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Private residences are popping up all over downtown. Two students say they've been unduly evicted by one in Concordia's backyard. p 6

Farewell, Captain

As the men's Stingers' hockey season winds down, team captain George Lovatsis reflects on his prolific CIS career. p 13

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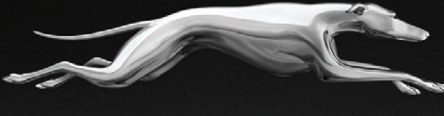
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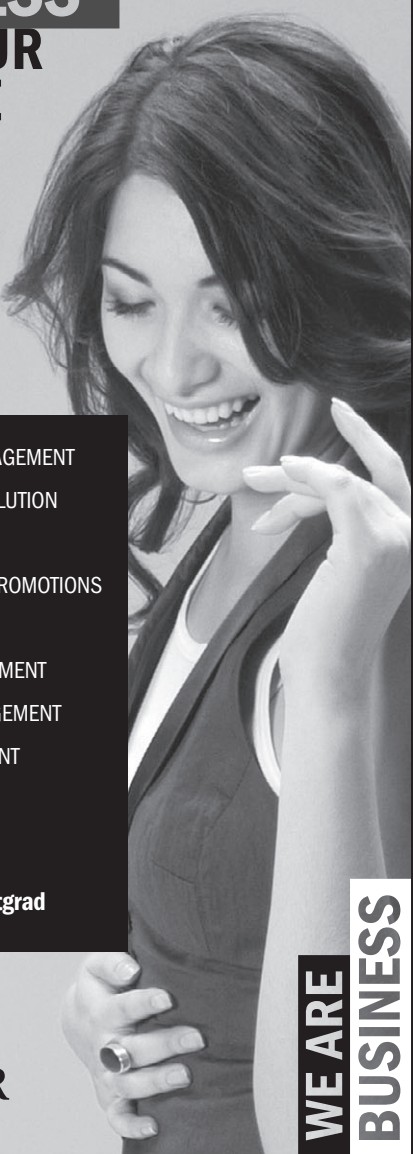
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Private Residence St. Cathy's Gives Students a Rough September

When Gabriella Wilsker was looking for a place to live for her first year of university, St. Cathy's student residence seemed like the perfect solution.

Wilsker was moving from Boston, and the community living described on the private residence's website sounded like a good fit for someone with no connections in Montreal. It was located across the street from Concordia's EV Building, where she would start classes in September 2013. It came furnished, with Internet, air conditioning and a TV in each room.

Wilsker stayed at St. Cathy's throughout the summer, later deciding to move into a new sec-

tion of the residence slated for completion for the beginning of September.

When she was moving into her new room for September however, Wilsker said it was covered in dust. It also did not yet have the couch and two desks that were supposed to be included in the room.

The day before dozens of students were meant to move in, Wilsker and the building's residence assistants worked to finish the dorms.

"They had us moving in last-minute items to the rooms. One kid didn't have a bed for two nights. None of the rooms with working cable

had TVs, which they were all supposed to have," she said, adding that she moved furniture and set up rooms for 12 hours without pay.

Wilsker says she was also charged \$20 for her floor to be mopped.

By the end of the first week of classes, Wilsker was evicted along with a resident's assistant that she had recommended for the job.

Having not yet signed her lease for the coming semester, Wilsker says she was evicted because she wouldn't keep her mouth shut about the residence not living up to what was advertised.

► Continued on page 6.



TRUDEAU-MANIA REACHES CONCORDIA

Liberal Party leader Justin Trudeau toured three Montreal universities last week, hoping to re-engage younger voters in federal politics. **P4**

GREENER FOOD

The Concordia Transitions conference takes a look at how to make the university's food system more sustainable. **P7**

BETWEEN THE SEAMS

Infinithatre's new production takes on predator bosses in the fashion industry. **P10**

A MAN ON A MISSION

Stinger Mukiya Post's goal is to collect as much sporting gear as possible for poor kids. **P14**

ON BEING A RADICAL

The Link talks to American musician and activist Boots Riley about optimism, the Occupy movement and revolution ahead of his talk at Concordia. **P5**

CAMERAS IN THE SKY

Concordia grad pioneers cinema-drone company and brings filmmaking to new heights. **P9**

WHO WANTS TREES?

Folk-pop group Lost in the Trees tours Canada and gives away saplings at every stop. **P11**

MEDIA FILE: MAKING SPACE FOR INTERNET TROLLS

Can any good ever come from the comments section? **P16**

THE LINK ONLINE

CJLO SPOTLIGHT

Meet Fatoumata Touré, the host of CJLO's African music program, Safari.

PAY UP OR PAYBACK?

A current CSU Executive wants a \$1,500 bonus from last year forfeited and a faculty association president to pay off a \$30,000 unsuccessful event.

DE-LIGHTFUL

Fringe Blog: Lanterns on the Lake pleased the crowd last week at Divan Orange—one Link writer's review.

NEWTOWN, NEW RECOMMENDATIONS

After months of waiting, new financial controls are being presented to the CSU this week so another \$10,000 party on students' dime can't happen again.

STRONG STINGER WEEKEND

Men's hockey takes three of a possible four points heading into the final stretch before the postseason.

VIDEO: SUPERBOWL TWITTER STORM OVER NATIVE LOGOS

The big game had plenty of action, but the Twitterverse was interested in another kind of sacking: that of Native mascots deemed racist.

LINK RADIO

Tune in to CJLO 1690 AM from 11 a.m. to noon every Thursday to hear our newest episode of Link Radio. Missed our last show? Check out thelinknewspaper.ca.



Federal Liberal Party leader Justin Trudeau answered students' questions at Concordia on Feb. 6 as part of a tour of university campuses.

Justin Trudeau's Charm Offensive Comes to Montreal

Federal Liberal Party Leader Engages Younger Voters at Concordia

by Marc-Olivier Laramée

Justin Trudeau is already courting the youth vote ahead of the 2015 federal election, and he believes changing the nature of the conversation in Ottawa is integral to re-engaging younger Canadians in politics.

The leader of the federal Liberal Party continued his tour of Canadian campuses last Thursday with stops at three Montreal universities, starting his day at his alma matter, McGill, before going on to visit the Université de Montréal and Concordia.

"This [university tour] is [...] about how important it is to view politics as a dialogue, as a conversation that we can all be part of, that we need to contribute to with our voices, with our actions, with our participation," Trudeau told the crowded D.B. Clarke Theatre, insisting that his intention with the university tour wasn't to attempt to persuade younger voters to join the Liberal Party or vote for its candidates, but rather to engage university students in a discussion about politics.

"Because politics is [...] more focused on winning than on serving, more focused on finding the right wedge issues in order to get elected than focused on bringing people together to actually solve the challenges we're facing," he said.

"For me, I truly believe that politics needs to be about a respectful exchange of ideas, based on facts, seeking always for common ground, common values, common goals and shared dreams."

Trudeau said we are in the midst of "a wave of citizen engagement" and that younger Canadians in particular are better informed and

more engaged in advocacy than ever before.

Still, that engagement hasn't translated into participation at the ballot box. Trudeau noted that only about 30 per cent of younger Canadians exercise their right to vote.

"Getting young people to choose to vote and get involved isn't just about getting a few more people who are unlikely to vote for Mr. Harper to the ballot box. That's just a pleasant byproduct," he said.

"What it really is about is changing the nature of conversations that happen in Ottawa and in government."

According to Trudeau, the low participation rate of younger voters is related to the fact that they find it hard to relate to the topics and government policies discussed in Parliament.

"Right now, much of government is consumed with focusing on healthcare, on pensions, on tough-on-crime measures," he said. "Why? Because those [topics] play well to the people who vote—seniors, who [have] close to 80 per cent turnout."

Trudeau said the government doesn't spend much time, if any, talking about education, youth employment and other long-term issues that are of concern to younger generations.

He mentioned how profoundly different the House of Commons would look if only young electors aged 18 to 25 had been counted in the last federal election.

"Parliament today would have 43 Green Party MPs and the Conservatives wouldn't be in government, they'd be the third party," he said.

Question Period

Following his speech, Trudeau took several audience members' questions. Asked what

his stance is on the controversial Bill 60, also known as the Quebec Charter of Values, Trudeau said he met with Premier Pauline Marois and expressed his concerns about it.

"It is an unhelpful direction to be taking, to try and make people choose between their religious beliefs and their jobs," he said.

"Has this leadership by our premier led to solving a problem, led to bringing people together to try and figure out an issue that is top-of-mind for people? No," he continued. "It's led to divisiveness and polarization around a problem that, quite frankly, they couldn't even demonstrate was a problem."

"This bill is about one thing and one thing only, about identity politics."

Trudeau was also asked about Internet privacy and recent revelations of multiple governments collecting large amounts of data on their citizens. He said governments have gotten carried away with intelligence gathering.

"One of the things that I've been calling for, and the Liberal Party has been calling for, is a much more robust system of oversight over our security and intelligence agencies," Trudeau said.

He added that there needs to be a conversation on why citizens feel comfortable sharing vast amounts of information about themselves with corporations like Facebook but not with their government.

Asked about the development of the tar sands, Trudeau said he wants to develop them while also protecting the environment.

"Canada absolutely needs to do a lot more in terms of living up to its responsibilities as a modern country, as a good global citizen, to

reduce the impact that we have on climate change," he said. "We have to figure out how to make what's good for the economy and what's good for the environment go together."

In answering a question about federal funding cuts to arts and culture, Trudeau made a reference to Winston Churchill during the Second World War, when he was the prime minister of the United Kingdom and needed money to help finance the war.

"Churchill was sitting around in his war cabinet, and they were talking about cuts to various departments and ministries," said Trudeau. "And they were going down the line: 'health we'll have to cut 10 per cent, roads we'll have to cut 20 per cent.' And then they got down to the ministry of culture."

"And the prime minister said, 'We cut zero from the ministry of culture. [...] If not, what are we fighting for, if not our culture?'"

Trudeau said he plans to reverse the cuts to arts and culture funding if his party comes to power.

Finally, on reforms to Canada's electoral system, Trudeau said he would like to put in place a preferential voting system.

Under such a system, Canadians would rank the candidates on the ballot in order of preference. If no candidate is chosen by over 50 per cent of voters as their first choice, then voters' second-choice and third-choice votes will be tabulated.

"Political parties would then work to be the second or third choices of more voters," Trudeau said. "Common values will be more important than differences."

Photo Shaun Michaud

The Radical's Playbook

Boots Riley Talks Optimism, Occupy and Revolution

by Colin Harris @ColinnHarris

With an immaculate afro and razor-sharp sideburns, Boots Riley looks like a Black Panther frozen in time, or a long-lost member of Sly and the Family Stone. But the lifelong activist and musician's politics are only looking forward, ever searching for the path to revolution.

Boots, born Raymond Riley, is coming to Concordia Feb. 11 as the latest in the Concordia Student Union's speaker series, this month presented in collaboration with the Concordia Caribbean Student Union and Students of History at Concordia.

Riley's music is best known from his Oakland-based hip-hop group The Coup, which has been active since the early '90s, and more recent work with Rage Against the Machine's Tom Morello in the Street Sweeper Social Club.

From the MTV crowd to the underground rap show, Boots does it all. After all, he got into music to reach out to as many people as possible.

"Some of what's informing the revolutionary aesthetic is a punk aesthetic. A punk aesthetic has to do with being rebellious against any number of people, but a punk aesthetic is not one with the aim of creating a revolution of touching the people that are not yet won over," said Riley.

"This is not about being underground, this is about being above ground. That's what drives my whole artistic being; it's what drives who I am."

Growing up with a father who belonged to the radical communist Union Labor Party, Riley had early insight into class struggles and a distaste for the current economic system. No matter the topic of his rhymes, he says that class dynamics are always present.

"If you don't have a class analysis [in protest music] that says this world is run by the exploitation of the working class' labour by the ruling class, then you're going to come up with all this other mystical shit of why things are fucked up," said Riley.

"And what you're going to have is something angry and frustrating."

He criticizes protest art that only looks inward, saying that you can change inside all you want—but that you'll only get angrier when the world doesn't follow suit.

This perspective, he says, comes more from his experience as an organizer than being a musician. What Riley preaches instead is optimism, and he says that his message is one that helps people realize their economic power.

"The problems and possibilities are the same in almost every demographic of people in the world. One is they wish the world

was different. Two is most of us think we have no power to affect change in the world. I don't think that students are more optimistic than most people," said Riley, who speaks at campuses multiple times a year.

"I think sometimes they are in a material position where they have less to risk than someone who has to feed five kids. But I think they still suffer from the same pessimism."

He says people need to be reminded that they can change things, not just that things are bad—that people just need to see that there exists winnable battles over material change such as wages, housing and education.

"Often we are told the system is evil, which it is, but in this conspiracy sort of way where there are five people in a room that control the world and there's nothing you can do about it," said Riley. "I think that optimism grows when there's a movement, when people are fighting for material things together."

Riley was a prominent face of Occupy Oakland, where he's lived most his life. It's this lack of constructive mentality that led the movement to break down.

"Nobody was meeting and saying, 'How do we work with people and talk about these ideas?'" said Riley. "Some of that I can relate to an anarchist [perspective], trying to develop someone politically is tantamount to being an imperialist."

But that idea leaves groups only organizing with people who already agree with you, he says, creating "affinity groups" instead of community groups.

"The unfortunate thing is that the new folks come in with the possibility of becoming more radicalized, but a lot of them were just shunned and went home," said Riley.

"I think organizers have a duty to know a lot of people. To be friendly, to make conversation wherever you are and to not have most of your friends be other organizers. If most of your friends are organizers, you're not going to grow."

He argues that no successful social movement was made by creating a new group of people, that organizing has to be where you work, where you study—that it needs to be more than something extra-curricular.

"If you consider yourself radical that means you want to build a revolutionary movement, and building a revolutionary movement can't be made by forging an insular culture," said Riley.

Boots Riley is speaking in the CSU lounge on the seventh floor of the Hall Building on Feb. 11, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Admission is free for students, and \$5 for non-students.

Photo Astramarina Cobras



American musician and activist Boots Riley performs in Rome.



Two Tenants of St. Cathy's Taking Legal Action After Eviction

Residents Complain of Unfinished Rooms and Unresponsive Management

by Colin Harris @ColinnHarris

▶ Continued from page 3.

"They were telling my parents that I was unmanageable, that I was rude, that all the RAs were complaining about me, which was false," said Wilsker, adding that she was no longer allowed on site because the management said she smoked marijuana.

"They wanted to meet with me in person and have me sign something to say I wouldn't pursue any legal action," said Wilsker, noting that an RA tried multiple times to get her to sign the agreement, which she refused.

Chris Chapin was also evicted from St. Cathy's, according to Wilsker, for complaining to management about the state of the residence during the first week of September.

