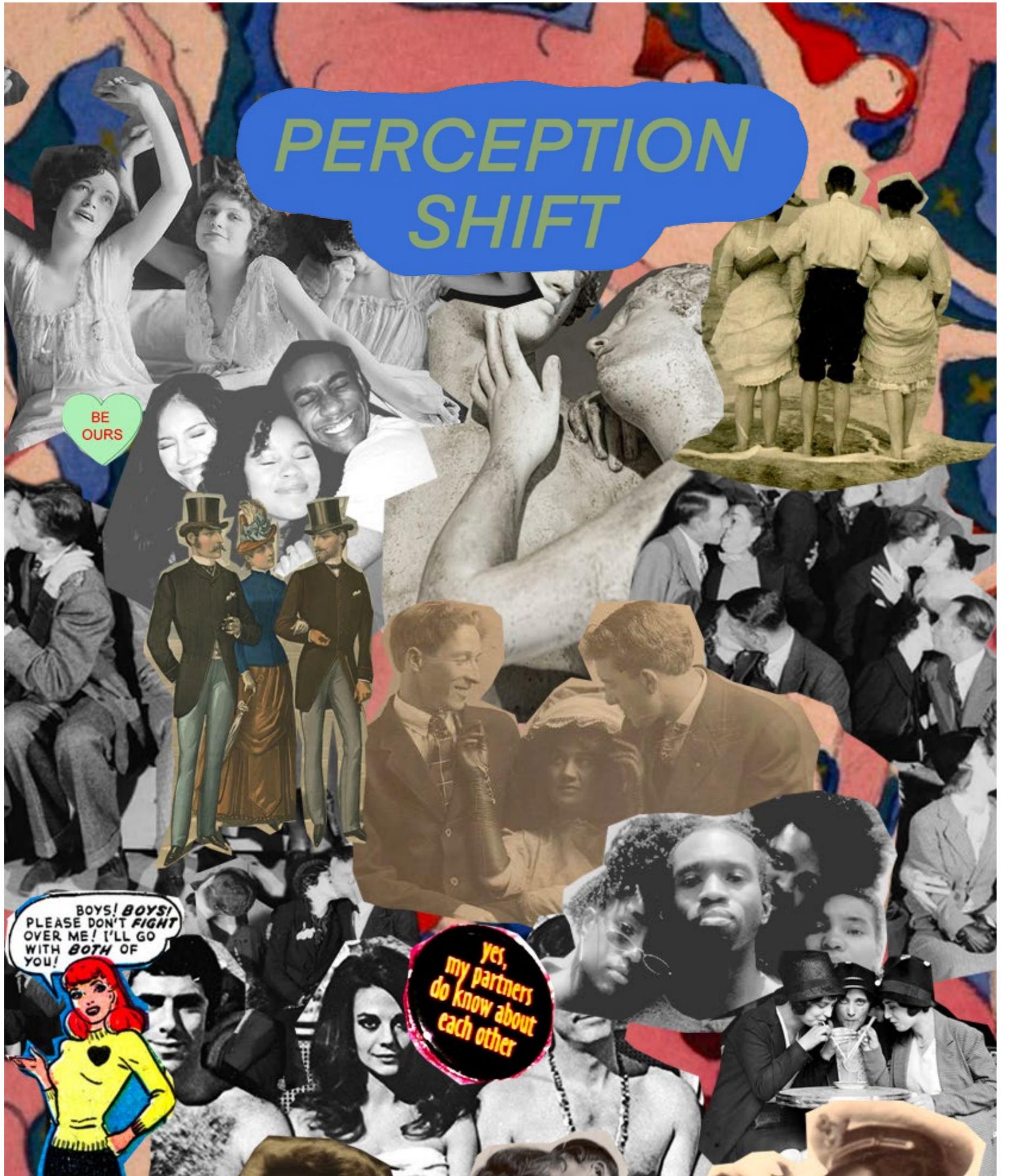


# THE UNITER

SORROW IN UKRAINE—P3

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## NON-MONO GAMY IN THE PANDEMIC



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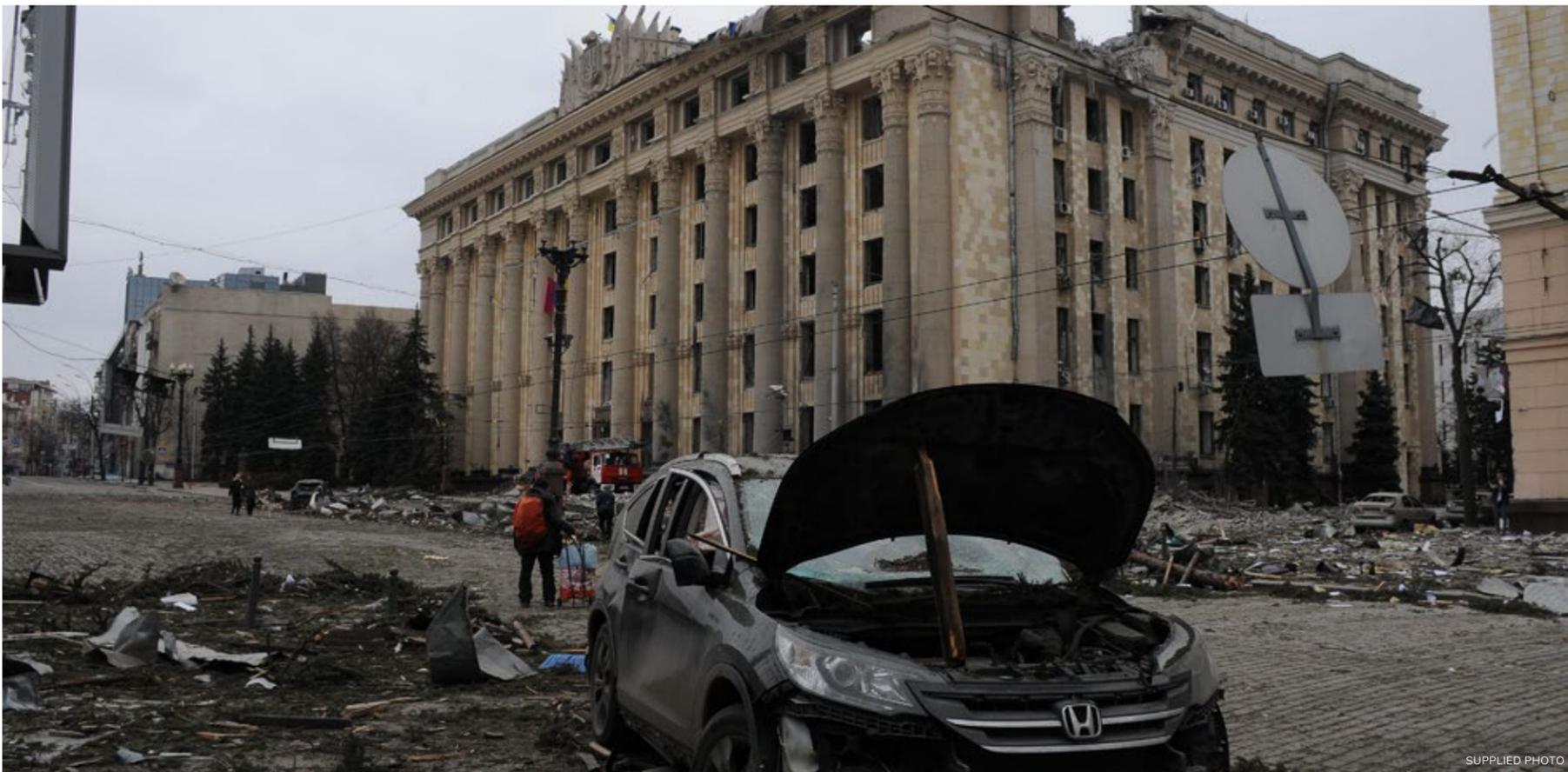
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SUPPLIED PHOTO

Destruction surrounds the city council building in Kharkiv, which was struck by a Russian cruise missile, killing at least 10 people.

# SORROW IN UKRAINE

THOMAS PASHKO | MANAGING EDITOR |   THOMASPASHKO

Last week, on Feb. 24, Russia began a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. It's an event many of us in the diaspora have spent much of the last decade warning could happen, while hoping that it never would.

Our fears were well-founded. Russia has been invading and occupying parts of Ukraine since 2014. In the past year, Russian president Vladimir Putin has drastically ramped up his anti-Ukrainian rhetoric, ranting in both essays and speeches that both the Ukrainian people and the country of Ukraine don't really exist, or have the right to exist has offered distorted and outright invented histories claiming that Vladimir Lenin invented Ukraine and falsely claimed that the centrist government of Volodymyr Zelenskyy, a Jewish Ukrainian and descendant of Holocaust survivors, is a "band of drug addicts and neo-Nazis."

