's context without stopping and holding on to it. To connect that to HIV, what I was doing was stopping the viral flow that doesn't have impediments,” she said.

The talk, which Juhasz called a “mixed reality experience,” ended with a question and answer period, which she explained was as much a part of the mixed reality as any other aspect.

Most of the people who stood up to ask questions were angered by the presentation. Many said that the quick transitions from one topic and one medium to another took emotional value away from the videos of HIV victims.

Juhasz addressed their concerns, explaining that what she wanted to portray was the coldness of the digital age that allows one to interrupt a video of someone with



Alexandra Juhasz pauses to let the digital portion of her presentation elaborate on her metaphor combining HIV and the Internet.

AIDS sharing their life—to quickly jump away to the next video or photo or tab in the browser window.

“I think that there's something dangerous about this idea of ‘virality’—meaning something that flows without change [and] without stopping. The question is, how do you want to be connected, and how do you want limits on that connectivity?”

Juhasz, who has taught at several universities and holds a PhD in Cinema Studies, has made several documentaries since the 1980s featuring people who are HIV-positive.

The next guest lecturer in the Community Lecture Series on HIV/Aids will be Dr. Vin Kim Nguyen, speaking on Nov 10.

The Struggle Goes On

Labour Board Finds in Favour of McGill on Replacement Workers



PHOTO JACOB ROBERTS

• JACOB ROBERTS

Quebec's Labour Relations Board rejected an emergency stop-work order Oct. 4 requested by striking McGill University employees.

The union representing the McGill University Non-Academic Certified Association had demanded the order in late September to prevent replacement workers hired to do their jobs from being allowed to work during the strike.

According to MUNACA's VP Minister of Finance David Kalant, the Labour Relations Board commissioner did not think that it was an emergency.

"Looking very briefly at the

evidence, [the replacement workers] didn't seem illegal—at least the casual workers," said Kalant.

"So that's another reason [the commissioner] denied the emergency order," continued Kalant. "Now McGill put this out as saying they've been cleared, which they haven't, because we still have to have the full hearing with all the evidence, and dates have to be set for that. It's not over yet."

Anti-scab laws differ from province to province. In Quebec, the only people allowed to replace a striking employee are non-union workers already employed by the university who do the same type of work, or a person in

a managerial position who has the power to hire and fire.

According to the report made by an inspector from the Commission des relations du travail, the scab workers seem to be illegal.

McGill allegedly has a number of low managers who are not true managers and are not allowed to do the work of a striking individual.

"There is apparently a quote in the report from 'M,' a low manager, who said, 'Yes, I am doing the work of a MUNACA member,'" said Kalant. "That's illegal and [they] said that to the inspector."

Though a date has not been set, at the full hearing MUNACA

plans to present their evidence for why the scab workers are infringing upon the labour law and McGill will present their counter-arguments.

According to McGill, the replacement workers are legally allowed to do the work they are doing and are therefore not scabs.

The injunction, which has restricted striking activities like picketing, has been extended until Jan. 21, when MUNACA expects a hearing of the case.

MUNACA has almost 1,700 workers who have been on strike since Sept. 1 to achieve wage parity with other Montreal universities, as well as improved pensions and benefits.

Briefs

\$7M FOR CONCORDIA RESEARCH

• LAURA BEESTON

On Oct. 11, seven Concordia professors came into \$7.2 million after the federal government announced their funding for the Canada Research Chairs program.

Established in 2000, the program invests millions each year to universities across the country to "attract and re-

tain some of the world's most accomplished and promising minds."

A third of the almost \$204 million in available grants went to Quebec universities.

Concordia professors, who were selected by an international committee of researchers, have been "acknowledged as

world leaders" in their fields, according to Concordia Senator Larry Smith.

They include Dr Ahmed Kishk from the Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering, who develops advanced antenna systems, David Walsh from the Department of Biology, who studies

microbial interactions of Canada's oceans and Mia Consalvo, of the Department of Communication Studies, who researches player response to digital games, among many others.

For more information, visit chairs-chaire.gc.ca.

BOG MEETING CANCELLED

• LAURA BEESTON

If you are a disgruntled undergraduate that was planning to #OccupyBoG this Thursday, you'll have to wait another month, as it was announced last week that the Board of Governors meeting—the venue for Concordia's highest decision-making body—would be cancelled.

Originally scheduled for Oct. 20, the official reason for the postponement was that "a

substantial number of governors were unable to attend, making a lack of quorum a real possibility," according to university spokesperson Chris Mota. "Cancelling a meeting is not an exceptional event. It tends to happen at least once per year."

Quorum on the Board is currently set at 21 out of 41 members.

The meeting was set to discuss, among other things, a

motion put forward by graduate students' representative Erik Chevrier calling for Board meetings to be televised, the addition of a public question period, and increased seating for audience members in the boardroom.

The highly anticipated meeting would have also been a follow up to the Board's controversial vote about membership makeup from their meeting on Sept. 28.

In a secret ballot, the Board cut proportional undergraduate student representation down to a single seat at a table of 25, though undergraduates make up over 35,000 of the 53,000-person Concordia community. Student representatives walked out of the Sept. 28 meeting in protest.

The next board meeting will take place Nov. 17, at 8:00 a.m. in EV-2.260.



THELINKNEWSPAPER.CA

Aggravatin' the Admin

Commenter wendykh thought the subject of our article "Who is @Peter_Kruijt?" was a tad subversive, posting a comment saying, "I hope you Linkies took it as a nod of respect [the administration] asked if you 'knew,' since that's code for 'You little shits, this is you guys after a few beers isn't it?'"

Musical Motherhouse

Board of Governors Student Rep AJ West was so enthusiastic about our article "Getting Out of the Habit," about the Grey Nuns building, that he wrote a song about it. Well, not really, but he did post this link to a music video he made last year. Take a gander with your ears: goo.gl/UlfsC

A Poor Plan

"It's a step back for Quebec," Nicolas Mainville of Greenpeace Canada said of development plans for the colder climes of our province in our article "Controversy Over Development of Northern Quebec." "Plan Nord [is] a plan of acceleration and industrial exploitation with a nice, green veneer. Unfortunately, once you scratch the surface a little, we realize that it's just nonsense."

More MUNACA

"What we're doing here might seem radical [but] it's just common sense. We need to stand in solidarity with these workers who deserve what they are asking for," said a student named Bianca in our article "Students Sit in Solidarity," which was about the anti-tuition increase group the Mod Squad supporting striking MUNACA workers. "I think all these apathetic people walking past us need to listen to what's happening and pay attention."

We Need You... Again

We got some exciting interviews coming up, and we want your input.

With tuition set to increase, do you have questions for Education Minister Line Beauchamp or National Assembly member Amir Khadir? They're talking to The Link this week, so send your queries to editor@thelinknewspaper.ca

“It’s All Very Frankenstein...”

FNC Lab Welcomes You to the Operating Theatre

• COREY POOL

In an unassuming apartment in Montreal’s Plateau borough, two young artists are hard at work bringing a ramshackle steel sculpture to life.

Inside the apartment, a thin veil of smoke fills the air with the smell of burnt plastic and in a dark room, two figures hunch over large steel frames with knives in their hands.

Abstract light patterns flash across the wall while the wheeze of a projector fan and the clank of gears and belts emanate from whatever it is they are concentrating on.

“We’re giving life to inanimate objects, so to speak,” explained Daniel Oniszcenko, one of two artists responsible for Operating Theatre, a performance/installation project created by Oniszcenko and his colleague, Philippe Léonard. “It’s all very Frankenstein, in a way, but I wouldn’t consider it dark or sinister at all.”

Léonard and Oniszcenko are Concordia film production alumni. Both artists met within the experimental thread of the film production program about two years ago.

“Philippe and I had been wanting to collaborate ever since we met each other in film school,” explained Daniel. “He asked if I had

any sculptural pieces in mind, and I told him, ‘Well, fuck yeah [...] I’ve got just the thing.’”

That ‘thing’ slowly evolved into two strange and cryptic looking steel structures, each supporting a 16mm projector, and incorporating a belt drive, an antique Singer sewing machine, broken glass pieces, and parts of old clocks. These sculptures became the basis of their latest project.

Operating Theatre is as an experience that synthesizes sculpture, sound, cinema, and performance art. Throughout the performance both artists manipulate the film running through their respective projectors, slicing, scratching, dyeing, and burning it, allowing light to slowly seep through and create various effects.

“If you see the film strip as a material object, you can consider this as a sort of live sculpture,” said Léonard. “We start with a black film strip—there is no light, there is nothing. Then we use surgical tools to engrave the film, letting light through. It’s kind of a sculpture of light and time, if you want.”

The visual element of the performance is then only further enhanced by the sounds that are created within it: an eerie and sometimes menacing sonic landscape is produced by the indus-

trial sculpture and its rhythmic oscillations. The sounds are then run through loop stations, and again manipulated by the artists.

“We mic the whole structure with contact microphones,” explains Léonard. “We’re getting everything from this machine—sound and visuals. Everything is bound together; it’s very mechanical.”

Though much of the performance is aggressive and unnatural, there is a unifying current that runs through the project. The stark contrast between dark and light, and between the cold, industrial steel structure and the impressionable, delicate film play important roles in the execution of this performance.

Where many modern artists attempt to bridge the gap between humans and machines by way of new, over-complicated technology, Léonard and Oniszcenko are taking a different approach.

“We’re doing the same thing in essence, but we’re using really simplistic, old, squeaky technology that’s way out of date,” says Oniszcenko. “We’re using these old mechanical processes and making them humanistic.”

Regardless of the means, the two artists agree that Operating Theatre is very much about the connection and interdependence between



human and machine.

Likewise, the title of their project was no coincidence:

“It’s very much like an operation,” says Léonard. “We’re just opening up the film strip, much like

the body of someone, to reveal its light.”

Operating Theatre / Oct. 18 / Quartier Général (1251 Gifford St.)

Fight for Your Right to Poetry

Mile End Poets’ Festival to Occupy the Main

• ALEX MANLEY

In a world where Occupy protests are popping up in public spaces around the globe like revolutionary seedlings, a group of Montreal poets is out to occupy St. Laurent Blvd. this week—but their demands aren’t necessarily about international finance.

Starting Oct. 19, the Mile End Poets’ Festival, which is in its second year of existence, will feature a litany of literary types both local and imported; Montreal poets will coexist with out-of-town guests like performance poet Tanya Evanson, Alberta poet Ali Riley and famed graphic novelist Eric Drooker.

Ian Ferrier, one of the festival’s co-organizers, said of Drooker, who recently completed a graphic version of Allen Ginsberg’s famous

poem “Howl,” “[He’s] creating the image of these times.”

“His images have always been able to do that,” Ferrier continued. “The face of banks and huge corporations is often shiny towers removed from humanity. Drooker paints them as the steaming engine of Moloch, as if Babylon were now and the furnaces were being fed with human sweat.”

Drooker will be presenting highlights from some of his many works Oct. 21 at La Sala Rossa at an event presented by Artists Against Apartheid.

Ferrier credited “a longstanding relationship with Stefan Christoff, the musician/activist behind the Howl series and Artists Against Apartheid” with helping to get Drooker on board.

“Stefan and I both like to present

art with a connection to social justice, but so beautiful and compelling in its own right that you would see it for any reason.”

Collaborative partnerships were important for the five-day festival, as it teamed up with a number of other organizations like the Enpuku-ji Zen Centre and Intimate Sky—a music/poetry series featuring local jazz collective Kalmunity.

Along with those two, both of whom collaborated with the Mile End Poets on last year’s inaugural festival, this year featured Artists Against Apartheid and Janejane Productions for the first time.

It might seem like a convoluted mix at first glance, but Ferrier says that there’s a lot of commonality between them—the four groups “either inhabit or regularly present their work in the Mile End, [and

they] represent the artistic, spiritual, activist and exploratory nature of the neighbourhood.”

The local organizations weren’t the only Mile End addition; musician Xarah Dion of Les Momies de Palerme was in just the right place to get in on the festival’s action, after striking up a conversation with Ferrier at Casa del Popolo, where she works.

“We were just talking about what we’re up to,” said Ferrier, “and I mentioned the festival and she said they’d be interested. I got a copy of their record and was blown away. So I came back the same night to see if they’d play and she said yes.”

Concerning the egalitarian nature of the festival when it comes to artistic genre—the Mile End Poets mashes up music, visual art, spoken

word, improv, dance and whirling (yes, as in dervishes)—Ferrier didn’t mince words:

“We call it a poets’ festival because it is hosted by the poets of the Mile End. Our friends are poets, musicians, dancers and performers and this is what we like.

“The idea behind the festival is to bring together performances that demonstrate the beautiful, searching nature of the work being done here—work that you might not otherwise see because it happened in a little café for 18 people and was barely publicized.”

For a full list of performance times, locations and prices, head to litlive.ca/event/361 or search “Mile End Poets’ Festival” on Facebook.

Rough All Over

The Men Leave Home to Conquer



• COLIN HARRIS

With dirty distortion, spacey jamming and Stoooge-esque ferocity, The Men somehow manage to sound like punk's roots and its future at the same time.

They bang through rough, rocking numbers and intense verging-on-hardcore passages, bringing together elements of krautrock and shoegaze for a record that's as brilliant as it is varied.

Their latest LP *Leave Home* brought them on their first cross-country tour this past summer, and a whole new audience heard their Brooklyn-born sonic assault.

"Depending on how we're feeling we have what we call our 'bangers,' the punk, faster songs, or maybe we'll start with the dronier, quieter songs that gradually get louder and end in noise," said the band's lead guitarist, Nick Chiericozzi.

"It depends on the night if we play the heavy stuff or the psychedelic stuff. The response has been

good," he said. "People have been saying they've been liking the slower stuff, along with the heavy stuff that Chris [Hansell] usually sings on."

The trio added Rich Samis behind the kit after recording *Leave Home*, allowing for both Chiericozzi and Mark Perro to ignite their six-string power. On their forthcoming record, tentatively titled *Open Your Heart* and surfacing this spring, the band managed to discover yet another side of their sound.

