



JUNE 2025 • Vol. 13 No. 9 • CULTMTL.COM

FREE

\* Alicia Moffet \* Suoni Per Il Popolo \* Pasta Pooks \* Montreal Fringe \* CAQ vs. doctors



# Wagie Farm

Berlinale  
Internationale  
Filmfestspiele  
Berlin

OFFICIAL SELECTION 2025  
sundance  
film festival



**Starring**  
Chloë Sevigny  
Alex Wolff  
Guillermo Jacubowicz  
Amalia Ulman  
Joe Apollonio  
Valeria Lois  
Camila del Campo  
and Simon Rex

A film by Amalia Ulman

**"Wild and smart"**  
The Hollywood Reporter

**"A biting satire"**  
Variety



MUBI

GET 30  
DAYS FREE  
[mubi.com/cultmtl](https://mubi.com/cultmtl)

Montreal Street Photography

See the exhibition now

# Pounding

# the Pavement

**McCord  
Stewart  
Museum  
Montreal**

Buy your ticket online  
and save \$2



This project has been made possible by  
Ce projet a été rendu possible grâce à



Library and Archives  
Canada

Bibliothèque et Archives  
Canada



TOURISME /  
MONTREAL

fugues



The Gazette



Montréal

Québec



# table of contents

# Cult MTL is...



Quebec City-born Montreal pop singer-songwriter Alicia Moffet, who you may know from her time coming up on reality TV (and continuing role as host of Occupation Double), told us about her new, third album No, I'm Not Crying.

Cover photo by Lian Benoit

Cover photo by Jen Rosenstein

<b>city</b>	
CAQ vs. doctors	6
:best buds	8
:the 1st half	10
<b>food &amp; drink</b>	
Pasta Pooks	12
<b>music</b>	
Alicia Moffet	14
Karneef	16
Suoni Per Il Popolo	18
:hammer of the mods	20
Album reviews	22
<b>film</b>	
On Screen	24
<b>arts</b>	
Summer Arts Calendar	26
Fringe Festival	28
:weird era	30

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

Justine Smith  
film editor  
justine.smith@cultmontreal.com

Clayton Sandhu  
food editor

Dave MacIntyre  
contributing editor (music)

Savannah Stewart  
contributing editor (arts)

Paul Desbaillets  
contributing editor (football culture)

Chris Tucker  
art director

Advertising  
ads@cultmontreal.com

Contributors:  
Stephan Boissonneault  
Johnson Cummins  
Toula Drimonis  
Sruti Islam  
Darcy MacDonald  
Alex Nierenhausen  
Joseph Sannicandro  
Mr. Wavvy

Special Thanks:  
Tristan McKenna

General inquiries + feedback  
info@cultmontreal.com



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

**cultmtl.com**

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

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada.

Funded by the Government of Canada | **Canada**

ADVERTISING IN  
CULT  
MTL

ADS@CULTMONTREAL.COM



# MYRIADE



café myriade - mille carré doré  
1432 rue mackay

café myriade - le plateau  
4627 rue saint-denis

café myriade - westmount  
347 av. victoria

café myriade - mont-royal  
28 av. mont-royal o.

café myriade - shaughnessy village  
2021 av. atwater, #100

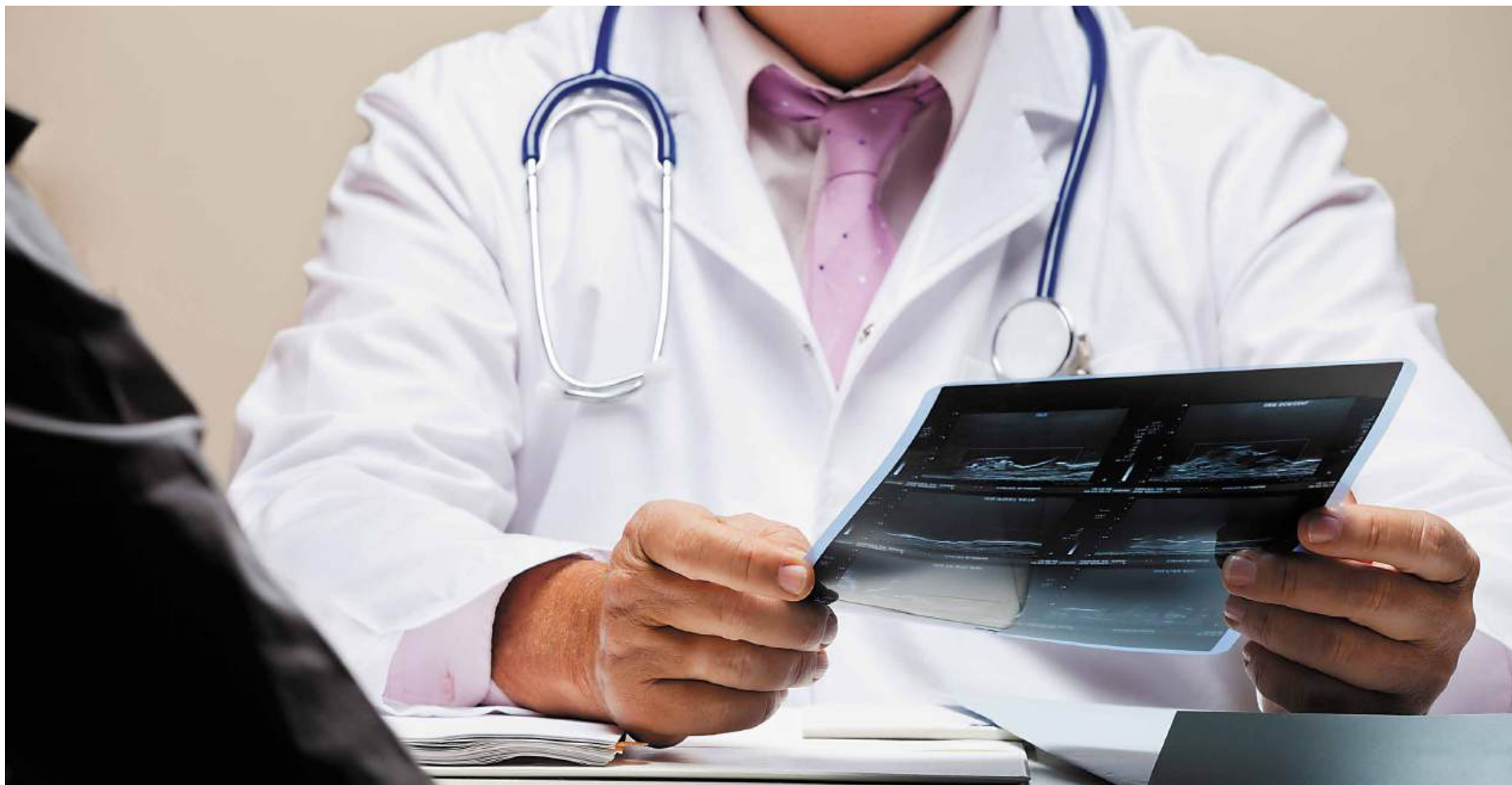
[www.cafemyriade.com](http://www.cafemyriade.com)



3780 Saint-Patrick St., Montreal, Quebec H4E 1A2



## CAQ vs. Quebec doctors



BY TOULA DRIMONIS

Dr. \*Smith, a physician and director of a Montreal-based GMF (Groupe de Médecine de Famille) who spoke to me on condition of anonymity, says she first came to Quebec when she attended McGill University.

“I fell in love with the culture here and decided to stay,” she says. But the CAQ government’s latest bill affecting the province’s medical professionals may just be the last straw for her. And many others.

“When you start comparing to other provinces,” she says, “if Quebec continues to be more and more restrictive, why not go to where my family is?”

On May 8, Health Minister Christian Dubé tabled a surprise bill aiming to introduce “collective responsibility and accountability for improving access to medical services.”

How does the CAQ government plan to do that? By ensuring, they say, that 25% of the remuneration package for family doctors be linked to their performance. This decision has them feeling frustrated, discouraged and, for some, downright livid.

Dr. Véronique Godbout, a practising physician and orthopedic surgeon for the past 17 years, and the president of the Quebec Orthopedic Association, says the government is essentially penalizing them for its own inefficiencies.

“They tabled a bill that affects our remuneration without even consulting us while we’re in negotiations,” she says. “It’s like imprisoning us in a dysfunctional system where we’re lacking in major resources and where they continue to implement major cuts, but 25% of our remuneration will now depend on whether we achieve the objectives that they set for us.”

Dr. Godbout refers to these actions as “disrespectful and denigrating,” labelling them as “harassment and intimidation.”

This move follows a series of confrontational and authoritarian measures. Bill 83, which aims to stem the exodus of doctors to the private sector and proposes restrictions on doctors, makes it much harder for them to move between public and private sectors, as well as attempting to force physicians to practise in the public system for at least five years after graduating. The measures have been met with concern by doctors’ federations, patient advocates and policy analysts who worry that punitive measures will only exacerbate the problems they seek to solve.

The attempt to modify doctors’ remuneration model comes in the middle of negotiations to renew the framework agreement for doctors and has already been rejected by delegates from the Fédération des médecins omnipraticiens du Québec (FMOQ). They say the government’s move is an attempt to hold them responsible for their own continued failings in this file and they worry that if 25% of physicians’ salaries is tied to collective performance indicators that are beyond their control as GMFs, it jeopardizes the financial viability of many clinics. This means access to primary care

could be seriously compromised, and medical clinics could be forced to close.

“Doctors pay a percentage of their income to these clinics,” says Dr. Smith. “Salaries haven’t gone up that much, while inflation has. A lot of clinics won’t be able to survive if doctors start leaving. If a clinic closes, it impacts far more than just the patients of the doctors who left.”

She says the current system in place for GMFs is extremely restrictive.

“There’s already so much bureaucracy and restrictions around our practice here, whereas if you look at any other province, if a family doctor wants to practice, no one is telling them how to. We’re already in a position where a lot of people are doing what they don’t necessarily want to do but they have to. There’s this constant stress because of restrictions already in place.”

Dr. Smith is concerned about burnout. “I worry that it’s yet another thing that’s going to create animosity and frustration with the system,” she says. “It’s going to create a significant exodus.”

For the first 15 years of their practice in Quebec, family doctors must do a minimum of 6 to 12 hours in an activity the government deems to be in need, such as obstetrics, emergency, work in CHSLDs, homecare, etc. “But that takes away time from their clinic,” Dr. Smith, says. “When you start adding performance indicators, many doctors will question how they can manage to see their patients. It may be the last straw for them.”

While she says these doctors may feel guilty about abandoning their patients (and the government may frame



it that way), it's mostly about working conditions and quality of life.

"There's this notion," Dr. Smith says, "that because you're in healthcare — and I'm sure it also applies to nurses when they're negotiating their contracts — because you're taking care of vulnerable populations, you're expected to do it out of the goodness of your heart, and you can't negotiate. Because if you do, then you should feel guilty. But in any other field, if someone is offered lower pay with more restrictions, no lunch breaks, we would tell them to go somewhere else."

La Presse recently revealed that even the government's own committee of experts didn't recommend doctors' pay be tied to performance indicators. It's not the first time the CAQ government has been accused of failing to listen to its own experts and rushing through decisions that people on the ground denounce as unhelpful and counterproductive.

While Dr. Smith agrees that the current formula doesn't work and there's a need for changes, "those changes need to be brainstormed with everyone involved."

"It feels patronizing and authoritarian," she says. "To have 25% of your pay dependent on performance and you don't even have any control over that performance? That's life-changing for a lot of people."

She predicts people will leave.

"I've always said that I would move provinces before going private because I think that public healthcare is so important," she says, "and I'm at the point of thinking, 'Do I go back to my home province? Other than my patients themselves, what's keeping me here?' For me to be reflecting on this is very telling."

And if doctors leave, she warns, "those who stay are probably going to be in an even worse position. The strain is only going to increase for those who remain."

Dr. Godbout sees a similar pattern. "On the doctors' groups I belong to, I see many ready to leave the province and even change professions," she says. "I see a lot of comments indicating major frustration. People are very angry, they're insulted and they don't feel like practising in Quebec anymore. Our groups are national, and I've never seen so many messages from Quebec doctors asking what the work conditions are in Alberta, Ontario or B.C. These doctors are being actively recruited and being told that other provinces lack doctors, and that they should move there, that they'll be better paid, better respected. For example, Ontario just legislated to better protect family medicine."

