

THE **U**NITER

MUSIC FOR THE SOUL—P5

| 15-MINUTE CITIES—P11

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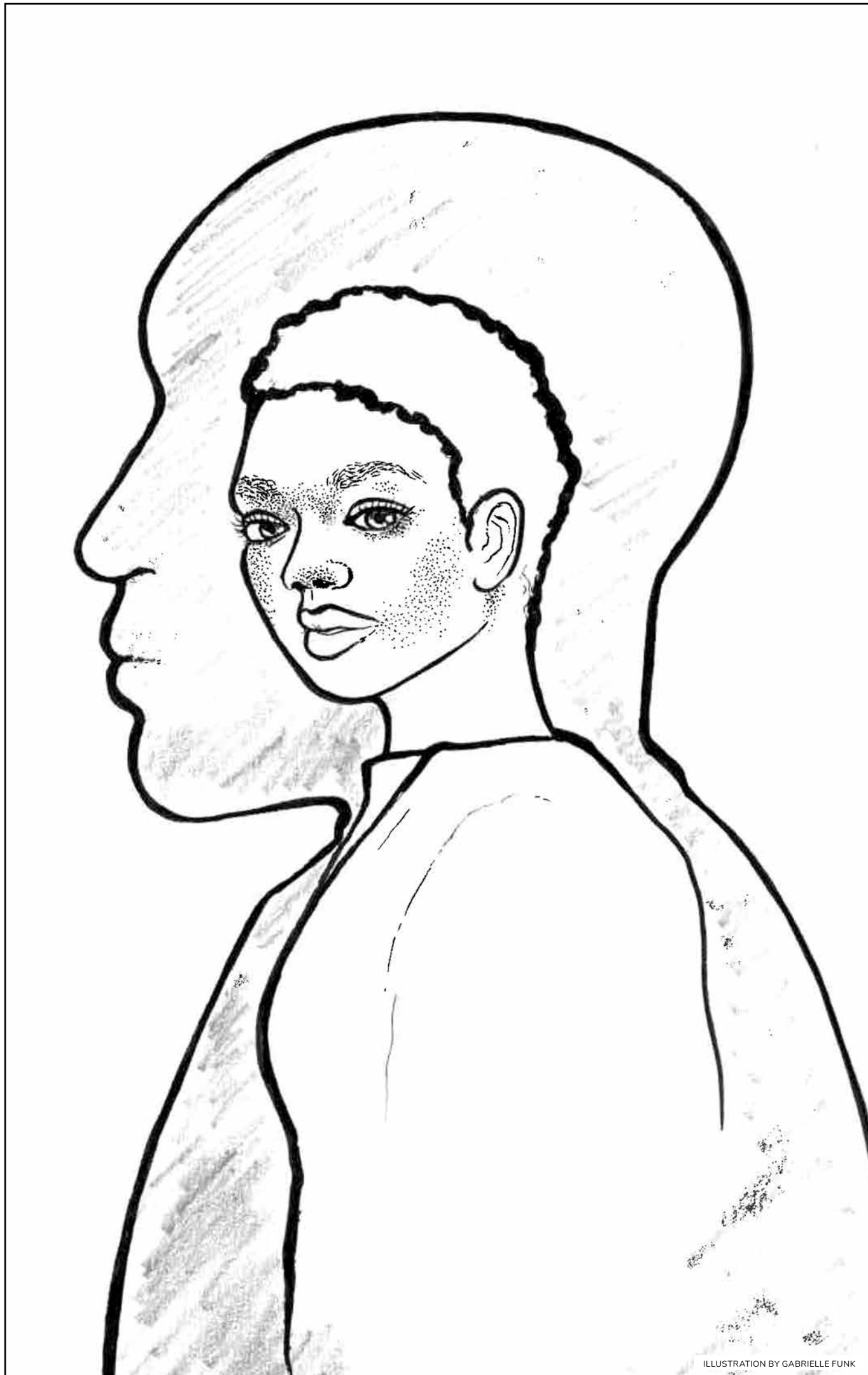


ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

MORE UNITER THAN USUAL!

THOMAS PASHKO
MANAGING EDITOR



Those of you who picked up a physical copy of *The Uniter* this past week may have noticed something weird. Due to a printing error, most of last week's issue wasn't *actually* last week's issue. With the exception of the outside cover and the centre spread, most of the issue was a reprint of our Feb. 9 issue.

Many of you *did* notice. Thank you for your many emails, DMs and voicemails about this. It's good to know that people are paying attention out there!

While the entire, correct issue has been available at uniter.ca, we wanted to make sure that print readers get their chance to catch up on anything they may have missed. Last week's issue was full of coverage that our staff and volunteers worked super hard on, including interviews and commentary on the recent political-science lecture that raised red flags for local 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

So, what you're holding in your hands right now is a super-sized *Uniter* packed with both new content *and* stories you might have missed from last week. We hope you enjoy this extra-hefty stack of newsprint.

In this week's *According to Her*, columnist Ciku Gitonga looks back with ambivalence on trysts that numbed a simmering discomfort. Read more on page 20.

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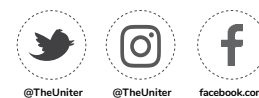
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Submissions of articles, letters, graphics and photos are encouraged, however, all new contributors (with the exception of letters to the editor) must attend a 45-minute volunteer orientation workshop to ensure that the volunteer understands all of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



'AN ARCHITECTURAL JEWEL'

Places + Spaces brings Winnipeg's cityscapes to the cinema

PATRICK HARNEY | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER

Places + Spaces: Winnipeg is a series of documentary vignettes that puts the structures, histories and politics of Winnipeg's built environment on screen.

Throughout its history, Winnipeg has acted as a breeding ground for creativity and innovation, largely due to the University of Manitoba's (U of M) prestigious Faculty of Architecture.

The Winnipeg cityscape features a combination of early and late modern architecture, as well as more contemporary styles that all meld together to create an eclectic spatial experience. Each building is informed by the political and historical landscape of the time, imbued with a particular way of seeing the world.

Director, co-writer and seasoned local filmmaker Noam Gonick joined the project after discussing the city's architecture with the show's producers.

"Winnipeg is an architectural jewel," he says. "We have a city that is a pallet of eras and schools of architectural thought."

With *Places + Spaces*, Gonick has created an opportunity for citizens of Winnipeg to gain intimate knowledge of the processes shaping the city.

"If you grow up in Winnipeg, it's all normal, and you're used to it," he says. "You might not really know why we have

all these incredible banking buildings on Main or the greenest corporate highrise (the Manitoba Hydro building) in North America."

Hayden Mushinski, the series' host and other co-writer, echoes this sentiment. As a graduate from the U of M's environmental-design program, Mushinski has spent years studying designs around the globe. He says *Places + Spaces* showcases the city's "unique legacy," as well as the exciting stories that characterize contemporary Winnipeg.

"Winnipeg was and still is a hub for great architecture and innovation," Mushinski says. "It is an exciting time now. As a 26-year-old, I love living in Winnipeg and telling people about Winnipeg."

While Gonick and Mushinski are listed as the series' writers, both draw attention to the many people who worked on the show. Specifically, both praise the work of the Winnipeg Architecture Foundation in assisting with research and writing.

Places + Spaces is Mushinski's first foray into the film world, a medium he plans to explore further. Both Mushinski and Gonick draw attention to the resonance between film and design that makes *Places + Spaces* an ideal way to experience the city.

"I've always felt like film and architecture were sister arts," Gonick says. "They



A still from *Places + Spaces: Winnipeg*, a new documentary series exploring local architecture

are the two mediums that try to create a world. In film and television, it ends up on a screen. In architecture, it ends up in real life around you."

The continuity between film and architecture allows viewers to be present within the spaces and reflect on the flows of history that brought them there and will eventually take them away.

"It's important just to be present in what you are doing and where you are," Mushinski says, "being present and reflecting

on the people and hands that build the spaces we are in."

If the series is picked up for another season, Gonick says he would love to delve even deeper into Winnipeg's politics and the different political intersections that dot each city corner.

***Places + Spaces* is currently available on Bell Fibe TV1 and will screen at the Dave Barber Cinematheque on April 28 as part of the Architecture + Design Film Festival.**

TOUGH TALK AT TEATIME

***The Secret to Good Tea* explores intergenerational trauma**

MATTHEW TEKLEMARIAM | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | MATTEKLE

Sitting down with family for dinner or coffee can often lead to awkward conversations. But that's precisely what Winnipeg-based Cree writer and poet Rosanna Deerchild wanted to explore in her latest project, *The Secret to Good Tea*.

Playing at the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre (Royal MTC) from March 22 to April 15, the play, directed by Renae Morriveau, chronicles the respective experiences of mother Maggie (Tracey Nepinak) and daughter Gwynn (Kathleen MacLean).

Formatted like a coffee-table chat, the pair discusses happenings in each other's lives, with the disquietude of residential-school trauma bubbling underneath. Journalist Gwynn encourages her mother to share her story, while Maggie is reticent, as many survivors are.

"This show is really about their relationship and their reconciliation as a family versus the concept of reconciliation as something between the First Nations and Canada as a country," MacLean says.

The concept for the story had its genesis in the inaugural Pimootayowin Creators Circle, a program hosted by the Royal MTC and led by playwright Ian Ross. According to the Royal MTC website, the circle aims to support "the creation and development of new plays by Manitoba-based Indigenous artists." Both Deerchild and MacLean were participants.

"I read some of the very first drafts of *The Secret to Good Tea*, because we would read each other's work every week or so," MacLean says.

"I was really excited at the prospect of being with it from the beginning to the end. They kind of asked, but I still had to audition just like everybody else."

Deerchild's inspiration came from her own experiences with her mother and the resulting poetry collection, *Calling Down the Sky*, that came from their discussions.

"At first, she was very resistant to talking about such a painful time in her life. But over time, she shared more and more. Eventually, we decided to write the poetry book together as a way to heal. In many Indigenous communities, you will always find a pot of tea on the stove, waiting for visitors, waiting for stories," Deerchild says.

"I wanted to explore the conversations we had about those memories, how that journey changed our relationship as mother and daughter and ultimately led to reconciliation in our family."

MacLean cites the beauty in the story's realism as a major factor in its importance.

"This story is so beautiful, because it really gets into the nitty-gritty of a relationship that is impacted by intergenerational trauma," they say.

And, ultimately, what Deerchild wants audiences to take away from the production is simple, yet elegant.



Rosanna Deerchild's play *The Secret to Good Tea* examines issues of trauma and reconciliation through a mother and daughter's grappling with the former's residential-school story.

"Hope, that we as Indigenous people can heal from this great wound. That we can reclaim our stories, that we can repair our broken circles, and we can reconcile in our families. And joy. There is a lot of laughter in the play. But despite this trauma that has affected so many of our In-

digenous communities, we are still here." Deerchild says.

"We are still here."

***The Secret to Good Tea* is on from now until April 15 at the Royal MTC. Tickets can be purchased via bit.ly/3n30xph.**



'MADE WITH COLLECTIVE CARE'

Phase 4.0 showcases collaboration on stage

PATRICK HARNEY | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER

From April 5 to 9, Prairie Theatre Exchange will host Phase 4.0, a dance show presented by Alexandra Elliott Dance. Headed by Alex Elliott, a prolific artist and cofounder of the Art Holm performance festival, Alexandra Elliott Dance draws from her 20 years of dance expertise.

Phase 4.0 comprises two works, a solo show titled *Conduct* and a duet entitled *Ellipsis 2.0*.

Conduct is a co-creation of Elliott and sound designer Dasha Plett. It focuses on the lively movements associated with classical-music conductors.

Elliott says the idea for *Conduct* came after viewing Alexander Micklethwait during the Winnipeg New Music Festival.

"I became fascinated by how dynamic and physical his movements were," Elliott says. "I wanted him to turn around and just do this incredible act of physicality and athleticism for us."

Through *Conduct*, she turns the figure of the conductor toward the audience, transforming the traditionally stationary movements of conductors into dance.

The piece's sounds bear a deeper commentary on conducting. The music is the cut and distorted work of Herbert von Karajan, a controversial and prominent modern European composer who was also an instrumental part of Nazi Germany's program of cultural propaganda.

As the composer, Plett has used the

soundscape of *Conduct* as an opportunity to explore how controversial figures come to power in art.

"To me, the piece has evolved to the point that it's not about von Karajan but instead the relationship between artists and power and how our cultural labour is used or allowed to be used in the name of really horrible things," Plett says.

In contrast to *Conduct*'s focus on a single performer, *Ellipsis 2.0* centres around partnership. The piece utilizes what Elliott calls "intricate partnership," which is "where two bodies are very interlinked almost like a puzzle or physics – where two bodies cause and effect each other."

The piece was initially developed with the co-founder of Art Holm, Hilary Crist, but following COVID-19 shutdowns, Crist had to leave the project, and Elliott developed a second iteration.

Elliott's work within a women's health clinic also informs *Ellipsis 2.0*'s use of a medical object as the centrepiece.

While Phase 4.0 seems to only showcase three dancers on stage, including Elliott, Justine Erickson and Neilla Hawley, the show incorporates the work of five other artists to bring the performances to life.

Plett emphasizes her work with the music as "another dancer in the piece," as well as all the other collaborators in Phase 4.0.

"Sometimes it's a pool of sound in which they are swimming, sometimes it is the featured dancer or element for a moment,"



PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

Phase 4.0, the new choreographed diptych from Alexandra Elliott Dance, examines themes as wide-ranging as collaboration and orchestral conducting.

she says, mentioning how the show incorporates different set pieces and costumes into its storytelling. "It's a dance piece, but it's a dance piece informed by many, many different artist approaches."

Plett emphasizes that "these pieces have been made with an enormous amount of collective care."

Coming up to the show, Elliott is excitedly anticipating the last important player, which is still yet to be realized in creating

the work: the audience.

"We let the audience have a moment with each element, to welcome them into something that is tangible," she says. "Then we can go on a wild ride together on something that is a bit more fantastical."

Phase 4.0 runs from April 5 to 8 at 7:30 p.m. and on April 9 at 2:30 p.m. at Prairie Theatre Exchange. Tickets are available at bit.ly/3TzB3fk.

