

THE LINK³⁵

CONCORDIA'S INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1980

PRESENTS

THE NEW PORNOGRAPHERS

P. 6

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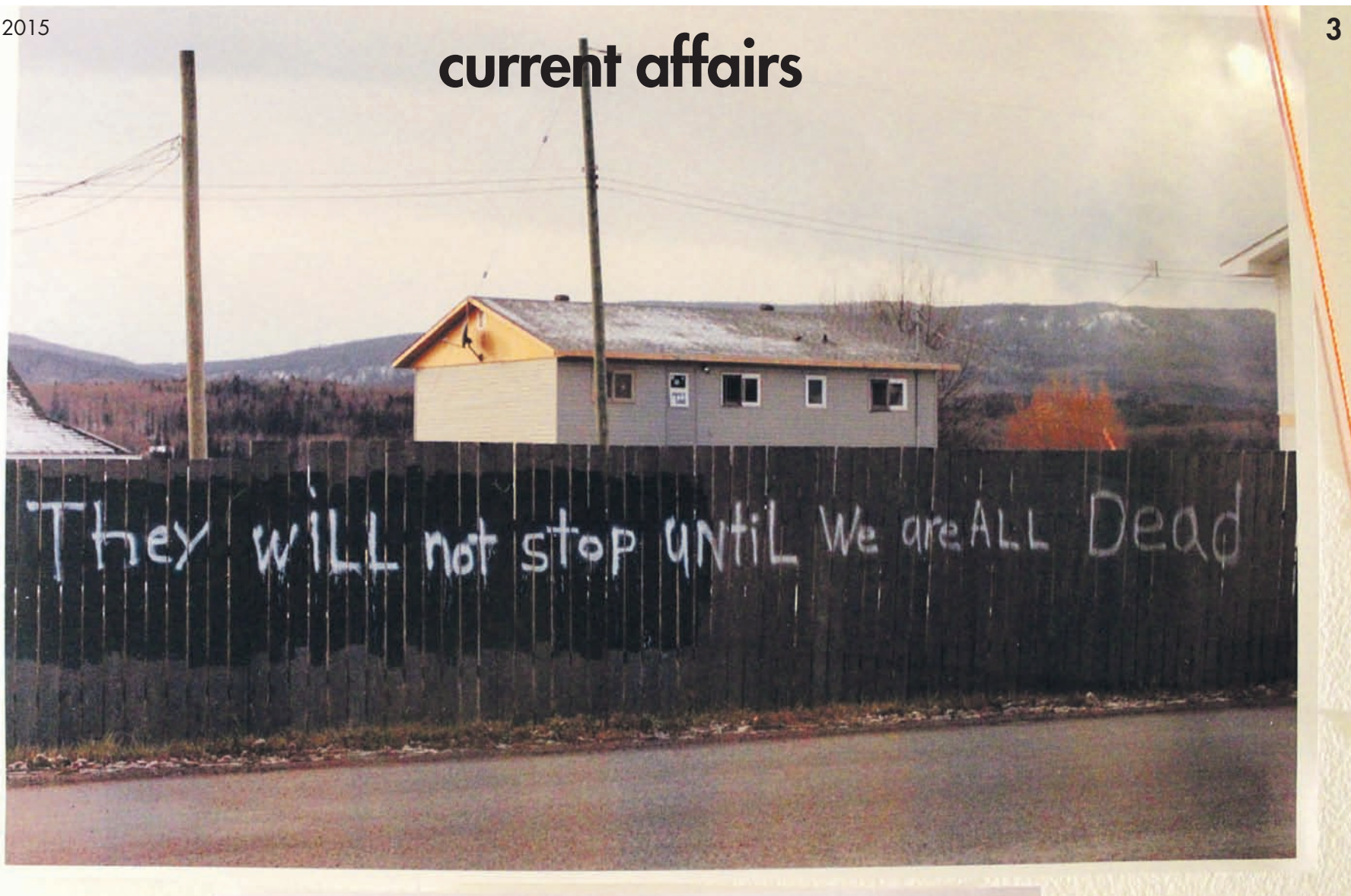


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current affairs



piping hot resistance

Fundraiser Seeks to Support Indigenous Resistance to Oil Pipelines

by Marianne Geoffrion

Activists “piped up” Saturday night to raise awareness about the Energy East Pipeline and fundraise for the Unist’otèn Camp, a hotbed of grassroots resistance fighting for indigenous peoples’ right to their land in British Columbia.

Located in a small studio on de Gaspé Ave., the guests of “Pipe-Up!” were invited to walk in socks and drink Kombucha as they explored a photography project based on a Unist’otèn documentary and listened to musical performances.

It can be hard for people to feel that they have the power to change things, said activist Alyssa Simon-Bélanger. “That’s why creating events based on creativity and positivity is important—it makes it easy for people to join.”

Samuel Brière, an organizer of the event, explained that the goal was to raise as much money as possible for the Unist’otèn Camp.

“But beyond that, it’s creating a bridge between what’s going on in BC—the pipeline issues, the tar sands, transportation, etc.—and what we’re facing here in Quebec with the Energy East Project,” he added.

TransCanada predicts that the Energy East Pipeline project will be actively pumping oil into Quebec by 2018 if they get final regulatory approval in the fourth quarter of this year.

Simultaneously, TransCanada is looking to build new pipelines on the Wet’suwet’en territory, a free territory that never ceded to the colonial Canadian state, according to the Unist’otèn Camp website.

This distresses many indigenous people living on the land. A short video documentary projected during the Pipe-Up event called “How to Stop an Oil and Gas Pipeline: The Unist’otèn Camp Resistance,” explores the many attempts they undertake to pro-

tect their land, such as building an oversized streamer with “No Pipelines” written in capital letters, hung between tall trees on the outskirts of the forest.

“Job creation is really not important if the primordial things in life are not being respected,” said Élisabeth Néron.

TransCanada’s East Energy Pipeline website has a section at the top called “Benefits.” With the touch of the mouse, the category expands in four subsections: “Fueling our Growth,” “Creates Jobs,” “Bolsters Provincial Economics” and “Supports Communities.”

The benefits they bring up are mostly related to the economy.

“It might be good [economically] in the short term,” Brière told *The Link*, adding that in “the long run, we’ll be facing a big wall with exploiting dirty energies.

“Environmentally, socially and economically speaking, it doesn’t make sense.”

According to The Ontario Energy Board’s (OEB) assessment of TransCanada’s Energy East Application, further information is needed to ascertain the effects the pipeline would have, including “with respect to impacts on drinking water.”

The issue is “we’re not using our resources well,” said Alexandra Pronovost, an intellectual and cultural mediator for Exeko, an organization mandated to “promote the inclusion and development of the most marginalized people through innovation in culture and education.”

“We all need clean air and clean water, so whatever our differences [...] there is a condition of life that we have in common.”

Pronovost emphasized that the event was mostly created to raise awareness.

“Environmental issues [...] bring people together. Everyone’s connecting.”

The event provided some information on

the ongoing concerns felt by some people towards TransCanada’s pipeline projects. A whole wall was dedicated to a series of pictures taken from the documentary “RESIST: The Unist’otèn’s Call to the Land,” created by Simple Matters Films. A quote was taped to each picture, giving insight on the film to anyone interested.

The main source of information was the documentary, made by AJ+, an affiliate of Al Jazeera, which focused on the Unist’otèn Camp. The activists of the indigenous land are shown struggling to be heard.

The first message that appears on screen is, “Since 2010, the Unist’otèn group, an indigenous group, has been blocking oil and gas pipelines from being built on their land.”

“In June 2014, Canada approved the Enbridge Northern Gateway, a tar sands pipeline, and gave them 209 conditions to fulfill.

“One of those conditions is a mandatory consultation with the indigenous communi-

ties whose land they would cross.”

The gatewayfacts.ca website states that one of five conditions to building the pipeline is to make sure that the “legal requirements regarding Aboriginal and treaty rights are addressed, and First Nations are provided with the opportunities, information and resources necessary to participate in and benefit from a heavy oil project.”

Pronovost explained that indigenous people have a right to choose whether the pipeline runs through their land or not. “It’s their land; they have to decide if they want it to go there,” she said.

Pronovost added that until we leave indigenous peoples alone to decide what they want to do with their resources, we’re still in a “colonialist racist system.”

“You can try to disguise it under fancy words, but that’s kind of what it boils down to.”

Photos Fatma Daldoul





art in the atrium

Concordia Greenhouse Welcomes Students for Workshop on Creating Zines

by Jane Lakes

Gathered on the top floor of the Hall building, a small group of students sat quietly among shelves of plants, carefully cutting, pasting and glittering a fresh batch of artistic booklets.

The crafters were participating in the Concordia Greenhouses' monthly Art in the Atrium series, which kicked off the winter semester on Thursday evening with a zine theme.

"It really allows an opportunity for sharing information, for chatting about people's lives," said event coordinator Sheena Swirlz.

Complete with pumpkin cookies, tea and a temperature at least 30 degrees warmer than outside, the evening began with a quick briefing by Swirlz on different kinds of zines, where to find them, how to make your own and several examples.

