



HOW AIRBNB IS GENTRIFYING OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS p.6

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EDITORIAL: ILLEGAL AIRBNBS SHOULD NOT BE IGNORED

As Airbnbs become an increasingly popular alternative to hotels, especially in urban areas like Montreal's Plateau-Mont-Royal and Parc-Extension, long-time residents of these areas are feeling the effects. The proliferation of Airbnbs can be linked to a rise in housing costs, especially in trendy central neighborhoods. In the case of Parc-Extension, where there is a high population of immigrants, this is even more problematic.

What is an Airbnb? The quasi-hotels have grown in popularity over the past few years, as they tend to be inexpensive compared to regular hotel rentals. The original concept centered around the idea that people would rent out their homes or a room to fellow travellers, for a cheaper, funkier, and more community-oriented way of finding lodging.

While it may have begun like that, many Montreal residents have noticed a change; the Airbnb meant to subvert the traditional hotel have become a business themselves, becoming indistinguishable from the hotels they were meant to usurp. Recent years have seen an increase in news reports detailing residents being disturbed by trash piling up and not being taken out, people coming and going at all hours, loud noise, and other problems caused by partying.

In April 2016, regulations surrounding

hotels changed in an effort to address some of the issues caused by the rising popularity of Airbnbs. These included a \$250 permit and a minimum \$2 million dollar insurance policy, and a nightly lodging tax to be paid to Revenu Quebec. These rules apply to anyone renting out their home for no more than 31 days regularly.

The issue is that enforcing these rules is difficult and further strains municipal resources. Quebec only has 27 inspectors authorized to examine the issue across the entire province.

The high cost of legally running an Airbnb becomes a deterrent for some, meaning that many of these "hotels" continue to fly further under the radar of regulations and taxation.

At first glance, the idea of an Airbnb is not bad. It isn't the quasi-hotels themselves that are the problem; it's their ripple effects.

Montreal is already facing the effects of gentrification. Over the past few years there have been a sharp increase in the number of stories dominated by narratives of Airbnbs contributing to gentrification and forcing long-time residents out of buildings and neighborhoods they've called home for years.

This happens mainly due to the fact that an individual who rents out an apartment or condo on a regular basis can make up to twice as much as what

that apartment's monthly rent costs. With this in mind, potential buyers won't mind spending more. This increases the average rent costs in the borough, in turn creating an increase in municipal taxes.

Overall, this puts low-income families and marginalized individuals at a disadvantage, and often pushes them out of their own neighbourhoods to make room for a new socio-economic class.

Montreal is currently entering a housing crisis, meaning that there are fewer and fewer residential buildings to accommodate a growing population. With vacancy rates as low as two per cent, and one per cent in the Plateau, Airbnbs only further exacerbate the situation by taking up space in buildings that were previously strictly residential.

The provincial government needs to allocate more resources into policing illegal Airbnbs and Montreal needs more affordable housing to lessen the strain on both parts of the issue. While both proposed solutions are costly, they would be beneficial to all of Quebec's residents in the long term.

Having only 27 people authorized to police the issue of illegal Airbnbs (among their other tasks) is simply not enough to properly address a rampant problem, that is close to becoming systematic in its scope. The time to act is now.

A New Gold Rush in Plateau-Mont-Royal

Airbnb May Be Beneficial for Landlords, But It's Inducing Gentrification At Accelerating Rates

MARCUS BANKUTI
@MARCUSBANKUTI

Plateau Mont-Royal is a popular place for students to live and play, home to neighbourhoods such as the Plateau and Mile End, as well as some of the city's most revered cultural touchstones. No secret to tourists looking for a taste of Montreal's joie de vivre, the borough is also a premier Airbnb hotspot—which some experts suggest is putting an upward pressure on rents. It is tempting for landlords to accommodate tourists rather than residents in a landscape of increasingly scarce housing. Long-time borough-dwellers are threatened by displacement, while disheartened students may be forced to look elsewhere.

Tim Forster, editor of Eater Montreal, works out of a fifth-floor Mile End studio, an emblem of the neighbourhood's fame as a creative hotspot. "This is a shared studio. Everyone [else] is doing artwork," he said. "There's space for 13 people." But he used to live around the corner in a building on Park Ave. near Bernard Ave.

Surrounded by vibrant spools of yarn, an orange-sweatered dog and a view of Mount Royal, Forster shared the story of his move. "I'd been living there for close to two years by the time the eviction came around," he said. The previous



PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS PAULINA DOMÍNGUEZ
AND ELISA BARBIER

owner had been older and easy to deal with, but when the building changed hands, the representatives of the numbered company that purchased it sent out eviction notices by registered mail, giving the required six months' warning and a promise of three months' rent, plus moving expenses.

"We negotiated, and they to our surprise outright said, 'Oh, well we want to make the building Airbnbs.' [...] This was like one-on-one in the apartment. They came to the apartment [...] to avoid going to the Régie [du logement]. We felt that we were in a position of power because I was pretty sure that the eviction was invalid."

A tenant generally has the right to keep their home if they conform to obligations such as paying rent on time and not disturbing other tenants, but there are exceptions delineated by the Régie du logement, Quebec's rental housing tribunal. An apartment's owner or their close relative can move in at the end of a lease, and the owner can take possession in order to "divide, enlarge, or change the destination" of a unit, the latter term meaning to change its purpose.

Had Forster's eviction proceeded to the Régie, the landlord would have had to provide evidence demonstrating the validity of their stated intentions and any legal permissions they would need. According to Forster, the landlord had no intention to move in, enlarge or divide the unit and appeared not to have obtained a permit to operate a tourist accommodation—an electronic entry system has been installed at the address, but there does not appear to

be a classification sign posted as would be required according to Tourisme Québec. A spokesperson for the Régie, Denis Miron, did not confirm whether an eviction like Forster described would have been illegal but reiterated the leaser's burden to show they truly intend to "divide, enlarge, or change the destination of the dwelling and that [they are] permitted to do so by law."

"We negotiated [and] I pushed quite hard on them. I bluffed it and said I'm a journalist, I worked at city hall [...] I've been to city hall and have a rough understanding." In the end, he suspects that he and his roommate, with whom he split a settlement of \$10,000, fared better than the building's other tenants.

"Part of the reason why they were willing to budge and give us more money was because the eviction notice they delivered to us as registered mail was addressed to someone that was no longer on the lease." For a lease longer than six months, tenants are entitled to six months' notice prior to the end of the term of their lease and have a month to object to the eviction.

Forster has since found his old building on Airbnb, where four of its apartments, nearly half, are currently listed on the platform. All four are two-bedrooms, and the current price of each at the time of publication hovers around \$75 per night on weekdays, plus a one-

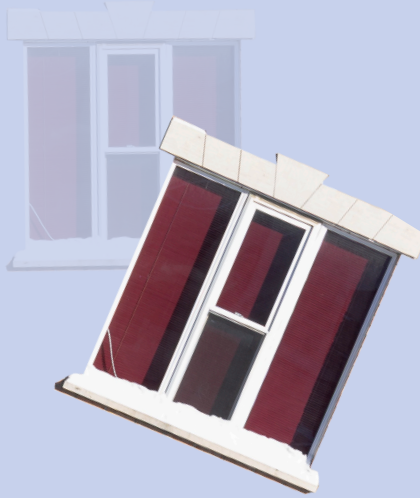
time cleaning fee of \$80.

Prices in the same building rise as tourism season arrives. The nightly prices can go up to \$138, plus cleaning, when booking for weekdays in early May. Prices later in the month go to \$214 per weekend night. When staying on a weekend in mid-June, the price hits \$235 per night plus cleaning, while Tuesday to Thursday early in June goes for \$154 per night. Some of the revenue funds Airbnb, as the company typically takes a fee of three per cent from hosts.

It is difficult to calculate what one unit in Forster's old building will earn in peak season. But averaging even the lower June figure over thirty days, the unit generates a few thousand dollars, assuming two-night stays are booked for close to the entire month.

Forster and his roommate had been splitting a monthly rent of nearly \$1,000.

The apartment is one of thousands no



longer available to Montreal residents looking for an affordable home within commuting distance from school or work, serving instead the legions of tourists the city attracts each year. The reviews are overwhelmingly positive, with guests raving about the location in a good neighbourhood close to downtown and the suitability of the units for families. One guest noted that the adjacent apartment is an Airbnb, so travellers can enjoy meeting each other.

Due to his work, Forster is an expert on the restaurant and café scene that forms part of the neighbourhood's appeal to visitors. He said he has seen changes in the neighbourhood since he started spending time there in 2013 and fears for its future. "I would not want to see [Mile End] converted into a permanent tourist neighbourhood, and I think that's going to effectively eliminate the character that drew the tourists there in the first place.

"It's really hard to separate gentrification from the tourism. [...] If something is causing problematic gentrification, it's [...] a switch from something like housing to being permanent Airbnb," Forster said.

Concerned by the proliferation of full-time tourist accommodations in the borough, Plateau Mont-Royal recently introduced regulations that will limit new permits to stretches of St. Laurent Blvd. and St. Denis St. The by-law was adopted in December in an attempt to preserve quality of life for residents and protect the borough's housing market.

The borough notes that it does not have the tools to stop illegal tourist residences, which include those offered on a regular basis without a certificate required by provincial law.

A 2017 report from the Front d'action populaire en réaménagement urbain shows the vacancy rate in the borough fell from 2.3 per cent to 1.1



per cent between 2016 and 2017. This is a period which saw a large increase in Airbnb listings in major Canadian cities, according to a report published the same year by the Urban Politics and Governance research group at McGill's School of Urban Planning.

That report highlighted that some Montreal neighbourhoods have seen two to three per cent of housing stock "converted to de facto hotels," and that in some cases whole buildings "have been converted by their landlords into full-time Airbnb operations."

"[Gentrification] raises rents and makes cities less affordable for [...] people who lived here for decades," explained Odile Lanctôt, a researcher tasked with updating 2016 research around Airbnb by the Comité logement du Plateau-Mont-Royal, a tenants' rights in the borough.

Gentrification can be hard to quantify and its causes are complex, but the CLPMR believes it is an ongoing process in the borough, as demonstrated in their 2014 report on the subject.

A 2018 report comparing 2011 and 2016 census information shows a 15 per cent increase in the median income of borough renters in Plateau Mont-Royal, while rent went up 16 per cent. This is nearly twice the increase of Quebec's consumer price index—a measure of inflation—over the same period.

The CLPMR characterizes Airbnb as a contributing factor to gentrification.

Their 2016 report states that, "Airbnb indirectly pushes homeowners to oust tenants in order to rent accommodations to tourists and make more profit," and that the "arrival of better-off people and tourists in the neighbourhood opens up new bars, restaurants, cafés, etc, which increases the cost of living in a global way. In this sense, Airbnb reinforces the gentrification of a neighbourhood and the lack of affordable housing."

Their solution? "Ban Airbnb," exhorts the cover of a brochure they produce. These are arranged in a neat stack on their office's literature table, on which the small staff brews coffee in a cheap plastic machine. The group estimated in 2016 that as much as five per cent of the rental housing market in Plateau Mont-Royal was being diverted for tourist use on Airbnb.

Many Airbnbs operate illicitly in Quebec. A 2017 report out of McGill's School of Urban Planning indicated that, "Fewer than one per cent of Montreal's full time listings [were] certified and paying the accommodation tax," with only a handful of violations handed out—none of which were in Montreal. Enforcement of the rule was transferred to Revenu Québec in June, resulting in nearly one thousand warnings being issued across the province by the end of November according to Mathieu Boivin, a spokesperson from the agency who emphasized a focus on tax compliance.

"Airbnb growth [in Plateau Mont-Royal] is completely outpacing new constructions and [is] actually reducing net available housing stock," noted the McGill report, meaning in spite of new homes being added to the neighbourhood, there's still a decline in housing available for people to live in.

The CLPMR's office receives field calls

every day from residents frustrated by issues related to the platform. "[The guests] just throw garbage everywhere. And there's the sound of people checking in and checking out, and the parties [...], apartments rented to tourists who want to do bachelor parties" Lanctôt said.

"It just destroys neighbourhood life. You don't know your neighbours. They're always different, they don't care about you, you don't talk to them. It's a way of living."

She said tenants being evicted or pressured to leave to make room for Airbnbs is a big problem in the borough.

Richard Stafford, 72 years old, is fighting to keep his Pine Ave. apartment of three years, located around the corner from a building where he lived and worked as a superintendent for more than 20 years.

"It's sort of stressful," he said. "I'm a little too old for this. [...] I've lived in different places in my life, but when you get old you want something stable." He's paying \$600 now, but said if he moves into a neighbouring building where he can get a comparable apartment for \$800, he is worried the same thing could happen again.

"It's like the gold rush," he said. "Everybody's jumping on it."

Most of his fellow tenants have taken money to vacate or been evicted by other means, he said. "The former landlord [always] let them get [...] behind on rent, so they were used to that. That's how they got rid of three or four people."

"[As for the others], if you have a minimum wage job, or you're on welfare [...] and they offer you \$4000—I remember when I didn't have any money at all. You take the \$4000."

The renovation of vacant units has been a nightmare, he said. "Before they were closing the door and asking very nicely [if they were] making too much noise. Now they're just leaving the door open."

In the summer, Stafford saw, "Constant circulation [of tourists]."

"It was like a hotel lobby when you're

"It just destroys neighbourhood life. You don't know your neighbours. They're always different, they don't care about you, you don't talk to them. It's a way of living."

— *Odile Lanctôt*



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pher Curtis will be giving a workshop on
feature writing!



coming in the entrance.”

The apartments that have been renovated, he said, are rented to short-term tenants during the winter months and put on Airbnb in the lucrative summer season. He says the character of the building has changed as a result. “You’re getting all the BBs—bourgeois bohemi-ans.”

Meanwhile, Stafford said prices in the area have gone up and complains he has nowhere to go unless he moves into a comparable apartment in a high-rise for \$1100, that or he feels he’ll risk the same fate in a smaller building.

Online listings on other websites show that units from the building have been advertised for short-term leases and tourist bookings. On one, the host’s profile compares his apartments to hotel rooms, citing things like clean sheets and towels.

“I had an opportunity,” explained Dana Zhou, who operates more than 10 Airbnbs and employs a cleaning team and an assistant.

“There was an apartment for rent, and we were friends with the owner, and they asked me if I was interested in renting it on Airbnb. I was like, ‘Sure, why not.’ I was doing it just for fun. We started with one, like a year and a half ago. And then it just went on. There was another one in the same building, so I took over.”

For each of her properties Zhou said she either represents the owner or has all the apartments in the building for rent.

“I don’t have to hide it from everybody,” she said. “I don’t have to tell the guests, ‘Don’t tell people you’re in an Airbnb, just say you’re my friend.’”

“That happens all the time.”

She has faced some complaints about parties but insists these are rare and have never been serious. That’s not the only drawback: hosting has gotten more and more competitive.

“[Listings] are nicer and nicer. Nicer, like really nice. And not expensive.” The goal is to stay afloat until the bountiful tourist season, between March and September, during which prices go up and

her apartments will be “98 per cent full.”

Zhou believes much of the market is operating in contravention of the law.

“There’s so many, so many [Airbnbs] right now, and none of them have permits,” Zhou said. “I would say a few of them do, but very, very few. Maybe a hundred out of a thousand on the Plateau. It’s like a free for all right now.”

Most of Zhou’s listings are in Plateau Mont-Royal, where she also lives. “If I were to come to Montreal, I would stay [here]. It’s quite family-oriented.”

Stafford says he just wants to stay in the community, reflecting on his fondest memories. A dedicated customer who has been going to Shish Taouk on St. Laurent Blvd. and Prince Arthur St. E. everyday for about 20 years, he said, “It’s like family for me.”

Around the corner from Stafford’s favourite restaurant, it is not uncommon to see people dragging luggage or screaming drunk on pedestrian-only Prince Arthur St. E. Get out of the commotion: dip into a *dépanneur*. Inside, you’ll find the usual scene. People are clamouring for chips and crackers, or perhaps another beer. Next to a stack of warm Pabst Blue Ribbon, you’ll find an electronic box mounted to the wall. If you’ve made arrangements, you’ll need only your code. Inside each of its 19 compartments? A key, of course. Enjoy Plateau Mont-Royal. □



Canada's Post Legalization Pardon Promises Don't Go Far Enough

Marginalized Communities
Continue to Be Affected by
Cannabis Criminalization

DAVID EARLES
@NI_MASTE_BORT

Last fall, after nearly a century of prohibition, Canada became the first country in North America to fully legalize marijuana.

