



MARCH 2021 • Vol. 9 No. 6 • CULTMTL.COM

FREE

* Pony * LeFIFA * The Mauritanian * Thammada * Bouge d'ici * Francouvertes



Be there for yourself the way you're there for others

It's normal for these uncertain times to bring out negative emotions or anxiety. You're there for your loved ones when they're not doing well. Remember to be there for yourself. There are solutions for getting better.

[Québec.ca/gettingbetter](https://quebec.ca/gettingbetter)

 Info-Social 811

MADISON BEER
LIFE SUPPORT



DISPONIBLE
MAINTENANT

 Écouter sur
Apple Music

table of contents

Cult Mtl is...



Montreal visual artist and travel-TV-show host Pony told us about her loves, hopes and dreams.

Photo by Mr. Wavvy

city	6
n10.as radio	6
Téa Long vs. Instagram	8
:MTL courtside	10
:best buds	11
:1st half	12
 food & drink	 14
Thammada	14
 music	 16
Francouvertes	16
CJLO's International Women's DJ series	18
Album reviews	20
:hammer of the mods	21
 film	 22
Tahar Rahim	22
FIFA	24
On Screen	26
 arts	 28
Pony	28
Bouge d'ici	30
:play recent	32

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

Alex Rose
film editor
alex.rose@cultmontreal.com

Clayton Sandhu
contributing editor (food)

Chris Tucker
art director

Advertising
ads@cultmontreal.com

Contributors:
Johnson Cummins
Paul Desbaillets
Ryan Diduck
Marilyse Hamelin
Erik Leijon
Dave MacIntyre
Darcy Macdonald
Savannah Stewart
Mr. Wavvy

Special thanks:
Rob Jennings

General inquiries + feedback
info@cultmontreal.com



Cult MTL is a daily arts, film, music, food and city life site. Visit us at

cultmtl.com

Cult MTL is published by Cult MTL Media Inc. and printed by Imprimerie Mirabel. Entire contents are © Cult MTL Media Inc.

ADVERTISING IN
CULT
MTL

ADS@CULTMONTREAL.COM

LIBRAIRIE DRAWN & QUARTERLY

176 & 211 BERNARD, MILE END

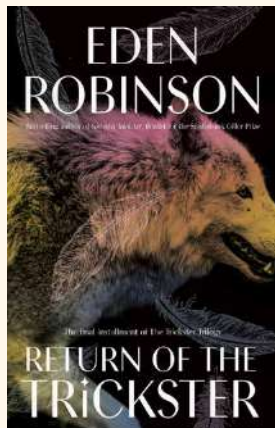
MTL.DRAWNANDQUARTERLY.COM

SHIPPING CANADA-WIDE

DELIVERIES BY BIKE IN MONTREAL

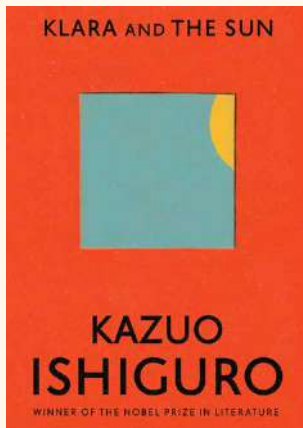
OPEN FOR CURBSIDE PICKUP

VIRTUAL READINGS AND BOOK LAUNCHES



MAR 12, FRIDAY | 7 PM

Eden Robinson launches *Return of the Trickster*, in conversation with Cherie Dimaline



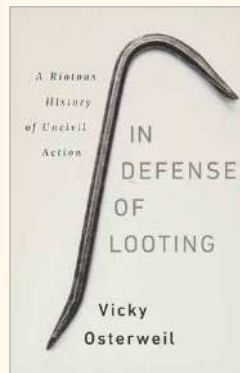
MAR 15, MONDAY | 7 PM

Kazuo Ishiguro launches *Klara and the Sun*, in conversation with Souvankham Thammavongsa

MAR 23, TUESDAY | 7 PM

Cesario Lavery launches *Der Eydes* with the Museum of Jewish Montreal

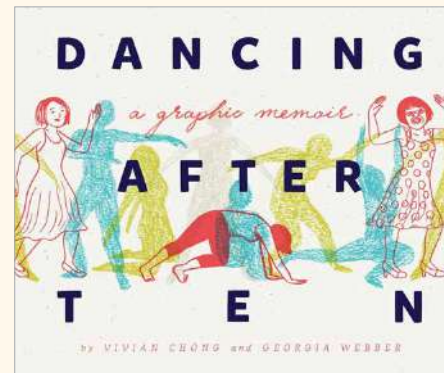
VIRTUAL BOOK CLUBS



MAR 2, TUESDAY | 8 PM **TRUE READS**
In Defense of Looting by Vicky Osterweil



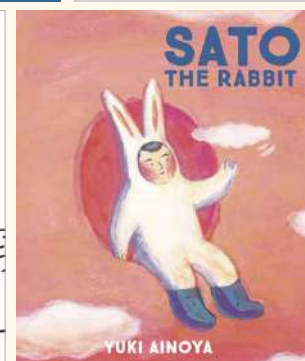
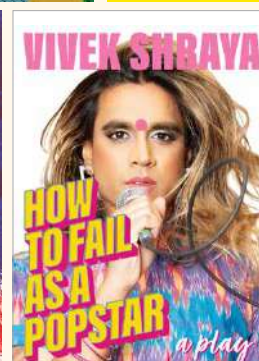
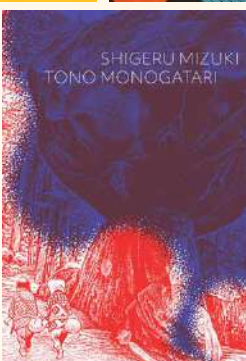
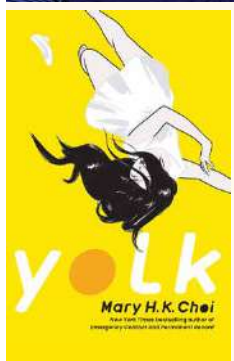
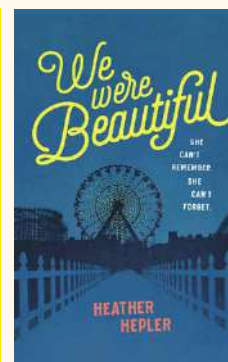
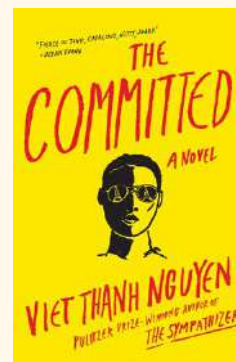
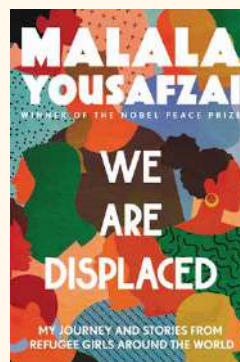
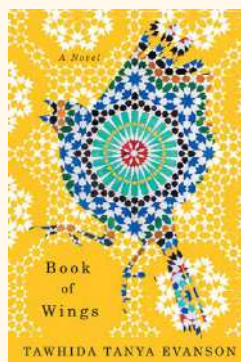
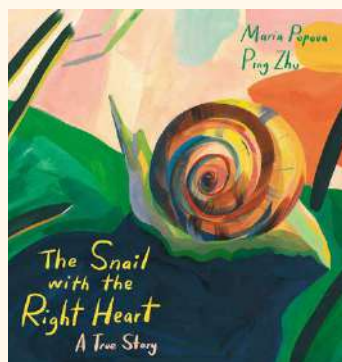
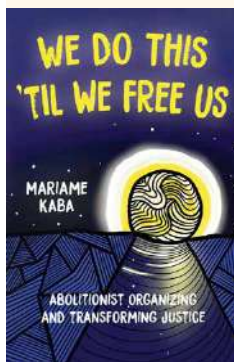
MAR 9, TUESDAY | 8 PM **STRANGE FUTURES**
Future Home of the Living God by Louise Erdrich



MAR 18, THURSDAY | 8 PM **GRAPHIC NOVEL**
Dancing After TEN by Georgia Webber and Vivian Chong

MAR 30, TUESDAY | 8 PM **INDIGENOUS LITS**
Crooked Hallelujah by Kelli Jo Ford

ORDER ONLINE AT MTL.DRAWNANDQUARTERLY.COM



Antennas up



Gert Pörk

BY DAVE MACINTYRE

In February of 2016, a Montreal-based online radio station called n10.as was launched. Pronounced “antennas,” the project was founded by a group of then-Concordia students (Mason Windels, Conan Lai, Dylan Bourdeau and Tam Vu), as well as Arbutus Records founder Sebastian Cowan.

Inspired by similar online radio projects like London’s NTS and New York’s Know Wave, the project was visualized whilst playing *Settlers of Catan*, a game Vu and his then-roommate (and Braids drummer) Austin Tufts would play together.

Operating out of the same building as Arbutus’s headquarters, on 7119 St-André in Plaza St-Hubert, the station’s programming and genres run back and forth across the musical gamut. Listeners can tune in and hear death metal, dub, future soul, U.K. garage, old-school techno or even something as niche as medieval music. Guest mixes from hosts located around the world can also be heard, and the station is open to hosting talk shows.

n10.as is also known for its website design, which looks charmingly like a Windows 95 webpage from back in the day. Perhaps its most striking feature is the live chatroom on the main page, where listeners can interact with one another and form a community around their love for the station. Mixes from past n10.as show episodes are also archived on Mixcloud.

About two-thirds of its hosts are Montreal-based, with the rest broadcasting from elsewhere in Canada or abroad. Many international hosts play music highlighting their local communities and amplifying their sounds, helping to give n10.as a truly global perspective with their programming. The station also does not run advertisements or have sponsors, and their independent nature also means they are not bound by any CRTC regulations.

As it approached its fifth anniversary, I chatted via Zoom with three of n10.as’ major figures from over the years: Rachel Nam, Simon Rock and co-founder Tam Vu. While listening to Know Wave’s *Skate Wise* show, Vu noticed how its ambience resembled people chatting in a living room. He sought to fill a void in Montreal’s music community, while also bringing people together from all walks of life and varying interests.

“It was the dead of winter, and I thought ‘That sounds really

nice! How can we do something like that in Montreal?’” says Vu, who acted as n10.as’ station manager until about 2018.

Vu also says that, when the project began, the goal for n10.as had always been for it to “stay fun,” and maintain creative freedom without investor interference. Though he also admits there are growing pains to running a community project like this one, he’s happy to see how far n10.as has come over the past five years.

“It’s still running with good people,” he says. “People are learning and maturing. There’s growth and skills to get from it. We can still make funny merch items, which I love! (laughs)”

The station’s operational approach is quite distinct compared to that of campus-community radio. Run by a core group of volunteers, n10.as offers a great amount of accessibility to aspiring hosts, as anyone can send a proposal for a show. The station then works to ensure everyone who applies for a show eventually gets one. This contrasts university radio stations, which tend to have a more rigorous process for accepting show proposals.

Nam and Rock, who have both been involved with n10.as in some capacity since 2018, had already been campus-community radio volunteers at CKUT and Calgary’s CJSW, respectively. Since joining n10.as, they’ve found themselves stumbling upon great new music with every listen — even if they’re just there to let show hosts in and out of the studio, which there needs to be at least one volunteer present for.

“I’ll be passively listening, but then something will pop into my ears and I will be like, ‘Oh my God, I have to get this track ID immediately,’” says Nam. “Some of my favourite tunes have definitely come from listening to n10.as.”

Nam also feels grateful that n10.as has been able to create a community of people within Montreal’s music scene who believe in the project, trust them with hosting their shows, and want to actively help keep it going.

“I feel like that’s so hard to do in a city that sometimes feels as transient as Montreal, with people moving in and out all the time,” she says. “We have show hosts who started shows here, have moved away, and continue to send in shows because they love the radio and care about it so much.”

In some cases, hosts from outside Montreal have come to the city to visit, and n10.as typically welcomes them to town by having them as guests in the studio. The station’s international reach is such that listeners come from all corners of the globe. Rock even notices during our Zoom call that there had been more Polish n10.as listeners over the two preceding weeks than Canadian ones.

In fact, one volunteer from abroad even drew direct inspiration from n10.as for a radio project of their own. “We had a volunteer who was here for a semester abroad from Australia,” says Rock. “When she went back, she started sort of a branch of n10.as radio out in Australia, called n10.aus.”

During the onset COVID-19 pandemic last March, n10.as had to close their physical studio space. Although there’d only be a few people present at a time while hosting shows, they ultimately decided it wasn’t worth the risk. Nonetheless, it wasn’t easy news to take.

“A large part of n10.as’ charm is that our hosts would come into the radio station. It was almost like a social activity,” says Nam, who later mentioned that the station had to create an entirely new workflow system when COVID hit. “The physical space was such an important part of the station. It’s a reason why a lot of hosts decided to apply.”

While it didn’t affect their hosts of pre-recorded shows too much, n10.as wanted to ensure live hosts — who make up most of the programming — were still able to record and submit their shows. Despite how much n10.as prides itself over their studio space being such a huge part of their community, the station is continuing to grow, and programming has continued expanding.