Chapin declined to comment, as he is pursuing legal action against the management of St. Cathy's.

"He was accepted at the residence, they cashed in the cheque, and for reasons unknown to us they decided to unilaterally evict him without even going to the rental board," said Angelo Caputo, the lawyer who is representing Chapin.

"I did get a mandate from Mr. Chapin that he wants to take legal action against them for all the damage and inconvenience that was caused in that incident."

Wilsker also plans on taking legal action against the residence's owners.

In an email sent to *The Link* by Amanda Kemal, director of operations at UNO Investments Inc.—the company that manages St. Cathy's—wrote that the building "had as many as 50 parents move in their children on day one, and not one of them had an issue with the cleanliness."

However, a current tenant of St. Cathy's agrees with Wilsker's account of the move-in.

"My room was disgusting. Me and my mom had to go get mops and clean up my room. There was dust everywhere, I couldn't sleep because of the dust," said one tenant, Sara*.

"I don't think people wanted to leave, be-

cause they knew how tricky it would be to find a new place. We just wanted reimbursement for one month's rent. People were really ticked off about construction," she said, adding that the construction of the building's exterior continued into October, starting as early as 7 a.m.

"At the beginning it was really ridiculous. They weren't ready at all."

A Market of Their Own

The Concordia Student Union Housing and Job Bank is familiar with St. Cathy's residence.

"[Students] can't reach anyone who has any ability to deal with their problems. The RAs who are students living there take their complaints, but the management doesn't get back to people," said Leanne Ashworth, a coordinator at HoJo.

Ashworth says HoJo has been getting complaints about the space for the last few years, but that there was a spike of complaints in September. They do not recommend the residence to students.

"The style of management is 'ignore the students, take their money.' They take their credit card information online so there's really no reason for them to communicate with the students for the rest of the year," she said.

"It was stupid hot, it would be about 30 degrees in my room. They didn't want me to leave my door open, and even with my window open it would be ridiculous," said Sara, adding that many residents did not have curtains for their windows, and that construction workers could see inside their bedrooms.

Internet quality continues to be an issue, and each tenant is now limited to 10 GB of bandwidth each month—although that was not communicated before signing.

"They'd be like 'yeah we'll fix it, we'll fix it,' and they'd never get to it," Sara said. The students in St. Cathy's took their complaints to the RAs, who receive a discount on their rent as payment. The RAs would then inform Kamel.

"We deal directly with Amanda," said St. Cathy's RA Ali Murji, noting that a receptionist

at the building is also able to take complaints. He said there was some delay with furniture in the rooms for September, but when someone asked it was dealt with right away.

Ashworth recommended sending a registered petition to the company, demanding a full month's rent in damages for the noise and unfinished rooms. The petition, complete with 53 resident signatures, was mailed at the beginning of October.

The petition was delivered, but residence management gave no response. Kamel, who manages the residence, says this is because the petition included false information, and that residents did not know what they were signing.

They then brought the petition to the Régie du logement du Québec, the provincial rental board, but were told that complaints would need to be filed individually.

"It's an open secret that the Régie du logement wait time is 17 months for non-urgent issues," said Ashworth.

She added that as long as there is "minimal livability" in the space, the request is considered non-urgent—stating that, for example, having hot water shut off would not count as urgent.

With the recent surge in private residences in downtown Montreal, Ashworth says this kind of housing is particularly attractive to international students, who are looking for furnished spaces with a lease shorter than the typical 12 months required for apartments.

However, these students are less likely to be aware of tenant rights in Montreal. There is also not enough room in Concordia's residences to fit all first-year students, with a lottery system in place for those looking to live there.

St. Cathy's offers four and eight-month leases. "These large student buildings, they'll offer heat included and Internet included but that needs to work all the time," said Ashworth. "That's not a gift, that's included in their rent. It's something people could go to the Régie for, but it would take two years."

Kamel stated that the new residences would have been completed by September if not for the two-week construction strike at the end of June 2013.

However, this isn't the first time the residence has had complaints of construction occurring while tenants are living in the building.

One tenant who lived at St. Cathy's from the fall of 2012 to the spring of 2013 echoed the complaints of construction and dust as early as September 2012. They also noted that there were holes in the wall. "They appeared when the adjacent building was torn down," said the former tenant, who did not want to be named.

She also said tenants were required to provide post-dated cheques and a key deposit, both of which are illegal in Quebec, and that tenants were pressured to sign non-disclosure agreements in exchange for \$250.

The former tenant planned on reporting the issues, but was unable to get a hearing date with the Régie while she still lived at the residence.

"I was filing with another tenant and she moved to Toronto. Things got a bit complicated after that," she said. "We weren't quite sure how to follow through."

Stanislas Olenski rented from UNO Investments from October 2008 to February 2009, when it was named Gap Investments. He sued the company for 50 per cent of his rent, for damages including excessive noise and dust from construction, and was awarded the full amount—\$2,458—in January 2012.

Sara is glad the experience at St. Cathy's gave her and her fellow tenants the chance to meet people, but feels like she was taken advantage of during the beginning of her lease. The rooms have since been completed.

For Wilsker, she wants people to know how she was treated by the residence's management.

"I just want to make sure that nobody moves into that building again," she said.

HoJo offers legal advice and resources on housing and jobs for Concordia students. Their offices are located in room H-260 in the Hall Building.

*Name has been changed because the tenant still lives at the residence

Photo Brandon Johnston



No To Making Green, Yes to Being Green

Student Conference Concordia Transitions Discusses Ways to Improve Concordia's Food System

by Noelle Didierjean @noellesolange

Members of the Concordia Food Coalition, the Concordia Greenhouse and the Concordia Student Union agree: Concordia needs a new food system, one centred not on financial profits, but rather on being committed to providing affordable and healthy food. The only question is: how to make it possible?

That's what the student groups set out to determine at a conference they organized on Saturday titled Concordia Transitions.

"I just think it's really fantastic to see students working together on a [conference] like this," said former CSU president Lex Gill, who facilitated the discussion at the conference alongside Erik Chevrier, who the CSU hired in October as a researcher and negotiator.

"Concordia has a really long history of rich, imaginative campus activism, and I feel like the work around food systems and sustainability that's been going on over the last year or two in particular has been really good."

The conference began and ended with urban agriculture. Curtis Stone, a farmer who founded Green City Acres in Kelowna, B.C., got the event started with a keynote speech. He explained how he originally envisioned saving enough money to buy his own land, but quickly realized that the price of land in British Columbia would make such an approach prohibitively expensive.

His solution: farming in people's back-

yards, paying rent in fruits and vegetables. Every time Stone drops off produce at the restaurants he supplies, he collects buckets of vegetable trimmings to use as fertilizer. When he first started the business, he delivered the produce entirely by bike, sometimes towing as much as 180 kg of produce at once, thus reducing the carbon footprint of his farming.

His proximity to the community is effective marketing when your clientele is looking to buy local. Selling produce is easier when people can see for themselves how the food is being grown, he added.

"It doesn't matter what political spectrum you're on, everyone likes a garden," said Stone.

Stone told the 100 participants in attendance that he wants to diversify and decentralize the food system. Instead of 10 massive corporate farms feeding a city, he says he would prefer hundreds of smaller farms serving local communities.

Ben Flanner, co-founder of Brooklyn Grange—a rooftop farm project in New York City—shared a similar approach in his own keynote speech. One of the project's two farms is in a building with a café on the ground floor, from which the farm collects coffee grounds and vegetable trimmings to use as compost.

Both organizations look at waste management as resource management, and say they avoid whenever possible using industrial fertilizer which may contain harmful chemicals.

Concordia political sociology professor Satoshi Ikeda stressed the importance of eating

organically during the CFC's panel. He explained that as food is the primary determinant of a person's health, bringing organic, non-GMO food to students should be a top priority.

Although Ikeda admitted it wouldn't be possible to create enough food to feed all Concordia students through initial urban agriculture initiatives by the university, he added they could nonetheless serve a greater purpose.

"By creating many gardens, we would put pressure on the industry to change," he said.

Concordia economist Marguerite Mendell spoke about the larger implications of urban agriculture and alternative economics.

"Rather than harvest food, I'd like to harvest some ideas," she said.

According to Mendell, on a larger scale, Western economies must do away with the neoliberal model of laissez-faire, free market economics and instead embrace a more social and cooperative economic model. She told attendees of her experience at a meeting held by the European Commission, where the host declared it in the best interest of Europe to seek a new economic paradigm.

Espace/Vie/Emploi, an employment centre in Montreal, was praised by Mendell as the kind of inclusive institution that gets results.

Other institutions taking action on the issue of food sovereignty—such as the vegan soup kitchen the People's Potato and the anti-capitalist grocery store Le Frigo Vert—echoed the economic need to level the play-

ing field by subsidizing or paying entirely for healthy and sustainable meals.

After all of the speeches and panel discussions, conference attendees broke apart and participated in two-part discussion groups. During the first segment, they brainstormed broad responses to the question, "How do you go about developing a better food system at Concordia?"

Participants came up with answers such as "collective value shift," "productivity" and "thinking of waste management as resource management."

During the second part of the discussion period, attendees came up with more specific ideas on how to change the food system at Concordia. One group suggested a brewing and fermentation co-operative, where students would craft their own beer.

Another group said the current for-profit Java U café on the mezzanine of the Hall Building must be replaced—as it is currently expected to be—with a student co-operative when the company's lease runs out. They said the new co-op should be supplied with food grown in the Concordia Greenhouse and urban agriculture initiatives at the Loyola Campus.

Before Java U took over the space in 1998, the second-floor housed the Mezz Café, a student-run endeavour that closed because it wasn't profitable.

Photo Alexandre Hureau

The 21st Century is Here—But What About Quebec's ATI Laws?

Panel Debates Government Transparency and Access to Information



Five panellists discussed the public's right to access government documents at Concordia on Feb. 4.

by Aneil Prasad @aneilprasad

A panel of government officials, journalists and activists debated government transparency and the right to information Feb. 4 at Concordia's Samuel Bronfman House.

"The failure of federal and provincial government to move toward greater access to information is born from [a disagreeing] attitude of mind," said Concordia journalism professor Alan Conter to an audience of about 40 people.

"What guides the thinking is an attitude of mind rather than a set of written rules," continued the media law and ethics professor. "The commissioners generally want greater improvements, yet are powerless to draft new legislation."

The panel was organized by Concordia's School of Community and Public Affairs to discuss the public's access to information from the government.

Quebec's Access to Information Act was voted into law in 1982, and since then all other provinces and territories have adopted similar ATI legislation.

Since its inception on the national level, the Supreme Court of Canada has declared freedom to information to be a fundamental part of one's right to freedom of expression, protecting it under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Under federal law, the right to information is balanced with an individual's right to privacy and each request is examined on a case-by-case basis.

Yet, with 30 years having passed and the state of collection and distribution of information having shifted so radically in the wake of widely available information on the Internet, there have been calls in recent years to renew and strengthen ATI legislation.

According to Conter, the calls from journalists and advocacy groups to reform the legislation have been steadily increasing over the past few years.

Teresa Carluccio, administrative judge for the Commission d'accès à l'information du Québec—the provincial access to information tribunal—says that every year there are over 1,000 applications made to the Commission alone.

She says that according to the law, every person in Quebec has the right to demand the government for public documents, regardless of citizenship status.

Public documents are defined as any piece of information, whether words, sound or images, that have been created, collected and stored by the Quebec government.

But Jonathan Brun, co-founder of Montreal Ouvert, a citizen's action group that has successfully lobbied the Montreal city government to launch an open-data policy, says the inflexibility of the current legislation hinders the citizenry from being informed.

Also, since the provincial ATI legislation has largely remained unchanged since 1982, Brun asserts the laws need to be revamped in order to get them in line with the pillars of the digital age: open and shared informa-

tion routed across the World Wide Web.

But Mike de Souza, a reporter specializing in energy, environment and infrastructure issues who was laid off by Postmedia News as a national political correspondent the day before the panel event, says the web hasn't entirely changed things for the better.

"In the past, if you asked an official a hard question, they would be pressured to answer on the spot," he said. "With the Internet, one can now reply, 'Can you send that to me in an e-mail?'"

"In this way more questions from journalists are ignored."

According to De Souza, from the federal government's sanctioning of the tar sands, to climate change and the factors leading up to the Lac-Mégantic disaster, ATI requests were able to shed light on the real truth.

"We wanted to know: What happened at Lac-Mégantic? Through the ATI, we found that there was a directive in certain departments to ignore access to information requests, recommending to focus on other issues."

However, De Souza echoed other panelists in calling for updates to ATI legislation, explaining that often even when requested under ATI the truth is still easily concealable under the current legal framework.

"Typically, when the government doesn't wish to reveal something, they say that the matters are 'under consultation' or a matter of national security," he said.

Photo Derek Munn

Briefs

by Erin Sparks @sparkserin

Man Dies in Overnight Stabbing

Montreal's third homicide of the year occurred Sunday night when a 48-year old man was stabbed outside Saint-Laurent metro station, CBC Montreal reported. The man, who suffered multiple stab wounds, died in hospital. Police have no suspects so far, but have said they are meeting with a woman they believe to be a key witness. While police investigate the area, St. Dominique St. between Ste. Catherine St. E. and de Maisonneuve Blvd. is closed.

Bixi For Sale

Bike-sharing company Bixi is for sale, the *Montreal Gazette* reported Monday. The company filed for bankruptcy protection on Jan. 20, and hopes to sell everything but maintain its Montreal branch. Mayor Denis Coderre is expected to make an announcement regarding the future of the company in Montreal in the coming weeks. The city is still owed \$31.3 million from Bixi. All bids for the company must be made by March 10.

Construction Contracts Inflated by Union Intimidation

The price of construction projects on the North Shore of Montreal were inflated by as much as 30 per cent as a result of intimidation, vandalism and threats, the Charbonneau Commission heard Monday according to Global Montreal. The provincial corruption inquiry heard from investigator Michel Comeau, who said that the region's shady practices meant that contractors were forced to add 20 or 30 per cent to the total cost of their projects to appease allegedly corrupt unions. Comeau said most of the region's projects were done under the direction of provincially-owned Hydro-Québec.

Orders to Turn Away Patients at Jewish General

The Jewish General Hospital has been told by the Parti Québécois that they must once again refuse treatment to off-island patients, and that they must instead tell them to seek treatment where they live, the *Montreal Gazette* reported. The order extends to those seeking treatment for cancer, despite the hospital's comprehensive cancer centre, the first of its kind in the province. Those in need of a second opinion or receiving treatment for research purposes are exempt from the policy, which was put in place to ensure the hospital does not go over budget.



