

CULT M T L



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* No Waves * Trailer Park Boys * Justice * Quebec vs. religion * Le 9e

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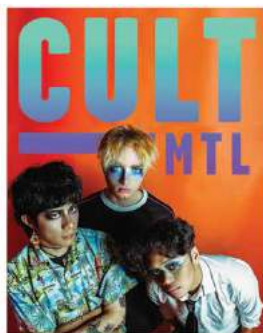
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Montreal nu-punk trio No Waves invited us into their rehearsal space to talk about how they manifest destiny — like their dream of playing Osheaga, where they'll be performing on Aug. 3.

Photo by Loïcia Samson

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city

Quebec, religion and double standards

BY TOULA DRIMONIS

Images recently shared on social media of members of Montreal's Muslim community gathered in prayer in a public park in the Ahuntsic-Cartierville borough to mark the end of Ramadan and the start of Eid quickly brought out the usual complaints from the usual suspects. Even though the group had requested and obtained permission from the borough council for the collective prayer, many expressed discomfort with the images.

In a *Journal de Montréal* column, Joseph Facal argued that public religious ceremonies should be banned, insisting that “a collective prayer by hundreds of people at the same time transforms the park into a sacred space reserved only for the faithful of this religion.” It's a questionable argument at best, since absolutely no one was forbidden from accessing the park at any time while the group was praying. A nearby frisbee game or a birthday party in a park doesn't prevent me from also enjoying it, so why should some folks praying stop me? Parks are, by design, multipurpose public spaces. I think some people's apprehension says more about their own misgivings and suspicion of certain religions than it does that particular group's intent to take over the park.

I'm not arguing for public spaces like parks to become routine places of worship. They shouldn't. What I'm pointing out are the double standards and the lack of consistency often displayed when it comes to Quebec secularism. What many won't come out and just say is that the image of a bunch of folks praying scares them, as they see it as the first step in *taking over* that space, and other spaces like them — metaphorically and physically.

DISPLAYS OF FAITH ARE NOT PROVOCATION

As an atheist who adamantly believes in secularism and the separation of state and religion, I tire of disingenuous arguments about protecting our public spaces from religion. Primarily because these arguments, curiously enough, only seem to materialize after Muslim gatherings.

In my book *We, the Others*, I point to a similar “controversy” that took place in 2017, when a video of Muslim community members praying outdoors at Parc Safari — a popular Quebec zoo and amusement park — made the rounds, “prompting outrage by onlookers who suspected, despite claims it was just an innocuous display of faith, that it was meant to be a deliberate and malicious provocation.”



The truth is that many religious ceremonies or religious activities routinely take place in Quebec's public spaces, without anyone claiming that they compromise Quebec secularism. My local church bells loudly ring every Sunday. Italian, Portuguese and Spanish communities have religious processions on certain annual feast days, and so do many French Catholics, which hold Way of the Cross processions annually on Good Friday. Every year, during Greek Easter, members of Montreal's Greek community take part in a religious procession called the Epitafio, which culminates in midnight mass on Saturday (loud speakers letting the neighbourhood know — at an ungodly hour — that “Christ has Risen”) and someone always setting off firecrackers afterwards. While I'm not religious, Greek Easter is a religious tradition and holiday I feel strongly about because it's a huge part of my Greek identity. Firecrackers set off at midnight in sleepy neighbourhoods is not exactly what I'd call keeping our faith private and to ourselves. No one ever seems to care.

The very same year that the Parc Safari incident happened, Montreal was celebrating its 375th anniversary. The event was ostentatiously marked with the symbolic sounding of St. Joseph's Oratory's first bell, followed by the simultaneous chiming of church bells across Montreal for 10 entire minutes. A public mass was also held at the Oratory, where priests, deacons, members of religious communities and special guests were all in attendance.

Hell, there's a guy that's been standing at the corner of Ste-Catherine and McGill, holding a “Jesus Christ Eternel” sign for years now, and absolutely no one has ever thought to remove him. I routinely get politely solicited by Jehovah's Witnesses asking me if I want to attend their church and I often pass by religious groups distributing information pamphlets in Montreal metros. Again, no one's writing alarmist columns about these very purposeful proselytizing efforts.

SECULARISM ISN'T ANTI-RELIGION

The only reason we collectively don't treat any of those particular displays of religious faith as compromising secularism is because — even if we're atheist — I suspect that most of us fundamentally see both the

Christian religion and those who practise it as largely benign and non-threatening. It's a huge part of the province's *patrimoine*. The *adhān*, the Islamic call to prayer emanating from mosques, is identical to a church bell ringing to invite the faithful to attend service. Yet some folks treat it as an Isis invasion, simply because it's foreign and the sound is often associated with Hollywood movies where terrorists are busy blowing up something. I get that some folks may not be used to other religions and their traditions and may need some time to familiarize themselves with them. But if people are just peacefully praying, minding their own business, please consider that your over-the-top reaction may just be run-of-the-mill xenophobia and, yes, even Islamophobia.

It bears repeating that secularism is merely the separation of church and state. It's meant to ensure the government in power does not impose a religion on us and that no one religion is favoured to the detriment of all others. Secularism isn't anti-religion. It isn't the right *not* to be exposed to religion publicly or the right *not* to live with people around you who may have a different relationship with faith than you do.

Allowing people their fundamental freedom of religion and occasionally even public displays of their faith doesn't in any way translate to Quebec suddenly transforming into a theocracy where religious fundamentalism rules. Secularism is very clearly here to stay. And, despite popular misconceptions, not just in Quebec. “No religion” is the second-most-common answer when Canadians are asked about their religious affiliation.

Secularism, however, doesn't mean treating people who wear visible religious symbols or who consider their religion a big part of their identity as pariahs or as a danger to our secular society. In an increasingly multicultural and multi-faith world, even a state that promotes no religion has an obligation to ensure that its citizens don't perpetuate religious prejudice and don't discriminate against those who practise their faith.

If you're going to start demanding that religion be banned from the public space, you better make sure you demand that of *all* religions. Otherwise, your double standards and bias are showing.

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Revolution 9



BY TAYLOR C. NOAKES

Is there a word for the simultaneous feeling of ebullient joy and crushing disappointment at the exact same time?

I feel like the Germans would have that covered. It's pretty much what I'm feeling right now with regards to Eaton's 9th floor.

I know this isn't breaking news. Montreal media were given a sneak peek back in mid-April and the restaurant, named Île de France, opened about a month later. While there's nothing inherently false about the coverage I've read so far, I feel there's something still missing here.

For those of you who don't know what I'm talking about, a brief summary of this magical place called the Eaton's 9th floor restaurant. Once upon a time, there was a national chain of department stores called Eaton's, and their flagship store in downtown Montreal had a very beautiful restaurant inspired by the dining halls of the great ocean liners. It opened in 1931 and quickly became a place to see and be seen. Even as tastes changed over the decades, the grandeur and beauty of this restaurant kept people coming in the doors. Though it appealed to Montreal's high class when it first opened, it evolved over time into an affordable dining experience set in a luxurious interior, a place where anyone could go and feel like a million bucks, even if just for a moment.

When the Eaton's chain went bankrupt in 1999, Héritage Montréal, the city's champions of architectural and historical preservation, jumped into action. There were plans to gut the whole former Eaton's department store building, including the 9th floor restaurant, and Héritage Montréal managed to tap into what this restaurant meant to so many people. Astoundingly, the Quebec government's culture ministry agreed and came up with a preservation plan quite unlike many others. Typically, only the facade of architecturally significant buildings gets preserved. In cases where a building is historically significant, more of the building tends to get preserved, but this often precludes it from other uses. In the case of the old Eaton's building, the facade was preserved, the lobby and some interior spaces were preserved, even the signage was preserved, but the rest of the interior was radically transformed. Except for the 9th floor, which had to be left exactly as it was in every respect. And that included all the furniture, furnishings and fixtures as well.