Dr. Godbout says that the situation also affects her field in orthopedics. "I have quite a few orthopedic doctors currently in private practice," she says, "hesitant to re-enter public practice because of these conditions and demands."

She denounces the lack of collaboration. "All the actions that have recently been undertaken by the government," she says, "are diminishing access to healthcare services. It's doing the exact opposite of what they say they want."

Premier François Legault recently pointed out that, in his opinion, "two-thirds of doctors take care of Quebecers, but there is a third who need to do more."

Dr. Godbout warns that such statements lack nuance.

"They say a third of doctors are working part-time, but have they looked to see why?" she says. "Some are progressively returning after being on disability leave, some have health restrictions and can't do more, and some are older doctors

who, instead of retiring, have decided to stay in practice to help out and work part-time. There are so many possible scenarios. Doctors are human, too. It's not because you have a medical degree that you can't get sick or become pregnant. The risks of burnout and suicide are very real in our profession because we don't have the help and resources that we need. This is just not the right approach."

Dr. Godbout says the government should be looking at why excessive bureaucracy and a lack of staff take up so much of doctors' time.

"After my clinic and seeing patients, I spend so much time opening computers and opening applications," she says. "Clicking on 15 links just so I can print a document for a patient or spending time posing questions that I could have read far more quickly if the answers were already available to me and questions had been asked by a doctor's assistant or a nurse. If all this work that's not specific to my expertise was being done by other people, I could potentially see more patients. But none of this is happening because of major service cuts."

In the meantime, Minister Dubé has stated on social media that he's working "to ensure that 100% of Quebecers are cared for by the summer of 2026."

Doctors see it as the political campaigning that it is.

"We're discouraged," Dr. Godbout says. "We don't know where this is going to go. It's been 17 years that I've been a practising physician and it's always the same thing. A certain amount of time before an election, the bullying starts. But I don't think it's going to work this time around. I think Quebecers know we're not lazy and we work hard. We take our jobs very seriously."



24 → 28 SEPTEMBER • 2025

POP MONTREAL

QUEL FUCKING PLAISIR!

FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DE MUSIQUE

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL

ALBERT DALTON • ANNIE-CLAUDE DESCHÊNES • **ASMAA HAMZAOUI & BNAT TIMBOUKTOU** • BANANEBANANE • BILLIANNE **BOLIS PUPUL** • BOUVIER NORMAL • **CHANEL BEADS** • CIRCUIT DES YEUX • CLEAR CHANNEL • COMET • COMMON HOLLY COOTIE CATCHER • **DAM** • DANIEL SON • **DO MAKE SAY THINK** • ELIZA NIEMI • **FAT DOG** • FLOWER FACE • FOLD PAPER • GARDEN OF LOVE GOOD FLYING BIRDS • **HAND HABITS** • HAWA B • **ISABELLA LOVESTORY** • JAYWOOD • JAY WREH • **JESUSLESFILLES** JOE'S TRUCK STOP • **JOSEPH SHABASON** • JULES REIDY • **LA FORCE** • KEE AVIL • LAEL NEALE • **LANKUM** • LES SHIRLEY LITTLE MAZARN • **MAPPE OF** • MATT HECKLER • **MEGGIE LENNON** • MEGHAN DOWLEN • **MICHEL PAGLIARO** • MIMO • MODEM **MÚM** • MYRIAM GENDRON • NARCY • **NO JOY** • PISS • PURE PULP • **QUAL** • RACHEL BOBBITT • **REYMOUR** • RISE CARMINÉ • SIDI BLUE MOON TARANEH • **TEKE::TEKE** • TUKAN • **U.S. GIRLS** • URA STAR & FIREBALL KID • **ZOLA JESUS** • ZOM ZOM ... AND MANY MORE!

200+ ARTISTS, 5 DAYS OF MUSIC, ARTS, CONFERENCES, CRAFT FAIR, KIDS ACTIVITIES AND SO MUCH MORE

TICKETS & PASSES ON SALE NOW @ **POPMONTREAL.COM**

SiriusXM

FACTOR

Canada

Québec

Montréal

TOURISME / MONTREAL

Conseil des arts du Canada

Canada Council for the Arts

CONSEIL DES ARTS DE MONTRÉAL

SOCAN

UBISOFT

WILLS

MTS

MUSICB.C.

CREATIVE

RACS

seltzer

MC ADAM

JeGt

STEREODUM

CULT

ekur

ORO

Ce projet est financé en partie par FACTOR, le gouvernement du Canada et les radiodiffuseurs privés du Canada. Nous remercions le Conseil des arts du Canada de son soutien. Ce projet est réalisé grâce au soutien financier du gouvernement du Québec, de Tourisme Montréal, de la Ville de Montréal et le Conseil des arts de Montréal.

This project is funded in part by FACTOR, the Government of Canada and Canada's private radio broadcasters. We acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts. This project is made possible thanks to the financial support of the Gouvernement du Québec, Tourisme Montréal, Ville de Montréal and le Conseil des arts de Montréal.



# : best buds



BY DAVE MACINTYRE

We are already halfway through the year, and it feels like it should still be 2024.

This calendar year has flown by incredibly quickly for me, and not just because I've spent a significant percentage of my spare time high. It's also because it'll be my birthday within a week or so of me writing this. I'm already at the age where weddings and baby showers are becoming increasingly regular occurrences within my friend circles, and it's giving me all kinds of mixed emotions.

Luckily, weed is highly enjoyable at any age and phase of life, even if it'll get you all reflective and in your thoughts and feels. Mango Fuel is my product of choice this month, courtesy of Clem&Co. Grown in Cookshire-Eaton (just outside Sherbrooke), this sativa contains limonene as its primary terpene, making for

a citrusy aroma and a head high that packs a punch. In other words, not a bad option for some early summer smoking.

CLEM&CO MANGO FUEL (SATIVA)

The name "mango fuel" is a fitting one. As soon as you open the container and take a whiff of these bad boys, they manage to smell fruity and a bit gassy at once for me, and the fruity taste is evident when I inhale it with my pipe. Once you smoke it, it'll get you nice and toasty, with the high very much concentrated around your head. It's a comfortable kind of head high, though, even if I feel it especially around my eyes (and my shoulders start to feel a bit numb, too, for some reason). The buds are moist and not too sticky, and it takes a good week or so for them to really dry up. In any case, it keeps me on a pretty steady wave for a good stretch of time, and with enough energy one would expect from a 24% THC sativa, and that's enough to make me happy.

It's also not a bad choice for weekend smoking or a post-work spliff. Going on a walk in the neighbourhood and through alleyways while smoking joints of this stuff was pretty cool, and I'm glad I don't have to bundle up literally every time I leave my place. Mind you, I still had to be hyper-aware of my surroundings during these neighbourhood walks, given the weather's now warm enough for kids to start playing outside again. On the flip side, being high on a sativa like this is the best when it's nighttime and it's breezy but not too cold — hoodie and sweatpants weather, baby. Hopefully it'll be more shorts and t-shirt weather soon enough (but not tooooo much in our ecological climate, of course). 8/10

## LET TERRACE SEASON BEGIN!

# LA TERRASSE ST-AMBROISE



A symbol of the return of sunny days, the legendary Terrasse Saint-Ambroise is finally reopening its doors along the Lachine Canal. Cold beer, sun on your skin, laid-back atmosphere and stunning view: all the ingredients are here to enjoy a perfect Montréal summer."

5080 ST-AMBROISE, MONTREAL, QC, CANADA, H4C 2G1





# FACE RIDER



**FRAN CHUDNOFF + DRIFTNOTE  
+ ANGELA CABRERA**

**WITH: RYAN KOSTYNIUK + CAL  
+ ROBERTO SORIA + JESSICA MAK**

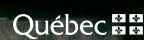
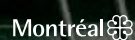
**JUNE 18 — 21**

**dance, fashion, music, performance**

**3680 jeanne-mance  
m-a-i.qc.ca**

© Roya DelSol

produced by:





# :the 1st half



BY PAUL DESBAILLETS

The 2024–25 Premier League season wrapped up with all the drama, glory and heartbreak that fans have come to expect. From Liverpool's winning title run to the relegation woes of newly promoted sides, the season was a rollercoaster of emotions.

For the first time in many years, the final day of matches actually meant something to the teams fighting to make the European Championships.

Liverpool clinched their second Premier League title with four games to spare, finishing the season with 84 points. Mohamed Salah was instrumental, netting 29 goals to tie the Premier League record for goal involvements in a season.

For the first time, six English clubs qualified for the UEFA Champions League:

- Liverpool (Champions)
- Arsenal (2nd place)
- Manchester City (3rd place)
- Chelsea (4th place)

- Newcastle United (5th place)
- Tottenham Hotspur (17th place, qualified by winning the Europa League)

Aston Villa and Crystal Palace secured spots in the Europa League, with Palace earning their place by winning the FA Cup. Nottingham Forest will represent England in the UEFA Conference League.

All three newly promoted teams — Leicester City, Ipswich Town and Southampton — were relegated after just one season in the topflight. This marked only the third time in English top-flight history that all three promoted teams went straight back down.

As we bid farewell to the relegated sides, we welcome three new teams to the Premier League:

- Leeds United: Championship winners, returning after a brief stint in the second tier.
- Burnley: Secured automatic promotion alongside Leeds, showcasing a solid campaign.
- Sunderland: Triumphed in the Championship play-off final, marking their return to the topflight after several years. (*Watch the Netflix series on the club if you have not seen it yet.*)

As the boots are taken off for the 2024–25 Premier League season, fans are already looking forward to the next chapter in this ever-evolving football saga.

Clubs are now turning their attention to the summer transfer window, aiming to boost their squads for the challenges ahead. The transfer window opened on June 1 and runs through June 10, accommodating the FIFA Club World Cup, and then reopens from June 16 to Sept. 1.

For MLS chatter, I wanted to bring up something I witnessed on May 24.

LAFC's Olivier Giroud (ex-Chelsea FC) showcased his professionalism and class during a 2–2 draw against our CF Montréal. Despite the rainy and cold conditions, Giroud took the time to sign autographs, take photos and engage with fans who had braved the weather to see the World Cup winner. His actions left a lasting impression on the Montreal faithful, exemplifying the spirit of the beautiful game.

Speaking of Chelsea FC, they've become the first club to win each of the five major European trophies after defeating Real Betis to be crowned Conference League champions in the month of May.

## UP THE CHELS!

The inaugural season of the women's Northern Super League features 25 matches before the top four teams advance to the playoffs. The winners of the semifinals proceed to a single-match championship final scheduled for Nov. 15.

Given their current standing, the Montréal Roses FC are well-positioned to qualify for the playoffs. The Roses began the season strongly, securing three consecutive victories, including a 2–1 win over Ottawa Rapid in their home opener on May 3. This was followed by two draws and two losses. With the season still in action (a home game is scheduled for June 7 at Stade Boréale), the team must keep at it to secure a spot and best position.

**BULLA**  
café

@bulla.cafe

4141 Rue Saint Denis, Montreal, QC







# LMN LIVE

MONDAYS  
PIANO PIANO  
Jeff Louch  
7 - 10

TUESDAYS  
Jazz Necessaire  
The Jeff Louch Trio  
7 - 10

## Special Jazz Fest Shows

Monday June 30th  
The Jeff Louch Quartet  
Featuring Erik Hove on Tenor Sax

Tuesday July 1st  
The Jeff Louch Quartet  
Featuring Andy King on Trumpet

Wednesday July 2nd  
The Forbidden Fruitcups  
Featuring Darren Moore on Tenor Sax

Bar Le Mal Nécessaire  
1015 rue St. Alexandre

Presented By 



# food

## Sublime simplicity

BY CLAY SANDHU

Since opening in March, Pasta Pooks has made an undeniable impact on Montreal’s restaurant scene. It’s been called raucous, chaotic — a pasta counter for “cool kids” — and while there’s a grain of truth in each of those descriptors, I believe that’s far too reductive a way to describe what may well be the purveyor of the city’s best fresh pasta.

Taking over the corner lot in Little Italy that was formerly home to Dinette Triple Crown, Pasta Pooks (6704 Clark) is the first brick-and-mortar venture for nomadic *pastaiolo* Luca Labelle Vinci (the titular Pooks of Pasta Pooks). Joining Vinci in the venture are longtime friend and collaborator Victor-Alex Petrenko (Double’s), chef de cuisine Kai Borst (ex-Maison Publique, Lawrence, Mon Lapin) and Martin Pariseau (ex-Menu Extra), who oversees the unnecessarily excellent wine list.

