

UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG'S WEEKLY URBAN JOURNAL

THE **UNITER**

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SUMMER AT LAST

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UWinnipeg thanks CN



The University of Winnipeg would like to thank CN for its significant and generous gift of \$750,000 to create the CN Indigenous Resource Centre in the Richardson College for The Environment and Science Complex, the CN Master's in Development Practice Graduate Scholarships and the CN Model School Bursaries which will assist high school students attending UWinnipeg Collegiate.

photo (L- R) Dr. Phil Fontaine, UWinnipeg Master's in Development Practice (MDP) Advisory Circle Chair; Michael Cory, CN Senior Vice President, Western Region; Elder Tobasonakwut Kinew; David Crate, Chief of Fisher River Cree Nation; Gerri Zacharias, Acting Director, UWinnipeg Model School; Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, UWinnipeg President & Vice-Chancellor; Dr. Julie Pelletier, Director, MDP; Jennifer Rattray, UWinnipeg Executive Director, Government, Indigenous & Community Affairs. June 23, 2011

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News

The cost of revitalizing the West End

Neighbourhood's housing prices skyrocketing, rental vacancy rates plummeting



TIMOTHY DYCK

In 2000, the average price for a home east of Arlington Street and around the University of Winnipeg was \$28,500. Today, homes are selling for \$121,500.

MATT PREPROST
VOLUNTEER STAFF

More than a decade ago, few would have guessed snapping up a home in the West End or Wolseley would turn out to be one of the best investments a person could make.

But since 2000, house prices in the West End have jumped by 361 per cent, according to Winnipeg Real Estate Board statistics.

And while it's enough to start flashing new dollar signs in the eyes of home and business owners, some are concerned the rising prices might be pushing the area towards gentrification.

In 2000, the average price for a home east of Arlington Street and around the University of Winnipeg was \$28,500. Today, homes are selling for \$121,500.

The average home west of Arlington and towards Polo Park was \$54,000. They've more than tripled to \$176,700.

Even a house in Wolseley was, on average, \$56,000. Houses are now selling for close to \$161,000.

Natural inflation aside, community leaders say a concentrated effort over the last 10 years to improve housing stock in the West End has a lot to do with it.

Organizations like Housing Opportunity Partnership (HOP) and Lazarus Housing have fixed up derelict and abandoned houses and put homeowners committed to the West End back in them.

"You need home ownership as a base to build on for community revitalization," said Peter Squire, public affairs director for the Winnipeg Real Estate Board and an organizer with HOP. "Prices were in free fall

mode. Something had to be done to reverse that decline."

HOP alone has flipped some 80 homes in the area since 1999. Lazarus Housing, an initiative led by the late Rev. Harry Lehotsky, has renovated 26 homes and more than 100 rental units.

Add on top of that some 50 new infill houses that have sprung up, going beyond Spence and to Arlington.

What has followed has been a litany of beautification and housing grants from organizations like the Spence Neighbourhood Association, the West End BIZ and the Daniel McIntyre/St. Matthews Community Association.

"We want to have mixed-income housing; we're not out to displace people."

- DON MIEDEMA, HOUSING CO-ORDINATOR, SPENCE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

All receive funding from the city and province to give out grants for external renovations to rental properties and home and business owners.

Naturally, the area is seeing new commercial growth as businesses follow new money as higher-income families move into the traditionally lower-income neighbourhood.

It's not to say the West End hasn't lost major businesses – it has (most notably Safeway in December 2008).

But some see a silver lining when companies like Cambrian Credit Union, Winnipeg's third-largest credit union with about \$2.2 billion in assets, recently moved into a new 4,000-square-foot building at the corner

of Ellice and Wall Street.

"They decided they wanted to stay," said Gloria Cardwell-Hoepfner, executive director of the West End BIZ. "Anytime people make an investment like that, it tells you what they think of the area and that it's worth investing in it."

However, some lower-income residents are struggling to keep up pace, and might be on the verge of being squeezed out.

While housing prices are skyrocketing, rental vacancy rates are plummeting and Manitoba's minimum wage is still only crawling along.

"Ultimately, it's not a surprise that property values have been escalating considering all the money that government has put into the West End" through funding community organizations, said Don Miedema, housing co-ordinator at the Spence Neighborhood Association.

"(But) there are a number that have talked about appealing their property tax assessments," he added. "Their taxes have increased – in some cases doubled."

Miedema said it is starting to push away those who had previously come to rely on lower housing prices in the West End.

"It's a crisis level in the city when you have less than one per cent vacancy rate," he said. "When property taxes go up, the price of rooming houses go up, and it contributes to making it difficult for the lower-end client to retain a room."

It is unlikely that the neighbourhood will have much time, if any, to catch up, as organizations push more housing renewal over the next few years.

"There's still more work to be done," Squire said. "There are still boarded up houses that need to be removed."

Miedema added that organizations aren't out to gentrify the area.

"We want to have mixed-income housing; we're not out to displace people," he said.

"We are out to improve the neighbourhood and expand the amount of living space available. We would like to do improvement across the board and that will mean some higher income people coming in here."

Squire cautioned that while the West End isn't as affordable as it used to be, it's still lagging compared to the rest of the city.

"It's still half of the selling price of the average home around Winnipeg," he said.

With files from Ethan Cabel

REAL ESTATE BY THE NUMBERS

WEST END (west of Arlington)

Average house price, 2000: \$54,090

Average house price, 2006: \$90,206

Average house price, 2011: \$176,702

WEST END (east of Arlington)

Average house price, 2000: \$28,522

Average house price, 2006: \$59,698

Average house price, 2011: \$121,501

WOLSELEY

Average house price, 2001: \$55,877

Average house price, 2006: \$104,945

Average house price, 2011: \$160,972

Source: WinnipegREALTORS

New agreement targets "Buy local" policies

ANNE THOMAS
VOLUNTEER

A cross-country campaign that stopped in Winnipeg June 27 is aiming to educate Canadians about the local implications of a little-known free trade deal with Europe.

Maude Barlow, chairperson for the Council of Canadians, and Paul Moist, president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, spoke at Red River College's downtown campus as part of their "Canadian Communities Are Not for Sale" campaign.

Barlow and Moist are attempting to raise awareness about how a little-known free trade deal with Europe could curtail local environmental and economic development initiatives, while encouraging privatization of public utilities.

The local Council of Canadians and Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) chapters co-sponsored Winnipeg's event.

Barry Hammond of the Council of Canadians fears the proposed Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) will support privatization of Winnipeg's water, while mainly benefiting the rich.

"I'm fearful that a new trade agreement simply means that poorer people will be disenfranchised here in Winnipeg," he said.

The Council of Canadians also expects CETA to drive up prescription drug costs, threaten farm support programs and allow foreign corporations to ignore Canadian environmental regulations.

"(The deal) could be agreed on very soon, even this summer," said Fort Rouge City Councillor Jenny Gerbasi.

She added that the main concern raised during a recent meeting of the Federation of

Canadian Municipalities was loss of control over local sourcing.

Unlike past free trade deals, under CETA, purchases made by provincial and municipal governments would be included in a major way.

A CCPA report analyzing a leaked draft says that local governments would not be allowed to favour local or environmentally responsible suppliers or those suppliers creating local jobs.

Small purchases would be exempt, but the report estimates the restrictions would apply to about 80 per cent of the over \$100 billion spent annually on provincial and municipal purchases.

The restrictions would also apply to universities, hospitals and Crown corporations.

"When government is in the business of serving our society and communities, it should fully consider how its purchasing will

achieve the greatest good – all things considered," said Brendan Reimer, regional co-ordinator for the Canadian Community Economic Development Network. "The CETA agreement takes this strategic tool of government off the table."

Provincial negotiators are participating in the federal trade talks that resume July 11 in Brussels.

"Manitoba's very much placing priority on protecting environmental regulations and local economic development policies as part of our negotiating position," said Peter Bjornson, Manitoba's entrepreneurship, training and trade minister.

He added that it is too early to say if sustainable procurement guidelines in the Sustainability Act will be affected.

"If it means some amendments to existing laws, of course we'll be doing so very cautiously," he said.

A review of the documentary
The Top Twins: Untouchable Girls

"It's not quite Tegan and Sara meets Flight of the Conchords."

ARTS ↻ page 12

"There isn't a separation
between **what urban space
is and what art is.**"

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LOOKING FOR LISTINGS?

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*COVER IMAGE

PHOTO BY DYLAN HEWLETT
Dylan is *The Uniter's* photo editor for 2011/2012.
See more of his work at
www.hewlettphotography.ca

UNITER STAFF

MANAGING EDITOR
Aaron Epp » editor@uniter.ca

BUSINESS MANAGER
Geoffrey Brown » geoff@uniter.ca

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Ayame Ulrich » designer@uniter.ca

This is the second of two great summer issues *The Uniter* is publishing this year.

Our regular, weekly publishing schedule resumes in September. Look out for our next issue on newsstands on Thursday, Sept. 1. If you're interested in contributing articles, photos or illustrations, e-mail Aaron at editor@uniter.ca.

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CONTRIBUTORS:

Aranda Adams, Ethan Cabel, Kent Davies, Timothy Dyck, Britt Embry, Nicholas Friesen, Robert Galston, Paul Hesse, Dylan Hewlett, Brittany McLeod, Karlene Ooto-Stubbs, Timothy Penner, Michael Petkau Falk, Matt Preprost, Lee Repko, Aaron Snider, Jon Sorokowski, Samuel Swanson, Anne Thomas, Cindy Titus, Colin Vandenberg, J. Williams

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CONTACT US »
General Inquiries: 204.786.9790
Advertising: 204.786.9790
Editors: 204.786.9497
Fax: 204.783.7080
E-mail: uniter@uniter.ca
Web: www.uniter.ca

LOCATION »
Room ORM14
University of Winnipeg
515 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2E9



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Michael Rac (chair), Alex Freedman, Ben Wickstrom, Kelly Ross, Karmen Wells, Peter Ives, Robert Galston and Sara McGregor.

For inquiries e-mail: board@uniter.ca



SCIENCE COMPLEX OPENS

Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger, James Richardson & Sons, Limited chairman of the Board Carolyn Hursh, MP Bob Sopuck and University of Winnipeg President and Vice-Chancellor Lloyd Axworthy cut a ribbon to officially open the Richardson College for the Environment and Science Complex at 599 Portage Ave.

The \$66.58 million facility, made possible through partnerships with the provincial and federal governments and private donors, includes more than 30 new teaching and research labs, a vivarium and a 1,127 square foot rooftop greenhouse.

The new facility is one of the most energy efficient educational laboratory buildings in North America, and is targeting LEED Gold designation.

COURTESY UW

Manitoba budget good news for students



LEIF LARSEN/THE MANITOBBAN

Finance Minister Rosann Wowchuk delivers the 2011 Manitoba budget this past April.

Tuition increases linked to inflation, more money for university operating grants

LEIF LARSEN
THE MANITOBBAN (UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA)

WINNIPEG (CUP) — Students and universities in the province of Manitoba should be happy with the province's 2011 budget.

The budget will link the rate of tuition increase with inflation. This means Manitoba students can expect to pay about one to two per cent more for their education this September, as opposed to the five per cent or higher some students and organizations had feared.

In order to offset what finance minister Rosann Wowchuk called "low tuitions," the NDP government will also implement a multi-year plan to help universities cover the cost of operations.

This plan will see university operating grants increase substantially over the next three years.

Both Alanna Makinson, Manitoba chairperson for the Canadian Federation of Students, and Heather Laube, students' union president

at the University of Manitoba, felt that the 2011 budget represented a step in the right direction.

Laube said this budget represents "good news" for students.

"For a number of years students have been encouraging the provincial government to look at their policies on tuition fees and tuition fee regulation," she said. "I think (this budget) gives students an idea of how tuition fees are going to be increasing."

The provincial Liberals and Conservatives also liked what they saw in the budget in regards to post-secondary education, but both felt the NDP's initiatives were adaptations of their own policies.

Liberal leader Jon Gerrard said his party "were leaders in having a tuition increase, which is only the rate of inflation."