And then, for 25 years, as Montreal grew up and changed in every way around it, the 9th floor stayed perfectly still. A time capsule, fundamentally unaltered since 1931.

I passed by on the morning of April 19 for the local media preview. It was a modest turnout — at one point, I felt like there may have been as many people connected with the project as there were journalists covering it. A few television cameras and reporters made the rounds, lining up to take many of the same exact photographs. Chairs were arranged facing a podium in la Grande Salle, suggesting some kind of press conference, though none took place. There was no introduction of any of the key people involved, nor an organized guided tour. I suppose those in the know already knew who to talk to. It was a surprisingly informal affair given some of the hype surrounding the former Eaton's restaurant's triumphant restoration, revival and reopening.

Despite the fact that the iconic restaurant was saved from being gutted a quarter century ago by the quick thinking of the provincial culture ministry, no provincial officials were on hand. No one from Héritage Montréal either, as far as I could tell, even though they were instrumental in identifying the site's architectural value early on, and kept the pressure up over the years to ensure the space was at least not forgotten by the public. There was no one from the city or the downtown business development corporation either. Granted, this wasn't their project, but still, you would have figured they would at least have been invited.

It struck me as odd, but I digress. These peculiarities notwithstanding, the restoration and rehabilitation of this space is a home run for historic and architectural preservation in this city, and it's not often I get to say that. We have lost — and continue to lose — far too many buildings worthy of preserving, so the fact that plans were drawn up 25 years ago to preserve a jaw-dropping art deco masterpiece is an achievement in and of itself. That the former restaurant and its associated spaces have been so meticulously restored, that the necessary modernizations are so extraordinarily subtle and that such an accomplished team have been assembled to breathe new life into this space, are all spectacular successes as well.

So what's the problem, you might be asking.

Well, though the form was preserved, the function has been modified, and perhaps too much so.

You can once again dine on the 9th floor of the old Eaton's building, in a restaurant that pays tribute to the ocean liner inspiration of the old 9th floor restaurant. You just can't eat *in* the old restaurant.

When setting up a reservation the other day with their online reservation system, I noticed a note left by the management:

"We are delighted to inform you that our restaurant is located in the charming foyer of the original Le 9e restaurant. During your dinner at Restaurant Île de France, we warmly invite you to tour the beautiful Grande Salle, subject to availability."

I'm so happy that they're delighted to inform me I can get as far as the foyer, but not have the experience of actually dining in the art deco masterpiece people have literally been waiting 25 years to come back to. And what's that? I can, availability permitting, walk around the space and contemplate my disappointment, post-dinner?

I got the same over-rehearsed and canned response from different people I spoke with about this pretty glaring problem, and it boils down to, 'we can't pack them in like we used to.' Several people connected to the project told me that the original restaurant could hold 500 people, and that no one wants to open a 500-seat restaurant in this day and age.

I find this to be a pretty lame excuse. They could have just as easily set tables for 100 people in the big room rather than cramming them into the former foyer. I suspect the real issue here is that renting La Grande Salle out for conferences, weddings and special events for the corporate crowd are potentially bigger money makers than the restaurant. It doesn't make sense to me: you'd figure the nostalgia factor alone would fill the big room for the next few years at least, and be a particularly big hit this summer during festival season. But somehow it makes sense — to those holding the bag — to run a restaurant in the foyer and hallway *next* to what people are coming to see, while the big room will likely be empty most of the time.

In the last few decades of its life, the original Eaton's restaurant wasn't the fancy place it was when it opened. But that didn't really matter anymore, as it had evolved to meet the times as they changed. The service was less formal, the food more middle of the road, but the space still had style, and people still dressed up to go there. It was open nearly all the time, a place that would welcome pretty much anyone, and that was kind of the point. It was an affordable, accessible luxury.

For all the effort that went into restoration and rejuvenation of this space, this crucial element, this vital detail, seems to have been forgotten.

The 9th floor was preserved for all of us — who's going to pay good money to eat in the foyer?

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: best buds



BY DAVE MACINTYRE

If you're looking for a more Québécois-sounding name for a weed product than the one I reviewed this month, good luck finding it.

For this issue, I got my hands on Aweille Réveille by T'es Dans L'champ, supplied by 5 Points Cannabis, which is based in Pierreville (near Trois-Rivières). It's a sativa with a high THC quotient and it's as uplifting as any sativa worth its weight should be — perfect for sunny afternoons in the park, whether it's a quiet get-together with pals or you're literally surrounded by other stoners and/or drum circle hippies at Tam Tams. 'Tis the season, after all, and a sativa like this one is a good bet to get you through those summer days (despite those days getting hotter and hotter with each passing year, that is). Here's what I thought.

T'es Dans L'champ Aweille Réveille (Sativa)

This one's THC percentage ranges from 24% to 30%, so it's not for the faint of heart. But if you can handle it, it's a fun ride. It doesn't come without some gripes on my end, though: for example, the buds are neither dry enough to crush with my fingertips, nor do they have the kind of moisture you want upon bringing home a fresh new batch of dried flowers. My container also included a couple more stems than I would've been okay with.

Though the SQDC claims this batch's scents can vary depending on which one you get, it smells herbal and earthy to me — a bit spicy, even. Either way, it had a nice aroma, and smells especially nice while firing up my portable vape. It's a nice head high, if nothing exceptional, but I feel my body tingle a bit from it, too. The high itself is durable, and a comfortable one, too. Those with high tolerance levels like moi may find that it doesn't necessarily rock their socks off, but

it's still a smooth journey regardless of your personal threshold. Of course, always in moderation, folks!

Any good sativa should be a great companion for enjoying music with, and this batch fulfills that purpose admirably. My musical drug of choice (metaphorically speaking, of course) is Jamie xx's new singles, released as he's about to drop his first album in nine years. "Baddy on the Floor" and the Robyn-featuring "Life" are whole-ass summer anthems, man. Ditto for Austrian producer Salute, whose track "System" is another high-energy banger I listened to here. From then on, I fell down a house-oriented rabbit hole that also included SG Lewis, Fred again.. and Peggy Gou. Knowing that we've just gotten new Kaytranada and Justice, and are about to get a new Porter Robinson album, you can expect a lot of stoned dancing from me this summer. Even as other aspects of my life aren't quite together, this weed/music got me feeling a sense of optimism I otherwise wouldn't, and that's good enough for me. 7.5/10

:the 1st half



BY PAUL DESBAILLETS

Well, it's that time of the year again...

The GOAL Initiatives Foundation (which, full disclosure, I founded) is gearing up for the 14th edition of its annual soccer festival, GOAL MTL 2024. Set for July 28 at McGill's Percival Molson Stadium from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., this event promises a day of fun and community spirit, with free — that's right, FREE — entry for all attendees.

The festival supports the foundation's mission of promoting equality and opportunity through soccer. As I've always stated about football/soccer, that unifying power of the ball gives us the opportunity to come together for one cause, creating equal opportunities not only on the pitch but in life.

The festival will feature 23 teams from Montreal's hospitality and business sectors, along with local celebrities, community leaders and athletes, creating an engaging and festive atmosphere. Attendees can enjoy exciting soccer matches, as well as golf games celebrating the upcoming Presidents Cup tournament.

Additional activities include a tie-dye station, tattoos by Linus, a silent auction and free haircuts from the top barbers in town, Maison Privée.

Café Olimpico and Bossa will provide proper nourishment and refreshments, alongside a variety

of spirits, beers and non-alcoholic drinks. The event will also showcase the "Top-Bins Challenge" skills competition, offering a cash prize to the winning team.

Proceeds from the event will fund several initiatives, such as refurbishing the soccer pitch at Verdun Elementary School and a continuing 16-week program with Patrice Bernier at James Lyng High School in the fall.