Having amassed a cult following after years of pop-ups across the city, it’s safe to say the Pasta Pooks brand was well cemented before taking root in Little Italy. It’s no wonder there’s regularly a line out the door. Another contributing factor to those consistently long lineups is the microscopically small dining room. With a half-dozen bar seats and two small tables outside, Pasta Pooks is among the smallest dining rooms in the city. And while that might suggest it’s best considered a take-out counter, not eating the food while it’s as hot and fresh as possible would be doing yourself a great disservice.

The menu is straightforward: three pastas, two hoagies and a small handful of antipasti. Before I get into the food, I want to address the most common negative criticism I’ve read about Pasta Pooks: the price. To me, there’s a contextual misunderstanding going on. Sure, the food isn’t served in a traditional dining room, but the quality of the product is second to none, and the portion is fairly generous. No pasta exceeds \$30 on this menu, and I can say from experience that the Conestoga eggs used to make the pasta do not come cheaply. For comparison, many restaurants in town comfortably charge in the high 30s for their plates of made-in-house pasta. I’d say you’re getting very good value for money.

The three pastas available that day were Tagliatelle Bolognese, Tagliolini with pesto and Tortelloni Burro e Oro. I sampled all three.

Let me start with a blanket statement regarding Vinci’s pasta: it is sublime. There is a perfect amount of tenderness and chew. It’s *al dente*, the way that expression is meant to be understood — texturally significant but not hard. Each shape is precise and respectful of the traditions from which it’s derived (something I think is especially important



in pasta, as shape is a key element of regional specificity) and the beautifully craggy surface helps the sauces cling properly in every preparation.

First up, *Tag Bolo*. I’ve written multiple times about tagliatelle Bolognese over the years. It’s a dish I love, from a city I love, and it’s often replicated to underwhelming results. Chef Borst’s preparation is as faithful a representation as I’ve had in Montreal. More orange than red (as it should be), this dish is unctuous and rich from slow cooking and slowly rendered fats. What I like most is the proper use of nutmeg and the fact that the tagliatelle is cut to the right size. Lovely work. I might have liked the sauce to be a bit wetter, but that’s just a matter of personal preference.

Next came the tagliolini in pesto. A tangle of hand-cut tagliolini (a more slender cousin of tagliatelle) bathed in a vibrant green pesto and topped with ricotta salata and lemon zest. This is a fantastic plate of pasta. There’s not a lot of creativity to speak of, but there is mastery and reverence for great dishes that just work. I love to see that kind of restraint, personally. I find it commendable to make classic dishes more or less as they’re meant to be done, and to take great pride in rendering them faithfully — and, more importantly, deliciously. That’s exactly what’s on offer here. And while I have to admit that sauce is not exactly a proper pesto Genovese, it is a delicious pesto and a classic pairing for the shape.

The final dish — Tortelloni Burro e Oro — was my favourite of the three. Nine plump tortelloni are set in a bright and vibrant tomato sauce, mounted with a healthy bit of butter and finished with a scattering of basil leaves. The filling is a blend of four cheeses (I’d assume ricotta, parmesan and pecorino at a minimum) with a generous sprinkle of black

pepper. It’s a dish that is so joyful in its apparent simplicity. For me, that’s the beauty of great pasta — the result is so much greater than the sum of its parts. The sauce is silky and rich from the butter but fragrant and acidic from the tomato. The acidity in the cheeses plays off the sauce, the pepper adds depth and the basil peeks in with an herbaceous high note that rounds it all out. It’s dishes like this that remind you why Italian food is so widely adored.

After three pastas and a few cheeky mortadella and peperoncini *gildas*, I had more than eaten my fill, so I can’t report on the quality of the hoagies or side dishes — though I will say that the asparagus with savoury sabayon and bottarga seemed to be greatly enjoyed by others. The hoagies, from what I understand, are the product of intensive sandwich study in Philadelphia and are assembled on bread custom-made for the project by friends at Boulangerie Automne. During my visit, I saw a number of hoagies fly out as takeout orders, which I take as a good sign.

Is Pasta Pooks Montreal’s best new Italian restaurant? Not exactly. But it is among the very best places in town to eat a plate of pasta. I like the simple, no-reservations approach. Pasta is a joyful food — the kind you eat with reckless abandon, slurping sauce onto your chin. This restaurant is exactly the kind of place you’d hope to have in your neighbourhood when a craving strikes. Is it the cheapest option? No — but I believe it offers exceptional value. And if price is your only motivating factor, you might be happier with the five-dollar gnocchi offered just around the way.

Pasta Pooks may be run by cool kids, and frequented by them, too, but it’s a place that *can* and *should* be enjoyed by everyone. After all, pasta is for the people.



# MONTREAL COMICCON

PRESENTED BY

**le journal  
de montréal**

IN COLLABORATION WITH

**EBOX**  
INTERNET-TÉLÉVISION

POWERED BY

**nixa**  
Propulser l'innovation

**ELIJAH WOOD • ANDY SERKIS • IAN MCDIARMID • WILLIAM SHATNER**

**NATALIA TENA • ROSE MCGOWAN • MIKE COLTER • THEO ROSSI • PETER WELLER • WIL WHEATON**

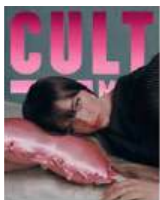
**BILLY BOYD • SEAN ASTIN • BRENT SPINER • JAIME MCGUIRE • JOHN KASSIR • KANE HODDER  
LAZ ALONSO • TOMER CAPONE • ROSS MARQUAND • MICHAEL JAI WHITE • SPENCER GRAMMER  
JIM STARLIN • NICK BRADSHAW • TODD W. LANGEN • JED MACKAY • ED BRISSON • DAVE MCCAIG**

**AND MANY MORE!**



**PALAIS DES CONGRÈS | MONTREALCOMICCON.COM**





## Tears for fears

BY DAVE MACINTYRE

Contrary to the title of her new album, Alicia Moffet isn't afraid of big emotions, and she wants fans to feel the whole range when they listen to her latest songs.

The 26-year-old chanteuse released her third studio album, *No, I'm Not Crying*, on May 30 via Cult Nation. Moffet's newest LP is the most confident and ambitious project to date for a singer who's come a long way from her teenage years coming up through reality shows like *The Next Star* and *La Voix* during the 2010s.

I caught up with Moffet via Zoom while she was in Saskatoon on tour with fellow Canuck pop singer Alessia Cara. Yes, we know what you're thinking: the fact that it's Alessia and Alicia — pronounced *aleesia* — on tour together is hilarious branding, even if by coincidence.

"It's funny, because every time we speak with team members, they never know who we're talking about," she says, laughing. "It's very confusing!"

A native of Quebec City who later moved to Vaudreuil-Dorion with her mother and now calls the North Shore home, Moffet got the last-minute offer to tour with Cara right on time, with her new album *No, I'm Not Crying* still waiting in the wings.

It's been a long time coming, too: Moffet's last release was the single "Didn't Try" in February 2023, following the March 2022 release of her sophomore LP *Intertwine*. She continued touring until early 2024 before starting work on her next album, while also co-hosting *Occupation Double* with boyfriend Frédéric Robichaud.

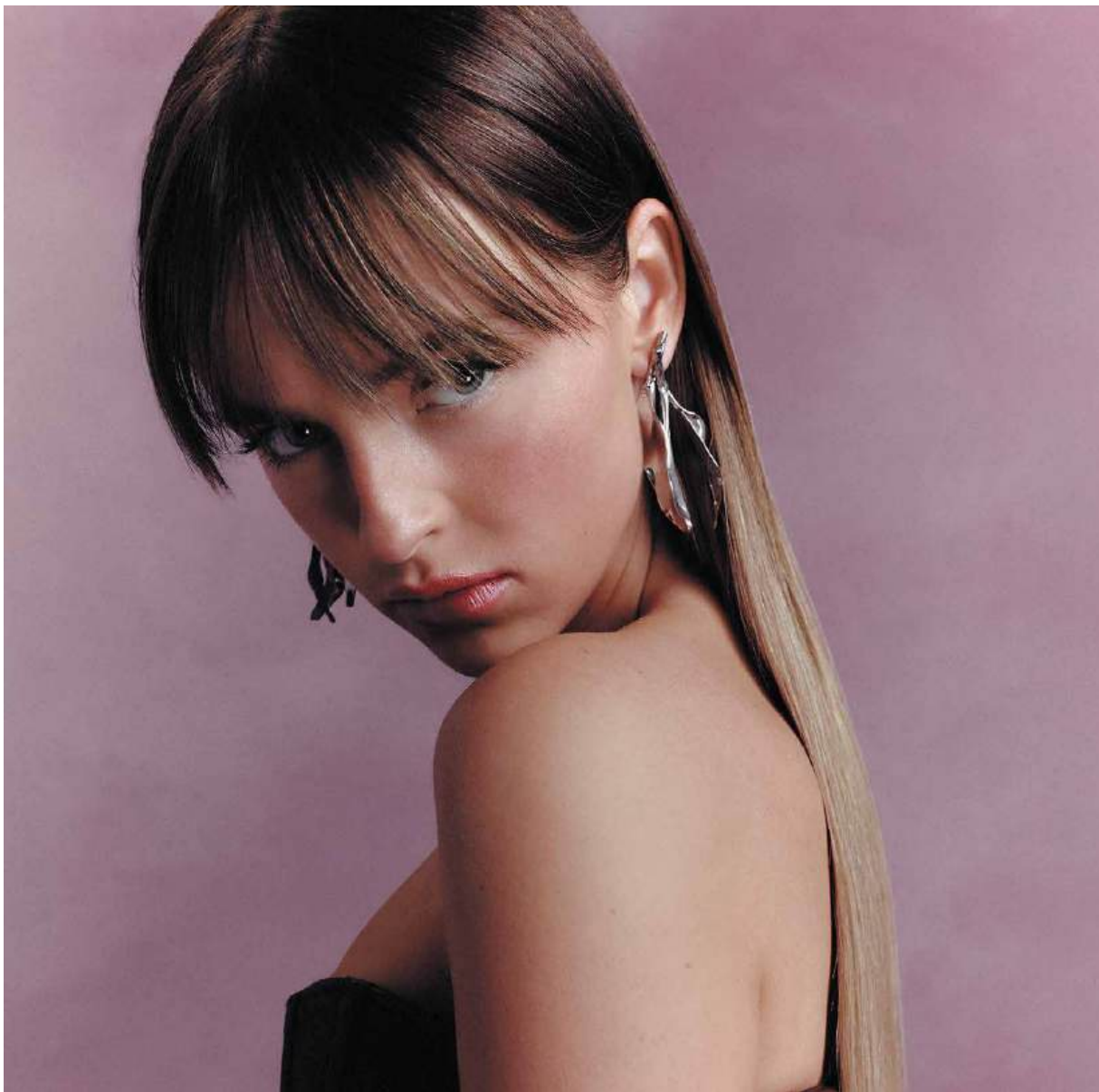
We know what else you're thinking re: the title — it's hard not to mentally add *You're Crying!* to the end of it (a suggestion Moffet laughs at). But make no mistake, the listener will know her feelings are no joking matter.

"It's really a façade," she explains. "When you listen to the lyrics, you're like, 'Okay, she really is crying.' I think (listeners) will too, honestly. If they relate to the lyrics, I think some people will cry."

*No, I'm Not Crying* is the result of nearly a year and a half's worth of work. Moffet describes that process as long, but "soft" rather than rushed, and with a great team behind her. Some songs were finished a year before completing the album, to the point where, Moffet admits, she started overthinking them because she listened to them so much.

"These songs that we thought would be singles, you end up listening for a year straight and you're like, 'I don't know — is it still that good?'" she says. "Then you finish it, you start the promo, you listen back and you're like, 'Okay, this album smashed.'"

*No, I'm Not Crying* is Moffet's first release on Cult Nation — home to Charlotte Cardin — after previously releasing music independently. *No, I'm Not Crying* oscillates between confidence and vulnerability. For Moffet, it's a perfect encapsulation of who she is as a person.



Lian Benoit

"They challenge each other a lot, these two sides of my personality," she says. "I could be onstage joking around, jumping around and being super sassy. Then I just have a stand and a mic, and I'm super vulnerable and in my feels."