In June 2018, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that, "We will soon have a new system in place, one that keeps cannabis out of the hands of our kids and keeps profits away from organized crime."

But with the Canadian cannabis industry poised to become a revenue-generating juggernaut, the lingering issue of how to deal with the thousands of Canadians left with criminal charges remains unresolved.

Reena Rampersad is a volunteer coordinator with the Campaign for Cannabis Amnesty, an Ontario-based advocacy organization dedicated to pressuring the federal government to fully expunge the records of all non-violent pre-legalization offenders.

"Considering the price that has been paid by the people that have created the industry for the country and for the people that are making the money from



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION ELISA BARBIER AND
PAULINA DOMÍNGUEZ

it now, I definitely think it's unfair that this process is being handled the way it is," Rampersad told *The Link*. "It's really funny because the government used that whole pardons announcement as a little bit of a publicity stunt to gain popularity with the general public."

When legalization was announced by the Liberal government, it came with a commitment to enact a new policy of amnesty for pre-legalization offenders. Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Minister Ralph Goodale said legislation streamlining the pardon process would be introduced before the end of 2018. This legislation, however, has yet to materialize.

Rampersad said that a lot of people don't have a real understanding of pardons and what their implications are.

"I think the government kind of played on that ignorance to present themselves as heroes," she said. "They were able to say, 'We're issuing pardons for anyone who has cannabis convictions,' but what's really new about that? Nothing."

Trudeau's statement unveiling Bill C-45 was a recognition of historical injustices and a pledge to rectify them. However, Trudeau said in an interview with *Vice* in May 2017 that his father, former prime-minister, made the possession charges against Justin's late brother Michel "go away."

"We were able to do that because we had resources," Trudeau told *Vice* at the time. "My dad had a couple connections and we were confident that my little brother was not going to be saddled with a criminal record for life."

Trudeau also said he smoked cannabis recreationally while he was a sitting member of parliament, an admission for which he has not faced legal consequences.

This person also currently heading the Liberal party, the same party Rampersad says is downplaying the difference between a pardon and an expungement—a difference she says is significant.

"A pardon is essentially the relabeling of a conviction on your record. It doesn't mean anything," Rampersad explained.

She said as it stands at this moment, a person has to first serve their sentence and then wait for three to five years after being released before they can even apply for a pardon.

"That's a very convoluted and expensive process," she said. "They have to go obtain their record, then put in their request, and obtain affidavits and all kinds of other things."

"The government has responded that they will explore streamlining the process and waiving these fees, but the fact is, a pardon is still going to remain on their record, so this does nothing," said Rampersad. "An expungement, on the

"My dad had a couple connections and we were confident that my little brother was not going to be saddled with a criminal record for life."

— Justin Trudeau

other hand, erases it entirely. It wipes your record clean."

During a recent interview with CTV News, Goodale addressed the expungement question. "We obviously recognize the disproportionate impact that convictions for simple possession has had on people's lives," he said. "Expungement historically has been used only in one case, and that is to correct a situation where the law itself—not the application of the law but the law itself—was in violation of the Canadian Charter. It violated human rights. And that's why we used expungement in that case, when the Criminal Code specifically, and explicitly, discriminated against gay people."

What Goodale's equivocating state-

ment translates to is that because persecution of LGBTQ+ people in Canada by law enforcement was specifically directed by an identifiable law, people from that community were deserving of the blanket record expungement that Canada belatedly issued in June 2018 to violators of "sodomy laws," later repealed in 1969.

In other words, although Canadian law enforcement engaged in widespread discriminatory policing of cannabis, because systemic prejudice was a manifestation of widespread individual prejudice (as opposed to the other way around), record expungements aren't warranted in the case of cannabis offenders or victims of disproportionate enforcement, according to Goodale.

In fact, because Canada doesn't collect data on the relationship between race and arrests in a standardized fashion, institutional racism within Canada's police apparatus is difficult to quantify.

However, through ground-breaking research conducted by University of Toronto criminologists Akwasi Owusu-Bempah and Alex Luscombe, racial bias in cannabis arrests in multiple cities across Canada was clearly demonstrated for the first time in April 2018.

The investigation, published by *Vice*, was based on data obtained through access to information requests from multiple police departments. The data showed that enforcement of cannabis law was universally less rigorous against white people than against other racial groups.

"This data is so powerful because it confirms the speculation or the idea that Canada's war on drugs has been so heavily racialized," Owusu-Bempah told *Vice*.

In Halifax, for instance, the data showed that Black people were five times more likely to be arrested for cannabis possession than white people, while for Indigenous people in Regina, the number rose to nine times more likely.

Among the cities which provided data for the *Vice* investigation (Regina, Edmonton, Calgary, Halifax, Vancouver,

and Ottawa), data showed conclusive evidence of widespread racially disproportionate enforcement in all cities.

Another investigation conducted by the *The Star* in 2017 demonstrated a similar trend in Toronto, where Black people with no criminal history were found to be three times more likely to be arrested than their white counterparts for cannabis possession.

SACRAMENTAL USE

Donisha Prendergast was born in Jamaica and is a practicing Rastafarian. She lives in Toronto and is an outspoken advocate of restorative justice for communities that have been disproportionately targeted by law enforcement during the decades of cannabis prohibition here in Canada. She also happens to be the granddaughter of Bob Marley, the most recognizable Rastafarian of all time.

“[The Rastafari] movement started in Jamaica in the 1930s, and was heralded by the coronation of Haile Selassie, King of Ethiopia, and what he represented during the time of colonialism,” Prendergast explained to *The Link*. “Rastafari is an evolving cultural movement that seeks to right the wrongs of colonialism by holding people accountable to their own evolution.”

When asked about her views on the recent legalization of recreational cannabis here in Canada, she said, “It’s an emotional topic because, for us, cannabis is a sacrament. For the world right now, it’s being used ‘recreationally,’ and that in itself is contrary to how we want to see the world consume this plant. We look at this plant as a sacrament, not as something for recreational use. Cannabis as a sacrament has helped me to gain more clarity on my spiritual journey and to make hard decisions. It’s a way of getting closer to the idea of God, to the idea to a higher self.”

To more fully contextualize the issue of sacramental use and the persecution of members of the Rastafari faith, it is important to examine the history of the Rastafari movement, which began with

a man named Leonard Percival Howell. Born into an Anglican family, Howell left Jamaica, eventually ending up in New York City, where he was influenced by fellow Jamaican Marcus Garvey, inspired by black nationalism and the Pan-African movement.

When a Regent named Ras Tafari Makonnen ascended to the throne of Ethiopia and was crowned Emperor, known as Emperor Haile Selassie, some believed this to be the literal fulfillment of Garvey’s prophecy, “Look to Africa, when a Black king shall be crowned, for the day of deliverance is at hand.”

“For the world right now, it’s being used ‘recreationally,’ and that in itself is contrary to how we want to see the world consume this plant. We look at this plant as a sacrament, not as something for recreational use.”

— *Donisha Prendergast*

Preaching a message of Emperor Selassie’s divinity on the streets of Kingston, Howell soon developed a following, and came to be known as “the first Rasta.”

After buying a large parcel of land outside of Kingston, Howell broke ground on a project he called “Pinnacle.” Drawing his inspiration from both the Pan-African and Ethiopian movements of the time, it was at Pinnacle that Howell sought to establish a communal, economically independent, and agricultural community.

One of the crops the community cul-

tivated was ganja—the Sanskrit name for cannabis. The plant was widely used by Howell and his followers as sacramental; smoking it is ritualistic, and provides a spiritual connection.

The ganja trade, though illegal throughout the British Empire, was a lucrative one, and Howell saw it as an economic means for autonomy and self-determination for the citizens of Pinnacle. By the 1950s, Pinnacle was an independent and economically robust community.

Eventually police raided Pinnacle, sending Howell and his followers to jail, hoping to end popularity towards Howell and the Rastafarian movement. Following this, decades-long of state repression against the Rastafarians continued.

In recent years, Prendergast has organized an online campaign called Occupy Pinnacle that seeks to preserve the original site of Howell’s community, as the property is now under threat of acquisition by developers. But here in Canada, she says the persecution of her community has continued, and claims of sacramental use were never acknowledged as justification for exemption from previous law.

“I support the movement for expungement, but it’s not enough,” said Prendergast. “You’re talking about families that have been broken up. You’re talking about wealth creation opportunities that were interrupted, destabilized and destroyed.”

Along with many others who were active in the legalization movement, Prendergast also expressed indignation at some of the emerging key players in the Canadian cannabis industry. “You have former members of the police force that are now set to partake in the legal cannabis industry,” she said. “Come on, really?”

One particularly controversial figure in the industry is Julian Fantino. While serving as Toronto Police Chief and later as Ontario Provincial Police Commissioner, Fantino left with accusations of interfering with an anti-corruption task force.

Afterwards, as a Conservative Party MP, Fantino supported mandatory

minimum prison sentences for home-growing as few as six cannabis plants.

However, following a rather dramatic change of heart, he has now partnered with former RCMP deputy commissioner Raf Souccar to form Aleafia Health Inc., which operates a network of “health delivery system” clinics and has now expanded into cannabis farming.

Fantino, who in October 2015 stated via Twitter, “I am completely opposed to the legalization of marijuana,” now stands at earning \$1.2 million in revenue from it.

THE NEED FOR EQUITY

It is estimated that 500,000 Canadians currently have a criminal record as a result of being charged with the simple possession of cannabis. While those with the resources and social connections necessary to capitalize on the cannabis gold rush are quickly consolidating the market and making a fortune, many wonder what will happen to the thousands upon thousands of people who have had their lives disrupted by cannabis prohibition, especially those from disproportionately targeted communities, and how do we go about achieving something that resembles “justice” for them? Lawmakers in California may have an answer.

According to the American Civil Liberties Union, African-Americans in the United States are nearly four times more likely to be arrested for marijuana-related offences than whites, while marijuana use between the two groups is roughly the same.

Recreational cannabis was legalized in California on Jan. 1, 2018. Across the bay from affluent San Francisco, the predominantly African-American city of Oakland has long been plagued by poverty, and its residents have been among the hardest-hit victims of the drug war.

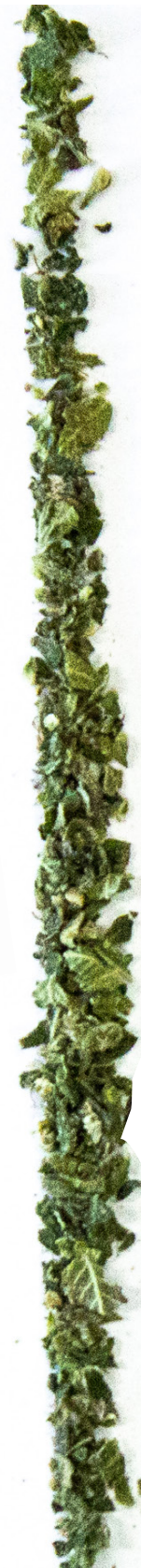
It was with this in mind that Oakland legislators proposed a bold new approach to regulating the nascent legal cannabis industry in their community: the Cannabis Equity Program.

This program, which fast-tracked victims of disproportionate enforcement into the exploding cannabis industry, sought to provide legitimate wealth-generating opportunities for communities most in need.

In May 2018, the California Senate passed Bill 1294, which will take the equity program concept statewide. Speaking from the senate floor, Steven Bradford (the bill’s author) argued, “Although California isn’t the first state to legalize the adult use and sale of cannabis, we can be the first state to do it right—by including those who were once punished, but can now contribute.”

Here in Canada, the Liberal government has yet to pass a bill amending the federal policy on pardons for those with cannabis convictions, though they promised to do so by the end of 2018. The New Democratic Party tabled Bill C-415 which proposes expungements, but the bill has yet to be voted on.

While an equity program is not something available to Canadians, Canada is moving towards further legalization later this year, with edibles coming to our legal market. Consultations on edibles have been hosted by the government in major Canadian cities to address public concern. With the push for more products available in the recreational and medical industry, Canada’s intentions for amnesty, once promised last fall, are still not in the foreseeable future. □



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The Online Blacklist for BDS Activists

Canary Mission Correlates Anti-Semitism With BDS, Doxing Supporters of the Movement

BY SAVANNA CRAIG

In a day and age where online data faces concerns from the greater population, with websites like Facebook selling our data or hackers releasing our information to the public, for some communities, such as those involved in Palestinian activism, the internet can provide a great threat to safety and security.

Canary Mission, a website used to dox supporters of BDS—the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement in relation to the state of Israel—works to release the identity of supporters, correlating this activism to anti-Semitism, and ousting supporters as racist. Since its establishment in May 2015, Canary Mission has doxed BDS activists on Canadian and American campuses, professors included.

“We always feel under surveillance, certainly in the Palestinian-Arab community,” said Henry Cook*, a member of Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights Concordia. “Our parents, while growing up, they tell us to watch out—the basic, ‘Do not talk to strangers’ and what not—but they always tell us to not get too involved with the causes for SPHR, even if it’s the right thing,” he said.

Cook said his parents don’t know about Canary Mission, but they have always told him to stay away from Palestinian activism to not endanger his career, as they understand there’s a

blacklist for Palestinian activists.

Palestinian activists are always a target, he said, even if they aren’t doxed and listed on sites like Canary Mission. “For example, I have a Canadian passport, I was



born here and raised here, I travel a lot and every time I travel I always get questioned and what not.”

Cook said he has been able to remain off the site due to not publicizing his name online alongside his BDS activism.

“Most people, even in the Palestinian activist community, they don’t know me by my name, they just call me by my Instagram username,” he said. “I guess that’s a way I’ve been able to stay out of it.”

Cook said some fear can stem from Canary Mission either impacting one’s future career or being barred from entering Palestine. When mentioning a colleague that is listed on the website, he said, “His chances of ever seeing Palestine are next to none.”

There has been speculation that information from Canary Mission has been used to prevent those with profiles on the site from entering Israel and Palestine at the Israeli border before entry. Some accounts of this have surfaced. However, it’s unclear to what extent the Israel Defence Forces utilize the site.

Canary Mission was unable to answer this question before publication, however in an article by *The Aggie*—a student paper at the University of California, Davis—Canary Mission told journalists they have no connection to the Israeli government. “Individuals, journalists or organizations are free to use our material as they wish,” a representative from Canary Mission wrote in an email to *The Aggie*.

“The population most at risk by Canary Mission are Palestinians who want to visit their family in Palestine,” said Maya Edery, campus coordinator for Jewish Voices for Peace, a left-wing activist organization based in the U.S. and focused on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

“The [Israel Defence Forces] has long searched for any kind of activist history before allowing Palestinians in the country, efforts that have only increased in recent years.” She said this is fundamentally anti-democratic behavior and described these tactics as a form of violence.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a complex topic, one that cannot be simply boiled down to a two-state solution within today’s political realm. While action to address and push for change is taken from both sides, BDS is one of the most controversial movements that has gained popularity in North America.

BDS aims to put pressure on Israel to pull out their settlements from Palestinian territory through the economic boycott of Israeli products and academics. This further controversy between sides, as some Israel supporters identify this as a threat to the Jewish state, while some supporters of Palestine often regard it as the last recourse to save Palestinian land.

“BDS is anti-Semitic. It is a movement determined to undermine and destroy Jewish self-determination,” explained a representative from the Canary Mission team via email, which works anonymously to protect the identities of those involved.

“The desired outcome of the BDS movement is for Israel to be eradicated, so supporters of the economic boycott of Israel fulfill the criteria of applicability as per the ethics policy on our website,” the representative continued.

Canary Mission’s website lists that any individual or organization can get placed on the website if they are anti-Semitic, or if they support a group that has been listed as terrorist, such as Hamas, or if violate the safety of Jews or Israelis, disrupt Jewish or pro-Israel events, incite violence on those groups, use language to demonize Jews, Israelis or Israeli supporters, or support or promote BDS.

The website claims that all information written on their profiles has been gathered from open sources on the internet. The website also states that they avoid intentionally adding embellishments or opinions to the information they publish.