"Now Mark and I can weave guitars a little more and double stuff," said Chiericozzi. "We want [this time] to be able to discern different stuff that you couldn't on the fuzziness on *Leave Home*, which was cool because it had its own personality, but we wanted to get things a little cleaner."

The drums on all their released material are played by Perro, Hansell and Chiericozzi, adding a simple, driving rhythmic wall for crunchy guitar and bass.

"When the three of us were

playing drums, we didn't really know what we were doing," laughed Chiericozzi. "Which is cool because I like simple drums, but Rich can do that and he can also do other stuff that we couldn't do. Not necessarily busier, but he's able to pull more off."

Pedal-steel and slide guitar find their way onto the new stuff, and they're continuing their punk rock allusions, too. *Leave Home* shares its title with an early Ramones album, and the next record will likely give a nod to their forefathers, Iggy and the Stooges.

"If you look at the track order for [seminal Stooges album] *Raw Power*, we're kind of thinking about mimicking that, where there's the idea to have the song order on one side kind of match with the other," he said.

Leave Home was recorded on tape, a first for the band. It was a perfect match for their building, brooding aggression, and *Open Your Heart* was done the same way, also engineered by Ben

Greenberg.

"It was something we'd always wanted to do, but we never found the engineer we wanted to work with," said Chiericozzi. "So we always went with the digital way. I think our sound just fits with the warmer tone of tape."

It's pretty evident when you experience the depth of *Leave Home*'s distorted haze and the crunch of its clipping drum tracks just how important studio environment is to this live production. Onstage, it transforms into a sweaty, powerful mass of punk fury with influence flying in from both sides of the Atlantic. With a full-time drummer, things will only get bigger.

"Mark and I always wanted to have the ability to have two guitars working together, to be able to build off each other," said Chiericozzi. "So it's really cool to be able to make that happen."

The Men / Oct. 20 / Cabaret Mile End (5240 Parc Ave.)

ART MINDS & ART MATTERS

Art Fest to Hold Annual Info Party, Launch New Website

• ALEX MCGILL

Entering its 11th year, Art Matters, Montreal's student-run multidisciplinary art festival, is back. Get ready.

Over the years, the festival has become an integral part of Concordia student life, an incredible forum for students to show their work and to experience the artistic forays of their peers.

As the largest student-run festival in North America, there is an opportunity to do big things, and this year's crop of organizers say they're ready to do everything they can to further the influence the festival has on both Concordia and Montreal's artistic communities.

"Art Matters 2012 is looking pretty exciting right now," said

Vivien Leung, outreach coordinator of this year's festival. "We have a super dynamic team of producers who are all really intent on pushing the festival framework further. We want to make more events and higher quality events."

The team has already planned several new additions to the festival, including an open house weekend and a Nuit Blanche event.

"I am super excited about the open house weekend, during which people will be able to visit multiple shows in a day following our itinerary and we'll hopefully also have some collaborations with local art organizations," said Leung.

"Open house weekend is going to be a risk because it's the first

time we're trying it, but it's a very interesting new addition to the festival."

"Caro Loutfi and Zoe Koke, the special events coordinator and exhibitions coordinator respectively, are planning an amazing Nuit Blanche event, but we can't say too much about it now."

This Thursday marks the festival's annual info party, a free event held at La Sala Rossa. The party will feature displays by Concordia artists, as well as performances by UN, Mozart's Sister, The Breezes and Gold Zebra, and the launch of the new Art Matters website.

"Patrik Stasieczek, the visual coordinator, has some really creative ideas for the website to make it more interactive and informative that I think everyone will want

to keep an eye out for," added Leung. The new website will focus on interactivity and serve as the main location for information and updates on the festival.

On top of the music and visuals to keep you entertained, Art Matters executives will be on hand to answer any and all questions.

The info party is key in Art Matters' goal of increasing communication and connectedness within the Concordia community, as well as with the larger Montreal scene. Art Matters is all about proving that art, well, matters—and that artistic exchange and interaction is central within that.

Art Matters Info Party / Oct. 20 / Sala Rossa (4848 St. Laurent Blvd.) / 8:00 pm



THELINKNEWSPAPER.CA

WEEKLY SPINS

Read our reviews of the latest from Asobi Seksu and Chris Taylor of Grizzly Bear's solo project CANT.



ROMANCE & SHAME

Check out our latest *Frame to Frame* to learn more about the Festival de Nouveau Cinéma.



SHONEN KNIFE

We chat with the all-girl Japanese bubble-gum punk band about their latest record *Osaka Ramones*.



FRINGE FOODIE

Learn about Mother Hubbard's, Concordia's community kitchen.

GAUNTLET HAIR

Watch the video interview with the purple PT Cruiser-crazed Denver music duo.

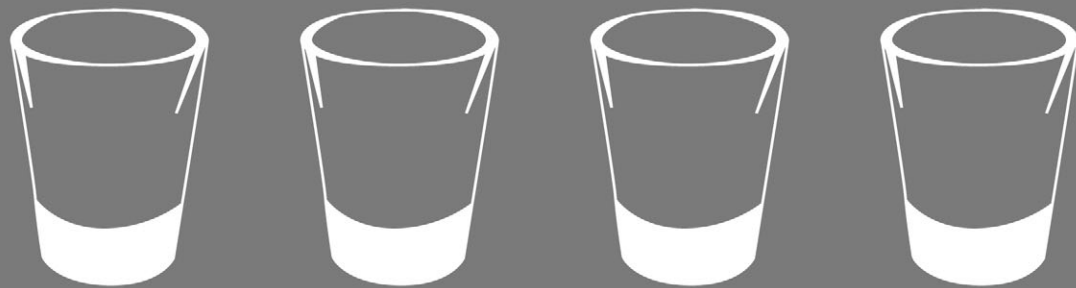


B-52 equal parts Amaretto, Bailey's Irish Cream, Kahlua **Coyote** Blue Curacao Malibu Rum, Midori, Pineapple Juice

Jelly Bean Grenadine, Sambuca, Tequila Lemon Drop Tequila, Vodka

DRINK WITH **THE LiNK**

NERD & MEET THE MASTHEAD EDITION



FRIDAY, OCT. 21

9:00 p.m. at The Bull Pub, 2170 Ste. Catherine St. W.

Black Rose Blavod vodka, Tequila Rose M&M Amaretto, coffee liqueur

Fatheaded Jackass Dekuyper Hot Damn 100 Proof Cinnamon Schnapps, Everclear, Jagermeister, Tabasco Sauce

THE LiNK

2011 BYELECTION

Byelection Oct. 21, 2011 4:00 p.m. H-649

The following candidates are running:

- Lifestyle Editor: David Murphy
- Current Affairs Editor: Adam Kovac
- News Editor: Julian Ward • Assistant News Editor: Jacob Roberts

The following contributors are eligible to come and vote:

Jeff Bush, Josh Davidson, Shoshana Eidelman, Melissa Fuller, Rebecca Hiscott, Adam Kovac, Claudine Lamothe, Amanda Laprade, Brian Lapuz, Caitlin Leroux, David Murphy, Dylan Maloney, Christopher Olson, Corey Pool, Jacob Roberts, Amanda Siino, Riley Sparks, Julian Ward, Jonathan Woods, Alex Woznica, Nicole Yeba,
& current *The Link* masthead.

Elections will take place in *The Link* office, Hall Building, room H-649.

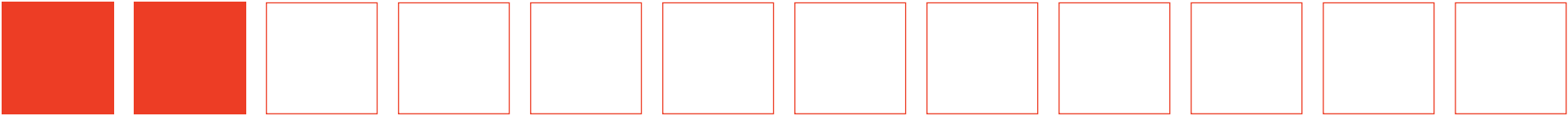
For more information, email: editor@thelinknewspaper.ca or call

514-848-2424 ext.7407



Nerd issue

pull-out
section



NERD 101

Starting this fall, Concordia students can get a minor in sustainability by taking specific courses from programs such as geography, biology, urban studies and political science.

So what if you wanted to get a minor in nerdiness? Here are our proposed courses:

programming basics

- COMP201 Introduction to Computing
- COMP218 Fundamentals of Programming
- COMP232 Math. for Computer Science
- COMP233 Prob. & Stats. for Computer Science

computer games

- COMP345 Advanced Program Design with C++
- COMP353 Databases
- COMP371 Computer Graphics
- COMP376 Introduction to Game Development
- COMP472 Artificial Intelligence
- COMP476 Advanced Game Development
- COMP477 Animation for Computer Games

fine arts classes

- FFAR 298H The Movie Soundtrack
- FFAR 298P Pop/Soul & Its Roots
- FFAR 298T Censoring Pop Culture in America
- FFAR 398B Hip Hop: Past, Present and Future
- FFAR 298A Horror and Fantasy Films
- FFAR 398T Introduction to Digital Imaging

computation arts

- CART498F Gaming Design Studio 1
- CART498H Gaming Design Studio 2

<<nerd resources>>

computation lab

EV 7.760 clab.concordia.ca
The C-Lab is an educational resource to help students with programming created by the Department of Design and Computation Arts and targeted towards the Fine Arts community. C-Lab gives several workshops each semester related to programming issues in the context of new media art.

tag

EV 11.425 tag.hexagram.ca
Short for Technoculture, Art and Games, TAG is an interdisciplinary collaboration platform for research/creation in game studies and design, digital culture and interactive art. In plain English: a sweet room with lots of sweet computers for serious geeks to get their serious geek on in.

otaku anime club

otaku.concordia.ca
Get involved and check out Otaku's screenings, a great way to discover what anime has to offer.

neo internet cafe

1839 Ste. Catherine St. W., Suite 110
If you're looking to burn a few hours instead of studying, head over to Neo Café and get your game on!

brutopia

1215 Crescent St.
Need to flex your brain muscles? Drop by Brutopia on Mondays at 9:00 p.m. for some fun nerd-style trivia. Lead your team to the top with your giant brain and claim the winner's prize: a free round of beers. Now that's brew-topia.

girl geeks

montrealgirlgeeks.com/about
The Girl Geek Dinner is the Montreal chapter of international organization geared towards making technology accessible and interesting to all age groups and all people, particularly women.

con u starcraft

facebook.com/groups/concordiasc
If you're looking for people to play StarCraft with or to share strategies, just check out the CSC and Zerg out.

1.000.000 comix

1418 Pierce St.
This is the place to find the latest releases of comic books. They're also the folks who organized the Montreal Comiccon!

sensor lab

EV 7.755 slab.concordia.ca
The S-Lab is an educational resource to help students with physical computation created by the Department of Design and Computation Arts and targeted towards the Fine Arts community.

amusements 2000

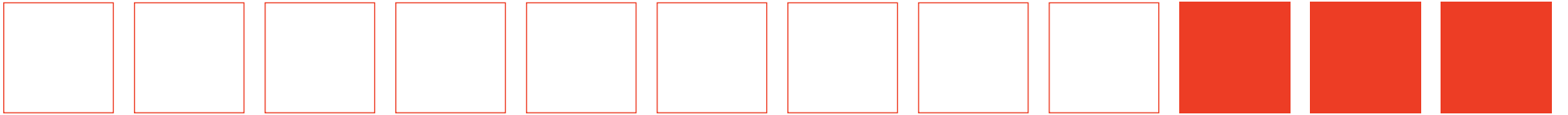
1381 Ste. Catherine St.W.
Are you drunk? Is it 1:00 a.m.? Do you like arcades? Go here. 'Nuff said.

street fighter

mtlsf.com
If you're into street fighting—the digital kind, that is—check these guys out!

foulab

foulab.org
The goal of Foulab is to provide its members an environment and resources that allow the exchange of knowledge, ideas and explore new technologies.



it's never been cooler to be **uncool**

Since the advent of hipster culture, every 20-year-old with a trust fund and a tank top let the world know that mainstream culture sucks. Add in a dash of Michael Cera and sprinkle of awesome Marvel movies and bam! Nerds suddenly, and somewhat awkwardly, found themselves at the top of the social totem pole—well, sort of.

The point is, today's nerds aren't exclusively basement-dwelling agoraphobics with big glasses and bad skin. They could be dedicated gamers making six-figure salaries doing what they love (page 4). Or they could be a cute girl, drawing web comics about Star Wars and Wonder Woman (page 8). They could even be

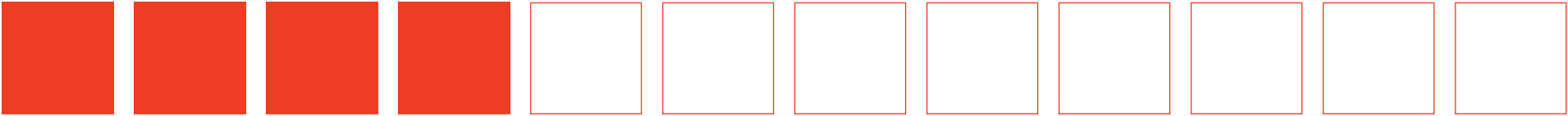
a sick DJ playing to a packed venue using nothing but a hacked GameBoy and a laptop (page 7).

So, the two nerdiest editors at The Link decided it was time to give some of those subcultures a shout-out. Whether you're one of us—or a total n00b—this issue is for anyone curious about nerd culture and technology in Montreal.

Enjoy, get your geek on and if something really pisses you off, don't be afraid to get on our website and start a flame war. For those outsiders who still look at us as if we're some strange new breed of animal, get used to our newfound popularity. It isn't going away anytime soon.

