

THE GRIND

FREE

PG.4 MAYOR CHOW'S BUDGET CHOICES



CALLING ALL 'FRIQUES **PG.18**

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2024

VOL 2 ISSUE 2

TORONTO MOURNS AND SPEAKS OUT



SPECIAL COVERAGE OF PALESTINE PG. 9-15



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REHAB NAZZAL



SUMMER 2022, GAZA, PALESTINE

This photo is of Amani Izz Eldeen (left) and her friend enjoying moments of peace amidst the waves of the Mediterranean Sea along Gaza's coast. I met these deaf girls during the filming of my documentary *Vibrations from Gaza* in the summer of 2022. Amani is a central figure in the documentary, which sheds light on the impact of Israel's frequent onslaught and a 16-year siege imposed on over two million Palestinians in Gaza.

One year later, these peaceful moments have dissipated. Since October 2023, Gaza's inhabitants have been enduring an ongoing genocide, broadcasting to the world details of their own slaughter. The fate of Amani and other deaf children remains unknown, as I lost contact with them in November. The current complacency of Western states implicates them in the ongoing genocide against the Palestinians, including killing over 24,000 Palestinians, 10,000 of whom are children, the displacement of 1.8 million people, and the destruction of 75 per cent of Gaza's homes and cultural, religious, and heritage sites.

Photo and caption by Rehab Nazzal. See more of Nazzal's photos on page 10.

ABOUT
The Grind was launched in fall 2022 by a group of passionate local journalists, as a new politics and culture mag for Toronto. It is a non-profit publication not owned by a media empire. We scrape by financially with no full-time staff and a lot of volunteer labour, though we prioritize paying our contributors. Around half of our revenues are from ads and the other half is from donations. We don't publish advertorials (paid advertisements that look like articles). *The Grind* comes out once every two months.

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LETTER FROM THE GRIND'S EDITORS

Dear readers. The last few months have been intense, watching a genocide unfold day after day, broadcast onto our phones and computers.

Just after our last issue came out in November, Hamas and Israel agreed to a temporary ceasefire and hostage/prisoner exchange, which lasted for around six days. It was a hopeful yet short-lived moment, followed by a return to the incredible suffering and death in Gaza.

In Toronto, across Canada, and around the world, people have taken to the streets to speak out against the killing, and mourning the loss of loved ones.

For being critical of Israel and the Canadian government's position, people here have been disciplined at work or lost their jobs, and others have been arrested, including for walking on sidewalks on bridge overpasses (more on page 13).

In our communities and even in some of our families, people have said and done things regarding Palestine and Israel that have led to divisions that won't be mended easily, or maybe ever. That's just something we have to live with now. When we put our devices down, life continues here, but differently.

Some aspects of Toronto haven't changed so much. Last issue, an article discussed a possible eviction of a tent encampment in Kensington

Market outside St. Stephen's church. That eviction ended up happening a few days later on Nov. 24, with police and city staff kicking people out of their homes and destroying belongings. On that same night, Toronto's new mayor, Olivia Chow, was scheduled to appear at a fundraiser for a group that helped elect her, Progress Toronto.

In this issue, there is an article about the police budget (page 4), but there isn't an article about Toronto's municipal budget overall. *The Grind's* position on the city budget is that a property tax increase is necessary and overdue. The shelter system is in shambles, mental health and social services are needed in the TTC and at libraries, and both of those services also need more operational funding. Throwing more money at the police can't be the answer to everything, especially with studies showing increased policing doesn't necessarily reduce crime.

The small monthly property tax increase proposed by city staff would cost homeowners, on average, \$30 on their bills. Most renters deal with increases far higher every year. Taxes should also be added to parking lots, and increased on luxury and vacant homes.

That rant aside, we hope you enjoy this issue of *The Grind*. It's, well, a grind to put it out, but as a small team, we're in the muck here with you.

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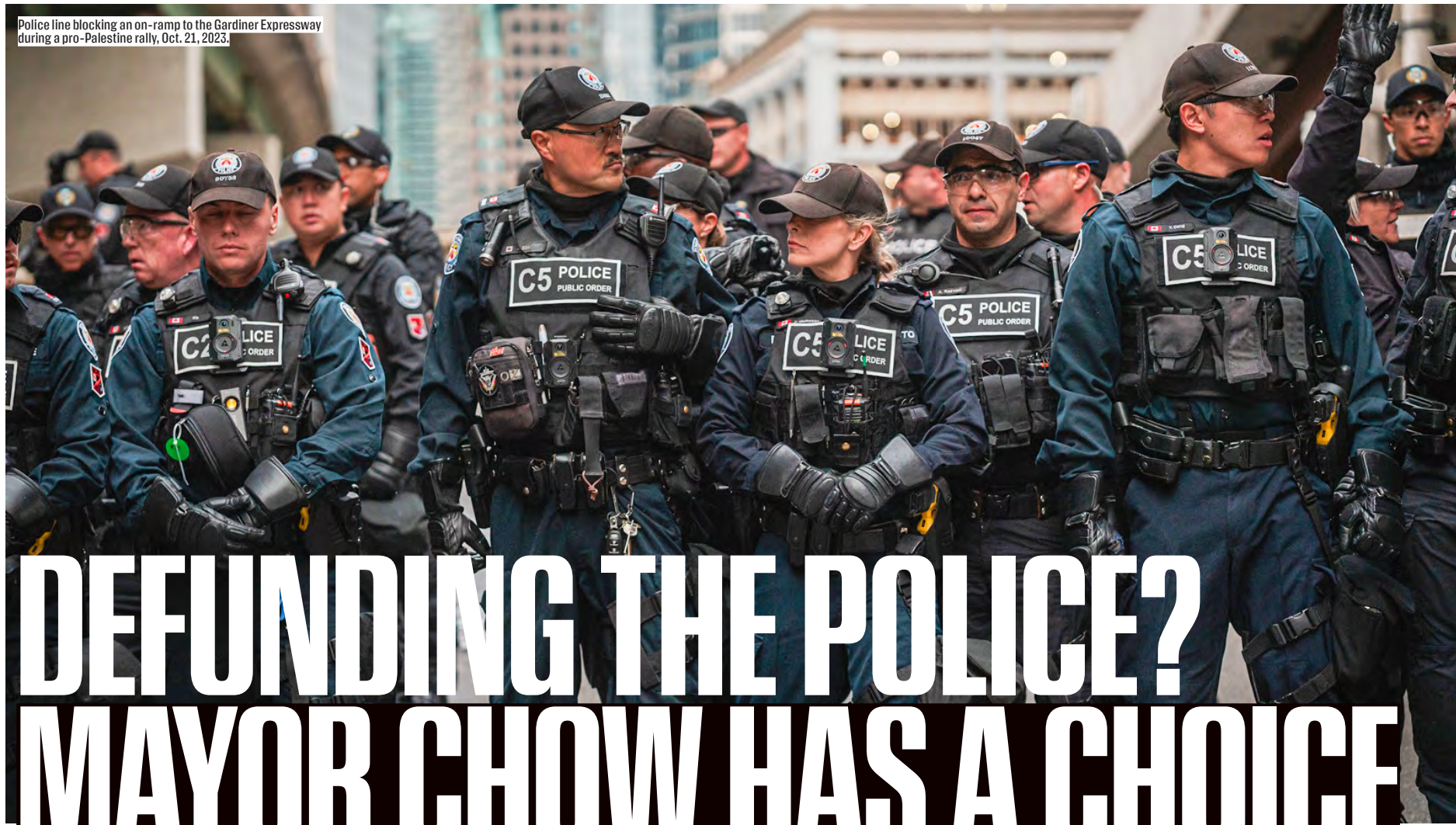
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COVER PHOTO

Torontonians march through the streets on Jan. 15, 2024, 100 days since Oct. 7, 2023, the date of Hamas' attacks on Israel and the beginning of Israel's current campaign of aerial bombing and ground invasion of Gaza that has killed thousands and displaced 1.9 million.

