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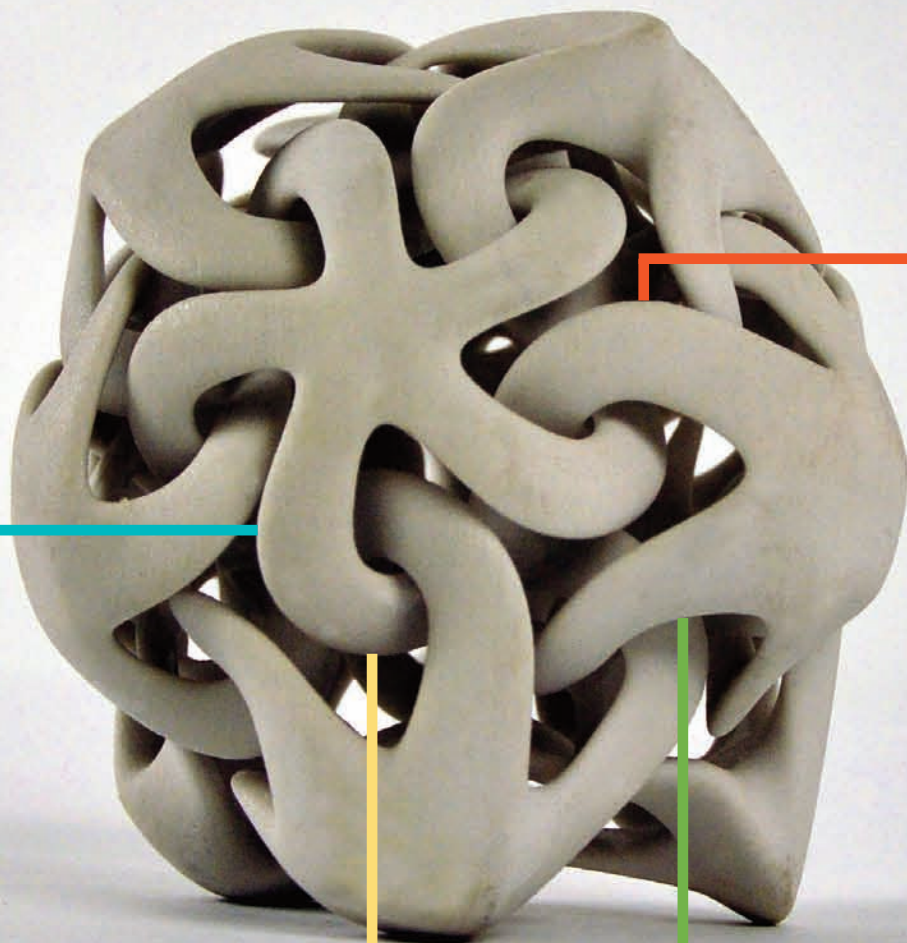
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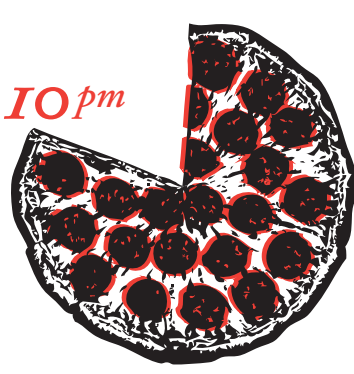
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giving themed the ninth
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VINYL LIVES

*L'Oblique record store
celebrates 25 years in
business.*

FROM THE BLOGS

**LET'S BUILD A
WARP DRIVE**

*We're going to 1985, hitch-
ing a ride Marty McFly.*

TITUS ANDRONICUS

*Titus married nihilism
with optimism at Il Mo-
tore last Wednesday.*

DECIPHERING STUDENT SPACE NEEDS

by Megan Dolski



◆ PHOTO ERIN SPARKS

On the heels of signing a \$97,500 contract, the Concordia Student Union is actively working alongside project management firm MHPM to determine what students want and need in terms of space at this university.

The union inked the deal with the firm in late October, but due to a delayed acceptance of the proposal, the CSU has been forced to adopt a compressed timeline.

They've had to slash roughly

two months off the one that was initially proposed—and consequently are still immersed in phase one of the three-part plan, which remains slated to wrap up by the end of this school year.

VP Internal and Clubs Nadine Atallah, the CSU's primary liaison with MHPM, said that despite the rush and daunting workload, "nothing's had to give, yet."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7.

SERVICE INDUSTRY SPEAKS OUT AGAINST TAX HIKES

Montreal Restaurateurs Rally Against New Marois Budget

BY PIERRE CHAUVIN
@PIERRE_CHAUVIN

The Quebec government's decision to increase taxes on alcohol for bars and restaurants isn't sitting well with the local tourism industry.

On Monday afternoon, about a hundred protesters—mostly bar and restaurant owners—gathered at Place des Arts to raise concerns about the new tax, proposed by Pauline Marois's Parti Québécois government in its newly released 2013-2014 budget.

The tax imposes a \$0.50 increase per litre of wine or spirits and a \$0.17 hike for beer. Those in the industry are arguing that the tax is retroactive—seeing as it applies to alcohol already purchased by restaurant and bar owners.

They are required to pay the difference before the end of the year.

"The mismanagement of government—going back in to tax more to fix their mistake—will bring us all down," said Paul Quinn, owner of the Irish Embassy Pub.

David McMillan, owner of Joe Beef and Liverpool House restaurants, echoed Quinn.

"The tax is stupid and the retroactive tax is an insult—you can't squeeze the lemon until there is no more juice left in it," he said.

Many argue the tax will only further hurt the tourism industry in Montreal, already struggling to compete with its American neighbours.

"The prices in the United States are one-third of what they are here," said Steve Siozios, president of the Crescent Street Merchants Association and owner of Stogies Cigar Lounge and the London Pub.

"Our prices are based on the



Demonstrators protest inside Revenu Québec on Monday afternoon.

PHOTO PIERRE CHAUVIN

advantage of a dollar."

But with the current exchange rate—the Canadian dollar almost at parity with the American one—Quebec businesses are suffering.

"[Montreal] is one of the hardest places to open a business, and [the government is] making it even worse," said Siozios.

After a few speeches, protesters entered the offices of Revenu Québec in the Desjardins mall chanting, "Rétroactif, c'est destructif."

They left peacefully five minutes later.

Siozios said that it is the employees—most of whom are students—who stand to lose the most, and for many, working conditions are already tough.

"Nobody is walking away like millionaires—people are scraping out a living," said McMillan. "The majority are working 50 to 60 hours a week."

Restaurant and bar owners are also limited in the pressure tactics

they can use against the government.

"There are 200,000 people who work in our industry but we get no respect because we are 8,000 small businesses trying to survive," said Siozios.

Future demonstrations and actions are in the works.

"Potentially, next Monday, we're talking about closing down across Montreal, across Quebec," said Sandy White, president of the Quebec Nightlife Association, an

organization created one year ago.

While striking isn't a viable option, the owners are exploring other avenues.

"Retroactive [taxes] are technically legal, they're just very complicated," said White. "There are talks of legal challenges, because we might be able to fight it."

The Quebec Nightlife Association has launched a petition denouncing the new retroactive tax, which had accumulated over 250 signatures by press time.

LOYOLA TRADE WORKERS PASS MANDATE FOR ACTION

United Steelworkers Want to Bring University Back to Negotiation Table

BY SAM SLOTNICK
@SAM_SLOTNICK

Loyola Campus' trade workers voted unanimously on Nov. 27 in favour of a mandate to use pressure tactics on the university, including a strike if necessary.

The United Steelworkers Local 9538, who represent 32 trade employees at Concordia's Loyola campus, feel like the 4-year-long negotiations have made little progress.

This mandate, they hope, would change that.

"The university isn't trying to negotiate—they're trying to impose," said Eddie Ginocchi, who represents the employees at both the Loyola and Sir George Williams campuses.

According to Ginocchi, the university is opting for an adjustment to wages that is half of the government's policy on salary increases.

"[It's] a slap in the face," said

Ginocchi. "They proposed a 0.75 per cent increase in 2011, while the senior administrator gets a 2.5 per cent increase. A quart of milk costs the same for everyone."

The university may have problems replacing the slowly dwindling pool of trade employees as a result of their alleged position on raises. An average employee earns about \$23.00 an hour, while outside the university the wage is closer to \$27/hour.

In March 2011, a deadlock in negotiations with the university inspired the passing of a similar mandate by the Sir George Williams campus trade unions. The union then marched during their lunch hours and held a day-long strike.

These are strategies that Ginocchi said the Loyola workers are prepared to do as well.

The union and university are planning to negotiate on Jan. 11 but—according to Ginocchi—it

was only after the university heard of the general assembly that they even acknowledged their negotiation invites.

Ginocchi isn't optimistic, however.

"I don't think the university cares," he said. "We feel like we aren't being treated like other university employees. [...] The trades need to be respected."

The university declined to comment on any negotiations as a matter of policy.

CUTV COMES OUT OF GA WITH BOARD, BYLAWS

Station Still Shaky, But Assembly Gives Some Hope



Participants in Saturday's CUTV GA vote on proposed bylaw changes.

PHOTO LESLIE SCHACHTER

BY MEGAN DOLSKI @MEGAN-DOLSKI

Roughly 40 people gathered on the seventh floor of the Hall Building last Saturday in an attempt to “legalize the shit out of CUTV.”

The general assembly for the future of Concordia University Television was called after weeks of controversy, inter-personal conflicts, structural collapses and questionable finances threatened to collectively run the station into the ground.

In order for the station to continue to function, chair Alex Matak made it clear that, at the very least, the meeting had to end with an election of a provisional Board of Directors, a consensus as to the definition of a general assembly and an approved set of temporary bylaws.

Nine hours later, with the flip of a coin—the meeting had managed to accomplish just that. Well, almost.

The day left CUTV with a more sound structure than it began with—albeit still a relatively shaky one—consisting of a newly elected

provisional Board, mandated to work under a provisional set of semi-modified bylaws and deal with conducting their own forensic audit of the station and its former parent corporation, the Concordia Student Broadcasting Corporation.

Until the next GA is called, at least, Matak said the station and its board can operate under the newly agreed upon “provisional thing.”

Dealing With the Document

Considering the size and scope of the eleven-page, nineteen-point document up for discussion, the assembly was unable to go through and modify every section of CUTV's bylaws within the allotted time frame.

Few specific changes were made to the document, in favour of prioritizing the fundamental decisions required to meet the bare-bone needs that would permit the station to function.

The modification of bylaw 4.1, put forth by former Concordia Student Union president Lex Gill, removed the requirement of sign-

ing a membership agreement and performing volunteer hours as criteria for being considered a “student member.”

The document now permits any fee-levy paying student to be granted “student member” status at the station.

As per the recommendation of CSU President Schubert Laforest, bylaws 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 were modified to include a clause that everything previously set to be determined “upon recommendation of the coordinating committee,” also be subject to ratification by the Board of Directors.

This stipulates the BoD must look over every membership application CUTV receives.

The assembly also modified the procedure of calling a special general meeting—requiring that it be called by the lesser of either 10 per cent or 1,000 member votes.

Getting a Board on Board

After various proposed structures were suggested and debated, the assembly settled on approving the structure of nine-member provisional Board. It would include four student volun-

teers, four community-at-large members and one staff member.

It was deemed that members would vote for those in the category for which they themselves were eligible to run. Negative votes would be tallied as well, and would count against votes in favour.

At the meeting, only the student and community spots were voted on, as the staff position was tabled to a later time.

Executive Director Laith Marouf proposed that there were only two staff members, including himself and Nawar Al-Rufaie, who were eligible to run for the board position, and that he did not intend to run.

Staff member Francisco Peres responded to this by saying that there were in fact three eligible staff members, including himself.

After a short but tense back-and-forth, former provisional Board member Sabine Friesinger interjected and proposed a motion that, due to a staff conflict, the question of staff representation on the board should be suspended until the issue could be resolved.

Finally, the secret ballot vote elected Emily Campbell, Julian Ward, Kian Ettehadih and Michelle Moore as student directors.

The community member spots, however, hit a snag when a tie was declared between Anthony Côte and William Ray.

According to the newly passed bylaws, as chair of the meeting, Matak was responsible for breaking the tie by casting the deciding ballot.

However, saying that she felt uncomfortable doing so in such a public forum, Matak opted to flip a coin to decide the outcome.

That's how Anthony Côte was voted in as community member, alongside Catherine Poitras Anger, Mikelaï Cervera and David Widginton.

The provisional Board will have to arrange to meet in the near future, and appoint a chair, secretary and treasurer.

Since they have yet to formally meet as a group, no one from the provisional board was able to comment speak to *The Link* prior to press time.

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Enjoy your end-of-term break. I look forward to hearing from you in the New Year.

Alan Shepard

Alan Shepard
President

SPEAK UP FOR YOUR SPACE

CSU and MHPM Teaming Up to Assess Students' Needs



Patrick Goodwin, Nadine Atallah and Schubert Laforest are working together to assess Concordia's student space needs.

PHOTO COREY POOL

BY MEGAN DOLSKI
@MEGANDOLSKI

Continued from Page 3.

Patrick Goodwin, the CSU's primary consultant with MHPM, said the executive has been realistic in what they can accomplish in the confines of their mandate.

"They aren't aiming to draw up some beautiful castle in the sky that they can sell," he said. "This is about defining needs and listening."

Assessing Students' Needs

Sometime, likely later this week, Concordia students will be given the opportunity to answer a roughly ten-question survey about their wants and needs regarding student space.

Atallah isn't sure yet how the survey will be distributed, though she said it will be available before the end of the current semester.

The questions, aimed at the average, relatively uninvolved student, are designed with the intention of filling informational voids left by the \$11,046.80 Leger Marketing student space survey commissioned by last year's CSU.

Atallah said that while that survey is a great resource in terms of students' views on school space in general, it fails to delve into specifics regarding an actual student centre—something she hopes next week's survey will address.

Meanwhile, the CSU and MHPM have also been working on the task of interviewing each of the university's student clubs and fee-levy groups, seeking to find out what the "super-users" need from their space.

"You are dealing with different needs," explained Atallah. "We are trying to get a holistic view so we can figure out how to best serve everybody."

She said that once they have completed the needs analysis, synthesized the data from it and produced a report, they will begin looking at financially viable options to present to council, and then to students.

Those possibilities are expected to surface at some point in February.

Once they have been made public, the CSU will be seeking feedback from students on the options presented to them—and intends to set up a website to allow them easy access to information about each option and the findings from the needs assessment.

"Next semester is going to be a crucial time in determining how this project is going to move forward, if it is going to move forward at all," said Atallah. "It can't move forward unless [students] take real interest in it."

If students choose not to participate, she said, they are choosing to leave the decision-making to someone else.

To the Table—Or Not

The CSU and MHPM have opted to wait to instigate a conversation with the university administration until they have collected concrete evidence of what students want.

"There is a lot of power that comes from saying that you've consulted with so many associations and with 35,000 students," she said. "That way, I can say, 'This is what they want,' and it's hard to argue against that."

Atallah estimates they will enter discussions and negotiations closer to February.

The union is currently bound by a controversial student centre contract with the university. Former CSU president Keyana Kashfi signed a forty-year binding contract in May 2009.

Atallah said the urgency of renegotiating with the university will be determined by whether or not it seems that students want to enter a partnership with the university.

If other options are entertained, such as a private partnership or an exclusively student-run space, then—while the contract will remain binding—it won't delay the progression of the student centre project.

"There is a balance-of-power shift if one option surfaces that makes sense to a lot of students,"

said Goodwin. "It's not reacting to the administration, but rather putting forth something."

Referendum

Despite working on a constantly changing timeline, there are certain dates and deadlines that are inevitably absolute—whether the CSU and MHPM are ready for them, or not.

The most noteworthy of which being the CSU's mandatory March elections—the point where the union could potentially take their proposed student space options to a referendum vote.

