



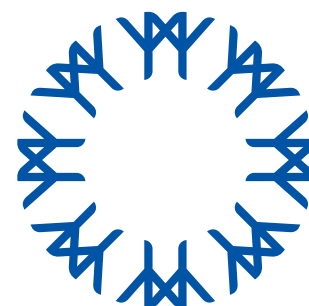
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* Beatrice Deer * Top Albums of 2021 * Restaurant scene forecast * Arts & culture To-Do List

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A large, moody photograph of Adele in a recording studio. She is wearing headphones, has her eyes closed, and is resting her chin on her hand, looking towards a professional microphone. The lighting is warm and focused on her face.

A D E L E

30

O U T N O W



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Montreal-based Inuk/
Mohawk singer-songwriter
Beatrice Deer showcases
her «inuindie» sound on her
sixth album *Shifting*, being
released on Dec. 10.

Photo by Alexi Hobbs

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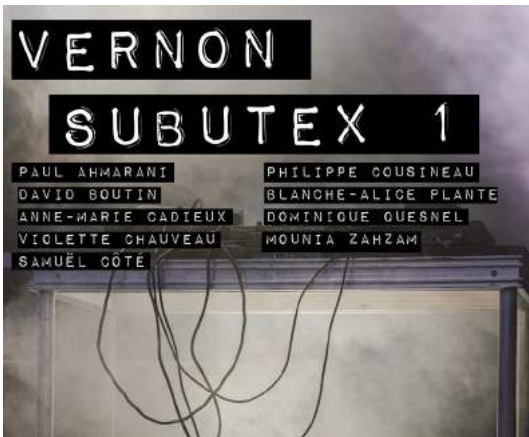


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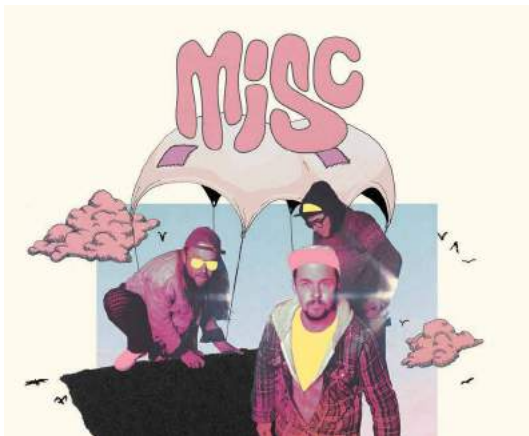
Alexa-Jeanne Dubé & Patrick R. Lacharité
Manque

A La Fratrie production
by Sarah Kane
World premiere
Theatre | Montreal
FEB 8 → 12



Cédric Delorme-Bouchard
Intérieur
by Maurice Maeterlinck

World premiere
Theatre | Montreal
FEB 15 → 18



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la totale

Music | Montreal
FEB 23



Marie Brassard
Violence

Theatre | Montreal
MARCH 10 → 20



Anne Plamondon
Seulement toi

World premiere
Dance | Montreal
MARCH 30 + 31



Philippe Cyr
Atteintes à sa vie
by Martin Crimp

World premiere
Theatre | Montreal
APR 19 → 30



Philippe Boutin, Étienne Lepage & Elon Höglund
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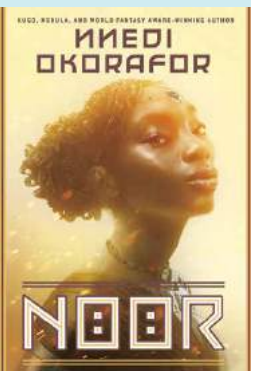
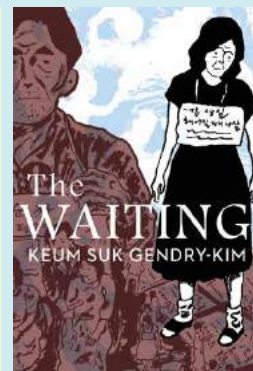
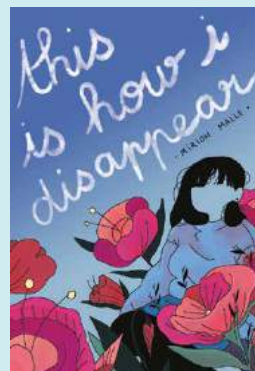
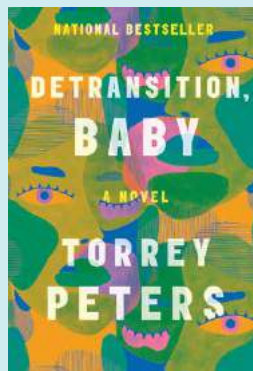
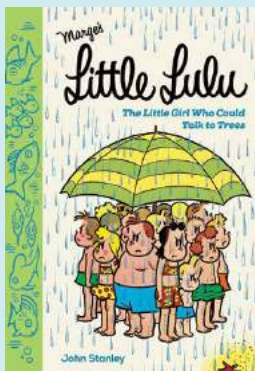
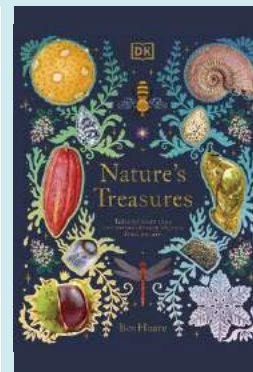
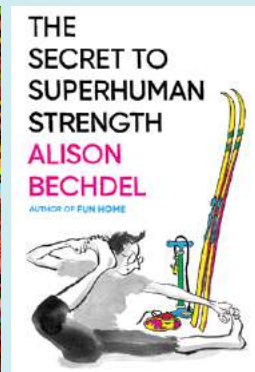
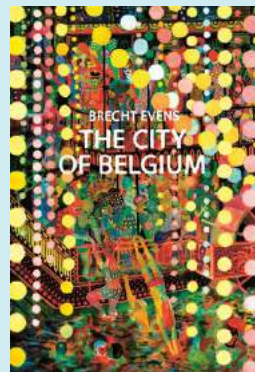
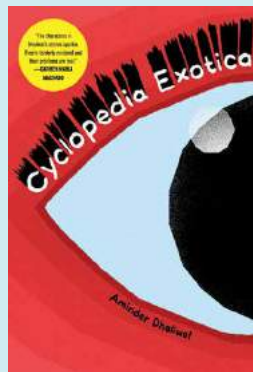
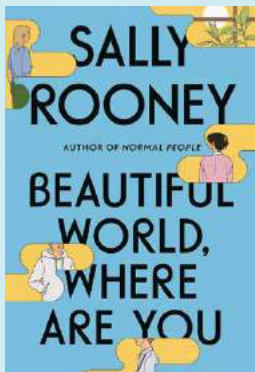
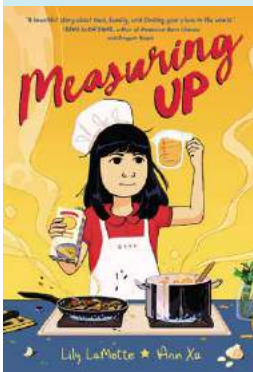
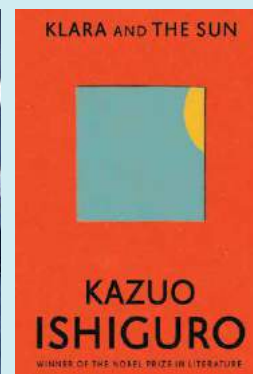
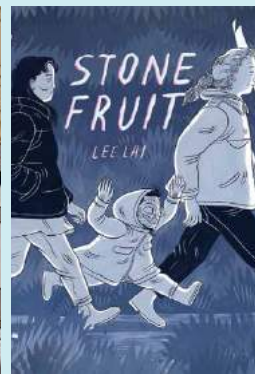
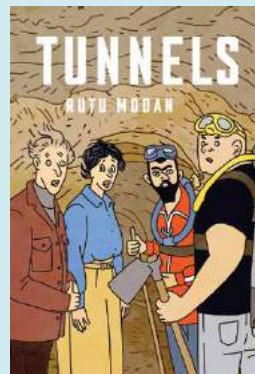
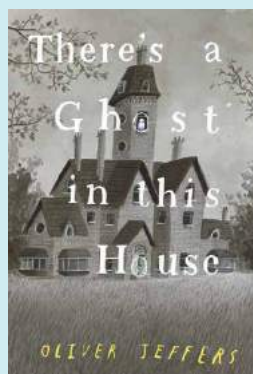
“Presented as a series of flashbacks from Cohen’s deathbed, this biography recounts highlights from the life of the legendary songwriter.”