Other beneficiaries include Lasalle Rapides Soccer Club, Grassroot Soccer, Fondation Patrice Bernier, and the DeRo Foundation, all dedicated to promoting health, wellness and inclusivity through soccer.

For more details, visit goalinitiatives.org. Join the celebration of soccer, community and culture at GOAL MTL 2024, and make a difference in the lives of Montreal's youth this summer!

Supporting the community in any way you can is vital. It fosters a sense of belonging and solidarity, creating opportunities for growth and development. By contributing to events like GOAL MTL, you help build a stronger, more inclusive society where everyone has the chance to thrive.

Sponsorship plays a crucial role in the success of GOAL MTL 2024. Partners like Quincailerie Notre-Dame, DRW, Jack Daniels, Sodexo and Burgundy Lion Group provide essential resources that make the event possible. Their support not only covers logistical costs but also enhances the overall experience for attendees, ensuring a vibrant and engaging festival.

Moreover, these sponsors share a commitment to the community's well-being. By aligning with the GOAL Initiatives Foundation, they help drive social impact, funding initiatives that promote equality and opportunity through soccer all year round. Their involvement shows the power of collaboration between businesses and charitable organizations, amplifying efforts to create positive change in Montreal.

Through sponsorship, these companies demonstrate corporate social responsibility, contributing to a cause that resonates with their values and those of the community. This partnership highlights the importance of businesses investing in local initiatives, fostering a culture of support and engagement that benefits everyone involved.

Soccer excels at bringing people together from all walks of life due to its universal appeal and accessibility. Its simplicity — requiring just a ball and open space — makes it possible for everyone to play, regardless of social status. As the world's most popular sport, soccer transcends cultural and language barriers, creating common ground for diverse communities. It fosters a strong sense of community and teamwork, encouraging collaboration among players and fans alike. Additionally, ongoing international tournaments like the COPA América and the Euros, along with local leagues, provide opportunities for cultural exchange, enhancing understanding and respect among diverse groups.

The shared passion for the game unites fans, creating a sense of belonging that bridges differences, making soccer a powerful tool for promoting inclusivity.

We hope to see you on the pitch on July 28 at Percival Molson Stadium, in the heart of downtown Montreal.

"Football is for everyone." —Alex Scott

food

Tongue in cheek

BY CLAY SANDHU

Back in January, a friend of mine who happens to be a winemaker and well-known Montreal sommelière posted a picture of a plate of veal tongue topped with a rich-looking sauce *gribiche*. It looked simple and delicious — exactly the kind of thing you’d get from London’s Rochelle Canteen or St. John. It’s also exactly the kind of food that I’m interested in eating these days. Straightforward, well-cooked food dishes that rely on great ingredients cooked with knowledge and care. No fussy stuff.

When I inquired, she revealed the dish was from a lunch she had recently enjoyed at Restaurant Jean-Paul in Villeray. At that moment, I felt like I was gifted with an insight into one of the city’s hidden gems. I thought I was discovering a Chez Doval-type spot — a local favourite that’s been around for ages but hardly ever finds itself in the spotlight. Turns out, I couldn’t have been more wrong. The day that dish caught my attention was only a few weeks after chef/owner Isael Gadoua and front-of-house manager Laurent Blanchet had opened their doors.

Chez Jean-Paul is named in honour of Gadoua’s late grandfather, the man he credits with igniting his love for food and drink. While I might have been wrong about the restaurant’s age, I wasn’t wrong about its hiddenness. Save for the decal on the door, the storefront, which is at the residential corner of De la Roche and Bélanger, could easily go unnoticed. Inside, the room is simple but charming. It’s clear there wasn’t much of a design budget but it’s also evident from the pressed tin ceiling, elegant light fixtures and wainscoting that folks with taste put the room together. Combine that with the fact that our lunch reservation happened to be a beautiful late-spring day with the sun shining through the picture windows to a soundtrack of Thelonius Monk and I could already sense we were in for a special lunch.

Joining me for lunch was my dear friend Will Weston, the former owner of Paradiso and a long-time cook with years of experience at Taverne Monkland, McKiernan, Joe Beef and Liverpool House, the latter of which he spent time working alongside Gadoua. Though I had never heard of Gadoua, Will reassured me, “He’s an incredible cook.” Good enough for me. In my research, I found that Gadoua cut his teeth at Joe Beef, McKiernan and, most recently, Paloma — one of my very favourite restaurants in the city. Blanchet, for his part, comes to Chez Jean-Paul by way of the recently closed Pullman. Great CVs all around and the kind that should reassure any diner that when it comes to food and drink, they are in good hands.

Blanchet’s list is concise but very well constructed, a mix that covers the old and new world and is dotted with well-known and sought-after producers, but also some who are decidedly lesser known. With a list this compact, Blanchet is able to confidently stand behind each of the wines. As I flip-flop between a lightly macerated Jacquère from cult Savoie winemaker Jean-Yves Péron, hearty Romorantin from the Loire’s Hervé Villemade or a classic Pecorino from De Fermo,



Mickael A. Bandassak

Blanchet takes charge and suggests a textured Pinot Blanc from Austrian producer Harkamp. With notes of bright lemon curd, white pepper and white flowers, the wine’s defining characteristic is its briny salinity, which offsets the fruit and begs to be paired with food. A fine selection.

Our lunch began with a plate of assorted homemade charcuterie: coppa (pork shoulder), lonza (pork loin with the fat cap), pancetta (cold smoked pork belly) and bresaola (beef loin). The lot was served with a focaccia-like bun, which was beautifully puffed, crisped and topped with a heap of shaved parm and chives — the McKiernan influence peeks through a bit here. All the charcuterie was delicious, but before describing the standouts, I should express that the plate was correctly served at room temperature. Too often, charcuterie is served fridge-cold, meaning the fat is hard and congealed and the subtleties of the flavours are entirely obscured. This plate was excellent but the pancetta, which was supple, silky and gently smoked, was by far the best charcuterie I have had in recent memory.

The next course, a plate of marinated arctic char, is an old recipe of the restaurant’s namesake. Gadoua remembers going fishing for char with his grandfather, who would then prepare it in this style. Gadoua remembers his grandfather as “a man who lived well” — a man who hunted, fished and drank good wine. Though slightly refined and served with a side of chicharron, the recipe is essentially unmodified. Plump slices of char are mixed with lemon juice, good olive oil, shaved fennel, white onion and a delicate dollop of crème fraîche. It’s a simple dish, but thanks to pitch-perfect seasoning, along with a balance of fat and acidity, it achieves something much greater. Delicious.

Next, the veal tongue that launched 1,000 ships — or at the least the one that launched mine. No longer served with gribiche, the braised and seared tongue was now accompanied by a sharp and herbaceous sauce ravigotte and some roughly chopped green asparagus. Sitting in a pool of vibrant green oil, it was an evocative sight. For the squeamish, allow me to assure you that tongue is delicious and exceptionally approachable. Hearty and meaty, its texture is not unlike a tender brisket or short rib. Married

with the sauce ravigotte, the tender meat is enlivened with herbs and vinegar in much the same way a steak is brightened by chimichurri. It’s a dish that has me grinning from ear to ear. It was an excellent match for the wine, too — moving from meat to fish and back to meat, the Pinot Blanc held its own quite well.

The least remarkable dish, both Will and I agreed, was a cacao pappardelle with morels and sage. The cacao in the pasta, you might be surprised to hear, wasn’t the problem. Chocolate and mushrooms are one of those odd gastronomic pairings that just work together. The problem was the pasta itself. Cut far too wide (nearly an inch and a half) and far too thick, the noodles felt overly weighty and stodgy.