Atallah and Goodwin have already been in touch with the CSU's judicial board and chief electoral officer to ensure procedures leading up to a potential referendum are properly understood and followed.

"If it needs to go to a referendum, it will," said Atallah.

"We are going to have to develop this question and make sure that it isn't written in a way that isn't guiding or leading anyone into one option or another," she said. "It's not like a fee levy where you're going to be saying 'yes' or 'no' or 'abstain,' you are going to be picking between different options."

In Nov. 2010, 69 per cent of undergrads voted "no" to a series of fee levies which, if passed,

would have resulted in students paying \$4.50 per credit toward a multi-million-dollar student union building project—revealed to be the Faubourg Building—by this year.

In March 2009, a proposed fee levy of \$2.50 per credit to purchase a student union building was rejected by 72 per cent of students.

Keeping Continuity

If nothing else, Atallah hopes that the union's work with MHPM will provide a very clear roadmap for next year's executive to move forward.

"This is not our building," said Atallah. "We won't be around in the next five years to see it come to life, so it's really important that in this process we are transparent."

CSU President Schubert Laforest said that documenting institutional memory is crucial in determining the longevity of the project.

Atallah said the framework and mandate for a standing committee is in the works, to ensure the project continues moving forward, beyond the timeframe of this year's executive.

"Our year has been defined by laying foundations on a lot of projects, it's the responsible thing—but it's not easy to do," she said.

CSU FILLS OUT COUNCILLOR ROSTER

Students Elect Nine New Reps in Byelections

BY MEGAN DOLSKI &
SAM SLOTNICK

The results of the Concordia Student Union byelections—held from Nov. 27 to Nov. 29—are in, and will see nine new faces sitting at the table during the CSU's next regular meeting, scheduled to take place on Dec. 12.

While the results are provisional, pending an automatically required recount set to take place this Wednesday, Caroline Bourbonnière, Patrick Lefebvre, Benjamin Prunty, Hardial Rosner, James Tyler Vaccaro and Ashley Walling have been elected to fill the six vacant arts and science councillor spots.

Eugene Gusman, Pierre Tardivo-Martin and Anja Rajaonarivelo will step in as the new John Molson School of Business councillors.

There was one spot open in elections for fine arts students, but the spot remains unfilled, since no candidates ran.

The faculty currently has no representatives sitting on CSU

Council.

This comes as result of the resignations of fine arts councillors Laura Glover, Nicolas Martel and Michael Mercer, following the initial announcement of the polls on Nov. 2.

The Fine Arts Student Alliance's VP Clubs and Services Erika Couto brought the issue to council's attention at last Wednesday's meeting.

She has begun circulating a petition requesting that the CSU hold a second byelection come January to ensure that the faculty regains its due representation on council.

"It's not a question of lack of interest; it's a question of one spot versus no representation at all," Couto said.

Council responded to Couto's concerns by passing a motion to have its financial committee look into the feasibility of holding another byelection next semester, and will report back at the next regular meeting.

In addition to those entering council via student vote, Hajar El



Newly elected councillors will join the conversation at the upcoming regular council meeting.

PHOTO COREY POOL

Jahidi has joined the union's executive team as the new VP Academic and Advocacy.

El Jahidi attempted to run for the position in byelections, but the

spot was removed from the ballot after the CSU's judicial board ruled it had never been legally opened.

CSU President Schubert Lafor-

est appointed her to the position at Wednesday's meeting, backed by the unanimous support of council. She began training immediately.

CON U BRIEFS

BY ANDREW BRENNAN, @BRENNAMEN & COREY POOL, @COREYRIVER

New Events Management System

Concordia's hosting and guest services is revamping its event planning system by replacing its current program, UBookIt, with a new event planner named MyEvents.

The new system will consolidate all event-related documentation into one channel and better outline costs.

At November's Senate meeting, several senators voiced concerns about the "inhospitable" quality of service provided to them by Hospitality Concordia—at least from an inter-

nal booking perspective.

At the meeting, Maria Peluso, part-time political science professor and president of the Concordia University Part-Time Faculty Association, asked if more clarity could be provided in terms of what space was available and how to go about booking it.

The new system should address these concerns by simplifying the events-booking process. MyEvents is set to launch this January.

Talkin' 'Bout Accreditation

Though Concordia's Engineering and Computer Science Association may look and act like a full-fledged student association, that's not necessarily the case—not yet anyway.

Between Jan. 28 and Feb. 14, the ECA will be asking its members to head to the polls and vote, with the hopes of once again becoming an accredited student association.

The ECA will need 25 per cent of its members—or roughly 900 votes—in order

for the accreditation to be officially recognized.

Though the ECA is already treated like an association, accreditation would make everything legally binding, and mean guaranteed fee levy funding from students without approval from the university, as well as guaranteed space to operate.

The ECA lost its accredited status several years ago when it failed to renew its status under the Quebec Companies Act.

BRIEFS

BY CHARLOTTE WILLIAMS & MEGAN DOLSKI

Dodging Construction Roadblocks

Although several of Montreal's construction plans have been hindered due to ongoing investigations, Michael Applebaum—Montreal's new mayor—is determined to get things moving forward.

The *Gazette* recently reported that "prominent Montrealers" have some ideas as to how the city can avoid paralysis until the Charbonneau Commission is set to wrap up in October 2013.

These include building additional bus lanes, lowering property taxes and reconsidering the roles and power of the mayor's cabinet and standing committees.

New Spokesperson for Québec Solidaire

André Frappier was elected on Sunday as the new interim co-spokesperson of Québec Solidaire. He will replace Amir Khadir, who left the position last month.

The party's policy is to have both female and male spokespersons. Frappier will work alongside Françoise David.

Frappier has been a QS candidate in the past three provincial elections in the Crémazie riding.

The next spokesperson will be elected this May and will hold the position for the following two years.

Intercontinental HIV Study

A portion of an HIV study from Paris is set to hop across the Atlantic and debut here in Montreal.

The aim is to test out an anti-retroviral drug that could potentially stop the spread of the disease if taken either soon before or after intercourse.

Local researchers are currently searching for 400 prospective candidates to take part in the study. They are seeking males, over the age of 18, who are considered to be at "high risk" of contracting HIV.

The project is funded by the French National Agency for AIDS Research.

Pope Gets a Handle on Technology

The Vatican will soon enter the Twitter-sphere. As of Dec. 12, 85-year-old Pope Benedict XVI will begin tweeting in eight different languages, with the aim of answering queries about faith.

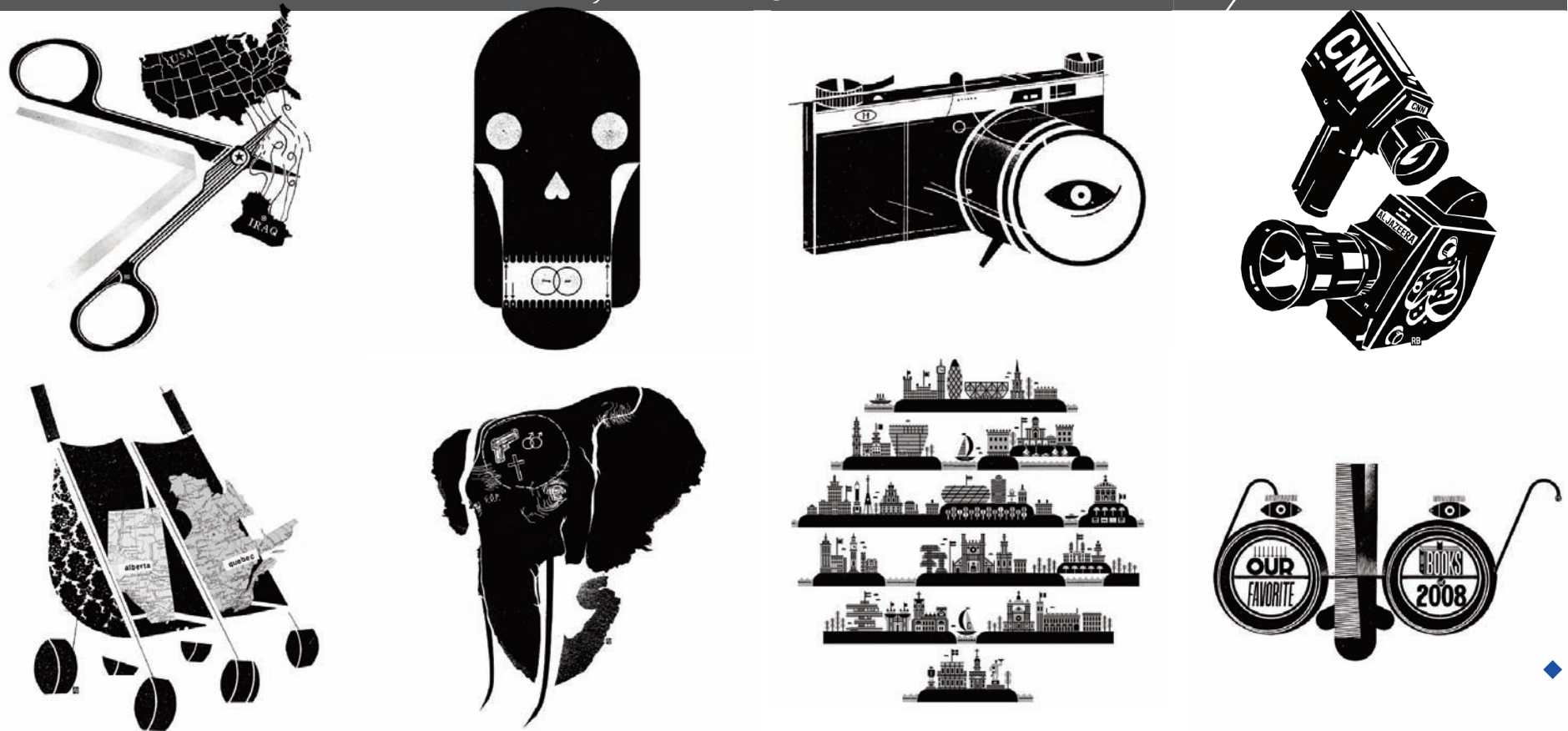
His English-language Twitter handle will be @Pontifex. Within 12 hours of the announcement, the account had already garnered more than 280,000 followers. It is currently only following different versions of the Pope's official handle in other languages.

To submit pressing theological questions, believers should use the #askpontifex hashtag.

DIE, FRANKLINS, DIE ILLUSTRATING A POINT

Raymond Biesinger on Communism, Consumerism and the Black and White

by Tom Llewellyn @tomllewellin



To Raymond Biesinger, facts are sacred.

"The world has lots of abstract expressionism, things where people are not interested in controls," the 32-year-old commercial illustrator told *The Link*. "I'm about back story, research and content."

His illustrations are a series of stark contrasts. Part collage and part infographic, he evokes zine culture and tries to find a unity of purpose in collections of scattered facts.

Something that's always on his mind with each illustration is being able to make an argument and have each element be rational and relatable, said Biesinger.

His new book, *Black and White Illustrations*, covers illustrations he did between 2002 and 2012 and is being released on Dec. 13 at Drawn

and Quarterly.

It covers the first few years of his career, from putting together band posters and house party postcards for friends to the wide variety of commercial and nonprofit commissions he now entertains.

His illustrations, both in black and white and in colour, have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Spin*, *The Economist* and *Le Monde Diplomatique*, among others.

Biesinger's approach to his work is shaped by his "minimalist maximalist" philosophy. "It's my intent to shun decoration, to find a purpose," he explained. He tries to put as much information as possible into the sparsest format.

Biesinger got his start in illustration around 1999, while he was a student in political history at the University of Alberta.

The Gateway, the school's paper, needed some comics drawn on short notice. Biesinger never drew professionally or considered himself much of an artist, but decided to throw his hat in the ring. He was limited to black and white because of the high cost of colour pages, but learned to appreciate the constraints he was given.

To this day, he aims to keep clarity in mind.

"I impose limitations and work within them, get out the basic shapes," he said. "One interpretation of maximalism that I like is to take something simple, and work incredibly fast at it, and for a long time."

Biesinger's art is done digitally, but his interactions with his computer are a lot more restrictive than most digital artists who are concerned with manipulation.

"I use my computer as scissors and a Xerox machine," he said. He copies and pastes different elements of an artwork and turns the contrast to 100 per cent, making mostly minor tweaks after that.

"We're really incredibly wealthy," he said of the technologies that make work like his possible for a one-man shop. "One person with a laptop can do what an entire small office could."

The need to always back up an argument and be able to deploy reason has remained crucial to him. "I try to be always purposive," he

explained. "It's a response to empty politics. We have a government that refutes hard science and avoids hard facts."

The Conservative government's decision to dismiss climate research and control what federal scientists say to the press is one he finds especially irksome; he thinks that the lack of clarity and large volume of information we're confronted with is best dealt with by having a clear sense of an end in mind.

Politics and history, he said, are "on my mind an awful lot." He began reading radical works in university and Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' *Communist Manifesto* made a particular mark on him. "I was very interested in people who wanted to change the world, for the worse or for the better," Biesinger said.

Over the decade he's been illustrating, Biesinger's work has appeared in some of the highest-circulation and most influential publications in the English-speaking world.

Recently, New York advertisement agency Saatchi and Saatchi contracted him to make a series of colour illustrations that were used as the basis for a campaign.

Despite this, he doesn't find consumer culture to have a sudden allure to him.

"I'm not excited about consumer society," he said. "I make my per-

sonal life as simple as possible. I don't own a cell phone."

When it comes to the high-profile corporate clients, he has no illusions about their place in things. "I try and get as much out of them as I can, and not give anything back. It lets me volunteer my time for causes that matter to me."

Biesinger's work as an illustrator has grown in tandem with his place as one-half of the garage rock duo The Famines. The two-piece consists of him on guitar and vocals along with a drummer, Garrett Kruger. They play without any pedals or effects. "It's a reaction to all the technology razzle-dazzle that's sold to people," Biesinger said.

"I'm not enthused by musicians not willing to stand behind their lyrics," he said. Saying they're ambiguous and open to interpretation is a "total copout. It's the equivalent of saying our conversation didn't mean anything."

His book launch at Drawn and Quarterly the week after next will give him a chance to practice a new-found skill: talking about his work to others. "I appreciate having an audience," he laughed.

Launch for *Black and White Illustrations* by Raymond Biesinger / Dec. 13 / Drawn and Quarterly (211 Bernard St. W.) / 7:00 p.m. / Free

"I impose limitations and work within them, get out the basic shapes. One interpretation of maximalism that I like is to take something simple, and work incredibly fast at it, and for a long time."

—Raymond Biesinger

◆ GRAPHICS COURTESY RAYMOND BIESINGER

“THE CLASH MEETS BEACH BOYS”



The Breezes rehearse at Breakglass Studio, where singer/multi-instrumentalist James Benjamin is a co-owner.

PHOTO GABRIEL ELLISON-SCOWCROFT

Montreal's The Breezes Prep New Album With Old-School Vibe

BY COLIN HARRIS
@COLINNHARRIS

Sometimes it takes the right environment to push a band to their full potential; to gain the inspiration to flesh a project from fun with friends to something they want the world to hear.

For the Breezes, that place is Breakglass Studio.

“It’s a really special place, it’s formative for The Breezes for sure,” said James Benjamin, singer/multi-instrumentalist for the local psychedelic indie group. “When we first went to Breakglass, it was just me and [singer/guitarist] Danny [Leznoff]. Right away there was a kind of magic to it.”

Benjamin loved the studio so much that he became an owner. With co-owners Dave Smith and the Besnard Lakes’ Jace Lasek as mentors, Benjamin grew as a producer and sound engineer in the three years it took to complete The Breezes’ self-titled debut LP.

With bands big and small regularly passing through Breakglass, his work there is a constant learning experience and one that

has been instrumental in The Breezes’ evolution. This year, some notable projects he’s worked on include Purity Ring, Stars and just recently, Arcade Fire.