—NEW YORK TIMES

“Entertainment with an undercurrent of sadness and introspection. Much like the bard himself.”

—TORONTO STAR

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: best buds



BY DAVE MACINTYRE

Before this issue, I'd never watched a Christmas movie stoned. I felt like it would be quite a trippy experience watching films involving Christmas trees while smoking actual trees. But alas, here I am, making all of that change — and which better movie to go down that rabbit hole with than my favourite holiday movie ever, *A Charlie Brown Christmas*?

I knew I was in for a wild ride, too, as I'm smoking a hybrid that hits harder and faster than I thought. Not bad for a government-approved, budget-friendly strain. In fact, it's one of the better strains I've tried since I started this column almost a year ago. Here's how it all went down.

HYBRID: GOOD SUPPLY TANGIE GREEN

At around 18% THC, this strain gives me a comfortable and relaxing high, making things around me feel more vivid and impressive. When the piano comes in for «Christmastime Is Here» at the start of the movie, it definitely hits a bit differently. These buds lose points, however, due to their dryness and brittleness. Nonetheless, they smell nice even if the aroma's potency is below-average. And when they kick in, they hit you quick and HARD. I was pleasantly surprised at how fast-acting this strain was, as I started feeling pretty blasted while only being halfway through the joint I rolled. Better yet, I rebounded quickly when I smoked it after starting to come down from my previous high. Naturally, I ordered a karaage don (fried chicken, rice and lettuce with Japanese mayo and a lemon) from Tsukuyomi on St-Laurent — if you eat meat, I highly recommend it.

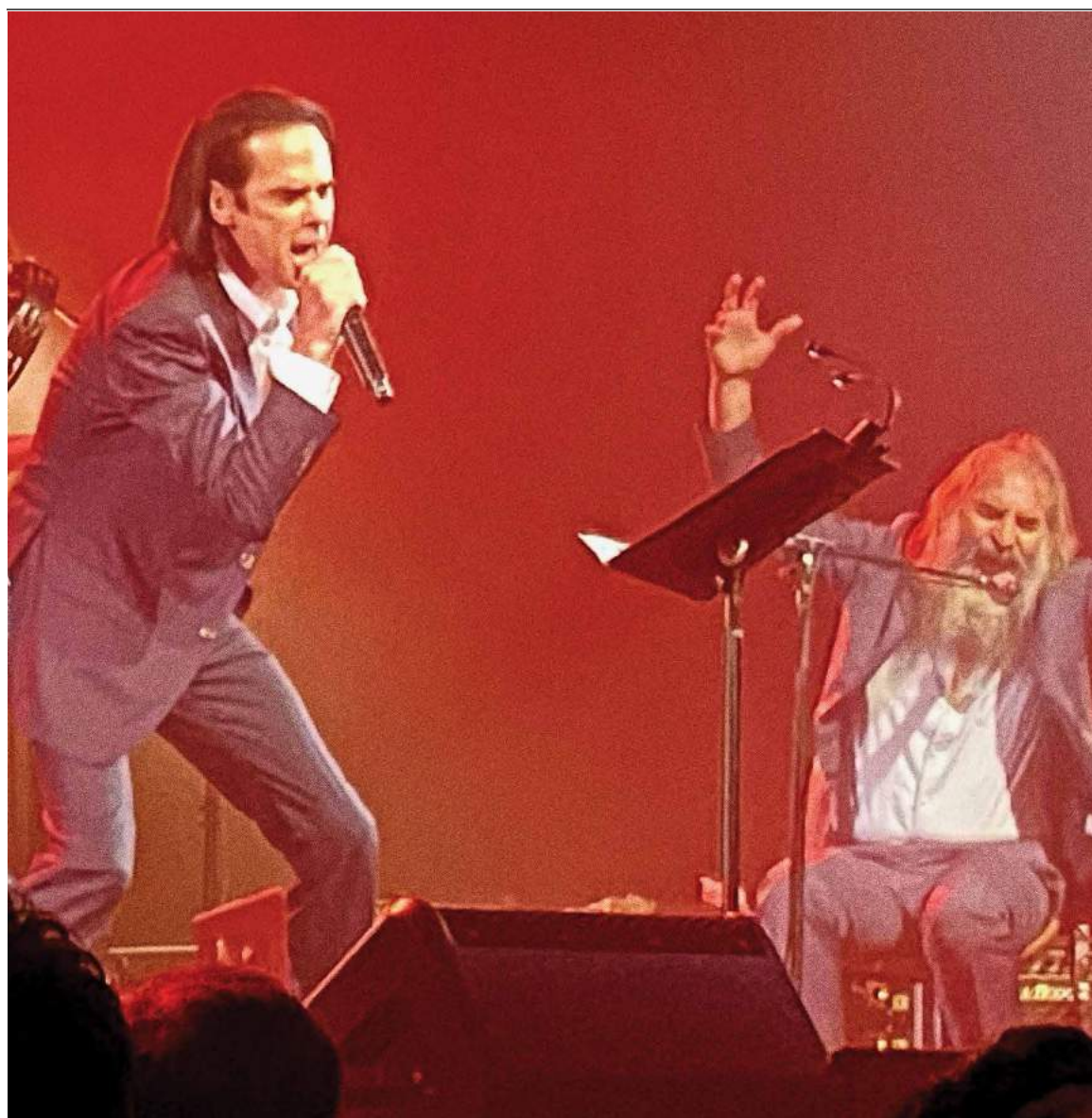
Now, for the cinematic component of this issue's column. I've seen *A Charlie Brown Christmas* over the holiday season more times than I'd dare to count, but never while high... until now. For my money, it's one of the Christmas movies that has aged the most beautifully over the years — unlike, say, *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* (1964), where sexist language surprisingly runs amok. In fact, I think *A Charlie Brown Christmas* was ahead of its time. With rampant consumerism threatening to help cause irreversible climate damage, the film's strong anti-consumerist message is more relevant

than ever today. Who'd have thought Charlie Brown could thoughtfully teach kids about both depression AND dismantling capitalism? (Also, as far as I'm concerned, the Vince Guaraldi Trio's soundtrack is the ONLY Christmas music you need to hear.)