GLOBAL SOUL SUPREMACY

One of the city's hottest underground parties seeks to grow the groove

MATTHEW TEKLEMARIAM | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | [@MATTEKLE](#)

The phrase "soul supreme" may conjure imagery of beehive hairdos and a certain doe-eyed songstress from Detroit. But that may soon change, as a more modern means of getting down seeks to expand, and it's right in the heart of this fair city.

Located in the Exchange District and currently operating out of One Eleven (111 Princess St.), Soul Supreme events typically include a DJ for entertainment as an introduction, followed by a live performer.

"Soul Supreme is an event that is dedicated to R&B lovers, by R&B lovers," Keisha Booker, curator and co-founder of the brand, says. "The reason it was started is because there was nowhere to really sit down and listen to R&B music. There was nowhere to really enjoy it."

"Eventually to be able to tour with it, that's really the plan," Booker says.

An R&B singer herself, Booker and a collaborator started the weekly Soul Supreme initiative back in 2014, hoping to provide a platform for their music and Black culture.

"At the time, the only places there were to perform were hip-hop showcases and other genres of music. Now, fast-forward to today, there are way more spaces that hold R&B-specific events where that was

non-existent at that time," she says.

Visual artists are also featured with the opportunity to display their art and sell pieces.

"They'll set up their art amidst the room. It's like an artistic immersive experience. It's supposed to be a platform that provides opportunities for creatives," Booker says.

"You can bring your boo thing. You can bring your girlfriend. It can be a girls' night out or a date night. It's a more intimate lounge vibe, but you can dance if you want to, sing along if you want to."

Local artist DJ Zuki performs regularly and was introduced to Booker and the Soul Supreme concept around the time of its debut. He's been a staple ever since.

"My style is pretty wide-ranging. Generally, it's guided around R&B, '90s, and hip-hop that is R&B-leaning. More recently, it's started to blend into a lot of other genres like afrobeat and funk," Zuki says.

"I love that it's a space for Black and Brown audiences to come and listen to the music that they might not hear everywhere else. I would advise anyone showing up for the first time to show up with dancing shoes, an open mind and expect to have a good time."

And while the beat goes on unabated



here in Winnipeg, the future of Soul Supreme looks bright as they seek to expand far beyond the Perimeter Highway.

"We're working on doing an outdoor Soul Supreme festival, a one-day festival that's just a larger showcase on a weekend and can engage more of the city," Booker says. "We'd also like to eventually expand

and do one-off Soul Supreme events in different cities and, from there, different countries. Soul Supreme to the world."

Follow [@soulsupremewpg](#) on Instagram for updates on upcoming events.



JOEY SENFT (SUPPLIED)

SPACE GIRL

Runs at Prairie Theatre Exchange until April 15

★★★★☆

CIERRA BETTENS | ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR | [FICTIONALCIERRA](#) [@CIERRABETTS](#)

Frances Koncan's *Space Girl* is simultaneously out of this world and heavily grounded in Manitoba.

In its 105-minute run time, the Prairie Theatre Exchange production (PTE) crosses gravitational zones, livestreams a birthday party on the moon and features a surprise guest appearance from Ben Affleck.

The play follows 21-year-old Lyra (Brynn Godenir) – better known by her alias, @spacegirl – a social-media influencer based not in LA, nor in NYC, but

on the moon. While there are only three actors (Godenir, Justin Otto and Daina Leitold), the production boasts seven characters.

One day, while Lyra preps her next string of content for her loyal followers, an impending meteor shower forces the social-media star to take refuge on Earth – specifically, in St. Andrews, Man. Landing on the tall-grass prairie, she encounters what one might call a simp (played by Otto), who guides her on an arduous journey to charge her cellphone.

In a cozy auditorium nestled on the third floor of Portage Place, *Space Girl* makes exceptional use of space. In the first act, the stage is fitted with three catwalk-style extensions, allowing the characters to build new worlds.

It's a play about outer space and taking up space, be it online or offline.

With their pulse on the currents of social media, Koncan reveals the foolishness and fragility of influencer culture. The play pokes fun at the unnamed billionaires, baby influencers and garden-variety elites who are shielded from the bleak realities of our time.

Peppered with plenty of Zoomer humour, *Space Girl* speaks across generations. Those young enough to have no recollection of 9/11 will vibe with the familiarity of chronically online catchphrases. Those old enough to have gone to the theatrical premiere of *Good Will Hunting* will appreciate the precision of Otto's Ben Affleck impression.

Otto's five-character performance was

so seamless that, at times, I questioned whether a different actor had stepped on stage. In a fated meet in the Portage underground, Lyra crosses paths with Otto's fifth persona: @Maxabillion, aka the Vanguard. A crowd-favourite character in a black turtleneck and fitted blue jeans, he hits his Puff Bar like how a French new-wave star would smoke a cigarette, voicing his disillusionment with social-media fame.

Between the moon and Earth, *Space Girl* occasionally goes off the tracks. At the same time, there's joy to be found in its randomness. Koncan brings the characters of our Instagram explore pages to life while simultaneously critiquing the absurdity of influencer culture.

Space Girl imagines a universe where the wonders of the moon are no match for the enigma that is Portage and Main. You'll have to see it to understand why.

Tickets to *Space Girl* can be purchased online via bit.ly/3FCoUQO.

ARTS BRIEFS

CIERRA BETTENS | ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR | [FICTIONALCIERRA](#) [@CIERRABETTS](#)

Lubomyr Melnyk is back in town

Lubomyr Melnyk, a world-renowned pianist and composer with roots in Winnipeg, performs at the First Presbyterian Church this Sunday, March 26. Documented as the world's fastest pianist, Melnyk has sold out shows all over Europe. Tickets to the must-see concert can be purchased via bit.ly/3na2hwV.

Get on board

Urban Shaman Contemporary Aboriginal Art is seeking board members with one of four areas of expertise: treasurer, legal, public relations and/or governance. The organization, which was established in 1996, is a national leader in Indigenous art programming and curation. Submit applications to board@urbanshaman.org with the subject line "Board Member Search" by March 31 at 5 p.m. For more information, visit bit.ly/3FHb93y.

Trio SR9 at CCFM

Hailing from Lyon, France, Trio S9 will perform at Centre culturel franco-manitobain (340 Provencher Blvd.) on Thursday, March 23. The three-part concert is, in part, an ode to women composers, featuring baroque, romantic and classical melodies. Doors open at 7 p.m., and the concert begins at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$30 to \$35 and can be purchased through bit.ly/40skt3k.

Somewhere between figurative and abstract

Catch the last few days of *Indeterminate Limits*, a show featuring works by the University of Manitoba's School of Art students. Curated by Scotland Cook, the exhibition features artists from a wide range of mediums, brought together through intuition and experimentation. The show wraps up on March 24. For hours of operation, visit bit.ly/3yV0xdp.

Don't be negative, bring your negatives

Bring your black-and-white film negatives to the PLATFORM Centre on Saturday, March 25 at their upcoming darkroom drop-in, hosted by Alexis Aurora. From noon to 3 p.m., Aurora will walk participants through the darkroom, guiding them through the ropes of film processing. No previous experience is required, and paper and chemicals will be provided.

Solidarity forever

On March 29, a group of musicians will fight a good fight through song at the West End Cultural Centre in support of local musician and nurse Emma Cloney. Cloney was diagnosed with lipedema in 2021 and is set to undergo a string of costly treatments. All proceeds of the benefit concert – which includes performances by Raine Hamilton, Leonard Podolak, Madeleine Roger and many others – will go to Cloney's medical costs. Tickets are \$20 plus service fees and can be purchased via bit.ly/3ndTYA0.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

ARCHANGEL

Plays at the Dave Barber Cinematheque
on March 22 and 23

★★★★☆

MATTHEW TEKLEMARIAM | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | MATTEKLE

When it comes to Winnipeg filmmakers, one Guy stands far above the rest. To celebrate the Dave Barber Cinematheque's newly serviced 35mm projector, the theatre will show director Guy Maddin's 1990 motion picture *Archangel*.

Wikipedia ascribes the "comedy-drama" label on this film, and while it is comprised of bizarre versions of both, such parochial labelling is a disservice. *Archangel*, a curious blend of surrealist and expressionist sensibilities, is delivered in a part-

talkie style and (mostly) devoid of colour.

The film follows Lt. John Boles (Winnipeg-born Kyle McCulloch) of the Canadian military. He embarks on a business trip of sorts to northern Russia, as the period setting of 1919 has Canada intervening in the Russian Civil War following the recent end of the First World War.

The one-legged Boles is not whole, both literally and figuratively. He mourns the loss of his lover, Iris, and maintains a generally surly disposition through the film.

As he arrives in the town of Arkhangelsk (anglicized to Archangel) and shacks up with a local family near the front, he finds himself embroiled in a love triangle spurred by a case of mistaken identity and his own grief-stricken convictions.

This can be a confounding picture, and not just because the plot twists and turns enough to get one's head spinning, which ultimately may be its primary objective. The tragicomic tone is established right off the hop. As Boles attempts to scatter Iris' ashes at sea per her request, a ship captain mistakes her urn for a bottle of liquor and unceremoniously heaves it overboard.

Those familiar with the absurdist leanings of fellow surrealist filmmaker David Lynch may find themselves at ease with the capricious nature of the film. Everyone else should buckle up.

And that's not to say that *Archangel* is a mere inundation of detached irony just because the movie proudly boasts its eccentricities. There are poignant plot threads among the sizable cast of characters.

A cowardly father's redemption in the eyes of his son, Boles' quest to ingratiate himself with a local woman physically identical to his deceased love and even the depiction of trench warfare have a campy yet stark quality. In the standout shot halfway through the film, Maddin shines a spotlight as the camera pans on the diverse company fighting in the civil war. It's a perfect microcosm of the film's eccentricity, beautiful in its idiosyncrasy.

Self-reflexive yet sincere, the movie strikes a deft balance between homage to cinema's yesteryear and what can be transmuted into today. Yeah, the story takes a backseat to aesthetic values, and, occasionally, the film drags, even at 83 minutes. But if I may invoke the cliché that art is predominately about how it makes one *feel*, then I can confidently say these were 83 minutes I would gladly waste again. While some may feel compelled to mine this picture for meaning, I'm more than content to enjoy the studded ore.

SHAY WOLF'S STAY EP

Out now on streaming services

★★★★☆

MATTHEW TEKLEMARIAM | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | MATTEKLE

Prairie born-and-raised artist Shay Wolf's debut EP, *Stay*, is available now on all major streaming platforms. Prowling the scene since 2016 as an artist and creator, the Winnipeg-based songwriter has chosen now to pounce into plain view.

Stay is a feather-light foursome of ballads that showcase Wolf's range and sometimes limitations. A trained classical pianist, Wolf wisely centres her debut here on the double threat of her airy lilt of a voice, very much reminiscent of other singers in the folk-pop sphere, as well as her keywork, which is paradoxically delightful in its melancholy.

Overseeing the production is prolific Winnipeg-based producer John Paul Peters, with additional instrumentation provided by drummer Jon Plett and cellist Julian Bradford, among others. Sparse musical arrangements and sombre textures reign supreme throughout.

The EP opens with the titular track "Stay," a minimalist and endearing ballad that immediately conjures reverie-like imagery as Wolf implores a lover to stay for just one more moment. Despite some complementary studio effects and production choices, this is the cleanest exhibition of Wolf's technical ability, as her voice

deftly soars, and the tumble of her pianism serves as the track's foundation.

In "Alone Together," Wolf duets, or perhaps duels, with the buck and bending of a guttural, bluesy guitar. With the first introduction of another major musical element, she establishes the forward momentum that will continue to ramp up over the rest of the EP.

The morale boosting of "Fighting" is a highlight, a quietly triumphant power piece that crescendos with a touch gentle but firm. And closing stomp-clap pop tune "Deeper" is fundamentally sound if a slight betrayal of the rest of the EP's textures.

Lyrical, *Stay* is somewhat anodyne, with words clear and concise enough for imagining the inspiration without quite feeling it. I can appreciate the catharsis of a track like "Stay," even if the imagery of walking a moonlit night is a bit played out.

But what is said is less important than *how* it is said. The lyrics here function best as a vehicle for demonstrating Wolf's enviable vocal talent. Her melismatic manner of vocalization can stand proudly among the emerging artists of this era of music.

This EP could neatly fit amongst the bevy of similar folk-pop that came about during the



SUPPLIED PHOTO

mid-to-late 2000s. Influence from artists such as Regina Spektor and Feist is plainly felt, and the best of this project will titillate the same sensibilities that made that earnest era of pop songwriting so effortlessly popular.

But Wolf threatens some of her own credibility, as the track "Deeper" evidently vies for the kind of Top 40 territory that artists like Spektor and Feist proved doesn't need to be

conformed to.

One thing to consider about this particular record is that it is essentially an auricular debutante ball. Where Wolf comes up short stylistically, she makes up in terms of technical ability, and that's not to say this EP left me totally cold. Colour me impressed, if not especially touched.



AND IN THIS CORNER...

High-flying Winnipeg Pro Wrestling league brings the pain

MATTHEW TEKLEMARIAM | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | MATTEKLE

Cruisin' for a bruise? Don't bother waiting for WrestleMania. There's plenty of gut-churning, turnbuckle action right here in the Prairies.

Winnipeg Pro Wrestling (WPW), one of the city's hot spots for raw, smackdown-type action, is celebrating its fifth anniversary this year. The roster of wrestlers features both local and international talent.

"Our mission is to bring top-level competition and athletes to Winnipeg to compete in a professional wrestling ring for championships and pride and glory," Devin Bray, booker, co-owner and co-founder of WPW, says.

"We also aim to have a really diverse lineup, so that includes women and People of Colour and LGBTQ wrestlers. We're just looking to have a more equitable and diverse lineup."

WPW had its inauspicious origins after a group of Bray's friends visited Los Angeles for some big-league wrestling but were ultimately inspired by the city's less-ambitious exploits.

"They went to an event called Bar Wrestling and were really impressed with that particular show. It was something that maybe we could replicate here. Since then, our scope has grown a lot," Bray says.