Moffet sees songwriting as a day-to-day exercise. She'll come into the studio to write about whatever emotion she's feeling that day. If she's sad because she'd just had a fight, she can't bring herself to write a "sassy" song.

"I can't get into a different headspace for writing," she adds. "I try to train myself into doing that a little bit. At some point, when you're not going through any specific emotion, you arrive at the studio and you're like, 'I have nothing to say or talk about.' That's where you have to dig into old emotions, which I did on this album."

Opening track and lead single "Choke" wastes no time setting an emotional tone. That song talks of leaving a toxic relationship, and knowing when the final straw comes. (To be clear, she doesn't actually hope anyone chokes.)

"I wrote it trying to imagine the first emotion when getting fucked over," Moffet says. "I feel like the first emotion is, 'Fuck you, I hope you fucking choke!'"

"But then you come back down, and you're like, 'No, karma's going to take care of it. You're going to stub your toe. You're going to burn your toast. That'll be karma. That's how I'm going to get you back.'"

Surprisingly, "Choke" — a song transformed from a demo titled "Emergency Room," with a different lyrical theme — wasn't initially a contender to be a single. Moffet and her team had chosen another song as *No, I'm Not Crying*'s lead single before "Choke" was even finished; it was one of the final tracks completed for the album.

"The Girl" is a "cousin" track to the previous song on the album, "Lay Your Light," as both borrow cues from house music. "The Girl" was also the hardest song to finish. After being unable

to flesh out a demo, it was set aside so they could get a better sense of direction for it upon completing other songs.

"I ended up almost cutting it," she says. "At some point I was like, 'I hate it. I hate it so much.' I remember my producer, Sam, sent me a demo one night. He's like, 'Do you like this kind of Drake 'Hold On, We're Going Home' vibe?' I was like, 'Yes, that's exactly what I wanted!' Then I fell in love with the song again, and we finished it."

"Indemne" is a piano ballad that's also the album's only French-language song. Though Moffet is francophone, she views English as the language she most instinctively writes in.

"One day, I was in my car, and very weirdly, this melody came into my mind and I started singing in French," she says. "I voice-recorded myself and I was like, 'This could be good.'"

"I went to my piano in my house and I started writing it, which is never ever ever something I do. I always write in the studio with somebody else... I showed it to the team, and they were like, 'Well, that's good.' That gave me a lot of confidence, because I was like, 'Okay, I can do it by myself.'"

After finishing this run of dates with Alessia Cara, Moffet returns to Montreal for a fan event and album launch. She plans to head back to the studio to make a deluxe edition of the album, as well jetting off to Cyprus for two months to film the next season of *Occupation Double* before doing pre-prod for shows she'll be playing this summer.

Above all else, Moffet wants listeners to feel something when they listen to *No, I'm Not Crying*, and not be left feeling indifferent.

"I want them to feel sad when they listen to 'Hotel W' and empowered when they listen to 'Choke' and 'Fake' and scream 'Lay Your Light' at the top of their lungs," she says. "I want them to relate to the songs the way they relate to it, not because I give them the context... I want them to make it theirs."



PHI

Book your tickets → [PHI.CA](https://phi.ca)

# HABITAT SONORE SUMMER IMPULSE

MAY 15 — JULY 6 2025

An invitation to slow down,  
be carried by enveloping  
sound works and enjoy an  
immersive Dolby Atmos  
experience.



FEATURING:



FLABBERGAST



THANYA IYER



ALL IS WELL  
(Fred Everything)

407 Saint-Pierre Street, Old Montreal

📍 Square-Victoria-OACI / Place-d'Armes

# NICO WILLIAMS BINGO

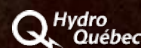
APRIL 25 — SEPT. 14 2025

Nico Williams, *Flamer*, 2022. 11/0 seed beads on thermally-fused/braided polyethylene thread, maple, cottonwood and metal. Courtesy of the artist and Blouin Division. Photo: Paul Litherland.

Nico Williams: *Bingo*  
is presented with the support of:



Conseil  
des arts  
et des lettres  
du Québec



Media  
Partner:



Distribution  
Partner:



451 Saint-Jean Street, Old Montreal

📍 Square-Victoria-OACI / Place-d'Armes



# Free delivery



BY DARCY MACDONALD

In the afterparty haze of the early 2010s, in a tangle of shared gear, questionably legal venues and cramped apartment studios, a community of musicians in Mile Ex — powered by hard drives, MIDI and cracked studio software — recorded the spirit of the moment.

There and then, alongside buzzing names like Grimes, Purity Ring and Cadence Weapon, Phil Karneef programmed his own quietly influential presence in Montreal’s experimental music scene.

A decade later, the singer/composer posted up at the Barr Brothers’ studio, surrounded by Grammy winners and L.A. jazz prodigies, bringing to life and shaping the character of pieces he initially composed by himself with his headphones on.

The title of the resulting album, *It’s How You Say It*, kinda says it all.

To Karneef, the means of deployment matter as much as the music. His jazz doesn’t march to the beat of genre or trend, but on instinct, precision and an ongoing curiosity about how sound is shaped, as well as how it lands.

Raised in rural Ottawa, Karneef started playing guitar at four, drums at nine and was fluent in computers before he could read.

His father ran a tech company dealing in Sun Microsystems machines and telecom infrastructure at the dawn of the 1980s.

“Communication was just such an integral part of everything that I did, even from such a young age,” he said.

Spending teenage summers downloading cracked sample libraries and pirated software, Karneef built a portfolio that would finally get him accepted into Concordia’s electroacoustics program in 2004.

But before his studies began, he was a frequent weekend visitor to Loyola Campus.

“(The electroacoustic students) were doing these playback diffusion concerts,” Karneef recalled. “It was before (Dolby) Atmos or anything like that. Just as many speakers as they could get their hands on, patched together through an analogue console.

“The sound would move all over the Oscar Peterson Hall. It was the craziest sound I’d ever heard,” he recalled.

From Commodore 64 to cracked Cubase, through analogue consoles to Pro Tools quantization, there is a distinct discipline in the way his programming gets with timing and tone that, today — nearly a decade removed from his last recordings — is further informed by personal, experiential upgrades.

With the initial composition on *It’s How You Say It* complete, Karneef sought outside input. He reached out to alto saxophonist Nicole McCabe, one half of the L.A.-based duo Dolphin Hyperspace.

She asked if he’d also like her bandmate, bassist Logan Kane, to give the tracks a pass. The pair returned inspired, elastic takes.

“At first I was like, ‘No, this isn’t what I wrote!’” he shared. “But the more I listened, the more I realized what they were doing. There was beauty in it I hadn’t even considered.”

That pattern repeated. Longtime collaborator and bandmate, drummer Max Lasage, patiently and precisely recreated certain programmed patterns live. Brad Barr, who shared studio space in addition to contributing to standout track “Back to Block,” lent perspective.

Over time, improvisational additions began to stick. Bass solos became melodies. Horns doubled lines that didn’t exist before.

“It’s the closest I’ve ever come to collaboration. They all added things that (challenged me) and made me go back and rewrite my own parts.”

Over the course of months leading to the arrival of the album, Karneef took opportunities to play the new sounds out

live, debuting at last fall’s edition of POP Montreal. The live experience brings together drummer Lesage, saxophonist and “CEO of the band” Evan Shay, 2025 Grammy nominee Housefly on keys, guitarist Ryan Nadin and bassist Rodolfo Rueda.

At the helm, with his processors, his mic and an earnestly calculated, almost-but-never-quite over-the-top vocal delivery, Karneef exhibits a duality of presence that showcases his role as master of ceremonies with his sheer appreciation for the intricacy of the players surrounding him. He is part frontman, part fan and all charisma.

That cohesion is reflected on the album, which mirrors a musical personality that is precise, layered, unpretentiously serious and yet confidently unrelenting.

“It’s complicated music. And we’re trying to play it like pop. Weird pop. But the message is getting across. That’s what matters.”

He describes himself as a director, both in the studio and on stage. But he also sees the limits of control.

“In the studio, it’s for me,” Karneef explained. “Live, it’s for the audience. If I have a good time, too. That’s a bonus.”

As challenging as it was for Karneef to let go and give the talent he is surrounded with space to truly become part of his process, he smiled while acknowledging the lessons of the past and the achievement of the present, and a project he is proud to share.

“(Early on) I didn’t really appreciate what was going on around me,” he said. “I was constantly comparing myself to others. It put me in a place of superiority, and also made me feel like a giant imposter.”

But now?

“To have other songwriters lend themselves to what I’m doing compositionally — that’s what I’m after.”

*It’s How You Say It* doesn’t seek attention. It earns repeat listens by refusing to waste a second; dense and deliberate without being needlessly clever or over-thought.

“I used to think no one was doing what I was doing, that no one got it. But that’s just not the case. And that’s such a relief.”



A SEGAL CENTRE PRODUCTION



BASED ON THE SCREENPLAY BY  
**JONATHAN LYNN**

WRITTEN BY  
**SANDY RUSTIN**

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL BY  
**HUNTER FOSTER AND ERIC PRICE**



# clue

ON STAGE

BASED ON THE PARAMOUNT PICTURES MOTION PICTURE  
BASED ON THE HASBRO BOARD GAME CLUE  
ORIGINAL MUSIC BY **MICHAEL HOLLAND**  
DIRECTED BY **LISA RUBIN**

**\$20**  
**Tickets!**

\*CONDITIONS APPLY

**CLASS ACT**  
FOR STUDENTS AND PEOPLE UNDER 30

514-739-7944 [SEGALCENTRE.ORG](http://SEGALCENTRE.ORG)

**BUY TICKETS!**

**June 8**  
**– June 29**  
**2025**



# Sonic boom



SANAM

BY JOSEPH SANNICANDRO

Montreal’s great anti-festival, Suoni Per Il Popolo, returns for their landmark 25th edition, running from June 14 to 30.

Most of the festival takes place at Casa del Popolo, La Sotterenea and La Sala Rossa, with other events erupting in galleries, churches and even the Van Horne underpass. The festival opens with a free show at Parc Lafontaine’s new Théâtre de Verdure, a gift to the city that birthed it.

Suoni describes itself as dedicated not to any genre but instead to “liberation music,” a term borrowed from Charlie Haden’s revolutionary 1970 jazz project. The form that expression takes changes, but the sentiment is shared. As the slogan goes, *Liberez vos oreilles!* An English translation of Eric Fillion’s book *Soundtrack to the Revolution: Free Jazz and Leftist Nationalism in Quebec 1967–1975* was recently published, a timely reminder of the historical connections between music and social movements in Montreal. This year’s programming arrives amid renewed urgency, with events speaking to gentrification, Indigenous and queer resistance, and Palestinian solidarity.

We spoke with Kiva Stimac, Suoni’s co-founder and artistic director, shortly after she printed up some “Free Palestine” benefit prints. Stimac recalls her family’s legacy of dissent. “My dad was a draft resister. And my mom at 16 went to Israel and realized that it was a colonial state and an apartheid state. So I’ve been an anti-Zionist Jew all my life. I was coming out of that tradition.” Stimac’s great-grandfather was a poet and binder of Yiddish books; her parents printed protest posters. That spirit fuels Suoni, and its visual arm, Popolo Press.

“Ink is in my blood”

Popolo Press began humbly, printing flyers to promote shows and engage the people of the neighborhood, *il popolo*. Stimac opened Casa del Popolo as a vegetarian restaurant and music venue in 2000 with her then-husband, Mauro

Pezzente (of Godspeed You! Black Emperor), launching Suoni the next year. Back then, many touring artists skipped Montreal “because they didn’t see it as a viable place to stop,” aside from big commercial events like the Jazz Fest. So Suoni carved out space for niche artists, while Stimac carved wood and linoleum to get the word out. “When I first started printing stuff for Casa, it was out of necessity, for sure.” In true DIY spirit, Stimac remembers, “I just did it with the back of a spoon.”

Over 25 years, Suoni’s visual identity has evolved alongside its music, with Stimac’s hybrid printing style mirroring the festival’s experimental edge. “I like all the different kinds of printing,” Stimac admits, often combining letterpress, silkscreen and risograph. Boasting one of Canada’s largest type collections, she emphasizes the importance of getting your hands dirty as a designer, since with computers “you lose the tactile sensation if you’re not putting your hands in ink and paper.” That hands-on ethos extends to curation. “I just love experimenting and trying new things, and that’s kind of the music that I’m drawn to.” Innovation can come out of experimentation and struggle, as can joy, so the festival provides opportunities for the community to come together and celebrate. “I don’t want to be in a revolution where you can’t dance or sweat and have a good time together.”