The most lovable loser in cartoon history is feeling down in the dumps about Christmas, and is tasked with directing the Christmas play. When asked to buy a tree for the set, he goes with the saddest, most bare-bones tree in the lot. Though he's mocked mercilessly by the other kids for it, I honestly think it was a brilliant choice. Nowadays, that tree could pass for an art piece at the Musée de Beaux-Arts. It's also a metaphor of sorts for minimalism, and resisting materialistic temptations, which makes Charlie a true hero in my book. The pine needles fall off as he picks it up, and yet he still feels content with his choice, knowing he stuck to his guns and stood up for what he believed in. Hell, he even skips and hops away gleefully after being humiliated by his peers, and vows to redecorate the tree himself.

I never thought I'd get this analytical with a Christmas movie geared toward children... I guess that's the sign of a good strain!

The weed: 8.5
The movie: 10



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Noel

A large, vibrant floral arrangement in the back of a silver convertible car. Two people's legs are sticking out of the open top of the car, positioned on either side of the flower bed. The background shows a clear blue sky and tall evergreen trees.

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The logo for the McCord Museum's 100th anniversary. It features the text "McCord Museum" in a bold, sans-serif font, with "100 Years Young" below it. To the right of the text is a stylized graphic consisting of concentric, overlapping lines that form a circular, ripple-like pattern.

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Photo: Serge Barbeau

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food

The future of restaurants pt. 2

BY CLAY SANDHU

Introspection. That's the word, which for me, has come to define 2021.

After the undulating uncertainties of the enduring pandemic lost much of their fear-stoking potency, our collective gaze — at least in the vaccinated parts of the world — shifted inward. A major reflection being had in society seems to be about personal happiness and whether we give happiness enough space in our lives.

That reflection certainly rings true for me. I've worked in restaurants for the lion's share of my adult life. In the restaurant world and especially in kitchens, there's a pissing contest being had constantly, one that pits cooks against each other in a competition to prove oneself a "real cook" — a kitchen lifer. I used to think I would be one of those cooks — then I got a bit older. My partner and I had lived together for four years and had barely spent one day per week together. I was eating very poorly and drinking far too much. At my lowest point, I was working 60 hours a week and only eating once per day — I was sick, I was gaunt and I was depressed.

I quit the kitchen shortly thereafter, got a WSET certification and found my way into a job tending bar and serving wine at a reputable restaurant. My work was less gruelling, my hours were much better and so was my pay. I felt like I had hit the jackpot. Nearly exactly a year into that job, however, the pandemic hit. Needless to say, I lost that gig.

Today we're hearing a lot of talk about labour shortages, demand for better wages and better working conditions in restaurants. Restaurant workers have seen the light, they've had a taste of greener pastures and they ain't coming back. I realized during my days away from restaurant work that I am not a restaurant lifer. I found a new line of work, one that gives me a vastly improved quality of life and one in which I am able to prioritize my own happiness. I am a restaurant worker who has left and has no plans to return and I'm far from the only one.

But as the cooks, sous-chefs, sommeliers and servers leave the restaurant world behind, I can't help but wonder about the state of restaurants in 2022. What will they become and who will run them? When the cooks are now carpenters and the sommeliers work in marketing, will the plate remain empty and the glass stay dry?

The most attention-grabbing departure from the scene came earlier this month when Joe Beef Group co-owner Dave McMillan announced in an interview with *The Gazette's* Bill Brownstein that he had sold his shares in the business and was retiring from restaurants. His departure was summarized with the quote, "I never want to shave white truffles onto asparagus for someone from Toronto ever again in my life" — a statement that will resonate with most anyone who has worked in a kitchen. The problem is, Dave wasn't a lowly line cook peeling potatoes and cleaning grease traps. In fact, Dave hadn't worked in a kitchen (at least as a defined part of his responsibilities) in years. From the perspective of most restaurant workers, being Dave McMillan is about as good as anyone could hope to do in the restaurant biz. If someone who has achieved as much as him could leave disheartened and angry, what hope is there for the rest of us?

In that same article, Dave wrote that his breaking point

came after a fight with his executive chef Gabriel Drapeau. "In all honesty, I think that's what brought me to (leaving) at the end. I was fighting with Gab. I was really starting to get angry and see things I didn't like at Joe Beef, and he is my friend." Drapeau also recently announced his departure from Joe Beef and restaurants in general, having accepted the position of Director of Culinary Operations for the ready-to-eat meal company WeCook. The eight-year veteran's departure marks yet another loss for Montreal's restaurant scene, but a notable gain for the meal delivery scene.

For Drapeau's part, he says his departure was long in the making, or as he put it, "I was ready to graduate from the Joe Beef program" and a great opportunity had presented itself. To borrow his saying, the Joe Beef program has produced much of Montreal's, and some of the country's, best cooks and restaurants. The natural evolution of the program generally leads to opening a restaurant, not portioning brussels sprouts for ready-to-eat meal kits. That said, for



Drapeau, the end goal is the same. "The idea is making delicious food and making people happy. That's all that matters to me in the end."

In our conversation, the ever-competitive Drapeau tried as best as he could to avoid coming out and saying it, but it was palpably clear that despite being a dutiful soldier, the restaurant world wore him down. "It came to a point where one day I was looking at what I was becoming — for me it was time to move on." After struggling with burnout and exhaustion, he broke. "A couple of years ago I went to the Douglas Hospital emergency room. I was going through a hard breakup, I was drinking so much, I went to see the doctor and I said, 'Help me.'"

Drapeau was able to find his way back from that low point, citing massive changes in his diet and routine. He even goes as far as to say that in the time before leaving Joe Beef, he had "a beautiful life." I'll take his word for it but the exhaustion he describes and the pain he has endured, not to mention McMillan's account of his last days at the restaurant, struck me as being at odds with Drapeau's version of things. Chalk it up to the rose-tinted glasses of memory, perhaps.

I had the chance to speak with two other cooks: Will Weston, a former Joe Beef cook himself and his partner (both in business and in life) Kira German who was the former chef de cuisine of Nora Gray until early 2020. Though both left their restaurant jobs just prior to the pandemic, they shared Drapeau's sentiment about burnout and exhaustion, along with his desire to continue cooking good food, just under better conditions. Another oft-reposted soundbite from

that same McMillan interview is his revelation on restaurant cooking. "It's 5% cooking. It's 95% cleaning." If only it were so simple. Weston, for his part, puts it more acutely. "It's an ego thing. It's like, 'We work long hours and we get paid nothing but we do it because we love it and fuck you if you don't like it.' That can work when you're 21 — getting close to 30 and over, you start realizing that you can't buy a house with ego, you can't raise a family with ego. Fuck — you can hardly even feed yourself with ego half the time."