“Even though I’ve only been here volunteering for the past year and a half, I can feel that five years of work, energy and community spirit,” says Rock. “It’s persevering. We’re still getting people interested in volunteering and submitting shows. It’s exciting to see that resilience through the pandemic.”

As far as what the future holds for n10.as, the station had intentions pre-COVID to make their studio space more open to the community, so it could host events such as workshops and teach aspiring DJs how to practise on CDJs. The station had also been broadcasting events remotely, where they would transmit a show live from an event in the city.

Rock considers both of these initiatives to represent the station’s increased community involvement that’s “not necessarily us doing something ourselves, but opening ourselves up and using the platform and space that we have to make those links and bring people together.”

Although Vu is no longer actively involved with n10.as, he and Nam still see each other frequently, and often get to talking about the station’s continued evolution.

“When I reflect on it now, I’m so proud of how the spirit continues,” he says. “Everyone’s so generous with their time and energy. The people who participate in radio [at the station] have such a deep and profound love for it. That’s been there from the start.”

POINTE-À-CALLIÈRE

CP

presents



A RAILROAD

TO DREAMS

POINTE-À-CALLIÈRE
Montréal Archaeology
and History Complex



pacmusee.qc.ca/en

Exhibition until September 6, 2021

INTERCONTINENTAL
MONTREAL



Montréal

PHI

LEE BAE UNION

Canadian
Premiere

24.02.2021—
20.06.2021

Free admission
Old Montréal

phi-foundation.org

PHI FOUNDATION



Lee Bae, Issu du feu, 2018, Charcoal, rubber band, 130 x 90 x 90 cm.
Courtesy of the artist and Perrotin.

Black mirror

BY LORRAINE CARPENTER

Montreal model, activist and trans-youth advocate Téa Long recently had her livelihood and primary social lifeline undercut by an algorithm.

Instagram snatched her account away in mid-December of 2020, and dozens of attempts at the social network's appeals process proved to be futile. As a last effort before giving up on Instagram, Long contacted an acquaintance who moves in celebrity circles, a woman who somewhat magically had the account reinstated in the second week of February 2021, no questions answered.

As a professional model, Téa Long had cultivated her Instagram with visual content and contacts — she calls it her digital business card. She used to consider Instagram a safe space for expression, and had invested money in advertising on the platform. It also served her, as it does all of us, as a social lifeline — especially these days — and as a beacon of sorts for youth looking for images of success in the LGBTQ2 world. Having her account removed had an impact not only on her work as a model but as a role model.

She considers herself lucky, because for everyone fortunate enough to have a powerful friend with influence inside Instagram, there are hundreds if not thousands of people whose accounts are erased due to practices that support bias and discrimination against trans people of colour.

In the week that followed the reinstatement of Long's Instagram account, as she was attempting to get "verified" with a sought-after blue checkmark that makes your account virtually untouchable, I spoke to her about exactly how this happened.

Téa Long: Just for some background, I've been doing groundwork in the community for over four years, going to high schools to speak to young adults about loving yourself and putting yourself first and not getting tied into what everyone else thinks about you.

One of the main things trans people fight for is trans visibility, but then we have the issue of combatting the fact that this world is trying to erase us on a regular basis. With the age of digital platforms, you have the erasure of trans visibility.

There are so many LGBTQ+ people of colour, trans people of colour, who are erased on a daily basis from dating apps. It's even happened to me. If I'm on a dating app, I'm a woman, I'm talking to a man, I disclose my trans identity and on his way out of unmatching me, instead of just unmatching me, he decides to report me. If you get reported enough times, you get erased. The algorithm will do it and you have to wait for a human to give you the time of day to see what's been done to you and judge whether it's valid.

On Instagram, you have reporting methods where you can report someone's profile if you deem it to be inappropriate or disturbing, but in a lot of places in the world, trans identities, queer identities and black trans identities are all too often deemed inappropriate or disturbing. I've had an Instagram algorithm take my photo down and then I reposted it and it took my photo down and I reposted it and it took my photo down and so on. I would select an option like "Tell us



Téa Long

something's wrong" and then afterwards Instagram would message me back saying, "Oh sorry, our mistake. After reviewing your photo, we see there's nothing wrong with it."

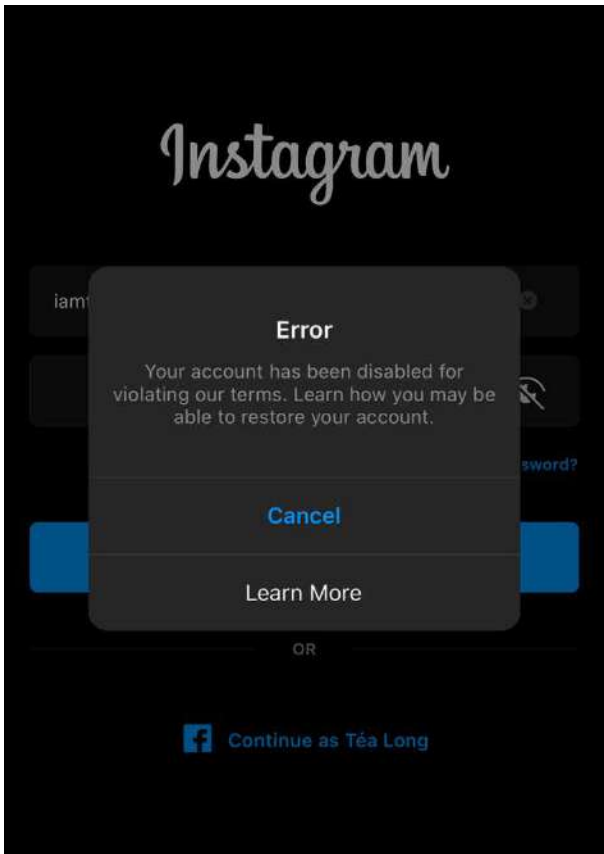
I've had to deal with that, I've had to deal with people reporting my photos for no good reason. Then around Dec. 15, I went to sign into my Instagram and my account was gone. When I tried to sign in, all it said was, "You have breached our terms of agreement. Here are our terms of agreement that you may have breached."

Lorraine Carpenter: I'm guessing that appealing to a human was not possible.

TL: Definitely not. I sent in probably over 30 appeals in which they make you hold a piece of paper with your photo with your name on it, the name of your account and some code that they give you. I did that probably around three or four times a day. I was trying to believe in the system and slowly getting more and more discouraged that I was not going to

get back onto my platform, that I was not going to get my voice back. Yeah I have my own voice, but Instagram is how my voice echoes throughout the globe. I felt exiled out of my own community. And God knows what jobs I have missed out on in the past month and a bit.

I eventually got discouraged and stopped messaging Instagram and I started messaging friends with social elite connections to see if maybe they could help. On Jan. 9, I contacted Kim — she's best friends with Beyoncé's mother — and she wrote back saying, "Oh that's weird, I'm really sorry to hear that. Let me message them and see what I can do. I can reach out to someone tomorrow." I didn't hear back from her but then I reached out to her again on Feb. 2, and she said she'd follow up with them. Then yesterday, on Feb. 9, she sent me a link to my profile being reinstated. I told her, "You're a godsend, I can't describe my level of appreciation," and she said, "You're welcome, I'm sorry this happened." I asked if she got any information about why it happened and she said, "Sadly, none. They said it was just a mistake." I was



locked out of my account for over a month all for it to be summed up as “just a mistake.”

LC: How did it feel after you gave up on Instagram? Did you get any advice, or consider starting over with a new account?

TL: I was erased! That’s how I felt. I had friends telling me, “You have to fight this!” but I felt so small and powerless compared to a big multibillion-dollar corporation that had

decided that I am indecent and I should be shunned from Instagram society. It was extremely triggering for me to just keep my head on straight, to not let my experiences affect my other friends who are on the platform. Instagram is a drug, let’s just be real, but it’s also a business, and there are so many aspects to it that you can’t just take someone’s account away from them.

A lot of people online suggested that I should just make a new account, but I was not making a new account. I would’ve never used the platform again. I would’ve just had a bad taste in my mouth and I still do, to be honest. It’s like I’ve been unplugged. It’s like I was asleep thinking that you can trust the system. I know the system fails people all the time but to have your property removed, it just reminds me that unless it’s your domain, tealong.com, you own nothing, you have no rights, and at any point in time a higher-up can decide to take it away from you.

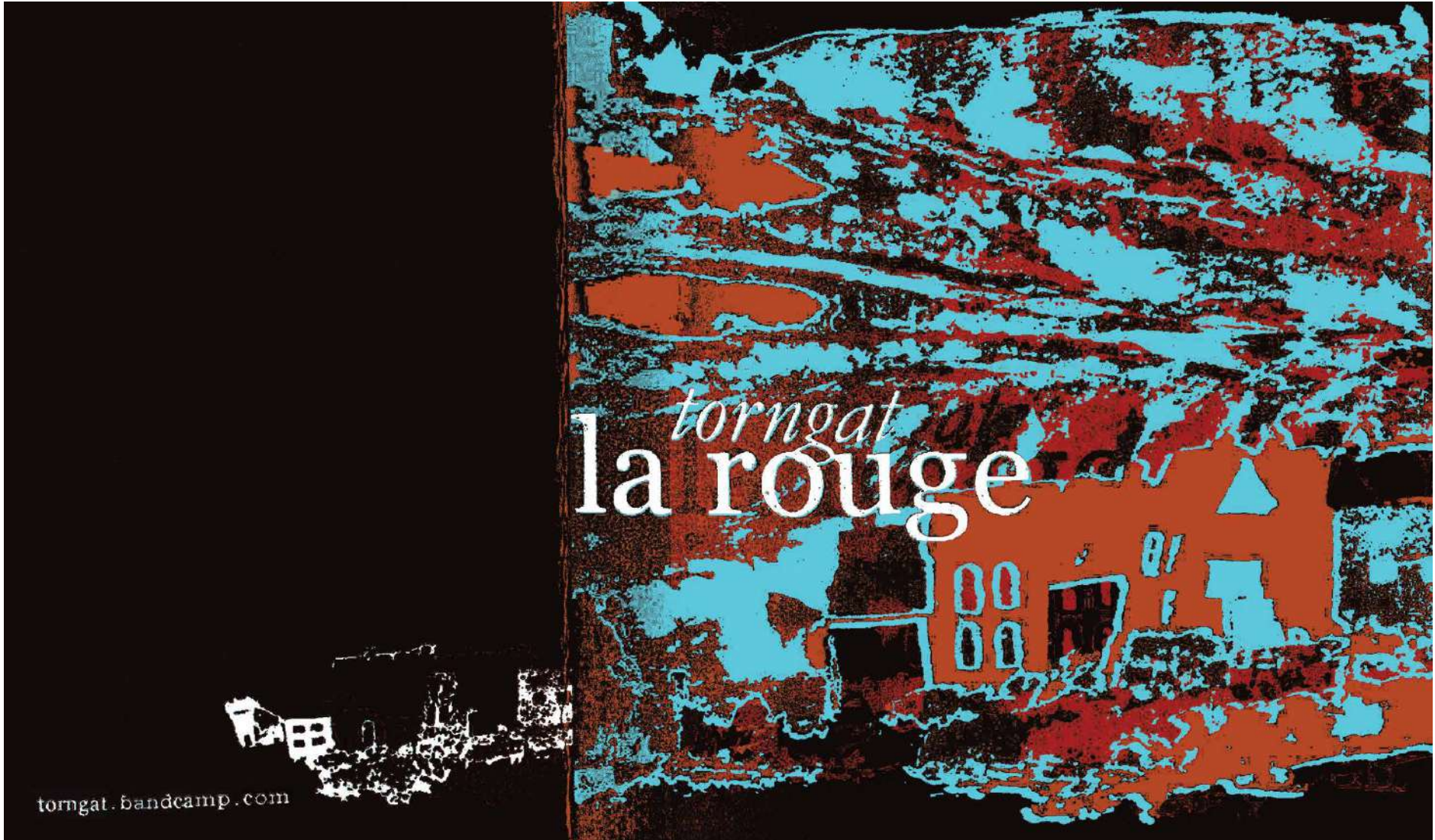
The fact that I even questioned myself, that was probably the saddest part. I was actually asking myself the question, “Wow, maybe I was indecent, maybe I was (legitimately) flagged for something I posted.” It had to cross my mind that maybe I did do something wrong.

LC: It doesn’t take a lot of research to find that there are tons of examples of accounts being wiped for similar reasons.

“There are active algorithms that are working against people of colour and trans people, and the flag system takes into consideration how many times your page has been flagged.”

TL: When I went on the Internet, there were thousands of stories like mine from people who’ve had their accounts taken down, especially LGBTQ+ people whose posts were being described as propaganda; gay couples and Black trans people who were just sharing empowering messages. I have a friend who is a queer artist who had his account deactivated a long time ago and he just moved on.