—Julia Wolfe
& Clément Liu

special issue coordinators



get in the game

E-SPORTS GAINING GROUND, COMPETING FOR CRED

• MICHAEL COHEN

Of those who actually know the term, few take e-sports seriously. E-sports—also known as competitive gaming (as in, videogames)—will never be as professional or accepted as mainstream athletic sports. But it has been growing steadily since the ‘90s.

Competitive gaming still revolves around a limited number of videogames. Street Fighter, StarCraft and CounterStrike: Source have all stood the test of time and are still played at a very high and competitive level.

These reasonably priced games are accessible to anyone and, unlike the new wave of dance and sports games that have gamers moving their bodies, give no advantage to those in better shape. In fact, it’s not uncommon for quadriplegics to be able to play at a highly competitive level.

Like other competitive sports, however, success depends on practice and commitment, and nowhere is this more evident than at the pro level.

Though on the surface, players sitting around pushing buttons might seem indistinguishable from a group of schoolkids rushing through levels of Mario, these

players are competing in an organized league over cash prizes or gaming goodies like expensive limited-edition controllers.

They’re looking at salaries, international tournaments and rigid training schedules of 10 to 12 hours a day. And some of the world’s best players are actually based in Quebec.

Andrew “Attero” Golec is a former Concordia student. He’s also captain and coach of Team Dynamic, one of the most successful StarCraft teams. Team ReIGN, another major StarCraft group, includes Quebecers Paul-David “Slush” Pagé and Jonathan “KiWiKaKi” Garneau.

Their hard work and practice has paid off: these pro players earn salaries that can pay them anything from part-time-summer-job money to enough to support themselves year round—and, for the best players, even more.

Their popularity or recognition isn’t region-based, though; in fact, they’re less famous here in Montreal than they are in South Korea, where e-sports, governed by the Korean e-Sports Association, are something of a national pastime—hundreds and thousands of people watch them play against other foreign players.

Some major veterans of Star-

Craft, like Koreans Lee Jae-Dong and Lee Young-Ho, are sponsored by companies like Korean Air.

They can earn upwards of \$100,000 a year and their matches are televised nationally.

Of course, it’s not just about the money or the fame. Challenging, varied gameplay and the excitement of figuring out how to defeat your opponent—what’s exciting about any old-fashioned sport—are the lifeblood of the e-sports world.

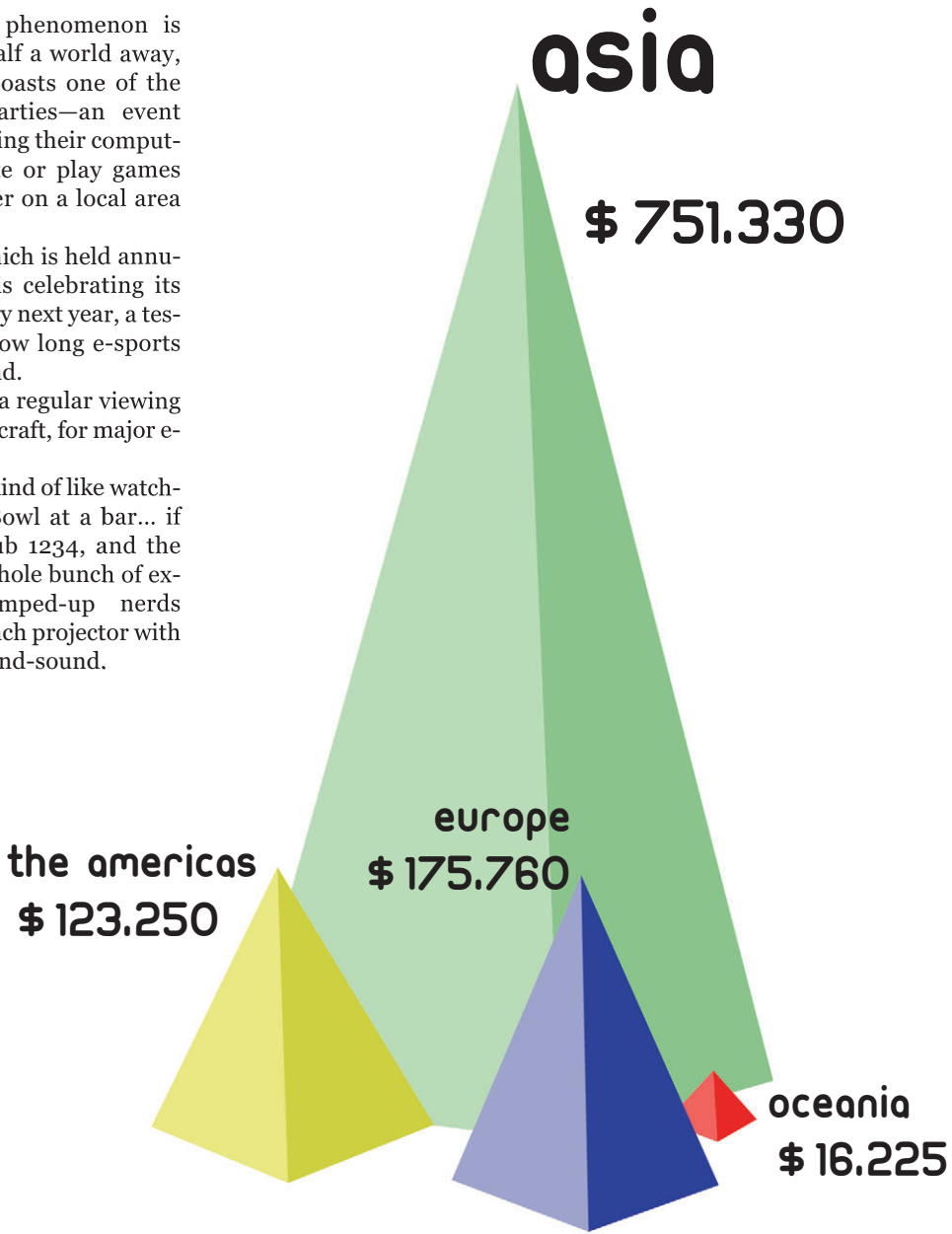
Though the phenomenon is most popular half a world away, Montreal still boasts one of the largest LAN parties—an event where people bring their computers and compete or play games with one another on a local area network.

LAN ETS, which is held annually in March, is celebrating its tenth anniversary next year, a testament to the how long e-sports have been around.

There’s even a regular viewing party, called Barcraft, for major e-sports events.

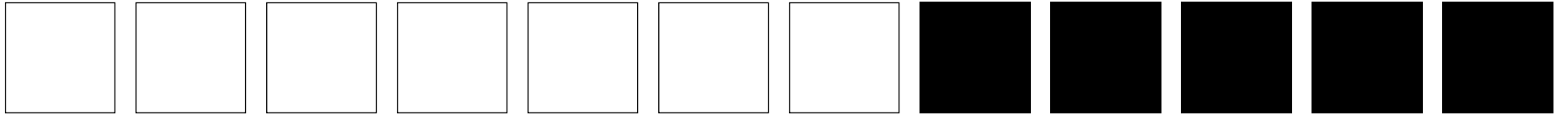
The event is kind of like watching the Super Bowl at a bar... if the bar was Club 1234, and the people were a whole bunch of excited and pumped-up nerds watching a 64-inch projector with powerful surround-sound.

the starcraft earnings of the top five players per region:



MORE INFO

concordia has its own **starcraft** club. members meet fridays at 5:45 p.m in the hall building room h-423.



sang-froid, written by author bryan perro, takes place in 19th century quebec and draws from quebec lore

developing on the down low

INDEPENDENT GAME COMPANIES GO FOR QUALITY ON A BUDGET

• ADAM KOVAC

Despite the presence of the word ‘Arts’ in the company’s name, Yan Pepin found his time at Electronic Arts creatively stifling. The hulking company, the clear financial leader amongst video game developers, was too risk-averse and was suffering from sequel fever.

Walking away from a secure paycheck, Pepin left EA to start Artifice Studio, a move he said freed him to pursue avenues that he could not at a gigantic company.

At Artifice, rather than develop another football game with a numerically larger title and a hidden hipster-themed mini-game, Pepin embraced the opportunity to explore territory that might not appeal to all gamers.

The company’s first game, Sang-Froid, is still a few months away from release, but it promises something different. With a story scribbled up by the pen of popular French-Canadian author Bryan Perro and unfolding in 19th century Quebec, the PC-based game is inspired by Canada’s long and rich history of werewolf legends.

“Our games reflect more what we are,” said Pepin. “We can make games for a more specific, niche audience. We don’t have to be as mainstream.”

“This couldn’t have been created in a big company; they don’t really bother with the small legends of a small place like Quebec. For a company like EA, it doesn’t appeal enough to a large audience.”

Artifice isn’t the only small game developer springing up around here, though.

Speaking to Concordia design professor Santo Romano, who has dabbled with creating his own games, you’d be hard-pressed not to hear the word “MineCraft” repeatedly.

Romano cites the 2009 game, which was created by a single Swedish programmer and became one of the most popular games of the new decade, as evidence that indie developers are able to compete with the giants of the gaming world.

“One of the things that’s really great about indie developers is the fact that they often produce games that are not within the same genre

as the AAA games,” he said, referring to the industry’s jargon for the highest-budget games. “They have more room to be creative.”

“[The big] developers are always going to have more money than God, so they’ll have larger teams and a better turnaround time, but that doesn’t mean indie developers won’t be able to produce games of quality.”

Of course, money is still a concern. Pepin said that even a game like Sang-Froid, which is being developed by a team of six who work from home, requires over \$100,000 to produce.

Funding for any business can be hard to come by; Artifice’s founders had to dip into their own savings to fund Sang-Froid’s development, and combine that with a statistic Pepin cited, which says that only one out of every 10 games turns a profit, and you’re looking at a pretty daunting challenge.

You’d think a company like Artifice would therefore spend a significant amount of time and money looking at the market and trying to figure out how to design and market their game to maximize their

chances for success—but you’d be dead wrong.

“When I was at EA, I saw the marketing department guys and I’m not sure of the usefulness of those departments for video games,” said Pepin. “They’re really useful to analyze the trends once they occurred, but they’re not so good at predicting the next trends.”

“I think the advantage we have is that we can be ahead of the times. We don’t analyze the trend to make the next game, because [if you do that] you’re always late. If we really work hard and create something new, there’s that one chance out of 10, then we created a new trend.”

Luckily, Artifice has a secret weapon. Perro is well enough known in Quebec that his connection with Sang-Froid is drawing attention; not all companies have the advantage of being associated with an author that has sold over a million books.

Romano said that one way to go around this visibility problem is to avoid competing with large developers on the graphics front. Instead, indie developers can shoot for something too small for EA and

its ilk to bother with, like a basic game app on smartphones or iPads.

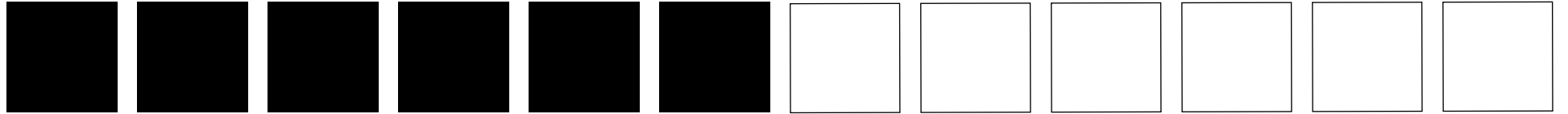
Until recently, indie developers had to rely on a business model that was heavily reliant on revenue from online advertising.

“People with a background in online flash games are making the switch to working in app development and mobile app development in particular. Which is great, because it gives many indie developers the opportunity to make money that’s not necessarily generated through advertisements.”

As for the future of small game companies, Pepin envisions a day when the big boys help them financially, but let them develop organically.

There will likely never be a time when Call of Duty: Anglo-Zanzibar War doesn’t rake in a billion dollars, but as hardcore gamers tire of the same old point and shoot, the big guns will realize the money to be had in the niche markets as well.

One day soon, we might have a utopian era of game collaboration between the mega-successful and the obscure.



collectors



There's probably some nerd in each of us. It's just that some have a little more than others. And some, the collectors, have so much that it fills their houses with Pokémon cards and Nintendo paraphernalia.

PHOTOS BAGHDIG BALYAN

hack to basics

MONTREAL'S HACKER COMMUNITY FIGHTS MISCONCEPTIONS

• NAHILA BENDALI

Hackers have historically gotten a pretty bad rap in pop culture. They're usually portrayed as greasy, lonely, creepy, shifty white guys who don't know any girls, consume only junk food, and have questionable moral character.

Freed from some fundamental misconceptions, however, the term has a more positive connotation among people who actually know anything about computers.

Hacker culture actually encourages sharing knowledge and learning about technologies by building, modifying and creating.

"Crackers are the ones who break things, when hackers are the ones who build," explains Concordia communications student Chistina Haralanova.

There is also an activist side to the hacker movement, which is called 'hacktivism'—a way to protest through computer networks.

"The term refers to the freedom to use, modify, copy and share any software and hardware, skills and

content," said Haralanova. "Although a lot of people think of hacktivism and free software movement as necessarily political, it does not have to be.

"It's not only about groups like Anonymous, but also people who enjoy inventing and creating. It is more about accessibility and freedom to use, modify and redistribute any software."

She gives the example of WordPress, a popular website management platform. The users who find it handy and useful for their own purposes might not necessarily realize that it's considered free software, but it is.

Hackers usually gather in 'hackerspace,' a term for any learning space where the member hackers can come together to discuss common interests like science, computers and software.

Montreal's own 'hackerspace,' Foulab, is a non-profit organization that provides a collaborative environment for exploring new technologies and sharing knowledge and ideas.

The group started when a few

interested hackers went to the Hackers on Planet Earth conference in New York City in 2008, and thought Montreal was missing out.

Three years later, Foulab is based in a warehouse apartment with a red flashing neon arrow sign. The apartment is large and open and complied with an organized mess of computers—but the hackers don't mind. The St. Henri headquarters are abuzz with people, especially on Tuesdays, the lab's open house day.

