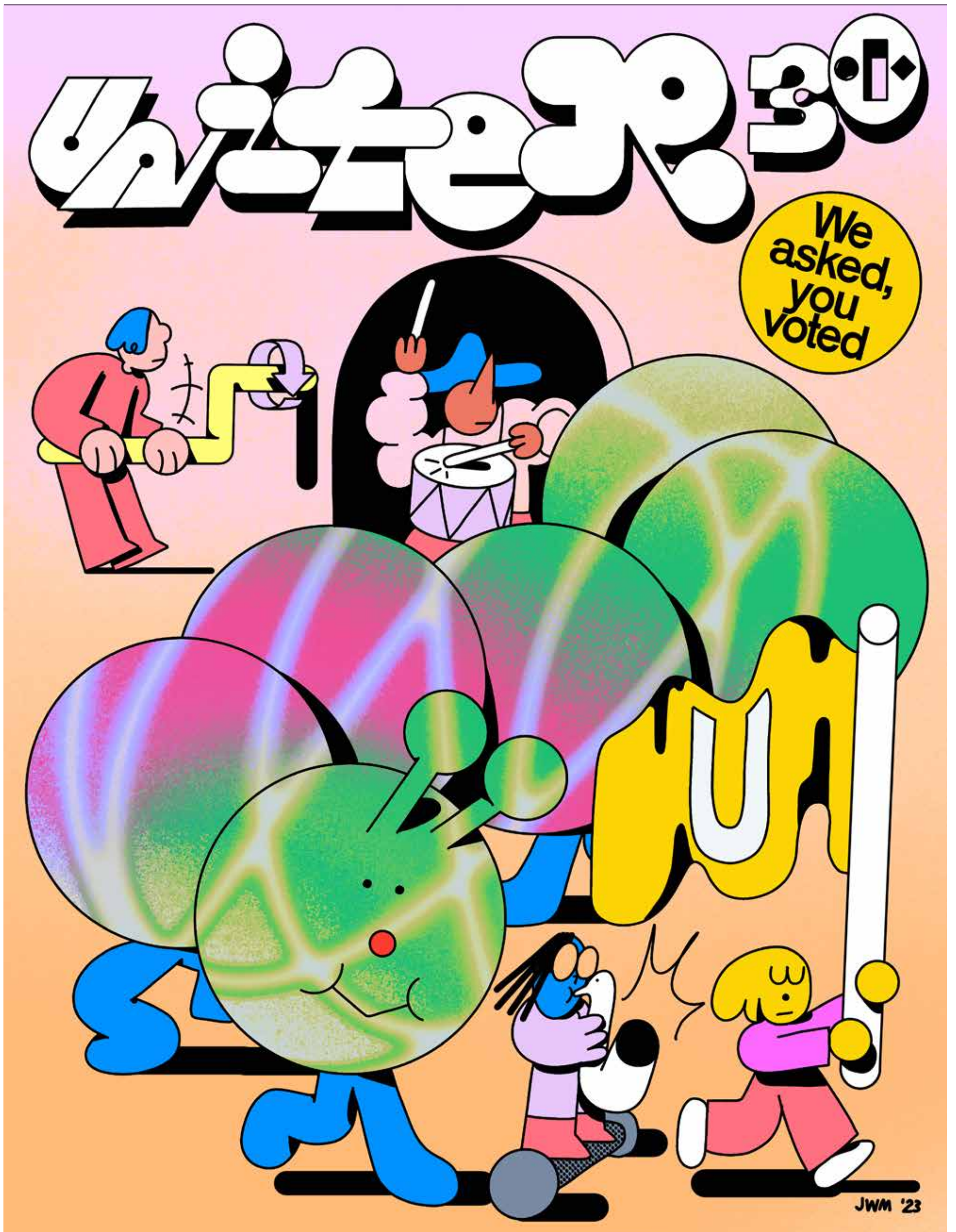


THE **U** N I T E R

Winnipeg 30

We asked, you voted



JWM '23

WINNIPEG'S FAVOURITE PEOPLE, PLACES AND THINGS OF 2023

ON THE COVER

Cover art by Jay Mellor.

Jay W. Mellor (also known as JWM) is a neurodivergent visual artist who works primarily in animation and illustration. He is based in Winnipeg on Treaty 1 territory. His work has appeared overseas, as well as in Canada. Follow them at @jwem08 on Instagram.

YOUR UNDISPUTED FAVOURITES

THOMAS PASHKO
MANAGING EDITOR

X@THOMASPASHKO

It's *The Uniter's* final issue of 2023, which can only mean one thing ... or 30 different things?

For those who are new to this, the *Uniter 30* is our annual readers' poll, in which Winnipeggers vote on their favourite people, places and events of 2023. This issue is dedicated entirely to the results of that poll. We've tallied the results, we've interviewed your favourites, and now they're here to enjoy their bragging rights.

But wait, there's fewer than 30 articles!

That's right, confused reader! While we take votes in 30 different categories, some people won in multiple categories. In these instances, we've opted to just do one article covering all the categories, rather than subjecting your darling artists, business owners and achievers to multiple interviews with grimy, ink-stained newspaper people like us.

How come in some categories you interviewed the second or third-place winner?!

Take it easy there, old chum! Let's not get angry. In some of these categories, the first-place winner wasn't available for an interview. In others, the same people or places have won the category multiple years in a row, so we figured we'd give the coverage to someone new.

Aw, I didn't get to vote!

You snooze, you lose! Be sure to keep an eye on uniter.ca (which you should *a/ways* be checking regularly, anyway) for future polls, initiatives and news stories.

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SUBMISSIONS

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

In-person volunteer orientations will be commencing shortly. For more information, please email volunteer@uniter.ca.

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

Favourite local achiever under 30

1. Jimmy Skinner
2. Lauren Wittmann
3. Jelynn Dela Cruz

Favourite local comedian

1. Jimmy Skinner
2. Jesse Bercier
3. Sarah Jane Martin / Spencer Adamus (tie)

BY MATTHEW TEKLEMARIAM

📷 MATTEKLEMARIAM

Favourite local social-media presence

1. Jimmy Skinner
2. Carter Chen (Ritzcracka)
3. Winnipeg Wildin

Eat your heart out, Secretariat. Here's a triple crown of achievement that's truly the first of its kind. Local funnyman Jimmy Skinner has been chosen by the people of Winnipeg as favourite local comedian *and* favourite social-media presence. And he's done it all before 30, an award in itself. Just don't ask him how he did it.

"If I'm being completely honest with you, this one was a pretty big shock to me. I really didn't expect this to happen," Skinner says, specifically referencing his social-media award.

"My Twitter (X) is mostly just used for testing material. Instagram is more for sharing what I'm going to be doing and my feelings about sports. It's no Winnipeg Wildin. If I'm this popular, why aren't people liking my tweets?"

The young comedian and Grand Beach native has been resolutely climbing the rungs of the ladder of laughs over the past five years, earning himself a residency at Yuk Yuk's Comedy Club in the Fort Garry Hotel. He describes his style as a warmer brand of comedy, drawing inspiration from his day job.

"I'm not the kind of person that does edgy stage material. I think (my style) is endearing, and it keeps audiences wanting more," Skinner says.

"Outside of comedy, I work in funeral supplies. Honestly, I get a lot of material out of that. I guess I bring light to normally tougher situations."

Skinner has taken his rib-tickling abroad, performing in most major Western Canadian cities.

"I've done shows in Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton (and) Saskatoon. I just haven't been out east, which is where I'm hoping to go next."

And when he's not roaming the Prairies, he co-hosts the bimonthly program "Laughs at Gaff's" at Gaffer's Restaurant & Lounge in Lockport, Man. He's quick to chide those who make the pilgrimage solely for vintage diner the Half Moon Drive In.

"You go out to Skinner's. You don't go to Half Moon anymore."



PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

Favourite local achiever over 60

1. Fred Penner
2. Karen Fuhr
3. Lara Rae

BY THOMAS PASHKO

📷 @THOMASPASHKO

Twenty-five years ago, Karen Fuhr painted a rock for the first time.

"I was always a drawer as a kid," Fuhr says, "and then I studied fine arts. But then life took me into working at a bakery and doing all these other things. But during a hiatus, I painted on a stone."

Not long after, she began selling her work at local maker shows and created what eventually became ArtRocks, her business that has grown far beyond that initial painting on a found stone.

"It started as painting little animals and stuff," Fuhr says. "Then I developed into writing on stones with positivity and mindfulness quotes and doing art on them."

"I'd always wanted to have a cardmaking company, so about 15 years ago, I started designing cards and selling them at my shows alongside my rocks. And 10 years ago, I was reintroduced to letterpressing and screenprinting."

Fuhr uses vintage type and old letterpress machines to create her cards. Her work is now sold at

locations all over Winnipeg, including Forks Trading Company, Riley Grae and Martha Street Studio.

Fuhr is still learning new tools and media to expand her palette.

"(In 2023) I got myself an iPad Pro (and learned) how to use Procreate to do some designing for my cards and screenprints, so that's new for me ... (I've also been) taking an etching course. So I want to do a little more 'art' art, you know what I mean?"

The community support for Fuhr in the *Uniter 30* came as a surprise, but in this writer's opinion, it's well deserved, as Fuhr is herself a visible supporter of the local community.

Folks tapped into the local music scene may recognize her as the mother of House of Wonders' Adam Fuhr and a second mom to those working under that umbrella. When I first met her, it was when she came to the *Uniter* office to pick up back issues of the paper covering Adam's work. She brought me cookies.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

ARTS BRIEFS

CIERRA BETTENS | ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR | 📧 FICTIONALCIERRA 📷 CIERRABETTENS

Django Festival All Stars @ the Rady JCC

The dynamic five-piece French jazz band Django Festival All Stars will make a Winnipeg stop at the Rady JCC (123 Doncaster St.) on Dec. 2 and 3. Tickets are \$20 for students and \$45 for everyone else and can be purchased via radyjcc.net/ticketjazz.cfm.

Music in the Parlour

Stop by the Dalnavert Museum and Visitors' Centre on Dec. 2 at 1 p.m. for another edition of Music in the Parlour. This musical event features the Barefoot Ceili Band, who will bring traditional Irish tunes to the parlour. Tickets are \$40 (\$35 for members) and can be purchased via bit.ly/49UTrH7.

Winter classes open at Forum Art Centre

Brush up your art skills this winter at one of Forum Art Centre's (120 Eugenie St.) 2024 classes. Each session is 10 weeks long with one class (two or two-and-a-half hours long) per week. Options range from watercolour painting to open-studio clay classes and more. For a full list of classes and to register, visit forumartcentre.com.

Get curious @ cre8ery

From Dec. 7 to 19, artist and people-watcher David Colvin will exhibit a solo show at cre8ery (125 Adelaide St.). Colvin, a behavioral-health practitioner by day, explores the complex range of human emotions through his works, which draw visual inspiration from Early Netherlandish painting schools. For gallery hours and more information, visit bit.ly/47POZYm.

To Broadcast is to Scatter

Starting Nov. 30, the University of Manitoba School of Art's Visiting Curator Program will present Shalaka Jadhav's curation of works, *To Broadcast is to Scatter*. The exhibition features works from a swath of artists, including seth cardinal dodginghorse, Cadence Planthara, Diana Sofia Lozano and Natalia Villanueva Linares. A reception takes place on Nov. 30 from 5 to 8 p.m. at the School of Art Gallery (180 Dafoe Rd., 255 ARTlab).



A Day With(out) Art

The Video Pool Media Arts Centre has teamed up with the New York-based non-profit Visual AIDS to present a two-day installation of five works forging connections between HIV and other forms of illness and disability. *Everyone I Know Is Sick* will be available to view at the Poolside Gallery (3rd floor, 100 Arthur St.) on Dec. 1 from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. and on Dec. 2 from 1 to 5 p.m.

Favourite local activist

1. Omar Kinnarath
2. Uzoma Asagwara
3. Justice4BlackLives

BY TESSA ADAMSKI

 TESSA_ADAMSKI
 TESSA.ADAMSKI

On the front steps of the Manitoba Legislative Building, Omar Kinnarath addressed a crowd of nearly 300 protesters at an All Out for Palestine rally on Nov. 19.

“The people of Gaza asked us to do our part to join them in the resistance ... We’ve made it clear that if we do not have justice, they will not have peace,” he said in his speech.

Kinnarath has been a local activist for more than a decade. He organizes for Fascist Free Treaty 1, which started in 2017 to combat alt-right white-supremacist groups.

He also co-founded the Mutual Aid Society during the COVID pandemic. It matches people who need clothing, food and support services with those who can help.

Kinnarath says his main focus right now is working with the Palestinian community and providing guidance and advice to younger activists.

“I feel like this is the time where the torch gets passed,” he says.

“I’ve been around for a long time. I’ve never seen this kind of intense organizing. These in-

tense actions go on consistently, day after day, week after week.”

