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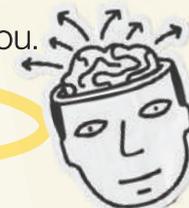
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# table of contents



Channelling Film Noir, sending the Batmobile into actual fire and undercutting digital with analogue, filmmaker Matt Reeves told us about how *The Batman* is his love letter to the movies.

Photo courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures Canada

<b>city</b>	<b>6</b>
The Habs and the trade deadline	6
:the 1st half	10
:best buds	12
<b>food &amp; drink</b>	<b>14</b>
Willow Inn	14
<b>music</b>	<b>16</b>
Squid	20
Sook-Yin Lee	20
:hammer of the mods	22
<b>film</b>	<b>24</b>
<i>The Batman</i>	24
On Screen	26
<b>arts</b>	<b>28</b>
Rawi Hage	28
:play recent	30

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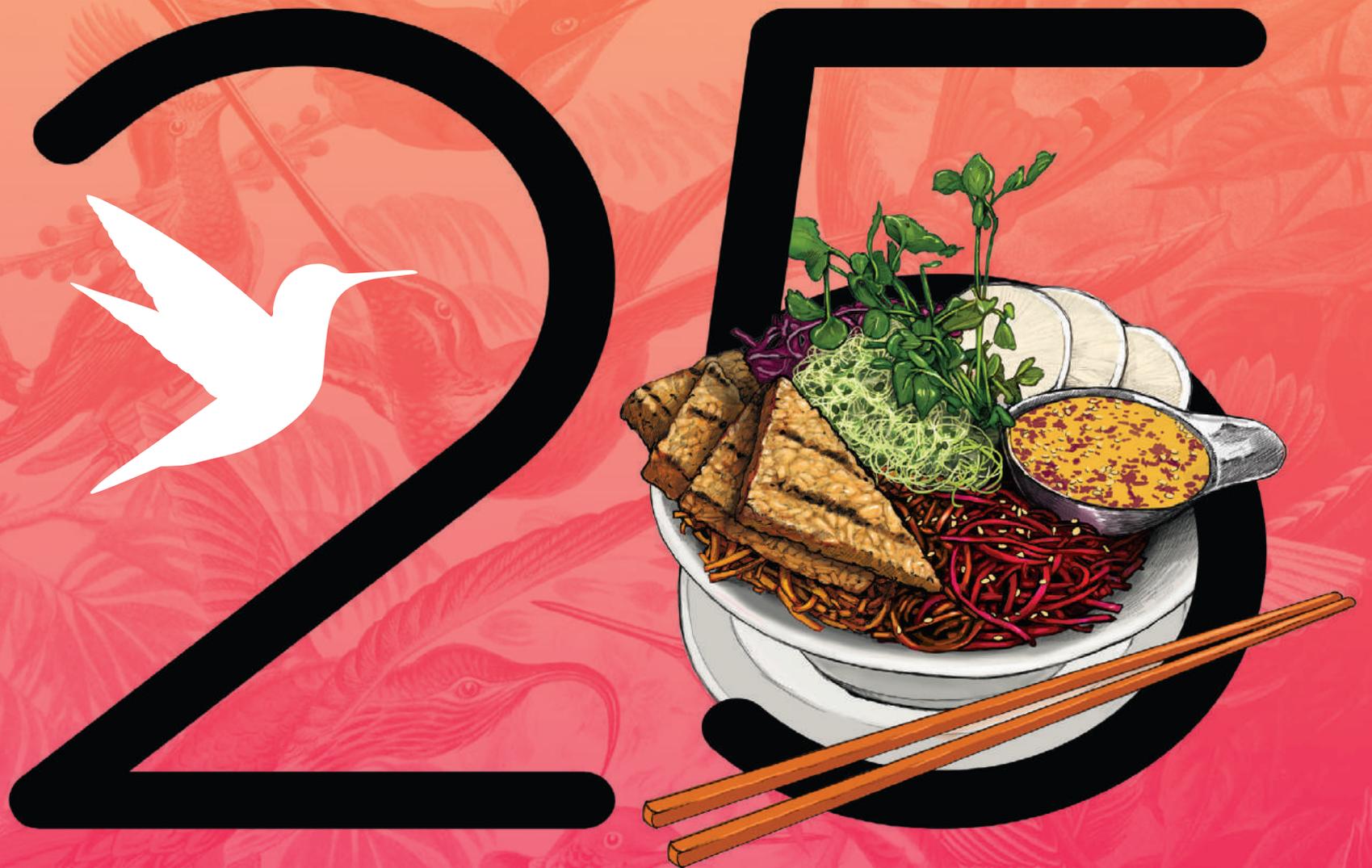
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## Which Habs are heading out?



Jeff Gorton, Martin St. Louis, Kent Hughes, Chantal Machabée

BY DAVE MACINTYRE

The NHL Trade Deadline will be upon us at 3 p.m. EST on March 21, and GMs' phone lines are sure to be lighting up very soon.

For the Montreal Canadiens, this will be the first true opportunity for new hockey ops VP Jeff Gorton and GM Kent Hughes to build the team in their image. Given that the Habs — despite being on a fantastic run of form after hiring Martin St. Louis as interim head coach — will be sellers at the deadline, expect that some veteran players may get shipped out of town in exchange for prospects and/or draft picks ahead of the 2022 NHL Entry Draft, to be held at the Bell Centre. The ball has already begun rolling, with Tyler Toffoli recently being traded to the Calgary Flames — proof that Gorton and Hughes aren't afraid of trading fan favourites to acquire pieces for the long-term.

Though bigger-name veterans like Carey Price (who has still yet to return to play) and Brendan Gallagher are unlikely to be moved before the deadline, several others are actively being courted by other NHL clubs and could very well go from a basement team in Montreal to a Cup contender elsewhere on deadline day. Here are a few current Habs who should consider packing their bags before the 21st.

### Ben Chiarot

Currently occupying second place on TSN's Trade Bait Board behind only Jakob Chychrun of the Arizona Coyotes, Ben Chiarot is perhaps the most likely piece of the 2021

Cup Final team to get moved next. Even a cursory glance at Habs Twitter will show some fans tweeting "Today's a great day to trade Ben Chiarot" every single day. Though he's a reliable if non-flashy defenseman, players of Chiarot's calibre are coveted at the trade deadline, and teams such as the Calgary Flames, Boston Bruins, Toronto Maple Leafs and St. Louis Blues are rumoured to be interested in his services.

### Artturi Lehkonen

Though many Habs fans don't want to see him go, Lehkonen is perhaps one of the best trade chips the team currently has in their arsenal — and chances are, his value will never be higher. At 26 years of age, the Finn is unquestionably the Habs' best defensive forward following Phillip Danault's departure last summer, and would be a boon for any team's bottom six. A first rounder plus other assets (including a B-level prospect) is a possible deadline day return for Lehkonen, one of the Habs' best penalty killers and hardest-working players — not to mention a proven playoff scorer, having potted the goal against Vegas that sent the team to last year's Stanley Cup Final.

### Jeff Petry

It doesn't take a hockey expert to see just how poor Jeff Petry's play has been this season. Sure, the fact that his wife and children have left Quebec to return to the U.S. because of the province's harsh COVID restrictions is a definite factor, but his play has looked lifeless and haphazard almost all season — or at least the whole time Dominique Ducharme was still head coach. Though he seems energized to play under St. Louis, he remains a key trade piece leading up to

the deadline, and teams looking for a veteran d-man who can help run their power play unit will have interest. The Dallas Stars and Philadelphia Flyers have both been linked to Petry in recent weeks.

### Mike Hoffman

Though Hoffman has mostly been a positive for the team as far as contributing goals on the power play (a source of consistent struggle for the Habs ever since Andrei Markov's departure), there is little point in keeping the 32-year-old Kitchener native beyond this season with a possible rebuild on the horizon in Montreal. His \$4.5-million cap hit may be hard for other clubs to swallow without any salary retained, but he'd nonetheless be a strong pickup for any playoff team looking to bolster their scoring. He'd also be one of the easier big contracts to move compared with Joel Armia, who has struggled to live up to the \$3.4-million AAV that former GM Marc Bergevin signed him to until 2025.

### Jake Allen

Remember when the Habs protected Allen for the Seattle expansion draft and risked losing Carey Price for nothing? That feels like a distant memory now, with both goalies being injured for much of this entire season. Though when or whether Price will return to play remains unclear, Allen — who's out injured until mid-March — has become more expendable than we thought given the recent strong run of form by Samuel Montembeault. The 25-year-old Bécancour native has been making a case for a permanent job as the Habs' backup, which could make Allen an appealing trade chip for teams lacking punch between the pipes. The Edmonton Oilers in particular could be a fit for him.

