

THE **U** N I T E R

ART, ACTIVISM & ANIMAL CROSSING—P3

AN INNER-CITY EDUCATION—P10

A HOLLOW MEMORIAL—P14

Literary landscapes



WINNIPEG AS SHAPED BY WRITING AND WRITERS

A CAUTIOUS RETURN

THOMAS PASHKO
MANAGING EDITOR

THOMASPASHKO

On March 19, the University of Winnipeg (U of W) announced its intention to resume in-person classes on campus in the upcoming fall 2021 term.

This is huge news. It is, of course, conditional to several factors.

"Based on the current timeline of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout in Manitoba, we are optimistically preparing for the return of in-person programming ... for the 2021 fall term," the statement from U of W interim president Dr. James Currie reads. "Decisions related to our re-opening will be aligned with public health guidance ... Our plans for the 2021-22 academic year will evolve along with new health information and we will be adaptable if required."

This is exciting news for us at *The Uniter*, but we, too, need to remain adaptable.

There are a lot of questions about what a return to humans on campus means for our newspaper. The top priority will be ensuring that print copies of the paper are available for those on site. We've spent the last 12 months publishing exclusively online, which has been the saddest development for me personally. While journalism and writing can flourish anywhere in the digital world, I still have a love for a good old-fashioned physical newspaper.

But while I look forward to returning to our cramped little cave office in the Bulman Centre mezzanine, it's still unclear when it will be safe for all of our staff to gather in that office for in-person pitch meetings again. There's a big difference between one or two people in a cramped office and one or two dozen.

Like physical newspapers versus online journalism, there's really no substitute for the creativity and energy of an in-person meeting, developing stories, sharing contacts and brainstorming together. Zoom has helped pick up some of the slack, but it's not the same.

However the next few months shake down, we're looking forward to taking baby steps to return to campus with the U of W's vibrant community of students, faculty and staff.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

The Village Conservatory's new virtual theatre project *Inhibition Exhibition* incorporates a physical venue into the streaming experience. Read more on page 4.

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

WRITER
Madeline Rae

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



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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.

BRINGING THE POLLS TO THE PEOPLE

New polling software doubles as market-research tool and social app

SARAH LONDON | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | @SRA_5000

One day, in an economics lecture at the University of Winnipeg (U of W), while his peers were taking notes or thinking about the stock market, Joe Sworyk came up with the idea for the social-polling software company that became Thinkster.

Thinkster is a transparent social-polling app. Users can create and fill out polls and connect with other users. Scrolling through Thinkster and seeing people's opinions "is a lot deeper than just seeing someone's profile picture," Julian Rowan, Thinkster's chief marketing officer, says.

To build Thinkster, Joe Sworyk, the CEO and developer, switched his major to computer science and brought on his brother, Andy Sworyk, as chief product officer.

Just as someone might immediately go to Google for an information search, they want folks to go to Thinkster first to collect opinions, Rowan says.

Polling is invaluable to market research, but "there isn't a lot of interest or enjoyment associated with filling out surveys ... we endeavored to find a way to make it more palatable for the average person," Joe Sworyk says. "Thinkster is kind of a double-headed

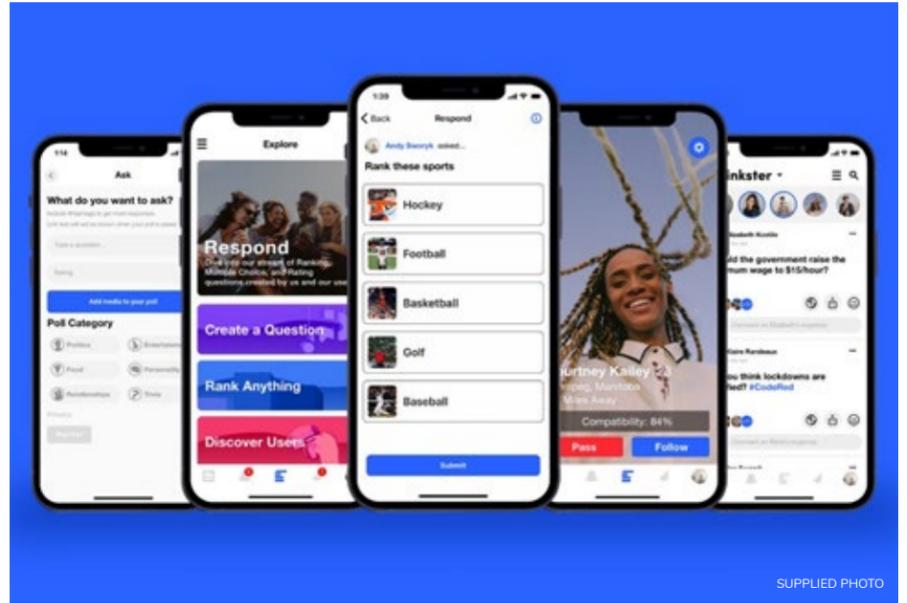
dragon. Right now, we're heavily focusing on the social app, (but) we want to be able to integrate our polling algorithms into any business' point of contact with either their customers (or) their peers," Rowan says.

Angela Claveria is president of events for the U of W's Business Administration Students' Association. Her team uses polling and surveys to collect feedback for their events from students and sponsors. They currently use Google Forms as their main tool, she says.

In addition to surveys, the team will post fun and engaging questions on their "Instagram story about a specific event (and) get people to answer a multiple-choice quiz question," Claveria says.

It's "a challenge to get people to actually do a survey or do the poll," she says, adding she usually receives a 25 per cent response rate. She says it's a struggle to get students to spend even a couple minutes filling out a survey or poll.

As a student, Claveria empathizes with the 75 per cent who skip the surveys. When "I attend an event and they send a follow up email (for) feedback, I always feel like I can do that later (and) keep forgetting," she says.



Thinkster, a new app from U of W alum Joe Sworyk, takes a social approach to opinion polling and market data.

If applied as a tool for university groups like Claveria's events team, Thinkster would allow "them to have a more unfiltered way to communicate with students and see the feedback ... in real time," Rowan says.

The benefit for schools is "limitless, because there's always going to be value in getting quantitative and qualitative feedback," Rowan says.

The goal of Thinkster is to bring the value of polling to users, because usually when people's data is collected, all they get in return is nonstop advertising, but Thinkster opens "up

the floodgates to give people the same sort of value," Rowan says.

"We're giving more value at 0.1 per cent of the cost that (other) companies are charging and hope to do it in a fun, easy way," Rowan says.

Learn more about Thinkster at thinkster.info. Thinkster's social app is in the open beta stage. Download it from the App Store or Google Play and send feedback to Joe Sworyk at joesworyk@gmail.com.



Animal Crossing: New Horizons isn't just a venue for K.K. Slider. It's also hosting the newest exhibition from the University of Manitoba's School of Art.

PROTEST, ACTIVISM, WHIMSY AND SELF-CARE

University of Manitoba's School of Art presents exhibit within *Animal Crossing*

HANNAH FOULGER | ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR | @FOULGERSCOVFEFE @SPEAKSTORY

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, many people have turned to virtual spaces for solace and connection in an unpredictable world. With its low-stakes gameplay, virtual crafting and exploration, *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* has been a source of self-care for many people around the world, but also for activists involved in political movements.

A new art exhibit curated by Ciel Noel from the University of Manitoba's School of Art takes place inside *Animal Crossing* and explores the tension between activ-

ism and self-care.

Battleax Bunny, the user handle of another School of Art student, designed the *Paws: Protest, Activism, Whimsy and Self-Care* (PAWS) exhibit in-game while never having played *Animal Crossing* before.

The exhibit is "set up like an open-air gallery," she says. "You can't build enclosed spaces. So it's sort of like walking through a sculpture gallery, in a sense, where it's open air. You can relax. You can sit. You can take in the exhibit."