He teaches younger organizers how to sustainably protect their mental and physical health, especially if they face harassment. He also shares time-management skills and advice on speaking with police officers and government officials.

“You can burn out really fast,” Kinnarath says. “So you really need to focus on what makes you healthy, what makes you happy. And the reason you do this is so you have the energy and the capacity to do the work that you need to do.”

The Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip has killed more than 15,000 Palestinians and 1,200 Israelis, according to Anadolu Agency, a news organization in Turkey.

Kinnarath says people in Winnipeg can protest, intensify boycotts, fight propaganda, challenge Israel lobby groups and pressure elected officials to call for a ceasefire.



PHOTO BY DANIEL CRUMP

Favourite local album

1. Virgo Rising - *Vampyre Year*
2. Amos the Kid - *Enough as it Was*
3. Neighbour Andy - *Wild Ones*

Favourite local performance

1. Virgo Rising EP release show, Oct. 13 @ Good Will
2. *i am your spaniel* by We Quit Theatre
3. Neighbour Andy, Aug. 24 @ The Beer Can

BY JURA MCILRAITH

 JURA_IS_MY_NAME

Sisters Jenna and Lauren Wittmann started the band Virgo Rising with Emily Sinclair in 2019.

They later welcomed drummer Isaac Tate into the group, completing their bedroom indie-pop style.

“We just started from there and were making songs the very first day we started (practising), and then we kept doing it,” Sinclair, Virgo Rising’s vocalist and guitarist, says. “And the rest is history.”

The group says their newest EP, *Vampyre Year*, took longer to produce than expected, but they’re all proud of the final product.

They started recording a few years ago and reworked the album until it felt right for them. Each member works toward creating music that feels true to all of the members.

“All of us have written and contributed to parts of everything that’s on the EP,” Lauren, who plays bass and keyboard, says. “There’s

no one chunk that’s only one person’s doing.”

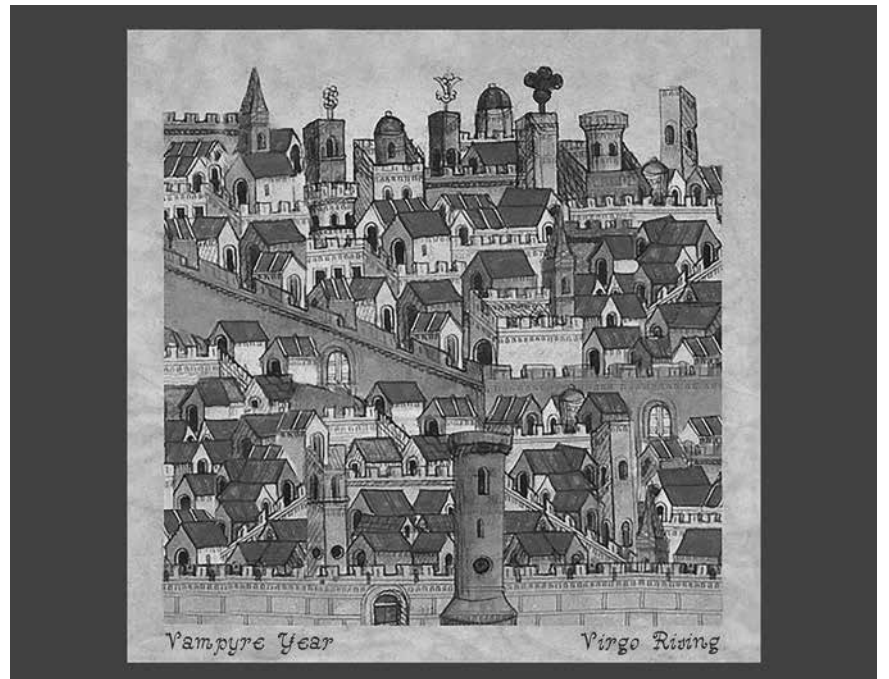
Virgo Rising launched the album on Oct. 13 at the Good Will Social Club. Jenna, the band’s violin and guitar player, says they wanted the show to be special, so they incorporated the medieval theme of the EP into their performance. They encouraged attendees to dress up.

Their merch included handmade ceramic pieces and screen-printed shirts.

Vampyre Year has a dreamy vibe with thoughtful lyrics woven between whimsical riffs.

Jenna says they’ve always felt supported in Winnipeg but that it’s flattering and “rewarding to be recognized.”

“We thank everyone for their support. It’s very sweet,” Tate says. “We like to have fun, and we’re glad that people can enjoy it and that we can share it with them.”



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Favourite movie by a local filmmaker

1. *Butch Bathroom Blues* (Nic Kaneski)
2. *A Traveller’s Guide to Montreal and Toronto in 2022* (Dylan Bodner)
3. *Diaspora* (Deco Dawson)

BY SUZANNE PRINGLE

 BLAQUE_SQUIRREL

Nic Kaneski has been making movies since – well, the summer.

Following a debut at the 2023 One Take Super 8, Kaneski wrote and directed their second short, *Butch Bathroom Blues*, as a student project through the Winnipeg Film Group. It screened at the University of Winnipeg Film Festival in October of 2023.

How did this budding filmmaker turn a student short into a fan-favourite in less than two months?

“I think predominantly it’s just been seen by my friends,” Kaneski, a U of W student who also works at Cinematheque, says. “I feel very loved and supported by them at this moment. I’m very grateful.”

Kaneski identifies as a queer DIY filmmaker, which informs their work.

“Being a women’s and gender-studies student, I’m thinking a lot about gender and our lived experiences and how space changed gender, but I think also being a queer trans person, it’s based off of my lived experiences,” he says.

Butch Bathroom Blues centres around a trans person entering a gender-neutral bathroom to change a pad, only to find there’s no trash bin in their stall. The story is based on a real moment Kaneski experienced while working at the Artspace building.

“It’s silly to go through the effort of changing the signs and demonstrating that form of inclusion but without fully thinking through the practical steps and implications to support that,” they say, confirming that the Artspace bathrooms still have no bins.

For Kaneski, the fun of making films is the communal experience. “Getting to work with other queer people, getting to collaborate and be in community as you’re making something is really exciting,” he says.

Although “a little shy” about the nomination, Kaneski is encouraged. “Being a first-time filmmaker and having people take to my film well, it feels silly. But it’s really cool.”



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Favourite local gallery or artist space

1. **aceartinc.**

BY JURA MCILRAITH

2. **Winnipeg Art Gallery**

✕ @ JURA_IS_MY_NAME

3. **MAWA**

aceartinc. offers an alternative art experience to larger galleries in Winnipeg, with a focus on local.

It serves as a space for “creative expression, collaboration and idea-sharing” by allowing new ideas and perspectives to show in the city’s art community.

They also aim to help local and national contemporary artists but focus on new artists or those who have never had solo exhibitions before.

They aim to go beyond just showing local and international contemporary art by trying to provide community resources “in a safe space that fosters activism and empathy,” according to their website.

Their current solo exhibition features Grace Han until Dec. 22. Han is a ceramic artist originally from South Korea. Now based in Winnipeg, she illustrates her journey to seek answers about her identity as a Canadian newcomer in *Trace of Freedom*.

“I began to perceive ‘Betweenness’ in a more

positive light,” Han says in a statement on the aceartinc. website. “This shift offered me a newfound sense of freedom, even though it’s a fluctuating experience. I’ve come to terms with the idea that these feelings of ‘Betweenness’ and ‘Freedom’ are ongoing and interconnected.”

The installation incorporates current and past work from Han.

Founded in 1983, aceartinc. hosts five major exhibitions each year, featuring artists who express themselves through sculpture, painting, video and other new media.

aceartinc. tries to create a space that allows anyone to participate in conversations about art and to encourage growth for writers, curators, artists and all who come into the Princess Street art gallery.

Everyone is encouraged to come in and experience the free exhibits in the Exchange District location.



HELGA JAKOBSON (SUPPLIED)

Favourite local grassroots group

1. **Mutual Aid Society**

BY MIEKE RUTH VAN INEVELD

2. **Bear Clan Patrol**

✕ MIEKERUTH

3. **Winnipeg Police Cause Harm**

In anarchist theory, “prefiguration” describes movements that put into practice the ideals of the world they are trying to create. There are few better examples of what that concept looks like in practice than the Mutual Aid Society (MAS).

Launched by local anti-capitalist organizers during the spring 2020 lockdowns, MAS is a 12,000-member Facebook group that helps connect community members in need of essentials – diapers, cat litter, air conditioners, toilet paper, groceries and more – with people who have something to spare.

MAS admin team member Rae Gunn describes the group’s ethos as “solidarity, not charity.”

“We’re all here to help each other, and I think that’s why we’ve seen this big increase in growth,” they say. One of the group’s core features is reciprocity: members who post requests for help one week will regularly be back a week or two later offering a donation.

“People are realizing ‘This isn’t a handout. I don’t have to be ashamed. I have something that

somebody else needs. I’m going to hand that out,” Gunn says. “It’s that community mindset that I think we’re helping to rebuild within Winnipeg.”

Gunn says the admin team’s mix of backgrounds helps the group stay in touch with the ways vulnerable community members tend to fall through the cracks of more formalized avenues for support.

“Our own admin team is full of people who struggle with paycheck-to-paycheck life ... and what those barriers are, and so we know that there are those gaps for everybody else in our community,” they say.

MAS successfully incorporated as a registered non-profit this year. Gunn hopes this will help the group build toward having centralized locations to reach those without internet access.

“We want to have (a) setup of ‘You need a winter jacket? Come on down, we’ve got a winter jacket. You need food while you’re here? Take some food.’ ... the big wish list is to just not turn anybody away.”



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Favourite local photographer

1. **Joey Senft**

BY MATTHEW FRANK

2. **Adam Kelly**

✕ MATDFRANK

3. **Dwayne Larson**

Joey Senft searches for energy when photographing concerts. Each photo is packed with the dynamic emotion shown in the artists’ faces and limbs swaying with the music.

Senft has come close to being voted first in the past, with a second-place finish in 2021 and third-place finish in 2022.

“It’s really nice that people voted for me to be first. I work really hard, so it’s nice to get recognized sometimes,” Senft says.

Live music has always featured heavily in Senft’s work, and her first photography experience was capturing memories of her friends’ bands in high school. Her love for live music influences her music tastes, too.

“I’m an odd person,” she says. “I won’t buy an artist’s album unless I’ve seen them live, because if they sound good live, they’ll probably sound good on the album.”

For Senft, the higher a show’s energy, the better. Her favourite concerts to shoot are ones where the artist jumps into the crowd, because

she believes it shows they care about their fans.

One example is a photo of the lead singer for Death By Stereo jumping into the crowd, belting into their microphone, with their arm wrapped around fans singing along.

“Those guys are always so much fun to photograph, because I know he’s going to get in the crowd, and the crowd just loves it,” she says.

Senft believes live-music experience adds a depth to an artist’s performance that isn’t there when streaming the music.

“You get (the artist’s) emotion a lot more when they play a live show, and people don’t really understand that sometimes.”

The Foo Fighters top Senft’s photography bucket list. She tried to do everything to make it to the show, but when the band was scheduled to come to Winnipeg, they canceled their concert.

“It’s the one show I want to shoot, and I can die happy after that,” Senft says.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Favourite local place that no longer exists

1. The Tallest Poppy
2. Music Trader
3. Cousin's Deli

BY SUZANNE PRINGLE
 @BLAQUE_SQUIRREL

For its comfort food and community support, epic drag brunches and service that slapped, The Tallest Poppy was an unrivalled space that will be missed.

This beloved eatery was a Winnipeg gathering spot for 15 years. After moving from its Main Street location to Sherbrook Street in 2014, it closed its doors one last time in June of 2023.

Talia Syrie, former owner of The Tallest Poppy, credits her staff for making it such a special place.

“We were always more than the sum of our parts,” Syrie says in reference to the steadfast “weirdos” who made the Poppy a memorable and inclusive space. “You didn’t realize how much you needed to see them.”

Syrie, a keen observer of Winnipeg culture, finds this nomination “a bit obnoxious.”

“We never really placed on the (Uniter 30) list when we were open, which is so quintessentially Winnipeg,” she says, noting the community’s proclivity for enshrining retired institutions in

memoria, like the drive-in movie theatre.

Syrie does, however, credit their loyalty. “Once they’ve signed on, they’re in it forever. They’ll go down with the ship.”

She cites the building’s broken ventilation and make-air systems as the cause for rendering the Poppy’s kitchen and dining area “untenable.”

“We were evicted,” Syrie says of the tenant-owner stalemate. “He (the landlord) just said, ‘I’m not fixing them.’ And we couldn’t legally operate without them.”

Though she has no plans for a third Poppy incarnation, Syrie will miss her staff and customers.

“I’m very grateful to the people that made up our community. They’re a pretty fierce bunch of folks. I hold them in very high regard,” she says.