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# :the 1st half



BY PAUL DESBAILLETS

March is a time when we should be starting to think Spring-like thoughts with heaps of optimism and excitement for what is to come.

The city is moving further and further away from the past two years worth of lockdowns, curfews, too many rules to count and small business beat-downs. We should be talking about exciting things in the world of football, like Team Canada's rise in the world ranking and being on the verge of qualifying for the 2022 World Cup, Chelsea FC winning the FIFA Club World Cup, Liverpool FC winning the Carabao Cup, the new 2022–23 MLS & CFM season that kicked off a few days ago, but we will not talk about that.

Everything that I would normally want to put in this piece seems quite trivial compared with what is actually happening in the world right now.

Last week, the world got flipped upside down once again with Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and the world of football has stepped up to support peace and love in these trying times.

In response to the aggression in Eastern Europe, the 2022 Champions League will finally be played in Paris after UEFA, European football's governing body, moved the match away from St. Petersburg.

FIFA has announced that they have suspended all Russian men and women's teams from international competition.

"Following the initial decisions adopted by the FIFA Council and the UEFA Executive Committee, FIFA and UEFA have today decided together that all Russian teams, whether national representative teams or club teams, shall be suspended from participation in both FIFA and UEFA competitions until further notice." — FIFA

Poland will boycott their World Cup playoff against Russia because of the invasion of Ukraine, with captain Robert Lewandowski saying, "We can't pretend that nothing is happening." The Polish football association president Cezary Kulesza has said the team "does not intend" to play the game.

UEFA ordered Russian and Ukrainian clubs and national teams to play their home matches away from the region "until further notice," so that means neutral ground. UEFA is ending its major £30m-a-year sponsorship deal with Russian state-run gas giant Gazprom. Manchester United

have terminated their sponsorship deal with Russia's national airline Aeroflot. On Thursday, football clubs, players and fans showed their support for Ukraine with anti-war T-shirts and banners. England will not play any international matches against Russia at any level following the invasion.

Other sports have made moves as well: Russia's Formula 1 Grand Prix, which was due to take place in Sochi in September, is now cancelled. International Sports Federations were urged to move or cancel events currently planned in Russia or Belarus by the International Olympic Committee. The International Basketball Federation (FIBA) postponed the World Cup 2023 qualifiers involving Netherlands v Russia on Feb. 27 and Great Britain v Belarus on Feb. 28.

I hope that when we meet again in April, the subject matter, the focus of football and the world will have shifted to a more positive path forward.

Football and war have been famously linked since World War I, when there was a Christmas Day truce in 1914.

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# : best buds



BY DAVE MACINTYRE

This month, I went from one *Up in Smoke* movie to another. No, not of the Cheech & Chong variety. Instead, I decided to watch a concert film, and may or may not have been inspired by a recent Super Bowl halftime show. Yes, I'm referring to the 2000 documentary film about Dr. Dre and Snoop Dogg's *Up in Smoke* tour, alongside Ice Cube and a rapidly rising Eminem. Let's just say a lot of other wild stuff goes down offstage in that doc, too.

For this viewing, I decided to go with Grand Prix GG4 from Montreal's own Great White North Growers. It undoubtedly packs a punch at 21.7% THC, but it neither knocks you out nor keeps you awake too long.

Though I often consider weed to enhance my music-listening experience, doing it in the context of a rap tour from more than two decades ago — and a relic of its time as a whole — was uncharted territory for me. As the late Nate Dogg said, hope you're ready for the next episode. (Heyyyyyy..... smoke weed every day!)

HYBRID: SUN FICTION GRAND PRIX GG4

This strain gives you a smooth, pleasant head high, even if it's a mercurial one. Perhaps I didn't smoke enough of it at once, but I felt as if the high — enjoyable as it was — dissipated faster than I would've wanted. It's indica-dominant, so it likely won't provide you with any sort of energy boost, but it will nonetheless put you in a good mood. That said, I would've preferred to have not had to go outside to smoke multiple times to ensure lasting highs. While it loses a point based on staying power (though that may also be an indictment of my own weed tolerance), and its bright-coloured buds are dry, it nonetheless boasts an earthy aroma. This is a solid batch of chronic.

The documentary film, meanwhile, wasn't much of a documentary at all. It was essentially just a compilation of footage from the *Up in Smoke* Tour, starting with performances from Ice Cube, then Slim Shady, then Snoop

and Dre. The latter two's sets, of course, are preempted by a very rehearsed video of them being accompanied by several naked ladies in a hotel room, as one does upon reaching legendary rapper status. My girlfriend sat next to me for the duration of the viewing and enjoyed the documentary, despite being neither high nor even a weed fan herself.

Ironically enough, the hotel liaison scene with Dre and Snoop was pretty tame as far as the kind of footage they put on tape here. Sadly, we must always remind ourselves that some of these videos are products of their era: casual homophobia ran rampant in some rap lyrics (Eminem's in particular), and the sheer magnitude of female nudity in the crowd shown toward the end of the film — flashing a litany of bare breasts, one bare vagina and at least one sex act — was shown almost every other second during one of the songs. Geez Dre, I know weed can make you horny, but this viewing experience basically turned into a *Girls Gone Wild* special.

Anyways, there you have it. What I thought would be a straightforward rap concert documentary turned into a softcore porn video by the time it was over. Though the weed I smoked was indeed strong and satisfying, the doc felt haphazardly edited and not as insightful into their experience as a tour featuring such pillars of rap music history deserves, even by Y2K standards. At least the highs the Grand Prix gave me probably would get both Snoop and Dre's stamps of approval.

The weed: 8.5/10  
The movie: 6/10

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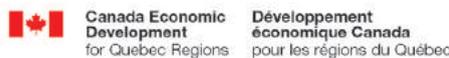
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# food

## Unpretentious and urbane



Virginie Gosselin



BY CLAY SANDHU

“It’s somewhere between Norm’s and St. John,” says Danny Smiles, describing the direction of the menu at the Willow Inn in Hudson since he took over running the restaurant roughly a year ago.

The St. John that Danny is referring to is none other than Fergus Henderson’s London Institution famed for his signature style of nose-to-tail cooking and for unpretentious and uncomplicated British fare. Norm’s, which is a reference to another great, albeit less storied eatery — Norman’s Café — takes the level of pretension down even further. It’s a bare-bones London shop known for beans on toast and unfussy fry-ups. The red thread that runs through all three restaurants is an appreciation of ingredients, simplified cooking and an innate British austerity.

For people familiar with Danny’s cooking, British food isn’t likely what comes to mind. Danny built his reputation on the back of le Bremner’s seafood, pasta and clever (if slightly esoteric) composed plates. Le Bremner, in a lot of ways, was emblematic of a certain style of Montreal cuisine — rooted in old-world European (read: French and Italian) technique but free to be playful and iconoclastic.

The 200-year-old Willow Inn, however, is something entirely different. A few years back, the Willow Inn underwent a major renovation. Owners Patricia and David Ades brought in interior designer Sophie Fidler to bring the rooms into the present era, all while retaining the hotel’s British charm and patina. Danny, for his part, is trying to do the same from within the kitchen.

A few Sundays back, I took the scenic drive from my apartment in the Plateau to the black and white manor on the shores of the Ottawa River. The Willow has launched a beautiful and delicious-looking brunch menu, but when I went, the daytime weekend offering was built for lunch. The Willow Inn is located just on the outskirts of Hudson’s town centre and sits on a beautiful piece of waterfront land that backs onto the river with views of the Lake of Two Mountains. It takes about 45 minutes to get out that way, but as you drive down the country roads lined with old-growth trees and picture-perfect English cottages, you feel a lot further away from the city.

I arrived at the inn on a particularly frigid but blue-skied winter day. I really can’t say this enough: the region is absolutely bucolic. Though I can easily imagine the Inn with its tidy garden and beautifully manicured grounds in the spring and summer, the property looks serene under a blanket of freshly fallen snow. There’s a very welcome traditional aspect of the hotel, it’s not trendy or cutting edge, it’s restrained and intentional, and most importantly it’s a reflection on its time and place. I can’t help but think, “Is this really the uptight traditional restaurant style we’ve been rebelling against all this time?” Maybe we got it all wrong. The guest experience at the Willow is imprinted with traditional English elegance from the moment one enters the bakehouse-green reception accented with classic William Morris wallpaper. A friend of mine got married at an estate in England that was rumoured to have once been Winston Churchill’s summer home — the Willow embodies that kind of Britishness.