With access to a studio that hosts some of the city’s heavyweights, Benjamin and company had the opportunity to do something much more ambitious than the bedroom recording experiments that made up the band’s previous release, *Update My High*, tracked in Benjamin and bandmate Adam Feingold’s old St. Urbain St. apartment.

“A lot of the stuff you’re hearing coming out of Montreal is DIY, low-key production, the idea of the production is to have that DIY aspect to it,” said Benjamin.

“I find this record is refreshing because it’s not like that, this is a studio record. We thought a lot about every sound on there, and when the mixing time came around they were done on this incredible Neve console, that is one of the greatest sounding consoles in the world.”

The Neve is the Breakglass

pride and joy, and a piece of history—Led Zeppelin’s *Physical Graffiti* was recorded on it.

All that hi-fi care on *The Breezes* is most evident when the strings come in, giving off a rich, Motown-esque vibe on a couple tracks, notably the retro-wave “Promethean Eyes.”

“They were recorded using a super cool, old-school microphone technique,” said Benjamin. “We used these awesome Coles ribbon mics, and those are classic for recording strings, they’re really dark and rich.”

The record shows some of the many faces of The Breezes, just short of a jukebox of contemporary indie sounds with chilled-out, synth-driven tracks, Beach Boys-emulating straight pop tunes, and a bit of intentionally sloppy indie rock.

At times there’s even a Radio Radio-like sense of humour, a band they opened for at Metropolis last year for their biggest show to date.

“When we were on tour, somebody told us we were The Clash meets Beach Boys, and I never forgot that. I thought it was

pretty hilarious combinations of sounds,” said Benjamin.

“In some ways [*The Breezes*] is a best-of record. We have an enormous bulk of songs, but we really chose the ones that would be the best premiere for us, what we hope is sort of a unified, almost quality-controlled record.”

Their varied sound is due to Benjamin, Leznoff and Feingold all sharing songwriting duties equally, fleshing out their songs together during the recording process.

Now that the debut LP is completed, the band is wrapping up the business side of things, including independently distributing the record across North America and Europe. They’re able to pull it off because of the connections they’ve made over the years, the European distro being taken care of by an old friend of Benjamin’s living in Amsterdam.

“Through Breakglass I work with all kinds of different bands, big bands and small bands, so I’ve gotten to see what works and what doesn’t,” said Benjamin, re-

ferring to the daunting task of releasing a record without label support.

The band is expecting the newly pressed vinyl edition of the record to arrive any day now, which will be available at their album release concert next week at La Sala Rossa—a show that will feature guest performances and live strings.

Their vinyl is being shipped from the Czech Republic by custom manufacturer Pirate Press. While LPs have witnessed a renaissance over the last few years, there’s not yet a closer vinyl pressing company with the band’s desired intersection of price and quality.

Until the show at Sala, The Breezes are setting the stage for the new release.

“You’ll be seeing The Breezes popping up all over town in the next week or two,” said Benjamin. “We’re going to see just how far we can go with it.”

The Breezes + CFCF + Suite / Dec. 11 / Sala Rossa (4848 St. Laurent Blvd.) / \$8.00 advance, \$10.00 door

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THE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY ISSUE



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THE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY ISSUE

We've built the means to destroy both ourselves and our environment—but now how do we use these tools to fix these vitally human problems?

Things need to be done.

This year for our special Science and Technology issue, we tried to bring you initiatives and innovations with tangi-

ble goods—social betterments, if you will.

From curbing emission in the air to solving world food shortages, from the wonders and insights of space to fostering ideas and growth from the ground up, it's all here.

And like these staggering marvels of human progress—we did it all for you.

—Andrew Brennan, Assistant News Editor &
Clément Liu, Creative Director

ALT, ALT ENERGY

And You Thought Corn Was Innovative. Here Are Four New Forms of Energy That'll Really Blow Your Mind. (One of Them Is a Floating Wind Farm.)

words & graphic Clément Liu

SEAWATER JET FUEL

The United States Navy has been researching the most effective method of separating hydrogen and oxygen in order to make hydrocarbons a key ingredient in jet fuel. The U.S. Navy estimates the cost per gallon at \$3.00 to \$6.00, which is roughly the same as non-ocean water jet fuel.

FARMING ALGAE

We can currently produce biodiesel, jet fuel, biogasoline and plastic with algae. The first phase of a 300-acre algae farm has just been completed in New Mexico. It is set to produce 1.5 million gallons of biofuel annually.

VOLCANO FRACKING

Geothermal power is not new to us, but enhanced geothermal systems are a new combination of fracking—hydraulic fracturing—and geothermal energy. You frack into a not-so-active volcano and inject water, which comes back out in the form of steam.

As the steam rises it turns turbines, creating energy. According to *Wired* magazine, by 2050, this method will be able to generate 100,000 electric megawatts, which is currently the capacity of the entire European Union wind power network.

FLOATING WIND FARMS

After the 2011 Fukushima nuclear power incident, various countries have begun looking into the possibility of replacing nuclear power with wind power.

Currently, some countries are looking into developing floating windmills that aren't directly attached to the ocean floor—instead, they'll float with a buoyancy mechanism and will be anchored with lines to the sea floor.

LIFE ON MARS • LIFE ON MARS • LIFE ON MARS

Tweeting Rover Reignites Public Imagination When It Comes to Space

words Andrew Brennan
graphic Paku Daoust Cloutier

Touching down on Mars. Date: Aug. 6, 2012. 12:25 a.m. EDT.

“Entering Mars’ atmosphere. 7. Minutes. Of. Terror. Starts. NOW. #MSL,” said the Mars Rover Curiosity over Twitter.

Right on time, at 12:32 a.m., came another tweet: “I’m safely on the surface of Mars. GALE CRATER I AM IN YOU!!!”

Back on Earth, hundreds of thousands were following the feed—and over three million were watching live online.

Like a burning freefall through an atmosphere, things were getting heated. By the end of the night, even the flight director—and his mohawk haircut—was an Internet phenom. In one night, his 200 Twitter followers ballooned to over 14,000.

But of course, there was no robot talking to anyone. Human progress has come a long way, but as of yet real artificial intelligence has eluded us. The real voice behind the persona was only human. Three humans, to be exact.

Veronica McGregor is the principal brain behind the Mars Rover Twitter account. A Montreal native, her father was a graduate of Loyola College, while her mother attended McGill University. Now, she is the director of communications for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, CA.

THE ORIGINAL TWEETING SPACEBOT

McGregor started experimenting with robotic personalities in 2008, when she thought to give the Phoenix Lander the Pinocchio treatment as it made its way through the Martian arctic, looking for frozen water samples.

Looking back, McGreger wasn’t sure what to expect.

“Honestly, when I first wrote in first person, I just sat there and waited and

cringed and thought: I’m going to get people writing back saying, ‘That’s silly—don’t do that,’” she said.

McGregor had only expected a couple of hundred followers—just a few major space enthusiasts, really—in time for the rover’s landing. Instead, the whole campaign went viral. It was the fifth-most-followed account on Twitter in the summer of 2008, garnering over 40,000 followers by mission’s end.

People were hungry for answers. Until then, NASA had to rely on the mainstream media to reach anyone.

“Up until that point we relied heavily on the news media,” she admitted. “We got great feedback from people. They really appreciated even just a one-sentence update every day on the mission—and it opened up that door for people to be able to send us questions.”

Not surprisingly, others around NASA started to take notice. New NASA Twitter accounts started popping up. The project manager for two other Mars rovers—Spirit and Opportunity—wanted McGregor to manage those accounts as well.

But there was a catch: no first-person robots.

“I said, I can do it that way, but you’ll not get the followers you can get from first-person.”

Objectively, she was right, though McGregor said the missions’ outreaches have still been very successful.

As a talking robot, Phoenix was exuberant, enthusiastic and extremely excited. But it also had to put on a brave face—it was going to die in a few months.

“People started writing us back, [asking] ‘Why do you have to die? Can’t you move?’” she said, holding back a small chuckle.

“And I had to be this very brave little robot, saying, ‘It’s okay; I don’t want to be anywhere but here. This is amazing!’”

OUT OF THE BALLPARK

Phoenix was one thing, but by the time Curiosity was launched, popular interest had blown past the stratosphere.

“In the week prior to landing, we had over 374,000 tweets that were related to the Mars Curiosity Rover, and that could have reached a potential 1.2 million people,” said Jason Townsend, social media coordinator for NASA in Washington, DC.

“That’s like knocking every ball out of the ballpark as a homerun,” he admitted.

But compared to previous rovers, everything about Curiosity is bigger.

“She is the biggest, most capable rover ever sent to another planet,” said McGregor matter-of-factly. “We gave her a real sense of bravada—and she knows she’s a big tough rover,” she added.

Curiosity hosts the most comprehensive chemistry set ever assembled for a rover mission. It hasn’t even used most of its tools yet, according to McGregor.

The big mission goals—determining methane deposits, finding water and other signs of life on Mars, past or otherwise—are only just underway. Curiosity has yet to even collect any drill samples.

TWO-WAY LEARNING

Interest is still high as the Curiosity mission continues—thanks in part to McGregor and her team’s daily in-character tweets. According to McGregor, it’s social media that’s driving the public’s imagination.

“What’s really wonderful is now we have this two-way communication ability with the public,” she explained. “We’ve

learned so much from the public about what information they’re looking for and what they need cleared up. It was this real eye-opener for us.”

Townsend sees a similar role for social media.

“I think it’s really important to engage with the public. We’ve got millions of people who follow us right now on all of our social media accounts who agree with that,” he said.

“It’s a way for us to connect directly with them: to share as much as we possibly can about what we’re doing, our missions, our people, our programs, and really connect—kind of pull that curtain back and see what’s going on here.”

McGregor said social media is also great for engaging more and more young people, who she says are asking about scientific careers.

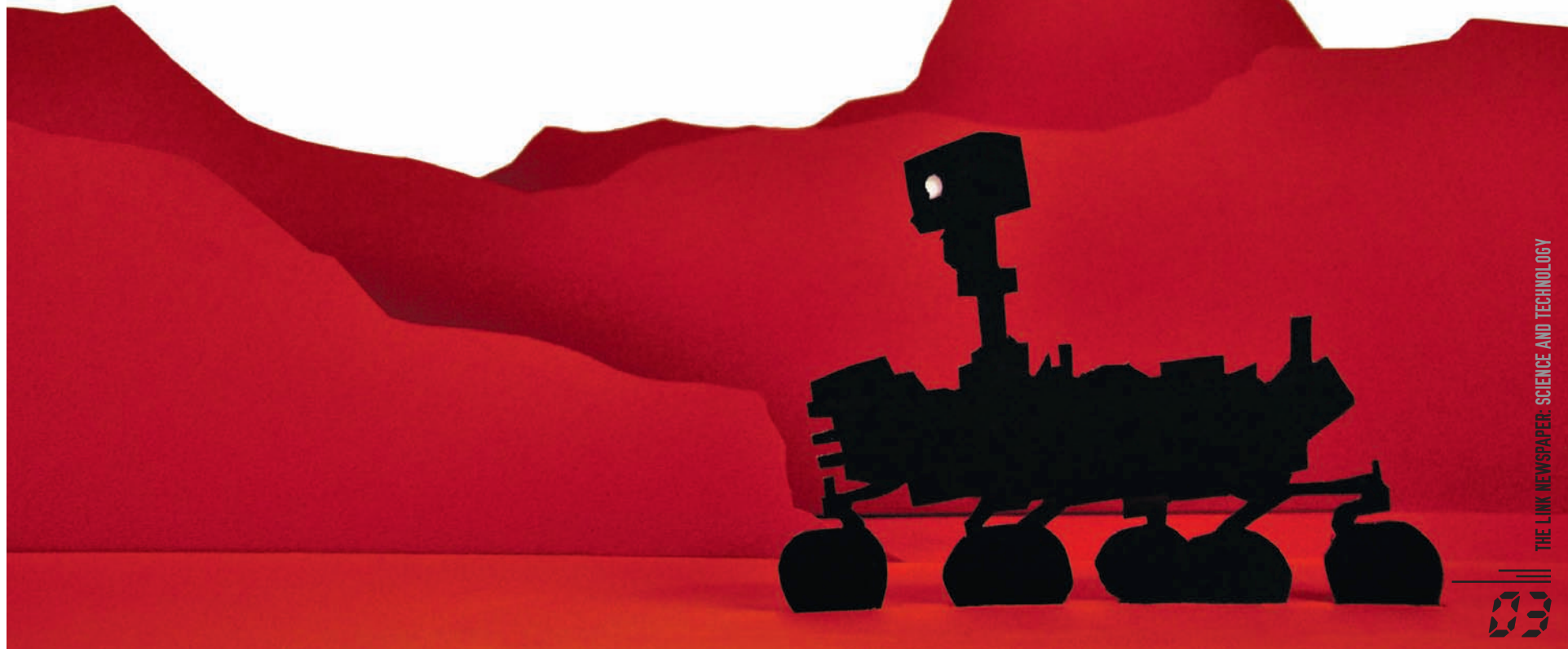
But one of the biggest gifts of social media is reaching everyday people and fostering their scientific interest, she said.

“Our goal is to always try and get people interested in what we call STEM: science, technology, engineering and math,” she said.

But space is only one of many arenas making progress. Around a third of all research conducted at JPL is actually in the earth sciences, according to McGregor.

NASA also has social media accounts and programs dedicated to these fields, including an app called Earth Now, which allows users to follow NASA satellites.

“We’re doing more on that front to get people connected with NASA,” McGregor said. “Because the most important planet to study is our own.”



VIRTUAL FEARS

From Soldiers to Spiders, Quebec Psychologists Are Pushing the Envelope When It Comes to Using Computers to Fix the Mind

words Sam Slotnick

graphics Eric Bent, Jessica MacDonald, Graeme Shorten Adams, Paku Daoust-Cloutier

It's just after sunset somewhere in Afghanistan.

A group of Canadian Forces recruits, all trained at the Valcartier base about 250 km northeast of Montreal, listen to the day's final call to prayer blaring in the background when they receive orders to assist a fellow soldier caught in a firefight nearby.

As the soldiers walk into the room where their mission takes them, an explosion goes off in a garbage can.

When the debris settles and the soldiers regain their bearings, the cries of agony make it clear that someone has been injured in the explosion. The room fills with smoke and a pool of blood wells beside an injured soldier.

As the soldiers attempt to stay calm and administer first aid, they try to remember their training.

Fortunately for them, the voices of senior officers and medics are guiding them through the process.

In fact, the soldiers are only a few hours' drive from their home base of Valcartier, at Université du Québec en Outaouais in Gatineau, QC.

Monitoring them is Dr. Stéphane Bouchard, who watches the 41 volunteers navigate their way through the university's virtual reality simulator.

Each participant is in full uniform and stands in a room-sized space enclosed by six screens designed to monitor and help stress management in combat. The simulator projects images from a virtual world developed specifically for this exercise.

This simulator, dubbed the Cave Automatic Virtual Environment, or CAVE, is one of six in the world.

The name comes from Plato's Allegory of the Cave, a parable about using projections of shadows and echoes to enlighten the imprisoned dwellers of a cave.

The CAVE simulator at UQO is designed to help patients manage—and observers help better understand—everything from stress in combat to phobias.

It is the world's only such simulator

dedicated to mental health. In projecting their manufactured images and sounds, virtual reality therapy researchers hope to enlighten the CAVE's users about the anxiety that imprisons them.

The simulator and simulators like it are part of a form of treatment known as virtual reality therapy and part of a relatively new field of psychology called cyberpsychology, which studies the interactions between people and technology.

VR therapy has only been around for about a decade but may be an incredible boost to the efficiency and effectiveness in the treatment for certain mental conditions.

For example, simulators like Bouchard's allow users to push their boundaries when it comes to their phobias.

According to his 2012 research, people with phobias often experience extreme levels of anxiety when they first encounter the object of their fear and therefore immediately avoid it at all costs.

However, those anxiety levels typically drop to manageable levels after being exposed to the source for a longer time, which the simulators allow. In other words, it allows patients to learn that the discomfort associated with their phobia subsides eventually.