The meal was set back on track with a plate of perfectly cooked sweetbreads sitting on an island of creamed spinach in a rutabaga and smoked butter sauce. This was phenomenally good. Crisp sweetbreads, tender greens and a complex butter sauce that was somehow light as air. It reminded me of all the great simple dishes I’ve had at restaurants like Paloma or Salle Climatisée that show exactly how good ingredients and tactful cooking can create something spectacular on the palate that might seem less than exciting on paper. We both also agreed that this dish was the very best pairing for the wine, which managed to go the distance.

For dessert, two deeply browned beignets filled with strawberry and rhubarb sitting in a silky puddle of strawberry something or other — somewhere between a purée and a sabayon. Garnished with fresh verbena leaves, it was both indulgent and fresh and brought to mind the best of summer fruit and McKiernan’s damn delicious donuts.

Lunch is my favourite meal. There is something about relishing decadence in the light of day that feels especially freeing and luxuriant. Lunch at Chez Jean-Paul, whether simple or elaborate, embodies those feelings and does so with the style of casual sophistication that great Montreal restaurants are known for. While it may not have been a decades-old neighbourhood institution, Chez Jean-Paul has the makings to become one.

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Manifesting destiny

BY STEPHAN BOISSONNEAULT

No Waves and I are outside a commercial building surrounded by professional-looking people in suits and dresses who are just getting off work. As we all walk into the elevator leading to the Montreal band's jam space, guitarist and vocalist Angel Parra Vela tells me the band sometimes feels slightly off entering this building.

"People will sometimes be in really formal clothing early in the day and we'll just be here doing our thing in our band t-shirts and tattoos," he says. "All you can do is smile, but we have very different lives."

We take the elevator up a few flights, walk through the warehouse entrance, and are greeted by a huge artist loft with a kitchen area and many painted windows above a dusty couch. On the right is a door with an Atelier sign, the solo space of a solitary woodworker. Vera and drummer/vocalist Sam Sussman immediately feel at ease here. And how couldn't they? The young indie surf punk three-piece has a jam space right in the back of this DIY artist commune, one that's filled with canvases, guitars, spray paint and the aroma of wafting joint smoke. The No Waves boys feel creative and at home here, surrounded by collaborators and friends.

"We've always loved DIY spaces 'cause it's kind of where we started," Sussman says while we get settled in the rehearsal space. "We were 14 or 15 years old, so we would be too young to play bar shows and have to set up our own all-ages things like house shows."

The band also remembers getting fake IDs to get into the 18+ shows and meeting other younger artists who wanted to play *real* sets. "I remember it being very frustrating to not play anywhere as a younger band," Vela says. "Now, we're really blessed with places like la Sotterenea, who are having all-ages shows and lots of under-the-bridge shows for the all-ages scene."

Since they started playing shows, No Waves have been consistently grinding, carving out a name for themselves across Eastern Canada. And it's paid off. They're soon off on a mini-tour of Ontario, and the big talk of the Montreal music scene a few months ago was that they managed to get onto the 2024 Osheaga lineup. This is a huge accomplishment for any local band, but No Waves is treating it like any other show.



Lolita Samson

"We used to joke about playing Osheaga all the time because it didn't seem like it would ever be a reality," Sussman says. "We would do that for other things like playing MTELUS, and then boom, we'd get a show booked there. The same thing happened with Osheaga. We manifested it, but now that we have it, we're not making a big deal of it."

A few minutes into our talk, bassist Cy Musngi joins us, but remains silent during most of the conversation, nodding with his bandmates while holding a poutine. Earlier, outside, there had been talk of edibles on the menu, and Musngi now seems to be in a completely zen state. I can tell the quiet, well-dressed bassist can't wait to dive into his poutine, but doesn't until the interview concludes. It's a sign of respect for the process. One that needs to be admired.

When No Waves was just starting out back in 2016, it was touch and go there for a bit, but everything changed for them after they saw a little band called Crabe.

"They were totally our mentors in the scene," Sussman says.

"We didn't know shit and they showed us the scene and let us open their launch party and really took us under their wing."

"Crabe is the GOAT," adds Vela.

Crabe is a band that is constantly reinventing itself, and No Waves is taking that theme as inspiration for their next batch of recordings to follow up the 2023 *Postcard EP*. This is a band that listens to a lot of music and loves to be inventive and be able to take risks.

"I think we will definitely always be a loud band, but we've been experimenting with a lot of the sounds so it's not only straightforward punk," Sussman says.

"And we can't wait to get into the studio and really take our time with the next one," Vela says. "It's going to get weird."

→ No Waves plays the Green Stage at Osheaga on Saturday, Aug. 3, 2 p.m., individual single-day tickets \$165, \$320 Gold, \$685 Platinum, individual weekend passes \$395/\$745/\$1620

Cross purposes



Julia & Vincent

BY DAVE MACINTYRE

If bursts of creative energy are temporary, they can always come back. For Justice, that moment is now.

The French duo of producers Gaspard Augé and Xavier de Rosnay catapulted themselves into dance music's elite back in 2007 with their blistering debut album *Cross* — a classic record that not only influenced artists in the EDM boom to come, but still sounds fresh and ferociously hard-hitting today.

After two albums — 2011's *Audio Video Disco* and 2016's *Woman* — that couldn't quite recapture *Cross*'s strength and consistency, plus a solo album by Augé (2021's *Escapades*), Justice are back with their fourth LP, *Hyperdrama*.

The album finds Justice sounding more confident and revitalized than they've been in ages. Augé and de Rosnay tapped several high-profile guests (Tame Impala, Thundercat, Connan Mockasin, Miguel) for the album to help update their sound for 2024.

Hyperdrama is a collection of songs that are swaggering and at times chaotic, while boasting some of the strongest melodies and most inspired production the Parisians have put on tape since their debut.

Cult MTL caught up with Augé and de Rosnay two days prior to *Hyperdrama*'s late-April a few days after they'd played two hugely successful Coachella sets. The duo debuted their new live show at the iconic California festival, and will bring it to Osheaga in Montreal in August.

While they consider it one of the world's great festivals in general, Justice's most lasting memory — like many artists before and after them — of playing Osheaga comes down to one thing: the top-notch catering.

"They have the best catering of all the festivals in the world," de Rosnay adds. "It's so easy to make bands happy — you just serve good food, and you know you're going to have them in your pocket already. It's good, diverse, healthy, fresh."

Another standout memory from past Justice shows in Montreal, de Rosnay jokingly says, is the infamous strip

club *La calèche du sexe*, before explaining that Montreal feels foreign to them in a good way, despite being another French-speaking part of the world.

"We can feel at home when we come to Montreal or Quebec, but on the other hand, it's very exotic to us," he continues. "I bet it's as exotic as people coming from Montreal and going to Paris, and having Paris syndrome and feeling overwhelmed and oppressed by the Parisian environment. Montreal feels very different to us, and it's great."

Though French artists typically enjoy playing in Montreal as it's their sole opportunity during a North American tour to address crowds in their native tongue, de Rosnay also gives us a history lesson on Quebec French versus the European variety.

"The truth is that French as spoken by the people of Quebec is much more refined than French French. It's proper French," he says.

"Untainted French," Augé interjects.

De Rosnay continues, "That's the real (French) language. We speak a mutated version of French in France, for the worse."

Justice's new approach to performing should leave plenty of fans thrilled and rejuvenated as their live shows have done for nearly two decades. Fans watching them at Coachella were ostensibly lapping it up — take the social media reaction when people first heard album opener "Neverender," for instance.

"While we were preparing, we could only imagine how people were going to react to the music, because it's very speculative," says de Rosnay. "We were saying, 'Okay, we can build up that track like this. It's probably going to make people scream.'"

"One thing we didn't expect was for 'Neverender' to work that well. When it kicked in, we could see that the reaction was immediate with people for a song that they'd never heard before."

Augé and de Rosnay worked on *Hyperdrama* for three and a half years — writing, researching and producing, then trying to edit everything to make it sound more spontaneous and surprising.