COVER PHOTO BY JOSHUA BEST

Police line blocking an on-ramp to the Gardiner Expressway during a pro-Palestine rally, Oct. 21, 2023.



DEFUNDING THE POLICE? MAYOR CHOW HAS A CHOICE

The new mayor could push for a cut in the police budget to make up for a big budget gap, but it's unlikely that she will. In the spirit of Toronto's long history of communities resisting the harms of policing, however, grassroots groups are campaigning for her to make that choice.

BY SCOTT NEIGH

In December, the Toronto Police Services Board unanimously endorsed the request by the police for a 1.7 per cent (or \$20 million) increase in funding for 2024. By the end of January, the police's \$1.2 billion total budget is likely to pass the city's budget committee, maybe with minor changes. Then it will be considered in the overall municipal budget by city council in February.

The police are currently in collective bargaining, negotiating with the city for a new contract, and any resulting salary increases will also be added to this total.

WHERE WILL THE MONEY GO?

The police say the increase in funds will be spent on hiring more officers and civilian employees, like clerical staff and administrators. The police have also been emphasizing the need to respond to a reported increase in hate crimes. At the Jan. 11 police services board meeting, Toronto police Chief Myron Demkiw said a proposal to cut \$12.6 million from the requested budget would lead to "unacceptable risks."

But many advocates are critical of this rhetoric. Britt Caron of the Toronto Citizens Collective (TCC) points out that even when police respond after the fact to an incident, they "are not preventing hate crimes." She continues: "We know that prevention is much more complicated than that" and requires funding for

education, for meeting people's needs, and for basic elements of safety that have nothing to do with policing.

"This entire narrative about hate crimes is really problematic," says Beverly Bain, with the No Pride in Policing Coalition (NPPC). Bain says that people who face systemic oppressions like racism experience a wide spectrum of harm, and the category of "hate crime" only gives attention to one very narrow slice of that harm. So, for instance, people who face racism are deprived of resources and made less safe and less healthy

"What we keep repeatedly seeing, though, is that there seems to be more money for cops."

because of how they are treated by powerful institutions and the people in them, as well as by other ordinary people.

At best, the "hate crime" designation captures a small subset of interpersonal mistreatment, while downplaying or dismissing everything else. As Bain asks, "What makes a hate crime any more profound than other kinds of harms that people experience?" And at worst, the category of "hate crime" gets used in ways that stigmatize or even criminalize

actions that are not actually contributing to larger oppressions, including legitimate political protest.

Bain says that "hate crime" is a category defined by the state and "deployed for particular purposes. And it's being used in this very moment in the most profoundly dangerous way. ... It gives legitimacy to police and for police budgets, and for police buildup of militarization, and for the criminalization of particular groups of people."

As an example, she points to institutional responses to even very basic forms of solidarity with the Palestinian people. When they act in solidarity, "certain people become targeted. And it's so happened to be [that] the majority of people who get targeted around Palestine happen to be racialized, Black, and Indigenous people."

DEFUND & REINVEST

Lorraine Lam is a street outreach worker and a member of the Shelter and Housing Justice Network (SHJN). She says that advocates "keep hearing all this language around, 'Oh, there is no money' to do anything about the housing crisis and deteriorating social and health care services. "What we keep repeatedly seeing, though, is that there seems to be more money for cops."

Community members have been working together to respond to the harms of policing in Toronto for decades. But the specific "defund the police" language comes from the racial

MUNICIPAL BUDGETS AND THE "STRONG MAYOR" POWERS

BY THE GRIND EDITORS

It used to be that Toronto city council had to vote to pass the municipal budget. But the "strong mayor" powers introduced by Premier Doug Ford changed that, as seen first with the 2023 budget.

Now, the mayor simply prepares the budget themselves, and the most city council can do is propose amendments to it. The mayor can veto those amendments, and in that case, council can override vetoes only with a two-thirds majority vote.

This year, a number of budget consultations were held around the city, and staff reports and budget committee recommendations have landed on the mayor's desk.

But it ultimately comes down to Mayor Olivia Chow to propose a budget by Feb. 1.

Council then has an opportunity to propose amendments on Feb. 14 at a special budget meeting.

Chow has said she will put forward a property tax increase. City staff prepared a budget including an increase of 10.5 per cent, which would raise monthly property tax bills by an average of around \$30.

justice uprising in 2020 sparked by a number of high-profile killings of Black people in the U.S., including Breonna Taylor and George Floyd. Organizers we spoke to in Toronto say that while the defund demand remains crucial, it is just one part of a broader struggle.

The demand to defund is not currently the sole or central focus for any of the groups that are working on it. Some groups are overtly abolitionist, meaning they are working towards a much larger social transformation that involves abolishing the police and prisons entirely. Others focus more narrowly on issues like homelessness and poverty, or on reforms related to policing like ending solitary confinement or strengthening civilian oversight of the police, and these groups see defunding as one element of advancing that work.

In 2020, the banner for defunding in the GTA was most visibly carried by Black Lives Matter – Toronto, a group which has since become much less active. An Ipsos poll conducted in July of that year found 51 per cent of Canadians were in favour of defunding the police. Despite the popular support and the movement's demand for a 50 per cent defunding of the Toronto police budget, a motion at city council in 2020 to shift 10 per cent of the police budget to other priorities failed to pass.

In the years since, various groups working on this issue have formed and faded, but the call to defund has remained. During last year's municipal budget process, for instance, a number of groups came together to work on policing issues as the Another Toronto is Possible Coalition.

Organizers say the challenges facing defund organizing include the lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the cumulative toll of internal movement divisions and individual trauma from earlier moments of uprising.

Movement work is emotionally grueling, particularly for people in those groups that are more likely to be targeted by state repression, and it is almost always unpaid. Other factors are more specific to this year, like the need for some organizers to focus on other urgent issues, particularly Palestine solidarity, and escalating police repression targeting grassroots political mobilizations in the city. "There's a lot going on right now," says Caron, "so there are people who normally would be at the forefront of this kind of thing who are preoccupied with other things."

At the same time, other groups have become more active on the issue. Lam says that in the past, the SHJN has focused more on "amplifying other groups' efforts" when it comes to the defund demand, but this year is taking more of an "active" role.

CHOW'S CHOICE

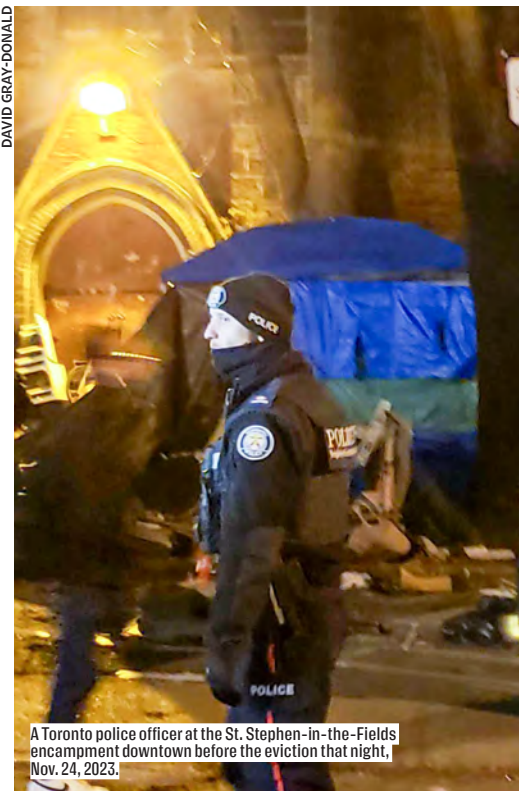
The TCC and SHJN are part of a campaign that has been focused on "Chow's choice." The campaign's website argues that Mayor Olivia Chow, in the first budget process since her election, can either choose the status quo priorities of funding police and "private luxury for the few," or fund social services, housing, and "public good for the many." Groups involved in this effort have been training community members to make deputations to city council, plan to make their own deputations, and are engaging in other forms of political pressure.

In addition, Caron says in an email, that while they have "varying degrees of ability



Police block pro-Palestine protesters downtown during a rally, Oct. 21, 2023.