The restaurant is divided into three adjoining yet distinct dining areas. One arrives in what is known as the taproom, which is essentially the bar and a few two-top tables. To the left of the taproom is a welcoming seating area with comfortable-looking tufted banquettes and robust pub

tables. Opposite that and toward the back of the restaurant is the primary dining room with its massive panoramic window that looks out over the Lake of Two Mountains. The dining room is spacious and inviting, arranged around an ancient stone hearth. At the centre of the room is a table set for eight under which an ornate Turkish rug has been laid. Seated at my beautiful table set with fresh tulips and a view of the frozen lake, I could hardly think of anywhere else I’d rather be.

The menu is simple and straightforward: four starters, four mains, two desserts and a handful of snacks. We ordered a half-dozen oysters to begin with. They arrived perfectly shucked and with the typical accoutrements. Danny mentioned that they go through more oysters at the Willow than they ever did at Bremner, a number that seems nearly impossible until you look around the dining room and see at least a half dozen oysters on every other table. We also ordered a few devilled eggs topped with plump Cantabrico anchovies — they were absolutely delicious.

Moving on, we ordered bowls of clam chowder. The creamy soup was served in a wide and shallow bowl and was full of plump steamer clams, rounds of fingerling potatoes and finely diced mirepoix. It was unctuous the way a good chowder should be, but overall light and refined — a coastal classic done right. We mopped up the dregs of the bowls with a few slices of well-buttered sourdough bread from Hof Kelsten. Following the chowder was a mound of bright purple treviso, dressed with a vibrant vinaigrette with flecks of orange zest, chives and parsley. I’m a sucker for bitter lettuces but I’m confident in saying it was a lovely salad suitable for any palate and a refreshing way to transition to our main courses.

—My date went for a lovely sounding leek and potato tart topped with Piave, a nutty cow’s milk cheese from northern

Italy that falls somewhere between aged cheddar and parmesan. I, on the other hand, got the fish and chips. It's worth noting that nowhere on the menu is fish and chips written — the menu is too urbane for that and instead lists the dish under the name Fried Newfoundland Cod. The leek and potato tart, roughly six inches in diameter, was understated but nonetheless refined. Its light and flaky pastry gives way to a rich and generous filling that is offset by the sharp bite of the Piave and the acidity of a few pickled mustard seeds. It's the perfect dish for a lighter lunch.

The fried cod — well that was a revelation. A single (yet substantial) piece of golden fried fish finished with a pinch of Maldon salt was served with a tight quenelle of smash peas, a bit of lemon and an excellent tartar sauce chock full of capers and cornichons, just the way I like it. This fish was absolutely exquisite. It's rare, and slightly paradoxical, that an order of fish and chips is more about the fish than the frying. How many of us think of heavily battered pieces of fried haddock in a grease-saturated cone of newspapers when we think of fish and chips? It's not to say there isn't a place for that, but it's a gut buster that is more about eating something fried than eating a quality piece of fish.

At the Willow, the fish is in a light, pale golden batter — more like tempura than a proper beer batter. It's decidedly crisp and devoid of any pooling grease, which suggests it had a bit of time to properly rest on a cooling rack after leaving the fryer and landing on the plate. The cod is perfectly cooked, flaking in an attractive and satisfying way. It's worth keeping in



mind that Newfoundland cod has been fished to near extinction, it's only recently that this prized fish, thanks to the work of restorative and sustainable fishing practices has made the fish available again to consumers. To put it in fish and chips is almost like putting wagyu beef in a burger or truffles on mac and cheese — it risks being a complete waste of the product. Fortunately, that's far from the case here, the fish is treated with respect and the frying only adds a textural element to a wonderfully cooked and delicious piece of fish. The chips, which I neglected to mention before, came served in a side bowl along with a bottle of Sarson's malt vinegar — only the best at the Willow. They were very good fries; cut thick with the skins on and fried until they reached a deep shade of golden brown. Just the kind of fry you'd want with your fish and chips. I washed the lot down with a perfectly poured pint of Guinness. For me, the meal was absolute perfection.

Anyone who knows me knows that my favourite meal is lunch, and a vacation lunch — well that's the top. There's a real romance to spending a few hours in the afternoon enjoying beautiful, simple food in a nice environment with people you love. My lunch at the Willow Inn perfectly captured that feeling while being less than an hour from my front door. After such a long time away from restaurants, it was this lunch that reminded me why I value going out to eat so much and that I don't need to travel half-way around the world to get it. If you're looking to escape the city and to enjoy one of the best meals served anywhere on or off the Island of Montreal, I can't recommend the Willow Inn more highly.

→ The Willow Inn is open Thursday to Saturday for lunch and dinner and from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday for brunch.

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# music

## Squid game



Squid

Holly Whitaker

BY STEPHAN BOISSONNEAULT

Life imitates art ... or is it art imitates life? Whichever version of the phrase you fancy, the sentiment could not ring any more true for English krautpunks Squid and their summer 2021 debut LP *Bright Green Field*.

A song like the post-punk burner “Global Groove,” which is really about societal complacency and 9/11, just hits harder with what’s going on in Eastern Europe today. The members of Squid never set out to make an album parallel to international crises, but with music like this, context truly is everything—and with the post-apocalyptic vibe of 2020–2021 and a potential World War 3 knocking on Europe’s door, Squid’s sound has a ton to work with.

“It’s strange how (“Global Groove”) kind of fits the paranoid times of this exact moment,” says drummer and lead vocalist Ollie Judge from his girlfriend’s flat in London, U.K.

Judge is inspired by all media, but when he’s working on lyrics, his love of science and experimental fiction always seems to trickle in. Just take the song “G.S.K.,” a brutalist dystopian krautrock stab that references J.G. Ballard’s *Concrete Island*, a 1974 book where a man is marooned on a dreary slab of land between highways. Judge modernizes

this situation, incorporating it into his nightly bus routine, while the music seems agitated with truncated guitar lines and booming bass. It’s a viciously anxious track, and perfectly conveys Squid’s documentarian composition style.

“With sci-fi, the line is totally blurred now,” Judge says. “You can take a J.G. Ballard book and it almost seems real. I find that if it’s a really good book, quotes or themes stick with you and for me, it always seems to be the dystopian-type stuff.”

This paranoid aura is prevalent in most of Squid’s music as Judge, who handles 90% of the lyrics, shout-sings in a sweaty, almost satirical refrain while a whirlwind of frenetic guitars, sawtooth synths and the occasional darkened horn flurry slowly consume. Sometimes it lasts four minutes, sometimes nearly nine.

Judge’s shout-sing vocal style is one of the core components that makes Squid sound like Squid, but it only happened by accident. Before they reached international acclaim, Squid was playing a show when Judge’s microphone was off for almost the entire show.

“I just started screaming the lyrics and it stuck. It’s funny because anyone who knows me knows that it’s the exact opposite of me. But it’s nice to get on stage and scream for an hour. So I guess it’s kind of like free therapy,” he says.

Still, Judge says the next Squid album will be “mellow” and quite different from *Bright Green Field*.

“It’s got a lot more range, but yeah I guess I kind of got tired of the screaming and shouting. I think there’s a lot more melodic stuff coming. There are obviously the classic, intense Squid seven-minute songs in there but there’s a lot of them we have even been scoring with woodwind instruments. It’s actually quite a hopeful record, which is quite nice.”

Squid’s upcoming tour will be the first time the band has played in Canada and Judge is eagerly awaiting being able to breathe in a new music scene.

“We did America last year and it was kind of a baptism by fire,” he says. “When you tour in the U.K. or Europe, the biggest drive you have to do is like five or six hours, and in America, that doesn’t happen. It’s like 12 hours.

Just wait until he experiences touring in Canada, where it sometimes takes a few days to get out of a province.

“I think we’re primed and ready and know what to expect,” he laughs. “You know, we know which kinds of snacks not to get.”

→ Squid perform with openers Deliluh at Bar le Ritz PDB (179 Jean-Talon W.) on Saturday, March 19, 7:30 p.m. sharp, \$33.79



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# Can-alt queen

BY DAVE MACINTYRE

For the past quarter century and counting, Sook-Yin Lee has evolved into one of the country's most iconic voices in alternative culture. Readers may recognize her from her days as a MuchMusic VJ from 1995 to 2001, where she established herself as host of *The Wedge*, the station's flagship alternative music program.

She'd take her career to even greater heights after leaving, not only continuing her broadcasting career at CBC Radio but trying her hand in film, both as an actress and director. To date, her filmography includes 2006's *Shortbus*, 2009's *Year of the Carnivore*, and a role on the 2013 CBC TV movie *Jack*, as Jack Layton's widow Olivia Chow.