Defined by Swirlz as a small creative project that "you give yourself [as] a self-published book," zines can be anything you make of them.

"People will make everything, [even]

art zines that are only pictures," Swirlz explained. "Poetry zines are very common, guide zines, and what's called per-zines, which are personal zines."

From small zines about different kind of screws to medium ones about little blue houses, to ones with wax paper covers displaying a collection of short stories, the crafters were never far from inspiration.

"This is more sharing-based," explained Swirlz. "People can share tips on what they've learned, or ways of doing things more interestingly, and people get really inspired off of each other."

With some choosing to make collage zines out of old books, and others preferring to make use of the old-fashioned stamps Swirlz provided, the evening concluded with a fresh batch of zines ready to be distributed.

These small booklets can be kept for oneself or circulated widely as a travelling zine, which is passed along from traveller to traveller until it becomes a completed publication.

"The best thing to do is to go to a workshop like this and get interactive," said Swirlz.

"There's also zines on how to make zines that you can read, and the Internet has lots

of tutorials especially on binding and sizes that you can do. Typically there are just a few workshops a year where you can engage in what different organizations do."

Montreal is a hub for zine culture. Annual events such as Expозine, the Anarchist Bookfair and the Queer Book Fair are venues that provide an outlet for prospective zine-creators.

Local zines can be found on the shelves at the Concordia Co-Op Bookstore. Closer to home, the Greenhouse shelves some on herbal health.

"Accessibility is really important to us here," said Swirlz. "Especially in the winter, I think that it's really important to have free spaces where people can go and interact where they don't necessarily need to be purchasing food. I think people really enjoy in the winter to come up here, be with community and be creative."

The monthly "crafternoons," which are set to continue for the rest of the semester, have a short but rich history.

"It was started about two years ago by volunteers, and it has continued as a regular event, partially because this is a really great space to make art and also because

there's not a lot of creative play events on campus," said Swirlz.

Previous months' themes include making new candles by recycling old wax; creating bird boxes, miniature stuffed animals and terrarium necklaces; and wood burning.

With next month's event scheduled to be Valentine's Day-themed, Swirlz hopes to show participants that "you don't necessarily need to buy expensive chocolate and gifts to express your love."

"You could just make somebody a little zine about the top ten things you like about them," Swirlz added.

Beyond Art in the Atrium, the Greenhouse regularly hosts a variety of events such as weekly educational workshops, music parties, clothing swaps and film screenings.

The Greenhouse also hosted their annual plant sale last Wednesday, which saw over 700 plants sell out within an hour.

To see when the next Greenhouse event is, checkout concordiagreenhouse.com or their Facebook page.

Photo Brandon Johnston

To see when the next Greenhouse event is, check out concordiagreenhouse.com or their Facebook page.

a meeting of dirty minds

Panel on Soil Brings Science, Art and Activism Together

by Maxime Roy

Soil degradation is a global problem. Faced with the upcoming food systems crisis, 2015 was declared the International Year of Soils by the United Nations. The panel “Soil: Source of Life,” held Friday at Concordia, discussed the causes of the crisis as well as the changes to food systems needed to avert it.

Topsoil is the bioactive and biodiverse layer of soil necessary for long-term food production. Most modern industrial agricultural practices diminish the amount and vitality of topsoil, in contrast to sustainable agricultural practices, which build fresh topsoil.

In the words of Dr. Elaine Ingham, an international leader in microbiology researching the complex links within the soil food web, “the difference between soil and dirt is that soil is alive while dirt is dead.”

Soil mismanagement—on top of a growing human population, increasing meat consumption, urban sprawl, desertification, climate change and the industrial chemical poisoning of land and water—is leading to the elimination of a finite resource fundamental to humanity’s food systems: soil.

“Healthy soil is necessary to build resilience to climate change,” said Loïc Dewavrin, a large-scale organic farmer who, along with his family, cultivates 1,500 acres by the St. Lawrence River on a mission to prove the efficacy

of sustainable agriculture.

The event was co-organized by Compost Montreal and Mycelium Labs. The D.B. Clarke Theatre was packed with a mix of young students, modern farmers, social activists, indigenous groups, grey-haired hippies and green entrepreneurs.

Upon entering the guests were given a folded dove containing a poem and sunflower seeds, a collaboration between Dewavrin and Emily Rose Michaud, an artist and activist who works with land and who seeks to collaborate with both natural and social forces.

Michaud was central to the development of the “Sprout Out Loud!” zine and to the transformation of the Champ des Possibles, a commercial space that was transformed into a municipal park in the Mile End.

Other guests included Silver Bear, alias Steve McComber, a member of the Iroquois Confederation known as a keeper of Iroquois seeds; Jonathan Pineault, a self-declared “unlikely” businessman who started permaculture enterprise Écomestible; and Vanessa Reid, activist and ex-executive director of the Santropol Roulant.

“There is almost no soil that lacks minerals and nutrients, only the life and biodiversity that is required to sequence and unlock these nutrients [that] are missing,” Ingham said.

Graphic Raven Sisypheus



digitized and decolonized

Concordia Panel Explores the Work of Aboriginal Artists in the Digital Sphere

by Brandon Johnston @bjohnston_photo

Can the digital realm exist as decolonized space? This was one of the topics discussed at last Friday’s panel discussion “Aboriginal Territories in Digital Space” in the EV building’s auditorium.

Organized by the Aboriginal Arts Research Group, the Concordia-based student group focused the event on fostering a discussion on indigenous art and artists in Montreal.

Skawennati, an Aboriginal artist and Concordia graduate, spoke about her recent project “Time Traveler,” an animated video series based on a Mohawk character named Hunter who lives in the distant future.

He acquires a pair of glasses that allow him to travel through time and interact with historic events. His adventures allow him to understand his people’s history, and throughout the series, he forms a positive self-identity, eventually falling in love and gaining success in the hyper-materialistic world of the future.

“I think that what we’re doing as artists is we’re trying to show connected history and recreate that history,” Skawennati said. “I think art has that potential to remind us of something and in this case, it’s reminding us of our connections to our past and our ancestors.”

The entire series was created on a comput-

erized set designed in Second Life, an online virtual reality.

“I really think virtual worlds are kind of metaphors for the future and that’s why I thought it was the right medium to use for this story,” she continued.

Following Skawennati’s talk, Jason Lewis, Concordia Research Chair and associate professor of Computation Arts, discussed SKINS—a video game design workshop he helps coordinate for Kahnawake’s First Nations youth.

The workshop allows young people to design their own video games from the ground up, with the help of Lewis and others. They first discuss the story they want their game to tell, design characters and landscapes using paper and clay and eventually take the games to the digital stage with the help of the workshop coordinators.

“A big part of why we undertook the SKINS workshops is because [technological] choices are being made for us,” Lewis said. “Part of what we need to do is start making those choices ourselves, so we can make them the way we want.”

“In order to do that we need to gain a good grasp on the technology—the best place to start is with the youth.”

Technology, Lewis claimed, is inherently biased towards those who develop it. Since it has been primarily developed through a Western lens, it reflects those worldviews

and results in a monoculture of technology, absent of divergent voices.

Morgan Kennedy, a usability analyst at Ubisoft, continued the evening’s discussion by talking about his experiences in helping develop Assassin’s Creed III, a video game which features a mixed-race Mohawk protagonist named Ratonnhaké:ton.

“At all levels of the development team [...] there were people who really cared about getting it right,” Kennedy said on the game’s development.