Justice's meticulous yet highly intuitive approach to making this album saw them make 10 to 15 mixdowns of the same song, before going back to the first demo and analyzing why it felt good to them, and how to recapture that feeling.

"The first time we listened to the mastered record the day after it was finished, I really felt emotional listening to it, and still surprised by the choices we made," de Rosnay says.

"Taking one step back, we were quite confident that we achieved this kind of 'freedom' album. Some of the things still sound surprising even after six months now.»

From start to finish, the album feels like an event fully aiming to live up to its title. The cover artwork depicting their iconic cross logo with a see-through bionic skeleton inside suggests you're in for a high-energy listen. "Muscle Memory," for example, recalls John Carpenter soundtracks from horror movies, a genre that's as hyper-dramatic as they come.

"To us, it's an album of pure fantasy that unfolds, that rips everywhere," says de Rosnay when asked about the title choice. "We really see it as a mutating shape or form that's changing. It's something fantastic where everything is over-exaggerated, oversaturated — but more in terms of colours and sound. Over-bright, over-slick, over-rough, over-everything."

Augé and de Rosnay wanted to avoid influences from decades past that have permeated their previous work — metal, classic rock and '70s disco, for example. ("There's no nostalgia on this record, really," says de Rosnay.)

The album's focus became trying to make music that sounded as futuristic and modern as possible, even on somewhat disco-esque tracks such as the single "One Night/All Night" and the rollercoaster-like "Incognito." These two were also among the album's first fully-formed songs, along with the Connan Mockasin-assisted "Explorer."

The aforementioned "Neverender" is one of the duo's strongest tracks in years, and the first of two songs on the album featuring Mr. "Did you know he's only one guy?" himself: Tame Impala's Kevin Parker (the other being "One Night/All Night"). Justice are longtime admirers of the Aussie auteur, even turning down the opportunity to remix 2012 single "Elephant" because they felt they couldn't improve upon it.

Given that Parker is a notoriously meticulous perfectionist, one would think there could be difficulty merging his vision with Justice's. Luckily, no such problems arose.

"In that regard, we're all as problematic as each other," de Rosnay says. "We had this impression that it would be easy to work with him based on what we heard from Tame Impala since the beginning, and seeing how it evolved. We always had this impression that it would be a natural match."

Hyperdrama not only comes 17 years after their debut, but also after much change and evolution in the dance music world since then. After the halcyon days of the late aughts and other Ed Banger acts like Breakbot, Uffie and SebastiAn came the early-2010s EDM boom, but Justice have endured and stood strong through it all.

The changes Augé and de Rosnay have seen in that world since they started making music together have been vast, but none of them have affected their artistic approach.

"Everything has changed, but we're also very hermetic about it in the sense that we don't let any of those changes influence or concern us while we're making music," de Rosnay says. "We're ready to operate on our own terms, even if that means reaching a smaller audience than if we were playing the game of social media and TikTok, or trying to make music that's algorithmically friendly."

De Rosnay acknowledges there'll be a big gap between how they hear the album and what fan response to *Hyperdrama* will ultimately be. But he's proud of how it turned out, and of its freshness.

"When I listen to it, it doesn't sound like a vintage record from a vintage band that's been making music together for 20 years," he continues. "Somehow, it still sounds very playful, and it sounds like two people having fun making music together and experimenting."

→ Justice play the Green Stage at Osheaga on Sunday, Aug. 4, 9:15 p.m., individual single-day tickets \$165, \$320 Gold, \$685 Platinum, individual weekend passes \$395/\$745/\$1620

:hammer of the mods

BY JOHNSON CUMMINS

There is nothing better than shows in the summer.

The outdoor fests are okay, I suppose, but they tend to draw pedestrians. For the real deal, you have to pack into the watering holes and let the walls drip and just deal with some elbows. As we lead up to the Behemoth of the summer season, Osheaga, there are some absolutely killer shows happening this month, with two extra special gigs happening over two consecutive nights. Freak out!!!

JULY 4

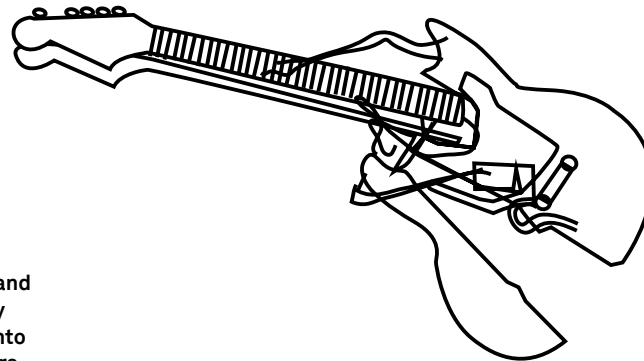
While the roman candles get lit stateside, we can do our own celebrating with what should prove to be the heaviest show of the year: the Body and Dis Fig at Bar le Ritz PDB with the middle slot going to Cel Genesis and the sweat act spot going to Big/Brave member and all-around good egg Mat Ball. If you saw the Body devastate Sala and blow up the PA years ago, you know this duo's psychedelic violence will leave marks. If you like your pummelling heaviosity with a daring dash of experimentation, you will want to scoot down to the July 26 announcement and expect to see the same people that packed it in for the Body. (179 Jean-Talon W., show 8 p.m., \$27.13)

JULY 5

As promised, the one/two combination-punch happening the night after the Body is the psych and wacky soundtrack-y warlords Grails, who finally return to Montreal since they tried to squeeze onto Casa's postage stamp sized stage almost 10 years ago. After starting off their career as a decidedly sludgy affair, it was once the members started digesting off-kilter soundtracks that Grails seriously led a charge that is still being felt in underground music today. This will be an utterly killer show, and seeing the Body and Grails within a night of each other is definitely a personal "pinch me" moment. Openers are Soma and this all goes down at le Ritz. (179 Jean-Talon W., show 7:30 p.m., \$30.20)

JULY 26

Again, it's been a good while since Locrian set the controls for the heart of the sun at Casa but this heavy/electronic trio return after a lengthy spell and are guaranteed to challenge your preconceptions of what metal and electronic music can be. I would of course never advocate drug use, but if you were going to dose for one show this month... If that wasn't enough, opening is the drone lord thisquietarmy with t.g. a regular guest Away (from Voivod), who will be laying down the back beat. If the Body and Grails have you hot under the collar, this gig will prove to be your perfect



summer triple play. This all goes down at the sacred hall of Foufs. (87 Ste-Catherine E., show 9 p.m., \$24.56)

JULY 30

With all of this heaviosity happening this month, I will change speeds and alert the pedal pushing, myopic, backpacker nerds about the post-rock gig of the month. Now, I must admit that pedal pushin' post-rock is about as sexy as childbirth but even I have to don my proverbial cap to the epic soundscapes that Caspian are able to weave. As far as arm-folding, gentle head-nodding post-rock goes, these substitute teacher-esque dudes absolutely crush. If you think I'm blowing smoke here, go check out their recent KEXP session and thank the Ol' Johnson later. Openers are And So I Watch You From Afar (ugh, that name absolutely sux) and Bas Relief. This gathering of tech bros is happening at Fairmount. (5240 Parc, show 8 p.m., \$38.65, all ages)

Current Obsession: Portishead, *Third*
jonathan.cummins@gmail.com

Album reviews



Charli XCX, *Brat* (Atlantic/Warner)
Charli XCX has had an admirable career trajectory since she emerged in 2008, cementing her position as a pop star with enough edge to stay interesting as a personality, performer and songwriter — and presenting young girls with an alternative. This sixth album aims high into the pop

stratosphere while keeping her experimental spirit alive, pairing hard, hyper beats and sharp verses ("Everything Is Romantic"), electropop energy and catchy melodies ("Sympathy Is a Knife"), vulnerable balladry and delicate soundscapes ("So I"), electroclash sass and seductive earworms ("b2b"). 8/10 Trial Track: "Sympathy Is a Knife" (Lorraine Carpenter)



Joey Valence & Brae, *NO HANDS* (independent)
Who would have thought the world needed another college dorm rap group, much less one that blew up on Tik Tok? So begins the tale of an MC duo that grew up together in rural Pennsylvania, sharing an affinity for 80s and 90s hip hop and club music and the wildly creative beat

production styles birthed in New York, Miami and L.A., for starters. Their 2023 LP debut *PUNK TACTICS* was impossible to hate on and its successor keeps the flame hot. Throwback music is always better through the lens of imaginary nostalgia as opposed to pandering back-in-the-day bullshit.