For the purposes of this article, *The Link* spoke to four BDS activists who have been listed on Canary Mission and one who has not been listed on the site. Four of the sources have been granted

anonymity at their request to avoid further online harassment and threats to their safety.

A Concordia student who has been listed on Canary Mission, Steve Bryce* said much of the information on his profile was taken from an interview that he was told would be for a project, but later found the information published on Canary Mission.

He said the encounter took place after BDS was endorsed by the Concordia Stu-



dent Union in 2014. “I was interviewed by a [...] ‘journalism student’ that was interested in doing a project on Palestinian activism on campus,” said Bryce. “They promised me that it would be private, and that it’s just for a project for their professor.”

He said after a month he found himself on Canary Mission with the same information he provided in the interview. “They quoted me, but twisted the interpretation of my interview,” said Bryce.

When asked if Canary Mission uses tactics such as interviewing BDS activists on a different pretense to be used on the website, the same Canary Mission representative said no.

Hannah Stanton*, a former McGill student involved in Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights McGill, said she found her profile to be manipulated as well. She said her profile mostly involved screenshots of opinions she had posted on Facebook, or things she had said

during SPHR McGill meetings.

“They purposely try to create associations between individuals and things like Hamas and acts of anti-Semitism that have absolutely nothing to do with you,” said Stanton. “On my page there’s a whole section on like Hamas and the wider [Students for Justice in Palestine] movement and how SJP activists supposedly harass Jewish students.”

A section of her profile discusses how SJP activists frequently intimidate and



harass Jewish and pro-Israel students. Stanton said these narratives don't apply to her or her experience at McGill, either.

"If any anti-Semitic statements or harassment of Jewish students did happen at McGill it was not done by anyone associated with SPHR," said Stanton. "Our group was together the whole time and [not] one of us ever thought it was OK to personally attack another person and we understood that that would be discrediting to the movement."

"So the fact that they're trying to conflate all the issues that have ever happened across North America with all pro-BDS activism and put it on my page to indirectly draw links to it is where the manipulation comes in," she said.

In an interview with *The Intercept*, one attorney from Palestine Legal, a group that has interviewed more than 200 people who were doxed on Canary Mission, reported some have received death threats, racial harassment and damaged professional relationships as

a result of the site. They also heard that one person was denied a bank account after finding themselves on the site.

Former Concordia student and BDS activist Gregory Holland* said that in his network the site's harassment hasn't worked. "We're still getting hired, we're still performing, we're still doing great stuff—but I think that we should not get distracted," he said, "use Canary Mission as a way to empower us, to really remind ourselves that what we're doing is working."

Instead, he said having a Canary Mission page shows that activists are being effective.

Jewish Voices For Peace condemns Canary Mission. However, Indepen-

dent Jewish Voices, an organization that represents Canadian Jews committed to social justice and human rights, does not have a stance on the conflict, according to Tali Ioselevich, a Concordia representative for Independent Jewish Voices.

Ioselevich said they can't speak for every Independent Jewish Voices member, but said many see Canary Mission as a scare tactic.

Ioselevich found themselves on Canary Mission circa the end of 2017 or the beginning of 2018. As an active member of Independent Jewish Voices at Concordia and formerly McGill, Ioselevich mobilized for BDS support and to discourage Jews from attending Birthright—which allows them to return to the holy land in Israel for free to learn about the roots of Judaism.

Ioselevich said they had a mixed reaction being on the website. "On the one hand, I have a very Zionist mother and I know she sometimes out of the blue googles my name," they said. "So my first reaction was concern that she's going to find out and there will be consequences."

They said their second reaction was that they must be doing something right.

Ioselevich highlighted that most of these profiles on Canary Mission are of racialized people. "It's more of a threat for them and I'm sure it's more intimidating to be publicly outed and have their names associated with the way Canary Mission words it," such as stating they are a terrorist or anti-Semitic. They said there are also a sizable amount of Jews on the website being labeled as anti-Semites.

"In the three years we have been fighting Canary Mission, the overall impact we've witnessed from Canary Mission has been the creation of a culture of fear that intentionally targets some of the most vulnerable students on U.S. campuses," said Edery.

Edery said Canary Mission uses overly broad definitions of anti-Semitism, aiming to paint advocates for Palestinian human rights as anti-Semitic.

She said there have been some anecdotal stories of a few students being



questioned by the university administration over allegations made by the site, but those concerns, “Were subsequently cleared up once more information about Canary Mission’s McCarthyist approach came out.”

Edery said no one from Jewish Voices for Peace’s knowledge has been fired from their job for being listed on the website, but it’s impossible to tell if applicants for jobs haven’t been selected due to Canary Mission’s posts.

“Canary Mission does all of this in the name of Jewish students’ safety, but groups like Canary Mission actually endanger students by subjecting them to hate mail and other forms of harassment,” Edery said.

Jewish Voices for Peace has seen a growing trend of students resisting Canary Mission, exposing it for the racist right-wing site that it is, explained Edery.

“Students have publicly spoken out to the media,” Edery said. “They’ve organized AgainstCanaryMission.org to challenge the impact and false claims that Canary Mission makes.”

Edery said more than 1,000 professors signed a petition condemning Canary Mission, as Open Hillel—an organization described as open to interfaith relationships, and supportive of feminism and LGBTQ+ communities—has called upon Hillel International to stop supporting Canary Mission.

In the fall of 2018, a journalist from *The Forward* exposed those funding the site. Between November 2016 and September 2017, the Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles sent a series of donations totalled at \$250,000 to an Israeli non-profit, Megamot Shalom, thought to operate Canary Mission.

The Helen Diller Family Foundation sent \$100,000 to the Central Fund of Israel, a New York-based charity that operates as a conduit for U.S. taxpayers looking to make tax-exempt donations to right-wing and extremist groups in Israel.

Within the tax filing, the Helen Diller Family Foundation included the message “Canary Mission For Megamot

Shalom,” as uncovered by *The Forward*. This indicates that that the grant to the Central Fund of Israel was designated for Canary Mission through sending money to Megamot Shalom.

A link between Megamot Shalom and Canary Mission has been speculated ever since Jonathan Bash, a British-born Jerusalem resident, signed Megamot Shalom’s 2016 financial reports. Two sources that were granted anonymity separately told *The Forward* that Bash is the operator of Canary Mission.

Those on the website wanting to be removed are able to, however, they have to denounce the actions that have placed them on the website. The identities of those who have done so, listed as Ex-Canaries, remain anonymous to prevent harassment. The total of Ex-Canaries amounts to 15 people.

“These individuals have displayed the intellectual honesty to acknowledge the problem of anti-Semitism within anti-Israel organizations such as Students for Justice in Palestine, Jewish Voice for Peace and the [BDS] movement,” the website explained.

CONFLICTING OPINIONS ON BDS

President of Concordia’s Chapter of Israel on Campus, an initiative intended to educate students on Israel’s commitments to democracy in the Middle East, culture, history, and humanitarian efforts, Laurent Cohen said that Israel on Campus does not have an official stance on Canary Mission.

He said Israel on Campus however, doesn’t support BDS. “We find it to be



discriminatory and bigoted movement,” said Cohen. “[BDS’s] goals are very clear and have been stated since its inception, to destroy the Jewish state.”

Jon Levine from Hillel Concordia said Canary Mission is an off campus independent website, which neither the IOC or Hillel have relations with.

“That being said, BDS is a discriminatory movement based on national origin which denies the right to self-determination of the Jewish people on their historic and ancestral land,” said Levine. “BDS alienates many students, while also limiting academic freedom and dialogue.”

Cohen said BDS doesn’t make a distinction of where the border should be. “It

makes no distinction. It is specifically targeted against destroying the world's only Jewish state and it holds it to a completely unfair double standard that it doesn't hold for a number of other nations."

He said that highlighting efforts to coexist, such as a two state solution, would be a much more productive use of everyone's time instead of isolating and harming Israel.

"I think trying to find points in mutual agreements between Israelis and Palestinians would be ideal, and just try to come together and have a conversation instead of [blocking] all voices."

Cohen said he feels that Israel is misrepresented. "People really see it as a one sided conflict, Israel is painted as the oppressor, the Palestinians are painted as the oppressed," said Cohen. "I'm not denying that obviously there are tons of hardships faced by Palestinians, I just don't think that they're being properly attributed the vast majority of the time."

He said that the everyday struggles Israelis face are underrepresented. "For example, Israelis live in border communities that are under attack from rockets, this is something that doesn't get spoken about at all, and I think it's really unfair."

Cohen said in the past IOC has provided events geared towards discussion, which he feels is more productive. "In the past we've worked with organizations like Stand With Us, [a non-profit pro-Israel education and advocacy organization] to bring in Israeli soldiers and have conversations with students passing by," he said, adding that this allows students to understand people who are living on the grounds and experiencing the conflict every day.

"I think that a lot of the time that when certain Israeli voices have been brought to campus, there's been a really strong effort to silence them, which I don't think has been productive in advancing the interest of Israelis nor Palestinians," said Cohen. "Events that try and focus and foster discussion would be ideal in looking for common ground, instead of highlighting the conflict all the time."

Ioselevich said not everyone who sup-

ports BDS is pro one state or two states, as they describe that there's a variety of views on the best solution. They said there are also misconceptions of BDS, as they said it is not a mostly Arab community—as there are Jewish and other folks involved in BDS—and that BDS does not call to an end for Israel.

Holland said he feels BDS is correlated to anti-Semitism as an aim to delegitimize the movement.

"What [some are] trying to do is delegitimize the movement by just repeating the same narrative over and over again, until it comes true, or until they believe they were able to convince everyone that BDS is anti-Semitic," said Holland. "There could be anti-Semites within the Palestinian movement [...]"

"We always feel under surveillance, certainly in the Palestinian-Arab community, just in general."

— Henry Cook

just the same way there's bad apples in every single movement, but let's just remember the Palestinian movement is based off of equal rights."

Holland said the three demands of BDS are ones imposed by the international community of the United Nations, which calls, "For the right of movement, the return of the Palestinian refugees," then the third, which asks for equality for Palestinian citizens of Israel.

Ioselevich said that BDS is comparable to the previous boycott of the South African apartheid, where countries worldwide cut professional and trade ties with the region in protest of long-standing system of racial inequality.

"[Israel] expanding illegal settlements [...], this just blows my mind that they

think it's a debatable issue—it's happening, it's clear, the United Nations has issued [many] resolutions over it," said Stanton.

She stressed how the borders between Palestine and Israel were decided upon in 1949.

"The BDS movement is trying to call for the respecting of those boundaries," said Stanton. "That's it, you don't occupy any more Palestinian land, like go back to the borders that everyone agreed on and let people live their lives in a non-occupied way, with free movement, free ability to seek healthcare when you need it."

Ioselevich reiterated that BDS is not against the existence of Israelis or the existence of Jewish people. They said not buying products from Israel is a tool to push for changes within Palestinian human rights.

The opinion of those who are against or for BDS does not completely separate who supports Canary Mission or not. "If you look online even there's Israeli groups, Zionist groups, that are against Canary Mission because it's just intimidation," said Cook.

He referenced an article where a Zionist had been put on Canary Mission. The article, titled "I'm A Zionist. Canary Mission Targeted Me Anyway" assesses how David Baile, a professor of Jewish history at the University of California, ended up on Canary Mission, falsely describing his views.

Cook added that he's noticed a university in America that passed a statement that requires the university to be transparent to potential employers of a student that is on Canary Mission that the website is for intimidation purposes. He said he wants to bring something like this to Concordia.

"It's definitely something I want to do before I leave Concordia. I still have a long way, [but] it's in my plans," said Cook. □

Ambivalently Yours: Using the Colour Pink as a Tool Against the Patriarchy

The Montreal Artist Split Between Loving Femininity and Realizing That It's Part of the System She's Constantly Fighting

MARISSA RAMNANAN

“M

y softness is my armour,” reads one. “Learning to hate myself less in small increments one tiny piece at a time,” reads another.

Flirty pinks and soft pastels colour Ambivalently Yours’ Instagram page. The Montreal artist often uses the internet as a medium to remain anonymous in her work, although the vulnerability she communicates through her pieces is synonymous to her identity.

Through her art, the viewer is given space to rest, settle into themselves, and mull over the intrinsic emotions of

what it means to be alive and exist with a myriad of emotions. She has created a platform where experiencing emotions is okay, which helps to validate people’s lived experiences.

Ambivalence, which means having opposing feelings (like attraction and repulsion) toward something or someone, is the root of her artistic practice.

Her content is emotionally raw, coupled with sweet and slightly creepy illustrations. With it she opens up the dialogue for women to question their confusing relationships with the patri-



archy and to express their vulnerability, passion and uncertainty.

AY tends to use rounded lines in her art, and her curious illustrations follow a theme of strange, malleable-looking figures with large eyes drawn with delicate penmanship.

AY couples her artwork, which stems from a tender place, with an unapologetically raw short statement or poem rooted in emotion.

“[My work] is a lot about validating my own feelings, and trying to vali-

“Everything that’s associated with femininity is seen as lesser or weak. I think there can be a lot of power in femininity, in softness and emotions. A lot of what I try to do with my work is to confront these things, and show that being a tender and emotional person doesn’t equate being weak, or lesser than the strong, bold, [male] archetype.”

— *Ambivalently Yours*

date the feelings of everybody [else],” she explained, “which is feminist in its nature.”

Typically creating her work with a simple ballpoint pen on paper with some watercolour paint, AY scans and posts her work on her online platforms like Instagram, Tumblr and Twitter. She also creates animations and GIFs, and has a small line of tangible work that she sells online and at markets, like pins, patches and shirts.

“It’s important for me to share [my art] because it’s a form of communication; it’s a way that I found to express things that I can’t express with words alone.”

The vulnerability that she demonstrates in her art is intentional; publishing her work and getting a response from her followers helps AY feel like she’s less isolated in her feelings.

“It’s really important to listen to your emotions, and I think being an emotional person is a gift in a way. But [there’s] a fine line between being an emotional person and being completely overrun by your emotions. So, in a way, art is a way for me to try to balance that a bit.”

AY explains that sharing her work helps her let go of the consuming emotion she tries to convey through her art.

“A lot of the time when I make this art and it’s really emotional, the act of making that art lets me let go of that emotion. If I put it out there, it’s over, [...] it’s further away from me. Sharing something publicly lets me kind of let go of it a bit; it [doesn’t] consume me as much.”

The use of pink helps her to express her work in the most candid way possible. She often uses the Pantone shade 1895.

AY tried to use other colours in her art in the

past, but she always felt like something was missing once the piece was finished. She explained that her art was dishonest if it wasn’t dipped in that hue of pink. “I decided to just give in to that aesthetic joy of that colour.”

AY now uses the same light, warm pink as the background of all of her work. This has led her to feel like every work of art she creates is part of a continuous project.

“All of my drawings are that same shade of pink, so in a sense I see it as one big, never ending big piece, with little mini projects inside.”

Her trademark aspect of using pink infused her artwork with deeper mean-

ing. AY’s previous career in the fashion industry, and the contradictions she came across increased her desire to incorporate pink into her art.

AY completed a BFA and MFA in studio art.

She recounted how negative assumptions were often made about her by classmates and colleagues in the fashion industry because of her feminist slant was combined with feminine pinks. The two were viewed as irreconcilable opposing forces.

“They [...] thought that I was being duped by the patriarchy, in a way. Like I didn’t realize that all of these things that I really loved were [...] part this system.”

At the fashion company she worked for, she had a marketing position which slowly led her to a negative change of mind about the industry.

“Marketing is a lot about creating needs, like making people feel like they need something, and that need is also born from you missing something. ‘If you buy this thing then it will get you closer to that thing that you’re missing, and that need will lead you to happiness, relationships or fame.’”

“That whole manipulative aspect of it; the more I learned about feminism, the more I understood what it all meant, and the less I wanted to participate in it,” said AY.

While she understands this, she still loves fashion.

“It’s hard, because I like clothes, I like makeup, I like pretty things, and so there’s a part of me that is drawn to that, and that still falls for it. Then there’s [another] part of me that doesn’t want [to]. I was having a lot of mixed feelings about moving forward, and about the art I wanted to make, and so I eventually decided to embrace those mixed feelings.”