Since the end of the First World War, Ukraine has been invaded eight times during three separate conflicts (the Ukrainian War of Independence, the Second World War and the current Russo-Ukrainian War). Five of those invasions have been perpetrated by Russia (the other three being varying combinations of Germany, Hungary and Romania).

We warned it was possible, but when it finally happened, there was no feeling of vindication at having been right. There is only sorrow. Sorrow, pain, anger and, above all else, fear. Fear for the safety of my loved ones who still live in The Old Country. For their democracy and independence from the colonial Russian empire that occupied them for so long. For the safety of the many peoples of Ukraine – ethnic Ukrainians, Russians, Jews, Tatars, Romani, Poles, Romanians, Armenians, and many others – who are

united against Putin's campaign of slaughter.

We speak with our cousins as often as we can to ensure that everyone is alive and, relatively speaking, safe. Their story isn't mine to tell. I can only speak to my own experience, which is one of heartbreak. It's the same heartbreak that diasporic Chechens, Georgians and Syrians have felt when Putin sent his armies and private death squads.

It's an experience of sleepless nights, endlessly refreshing newsfeeds and social-media timelines, trying to get any updates I can while weeding out the sickening posts from the Trumpian right-wing authoritarians and the "dirtbag left" who regurgitate Putin's propaganda and conspiracy theories about Ukraine the same way they did about Syria.

It's an experience of physical illness and deep rage every time new images come in of indiscriminate bombing of civilian infrastructure, of cruise missiles striking Freedom Square in Kharkiv, the bodies of innocent Ukrainians bleeding in the streets or sick children receiving cancer treatment in bomb shelters.

It's an experience of inspiration at the unity and resolve among the Ukrainian people to resist their fascist invaders, whether that's through the work of defensive forces, guerilla tactics by ordinary people or grumpy old Babas and Gigis simply hurling insults at the occupying forces. A complicated sadness for the Russian soldiers, young boys who will die needlessly for a war the Russian people don't want. For the Ukrainian, Russian and Belarusian kids who will grow up without their parents, or parents who will outlive their children, because of one vile dictator's imperial and genocidal ambitions.

It's a feeling of absolute pride in the heroic actions of Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who has shown a degree of grace, effectiveness and integrity that I never could have imagined would emerge from this bloody and unnecessary conflict. It's an experience of empathy, during which I've received messages of support from friends and acquaintances of many backgrounds from around the world, including Russia and Venezuela.

It's an experience of unexpected emotions. Welling up at expressions of solidarity from Indigenous Canadians, many of whom have dawned kokum scarves in an acknowledgement of the cultural exchanges that took place between Cree peoples and early Ukrainian-Canadian settlers.

It's a story I'm familiar with. My great-great grandparents John and Anastasia Ewonchuk forged these same relationships, trading bushels of wheat with their Cree neighbours so they could serve meat at their wedding. Another story, about Ukrainians who adopted a freezing stray puppy and named him Rambo, made me gasp out loud. By sheer coincidence, my Ukrainian grandfather also had a dog named Rambo.

But, ultimately, it is an experience of sorrow, that the Ukrainian people once again must suffer and fight for the independence they deserve.

**The Canadian Red Cross is accepting donations for humanitarian aid to Ukraine. The Canadian government is matching these donations up to \$10 million. To donate, visit [bit.ly/36MG8MQ](https://bit.ly/36MG8MQ).**

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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](mailto: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.

## CORRECTIONS

In the Feb. 17 article "Information for all!" Katherine Klosek's job title was given as "director of research policies." Klosek's correct title is "director of information policy."

*The Uniter regrets the error.*

# ROCKING OUT OF LONELINESS

'90s-inspired Jamboree set to release sophomore album

ISABELLA SOARES | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | [TW BELLASOARES0601](#) [IG BELLA\\_SOARES16](#)

From Avril Lavigne's comeback to Machine Gun Kelly's emo shift after years in the rap scene, it's clear that pop punk is back on trend. But it isn't the only rock sub-genre making a comeback.

Inspired by the "less-cool bands of the '90s" like The Smashing Pumpkins and Oasis, Winnipeg trio Jamboree makes it clear that alternative music is a go-to.

Band members Sky Parenteau, Alex Braun and Nick Lavich joined forces in 2017 and instantly noticed they had a similar temperament and creative style. Braun and Lavich had been connected through another band before reuniting for a second attempt at music.

"We probably practiced three or five times, and we did one show. Alex and I sort of fell out of touch for two years," Lavich says.

When Lavich and Braun discussed the possibility of a new band, they knew they needed an additional member. That was when Parenteau came to mind, since Braun had played with him in a jazz band when they were in school.

After a couple months adjusting to the creative process as a group, they decided on a name and their signature style. Despite the word "jamboree" evoking an up-tempo vibe, the band's music is often laid-back and introspective. After listening

to Weezer and Oasis CDs at work, the trio was inspired by the nostalgic sound and used it as a canvas for the mental-health and interconnectivity struggles addressed in their debut album, *A Beautiful Place*.

"As far as themes go, we talked a lot around that time about feeling crazed by the internet and feeling alienated by it. The song 'A Very Pure Town' is sampling a guy who would make vlogs that were really unhinged," Braun says.

"There" was the first track the band recorded for their debut album, as well as the first song they ever worked on as a group. Parenteau reflected on what led him to come up with the lyrics.

"I wrote it after a very long shopping trip with my parents in Portage Place, and I just couldn't go to another store anymore. I guess it fits that isolation theme," he says.

After playing at Real Love Mini Fest in 2021, the band connected with Adam Fuhr, House of Wonders' label manager, about potentially collaborating on a new project. A while later, after most mixes were made by Lino D'Ottavio in his basement, Jamboree brought their sophomore album back to Fuhr before the record deal was set in stone. Since then, the band released "The Snow," a bold first single for the upcoming album featuring heavi-



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Local trio Jamboree take their musical inspiration from the "less-cool bands of the '90s."

er-sounding guitar riffs and resurfacing the theme of inner turmoil.

"At first, we thought it might sound more aggressive for a first single, but Adam was very fond of that one. It does set the stage, but most of the songs in the album are softer than that one," Lavich says.

Jamboree's sophomore album *Life in the Dome* comes out on Apr. 1, and the band will perform at The Good Will Social Club on the same day.

# GLAM TIME IS A SUPERPOWER

Local makeup artists share behind-the-scenes experiences

ISABELLA SOARES | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | [TW BELLASOARES0601](#) [IG BELLA\\_SOARES16](#)

Applying foundation and blending eye-shadow with precision isn't as easy as it seems. Makeup artistry's value is often overlooked, but according to Winnipeg freelancers, this trade is worthy of recognition and respect.

Shelby Davidson, a youth mental-health coordinator at the Canadian Mental Health Association Manitoba and Winnipeg, has been a freelance makeup artist for years. Whether preparing a bride for their big day or crafting a look for a local musician, she says the secret to being a makeup professional is focusing on the details.

"It is really important to read in between the lines and hear what (clients) are saying on a deeper level than the words they are expressing themselves. Paying attention to the choice of words that they are using or their previous relationship with makeup is all useful information when approaching it," she says.

Davidson has worked with many local artists for photoshoots, music videos and live performances. An experience that stood out to her was her first time collaborating with Franco-Manitoban musician Rayannah.

"The first look I ever did on her was an

orange eyelid, and eventually she started doing that look on her own on tour or whenever I wasn't around to be hired for the makeup. She even made an Instagram filter with the orange eye look, so it's cool that the work I did with her transcends that one experience," Davidson says.

Rachel Lynne Jones is a makeup artist who is also pursuing a different full-time career path. Currently, Jones is a Creative Communications student at Red River College whose makeup looks landed in *Elle Canada* and *Into the Gloss*. What started as a fun activity to do with friends led to even greater accomplishments with the guidance of hair stylist Kitty Bernes.

"Almost on every single shoot, she and I will have a moment when we look at each other on set, and there's no discussion to be had, just this beautiful collaboration where you understand each other's artistry so much and how to work with one another in super tight locations," Jones says.

Although makeup can captivate people's attention, the art of creating makeup looks is still undermined as a solid career option. However, the perks of prior experience with this craft equipped Jones with "magical superpowers" to pursue her chosen field.



TRAVIS ROSS (SUPPLIED)

Makeup artist Shelby Davidson co-created signature makeup looks for musician Rayannah.

"Makeup artistry is so much more than buying something at Sephora and smacking it into someone's face. You have to be gentle with your client. You have to work with so many people on set. Before studying media production and photography in college, I went in with knowledge about composition and how lighting affects the face. It's such an intense art form that complements many different things," she says.

Both Davidson and Jones advise all freelance makeup artists to get started with a

ring light, a makeup kit and, most importantly, a positive attitude.

"If you are enthusiastic and love what you are doing, you might get hired based on your attitude alone," Jones says.