If something you've heard a million times manages to sound fresh, real heart went into it, bet. Joey Valence & Brae have it all the way in them. Guest spots from Danny Brown and hip hop DJ extraordinaire Z-Trip stamp their approval. *NO HANDS* is all in good fun, and in equal parts, too. 8/10 Trial Track: "BUSSIT" (Darcy MacDonald)



Kaytranada, *Timeless* (RCA/Sony)
At long last, the pride of Saint-Hubert, Quebec has returned with another expertly produced, relentlessly groovy body of work. Kaytranada's third album (and first since pre-COVID) sees Montreal's biggest producer make an LP with more of an emphasis on challenging himself, adding

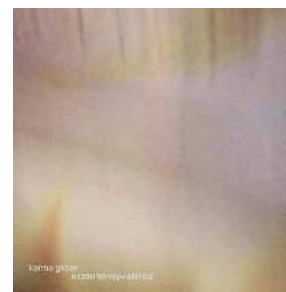
an almost psychedelic twist to his production style ("Feel a Way"). The end product is a smidge bloated, so it would've been even better with some tracks left out, and some features are utilized better on his beats than others. Aside from that, there's plenty still to like about *Timeless*: a thrilling reunion with Anderson .Paak on "Do 2 Me," the Nujabes-meets-Lauryn Hill vibes of "Still" with vocals from Charlotte Day Wilson and the triumphant "Witchy" featuring Childish Gambino are among the project's highest points. 8/10 Trial Track: "Witchy" (Dave MacIntyre)

Laughing, *Because It's True* (Celluloid Lunch)

The debut album by Montreal rockers Laughing sometimes feels like one of those bygone '70s rock records you pick up from a dusty bin, only to find hidden gems crackling on the surface. It certainly sounds more like a third or fourth album than a debut, as they've already found their sound: a healthy



mishmash of jangle pop, rock 'n' roll and a touch of power pop. This album bleeds a mysterious Canadian cool — comparable to Daniel Romano or Neil Young's *On the Beach* era. The riffs are tight, catchy and only get lost in the instrumental sauce a few times, while the vocals feature some seriously gorgeous harmonies and their lyrics exude a brilliant wit and straightforwardness. At its heart, *Because It's True* is an easy listen, perfect for those hazy summer days, or even punishing, boiling night drives. 8/10 Trial Track: "Garden Path" (Stephan Boissonneault)



Karma Glider, *Ocean Honey Violence* (Mothland)
This little EP from Karma Glider, a follow-up to last year's *Future Fiction*, might have one of the most clever yet hilarious openings to an EP in recent memory. Using the same style as a rapper hyping himself up before dropping some serious bars, Karma Glider frontman Susil Sharma uses AI and interview snippets on the song "Back" to make his project seem god-like. We then jump into "Sugarcane," with its bubblegum-shoegaze guitar synth intro that ends with a reverb-soaked and warped instrumental line that continues into the sunken "Saltwater." Right down to the EP cover, this bundle of songs feels immediate — not sat on and over-contemplated — but made on pure instinct, which is what art should be about. *Future Fiction* was a pretty safe record that dabbled in shoegaze with a small hip hop influence. *Ocean Honey Violence* is more experimental and less straightforward, sometimes to its detriment and sometimes to its success. Maybe it could have been cooked a bit more, but there are some stellar moments nonetheless. 7/10 Trial Track: "Submarine" (Stephan Boissonneault)

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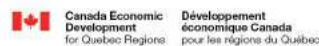


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film

A chat with Ricky, Julian and Bubbles



BY DAVE MACINTYRE

Ricky, Julian and Bubbles are still going strong a near quarter century after Trailer Park Boys first aired, and continue to sit atop their thrones as the kings of Sunnyvale Trailer Park.

Beyond their beloved mockumentary sitcom, the Trailer Park Boys brand has spawned movies, live specials and a whole lot of merch — building an empire far greater than the parameters of Sunnyvale.

Now, the most famous trio to emerge from any trailer park (let alone one in Nova Scotia) are coming back to Montreal for an appearance at the upcoming Montreal Comiccon, taking place at Palais des Congrès from July 5 to 7, where the three will be signing autographs and doing photo ops each day.

The boys, aka John Paul Tremblay, Robb Wells and Mike Smith — who each spoke to *Cult MTL* in character over the phone — love Montreal, and are excited to come back to town after a lengthy absence... and especially after a particularly hilarious incident involving Dunn's smoked meat.

Here's how our chat went down.

Dave MacIntyre: When were you last in Montreal?

Ricky: That's a good question.

Julian: I drove up and watched a couple Habs games. That's the last time I visited Montreal. As a group, it's been many years.

DM: Which memories of Montreal trips stick out most to you?

Bubbles: That's a great question, because a lot of those trips are very blurry.

J: Ricky ended up in the drunk tank one time. He's not really good with French, so there was a police officer who's talking away, and Ricky thought... He didn't understand what he was saying, anyways, so it turned into a bit of a nightmare.

B: Ricky also stole an entire side of smoked meat out of Dunn's one night, wasted.

DM: Oh my God! Please tell me all about that.

B: We just went in to order. Ricky was hungry, the lineup was long. When the guy went down to go into the kitchen to get some stuff, Ricky just went behind the thing and put a whole side of it under his arm and ran.

DM: That sounds like pretty typical Ricky.

B: Then Julian stole some bags of bread, and I stole the condiments. We went over to the park there, across the street, and we just drove about 19 Dunn's sandwiches into us.

DM: I hope those were some good sandwiches. It sounds like you went through quite the ordeal to procure them!

J: You guys have good smoked meat there, that's for sure.

R: And bagels. Good bagels. Another time, we went to the F1 race and almost died. We got sunstroke. That was a weird one... It was 50 degrees at the track, man. It was crazy. That was quite a few years ago now.

J: We weren't hydrating ourselves. We just kept drinking liquor.

DM: You're coming here for Montreal Comiccon soon. What do you think of comic-cons in general? How do you feel whenever you're at one?

B: Comic-cons are fantastic, because normally when we're doing a show, the fans are right out of 'er. They're high and drunk, and half of them don't know where they are. But at the comic-cons, everybody comes in, they might be a little baked or whatever, but they're not falling down drunk. It's a lot easier to talk to people.

DM: It's not like you're at a convention full of Mr. Laheys.

J: No!

R: That's a good point. People seem really happy to see us — all the fans have been fantastic.

B: And people are constantly slipping drugs to Ricky, so he enjoys that.

DM: What can fans expect from your Montreal Comiccon appearance this year?

B: We'll be there, we'll be at the table signing stuff, whatever

people want signed. Getting pictures. Chatting, hanging out.

J: Probably be some drinks flying around.

B: There'll be some drinking, and there'll be some things ingested that make you high, probably.

J: We'll usually get up and do a Q&A for about 20 minutes, half an hour or so.

B: If people are in town, they should come down and see us! Come hang out and say hi. It's a good time, especially if you've got kids. Or even if you don't, and you just want to take some gummies and come down and look at all the people dressed up. I wouldn't suggest coming to it on mushrooms, I'll say that.

