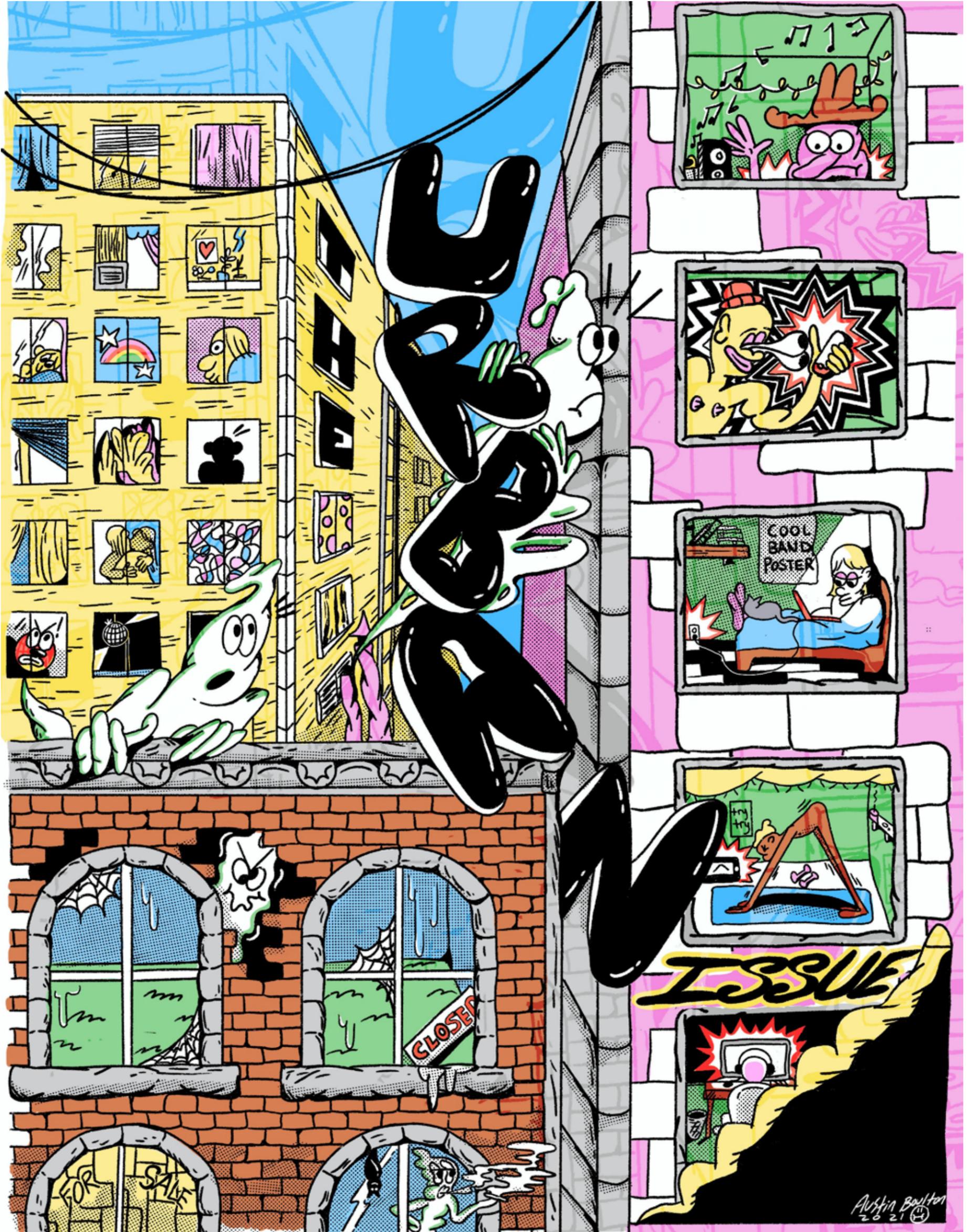


THE UNITER



INVISIBLE CITY: COVID-19'S UNSEEN SPACES, PHYSICAL & VIRTUAL

INVISIBLE WINNIPEG

THOMAS PASHKO
MANAGING EDITOR

THOMASPASHKO

Another publishing year is coming to an end. This issue of *The Uniter* is our final weekly publication of the 2020-21 academic year. For the past 13 years, this final issue has been dubbed "The Urban Issue," a themed edition of the paper exploring affairs concerning people across Winnipeg, centred around a particular topic.

This year is no different, and our theme is "Invisible Winnipeg." It's an opportunity for our staff to take a look at the unseen spaces, both physical and virtual, that Winnipeggers have had to consider during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Physical spaces have been dramatically impacted by the pandemic. Many, like restaurants, venues and places of worship, have spent the past year in total or near-total emptiness, depending on the regulations and capacity restrictions of the moment. Others, like public transit, have become fraught with tension over masks, physical distancing measures and the very real dangers of exposure and infection.

Virtual spaces, on the other hand, have had to fill that void while Winnipeggers stay home. Online forums have become the venues not just for certain jobs, religious services and arts organizations, but also for social and leisure activities like gaming, streaming and other fandoms.

We touch on all of these facets and more in our (virtual) pages this week. While we will be ceasing weekly issues until the start of the U of W's new academic year in August, we will continue publishing at uniter.ca throughout the spring and summer months. We won't be dropping an entire issue's worth of content every week, but we will be reporting on the issues most important to the campus and downtown communities.

Stay safe, everyone.



PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

Laura Gurbhoo opened her new bakeshop Gâto during the COVID-19 pandemic, despite the logistical challenges. Read more on page 5.

UNITER STAFF

MANAGING EDITOR
Thomas Pashko — editor@uniter.ca

BUSINESS MANAGER
Olivia Norquay — businessmgr@uniter.ca

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Talia Steele — creative@uniter.ca

ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR
Hannah Foulger — culture@uniter.ca

FEATURES EDITOR
Charlie Morin — featureseditor@uniter.ca

CITY EDITOR
Alex Neufeldt — city@uniter.ca

COMMENTS EDITOR
Haley Pauls — comments@uniter.ca

COPY & STYLE EDITOR
Danielle Doiron — style@uniter.ca

PHOTO EDITOR
Daniel Crump — photoeditor@uniter.ca

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Callie Lugosi — callie@uniter.ca

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Keeley Braunstein-Black — keeley@uniter.ca

STAFF ILLUSTRATOR
Gabrielle Funk — gabrielle@uniter.ca

FEATURES REPORTER
Keesha Harewood — features@uniter.ca

ARTS & CULTURE REPORTER
Sarah London — sarah@uniter.ca

ARTS & CULTURE REPORTER
Vacant

CITY REPORTER
Cierra Bettens — cityreporter@uniter.ca

CAMPUS REPORTER
Callum Goulet-Kilgour — campus@uniter.ca

VOLUNTEER CO-ORDINATOR
Holly Liu — volunteer@uniter.ca

CONTRIBUTORS

COMIC
Hely Schumann

ILLUSTRATOR
Austin Boulton

WRITER
Vinay Sharma

MOUSELAND PRESS

MOUSELAND PRESS BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Kristin Annable (chair), Anifat Olawoyin, Larissa Peck, Andrew Tod and Jack Walker — For inquiries email: board@uniter.ca

CONTACT US

GENERAL INQUIRIES
editor@uniter.ca

ADVERTISING
businessmgr@uniter.ca

ROOM 0RM14
UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG
515 PORTAGE AVENUE
WINNIPEG, MANITOBA
R3B 2E9
TREATY ONE TERRITORY
HOMELAND OF THE MÉTIS NATION



SUBMISSIONS

Submissions of articles, letters, graphics and photos are encouraged, however, all new contributors (with the exception of letters to the editor) must attend a 45-minute volunteer orientation workshop to ensure that the volunteer understands all of the publication's basic guidelines.

In-person volunteer orientations are currently suspended due to COVID-19, but over-the-phone and remote orientations can be arranged. Please email volunteer@uniter.ca for more details.

Deadline for advertisements is noon Friday, six days prior to publication. The Uniter reserves the right to refuse to print material submitted by volunteers. The Uniter will not print submissions that are homophobic, misogynistic, transphobic, ableist, racist or libellous. We also reserve the right to edit for length/style.

CORRECTION

In the March 24 article "Literary landscapes," Katherena Vermette's *The Break* was mentioned as a winner of the Governor General's Literary Award in fiction. The novel was actually a finalist for the prize.