There are active algorithms that are working against people of colour and trans people, and then the flag system, which also takes into consideration how many times your page has been flagged, how much content has been flagged. Look, I’m not a porn star, I’m just body-positive, I embrace my body. You have sex traffickers on Instagram, you have robots on Instagram, you have pornography on Instagram, you literally have people who make pages just to hate on different groups, you have racists. And when you try to report those pages, you often get a response like, “Sorry, whatever they posted is in their rights to post.” And yet when you have someone like me who’s trying to spread love and light and trying to uplift the community, out of nowhere they just get their platform taken away. I truly believe I wouldn’t have had my platform reinstated if I didn’t know somebody on the up and up. But the average Joe doesn’t have access to someone who has teatime with Beyoncé.



:MTL courtside



BY MR. WAVVY

Woah. We're halfway through the 2020–21 season and the league is damn sure living on a prayer. With coronavirus cases every week, there is no telling how the league's schedule will be affected.

All things considered, the NBA has handled the pandemic better than any other North American sports league. Yes, some teams' choice to have fans in their "distanced" crowds is concerning but the players continue to take matters extremely seriously — for the most part.

These next few weeks will be crucial for teams looking to solidify their shot at being in the playoff picture. Here is the latest look at life in the league:

A night of not enough stars

Despite all odds, the 2021 NBA All-Star Game is upon us. A dozen of the finest players from each conference will duke it out in Atlanta, Georgia on March 7.

Of course, there is not enough room for *everyone* to be a star but it is hard not to note some glaring omissions.

In just his third year in the league, Canadian hooper Shai Gilgeous-Alexander is having his best season thus far. At 23.2 points per game and 6.3 assists, Gilgeous-Alexander has assumed his role as the Oklahoma City Thunder's new leader in dignified fashion. Give him another year or two (and an improved team) and we'll be sure to see Shai making the team.

Always look on the Whiteside of life

The trade deadline is approaching. Teams will have until March 30 to make their best offers for players and picks. A looming issue for many teams this year is a lack of big men. Contenders such as the Raptors or Lakers are both lacking solid centres that could take their defence to the next level.

For teams facing such adversities, trading for Hassan Whiteside could be their best bet. In the 11th year of his career (two injured seasons aside), the veteran is still putting up impressive stats, averaging 8.3 points and 5.7 rebounds this season with the Sacramento Kings. Better yet, Whiteside's 2020–21 paycheck is a mere \$2.3-million league minimum, which could mean serious cap space relief for any team that pursues him. This could be a win-win for the aforementioned teams and the Kings, who are a young

team with tons of potential but have clearly missed the mark on this year's playoffs.

The Knicks are good? The Knicks are good!

«I see orange-and-blue skies again,» director Spike Lee jubilantly exclaimed in an interview with *The New York Times*. If there was not a pandemic, you could be sure to see Lee sitting courtside at Madison Square Garden, head to toe in the aforementioned colours.

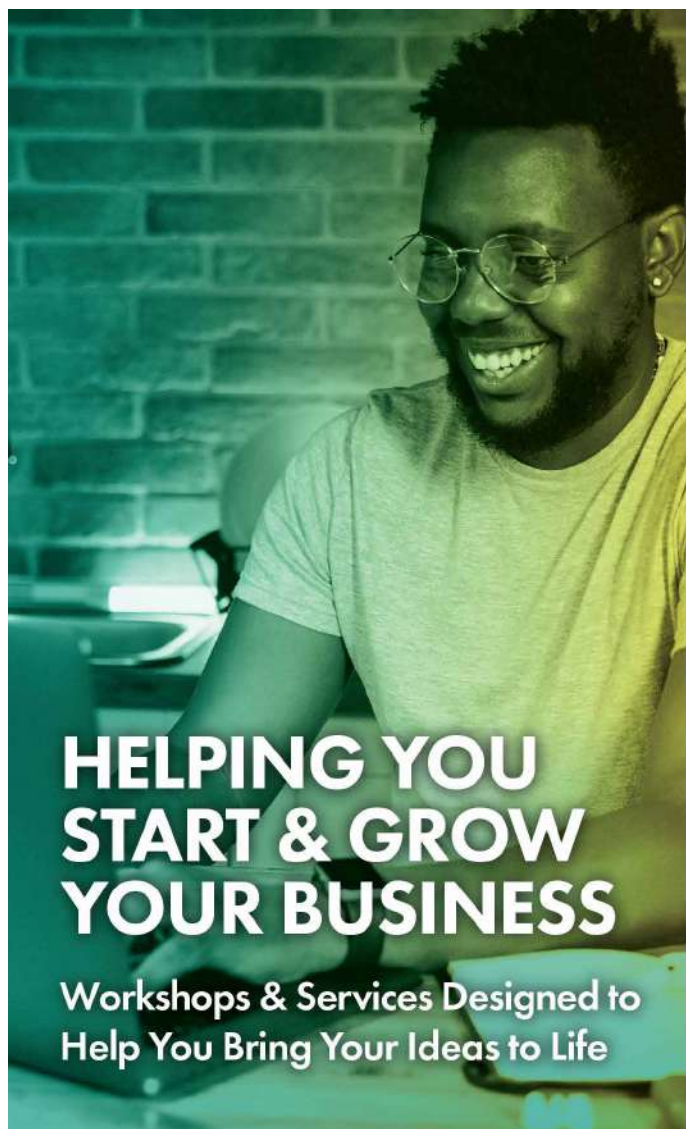
New York Knicks fans are loyal to the soil. There have been very few pockets of time over the last 20 years that the team was truly great. No matter how bad things get, they will be there to support.

Until they couldn't. The pandemic has stopped fans from attending their beloved Knicks games. At \$5-billion, the Knicks are the [highest valued](#) NBA team. It didn't matter if they won or lost, the Garden could always count on diehards and tourists in attendance.

With no crowd this year, the Knicks were given no choice. At long last, they had to become... a good team.

Luckily, the team has assumed such a role with style and grace. New coach Tom Thibodeau and first-time All-Star Julius Randle have helped lead the team above .500 just before the season's halfway mark. The last time this was the case was 2012–13.

Everybody loves an underdog story. With the Knicks silently securing a fourth seed playoff position, hopefully their momentum will extend into the season's second half.



HELPING YOU START & GROW YOUR BUSINESS

Workshops & Services Designed to Help You Bring Your Ideas to Life

JUMP-START YOUR BUSINESS

FREE | Wednesdays | 2:00PM - 3:30PM

Entrepreneurs, you do not want to miss this FREE online orientation session. We will walk you through the steps you need to take and the different types of financing options that are available to get your new or existing venture funded.

BUSINESS COACHING

Open to any age and any stage of business, we offer individual and personalized support to help you start, grow and expand your business.*

BUSINESS BOOTCAMP

Daytime sessions

Thursdays, March 11, 18, 25 & April 1 | 1:00PM - 2:30PM

Gain invaluable information in this one-month accelerated course consisting of four 90-minute interactive modules in an online group setting.*

INTERNATIONAL TRADE: HOW TO ENTER, SURVIVE & THRIVE

FREE | Thursday & Friday, March 4 & 5 | 9:30AM - 12:00PM

INTRODUCTION TO SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

\$10** | Tuesday, March 9 | 6:30PM - 8:30PM

INTRO TO GOOGLE ANALYTICS

\$10** | Tuesday, March 16 | 6:30PM - 8:30PM

ENVISION YOUR BRAND: HOW TO CREATE YOUR OWN MAGNETIC IDENTITY

FREE | Wednesday & Friday, March 24 & 26 | 10:00AM - 1:00PM

SIGN HERE: AVOIDING LEGAL PITFALLS OF COMMERCIAL LEASES

\$10** | Tuesday, March 30 | 6:30PM - 8:30PM

Register now at yesmontreal.ca or call **514-878-9788**.
All of our workshops are available as live streaming webinars.

*There is an annual business service fee of \$30 that grants you access to specialized services including coaching, Business Bootcamp, legal information and accounting clinics.

**As part of our ongoing effort to support entrepreneurs, small business owners and artists, we have applied a 50% discount on select workshops. The online price reflects the 50% discount.

Funded by:



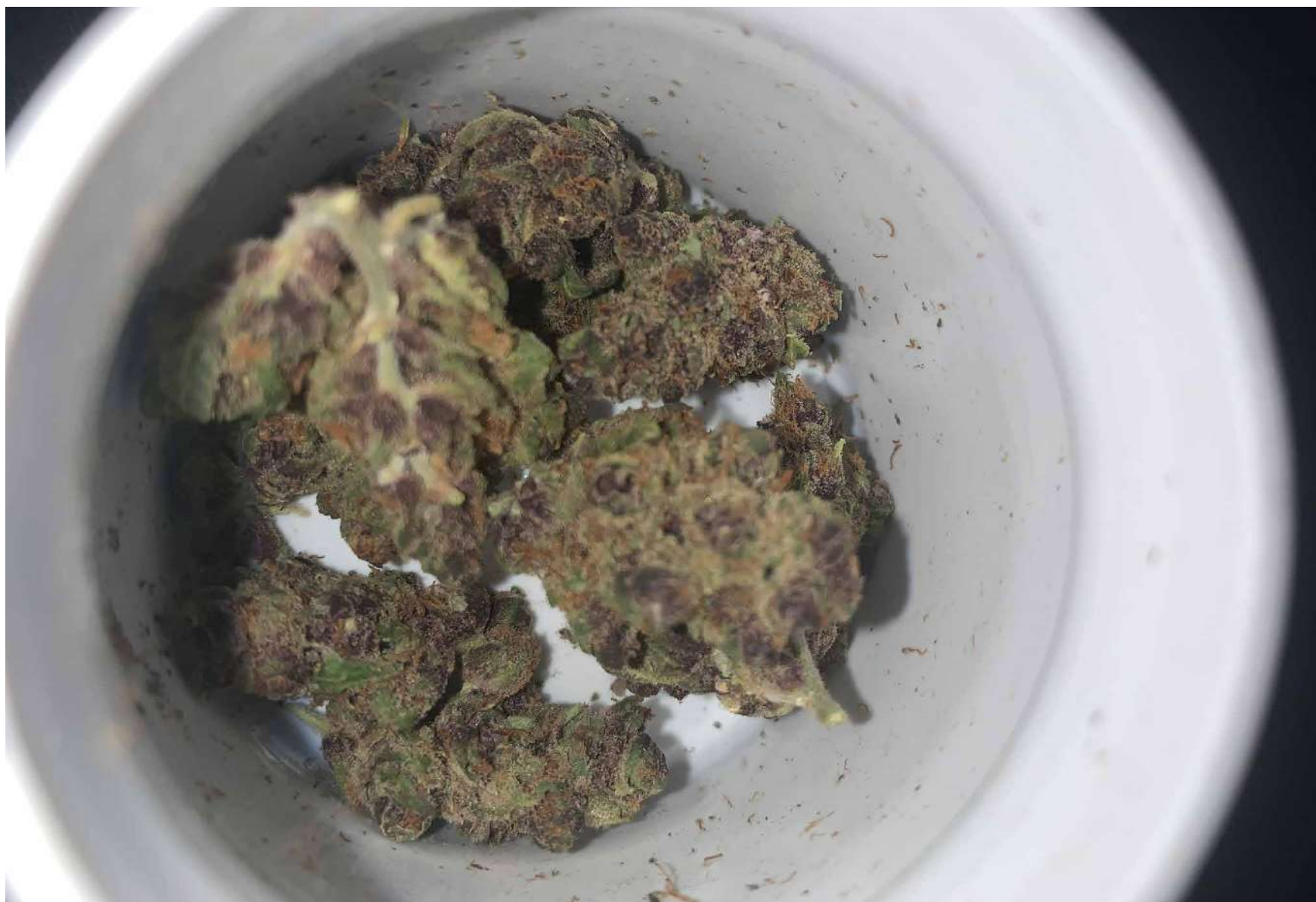
Canada Economic
Development
for Quebec Regions

Développement
économique Canada
pour les régions du Québec

YES is a non-profit organization



: best buds



BY DAVE MACINTYRE

First things first: thanks to those of you who read and enjoyed the first installment of the Best Buds column last month! The response I got was exciting to see, and I'm hoping my future adventures in exploring our government-approved weed repertoire will go down just as well.

In a week that has been a pretty busy and overwhelming one for me personally, the opportunity to tok up and write this column again was greatly appreciated.

After taking requests for strains to be reviewed (and I'm still taking requests for future issues, by the way!), I ultimately decided on these three: two dried flowers, one pre-roll; a hybrid grown within Quebec, a sativa from the GTA and an indica from Beautiful British Columbia by way of Alberta. Here's how each one went.