People come and go, exchanging ideas, developing projects and discussing upcoming workshops. Members are open to explain how the different tools work, and inform interested newcomers as to what Foulab is all about.

The organization offers workshops on varied topics, from building electronic circuits and making computers react to light and movement, to more unconventionally nerdy subjects like the basics of brewing, how to use dry ice or how to make mustard.

Sean, a founding member of Foulab who requested his last

name not to be published, said the workshops have a hands-on approach. People from all walks of life come to their office. "There are people from high school as well as people outside of the educational system," said Sean.

"The age varies greatly, from 17 to 60 years. As for gender, the ratio is similar to the engineering programs."

Foulab even hosts 'hackfem' nights, every Wednesday from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., a refreshing change from the usual male-dominated atmosphere.

"Here, no one is afraid to learn. Everyone helps everyone, and that's the spirit of the hackerspace," said Sean.

The space is full of eclectic possessions. It has a library with books on programming—from software to radio, among others—and a 'museum' houses a collection of old technological artifacts that people donated to the group. Random electronic parts are packed on shelves, used for projects and workshops.

One project that Foulab mem-

bers are particularly proud of is an old NASA machine that was rebuilt as a Twitter teletype machine. The 'tweletype,' a machine about four feet tall, prints out a long, continuous stream of paper with Twitter messages on it and decorates the walls of the office.

Why so much emphasis on sharing the knowledge and access to the technology? MaxD, another founder of Foulab who requested his last name not to be published, said very few people know how their computers truly work.

By working with technology, learning the basics of programming and not being afraid of going beyond theory, anyone can learn how to fix their gadgets or understand the basics of software and programming.

This knowledge and these skills can help people become empowered and independent with the help of a community. Everyone is there to learn, and anyone is welcome—anyone can be a hacker; even you.

—with files from

Julia Jones & David Murphy

foulab is located at suite 33b. 999 du collage ave. for more info. go to foulaborg.



power of the handheld

BATTLE LAVA'S NINTENDO INSPIRATION

• COLIN HARRIS

The name Battle Lava brings some pretty pixelated imagery to mind. It sounds like it could be an early '90s Nintendo game that pits a young male protagonist against a world of traps, henchmen, and evil bosses, all suspended over vast seas of molten, bright orange magma.

As it happens, that's exactly what Alexander Westcott was shooting for. The Concordia student has been creating and performing music under that moniker, exploring a genre much older than pop culture would lead you to believe.

He's been writing chip music for the last couple years, digging deeper into an 8-bit universe with each digital EP he releases. The resulting work finds much more value in the sounds than just nostalgia for video games gone by.

"I don't really blame people for seeing it as a novelty," said Westcott, "but that is something that I'm trying to destroy."

The Montreal musician started out playing bass at 13, then moving to drums and guitar. Three years ago he began exploring electronic sounds, and upon finding the genre perfect for his creative voice, Battle Lava was born.

"I came across chip music just randomly, to be honest," said Westcott. "I always appreciated the audio element of video games and media just in general, but I never thought of it really until I came

across other people doing it.

"Within seconds of finding out that people do this I knew I had to do it."

In discovering production software tailor-made for use on game consoles, the potential for creating a whole new realm of sounds presented itself to the young musician. With this idea firmly in hand, Westcott has been exploring the grainy electronics of chip music ever since, with '80s Nintendo technology providing the base sounds.

The Battle Lava weapon of choice is the DMG-01, the first Game Boy to land in the hands of kids in 1989. It may seem primitive now with its four-shades-of-green screen and two-dimensional graphics, but it's an inspiring tool for the Computation Arts student.

Along with the Montreal scene, the online chip music community offers a window into a subculture that has much more to offer than its nostalgic surface value.

It was through the forums that Westcott met the members of Toy Company, a group of friends that put on Montreal chiptune shows. He stresses how forum culture is far from unique to those who find inspiration from old handsets.

"I don't want to say that chip music is a product of the Internet, because people were doing this before they had Internet at home," said Westcott. "The only way that I could argue that is the same way that any [music scene] is. That's how our

generation is, we live in a virtual space.

"I don't want to make that unique to chip music because I feel that can be a misconception. I think misconceptions are a big thing when it comes to chip music."

As the craft grows and expands, so will the scope of chip sounds. For Battle Lava, the goal is to create dance music that is not necessarily defined by its genetic ties to plumbers and falling bricks.

"Your understanding of the medium before using it is video games, so the stuff you do in the medium is really related to your prior experiences with it," said Westcott. "The more experience you have with it, the less important those prior ones become," however.

On his latest EP, Screen Hallucinations, Westcott has really begun exploring the experimental potential of this process, stretching and distorting tones all the more engaging. Constantly writing new material, he's sure to keep treading this less travelled side of chip music.

"I just want to use [a Game Boy] as an old computer. I like to use it for reasons of appropriation, using the technology in a lateral way, the way you're not supposed to do it," he said.

"This artistic appropriation is kind of like a punk aesthetic way to look at the medium. Screen Hallucinations is my first attempt to not sound like video game music, to try and do something really impressive with the technology."



Battle Lava, aka Alexander Westcott, is a Concordia computation arts student who writes music with Game Boys. PHOTO MARJORIE BECKER

battle lava / oct 22 / cfc (6388 st hubert st) / 8:30 pm

WHAT IS CHIPTUNE, ANYWAY?

• COREY POOL

Chiptune—also called chip music or 8-bit—is one of the liveliest, most progressive, diversified, and wildly convoluted musical genres that you've probably never heard of.

Now let's shuffle through lost Game Boy cartridges, huff and puff into our original Nintendo Entertainment System, and dust off the old Commodore 64 in an attempt to dig up the genre's origins, and iron out the creases of this fairly original, oddly nostalgic, and awesomely low-tech brand of music.

Born in the '80s, chiptune really

grew from the advent of home computer systems and entertainment consoles like the Atari, the Commodore 64, and the NES, as well as their newly programmable audio hardware.

Simply put, chiptune is the sounds or music made from programming microchip-based hardware. Eventually chiptune became its own genre, which encompasses a multitude of sub-genres and sonic mutations using those original, elemental sounds.

In its early stages, most people who gave a damn about it were programmers making music for video games. But as the technology became out-

dated, and the systems more advanced, chiptunes, and sampling these chips into electronic music, became cheap and easily accessible—and super-cool.

Thanks to the ease of using such hardware, people were able to create and emulate sounds found in heavy metal, rock 'n' roll, techno and jazz—among others.

Despite its beginnings as a genre born out of necessity, today chiptune is a retrospective look—a process of unearthing childhood consoles, and memories, striving for that authentic sound.



katie can draw

• AMANDA SIINO

Katie Cook likes cats. And robots. And monsters. And Star Wars. And Wonder Woman. And drawing. She really likes drawing—but what she loves is combining the things that she likes.

Cook is a Michigan-based web cartoonist, but more importantly, she is a nerd, born and bred.

“My mom loved B-movies and *Star Trek* and my brother was a Trekkie. I grew up knowing every line from every episode of the original *Star Trek*,” she said. “Then I switched over to *Star Wars* [and] I don’t think my family will ever forgive me.”

But it wasn’t just nerd culture that’s has been part of her for as long as she can remember. “I’ve wanted to be a cartoonist since I was in kindergarten,” she explained. Cook was one step closer to her goal after she graduated from the College of Creative studies with a BFA in illustration in 2004. She’s been working in the field for about 10 years now.

“Being a cartoonist amongst a lot of fine artists [in college] means you’re kind of the lowest person on the totem pole,” she said. “After college, I worked at a design studio for a few years. I designed paper products, toys, packaging—a little bit of anything and everything,” she said.

Meanwhile, she did freelance work and eventually devoted herself entirely to it. She now works for herself full-time and set up her website under her label, Katiecandraw.

“Pretty much all my life, I was the kid always drawing. [I was introduced like this:] ‘Have you met Katie? Katie can draw,’” she said.

Cook also is a regular guest at comic book conventions—something she said can get a little silly.

“I was at a convention a few years ago and I sat across from someone who was a total idol of mine. I spent the whole time awkwardly staring at him, waiting for his line to dissipate so I could go over there. When I finally did, everything came out bumbling, too fast and idiotic [and I] ran back to my table,” she said. A second attempt at speaking to him, to apologize for her prior awkwardness, also proved embarrassing. “I have so many [awkward moments at Comiccon] I could write a book,” she said. “Really. I probably will write a book about them.”

Regardless, Cook does over 10 shows a year and tries to visit a new one each year.

Besides the travel, she said, “I’m such a homebody, I like my own bed.” Travelling from her home in Michigan is also difficult since she has a nine-month-old daughter.

Cook said she’s looking forward to sharing some of her favourite comics—like Jeff Smith’s *Bone* and Bill Watterson’s *Calvin and Hobbes*—with her daughter. While her projects have always seemed child-oriented, it is her comic *Gronk* that gets all age groups laughing.

“*Gronk* came from a project back in college. We were supposed to do a self-portrait [but] instead, I designed what I would look like if I were a monster,” she said.

Cook really lets her nerd flag fly in this strip, but she has also done decidedly un-nerdy licensed work for many companies, like DC, Marvel, *Star Wars*, HEROES and *The Lord of the Rings*. She also considers it a great personal achievement to have worked for the Jim Henson Company—creators of the Muppets, *Fraggles*, *Labyrinth*, *The Dark Crystal*, etc.—who had a big influence in her life.

“They are the most influential characters and stories of my childhood. To be able to work for that brand was a check on my bucket list,” she said.

Her ultimate goal is to do official work on Wonder Woman, one of her favourite characters. But for now, she’s happy drawing anything. Even her cats.

A COMIC BOOK STORE-Y



PHOTO ERIN SPARKS

• AMANDA SIINO

Spider-Man, Superman, Batman, the X-Men and Thor have all been big hits on the silver screen in the last few years, but before they were mingling with each other on the DVD racks, you could find them all spending time together on the shelves of comic book stores.

Comic book adaptations for film and TV are bringing more and more curious first-timers into the stores, according to Rob Steal of 1,000,000 Comix, nestled right next to Concordia’s downtown campus a block west of Guy St.

This presents comic book stores with a bit of a conundrum, since it’s the loyal weekly buyers—seldom approve of these adaptations—who are the heart and soul of the comic book store operation.

Wednesdays are new release days in the comic book universe, and “85 per cent of [our clients] comes [then],” Steal said.

Though the store is tucked away on quiet Pierce St., it still draws a steady flow of customers young and old, wearing suits or scrubs or scruffy student duds, and most customers depart with a

“Catch you next week!” to Steal.

For many customers, after perusing this week’s wares, it’s not uncommon for them to stick around for friendly conversations about anything from next week’s issues to the latest issues in their own lives.

True to the stereotype, women are still a rarer sight in comic book stores, but Rachel Burke, a Vancouver native and McGill student, is a new weekly buyer at Millennium Comics, a store based in the upper Plateau.

“About less than a quarter of the buyers I have seen are women,” she said.

Before going into the store over a month ago, she would mostly buy or trade books on Amazon, but Burke started going every Wednesday to buy issues from DC Comics’ *The New 52*, a re-launch of all the existing DC titles with 52 new first issues.

“One week I went on Thursday, and some of the 52 I wanted, like Wonder Woman, were already sold out,” she said.

That level of popularity for *The New 52* titles seems to be the trend for other stores as well; at 1,000,000 Comix, Steal said,

“Every single one is sold out.”

That kind of dedication to new issues like these from weekly buyers can certainly be daunting for newcomers. “I was intimidated at first because [comic book stores] are usually pretty snobby—but they were actually friendlier than I expected,” said Burke.

“They’re very nice, but they always speak in French with everyone, so it’s difficult for me to nerd out with them, which is often the best part,” she admitted. “But when they are less busy, they always make an effort to speak with me in English.”

Steal agrees that this seemingly closed community wouldn’t turn away new faces.

“Comic book writers know that every comic is someone’s first—so it won’t be a big deal if you start in the middle of a series,” he said.

The devoted group—Steal, for instance, claims to have read everything in the store—doesn’t always embrace nerd status, however.

“I’m not a nerd,” said Steal.

“Nerds are supposed to be smart—we’re more like dorks,” added customer Marc.

Alcoholia! Where the Bourbon Neat,
does sure taste sweet,
An' the Vodkatinis go
straight to your braaaaaaaain...



inside the twisted mind of a webcomic artist

• JACOB ROBERTS

The world of online comic strips—or webcomics—has pretty much existed since the Internet was commercialized in 1995.

James L. Grant has been lurking in the shadows the entire time.

“It was... 1997? I had my first tech support job at Hewlett-Packard, and I noticed that a few cartoonists were just putting their work out for free on the intertubes,” wrote Grant from his home in Dallas, Texas.

“Part of my brain recoiled at the idea of putting out comics for free, but another part of me noted that hell, 90 per cent of my comics had never sold to magazines, so it wouldn’t hurt to put them online, would it? So I did, about the same time as Penny Arcade started.”

Penny Arcade is one of the longest-run and most successful webcomics. Although Grant hasn’t attained the same notoriety as its creators, Jerry Holkins and Mike Krahulik, his FLEM comics—“more fun than a sack of dead kittens,” according to its motto, has been around since the beginning.

Grant started FLEM in high school—before the Internet even existed. The comic, which is told in a mixed format of series, stand-alone strips and single panel

comics, is sometimes autobiographical, but just as often simply a vehicle to get out something funny he thought of.

“FLEM is just, as the misspelled name implies, what my brain hocks and spits out on people,” wrote Grant. “There are over 1,200 comics in the archives, spanning almost 13 years of webcomicry, and they run a severe gamut, from the whimsical to the totally disturbed. FLEM is my personal, homemade therapy.”

While FLEM has maintained a more indie presence in the webcomic world, Grant’s other webcomic, Two Lumps—which is written by his wife Mel Hynes—has gained a more mainstream audience.

Featuring Hynes’ two Russian Blue cats as the main characters, the humour of Two Lumps is toned down from FLEM’s craziness, but not by much. Even though Grant doesn’t write for Two Lumps, Hynes’ sense of humour is so similar to his that the styles easily overlap—for the most part.