Geneviève Robillard, the cyberpsychology research coordinator at UQO, says the unit expands the range of possible treatments.

"You can access situations you wouldn't normally be able to access. Like social anxiety disorder: bringing the person to different places—or people to listen to them—can be a lot of work, but with virtual reality you can basically do anything."

VR therapy has its downfalls, like any form of therapy. The immersive simulators like the one at UQO, or the therapist who is needed to monitor the cheaper forms of virtual reality, can be costly.

There is also the "cyber sickness"

sometimes associated with simulations, as well as the relatively crude and blocky worlds some of the virtual reality simulators employ.

Bouchard founded and directs a network in order to push VR therapy into new places, called the Canadian Cyberpsychology and Anxiety Virtual Reality Network.

However, Robillard also says that meeting with experts of each type of anxiety and the subsequent development of the actual environments can be difficult.

"The funding [for the CCA Virtual Reality Network] has run out and [...] it takes a long time because it's really never been done before," she said. "The equipment is also extremely expensive," she added before explaining that they are slowed down by every update in operating systems.

Although the CCA VR Network faces barriers, Bouchard expects to see its first two sets of virtual reality environments soon.

"We will probably see the first around January, for generalized anxiety disorders and [obsessive-compulsive disorder] and the second set—which will be for social anxiety disorder and [post-traumatic stress disorder]—should be ready probably March.

"After that, the CCA will be more active on the scene because we will be collaborating to use these technologies in clinical trials."

Virtual reality therapy is based on the practices of Cognitive behavioural therapy, which, according to some, is a therapy approach on its way out as it becomes a less and less fashionable approach to therapy.

Robillard contends that it may have lost popularity because where it is most effective, in anxiety-related disorders, patients avoid overcoming their fear directly—which is what CBT compels its patients to do.

"Some patients cannot handle that, or think they can't [face their fears]," she said. Virtual reality therapy is therefore perhaps a vehicle for those

effective but uncomfortable practices "where virtual reality comes in and says, 'You have to be exposed to your fear,' which you can do with virtual reality... but it's not real," said Robillard.

Even though UQO is the only immersive simulator in the world dedicated to mental health research, in the past half-decade, virtual reality technology has been shared nation-wide with programs like the CCA VR Network, which work to share the virtual reality environments with universities across Quebec and, to a lesser extent, Canada.

Partially as a result of these efforts, Quebec has been a major international leader in virtual reality therapy.

The Institut Philippe-Pinel in Montreal also currently uses virtual reality simulators to research whether it is possible to help sexual predators manage the stimulation they receive from images of a computer-generated avatar of their fixation.

However, in some cases—when the situation is not 'dangerous'—VR's actual utility comes into question.

"People often comment, 'What is the point in using VR to treat spider-phobia for a spider when I can get a real spider?'"

Bouchard explained: "If you get a real spider you need to take care of it and feed it," adding that "we can now also do things in VR that we not dare do *in vivo*. Take fear of heights—we would never ask a patient to jump off a cliff *in vivo*."

"But you can do that in VR, which is actually quite interesting because what the patients [...] learn in our lab is that they can jump when they want to. This is something they can't learn otherwise."

Both Robillard and Bouchard see a bright future for virtual reality therapy.

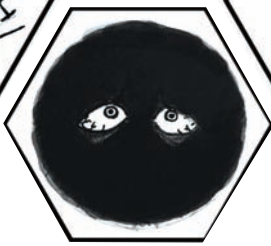
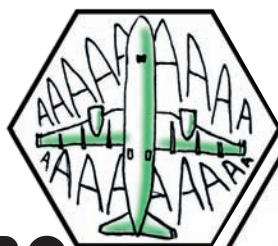
"It's going to happen," Robillard said emphatically.

"We have already transferred our research to a private clinic [...]. Now everyone can use it."

The clinic, which is in Gatineau, is dedicated to treating phobias with virtual reality therapy.

The 'In Virtuo' clinic uses the much cheaper—but, according to Bouchard's research, equally effective—head-mounted display, which has two screens fitted onto a patient like glasses.

"We are now moving to new disorders (that are more challenging), mobile applications, augmented reality—think schizophrenia, think phantom limb syndrome, think eating disorders. [...] There's a need there for VR."



REALITY++;

Concordia Researchers Are Exploring the Future-Morphing Possibilities of **Augmented Reality Systems**. Get Ready to Play an Eggplant Like It's a Musical Instrument.

words Colin Harris

photo/graphic Erin Sparks/Clement Liu

Augmented reality is a bit of a buzzword these days among startups and tech junkies. It's begun to take the app world by storm, from games that change depending on your location to interactive marketing wrapped in a gimmicky package.

And while these mobile time-killers may seem like a flavour-of-the-month smartphone craze, augmented reality's potential is far greater than what's available for mass consumption today.

AR blurs the line between Internet space and lived-in space like never before. While the technology today delivers mostly kitsch value and not-so-reliable functionality, it opens up a future where these two spaces become inseparable in everyday life.

As the name suggests, this heightened world will come to elevate what we know as reality, becoming more pervasive in our day-to-day activity as our technological means grow.

On the mobile front, progress in AR has focused around image-recognition software that combines with the camera and GPS hardware on your phone. Based on your location and what you're viewing,

relevant data is pulled from the Internet to add to—or replace—elements of real life.

For now, it's a process of mapping and marking the world so that the apps can recognize the programmed connections, but as these apps grow, the breadth of incoming data does too.

Microsoft has recently filed a patent for augmented reality smart glasses, which would provide users with a heads-up display of stats of baseball players when watching a game in real time. Earlier this year, Google unveiled Project Glass, a visor-like headpiece potentially providing Google services already offered through Android.

Theoretically, in the near future you could be provided with instructions on how to use a tool, or get the weather forecast, just by "looking" at it with the AR device. These objects can be uniquely identified based on pre-existing Internet data about them online, making your physical world a fully wired system encapsulating everything you do.

"TRANSMUTATION"

"It's as if we made the pinecone out of glass," said Dr. Sha Xin Wei, playing a

video of Concordia electroacoustics grad Navid Navab experimenting with auditory augmented reality.

Using contact microphones, which register vibrations through objects, rather than through air like conventional microphones, Navab then processes the natural sound of objects into something more immersive.

"Recording at a sample rate of 44,000 Hz, each tiny moment can be captured and processed, making the transmutation as fluid and complex as your real-life interaction with an object," explained Sha.

Sha, an associate professor in the Design and Computation Arts department, is the director of Concordia's Topological Media Lab, a multidisciplinary space that combines the technological, the ecological and the philosophical.

Some of the various projects underway at the lab employ augmented reality—such as the contact microphone procedure—but not in the screen-centric way that is typically associated with AR today.

"The object transmutes itself depending how we touch it," said Sha.

"It's as if, if you were playing a guitar, the strings were getting bigger or thinner, or changing from gut to steel or copper wire, depending on how you're stroking it. It's morphing underneath your fingers. That's what we do."

And it's that almost natural relationship between real-world objects and the program's output that, when done right, makes augmented reality so, well, *real*.

From vibrations to images to gestures, through sophisticated processing, it's becoming possible to move through a room "as if the air was made of barbed wire, or beans," in the words of Sha.

Because of the precision of the programming, the AR's response is enough to fool the senses. In the case of Navab's work,

it can turn something as unmusical as an eggplant into an evolving percussion instrument.

"Why use a computer? Of course we can play a guitar made of wood; it's already there. With what we can do here, we can mutate it, on the fly. And we can't do that with a physical object," said Sha.

MAKING PHYSICAL GROUND

The idea of augmented reality got a publicity boost in 2009, after a TED talk revealed SixthSense to the world, a prototype system developed at the MIT Media Lab.

The gadget combines a smartphone with a camera, projector and a few other easily found objects, allowing users to pull data from the Internet instantaneously—simply by interacting with an object or person as they already would in real life.

AR has proliferated since then, but for now (at least until a reliable consumer heads-up display enters the market), the phenomenon is limited to being experienced on a screen, processed through the lens of a camera.

"I'm not a fan of how we always have to have a screen between, and I'm not sure how we can overcome that eventually," said Nikos Chandolias, a graduate computation arts student who works in the TML on responsive processing for sound input.

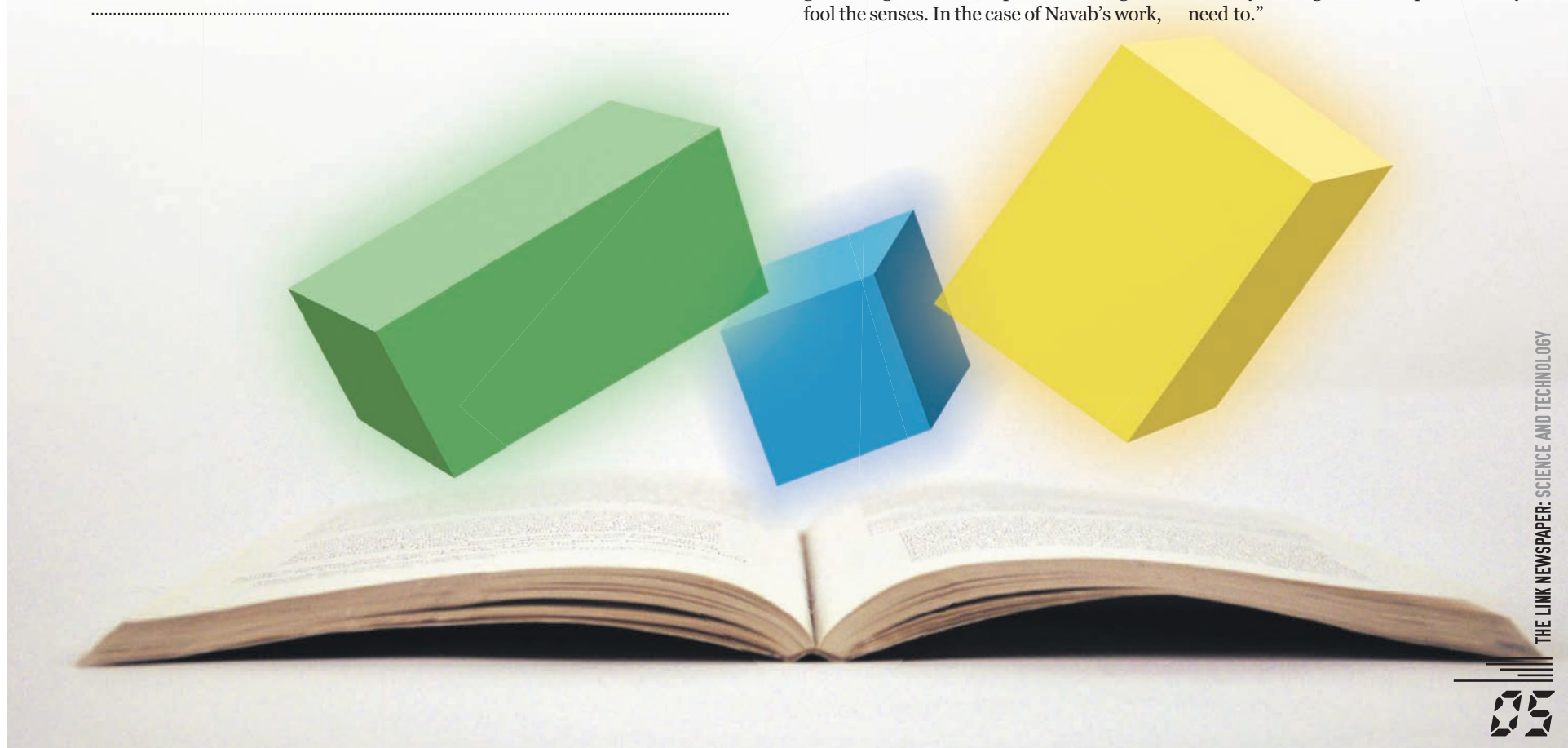
"[But] I'm really interested in how you could actually interact with the object projected."

Given the amount of work being done with AR, however, things are only going to get more immersive and complex. Progress is bound as much to the limits of our imagination as it is by technological development.

"Augmenting, to me, is taking an ordinary thing and making it magic," said Sha, "by adding some computation as you need to."

"IT'S AS IF, IF YOU WERE PLAYING A GUITAR, THE STRINGS WERE GETTING BIGGER OR THINNER, OR CHANGING FROM GUT TO STEEL OR COPPER WIRE, DEPENDING ON HOW YOU'RE STROKING IT. IT'S MORPHING UNDERNEATH YOUR FINGERS. THAT'S WHAT WE DO."

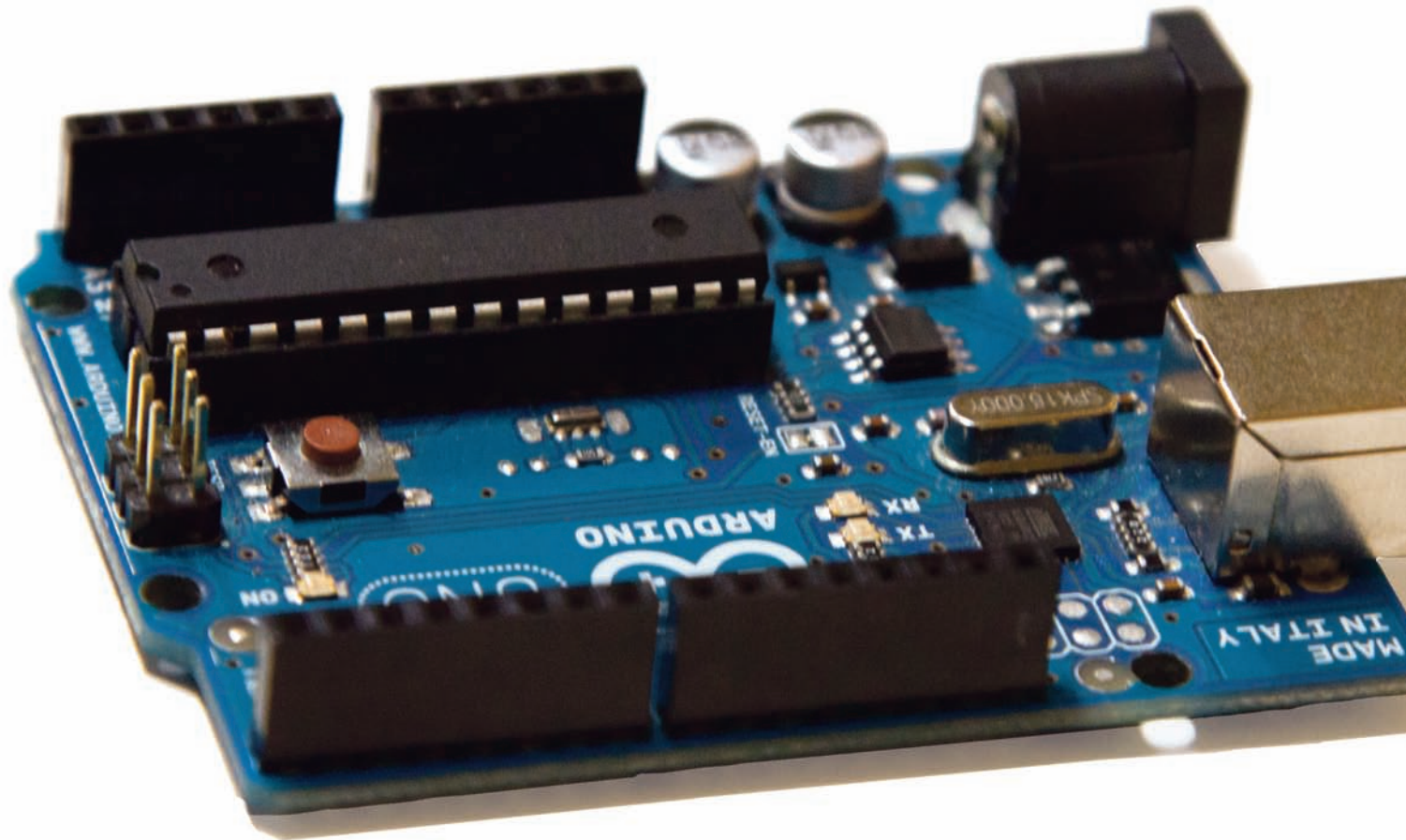
—Dr. Sha Xin Wei, Director of the Topological Media Lab at Concordia



CONCORDIA STARTS UP

Alan Shepard Wants to Bring Tech Culture to ConU,
As Soon As He Figures Out What That Means.

words Julia Wolfe
photo Erin Sparks



Alan Shepard wants you to play baseball.