SATIVA: **San Rafael '71 Tangerine Dream**

This month's sativa was one with a tangy taste to it — entirely appropriate given its name. It's a comfortable, enjoyable high with a strong citrus scent and a mild boost of energy. Your mood can definitely get a lift from this one, and it also pairs up well with listening to many types of music (My choice was local rockers Gulfer, and their excellent self-titled album). The buds are also a shade of purple, and noticeably not as bone-dry as other SQDC strains tend to be. Although not quite as potent as it could be (mine only had 12.2% THC), it's nonetheless a solid choice for a Friday night pick-me-up strain. 8.5/10

INDICA: **Daily Special Indica**

Now, a strain grown in Alberta and supplied by B.C.'s Aurora Cannabis: Daily Special. It's a remarkably stronger one, to boot, at 19% THC. While I felt more energized and inclined to be productive on the Tangerine Dream, I didn't really feel like doing a whole lot of anything with this one. If anything, I spent more time doom-scrolling Instagram than something I should have actually been doing, like vacuuming my floor or washing my dishes. What it did do, for better or (more likely)

worse, is make me hungry for greasy food. While not extraordinary, it's a reliable indica that burns smoothly and will do a decent enough job of chilling you out — like any good indica should do. 8/10

HYBRID: **Dubon Blend 14**

The lone pre-rolls smoked in this installment of Best Buds come from Dubon, a Quebec-based company sold exclusively via the SQDC. Even if it's only 17% THC, I still feel like I burned through the joints fairly quickly. Regardless, I smoked it right before a pleasant Sunday afternoon walk, and then again later in the evening while watching a Tommy Chong stand-up special on Prime. As much as Calgary's most famous stoner is full of wisdom and good pot jokes, the special itself would often cut to a poorly mic'd roundtable of Chong and some other dudes telling boring weed stories to each other. In a way, this felt like I was method acting, watching stoner shows while smoking weed like a 420-friendly Daniel Day-Lewis transforming into a full-on pot enthusiast. (Actually, I don't know what his stance is on weed. But you get what I'm trying to say.) 8/10

:the 1st half



BY PAUL DESBAILLETS

Two coaches gone in February! I thought January was something. Well, February had it all as well.

Thierry Daniel Henry spent 15 months with Montreal, had a 8-13-2 record and got CFM to their first playoff appearance since the 2016 season. On Feb 25 at 10:56 a.m., Henry wrote that he had to leave the club he joined so recently, for personal reasons. He wrote: "It is with a heavy heart that I'm writing this message. The last year has been an extremely difficult one for me personally. Due to the worldwide pandemic, I was unable to see my children. Unfortunately, due to the ongoing restrictions and the fact that we will have to relocate to the U.S. again for several months (at least) will be no different. The separation is too big of a strain for me and my kids. Therefore, it is with much sadness that I must take the decision to return to London and leave CF Montréal."

CFM started training camp for the 2021 season here in Montreal on March 1, to be ready for the season start mid-April.

Another blow to football this past month had the

province coming out with a statement that Montreal is pulling out of World Cup 2026. Quebec Tourism Minister Caroline Proulx explained in an email: "We understand that the decision not to support the hosting of FIFA World Cup matches in 2026 may disappoint the city of Montreal and soccer fans. We would have been happy and ready to support the hosting of the FIFA World Cup in Montreal, but the apprehended cost explosion of the event was becoming difficult for us to justify to Quebec taxpayers."

According to Proulx, in less than three years the estimated costs for the Quebec government have more than doubled, from \$50-million to \$103-million. However, like all football matches, it's not over until the final whistle blows. There is a chance that the government stance and the plans to support Montreal matches will change.

Hollywood continues its love affair with football, with the latest star to get involved with a club being Ryan Reynolds. Reynolds & Co. were approved to become investors in fifth tier club Wrexham AFC. The Welsh team was formed in 1864 — it's the third oldest professional football team in the world — and has never played in the top-flight of English football, but the club has previously reached the FA Cup quarterfinals and famously beat Arsenal FC in the third round in 1992. Nobody got in the way of this deal and Wrexham supporters are reportedly ecstatic. The new owners will immediately invest \$2.5-million to get the ball rolling.

Speaking of Europe, mobile app TikTok has been announced as a global sponsor of UEFA EURO 2020. The tournament was supposed to happen last summer but has been pushed to this summer starting June 11, 2021. This is the first time a digital entertainment platform has sponsored a major international tournament for UEFA.

As a global sponsor, TikTok will work with UEFA to launch a range of exciting features like AR Effects, Hashtag Challenges, TikTok LIVEs and Sounds. UEFA will also give TikTok access to its huge library of historical content to create new, more modern and relevant consumable product(s). UEFA EURO 2020 will launch an official TikTok account just before the tournament kicks off.

Rich Waterworth, TikTok's U.K./EU general manager, said: "TikTok is fast becoming a place where people can enjoy a new type of experience for the beautiful game, as more and more football organizations, teams and players jump on our platform to engage directly with fans. We're delighted to be partnering with UEFA EURO 2020, one of the world's biggest sporting events, bringing the spirit and passion of this tournament to its fans on TikTok. Our community loves to celebrate sport in creative ways, and I can't wait to see how they engage with all the unmissable content we expect for UEFA EURO 2020."

Not bad for supposedly a quiet month.

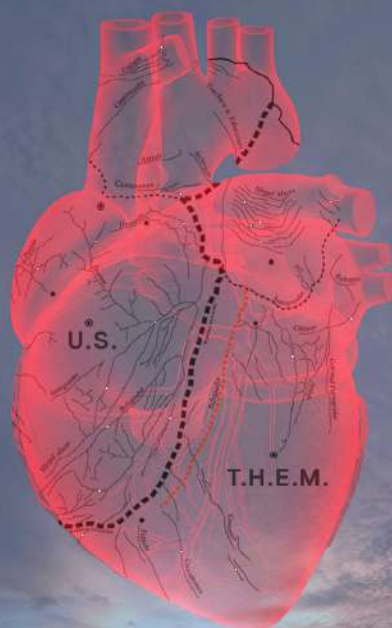
Can't wait to see what April brings us!

"We must have had 99% of the game. It was the other 3% that cost us the match." —Ruud Gullit

Alejandro G. Iñárritu

CARNE Y ARENA

A powerful Academy Award®-Winning large-scale virtual reality experience that explores the human condition of immigrants and refugees.

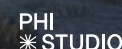


March 17
— June 20, 2021

Book now: carne-y-arena.com

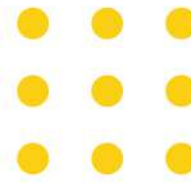
"Nothing short of brilliant."

— Denver Post





BUSINESS SKILLS FOR CREATIVE SOULS ARTIST CONFERENCE



Featuring:

AGAM DARSHI

Award winning actress,
writer & director

Hosted by:

NANTALI INDONGO

CBC Host



RE-IMAGINING THE ARTS

A FREE virtual event for artists

More than ever, the world is changing and transforming - and art is no exception. Learn how to adapt your creative practice to these shifting tides and mobilize new business skills to grow your artistic career.

During this two-day virtual conference, benefit from an engaging mix of workshops, panel discussions and networking opportunities. Be prepared for a program filled with inspiration, fun and self-discovery!

Save your spot! March 22 & 23
yesmontreal.ca | 514-878-9788



Employment
+Entrepreneurship

Supported by:



Canadian
Heritage

Patrimoine
canadien

Media Partner:



food

From Thailand with love

BY CLAY SANDHU

Nearly a year into the pandemic — I promise I'll keep the clichés brief — I've found myself asking one question to my wife nearly every day: "What do you feel like eating?"

There's this wild paradox of choice that the pandemic has created for us. Our access to good food at home and the variety of choices we have is incredible. You could order take-out from a different restaurant every night for a month and never eat the same thing twice. But, at the risk of sounding like a spoiled brat — knowing that I can have nearly anything I want delivered to my front door has made it harder and harder to choose what I want to eat. These days, the answer to that question tends to be Thai food. It's cold, winter's been bleak and Thai food offers a perfect blend of comfort and vibrancy that just hits the damn spot.

As of late, a place that has really been doing it for me when I'm craving Thai is Thammada. Well into its second year, the Outremont (of all places) street food shop has carved out a place for itself as one of the best Thai restaurants in town — or really, just restaurants in general. Authenticity is a word that gets thrown around a lot, and Thammada's website even promises authentic Thai flavours. While it's true that chef-owner Chita Phommavongxay carefully sources the proper Thai ingredients and that Phommavongxay has spent time in Thailand learning techniques and recipes, his food isn't a replica of what you'd find in Thailand, it's a love letter to a place that moved him.

I don't have any real credentials to judge the authenticity of his food. I've been to Thailand twice and I've eaten my fair share of street food, but I'm far from an expert on the subject. What I can say is that his food embodies the feeling you get when you come across a great street vendor. The food isn't precious; it's cooked with purpose, allowing the flavours to speak for themselves.

I think about the first time I ate a satay skewer at a night market in Bangkok. I was doing the thing where you walk up and down the rows just scoping out what looks good. One vendor grabbed a skewer off the grill and pretty well just handed it to me. He knew that my search would be over when I tried it, and he was right — I ate five skewers.

If you have even a passing knowledge of Thai food, Thammada's menu will be familiar: a couple of curries, papaya salad, pad thai etc. It's the flavours, the richness and deepness that really set it apart.

The satay is a great example: The chicken is tender and perfumed with smoke shimmering in the light thanks to its sticky glaze that's slightly blackened on the grill. To look at it, it's far from revelatory, but to taste it — I'm standing at the stall in the night market, my clothes and hair slowly taking on the smell of charcoal.

For a true revelation, try the Pad Thai Maan Gung (Pad Thai with shrimp). Even the most novice Thai food eater



Thammada

has had a rendition of this dish, but Chita's is different. He does everything the long way — he roasts his own peanuts so that their natural oils are fresh, the shrimp he uses are whole, head-on shrimp. The shrimp themselves are plump and flavourful, but it's the heads that are of interest in this dish. Chita reserves the sweet, boldly-flavoured heads for an infused shrimp oil that serves as the cooking fat for the pad thai. It makes for a version of the dish that is infinitely more complex and flavourful than any other I've had.

The papaya pokpok salad is fine — it's a crowd pleaser. It's the kind of dish you might order if your picky aunt is coming to dinner. It hits all the right notes but lacks the special character I love about Chita's cooking.

The Som Tum Isaan (Isaan being a region in the northeast of Thailand bordering Laos and Cambodia) is what you should get if you're looking for something special. This dish is spicy, fragrant and funky thanks to a homemade fermented fish sauce — a staple of the region and a cross-border ingredient that also appears in Cambodian and Laotian cooking. Contrary to the light version we're used to seeing in Vietnamese food, the fermented fish sauce is rich and potent. It adds a base onto which spice is built and subsequently tamed by palm sugar, brightened in the end with a generous spritz of lime. The mixture serves as a dressing for green papaya, long beans and cherry tomatoes.

The Gyo Pedd (roast duck dumpling) are filled with

Cantonese-style roast duck and are served with a dark soy sauce that tastes of molasses. It's a dish that gives a nod to Yaowarat Road (Bangkok's Chinatown) and is an homage to the influence of Chinese cooking on Thai food. The dumplings taste like Peking duck with hoisin and arrived at my house still remarkably crispy.

I can go on and on about the slow building spice of the Gaeng Khiew Waan Gai (green curry with chicken) or the brilliance of the vibrant and spicy Beef Nam Thok (a cold beef salad with coriander and powdered rice) but suffice it to say that they are delicious.

Chita does things the right way — no shortcuts are taken. There's a romance in this cooking. He doesn't go the extra mile as a flex or out of ego, he does it purely because he wants to do justice to the food he loves so dearly. I have endless respect for people who cook that way. The last time I was at Thammada, Chita told me about meeting his girlfriend Nim, who grew up in northern Thailand. It was she who introduced him to Isaan food and through her, his love for Thailand and Thai cooking was formed. Many of the recipes and techniques he uses were taught to him by Nim's aunts. As much as it's clear that Thammada is a love letter to Thailand, I wonder if it isn't also a love letter to Nim.

Thammada's dining room, of course, is closed for the time being but they are open Tuesday to Sunday from 5 to 9 p.m. for takeout and delivery via Uber Eats, Chkplz and Doordash.

WARNING TASTY



BERGHAM

NOW OPEN : 2110 GUY ST, MONTREAL, QUEBEC H3H 2M8
instagram : @centrale_bergham

Uber Eats

music

Alt barometer



Les Hay Babies

BY MARILYSE HAMELIN

Could you imagine Led Zep, the Police, the Clash and Joy Division being revealed to the public within the same contest, possibly within a single edition of that contest? It sounds surreal, but in Quebec, it's hard to find an important francophone band in the last quarter of a century that hasn't made its debut in les Francouvertes.

Damien Robitaille, Sarahmée, Tire le coyote, Alex Burger, les Cowboys fringants, Karim Ouellet, les Soeurs Boulay, Philippe Brach, Lydia Képinski, P'tit Belliveau, les Louanges, les Hay Babies... I could go on for a long time (but since some of their star contestants have been carried away by the #MeToo wave, I won't). Each and every one of these acts has stepped through the hallowed doors of the contest, which takes place at the charming Art Deco theatre Cabaret du Lion d'Or.

Fun trivia fact: some participants who are now beloved and successful artists never even made it to the finals. Kaïn, one of the most popular artists on Quebec commercial radio, is amongst those ranks, as is the pop duo Alfa Rococo.