The work of cooking is often compared to that of an artist. It is more accurately a trade. Your work is to replicate a dish time and time again, night after night without error. Only a very small part of the work is about menu planning or dish development and that work is usually only handled by the highest tier of the kitchen staff. What's maybe worse is that, as a trade, it's incredibly undervalued — a plumber comes by for 20 minutes to unclog a drain and you're out \$200, whereas a cook will spend 12 hours prepping food, cooking dinner and cleaning up for 200 people and barely walk away with \$100.

Restaurant workers are asked to work exceptionally hard in the name of passion but passion devoid of actual compensation is an utterly valueless currency.

Finding alternative ways to exercise passion and dedication to the craft of cooking without suffering the daily grind and indignities of restaurant kitchens has been a major factor for both German and Weston, who are close to wrapping up construction on their first business, Paradiso — a handmade pasta counter slated to open early 2022. "It's nice to focus on the parts of the business that we want to focus on, which in this case is making pasta and perfecting that skill," reflects German. For Weston, they, like many people are "...just finding creative ways to do something a little different while still holding onto that passion and love for food."

Cooking is seeing an expansion, at least in so far as in the areas of professional cooking that are seen as legitimate. If cooks like Weston and German — or, for that matter, Anita Feng who recently opened *Épicerie J'ai Feng* (an extension of her popular 2020 pop-up) — are any example, 2022 seems ripe to see a lot more restaurant adjacent culinary concepts. Drapeau seems to think so too. "People are starting to do bodegas and *épiceries* — I think it's the future. It's so damn cute, and it's so damn good!"

What's for certain is that things cannot remain, or rather return to how they once were. Restaurants that wish to operate in the traditional way are going to be forced to improve working conditions and that's likely to mean reduced menus, simpler concepts and ultimately charging more money. While that might be a bitter pill to swallow, Weston reminds us that dining out in restaurants is a luxury. "You're paying what you should be paying for a luxury experience." More than that, you're paying the price of ethical working conditions and human decency. German notes, however, that the burden of those additional costs should not be entirely put on the customer, saying restaurants have a responsibility to make some adjustments, too. "You can design a menu that requires less prep, which means that you can get away with people doing fewer hours."

All sorts of reasons have been bandied around for the labour shortage in restaurants. Some make the argument that restaurant workers found better jobs, others argue that CERB turned them all into lazy ingrates. In my experience, restaurant workers are the least lazy people I know. What's most likely is that the time away from restaurant work provided time for introspection. "When you're really in it and you're working like crazy and not sleeping and not eating properly and in no way taking care of yourself, it's really easy not to notice how bad it is. Once you stop and have a minute and you're eating properly and exercising and sleeping — you notice how horrible it was before," says German, and I tend to agree. The mark of a good cook has historically been the level at which they are willing to sacrifice themselves in the service of others' enjoyment. This labour shortage seems to be in direct defiance of that line of thinking.

The parting note of my conversation with Drapeau was poignant if a bit morose. "When you go, there's only one space in the casket. In the end, you have to take care of yourself — that's going to make you a better cook, that's going to make you a better human being." As for my worries about what's in store for restaurants, I still don't know what will become of them and what they will look like or be like next year and thereafter, but it is my sincerest hope that, whatever it may be, it is the product of self-care and putting value in happiness.

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Power of song

BY YARA EL-SOUEIDI

Beatrice Deer's smile is a reflection of her art.

The award-winning Indigenous singer-songwriter from Inuk and Mohawk ancestry shines when she discusses her upbringing in Quaqtaq, a tiny village in Nunavik. She lights up when she speaks about her memories, her upbringing. This is why it has an important place in her music.

"My own experiences in my life are what I write about a lot. I use my mother tongue to write because I'm more comfortable writing in Inuktitut," she says.

Deer's songs have been acclaimed by everyone. She is a model for her community, a winner of the 2021 Prism Prize, a beloved figure in Northern Canada. Her music mixes throat singing, Innu folklore and a folk pop sound. Mostly, she plays music to communicate her emotions and feelings.

"I know that music is a communication tool, a very powerful one. It can express what we can't express verbally. It can express the feelings that we don't know how to put into words. Music can help bring that out, bring those feelings out; whether they're nice, or angry. And that's what I find so powerful about music. We don't necessarily need to understand the language that is being sung, because music touches the heart."

And her emotions come through strongly on her new album, *Shifting*. In recent years, Indigenous communities have been reckoning with the abuse they suffered through the hands of the Canadian government and the Catholic church. The trauma they have been going through for generations is one of the many subjects Deer explores on the album. Incorporating throat singing — a form of traditional Inuk singing that was deemed "demonic" by missionaries — in her songs is a way for her to destigmatize her heritage and give it a rightful place in music.

"[Missionaries] assumed that it was demonic, and with their oppressive opinions ordered to stop throat singing. Inuits, being very humble and submissive, listened and obeyed. They didn't publicly sing anymore. They did it in hiding. Luckily, there were some people who wanted us to bring this back before we lost it completely. Slowly, the elders, mostly women, started throat-singing again. There were even a couple of them who went abroad to perform in the 1980s. Fast forward to today, there's many girls, women, even men who throat-sing now. It's thriving. We're proud to be able to throat-sing because we almost lost this part of our heritage through colonization, and now we're bringing it back. We can do whatever we want with it, and wherever we want to."

But Deer doesn't stop at her heritage. Her music explores universal themes that are close to her heart. She sings about mental health, abuse and changes. Emotional well-being has always been important to her. Her music denotes it. She addresses it upfront. The singer, who has gone through her fair share of trauma during her upbringing, wants to end the shame surrounding mental health by sharing her experience with others.



Beatrice Deer

Alexi Hobbs

"I've had a lot of help, through counselling and therapy. I learned about healing and what trauma does. I overcame these things. What's important is that we need to help each other and we do that by talking about it, by listening and learning. Music is just my way to have a platform to be able to share stories of hope."

Shifting is a story of hope. It is a personal story, hers and the ones of those she grew up with, those who had an influence on her. She sings from her heart, telling people her career as a singer-songwriter is a vocation. She uses her songs as a megaphone, wanting to attract people's attention to her roots, to her feelings. When asked which song is her favorite on the album, she answers candidly "Sunauvva," an indie-rock song where she addresses her past self.

"'Sunauvva' is about me saying, if you would have told

me about this a long ago, if you would have told me that I would forgive, I wouldn't have believed you. If you would have told me back then that I would be happy, I wouldn't have believed you. But I'm here now. Who would have thought? I am happy."

Beatrice Deer's smile is soft, her demeanour is shy and very warm. She attracts people naturally towards her, and has a way of delivering her words through music. With all the recognition, praises and applause she has been given in the past few years, she feels grateful. Grateful for being able to make what she wants to make and, mostly, grateful for giving a voice to the Inuit people.

"It's a real privilege to be able to do what I love and get paid for it. I just hope that the accolades will bring more light to our social issues so we can get more help for our people."