The Sky's the Limit

Skysmith Cinedrones Bring Cinematography to New Heights

by Alejandra Melian-Morse
@AMelianMorse

No one can deny that modern technology is reaching unimaginable new heights—but when it comes to film, this statement can be taken literally. Drones have now been introduced to the cinematography scene, and Skysmith Cinedrones is flying them down an artistic path.

Tim Zafir, a Concordia graduate who majored in Communication Studies with a focus in film, has been at the forefront of this new cinematic technology, growing out of his love for flexible camera movement.

"Me and some of my mates were always interested in camera movement particularly, so we were building cable cameras and cranes and dollies and little robotic heads and whatnot for filming and getting cooler and cooler shots every time," he said.

Although it began as just an interest, Zafir's experimenting, and the ideas that went along with it, brought his work to the forefront of contemporary mobile-operated

camera technology.

"In the last two years, the multi-rotor popular name drones have come into the [amateur] filming world and even more recently into the professional filming world," he said.

"In the past [professionals] have had the budget to shoot with helicopters and whatnot so there hasn't really been too big a need, but now we're able to get really close with the shots and get really intimate scenes then pull out really far to show breathtaking landscapes.

"That's a new technique that never really existed before in cinema."

Cameras Roaming the Skies

Skysmith's filming drones are remote-controlled flying machines with a mounted camera and a small CPU inside, attached to various types of sensors. A gyroscope keeps the drone balanced and stabilizes the camera, the barometer stabilizes the altitude and a GPS keeps it on course.

Zafir was able to coordinate with Canada's first drone manufacturer, DronExperts, to solicit

the resources to get Skysmith off the ground, so to speak.

"I met a commercial pilot and he was building multi-rotor helicopters more for the purpose of industrial uses and lower-end filming of weddings and things like that," Zafir said. "I came to him with the need of building bigger, badder machines so we can put bigger, badder cameras on there and get shots that have never been seen before in cinema."

With DronExperts as a resource, Zafir and Granet have been able to concentrate more on the artistic side of production.

"I like the idea that DroneExperts and Skysmith are brothers in the same family," Zafir said. "They're helping us with the technologies and the resources we need to grow as an artistic company.

"But at the end of the day, technology is technology and it's nothing without the humans behind it," he continued. "I'm more concerned with creating the teams and pushing the artful uses of this technology instead of focusing on the dollar."

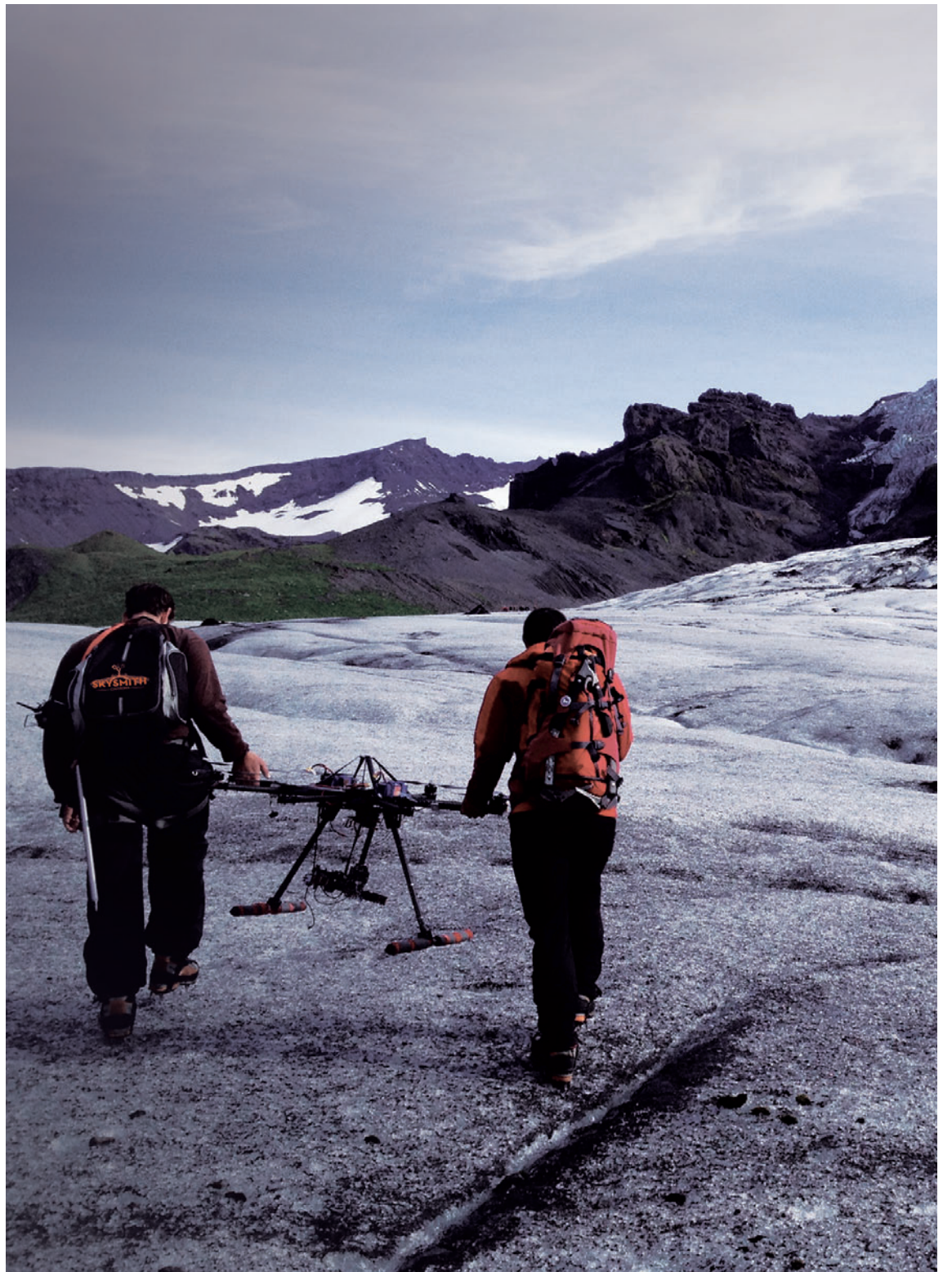
All New Possibilities

Skysmith sees more potential for drones than just capturing breathtaking cinematography.

Because much of the footage captured by their machines is so rare to attain, it has a lot of power, and to Zafir it offers the opportunity to do a lot of good.

"What really attracts me is any opportunity for us to get into the frontier locations," said Zafir. "For instance, Ben and I are planning on going down to Patagonia to film a bunch of aerials for the conservation projects fighting the foreign hydroelectric dams that are coming in there and wanting to dam up the Patagonian mountain region between Chile and Argentina.

"It's one of these last wilderness frontiers that is somewhat untouched by man and there are people down there wanting to protect it," he explained. "The problem is they don't have a massive voice because there are so few of them and it's far away from the rest of the world, so we want to go



Tim Zafir and his team testing drones in Montreal (left) and Iceland (right). Photos courtesy of Skysmith Cinedrones

down there and give them images that will really speak to the hearts of the public."

But beyond their power for change, drones also aid cinematographers in their own exploration.

"It's exciting—when I was standing there on this glacier in Iceland last year with a bunch of ice climbers and mountain guides and we were flying across this glacial tongue," Zafir said.

"For the first time they were seeing images and new routes through this glacier which they could now go through. So we were pioneering, we were basically seeing images and opportunities in these incredibly rugged landscapes that have never been seen before."

But the company knows full well that untrodden trails will make for hard hiking, both physically and financially.

"It's new. As far as the industry goes, we're not just trying to work; we're also trying to create our job at the same time," said Zafir. "We're paving the path while we're walking on it."

The Unseamly Truth

New Montreal Play Takes On Gender and Class Issues in the Fashion Industry



by Gabriel Wainio-Théberge

Anyone familiar with American Apparel's sexual harassment scandals in the past few years will likely find a parallel with In-finitheatre's latest production about the perils of being a woman in the fashion world's highly sexualized workplace.

Unseamly, co-directed by Concordia alumnus Sarah Carlsen, aims to unzip this hidden world and bring it into the harsh light of accountability.

"I have friends who were on the pre-jury who didn't even know if they wanted to come see it," said Carlsen. "But the reason they don't want to see it is the reason I want to put it on."

The play tells the story of a young woman, Malina, who consults legal advice over whether to accuse her former boss, international clothing company CEO Ira Slatky, of sexual harassment—not unlike the numerous lawsuits former American Apparel employees have filed against the company's CEO, Dov Charney, over the past few years. The majority of them have been settled out of court or dismissed.

Slatky appears to be a charming man and even a "revolutionary machine of human justice" at first, according to Carlsen, who uses ethical labour practices and lets workers at all levels of his company contact him directly.

But when it comes to women, especially Latina ones, Slatky has no scruples about exploiting and abusing their sexuality to sell his products and more.

Carlsen says Slatky is "a man who makes you laugh in one second, and scares the shit out of you in another"—not to mention a "man-child archetype" given huge authority by wealth and entrenched privilege—who could likely remind those in the audience of leering bosses they've had in the past.

"Why couldn't you have picked that script about the girl with the dead father?" Carlsen recalls being asked. While bleak itself, the alternative script at least carries the possibility of a simple, universally satisfying resolution that raises no unsettling ques-

tions about the society we live in.

That, however, is not the kind of play Carlsen wants to put on.

"Good art actually does separate people, it doesn't just bring them together," Carlsen mused. She says some people will walk out of *Unseamly* thinking they've just seen "smut," while others, she hopes, will recognize in its themes things they've thought but never said, most notably in the female audience members, where it might hit closest to home.

"You couldn't produce this without a woman director or co-director, it's just not possible," she said.

Unseamly tells a story that is around us every day. It asks, as Carlsen puts it, what if the girl on one of those billboards you see on every block—the girl with the perfectly toned body, wind-blown hair and vaguely orgasmic expression—stepped out of that picture and told you what she had to do to get there?

Lead actress Arlen Aguayo Stewart says she has worked in the fashion industry and found it every bit as exploitative and discriminatory as it is portrayed in the play. She auditioned on a recommendation from a friend, recognizing its relevance to her own experience.

Stewart is also interested in bringing her perspective as a Latina woman to the foreground. The play's protagonist is Latina like her.

"What I really want to bring to it is a more realistic depiction of a woman from a Latino background. She's the only woman onstage for a lot of the time so I just want to give her as much strength as possible," Stewart said.

Carlsen hopes the new production will ignite a dialogue on the issue.

"Almost every rehearsal, tears come to my eyes," she said. "This play is waking me up again."

Unseamly // Feb. 11 to Mar. 9 // Bain Saint-Michel (5300 St. Dominique St.) // Tuesdays to Saturdays 8 p.m., Sundays 2 p.m. // \$20 students, \$25 regular

Graphic Graeme Shorten Adams

GENERAL ELECTION VOLUME 35

THE LINK
CONCORDIA'S INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1980

All of *The Link's* editorial positions will be open.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Make the big calls and represent the paper. Through rain, snow and sleepless nights, you lead the troops of this paper to greatness.

COORDINATING EDITOR

Direct the newspaper's online content and stay on top of the news, fringe and sports cycles. Take on the mountain of the Internet through cunning social media strategy.

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Conduct the paper's orchestra of ideas, quips and shouting. Make sure everything comes in and gets done on time.

NEWS EDITOR

Direct the newspaper's online news content. Get to know the school's politicos, learn the acronyms, chase the truth and be ever vigilant.

ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Help the news editor avoid insanity for as long as possible, and fill whatever cracks need to be filled.

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Put your magnifying glass to the week's happenings and dig deeper. Curate long-form pieces that give context to the university's breaking news.

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Expose all that's cool and underground. From gallery openings to indie bands, you're the go-to for what's on the up-and-up in the arts scene.

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The online, daily counterpart to the fringe arts editor, you tell Concordia what's worth seeing and what to avoid.

SPORTS EDITOR

Find the story behind the game. Give a voice to the athletes, and highlight the great wins and tough losses for all of Concordia's teams.

SPORTS ONLINE EDITOR

Be the ultimate source of knowledge for all things Stingers. Fast stats and game recaps are your wheelhouse.

OPINIONS EDITOR

Separate the crazy from the coherent and curate one killer Opinions section. Hunt down the strong debaters and the columnists and give them a page to fill.

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Design the visual language of the newspaper. Lay it all out and make it look pretty.

PHOTO & VIDEO EDITOR

Capture the ups and downs of Concordia life. Snap photos and video footage of Stingers games, protests and everything in between.

GRAPHICS EDITOR

You're the illustrator extraordinaire. Find a way to visualize the tough stories and the easier ones, with the help of some great contributors.

COPY EDITOR

Keep articles out of synonym hell and catch all the mistakes, big and little. Make the boring stories exciting, and the exciting stories even better.

COMMUNITY EDITOR

Organize events, plan parties, get people in the door and make sure they stay. Be outgoing, approachable and love *The Link*.

Friday, March 7, 2014
4:00 p.m.

The Link Office (1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W., H-649)

In order to be eligible, candidates must be current Concordia students who will be returning in the fall. Applications for the positions must be posted by Feb. 28 at 4:00 p.m. in the *Link* office, H-649. Applicants must have contributed to at least four (4) issues during the winter semester of Volume 34 and must include a one-page letter of intent, as well as three (3) contribution samples.

For more information, send an email to editor@thelinknewspaper.ca

THE CONTENTERS

Eligible to Run: Alex Callard, Liana di Iorio, Caity Hall, Julian McKenzie, Verity Stevenson and all current *Link* masthead.

One More Contribution Needed
Matt Garies and Flora Hammond.

Two More Contributions Needed
Jocelyn Baxter, Emily Campbell, Noelle Didier-jean, Olivia Jones, Athina Lugez, Alejandra Melian-Morse, Shaun Michaud and Rowena Ren.



the Sustainability Issue

Sustainability, as a concept, is one of foresight—ensuring that we aren't giving generations down the road a raw deal in regards to our social systems, our economy and most notably, our environment.

We're living in a rapidly changing world: The Earth's population has exploded in the last hundred years, and while technology has alleviated many of our ills, we're a long way from establishing a truly sustainable society, accelerating full-steam into the great unknown of the future.

Looking at sustainability through a local lens, Concordia and our fellow Montreal universities could be promising leaders in changing school policies to adapt to the world's ever-changing circumstances. If you've ever wondered what you personally can do to contribute to our university's sustainability efforts, look no further—you can get the scoop on divestment (pages 4 and 5), our local greenhouse (page 3) and Concordia's sustainability ratings (page 8) right here in our special issue.

"Sustainability" may have turned into an over-used buzzword, but the idea will always remain relevant—securing humanity's continued prosperity on Spaceship Earth.

—Coordinators Colin Harris,
Jake Russell and Michael Wrobel

The Link is produced on recycled
paper using vegetable inks.





