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FREE

* Rich Aucoin * Jay Baruchel * Music venues * Restaurants * Galleries * Josh Hartnett



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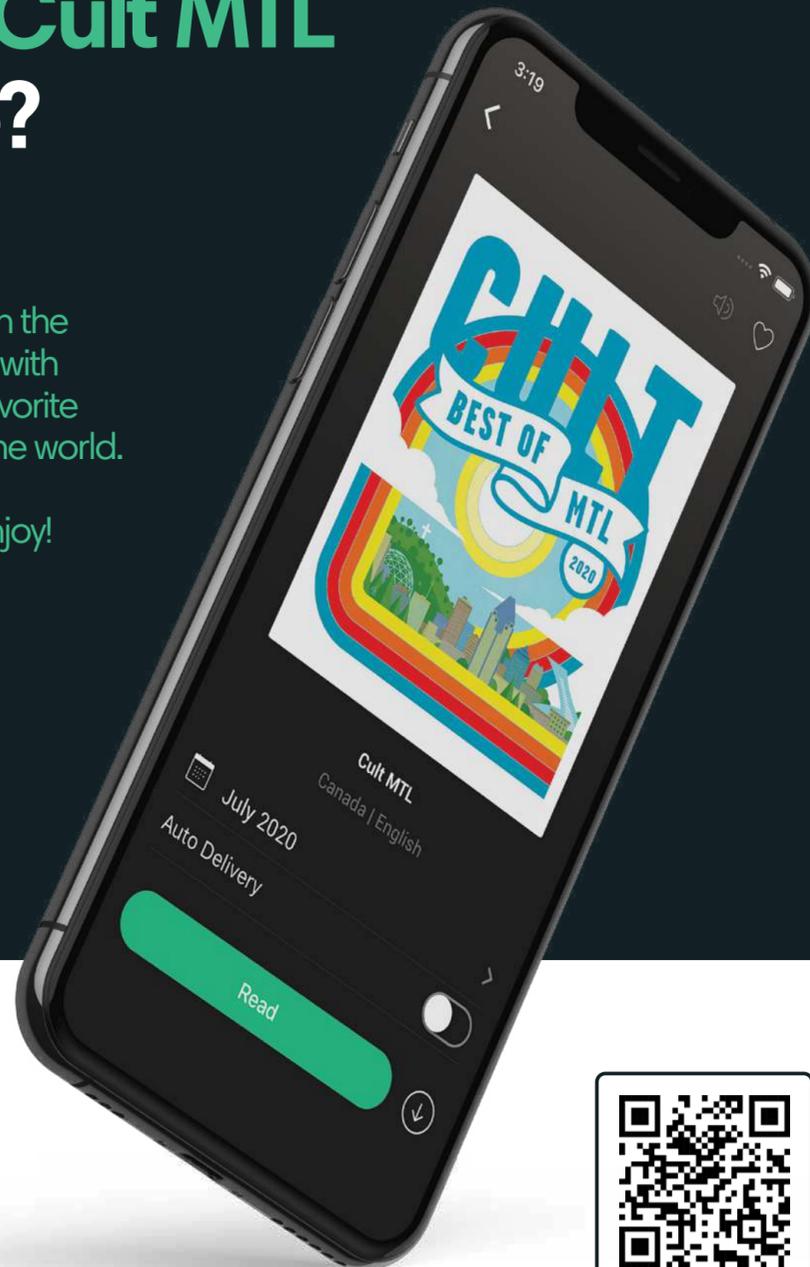


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Halifax singer-songwriter and showman Rich Aucoin on his upcoming record *United States*, being grounded and making epic music videos.

Photo by Mat Dunlap

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Cult MTL is...

Lorraine Carpenter
editor-in-chief
lorraine.carpenter@cultmontreal.com

Alex Rose
film editor
alex.rose@cultmontreal.com

Nora Rosenthal
arts editor
nora.rosenthal@cultmontreal.com

Clayton Sandhu
contributing editor (food)

Chris Tucker
art director

Advertising
ads@cultmontreal.com

Contributors:
Johnson Cummins
Ryan Diduck
Erik Leijon
Darcy Macdonald
Al South
Savannah Stewart
Mr. Wavvy

Special thanks:
Rob Jennings

General inquiries + feedback
info@cultmontreal.com



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:inspectah dep

BY THE DEPSET

We last spoke with Yogesh Patel of Mile End's Dépanneur Can-Pal (50 Maguire) in the fall of 2018. This past week, we ran into Yogesh as he was holding a social distancing barbecue outside the dep for passersby and friends. He talked to us about the ups and downs of running an essential service in a pandemic.

The Depset: A lot has changed since the last time we spoke to you! How has the COVID situation affected Dépanneur Can-Pal?

Yogesh Patel: It's been slow. The majority of our clients are from Ubisoft and they're working from home. We'll see what happens in the next couple of weeks. The neighbourhood people do their shopping at supermarkets, which is normal. Also not very many people in the area smoke. Ubisoft has a lot of employees from France, and they smoke a lot! So cigarette sales have gone down. The Ubisoft crowd also used to have 5 à 7 after work and stop by for beers. They're great clients!

TD: Are you worried about the future of the store?

YP: Yes and no. It's a little road bump in life. But whatever God gives you, you take it as is — that's how I look at things. On the bright side, everybody's very friendly and it's a great neighbourhood. We try to be helpful, too. If some old lady calls and needs food delivered, we'll go drop it off.

TD: Do you normally deliver?

YP: No. For essentials like bread and milk, especially for older folks, my heart opens up. I'm not going to deliver for a pack of cigarettes or a case of beer. I even had one older client ask for food on credit. I gave it to him on the house. I'm thinking about doing Uber Eats with the food, but I'm a bit skeptical because of the surcharge.

TD: Last time we talked a lot about your mother's home-cooked food. Are you still serving the samosas and other dishes?

YP: We had to stop when COVID first started. Food sales went way down and it just didn't make sense. Since the city has started reopening, we've started serving food again.

TD: It's you, your mom and your dad that work here. How has COVID affected the family?

YP: My parents are at risk, but every 20 minutes we use Purell everywhere. We also have the plexiglass barrier. If someone comes in and they're coughing, we tell them to wait outside for their order and disinfect the section they were in. My dad doesn't do the shopping in person anymore. We order



Dépanneur Can-Pal

everything wholesale for delivery.

TD: I saw you put a rainbow poster in the window!

YP: Yeah! I have a printing business on the side. I saw [the rainbows] around the Mile End one day, and I thought, "This would be great!" I saw a lot of people taking pictures when we first put it up and it showed up in people's feeds on Instagram.

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Night shift

BY LORRAINE CARPENTER

After green-lighting seated indoor gatherings of up to 50 people on June 15 — with 1.5 to 2-metre distancing and other COVID-19 safety measures in place — in cinemas and “showbars,” Quebec public health authorities announced that all bars, along with casinos, hotels, amusement parks and spas, could reopen, effective immediately. Though dancing is verboten (making the reopening of nightclubs virtually pointless, or extremely difficult to manage), and the province’s public health director Horacio Arruda said that live singing indoors should continue to be prohibited (in a response to a question about places of worship, mind you), few guidelines have been shared with the public regarding how bars — particularly showbars with small capacities — can function during the ongoing pandemic.

We contacted the owners or co-owners of four Montreal establishments about how (and if) they’re managing:

Mauro Pezzente (Casa del Popol / la Sala Rossa)

“The Casa is going to open on July 9 — that’s what my plan is, I hope — but just the bar side. On the venue side, we actually took the stage down a couple of months ago. Kiva (Stimac, co-owner of the venues, and Pezzente’s wife) is going to start her print shop on the venue side. That’s already built and ready to go. She’s just doing her inventory now and hoping to open on July 9 as well.

“La Sala Rossa is basically closed, for now. I’m really not interested in doing any live shows. Kiva and I are really scared and anxious of the idea of opening up again. I’ve read all these things about every bar and concert hall in the world that reopens, two or three weeks later there’s something bad that happens.

“We’re just going to try to focus on recording and live streams. We learned quite a bit over the past month (during the smaller streaming edition of their Suoni per il Popolo festival) about how to do them properly, technologically speaking, and also production-wise. We’re pretty well set up. There were a few shows that happened that we were really happy with. To do a really good show, you need some good production otherwise it’s just going to look like somebody in their living room, and that’s what we didn’t want to have.”

Pezzente and Stimac’s other venue, la Vitrola, will be closing permanently. They have received Commercial Rent Assistance via their landlord for Casa del Popolo, which has been entirely closed since the start of the pandemic, and have used the CEBA small-business loan and wage subsidy aid from the federal government.

Sergio Da Silva (co-owner of Turbo Haüs)

“Ultimately the directives set by anyone won’t be as important as (what businesses do) and people’s sense of personal responsibility. The Black Lives Matter protests were inspiring for a number of reasons but in terms of COVID-19 specifically, seeing people taking the necessary steps to keep themselves and others safe while being in big groups made me optimistic that people can be the same



George Humphreys

way in their day to day lives, whether they’re going out to get groceries, going to work or enjoying themselves in parks, bars and restaurants. If people can do that, then it won’t be difficult and the expense will be minimal.

“We aren’t receiving money directly from the city but they have supported businesses in different ways like waiving the terrace fees, which for us would have been quite high. We were able to get the CEBA loan from the feds and the rent subsidy through our landlord as well. We’re very grateful for all of it but the outpouring of support from people in the community really was the game changer. We had people buy shirts from all over North America and donate money out of nowhere. It’s a huge morale booster knowing people care about all the hard work we’re putting in.