The Uniter regrets the error.



LEIF NORMAN (SUPPLIED)

A scene from Prairie Theatre Exchange's production of Hanna Moscovitch's *Post-Democracy*, which will run virtually throughout April.

GHOST LIGHTS, CAMERAS AND ACTING

Performance art in pandemic times

HANNAH FOULGER | ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR | [FOULGERSCOVFEFE](#) [@SPEAKSTORY](#)

Winnipeg's theatre ghosts have had a lonely year. In the before times, theatres around the city would be filled with audience members sitting close while watching productions put together by teams of actors, directors, designers and technicians working in enclosed spaces. At the end of the night, a "ghost light" would be left onstage at the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre (RMTC), but now it is left on all the time. It seems the ghosts are self-isolating too.

Theatres that would have been full more days of the year than not have sat empty. Even theatre productions like *The Mountaintop*, *Post-Democracy* and *Plé* have only run their performances a few times for the cameras and empty audiences.

In a year of constant change, it's been difficult to predict when, where and how people will be able to gather. Winnipeg's performing-arts companies had to scrap many plans over the past year. They created new programs, sometimes with no guarantee they will be able to go forward, as they are subject to governments' shifting pandemic health orders. Performing-arts organizations have had to reconsider the definitions of theatre and art when audiences and sometimes artists can't gather in person.

At the same time, following the death of George Floyd and the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement, IBPOC artists and allies have demanded performing-arts organizations perform a deep, introspective assessment of their own racist structures and behaviours and to demon-

strate a commitment to change.

In the fall, the RMTC embarked on a season of microprogramming, starting with *Tiny Plays, Big Ideas*. The plan was to run several short plays written by a diverse group of artists to be staged for small audiences at the Canadian Museum of Human Rights in small, socially distanced groups. They will now be digitally streamed from May 7 to 23 online.

At the time, Kelly Thornton, artistic director of RMTC, said they were announcing programming as shortly as six weeks out from the events, as health conditions and the comfort level of audiences could change quickly.

Tiny Plays "is our first toe in the water, to see whether audiences are willing to come back, and they are actually willing to come back," Thornton said in November. The shows sold out in minutes, but, days before the show was to open, Manitoba went into Code Red, and the shows were cancelled.

Programming decisions this year have been made more rapidly than in living memory. Theatres and other performing arts organizations like Young Lungs Dance Exchange, a dance organization that supports development, creation and presentation of contemporary dance, have also had to quickly learn how to provide workshops and training online. Young Lungs is running an upcoming workshop with Sick + Twisted Theatre for Deaf and disabled artists, as well as other artists who want to work with them.

While it is difficult for Young Lungs to adapt a physical medium to a digital space, especially with certain workshops that required working with a partner, managing artistic director Zorya Arrow says it has been beneficial to them as artists, but also made financially easier without the costs of a permanent venue.

Adaptation "is like stretching that muscle," she says. "The whole pandemic has really opened a lot of doors for a lot of different accessibility needs, and (we are) breaking a lot of new ground."

This season has forced performing-arts organizations to consider how to make their programming safe and accessible for everyone, including both the artistic teams and audience members.

"Everyone is reading their space," Thomas Morgan Jones, artistic director of Prairie Theatre Exchange (PTE), says. "The project, the amount of people, (how long) they're presenting in real time, to figure out what's responsible. Every company and all the humans that make up those companies are dealing with balancing rules with context-based ethics."

"The question is: what makes a theatre relevant? What is the purpose of a theater? (How are we) serving all the communities right now?"

Many performing-arts organizations, including PTE, Young Lungs and Theatre Projects Manitoba, have found a comfortable virtual space by offering different online workshops, which is a function of theatres more easily translatable to the digital medium. But there are serious philosophical questions around the definition of art and theatre online or in person.

"For some people, it's about gathering, and that gathering doesn't have to be live. And for some people, it is absolutely about sharing time and space, physically," Jones says. "The magic (of live, in-person theatre) for me is not greater or lesser than (filmed theatre). It's different than the magic of what can happen in terms of receiving things through the screen."

In November, PTE presented *Katharsis* by Yvette Nolan. The performance, which starred Tracey Nepinak, ran at a

tidy 20 minutes and was set in the reality of an empty theatre. Jones commissioned Nolan to "write a love letter to the theater, and then what she wrote was something that was immediately speech, in the immediate present."

However, after filming was finished, both on *Katharsis* and the upcoming *Post-Democracy* by Hannah Moscovitch, "there was a real sense of a lack of completion or fulfillment, on the part of all the artists and production team, because the next stage of creating a play, it's like, now it's ready for us to have a communion with the audience," Jones says. "That feeling of displacement from that experience is really resonant right now."

The road ahead is unclear, but, at least in PTE's case, they are coming through financially with the help of the wage subsidy, government support and subscribers. However, performing-arts organizations will have to continue this kind of flexibility in programming until the pandemic is declared over and beyond, depending on their financial status post-pandemic.

As for now, companies continue to take calculated risks in planning far ahead.

The Winnipeg Fringe Festival has just announced they will not have indoor venues this year. However, there are other hopeful plans ahead. Shakespeare in the Ruins and Théâtre Cercle Molière are attempting to mount their bilingual production of *The Winter's Tale*, which they originally programmed for the summer of 2020.

Jones hopes to have both an in-person and digital run of Ismaila Alfa's *Voice* at PTE, and RMTC opens *The (Post)Mistress*, a new musical by Tomson Highway, on April 8.

There's no way to know if all these plans will work out or when the theatres will be full again, but at RMTC, the ghost light stays on, and the ghosts wait for us to join them.

***Post-Democracy* runs virtually at PTE from April 8 to 25. To stay up to date on their evolving season, find them at [pte.mb.ca](#). RMTC's *The (Post)Mistress* runs April 8 to 25 at [royalmtc.ca](#).**



The podcast *What We Do in the Basement* is one example of how Dungeons & Dragons players and fans have connected online.

SUPPLIED PHOTO

DON'T HAVE TO SOCIAL DISTANCE WHILE FIGHTING A DRAGON

D&D uses 'theatre of the mind' to bring fantasy worlds to life

SARAH LONDON | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | @SRA_5000

The role-playing game Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) had its biggest year ever during the COVID-19 pandemic. Sales grew 33 per cent in 2020, due to adventures like battling goblins and traversing orc villages living in the collective imaginations of the players. This means these supernatural spaces can live anywhere, including online.

Miranda Moroz is an avid D&D player and Dungeon Master (DM) for several campaigns, meaning she leads the players

through the world of the game.

For Moroz, "music and ambient sound is a really big component to D&D." It helps players think about the space they're in and sets the mood of the scene," she says. Moroz also makes maps using cartography software to display the worlds of D&D games.

"Putting together the geography of your space can help you to describe things more vividly," she says, noting that having a sense of geography can inform the spe-

cifics of gameplay.

The transition to playing D&D online for COVID was easy for Moroz, because she started DMing online before serving as a DM in person. "The methods of creating that immersive environment is relatively similar, whether you are in person or online. The resources to do so are just different," she says.

Back in 2020, Kevin Ramberran started recording a podcast project called *What We Do in the Basement* in person before moving online for COVID. Ramberran DMs and produces the "comedy D&D podcast, where improvisers explore fantasy worlds, battle foes and navigate political conflicts with the help of their wits, weapons and obscure pop-culture references."

Inspired by other D&D podcasts, Ramberran created a campaign from scratch to allow the improvisers Natasha Durande, Thomas Toles, Jesse Bergen and Luke Cecelon room to play and leave their mark on the game's world. This adaptability is in "the spirit of the podcast, (which) is comedy and improv," Ramberran says.

"I'm very open to the fact that the players ... may create both backstory but also literal physical things that are in the space that I didn't anticipate," he says. "It's really important to keep the theater of the mind in mind when we're (recording). We

should be able to play this podcast with our eyes closed."

The improvisers from the podcast, including members of local comedy group Club Soda, went from live comedy to online shows for COVID. But without the audience feedback, it's not the same, Ramberran says.

"Right now, a lot of (musicians) are trying to find ways to write, record and release (music), and this (podcast) is sort of like the comedy equivalent," he says.