In 2002, Karkwa, a mythical outfit whose cult reputation is practically on par with Harmonium in their glory days, finished third — behind two groups whose names also began with the letter K: Kulcha Connection, a short-lived hip hop outfit whose members remain famous to their family and friends, and Karlof Orchestra, a self-proclaimed “psychedelic chanson” outfit whose claim to fame in the 2000s was opening for Stephen Faulkner, Daniel Boucher or Mononc' Serge. Who was it that said the last shall be the first?

But enough with the fun facts. To put it simply, les Francouvertes is the barometer of the Québécois alternative scene, as my colleague Philippe Papineau wrote in an article covering the contest's 20th anniversary in *Le Devoir* in 2015. The concept is simple: every Monday night from mid-February to the end of March, three up-and-coming artists — they cannot qualify if they have a contract with a record label — try and make their way to the top of the ranking.

There's a jury, of course, composed of journalists, researchers, programmers and so on, but the people in the audience also vote. Even better, they're not just grading the performance — they're required to write at least one paragraph of commentary on each artist in order for their vote to be counted.

These comments are then given to the participating bands, which can lead to emotionally difficult situations for the budding stars. What's hard on the ego is good for the artist,



Sarahmée

as they say! In fact, I'm pretty sure I just made that one up. You can have it, I'm feeling generous.

A “giant family”

For Estelle Grignon, local music journalist, trans musician, feminist activist and member of the 2021 Francouvertes jury, les Francouvertes feels like a “giant family.”

“Every night and through the years, you end up seeing the same faces,” she says. “You'll find that artists from the current edition stick around to cheer for their colleagues, artists from past editions, journalists, labels, festival staff and music lovers. Yes, there is a grand prize and an official ‘winner.’ But it never feels like much of a competition — no one really loses at the event. People are here to feel the pulse of the upcoming francophone scene, to discover new faces and to have a damn great time.”

Could we call it a non-competitive contest, then? “To be honest, it's always exciting to follow the trajectory of these artists after they graduate from les Francouvertes,” she explains. “To see them land on the front page of a magazine, to spot their name on a festival poster, to find them at your local record store. It might just be me, but I feel like I'm adopting every new artist to come out of “les Francous,” as the event is known to regulars. Like a mom standing in the front row with her camcorder when her daughter takes the stage at a school show, though in this case, the daughter is a fully grown adult with actual talent!”

An influence throughout Canada

An Acadian musician from Nova Scotia and the finalist of the 2019 edition of the Francouvertes, P'tit Belliveau, never thought he'd be able to break into Quebec's alternative scene.

And yet, since his participation, prizes have been lining up: his album *Greatest Hits, Vol. 1* won best record production of the year at the most recent ADISQ gala, where he was also nominated for Best Alternative Album and Best New Artist. He also won the best album from outside of Quebec prize and the best new artist prize at the Gala alternatif de la musique indépendante du Québec (GAMIQ) last year.

Would this otherwise unknown artist have benefitted from such visibility without the Francouvertes? Doubtful.

Last March, Belliveau told the *24H Montréal* newspaper that he hadn't quite anticipated the potential impact of the contest when he signed up. “Les Francouvertes is a great example of something I'd never heard of. My friends were like, ‘You should sign up, it's worth it!’ (...) We ended up in the finals, and through all that, we got exposure. We got tons of opportunities out of it. That's around the time we started talking to Bonsound as well. Now, we have a whole team in Montreal.”

P'tit Belliveau isn't the only Acadian artist to have made



Karim Ouellet

his mark on the Francous. The psychedelic rock group les Hôtesses d'Hilaire as well as the Hay Babies have also darkened the Francous' door. The latter group even won the contest in 2013.

That damned virus!

The event's 25th anniversary won't be happening exactly according to tradition due to COVID-19. Instead of taking place every Monday night from mid-February to the end of March as is usually the case, the Francous' preliminary round has been compressed. It will happen twice a week, from mid-March to the beginning of April. Will there be an audience, or will the whole thing happen online? That's the question.

Last year, half of the preliminary round, the semi-finals and the big finale were pushed to the fall. Then, to everyone's regret, the semi-finals and big finale were held virtually, in October and November. Fans were then able to watch online as artists went forth with feats of musical prowess in front of a completely empty Lion d'Or.

The only thing that's set in stone at this stage: all 21 participants will be announced on March 8 during a virtual launch event.

“For the moment, it's looking like it'll be without an audience,” says Clémence Giroux-Tremblay, communications manager for the contest, when asked about the preliminary rounds. “With a concern for fairness towards all artists, if, on the date of the first preliminary evening, an audience is still not allowed, there will be no audience for all seven of the evenings, even if sanitary measures are modified in between those dates.”

Navigating by sight

After that, the organization hopes to be able to offer a hybrid formula for the semi-finals, with both an audience on-location and an online streaming presentation. Above all, however, they hope that the contest's finale on May 17 will happen in front of a live audience.

“Club Soda is reserved,” assures Clémence Giroux-Tremblay. “If it isn't possible to have a live audience, then we'll have an equally sumptuous virtual finale, with a performance to highlight the Francouvertes's 25th anniversary.”

One thing is certain: seven judges will be in the room at every step of the contest, becoming the contestant's live audience every week. A reduced live audience, it must be said — the Lion d'Or, in its cabaret format, can host up to 250 people under normal circumstances.

The jury will notably be integrated to shoots for the livestream. In fact, the online broadcast is here to stay, confirms the communications manager, as the formula allows the organization to “increase the experience for an audience outside of Montreal,” which goes to show that there's a bit of good in every bad thing after all.

39TH FIFIA / 39e FIFIA

39^e FESTIVAL
INTERNATIONAL
DU FILM SUR L'ART
→ MONTRÉAL

39TH INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL OF FILMS
ON ART
→ MONTREAL

16.03.21 → 28.03.21

LEFIFA.COM

Women DJs rule the dial



BY DARCY MACDONALD

This week Concordia University's 1690 AM CJLO radio station is the hub for a unique and universal International Women's Day celebration thanks to longtime volunteer and all around-badass Kelly "Sugarface" Belfo.

The DJ took time to tell us about her experience in radio and on Montreal's nightlife scene (the good, the bad and the ugly) and the inaugural edition International Women's DJ, which features DJs from around the world streaming all week from their countries of origin and culminates in a Zoom conference on Monday, March 8.

Darcy MacDonald: Please introduce yourself and a bit about your background as a DJ and in terms of your involvement with CJLO.

Sugarface: My name is Kelly Belfo, aka DJ Sugarface Belfo. I am co-founder of Flat Cola, a non-profit initiative to support women DJs.

(I've also been) World Music Director at CJLO 1690 AM since 2003, a local and international DJ since the early 2000s,

a registered nurse with over 10 years experience in the operating room, and I am the creator and head organizer of International Women's DJ Online Radio Festival & Closing Conference.

I was born and raised in Montreal into an Egyptian-Portuguese household, and I grew up with sounds from Portugal, Brazil, the Caribbean, Middle East, and Africa.

Thanks to my parents, I was exposed to a wide range of music but I also listened to a lot of radio. From CHOM 97.7 to Oldies 990, I dubbed overnight radio onto cassette and made multiple mixtapes as a youth.

I first put my hands on CD decks in 2001 at the famous Gogo Lounge in Montreal, playing funk, soul and easy listening during happy hour. DJing at Gogo Lounge and interacting with staff and clients enabled me to discover Afrobeat and, essentially, Fela Kuti, the funkier of music from '60s and '70s Nigeria.

It was my need to delve deeper into world music that brought me to CJLO. I was given the position of World Music Director in 2003 and grew our library from there. I knew radio would help me to discover more. And it did.

DM: When you started playing out and establishing your reputation as an event DJ off-air, did you find the landscape

to be particularly male-centric? And if so, what were some of the challenges you faced in terms of staking your claim in the scene?

Sugarface: Looking back at the start of my DJ career, I would not be where I am today without the solid family-based mindset held by staff and employees at Gogo Lounge.

There were a handful of women DJs on the scene that I heard of but I never knew them. As a matter of fact, when I first started playing, I didn't know anyone other than DJ Rollergirl, who, luckily for me, also worked at Gogo Lounge. She was a DJ long before I started, a pioneer in the scene who paved the way for me and many others.

Not only did she become my friend, she was also my mentor. She was an incredible source of information, support and encouragement. She told me how to say "no," how to handle grabby and unruly clients, and how much to be paid for gigs.

She also spoke about the need for women to support (each other). But I never really understood what she fully meant by that until I worked outside of Gogo Lounge (and formed) my own DJ persona.

With the knowledge from early in my career, I was able to hold down many DJ residencies and build a name for myself, but that is when things started to get harder. As a DJ, you

want to grow, play different styles and become an expert in your specialty.

I joined forces with an all-male crew that I won't name. We specialized in tropical/world music on vinyl. My people came out to our parties. Our parties were a huge success. So much so that the guys wanted us to play the Montreal International Jazz Festival.

We got on the bill, but neither my name nor picture were included. I was given the story that they started the crew before me, so they deserved the limelight and cash payment.

I was invited to play on stage with them, for no pay or exposure, of course. I thought, "Okay, let me give them the benefit of the doubt."

But the following year, same story. At this point, it was hard for me to trust them. I don't recall how much time had passed, maybe weeks or months later, I was kicked out of the crew. I was told, "You smiled on stage and that was great."

But I realized they kicked me out because I did not share my connections with them. How could I when they made it so hard for me to trust them?

DM: What have you learned or been informed by, through your own experience and that of other non-male DJs, over the years in terms of what women bring to the craft that guys can't?

Sugarface: This is a biased opinion, but at the time of my early DJ beginnings, I felt that many men, although I loved what they did, played a lot of repetition in their sets. They would go for the hits.

It was too obvious, curated, mathematical. There was no feeling nor emotion to the movement of the dancefloor.

I also often heard many male counterparts say they played

music to "make the girls dance." Women behind the decks don't necessarily have the same approach. Speaking for myself, I'd much rather take the listener on an adventure. Start slow and build on the momentum, giving hints of my musical knowledge and dropping unknowns along the way. A musical foreplay, if you will — sexy, intelligent and well thought out.

It is also a vibe, a mindset, a declaration or statement of self, power, liberty, choice or simply the space to be free without the constraints of imposed ideologies. I also just want to play some good music, man.

DM: How did CJLO come to be involved in this event? And how did the station end up being the dedicated conference host?

Sugarface: In a structured setting, CJLO has always given its volunteers the opportunity to use its resources to its fullest capacity. The trick is, you need to commit to your plan fully and completely.

Being an active World Music Director at CJLO and the head of Flat Cola, which is a non-profit initiative to support women DJs, I felt the need to bring my two worlds together and showcase talented women DJs from around the world. If anyone was going to listen to women DJs, it would be on International Women's Day. It's sad to say that it would not have the same effect any other time. I knew I had to do something. So I created this festival and got CJLO involved.

The idea for the conference came simply because I wanted to share my experiences with women DJs that I respected and admired. I felt drained and conflicted about myself as a DJ. I needed to talk with people who resemble me, and who have my best interest at heart. CJLO has been my rock along this DJ journey. It was only natural to ask them to do this conference.

DM: Who are some of the participants from around the world that you're personally excited for?

Sugarface: This festival has two main parts. The broadcast of 14 internationally known female DJs through seven different local and online radio stations, and the closing conference.

I am personally excited to hear mixes by Worldwide FM's senior producer and Gilles Peterson's longtime radio collaborator Mari* (London/Tokyo); Wicked Girls/Female Future Sounds DJ and producer, DJ Carie (Brussels); and Brazilian electro, baile funk record collector House of Pris (Miami/Brazil).

I'm also excited to have Montreal's own Aisha Vertus — aka Gayance — represent our city at the conference.

We will also have a surprise guest mix and an in-conference announcement that I'm particularly excited about but I can't divulge any more information on it just yet!

DM: What will some of the panel topics be, how were they chosen and who will be speaking?

Closing Conference panelists include Sabine Blaizin of Oya Sound (NYC), Priscilla Cavallante of Concreta Sala (Miami), Gayance (Montreal) and Lissette Jassan of 900 Grados (CDMX, Mexico). From music producers, to record store owners, radio talk show hosts and DIY community project builders, each panelist contributes valuable insight and perspective in their field.

Discussions will include if and how current COVID restrictions have affected their careers, coping and adapting methods, challenges faced as a womxn, BIPOC, LGBTQ2+, exchanges of stories and ideas, and things we would like to see for the future. There's also a Q&A period open to the audience.