After debuting at the Sherbrook Inn in 2018, the league sought more room to rumble.

"When we wanted to try something bigger, we found the West End Cultural Centre, and it just sort of went from there.

Now we're kind of branching out into different venues," Bray says.

He refers to the upcoming and sold-out Fight at the Museum on April 18 at the Manitoba Museum, an event that WPW is touting as their biggest show yet.

"With the museum, we just wanted to branch out somewhere that had a little more of a capacity but keep that unique sort of aesthetic we've really worked hard to have," he says.

AJ Larocque, a wrestler, DJ and entertainer, is among the event's participants. Wrestling under the stage name AJ Sanchez, he was the first-ever WPW champion, utilizing the "low blow" as his signature move in the ring.

"I've been with WPW since the inception, and I've been involved in the local scene for about 21 years now," Larocque says.

"It's been fantastic. The guys, they've got a real family-type atmosphere. As a performer, my favourite part is just being able to be in the centre of the ring or on the stage and commanding everybody's attention."

Bray believes the WPW continues the city's longtime tradition of professional wrestling greatness and hopes to pay homage to those who've blazed a trail.

"With wrestling, there's sort of inherent tradition and respect for those who pave the way. There's always been independent wrestling in Winnipeg at community centres and bars. That's where Chris Jericho



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Winnipeg Pro Wrestling follows in the city's long tradition of independent wrestling, while also spotlighting women, LGBTQ and BIPOC wrestlers.

got his start," Bray says.

"They had a thing called the American Wrestling Association, and that was top names like Ric Flair and Andre the Giant, these massive shows at the Winnipeg Arena. It's always fluctuated up and down, and I think wrestling in general is hitting another hot period right now."

And while they're more than happy to

carry the torch, the greatest reward comes from sharing their love for the sport.

"A lot of people who aren't even wrestling fans come to these shows. To make lifelong fans at these shows has been really special for (those of) us who were always lifelong fans. It's showing them what we love about it," Bray says.

TAKING POP SERIOUSLY

Carlo Capobianco on his debut album and the allure of pop stardom

PATRICK HARNEY | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER

Local up-and-coming pop artist Carlo Capobianco is set to release his debut album at the end of the month. He describes the release, entitled *Pray to You*, as "my little bible of music about love."

Capobianco is heavily influenced by 1980s pop and new wave. He says he's attracted to the era's permissive attitude toward popular musicians, including their being able to wear makeup, fishnets and, generally, disregard gender norms.

"If you are a musician and a guy, you can wear makeup and fishnets and be androgynous. It was a cool thing," Capobianco says. He mentions how the music of the '90s pushed some of pop music's glitz and glamour to the wayside.

Produced by Yes We Mystic's Adam Fuhr, *Pray to You* sonically recreates the lost features of '80s pop, emphasizing grandiosity in its sound with huge synthscapes and booming drums.

The album is "a love letter to the '80s, but my take of what the '80s would have sounded like as a younger person," Capobianco says. "Most of the music from the '80s just sounds so iconic."

Through his music and stage presence, Capobianco hopes he can capture the spirit of the '80s — a time in pop when icons like Madonna and Prince made huge splashes with every release.

"There used to be music videos, and

when they were released, it was an event," Capobianco says. "it was more than pop music. It's pop culture and music."

According to Andrew Burke, an associate professor of English at the University of Winnipeg, the figure of the popstar predates the 1980s. Yet, it was during this time and its melding of popular music and television that artists were really able to jump off.

"There is something interesting about the 1980s with the emergence of MTV and the growth of the music video which brings together the idea of the popstar in a different way from previous eras and melds it with the visual," he says.

Burke says pop music is often looked down on as a less-serious form of music compared to traditionally male-dominated genres like rock and roll or hip hop.

"There's long been this divide within popular-music criticism ... the idea that rock should be the mode that deserves serious study, while pop is just the stuff of teenage girls," Burke says.

Capobianco initially felt this divide but says it is slowly changing.

"A lot of people don't want to go see a pop show, because they think it's not real music," he says. "The indie scene is more rock-punk oriented, but I think people are softening to pop."

Burke says pop music is perceived as



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Pray to You, the new album from Carlo Capobianco, is a love letter to pop superstars of the MTV era.

something that is manufactured, inauthentic and not "real." The oxymoronic idea of the independent pop musicians is an opportunity for artists to lean into that escapism and create figures audiences can identify with.

"It is someone we can invest desire and energy into. They become this kind of icon in whom we invest our desires," Burke says.

Capobianco says he experiences this

same escapism on stage.

"I think that the Carlo Capobianco on stage is completely different from what I am. I am quite reserved and quiet and timid," he says. "Once I get on stage, it is definitely a different person and mindset. I don't try, but it just comes out."

Pray to You releases on April 20. Follow carlocapobianco.bandcamp.com for updates.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
6AM	MORNING BREATH	The Sentinel's Marvellous Kaleidoscope	Worldbeat Canada Radio	Fly Travel Radio	WASTASTIC FRIDAY World - Island Music	THE SATURDAY MORNING SHOW	CKU-SPEAKS
7AM		Folk Roots Radio	FRANÇOL	CANQUEER			
8AM	Shortwave Report	Talking Radical Radio	Making Contact	OutSpoken	Wooden Spoons	DEAD MEDIUM	SHADES OF CLASSICS Classical and New Age
9AM	CounterSpin	FREE CITY RADIO	After Thought	Truth Before Reconciliation			
10AM	DEMOCRACY NOW!				DEMOCRACY NOW!		MUD PUDDLE RADIO For Kids (Adults too)
11AM	DEPARTMENT 13 POP/ROCK	This Way Out WINGS	VOYAGE (Jazz)	After Thought BRIDGING THE GAP	SUNNY ROAD Roots Music		Medicine Wheel of Music
NOON	COMEDIOLOGICAL REPORT	BOOTS & SADDLE COUNTRY		ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS	NO FIXED ADDRESS LIVED EXPERIENCES OF HOMELESSNESS	THE ELECTRIC CHAIR	TEMPLE TENT REVIVAL
1PM	outsPOKEd	THE GREEN MAJORITY	ALTERNATIVE RADIO	YEARSHOT DAILY	HOW TO SURVIVE A TORNADO		NEON BEIGE SOUND EXCHANGE
2PM	Truth Before Reconciliation			BINKY PINDER'S FUNHOUSE	GLOBAL RESEARCH NEWS HOUR	THE IVORY TOWER Eclectic Mix	YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM GOD Gospel
3PM	GROUNDWELL New Classical	The Stuph File	The Phil-In Show	THE META WORLD STOOPALOOP SHOW	CKUW Album Feature		Active Voice*
4PM	SEAN SHOW (Local music)	Winnipeg Arena is on Fire		BARKING DOG Past 'n Present Folk 'n Roots	THE EXILE FILES	Eclectic Residents	Orange Groove Radio
5PM	Radio Eco Shock		SPACE CADET MUSIC, OUT OF THIS WORLD	STARROAD JUNCTION	DEEP THREES Electronic/Expository	THE TRIP PSYCHEDELIC ROCK	BOOTS & SADDLE BARKING DOG
6PM	Journey Into Sound (Music History)	SQUARE WAVE Video music and history	AMATEUR HOUR So Bad. It's Good	PAGES	Behind the News with Doug Henwood		
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	Best of Bluesday	On My Way Home (Local Indie)	S.A.N.E. * RADIO Local Experimental Music	Adult Kindergarten	CHECK CA Funky	SOUNDS LIKE MUSIC
9PM	DESTINATION MOON Sock-Hop-A-Go-Go	Indigenous in Music	Radio Art Hour	Dub City Steppers	QUADRAFUNK Electric Dance Party	RED BOX Hip-Hop	THE GASHLYCRUMB TINIES
10PM	YEARSHOT DAILY	YEARSHOT DAILY	YEARSHOT DAILY	PHASE ONE Electronic	StreetKilliaz Generation (Local Hip Hop)	DANCE HALL FEVER Dancehall and Reggae	ISLAND VIBES Caribbean
11PM	BREAK NORTH RADIO	MONKEY SPARROW	Two Princes				
MIDNIGHT		LISTENING PLEASURES					
1AM	METAL MONDAY	NIGHT DANGER RADIO	WINNIPEG ARENA IS ON FIRE	THE WONDERFUL & FRIGHTENING WORLD OF PATRICK MICHALISHYN	MANITOBA MOON	Your Show Here	Rainbow Country
2AM							REVOLUTION ROCK
3AM	MODERN JAZZ TODAY	The Motherland Influence	THE META WORLD STOOPALOOP SHOW				GIRLIE SO GROOVIE
4AM			Hurlements Sur La Youndra				
5AM	AMPLIFIED RADIO	BACKBEAT					
6AM							



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

New shows are marked with a star *

Live shows are marked with a lightning bolt ⚡

THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

Student Services

SPRING TERM REGISTRATION

The Spring Term 2023 timetable is now available. Students were sent their registration start date/time to their University webmail account in early March. Tiered registration for Spring Term will begin **March 17**. Open registration will begin **March 31**. More information here:
<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/registration/spring-process-and-procedures.html>

GRADUATION POW WOW

Hosted by the Aboriginal Student Services Centre (ASSC), the Pow Wow will be held **Sat., March 18** at the Duckworth Centre. Everyone is invited to attend!

More information here:
<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/assc/graduation-pow-wow.html>

WEBINAR WEDNESDAYS

The series continues with a wide range of sessions geared to helping you succeed at UWinnipeg and beyond!

Upcoming sessions:

March 22 – What can I do with my Degree?

March 29 – Overcoming Test Anxiety

For details and to register, please go to:
<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/student-services/webinar-wednesdays.html>

CAREER CHATS ON INSTAGRAM

Drop in for Career Chats - live sessions on Instagram that feature advice from an employer or career-related expert. Hosted by the Academic and Career Services Dept., these live sessions take place every other Thursday

at 11:00 am on UWinnipeg Instagram. The next sessions are:
March 23.

ASK AN ADVISOR ON INSTAGRAM

Academic & Career Services hosts a live take-over of the @UWinnipeg Instagram account every second Thursday from 11:00-11:15 am CDT.

At each session a guest from the UWinnipeg community talks about a timely topic, event, or service offered at the University. Students can use the chat feature to ask questions in real time.

Can't make it? No problem! Each session is also viewable afterwards on IGTV.

Upcoming topics:
March 30 – Exams and Student Wellness

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City support for libraries is overdue

Winnipeg is falling behind in funding and staffing its libraries



PHOTO BY ISAIAH SANCHEZ

The Millennium Library, Winnipeg's flagship downtown library facility, is spending extravagantly on security measures, while library funding at large is floundering.

Libraries are intersections of cultures, knowledge and accessibility within cities. Libraries are much more than places for books. They're sacred spaces and part of community ecosystems.

On a Friday afternoon, Winnipeg's Millennium Library is no different. There's a child reclining in a mint-coloured chair, flipping through a picture book taller than him. A man

in a bright, neon-yellow construction vest is charging his phone at a kiosk while sipping from a Tim Hortons coffee cup.

A woman and her father speak with a librarian about how to print a tax form off the computer. An elderly man walks over to a shelf, picks up a Marvel *Daredevil* comic book and relaxes on a bench.

This atmosphere is pierced by the beeping

of the metal detector at the entrance and radios attached to the vests of two police officers leaning against a table. The now-closed Community Connections space, which opened in April 2022, sits empty across from the line of people waiting to get inspected and scanned to enter the library space.



Dr. Aaron Moore, chair of the University of Winnipeg's political-sciences department

“If you really want to compare Winnipeg to other jurisdictions, you have to understand that where most other jurisdictions saw their taxes going up, Winnipeg was keeping them flat ... the consequence of that is you have less and less resources.”

Using the library

Nicole Brown has been a dedicated library user for 10 years. She's visited all 20 library branches in Winnipeg, hunting for new graphic novels to check out. Brown enjoys going to the smaller branches because of the more intimate, community feeling they offer but does occasionally go to the Millennium branch for more resources.

“I go to the Harvey Smith branch the most,” she says. “It's quiet, and the staff are really friendly. There's a lot of teenagers hanging out outside and inside the library. There's lots of families coming with children and checking out lots of books, which is good to see.”

Brown says libraries provide resources for children in her community who might not otherwise have regular access to books. The lessened amount of programming has impacted the atmosphere of the library, but the staff are still passionate about helping people who come in.

“It's the one last place you can visit where you're not expected to pay,” she says. “All of the services are free, and there's no barriers for finances. It's a good space.”

For the most part, libraries are free of charge, except for certain printing services and memberships for non-Winnipeg residents.

However, the accessible spaces and resources that the Winnipeg Public Library (WPL) provides are at risk. The City's preliminary operating budget for 2023 includes funding cuts for services and circulation, as well as increased salaries for library staff. The Millennium branch requires patrons to go through airport-style security measures on every visit. Library staff and community advocates are sounding the alarm and pleading for financial support.

The Instagram account @wpglibraryfacts first posted on Feb. 13, less than a week after the 2023 preliminary budget was announced. Since then, has posted more than 60 times. It's run by a collection of past and present library staff members who created a space for concerned workers to speak anonymously.

One post says, “I asked for a sharps container (for safe disposal of used needles) for my library's public washroom but was told that there was no funding.” While the cost of some elaborate sharps containers can exceed \$100, many basic varieties cost less than \$10.

Another post reads, “We didn't have any money to run an important community program and had to bring in and reuse our own materials from home.”

@wpglibraryfacts declined to be interviewed for this article.

Underfunded and understaffed

Winnipeg's libraries are underfunded and understaffed when compared to those in other Canadian cities.

According to an analysis provided by the Manitoba Libraries Association, the WPL's 2021 operating budget was spending \$36.22 per 100,000 people. This is smaller than the budgets of Regina, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton, Hamilton, Ottawa, Halifax and Victoria. Calgary is the next closest, spending \$41.05 per 100,000 people.

Currently, the WPL has 267 full-time employees or equivalent positions. The proposed 2023 budget would cut 11 full-time staffers. The WPL has less library staff when compared to even smaller cities like Hamilton and Halifax.

