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THE LINK

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Israeli soldiers patrol a settlement in Hebron.

EDUCATE YOURSELF: BDS WEEK IS COMING TO CONCORDIA

Pro-BDS Group Raises Awareness About Controversial Movement

BY JOSH FISCHLIN
@FISHYNEWSWATCH

The one-year anniversary of Concordia's Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) referendum is swiftly approaching. Of 2,500 students who voted, 1,276 cast their ballots in 2014 in support of the Concordia Student Union's endorsement of the contentious movement.

Solidarity For Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR) introduced the BDS initiative to the university. The group won numerous awards in the 2014-2015 year, including Best Overall Club, Best New Initiative and Best Humanitarian Club.

"The goal here is that it's a peaceful and non-violent way of resisting the occupation," said Rami Yahia, who has been a member of SPHR for a year and a half and was an active member of the group during last year's BDS campaign.

Inaugural BDS Week

This is the first time in Concordia history that a student body has organized a week of events specifically dealing with BDS.

The group has planned five days of presentations, all geared towards informing students of the increasingly volatile situation in Israel and Palestine. They will be taking place between Oct. 26 and 30.

"We really hope there's a high turnout to our events. I just want to put a lot of emphasis of the fact that this is a great initiative, supported by the CSU, supported by

many organizations around Montreal," Yahia said.

Keynote speakers include journalists who have covered the conflict, a human rights attorney and indigenous documentary filmmaker Clifton Nicholas.

There is also a concert planned for Oct. 27, and Palestinian food was served at the People's Potato on Monday as a means of "culturally resisting."

"The reason why we organized this BDS week is to talk about BDS," Yahia said.

"Anyone who has an open mind, whether they agree with the movement or not, they are more than welcome to come and attend these talks."

The events are free of charge in order to maintain maximum accessibility for all students, he continued.

"We have so much support," he said. "This is a [huge] test, and we cannot wait to spread it all over the world."

Reporting in Hell

Dan Cohen, a reporter for the news website Mondoweiss, is set to speak at Concordia on Oct. 29. He has been reporting on the conflict since February 2014 and spent three weeks in Gaza during last summer's war.

"I don't think [BDS] is going to solve everything, but it is a tactic. And it's a tactic that we, abroad, can use," Cohen said.

He described it as an important tool, but maintained that, on its own, it won't be able to end the conflict.

"I think these movements on campus are really important. Universities have historically been at the frontline of social justice movements, so I think they play a really important role," he said.

Cohen explained how he was raised to believe that being a good Jew meant supporting Israel. However, he gained a different insight on the issue as he became critical of U.S. foreign policy.

"To be honest with myself, I had to take the same approach to Israel. As I broke it down, I started to see what was really happening here," he said.

After his arrival in Gaza during a five-day ceasefire in August 2014, Cohen gathered testimonials from survivors who had fled their homes during Israel's bombing campaign.

"They came back and found their homes were destroyed," he said. "Many of them dug family members out of the rubble."

On the final night of the war, he witnessed the bombing of three "landmark Gaza towers," all of which were meant for residential and commercial use, according to Cohen.

The attacks on the towers were "favourably compared" to 9/11 by a retired Israeli general at a military conference that Cohen attended three months ago.

He spoke about the existence of an Israeli military document called the Dahiya Doctrine that condones the use of excessive force.

"The whole idea of the Dahiya Doctrine is that they'll use dis-

proportionate force with the idea of turning the civilian population against resistance, which of course backfires and has massive civilian tolls," Cohen explained.

The best way to understand Gaza is in the way that Israelis describe it, he said.

"They often tell me 'Go to Gaza,' which is their way of saying 'Go to hell.'"

Jewish Groups on Campus Weigh In

Lauren Luz, president of the Concordia chapter of Israel on Campus (IOC), does not believe that last year's "Yes" vote to BDS was representative of the student body.

"It says a lot about our students at the end of the day, because 2,500 students voted, and I think there's about 35,000 undergraduates," she said.

Lack of a strong voter turnout and general disinterest in student politics is what led to the CSU's endorsement of BDS, according to Luz.

IOC does not have any of their own events planned for the week. They wouldn't be "useful," she said.

"The CSU represents all students, and that's in their mandate. The CSU should, in my opinion, be fostering dialogue," Luz explained.

What happens in Concordia will have "zero" effect on policy in the Middle East, she continued.

"The money I pay to the student union should go towards fostering dialogue, to bringing together the two groups; not even to talk politics, just to learn about each other," Luz said. "That's what peace is."

She spoke about schools across Israel that bring Israeli and Palestinian children together in order to create an atmosphere of togetherness rather than one of division.

"From a young age, they're going to see each other as classmates," she said. "And that's peace. When you see the other, and you don't see them as an enemy."



PHOTOS JOSH FISCHLIN



Entrepreneurs take a break at District 3, a startup incubator based in Montreal.

PHOTO HÉLÈNE BAUER

Startups, the Future of Business?

Open House Gives Entrepreneurs an Inside Glimpse Into the World of Startups

BY WILLIAM FOX
@WFOXINFO

The wide world of Montreal startups is opening its arms to entrepreneurial-minded individuals looking to get their feet wet.

Montreal will host the third annual Startup Open House on Oct. 29 from 4 to 7 p.m.

"It's like a reverse career fair," said Kara Sheppard-Jones, project manager of Startup Open House, and coordinator of the event, which is run Canada-wide. A startup is a small but quickly-expanding company that "fits the ethos of innovation, growth and ambition," according to the event's website.

This event will see startup businesses open their doors to visitors, giving them the opportunity to meet entrepreneurs in their workspaces. Each individual will traverse a pre-designed course of businesses based on their interests, such as travel, lifestyle, software, sustainability and social impact, among others.

Participants will be able to go around the city using two free shuttle buses that will run during the

event, or profit from a 60 minute free credit when signing up for the community car sharing company Car2Go.

"If you are into marketing, you can meet with the chief marketing officer. If you are into technology you can meet with the head developer," Sheppard-Jones explained.

Startup Open House's initial focus was to attract job seekers, but after some thought, the focus shifted to raising attention for the businesses. "We actually have awesome innovators in our city," Sheppard-Jones said. "We should recognize them and increase their visibility."

In the past few years, Canada's entrepreneurial sector has been boosted mainly by technological developments. This event aims to demystify the image of startups, and help people consider them as viable career options.

It's not only the participants who will profit from the event—startup companies are aware of the benefits of opening their doors to students, recent grads and job seekers interested in their projects.

"We want to meet people and communities. We want to know

who is looking around [and] get our name out so that people can find us," said Benoit Hudson, cofounder of Imaginary Spaces, a participating startup. "It's a networking event."

Imaginary Spaces developed an app to test interior design ideas before using them at home. During the event, participants are invited to meet with the home-stylist, share ideas and receive a personalized design.

AdviseAuto is another participant in the event. It's a car software company that has developed a potential solution for car owners to deal with problems with maintenance. Their app links up the car with a central platform, so that the dealership will be able to monitor relevant information and give important notices before failures to help prevent accidents.

"It's fun to exchange with other people interested in startups. Maybe we can find people that are looking to get a job, or people that are passionate about our industry," added Alexandre Lataille, cofounder of AdviseAuto. "We can also meet with other startups."

"In these types of events you can also meet someone that has an idea and doesn't know how to go about [executing] it," said Kevin Ferah, AdviseAuto's other cofounder.

Building the right team is one of the major challenges many startups face, and can often be a long process.

"Build people first, then build projects. Happy people build great projects and are more productive," said Hiba Ganta, innovation manager at District 3, a hub dedicated to innovation and entrepreneurship at Concordia—a startup to help other startups.

It uses different methodologies to increase the odds of success for the companies it supports. Their mission is to put emphasis on how entrepreneurs develop themselves as founders and on how they build their team.

Her belief in finding the right people for the job seems to be shared throughout the industry.

According to Lataille, every time AdviseAuto meets someone from these events who match the company's ethics and vision, they keep them on their list of potential hires.

"They need to buy in to the idea of what we do, fit in the team and be passionate about the industry," he said. "We need to see that twinkle in their eye."

Ganta explained that one of the key factors companies need to succeed is managing people properly.

"If the only reason to sit around in the office is the cheque, they are not going to stick," she said.

Ganta's work with startups has shown her the importance of developing a vision and focusing on the "why" of motivation more than the "what" of the actual product. Why does a startup want to deliver something that customers can rely on and that will last? Then, hopefully, people will buy the idea.