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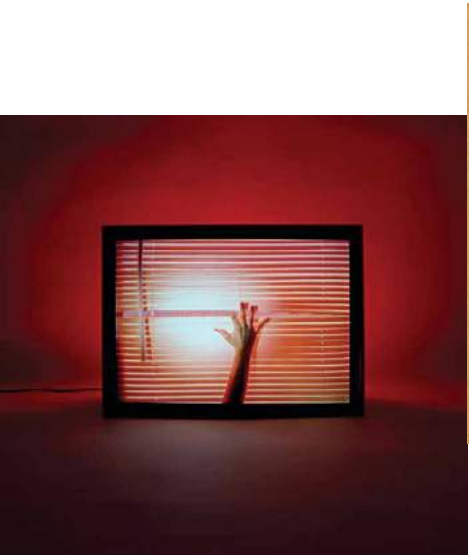


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Top albums of 2021



ERIK LEIJON

Allison Russell, *Outside Child* (Birds of Chicago/Fantasy/Concord)

D-Track, *Hull* (Coyote)

Wake Island, *Born to Leave* (Independent)

Erika de Casier, *Sensational* (4AD)

Kirai, *KayWorld* (Blockstar)

Backwash, *I Lie Here Buried with My Rings and My Dresses* (Ugly Hag)

Kings of Convenience, *Peace or Love* (EMI)

Mach-Hommy, *Pray for Haiti* (Griselda)

Islands, *Islomania* (Royal Mountain)

CFCF, *Memoryland* (BGM)

My top three albums are about hometowns/countries and how we feel about them. Russell escaped a harrowing situation in Montreal and went on to great success in Nashville, but when it came time to write a solo record, the memories of home, good and bad, came rushing back. For D-Track, he had to leave Hull to gain perspective on it. In his case, Montreal helped him realize what he'd been missing. Now he's raising his kid back home in Hull. As for Wake Island, they've been half a world away, helplessly watching Lebanon suffer.

DARCY MACDONALD

Chiild, *Hope for Sale* (Island/Avant Garden)

Janette King, *What We Lost* (Hot Tramp)

Cadence Weapon, *Parallel World* (Independent)

Czarface & MF DOOM, *Super What?* (Silver Age)

Tha God Fahim X Your Old Droog, *Tha Wolf on Wall St.* (Mongoloid Banks)

Madlib (with Four Tet), *Sound Ancestors* (Madlib Invazion)

Backxwash, *I Lie Here Buried with My Rings and My Dresses* (UglyHag Records)

SG Lewis, *Times* (Virgin EMI/PMR)

Aesop Rock X Blockhead, *Garbology* (Rhymesayers)

Blu, *The Color Blu(e)* (Nature Sounds)

All global clusterfuckery considered, it was a solid 365 for music this year. What 2021 may have lacked in quantity, release-wise, it made up for with quality, re-listenable projects. This list reflects albums I kept coming back to throughout high and low points alike of this blur of an *annus* we'll not soon wipe clean, I suspect. Montreal-adjacent talent made a highly respectable showing, with Chiild and Janette King having been a kind of yin-and-yang for my ears as a weird winter gave way to a sweltering summer. Even their respective album titles stood in as suitable slogans for how life in the '20s is playing out so far. As I peruse the list again, that's actually somewhat true across the board. Anyway, one more time for your MF'n mind: RIP DOOM.

DAVE MACINTYRE

CHVRCHES, *Screen Violence* (EMI/Glassnote)

Dave, *We're All Alone in This Together* (Neighbourhood)

Japanese Breakfast, *Jubilee* (Dead Oceans)

Kings of Convenience, *Peace or Love* (EMI)

Little Simz, *Sometimes I Might Be Introvert* (Age 101/AWAL)

Porter Robinson, *Nurture* (Mom + Pop)

SG Lewis, *times* (Virgin EMI/PMR)

Shame, *Drunk Tank Pink* (Dead Oceans)

Snail Mail, *Valentine* (Matador)

Tyler, the Creator, *Call Me If You Get Lost* (Columbia)

This was an incredibly fruitful year for albums in particular, as other LPs from Arlo Parks, BROCKHAMPTON, Adele, Billie Eilish, the War on Drugs and Yebba came close to making my list. But my top choice of 2021 is *Nurture*, which came after Porter Robinson endured a years-long bout of writer's block, during which time his brother had cancer. The end result was a remarkable leap forward for him artistically — dude has come a loooooong way from his maximalist, "complextro" EDM days.

MR. WAVVY

Silk Sonic, *An Evening With Silk Sonic* (Aftermath)

Adele, *30* (Columbia)

Snoh Aalegra, *Temporary Highs in the Violet Skies* (Roc Nation)

Etienne Dufresne, *Excalibur* (Chivi Chivi)

Charlotte Day Wilson, *Alpha* (Stone Woman)

John Lisi, *I Hope this Feels Good* (Independent)

Slowthai, *Tyron* (AWGE)

Olivia Rodrigo, *Sour* (Geffen)

Charlotte Cardin, *Phoenix* (Cult Nation)

Foushee, *Time Machine* (RCA)

Never in my eight-year career have I given an album a perfect 10/10 rating...until now. *An Evening With Silk Sonic* is a perfect soul album. The combination of Bruno Mars and Anderson .Paak is as smooth as taking a butter-filled jacuzzi. The nine-track project is a love letter to the sounds of the '70s and blends seamlessly with any Quiet Storm playlist. If there was ever a public service announcement on the benefits of cocaine, the sensational Silk Sonic twosome should be its spokesmen.



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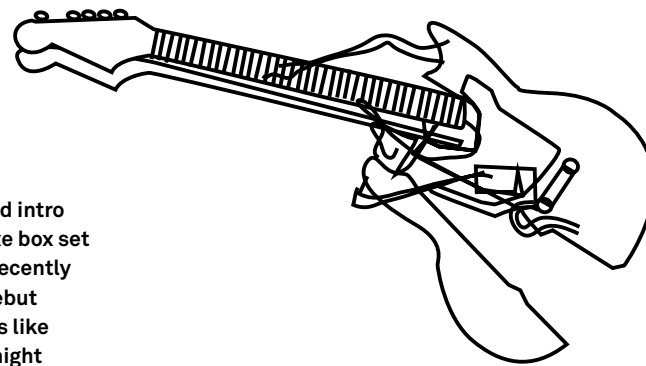
BY JOHNSON CUMMINS

I just finished watching the exhaustive eight-hour Peter Jackson Beatles doc *Get Back*, but don't get your panties in a twist as I'm not going to throw the gazillionth review on the already massive heap. Just hear me out, Chuckles.

For those who aren't fans of the Fab Four, you probably switched off the telly long before Macca knocked back his first cuppa. For those of us who truly love the band (guilty AF), the series polarized fans who fell into two distinct camps. The first camp is the pearl-clutching set who don't want to taint their memory and see how the sausage is made as the Fab Four limp through 20 takes of "Get Back." I fell firmly in the second camp that was captivated watching the band plod through numerous takes until they created pure gold, and I immersed and gorged myself in every iota, no matter how banal. Hey Jackson, get off your hairy ass and give us the 20-hour director's cut fer chrissakes!