Suoni’s community is its backbone. Some artists who performed in the earliest editions, including Matana Roberts and Jessica Moss, will also be performing this year. In addition to being a performer, former Sala sound engineer and co-founder of Hotel2Tango, Radwan Moumneh (of Jerusalem in my Heart) is serving as this year’s technical director. Stimac again emphasizes the importance of the festival’s community, who have continued to rally around the festival. She sees her role as beautifying the neighbourhood, and fostering space for in-person connection: “I think that’s part of why live music, or any kind of arts presentation, is exciting, because you’re sharing space and connecting in a way that you don’t get by listening to a record.”

## Highlights

While jazz and improvisation are well represented at Suoni, many artists draw on punk, metal, hip hop and more

experimental genres to express themselves. The program is Canadian-heavy this year, with quite a few guests from Mexico City and Beirut further cementing links with our city. One last off-season show features NYC’s HxH, the duo of Chris Ryan Williams (trumpet & electronics) and Lester St. Louis (cello & electronics), touring in support of their enveloping debut album, *STARK PHENOMENA*, with opening electroacoustic deconstructions from locals *skin tone* and Emmanuel Lacopo (La Sotterenea, June 8).

Suoni’s longtime curatorial partners Constellation Records and No Hay Banda present the free opening outdoor show featuring the Sam Shalabi Septet, Black Ox Orkestar, Matana Roberts and Erika Angell, kicking off Suoni’s 25th edition with an evening concert under the stars (Théâtre de Verdure, June 14). The festival proper begins on June 19, with a full slate of four shows, including *Cabaret Noir: The Musical*, and interdisciplinary musical cabaret celebrating contemporary Afro-descendant voices alongside canonical inspirations (La Sala Rossa), and WATCH THAT ENDS THE NIGHT’s label showcase, including genre-bending headliner Quinton Barnes (Casa del Popolo).

Suoni provides many opportunities to experience solo artists with a singular relationship to their instrument. Jessica Ackerly explores the far boundaries of the guitar, while *chik white* coaxes wild improvisations from his collection of handmade jaw harps. (Casa, June 20) Other events celebrate collectivity. A night of raw protest music will cap off with the return of *Lesbians on Ecstasy* — this promises to be a queer dance party the city won’t soon forget (La Sotterenea, June 21). In a similar spirit, Metonymy Press celebrates ten years of publishing queer, trans, and feminist literature with an evening of evocative readings (Casa, June 22).

Radwan Ghazi Moumneh’s experimental soundscapes will set the stage for Beirut septet SANAM’s dynamic and hard-edged improvisations (Sala, June 21). Members of the septet will also appear with Moumneh and Jessica Moss in various configurations over two special nights (Hotel2Tango, June 23–24). Voice and percussion duo MESTIZX’s draw on their ancestral Latin American rhythms, with opening soundscapes from Nicaraguan-Canadian Mas Aya, and Daniela Solís & Stefan Christoff further exploring the Mexico City–Montreal connection (La Sotterenea, June 22).





Wolf Eyes

Of course it wouldn't be Suoni without a hearty serving of free jazz and improvised music. Resonant Impact finds two visionary composers — percussionist John Hollenbeck and pianist Eve Risser — unite for the premiere of their new improvised duo. (Casa, June 22). The world premiere of Canadian clarinetist François Houle's "The Secret Lives of Color" will be realized by the composer's impressive live band — Gordon Grdina (oud/guitars), Myra Melford (piano), Joëlle Léandre (bass) and Gerry Hemingway (drums). Not to be missed (Sala, June 22). And for those looking for the really wild improvisations there's GET FREE! Soirée d'impro. Several ensembles push traditional acoustic instruments past their limit, but I'm particularly excited for the unconventional electronics of Anne-F Jacques, Jarrett Martineau and Joël Lavoie (Casa, June 26).

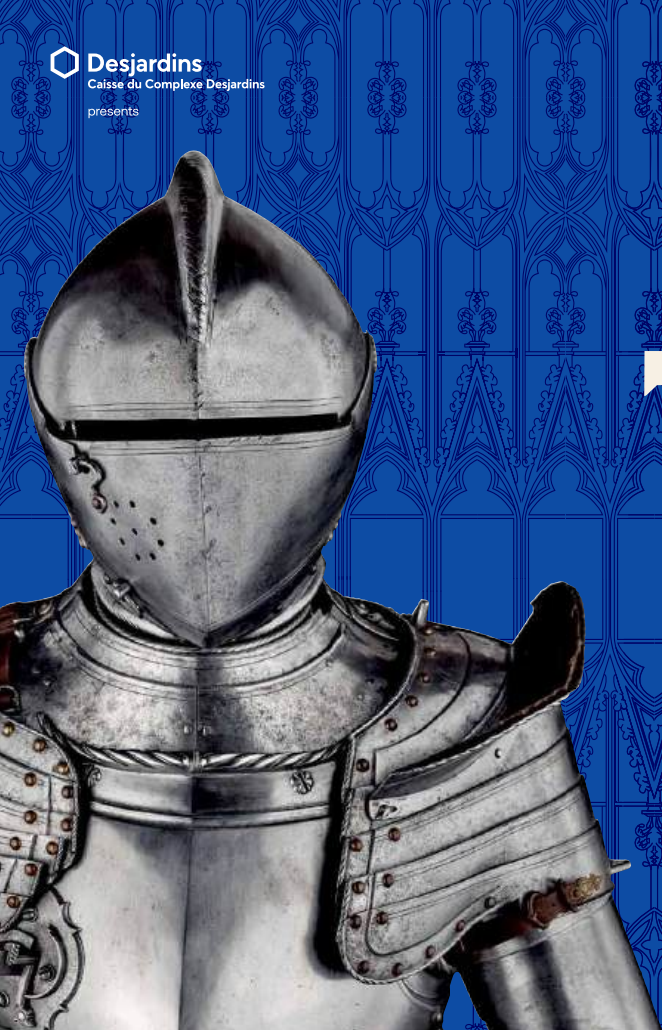
One of the enduring appeals of Suoni is the way the festival moves outside the concert hall, activating unconventional and often public spaces. The IWant2BeOnTV crew will be presenting The Pony Show, a punk rock pantomime pony race in the Van Horne underpass, for what's sure to be one of the most fun and ridiculous events of the year — volunteers wanted! (Parc Mario, June 20). On a more somber note, militant sound investigators Réverbérations d'une crise will lead a funeral march for Montreal's "dead" venues, culminating at the gallery Produit Rien, in Mile Ex, where GAMBLETRON and Johnny Forever Nawracaj will present Screaming Against the Wall, a new work about Israel (June 22, procession starts at noon, departing from Parc Jeanne-Mance, corner of Mont-Royal and Esplanade).

Quatuor Bozzini presents the Canadian premiere of "Borrowed Light" by Sarah Hennies, with the composer herself joining bassist Tristan Kasten-Krause for a performance that delves into the hypnotic interplay of timbre and time, as documented on their acclaimed debut duo album, *The Quiet Sun* (Sala, June 23). Meanwhile, shifting from sun to stars, Montreal's beloved Kalmunity Collective takes the stage across the street with STARS SHINE DARKLY, a speakeasy-style evening of experimental solos, duos and trios (Casa, June 23).

Joni Void's Everyday Ago returns for their third co-presentation with Suoni, once again showcasing artists from Japan. Having previously performed together in Tokyo and Matsumoto, Void joins the illustrious Takako Minekawa for a rare Montreal appearance, what will surely be a deeply meditative audio-visual experience (La Sotterenea, June 25). The visceral beats of NYC's Hiro Kone cap off an intense and eclectic night of GAMBLETRON's radio transmissions, Engone Endong's contemporary electronic take on Gabonese tradition and SlowPitchSound's sci-fi-turntablism (Casa, June 27).

Finally, Suoni goes out on a high note with two hotly anticipated concerts. Pulitzer Prize-winner Raven Chacon returns to Montreal with Michican's pioneering noise rock outfit Wolf Eyes, but only after Tension Nurse and EarthBall shake up the room with some sub-bass sonics. (La Sotterenea, June 28). Hot on the heels of her first new album in eight years, the much lauded *From Where You Came*, Kara-Lis Coverdale will grace us for a solo organ concert in a 19th century church in collaboration with Les Vespérales. Local duo Beast set the tone of this comedown event with their hypnotic hurdy-gurdy and historical klaviers (Sacré-Coeur-de-Jésus, June 30).

Suoni va!



**Desjardins**  
Caisse du Complexe Desjardins  
présente

# Kriegs

EXHIBITION



**POINTE-À-CALLIÈRE**  
Montréal Archaeology  
and History Complex

May 22 | October 19, 2025

The exhibition is produced by Pointe-à-Callière, Montréal Archaeology and History Complex, in partnership with the Museo Stibbert and Contemporanea Progetti.





# :hammer of the mods

BY JOHNSON CUMMINS

June is finally upon us and that means that the greatest fest in our burg, Suoni Per Il Popolo, will blot out much of this month's concert calendar.

This fest has always been bursting with heart, and the real feather in the cap is its potential for discovery. Hanging out in and around Casa del Popolo, you can see everything from free jazz, poetry as well as artist talks that are sure to surprise as well as illuminate. For their noisiest night of the month, head down to the last announcement in this column.

## JUNE 6

Things start off with a bang just as this month's Cult MTL ish's ink is barely dry. Serious heavy groove metallists Clutch bubble the bongos and get the heads nodding at MTELUS. Opening up the night of riffs is Tyler Bryant & the Shakedown and Nate Bergman. 59 Ste-Catherine E., 8 p.m. (doors 6:30 p.m.), \$32.25/\$62.25/\$83/\$96

## JUNE 7

Clutch starting things off for the month of June is no slouch, but those of you who like a bit more bludgeoning in your metal riffage will want to make

tracks down to Théâtre Fairmount when the mighty Full of Hell join forces with meme all-stars Harm's Way. The sweat act is taken up by Kruelty, Jarhead Fertilizer and Clique. This could be the pit of the summer. 5240 Parc, 6 p.m. (doors 5 p.m.), \$35.83, all ages

## JUNE 18

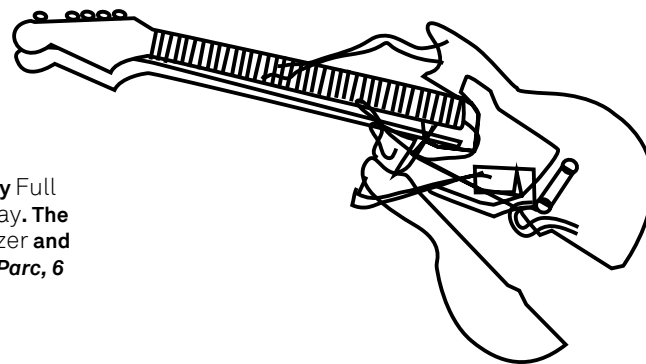
If you are a myopic, knapsacked young gent who writes code and frequents guitar pedal forums, Ol' Johnson hasn't forgotten about ya. You will want to be crossing your arms as This Might Destroy You sets their phasers on "liquify" at Bar le Ritz, with fellow gear nerds Jesse Beaman and (ahem) Death As It Shook You. Next month I'll teach you how to talk to a real, live girl. 179 Jean-Talon W., 8:30 p.m. (doors 7:30 p.m.), \$36.09

## JUNE 28

If you've been digging the scene coming out of the darker recesses of the U.K. recently (one that hopes you've never heard the Cows), you will be astonished by the "original" sounds of Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs, who will get noisy at Bar le Ritz with Rickshaw Billie's Burger Patrol. On Behalf of all of us who get paid by the word, we salute you Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs... oh yes we do, uh, yep. 179 Jean-Talon W., 8:30 p.m. (doors 7:30 p.m.), \$36.09

## JUNE 28

If you go to only one show at Suoni Per Il Popolo this year, better make it this one. Remember when everybody in



Montreal was hanging out at Friendship Cove and you couldn't swing a cat without hitting a noise artist with a collapsable table? Well expect to see those former screamers (who have sadly put down their Fischer Price baby monitors) at the Wolf Eyes gig at la Sotternea with fellow noiseniks Raven Chacon, EarthBall and Tension Nurse. Tylenol and ear plugs will be served up at the bar. 4848 St-Laurent (basement), 9 p.m., \$26.06