“She just refuses to write strips about dancing aborted fetuses and lesbian slut ninjas,” wrote Grant.

“When Mel and I started doing Two Lumps, we realized we had a chance to keep it family-friendly, keep it funny, but still push some

boundaries. I maintain to this day that if you do comics for more than a year and never get any hate mail, you’re doing something wrong. Especially with the Internet crowd.”

In the early days, Grant drew his work with pen and ink. But in 1997, when he decided to move online, scanners were a fairly new technology for home use and cost a fortune.

“Kids today won’t believe that, since you can now get a 1600 dpi USB scanner in a box of Captain Crunch, but back in the mid-1990s, scanners were way too rich for my blood. So I started learning how to draw with a mouse. *A ball mouse*, if you can believe it,” wrote Grant.

“I kept cracking, optical mice came around, and by the year 2000 I was a passably good artist with a mouse.”

As of late, Grant has gone back to drawing with pen and paper, but still uses computers extensively for his work. The creative process for Two Lumps and FLEM is fairly similar, Grant explained:

“For Two Lumps, Mel sends me a script to draw. For FLEM, I come up with an idea that’s just too awful not to share. Either way, the first step of creation is: booze. Beer at first, switching to vodka or rum as common sense dissolves. Then I draw the strip, scan it, letter it, and

take my pants off.”

Though his comics aren’t primarily political, Grant, who grew up in California with three siblings and a single mother with a heart condition, still has a very political consciousness. His family lived in a level of poverty so extreme, Grant wrote, “that most Americans don’t actually believe is still happening in our country.”

“We had to make food stretch like crazy. Most people I know today have no idea how to make soup twice out of a single leftover roast chicken, once it’s been served for dinner. The first is to boil off what little meat is left. The second is to boil out the marrow, and get the microscopic amount of flesh that still exists.

“Chuck some dandelion greens and wild onions in that broth, and serve it up to four hungry kids. Maybe mix in an egg, if you have it. Ignore their complaints.”

Grant described his frustration with the welfare system in the United States.

“We live in a country that is overflowing with wealth, but I’ve never forgotten my destitute upbringing. We can do better, as a nation, than to just say ‘screw the poor,’ but nobody particularly gives a damn. They don’t have to, since the poor don’t have any

power to make their voice heard.

“It doesn’t help that those of us who climbed out of poverty, all too often, don’t want to talk about it. It’s painful. But until enough of us do, the system will go on being broken, and the poor will continue to get screwed to the dirt.”

Grant moved from California to Dallas in his early twenties. He would later write a semi-autobiographical strip within FLEM that chronicled the drug-induced, gonzo-esque adventure, known as the Jay Series.

Over the course of its 500-strip run, the Jay series garnered a cult following that persists today. Grant made it very clear during the interview, however, that Jay is gone for good—the title character was left to rot in prison after being arrested for molesting a loaf of bread in public—and Grant has no intention of bringing him back.

The new Grant lives in Dallas with his wife and daughter from a previous marriage. He continues to create FLEM and draw for Two Lumps, which has a table at ComicCon International, and is often recognized on the street.

As for hobbies? “[I] sometimes cruise the dark in my black costume and mask, stopping evildoers—and showing them how to do evil better.”



the third dimension

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON

Like some gothic horror story, 3D makes a bold return to prominence every few decades, feeding on theatre-goers' dollars before entering a period of slumber, to return again and feed when the planets have properly aligned in their pre-ordained cycles.

Or whenever Hollywood gets a burst of confidence as a result of new technological developments. You know, whichever comes first.

So it is with great skepticism that audiences assess the recent resurgence of stereoscopic 3D films, mostly spearheaded by blockbusters like 2009's *Avatar* and especially by its writer and director, James Cameron.

"The debate isn't whether 3D is here to stay," says Munro Ferguson, an animation director who has produced 3D films for the National Film Board of Canada.

"There will always be 3D films," continues Ferguson. "The question is whether 3D will completely overwhelm 2D the way colour films eventually overwhelmed black and white films."

People forget, says Ferguson, that black and white films once dominated the cinema, and didn't suffer a sudden death with the advent of colour film.

Stereoscopic films represent a new cinematic language, says Ferguson, and both audiences and filmmakers are still learning how to

use it.

"I think as audiences see more 3D films they're [...] starting to recognize the difference between good 3D and bad 3D and moving beyond the phase of looking at it as a gimmick and starting to expect more of it in terms of storytelling."

Part of the reason 3D has failed to snowball in the past, says Alison Loader, a part-time faculty member of Concordia's Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema, is the relative quality of the stories it told.

"Because it's so technically difficult to do, you need to attract a very large audience to pay for it, and so the films that have come out have never been particular good," she says.

What you typically ended up getting in the 1950s and 80s, during 3D's previous crop of major releases, were monster movies and lackluster franchise films like *Jaws 3D*.

"One of the things that people like to do when they go to the movies is to forget where they are, and it's hard to forget where you are if you've got a stupid pair of glasses on and you're getting a headache or if the story is so silly that it's a distraction," says Loader.

Scientifically, 3D vision occurs when the brain fuses the two different views from the left and right eye. While advances in stereoscopic technology have made inroads in reducing the visual anomalies that made earlier audiences queasy, no

amount of money invested in equipping theaters with the latest technology will overcome audiences who bring their own anomalies into the theatre in the form of undiagnosed vision problems.

"In a sense [3D] becomes a very good clinical screener," says Jocelyn Faubert, director of the visual perception and psychophysics laboratory of the Université de Montréal, which uses stereoscopic technology to train athletes, among other things.

"Some people don't know they have all of these little [visual anomalies]," he says, because they might have been considered too minor to send up any red flags. "And those people [become] uncomfortable because they're straining to put two images together, and that's something their brain doesn't do well."

Compounding the problem, says Faubert, is that cinematographers routinely stretch the limits of what the human eye can handle, like accommodating swift changes in depth of field, something the eye has no trouble perceiving in traditional cinema, which uses more subtler visual cues to suggest depth of field.

"But if people have difficulty adjusting to 3D now, just imagine how things were just 60 years ago," says Loader.

Analogue equipment was more likely to produce misaligned left and right eye views, and small vibrations in the imagery led to eye-

strain and headaches. Yet the challenges to 3D previous to digital production and projection were both technical and perceptual.

"If you were to show an audience from 1950 the kind of cutting you see in 2D films now, they would probably get upset and their eyes would hurt and it would annoy them," she said. "It's really hard to say it's that [filmmakers] have to learn how to make 3D movies. Well, maybe we also have to learn how to watch them."

But if the movie is any good, says Loader, people won't notice the 3D.

"Hopefully the movie is so immersive that it stops mattering. They've gotten caught up in the story or the characters, so they're not really thinking about it. That's the other problem with 3D: if you watch it for too long, you stop thinking about it. You just sort of accept it as natural vision."

Whatever challenges it continues to face, the medium is finally reaching critical mass, says Ferguson, with a large number of theatres already supporting the medium, and independent filmmakers like Wim Wenders and Werner Herzog exploring the artistic applications of the technology in documentary films.

"It's conceivable that there will be a future time when people will look at 2D cinema the same way we look at black and white, as quaint and anachronistic," he says.



king of the blogosphere

MONTREALER FRANÇOIS HOANG BECOMES DIGITAL ART ROYALTY

• JULIA WOLFE

Every morning at 7:00 a.m., François Hoang wakes up, checks his email, gets dressed and—without coffee—sits down at his home office. Then he makes sure that his blog is still running smoothly. With between 100,000 and 200,000 views a week, it's a pretty important thing to do.

About three months ago, Hoang got a call from digital art legend Fabio Sasso asking him to take over Sasso's site, Abduzeedo.com. Hoang had been a regular contributor for the design and art blog, and was a friend of the editor's. But Sasso was moving on to Google, and wanted to make sure it passed into capable hands.

"When this opportunity came up, I couldn't say no," Hoang said. "In my mind, if Fabio [Sasso] calls you up and asks you to be the edi-

tor of Abduzeedo, you can't say no. Would you say no?"

The blog has writers from Brazil to Germany and features tutorials, inspirations, and free fonts. Conceived in 2006, Abduzeedo is widely considered to be the first of its kind, although Hoang says the site only really took off in 2008. Now, they're getting up to 10 million hits a month, and dozens of emails per day.

The site inevitably crashes 5-6 times a month, Hoang said. But considering how heavy the traffic is, that's actually impressively rare.

Still, most people outside the digital art community have never heard of the blog. Hoang's dad, a painter, is among them. "He's like, 'What's a blog?'" Hoang said. "I just tell him to compare Abduzeedo's [importance] to Tiësto in the trance world."

Hoang isn't the only Canadian digital artist getting noticed these

days. James White, another Abduzeedo contributor, is a Vancouver local whose studio Signal Noise is also generating a lot of buzz.

In 2006, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization named Montreal an International City of Design along with only two other cities, Berlin and Buenos Aires.

"[Canadians] have this huge art community," Huang said. "If you look at our magazines and newspapers, you know that our designers are super talented," he said.

But this rush into the online spotlight is something pretty new—and kind of overwhelming—for Hoang. Growing up, he never really considered pursuing art. "I wanted to be a SWAT guy," he said.

"Then my uncle asked for a business card, and I downloaded the 30 day trial of Adobe, taught myself Photoshop and Illustrator

and thought, 'Wow.'"

After that, he realized that he wanted to be a graphic designer. He went to Concordia's continuing education program and worked towards a degree in design, just to see if he had what it took. Turns out he did.

"I had this teacher there, and after class I showed him my portfolio," Hoang said.

"He said to me 'What the fuck are you doing here? I don't see the point of you being here.'" The professor told him that school was a waste of his time, and someone as talented as he was could go straight into the industry. He finished the session with a 92 average.

After a few years in the industry, he eventually started his own freelance firm, Aoiro Studios. Through the firm, he offers everything from illustrations to web design to photography.

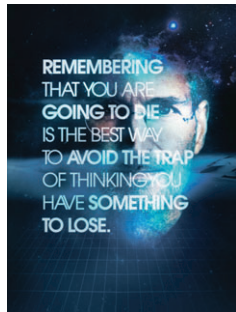
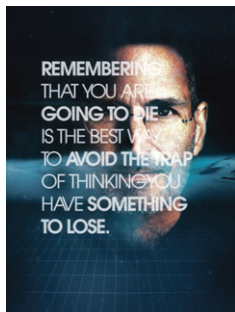
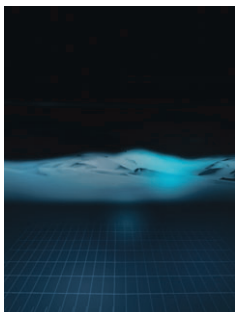
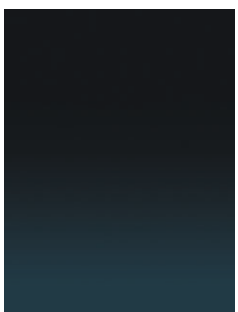
"Whenever I find a client, I say yes to everything," he said. "Even if I can't do it, I find a way to do it."

Starting the studio was a big struggle, he said, but through word of mouth he managed to build it up into something that could support him. When he finds time, he said he'd add a section on tips for new designers and freelancers.

He runs the studio on top of Abduzeedo, a schedule that doesn't leave him with a lot of free time. He still loves it and says he could never be sick of design, but it's a short-term juggle. Hoang hopes to pass on the reins of the blog, which he refers to as his "second girlfriend," within five years.

With or without him, though, he's not worried about the future of Abduzeedo. He thinks interest in the blog, and other blogs like it, is only going to grow. "[Digital art] is on the verge of taking over," he said. "It's a lifestyle."

THE VISIONARY PROCESS BY FRANÇOIS HOANG



THE LiNK
a special issue

Concordia Baseball Settles For Second Stingers Stand By and Watch Their Title Be Taken



PHOTOS DYLAN MALONEY

• TYLER FINIGAN

After eight straight hours of baseball, the Concordia Stingers gave up their conference crown in a 4-0 loss to the Carleton Ravens on Sunday.

ConU played a triple-header in which a constant flow of errors proved costly, causing them a loss in the opening and tie-breaking game of the series.

“When we want to play, we will win.”

— Howard Schwartz

The battle for first seemed evenly matched during the better part of the first game, with both teams posting a run in the first and third inning.

It wasn't until the fifth that the Stingers broke free with a one run lead, but the lead died quickly as the Ravens posted two runs early in the sixth.

With one inning left, ConU failed to answer back.

This was a game where the Stingers struggled defensively. A fair amount of botched plays and dropped relays would allow too many base runners for them to handle.

This eventually caused starting pitcher Kechayen Alex to falter and let up too many runs, losing 4-3. Alex declined to comment on his performance.

After losing the first game of last week's series against McGill, the Stingers found themselves in a similar position. Despite the abundance of glaring mistakes and lack of hitting, head coach Howard Schwartz stayed confident.

“At least we have the experience of knowing that we have to tank a game before we start playing and we certainly tanked,” said Schwartz, “When we want to play, we will win.”

The Stingers brushed off their opening loss and proceeded to win their second with the aid of a three-run homer slugged by shortstop Marco

Masciotra and relief pitcher Brandon Bercovits keeping them alive in the series.

“Feels great, I couldn't ask for anything else, we're back to Game 3 again, just like last weekend, and I'm sure we can pull it off again,” Bercovits said.

The win was well-deserved. ConU's hitting became an evident factor, along with a sufficient defense game powered by an acrobatic outfield the Ravens were kept behind. The Stingers took their second game 6-4.

One game was left to play. Both teams, exhausted from their two previous games, took the field, but with ConU coming off a win, confidence was in the air.

“I have great confidence in the team that they will do their best, I think they'll dig deep and I think they'll find what it takes to get through this third game,” said ConU's Athletic Director Katie Sheahan. “It means a lot to them to go into

the championship on top of the conference pile and I think that's what they're going to do, it'll be well earned.”

