

Disclosing the debt: CSU

INVESTIGATION UNDER WAY IN
LIGHT OF MISMANAGEMENT OF
STUDENT FUNDS • PAGE 3

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Negligence pushes CSU deficit over \$500,000

Former employee spent union into the red during 2005, 2006, 2007

• TERRINE FRIDAY

Keyana Kashfi says she's concerned about rumours surrounding the Concordia Student Union's finances and how undergraduate students may interpret them.

Kashfi, president of the CSU, wants to put allegations and questions regarding the finances of the CSU to rest by opening up to the student press.

This comes in light of various accusations made against the student union, which include everything from embezzlement to non-disclosure.

"It's my job to look out for the interests of the student union," Kashfi said in an interview with *The Link*. "Wrong information is damaging to the CSU."

Amidst confusion and the buzz of questionable finances, the CSU has decided to open up—but without disclosing too many details.

Cat out of the bag

On Nov. 25, 2008, *The Link* reported of questionable finances on the part of the CSU based on information obtained from confidential sources.

According to both CSU councillors and the CSU executive, the closed session that wrapped up the Nov. 12 Council meeting had an item that was not on the agenda.

The last item on the agenda read "Budget," but only part of the discussion surrounded the budget. The rest was about previous mismanagement of funds by persons no longer associated with the CSU. All councillors signed a legal confidentiality agreement before details of the financial irregularity were disclosed.

"That's why things were discussed in closed session," said Elie Chivi, VP communications for the CSU. "This isn't a very cut and dry situation and we're still trying to figure out what happened."

Half a million gone

According to the CSU, negligence on the part of a former employee, as well as former executives of the union, caused the CSU to incur a combined deficit of nearly \$500,000 for the fiscal years ending May 31, 2006 and May 31, 2007.

The CSU must pay back-taxes for the affected fiscal years—which was realized when a former executive couldn't withdraw money "because our bank accounts were seized," said Kashfi.

VP Finance of the CSU, Andre Leroy, said that the deficit figure is probably inflated because an investigation is still ongoing.

"These numbers are not close to

where we are by far," Leroy said.

The current numbers provided by the CSU are those available to all undergraduate students and not those written in the financial investigation report launched by former VP finance Fauve Castagna in June of 2007, which the CSU has refused to disclose.

A non-bargain

In addition to the deficit incurred for the 2005-2007 academic years, the alleged culprit may be held accountable for other damages.

In light of the allegations, the CSU approached *The Link* to disclose more confidential information to its readership—but only on the condition that *The Link* sign an agreement that would have compromised *The Link's* editorial control, which according to *The Link* and its legal counsel, was not in the best interest of the paper and its readership.

When *The Link* refused to sign the agreement, the CSU contacted *The Gazette*, confirmed Kashfi.

Speaking Out

Former student union executives have spoken out about the financial disarray.

A former CSU executive, who wishes to not be named, is concerned for the current executives.

"These kids don't know what the hell they're doing," the former executive said. "This is very, very serious [...] This is not something you play around with."

This former executive said full disclosure is the best solution for the CSU and its membership: undergraduate students who pay fees to them.

But this former executive questions the role of the councillors.

"Fingers start pointing at councillors. Why didn't they ask where the audits were? This is huge."

Mohamed Shuriye, former CSU president for 2005-2006, confirmed he was contacted by *The Gazette* and is afraid his name will be tarnished due to the investigation.

According to Kashfi, Shuriye and the alleged culprit did not handle student money responsibly by keeping track of financial transactions.

"They didn't know where they [stood], but they just kept spending," Kashfi said, "so as long as their cheques cleared, they kept spending."

But Shuriye said he could not have foreseen the mismanagement by an employee, especially since he wasn't the one in charge of the books.

"For this current executive to say that we should have questioned the numbers



The CSU remains adamant about not letting the cat out of the bag.
GRAPHIC GINGER COONS

"These kids don't know what the hell they're doing."

—former CSU executive

from a chartered accountant is unreasonable," Shuriye said. "I'm appalled that this executive has the tenacity to question my judgment especially since they're being recalled."

Both Shuriye and Kashfi concur that all notices sent by the federal and provincial government were addressed to the alleged culprit and not to any of the executives.

"I didn't open the mail, it's a federal offence," Shuriye said, noting that a year after his mandate expired, "the [CSU executives] realized [the alleged culprit] didn't even open the mail," which detailed delinquency in tax payment.

Former CSU president and VP finance Patrice Blais doesn't seem surprised by the news of questionable finances, but is disappointed with the ongoing investigation, which has already taken more than a year.

Blais was VP finance in 2001, shortly after Sheryll Navidad, former VP finance of the CSU, was accused of embezzling almost \$200,000 in student money.

"A forensic accountant was hired and [the investigation into Navidad] didn't

take a year," Blais said. "The numbers were never kept away from CSU members."

Blais said he's still waiting for the current deficit numbers to be made public and overall, wants a transparent student union.

"What I do know is there is a CSU executive [...] who aren't telling people what's the real deal here."

Tomorrow's Another Day

Kashfi and the VP finance ensure that the current financial situation is under control and everything they know has been conveyed to *The Link*.

However updated figures were not disclosed, nor has an interview with the CSU's former VP finance—who undertook the investigation during the 2007-2008 school year—been granted.

Kashfi says the alleged culprit still has not been charged with any offence and that the investigation is ongoing.

"The numbers are going to change, but the people involved will not," Kashfi confirmed.

Kashfi summed up the financial disorder: "It's a bigger thing than just money missing or that there's a deficit."

2004-05
(19,707)

2005-06
(85,763)

2006-07
(433,488)

A graphic representation of the CSU's increase in debt as per their end-of-year financial statements. GRAPHIC GINGER COONS

Money missing, CASA's Gold suspicious

Co-organizer claims money missing from Hallowe'en event

• TERRINE FRIDAY

Arts and science councillor Alejandro Lobo-Gerrero says he's on a mission to clear his name, even if it means taking legal action.

Lobo-Gerrero, VP social for the Arts and Science Faculty of Associations, is under scrutiny for questionable finances for last semester's Halloween party.

In an email sent out by Adam Gold, president of the Commerce and Administration Students' Association, to ASFA councillors on Jan. 9, Lobo-Gerrero was accused of "financial irresponsibility" and mismanagement of funds.

"There was no missing funds," Lobo-Gerrero said. "There was no mismanagement of any money,

I have all the receipts to prove it." Gold, who was co-collaborator of the event, says it isn't so.

According to Gold, the event—which was co-hosted by ASFA, CASA and the Engineering and Computer Science Association—saw two separate monetary issues under the supervision of Lobo-Gerrero: the cost of missing drink tickets and the cost of the door prizes, the latter of which was supposed to be provided for free.

"Alejandro assured us the Daytona [door prize] tickets [...] were free," Gold argued. "We then found out we paid over \$1,000 for them."

Gold says that he has tried to meet with Lobo-Gerrero on several occasions to rectify the financial discrepancies, to no avail.

"I have made numerous

attempts to meet with Alejandro and have been cancelled on each and every time, some cancellations being made minutes leading up to it."

"I said 'I don't think it's a good idea,' given all [the CSU's] problems right now."

—Alejandro Lobo-Gerrero, VP Social for the Arts and Science Faculty

Lobo-Gerrero said he's yet to be accused of anything by phone, email or direct conversation with Gold.

"They didn't accuse me of anything until [the email]," Lobo-Gerrero said—an email which he was not copied on.

Lobo-Gerrero also claims the accusations of mismanagement come amidst his refusal to share the financial burden of the upcoming spring break New York trip with the Concordia Student Union, as proposed by ASFA President Peek.

"I said 'I don't think it's a good idea,' given all [the CSU's] problems right now."

According to Peek, "Alejandro actually pursued the CSU himself before the Christmas break." Peek said that firing Alejandro seemed a little far-fetched but hopes the special meeting called by ASFA councillors—to be held Jan. 14—will settle the issue.

"I will participate in discussion, but [course of action] will be for Council to decide. I certainly hope [firing Alejandro] will not be

the case."

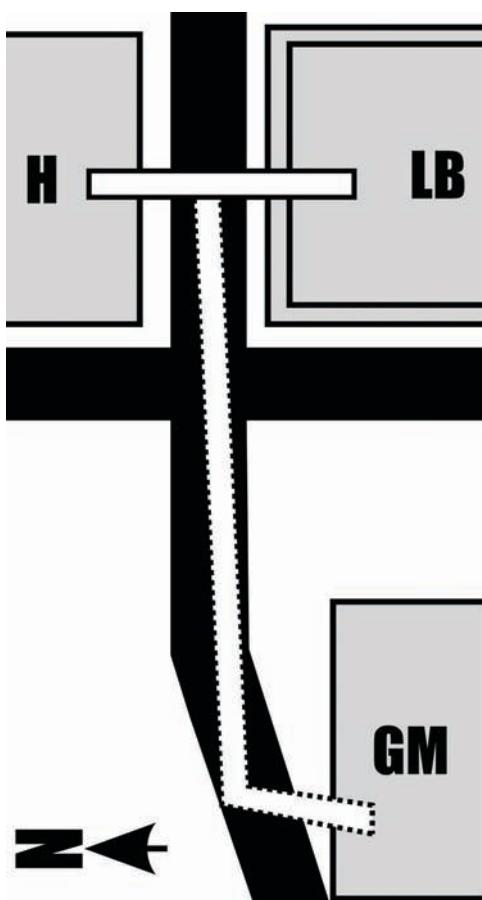
Arts and science councillor Louise Birdsell-Bauer defended Lobo-Gerrero and called the mass email "a character assassination on Alejandro."

"Even if the accusations were true, why would [Gold] send an email to councillors instead of bringing it up three months ago?" Birdsell-Bauer said.

But according to Gold, repeated arrangements were made to meet with Lobo-Gerrero to discuss the losses incurred.

"Obviously if I want to meet, there's a reason," Gold said.

Although a special meeting has been called for Jan. 14, the next regular ASFA council meeting is scheduled for Jan. 15 at 6:30 p.m., place to be confirmed.



"T" marks the spot where the tunnel will run.
GRAPHIC GINGER COONS

Tunnelling towards the future

Concordia tears up de Maisonneuve for a tunnel

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

The heart of Concordia's downtown campus will remain a construction site for the next 12 months as the university builds a tunnel between the Hall building and Guy-Concordia metro.

With an estimated completion date of December 2009, the \$5 million project calls for the digging of a trench in which the 120-metre tunnel will be built. The final passageway, running under de Maisonneuve Boulevard, will link the current Hall-LB tunnel with the Guy-Concordia metro station, exiting beside the Uniprix.

"This idea has been around for about 10 years, it is finally going to be realized," said Peter Bolla, the associate vice-president of Concordia's Facilities Management, the organization responsible for the project.

Pedestrian traffic has already been routed around the construction site as

excavation work has already begun on de Maisonneuve Boulevard, south of Norman Bethune Square.

The work, running eastward from the GM building, will be at its noisiest over the next four months during the excavation and piling phase. "They will dig a trench, you can already see where its going to be, and build a temporary wall in the earth [piling] so that sides don't cave in while there are people in there," explained Bolla.

Garnier Construction, the Lavallois company that built the new Parc avenue intersection, will build the tunnel. "The bidding process was held last summer, in August," Bolla confirmed, "and we gave out the project in November, after the board approved."

Concordia and Bolla's department have co-ordinated with the city so that the final phase of the city's Norman Bethune Square overhaul, part of the Quartier Concordia project, is finished along with the tunnel.

Timeline for the project

Jan. 12 to April 2009

—Piling (tunnel walls built)

February to May 2009

—Excavation work

March to September 2009

—Concrete poured

September 2009

—Tunnelling west of Mackay complete

October 2009

—Tunnelling east of Mackay complete

December 2009

—Project Complete

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cover photo by Jonathan Dempsey

World Cafés not a bust: the tablecloth debates

Concordia airs its laundry, both clean and dirty

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

Geoff Selig has worked at Concordia for almost 30 years, nearly as long as the university itself has existed as such.

It seems only natural that as systems analyst for the Institutional Planning Office, Selig would be the think tank to produce Concordia's World Cafés, whose goals were to start a conversation amongst Concordia students, faculty and staff about the future of their university.