For those missing the Poppy (and their fried chicken), Syrie and long-time collaborator Synonym Art Consultation will host a New Year’s Day drag brunch at The Forks.



EMILY CHRISTIE (SUPPLIED)

Favourite local podcast

1. Witchpolice Radio
2. The Reel Debaters
3. Barking Dog

BY MATTHEW TEKLEMARIAM
 @MATTEKLEMARIAM

In a “sea of podcasts”— as Micheal Petrow, executive producer and host of *The Reel Debaters Podcast*, puts it — big and small, there is but one podcast to rule them all.

“If you’re at a house party, and you’re talking about who’s got the best spaceship in a sci-fi movie, one of those conversations, it’s hard to find an answer. That’s what we do on the show,” Petrow says.

He describes the award-winning podcast as a “small select group of film nerds, cinephiles, filmmakers, comic-book collectors, AV nerds” from all walks of life.

After 230-plus episodes in the bag, *The Reel Debaters Podcast* shows no sign of slowing down. With a laundry list of local talent and a rotating format for each episode, stagnation is unlikely.

“We have three different sections to the show. We have the comedic aspect, which is the debate. Then we have real talk sessions, which are open format/open floor, where we pick topics out of a hat or a list from online and critique it,”

Petrow says.

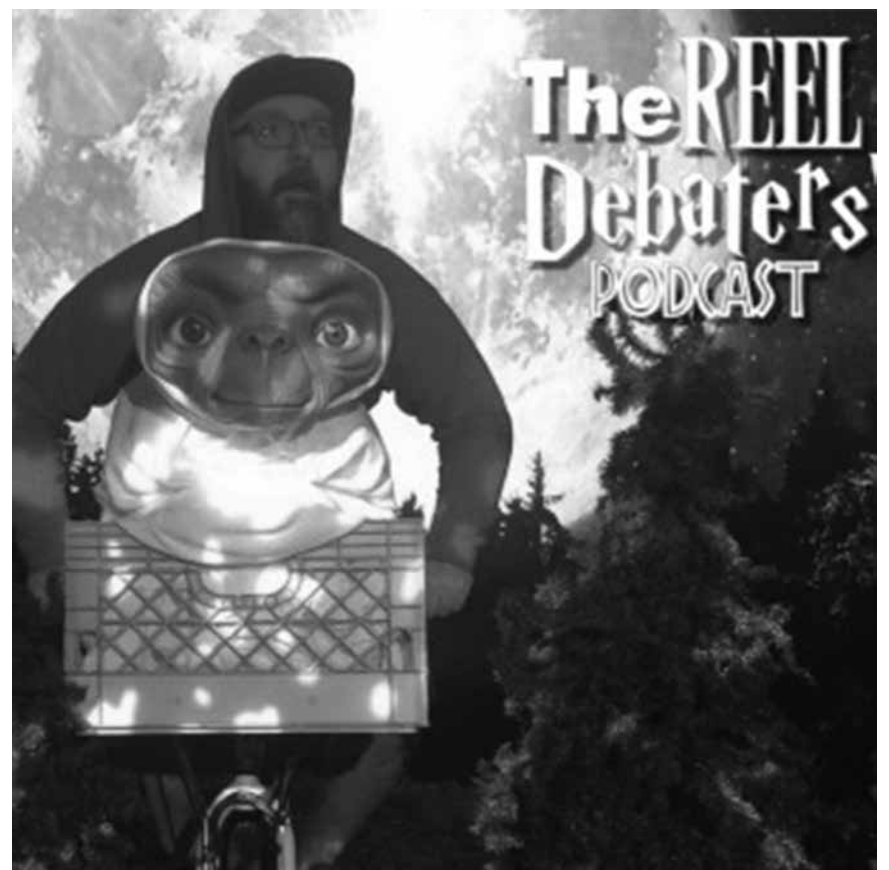
The third segment involves interviewing industry professionals, from resident makeup artist Doug Morrow to bodybuilding and superhero legend Lou Ferrigno.

“I started to pick apart the local film industry because I work in it, and I know that there is a lot of talent and behind-the-scenes positions that don’t get noticed,” Petrow says.

He attributes their success to knowing their audience. Unlike nine-figure tentpole productions popping up in theatres, the Reel Debaters are less than concerned with mass appeal.

“We know who’s listening, and we know them well. We just act like ourselves and try to be as approachable and fun and silly as possible,” Petrow says.

“We love the devoted niche audience that we have. We’re for people who talk movies, who live movies, for whom the movie theatre is their church.”



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Favourite local politician

1. Wab Kinew
2. Leah Gazan
3. Uzoma Asagwara

BY MIEKE RUTH VAN INEVELD
 X MIEKERUTH

Wabanakwut (Wab) Kinew’s ascendancy to the premiership of Manitoba is an achievement in itself, but the Anishinaabe community leader, broadcaster and musician has now won an even greater honour: recognition as *Uniter* readers’ favourite local politician of 2023.

Kinew’s performance in the Uniter 30 over the years mirrors his career in provincial politics. But much like this category’s recent heavy-hitters Uzoma Asagwara and Robert Falcon-Ouellette, Kinew’s path to the number-one spot began well before his name appeared on a ballot.

Many first came to know Kinew as a broadcast journalist. His career at CBC began in 2005, where his “blunt delivery” and knack for public speaking earned him host-producer roles on *Live by the Drum*, *Canada Live* and *The 204*.

He rose to national prominence as host of the 2012 documentary series *8th Fire*, which argues for a re-evaluation of the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and settler society and notes the economic benefits of greater Indigenous inclusion. Kinew holds a bachelor’s degree in economics from the University of Manitoba.

In 2011, the University of Winnipeg named Kinew as its first director of Indigenous inclusion, and he continued serving in its administration until he began pursuing his long-held political aspirations in 2016.

Kinew defeated then-Liberal leader Rana Bokhari in that year’s provincial election, becoming the MLA for Fort Rouge and *Uniter* readers’ second-favourite local politician.

In 2017, Kinew defeated Manitoba New Democratic Party stalwart Steve Ashton to win the party’s leadership, but this wasn’t enough to tip the scales for Uniter 30 voters, who continued awarding him second place through 2019.

He dropped out of the Uniter 30 running altogether in 2020, as the NDP’s support sagged. This drought would be short-lived. Kinew took third place in 2022, following a year of successfully capitalizing on then-premier Heather Stefanson’s increasing unpopularity, setting the stage for both of this year’s big wins.

The Uniter was not able to reach Kinew for comment as of press time.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Favourite local athlete

1. **Brady Oliveira (Winnipeg Blue Bombers)**
2. **Bobby Schink (wrestler)**
3. **Connor Hellebuyck (Winnipeg Jets)**

BY PAUL HODGERT

PAULHODGERT

You might think Winnipeggers would be tired of hearing about Blue Bombers who went to Oak Park High School, but you would be wrong. This year, *Uniter* readers selected running back Brady Oliveira as their favourite local athlete for 2023.

While only in his second season as a starter, taking over for fellow Oak Park alum (and 2018 winner) Andrew Harris, Oliveira managed to have a truly dominant season, racking up more than 2,000 yards from scrimmage.

He was also part of another milestone. Oliveira and Nic Demski, yet another Oak Park alum, became the first two Canadians on the same team to reach 1,000 rushing yards and 1,000 receiving yards in a single season.

The fact that they both played for the same high school in the same city as their team makes this an achievement that will likely never be repeated, unless these two do it again in the future.

“This means a lot to me. I’m a proud Canadian, a proud Manitoban,” Oliveira said in an emailed statement to *The Uniter*. “So to be rec-

ognized like this by my hometown, by my community – as a Winnipegger, it means the world to me.”

While the Blue Bombers were unable to bring home a third Grey Cup in four years, Oliveira managed to win some hardware for himself. At the CFL Awards this year, he was named the CFL’s Most Outstanding Canadian, won the league’s rushing-yards title and tied for the league’s touchdown title.

With a season like that, it should come as no surprise that there has been interest south of the border. Oliveira is currently working on setting up workouts with NFL teams.

But even if he manages to move beyond our borders and gets a taste of NFL glory, he will always remain a Winnipegger at heart.

“I’m living out a childhood dream playing for my hometown with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers,” he says.

It’s not hard to see why he’s your favourite.



DANIEL CRUMP/CFL (SUPPLIED)

Favourite local barber or hairstylist

1. **Shawna Friederici (261 Hair Company)**
2. **Jas Moran (The Barber Bae)**
3. **Walter Spooner (Waltz on In)**

BY MATTHEW TEKLEMARIAM

MATTTEKLEMARIAM

Shawna Friederici is quite simply a veteran of her craft. She’s been a staple in local aesthetics long before frosted tips were a punchline and has now been chosen as Winnipeg’s favourite local hairstylist.

A tale as old as time, Friederici’s passion for hair was born of rebellion and fried chicken.

“When I was in Grade 10, I worked at the local Chicken Chef. I wanted to dye my hair blue, so I asked my boss, and he said no. I thought, when I get older, I’m going to do what I want,” Friederici says.

Straight out of high school, Friederici attended and graduated from hair school in Brandon, where she took her first job at the now-defunct Hair Haven salon. Wanderlust struck, and she had a brief stint aiding Calgarians with their coiffures before finally settling back in Winnipeg.

“I went to a place called Making Waves, where you can rent a chair and run your own business,” Friederici says. “My mind blew. You make your own hours. You’re your own boss, and all the money is yours.”

Today, Friederici’s elusive talents can be seen at 261 Hair Company, where she handles a full cli-

ent list with grace and poise. While more technical stylists may be inclined to “precision cutting,” Friederici prefers a more free-spirited approach to the art of the snip.

“It’s more of a freestyle cutting situation. People like that. I like doing colours and more creative stuff,” she says.

After 24 years in the follicular arts, Friederici has mastered adaptation in an industry that’s never content to settle.

“There have definitely been different time periods where I’m into specific things. Every five or seven years, there’s something new. Everyone is getting copper hair these days,” she says.

It raises the question for would-be avant-gardists all over: what’s on the horizon for hairstyles?

“If we’re talking men’s hair, it’s going to be a permed mullet. I’m having to learn how to perm again. We permed a lot of hair (in) school, but it was gone for a while. For ladies, a lot of the balayage is going on,” Friederici says.



PHOTO BY ISAIAH SANCHEZ

Favourite date activity

1. **See a local comedy show**
2. **See a movie**
3. **Visit the Manitoba Museum**

BY THANDI VERA

Couples are drawn to the Manitoba Museum for dates, because it offers more than a traditional historical experience – it provides an immersive and interactive outing.

Situated at 190 Rupert Ave., this cultural institution stands out as a preferred destination for couples seeking an adventure-filled evening.

“The Nonsuch Gallery and the 1920 Winnipeg Cityscape are fan favourites,” Sam Wijesinghe, a learning facilitator at the Manitoba Museum, says. These two attractions create an atmosphere that feels like embarking on an exploration, except the twist is attendees are discovering a whole new world together.

The Nonsuch Gallery immerses visitors in the world of an iconic ship that sailed across the Atlantic Ocean in 1668 and 1669. According to the Manitoba Museum, the replica was built in 1968 in England to celebrate the tricentennial of the Hudson’s Bay Company. It sailed 14,000 kilometers through salt and fresh water before finding its home in Winnipeg.

“People love going onto the ship and exploring it,” Wijesinghe says.

The gallery’s intricate details and captivating stories create an atmosphere that transports visitors to an era

of exploration and trade.

Another beloved spot for dates, the 1920 Winnipeg Cityscape, is where a snapshot of the city’s past comes alive.

From the hustle and bustle of the Amy Galbraith dress store to the mystique of a tarot-reading room and Strathcona restaurant, the immersive experience offers a vivid glimpse into the past.

“People enjoy going into the little stores and rooms. It’s like being in another world,” Wijesinghe says.

Couples can also relish a movie date within the enchanting confines of the 1920 Cityscape, where the Proscenium Theatre becomes an integral part of the experience. Illuminated by warm lights and offering snug seating, the theatre screens silent short films featuring iconic stars of the era, such as Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton.

Overall, these exhibits give couples a shared adventure, offering a special date experience.