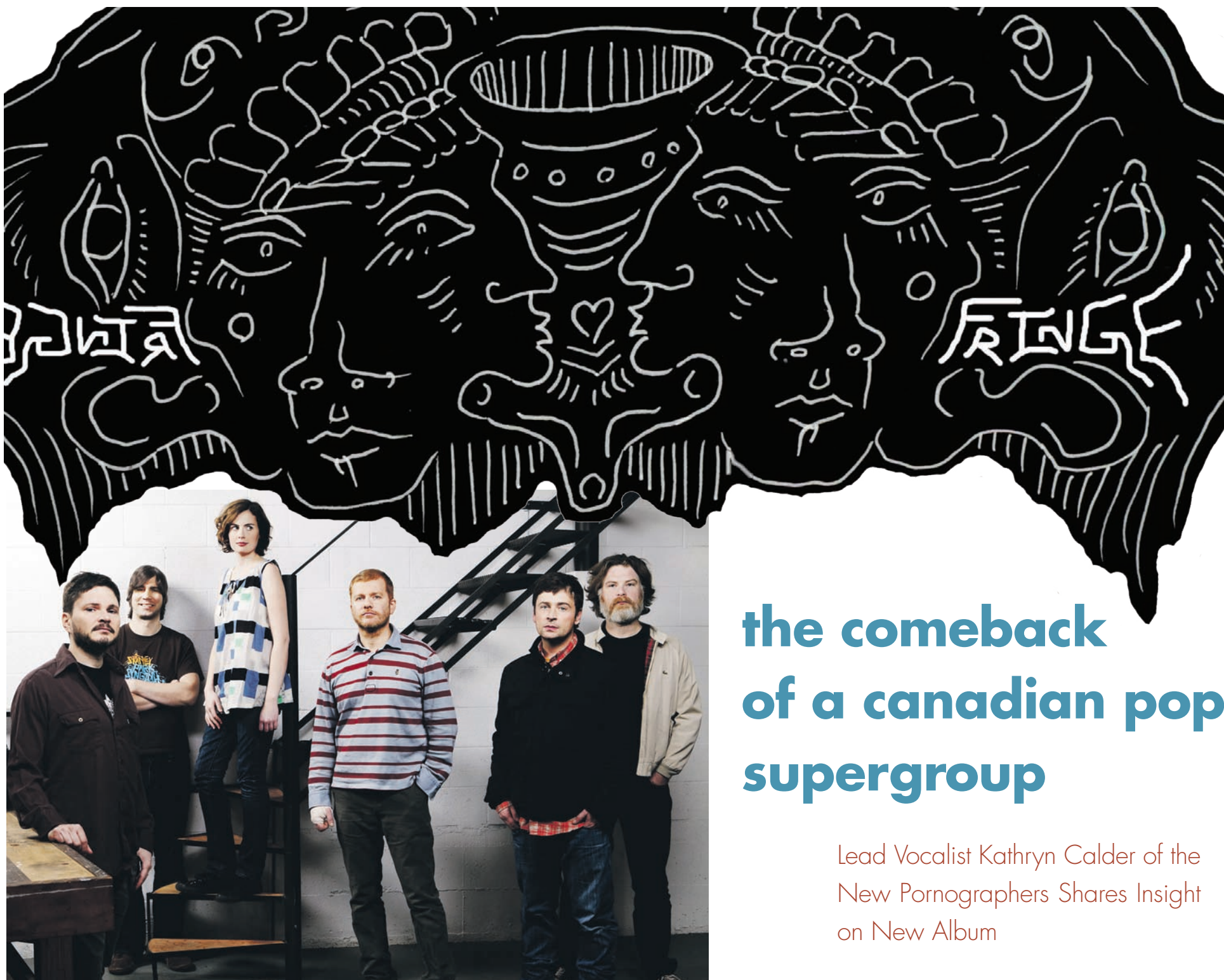
“There was this sort of political battle between the development team and

our home office over whether or not [Ratonnhaké:ton] would actually speak Mohawk in the game,” he said. In the end, a significant portion of the dialogue chosen for the game did appear in Mohawk.

“Sadly, I think that Assassin’s Creed III was one of the only [high budget] games that came out that year that actually featured a non-white protagonist,” Kennedy added. “I think that’s a shame and it speaks volumes about what’s wrong with the industry right now.”

Photo Brandon Johnston





the comeback of a canadian pop supergroup

Lead Vocalist Kathryn Calder of the
New Pornographers Shares Insight
on New Album

By Andy Fidel @Tourneaurouge

The New Pornographers are coming back to Montreal this Wednesday, ready to sway the Corona Theatre with a whole lot of keyboards, plenty of synthesizers and energetic pop sounds. With the release of their new studio album *Brill Bruisers*, the band call themselves a pop super-group.

An indie-rock band originally from Vancouver, B.C., The New Pornographers have been around since 1999, moving the Canadian music scene with their catchy guitar strums and picking patterns that bear a musical resemblance to 1960s pop group The Bee Gees and rock iconoclasts The Rolling Stones.

"[We're] a very unique collection of people," said Kathryn Calder, the band's lead singer. "There are a lot of really strong songwriters and musicians in our band. There are a lot of ideas and directions that we could go. It's like an art collaboration."

"If one person is playing all the instruments it sort of lends itself to being the same type of melody or the same type of rhythm. As soon as you bring somebody else, it just changes. I love that collaborating and the meetings of the mind."

Album opener "Brill Bruisers" captures that communal energy perfectly. The song starts full blast with the lines "Bo ba, bo ba ba bo, Bo ba, bo ba ba" and leads the way to the 13 songs written for the most part by lead singer Carl Newman, also known as A.C. Newman.

Newman told RiffYou.com that he liked to go into a new song without a concrete idea

and work at it until it just sounds right—there's no real formula to success.

"It's hard to tell where songs come from," said Newman. "I want it to burst out of the gate with a big hook [...] We just gotta make sure we record this as well as possible. The drums need to sound great, the guitars need to sound great, and the vocals have to sound great."

All eight members pitch into the collaborative process with their own colours and experiences, making the album flavorful, each song unique with different minds at work.

"You get not only life perspectives of where everybody is, but also what everybody is listening to," said Calder. "We're all big music fans."

Newman told *New York* magazine that he "didn't really have plans for world domination; I just wanted to have an interesting band with friends."

It's a mutual feeling for Calder, who believes that being in a band is like being in a club—there's a feeling of belonging. She joined The New Pornographers in 2005 on their third album, *Twin Cinema*.

"It's weird, like one part happenstance, one part luck, one part connection."

When Calder joined the band for their sixth album, Newman had already laid out the groundwork. For the most part, the songs had been written and structured, and Newman knew which direction he wanted to take them.

"I just get to come in and have fun," said Calder. "It's a crazy experience. My brain is always so tired every day after recording to constantly keep coming up with new ideas, new ideas, new ideas, all day. It's really a brain workout."

"Luckily when you're working with other people and you're collaborating, you don't have to have all the energy yourself."

Moreover, Carl Newman is actually Kathryn Calder's newfound long-lost uncle from her mother's side, who had been adopted.

"It was incredibly surreal at the time," said Calder. "I would have been incredibly dumb if I didn't jump all over this chance. Sometimes opportunities are just too good, you know, so you don't even have a chance to think about what the implications are going to be. You're like, 'this is awesome and I'm going to do this.'"

"I love being in bands," Calder continued. "It's like being on a soccer team. Any time you do anything with a group of people, it creates this little club that you belong to. I like that feeling."

Many of the band members are either part of other Canadian bands or have solo careers. For instance, bassist John Collins is from The Evaporators, guitarist Dan Bejar fronts Destroyer and Carl Newman played with Zumpano. Like Neko Case, Kathryn Calder also has a solo music career.

"With my solo thing, I tend to write songs that are quieter and slower," said Calder. "Maybe a little mellower. It's nice to be able to express that side too."

"I think the rock band stuff comes naturally to me in the rock band setting and the quiet music comes naturally when I'm sitting there writing my own songs. I can really be all over the place if I let myself be," Calder continued.

Her solo record was her opening experience in the music industry. Calder marked

her debut as a singer and musician when her mother was diagnosed with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, a fatal disease that affects the neurons in the brain and spinal cord.

"She'd always been [such] a huge supporter of my music that I decided I was going to dedicate an album to her," Calder said. "I was going to write my first solo album and dedicate it to her."

Calder turned her living room into a recording studio and recorded her first album, *Are You My Mother?*, released in 2010. A Kickstarter-funded documentary was made by Yellow Bird Project and titled *A Matter of Time*.

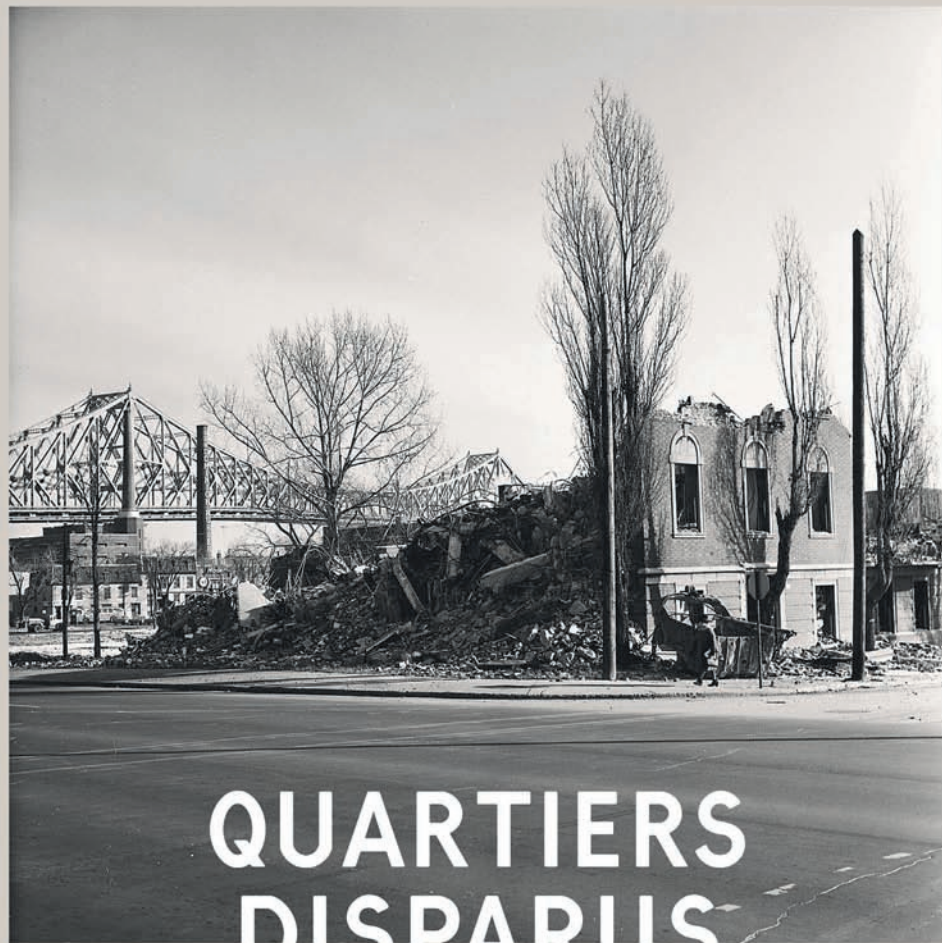
Her childhood was musical; both her parents played the piano. Kathryn describes her father as an "excellent sight reader". He would sit down at the piano, open any music book and play whatever was on the page. "It was crazy to watch," Calder said. Her mother, on the other hand, played jazz.