“We’re going to start slowly and open up more and more as we get more comfortable and better at dealing with the new realities of what running a bar has become. We’re going to take advantage of not having to worry about booking shows to focus on that aspect of the business and really sharpen our skills on the bar and service side of things as well as continue to take stock of what our responsibilities are in terms of being a space for different artists and communities to come together to make art or just be together.”

For the time being, non-staff members won’t be permitted inside the bar unless it’s to use the bathroom. When the interior eventually reopens, it will be at 30 per cent capacity. Staff will be required to use face-shields.

Meyer Billurcu (co-owner of Blue Skies Turn Black, Bar le Ritz PDB)

“We’re looking at 2021 at the earliest,” he says in reference to BSTB concerts. “We actually have events confirmed but it’s all based on regulations and where we’re at come that time. Everyone’s just holding their breath hoping that (venues) will be able to start opening up and operating then.”

BSTB is involved in the SAT’s Domesicle event planned for Aug. 15, where 50 audience members will be seated with distancing in place. If/when the government expands the allowed capacity for shows to 250 in mid-July, BSTB may consider hosting outdoor shows.

“We deal a lot with touring bands from all over the world and with the borders being closed until at least July 21, everything that we do is going to rely on local talent,” he says. “(The States is) where a lot of our business comes from but looking at the situation down there, clearly it’s out of control and they don’t have a good grasp on it. Until that happens I feel a lot better with the border staying closed, even though that’s bad for (BSTB). I’d rather it re-open when we can do it safely and properly.”

As for Bar le Ritz, “We talked about it and based on the current guidelines it just doesn’t make sense for us to reopen. Our biggest nights are our DJ nights, our dance parties, and we’re

not allowed dancing right now. The Ritz had tried for a long time to operate as both a venue and neighbourhood bar but that just never really worked out for us, so we’re not opening until the situation is a little bit better.”

Billurcu says that he and his partners in Bar le Ritz have been extremely fortunate to have easy-going landlords who have not asked for rent since March. They are now applying for Commercial Rent Assistance.

“If we weren’t getting rent relief, I don’t know how much longer (the bar) would be able to survive.”

Isis Paola Giraldo (co-owner of Résonance Café)

The Parc Avenue jazz venue, restaurant and café was closed for the first two months of the pandemic but started a live streaming concert series nine weeks ago and reopened for food delivery six weeks ago. Giraldo is a touring musician who usually works remotely but has taken on more of a hands-on managerial role due to staff cuts and being grounded, not to mention preparing to relocate.

“Martin (Heslop, her partner in life and business) and I are going to be moving to Toronto so we wanted to get things rolling so that when we move we have a working model for the space. We’re taking it week by week. It’s a very unstable model right now for the restaurant industry, let alone for venues. Nothing is normal.

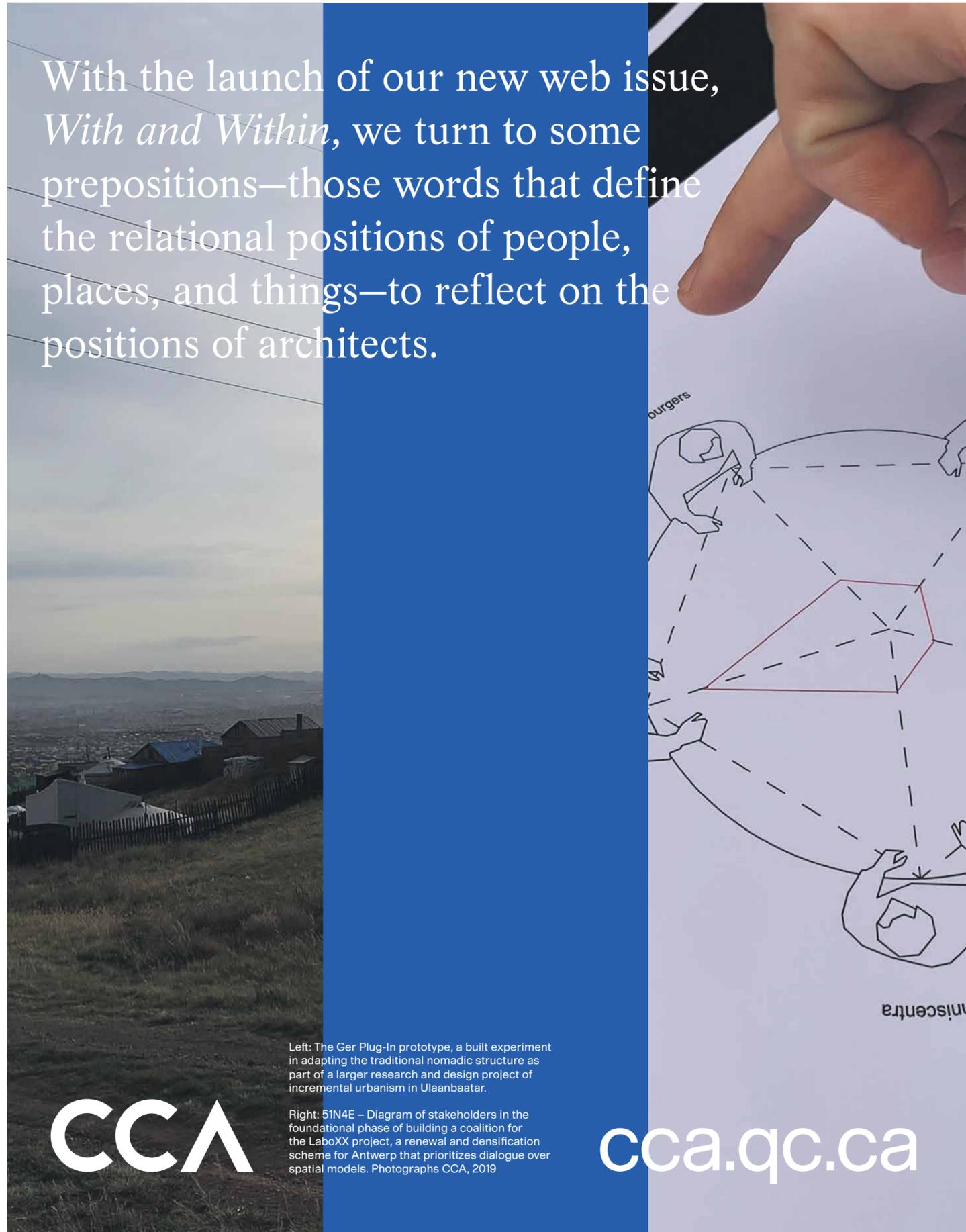
“We’ve been doing a live-stream series — though not in the space — every Saturday night with three musicians from different parts of the world, it’s not just Montreal. It’s a very personal series. As a musician, sometimes a lot of my friends aren’t in Montreal and it’s been really fun to be able to include them. That’s been a really cool and positive thing about having this platform online.

“We thought it would be a cool idea to try and keep the attention on the (music) community as much as we could. That’s always been our main focus with the space. The café has taken on a lot of importance, highlighting vegetarian food and all that, but the place started with a vision to be a hub for creative music.”

Though Résonance is currently operating on “low power mode,” some staff has returned to serve food and drinks, and they’re consulting with their in-house non-profit organization (les Sympathiques) about starting an in-house weekly concert series in August. Duos or trios would perform on Saturday nights, with one staff member on sound and one taking tickets, which would be sold in advance. The capacity would be limited to only 15 people, with no food or drink service during the show.

“That’s the main concern. It’s not like people are going to be wearing masks if they’re eating, so that doesn’t really feel like the right thing to do. We will try to make it as safe as possible for the staff, the musicians and the audience.”

With the launch of our new web issue, *With and Within*, we turn to some prepositions—those words that define the relational positions of people, places, and things—to reflect on the positions of architects.



Left: The Ger Plug-In prototype, a built experiment in adapting the traditional nomadic structure as part of a larger research and design project of incremental urbanism in Ulaanbaatar.

Right: 51N4E – Diagram of stakeholders in the foundational phase of building a coalition for the LaboXX project, a renewal and densification scheme for Antwerp that prioritizes dialogue over spatial models. Photographs CCA, 2019

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food & drink

Curbside Cambodian



Clay Sandhu

BY CLAYTON SANDHU

Chantry Yen is unlike any chef I know. “I don’t drink very much and I don’t swear,” he says sweetly of his style of kitchen management. He doesn’t reek of machismo and bravado the way many Old Port chefs do — he’s gentle and unassuming.

I first heard of Chantry when he ran a restaurant in Mile End called Fieldstone. I never ate there and to be honest I always thought of it as a try-hard. The restaurant was structured for a format that offered 3- to 15-course tasting menus for a room that seated 30 people. At that time I was cooking at Larry’s and fussy tasting menus was the antithesis of everything I was into.

My opinion, which I admit is flawed, was that tasting menus should be reserved for the great chefs in prestigious restaurants in New York, Paris and Tokyo that bought their Michelin stars and charged accordingly. I went to university with a guy who wore an ill-fitting suit every day — bear with me, there’s an analogy coming — because he thought it

made him look sophisticated and intellectual, but everyone thought he looked like a pretentious asshole. That’s how I felt about small restaurants doing affordable tasting menus — like they were putting on airs trying to be something they weren’t which was grand and opulent and prohibitively expensive. To me, they looked like imposters.

Chantry Yen is a Cambodian chef who was raised by his grandmother in Windsor, Ontario, and trained at Mugaritz (currently ranked as the #7 best restaurant in the world). Behind the scenes at Fieldstone, he was running the show single-handedly. Take that in, because it’s astonishing. Yen was cooking up to 15 courses per person, in a room where all the courses were staggered, alone. Fieldstone eventually fell off my radar, and so, too, did Yen. I now consider my ill-conceived bias to be responsible for a sorely missed dining opportunity because it was at Fieldstone that the chef started developing the recipes, techniques and confidence to launch his current project: Touk.