"The 'why' constitutes the essence of the company," she said. District 3 will also be participating in the open house.

Visitors can sign up for free for the Startup Open House event on its website, which offers a tool to help choose which companies participants should visit.

For more information visit www.startupopenhouse.com

Students Vote for Weeklong Strikes

Mobilization Against Austerity Reigniting at Concordia

BY JONATHAN CARAGAY-COOK
@HIIMBIRACIAL

Undeterred by the consequences of their actions last semester, two student associations recently voted to have weeklong strikes to protest austerity measures, while two more may soon join.

From Nov. 2 to 8, classes within the Liberal Arts College and the School of Community and Public Affairs will be picketed and disrupted. Philosophy and fine art students are expected to hold general assemblies discussing strike motions within the coming weeks.

Following last semester's strikes, Concordia University became co-complainants alongside three professors who filed formal charges against approximately 30 students for disrupting classes.

"[The upcoming strike] demonstrates the importance of not withdrawing in the face of political repression," said Madelaine Sommers, the Community Outreach Secretary of SCPA's student association.

Tension can rise from no communication, and there is an intention this time to have a dialogue with faculty about striking, according to Aloyse Muller, President of the Liberal Arts Society.

"It's pretty much a lesson from last year," he said.

Muller added that an executive from the LAS already held a discussion with the program's principal, Eric Buzzetti. Buzzetti couldn't be reached for comment by press time.

Students from SCPASA have also reached out to Dr. Chedly Belkhodja, their program's director, to open a dialogue, Sommers said. The program director considers the collective decisions made during the association's general assemblies legitimate, she added. Belkhodja also could not be reached for comment by press time.

Last semester, the university cancelled classes for programs with striking students on two separate days. Interdepartmental courses—classes that share two programs—weren't cancelled, however. This saw some of the strikes' most

heated moments, as student protesters still chose to disrupt the shared classes.

The SCPASA won't have to deal with this scenario this time around because they voted not to disrupt interdepartmental classes, according to Sommers. She added that their program shares some courses with history and political science students.

"Those courses aren't composed entirely of SCPA students," Sommers said. "They wouldn't have had access to the [voting] process."

In the LAS general assembly on Oct. 15, the strike motion passed with 17 votes for, 11

against and three abstentions. Quorum for a general assembly is 20, according to Muller. He also said there wasn't necessarily opposition to striking, but that some students were uncomfortable with the strike's length.

In an interview, Concordia University president Alan Shepard acknowledged students' right to strike, but reiterated that the safety of those on campus is a priority.

"Code isn't suspended because some people think it should be," he said. Discussions to cancel classes and to hold days of dialogue and reflection like they did last semester haven't happened yet, Shepard added.

Muller said that Liberal arts students didn't discuss any potential reaction from the university.

Mobilization against provincial austerity measures throughout Quebec is supposed to take place the week of Nov. 2. The Association pour une Solidarité Syndicale Étudiante is organizing a Manifestation Nationale on Nov. 5. The LAS and SCPASA are both part of ASSÉ.

Both student associations are planning to organize skill-shares, workshops and teach-ins to educate about the harmful effects of austerity on the public sector.

Philosophy students will hold a general assembly on Wednesday with the sole agenda point to vote on a motion to strike, while the Fine Arts Students Alliance—which represents the whole fine arts faculty—scheduled a general assembly on Nov. 2 with reference to possible strike action.



Aloyse Muller is the president of the Liberal Arts Society. PHOTO BRANDON JOHNSTON

Divesting to Invest in Cleaner Energy

Concordia Announces New Million-Dollar Investment with American Firm

BY JONATHAN CARAGAY-COOK
@HIIMBIRACIAL

Almost a year since the Concordia University Foundation board announced they would divest \$5 million from fossil fuels, they have chosen to reinvest the money into American fund Nelson Capital Management.

The foundation board chose Nelson Capital because of its strategy of investing in companies with environmentally sustainable practices, according to Bram Freedman, University Vice President of External Relations.

An investment fund like Nelson Capital is essentially a firm that manages money for its clients and reinvests into assets of other companies.

On its website, the Nelson Capital leadership team—which has seven managers—states they pursue “socially responsible investment” by identifying companies with “positive performance on environmental, social and governance issues.”

“We literally custom-tailor the portfolio to the clients for their own needs, wants and desires,” said Scott Benner, President and CEO of Nelson Capital. This could include making investment choices based on a company's fossil fuel, religious or animal testing practices, he explained. Benner declined to comment on the specifics of their contract with Concordia due to confidentiality.

The California-based fund was the best

option available, but there weren't many to choose from, Freedman says, adding that divestment is a relatively new area. “We know they don't invest in fossil fuels,” he said.

The history of Nelson Capital suggests their knowledge about socially responsible investments, according to Concordia Student Union President Terry Wilkings.

“It's definitely something we're happy to see happen,” he said.

Following the announcement last year that the foundation would divest \$5 million, the issue of transparency emerged. The percentage Concordia invested into fossil fuels was unknown, even to Freedman.

He estimates now that approximately 10 per cent of the foundation money is invested in fossil fuels. The foundation is comprised of donations to the university. Maximizing returns from investments helps support student financial aid and research, Freedman said.

The foundation currently invests its money into about a dozen other investment firms, which then invest into a variety of American and Canadian shares, he added.

“Nobody is trying to hide anything,” he said.

Transparency is a challenge because these firms reinvest the money from the foundation into upwards of 50 different shares and don't provide detailed breakdowns, according to Freedman.

To continue the oversight of fossil fuel divestment and investment into renewable,

cleaner energy, an agreement between student groups, faculty and administration to form a “joint sustainable investment advisory committee” is being finalized, Freedman said.

So far the only student group involved in preliminary discussions is the CSU. Despite sitting on a working group last year to evaluate possible divestment, the Graduate Student Association (GSA) and Divest Concordia aren't in talks for committee membership at the moment.

According to Jenna Cocullo, a Divest Concordia member, the university didn't inform them of the Nelson Capital relationship or the forthcoming committee. Both the GSA President Alex Ocheoha and VP Mobilization Bhavreet Gill said they weren't told as well.

“It would be my hope that GSA and Divest Concordia would be part of the committee,” Freedman said. One of the committee's purposes would be to review quarterly reports from Nelson Capital, which is expected to provide detailed breakdowns, he added.

“It's a big step for us,” he continued. “We never before gave detailed reports before a joint committee involving students and faculty.”

After a motion from its council of elected representatives last semester, the CSU's investment account is currently in the process of being fully divested, Wilkings says. “It takes a while to find homes for different investments,” he said about not fully deploying divestment yet. The CSU has \$5 million

in this divestment fund, which is operated by an asset manager firm, he added.

Allowing the committee to have multiple contributors, including the GSA and Divest Concordia, is an initiative the CSU is pushing for, Wilkings said. He added that he hopes the committee's mandate is action-oriented in pursuing more divestment.

“We'll see how that goes over a couple of years,” Freedman said. “If the returns are comparable we're open to a discussion about further divestment.”



Bram Freedman is Concordia's VP External Relations.

PHOTO COURTESY LASSMAN STUDIOS

VIDEO EDITING WORKSHOP

The Link's workshop series continues on Friday Oct. 30 @ 4 p.m. with our former photo/video editor, Brandon Johnston. Director of a ward-winning "Reasons to Join *The Link*," this Mile End Nova Scotian cool cat will give a basic 101 on editing videos with Premiere Pro. Stop by and learn a few tricks.

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Get 'Em High

How University Students Use Illicit Drugs to Get By

BY DAVID EASEY
@SIBERIANDAVID

The stench of body odour and despair fills the nostrils of tortured individuals scurrying to and fro. Their skin is sallow and pale, their eyes as red as the blood moon. This is not a vision of the apocalypse, but a glimpse into midterm season at Concordia.

Students are cramming, regretting their neglect of class readings, practicing problems and reviewing tutorials they've ignored in recent weeks. As a result, some students are turning to the illicit use of study drugs to catch up.

Adderall, Concerta, Ritalin, Biphentin and Vyvanse—these powerful stimulants stabilize dopamine levels in the brain, providing focus and tranquility. Many of them are used for treating cases of ADHD and ADD. However, students who do not suffer from hyperactivity are using these drugs to study, apparently gaining the ability to sit for hours and absorb information at a rapid pace.

"It actually [has] the opposite [effect] in people who do not have behavioural disorders, creating hyperactivity by flooding the brain with dopamine," said pharmacist Andre Desjardins. He stressed that stimulants don't increase concentration for everyone, and the effects differ among individual users.