"Between the two of them, there was constantly music going."

"I find that when you're working on music or writing, that's it's very important what you listen to before you start," Calder said. "Whatever I'm listening to will seep into what I'm working on, even if I'm not intending on it. So I try to listen to really great things."

**The New Pornographers // Virgin Mobile
Corona Theatre (2490 Notre-Dame St.) // 8pm // \$30 adv**

Photo courtesy of Indoor Recess



QUARTIERS DISPARUS

RED LIGHT, FAUBOURG À M'LASSE, GOOSE VILLAGE

UN OUVRAGE SOUS LA DIRECTION DE
CATHERINE CHARLEBOIS ET PAUL-ANDRÉ LINTEAU

cardinal

by Michelle Pucci @michellempucci

Snapshots of women hanging laundry in makeshift courtyards and back alleys, children hanging over precariously built railings and curious residents and shop owners staring at city workers photographing corner stores—these are the only mementos of parts of Montreal's working-class history.

The archived photos of old lopsided houses from *Quartiers Disparus* are from a bygone era and present what was lost when Montreal sought modern metropolis status.

The book, *Quartiers Disparus*—based off an exhibition originally shown at the Centre d'histoire de Montreal in collaboration with the city's archives—will be presented once again at McGill's Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Montreal this Thursday.

Most of the historical research focused on the forgotten Red Light District, Goose Village and Faubourg à m'lasse, mostly demolished from 1957 to 1964 to make way for a modern city.

Sex workers and gamblers

Remnants of the former Red Light District are still somewhat visible. The area between St. Laurent Blvd. and St. Hubert St., where you find most of the UQAM campus, is still home to many of the city's strip clubs and sex shops.

Much of the area was demolished in 1957 and 1958 and replaced with 788 social housing units, the Habitations Jeanne-Mance.

In the mid-1900s, the Red Light District was considered a hotbed for criminal activity, but the people that grew up in the area didn't feel that way.

"When we think Red Light, we think prostitutes and gamblers," said co-author Catherine Charlebois, a museologist at the Centre d'histoire de Montréal. "But there were many families there."

More so than the result of the Quiet Revolution, which saw Quebec invest in its own infrastructure and social systems and enforce secular policies, Charlebois says the city was marked by a modern revolution.

Urban planning turned away from the "cramped" and "unhygienic" old neighbourhood structures and moved towards wide open spaces in the form of parks, public centres, highways and suburbanization.

Coming out of WWII, Charlebois says North Americans dreamed of metropolis.

"We felt that the cities we had were the cities of the industrial revolution," she said. "They weren't adapted for modern life."

The car was also becoming an icon—and a headache, says Charlebois. A highway that led directly to the downtown core was the solution to modern living.

Cities were reorganized: the city centre was for business, for working, for trade.

"The idea wasn't to live downtown, the functions for living existed on the periphery," said Charlebois.

Labourers were the main residents of the downtown areas and were only there because they couldn't afford to get out.

"They didn't have the money to buy a house in the suburbs and have nice grass and a pool," Charlebois said.

Now it's a bit of the inverse, she added. People are obliged to go to the suburbs because it's less expensive to raise a family.

Mayor Jean Drapeau spearheaded the modernization of Montreal. His terms from 1954 to 1957 and again from 1960 to 1986 coincide with the "renewal" of the city and the disappearance of the low-income neighbourhoods.

The desire to create space meant starting from scratch, eliminating traces of the industrial revolution by demolishing the neighbourhoods that served only as reminders.

"At the time, there wasn't a notion of keeping what is good and demolition what should be demolished," Charlebois said. "There was no concept of recycling or recuperation."

Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance was the ideal modern structure. It released occupied land to make way for parks, playing grounds and green spaces to help the area breathe.

Goose Town

Of all the forgotten neighbourhoods, the most devastating loss was Goose Village.

About 1,500 residents were displaced and 350 buildings were torn down, including its Victorian-style homes, a school, a playing field, a recreational centre and a former church-turned-factory—only a fire station and gin distillery escaped the destruction.

"We demolished it all; there's nothing that remains," Charlebois said.

The area by Victoria Bridge was destroyed in 1964 to make way for Expo 67, the international event that would raise Montreal's status as a major city.

Goose Village, with its reeking stockyards and tanneries, stood in the way of that goal. By the 1960s, it was mostly inhabited by Italian immigrants, who didn't amount much of an opposition.

The residents of Goose Village spread out to the neighbouring South West, Pointe St. Charles, LaSalle, Verdun and even Greenfield Park on the South Shore. They were faced with the challenge of finding equally cheap places to live.

In the end, there isn't anything left of the Autostade—the football stadium built for Expo 67 on the razed Goose Village land. Now it mostly consists of a Costco, a train station and parking lots.

Molasses memories

Since the creation of CBC/Radio-Canada in 1936, the public broadcaster's French-language service had managed to spread its resources throughout the city in some 40 different locations.

Here, Drapeau saw an opportunity to fulfill another dream: a dream of a broadcast city, a district where television and radio stations were concentrated.

The broadcast city would be the eastern city centre—counterbalancing the traditional business district to the west, a predominantly Anglophone area.

"We dreamed of a centre that was more Francophone, where we could have public installations," said Charlebois. "Radio-Can-

ada was the motor for that."

Near the port east of Berri St., the smell of molasses was strong. According to Charlebois, the nearby sugar refinery was only a reminder of what the low-income labourers could not afford. Instead, everyone ate the imported molasses.

By 1963, the 5,000 mostly French-Canadian residents were told to vacate the area; the planned broadcast city would reclaim the flattened area and launch the downtown of the east.

But the broadcast city never came. The planning was drawn out to 10 years until the current CBC/Radio-Canada tower was built.

Where 5,000 once lived there is now a tower, a few scattered buildings and parking lots.

"The city isn't static, it transforms constantly," Charlebois said. "In areas with older buildings, like Griffintown, we always ask ourselves, 'What do we keep?'"

While Charlebois says there are many comparisons between urban redevelopment then and now, the Habitations Jeanne-Mance, the Radio-Canada tower and Expo 67 were different because they were government projects.

They were developed with collective ideals.

In contrast, in Griffintown today, the city is attracting private interests, mainly in the form of condo developers.

The forgotten neighbourhoods from 1957 to 1964 were much more dramatic.

Charlebois remembers the testimony of one woman, who compared it to a death.

"They had to mourn the loss of their neighbourhood," she said. "They couldn't go back."

Quartiers Disparus revisits the memories of boroughs, whose residents exhibited a "village spirit." Closed networks between residents existed beyond the dated homes and unpleasant odours, and some areas were intertwined with the histories of the families that inhabited them for generations.

Quartiers Disparus // Thursday, Jan. 29 // 11:45 a.m. // CRIEM CIRM (3438 McTavish Ave.) // Free Admission

Photo courtesy Les Editions Cardinal

BY-ELECTION VOLUME 35

THE LINK

CONCORDIA'S INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1980

Wednesday, Jan. 28 4 p.m.
The Link Office
 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W., H-649

It's the start of a new year and we're looking to fill our editorial roster. We currently have three positions open. If you've contributed to four (4) separate issues of this year's volume of the *The Link* then you're eligible to run. Applicants must submit a letter of intent and three (3) samples of published work to *The Link*'s office by 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 28.

Elections will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 4 at 4 p.m in *The Link*'s office, H-649. All staff members (those who have contributed four times or more) are eligible and encouraged to vote in the election.

Here are the current open positions:

Community Editor

You are the link between our editors, audience and contributors. Organize social events, help curate our online presence, and keep the community thriving.

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You're in charge of the news portion of our weekly print issue. Keep tabs on student politicians, uncover corruption, and ensure that everyone's voice is heard in our weekly publication.

Graphics Editor

Every story needs a visual. Use your artistic prowess to help us illustrate unflattering portraits of bureaucrats, communicate with graphic contributors, and draw sexy pictures for sexy stories.