I went to eat at Touk on June 25th — the day of the National Dragon Boat races — an auspicious day if there ever was one as Touk derives its name from those very boats. Currently, Touk is the kitchen of Parliament Pub and Parlour, the latest endeavour from the team behind Cold Room, but the project has been simmering away beneath the surface for some

time. Initially, Touk was going to be Yen’s chef-run stall in the Time Out Market, but the project fell through due to timing. The concept ended up being tucked away.

Yen is currently the chef at Parliament, a position which ranked him #2 on our list of Montreal’s best chefs. He used the recent closure of restaurants to resurrect a concept he’d been developing for years; that project became Touk. “Especially during COVID, why not dig into your roots?” he reflected as we sat down on Parliament’s outdoor terrace. “I have a feeling that street food and culturally significant foods are starting to come forward with all the changes going on in the world right now.”

As a chef, however, Yen’s career has been defined by working with some of the world’s most celebrated chefs. Elaborate, multi-course fine-dining has been a hallmark of his style, so it struck me as odd to see him transition to the seemingly simple street food of Cambodia. When I asked about his pivot from fine-dining to casual food, he put it like this: “It’s crazy to work with the guy who created the first sphere, to work with the guys who created culinary techniques, but there’s more — there’s more to explore. If I can be an ambassador and introduce people to food from my country, why not do that? For me it’s not a pivot at all.” Yen’s words echo sincere and there’s humility in his candor, but also a maturity and confidence reinforced by a wealth of experience that he’s channelling into something deeply meaningful.

Our first course arrived, packaged in take-out boxes. It’s cliché, perhaps, but here I was *Bún cha* in Hanoi on little plastic chairs cheek to jowl with other hungry diners. You get the sense that it was meant to be this way. If this had been a stall at the Time Out Market, the food would have been good, but Touk is and has always been a concerted effort to be as authentic as possible. Serving street food on the third floor of an enormous shopping mall is probably not the authentic setting for what Yen calls “curbside Cambodian.”

The first two dishes are familiar. Jungle rolls (*Nam Chow*), which closely resemble *Goi cuon*, the rice-paper spring rolls of Vietnam, and *Bok Lahong*, a green papaya salad that most will associate closely with Thailand’s *Som Tam*. He’s easing me into it, but cleverly, presenting me with the dishes I expect to understand, and then challenging me when I taste them because I’m immediately confronted by how different each dish is from what I expected. The *Nam Chow* are packed with vegetables, in particular carrot and purple cabbage, which gives the roll a much more substantial feel. Those two julienned vegetables also stand in place of the vermicelli typically found in *Goi cuon*. Yen’s *Nam Chow* features lettuce, mint and Matane shrimp but the flavours are mild, and less punchy in their use of herbs than their Vietnamese counterparts. The same can be said for the papaya salad. Most noticeably for me was that Yen’s *Bok Lahong* is vibrant but not overt. In Thailand, *Som Tam* varies regionally, but in North America we typically eat what’s known as *Som Tam Thai*, a version that uses a powerful combination of lime juice, fish sauce, dried shrimp, chillies and palm sugar. The result is an extremely vibrant combination of sweet, spicy and acidic. Yen’s *Bok Lahong*, however, manages to create harmony within that diversity of flavours in a way that is subtle. It strikes me that his personal nature comes through in his food — gentle yet confident. My preconceptions of both him and his food are challenged and what I’m left to reflect on is the power of subtlety when used in combination with expert flavour integration. I never once find myself missing the strong flavours of *Som Tam* because I was being reintroduced to those same flavours in a new way. Chantry reminds me that Cambodia is a deeply gastronomic country, one that, like other South-East-Asian countries, has a lot of regionality when it comes to cuisine. “Cambodian food is very aromatic and fragrant. We use a lot of edible flowers — lotus, lilac, jasmine flowers, things like that. We also use a lot of preserved fish paste, which is known as *Prahok*. Depending on which region you go to, there’s a lot of gastronomy. There’s a huge rainforest in the Mondulkiri where a lot of the tribes eat insects.”

Our next course is *Prahok Ktiss*, a dish Yen lovingly compares to Bagna Cauda or Cambodian crudité. Mango, cabbage, cucumber, tomato, jasmine blossoms and asparagus overflow from the takeout box each ingredient tightly organized around the *Prahok Ktiss*, a spreadable fermented fish paste flavoured with galangal-heavy yellow curry and minced pork. Yen tells me this is a quintessential Cambodian dish, one that speaks directly to his upbringing. He grew up in Windsor, Ontario and started farming in nearby Leamington at the early age of nine. As a dish, it’s

easy to simply call this Cambodian Bagna Cauda, but it’s more than that. It’s a celebration of fresh produce, which has symbolic resonance. Fruits and vegetables served as both nourishment and a source of gainful employment for a family who arrived in Canada as refugees. It is also, of course, a celebration of ancestral heritage. The dish is as simple as you might imagine, but it perfectly encapsulates Yen’s description of Cambodian cuisine — the gently transformed fruit, vegetables and flowers speak for themselves and are only gently accentuated by the fragrant spread.

Alongside the *Prahok Ktiss* is another dish inspired by Yen’s rural upbringing, but one that has little to no roots in Cambodian culture. A risky dish to say the least, one that could be easily perceived as culturally tone-deaf, was *Khey* (which translates to Bird) FC, a dish of fried chicken and pickled watermelon. While the dish, on its surface, appears to reinforce an age-old anti-Black stereotype, Yen’s story behind this dish is one of cultural blending, assimilation and financial emancipation, “When I started working on farms, we didn’t speak a lick of English and we saw a lot of people either from Rwanda or Mexico. We all sat around a table at the farm and we ate KFC — my first fried chicken. We were working on a watermelon farm and so I walked over and picked up a fresh watermelon, cracked it open, and ate it with our meal.” It’s a dish that pays homage to a version of becoming Canadian, reflects on a Cambodian tradition of eating fruit with a meal and references a time in Yen’s life where farming watermelons was a way to create a better life. For freed Black slaves, watermelon farming was a way to become financially autonomous; it became a symbol of freedom. In my opinion, Yen’s dish aligns itself more closely with that narrative than one of racial insensitivity. The chicken, to no one’s surprise, is excellent and is served with a 10-day fermented habanero mayo and a tamarind and star-anise ketchup.

The last dish served was a noodle soup called *Khuy Tiev* and it was a revelatory dish. The soup is very similar in style to *Pho* but omits all of the characteristic spices found in *Pho* broth. Instead, *Khuy Tiev* is characterized by the flavour of beef, which is pure and unctuous. Beef bones are blanched and simmered with tendon, tripe and brisket for 30 hours, creating beautifully tender meat and a honey-brown coloured broth that is perhaps the purest essence of beef that I have tasted. When I worked at Lawrence, the restaurant would use the scraps of things that weren’t sold at the butcher shop — one such thing was beef fat, which we would render and clarify for eventual use as cooking fat. The first time I saw the fat used was to fry potatoes — it was revolutionary. In western cooking, beef fat is maybe the closest thing we have to pure umami flavour. Its flavour is deep and powerful, and when used correctly it elevates other flavours and creates a richness in a way that few other things can. It’s that flavour that steak purists crave; it’s why we dry-age beef, it’s why we roast bone marrow and spread it on toast. The broth of Yen’s *Khuy Tiev* is a liquid form of that flavour and I will think of it often. The soup is garnished with beautiful red prawns, springy meatballs, tender brisket and tripe atop perfectly slurpable rice noodles, but had the whole bowl been nothing but broth, I wouldn’t have missed a thing.

Chantry Yen has made it a mission to share Cambodian cuisine with Montreal. Along with his sous-chefs McHale Whitehouse and Jasmine Hamel (who are both vegetarian and have been learning to cook Cambodian food via smell and salt percentages), the message is being articulated in a poignant and delicious way. But for Yen it’s the response from the Cambodian community that has the most impact.

“I’ve had Cambodian families who were war-torn who came [to Touk] to eat one of the national dishes and were moved to tears. That’s what makes me happy — Cambodian parents never eat out, they always cook at home. So to see a family come here — I was screaming with joy, and they’ve come back every week. Now families are hearing about it everywhere and saying they want to come and eat this food, they want to spend their money — immigrant parents don’t do that.” It’s an experience that hits close to home.

Touk is open from Friday to Sunday from 5 p.m. until late. Currently plans are to establish Touk as a standalone restaurant, but for now (and in my opinion forever) the best way to experience it is to find a sunny spot on the sidewalk and enjoy your Cambodian, curbside.

→ 351 Place d’Youville

:rantline™

THIS WEEK: The dangers of drinking, mingling and cycling!

PLUS: World’s #1 tennis star identified as idiot!!

“edited” by AL SOUTH

Hey everyone, I just wanted to say how pleased I was to see the SUPERHOT Valérie Plante rated as Best and HOTTEST Politician in Montreal! Lionel Perez sure ain’t got nothin’ on her! [BLEEP!]

F Hey did I miss something? All of a sudden it’s la St. Jean and people are MINGLING on terraces with no masks, high-fiving on the softball field and picnicking in groups of about 30 in all the parks. Hope this doesn’t turn out like Florida or Texas. [BLEEP!]