The campaign's website argues that Mayor Olivia Chow, in the first budget process since her election, can either choose the status quo priorities of funding police and "private luxury for the few," or fund social services, housing, and "public good for the many."



A Toronto police officer at the St. Stephen-in-the-Fields encampment downtown before the eviction that night, Nov. 24, 2023.

to call for full out defunding," groups like Showing Up for Racial Justice, TTCriders, and the Toronto Police Accountability Coalition "are definitely all aligned in that we think the police budget could and should be reduced in order to fund other services."

Another coalition of community groups was announced on Jan. 21, a week and a half before Chow was set to unveil her budget on Feb. 1. Its membership includes NPPC, Voices for Unhoused Liberation, Jane Finch Action Against Poverty, Palestinian Youth Movement, Wet'suwet'en Land Defenders, and Jews Say No To Genocide. They wrote in a press release, "These budget decisions are being made in the context of mountainous evidence that policing is fundamentally anti-Indigenous and racist — and that increased spending on policing does not lower crime rates." They warn that "Mayor Chow appears ready to continue the status quo of prioritizing policing" and called for money instead to be invested in "social services and community support programs that keep people safe and alive."

The NPPC also made deputations earlier in January that included a demand for defunding, linking it with calls for abolition, as part of their organizing in response to the February 2023 police shooting of Devon Fowlin. The shooting took place in a North York park and left Fowlin with serious injuries. An administrative investigation by the Toronto police chief found that Fowlin posed no threat to the public, that the constable who shot him used unnecessary force, and that three of the other officers involved in the incident also violated law and policy.

"At a time when police are requesting more funding, this report highlights

their practice of needlessly escalating encounters and causing lasting harm," says Fowlin's lawyer, Dave Shellnutt, in a press release.

As useful a tactic as deputations can be, Bain says that the NPPC's view is that "deputations aren't sufficient. We have to be out there protesting in the streets during this time."

Many organizers agree that resisting the harms of policing in Toronto requires more than just coming together once a year to tell the city to give the cops less money. Lam says people "hear the term 'defund' and they have a certain idea of what it means, but I don't think they're really thinking about how it's interconnected" with so many other issues.

The demand to defund the police asks politicians to make a choice: they can choose to put resources into policing, or into other things that would meet people's needs. More than that, it highlights two competing ideas for how to respond to people's needs: When the city spent millions on cops, fences, and landscaping to clear homeless encampments out of parks, for instance, it only happened because the city and other levels of government had already failed to properly fund work that would prevent homelessness in the first place.

Bain says abolition is about "creating a city, creating a country, creating a world that's based on a form of ethical care" to replace current systems that invest in policing, prisons, and carceral logics and that are "choosing violence over care." For abolitionists, it's about defunding, yes, but it is also about organizing against all of the many kinds of violence that governments and other powerful institutions do to people, and in support of initiatives that meet people's needs and allow them to thrive.

CODE RED FOR PARA

Toronto's ambulance paramedics are so overstretched there are often no ambulances available for dispatch. And patient care is suffering, hard. One paramedic shares stories from on-shift.

BY PARKER PALMER

The timer counting down until our next 911 call has been shortened again by dispatch, the third time this shift. We just finished transporting a teenager with serious self-harm injuries to SickKids hospital. Now we're under the gun again.

We are supposed to have 40 minutes to offload a patient into a bed, sometimes change their clothes, attach them to equipment, or help them to the washroom; provide a report to the triage nurse; clean and disinfect our stretcher and ambulance; restock our supplies; complete our paperwork; and debrief with our partner. Now, dispatch updates us to say we only have 33 minutes.

I've been a paramedic in Toronto for three years, and for two years before this in Guelph. My name is Parker Palmer, though that's not my real name — to write this article, I have to use a pseudonym. Our contract prevents us from speaking openly about our employer, and writing the article under my own name could jeopardize my career.

The patient stories that I tell in this article are a patchwork of real events from multiple different patients, with identifying details removed to protect their privacy.

Staff and infrastructure shortages in Toronto Paramedic Services (TPS) are chronic issues, decades in the making. A 2015 report by our union local CUPE 416 identified the causes behind critically low morale among paramedics: call volumes that grow by three to five per cent each year; not hiring enough staff; a lack of trust in management. When it was presented to city council, it was ignored.

Since then, these issues have skyrocketed, made worse by the pandemic. They culminate in "code reds," times where there are zero available ambulances in the city. According to freedom of information (FOI) documents, Toronto Paramedic Services reported an average of 5 hours and 31 minutes in code red per day in 2022, or 23 per cent of each day. The city says 2023 was better, reporting 2 hours and 24 minutes per day with less than 10 per cent ambulance availability. (They haven't yet released data for the amount of time spent in code red).

While the causes of this crisis are systemic and multifaceted, their burden is shouldered mostly by rank-and-file paramedics, emergency room (ER) staff, and our patients, who are increasingly people suffering from poverty, disabilities, mental health issues, lack of access to basic medical services, and social isolation.

Susan, a five-year veteran paramedic in Toronto, tells me about her days at work: "I'm



Last year, Toronto Paramedic Services spent an average of 2 hours and 24 minutes each day in "code red," periods where there were zero ambulances available in the city, a symptom of a crisis caused by underfunding health care.

"Watching patients die on offload delay, that's happened to me multiple times. How is that even possible? That's disgusting. But that's not in the news."

not really an anxious person at all, and I have found that working in Toronto, I've actually developed night shift anxiety. [...] I feel anxious about entering a night shift because I know we're probably going to get wrecked for 12 hours straight without a break [...] and then have to work longer than 12 hours." (I'm using a pseudonym for Susan, to protect her job.)

Back at SickKids, not one of the roughly 150 ambulances staffed in Toronto today is available, and there is a call in Scarborough, a 45-minute drive away, that has been waiting for hours. With our paperwork unfinished, dispatch reduces the 33 minutes we thought we had down to 29.

This is nothing compared to the grueling

four-hour wait our injured elderly patient endured, trapped on the floor, covered in his own urine, unable to stand. He called 911 in desperation three times, but there weren't enough staff working in dispatch, so he was put on hold.

After an hour commute, we arrive at a Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) apartment in shambles: dishes, clothes, and garbage litter the tiny space, various known and unknown insects skitter away as we enter. Our 85-year-old patient is face-down in a small washroom, naked, yelling for help. We determine the immediate cause of the fall is likely sepsis from a UTI, causing weakness and delirium.

I call our patient's family. They tell me that this is the third such fall in as many weeks, recounting a heartbreakingly familiar story: despite their best efforts, the waitlist for a long-term care home is too long, in-home care services are overstretched, and the long hours they work to make ends meet prevent them from being present. Their loved one isn't safe at home anymore, but he has nowhere else to go but the ER.

After 16 years on the job, Diane recounts the extent of her heartbreak. "Watching patients die on offload delay, that's happened

to me multiple times. How is that even possible? That's disgusting. But that's not in the news." (I'm also using a pseudonym for Diane, to protect her job.)

Diane's patient could easily be mine. After driving quickly to the closest hospital, the triage nurse tells us there are no beds. We will care for our patient for an unknown length of time, in a hallway usually reserved for garbage bins and laundry. This is offload delay.

While offload delay has been touted by senior TPS management and Mayor Olivia Chow as the single largest issue contributing to code reds, the reality is that it's only one of many problems — problems that exist within TPS, the city of Toronto, Ontario, and Canada at large. But offload delay is a convenient issue to point to, because hospital administration is not under municipal oversight, it relieves both TPS management and city politicians of any responsibility for the crisis.

Speaking about what the city's response has been, Susan is livid. "Instead of helping us, they are looking for ways to further reprimand us, to scare us, to belittle us to comply with a dictatorship."

The crisis in our ERs is decades in the making. In Ontario, a series of governments

MEDICS



Staff and infrastructure shortages in Toronto Paramedic Services (TPS) are chronic issues, decades in the making.