"Since dopamine levels are affected, it impacts the reward system in our brains, increasing chances of dependence," said Karina Cistera, a fourth year pharmacy student at Université de Montréal. "Tolerance for these stimulants increases over a period of time, meaning that users must increase their dosage to feel the same effects."

Both health professionals mentioned a 'crash' or 'comedown' which users experience when dopamine levels are returning back to normal. This crash is usually characterized by an array of symptoms including fatigue, irritability, and in some instances, depression.

Stimulants should never be mixed with any other substances including alcohol, marijuana or even caffeine.

As well, interactions with other prescriptions such as antidepressants or anxiety medications can lead to fatal complications, demonstrating the true potency of these drugs.

Furthermore, there's no published research in the scientific community linking study drugs with higher grades. Although they may provide a degree of concentration for a short amount of time, they don't increase the cognitive ability—you're not going to suddenly morph into the top student and produce a genius paper while on Ritalin.

Due to growing demand, there is a market tailored specifically to students. Dealers have found a cash cow, some asking for \$20 per capsule of Adderall. These are powerful drugs with serious effects, and it's illegal to purchase, sell or distribute them in Canada. Amphetamine, the substance found in Adderall, is the parent compound of methamphetamine, more commonly known as meth.

The security department at Concordia refused to acknowledge if there had been any cases of study



PHOTO DAVID EASEY

drug overdoses or distribution of such substances on campus, even with midterm pressures rising.

"I have to get a minimum of a B- in my accounting classes, or else I'll have to retake them," an occasional user of Concerta told *The Link*. Another student added that many honours programs are highly competitive and require a GPA above a 3.0. The pressures of academia, combined with this bloodthirsty,

Hunger Games-like environment drive many towards study drugs.

These drugs are not tiny miracles that will answer academic prayers. Rather, they are quick fixes to the stresses that students face in university.

For advice on how to navigate the perils of university, including tips on organization and stress management, visit the Student Success Centre at H-440 at the SGW campus.

Gun Shots Resonate Downtown

Montreal Police Simulate Terror Attack in City Centre

BY MATT D'AMOURS
@MATTDAMOURS

A bus full of passengers comes to a halt in an empty lot. The front door opens, and the driver dashes out. Shouts and screams suddenly erupt from the back section of the bus, and a man's angry voice booms out.

"To hell with all of you," he screams. "You're dead."

Police on-site tell us there are two terrorists on this bus—and they're carrying a biological weapon.

Three unmarked vans pull up nearby—two stopping at the rear, and the third at the nose. As the van doors slide open, police officers in gas masks and bulky vests pour out and move swiftly toward the screams coming from the bus.

As the chaos of the situation unfolds, one thing becomes readily apparent: when the SPVM stages a fake terrorist attack, they make it look and sound like the real deal.

The crack of two gunshots fired from inside the bus cuts through the cold morning air. One of the officers lobs a grenade through the open door, causing smoke to quickly spread throughout the stationary vehicle.

There's no hostage negotiation,

and no warning for the suspects to come out with their hands up.

The officers rush into the bus and neutralize the threat. One assailant in a gas mask is brought out with an apparent bullet to his thigh, and the other man is dragged out in handcuffs.

This past Saturday's early morning simulation at the Longue-Pointe military base was part of a larger initiative to improve preparedness in the face of a possible terrorist attack in Montreal. The project—dubbed *Montreal 360*—was organized by the Comité aviseur antiterrorisme de Montréal (CAAM), which includes the SPVM, the Sûreté du Québec and the Department of National Defence.

According to the SPVM, the exercise was the most significant of its kind since 2005 and involved the participation of over 350 emergency responders.

Once the simulated attack was brought to an end, personnel in HAZMAT suits were brought in to quarantine the area. The fake victims from the bus—some playing dead in temperatures hovering around zero degrees—were then laid down on the ground, separated and assigned numbers.

A small tent and an emergency clinic were quickly set up to deal with the immediate medical needs that would arise in the real world. An SPVM officer narrated the

two terrorists set off explosives and opened fire on Armed Forces members on the street outside the building. As the assailants made their getaway on foot, the victims

blocked off, mostly around Place des Arts and SPVM headquarters.

The downtown exercise attracted a lot of attention, with bystanders watching from behind barricades, and confused apartment dwellers peering out of their windows to see the source of the commotion.

In a release sent out to the press, Montreal police emphasized that Saturday's events were a simulation of terrorist acts and "not a media exercise."

As a result, media relations officers were adamant that no interview requests would be granted, and that feedback on the simulations would not be transmitted to journalists.

"To hell with all of you," he screams. "You're dead."

events over loudspeaker, explaining the process to journalists and the 50 or so observers from the Montreal police service present at the event.

Hours later, another simulated attack took place at the Black Watch Armoury on Bleury St., where

of the staged assault cried out convincingly in pain.

Montreal police warned residents days in advance that the operations would make use of blank firearm rounds, which would be audible in the downtown core. Many streets were



Saturday's simulation was part of an initiative to be prepared for a possible terrorist attack.
PHOTO WILLIE WILSON

A Call for Justice

Families Commemorate Victims of Police Brutality, Denounce Lack of Independent Investigations

BY CAINY MOK AND
SARAH JESMER

As family members held close the portraits of loved ones who died from police mistreatment, nearby officers looked on in stony silence from the stoops of the police offices outside Laurier metro on Thursday evening.

Approximately 70 people gathered for the sixth annual commemorative vigil to share memories of deaths involving police brutality, excessive force or mistreatment that failed to yield justice or official answers.

The event was organized by the Justice for Victims of Police Killings Coalition, a Montreal-based community made up of families touched by police-related deaths.

Concordia student Julie Matson experienced first-hand the effects of police brutality. Matson shared with the crowd the story of her father Ben Matson, whose confrontation with the law escalated from a parking violation to being publicly beaten by officers and dying of asphyxiation while in custody.

"My wish is that the police would

actually really overhaul their training and include a significant portion of it to be sensitivity training," said Matson. "Especially with people with mental health issues and different social classes, and that goes into race as well."

Bridget Tolley is the daughter of Gladys Tolley, a First Nations woman who was struck and killed by a patrol car driven by a Quebec police officer in 2001.

"We never saw the body," Tolley said. "The only people who saw the body were police."

While sharing her story, Tolley turned from the crowd and spoke directly to a group of eight officers blocking the doors to the police department.

"Since when was it allowed for a brother to investigate another brother while on the scene of an accident after [striking] and killing someone? Since when?" she asked.

There was no reply. Tolley's words addressed the conflict of interest in her family's case—the officer who led the investigation of Gladys Tolley's death was the brother of the officer driving the vehicle which struck and killed her.

Police brutality and impunity have been brought to the forefront of the public eye in North America, especially in the last few years. A highly publicized case is that of Michael Brown, a Black teenager who was shot and killed by a police officer in Missouri in 2014.

The circumstances surrounding the shooting were heavily disputed, according to an article in the New York Times. After an investigation was brought before a grand jury, the police officer responsible was not convicted. The media coverage and intensity of the case sparked a landslide of discussions concerning police impunity. According to Matson, the increase of police militarization and an imbalance of power lead to these frequent cases of police brutality and mistreatment.

Wissam Mansour, another attendant of the vigil, pointed out the lack of an independent institution watching over police forces.

"When something big [like police-related killings happens], police will investigate police, [there's] no one from the outside," Mansour said. There are only internal investigations done on police officers who are

suspected of crimes, which makes it easier, in theory, to have charges and investigations dropped with little explanation. There is a belief that the introduction of outside supervision to police forces might decrease the number of brutality cases.

As more cases of police brutality are brought to light, the need for systemic reform and a hunger for justice are also on the rise.

"It has been 14 years, but there is still no justice," Tolley said. "I don't want this to happen to my children."



PHOTO SARAH JESMER



MONTREAL CHARACTER SERIES

PHOTO ZACH GOLDBERG

Catherine Debard

I met musician Catherine Debard in the winter of 2014 at Casa del Popolo. We were
BY ZACH GOLDBERG
@ZACHGOLDBERG

tabling beside each other at a Howl! event—myself, for a documentary production company, and she for her music label, Jeunesse Cosmique. I was immediately struck by her attitude—Debard is stoked, permanently. In speaking about any aspect of her art—playing in several bands (ranging in genre from crazy noise to thumping dance to ambient drone), to releasing her friends’ music and booking shows—she’s all smiles and laughter, her English is broken, but her spirits are high. She couldn’t spread enough positivity about all her friends and colleagues, and I liked that.