M Hello Rant Line™. I just saw that casinos, amusement parks, water parks, spas, hotels and BARS are now all open. Effective immediately, it says. Okay, that’s really getting back to normal, I guess, is the idea. Even though testing is going down, we need to get back to normal. Now, personally, I don’t go to the CASINO — that place scares me — and I am too old for a water park or la Ronde. I don’t need a hotel. And I couldn’t afford to go to a SPA if I wanted to. But I have been known to go to bars. You know, quite a lot. But I am not sure, maybe it is the shock, maybe I will get over it — but I am in no rush. I see the HEALTH GUY, Arruda, says — here, I’ll read it — “I think it’s the right time to deconline actually but please, please, please, please, please wash your hands and wear your MASK.» Okay sure. Will do, boss. But tell me please please — please please please — how do you wear a mask in a bar? Is that even FEASIBLE? Do you keep taking the mask on and off every time you take a drink? Do you slip the bottle under the mask? Pull the mask down and take a hit from the glass? Can you put a straw under the mask? Through the mask — like, poke a hole in the mask? I am not kidding — is there a way to do it that would, you know, pass health standards? I am trying to picture it. Or is it just accepted that in bars no one will be wearing a fucking mask and the government has decided it is worth the RISK because, you know, bars need the business and people want to go to bars? [BLEEP!]

F Hey Montrealers! What’s up with you people not wearing a mask while SHOPPING? Is it because you can’t afford one? Because you don’t believe it helps? For God’s sake, get with the program and wear a friggng mask! [BLEEP!]

M So ridiculous to read about Novak Djokovic’s recent COVID-19 ANTICS. Serves him fucking well. First he says he will not get vaccinated against COVID-19, because he doesn’t believe in vaccines. So automatically that is crazy. Next he hosts a big event with no social distancing, no masks. There were tons of fans in the stands, they even had a big party at a bar. They had their SHIRTS OFF, dancing in the bar. And then of course he gets COVID-19 and so does his wife and tons of other people. It’s so stupid that you almost think he did it on purpose. Like he didn’t want to get a vaccine, which the tennis circuit will require — never mind that there is no vaccine — so instead he gave himself the disease. Sort of like having a MEASLES PARTY or a CHICKEN POX PARTY. But I guess that is just my own conspiracy theory. Probably the real reason is the obvious one: he is a SELFISH EGOMANIAC,

right? Oh and a reminder to all: our big local ANTI-VAXXERS are the Habs number one goatender and his wife — but I won’t name names. [BLEEP!]

M Okay, so this is my first time calling but I am so pissed off with the Avenue Mont-Royal closure that I just need to rant. The first few days were car-free heaven but now they’ve installed WALK BIKE signs all along the street and have SPVM cops and cadets patrolling and aggressively approaching anyone on a bike! Listen, this is my commercial street and I use my bike to shop on this street. This is not a three-day street fair, it’s a multi-month closure of an important neighbourhood avenue for shopping and services. If they expect me to walk 14 blocks from butcher to baker with my fully loaded bags then I’m going to take my bike and my money to some other street where I can continue to shop and live like I always do. [BLEEP!]

M Oh for God’s sake, no bikes on Mont-Royal OR Wellington? What the fuck? This reminds me of when some Ville de Montréal idiot decided you couldn’t ride a bike in the public parks a couple of years ago. That lasted for about a week. Hope they fix this pronto. [BLEEP!]

M So I just found out they’re not going to allow bikes on the closed Mont-Royal street. Are you fucking kidding me? Not even a bike lane? Whose fucking BAD IDEA was that? [BLEEP!]

M Hello Rant Line™. So listen, I finally followed one of these fucking SPVM POLICE CRUISERS who was speeding down the residential street with lights and siren at about 100 clicks and there he was with three other cop cars and four cops on bikes arresting a fucking DRUNKEN HOMELESS DUDE! They all looked so pleased and amused with their arrest. Couldn’t imagine what the guy had done. Shoplifting? Public urination? Time to defund and disband this out-of-control gang of HOOLIGANS. [BLEEP!]

M To the guy who said the Ontario WEED WEBSITE has rosins, kiefs, bubble hash and shatter, and the SQDC does not: good point. We could all use more product. But then I think to BACK IN THE DAY, when friends of mine were nailed for having a few bricks of hash — simple hash — in their trunk or at their apartment. They went to JAIL. Boy how times have changed. And also, can they get that time back? [BLEEP!]

F Okay, so I just listened to the full 16 minutes of “Murder Most Foul” by BOB DYLAN. I’m not usually much of a fan of these OLD FOLK SINGERS but this one blew me away. Talk about the perfect song for these sad TRUMP AMERICA times! I suggest you all have a listen. [BLEEP!]

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Burgundy Lion

BY SAVANNAH STEWART

Just in time for terrasse season, restaurants in Montreal got the greenlight to open their doors to customers on June 22 — provided they abide by a hefty list of new public safety guidelines.

Those looking to go out after more than three months in confinement will find that their visit to a restaurant is a bit different from what they remember. The tables are spaced out, hand sanitizing stations decorate the dining room and your server will greet you with some combination of a mask, goggles or face shield. It's not the most glamorous dining experience, but it's how restaurants are able to open while still preventing the spread of COVID-19.

"We're used to doing our utmost to give the customer the best experience they can have, and now we're doing things that we know will make it a worse experience but that we're forced to do," says Toby Lyle, founder of the Burgundy Lion group, which runs five gastropub-style locations in Montreal: Burgundy Lion, Brit & Chips (two locations), Bishop & Baggy and Wolf & Workman

Despite the experience that Lyle and his team have had, preparing their restaurants for the June 22 reopening date posed a unique challenge. "It was a rush. It felt like opening a restaurant for the first time, and we were doing five restaurants at once."

With the need to keep tables two metres apart, restaurants are running at half capacity at best. Burgundy Lion, if they're lucky to get a lot of tables of four people all from the same household, is able to seat around 150 guests out of their usual capacity of 300.

Damas Restaurant opened with about a third of their usual

seating space. Dan Gillis, sommelier at the Outremont restaurant, understands the need to wear masks and eye protection, but said he doesn't think he'll soon get over the barrier it imposes on service. "Talking about wine and food and anything you're excited about, so much of that communication is non-verbal, and so much of it is lost. It's a very strange feeling. I don't know what to make of it yet."

Gillis is not worried about contracting the virus at work because they're taking the new guidelines seriously and following all the necessary precautions. Places like Damas, which offer a fine dining experience, can more readily adapt to the public safety measures, he said. "Things are clearer, things are already a lot more rigid. The service is a lot more intentional."

Petite-Patrie's MaBrasserie is more of a casual brew-pub that serves food, but their large terrasse allows them to comfortably seat people outside while respecting the two-metre distance. So far, the clientele has been patient and understanding.

"Clients just spent three months in confinement so they're used to washing their hands and respecting social distancing rules," says Martine Lafontaine, head of business development at the bar. "The big difference is in the service. The servers wear a face shield and our cleaning procedures are very different. Menus are disinfected after each client, and the glassware is taken from the tables by the bussers, or the servers do it and immediately disinfect their hands."

Zac Clarke owns Dirty Pizza, which runs out of a small space on Mont-Royal E. Until he gets the approval to rebuild a terrasse in front of his building, he essentially can't have clients sit to eat their meal. "I let two people eat [inside] yesterday but that's about all I can fit," he says. "There's just no way I can seat four people and do the social distancing."

Still, he says business was good during week one, since he's just a short walk from Jeanne Mance Park and Mont-Royal Avenue has become a pedestrian street for the summer. "The

numbers are definitely up, even without tourism. People are pretty antsy and they're down to eat out."

Making sure clients respect the guidelines means that workers in Lyle's restaurants have had to do a bit more policing of clients' behaviour, another challenge when you work in service. "It takes away that hospitality edge, telling people what they can and can't do," he says. "Most have been great but it's only natural that after a few beers you want to be more social."

"I don't think we'll get to a point where people will stop going to restaurants out of fear," says Lafontaine when asked if the novelty of going out to eat might wear off with the new public safety measures. "If anything, people might not come because of the wait time."

After just a few days of serving clients in-house, a lot still remains to be seen about the new wants and needs of the clientele. "There's a whole bunch of unknowns," Gillis says. "Wine in restaurants is expensive, much more expensive than it is to buy at a store, so are people going to be in a strange space about spending \$100 on a bottle of wine?"

The laws may also loosen in July if these first weeks go well, and any issues that have come up will likely be worked out over time. "Something we worry about is the workers wearing the face shields when there's a heatwave," Lafontaine points out.

"I'm most optimistic if restaurants behave ourselves and we give the authorities the confidence to reduce it to one metre, which would make a huge difference," Lyle says.

It's not just on restaurants to respect the rules though — it's on clients as well.

Clarke says he would rather people who flout social distancing don't come into his restaurant, to keep himself and his employees safe. "If you can't show me, as a human, basic respect based on simple science, then I don't want you around me at all," he says. "It needs to be a symbiotic relationship."

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music

The breakdown

BY LORRAINE CARPENTER

The most predictable element of the Trump presidency has been chaos. Ever since the awful shock of election day 2016, it's been easy to foresee that the road ahead would be broken to the point of putting the whole world in danger. No one knew just how deadly the journey would be for Americans, on American soil.

Two years ago, Halifax singer-songwriter Rich Aucoin biked across 12 states to raise money for Mental Health America and the Canadian Mental Health Association, writing one song for each state. For the first time, his lyrics became imbued with politics — not the daily goings-on in D.C., Twitter tirades or media feuding, but the fall-out of failed policies and the great “Make America Great Again” con.