He's going to build the field, hand you a bat and walk away. After that, it's sort of up to you.

At least, that's how the university's president explains bringing start-up culture to Concordia.

It shouldn't be much harder than that, Shepard says. In a city bursting with creative entrepreneurship, at a school committed to practical learning, the ingredients are all there. Someone just needs to build a couple of strategically placed bridges. Or a baseball diamond.

So Shepard teamed up with Gabriel Sundaram from the Notman House, the local start-up incubator that bills itself as "the home of the web in Montreal."

Neither Shepard nor Sundaram, who's a Concordia grad, know exactly what that partnership is going to look like. But they're committed to bringing the community, connections and culture of this booming business

model to the school.

"The thing about universities is we've been around for hundreds and hundreds of years," Shepard said. "So you run the risk of getting stuck in old habits."

Start-ups, on the other hand, are new by definition.

A start-up can be just a couple of twenty-somethings in a garage with a bag of LEDs, a maxed-out credit card and a million-dollar idea.

And they fail *a lot*.

Forbes reported that in the United States, a quarter of all start-ups fail in their first year. After 10 years, less than 30 per cent of those original start-ups will still be around.

It's risks like those that universities don't like to take—particularly in Canada, where they rely so heavily on public funds.

But if the U.S. is any measure, it might be absorbing this potential failure that makes Concordia a success.

The same *Forbes* article reported that virtually all job growth south of

the border comes from start-ups.

The crumbling job market is coming from flat-lining big businesses that were built in an era that's no longer relevant.

Start-ups are creating the technology those corporations will be using in 20 years. Where start-ups are 3-D printers, traditional businesses are fax machines.

Universities, Sundaram said, need to be more like start-ups.

"In this world, information changes so quickly and technology changes so rapidly," said Sundaram. "The best way students can learn is to learn how to be adaptable and learn how to learn."

And that's exactly what Shepard is trying to do. But he's quick to tell you that he didn't get the idea himself.

"When I came to Montreal, [start-ups were] something people kept bringing up with me," he said.

So he looked into it and found a start-up culture that's "much more alive" than what he had seen in Toronto.

For Sundaram, that's due in large part to the diversity of the city.

Montreal, Sundaram said, benefits from being able to mix a French culture that's willing to experiment with the business-focused English side.

To the tech buffs, it doesn't matter if you're franco or anglo because either way, you speak Javascript.

"One of the great things about the web community is that it's really language-neutral," Sundaram said. "The language is the language of the web."

And it's more than that, said Concordia professor and start-up founder Mouna Andraos.

"There's a huge cultural milieu in Montreal and Quebec," she said. "I see entrepreneurship here in so many ways."

That same culture is what Shepard sees at Concordia.

"The students who come to Concordia—my impression is—are pretty hungry for doing stuff," said Shepard. "Some schools have students who want to come to school and then just go home. I don't think that's the kind of students Concordia attracts."

The Concordia Student Union's space report, however, said that that's exactly what roughly two-thirds of the student body does.

But Shepard feels it's his job to help provide for the students who do want to stick around. He wants to give them a campus they're proud of.

"I want to try to use my position so that if somebody says they graduated from Concordia, the people they are talking to or the person potentially hiring will say, 'That's the cool edgy place where new stuff happens,'" he said.

It's a great initiative, says Andraos—as long as it's thought-out.

"The only thing that I would keep in mind is what part of start-up culture are we interested in bringing?" she said.

"Is it innovation? Is it about bringing ideas to the market? Is it about building relationships with the industry? I don't think they are all the same thing or have the same intentions."

"I WANT TO TRY TO USE MY POSITION SO THAT IF SOMEBODY SAYS THEY GRADUATED FROM CONCORDIA, THE PEOPLE THEY ARE TALKING TO OR THE PERSON POTENTIALLY HIRING WILL SAY, 'THAT'S THE COOL EDGY PLACE WHERE NEW STUFF HAPPENS.'"

—Alan Shepard, Concordia President

HARVESTING A CRISIS

How Canada Can Address Its Farming Needs With Urban Agriculture

words Hilary Sinclair
photo Erin Sparks

Canada is approaching a potentially devastating demographic shift. We have an aging population, sure, but even worse, we have an aging agriculture sector.

The 2011 Statistics Canada Census of Agriculture revealed that the average age of farm operators in this country—those running Canadian farms day-to-day—is 54. Their numbers have dropped by 10 per cent since 2006.

“We have a farming crisis. [...] Seventy-four per cent of farmers today are planning to sell their farm in the next 10 years—and guess who’s waiting to buy it up? Developers, investors, offshore investment agencies,” said Food Secure Canada Coordinator Amanda Sheedy at a Concordia panel discussion on food politics last Thursday.

“We have a serious problem. There is no policy to cover how we’re going to manage that shift in land tenure over the next 10 years.”

To cope, Canada needs new innovations: technology, initiatives and policies to engage younger generations in food production.

THE PROBLEM

“Try and think of something that food doesn’t affect in our society and in our lives,” said Sheedy. “It affects our social relationships. It affects our environment. It affects our health. It’s fundamental.”

Separation is perhaps the biggest problem in our food system—we are geographically separated from what we eat.

According to June Komisar, associate professor in the department of Architecture Science at Ryerson University, who specializes in designing for urban agriculture, our current system presents two problems.

“One, you’re not contributing to the local economy and two, there’s a lot of energy expended in bringing that food thousands of miles to the consumer,” said Komisar.

Delivery from farm to plate is responsible for between 30 and 50 per cent of our greenhouse gas emissions, Sheedy said.

Meanwhile, Statistics Canada reports only 8.2 per cent of farm operators are under 35.

David Wees, a lecturer at McGill University’s department of Plant Science—and at the Farm Management and Technology Program—attributes the change to natural demographic shifts.

“Traditionally, people who studied agriculture were sons and daughters of farmers. Well, there are fewer and fewer farmers and they’re having smaller families. [...] It’s just a rapidly shrinking population,” said Wees.

Whatever the reasons, this is the first

time in history that we have seen agriculture dominated by the aged. Of the 168 agriculture programs funded by the Canadian government for the purposes of managing farming and production, only seven of them are dedicated to “young farmers or new entrants.”

Two of these programs are limited to Nova Scotia—which is also the only province to see an increase in the number of farms—while the rest are dedicated to agricultural financing, management and accounting.

But while the federal government invests in ways to innovate the current system of farming, an increasing percentage of the population is congregating in cities. The United Nations estimates the total global population living in cities will increase from 50 to 60 per cent by 2030.

So what does the future of agriculture look like?

URBAN INITIATIVES

Without copious amounts of funding from governments or other sources to build their own buildings, independent citizens are turning to what’s already there in their cityscapes. From the tops of skyscrapers to the backyards of strangers, simple ways to maximize growing spaces are popping up everywhere.

“We could certainly do a lot more just to take advantage of the space that we do have,” admitted Wees.

“There are a huge number of vacant lots on the island of Montreal. There are a lot of green spaces that are underutilized. And I think that if we just try to take the space that we have and make better use of it we could probably produce quite a bit more.”

Wees and his students estimated that if all the available green spaces on the island of Montreal—parks, backyard gardens and community gardens—were used to grow as many fruits and vegetables as possible, they could support about 40 per cent of the island’s needs.

Community gardening initiatives in the city are also on the rise. With 97 gardens and 18 boroughs participating, the programs generally provide access to tools, compost and managers who oversee the plots.

“We have a very good community garden system in Montreal, but there’s simply a limited number [of farming locations],” said Wees. “There are more people who want to garden than there are actual spaces.”

Cities generally have a slightly longer growing season because of their higher temperatures, and they can be extended even further by the use of materials like a lightweight cheese cloth-esque substance that retains heat.

Currently, however, according to Wees, the only areas zoned green—for agricultural use—are Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, Senneville and Pierrefonds in the West Island.



Other initiatives are also changing the landscape of the city.

Small-plot intensive farming, or SPIN-Farming, sees entrepreneurs farm plot-to-plot in neighbourhood yards, sometimes charging the lot owners for upkeep and giving them a percentage of the harvest as payment.

“In Toronto at the moment [SPIN-Farming] seems to be able to support someone part-time,” said Komisar.

“We have a number of young entrepreneurs that are kind of getting their feet wet with training themselves as young farmers by doing this. It might not pay enough to be a full-time job, but that is a way of supplementing income and getting experience in becoming an entrepreneur.”

THE REAL FUTURE OF URBAN AGRICULTURE

“There are a number of hypotheses [about the future],” surmised Komisar.

“One is that every large roof is going to become farmed and I think that is going to happen to a great extent be-

cause people are beginning to understand that the heat island effect is terrible, as well as the cost of processing runoff from rain from the roofs.”

One notable example she cited is the continuous productive urban landscape.

CPUL integrates urban design and food production into the vision of cities and surrounding countrysides. The urban and rural partnership could open even more opportunities.

“The CPUL concept really shows that our parks, our open spaces can all be connected up to be a productive landscape,” said Komisar.

“So rather than merely having unproductive landscaping, you can have things that provide food for the city. I think that their vision is much closer to what the future might possibly look like.”

FOR THE FULL VERSION OF THIS ARTICLE, INCLUDING A SECTION ON VERTICAL FARMING, CHECK OUT THELINKNEWSPAPER.CA.



FLYING GREEN

While ConU Aerospace Institute Seeks to Reduce Emissions, Air Canada Slowly Manoeuvres Toward Cleaner Skies

words Elysha del Giusto-Enos
graphic Jayde Norström

Though it's thirteen stories tall, the highest point in Concordia's Hall Building is actually in the basement.

That's where Concordia University researchers are flying high, using a flight simulator to develop a more eco-friendly flight.

While the majority of an aircraft's flight is controlled by computers programmed to reduce fuel consumption, changing altitudes mid-flight is still not done in the most fuel-efficient way. Concordia's researchers are looking to change that.

"The idea here was to design flight controllers that would go from one set point to another set point while minimizing fuel," said project leader Dr. Luis Rodrigues, undergraduate program director of the department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and faculty member of the Concordia Institute of Aerospace Design and Innovation.

Rodrigues has been leading this research since 2007, when Concordia's flight simulator was donated by Mechtronix—a flight simulator engineering company founded in 1987 by a group of Concordia students.

"Concordia University has a long tradition of flight simulation," Rodrigues said. He was already doing extensive research in aircraft control

when the idea to tie in ecological concerns crept in.

"There has been a lot of talk about next-generation aircrafts—a lot of people talk about electric aircrafts," he admitted. "Especially now, since lawmakers and stakeholders are imposing laws on emissions. They are finally waking up to the reality that the planet is heating up too much."

But while Canada is at the forefront of green flight technology, its progress comes on a kind of honour system, rather than by firm legislation.

Transport Canada has issued the "Aviation Action Plan" which outlines how players in the aviation industry are expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

But it clearly states, "[The Aviation Action Plan] does not contain legal obligations of any kind or impose unreasonable expectations on any party, or intend to negatively impact any air carrier's ability to do business in Canada."

The plan looks to increase the fuel efficiency of the Canadian aircraft fleet, and since 2005, \$13.5 billion has been invested in modernizing Canadian airlines for fuel efficiency.

Rodrigues said that the industry is looking 10 or 20 years ahead in terms

of what it can change. On top of improving fuel efficiency, alternate sources of energy are also being investigated.

"Electric aircrafts are definitely a possibility," he said. "And people talk about using hydrogen cells, but the problem is that it's flammable. A long time ago there was a big disaster with a hydrogen blimp and a lot of people died. So people have been a bit concerned with the hydrogen cell solution."

The Hindenburg airship is definitely one chapter of aviation history that the frequent flyer might not be comfortable revisiting. But even if not hydrogen, alternate energy like an electric aircraft poses environmental problems of its own.

"It's not going to be completely environmentally friendly," Rodrigues said. "When you dispose of those batteries, those are toxic chemicals as well. But it's just not going in the atmosphere. [...] It's a different problem."

For now, biofuel, which has its own controversies, is the way forward that Air Canada is banking on. A representative for Air Canada, Isabelle Arthur, stated in an email that Air Canada is actively involved in the development of biofuel.

Air Canada performed two biofuel

flights this year: one from Toronto to Mexico City, and another from Montreal to Heathrow Airport for the London Olympic Games.

The company is actively trying to meet the goals outlined in the Aviation Action Plan. Some of the targets they signed on for include improving fuel efficiency by two per cent every year until 2020 and having a 50 per cent reduction in overall emissions by 2050.

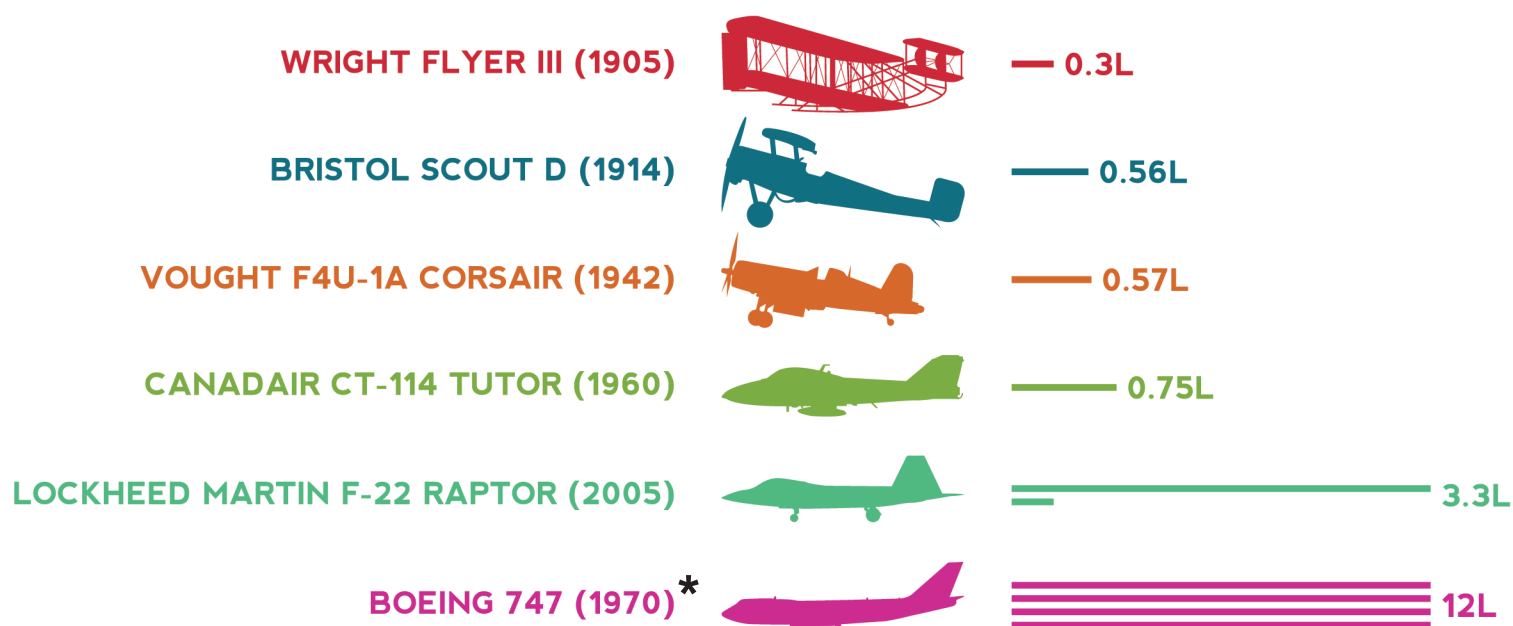
Rodrigues said that emissions are constantly increasing, so aiming for this kind of reduction may be difficult.