DM: *laughs* Sounds a little overwhelming.

B: Well just, you know, all of a sudden you're talking to Pikachu, and you can't tell if it's real or not.

DM: Pretty much! I'm sure you guys probably come across people dressed up as you at comic-cons too, right?

J: There is a little bit of that going on, yeah. It's cool.

B: We've probably seen 50 Mr. Laheys in the last couple years. A bunch of Randys. Lots of Green Bastards show up.

DM: You guys recently performed with Snoop Dogg, whom you've had quite a history with. What is it about Snoop that makes you want to keep working with him again and again?

J: He's just so cool, man. He's the man. Everybody loves Snoop Dogg. He's a great businessman, great performer. People just love him.

R: He's got Olympic lungs.

DM: What's smoking with him like? I've heard rumours he's a bit of a joint hog.

B: He's not! He's not a hog. If you're standing in a circle with six people, he lights six gigantic joints. He's definitely not a joint hog.

DM: I've heard of some people accusing him of being that!

B: Not any time we've been with him! It's like, "Snoop, could you stop passing me joints? I've barely even exhaled this one, now I've got two more in my hand!"

R: I can keep up with him, no problem. A lot of people have trouble.

DM: Paint a picture for me of what life in Sunnyvale is like in 2024. What has changed in the park, and what has stayed the same?

J: Since Lahey [actor John Dunsworth] passed away, things are a lot quieter. Randy was chilled out for a bit, but he's starting to think that he's the boss around there. We're constantly getting into bullshit arguments and fights with him.

R: People moved into the park from all over the world. It's definitely different.

DM: All over the world? Like where?

J: Housing's a bit of a problem here. People must've watched our show and thought it was cool to live in Sunnyvale. There's a lot of people we don't know there.

R: People from India. Ukraine.

J: Sweden. Germany.

R: Some of them are hard to understand, but they're nice people.

B: I don't like that Russian bastard down at the end of the park. Viktor. Something shady about him. He's funnelling secrets back to the motherland.

→ Montreal Comiccon runs from July 5–7 at Palais des Congrès (1001 Place Jean-Paul Riopelle). Check montrealcomiccon.com for ticket details.



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On Screen



Sing Sing



Deadpool & Wolverine



Twisters



Bookworm

BY JUSTINE SMITH

Can *Deadpool & Wolverine* (July 26) save the superhero genre? Uniting two of the most popular Marvel characters, Ryan Reynolds and Hugh Jackman join forces as two morally flexible and reluctant superheroes to fight a common enemy. Montreal-born Shawn Levy directs one of the most anticipated blockbusters of the year.

What's better than a Twister? *Twisters* (July 19), obviously. Adopting the James Cameron *Alien\$* titling strategy, one of the most popular films of the 1990s is revived for a new generation. Glen Powell stars in this update of the 1996 classic, which centres on a pair of storm chasers who risk their lives in an attempt to test an experimental weather alert system.

Believe it or not, it's been well over a decade since minions were unleashed onto the world with the release of the first *Despicable Me* film back in 2010. While the yellow banana-loving monsters have now utilised their popularity in the original film, they're back to supporting roles this summer in *Despicable Me 4* (July 3). Gru, a criminal mastermind, adopts three orphans as pawns to carry out the biggest heist in history. His life takes an unexpected turn when the little girls see the evildoer as their potential father. The film features (as always) an all-star voice cast including

Steve Carell, Will Ferrell, Julie Andrews, Will Arnett and many more.

In his collaboration with Mia Goth, in *X* and *Pearl*, horror director Ti West has finally made his mark on the mainstream. With *MaXXXine* (July 5), the two reunite to close out the unofficial slasher trilogy about fame, as we rejoin adult movie star Maxine and her attempt to break into the mainstream in 1985 Los Angeles.

For more spookiness, hype has only been growing for the Nicolas Cage film *Longlegs* (July 12). Cage stars as FBI Agent Lee Harker, who's assigned to an unsolved serial killer case that takes an unexpected turn, revealing evidence of the occult. Harker discovers a personal connection to the killer and must stop him before he strikes again. The supporting cast includes Maika Monroe, Alicia Witt and Kiernan Shipka. Preview audiences are already calling it one of the best horror films of the decade.

For a lighter horror comedy adventure, *We Are Zombies* (July 17) is the latest film from hometown favourites RKSS (*Turbo Kid*). In a city infested with the living-impaired — aka non-cannibal zombies — three slackers after easy money must fight small-time crooks and an evil megacorporation to save their kidnapped grandma.

For an old-school romantic comedy with a 1960s twist, check out *Fly Me to the Moon* (July 12) starring Scarlett Johansson and Channing Tatum. Marketing maven Kelly Jones wreaks havoc on moon-mission launch director Cole Davis's already difficult task. When the White House deems the mission too important to fail, Jones is directed to stage a fake moon landing as a back-up.

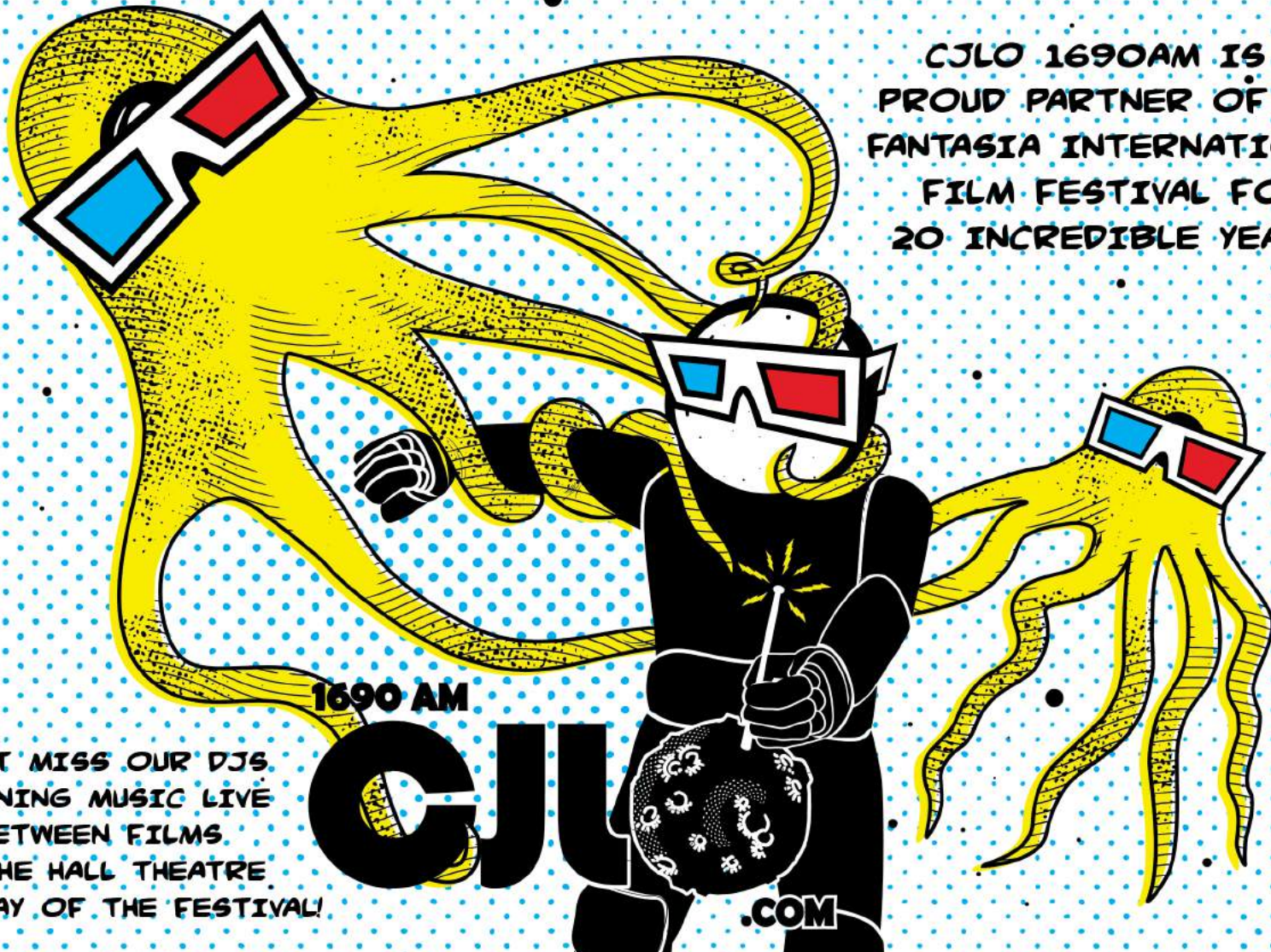
One of the biggest crowd pleasers to premiere at TIFF last year is finally hitting cinemas. *Sing Sing* (July 19) is based on the real-life Rehabilitation Through the Arts program at Sing Sing Maximum Security Prison. The film focuses on a group of inmates involved in the creation of theatrical stage shows through the program. It stars professional actors Colman Domingo and Paul Raci, alongside many real-life, formerly incarcerated men who were themselves alumni of the program.