She realized then that she was feeling ambivalent, and used it to brand her work, which ultimately changed her way of life.

Instead of being a radical feminist and rejecting everything, or the fashion girl who loves everything, she decided to

“be both and neither at the same time.”

A major part of her artistic practice is its interactive aspect. AY started publishing her artwork online in 2011 when she was in graduate school. Her followers gave such a positive response to the sensitivity in the work she originally created that she decided to open up her art to the audience.

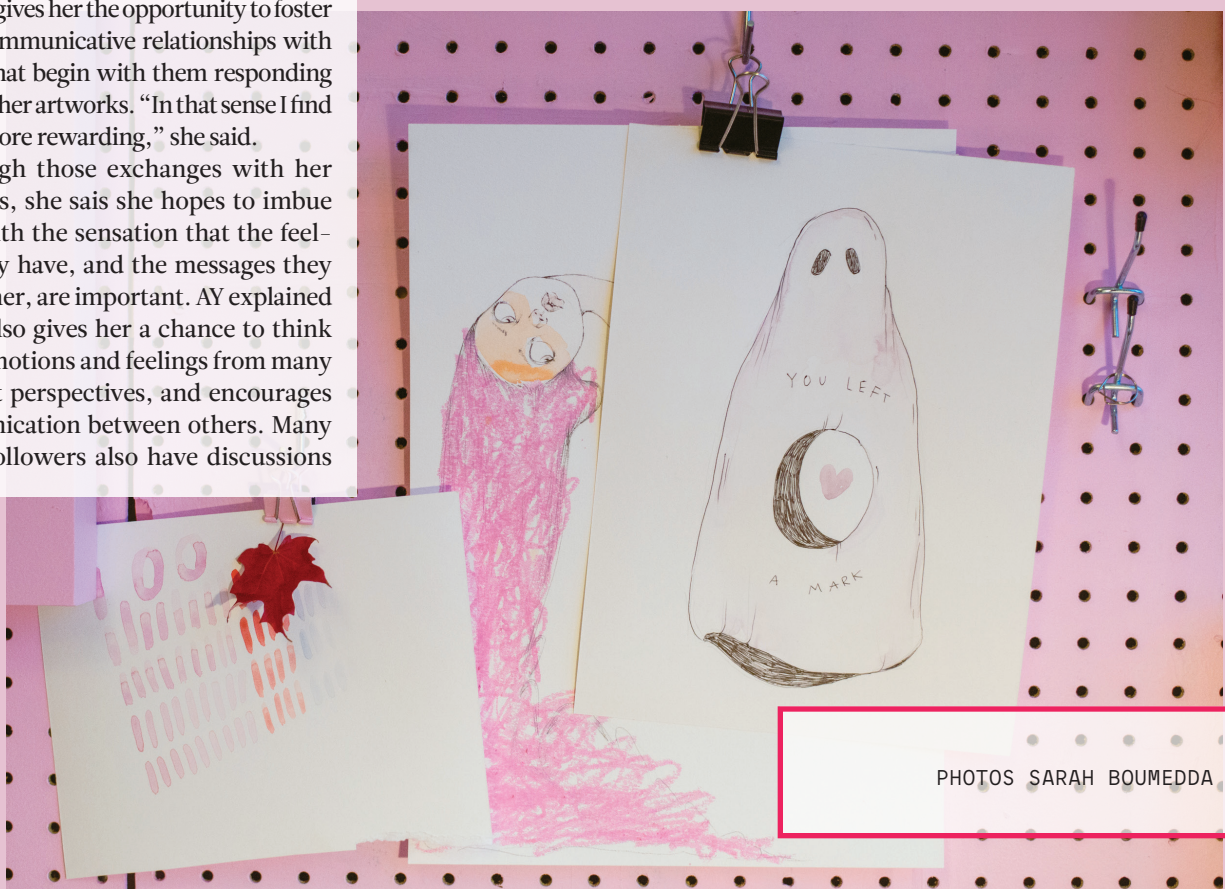
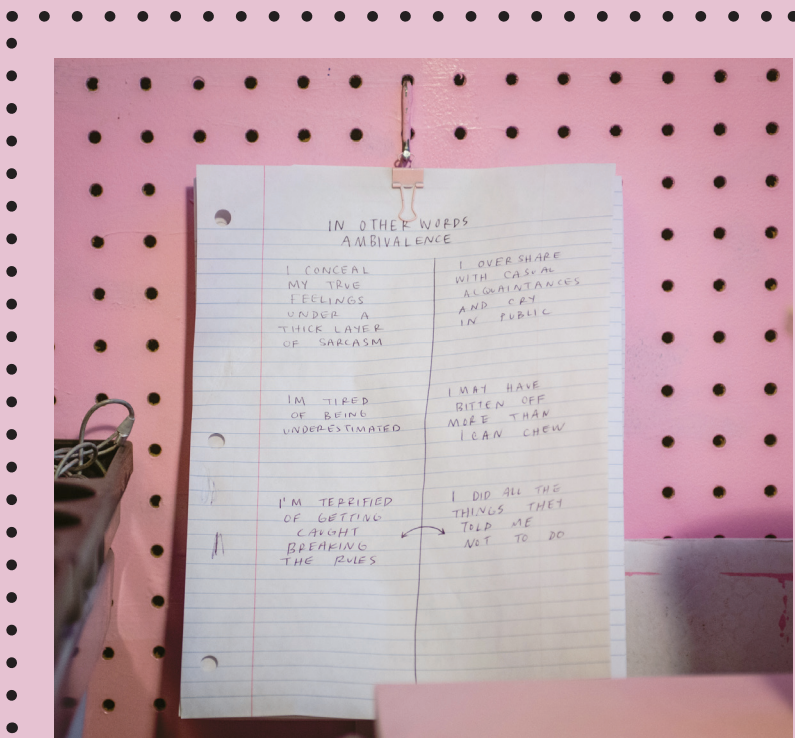
It quickly became an interactive performance. People would ask her for advice as an ‘anon’—anonymous user on Tumblr—and she would create an illustration to go with her response to them.

She uses this inspiration and practice in her art today, but to a lesser extent because of the decline in Tumblr’s popularity.

She now uses Instagram as her main medium because it gives her a larger reach than she would ever get displaying her work in a regular exhibit, allowing her to spread her message of tenderness and the strength of femininity to more people.

It also gives her the opportunity to foster close, communicative relationships with people that begin with them responding to one of her artworks. “In that sense I find it a bit more rewarding,” she said.

Through those exchanges with her followers, she says she hopes to imbue them with the sensation that the feelings they have, and the messages they send to her, are important. AY explained that it also gives her a chance to think about emotions and feelings from many different perspectives, and encourages communication between others. Many of her followers also have discussions



PHOTOS SARAH BOUMEDDA

about emotions and vulnerability in the comment section of her posts.

She said being anonymous in her art-istry helps with her being able to be completely honest and open about what she's feeling.

"I use it to be more vulnerable and kinder; I would argue that my online persona is a lot kinder than I'm able to be in real life."

Geneviève Darling, a friend, illustrator and small business owner of Lovestruck Prints, has collaborated with her on multiple events. They share a small art studio, organize markets in Montreal together and have collaborated on zines. Their most recent work was a zine called "*I don't know what I'm dreaming of anymore*," where Darling wrote a journal-like text and AY answered her questions through her illustrations.

"It was just so heartwarming to see her answers," said Darling. "All those questions are so uneasy and those answers just softens everything. It's really [brought] another kind of connection."

"She's also obviously very strong for being able to hold all this vulnerability, and make something out of it that is communicable," Darling continued. "Her art is very strong and sensitive. I really admire her capacity to put into drawings complex feelings, and to make people feel seen and understood."

"[I wanted to] make work from [an ambivalent] space," said AY. "And to allow myself to have conflicting ideas, instead of trying to oversimplify how I was feeling. In that sense, when you're oversimplifying, you're kind of taking away parts of yourself."

With a new mindset, she communicated that femininity is positive and should be appreciated by being radically tender and vulnerable through her work.

"Everything that's associated with femininity is seen as lesser or weak," she said. "I think there can be a lot of power in femininity, in softness and emotions. A lot of what I try to do with my work is to confront these things, and show that being a tender and emotional person

doesn't equate being weak, or lesser than the strong, bold, [male] archetype."

"I was trying to be [...] critical of mainstream femininity, and how it's imposed on women, while also embracing the joy that can come from indulging in femininity, or expressing ourselves in a feminine manner," she continued.

Those concepts have led her many places. AY is currently working on a series that will go live in 2020. It will centre around the concept of ambivalence. For that exhibit, she will create larger pieces than her standard, smaller ones.

She also said she'd like to publish an anthology of her work in book form sometime in the future.

"I want to do an anthology of those messages and the drawings [from my online platforms]. I feel like it was a really important time on the internet, that Tumblr time," explained AY. "Making a book would allow it to just exist in its original form."

She navigates the tenuous boundary that many creators do, the one between art as an outlet and as a source of income.

"It's tough, especially in the last few years when I'm making a living off of my art, so it's tricky to find the right balance, allowing my art to be fun and pleasurable and fulfilling without worrying too much about selling," AY said.

"[My art] is how I express myself, but it's also self care. When I'm drawing or making art is when I'm at my calmest, when I feel like I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing." □



Graphic Artist of the Month:

Breea Kobernick

Often provocative, definitely edgy, and meant to invoke feeling, Breea Kobernick's artwork is constantly evolving. She also *The Link's* incoming Graphics Editor. At first glance one would characterize her artwork as humorous, but after closer study, it reveals cleverness with whiffs of weird surrealism.

A look at Kobernick's Instagram page @designboiiiiii showcases her hate of bad hygiene: getting soaked by a stranger's sneeze, or a cotton swab's last thought before being plunged in an ear. Other works provoke exaggerated, satirized thoughts on the danger of eating sugary foods—licking a popsicle cactus—and the fear of going to a new hair stylist, or what happens when your only friend isn't into exercise. She hopes that people can relate on some level to the experiences she creates.

A second year design major, Kobernick started at Concordia in environmental geography. Intrigued by friends who were in the design program, she later made the decision to switch her focus to design. Rather than concentrate on one particular medium, Kobernick is currently exploring the many courses Concordia has to offer such as web design, wood working and 3D printing.

A native of both Washington, D.C. and Quebec, Breea grew up playing ice hockey, skiing, and washing her hands frequently. 🧼



Examining a Living Art Form: Bonsai

What This Ancient Art Can Teach You About Reciprocal Relationships Between Humans and the Natural World

NANOR FROUNDJIAN

I have a riddle for you to solve. Find the answer to the question of: What is between a pet and painting? (Hint: It's tiny and green.)

Most conventional artworks are created—sometimes over the course of many years and decades—and are then framed or put on display to be appreciated; they become a piece of the past. The transformation of a tree into a bonsai however, will leave the artist with a creation that is alive, almost like a companion, that requires commitment and patience as it keeps growing and changing over time.

Flower art is present in many forms today ranging from detailed mosaics, tattoo design, intricate colouring books, to drawings and paintings. Flower arrangement, so obvious that we can sometimes forget it, is one of the earliest forms of floral art that has stood the test of time across oceans to different continents and is still present today. It is more than a two thousand year-old tradition that first began in China.

However, flower art is not limited to traditional Chinese customs. It is also found in artistic expression without its

The bonsai Ficus above is one among many different types of bonsai species.

PHOTOS SARAH BOUMEDDA

deep-rooted ties to cultural and religious beliefs, bonding humans with nature in a more organic fashion.

IKEBANA

The art of floral arrangement originated in China during the period of Wei, Jin and Southern and Northern Dynasties. In Japanese culture there is a similar art known by the name of ikebana.

In Chinese traditions this art strives to artificially mimic natural irregularity, whereas masters and amateurs practicing the art of ikebana ultimately strives to emulate simplicity. A study called “Occupational Engagement and Meaning: The Experience of Ikebana Practice” conducted by Allison M. Watters, Christine Pearce, Catherine L. Backman, and Melinda J. Suto has shown that practicing ikebana offers a creative outlet that can promote self-growth and discipline while establishing a connection with nature.

“[It] was perceived by participants as a means of promoting physical and mental health and well-being,” they wrote.

Orysia Krywiak is the co-owner of the flower shop Fig Fleurs, located in Pointe-Claire. Having been in the flower business for over two decades, Krywiak has dedicated her career to creating and promoting floral design, and sharing the beauty of nature with her clientele. Fig Fleurs caters to the various wants and tastes of a wide demographic, who purchase flowers to enliven their homes, give gifts or celebrate holidays.

Although she doesn’t practice ikebana, Krywiak works with flowers and recognizes the aforementioned benefits. She explained that, “Being around plants and flower

is very comforting, calming, it’s a good feeling all the time. It’s hard work.”

“But you’re surrounded by beauty and nature,” she continued.

Krywiak, whose focus is the design of the floral arrangements, explained that her style and approach to flower design is very natural. “We don’t do anything dyed or overly stylized,” she added. “We make it as natural and free-flowing as possible.”

THE LIVING ART OF BONSAI

Art involving the manipulation of trees is specific to East Asian cultures. The age-old tradition, marrying human artistry to nature by crafting a small tree, is known as bonsai. That art also originated in China, where it was called penjing, before it crossed the sea and was mastered in Japan where it flourished within the Zen Buddhist culture.

Isabelle Harvey, vice president of the Société de bonsaï et de penjing de Montréal, explained that bonsai is an art form that each artist will interpret differently; there is no right or wrong way to do

it. Harvey simply described it as a skill anyone can learn, and said everyone is capable of learning how to interact with the trees.

The SBPM, a non-profit organization founded 40 years ago, has a long established partnership with the Botanical Gardens in Montreal and works to promote the art of bonsai in Quebec. Their annual exhibitions display around 45 to

“Trees are always something that will calm you down. You can spend five to 10 minutes in front of a tree and there are so many small details that it makes you peaceful.”

— Isabelle Harvey





60 bonsai crafted by the members of the SBPM who are passionate amateurs.

“They had a year or two [...] of experience and their trees were amazing, and people like it, they are happy to share,” Harvey said. She emphasized that the artist is engaging with an ever-growing piece of work which allows a relationship to form between the tree and its owner.

FROM JAPAN TO THE WESTERN WORLD

The art of bonsai evolved over centuries as it was transmitted from one generation to the next and gained popularity in the western world during the twentieth century. As the art became globalized, it was interpreted and adapted in different ways.

Harvey explained that each group or organization can have their own, perhaps modernized, approach to the craft. However, she added that, “In Montreal,

we try to be more conservative and the quality scales up every year.”

In other words, organizations in Montreal such as the SBPM adhere to the traditional Japanese guidelines, rules and principles regarding the measurements and shapes of bonsai.

A motif that strings together all practitioners of floral art, regardless of any cultural elements or beliefs, is the reward of creating an ideal aesthetic and the self-satisfaction derived from the personal connection with a part of nature.

The art of flower arrangement and bonsai is interpreted differently between cultures and individuals. The objective is to reach a harmony between man and nature—which is manifested differently for everyone—while learning and mastering techniques that contribute to one’s grounding.

“Trees are always something that will calm you down. You can spend five to 10

minutes in front of a tree,” Harvey said, “and there are so many small details that it makes you peaceful.”

HOW DO THEY STAY SO SMALL?

The term bonsai translates to potted tree. (“bon”=dish/pot/container + “sai”=planted tree/plant). Contrary to popular belief, a bonsai is sculpted out of a standard full-sized tree. In fact, these curiously small creatures require ceaseless maintenance and a lot of patience.

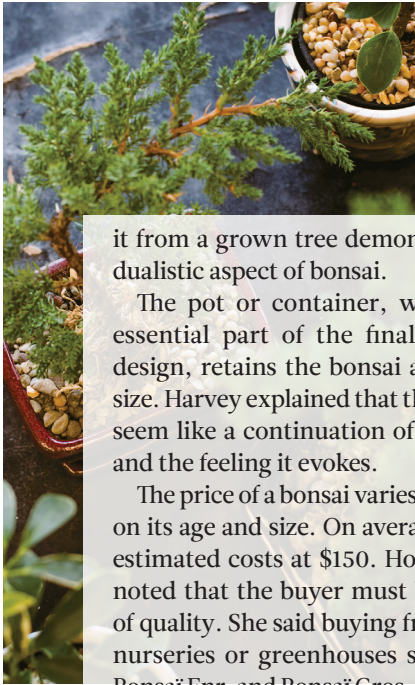
There are two ways of creating a bonsai, either starting with a full-grown tree, or starting with a seed. Bonsai are kept small by the trimming of the roots.