There's been "a huge rise (in D&D) during the pandemic because of its flexibility and, its ability for people to play remotely, and, as a performer, to put a comedic spin on that has given us ... access (to) an audience we otherwise wouldn't have," he says.

There's a perceived "gateway to entry," but even with the complex rule systems of D&D, anyone can curate how the game works, Moroz says. "The beauty of D&D, and notably of tabletop role-play games, is no one's judging how closely you're following the rules."

Find *What We Do in the Basement* @wwditb on social media or search for them wherever podcasts are found. Check out Moroz's cartography @pandorasmaps on Instagram.

WINNIPEG'S TWITCH COMMUNITY HOP BACK ONLINE

'Fantastic' and 'supportive' streaming community stays strong during COVID

SARAH LONDON | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | @SRA_5000

Usually, it's considered creepy to make a new friend by staring at them while they play video games in their room. But on Twitch, a live-streaming platform known for video-game streams with an emphasis on online community, it's encouraged.

The Winnipeg Community MeetUp group (powered by Twitch) is "a collection of broadcasters with varying interest across all platforms of the industry."

The group began in 2015 as a way to bring people together in person, with small groups going bowling or grabbing food and talking streaming, Samantha Requeima, lead organizer of Winnipeg MeetUps, says.

"It totally expanded into something beyond that," she says, adding the events grew from a handful of people to hosting over 100 by 2019.

The goal of meetups for the Twitch Winnipeg community are "to make this hobby into a community and to build a connection and support system with each other," Requeima says.

Participating in the community doesn't guarantee viral growth in stream views, but they do guarantee friendships and

connections with other folks who enjoy streaming and want to help each other improve, Requeima says.

"Twitch has a great way of bringing people together," Sakura Tsubasa, a Twitch partner and Winnipeg MeetUp admin, says.

Tsubasa has made lasting friendships from the Twitch Winnipeg community, because "we share a common interest in gaming, and I think that's really beneficial for ... everyone," she says, adding the community has been especially beneficial during COVID-19.

The community is a "fantastic group of people" that includes chat moderators, volunteers and respectful community members who provide each other with tech support, gaming groups and networking, Tsubasa says. They also offer collaborating opportunities that can "help with stream growth in the long-term."

Tsubasa's first stream was for a 24-hour Extra Life marathon to raise money for the Children's Miracle Network hospital in Manitoba. After that, she continued streaming, and her content evolved from there, she says.



Local Twitch streamers at the last in-person Winnipeg Community MeetUp. The events have since moved online.

SUPPLIED PHOTO

The Winnipeg MeetUp group is a not-for-profit, so money made within the community goes back in to support events for members. The group often raises money for local charities and does Extra Life streams, which they have continued throughout the pandemic.

The group is "more equipped than most" to bring their offline meetups back online, because the community already stemmed from connecting with each other online, Requeima says. "It's been an absolute thrill to help build it up and to keep it sustained during quarantine."

The admins are bringing their community together during COVID over Discord, which is "a voice, video and text com-

munication service" that facilitates online communities and is often used by gamers.

Connecting through Discord "consists of hosting game nights within the community, having chat constantly going with interesting topics and encouraging others to share things going on in their lives," Requeima says. "(I) want to get everybody as connected as possible right now. Quarantine (can) be so lonely."

Learn more about Winnipeg Community MeetUp @twitchwinnipeg on Instagram or meetups.twitch.tv/winnipeg/. Find Tsubasa's streams at SakuraTsubasa on Twitch.



PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

Laura Gurbhoo opened her new bakeshop Gâto during the COVID-19 pandemic, despite the logistical challenges.

OPENING IN A PANDEMIC

Why the owners of Gâto and Thyme took the risk

KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER | @KEELEY_IMAGE

Starting a new business can be financially risky at the best of times. Doing so during a pandemic can be particularly challenging. With slim profit margins to begin with, it is a wonder that many places are still somehow operating at reduced capacity.

The COVID-19 pandemic hit the local restaurant industry hard. Hermanos Restaurant and Wine Bar and Segovia Tapas Bar (among others) closed permanently during the first wave. Amid constant warnings in news articles and online about the status of

the industry, this might not seem like the best time for a new venture.

For Laura Gurbhoo, however, the pandemic is part of what pushed her to open Gâto.

“The pandemic has definitely (taken) a toll ... however, it has also made me realize how precious time is, and I thought it was time for it,” she says.

Gâto translates to “cake” in Gurbhoo’s mother tongue, Mauritian Creole. Gâto was inspired by “the current climate crisis, and the need for change,” Gurbhoo says. “Baking has

always been my passion, so it was an ideal job for me. I realized that baking was what I wanted to do. Gâto started with the focus of reducing our carbon footprint while providing delicious baked goods to Winnipeg.”

Sandra Drosdowech, co-owner of Thyme Cafe and Books, is no stranger to the business. She’s a former co-owner of the collective Mondragon Bookstore & Coffee House. Drosdowech hoped to open a vegan restaurant and bookstore since Mondragon closed seven years ago.

All the ownership team really needed was a desirable location. “We had been looking for a space and saw the space on Taché that had been Cocoabeans Bakeshop a few years ago. We knew it would work out well, as it was close to home and central and (in) a great neighborhood with a lot of people in the medical or health field,” Drosdowech says.

Drosdowech and her partner Jason Holland signed a three-year lease in 2019. “We had daily discussions about what we should do: when we should open, if we should open, was it going to get better? Worse? It was very hard to know what to do! We finally realized that we just needed to

make it happen, as we needed the income, and we were one year into our lease.”

Drosdowech was able to take advantage of watching and learning from what others had done successfully during that year. “As our space is small, we were able to adjust how we were going to run and just move to pickup and takeout only. If we had a bigger space that relied on large groups of people, we would have had a much more difficult time,” Drosdowech says.

“We also had the advantage of observing how other places were operating in the pandemic with the restrictions. The places who suddenly had to switch how they were operating would have had a very challenging time.”

Gâto opened on March 24 and has sold out every day. “I would like to say how thankful I am for all the support we received on our opening,” Gurbhoo says.

Thyme has met with success as well. “Everyone has been amazing: customers, other business owners, suppliers, neighbours and old friends! It makes it all the challenges worthwhile and confirms that we made the right decision by opening. We are so grateful to once again be doing what we love,” Drosdowech says.

IMAGINING FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

Honour fandoms by engaging with them in new, imaginative ways

CHARLIE MORIN | FEATURES EDITOR | @MILLENNIAL.DIGS

Amidst the uncertainty brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, many people have turned to the comfort of familiar TV shows.

“Like routine, it eases our cognitive load, which is suffering after all these months of immediate and implicit uncertainty,” Allison LaSorda writes in a recent *Globe and Mail* article.

It is true that it’s easier to engage with well-worn fandoms than it is to seek out new content. As an avid *Harry Potter* fan, I’m always re-reading the series – whether it be the actual books, audiobooks or the movies.

As LaSorda says, re-engaging with a favourite series is an opportunity to hone in on details that may have previously been overlooked. That deeper appreciation, however, can be taken much further.

Harry Potter and the Sacred Text is a podcast where hosts Vanessa Zoltan and Casper ter Kuile examine the *Harry Potter* series by using traditional sacred reading practices.

Both graduates from Harvard Divinity School, Zoltan and ter Kuile guide the conversation with a different theme in every episode – for instance, the reading of Book 4, Chapter 5, “Weasley’s Wizard Wheezes,” through the theme of masculinity.

Through their conversations, Zoltan

and ter Kuile address a myriad of difficult themes present in the text – including power relations, toxic masculinity and fatphobia, to name a few – with tact. The hosts are always willing to share new perspectives on the motives of the characters, particularly those vilified in the standard reading. The episode ends with a blessing to two characters deserving special recognition.

Reading a beloved text with the intention to treat it as more than a vehicle for escapism and entertainment is helpful not only to better understand the series, but also as a mindfulness practice. Zoltan and ter Kuile encourage listeners to ground themselves in the text, providing the opportunity to meditate, process and imagine new possibilities through the practice.

The two hosts sat down for a livestream of their final episode together on March 25, 2021, reading Chapter 1 of Book 1 through the theme of transition.

The theme of transition felt particularly relevant besides the evident reason (ter Kuile leaving the podcast). It has now been over 20 years since the first book in the *Harry Potter* series was released.