At two World Café events in early November, 100 Concordia students, staff and faculty sat down and shared a cup of coffee.

After three hours of conversation their tables were a colourful mess of scribbles.

The results of those two World Cafés, 25 tablecloths with cues to the future of Concordia, had been advertised prominently on the university's homepage for nearly two months, until Jan. 12.

"The World Café is designed to go deeper into a question and build on people's ideas," said David

Gobby, director of the Student Transition Centre. "It's an alternative to the way we traditionally look at public consultation."

The Questioners

Along with Gobby and Ann Waymann, the program director of Concordia's Facilities Management, Selig proposed the World Cafés to university President Judith Woodsworth in April 2008.

"I was participating in the town halls that were held in April and May and it seemed to me that we needed to have a more participatory approach for [getting] feedback," said Selig. Along with Waymann and Gobby, Selig oversaw the planning for the two events.

The questions at the first World Café, held on Nov. 11 in the Webster Library atrium, asked participants to react to a hypothetical situation where a Concordian wins a Nobel prize; and to apply American President-elect Barack Obama's "Yes we can" mantra to Concordia.

Concordia answers

In the colourful chaos of community organizing, the answers showed a schism in thinking. Some saw Concordia as a "community organizer: reputation as community focused," and a research-based university with a "marketable myth: identity for Concordia that can be sold to attract scholars, public interest and research dollars."

To add to the confusion, Concordia was also called a "green university; peace university [or] U. of the Street Café."

One participant asked "Is it just about the money? Necessity of growth?" as another called for the president to "focus on what's there already."

Some of the biggest comments questioned the questions themselves. One participant drew a line from the Nobel prize question to their own words inked in red, "What's happened to Concordia??" while another wrote "Concordia's mission is not for Nobel Prize Winners."

McGill Envy?

"With the Nobel questions we wanted people to think, 'Gee that's a good idea, what would that look like?'" Selig said as he admitted that the Nobel question resulted in much debate on what one participant called "McGill envy."

"What would allow us to be like that? But people got distracted with McGill comparisons," Selig continued.

The Link called the World Cafés "a bust" at the times they were held due to the few students who turned up. "Where are the students???" asked one participant in all caps. Selig confirmed that "several hundred" randomly selected students were contacted by email, of which only 15 attended among the 100 participants.

A question at the second World Café, held Nov. 12 in the CJ atrium, asked participants to identify one key idea about what Concordia can become.

One view of the university's potential stood out: "Concordia is a growing teenager."



GRAPHIC GINGER COONS

4

number of times tuition is mentioned in table talks.

2

number of times a tuition freeze is mentioned.

22

number of times "corporate" or money is mentioned.

14

number of times Concordia is compared to McGill.

Fuelled with rage

• JULIEN MCEVOY

Children held Palestinian flags and bright banners on Saturday as a crowd of Montrealers marched behind them chanting "Israel, assassin. Harper, accomplice." For a second weekend in a row, opposition to Israel's invasion of Gaza reverberated loudly off the glass of Montreal's downtown skyscrapers.

During the week preceding the protest, competing rallies were held by pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian organizations across the island. On Jan. 8, a thousand people were present at the Jewish synagogue in Côte St. Luc to hear Israel's consul general speak.

Earlier that day, a Montreal-based collective called Tadamon—solidarity in Arabic—made global headlines by blocking the doors to the Israeli consular offices in Montreal.



Protests continued in downtown Montreal in response to Israel's offensive on Gaza. PHOTO IAN LAWRENCE

Something academic

Obama's inauguration: Notes from a Quebecer in a redneck state

• ROSS PERIGOE

Ross Perigoe has a diploma in Radio and Television Arts from Ryerson, a Masters of Science in Communications from Syracuse University, and a Ph.D. from Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University.

Perigoe was a radio and television producer, reporter and manager for 15 years in private and public television in Canada and the United States. He was one of the youngest national radio producers in the history of CBC Current Affairs Radio, attaining the position at the age of 20. He also co-authored an analysis of the television coverage of the 1990 Oka crisis.

Perigoe has been teaching journalism at Concordia University for over 20 years, specializing in broadcast journalism.

He is currently on sabbatical.

I am living in Mississippi on sabbatical for a year. It is a place I had driven through in the past to get to more interesting places like New Orleans or Houston—a place I never thought I'd live in. But the place is fascinating. For a Journalism professor, it is a place rich with stories—never more so because of the seismic impact of the election of Barack Obama.

Mississippi is a paradox. It is a 'red' state characterized by right-wing 'redneck' music. When I was growing up, red was symbolic of socialism and communism. 'Better dead than red' used to mean that being a communist was a fate worse than death. Now red means conservative. Go figure.

I wish I could tell you that Mississippians are, to a person, looking forward to inauguration day on Jan. 20. It's not true. More people are talking about gas prices, and the auto industry and bail-outs. Mississippi has a brand new Toyota plant under construction, ready to build the next generation of Priuses.

But the construction on the building has stopped. Toyota lost \$1.7 billion last year—the first time in its history that the company lost money. This state—one of the poorest in the country—is clearly worried.

You should know that white Mississippians are proud of the racial progress that has been made in the past 40 years. The presidential debate between

John McCain and Obama, which was nearly cancelled in late September, sucked the air out of Mississippi politics.

It was supposed to be hosted by the University of Mississippi in the tiny town of Oxford. Ole Miss had planned to show the rest of America—and the world if they could—that Mississippi, the state that had seen race riots over the University's refusal to admit James Meredith in 1962, had changed.

They wanted to obliterate the memories of President Kennedy calling out 30,000 soldiers to quell the rioting and to protect Meredith. Ole Miss wanted the world to know that the state, that 46 years ago had refused a black man admission to attend courses, was now inviting a black man to contend for the presidency.

McCain absorbed all of that energy when he nearly cancelled the debate in the heat of the economic crisis. So Mississippi will have to find another moment to tell the world that there is now a black enrollment of roughly 14 per cent in universities across the state.

For white Mississippians, the entire question of race has become moot. They point to black enrollment as a testament to change.

Things haven't changed all that much. I watched on election night as black, and some white, Mississippians literally danced for joy in the streets as the election results poured in across the country.

A 14 per cent university enrollment certainly is progress for the black community but it has to be tempered with the knowledge that 37 per cent of Mississippians are black. So, despite the joy in some quarters of the state (mostly the Delta—home of the blues and preponderantly black), the morning after the election, Mississippians learned they had voted for McCain by a substantial margin (56–43 per cent). Mississippi stayed red in a solid Republican south, sticking to faith in God and country; faith in a strong defence; the war in Iraq; pro-life and anti-gays.

Now all of Mississippi—all of America—will for the first time be led by a black man.

Black Mississippians will sit and marvel as they will have on the day before the inauguration—Martin Luther King Jr. Day—at how far they and we have come, how very

long it has taken, and how much further they and we have to go.

Some other quick thoughts:

Barack Obama will most certainly call upon the words of Martin Luther King Jr. and Abraham Lincoln in his inaugural speech. He probably won't acknowledge the help that black actors Dennis Haysbert, D.B. Woodside, Morgan Freeman and even comedian Chris Rock all afforded him. Haysbert and Woodside played the Palmer brothers who were presidents on the TV show "24"; Freeman played president Tom Beck in the movie *Deep Impact* (1998); and Rock played Mays Gilliam in *Head of State* (2003). Fiction often works as a pre-conditioner to reality. So these presidential roles all gave visual examples of white Americans working for blacks—an idea that Americans obviously became accustomed to, and learned to accept as a possibility.

There will be a series of 10 inaugural balls, including the first ever Neighborhood Inaugural Ball for residents of Washington DC who don't get the invites to the black-tie affairs.

Among the greatest concerns is the massive number of cell phones that will be turned on during the inauguration procession and speech. Between two and four million people are expected to attend the open-air ceremony, filling the National Mall in front of the Washington Monument. Pray for good weather and plenty of cell phone transponders to receive the signals. The cell phone carriers in the U.S. have added massive amounts of capacity to their systems in downtown Washington. We'll see if it was enough, or if the whole system crashes.

Let the merchandizing begin...

The QVC shopping network will originate its TV programming from Washington the week of the inaugural. Well over \$2 million in Obama souvenirs have already been sold, with more expected.

Meanwhile, *USA Today* has produced a special edition newspaper that it is giving away on inauguration day and the *Chicago Sun Times* is putting out a special afternoon edition, hoping to cash in on the souvenir hunters. Maybe all this spending will jumpstart the American economy. It sure does need something.

Pending matters hang over CSU

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

A new Chief Electoral Officer is to be appointed at a Concordia Student Union Council meeting this Wednesday. The names of possible CEO candidates have yet to be released to the public or CSU councillors.

The fate of the recall petition delivered to the CSU on Dec. 19 is still unknown. The final decision on the petition's legitimacy, due to contested last-minute rule changes, rests with CSU Council Chair Jessica Nudo. After repeated requests for interview, Nudo has refused to comment.

Senior Concordia director packs bags for UofO

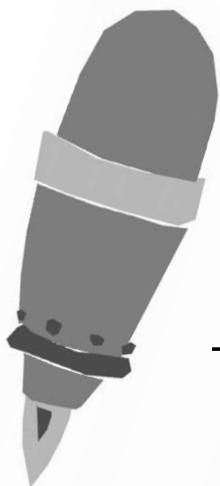
• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

The University of Ottawa has lured away the long-time director of Concordia's Centre for Continuing Education, Murray Sang. Serving as director of the centre since 2000, following 11 years in the assistant position, Sang's departure was announced by the Dean of the School of Extended Learning, Noel Burke. Sang had also chaired the organizing committee of the Concordia Shuffle, a source of scholarships for many Concordia students.

Frosty Fest thaws frigid freshman

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

With the thermostat predicted to bottom out at -30C on Friday, the CSU's Frost Fest is not a misnomer. A screening of the cozy comedy *Step Brothers* on Jan. 13, followed by a Wine & Cheese at Loyola on Jan. 14, is set to get students moving. A concert by the aptly named Wintersleep at Metropolis on Jan. 15 marks an end to the fest, and hopefully also the frost.



Join us for our annual **Science & Technology** special issue brainstorming session.

Pitch stories, write articles, create graphics, or just eat the *free popcorn!*

This Friday at 4 p.m. is when it's at. The Hall building's room H-649 is the place to be.

See you there!





Denton eats flame at Nevada's Burning Man festival.
PHOTO HANNES HÄFELE

Breaking

One man's search

• PASCALE ROSE LICINIO

Nick Denton always has a nail on him...to hammer into his face. He says it's the least painful and least dangerous circus stunt he performs.

Visually, nothing about Denton betrays his passion for performing. His black hair is short. None of his tattoos are visible. And he recently took out the piercing he had on his lip. The 24-year-old looks like any other Concordia Literature student, and he'll tell you that he's an artist, not a hipster.

Eight years ago, Denton started doing Poi—a stunt of Maori origin. The performer spins two weights connected by a rope, manipulating them about in different ways. Soon enough, he began lighting the weights on fire.

Denton also began sideshow performing, starting with block head—a stunt that involves hammering a nail into one's face. He has since moved on to fire-eating, walking on broken glass and eating light bulbs.

"It's extremely dangerous, but you only hurt yourself if you're careless and you don't know what you're doing," he argued. "But when you perform, you don't perform something you're not one hundred per-

cent sure you can do."

One of his friends, a fire breather, inhaled too much fuel and got chemical pneumonia—pools of paraffin formed in her lungs.

"It's really bizarre to be gay-bashed by a gay person for not being gay enough," he said. "And vice versa, being gay-bashed by a straight person for not being straight enough..."

Amazingly, Denton is self-taught. Block head is the only exception.

"There was a lot of room for error and I did end up hurting myself a lot," he remembers. "Eating fire, I've hurt myself very seriously. I got a second-degree burn on my upper lip. Denton is well aware that most people would not play with danger the way he does.

"It's an audience thing for me," he admitted. "The best thing about performing is the way the audience reacts."

Performing plays a huge role in his life. "It's just kind of a constant for me," he smiled.

Denton admitted that he loves circus

sideshows because of the reactions, whether people are amazed, disgusted or even yelling at him. He remembered the time an audience member started shouting at him during one of his routines as he

—Nick Denton,
poet, musician and sideshow performer

stood on broken glass and hammered a nail into his face, uncomfortable that he wouldn't step off of the glass.