— first the Liberals and now Doug Ford’s Conservatives — have cut funding to our health-care system. Canada is an outlier among OECD countries, with one of the lowest numbers of hospital beds per capita. And Ontario ranks worse than all other provinces.

Many of the paramedics I interviewed for this article tell me the same thing: funding preventative health care to help patients avoid serious medical issues is the number-one way governments should begin to address this crisis. That money is being spent anyway, on repeat ER visits by chronically ill patients and, increasingly, on paying private companies to fill in the gaps.

As the ambulance crisis rages on, businesses are circling like vultures. Medavie Health Services, a private health-care company, recently took over management of paramedic services in Lennox-Addington County

near Kingston, despite multiple issues with the company’s management of ambulance services in New Brunswick. There, the auditor general found that the company was paid millions in bonuses to meet ambulance response time targets that were biased against rural areas, and collected \$8 million in surplus payments that came from cost savings due to a shortage of paramedics, creating a disincentive to hire more paramedics.

Back in the hospital, after hours of waiting, our patient becomes so sick that he requires a resuscitation room. I provide a report to the doctor while my partner cleans our stretcher in the company of six other medics who are still on delay. It’s now 90 minutes past the end of our shift, and with the half-hour-long drive back to the station, we will have worked 14 hours today.

My partner drives while I finish my paperwork. A message pops up on our computer screen: “Hello lovely medics, we are experiencing a high number of calls today. Anyone who would like to work overtime, please call the Duty Officer!” Exhausted, we shake our heads in disgust, wondering what more we could possibly give. We’re 10 hours from doing this all again, and it won’t be nearly enough.

SAVING HEALTH CARE

Doug Ford has held back billions of dollars budgeted for health care and is funneling money to an expanding private health system. Health-care workers and advocates are pushing back.

BY DAVID GRAY-DONALD

If you’ve used the health-care system recently, you probably know there are big problems. Underfunding, long an issue in Ontario, has gotten worse under Doug Ford’s Conservative government, and he has pushed privatization of many health services, diverting money and staff away from the public system and towards private businesses.

The question now is whether the health-care system as we know it — or as we once knew it — can be saved.

Another signature Ford government scheme project backfired spectacularly last year: giving away large sections of the Greenbelt to real estate speculators and developers. The combo of broad public opposition, investigative journalism by *The Narwhal*, *Toronto Star* and auditor general reports exposing scandalous and embarrassing dealings, and divisions within the Conservative caucus caused Ford to abandon most of his plan.

Could his hand similarly be forced on health care? What would it take?

ONTARIO HEALTH COALITION GEARS UP

“They’re a tough nut to crack. There’s no question,” says Natalie Mehra, executive director of the Ontario Health Coalition, in a phone interview with *The Grind*. “They’re trying to privatize virtually every subsector of health care that they can, from hospitals to long-term care for the next 30 years to the remaining public parts of home care, to primary care ... [and] vaccines and COVID testing. ... Despite all the rhetoric from Doug Ford saying you’ll never pay with your credit card, every piece of this privatization is resulting in more costs for patients.”

Mehra has been taking on Liberal and Conservative provincial governments for 27 years to keep health care public and adequately funded. And it has more or less worked, like defeating the provincial Liberal’s plan to allow private hospitals when they were last in power. But, she says, the current government has so far been intransigent and “very difficult to move.”

To get the government to shift course, Mehra says “it’s going to take a mass, mass public movement and tons of public pressure.”

The Ontario Health Coalition has a tiny staff team of three, and relies on volunteers as well as organizational members such as churches and seniors groups to run 50 local chapters across the province. They have a goal of reaching two million people in person-to-person outreach, which includes door-knocking and distributing leaflets.

Volunteers are welcome to get involved in that effort, says Mehra. Other volunteer tasks include speaking to community groups, distributing surveys to seniors to gather stories about being billed extra at private clinics (like for cataract surgeries) for a report, making memes and other

online shareables, organizing press conferences and rallies, and more.

These efforts “will lead to a mass protest outside the [provincial] legislature in May,” says Mehra.

HEALTH WORKERS AND UNIONS

This winter, hospital workers are negotiating new contracts with the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA). Many hospital workers, briefly hailed as heroes in the early pandemic, have been leaving their jobs in recent years — a combination of being overworked and underpaid.

Forty-one per cent of Ontario’s hospitals workers now dread going into work, according to a recent survey conducted by Nanos Research on behalf of the Canadian Union of Public Employees’ Ontario Council of Hospital Unions (OCHU/COPE). OCHU/COPE is one of three unions bargaining for new contracts, along with Unifor and the SEIU Healthcare.

“You’ve got a system which is very, very underfunded, very under-resourced, and has a huge backlog of people waiting for treatment,” OCHU/COPE President Michael Hurley tells *The Grind* by phone. “And what we’re really fighting over here with the government [in contract negotiations] is how to improve care, how to improve access, how to ensure that people get quality care. We believe that they’re running the system into the ground deliberately. And then they point to its growing waiting lists and say, ‘well, we have no choice now, but we’re going to have to bring in the private sector to do surgeries, even though we know those surgeries will be more expensive and will ultimately result in longer waiting lists.’ We say that’s no solution. The solution is actually to invest more in the public system.”

Hurley is concerned that the OHA is intent on concession bargaining, meaning trying to get the workers to take worse contracts than before, and potentially worse working conditions.

Unlike most other workers, “We don’t have the legal right to strike,” says Hurley. Contract disputes are frequently resolved through arbitration, and the arbitrator is often not someone the union trusts.

Despite the legal restrictions, there is a history of strikes among health-care workers in Canada and abroad. British nurses, for the first time in over 100 years, went on strike in 2022 and 2023 over similar concerns of underfunding. They maintained a baseline of service in hospitals, including for chemotherapy, intensive care and other units, but some non-urgent care was affected, creating substantial pressure on the government.

“I think they set an example for others across the world,” says Hurley. “We certainly were watching and have a lot of respect for what they have been able to accomplish in terms of their political action.”

But, he adds, “I’m not saying that that’s where we will end up — that’s not a foregone conclusion at all.”

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JOSH BEST



Massive rally in Toronto organized by the Palestinian Youth Movement, Oct. 29, 2023.

PROTESTING A GENOCIDE

Dalia Awwad was born and raised in Palestine's West Bank. Her family is from the village of Lifta, which was ethnically cleansed in 1948 and is now claimed by Israel. She lives in Toronto and is a member of the Palestinian Youth Movement, which has organized dozens of protests since October.

BY DAVID GRAY-DONALD

THE GRIND — What is happening in Palestine and what are you asking the Canadian government to do?

AWWAD — For the past 108 days [as of Jan. 22], the Zionist state of Israel has been exercising a campaign of ethnic cleansing and genocide against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. So far, they have murdered over [25,000] Palestinians and committed countless war crimes, including using white phosphorus, bombing hospitals, targeting journalists and preventing aid from entering the Gaza Strip. At this point, only 10 per cent of the aid that's needed is entering.

Israel is also committing atrocities in the West Bank, where they have imprisoned over 10,000 Palestinian political prisoners. They have prevented them from receiving any medical attention from the Red Cross, and they have been torturing them. Released political prisoners have talked about having broken bones as a result of torture and not having that treated for weeks on end. This is a continuation of the 75-year long ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people.

So, we are asking for an immediate and permanent ceasefire on the ground. We are demanding the lifting of the almost 17-year long blockade on the Gaza Strip. And most importantly, as it relates to the Canadian government, is asking for an end to the complicity that they have played. And what that means is having an arms embargo placed on Israel, having economic sanctions, and cutting diplomatic ties.

The Canadian government allows different weapons companies to export weaponry. Parts are produced here and then exported to the US to then go into F-35 planes or to go into drones that are then used for the genocide of the Palestinian people in Gaza.

What are your reflections on organizing in the Toronto context? What sort of obstacles have you encountered and where have you found support?

A — What I've observed in the last three months is people coming out en masse against this genocide. And what's been interesting is I think that this has included both Palestinians, Arabs and people from the Muslim community, but it has gone beyond that to include everyday people who can see how terrible these war crimes are.