Eligible to run:

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One contribution needed:

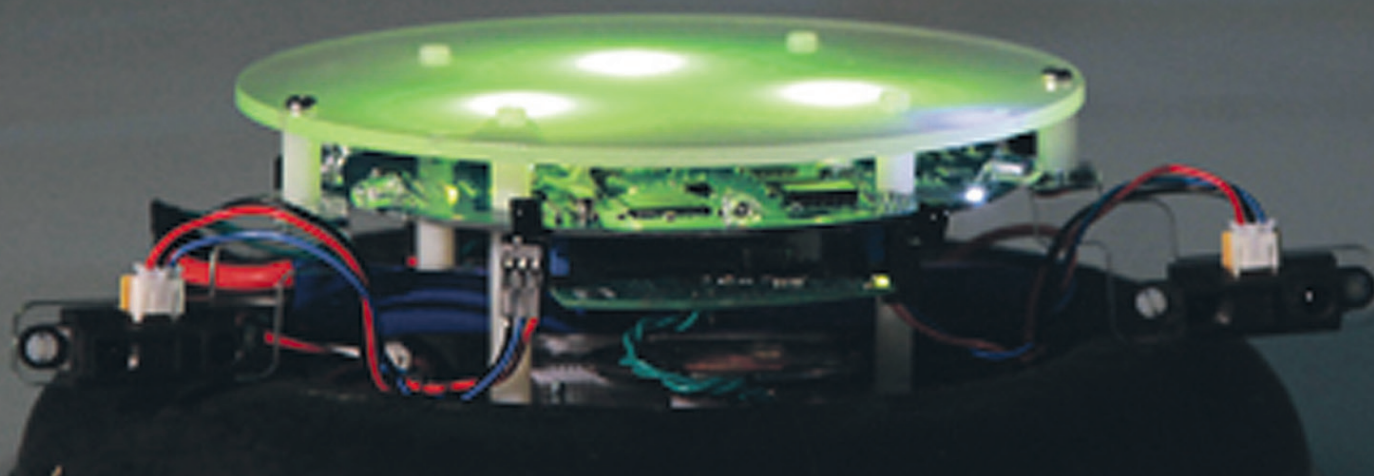
Alex Ocheoha, Chanel Jacques, Julien Assouline, Robert Arzenshek, Colin Harris, Bianca Gazinschi

THE LINK DESIGN WORKSHOP

Ever wondered what people are talking about when they talk about design? From Illustrator to inDesign to typography, there's a whole lot to learn.

creative director laura lalonde
 will answer any and all of your design questions in an interactive workshop on

FRIDAY, JAN. 30 AT 5 P.M.
THE LINK OFFICE, H-649



the organism of robots

Multimedia Artists Create Kinetic Installation Exploring Robotics and Ecosystems

By June Loper

Somewhere between fact and fiction, Eastern Bloc Gallery revisits the theme of robots and drones for the exhibition *Robotis Personae*. Presenting a binary and complementary perspective by artists Sofian Audry, Samuel St-Aubin, Stephen Kelly and Beatriz Herrera, the gallery examines the paradoxes existing between the machine and the human environment.

Describing herself as a “hermitic luddite who loves robots,” Chilean-born mixed media artist Beatriz Herrera is based in Montreal and graduated from Concordia’s Master of Fine Arts program a year and a half ago.

Working with organic and simple mechanisms, Herrera creates in *Humo, Leche y Miel* (Smoke, Milk and Honey) a kinetic installation in which she plays on the association of opposing elements, mixing the organic and the robotic; the automatic and the uncalculated; and the spontaneous along with the pre-programmed.

St-Aubin, Audry and Kelly present a different take on robotics with the installation *Vessels: Intro*, an exhibit composed of a multitude of robots swimming among other machines. The piece reflects on the role of collective behaviour and what this specific observation says about a certain environment. Using diverging ideas and visions, Herrera explained they still shared similar preoccupations.

“We’re both trying to explore emergence, how small random movements and decisions really create a whole world,” she said. “Also, we’re all trying to experiment with expectations of how artists’ robots might work: where can we set up the work? How can we create interventions in the world? How to take the robots outside the gallery?”

“Ironically, I’ve realized that for me, if I ever want to safely take my work out into the world, the gallery is absolutely necessary as a

space of experimentation.”

In an empty room of the Eastern Bloc gallery, Walker, Porcupine, The Blob and The Brain—the names given to the robots on display—interact with each other and move around the space they share. On the walls of the room, various types of sketches, mock-ups and drawings present the different steps of the conceptualization and creation of these metallic creatures.

Every robot Herrera created carries its own distinctive characteristics. Walker has legs that kick, Porcupine has a spiky allure, The Blob was built with misshapen wheels forcing it to circulate in unsteady jerks while The Brain spins around and around in its rubber, metal and paper structure.

Focusing on behavioural patterns, Herrera plays largely with scale and differences in robot size – her largest piece being close to seven feet long while the smallest is only two feet long. She looks at the ways in which their irregular forms operate and influence the way they move, crash into each other or chase one another.

Deliberately exposing the hand-made nature of her robots, Herrera aims to critique certain concepts of efficiency and technology in our culture. Building the robots from scratch, her approach is not one of a mechanical engineer trying to build the perfect machine but one of an artist exploring and experimenting with that discipline.

Through the process of creating these machines, her observations underline the limits of human control over robots. Once they are created, Herrera explains, small imperfections come into play and the way the robots are going to move becomes unpredictable.

Could robots have an instinct of their own? The title of the piece *Humo, Leche y Miel*, she explained, made sense to her in her desire to move away from typical interactive installa-

tions. The robots are showcased in the space as having a life of their own, independent from the spectator’s point of view. In a playful and subtle take on robotics, her installation is an open-ended question on the increasingly consequent space occupied by robots and drones in our environment.

“Robots fascinate me most of all because they are a physical presence among us. It’s not an invisible technology, it’s not tiny, it’s everything from rumbas to military drones, to robotic field medics and nannies,” said Herrera.

Part of what motivated her to work with the world of robots and machines was the realization of the omnipresence of technology in our culture, how deeply entrenched it is in our everyday lives and how little we truly understand it.

“It really speaks of a complete disconnect with our world, not just technology, but everything from our clothes, shit, garbage, tax money. Where does any of it go? To a great degree my art practice is about a series of small gestures to attempt to understand the context of the world that’s around us right now,” said Herrera.

For her next project, Herrera will also be working with robots and more precisely on a triptych of talking, recording and storytelling robots. Interested in the emotional responses triggered by the contact with physical machines, most of her research relies on people’s testimonies, stories about robots, monologues, jokes and “neurotic, fearful, nervous, hopeful, pedantic little shorts,” Herrera concluded.

ROBOTIS PERSONAE // Jan 22. – Feb. 11 // Eastern Bloc Gallery // Opening hours: Tuesday - Sunday, 12 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Photo: Courtesy of Eastern Bloc
Graphic: Sam Jones



Let the gaelic games begin

Visiting Irish Scholar Set to Begin First-Ever Gaelic Athletic Association Club at Concordia

BOX SCORES

WEEK OF JAN. 20 TO JAN. 26

WEDNESDAY

21

Men's Hockey—Concordia 8, UQTR 5

THURSDAY

22

Women's Basketball—Concordia 44, UQAM 60
Men's Basketball—Concordia 72, UQAM 57

FRIDAY

23

Women's Hockey—Concordia 6, Carleton 1

SATURDAY

24

Women's Basketball—Concordia 55, UQAM 75
Men's Basketball—Concordia 74, UQAM 70

SUNDAY

25

Men's Hockey—Concordia 2, Laurentian 4
Women's Hockey—Concordia 2, McGill 3 (OT)

UPCOMING GAMES

COMING UP IN CONCORDIA SPORTS

THURSDAY

29

6:00 p.m. Women's Basketball vs. Laval Rouge et Or (Concordia Gymnasium)
8:00 p.m. Men's Basketball vs. Laval Rouge et Or (Concordia Gymnasium)

FRIDAY

30

7:00 p.m. Women's Hockey at Ottawa Gee-Gees

SATURDAY

31

5:00 p.m. Women's Basketball at Laval Rouge et Or
7:00 p.m. Men's Basketball at Laval Rouge et Or

SUNDAY

1

2:00 p.m. Women's Basketball at UOIT Ridgebacks

by Julian McKenzie @JulianTheIntern

Formed in the 19th century, the Gaelic Athletic Association has over one million participants worldwide and features numerous Irish sports, including Gaelic football and hurling. Both sports are huge hits in their native country of Ireland and games are played in front of tens of thousands of fans.

These numbers dwarf the 10-15 Concordia students who attended the first meeting of "Na hÓglaigh Ollscoile" or the Gaelic Athletic Association club this past Wednesday. However, it's a stepping-stone in the hopes of becoming the first GAA to operate out of a Canadian university.

"In the last five or six years, the GAA have been promoting Gaelic games in American universities so they have national competitions for university clubs," said Daithí Mac Fhlaitimh, a visiting Irish scholar at Concordia's School of Canadian Irish Studies.

"When I was looking across all of these Canadian universities, [I thought] there are these fantastic projects going on in America, why not in Canada?"

Fhlaitimh is spearheading the development of Concordia's first-ever GAA club, with an emphasis on promoting hurling and Gaelic football. According to their club proposal, the volunteers wish to eventually develop four teams—two male and two female teams of Gaelic football and hurling.