Provincial funding for the WPL has been stagnant for 35 years, and the Province has only contributed slightly more than \$2 million annually since 1987. Provincial funding accounts for a little more than 6 per cent of the total WPL budget.

Dr. Aaron Moore chairs the political-sciences department at the University of Winnipeg. He says because of Winnipeg's long history of tax freezes, funding has been cut for many services, including libraries.

“If you really want to compare Winnipeg to other jurisdictions, you have to understand that where most other jurisdictions saw their taxes going up, Winnipeg was keeping them flat,” he says. “The consequence of that is you have less and less resources.”

Moore says politics and department demands are interwoven with the budgeting process. Despite having a budget of more than \$1 billion, Winnipeg's operating budget is largely tied up by fixed costs.



Richard Bee, director of advocacy for the Manitoba Libraries Association

“The actual pie of money that’s discretionary isn’t a huge amount,” Moore says. “It will come down to politics and trying to balance the interests and demands of multiple different departments within the city. Sometimes, they’re going to prioritize certain costs over others.”

For example, the police budget will increase almost 50 times more than the WPL’s and includes the addition of 11 full-time employees.

The WPL is the outlier in Canadian library governance. It’s rare for a municipal government to directly control a Canadian library system. The City’s community-services department operates the WPL. While the WPL has a board, it only serves in an advisory capacity.

Richard Bee, director of advocacy for the Manitoba Libraries Association, says library boards are typically treated the same as police boards. They set budgets, staffing levels, policies and mission statements for the library with full autonomy.

He says it’s important for a library board to remain at arms’ length from its municipal government, because it allows the library to fully function as a free and accessible public resource without being caught up in politics.

“WPL having an advisory board allows it to be undercut by city administration,” Bee says. “Now you have this added layer of politics and bureaucracy that WPL is having to navigate that no other library system has to deal with.”

Coun. John Orlikow, the community-services chair, didn’t respond for comment by press time.

The fight for accessibility

Dr. Joe Curnow is part of the library ad-

vocacy group Millennium for All. Started in 2019 after security screening was first introduced at the Millennium Library, the organization speaks out against the renewed security measures.

She says Millennium for All pushes for the City to use evidence-based strategies that cost less and support library staff and community members instead of the current measures that can push people away.

According to a Millennium for All study published in 2019, airport-style security screening causes a 25 to 32 per cent reduction in people entering the library. The security measures have also forced many programs to either move elsewhere or shut down. The Community Connections space that opened in April 2022 has been closed since police and security screening returned to the library.

“A lot of organizations and nonprofits don’t feel they can say to their users that it’s a safe space. They’re likely to get harassed at the door or turned away based on race, class and gender. As a result, these organizations don’t feel they can use the library for their programming right now,” Curnow says.

The city has dedicated \$100,000 for 2023 for ongoing security measures at the Millennium Library. In January, Winnipeg’s chief administrative officer, Michael Jack, told CBC these measures cost the City “in excess of \$10,000 a week.” No other city in Canada has this level of library security.

“For every hour we have these two special-duty cops, we could pay for a full-time librarian who’s dedicated to the Community Connections space, a dedicated library assistant, one or two crisis workers, plus consumables,” Curnow says.

She also says increasing the number of staff can effectively help library employees

and visitors feel safer.

“City council keeps cutting away until there’s literally no time for staff to have a 15-minute overlap in shifts or have safety briefings or to have enough people on the floor to respond to needs quickly,” she says.

Curnow says the City can best support the WPL and the Millennium Library by reopening the Community Connections space, funding the Community Safety Host program (a peer-based security service), increasing staffing and bringing the security team in-house.

Having a voice

Kirsten Wurmman is a retired librarian who worked for 11 years as a WPL branch manager. She says that despite doing exciting work and having it align with her social-justice values, she began to feel misunderstood and unsupported as a librarian.

To be a librarian, individuals must complete a master’s degree in library science. Manitoba currently offers no such program.

“I certainly took a cut when I came here to Winnipeg from Edmonton. I took the \$20,000 a year cut,” she says. “In my retirement letter, I actually said that it became offensive considering the workload.”

Wurmman says now that she is retired, she is able to speak freely about the issues she experienced while working at the WPL.

“Working for a public library, working for the City, you cannot share the realities that are actually happening,” she says. In the past, Wurmman says library employees have been reprimanded for retweets or sharing news articles about the library.

“I know some workers have felt that their social media is being watched or monitored. It sounds ridiculous, but this is the reality. Folks are nervous.”

During an executive policy committee meeting on March 16, Wurmman spoke as a delegate about the upcoming library budget and her experience as a librarian. As she began speaking, three of the six councillors present walked out.

“For the very first time, I spoke to my former bosses and shared my reality and my story and three out of the six left. It just felt so rude, and I felt hurt. I was starting to feel actually even a little emotional,” Wurmman says.

Couns. Brian Mayes and Jeff Browaty say they had to leave to use the bathroom and take a call, and their actions weren’t related to who was speaking. Coun. Sherri Rollins says she left to check on people who were affected by a homophobic incident.

Wurmman says she understands that it was a long day, but this incident raises the issue about a lack of opportunities for citizens to share their voice.

She describes how libraries have become more than places for books. Now, they serve as community spaces.

“It’s the neighbourhood living room,” Wurmman says. “It’s a space where you can bring in food and drink. You can talk to neighbours. You can have storytime. You can use computers, which is a lifesaving service that we provide. It’s such a growing social service.”

Brown says the City needs to listen to library staff and recognize the importance of supporting Winnipeg’s libraries. “The libraries are more than a place for books,” she says. “They’re a community pillar.”

Shaving, waxing, tweezing

Body hair, social norms and perceived 'femininity'



Sarah Struthers, photographed at the Asper Centre for Theatre and Film

I keep checking under my chin for this one persistent hair that grows in fits and starts. I'll check every day for weeks and then one day, I wake up and it's like half an inch long. For just over a year now, I've only done some light hair removal on my face. I let everything else grow long and dark. I'm really pale, so my body hair is noticeable. I don't like how it looks on me, and I worry what other people think, too.

I stopped shaving my legs about eight or nine years ago. My first boyfriend and I had just broken

up, it was winter, and I was wearing pants all the time. Who was I even doing it for?

There are lots of body-hair removal methods available today, like shaving, tweezing, threading, waxing, sugaring, laser hair removal and electrolysis. And until recently, I would say I was just lazy. I didn't want to put in the time, effort or go through the pain and expense of engaging with these practices. Plus, I figured I could be doing literally anything else, like napping or eating.

But Kayla Chafe, a 39-year old cisgender wom-

an, called me out for using that word. People who are socialized as girls are expected to remove certain body hairs. We're supposed to believe we're "lazy" if we don't.

When I stopped shaving my legs, I was also a budding feminist. I was majoring in gender studies and thinking a lot about the patriarchy, the beauty industry and their role in my life. Not shaving was, in some ways, a political statement. It felt really good, but it was scary, too.

First times

When I was a kid, I knew one day I'd get hair on my legs, and I'd start shaving. It was a rite of passage. I'd be a woman, or something. But these first experiences with body-hair removal aren't always joyful.

The first time I shaved my legs, I shaved my arms, too. I wasn't sure which parts of my body were unacceptable. I regretted it afterwards when I realized that girls in my classes had arm hair. Ironically, I wore long-sleeved shirts for a while to cover up my hairlessness.

Of course, "The gender binary is very clear on the amount of hair that people should have and where they should have it and where it should be groomed," Dr. Fiona Green says. Green is a cisgender professor of women's and gender studies at the University of Winnipeg.

She says people don't often think critically about the habits and practices we see as "normal." Even children police each other's body hair.

As a kid, Sarah Struthers, a nonbinary 24-year-old who goes between identifying as femme and masc, remembers their cousin calling them "hairy knees," which I was so confused by, because we're literally kids. And ... I'm thinking of this. I'm conscious of it now."

Jordyn Wiebe, a cisgender woman, owns The Sugar Freak, which is a sugaring shop in Winnipeg that also sells sex toys and advocates for reproductive rights. Wiebe says, "I knew in school, people were bullied about body hair. So there was one day where I took my mom's razor, and I actually razored one square out of my arm, just to see what it would look like. And I was like, 'Why did I do that?'"

The expectation to remove hair comes from more than just peers, though.

Struthers says that when they started puberty, their mother and sister noticed their hair growth and asked if they needed to start shaving their underarms. "It was embarrassing ... secretly shaving my armpits," they say.

Wiebe, however, says attitudes toward body hair are likely "more of a generational thing. I don't know that I've had my own peers say anything, but I've definitely had family say things when I'm growing out my armpit hair or if my legs aren't done."

These pressures and expectations never really go away.

Pressure, expectations

Green says that while growing up in the '70s, autonomy was a value feminists rallied around, particularly regarding reproductive rights.

"However, it extends beyond that," she says. Body hair is about "how we want to present ourselves in the world, how we want to be read and understood and how we define ourselves, and that goes with gender (and) sexual orientation."

Green remembers how societal pressures to shave different body parts intensified in the '70s and '80s, with the intention of making women look more childlike. In particular, feminists saw these expectations change in magazines like *Playboy* and *Penthouse*, where women's vulvas "went from being a natural hairy area to being groomed ... and then (the hair) slowly became removed completely."

By 1985, when Green married, she felt pressured to wax her underarms because of the gendered ritual and performance of marriage. "It was recognizing that I was going to be surveilled, I suppose, by guests at the wedding." She says she didn't want to distress anyone.

With the advent of social media and bombardment of advertisements, no one can escape gender norms.

For example, in shaving commercials, Struthers says "their legs are already shaven. The image of a woman with hairy legs is so appalling for the public to see."

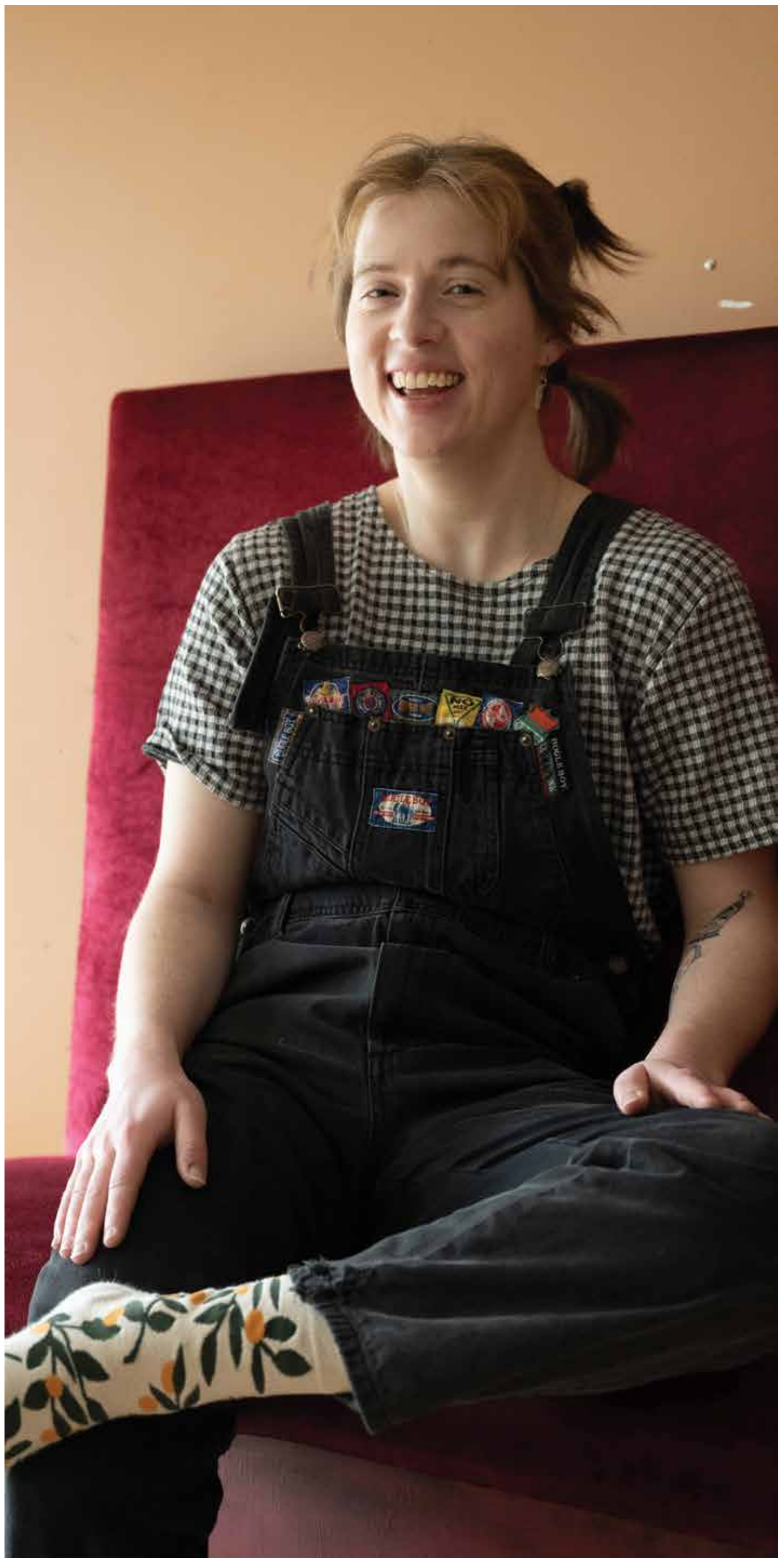
Wiebe, on the other hand, makes social-media posts where she sugars herself. "Some of (the comments) will be like, 'Oh my god, you had so much hair to begin with.'" She says it's mostly men who make these comments.

"It's definitely something people want gone."

Romance

Until about a year ago, I would constantly get the urge to shave my legs every time I had a new romantic partner. More often than not, I'd give in. That said, when I did shave, I wasn't only doing it for my partners. Like many people, I *like* the feeling of soft, silky legs. It's nice.

My experience is pretty typical. For instance, Wiebe has sugaring clients who come in before dates. "They do it so their first impression with



Sarah Struthers first became conscious of the social pressures of body hair as a child, when their cousin called them "hairy knees."