For some people, they've been on the Palestinian side for many years, but this is a moment where they are no longer able to be silent. They are mobilizing and self-organizing and doing work [including at the neighbourhood level] to really try their best to get the Canadian government to abide to these demands.

“This is a moment where they are no longer able to be silent.”

We've also observed quite a bit of repression from the state and a lot of racist rhetoric from politicians. We've seen that the Toronto police has escalated repeatedly with organizers and protesters and ... that has taken the form of criminalization by arresting people and then the doxxing that comes after.

The support that we've received from allied communities, from comrades who were in joint struggle with us, [it] is difficult to describe the amounts of gratitude that I personally have.

People may have seen media coverage and gotten the impression that these protests are hateful and antisemitic. What do you say in response?

A — For starters, I think it's important to remember what people are protesting, and people are protesting an active genocide that's taking place.

I don't think we should ever associate a religious faith with a state. Critiquing a state's action should always be permissible and welcome, particularly when that state is committing war crimes and murdering people en masse.

I also think that the representation of these protests has been very biased. In part, the way the media and politicians have spoken about folks organizing for Palestine in the last while has been in an attempt to dehumanize us and criminalize us off the bat — where, again, the protests are asking for a life of dignity for Palestinians, which should not be a radical ask in any way.

The miscategorization makes it so there can be a continuation of this narrative that 'this is very complicated' and 'I don't know enough,' when in reality there is nothing complicated about genocide. There is an entity that commits the genocide, and a people who are subjected to a genocide. I think these categorizations are to make it so people are afraid of protesting, and that people who do protest are doing it at a high price of potentially being arrested or categorized as being hateful.

I think people should ask: why is the state working so hard to silence people who are saying we are against genocide and against any role that the Canadian state has in facilitating this genocide? Why isn't there more critique of the ways in which the state has tried to silence people saying that?

KEEP READING

A FEW ARTICLES & PODCASTS ON PALESTINE TO CHECK OUT

Palestinians In Canada Grapple With Loss And Trauma Inflicted By Israel

THE MAPLE

A List Of Some People In Canada Fired For Pro-Palestine Views

THE MAPLE

'Chilling effect': People expressing pro-Palestinian views censured, suspended from work and school

CBC

In stunning pre-dawn raids, Toronto police 'terrorize' Palestine activists

THE BREACH

Naomi Klein to Heather Reisman: Charges must be dropped against Indigo 11

THE BREACH

CIJA Has Taken Nearly 25% Of MPs On Paid Trips To 'Israel'

THE MAPLE

In 'covert op,' Israeli consulate backed poll inflating support for Gaza war

THE BREACH

Beautiful Like The Moon

THE NEW QUARTERLY

Inside Israel's torture camp for Gaza detainees

+972 MAGAZINE

'A mass assassination factory': Inside Israel's calculated bombing of Gaza

+972 MAGAZINE

Hamas w/ Tareq Baconi

THE DIG (PODCAST)

The Jewish Left Is Trying to Hold Two Thoughts at Once

THE EZRA KLEIN SHOW (PODCAST)

'This Is How Hamas Is Seeing This'

THE EZRA KLEIN SHOW (PODCAST)



LIFE IN PALESTINE'S WEST BANK

PHOTO ESSAY BY REHAB NAZZAL

DEC. 5, 2023, JENIN REFUGEE CAMP,
WEST BANK, PALESTINE (ABOVE)

Taken during my walk in the Jenin refugee camp, this photo portrays the silent strength of a child, his gaze set against a background loaded with symbols of struggle, including posters and bullet marks. Captured after one of the frequent Israeli military raids, where children bear the brunt with loss, destruction of camp infrastructure, and house ransacking and bombing. Established in 1953, the Jenin refugee camp was supposed to be a temporary refuge for Palestinians forcibly expelled from their homes and lands by Zionist groups during the 1948 Nakba. Seventy-six years later, the refugees still face Israeli atrocities.



INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY IN THE HEBRON HILLS

For years, people have come from around the world to stop Israel's land grab in the Hebron Hills in Palestine's West Bank. Jewish Torontonians Anna Lippman and Dan Mossip-Balkwill travelled there in January to document what was happening and to get in between Palestinians working their land and the Israeli military trying to stop them.

BY ANNA LIPPMAN AND DAN MOSSIP-BALKWILL

Masafer Yatta in the South Hebron Hills region of the West Bank has faced an extreme increase of violence from both neighbouring Israeli settlers and the Israeli army since Oct. 7. This region, also known as Firing Zone 918, is used for Israeli military training purposes. Since the 1980s, Palestinian residents of Masafer Yatta have been at risk of forced eviction and under strict "no build" orders. Since October, the almost 1,000 people living in 16 villages have been forced to leave their homes under threat of death by armed settler militias.

For those who choose to remain, settlers and the army seek to make their lives unbearable. With movement almost entirely restricted in October, many villagers were unable to visit their lands and undertake their yearly olive harvest, one of the main sources of income for families.

Shepherding too is severely restricted by encroaching illegal settlements which claim grazing land in the area. The army ensures Palestinian livestock cannot graze there either. Since the beginning of the war on Gaza, which is around 60 kilometres away, shepherds are often not even allowed on the small patches of land the settlements have left them.

We stayed in the remote village of Tiran, joining a group of both Israeli and international activists who have answered the call to support the resistance to these threats. In November, Tiran's residents were given 24 hours to evacuate or be killed by the neighbouring settlers. In part because of co-resistance efforts, village leader Bassam and his family have remained on their land. He and his family keep all sorts of livestock on the rocky hillside just above the Israeli settlement of Hevat Yehuda.

The situation is tense, and foreigners sleep over in the village almost every night in case the settlers return.

Living and resisting in Masafer Yatta requires the continuation of farming and shepherding on their traditional lands. But with army outposts and settler drones, these attempted daily outings can sometimes last for as little as five minutes before being confronted with Israeli soldiers. With our camera gear and international passports, the outings can last a little longer.

Palestinian culture celebrates the value of *sumud*, or steadfastness. In Masafer Yatta, *sumud* is cultivated from a young age as families continue to hold onto their land, lives, and traditions. In Tiran, we are shown how to turn dried cheese into milk. In the evenings, Bassam insists we drink as much tea as possible. With the sounds of warplanes overhead and faint bombing of Gaza in the distance, the laughter of the children that fills our entire tent teaches us how to live with *sumud*.

DAN MOSSIP-BALKWILL



Villagers from Wadi Jahish in the Hebron Hills were trying to plant seeds but were stopped and turned around by Israeli soldiers. One man, pictured here, was held away from the group and questioned.

DEC. 17, 2023, JENIN REFUGEE CAMP, WEST BANK, PALESTINE (LOWER LEFT)

Marlene and her family reside in this place. I met them at the end of October 2023 during the funeral of three Palestinians killed by Israeli occupation forces (IOF), which Israel calls the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF). After the funeral, Marlene's parents explained that the IOF invasions are making life in the camp difficult and dangerous, forcing residents to leave during the night or take refuge somewhere else. Marlene's family has nowhere else to go. They've stopped repairing doors and walls since the IOF consistently destroy them; instead, they use blankets. During my visit to the camp mid-December, I witnessed additional destruction including to their home and shop. Nonetheless, the smiles and waves of Marlene and her mother testify to the resilience of the Palestinians.

JAN. 16, 2024, NUR SHAMS REFUGEE CAMP, TULKAREM, WEST BANK, PALESTINE (ABOVE)

Amid the overwhelming conditions of Nur Shams refugee camp — home to 14,000 Palestinian refugees within 0.21 square kilometres — children play joyfully in narrow streets, resilient despite the hardship. Older children diligently care for the younger ones, fostering that resilience amid the wreckage of destroyed lives and homes. Since Oct. 7, the camp has been facing frequent Israeli military raids targeting members of the resistance movement who are struggling to end the occupation and attain their right of return to their home that they were forcibly expelled from during the 1948 Nakba. Each invasion brings more martyrs (killed), arrests, and destruction. Homes are bombed; doors, windows, and furniture damaged, streets carved by bulldozers; and vital infrastructure like water and sewage pipes are in ruins.