Erin Selby, the newly appointed advanced education minister, felt her party did a good job of balancing "affordability and accessibility" with sustainability for post-secondary institutions.

The 2011 budget will allocate the equivalent of one-seventh of the provincial sales tax, or about \$239 million, to municipalities for use on infrastructure and transportation.

In Winnipeg this could mean more money spent on public transportation, including the

city's rapid transit plan, which the city says will eventually link the University of Manitoba with downtown.

When asked if she would like to see the new money put toward rapid transit in Winnipeg, Selby said that a lot of students have told her that rapid transit is a priority for them, and that those students would appreciate more convenient ways to get to school.

Your article, photo or illustration could be here.

*

The Uniter is always looking for more people to contribute to the paper.

Students and community members are welcome to get involved.

E-mail Aaron at editor@uniter.ca for more information.

Campus News Briefs

Compiled by Jon Sorokowski

BOARD APPROVES BALANCED 2011-2012 BUDGET

The University of Winnipeg's Board of Regents approved a \$100 million balanced operating budget for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. The budget allows the university to hire 31 tenure-track faculty, increase entrance scholarships, create \$250,000 worth of new second- and third-year scholarships and bursaries, and expand money and opportunities earmarked for research. To balance the budget, a U of W press release reported that the university cut expenses wherever possible without affecting student services and academics. The university also restructured certain units and froze senior executive and middle manager salaries.

STUDENTS EXPLORE SOUTH AFRICA RECONCILIATION

A group of students from the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg have travelled to South Africa to learn about apartheid. The U of W's Global College course welcomed graduate and undergraduate students to explore reconciliation as part of healing. The two-week course began in Cape Town and ended in Johannesburg and examined community-based to government-initiated reconciliation projects. Six South African students joined the group for the course. Global College vice-principal Dean Peachey said the course gives students a richer understanding of South Africa's dealing with apartheid, a U of W press release reported. A similar course is planned for 2012 that

focuses on aboriginal experiences, but will depend on funding availability to support South African students.

GREEN CORRIDOR TO CONNECT CAMPUSES

Construction at the University of Winnipeg continues this summer with the building of a green corridor that links the main campus to the new Richardson College campus. The university reported the project will create new community green space, improve accessibility and update an aging campus and community sewer system. By Sept. 5, the campuses will be connected by an accessible and lit path monitored by security cameras. Cisterns installed by the university and the City of Winnipeg will also be in place underground to improve sewage transport. The eco-project began June 13.

STUDENTS WINS TOP 20 UNDER 20 AWARD

U of W human rights student Megan Fultz has received a Youth in Motion Top 20 Under 20 award, which praises 20 Canadians for their innovation, achievement and leadership. Fultz was among 20 young Canadians presented the national award and the first Manitoba recipient in two years. Fultz began working toward her B.A. in human rights at Global College while still in high school and donated much of a scholarship she received to the university's Global Citizenship Fund. She currently acts as a student advisor, a U of W press release reported. Fultz received the award in Toronto on June 2.

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City Councillor
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jennygerbasi.ca

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Comments

Follow the leader

The MTS Centre is a contributor to downtown life, and other developments should follow suit



ROBERT GALSTON
VOLUNTEER STAFF

In an article in the latest issue of the Toronto magazine *Spacing*, sports writer Adam Proteau suggested that the MTS Centre is "probably the most urban-friendly sports complex in Canada."

With Boston's Fenway Park and Chicago's Wrigley Field (built in 1912 and 1914, respectively) as obvious exceptions, Proteau is probably right. The MTS Centre stands on a relatively small block, in the middle of a relatively built up commercial centre.

Not just urban by virtue of being snug among its surroundings, it also possesses some basic architectural texture, has several active entrances, and a few commercial services oriented to the sidewalk public, making it a part of the neighbourhood even when no events are going on.

In contrast, most sports facilities in North America are monoliths built on vast swaths of land at the forgotten edges of downtown — usually former rail yards or industrial waterfronts.

Ostensibly, these facilities are built there to spur development opportunities in the surrounding neighbourhood, but, with few exceptions, they have had very limited results.

The blocks south of Portage Avenue need the strong residential population they enjoyed prior to the 1950s more than they need a hockey team the city enjoyed prior to 1996

In the middle of what is still Winnipeg's commercial centre, the MTS Centre acting as an agent of urban renewal would be a greater challenge.

Portage Avenue is fairly built up, and land assembly for further development is a costly and complicated process.

There are also existing myriad uses and users of the neighborhood, including a concentrated expression of the city's poverty and social dysfunction, which congregates on and



COLIN VANDENBERG

near Portage Avenue during the day and evening.

Still, this hasn't stopped many people from imagining that NHL hockey will be the happy ending of downtown's sad post-war saga.

Perhaps caught up in the ecstasy of a new NHL team, one local urban issues columnist trumpeted it will give the city the "renewed opportunity to transform our downtown and

area, thus creating a financial incentive for further development.

In the case of Portage Avenue, however, tax increases will go toward public infrastructure projects such as new sidewalk benches, street lamps or a new "public square" on the Manitoba Public Insurance-owned parking lot behind the MTS Centre.

The NHL's return will be a good opportunity for downtown, but in trying to make the neighbourhood just one thing, organic strengths that are already there can be cut off.

So, too, can the chance to allow other uses to flourish. The blocks south of Portage Avenue need the strong residential population they enjoyed prior to the 1950s more than they need a hockey team the city enjoyed prior to 1996.

The area around arenas built on the wind-swept edges of a city's downtown can remain a parking lot wasteland, and while this may detract from the game day experience, it really doesn't matter. Portage Avenue does not have that option: it is unavoidably the public face of Winnipeg, and the city cannot afford to ignore it outside of game days.

If the MTS Centre as a major league sports facility is going to uplift Portage Avenue, it

will have to do so only as one component of a busy, mixed-use district.

The City of Winnipeg and other downtown organizations should seek quality over quantity when it comes to approving development plans downtown, and it should be more about asking what vitality these developments will add, rather than what blight they will remove.

Design, scale and complexity matter. There must be a good number of old buildings because they add not just character, but economic opportunities (there is a reason why the best bars and restaurants are found in old buildings).

There must also be a great number of buildings with small footprints rather than ones that take up entire blocks.

The MTS Centre is relatively urban and manages to be a contributor to downtown life because it is as compact as possible and interacts with the street.

Every other development, sports-related or not, should follow this same rule.

Robert Galston is a University of Winnipeg student who writes about urban issues. Visit his blog at <http://riseandprawl.tumblr.com>.

Government needs to put citizens first when it comes to road repair

Osborne Bridge repairs an example of what not to do



PAUL HESSE
VOLUNTEER

There was confusion in late April when the Osborne Bridge closed its east sidewalk for repairs. Construction was easy underway, but until then, the daily routine for pedestrians and cyclists had not changed.

All of a sudden, people found they could no longer walk to and from downtown through the legislature grounds. They could no longer access the new Assiniboine Avenue bikeway.

Officially, the plan was for pedestrians and cyclists to cross under the bridge.

When the Assiniboine River is low, there is a riverside pathway that connects Mostyn Place (by the Granite Curling Club) to Assiniboine Avenue (and the river walk). However, that walkway was underwater, and even when it's open, it is very steep by Mostyn.

What happened next was predictable: there was massive jaywalking.

On the first day, I often saw crowds of a dozen or more people walking across together through breaks in traffic on Osborne Avenue. Mothers pushed baby strollers through idling cars. Cyclists rode their bikes through

the chaos. Joggers ran through three lanes of traffic.

The media seemed surprised, but they shouldn't have been.

Before the construction, pedestrians could cross Osborne at Roslyn Road. The construction made that impossible. Was there an adequate alternative? Sadly, no.

With the river walk closed, the other plan was for pedestrians and cyclists to travel north to Broadway before crossing. But there were no signs explaining that, and people prefer to get somewhere the shortest possible way. Many seniors didn't have the energy for a 700-metre walk to Broadway and back.

Cyclists were also affected; they were cut off from the Assiniboine bikeway, which only opened last year, and most cyclists don't feel safe cycling in the construction zone.

The police have, so far, not ticketed the jaywalkers, but they have ticketed cyclists on the bridge's sidewalk.

Construction workers were also at risk when the river walk was underwater. I was shocked to see them also crossing the bridge through traffic. Their work is on the east side, but the construction trailers are parked on Mostyn, on the west. Luckily, no worker has been hit so far.

Slowly, people are adjusting. A long, high fence is now discouraging jaywalking, and when the river is low enough, the riverside path is open.

But, next year, the west sidewalk will be

closed and the curling club, Great West Life and West Broadway will be similarly cut off from the east side.

What lessons should we learn from this? Government must better understand its citizens and their needs in order to serve them.

We must learn from these projects and improve our planning. We must understand how people actually travel. We must acknowledge their desire to get from Point A to Point B as directly as possible.

Sadly, pedestrians and cyclists have been neglected during the repairs. The story is not much better with the Disraeli Overpass and bridge work.

Work on the Disraeli will slow traffic and put pressure on the narrow Redwood and Louise bridges.

At the end, a new cycling bridge will also open, but that's the reverse of how it should happen.

The new cycling bridge should have been started and opened first. Then citizens could have left their cars and cycled, rollerbladed or walked over the river.

This would have reduced their inconve-

nience and reduced congestion for everyone else. It would have cut emissions from cars stuck in traffic jams during the work.

Instead, more people will be stuck in traffic. Government didn't put people first.

Bridge work is necessary; the repairs will lead, ultimately, to improvements.

When all is finished, there will be new bike lanes on the Osborne Bridge. The sidewalks will be slightly narrower, but still wide enough for pedestrians. The hope is that cyclists will be comfortable in the new, on-street bicycle lanes.

And, in late 2012, a new pedestrian crossing across Osborne, between Mostyn and Assiniboine, will open.

However, it's too bad it could not have been done first.

Progress requires change and is often inconvenient. But, it should not cause danger and government must be more sensitive to its citizens.

We must learn from these projects and improve our planning. We must understand how people actually travel.

We must acknowledge their desire to get from Point A to Point B as directly as possible.

And we must not make pedestrians and cyclists an afterthought. Government should put its citizens first.

Paul Hesse is the Manitoba Liberal Candidate for MLA in Fort Rouge.

Eight ways to improve your music career



ARANDA ADAMS

Educating yourself, taking risks and having fun are key to succeeding



MICHAEL PETKAU FALK
VOLUNTEER

I want to offer an addendum to my discussion with Kier-La Janisse about the state of Winnipeg's arts scene from the March 31 issue of *The Uniter* ("State of the arts," page 14).

Specifically, I'd like to address some opportunities for the local music community – ways to get better, develop a broader audience and take those sometimes scary steps to building a sustainable music career.

1. Take risks! The world is full of musicians playing it safe, copying their idols or trying to figure out what the public wants and then providing it.

This is backwards. Copycats don't get remembered – innovators do. Make high quality art that stands on its own and means something, and people will be attracted to it.

No record that plays it safe has lasted in the public's consciousness or got people excited about spreading the word about the act. Do something that gets people excited. No risk, no reward.

2. Your relationship with your audience is everything. And for artists on the fringes, it takes longer to find the people who your music will resonate with.

For example, it took The National four

albums and thousands upon thousands of dollars of debt to finally find an audience that cared deeply about their music.

Venetian Snares is one of Manitoba's highest selling artists and performs to thousands of people across Europe, yet gets little recognition at home. He had to travel extensively to connect to those who revered one of the world's most innovative musicians.

Be prepared to go where your audience is, not where you want them to be.

3. Become versed in the language and culture of the music industry – especially if you play non-mainstream music, as the margins for sustainability are smaller.

Read industry blogs such as Bob Lefsetz, ask questions of Manitoba Music or local music business-people you respect.

I can't tell you how many established local artists I've dealt with at the West End Cultural Centre who don't know how an offer sheet works, or how the venue/artist partnership works.

These are basic things – if you're going to build a career, you need to invest in learning the business, and you're going to need partnerships.

The DIY ethic can only get you so far – there are so many jobs: publicity, distribution, marketing, video, tour booking, concert promotion – that it's nearly impossible to do all of them yourself, let alone do them well. Identify your weaknesses and find people to help. Build your team!