Follow [@shelbydavidsonartistry](#) and [@rachellynnejonesaesthetic](#) on Instagram to keep up with their creations.

# LEARNING TO WORK WITH THE DARKNESS

Village Conservatory to showcase pieces from the 2021-22 class

REBECCA DRIEDGER | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER |   REBECCADRIEDGER

Last year, the Village Conservatory for Music Theatre held a virtual exhibition titled *Inhibition Exhibition* to showcase 14 original pieces. The works were a mixture of original songs, poems, dances and short plays, created with the help of some of Winnipeg's top arts professionals.

This year, the exhibition is called *Embracing Shadows*, which recently entered the recording process.

"*Embracing Shadows* came about as our students' pieces tie into their own personal demons: depression, performance anxiety, struggles to create and, in one particular case, literally embracing a ghost," Daphne Finlayson, the Village Conservatory's director of communications and administration, says. "The title refers to how we both confront and accept our struggles and learn to work with the darkness in each of our lives."

Many people can likely relate to this topic, especially as the COVID-19 pandemic ebbs and flows, and restrictions ease and tighten. Through all this, the Village Conservatory has been working to give their students the best experience possible.

"Last year, we held on as long as we could during the second major wave of the virus until we were forced to pivot to virtual instruction. We had planned on hosting our year-end production live and in person, but necessity meant we needed to change to a

digital, pre-filmed presentation," Finlayson says.

"In the past two years, we've continued to ask how we can continue creating art in increasingly challenging circumstances, which has allowed us to explore different methods of performance and what we consider 'theatre.'"

This has resulted in the students having an increase in their appreciation for the program and the ability to perform, even if it is only for a virtual audience.

"It's been interesting, because I feel like theatre as a whole has been changing throughout this pandemic, so it's allowed us to be a part of that development. It also makes me very grateful for having the opportunity to connect with all of these other artists throughout this time," Madyson Richard, one of the students in this year's program, says in an email to *The Uniter*.

For some of the students, this showcase is exactly what they have needed, since many couldn't perform or connect with others in a pre-pandemic way.

"It's been two years since I've done any kind of performance, and it just excites me that I have the opportunity to put something on a stage after two years," Madison Olivier, another program student, says. "(I'm) even more excited that it's something I personally wrote, showing a piece of myself. The show



SUPPLIED PHOTO

The Village Conservatory for Music's show *Embracing Shadows* will take place at Crescent Fort Rouge United Church on Mar. 30..

is just such a healing process for us all, and I'm really excited to be a part of it."

Bronwyn Smyth, a student who created a mini horror film for the exhibition, says over email that one of the best parts about performing is "hearing the audience laugh."

These students may not have the opportunity to hear their virtual audience's laughter, tears or applause, but if this year's exhibition is anything like last year's performance,

viewers are in for a wonderful theatrical experience.

There will be a live screening of *Inhibition Exhibition: Embracing Shadows* at the historic Crescent Fort Rouge United Church on Mar. 30 at 7 p.m. Tickets can be purchased online at [bit.ly/embracingshadows](https://bit.ly/embracingshadows).

# GETTING ACTIVE FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Virtual 5Ks give people more ways to support their favourite causes

REBECCA DRIEDGER | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER |   REBECCADRIEDGER

Virtual 5Ks and other races have become increasingly popular during the COVID-19 pandemic. The ability for runners to socially distance, choose their own locations and participate at their own pace have made them an attractive option for beginners and seasoned runners alike.

Some runs, which were created as in-person events, chose to make it virtual to be more accessible to people not in the area. For example, Run For It 5K, created by the American non-profit organization To Write Love On Her Arms (TWLOHA), had 4,200 runners from 22 countries and all 50 US states participate in the virtual run in 2021.

Virtual races like Run For It 5K, created by non-profit organizations, often have proceeds going towards the organization's cause. For TWLOHA, it means the funds go toward "providing hope and help for people experiencing depression, addiction, self-injury and suicide."

Then there are runs like the Get Real Movement's Virtual 5K, collaborating with the global organization Rainbow Railroad. Their 5K's proceeds will be split between the Canadian non-profit focused on "combating bullying, 2SLGBTQ+ discrimination and racism" and the global organization "helping LGTBQI+ people facing persecution based on their sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics."

Get Real currently has an after-school

program in Winnipeg, run by Mackenzie Kolton.

"We held our first virtual 5K last year in 2021. This was the first time we decided to bring all the chapters across Canada to support one 50/50 fundraiser," Victoria Pedri, Get Real's chapter manager, says in an email to *The Uniter*. "It was a big hit last year! Our goal was to raise \$2,500, and we doubled that amount, raising \$5,000."

Get Real's goal this year is \$10,000, and with more people wanting to get active for a good cause, they may reach their goal.

"I ran the virtual 5K in June 2021 for the Pride and Remembrance Foundation," Bre Kelly, who also cosplays online and at Comic Cons as Priderman, says. "I've participated in the run before, back when it was still in person. When I heard they introduced a virtual/remote option, I jumped at the opportunity."

Kelly has been a socially-conscious cosplayer since 2016 and has participated in different runs in Toronto and Winnipeg that align with her values.

Kelly says she felt good about participating in the Pride and Remembrance Run, even though she ran the 5K only hours after getting her second dose of the COVID vaccine in full cosplay on a hot day.

"I hit my fundraising goal, completed the 5K – even if it was longer than I had hoped – and, all in all, I felt good supporting causes I believe in," she says.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Kelly also says that when she looks to participate in these types of events, it's all about what she is supporting.

"I chose the Pride & Remembrance Run because it most closely aligns with my goals as a socially conscious cosplayer. I'm always

looking to see with the beneficiaries are, and, without fail, the organizations receiving the funds are wonderful orgs doing amazing things for queer people across Canada and, in some cases, around the world," she says.



## ARTS



SUPPLIED PHOTO

# NATIONTIME

Plays until March 11 on Cinematheque At Home



ARMANDE MARTINE | FEATURES REPORTER | 1MANDE7

*Nationtime* reports on the historic National Black Political Convention held in Gary, Ind. in 1972.

Shot in a time following the 1960s anti-establishment movement, the film documents Black people in America rallying together to create political change. At the time of the initial release in 1972, the documentary footage was deemed too confrontational for television broadcast, and, instead, a shortened 58-minute version was circulated.

Directed by prolific filmmaker William Greaves and narrated by Sidney Poitier, the entire 80-minute documentary was digitally restored in 2020 with the help of Greaves' widow, filmmaker Louise Greaves. Funding from Jane Fonda and the Hollywood Foreign Press Association helped the film return to the public eye at a time when the Black Lives Matter movement has brought racial

injustice to the forefront worldwide.

The murder of George Floyd in 2020 at the hands of the Minneapolis police brought into the glaring public light the ongoing injustices Black people face. That year, the largest protests in the history of the Black Lives Matter movement were held globally.

The National Black Political Convention followed on the heels of the 1968 National Party Conventions. It was generally felt by Black America that both parties in America had failed Black people.

The 1972 convention was a convergence of political voices including Coretta Scott King, Reverend Jesse Jackson, Richard Roundtree, Dr. Betty Shabazz and Dick Gregory, among others.

Intent on self-determination, the formation of a third political movement was brought forward by organizers to convention delegates. The hope was that minori-

ties, disillusioned youth and the "best of white America" would band together to form a new coalition and make their collective voice heard at the ballot box.

In his narrative, Poitier describes the historical political gathering as the first time Black people came together to combine the powers of the ballot and protest.

"They have come with one purpose in mind, and that purpose has eluded our people ever since we left the distant shores of Africa. That purpose is to unite all the segments that make up what we call Black America," Poitier says in the film.

The quality of the filmmaking turns viewers into witnesses of a historic event, with the camera effectively catching the whole of the convention, zooming in on speakers, panning to delegates on the floor and taking viewers backstage to listen in on interviews.

Between speakers, actor Harry Belafonte recites poetry in his smooth voice to inspire and rally convention delegates. Words such as "Out of the long wintry night of our oppression in America, we are witnessing the birth of a new golden age for our people" are a call to action for the 10,000 delegates in attendance.

This echoes the way a great deal of hope was pinned on the outcome of the event. The thrust of the convention was aimed at the emergence of an independent national Black political agenda.

It was anticipated that history would be made in Gary, and that Black America would unite politically, effectively addressing the many problems brought about by the centuries-long oppression by white people.

Unfortunately, unclear audio from the speech of the Michigan delegation spokesperson on the last day means viewers miss an unexpected turning point: not wanting to support the agenda brought forth and championed by the New York delegation, a portion of the Michigan delegation walked out.

That occurrence meant, in the end, that consensus was not reached and that the convention's main goal of self-determination was not attained.