Wijesinghe says a lot of couples choose First Fridays for date nights, because the museum is free from 5 until around 8 p.m. Adult admission is usually \$15, and the museum is usually open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

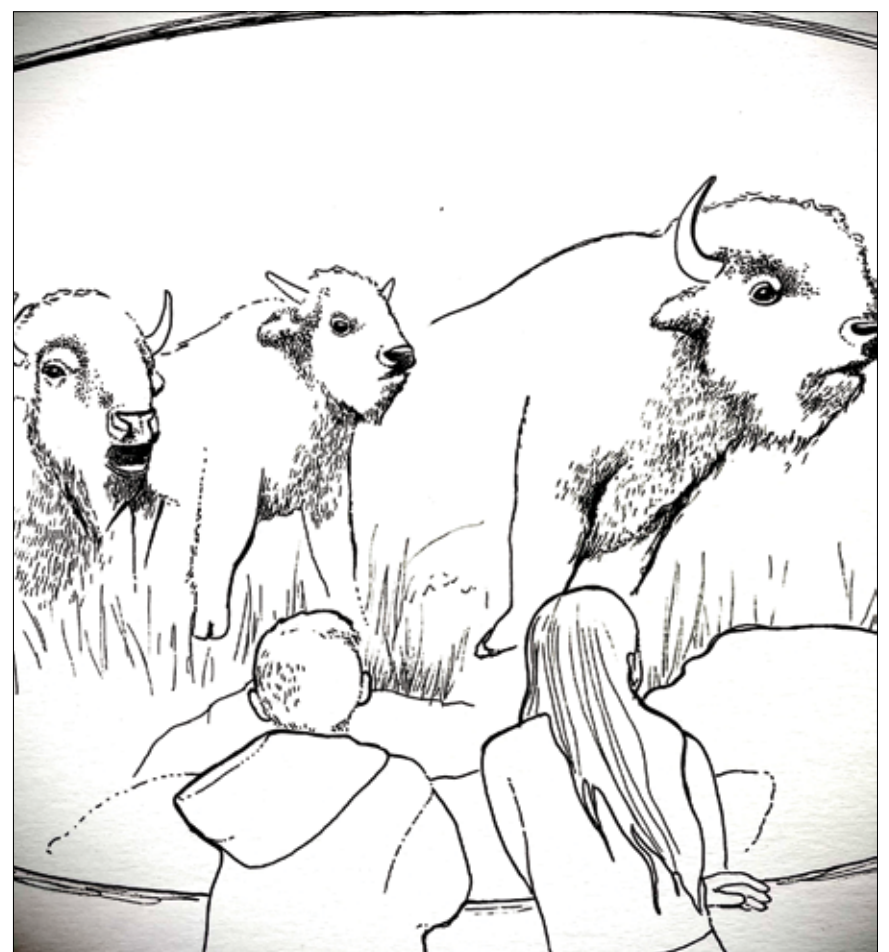


ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

Favourite local dancer

1. Esethu Gwintsa
2. Ella Steele
3. Dancing Gabe

BY THANDI VERA

At the tender age of five, Esethu Gwintsa pirouetted into the world of dance with a dream as delicate as a ballerina's twirl. "I told my mom I wanted to be a ballerina, so she put me in dance classes," Gwintsa says.

Raised in Winnipeg, she began dancing at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, later adapting to various studios across the city as her family moved.

Today she has 15 years of dance experience with a repertoire spanning a variety of genres.

"I feel like jazz is my favourite. I love it, and then hip hop I've come to like quite a lot," she says. "There's kind of a style in the middle, jazz funk. It's kind of a mix of the two. I really like it, too."

Gwintsa has performed in musicals and spent time as a cheerleader for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. "I did that for almost two years. I started in 2021 after graduation, but I'm not doing it now," she says. "It was so fun to be able to dance in that setting and also cheer on our

team."

Known for her versatility, Gwintsa says she ventured into choreography two years ago, a surprising turn for someone who initially never considered it.

"It was something I never thought that I would get into, but I've had a lot of fun with that. But, ultimately, performing is my passion, like my one true love," she says.

Looking ahead, Gwintsa says she's recently begun to embrace dance not just as a passionate pursuit but as a prospective profession.

"I'd love to definitely move somewhere in the next couple of years and either do a dance program or just take dance classes in New York, Los Angeles or Vancouver," she says. "I want to see what it's like, because performing is different than actually working as a dancer."

Gwintsa says she feels grateful to be voted first. "It feels nice ... It's kind of a surprise, but it was a very pleasant surprise for sure," she says.



PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

Favourite new local independent business

1. Crumb Queen
2. Fantasy Club Books
3. Friend Bakery & Pizza

BY THANDI VERA

Cloe Wiebe, the driving force behind Crumb Queen, discovered her passion for baking at a young age, sharing moments with her mom in the kitchen. Today, her bakery stands as a favourite spot in Winnipeg.

The vibrant walls are adorned with work from local artists, including pieces brought from home and others curated by Meganelizabeth Diamond. T-shirts hang on the wall behind the counter, adding a personalized touch.

The bakery's soothing, light-pink colour scheme and wooden counter create a warm and inviting atmosphere. The smell of fresh honey crullers permeates the air, and through the slight open box frame, the hustle and bustle in the kitchen is visible as bakers prepare delectable treats.

Just outside, a sign on the street calls visitors in, inviting them to experience the cozy charm within.

The menu promises an array of delights, including breads, cookies and pastries. The new location not only showcases Crumb Queen's beloved crullers but also lists "Andy's Lunch @11" on the menu, where Andy Koropatnick, Wiebe's

partner, shares his culinary talent.

"It's been really fun to collaborate with Andy and make the place our own," Wiebe says.

Crumb Queen began during the COVID-19 pandemic, when Wiebe found solace and joy in connecting with others through baking.

"I was just happy to interact with anybody, because that was when you were only allowed to have one person in your apartment at a time," she says. "It was fun to talk to people, and that was also a good way to see friends and family, because they would come and pick up orders so then we could chat."

Crumb Queen gained Instagram popularity, leading to weekly micro-bakery popups. The bakery's success surged in the fall, when Wiebe found a new home in Osborne Village.

Reflecting on Crumb Queen's success, Wiebe says she is forever grateful for the support.

"I'm always shocked. I was shocked every single week and even now, though it's been three years since I started," she says. "I have days where I'm like, 'No one's coming today. The hype is dead,' and then we have a great day."



PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

Favourite local neighbourhood

1. Wolseley
2. West Broadway
3. West End

BY CIERRA BETTENS

✕ FICTIONALCIERRA @CIERRABETTS

It's a neighbourhood known for its outdoor cats, hatred of insecticide and overabundance of Blundstones. But to uncover the storied magic of Wolseley, look no further than the trees.

On Sept. 19, 1957, a photo of 12 women chained to a 97-year-old elm tree in the middle of Wolseley Avenue graced the front page of the *Winnipeg Free Press*. "Wild Women Win," the headline read.

The tree, planted on Joseph and Mary Ann Kirton Good's river lot in 1860, became a hallmark of the neighbourhood. But in 1957, plans to open the roadway on its Wolseley Avenue home threatened the elm's existence.

"If they chop it down, they're going to chop us down first," Mrs. C. A. Orr of 1269 Wolseley said.

After a spat with the police and city workers ("Whatsa matter?" said a little boy. "These guys afraid of a bunch of women?"), Mayor Stephen Juba ordered the chop to a halt. The tree survived another few years (including a suspected dynamite

attack) until the city opted to cut it down in July 1960.

While the famed Wolseley Elm is but a plaque on Palmerston Avenue in 2023, thousands of mature trees still call the area between Maryland Street and Omand Park home.

Today, the neighbourhood's infectious love for trees reckons with the infectious Dutch elm disease. Between 2015 and 2021, Wolseley's tree count dropped from 4,163 to 3,517.

To counter these challenges, a team of self-proclaimed "tree bandits" tend to the neighbourhood trunks through grassroots organization Trees Please Winnipeg. Symbols of hope in bandage form line the streets of century-old homes, cafés and gathering spots.

From yesterday's wild women to today's tree bandits, Wolseley's unconditional love for the trees is a testament to the collective will of the neighbourhood.



PHOTO BY DANIEL CRUMP

Favourite local outdoor gathering place

1. The Forks

BY TESSA ADAMSKI

2. Munson Park

✕ TESSA_ADAMSKI @TESSA.ADAMSKI

3. Assiniboine Park

Assiniboine Park is full of winding trails, green spaces and gardens that bring visitors together for picnics, sports, live entertainment or beverages at Cargo Bar.

Its newest attraction, The Leaf, is a natural oasis for thousands of trees, shrubs, flowers and fruits flourishing in four indoor biomes.

With its jungle-like feel, The Leaf is “a place where people from all cultures and all walks of life can find common ground, rooted in our universal connection with nature,” Margaret Redmond, the Assiniboine Park Conservancy president and CEO, said in a news release.

The four biomes include the Hartley and Heather Richardson Tropical Biome, Mediterranean Biome, Babs Asper Display House and the Shirley Richardson Butterfly Garden.

The Babs Asper Display House changes its floral displays every season. This winter features Celebration, a mix of poplars, dogwoods, lush ferns

and fresh-cut black hills spruce trees with shimmering ornaments.

The display showcases traditions, customs and festivities from across the world, “emphasizing the importance of unity and togetherness during this joyous time of year.”

The Holidays at the Park zone will celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, New Year’s, Kwanzaa and the Winter Solstice. The Whimsical Woods display will have star-themed topiaries and a miniature village.

The Mediterranean biome has a holiday tree made of succulents, and the Hartley and Heather Richardson Tropical Biome has a tree made of bromeliads and ferns.

This humid biome is home to exotic plants, birdsong, a koi pond and Canada’s tallest indoor waterfall – a place visitors flock to in the winter months to escape the cold and watch 17 different species of butterflies in the garden.



PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

Favourite political moment

1. NDP defeats PCs in provincial election

BY MATTHEW FRANK

2. Palestinian solidarity/ceasefire movement

✕ MATTFRANK

3. Rally for Trans Youth

Under the chandelier of the ballroom at the Fort Garry Hotel, cheers erupted from the crowd on Oct. 3 when it was announced Wab Kinew’s New Democratic Party (NDP) was elected as the next Manitoba provincial government.

The NDP formed a majority government with 34 seats, defeating Heather Stefanson’s Progressive Conservatives (PC), who only held onto 22 seats.

According to Probe Research, voters were most concerned with issues like healthcare, cost of living, and public safety during the election. More than 400,000 voters cast their ballots by the time the polls closed, including a record 200,790 during the advanced voting period.

The NDP campaign hinged on fixing healthcare and making life more affordable for Manitobans. The party promised to build three new emergency rooms in Winnipeg and a new cancer-care facility.

The NDP last won an election under then-premier Greg Selinger in 2011, before losing to Bri-

an Pallister’s PCs in 2016.

As the wave of orange swept across the province on election night, Manitoba’s first First Nations premier stood grinning on the podium, surrounded by his family.

“This is a great victory for us,” Kinew said. “This is a great victory for all of us.”

The new majority NDP government saw a diverse range of rookie candidates elected. Of the 34 elected seats, 16 are held by first-time Manitoba Legislative Assembly members.

One is 23-year old Jelynn Dela Cruz, who is the youngest woman to hold a seat in the Manitoba Legislature. Also making history is Logan Oxenham, who became the first transgender person to hold office at the provincial level in Manitoba.

As the results rolled in and an NDP victory became officially certified, both PC leader Heather Stefanson, and Manitoba Liberal leader Dugald Lamont announced they would step down from their positions.



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

Favourite local public art piece

1. *emptyful* by Bill Pechet

2. Riley Grae mural

BY PATRICK HARNEY

3. Cinematheque bathroom by JD Renaud

Created by Bill Pechet as a part of a Millennium Library Park renovation project, *emptyful* stands in direct contrast to its neighbour. While the Millennium Library is a hulking brutalist structure, full of sharp edges, flat surfaces and straight lines, *emptyful* is narrow, with curved sides and a metallic finish.

Despite its small size, *emptyful* intended to invoke a feeling of open-ended space and the possibility of imagination that emptiness brings.

“When I went to Winnipeg, I felt an open-ended liberation ... Winnipeg has a lot of those empty spaces that are valuable for cities,” Pechet says. “Knowing its position in the Prairies, it’s an area where you can project a lot of imagination into space.”

The piece’s title is meant to embody the liminal space between the emptiness of the vast Prairie environment and the fullness of the peo-

ple that occupy it. The Prairie environment also informs the piece’s shifting light show.

In the summer, the lights of *emptyful* project cool colours, matched with a misting machine to provide respite during the scorching heat.

Come winter, the piece shifts as its lights project warm colours, referencing a backyard fire pit that brings people in to feel the warmth.

Spending money on public art can be contentious, but Pechet’s piece shows what filling these empty spaces can do.

“I think a well-rounded society has many, many options for the population that provide both things considered useful and things that spark the imagination,” Pechet says. “If we only devote money to things that are classically utilitarian or arguable, we omit a large part of our brains, full of imagination.”



PHOTO BY DANIEL CRUMP

Favourite local music venue		Favourite local restaurant	
1. The Good Will Social Club		1. The Handsome Daughter	BY JURA MCILRAITH
2. The Handsome Daughter		2. Bonnie Day	✕ @ JURA_IS_MY_NAME
3. The Park Theatre		3. Shorty's Pizza	

The Handsome Daughter gives smaller local bands a place to start performing, while its in-house restaurant Magic Bird Fried Chicken offers some seriously good food.

The Handsome Daughter's booking manager, Corey Hykawy, says the appreciation for the venue was unexpected. The Good Will Social Club, now slated to close Feb. 1, 2024, has long dominated this category in the Uniter 30.