One of the inspirations for this ex-

hibit was the Hong Kong protests, some of which took place in *Animal Crossing*. Joshua Wong, one of the organizers of the Umbrella Movement, is celebrated in PAWS through umbrella art in the exhibit and a collection of umbrella game items.

"We use these kind of limited tools that Nintendo provided to define an art space and talk about the kind of art that's happening in *Animal Crossing*, with a focus on how people related to activism and protest, but also the reflective topic of self-care and expression," Noel says.

Johanna Hedva, a chronically ill American theorist, had written extensively previous to the COVID-19 pandemic about how self-care is a radical act for people who can't necessarily engage in physical protest due to disability or chronic illness. This inability to leave home in order to manage personal health has become a worldwide issue, which makes *Animal Crossing* a good place to protest and for PAWS to engage in larger ideas about activism and self-care.

"At some point, you actively have to put your safety on the line in different forms of activism, including the kind that inspired the exhibition," Noel says. "The protests that happened on an (*Animal Crossing*) island by a player in Hong Kong,

after Hong Kong went into quarantine ... They used *Animal Crossing* to continue" protesting.

Noel says that, while working on these activist movements, "many people have to make different decisions around the intersection of self-care and protest. When it comes to their safety, 'How far do I go? What do I put on the line? And what do I do to take care of myself?'"

She says that, as a Black and mixed-race person engaged in Black activism, she's had to choose when to engage in the physical effort.

"It's not always the most just thing for you to be out in the streets. If we're trying to preserve quality of life for different people, sometimes it's best for some folks to be able to be at home or be fed," Noel says.

This digital-art activism allows visitors to engage in these ideas, explore on their own terms and see how the digital world can function both as escape and a radical mode of expression. Those without *Animal Crossing* are able to engage with this exhibit through a video tour.

Take a video tour of PAWS at umanitoba.ca/art/paws or find it in *Animal Crossing* at DA-5260-9503-9239.



ARTS



SUPPLIED PHOTO

The Village Conservatory incorporated the Crescent Fort Rouge United Church, the “venue” for its new virtual show, into the streamed performance.

THE SHOW MUST GO ON(LINE)

The Village Conservatory class creates ‘unique’ and diverse digital theatre

SARAH LONDON | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | @SRA_5000

Last year, the students of the Village Conservatory for Music Theatre (The ViC) performed shoulder-to-shoulder in a musical. But this year, masked up and distanced, they took their work online.

The ViC, a post-secondary arts education organization, is presenting a virtual show from March 25 to April 10 called *Inhibition Exhibition*, featuring 14 original and vulnerable pieces from their students “exploring their greatest fears and triumphs.”

This year, The ViC “focused on students writing their own pieces and kind of figuring out their own artistic voices,” Daphne Finlayson, the director of photography and editor for *Inhibition Exhibition*, says.

The results of six months of rehearsal, development and guidance from top arts professionals are original songs, poems, dances and short plays that make up the program of *Inhibition Exhibition*, exploring themes like anxiety and heartache.

When creating and rehearsing during the COVID pandemic, The ViC team knew the performance would take an unexpected form.

“We had to rethink how we were going to present each piece, and that really meant giving all of us as theater performers a crash-course in how to produce 14 short films,” Finlayson says.

Pieces that make interesting use of the

film format include *Cracked* by Angelica Reid, a spoken-word presentation using cinematic images, like dropping Skittles onto a shattered mirror and painting gold cracks on skin. In another piece, the camera acts as paparazzi, following the students around, Finlayson says.

When *Inhibition Exhibition* officially became destined for the screen in January, The ViC decided to do the show promenade style, meaning the performances were filmed around the venue, the historic Crescent Fort Rouge United Church, Finlayson says.

Kimmy Martin, a University of Winnipeg alum and multidisciplinary artist in her second year with the ViC program, wrote and performed in a piece called *Untitled*. The piece, inspired by a random dream about pool tubes, evolved into a children’s fable set in a world where children go to a dock and “fish for their fate.” Whichever fate they catch is their career path, she says.

“The idea behind it was that you don’t have to just take one career for the rest of your life ... you can do as many things as you want to be and be happy,” Martin says.

It was “really special to be back in the space and creating with people,” Martin

says about performing and rehearsing in Crescent Fort Rouge United Church, which brought her classmates together in a small, COVID-safe capacity.

The space informed the pieces presented in *Inhibition Exhibition*. Martin is excited to see how others in her class use the space. While developing her piece, she decided to incorporate the giant, “gorgeous organ (that was) just part of the background.”

The show is a “reminder that we’re not stuck,” Finlayson says. “We’re not sitting on our hands, waiting for live theatre to come back.”

“Even with everything stacked against us ... we still have something to show for all of the months of hard work that have gone into this program,” she says.

“It’s gonna be really unique. You get 14 different perspectives on multiple different topics,” Martin says.

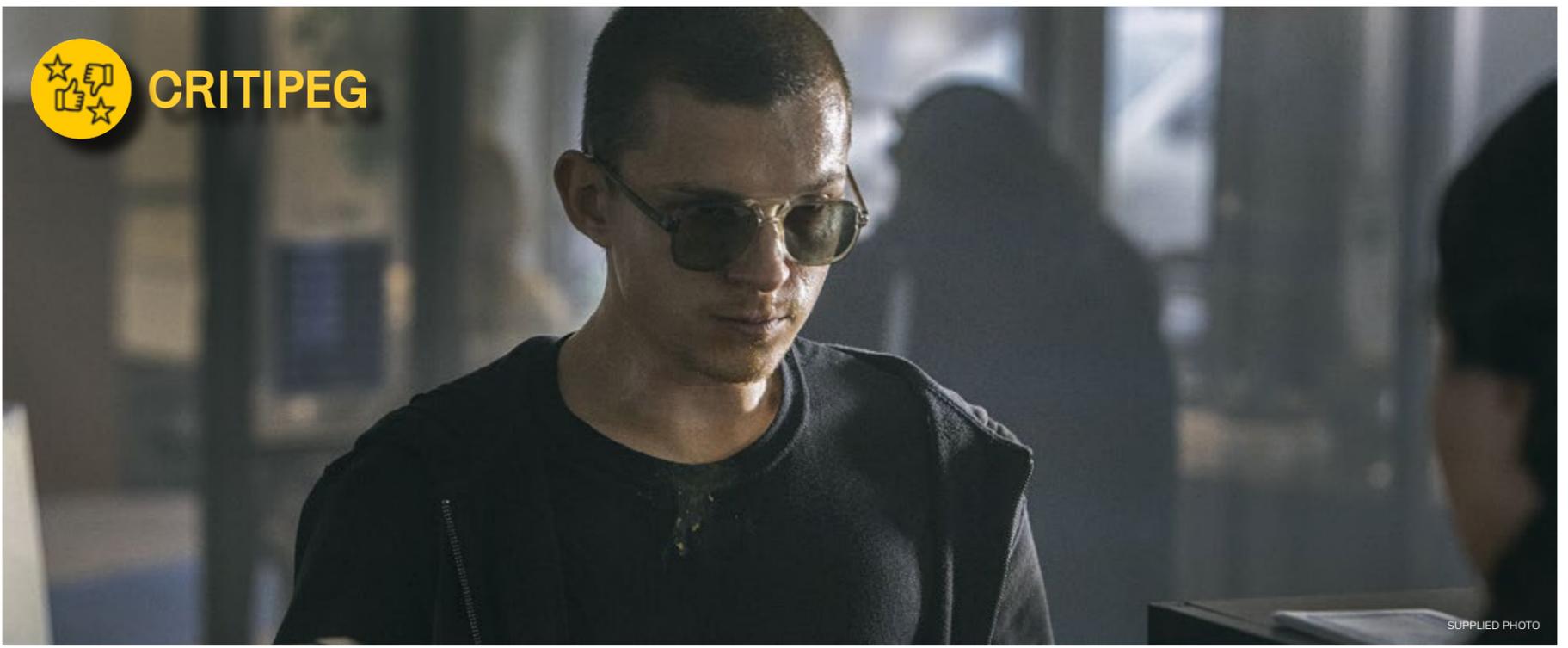
Find out more about The ViC at villageconservatory.com and buy tickets to *Inhibition Exhibition* at showtix4u.com. Video-on-demand-style tickets are available at \$20 for a single ticket, \$35 for a household and \$15 for low-income folks or artists.