An overview of this pivotal moment in the struggle for dignity and equal rights for Black people across America, this documentary helps educate viewers on this particular moment in history.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of when Black Americans were invited by Gary mayor Richard Hatcher to form a Black agenda. That political agenda states that any change for the benefit of Black America be initiated by Black people. It was to be the new birthing of Black politics where both social transformation and deconstruction would right the wrongs of a legacy of slavery in America.

## ARTS BRIEFS

CIERRA BETTENS | ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR | FICTIONALCIERRA | CIERRABETTS

### Lost and found

The latest exhibition at the Manitoba Museum's Discovery Centre features the recently uncovered work of photographer Nick Yudell. *The Lost Expressionist: Nick Yudell, A Photographer Discovered* displays an archive of photos chronicling Manitoba life in the 1930s. Visit [manitobamuseum.ca](http://manitobamuseum.ca) to learn more and purchase tickets.

### Celebrating women in jazz

In the spirit of International Women's Day, the Winnipeg Jazz Orchestra (WJO) is presenting a night of music composed and performed by women. The doors open at 6:30 p.m., and the show begins at 7:30 p.m. at the West End Cultural Centre (586 Ellice Ave.). Tickets start at \$35.26 and can be purchased online at [bit.ly/3C3p9Bw](http://bit.ly/3C3p9Bw).

### Little Miss Higgins to release *The Fire Waltz*

Alberta-born and Manitoba-based musician Little Miss Higgins is releasing the final chapter of her forthcoming album *The Fire Waltz* on March 14. Inspired by tales told by her great-grandmother, *The Fire Waltz* chronicles riveting stories through sound. Higgins has been trickling song releases on the album since Feb. 14, which can be listened to on all major platforms.

### Free films at Freeze Frame

Freeze Frame's annual International Film Festival for Kids of All Ages is taking a hybrid approach this year, offering virtual and in person programming. Running from Mar. 6 to 13, viewers can watch select films in-person at the Centre culturel franco-manitobain (340 Provencher Blvd.) or enjoy them from the comfort of their home. Visit [freezeframeonline.org](http://freezeframeonline.org) to view the full schedule and purchase tickets.

### Manitoban takes home a Governor General's Performing Arts Award

Sainte-Anne-des-Chênes-born Michelle Smith was among the seven Canadians who won a Governor General's Performing Arts Award this year. Smith was honoured for her volunteerism in the Manitoba arts community, where she helped establish the Maison Gabrielle-Roy and raised over \$2 million to build a new theatre centre.

### Manitoba Music presents GEAR UP speaker series

Manitoba Music recently launched GEAR UP, a three-part speaker series that focuses on gender equality in audio recording and music production. The first installment of the series, set to be released on Mar. 9, features Grammy-nominated engineer, vocal producer and vocalist Simon Torres. Subsequent episodes feature multidisciplinary artist Hill Kourkoutis and sound designer Chloe Alexandra Thompson. The series will be live-streamed on Manitoba Music's Facebook and YouTube channels.





COLLAGE BY LEIGH LUGOSI

**Pandemic stress**

Certified sex educator and sex therapist Dr. Reece Malone says what is perceived as an en-masse opening up of previously monogamous long-term partnerships is simply that: a perception.

“It’s actually very common. It’s just coming out of the closet a lot more, and, historically, people have very legitimate reasons for not being able to disclose their relationship status,” he says.

“Are there more non-monogamous poly people? Perceptually, yes. Is it true, though? Not necessarily, because you can still identify as such but not be able to express it.”

Naturally, pandemic-induced isolation has also contributed to how relationships are faring. For some people in live-in, monogamous relationships, excess time at home has presented opportunities for more meaningful conversations about their relationship dynamics.

“We know that familiarity can also occasionally equate to boredom,” he says.

“People may start talking about ‘what are different things that you might be curious about that you want to experiment with?’ Those conversations may start to include adding, supplementing, enhancing your relationship, and that may include another person.”

It’s important not to explore such new romantic realms lightly, cautions San Francisco-based polyamory coach Magenta Brooks.

“You want to go into those transitions thoughtfully and not from a place of reactivity and panic,” she says. “It *can* work, but you really need to go into that process with care, especially because there’s a pandemic.”

While there may appear to be correlation between the COVID-19 pandemic and the exponential opening up of previously monogamous relationships, the truth is that non-monogamy has been around for a long time. Now, it’s simultaneously experiencing both a shift in social perception, as well as facing new and significant challenges from COVID-19.

“One of the worst things was at the beginning of the pandemic. I kept talking to these people who had just decided to open up, and then the pandemic hit,” Brooks says.

She explains that existing in a pandemic added a stressful risk to consider when deciding who to be in contact with. The possibility that “if you spend time with somebody you care about, you could kill them is not good,” Brooks says.

While there are many factors that may give people pause in pursuing non-monogamy, Malone believes that at the core

of stigma is what he calls the trifecta of shame, fear and guilt.

“These lessons of shame and guilt may come from your family, origin, history, your culture, but also from other structures like religion and also our legal systems that define what is a legitimate family,” he says,

“People consider poly configurations as alternative as opposed to (considering them part of) the diversity of relationships. Which speaks to another topic: the lack of comprehensive sex education, or the diversity of families, and the principles of what makes a healthy family,” Malone says. “Not which genders are involved or how many people are involved in that family, but the dynamics and the principles of consent, transparency and compassion.”

Despite the stigma, Brooks explains that, for many, the pull toward non-monogamy is an intuitive one, which often creates dissonance when pushing up against societal pressure.

“A lot of people ended up being monogamous out of social expectation. A lot of the people I talk to say things like ‘I really want to have intense, loving relationships. They’re really important to me.’ But they struggled with something within monogamous dynamics, (and) they didn’t know what was wrong. They don’t know where that sense of disquiet was coming from, and then somebody goes, ‘Hey, what about polyamory?’ and then they go, ‘Holy crap, that’s it!’”

**Social stigma**

In spite of non-monogamy being a natural choice for some people, Malone believes there is a long way to go in terms of moving past societal constructs.

“We need to look at this from a real systemic, ecological lens, in my opinion, if we’re going to do a cultural and sexological critique of what this phenomenon is all about. Because we know, in history, that poly dynamics have existed throughout time. Ritualistically, they were celebrated, they were honoured, they were revered. (It’s important) to look at how colonial histories impacted those dynamics and the attitudes toward non-monogamy.”

The perception of monogamy as the “default setting” for romance can be damaging in many ways. Veronica Lowry-Pereira is married and polyamorous and feels that misconceptions around polyamory are common.

“I think it’s still super stigmatized. There are people that say things like, ‘oh, it’s so weird. Why can’t you just settle down?’” she says.

There’s “this weird, very old rhetoric. And that’s kind of what I knew before my experience with it, and I feel like there was a lot of shame in wanting to explore other people or have different experiences with other people.”

Because Lowry-Pereira is married to her partner, she says this adds a layer of worry when going out in public with other partners.

“This is such a small city to do this in, too. The idea of any public displays of affection when people know I’m married ... I never want people to think that that’s something that hasn’t been negotiated,

but then I also don’t want to have to talk to people about *what* I’ve negotiated. It’s not really their business.”

One place where non-monogamy, societal preconceptions and the stress of the pandemic all intersect in a major way is on dating apps.

Jeremy Haywood-Smith is in an ethically non-monogamous couple and well aware of the pitfalls of navigating online dating without the end goal of monogamy. He says some people are put off when they see a profile where someone has self-declared as non-monogamous.

“On dating apps, I think that when



people see the abbreviation of “ENM,” that equates to the fish picture now for some people,” he says. “I think it’s the truth. But if people see someone that’s non-monogamous, and their mind is operating within monogamy, they believe that ‘Oh, they don’t want to commit, they don’t want to communicate, they don’t know what they want.’ So I’m sure that’s a quiet stigma that exists. I don’t think people fully understand the full scope of what it can mean.”

“If their first inclination is to be like, ‘Oh, you’re not being honest,’ I can say, no, it’s right there. It’s kind of weeding out people that might not be (interested in non-monogamy).”