The Stingers' confidence level tumbled in the third game, however. This was seen early on, as they were shut down by the Ravens in the first inning, who pocketed two runs with ease. These two runs would be all the Ravens needed to take the Conference final.

Carleton head coach Rick Young couldn't be more proud of his team's effort.

“Feels pretty good; we have a really good team. To get two on [Concordia] today was nice to have. [We had] a lot of doubts but in the end, with lots of effort and practice, the final result paid off,” said Young.

While the Stingers didn't get the results they were looking for, they'll have a chance to redeem themselves at the nationals this weekend in Moncton. Their first game is on Friday.

SCAVENGERS IN THE CITY

Montreal Search Has High Possibility of Fun

• TYLER FINIGAN

Montreal Impossible isn't your average scavenger hunt.

Teams of 12 will have three days, starting on Nov. 6, to conquer the streets of Montreal by performing different tasks such as uploading cinematic reenactments to YouTube or building a functional bicycle out of hanger wires and two-by-four wooden planks.

Francois Vincent, the event's organizer, encourages people to sign up for the unusual experience.

“I had initially only intended to have groups sign up because the focus of the hunt items are generally things that individual people could not do on their own,” said Vincent.

“I want a group to feel like they were brought together by knocking off the items on the list and to have them do things that they can look at each other a few years later and go, ‘Hey, remember when we did that thing for Impossible Montreal?’”

Each team must consist of at least two people, a captain and a wizard. The captain is the chosen leader of the group that communicates with the judging committee during the hunt. The wizard is in charge of uploading any tasks to the Internet.

Organizers suggest that a third person, a pilot, be assigned to navigate the streets and have access to a vehicle.

A variety of prizes includes: A round of drinks at Brutopia for the top two teams, tickets to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, and a board game from local company MJ Games.

The hunt is open to anyone above the age of 18. People can sign up as a team or individually—individuals will be added to another team on the day of the hunt.

Vincent says the \$10 will be well worth the fun.

“I want it to be so much fun that they drag their friends to try it again at next year's edition. Besides, who doesn't like being a hero on a quest?” said Vincent.

Sign-up sheets can be downloaded online from impossiblemontreal.com. The sign up deadline is Oct. 29.



MEN'S SOCCER

Concordia's men's soccer team lost Sunday's home matchup 4-0 to the Université de Montréal Carabins. Head coach Lloyd Barker said the performance was poor and the team played with a "lack of heart." The Stingers head to the Claude Robillard Sports Complex this Friday where they'll take on the Université de Québec à Montréal Citadins. Kickoff is at 8:30 p.m.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Université de Montréal was too much for Concordia's women's soccer team Sunday, losing 4-1 on home field. The Stingers play again Oct. 21 against UQAM Citadins, and again on Oct. 23, when Bishop's University comes to town. Kickoffs are at 6:30 p.m. and 1:00 p.m., respectively.

FOOTBALL

The Stingers' hopes of a second-place finish were crushed Saturday as too many turnovers caused the Sherbrooke Vert et Or to cruise to a 31-11 victory. ConU will try to clinch third place when Danny Maciocia's Université de Montréal Carabins visit. Kickoff is at 1:00 p.m. at Loyola.

WOMEN'S RUGBY

Concordia's women's rugby team delivered a 56-19 clobbering to the Sherbrooke Vert et Or while on the road. They'll be opening their playoffs when the McGill Martlets come to visit. The dates and times have yet to be announced.

MEN'S RUGBY

The Sherbrooke Vert et Or edged out Concordia's men's rugby team on Friday, losing 12-11. The Stingers close out their season this Sunday against the McGill Redmen. Kickoff is at 3:00 p.m. at Loyola.

Show Some Spirit for the Home Team

Concordia's Spirit Team Is Back and Better Than Ever



The Stinger Spirit squad ain't your typical cheerleaders. GRAPHIC ERIC BENT

• DAVID MURPHY

In three lines, more than a dozen sweat-covered female Concordia students drop, bend, and shuffle to LMFAO's "Party Rock Anthem" right next to the entrance of the athletic complex at the Loyola Campus.

The complex is buzzing with football, basketball and rugby teams taking over the artificial turf field, but the poorly lit pavement will have to do for the the Stinger Spirit squad tonight—there's no room anywhere else.

It's chilly and windy; fall's beginning to set in, but if the girls have noticed it, they aren't letting on. They're working up a sweat, decked-out in sweatpants and sweatshirts, but their Spartan dress doesn't deter the soccer team from casually slowing their pace as they walk by.

Dana Lambert, 20, one of the team's seasoned vets, snaps at the back-row for being out of sync—the girls are not ones to be distracted. Their eyes are forward, their backs are straight, and you could see the whites of their teeth a hundred metres away.

This is Stinger Spirit.

Catch the next performance by the Spirit Team on Oct. 22 at 1 p.m. during the football game at Loyola.

Getting Better

"We've gotten a lot better than last year I think," said Lambert, who has become the unofficial choreographer, leading and barking orders. It's no wonder; she has experience back home at a dance studio in Ottawa.

She came to the team in 2009, but it was much different then. Two years ago, the girls didn't have to try out and no experience was needed to be on the team. This led to frustrating moments and poor performances. Last year the team was so incompetent, the majority of them quit.

"I'm a good competitive per-

son. And when 95 per cent of the people don't put effort into it, you get fed up," said Lambert.

"Picture a football team where everyone's allowed to join. You're going to have quarterbacks who can't throw. That's what we had. [...] No practice times, practices weren't being run properly; our music was screwing up on performance days."

Since then the power has shifted, however, and Lambert has taken on a bigger role in the group. An unprecedented number of rookies have joined, too; and for the first time in years, try-

outs were a necessity to cut the hopefuls down to a 20-woman squad.

The new work ethic is clear: it's their business to be good. The team practices three times a week, three hours a practice, all for what might not exceed seven performances throughout the year—about the same practice time as the soccer team, but with half the game time.

Among the new recruits is Concordia's Department of Recreation and Athletics promotions coordinator Samantha Milner, who, like Lambert, has

previous experience: gymnastics, hip-hop, aerobics and jazz dancing.

Milner isn't a bad person to be managing the group—she started her own company, Sassy Sam's, at the age of 11; it has since sold over \$1 million worth of scarves, jewelry and accessories.

Over the years she's donated thousands of dollars worth of her profits to local charities and continues to help the community by overseeing the Spirit team, helping to schedule practices and performances—a welcome addition from last year's chaos.

They're NOT Cheerleaders

Although they now have a full squad of girls cheering on the football team in front the bleachers at Loyola with pom-poms and gold and maroon skirts, Milner stresses they're not cheerleaders.

"It's just a different sort," says Milner. "Girls do dancing and promotions. They can dance and they can tumble. But we just don't do any lifts or anything like that."

Even though the Spirit team

is not a cheer squad, Dana Lambert admits there might be a cheerleading stereotype—even if the team doesn't have time to hang around with the athletic teams.

"We don't do that. We have practice, then we go to school, then we have practice, then we go to school," said Lambert.

"If they think the Spirit team's slutty, then they can think the Spirit team is slutty because we

shake our hips instead of run around."

The stereotype of the classic cheerleader still remains, says women's issues expert and Concordia professor Angela Ford-Rosenthal.

"I think the stereotype of the cheerleader is someone who is kind of empty-headed, not that bright, focused on their appearance, out to please the men," said Ford-Rosenthal.

"People might say that it doesn't really conform to today's ideas about women. Women shouldn't be standing there semi-dressed and displaying themselves.

"But they can also be serious students. People make assumptions—that's the bottom line," said Ford-Rosenthal. "There's assumptions made on these women that are probably very far from the truth."

More Than a Hobby

In fact, the Spirit squad acts more like a community outreach group, taking donations at games and cheering on teams in the bleachers even when they aren't required to perform, like at ice hockey or baseball games.

For Corbin Girard, 17, however, it's more than that. She

moved to Montreal this fall from Vancouver with few friends in a new city, and she says the transition has made it that much easier because of the Spirit team.

"They have been really open and welcoming; a couple of us are first-years, and they've made it really nice for us," says Girard.

"This is where I met my first friends here. I love all of them. They are so nice and we go and do stuff afterwards."

As the team practice their routine again—this time flawlessly—it's hard not to notice similarities to an athletic sports team. Sophomore Emily Richler tries to cool

down in the breezy night by fanning herself with the bottom of her shirt, exposing for a second a set of washboard abs.

The next time you're watching 300 lbs-plus men running at each other, don't forget that there's another performance happening a few metres away.



Occupiers gather in Square Victoria this weekend, taking a stance against the current capitalist system.

PHOTO VINCENT YIP

A PAPER TIGER

Occupy Montreal All Isms, No Action

• ALEX WOZNICA

When the Occupy Wall Street movement came to Montreal this Saturday, it came bearing a confused message—one that is unlikely to result in any sort of change, let alone lead to any progress.

The battle-cry behind the Occupy movements around the globe has been one against wealth disparity that cannot continue. But you would never have known it by the scene on display at Square Victoria this weekend.

While there were certainly people representing the 99 per cent, standing in protest against the richest one per cent of the world, those voices seemed to be diluted by the presence of so many other people protesting for other causes.

A quick tour around the square would show you people advocating for Quebec and Palestinian nationalism, environmentalism, socialism, pacifism, feminism, Republicanism, anarchism, communism, and a wide range of other isms. There were also groups protesting prisons, the police and the prime minister.

Theoretically, this protest had the capacity to bring a lot of people together against the large and growing gap between the haves and the have-nots in our society. Instead, the demonstration manifested itself as a summation of small groups standing in the same space, each advocating their own pet cause.

This had the effect of transforming what could have been united stand with a positive message into a disjointed protest that ended up having no message at all.

If one were forced to pinpoint a prominent message coming out of Saturday's protest, it would be one of opposition of the current capitalist system. It's unfortunate though, as anyone who witnessed the protest would be forced to conclude that its

participants were in no way prepared to take any real or practical action against that system.

For starters, it's hard to take someone seriously when they say they want to drastically change the capitalist system while they are shrouded in and actively consuming its products.

Many of the the participants at Square Victoria were wearing brand name clothing and consuming brand name food, coffee, and cigarettes—all while protesting. Given that the profits from the sale of such products are what sustains the system they were protesting against, their commitment to drastically changing it seems suspect.

The fact is that although those involved in the Occupy movement profess the desire for fundamental change, they are simply not ready to take the actions necessary to bring it about.

The richest one per cent of the world has too much at stake in the current capitalist system, and is unlikely to relinquish their control of it simply because a couple hundred bohemians spent a day in the rain.

The sort of change those in support of the Occupy movement wish to see would require millions making a concerted effort to reject the material trappings that fuel the current capitalist system.

That is evidently a tall order considering that participants weren't even willing to refrain from doing so during the protest this Saturday.

While spending a day with friends in a public square and pretending it's 1969 may be fun, doing that alone is not going to change anything.

Until those in the Occupy movement decide that it's time to take practical steps towards achieving their professed goal, the movement will remain what the richest one per cent of the world certainly recognizes it as: a paper tiger.

THE COVERAGE CONUNDRUM

Occupy Wall Street Needs to Stay Newsworthy

• MEGAN DOLSKI

The movement against the stark inequality of our population, created by the capitalist and corporate system, is occupying everywhere these days—including the Twitter feeds, headlines and front-pages of almost every major news source.

But if the 99 per cent want their cause to keep making headlines, they're going to have to stop occupying and start acting.

Initially, the mainstream press was criticized for letting the "occupy" protests fly under their radars, while the underground and independent press picked up the slack. What followed were accusations of left-wing bias and slanted coverage.

Regardless, the movement continued to grow and now the mainstream media is all over it, because it never went away (and props to the protesters for sticking it out until they turned some heads).

This weekend, "occupy" news was at the forefront of every major new source's coverage—left, right, mainstream and underground—and last week the movement's coverage quadrupled, according to *Pew's Project for Excellence in Journalism*.

But do these protests really merit the front pages and cover photos they are getting almost everywhere?

Jack Shafer of Reuters says no. In a Reuters blog he writes, "My imperfect policy was this: If a demonstration created other news, I might be convinced to assign a story. But covering a demonstration just to cover a demonstration appeals less to me than turning my editorial pages over to a public service announcement about the opening of a spay clinic."

He has a point. Usually a protest in and of itself isn't news, but the action that comes from it is what makes the news or, at the very least, the specific call for action or the demand for change. The outcome is

newsworthy but, unless something extraordinary happens, the demonstration itself is only ever an element of the story.

One could argue that the fact that these protests have stretched across over 951 cities in 82 countries is newsworthy alone. Yes, maybe it is—but not for long. That fact has been printed and the story, like the protesters, isn't going anywhere.

By Shafer's standards, this movement really hasn't created any other form of news.

Standing sedentarily in solidarity with no tangible demands is only going to be newsworthy for so long. If these occupations continue to exist with no further progress, goals or calls for action, they are going to find themselves off of the airwaves and out of print.

Occupiers would do well to realize that the world is watching them now, so if they are going to incite change they need to haul ass and do so before people turn away.

In my lifetime I cannot remember a time when capitalism, communism and equality, (or lack thereof) has ever been more widely discussed.

Last week the *The New York Times* posted a video of a Wall Street hippy and a Wall Street moneymaking-big-cheese discussing and debating issues in a café near Zuccotti Park in New York. Discourse between the one per cent and the 99 per cent is happening. That itself is an achievement.

This type of discussion is so valuable, and has the potential to be the beginning of progress—but the media won't be telling those stories if nothing moves forward.

So, please, protestors: realize that if there was ever a time to think big, to use your numbers, or to actually make a change, this is it.

Viewers are watching. Readers are reading and media has all eyes on you—do something about it before it's too late.

Ask Not for Whom the Bridge Tolls—It Tolls for Thee

Budgeting for New Bridge Project
Needs Balance



PHOTO RILEY SPARKS

• BENTO GUIMARAES

Montreal's infrastructure is falling apart—the streets resemble a piece of Swiss cheese, the potholes are so big they have their own potholes and a few of the city's bridges have been hanging by a thread for a while now.