Locally, the Vancouver native has performed in Montreal since her high school years as frontwoman of Bob's Your Uncle, as well as screening several of her films, including debut *Escapades of the One Particular Mr. Noodle* and most recent film *Octavio Is Dead!*, the latter of which was shown at the 2018 Image+nation festival.

As much as she's worn an abundance of hats over the years, music has always remained a part of Lee's career. She and her late former musical and romantic partner, Adam Litovitz, recorded and released two albums together as jooj before Litovitz's death in June 2019. Lee would eventually complete the album, titled *jooj two*, which she released in April of last year. Though COVID restrictions have made it challenging to promote the LP on tour, Lee will be returning to Montreal on March 18 to perform at the Diving Bell, alongside openers Joni Void and Benjamin Kamino.

Lee has also kept herself busy during quarantine, having made a feature film, *Death and Sickness*, with musician Dylan Gamble (of Hot Garbage), released in late 2020. The film was conceived while the two were spending lockdown together. She and Gamble are also releasing a documentary film on March 16 as part of Toronto's Wavelength Winter Festival, with another feature film expected to be ready by year's end.

We caught up with Lee to ask — among other things we were bummed to have to cut — about her upcoming projects, prior experiences playing in Montreal and a chance encounter with a rock legend after stumbling into the wrong bathroom.

Dave MacIntyre: How's the pandemic been treating you?

Sook-Yin Lee: I was just going through photos for the last few years and I was like, "Wow, it's been a long time!" (laughs) It's so weird. It feels like time collapses. I can't believe how much time has passed. At the beginning, the pandemic was, for me, a relief in some regards. Life was really intense for me. On a personal level, it was almost like there was a crazy rat race, and I was one of the many, many rats scurrying along, and then suddenly it was a timeout... When I worked at CBC, I'd do some social experiments. One of them was like, "What happens when you pause?" My friend, Nick, stood on the side of a busy street, very still. People just thought he was a freak, like, "What's up with the dude who's not moving?" There's something that is inherently strange when things stop. In this case, it wasn't just an individual — everyone had to stop.

It was horrifying to see what was going on with the pandemic, the death count, and people getting sick. It was quite scary. But at the same time, with everybody stopping at once, it was kind of us having to reflect on our lives en masse. I'm both extroverted and also really introverted, so I just turned to work. I find that this period of time in the world is very exciting



Sook-Yin Lee

Dylan Gambl

to me. There's a lot of fantastic and harrowing collisions of social, political, all kinds of technical trends colliding—a lot of dissent and conflict. These are great times to be making art. Really, it gave me an opportunity to observe the world, observe myself, and translate it into art-making.

DM: You're coming to Montreal soon to perform a show at the Diving Bell on March 18. How are you feeling leading up to it?

SYL: I'm very excited. The music that I'm going to be playing was with Adam Litovitz, who I was with for many years, and we made lots of wonderful things together. He passed away in 2019, and it really threw my life for a loop. We had been working on our last album (*jooj two*) together. It was something we were really, really excited about. When he passed, I knew I wanted to finish it. It was about 80% done. It had to be mixed, and needed a couple more songs to be brought together... I was able to complete the album in a manner that I think Adam would've loved.

I'm very proud of the album. It makes me happy to be able to share the music. When I hear him playing the piano or the guitar, his spirit is evoked for me. Art has the ability to share experience and human spirit, so it makes me very happy to play that music. I've done one show (for the album), as there was a brief window where I was able to play a show in Toronto when restrictions were let down. That was just before Omicron hit. We were so happy. The place was entirely full. Everybody had to show their vaccine status, so it was safe. But it was full and warm. I wasn't sure how I'd be able to play the songs without him, and yet, I was able to do so. I had a light that signified him on stage, and I felt him with me. It was a beautiful show, and made me want to share the music more.

DM: For sure! How many times have you been to Montreal before?

SYL: I've been to Montreal quite a bit! In my first band Bob's Your Uncle, when I was a teenager, we were one of the few Vancouver bands that would get out of the city. We toured Canada numerous times in an old Ford Blue Bird bus. It was an old 39-seater bus that we found in a junkyard. Our friend, who's a manic mechanic, fixed it up, and we would tour. I very fondly remember coming into Montreal and playing places like Founounes Electriques. I don't know if they're still around.

DM: Yep, they're still around!

SYL: Oh my God, that's amazing! We were a freaky band, like a travelling circus sideshow. We were immediately so well-loved in Montreal. I remember parking the bus on St-Laurent and bringing our stuff upstairs. It was on the second floor of a club on St-Laurent doing our thing, and people were super stoked beyond belief. There were so many beautiful people in the audience! (laughs) They would then have a DJ play afterwards, and everyone would dance like crazy. The DJ would be so innovative, and would be playing everything from cutting edge experimental electronic music, right beside an old Edith Piaf song.

To me, it was like, "that is so cool." One of our bandmates, Peter Lizotte, who's from Quebec and loved to go back there, would show me all of the junk food that was so key to Québécois culture. The submarine sandwiches' buns are beautifully fried — so much better than the doughy ones you get outside of Quebec! (laughs) There's a lot to love (about Montreal), and I really appreciated that. I also opened for Nick Cave in Montreal at the Spectrum when it was still around. I remember we were doing soundcheck, and I went to the bathroom. I accidentally walked into the men's bathroom, and there was Nick Cave walking out of his stall. I guess he had a BM! (laughs) He didn't bat an eye, he was just like, "Hello!" He was very gracious and nice, and he was happily sharing his bathroom with me.

DM: As far as for your upcoming show at the Diving Bell, what can fans in Montreal expect from the live show you'll be putting on there, without giving too much away?

SYL: I've only performed these songs once, and I perform it with all my heart. I think they can expect that. It's going to be very special. I feel so happy about the musicians who are playing with me, Joni Void and Benjamin Kamino. I've never met (Joni) face-to-face, but he's very much a gem when we communicate online. With the restrictions coming down, it's still so volatile. I think a lot of it is what happens when people have been sequestered for a few years. It's one of those transitions that will require care for us to open up again. Some people won't be ready to open up again, or won't want to. I hope that we can create a space that feels good, warm, inviting, safe and also exciting.

DM: What are your plans for the rest of 2022?

SYL: Right now, I'm finishing up this documentary that will be released as part of the Wavelength (Winter Festival's) Speaker Series. It's an amazing series. Buffy Sainte-Marie, Beverly-Glenn Copeland, Maylee Todd, myself, Dylan and Casey Mecija. We're all speaking on the subject of community care. I think Buffy Sainte-Marie is doing the big opening speech. Every week, a new person comes up. So I imagine that Maylee Todd will probably be doing a recorded live performance. When they asked me to do it, I had just done a recorded live performance in the backyard the previous month, so I pitched the idea of making a documentary film based upon this theme. Dylan and I are making it together. I'm piecing it together, I really love it. It's very playful, but also deep, and goes through highs and lows. and there's a lot of funny storytelling in it, as well. We'll be sharing that on March 16.

I'm also finishing a feature movie. *Death and Sickness* was a very scrappy movie, shot on cell phones and my little handycams and stuff like that — I edited the whole thing on iMovie. I was able to license it, and from that licensing money, we ended up buying a much nicer camera. So this one is, again, a very DIY adventure. Dylan and I are playing most of the roles. We have some of our friends also playing parts in the movie and it looks great, and it's entirely fictional. I hope to have that finished by the end of the year.

→ Sook-Yin Lee performs at the Diving Bell Social Club (3956 St-Laurent) on Friday, March 18, 8 p.m. sharp, \$18.80

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# :hammer of the mods

BY JOHNSON CUMMINS

It's with a heavy heart that I start off this column by talking about Sadies guitarist Dallas Good, who passed on to the next world on Feb. 17 at the much too young age of 48.

I first met Dallas when he was 12 at his parents' house in Newmarket, back in the '80s. I was a bandmate with his brother and future Sadie Travis at the time and Travis was able to put me up during my couch-surfing summer. Seeing how we were the ripe old age of 20, we would give a good ribbing to the young Dallas about his first baby steps into punk (Exploited? Really?). Dallas became far cooler than an Exploited fan in the years that followed but always remained all eyes, tending to let other people in the room shine. All of my heart goes out to his wife, family and bandmates. Truly one of the great ones! If you never got a chance to see one of Canada's greatest live bands, get on YouTube right now.