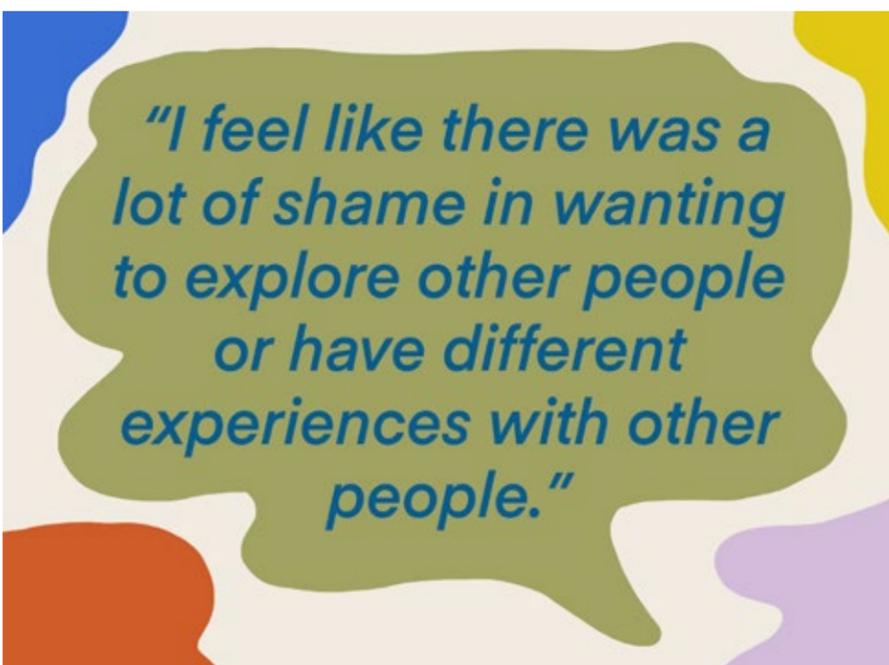
**Needs**

Stigma can also come from within the polyamorous community.

“I often run into situations where people don’t like the hierarchical model, because somebody’s primary partner gets too much say in what they do with their life,” Mia Pohl says. She practices a hierarchical model of polyamory, where she focuses first on her primary partner’s needs.

Pohl has been in a long-distance partnership for six years, in addition to her local primary partnership for a year and a half. Pohl says she applies a needs-based model with her partners.

“(My primary partner) Bryce doesn’t get to dictate what I do with my time. He gets to tell me what his needs are and



whether or not they’re being met,” she says.

Pohl says that, contrary to the criticism she’s heard, her behaviour isn’t restricted by respecting her partner’s needs.

“He has a need to remain safe, so that dictates what I can do sexually with people. But he doesn’t tell me if I can have sex with someone, that kind of stuff. He doesn’t tell me if I can or cannot hang out with someone. I get to choose when to

hang out with someone.”

Pohl found the additional support helpful when she recently travelled to Montreal for bottom surgery.

“I pulled every need out of the whole network. Even people who weren’t my partners, I pulled them into the game. I pulled in Bryce’s partner and said ‘you need to take care of Bryce. I can’t take care of him, so you’ve got to pull through,’” she says.

“It takes a load off of me to make sure his needs are met when he goes out and gets them met by somebody else,” Pohl says. “(It means) being able to say ‘I don’t have the resources for this. I need you. I’m going to help you find someone to meet those needs.’”

### Love

For those outside non-monogamy culture, it’s easy to think the move into polyamory springs from dissatisfaction or loneliness, but this is often far from being the case.

“That’s a very easy, palatable way for people who don’t want to put in effort or even give non-monogamy or polyamory a try, right? It’s like, ‘oh, well, someone’s not doing something for you,’” Lowry-Pereira says. “My partner does tons for me. We own property together. We’re literally married. No one else can take that space.”

“Everyone fills different spaces, just like my friendships. Like I go to different people for different problems or different activities. For me, the line between platonic love and romantic love is super, super blurry. I just love to love, and whatever the capacity is, if I can do it, I’m into it.”

Regardless of the challenges currently faced, Brooks has a positive outlook on the growing acceptance of non-monogamy in the cultural consciousness.

“My Midwestern Irish Catholic aunt, when I told her what I did for a living, she said, ‘Oh, that’s interesting.’ I was expecting a whole conversation,” she says.

Brooks sees an emotional shift currently happening, one which may have positive effects not only for individuals engaged in non-monogamy, but for everyone.

“I think polyamory affects how people do monogamy,” she says.

“There are so many healthy ways of seeing each other as fully independent, autonomous people loving each other through choice, and that is a thing monogamous people can do, too. And as these ways of being become more popular and more seen, the lines become fuzzier.”



## CITY BRIEFS

ALEX NEUFELDT | CITY EDITOR

### Black balloons

Mar. 6 is Overdose Awareness Day, when those who have lost loved ones to overdose and other substance-related harms display black balloons to raise awareness of the issue. Overdose Awareness Manitoba has been hosting public memorials in the lead-up to the event and has resources for those observing the day.

### Winnipeg stands with Ukraine

In response to the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, thousands of Winnipeggers have gathered in demonstrations in support of the people of Ukraine over the past few days, including in a large rally on Feb. 26 that the premier and many MLAs attended. There are ongoing projects throughout Winnipeg to coordinate donations to Ukraine.

### Going without

On Mar. 7, from 7 to 8 p.m., Healthcare for All MB is hosting Living Without Public Healthcare, a discussion on the the experiences of international students, migrant workers and undocumented residents who have navigated the COVID-19 pandemic without access to public healthcare. Registration for this Zoom event is available on the Healthcare for All MB Facebook page.

### Winnipeg unmasked

In response to the provincial government’s decision to end the mask mandate on Mar. 15, the City of Winnipeg has concluded it is not viable to continue to enforce a mask mandate in City facilities, including city buses. The mask mandate will stay in force for city employees, but the requirement for unvaccinated employees to regularly test for COVID-19 will also be lifted.

### Public works pandemonium

A recently released investigation by Christian Sweryda, a law student, and Ryan Thorpe of *The Winnipeg Free Press* has revealed massive systemic mismanagement in the public works department of the City of Winnipeg. The corresponding article in *The Free Press* has prompted Counc. Matt Allard and Scott Gillingham to call for a formal review of the department’s spending, by audit and by public hearing, respectively.

### Council split on drug decriminalization

City council was tied in a vote to request the federal government decriminalize small amounts of illegal drugs within the city, legislation which would have allowed those carrying illegal drugs to be referred to addiction support programs rather than criminally charged. Mayor Brian Bowman suggested additional collaboration between the municipal, provincial and federal governments would be needed for such legislation to be enacted.

# SLOW TO ACT?

## Examining the police response to the 'Freedom Convoy'

CALLUM GOULET-KILGOUR | CITY REPORTER |  CGOULETKILGOUR

After more than three weeks in downtown Ottawa, the so-called Freedom Convoy protest has ended. Police forces from across the country were instrumental in removing the occupiers, but questions remain about why it took so long.

The convoy arrived in Canada's capital on Jan. 29 and remained until around Feb. 20, when a large-scale police operation cleared the streets. During these weeks, downtown Ottawa residents were subject to harassment, noise, pollution and confinement.

Ted McCoy, associate professor in the University of Calgary's Department of Sociology, is an expert on criminology and social inequality.

"It seems that the Ottawa police are already experiencing a hard reckoning for their lax enforcement and for ceding the downtown core to the convoy," he says in an email to *The Uniter*.

"I think it makes it very difficult for the police to argue they need more funding to do their jobs in the future."

The protests in Ottawa – and, in fact, across Canada – led to the federal government's unprecedented invocation of the Emergencies Act, which replaced the War Measures Act, infamously invoked during the October Crisis. Police departments claim this was necessary, as it provided them with the necessary forces to address the sit-

uation.

In addition to the Freedom Convoy protest in Ottawa, similar occupations occurred across Canada, including in Winnipeg.

Cerah Dubé is a member of Winnipeg Police Cause Harm, an organization calling for the abolition of the Winnipeg Police Service.

She claims that "police departments across the country are sympathetic to the causes the organizers of these occupations have been pushing."

"The occupations would not have gone on this long without police support," Dubé says.

Many of the convoy protestors believed police officers were sympathetic to their cause and were shocked when the police took action to end their occupation of downtown Ottawa. However, there are financial ties between individual police officers and the Freedom Convoy movement. Many Ontario police officers donated to the convoy's GiveSendGo page, something authorities have vowed to investigate.

"We've seen historically, and tangibly in the last few weeks, that police will always support white supremacist/fascist movements," Dubé says. "Police departments across the country are sympathetic to the causes the organizers of these occupations have been pushing."



Police responses to the Freedom Convoy protests across Canada have been criticized as slow, ineffective and even enabling.

In Winnipeg, a police spokesperson said that those in front of the legislature were "one of the most reasonable and welcoming" groups of protestors they have encountered. However, they did later issue a letter saying the protest had to end, which has since occurred.

Another dimension to these protests has been the policing costs imposed on governments. Dubé notes that police have benefited from overtime hours.

"We hope that people will remember this

moment going into the municipal election this fall and that defunding the police will be a central issue," she says.

While it is unclear how the protests and blockades might have been handled without police forces, it is clear that police responded differently to this protest than many other situations, including clearing homeless encampments in Toronto last year.

"It is difficult to escape the conclusion that there are different standards that the police themselves are determining," McCoy says.

# TIME TO RENTERII!

## Local tech startup makes waves

CALLUM GOULET-KILGOUR | CITY REPORTER |  CGOULETKILGOUR

Renterii, a new item-rental app from a Winnipeg tech startup, all began with a simple mission: to rent a kayak. Launched in summer 2021 by Jordan Smith, Dennis Cheong and Dany Cheong, it is an app where individuals and businesses can list, discover and rent out items.