"We live in a very market-oriented society that only looks at money," he said.

"So although there are lots of companies that have the goodwill to help the environment, at the end of the day, they want to make money, of course. And if there's no legislation that will make them reduce emissions by giving them penalties they will not consider it as a high priority."

Although Air Canada's environmental endeavours can reduce flight emissions by over 40 per cent, Arthur stated, "at this time, there is not enough supply of aviation biofuel to meet the needs of thousands of flights, including Air Canada's, operated around the world every day."

FUEL TO TRAVEL 1 KM



* THE BOEING 747 CAN CARRY 400 TO 660 PASSENGERS. SO, DESPITE USING 12 L OF FUEL FOR ONE KM, IT STILL USES LESS FUEL PER PERSON THAN THE WRIGHT FLYER III.

PHOTO OF THE SEMESTER



Stingers fans react to a goal scored during a men's hockey home game against the McGill Redmen. The Stingers won the game by a narrow 6-5 margin, taking home the 26th annual Corey Cup. PHOTO MATTIAS GRAHAM

BOXSCORES
WEEK OF NOV. 26 TO DEC. 2

SATURDAY, DEC. 1 Men's Hockey - Concordia 2, University of Toronto 7

FRIDAY, NOV. 30 Men's Basketball - Concordia 68, Université Laval 72
Men's Hockey - Concordia 2, Queen's University 3 (SO)
Women's Basketball - Concordia 49, Université Laval 50

UPCOMING GAMES
THIS WEEK IN CONCORDIA SPORTS

28

Women's Basketball at Concordia-Reebok Tournament

29

Women's Basketball at Concordia-Reebok Tournament

30

Women's Basketball at Concordia-Reebok Tournament

LOCKED OUT? PLAY ON!

Montreal Arenas Offer Ice Time for Hockey-Starved Players



Children learning how to skate at Bill Durnana Arena.

PHOTO LESLIE SCHACHTER

BY DAVID KAUFMANN
@DAVIDKAUFMANN85

It's that time of the evening. You're at the point where you want to invite your friends over to watch the hockey game with some pizza and beer. There's just one problem.

Thanks to the National Hockey League lockout caused by tensions between the league's commissioner, Gary Bettman, and National Hockey League Players' Association Executive Director Donald Fehr, there isn't any hockey to be watched.

Fortunately, if you're the type of person who would rather take to the ice than have an absence of hockey in your life, you're in luck, as some of Montreal's arenas open their rinks to pick-up hockey.

St. Louis Arena

What's great about this arena is that it's only a short ride on the 55 bus away from the downtown area, or a short walk from the Rosemont Metro station.

You can enjoy its services—for only \$5.00—every day of the work-week from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., with the exception of Wednesdays.

According to Sam Maniatis, a regular at St. Louis, the arena is also a safe place to play.

"I like that the staff is very vigilant, that they make sure we're all wearing our neck guards, we have our helmets on, and that they pay attention to the game while we're out there," he said.

There are some downsides to the arena, however. For instance, if you want to use the showers in the locker room, the water is either too hot or too cold. But Edmond Bérubé, who practices in other arenas, says it's a common problem on the island.

"You can go to CEPSUM, Mont-Royal, or Outremont, and it will always be like that," he said.

Also, if you're driving to the arena, the city recently installed parking meters in the area that start charging at 4:00 p.m., which gives you little time to change out of your hockey gear and get to your car.

Nevertheless, most reviews are positive. "The staff is very friendly. I like that there's hockey almost every day of the week," said Scott Carter, another regular.

St. Louis Arena (5633 St. Dominique St.) / Rosemont Metro / Accessible via 55 bus

Bill Durnan Arena

This may be a little further away from downtown than St. Louis, but it's closer to a metro station.

To get to Bill Durnan, you exit at Plamondon, walk a couple of blocks and you're there, whereas with St. Louis, you have to drag your hockey bag up a narrow staircase, then down the Van Horne/Rosemont viaduct to get to the Metro.

On Fridays, you can take part in shinny hockey from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. free of charge, with free parking should you decide to drive there. The place is also well-maintained.

"The rooms are clean and the ice is in good condition, so I'm pleased with it," said Bernard Tessier, one of the hockey players who frequents the arena.

They also open their rink Saturday evenings from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. for some pick-up. The problem is that they charge \$7.50 to take part in it, which doesn't sit well with those seeking more ice time.

"Sometimes you'll see some people who only come on Fridays because of the price you have

to pay on Saturday," said Jean Semana, a regular at Bill Durnan.

Bill Durnan Arena (4988 Vezina St.) / Plamondon Metro

Aréna Raymond-Bourque

Located in the St. Laurent borough, this arena has two rinks where you can take to the ice weekdays from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

There's a \$5 fee for Carte Loisirs holders—an ID card for those who regularly take part in activities offered by St. Laurent's culture, sports, recreation and social development management—and a \$6 fee for those without. If you work for the city, it's free to rent one of the rinks.

That being said, only one rink is open to the public, which can be problematic should 25 people show up for a game of pick-up, the maximum number allowed for the rink.

"When there's too many players, they should open the other ice," said David Pidgeon, one of the regulars at Raymond-Bourque. "Very often, there's no

body there, so it'd be nice to have the second rink."

Luckily, buses pass once every 10 minutes in front of Côte-Vertu Metro station around the time when shinny hockey is taking place.

But, if you're not so lucky, it's a 15-minute walk from the Metro station to the arena, quite a trek for those carrying large hockey bags.

Aréna Raymond-Bourque (2345 Thimens Blvd.) / Côte-Vertu Metro / Accessible via 171 bus

Outdoor Rinks

If these arenas are too far for you to travel to with hockey gear, there will be many hockey rinks opening outdoors during the winter months.

The closest one to Concordia is located in the Queen Elizabeth Gardens park, across from Dawson College on Sherbrooke St. W., corner Wood Ave.

For a list of other rinks near you, visit ville.montreal.qc.ca and check out the Activities and Recreation tab.

THE PRESSURE IS ON

The Stress of Shootouts and Penalty Shots in Hockey



◆ GRAPHIC ERIC BENT

BY THIERRY TARDIF

From the gruesome skating, the body-checks along the boards and the battles for the puck—playing a hockey game is always physically draining.

Then after all that you have to try and score that game-winning goal late in overtime.

But when the game is still tied after that, then comes the most mentally exhausting part: the shootout. The whole arena is on its feet, screaming and shouting. The pressure is on.

The shootout shot is the moment where hockey players test their skill one-on-one against goal-tenders, where they must take on the pressure and score that all-important goal.

It is at moments like these that hockey heroes are made. Some players aren't able to score those key goals because it's simply too stressful, but others rise to the occasion and give their teams the win.

Stinger Kyle Armstrong, centre for Concordia's men's hockey team, sees shootouts and penalty shots as some of the most nerve-racking moments in hockey.

"When I get asked by my coach to take a penalty shot in the game, a lot of emotions come over me," said Armstrong. "As you stand there at centre ice, you can't help but think about scoring on the goalie and helping your

team win the game."

There is no doubt that a standing crowd watching your every move is stressful, but Armstrong said that there are other things circling in the player's mind.

"When you're about to take a penalty shot during a game, it's not so much the fans that put pressure on you, but the implications that the shot might have on the game," explained Armstrong.

When the referee blows the whistle for Armstrong to take the shot, everything for him goes silent.

"I just focus on what I'm doing with the puck and hope it finds the back of the net," he said. "You try not to let [the pressure] creep in your head before you take the shot, but it's definitely hard not to."

Dr. Lois Baron, a sports and educational psychologist at Concordia, believes that there is a lot of pressure coming from the results of the match, but thinks that all those staring at you have an additional impact when performing your finesse move.

"Nobody likes to fail. There is an element of judgment that is magnified when all eyes are on you," Baron said.

"There are the expectations from within as well as from team members and the coach," she added. "Now that's pressure."

But there are ways around it.

Armstrong's tip to other hockey players is to find a specific move

that feels most comfortable and practice it over and over again.

His move is pretty simple, he said.

"I've always been told by other goalies that the hardest thing to stop is quickness. So I try to come at the goalie with a lot of speed, make a quick move with my back-hand and try to get the puck up as quickly as possible."

That last part, Armstrong said, is key.

"When you come down the ice with speed and make a quick deke, the goalie instantly puts his pads on the ice," leaving the top shelf wide open.

It's not just the moves that count, however: the order of shooting is just as important to Armstrong, who, given the choice, would shoot first every time.

"Shooting first has way less pressure than shooting last because the game doesn't necessarily rest on your shoulders," he said. "Depending on when you shoot, it could be the difference between

one or two points [in the standings]—which always has an effect on where the team places at the end of the season.

"The most pressure you can have as a hockey player is being the last shooter in a shootout, and if you don't score your team loses. When you shoot first it still matters, but everyone always remembers the last shooter."

As for Baron, her biggest suggestion is repetition: those who simulate real penalty shot sessions in practice will be able to better manage their thoughts come game day.

The most important thing for Armstrong, however, is simply taking a deep breath before going for the shot.

"It instantly relaxes all the nerves in your body [...], puts your mind in a peaceful state and prepares you to execute whatever you're trying to do," he says.

Still, none of the above guarantees a goal every time.

"When I was in Midget and we

were in the semifinals in the playoffs and I was chosen as the first shooter for my team [...] I ended up trying a move that I had used in the game earlier and scored, but sadly it didn't work [in the shootout]," said Armstrong.

But whenever that puck does make it to the back of the net, only one thought passes through Armstrong's mind—not personal pride, but what it means for the team.

"It's a huge relief when you've scored the shootout goal because you know you've put your team in a position to possibly win the game," he said.

However, there's no doubt Armstrong gains more confidence from the experience, and brings it to the team's next game.

"[Scoring] is a great feeling because the coach put trust in you to score that goal, so to come through gives him more confidence in you as a player," said Armstrong. "It also gives you more confidence in your skills going into the next game because you've scored the goal."

"The most pressure you can have as a hockey player is being the last shooter in a shootout, and if you don't score your team loses. When you shoot first it still matters, but everyone always remembers the last shooter."

—Kyle Armstrong, Concordia Stingers Centre

PERFORM CENTRE, ONE YEAR LATER

Concordia's Research and Athletics Centre Gaining Ground



"It's a facility where students can interact with the community and have the researchers there as well."

—Kevin Little, Chief Administrative Officer of the PERFORM Centre

PHOTO AMANDA LAPRADE

BY YACINE BOUHALI
@MYBOUHALI

From the outside, Concordia's PERFORM Centre looks like your everyday gym, but inside is a research and community-based complex that is looking to break new ground in the field of health.

"The challenge has always been to find a place that is not fractured," said Kevin Little, the centre's Chief Administrative Officer. "It's a facility where students can interact with the community and have the researchers there as well."

Concordia students can get a one-semester membership for \$60; to try it out for the month of December is \$15.00. There are no extra membership fees and no need to commit to longer than that.

One of the reasons the membership is so cheap is because the

people who use the gym become the pool of possible subjects when the researchers in the glass offices above the conditioning floor want to study something. Of course, that's only if the gym-goer chooses to participate.

The centre's mission is to promote long-term health through prevention. Researchers from different fields work in the ultra-modern facility.

"The exchange between the students, the community and the researchers speeds up the research projects as much as it speeds up the learning process for the community," said Little.

The organization that runs the PERFORM Centre emphasizes giving back to Concordia students, and teaching is one of the ways they do it. Through internships, undergraduates learn by working with researchers and

professionals in their field.

There's also an athletic therapy clinic and a treatment centre run by Concordia's athletic therapy students, who are supervised by certified athletic therapists. The clinic charges \$25 per visit to students for treatments.

"I've been going there for three months now—not once I've had to wait to use something. The staff is also really nice and helps you out with pretty much anything you need," said Concordia student Alex Melki.

While PERFORM has the latest fitness technology to offer, it might disappoint a seasoned gym rat. There's no bench press or squat machine, but Research Coordinator Axel Bergman said there's a reason for that.

"We're really trying to promote healthy living and get the people who usually don't go to gyms to come here. These people

have different needs than the heavyweight lifters."

Located across from Concordia's Loyola Campus in Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, the PERFORM Centre—which stands for Prevention, Evaluation, Rehabilitation, Formation—was inaugurated in October 2011 with the help of a \$35-million investment from the Canadian government.

"The research we do is really varied—we're looking at athletic therapies, chronic disease and common sports injuries like concussions. We're also working on prevention and lifestyle behaviour studies," explained Bergman.

"Because it takes time to collect data and analyze it, we're only going to start having results in about a year and a half."

Once researchers publish the studies' results, the institution plans to share them with health

agencies and via conferences and their website.

The PERFORM Centre isn't only gaining momentum here in Montreal—other universities around the country are looking at it as a model.

"I was in British Columbia last summer and [the University of British Columbia] had partnered up with a contractor to build a similar place to this, but you know it's not easy to put together 40 million bucks," said Bergman.

Even if it's only a year old, Bergman has high expectations for the PERFORM Centre and his staff.

"I would like the Centre to have a world-class reputation for doing preventive health research and see researchers from all over the world working here together and giving the absolute best to our community," he said.

by Oliver Leon @oliverdandylion

THAT TRANSSEXUAL GUY

Chats With Author Susan Jane Bigelow

**SUSAN JANE BIGELOW IS A
SCIENCE FICTION AUTHOR,
POLITICAL WRITER,
LIBRARIAN AND CAT LADY.**

She and I first met each other on Twitter (she goes by @whateversusan), then again in person in June when she came to Montreal with her partner.

I brought her flowers and fresh bagels. She welcomed me with a smile as big and happy as the sun.

She has published three books to date, and recently had a wonderful short story published in the Topside Press's *The Collection*. The nearly 400-page short fiction anthology is written entirely by transsexual, transgender and gender-variant authors and has exclusively trans* protagonists.

"In the six years before I transitioned, I wrote two books and a small handful of terrible short stories," said Susan.

"In the past two years, though, I've written five books, two of which are either published or about to be published, and lots of stories/essays.

"For some reason transitioning was like a creative fire lit under me.

I'm sure that not obsessing about gender all the time helped. I also think transition helped me find a writing voice that I really like."

More than just a voice, the transition also had an effect on the characters she writes.

"Renna, who is the protagonist of the second Extrahumans book, *Fly Into Fire*, is trans*," said Susan. "There's also a lot of themes in those books that I think trans* people could relate to, like passing/stealth, the importance of names, feeling like an outcast, etc."

Her Extrahumans Union trilogy features humans with 'extra' powers living under a repressive government. It's a post-war science-fiction setting where humans are colonizing the stars.

Former disillusioned superheroes meet a paranoid fascist dictatorship hoping for world domination. The twist is that our superhero can't fly anymore and becomes homeless. She meets Michael Forward, who can see

the future.

Together, along with allies acquired throughout the trilogy, they set off to save the world. Hey, what's science fiction without saving the entirety of humanity?

"Right now, I'm revising the second book in a trilogy about three sisters and a bunch of meddling aliens," said Susan. "The first one comes out in the spring, and once these revisions are done, I'll probably get to work on the third book. Someday, I'd like to try and write a few more short stories, though, and maybe something more about Mona."

Mona, who's the main character in her short story, "Ramona's Demons" in Topside Press's anthology *The Collection*, is a former demon-hunter whose magical ability has 'decreased' as she has transitioned and now works for the Central Connecticut Supernatural Services Agency.

I won't tell you what she's been tasked with finding—I don't want to spoil the story!

"I have plans to write a gender/magic fantasy book, and I've got maybe a quarter of it done so far," said Susan. "As for Mona, I'd love to write more of her. She's a fun character! I've promised my-

self that I'm going to finish all of my current projects before I start something new, however."