"It's important to have places like ours that young bands can play," Hykawy says. "I'm very happy to see that people love The Daughter and love coming to see shows here."

The space is smaller than some other music venues in Winnipeg, which may seem like a disadvantage. Hykawy says it's actually one of the great things about The Handsome Daughter.

"It's important to have smaller venues," he says. "Having a place that young bands can play and get their first shot at playing on a stage is really important."

It's easier for emerging bands to fill the room with the lower capacity limits of about 100 people. If only 30 people show up for a performance, it still feels full, Hykawy says.

"My favourite thing is that the room just has a character to it," he says. "It's not the best-sounding room. It's not the nicest-looking room, but no matter where you're standing in the room, you can see the stage great."

Magic Bird Fried Chicken specializes in Nashville-style fried chicken and is run by chef Mike O'Connell.

The menu features crispy chicken sandwiches made with varying levels of heat for concert, trivia, karaoke or comedy-night attendees to enjoy.

The restaurant has been serving up classic fried comfort food and creative recipes since 2018.

O'Connell could not be reached for comment at press time.



PHOTO BY DANIEL CRUMP

Favourite on-campus spot	
1. Library	BY MIEKE RUTH VAN INEVELD
2. Fourth-floor cafeteria	✕ MIEKERUTH
3. The University of Winnipeg Club	

Campus libraries are often described as "the heart of the university," and the University of Winnipeg library doesn't take that for granted.

Librarian Joshua Herter works on user experience and assessment for the library.

"We're always trying to improve the space," he says. This year, they overhauled the once-cumbersome printing infrastructure based on results of a behavioural mapping study to identify that system's "pain points."

"We wanted to do what we could to minimize the frustrating nature of that system for everybody in the library," he says.

While campus may feel a bit emptier than before the COVID-19 pandemic, Herter says when people are on campus, the library is busy as ever. Weekends and evenings have not yet recovered, but usage is growing steadily.

Feedback from students has reflected that losing access during the pandemic made the library's value as a "third space" outside of home or classroom

much clearer to many of its users.

"We were all under lockdown at one point where we suddenly realized, 'Oh my god, I don't want my workspace to be my home space,'" he says. "When people are on campus, they like ... being connected with other people, studying with their friends (and) being in an academic atmosphere to do that work."

He says the library's best- and most-underrated feature is its staff. Many students are unaware that the library offers research consultations. Not only will librarians provide detailed guidance on the tools, methods and resources best suited to a student's research, but they're also happy to talk about the stresses of academic life.

"We're always here to help people, and we really enjoy doing that," he says. "If you look at our Google reviews, that's what's on there. It's like, 'Hey, the place is a little shabby, but this staff member interceded when someone was bullying me.'"

Does it get more Winnipeg than that?



PHOTO BY THOMAS PASHKO

Favourite local writer	
1. Sheldon Birnie	BY PATRICK HARNEY
2. Owen Toews	
3. Zoe Mills	

With his writing featured in *VICE*, *Briarpatch*, *Exclaim!* and more, one doesn't have to look far to find the work of Sheldon Birnie. He has covered almost everything from music to sports to politics to fiction and he shows no sign of stopping. He "just enjoys doing it."

Much of Birnie's work showcases the people, culture and environment of the Prairies. Despite not growing up in the Prairies, Birnie says he is "a bit of a homer."

"I grew up in Northern B.C., but my parents are from Manitoba. My family's all from here, and we spent summers visiting my grandparents and aunts and uncles," Birnie says. "For whatever reason, I always felt more connected to here than where I grew up."

Birnie says he always showed an inclination toward writing. He wrote in his youth and worked for punk-rock zines as a young adult, but his career as a journalist didn't begin until a friend

roped him into working at *The Manitoban*.

"I really enjoyed doing that. I had never thought of journalism as a career before, but I quickly fell in love with it," Birnie says. "I pursued opportunities as they came up, and here we are."

Now, Birnie works at the *Free Press Community Review*, covering community meetings and local events, while working on his own writing. His recent collection, titled *Where the Pavement Turns to Sand*, features stories he's written over the past 20 years, blending genre fiction with the backwoods of Prairie Canada.

"Writing about characters and stuff from here, it comes naturally to me. I think it's important to write those stories down and to share them," Birnie says. "And if there's a readership beyond here, that's great, but if not, then at least there's some stories for us."

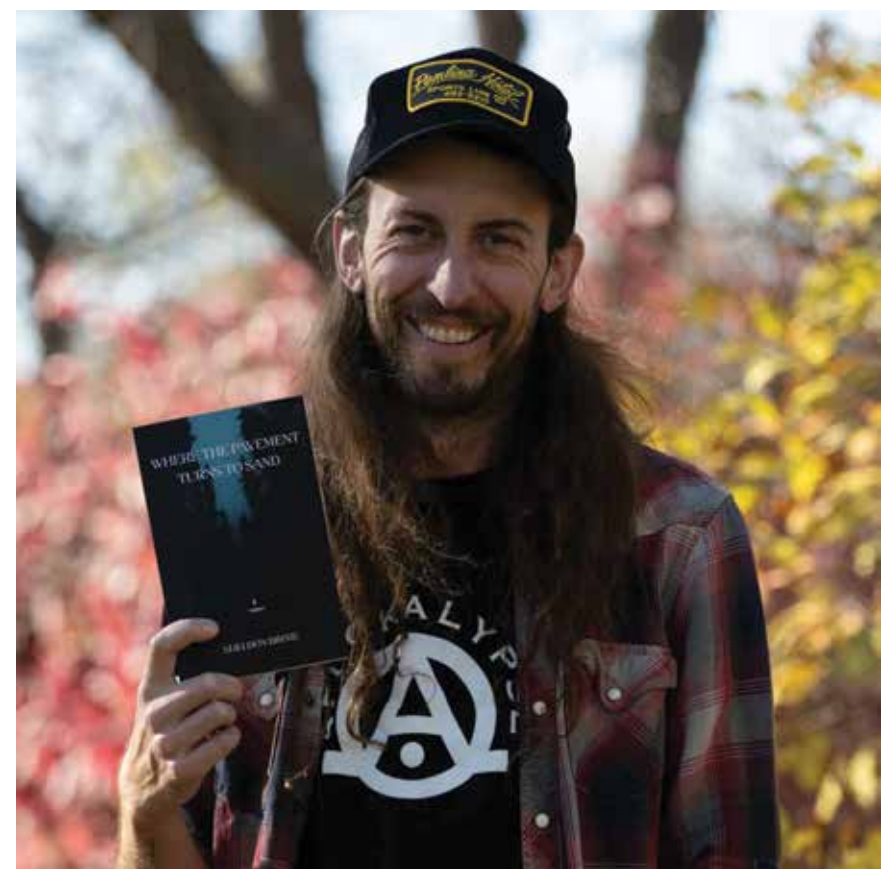




PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

Favourite local publication (that isn't *The Uniter*)

1. <i>The Uniter</i> (editor's note: please stop voting for us)	BY CIERRA BETTENS
2. <i>Stylus</i>	 FICTIONALCIERRA  CIERRABETTENS
3. ARP Books	

In 1996, a group of anarchists bound together to establish a radical press in the Old Market Square Autonomous Zone in Winnipeg's Exchange District.

"ARP was born as Arbeiter Ring Publishing at the time," editor Irene Bindi says. "It was run on volunteer steam for the first 15 years or something, with a focus on leftist politics originally, and then incorporating literary titles that have leftist-leaning themes, as well."

Now, 27 years later, ARP Books has grown from a humble workers' collective into a respected, independent publisher, loved by *Uniter* readers and many more. It's given dozens of writers a platform to share radical ideas, styles and futures with the world.

While other publishers may shy from dissent, ARP welcomes it. From Owen Toews' critique of settler-colonialism in *Stolen City* to Hannah Godfrey's reinvention of art criticism in *Critical Fictions*, the publisher finds its strength in testing the boundaries of writing.

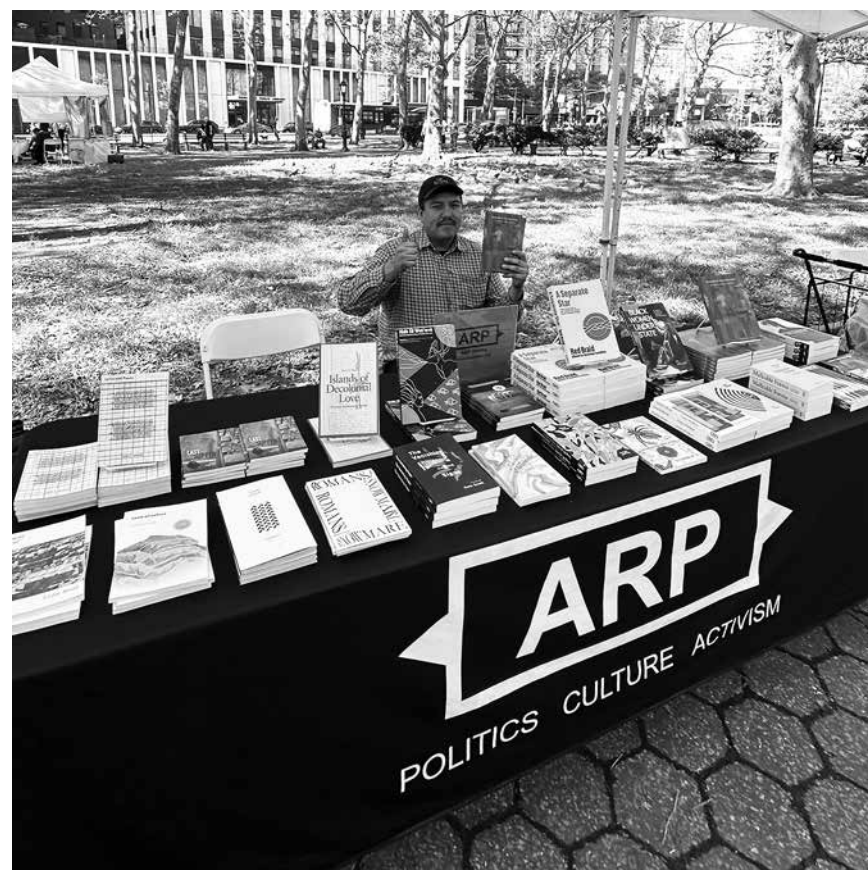
"We try to be aware of what's going on obviously locally, and provincially, nationally and internationally," Bindi says. "We believe in interconnection and that there is no such thing as an isolated struggle."

The authors on ARP's roster are diverse in background and craft. They are musicians, poets, academics, community leaders and activists of all stripes. But what binds them together is their belief that a better world is possible.

"A lot of our writers on the academic side and on the literary side are also activists and organizers and involved in a material way in creating change," Bindi says.


In the face of large-scale, corporate publishing monopolies, she believes ARP's people-over-profit mandate is what sets them apart.

"We operate in order to spread ideas, not in order to make profit," Bindi says. "Along with that comes a lot of differences in terms of freedom to experiment both with content and with form."



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Favourite local visual artist

1. Dylan Carr	BY SUZANNE PRINGLE
2. Barb Bottle	 BLAQUE_SQUIRREL
3. JD Renaud	

Artists often struggle with calling themselves artists. Even after being named readers' favourite local visual artist, Dylan Carr hesitates to shoulder that title.

"I think my friends just voted for me," they say. "I'm so grateful. That was a really lovely thing to receive. But, yeah, I definitely think it was them. The power of a mass text."

Carr, a first-year fine-arts student at the University of Manitoba, encourages others to call themselves artists – even though they struggle to do the same.

"It's such a hard thing," Carr says. "I internalize that in myself. I've struggled with feeling legitimate. But I think, yeah, everyone's an artist, including me, you know?"

Through taking printmaking classes at Art City Studio, then Martha Street Studio's Youth Outreach Program (YOP) and INKubator program, Carr took to lino-cutting and screen-printing.

"Being able to duplicate artwork and also experiment and see how it comes out differently

every time – I love that kind of process," they say. "I started off being really excited by the fact that I could make my own clothing designs ... but I like it all. I'm into everything."

After a few false starts at the University of Winnipeg, Carr finally landed on a fine-arts degree. "I tried other different programs and really tried to make those work," they say, "but I think I was always wondering if maybe fine arts would be something for me."

With their degree, Carr wants to pursue arts education, community engagement and their "big goal" of making a mural.

"He-ey, Synonym," they say, giving a shout-out to local curatorial collective Synonym Art Consultation, which hosts Wall-to-Wall Winnipeg, an annual mural event.

Carr's work is on Instagram @bed_crumb_printz and will be at future local markets. They are also running a workshop on Dec. 10 from 1 to 5 p.m. at Haus of Rough Drafts. Check @hausofroughdrafts on Instagram for details.