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CHERRY

Streaming on Apple TV+



KEESHA HAREWOOD | FEATURES REPORTER | @KEESHAHAREWOOD

Based on Nico Walker's novel of the same name, the film *Cherry* follows the gritty, unfiltered story of a war veteran who robs banks to support his opioid addiction to cope with severe PTSD.

This film is certainly ambitious. It aims to tackle a lot of important themes like addiction, war and mental health in an authentic, unromanticized way.

While this undertaking is crucial, the

final product of the film is a mixed bag; drastically excelling in some areas while falling short in others. Even so, there is a list of notable highlights that can't go unmentioned.

To start, the acting is phenomenal.

Simply put, Tom Holland (*Cherry*) and Ciara Bravo (*Emily*) are brilliant. The care and effort they each put into their performances is exceptional and unwavering. Not only do they do their characters justice, but

their portrayals carry a high degree of respect and consideration for the larger issues of drug addiction and trauma at play.

It's easy to get swept up in their performances, and, at times, their joint efforts mask the film's shortcomings. That said, there are times when the film's flaws are too overt to ignore.

The main issues of the film are to do with the direction, the writing and the inconsistencies in their quality.

The film's dialogue contains some one-liners that are great, but there are other moments that sound bad or cliché. The majority of the plot is solid, but on multiple occasions, there are scenes that, if cut altogether, would not disrupt the narrative.

Worst of all, the ending is a condescending, unearned departure from the film's unromanticized attitude toward its main themes. To be clear, the ending does not undermine the story, but, with its tone and mood, it doesn't belong, either.

In many ways, the direction is no better. The film's directors – Anthony and Joe Russo – adopt a highly stylized approach that doesn't always pay off.

It seems as though the Russo brothers had a grand old time playing with the film's visuals and camera filters, but, unfortunately, no one was around to tell them to pump the brakes.

Watching the film in a single sitting is like watching seven different films strung together with cohesiveness being an afterthought.

In all fairness, the majority of the "films" in this movie are good, even great at times, but the feeling of watching one stylistically fascinating film was left to be desired.

Despite its defects, *Cherry* is worth watching for those who already have a subscription to Apple TV+ or who perhaps enjoy crime dramas. Unfortunately, the film isn't strong enough to warrant signing up for Apple TV+ on its own merit.

CKUW TOP 30

February 14, 2021



TW = This Week // LW = Last Week // ! = Local content // * = Canadian Content

TW	LW	C	Artist	Album	Label
1			Osees	Protean Threat	Castle Face
2			Cut Worms	Nobody Lives Here Anymore	Jagjaguwar
3			Bob Mould	Blue Hearts	Merge
4			Cloud Nothings	The Black Hole Understands	Self-Released
5	!		Slow Leaves	Shelf Life	Birthday Cake
6	*		Terra Lightfoot	Consider The Speed	Sonic Unyon
7	!		The Lizards	The Lizards	Eat Em Up
8			Various Artists	Strum And Thrum: The American Jangle Underground (1983-1987)	Captured Tracks
9	!		Silver Clouds	Silver Clouds	Disintegration
10			Uniform	Shame	Sacred Bones
11			Silver Synthetic	Out Of The Darkness	Third Man
12	*		Zoon	Bleached Waves	Paper Bag
13	!		Sean Burns & Lost Country	We Gotta Lotta Truckin To Do	Strinbreakin'
14	!		Figure Walking	Vertical // Horizontal	Disintegration
15			El Ten Eleven	Tautology li	Joyful Noise
16	*		Heaps	What Is Heaps	Birthday Cake
17	*		Pharis & Jason Romero	Bet On Love	Lula
18			Screamers	Screamers Demo Hollywood 1977	Superior Viaduct
19			Osees	Panther Rotate	Castle Face
20			Boogarins	Manhaca Vol. 1	Overseas Artists
21	*		Black Thunder	La Fine Crea	Transistor 66
22	*		Gulfer	Gulfer	Royal Mountain
23			Takuya Kuroda	Fly Moon Die Soon	First World
24			Wax Chattels	Clot	Captured Tracks
25			Bailterspace	Wammo [reissue]	Flying Nun/Matador
26	!		The Famous Sandhogs	Telma Muskwa 2	Self-Released
27			Cabaret Voltaire	Shadow Of Fear	Mute
28			Negativland	The World Will Decide	Seeland
29	*		The Mastersons	No Time For Love Songs	Redhouse
30	*		War Baby	You Are Not Here	Bummer/Kingfisher Blues

ARTS BRIEFS

HANNAH FOULGER | ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR | @FOULGERSCOVFEFE @SPEAKSTORY

Time to Plé

The multilingual Plé collective premiered *Plé* on March 24. This online theatre production incorporates French, English and ASL in a groundbreaking play that explores the ways in which language makes us different and how it makes us the same. Find out more on how to *Plé* at pletheplay.com and purchase tickets at mtvp.ca.

These HUNKS have some Mouth Beef

Beloved Winnipeg sketch troupe HUNKS, featuring members Rory Fallis, Tim Gray, Matt Nightingale and Dana Smith, release their debut comedy album on April 1. *Mouth Beef* is six years in the making and recorded in the before times, when people were able to gather and laugh. Purchase *Mouth Beef* at hunkscomedey.bandcamp.com or listen to it online.

Popping up at Théâtre Cercle Molière

Théâtre Cercle Molière is (virtually) hosting a series of events featuring multidisciplinary French artists. On March 27, they host a live Zoom reading of *Sous les tilleuls* by Manitoba playwright Bertrand Nayet. Find out more at cerclemoliere.com/en/event/pop-up-series about these readings and other upcoming Pop Up events.

The Laramie Project

Manitoba Theatre for Young People's Young Company presents *The Laramie Project* on March 26 and 27. The play, an original production of the Tectonic Theatre, is about the murder of Matthew Shepard in Laramie, Wyo. Book tickets for this free event at showtix4u.com/event-details/47793.

Virtual adult music classes

Manitoba Conservatory of Music and Arts is offering several courses for children and adults. Teachers include Lindsey White, Andrea Ratuski and John Einarsen. Sign up for these classes and find out more about Manitoba Conservatory of Music events at mcma.ca.

Manitoba Accessible Sport Trivia Night

On Monday, March 27, Accessible Sport Manitoba hosts the Manitoba Accessible Sport Trivia Night. Sign up to test your knowledge of accessible Manitoba sports through the Accessible Sport Manitoba Facebook page. A Zoom link will be sent to participants the day of the event, which starts at 7 p.m.

Literary landscapes



WINNIPEG AS SHAPED BY WRITING AND WRITERS

Katherena Vermette's novel *The Break* takes its name from an undeveloped stretch of land west of Street between Selkirk Avenue and Leila Avenue.

"Do you know," said Dirk, "what my maiden aunt who lived in Winnipeg used to tell me?"

"No," said Richard.

—Douglas Adams, *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency*

Winnipeg. Muddy Waters. The Peg. Winterpeg. This city is known by many names that encompass its features and flaws. Poets and novelists have created the concept of Win-

nipeg through words for more than 100 years, which have been read locally, nationally and abroad.

Authors like Carol Shields, Margaret Laurence, Miriam Toews, Joan Thomas and Gabrielle Roy have told stories about Louis Riel, the Winnipeg General Strike and our cultural centres like St. Boniface, the North End and the Wolseley neighbourhoods. These spaces have entered the national consciousness through the works of these writers, shaping the view of this Canadian city from afar and from within.