Since then, so much has changed: not only in conversations around the *Harry Potter*



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

world and *She Who Must Not Be Named*, but also in the lives of everyone who has been part of the fandom along the way.

If we continued to read *Harry Potter* with the same eyes that we did when we first sat down with the book – be it many years ago or more recently – who would we be?

The reason we engage with our favourite series is because of the way they resonate with us on a personal level. It’s important

to give ourselves the opportunity to carry our fandom forward as we continue to grow and imagine future possibilities.

For those who feel uneasy about the author: the harrypottersacredtext.com website has a section with voicemails from trans and non-binary listeners sharing their views on the series, the author and transphobia – a conversation worth listening to.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Q: INTO THE STORM

Episode 1 “Calm Before the Storm”
Airing on HBO, streaming on Crave



THOMAS PASHKO | MANAGING EDITOR | THOMASPASHKO

Anyone who has spent the last several years closely observing the disturbing far-right resurgence has surely encountered the bizarre QAnon conspiracy theory. But the Jan. 6 storming of the US Capitol by Donald Trump supporters made it impossible for even the most tuned-out observers to recognize the Q crowd was no longer a wackadoo online subculture, but a full-blown cult.

Q: Into the Storm, the new documentary miniseries from director Cullen Hoback,

delves into the origins of the QAnon conspiracy, the people who believe in it, the online personalities who propagate (and profit from) it and the people trying to identify the actual fraudster behind it.

For those unfamiliar (of whom I'm deeply jealous), the QAnon conspiracy theory is based on anonymous online message board posts by “Q,” someone claiming to be a close contact of Trump with access to secret intelligence. Q falsely claims that the US Dem-

ocratic Party, Hollywood celebrities and other enemies of Trump are a satanic cabal of pedophiles and cannibals who traffic and eat human children. Trump, Q says, is a messianic figure sent to destroy these evildoers.

The “evidence” is all there, they claim, pointing to random combinations of numbers and letters in Trump tweets, public appearances or photos. In one scene, a believer points to a photo of Trump and four associates all giving the camera a “thumbs up.” He arbitrarily draws a circle and line between the thumbs and says, “Look, they form a Q!” It's all reminiscent of *King-Kill33*, the essay that claimed random numbers associated with the JFK assassination prove the Dallas shooting was actually a mass-scale masonic ritual.

As stupid as it sounds, the conspiracy theory caught like wildfire among Trump's deplorable crowd, eventually spreading well beyond his base. Two interviewees, a couple who were previously lifelong Democrats, have become Q diehards. Many of them say they became radicalized after watching YouTube videos from conspiracists or viewing memes.

In addition to acting as a good intro to the

phenomenon, the premier episode of *Into the Storm* highlights the vast political gap between real-life and online identities. It speaks to a frightening confluence of internet and media illiteracy, which combined with online algorithms, age-old racist tropes and religious fundamentalism to birth QAnon.

Hoback's skillful interviews highlight how this lack of online media literacy can upend and destroy QAnon devotees' lives. One interviewee, a former gossip columnist whose career was ended by her QAnon obsession, tells Hoback, “nothing surprises me anymore,” saying she'd believe Earth was flat if Q said so. She seems so oblivious that when she says “nothing surprises me,” she really means “I'll believe anything that reaffirms my worldview.”

Hoback treats his subjects with compassion. His tone has as much in common with recent cult documentaries like *The Vow* or *Heaven's Gate* as it does with political documentaries or news coverage about the Trump phenomenon. This is essential to *Into the Storm's* entire worldview: it understands QAnon isn't just a cult, a conspiracy theory or a political crisis, but all three rolled into one.

ARTS BRIEFS

HANNAH FOULGER | ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR | FOULGERSCOVFEEFE SPEAKSTORY

Free online art talk

First Fridays hosts Bev Pike, a Winnipeg-based artist and activist for her talk, *You've Come a Long Way (Maybe?)*, about the history of feminist art in Winnipeg from 1975 to today and its connections with environmentalism. Tune in live on April 2 at 7 p.m. at youtu.be/boG0SaYZbrU.

Charlene du Toit: *Feminine and Fierce*

Arts AccessAbility Network Manitoba hosts Charlene du Toit's mixed-media exhibition *Feminine and Fierce*, opening on April 2. Du Toit is a self-taught artist originally from South Africa, who is currently based in Winnipeg. The exhibit explores femininity as a source of inner strength, resilience and power. View the exhibition at aanm.ca/online-exhibitions.

Flux

Cr8ery (125 Adelaide St.) hosts a trio of artists in their new exhibition *Flux*, running from April 1 to 13. The show features work by Lori Ferguson, oil painter and modern impressionist; Xavier Mutshipayi, artist and figurative oil painter; and Rey Page, artist and photographer, all on the subject of change. The gallery is open to in-person visitors Tuesdays to Fridays from 12 to 6 p.m. and on Saturdays from 12 to 5 p.m. or by appointment.

Within Reach

Artist John Statham's solo exhibition runs from April 1 to 24 at Soul Gallery (163 Clare Ave.). With paintings of rocky landscapes and Winnipeg back lanes, Statham tries to find the radiance beneath the mundane. There will be no opening reception. The exhibit is available to view on Saturdays from noon to 4 p.m. or by appointment. Purchases can be made online at soulgallery.ca.

Yom Hashoah Interfaith Commemoration

On April 8, Congregation Shaarey Zedek hosts the 13th annual Yom Hashoah (Holocaust) Commemoration, with a candle lighting and a reading from the Megillat Hashoah (Holocaust scroll). A seventh candle will be lit in memory of the Roma, Sinti and others singled out for genocide. The memorial will be streamed live to the Congregation Shaarey Zedek YouTube page. People of all faiths and backgrounds are welcome.

ON THE COVER

Winnipeg-based artist Austin Boulton

Austin Boulton (they/them) is an aspiring self-taught illustrator and cartoonist from Winnipeg, Man. They are inspired by the cartoons and comics they grew up with and the friends who motivate them, Austin's work has been compared to artists such as Dr. Seuss and Patrick Kyle because of their strange, whimsical illustrations. They have a strong passion for printed media and strange tales that one day will be accessible for everyone.

You can find Austin's art in zines and in various projects from Winnipeg musicians. They're currently working on finding their own style by exploring new mediums and studying comics and animation.



ILLUSTRATION BY TALIA STEELE

ROMANCE, UNPRECEDENTED

Making it official in the time of COVID-19

CIERRA BETTENS | CITY REPORTER | [TWITTER](#) FICTIONALCIERRA [INSTAGRAM](#) CIERRABETTENS

Crossing over the one-year mark of COVID-19, some Winnipeg couples anticipate two anniversaries: one marking the first year of their relationship and one of lockdown.

Dating in a pandemic has put a pause on many relationship “firsts.” For some, the first night out could take place five months into a relationship. For others, it could mean putting off meeting each other’s family and friends for months, or even a year.

The Uniter spoke with folks who managed to find love in the time of COVID-19 – however unprecedented these times may be.

Days before Manitoba went into lockdown in March 2020, Rebecca Simiyu, a University of Manitoba student completing her final year in the political studies program, and Christian Higham, a master’s student in the cultural studies program at the University of Winnipeg, matched on an online dating app.

What would follow was two months of texting, FaceTiming and Netflix party date nights – all before meeting in person in May 2020.

“Our first date wasn’t really a traditional first date. We just took a walk, because that was all we could really do at the time,”

Simiyu says.

“When we first started talking, we were able to get to know each other so deeply,” Higham says. “By the time we hung out, it was so intense to be experiencing that in person finally.”

Not long after they met, Simiyu and Higham made the decision to move in together to avoid the safety risks of going back and forth between residences.

“The first part was like accelerated U-Hauling,” Higham says. “We could live together or not.”

Though the couple hasn’t been to a movie theatre, travelled outside of Manitoba or attended a concert together, Higham says the experience of getting to know Simiyu was something she wouldn’t trade.

“I think it’s also something that we may never get to experience again – getting to know someone so thoroughly and slowly,” Higham says.

For couples like Megan St. Hilaire and Andrew Roper, who also chose to move in together recently, pandemic dating has accelerated some aspects of being in a relationship, while decelerating others. St. Hilaire says the seriousness of COVID-19 forced them to reconsider how they ap-

proached getting into a relationship.