Rehab Nazzal's Bio

I am a Palestinian-born multidisciplinary artist based in Montreal. My work deals with the effects of settler-colonial violence on the bodies and minds of colonized peoples, on the land, and on other non-human life. My video, photography, and sound works have been shown and exhibited in solo and group exhibitions and screenings across Canada and internationally.

Since September 2023 I have been conducting research in the occupied West Bank, documenting the violence of Israeli occupation forces and armed settlers, which has been increasing tremendously since Oct. 7, including imposing blockades on Palestinian communities, frequent raids, displacement, killing, arrest campaigns and torture, and the destruction of homes and essential infrastructure.

READ ONLINE



JEWES AGAINST GENOCIDE

In Toronto's Jewish community, there are long-standing and deep divisions regarding Israel. Those divisions have become more pronounced than ever after Hamas' Oct. 7 attacks and Israel's months-long slaughter of Palestinians. Louise Smith shares her experience of it all.

BY LOUISE SMITH

In my memory, I am walking down the corridor of my Hebrew school in Toronto. It is the 1980s. I am only 11 years old, looking at photos from the ghettos and concentration camps. We are outside the swimming pool and I can smell the chlorine in the air as the teacher talks about the gas chambers. On the wall is an infamous photo of a boy, probably younger than I was then, with his hands raised and a rifle pointed at his back. It's such a vivid memory. You don't forget things like that.

All my life I was warned what can happen when people develop a hate so deep for others that they forget their humanity. We asked how the world let it happen. Why did no one intervene? We swore "never again."

And yet, here we are.

About five years ago, I got involved in Palestinian solidarity and joined Independent Jewish Voices Canada. I undertook a research project and was horrified by what I learned. I thought, if only people knew. If they saw how many Israeli laws enshrined different rules for Palestinians than for Jews, they'd understand why Israel is described as an apartheid state. If they knew that Israelis living in illegal settlements had set fire to Palestinians' houses with families inside them and faced no repercussions, or that people die in Gaza waiting for Israel to give them a permit for cancer treatment, they would surely be outraged as well. I was wrong.

Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, killing and injuring many. While over 100 hostages were freed, approximately 130 were still unaccounted for as of late January, with most being held by Hamas and some presumed dead. I hurt imagining the suffering of the victims and of their families.

The response from Israel has been this brutal, cruel and seemingly endless war on Palestinians. People can see online exactly what Israel is doing in Gaza and the West Bank. Israel's campaign is also in line with the resettlement vision long held by some key government representatives. And yet, most in the Jewish community cannot bring themselves to criticize any of it. That has been truly heartbreaking for me.

In this awful time, I have found the most welcoming, collaborative and productive group of Jewish people to work with in the Jews Say No to Genocide coalition. It is intergenerational, gender- and identity-diverse, full of clever, funny and creative people who are deeply committed to universal human rights. We have built meaningful and supportive relationships with Palestinian organizers and activists across a wide spectrum of issues. We have organized demonstrations and participated in those led by others. I've met people I've long admired from afar and now admire people I've only just met.

When I come back from a protest or have a powerful interaction with someone, I want to tell everyone from my pre-Oct. 7 life. But I can't. For many of us, we have too many different opinions on the situation. It's too sensitive a topic. So, there's a split in my life. My non-Jewish friends get to know parts of my life that many of my Jewish friends and family do not. They don't bring the same emotional investment or personal history, and so it's a safer conversation.

I believe it is especially important to have Jewish representation in this movement calling out Israel's actions since a key feature of the Israel lobby is to claim all criticism



"I wish that people were more careful about separating out legitimate criticism of Israel and hatred for Jewish people."

of Israel is antisemitic. Jewish Palestine solidarity organizers make ourselves very visible. At our rallies, we wear matching hats and shirts that are emblazoned with our message, prominently noting that we are Jewish. And yet, many media stories erase our identity and generically reference "protesters" to maintain a tidy narrative of Palestinians versus Jews, which isn't true.

There have been really frightening acts of antisemitism since this war started, including various threats made toward my former high school, the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto. I hate that Jewish kids here are growing up fearful or feeling ostracized. But I wish that people were more careful about separating out legitimate criticism of Israel and hatred for Jewish people.

For example, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) claimed in its newsletter that at Palestinian solidarity protests people call for death to Jews. I've been to dozens of protests and know people who have been to almost every single one in Toronto, and none of us have heard such rhetoric. What we have heard are calls for a ceasefire and for Israel to respect Palestinian human rights and freedom. It's cruel for Jewish organizations to make Jews more afraid just to push the narrative that protesters and Palestinians

hate Jews. And then they fundraise off that fear.

When I was in school, we'd wonder about the "what ifs." If things got bad for Jews, would our neighbours protect us or turn us in? What is scary now is how quickly the idea of "Jewish safety" is being used to target people, including Jewish people, who are protesting against Israeli state actions and positions.

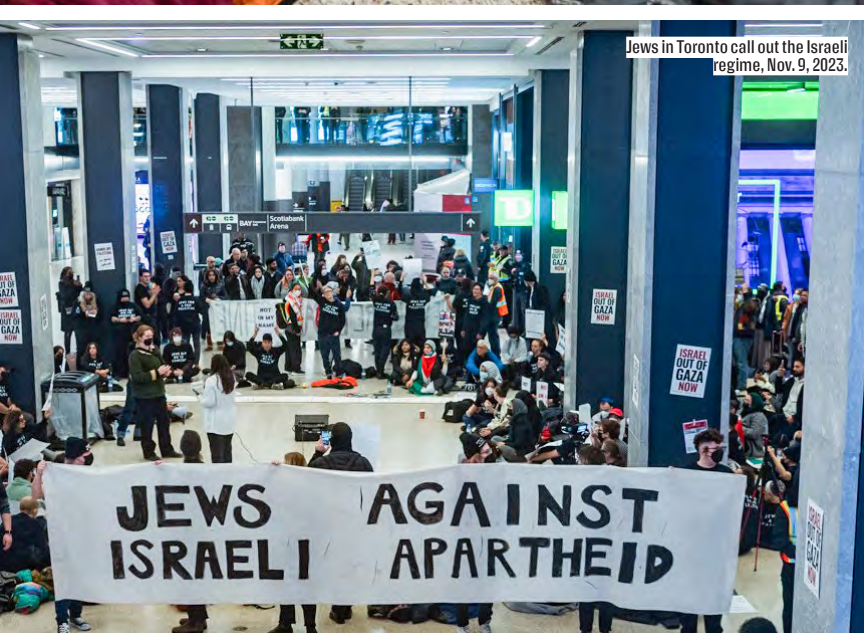
People who are marching to stop a brutal bombardment are being called terrorist supporters by politicians, tabloid newspapers and Jewish organizations who cannot abide any criticism of Israel. They are calling on police to make more arrests and lay more serious charges. And police have done just that, largely targeting Palestinians and other racialized, queer and trans people.

I feel the immediacy of this moment and the need to mobilize against the tragedies unfolding in Palestine. Rabea Eghbariah, a Palestinian human rights attorney at Harvard, writes about the hypocrisy on display with the refusal of many to accept the legal framework for assessing Israel's actions as genocide. He notes that "legal scholars tend to sharpen their pens after the smell of death has dissipated and moral clarity is no longer urgent." We can't wait that long.

Watch the award-winning documentary *Israelism* to see how Jewish attitudes towards Israel are changing dramatically, revealing a deepening generational divide over modern Jewish identity. It's playing at the Redwood Theatre in Toronto on Saturday, Feb 14 at 4 pm and 7:30 pm, followed by a discussion with the filmmaker. The film is also available for rent online anytime.



Jews Say No to Genocide protest action inside Union Station, Nov 9, 2023.



Jews in Toronto call out the Israeli regime, Nov. 9, 2023.