Favourite Winnipegger abroad

1. Chris Jericho	BY THOMAS PASHKO & PAUL HODGERT
2. Guy Maddin	
3. Brit Kornell	

Not many wrestlers can say they've wrestled in the WWE, WCW, ECW, CMLL, NJPW, ROH and AEW. But only one has wrestled in all of those and the WFWA in Winnipeg. That distinction belongs exclusively to Chris Jericho.

Now Jericho has another honorific to show off alongside his championship belts: he's *Uniter* readers' favourite Winnipegger abroad.

Born Christopher Irvine in Manhasset, N.Y. to Winnipegger and NHL left winger Ted Irvine, Chris grew up in Winnipeg and attended Westwood Collegiate and Red River College before donning the tights. He took his wrestling moniker Chris Jericho from *Walls of Jericho*, the debut album by German power-metal band Helloween.

In his 33-year-and-counting wrestling career, Jericho has achieved stardom and prestige, grappling with the greatest of his generation, those from before his time and the present crop of superstars.

Jericho has also expanded into music, fronting the hard-rock band Fozzy since 1999, releasing eight full-length albums, most recently in 2022 with *Boombbox*. His aural explorations of wrestling and culture have also spilled over into the world of podcasting. His wildly popular show *Talk Is Jericho* has been releasing episodes for 10 years.

However, Jericho has come under fire in recent years for his politics. While reluctant to acknowledge his leanings publicly, he has flirted with Trumpism, tweeting skepticism about the 2020 US election and hosting Donald Trump Jr. as a guest on his podcast. Online wrestling sleuths also discovered that he donated over \$38,000 to Donald Trump's reelection campaign. His Republican leanings have reportedly led to feuds with other wrestlers and promoters.

But his sometimes problematic politics weren't enough to turn off locals, who still clearly have affection for this local brawler-done-good.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

LOL

UNITER 30 OUTTAKES

Tomfoolery of the lowest order

THOMAS PASHKO @X THOMASPASHKO

Tabulating the votes for the Uniter 30 every year is an emotional rollercoaster. Some years it's fun. Others, boring. Depending on my mood, it's a task I either look forward to or dread. No part of the psychological experience oscillates more wildly than the joke votes.

Yes, we get a lot of joke votes. Votes are anonymous, people can write whatever they want, and, much like the anonymous questions box in junior high sex-ed class, there's always plenty of juvenile attempts at humour and vulgarity.

In 2019, my first time tabulating, I said these jokes "make the process a whole lot more fun." Last year, I compared them to bathroom-stall graffiti, and not as a compliment. In this difficult year, like many folks, I'm taking any chuckle I can get as a small blessing, no matter how crude.

Favourite local achiever over 60

"My friggin dad."

"The Mayor or something."

Favourite local achiever under 30

"Hannah the Liberal rep on CBC's election night."

"Nobody achieves anything until they are 45 years old."

"The girl reading this :)"

Favourite local activist

"First person to jackhammer the barricades at Portage and Main."

Favourite local athlete

"Not Obby Khan."

Favourite local comedian

"The Gen Z CBC interns who asked Heather Stefanson and the other leaders what their girl dinner was."

Favourite date activity

"Becoming nauseous and drained of energy by the fluorescent lights in Value Village."

"Cruising at Club 200."

"Dreaming about living somewhere with better transit."

"Getting railed."

"Spending \$250 at Moxies Kenaston."

Favourite local dancer

"My friggin dad."

Favourite new local independent business

"I saw the greatest local independent businesses of my generation turned into weed shops."

"One of the hundreds of new cannabis stores that popped up."

Favourite local place that no longer exists

"Clean air in summer."

Favourite political moment

"Audrey Gordon losing."

"Everyone realizing MB Poli Drag Race was run by an NDP staffer."

"Sleepy Joe"

"When All Of Us Laughed"

"When the fly laded on Mike Pess head."

Favourite public art piece

"That conceptual installation where they closed sidewalks all over the city for months."

"The Liberal CBC rep's earrings."

"Vandalized PC bus bench ads."

Favourite on-campus spot

"Centennial Hall (because thats where the pizza is!)"

"Distance ed at home thank yewwwwww."

"The hall on the 4th floor everyone goes to when they have phone calls."

"When the book guy is there it's wherever the book guy is set up."

"The library aisle with the books about folk music on one end and you can sit there and read against the window."

Favourite local restaurant

"The illegal pizzeria in Wolseley."

"Whatever Cousins is called now."

"Spicy Noodle House - get the spicy peanut noodle soup if you are sick it will heal you instantly."

Favourite local social-media presence

"All the news sites I now can't read."

Favourite music venue

"My cd player at my parent's place."

"my shower"

"Darling Bar because I can sit on the floor and no one cares."

Favourite Winnipegger abroad

"My ex. See ya!"

OMG

HAHA

(note: any typos or grammatical errors are preserved from actual ballot entries)

CITY BRIEFS

THOMAS PASHKO | MANAGING EDITOR | @X THOMASPASHKO

Google strikes deal on Canadian news

On Wednesday, Nov. 29, Google struck a deal with the Canadian government after a months-long deadlock on Canadian news. In June, the federal government introduced Bill C-18, which would require tech companies like search engines (Google) or social media (Facebook, Instagram) to compensate Canadian news outlets for sharing their work. Meta, the parent company of Facebook and Instagram, is still banning Canadian users from accessing news.

Mass shooting in West Broadway

Four people were killed and a fifth critically injured in a shooting at a West Broadway boarding house in the early hours of Sunday, Nov. 26. Two of the dead were sisters from Lake St. Martin First Nation: Crystal Shannon Beady, 34, and Stephanie Amanda Beady, 33. The other victims were Melelek Leseri Lesikel, 29, and Dylan Maxwell Lavallee, 41. The identity of the injured victim hasn't been released. The shooter remains at large.

Globe and Mail names Winnipeg third most livable city

On Nov. 25, *The Globe and Mail* published its list of the 100 most livable Canadian cities. Winnipeg came in third place, just behind Victoria and North Vancouver and just ahead of Regina and Burlington. The newspaper evaluated cities within the categories of economy, housing, demographics, healthcare, safety, education, community, amenities, transportation and climate.

CN Rail files suit against protesters

One day after a Nov. 20 protest that blocked rail traffic for five hours, CN Rail filed a lawsuit against members of Queers for Palestine Winnipeg. The group blocked rail lines north of Union Station, calling for a ceasefire in the Israel-Gaza war and halting the movement of what they say are Israeli goods. CN claims the blockade caused "irreparable harm" to the corporation. As of press time, none of the protesters have yet been served with a lawsuit.

Embattled school trustee resigns

Francine Champagne, the thrice-suspended Louis Riel School Division school-board trustee, resigned from her position on Nov. 28. Champagne was previously suspended for making racist and anti-2SLGBTQIA+ online posts. The resignation comes amid a recent wave of far-right school-board candidates across Canada and the US, as well as attempts by racist and anti-queer groups to influence teaching materials.

True North requests extension on Portage Place redevelopment

The uncertain future of Portage Place mall is likely to remain in limbo for a while longer. True North Real Estate Development, part of the parent company that owns the Winnipeg Jets and the Burton Cummings Theatre, had previously signed an agreement to decide by Dec. 31 whether they will undertake a redevelopment of Portage Place that would cost upwards of half a billion dollars. True North is now asking the city to extend that deadline to June 30, 2024. The requested extension remains under review.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	
6AM	MORNING BREATH	The Sentinel's Marvellous Kaleidoscope	Worldbeat Canada Radio	Indigenous in Music	FANTASTIC FRIDAY World - Island Music	THE SATURDAY MORNING SHOW	CKU-SPEAKS	
7AM	Shortwave Report	Folk Roots Radio	FRANÇOL	CANQUEER	Wooden Spoons	Green Planet Monitor	SHADES OF CLASSICS Classical and New Age	
8AM	CounterSpin	RADIO ECOSHOCK	Behind the News With Doug Henwood	Harbinger Media Hour	Green Planet Monitor	SHADES OF CLASSICS	SHADES OF CLASSICS	
9AM	DEMOCRACY NOW!				DEMOCRACY NOW!			
10AM	DEPARTMENT 13 POP/ROCK	This Way Out WINGS	VOYAGE Jazz	Viewpoints BRIDGING THE GAP	SUNNY ROAD Roots Music	MUD PUDDLE RADIO For Kids (Adults too)	Medicine Wheel of Music	
11AM	COMEDIOLOGICAL REPORT	The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit Folk	DEAD MEDIUM	ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS	NO FIXED ADDRESS Lived Experiences of Homelessness	THE ELECTRIC CHAIR	NEON BEIGE SOUND EXCHANGE	
NOON	outSPOKeN Truth Before Reconciliation	THE GREEN MAJORITY	ALTERNATIVE RADIO	DEAD MEDIUM	HOW TO SURVIVE A TORNADO	TEMPLE TENT REVIVAL	YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM GOD Gospel	
1PM	GroundSwell Radio New Classical	The Stuph File	The Meta World STOOPALOOP SHOW	TICKLE MY FANCY Blues	GLOBAL RESEARCH NEWS HOUR	THE IVORY TOWER Eclectic Mix	Active Voice	
2PM	NewFound Records Music from Newfoundland and Labrador	Winnipeg Arena is on Fire	SPACE CADET MUSIC, OUT OF THIS WORLD	BARKING DOG Past 'n Present Folk 'n Roots	Dollar Country	Eclectic Residents	The World News, spoken word	
3PM	The Vulcan's Hold Trip Hop	SYSTEM KIDZ YOUTH IN CARE	AMATEUR HOUR So Bad, It's Good	SQUAREWAVE VIDEO GAME MUSIC AND HISTORY	The Sean Show Local Music	Star Road Junction Progressive Rock	GroundSwell Radio New Classical - Repeat Broadcast	
4PM	Thrash Can Thrash Metal	Sonic Blanket	TWANG TRUST Country/Roots/Big, Dumb Rock 'n' Roll	PAGES EAT YOUR ARTS & VEGETABLES	LET'S PLAY DJ!	THE HOW DO YOU DO REVUE	This is Hell	
5PM	THE WORLD World	Balmoral Blues Blues	TAWNY, THE BRAVE Pop/Rock	Soft Robotics (Electronic/Ambient)	WE BUILD HITS Hip-Hop	THE C.A.R.P. The Completely Asinine Radio Program		
6PM	DESTINATION MOON Sock-Hop-A-Go-Go	On My Way Home Local Indie	S.A.N.E. * RADIO Local Experimental Music	HIP HOP 50 Hip Hop	RED BOX Hip-Hop	Circle One Punk		
7PM	The Freedom Principle World Music	TranceLand Electronic/Dance	ROMPE Latin	Da Show World & Variety	QUADRAFUNK Electric Dance Party	THE GASHLYCRUMB TINES		
8PM	IEARSHOT DAILY	IEARSHOT DAILY	IEARSHOT DAILY	StreetKilliaz Generation Local Hip Hop	DANCE HALL FEVER Dancehall and Reggae	ISLAND VIBES Caribbean		
9PM	IEARSHOT DAILY	Free City Radio	Two Princes	PHASE ONE Electronic	ShrimpFarm.Crypto Collages by Silas	Rainbow Country		
10PM	BREAK NORTH RADIO	LISTENING PLEASURES	THE WONDERFUL & FRIGHTENING WORLD OF PATRICK MICHALISHYN	MANITOBA MOON	Your Show Here	REVOLUTION ROCK		
11PM	METAL MONDAY	NIGHT DANGER RADIO	ShrimpFarm.Crypto Replay			GIRLIE SO GROOVIE		
MIDNIGHT	MODERN JAZZ TODAY	The Motherland Influence	Winnipeg Arena is on Fire Replay					
1AM	AMPLIFIED RADIO	BACKBEAT	Thrash Can - Replay					
2AM			Meta World STOOPALOOP Show - Replay					
3AM								
4AM								
5AM								
6AM								



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

WWW.CKUW.CA

OFFICE:
204-786-9782

NEWS DESK : 204-786-9998

ON AIR:
204-774-6877

FAX:
204-783-7080

EMAIL:
CKUW@UWINNIPEG.CA

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

New shows are marked with a star ★

Live shows are marked with a lightning bolt ⚡



THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

Student Services

Work-Study Program

The Work-Study Program can help you meet your expenses during the academic year. The program offers valuable life and work experience with flexible hours that fit around your school schedule.

The deadline to apply to the program is Dec. 4, 2023.

If you are interested, please go to "Work-Study Program" on the awards website: uwinnipeg.ca/awards

Webinar Wednesdays

The last Webinar Wednesday for the year is on Preparing for Winter Term (Dec. 6).

All webinars are held 12:30 to 1:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Pre-registration is required.

For more info, see uwinnipeg.ca/webinar-wednesdays

Career Chats on Instagram

Career Chats are live sessions on Instagram that feature advice from an employer or career-related expert.

The last session is on Preparing for the Career Fair (Thurs., Dec. 7).