His upcoming album *United States*, which will be released on Sept. 18 by Haven Sounds, is equally inspired by the hope produced by multiple American protest movements that have grown up in recent years, and by the notion of uniting states of consciousness via psychedelics and meditation. Aucoin's upbeat pop sound remains as universal as ever, and even though on the surface the lyrics and themes on this fourth LP are tied together by something specific, the world is always watching and reacting to what goes on in the U.S. — perhaps especially here in Canada.

“I was approaching it like a third-party observer, seeing it at the most slow-paced personal level that I could, pedalling across Middle America. If anyone is like, ‘What is this guy doing commenting on this?’ my answer is ‘Why not someone with a foreign perspective to look at the system from outside the system?’”

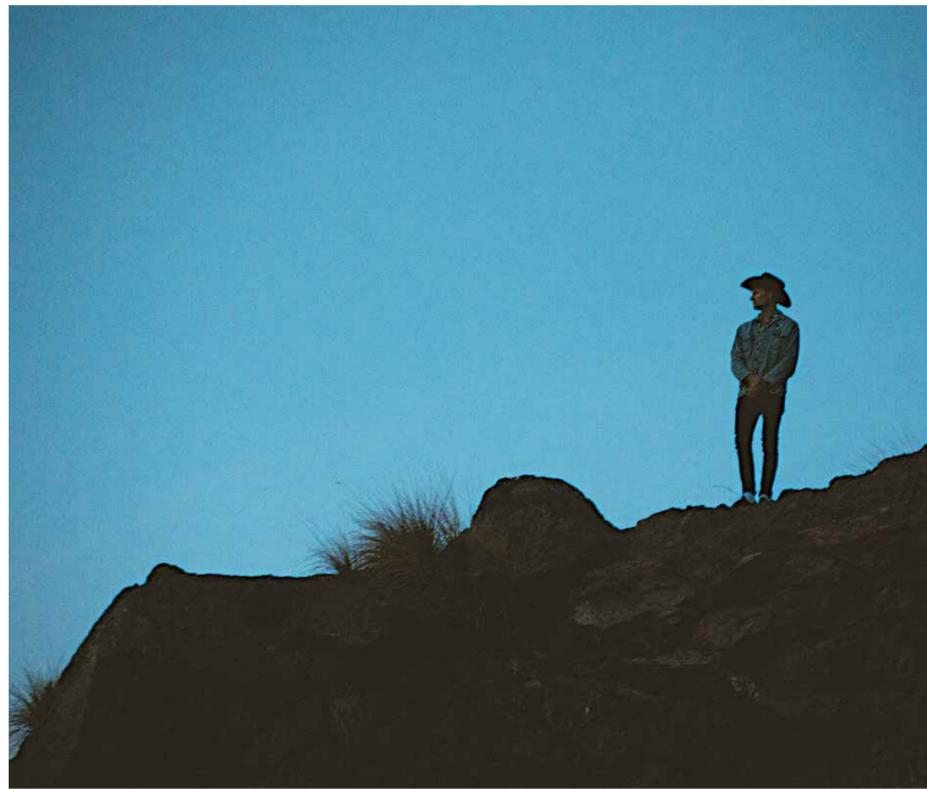
When I last spoke to Aucoin in the fall, he was looking ahead to a period after this record (the contents of which were then top-secret) when he would break from the rigorous touring he's been engaged in for years.

“Careful what you wish for,” he says now, laughing. “I was supposed to be playing over 100 shows in the States this year,” he adds, sharing that he had high hopes for breaking into the American market with past/future tour-mates *Tupper Ware Remix Party (TWRP)* and *Planet Booty*.

“Their fans are some of the nicest folks I've ever met, and so supportive, and just getting to meet them across the States, face-to-face, was something that I thought might be a big game changer. Now that's not happening for a while, so I wouldn't be surprised if the album doesn't do well. (laughs) I'm not trying to be pessimistic but I'm just back to another situation where I'm rolling the dice and maybe I get a good roll and maybe I don't.”

Aucoin has toyed with some live streaming events but, like many musicians, has walked away unsatisfied with the production value, not to mention the level of engagement, limited as it is to squinting at incoming comments on a screen.

“I'm focusing more on getting ready for whenever live shows do happen again, and on doing a version of my show that doesn't require us all to be under a sweaty parachute together,” he says. To the uninitiated, a Rich Aucoin show is more hands-on than most — he typically encourages fans to form a circle around him at the front and place their hands on top of one another like a pre-show/pre-game pep ritual, but



Rich Aucoin

Mat Dunlop

during the actual show.

“I've been joking with all my music peers and friends that my show is going to be the last thing that's permitted (because of the pandemic),” he says.

Along with planning more theatrical performances for the future, Aucoin has been focusing on the music videos that will — given the lack of touring — almost single-handedly sell this record to the masses. Visuals have always played a central role in Aucoin's shows, and his music videos never fail to impress. The *United States* project launched in mid-April with the video for “How It Breaks,” an anti-Trump song/video that doesn't mention the heinous President by name, and censors his grotesque face.

“Like Voldemort, you don't want to give them more power,” Aucoin explains (a Harry Potter reference for anyone who's wondering). “I wanted the song to continue to apply to any corrupted power and not just one very harmful individual.”

Even more powerful was the video for “Reset,” which dropped in May. The video is a montage of the aftermath of American mass shootings and the anti-gun protest movement, and as with the previous video, the clip does not feature its main subject — there are no guns. Aucoin was compiling and editing the video on April 18, when Canada's worst ever mass shooting unfolded in his province — a chilling experience, to say the least.

“I was googling mass shooting and getting all this information about the history of events in America over the last few years, and then Nova Scotia pops in there,” Aucoin recalls. “That day was very surreal because the RCMP really didn't update people effectively so there were a lot of rumours circulating. The news was trickling in and the degree was getting worse with each update. We always joke with Maritimers and particularly Haligonians that everyone is only one degree of separation apart from everyone else anyway — there are so many connections. There was a lot of worry while it was still ongoing, and it went overnight.”

“Working on the video was a way to research and think about some of the problems with gun access and how to ban things in a way that makes sense. Seeing the number of times it's happened in the States was really eye-opening. It happens so often that the ones with lower body counts are only in the

news for a day, or not even. It was a heavy time, for sure, and the community here was making it very four-dimensional.”

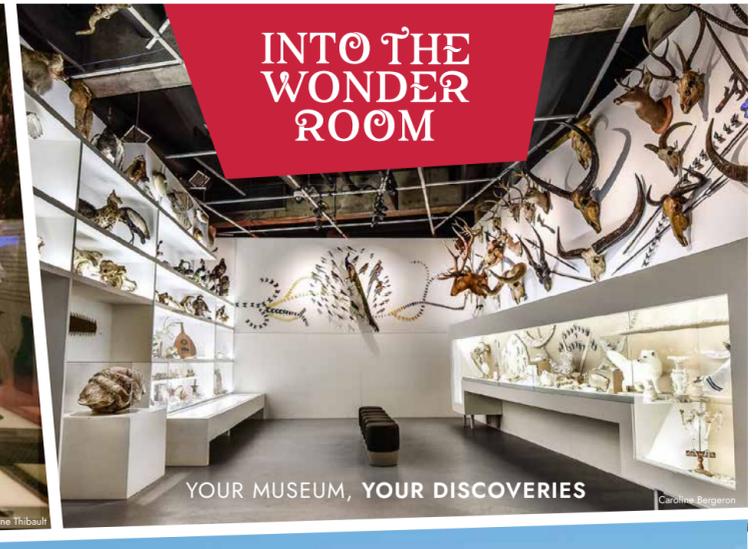
Videos for the songs “Dopamine” and “Walls” are still to come, in July and September. Aucoin refers to “Walls” as the “main single” from *United States*, “the one that has the greatest chance to connect.” Fittingly, it's about breaking down barriers between people, something the video depicts quite literally with walls between YouTube screens being busted, à la Run DMC/Aerosmith. And within each screen is a recreation of a classic music video, a concept that gave Aucoin and a huge crew of friends, musicians and actors (pre-lockdown) the opportunity to play Prince, Madonna, the Beastie Boys, OK Go, Alanis Morissette, Nirvana, Beyoncé and others.

“We reshot 16 of my favourite music videos with over 100 people involved. We just took over this huge filming space where they made *The Lighthouse*. The funny part is the mash-ups of Beyoncé with OK Go, or having the Beastie Boys with Madonna or Alanis Morissette in the ‘Sabotage’ video, stuff like that. Probably the most fun we had was remaking sets for ‘When Doves Cry’ and ‘Smells Like Teen Spirit.’”

When I ask Aucoin about the stakes of the upcoming U.S. election, an event that he so wanted to weigh into in a hands-on way by rocking the vote, as it were, with a voter registration drive on tour, he doesn't refrain from getting philosophical.

“There's a loss of truth happening everywhere. It's almost like Nietzsche's ‘God is dead’ — ‘truth is dead’ is something that's happening right now because of how much Trump has enabled ‘fake news’ to erode the perception of what's real and what's fake. That's why I borrowed the term from wrestling, kayfabe (a song title on the album) — the idea that people are in on the fact that what's being said is fake but they accept its fakeness as truth for admission to this overall paradigm.”

“I'm definitely not saying that as Canadians we are absolved of all the things they're going through (in the States),” he adds. “The struggles that are very much on display in America are happening in Canada and other parts of the world. Maybe one day I'll bike across Canada again (as he did for Childhood Cancer Canada Foundation in 2007) and do an album that looks at all our problems.”