4. Get really good at your instrument, at your songcraft, at your soundscapes, at your feedback – whatever it is that defines the music you make, get really damn good at it.

Blow people away. Surprise people with how good you are. Invest in high-quality gear and learn how to use it.

Have the humility to shorten songs, be aggressive with the arrangement axe. "That's good enough" rarely is.

5. Manitoba Music offers an unbelievable selection of music industry workshops, many of which are under-attended by the people that could most use the information. If you're too cool to care how to build a career, you're not going to have one.

But if you want answers to your questions, insights into how and why things work, or opportunities to make new connections, attend these workshops. They're insightful and a great way to get both connected and informed.

6. No other place in the world funds musical artists to the extent that Manitoba does. No one. Manitoba Film & Music and Manitoba Music are great partners who can help you build connections outside of Manitoba, and help fund the process.

Get to know them, get to know the grant system and learn to write grants really well.

But most of all (and worst of puns), do not take this opportunity for granted. Sometimes with such a system a sense of entitlement develops amongst the potential recipients.

You are not owed anything by these organizations – you are given an unbelievable gift, the opportunity to have the very expensive developing years of your music career supported by these agencies.

7. You need to dedicate your life to making music, and making music exceptionally

well. There is no other option anymore – you're either in it for the long haul, or you're wasting everyone's time.

There are more artists than ever right now and you are in competition not just with Winnipeg acts, but acts from across Canada, North America and increasingly, Europe and beyond.

This shouldn't be scary for you, but it does require commitment. Deep down inside, this has to be what you want to do. It takes a lot of work, a lot of trial and error, some rejection, but your goal must be to be able to excel on a stage and on record.

There are more ways than ever to build a sustainable music career. Be prepared to work hard and work smart.

8. Have fun! At the end of the day you get to put all of this hard work aside and walk onto a stage and play music with your friends. Sometimes even in far away places. And that's pretty special.

Our fine city has a lot of talent, but we're isolated and there isn't a lot of music industry here. It takes extra effort to make the connections and find the answers that you need to get things going beyond our borders.

I've felt for several years that there was a growing tide of great new music coming from this city, and the more of us that can take these points to heart and build some momentum, the more everyone benefits.

Michael Petkau Falk is the artistic director at the West End Cultural Centre and singer-guitarist in Les Jupes.

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Arts & Culture

The greatest show on Earth

Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival set to be a perfect storm of entertainment



ETHAN CABEL
VOLUNTEER STAFF

"A few years ago, it was closing night of the festival, and there was a thunder storm the likes of which I've never seen," says veteran Fringe performer TJ Dawe when asked to recount his favourite memory of the Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival.

"Lightning was striking from cloud to cloud across the entire sky ... and no one I knew in Winnipeg remarked on it as being unusual the next day," he adds.

"This wasn't a once in a century kind of storm – that, in Winnipeg, is called a thunderstorm."

"We're still finding new patrons every year. We're trying to help artists get bigger audiences."

- CHUCK MCEWAN, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, WINNIPEG FRINGE THEATRE FESTIVAL

For Dawe and many of the hundreds of Fringe performers who will journey to the city in mid-July, this is an apt metaphor.

While the Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival set an in-door paid ticket attendance record of over 86,000 last year and is among the largest in the country, Winnipeggers still consider the festivities that engulf the Exchange District from July 13-24 as simply

another summer activity.

"The notion of anywhere in Canada, anywhere in North America, or anywhere in the world where there is a popular audience for new, unpublished, experimental, and often local theatre ... it's so unlikely," says Dawe, who returns to Winnipeg this year with the autobiographical *Lucky 9*, a show that examines three forces that came into his life, and brought his family together, in 2009.

"And yet it's real and it's thriving and it doesn't happen anywhere else."

Chuck McEwan, the festival's executive producer, fervently believes that the Fringe can only continue to grow in Winnipeg.

"We're still finding new patrons every year," he says.

While the Fringe will remain extended to Albert and Arthur streets in the absence of the old vendor court, still inaccessible due to construction on the Union Bank Tower, McEwan believes that in 2012 (the festival's 25th year), the Fringe will take up both areas with outdoor activities.

"It just shows you how educated and confident our theatre-going public is ... they're out there in the thousands seeing new plays, just having fun and trying to discover the next big name on the Fringe circuit."

This year, the Fringe will be facilitating audience growth with two new features: allowing companies to charge a special rate (two for \$10) for any show they choose as well as permitting Fringe pass holders to book up to half their tickets in advance before the start of the festival.

"We're trying to help artists get bigger



Local sketch comedy groups Hot Thespian Action (top of page) and Outside Joke (above) are participating in this year's Fringe Festival.

audiences," says McEwan, adding that there are 150 productions at this year's Fringe with companies from around the world.

Tickets for individual plays range from \$5-\$10

and can be purchased in cash at the venue. Advance tickets and Frequent Fringer passes can be purchased at the Manitoba Theatre Centre box office at 174 Market Avenue or online at www.winnipegfringe.com.

Frequent fringer

The Uniter's resident Fringe fanatic picks five shows you should see

This is Cancer

Venue 16: PTE Mainstage (393 Portage Ave.)

After losing 90 per cent of his vision to cancer of the eye and after the death of both his father and grandfather, Canadian actor/writer/musician Bruce Horak decided to personify the disease for a laugh at its expense. It all began with spontaneous open mic performances whereby Horak, after being introduced as Cancer, would state simply to the audience: "I've been told you have something

to say to me." It has since evolved into a full-scale, critically acclaimed 90-minute dark comedy about Cancer's slow realization that the entire world hates him.

Law and Order: Nursery Rhyme Unit

Kids Venue: School of Contemporary Dancers (211 Bannatyne Ave.)

The Inspector and the Punnish Sir ("he's always scrambling for egg puns!") are called on to investigate Humpty Dumpty's crime scene in a satire of television's *Law and Order* and a fun nursery rhyme farce. From the director of the 2009 Kid's Venue Best of Fest *Cinderella! Cinderella!* comes a smart comedy that incorporates word play and adult references designed to make parents (and children) howl with laughter.

Happy Slap

Venue 10: Planetarium Auditorium (190 Rupert Ave.)

The rough definition of "happy slap," a popular if short-lived fad in the United Kingdom, is a spontaneous assault caught on camera. The performance poet and quick-witted English comedian Rob Gee, who mastered his twisted brand of theatre with the dark comedy *Fruitcake* and celebration of childhood *SmartArse* at the 2009 and 2010 festivals, returns to Winnipeg with a brand new "celebration of impropriety."

jem rolls IS PISSED OFF, The Same Joke Twice by jem rolls

Venue 14: King's Head Pub (120 King St.)

The beloved English performance poet jem rolls returns yet again. However, the Fringe veteran will not only wow audiences with

his visceral and politically-charged poetry on the second floor of the King's Head pub (Venue 16, *jem rolls IS PISSED OFF*); he will also perform a one-man play (*The Same Joke Twice*, Venue 9) about "a couple stuck in a hotel room (that) struggle valiantly for true love and real life."

The Sucker Punch

Venue 7: Cinematheque (100 Arthur St.)

Fringe powerhouse Brent Hirose returns to the Winnipeg Fringe with a one-man, multifaceted sci-fi drama that uses time travel as a plot element to weave four characters together. He seamlessly portrays a businessman, a socially inept slam poet, an unsuspecting test subject and a factory labourer with relationship woes. The content has been described by critics as darkly introspective, dealing with alienation and the limitations of modern technology.

Five days of folk music in July

2011 Winnipeg Folk Festival aims to excite and engage audiences with a diverse schedule of performers

SAMUEL SWANSON
VOLUNTEER STAFF

When the lineup for the 2011 Winnipeg Folk Festival was announced, standout acts included k.d. Lang, Blue Rodeo and an acoustic set by Tegan and Sara, leading some to believe the festival was catering to its older, committed attendees.

However, when artistic director Chris Frayer talks about the festival, he doesn't focus on those acts.

"We've started to go deeper into the world of electronic music, bringing in Ganga Giri from Australia and Omar Souleyman from Syria," Frayer says.

The festival begins at Birds Hill Park on Wednesday, July 6 and runs until Sunday, July 10.

"Folk music is hip where we live, and it's not that way everywhere in the world."

- CHRIS FRAYER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, WINNIPEG FOLK FESTIVAL

The idea, Frayer says, is to appeal to a wide and increasingly younger audience to get them into the festival. Once there, he hopes people will begin exploring how broad folk music's range is.

"I think the electronic stuff works best to provide a catalytic opportunity to introduce fans to a variety of music," Frayer says.

A late addition to the festival lineup is San Francisco-based electronic and world fusion duo, Beats Antique.

"In regards to bringing electronica/folk to a younger audience, we feel that this is one of Beats Antique's most important missions," Beats Antique member Dave Satori says by email.

"The younger generation is living in a highly electronic, computerized culture," he continues. "I grew up with record players and cassette tapes – an analogue childhood that saw the transition into the digital world. I believe Beats Antique tries to capture that transition and remind the new generation of its rich history and amazing traditions that have built this beautiful world."

Frayer adds that folk music is evolving at a very fast pace.

"The festival more or less represents the different kinds of tastes in folk music that people have so that younger audiences get



to see the acts they know, while we're trying to be true to the artists that shaped their genres," he says.

For example, Saturday's feature act at the festival will be Funky Meters, who had a great deal of influence in developing funk as a genre in the '60s and '70s.

Some of the first-time acts at the festival this year include Wilco lead singer Jeff Tweedy, who will hit the main stage on Sunday, as well as Vermont's Mountain Man and Winnipeg's Crooked Brothers.

"There's been a lot of debate about what is folk music," said Jesse Matas, mandolin player and vocalist with the Crooked Brothers. "It looks like a great lineup. I think Chris (Frayer) did a really good job."

Frayer says the key to programming a successful lineup of music is to include music that is going to get people excited and engaged.

"Folk music is hip where we live, and it's not that way everywhere in the world," he says.

Visit www.winnipegfolkfestival.ca.



Jeff Tweedy (top of page) and Oh My Darling (above) will perform at this year's Winnipeg Folk Festival.

Folk Festival highlights

As usual, the line-up of performers at the 2011 the Winnipeg Folk Festival features an eclectic mix of local, U.S. and international artists.

Here are some acts you won't want to miss.

M. Ward

A troubadour of today's singer-songwriter scene, Ward has a zest for collaboration and a knack for getting the perfect sound. The American singer-songwriter has released seven solo albums as well as collaborations with actress Zooey Deschanel (as She & Him) and fellow singer-songwriters Jim James, Conor Oberst and Mike Mogis (as Monsters of Folk).

Jeff Tweedy

He's never released a solo album, but as the leader of critically acclaimed rockers Wilco and as a former member of Uncle Tupelo, Tweedy has 11 albums of material from the past 21 years to choose from. With any luck, he'll play a song or two from *The Whole Love*, Wilco's eighth studio album, due out in September.

Omar Souleyman

According to Wikipedia, this musician from Syria has released around 500 studio and live

albums since he began his career in 1994. Whether that's true or not, Souleyman has been "drawing rapturous reviews" for his live show, according to Pitchfork. His music draws from a number of traditional Arabic styles but also uses dance beats and synthesizers.

Funky Meters

Combining funk, blues and dance grooves with a New Orleans vibe, The Funky Meters have toured with the likes of The Rolling Stones, and have been a studio band for artists like Dr. John, Paul McCartney, Robert Palmer and Patti Labelle in their 31-year history. Originally known as The Meters, the band is considered to be one of the originators of funk music.

Tim Robbins and the Rogues Gallery Band

Admittedly, we're mostly interested in this one because of the novelty. Fifty-two-year-old Oscar-winning actor and nominated director Tim Robbins leads a group that includes keyboardist Roger Eno, multi-instrumentalist Kate St. John and musical saw player David Coulter. The band will release its debut album on July 5. Wouldn't it be amazing if Morgan Freeman made an appearance at the band's Folk Festival show?



Winnipeg's The Crooked Brothers are one of many Manitoba acts appearing at the festival.