Hosted by Career Services, these live sessions take place every other Thursday at 11:00 a.m. on UWinnipeg Instagram.

Fall Exams

The Fall (December) Exam schedule is available at uwinnipeg.ca/exam-schedules

The exam period is from Dec. 7 – 20.

Ask an Advisor

This is your opportunity to find out more about different services at the University in live sessions on UWinnipeg

Instagram. Join us for Accessibility Services on Dec. 14.

Hosted by Academic and Career Services, these live sessions take place every other Thursday at 11:00 a.m. on UWinnipeg Instagram.

Study Abroad – Summer Programs

The deadline is fast approaching to apply for exchange programs next summer in Demark and South Korea.

This is an ideal opportunity to study abroad, as funding is currently available through the Government of Canada's Global Skills Opportunity Program that could cover 40% to 90% of the costs of your exchange.

The deadline to apply is Dec. 15, 2023. Find out more at uwinnipeg.ca/study-abroad

Holiday Break/Start of Winter Term

The University is closed for the holidays from Dec. 23 to Jan. 4. Most services on campus resume on Jan. 5. Lectures for Winter Term begin on Jan. 8.

The Wellness Hub

Check out the Wellness Hub, a digital platform on the UWinnipeg website, with links to:

- crisis and counselling services
- informational websites about mental health
- tools to track how you are feeling and learn coping skills
- connections to specialized resources

You choose which links to access each time you enter the Wellness Hub. Visit the hub any time:

uwinnipeg.ca/wellnesshub



COMMENTS

THE NEWCOMER COMPARES

Life in Canada and Ukraine

VOLODYMYR ANDREIKO | COLUMNIST

Coming to Canada, I had many different expectations based on stereotypes about maple syrup, hockey, politeness and wearing shorts during snowstorms. Many of the things turned out to be quite true, but to my surprise, there were many other elements of this country I did not expect.

I knew the climate was different, but I did not realize just how different. Ukraine has a mild climate with high humidity, so there are all four seasons with their specific and great changes.

While in Ukraine -15°C felt unbearable, -30°C in Canada is actually not that bad, and the same can be said when the temperature is high. Typical summers in Ukraine are very stuffy, even when it's just 15°C. In Canada, the same temperature is perfect and won't make you sweat that much.

Manitoba's architecture definitely surprised me at first. Many buildings are made in a simplistic box design and are all quite similar to each other. It is unbelievable how strange it is for a European to see one box after another for the first time.

Also, Canadian cities are absolutely gigantic. When describing Winnipeg to friends or relatives, I usually use the joke that Winnipeg is like Lviv, a large city by Ukrainian standards, multiplied by three.

Having learnt and used English as a

translator, it was much easier for me to use English to communicate for the first time. Many Ukrainian newcomers don't realize how difficult it is to learn the language on the spot. It's definitely a challenge, especially for people who now have to use English every day for tasks like buying groceries.

What surprised me was that all of the text on Canadian products is usually doubled, in both English and French. This makes it a bit easier to learn French on the spot by looking at the spelling of some of the words.

Most groceries are also different from what's available in European supermarkets, which don't have a vast range of products. Shoppers may easily feel overwhelmed when seeing such a variety of options.

It is especially interesting to see that many products come in different versions, some having no salt or sugar added. And perhaps one of the most unique peculiarities I saw was the international aisle, presenting many choices and giving shoppers the chance to try new cuisines.

I must say that the "nutrition value" side of food packaging is interesting and easy to use. In Eastern Europe, I only saw lists of ingredients.

No matter how incomprehensible the Americas may be to the European mind, they are distinct and definitely worth experiencing. And perhaps Canada is one of the greatest examples of what you may find, trying to get to know what it is like to live on the other side of the world.



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

Volodymyr Andreiko is a newcomer to Winnipeg from Ukraine. He is a translator and student at the University of Winnipeg interested in music, literature, philosophy and culture.

SILENCE=DEATH

Why queer people must speak out against pinkwashing

MISHA STONE | VOLUNTEER || SIMON PENSATO | VOLUNTEER

During the AIDS epidemic, queer organization ACT-UP popularized the slogan "Silence=Death" to show that the public pressure to not speak about AIDS was leading to the deaths of queer people who were left without resources or support. Many queer activists have recently used the slogan to show that queer silence is complicity with Israel's mass killing of Palestinians.

Speaking out against Israel's occupation of Palestine, and what some human-rights experts are calling a genocide in Gaza, we, as trans people, have often been met with hostile claims about Palestinians' supposed homophobia.

At protests, or as we have walked around simply wearing keffiyehs, opponents have approached us to gleefully describe their fantasies of Palestinians subjecting us to extreme violence because we are queer and trans. These statements are sometimes followed by exaggerations about the legal rights of queer people in Israel, with no mention of the current government's anti-queer stances.

We've heard this narrative from hard-line supporters of Israel counterprotesting pro-Palestine rallies and vigils, from politicians such as Ben Carr, and, sadly, from other queer people.

The narrative of supposed Israeli acceptance of queers and supposed Palestinian bigotry toward us is a tactic called pinkwashing. The state of Israel and its allies, including Canada, use pinkwashing to frame basic assumptions about the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

The narrative that Israel supports queers while Palestinians reject us is untrue, and it

erases the voices of queer Palestinians. Israel has blackmailed queer Palestinians and does not spare queer people in their bombing campaigns in Gaza. In our experience, the Palestinian community of Winnipeg has shown hospitality and solidarity with queers, including ourselves, who show up in support of Palestine.

An image is currently circulating of an IDF soldier holding a rainbow flag over a bombed-out neighbourhood in Gaza. Queer people must speak out when we see our identities used to celebrate and justify genocide. We have a responsibility to speak out against pinkwashing in our own communities and beyond, and to stand in solidarity with Palestine.

Some queers see inclusion and representation in the status quo as the hallmark of liberation, ignoring the fact that many countries with repressive policies toward queer people are former settler-colonies and have those policies as remnants of an imposed colonial legal framework.

There is a different vision for what queer community can look like. "Queer" is a broad term including many different expressions of sexuality and gender identity. Queer people come from a wide range of class and racial backgrounds. Our diverse identities – within the queer umbrella, and including race, class, disability, et cetera – mean that any two queer people may have few common experiences, but we find community together across our differences.

The queer ideal of solidarity in spite of differences opens up the possibility for queer solidarity across identities and across borders.



PHOTO BY DANIEL CRUMP

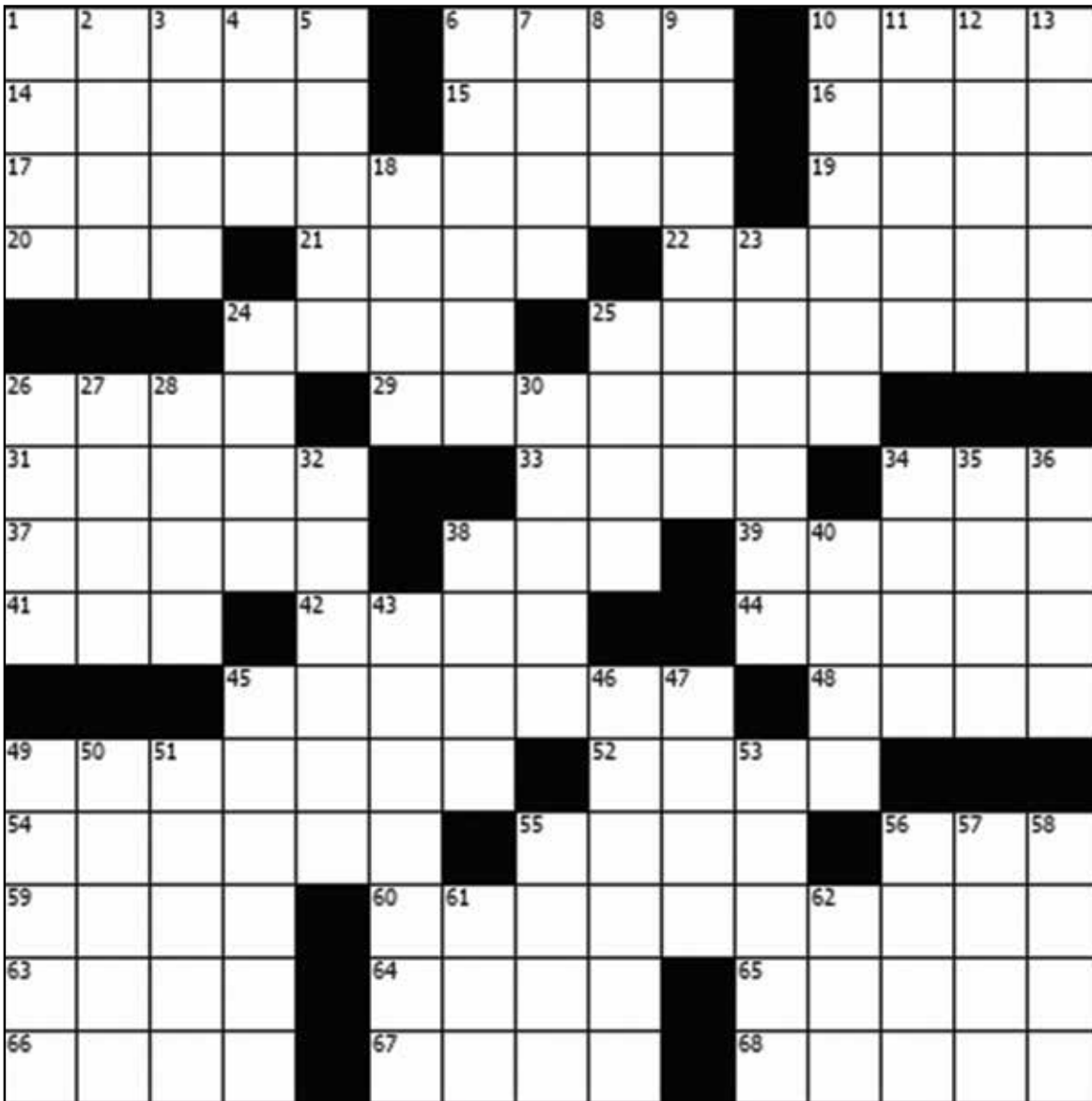
Hundreds protest Israel's occupation of Palestine and war on Gaza at Portage and Main on Oct. 28.

Queer communities often focus their politics in a narrow way: advocating for legal rights and marriage equality. But for the queer community to experience liberation, we must embrace a wider understanding of solidarity.

This is why we organize as queer people for Palestinian freedom, for an end to occupation, colonialism and genocide. Queer lib-

eration demands that we recognize that an injury to one is an injury to all.

Misha Stone and Simon Pensato are members of Queers for Palestine - Winnipeg. They live together, with a cat, on Treaty 1 territory.



ONLINECROSSWORDS.NET

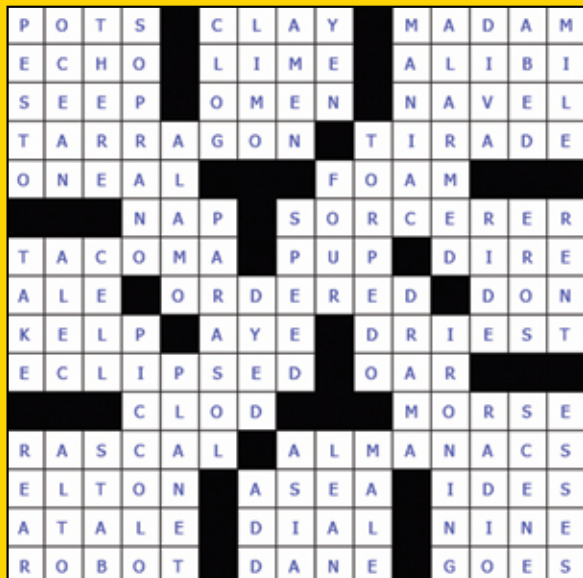
ACROSS

- 1. MORE POSITIVE
- 6. "___ DEAD PEOPLE!" (2 WDS.)
- 10. ENCLOSURE
- 14. "___ OF TWO CITIES" (2 WDS.)
- 15. SIGN GAS
- 16. HAD DEBTS
- 17. LEGISLATURE, IN CANADA
- 19. WARBLER
- 20. PRONOUN
- 21. WEIGHT UNIT
- 22. GO TO BED
- 24. MAKE SOCKS
- 25. TRANQUILIZED
- 26. INLET
- 29. HOPELESSNESS
- 31. MATURING
- 33. HEARTTHROB BRAD ____
- 34. MOVER'S TRUCK
- 37. PLATTER
- 38. WINE (FR.)
- 39. "CARMEN," E.G.
- 41. SNAKY SWIMMER
- 42. PRINCIPAL
- 44. SHABBY
- 45. DECEIVE
- 48. PROFIT AND ____
- 49. STRONG
- 52. ATTRACTIVE
- 54. HONEY
- 55. PRECINCT
- 56. COMMOTION
- 59. DRAW THE ____
- 60. POLITICAL UPRISING
- 63. OMELET INGREDIENTS
- 64. DEUCES
- 65. DISCUSSION GROUP
- 66. INJECTION
- 67. STITCHES
- 68. DOORWAY