"It really took some time to decondition myself from what is dubbed as normal." - Kayla Chafe



Chelsea Howgate says that waxing at a salon "is giving someone access to a part of my body that I'm still really self-conscious about."

somebody when they're about to possibly get intimate with someone is that they don't have any hair."

Struthers' past partners have pointed out their body hair. "When I was in my first serious relationships, I started to get comments. One of my boyfriends would say, 'Your legs are kind of prickly.' It's just like, what the heck?"

And Chafe says she felt the need to announce her body hair to partners.

However, sometimes partners help encourage us to be ourselves.

Struthers says, "I was with someone else who was like, 'You can do whatever you want. It's your body.' And that opened my eyes more to like, yeah, it is."

Winnipeg winters, Winnipeg summers

On the one hand, Winnipeg winters are great opportunities to not worry about body hair. Wiebe mentions people who visit The Sugar Freak and say things like 'Oh, it's winter. Who cares about my legs right now?'

But the long winters mean there's less oppor-

tunity to work on self-acceptance.

Wiebe says her business is busier over the summer. "People want to remove the hair so that other people can't see it."

And that makes sense. After all, "If you're wearing a bathing suit and there's pubic hair seen, that's often frowned upon. That's seen as disgusting or dirty or poor hygiene," Green says.

In fact, I've somehow trained myself not to gaze at my legs, because every summer, I put a skirt on for the first time, and it's a big surprise that my leg hair is there. Was it always so long and dark? And I don't want to get rid of it, and I can't anyway, because my skin is too sensitive these days, but I certainly don't feel pretty.

It turns out that removing my body hair and ignoring it have the exact same effect. I still haven't learned self-acceptance. But I still wear whatever I want. And every time I push through that fear, it gets smaller.

Trans and nonbinary experiences

Transgender women and nonbinary people have different experiences with body hair than me.

Chelsea Howgate, a trans woman, says that before transitioning, she didn't shave her face. But now, "That's another source of dysphoria ... Now it feels like there's a need to shave."

In Manitoba, trans women who experience body-hair dysphoria can receive health coverage for laser hair removal or electrolysis. "But, unfortunately, laser doesn't work for everyone. There's better alternatives, but a lot of those are considered cosmetic rather than a medical necessity, so they aren't covered," Howgate says.

She also says it can be difficult to find a trans-friendly clinic. "With waxing ... I would have to go to a salon. And that is giving someone access to a part of my body that I'm still really self-conscious about."

Howgate points out that feminism has made it easier for trans women to go without shaving. "I can have the kind of body hair that's starting, in a way, to become more acceptable for cis women to have. Like, sometimes, I'll go a while without shaving my legs."

Overall, "Gender non-conforming people exist, and you're just going to have to deal with it," Struthers says.

Education and empowerment

With education, people will likely come to think of body-hair removal as a choice.

Struthers has noticed more of their friends have stopped shaving, and Chafe says knowing others who don't shave normalizes body hair. "It doesn't really feel like I'm out here alone."

"It really took some time to decondition myself from what is dubbed as normal," Chafe says. "I am not doing anything else in life unless it empowers me and it's my choice fully and not because of systems or culture or people's opinions."

Of course, people remove their body hair for lots of good reasons. "People feel sexy ... They feel good about themselves," Wiebe says. For people with skin conditions like psoriasis, she says sugaring helps because their skin feels less itchy. "It overall helps with their mental health."

Ultimately, "It is a personal decision," Green says. "Who am I to tell anybody if they should or shouldn't be removing their hair? That's none of my business, and it's no one else's business what I do with my body, either."

MANITOBA ANNOUNCES PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS

Province unveils plans for new \$126M homelessness strategy

MATTHEW FRANK | CITY REPORTER |  MATTDFRANK

On Feb. 28, the provincial government announced a new housing-first homelessness strategy called A Place for Everyone, which promises \$126 million in funding and 700 social housing units. The province is providing \$58 million on top of \$68 million promised in 2022.

Non-profit organizations, community advocates and municipal and provincial officials collaborated to create the strategy in 2022. More than 400 people were consulted, Families Minister Rochelle Squires said during a news conference.

“We recognize that people become homeless when they fall between the cracks and we understand that those cracks are largely provincial systems,” she said. “This shift is necessary if we want to end homelessness, rather than just managing it.”

Squires said this is the first whole-of-government homelessness strategy enabling service providers to move from primarily crisis-orientated care to focusing on prevention.

The End Homelessness 2022 Winnipeg Street Census, which was completed over a two-day period, found 1,256 people experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg, with likely more unreported.

The housing-first model focuses on modernizing the emergency response, providing housing with supports, preventing homelessness, developing person-centred services and building northern and rural capacity.

Some of the new initiatives include increasing funding for shelters to operate as 24/7 service hubs and adding 700 social housing units with support teams in 2023 and 2024. These support teams will provide help with getting personal documents, social services and daily clinical support.

The strategy will also continue providing increased annual funding for N’Dinawemak, Manitoba’s only Indigenous-led 24/7 shelter funded by the province and a community-based bridge program for people waiting for Employment and Income Assistance (EIA).

Provincial Working Group chair for the Right to Housing Coalition Kirsten Bernas says the Province still has to do more for housing in Manitoba. She says the provincial government has invested little in social housing, and Manitoba has lost many units in recent years because of buildings being sold or falling into disrepair.

Bernas says the impact of less social



PHOTO BY ISAIAH SANCHEZ

On Feb. 28, Manitoba announced the “A Place for Everyone” homelessness strategy to help assist unhoused people.

housing is felt within the province, but it’s difficult to know exact numbers because the data isn’t easily available.

“It didn’t seem to be a political priority before this announcement, and I’m not sure it is now, either, even with the strategy, because we only have the one-year commitment. It’s going to take more than that for people to feel reassured that this government is serious about ending homelessness,” Bernas says.

According to the Manitoba Non-Profit Housing Association, Manitoba needs 8,700 very low-income units to fill the current need.

University of Winnipeg geography professor Dr. Jino Distasio says housing is key to ending homelessness.

“There’s a lot of instability in a lot of

people’s lives,” Distasio says. “The gold standard is getting people into independent, safe, affordable housing and then having access like anybody else to the support they need to live a real, fulsome life.”

Distasio says political will and community empowerment will impact how successful the strategy will be.

“We need all levels of government and the community to say enough is enough.”

“I’d love to see a day in Winnipeg where we aren’t focused on thousands of people. This strategy won’t get us there, but it’s moving the needle. We need to do more.”

CITY OF WINNIPEG CUTS AMOOWIGAMIG’S HOURS

Budget constraints impact the downtown public washroom

MATTHEW FRANK | CITY REPORTER |  MATTDFRANK

Due to budget constraints, the City of Winnipeg is cutting the hours of operation for Amoowigamig, the only dedicated public washroom space run by the City. Starting on May 16, the washroom will be open seven days a week for eight hours a day instead of 10.

Since opening on June 3, 2022, Amoowigamig has been used more than 20,000 times.

Trevor Lambert, a community member, has frequently relied on the washroom and was surprised by the quality of the space when it first opened.

“When it was being built, I was thinking people were going to camp out there and just wreck it, but there’s well-trained staff there,” Lambert says. “They have a good deal of understanding of what it’s like to be on the street.”

This positive impact is linked to the city’s partnership with community organization Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, which operates the facility and provides peer-support services and harm-reduction supplies.

Discussions for a permanent public washroom began in June 2020. This spe-

cific project was funded by the COVID-19 Community Response Fund for Vulnerable Populations, which supports people experiencing homelessness, and Circle of Life Thunderbird House, an Indigenous community centre.

The total cost for the washroom was \$874,489, with an annual, City-set budget of \$200,000. However, according to a City report, the facility’s operating costs have exceeded this budget.

Coun. John Orlikow, who chairs the standing policy committee on community services, says the City would’ve kept the hours open longer, but the budget ran out for the pilot project.

“It’s always easy to spend the money, but where do we find the money is the problem,” he says. “The fact that the program was so successful will help in trying to find funding for it.” Orlikow also says the City needs to look at “finding partners with some existing infrastructure.”

Jamil Mahmood, the executive director of community organization Main Street Project, says the washroom’s reduced hours show how the municipal government isn’t prioritizing Winnipeggers’ ba-



PHOTO BY ISAIAH SANCHEZ

Only nine months since its opening, the City of Winnipeg is cutting the hours to the Amoowigamig public washrooms.

sic needs.

“It’s very clear that the City isn’t making the investment in community and public services that we need to be. We’re a major city in Canada, and to think we don’t have one 24-hour staffed washroom in the core of our city is mind-boggling,” he says.

While Main Street Project has washrooms available, Mahmood says their space is often full, and individuals have to go through the shelter intake process to access the washrooms.

“Why should you have to go through a shelter intake to access a washroom when there’s a public washroom right there?”

he says.

Besides Amoowigamig, the only other City-run washroom facilities are four temporary portable toilets. Lambert says the lack of accessibility makes the task of going to the washroom difficult.

“I don’t like going to the bathroom. I hold (it) for as long as possible, because there’s not many places to go, and then finally I’m in crisis mode,” he says. “I wish the washroom was open for 24 hours.”

Funding for Amoowigamig will end on Dec. 31. City council will vote on increasing funding and hours or maintaining the current model.



Poet and novelist Zoe Whittall, the newest Carol Shields writer-in-residence, also has writing credits on *Baroness Von Sketch Show* and *Schitt's Creek* under her belt.

'A POET'S NOVELIST'

Zoe Whittall named the latest U of W writer-in-residence

MEGAN RONALD | CAMPUS REPORTER | @MEGANLYNNRONALD

Zoe Whittall is an acclaimed novelist, poet, screenwriter and this semester's Carol Shields writer-in-residence at the University of Winnipeg. Whittall's career spans written and filmed media and includes five published books, three volumes of poetry and a litany of awards.

In an email to *The Uniter*, Whittall writes that she started her career as a songwriter before shifting to poetry and then eventually moving to fiction while in university. After two years in Concordia University's creative-writing program, she dropped out

to pursue writing in Toronto.

"I published my first poetry book with a small press at 25. I worked on short stories that became my first novel, *Bottle Rocket Hearts*, for several years," Whittall says.

She describes this transition from poetry to fiction as an experiment. After writing her first novel, fiction became Whittall's preferred form of storytelling.

"I just love all that room to move around, but I'm still a poet's novelist," she says. "I still think in terms of the line and the image and the irony and small moment."

Looking back, Whittall adds that while she never planned to be a writer, she knew she didn't love anything as much as reading and writing.

Whittall is also a recognized screenwriter and has worked on *Baroness Von Sketch Show* and *Schitt's Creek*. She says this work impacted her overall writing practice.

"It's helped me understand how to construct a plotline," Whittall says. "It's sharpened my ability to write dialogue, and it's helped me to make a living as a writer." Writing scripts has helped her produce better characters, structures and plots to create suspense.

"I'm still a character-first writer who gets hung up on sentences and specificity, but I think this is the gift that writing for screen has given me: not just a deeper understanding of how plot can move a narrative, but how to structure it," she says.

Since the start of her career, Whittall's identity as a queer woman has influenced her writing.

"I think that my books are often written

in response to queer novels in our own niche cannon," she says. "Having queer novels read outside the community is an entirely new thing in the last decade."

She says her first novel, a queer coming-of-age story, received homophobic reviews. People commented that "they'd never never have read it if they'd known it had a gay narrator," Whittall says. "Now that's inconceivable. I don't only write about queer characters, but there is always a queer lens or authorial voice present."

Whittall's latest novel, *The Fake*, centres on Cammie, a compulsive liar, and how her choices impact the people in her life. The book asks questions about whether or not people can trust the ones they love.

While Whittall says none of her fiction is autobiographical, she is inspired by familiar settings and social environments. "With *The Fake*, I took inspiration from an experience I had being conned by someone, but the characters and the plot are entirely fabricated," she says.

WHAT MAKES A 15-MINUTE CITY?

Winnipeg neighbourhoods lack accessibility and daily necessities

MEGAN RONALD | CAMPUS REPORTER | @MEGANLYNNRONALD

Winnipeg depends on cars. This is partially due to urban sprawl, an unreliable public-transit system and an overall lack of walking and cycling infrastructure. Applying the principles of 15-minute cities could help address these problems, but not everyone agrees.

While definitions vary, the phrase "15-minute city" generally refers to communities where residents are never more than a 15-minute walk or bike ride away from daily needs like workplaces, grocery stores, schools, medical clinics and recreation spaces.

These 15-minute cities have existed in practice for years, but Colombian-born architect Carlos Moreno recently redefined them as spaces in which residents can access the essential services and locations they need "to live, thrive and learn within their immediate vicinity."

The term has recently entered the public consciousness, and some people, including right-wing psychologist Jordan B. Peterson, have spread conspiracy theories and vented their frustrations with the concept on social media.

Marc Vachon, an associate professor in the University of Winnipeg's geography department, says people living in parts of downtown Winnipeg already have easy access to multiple transit routes and amenities.

"If you're a student living in a residence downtown, you live already in a 15-minute city, because you have access to so many things that you wouldn't have access in the suburbs," he says.

However, some areas of Winnipeg's core

can be categorized as food deserts. A food desert is a space where low-income residents have limited or no access to retail food establishments with sufficient variety at affordable prices. People must then leave their neighbourhoods to buy groceries.

John Wintrup, a local urban and community planner, highlights a zoning bylaw that does not allow grocery stores in portions of downtown Winnipeg. "The zoning regulations are actually creating a food desert," he says.

The Manitoba Collective Data Portal's Winnipeg Food Atlas was last updated in 2021 and includes an interactive map that displays food deserts in Winnipeg. These regions include parts of downtown, Point Douglas and East Kildonan.

Vachon says the term "15-minute city" is often misinterpreted, because it's really districts and neighbourhoods that need to change – not entire cities.

He says cities were initially designed with separate commercial districts and residential areas. The COVID-19 pandemic drew attention to these divides, as people saw disadvantages to segmenting cities by district and use.