The conversation eventually shifted towards gender, as it often does when transsexual folk get together.

Susan assured me that it was not all that odd for her to write cisgender (non-trans) characters.

"I assure you, I've done extensive research into the lives of cisgender people! Do you want to see my notes? I have lots of notes," she said.

"I could imagine putting on a gender like an outfit, and taking it off at the end of the day! That would be cool.

"I think gender will increasingly be something we experiment with and play with, and our understanding of what gender means will ex-

pand. I'm hoping we get to a point where a lot of the ridiculous notions we have about gender are put to rest."

For all its importance in her fiction, though, Susan's very conscious of the very real implications of trans*ness in real life.

"I think facilitating access to both treatment and support is a huge deal. In the United States, health insurance rarely covers medical treatment, and therapists and support groups are often not well-versed in trans* issues.

"Non-discrimination measures, especially those that cover employment, are also vital. One big hope I have for our community is that we find a way to focus on the positive; I think that's something we really need."

"I think gender will increasingly be something we experiment with and play with, and our understanding of what gender means will expand. I'm hoping we get to a point where a lot of the ridiculous notions we have about gender are put to rest."

—Susan Jane Bigelow

An excerpt from Susan Jane Bigelow's short story *Ramona's Demons* that appears in Topside Press' *The Collection*.

"It's real," I insisted. "I did. I killed demons for a living back before I knew you. You've seen my sword!"

"You need to get yourself into some therapy, some real *non-gender* therapy, and fast," Dori said, pointing a piece of chicken at me for emphasis.

"I know, I know, you always say that. But what do you think I do all day? I work for a company called Central Connecticut Supernatural Services Agency!"

"I thought it was a psychic hotline," said Dori. "Like Miss Cleo!"

"I'm *not* like Miss Cleo," I said through clenched teeth. This was an old

argument. Though, to be fair, we did have a psychic on staff. "I find things, I do finding spells. It works. I did a spell and went after what I thought was an object. But it wasn't. It was the *kid*. He says they're demons and they're after him, so I took him and hid him in my apartment."

"Demons are bad, right?"

"Yes!" I said, letting my frustration show.

"So whatcha gonna do?"

"I don't know," I said heavily. "That's what I needed you for. I left them a message saying I was working on things but

I don't know how long they'll buy it for."

"Didn't you say you were a demon killer or something?" Dori asked.

"Before, yeah."

"Well, why don't you *kill the damn demons*? There, problem solved. Can I tell my story now?"

"I — you really — *look*," I seethed. "I *told* you. I can't do that anymore. I don't have that power."

"Why?"

"Because I'm a *girl* now! That's boy magic!"

"There's boy and girl magic?" Dori asked, confused. "That sounds sexist."



Drink With *The Link*

Come get weird with your favourite student journalists. We'll be at Brutopia all night with non-denominational Christmas bells on! Come celebrate holiday cheer with holiday beer!

SATURDAY, DEC. 8, 2012
9:00 P.M., BRUTOPIA
1219 CRESCENT ST.

TAKE TWO

On the Right Track With CUTV



Moderator Alex Matak (right) tallies votes during the CUTV GA.

PHOTO COREY POOL

BY JULIA WOLFE @JURUWOLFE

There's hope yet for CUTV.

Concordia University Television's general assembly on Saturday provided the organization with a provisional Board of Directors that just might breathe some life into a station desperate for a little CPR.

But if this new CUTV is to thrive, we need to build a station that will be impervious to what got it into this mess in the first place.

First, all staff positions founded in the editorial side should abide by term limits. While any organization benefits from the institutional memory and the overall vision that a long-standing staff member can provide, student media needs a regulated reboot in order to allow for

maximum participation from the outside and fresh perspectives.

Any editorial staffer should have to run for reelection at least every two years. The election should allow anyone who has volunteered the appropriate amount to vote privately. This could allow volunteers to have a real say in the direction and vision of the station.

Regular turn-around also provides the necessary structure to allow students to move up over the course of a regular degree. It gives students interested in broadcast media the chance to exercise multiple roles in an organization and the chance to understand where they can fit once they leave Concordia.

But it's hard to imagine any of that happening if the final Board

doesn't to follow the structure of the current provisional Board.

Ultimately, students and former volunteers need the largest say at the table. These are the people who have CUTV's best interests at heart. The station will grow under their guidance.

Once the dust settles, CUTV needs to be as transparent as possible.

Annual audits should continue to be published on CUTV's website. Open annual general meetings—where all student members can vote—should be well advertised.

But even before that, there are so many financial questions and so many red flags that need to be addressed. The only way CUTV can hope to regain the trust of their members is by airing their dirty

laundry.

We need to know what financial state CUTV is currently in, and how it got there. In order for members to make informed decisions about CUTV's future, we all need to understand its past. The idea of "good faith" can only go so far.

And while we're educating, it would be great if the provisional board could organize a Robert's Rules training session.

That could help every member get a say during meetings in the most efficient and effective ways possible, without getting trampled by the often shyster-y language of RR.

It also might help to get things moving more quickly, so less time is wasted on explaining procedure.

But if the organization behind

the last general assembly is a sign of things to come, we're off to a great start.

Recently graduated student activist Alex Matak is known more for her bullhorn than her gavel, but, acting as the chair, she managed to keep a relatively cool head at a pretty tense meeting.

The free food and childcare opened the assembly up to those who are often shut out of such events and—considering the short timeframe—it was pretty well advertised.

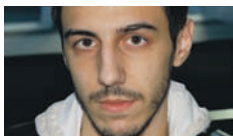
If the comments on our website are any sign, students are passionate about building a station they can call home.

It looks like we're finally on the right track—so let's not lose sight of that.

HEARD IN THE HALL The End of the World

BY SUNNIE SANAZ HASSANPOUR

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO BEFORE THE WORLD ENDS ON DEC. 21?



"Personally, I don't think [the world] will end—but if it does, I would spend it with my family and my loved ones. And have a party the day before. That's pretty much it. I probably would buy anything that I've ever wanted to buy with the money that I have left."

— Spiro Kalamvokis,
BA Economics



"Before the world ends on Dec. 21, I'm gonna talk to my best friend, who is in France right now, and tell her that I love her—because I always wanted to do it. But, I never had enough courage to do it. So, I definitely want to do it before the world ends."

— Eloi d'Herbecourt,
BEng Building Engineering



"I am going to enjoy my last meal. All my favourite foods. Because, there is no time to travel the world. So, why not get the next best thing, which is food. Just spend time with my family, I'd say."

— Brittne Potter,
BFA Studio Art



"If/when the world ends or before that, I wanna build a time capsule and fill it with like a bunch of comics and CDs and USB cords."

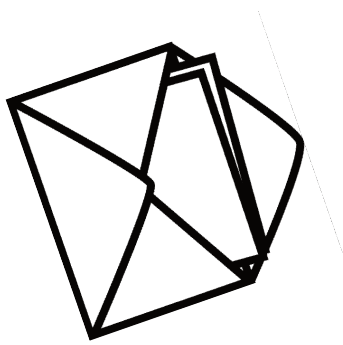
And whoever finds it will kinda have an idea of what was going on in the world at the time. [...] Maybe, I'll make this time capsule out of the fridge, 'cause apparently fridges are indestructible. I'd hardly believe that, but whatever. I don't really have that many options."

— Magassy MBow,
BA Sociology



"If the world would ends on Dec. 21 I would get married. I would skydive. I'd live in Africa. I'd spend more time with my dad. I would spend more time with my brothers, my family in general—just live the rest of my days happily with everyone. Because, at the end of the day, family is what matters. Without family, nothing means anything."

— Khalil Hamarneh,
BComm International Business



ADDRESSING MISCONCEPTIONS AND INACCURACIES ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

In recent weeks, articles have appeared in *The Link* and *The Concordian* discussing the department of Political Science. These articles have focused largely, but not exclusively, on the following issues: changes to undergraduate course offerings, the department's commitment to courses on gender, diversity and equality issues and, finally, departmental governance.

The intention of this letter is to address misunderstandings and misconceptions. Further, to underscore the commitment of the department of Political Science to inclusive, transparent and collegial governance that allows faculty to present a contemporary and cutting-edge curriculum to its undergraduate students.

Curriculum vs. Scheduling

It has been suggested that courses were cut and the curriculum modified without proper consultation. We need to distinguish between the curriculum (the courses a department may offer) and scheduling (the courses offered each academic year). It is also important to distinguish between permanent and slot courses, as well as to understand the purpose of slot courses.

The curriculum of a department represents the academic mission of its members. A large department like Political Science does not offer its entire undergraduate curriculum each academic year. This occurs because of sabbaticals, leaves of absence and the desire by faculty to teach a range of courses over the academic career of undergraduate students, which allows greater diversity in our yearly curriculum offerings.

In order to ensure this diversity a department cannot offer every course each academic year. Indeed, it is normal for courses to be scheduled periodically to reflect changes in personnel and academic priorities. Deciding not to schedule a course should never be equated with cancelling a course or insufficient commitment to an intellectual perspective or tradition. A problematic misconception, therefore, surrounds the process by which the depart-

ment of Political Science implemented its current curriculum. The changes to the curriculum were implemented in 2012-2013 and were the result of a concerted, transparent and collegial exercise at the departmental level that began in 2009.

The department of Political Science, like many other departments at Concordia, has experienced a significant increase in tenure-track hiring, starting in 2000. It was necessary to engage in curriculum reform to reflect changes in the character of the department and its emerging research strengths. The best courses are those in which research is integrated into the classroom; therefore, the curriculum was revised to capture and ensure this synergy between research and teaching in a rapidly changing department.

In December 2010, after a systematic review, the department's curriculum committee recommended substantial changes to the departmental council. These changes were debated by our departmental council, which includes full-time faculty and representatives of our part-time faculty, as well as our undergraduate and graduate students. The proposed changes were approved by the council and submitted to the Associate Dean, Academic Programs of the faculty of Arts of Sciences in January 2011.

After being approved by the Arts and Science Faculty Council in September 2011, the university's academic programs committee in November 2011 and Senate in December 2011, a new curriculum was implemented for the 2012-2013 academic year.

This process saw the deletion of 15 courses, the addition of five new courses, and the conversion of 28 slot courses to permanent courses, for a net increase of 18 courses to our undergraduate curriculum.

We are particularly proud of this, as it significantly expanded our course offerings, allowing the faculty to deliver a contemporary and cutting-edge curriculum to our undergraduate students. This was achieved through an inclusive, transparent and collegial process.

Permanent vs. Slot Courses

The distinction between permanent and slot courses is important. Slot courses are devices by which full-time faculty create new courses with the intention of converting them into permanent course offerings during the next curriculum revision exercise. Our department has demonstrated its commitment to the purpose of slot courses, with the recent conversion of 28 slot courses to permanent features of the current curriculum.

A Steadfast Commitment to Gender-, Equality- and Law-Related Courses

A petition that was reported on by *The Link* stated, "Many of the most popular courses [have been] cut from the course list—especially those in gender, equality and law—to the detriment of students who wish to pursue studies in those fields."

In fact, the department continues to offer a large number of courses in the areas of gender, equality and law.

The department of Political Science also participates in two interdisciplinary programs that advance these disciplines: minor in Human Rights Studies, which is housed in our department; and minor in Law and Society, based in the department of History.

In addition to these interdisciplinary commitments, our department demonstrates a steadfast commitment to these subjects. Courses such as POLI 211 (Human Rights: An Overview), POLI 301 (Social Movements and Protest Politics), POLI 311 (International Public Law), POLI 324 (Parliament and the Charter), POLI 361 (Advocacy Groups and Public Policy), POLI 388 (Human Rights and International Justice), POLI 411 (Gender and Public Policy) and POLI 423 (Peace Studies and Global Governance) underscore the depth of our curriculum and availability of such courses for students that are interested in pursuing these fields.

Finally, POLI 309 (Women and Politics) and POLI 328 (Public Policy and the Politics of Equality) will be part of our course offerings in 2013-2014. These are important components of the permanent curriculum and the department continues to be committed to their place in its yearly course offerings.

Similarly, POLI 389 (Religion and Politics) was not offered in 2012-2013 due to an interdepartmental agreement, but will be offered as two sections in 2013-2014: one cross-listed with Theology and one by Political Science.

Departmental Governance and the Associate Chair

Much has been made about the position of associate chair. The discussion surrounding this position began a number of years ago at the departmental level, and this was implemented in 2012-2013 at the request of the current chair. The misunderstandings of this position center on its creation—the chair requested its creation and sought approval at the faculty of Arts and Sciences.

Thus, the associate chair was not, as erroneously characterized in a petition reported on by *The Link* as "hired by the department and assigned to handle student complaints."

Similar to other administrative positions in the department, the associate chair is appointed by the chair with responsibilities approved at the faculty level. These responsibilities are modeled on those performed by other associate chairs in the faculty of Arts and Sciences. This position has not decreased accessibility to the chair, who remains engaged with all issues delegated to the associate chair.

In closing, the department of Political Science is a dynamic teaching and research environment. Our members are committed to advancing the academic mission of our unit in the interest of our students. Our departmental practices are collegial and our decision making is transparent.

Csaba Nikolenyi,
Professor and Chair
Department of Political Science

James Kelly,
Associate Professor and Associate Chair
Department of Political Science

Stephanie Paterson,
Associate Professor and Undergraduate Program Director
Department of Political Science

Jean François Mayer,
Associate Professor and Graduate Program Director
Department of Political Science

Francesca Scala,
Associate Professor and Director of the Master's in Public Policy and
Public Administration Program
Department of Political Science

PRIDE AND PRIVILEGE



This weekend in honour of World AIDS Day, I posted a picture on Facebook of a sign that said “I am HIV+.”

This sentence has meant a lot of different things to me over the last few years but in this instance it represented people remaining positive in the face of stigma, whether actually HIV+ or not.

Someone was offended by my picture and chose to express it in a really inappropriate way.

Rather than explaining what about me posting this picture offended him and starting a discourse, he chose to verbally abuse and attack me with comments about how many people I’ve slept with, dicks I’ve sucked and what a “cunt” I am.

When frustrated, this person decided that attacking my sexuality was the logical course of action. This was abusive and public slut shaming.

I was reminded that many men are still

completely unaware of their privilege and of the power behind words like “hoe,” “slut” and “cunt,” when they casually drop them.

This was far from my first experience with slut shaming. When I was in high school I was that girl—that girl that everyone called a slut, whore and every other demeaning word you could imagine.

And it didn’t matter which rumours were true and which weren’t, if they were out there people believed them and acted accordingly. I wasn’t just bullied; I was sexualized through comments, attitudes and behaviours.

I learned early that pride and privilege can make people do some really terrible things, and I learned that our society supports those people through victim blaming.

I was made to feel ashamed of my sexuality and ashamed to be a woman before I had even begun to experience and understand what either actually meant to me. What’s worse is I learnt that the worst thing a woman can be in our society is sexually active.

The most terrifying thing I’ve ever realized is that this abuse doesn’t change after high school. It becomes more subtle, but everyday women are slut-shamed, monitored

and told what behaviour is and isn’t okay.

In the almost three years that I have been writing Sex & Pancakes I’ve seen people’s behaviours toward me shift.

Now, people often assume I must be comfortable with inappropriate comments about my sexuality. And, since I love sex, I must want to do it with everyone.

This week I thought about all the times I’ve been approached and told that I probably love this or that when it comes to sex, while someone got uncomfortably and intimately close to me.

I think my personal favourite was being told that someone loved how I “own being a slut.” In case it isn’t obvious, writing and talking about sex doesn’t mean I lovingly associate myself with the word “slut” and it’s offensive to assume so.

The most depressing part is I’ve often shrugged these incidences off. I’ve repeated them to close friends and we’ve mutually expressed our disgust but it always ends there. By accepting these words and this abuse we tell people that this treatment is okay.

But it’s not okay.