"The idea for Renterii stemmed from a past trip on the West Coast where the accessibility for myself to rent a kayak on this random adventure wasn't as easy nor as modern as I thought it should be," Smith says in an email to *The Uniter*.

He says the process required Google searches, phone calls and website hops just to discover that there was no kayak available for rent.

"After this experience, I decided to build a platform ... aimed at giving folks like me the tool to discover and book from these existing rental businesses more efficiently," Smith says, adding that a second goal was to provide the opportunity for people to rent things from locals.

He says Renterii is "similar to a platform like Airbnb, but having access to rent items like kayaks, bikes and tents from nearby local lenders in Canada."

Smith is a proud University of Winnipeg alum and has some previous entrepreneurship experience. As a student, he co-founded YTID Clothing before joining SkipThe-

Dishes, where he became passionate about technology.

"Currently, the Renterii app is accessible from coast to coast on both app stores (the App Store and Google Play), where, with the help of Renterii's national insurance partner and in-app booking system features, users can connect with lenders nearby and rent items directly from each other worry-free," Smith says.

Steven Maxted is the founder of Type Eh Bikes, a Winnipeg-based mobile rental company that has partnered with Renterii. He says the Renterii app has played a "huge role" in his company's expansion.

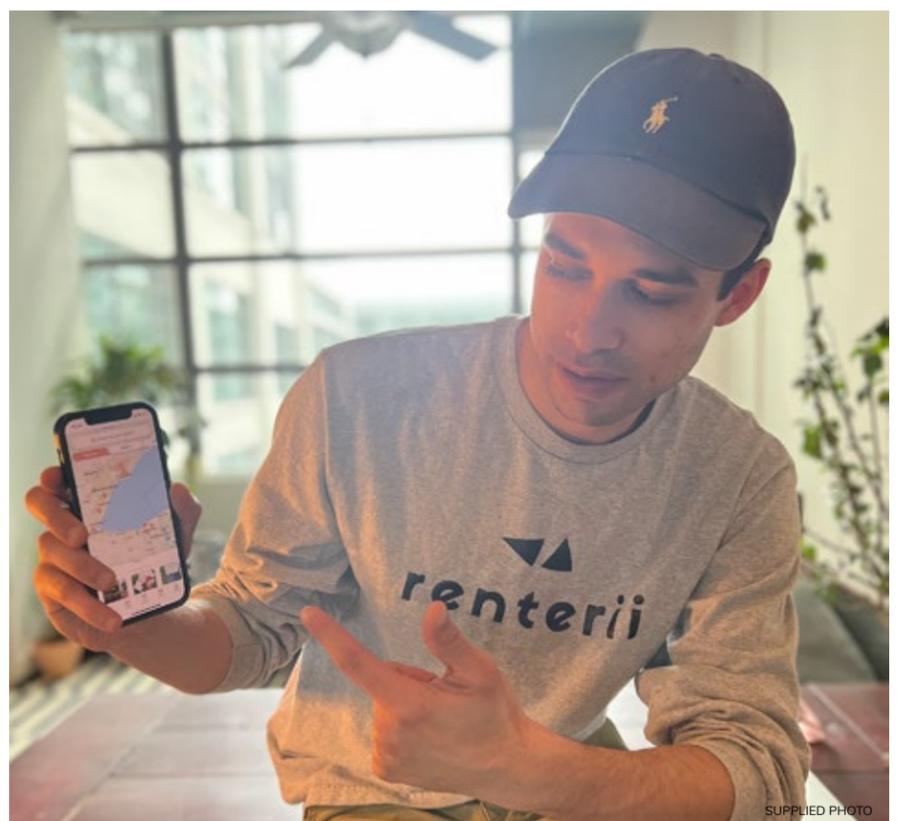
"It fits into our business as a main source of booking and expansion ... into other markets," Maxted says, adding that "the app makes it easy to upload your items, manage bookings (and) insurance on your products."

"It processes the payment for us and allows us to function with insurance as needed ... which is truly a win-win for cash flow," he says.

Maxted says they came across Renterii while "researching tech in this space."

"We then connected, and they helped on-board us at Type Eh and offered some cross-marketing in the form of a commercial," he says.

"It was easy to use, and our so-to-say partnership in business continued to evolve."



Jordan Smith got the idea for the Renterii app when he had a difficult time renting a kayak.

Renterii was recently named one of the 16 Top Apps Startups and Companies in Manitoba and was accepted into the League of Innovators Boost Residency, an incubator that focuses on supporting scalable Canadian startups.

**Renterii is available for download on the App Store and Google Play.**

# RENTAL REPORT

A closer look at the state of renting in Winnipeg

ALEX NEUFELDT | CITY EDITOR / ALLYN LYONS | COLUMNIST

In December of 2021, the Institute of Urban Studies (IUS) at the University of Winnipeg released Gain, Loss, and Change: The Impact of Condos on Winnipeg Neighbourhoods, a report on the shrinking number of affordable apartments in Winnipeg, and found that over 10,000 rental apartment units had been removed from the market between 1968 and 2015.

Scott McCullough, a senior research associate at the IUS and one of the authors of the report, says that while previous research indicated a loss of rental units, the number was surprising.

The lost units were largely converted to owned condominium units, and this particular shift in the housing supply has nuanced impacts. McCullough explains that condo units are more affordable than free-standing units, making them an appealing option for first-time buyers, young people and seniors downsizing from larger homes.

But rental units serve different people and purposes in the housing ecosystem. McCullough argues that the impacts on rental units have been more significant than the impact on owned units.

“Conversions typically target older apartment buildings that were affordable” he says. “The affordable rental units that have been targeted for conversion are concentrated in the core of the city, and that core of the city actually needs affordable rental. We think a significant amount of people who would have otherwise been in affordable rental units would struggle to

come up with the downpayment to move into a converted condo.”

McCullough says the loss “has permanently reduced the availability of affordable rental units, and that is something all levels of government should look at and should try to minimize,” noting that other jurisdictions have taken measures to limit this conversion.

As affordable rental units are becoming harder to find, groups like the West Broadway Tenants Committee are reminding tenants of their rights and holding landlords accountable.

Since September, Stefan Hodges has been working with renters in West Broadway to come together and create a collective response to issues in the building. Similar to a labour union, creating a tenants’ organization uses the power of many to bargain for better conditions.

“Landlords aren’t really used to this. In some cases, we have received retaliation even for just getting tenants to meet each other over an issue. I think that shows there’s a lot of power when tenants come together,” he says.

Despite their actions not breaking any laws and tenants being protected to form a tenant association, the committee has received two legal threats over five campaigns.

He says the main issues facing tenants in the community are maintenance problems, rent increases and “renovictions,” which are when a landlord ends a tenancy to repair or



PHOTO BY DANIEL CRUMP

The construction of True North Square illustrates a trend in Winnipeg which has prioritized condos over rental units.

renovate a unit.

Hodges reminds tenants that there are protections in legislation, but tenants can also meet with their landlords if they don’t think they’re being treated fairly. Meeting with other tenants and demanding their landlord fix a problem, offer compensation or keep the rent at a reasonable rate can be quicker and easier than pursuing legal action.

“What organizing does is build more power for tenants to come to the negotiation table as a balanced partner. As a group, it’s easier to try and stay in their home and actualize their rights,” Hodges says. “Hopefully this builds a bigger movement in collaboration between tenants in the city.”

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



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

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

# ‘A LIFE DREAM’

**Dr. Yadira Chinique de Armas, assistant professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Winnipeg**

ARMANDE MARTINE | FEATURES REPORTER |  1MANDE7

Growing up in a colonial village in Havana, Cuba, Yadira Chinique de Armas was fascinated by major archaeological findings in Mesoamerica and Peru.

“Being an archaeologist has been a life dream,” Chinique de Armas says.

Later, Chinique de Armas was disappointed to discover that archaeology is not part of the academic curricula in Cuban universities. She decided to study biology instead at the University of Havana.

Chinique de Armas later volunteered at an archaeological burial excavation site in the province of Matanzas when she was 17 years old. Seventeen years later, she continues to direct archaeological excavations at this site.

Chinique de Armas practices bioarchaeology, studying human remains from the past while considering their cultural and environmental context.

“For me, bioarchaeology is a bridge that linked my interest in archeology and my love of biology,” she says.

Chinique de Armas’ PhD research detected new findings on ancient populations in the Caribbean area.

“I identified different dietary traditions among early Indigenous groups in Cuba, which suggested a higher cultural diversity

than previously acknowledged. Currently, we are exploring to which extent some of that diversity is reflected at the DNA level. Our recent results published in *Science* journal were promising,” she says in an email to *The Uniter*.

Recently, Chinique de Armas secured a grant with a colleague to develop and equip an osteoarchaeology research facility at the University of Winnipeg. The funding builds on a previously acquired grant.