Back once again for all your Asian and genre cinema needs, the Fantasia International Film Festival runs this year from July 18 to Aug. 4. Some of the announced lineup includes the world premiere of the Elijah Wood film *Bookworm*, YouTuber turned filmmaker Chris Stuckmann's *Shelby Oaks* and Nobuhiro Yamashita's *Confession* are among the early announcements. (The full program was due to drop within 24 hours of this magazine going to print.)

Every summer, the Cinémathèque Québécoise does an expansive thematic series. This year, they will shed a spotlight on science fiction films featuring over 100 films including *Metropolis*, *Solaris*, *The Matrix*, *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Interstellar*, and *Arrival*. To round up the program, they will also feature a special sub-program called Spielberg and Lucas, The Beginnings, dedicated to the early works of these American masters. The cycle opened on July 2 with a screening of Terry Gilliam's *12 Monkeys* and Chris Marker's short film *La Jetée*. It runs until the end of August.

For some other seasonal activities, be sure to head to the free outdoor screening series Film Noir au Canal, which begins its season on July 14 and will run every Sunday for just over a month.

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: weird era



BY SRUTI ISLAM AND ALEX NIERENHAUSEN

More about books you should read, and the authors who wrote them, that were recently featured on the Weird Era podcast.

The Coin by Yasmin Zaher

I cannot emphasize how significant this novel has been for me. In *The Coin*, we meet a seemingly wealthy Palestinian woman navigating life in New York City. Seemingly, because she finds herself struggling with her inaccessible inheritance, memories of her lost homeland and her quest for identity in America. Think, *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* meets the Middle East. Teaching at an underprivileged school, our narrator befriends a homeless man and becomes entangled in an international scheme involving Birkin bags. As she grapples with her sexuality, and her fixation on purity and control intensifies, she draws

her students into her obsessions. Her trauma fills her body, and is then projected out in the world in unexpected ways. In this episode, I talk to Yasmin about physicality, sexuality, the dirtiness of cities and problematic female narrators and their students. (SI)

Good Want by Domenica Martinello

Montrealer Domenica Martinello makes a triumphant return to the poetry scene with her newest collection, *Good Want*. While her debut *All Day I Dream About Sirens* tackles myth, *Good Want* is all about religion, prayer, devotion. What is desire, she asks, and how do we define “good” wanting vs. “bad” wanting? Are poetry and prayer two sides of the same coin? Does growing up poor give you an upper hand in the search for godliness? What even IS godliness? All is laid bare in this stunning collection, best read on a sweltering day by the canal when there’s nothing else to do but contemplate. In this episode, we talk fake Catholics, confession, craft and how poetry can be prayer. (AN)

How It Works Out by Myriam Lacroix

In Myriam Lacroix’s debut novel *How It Works Out*, we explore the relationship between Myriam and Allison, a young lesbian couple, through a series of hypotheticals. What if the only cure for Myriam’s depression was Allison’s flesh? What if they were housepets planning an escape from their owner? What if they were famous self-help authors who were celebrity friends with Tegan and Sara? As their relationship unfurls across the multiverse, each reality offers new insights, perils and deeper connections to themselves and the world. Come for Lacroix’s brilliant new voice in the queer CanLit landscape, and stay for the delicious absurdity of her mind. In this episode, we discuss queer fiction, the Canadian literary landscape, love as hunger, and parallel worlds. (AN)

The Weird Era podcast is available via Apple and Spotify. @weirdera.ca

: game jam



BY NATALIA YANCHAK

Summer Game Fest, founded by games journalist Geoff Keighley in 2020, has become possibly the biggest event where games are announced, celebrated and revealed in the North American market.

The week-long festival, which took place in June, kicked off with the titular Summer Game Fest (SGF), followed by a series of themed and curated announcement events, including Day of the Devs, Women-Led Studios and Latin American Games Showcase. On the AAA slate, we saw the announcement for Montreal-developed *Assassin’s Creed Shadows* during the main SGF event, as well as the Ubisoft Forward and Xbox events that happened later in the week.

Games advocate and Game Awards host Keighley founded SGF to fill a void left by the cancellation of the industry’s most reviled gathering of devs and droppage of trailers, E3 (amongst other more B2B conventions postponed during the pandemic). For various reasons, E3 never recovered and is now

defunct. In its place is the almighty, weeklong hybrid SGF where some of the year’s most anticipated titles are revealed.

The visibility, especially for an indie title during the main event, is real: the recorded stream has seven million views on YouTube alone, and that doesn’t include people who watched on other platforms like Twitch. A reveal at SGF could potentially translate into a lot of wishlists and some killer interest.

Below are just some of the hundreds of games in the spotlight during SGF (but by no means a definitive list of every Montreal-developed title):

While publishers reportedly pay big bucks (upwards of \$480K CAD) to feature their trailers in the main event, some curated spots are given to selected titles. One of these spots was given to Montreal studio Paper Cult, who announced their latest game *Tears of Metal* -- a hack-and-slash co-op roguelike set in medieval Scotland -- right after the announcement of *Street Fighter 6*.

During the Future of Play event, we saw the announcement of *Echo Generation: Midnight Edition*, out July 19 from Montreal’s Cococucumber — an award-winning, turn-based action-adventure RPG with a throwback feel, set in the '90s.

Montreal studio Impossible announced the release date for *Été*, a relaxing painting game (set in Montreal) during the Wholesome Direct event. *Été* is set to be released on July 23 -- and its stunningly detailed, hand-painted style will remind you why you love living in Montreal!

The Future Games Show gave us the announcement of *Happy Bastards* from Clever Plays. *Happy Bastards* is set in a playful, parody-filled fantasy world. It’s a tactical RPG with turn-based combat in which you assemble and manage a squad of unruly, mindless mercenaries as you explore, fight and loot your way to fame and fortune.

The PC Gaming Show announced the demo for *Aloft*, built by Astrolabe Studios -- a gliding-forward, co-op sandbox survival game set in a world of floating islands. Craft your home, find lost knowledge, cure the fungal corruption and brave the hurricane as you gather resources and restore the ecosystem to its natural state.

Most of these games have free demos you can play right now, and if you wishlist them on Steam and follow the games, you’ll get updates as they are announced. You can also get hands-on with dozens of Quebec-developed titles (including *Aloft*) at the Loto-Québec Indie-Zone during this year’s Comiccon (July 5–7).



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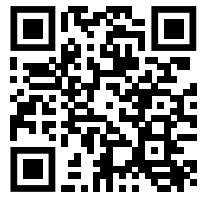
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