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Album reviews

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Thanya Iyer, *KIND* (Topshelf)
A cavalcade of Montreal places and faces find their way onto local artist Thanya Iyer's expansive and ornate *KIND*, which existed previously as a visual album directed by Bucky Illingworth. There's a core trio starring Iyer with a number of guests finding a home on this deeply personal project,

and there's a sonic variety, too, that reminds us the best Montreal is a collaborative one: experimental art pop, improvisational jazz, orchestral indie rock all mesh with Iyer's intimate vocals to create a compelling listen. 8.5/10 Trial Track: «Please Don't Hold Me Hostage for Who I Am, Who I Was» (Erik Leijon)



El-P, *Capone Original Motion Picture Soundtrack* (Producto Mart, Inc.)
Yes, the latest installment in Run The Jewels' catalogue, 4, is wonderful and timely and violent and necessary. But lest we forget that its production muscle, the venerable El Producto, was once better known for noisy, disturbing,

bathtub-liquor-grade, broken-ass beat-making than for magazine covers, Twitter commentaries and mega-fest headlining slots, he reminds us of how comfortable he is inside the twisted mind of a real-life criminal supervillain by providing the

score to this year's film *Capone*. This is mood music from a man whose earlier work with groups like Company Flow and Cannibal Ox was the paranoid soundtrack to 9/11 that avant-garde rap fans, hunkered down in stoned conspiracy caves, both craved and deserved, and so in these strange times, El-P's spin on Al Capone's sick cerebrum is a totally apt bit of background confusion as we sit and reflect on how little sense we can make of the world, and a throwback to what made the producer great to begin with. 8/10 Trial Track: "Intruder" (Darcy MacDonald)



KA, *Descendants of Cain* (Iron Works)
If you were as disappointed by Jay Electronica's debut album as most of the world was when it dropped — just in time for the apocalypse — in March, maybe Ka's newest will help feed your hunger for lo-fi, heavy rap introspection that the former's heavily Hov-

assisted bomb left in the wake of its vast, empty nothingness. The comparison may seem unfair, especially since Ka has had the benefit of actually putting albums out in the last decade instead of, you know, just talking about them. Many seemed to expect the second coming of Elec's earliest stream-of-thought YouTube efforts. The superiority of Ka's resonance over ghostly drums and sparse samples here is anything but void, which can't be said for the former, disappointingly enough. Whereas both rappers are in their late 40s, Ka fully brings to life his own take on what mature hip hop can offer the listener — in this case, substance and style without

pomp and ego. *Cain* kills with sheer ability. 8/10
"Solitude of Enoch" (Darcy MacDonald)



Teyana Taylor, *The Album* (G.O.O.D. Music/Def Jam)
Teyana Taylor's 2018 release *K.T.S.E.* felt shortchanged. The project seemed like an afterthought in Kanye West's ambitious plan to release five albums in five weeks, produced entirely by himself, via his G.O.O.D. Music label. Taylor's rollout was particularly messy, her

album arriving an entire day after it was supposed to. Flash forward two years, the label's first lady at long last receives her due diligence. While a little on the long side (77 minutes), *The Album* is a well-rounded body of work that demonstrates what Taylor could achieve upon unlocking her full potential. 8/10 Trial Track: "Come Back to Me" (feat. Rick Ross & Junie) (Mr. Wavvy)



Lil Yachty, *Lil Boat 3* (Quality Control/Motown)
Lil Yachty swept the rap scene by storm in 2016 with the release of his breakout mixtape *Lil Boat*. Since then, his projects have felt inconsistent or forgettable. That was until the release of *Lil Boat 3*, which completes a trilogy. Reports that the rapper had rerecorded the album three

times seem plausible, with far more effort seemingly put into his craft this time around. Yachty hones in on his illuminated energy, offering a light listen for these incredibly heavy times. 7/10 Trial Track: "TD" (feat. A\$AP Rocky, Tyler, the Creator & Tierra Whack) (Mr. Wavvy)

:hammer of the mods

BY JOHNSON CUMMINS

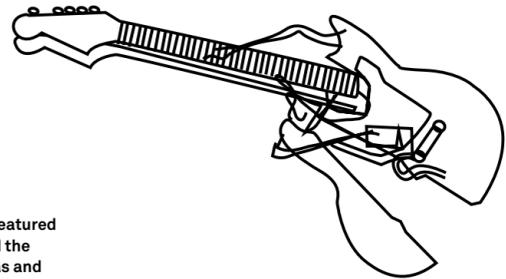
It's going to be a good little while until we can sweat it out in live venues again, but record stores are back in action. There are two killer slabs of glimmering Canadian power pop (that somehow escaped my radar when they were both released in 2018): the Modern Minds' *Go!* and the Mods Rickenbacker-driven *Reactions*. These original recordings stem from punk-pop's glory years as razor blades made way for skinny ties in '78 to '80. Thanks to awesome Toronto label and punk rock excavators Ugly Pop, this is surely the first time many of us will have ever had a chance to check out these rare gems.

The Mods, *Reactions* (Ugly Pop, 2018)

Bursting out of the first wave of Toronto punk that featured snotty gutter gods like Viletones, Teenage Head and the Ugly, the Mods were the odd men out with the parkas and penny loafers. The energy, urgency and general smash-and-bash that they squeezed into the grooves of *Reactions* is undeniable, with pure pop-punk power. The 1979 single *Step Out Tonight* is included here but it's the unreleased jewels like *Reign of Terror* and *Comin' In Out of the Rain* is proof that if these Scarberians had instead been located in London or L.A. at the dawn of the '80s, they would've been crowned power pop kings. Not all is peaches and cream here, though, as their obvious obsession with the Jam is on full display, especially with singer Greg Triner, who frankly sounds like a Paul Weller understudy — his vocals might make you bristle upon first listen, with a voice that can only be described as "punchable." Upon closer inspection, with repeated listens, you can hear Triner come into his own. Ugly Pop once again kill with great packaging and include an informative bio written by Mods drummer David Quinton-Steinberg with period-correct photos of the fellas glamming it up for the camera as well as copy of a gig flyer for us trainspotters. If you dig the Nerves and the Exploding Hearts, you really need to stick your needle in this groove.

The Modern Minds, *Go!* (Ugly Pop, 2018)

Another major power pop score here from Ugly Pop as they unearth the ultra rare KBD 1980 single "Theresa's World" as



well as unreleased demos that prove this Edmonton trio should have been leading the skinny-tie charge of 1980. Most noted as featuring the Pursuit of Happiness's Moe "I'm An Adult Now" Berg this is a snapshot of Berg still full of piss and vinegar with stacks of Buzzcocks, Pointed Sticks, Modernettes and Undertones records under each arm. Early Who and Todd Rundgren's sense of songwriting prowess also make appearances in the most unlikely places. Ugly Pop keep things churning in the packaging department and includes an extensive bio written by Ugly Pop head honcho Simon Harvey, photos of the nerdy trio, early gig fliers as well as a photocopy of an early press clipping. If this collection of their sole single and demos saw the light of day in 1980 on a label like Bomp, this humble piece of power pop would've easily been spoken about in the same breath as the Plimsouls, the Records, the DB's and the Only Ones. Get this now!!!

- For all other killer releases on Ugly Pop, check out their page on www.discogs.com

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film

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Random Acts of Violence

BY ALEX ROSE

When I interviewed Jay Baruchel about his directorial debut, 2017's *Goon: Last of the Enforcers*, he clearly outlined all of the technical and visual challenges that he had set for himself in order to scale up from the first film. When I saw that his next directorial effort was the horror comic adaptation *Random Acts of Violence*, I thought he was deliberately scaling back — then I actually saw *Random Acts of Violence*.

“Being scared of the strings attached to subject matter shouldn't be a reason not to do it,” says Baruchel. “You should not go into it for a bunch of reasons: you're not into it, you don't agree, you don't give a shit, you can't wrap your head around it or whatever. But being scared of something... I think if I'm scared of something I'm interested in, that tells me I should try to look into it a little bit more. It's a combination of two things, basically. First was this idea that I couldn't name most of the victims in most of the horror flicks I'd seen, but I could name all of the killers. And then, obviously, the next thing was that it was true in real life. I can name a bunch of fuckin' awful murderers, but I'd be hard-pressed to name more than a handful of the people they hurt and killed. I wasn't thrilled by that! (laughs)”

Todd Walkley (Jesse Williams) is a comic-book artist whose

long-running series *Slasher* is coming to an end after several years. Based on a real-life serial killer that terrorized a stretch of the United States in the late '80s, *Slasher* remains controversial in the world of the film for what many deem irresponsible use of real-life tragedy. As Todd, his girlfriend Kathy (Jordana Brewster), his assistant Aurora (Niamh Wilson) and editor Ezra (Jay Baruchel) head on a press tour of the area where the real *Slasher* committed his crimes, Todd is forced to examine his role in perpetuating the myth of *Slasher* in the immediate world where the victims have been reduced to gory panels in his comic books — until someone starts killing people around them by emulating the kills drawn by Todd.

“That t-boned with this other concept that I'd been interested in for a while: the potentially harmful nature of the creative process for some people,” Baruchel continues. “It's like this: in any kind of artistic or creative field, there are people generating work that have their heads so far up their own ass that everyone in their immediate orbit suffers as a result of being close to this person. Read any rock bio or watch any kind of music documentary — rare is the rockstar that anybody they're actually blood-related to has anything nice to say about. There's something to that, to somebody scratching an itch in their head at the cost of the people they're supposed to care about.”

Though it starts life as a fairly straightforward horror movie, *Random Acts of Violence* also makes it clear early on that it will grapple with metatextual elements surrounding creation. What is the responsibility of the artist? Is it irresponsible to use real pain and real tragedy to make art?