Male privilege and rape culture are real

things and it’s not just men who participate in them. I think we’ve all gotten a little too comfortable shaming people about their sexuality—relevant or not—and using derogatory words to bring each other down.

Be aware of your language and privilege. Consider the effects they might have on others. Maybe consider the effects language has had on you.

I’m not perfect and I know I’m guilty of it too, but awareness and effort are half the battle. So please, make the effort.

—Melissa Fuller, @mel_full

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

Need some extra help? You can always contact Concordia Counselling & Development at 514-848-2424 ext. 3545 for SGW and ext. 3555 for Loyola.

Got a quick health question? Call info-sant  at 8-1-1 from any Montreal number.

ACROSS

1. The Mayans, who started this whole kerfuffle in the first place, may or may not have been trustworthy apocalypse-predictors. They are also notable, however, for not having discovered this cool technology, which other civilizations used in their chariots, steam engines and sweet pimped-out Hummers. (2 words)

4. This isn’t particularly new technology, but if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it. It’s portable, double-barrelled, and has what the gun nuts call “stopping power.” And it allows you to claim passenger seat in any car ride.

5. In the event of an apocalyptic event, it’ll be important to have one of these devices, since drinking unsanitary water is a sure way to die. Also, we could use more of these to transform seawater into something more useful, apocalypse or no. Get on it, science. (2 words)

7. Just like 5-Across, you’ll want one of these to keep healthy after the end of the world precipitates mass power failures, so you can cook the bodies of squirrels and stuff. Seriously, though, post-apocalyptic cuisine is gonna suck. Maybe they’ll develop some sort of *Iron Chef: Wasteland*. (2 words)

8. True story: Al Gore actually did play an important role in the birth of the Internet. Look it up. But it was pre-dated by this dorky-sounding network that the United States Department of Defense funded—which, contrary to popular belief, and unlike this crossword—was not built because of the threat of impending disaster.

9. It’s a good bet that this technology—whose cool name is actually an acronym, like SCUBA—is what the aliens use to cut us down when they finally do come. Seriously, bullets just take up too much space.

DOWN

1. Many thought the advent of this micro-blogging platform would signal the rise of the bird-brains and the eventual devolution of humanity into a gibbering cesspool of meaninglessness. I’m not sure whether they were right or not, but I do know that if the world ends, we’ll all hear about it here first.

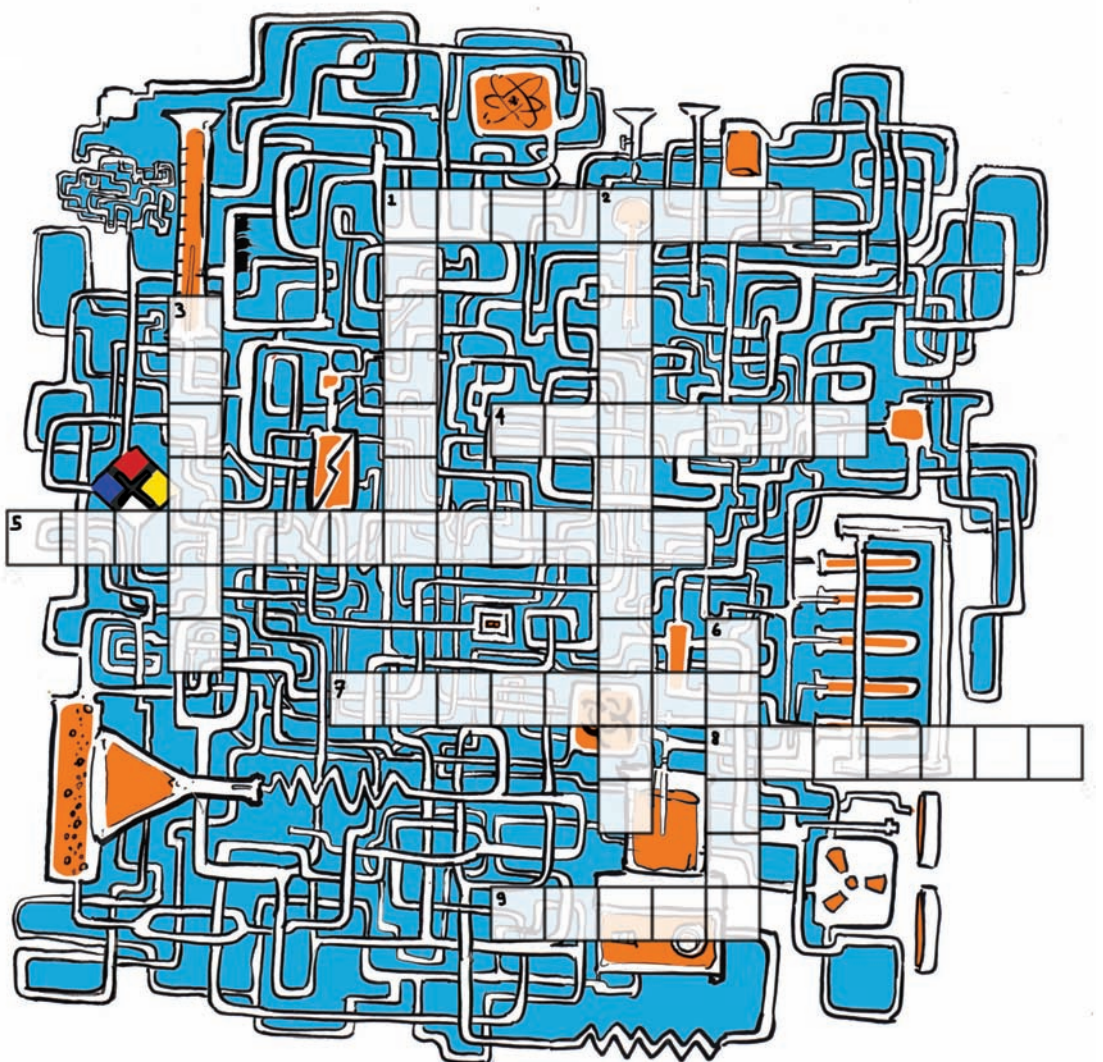
2. This upgrade on the atom bomb was never used in military combat, thanks to the surprisingly level-headed thinking of world leaders in the second half of the 20th century. There’s no joke here. That’s literally the reason we’re all still alive. (2 words)

3. This long-running comet was thought to be a harbinger of the end of the world when it was set to return in 1910—in part due to a French astronomer’s claim that gas in the comet’s tail would “snuff out all life on the planet.” Phew, close call.

6. In many people’s apocalypse scenarios (*Mission: Impossible III*, for instance) the end starts in a science lab, in one of these graduated containers, as two noxious substances are mixed into a world-ending plague. Luckily, Tom Cruise tends to be there to save the day.

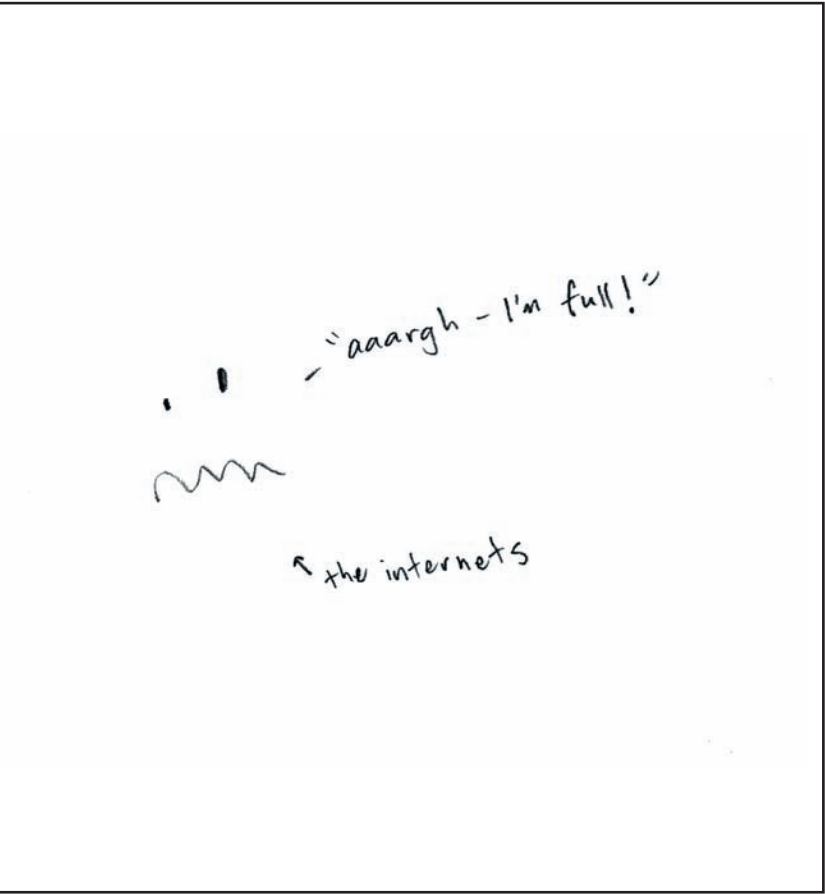
SCIENCE AND TECH FOR THE END OF THE WORLD

BY ALEX MANLEY @ALEX_ICON, GRAPHIC PAKU DAOUST-CLOUTIER



BARTON FLATS

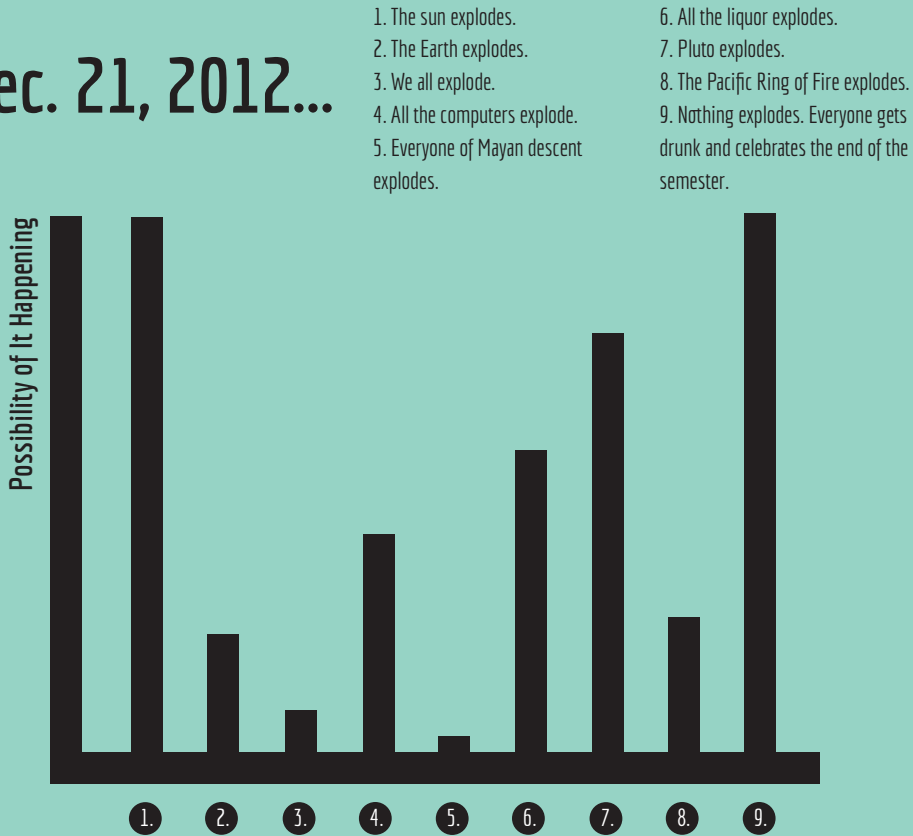
COMIC JONATHAN WOODS



LINKOGRAPHY

HOW WILL THE WORLD END?

Dec. 21, 2012...



GRAPHIC CLÉMENT LIU

False Knees

THIS FALL, ON NBC...

COMIC JOSHUA BARKMAN



NAH'MSAYIN?

Light-Speed Bus

There is one thing I don't understand about the Société du transport de Montréal's buses: Why do drivers feel the need to slow down by slamming the brakes like it's the apocalypse? I mean, at first I didn't mind it. It reminded me of my travels around the galaxy—you know, when you're going in and out of light speed, there's this slight bump for a couple of seconds... Anyway, we're getting off-topic. After a couple hundred times bouncing around like a potato bag in a cart before Thanksgiving dinner, I changed my mind. I'm not even complaining about the security issue—you know, cracking your skull open on the front window

because you didn't have time to hold on to something. It's just not comfortable. I can understand that some people like face-planting into metal poles, but I don't. And it's not like buses only stop once in awhile—they stop at every street corner. It also seems very counter-productive. If all your passengers are going to be dead or injured before arriving at the last stop, why not simply veer sharply to the right and plunge off the Turcot? Too bad we can't use OPUS cards for the Millennium Falcon.

—Pierre Chauvin @pierre_chauvin



GRAPHIC JOSHUA BARKMAN

Editorial



DEAR CONCORDIA,

If *The Link* were to write a Sears-esque *Wish Book*, this would be it.

Instead of Batman Underoos or iPods that look like authentic jukeboxes, our catalogue is slightly more practical.

All we want for Christmas is the administration, Board of Governors and the Concordia Student Union to follow through on their promises to students. (We also hope that this list is read with the same brand of childlike excitement that is inspired by the actual *Wish Book*.)

Dear Administration

There are three things we want from you in 2013:

—Make good on your promise to contact every single Chinese international student that was enrolled in Concordia through the China Recruitment Program—in Mandarin and Cantonese.

When the story of exploitative

dealings with a recruiter employed by Concordia and poor treatment in homestays broke, the university was slow to act. Now that a plan has been publicized, it's time to start dialing.

—Secure contracts with our unions. Give a little as you get deeper into negotiations with the Concordia University Part-Time Faculty Union—who earlier this year passed a strike mandate with 95 per cent of members voting in favour of walking off the job if talks break down.

The university has historically been terrible with negotiations, with the last CUPFA contract taking seven years to negotiate.

—Evaluate our space needs. The \$4.5 million acquisition of the fifth and sixth floors of the Faubourg Building means an expansion for the Webster Library, but exactly how this new space is going to be utilized is still unclear.

Collaborate with students, innovate and create a space that students want to be in.

—Take sexual assault victims seriously. Give us the Sexual Assault Centre students have been asking for for over a year. Space, funding and collaboration is fundamental, so work with the CSU and the 2110 Centre for Gender Advocacy to make it happen.

Dear CSU

You've gone through some growing pains. The general lack of leadership skills from those who have managed to stick around since June has made it damn near impossible to get anything done.

But it's December, and you have nine new members. Use them to the fullest as you enter the second half of your mandate.

—The ink is still drying on a \$97,500 contract with a project management firm to evaluate what

undergrads want out of a student centre. You have promised to have results, options and negotiations underway in February 2013. Don't push deadlines and don't hand this off as an unfinished project to the incoming CSU in March.

—You need a website that works. A series of technology disasters have rendered csu.qc.ca almost unusable—which is a great disservice to students. Make this a priority.

—Be leaders and act professionally. Council meetings generally stretch needlessly into the wee hours of the morning. The chair and the president need to keep their council in order and learn Robert's Rules.

No more heavy sighs, wearing your pajamas to meetings and fighting over who gets stuck with the vegetarian pizzas. You're dealing with \$2 million of student money. Act like it.

Dear Board of Governors

Our list of wishes for you is a lot shorter this year than last—and for that we're grateful. Transparency, however is much more than just a shiny ideal.

—We need real answers to our questions. While you are infinitely more open than the last board was to being posed questions about the mysterious eConcordia and union negotiations, you've yet to give us any real information.

—Let us record your meetings. The arcane ban passed under former Board chair Peter Krut needs to be overturned—for very obvious reasons.

Unlike the items on the lists we email to Santa, these requests aren't gifts. They are needs that are instrumental to the university moving on in a positive direction.

◆ GRAPHIC PAKU DAoust-CLOUTIER

THE LINK

CONCORDIA'S INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1980

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