Get Ready for Action

CONCORDIA'S SUSTAINABILITY ACTION FUND SPONSORS UNIVERSITY'S GREEN IDEAS

by Jake Russell @jakeryanrussell

The greenhouse, the People's Potato, Le Frigo Vert, the list goes on—just about anywhere you turn on Concordia's campuses, sustainable hotspots are waiting for you to peruse. They don't run on biofuel, however—even these green projects and others yet to be initiated need money to get started.

Enter the Sustainability Action Fund.

Established in 2007 after an energizing youth summit entitled *Less Talk, More Action* and hosted by Dr. David Suzuki and former U.S. president Al Gore, the fee-levy-backed student-run organization supports and provides resources to projects at Concordia dedicated to sustainability.

"We've funded over 150 projects in the past seven years, and we've given out close to half a million dollars in project funding," said Mikayla Wujec, a Concordia geography alumnus and SAF's chief executive officer since August of last year.

"What's really great about the fund and something that I really enjoy is that there's a seriously crazy diversity of projects. [...] It's really neat to see all the different things that are emerging at Concordia and how successful they've really been."

Along with sponsoring endeavours such as Divest Concordia and biodiesel initiatives, SAF also has an eye on community-based, educational and social justice projects as well.

"It's funny, the majority of our projects usually fall within the social justice community and education and research categories, even more so than the energy, technology and environmental categories, which is a bit unusual because you wouldn't necessarily think that," Wujec said.

"But especially at a university like Concordia, where there's such amazing student presence and a really strong activism within the community, we at SAF and our board of directors really feel that it's important to create these spaces to educate people on issues that affect the long-term health of any sort of community or population. So gender issues, indigenous issues, the whole spectrum of social justice is important," she added.

Cinema Politica, Alternative Libraries, ASFA Talks, the Sexual Assault Resource Centre and even last month's JMSB MBA International Case Competition are among the community-based efforts that SAF supports.

Wujec explained that while the case competition didn't directly revolve around sustainability, the organizers behind it showed a real dedication to making the event as sustainable as possible by providing local foods, composting, ensuring competitors took shuttle buses rather than taxis and making the entire operation go paperless, which SAF was pleased to support.

Power to the Students

For Concordia's overall sustainability, Wujec said Concordia has shown tangible progress but still remains far from ideal. SAF has embarked on a three-year in-house project called the Sustainability Curriculum Project to gather the full scope of Concordia's sustainability situation, and compiled their initial findings last summer.

"We did an audit of all the courses in the arts and science faculties to figure out how much sustainability is actually taught, which was a very rigorous project over the summer," Wujec said. "And it turns out that just about nine per cent of courses have sustainability in them, and that's social sustainability, environmental sustainability, economic sustainability [...] so that's a fairly low amount for a university."

Wujec went on to say that in a Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (or STARS) assessment, Concordia received an "F" for its curriculum.

But all is not lost: SAF has gotten a significant amount of DIY sustainability projects off the ground since its inception, powered by the will of the students to help transform their school.

"Concordia has definitely been improving over the years; there's a lot of hope within the university, at least from my perspective, to increase the sustainability across the board," Wujec said.

"It's student groups, student organizations that are really setting the tone for sustainability and making all this headway for the university. It's starting to happen where other aspects of the university are starting to hear that and really take it to heart and understand that it's a really important issue."

While SAF is most known for funding other organizations' projects, the group also puts on events themselves, the most recent being the Winter Teaching and Learning Festival held from Feb. 5 to Feb. 7.

The Festival opened with a keynote lecture by Dr. Thomas Homer-Dixon, a professor at the University of Waterloo, who Wujec says "is potentially the smartest man I've ever seen."

Homer-Dixon gave a stirring talk on climate change and the horror of "triage," the brutal choices that doctors make on the battlefield to determine which of the wounded receive care and which are left to die.

It's a philosophy Homer-Dixon said could be applied to entire countries in the not-too-distant future as extreme weather events, rising temperatures and overpopulation begin to squeeze the Earth's natural resources and carrying capacity.

Sustainable Campus, Sustainable World

For those looking to get involved with SAF or pitch an idea, Wujec says all are welcome to discuss grant applications and work through the process together, and internships with SAF are available through the sustainability minor and most recently through the geography and political science programs.

"It's a great experience for students because they get to learn about grant applications in a really supporting environment, because [our] job is to help people write a really great grant [application]," Wujec said.

"So it provides some really good hands-on experience that will hopefully be useful in the future, and then if they do get funded, it provides really good project management experience, financial accounting and things you maybe necessarily don't even learn directly in undergrad."

When asked about the future of sustainability at Concordia, Wujec had an optimistic vision.

"As an institution, we're really a microcosm of a society. We're a huge community—40,000 people—and we have a really amazing opportunity to set the bar for what it could look like to have a sustainable society and university," she said.

"I think that SAF plays a really important role in that because we're a specific place where you can come and start a project to further that goal."

"It's really important to take advantage of the possibility for project coordination, the experience, and to contribute to something that will have a really measurable impact on campus," she continued.

For more information or to get involved, email saf@concordia.ca.

Photos courtesy Sustainability Action Fund



Soil and Herbs Above Our Heads

STUDYING GROWING AND LEARNING IN CONCORDIA'S GREENHOUSE

by Verity Stevenson @vestevie

As university students, sunlight is hard to come by this time of year. The sun rising earlier and setting later now than during the summer months is worsened by the fact that we're trapped indoors during daylight hours due to school and perhaps work.

From December to March, we ditch reading on the balcony for the fluorescent lights of our school library and wilt like starved flowers into the wee morning hours. This is the time for the Hall Building's oasis—which may sound like an oxymoron—to flourish.

"[There's] fresh air, you know, with all these trees and sunlight so you don't get Seasonal Affective Disorder, and [there's] mad vitamin D [...] and people can be very friendly so the atmosphere is very good," said Concordia greenhouse social events coordinator Sheena Swirlz.

The greenhouse on the Hall Building rooftop is known for its inviting study space, but also has its roots in a number of urban and market gardening efforts across the city, benefiting the likes of local schools and food co-ops like the People's Potato and Le Frigo Vert.

One of the literal ways the greenhouse does that is with its seeding project, where its members and interns meticulously watch and help grow 10,000 vegetable seeds during their very early stages. They then distribute the sprouts to community organizations for people to continue to grow and eventually eat.

"It starts as this tiny box of seeds that come in the mail and ends up with a plant on every single surface of the greenhouse and then I don't see them again, but [...] then they grow up and they produce food for people," said greenhouse collective coordinator Jackie Martin.

In 2006, weighed down by maintenance costs and a mold problem, the greenhouse was to be torn down. But students involved in Sustainable Concordia and the Geography Department urged the university to salvage the space, and the glass structure

atop the Hall Building survived, as well as everything inside it.

Sustainable Concordia went on to separate the space into two areas: one for growing plants, including fruits like papaya, vegetables and micro greens; the other, an area for socializing.

The space is composed of two of the many adjacent glass rooms that make up the structure. Plants shading and surrounding the seating area are nourished by sunlight pouring through the glass walls and ceiling.

On Mondays and Fridays, students can book the social space in the greenhouse from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. for events or gatherings like club meetings, dinner parties and film screenings. So at night, during one of their "5 à 7," those plants may be entwined with lights that follow the backdrop of the city's skyline.

"It's just a really nice, beautiful space that you can use for yourself," says Martin.

Farming in the City

Since gaining its 12-cent student fee levy and becoming its own collective last spring, the Hall Building's greenhouse has initiated a number of new endeavours, including an increase in its weekly events and workshops.

The fee levy constitutes the group's main revenue stream and amounts to about \$75,000 a year. Before, it relied on grants and a five-cent levy as part of Sustainable Concordia.

Other revenue includes its City Farm School internships, which cost \$450, but help cover "two workshops, as well as the training you will receive from the CFS coordinators," according to the CFS website.

The CFS is "an initiative to develop partnerships and expertise in urban agriculture on the island of Montreal," according to its website. It fulfills its mission by working with the English Montreal School Board, building gardens in their school yards and hosting before and after-school workshop

teaching students basic urban gardening skills.

"One of the goals of these school yard gardens is to help build the students' confidence and give them the opportunity to make a difference in their schools and in their own lives," said school yard gardens coordinator Marcus Lobb at this year's CFS launch on Thursday.

Part of the project includes the Loyola City Farm, a vegetable garden at the Loyola campus. The farm is being expanded in the upcoming growing season with a 70- by 100-foot plot "which will double what he have right now," announced Martin at the Thursday launch.

The new plot will allow the city farm to grow all of the People's Potato's garlic, ridding them of the need to buy garlic from outside Canada.

Also part of the collective's initiatives is a series of workshops held every second Thursday, which range from building "living necklaces" made of plants, to moss graffiti, to zine-making, to mushroom growing.

"People always have a lot to contribute to every workshop," said Swirlz, citing the mushroom growing workshop as an example with people bringing their own tricks to the table.

Swirlz is one of the collective's five part-time staff members. The two other staff members work full-time.

In the growing section of the greenhouse, in the winter, the greenhouse's members grow microgreens—small trendy leaf vegetables used to enhance a meal's look and taste—as well as salad greens, beans and house plants, which are sold at the popular house plant sale every year. Then, there are the perennials—plants that live over two years—of the greenhouse's tea atrium.

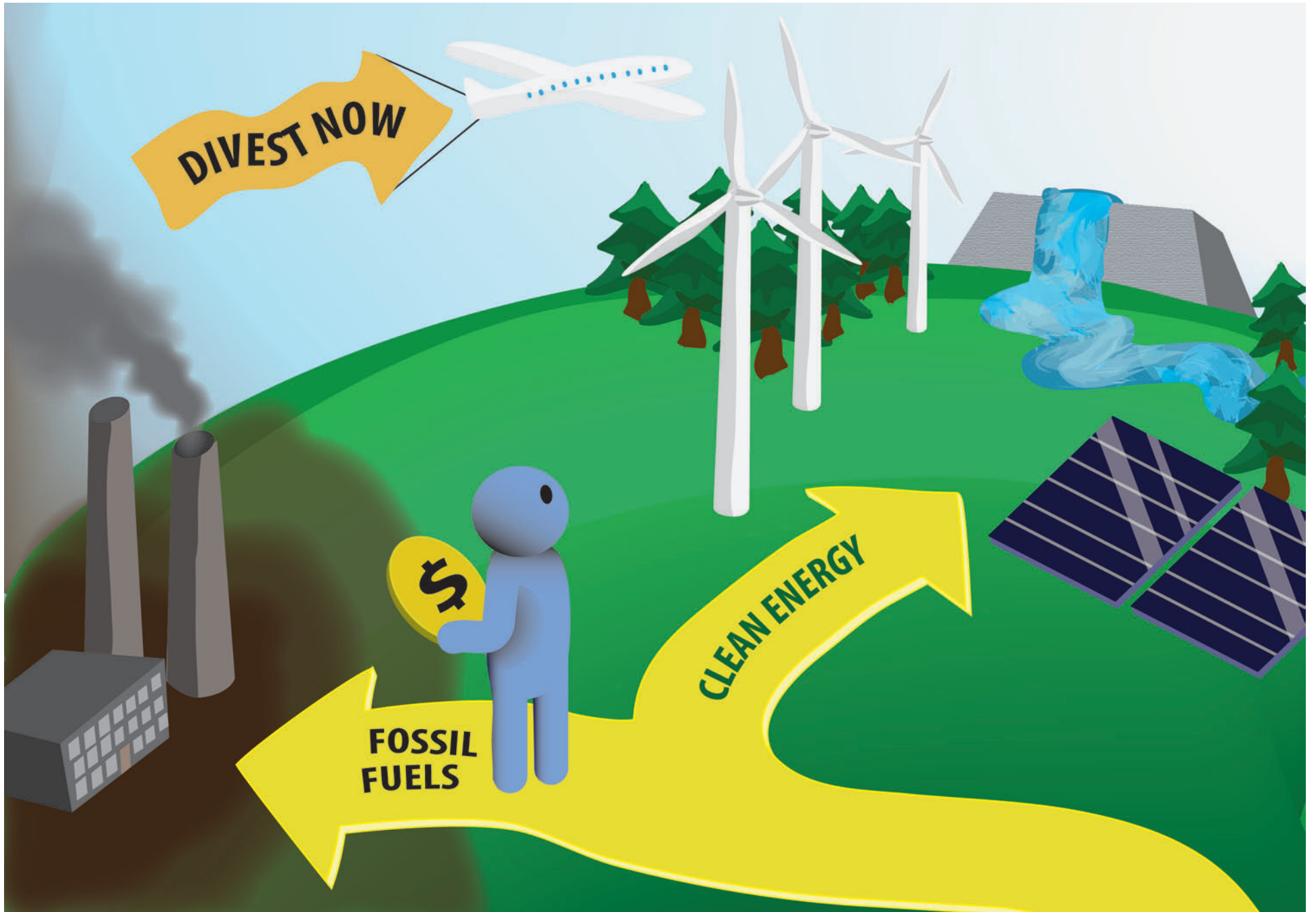
"It's so about the community aspect, it's not closed-off, it's not about the production or the money-making factor—we serve the community and get people involved," said Swirlz.

Photo Brandon Johnston



Divest Now

WHY DIVESTMENT IS NECESSARY FOR CONCORDIA TO FLOURISH



by Aneil Prasad

Divestment. It's the talk of the town, the word on the street. It's the subject of workshops, the screen print on gym shirts, and the latest petition making the rounds. What's all the fuss about this newest addition to our vocabulary?

We've all heard the word "investment," which means to place a known amount of money, time or other valuables into a situation, wait and receive greater returns than what you put in.

One can quantify some investments, such as stocks in a company, while other investments, such as time spent with a loved one, enter the realm of the unquantifiable.

Out of all kinds of investments, however, financial investments are perhaps those that can have the greatest impact on our collective well-being. This runs the gamut from the goods we buy, to the services we provide, to the companies we invest in.

Needing large amounts of capital in order to run factories and pay labourers, the vast majority of large corporations are publicly traded. If a publicly traded company makes a profit, investors who own shares of the company may receive a portion of its profits in the form of dividends, provided that the company chooses not to reinvest all of the profits in its own expansion instead.

In addition, if the company is doing well, its shares will likely increase in value on the stock market. These are the financial incentives to invest in profitable industries.

But what does this have to do with Concordia? According to a 2011 financial audit, Concordia University has investments worth over \$100 million. And this publicly available audit also indicates that nearly \$12 million of that \$100 mil-

lion was invested in various oil, gas and pipeline companies.

It's understandable why Concordia University invests in fossil fuel companies: As the bedrock of our globalized industrial economy, fossil fuel companies are among the most profitable on the planet.