The Grind's Editorial

WE MUST NOT BECOME NUMB

“Please do not get used to the genocide happening in Palestine.”

An older Palestinian woman was repeating the phrase to passersby outside Union Station while she was leaving a rally in January. One of our editors overheard her, and it stuck.

Her words are a reminder that we must not become numb. As Palestinians continue being killed by Israel, we are reminded of a 2022 poem by Mosab Abu Toha, *The Wounds*. After describing how many people in Gaza had been killed and injured by an Israeli bombing, he writes: “(Don’t think of us as numbers.)”

Parents cry as they lose their children, crushed under buildings in Gaza destroyed by Israel’s bombs. An older woman waves a small white flag in the street to indicate she is unarmed and is shot dead by an Israeli sniper. An injured child is held and cared for after losing both parents and all their siblings to the bombings. Israeli soldiers strip men, torture them and take them away from their families.

These are people, not numbers.

Despite this, numerous organizations and individuals are working diligently to numb us to what’s happening and to distract us from the fact that the Canadian government supports Israel through it all.

If you regularly read the *Toronto Sun*, you might be under the impression that the protests have been full of hate and antisemitism. But as Palestinians and Jews who have been protesting for decades have said repeatedly, this is about opposing the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians from their homes, which has been ongoing throughout the past century.

People are also losing their jobs for speaking out. After sharing Instagram posts critical of Israel and supportive of Palestinians, the Art Gallery of Ontario’s first curator of Indigenous art, Wanda Nanibush, left the gallery under mysterious circumstances seven years into her role. Several Palestinian journalists have lost their jobs. Many others have been censored or suspended from work or school.

Politicians including Mayor Olivia Chow and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau have demonized pro-Palestine protesters and encouraged police to go after them. And police have. There was a wave of arrests in November following Palestine solidarity actions.

In December and January, highway overpasses became a flashpoint, with people waving Palestinian flags and banners from around 20 overpasses. There were confrontations between pro-Israel and pro-Palestine protesters on the Avenue Road bridge over Highway 401 in late December, and one pro-Israel protester was arrested after a video showed her repeatedly making a throat-slitting motion towards the pro-Palestine crowd.

On Jan. 13, pro-Palestine residents in the area of the Avenue Road and Highway 401 overpass, including Jewish residents, were walking onto the bridge when three people in the group were arrested. Others in the group were injured by the police and hospitalized. On Jan. 21, one person was arrested in Scarborough at the

McCowan and 401 overpass during a pro-Palestine demonstration.

While people are desperately trying to bring attention to the loss of life in Palestine and to Canada’s complicity, the story continues to be shifted away, deliberately.

Through the fall, we were appalled — but not particularly surprised — that Western nations like Canada, the U.S., the U.K. and Germany did and said nothing to stop the slaughter. These were governments that we remember talking endlessly about the “rules-based international order,” now doing nothing while seeming war crimes were broadcast live.

And then, in early January, South Africa accused Israel of committing acts of genocide in Gaza. They presented a mountain of evidence in a readable submission to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), including statements appearing to show genocidal intent on the part of Israeli government leadership.

Finally, someone said something. And not just anyone, but South Africa, the nation where a domestic and international mass movement ended apartheid there in the 1990s.

The focus was, momentarily, returned to Gaza and Israel.

We don’t expect the ICJ ruling will change all that much. An interim order had not been released by our print date, but it might have by the time you read this. A final ruling may take two or three years. And even when orders are released, countries can choose not to follow them, as has happened before. But the case is already having an effect on the reputation of Israel and on nations which reject South Africa’s arguments, like Canada.

At a Tamil Heritage Month event in Scarborough on Jan. 21, Tamils in solidarity with Palestine interrupted Liberal MP Gary Anandasangaree. “As Tamil people, we understand a genocide. We know the pain of losing our loved ones, of losing generations of our families, of experiencing war crimes,” the attendee said. “And the same thing that happened in [the 2009 massacre of tens of thousands of Tamils in the village of] Mullivaikkal is repeating itself right now. If Canadian politicians are silent, then what is the point of any of this remembrance?”

They went on to say they had emailed and tried to meet with the MP to get him to act, to no avail.

It will be community interventions and efforts like this, not leadership from politicians in power, that will centre humanity.

If we allow our governments to support genocide in Palestine, it devalues all life everywhere. And there is a frightening trend in that direction. As so many of us struggle to get by, some loud voices, instead of pointing out how the rich keep getting richer, instead encourage us to blame and look down on a growing list of marginalized groups, including Palestinians, migrants, the unhoused, queer and trans people, and others.

But we can resist, and collectively bring ourselves that much closer to lives of dignity and freedom.

Please do not get used to the genocide happening in Palestine.

Canadian Media's Anti-Palestinian Bias

Ever wonder if the major media outlets are providing fair and balanced coverage on the war in Gaza? The folks at *The Breach* looked into it. Long story short, Canadian media consistently dehumanizes Palestinians, giving less space to covering Palestinian than Israeli deaths, and giving more air time to Israel's spokespeople and their supporters.

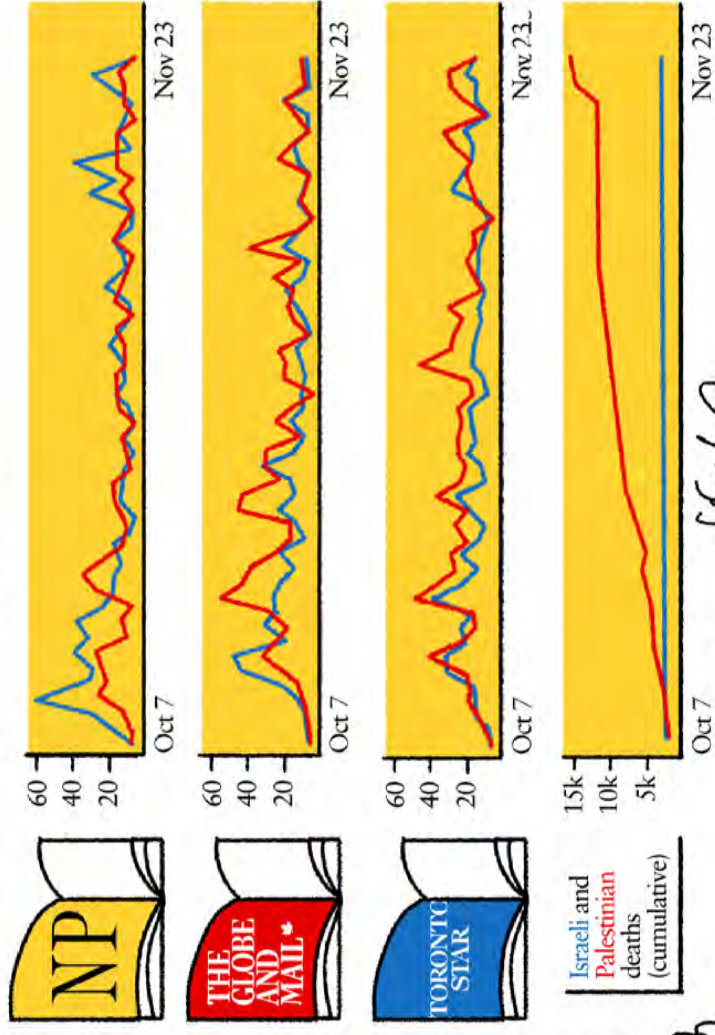
Palestinian deaths count for less in Canada's newspapers

The Breach analyzed thousands of sentences in coverage in *The Globe and Mail*, *Toronto Star*, and *National Post* from Oct. 7 to Nov. 24. The study found that dozens of Palestinian deaths were required to merit just one mention in the newspapers, while there was one mention of Israeli deaths for every two Israelis who died.

Israelis were also portrayed in more humanized ways, their deaths were characterized as more worthy of indignation, and the newspapers more often identified who was responsible for killing them, the study revealed.

This uneven coverage sanitizes political violence against Palestinians and unequally stirs emotions about Israeli deaths.