Neighbourhoods designed as 15-minute cities can specifically benefit lower-income people. Reliance on a car comes with vehicle insurance, expensive gas-station visits and maintenance costs – all of which add up.

"If you're required to have a car, you're dedicating more of your discretionary income towards a vehicle," Wintrup says. However, "the biggest barrier to the 15-min-

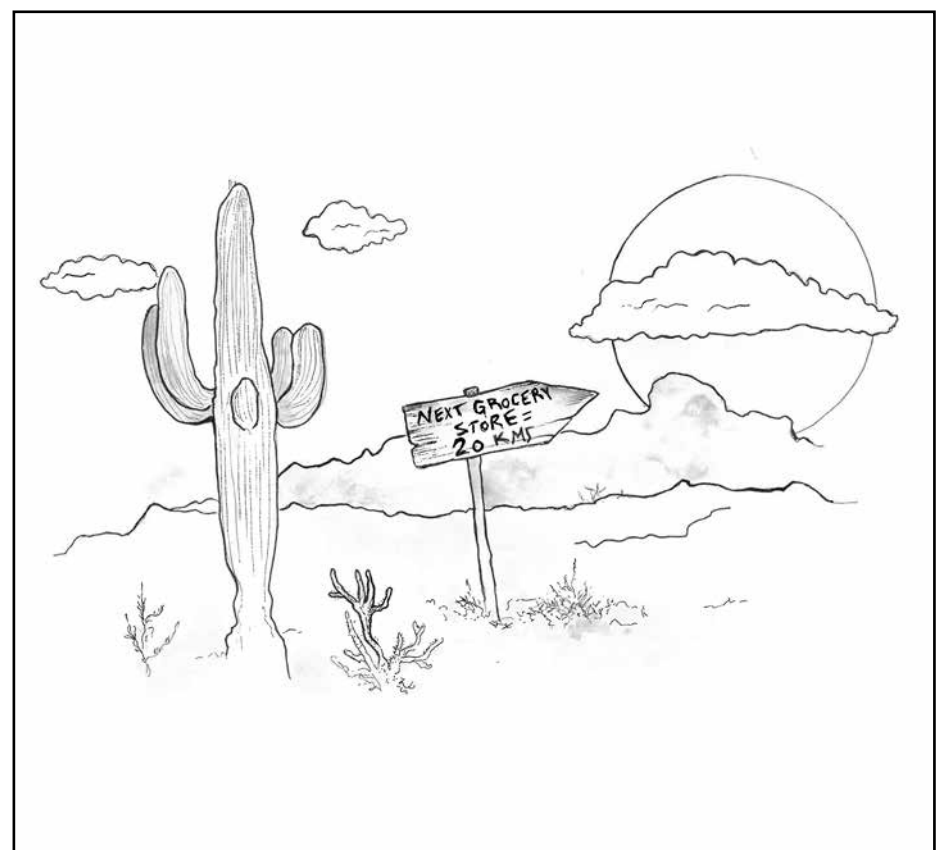


ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

ute city happening in Winnipeg is Winnipeg itself."

Changes downtown depend on zoning regulations and planning policies, he says. More specifically, Vachon says 41 per cent of land downtown is dedicated to parking. Adding affordable housing, businesses and cultural centres to Winnipeg would involve decreasing the city's reliance on cars and repurposing some of these parking lots and complexes.

Around 60,000 people spend time downtown on a given day, Vachon says. Students account for about one-third of the people who spend their days downtown.

"One of the solutions for downtown, before we even begin to imagine all this, is to bring more people there," he says. Vachon

notes that much of the backlash surrounding 15-minute cities comes from people who fear how new policies may impact vehicle use.

He says advocates for 15-minute cities don't necessarily want to limit the use of vehicles. Instead, they hope to transform cities so that cars aren't absolutely necessary.

Wintrup emphasizes the importance of becoming involved in city planning. "You will inherently live in a city based on the decisions being made," he says.

"You might want to start trying to be involved and influencing those decisions now, so that you get a city that you want to live in, not one somebody else has planned and built for you."



ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND ANTI-TRANS RHETORIC

Lecture by U of W poli-sci professor sparks community concerns

MEGAN RONALD | CAMPUS REPORTER | MEGANLYNNRONALD

On March 3, Joanne Boucher, political science professor at the University of Winnipeg (U of W), gave a lecture titled “The Commodification of the Human Body: The Case of Transgender Identities.” The language used on promotional flyers to outline the aims of her lecture, such as the term “transgenderism” and the “economic interests involved” in gender-affirming healthcare, signalled potential anti-trans themes. The circulation of Boucher’s abstract prior to the event garnered backlash from both university students and staff, and the queer community at large.

Emma Joyal, a fourth-year U of W student, started a petition urging the university to cancel the talk, due to its potential to threaten the school’s purported respectful and inclusive learning environment and circulate misinformation about trans lives and experiences.

Alyson Brickey, an assistant English professor at the U of W, led a Trans Love Cupcake Hour, and Brie Villeneuve organized a rally. Organizers scheduled these events at the same time as Boucher’s lecture, and both counter-events were attended by those wanting to show their support of the trans

community.

A day before the lecture was due to occur, the university published an email stating that it would not intervene or attempt to cancel the event. By way of explanation, it cited its commitment to academic freedom and its commitment to “fostering an environment in which freedom exists to question and discuss issues using a scholarly and respectful approach.”

Brickey, in an email to *The Uniter*, defines academic freedom as “a fundamental privilege that academics earn by becoming trustworthy experts in their chosen field.”

She adds that this freedom “protects our right to engage in intellectual critique without the fear of losing our jobs or being unfairly disciplined by the university.”

Brickey emphasizes that “academic freedom is not the same as unbridled free speech. It does not give professors free rein to say anything they like without consequence.”

She quotes clause 7.02 of the collective agreement between the university and those teaching, which states that “academic freedom implies a respect for the rights of others, a tolerance of other points of view and a duty to use that freedom in



PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

The UWSA held a rally for Two-Spirit, trans, nonbinary and gender-diverse safety on March 3, to coincide with a lecture from political-science professor Joanne Boucher.

a responsible manner.”

However, the appropriation of this term by the far-right furthers an increasingly altered understanding of what academic freedom means. Whose academic freedom comes first, and at what cost?

Peter Ives, a political-science professor at the U of W, says that when it comes to opposing freedoms, scholarly responsibility must come first.

“I think in general, people have thought about this issue and this particular talk on campus as if it were a question of free expression, and was this hate speech or not,” he says. “I think that’s a misunderstanding of academic freedom.”

“The direction of research ethics for the last 20 years has been saying that if we’re working on research topics, that people are a part of our topics, then we have a lot of responsibility to them,” Ives says.

Brickey adds that, in recent years, there has been a rise in academic freedom used “as a protective cloak” to engage in ho-

mophobic, racist and otherwise discriminatory behaviour.

“These instances weaken the principle of academic freedom because they represent a failure to uphold the duty that academics have to use our privilege responsibly,” Brickey says.

She says the ability to disagree with responsible academic work does not mean the right to restrict it. Academic freedom does include the right to debate and discuss research.

Villeneuve, 2SLGBTQ* students’ director for the University of Winnipeg Students’ Association, says that Boucher’s claims reflect anti-trans rhetoric.

Villeneuve adds that if criticism is restricted, academic freedom comes into question.

“Trans people are people. The healthcare we get is affirming to our gender,” Villeneuve says. “Academic freedom does not protect you from others critiquing what you’ve researched.”



ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY AND THEATRE

Dennis Gupa, assistant professor in the Department of Theatre and Film

SYLVIE CÔTÉ | FEATURES EDITOR

Dr. Dennis Gupa, a queer artist of Colour and assistant professor in the University of Winnipeg’s Department of Theatre and Film, says “(Theatre) gives you the possibility of imagining.”

Gupa has a master’s of fine arts in theatre directing from the University of British Columbia and a master’s degree in theatre from the University of the Philippines. He received his PhD from the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Victoria in applied theatre.

He says applied theatre is the practice of working with community members who do not have professional theatre expertise.

“Building on this academic (experience), I also went to Indonesia to study traditional theatre and dance as a scholar for six months at the Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia,” he says. “It’s not a degree, but it’s a very important and artistic exposure for me.”

His dissertation connected applied theatre, climate-change and Indigenous ecological knowledge in the Philippines. “I went back to one province in the Philippines, which is the homeland and birthplace of my father. I did my dissertation there as a field site. And this is an important site, because (it was) devastated by a big typhoon in 2013.”

“I worked with fisherfolk. We did theatre together to tell about the Indigenous knowledge of their fishing tradition.”

Gupa’s current research is a transnational project.

“My method of engagement connects Canada to the Philippines and Southeast Asia. I work with immigrants and migrant people and communities, understanding their emotions, challenges and experiences around climate change in Canada and also back in their own homeland.”

His focus is on “ecological sustainability and stewardship in times when we are facing the enormous challenges of tragedy brought by climate change and climate emergency.”

What is something you’ve learned from your students?

“Intellectual humility ... Working with them is always a riot of inspiration and creativity. And their hunger for knowledge ... I am forced to work hard and really be better as an artist and as a teacher.”

What do you do in your spare time?



SUPPLIED PHOTO

“I call my family back in the Philippines. I write letters to them ... I walk a lot, even during winter. I try to find the beautiful things around me.”

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

“I would like to have an equal distribution of wealth.”

What do you like most about Winnipeg?

“People are so welcoming. The sky is so close. It feels intimate. And, also, I observe that it’s a migrant city. It’s so global in that sense ... The Assiniboine River in winter taught me that I should be open to change and transformation.”



KERN-HILL FURNITURE STANDS THE TEST OF TIME

U of W Archives digitize the furniture store's classic commercials

MEGAN RONALD | CAMPUS REPORTER | MEGANLYNNRONALD

While students may not remember the glory days of local commercials, many Winnipeggers can't forget Kern-Hill Furniture's high-energy TV advertisements. The University of Winnipeg Archives recently digitized Kern-Hill's locally famous commercials, which are now available online.

The ads feature Kern-Hill owner Nick Hill, who ran the business from 1957 until his death in 2003, donning his signature cowboy hat and rhythmically chanting like an auctioneer. He shares the screen with his "No. 1 son," Andrew, who modulates his father's rapid claims with a more passive delivery style.

"Kern-Hill has an iconic place in Winnipeg's business history," Thomas Nesmith says in an email to *The Uniter*. Nesmith is professor emeritus at the University of Manitoba's archival-studies department. He notes the similarities between *The Price is Right* and Kern-Hill's commercials.

The "game-show announcer always called audience contestants to the stage with 'come on down' to try to win merchandise not unlike what Kern Hill (was) selling. Making the business of selling a kind of game show may have helped Kern

Hill a lot," Nesmith says.

He adds that Winnipeg's business history, including Kern-Hill's legacy, should be better known. "There is much more to know about these fascinating entrepreneurs and the less flashy ones who also shaped our city life," Nesmith says.

Brett Lougheed is a digital curator at the U of W Archives. He says the archives are reaching out to the Hill family about acquiring records to further illustrate the furniture store's local impact.

The archives received the commercials on analog video cassettes. Lougheed says archival preservation is expensive. To convert these cassettes to more modern, accessible formats, they shipped the original commercials to a vendor in Toronto. There is also an ongoing cost to store the converted digital information.

"Digitization is a complex and costly task," Nesmith says. "It's not simply a matter of pressing a camera button."

However, this cost is often worth it to preserve history when possible. Lougheed says digitization can help more people access important archival materials.

"Archives reflect society. They provide documented evidence of activities under-



The University of Winnipeg Archives partnered with the Hill family to digitize and preserve the iconic Kern Hill Furniture ads featuring the fast-talking patriarch Nick Hill.

taken by individuals around the world," he says.

"If there were additional funding resources available to us, archives might be able to digitize more content to make more content accessible to people online and ensure that important documentary heritage is preserved for the long term."

Nesmith says it's not possible to digitize all archived materials, as "the holdings of archives are so massive, in most cases, or continually growing." However, he says the classic Kern-Hill commercials are among local stories "needing to be archived before they are lost forever."

Lougheed agrees. "If we don't (archive certain historic materials), it's possible that

records of importance to society will be lost forever," he says.

The U of W Archives received a grant from the provincial Department of Culture, Heritage, and Sport to digitize the videos. Andrew Burke, an associate professor of cultural studies at the U of W specializing in film and television, also received funding from the U of W to assist the digitization process.

To watch these kitschy gems of local history, visit the University of Winnipeg Archives' YouTube channel.

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CITY BRIEFS

TESSA ADAMSKI | CITY EDITOR | TESSA_ADAMSKI TESSA.ADAMSKI

More SANE staffing shortages

Four casual nurses have resigned from the sexual-assault nurse examiner (SANE) program amid a major staffing crisis. The program received \$642,000 in funding to expand and hire a manager and more full-time nurses. However, due to a shortage of nurses, survivors have been sent home since January and told not to wipe themselves or shower to preserve evidence until they can see a nurse examiner. Others wait hours in the emergency room until they can be examined.

New expansion of missing-persons response unit

The Winnipeg Police Service reported 9,315 missing-persons incidents in 2022. As a part of the provincial government's violent-crimes strategy, the WPS is receiving \$2.1 million in funding to expand their Manitoba Integrated Missing Persons Response unit. The WPS and its missing persons coordinators will be the centralized intake for the province-wide reporting system. Currently, there are eight coordinators, but the plan is to hire four more.

Funding for Velma's House

The provincial government is providing \$1.5 million in annual funding for Velma's House, which is a 24/7 Indigenous-led centre supporting sexually exploited women, non-binary folks and survivors of gender-based violence. The centre offers free meals, resources and shelter, including hygiene supplies, laundry and shower facilities, employment counselling and housing and healthcare support. The project is operated by Ka Ni Kanichihk, an Indigenous-led organization providing education, job-skills training and mentorship.

NDP promising free birth control

The provincial NDP is promising free birth-control options for Manitobans if they're successful in the provincial election this October. Manitoba would be the second province, after British Columbia, to offer universal birth-control coverage. The plan would cost the NDP \$11 million per year and cover prescriptions and over-the-counter birth-control methods such as the morning-after pill, hormonal injections, copper and hormonal intrauterine devices and oral contraceptives. The plan wouldn't cover condoms.