We use fossil fuels in every aspect of modern life, from the growing of food through personal transportation to the manufacturing of practically everything. Thus the power and influence of fossil fuels companies such as BP, Shell, Exxon Mobil and TransCanada are not to be underestimated. In purely financial terms, investing in fossil fuels is a wise decision.

Now, descending from the abstract realm of neoliberal economic doctrine, let us take a hard look at the reality on the ground. First off, climate change is happening. Every year, the Arctic ice sheet grows smaller in area. Global average temperatures break records set the year before.

On every coastline, the sea level creeps up, centimetre by centimetre. The number of species falls as forests catch fire, deserts claim the grasslands and rivers run dry. This is happening as we speak.

According to the fifth Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, there is a 95 per cent certainty that humans are the cause of most of the global warming observed since the 1950s.

The report lists the burning of fossil fuels as the primary contributor. It adds that tropical deforestation is the second-biggest contributor, as we cut down the forests that render the air breathable on this planet. If we are to preserve the livability of our birthplace, the only home we have, then we must replant the forests and stop burning fossil fuels as quickly as possible.

This is where divestment comes in. Divest Concordia, a student-run environmental justice group, is spearheading the campaign to have Concordia University divest—the antithesis to invest—any and all holdings in fossil fuel industries, working working to persuade the university's administration to pull its money out of polluting industries and reinvest in emerging technologies.

Divest Concordia aims to achieve this by convincing the university to form a Committee for Responsible Investment. This committee would oversee the divestment from fossil fuels and reallocation of funds to clean energy companies.

This shift in capital is vital if we are to maintain our modern technologies while developing a low-carbon energy economy.

To me, continued fossil fuel development is an act of madness, plain and simple. To invest in companies perpetrating fossil fuel development is to be an accomplice in a great crime, one that history will judge harshly. Considering the present state of our planet Earth, with climate change already devastating populations around the globe, to divest from fossil fuels is the only logical choice.

Yet even higher than reason, higher than logic, is the love for my family and friends, for the children I hope to have, for all the living beings that share our Earth. We have a moral responsibility to act now, for the gravity of our situation demands nothing less.

That's why I call on Concordia University to completely divest from fossil fuels by 2015, and to finally invest in a clean future.

Graphic Ekavi Beh



Universities Unite Across Borders Against Fossil Fuels

STUDENT DIVESTMENT GROUPS SWEEP ACROSS NORTH AMERICA

by Geoffrey Vendeville @geoffvendeville

When experts from around the country arrived at McGill University on Feb. 8 for a conference on oil, energy and Canada's future, they found the doors were locked.

Masked protesters had fastened shut the front doors and barred the fire exits. The McGill Institute for the Study of Canada, which organized the conference, moved the event to another location until the so-called "lockout" ended quietly a couple of hours later.

On university campuses around the world, most students have found a different way to take a stand against fossil fuels and climate change. Instead of staging lockouts and sit-ins, they have taken aim at universities' investment portfolios.

"In general, we [at Divest McGill] tend to think of strategies that will serve to build support on campus, as well as increase the visibility of this support to key decision makers at the university," said Divest McGill member Kristen Perry.

McGill's divest group is not alone. There are campaigns across the globe, including one at Concordia, to encourage universities to divest their holdings from fossil fuel companies and reinvest in greener alternatives. Divest campaigns have sprung up on 18 Canadian campuses, over 300 in the U.S., and a handful of others worldwide.

Advocates of divestment say it's wrong for universities to profit from shares in the worst carbon-emitting corporations. Student-led divest groups are hoping their campaigns will hurt the fossil fuel industry as past divestment movements undermined apartheid in the '80s and big tobacco in the '90s.

So far, the U.S. divestment movement has had mixed success. Nine American colleges have agreed to divest. However, Harvard University, which has the biggest endowment fund in the country totaling around US\$32.7 billion, has refused.

No Canadian university has pledged to go fossil-free.

Concordia and McGill

That comes as little surprise to Anthony Garoufalidis Auger of Divest Concordia.

"There's not as much openness to divestment here as there is in the U.S.," he said. "[Canadian universities] are more rigid in the way they operate."

He added that it would be "hard to imagine" Concordia following the example of colleges in the U.S. that agreed to divest, such as Unity College in Maine. The first fossil-free American university, Unity reported last May that it lost no money from its decision to divest its \$14.5-million fund.

"We don't have the same kind of activism in our [Canadian university] administrations," Garoufalidis-Auger said.

Divest Concordia has still managed to persuade the university to rethink its investment practices. In January, student reps sat down with board members of the Concordia University Foundation—the university's \$136.6 million endowment fund—and the university treasurer to plan an ethically responsible investment policy.

The policy is still in the very early stages, but Divest Con-

cordia is hoping the university will soon start screening companies based on their environmental track record.

"We are dealing with complex issues that require a lot of discussion and exchange," said university spokesperson Chris Mota.

The push for divestment has received the support of the Concordia Student Union, which officially endorsed Divest Concordia in September.

At McGill, student efforts for divestment have run up against a wall. In February 2013, they submitted two petitions with 750 signatures each to the Board of Governors to divest from fossil fuels, oil sands and the Plan Nord, but they were rejected.

In years past, McGill has divested from tobacco and Burmese businesses. But the McGill Board said the university relies on its fossil fuel investments and that it doesn't meet the board's standards for divestment based on "social injury."

"Whether you like it or not, Canada is a resource-based economy," board member Michael Boychuck told *The McGill Daily*. "That's a fact. It's not going to change any time soon."

Divest McGill isn't taking no for an answer.

"Through proving the failure of the 'official' process we can justify beginning to escalate our campaigns and start putting strategic pressures on other change-making avenues in the university," said Divest McGill member Kristen Perry.

Although not involved in the lockout of the Faculty Club during the oil conference on Feb. 8, Divest McGill—and its counterpart at Concordia—supported the protesters.

The Divest McGill campaign has been endorsed by three major student societies representing 30,000 students.

"It's definitely progressing," said Amina Moustaqim-Barette, a member of Divest McGill. "As we get more info about alternative investments and more support on campus, the idea is becoming more popular with the administration as well."

Divesting Harvard

If American colleges have generally been more open to divestment, Harvard is an exception.

Members of Divest Harvard estimate that the university has invested US\$32.6 million in the top 200 fossil fuel companies.

In November 2012, 72 per cent of undergrads voted in favour of divestiture. Harvard President Drew Faust responded with an open letter: "I do not believe, nor do my colleagues on the Corporation, that university divestment from the fossil fuel industry is warranted or wise."

"The endowment is a resource," she continued, "not an instrument to impel social or political change."

Divest Harvard disagrees. Coordinator of the group, Chloe Maxmin, says "divestment is one of the only campaigns in the modern climate movement focused on true systemic change."

"Divestment is important because it is bypassing a government that is inefficient and clogged by the power of the fossil fuel lobby," she wrote in an email to *The Link*. "It's going straight to the source of carbon extraction and political gridlock: the fossil fuel industry."

Photos Tamim Sujat, courtesy of The McGill Daily

CONCORDIA

\$115 900 000
Endowment fund total

\$9 170 000
Oil & Gas

\$2 600 000
Pipelines

Source: 2011 Financial Statements.
More recent data unavailable.

MCGILL

\$1 149 000 000
Endowment fund total

\$26 300 000*
Fossil Fuels

Sources: McGill quarterly performance report Sep. 2013 and Divest McGill.

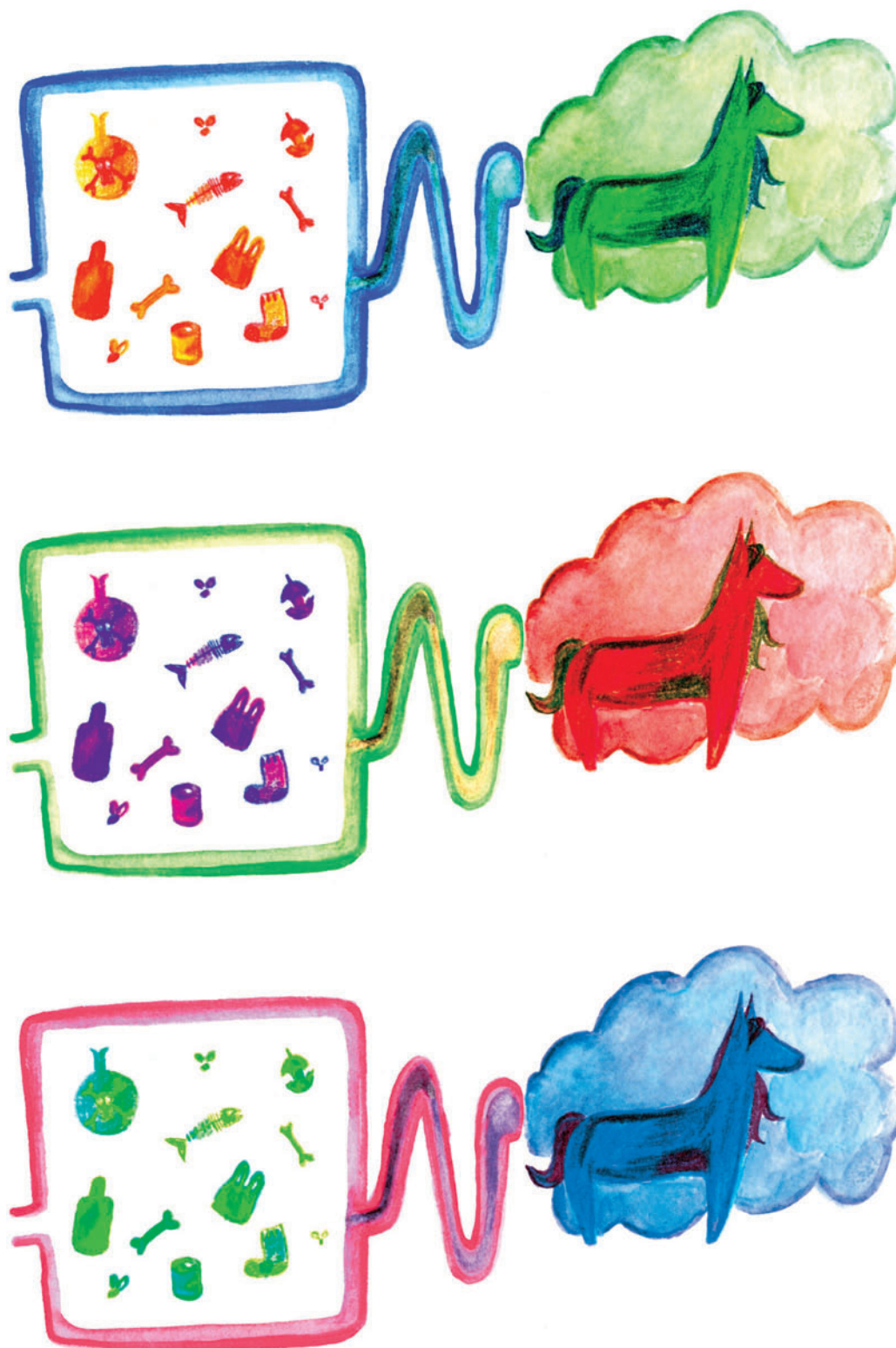
HARVARD

\$32 700 000 000
Endowment fund total

\$32 600 000*
Fossil Fuels

Source: Harvard Crimson and Divest Harvard

*Only includes investments in the top 200 fossil fuel companies, so estimates may be conservative.



Reimagining Waste

MONTREAL BIO FUEL PLANT DEVELOPS GAME CHANGING WASTE MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY

by Emily Campbell @emkcampbell

Engineers at Montreal-based Terragon Inc. want to change the way the world views its trash—to consider it rather, as fuel.

Their growing team has developed a machine they fondly refer to as MAGS, a micro auto “gasification” system that functions much like an incinerator. Garbage is fed into the machine, but eliminating trash is only half the point.

“Instead of putting fuel into our system we put waste, that generates this gas, then we can combust this gas just like we would any fuel,” says Lean Lobry, an engineer at Terragon.

The machine first heats the trash to temperatures as much as 700 degrees Celsius. This heating process converts most of the waste into gas, which is fed into a second chamber, where it is ignited to create energy.

This energy is currently used to power the machine itself and act as a water heater.

MAGS was developed specifically for large boats and to power remote habitats like military camps or resorts, which struggle to dispose of their waste responsibly.

“Waste management is a very complex process which has the perception of being a

simple matter of throwing things in the garbage and a truck takes it away to the dump,” says Wayne Moore from the Department of National Defense.

“That is fine at a municipal level, but at sea it is a much different story where space is very limited, hence why MAGS is being considered as a potential technology suitable for shipboard use.”

MAGS is considered a green technology because for every 100 pounds of trash, it produces five pounds of non-toxic ash that can be used as fertilizer. Its emissions are filtered through a “scrubber,” which cleans the harmful components from the exhaust and can be fed back into the machine in order to create more energy.

The machine has been through many phases of testing.

“We tested those in the field at the Fairmont Le Château Montebello hotel, on the Maersk Laser supply ship, and we also put it with the Royal Canadian Navy and the U.S. Marines,” said Andrew Korney, communications director at Terragon.

“They’ve become our biggest champions for MAGS. They’ve literally tested it, put

everything you can imagine into it. [...] These were very successful field demonstrations.”

But the machine isn’t perfect yet. It still struggles to handle moist waste, which takes longer to gassify and can stall the machine. Personnel manning the machines are therefore forced to dry their waste, sometimes in buckets on the hull of ships before feeding it into MAGS.

Terragon is also working on developing technology to harness the energy produced to not only heat water, but convert it into electricity that could be used for other purposes.

Eventually Terragon developers would like to see MAGS technology reach residential markets, to dispose of trash and conserve energy used for heating water in every home.

“Thing is, this is such radical way of thinking for the Marine industry alone, that this will [be] a total game changer,” said Korney.

Others are skeptical about the revolutionary impact MAGS technology could have.

“I think it’s a neat technological development; it seems that it is able to treat the trash in a way with having emissions that are within standards, which is good,” said Faisal Shennib, environmental coordinator at Concordia.

He considers MAGS as more of a band-

aid solution to waste management problems that need to be addressed from the source.

Through his research on better waste reduction strategies for Concordia, Shennib has concluded that rather than creating so much waste, producers and consumers of goods need to be more mindful of the kind and amount of packaging is being created to contain and ship what we consume.

He explains his attitude towards waste management with an analogy.

“You’re standing near a river and you see a baby in the water, and you’re alarmed that there’s a baby in the water, it’s drowning, it’s crying. You go to rescue the baby, and then babies just keep coming,” he said.

“Eventually you need to start asking yourself, ‘Who’s putting the babies in the water?’ So we need to think that way about waste, right? Stop the baby throwers.”