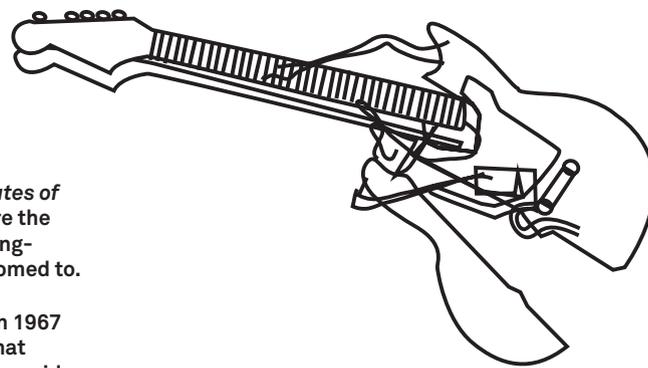
Being re-released this month is one of psych's greatest masterworks, and finally in the form it

always deserved: mono! Pink Floyd's *Piper at the Gates of Dawn* will be hitting the record racks and will feature the mixes the band really wanted you to hear, not the ping-ponging stereo mix most of us have become accustomed to.

Recorded at the same time as *Sgt Pepper's* at BBC in 1967 while London was still swinging, this is the record that had leader Syd Barrett well in control, just before the acid grabbed a bit too much of a firm hold. The engineer on *Piper at the Gates of Dawn*, Norman Smith, is nothing short of a genius, but even when he was forced to try his hand in the unknown stereo field, he definitely lost his footing. Most engineers who had been steeped in mono for decades simply didn't know how to make stereo work.

As a general rule of thumb, mono editions of records recorded in or prior to 1967 have always been the mixes to get. Mono mixes were slavishly concentrated on while the stereo mixes, a "gimmick" format, were tossed off slap-dash. Band members were present for the mono mixes as that was what most people would be hearing, and creative input was at a zenith. Stereo mixes were created with exaggerated stereo spectrum and used almost as demonstration records for brand new playback systems that would be utilizing stereo. If you've listened to pre-'67 Beatles stereo records, you can hear that songs don't really punch enough, with the main meat of songs getting lost in a wash.

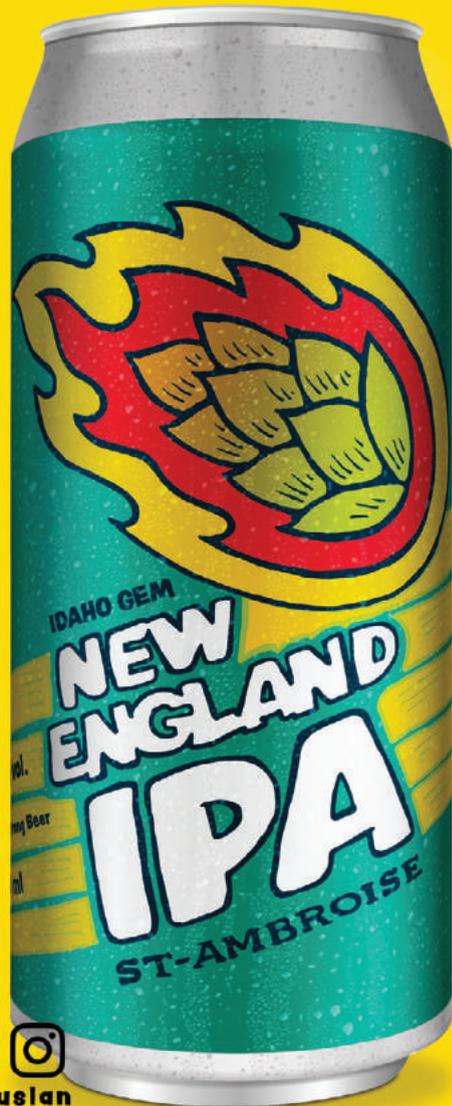
I did manage to scoop up the 2007 mono edition book/CD of *Piper at the Gates of Dawn* years ago, but this new



remastering absolutely pummels it. Syd Barret's infatuation with whimsy-land *Canterbury Tales* shoot directly to the forefront. Despite the well-intentioned stereo version, this mono version turns up the psych with the more experimental sounds being pushed up on the fader.

I love Pink Floyd (at least up to *Dark Side of the Moon*), but to a certain extent it was all over after their first record and Syd had relegated himself to an isolated existence with mental illness. Up there with *S.F. Sorrow* and *The July 5th Album*, this is as good as '67 psych gets — and it's in mono!

Current Obsession: Pink Floyd, *Piper at the Gates of Dawn* (mono!)  
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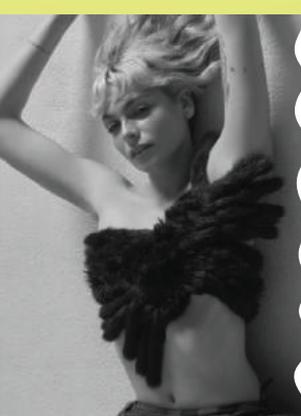
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## Light in the darkness



Jonathan Olley

*The Batman*

BY JUSTINE SMITH

Since 1939, Batman has adapted to fit his era. Born under the looming war and the aesthetics of film noir, the flawed and all-too-human superhero has transformed to reflect the moment's anxieties. Director Matt Reeves, the latest director to take on the Dark Knight, could not have predicted the darkness COVID-19 would have plunged the world into when he first accepted the project, but the paranoia of our era feels perfectly encapsulated in *The Batman*. This superhero seems to ask, "What hope is there in this dark, tormented world?"

"For me, that's Batman," Reeves explains over Zoom. "That in these dark times, that will and desire to fight gives meaning. Regardless of whether or not it will change something, you have to keep fighting."

Robert Pattinson, as Bruce Wayne/Batman, embodies this struggle. He's blinded by grief. Reeves plunges us deep in his world, foregoing hashed and rehashed origins. With his eyes painted black, like burned tears, Wayne struggles to find hope. His fear and his anger propel him to act, but one feeling from the beginning is that he's on the brink of giving up. His body language betrays a growing sense of apathy. Is the world capable of real change?

The world Reeves builds is dark, but that doesn't mean it's lifeless. "I wanted the movie to have a humanist bent to have empathy for all these characters. It's about the struggle," he says.

In creating the look and feel of the film, Reeves drew on movies and art of the past. Movies like *The French Connection* and *Chinatown* inform the textures and movements of the era. Narratively, these reference points echo a previous generation of growing paranoia and apathy reflected on the screen. Channelling those periods aesthetically lends *The Batman* a more timeless feel.

"Some digital cinema can be a bit too clean," Reeves says while explaining how he integrated elements of those films. The movie was shot digitally using the Alexa LF

with anamorphic lenses, creating a wider aspect ratio. The result often means that the camera has a shallow depth of field and mild distortion further away from the centre. The imperfections create a painterly quality that was particularly prominent in the 1960s through until the early 2000s. Reeves originally wanted to try the effect on his *Planet of the Apes* films. His VFX supervisor, Dan Lemmon (who also worked on *The Batman*), explained it would be impossible to "take all those imperfections and then shoot the digital apes."

They furthered the textured effect by taking the edited film and rendering it into film negatives. "There is this quality of the kind of analogue and digital together," Matt says. In previous films, particularly *Cloverfield* and *Let Me In*, Reeves used image noise and nature (such as snow, smoke, rain) to further obscure the image. The effect disorients and displaces the audience, creating a sense of discomfort and uncertainty. The world becomes literally clouded, the edges of the frame uncertain and flexible. It's a risky move for a major blockbuster to risk alienating your audience, but it pays off.

Another critical point of inspiration was the paintings of Edward Hopper. "It was literally in the script," Matt says. "I'll write a lot of shots, and I had this one image of the cops

moving to capture the Riddler. We see him sitting alone in the diner. It would be like *Nighthawks*." The loneliness and disillusionment of that image weigh heavily in Reeves's vision for the film. While scouting in Chicago, he even brought the crew to see the painting.

The diner was a set built by production designer (another long-time collaborator) James Chinlund. "As I was writing *Batman*, I would send him pages, and he would send me sketches and images," Reeves explains. "We had this whole dialogue about the Gothic architecture and really about trying to make our own version of Gotham so that you didn't feel like we were shooting in Chicago or London or New York."

One of the film's most impressive sequences is a rainy highway chase scene. Once again inspired by films of the past, Reeves did as much practically as he could. "Obviously, we live in a time where it's possible to do anything through CGI," he says. "I wanted everything to be as real as possible."

"There's even some stuff you probably think is CGI, but we actually did it," Reeves says. "The Batmobile is meant to intimidate. You can't drive around in the Batmobile and not be noticed, right? I had this idea," he says. "Like in a horror movie, the Batmobile could fly through fire and that would be emblematic of this *Batman*. I thought it would have to be a CGI shot." Speaking with his stunt coordinator, Rob Alonzo, and Dom Tuohy, the physical effects coordinator, they told him they could make it happen. They really drove the Batmobile through the fire; no (or very limited) CGI required.