The federal government recently announced that they'll be building a new bridge across the St. Lawrence to replace the crumbling Champlain Bridge.

This project is necessary and urgent—but the gravity of the situation means that the cost of construction isn't going to be cheap and someone's got to pay the bill.

Alongside a public-private system, one means of funding the new bridge that's been suggested is implementing a toll system.

The Gazette reported that, although Provincial Transport

Minister Pierre Moreau did not support the idea, Federal Transport Minister Denis Lebel would be in favour of using a toll system to fund the project, as would Montreal Mayor Gerald Tremblay.

Lebel was quoted saying, "The idea of a user-pay system is a popular one worldwide and it makes sense that we follow it."

Using tolls would provide a useful safety net that could guarantee that, even if the government needs to reallocate resources due to a financial crisis, the bridge would not be left alone to crumble.

Considering the current state of the Champlain Bridge, I'd say that's a smart move on Lebel's part. Especially since it's costing the government and taxpayers a hefty \$370 million in renovations to keep the old bridge from collapsing until the new one is ready.

The toll system could work, but in order for it to be fair and effective, there are some caveats that must be considered. A flat rate is not the answer—the fare paid on the tolls should differ according to every individual's usage.

This means that the newly implemented toll system must take into account that people driving cars aren't the only ones using the roads and bridges. People walk, take buses, taxis and ride their bikes.

The new system should also consider that people living in the South Shore that come to work or study in Montreal several times a week—who generate income to the city, in essence—should pay a lower fare.

Tourists and other "casual crossers" should pay a higher fare. Transport trucks, which

carry an estimated 20 billion dollars a year in products on and off of the island, should pay a "by wheel" fare. It's a system used in many countries based on the premise that the bigger the truck, the more it damages the road—therefore it should cost more.

The STM should pay a fixed annual fee that could be reflected in a small increase on the public transport fare. And cyclists—if the new bridge has a bike lane (which it should, in my opinion)—should pay a symbolic fare.

If the government can implement tolls in a fair and balanced way, then they have my support. But if I'm paying every time I cross the bridge, I expect the government to be transparent. I want to know where my toll tax is going and I want my fee to be relative to the amount and way in which I'm using the bridge.

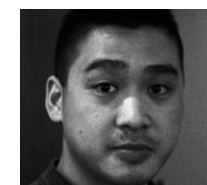
NERD IN THE HALL

How Geeky Are You?

• PIERRE CHAUVIN

For *The Link's* first-ever Nerd Special Issue we decided to take to the halls of Concordia and find out what how nerdy ConU students actually are. We asked students what the nerdiest thing about them was. Here's what they said.

"I'm addicted to video games, and I love *Star Wars*. This is not the nerd you're looking for."



—Jonathan Lai,
BA Business
Administration

"I can just stay in front of my computer instead of sleeping and eating. It doesn't have to be computer games. Sometimes movies, news, even YouTube or Facebook."



—Mike Pham,
BA Computer
Science

"My Bachelor's—that's the nerdiest thing about me. I'm [also] a big fan of computer games—and I'm the only girl in Engineering."



—Micha Kindarji,
BEng

"Something weird? I read a lot. Not very original."



—Emily J'bari,
BA Political Science

"I'm a huge comic book fan. I collect graphic novels—I guess that would be the geekiest thing about me. I'm [also] a huge movie freak. I like Tarantino stuff, *Pulp Fiction* and all of that, but I don't know if that would be nerdy or just an interest."



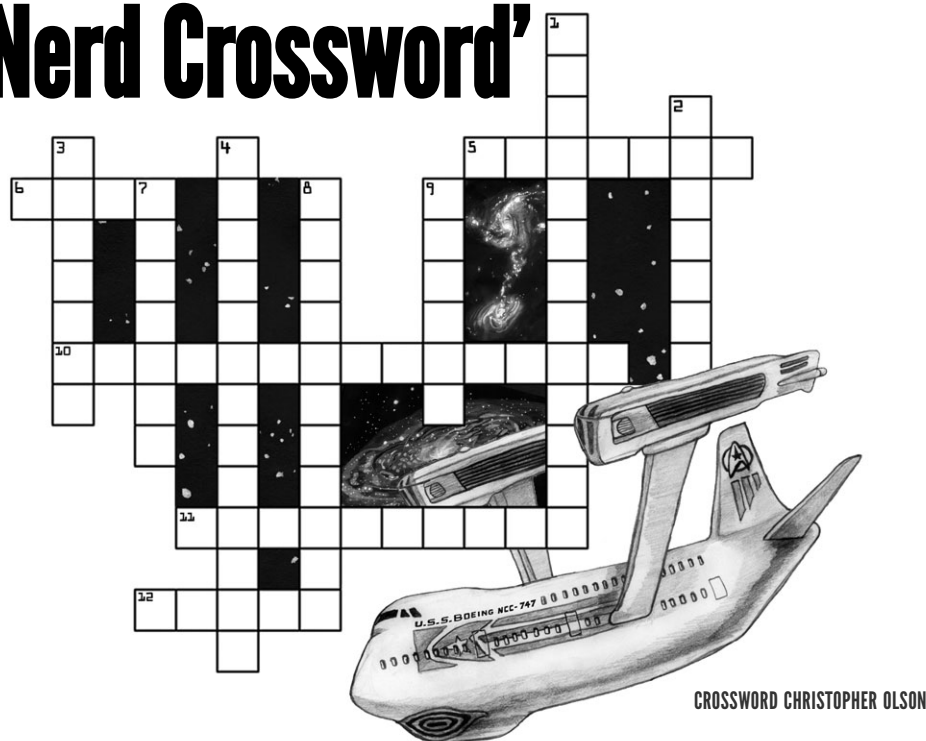
—Andy Metivier,
BA Commerce and
Accounting

"I guess I'm a bookworm nerd. I love reading. I would even pick reading over TV."



—Jo-Anne Gagnon,
BA Education

'The Nerd Crossword'



Across

5. When nerds dress up as their favourite characters, sometimes with a sexy twist. Mostly it's just terrifying, though.

6. Two plus two is four. Everyone knows that. But if you happen to memorize the first 3,000 digits of π ? Neeeeeeeerd. This subject, like everything else in life, is unfair.

10. It's like regular fiction, only more technical and containing far more paradoxes and three-boobed aliens. (2 words)

11. Shaking the poor man's hand wasn't enough; you also need a glossy photo of the man with the signature he signs his cheques with? All those twenties are going right towards reconstructive

wrist surgery, you know.

12. Before there were role-playing games, nerds could pretend they controlled armies of pawns. Orcs have nothing on pawns.

Down

1. Where nerds air their gripes about plot inconsistencies and the like, while also basking in precious anonymity—something they otherwise never experience (Ha). (2 words)

2. Sometimes imagining what it would be like to be Elvish isn't enough. Sometimes you also have to find a secluded place in the woods and beat the shit out of your friends while wearing Elvish facial prosthetics.

3. It's like regular fiction, only more improbable and containing far more witches.

4. Dolls for men. And by "doll" I don't mean "lady of the night." (2 words)

7. It's all fun and games until you accidentally instigate a nuclear standoff with a sentient A.I. because you thought it was the software for some new kind of game. You're kind of stupid that way.

8. A place where nerds congregate, typically in annual intervals.

9. Spend millions of dollars pretending Chris Hemsworth can fly and it's called fun for the whole family, but draw Chris Hemsworth flying and publish it in monthly installments and suddenly it's nerdy? Well, yeah, but—more nerdy?

✉ Letters@thelinknewspaper.ca

Occupy The Link

The Link's coverage of Occupy Wall Street in Vol. 32, Issue 7 was upsetting—and it sheds light on inherent flaws in our media.

As an active contributor and participant with *The Link*, I am quick to congratulate their good work. But I am equally quick to raise points of concern when they merit attention. Unfortunately, the work by Julian Ward and David Murphy last week merits such attention.

A few quotes from this article are worth repeating: "...these people [i.e. the participants] refuse, or are intellectually unable, to attach a definite list of demands to their cause."

The editorial also noted, "the reporters we sent told us that [...] there were also a ton of, well, idiots."

These quotes remind me of the contempt that mainstream journalists expressed for dissidents protesting the Iraq War, or even further back to Vietnam. These dirty "hippies" are clueless and therefore not worthy of public concern. This speaks directly to the nature of our media.

For starters, it is worth reflecting

on why participants in the Occupation are called "these people" with such a degree of contempt.

According to the dictates of professional journalism, reporters are required to "objectively" report on events. The person being interviewed becomes an object of analysis, and the reporter must detach themselves from any moral or emotional considerations.

This is precisely what leads to the use of terms like "these people" and "hippies." Shaming and marginalizing in this way can have devastating consequences.

There are alternatives to calling participants "idiots" that are "intellectually unable" to articulate their aims. A participatory media would engage in discussion with these "hippies" in order to collaboratively create media for the public.

Similarly, the fact that reporters are seeking "a definite list of demands" from Occupation participants and would like an "official spokesperson" also speaks to the nature of our dominant media structure.

Why are definite demands necessary? Why must there be an official spokesperson?

These are the very structures of hierarchy that the Occupation is

challenging. There are no "officials" in the commune that has been created in New York. And there are no definite demands, because genuine democracy takes careful discussion of conflicting ideas.

Occupy Wall Street participants are challenging people to question all forms of oppression and hierarchy. One would hope that journalists are equally reflective about the role and nature of the media. Occupy *The Link* indeed.

—Matthew Brett
BA Political Science

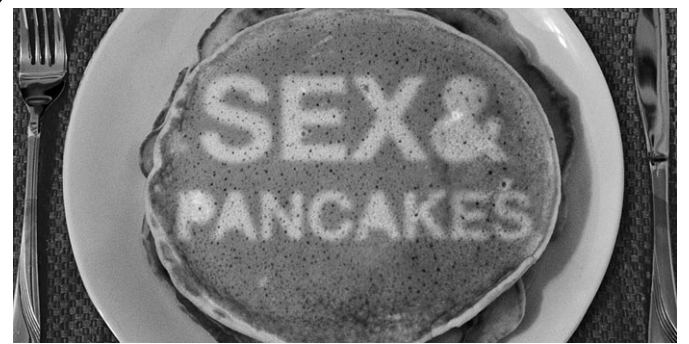
I Am a Cat :3

Hey everyone! I'm a cat! :3
Today I had some catnip. It was great!

What will my cat adventure be next week? Who knows! :3

—Nadim Kobeissi
BA Political Science

The Link's letters and opinions policy: The deadline for letters is 4 p.m. on Friday before the issue prints. *The Link* reserves the right to verify your identity via telephone or email. We reserve the right to refuse letters that are libellous, sexist, homophobic, racist or xenophobic. The limit is 400 words. If your letter is longer, it won't appear in the paper. Please include your full name, weekend phone number, student ID number and program of study. The comments in the letters and opinions section do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial board.



First-Time Fisting

My girlfriend and I (a lesbian couple) talk about fisting sometimes and we both really want to try giving and getting it but I don't want to fuck it up the first time and never get to try again. I've tried looking online but it's hard to get through all the stupid forum responses. Can you tell me how to safely fist my lover?

—Timid But Tempted

I absolutely can! For those of you that don't know what fisting is, fisting, aka handballing, involves inserting a hand into the vagina or ass and shaping it into a fist for sexual pleasure.

Interested? Here's how you do it:

Step 1: Have a good talk with your partner to make sure you both really want to fist. It's important for the receiving partner to remain calm and relaxed—and that's going to be impossible if they aren't into doing it in the first place.

Keep in mind that for the receiver, being fisted can trigger an intense emotional reaction and feelings of vulnerability. Trust, understanding, and strong communication are essential throughout.

Step 2: Groom yourself before getting all up in there. Make sure your nails are neatly trimmed and rounded (you should probably file them too) to avoid scratching or tearing. Wash your hands thoroughly before and after, wear a latex glove and switch to a new one if you move between her ass and vagina. This will lower the risk of STIs, and can even make the process easier since it's super slippery with lube.

Step 3: Get your partner hot—really hot. You may even want to bring her to orgasm before getting started, as it will relax her muscles and provide some natural lube.

Step 4: Add lots of lube. Lube is something you can never have too much of, so cover your latex-y hand really well and when you think you have enough, add a little more.

Step 5: Ease your way into it. Start with one finger and add more fingers as you stretch her more. Don't force this, and remember that fisting isn't necessarily going to happen on your first try. This will also really depend on the size of your fist and the size of her vagina.

Step 6: Getting over the knuckles. The knuckles are the hardest part, so once you've reached five fingers, be gentle and prepare yourselves. The goal here is to make your hand as small as possible, so curl your fingers around your thumb as if you're making a shadow puppet talk, and try to be as thin as possible.

Move slowly and let the receiver lead the way, since any sudden movements she's unprepared for could lead to muscle or tissue injuries.

Step 7: Next is the big push. When ready, make your way into the vagina. The receiver should remain calm—breathing slowly and visualizing her vagina opening up to let your hand in with ease. It's normal for this to be a bit uncomfortable for both of you, and it's up to the receiver to say something if it becomes too uncomfortable.

Step 8: Once you slip through, roll your hand into a fist. You might feel a lot of pressure, but whatever you do, don't pull out or move suddenly; this could actually hurt her more than staying inside.

Step 9: Once you're in and you're both getting used to it, start to experiment. Depending on how she's feeling, try different things like slowly pumping inside her, twisting your hand around or pulsating your fist. See what she likes and act accordingly.

Step 10: Once you're done, make the shadow puppet shape again and slowly and gently slide out. You can try doing this as she orgasms since her vaginal contractions might help ease your hand out.

That completes this guide to fisting a pussy. You can also anal fist—with similar steps—but the process can be a little more challenging and intimidating since anal muscles aren't as flexible as vaginal ones. Feel free to write in for an anal specific guide, but in the meantime, fist away!