→ More details, set times, station info and conference registration can be found on the event Instagram @InternationalWomensDJ



Album reviews

Presented by

SUNRISE
RECORDS



The Hold Steady, *Open Door Policy* (Positive Jams)
It's been a rough few years for the Hold Steady, the world's premium meta-bar-band. Lineup changes and a vested interest in moving away from the Springsteen-inflected, hyper-wordy indie rock that made them the perennial favourites of the "dudes rock" faction of rock fans resulted

in some middling albums that struggled to find a sound. With eccentric keyboardist Franz Nicolay back in the fold, the Hold Steady deliver their best album since 2008's *Stay Positive*. Frontman Craig Finn's literary lyrics are at its densest, the E Street Band piano hooks and chunky dual-guitar (now triple-guitar, in fact) assaults abound and yet the Hold Steady have refined their sound some, swapping in more trippy guitar parts, buttery electric piano and more jazzy arrangements without sacrificing the things that anyone who loves the Hold Steady loves about the Hold Steady. Most bands would have thrown in the towel after so many wilderness years, but *Open Door Policy* proves it was worth sticking to it. 9/10 Trial Track: "Heavy Covenant" (Alex Rose)

SG Lewis, times (PMR / EMI) Samuel George Lewis has finally dropped his debut full-length after a string of buzz-worthy, highly danceable singles since 2015. Between sun-kissed bangers like album opener "Time" featuring Rhye, and the disco/house hybrid of "One More" with guitar work from Nile Rodgers himself, this is a 10-track disco odyssey taking cues from both past and future dance tropes. While it would've been nice if singles like "Impact" and "Chemicals" weren't out well before the album's release, the moody seven-minute epic "All We Have" and the slowed-down '80s yacht rock vibes of "Heartbreak on the Dancefloor" are examples of solid tracks he's saved for the big reveal. Ultimately, it's the sound of the 26-year-old British producer making an album

that would be an excellent soundtrack for summer get-togethers this year — if we get to have any, that is. 8.5/10 Trial Track: "Time (feat. Rhye)" (Dave MacIntyre)



Planet Giza, *Don't Throw Rocks at the Moon* (Independent)
Montreal trio Planet Giza return with their first project in nearly two years. The project is a demonstration of the group's distinct duality. It is at once a call-back to the sparse and hard-hitting sounds of the early 2000s à la Clipse and the Neptunes and unapologetically funky as well. Despite its 14-minute

runtime, *Don't Throw Rocks at the Moon* feels like a fully fleshed out body of work. Planet Giza are widely regarded as some of the most talented producers from the city but Tony Stone and company are equally talented as centre stage artists. 8.5/10 Trial Track: "When the Moving Stops" (Mr. Wavvy)

Malika Tirolien, *Higher* (Genison)

Undercurrents of past and future coalesce in the cosmos on the Bokanté vocalist's solo endeavour. The Montrealer and Grammy Award nominee is wholly unencumbered, exploring rap, future funk, soul and spacey fusion jazz with positivity and personal exploration the common thread throughout the uplifting journey. The impossible feels possible in her sure hands on "Higher," but it doesn't come from a disingenuous place: you can hear the work it took to reach that level of balance and strength. 8/10 Trial Track: "Don't Come Around" (Erik Leijon)

Tash Sultana, *Terra Firma* (Mom + Pop)

The second album by this Australian one-person band is the sonic equivalent of a sunny, beer-soaked summer



afternoon at Parc Jeanne-Mance. On *Terra Firma*, Tash Sultana delivers an album that adds further colour to their trademark mélange of reggae, neo soul and psychedelic pop, even if the Melbourne native doesn't really leave their musical comfort zone. While their 2018 debut *Flow State* was a bit too overproduced to

effectively capture Sultana's blistering live shows onto tape, *Terra Firma* is a noticeably more measured and cohesive effort. "Sweet & Dandy" is a chilled-out meditation on 21st century life, "Greed" lyrically tackles the trappings of fame and the R&B slow jam vibes of "Vanilla Honey" augment the album's emotional impact. Where it lacks in immediately memorable hooks it makes up for in strong musicianship and blunt, introspective lyricism. *Terra Firma* might not be a knockout, but there's still no sophomore slump to be found here. 7.5/10 Trial Track: "Sweet & Dandy" (Dave MacIntyre)



Barry Paquin Roberge, *Exordium to Extasy* (Costume Records) Though the formulation of their band name suggests symphonic pomp-prog in the ELP mold, Barry Paquin Roberge's party-ready disco-funk sound is much more in line with expansive disco outfits of the '70s like Earth, Wind & Fire or Kool and the Gang. I

won't lie — there's a whiff of ironic distancing to some of the album's more outré grooves, but on the other hand, it's nearly impossible to do this kind of thing without at least a wink and a poke to the way disco has been shit on for the last 40 years. The musicianship is, however, excellent, and the songs' rock edge ensures that this is more than blind Moroder worship and gold-lamé fetishism. *Exordium to Extasy* is more focused on infectious grooves and dense walls of synth than with hooky songwriting, but that's precisely the point. 7/10 Trial Track: "Hot Stuff — Wanna Play Rough" (Alex Rose)



Build a better & brighter future.

Level up your power skills for a post-COVID workforce!

Take advantage of these FREE services:

- + Create your professional narrative & refine your C.V
- + Learn to stand out from the crowd & still be authentic
- + Get access to career development workshops & specialized insights
- + Meet one-on-one for employment coaching & mentorship
- + Discover top industry trends & comebacks
- + Identify your key skills & opportunities for growth

Reach out, we're here to help! **514-878-9788** | **yesmontreal.ca**

Employment services including career coaching and workshops are free. Some services are based on eligibility.

Supported by:  Canadian Heritage Patrimoine canadien



A line drawing of a hand holding a guitar neck. A ruler is placed across the fretboard to measure the distance between frets. The hand is positioned at the bottom of the neck, with fingers wrapped around the body. The ruler is held in place by the thumb and index finger. The fretboard has several frets visible, and the ruler is positioned to measure the distance between two of them.

Current Obsession: Duh
jonathan.cummins@gmail.com

1690 AM

CJLO **METAL MARCH**
.COM

CELEBRATE EVERYTHING
HEAVY WITH **SPECIAL**
PROGRAMMING ALL
MONTH LONG AND DON'T
MISS OUR INFAMOUS
BANDVENT CALENDAR
WITH FREE RECORDS TO
DOWNLOAD EVERY
SINGLE DAY



Detainee drama



The Mauritanian

BY ALEX ROSE

Kevin Macdonald's *The Mauritanian* tells the story of Mohamedou Ould Salahi (Tahar Rahim), a man from Mauritania whose tenuous connections to Al-Qaeda put him directly in the crosshairs of American counterterrorism.

Dogged for years by authorities, Salahi was eventually detained, questioned at length for months based on his association with known jihadists and eventually sent to Guantanamo Bay, where he stayed for 14 years, enduring torture and isolation. Somewhere along the line, he comes into contact with Nancy Hollander (Jodie Foster), a defence attorney, and her associate Terri Duncan (Shailene Woodley), who begin a years-long process to free him.

Tahar Rahim was born in France to Algerian parents. His career really took off in 2009 with Jacques Audiard's *A Prophet*. Suffice to say that when you're a young actor of Maghrebi descent whose career is really popping off in the years following 9/11, projects about terrorism are bound to come your way.

"I was skeptical, because I read the title, which was *Guantanamo Diary* at that time," says Rahim. "I made a mistake. I instantly thought, 'Kevin is too clever to make those kinds of movies that I don't want to do, be a part of or even see.' But when I read it, I knew I wanted to do it. Straight away."

Rahim and Macdonald had previously worked together on the 2011 historical epic *The Eagle* — the first project that Rahim was involved in following his international breakout in *A Prophet*.

"When I first met Kevin for *The Eagle*, it was 10 years ago or so," says Rahim. "At that time, I was frustrated because I could barely speak English. I couldn't really build a real connection with my director. My communication was not good enough. I had a good time and we got along very well. We became good friends over the years and he came back five years later with a TV show. We didn't do it, finally, but when he came up with this story, I was ready. My relationship with him was great and is still great. As a great director, he likes to share ideas with his actors. He cares for actors. He always listens to suggestions. He's not narrow-minded at all. He knows that everything we do is to help the movie. He once told me that the best idea always wins."

Though there are bonafide movie stars in *The Mauritanian*, Rahim is really the star of the show. Mohamedou is taken through every horror imaginable: beaten, tortured, subjected to sexual humiliation and even, in one case, a sort of "murder prank." As the film takes place over more than a decade, it's a role that requires a lot of gradual, incremental work.

"It was the most challenging part I've ever had to do, because there are so many challenging things in it!" says Rahim. "All those torture scenes. I had to speak four different languages... We needed to build his ability to speak English gradually, which is a bit complicated when you think about it. Plus, I felt really responsible to Mohamedou. I didn't want him to feel disappointed, diminished or simply not happy about what he would see. He was my first audience. I wanted him to be happy and I wanted to please him. That was one of my biggest challenges, finally."

The centrepiece of the film is the speech that Mohamedou gives, via Skype, during one of his trials. As it turns out, even that scene — demanding under any circumstance — brought its lot of extra challenges.

"When I first read the script, I got struck by this monologue. I cried at the end of the script. It was so important to tell people what this character needs to say about his background, his religion and what he's been through. It was important, and the funny thing was that we were supposed to shoot this in the middle of the shoot or at the end, but we had a scheduling problem. Two days before we started to shoot, Kevin told me we needed to start with the monologue. (laughs) I got scared, and I worked on it a lot in order to be emotional enough to convey what Mohamedou wanted to convey to the world. I think it's a very clever one and I was moved by the fact that he doesn't hold any grudges against anybody. It's a beautiful life lesson."

Of course, a large part of preparing for the role involved meeting the real Mohamedou, who was released from Guantanamo in 2016 and now lives in Mauritania.

"I met him on Skype for the first time," says Rahim. "I was shooting abroad in Thailand. I wanted to meet him. I wanted to travel to Mauritania, but it was not possible. So we met on Skype and it was a great meeting. It was like meeting a friend — someone cool, funny and generous. It came as a shock to me that a man who has been through what he's been through would be able to crack jokes, to smile, to be funny. At some point, we needed to talk about some touchy moments. Suddenly, he began to change. He became very sad, dark. His eyes would go here and there. I felt like I was embarrassing him and I felt stupid, so I stopped asking those questions. At that moment, I felt like I was meeting someone extraordinary. I took advantage of it. I knew that by talking to him, spending time with him, talking about the people in his life and in Guantanamo, I would catch his spirit. It was more observing him and listening to him. When you meet someone like him, all you have to do is shut up and listen."

→ *The Mauritanian* is available on VOD now.

Thanks for drinking local



Montreal's very own.



BIÈRE ST-AMBROISE



MCAUSLAN.COM

Art of film, film of art



Erwin Olaf — *The Legacy*

Pim Hawinkels

BY ALEX ROSE

Like pretty much every film festival, the FIFA (Festival International des Films sur l'Art) has had to move its operations online during the pandemic. The fest will nevertheless runs from March 16 to 28 and offer full programming available at all times during those 13 days. The best way to enjoy FIFA, therefore, is to purchase a \$39 passport, which gives you access to the entire platform for the duration of the festival. FIFA is available across Canada, though a few select titles are geo-locked.

The festival opens with *Beijing Spring*, a documentary from Andy Cohen and Gaylen Ross that examines the history of the Democracy Wall, a wall covered with artwork, poems and posters that sprang up in Beijing in 1978. The film features 16mm footage that was only recently discovered, as well as many interviews with those who were present at the time.

FIFA is split up into many different sections and includes a competitive section. That's where you'll find docs about video art pioneers Woody and Steina Vasulka (Hrafnhildur Gunnarsdottir's *The Vasulka Effect*), Dutch photographer

Erwin Olaf (Michiel van Erp's *Erwin Olaf — The Legacy*, one of the few films to be geo-locked to Quebec), conceptual artist Marina Abramovic (Boris Miljkovic's *Homecoming — Marina Abramovic and Her Children*), French electro-pop musician Sébastien Tellier (Mathieu Cesarsky's *Sébastien Tellier: Many Lives*), flamenco musician Jorge Pardo (Emilio Belmonte's *Trance*), painters Vladimir Dvorkin (Billie Mintz's *Portrayal*) and Christian Boltanski (Alain Fleischer's *J'ai retrouvé Christian B.*), contemporary pianist Eve Egoyan (Su Rynard's *Duet for Solo Piano*) and filmmaker Hector Babenco (*Babenco: Tell Me When I Die* by Barbara Paz, Babenco's widow), among many others.

Outside of competition, you'll find films about Charlie Chaplin (*Charlie Chaplin, le génie de la liberté*, narrated by Mathieu Amalric), musician Edgar Bori (*Dialogues pour un homme seul*, directed by Jean-Pierre Gariépy), Federico Fellini (who is in fact the subject of two films this year, a feature-length documentary and a short from Montreal filmmaker Paul Tana), folklorist and academic Henry Glassie (Pat Collins's *Henry Glassie: Field Work*), architects Frank Lloyd Wright (*Frank Lloyd Wright — The Phoenix from the Ashes* by Sigrid Faltin) and Paulo Mendes da Rocha (*It's All a Plan*, co-directed by his daughter Joana), Upstairs jazz club owner Joel Giberovitch (*Jazz Club Owner* by Guylaine Dionne), French comedy legend Louis de Funès (Lucie Cariès's *La folle aventure de Louis de Funès*), multidisciplinary artist Mary Bauermeister (*Mary*

Bauermeister — One and One Is Three) and many more.