Montreal has three Gaelic football clubs that each play in the Montreal Superleague: the Verdun Vikings, Griffintown Gaels, and the Goose Vil-

lage Black Rocks. The Volunteers intend on joining the league, meaning they'll become the fourth team in the Superleague.

Recognized as Ireland's most popular sport, Gaelic football brings together elements of soccer, rugby, handball, volleyball and even basketball. 15 players per team aim to score on a net, or through uprights with the aid of hand-passes, kick-passes, kicks and catches.

Hurling, seen as "the fastest game on grass," is a game that is over 3,000 years old. Players use a wooden stick, or hurley, to hit a small leather-covered ball, known as a sliotar, into a goal.

"[Hurling] feels like it's something special," said Fhlaitimh. "For me anyways, there's spirituality playing hurling because of the history. Three thousand years of your kin playing this sport. I think that's unrivalled, maybe with Native Americans here playing lacrosse. In European terms, it's unmatched."

Back in Ireland, most players of Gaelic football and hurling do not play the sport for a living. Most players, even play-by-play commentators, have regular day jobs such as teachers, bankers and even military personnel.

"They all go back to their job on Monday morning after playing in front of 80,000 people on Sunday," said Fhlaitimh. "They're your average Joe Soap."

In addition, players represent their own parishes and counties out of pride as opposed to more money-driven athletes elsewhere who, in turn, have more freedom to play wherever they feel.

"It's to do with the fact that [the GAA] is a community-based organization,"

Fhlaitimh added. "It's about representing your family, where you come from and basically your own local area."

"There's a fear if it does become professional, you'll have big counties like Dublin with huge populations attracting players from counties all over the country. Then it becomes not about where you're from, or representing your family or parish or your people, and more about money."

This past Saturday afternoon, assisted by the Montreal Shamrocks, a local GAA club and Team Quebec players, a Gaelic football practice for beginners took place at the Stinger Dome on the Loyola campus, followed by a scrimmage.

The majority of attendees were interested in Gaelic football, as opposed to hurling, yet all had to adjust to the learning curve of a new sport.

"This is my very first day [playing Gaelic football], ever," said Irish Studies student Morgan Kleinsasser. "I keep tossing it up to set it, like volleyball, and you can't. You have to hold it in your hand and hit it."

"It's a lot of fun," said Irish Studies student Patrick Mayers. "You come here, [the coaches] show you the ropes, and it doesn't matter if you suck right away or if you're good. Everybody's just welcome to play and have a lot of fun."

The Volunteers plan on holding monthly practices according to their proposal and will offer more training sessions as the conditions get warmer. The Volunteers plan on playing their first game in the Superleague in March.

Photo Elysia-Marie Campbell



le roy sur la glace

Former AHLer and
Son of NHL Hall of Fame
Goaltender Will Join the
Stingers Next Season

by Vince Morello @vinnymorellz

The son of Hall-of-Famer and current Colorado Avalanche head coach Patrick Roy, Frederick Roy shows that the apple indeed does not fall far from the tree.

"Just compete, have heart and just be a good person," Frederick Roy said during a break in practice, when asked what his father taught him about hockey. "If you go out there and compete every night, and you work hard and you care, that's the most important thing."

"[There's] just a lot of passion in the family [for] hockey," Roy added. "Just watching [Patrick] and going to practices and skating with the guys, it just comes upon you and you fall in love with it."

The journey that led Frederick Roy to the Stingers is not as decorated as his father's, but is still a unique story. After playing five seasons with the Quebec Remparts in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League, where he was coached by his father, he played two seasons with the Rochester Americans in the American Hockey League.

"[The] AHL is a very strong league," said Roy. "For me to get the opportunity to play there for two years, I had a blast. It was a great experience."

Despite having two years in the AHL under his belt, Roy abruptly decided he

would retire from pro hockey at 23 to pursue a degree in finance.

"I really wanted to go back to school, that was my main focus," Roy said. "The way I looked at it was, 'after hockey, what am I going to do?'"

"You can play until you're 32 and after that you don't have an education. [...] I thought about what I wanted, what I really wanted in my heart, and that was to go back to school and get a good education."

Having played in a professional league, Roy is ineligible to play until September according to Canadian Interuniversity Sport rules, but that has not stopped him from practicing with his teammates.

Roy has found it easy to adjust to his new surroundings and brings veteran experience to the lineup, which was evident in practice as he offered tips to players during drills.

"It's been pretty easy, honestly," Roy said about his early days with the Stingers. "Obviously [I'm] just practicing, but other than that the guys have been great, helping me a lot, the coach has been great."

Stingers head coach Kevin Figsby is excited to see the team's newest addition already having an impact in the locker room.

"Anytime you add a player of Fred's calibre who's played pro before to your locker room, it gives the players a little more to aspire to," Figsby said. "[The players] get the opportunity to talk to him about his experiences."

While playing for the Remparts in the QMJHL, Roy became familiar with many current Stinger players, especially current captain Olivier Hinse. Hinse and Roy both played on the Remparts together, a major factor when Roy was deciding which university to study at.

"[Hinse is] a good guy, great person and we had a blast when we played together," Roy said.

The coaching staff and Hinse had similar things to say of Roy.

"It's great, I played with him before in Quebec and he's one of my great friends," said Hinse. "I'm really happy that he's here with us and he's going to help us a lot next year, that's for sure."

"[Roy's] positive all the time, he's fun to have around, he's got a great sense of humour and he's got a tremendous work ethic," said Figsby. "Those are things we look for in our program."

When Roy is eligible to play next year, he hopes that he can use his experience to help the team win.

"I think I can bring a lot of energy. I'm a smart player on the ice. My hockey sense is really good," Roy said. "I can bring that and a lot of character as well. I've always been that type of person, and I can bring those attributes."

Photo Evgenia Choros



Streamlining Today, Privatization Tomorrow at Canada Post

Dissecting Ottawa's Neoliberal Crusade Against Public Industry

by Mattha Busby @itsmattha

Plans to streamline Canada Post, amid a reported fiscal deficit, have been in the process of implementation for several months now.

Canada Post delivered approximately 9.4 billion pieces of mail in 2013, around 63 per cent of which was through a door-to-door or a to-apartment-building service. However, the changes they are making—by decree, without consultation—will lead to the total replacement of this service with community mailboxes in an effort to reduce costs.

At the same time, there will be a 35 per cent rise in the price of stamps and job cuts amounting to between 6,000 and 8,000 positions over the coming years. Canada will be the first country in the G8 to entirely eliminate door-to-door service.

"Jobs are not at risk, our workers have job security. [...] However, over time, we will be reducing positions," Canada Post spokesperson Jon Hamilton told *The Link*.

In 2014, Canadians sent 1.5 billion fewer letters than they did in 2006, according to Hamilton. In order to avoid becoming "a drain on the taxpayer," these reforms are a necessity, he said. One wonders, though, how Canada Post could become a drain on the taxpayer when it isn't subsidized by the state.

I spoke to Alain Duguay, president of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers' Montreal local, to help clarify the supposed necessity of these reforms. He disagrees with Canada Post's dire prediction of deficits ahead. He said 2014 will be the most profitable year in Canada Post's history; and the cuts are an "ideological decision," not a financial one.

"In 2012, Canada Post predicted that by April 2013, they will be facing a deficit of \$250 million. In fact, Canada Post made \$94 million [in] profit," explained Duguay. "Canada Post is claiming that due to the \$250 million deficit in 2012 they will be facing a deficit of \$1 billion in 2020. That's not true."

"The only reason that there was a deficit in 2011 was because there was an industrial dispute between the office workers of Canada Post and the organization over equity pay, in a case stretching back 31 years, which resulted in Canada Post having to put aside \$200 million for repayments," he added.

Duguay also pointed out that Deepak Chopra,

the current president and CEO at Canada Post, was formerly the CEO and president of Pitney Bowes, a privately owned company selling postal equipment. Chopra is "of course in favour of privatization," Duguay said.

Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre has spoken out against the discontinuation of door-to-door service. He told *La Presse* that "reduced-mobility persons and the elderly need this service."

Indeed, at least one in 10 Quebecers live with a disability and far more have mobility issues: this plan will affect those individuals most harshly.

Those with limited mobility will have to provide Canada Post with their medical record if they would like to have their mail delivered to their home once a week. Duguay described this as "illegal."

One wonders if the reforms at Canada Post are part of a strategy to eventually privatize the company. What does a Crown corporation do before it is privatized? Well, it streamlines, reduces costs, reduces services and transforms itself into a more skeletal and profitable model.

Moya Greene, who served as president and CEO of Canada Post from 2005-2010, later went on to oversee the privatization of the United Kingdom's Royal Mail. The UK government came under widespread criticism as the value per share rose 80 per cent in the weeks immediately following the start of trading.

"Another key fact to include is that the cuts [at Canada Post] are premised on a Conference Board of Canada report which has so far failed in every single one of its predictions," said Aalya Ahmad, a communications specialist at the CUPW, noting that the report concluded the corporation would lose money in 2012 through 2014.