They mounted as many possible cameras to capture the scene to create the mood. The impact is raw and visceral. When the car shakes, you feel it in the camera. "You're

feeling the water on the lens, the grit," because it's really there. There are computer effects, but he didn't want anyone to see the seams as much as possible. Reeves is insistent on the importance of not "breaking the rules of the practical world," even when using computers. The effect is seamless.

While Reeves's *Batman* privileges naturalism in many ways, the movie remains in a nightmare liminal space where anything seems possible. The subjectivity of the camera, borrowed in part by the realm of Film Noir, means that we are often seeing and hearing the world through the point of view of characters. Sound plays a tremendous role in this, for example, if "Batman gets knocked out. You're suddenly gonna be knocked out with him," Reeves explains. "We would do these very expressionistic things, and they would make sounds and put them through all kinds of different sorts of processes and distortions."

*The Batman* becomes Matt Reeves's love letter to the movies in many ways. "I wanted to do a story that felt very intimate, but also felt like a visceral experience," he says. "You can feel the sound in your body, you can feel your hair move. We want the theatrical experience to survive, and everything was about creating that big-screen experience. It's exciting to know that we're in a time where we can get back to people, going to the movies — and we hope they do."

→ *The Batman* opens in theatres on Friday, March 4



Jonathan Olley

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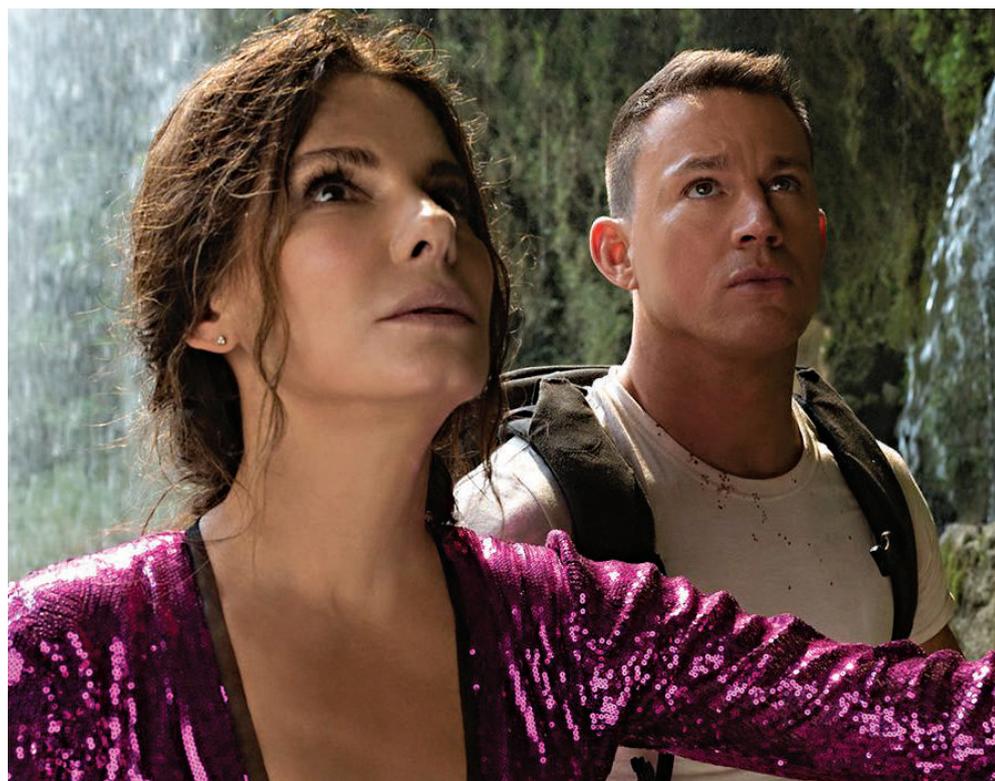
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# On Screen



X



The Lost City



Everything Everywhere All at Once



After Yang

BY JUSTINE SMITH

Robert Pattinson is *The Batman* (March 4) in this visceral and raw adaptation of the beloved comic franchise. Director Matt Reeves had huge shoes to fill, taking up the Dark Knight's mantle from Christopher Nolan and Zack Snyder. As a deranged serial killer, the Riddler terrorizes Gotham, and the Batman gets pulled into a world of crime and corruption. The film co-stars Zoë Kravitz as Catwoman, Paul Dano as the Riddler and an unrecognizable Colin Farrell as the Penguin.

Speaking of Colin Farrell, he stars in one of our most anticipated films of the year, *After Yang* (March 11). From Kogonada, director of *Columbus* (one of the best films of the past decade), *After Yang* is set in the near future as a family unit grapples with questions of love and loss while their AI helper breaks down.

For other fans of indie cinema, *Jockey* (March 4) opened

to solid reviews last Sundance and is finally hitting the big screen this spring. The great character actor Clifton Collins Jr. (*Capote* and *Star Trek*) plays an ageing jockey determined to win one last championship. However, his dream is complicated when a young rookie shows up claiming to be his son.

In the tradition of *Romancing the Stone*, Sandra Bullock and Channing Tatum star in *The Lost City* (March 25) about a reclusive romance novelist and her cover model who get lost in the jungle. Both Bullock and Tatum have great comic talents, and with a supporting cast that includes Daniel Radcliffe, Brad Pitt and Da'Vine Joy Randolph, this might be a good time at the movies.

Looking for something grittier? Why not try on Ti West's *X* (March 18). After two highly acclaimed horror films (*The House of the Devil* and *The Innkeepers*), West has fallen off the radar even among horror fans, but when the trailer for *X* dropped, it caught the attention of the internet. Starring Mia Goth, the movie is set in 1979 as a group of young filmmakers seek to make an adult film in a secluded farmhouse in rural Texas. As night falls, shit hits the fan.

If you have absolutely no interest in Batman or mainstream

superhero films, you may be interested in *Everything Everywhere All at Once* (March 25). Dubbed an anti-superhero movie, the fabulous Michelle Yeoh stars as an ageing Chinese immigrant swept up in an insane adventure where she alone can save the world by exploring other universes and connecting with the lives she could have led. Unfortunately, this lands her in an even bigger adventure when she finds herself lost in the infinite multiverse. From the directors of *Swiss Army Man* (aka the farting corpse movie starring Daniel Radcliffe), this should be a wild and original experience.

If all these movies somehow seem too big and popular for your tastes, why not see the new documentary *Jane by Charlotte* (March 18)? Inspired by Agnès Varda's film *Jane B. by Agnès V.*, about Varda's friend, the model and actress Jane Birkin, Charlotte Gainsbourg makes her own intimate film about Birkin, who happens to be her mother.

Fans of the big screen should also note that starting on the weekend of March 4, Cinéma du Parc is bringing back their Parc at Midnight screening series. This season, running March through April, includes titles like *Nightmare Alley*, *Black and White*, *Soylent Green*, *Cure*, *Shortbus*, *Wild at Heart* and *The Shining*.

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## Going to the dogs



Rawi Hage

BY MATTHEW HAYS

Since his 2006 debut novel *De Niro's Game*, Rawi Hage has penned several more, earning an array of literary prizes, critical raves and translations into 30 languages. His writing, often stories of complicated cultural identities told through magical realism, have earned him a base of loyal followers.

His latest book, *Stray Dogs* is a collection of short stories, disparate tales that are loosely connected by the author's exploration of ideas around photography. Hage keeps his readers' heads spinning as he takes us inside the heads of his varied protagonists. His dream-like style is matched by his comic moments, which often enter into the absurd. Along the way, we get analysis of Lebanon's obesity epidemic, meet a disaster prophet, peer inside the head of Mussolini's love child and Sophia Loren even makes a cameo.

Hage spoke to *Cult MTL* from his Plateau home.

Matthew Hays: *Stray Dogs* is a collection of short stories. Why did you choose the form of short stories over the novel?

Rawi Hage: I wrote some short stories during the pandemic. I noticed that a number of the stories were about photography or light, so I set out to explore ideas around that. It's a funny medium, but it's also rich, in terms of its history. It's been used for anything and everything, from wedding photography to surveillance. You can touch on so many issues: theology, the notion of light and dark, what's visible and invisible. I studied photography at Concordia, so I have some knowledge of how it developed. It's still alive, after 200 or 300 years. It's a major capitalist commodity now. There are aspects of it now that are very narcissistic. But also, when I went to Concordia, ideas around postmodernism were developing, and photography itself, the kind that claimed to hold truth, was under attack. But it also did have a huge influence; if you look at the photos from the Vietnam War, those had an impact. I remember Eugene

Smith, who went to places in the 1950s and captured the pollution destroying their communities. That diversity in my short stories reflects the diversity in photography. I could have continued writing about it.