Is the artist responsible for how their art is received by fans? Is it irresponsible to reject or ignore that reception? Suffice to say that this is pretty heady stuff for a horror movie, especially one like this one, that asks the viewer to grapple directly with their basest instincts. The contradiction (decrying something that you also indulge in) makes *Random Acts of Violence* more than just a straightforward gorefest.

“Mercifully, a film is a collaborative process,” says Baruchel. “Even if I'm the steward of the heroic ideal that's propelling the thing, everyone else's fingerprints are on it. That's a good thing for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that it tempers me. I realize that there's no point in having this thing come from an uber-judgy place so much as present the dialectic. If you go to the grocery store, look on the back of the product, see that the first ingredient is glucose but you still buy it? That's totally fucking fine, man! (laughs) That's on you, but you should know that glucose is in there. I'm someone that has a true-crime section in my library at home, I'm interested in that stuff and I grew up in a home where my mom was super into it as well. I'm fascinated by it, but I have to constantly remind myself that these are people with families. They're not just names. I think the most powerful true crime book I've ever read is the Ann Rule book about the Green River Killer because she doesn't really even fucking name him. What the book is is a collection of biographies of the women that he murdered. It's a profoundly heavy read, obviously, but that's the thing! I think that this push-and-pull, if nothing else, it makes for good drama.”

→ *Random Acts of Violence* opens in theatres on July 31.



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Canadian gonzo



Target Number One

BY ALEX ROSE

Victor Malarek is the kind of journalist that doesn't really exist anymore, but even when he was at the height of his powers, he remained a rare occurrence. Laying the groundwork, in a way, for modern gonzo journalism in the *Vice* mode, Malarek was a reporter at *The Globe and Mail* whose presence was so at the forefront of his work that it inspired a movie (*Hey, Malarek!*, starring Elias Koteas) and a TV show (*Urban Angel*) right around the time that the events of Daniel Roby's new film *Target Number One* were occurring.

In Roby's film, Victor Malarek (played by Josh Hartnett) is a principled, opinionated newspaper reporter who comes across the case of Daniel Léger (Antoine-Olivier Pilon), a Québécois heroin addict currently rotting in a Thai jail for heroin trafficking. The official line is that Léger is a kingpin controlling the drug trade, but what Malarek soon finds out is that he's almost certainly a patsy, delivered through an informant (Jim Gaffigan) to government officials through less-than-legal means.

Target Number One has been a pet project of Roby's for well over a decade — there are mentions of it in articles previewing *Funkytown*, which was shot in 2009 — and one that Hartnett has been attached to for nearly as long.

"Daniel got in contact with me maybe six years ago," says Hartnett, "and then I didn't hear from Daniel for about a year. (laughs) The first financing deal fell through, actors fell through. It took a while to get the right group of people together, and then we finally finished the film about two years ago. It's been a long journey for Daniel, for sure. When he sent me the script, it wasn't about me being the lead in the film. It is an ensemble piece, 100 per cent."

Victor Malarek is a central figure in *Target Number One*, but not its main character — he's part of the tapestry of a surprisingly complex political thriller with shades of Oliver Stone and Michael Mann. To prepare for playing the part, Hartnett met with the real Victor Malarek, who went on to host *The Fifth Estate* for a decade and now works as a senior reporter for CTV's *W-Five*.

"Part of Victor's charm is that he lets it all hang out," says Hartnett. "His heart is on his sleeve, he tells you what he believes and he fights for it. It's simple, it's clear and he doesn't let up. Most of the reason I wanted to do the film was, first of all, Daniel's enthusiasm and the fact that the script was really interesting. But he invited me up to meet with Victor. I flew up to Toronto — I was living in New York at the time — and spent the day with Victor. Getting a sense of what he's like, what drives him, was comforting. It was exciting to feel like you're with someone who has an answer for themselves. That, I think, is his charm. He's very certain of what Victor Malarek is about and what creates that star power that you're talking about, that clarity of vision."

An interesting nuance about the way Malarek is portrayed in the film is that, although he fits in many ways into the image

of the rough-around-the-edges, truth-seeking reporter, he's also someone concerned with the work and, ultimately, the paycheque that comes with it. In the idealized version of *Target Number One*, Malarek would be the kind of starry-eyed reporter for whom justice is payment enough — but, for Malarek, payment is the ultimate form of payment.

"That's what made the story interesting," says Hartnett. "He's at a point in his life where it's all changing. Victor is basically just going on his little journeys and getting the bad guys and thinking of himself as this vigilante journalist, but this is the point where things are changing for him. Suddenly, he's gotta worry about his family and about his income — for the first time, he's not the only one who doesn't eat if he gets fired from all his jobs. It's a transitional period in his life, which is what makes the character more compelling than just the cavalier, renegade journalist."

Target Number One is also a period piece about what feels like the not-so-distant past (although it was three decades ago). Though Hartnett is no stranger to appearing in period pieces throughout his career, this is the first "recent past" film he's appeared in in some time.

"It frightens me, but I'm well past that now," he says. "When I first heard Nirvana on a classic rock station, I wanted to jump off a bridge. (laughs) I'm 41 now, I'm used to it. Some of the movies that I was in are now being rediscovered by kids who weren't born yet. It's what happens, man. If you're lucky enough, you get old."

→ *Target Number One* opens in theatres on July 10

On Screen



Radioactive



Desperados



The Old Guard



The Broken Hearts Gallery

BY ALEX ROSE

After months of uncertainty, movie theatres have slowly begun to open up again as of this month. The schedule remains extremely tentative; some theatres have opted to fill their screens mainly with films that have already been released in pre-COVID-19 times (*Parasite*, *Le grand bain* and *Portrait de la jeune fille en feu*), and news of brand-new releases are coming slowly and without too much certainty. We've already seen Christopher Nolan's *Tenet* delayed several times (at this point, to August) as the situation in the U.S. remains unstable. One of the first films intended to hit theatres this month was *Unhinged*, a truck-driver thriller starring Russell Crowe from director Derrick Borte (*London Town*, *American Dreamer*); it, too, has been bumped to July 31.

That makes the first new release to hit theatres in Montreal — on July 10 — likely to be *Target Number One* (aka *Most Wanted*), a political crime thriller from local director

Daniel Roby (*Funkytown*, *Dans la brume*). Josh Hartnett (interviewed on p.19) stars as real-life hotshot reporter Victor Malarek, who investigates the case of a Québécois ex-pat (Antoine-Olivier Pilon) who is jailed in Thailand for trafficking heroin. Geraldine Viswanathan (*Blockers*) and Dacre Montgomery (*Stranger Things*) star in the Toronto-shot romcom *The Broken Hearts Gallery*, from first-time filmmaker Natalie Krinsky (a writer on *Gossip Girl*), out Aug. 7 (pushed back from July 17).

Kelly Reichardt's *First Cow* was poised for release just as movie theatres were closed in March. Resisting the allure of VOD, it will now see release on July 10. John Magaro and Orion Lee star as a couple of travellers in the 1820s who find a lucrative money-making scheme that involves the unlawful use of a cow that doesn't belong to them. Another victim of the shutdown was the British horror film *Saint Maud*, which also saw its release pulled with a day or two to spare — it's now slated for July 17. Directed by Rose Glass, it's the story of a hospice nurse who suspects she may be possessed.

Celebrated Canadian director Atom Egoyan returns with one of his best-received films in years in *Guest of Honour*, a drama featuring David Thewlis as a health inspector whose daughter has been jailed for sexual assault. Actor and former Montrealer Jay Baruchel's second feature, *Random*

Acts of Violence (July 31), is a comic book adaptation that premiered to overall positive reviews at Fantastic Fest last year. Baruchel and Jesse Williams (*Gray's Anatomy*) star as a couple of comic-book artists whose serial-killer-centric work starts having repercussions in the real world. (See our interview with Baruchel on p. 18).

STREAMING RELEASES

Charlize Theron stars in the Netflix original *The Old Guard* (July 10), based on the comic-book of the same name. Directed by Gina Prince-Bythewood (*Love & Basketball*), the film focuses on a pack of immortal mercenaries. Kiki Layne, Matthias Schoenaerts and Chiwetel Ejiofor also star. Anna Camp, Nasim Pedrad and Heather Graham star in *Desperados*, a comedy from former *Funny or Die* director LP that's out on July 3.

Marjane Satrapi (*Persepolis*) might seem like an unusual choice to direct a biopic of Marie Curie; that's certainly how many took it when *Radioactive* premiered at TIFF last year. The film, which stars Rosamund Pike as Marie Curie and Sam Riley as Pierre Curie, was received with cautious optimism by many who applauded Pike's performance but criticized some of its storytelling choices. It hits Amazon Prime Video on July 24.

arts

Back to the galleries

BY NORA ROSENTHAL

How to reopen the world has everything to do with how to be a better ally and how to envision a future in which economic security isn't predicated on environmental destruction. If you, like me, are lucky enough to have benefited from the CERB and the perhaps paralyzing thoughtful hours that bestowed on you, hopefully you've made of that what you can.

I keep watching a short dance piece by Jamar Roberts, *Cooped*. In Roberts' words, a "potent fever dream that aims to capture the fear of sickness, and the anxiety of quarantine as it relates to the historical trauma of Black bodies being relegated to live in and within confined spaces." It's rare to find a work that so fully encapsulates the historical moment of its creation. I'm still unsure of how to be a better ally, not least of all because white certitude has such terrifying ramifications, but in my uncertainty I am advising any and everyone to go and watch *Cooped*.