"She yells out, 'You're STILL on broken glass!'" he laughed. "I had given everybody warning before, you know. But I guess she didn't expect to be so shocked."

When he's not performing stunts, Denton's a slam poet and musician. But he finds that music brings about fewer spontaneous reactions.

"If I play the acoustic guitar, it's something you can see just about anywhere on any given day. At open mic sessions, someone can be great, but the audience might not clap—they might not even lis-

ten. They're just used to there being music around," he said.

On stage, with music or poetry, he feels that he offers a different part of himself.

"As far as circus performing goes, there's really no personal attachment to it," he explained. "I don't have to put anything of myself in it. It's performing a trick, that's what it is." Poetry slams are about revealing something genuine and intimate.

"I think it's wonderful when you hear somebody say something that's deeply personal. People in the audience are taken aback, they gasp or say something. That really establishes a connection," he explained.

When performing slam poetry on stage, he stands straight in front of the microphone, focused. His voice is intense and deep. He strives to open himself to the audience.

"After a performance, a woman came up to me and said that my poem was really touching, that she had felt I was being really genuine," he said. That's the kind of reaction he was looking for, not only striking the audience—the way a circus trick can do—but also involving people in his emotions.

*At the edge of a café bar sits a boy
Dressed in striking reminiscence of a young James Dean
And you pen love poems on napkins
But your shy hands find the corners
And fold them into flightless white birds
Perched in a cage called reluctance.
You blush.*

—excerpt from "Folding Patterns,"
a poem by Nick Denton

Patterns

for self-expression with words, song and broken glass

"It feels amazing when someone tells you they felt connected to what you did after a show," he said.

He believes that poetry is about writing for yourself. "If you don't write for yourself, why are you writing poetry?" he wondered aloud.

Although he writes for himself and rejects political correctness in general, he draws a line when it comes to being offensive. "Obviously, that sounds a little hypocritical from someone who hammer nails into his face and understands that that will offend somebody in a way," he laughed. "But I don't like personally, emotionally offending people."

Denton was a little apprehensive about the poem that he had written for the live recording of the Throw Collective at Casa del Popolo last October.

His poem "Folding Patterns" dealt with the difficulties men can experience, whether they are gay or bisexual, if they want to walk up to another man and try to express their attraction. "It can go a lot of different ways. The person can be accepting; the person can be friendly; the person can entirely brush you off; or you can get your ass kicked,"

he said.

"The poem was just trying to address the fact that that is where a lot of apprehension lies," he explained. "It's terrifying to think that trying to show your emotions to someone can make them want to physically harm you."

He has never found himself in that situation but he feels deeply that bisexuality does not yet have a place in our society.

"It's really bizarre to be gay-bashed by a gay person for not being gay enough," he said. "And vice versa, being gay-bashed by a straight person for not being straight enough..."

[My parents] have no desire to see me hammer a nail into my face. They like the fact that I'm performing, but they don't like what I'm performing.

Being rejected because of his sexual orientation is not something that he feels might happen to him within the circle of the slam poetry community. He thinks that most poets and artists are extremely accepting.

"It's not that I don't want to be open

about it, but a lot of people are not aware of the fact that I am bisexual," he explained.

Denton is aware that people make assumptions based on first impressions and that there isn't anything about him to tip people off. "I don't personify either a flamboyant gay side [or] a straight macho side," he laughed. "Letting people know is about tossing aside their assumptions, which can be an unpleasant process."

"I'm not ashamed of any kind of sexuality at all, but I don't try to force it on people. I like people to know," he said. That's why he also put his poem in the chapbook

on stage and coming out every single time," he said.

Denton does not come from a family of artists. His father is a physical therapist, his mother a real estate agent. "They are more timid than I am when it comes to performing," he said about them. "But they are extremely encouraging."

There is only one sort of performance that his parents don't really encourage and he finds it perfectly understandable. "[My parents] have no desire to see me hammering a nail into my face," he said, amused. "They like the fact that I'm performing, but they don't like what I'm performing."

Denton's parents still don't know that he is bisexual. He's not afraid of being rejected. "They are the most understanding, intelligent people I have ever met," he said. He is more worried about their first reaction to his coming out but is confident that in the long term his parents will accept it.

"So, for now, they don't know. But they know about the recording and they want to have the CD. So they don't know... until they get the CD!" he said with a larger smile, opening his hands in front of him.

Sometimes things suddenly start moving faster and just like a circus stunt, you have to be 100 per cent sure of yourself.

—Nick Denton,
poet, musician and sideshow performer

that was sold the night of his recording.

Performing pieces like "Folding Patterns" is always a nerve-racking experience, admits Denton. "It's difficult to say those kinds of things in front of a group of people that have no idea. It's like getting

Do you Nomi?

Montreal playwright Marie Brassard receives this year's Carte Blanche

• CHRISTOPHER OLSON

For the second year in a row, the Goethe-Institut of Montreal is awarding its Carte Blanche to native Montrealer, actress and playwright Marie Brassard.

The Goethe-Institut, which aims to foster an appreciation for German culture and the German language, holds a film series each year to highlight the work of German artists past and present.

As always, the selection of films is diverse, with films by and about heavy hitters like Werner Herzog and Leni Riefenstahl, as well as underground artists like Isabell Spengler and Germany's "enfant terrible" Christoph Schlingensief.

This year, as in others, the films chosen for the Institut's Carte Blanche were made by a non-German who nevertheless recognizes and values Germany's contributions to world culture.

Brassard remembers falling in love with her second home after the fall of the Berlin Wall, which became the subject of one of her many plays performed in her non-native country.

"I lived in Berlin and go back often, so part of my life also takes place there," says Brassard. Every time she returns, she is struck by how the city continues to reinvent itself and foster the works of incoming artists.

With this film series Brassard wanted to "explore the avant-garde artists, the controversial ones." One of those controversial

artists is Isabell Spengler, whose 1998 short film, *Psychic Tequila Tarot*, centres around a bare-breasted tarot card reader whose readings often involve downing large quantities of tequila in the passenger seat of her car.

One of the most prominent films at this year's Carte Blanche is the critically acclaimed 2004 documentary *The Nomi Song*, about the rise and fall of a German countertenor who became a rock star in New York's East Village.

Unlike Superman, the alien immigrant who stressed the importance of blending-in, Klaus Nomi was a German immigrant who made every effort to stand out. Singing in a rousing countertenor, Nomi accentuated his already elfin appearance and crafted the persona of Nomi, an alien who appeared on stage in a hush of whispers and left in a cloud of smoke.

Nomi captured the attention of the likes of David Bowie, and even appeared on "Saturday Night Live," where he performed a blend of opera and the avant-garde, pomp and circumstance with pop music. Nomi died due to AIDS complications, a then unknown disease which rose to international attention just as Nomi found recognition in Germany for his accomplishments in the U.S.

Nomi's eclectic mixing of genres reflects the unique mix of film subjects chosen by Brassard. A screening of the 1927 experimental film *Berlin: Symphony of a City* features various locales in 1920s Berlin and is accompanied by a symphonic



Klaus Nomi made every effort to stand out; accentuating his elfin appearance and crafting the persona of Nomi. GRAPHIC CHRISTOPHER OLSON

score which attempts to evoke the spirit of the city.

Attached to that film is *Berlin Song*, a 2007 feature about six musicians from countries across Europe and the United States who, like Brassard, have adopted Berlin as their home away from home, and try to capture the modern spirit of Germany—80 years after *Symphony*

of a City.

The films screening at the Goethe-Institut this month are alternately flippant and demanding of your attention, both sumptuous and disturbing.

For a list of screenings, or for information about the Goethe-Institut, visit goethe.de/ins/ca/mon.

Life outside of the womb

Sweaty palms and Magic Christians

• CODY HICKS

I don't often get the shakes before an interview, but I had butterflies an hour before calling Cyril Jordan, leader and guitarist of power-pop super group Magic Christian.

If Jordan's name is familiar, it's because he was the leader of shit-hot rock 'n' roll revivalists The Flamin' Groovies.

I was raised on a steady diet of The Who and The Rolling Stones so when I first got my hands on a CD copy of The Groovies albums *Shake Some Action* and *Teenage Head* from the Saskatoon Public Library I was floored. Since then, I've nearly worn out the grooves on my vinyl copies.

If The Groovies don't ring a bell, you might recognize the name of ex-Blondie drummer Clem Burke or bassist Eddie

Munoz of The Plimsouls.

Rounding out the roster is rock 'n' roll preacher vocalist Paul Kopf, who might be the most enjoyable interview in rock 'n' roll, spilling over with excitement about being in a band that he describes as "high energy rock, the opposite of Emerson Lake and Palmer, escapism at its finest."

Although he's been playing music since the '60s, talking to Cyril Jordan is like talking to a hungry kid who just discovered the primitive power of playing air-guitar in his bedroom to the raw early Kinks' 45s.

"Rock 'n' roll is my religion," says Jordan. "It enhances you in the same way religion enhances your life. I worship the musicians who make me feel the way I do about rock."

I might have been skeptical of this kind of talk, but ever since

being drunkenly baptized on stage with Red Mass last Friday I understand the spiritual aspect of rock, and I'm excited to see its evangelism from another angle.

Magic Christian's message is positive, a yin to the evil and chaotic yang of Red Mass. But Jordan makes it clear that Magic Christian is not a part of the limp Christian rock movement, but is actually a reference to "the coolest cruise ship of all time" in the 1969 Peter Sellers and Ringo Starr flick of the same name.

This will be Magic Christian's second visit to the east coast after a recent successful tour last September. Although the boys are terrified of the weather, they're excited to finally make a pilgrimage to Montreal, which Jordan sees as a kind of rock 'n' roll sanctuary in comparison to their home of San Francisco.

"The west coast has been

taken over by corporate America," he says with dismay. "That's why we're coming up to Canada, the land where people wanna rock, and are still free from this kind of bullshit fascist takeover."

They've been showered with more love and positive press from one east coast tour than the four years they've spent gigging on their home coast.

Although he's been at it for 40 years with loads of different bands, Jordan says that life on the road is more fun than ever with Magic Christian, citing their stripped down approach coupled with overly passionate fans.

"For the first time what appeared to be women's underwear flew onstage from the balcony," Jordan recalls about a particularly wild show. "At first I thought it was a fucking bat!

"People are getting jazzed

because you don't hear that many bands that rock out like this. This is definitely the most rockingest band I've ever been in."

The songs on their MySpace are incredibly catchy '60s throwbacks, but be sure to check their Youtube videos for a true taste of the rock 'n' roll salvation that is promised by Jordan and Kopf. Those dudes look jazzed up as hell and ready to spit more fire than most bands half their age.

So, have some beers and be on your wildest behaviour, because we are the rock 'n' roll ambassadors of Canada! And we don't wanna disappoint some of its elder statesmen on their first visit now, do we?

Check out their sound at myspace.com/magicchristian or see them live this Sunday at Sala Rossa, 4848 Saint-Laurent, with Sonic Avenues. Tickets are \$14.

Solo Niko

Strokes' bassist Nikolai Fraiture steps out of the shadows

• JAMES LYNCH

In 2001, The Strokes brought an indie rock aesthetic to an age of rap and boy bands, opening the floodgates for a myriad of copycats.

Now, in 2009, Strokes bassist Nikolai Fraiture will release his first solo effort, *The Time of Assassins*, under the moniker Nickel Eye.

With Nickel Eye, Fraiture has found a way to transcend his lyrics and newfound vocals in a project that recalls the best of Frank Black and Leonard Cohen.

On album opener "Intro (Everytime)" we hear Fraiture plug in his bass, starting the album with a driving riff that's sure to catch the listener's attention. "You and Everyone Else" shows off Fraiture's Strokes roots—his voice sounds the way the lovechild of Strokes lead singer Julian Casablancas and Montrealer Rufus Wainwright would (after smoking for 10 years). Backed with a stomping beat, Fraiture delivers the goods on this rockin' laid-back track.