Perhaps this long-winded and somewhat misaligned intro would've been better suited for the upcoming deluxe box set for *Let It Be* (get it!?!), but like Jackson's film, the recently released Replacements box set for their glorious debut album *Sorry Ma, Forgot to Take Out the Trash* hovers like a glorious hangover trying to sort out the previous night of debauchery. Continuing in the fashion of Replacements collections that started with the fairly crappy *Don't Tell a Soul* (2019) (titled *Dead Man's Pop*) box set and followed by the incredible *Pleased to Meet Me* (2020) box set, this a perfect piece of the puzzle. Initially I felt a tinge of trepidation as I found the original 1981 version of the record was truly the last word but — wrong 'em boyo!!!

These four CDs are absolutely stacked to the rafters with all the good shit you NEED! There are 67 unreleased songs (!) culled from home demos and basement tapes and a live show that is the real jewel here. Obviously you already have the record loaded with Heartbreakers/Stones tales of teen angst in "I Hate Music," "Customer," "Johnny's Gonna Die" etc, but it's unreleased blasters like "Don't Turn Me Down," "We'll Get Drunk" and the utterly sublime — and dare I say one of singer/songwriter Paul Westerberg's greatest moments (previously relegated to a B-side!) — "If Only You Were Lonely." True, a lot of the source material is taken from cassettes past their prime, but once your ears acclimatize to the hiss and warble, this is goosebump-inducing. The included vinyl boasting the alternate version of *Sorry Ma...* was well intended but a bit



superfluous and will likely remain in its sleeve. The massive booklet and oral retrospective, however, once again penned by Replacements know-it-all Bob Mehr, is a holy grail of info and unpublished photos.

The real reason you want this deluxe box set is for the fourth live CD featuring the band firing on all cylinders at the sacred 7th St. Entry in Minneapolis just before recording the album. This is where it all comes into focus because these early blasters were written to be performed on tiny stages littered with broken glass and cigarette butts, and the band crushes on "Shut Up," "Raised in the City" and "Shiftless When Idle" and never lets off the gas. Long before Westerberg would blossom into a serious songwriter, the band members all hold their own here and show proof that their days of being a truly great American rock 'n' roll band were just around the corner.

Current Obsession: The Replacements, *Sorry Ma, Forgot to Take Out the Trash* box set

A film by JEAN-FRANÇOIS LESAGE

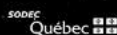


Prayer for a Lost Mitten

In theatres DECEMBER 10

Online DECEMBER 24

A film by JEAN-FRANÇOIS LESAGE — Cinematography MARIANNE PLOSKA — Editing MATHIEU BOUCHARD-MALO and ARIANE PÉTEL-DESPOIS — Sound Recording MARIE-ANDRÉE CORMIER — Sound Design MARIE-PIERRE GRENIER — Sound Mixing OLIVIER GERMAIN — Music TOM BRUNT — Sound Effects ALEXIS FARAND
Online Editing SYLVAIN COSSETTE — Production Assistance CONSTANCE CHAPUT-RABY Research and Scriptwriting Adèle LAURÉNT OLIVIER — Online Production RICHARD BROUILLETTE — Graphic Design DIANA LE NÉZET — Production LES FILMS DE L'AUTRE — Distribution LES FILMS DU 3 MARS



HOLST: THE PLANETS

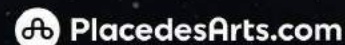
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film

On Screen

BY JUSTINE SMITH

It's the most wonderful time of the year, at least if you're a film fan. The biggest blockbusters are out but so are the late-season Oscar contenders. For the spectacle inclined, it's a great time to escape the cold and catch a movie.

Keanu Reeves is back as Neo in *The Matrix Resurrections* (Dec. 22). After nearly 20 years, Lana Wachowski revives one of the most visionary science-fiction films of the past half-century. Will she recapture the magic of the first film, or will it be another of the franchise's doomed sequels?

Also this month, Cineplex is offering anyone who spends over \$40 on gift cards a free general admission ticket, a free regular popcorn and 50% off classic nachos or poutine. (Cineplex.com/Holiday)

For the Marvel-heads, the much anticipated *Spider-Man: No Way Home* hits screens Dec. 17. The film has fans buzzing due to the confirmed and rumoured return of previous Spider-Men (Tom Holland remains head Spidey) along with Alfred Molina as Doctor Octopus and Willem Dafoe as the Green Goblin. This entry has big shoes to fill as audiences seem tired of superhero films based on disappointing box-office results. With similar source-inspiration, it will also, no doubt, be compared to the best Marvel film of the past decade, the animated *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* (2018).

One of the most hotly anticipated films of the year, Steven Spielberg's *West Side Story*, opens in theatres on Dec. 10.



The Matrix Resurrections

Given that Spielberg is one of the few filmmakers who please popular and critical audiences, it's hard not to be excited for the maestro's take on the beloved musical. It's only beginning to screen for critics, but the trailers are bright and vibrant; it seems unlikely to disappoint even though the lead actor, Ansel Elgort, has been embroiled in controversy and conspicuously absent from recent publicity for the film.

Another heavy-hitter coming out this December is Guillermo Del Toro's *Nightmare Alley* (Dec. 10), a new adaptation of a classic novel about the circus world by William Lindsay Gresham (previously adapted into a seedy noir in the 1940s). The star-studded cast includes Bradley Cooper, Cate Blanchett, Toni Collette, Willem Dafoe and Rooney Mara.

P.T. Anderson, arguably the greatest working American filmmaker (*There Will Be Blood*, *Phantom Thread*), also comes out with his newest film, *Licorice Pizza* (Dec. 24). The film stars songstress Alana Haim and Cooper Hoffman (Philip Seymour Hoffman's son in his film debut) in this rom-com road-movie set in the 1970s. The film has received rave reviews in early previews and features an all-star supporting cast, including Bradley Cooper as Jon Peters, Barbra Streisand's former hairdresser-turned-producer husband.

In other major blockbusters, another pre-Christmas release, *The King's Man*, is the third entry in the improbably popular



Benedetta

Kingsmen series. This time around, some of the worst villains in history (among them Rhys Ifans as a ridiculous Rasputin) plot to wipe out millions. The film has already been delayed several times, and it can't all be blamed on COVID. It was originally slated for a Nov. 2019 release date. Let's hope the film isn't as messy as it seems from the outside. You can catch it in theatres as of Dec. 22.

Indie-darling Sean Baker (*The Florida Project*) comes out with *Red Rocket*, the story of a former porn star turned grifter returning to his home in Florida. The dark comedy about American narcissism captures the hubris of the American dream. It hits screens on Dec. 17.

The hotly anticipated *Benedetta*, which screened as part of Cinémania at Cinema l'Amour last month, finally gets a release on Dec. 10. Paul Verhoeven, director of *Showgirls* and *Starship Troopers* (among others), brings to the screen the true story of a 17th-century lesbian nun with all the flair for drama and hysterics you'd expect.

Also, for arthouse fans, the intimate documentary *Prayer for a Lost Mitten* hits the big screen on Dec. 10. The wintry film centres on the lost and found office of the Montreal metro system. What do our lost items say about us? It's a lyrical and poetic examination of love and loss.