“I’ve always been someone who tries not to get head over heels (or) ahead of myself in relationships,” they say. “With COVID, it was kind of like, okay, you either need to give this your all, or nothing is going to happen. You really learn quickly whether or not you guys are going to work.”

While St. Hilaire says they joke about never having been on a real first date, the couple has managed to make a sanctuary out of their shared space, having movie nights and anticipating a time when going to the cinema is safe and feasible.

“We’re both kind of introverted hermits, so it’s a good co-existence, but it definitely gets cabin fever-y sometimes,” St. Hilaire says.

Gillian Brown, a student journalist at *The Manitoban*, says she and her partner Ty Brass, who she met while working at the paper, only went on their first *real* date in March 2021 – despite calling it official in August 2020.

“I feel like we skipped a lot of the beginning stages of the relationship. We didn’t go on dates really, (and) we haven’t met each other’s family and friends,” Brown says.

For Brown, not being able to meet each other’s families or celebrate holidays together has been a challenge. Oftentimes, she says Brass was the only person she saw.

“I think the family thing is difficult for a lot of people,” she says. “With the lockdown, with social distancing, there’s just a whole other part of the relationship that we don’t get to have right now.”

Others, like Sharee Hochman, a writer and student completing her final year in the rhetoric, writing and communications degree program at the University of Winnipeg, experienced the end of a relationship during the lockdown.

When faced with the option of travelling to Germany to see her then-significant other, Hochman says she found herself caught between a moral dilemma: accepting the health and safety risks of travelling during a pandemic or remaining long-distance for the duration of lockdowns.

“It gave me a lot of anxiety to think about going against the guidelines and the safety of others,” she says. “It was difficult to know that the consequence would be breaking up if I didn’t go, but I think I would’ve felt worse being there if I didn’t go with my gut instinct to stay back in Winnipeg.”

In the end, Hochman’s relationship eventually came to a close, in part due to her choice to stay in Winnipeg. It’s a decision that, while difficult, she says she doesn’t regret.

“It gave me the opportunity to set my boundaries and stick to my morals,” she says.

For many COVID-era couples, what lies ahead in the post-pandemic future remains a beacon of hope.

Simiyu and Higham have been making the most of the pandemic dating world through skateboarding, walks and picnics. Still, the pair looks forward to a future where travelling and interacting with each other’s greater circle of friends is safe.

“Usually, I find that, after a year of dating, people have done a lot of firsts together, but we still have so many first things to experience together,” Simiyu says.

Similarly, St. Hilaire and Roper dream of a future of camping and theatre outings in addition to the bike rides and pizza-making nights they’ve enjoyed together throughout the pandemic.

“I feel like we’ve made a lot of memories in this little bubble we’ve created, and I can’t wait for that bubble to expand,” St. Hilaire says.

CITY BRIEFS

ALEX NEUFELDT | CITY EDITOR

See it before the final curtain call

The Department of Theatre and Film’s final production of the year, *Blink* by Phil Porter, will be performed over livestream every night at 7:30 p.m. until April 3. While admission is free, viewers need to register ahead of time on the department website to access the link.

Physics and geography thesis presentations

The Departments of Geography and Physics are both holding thesis presentations in early April. Physics honours students Shawna Skelton and Sidney Leggett will present virtually on April 5, and geography honours students will present virtually on April 9.

A new space to gather and learn in

The City of Winnipeg has announced the opening of a new library in River Heights-Fort Garry as of March 29. According to a press release from the City, the Bill and Helen Norrie Library, named after former mayor Bill Norrie and his wife Helen, takes much of its design inspiration from Rooster Town.

Psychology students sharing research

The Department of Psychology is hosting a virtual undergraduate research conference featuring the work of honours students from the department and students from other regional universities on April 30. There will also be a keynote address by Dr. John E. Lydon from McGill University. Registration is open on the department website.

Exploring strategies to end homelessness

On April 7, Kíkininaw Óma Strategy to Support Unsheltered Winnipeggers, the Right to Housing Coalition, Make Poverty History Manitoba and End Homelessness Winnipeg are hosting From Crisis to Connection: Ending Homelessness in Winnipeg, an event exploring the causes and solutions to homelessness in Winnipeg. The event is free, and participants will need to register ahead of time.



PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

The COVID-19 pandemic has made riding the bus a lot more complicated for passengers and operators alike.

‘EYE-POPPING’ CONDITIONS AND ‘REACTIVE’ POLICIES

A transit operator’s pandemic work environment

CALLUM GOULET-KILGOUR | CAMPUS REPORTER | [CGOULETKILGOUR](#)

Over the past year, the COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically altered how many Winnipeggers interact with others, especially in public spaces. The prevailing public-health advice has been to avoid being in enclosed spaces with people outside of a household “bubble.”

In buses, however, which are an essential service for many, riders and bus drivers are forced into close proximity to one another, making it one of the few public spaces where this occurs.

A Winnipeg Transit bus operator, who has spoken to *The Uniter* under the condition of

anonymity, describes their work environment over the last year as “eye-popping.”

“Winnipeg (Transit) was very unprepared for COVID-19,” they say. “We’re all very frustrated.”

According to the bus operator, the Amalgamated Transit Union, which represents them and their coworkers, raised the issue of masks for drivers and on buses in January 2020.

While Winnipeg Transit eventually provided drivers with masks in late April of 2020, they say the mask mandate, which came into effect in late August for Winni-

peg Transit buses and city buildings, “took way too long.”

Even with this regulation, the transit operator says they witness constant violations, such as patrons not wearing masks, at essentially every moment during every shift.

“In reality, we don’t have the power (to enforce it),” they say. “If we call the control centre, they’ll tell us: ‘just advise them, and if they don’t comply, just let it be,’” they say, adding that it is common for bus drivers to encounter “combative” and “COVID-denying” individuals.

In an email to *The Uniter*, Megan Benedictson, communications officer for Winnipeg Transit, says that “mask compliance currently sits above 99 percent.”

“Compliance is monitored through visual observations carried out by on-street supervisors stationed at strategic locations, and other personnel,” she says.

The Winnipeg Transit website states that “Transit riders could face a \$100 fine for non-compliance.” However, it is unclear who – if anyone – is enforcing this policy.

Dylon Martin, who takes the bus a few times every month, says in an email to *The Uniter* that COVID-19 safety concerns have caused him to minimize his transit use.

“Buses don’t seem significantly less

crowded, at least at peak times, than before,” he says.

“I think it would be very important to improve transit frequency on peak hours,” Martin says, adding that “buses should be well below capacity to allow for physical distancing.”

He adds, however, that the mask mandate on buses has helped him feel more comfortable while riding.

Another issue of concern for transit workers has been the reporting of COVID-19 cases. The operator says they are not being directly informed of cases on their buses.

Benedictson points out that Winnipeg Transit shares information “about potential public exposures at civic facilities and on board our vehicles on the City of Winnipeg website.”

“Winnipeg Transit is committed to protecting the health and safety of our operators, other employees and passengers,” she says.

Looking ahead, however, the bus driver hopes a different approach is taken.

“Going forward, we are hoping that the City of Winnipeg and Winnipeg Transit are more proactive instead of reactive,” they say.

EMPTY SANCTUARIES

Local places of worship adapt to COVID-19

CALLUM GOULET-KILGOUR | CAMPUS REPORTER | [CGOULETKILGOUR](#)

Over the past year, emptiness has plagued many of Manitoba’s most cherished spaces. Everything from hockey arenas to universities to museums have been closed – or have had their capacities massively reduced – due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Places of worship are no exception. These institutions, which provide comfort and hope to many, have had to adapt in order to continue their missions during a time of widespread anxiety and despair.

Manitoba public-health restrictions for places of worship have varied over the past year. They have ranged from reducing capacity to prohibiting in-person services.

Headlines about anti-mask and anti-lockdown churches have dominated much of the discussion about religion and COVID-19. However, many local congregations have been able to adapt while following public-health guidelines.

First Mennonite Church of Winnipeg’s worship services have been exclusively online for most of the pandemic. Kathy Koop, their leading minister, says members of their con-

gregation have been completely supportive of this decision.

“A lot of people in our congregation feel that the church worship services are there to equip them to live their lives throughout the weeks, and we continue to do that in our online services,” she says.

Music has proven to be an effective tool for engaging members of their congregation.