"Hello motherfuckers, I'm back from

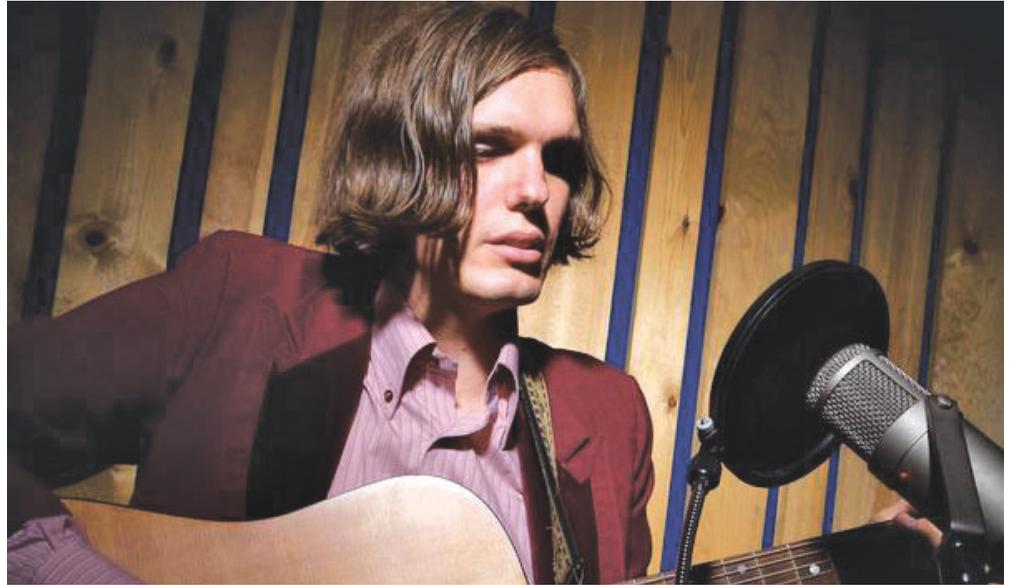
exile," he coos on "Back From Exile" which, on top of sounding cool, makes me think that Nickel Eye may just have an axe to grind. If nothing else, Fraiture proves his knack for storytelling on this cowboy-inspired track; a song that wouldn't be out of place in a Clint Eastwood western.

Guitarist Nick Zinner of Yeah Yeah Yeahs fame adds some punch to "Dying Star," while Brooklyn scene alumni Regina Spektor joins Fraiture on piano in "Where the Cold Wind Blows," a gloomy ballad about a man down on his luck.

But how did it start?

After stumbling across an old shoebox full of rants and poems that he had written at 19, Fraiture found inspiration. With plenty of time on his hands, he flew to Hackney, London and sought musical refuge in the band South, a fixture of the British indie rock scene.

He recorded a handful of demos with them as Nickel Eye; he finally had the blueprint to his first opus. A few months later, he completed the album and named it *The Time of the Assassins*, an homage to the book by Alistair MacLean.



Strokes' bassist Nikolai Fraiture finally steps up to the mic.

The record effectively displays Fraiture's songwriting talent and feels like a delicate self-examination leaving the audience with a bittersweet feeling of nostalgia. Leaving long-time Strokes listeners wonder why Fraiture's been hiding behind Casablancas all this time.

I mean, c'mon... even Mick Jagger let Keith take the mic sometimes.

To see Nickel Eye take centre stage, check out the Green Room, 5386 Saint-Laurent, this Wednesday at 9 p.m. Tickets \$12 on admission.



The DOWN-LOW

Events listing
Jan. 13-19

ART GALLERIES

IGNITION

Steve Bates, Amélie Guérin, Mark Igloliorte, Miriam Sampaio, Meera Margaret Singh, Malena Szlam. The annual exhibition of selected works from Concordia's Graduate Program in Studio Arts. This year, *IGNITION* features six artists whose practices include photography, video and sound installation, painting, drawing, and sculpture.

Now to Jan. 17

Leonard & Bina Ellen Art Gallery, 1400 Blvd. de Maisonneuve West on the ground floor of the McConnell Library Building

DANCE

Occupants

The students of the Concordia Department of Contemporary Dance are proud to present *Occupants*, a dance performance event of site-specific choreography created by third-year students, which was inspired by a two-week residency where students experimented with dance and architecture.

Wednesday, 1-3 p.m.; Thursday, 1-3 p.m. and 7-9 p.m.; and Friday 1-5 p.m.

Concordia University's EV Building, 1515 Ste. Catherine Street O.

FREE

LECTURE

"Speaking of Photography: John Raeburn"

John Raeburn is the author of *A Staggering Revolution: A Cultural History of Thirties Photography* (2006). Professor of American studies and English at the University of Iowa, John Raeburn has been writing and lecturing on documentary photography, racial representations, and photographic culture since the 1980s. He has recently completed a book-length study of Ben Shahn.

Monday, 6:30 p.m.

Concordia University's EV Building, 1515 Ste. Catherine Street O.

FREE

MUSIC

Justice Jam

Benefit for the International Justice Mission. With live performances by: New Groove Orchestra & Strength in Numbers.

Friday, 8:30 p.m.

La Sala Rossa, 4848 St-Laurent

Tickets \$12

THEATRE

Zeppelin Was A Cover Band

Written and directed by Stéfán Cédilot & Ben Kalman

Halfway between presentation and performance, *Zeppelin Was A Cover Band* retraces the history of the blues through the work of rock band Led Zeppelin. Originally produced in French at Mainline Theatre in November 2006, this version, in English, was premiered at the Montreal Fringe Festival in 2008.

Tuesday, 9 p.m. and Saturday, 7 p.m.

Centaur Theatre, 453 St. François-Xavier

Tickets \$12.50, \$10 students

—compiled by Joelle Lemieux

BC artist gives new meaning to 'hanging out'

Modification artist Russ Foxx talks flesh and hooks

• KARA CHOW, *OMEGA* (THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY)

KAMLOOPS (CUP) – The human body is Russ Foxx's canvas.

Foxx, a 26-year-old Toronto native, is not your average paint-and-brush artist. The tools of his trade are hooks, ropes, and the occasional scalpel.

"I practice body art in all its forms, barring tattooing," Foxx said. "I'm also lucky enough to make a living from my art."

People aren't usually shocked or turned off by his profession, he says.

"People are generally intrigued by my work. I'm sure some are put off, though," he said.

Foxx sees body-modification work as another form as art. The body is just his "medium of choice."

Growing up, Foxx didn't know what career path he would follow, and when he first got into getting his own body art done, he was inspired to learn how to do it himself.

"I did have a few peers and mentors who helped me along the way, but I was self-taught for the most part," he said.

While much of his work is done at various tattoo and piercing shops where he makes



Russ Foxx "looks the part."

charges laid," he said. "They've even stuck around and watched."

People looking to have body art done often contact him through referrals, in person at his studio, or through e-mail.

But, it's not as easy as dropping him a line—Foxx goes through a client screening process.

"I've had police show up during suspensions in public places, but have never had any charges laid [...] They've even stuck around and watched."

—Russ Foxx, modification artist

guest appearances, Foxx carries out suspensions and pullings outdoors.

Recently, he suspended people from hydro lines outside of Vancouver, where he has resided for the past four years.

This meeting was pulled off without any interruptions, but sometimes the police dropped by to check up on things.

"I've had police show up during suspensions in public places, but have never had any

"[It's] in place to avoid going through with any procedures that a client may regret," he said.

"People often back out of modifications before going through with them. I also decline working on many people for different reasons," Foxx said.

With such an out-of-the-box profession, it would be easy to assume that Foxx looks the part.

Sure, his ears are stretched and he has a few facial piercings, but as society becomes more accepting of body modifications, Foxx almost seems like an average Joe.

Foxx is outspoken about the common stereotypes surrounding people with body art.

"There are criminals, deviants, uneducated, and offensive people in every class and category of society. There is no reason to profile modified people as any more deviant than anyone who is not modified," Foxx said. "That stigma is slowly being left behind, thankfully."

For some people, getting a modification done or being suspended in the air with nothing more than some hooks, pulleys, and ropes can be a spiritual-like experience. Foxx says the experience is often what the suspender makes it.

"If you treat it like a spiritual experience, it will be one. If you are looking to get something else out of it, you'll likely find what you're looking for," said Foxx. "I'd say out of the people I've suspended over the years, it's about half and half."

spins

Mudvayne *The New Game*

Epic Record



At the start of this decade they were filled with powerful screams, hard-rock melodies and aggressive riffs. In comparison, Mudvayne's latest album, *The New Game*, is awful and disgraceful. Instead of delivering a heavy sound, Mudvayne is geared towards making pop-metal for radio, but in doing so they have lost their attractive sound for money. Vocalist Chad Grey doesn't even come close to delivering passionate screams or even feigning interest in what he's singing. All of these songs stand as a reminder of what a major disappointment this once revolutionary band has become. It's hard to believe this is the same band that produced hot-selling albums such as *L.D. 50*, *The End of All Things to Come* and *Lost &*

Found. Fans can only hope that Mudvayne's next project makes a major effort never to settle for mediocrity again.

1/5

—Johnny North

CAVE\$ *Get On With It*

Independent



What can you say about a band that professes to be simultaneously minimalist and glamorous? Vocalist Jacob Carey, drummer Brian Morris, guitarist David Benedetti, and bassist Tim West form Portland, Oregon's CAVE\$, whose debut *Get On With It* makes it hard to say a lot.

Don't get me wrong, it isn't a bad debut and although some tracks could use a little work, others are glam rock at its finest. Album opener "Curiosity" was a straight-up disappointment and "Samurai" is just

plain cheesy—no excuses. And though the band released, "Optimist, Pessimist" as their single, "Closure" is the standout track.

"You're gorgeous and you always will be, but you're always taking the air out of me and we see the world so differently," sings Carey, his voice full of emotion. "But you have such a beautiful face," he repeats hauntingly.

Other into-it tracks include, "Rock You to Sleep (Manic)," "I Lied," and "Soldier."

3.5/5

—Joelle Lemieux

Rivers Cuomo *Alone II: The Home Recordings of Rivers Cuomo*

Geffen Records



The sequel to Rivers Cuomo's first *Alone*

album continues to take listeners on a rock opera experience based on his world of relationships. Unlike Weezer's latest releases, Cuomo's songs are all demos geared on child-like melodies and lyrics based on his failures, guilt and obsessions. The album can get depressing and weird—in "Walt Disney" he compares his feeling of being abandoned during the winter to Walt Disney's suspended animation. In the piano ballad of "My Day is Coming" he sings about overcoming his critics, but you question it all when he starts sniffing at the end. Three parts of the lost Weezer album *Songs From the Black Hole* appear on the album; the first part starts off in a dream-like environment followed by an argument and ending in a calm, goofy melody. The album is suited for fans of *Pinkerton* and those that found the first one left them with cravings for more of Cuomo's eccentric pop-rock.

3/5

—Johnny North

Poetry never slammed so good

Throw Collective releases its first album of poetic beats

• PASCALE ROSE LICINIO

Next Sunday, the Throw Collective is offering a 3-in-1 poetic night at Casa del Popolo, with a slam session, a concert of poetic music and the simultaneous launch of its first album.