A year later, I contacted Debard about an interview. We met at a (shitty) café on Mont-Royal, but it was crowded and the scowling barista refused me water. Instead, we had our chat in a park around the corner. The air was crisp with fall, the seating damp with rain, and Debard the same laughing, amiable force I had met a year before. We talked of her childhood growing up in Beloeil, leaving DIY shows early to catch the last bus back to the suburbs, her zen parents, and most of all, the community in music.

Catherine’s project YlangYlang releases a new album this winter. You can catch her

around the city, booking and playing with any number of friends in tow.

CATHERINE DEBARD
AGE 30
8 YEARS IN MONTREAL

You’ve synthesized a lot of sounds in your music. Could you talk a little about your progression? Are you trying to make a specific sound, or is it just a natural progression based on what you’re listening to?

I tend to always try to progress to a kind of ultimate sound that I can’t really imagine or know. The more I learn about software, the more [there are] changes in the way I make music.

Originally, I was just recording track over track and layering, so it was more linear. But then, learning other softwares like Ableton, and learning that you can generate musical matter, but then you can actually fuck that matter—pitch it down, shift it, add effects, cut it, create rhythms in drone layers—it really creates a new way to [think about] making music.

I want the sound to be more sophisticated. The more I work on stuff, the more field of possibilities emerge. So you apply that on an album and listen to it, and you’re like, ‘Wow, I really did it big there, but I don’t want to do that again.’ And you take what you learned and you use it elsewhere.

I always have to take a pause between records because I’m always so drained [after putting out a record]. I listen back and I’m like, “How will I ever do something else?” When it first started happening, I’d panic a lot, wondering how I’d ever do music again. But now I know it’s part of my process—that I need to chill, listen to music, think.

Generally, when I start working on something, I just jam with myself, record stuff that isn’t necessarily amazing, just to generate matter. I work all the time on music. I had a week that I didn’t do music, and that’s a lot for me. I tend to try and empty my head, especially because right now... the energy is sort of crazy. I end up rethinking everything, the structure of everything, where I want to go and what I want to do with my life. Just trying to be present. Reading, watching movies... not forcing the inspiration, just letting it come back; whenever I want to do music, I’ll do it, but [I’m] not doing music in order to not think about life.

I’m curious what your advice would be to anyone interested in creating a supportive community for artists.

Depends on the kind of community you want to create. To have a good music community, it’s important to try to reconsider the relationship between the musicians and the audience, to create a safe and inspiring environment. Because, you know, often there’s a separation when you go to shows—there’s a...

space between the stage and the crowd.

[There are] shows that are for artists to go and be free to do whatever and improvise. They realize that [shows] are just a moment shared with others.

It’s important to create a chill vibe so people feel like they can talk to each other. Some people go to shows and they want to talk to the artist and be inspired, but they’re shy or they just feel like they can’t, so it’s a big step for them to open up with an artist. So, with Jeunesse Cosmique or Noise Sunday, when people come up to talk to me, it’s important that there’s this connection, because that person can go home and be inspired to make music.

Same thing for any new artist, when you go to see them, and tell them how you feel—that it was inventive, or interesting, or whatever. It can give confidence. Even if you didn’t like it, you can talk about that; there’s nothing wrong with that. Music is just a big experimental pool, people need to talk and challenge each other and bring new ideas, and I think communities should be there to offer support and help. Like, two days ago, a friend showed me how MIDI works, and my mind was blown, it was like my brain exploded.

It’s important to have friends and other artists around to be there to help you.

Visit thelinknewspaper.ca for the full interview.



GRAPHIC LAURA LALONDE

STREET GHOSTS

Bike Couriers Play a Deadly Game of Shadows and Win

NOELLE DIDIERJEAN
@NOELLESOLANGE

Tiny flesh sacks protected by flimsy foam dart between gas guzzling killing machines.

While the insanity of cyclists and cars fighting for territory in narrow streets sounds like a dystopian science fiction novel, it's the lived reality of thousands on the island of Montreal.

Reclaiming the streets from the cars they were built for means putting your life on the line, but the bike couriers that laugh in the face of death on the daily manage to find zen between rows of squealing, honking death-traps.

"It's more about not disturbing the flow of traffic than it is about fighting constantly. Like a ghost, or an eagle," former bike courier Duncan Campbell explained.

The best way to do your job "is to have no obstacles in your path," he continued. "It's not like you're going to be cutting cars off and getting in their shit: mostly you're trying to occupy a space that no one else is occupying."

"So you can be like a ghost, you can pass through the whole thing unnoticed."

While in many ways being a bike courier is just like any other job, the couriers I spoke with agreed that bike culture lends itself to collectivism.

Car enthusiasts don't have collective shops "where they'll teach you how to fix your bike," Winnipegger Cal Probetts said, in reference to collective bike co-operatives like Mile End Bike Garage, SantroVelo and Concordia's Right To Move.

Rather than paying someone else to fix your bike for you, these institutions allow you to pay a membership fee in exchange for access to the community's expertise and used bike parts.

"Bike culture isn't exclusive," Campbell commented. "All you have to do is have a bike and care about it."

Bike culture is diametrically opposed to car culture in more places than on the road. Car culture is "more macho," according to courier and part-time bike mechanic Felix-Antoine Tessier.

People invested in cars care a lot about displaying their wealth, he said. Bike riders are less concerned with price tags and more by the joy of a smooth-running machine.

While it might not breed machismo, biking in any urban setting breeds a certain toughness. Being constantly on the brink of death results in a strange persona. A courier's easy-going exterior often masks a defiance, a side effect of fighting for territory with two tonne mounds of metal every day.

"My goal [as a courier] was always to disrupt the flow of traffic as little as possible," Campbell said, adding that even a seasoned cyclist is often aggravated by their automotive neighbours.

"You get in the habit of touching taxis when they're too close to you, or just straight up yelling at old people who wander into the bike lane," he said.

While not all bicyclists pursue urban planning reform, most are forced to aggressively combat the negative effects of poor municipal planning on their daily commute. Probetts summed it up with a giggle:

"I stay away from bike lanes, man."

Any semi-serious cyclist knows to avoid the Maisonneuve and Rachel bike paths like the plague if they want to get anywhere fast. The bi-directional lanes are counterintuitive, serving as a half-hearted alternative artery.

The most flagrant example of the lack of consideration for cyclists is on Parc Ave., where a bike lane was stuck onto some cement as an afterthought, abruptly ending halfway up the mountain, leaving cyclists to hurtle pell-mell through hordes of pedestrians. This reporter knows from experience that it is nearly twice as fast to simply fight the 80 bus for space on the broad road than tolerate the "lane" constructed for bikes.

Campbell commented matter of factly.

"The best way to get honked at is to obey the letter of the highway safety code," he explained. "If you take the lane when you're allowed to, people don't understand and they get pissed."

Moving past a fear of death is what allows one to move as quickly and efficiently as possible.

"Sometimes I don't get as scared as I should get," Campbell admitted.

Tessier was more blunt.

"I'm actually a real lunatic on the road," he said with a toothy grin. "I just zone out."

But zoning out doesn't mean forgoing constant analysis of the road.

"When I have an ounce of fear or inquietude, uncertainty, that's when I'm most at risk of getting into an accident. It's that constant need for analysis and daring that makes biking a game of shadows," Campbell said.

"It's a way a car can cast a shadow of momentum, and no-one will enter into that trajectory. You have to predict how other people will be viewing the road, and learn to sneak in behind a turning truck."

Despite the risks, most couriers love what they do.

"It's fucking awesome," Tessier said. "I don't feel like I'm working."



Art by Lacey Jane at the Woman x Women exhibition.

PHOTOS COURTESY MAXIME CHARRON

WHERE ARE ALL THE WOMEN?

Montreal Artist Calls Into Question the State of Women in Art

BY MICHELLE PUCCI
@MICHELLEPUCCI

Disparities based on gender aren't exempt from the art world.

It's a fact some scholars and artists are trying to understand: just where exactly do cisgender women in art stand?

Artist Mira Silvers, founder of street art collective Sugar 4 Brains, was invited to the New Zealand street art festival Spectrum, where she quickly detected an imbalance in the number of artists who identify as female.

"I was looking at the lineup and made an offhand comment," Silvers said. "It's so strange that out of the nine headlining artists, there was only one woman."

Her plan to curate an all-women show was born: Woman x Women, featuring around 30 artists tasked with fulfilling the theme of reappropriation of the female body.