For Shennib, the best way to manage waste is to create less of it, but for the garbage we do make, MAGS technology may become a viable solution that can be a source of energy, too.

Graphic Flora Hammond

Welcome to the Sprawl

ANALYZING THE SPREAD OF THE SUBURBS IN MONTREAL

by Michael Wrobel @michael_wrobel

For Lissa Marcotte, there's truth in the marketing slogan "*La vie est belle à Mirabel*." In this suburban municipality on the northern periphery of the Montreal metropolitan region, where suburban comfort meets the tranquility of farm country, life is good.

"We like the neighbourhood very much," said the social worker and mother of three boys aged 7, 5 and 2. "Families know each other. Between neighbours, we'll help each other. [...] There are also a lot of children. There's lots of parks with playgrounds and skating rinks, they're well-maintained."

Mirabel has grown considerably in recent years. The last Canadian census found that its population increased by no less than 21.2 per cent between 2006 and 2011.

"There are two schools that are at full capacity and there's talk for next year of building a third school," said Marcotte, who has lived in the suburban municipality for 12 years and has seen the influx of families profoundly transform the area. "It's truly an economic boom."

But not everything in the suburbs is as rosy as it seems. The suburbs are not nearly as environmentally friendly as their lush, green lawns may lead the unsuspecting city-dweller to believe.

Understanding the Phenomenon

Canada is most accurately described as a suburban nation, according to a study published in the *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* last fall.

In "Suburban Nation? Estimating the Size of Canada's Suburban Population," Queen's University urban planning professor David Gordon and policy analyst Mark Janzen found that suburban areas account for roughly 80 per cent of the country's metropolitan population and around 66 per

cent of the national population in 2006.

Montreal is no exception. Data provided by Gordon to *The Link* shows that 76 per cent of the metropolitan region's residents lived in car-dependent suburban areas within Montreal or neighbouring suburban municipalities in 2011.

It wasn't always that way.

"The urban sprawl in both metropolitan areas—in Quebec City and Montreal—increased sharply from 1951 to now, and the sharpest increase happened in the past 30 years, between 1986 and now," said Naghmeh Nazarnia, who recently completed her master's thesis on urban sprawl at Concordia.

"The results [of my research] show that the degree of sprawl in the Montreal metropolitan area increased 11-fold."

The Environmental Impact

For McGill University urban planning professor Raphaël Fischler, it's important to acknowledge that urban sprawl has enabled many people to achieve the dream of a home of their own.

"What people generally negatively call urban sprawl has in fact been an incredible contribution to the middle class in terms of giving the middle class access to single-family housing," Fischler said. "The middle class cannot afford a single-family house or a semi-detached house, something with a yard and of a decent size, inside the city."

Still, all of this residential development on the edges of the metropolitan region has its disadvantages.

"The environmental reputation of suburbs is a bad one, and it's deservedly so," Fischler said. "They are clearly not a gift to the Earth in terms of [their] carbon footprint."

In some parts of the metropolitan region, suburban development has undercut rich ecosystems such as wetlands, destroy-

ing natural habitats—a definite "no-no," according to Fischler.

Fischler adds that energy consumption of suburbanites is also higher than that of city-dwellers.

"If you have a single-family home, it takes more energy to heat than a condominium, because it has four walls and a roof exposed to the elements," he said.

That may one day change, however.

"If solar energy, wind energy and other forms of alternative energy become [more viable], it may be that every home in the suburbs can become energy-independent and everyone will drive cars that are using renewable energy, and this question [of sustainability] will become moot," he continued.

"However, at this point [in time], when we still rely on a lot of fossil fuels, it is clear that cities have a lower carbon footprint than suburbs and that suburbs involve more energy expenditures per [housing] unit."

Curbing the Sprawl

Though he doesn't dismiss land use policies entirely—he is an urban planner by profession, after all—Fischler argues that the Montreal metropolitan region's carbon footprint can be reduced more easily through technological innovation than through better metropolitan planning.

For instance, he said increasing the fuel efficiency of cars by 50 per cent would significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Achieving a similar reduction in the region's carbon footprint through planning tools would require 50 per cent of the individuals living in single-family homes to move into more energy-efficient condos or apartments—something that would be considerably more difficult to bring about.

But even if technological progress might be a shortcut to environmental sustainabil-

ity, Fischler said there are other reasons to curb urban sprawl, including the fact that cities promote greater inter-generational and social equity.

"In the suburbs, I think the question of car dependency has a tremendous impact, and that's not a technological question," he said. "That's a question of the fact that under 18 and over a certain age if you become less physically fit, you cannot drive."

"It's possible that, in the future, automated vehicles à la Google will solve that problem and that any youngster of 12 and any elderly person of 92 can hop in a self-driving electric vehicle, but for the moment, the suburb is not a very equitable place in many cases for poor people, for the elderly and for the young."

Reducing the amount of urban sprawl may also help to protect the forests and farms left in Greater Montreal.

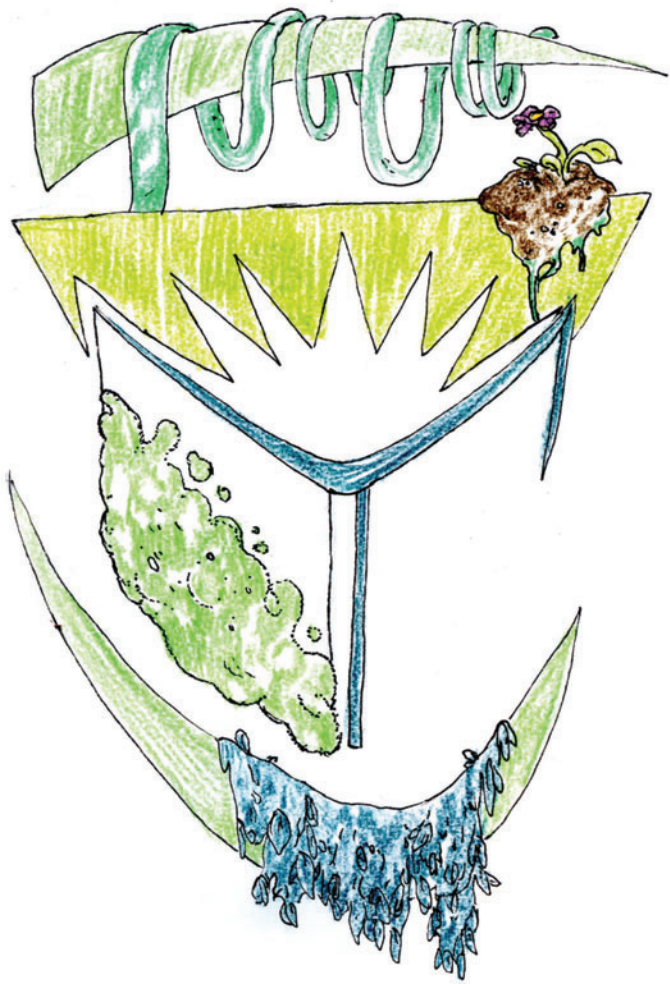
Progress is being made, according to Fischler, who says suburban municipalities are increasingly taking public transit into account in their development plans, seeking to build denser neighbourhoods around transit hubs.

As for the environment, Claude Marois, a geography professor at the Université de Montréal, says the laws already in place to protect agricultural lands in the metropolitan region are working, and that he's also noticed a shift in the mentality of suburban municipalities on the importance of conserving agricultural areas and forests.

"Despite all the urban pressures, agriculture is continuing relatively well," Marois said. "Since the 1990s, more and more municipalities are realizing that the protection of the environment becomes a factor in enhancing their attractiveness to residents, that quality of life and improvement of the environment go together."

Photos Michael Wrobel





Towards a Greener Concordia

REPORTS WEIGH IN ON CONCORDIA'S SUSTAINABILITY

by Colin Harris @ColinnHarris

At an institution as big as Concordia, in order to be truly "sustainable," long-term efforts must come from all corners of the university.

Concordia has conducted three sustainability audits since 2003, the most recent report having been released in 2009. The next Concordia Campus Sustainability Assessment report is in the works, looking at everything from governance to construction to course content.

For transportation, a draft of the forthcoming report notes that about 90 per cent of students and 80 per cent of employees are using "sustainable commuting" practices, including public transport, the shuttle bus or active transport such as cycling or walking.

At Loyola, security officials use two electric cars, which are permitted to drive on the streets surrounding Loyola, to travel on campus. Loyola has two electric car charging stations for public use on the campus.

The report draft, dated Jan. 30, 2014, recommends that the Concordia shuttle buses use B20 biodiesel fuel, which is 20 per cent biodiesel, compared to the two per cent biodiesel fuel mix the university currently uses. According to a 2002 Environmental Protection Agency report cited in the draft, switching to B20 fuel would reduce CO₂ emis-

sions by 12 per cent, compared to just 1.5 per cent for the B2 fuel currently in Concordia shuttle buses.

However, the report notes the source of biofuel is critical to its recommendation.

"Biodiesel produced from conventional food crops that could have otherwise been used as food is considered an unsustainable source," reads the draft, noting the source of biofuel should not create competition with "animal or human food supply."

Biofuel driving up the price of food is a source of controversy for the clean energy source, in that it crowds out developing countries from growing their own crops.

Another recommendation is to add an emissions surcharge for certain vehicle parking fees to encourage more use of hybrid and electric cars, and provide additional funds for shuttle and bicycle projects. Signage for Montreal's no-idling bylaw is also recommended to be placed "throughout [Concordia]'s community."

Concordia's newest building has qualified for the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design silver rating. The Centre for Structural and Functional Genomics is the third Concordia building to receive LEED certification—the current standard for sustainable building.

The ratings system was developed by the U.S. Green Building

Council, and since 2003 the Canada Green Building Council has been evaluating buildings using this ratings system. The Molson Building also has silver certification, and the PERFORM Centre has gold certification—the second-highest ranking after platinum.

While these new buildings are getting the LEED seal of approval, the report draft recommends that clearly defined sustainable practices should be worked into Concordia's Environmental Policy.

The policy currently states that "green building principles" must be used for construction and renovation projects, including "optimal energy efficiency, life-cycle costs, high indoor environmental quality, and reduced water consumption."

The university also has two "green roofs" to use as garden space, however the report draft notes the roof on the MB Building is not currently being maintained.

The renovations of the outside of the GM Building will reduce its natural gas consumption—which Concordia uses to heat its buildings—by 65 per cent, according to a 2011 report by Pageau Morel et Associés Inc. The D.B. Clarke Theatre also now uses LED light bulbs, which use less energy than the old incandescent ones.

Graphic Graeme Shorten Adams

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Rooted in Music

Orchestral Folk-Pop Band Lost In the Trees Share Their Organic, Creative Process

by Athina Lugez

Ari Picker wanted to give his band “a dramatic feel to it” when he decided upon the moniker Lost in the Trees in 2007. Coincidentally, it’s the band’s music, not its name, that is helping keep Canada’s wilderness alive.

The five-piece orchestral folk-pop group from North Carolina is venturing through the forests of Canada this month and contributing to their growth, pairing with non-profit organization Tree Canada and handing out free tree saplings at their Canadian shows.

“I worked in the music industry for almost two decades and met some amazing and inspiring people along the way,” said Richard Walker, head of communications at Tree Canada. “One of them works for [Lost in the Trees]’ Canadian label and posted a song of theirs on Facebook.

“After listening to it, I instantly loved the band,” he continued. “I contacted my friend and asked [if they could do] something with Tree Canada during their Canadian leg of the tour.”

A trip to Canada was the last thing on Picker’s mind when he first started the band seven years ago.

After graduating from Berklee College of Music in Boston with a formal training in classical music, Picker wanted to burst out of his academic bubble with the creation of

Lost In the Trees.

“After college I was listening to a lot more contemporary music and seeing a lot of bands at festivals, so I was less isolated musically speaking,” said Picker, the band’s writer and lead vocalist.

Picker started by writing songs in his bedroom and sending out demo CDs to record companies. He eventually formed the band with friends he had met in the orchestral music program and they were signed to Trekk Records.

Over the years, Picker says the band has changed in significant ways, with the size fluctuating and plenty of experimentation done within different musical genres.

“Our past records were influenced by classical music, because that’s what I was studying and I was in my classical bubble,” he said.

Their newest album, *Past Life*, set to be released on Feb. 18, has minimalist modern sounds and puts an emphasis on rhythm and groove.

“This album is more abstract and open. We tried to be more hands-on and develop an emotional reaction from listeners, versus having a particular theme like the past album,” Picker said. “The purpose was having fun making this record during the process.”

The band’s intention was to move away from themes of loss—their previous record,

A Church That Fits Our Needs, released in 2012, was largely fuelled by Picker’s mother’s suicide in 2008.

“I think each album is its own musical experiment. I wanted the process to be more external whereas the others were a lot more personal and intentional. The goal was to make this album more spontaneous, fun and free,” he said.

“So it turned out a lot more pop. The song structures are based on loops and beats. So, it’s definitely more groovy, and a little fancy and certainly a lot more powerful to play live.”

Picker explained that many of his inspirations came from paintings he had seen in museums, poems he had written and books he had read.

“It was assembled like a collage—copy-paste kind of lyrical experiment versus every line having a ton of weight,” he said.

A Bag of Trees

Aware of the large carbon footprint a touring band leaves behind, Lost in the Trees decided to collaborate with non-profit green organization Tree Canada for their Canadian tour this month.

“Music has many purposes, and one of them is a responsibility not only for the creation of art but to leave a positive impact in other ways,” said Picker.

Tree Canada’s mission is to maintain a healthy environment in the true North by sustaining urban and rural forests. Thus far, the group has planted over 80 million trees across Canada through different and diverse programs. Their goal is to raise awareness of the importance of trees to all age groups.

At the end of every concert during their Canadian tour, tree saplings will be distributed to fans. They are then encouraged to nurture the saplings into thriving trees, in order to replenish the Earth with life.

Walker said that Tree Canada collaborating with Lost in the Trees was “the perfect vehicle to engage a demographic through something they love.”

“We even have a contest set up for people who pick up saplings to post how they will care for the tree and where they will plant it. Prize packs will be given to the best plans in each city,” Walker said.

“The best thing to do is to plant it in a pot with some soil, water it every other day until the ground thaws and plant in your backyard or neighbourhood park. The best times to plant are late April to mid June and late August to late October,” he added.

Lost in the Trees + All Tiny Creatures // Feb. 22 // Il Motore (179 Jean Talon St. W.) // 8 p.m. // \$14 door, \$12 advance



Fringe Calendar FEB. 11 TO FEB. 17 by Riley Stativa @wileyriles

MUSIC

1 Kalmunity Live Organic Improv
Feb. 11
Les Bobards (4328 St. Laurent Blvd.)
8 p.m.
\$5 before 8:30 p.m., \$8 after 8:30 p.m.
Witness the Kalmunity Vibe Collective, a talented group of poets, singers, dancers, musicians and artists of many disciplines, as they perform a live show through spontaneous composition and performance. Culturally rich and unique, this is music, it's storytelling, and it might just be an experience unlike anything you've seen before.