MH: And you have a background as a photographer yourself.

RH: Yes, I worked as a wedding photographer as well. When I finished my degree, I couldn't find a job so I did that. I experienced that side of it, which was very ugly, very kitsch, very brutal. It was abusive. I did fashion shows and was an assistant photographer at the time — you had to carry a lot of heavy equipment. I liked the dark room, because it was very contemplative. I have a history with photography. I can write about that era now because it's no longer contested in the academic discourse. Now I can write about it as nostalgic, historic fact.

MH: The title again makes reference to dogs, something that comes up in your work repeatedly.

RH: There was a dogs massacre in my first novel. There are always dogs, I don't know why. I have a fear of dogs. I'm trying to deal with it. It seems like a recurring theme. I finally faced it and called the book *Stray Dogs*. One of the stories is about people who photograph dogs. Also, most of the characters are like stray dogs, always on the move, living in the margins, unsettled. I thought I'd call the book *Stray Dogs*. Maybe I should have called it *The Duplicate*. It was between those two.

MH: Are you over your fear of dogs now?

RH: Yeah, more and more. I watched a few reality shows on dogs and how to train them and it made more sense to me. I'm less fearful than I was before. It's a language I didn't comprehend but now I understand.

MH: In interviews, you've said that artists and writers often see themselves as spokespeople for communities. And here we are: many see you as representative of Lebanon. Are you comfortable with that?

RH: I'm comfortable, as I write about it a lot. I write about Canada as well. I have a history with Lebanon. It's a rich

place to write about. It's a microcosm of that encounter between East and West. There was always this mixture of religions, which now, to a certain extent with our multicultural society, we're trying to face these things. Lebanon, for the most part, it was problematic, but there was also a period of grace, where coexistence happened. I think that's what the West is now. If you look at Europe, or Canada for instance—probably Canada is the most successful—these coexistences are still in their early days. Lebanon has already gone through this for many years. In that sense, it is very relevant to the West.

MH: Is writing cathartic for you or do you see it simply as an artistic or creative endeavour?

RH: If you're an emotional writer, you deal with all of these emotions, so it's tiring. When you're not writing, it's also tiring because you don't know what to do, and you always feel like you should be writing. So it's one of those two things.

MH: So being a writer is hell is what you're saying.

RH: Your only consolation is that you're doing something.

MH: Bill 21 is now the law. What are your thoughts on it?

RH: Having lived in a place where religion is so dominant and it becomes an identity, I'm a firm believer that there should be a separation between religion and state. That said, everyone should be accepted and be free to dress the way they are. I think there should be a debate and that it should go on. But I'm opposed to (Bill 21); it's a drastic measure. Society is changing rapidly, and demographics are changing more rapidly than many would like to admit. I think it's a reaction to that. It's an archaic argument. It doesn't make sense.

MH: In your work, I feel a consistent tension, that between a sense of belonging and place, and on the other a sense of alienation. Both exist simultaneously. Do you feel Montreal is home now?

RH: Yes, I do. I like it here. I feel very comfortable here. People like me, who are crossed between two peoples, are the future. It's much more cosmopolitan than we think. It's also a very progressive city. It has some values from elsewhere. I look at the public spaces for example. It still has a very Bohemian characteristic. There's a lot of sexual liberty here. It's a different frame of mind. We need this city in Canada. When anglos come here, they come with a certain liberty, they want to live a certain experience. Some people are going to be marginal, but that's much of the city. It's not a puritanical city at all — au contraire.

MH: No, you can get an abortion here, even if you're not pregnant.

RH: (laughs) Yes.

MH: Novels and now short stories — is theatre next?

RH: I guess that would complete my mission as a writer, to do all three. The theatre is full of dialogue, which is fascinating. But I like to describe things, so it would be a real challenge for me. Theatre is for people who like to talk a lot.

MH: What is happening in Ukraine right now must be impacting you, given your own experiences living through war.

RH: Yeah, the sad thing about this is, this whole democracy grace period, as an idea that was dominant, is being challenged on a great big scale. It's terrifying. It's now possible that we could experience life in a dictatorship. That's terrifying. I think the alliances are clear. Europe might change. Some might argue, get rid of democracy because democracy has its roots in capitalism and capitalism is linked to colonialism, but people who never experienced dictatorship, they don't know how brutal it is. I hear stories from the Arab world of people living in dictatorships. If you buy the wrong newspaper, you're questioned. I remember going through Lebanon and having to go through Syrian checkpoints. There are so many things that are brutal about them. But many people are much more comfortable living under dictatorships. We're lucky we're here.

→ *Stray Dogs* (Knopf, 201 pages, \$29.95) by Rawi Hage is out now.

Let's practice together...



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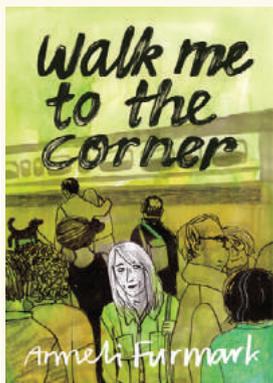
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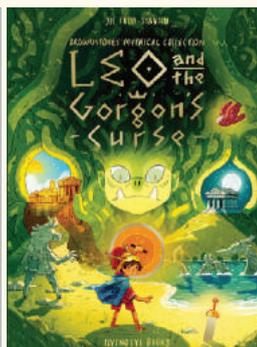
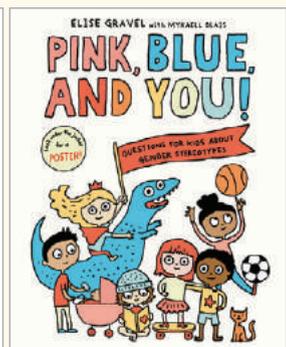
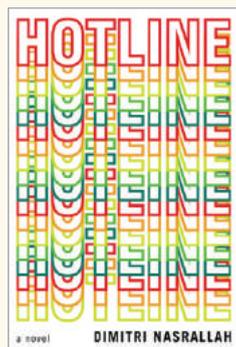
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## Op-ed



Croatian Amor

BY RYAN DIDUCK

Lonny, “Comme la fin du monde,” *Ex-voto* (Let Artists Be)

Unless otherwise stated, I am of the opinion that the songs and things included in this column are very good and worthy of your time. You might enjoy them — that’s my opinion. The opinions expressed implicitly by inclusion in this column, I hope, are also in harmony with this publication’s opinion, since the last page of a publication is traditionally reserved for the editorial.

The opinions on things contained herein are “expert” opinions — I have a doctorate in... something culture-related. Whatever. It doesn’t matter anymore, it’s on my wall. But I’m more than a master. My honorific title is Dr., and that title entitles me to my expert opinion on music and culture, at the very least.

Having said that, I’m not an expert in healthcare, specifically mental healthcare, although my mom is a psychiatric nurse of 52 years, and my late step dad was an ophthalmologist. I’m not an expert in COVID, although my aunt died of it in April 2021.

I’m not a politics expert, either, although I vote. And I have this column that people still read in the pub, when pubs are open. If you can reach just one, you’ve done your job. I have opinions on these things. They’re armchair opinions at best, and perhaps best left in the armchair.

I’m also of the opinion that it’s the end of the world and time to act accordingly, but that’s just an opinion.

Brainwaltzera, “Fwd: Re: late (Ref.: karoshi),” *ITSAME* (Film)

If I previously followed you on Twitter, apologies, I’ve

unfollowed you. I’ve unfollowed everybody. The reason: in a nutshell: too many opinions.

Opinions are like assholes: everybody has one. I have no desire to look at everybody’s asshole. There are very, very few assholes that I’d purposely seek out (only one, for the record) much less want to stumble upon, much less want to hear anything out of, or from. (I’ve got all kinds of prepositions to end sentences with.) Most people’s assholes stink, just like most people’s opinions. Screw your opinions.

Robbie Lee & Lea Bertucci, “Division Music,” *Winds Bells Falls* (Telegraph Harp)

Opinions are good things to have, though. I am an opinions connoisseur, not necessarily an expert. In addition to having some expert opinions on things, I’m an amateur opinionologist.

Most folks’ opinions I can do without. But in my amateur opinion on opinions, you’ll always get the best quality opinions from drivers. Today, it’s Uber drivers, but ever since *Taxi Driver*, it’s been a cliché that drivers are opinion receptacles, and it’s true. I’d rather talk to expert drivers than any other expert.