"The current CEO of Canada Post sits on the Conference Board and Canada Post funded the report, which has been claiming—erroneously, if its mistakes in prediction to date are anything to go by—that it will lose \$1 billion by 2020," she said.

"Therefore Canadians are being duped into believing the cuts are necessary as this billion-dollar figure has been widely broadcast."

André Frappier, a former president of CUPW's Montreal local and Québec solidaire candidate for Crémazie, says parcel service "increases by the day"

and helped Canada Post "to reach record profits this quarter." He argues that Chopra and the Harper government "are determined to dismantle our public postal service, whatever the cost may be for communities across Quebec and Canada."

The CUPW has presented alternate ideas for increasing revenue, such as providing passport and banking services at Canada Post which, with 6,519 distribution and service points, has unparalleled reach across the country.

While Greene was CEO of Canada Post, she ordered a study into the feasibility of banking services that found that the Crown corporation could "profitably launch the largest banking network in the country." Only 110 of the report's 811 pages were ever disclosed, suggesting that Canada Post is determined to streamline even if expansion would be profitable, saving jobs in the process.

Ultimately, the plan to end door-to-door service is purely ideological and will only result in a much-depreciated service to the public for a much higher price, as Canada Post is downsized to prepare it for privatization.

When I asked Hamilton if Canada Post will remain a Crown corporation, he answered, "We have a mandate to serve every Canadian in a financially self-sufficient manner, and we will continue to do so."

I'm personally very skeptical.

Investors typically prefer to invest in the most streamlined, profitable model. These reforms seem to have prepared this public industry for such a process.

Canada Post is clearly making a profit. This is just another case of a flawed, dehumanized neoliberal logic that thinly veils the selfish profit-seeking motive of our democratically elected officials and their appointed cronies who lobby for their previous employers.

Canada Post has made a profit in 17 of the last 18 years. Hamilton claims "treading water won't get you out of the deep end, and that's what we're doing with our five-point plan [as post by letter declines]," but I believe that this is merely an excuse for private companies to muscle and lobby their way into pillaging the fruits of public industry.

Graphic Isabelle Thuy-Mai Nguyen



SEX & PANCAKES

Breaking It Off with a Prof

What do you do if you are sexually involved with a married prof? You want to break it off but he is getting kind of needy and you want to end it nicely.

by Melissa Fuller @mel_full

In many ways, breaking off a relationship of any sort with a professor should be rather similar to ending any other relationship.

While it can be difficult if the other person doesn't want it to end, the best you can do is be straightforward with them and communicate honestly about no longer wanting the relationship to continue.

It helps to be confident and clear in what you want, especially if you feel that the other person doesn't want the same thing and to remember that continuing a relationship because you feel bad isn't fair to you or the other person.

From there, all you can do is hope that the other person will handle the situation as maturely as possible and be prepared to distance yourself if not.

However, if you're taking one of this professor's courses this semester, it might be a little more complicated than that.

Relationships in which there is a power imbalance of some sort between partners can often be more tricky territory to navigate.

In fact, this is reflected in Canadian laws about consent. The legal age for consent to sexual activity is 16.

However, the age is raised to 18 when there is a significant age difference, a hierarchical relationship

(like dating your boss or teacher), or another factor that suggests the possibility that one partner is being exploited.

I mention this not to suggest that you're being exploited, but because the same power dynamics from which the law seeks to protect minors can, and often do, still exist in relationships at any age.

Essentially, the situation becomes more complex anytime one partner depends on the other for something other than love and respect—like a pay cheque, grades or keeping a secret.

Whether or not this thing is brought up explicitly, it can play a role as a sort of unconscious gambling chip, subtly influencing how you see yourself in the situation as well as what decisions you make, how you make them, and when.

What's important to recognize is that such factors can play a role in your decision-making even if they're not actively being used against you.

Moreover, it can be rather difficult to discern when one of these factors is at play.

I'll also point out that the professor isn't the only one with power here.

While you're getting grades and credits from them, they likewise probably depend on you to keep a secret for both their professional and marital stability.

I bring this up because, while I think most people are above using these things to intentionally manipulate, it's nonetheless important to reflect on how they may be influencing your decisions.

Sometimes it can help to actually bring these things up if they're at all of concern to you since it can lead to an open discussion that provides clarity on where you both stand.

In returning to what to do if you want to break it off, in my opinion an honest conversation is always best.

It helps to enter that conversation knowing what you would like the outcome to be, while also being sensitive of the fact that the other person might be hurt.

If you want it to end nicely, this would mean hearing them out and being kind, while staying true to where you're at.

When someone is being needy, it's easy to imagine them being difficult if you try to break it off and that can keep you from expressing yourself directly for fear of hurting them or having them act out.

However, the kindest approach is to be honest and treat the other person the way you would want to be treated.

Submit your question anonymously at melissafuller.ca and check out "Sex & Pancakes" on Facebook.



pressbox HAT TRICK

thelinknewspaper.ca/pressbox-hat-trick

Keep Calm and Carey On

by Joshua Rosenbaum

If all a team needed was a future Hall of Fame goaltender, the Montreal Canadiens would be the favorite for the Stanley Cup this year.

Unfortunately for them it takes a lot more than that, and this season they just don't have all the right pieces.

There's no doubt the Habs will make the playoffs; but after an Eastern Conference Finals appearance last year, the expectations in this hockey-crazed town are sky high.

The Montreal Canadiens currently sit third in the Atlantic division with 61 points, 11 more than the first non-playoff team, the Florida Panthers.

The main reason for the their success is the goaltending.

The team has been outshot 24 of the 45 games they've played this season, which is just over 50%. That is the worst percentage for any current playoff team.

Normally, fingers point towards defence for the excessive amount of shots taken.

While there needs to be improvement on that front as well, there lies a greater reason for the troubling trend.

The team is not balanced. If you look at any team that has won in the past couple of seasons, the key is depth and consistency across all facets of the team.

Goaltending can steal a game or two here and there, but for any real run there can't be any defensive or offensive liabilities.

Price recently returned from injury, with backup Dustin Tokarski filling in. During his stint, the team's major holes

became much more obvious.

In the game against Ottawa on Jan. 15, the Senators' fourth shot of the game got past the back-up goaltender.

They continued to outshoot the Canadiens 31-26 to win 4-1.

The Habs couldn't convert on any of their four power plays and were having trouble transitioning through the middle of the ice, which led to a limited number of chances in the offensive zone, not to mention that seven of the 16 forwards failed to register a shot on goal.

A major issue this team has to deal with is the third pairing defenceman Alexei Emelin, who has turned making mistakes into a nightly affair.

His puck handling has improved and he's making fewer turnovers, but the problem lies in his skating ability.

Emelin can't keep up. He's not fast enough to make needed transitions out of his own end and has a lot of difficulty controlling the pace of the game.

His largest asset was his physicality, but even that has diminished this season. Not every playoff team needs six top defensemen, but they do need six competent ones.

The Canadiens are 30th in the league in scoring during the first period of play and only really start playing when they get scored on.

For instance, in last Tuesday's win over Nashville, the Canadiens found themselves being outshot 22-4.

With the current roster, I don't see how they would be able to get past a superior team in the conference to get to the Stanley Cup Finals.

Even with the Habs having 5:1 odds to win the East, it doesn't seem likely with teams like Tampa Bay and Pittsburgh, who have found a way to dominate possession in the offensive zone.

The Habs were able to sweep the Lightning last year, but that came without Tampa Bay's starting goaltender, Ben Bishop, who was injured just before the start of the playoffs.

The Rangers eliminated the Habs, after Carey Price fell to injury by forward Chris Kreider, in six games.

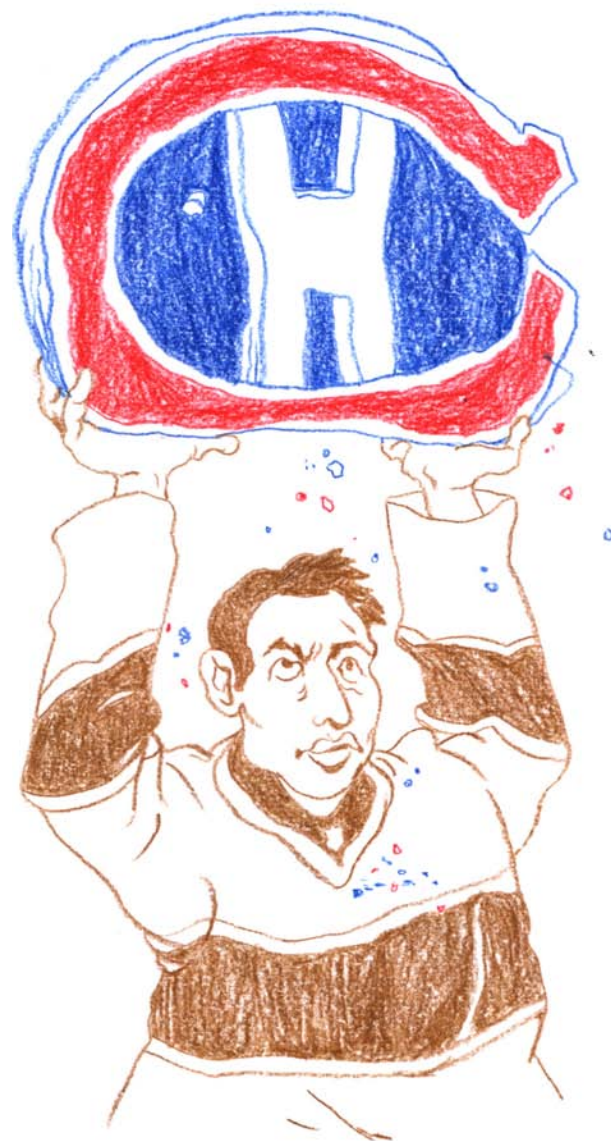
If the Canadiens are able to bring their offensive game back to a level that got them to the Eastern finals last year, with a healthy Price and a trade or two, their chances of making a deep push might be more possible.