Changes to camping reservation system

On Monday, March 27, manitobaparks.com is launching a new campsite-booking system. People are encouraged to take note of their favourite sites, as they will be required to create a new account on the new website in order to book a reservation. Bookings for cabins, yurts and group areas open on April 3, and bookings for campsites in the northern and western areas of the province open on April 5. Campers can make reservations for spaces at Birds Hill, Winnipeg Beach, the Whiteshell and Nopiming, among other parks, in early to mid-April.

Prioritizing safety at the Millennium Library

Millennium for All, a group of Winnipeggers advocating for more effective safety measures at the Millennium Library, is calling on the City's executive policy committee to reopen the library's Community Connections space. It offered free snacks, shelter, mental-health and addiction services and trauma-informed care, which the group says improved safety conditions at the library, as opposed to the current metal-detector screenings and on-site police officers. Reopening the space would require hiring a librarian, library assistant, social worker, three more full-time employees and four more community-safety hosts.



ACCORDING TO HER

Burrowing

CIKU GITONGA | COLUMNIST

By some accidental sequence of thoughtless actions, I discovered the possibility of disappearing into a man's life for a day, a week, a short time, burrowing into a shared warmth, a stillness away from the ever-moving surface of everyday life.

I was 19, then 20. I had little experience with men and collected this experience haphazardly, stumbling from one encounter to the next. At the time, I never questioned my motives or stopped to take a good look at myself.

I did not feel a pull toward any man in particular. My desire was faceless. It was an urgency to escape at all costs the shadow of a lonely evening or a quiet bus ride home after a night out where no one noticed me.

In those days, I dressed to be noticed. In shoplifted heels, I followed strange men into the night. I slept in their beds as they cooked, hung around their apartments all day in bare feet instead of putting on my shoes and walking home.

How lucky that I was not harmed. I look back at the men with a strange sort of gratitude. They were older, kind faces below hairlines beginning to recede. They held me gently, whispered sweet words.

In the years since that time, I have experienced the ugliness that can suddenly be shown at such intimate moments. I look back at my younger self, untouched by certain things, her trust not yet betrayed.

I have grown up and learned from experi-

ence what I once did not know. But how can I condemn the choices I made back then when I can still remember the joy I felt in those moments when I was held, the closeness with kind strangers that gave me brief respite from my worries, my fears?

These encounters taught me a new way of running away from my problems. They taught me to instinctively trust men, to see masculinity itself as a symbol of safe refuge from the turbulence of life. How painful to see the emptiness of this promise of safety with the passing of time.

I look back and see the pain that came with burrowing. The gentle closeness was never permanent. I often wept in the arms of some man or another, not yet knowing how to put into words the feeling I had that he would leave me soon. It would be time to wander out into the night again to find another hiding place.

Have I been cured of my urge to burrow?

I know myself better than I did back then. I want to keep myself safe, surround myself with people who truly care about me. But I am still learning how to sit with loneliness. I am still learning how to sit with the longing that sometimes comes, in lonely moments, for immediate closeness, for the touch of another human being, however brief.

Ciku Gitonga is a fourth-year creative-writing minor who enjoys reading fiction and ruminating about the past.

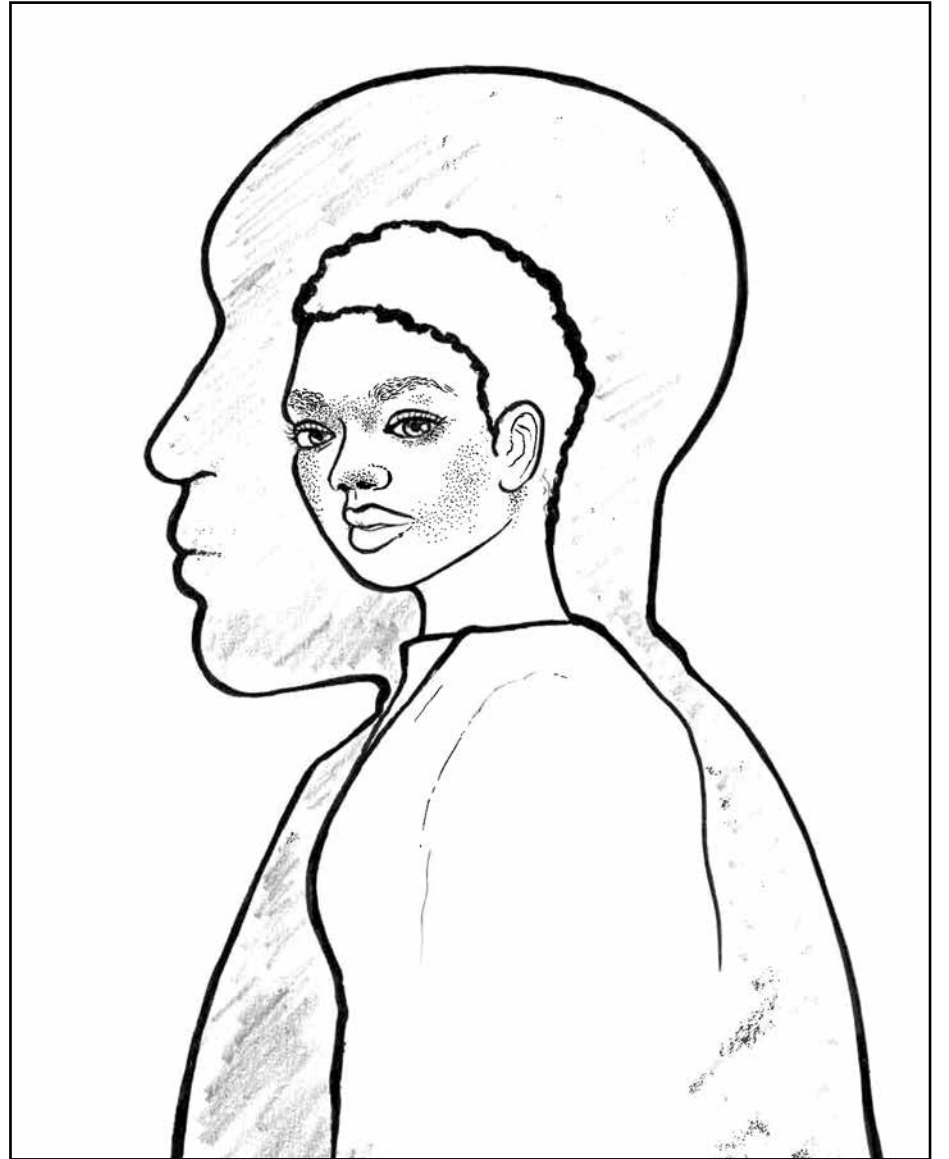


ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK



COMMENTS

BEFORE MY OBITUARY

Coming out to be recognized, remembered and immortalized

DANIELLE DOIRON | COPY AND STYLE EDITOR | DANIELLEDOIRON

As the family's resident copy editor, I was tasked with proofreading my grandfather's obituary before publication. What should have taken a lunch break stretched into a weeklong project, as relatives chimed in with additions, revisited anecdotes and questioned my capitalization choices – all things I should have expected from fellow storytellers.

Hours of work, phone calls and fact-checking Google searches later, someone pressed "send." I opened a book (well, scrolled through my browser tabs to a digital copy of *It Was Vulgar and It Was Beautiful*) and serendipitously read a quote attributed to activist Richard Elovich:

"I didn't want people to learn that I was queer from my obituary."

I don't equate my experiences with Elovich's at the height of the AIDS epidemic. Still, this got me thinking.

Perhaps it's natural to contemplate how you want to be remembered while memorializing someone else. While searching a box of papers for my grandfather's will, I was overwhelmed by how much I didn't know.

I was elated but unsurprised when I found a photo of him onstage in full drag. His gender-bending *Cinderella* performance had been an often-repeated part of family lore since before I was born. The box held thank-you notes, letters from government officials, copies of elementary-school report cards, the meticulously collected detritus of an octogenarian life.

I knew my grandfather was a poet, a historian, a chemist. Somehow, despite my decade working in journalism, I never

knew that he, too, wrote for a newspaper. I forgot his career as a politician, his interest in photography, his flag collection.

While reworking his obituary and sorting through that single time capsule of a box, I learned more about my grandfather than I could have expected. I haven't yet looked through his writings, but they'll likely reveal intimate emotions, experiences and beliefs he wouldn't have divulged to a grandchild.

I can't be the only writer in the family who expresses themselves more fully on the page. There's safety in jotting down thoughts on a blank document or across a stray piece of paper. There's a chance no one will consume my words – but if they do, it likely won't be while we make eye contact.

That's partially why I chose to come out online, during yet another wave of pandemic-induced restrictions. It was a simple Instagram caption about my updated pronouns. Then another, more than a year later, proclaiming the sexual orientation I had first, secretly claimed at six years old.

Both times, I turned my notifications off and my phone over. I readied myself for judgment, ridicule, prying questions. There was, later, a little of each. Notably, though, there was nonchalance. Many of the people closest to me already knew. Others either speculated about my identities or didn't care.

Regardless, it was freeing. Yes, I came out for myself, as the expression goes, but it was also for external recognition. I wanted people to know this part of me. I



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

revelled in finally, fully being seen. This was tangible (well, online) proof that I existed in my sexual orientation, in my gender identities somewhere beyond my own mind.

Years down the line, when family members gather and argue over my obituary, I hope someone recognizes, remembers and

immortalizes these parts of me. My story wouldn't be complete without them.

A former sports broadcaster, Danielle Doiron is now a writer, editor and educator. Find them in Winnipeg, Philadelphia and, occasionally, on the airwaves.



THE WORLD THROUGH TWO WHEELS

What cycling has taught me about the climate crisis

ADAM JOHNSTON | VOLUNTEER | [@ADAMJOHNSTONWPG](#)

The bicycle is one of the simplest forms of transportation on the planet. Cycling has the possibility of inspiring fresh perspectives that are linked to its up-close and visceral mode of moving through urban spaces.

As 19th century New Yorker Dr. K. K. Doty is often quoted as saying, “cyclists see considerably more of this beautiful world than any other class of citizens. A good bicycle, well-applied, will cure most ills this flesh is heir to.”

Cycling has changed my views on politics and society, and it has altered my previously held notions about how communities might best approach the climate crisis from a transportation perspective.

I recently returned to commuter cycling after nearly a 20-year hiatus. I resumed biking in 2020 for both cost and environmental reasons. While experiencing Winnipeg differently on trails, bike lanes and congested roads, my views on climate action changed.

First, cycling helped me realize that bicycles work much more effectively than electric cars to promptly address change.

Public conversations about low-emission transportation have often focused on electric vehicles, including increased ads during major events like the Super Bowl. Despite reducing emissions, these vehicles don't offer a natural alternative to reducing car

dependence. Plus, heavier electric vehicles will add further strain to already-crumbling roadways.

Currently, 50 per cent of Winnipeg's carbon emissions come from transportation. Meanwhile, 69 per cent of trips are done by car, compared to two per cent by bicycle.

However, last spring, Manitoba Public Insurance reported a notable increase in claims for pothole damage from previous years. To put it simply, if Winnipeggers continue to rely on cars, local streets will see more wear and tear due to aging and ongoing climate change.

Instead, the city should invest in urban density and active public transportation. The United Nations has said countries should invest 20 per cent of their transportation budget into pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure, such as walkways, trails and bridges, to slash emissions.

Most importantly, my experience commuting by bike has been a stark reminder of the urgency of the climate crisis and how action must be taken now, not later. From cycling in extreme heat to severe downpours, I have felt the direct impacts of the climate crisis and can anticipate a future with increased extreme weather events.

These events are already causing dents in the country's financial coffers. Insured damage from Canadian severe weather



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events totalled \$2.1 billion in 2021 and is expected to total \$139 billion by 2050.

People must act quickly rather than wait as car manufacturers build electric vehicles in the hopes consumers switch from gas cars. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 2018 said the world would have until 2030 to slash 2010 carbon emission levels by 45 per cent, while reaching net-zero emissions by 2050. We need to tread more lightly now.

The late Indigenous actor, poet and activist Chief Dan George put it well: “We are

all part of Mother Earth. She sustains us, and we must sustain her in return.” Cycling has changed my understanding of and approach to climate action, demonstrating the importance of treading lighter now and using past technologies (and a new twist with electric bicycles) to sustain the planet.

Adam Johnston is an active- and public-transportation advocate. Follow him at [adamjohnston.wordpress.com](#) or on Twitter at [@adamjohnstonwpg](#).

SHUTTING DOWN HATE ON CAMPUS

Why activists must go beyond petitioning university administration

MISHA PENSATO | VOLUNTEER | [@BARITONEFEMME](#)

Earlier this month, professor Joanne Boucher gave a talk at the University of Winnipeg (U of W) provocatively titled “The Commodification of the Body: The Case of Transgender Identities.” The description for this talk mirrored many familiar anti-trans talking points while using a critique of the for-profit medical system as plausible deniability.

Seeing the talk for what it was, many U of W staff members, students, faculty and broader trans community members – including myself – sprung to action.

At first, this organizing centred around a petition submitted to the U of W administration to have the talk cancelled, which received more than 1,700 signatures. The U of W administration responded with a statement affirming their support for “those in our 2SLGBTQ+ community” but also stating that they would not intervene, citing commitment to academic freedom.

Though petitions can be a good place to start, they run into problems when requesting event cancellations. When activists demand that an authority cancel an event, reactionaries can respond with the bad-faith argument that the left is trying to take away their freedom of speech.

Free speech is often hypocritically invoked to create space for the spread of bigoted opinions. This is a shame, since across Canada and the United States, freedom of

speech is under attack for many marginalized groups. For instance, in March 2019, Seven Oaks School Division in Winnipeg cancelled a talk by a Palestinian-American feminist after hearing complaints from Zionists.

In addition, petitions can transfer momentum out of activists' hands and leave decision-making power with the authorities being petitioned. Activists cannot count on institutional good will toward 2SLGBTQ+ people. We need to realistically assess who our allies are and build our own counter-power.