Meanwhile, our city's many cultural institutions are trying to position themselves as they reopen, and John Zeppetelli, the director of the Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal (MAC) in fact references *Cooped* as part of the MAC's list of resources in response to the global Black Lives Matter movement. With this trepidatious reopening and repositioning in mind, here's a rundown of some of the offerings from the larger museums and galleries that are now able to open. Gallery programming works not unlike cinema, with years of planning behind the scenes prior to the work being shown to an audience, so a lot of the programming is the same as it was before closures, but I surmise that it can still be viewed differently.

LA GUILDE

You still have time to see works from the fifth edition of the BACA (Contemporary Native Art Biennial), *Kahwatsiretatie: Teionkwariwaienna Tekariwiennawahkòntie* (on until July 19). David Garneau, one of the curators, describes the approach of the Biennial: "Kinship is not just the subject of *Kahwatsiretatie*, it also informs our curatorial method. In addition to choosing fine works of art and placing them in good display relations with each other, we also asked many of the senior artists to invite "kin" to exhibit with them [...] Like a ceremony or party where invited guests invite their own guests, we want to expand the circle to include relations we did not yet know." 1356 Sherbrooke W., free

PHI Centre

The PHI Centre is presenting *Emergence & Convergence*, which Phoebe Greenberg, the PHI's founder and director, describes as "an invitation to immerse ourselves in an exhibition which investigates our humanity in relationship with our planet and all living beings." To Sept. 6, 315 St-Paul W., \$16.35–\$21.80



Emergence & Convergence at PHI Centre

FONDATION PHI

The Fondation PHI, meanwhile, is presenting *Relations: Diaspora and Painting*, a group show curated by Cheryl Sim examining "the complex and multiple meanings of diaspora, its condition, and its experiences as expressed through painting." July 8–Nov. 29, 451 St-Jean, free

FONDERIE DARLING

The Fonderie's dual exhibition of Vikky Alexander's photographic and sculptural installation *Nordic Rock* and Michael Eddy's print and video work referencing Charlie Hebdo, *Je Suis* both continue until Aug. 30. Additionally, the Fonderie will be continuing their yearly tradition of installing a site-specific work in Place Publique. This year the Montreal duo Anna Eyler and Nicoias Lapointe are presenting *D.o.t.T.D. (Dance of the Techno-Demon)*, part hot-dog stand, part capitalist critique. 745 Ottawa, Fonderie's regular programming: \$5; D.o.t.T.D.: free

MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN

The MAC's selection of video work from their archive, *Points of Light*, continues until Oct. 11, as well as *Painting Nature*

With a Mirror, the exhibition of Canadian painting from the 1980s. 185 Ste-Catherine W., \$4–\$10

MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

Following *Egyptian Mummies: Exploring Ancient Lives*, which is presently sold out, the MBAM will be presenting *Paris in the Days of Post-Impressionism: Signac and the Indépendants* from July 4 to Nov. 15. 1380 Sherbrooke W., \$16–\$24

MCCORD MUSEUM

Wearing our Identity — The First Peoples Collection continues as part of the McCord's permanent collection. The McCord is also showing an exhibition of work by Serge Chapleau, a Quebec cartooning icon (on until March 7, 2021), a photographic exhibit focusing on Robert Walker's photographs of the changing face of Griffintown (on until Feb. 14, 2021) as well as an exhibition of Jean-Claude Poitras's fashion career, spanning the 1970s to the 2000s (on until Aug. 2). 690 Sherbrooke W., \$14–\$19, free for Indigenous Peoples, children and museum members

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JULY 19-25

:play recent



All the grey junk tomorrows...

BY RYAN DIDUCK

Snog (Coluber), +ssRNA6: Move (Amniote Editions)

This may be the first ever Play Exclusively column. Because, in addition to what I've been playing recently, this is what I've been playing to the exclusion of everything else. Five songs on repeat for days. Throughout the Coronavirus crisis, I shunned everything new, preferring to listen back to historical records, making desert-island lists for the desert island that became of my life. But there's a sea of newness out there. It's easier to dive back in than to tiptoe.

I can't imagine what the next knees-up event will look like, nor when it will happen again in meatspace. Even if there was a rave, I'm not sure that it would be any fun dancing at a safe distance, in hazmat suits. I miss desperately the days of overbearing bouncers, lascivious enforcers, the inquiring mindless, probing, prodding, prying, penetrating, searching, snogging, squeezing, spreading, patting down, feeling up. I'd go through that line twice.



Jane Jacobs

Superpuppet, *O Sun* (self-released)

Fresh as if torn from today's headlines:

"Heated debates rage over who is allowed entry into certain spaces and who is kept at the door. The policing of movement from place to place, the raising of border walls, the encryption of data — these and other restrictions lock out scores of people. And monitoring technologies keep watch to make sure only the chosen are let in. But you can't keep information from spilling out, and you can't always manage the chaotic flows of human migration. Somewhere someone will break through. Information will leak. What the state does with those incomers and leakers sets long-term precedents. Things cannot forever be kept under lock and key."

—From Grafton Tanner's *The Circle of the Snake: Nostalgia and Utopia in the Age of Big Tech*, forthcoming via Zer0 Books.

Zoe Polanski, "Pharaoh's Island," *Violent Flowers* (Youngbloods)

Dream: June 20, 2020

I am in a European city, maybe Krakow. I am staying in a hotel. It is big and beautiful and old. Many of the hallways lead up and down at odd angles and seem to make no sense. Some of the doorways are too tight to fit through, so I don't. I just marvel at the intricacy of the place, like a giant fractal in three dimensions. Then I am hanging out with Miley Cyrus. She is there with a gang of girls. Cyrus is standoffish with me, but

she has a brunette friend who says she thinks I'm cute. We all smoke a joint together. I can feel the sogginess of the roach between my lips, and I hope that nobody has Coronavirus. The brunette asks me if I want to come along with them and make out and I say, "Yes, very much."

Freak Heat Waves, "Dripping Visions," *Zap the Planet* (Telephone Explosion)

As conspiracy theorists go, the Polish-American sculptor Stanisław Szukalski was heroic. Beginning in 1940, Szukalski earnestly outlined his elaborate concept of "Zermatism," in which he theorized that all of humanity originated from post-deluge Easter Island. He believed that humans had been enslaved by a malevolent race of "Yetinsyny," the unholy offspring of Yeti and homo sapiens. Over a 40-year period, Szukalski sketched out his ideas in a 42-volume tome of more than 25,000 pages and 14,000 illustrations — a monumental life's work.

The art community, however, avoided his scholarship like COVID-19. A clip from the Autumn 1988 issue of *Whole Earth Review* notes: "...[Szukalski] categorically loathed all art critics and invariably repaid their admiration with profound contempt ... Szukalski simply refused to make himself palatable. He held a lot of unpopular opinions and he saw no reason to keep them to himself." The thing about knowledge is that it all started out as theory. Theories become hypotheses, experiments, observations, conclusions. When we stop theorizing, we're lost.

Joshua Van Tassel, "Eternal Turtle," *Dance Music Volume II: More Songs for Slow Motion* (Backward Music)

"In a corrupt context," claimed Jane Jacobs's Jasper

character in the 1992 dialogue *Systems of Survival*, "the moral and scrupulous man or woman is a misfit."

Gilead Sciences, the pharmaceutical company that makes the Coronavirus therapeutic drug Remdesivir, announced on June 29 that doses of the antiviral medication, which has been provisionally FDA-approved for emergency use in the U.S., will cost between \$2,340–\$3,120 per five-day treatment, depending on whether or not the patient has private healthcare coverage. In early trials, Remdesivir sped up recovery in COVID-19 patients by up to four days, meaning that mild-to-moderate cases could potentially be discharged from hospital up to four days sooner than those not taking the drug. A day in hospital in the states costs an average of \$3,949, according to the U.S. debt assistance service debt.org, and each hospital stay costs an average of \$15,734. So, if a \$3K dose of remdesivir can save a four-day hospital visit at roughly \$16,000, it's quite a steal. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has secured half a million treatment courses of Remdesivir, with a potential "street value" of up to \$1,560,000,000. Gilead Sciences reported earnings of \$22.45-billion in 2019. Its chairman and CEO, Daniel O'Day, wrote in an open letter that the company would "price Remdesivir well below [its] value". They can afford to do this because of the overwhelming demand — a healthy market of more and more sick people, as the virus ebbs and flows in new waves throughout the country. Gilead's shares have risen about 18 per cent this year, according to the CBC, and the company "may be on the verge of having one of the fastest growing products in the industry," according to SVB Leerink analyst Geoffrey Porges.

Daniel O'Day about now is asking his assistant for a moment alone so he can jump up on the Redwood boardroom table and shout, "We beat penicillin!"

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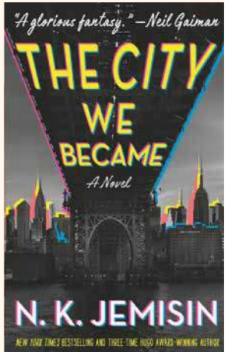
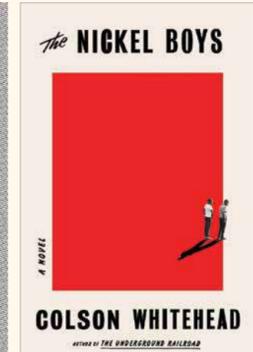
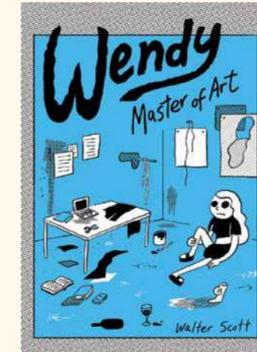
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