—Melissa Fuller

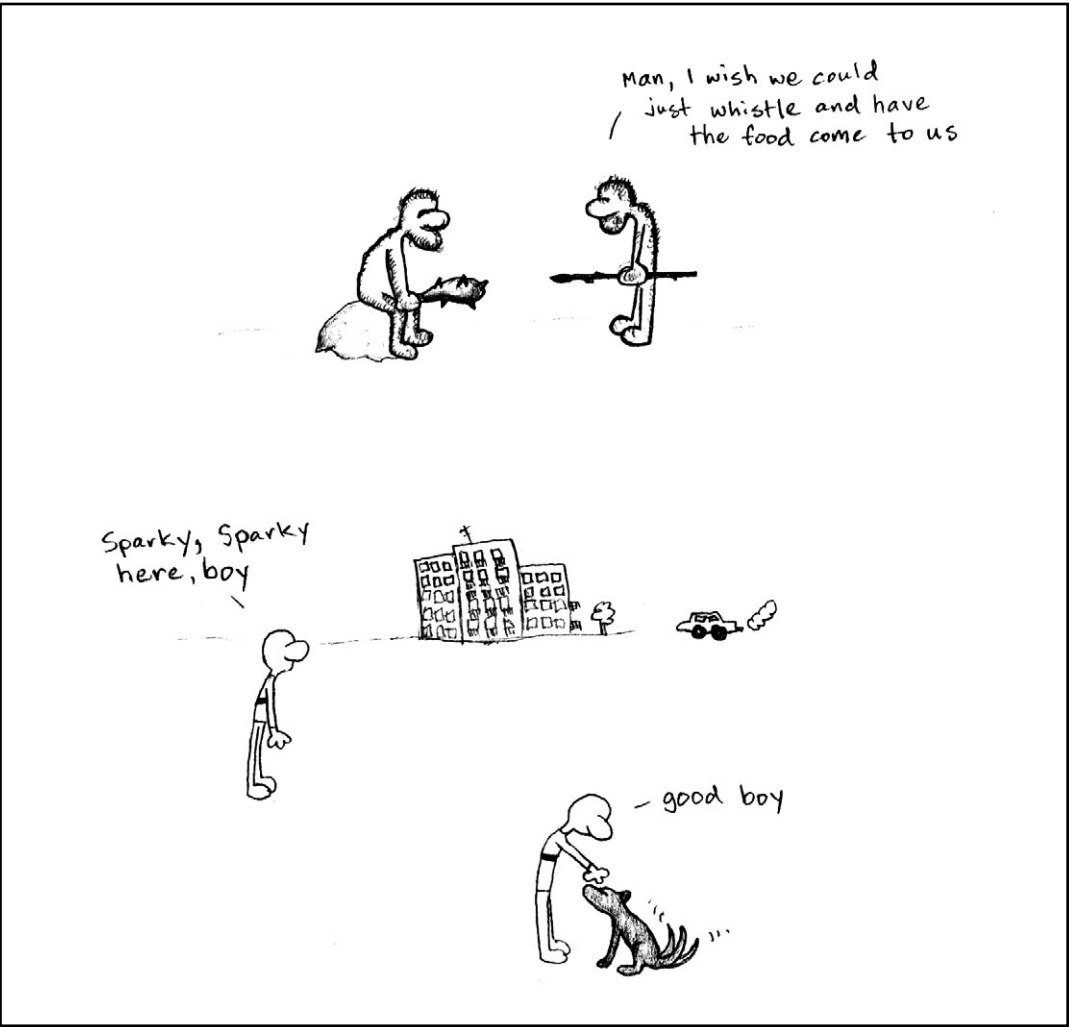
Submit questions anonymously at sex-pancakes.tumblr.com and check out "Sex & Pancakes" on Facebook.

Tremendous Tales
by Christopher Olson

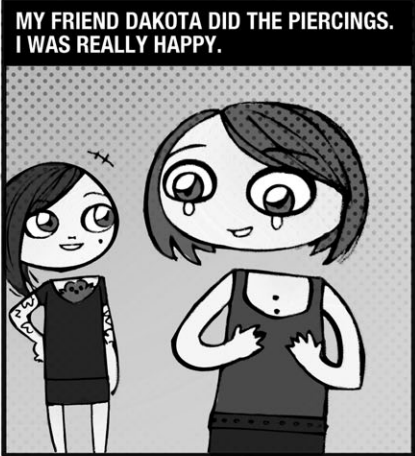


“This is a real find,” said Ziegfried, as he dusted off a freshly unearthed relic at the camp site. “In the olden days, these things could hold up to 3,000 songs.”

Barton Flats
COMIC JONATHAN WOODS



Living The Life
COMIC CLAUDINE LAMOTHE



Nah'msayin?

Braindead Bagel Burglars Beware

I love Tim Horton's. It's a wonderful, magical place where the holes in the bagels are formed by magical unicorns thrusting through the dough with their glimmering horns while magical fairies urinate coffee into the pots. It's basically Disneyland for the taste buds.

The downside is that, like a real amusement park, Timmy's line-ups seem to be filled with an awful lot of slack-jawed, drooling tools whose parents would have been better off remembering Jesus' sacred teachings on condoms instead of getting their conceive on.

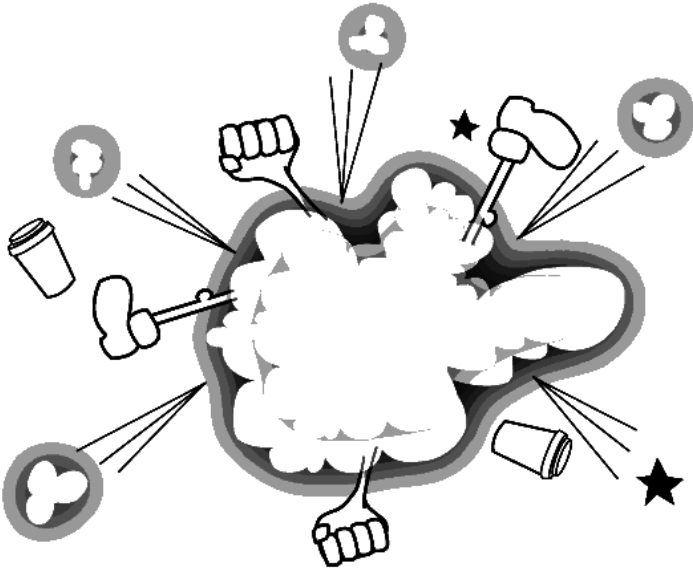
I seem to have misplaced my English-to-Idiot dictionary, but recently I discovered that in Idiot, the word for 'bagel with cream cheese' is actually the same as 'ham sandwich.' Crazy!

So please, stupid people—those of you who possess the intellectual capacities to know who you are—if you're capable of memorizing Limp Bizkit lyrics and recognizing brands of massive spinning hub-caps on your fuel-inefficient cars, you're capable of checking the frigging bag the nice employee is handing you.

For the sake of all that is holy, make sure you are not about to eat my bagel. (You can understand, I hope, that this is particularly important in Montreal.)

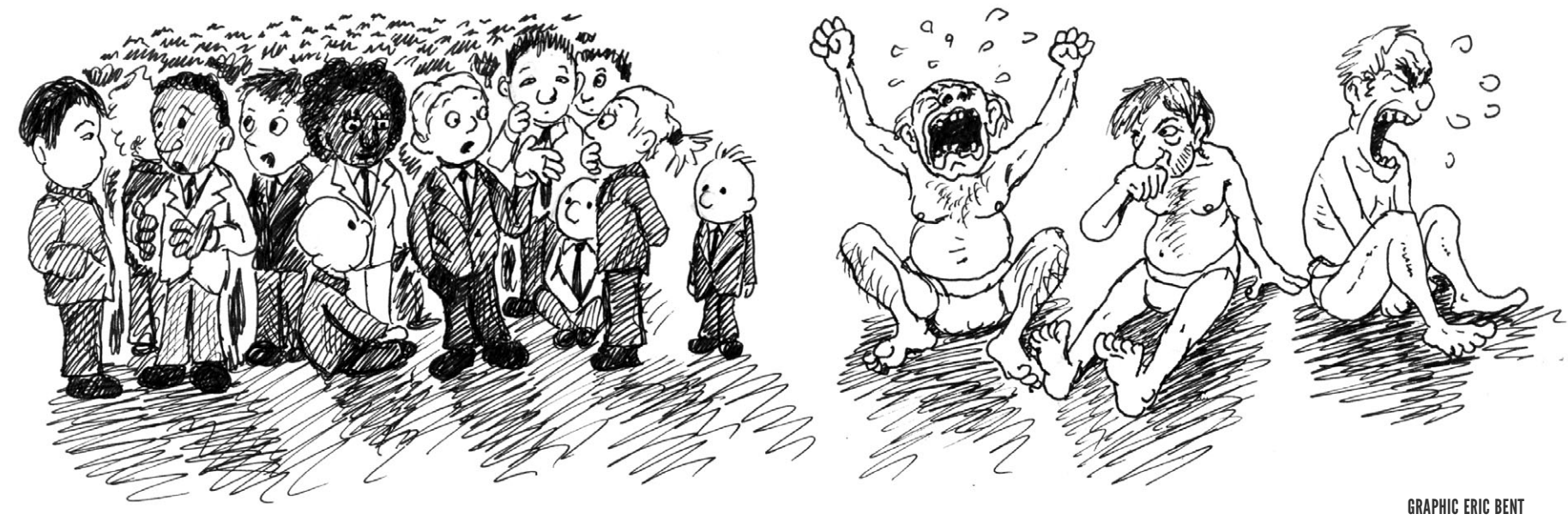
Ahhh, who am I kidding? You're not reading this. You're looking at all the pretty, pretty pictures on this page instead.

—Adam Kovac
Current Affairs Editor



GRAPHIC SHOSHANA EIDELMAN

editorial cartoon



Time to Change Hands

Recently, there’s been a lot of talk about today’s youth, representation and radical change. The issues boil down to the differences between ‘us’ and ‘them,’ with both parties saying, “Look: you just don’t get it.”

On a hyper-local, federal and international level, you can see it. It’s happening at this university, within our federal government and around the world.

Many on Concordia’s Board of Governors are a decade or more past their set mandates and have been called to resign, yet are still exercising a tight, top-down approach to meetings and dialogue concerning the future of its membership makeup, which inevitably marginalizes students—the most numerous body of this university.

In terms of increasing tuition and the long term vision of this institution, we also have a 78-year-old president contending with a twentysomething president—each with radically different ideas about how the university ought to spend its time, energy and money, as well as how it ought to be funded and who it ought to serve.

On macro level, one could easily apply this thinking to the Canadian political landscape—specifically, to the New Democratic Party’s youthful “orange crush” that swept Quebec in the most recent fed-

eral election.

With a third of the official opposition under the age of 30, the NDP’s “brat pack” saw reporters focus on their age instead of their platforms, while the coverage they’ve received has been highly skeptical.

Besides the cutesy contempt for this surge of youth into real representative power, there also seems to be an unfair expectation that these “kids” prove themselves and their credibility.

This is happening all the while plenty of existing MPs, who seem to have no idea what the hell they’ve been doing or talking about for the last decade, continue to tote the party line without any questions asked.

“It’s not a matter of age as much as what kind of job the ministers are doing,” argued 20-year-old NDP MP Lauren Liu in a Postmedia news article this past week. The article was written with a tone of surprise that she seems capable enough to handle her new responsibilities.

As it turns out, the “kids” are the ones who are reminding us that the incumbent ministers aren’t doing a good job.

Liu recently took her opposition, 68-year-old Environment Minister Peter Kent, to task when he told the House the Conservative government was “already on top of the [greenhouse gas] situation.”

Demanding immediate action, Liu came right back, calling the government “out-of-touch,” and arguing they have produced no concrete plan to deal with the impacts of climate change.

And she’s right. The government has had five different ministers in the past five years on their pathetic environment portfolio, and Harper’s Conservatives aren’t exactly known to root for the green cause.

Finally, and perhaps most fittingly, this ‘us’ versus ‘them’ model speaks to the breakout demonstration Occupy Wall Street—a movement that has unexpectedly launched an international dialogue with over 900 demonstrations worldwide this past weekend.

Granted, the crowd is as diverse as the causes that fly under its banner, but the occupiers are overwhelmingly twenty- and thirty-somethings who understand that the status quo of class warfare being waged by those in power, coupled with a corporatized chokehold on future opportunity is very, very real.

The 99 per cent versus one per cent narrative has permeated the politics and talking points of this event, and the reaction from the one per cent has been, for the most part, unsurprising—they don’t want to give up their power.

“We have to be careful not to allow this to get any legitimacy,” stressed U.S. Con-

gressman Peter King, who was quoted in the *Huffington Post* Canada.

“I’m old enough to remember what happened in the 1960s when the left-wing took to the streets and the media glorified them, and it ended up shaping policy. We can’t allow that to happen.”

Yet, in all cases, the changes the students, young politicians and occupiers envision are not so radical as the ruling minority would have you believe.

In fact, the demands are pretty damn basic and pretty damn fair. So what’s with the knee-jerk reaction against youth engagement—full of optimism, vim and vigor against all odds, cynicism, contempt and institutional oppression?

The voices of youth are shaking up the boardroom, Parliament and the whole world order, offering another, necessary perspective from a generation who has a different vision for the unsustainable “business as usual” world that is on a dangerous trajectory.

It’s time that ‘they’ start listening.

Those who invest in serving real democracy don’t have to be lawyers, financiers or CEOs, it’s not something only ‘certain’ people can do. Young people are, indeed, leaders. And our very future depends on acknowledging it.

—Laura Beeston
Editor-in-Chief

editorial

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ISSUE 7 CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS
'JUST [SAMUEL L.] JACK[SON]'

Corrections

In Vol. 32, Issue 7 of *The Link*, Abbas Chazi was incorrectly referred to as Abbas Kezouch in the article “Unhealthy Habs Session.” *The Link* regrets the error.

THE LINK

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