Harvey explained that after each alteration through wiring techniques or trimming, the tree needs time to adjust and grow into one’s desired shape. It can take months and even years to craft a bonsai, depending on the age of the tree before the transformation begins.

Harvey pointed out that some bonsai are crafted from the trees planted along residential roads when landowners want to see them removed. Those grown trees can then be recycled into bonsai.

“But if you start with a seed, it could take years and years to get something big,” she said. The process cannot be rushed “by cutting the roots, because we are using a soil that has a lot of little rocks, the roots will hit a pointy rock and usually divide [into mini roots].”

This happens because bonsai are traditionally planted in a soil with lots of small stones in it. Having the option to create a bonsai from a seed or to craft



it from a grown tree demonstrates the dualistic aspect of bonsai.

The pot or container, which is an essential part of the final product's design, retains the bonsai at a certain size. Harvey explained that the pot must seem like a continuation of the bonsai and the feeling it evokes.

The price of a bonsai varies depending on its age and size. On average, Harvey estimated costs at \$150. However, she noted that the buyer must be mindful of quality. She said buying from certain nurseries or greenhouses such as Les Bonsaï Enr. and Bonsaï Gros-Bec located in Montreal will ensure that the bonsai is of good quality and health. "[It] is a fun art because it is so small that everyone can have it, even in an apartment, as long as you can meet the plant's requirements," Harvey said.

"It's a mutual relationship that we have," Harvey continued, describing profound connection to her trees.

"You need to always think about your trees, almost as much as you care about your kids," she said, laughing.

Having been a practitioner for more than 10 years, Harvey says bonsai is an art that demands mutual respect between the caretaker of the bonsai and the bonsai itself. A bonsai can live with its owner for centuries. "It's an art in total evolution." □



Callen Schaub Creates Out of Totality Not Finality

Meet the Abstract Artist Known for His Colourful Drip Paintings and Unusual Technique

SUREAYA WHITE

Callen Schaub is not the first artist to employ a technique known as drip painting; what makes him special is how he goes about doing it. One part artist, one part scientist, one part visionary, the painter makes his own troughs and contraptions from found materials to drip paint onto a variety of unconventional canvases. Drip painting is a discipline situated within the practice of abstractism, a movement that really took off in the 1940s.

The Canadian artist, who is based in Montreal and Toronto, can be categorized by his unusual approach to art, from the mediums he uses, the application and colour palette. Usually beginning with a more solid background of black, white, or minimal mix of colours spun onto one of his many unorthodox canvases, such as a heart, 3D metal sphere, or even people.

When Schaub started this process, he began with just a potter's wheel to pour, drip and allow the paint to flow. As his commitment and love for this form grew, he began to craft his own tools for this almost scientific, artistic process, which includes harmonographs as well as pendulums in order to get the perfect swing to pour the paint fluidly onto the canvas.

Schaub said he's always been an artistic individual. Taking to the streets as a graffiti artist to work on his craft, he said he wasn't thinking of professional ends. Drawing inspiration from artists like Banksy, Schaub started his journey with spin paintings, using them as backgrounds, with stencils over top.

There were meditating monks, and visual representations of the viewer immersed in the painting. "I realized that the figure in the work was actually, literally, the person viewing it, so if I could immerse the viewer into the work, then I don't have to literally put the person into the work."

Using the stencil-background format, there was a sense of chaos meeting calm throughout his pieces. "I realized I was relying on the stencil bringing the emotion," explained Schaub. He said this led to him moving away from graffiti art and towards abstraction.

The next challenge was to immerse the viewer into his work, without literally incorporating them inside. His current style achieves this on two differ-

ent levels: the first being the evolution of his artistic style, and the second being the live aspect that has gone on to characterize his work.

The technical side of the artistic skills Schaub learned while doing graffiti didn't translate into his graduation towards abstraction, he said. What stayed consistent throughout each medium was the ambition.

"The ambition is large. Whether painting a mural, or doing a large canvas," he explained.

"Inspiration in and of itself is an inspiration," said Schaub. People who derive motivation from Schaub's work, whether artistically or personally, inspire him to paint more. The passion he has for his work is translated through each aspect, and step of the process—building his own contraptions, mixing his own colours, performing live and constantly challenging himself as an artist.

The inspiration that people draw from



his work then inspires him; it is self-referential. As an abstract artist Schaub has clear ideas, and images of pieces he'd like to do, or ways he wants them to turn out, but he said he tries to let his preconceptions go when painting.

"If I approach a canvas with a preconceived notion of what I want it to be then that often limits me to a very narrow avenue of expression, and very low success rate. Whatever I try, it will never look like what it looks like in my mind," explained Schaub.

Schaub has faced criticism for his abstract style, which some view as lacking in the technical skill of a realist painter.

"A lot of it happens in the moment. People criticize that because they think it's just [intuitive], what colour [I choose], but I think there's something deeper there, trying to tap into a natural state of creating," Schaub compares

creating to an out of body experience. "Instead of being so in my head, I'm in my body. Not even in my body, I dissociate, almost I'm watching myself paint, having an out of body experience."

He described it as a very natural phenomenon. The shapes movement are so prevalent in his work, pendulums, spheres, harmonographs, are shapes, forms, and expressions you can find entrenched in the natural world.

"Nature's the greatest sculpture of all. There's some things that are innately true and satisfying about the natural forms that I'm chasing. It's kind of like science at play, I'm not well versed in these things, but there's undertones of these psychics and stuff like that, that I'm referencing, but not intentionally," explained Schaub.

The use of colour has played a large role in Schaub's artistic practice. "Colour is emotion," explained Schaub. In life, or in terms of colour, Schaub thinks that you

need the highs to appreciate lows and vice versa. To be able to appreciate the brightest or lightest pigmentation of a colour, it needs to be informed by a dark one.

"I think it's important to use all the colours and not play favourites. [...] I'll put down literally the entire rainbow."

A running theme throughout Schaub's work is the immediate moment experience; the movement of the pendulum, pouring the paint, the emotions it brings forth; it is not about the final, monetizable snapshot. "[Colour] informs our experience more than we realize," Schaub observed.

"I don't think I was fully prepared to talk about it emotionally. I didn't really understand it," said Schaub explaining his relationship with colour. While completing a BFA in drawing and painting at the Ontario College of Art and Design, Schaub shied away from using colour due to a seriousness that was imposed on him

PHOTOS MAGGIE
MCCUTCHEON



throughout the school system.

“With minimal colours I could talk about the movement, the moment. I didn’t want to get distracted with colour, cause that’s a whole other thesis.” As Schaub began to work with colour and understand it more, he said he began being able to work and speak about it more freely.

His art is pure abstraction, sometimes purposely left up to interpretation. “It’s a literal mirror. Whatever they wanna fill the void with, that’s what it means for [the viewer],” said Schaub.

The way he effortlessly mixes a multitude of colours, deftly, swiftly and without brushes is something the artist hopes people might see as evoking the same sensation they have when witnessing natural beauty—such as a sunset, the ocean, mountains, and stars. Schaub hopes that people who view his work can incorporate the same ease into their daily lives.

“That’s the feeling I’m sort of going for, that natural phenomena. When

you’re looking at the ocean and the stars, there’s a sense of scale, your place in the universe, and in your life,” Schaub said.

The evolution of Schaub’s work has not been limited to unique methods of pouring the paint, he also experiments with unconventional canvases.

One such “canvas” is his partner and fellow artist Veronika Radolovich.

The two have a joint series on Instagram they created together called @moon.magic.loves.you. This account features the two artist working in tandem, incorporating dance, movement, and the human form as

a live paintbrush, bringing two collaborative forces together.

“I wanted to experiment and challenge myself. I think that’s the responsibility of an artist, especially an abstract artist, to keep on pushing the boundary.” Schaub has not let any medium, form, or even colour impede on his artist journey.

Constantly pushing forward and experimenting has allowed him to come

up with unique contraptions, such as the harmonographs he uses in his work. It has also allowed him and Radolovich to explore new, creative, and sometimes even interactive forms to work with. “It’s really about the flow of paint,” Schaub noted.

“The first time I did a spin painting with the contraption I made, it was filmed, actually. I met this guy on the subway, he came to my studio, he filmed it. I hadn’t even seen it yet. There’s something innately voyeuristic about it, it’s mesmerizing.”

Though there is a final snapshot, the end result, that is not the most important part for Schaub. For him, it’s truly about the collaborative shared experience between him and the viewer.

“It’s because it’s other people’s experience. Breaking that barrier of separation between me and the viewer,” he said. “That interaction is very precious.”

Instagram has been very influential to Schaub’s practice, serving as a secondary art form, and an online gallery

“I wanted to experiment and challenge myself. I think that’s the responsibility of an artist, especially an abstract artist, to keep on pushing the boundary.”

— *Callen Schaub*



of sorts. “For me it’s very much a part of my brand. I think it’s the best gallery in the world,” he said.

For someone who derives so much inspiration and emotion from an audience, an online gallery of all of your work provides a constant unwavering audience. Schaub explained that his relationship to online feedback has evolved to the point where he sees it as someone simply experiencing an emotion.

Schaub and his partner Radolovich’s collaborative pieces always happen on the full moon of every month before being posted on their joint Instagram

account.

It began with a dream of Radolovich’s. “I had this unfulfilled idea and fantasy of becoming a paint brush,” she explained. The two began following each other. Radolovich reached out to Schaub about her idea. They fell in love, and began the new interactive series together, making their story sound like a modern day fairy tale..

The two share a scrapbook where they document their ideas, and are slowly working their way through the book.

“We tried to bring it down to its simplest form. We found that movement works best when trying to leave marks

on the canvas dancing. Our first body paintbrush piece we did, I was doing stars, and it was like this weird pukey colour. Our first trials were not so successful,” said Radolovich.

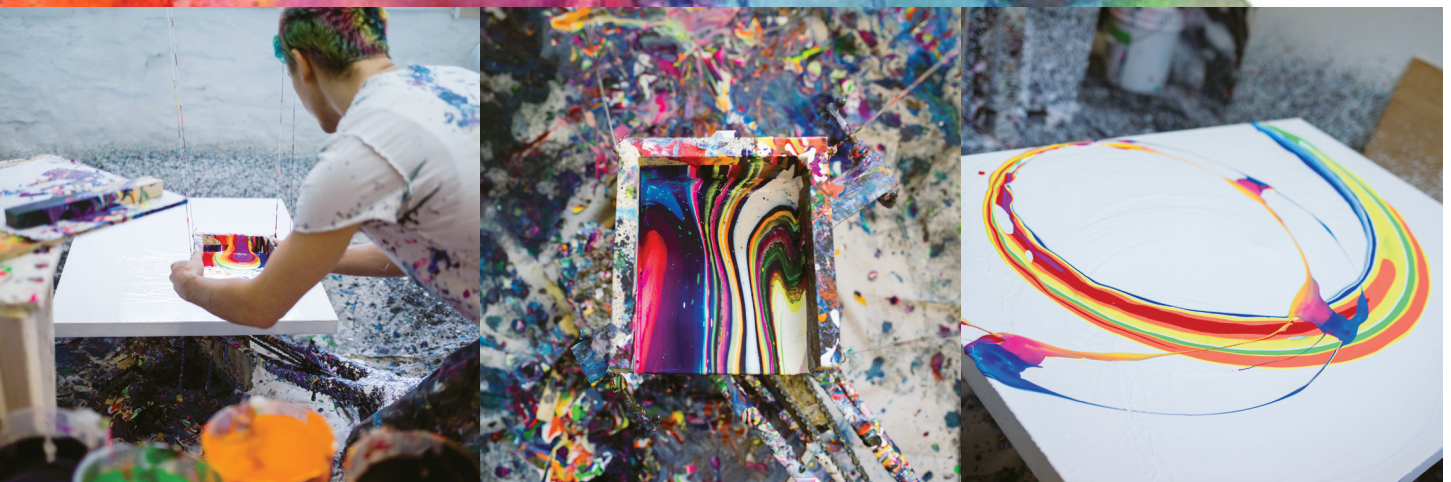
Working through a trial and error process, the two began to experience more success, and are hoping to put together a live performance in the future. Though it can be challenging for two artists with their own visions to work together, art is important to the two of them, and their relationship. Schaub explained that, “In a way it’s the biggest compliment to be able to collaborate with somebody.”

Rain or shine, sickness or health, the two artists always come together to produce something magical on the full moon. Schaub said, “That’s how the relationship is also an art form in itself. It’s not just like we fell in love, our love is built on top of our art.” □



Schaub paints white an old painting before using a variety of homemade mechanisms to create a new art piece.

PHOTOS MAGGIE MCCUTCHEON



How Concordia Students Have Been Using CUCCR

Examining the Growth of CUCCR Over the Past Two Years

YOUNMNA EL HALABI



It's been almost two years since Concordia University's Centre for Creative Reuse opened its doors to students. Located in the basement of the Hall Building, it's only open from Tuesday to Thursday, but that doesn't mean it hasn't created positive changes in the daily lives of students and the community.

CUCCR (pronounced 'sucker') provides rescued materials free of charge, that can be used for anything from an art project to renovating a kitchen.

Sustainability is a tricky business to approach people with. In a consumerist society, where capitalism eats away at people's daily lives, and advertisements creep their way into browsers, reusables are not what consumers tend to lean towards.

HOW DID CUCCR GET STARTED?

In March 2017, Anna Timm-Bottos art education masters' thesis came to life through CUCCR and is thriving to this day. Inspired by creative reuse centres in Toronto and Winnipeg, she dreamt of introducing the idea at Concordia. And its success is refreshing.

"I am incredibly impressed and so

humbled," Timm-Bottos said. "I mean [CUCCR] has gone so much further than I've ever intended it. I always looked at it as a way to kind of open up opportunities, and I knew that once you put materials and people together and give them space and time, amazing things come out of that. I mean we've been able to do so much within this year. It's been amazing."

In November 2018, CUCCR launched a Reclaimathon, where they encouraged Concordia students to reclaim and donate materials, spanning pretty much anything you might find in your backpack.

This project resumed in the month of January, and should you come across a turquoise box branded CUCCR around campus, pull open your drawers, take out old pens and give them to the community. (HINT: there's one at the Hive Café in the Hall Building.)

Co-founder Arrien Weeks is the one responsible for Timm-Bottos' vision becoming reality. Besides building the depot space from ground zero, Weeks leads CUCCR's skillsharing and workshops, and rounds up material from across campus for the depot. A skill share, in contrast to a workshop, has a greater emphasis on mutual participation between attendees and a facilitator.

"Awareness has gone up about reuse [centre] on campus over the last year," Weeks said. "And it means we're doing something right. More people are coming and becoming members. Blows

my mind every time I look at the numbers."

The members' numbers have recently reached a total of 2043; the metrics are impressive to both Timm-Bottos and Weeks. After filling out an online form for free on their website to become a member, you're able to donate and collect as much material as you need, and also get a say in the centre's creative ideas, workshops, and events.

"[To get people involved, we do] hands on workshops, expanding ideas on what sustainability means," he said. "It's really just about seeing all the possibilities, and teaching people about these possibilities."

CUCCR IN ACTION

CUCCR is quite popular among arts and science and fine arts students, but throughout the year it's seen an increase in use from students belonging to other faculties.

"We will be better able to inform our community on waste management procedures, keep good stuff out of the landfill, provide materials for free, and offer rad ways of transforming old into new. Help us in changing the culture of reuse," said Timm-Bottos.

"We've seen a growth in engineering students and [John Molson School Business] students in the last year. It's slow, but I think it's a matter of opening their minds to reuse," Weeks said. "We're working with John Molson students to

sort of break their preconceptions about reuse and to get them to think about it in a broader way.”

“It’s a little bit slow [getting other faculties involved],” Timm-Bottos said, “because it is a project that came out of a base in fine arts and it would be used well in that faculty. But I think as people start to visit and see the types of materials that are [at CUCCR], I feel like they’re starting to change their way of thinking about these materials, and realizing that they need that too for their apartment, and school supplies.”