Opera and garage rock, together at last

This Hisses debut with *Surf Noir*

SAMUEL SWANSON
VOLUNTEER STAFF

Just home from Toronto's North by Northeast Music Festival, This Hisses played Old Market Square on June 18 to kick-off the Winnipeg Jazz Festival and have had a busy weekend touring their haunting surf sound — a genre that became the name of their upcoming debut album, *Surf Noir*.

Characterized by Julia Ryckman's operatic voice and commanding presence, Patrick Short's post-punk influenced grungy guitar riffs and JP Perron's tempo-shifting, surf-style drumming, This Hisses have built a reputation as a band to watch.

However, when they first got together to jam, they didn't even know they would be a band.

"It was purely a recording project at first, but the chemistry was so good we were like, no, this is a good band, we're gonna do this all the way," Ryckman says.

Wanting to get in the studio to lay down previously unrecorded songs from her last project, The Gorgon, Ryckman enlisted the help of former Mahogany Frog drummer Perron as well as Short, who played in Electric Candles and Under Pressure.

Since then the band has been signed to local label Transistor 66, and is set to release *Surf Noir* with a show at the Pyramid Cabaret on Saturday, July 23.

Much of the band's publicity so far has been about Ryckman putting her opera background to use in a garage rock context. Her

study of voice at the Royal Conservatory of Music has influenced her songwriting and lyrics.

"A lot of my vocal melodies were written before the words, and the melody dictated the direction of the lyrics completely because there are certain parts in the song where I want a certain phrasing, so I need a certain vowel there to carry that phrase," Ryckman says. "It's not the only factor, but it's a major factor in my lyrics writing."

Another major influence in her lyrics is her degree in English literature, an accomplishment shared by Short.

"How you see the world is how you use words," Ryckman says. "Symbolism and imagery, and how you put a sentence together is something that, having done an English degree, you can't not think about."

This Hisses was described by the host at the Old Market Square show as one of the most exciting bands in Winnipeg to watch live.

Certainly, a lot of that comes from Perron's hyperactive drumming that's visually somewhere between Keith Moon and Animal from The Muppets.

"We're trying to take it as it comes right now," Perron says of the band's future plans.

"We're trying to play good shows, and we practice a lot and try to make our shows really good for the audience and really good for us."

⇒ This Hisses releases *Surf Noir* on Saturday, July 23 at the Pyramid Cabaret

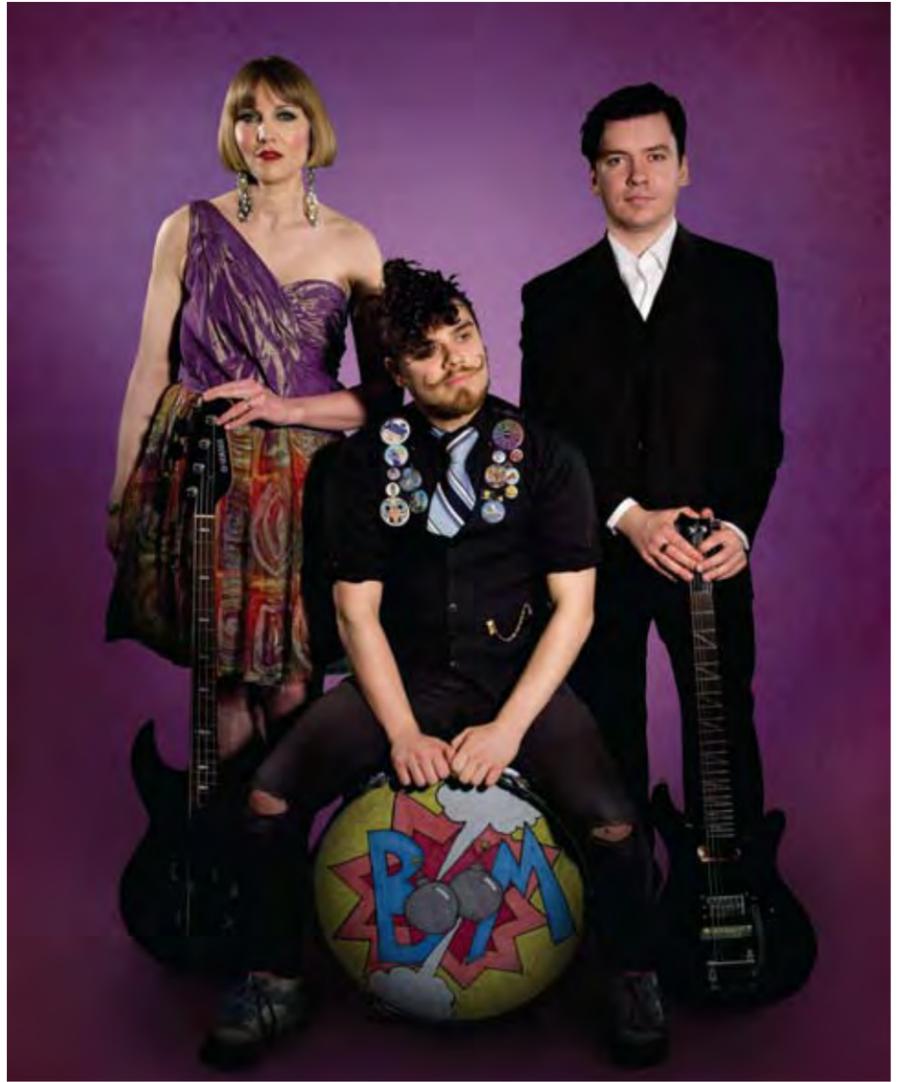
⇒ The Lonely Vulcans and The Girth will also perform

⇒ Advance tickets are \$10 at Into the Music, Music Trader, Kustom Kulture and Urban Waves, or \$12 at the door

⇒ Doors open at 10 p.m.

⇒ Download three songs for free at <http://bit.ly/ThisHisses>

⇒ Visit www.myspace.com/thishisses



TYLER FUNK

Brian Wilson meets David Lynch: Julia Ryckman, JP Perron and Patrick Short describe the This Hisses sound as "surf noir."

MUSIC LISTINGS

THURSDAY, JUNE 29 to WEDNESDAY, JULY 6

Canada Day starts early at the Cavern with ROMI MAYES, FRANKIE & THE POORBOYS and THE AFTERPARTY on June 30.

If you want to get crazy Canada Day weekend it's suggested that you make the trip to DAUPHIN'S COUNTRYFEST with TOBY KEITH, JOHNNY REID, DOC WALKER, THE MUDMEN, THE ROWDYMEN, THE WARPED 45s, AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, GEORGE CANYON and more from June 30 until July 3.

Canada Day continues at the Cavern with THE F-HOLES, THE BOTTLE ROCKETS, THE ENGLISH MOCCASINS, THE ROCKDORAS and THE TELEPATHIC BUTTERFLIES on July 1.

Other Osborne Village Canada day festivities include the CANADA DAY MEGA BASH with THE PERMS, NEW RENAISSANCE, THE BOKONONISTS, THE BENDERENOS, TIM BUTLER, BILL DURST, EL DIABLO and AM GLORY at the Osborne Village Inn on July 1. London Music Hall of Famer BILL DURST will also be appearing at the Osborne Street Festival during Canada Day.

What would Canada Day be without checking out the fireworks at the Forks along with great performances on the Scotiabank Stage by MAMA CUTSWORTH, MAGNUM K.I., TAKE ME TO THE PILOT, THE F-HOLES, JASON KIRKNESS, THE LIPTONIANS and of course the WSO.

LES SEXY rock the Cavern with FLOOR 13 on July 2.

THE BLACK KEYS play the MTS Center with CAGE THE ELEPHANT on July 2.

THE BOKONONISTS, MAHOGANY FROG and LITTLE HOUSE hopefully play a fixed up Royal Albert on July 2.

Drum 'n' bass DJ wizard ALIX PEREZ performs alongside ENCODE, REDWORM and OWEN REYNOLDS at Ozzy's on July 2.

Come on! You really want to see C'MON with MICRODOT, THE MYSTICS and THE GUNNESS at the Death Trap on July 2.

A PERFECT CIRCLE plays the Centennial Concert Hall with RED BACTERIA VACUUM on July 4.

Metal band CHILDREN OF BODOM returns to the Garrick Centre on July 4.

Edmonton's FEAST OR FAMINE, HIGH-CLASS LOW-LIFES, MOGGLEY and THE WOODLAND CREATURES play the Lo Pub on July 5.

Check out live music at the Lyric Theatre in Assiniboine Park all summer long. The series kicks off with ROCKI ROLLETTI on July 5.

FRED EAGLESMITH plays the Park Theatre on July 6.

The spooky MUSIC IN THE CEMETERY series begins July 6 with STILL STANDING at St. James Cemetery.

The downtown summer concert series continues on July 6 with BIG JAY HARRISON at Air Canada Park.

THURSDAY, JULY 7 to WEDNESDAY, JULY 13

From July 6 to July 10 the WINNIPEG FOLK FESTIVAL at Birds Hill Park will have performances by JEFF TWEEDY, BLUE RODEO, K.D. LANG, TEGAN & SARA, LUCINDA WILLIAMS, TINARIVEN, TOOTS AND THE MAYTALS, THE JAYHAWKS, and locals SCOTT NOLAN, IMAGINARY CITIES, TWILIGHT HOTEL, CROOKED

BROTHERS, DJs HUNNICUTT and MAMA CUTSWORTH and so much more!

THE TRAGICALLY HIP rock Shaw Park with BROKEN SOCIAL SCENE and HEY ROSETTA! on July 7.

The SOCA-REGGAE FESTIVAL returns to Old Market Square featuring OMESS SINGH, JAH KETTLE, KOOL RUNNINGS BAND, PARADIZE BAND, DUB ROOTS BAND, KID KOALA KAPONE, DE-MO MICE, MELLOW MAN and more from July 8 until July 10.

Chill out to the folk stylings of LINDSEY WHITE at McNally Robinson's Prairie Ink Restaurant on July 9.

WILLING FEET, CETASCEAN, WOLBACHIA and SCABSMOKER destroy the Death Trap on July 9.

Shane Quagmire is turning 29 and to celebrate 77 GUNS, THE PINKSLIPS and THE AFTERLIFE are throwing him a punk-rock party at the Albert on July 9.

A band resembling LYNRYD SKYNYRD plays the MTS centre on July 10.

Direct from Spain, gypsy flamenco act FLAMENCO DE JEREZ play the West End Cultural Center on July 13.

THURSDAY, JULY 14 to WEDNESDAY, JULY 20

Seven-piece pop-rockers LIBRARY VOICES play the West End Cultural Center on July 14.

Celtic rock act BANSHEE'S WAIL sets sail on the M.S. River Rouge with DJ ROB VILAR on July 14.

Local folk-rock sensation INGRID GATIN's long awaited EP release party is at the Park Theatre Café on July 14.

THE RESIGNATORS play alongside THE AFTERBEAT at the Royal Albert on July 14.

CHEERING FOR THE BAD GUY and BEN WYTINCK play the Times Change(d) High & Lonesome Club on July 14.

Centennial Concert Hall presents BLUE MAN GROUP on July 16 and July 17.

It's metal mayhem with TYRANTS DEMISE, NINJASPY, KYOKTYS and EYAM at Ozzy's on July 15.

ROMI MAYES and THE PERPS drink their weight while playing at the Times Change(d) on July 15.

The Broadway Neighbourhood Centre hosts a PICNIC FOR OLD & NEW FRIENDS with ERICA MARKS, DB BLUES BAND, CHRIS PALMER, DEUXIEME TAKE, PRIMROSE and much more on July 16.

BILLY JOE GREEN's video release party is set with LOST PRIORITY and PRIMATIVE at the Pyramid Cabaret on July 16.

DARK DARK DARK bring their unique piano-driven atmosphere to the WECC with NARWHAL STRIKE and DEMETRA on July 20.

Ukrainian-rock act ZRADA celebrates its EP release for *Farewell and Thanks for the All the Gypsies* at the Pyramid Cabaret on Wednesday, July 20.

EFFECT AND CAUSE, SALINAS and LITTLE HOUSE play Ozzy's on July 20.