Obviously, the programming for a festival of films on art will skew heavily on creators of art and other people who exist in the general vicinity of its creation, but that's not *all* that's on display at FIFA. There are several films about the world of classical music (*Beethoven Reloaded*, *Conductivity*, *Quinte et Sens*, *Allegro Colorato*), about the performing arts (*Rivale*, *May B*, *Kes Reimagined*), about urban design (*Art in the Twenty-First Century: Beijing*), about Paris (*Paris Calligrammes*) and more.

The FIFA also offers a Carte Blanche section in which people and organizations in the art world create their own programs of shorts. This year, carte blanche has been given to multidisciplinary artist Caroline Monnet, First Nations broadcast platform imagineNATIVE, British platform NOWNESS, writer and academic Ronald Rose-Antoinette, the Beirut Art Film Festival, the EPOS Festival (the Israeli equivalent of FIFA), the Mexican festival Fotogenia and three separate programs from curators at MOMA in New York City.

It's also interesting to note that FIFA will be launching their year-round platform Arts.film on the last day of the festival. A yearly subscription will be available for \$60 or \$89 with the festival passport.

→ See the complete program and more details at lefifa.com



**YOU HAVE IDEAS,
VISION & DRIVE.
WE HAVE EXPERIENCE,
CONNECTIONS & EXPERTS.**

ELLEVATE WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS PRE-ACCELERATOR

We are looking for 10 women from all sectors who have what it takes to scale their business or start-up.

WHAT YOU WILL GET:

- + Cash prizes and funding
- + Seasoned business advisors
- + Exclusive programming
- + Access to the entrepreneurial landscape

Contact jknapp@yesmontreal.ca to learn more.
Applications open March 15, 2021.

WE ALSO OFFER:

- + Business coaching
- + Speaker panels
- + Networking events
- + Mentorship opportunities
- + Online workshops

Register for these **FREE** upcoming workshops to boost your start-up know-how:

INTERNATIONAL TRADE: HOW TO ENTER, SURVIVE & THRIVE

FREE | March 4 & 5 | 9:30AM - 12:00PM

ENVISION YOUR BRAND: HOW TO CREATE YOUR OWN MAGNETIC IDENTITY

FREE | March 24 & 26 | 10:00AM - 1:00PM

INVEST IN YOURSELF AND YOUR BUSINESS

All of our workshops are available as live streaming webinars only.
Pre-registration is strongly advised as limited spaces are available.

514-878-9788 | yesmontreal.ca

Funded by:

Canada



A program by



On Screen



Martin Eden



Coming 2 America



Yes Day



The United States vs. Billie Holiday

BY ALEX ROSE

It seemed inconceivable for months on end, but there's no two ways about it: theatres have reopened. Having been closed or in a state of perpetual limbo for nearly a year, it goes without saying that the current offer is a little scattershot. It consists of films whose theatrical releases were cut short the last time theatres were open, popular titles that have nevertheless been available on VOD for some time (such as *Promising Young Woman*) and a smattering of new releases. Suffice to say that, although I doubt that theatres will be closing again in the upcoming month, it will be hard to gauge exactly what's coming out and when.

It's been no less than 33 years since *Coming to America*, the cult classic comedy starring Eddie Murphy, was first released. Murphy reteams with *Dolemite Is My Name* helmer Craig Brewer for the sequel, *Coming 2 America*. The sequel, which is hitting Amazon Prime Video on March 5, finds Prince Akeem (Murphy) discovering he has an illegitimate son (Jermaine Fowler) in America on the eve of being crowned king of Zamunda. *Moxie* is Amy Poelher's second

directorial effort after the ensemble comedy *Wine Country*; Poelher takes a supporting role as the protagonist's mother in this riot-grrl adjacent comedy about a teenager who takes inspiration from her mother's activist past to start a zine that shakes up her high school; it hits Netflix on March 3.

Tom Holland attempts to shake off the Spider-Man image with *Cherry* (March 12 on Apple TV+), a crime drama from the Russo Brothers in which he plays an Army vet who is forced to rob pharmacies in order to feed his opioid addiction. Early reviews contain much praise for Holland but less for the film, a derivative '90s-style crime drama. Nicholas Jarecki's *Crisis* is interested in similar thematic concerns. Partially shot in Montreal, it tells the stories of several people involved with opioids. Gary Oldman, Armie Hammer, Evangeline Lilly and Greg Kinnear star in the film, which is hitting VOD on March 16.

Andra Day is earning many plaudits (including a Golden Globe) for her performance as Billie Holiday in Lee Daniels' *The United States vs. Billie Holiday*. The film (coincidentally also shot in Montreal), which details the government's weaponizing of Holiday as an agent of the war on drugs, is being less favourably reviewed. Most describe it as a safe and bog-standard music biopic. Anthony Hopkins is also being bandied about as an Oscar hopeful for his performance in Florian Zeller's *The Father* (on VOD March 26). Hopkins plays an octogenarian who struggles with his age as his daughter (Olivia Colman) moves back in with him.

Postponed, then accidentally leaked by Amazon before being sold off to Netflix (who are finally releasing on March 26),

Bad Trip is a hybrid prank comedy starring Eric André and Lil Rel Howery as two friends on a road trip. The film — which is analogous to the Jackass film *Bad Grandpa* in that it strings together hidden camera pranks with a story — was rather well reviewed on its festival run, with many comparing it favourably to the anarchic spirit of André's talk show. Edgar Ramirez and Jennifer Garner star in *Yes Day* (March 12 on Netflix), a family comedy in which a family decides to spend a whole day saying yes to everything. It basically sounds like *Yes Man* meets *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* (which coincidentally also starred Garner).

Philippe Falardeau's *My Salinger Year* was meant to be released a few times after the last lockdown. It finally hits theatres on March 5. In it, Margaret Qualley stars as a young woman who lands a job working for the editor that handles the affairs of the enigmatic J.D. Salinger; Sigourney Weaver and Colm Feore co-star. *My Salinger Year* was shot in Montreal, just like Matthew Bissonnette's *Death of a Ladies Man* (March 19 at Cinéma du Parc), a drama loosely based on the songs of Leonard Cohen. Gabriel Byrne plays an ageing college professor and lothario facing the twilight of his life; Jessica Paré and Brian Gleeson co-star.

March 5 also sees the release of *Martin Eden*, Pietro Marcello's adaptation of Jack London's novel of the same name. Luca Marinelli took home the Volpi Cup for Best Actor at the Venice Film Festival for his portrayal of the titular Eden, a destitute young proletarian who dreams of becoming a writer. On March 12 you can catch Philippe Lacôte's Abidjan-set prison drama *La nuit des rois* as well as *Stray*, a documentary following stray dogs in Istanbul.

ALWAYS

JIM BEAM

WELCOME™

VIRTUAL NATIONAL
TALENT SEARCH

ACCEPTING ALL GENRES OF MUSIC

CALLING ALL INDIE
AND EMERGING
ARTISTS

ENTER AT INDIES.CA



2021 CMW

CANADIAN
MUSICWEEK

DRINK SMART®



arts

Pony's world is up in flames

BY MR. WAVVY

I enter Pony's spacious Old Montreal loft and am greeted by Shelly, an aging but very friendly greyhound. The two have just returned from a weekend in the Laurentians, where Pony has recently purchased a cottage. It's an important milestone for the young artist, one that coincides with her new television series *Résiste!*, which debuted on TV5 last month. The series finds her globetrotting to important artistic cities around the world.

"I'm a curious person, I believe that magic exists. I like to find the beauty in stuff," she explains. "Life can be so fucking tough. We're born in a weird era. It feels like it's the end of the world since we're young." The Laurentians have provided a much-needed escape for the artist who loves to explore.

Pony, born Gabrielle Laïla Tittley, was born in Quebec City but lived quite the nomadic lifestyle. She bounced around from Newfoundland to Outaouais and Buckingham, Quebec in her formative years before finally moving to Montreal. She gained a steady following over the past half decade with her artwork, which is just as colourful and hilarious as it is rich in substance. Pony explores topics such as drugs, existentialism and mental health through accessible figures. Rappers, philosophers and Quebec celebrities are among some of her most prominent subjects.

"They're poets," she says of hip hop artists. "Often, they're comedians, they're hilarious! This is why I love rap. One of the first things I loved about rap was the humour, how you can take something so deep and make a joke in the line after. Things don't always need to be so dark."

Tittley herself experienced a dark childhood and took to heart finding the humour in her experience.

"I think it's a survival mechanism to just try and find hope," she explains. "I am programmed to feel that way, I think it's because of when I was younger at home. This situation made me an optimist, as a survival mechanism. You're dropped into a world that's on fire, you're going to try and find a way to put the fire out, or try and see if there's any flowers that aren't burned out."

Résiste! is an extension of Tittley's artistic ethos. The first five episodes find Pony exploring cultural niches in New Orleans, London, Detroit, Atlanta and back home in Montreal.

"At its core, the idea of *Résiste!* is us going to broken places — politically, socially, environmentally. We wanted to go to important cities who went through that process. That was the basis. What are these interesting places that have gone through important historical moments?"

She treats hosting as an art form as much as she does her prints or clothing. *Résiste!* is not *The Pony Show*, it's Pony



Pony

Mr. Wavy

using her platform to help important voices in each city. The hometown episode is a testament to Pony's thoughtful approach to the show. She shines a light on artists whose messages have meaning, drawing attention to movements like Black Lives Matter and Indigenous rights.

"I think Montreal is an amazingly cultural place. It's not represented that way in most media. Of course, if we have this show that we believe in, we need to portray our city. We're not going to go with everyone that we're used to seeing. What these people are doing is fucking amazing."

While things are up in the air for when filming could restart, *Résiste!* still has five episodes to shoot for this season.

"There are other places that we wanted to go but we're blocked because of corona. They were going to do France, Spain, Korea, Turkey — all the best! I'm crossing my fingers for season 2 but we still have five shows to do for this season. Because of coronavirus, we're probably going to do them in Canada."

Pony is keeping her fingers crossed for a season two as well. "I just want it to continue forever! Even if we only did Montreal, there could be like, 10 other episodes! This show is so important, I just want to become better at it. It's a dream job."

Until then, she will continue to explore the arts and live life with a glass half full. She even hinted at an animated project in the pipeline. "Someone recently approached me for that," she shares about a potential cartoon down the line. "I want to do movies. I feel like a lot of artists are like that, they have ideas. Maybe you're only a little bit good at drawing but the point is to express your idea. I feel like, for me, illustration is one way, painting is one way, writing shitty rap songs is one way. I'm excited to learn about all of the mediums."

"I think that the meaning of life is to better yourself but to help better others as well," she adds. "This is where I'm at in life. The more we know about ourselves, the more we could help others. If we do all of that, maybe someone will put out the fire!"

"Are you looking to move this Spring / Summer?"

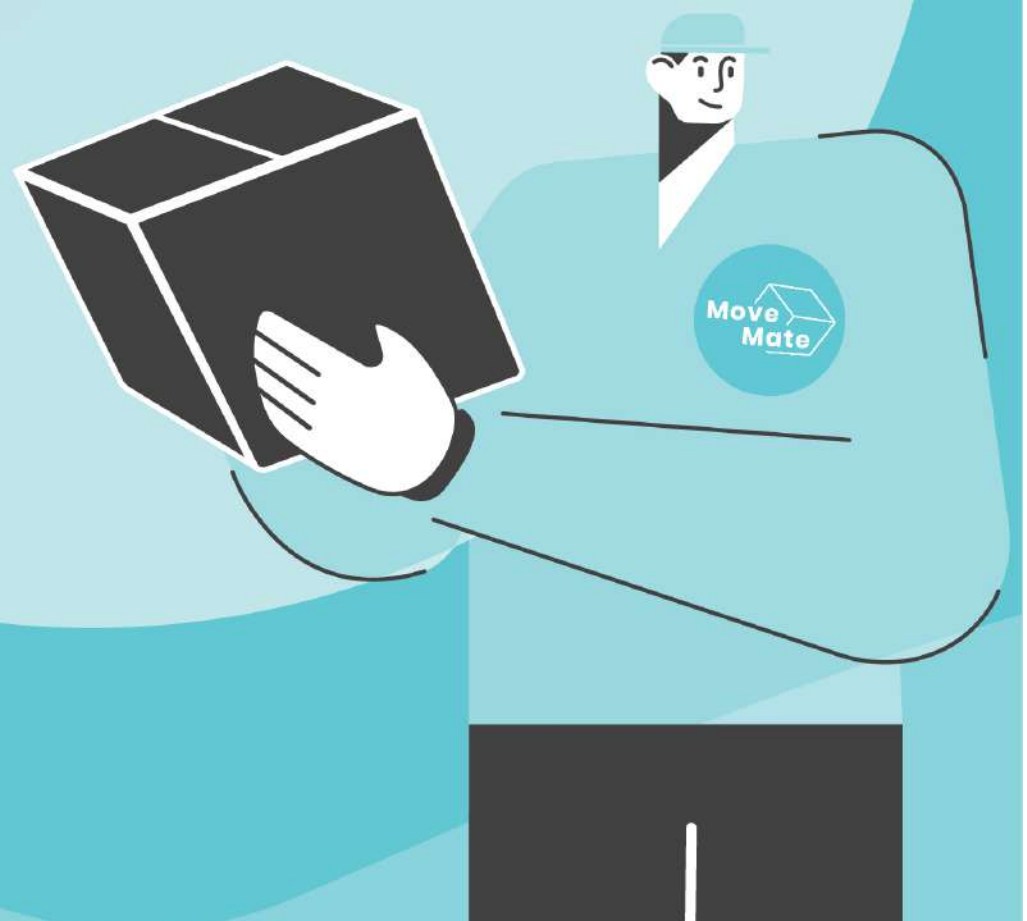
Move with MoveMate **Montreal's best Movers**

- 5-star Customer Satisfaction
- Book your move in 2 Minutes
- Trained and vetted movers

Use Promo Code
CULTMOVE5 for a 5% discount on your moves.