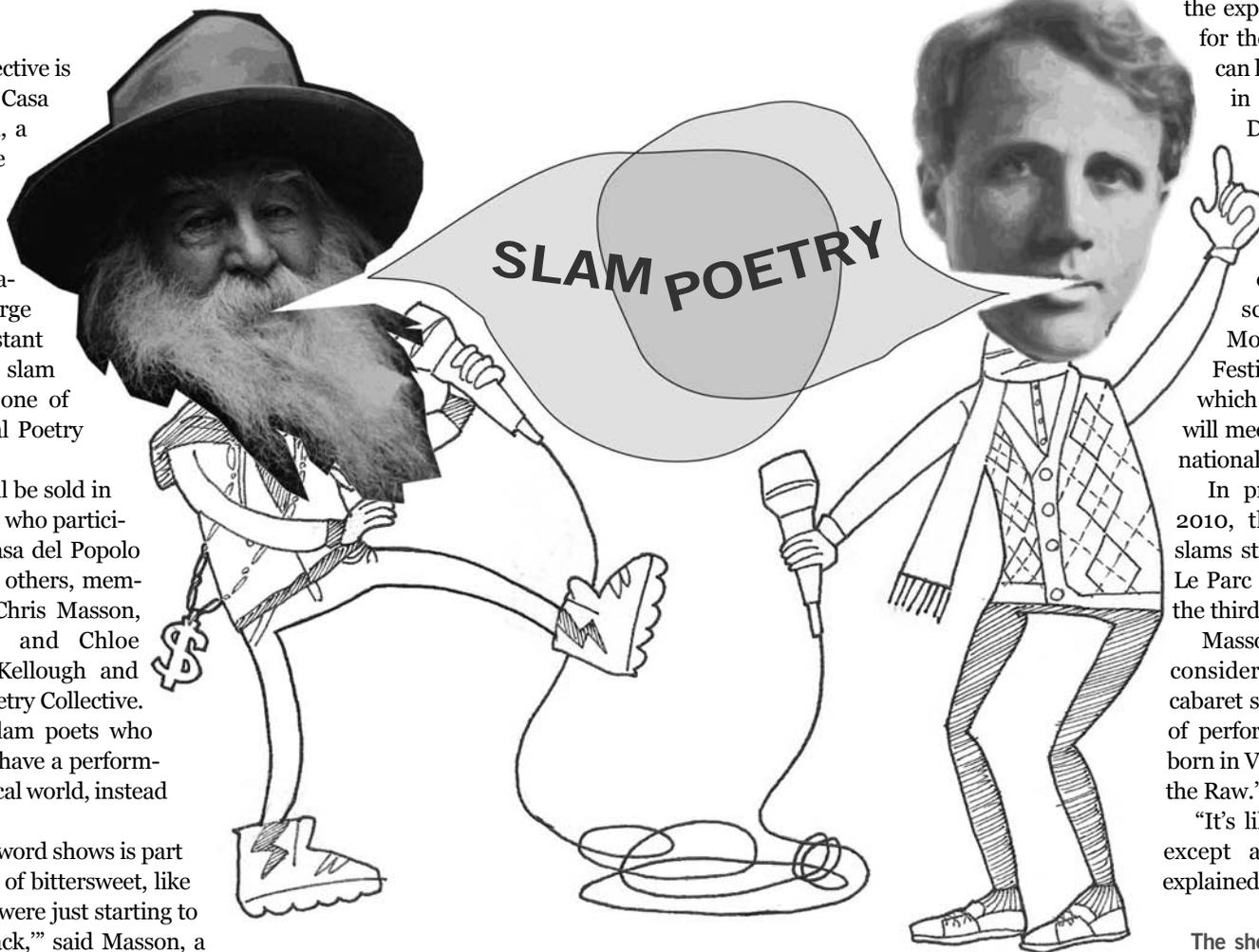
On stage, poets will compete in the first slam session of the season. Poetry and music will merge during the Montreal debut of Instant Release, the band fronted by slam poet Greg "Ritalin" Frankson, one of the founders of Ottawa's Capital Poetry Collective.

Copies of 3, 2, 1 THROW! will be sold in the café, featuring 20 slam poets who participated in recording the CD at Casa del Popolo last October. It features, among others, members of the collective such as Chris Masson, Jason Freure, Nick Denton and Chloe Haboush, special guest Kaie Kellough and members of Ottawa's Capital Poetry Collective.

As Masson explained, the slam poets who participated and their fans now have a performance that will live on in the physical world, instead of just their memories.

"The ephemerality of spoken word shows is part of their magic, but it can be sort of bittersweet, like 'Hey show, where'd you go? We were just starting to have fun... I miss you. Come back,'" said Masson, a Concordia student and head co-ordinator of the Throw Collective.

The album allows fans the opportunity to relive



Walt Whitman and Robert Frost combat for the ultimate honour of Slam Poetry Champion.
GRAPHIC VIVIEN LEUNG

the experience, or, for others to enjoy it for the first time. "Sometimes a poem can hit you harder when you can focus in on the sound of it," explained Denton, also a Concordia student.

The Throw Slam Poetry Collective has been very active over the past two years, helping make Montreal more visible on the Canadian Spoken Word scene. Thanks in part to that, Montreal will host the Canadian Festival of Spoken Word in 2010, which means that the best slam poets will meet and compete in the city for the national slam championships.

In preparation for the nationals in 2010, the Throw Collective will hold slams starting February at a new venue, Le Parc des Princes, on Avenue du Parc, the third Friday of every month at 7 p.m.

Masson said that the collective was also considering "a poetry-meets-circus cabaret style show," as well as a new kind of performance inspired by an initiative born in Victoria under the name "Poetry in the Raw."

"It's like a regular spoken word show, except all the poets are naked," he explained enthusiastically.

The show is free and starts at 7:30 p.m., Sunday January 18th, at Casa Del Popolo, 4848 Saint-Laurent. 3, 2, 1, THROW! (Wired on Words) costs \$15.

Too much information

Hodgman hilarious in small stretches

• JOELLE LEMIEUX

I was so ready to love it. In fact, it was sold the second I laid eyes on it. John Hodgman's *More Information Than You Require* was, or so I thought, my dream book.

While Hodgman's first book discussed his areas of expertise, the second was more an exercise in misinformation: "A further compendium of complete world knowledge in 'The Areas of my Expertise,' assembled and illuminated by me, John Hodgman, a famous minor television personality." Essentially this was a challenge issued to and from Hodgman to outdo himself in hyperbole.

Naturally, he succeeds: "September 14, 1341: Dante Alighieri, author of several popular tour guides to the afterlife, dies. Upon finally visiting the inferno he had previously only imagined, he was surprised to learn that Hell does not actually consist of nine concentric circles, but is actually a few relatively cramped caves of no particular shape (plus one furnished waiting room with French people in it). Frankly, it just hasn't been the same since the Pope closed Limbo."

Yes, *More Information Than You Require* is also a handy page-a-day calendar that starts the day the book was published. "October 21, 2008, New York City: This book is officially published."

The book is also filled with chapter titles like: "The Presidents Of The United States: Are They The New Hobos?" and "All of Your Questions Answered, Or At Least Five More."

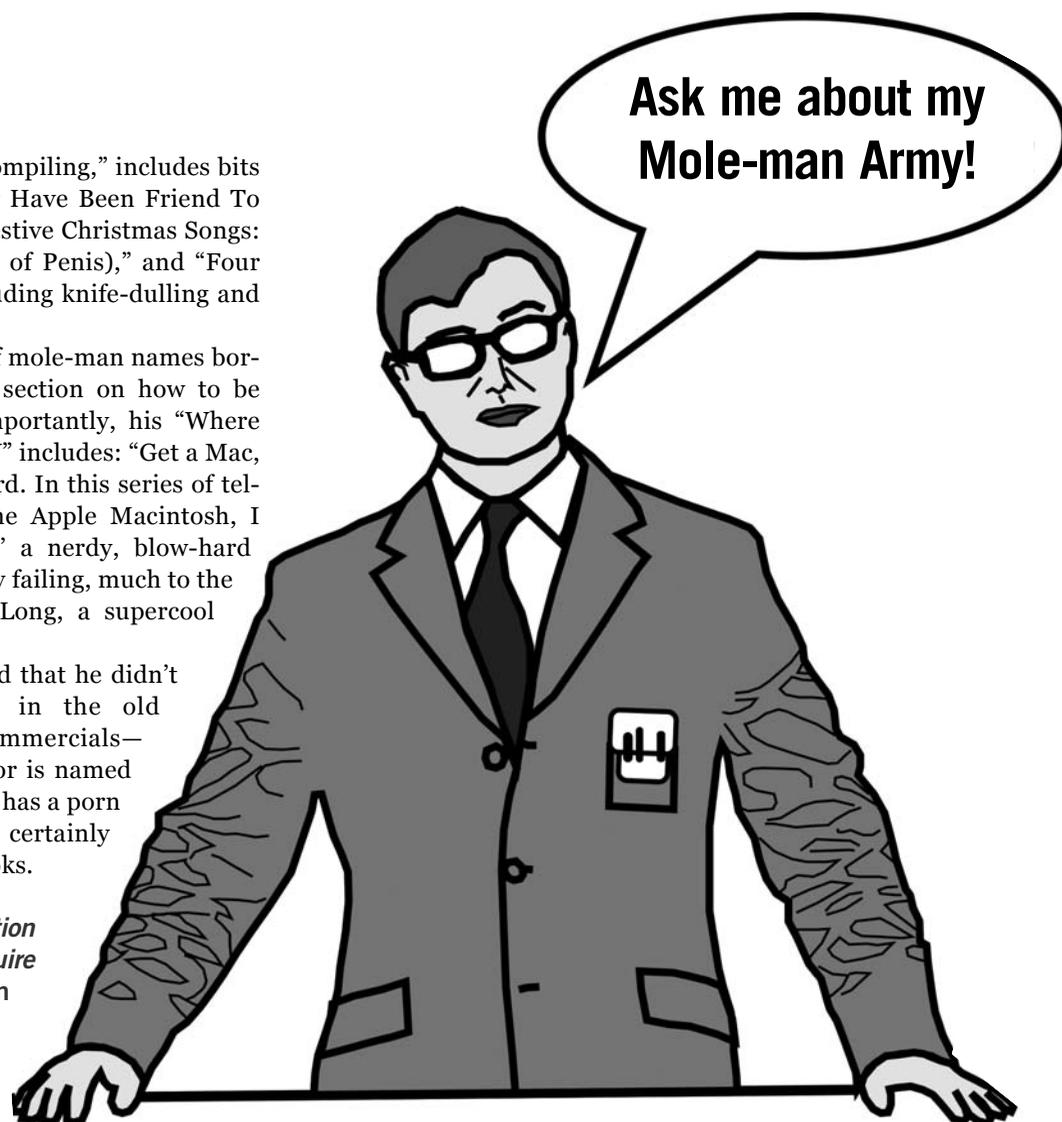
"Some Lists I Confess to Compiling," includes bits like: "Some Insects Who May Have Been Friend To Man," "Several Sexually Suggestive Christmas Songs: Deck The Halls (with Boughs of Penis)," and "Four Get-Rich-Slow Schemes" including knife-dulling and wishin'.

While the 700-strong list of mole-man names borders on tedious, Hodgman's section on how to be famous is hilarious. More importantly, his "Where You May Have Seen Me On TV" includes: "Get a Mac, various networks, 2006 onward. In this series of television advertisements for the Apple Macintosh, I play the 'Personal Computer' a nerdy, blow-hard obese person who is constantly failing, much to the delight of his friend Justin Long, a supercool android with a secret past."

Although it should be noted that he didn't play the smart-alecky kid in the old *Encyclopedia Britannica* commercials—"that is just a myth. That actor is named Donovan Freberg, and now he has a porn blog," Hodgman admits—he certainly seems to know how to sell books.



More Information than You Require
John Hodgman
Riverhead
October 2008
368 pp
\$27.50



Don't deny that there's a government conspiracy to cover up mole men. GRAPHIC GINGER COONS

Skating like a man

Checkout Girl visits Ontario in the 1970s

• PASCALE ROSE LICINIO

The year is 1970, and the times they are a changing, as Bob Dylan said. And, for better or for worse, as the local industry struggles to keep its head above water, Varnum, Ontario is trying to adjust to the changing pace of the modern world.

University professors now buy LSD, middle-aged housewives have become hardcore feminists, and yet pregnant women still have to find a way to go to Montreal to get abortions.

The Checkout Girl is a realist novel, punchy and tender, where nothing is black or white, where disenchantment and pugnacity meet and mix. It is about acknowledging raw pleasures such as eating too many candies or spinning on a skating rink with a child in one's arms. It also deals with the silent hopes and unbearable longing of the youth for something hard to define, something new, something different.

Kathy Rausch has just come back to her native province after an unsatisfying commune experience in Vancouver. The 20-year-old checkout girl has no goals, no ambition... Except for an impossible dream. She wants to make her living on the ice, and not as a figure skater, but like Bobby Orr, her idol, the kid from Varnum who is now playing for the Boston Bruins.

Skating like a man has never helped any woman Kathy knows find a job before, but there has to be a way to get a future on the ice, and Kathy waits for it to be revealed to her. How would she keep faith in herself if she gave up her dream? How would she stand sharing her room with a boa constrictor in the basement of a drug dealer's house, deal with her caring mother's concerns or bear the prevailing sexual pressure?

Skating is central to Kathy's life—it helps her connect with her autistic younger sister. Skating is her way to let the steam out and just

feeling her skates slide and grind on the ice gives her back a sense of humour. It is also a tribute to her father, a hockey fan, who died when she was a child. It can even be a cure against the most traumatic events of life.