It may seem strange, but the concept of "Canadian lit-

erature" is incredibly young, born out of conversations sparked by the 1967 centennial about what it means to be Canadian and what Canadian art and culture looks like.

"Margaret Atwood was a major leader in that movement," novelist and poet Catherine Hunter says. "She (wrote) a book called *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature*, where she talked about what Canadian literature is, but every darn person mentioned in the book is from the GTA (Greater Toronto Area). So when these upstarts in Manitoba began a writers' guild, it was really exciting."



Don's Photo at the corner of Portage Avenue and Kennedy Street

It was anglophone organizations like the Manitoba Writers' Guild (founded in 1981), Turnstone Press (1976) and Prairie Fire (1978) that bolstered generations of English-speaking writers from Winnipeg and Manitoba through publication, support and advocacy to create a provincial literary canon.

Franco-Manitoban literature, on the other hand, was born of the Quiet Revolution, the Quebec-founded movement away from the cultural domination by the Catholic church.

"We have managed to separate the use of the French language from it being a diktat of the church ... Language was free. We were happy to (finally) write about what we wanted," Franco-Manitoban writer J.R. Léveillé says.

Théâtre Cercle Molière started to write and produce Winnipeg/St. Boniface-based plays "in a kind of street French" like *Il Etait une Fois dans une Belle Plaine Plate*, Léveillé says.

"The questions of assimilation and using English language mixing (were especially relevant) in the domain of the theatre, of writers and comedians. There was a sort of representation and reflection of the state of the Francophone community," Léveillé says.

Today, in both English and French writing, there is a subtle delineation between rural and urban Manitoba writing. Léveillé says Prairie writing has "a way to conjure a sort of verticality, a forever extending horizon." Perpetually urban Manitoban writers don't always work with that form as much as writers with roots in rural Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, but they are still considered under the umbrella of "Prairie writing."

"Most of (the Manitoba writers I grew up reading were) either from a reservation, small Mennonite town or an Icelandic fishing village," Hunter says. "I was always a little ticked off to be called a Prairie poet when I'd never seen any grain elevators. We didn't even have a car."

As a crucial meeting place for Indigenous people from all over Turtle Island, Winnipeg is still reflected in literature to be a place people travel to from rural towns and conservative communities, and a place that still boasts a large Indigenous and Métis population.

Winnipeg is fortunate to have been mythologized by writers like Katherine Vermette, Tomson Highway and Joshua Whitehead.

Vermette is the award-winning author of *North End Love Songs* (winner of the Governor General's Literary Award in poetry) and *The Break* (winner for the Governor General's Literary Award in fiction).

The title *The Break* refers to a section of Hydro-owned, undeveloped land that runs alongside McPhillips Street. Vermette's writing often lovingly explores the cultur-

ally rich area of the North End, which is sometimes noted for its high rates of crime and poverty.

"The kind of poetry I write is very autobiographical and rather confessional. So it does become about me and where I come from and where I grew up," Vermette says. "I've developed such a love for this place, in my adult life, particularly in the last few years where I've been doing a deep dive into Métis history, which is all here."

Vermette names *In Search of April Raintree* by Beatrice Mosionier, which is about an Indigenous child in the foster-care system and is set in Winnipeg, as her favourite book because of the profound effect it had on her and how she saw her home.

"To see something of myself in literature was incredibly moving, because literature was, for many years, not made for people like me (as a Métis person), but also it was my city, so I knew where these places were. It was eye-opening in every way, like knowing that I could write about my experience," Vermette says. As a child, she thought she had to write about New York, which is where all stories seemed to happen, but *In Search of April Raintree* changed that.

"I find there's so much diversity in this land, the diversity in places around the city. You really come to appreciate how much is here, how much history is here, how many stories are here," she says.

Vermette's graphic novel series *A Girl Called Echo* follows a modern-day Métis girl who goes back in time to the Red River Resistance and the Pemmican Wars. This historical period has inspired poets, novelists and playwrights from across Canada to write about Louis Riel and the resistance at the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers.

"There was a very conscious eradication effort that happened for Indigenous history, so the material culture and what's left behind visually is very limiting," Vermette says. "(Métis people) do have a history. We do have a story there, but I think there's so many other Indigenous nations from this place here that don't have the luxury of still having that story."

As material culture, Winnipeg-based literature not only creates an idea of Winnipeg, but also historicizes our city as it stands today — enriched by its diverse cultural communities, ancient roots and the new Winnipeg stories by Indigenous writers. In no way does this make up for what is lost. However, writing and publishing is a radical act of remembrance. It ensures that this version of Winnipeg will be remembered by the generations to come, and our cultural giants will live on in our collective memory.

You walk out of Don's Photo and turn the corner. Now you are expected to describe the weather: high cranes over the avenue, jackhammer and drill, another operation on the drugged body of the city. Transplant, amputation, root canal. Multiple grids of your hometown overlap in memory.

You pass the bookstore that was once a music store, the empty lot that was your father's office. You pass the school for ballet dancers that was once an old hotel where you drank beer with Patrick, who once was Patrick. And behind that hoarding on the south side of the avenue, what belonged there? The library's been erased, redrawn. A thin survivor crouches in the snow, baseball cap in his bare chapped hand. And where's Eaton's? You've been away. Or maybe you've been sleeping. You're waking slowly in an unfamiliar place. You follow the run-on line of river, crossed the renamed bridge, carrying the envelope of photographs—traces of your travels in the world beyond. You pass the graveyard, burned out church, and denoted abattoir. You're coming home.

—An excerpt from Catherine Hunter's "Landmarks," from her collection *St. Boniface Elegies*.



So long safe haven, first home
found in young adulthood's approximation
punk-house we all outgrew at last coming to rest

Thirteen years of handing off the lease
from friend to friend of friend and so on
comes down to this—
frantically gutting
the house in the final hours before the first of the month
sweating with the signatory in the damn Manitoban heat
for a sniff at the damage deposit
long after the last subletter skimped on cleaning,
split with hamster cage in hand
before the absentee landlord at last makes his appearance.

Someone always will, for someone must:
slap-patch wall-holes, re-set the doors
find a buyer to pick up both fridges for cheap
clean the wall of mirrors and the Doric column
put in by the old pianist who lived here previous.

—An excerpt from Joel Robert Ferguson's "A Directory of Enchanted Trash," from his collection *The Lost Cafeteria*.

114 Spence St. from "A Directory of Enchanted Trash" by Joel Robert Ferguson.

Quelques jours plus tard, je me suis réveillée en sursaut.
Non pas d'épouvante. Mais comme si l'éveil était venu de
l'intérieur de mon rêve et m'avait propulsée dans le grand
jour éclairé.

C'était sans doute en raison de ma promenade
de l'avant-veille, car dans mon rêve la fontaine de pierre
de Central Park, qui n'avait pas fonctionné depuis long-
temps, jaillissait. Jaillir, c'est peut-être un peu fort. Elle
coulait. Elle n'avait jamais rien fait d'autre que couler.
Mais cet écoulement à la suite de son silence semblait
une véritable projection.

A few days later I awoke with a start. Not because
I was scared; it was as if the awakening had come from
inside my dream and propelled me outward into the light
of day.

No doubt it had something to do with my walk of
the evening before, since in my dream water was shoot-
ing up from the fountain in Central Park. The fountain
had not worked for a long time and shooting may be too
strong a word. It was trickling. It had never done more
than trickle. But this trickle, after such a long drought,
seemed like a gush.

—from J.R. Léveillé's *La soleil du lac qui se couche/The
Setting Lake Sun*. Les Éditions du Blé, 2011. Translation
by S.E. Stewart provided by Signature Editions. A bilingual
edition is available from Signature as an ebook.