As an institution that relies on both public and private funds, the U of W administration is fundamentally concerned with its reputation, which impacts its ability to receive donations.

Right now, the U of W is presented as a welcoming place for 2SLGBTQ+ people. But with anti-trans movements gaining momentum across the globe, activists need to prepare for the possibility of anti-trans sentiment becoming a stronger force in Canada, even at liberal institutions such as the U of W.

If defending the humanity of 2SLGBTQ+ becomes an obstacle to expanding donations and enrollment, 2SLGBTQ+ advocates need to prepare for the possibility that the university's messaging could change.

2SLGBTQ+ activism is the strongest



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

when it comes from the community, by organizing with the university's staff, faculty, student body and broader affected communities. Real leverage exists within these groups, not in the administration. Without workers and students, there is no university.

Direct action can include protesting bigoted talks, taking over discussion periods and doing community educational events to counter misinformation. The Trans Cupcake Love Hour organized by trans-affirming U of W faculty was a great example of this kind of work.

The community response to Boucher's

talk brought together many people committed to transgender liberation. While the U of W administration has stated its support for 2SLGBTQ+ people in its response to the petition, that support is only made reality by the day-to-day efforts of the students, faculty and staff at the university. Our strength is based on our collective commitment as students and workers to making the U of W what it is.

Misha Pensato is a trans woman, a U of W alum and a member of Solidarity Winnipeg.



MOTHER OF GOO

Consent isn't rocket science

MADLINE RAE | COLUMNIST | @MOTHEROFGOO

Content warning: This article mentions non-consensual sexual encounters and grooming.

For this month's *Mother of Goo*, I felt like getting back down to basics: consent. Planned Parenthood's FRIES model can help bring clarity for those who are still not quite sure what is involved in comprehensive consent. In this article, I will break down each section of FRIES and contextualize it for you lovely *MOG* readers.

F stands for Freely Given:

This section addresses coercion, substance use and power dynamics. Power dynamics refer to if a person involved in the interaction holds persuasion or sway over the other person(s) involved. This component of FRIES also refers to age of consent laws. These laws are in place to protect young people who are susceptible to grooming.

The reality is, people have sex while on substances, and this complicates consent. If you plan to use substances while engaging in sexual activity, it's important to discuss what your boundaries are beforehand. The use of a safe word may help in this instance. Explicit check-ins and boundaries are a minimum. Waiting to sober up is best practice.

R stands for Reversible:

Consent can be revoked at any time during an encounter. The fact is that sex is better when all those involved are tuned in to each other. Reversing consent can also involve the use of a safe word or safe action. Safe words I've used include: spaghetti, pineap-

ple, banana and (oddly) Glenn Close (yes, from *Fatal Attraction*).

I stands for Informed:

Informed means that people deserve to know what they are consenting to. This doesn't require a person to bare their soul, but necessary information can range from an explicit understanding of what is involved in a specific sex act to actual legalities around sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (STBBIs). A previous *MOG* article covers HIV disclosure laws in Canada.

E stands for Enthusiastic:

This section is connected to F. It isn't really enough to just ask someone for a "yes" or "no." This is *especially* true if there is any hint of a power dynamic involved. Being in tune with the people you engage with is necessary. You don't have to be a mind reader, but if you notice the person(s) don't appear to be enjoying themselves, check in and *ask*. *Never assume*.

S stands for Specific:

Giving consent for one type of sexual or romantic activity does not mean blanket consent for all. Consent must be ongoing and asked for along the way. Examples of this sound like: "How does this feel for you? Can I add another finger?" and "I want to flip you over this way" or "I'd really like to go down on you right now."

FRIES is a helpful reference tool when ap-



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

proaching consent. Sex isn't a given. Writing this article is me giving myself over the past 15 years a big hug. I was never taught consent in school, and neither are many adolescents. Consent is an ongoing process that requires active participation and attention. So pay attention! Love you!

Madeline Rae, a University of Winnipeg alum, is a sex educator and writer living in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. She holds a BFA in performative sculpture, a BA in psychology and is studying her masters of clinical social work at Dalhousie University.

ZERO FARES

Low-cost transit is safe transit

ADAM JOHNSTON | VOLUNTEER

Security concerns are impacting Winnipeg Transit's image and discouraging ridership.

The City recently approved a \$5 million budget for a new transit security force. Instead of spending more on security, the City should consider other solutions to address the public-transportation crisis. This could include offering free or low-cost bus fare to every Winnipegger.

Support for free bus fare is gaining traction. According to a *New York Times* article published in 2020, about 100 cities around the world have some form of zero-fare policy. Kansas City completely eliminated fares in 2019. Other United States cities, including Denver, Salt Lake City, Los Angeles and Boston have contemplated similar initiatives.

In Canada, a section of Calgary's C-Train is complimentary. Children under 12 in Victoria are allowed to ride free of charge. Here in Winnipeg, children 11 and under are allowed to ride the bus for free if accompanied by a fare-paying passenger.

Free fares can help increase the safety of drivers and passengers.

Earlier this month, Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1505 president Chris Scott told CBC that discounted bus fares could help reduce passenger conflict.

Marginalized citizens rely on public transit more than others. Every time bus fares increase, they cut into people's transportation budgets. Rising prices and general cost-of-living increases can lead some passengers to refuse to pay bus fares and

escalate tensions between bus operators and riders.

Zero-cost transit has the potential to increase ridership, reduce car dependence, drastically reduce transportation poverty and help mitigate security problems for passengers and drivers.

Brian Pincott of Functional Transit Winnipeg, a group that advocates for transit improvement, said that reducing fares would advance ridership while cutting security concerns. He said increasing Winnipeg Transit fares limits access for those who need bus services the most.

Kansas City's zero-cost transit system has demonstrated what advocates like Pincott have been saying for years: If you provide free transit, they will come. Kansas City Regional Transit Alliance chair David Johnson said that since removing fares from Kansas City buses, passenger confrontations have decreased. Kansas City's free-transit trial expires this year, but the policy is expected to be renewed.

Winnipeg still has a long way to go before reaching fare zero. A defeated 2021 motion by Coun. Vivian Santos proposed the implementation of a \$1 fare. At a recent public-works committee meeting, Santos urged other committee members to acknowledge the success of discounted fares in other cities and consider employing something similar in Winnipeg.

However, critics say offering free or low-cost fares is not feasible due to a 2022 budget deficit of \$54 million.

Kansas City offers a glimpse of what's possible when a city invests in public



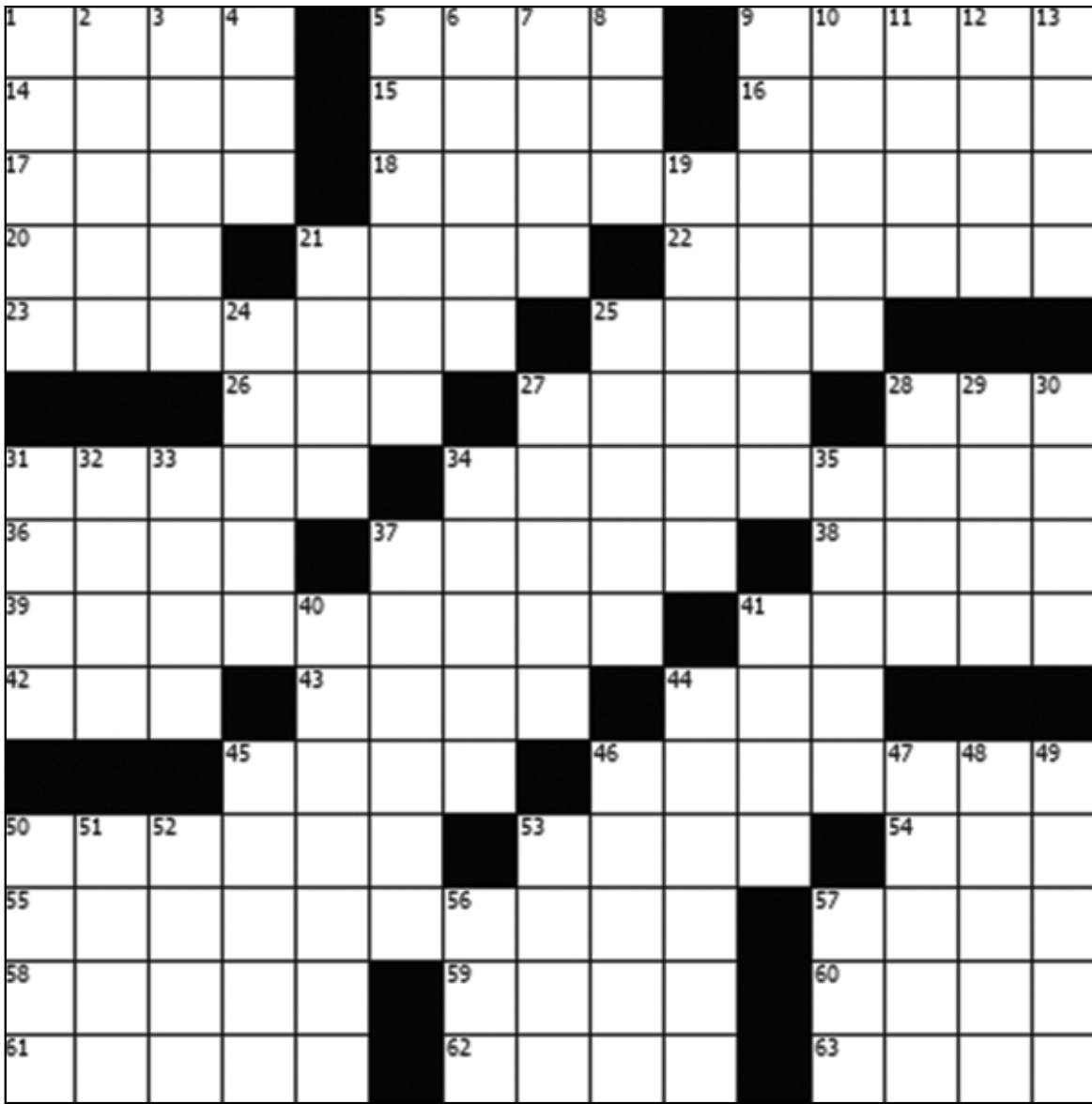
PHOTO BY LEIGH LUGOSI

The City of Winnipeg is spending \$5 million on transit security, but one of the most effective ways of increasing safety on buses is by lowering fares – or removing them altogether.

transportation as a public good rather than a commodity, by providing a secure service that benefits everyone. Rather than adding more security personnel, Winnipeg Transit needs to consider more creative options, including increasing use by lowering fares and increasing frequency of services.

Winnipeggers must consider discounted bus fares as an equity, climate and security policy to ensure the city moves forward.

Adam Johnston is an active- and public-transportation advocate. Follow him at adamjohnston.wordpress.com or on Twitter at @adamjohnstonwpg.



ONLINECROSSWORDS.NET

ACROSS

- 1. IF NOT
- 5. NOT WILD
- 9. DICKENS TITLE BEGINNING (2 WDS.)
- 14. CHARGED ATOMS
- 15. HIGH CARDS
- 16. FATHERED
- 17. SMALL PEST
- 18. ON A ____ (WITH LITTLE MONEY)
- 20. FEMININE PRONOUN
- 21. FRET
- 22. FORMAL AGREEMENT
- 23. GAVE MEDICAL AID TO
- 25. OAHU WREATHS
- 26. "VIVA ____ VEGAS"
- 27. FORAY
- 28. NILE VIPER
- 31. DAPPER
- 34. NASHVILLE'S STATE
- 36. HEALING PLANT
- 37. ROBERTS AND CLAPTON
- 38. ISN'T, INCORRECTLY
- 39. SUPPORT FOR AN INSTITUTION
- 41. KNIFE FEATURE
- 42. DOUBLE CURVE
- 43. SELF-CENTERED
- 44. CASUAL SHIRT
- 45. RELIGIOUS ORDER
- 46. NERVOUS STRAIN
- 50. SAHARA, E.G.
- 53. MOTHER'S SISTER
- 54. HEAT'S LEAGUE (ABBR.)
- 55. EASY TO REACH
- 57. MOLECULE COMPONENT
- 58. STOCK UNIT
- 59. HAVE TO
- 60. LIBERATE
- 61. RACETRACK ANIMAL
- 62. SCHOOL GPS.
- 63. HURL

DOWN

- 1. BLACK POOL BALL
- 2. RECLUSE
- 3. TYPE OF DRUM
- 4. NH TIME ZONE
- 5. SAMPLES FOOD
- 6. WAS SORE
- 7. CAT'S CRY
- 8. COMPASS POINT (ABBR.)
- 9. WITH A LEG ON EACH SIDE
- 10. BECOMES WEARY
- 11. DIVA'S SOLO
- 12. FASTING SEASON
- 13. JUMPY
- 19. BEER MUGS
- 21. DON'T GO
- 24. TAILOR
- 25. CYCLIST ____ ARM-STRONG
- 27. ROYAL RULE
- 28. VIETNAM'S CONTINENT
- 29. BROADCAST
- 30. SINGER ____ SEEGER
- 31. NECK AREA
- 32. OH, DEAR!
- 33. TODDLERS
- 34. DISTINGUISHING QUALITY
- 35. ____ TAX
- 37. MAKES INTO LAW
- 40. SUPERVISE
- 41. NOT STRAIGHT
- 44. RELIGIOUS BELIEFS
- 45. PROPHETS
- 46. OKLAHOMA METROPOLIS
- 47. PREFACE
- 48. CERTAIN WOODWINDS
- 49. MONIKERS
- 50. PUNCTUATION MARK
- 51. REPEAT
- 52. BLEMISH
- 53. ADJOIN
- 56. NAUGHTY CHILD
- 57. STERNWARD

GAME SOLUTIONS

Crossword solutions 77-21



This week's issue



Education with *a destination*

Your ticket to a career that cultivates adventure.

"If you like change, this is the industry for you.
Every day is different and it's always so exciting."



SUZANNE LAHR | EVENT COORDINATOR
RBC CONVENTION CENTRE
GRADUATE OF HOTEL AND RESTAURANT MANAGEMENT
RED RIVER COLLEGE



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