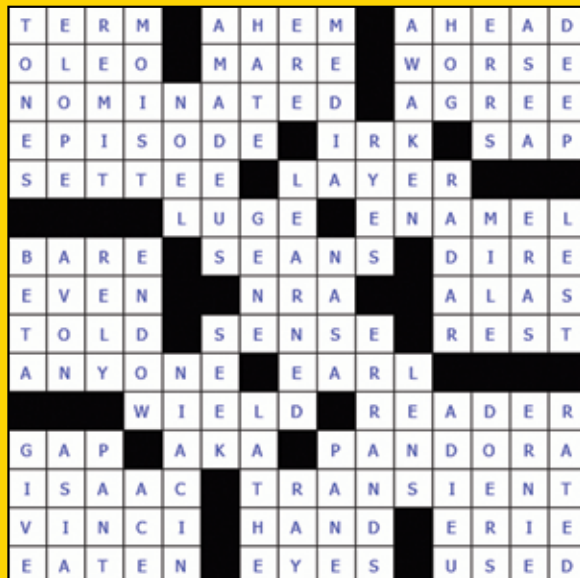
DOWN

- 1. TREE JUICES
- 2. IDAHO NEIGHBOR
- 3. EXCEPTIONAL
- 4. HOUSE ANNEX
- 5. ROYAL RULE
- 6. PRISONER
- 7. APPEAR
- 8. CHUNK OF ETERNITY
- 9. BESEECH
- 10. FELLOW LEADING ACTOR
- 11. ANTICIPATE
- 12. KIND
- 13. TRIMMED THE BORDER
- 18. MOISTURELESS
- 23. REPORTER'S BOSS
- 24. SUPERMAN'S ALTER EGO
- 25. GYRATE
- 26. ____ COD
- 27. LEER
- 28. SMALL BOTTLE
- 30. BACKBONE
- 32. ZODIAC SIGN
- 34. KILL A BILL
- 35. CRAFTS
- 36. THOSE OPPOSED
- 38. NASTY
- 40. COLORLESS
- 43. MAINTAINS
- 45. LEAST
- 46. CROSSWORD DIRECTION
- 47. FENCING EVENT
- 49. LOITERS
- 50. HORSE SOUND
- 51. ARGENTINE DANCE
- 53. BROWNISH GRAY
- 55. ASSERT
- 56. SLANGY NEGATIVE
- 57. ACTIVE PERSON
- 58. JUST
- 61. LAMB'S MAMA
- 62. SUNBATHE

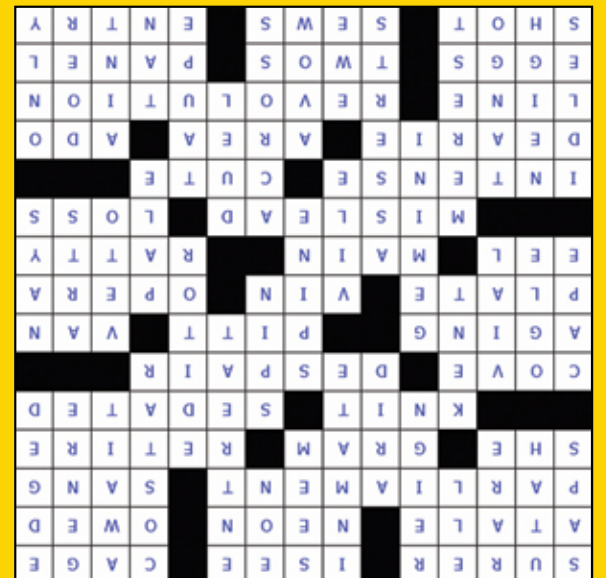
CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS



SOLUTION FOR 78-11



SOLUTION FOR 78-11



SOLUTION FOR THIS ISSUE (FLIP TO VIEW)

ADVERTISE WITH US!

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Contact Paul at businessmgr@uniter.ca for more information.

HOROSCOPES

Welcome to Sagittarius season!

Mercury enters grounded earth sign Capricorn on Friday, December 1, at 9:31 A.M where it will retrograde later in the month. Hard truths are expressed as Mercury connects with Saturn on Saturday, November 2, at 10:27 AM, making it easier to discuss responsibilities and limits.

SOURCE: CAFEASTROLOGY.COM



ARIES

While you're in a generally favorable period for harmony in close relationships, dear Aries, sometimes a bit of conflict gets you to a purer level of peace. Today, areas that have been swept under the rug can emerge in small ways. While your spirits are generally good today, it's not the best time to see your relationships clearly. You may even get into a position where you're doing so much for others that you feel drained. If you've held to a fantasy of a relationship or situation, this can now pose some minor problems. It may be best to give your heart a little more time on a matter. Patience will serve you best right now. Also today, you could experience some form of backing or commitment from family or related to home life, stirring a solid desire to plan and work more enthusiastically toward your goals. Fearless dealing with emotional issues can figure strongly and can be quite practical in effect, helping you approach your life with balance.



TAURUS

There can be minor confusing impressions and sensitivities or a feeling of being overwhelmed at times today, dear Taurus. It can be a time to reevaluate matters and allow yourself more time, not to drop or abandon a pursuit. A minor challenging aspect between Venus and Neptune can prompt you to prioritize your desire to keep the peace and maintain harmony today. However, it's best not to go overboard with this, or else you could end up feeling misunderstood or unappreciated. You might instead feel let down by a broken promise. Don't worry too much if you are a little out of sync with others or your goals--it's temporary. Look into ways to infuse more meaning, pleasure, or imagination into your work or chores. If you find yourself restlessly indulging or craving things, you may need to get in better touch with your needs. On the other hand, you could be excited to make progress on projects dear to your heart, and with more meaningfulness, you are all the more dedicated.



GEMINI

With a Venus-Neptune aspect influencing the first half of the day, dear Gemini, there is some tendency to see a situation the wrong way, especially if it's too close to your heart. Wishful thinking can blur perceptions related to romance, business, and long-term planning. You are unlikely to be sure about making a significant commitment or decision, and it may be better to avoid overcompensating for feeling uncertain and instead make time for rest or time out. Consider that staying in a state of indecision over essentially trivial matters can sometimes drain you of more energy than dealing with the consequences of a decision. Focus on what you feel good about doing and tune out what others think or say as much as you can. Consider that a temporary dip in motivation or spirits can help you realign yourself. As the day advances, it becomes more natural to put tricky issues aside. Sorting something out boosts your confidence. Your enthusiasm and willingness to work to achieve your desires positively impact your income, work, or health.



CANCER

While activities with clear goals tend to fare well today, dear Cancer, matters of the heart are not as straightforward. There can be some division due to uncertainty, leaving you in an ambivalent state on a social level. The desire to do something different or unusual can be healthy, but your heart isn't all in temporarily as you seek more peace and familiarity. Try not to stay on the fence for too long. In truth, staying in limbo can sometimes be more draining than simply deciding and living with it. There's no use wasting energy worrying about the little things. For the big stuff, however, it's best to wait things out. Another influence today highlights your unique qualities or dedication. Bonding over ideas and principles can figure strongly. As the day advances, it comes naturally to approach your world in a balanced manner.



LEO

Your practical goals have more power today, dear Leo. Self-improvement endeavors can be an active, positive focus, and so can activities related to home and family. Family matters seem to be strengthening, and you can feel more dedication to working things through. If you are feeling discontent on a social level, however, you're likely to feel this more intensely early today. Still, not knowing your heart today may tempt you to avoid the truth in your relationships. It's probably better to admit uncertainty and move on for now. Otherwise, you could end up only spinning your wheels. There could be unspoken desires or a sense that you want something but can't put your finger on what it is. Try not to allow distractions such as these to bring you down. Instead, aim to take more time to get in touch with your needs. It's a better time to keep things status quo than to push ahead. It probably won't pay to make waves if confidence is dipping or you don't have all the necessary tools to manage a situation. This is temporary and can help you reorient yourself.



VIRGO

There can be odd desires or cravings that seem to come out of nowhere today, dear Virgo, along with a sense that you shouldn't indulge. A Venus-Neptune aspect can tempt you to escape responsibility, hide things about yourself, or appease when you should probably stand up for yourself. Still, the timing is not excellent, so if you are uncertain, ride things out until you are clearer. Yearnings can take time to pinpoint. Keep watch for a tendency to focus on everything except what deserves your attention! Superficial attempts to make yourself feel better are unlikely to satisfy, and may even cost valuable time and energy, and possibly money. Even so, today's energies are just fine for activities in which the goal is clear. In fact, you're in a great position to secure or organize an area of your life. You're seeing the value of preparation, so take advantage.



LIBRA

Today's Venus-Neptune quincunx makes it a fuzzy, uncertain time for decisions about love and money, dear Libra. Take care of yourself rather than doing everything for everyone else and forgetting what you need in the process. Avoid people-pleasing as a quick fix for achieving the peace and harmony you crave. Instead, aim to dream and let your intuition engage. Self-doubt or confusion is temporary, but you should probably avoid speculation, significant purchases or sales, and big decisions in the meantime. There can be up and down moods, primarily because looks can be deceiving. However, another aspect in play today helps you brush feelings aside when needed so that you can take care of business. You may come to excellent ideas or conclusions about business, financial, or health matters.



SCORPIO

Venus is in your privacy sector these days, dear Scorpio, and you need time to process and digest recent experiences. Today, part of you is afraid of letting go of a fantasy or ideal, but unrealistic expectations can lead to discomfort. Vague dissatisfaction can weave in and out. Needs that come on suddenly and that don't make a whole lot of sense are probably things that only serve to lead you astray right now. Aim to connect with your genuine needs or work on your happiness rather than looking to others to bring you joy. Accepting things for what they are and appreciating them is the key now. A temporary lull can also slow you down long enough to explore alternate routes. After a brief spell of feeling doubtful or unmotivated, you'll find it easy to tune out the non-essential! Another influence in play today makes it easier to pace yourself and learn from mistakes. You might gain some appreciation or recognition for your intelligence, insight, or creativity.



SAGITTARIUS

On an emotional or sentimental level, a Venus-Neptune aspect today could leave you feeling you're not getting what you want, dear Sagittarius. Look to address the root of a problem, but if you can't get at it, it is wise to avoid going off on tangents. Try not to linger in limbo for too long today, especially for little problems. Rest and reflect when you can, or consider focusing on one particular task at a time. Avoid brand-new beginnings, making waves, or essential decisions until confidence returns and timing improves. Ideally, discontent motivates you to make needed adjustments. It's not a time for moving ahead straightforwardly, but you can get some little things done that ultimately help you advance. For example, you could be in the mood to organize an area of your life or otherwise find ways to make a situation work for you. It can be a good time for ironing out differences or tackling projects that can benefit from a cooperative effort.



CAPRICORN

It can be challenging to be as productive as you'd like to be today, dear Capricorn, with a Venus-Neptune aspect in play. Venus at the top of your chart these days generally points to increased enjoyment of your work or duties, but there are times like today when you may need a break from performing. You might agree to something to please someone, then later regret that you weren't straightforward. There can be benefits through your work or from others, but it could cost too much, in the long run, to yield to others at the moment. Watch for misconceptions today. Circumstances test your vulnerabilities, but you can move beyond this, or you get the chance to sort everything out to your advantage later. Another influence in play today draws your attention to fixing problems, and activities with clear goals feel much easier than the open-ended ones right now.



AQUARIUS

At times today, social or emotional distractions make it difficult to focus your energy, dear Aquarius. It's difficult to see how you can practically manage everything you'd like to do--or even where to begin. If you feel a little, let down or in a frump, it may be that you need some emotional refreshment. However big your plans and ideas are at the moment, don't be in a huge rush to put them into action until you feel fully confident about them. Vague problems or disconnects can leave you feeling somewhat out of sync. Some confusion about money, resources, or know-how can subtly get in the way of personal enjoyment or pursuing a new interest. Today is more about winding down than pushing something forward. In truth, a bit of hesitation can help you find yourself. Making minor improvements to your life is especially favored on emotional, mental, and physical levels. You might thoroughly enjoy making budgets, plans, and strategies.



PISCES

On some levels today, you can experience hesitation or pause, dear Pisces. A small bump in the road or a temporary dip in your confidence can help slow you down and reorient you. Try not to allow empathy to override your common sense, as there is some tendency to see what you want to see. Nevertheless, you may feel slightly out of sync with others, and the temptation might be to compensate by going out of your way to make them happy. It may be better to aim to learn your own needs rather than spend your time and drain your energy trying to figure out what others want. Aim to resolve outstanding issues if they've weighed you down, even if this is just about taking one or two steps toward your goals. You could feel more grounded and enjoy focusing on getting things in order if you have a set or precise goal.