THURSDAY, JULY 21 to WEDNESDAY, JULY 27

From July 21 to July 24, the 27th annual BRANDON FOLK MUSIC AND ART FESTIVAL features another great lineup with TEQUILA MOCKINGBIRD ORCHESTRA, THE SHEEPDOGS, FERRON, DAN BERN, MARIACHI GHOST, ROMI MAYES ELECTRIC TRIO, MAGNIFICANT 7'S, THE BURNING HELL, WAX MANNEQUIN and much more.

YEE-HAW! It's the MANITOBA STAMPEDE & EXHIBITION featuring a pro-rodeo, chuckwagon racing and an agricultural fair. Runs from Thursday, July 21 until Sunday, July 24 in Morris, Man.

LEBEATO and DJ ROB VILAR rocks the boat on the M.S. River Rouge on July 21.

Hopefully the party doesn't suck with THIS PARTY SUCKS and ON CALL HEROES at the WECC on July 22.

THIS HISSES release their much anticipated debut album *Surf Noir* at the Pyramid with THE LONELY VULCANS and THE GIRTH on Saturday, July 23.

It's gonna get sloppy with ALCOHOLIC WHITE TRASH at the Cavern along with TROUSER MOUTH, LESBIAN FIST MAGNET, PROSTITUTES and THE BUSHITTITS on July 23.

SLAYER!!!!!!! MTS Centre!!!!!!! July 27!!!!!!!

Post Slayer check out EXHUMED with MACABRE, CEPHALIC CARNAGE, WITHERED and PUTRESCENCE at the Royal Albert on July 27.

Author, actor, musician and funny man STEVE MARTIN plays with the Steep Canyon Rangers at the Pantages playhouse theatre on Wednesday, July 27.

The Downtown BIZ's free OUT TO LUNCH summer concert series continues with Canadian Folk Music Award winner DON AMERO at Air Canada Park on July 27.

THURSDAY, JULY 28 to WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3

The WAG is featuring JAZZ ON THE ROOFTOP all summer long with BJORN THORODDSEN, RICHARD GILLIS, GILLES FOURNIER and WILL BONNESS on July 28.

THE MASON RACK BAND plays the Park Theatre Café, July 28.

BEAN's on the Cube in Old Market Square on July 29.

The fifth annual FIRE & WATER MUSIC FESTIVAL hits Lac du Bonnet on the August long weekend which is somehow from July 29 to 31. Featuring: ROMI MAYES, ANDREW SCOTT, OH MY DARLING, THE CROOKED BROTHERS, FUBUKI DAIKO and much more.

MONTY YANKS and THE EXPERIENCES rock the Zoo on July 30th.

Free music at the Lyric Theatre in Assiniboine Park continues with STEVE OLIVER on July 31.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 4 to WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10

PAPA MAMBO play Winnipeg Art Gallery's JAZZ ON THE ROOFTOP series on Aug. 4.

THE GREAT WOODS MUSIC FESTIVAL features THE ROOT IN FLUENTS, JOHN PRIMER AND THE REAL DEAL BLUES BAND, BRAITHWAITE & WHITELEY, THE LIONEL YOUNG BAND, J.W. JONES, LYNDON JOHN X, THE AFTERPARTY and more. Check it out in Great Woods Park, Beausejour from Aug. 4 until

Aug. 6.

THE WIGGLES' BIG BIRTHDAY TOUR plays to loads of screaming kids at the MTS centre, Aug. 4.

Vancouver gospel group THE SOJOURNERS return to Winnipeg at the West End Cultural Centre on Thursday, Aug. 4.

Another August means another ARSONFEST. Hardcore fans get ready for total destruction all weekend long at the Death Trap with AHNA, ARCHAGATHUS, BLOODY PHOENIX, COOKED AND EATEN, ENABLER, HAGGATHA, OSK, PUTRESCENCE, WILLING FEET, WOLBACHIA, HAND OF THE HORSEWITCH, SCAB SMOKER and much more. Aug. 5 until Aug. 7.

Will the Times Change(d) High and Lonesome club stage fit both the THE TEQUILA MOCKINGBIRD ORCHESTRA and THE MAGNIFICENT 7s? We will see on Saturday, Aug. 6.

Jazz act NIGHTFALL plays the Prairie Ink Restaurant on Aug. 6.

The MUSIC IN THE CEMETERY series wraps up with CHARMAINE BACON at the St. James Cemetery on Aug. 10.

THE WINNIPEG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA is performing for the public in Old Market Square on Wednesday, Aug. 10.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 11 to WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17

A Manitoba festival tradition in Ontario? The TROUT FOREST MUSIC FESTIVAL features great local acts such as DON AMERO, VINCE ANDRUSHKO, CROOKED BROTHERS, CHIC GAMINE, MATT EPP, ANDREW NEVILLE & THE POOR CHOICES and more. Ear Falls Waterfront Park, Ear Falls, Ont., Aug. 12 until Aug. 14.

PUNCH, LOMA PRIETA, TU SFRES and EGYPTIAN ARTSTRIKE play the Death Trap on Aug. 12.

THE MINISTERS OF COOL play the Lyric Theatre in Assiniboine Park on Aug. 16.

Folk artist MARY GAUTHIER stops by the West End Cultural Centre, Aug. 18.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 18 to WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24

Do you like music? Do you like fishing? Do you like merriment? The RAINBOW TROUT MUSIC FESTIVAL AND FISHING DERBY is slowly becoming one of the best local music festivals of the year. Find out why by checking it out Friday, Aug. 19 until Aug. 21. This year's performers include THE EMPTY STANDARDS, THE JD EDWARDS BAND, DEPARTURES, SMOKY TIGER, VAMPIRES, MAGNUM K.I., ABSENT SOUND, ULTRA MEGA, TOME KEENAN, SWEET ALIBI and much more.

ROCK ON THE RANGE returns to the Canad Inns Stadium on Aug. 20 with ALICE IN CHAINS, SUM 41, EVANESCENCE, THE SHEEPDOGS, LOADED and more.

PUSHING DAISIES play a free show as part of the DOWNTOWN SUMMER CONCERT SERIES at Air Canada Park on Aug. 24.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 25 to WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31

Will it be worth it to go to BLINK 182 at the MTS Centre just to see RANCID and AGAINST ME on Aug. 25? We'll find out.

VILE INTENT destroys eardrums with WOLBACHIA, WOLFSBLOOD, VIOLENT GORGE on Aug. 31 at the Royal Albert.

Extreme music and social responsibility

Eleventh annual Arsonfest showcases great bands from across North America and raises money for a good cause

LEE REPKO
VOLUNTEER STAFF

Two months before the 2011 Arsonfest, festival organizer, metal promoter and musician Mike Alexander is looking back at how it all began 11 years ago.

"The first year it was called the Winnipeg Hardcore Festival," Alexander says. "Hardcore for me meant all things rad and dirty in music, but others gave me a hard time about the name."

"We changed the name the next year and got all sorts of other trouble from the mayor's office and the fire department because the name invokes a really strong reaction," Alexander continues. "There was some unintended media coverage and attention of the (University of Winnipeg Students' Association) that came from the name, but we decided to keep it instead of changing it again."

The name Arsonfest sparks an immediate gut reaction from anyone who hears it. Arson has a long history in Winnipeg that has left citizens dead and property lost.

The destruction that is often associated with fire in an urban setting is always immediately tragic.

However, as in nature, fire is always followed by re-growth and new life, another aspect of an incendiary and extreme music festival that might illuminate a little more about the name.

Arsonfest was inspired by the More Than Music Festival in Dayton, Ohio – a benefit festival that combined music and social activism. Alexander explains that Arsonfest has always held itself accountable to its community and has been a way for him to give back.



CAMILLE ELISE

The members of Calgary's Mares of Thrace are looking forward to headlining the first night of Arsonfest.

"Punk for me hasn't always been about putting on shows and paying bands money – it is about social responsibility," he says. "Music and ideas are supposed to be a progressive sentiment and this is about raising money for someone else in our community – something that has never changed (about the festival)."

Alexander has chosen to support his community again this year by donating the pro-

ceeds from the festival to the Powwow to Honour Children (who have died as a result of violence).

"The life story of Phoenix Sinclair is tragically sad and has an abrupt ending," explains Alexander, who is a part of Swan Lake First Nation. "And in Manitoba a lot of us here live in the shadow of this tragedy."

Phoenix Sinclair was a five-year-old girl from Fisher River First Nation, about two hours north of Winnipeg. Her life was full of torment at the hands of her mother, Samantha Kematch, and stepfather, Karl McKay, who eventually killed her.

Their defence council deemed the treatment she received while alive "horrific." Her body was found wrapped in plastic in a shallow grave at the edge of the garbage dump.

Sinclair had broken bones throughout her body when she died.

"I feel like I am straddling two communities – one of metal and one of thinking about powwows," Alexander says. "(Powwows are) a place of celebration (and) this one is to pay tribute to those children. It is important to take time aside to process grief and process trauma and deal with those kind of things."

"With ... the justice system the way it is, these kids are totally at risk of being subject to horrible things, and Phoenix is just an example."

An example that is not easily forgotten. "We must remember and honour," Alexander says. "That's just the way it is for me."

Arsonfest takes place at the Death Trap at 93 Albert St from Aug. 5 to Aug. 7. All ages welcome. Visit Arsonfest on Facebook at <http://on.fb.me/Arsonfest2011>.

THE ARSONFEST 2011 LINE-UP

FRIDAY, AUG. 5

Doors at 9:30 p.m.
Music at 10 p.m.
\$10 at the door

Mares of Thrace (Alberta)
Vilipend (Ontario)
Wolbachia
Cooked and Eaten (B.C.)
Violent Gorge
Willing Feet

SATURDAY, AUG. 6

Doors at 9:30 p.m.
Music at 10 p.m.
\$13 at the door

Bloody Phoenix (California)
Haggatha (B.C.)
Archagathus
Putrescence
Enabler (Wisconsin)
Osk (B.C.)
Wake (Alberta)

SUNDAY, AUG. 7

Doors at 7:30 p.m.
Music at 8 p.m.
\$10 at the door

Subjugation (B.C.)
Urine Cop (Illinois)
Hand of the Horsetwitch (B.C.)
Ahna (B.C.)
Scab Smoker
Cetascean



JON SCHLEDEWITZ

Organizing Arsonfest is a labour of love for Mike Alexander, left.

Three to see at this year's Arsonfest

Mike Alexander's Arsonfest has established itself as the premiere summer destination for prairie punks and grinders looking for the best in extreme music from around North America.

This year, bands from as far away as California (Bloody Phoenix) join locals who have just come off U.S. tours (Cetascean and Willing Feet).

Fiercely DIY, this festival runs on volunteer power and the generosity of many musicians who play for barely gas money. Here are some highlights.

Mares of Thrace

Friday, Aug. 5

Calgarians Mares of Thrace have been around since 2009. Blabbermouth referred to them as "a figurative bag filled with '90s post-punk and AmRep-ish sounds, and face-melting sludge from this decade or the last," so let's roll with that description even though they left out the kittens being lowered into the woodchippers.

"Arsonfest is awesome because it keeps turning into a yearly congregation of all our best friends in all the sickest independent extreme bands, in one of our favourite cities," says band member Thérèse Lanz.

Enabler

Saturday, Aug. 6

From Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Enabler joins the throng of acts that have come from the cheese-lovin', union-bashin' state to grace the Arsonfest stages (Northless and Half-

Gorilla have both made lasting impressions). Blasting hardcore with a relentless grind

and thrash backbeat, this band is an all-gono-slow noise attack that Sputnik Music calls "the musical equivalent to being boiled alive, tarred and feathered."

Scab Smoker

Sunday, Aug. 7

"We just wanted a band name that everybody would remember," says Scab Smoker's

James Korba. And we do remember it. Stoner sludgy doom is what immediately comes to mind but these adjectives hardly do them justice. The muck that they mire themselves in is slow and low – down-tuned and dirty at a glacial pace. For now, their lack of huge equipment still lends their sound to a minimalist aesthetic.