"The show that Mira was doing was something that was on our mind for a long time, but we just hadn't put enough time aside to put in the research in curating the show," said Adam Vieira, co-owner of Station 16, the street art gallery that hosted the show, which took place from July 29 to Aug. 8 of this year.

"Other galleries weren't aware of what I'd previously done, and they were very wary to do a show like this," Silvers said. Some sponsors and venues told her the project was "very political."

Woman x Women featured a range of painters and street artists in a space typically dedicated to muralists, a community in which women are underrepresented.

"Women in street art and graffiti are a bit of a minority," Vieira said. "Whenever we see someone who's exploring muralism or graffiti or street art, we tend to be excited about it and jump on it."

Out of the 19 muralists listed on Mural festival's website for its

2015 edition, only three identified as women. The annual outdoor art festival along St. Laurent Blvd. hasn't done enough to include women, according to Silvers.

"That's unacceptable," Silvers said. So many women enroll in fine arts classes or are doing art, she said. "It's weird. What happens to all those women?"

"Not every artist goes to school, but the ones that do—there's a big gap from students to professionals," Silvers said. "There's a huge gap. I don't know why."

In the 1980s, the Guerrilla Girls, feminist icons of the modern art world, counted paintings in the Metropolitan Museum to prove this point.

"Do women have to be naked to get into the Met. Museum? Less than 4% of artists in the Modern Art section are women, but 76% of the nudes are female," reads one of their most famous posters.

Their work is still an inspiration, 30 years later, but the Guerrilla Girls couldn't comment on the situation of Canadian art.

The nine-day Woman x Women exhibition by Silvers was paid for

out of her savings when she realized few sponsors would work with her.

Even so, the event was considered a success by its host gallery's standards. The Woman x Women exhibit brought in 900 people, with "quite a few sales," according to Vieira.

Now, Silvers is working on research, Guerrilla Girls-style, with no support from galleries and museums.

"It depends on the kind of institution you're talking to and also the kind of questions that you're asking," said Anne Whitelaw, the Associate Dean of Research at Concordia's fine arts faculty.

"If you look at a lot of small galleries across the country, there are a lot of women working in them," she continued. "But once you get to the larger institutions, it's less prevalent."

Women artists, including contemporary artists, are still underrepresented in public collections and in the exhibitions that could lead to significant success, according to professor Joyce Zemans and PhD candidate Amy C. Wallace in their paper *Where Are the Women? Updating the Account!*

In 1971, StatsCan reported that visual artists were mainly men. By 2006, census data showed 56 per cent of professional visual artists are women, but Hill Strategies Research, which specializes in stats about the arts, found women earn on average 28 per cent less than men.

"I think it's changing, but it's changing more slowly than I like," said Whitelaw.

"Even if [museums] have a woman directing the gallery or museum, very often they have almost 90 per cent men on their board of trustees or board of directors," said Katrina Caruso, an Art History Master's student whose thesis focuses on the role of women in power in art institutions.

"The director of the gallery or head curator—they're not really in the position of power that you expect them to be, because they still have to be accountable to their board," she continued. "If their board is mainly white dudes around the table, it sort of changes the conversation."

Manually counting the representation of female-identifying artists in galleries—like what the Guerrilla

Girls did, and what Silvers is working on—is difficult because a lot of it involves guessing an artist's gender based on their name, Caruso said. "It's a really hard thing to look [at] objectively, without have a whole team of researchers behind you."

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts is showcasing six Canadian and Quebecois female painters in *Elles Aujourd'hui*, until August 2016. The collection coincides with an exhibition on the Beaver Hall Group, whose history was rewritten by feminists in the 60s to be an anomalous group dominated by female artists.

The Beaver Hall Group was a modernist collective in Montreal during the 1920s, often described as an all-female counterpart to the Group of Seven—though women made up less than half of the Montreal group.

"The art world is a progressive place," Caruso said. "Why, then, does it not trickle up to management of these institutions?"

"It's true that there are not so many women that lead big museums," said Nathalie Bondil, the current director of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, and the first woman in the position.

The MMFA ranked 58 of the museums with the most visitors in 2014—the highest in Canada—according to *The Art Newspaper's* annual survey. Of the top 58 most-visited museums, Bondil counted only 10 female head curators.

"Of course there are many women who work for museums in the world, especially in Canada," Bondil said. The number of museums has doubled over the last 30 years, solidifying their place as important authorities in culture. That raised status also means the leaders of these institutions have more cultural power.

"The fact that museums are becoming more important and central in our cultural life, it also attracts more men," Bondil said.



Art by Hannah Natali and Sophie Wilkins at the Woman x Women exhibition.

So You're Saying There's a Chance (the Rapper)

Chicago Rapper Is Latest Special Guest of Hip-Hop Class at Concordia

BY JULIAN MCKENZIE
@JULIANTHEINTERN

It's quite an accomplishment to get hundreds of students clamouring to be in a class. Such is life for Yassin Alsalman aka The Narcycyst, or Narcy, professor of the Concordia class Hip-Hop: Past, Present, Future. The class meets weekly to discuss concepts and artists within the realm of the genre.

This past week, the class (and then some) sat in on an interview between Narcy and Chicago hip-hop artist Chance the Rapper for his *We Are The Medium* podcast. The rapper was in town as part of his Family Matters Tour, playing the Olympia Theatre alongside producer Metro Boomin, and rappers D.R.A.M and Towkio.

The rapper discussed his upbringing, encroaching fatherhood, and his collaborations with fellow artists including Childish Gambino, Lil B, and Vic Mensa. He even likened the creative process of his successful mixtape, *Acid Rap*, seriously, to releasing a fart.

"Everybody was like, wait, timeout," said Chance. "This is great. This is like the best fart to ever come out. This is the best fart to come out in 2013."

"I think for students this was a great opportunity," Alsalman said of the event. "[Chance] didn't go to university so to be speaking at a university for what he did, I think it's an experience that he will take away and will stay with him."

Alsalman was originally a guest for the class in 2009, when it was taught by Concordia instructor Marc Peters. He eventually co-taught the class with Peters, before taking it over solo in 2013. Back then, the class had a capacity of 90 students, but it has since ballooned to 241, according to Alsalman.

"It's way more responsibility," he said. "With Marc, it was way more about art history and more about the artistic birth of hip-hop, while my [class] is more about information and the understanding of consumption by the audience through hip-hop."

"This class is endless," he continued. "If you keep this class open, you might end up with 600 students."

It is the third time this semester that Alsalman has invited major guests to the hip-hop class. Earlier in the semester, photography/DJ duo Mochilla took part in the class, as well as local producer Kaytranada. In the past, rapper Illa J, brother to late producer J Dilla, as well as Montreal producers Lunice

and High Klassified, have visited the class.

"Narcy has mad connections to other hip-hop artists, and just prominent people in the hip-hop scene," said John Talbot of the Concordia Student Union, who assisted Alsalman in the planning of the Chance the Rapper event this past Wednesday.

The professor/rapper has no plans to invite

more guests to the class for the rest of this semester, but still maintains larger aspirations for its future.

"I just want to go bigger man," said Alsalman. "I want to bring Kanye to this class, [Mos Def] if he's ever in town, [Talib Kweli]. People that I grew up listening to that I'd love to talk to."



Yassin Alsalman (left) sits beside Chicago musician Chance the Rapper at Concordia's Alumni Auditorium on Oct. 21.
PHOTO NIKOLAS LITZENBERGER

PRESSING ISSUES

Local Publisher Metonymy Press Smashes Literary Conventions

BY TESSA MASCIA

In psychology, "mirroring" (or "reflecting") is a concept used to describe the self-actualization of the individual as a human being. For example, parents mirror emotions to their children, and pop culture mirrors society to the consumer. Unfortunately, in our contemporary world, pop culture chiefly mirrors a single narrative—that of the 'cismale,' or straight, heteronormative male; it's a narrative so pervasive that it acts to effectively dominate the voices of the marginalized.

One of the most muted groups is queer-identifying authors, who face roadblocks on the avenues toward publishing written work. Thankfully, organizations exist with the express goal of advocating for marginalized voices in the literary field, including publisher Metonymy Press, a local grassroots organization aiming to support such voices.

Metonymy began as the brainchild of longtime friends and neighbours, Ashley Fortier and Oliver Fugler. Though the two have been a writing team since high school, Metonymy is "revving into gear starting this year," according to Fortier. The publishing house was just able to secure funds to begin publishing in earnest. Funding, however, remains a consistent issue for the recent startup.