Susan Zettell has already written about hockey and industrial Ontario in her short story collections. With *The Checkout Girl*, her first novel, she offers an uncompromising portrait of the beginning of the 1970s and paints stroke by stroke the crudeness, disillusion and small conquests of daily life.



The Checkout Girl
Susan Zettell
Signature Editions
October 2008
256 pp
\$19.95



For your enjoyment, Bobby Orr as a figure skater. GRAPHIC GINGER COONS

Lit Writ

Dancing

• RENEE TOUSIGNANT

I flipped the disk onto the record player and the cracked music came out in spurts before the smooth sounds flowed over us. His lips curled up.

The red light flooded the room, intertwined with the music, intoxicated us. I circled. I was dancing. My hair flowed down.

His eyes danced with me as I grinned and did my very best Bowie impression.

The bed shook underneath me, white feathers blowing up around my legs.

My invisible mike silently echoed the words I mouthed.

His eyes crinkled around the sides as he laughed.

He laughed

I loved his laugh, even after all this time.

It had been far too long...

I shook my head, refocusing on my light mood. I knew better than to expect anything from him. After nine years, the closest I could get was his laugh.

Sure, there had been momentary lapses in his armor, but now that he had her, even those were gone.

We were simply, innocently enjoying some quality time, I forced myself to remember.

He folded his arms over his chest, leaning back against my pillows and shook his head. His eyes sparkled as my

hips shimmied.

*"Rebel Rebel You've torn your dress
Rebel Rebel your face is a mess."*

His stare turned serious, and he grabbed my hips. He pulled me down and the feather twirled as I crashed onto him. My white dress met the white sheets and I laughed.

Only he was no longer laughing.

His lips were on mine before I had time to gasp.

*"Rebel Rebel How could they know?
Hot tramp, I love you so."*

His hands tangled in my hair and I wrapped my body around his.

His lips explored me, making sure my geography hadn't changed.

He let them gravitate towards my shoulder, my hips my thighs and back up again.

His black shirt contrasted the rest of the scene, the only thing not red patterns on white cotton.

I wish I knew what to think. I wish I knew what he meant when his mouth did all the work.

He pulled off his shirt, tugged on my hair, kissed my neck, caught his breath in my ear, and a million other things that all blurred into one and happen all at once in my memory.



Bowie echoed off the walls as his hands shook. GRAPHIC ALEX MANLEY

I wished for a multitude of answers to come pouring down on me. I wished for clarity and rationale and piece of mind. I wished we had never met. Or I wished we had met again and again. But above all, I wished I didn't think this through, reliving how it felt when we were whatever it is we were.

I danced around him. Bowie echoed off the wall.

His hands shook and I knew I

was home.

*"You like me and I like it all.
We like dancing and we look divine."*

For as long as this would last, I was home.

To submit your fiction or poetry to the Lit Writ column, email them to lit@thelink.concordia.ca.

Unlucky number seven

Carleton prevails in seven-round women's hockey shootout

• PAOLO MINGARELLI

**Concordia 4
Carleton 5**

Hoping to bounce back from an unfortunate loss to the Ottawa Gee-Gees last Saturday, the Stingers were determined to come out of the weekend with at least two points.

Regrettably, the Carleton Ravens made the most of all their chances to bring the game to a shootout from which they ultimately emerged victorious last Sunday at the Ed Meagher Arena.

The Stingers set the pace early by forcing the puck into the Carleton zone. Carleton was unable to sustain the offensive pressure being imposed and ultimately they succumbed to a penalty. Con U's powerplay dominated, as a wrist shot deflected by Emilie Luck put Concordia up 1-0 less than five minutes into the game.

Unfortunately, Concordia's lead didn't last long. The Ravens took advantage of a breakaway deke on Stingers goalie Audrey Doyon-Lossard to tie the game at 11:34 of the first.

For the remainder of the period, the play was even with both defensive squads standing out. The Stingers, after killing off a penalty and with momentum on their side, saw captain Esther Latoures manage to sneak a goal in during a scramble in front of the Ravens' net. Hoping to end the period on a high note with the lead, Stingers incurred an untimely penalty forcing them into the second period short-handed.

Notwithstanding the quality play of Con U's penalty kill, the second period began with a goal that tied the score at 2-2. The Ravens took the puck into the Stingers' zone, when Con U failed to clear the puck properly. The puck landed on Ravens' forward



Rookie Stingers defender, Keely Covo, nets Concordia's lone shootout goal. PHOTO CHRIS GATES

ward Lassaline's blade as she skated from behind the net towards the slot, releasing a backhand that somehow trickled its way past Doyon-Lossard.

The Stingers penalty-killing unit redeemed themselves with less than three minutes left in the period. A beautiful shorthanded goal by defender Catherine Desjardins, thanks in large part to the pressure applied by Mary-Jane O'Shea, who managed two assists on the day, and took the puck away from the Ravens behind their net and into the slot.

When asked about the special teams Stingers head coach Les Lawton highlighted, "The special

teams got better, we work for our goals and it shows."

At 9:38 of the second period, the visitors managed to get their third of the night that tied the game.

During the third period, the momentum swung back and forth until a late penalty against the Ravens put the Stingers on the powerplay for a seventh time. The result saw a great point shot from rookie defender Keely Covo that found the top shelf past the Ravens' net with 1:58 left. It was her first goal of the year, and she celebrated accordingly with a few leaps on the ice. "Yeah, I was pretty excited [...] nice goal to score as a Stinger," said Covo

with a laugh.

With the period all but over, it looked as though the game was going to the Stingers, but the Ravens pulled their goalie. With the extra attacker and 50 seconds remaining, Carleton tied the game with a wraparound attempt. "It's a shot that gets saved 99 out of 100 times and they score," said a frustrated Lawton.

With the game tied and overtime resolving nothing, the game went to a shootout. After five shooters, the teams were tied at one goal each. The only scorer for Con U was Covo.

The shootout required seven more shooters before the Ravens

finally put an end to the match by scoring on a deke with a shot from the left side.

"It's a disappointing loss, but from a team point of view we're extremely happy with the way we played," said coach Lawton. "We played well but we were not rewarded for our play. If we play like today and yesterday we'll be great [...] our team is better than our record shows."

Concordia's women's hockey team plays at Ed Meagher arena twice this upcoming weekend, entertaining the Ottawa Gee-Gees on Friday at 7:30 p.m., then they play the McGill Martlets on Saturday at 2:30.

scoreboard

	Home		Away	Record
Men's Hockey	Concordia 6	— vs —	UOIT 3	10-7-0
	Concordia 5	— vs —	York 0	
Women's Hockey	Ottawa 2	— vs —	Concordia 0	2-9-0
	Concordia 4	— vs —	Carleton 5	

thelinknewspaper.ca/sports

schedule

	Who	When
Men's hockey	@ McGill	Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.
	@ Guelph	Saturday, 7:30 p.m.
	@ Brock	Sunday, 2 p.m.
Women's Basketball	vs McGill	Friday, 8 p.m.
	@ McGill	Saturday, 6 p.m.
Women's Hockey	vs Ottawa	Friday, 7:30 p.m.
	vs McGill	Saturday, 2:30 p.m.
Men's Basketball	vs McGill	Friday, 6 p.m.
	@ McGill	Saturday, 8 p.m.

Trying to catch first place

Men's hockey squad scores comeback victory

• DIEGO PELAEZ GAETZ

Concordia 3 UOIT 6

After falling behind early, the Concordia Stingers men's hockey team showed the toughness that is helping them into position for the top spot in the conference as they stormed back to defeat the visiting University of Ontario Institute of Technology Ridgebacks 6-3.

Despite controlling the action for much of the first period last Friday at the Ed Meagher Arena, the Stingers found themselves down early thanks to a perfect one-timer from UOIT forward Derrick Bagshaw that beat sprawled Stingers goalie Maxime Joyal.

The Stingers couldn't seem to stay out of the penalty box in the first period, but the short-handed unit stood tall early on in killing off two consecutive penalties.

However, as the Stingers were regrouping following a penalty to forward Renaud Des Alliers, Ridgebacks defenceman Mike Noyes found himself wide open at the blue-line and capitalized with a slapshot from the point that gave the visitors a 2-0 lead just over 11 minutes into the game.

"It was a butt-ugly first 20 minutes from my perspective," said Stingers coach Kevin Figsby.

The Stingers wasted no time

responding. Rookie forward Corey Garland ripped a pass from Alex Sciangula past screened Ridgebacks goalie Jeff Dawson a mere 30 seconds later to cut the deficit to one.

Both offences were lively early on, but the solid play of both goaltenders kept the game close. Dawson made a spectacular glove save on Des Alliers, then Joyal answered with a diving stop on a slapshot from Noyes to keep the score 2-1 heading into the first intermission.

Concordia rookie forward Nicolas D'Aoust evened the scoring early in the second period. The UOIT defence couldn't keep up with the speedy D'Aoust, as he snuck behind the defence and rifled a wristshot into the top corner to tie the game 2-2. "[D'Aoust]'ll be a top scorer in this country during his university career," said coach Figsby.

Con U's penalty woes continued late in the second period, as defenceman Nicolaus Knudsen was sent off for high sticking. UOIT capitalized on the ensuing powerplay, with Bagshaw scoring his second of the game on a goal-mouth scramble to give the visitors the lead yet again.

Despite trailing 3-2 entering the final period, the last 20 minutes belonged to Con U. The home team wasted no time making their mark, with Stingers forward Marc-Andre Element jamming home a rebound



Stingers defenceman Jesse Goodsell gathers puck. PHOTO JOEY TANNY

at the side of the net to tie the game less than two minutes into the frame.

The teams continued trading penalties in the last period. Stingers Alex Sciangula and Andrew Palombaro received back-to-back penalties, but the Stingers held strong.

Fittingly, the go ahead goal for Con U came with a Ridgebacks player in the penalty box. Defenceman

Jesse Goodsell unleashed a deadly accurate wristshot from the point that found its way past Dawson to give the Stingers a 4-3 lead.

The Stingers sealed the deal with less than five minutes remaining in the game. A terrible giveaway at the Ridgebacks' blue-line led to a two on none for Con U, with D'Aoust scoring his second of the game to push the lead to 5-3. D'Aoust would finish the scoring with an empty-netter to

complete his first university hat-trick.

With first place Trois-Rivieres coming up next week, the Stingers understood the importance of the game. "We needed to get this win," said D'Aoust.

Coach Figsby also felt confident regarding the team's future. "We are competing with the dominant teams, and we are becoming one of them."

Stingers don't back down

Rookie Corey McGillis records first goals as a Stinger

• JOHNNY NORTH

Concordia 5 York 0

"It happened like this last year," said Concordia Stingers men's hockey captain Simon-Pierre Sauvé when asked about the amount of roughhousing that went down last Saturday afternoon in a 5-0 victory over the York Lions.

"We knew how their team was. They're pretty physical with a lot of big guys on defence but we stood up to them."

A crowd of over 200 fans attending the game at Ed Meagher Arena saw the taller Stingers come out and try to set the tone early by nailing the York Lions with bone-crushing body checks. Yet holes in the defence allowed York to generate the most quality scoring chances in the first frame—a few odd-person rushes just missed the Con U net.

"We outshot them in the first," said York head coach Jim Wells. "I thought we had the better scoring chances, but we missed on some opportunities and let them in the game. I think if we would've put the pedal to the metal early you would have [seen] a different outcome."

"I think early on it was solid goaltending

that kept pucks from going in the net," said Stingers head coach Kevin Figsby. "Our defencemen kind of stumbled a bit at the beginning of the game. I think we found our stride in the second and third period tonight."

A little over a minute into the second period, Con U made it onto the board when third-year centre Brad Gager found rookie right-winger Nicolas D'Aoust right in front of York's net for the first goal of the game on the powerplay. Nicholas Lafontaine also assisted on the goal.

Less than three minutes later, rookie Stinger Corey McGillis came streaking down the boards and beat York goalie Dave Davenport, when McGillis dodged an attempted pokecheck by Davenport—exposing a large part of the net. Stingers Eric Bégin and Marc-André Rizk assisted on the goal. It was the first goal of McGillis' Concordia career.