Code: CULTMOVE5

Book now



Homestyle Bouge

BY SAVANNAH STEWART

After the success of their first ever virtual This Is Not a Fringe Festival last june, MainLine Theatre is back on a computer screen near you with a virtual edition of their Bouge d'ici dance festival.

Running from now until March 14, the festival offers up 25 Bouge Shorts, recorded dance videos by emerging and established artists, along with events meant to bring the community together at a time when we're all stuck in our homes.

MainLine's artistic producer Kenny Streule says that moving forward with this virtual edition is like returning to the root cause for the festival's existence. "It was created as a reaction to the lack of opportunities for emerging choreographers and dancers in the dance community in 2009," he explains.

He says the community has since grown, "but with the pandemic hitting, it's created fewer and fewer opportunities so the experience of doing it all virtually, it's keeping that factor of giving an opportunity to those who may need it, especially during this time."

Buying a ticket to the festival gives you 24-hour access to the Bouge Short videos up until March 14, along with access to events like the Bouge d'ici virtual dance party on March 5 at 8 p.m..

"We're going to create a Zoom page where people can just join in, and just dance and enjoy the music, and share that moment all together," says Streule. "Just dancing together will be something that will really warm my heart. I'm excited for that."

Bouge d'ici will also include a panel discussion this year that will provide a space for dancers and choreographers to discuss how they have had to adapt their practice in the past year to respond to the challenges the pandemic has brought and the swivel to an online-only format.

"How have we adapted our work, what has been the struggle to take a piece that is maybe more for an intimate space like MainLine, but now it's in front of a camera. How do you recreate that intimacy, how do you recreate the feeling that your performance usually gives you when your audience is not there?" says Streule. "It's not as simple as just doing it in front of a camera, the camera has its art form, too."

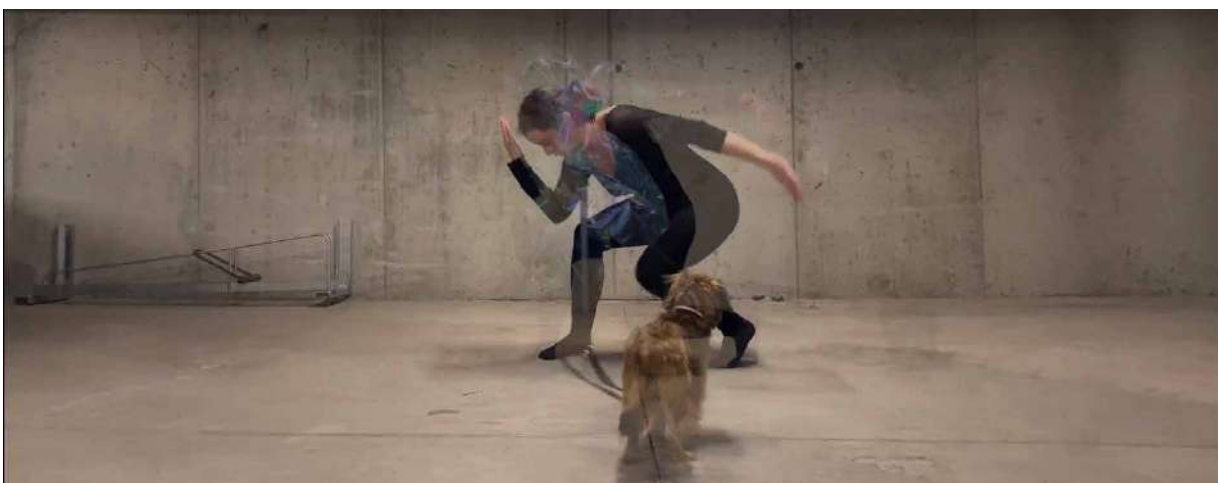
"I'm really excited about the panel discussion," says Stephanie Fromentin, a Bouge d'ici committee member who has been involved in planning the festival.

Fromentin will also be participating in the festival with the inclusion of a Bouge Short she filmed over the summer. Hers and nine other shorts were originally filmed for the This Is Not a Fringe Festival last year, and they will be reshownd at Bouge d'ici along with 15 new shorts filmed in the winter.

"I think it's really nice to have new content, but also letting things have a second life," she says. "Especially in dance, things don't really get a long run like they do in theatre even in regular times. If something was filmed, why not give it another chance to be viewed? So funnily enough I'm going to have a very summery-looking video being played."



Francis Nadeau Lussier



Stephanie Fromentin, Julianne Decerf, Eylul Bozok

Her video, titled "Face," was filmed on the soccer field that now occupies the space where the now-defunct Montreal Royals baseball team used to play. "That set the tone for the video, which is kind of like a spinoff on baseball moves," she explains, "actions that I find super interesting and that I have done as a dancer, but I'm not a baseball player, so this is sort of an exploration of physicality that I don't have."

Fromentin sees some silver linings in the virtual format the festival has had to take this year. For one, the festival organizers are trying to engage an online audience while they themselves are online, allowing them to make decisions about the shape the festival and its events take based on their own experiences navigating their online communities during the pandemic.

"What's easier for you is easier for [the audience] so there becomes this sort of fluidity in the experience of the spectator and the experience of the artist. We're kind of all experiencing the same thing."

Another positive is the increased accessibility for an already very accessible festival. The à la carte online format means that viewers can watch the shorts on their own time without having to follow a fixed schedule, and friends and family around the world can tune in to watch the dance shorts.

The tickets are also offered at different rates, from \$5 to \$50, so festival attendees can choose the level of support

they are able to give to the festival. All tickets have the same access to the festival, so no one misses out.

Fromentin says the festival meets a need for dancers like her who have had little opportunity to flex their creative muscles during the past year. "I'm really just grateful to have these opportunities with festivals and theatres that want to support the people who are all kind of holed up creatively and itching to get out.

"As an artist, of course, we have hardship, and financial struggles are real and everybody needs to be okay, but if it's possible to allow for these sorts of experiences and dreaming, I feel like it's sort of a 'why not?' phase right now."

"I'm really impressed with how artists have been so resilient and have done so much to continue to create in a time where it's not always easy to create and it's not always motivating," says Streule.

But he continues by saying that if artists are having a hard time creating right now, they shouldn't feel guilty about that. "If any fellow artists read this, it's important to know that if they're not creating, that's okay, too. We're in such a strange time, we're in this period of unknown, that it's okay sometimes to take a step back and breathe it all in."

→ The Bouge d'ici festival is on through March 14.

CULT

BEST OF

#MTL

2021

VOTE!

ANNUAL READERS POLL!

[CULTMTL.COM/votebestofmtl](https://cultmtl.com/votebestofmtl)



The bravery of being out of range



Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Allen Ginsberg

BY RYAN DIDUCK

Deniz Cuylan, "Flaneurs in Hakone," *No Such Thing As Free Will* (Hush Hush Records)

It's funny how things change. Especially the little things: we tend not to notice that something is different until well after its difference has been established — otherwise known in today's parlance as "the new normal". I'll give you a linguistic example.

When I was growing up, people commonly marked the end of a conversation with the phrase "have a nice day." I was born at the tail-end of the 1970s. Accompanied by a garish yellow happy face, "have a nice day" was literally a t-shirt slogan for my entire generation. Sometimes people might say "have a good day", or "have a nice one" instead, but have a nice day was the gold standard of suggesting to someone what sort of day to have after you parted ways, amicably or otherwise.

But recently, I've begun to notice that people are more frequently saying "have a *great* day" — as if good isn't quite good enough anymore. Great is the new good. It's insufficient to wish someone a simple good day when there are great days to be had. I see this as part of a broader campaign to paste phony smiley faces upon the masses amidst the craziest 12 months in more than 100 years. I'd be happy with a basic fine day; okay with a decent day; and overjoyed with a regular good day. Before we try to make days great again, let's just make them good.

Claire Rousay, "Discrete (The Market)," *A Softer Focus* (American Dreams Records)

They say the best revenge is living well. In an act of irrational and ungrateful collective revenge, living well in the west has nearly killed the entire world. In the not-too-distant future, living well might mean living without any remembrance of luxury or desire for anything more or different.

Fly Pan Am, "Scanner," *Frontera* (Constellation Records)

A lot has changed since Fly Pan Am performed their accompanying score to the Animals of Distinction dance troupe's choreography at Théâtre Misonneuve in December 2019 (the last time, coincidentally, that I saw a rock band play live). One year ago, the coronavirus crisis paralyzed the entire world, closing international borders in a blitzkrieg security operation not seen since the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks in the U.S. Cultural events and performances of all kinds ceased immediately and are yet to resume in any semblance of before-times normalcy. The globe has been carved up into smaller and smaller zones, neighbourhoods, households from which it is more or less impossible to escape. And yet, the message of this album, indeed this entire piece, is as urgent as ever: if viruses don't respect borders, why should we? If, as the politicians, health officers and epidemiology experts reiterate ad nauseum, we are all in this together, we might as well start acting like it.

Bendik Giske, "Fantas for Saxophone and Voice," *Fantas Variations* (Editions Mego)

The American poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti passed away last month, but not before living 101 thoughtful, creative, defiant and trailblazing years in arguably the best 101 years in human history. Ferlinghetti was primarily a poet, but also did double duty as the publisher of the ground-breaking San Francisco-based City Lights Press.

City Lights published Allen Ginsberg's infamous *Howl and Other Poems* in the fall of 1956. In March of 1957, however, 520 copies of the book were seized en route to Britain by U.S. customs agents who deemed it obscene, and Ferlinghetti was subsequently arrested for publishing the book. No less than nine literary experts testified at the ensuing trial to the poem's "redeeming social importance." California State Superior Court Justice Clayton Horn was sufficiently convinced and ruled in Ferlinghetti's favour.

The rest is history. Ginsberg went on to be one of the most celebrated poets of the 20th century, and City Lights continued to publish challenging works from the Beat

generation and beyond, carrying on its tradition today as one of America's literary cornerstones.

*I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by
sadness, LARPing hysterical rated,*

*dragging themselves through the gay village at dawn
dreaming an angry Facebook post,*

*No-brained influencers burning for the ancient wi-fi
connection*

*To the starry cloud streaming in the electronic circuitry of
night...*

The thing is, we won't know if there will ever be another Ferlinghetti, or Ginsberg, or San Francisco Renaissance somewhere else, just as the Beats had only a vague inkling if anything at all that the Six Gallery reading would be enshrined forevermore in America's literary lore. It isn't enough anymore to craft beautiful sentences and read them aloud to rapt audiences. Verse these days needs to be search engine optimized.

Ferlinghetti was likely the least well-known of the cohort he established — well after Jack Kerouac and Ginsberg, William S. Burroughs and Charles Bukowski. But there wouldn't have been a Beat generation were it not for Ferlinghetti. And so, the beat goes on in his absence, as I imagine would have been his parting wish. Swing low, sweet streetcar, for another passenger on these winding and steep streets needs one last lift up the hill.

Lawrence Ferlinghetti
(24 March, 1919 — 22 February, 2021)

THE LORD'S LAST PRAYER

Our father whose art's in heaven

Hollow be thy name

Unless things change

Thy kingdom come and gone

Thy will will be undone

On earth as it isn't heaven

Give us this day our daily bread

At least three times a day

And lead us not into temptation

too often on weekdays

But deliver us from evil

Whose presence remains unexplained

In thy kingdom of power and glory

Ah, Man!

— in *Blasts Cries Laughter* (1988)

CHRISTIAN DIOR



THE COUTURE REVOLUTION

— A MUST-SEE EXHIBITION —

“A BREATH OF FRESH AIR AND BEAUTY THAT WE ADORE”
— RADIO-CANADA

EXHIBITION PRODUCED BY



PRESENTED BY

HOLT RENFREW
OGILVY

MAJOR PARTNERS

ELLE

AIRFRANCE

 *Hotel Le Cantlie Suites*

Explore
France™

NORMANDY

TOURISME /
MONTREAL

MODE
DESIGN

fugues

TV5

LA
PRESSE

MONTREAL
GAZETTE

CONSEIL
DES ARTS
DE MONTRÉAL

Montréal

Québec

690 Sherbrooke St. W. – Easy access with: Parking nearby (\$) | Bike, Bixi | Bus 24 | Ⓜ McGill



Did you know you can read **Cult MTL** anywhere?

Cult MTL is now available in the PressReader app—along with thousands of your other favorite magazines from around the world.

Download the app and enjoy!