“Lots of people have stepped forward and volunteered to record music (for services),” Koop says, adding that about 70 people have been involved in music-making.

Even now, with public-health restrictions that permit in-person services, the First Mennonite Church of Winnipeg is only offering online events due to safety considerations.

Shaarey Zedek Synagogue has followed a similar approach. Rabbi Matthew Leibl says that, over the past year, his congregation “has not only survived, but thrived.”

“We were lucky, in a way ... since we had already been livestreaming our services prior to the pandemic,” Leibl says. In early 2018, Shaarey Zedek installed cameras in the syn-



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Kathy Koop, leading minister at First Mennonite Church of Winnipeg

agogue as a backup and as an alternative for members of their congregation who might not be able to attend in person.

Currently, their services are exclusively offered online, and in-person events are only held for specific occasions, such as bar and bat mitzvahs.

“We were able to transition seamlessly, and our numbers have been great,” Leibl says, adding that they “lost no momentum” and showed that they were capable of pivoting.

“Religious institutions, stereotypically, are

not great at adapting and not great at changing,” he says. “We showed we could, and a lot of our regular people hung with us.”

As of press time, places of worship may open to hold services if “the number of persons attending a service does not exceed 25 per cent of the usual capacity of the premises or 100 persons, whichever is lower” and social distancing between households is in effect.

Attendees, however, are not required to wear a mask when seated and socially distant from members of other households.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	
6AM	MORNING BREATH	!EARSHOT 20	Cafecito Latinoamericano	Fly Travel Radio ★ CANQUEER	FANTASTIC FRIDAY World - Island music	THE MAN IN THE GREY FLANNEL SUIT SHOW	CKUW-SPEAKS	
7AM								
8AM	CKUW MORNING NEWS / FRONT BURNER (CBC)						WOODEN SPOONS	SHADES OF CLASSICS Classical and New Age
9AM	DEMOCRACY NOW!			DEMOCRACY NOW!		MUD PUDDLE RADIO For Kids (Adults too)		
10AM	DEPARTMENT 13 POP/ROCK	This Way Out WINGS	VOYAGE Jazz	PLANETARY RADIO Cheese Please	SUNNY ROAD Roots Music		INDIGENOUS IN MUSIC	
11AM		BOOTS & SADDLE COUNTRY		ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS	NO FIXED ADDRESS LIVED EXPERIENCES OF HOMELESSNESS	THE ELECTRIC CHAIR	TEMPLE OF JAZZ	
NOON	The Sean Show			YEARSHOT DAILY	HOW TO SURVIVE A TORNADO		NEON BEIGE SOUND EXCHANGE	
1PM	TALKING RADICAL RADIO Truth Before Reconciliation	THE GREEN MAJORITY	ALTERNATIVE RADIO	RADIO ECOSHOCK	GLOBAL RESEARCH NEWS HOUR	THE IVORY TOWER Eclectic Mix	YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM GOD Gospel	
2PM	GROUNDSWELL New Classical	Your Show Here	Classical Kaleidoscope	BARKING DOG Past 'n Present Folk 'n Roots	What's Up Winnipeg?		Classical Delights	
3PM	PSYCLE RADIO	Winnipeg Arena is on Fire	SPACE CADET MUSIC OUT OF THIS WORLD	WHAT ON EARTH IS GOING ON?	Chart Noises CKUW's Top 30	THE TRIP PSYCHEDELIC ROCK	The Shortwave Report Bikini Drive-In	
4PM			AMATEUR HOUR So Bad, It's Good	PAGES EAT YOUR ARTS & VEGETABLES	PEG CITY PLAYLIST		Jokes On You Local Comedy	
5PM	INNER CITY VOICES	THE GREEN BLUES SHOW	SYSTEM KIDZ Youth in Care	TAWNY, THE BRAVE Pop/Rock	THE HOW DO YOU DO REVUE	WE BUILD HITS Hip-Hop	THE C.A.R.P. The Completely Asinine Radio Program	
6PM	THE WORLD World	Lost Chunes	TWANG TRUST Country/ Roots/ Big, Dumb Rock 'n' Roll	Adult Kindergarten	CHECK CA Funky	RED BOX Hip-Hop	Rank and File Radio: Prairie Edition	
7PM	THE TONIC Garage, Punk, Surf, and R&R	BLUESDAY PLAYING THE BLUES	S.A.N.E. * RADIO Local Experimental Music	Dub City Steppers	QUADRAFUNK Electric Dance Party	DANCE HALL FEVER Dancehall and Reggae	THE GASHLYCRUMB TINIES	
8PM	DESTINATION MOON Sock-Hop-A-Go-Go	YOUR SHOW HERE	YOUR SHOW HERE	PHASE ONE Electronic	Brain Drainer Radio	ISLAND VIBES Caribbean		
9PM	YEARSHOT DAILY	MONKEY SPARROW	YEARSHOT DAILY					
10PM	BREAK NORTH RADIO ★	LISTENING PLEASURES	Two Princes					
11PM	METAL MONDAY	NIGHT DANGER RADIO	HURLEMENTS SUR LA TOUNDR	THE WONDERFUL & FRIGHTENING WORLD OF PATRICK MICHALISHYN	MANITOBA MOON	CRYSTAL PALACE	Rainbow Country	
MIDNIGHT	MODERN JAZZ TODAY	The Motherland Influence	THE SENTINEL'S MARVELOUS KALEIDOSCOPE				Your Show Here	
1AM	AMPLIFIED RADIO	Old Parlour Radio	DEEP THREES					
2AM			CELT IN A TWIST					
3AM								
4AM								
5AM								
6AM								



- MUSIC
- LOCAL SPOKEN WORD
- SPOKEN WORD
- ALTERNATING WEEK
- Temporary Programming

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Some programs are on hiatus and/or airing different content due to university closure for COVID-19.



THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

Student Services

SPRING TERM REGISTRATION

Tiered registration for Spring Term courses ends **Thurs., Apr. 1**. Open registration begins **Mon., Apr. 5**.

GOOD FRIDAY

The University will be closed on **Fri., Apr. 2** for Good Friday.

LECTURES END FOR WINTER TERM

Lectures end for Winter Term courses on **Tues., Apr. 6**, except for courses which have a class scheduled in lieu of Apr. 2 (Good Friday) - those courses have a make-up day on Apr. 7.

EXAMS

The exam period is from **Mon., Apr. 12 to Fri., Apr. 23**. Please check the Exam Schedule: uwinnipeg.ca/exam-schedules/index.html.

CONVOCATION AWARDS

Do you know a graduating student who combines good marks with

community and/or campus involvement? Or maybe this describes you?

Nominations (including self-nominations) are now open for 2020-21 Convocation Awards! Graduates from October 2020, February 2021, and the upcoming convocation June 2021 are eligible for these awards, which are administered by the Awards and Financial Aid Office and selected by a committee.

More details and a fillable PDF application is available here: <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/awards/awards-bursaries-and-scholarships/current-continuing.html>

The deadline is **Thurs., Apr. 15**.

GRADES

Grades for Winter and Fall/Winter term classes will be posted on WebAdvisor on tentatively **Wed., May 18**.

Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, UWinnipeg students will have the option to choose how their grades will appear on their

transcript and affect their grade point average (GPA) calculation for the Winter and Fall/Winter terms.

Students must meet with an academic advisor before they can submit a request for alternate grading. The deadline to see an advisor and submit your form is **Fri., May 28**.

For details, please see: uwinnipeg.ca/covid-19/final-grade-options-faq.html.

BURSARIES FOR SPRING TERM

For UWinnipeg Spring 2021 bursaries, online applications open **mid-April until June 1**. Find the application here: uwinnipeg.ca/awards/apply-for-awards/index.html.

MYVISIT APP

Need to see a Student Central representative or an Academic or Career Advisor? You can now queue for Zoom drop-in sessions with Student Central, and/or Academic & Career Services using myVisit!

Student Central has drop-in Zoom sessions where students can ask questions "in person" with a SC staff member.

The Zoom waiting room is enabled. One student will be admitted at a time. Students wait for their turn and need to present their UWinnipeg student card (or other photo ID) to talk about their account, the same as actual in-person interactions at SC.

To add yourself to the queue, please use the myVisit app (by Q-nomy) available for Apple or Android phones. Turn off the location permission in the app. The SMS notification when it is your turn shortly will provide the Zoom info. Student can add themselves to the queue 10:00 am - 4:30 pm from Monday-Friday.