2 Ska-lentine's Day Show 2014
Feb. 14
TRH-Bar (3699 St. Laurent Blvd.)
9 p.m.
\$8 advance, \$10 door
Roses are red, trumpets are brass, it's a Valentine's Day ska show, and it's gonna be a blast! Rock and skank out to your heart's content with Killawail, The Lost Ideas, Viva Bertaga, and the Dirty Skankers at Montreal's crazy skateboarding bar.

ART

3 Oscillations of the Visible Vernissage
Feb. 12
Leonard and Bina Ellen Art Gallery, LB Building (1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W.)
5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Free admission
Olivia Boudreau's vernissage will feature live performance and 14 video installations. Once known for her static shots and video work, this exhibit takes a directorial turn, as her work has evolved to introduce both narrative and interaction.

CINEMA

4 Nickel Flicks: The General
Feb. 13
The Wiggle Room (3874 St. Laurent Blvd.)
8:30 p.m.
Five cents
Although it's difficult for young folks to imagine a time when they weren't paying with their future first born or a vital limb for a bag of popcorn and a movie, this event returns us to a simpler time when a flick only cost a nickel. This screening of Buster Keaton's *The General* will feature a pianist playing the live score with a menu of popcorn and classic cocktails, sure to help you out of your Great Depression.

5 Le Cagibi Cult Movie Night - The Gate + Chopping Mall
Feb. 16
Le Cagibi (5490 St. Laurent Blvd.)
7:30 p.m.
Free admission (donations accepted)
Just because your romantic Valentine's Day fondue plans didn't pan out doesn't mean you can't get your fill of cheese—with some classic '80s horror flicks. Three kids accidentally unleash a plague of pint-sized demons upon the earth in *The Gate*, while in *Chopping Mall* eight teeny boppers are locked in a mall after hours, and must survive the night while under siege by three out of control, killer security robots.

THEATRE

6 Tonight We Play "A Soggetto"
Feb. 12 to Feb. 16
F.C. Smith Auditorium
(7141 Sherbrooke St. W.)
8 p.m. and 2 p.m.
\$5 student, \$10 regular
This "metatheatrical" play features the force and talent of students within Concordia's Department of Theatre. It explores the lines and limits that separate real life from fiction, and actor from character. A comedy and a drama, featuring actors and puppetry, the show is set up to challenge conventions and redefine theatre altogether.

LITERATURE

7 Pitch Black
Feb. 15
CinémaMathèque québécoise (335 de Maisonneuve Blvd. E.)
7 p.m. and 9 p.m.
\$15 advance
This unique bilingual poetry and spoken word event immerses the audience in total darkness, so that they can focus on the content and calibre of the pieces being performed by over 15 artists. Listening without seeing creates a heightened relationship between the speaker and the people hearing them without other sensory distractions. You merely adopted the dark—these poets were born in it, molded by it.

OTHER

8 Boots Riley
Feb. 11
CSU Lounge, 7th Floor Hall Building
(1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W.)
7 p.m.
Free for students, \$5 for non-students
American musician, vocalist, writer and activist Raymond "Boots" Riley is coming to Concordia as part of a speaker series being put on by the CSU, CCSU and SHAC. Active in the music industry for over 20 years, Riley has worked with organizations such as the Women's Economic Agenda Project and the Black Panther Alumni Association, and will let his political voice ring out across campus.

T	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1			2			
	3					
		4			5	
	6					
				7		
8						
Check out more listings online at thelinknewspaper.ca/calendar						

Fringe Giveaway

TICKETS TO BURLESQUE SHOWS
AT THE WIGGLE ROOM

After great, yet random deliberation, the winners of this week's Fringe Giveaway have been chosen!

Congratulations Matt Hum, you'll be on the guest list for Dr. Wiggle's Burlesque Emporium: Love Potion Edition with a friend on Friday, Feb. 14 at 9 p.m. at The Wiggle Room (3874 St. Laurent Blvd.).

And congratulations Derek Andela, you'll be on the guest list for the Blue

Valentine Burlesque show with a friend on Saturday, Feb. 15 at 9 p.m., also at the Wiggle Room.

Thank you to everyone who entered, and be sure to check out our Fringe Giveaway video at youtube.com/linknewspaper, like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter to catch the next giveaway!

Happy Reading Week, Concordia!



Curtain Call for Captain Concordia

Stingers Captain George Lovatsis Reflects on Career in Maroon and Gold

by David S. Landsman @dslands

When Concordia's men's hockey 2013-2014 season reaches its end, most players will be reflecting on a season filled with ups and downs, and looking forward to how they can improve for next year.

Months away from completing his final year of eligibility as a Stinger, team captain George Lovatsis will have things other than hockey on his mind.

"I'll definitely miss being with my teammates every day, going downtown and to the Old Port," said the Leisure Sciences major. "Montreal is such a unique city, I hope when I'm finished that I'll be able to visit often."

A native of Markham, Ont., the 24-year-old centreman played three seasons in the Ontario Hockey League for the Kingston Frontenacs and Barrie Colts before joining the Stingers in the winter of 2009.

"I came to Concordia because I had some old teammates on the team," said Lovatsis. "I also wanted to come to Montreal because it's a great city," added the Toronto Maple Leafs fan.

Throughout his career, Lovatsis has collected some impressive statistics.

He's played a total of 121 games as a Stinger and has amassed 116 points, averaging nearly a point a game. He has also scored 51 goals, with his 50th goal coming in the Stingers' 5-2 win over Nipissing University on Jan. 11.

"It was a nice accomplishment to get [50] goals," said Lovatsis. "I hope I can get [more] before the season ends."

Lovatsis, who spent previous years as an alternate captain, was elected team captain in a unanimous decision by coaches and teammates at the beginning of the season.

"It was an honour to get the 'C' this year. It was a great learning experience and it truly allowed me to develop leadership skills," said Lovatsis. "This is the youngest team I've had in my five-year career, so I did my best to guide and direct my teammates in the right direction for the future."

Under his leadership, the team has clinched a sixth-place finish in the Ontario University Athletics East Conference. It will mark the first time the Stingers make the playoffs since the 2010-2011 season.

But that season isn't the most memorable one for Lovatsis. Rather, his proudest

moment came a season later, when he amassed 20 goals and 20 assists to finish the season with 40 points in just 28 games, fourth-most in the entire Canadian Interuniversity Sport that year.

"That's a difficult task to accomplish, and not many players can say they were at the top of the league in goals and points," he said.

The standings isn't the only place Lovatsis has left his mark.

"This is my third year playing alongside George, and every year he's been taking on more and more of a leadership role," said teammate and alternate captain Kyle Armstrong. "He's a great guy to look [up to] and I hope to be as great a leader as him when I'm done."

Olivier Hinse, who also holds the title of alternate captain, had similar praise for his captain.

"[George] is very mature, a real leader on and off the ice," said the sophomore. "He may not always talk the most, but when he does, we listen. We have a very strong relationship and we work really well together."

When Lovatsis is the one in need of guidance on or off the ice, he usually turns to his girlfriend and former Stingers women's hockey team captain Mallory Lawton.

"I go to Mal for advice all the time," said Lovatsis. "Whenever I need to, I'll ask her for her advice. She does the same when the roles are reversed."

Lovatsis is especially grateful for the guidance of head coach Kevin Figsby.

"It's been great. He's given me all the opportunities and chances in the world," said Lovatsis. "I'm extremely thankful for that."

What's next for Lovatsis is up in the air, but he's mulling over some of his options.

"I want to go to teachers college in Ontario and try to become a teacher," he said. "If there is a hockey opportunity, either locally or abroad, I would like to pursue that as well."

Until then, Lovatsis has two regular season games and the playoffs left to play.

"I'm anxious to get [the playoffs] started," says Lovatsis. "I think if [goal-tender Antonio Mastropietro] plays well, and all the other pieces fall into place for us, we have a real shot of going far."

Photo David S. Landsman



Stingers captain George Lovatsis hopes to lead Concordia deep into the playoffs as his CIS career comes to a close.

A 3,000 km Assist

Stinger Mukiya Post Brings Sports Gear to Caribbean Youth with Pass the Ball

by Julian McKenzie @therealestjmac

On the court, Concordia Stingers forward Mukiya Post has been counted on as a scorer, averaging a team-leading 14 points a game this season. Off the court, however, Post has been delivering more assists in hopes of allowing others the chance to score.

Mukiya is the co-founder of Pass the Ball, a non-profit organization that provides impoverished youth in the Caribbean with sports equipment. Post founded the organization with his brother, Keanau, who plays basketball at the University of Missouri, and also gets help from his mother and sister.

Since last summer, Post has been collecting basketballs, soccer balls, rugby balls, and other sports gear from businesses, sports centres and schools, donating all of the equipment to Jamaica.

"As long as [they're] in usable condition, I take them," said Post.

Growing up in Jamaica after moving from British Columbia, Post had the idea to give back to his community during his high school days in B.C. However, Pass the Ball only went into motion last year, when Post took a year off from his studies at Bishop's University.

"It's a process for sure," he said. "Collecting the stuff, registering the charity, paperwork. I really dedicated myself to doing that and getting myself off the ground."

"I always wanted to give back somehow."

Post had begun playing basketball at the age of seven, but was forced to stop playing when he moved to Jamaica, as his community didn't have basketball rims to shoot at



or basketballs to shoot with.

"Where I lived, we had a field and a soccer ball and that's it," he said.

"We played barefoot."

Post remembers childhood friends who were unable to follow their athletic dreams because of lack of equipment, whether it was for soccer, volleyball or basketball.

"They were very talented soccer players," he said. "They couldn't play on the soccer team because they didn't have soccer cleats."

Post has already donated a batch of sports gear including balls, cleats, nets and jerseys to

his primary school and a boy's orphanage in Westmoreland, a province in Jamaica where Post was raised. He also plans on sending another shipment of equipment to Jamaica in March and one to Haiti later in the summer.

"When I was younger, if somebody brought a soccer ball it was a huge difference in the community," said Post. "It was a big deal."

Post aims to eventually deliver shipments of sporting goods to other countries in the Caribbean, every three months through his initiative. He would also like to organize an association that could fund sports teams to

play against each other across countries in the Caribbean.

Post is also interested in organizing free sports camps for kids, where he'd teach basketball and other sports skills.

"I think sports are a great thing in children's lives," he said. "So I think it's a great way to give back to them."

For more information on how to donate to Pass the Ball, visit passtheball.ca.

Photo courtesy of Pass the Ball



PHOTO OF THE WEEK

Photo by Natalia
Lara Díaz-Berrio.

The sun sets in Rigaud, Quebec over a fresh blanket of January snow.

Submit your photos to
photo@thelinknewspaper.ca



Stingers centre Zach Brisebois fights for ball possession over Bishop's Gaiter Mike Andrews in Concordia's 64-61 loss on Saturday afternoon.

Sports Briefs

The Latest News On Your Concordia Stingers

by Yacine Bouhali @MyBouhali and Julian McKenzie @therealestjmac

Men's Basketball

After reviving their season with a six-game winning streak, the Stingers men's basketball team has now lost three straight games. Following a loss to McGill on Jan. 25, the Stingers dropped Friday's game against the Bishop's Gaiters 73-64, and despite a valiant comeback effort on Saturday, they lost to the Gaiters again 64-61. The Stingers now have a record at 6-6 and sit in third place in the Réseau du sport étudiant du Québec conference. Next they'll host the UQAM Citadins on Thursday at 8 p.m.

Men's Hockey

Amassing three precious points last weekend, the Stingers were able to clinch their first playoff spot since 2011-2012. The first point came from a 4-3 shootout loss to the Ottawa Gee-Gees on Friday, while the next two were the result of a 4-2 win on Saturday over the UOIT Ridgebacks. The Stingers now retain the sixth spot in the Ontario University Athletics East Conference with a 9-13-4 record. After facing the RMC Paladins on Friday, the Stingers will play their regular season finale this Saturday against the Gee-Gees at Ed Meagher Arena. Puck-drop is at 2 p.m.

Women's Basketball

The Stingers women's basketball team has now won six straight games after sweeping a home-and-home series versus the Bishop's Gaiters. After winning Friday by a score of 55-49 on the road, the Stingers beat the Gaiters at home Saturday by a final score of 68-41. The Gaiters have yet to win a game this season and sit in last in the Réseau du sport étudiant du Québec conference at 0-12. As for the Stingers, they sit a game behind the first-place McGill Martlets in the RSEQ with a 9-3 record. Next they'll host the UQAM Citadins on Thursday at 6 p.m. in the Concordia gym.

Women's Hockey

Despite suffering back-to-back losses over the weekend, 3-2 to the Ottawa Gee-Gees on Saturday and 6-2 to the McGill Martlets on Sunday, the Stingers still managed to clinch a playoff spot thanks to a Carleton Ravens loss on Sunday, clinching fourth place in the RSEQ for Concordia. This season will thus mark the Stingers' first postseason appearance since the 2010-2011 season. They'll host the Gee-Gees in their last game of the regular season this Friday, at Ed Meagher Arena. Puck drops at 7:30 p.m.

Photo Matt Garies

Check out Stingers game summaries & our weekly sports podcast, The Buzz, at thelinknewspaper.ca/sports

BOXSCORES

WEEK OF FEB 3. TO FEB. 9



Sunday, Feb. 9	Women's Hockey—Concordia 2, McGill University 6
Saturday, Feb. 8	Men's Basketball—Concordia 61, Bishop's University 64 Women's Basketball—Concordia 68, Bishop's University 41 Women's Hockey—Concordia 2, University of Ottawa 3 Men's Hockey—Concordia 4, University of Ontario Institute of Technology 2
Friday, Feb. 7	Men's Basketball—Concordia 64, Bishop's University 73 Men's Hockey—Concordia 3, University of Ottawa 4 (SO) Women's Basketball—Concordia 55, Bishop's University 49

UPCOMING GAMES

THIS WEEK IN CONCORDIA SPORTS



Thursday, Feb. 13	6:00 p.m. Women's Basketball vs. UQAM Citadins (Concordia gym) 8:00 p.m. Men's Basketball vs. UQAM Citadins (Concordia gym)
Friday, Feb. 14	7:00 p.m. Men's Hockey at RMC Paladins 7:30 p.m. Women's Hockey vs. Ottawa Gee-Gees (Ed Meagher Arena)
Saturday, Feb. 15	2:00 p.m. Men's Hockey vs. Ottawa Gee-Gees (Ed Meagher Arena) 5:00 p.m. Women's Basketball at Laval Rouge Et Or 7:00 p.m. Men's Basketball at Laval Rouge Et Or



Media File



Two Cents and Trolls

The Thorny Thicket of Online Commenting

by John Delva

You'll probably have some opinions by the end of this article.