“It will allow me to develop new analytical methods to model past human-environmental interactions and resilience. The acquisition of infrastructure will allow us to combine the use of optical microscopy, high-definition sampling techniques and 3D modeling to increase the resolution at which human lifetime events and changes can be detected and characterized in skeletal and dental tissues,” Chinique de Armas says.

—  
**What is the best thing about your work?**

“It makes me feel (like) myself. I enjoy exploring new archeological places, conducting research (and) teaching.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

My job perfectly combines my love of Caribbean archeology and my passion for teaching. It contributes to decolonizing the history of Antillean Indigenous people. It allows me to instill values in the new generations of scientists.”

**If you could have any super power, what would it be?**

“Time travel!”

**Is there any aspect about ancient populations you would like to research in the future?**

“In the last two years, I received funding for two projects to conduct archaeological research in the Caribbean. I would like to develop new methodologies to increase the resolution at which different lifetime events can be detected in the archeological record.”



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WINNIPEG**

## Student Services

**Webinar Wednesdays**

Student Services staff share some valuable strategies and tips to help you succeed at UWinnipeg. Upcoming dates/topics for these Zoom webinars include:

**March 9** - Developing your own Personal Brand: Part 1 “What makes me Unique?”

**March 16** - Developing your own Personal Brand: Part 2 “How to Brag about Yourself”

**March 23** - Applying for Loans and Bursaries

**March 30** - Planning for Spring Term

All sessions are from 12:30 to 1:00 pm via Zoom. For more information and to register online, please go to: [uwinnipeg.ca/student-services/webinar-wednesdays.html](https://uwinnipeg.ca/student-services/webinar-wednesdays.html)

**UWinnipeg Award Applications Now Open**

For current students:

- UWSA Student Conference/Travel Fund Award - Online application deadline March 15. <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/awards/apply-for-awards/index.html>

For new students:

- 2022-23 Entrance Awards - Online application deadline March 1. <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/awards/apply-for-awards/index.html>

2022-23 President’s Scholarship for World Leaders – web application form now open; deadlines vary by term start and program of entry (PACE, ELP, Collegiate, Undergraduate, Graduate Studies). <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/awards/awards-bursaries-and-scholarships/international-students.html>

**Winter Term Courses – Final Withdrawal Date**

The final day to withdraw from a

Winter Term class is **March 16**.

No refund is applicable. Courses are dropped through WebAdvisor using the “Student Planning/Registration” link.

**End of Winter Term + Make-up Days**

**April 6** is the last day of Winter Term 2022, except for courses that had a class on the first three days of term, which were cancelled due to concern about the surging Omicron variant:

- class cancelled Thursday, Jan. 6 --> make-up class is Thursday, **April 7**

- class cancelled Friday, Jan. 7 --> make-up class is Friday, **April 8**

- class cancelled Saturday, Jan. 8 --> make-up class is Saturday, **April 9**

**Student Services Continues Remote Service**

Departments in Student Services are continuing to offer their services remotely. No appoint-

ments for in-person meetings are available. Please see this webpage for details about each department: [uwinnipeg.ca/student-services/](https://uwinnipeg.ca/student-services/)

**Use the myVisit App**

Need some help from staff in Student Central and/or Academic & Career Services? Download the myVisit app today. The myVisit app enables students to add themselves to a virtual line for drop-in Zoom sessions at Student Central. The app can also be used to book appointments for a Zoom meeting with an academic or career advisor. Appointments with advisors can also be booked through the website: [www.myvisit.com](https://www.myvisit.com).

**Klinik Health Services**

Klinik on campus is once again available to provide virtual appointments to the University community. For more information, please visit: [uwinnipeg.ca/student-wellness/health-services.html](https://uwinnipeg.ca/student-wellness/health-services.html)

# ACCORDING TO HER

## To be held

CIKU GITONGA | COLUMNIST

Let's call him Jack. We matched on Tinder in early 2019, when I had just turned 20. He was nine years older than me. This was a time in my life when I frequented the bars on Osborne Street and the nightclubs in the Exchange, my feet tottering on platform heels.

Between the dark, sweaty bouts of dancing, I would step outside for what I had really come out for: the chance to talk to strangers over bummed cigarettes. I was looking for connection. I spent my days alone, often hunched over a book at the Millennium Library. At night, I chased human touch and the thrill of being seen. I wanted a friend.

Jack and I would meet once or twice a week at his apartment. In the days between, he sent one-word replies to my texts. I went to the library, went dancing and went on dates with other men. But I was holding my breath, waiting for a slow-blooming love.

*One night, he took off the condom.*

*"I want to feel you," he said.*

*Some time later, I turned to him in bed. The room was filled with early morning sunlight. The sheets were like a cloud beneath me.*

*"I love you," I said.*

*He looked away, embarrassed for me.*

I was embarrassed for myself when he phoned to say: "I might have herpes."

Three years after the herpes scare and the

breaking of my young, foolish heart, I have learnt – I am still learning – to follow the tug of my desires.

To an outside eye, my desires seemed to dictate the events of that period of my life. In my heart, I knew what I sought. But since genuine connection was elusive, I made do with nicotine and multiple orgasms. I traded what I *really* wanted for what was convenient to want.

On a trendy TV show, or an Instagram post, or in a real-life conversation over drinks, I will occasionally come across a statement masquerading as feminist: a declaration of the liberation, the empowerment of transcending emotion and separating sex from feelings.

How good it felt, back then, to declare to the world that I was above wanting a relationship, that being with Jack was fun. And it was – sometimes. And you, my dear, sex-having reader, may find genuine pleasure in a casual arrangement. I did not.

Perhaps you might read this and recognize a part of yourself. Perhaps you are, at this very moment, waiting for a text without admitting to yourself that you are waiting.

Feminism is not about embodying some predetermined figurine of liberation, a no-nonsense Samantha Jones, ready to kick a man out of her bed the moment she cums.

Instead of a facade of cool indifference, I



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

aspire to genuine control and agency in my sexual interactions. This requires honesty about what I want, both to myself and to my partners.

With Jack, I was lying to myself. I thought that my need for vulnerability was too shameful to say out loud. And so I stayed silent.

Overcoming the shame of vulnerability is a difficult task, but it is necessary. To this day, I am cultivating the ability to be honest about

what I want and to walk away from situations where I am not getting it.

**Ciku Gitonga is a third-year political-science student at the University of Ottawa. She moved from Nairobi, Kenya to Winnipeg with her family in 2016. Although her first love is fiction writing, she also dabbles in nonfiction.**


**COMMENTS**

# 'JUST DOING SOMETHING SHAMEFUL'

## Weighing pandemic rights and responsibilities

DANIELLE DOIRON | COPY AND STYLE EDITOR |  DANIELLEDOIRON

Amid the flags, signs and trailers that greeted me when I stepped outside my front door last month, one cluster of people caught my attention. It was the morning of Feb. 4, and a journalist stood at the crosswalk connecting Broadway and Memorial, interviewing unmasked protestors.

At the time, I feared both for that reporter's safety and what the Freedom Convoy demonstrators might say.

In the weeks since, journalists covering the occupations in Ottawa, Winnipeg and at the Canada-United States border have been "openly slandered, spit on and assaulted." The *Washington Post* describes the protestors as "apparent white nationalists" who hoist Nazi and Confederate imagery while "jeering at mask-wearing passersby" and "jolting residents awake by blaring their ear-splitting horns."

These people are hardly reliable sources, yet I understand why news organizations in Canada and around the world repeatedly reach out for interviews. This occupation was a spectacle. *BuzzFeed News* describes the protest as "a new model for how to bring a government to a crisis."

I don't question whether the Freedom Convoy is newsworthy, but I wonder how responsible it is to continually broadcast their supporters' claims.

Media outlets "provide forums for the free interchange of information and opinion" and "seek to include views from all

segments of the population," according to the Canadian Association of Journalists' ethics guidelines. However, they must also "serve the public interest and put the needs of (the) audience – readers, listeners or viewers – at the forefront of ... news-gathering decisions."

That intersection of Broadway and Memorial is now clear of protestors, but their memory lingers, as do their discarded signs and the claims and rally cries local media continually broadcasted.

Canada, like the America Thomas L. Friedman condemns in a *New York Times* column, has become a place where "everyone has rights and no one has responsibilities." He articulates how podcaster Joe Rogan spreading "anti-vaccine propaganda" is "about something more than free speech."

Spotify exclusively hosts *The Joe Rogan Experience*, which charted as their most-popular podcast in 2021. As Friedman writes, "when Rogan exercised his right to spread misinformation about vaccines, and when Spotify stood behind its biggest star, they were doing nothing illegal. *They were just doing something shameful.*"

*The Joe Rogan Experience* regularly reaches about 11 million listeners per episode, all of whom Spotify willfully exposed to Rogan's dangerous and inaccurate rhetoric. The streaming service acts as if any credible arguments against pub-



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

lic-health orders, vaccinations and basic human decency exist – and so do many news organizations.