Thirty-minute Zoom appointments with Academic and Career Advisors can be booked through the myVisit app or via www.myVisit.com as well.



FOREIGNER AFFAIRS

Art as a drawing board for change

VINAY SHARMA | COLUMNIST | @VINAYTHEPOOH

In his work *Art and Liberation*, Herbert Marcuse discusses the more revolutionary aspects of art. Although he suggests there is a divide between a work of art and actual social change, artists can use their practices to address society's ills, generating initial ideas that have the potential to create social change.

But as commodification becomes increasingly infectious, everything can be sublimated by a corporate structure. Exploring transgressive subject matter can be a way for artists to fight back against power structures. But these very transgressions can be internalized by profiteering organizations and sold back to people, disarming the actual transgressive elements in a work of art itself.

Though the subtext of Bong Joon Ho's 2019 film *Parasite*, for example, was explicitly socialist, this message was lost in its own corporate advertising. The film ended in Oscar glory, being applauded by the very same people it was transgressing against.

That being said, I believe smaller cities like Winnipeg can provide refuge for revolutionary creativity. We are far from being any sort of artistic powerhouse in some senses of the term, and because of this, I believe we have the potential to break away from the unifying stasis of big business.

I believe the immigrant population in particular should take advantage of this. Political change begins with the expression of one's discontent, and greater op-

portunities should be given to immigrant communities to express themselves in such a manner.

This can start with provincial government-funded programs providing public spaces in immigrant communities for people to express themselves, and go as far as providing grants to members of immigrant communities. Either way, the primary goal is the free expression of creative ideas, which will have the potential to translate to a more material change for the better.

Of course, the question remains: how can art be promoted in immigrant communities? One great way is for the provincial government to provide grants specifically reserved for artists from communities with dense immigrant populations (such as the Maples). This will both promote artistic endeavors in these communities and bring in a more diverse range of voices to the local established art scenes in general.

It will, most importantly, give immigrant communities a platform from which to express their specific experiences and struggles. It is also very important to encourage children in immigrant-dense schools to partake in more artistic practices. More money should be directed towards these endeavors in order to encourage art as a whole.

More artistic expression on the part of Winnipeg's immigrant community could be the basis for a new change in legislative policy or a broader social movement.

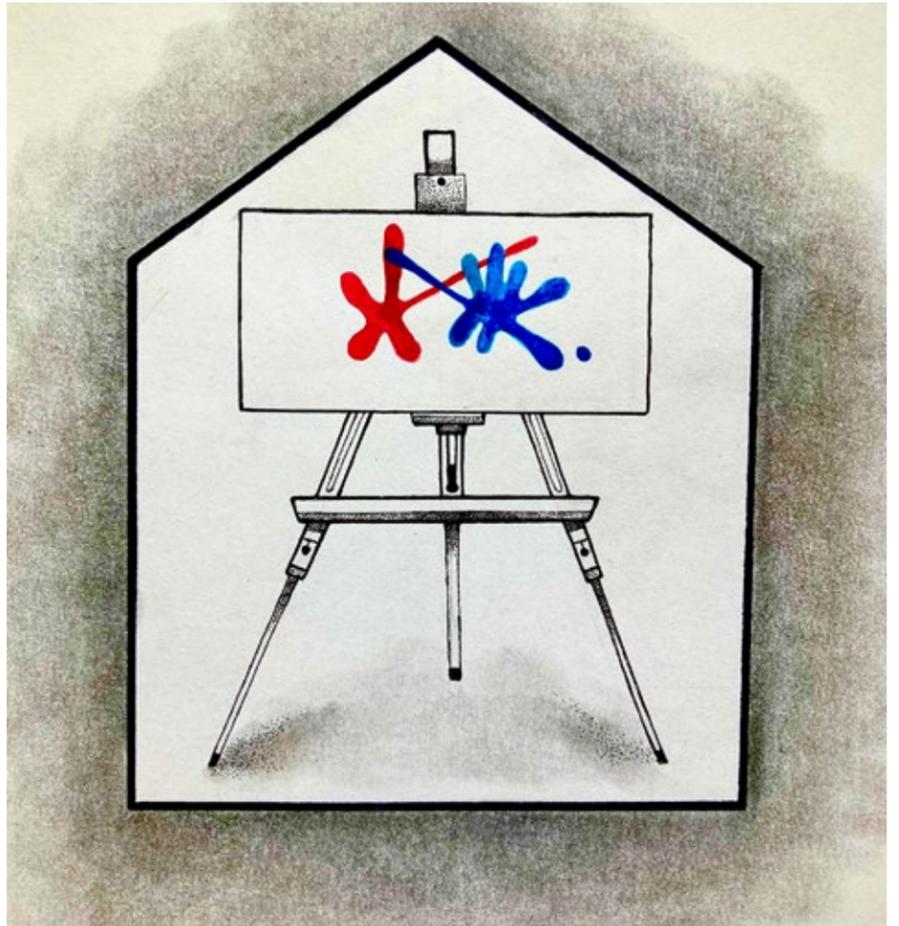


ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

It all starts with funding that is conducive to encouraging these ideas without opportunistically exploiting them for profit.

Vinay Sharma is a third-year philosophy student. His main interests are political philosophy and the philosophy of language.



'BREAKING FREE OF HUSTLE CULTURE'

Changing careers during the pandemic

DANIELLE DOIRON | COPY AND STYLE EDITOR | @DANIELLEDOIRON

I lost my job 13 months ago. Three days later, I packed up my desk, walked out of my office for the last time and went into self-isolation.

Initially, my layoff had nothing to do with the coronavirus pandemic. I knew cuts were coming, and my department was the first to go. But I was left jobless in an increasingly volatile economy. It was almost impossible to find a new, comparable position in corporate marketing.

And I'm one of the lucky ones. I have family members who were able to help me make rent and afford groceries when I didn't qualify for government assistance – and then again when the funds I eventually received weren't enough.

In the first months of the pandemic, I revelled in my "free" time. I could finally read the books on my shelf, exercise, cook and get my apartment in order. I picked up freelance clients when possible, but I constantly felt pressure to do more – not only so I could pay my bills on time, but because "getting things done" seemed to be expected of me.

"One consequence of COVID-19 is that we are all now being urged to hustle harder than ever," Kiran Misra wrote in a *Guardian* article last year. "Isaac Newton discovered gravity and invented calculus while in quarantine, we are told. Shakespeare allegedly wrote *King Lear* on lockdown."

I remember scrolling through memes

about historical productivity in plague times – feeling both encouraged and annoyed when they interrupted my news feeds. These pithy claims glossed over just how difficult it was for me and many other people to simply exist.

After all, "it's tough to be productive at the best of times, let alone when we're in a global crisis," Chris Bailey, a productivity consultant, told *The New York Times*. "The idea that we have so much time available during the day now is fantastic, but these days, it's the opposite of a luxury."

Eventually, like another professional interviewed by the *Times*, I realized I was "putting stress on myself during a time that's already stressful."

So I took a step back. "Acknowledging that we are all living in an impossible era with little, if any, extra free time is an important first step in breaking free of hustle culture, especially if you can laugh at the absurdity of it all," Misra wrote in that same *Guardian* piece.

Despite what many well-meaning social-media influencers might want me to believe, the pandemic was never a "blessing in disguise." Saying so is repugnant, especially considering that thousands of Canadians have died from the disease.