Waddell Fountain in Central Park is mentioned by J.R. Léveillé in *Le soleil du lac qui se couche*.



The Break is a stretch of land west of McPhillips Street between Selkirk Avenue and Leila Avenue, which is mentioned in Katharina Vermette's work of the same name.

The Break is a piece of land just west of McPhillips Street. A narrow field about four lots wide that interrupts all the closely knit houses on either side and cuts through every avenue from Selkirk to Leila, that whole edge of the North End. Some people call it nothing and likely don't think about it at all. I never called it anything, just knew it was there. But when she moved next door, my Stella, she named it the Break, if only in her head. No one had ever told her any other name, and for whatever reason, she thought she should call it something.

It's Hydro land, was likely set aside in the days before anything was out there. When all that low land on the west

side of the Red River was only tall grasses and rabbits, some bush in clusters, all the way to the lake in the north. The neighbourhood rose up around it. Houses built first for Eastern European immigrants who were pushed to the wrong side of the railway tracks, and kept away from the affluent city south. Someone told me once that North End houses were all made cheap and big, but the lots were narrow and short. That was when you had to own a certain amount of land to vote, and those lots were made just inches smaller.

—from Katharina Vermette's *The Break* (House of Anansi Press)

CITY BRIEFS

ALEX NEUFELDT | CITY EDITOR

Bill 57 delayed

The Protection of Critical Infrastructure Act (PCIA) or Bill 57, which would institute higher fines for protesters occupying infrastructure deemed "critical," is being delayed until the fall, in addition to Bill 35 and Bill 16. Many groups have raised concerns that Bill 57 could be used to suppress dissent and protest, especially from Indigenous land defenders.

UWSA election campaigns underway

At the time of publication, University of Winnipeg Students' Association general election campaign week is taking place, with many candidates campaigning over social media. Voting will take place next week, and the new UWSA leadership team will be announced shortly after the election.

Code Red to continue

After the Government of Manitoba had suggested the province may go from Code Red pandemic restrictions to Code Orange, the direction has reversed. Brian Pallister and Brent Roussin announced on March 23 that the province will stay in Code Red in response to public input, variant spread and concerns about maintaining health-system capacity, with select restrictions being lifted.

Podcasting workshop for U of W community members

The U of W Oral History Centre is holding a workshop on producing narrative-style podcasts on April 23. The workshop is open to students, staff and faculty and will cover audio storytelling structure, scripting, equipment, editing, producing on a budget and remote interviewing. Pre-registration is required.

Meet U of W's Indigenous engagement librarian candidates

The University of Winnipeg Library is hiring an Indigenous Engagement Librarian and has narrowed down their selection to four potential candidates. Members of the university community are invited to attend the candidates' public presentations on April 5 to 7. All presentations will take place over Zoom.

Dr. Deborah McGregor on Reconciliation, Colonization, And Indigenous Climate Futures

On March 26, Dr. Deborah McGregor, Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Environmental Justice, will give a talk titled Reconciliation, Colonization, And Indigenous Climate Futures. Dr. McGregor is hosted by the U of W Department of Biology and the Faculty of Graduate Studies. All are welcome to attend.

HYDRO TENSIONS

Strikes and opposition to Bill 35 creating friction at Manitoba Hydro

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

Over the past few weeks, a host of tensions have arisen involving Manitoba Hydro.

Following 28 months of negotiations, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 2034 (IBEW 2034) announced that Manitoba Hydro workers would strike on a rotating basis. After Manitoba Hydro failed to meet the 5 p.m. deadline on March 17, the IBEW declared a general strike involving Hydro's 2,300 electrical workers.

IBEW 2034 stated the reasoning behind the strike was Manitoba Hydro's lack of responsiveness to the proposed negotiations, which included the agreement that no worker would be laid off as a result of contracting out work and a 0.75 per cent wage increase in the third year.

At the time of writing, the IBEW 2034 workers were striking on a rotating basis after another contract was rejected by 88 per cent of the workers.

Jesse Hajer, an assistant professor of economics and labour studies at the University of Manitoba, says the Province has "taken a fairly aggressive approach to labour negotiations with public-sector workers."

He adds that the provincial government recently lost a court ruling regarding legislation "interpreted by the courts as unfair-

ly limiting the rights of workers to collectively bargain."

At the time of the strike, the Manitoba New Democratic Party (Manitoba NDP) vowed to block Bill 35, the Public Utilities Ratepayer Protection and Regulatory Reform Act.

Wab Kinew, the leader of the Manitoba NDP, says the impetus to do so rested on fears that the bill would compromise affordable electricity, concerns around climate change and the ability to support remote Indigenous communities. He says the block will allow the public to "have an extra six months to get engaged, to organize and to make sure their voices are heard."

Though Premier Brian Pallister previously vowed to not privatize Manitoba Hydro in October 2020, Kinew says the legislation undermines the public's voice in Manitoba Hydro's future.

"If we lose those public hearings after Bill 35 is passed, there's no protection in place (preventing) this government (from going) ahead and break(ing) off Manitoba Hydro and privatiz(ing) it," Kinew says. "The Public Utilities Board is really important, because that's the organization that stands up to the public when it comes to Manitoba.



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

This bill effectively removes their role."

Hajer says Manitoba Hydro's status as a publicly owned Crown corporation has many advantages, including low rates, public profit and the ability to achieve economic-development objectives.

"The broader public ownership of Manitoba Hydro has allowed us to keep rates among the lowest in North America," Hajer says. "Instead of having high hydro rates and paying out profits to pri-

ivate shareholders, we keep rates low, and everyone in Manitoba benefits."

In the event that Manitoba Hydro is privatized, Hajer says he has "no doubt" that hydro rates would increase for Manitobans. He also adds that it would be more difficult to ensure a private corporation would be attentive to goals such as greenhouse gas-emission targets and a transition to more sustainable energy sources.



Mitch Bourbonniere, a community activist and lecturer, is educating Maples Met students on inner-city Winnipeg alongside teacher Jason Neufeld.

PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

BRIDGING THE SUBURBAN/ INNER-CITY GAP

Dynamics of the Inner City course now offered at Maples Met School

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

In a city infamous for its suburban sprawl and car culture, disconnect between inner-city and suburban dwellers often exists in Winnipeg.

Mitch Bourbonniere, a community activist and lecturer, alongside teacher Jason Neufeld and students at Maples Met School are challenging this divide through a new Dynamics of

the Inner City course offered at the high school.

"We live in a lot of bubbles," Neufeld says. "What ends up happening as a result is that people who live in the suburbs live primarily with conceptions and stereotypes about what the inner-city is.

"That's the kind of bubble we're trying to get

students out of."

Every second Tuesday from October to April, students spend a half-day learning about the inner workings of the inner-city.

"In our classroom, we only have eight students. I'd say half of them grew up in the inner-city, and half of them grew up in the suburbs, so it's actually perfect," Bourbonniere says. "In our conversations, they get to teach each other what life was like for them."

Previously, the course was only taught at the University of Winnipeg through the Department of Urban and Inner-City Studies. Now, students can earn a post-secondary dual credit in high school – something Bourbonniere sees as an advantage for many reasons.

"There's something about being a young person and learning about some of the unfair things that go on that I think adults take for granted," Bourbonniere says. "When young people start to learn about different injustices that happen, they get really fired up and interested."

Ryan Spence and Ben Ireland are two students taking the course. In class, they say, many stereotypes have been broken down on

both sides. Ireland says one of the highlights was working alongside the Mama Bear Clan, a women-led community patrol group he plans to join this summer.

For Spence, it was the insights from Bourbonniere's understanding of the nuances of Winnipeg's inner-city.

"I think the big thing for me was just hearing Mitch talk," Spence says. "He paints such a vivid picture of what's happening in the inner-city that more people need to know and care about."

Though the course covers a lot of ground, Bourbonniere says there's a specific emphasis put on the relationship between the Indigenous community and the inner-city.