On a recent trip to the U.S., we had some characters. One, before being prompted, told us in a hushed and urgent tone that the truth was about to be revealed. Truth, I asked? What truth is that? “Joe Biden is a body double. That’s right. The CIA killed him in September. Your president, Justin Trood’oh is a body double, too.”

Before we could get the whole story, though, we arrived at our destination, and I couldn’t inform him that we have a Prime Minister, not a President, and even if he were a body double, it wouldn’t change that much. It would be like, “Oh that too, now — Justin Trudeau is a body double. Chicken tonight, hon?”

Croatian Amor, “Remember Rainbow Bridge,” *Remember Rainbow Bridge* (Posh Isolation)

Shop owners also know. Talk to someone who runs a *dépanneur* in this town, and they’ll give you some opinions, boy. The man who owns the *dep chez moi* told me about the \$4K tax bill he just paid, with another due in six months: “I have 600 square feet, what is my business?” he asked in exasperation, holding his hands high in the air. “When I came to Canada, they told me the best thing is to work hard. I am here from 8 a.m. until 11 p.m. every day.” (And he is.) “There are shops next door closed down, how are they paying their taxes?” (I don’t know.) “If this doesn’t change, I’m going to drive an Amazon truck!”

I hope he doesn’t. To deploy a David Lettermanism, it would be a long trip to find out the store’s closed.

Softmax, “Last Two Dancing,” *But What If There Isn’t?* (Psychotic Reaction)

I love the Seinfeld routine about the Chalk Outline Guy. The premise goes: it must be a really easy job to be the Police Chalk Outline artist. If you’re not good enough to be the court sketch artist, you can always grab a piece of chalk and draw a big circle around the dead person.

The other half of this classic joke asks, how in the world a detective might be able to tell who killed the victim based solely upon the chalk outline? Seinfeld’s line is something like, “Oh, his arm was up that way, so it must have been... Jim!” He does a little 180-degree turn, too, to punctuate the punch line. Seinfeld’s opinions I do enjoy.

There’s no Chalk Outline Guy for human heartbreak, unfortunately. No failed sketch artist for love lost. There’s no way to circumscribe that mess — the debris of a broken heart. First of all, just like the Seinfeld routine, you’d never be able to tell from the outline who the perpetrator was. And more crucially, there’d never be enough chalk.

PHI



Stan Douglas, Exodus, 1975. Digital C-print mounted on Dibond aluminum © Stan Douglas. Courtesy of the artist, Victoria Uno and David Zwirner

# STAN DOUGLAS

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An investigation of the image

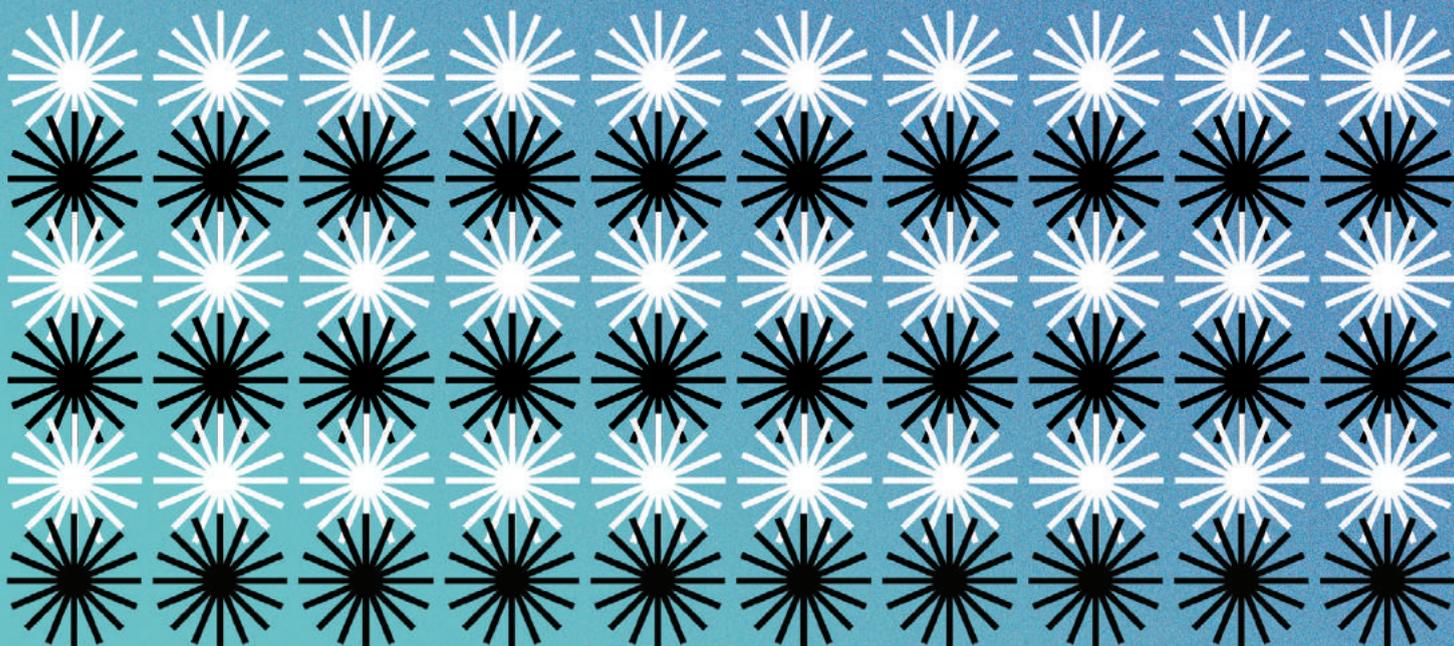
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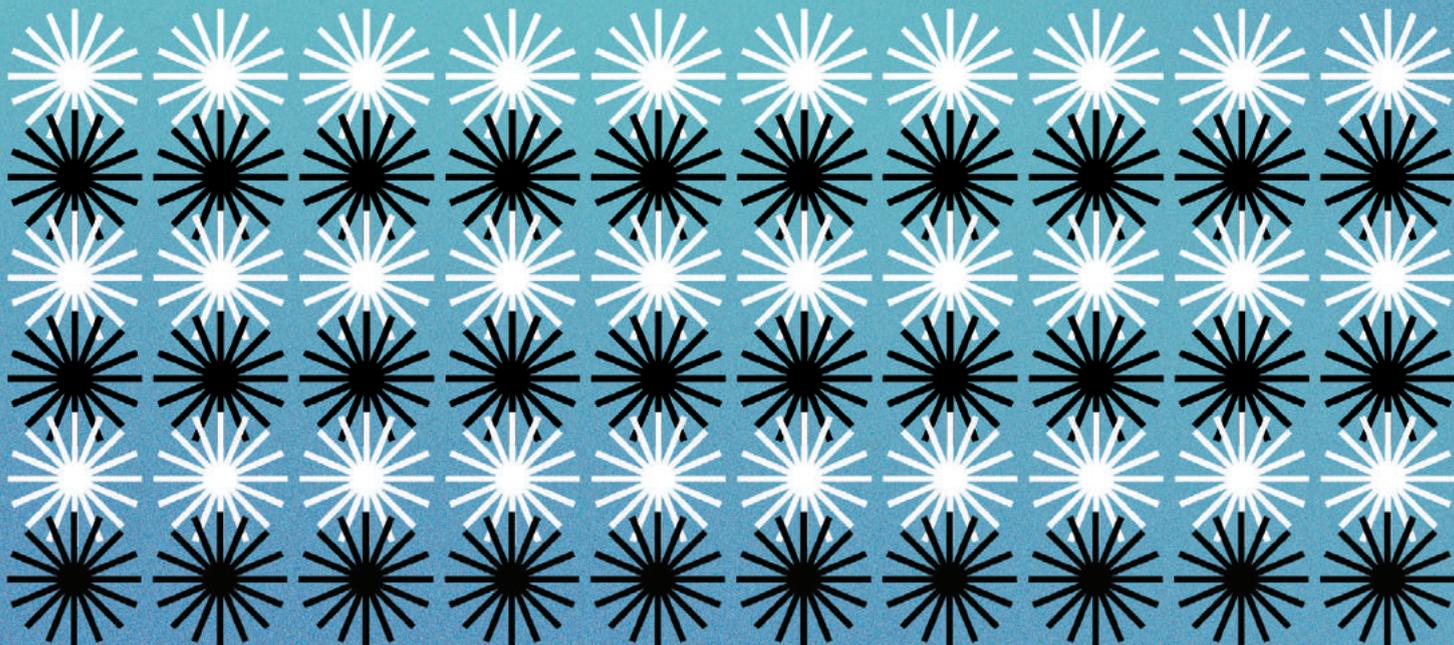
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