## JUNE 30

If you want to surf up a metallic wave of reverb with some serious go-go boots then you will want to check out the twangy Fenderized tunes of the Suffrajettes at Bar le Ritz. These ladies better bring their A-game, though, because the wild man Bloodshot Bill is the opener and he was absolutely lethal for his Cornwall Pizza 7" launch last month. 179 Jean-Talon W., 8 p.m. (doors 7 p.m.), \$30.97

Current Obsession: Robyn Hitchcock, *I Often Dream of Trains*  
jonathan.cummins@gmail.com

## FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL NUITS D'AFRIQUE

PRESENTED BY



39<sup>th</sup>  
EDITION



JULY 8-20  
2025 | MONTREAL

DISCOVER THE PROGRAM ON [FESTIVALNUITSDAFRIQUE.COM](https://festivalnuitsdafrique.com)





# MONTREAL IS JAZZ!

JUNE 26 TO JULY 5  
45th EDITION

10 DAYS OF MUSIC  
5 OUTDOOR FREE STAGES  
10 VENUES

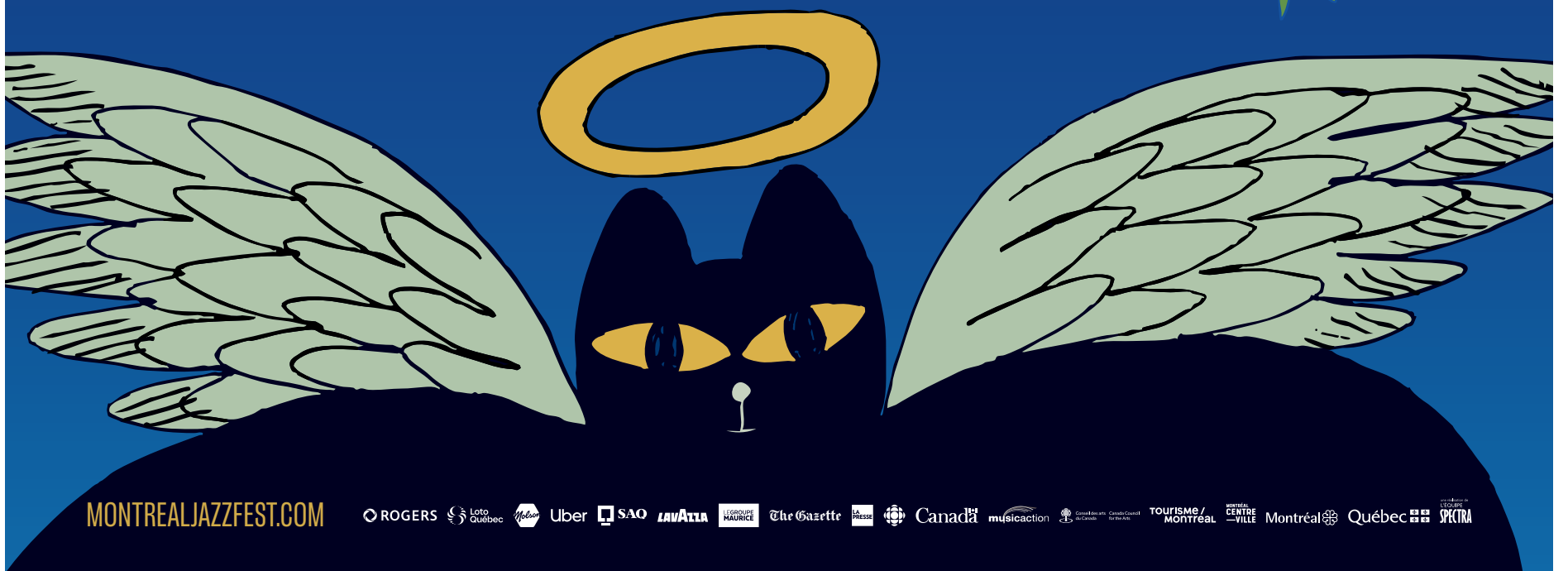


**NAS** ILLMATIC: LIVE W/ SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA • **AYRA STARR** • **THUNDERCAT**



BEN HARPER • JEFF GOLDBLUM & THE MILDRED SNITZER ORCHESTRA  
MON LAFERTE • NATALIA LAFOURCADE • VIOLENT FEMMES  
ALLISON RUSSELL • BLUE RODEO • ELISAPIE • ESPERANZA SPALDING  
MAVIS STAPLES • MEN I TRUST • MONSIEUR PERINÉ  
TROMBONE SHORTY & ORLEANS AVENUE  
AVISHAI COHEN TRIO WITH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA • CHRIS BOTTI  
JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA • WYNTON MARSALIS • SAMARA JOY  
BONOBO • LARA SOMOGYI + JEAN-MICHEL BLAIS • CLOWN CORE  
GEORGE THOROGOOD & THE DESTROYERS  
THE BUDOS BAND & SECRET CHIEFS 3 • THE CAT EMPIRE • KES • ISAIAH FALLS  
OSCAR PETERSON 100: CANADIANA SUITE  
FEATURING OSCAR PETERSON CENTENNIAL QUARTET

AND MANY MORE!



MONTREALJAZZFEST.COM

ROGERS Loto Québec Uber SAO LAVALLE LEGRAND MAURICE The Gazette PRESSE Canada musicaction SoudaBoum Grand Conseil du Québec TOURISME / MONTREAL MONTREAL CENTRE -VILLE Montréal Québec SPECTRA



# Album reviews



**SAMWOY, *Even Sad Boys Like to Have Fun* (Hidden Ship)**  
The new album by Montreal's SAMWOY is a haunted mixtape left behind in a burnt-out skate park where spectres attempt kickflips. Equal parts post-punk dirge, skate punk tantrum, hip hop confession, French lounge pop and cinematic hallucination, *Even Sad Boys...* refuses to sit still. It captures the uncertainty of youth with the grunge core opener "Poison," the glory of the party with "Sub in the Trunk Ft. Ev Bird," and relatable self-hatred on the post-psych burner "My Body." It's strange, sad and totally wired. A dream you won't want to wake from. 9/10 Trial Track "My Body" (Stephan Boissonneault)



**Aesop Rock, *Black Hole Superette* (Rhymesayers)**  
Aesop Rock has been making what was once considered "experimental" hip hop for so long now that all that's left from album to album is pure outcome, within which Aes stretches possibility from his one-man, elastic dimension. Judiciously chosen samples woven into broken boom bap and sprayed with round after round of word puzzle poetry remain signature to his homespun composition. Fans know what we're getting, but somehow it just keeps getting better. The frequency with which fresh projects arrive continues to

impress, and the quality is never a surprise. This time out, Armand Hammer, Open Mike Eagle and Lupe Fiasco are among names on the guest list to enter Aesop Rock's private time zone. 8.5/10 Trial Track: "Bird School" (Darcy MacDonald)



**CDSM, *Convertible Hearse* (Mothland & EXAG)**  
CDSM, the wonderfully dark oddballs from Atlanta, are back with their most sinister post-punk/dark disco release yet. *Convertible Hearse* contains all of the ingredients that make CDSM dusty and brilliant: demented synth work, blaring saxophone, heavy punk guitar energy, bombastic drums and satirical/ chaotic lyrics that leave you wondering, "Did they just sing that?" A song like "Cuck Jail" feels like NIN's "Closer," sonically and lyrically, in an unruly BDSM dungeon. It's tough to narrow down a standout song 'cause it will probably change, but right now I'd say it's the album closer, "Shockable Rhythm." 8/10 Trial Track "Shockable Rhythm" (Stephan Boissonneault)

**Preoccupations, *Ill at Ease* (Born Losers)**  
*Preoccupations'* latest album is a brooding, visceral return to form that expands their boundaries of post-punk with relentless urgency. Known for their icy textures and existential dread, the band leans further into cosmic chaos on this release, delivering a soundscape that feels both disoriented and tightly controlled. Tracks like "Bastards" and "Panic" showcase the band's flair for tension, balancing

abrasive noise with hypnotic repetition. *Ill at ease* also features one of Preocc's most "poppy" offerings in the form of "Andromeda." Vocalist Matt Flegel's acceptance of humanity's inevitable collision with our galactic neighbour is a new form of cosmic dread, and I'm here for it. 8/10 Trial Track "Andromeda" (Stephan Boissonneault)



**Mint Simon, *Chimera* (self-released)**  
Caveboy frontperson Mint Simon has always proven themselves a strong soloist, and has finally put that all together on their debut EP, *Chimera*. Just like in their main project, a strong '80s influence looms over this collection of six songs. Even if certain reference points can feel obvious at times, Mint showcases some genuine pop songwriting chops throughout. The brightest examples are probably the Stevie Nicks-indebted "Gargoyles" and the synthwavey ballad "Won't Go Back Now." *Chimera* is a bit all over the place stylistically, but there's clear potential for even greater heights, and I'd love to hear how Mint Simon could build on this in LP form. 7.5/10 Trial Track: "Gargoyles" (Dave MacIntyre)

**Snoop Dogg, *Iz It a Crime?* (Death Row)**  
Snoop Dogg's 21st studio album arrives just five months after *Missionary*, the Dr. Dre-helmed project that marked a late-career highlight for the Long Beach legend. While *Missionary* had Dre steering the ship, *Iz It a Crime* sees Snoop at the helm once again. What starts off on solid footing quickly unravels at the seams, a patchy mix of hits, misses and tracks that sound near-unfinished. With Dre calling the shots on *Missionary*, the vision felt clear. The lack of structure on its follow up results in a half-baked outing from the world's most famous stoner. 5/10 Trial Track: "Iz It A Crime?" (feat. October London) (Mr. Wavvy)





# Unlock Your Potential

Access these upcoming workshops to help you learn, connect, and grow!

## Business Coaching

Work one-on-one with a business coach to develop a customized plan that's focused on your needs and your business. Open to any age and stage of business.\*

### NEW! Business Real Talk: When Everything's on the Line

\$30 | Thursday, June 5 | 6:00PM–9:00PM

### Learn@Lunch: Introduction to Federal Procurement

FREE | Thursday, June 6 | 12:00PM–1:00PM

### NEW! Creating a Landing Page That Converts

\$20 | Tuesday, June 10 | 6:30PM–8:30PM

## Registering Your Business

FREE | Mondays, June 16 & 30 | 12:00PM–1:30PM

### Learn@Lunch: Growing On Purpose: Cultivating Confidence and Overcoming Imposter Syndrome as Women Entrepreneurs

FREE | Tuesday, June 17 | 12:00PM–1:00PM

### 9 Action Steps to Building a Successful Business

FREE | Wednesday, June 18 | 2:00PM–3:30PM

### Idea Generator: Kickstart Your Business Journey

FREE | Wednesday, June 25 | 2:00PM–3:30PM



Register now by calling **514-878-9788**, visiting **yesmontreal.ca** or scanning the QR code!

Join us in person at 666 Sherbrooke Street West, 7th floor or attend online. Don't wait – pre-register now!

Funded by:

Canada



Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions

Développement économique Canada pour les régions du Québec

YES is a non-profit organization

Yes Employment + Entrepreneurship

\*For \$30, you'll have access to specialized services including coaching, Business Bootcamp, legal information, and accounting clinics for a full year.



PUBLISHER OF  
WORLD FAMOUS  
CARTOONISTS

PROPRIETOR OF  
THE BEST BOOKS

LIBRAIRIE  
*Drawn & Quarterly*

176 BERNARD WEST  
OPEN EVERY DAY  
11 AM–6 PM

Art by Pascal Girard



# film

## On Screen



*Dangerous Animals*



*8 Years Later*



*F1*



*The Phoenixian Scheme*

BY JUSTINE SMITH

Vroom vroom! Formula One fans are in for some big-screen cinematic action to accompany this month's big race. Brad Pitt stars in *F1* (June 27), from *Top Gun: Maverick* director Joseph Kosinski, as a former Formula One driver who comes out of retirement to mentor a rookie. Made in close collaboration with F1 racers (and there are many cameos), the film also stars Damson Idris, Kerry Condon and Javier Bardem.

After nearly 10 years since the last film in the series, *28 Years Later* (June 20) takes us deep into the future of the post-apocalyptic hellscape first imagined by Danny Boyle and Alex Garland. A group of survivors live on a small island connected to the mainland. When one decides to venture into the heart of darkness, he soon discovers a mutation that will add a new twist on the horrific zombie-creating disease. Boyle not only returns to direct, but the film features an all-star cast including Ralph Fiennes, Jodie Comer and Aaron Taylor-Johnson.