“It becomes less about fine arts practices, and more about practicality. I mean saving money is universal,” she continued.

CUCCR has been getting more and more exposure ever since its opening, and it’s mostly due to its popularity among students. Most members learned about CUCCR from word of mouth.

“We don’t really put a lot into doing promotion, people seem to come to us. Having our stories told [...] definitely helps,” explained Weeks.

Timm-Bottos explained that CUCCR serves as an entry point into the world of sustainable practices, one that they may not have been otherwise exposed to.

“Sustainability can be very abstract or very practical depending on how you look at it. People have a very narrow mind about it. But places like CUCCR using reuse materials really normalizes it, and [people] start to think how they incorporate sustainability in their daily lives,” he said.

Kiah Ellis-Durity, a Concordia student majoring in religion and cultures and minoring in political science, has been a CUCCR member for about a year and a half. Ellis-Durity spoke to *The Link* as she made a card for her friend’s birthday. She mentioned that the reuse centre increased her awareness about all things relating to sustainability.

“I think I’m now more aware of waste, especially,” she said. “Like, I think people don’t consider recycling to be waste, but in recent research, we found that a lot of our recycling is going

PHOTOS SAVANNAH
STEWART

straight to garbage. So saving my paper, [CUCCR] taught me how to recycle paper, make your own paper, be more aware of what's in my home. What am I recycling? What am I giving away? Can it be reused? It's kind of making me think before I toss," she continued.

Ellis-Durity was introduced to CUCCR through her sister. The latter is greatly involved with the sustainability movement on campus, and is friends with Timm-Bottos.

"I think [my year with CUCCR] has been pretty awesome," she said. "I'm not into arts at all and I told a lot of my friends who are in arts about CUCCR and they use it a lot because buying a canvas is like \$30, and they have canvases [at CUCCR.] It's nice for me, and I'm not in arts at all, but I'm a broke student, so it's great."

CUCCR encourages people to get creative with their use of waste, and show them ways to utilize materials for things they would never imagine doing. In Ellis-Durity's case, for example, parts of her Halloween costume came from CUCCR. She actually ended up using the back of a chair to create a hat.

For another Concordia student using the CUCCR has become a lifestyle.

Chloë Lalonde is an anthropology and art education major, and art teacher at Loisirs Renaud-Coursol Community Centre in Laval.

Last semester Lalonde attended a chocolate tasting workshop where she met Weeks, and heard him speaking fondly about CUCCR. Her immediate reaction? "Sign me up!"

She has now gone from member to full-fledged intern. Part of her duties as an intern for CUCCR include organizing events as well as acting as a point of

communication for it.

"I started getting involved with CUCCR because I wanted to supply my kids with supplies that were ecological that I can buy out of my own budget," she said. "I built easels for my class, and I had to carry those in the metro and that was not fun, but now that community centre has easels. I just try to incorporate that in my own art practice. So I need to supply my own studio with the CUCCR mindset."

"The foundation of everything I do now is based on CUCCR," she explained. "From stocking my office space, getting materials for my art classes or even my own art space."

Artist Theran Seaton has been a CUCCR member for more than year already, and sees it as a reliable source for sustainable and affordable material.

"It definitely has an impact in terms of, I know there is a resource at my place of study that supports sustainability and that will

allow me access to materials," she said. "Art supplies are expensive so I understand the artist's need to seek resources that are free or cost effective. I think the centre makes an effort to be there as a resource."

CUCCR has not only helped her procure affordable elements for her art, but has also opened her eyes to the possibility that everything, everywhere is reusable.

"I check in from time to time to see if there are any materials that are pertinent to my work be it scraps of wood, material or, a jar of buttons," Seaton continued. "I really adhere to that 'someone's trash is another's treasure' philosophy."

CUCCR has influenced many Concordia students, including creative writing

"The foundation of everything I do now is based on CUCCR," she explained. "From stocking my office space, getting materials for my art classes or even my own art space."

— Chloë Lalonde





major Bronwyn Haney, who said her introduction to the centre could not have been more perfect.

“I first heard about CUCCR from my dear friend and fellow artist Kara Bowers, who passed along some of the supplies that she had accrued there to me at a pivotal time in my own art making practice,” she said. “I visited the centre myself a few days later and was hooked!”

The reuse centre truly plays an intrinsic role in her life, as she has used material from CUCCR for school projects and her own art pieces.

“[CUCCR] has allowed me to consider

different approaches to creation and sustainability, both in my artistic practice and in my daily life,” Haney said.

“Incorporating reuse leads me to be more involved in the process of creating and achieving the goals of my work,” Haney added, “which sometimes takes me down different aesthetic paths I hadn’t envisioned before. This mindset carries over into the choices I make in my daily life as well, leading me to find ways to reuse things and cut down on the amount of waste I contribute on the whole. I am more involved and aware as an artist and a person.” □



Students can use the exchange board to leave notes for material they have or seek.

Photos Savannah Stewart

Living With the Sport

Local MMA Fighter Corinne Laframboise Is Aiming for the UFC

VICTORIA LAMAS



Corinne Laframboise was pinned to the ground by her opponent during the second round of her latest professional mixed martial arts fight. Her back on the floor of the cage, she fought to regain control.

Laframboise hoisted her legs from Morgane Ribout's waist to her neck, surprising her adversary with a triangle choke that ultimately won the Montreal fighter her bout at the Bell Centre.

As her opponent tapped out of the fight, Laframboise stood up, the exhaustion of the fight and emotion of the moment clear on her face. She congrat-

ulated her opponent, and paced around the centre of the ring, taking in the crowd and the exhilaration of the win before running to her coaches, a smile across her face as the team applauded her for a win in her hometown.

Two years ago, Laframboise stepped into the octagon for the first time. Competing in Germany, with no prior amateur experience in the sport, she came out on top, taking her first fight by submission.

Praised by her coaches for her work ethic, Laframboise's momentum is propelling her forward, her last victory tipping her record to three wins, two losses.

In 2014, Laframboise dove head first into Brazilian jiu-jitsu, a sport that is played out on the ground, where fighters use techniques such as grappling, locks, and choking. After seeing the skill and beauty of the martial art first-hand at a gym one day, Laframboise felt compelled to immerse herself in it. "For me, it's black or white in life," said Laframboise in French. "[So I thought], let's go, I want to be all in."

Driven by her new-found passion, she quickly upped her training to six or seven times a week.

"She's a beast [...] She's ready to pay the price to get better," said retired MMA fighter and Laframboise's corner coach, Patrick Côté. "She is not very easy to get distracted [...] She wants to live with the sport."

"She wants to get to the UFC. She's very, very focused on one goal: it's to be an MMA fighter full-time."

Between BJJ, muay thai, boxing, and wrestling, it's been a series of passionate affairs with various disciplines that led the Saint-Mathieu-de-Beloeil native to professional MMA.

Four and a half years after setting foot in that first gym, Laframboise now trains between 20 and 25 hours a week, while working part-time as a dental hygienist.

If she works as hard at the profes-

sion as she does in boxing training, said former Olympic boxer Howard Grant, who's been coaching Laframboise in the discipline for several years, she must be very good at what she does.

"She looks like she is nice, but in that cage [...] she is mean. She wants to hurt you. Then you see her at work [...] doing somebody's teeth like she's an angel but she's really an animal."

"I tell her a few times, 'You're a fucking idiot.' Because she's a dental hygienist [...] She went to school for this," Grant continued with a chuckle. "You went to school and you want to get kicked in the head?" I don't understand."

Coming home victorious from her first fight, Laframboise also suffered a double fracture in her jaw, but she wasn't deterred from competing.

"I didn't slow down," said Laframboise. "I can't get in the cage, back down, and be scared. You start a step behind if you step into the ring [afraid]."

"If it's [on] sheer hard work alone, she's going to make it, because she's dedicated. She's motivated, and she's hungry. She wants to make it there."

— *Howard Grant*

To excel in MMA, she explained, athletes must master the different disciplines before combining them. Balancing the training between many martial arts and conditioning is another challenge of being an MMA fighter.

"The biggest challenge of MMA is to be as well-rounded as possible," said Côté. "You have to be good everywhere. In stand-up, in wrestling, on the ground. You have to be very, very well-rounded if you want success in that sport."

The coach noted that while athletes can have their specialties in terms of fighting style, to reach the top, they have to be comfortable in any situation during a match. The true challenge of the sport is to combine skills and disciplines and excel in each area to find success.

MMA is the perfect storm for Laframboise, who always thrived in competitive environments, and who desires to push her limits. When it comes to her training, she goes all in. More than the physicality of the sport, she admires the humility that comes with martial arts.

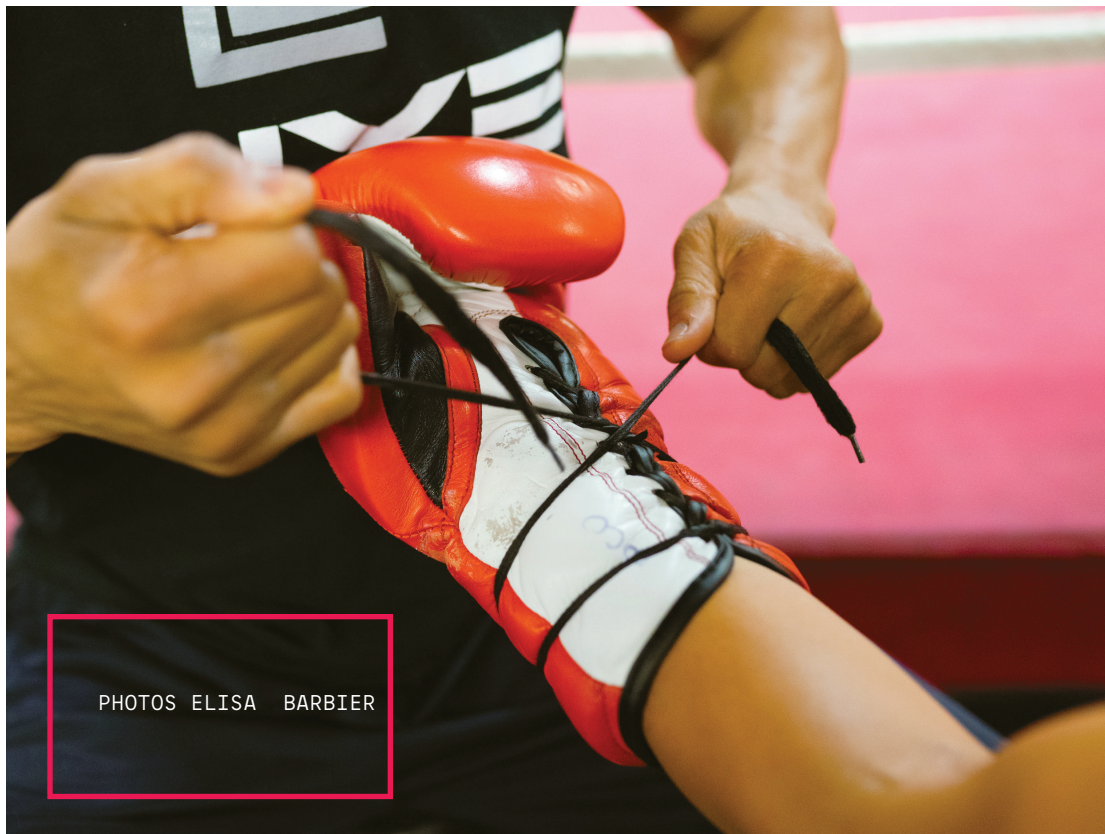
"Push yourself," she said. "Work for yourself. Humility, it keeps you in line."

"I think she's at the right place right now," said Côté. "Every time she comes in the gym, I can see that in her eyes.

I can see that she found the right place, she feels comfortable everywhere she goes." Now that Laframboise has found her pace, the coach added, she is on the way to becoming unstoppable.

Next up: Getting a contract with the UFC, and ultimately winning the championship belt in the flyweight division.

"If it's [on] sheer hard work alone, she's going to make it, because she's dedicated," said Grant. "She's motivated, and she's hungry. She wants to make it there [...] She's very, very dedicated, this girl."



PHOTOS ELISA BARBIER



Before sparring with friend Louis Jourdain, Corinne Laframboise works on her boxing combinations with her coach Howard Grant.

Photos Elisa Barbier

A SPECIAL TRUST

In the recording of the final moments of the bout between Laframboise and Ribout, Côté's voice is clearly heard. "Grab her head! Grab her head!" he yelled in French. For Laframboise, that moment speaks to the importance of having solid corner coaches, who see the fight from the outside and can offer guidance during the match.

"[During the fight], you think of nothing, because your job is done," said Laframboise. "Your reflexes are supposed to be on. The ones who think are my coaches. It's important to have a



good corner.”

Prior to a fight, Laframboise researches her opponent with her coaches to get an informed idea of her future adversary. She analyzes footage of her opponent's past fights, and also reads interviews and articles to get to know her.

However, despite her preparation, she explained, an opponent's performance can never be predicted with complete accuracy. From her research, Laframboise was expecting Ribout to have a right-handed fighting stance, but the French fighter changed sides.

Laframboise was taken aback for the first few seconds of the match, and had to adjust quickly. While she enters her fights with the intention to dominate, she knows the importance of adapting

and being flexible in the ring.

Come fight day, she is excited and nervous all at once. She doesn't want to lose, or lose quickly to her adversary, she said. Making her way into the ring buoyed by the tunes of A Tribe Called Red is a moment she relishes.

With the crowd cheering or booing her, Laframboise is in the spotlight walking towards the octagon, preparing for her fight. “It's your moment. You make your entrance with your song. I get in the zone. I get in character, and I keep that focus.”

In her MMA journey, Laframboise stumbled into adjacent opportunities that bring her closer to her UFC goal. She was recently approached to be a stuntwoman in a movie, something she did not expect prior to her career. Teaching private BJJ

lessons to young girls has also been fulfilling for Laframboise.

“Just knowing that you can make a movement [...] that you can defend yourself, [it] breeds self confidence,” she said.

So many aspects of Laframboise's MMA life have come together to bring her to where she is today. While it may not have been an easy journey, it's something she completely dedicates her time and focus to.

“She's very, very tough. Tough mentally,” said Grant. “She's also very determined and stubborn at times. But it's a lot of fun working with her because she's one of the hardest workers I've worked with.” □

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Finding His Way Back to the Game

Dylan McCrory Finding Success and Passion for Hockey Again

DUSTIN KAGAN-FLEMING
@DUSTINKFLEMING

January 2018: Dylan McCrory thought he was done with hockey. He had left his NCAA school and figured his hockey dream was over.

Fast forward one year. He's back in his hometown, being swarmed by teammates after scoring the overtime winner against their biggest rival in a comeback win.

"It was a pretty incredible feeling," said McCrory, as he smiled ear to ear. He had just scored his second goal in two games after spending a full calendar year away from hockey.

Before all of this, the Stingers' new winger spent a season and a half playing for Bemidji State University, a small Division 1 NCAA school in the United States. As exciting as playing for a Division 1 program may seem, the experience wasn't what the Montreal native had hoped for when he signed on.

South of the border, McCrory found himself sitting out games as a healthy scratch more often than he was seeing the ice at the Minnesota school. The young forward ended up only playing

in 16 games over two 41 game seasons. He was feeling discouraged, and certainly lacking in both confidence and the joy that the game had always brought him. After all, he is a hockey player; he wanted to play hockey.

Eventually, the situation just became too unpleasant and frustrating for McCrory. He left Bemidji State and he thought, at the time, he was leaving high level hockey too.

"When I left school, I had no intention of playing anymore. I was calling it quits," said McCrory. "I was super down."

It looked as if, after nearly two decades of hockey, McCrory's hockey dreams would be ending with his departure. Years of time on the ice, across three provinces and two states, were coming to an end.

Luckily for both him and the Concordia Stingers, things didn't go that way. When he got home, he heard from McGill and Concordia, both interested in bringing him onto their rosters. Stingers head coach Marc-André Élément called McCrory, offering him the chance to skate for the first time in months.

By McCrory's own admission, he was

sloppy and out of game shape coming back to the sport for the first time since leaving the NCAA. But that ice-time was the start he needed to get his passion back.