"Funding is an issue in publishing. Although we were lucky to get a grant from the Quebec government for starting up, crowd-sourcing and profit from sales are what we have to rely on now," Fortier explained. Keeping the company small also plays a factor in their financial situation and ability to publish works.

"If there were more than two of us, we could work on more than one project at a time...open calls for work always result in a lot of proposals, and we can only work on so many," Fortier said.

Writers who identify as queer unfortunately have to contend with the fact that they are dealing with a relatively limited market: "self publishing and small community-run presses are often your publishing options," she continued.

The greatest tip Fortier offered to the aspiring queer writer was to "try to make a ritual out of [writing]," and to share the work with trusted people.

Recently, the publisher released *She Is Sitting in the Night*, a queer tarot book. In the spring of next year, Metonymy will release its second novel, *Small Beauty*, written by Jia Qing Wilson-Yang. *Small Beauty* tells the story of Mei, a mixed-race trans woman managing the death of her cousin. Mei must navigate a world of racism and transphobia, attempting to maintain her hope for finding community when she visits a town from her family's past.

Regardless of the Metonymy's uncertain future, for Fortier, the press's purpose is clear.

"Putting new queer/feminist/marginalized voices out into the world is about participating in the broader communities and networks of people doing that same work," she said. "So we're always looking to learn from and support like-minded authors, publishers, community groups, and so on."

For more information on Metonymy, visit metonymypress.com



PHOTO COURTESY JACKSON EZRA HAGNER



PHOTO COURTESY SARAH O'DRISCOLL

ICE COLD AND FUNKY VELVET

Local Rock Outfit TOPS Shred Without Sacrificing Dancey Sensibility

BY MATTEO CIAMBELLA

As Montreal indie-rock band TOPS drove through the fall-coloured landscapes of Wisconsin, drinking coffee and tasting free cheese samples, singer Jane Penny got on the phone with *The Link* to talk about the band's current tour and their creative process.

Penny has lived in Montreal for eight years, and enjoyed talking about a few of the city's staples, including a long conversation about the grocery store Segal's, which won't be included in full, despite drummer Riley Fleck's request.

The band is touring the United States, but will be back in Montreal just in time for the Arbutus Halloween Party at the Théâtre Fairmount on Oct. 31. TOPS will headline the show, with support from pop duo PURO INSTINCT, and from the Montreal-based, mesmerizing singer-songwriter act Mozart's Sister. Dancing is guaranteed.

TOPS's members currently include Penny, Fleck, guitarist David Carriere and bassist Alana DeVito. The band was formed in 2009, when Penny and Carriere began a musical collaboration, releasing an album as members of the Silly Kissers, a

group whose sound shares a few elements with that of TOPS, despite being much more akin to a 1980s dance party. Fleck joined in 2011, and together they released *Tender Opposites*, their first album as TOPS in the following year.

The album established the band's characteristic sound, featuring ice cold, melancholic synthesizers, funky bass lines, rhythmic beats and Carriere's brilliant guitar riffs, which envelope their music with a layer of mellow tenderness, but can also turn a song into an instant call to the dance floor. Penny's soft, velvety vocals lull the listener, a kind of dreamy loneliness pervading her lyrics.

"It's my perpetual state of mind," Penny said with a laugh. Songs from their latest album *Picture You Staring* have a similar sensibility towards feelings of shyness, insecurity and isolation. Their catchy single "Way To Be Loved," for example, deals with the perception others have of us, beginning with the haunting, self-conscious opening lines: "Walking down the sidewalk / is that the way that you wanna be seen?"

The album oozes a similar vibe, although the music alternates between slow, delicate ballads like

"We have total control over our music."

— Jane Penny, singer

"Outside" and solid dance tracks like "Change Of Heart," which kicks off with Fleck's powerful psych-rock drumming. The album was released in September 2014, after a full year's work. It was written, recorded and produced by the band.

"The idea of having to have connections in the music industry, or a major label behind your project... that works if you want to make money," Penny said. "We have total control over our music. The songs come out casually, from the endless hours we spend playing music together."

The album is being distributed by independent Montreal-based label Arbutus Records, which is also home for artists such as singer-songwriter Sean Nicholas Savage, Blue Hawaii, and was an early plat-

form for Grimes, Doldrums and Majical Cloudz, among others.

Arbutus began as a DIY loft space for a number of bands, and has since branched out to a number of different kinds of media, including literature and film. Diversity and collaboration seem to be at the core of the label's success.

"We're just a big group of friends," Penny said, revealing that the band had been having fun jamming with Sean Nicholas Savage over the summer—material that won't be released, sadly.

TOPS and Savage are just some of the incredible artists that have been busting out of Montreal's underground music scene in the last decade, many of them associated with Arbutus Records. Some

have already received international attention, while others are rapidly gaining a loyal group of followers, such as the duo She-Devils, which Penny pointed out as one of her favourite acts in the city, and with whom she seems to share a fascination for old-fashioned soul music.

TOPS's Halloween show will be a chance to hear some of their fresh material, as the band has been working on new music and is planning to work on their third album at the end of their tour.

In the meantime, they have released yet another beautiful music video to accompany their new single "Anything," a song which captures a moment of confusion in one's life, and indulgence in nostalgic feelings for a loved person. Underneath the melancholia evoked by the lyrics lie some groovy instrumental parts, which leave room for Penny's soulful melodies.

"We are trying to keep the new songs fun and danceable," Penny said.

There could be no better news, in light of their show at the Arbutus Halloween party—except perhaps that, apparently, if you show up at the venue wearing a costume, you're eligible to enter a free raffle.



Concordia wrestlers battle it out in training on Sunday Oct. 25, 2015.

PHOTOS NIKOLAS LITZENBERGER

BUILT TOUGH

Concordia's Wrestling Team Trains Under Former Olympian Coach Victor Zilberman

BY VINCE MORELLO
@VINNYMORELLZ

For most elite coaches, nothing but the best is expected, and with a no-nonsense attitude, Concordia's head wrestling coach Victor Zilberman is no exception.

At a training session, Zilberman, a former Olympian, sits on the sidelines. As a very intense coach who demands everything from his wrestlers, he yells at the athletes in between answering questions. Every time someone is caught standing or perhaps indulging in an extended break, he calls them out to get them going again. He makes sure that his wrestlers are ready for everything the sport can throw at them.

"[Victor] can be intense sometimes, but we really need that," said Linda Morais, who took home a national gold medal for wrestling at the Canadian Interuniversity Sport championships in 2014. "It's really a privilege to be working with our coaches."

Aside from Victor, the coaching staff includes his son and former-Olympian David Zilberman, Martine Dugrenier, Rob Moore and Jason Chen. In addition to being the head coach of the wrestling team, Victor also teaches gym classes at Vanier College.

"[Victor's] really tough on the athletes but that's what the athletes need," said Vincent De Marinis, another Stingers wrestler. "If you don't have a coach that's tough on you, that's pushing you, then sometimes expectations don't get reached because of that."

Practicing technical skills is not the only thing the athletes do. As wrestling is a very athletic sport, they're on a scheduled training regiment.

Wrestling is done three times a week, with another three days dedicated to biking, running, swimming and gymnastics to help the athletes be better conditioned for tournaments.



Vincent De Marinis gets pinned in practice on Sunday, Oct. 25, 2015.

With a six-day regimen, it's not just about practice, but about being the best athlete you can be. Therefore, motivation plays a key role in the training and in Victor's job as head coach.

"When they see that the coaches are seri-

ous and motivated, then the kids are like that," Zilberman said.

"Then we have people coming from different countries all the time," he added. This year three athletes came all the way from Brazil to train in preparation for the 2016 Rio Olympics. "A lot of those things give motivation to the athletes." Another student came all the

way from Russia.

What helps the wrestling program produce many of their talented athletes is their recruiting system. From high school, athletes are trained with national talents; by the time

they get to the university level, they're at the top of their field.

"Obviously [we look after the] quality of coaching, we put a lot of time in it, we have very experienced coaching staff," said Victor. "Martine [Dugrenier] is a three-time world champion. My son, David, is an Olympian, so we develop those athletes over the years."

"[The coaches] are very tough but they're geniuses," said Stingers wrestler Genevieve Lamarche. "They know what works at the high levels and that's what they're teaching us."

Much like some other Stingers teams, the wrestling coaches and athletes see the team as a big family that's always working together toward the same goal. Athletes coming to Concordia to be a part of the team is not a rare occurrence. Jade Marie Dufour chose to come to Concordia from Windsor to continue wrestling and get an education.