Always a reason for celebration, Wes Anderson is back with *The Phoenixian Scheme* (June 6). Benicio Del Toro stars as a wealthy businessman, Zsa-zsa Korda, who appoints his only daughter — a nun — as sole heir to his estate. As Korda embarks on a new enterprise, they soon become the target of scheming tycoons, foreign terrorists and

determined assassins. An all-star cast of Anderson alumni and new faces includes Michael Cera, Tom Hanks, Willem Dafoe, Scarlett Johansson, Benedict Cumberbatch and Mia Threapleton, among others.

Mike Flanagan also returns to the big screen this month with another Stephen King adaptation following his 2019 go at the *Shining* sequel *Doctor Sleep*. Tom Hiddleston stars in *The Life of Chuck* (June 13), a life-affirming, genre-bending story based on King's novella about three chapters in the life of an ordinary man named Charles Krantz. Jacob Tremblay co-stars.

Set in the John Wick Universe, *Ballerina* (June 6) stars Ana de Armas as an assassin trained in the traditions of the Ruska Roma organization who's seeking revenge after her father's death. For more action cinema, *Off the Grid* (June 27) stars Josh Duhamel and Greg Kinnear in a film about a brilliant scientist who goes on the run instead of weaponizing his invention.

If you're looking for horror-thrills, *Dangerous Animals* (June 6) is an absurdist shark attack movie about a shark-obsessed serial killer who captures a free-spirited surfer named Zephyr and tries to feed her to the fishes. *M3gan 2.0* (June 27) is set two years after M3GAN's rampage, as her creator, Gemma, resorts to resurrecting her infamous creation in order to take down a military-grade weapon called Amelia.

It's a good month for family films. The live action adaptation of *How to Train Your Dragon* (June 13) hits screens in the middle of the month. The film follows more or less the same

beats as the beloved animated classic (though, predictably, this is much longer). There's also a new Pixar movie original hitting cinemas: *Elio* (June 20) follows an 11-year-old boy named Elio Solis (Yonas Kibreab) who accidentally becomes the intergalactic ambassador of planet Earth after being beamed up to the Communiverse by aliens making contact. He must form new bonds with eccentric alien lifeforms and navigate a crisis of intergalactic proportions.

Following up her extremely popular feature debut, *Past Lives* director Celine Song returns with *Materialists* (June 13). Dakota Johnson, Pedro Pascal and Chris Evans star in this film about a young New York City matchmaker whose lucrative business gets complicated as she finds herself torn between the perfect match and her imperfect ex.

If you're looking for a couple of films off-the-beaten path, Cinéma du Parc is screening *Super Happy Forever* (June 13) and *Black Dog* (June 27). *Super Happy Forever* is an unconventional romance that follows a Japanese man searching for a red hat at a hotel resort, only to remember meeting his wife there five years earlier. *Black Dog* is set in rural China right before the 2008 Olympics. After being released from jail, Lang heads home and gets a job clearing stray dogs, where he develops a strong relationship with a black greyhound/Jack Russell mix.

For something to laugh at, Rebel Wilson stars in *Bride Hard* (June 20). When a mercenary group takes a lavish wedding hostage, they have no idea what they are in for as the Maid of Honor is actually a secret agent ready to rain hell-fire upon anyone who would ruin her best friend's wedding.





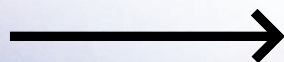
PRESENTS

# FESTIVAL FIERTÉ MONTREAL

IN COLLABORATION WITH



July 31



August 10, 2025

## NEVER WITHOUT OUR PRIDE



[fiertemontreal.com](http://fiertemontreal.com)





# Summer Arts Calendar



Jessica Mak in FACE RIDER at the MA

Roya Delsol, Fran Chudnoff

BY SAVANNAH STEWART

A guide to some of the most promising performances and exhibitions happening and launching in Montreal this month.

## Knights

Step into the world of medieval chivalry at *Knights*, a major exhibition at Pointe-à-Callière. Featuring nearly 250 artifacts from Italy's renowned Stibbert Museum, the exhibition explores the enduring legacy of knights through centuries of history. Discover the artistry, armour and symbolism that defined knighthood from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. Guided tours, lectures and family cultural activities are also planned to accompany the exhibit. 350 Place Royale, through Oct. 19

Berthe Weill, Art Dealer of the Parisian Avant-garde

This landmark exhibition at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts is the first devoted to the fascinating career of gallerist Berthe Weill (1865–1951), an important but nearly forgotten figure of modern art history. Weill was the first woman to focus primarily on championing young painters just as they were beginning their careers. In her gallery, she

exhibited some of the greatest artists we have come to know today: Pablo Picasso, Raoul Dufy, Marc Chagall, Amedeo Modigliani, Diego Rivera, Henri Matisse and Suzanne Valadon, among many others. Among the nearly 100 works presented in the exhibition, some have become milestones in the history of art, while others will enable you to discover the work of still-unsung figures, including women artists. Featuring exceptional loans from major museums in Europe and North America, the exhibition brings together paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, jewellery pieces, and archival documents that testify to the quality of Weill's gallery and deepen our understanding of its historical context. 1380 Sherbrooke W., through Sept. 7

## Deep Gazing

As part of a PHI Centre residency, *Deep Gazing* invites you to exchange a photo of the sky for a personalized prophecy. Created by Horizon Factory's Erin Hill and Nina Vroemen — also known as The Sisters of the Celestial Order of Nephology — this poetic project blends cloud-watching, weather lore and deep listening into a meditative practice of environmental attunement. Submit your sky photo and feeling, and receive a reflection shaped by the shifting skies. Celestial services available through June 29. 407 St-Pierre, June 5–29, free

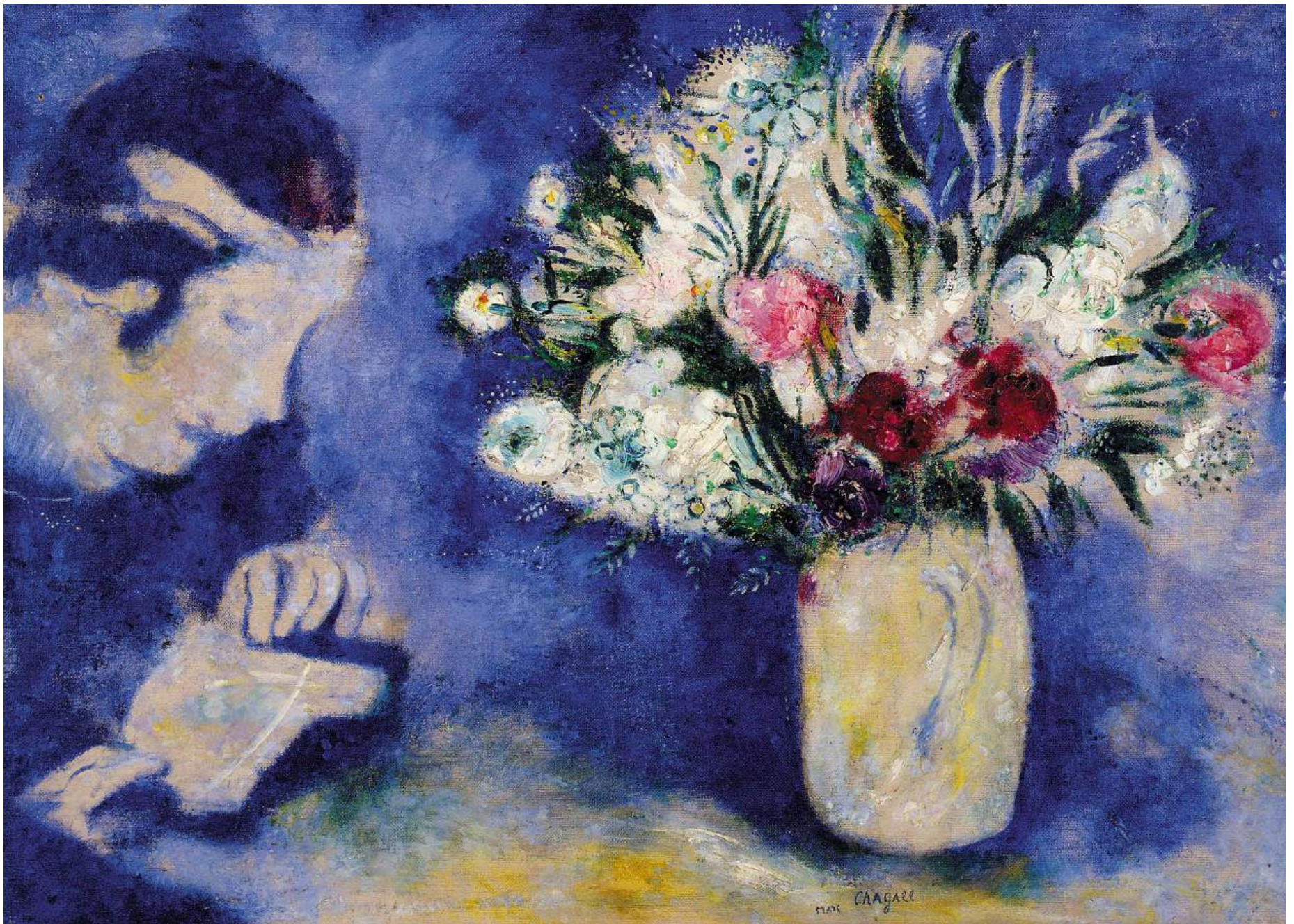
## MURAL Festival

Montreal's MURAL Festival returns for its 13th edition, transforming St-Laurent Boulevard into a vibrant open-air gallery celebrating urban art and culture. From June 5 to 15, the festival offers free programming, including live mural painting by local and international artists, music performances, exhibitions and more. This year's lineup features artists such as Belin, HOXXOH, Katie Green and Montreal's own WhatIsAdam, alongside events like the Caribbean Block Party and MOONSHINE. Experience the fusion of creativity and community in the heart of the city. St-Laurent Boulevard and surrounding streets, Sherbrooke to Mont-Royal, June 5–15, free

## Porosities (we will be sponges and loudspeakers)

*Porosities* is a choral performance project by Gabrielle Harnois-Blouin created in collaboration with a third-grade class from Saint-Barthélemy School. Blending voice, movement and reflection, the piece explores how children absorb and express the world around them — like sponges and loudspeakers. Poetic, playful and deeply human, the work culminates in live performances at PHI Centre that embrace all the wonder, chaos, and honesty of their creative process. 407 St-Pierre, June 5–29, free





Marc Chagall "Bella in Mourillon," from the MMFA exhibition Berthe Weill, Art Dealer of the Parisian Avant-garde

Private collection. Archives Marc et Ida Chagall / ADAGP, Paris / CARCC, Ottawa 2025

## DNA – Danse Non Altérée

**DNA – Danse Non Altérée** brings Montreal a high-energy street dance experience via Agora de la danse, blending battle, improvisation and creativity. Kicking off with a free afternoon battle for dancers 17 and under, the event culminates in a dynamic evening showdown where adult teams face off in a fusion of freestyle and performance. Don't miss this adrenaline-fueled celebration of movement and community. *June 7, youth battle 3:30–5:30 p.m. (free), adult battle 7–11 p.m.*

## Clue: On Stage

**Murder, mystery and mayhem** take the spotlight in this fast-paced comedy at the Segal Centre. Based on the cult 1985 film and the beloved Hasbro board game, *Clue: On Stage* invites audiences to a dinner party gone dangerously wrong at Boddy Manor. With sharp wit and endless twists, this classic whodunit aims to keep audiences laughing — and guessing — until the final reveal. *5170 Côte-Ste-Catherine, June 8–29*

## SÉANCE and FLIGHT

**Step into the unknown** with **SÉANCE** and **FLIGHT**, two immersive audio experiences in the Old Port of Montreal that promise to challenge your senses and perceptions. Using 3D sound and pitch-black environments, these unsettling

**20-minute encounters** pull you into mysterious narratives where nothing is quite as it seems. Presented by **DARKFIELD**, a British production company creating innovative immersive 360-degree audio experiences, in conjunction with **PHI Studio**. *2 de la Commune W., June 20–Sept. 21*