FILM

THE NATIONAL PARKS PROJECT is a groundbreaking collaborative art project about Canada's national parks. Thirteen acclaimed Canadian directors have created a series of beautiful films that feature Canada's parks from coast to coast. The soundtracks that accompany the films are provided by some of Canada's best musicians including Sam Roberts, John K. Samson, Christine Fellows, Kathleen Edwards and many more. The films premier on Canada Day at the Cinematheque, Friday, July 1 at 7 p.m. The series continues on Saturday July 2 at 7 p.m., Sunday, July 3 at 7 p.m. and Wednesday, July 6 at 7 p.m.

The special Winnipeg presentation of SUITE SUITE CHINATOWN features seven award-winning Chinese Canadian filmmakers from the GTA who were asked by the Reel Asian festival, "What is your Chinatown?" The response is a diverse array of cross-genre cinema. The films screen Thursday, July 7 at 7 p.m. at the Cinematheque.

The Winnipeg Film Group is once again presenting the 90-second QUICKIE FILMMAKING CHALLENGE. It's an open invite to all Canadian filmmakers to make a short film, no longer than 90 seconds. The deadline for submissions is July 14 with a grand screening of the films on July 27 at 7 p.m. at the Cinematheque. For more info on how to submit contact Aaron Zeghers at atozeghers@hotmail.com.

The Winnipeg Film Group's SUMMER TEEN FILM CAMP starts July 18 and goes until Aug. 1. The camp exposes teens to the basic components of film and video production. There are two sessions for the summer. Contact Darcy Fehr at 925-3450 or darcy@winnipegfilmgroup.com for more info.

THE GIMLI FILM FESTIVAL returns July 20 until July 24. The festival showcases over 80 features, documentaries and shorts from Winnipeg and around the world. This year the GFF 2011 is promising to showcase the best new films from Canada's most promising directors. For more info and complete schedule go to www.gimlifilm.com.

Assiniboine Park will be screening free family films for the public all August at the park's Lyric Theatre beginning with HAPPY FEET and AVATAR on Aug. 5 at 7 p.m. On Aug. 12, NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM will be showing alongside LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING starting at 7 p.m. ICE AGE 2 and RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK will be showing on Aug. 19 starting at 7 p.m. The film series will wrap up with MONSTERS VS. ALIENS and TOP GUN on Aug. 26 starting at 7 p.m.

LITERATURE

DONN HANNA launches his new book *Prairie Wool: Historically Significant Observations and Tales from the Saskatchewan Back Roads* in the Travel Alcove at McNally Robinson on Wednesday, July 6.

Assistant professor of sociology at the University of Manitoba CHRISTOPHER POWELL presents his controversial thesis with his book *Barbaric Civilization: A Critical Sociology of Genocide* on Thursday, July 14 at McNally Robinson's Prairie Ink Restaurant at 8 p.m. Powell's work attempts to answer unsettling questions about the contradictions between supposed civilized societies and genocide.

Join author GARY KINSMAN on Thursday, July 21, at 7 p.m. at Mondragon Café and Bookstore for the book launch of *The Canadian War on Queers: National Security as Sexual Regulation* by Gary Kinsman and Patrizia Gentile. Selected for the 2011 Over the Rainbow Book List, *The Canadian War on Queers* explores how from the 1950s to the late 1990s, agents of the state spied on, interrogated and harassed gays and lesbians in Canada. Kinsman will present the book as a warm-up to the 2nd International Copwatching Conference. Visit conference.winnipegcopwatch.org for more info.

Winnipeg Free Press gardening columnist COLLEEN ZACHARIAS is presenting a gardening workshop at McNally Robinson on Wednesday, July 27 at 7:30 p.m.

GALLERIES & MUSEUMS

Throughout July and August the Transcona Historical Museum is hosting the 9th annual KIDSQUEST! This annual self-led scavenger hunt encourages kids from five to 15 to explore their very own backyard on the streets of Transcona. Booklets can be picked up from the Transcona Museum from Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Every participant that completes their KidsQuest booklet leaves with a prize and a chance to win a grand prize. Kids from five to 12 are also welcome to drop in to the museum every Wednesday and Saturday, from July 6 through Aug. 24, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. for free craft workshops and stories about the history of the area. For more information contact Laura Milette at 222-0423 or email: communications@transconmuseum.mb.ca.

Photographic installation MANNEQUINS OF PUERTO VALLARTA and performance LA MORDIDA by CONNIE CHAPPEL and SARAH MCQUESTON will be appearing at the Outworks Art Gallery from July 12 until July 23.

FILM REVIEWS

An interesting and important story

Documentary explores the career of lesbian, folk-singing Kiwi comedy duo

NICHOLAS FRIESEN
VOLUNTEER

The Topp Twins: Untouchable Girls

Directed by Leanne Pooley, 2009

84 minutes

Plays at Cinematheque July 30 (7 and 9 p.m.), July 31, Aug. 3 and Aug. 4 (7 p.m.), Aug. 5 and Aug. 6 (9 p.m.)

★★★★☆

I'm torn on this film. On the one hand, it is an engaging, introspective documentary about trailblazing musicians who have stood up against social norms.

On the other hand, it's about a musical comedy duo whose songs are barely listenable and only considered comedy on the most basic level.

Essentially, this review is going to spend time discussing what makes this a strong documentary film, because it does tell an interesting and important story, and it tells it well.

Jools and Linda Topp, currently age 53, are lesbian folk singers from New Zealand, who found fame in the early '80s with their unique brand of in-your-face folk/yodel/country music.

Not a pair to mask its lyrics in any flowery delivery (or hide their homosexuality from anyone), all the cards are on the table in a simple, straightforward manner.

The film follows the evolution from busking street performances to a cabaret act, all the way to a performance on the 1983 New Zealand Music Awards and beyond.

In the '90s, Linda and Jools became equally well known as a comedic duo, with numerous characters (Ken & Ken, Camp Mother & Camp Leader) that they would perform in a live



COURTESY WFG

Directed by former Winnipegger Leanne Pooley, *The Topp Twins: Untouchable Girls* is the personal story of two yodeling, country-singing and dancing lesbian twin sisters from New Zealand named Jools and Lynda Topp.

setting and on television.

The Topp Twins are noted for being incredibly positive homosexual role models, as most lesbians in the media of the early '80s were known for depraved acts of murder and mental illness.

In one segment, singer Billy Bragg refers to the Topp twins as an "anarchist variety act."

That, and it is all delivered in a likeable country music package that flips the genre on its head.

The film dances between recent performances of the Topp Twins' greatest hits, interview segments with the subjects, and interviews with

various friends and admirers, including politicians, activists, comedians and musicians. (In one segment, singer Billy Bragg refers to them as an "anarchist variety act.")

The format works well, and only gets old when all of the songs begin to sound the same after a while.

The Topp Twins: Untouchable Girls is a wonderful document of an incredibly positive career.

Certain tours are highlighted, such as the 1985 Nuclear Free Zone Tour and 1989's Gypsy Caravan Tour (in which the duo traveled in a caravan pulled by a tractor), which paint a picture of just how unique this Kiwi comedy team are.

It's not quite Tegan and Sara meets Flight of the Conchords, but definitely a story worth a darn.

Melodrama and strange plot twists

Powerfully acted, gorgeous-looking film self-destructs in the end

TIMOTHY PENNER
VOLUNTEER STAFF

Son of the Sunshine

Directed by Ryan Ward, 2009

88 minutes

Plays at Cinematheque Aug. 12-14 and 17 at 7 p.m.

★★★★☆

Any actor given the task of portraying a character with a debilitating disease such as Tourette's syndrome has to walk a fine line between realism and caricature.

Ryan Ward, the Portage La Prairie-born writer/director/star of *Son of the Sunshine*, walks that line well, managing to pull off a surprisingly nuanced and sensitive depiction.

Ward plays Sonny Johnns who, after struggling with Tourette's syndrome for 24 years, undergoes an experimental procedure that manages to free him of the tics and tremors that have been a constant part of his life.

His newfound cure, however, hardly reduces the amount of tribulations in his life.

Sonny's mother (JoAnn Nordstrom) is a heroin addict; her boyfriend/dealer is abusive; his sister (Shantelle Canzanes) has left home because of problems with their mother; and Sonny's first attempt at love lands him in the arms of a bipolar drug addict, Arielle (Rebecca McMahon), who appears to be just a younger version of his mother.

The story to this point is slightly melodramatic, but the grittiness of the presentation makes for a visceral viewing experience.

Add in some wonderfully done, Terrence Malick-style expressionistic passages, and the film seems to be heading in the satisfying direction of many painful, yet beautiful independent films.

Then the third act begins and things go hor-



COURTESY RYAN WARD

A scene from *Son of the Sunshine*.

ribly wrong.

It's hard to say too much about what follows without spoiling the ending, although a spoiled ending hardly seems to be a concern for the filmmakers in question.

Essentially what began as a hyper-realist melodrama degrades into an episode of *Degrassi Junior High* with a twist so overwrought that it reaches the level of self-destruction rarely seen outside of an attempt by Spielberg to make a fourth *Indiana Jones* movie.

In fact, the strange twist begs the question, "Just how many comic book-obsessed teenagers were in the focus group that is responsible for this ending?"

To his credit, Ward is attempting something quite difficult as he works to channel the tradition of magic realism, a trope of directors like Ingmar Bergman.

However, the line between magic realism and silliness is even finer than the one Ward has been navigating in his performance.

It really is a shame that an otherwise fascinating film has been marred in the final reel.

That being said, the acting is powerful, the

direction is strong, the photography is gorgeous and at its best moments, Ward's film is a compelling character study of life on the margins of society.



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Art and infrastructure unite

Osborne Bridge project brings community's and artists' input to the drawing board



COLIN VANDENBERG

Part of the Osborne Bridge Rehabilitation includes incorporating art by Karen Shanski and Eduardo Aquino, U of M professors who blur the line between art and architecture.

AARON SNIDER VOLUNTEER STAFF

The congested traffic and unsightly barricades will last for two years, but in the end, Osborne Street will have more than just a rehabilitated bridge.

With support from the Winnipeg Arts Council (WAC) and extensive input from a Neighbourhood Advisory Committee (NAC), the project will incorporate a level of public art that may become the new standard for similar projects in the city.

Matt Chislett, a civil engineer for the City of Winnipeg and project manager for the Osborne Bridge Rehabilitation, said the NAC's input was essential.

"Instead of art just being an afterthought to fix something, or art as a band-aid, art becomes really an integral part of the project. There isn't a separation between what urban space is and what art is."

- EDUARDO AQUINO, ARCHITECTURE PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

"What we heard from the public was that they didn't want a cookie-cutter bridge," he said.

Nick Kowalchuk, executive director of the Gas Station Arts Centre in Osborne Village and a member of the NAC, said the aesthetic nature of the rehabilitated bridge was one of his central concerns.

"If you recall the current bridge, or something like the Disraeli Bridge, they're very functional but not artistic at all," Kowalchuk said. "I think that having some artistic input added to

the bridge is encouraged."

To make this particular community aspiration into a reality, the WAC invited certain groups and artists to present their proposals for the bridge.

The council selected Eduardo Aquino and Karen Shanski, both professors of architecture at the University of Manitoba and founding members of the arts, architecture and design practice spmb (São Paulo-Manitoba), to work on the project.

Aquino praised the early and meaningful collaboration between the artists and the engineers.

"The project was very well organized by the Winnipeg Arts Council," he said. "Usually what happens with architectural or engineering projects is that it's always the last thing to come in the process, which makes it much more challenging and difficult to find a vocation for the artists in something that's already done."

"It's very true when you actually engage the artists from the very beginning of the project, especially in this case as part of a collaborative design team, we can adapt the art in much more integral ways than something that is just attached to it," Aquino said.

Chislett agrees.

"In a few other bridges and sites within the city, the WAC has co-operated and we've had public art, but it's always been more of a stand-alone feature and it hasn't been integrated," Chislett said.

"Instead of art just being an afterthought to fix something, or art as a band-aid, art becomes really an integral part of the project," Aquino said. "There isn't a separation between what urban space is and what art is."

Spmb's approach to the project stems from Aquino's and Shanski's extensive experience in working with public art.