"Corey is an offensive player, we were expecting that kind of offence," said Figsby. "He scored one of the nicest goals I have seen in a long time—the play where he faked around and tapped the puck in the net. Corey adds a different dimension to our second line."

"I just wanted to get it out of the way," said McGillis about his first goal.

Con U's powerplay was relentless again

near the start of the third period, as a wild scrum in front of the net saw second-year winger Renaud Des Alliers find the loose puck and put the Stingers up 3-0.

29

shots stopped by Stingers goalie Maxime Joyal, leading to a shutout.

Around the eight-minute mark Concordia struck again. This time, Des Alliers capitalized on a rush to the net by Rizk. The Stingers ended the scoring about four minutes later when McGillis got his second of the game on a two-on-one break with Sauvé.

"It was a great pass from Sims," said McGillis. "It was an easy tap-in goal. You just crash the net and good things happen."

By the end of the game, 42 penalties were called, each team got 22 with a majority of the calls being roughing penalties. Scrums after the whistle were a common trend.

Once Con U had the lead Stingers goalie Maxime Joyal got rushed multiple times. Joyal was still able to stop all 29 shots he faced.

"As soon as the game was 2-0, they ran our goalie three times, which I thought was really cheap," said Figsby. "But I expect that kind of play from them. They're known as an undisciplined team."

"It was a very physical game, quite a few scrums after the whistle, definitely they are a big team," said Wells who acknowledged that his team played a hard game the night before and the play of Con U got under his team's skin.

"We were tired and hurt," he said. "I really wasn't impressed with a 5-0 score they were still trying to hit from behind and run at guys' heads. That's obviously not acceptable."

"I thought our guys handled the situation really well," said Figsby. "We're a stronger emotional team. If I had let the reigns go, things could've gotten out of hand. It's not our style of play. From our perspective it's not in anybody's best interest to intimidate us."

"It could've got really ugly—we got a really big team," said McGillis. "Kev calmed the guys down pretty good. We just stayed focused, we wanted to get the shutout for Maxie [Joyal]."

Concordia (10-5-2) renews their rivalry with the McGill Redmen (8-6-2) this Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. at McGill's McConnell Arena.

La survivance, non

‘Survival’ admits defeat, Montreal’s winter needs to be lived

• REDMOND SHANNON

When I first arrived in Canada, it was wintertime. Four years on and it feels as though it has been winter ever since. When the snow hits the ground for the first time every year, the memories of summer seem to fade quickly.

As winter is the dominant season in Montreal, it ought to be a time that doesn’t drive you nuts. In my first year here I joined a French-language group for newcomers. An Ethiopian girl told me that in order to survive the cold one needs to “make peace with the winter.”

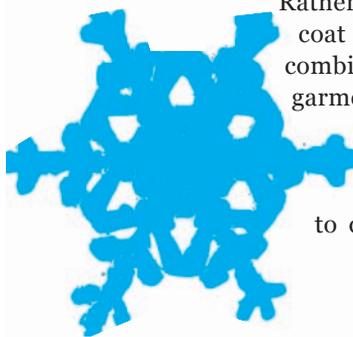
Now I must admit, at the time I didn’t understand what she was talking about—not just because she was speaking French. But I do now, and the Saharan had it down.

I have come to realize that you don’t “survive” the winter at all. Once you make your peace with the cold you will not just survive, you will embrace it. However, if that sounds a bit abstract and flaky, there are some concrete measures that will bring you toward your frigid Zen.

Getting dressed for the occasion

Invest in proper boots, gloves, a hat and a jacket.

Rather than buying one pretty coat and one functional jacket, combine your budget into one garment that is both cool and warm. This will give you the proper attitude to go outside, without freezing to death or looking like your



dad. Layering is an effective tool to bridge the divide.

Get active

Take up skiing, snowboarding, sledding or skating. You need a reason to look forward to winter, or just a reason to look forward to the weekend that doesn’t involve beer. If your budget doesn’t allow you the luxury of a trip to Mont Tremblant, there are ski clubs and buses that go to many of the hills near Montreal.

And if that is too much of a trek, then take a sled to Mount Royal and plough into the bails of hay every weekend. It’s not just for kids, trust me.

For a more sedate experience, hire a pair of skates at Lafontaine Park some evening. It’s truly beautiful there.

If the cold is too much for you, join the gym, go for a swim or take up an indoor sport. There is nothing worse than cabin fever at this time of year; you need to get out of the house.

Adopt the right attitude

Using the winter as an excuse to not exercise is a recipe for the blues and a big belly, which will

only increase your dread of the next winter.

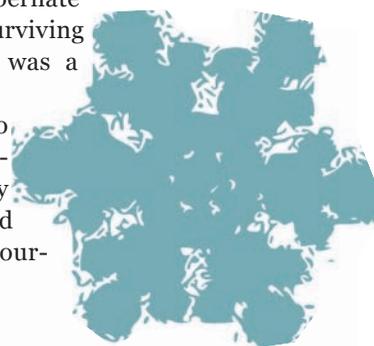
Get a dog. Okay, this may not be practical for many people, but if you can own a dog, it’s the best way to get outside. No matter the weather, Fido will need to do his business and go for a walk. Once you get outside, you’ll be glad you did. In fact, Quebec’s sunny blue skies on a winter’s day are far more tolerable than the wet and cloudy days of the coasts. Oh, and dogs are great.

“Comfort food” isn’t

Now there are those out there who will offer different advice. But don’t listen to them. These are folk who eat “comfort food,” a phrase that admits defeat to winter. If you think you need to be comforted, then you’re in trouble.

In my very first winter here, I met a Habs fan who told me that his whole winter was ruined by the NHL lockout. He used the word “hibernate” when he talked about surviving winter. The poor guy was a miserable soul.

If you want to survive the winter, start by dumping the word survive, and get yourself outside.



Beaver Lake and Mount Royal Park are a natural refuge for Montrealers looking to escape the city. Tobogganing down the side of the mountain is a must, just remember to pack a light lunch.

Just because poutine comes from Quebec doesn’t mean its made for winter. **Avoid comfort food** and you’ll be surprised how much more energy you have. Unless you’re a polar bear, avoid adding layers of fat for the cold weather.

Pack your skates and head for Old Montreal. There is almost a kilometre of pristine ice surface at the **Quays of the Old Port Skating Rink**. Each evening has a musical theme as you skate in the glow of downtown—\$5 for an adult. Beavertails are a must.

Windswept **Parc Jean Drapeau** may seem foreboding during the winter months, but the intimate island is only a metro stop away from downtown. Strap on your snowshoes and go for an unforgettable hike along the water, a great way to unwind and be home for supper.

The best way to keep the winter blues down is to move around. The \$60 membership at **Concordia’s Le Gym**, in the basement of the EV building, is a cheap way to stay active.



Green
spaceThe drastic
plights of plasticOne trillion bags floating
between LA and Tokyo

• MADELYN LIPSYC

Since the large-scale manufacturing of plastics began in the 1950s, practically every piece created, used and discarded is still with us on Earth. Few things are more universally visible than the one trillion plastic bags used yearly, many of which are strewn alongside roads and mar our countryside.

Each of those plastic bags is an ecological time bomb and will take over 1,000 years to break down. The use of the words 'break down' can be misleading as those bags are actually photodegrading: decomposing into tiny toxic particles that enter the water, the air, the soil and inevitably the food chain.

According to the 2007 BBC documentary *Message in the Waves*, many parts of the Pacific Ocean are host to more plastic than food, in some areas by as much as 6-to-1. This presents a real problem when starving birds assume that bobbing pieces of bright plastic are food. While it has been a fair assumption for millions of years that anything floating in the ocean is edible, it is no longer good today. Entire species are struggling as they attempt to subsist on plastic bags, toothbrushes and golf balls.

In the Northern Pacific Ocean, between Japan and Hawaii, there exists a naturally occurring gyre—a swirling vortex of ocean currents—that collects debris washed away from land and passing ships. Over the past two decades, nearly 100 million tonnes of plastic have congealed on the surface of this gyre to create the Great Pacific Garbage Patch.

This plastic trash has accumulated into an unprecedented mass slightly smaller than Russia. Although the size is still debatable—the smallest estimate has the size of the garbage patch slightly smaller than British Columbia—it highlights the permanence of plastic material, and its inability to biodegrade.

In an attempt to reverse the spread of the nearly ubiquitous plastic bag, Leaf Rapids, Manitoba, and Huntington, Quebec, have gone plastic bag free. The Quebec Alcohol Corporation, SAQ, recently phased out plastic bags to great fanfare, following in the steps of corporate giant IKEA.

Further abroad, parts of Germany, Greece, Australia, and Ireland have introduced a plastic tax. Other parts of the world including the U.K., China, Bangladesh, and New York City are imposing initiatives to stop the mess.

Aside from coastal pollution and the death of millions of animals, the environmental consequences of plastic production are nearly as severe. Plastic bags entail the extraction of oil, the creation of enormous amounts of greenhouse gases during production and transportation and further pollution during recycling. Plastic bags impose a heavy burden on the Earth's biosphere.

It is argued by some that the manufacturing of paper bags also uses a great deal of energy. But the simple fact is that paper does not stay in the earth for 1,000 years or end up in the stomachs of dead albatrosses. Despite its highly recyclable nature, paper bags aren't the solution to the problem of permanent pollution. For instance, re-using one cloth bag is more efficient than single use paper bags.

North America has recently seen the inception of so-called "green" plastic bags: oxo-biodegradable bags or starch-based recyclable bags. But these green bags are misleading. During production, these recyclable bags contaminate other very recyclable materials, making them less so. These bags also require two years to breakdown in compost under the right conditions. This problem is compounded by the limited availability of proper composting facilities, which simply cannot match the number of recyclable bags.

Bathed in greenwash, these bags are also produced in factories that create greenhouse gases, require polluting transportation and contain plastic. Although these "green" bags are a step in the right direction, they avoid the best solution: re-using your own bag and creating less waste.

The best thing for the environment right now is to use and re-use cloth bags or organic cotton bags. Furthermore, it is evident that the problem is not just with plastic bags, but the use of plastics as a material. Plastics don't decompose; for 50 years they have sat in growing piles, threatening the life that continues to flourish with ever-greater difficulty around them.



Letters@thelink.concordia.ca

Time for Woodsworth
to stand up

As the newly-appointed president of Concordia University, Dr. Judith Woodsworth cannot be held responsible for past decisions made by Concordia administrators. However, Woodsworth is no doubt aware of Concordia's recent history with respect to Middle East politics.

Students at Concordia are known for their solidarity with the Palestinian people living under occupation, so much so that it has become common for Concordia's pro-Israel detractors to call our University "Gaza U" as a kind of racist insult—although many students and former students wear this label as a badge of honour.

Concordia administrators, on the other hand, have generally claimed "neutrality" in political matters while in fact supporting the state of Israel.

Concordia administrators invite former Israeli prime ministers to speak while students denounce them as war criminals.

Most recently, Woodsworth's predecessor as president, Dr. Claude Lajeunesse, issued a statement denouncing the proposal of members of the British University and College union to debate the merits of a cultural and academic boycott of the state of Israel. The boycott takes its inspiration from the anti-Apartheid boycotts of the 1980s and 90s that helped isolate the racist South African regime in the international community. Dr. Lajeunesse rejected the boycott on the grounds of "academic freedom."

Now that the state of Israel has bombed the Gaza Strip's Islamic University, a clearly-identified United Nations School—which gave its GPS coordinates to the Israeli Defense Force—and other educational sites in the Gaza Strip, killing tens and wounding hundreds of innocent civilians in the process, I hope you agree that it is time for the president of Montreal's "Gaza U" to take a principled stand for real academic freedom.

It is an understatement to call Israel's war crimes an attack on academic freedom. I urge you to join other academic groups such as the Scottish Committee for the Universities of Palestine and California Scholars for Academic Freedom in calling on Israel to stop targeting the Gaza Strip's educational institutions.

—Dr. David Bernans, Ph.D.
Concordia University Alumnus

Not just numbers

Terrine Friday's article in last week's *The Link* commits a grievous factual error when it states that Israel has killed "over 500 civilians." (Happy New Year, Jan. 6, pg. 5) While there are certainly different statistics coming out of various organizations with their various biases, it would be appropriate policy on Ms. Friday's part to refer to the UN estimates. These place the death toll of civilians at 25 per cent of the total, which at the time was 500 and since then has unfortunately risen.