"I came [to Concordia], I felt so welcomed," said Dufour. "[If I] have trouble with homework, school or adjusting, [the coaches] are always there to help you and they're like my family now."

With efforts to remain a top program, the coaches and athletes are preparing for their first tournament of the season, which is on Nov. 1. Concordia is hosting it.

"It's just a practice tournament," Victor explained before speaking to one of his players, ending our interview.

That's the key to what Zilberman and his coaching staff do: the team always comes first.



A competitor in the all-styles championship, Saturday, Oct. 24, 2015 at the Can I Get A Soul Clap 2015.

BREAKERS DANCE OFF



A competitor pulling off a headstand trick in the b-boy five-on-five championship.

thelinknewspaper.ca/sports • Oct. 27, 2015

B-boy Event
Can I Get A Soul Clap
Makes Street Dance a
Family Affair

**PHOTOS AND WORDS BY
SHAUN MICHAUD @SHAUN_MIC**

Dancing duellists squared off on a mat, each trying to outclass the other under the gaze of a roaring crowd.

The sixth edition of the Can I Get A Soul Clap b-boy/b-girl competition was held Saturday night at Artgang Montreal.

"One of the formative elements of b-boying is capoeira," said Olivier Peloquin, one of the event organizers. "Long ago, people battled while other members of the tribe sang and clapped their hands to build a rhythm."

B-boy and DJ CreeAsian provided dope beats at the annual street dance tournament that showcased the talents of several Quebecois, Canadian and international artists.

Peloquin, 31, is founder of Distortion, a group involved in developing artistic platforms. Can I Get A Soul Clap's preliminaries were held the day before at their downtown studio.

The final meeting was separated into two categories. The first involved an all-styles one-on-one competition. The second was a five-on-five team championship.

"The one-on-one all-styles competition is different from straight b-boying. It includes waacking, popping and locking among other genres," said Peloquin. "It gives everybody a chance to battle dancers from different styles."

The bloodless bouts were akin to old kung fu movies where various characters sashayed their best moves. A prepubescent boy sporting a bandana competed against grown men, bringing images of Naruto Shippuden to mind.

"We try to integrate the younger generation to the street dance movement," said Peloquin. "It's positive energy, especially for kids coming from poor families who can't afford to play hockey. Dancing doesn't cost anything. It's accessible to everybody."

But the main event was the b-boy five-on-five team championship.

"We had elite b-boy groups hailing from Toronto, Quebec City, Montreal, Sherbrooke and Ottawa," said Peloquin.

Experienced dancers vaulted in the air and spun on the floor, each feat of urban acrobatics meant to uplift their team's status and outdo the opposition. A one-legged b-girl performed a handstand on crutches drawing whoops from the crowd of about 600. It was composed of mostly breakers and young families.

"I was here for the preliminaries but my team didn't make the cut," said Ange-Léonce Ndolimana, a 23-year-old McGill University graduate and b-boy. "They only announced who made the finals tonight, so I had to be here."

Still, Ndolimana was gracious in defeat. Despite the pressure, the event was more than just a test of skills.

"Sometimes, even if you don't win, it's fine because you're satisfied with your team's performance," he said. "I'm not too disappointed. I got to vibe with friends I hadn't seen in a long time."

Charles "Chuckie" Gao, 25, of BBoy North, made it to the five-on-five final with his team.

"Even though the dancers here were dope, I wished that there were more out-of-town people here," he said. "This would be an attractive event but for some reason people don't show up. I'm still having a good time though."

Peloquin said custom t-shirts sold at Can I Get A Soul Clap 2015 helped fund future events and reinvest in the community.

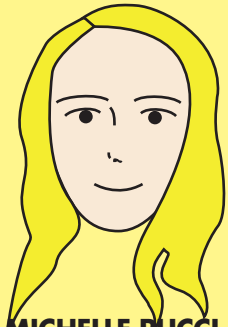
Guest breakers Tricky Trouble, CreeAsian, and Nauty One hosted dance workshops. Intrikid held a free workshop for children.

"It's important for us to introduce more kids to street dance," Peloquin said.



Here's Your Volume 36 Masthead

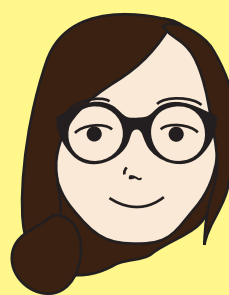
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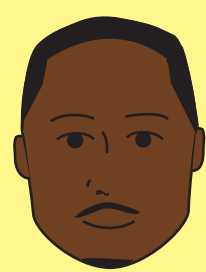
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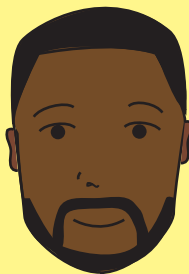
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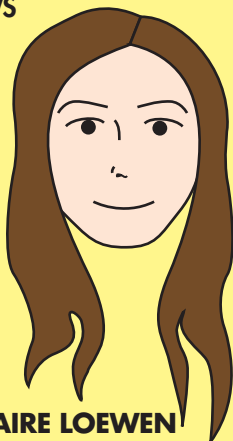
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NASH 78 DELEGATION ELECTIONS

The Canadian University Press National Conference
Toronto, Ont.
Jan. 6-10, 2016

Sometimes student journalists can feel like they're working in a vacuum, so the Canadian University Press's National Conference (a.k.a. NASH) brings us together to bond over the struggles of low-budget, independent reporting. If you want to hang out in Toronto with editors from *The Link*, get tips from some professional journalists and maybe schmooze with some prime time speakers (who have yet to be revealed) consider going to NASH. Don't worry—this time there's breakfast.

If you've contributed to the current volume of *The Link*, you can apply to be sent to the conference as part of our delegation. Come to our office (1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. Suite H-649) and tack up a letter explaining why we should send you and how you plan to contribute in the coming year. **The deadline to apply is Tuesday, Nov. 17 @ 6 p.m.**

Elections are Friday, Nov. 24 @ 6 p.m.
For more info, email editor@thelinknewspaper.ca

Liberal Policy on Student Loans: Small Steps in the Right Direction

Will Trudeau's Platform of Change Carry on Into His Term as Prime Minister?

BY CHRIS B. DODD
@CHRISXXXX

As the sun sets on the Harper decade, there are at least a few people who are not sad to see him riding off. The increased number of students who voted was a huge advantage for the Liberal party as students were more engaged and motivated by the prospect of change. But what will this change mean for students?

The platform of the incoming Liberal government promises to provide some answers to that question. The small section dedicated to post-secondary education was largely ignored by most of the media covering the Liberal campaign. It includes a promise to change the way that student loans are repaid, which might be no small matter for those struggling to meet repayments.

Liberals propose that graduates should only repay the loans after they reach an income threshold of \$25,000 a year.

Under the current system, loan payments begin six months following the end of studies, whether you graduate, quit or suspend your studies. It doesn't matter whether you land your dream job or extend your part-time college gig indefinitely.

There are currently a few ways to defer those payments, but interest continues to accrue and the debt stays with you. Much worse is the prospect of default.

Most students don't think about repaying their loan when taking it out. For starters, you cannot predict the state of the economy and the health of the job market four years from the start of your studies. Also, most students starting their post-secondary education are still well-programmed to consider education costs as a valuable investment in their own future, as graduates earn more during their lifetimes

than non-graduates, according to statistics.

Even if things do work out in the end, the beginning of a graduate's career journey isn't often so rosy, with no guarantee that a first job after school will pay enough to leave money left over after such silly little things as rent and food.

Thirteen per cent of students currently default, according to a recent CIBC study. A default on your credit record adds to the declining prospects of being able to obtain a mortgage, in addition to the insane housing prices.

The vast majority of those who end up in student loan default, according to another study by the University of Western Ontario, do so because they earn an annual income of \$20,000 or less.

Let's put that simply. Many of those who take out student loans will not be able to pay

them back.

These new proposals for repayment are not untried. Recently implemented in England after originating in Australia, this repayment scheme was brought in as a solution for the tripling tuition fees in English universities. The change represented an attempt by the government to guarantee the claims that education is an investment leading to higher earnings by linking repayment to those potential earnings.

In Australia and England, the tax department collects loan repayments. These are direct payroll deductions, like tax and social contributions, which kick in when you reach the required income threshold. There are no defaults. In England there's the added benefit of having any unpaid portion of a student loan written off at age 60, for all those people still paying off loans as they near retirement.