While eight students are set to come out of the program with a better understanding and compassion for Winnipeg's inner-city, Bourbonniere says this would ideally play out on a city-wide level.

"I think we all should spend time in each other's worlds. I think that would create more empathy, more understanding and people just getting along better in this world," Bourbonniere says.



ISOLATION AND ANXIETY

Student mental health after a year of online school

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

This past university year has been, without a doubt, difficult for students in many ways. The mental-health crisis at Canadian universities has been well-documented, even before the COVID-19 pandemic. A year of isolation, online learning and socioeconomic anxiety has only worsened existing problems.

“There are seemingly infinite challenges that students have had to face and overcome this past year,” Breanna Laggo, Jack.org chapter lead at the University of Winnipeg (U of W), says in an email to *The Uniter*.

According to its website, Jack.org is a Canadian charity focused on “training and empowering young leaders to revolutionize mental health.”

“We are passionate in our pursuit towards a University of Winnipeg where all young people understand how to take care of their own mental (health) and look out for each other, as well,” Laggo says.

“COVID-19 has exacerbated the already existing barriers to youth accessing mental-health support services,” she says, adding that “the toll of isolation cannot be (overstated).”

For university students, it is not just the public-health crisis and lockdowns causing

anxiety. There is also the ongoing economic crisis and the uncertainty of future job prospects.

“Students are navigating unemployment and the financial fallout of the pandemic, while trying to pay for school, the expenses of living and experiencing the stress of life in a pandemic,” Laggo says.

Statistics Canada’s February 2021 Labour Force Survey found that the unemployment rate for youth ages 15 to 24 is 17.1 per cent. While it has been gradually decreasing, it still represents the difficult labour-market conditions faced by students and young people.

The U of W chapter of Jack.org tries to tackle many of these mental health-related issues.

“We are working to increase education, improve attitudes, change systems and ensure access to affordable care,” Laggo says.

Stephen Sutherland, program director at the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Manitoba and Winnipeg and an expert on post-secondary student mental health, agrees that this past year has been incredibly challenging.

“Students, prior to COVID, were experiencing extraordinary mental-health needs



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

and challenges,” Sutherland says, adding that “normalizing stress” was one of the most prominent issues he has seen.

“COVID has only heightened those things,” he says.

In terms of what students should do to deal with their challenges, Sutherland highly recommends reaching out for help and using existing resources, including ones from his organization.

“Calling the service navigation hub here at the CMHA is a great first step,” he says.

Other resources recommended by Sutherland and Laggo include U of W Student Wellness and the Clinic Crisis Line (which can be accessed at 204-786-8686 or 1-888-322-3019).

“Be proud of yourself for making it through the challenges that COVID-19 has presented to you so far,” Laggo says.

U OF W PROF’S FORTHCOMING BOOK ON MEGHAN MARKLE AND RACISM

Kimberley Ducey’s research receiving international attention

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

Earlier this month, millions of people watched Oprah Winfrey’s interview with Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, which included allegations of racism within the Royal Family. This has amplified the conversation about racism against Markle, who identifies as a mixed-race woman, coming from both the British press and the Royal Family.

Despite this issue now being at the forefront of public discourse, the racism Markle faced has been discussed for many years. Sociologist Kimberley Ducey, associate professor at the University of Winnipeg, is the co-author of *Revealing Britain’s Systemic Racism: The Case of Meghan Markle and the Royal Family*, which will be released in May.

She and her co-author, Joe Feagin, hope to provide an “account of how Meghan Markle’s experiences as a biracial member of the Royal Family highlight contemporary forms of British racism.”

In an email to *The Uniter*, Ducey notes that part of her goal was to question “the long-held but largely anecdotal beliefs about racial progressiveness in the UK.”

“Markle’s marital union with Harry provides an exceptional opportunity to interrogate systemic racism and its accompanying white racial frame,” she says.

“For centuries now, Britons of Colour have been racially framed and considered by whites as more tolerable if they deport themselves according to white norms and framing,” Ducey says.

The research and writing process for this book began a few years ago. In particular, the wedding of Prince Harry and Markle in 2018 prompted Ducey to begin writing, due to the “reaction of some royals to the African-American Episcopal bishop Michael Curry’s sermon.”

“As this Black champion of civil rights spoke, the queen’s granddaughters, Zara Philips (with mouth wide open) and Princesses Beatrice and Eugenie (donning matching smirks) were excruciatingly rude, while Kate Middleton side-rolled her eyes to Camilla Parker Bowles,” she says.

“The white-dominated media often drew on the myth of a post-racial and harmonious multicultural Britain to defend or excuse such ill-mannered racial behaviour,” Ducey adds.

Since the Oprah interview, this book has received attention in media outlets ranging from *Time* magazine to TMZ Live.

“We hope our book’s message will be heard within and beyond academic walls,” Ducey says.

“We are thus grateful for the interest our book is receiving,” she says. The authors have chosen to dedicate *Revealing Britain’s Systemic Racism: The Case of Meghan Markle and the Royal Family* to the Black Lives Matter movement.

Ingrid Waldron is an associate professor at Dalhousie University’s School of Nursing and an expert in health inequalities and mental illness among BIPOC communities,



SUPPLIED PHOTO

The cover image of Kimberley Ducey and Joe Feagin’s new book *Revealing Britain’s Systemic Racism: The Case of Meghan Markle and the Royal Family*

which are themes also explored in the Oprah interview. Waldron believes the Black Lives Matter movement is having a positive impact on academia.

“I am seeing a greater commitment to embedding (equity, diversity and inclusion) into curricula, programs and hiring in a way that

I have never seen before,” she says in an email to *The Uniter*.

Waldron has also “seen an increase in talks/presentations/conferences and scholarly literature on racism by faculty and others across the country since last year.”



BORED OF POTS AND PANS

Mirjana Rokсандic, professor, anthropology department, U of W

KEESHA HAREWOOD | FEATURES REPORTER |  KEESHAHAREWOOD

Before professor Mirjana Rokсандic began teaching for the University of Winnipeg's (U of W) anthropology department, she first studied archaeology in Serbia, her country of origin. Funnily, she was drawn to the area of study for its relative irrelevance.

"I wanted to go into something that I thought was useless," she says. "I didn't want to do something important, like medicine or psychology. I didn't want to ruin people's lives."

After getting tired of digging for pots and pans, Rokсандic craved an area of study that incorporated more science. As a result, she quit archaeology and went into biological anthropology.

"My fascination was with Neanderthals," she says. "That was my big love."

Her studies took her from Serbia to France, where she got into a graduate program. Unfortunately, the Yugoslav Wars prompted her and her family to relocate altogether.

"When my country fell apart and the war started, we decided to move to Canada," she says. "Then I finished my PhD at Simon Fraser (University) in Vancouver."

After a bit more time studying both abroad and in Canada, Rokсандic landed her permanent position at the U of W. She thrives on the challenge of teaching her area of study.

After all, in addition to the scientific component of biological anthropology, there's a

social aspect to consider in terms of identity and gender.

"It's constant learning," she says. "I constantly feel like, 'oh, crap, I should know something.'"

But Rokсандic loves to learn as well as teach and enjoys any opportunity to do both.

What is something you've learned from your students?

"My students are bright," she says. "They also learn lots of stuff on YouTube, and then they teach those things (like) computer programs, what platform to use, this and that. They're much better than I am in that, so I learn a lot from them, constantly."

If you could have any superpower, what would it be?

"Flying would be the nice one."

Why are you most interested in studying Neanderthals?

"They're a very European phenomenon, and they're very much something that we are not, and yet they're what we are."



SUPPLIED PHOTO



THE UNITER IS SEEKING ILLUSTRATORS

The Uniter is looking for local emerging artists to create illustrations on a volunteer basis.

See your work in newsprint, online and distributed around the city while you enhance your skills.