The Montreal Canadiens will be able to stand on the shoulders of Carey Price to get into the playoffs; the issue they'll face is whether or not they'll fall off.

Check out *The Link's* new sports blog at thelinknewspaper.ca/pressbox-hat-trick

Graphic Graeme Shorten-Adams

thelinknewspaper.ca/opinions



BOOP by Caitly Hall



False Knees by Joshua Barkman

THE ORIGIN OF RAISINS

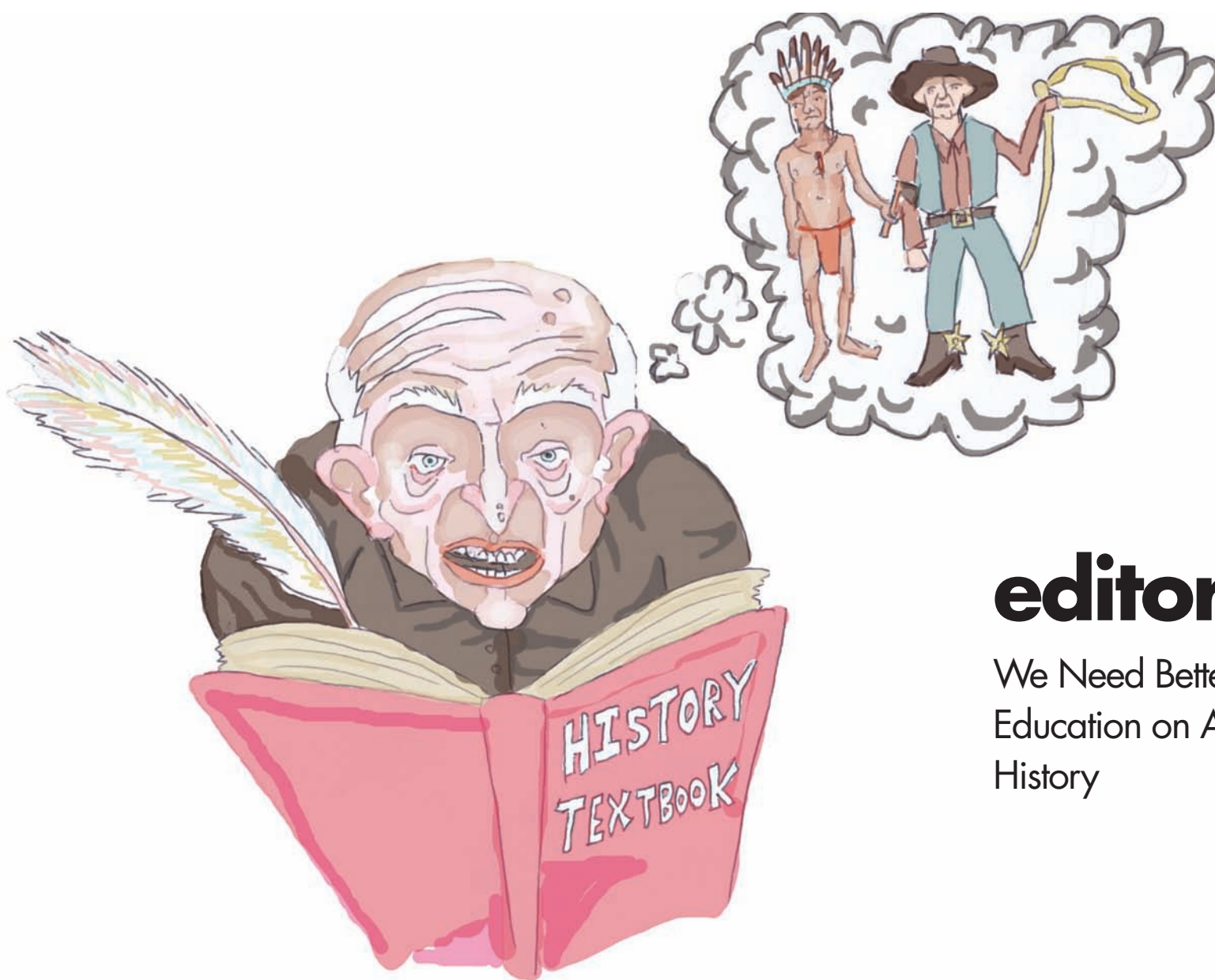


Balloon Ventures by Mengekko Jones



Power Theatre by Alex Callard





editorial

We Need Better Education on Aboriginal History

When a country like Canada calls itself multicultural, you expect the history classes in its elementary and secondary schools to be reflective of that diversity. And yet, the stories of Aboriginal Canadians are largely absent from the school curriculum and public discourse in most provinces, including Quebec.

The consequence of overlooking First Peoples in history courses is that most Canadians are poorly informed about the historical context behind the present-day challenges that Aboriginal communities face. History must inform public policy if we want to better promote the social, political and economic development of indigenous communities.

To be fair, Quebec's education reforms over the past decade have introduced some Aboriginal history into the curriculum. Grade nine students get a chronological overview of Canadian history, which begins with an exploration of the social and political organization of Aboriginal societies before studying European colonization in the 16th century. Meanwhile in

Grade 10, students study history thematically through topics like historical power relations, including those between Aboriginal peoples and colonial authorities in the early days of colonization. Post-colonial indigenous history, however, is severely lacking.

Once European historical figures like Samuel de Champlain, Louis-Joseph de Montcalm, James Wolfe and Sir John A. Macdonald come onto the scene, Aboriginal history falls by the wayside. This proves the Eurocentricity of the curriculum as European history supersedes the footnotes of indigenous histories.

With the exception of passing references to Manitoba's founder and Métis political leader Louis Riel, we hear little about First Nations societies and the struggles of preserving Aboriginal culture and political autonomy in the face of a racist European colonial regime.

Little is taught about the Canadian government's residential school system that sought to assimilate Aboriginal children and this policy's lasting effects on Aboriginal identities,

despite the fact that the last residential school closed less than twenty years ago in 1996. The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which is studying the legacy of the residential schools, is ongoing and scheduled to end later this year.

In contrast, pages of Quebec history textbooks are dedicated to Eurocentric topics like Sir John A. Macdonald's support for the construction of a transcontinental railway or the emergence of the social welfare state during Quebec's Quiet Revolution.

Still there is hope that where our schools have failed, popular education is filling the gap.

Aboriginal artists and student groups are generating dialogue through events and workshops such as First Voices week and panels such as "Aboriginal Territories in Digital Space" (see page 5).

For groups such as the Aboriginal Arts Research Group, revisiting history through video games designed by Aboriginal youth

can help lead the way to telling more sincere stories.

For the First Voices week currently taking place at Concordia, the aim is raising awareness about contemporary issues. Discussions about indigenous learning systems through a living library of local elders and healers are thanks to the head of Concordia's First Peoples Studies program, Karl Hele.

For us wary bystanders, participation means educating ourselves on a local level. While a recent Maclean's article draws the nation's attention to racism in Winnipeg—the urban centre with the largest Aboriginal population in the country—we shouldn't forget our responsibility to hold our education systems accountable for ensuring a scrupulous education about how we've gotten to where we are today. After all, the legacy of colonialism and systemic discrimination is inescapable to this day.

Graphic Sam Jones

THE LINK³⁵

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Letters to the editor are welcome. All letters 400 words or less will be printed, space permitting. The letters deadline is Friday at 4:00 p.m. The Link reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and length and refuse those deemed racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic, libellous, or otherwise contrary to The Link's statement of principles.

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group of thought leaders from across
Canada and the U.S. to Montreal. Their insights
and know-how will help us chart our university's strategic
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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28

WHY SHOULD UNIVERSITIES INNOVATE?

11 a.m. – noon
Room MB 2.445, John Molson School of Business Building
(1450 Guy St.)

David Ward
Former president,
University of Wisconsin-Madison



THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5

WHAT IS NEXT-GENERATION LEARNING?

4 p.m. – 5 p.m.
Room MB 10.121, John Molson School of Business Building
(1450 Guy St.)

Randy Bass
Vice-Provost for Education,
Georgetown University



TUESDAY, MARCH 10

HOW CAN UNIVERSITIES GO FROM GOOD TO GREAT?

Elizabeth Cannon
President, University of Calgary

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concordia.ca/directions



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