He signed with the Stingers and was ready to play. He spent his offseason time training with some current and future Stingers in Carl Neill, Chase Harwell, and Bradley Lalonde.

Unfortunately, when it came to getting on the ice, it wasn't smooth sailing. Because of transfer regulations in U Sports, the 23-year-old was forced to sit out the first semester of the 2018-2019 season. He could practice with the team and attend meetings but not play. His return to the game was delayed, again.

"Waiting from January to January is a pretty long time, and it's draining mentally to stay focused, hungry, and passionate. I kind of lost that when I was at Bemidji," said McCrory of the time he had to spend away from playing.

He may not have been playing yet, but McCrory knew this was a chance for him to get back to the sport he loved. He spent the extra time he had getting into the best shape he could to compete in the second semester of

the season. He focused his energy into his workouts in the gym and getting to know his new team and potential linemates' games at practices.

Early in his time with the Stingers, that has worked out pretty well. In his first game, he scored his first U Sports goal against the Royal Military College Paladins during his first shift of the second period. After being away from the game for so long, it was a special moment.

"I've never felt those kinds of butterflies after scoring a goal before. Even my first NCAA goal in front of [2500] people [...] it just felt different. Like 'finally I'm back playing hockey,'" said McCrory.

His teammates certainly appreciate his instant offense as well. The new forward has already made a real impression on those around him.

"He's flashy. You don't see him for awhile and then he'll pull off some cool moves. He brings some excitement to our lineup, it's a scoring punch we obviously needed," said Stingers alternate captain Carl Neill.

McCrory has been standing out, and his Jan. 11 goal against McGill was, without a doubt, his biggest moment as a Stinger so far. McConnell Arena was packed; it was carnival night for McGill. Boos and chants filled the arena throughout the night as spectators celebrated the crosstown rivalry matchup. The game looked strongly in McGill's favour after a first period, in which they led 3-1.

The Stingers fought their way back into the game, tying the game at four late in the third period. When the game went to overtime, the teams traded chances

until McCrory stepped onto the ice for the first time. His best strengths as a player were on full display with what came next: his speed, elusiveness, and goal scorers' instincts around the net all came together.

The rookie took the puck, skated through the neutral zone with speed, and showed just why the Stingers coaching staff trusted him in a critical three on three overtime situation where any slip up can

easily roll into a loss.

Crossing McGill's blueline, McCrory burnt one defender, accelerating past him before spinning away from the defensive coverage, protecting the puck as he went. As the McGill defence tried to recover and gain possession, he forced his way to the front of the net. The first shot he sent towards the net bounced back, a pad save by goaltender Louis-Philippe Guindon.

Pouncing on his own rebound, McCrory didn't pass up his second chance. The puck found its way between

**"When I left school,
I had no intention of
playing anymore.
I was calling
it quits."**

**- Dylan
McCrory**

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McCrory practices four times a week at the Ed Meagher arena .

Photo Elisa Barbier

McGill's defenceman and Guindon, into the open net for the overtime win.

"That was a good one, a huge one. He's a goal scorer," said Élement.

As the home crowd groaned, the Stingers leaped off the bench, surrounding the game's hero in a crowded mass of celebration and relief.


What may have made this even more of a twist of the knife for the game's home team is that before Concordia got in touch with him, there had been

talks of McCrory heading to McGill.

"That's fun. Really fun. He played really well. I'm really happy he decided to come to us. He's gonna be a key player for our team," said Élement on McCrory being the one to end the game in overtime.

As good as the personal success and scoring feels, being on a team where he knows he's playing, has the coaches' respect, and feels comfortable is something that Dylan McCrory deeply

appreciates. It's letting him enjoy where he is right now and his work is helping the Stingers on a recent run of success as their season heads into its later stages.

McCrory is feeling confident and excited about hockey again. His passion for the game is back and if he can keep up this pace, the Stingers may have found themselves a special player for years to come. 

Hoops on the Rise: A New Beginning

Two Former Concordia Students Reignite Montreal Basketball Community With Local Sports Media Company

JOHN NGALA
@LHOMMEJO

May 5, 2015 was a day to remember. In retrospect, the day marked the beginning of a new era. It didn't take much time for Russell Chau and Inti Salinas, two former Concordia University students, to realize they were sitting on

a gold mine. The flame that they were about to rekindle would unite an entire community.

That Tuesday, in a friend's basement, browsing the internet to register their domain name, Chau and Salinas rejuvenated Montreal basketball with the birth of a new sports media company: Hoops

on the Rise.

"Hoops on the Rise is a platform where kids can reach their goals academically and athletically," said co-founder Salinas. "We want to create a space where kids can come to us for everything."

At Dawson College, not only are there 11,000 students in the heart of

From left to right Russell Chau,
Jonathan Mirambeau, Karim Fall
and Inti Salinas





PHOTOS ELISA
BARBIER

the vibrant downtown Montreal, but these students are also more likely to win the lottery than to bump into the same face twice in a semester. As the largest CEGEP in the city, the same is hard to say for the lives of the school's student athletes—the matching tracksuits, the excitement before game day, the laughs and celebrations, the pride and joy, the grueling yet rewarding practices—who study together, but also share a common love for the game.

In 2012, at this point in their lives, Chau and Salinas both had basketball dreams. Though they each played on

“It makes me happy to know that we can actually help the community. We have a lot of talented kids in Quebec, it's just a matter of time until we get recognized for that.”

— *Russell Chau*

different varsity teams at Dawson, they still knew of each other.

Fast forward a couple of years later, and the tandem crossed paths once more at Concordia University, where Chau approached Salinas with a brilliant idea. Still with the same passion for the game, the duo embarked on a journey: Building a local company to empower young athletes ages between 12 and 25 through basketball.

With over 6000 followers on Instagram, Hoops on the Rise produces weekly podcasts, short clips, game recaps, highlights, live footage of games,

and also announces highly recruited player commitments. Specializing in high school, CEGEP and university basketball, Hoops on the Rise is a multimedia sports company that strives to expose Montreal's talent while creating a platform for youth to grow and be discovered.

Born in Tucson, Arizona, Salinas moved to Montreal at the end of 2009 looking to further his education while playing basketball. Double majoring in psychology and philosophy at Concordia, he played three years with the Maroon and Gold before dedicating himself to the company.

“A full agency, that's what we're trying to build up to,” said Salinas. “I just wanna help people. I find that Hoops on the Rise is a way to express my purpose.”

Now a mentor, podcast host, and assistant coach with Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf AAA basketball, Salinas works on the marketing, promotion, and content of the multimedia company but knows that expansion requires teamwork.

Founder and videographer Russell Chau believes Hoops on the Rise has come a long way since 2015.

“People are spreading the word,” said Chau. “We're just happy that when someone walks into a gym they know Hoops on the Rise is in the house.”

The 26-year-old finance student at Concordia's John Molson School of Business mixes his passion for photography with the video content covered during games to give viewers the ultimate fan experience.

Salinas already had his foot in the door with everything pertaining to Montreal basketball thanks to his playing days at Dawson and Concordia along with his connections in the community. However, Chau made it clear the struggle is not who

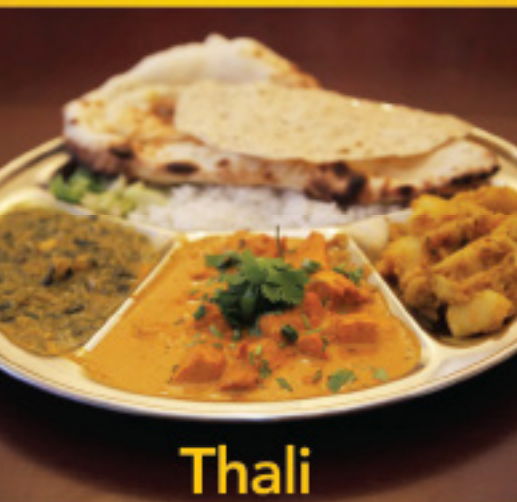


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or what to cover, but how to cover it.

“The toughest part of the job is time management,” said Chau. “Every one of us is working full time or working somewhere so when we end up with 10 videos to edit, it becomes hard at the end of the week,” he said.

Chau is referring to the members of the team keeping their dream alive. Podcast co-host and writer Karim Fall provides timely recaps and updates for games. Ralph Lauren Dizon helps with video content, and behind the scenes manager Jonathan Mirambeau uses his knowledge from Haute Études Commerciales Montréal to handle human resources responsibilities.

Despite experiencing early and well earned success, Hoops on the Rise’s financial difficulties as a young start-up is an obstacle Shafique Bakush understands all too well.

“I knew the schools weren’t willing to pay,” said Bakush who founded Keehs Productions, the first sports video company to ever cover Montreal basketball at the CEGEP and university levels. “That was a struggle, maybe there was some kind of business ways to entice the kids or schools to want to buy in,” he said.

In 2007—before Hoops on the Rise and the digital age—there was Keehs Productions.

“I was just a kid that loved basketball first. I never had anyone film my games when I played so I had nothing to look back on,” said Bakush. “In college I discovered video editing, a second passion where I learned to connect with an audience by bringing out emotion in my highlight videos.”

The 29-year-old shone light on an exciting time for Montreal basketball. Keehs Productions brought unprecedented exposure to the basketball community, with its first video of a rivalry game between Vanier and Dawson hitting over 10,000 views on YouTube.

A decade ago, the idea of viral sensations with a simple right click on the share button was inconceivable.

Building an audience took time—before instant gratification—and Bakush applauded Hoops on the Rise for seizing the moment while using social media to create buzz.

“I think it’s really cool what they’re doing in terms of the podcast,” said Bakush. “Their podcast, it’s crazy, that’s a niche. It’s important to diversify and market your brand. Back then, I didn’t have all that: Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.”

Currently employed as a video editor and camera operator for the Montreal Canadiens, the Keehs Productions founder’s trademark logo and intro sound monopolized Montreal basketball for four years. His departure from the game led to a brief stint in 2014 with “All Star Mixtapes,” but the void in the market remained, leaving a hole in the hearts of fans.

His hands full, a sudden yet necessary decision needed to be made, explained Bakush. Though he loved Keehs Productions, the opportunity to represent a professional sports franchise—a goal of his—was a blessing as he expressed his support for Hoops on the Rise.

“Finally somebody is coming out here giving exposure to Quebec basketball. It’s amazing to watch the new generation take it to new levels. They’re tech savvy and I really respect their marketing,” he said.

Amongst the hurdles to overcome, Bakush outlines authenticity, hard work, creativity, a good business sense and, most importantly, finances. That last challenge, for Salinas, is the dagger.

“Obviously we would like to do everything for free but we gotta make a living off this,” said Salinas.

He also thinks collaboration from the Réseau du sport étudiant du Québec would benefit both parties in the long run.

Nonetheless, with their furthest commute so far to Philadelphia, PA, Hoops on the Rise looks to build on the momentum of the recent surge of Canadian basketball players competing not

only in the NBA but also in the NCAA.

One example is Luguentz Dort from Montreal-Nord. Covered by Hoops on the Rise and a projected NBA prospect, the 19-year-old is crushing expectations in just his first year at Arizona State University.

“The good thing is [that] Hoops on the Rise is organized and they know exactly what they’re doing,” said Dort after his commitment video went viral garnering over 33,000 views on Twitter.

All in all, the warm feeling of recognition from Bakush, fans, and the basketball community is a big win for the team. Despite the road ahead being steep and bumpy, Chau explained that he feels nothing but love at this point.

“My biggest accomplishment is to hear players or parents saying they got recruited by coaches after discovering their mixtape on our platforms,” said Chau. “It makes me happy to know that we can actually help the community. We have a lot of talented kids in Quebec, it’s just a matter of time until we get recognized for that. There is a long way to go but I know it’s worth it.”

Hoops on the Rise wants to establish itself all over Canada, with the strong sense that sports, notably basketball, can translate to life lessons and provide kids the best opportunities in the future—on and off the court. □



Righting a Reproductive Wrong: Morgentaler's Fight for Abortion Rights

A People's History of Canada Column

APRIL TARDIF-LEVESQUE
@APRILTARDIF



Thirty-one years ago, on Jan. 28 1988, the Canadian Supreme Court overturned the law which had previously criminalized abortions. This gave women the ability to get unrestricted access to abortion from their healthcare provider, and is a decision we can attribute in part to the work of Dr. Henry Morgentaler, and other countless women who fought for self-determination.

The reason it is decriminalized, rather than legalized, stems from the fact that while the law against abortion in Canada was deemed unconstitutional in 1988, no other laws were been put in place to federally dictate when and where Canadians could get abortions, meaning that abortions could be performed in private clinics or public hospitals, and the procedure is itself publicly funded under Canada's Health Act.

In the ruling of *R. v Morgentaler* in 1988, Justices Brian Dickson and Antonio Lamer stated that, "state interference with bodily integrity and serious state-imposed psychological stress, at least in the criminal law context, constitutes a

breach of security of the person."

"Section 251 of the Criminal code [...] was found to clearly interfere with a woman's physical and bodily integrity. Forcing a woman, by threat of criminal sanction, to carry a fetus to term unless she meets certain criteria unrelated to her own priorities and aspirations, is a profound interference with a woman's body and thus an infringement of security of the person," it continued.

Today, it is fairly straightforward to get access to abortion services in Montreal, and many women do seek this care. The Morgentaler Clinic, for example, is one of the best known locations in Montreal to access these services, and they even offer access to IUD insertions after surgical abortions.

In 2017, Mifegymiso, a drug that can end a pregnancy at home up to 49 days after becoming pregnant, more commonly known as the abortion pill, was made available in Quebec by prescription. Of course, getting simple and accessible abortion care was not always this simple, and it's still an issue to this day. But, we have come a long way, in part due to the decades-long fight for abortion rights from Henry Morgentaler, both from inside the courtroom and in his own medical practice.

Morgentaler was born in Lodz, Poland in 1923. His birthplace and hometown was turned into a Jewish ghetto under Nazi occupation. He survived internments at Auschwitz and Dachau, but his parents, who were socialist activ-



ists, did not.

He came to Montreal in 1950 with \$20 U.S. and some books to his name along with his wife, Chava Rosenfarb, a Yiddish writer. Despite all these setbacks and hardships, he completed his medical studies at the Université de Montréal in 1953.

Morgentaler was president of the Humanist Fellowship of Montreal, and publicly pressured the Parliamentary

Committee on Health and Welfare to repeal the laws against abortion in 1967. Many women subsequently contacted him for abortion services after his parliamentary appearance, which he began to provide in 1968 in his own clinic.

In 1969, his practice became centered around family planning. Morgentaler performed abortions illegally, while also offering vasectomies, IUDs, contraceptives, and general family planning advice. Morgentaler was defying the law, risking his practice, his license, and his freedom for what he felt was the moral and right thing to do for these desperate women seeking the important procedure for a variety of reasons and who, otherwise, would have had to go by unsafe means to get abortions.