Contact Talia at creative@uniter.ca for more information.



WEBINAR WEDNESDAYS

In weekly sessions, Student Services staff have continued to share valuable strategies and tips to help you succeed at UWinnipeg.

- Ask Us Anything & Share Your Experience during Covid (March 31)

Sign up now for this last one! Advanced registration is required.

For details and to register, please visit: uwinnipeg.ca/student-services/webinar-wednesdays.html.

SPRING TERM REGISTRATION

Tiered registration for Spring Term courses continues until Thurs., Apr. 1. Open registration begins Mon., Apr. 5.

The Spring Term begins on Mon., May 3, with courses scheduled to start/end on various dates throughout the term.

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.

More details and a fillable PDF application is available here: 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.

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.

PHONE: 204.779.8946

EMAIL: studentcentral@uwinnipeg.ca

MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY SUNDAY

Radio schedule grid for CKUW 95.9 FM, listing programs like MORNING BREATH, DEPARTMENT 13, VOYAGE, and others across various time slots from 6AM to 6AM.



- MUSIC
LOCAL SPOKEN WORD
SPOKEN WORD
ALTER-NATING WEEK
Temporary Programming

WWW.CKUW.CA
OFFICE: 204-786-9782
NEWS DESK: 204-786-9998
ON AIR: 204-774-6877
FAX: 204-783-7080
EMAIL: CKUW@UWINNipeg.CA

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



MOTHER OF GOO

Confessions of a Unicorn

MADELINE RAE | COLUMNIST | @MOTHEROFGOO

I was lying sprawled out on my bed, stained oversized hoodie on, stoned and elbow-deep in a bag of chips. My phone buzzed, and I remembered: "shit!" I told the couple that we could have cyber-sex tonight. I groaned and looked at the ceiling. Maybe I could just bail. After all, I'm the unicorn.

Unicorn, according to Urban Dictionary: "A common swinging term used in the community to refer to a single (person) interested in meeting other couples."

I rolled off the bed with my bloated PMS belly and picked my favourite black lace lingerie. I washed my face, put on some light makeup, poured myself a glass of wine and lit some incense. I carried my sex toys to my well-lit bathroom and laid down on the fuzzy bath mat. I opened Instagram and saw greetings of adoration waiting for me. I responded, excited. I picked up my heavy Njoy wand (as they had requested) and put it in my mouth to make it wet, and then I began filming. I'll leave the rest up to your imagination.

My cyber threesome was fun and hot and pandemic-safe. It was also a fun way to test the waters with a couple I was interested in potentially one day seeing in person. Though I trusted the couple, as last month's *Mother of Goo* article articulated, trust isn't always enough. I must be clear that I was aware these images of me could be shared (even if unintentionally), and I was prepared for whatever happened. To

help ease any anxiety around this, I made sure to hide my face in the content I sent.

Cyber sex hits a bit different than in-person multiple-partner play. Less sweat, spit and vulnerability is involved. Threesomes are so multifaceted and are not simply defined. I've personally enjoyed the lack of commitment that comes with being the third or playing with friends. Bringing a third in as a couple can bring up difficult feelings of uncertainty and jealousy. But it can also be an opportunity to explore sexually with a partner and build new levels of trust.

Patriarchal colonial culture is keen on binaries and categorizing relationships. Sexual intimacy with platonic friends can be gorgeous and a hell of a lot of fun. Defining what works for you and the people you are in a relationship with is what is important, not trying to figure out what predefined social category you may or may not fit into.

As with all things sex, communication and crystal-clear boundaries are essential. In a small city like Winnipeg, finding a third you won't run into awkwardly later or worry about can be difficult. I remember having a conversation with a past partner about hiring a sex worker for our first threesome. Once we thought of the idea, it seemed obvious! As sex work is still so stigmatized, many couples don't consid-



SUPPLIED PHOTO

er this as a way to dip their toes into the murky waters of a third. But it's actually possibly the best way to get started: with a professional.

Sex workers are committed to consent and clear boundaries. Obviously, please play safe and be discreet and respectful if you choose to seek out a sexual professional. Governments continue to morally condemn sex work, and they push to stigmatize it with their political agendas. There are also many apps available now that pals of mine have spoken highly of like Feeld. If you are clear in your bio, classic apps like Tinder and Bumble can also work.

It's totally hot and fine to only want to enjoy one-on-one partnered sex, but whether cyber sex or in-person post-COVID exploration, three's a crowd, and boy, do I miss crowds.

Madeline Rae is a pleasure activist, writer and artist living on Treaty 1. Rae holds a BFA Honours in performative sculpture and is graduating with her BA in psychology in June 2021, while pursuing a career in sex therapy. She is trained in client-centred sex education and harm reduction. She can be found at motherofgoo.com.



640 ELECTRIC CANDLES IN THE WIND

City memorializes lives lost due to government laziness with more of the same

ALEX NEUFELDT | CITY EDITOR

From March 11 to 14, around the anniversary of the local arrival of COVID-19, the City of Winnipeg memorialized the 640 Winnipeggers who died from the virus by turning off the Winnipeg sign at The Forks. While this memorial took place, the Canadian Museum of Human Rights lit their tower in blue in what they called a tribute to healthcare workers in the city.

I want to be clear that I understand the City of Winnipeg is probably planning on developing a more permanent memorial to those who died of COVID-19, and that this is just a temporary gesture. I also don't think there is any intentional derision in this gesture on the part of the City or its elected officials. However, it's hard to ignore how dramatically insubstantial this gesture is relative to the tragedy of over 600 preventable deaths.

It's especially hard to ignore when a campaign for a memorial garden for police dogs is being treated with greater care and expediency than a memorial for the victims of a pandemic (which is to say nothing of the fact that the memorializing of police dogs is a higher priority than those who have been killed by police, but that's a subject for another article).

When it comes to public memorials, there are a lot of factors that play into who creates a memorial, who funds it and who is explicitly mourned by it.

There seems to be an apparent ideological

reason why governments are quick to memorialize soldiers, police officers who died while employed and police dogs: there is a belief that these lives are the responsibility of the governments that employ them in a way that is distinct from and more honorable than other public employees.

Victims of COVID-19, much like people who die due to poverty or at the hands of police, fall into an odd place in this logic. Their deaths are the direct result of government policy, but many governments do not rush to loudly and publicly memorialize these deaths, perhaps because doing so would be an acknowledgement of their own culpability.

Instead, when deaths at the hands of policy decisions are publicized, it is often the community that gathers to organize public vigils and memorials. These memorials vary widely in their scale and form, ranging from the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt to ghost bikes to smaller stations of flowers, photos and candles.

What rubs me the wrong way about the City's electric-candle memorial is that it mimics the small-scale and temporary nature of many public memorials with none of the community effort and engagement that often goes into those displays. It was also hosted by the same municipal government that had recently approved a \$300,000 memorial for police dogs.