Keep them to yourself.

That was the impression *Popular Science* magazine gave its readers after announcing last September it would close the comments section of its website. Opening her editorial with "Comments can be bad for science," then-digital editor Suzanne LaBarre explained that "trolls" were counterproductive to the magazine's work.

"Even a fractious minority wields enough power to skew a reader's perception of a story," she wrote.

Popular Science, of course, is in the minority—most publications out there actively seek readers' feedback. Radio-Canada.ca's online comment section has been up on the entire site since May 2009.

The website's news director, Pierre Champoux, sees the section as a "commitment [...] to hear what's on Canadians' minds." Behind this PR-like answer, though, lies a desire to change a flaw associated with old-style journalism.

"Our television and radio reporters used to work in prescription mode," Champoux added. "We told people, 'Here's what you should know [...],' but we didn't expect to hear back from them."

"With time, our reporters have discovered interaction can be a good thing," he continued. "They used to be afraid of being criticized."

For big publications, creating space for readers to give their two cents can be a

costly ordeal, but none of the organizations that were asked about the cost associated with curating comments gave any figures, citing business reasons.

Some organizations gave a clearer picture of how costly an endeavour comment curation can be, however. According to the Huffington Post, the website employs "the equivalent of about 30 full-time moderators [who] work 24/7/365 in six-hour shifts going through hundreds of comments per hour."

The New York Times has three full-time moderators and 10 part-timers. Champoux estimates two moderators go through Radio-Canada.ca's online comments each hour.

The *Montreal Gazette*, meanwhile, relies on its readers to oversee the website's postings.

"We trust the community to flag us. We're not moderating as much as we're monitoring the conversation. If it goes off track we'll step in," said Mick Côté, the paper's digital editor.

"Step in" entails a comment being flagged and someone, usually Côté, making the call as to whether or not the post should be taken down.

While *Popular Science* may be an anomaly when it comes to shutting out comments entirely, its qualms no less epitomize the difficulties involved in carrying such a section.

In 2012, Gawker changed its commenting policy. Like LaBarre, Gawker founder Nick Denton, too, wanted to keep trolls at bay. Would-be commenters could either register with Gawker's in-house "account option," dubbed "Burner," or log in through their Twitter, Google or Facebook account.

The Gazette resorted to a similar solu-

tion over a year ago by requiring readers to log in from their Facebook account to comment on online stories.

"The previous platform we used allowed for anonymous commenting. Since switching over to Facebook, we've noticed a drop in trolling and inappropriate comments," said Côté.

Radio-Canada knows a thing or two about inappropriate.

"During the 2012 Quebec elections, Option Nationale—which is not a major party—was the most efficient on social media," said Champoux. "I spent an entire evening on Facebook after someone from the party called me out, saying we weren't covering the party the way we should."

"Various people throughout Radio-Canada were inundated with dozens of what seemed to be copy-pasted messages," he continued. "It was clearly the work of some commando who was following the orders coming from social media or someone from the party."

To avoid such conundrums, in March 2011, National Public Radio implemented a policy based on a trial period in which comments made by new users are "reviewed by a community manager prior to the comments appearing on the site," according to an editorial the radio network published on its website.

Then there are times when the section has to be closed altogether for certain articles. Aside from issues related to offensive content, there are also those tied to potential legal ramifications.

Sylvia Stead, the *Globe and Mail's* public editor, felt the wrath of her readers when the newspaper's website closed comments

for a certain Rob Ford article.

"The reason for closing in these cases is to avoid contempt of court, which ensures that all individuals have a right to a fair trial and that right should not be impaired by pre-trial statements or statements during a trial," she told *The Link*. "Our reporters and editors are well trained in what can be printed in legal cases, while members of the public are unaware of the legal principles and rules for criminal cases."

While having comments on one's website may sound like an all-expenses-paid trip to a guaranteed migraine, these opinions may actually have a direct impact on reporters' work, says Champoux.

"A few times we managed to get in touch with people [who commented] and sometimes it enhanced a piece. But we don't do it enough," he said.

Many reporters, already burdened by their publication's requirement to use social media on top of carrying out their main duties, would likely gasp at the idea of adding yet another task to the list—especially after a cost-benefit analysis of such an effort.

At best, comment sections require many resources for very little tangible returns; at worst, they can be thorny and filled with nonsense. This ambivalence is not lost on Champoux.

"We know there's an element of risk carrying comment sections, but it's interesting for us, as journalists, to see what moves people and find out what aspects of our coverage we could elaborate on accordingly," he said.

Graphic Ekavi Beh

Daily Dose of Morose

I've been taking anti-depressants and I'm worried they affect my sexual performance. It's an awkward conversation to have—do you have any advice on how to bring this up with a partner?

—Frustrated and Medicated



My advice on how to bring this up with a partner can be summarized in two words: with confidence.

I recognize that doing so may not be an easy thing. Part of what makes this conversation difficult is that talking about taking anti-depressants will likely lead to a conversation about why you're taking them, so you should consider how you want to respond if this comes up.

Unpacking the reasons you're on anti-depressants may also not be something you're interested in doing if it's a casual partner, since doing so can require a certain level of intimacy. Above all, your comfort level with taking this medication and why you're taking it will affect how you approach this conversation.

It can help to focus on the benefits of sharing this information with your partner. First of all, it's

likely to take some pressure off you. Stressing about not performing the way you want to is a vicious cycle, since it's likely to have a negative effect on your actual performance. If you know that your partner is aware that this can be an issue, you're likely to feel less pressure to perform.

It's also good to consider the relational aspect of sexual side effects. Depending on the issue you're concerned about and the type of relationship you have with your partner, not being upfront about this could actually create tension. For example, the most common sexual side effects reported are related to sexual desire and arousal. You might notice a decrease or absence of sexual desire, or difficulty getting or maintaining an erection or natural vaginal lubrication.

In the context of a relationship, your partner could begin to feel negatively about themselves if they don't know where these difficulties are coming from. If you're repeatedly having these issues, chances are a regular partner has noticed. Talking about this lets them know that there is an external factor, and can help them to be more sensitive and better support you.

For some, these effects will go away or lessen once they've been on the medication for a while, though this isn't the case for everyone. If this issue is really bothering you, it might be worth discussing it with the doctor who prescribed the medication.

There's no guarantee that it can be solved, but sometimes these side effects are just a matter adjusting the dosage or trying a different medication. Though not

everyone is comfortable talking to their doctors about sexual desire or response issues, they're the best equipped to help you manage these side effects.

As a society we are slowly becoming more aware of mental health issues thanks to recent awareness campaigns, but people dealing with these issues still experience stigma and feel ashamed to speak openly about them.

This is unfortunate because a big part of working on that stigma and increasing awareness involves people living with mental health issues sharing their struggles with those close to them. Whether you choose to share this information is entirely up to you, but know that opening up to people close to you can help make you feel more comfortable.

My final advice would be that these things get easier the more

they're normalized, so don't shy away from sharing your experience with people if you want them to know.

This question couldn't come at a better time given that this is mental health and wellness week at Concordia.

There will be many activities happening during the week including workshops, and a fair with kiosks and activities to raise awareness and help with managing mental health issues, so stop by and check them out!

—Melissa Fuller @mel_full

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

Got a quick health question? Just need a resource? Text SexEd at 514-700-0445 for a confidential answer within 24 hours!

Reduce, Reuse, Re-Crossword



by Erin Sparks @sparkserin

ACROSS:

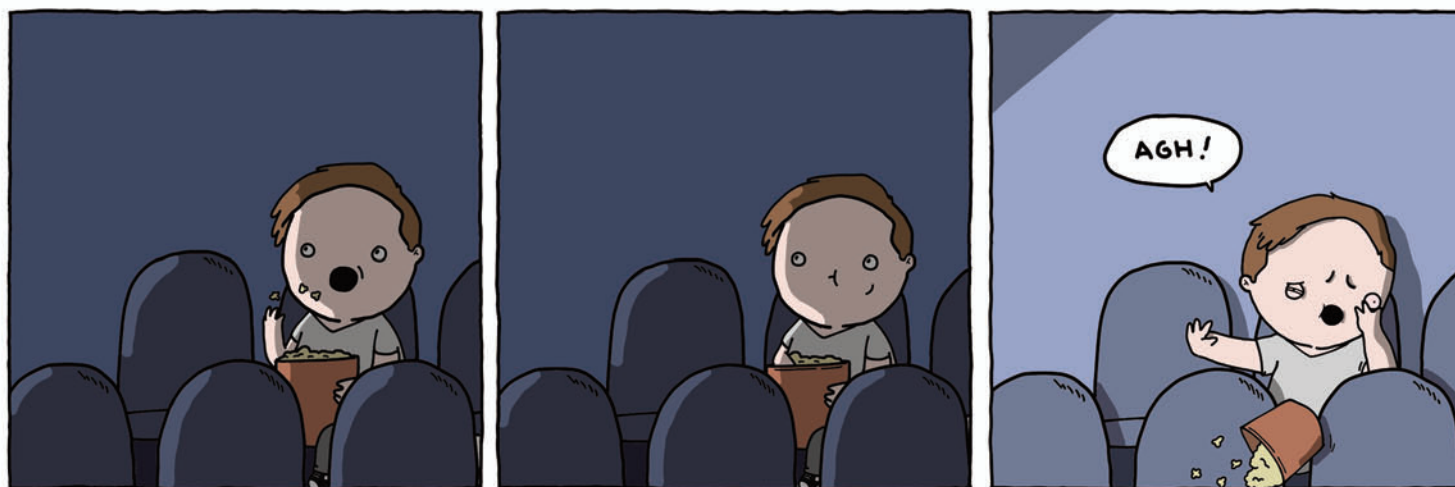
- ▶ 1. This alternative energy source gets its power from arguably the best star in the sky.
- ▶ 2. Keeping these buzzing insects in urban gardens can help boost food production thanks to their pollination efforts.
- ▶ 4. According to the 2014 Environmental Protection Index, this central European country does the best job of protecting the ecosystem and the environmental health of its citizens.
- ▶ 6. This former U.S. vice-president is known for his environmental initiatives. (2 words)
- ▶ 10. The mass production during this major 18th and 19th century phenomenon led to extreme pollution, among other things. (2 words)

DOWN:

- ▶ 1. It might be hard during colder months, but spending less time doing this can help reduce water consumption.
- ▶ 2. The largest known mammal in the world, this sea-faring creature is now endangered. (2 words)
- ▶ 3. These buildings allow plants to grow year round, and also provide a great place to study.
- ▶ 5. In Canada, these threatened marshy areas are home to over 100 species of birds.
- ▶ 7. Our fair city hosted a conference in 1987 that resulted in a treaty to phase out chemicals damaging this part of the atmosphere.
- ▶ 8. Thirty-six per cent of Montreal's household garbage is made of organic material, which can be recycled through this method of waste removal.
- ▶ 9. Home to the largest concentration of plant and animal species on earth, this rainforest has been heavily deforested.

Graphic Graeme Shorten Adams

COMIC ALEX CALLARD



COMIC PAKU DAoust-Cloutier



COMIC JOSHUA BARKMAN



Graphic Caity Hall

Editorial



The Towers of Terror

One certainty within the ever-changing landscape of our academic hub of a city is that there will always be students looking for places to live. Whether from out of town or born and raised on the island, the “finding adequate housing” dance is a limbo many students know all too well.

Recently, more and more companies have been seeking to take advantage of this fact: Private residences, with a bullseye on the backs and wallets of students, are popping up at an increasing rate en masse in Montreal.

These dream buildings offer it all: they’re usually conveniently located downtown, they come fully-furnished and they include appliances, air, heat and the promise of safety. Despite the hefty pricetag, it sounds too good to be true—and often, it is.

Recently, St. Cathy’s student residence, located right by Concordia’s Sir George Williams campus, was reported to have been in the midst of summer renovations that

went on into the fall—well past their scheduled end date. The work went on, with tenants moving into rooms lacking the amenities advertising, come hell or high monthly rent rate.

Since these kind of residences attract those who have travelled far to study in Montreal—they’re left with little knowledge of their rights, and how to make things better.

In some cases with these residences, students can apply for and then pay for a room with a credit card over the Internet—almost no interaction with the landlord or owner required.

It’s this sort of absenteeism that is the real issue. When things go wrong, there is no face to bring the problem to. Rushed construction jobs or poor living conditions are merely a symptom of a housing system with a serious disease.

When tenants, be they students or not, find problems with their apartment, the legal avenue is to file paperwork with the Régie du logement,

who will hear their case and consider it before providing a legal verdict.

It’s a system that is supposed to protect the rights of the tenant, making landlords accountable for lease infractions or basic rights, such as an apartment actually being livable.

But a complaint or report to the Régie can take up to 17 months to process, forcing many students to wait with their hands tied for legal action. Unless the situation is desperate, like a heater breakdown in the middle of the winter, or no running water at all, the everyday troubles of the student tenant are largely ignored, or at least legally delayed.

By the time their day in court comes, there is a chance they have opted to move somewhere else, leaving the landlord to bring in the next tenants.

This time constraint is especially troubling for exchange students, who are drawn to private residences and their furnished

rooms and short-term leases. If anything is ill-suited to their needs, filing with the Régie is useless, as their time in the city will likely be long over before their grievances will be heard. They become victims of the flawed system.

In this sense, students are vulnerable. Concordia’s Off-Campus Housing and Job Bank helps them navigate the complicated legal process that comes with filing a complaint with the Régie.

But the fact is the mountain of confusing paperwork is only one step of many, another kink in the backbone of the housing market’s crooked spine.

This is not to say every landlord of every building is dishonest and irresponsible, but there are enough apartment horror stories circulating to validate these unfortunate instances as a sad reality.

What we need now is real effort towards real change. We need a cure for the problem, not a band-aid. When we live in a place where it’s easier to move to another

apartment than to get in touch with a landlord who won’t answer their phone or fulfill their responsibilities, we must greet it with actions greater than that of a shrug.

“C’est la vie” simply can’t cut it for students finding themselves in precarious living conditions, or worse.

There is already a push for this kind of change in the city, with organizations like Project Genesis focusing on improving housing conditions and actively lobbying for shorter complaint processing times with the Régie.

But there needs to be a group effort. If there are to be any tangible changes, it’s up to each vertebrae of the system to straighten up and notice the wrongs.

If what we need is stricter, more streamlined city-wide legislation over the places we call home, it’s as much our job to raise our voices and speak up about it as it is the government’s job to listen.

.....
Graphic Graeme Shorten Adams

THE LINK

CONCORDIA'S INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1980

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