If implemented, this system would not bring Canadian students to an immediate utopia. Tuition fees are still high, and are no longer frozen nor indexed to inflation. Student organizations like the Canadian Federation of Students have called for tuition cuts—specifically, for fees to be linked to individual circumstances and their ability to pay. That has always been unlikely to happen and is less likely now.

As was the case in England, the new system could be accompanied by higher tuition fees if the new program requires more money to run than the current one. Money has to come from somewhere, so the government could be tempted to further reduce their direct investment in post-secondary education to cover any increase in the costs of underwriting loans that might not be repaid. It's also unclear how those covered by the provincially-run but federally-funded Québec aide financière aux études would be affected.

The new proposals do represent change in the right direction. It would put an end to defaults and help control student debt. It would help graduates start their careers without the stress of making loan payments and maintaining a decent credit standing.

The incoming government, elected on this platform of change, will soon be occupied with the business of governing. Once they get started, the Liberals will have a long list of proposed legislation to work.

Considering the scant attention paid to student issues, the promise of reforming the student loan system could easily sink on their list of priorities. Students who voted for change en masse must ensure that it happens, so that change is not just a slogan, but something which makes a tangible difference to their future.



GRAPHIC MADELEINE GENDREAU

Letter: Le Gym Doesn't Suck

Re: Nah'msayin? Concordia's Le Gym Should Change Its Name To Le Grotto

Hello! I read the opinion piece on Le Gym this week and was outraged—I understand that is what opinion pieces are supposed to do but that one was really just offensive and ill-informed.

It is true that Le Gym has no natural lighting, but for a \$20.84 a month, this fact is easily overlooked. It has everything that one might need to train effectively and efficiently. If one is found lacking "machines" to train with, one should consider hiring a personal trainer to help replace the "machines" one is looking for.

Machines are actually not required for strength training—in fact they are less beneficial because they force you to follow an unnatural movement pattern and do not work your stabilizing muscles—and any "serious weightlifter" would know that the equipment required for "serious weight lifting" is

provided by way of the six squat racks and five bench presses.

As the writer mentioned, muscle stimulation is required for growth. One can do this not by looking for new machines to play with but by increasing weight or changing the volume/intensity. As for the "interior decorating"—it is a gym. People do not go to a gym for the aesthetically pleasing environment, they go to work out.

If one is concerned with how everything looks, there are plenty of gyms in Montreal that offer different atmospheres (for quite a bit more than \$20 a month). It is true that the number of members in the gym is quite high, but that is only testament to its greatness.

—Anonymous student

The Link's letters and opinions policy: The deadline for letters is 4 p.m. on Friday. The Link reserves the right to verify your identity via telephone or email. We reserve the right to refuse letters that are libellous, sexist, homophobic, racist, xenophobic or over 400 words.

Please include your full name, weekend phone number, student ID number and program of study. The comments in the letters and opinions section do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial board.

Standards by Graeme Shorten Adams @foreshortening



Crap Comics by Morag Rahn-Campbell



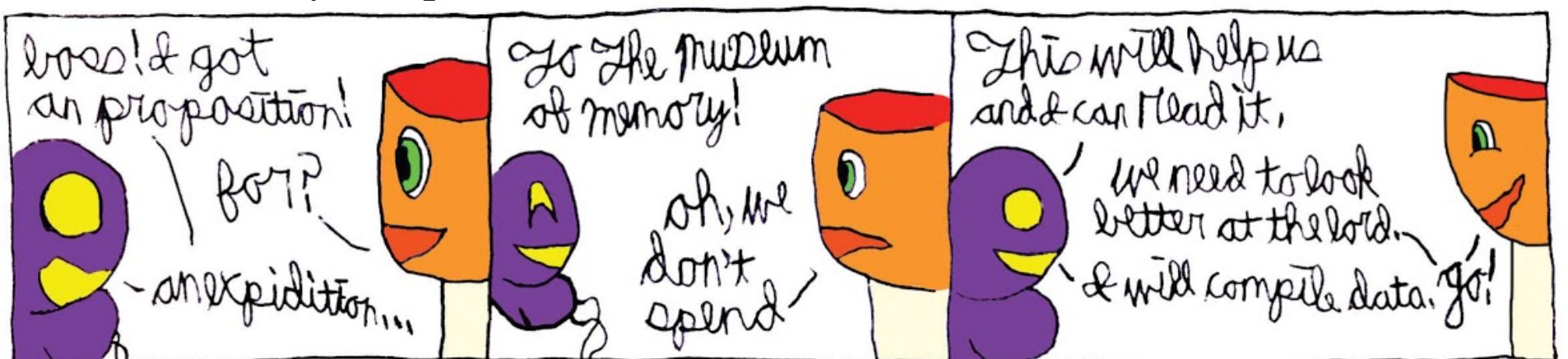
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EDITORIAL

GRAPHIC JENNIFER AEDY

New PM, Same Song and Dance

Trudeau May Be Against BDS, but Concordia Knows Better

Canadian politics have been a bastion for pro-Israel sentiments for years. Harper's government was famously committed to Israel, and Harper himself is renowned for talking up highfalutin' rhetoric for the pro-Israel lobby. In May 2014, he spouted off this nugget of propaganda:

"Those who hate democracy and freedom, tolerance and openness, have been plotting attacks against Western nations, beginning with Israel, for decades, seeking to destroy our rare and precious way of life."

Here was Canada's PM equating freedom and transcendental democracy with the Israeli struggle for land. That was then, and now, with a new PM, Canadian politics seem set on remaining staunchly pro-Israel.

Back in March, in the wake of McGill's tabling of Boycott, Divest and Sanction plans against Israel, Justin Trudeau released a tweet denouncing campus movements against Israel's occupation.

"The BDS movement, like Israeli Apartheid Week, has no place on Canadian campuses. As a @McGillU alum, I'm disappointed."

Trudeau ended his tweet with the hashtag

#EnoughisEnough, a reference to an op-ed published in the *Montreal Gazette* and written by a group of McGill students. The piece came in the wake of student supporters of Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights at McGill being ignored by way of an indefinite answer on BDS, and suggested that any campus endorsing BDS was inherently marginalizing not just the pro-Israel populace, but also the Jewish student body as a whole.

The idea that supporting solidarity with Palestine is the same as supporting Jewish marginalization is a fallacy. For that reason, *The Link* stands with the Concordia Student Union's mandate—voted on by students last year—to engage in BDS.

Approximately five million Palestinians are presently eligible for refugee aid, according to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. It is of primary import that we, as supporters of Palestinian human rights, rectify the false equation of Palestinian support and Jewish discrimination, to redirect the conversation away from bombastic rhetoric toward reality.

The BDS Week organized by Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights at Concordia is a

way to initiate the international movement within the university: through education. By bringing in journalists, thinkers and witnesses of the events in Palestine to speak, Concordia students will have the opportunity to learn about a movement that is too often skewed by mainstream North American media.

CNN's coverage of the recent wave of violence has resorted to the usual rhetoric; headlines tend to frame Israel as the victim of fear and violence. While it's true that Israeli civilians are being targeted by Palestinians, coverage by North American media outlets demonstrate a profound lack of dual perspective when reporting on the issue.

Palestinian violence flares up, and so does the mainstream's coverage of the conflict. But where are the headlines concerning IDF violence in the West Bank? It's fair for the mainstream to cover the conflict, but it should not only become an issue when Palestinians are violent.

Though CNN does not shy away from using the term "extremist" when covering Israeli settler attacks, it seems as though the media as a whole holds Palestinians to

a much more lax standard when deciding what makes for newsworthy violence. Stabbings and rock throwings against Israelis are notable, but a settler has to burn a Palestinian child alive before it hits the headlines.

Another example of this phenomenon is a demonstration earlier in October, which saw IDF soldiers kill six Palestinians. *Al Jazeera* stated point blank that undercover Israeli soldiers "infiltrated" the demo, partook in rock throwing and then helped arrest protesters. In *The New York Times* article, the story led with their deaths, but made no mention of possible incitement by undercover soldiers—not even an "allegedly" or "reportedly." They focused instead on how PM Benjamin Netanyahu is losing his grip on Israeli security.

It's about time that the slanted, disproportionately harmful coverage of the Israeli occupation ceases, and allows for Palestinians to be seen as people with voices, rather than violent rioters and lowlifes. Hopefully, this BDS Week will provide the education to Concordia students that media outlets and our governing bodies are so lacking.

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