This is not merely a debate about numbers. Friday has decided to depict Israel's attempts to defend its citizens as wholesale slaughter of innocents. This is enhanced by her very troubling decision to juxtapose Israel's military actions with those of Hitler.

In fact, using various means from pamphleteering to SMS messages, Israel has

went to greater lengths than any Western country to prevent civilian deaths, as it attempts to wage war on a terrorist organization that has entrenched itself in one of the most densely populated places on Earth. This certainly puts lie to her attempted comparison between Israel and one of the most barbaric regimes to have ever existed.

At a time when there is so much confusion

about this conflict, the use of appropriate facts and figures must be the basis for any valid opinion. *The Link* and its writers have a responsibility to provide those facts to the best of their abilities and in this case they have let their readers down.

—Menachem Freedman
Liberal Arts major

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

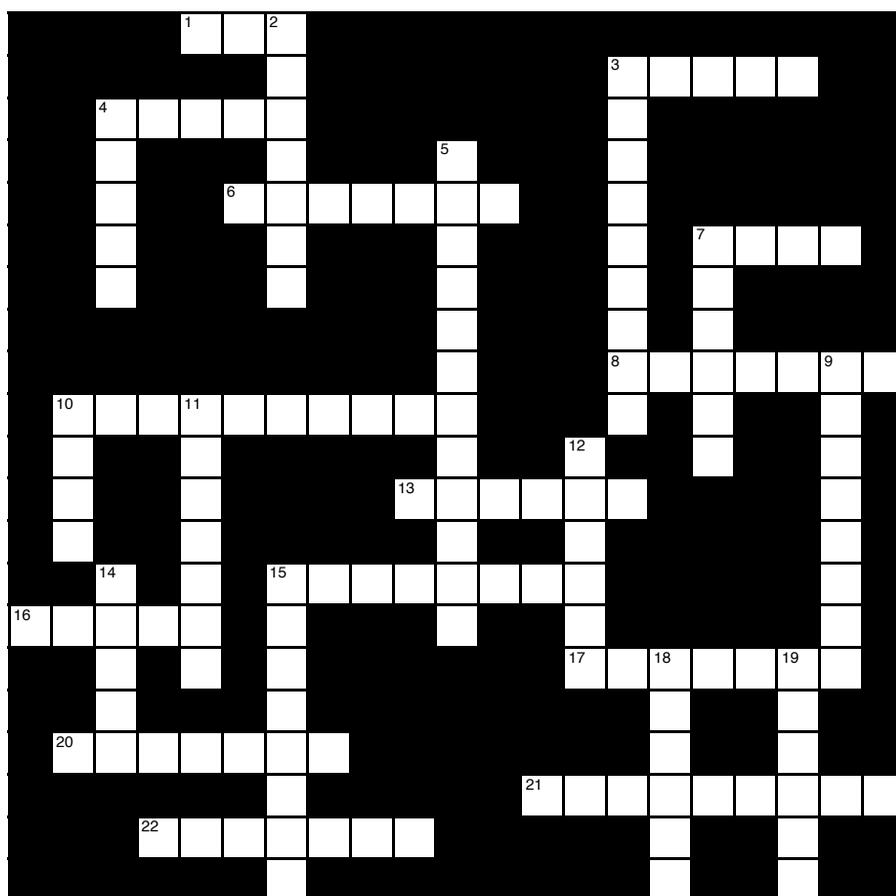


crswrdpzzlol

THE FOOD OF THE LINK • R. BRIAN HASTIE & BRUNO DE ROSA

Across

1. One of the many foods that can come from that "magical animal"; a pig.
3. Quebec's main export; the syrup of choice for the non-diabetic breakfast and lunch.
4. From whatever generic animal this comes from, this can fit between two pieces of bread.
6. Orange vegetable that is known for improving eyesight or vicious stick that can cause blindness?
7. Extinct bird that could make a good meal for the adventurous and provides tasty breakfast egg.
8. Preferred in the sweet chocolate variety, not the bitter fungus kind.
10. Mysterious white spread that can be a part of a sandwich, a salad or a horrible dessert.
13. Small fruits that comes on vines, preferably not involving wrath.
15. Known as a French stick, this looks more like a blunt weapon than a side dish.
16. These fruit beverages go into your mouth, not your veins.
17. Green vegetable that should be washed before being put into a sandwich; what food eats.
20. Long yellow food that is tough to eat with its skin on.
21. Round flat bread that should never be used as a substitute for a Frisbee.
22. Amazingly enough, most foods in the world taste like this animal. Not quite the same as a rooster.



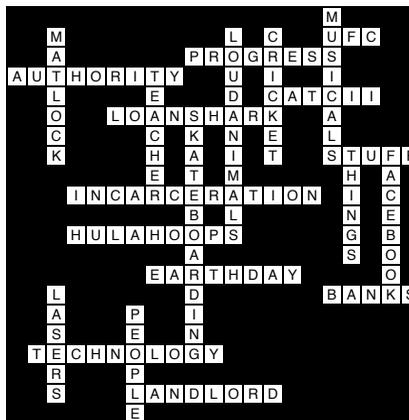
Down

2. Best to spread this in its non-gaseous form.
3. Whether you want the Brazilian kind or the hazel variety, this often comes in a tin container.
4. Round food filled with water and pulp. Not a human head.
5. Small red fruit whose jam can be used for an assortment of fake injuries.
7. Could the dough removed in the holes of this dessert be used for something else?
9. Too much of this candy tube can cause damage to your liver. Disliked by many due to its flavour.
11. Does this still count as a small spherical fruit if

it's seedless?

12. Comes in either dry crunchy form or soggy barely edible form.
14. Another circular food that has a wide variety of possible toppings. Do not use as a substitute for a Frisbee, no matter how overcooked it is.
15. The smoky taste of charred meat in a thick liquid. Pour generously on all fruits, vegetables and desserts.
18. Red spherical fruit that is close to impossible to share without a knife. Debate rages on if this is a vegetable.
19. With enough effort, milk can become this. Can come in a multitude of colours, such as white and

issue 17 solutionz



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

JANUARY 17, 1995

Poverty reigns in Montreal

• JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI

As the Canadian economy is pulled into a dramatic global recession, a retrospective on the fallout from Canada's last major downturn during the mid '90s is in order.

At the tail end of five years of economic malaise, Montreal found itself in dismal shape in 1995.

"Neighborhoods that once made up the industrial heartland of Canada are now listed by Statistics Canada among the poorest in the nation. Areas like Point St. Charles, St. Henri and Little Burgundy have gradually deteriorated into industrial ghost towns with boarded up businesses and abandoned buildings," wrote *The Link* journalist Adam Emery.

Unwary Montrealers awoke to being "the poverty capital of Canada," according to StatsCan. A quarter of Montreal's households earned less than \$10,000 a year, a third were below the poverty line of \$20,000, half the populations of the

previously mentioned neighborhoods were on welfare and 15,000 people were homeless across the island.

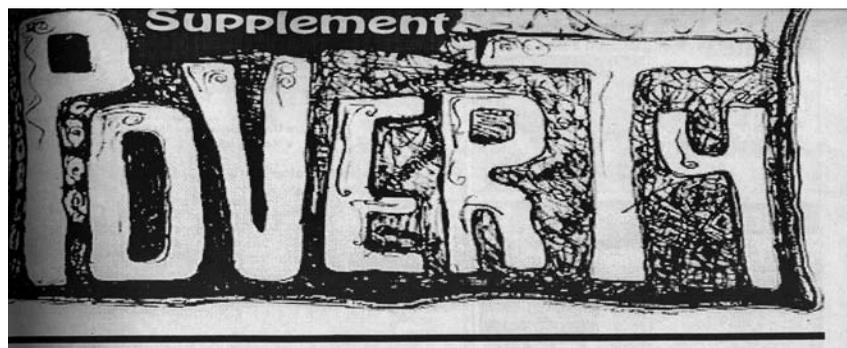
Philip Amsel, a member of the NDG Anti-Poverty Group, said that the poverty situation was different from previous recessions because it was concentrated among the middle class due to the loss of blue-collar jobs. "These are people [...] that never would have had these financial problems 20 years ago. Poverty is growing in Montreal because there aren't enough jobs being created."

The jobs that Amsel lamented the loss of would never return to the city; textiles, unskilled manufacturing and heavy

industry were gone for good. Instead, systemic poverty gripped le Sud-Ouest for the better part of a decade.

In a prophetic interview, Royal Bank economist Benoit Durocher warned that, "the jobs being created today are for skilled workers in fields like pharmaceuticals, telecommunications, information technology and biotechnology."

The jarring consequences of the early '90s recession would signal the end of Montreal's industrial base. Although the economy has been improving for nearly a decade, no sustained recovery has yet to elevate many areas of the island to they're past prosperity.



editorial

Where did your money go? We don't know

Half a million dollars of student money is gone.

When *The Link* wrote in late November that not all was well with the Concordia Student Union's books ("Student Union Admits Financial Irregularity," Nov. 25) the union's first reaction was a legal letter requesting a retraction while their second was a short-lived campaign of disinformation.

No retraction was made.

It's discouraging to know that the CSU would take legal action against a student paper whose mandate includes informing the students who the CSU work for.

Shortly thereafter, the CSU offered to disclose information about the union's finances to *The Link*—but only if a special agreement was signed on behalf of *The Link's* editorial staff.

The contract would have given the CSU the right to editorial input until May 31, 2009 over all articles related to their finances. *The Link* does not believe in playing politics with student money and decided to run the risk of trusting the CSU with transparency on their own financial history.

Why would the CSU think that there would be a need for a binding agreement whereby *The Link* would run the risk of being sued for content, unless there was something to hide?

This turn of events makes little sense. This mess is not that of president Keyana Kashfi or her current executive, it was committed years before their time.

In that light, the CSU's current relaying of information about their books has been astounding. Not only has there been no real disclosure of new information, but the CSU executive are still hiding behind the fact that Council is now aware of the questionable finances and that alone is important.

Student representatives being made aware of this situation is an improvement, but there is much more to be done.

What's important right now is the fact that our student union controls about \$1.2 million obtained from student fees. Not only do Concordia students have the right to know what their money is spent on but also how it's spent and misspent.

The fact that CSU councillors were given a legal document to sign at approximately 2:00 a.m. at the Nov. 12 Council meeting banning them from disclosing financial matters to people who gave the union their money to be spent in their best interest is questionable and daunting.

So councillors, although they have done fairly well this academic year, are wavering between putting students' best interests at heart or simply not. President Kashfi herself noted that during the academic years of 2005-2007, when no financial statements were presented, "no alarm bells sounded [...] nor did CSU Council raise any red flags." We surely hope a warning bell has gone off to our current Council in realizing each one of them represents a voice for over 1,000 undergraduate students.

Will the student body be shocked? Placated? Or has the student union's stock sunk so low that it won't attract the element of surprise?

Even *The Link* was astonished by how easily the current financial muddle went unnoticed. "The financial records. How could we have overlooked their financial records?" many editors asked, vacillating over an opportunity that had long since vanished.

Of course in the ideal world, this duty should fall only on the shoulders of the CSU. But in reality, the students have a responsibility to check up on their investments from time to time—whether or not they've invested in a bear market.

According to the CSU executive, there have been no requests to see their financial documents this academic year. Concordia's 30,000 undergraduate students have chosen a path, and their investments, their education and their student life has suffered.

The current CSU executive has insisted they've "implemented new controls and improvements," as noted by Kashfi. However outlining the positive improvements in financial tracking and responsibility of the current executive does not provide insight for previous wrongdoings.

To the current CSU executives: the half a million deficit is not your fault. It's understood that you inherited a setback near the beginning of your mandate, but where did that money go? Could it be that the student union has too much money to lose? An auditor's report of "denial of opinion" doesn't give a clear enough picture.

A deficit has been collected, interest is owed on money that was borrowed, the taxman wants his unclaimed share and bank accounts have been seized. Too much is still in the air, and the final price is anything but certain.

So in light of the discovery of the financial mess, we want answers. It's our money, too. Show us the financial documents, president Kashfi. Show us the documents.

—Terrine Friday,
News Editor