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arts

Art over the holidays

BY SAVANNAH STEWART

All I Want for Christmas

In this comedy written and directed by Rebecca Northan, sibling elves Nog and Ginger are on a mission to save Christmas — and keep their jobs. *All I Want For Christmas* takes the (12+) audience behind the scenes to see the inner workings of the North Pole, as seen from the perspective of a trouble-making elf. (At *Centaur Theatre*, through Dec. 5)

Making Revolution: collective histories, desired futures

A collection of artworks exploring revolution, struggle and hope in the Middle East and Northern Africa. With six videos and three installations, the exhibition presents works by a host of artists from the regions being explored. (At *MAI* through Dec. 11)

SuperDogs: The Musical

The Segal Centre is bringing over 20 dogs from the President's Choice SuperDogs crew onstage for *SuperDogs: The Musical*. This union of musical theatre and stunt-dog spectacle tells the story of what is possible when you chase your dreams with your best friend by your side. It's an event that promises to be fun for old and young alike, provided you aren't allergic to dogs. (At *Segal Centre*, through Dec. 19)

Gift of the Holidays

As a holiday treat, the MMFA is offering 24 days of free admission to its Discovery Exhibitions and permanent collections. Temporary exhibitions include *Ragnar Kjartansson, Sumarnótt: Death Is Elsewhere*. An immersive video piece shot during the midnight sun in Iceland, the installation features an eerie performance by two sets of twins in bands, namely Kristín Anna and Gyða Valtýsdóttir of múm and Aaron and Bryce Dessner of the National. The other temporary exhibits explore human connection to the environment in *Ecologies: A Song for Our Planet* and Anne Duk Hee Jordan's art, which imagines new lifeforms by blending the terrestrial and aquatic worlds in *MOMENTA X MMFA | Anne Duk Hee Jordan | Intimacy of Strangers*. Later on in the month, the MMFA has a schedule of art workshops lined up for kids and parents. (Museum of Fine Arts, free admission Dec. 1–24, activities Dec. 22–Jan. 2)

FringeMas Cabaret & Variety Show and SuperHappy LeFunTime

On Dec. 4, MainLine Theatre is bringing back its FringeMas Cabaret & Variety Show. Ugly Christmas sweaters and your “best Chanukah flair” are encouraged, eggnog is served and a lineup of performers is ready to entertain. On Dec. 9, SuperHappy LeFunTime promises a virtual game and discussion night hosted by artistic producer Kenny Streule. The event (in English, but bilingual exchanges are welcome) is open to all, especially the FringeMTL community. (MainLine Theatre, Dec. 4 & 9)



Expression at your fingertips, Family Weekends at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

MMFA, Jean-François Brière

Les Grands Ballets Canadiens presents

The Nutcracker: Clara's Journey

Unable to work with performers under 12 this year due to vaccine requirements, this holiday staple was reimagined. Magical toys inspired by ballet characters come to life and perform the first act, while the second act reverts to a more faithful rendition of *The Nutcracker*, as we follow Clara accompanied by her Prince Charming into the Kingdom of Sweets. (At *Place des Arts*, Dec. 9–28)

The Holidays on the Point

Montreal's archaeology and history museum is offering an outdoor winter paradise in Place Royale square, facing the museum — a place to sit and take in some festive beauty. On the weekends of Dec. 11–12 and 18–19, a visit to the square's illuminated forest decor could lead to a chance encounter with some historical Christmas characters: Saint Nicholas, for example, or the Italian folkloric gift-giver Befana. Then from Dec. 27–30, the museum is holding a series of arts and crafts workshops for kids and parents in alignment with their *It's Circus Time!* Exhibition, which runs through March. Workshop-goers will create their own pocket big top, some characters to perform in it and a phenakistiscope optical illusion. (At *Pointe-à-Callière*, Dec. 11–Jan. 3)

Antioch by Talisman Theatre

Talisman Theatre's first produced-for-digital experience presents Sarah Berthiaume's *Antioch*, a modern take on the ancient Greek tale of Antigone. Translated from French by Iris Cronin and directed by Sophie el Assaad, the play introduces us to Lily and her mother Inas, women consumed by their rage. Exploring the immigrant experience, intergenerational trauma and magical realism, *Antioch* is a story of the importance of communication and vulnerability, of knowing your roots. This production is meant to sit between theatre and digital art and will be streamed online with donations accepted for tickets. (YouTube, Dec. 13–19)

Wildside Festival

Centaur Theatre's independent experimental arts festival Wildside is turning 25 and bringing four pieces to the stage this January. The Centaur will present *Deer Blood*, which tells the story of two mythic lovers through a blending of media, and *HUSH*, delving into the suicide crisis Inuit communities face. La Chapelle Scènes Contemporaines, the Centaur's festival partner for the third consecutive year, will present the two other plays: *1, 2, maybe 3* is a non-verbal exploration of movement between two bodies stuck very, very close together. *Logic of the Worst* brings five performers to the stage to share their ideas on the “worst” through anecdotes and demonstrations. The festival will also revive *Confabulation*, a fan-favourite storytelling event by Matt Goldberg. (At *Centaur Theatre* and *la Chapelle Scènes Contemporaines*, Jan. 10–22)

Geordie Theatre presents *Other Worlds*

In this play for ages 10+, directed by Jessica Abdallah, two strangers are stuck together on a remote island after an environmental disaster. Though they don't have much in common, there is at least one thing they both share: a hatred for the land developers that overrun the island looking to cash in by creating a false sense of paradise for the wealthy. The story explores the importance of community, friendship and belonging as the two strangers embark on a journey of self-discovery and deepening connection with the natural world. (At *la Maison Théâtre*, Jan. 14–23)

Imago Theatre presents *Foxfinder*

In this not-so-dystopian near future, the Earth is on the brink of ecological collapse and humans believe foxes are responsible. When a struggling couple meets the foxfinder, the young man sent by the government to kill all foxes, their lives change forever. This eco-parable is directed by Cristina Cugliandro, written by U.K. playwright Dawn King, and is put on through MAI's residency program. (At *MAI*, Jan. 20–29)



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Zvrra

By Ryan Diduck

David McMillan's Last Supper

And like that, Mr. David “Joe Beef” McMillan has taken his final reservation. It wasn’t such a shock that one of Montreal’s most revered restaurateurs decided to quit the cutthroat business that he helped create; what was shocking was the manner in which he managed to insult everyone that helped get him in the first place to the truffle-shaving-for-Toronto-tourists level. Torontonians don’t know why they think asparagus is the apex of culinary arts. It’s not their fault.

But it wasn’t just McMillan’s clientele. Neither the staff nor the industry itself evaded his forked tongue. I guess fame and fortune in one’s chosen field isn’t enough. Having a best-selling cookbook and a city park named in one’s honour. Becoming buddies with Anthony Bourdain. Not enough.

A few years ago, I happened by Liverpool House on a frosty evening. A convoy of blacked-out luxury SUVs was parked out front. I wondered who was dining there, and later discovered it was Trudeau and Obama. Now, I’m not prone to pride, but I must admit I felt honoured somehow that the two hippest world leaders since JFK and Trudeau Sr. would have a summit in our local restaurant. Not enough for McMillan. He still had to wash the dishes.

I don’t usually do this — say something disparaging. But today, there are a dozen places within walking distance that I’d rather eat at. Montreal’s fine dining establishments have greatly improved since Joe Beef was considered a destination. Most of them are too refined to simply slop a slab of meat on a plate and pray to hell that the table is plied with enough wine to make a mediocre meal go unnoticed — not to mention the cheque that will leave everyone choking. Who knew McMillan’s last act of seasoning would be salting the earth as he turned the sign over to Closed?