## FACE RIDER

Enter the glitter-streaked swamp of **FACE RIDER**, a queer indie sleaze dance work that blends absurdity, longing and liberation. Drawing on the figures of the hermit, the hog and the himbo, this performance at MAI revels in gender deviance, emo melancholy and the chaotic beauty of togetherness. Created in collaboration with multimedia artist Driftnote and fashion designer Angela Cabrera, Fran Chudnoff's **FACE RIDER** crashes through the glossy surface of aspiration with raw energy and confessional lyricism. *3680 Jeanne-Mance #103, June 18–21*

## Tonight With the Impressionists, Paris 1874

**Step into 19th-century France** with *Tonight With the Impressionists, Paris 1874*, a new Virtual Reality experience that transports visitors to the opening of the first Impressionist exhibition. Developed by Excurio, GEDEON Experiences, the Musée d'Orsay and PHI Studio, and presented at Arsenal, the experience blends historical detail with immersive technology to bring this pivotal cultural moment to life. *2020 William, opens June 20*

## Montreal Comiccon 2025

**Montreal Comiccon** returns for its 15th edition, bringing together fans of comics, sci-fi, anime, gaming and pop culture at the Palais des congrès from July 4 to 6. This year's star-studded lineup includes Elijah Wood, Sean Astin, Billy Boyd and Andy Serkis from *The Lord of the Rings*, as well as William Shatner, Rose McGowan, Michael Jai White, and Mike Colter. Attendees can enjoy celebrity panels, autograph sessions, cosplay showcases and a bustling exhibition hall. A special ticketed event, «A Night in the Shire,» offers an intimate evening with the Hobbits and Gollum on July 5. *1001 Place Jean-Paul Riopelle, July 4–6*

## JOAT International Street Dance Festival

The heart of street dance beats at **JOAT Battles**, a high-stakes series of events where international dancers in breaking, hip hop, popping and kidz categories face off in thrilling, improvised showdowns. With a hyped MC, explosive beats from the DJ and a sharp-eyed jury, the stage is set for four days of raw energy and fierce creativity. Who will win over the judges this year? *Aug. 28–Aug. 31*



# Celebration of Fringe



Horse Girls



The Heterosexuals

BY SAVANNAH STEWART

June in Montreal means the return of the Fringe Festival, bringing a fresh bunch of shows for all ages and tastes! Here are some highlights of the 2025 edition, running through June 15.

ANARTISTE: Ode à la liberté d’expression

This French-language site-specific performance by THÉÂTRE MORTS-VIVANTS confronts the boundaries of art, activism and belonging. Set inside an artist residence now under threat of eviction, the piece follows the transformation of an artist who, through her situation, becomes an anarchist — a symbol of resistance in a world that punishes difference. Created and directed by Dona-Bella Kassab, with design by Romy Claire, *ANARTISTE* navigates the tender fault lines of identity, censorship, and creative survival. More than a play, it’s a living protest, a tribute to voices that refuse to be erased. *3655 St-Laurent #208, June 3–15, \$19, 12+*

The Routine

*The Routine* is what you get when you put Mr. Bean in *Death of a Salesman*. This surreal physical miming comedy follows a lonely office worker who stumbles through a portal and into a whimsical quest for the meaning of life. With dreamlike vignettes, absurd dances and a touch of existential wonder, *The Routine* turns the everyday into the extraordinary. *Mission Santa Cruz, 60 Rachel W., June 4–15, \$19, 12+*

The Waste Land — A Ritual in Five Acts

T.S. Eliot fans will rejoice in this immersive solo performance and visual art installation that breathes new, urgent life into his iconic poem, *The Waste Land*. Blurring the lines between theatre, gallery, funeral and séance, the piece transforms Eliot’s fractured modernist landscape into a visceral rite of passage confronting empires, ecological collapse and personal reckoning. For creator Gavin Sewell, who has navigated visual impairment since childhood, *The Waste Land* has long been more than literature — it’s been a survival manual

for making sense of a disjointed world. Staged in English with French overtitles, the work unfolds across five acts, passing through loss, collapse and the possibility of rebirth. Following its premiere at the 2025 Montreal Fringe Festival, the project will expand into an exhibition and a radio-play adaptation, continuing its meditation on what it means to see clearly in a world coming undone. *Cité-des-Hospitalières, La Grande Chapelle, 209 des Pins W., June 5–14, \$19, 12+*

Harlem of the North

*Harlem of the North* is a stirring new musical by Frangelica Cajuste that traces the journey of Ella, a young woman uprooted to 1920s Montreal with dreams of starting over. As the city’s vibrant jazz scene pulses around her, Ella finds herself caught between the weight of loss, the thrill of love and the fire of her own ambition. Set against a backdrop of smoky clubs and shifting identities, *Harlem of the North* is a story about how far one woman will go to live freely on her own terms. With original music and bold storytelling, this is a soulful ode to resilience in a tough world. *La Chapelle, 3700 St-Dominique, June 5–14, \$15*

The Heterosexuals

A Fringe circuit favourite, this hilariously subversive solo show dives headfirst into the bizarre rituals, questionable fashion choices and bewildering behaviours of that most mysterious species: straight people. Armed with biting wit and “undercover” field research (gathered while posing as one of them), performer Johnnie McNamara Walker peels back the layers of hetero-normativity with a mix of storytelling, satire and awkward personal confessions. Equal parts roast and revelation, *The Heterosexuals* flips the script on who’s “normal” and who’s just pretending. Come for the laughs, stay for the tea and shade. *O PATRO VÝŠ, 356 Mont-Royal E., June 5–15, \$19, 16+*

Horse Girls

If you were a horse girl, this play is for you! *Horse Girls* is a darkly funny descent into the obsessive world of the Lady Jean Ladies, a tween equestrian club where friendship is sacred, but betrayal is just around the corner. As alliances fray and innocence buckles under the weight of adolescence, this biting comedy by Jenny Rachel Weiner gallops through the wild emotional terrain of girlhood with wit, edge and just a touch of chaos. *MainLine Theatre, 3997 St-Laurent, June 5–15, \$14, 16+*

POZ

A raw and unflinchingly honest solo show by Mark Keller, *POZ* traces a decade of living with HIV through the real-life story of a six-day bike ride from Toronto to Montreal. Winner of the Toronto Fringe Best New Play, it explores stigma, resilience and what it means to be HIV-positive today, told with heart and humour. With *POZ*, Keller asks what it takes to move forward when the road ahead feels uphill. *Mission Santa Cruz, 60 Rachel W., June 9–14, \$19, 16+*

LITTLE STAR: BORN OF DESIRE

Told entirely through lipsync and movement, *LITTLE STAR: BORN OF DESIRE* is a four-act performance providing an abstract origin story of club kid drag persona Little Star, exploring the deep need to reinvent, transcend and give life to one’s truest self. Mythic, magnetic and unapologetically queer, *BORN OF DESIRE* is a creation story like no other. *MainLine Theatre, 3997 St-Laurent, June 5–15, \$14, 18+*

Shuttlecock

Get ready to embark on a bold, hilarious, and refreshingly absurd journey through the messy middle of life. Teetering on the edge of “the change,” creator Melissa G. dives into reproductive health, sexuality, aging and late-in-life coming out, all with a clown’s heart and a wink. This interactive solo show blends storytelling and play to tackle taboo topics with humour and honesty. Because *Shuttlecock* invites audience participation, performances can shift from night to night. *Cité-des-Hospitalières - La Grande Chapelle, 209 des Pins W., June 5–15, \$15, 18+*

Star Wars d’icitte : La guerre des cônes

*Star Wars d’icitte : La guerre des cônes* is a musical, satirical and wildly Québécois twist on George Lucas’s prequel trilogy. Follow young Anakin Skywalker from a podrace on the Circuit Gilles-Villeneuve (of Tatooine) to his fateful Jedi training, as this zany adaptation uncovers the true origin of the *guerre des cônes*, the dark side of the Force, and, of course, Darth Vader. Written by Catherine Bastien and Raphaëlle Proulx-Tremblay, this parody packs lightsabers, laughs, local flair and sand. *Comedy Theatre of Montreal, 1113 de Maisonneuve E., June 5–15, \$19*

→ For the complete program and to buy tickets, please visit [montrealfringe.ca](http://montrealfringe.ca)



26 MAI-15 JUIN, 2025 | 26 MAY-15 JUNE, 2025

# FRINGE



MONTREALFRINGE.CA 514.849.FEST



Montréal





# : 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.

## *Quietly, Loving Everyone* by Curtis McRae

Montrealer Curtis McRae — recently appointed editor at Véhicule Press and editor-in-chief of *Yolk* magazine — makes a quietly powerful debut with *Quietly, Loving Everyone*. This collection of short stories pulls together a cycle of everyday portraits that feel both deeply personal and strangely universal, all revealing a deep love letter to our city of Montreal. A boy raises James Dean from the dead, only to be disappointed. A student's quiet spiral follows an autoimmune diagnosis. Two sisters take a road trip that later reveals itself as a site of grief. A date unfolds in a dying porn theatre, the last relic of a changing neighbourhood. His prose is tender, precise and full of empathy. In this episode, Sruti sits down with McRae to talk about his new collection, the pleasures and pressures of writing in

Montreal and what it means to try and love everyone — fully, foolishly and without restraint. We ask: Is universal love possible? Does the attempt count, even if it fails? And what does it take to hold space for the quiet moments where connection either begins — or slips away? (SI)

## *Happiness Forever* by Adelaide Faith

I've followed Adelaide Faith on Instagram for years — she's a thoughtful presence in the literary world, regularly sharing notes on craft and insight from writers she admires. One of those is Sheila Heti, so it's fitting that *Happiness Forever* carries a blurb from the *Pure Colour* author. Both Faith and Heti explore purity in form and feeling, their prose distilled but emotionally resonant. Still, to call Faith's debut a Heti imitation would be wrong. *Happiness Forever* is its own raw, haunting thing. It follows a young girl who, after surviving layers of trauma (as young girls too often do) falls in love with her therapist. Faith captures something primal in that dynamic: the desire to be seen, to be understood. The story unsettles at times, walking a fine line between discomfort and revelation. I, too, found myself falling for the therapist's quiet warmth alongside the narrator. There's a vulnerability here that lingers. In this episode, we talk about the cost

of being emotionally exposed, whether crying helps locate the self and what it means to live a small, medium or large life. (SI)

## *The Emperor of Gladness* by Ocean Vuong

*The Emperor of Gladness* marks a very grand return for one of America's best contemporary writers. Ocean Vuong was catapulted to fame after his debut novel, *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*, hit bookshelves in 2019, and readers have been eagerly awaiting his follow-up. And boy, does he deliver. *The Emperor of Gladness* introduces us to 19-year-old Hai and the elderly Grazina, both immigrants to the U.S., both poor and both alone in their lives. They strike a bargain: Hai will be Grazina's caretaker, and in return he can live with Grazina rent-free. What follows is an exploration of the death of small-town America and how capitalism fails everyday, normal Americans. It's a story of chosen family and class struggle, and, in typical Vuong fashion, it will make your heart ache. He will tell you beautiful things about the world, you will feel sad about it, and you will beg him for more. Tune in to our interview together to hear him do exactly that, and to find out why he thought this novel was going to be his "flop." (Spoiler alert: with this novel being championed and heavily promoted by Oprah Winfrey herself, it most certainly is not flopping.) (AN)

A

**CERTAIN**

STYLE  
OF LIFE

AT THE 1ST HALF, ALL THINGS SOCCER CULTURE LIVE RENT FREE,  
SHAPING A UNIQUE LIFESTYLE "A CERTAIN STYLE OF LIFE" —  
WITH A NORTH AMERICAN TWIST.

Discover how the beautiful game influences fashion, art, music, and food.  
Delve into street art and local scenes as we interview chefs,  
athletes, artists, and tastemakers...

12  
QUESTIONS

w/ HOST PAUL DESBAILLETS

The  
1st  
Half

proud to support

GOAL  
INITIATIVES  
FOUNDATION

SUBSCRIBE

THE1STHALF



A group of men are shown from the waist up, wearing black and red SQUIRT.org underwear. They are holding small cupcakes with red frosting. In the center, a man with dark hair and a pearl necklace looks up at the camera. The background is a solid light color.

**SQUIRT**  
.org

**CLICK &  
EAT CAKE**

**CELEBRATING  
25 YEARS OF CRUISING.**

Visit [www.squirt.org](http://www.squirt.org) to join the action.



# ARCADE FIRE



# PINK ELEPHANT

NEW ALBUM OUT NOW