"We often say that we are not artists in the studio, we operate in the city," Aquino said. "Because of that we look for opportunities in the city to generate the art."

With more than 40 years of experience

between them, the two artists have developed an intricate and delicate philosophy that, rather than combining art and architecture, strives to render the difference between them irrelevant.

"Infrastructure as an idea resides in an unspoken, subdued level of perception in terms of the urban space. But what interests us is that we can think of infrastructure as art," said Aquino. "Our aesthetic approach is to have a very subtle, elegant, discreet presence, which leads to minimalist choices. Everything is embedded into the bridge structure."

Apart from a purely aesthetic preference, however, the amount of artwork on the bridge will need to show an understanding of those who will be using and enjoying the finished product.

"We find that there is more to public space than public art," Aquino said.

"I think a successful public art project is the one that would listen as much as possible to as many constituencies as possible," he added.

"What we find really challenging is to widen the range of possibilities and the range of relationships between the art and the people as much as possible so that people feel directly implicated in the work and validated through the work."

The community connection will really be the ultimate test for spmb's contributions.

Kowalchuk said that given the constraints of the nature of the project, he believes it will succeed in this regard.

"I think it will tie in the neighbourhood and the area, but it will be a bit lower key than if it was a new bridge," Kowalchuk said. "What you have to realize is that the Osborne Bridge is an upgrade and not a reconstruction. With the upgrade it's somewhat limited in terms of the design of the bridge."

Aquino acknowledged the engineering constraints of the rehabilitation process, but said: "We are strong advocates for any kind of poetic expression. Every genre of art has a valuable place in society and the culture in general."

Plug In Institute of Contemporary Art presents FRONTRUNNERS a multi-exhibition project that recognizes the impact of the Indian Group of Seven a.k.a. PROFESSIONAL NATIVE INDIAN ARTISTS' INC. Their art and story is a starting point for discussing the history of artistic and political action within Winnipeg by artists of aboriginal ancestry. The exhibition runs until July 24. The project features work by ALEX JANVIER, DAPHNE ODJIG, JOSEPH SANCHEZ, NORVAL MORRISSEAU, JACKSON BEARDY, CARL RAY, EDDY COBINESS, LOUIS OGEAMAH, JACKIE TRAVERSE, LITA FONTAINE and DARRYL NEPINAK.

NOT A DAY GOES BY is an exhibition showing at the Graffiti Gallery until Aug. 12. The exhibition is a celebration of the life of influential skateboarder JAI S. PEREIRA and features artwork by CHAD WOODLEY, SEAN CAMPBELL, BRAM ADEY, PAT LAZO, JESSE PERRAULT, JAMES VANDAL, MATT STEVENS and CYRUS SMITH, along with photography by CAM NIKKEL, JON SCHLEDEWITZ, GREG HASBEEK, BRIAN PEECH and JOHN GRIGLEY.

The QUILT OF BELONGING is a collaborative art project consisting of 263 unique and individualized panels, forming a completed tapestry measuring 10 feet tall and 120 feet long. The work speaks to Canada's unique heritage and will be featured at the WAG until Aug. 21.

The works of artist WILLIAM BRYMNER (1855-1925) are featured at the WAG until Aug. 21. Brymner's work has been regarded as a major influence on important Canadian artists like A.Y. Jackson, Maurice Cullen, and James Wilson Morrice. WILLIAM BRYMNER: ARTIST, TEACHER, COLLEAGUE comprises 60 works by the Scottish-born artist as well as his students and peers including HORATIO WALKER, MARC-AURELE DE FOY SUZOR-COTE, JAMES WILSON MORRICE and MAURICE CULLEN.

Can't wait until the CANADIAN MUSEUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS opens? Perimeter tours have started for the summer running from now until Sept. 4. Tours are from Thursday to Sunday at 9:15 a.m., 10:30 a.m. (French only), 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. All tours are free. Registrations are recommended but walk-ins are welcome. For more info or to book a tour consult tours@museumforhumanrights.ca or phone 289-2016.

The Manitoba Museum presents REEDS AND WOOL: PATTERNED SCREENS OF CENTRAL ASIA, an exhibition featuring rich and unique decorative reed screens, carpets and fibre weavings made by Kyrgyz women. These mindblowing weavings are featured at the museum until Sept. 5 in Festival Hall.

Ever want to know what it takes to preserve rare artifacts? The Manitoba Museum is presenting MUSEUM 911, an exhibition that explores how the museum's conservators save history from time, pests and humidity and what this can mean for you and your own precious objects. The exhibition is on until Oct. 16 in the EW Discovery Room.

CARL BEAM, one of Canada's leading contemporary aboriginal artists is featured at the Winnipeg Art Gallery until Sept. 11. The exhibition consists of 48 of Beam's most remarkable works including his powerful large-scale paintings.

The ENGAGING CONNECTIONS exhibition by ALAN MCTAVISH, MARGAURITE KRAHN and INGRID MCILLIAN will be running until Oct. 11 at the Buhler Gallery at St. Boniface Hospital.

THEATRE, DANCE & COMEDY

Rumor's Comedy Club's FUNNIEST PERSON WITH A DAY JOB competition continues on Wednesday, July 6 at 6 p.m. Now that Winnipeg's amateur scene has kicked it up a notch, local comics can expect some stiff comedic competitive behaviour while you can expect to laugh your ass off. The headlining comic will be LARS CALLIEOU.

CATS is on Winnipeg's Rainbow Stage until July 10.

Crass comedian and the voice of America DOUG STANHOPE returns to Winnipeg at Ozzy's on July 13.

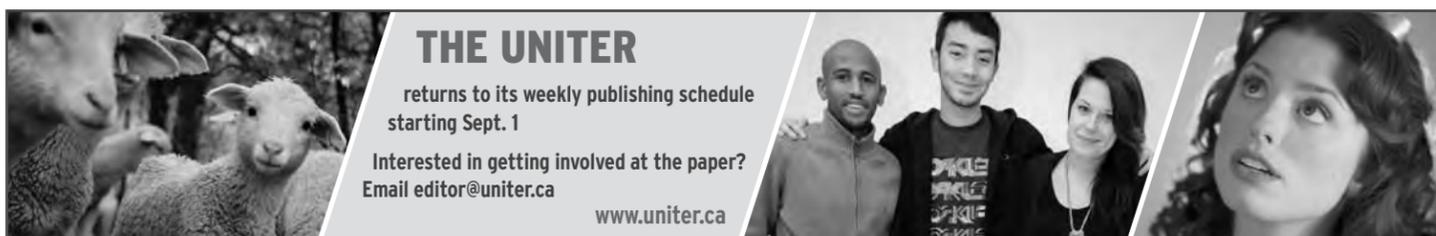
Step right up, ladies and gentlemen! BIG TOP FRINGE begins on July 13 and runs until July 24. The 24th annual FRINGE THEATRE FESTIVAL features over 150 theatrical dramas, comedies, musical and dance shows throughout Winnipeg. As always, there will be free entertainment at the Fringe Fairground a.k.a. Old Market Square in the Exchange District.

ERIC SCHWARTZ'S ENDLESS SUMMER COMEDY TOUR continues on Wednesday, July 20 at the Academy. Showtime at 7 p.m. until 10 p.m.

Based on the poetry of John Waters, HAIR-SPRAY is coming to Rainbow Stage with Cheers star GEORGE WENDT as loveable plus-size heroine, Tracy Turnblad. Aug. 4 until Aug. 21.

The critically acclaimed musical WICKED also aims to be a hit this summer at the Centennial Concert Hall. The show hits Winnipeg Aug. 24 until Sept. 4.

The open mic comedy night at the Standard is hosted by MIKE GREEN every Thursday at 8:30 p.m.



THE UNITER

returns to its weekly publishing schedule starting Sept. 1

Interested in getting involved at the paper?
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Portable toilets for dummies

Well, it's that time of year again: festival season in Winnipeg.

Because there are only around four or five months in our fair city where we can actually venture outside of our homes without freezing off our appendages, we have to squeeze an entire year's worth of festivals into every summer.

Some of our festivals are well attended and world renowned, such as the culturally diverse Folklorama.

Others are much smaller and less known, such as the "Dress Your Cats Up Like Porn Stars Festival," which is held every year in my apartment, and which is attended annually by my two cats and myself when my girlfriend is out of town.

As different as all these festivals are from one another, there is one thing that nearly all of them have in common: portable toilets.

In all of my years of festival going, I've become somewhat of an expert on portable toilets. Today, I'd like to share the benefits of my experience with all of you.

Each portable toilet fits in to one of four different categories of cleanliness and user friendliness, based on the length of the festival and the frequency of the big poo sucking trucks that come to clean out the "basements" of the toilets.

Level 1: Level 1 portable toilets are relatively clean. They are well stocked with toilet paper (also known more colloquially as shit tickets) and generally do not smell strongly of anything.

Level 2: Level 2 portable toilets are slightly dirtier and smellier than their Level 1 counterparts. They still have one or two rolls of shit tickets, but these are generally damp or partly soaked in poorly aimed, yet "friendly fire" urine.

Level 2 toilets smell worse than Level 1s. However, they rarely cause fainting or permanent brain damage.

Level 3: Now we're getting into the real festival experience. Level 3 portable toilets generally have no toilet paper at all. In the odd case that a Level 3 portable toilet does have toilet paper, it is invariably soaked in blood and/or urine.

The most distinguishing feature of a Level 3 toilet is that the feces in the basin, or poo receptacle, has somehow accumulated to the point where it has actually risen about the level of the toilet seat itself, like a Rocky Brown Mountain, rising from the unknown depths below.

This is significant because it means that the last dozen or so people to contribute to Mount Brown would actually have to hover a foot or so above the accumulation while they did their duty, as it were.

Level 4: Lastly, my personal favourites: Level 4 toilets. These are identical to their Level 3 counterparts in every way, save for one: instead of a massive, protruding mound of poo, the Level 4 toilet contains a comedian/columnist with a waterproof camera taking pictures of people's bums.

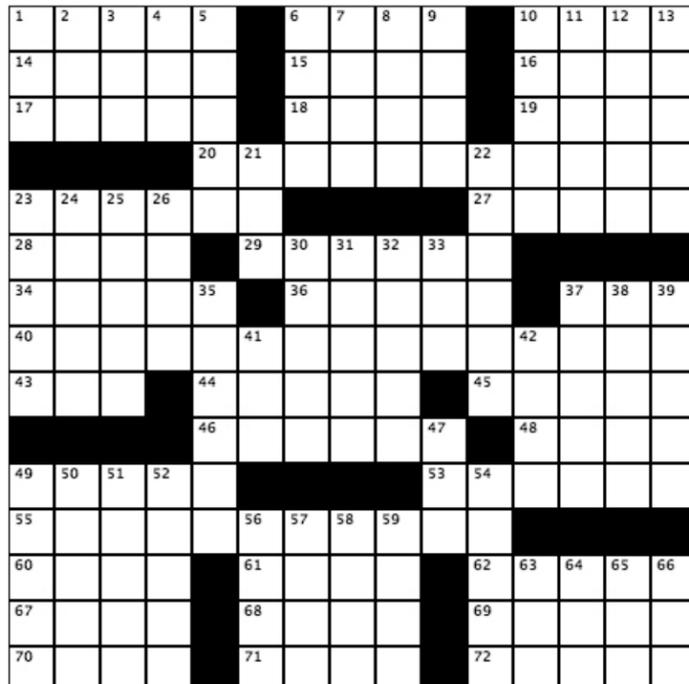
I hope this list has been both helpful and informative. If you are one of the thousands of festival-going Winnipeggers, then I'll see you in a Level 4 this summer!