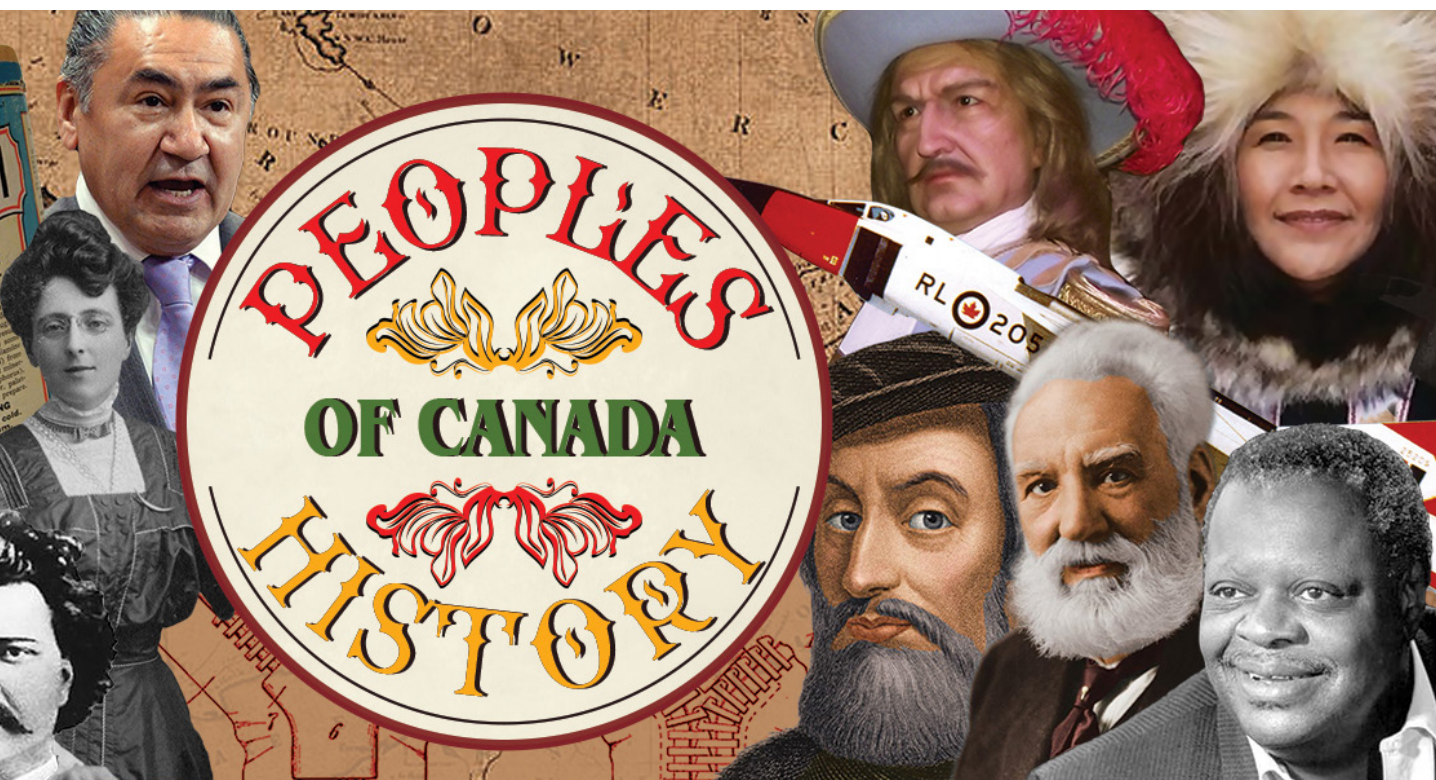
Over his lifetime, Morgentaler opened eight clinics across Canada. He had a complex relationship with women due to his relationship with his mother. Morgentaler told *The Globe and Mail* in 2003, “I knew I could not save my mother, but I could save other mothers,” said “If I help women to have

babies at a time when they can give love and affection, they will not grow up to be rapists or murderers. They will not build concentration camps.”

He admitted in Toronto, in front of an audience of supporters during a speaking tour as an activist, to having performed over 5,000 illegal abortions. Morgentaler was so bold that he even wrote a letter to prime minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, admitting to the abortions and describing the methods he used. On Mother’s Day 1973, W5 on CTV broadcasted an abortion being performed in his clinic—a courageous public display of disobedience, leading to a police raid of his clinic and his arrest along with staff and patients.

He first faced charges for performing illegal abortions in 1970. A jury acquitted him three years later, but the Quebec Court of Appeal overturned this verdict, which sent him to prison on an 18 month sentence in 1975. That same year, Canadian law was changed so jury verdicts couldn’t be overturned in appeal anymore. Morgentaler was released from

Morgentaler was defying the law, risking his practice, his license, and his freedom for what he felt was the moral and right thing to do [...]



prison 10 months into his sentence, weighing 15 pounds less than before his incarceration after suffering a heart attack.

He had lost his license to practice in Quebec, and was heavily in debt to lawyers and the government in back-taxes, all while losing his marriage. He travelled across the country, opening clinics, performing abortions, and getting arrested, charged, and acquitted, defying the law in the name of helping women and doing what he felt was morally right by challenging the laws in place.

It became difficult to argue abortion was unsafe, as Morgentaler was providing abortion care safely, and in large numbers. Eventually, these challenges to the law gave way to the law against abortion being struck down, and abortion was then decriminalized. The amount of legal issues facing Morgentaler gave rise to questioning why he was even being charged in the first place. Public discussion was sparked, and people began to also challenge this law, women especially.

When the Supreme Court repealed the law banning abortion on grounds of unconstitutionality in 1988, Morgentaler said it was, “A vindication of everything I believed in. For the first time, it gave women the status of full human beings able to make decisions about their own lives.”

Where does this leave us today? While not illegal, the question of access to abortion remains an important one, and it is patchy across the nation. There may be no law that restricts access to abortion, but there is no federal law ensuring access, either. It is up to the provinces to decide how they will set up abortion access, and it is not the same everywhere. While a person living in Montreal can easily access the service, a person in rural Atlantic Canada has no such guarantee of reliable abortion services.

According to research done by *The Star* in 2017, only one in six Canadian

hospitals perform abortions. Some provinces don't even have abortion clinics, and New Brunswick refuses to fund the ones performed at their few private abortion clinics where procedures may cost a few hundred dollars. New Brunswick covers surgical abortion only if done in one of two hospitals, in Moncton or Bathurst, which are urban centres. Prince Edward Island had never even offered abortion services officially in its territory before 2017.

The aforementioned abortion pill was considered safe and was made available in both France and China in 1988, but only approved by Health Canada in 2015. Quebec only just began to acquire and cover it. This pill in itself could be instrumental in bridging the access gap and assisting women in rural areas, or areas where services are difficult to access.

This is now a more affordable alternative to out-of-pocket surgical abortion in places like New Brunswick, and could also prove lifesaving for women in precarious situations who need to take it in anonymity. The procedure to obtain this pill could also be simplified and offered through school clinics and other public institutions to women in need.

While access to abortion has come a long way, and Canadian women now can decide for themselves with nearly no obstructions, we still have a ways to go. Some argue it should remain decriminalized to avoid the possibility of undue additional regulations that could be put in place to obstruct access. Others argue it should be legalized to provide a guarantee of availability of abortion services.

One thing I can conclude is that the access to abortion needs to be more evenly made available across the country. The abortion pill being available in public health institutions, like school clinics and walk-in clinics, would achieve this goal in minimizing access issues that surgical abortions can pose. □



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Oh coffee, how I love you so.

Saying I like coffee as a student journalist with a part-time job is about as controversial as saying that I breathe every few seconds. Lots of people like coffee, and why wouldn't they? A couple of sips of coffee can put a nice pep in your step. You can also customize your coffee basically any way you want, which is also super appealing. Like, lots of brown sugar, but no milk? Rad! Want a good ol' fashioned double-double? Go for it! Lattes, mochas, espressos, decaf? Stop asking permission, hypothetical coffee drinker, I'm not in charge of your life!

What I am in charge of, though, is what I like in my coffee: nothing.

You're probably wondering, Olivier, why are you settling for boring old hot bean water? Don't you like flavour? It might be boring to you, loyal reader, but to me, it's simple and perfect the way it is. It's not plain, it's not boring, it is its own thing, and it *rules*.

A great coffee is kind of an experience, which makes me sound like I'm trying to sell you on a coffee deal, but hear me out (read me out?). In my experience, coffee, especially a mediocre one, is often more of a means to an end to get some much-needed energy. But instead of trying to put it into your body as soon as possible to get that sweet, sweet caffeine running into the bloodstream, a great coffee makes you actually want to taste it. This has caused many a burned tongue, in my experience,

but tasting a great coffee with what's left of my tastebuds? It's super worth the occasional charred mouth, trust me.

There's just something about the smooth bitterness that makes it great (awesome pop punk lyric, by the way). There is nothing like the taste of a great coffee to make you feel alive, whether it's way too early in the morning, way too late at night, or somewhere in between.

This is the hill I'm willing to die on. In fact, if you see me putting any sort of milk or sugar in it, it's because the coffee tastes like warm dish soap that

got burned, somehow.

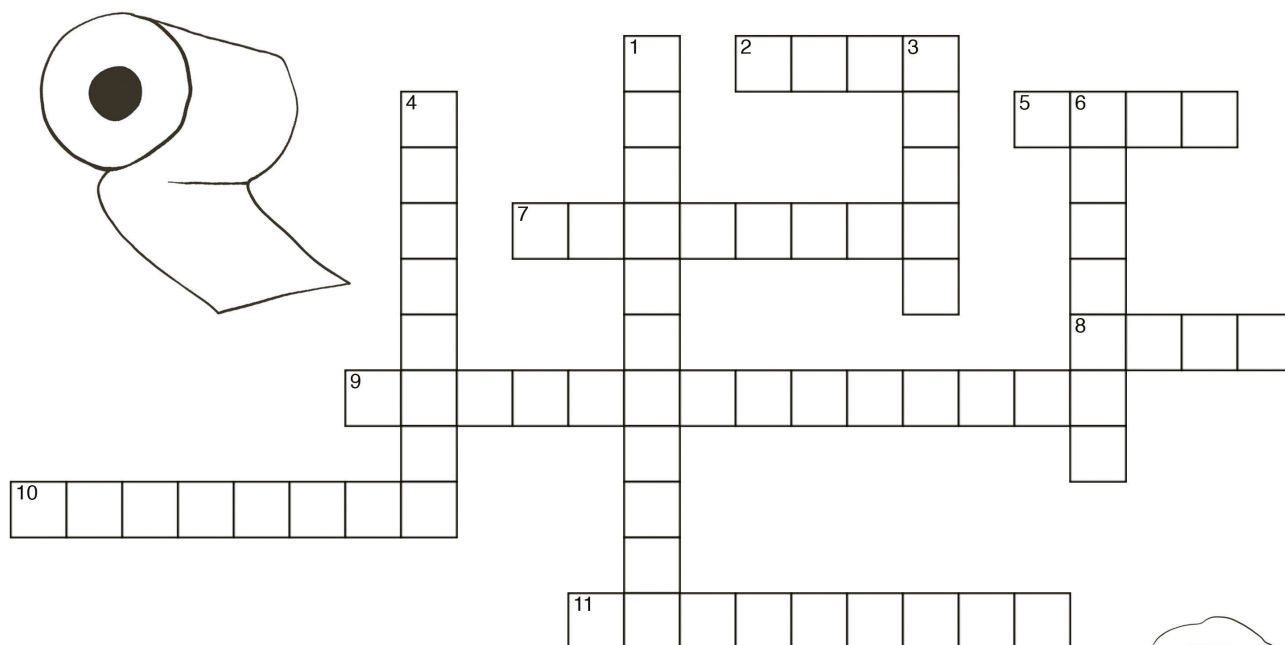
I won't ask you to ditch your current habits to get onto the black coffee bandwagon. But if your only experience with black coffee is lukewarm Tim Hortons that someone forgot to put your milk and sugar in, you haven't *actually* tried it. Give it a chance, a real one. And if by any chance you have a sip and hate it? It's the world's easiest fix, just add whatever it is you add in your coffee usually!

Now if you excuse me, this coffee isn't going to drink itself. ☒



GRAPHIC ELISA BARBIER

Crossword | by Breea Kobernick



ACROSS

- 2 Building with nastiest bathroom on campus
5 Current student organization that is falling apart
7 Concordia's engineering department named after
8 Stinger's mascot name
9 Free lunch at Concordia
10 "Haunted" downtown residence
11 Stingers home hockey arena

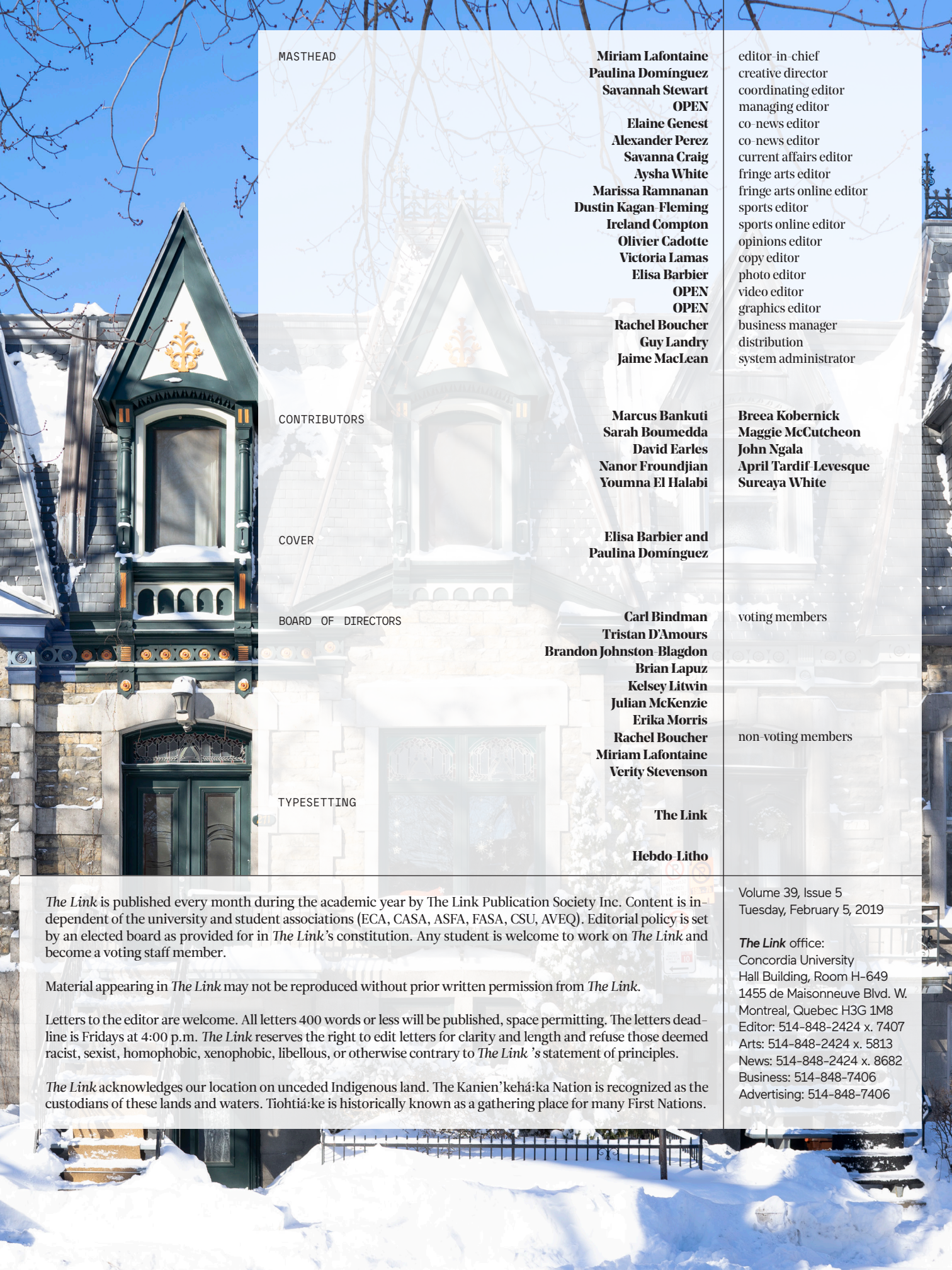
DOWN

- 1 Current Concordia president that will be leaving Concordia
3 Concordia gym
4 Campus bar
6 Area in library with 3D printers and sewing machines

Hastily Put Together | by Theo Radomski @flannelogue



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3		6				9		8
						2		4
9	6		1					
	3	7		2	8	1		
		5		9	6			



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CONTRIBUTORS

Marcus Bankuti
Sarah Boumedda
David Earles
Nanor Froundjian
Younna El Halabi

Breea Kobernick
Maggie McCutcheon
John Ngala
April Tardif-Levesque
Sureaya White

COVER

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TYPESETTING

The Link

Hebdo-Litho

The Link is published every month during the academic year by The Link Publication Society Inc. Content is independent of the university and student associations (ECA, CASA, ASFA, FASA, CSU, AVEQ). Editorial policy is set by an elected board as provided for in *The Link*'s constitution. Any student is welcome to work on *The Link* and become a voting staff member.

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The Link acknowledges our location on unceded Indigenous land. The Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of these lands and waters. Tiohtiá:ke is historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations.

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The Link office:
Concordia University
Hall Building, Room H-649
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W.
Montreal, Quebec H3G 1M8
Editor: 514-848-2424 x. 7407
Arts: 514-848-2424 x. 5813
News: 514-848-2424 x. 8682
Business: 514-848-7406
Advertising: 514-848-7406