I understand that the City of Winnipeg

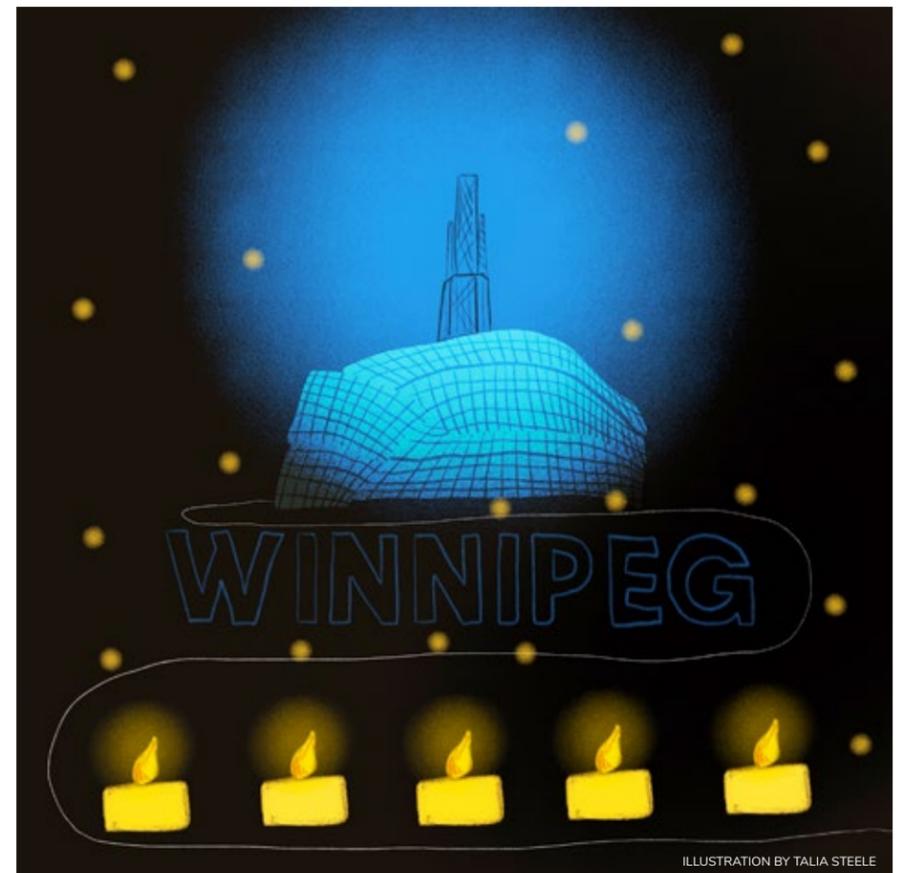


ILLUSTRATION BY TALIA STEELE

felt they had to do something on this anniversary, and I understand that municipal memorializing is by its very nature a performative and symbolic act.

However, the hollowness and low effort of turning off a sign and using the money saved on electricity to buy some dollar-store candles makes for an unconvincing performance and the kind of symbolism that sug-

gests the City thinks less of its citizens than dogs. It's clearly not intentional, and that lack of intention is the problem.

Alex Neufeldt is the city editor of The Uniter.



HOROSCOPES

There is a full moon in Libra on Sunday, March 28,

This full moon requires us to balance the relationships that we cater to and our independence. People will be longing as the full moon faces off with Venus and feeling like their responsibilities are isolating them as it harmonizes with Saturn. Commitment is needed.

SOURCE: ASTROLOGY.COM

♈ ARIES

Finally, peace returns with Thursday's cosmos, Aries! The moon spends the day prowling through playful Leo, focusing your energy on any creative passion projects you've left on the back-burner. Luna's opposition with happy-go-lucky Jupiter promotes good moods and an optimistic attitude towards your goals. Leisure is more appealing than hard work today, so let yourself devote energy towards something you actually enjoy doing.

♉ TAURUS

As a Taurus, part of your life's work is learning not to over-complicate things. Simplicity is restorative, and Thursday's skies gently remind you of that. The moon meanders through self-concerned Leo, making a pleasant connection with dream-big Jupiter on her path. This imbues the day with an uplifted sense of faith towards your highest aspirations, so long as you nurture yourself from the ground up.

♊ GEMINI

It's easy to slip into a state of mental overload today, Gemini. This is a tendency you're already used to wrestling with, but try to be extra on top of it today to avoid burnout. The playful Leo moon meets up with growth-giving Jupiter, helping you dream big and explore new visions of your potential. Pleasant moods, positive conversations, and a feeling of ease are in abundance.

♋ CANCER

You possess a wealth of skills that you forget to activate in your day-to-day, Cancer. You're ready to revisit those precious inner resources and figure out how to use them more effectively. The self-trusting Leo moon meets up with dream-big Jupiter on her path today, encouraging you to lean into the unknown and put your ideas into action, however frightening it may feel.

♌ LEO

Thursday's skies arrive like a warm summer breeze, Leo. The moon cruises through your sign with little opposition, helping smooth over any rough patches that emerged in the last few days. Luna's only connection is a meet-up with optimistic Jupiter, which encourages positive, hopeful interactions in one-on-one relationships. It's an ideal day for pampering and nurturing yourself—however you see fit.

♍ VIRGO

It hasn't been an easy week thus far, Virgo. Fortunately, Thursday's skies are something of a soothing balm for the rough patches you've had to endure. The moon meanders through lazy Leo, encouraging solitude, meditative practices, and recuperation. Luna's only connection today is with dream-big Jupiter, who helps you see the big picture view of your current work/life balance and make adjustments accordingly.

♎ LIBRA

It's time to get in touch with your long-term goals, Libra. Reaching a finite decision is not always easy for you, but it's important that you spend some time narrowing down your ambitions so you can ultimately achieve them. This narrative is highlighted today, as the moon meanders through self-confident Leo. Luna's connection to visionary Jupiter helps you feel positive and allows you to dream big with your creative potential.

♏ SCORPIO

You're getting closer to your calling, Scorpio. For the time being, you're asked to look deep within before you can enjoy the flourishing fruit above ground. This story is highlighted today, as the moon prowls through ambitious Leo, focusing your attention on your current career trajectory. Luna's link to aspirational Jupiter helps you see what needs fixing around your foundation... before you can climb to the top.

♐ SAGITTARIUS

As a Sagittarius, you need regular departures from the familiar to feel sane. This story is illuminated today, as the sun roams through excitable Leo and locks eyes with your ruling planet, expansive Jupiter. You may feel deeply aware of your current emotional state under this influence. You can find an outlet for these feelings by getting out of the ordinary through whatever means possible.

♑ CAPRICORN

Capricorn people aren't always willing to deal with their messier emotions. It's easier for you to stow them away, hoping they'll simply disappear if ignored long enough. Thursday's skies encourage you to sit with your feelings and reach a deeper understanding, as the heartfelt Leo moon connects with faithful Jupiter. You may feel drawn to shopping and spending to fill the void, but you're better off simply sitting with the reality of your emotions.

♒ AQUARIUS

Thursday's skies offer some welcome relief after a difficult week, Aquarius. The moon roams through romantic-connoisseur Leo all day, continuing to direct your attention towards your most intimate one-on-ones. Luna's mood-boosting link to optimistic Jupiter promotes positive attitudes and hopeful outlooks towards these interpersonal involvements. Yet, it's also possible for any unresolved issues to get blown out of proportion.

♓ PISCES

You're likely to be deeply aware of any imbalances in your life today, Pisces. The moon cruises through self-concerned Leo all day, focusing your awareness inward towards your current work/life balance and health concerns. It's an ideal day to sync back up with your body and curb any overindulgences. Luna's opposition with your ruling planet, dream-big Jupiter, helps you deepen your connection to your current emotional state.

♒ THE AGE OF AQUARIUS

WHAT IS THE AGE OF AQUARIUS?

An astrological age is a time period in astrologic theology that astrologers claim parallels major changes in the development of Earth's inhabitants, particularly relating to culture, society and politics.

This cycle, which lasts roughly 26,000 years, means the zodiac sign visible at dawn on

the first day of spring changes about every 2,000 years.

Out of all the signs, Aquarius is the most free-thinking. The Piscean Age was dominated by a Christian patriarchal system. The new age is all about making room for a more egalitarian world.

Aquarius is heavily associated with getting informed and technology. So, the Age of

Aquarius, then, is about acknowledging that the system is broken and not waiting for someone to fix it.

As the Age of Aquarius begins, humanity is set to focus on the innovative and socialist ways that only the air element can generate for us.

SO WHAT'S NEXT?

— Knowledge is power. 2020

has shaken us all to our core and helped expose the cracks in society's foundation.

We've all experienced a shift in the way we relate to power and safety, so we should think of 2020 as the training wheels for a revolutionary couple years to come that could change the way we relate to our communities and what we value in society.



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