In their rush to cover mandate dissidents, reporters, editors and producers simultaneously and perhaps unintentionally give them a platform to spread their messages of hate, mistrust and confusion.

When the Freedom Convoy first descended on Winnipeg's streets, I tried to save every news article that quoted the protestors but failed to cite accurate information about the virus and Canadian charter rights – let alone reactions from the residents whose lives they disrupted. The short-lived exercise was both illuminating and exhausting.

Articles like these obfuscate the truth

and promote a one-sided fabrication of the story. In the week before the local chapter of the convoy dissolved, I was still nervous when I saw a reporter approach the remaining protestors with a microphone in hand. I've been that tentative but determined journalist. Now, I'm also a fearful audience member who has seen too many people fall for the misinformation they see on TV or hear in a podcast.

**Danielle Doiron is a creative and educator who splits her time between Winnipeg, Philadelphia and small Midwestern towns. Catch them reading, procrastinating or defending the pineapple on pizza.**



# HOROSCOPES

Mars meets Pluto on Thursday, March 3, at 3:43 AM.

Relationships are transformed as romantic Venus meets powerful Pluto shortly after at 12:56 PM. Issues concerning jealousy, love triangles, or power imbalances are given the attention they need in order to heal.

SOURCE: ASTROLOGY.COM

## ♈ ARIES

Take a moment to try and recall your dreams this morning, dear Ram, as you may have received messages from the other side, thanks to a cosmic alliance between the Pisces moon and spiritual Neptune in the very early hours this morning. Signs you received while traversing the astral realms could point you toward the future, as Luna shares a sweet connection to the north node as the morning continues to unfold. While these vibes can get a bit lofty, you'll feel more alert and energized when evening rolls in and the moon makes its way into your sign.

## ♉ TAURUS

The moon finishes up its journey through Pisces today, activating the sector of your chart that governs community. You will likely feel more sensitive to news and the state of our world than you usually are, making it important that you look for reasons to stay optimistic about the path of humanity. Luckily, an abundance of positivity will reach you this afternoon, as Luna shares positive aspects to Venus, Mars, and Pluto. Connecting with the people you care about can remind you of the beauty of the human experience, helping you feel emotionally fulfilled and at peace.

## ♊ GEMINI

You'll be a force to be reckoned with at work today, dear Gemini, especially in the afternoon, when the Pisces moon forms a series of positive aspects to Venus, Mars, and Pluto. Use this energy to advocate for your cause, and don't hold back if it's time to negotiate a better raise or position for yourself. Luckily, you won't have to spend the entire day wrapped up in work or professional goals. A shift will manifest this evening when the moon moves into fiery Aries, lighting a fire in your eleventh house. Use this energy as an excuse to explore your neighborhood, inviting your bestie to try out a new restaurant or bar with you after you've clocked out for the day.

## ♋ CANCER

You'll feel as though the day is filled with promise, darling Cancer, as the Pisces moon activates your ninth house. These vibes will become especially beneficial to your love life and close relationships as afternoon rolls in and Luna blows a kiss to Venus, Mars, and Pluto. If you and your sweetie can swing a half-day at work, try to head out for an adventure in an effort to mix up your routine and make the most of these passionate vibes. Later in the evening, a shift will occur when the moon makes its way into fiery Aries, bringing your focus back to professional matters.

## ♌ LEO

You'll find yourself making headway within any transformational goals you've set for yourself recently, thanks to a series of sweet connections between Luna, Mars, Venus, and Pluto this afternoon. These vibes will help you stay focused and productive within such ambitions, giving you a chance to thrive where you may have once felt yourself struggling. Luckily, you'll have an opportunity to reset this evening once the moon makes its way into fiery Aries. This lunar placement will also bring an abundance of optimism your way, as the universe looks for ways to congratulate and support you for all of the hard work you've been putting in recently.

## ♍ VIRGO

Good vibes will flow your way this afternoon, dear Virgo, as the Pisces moon forms a series of helpful aspects to Mars, Venus, and Pluto. This cosmic climate can work wonders for your relationship as you and your partner look for ways to cheer on and lift one another up. Activities such as self-care can also work wonders in boosting your confidence, so don't feel bad about spoiling yourself a bit. A shift will manifest this evening when the moon makes its way into daring Aries, which could inspire you and your sweetie to plunge to new depths within your intimate connection.

## ♎ LIBRA

Make sure you're finding a healthy balance between prioritizing your tasks and nurturing yourself today, dear Libra, as the Pisces moon forms a series of helpful connections with Venus, Mars, and Pluto. These vibes will be especially helpful when it comes to restoring order at home, though taking care of your health should also be at the top of your list. The vibe will heat up this evening as the moon makes its way into fiery Aries and the sector of your chart that rules romance. This energy can breathe new life into even the most ancient of partnerships, so don't hold back when it comes to connecting with your sweetie.

## ♏ SCORPIO

You'll have plenty to say today, darling Scorpio, as the moon finishes up its journey through Pisces and your fifth house. Luckily, people will be excited by your words, especially in the afternoon, as Luna enters a series of sweet connections to Venus, Mars, and Pluto. These vibes can help you excite others with your passion and unique perspective, making it an excellent time for you to speak on behalf of any topics that are particularly close to your heart. As evening rolls in, the moon will move into fiery Aries, helping you get back on track with your health and personal organization.

## ♐ SAGITTARIUS

Don't feel guilty about laying low at home today, darling Sagittarius, as the Pisces moon shares sweet connections to Venus, Mars, and Pluto. These vibes will give you a chance to reconnect with yourself and the material realms, bringing a therapeutic and grounding energy to the table. Look for ways to tap into your gratitude and appreciate your body by relaxing in your space and nurturing yourself. Don't worry about getting bored, though. Excitement will find you this evening once the moon makes its way into fiery Aries and the sector of your chart that governs creativity, friendships, and fun!

## ♑ CAPRICORN

Anyone can talk a big game, dear Capricorn, but you're not just anyone. Luckily, you'll have a chance to prove that your words hold actual weight, as the Pisces moon forms sweet connections with Venus, Mars, and Pluto. Any disbelief that's been directed your way will begin to dissolve as the ideas you've been talking about manifest into reality. This is also the perfect time to tell the universe what you need help with since your manifestation game will be quite impressive. Later in the evening, you'll feel a shift as the moon makes its way into fiery Aries, inspiring you to redirect your focus to matters at home.

## ♒ AQUARIUS

Breakthroughs to your psyche could manifest today, dear Aquarius, as the Pisces moon connects with Venus, Mars, and transformative Pluto. This cosmic climate can help you overcome insecurities or fears that once held you back, helping you feel more stable within yourself. Don't be afraid to let go of any behaviors or thought patterns that have kept you from living your most authentic life since the universe will be looking for ways to push you towards a more elevated path. As evening rolls in, you'll notice a shift as Luna makes her way into fiery Aries, blessing you with a boost to your mental clarity and wit.

## ♓ PISCES

Leadership opportunities may find you today, sweet Fish, as the moon continues to travel through your sign. These sentiments will become accentuated as afternoon rolls in, and Luna forms supportive connections to Venus, Mars, and Pluto, putting you at the center of attention within your community. Don't hold back when it comes to taking the reins within your friendship circles or amongst your colleagues, as others will be looking for someone to lead the way. Luckily, you'll get a chance to focus more on yourself as evening rolls around and the moon makes its way into fiery Aries, encouraging you to slow down and see to your own needs.

### It's Pisces season!

Pisces is the twelfth sign of the zodiac, and it is also the final sign in the zodiacal cycle. Hence, this sign brings together many of the characteristics of the eleven signs that have come before it. Pisces, however, are happiest keeping many of these qualities under wraps. These folks are selfless, spiritual, and very focused on their inner journey.



They also place great weight on what they are feeling. Yes, feelings define the Pisces zodiac sign, and it's not uncommon for them to feel their own burdens (and joys) as well as those of others. The intuition of the Pisces-born is highly evolved. Many people associate Pisces with dreams and secrets, and it's a fair association, since those born under this sign feel comfortable in an illusory world.

Dates— February 19 – March 20	Ruling Planet— Jupiter & Neptune	Tarot Card— The Moon
Symbol— The Water-Bearer	House— Twelfth	Colors— Purple & White
Mode + Element— Mutable Water	Mantra— "I Believe."	Body Part— The Shins

Those born with the Fishes as their rising, sun, or moon sign have a mystical, intuitive, and transcendental dynamic in the core of their personality, an echo of the seasonal awakening in late winter.

As a mutable sign, Pisces holds adaptive, fluid, and shape-shifting qualities. Those with the sign of the Two Fishes prominent in their charts are sensitive seekers who have the potential to bring a soulful, healing energy to their relationships and communities.



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