J. Williams is currently sewing costumes for the Dress Your Cats Up Like Porn Stars Festival.

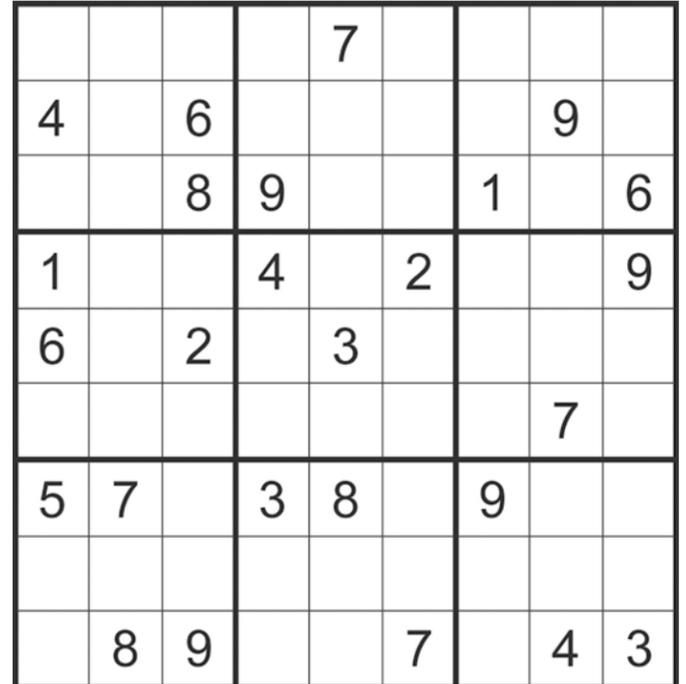
Crossword Puzzle & Sudoku 27

Solutions to this week's sudoku and crossword posted online and in next month's issue.

SUDOKU SKILL LEVEL: **DIFFICULT**



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Across

- 1 - Tending to a definite end
- 6 - Heroic adventure tale
- 10 - Turkish honorific
- 14 - New York city
- 15 - Banned apple spray
- 16 - Intend
- 17 - Boatswain
- 18 - Sci-fi princess
- 19 - Actress Heche
- 20 - Pretentious display
- 23 - Flared
- 27 - Lawful
- 28 - Do followers
- 29 - Stool pigeon
- 34 - Do penance
- 36 - Earth tone
- 37 - Bad review
- 40 - Describe fully
- 43 - Med. specialty
- 44 - One on track?
- 45 - Fragment
- 46 - Thrills
- 48 - Gumbo ingredient
- 49 - Talk
- 53 - Corn
- 55 - Having five digits on each hand
- 60 - River in central Switzerland
- 61 - ___ breve
- 62 - Last letter of the Greek alphabet
- 67 - Sgts., e.g.
- 68 - It may be happy
- 69 - Brilliant
- 70 - Salmon that has spawned
- 71 - Bottom of the barrel
- 72 - Perfect places

Down

- 1 - Clumsy boat
- 2 - DDE's command

- 3 - Fleur-de-___
- 4 - Hosp. area
- 5 - Boat often made of birchbark, canvas, or fiberglass
- 6 - Cure, in a way
- 7 - "Hard ___!" (sailor's yell)
- 8 - Profit
- 9 - I smell ___!
- 10 - Fine fiddle
- 11 - Photo finish?
- 12 - Capital of Vietnam
- 13 - Concerning
- 21 - Radical '60s org.
- 22 - Warns
- 23 - Clamp
- 24 - Admit
- 25 - Less than lively
- 26 - Bluish white metallic element
- 30 - Puccini heroine
- 31 - Eight singers
- 32 - Midway alternative
- 33 - ___X
- 35 - Exclamation of triumph
- 37 - Anorak
- 38 - Pong maker
- 39 - Sherpa's home
- 41 - ___ de mer
- 42 - Desktop picture
- 47 - Express
- 49 - Hit bottom?
- 50 - Freedom from war
- 51 - Sign up
- 52 - Bikini blast
- 54 - Covering for the hand
- 56 - Wonka's creator
- 57 - Burn soother
- 58 - Hint
- 59 - Sailors
- 63 - Central
- 64 - Holiday start
- 65 - Martini liquor
- 66 - Commercials

Solutions to puzzles from the June 1, 2011 issue.



The Uniter's new sex column

Sex, Stories & Secrets

will return next issue

Did you miss the first installment?

Read it online at <http://bit.ly/UniterSex>

95.9 FM CKUW CAMPUS/COMMUNITY RADIO

TOP 10 CD - ALBUMS

June 20-26, 2011

! = Local content * = Canadian Content



TW	Artist	Recording	Label
1!	The Details	Lost Art	Parliament of Trees
2!	Greg Arcade	In... Hawaii	A1
3!	The Vibrating Beds	The Vibrating Beds 7-inch	Transistor 66
4*	Fucked up	David Comes To Life	Matador
5*	Miesha And The Spanks	Gods of Love	Transistor 66
6	TV On The Radio	Nine Types Of Light	Interscope
7!	The Blowholes	The Blowholes	Transistor 66
8!	Romi Mayes	Lucky Tonight	Self-Released
9*	Austra	Feel It Break	Paper Bag
10!	Smoky Tiger	The Flood of Tigrzlove	Self-Released

FOOD REVIEW

Ssssssssssmokin'

Winnipeg's first poutinerie ends the drought of boring poutine in the city



BRITTANY MCLEOD

A line forms outside of Smoke's, the popular new poutine place in the Exchange. Right: The Philly Cheese Steak Poutine.

KARLENE OOTO-STUBBS
VOLUNTEER STAFF

Smoke's Poutinerie

131 Albert St.

When Smoke's Poutinerie announced it was opening a Winnipeg location, members of the culinary community rejoiced.

Even more enticing was that Smoke's offers a wide array of poutine, ranging from bacon cheeseburger to pulled pork.

In this way, Smoke's takes the basic idea of poutine (fries, cheese curds and gravy for the un-poutine educated) and applies a stir-fry-like mentality to the dish with its elaboration on the basic form.

Since its May opening, I've seldom seen it quiet when passing its Old Market Square

location.

It's clear that Winnipeggers are reveling in the restaurant's concept of a mostly take-out, late-night munch spot.

I made the mistake of visiting Smoke's on the opening night of the TD Winnipeg International Jazz Festival at Old Market Square. The line was a dozen-people long, the temperature was hot and it was an all-around uncomfortable space to congregate in.

Nevertheless, service was swift.

Along with its lumberjack style wallpaper (paying homage to poutine's Canadian roots, perhaps) is a chalkboard where patrons can record thoughts about their meals. Laden with positive reviews, my hopes were high as I started to chow down.

Surprisingly, I was disappointed. Blame falls on expectations that were too high and

gravy that was unappetizing.

First, I tried their original poutine. Instead of blowing my mind, it only reminded me of better poutine I've had in dingy Montreal diners.

Kudos to Smoke's for importing their cheese curds from Quebec, but the over-salted flavour of their homemade gravy didn't sit well with me.

Their fries, on the other hand, were great and would be suitable on their own.

Next came the Nacho Grande poutine, complete with homemade chili, tomato salsa, guacamole, sour cream and jalapeño peppers.

Although it could have used more meat, it's a prime example of how Smoke's elaborations on poutine work.

I was left with only a few toppings sans fries at the bottom because of a good ratio of

cheese to gravy to nacho components.

A poor choice was the Curry Chicken poutine. Along with not being spicy, its uniform flavour bored me after a few bites.

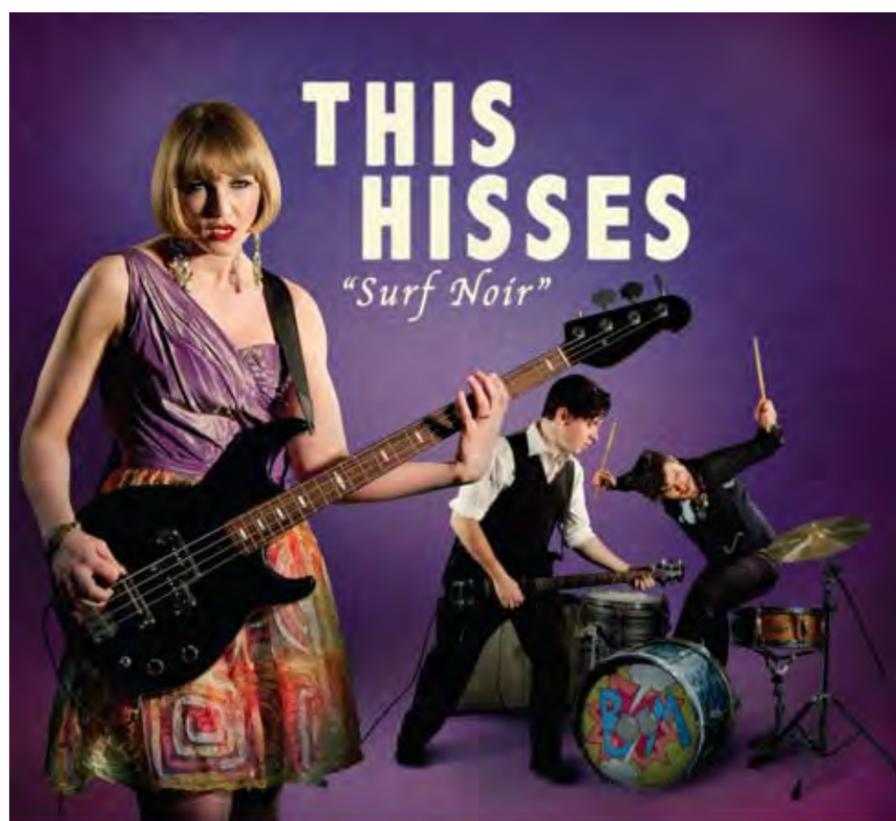
It would have been nice to see curry fries used instead of a curry gravy.

Don't be fooled by the little brown boxes they package the poutine in. The large size is massive, and I watched several grown men struggle to finish.

Ultimately, for \$9.99 and under, Smoke's is a good deal.

Their weekend hours are ideal for the after-bar crowd, and if you're drunk enough, you might just forgive their lacklustre gravy and focus on their unique twists on this Canadian classic.

Visit www.smokespoutinerie.com.



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Janessa

"My wardrobe has changed a lot since I started working with kids."

FASHION STREETER

The Uniter Fashion Streeter is an ongoing documentation of creative fashion in Winnipeg inspired by the Helsinki fashion blog www.hel-looks.com. Each issue will feature a new look from our city's streets and bars in an attempt to encourage individual expression and celebrate that you are really, really good looking.

YOUR MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Continue to Work Hard for Manitoba Students



GREG SELINGER

MLA FOR ST. BONIFACE
PREMIER OF MANITOBA
237-9247
gselingermla@mts.net



ERIN SELBY

MLA FOR SOUTHDALE
253-3918
southdalemla@erinselby.ca



DAVE CHOMIAK

MLA FOR KILDONAN
334-5060
kildonanmla@mts.net



JENNIFER HOWARD

MLA FOR FORT ROUGE
946-0272
fortrouge@mts.net



SHARON BLADY

MLA FOR KIRKFIELD PARK
832-2318
Kirkfieldpark@mts.net



ROSANN WOWCHUK

MLA FOR SWAN RIVER
734-4900
rosannw@mts.net



NANCY ALLAN

MLA FOR ST. VITAL
237-8771
nallan-mla@shaw.ca



THERESA OSWALD

MLA FOR SEINE RIVER
255-7840
theresaoswald@mts.net



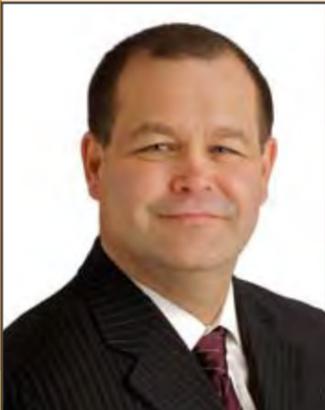
KERRI IRVIN-ROSS

MLA FOR FORT GARRY
475-9433
kerriirvinross@mts.net



PETER BJORNSON

MLA FOR GIMLI
642-4977
gimlimla@mts.net



JIM RONDEAU

MLA FOR ASSINIBOIA
888-7722
assiniboica@shaw.ca



BIDHU JHA

MLA FOR RADISSON
222-0074
radisson@shaw.ca



ANDREW SWAN

MLA FOR MINTO
783-9860
ajswan@mts.net



FLOR MARCELINO

MLA FOR WELLINGTON
788-0800
wellington.constit@shaw.ca



CHRIS MELNICK

MLA FOR RIEL
253-5162
christinemelnick@mts.net