Tim Hecker, “Winter’s Coming,” *The North Water* (Original Score) (Lakeshore Records)

Speaking of restaurants, it’s weird that “going back to normal” for most people means being able to dine out — or at least order in — rather than having to cook and clean for our own lazy selves. It’s no wonder that nobody wants to work for minimum wage in one of the hardest jobs that exists. I helped out washing dishes in a friend’s restaurant this past summer and lasted precisely two shifts. It’s backbreaking labour.

The pandemic has exposed another of capitalism’s little cracks: more than a service industry, an industry of servitude. Walking by, all the chic restaurants are busy. You’d never know there had just been a pandemic or something, other than the masked staff, the ubiquitous barcodes and the plexiglass dividers that we’re now being told probably made things worse.

We’ve not yet begun processing the trauma of what just happened. And I get the impetus behind going out for a meal. It’s nice to be served. It’s nice to feel like someone is taking care of you, someone who cares. That’s normal. But everyone who’s worked in the service industry knows that you can’t care about everyone. Especially after *that*.

More than other kinds of cultural events, like sports or live music, dining out has taken a turn for the absurd, post-COVID — it’s become explicitly aristocratic. Unless you’re travelling or dating, and with labour shortages, food prices and winter’s imminent onset, there’s every reason to brush up on your cooking skills while hunkered down safely at home. Serve yourself.

Huerco S., “Plonk IV,” *Plonk* (Incienso)

Has anyone else noticed the current trend, started well before 2020 but now in full swing, of electronic music that, for lack of a more convenient descriptor, sounds “plonky”? I’m thinking of the break in Oneohtrix Point Never’s “I Bite Through It,” reminiscent of Spacetime Continuum’s “Kairo,” or even further back to Stanley Jordan. More recently, there’s

the debut record from Orange Milk boss, *Giant Claw*, which sounds like a basketball bouncing through the entire DX-7 preset catalogue. And now this.

Zvrra, “Array of Light 01,” *Array of Light* (Whited Sepulchre)

“Every time a culture gets into trouble, it casts itself back in the past, looking for the last sane moment it ever knew. And the last sane moment we ever knew was on the plains of Africa 15,000 years ago, rocked in the cradle of the great horned mushroom goddess. Before history. Before standing armies and slavey and property. Before warfare and phonetic alphabets and monotheism...

This is where the future is taking us...

The secret faith of the 20th century is nostalgia for the archaic.”
—Terence McKenna

Roger Tellier-Craig, “Horizons pavés” single (self-released)

I recently took a ride on Old Montreal’s big wheel — up and down 60 meters, three times around. I’d never been on it before, believing it a bit cheesy, too touristy. But it was good fun, to be frank. The view from up there is spectacular in every direction.

It was raining the day I went, so there was nobody else there. I had not only the cabin but the entire wheel to myself. I tried my best to identify the exact moment at the top when it was neither ascending nor descending, the pinnacle, as high as it gets.

It’s a strange sensation going up and immediately going down and for a moment not really being sure which is which. Of course I got vertigo from the whole experience and had to have a lie-down afterward, but if you’ve got stronger inner ears than I do, it’s worth a spin.

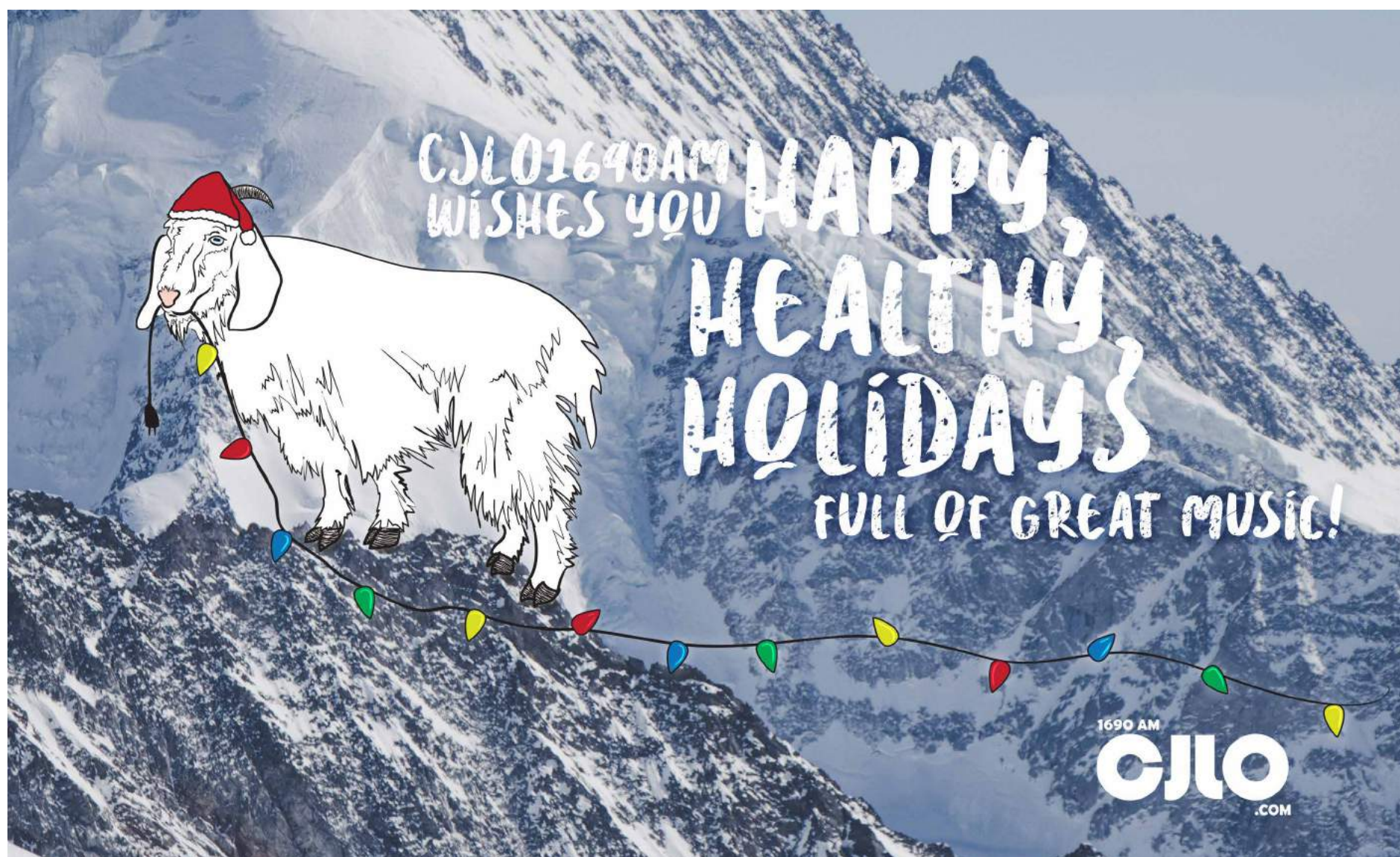
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