But here's what I will say: this crisis has helped me realize what I truly value. The kind of corporate job I had and the freelancing work I picked up never truly ex-

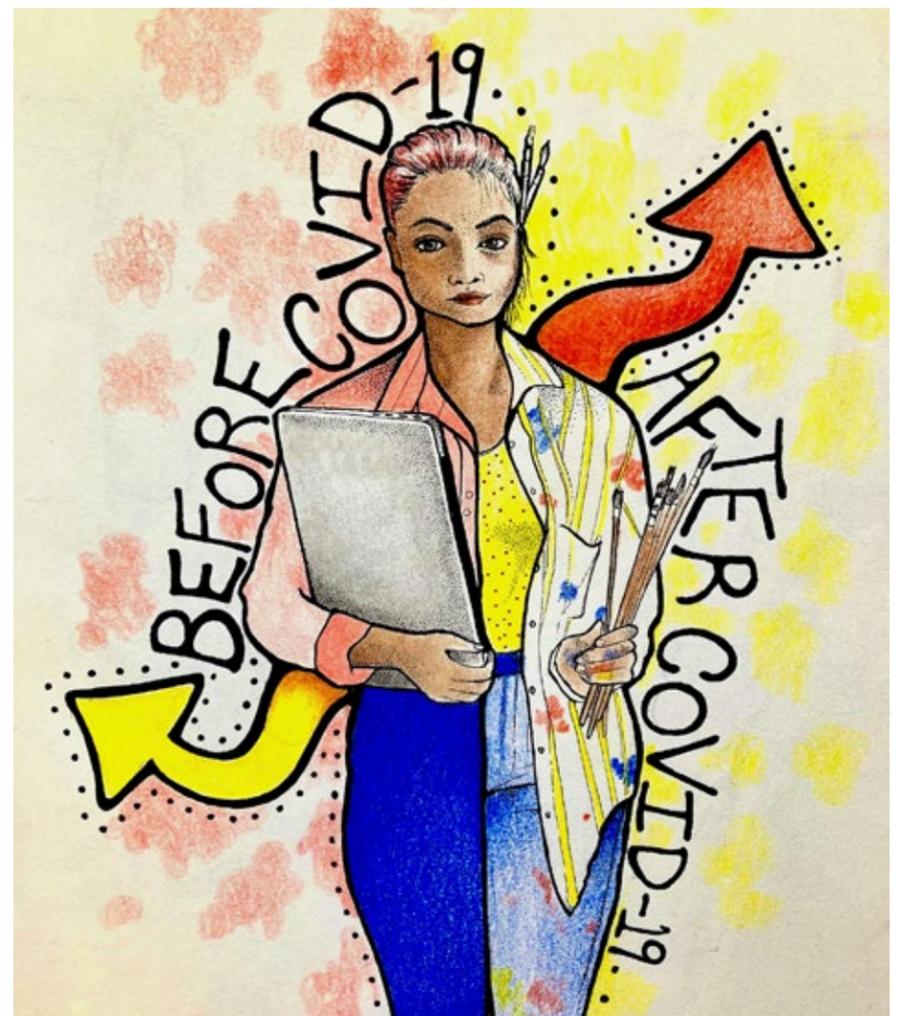


ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

cited me. And when I was offered a job as an educational assistant two months ago, something clicked.

When spring breaks ends, I'll go back to school. And sometime in the future, I'll go back to school again. This time, I'll study to become a teacher. I don't know all the logistics yet, but I'm trying not to stress

too much yet. After all, I'm already living through a pandemic.

Danielle Doiron is a writer, editor and marketer who splits her time between Winnipeg and Philadelphia. She's spending the pandemic reading, practising yoga and cursing out the governments in both cities she calls home.



HOROSCOPES

On April 3, Mercury enters Aries, bringing more energy and focus to our thoughts

On Friday, April 2, messenger Mercury connects with power planet Pluto at 2:03 AM—you have no idea what lies in store unless you simply ask! You might be able to find a secret recipe or learn about someone's biggest fears. This is also a time when we may have more awareness of our thought patterns and try to transcend them by working through them. Conversations with someone or with two other people, can bring you newer awareness.

SOURCE: ASTROLOGY.COM

♈ ARIES

Worrying about it won't get you anywhere. Be responsible and do your best.

♉ TAURUS

Don't engage in conflict, even if you're provoked. Just smile that devilish grin.

♊ GEMINI

You're a whirlwind, and wherever you go, things improve with your fabulous energy.

♋ CANCER

Walk the fine line between blatant self-interest and complete altruism.

♌ LEO

You're seeing patterns where others see chaos. Take it to the next level.

♍ VIRGO

Bewildered? It's all hazy now. Keep puzzling it out while you wait for clarity.

♎ LIBRA

Beware of those in uniform — you and authority don't mix well now.

♏ SCORPIO

Expect a bit of hurry-up-and-wait. Bring a book to read. The time will pass.

♐ SAGITTARIUS

The group's just bumbling along, and you know what to do. Don't follow — lead.

♑ CAPRICORN

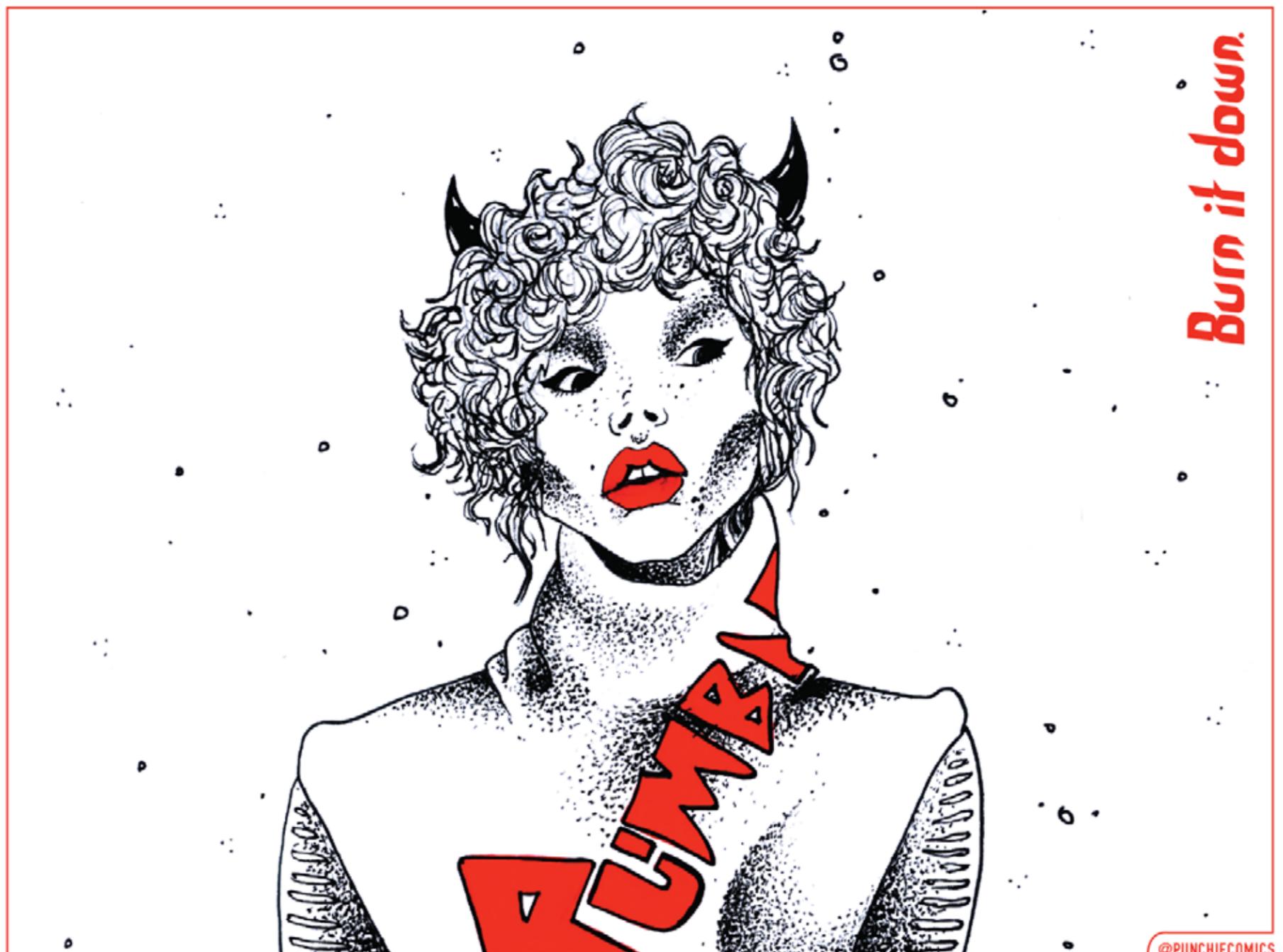
Spontaneous should be your middle name. Enjoy the randomness of it all.

♒ AQUARIUS

Fun is where you find it — at work, at the store, even stuck in traffic.

♓ PISCES

Double and triple-check calculations. Count your change. Balance your accounts.





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The Uniter is seeking volunteer writers, illustrators and photographers.

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