Mentions of Israeli and Palestinian deaths:



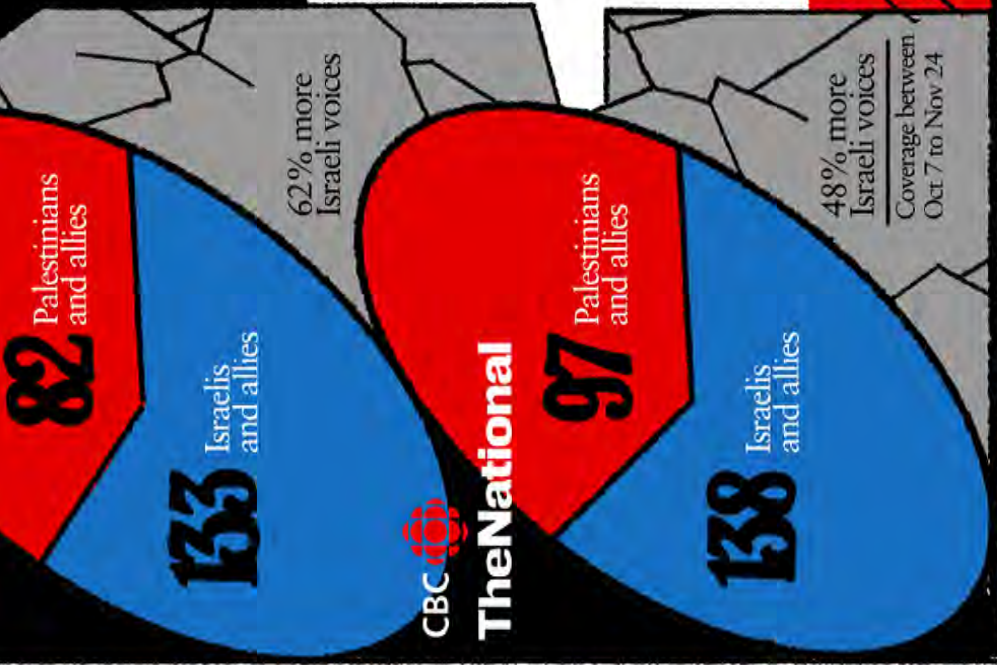
TORONTO STAR	17 dead Palestinians = 1 mention of Palestinian death
THE GLOBE AND MAIL	20 dead Palestinians = 1 mention of Palestinian death
NATIONAL POST	30 dead Palestinians = 1 mention of Palestinian death

Coverage between Oct 7 to Nov 24:
 Across all 3 papers:
 2 dead Israelis 1 mention of Israeli death



CBC featured more Israelis

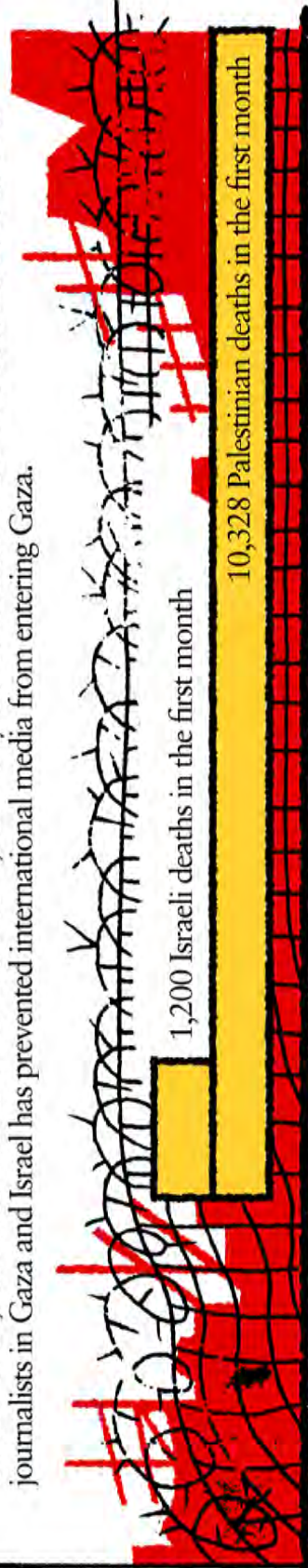
even as Palestinian casualties rose, data shows



CBC News' The National featured 42 per cent more Israeli voices than Palestinian in its first month of coverage after the Oct. 7 Hamas attack, a comprehensive analysis by The Breach and Toronto Metropolitan University's Review of Journalism found.

CBC's flagship broadcast continued to feature more Israelis than Palestinians even as the death toll in Gaza mounted. It also failed to identify by name more than a quarter of Palestinians and their allies.

1,200 Israelis and foreign workers and more than 200 people were taken hostage in Hamas' Oct. 7 attacks, while Israel killed over 10,000 Palestinians over the next month, and many thousands more since. CBC does not have its own journalists in Gaza and Israel has prevented international media from entering Gaza.



CTV forbids use of 'Palestine,' suppresses critical stories about Israel

CTV directed its journalists not to use the word "Palestine" and has cultivated a "culture of fear" that is suppressing critical coverage of Israel's war on Gaza, according to internal emails obtained by *The Breach* and interviews with several employees.

The journalists said senior producers and senior editors across the platforms of CTV's parent company Bell Media have disparaged Palestinian guests, told employees that protests calling for a ceasefire should not be reported on, and blocked or delayed stories that included too much contextual information about Israel's military occupation and regime of apartheid in Palestine. Bell Media also controls CP24 and BNN Bloomberg.

CBC says killing of Palestinians doesn't merit terms 'murderous,' 'brutal'

In a letter responding to a complaint filed by retired Humber College professor Jeff Winch, CBC News acknowledged that they've used terms like "murderous," "vicious," "brutal," "massacre," and "slaughter" to refer only to Hamas's attack on Israelis on Oct. 7.

But when it comes to the Israeli army's bombing of Palestinians, which has killed more than 24,000 people as of mid-January, CBC says they prefer to use terms like "intensive," "unrelenting," and "punishing."

The more evocative and sympathy-generating terms don't apply to Palestinian deaths, CBC argues, because Israel carries out its killings "remotely" instead of face-to-face.



ANNOUNCEMENT



OPEN MEETING FOR SUPPORTERS OF THE GRIND

Wednesday, Feb 7, 7pm on Zoom

The Grind launched in 2022 and has survived this long due to the support of so many readers. In this meeting, we invite you to discuss with us how to grow and improve the publication. That includes plans to increase revenues, and potentially to hire staff, put streetboxes out on sidewalks, and publish more frequently. All are welcome.

Email info@thegrindmag.ca to attend

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“The link between the pandemic and capitalism is meticulously exposed.” —Vittorio Bufacchi

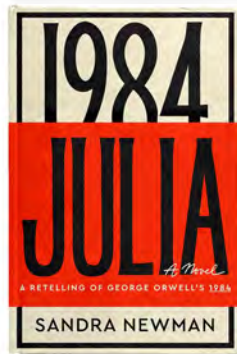
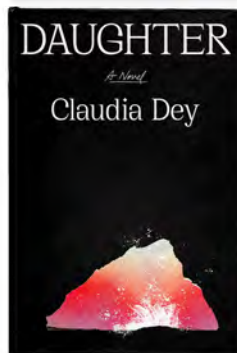


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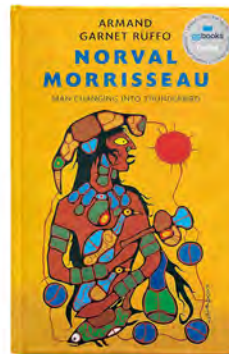
BOOK RECS

THE COBRA AND THE KEY By Sam Shelstad (Brindle & Glass, 2023) A tongue-in-cheek novel in the guise of a how-to guide for aspiring writers. Local author Sam Shelstad mashes together observational humour with a character study of one of the saddest stereotypes in literary fiction: the artist manqué. Composed of short chapters, like a collection of standup comedy routines, I found something I wanted to read out loud on nearly every single page of *The Cobra and The Key*. The type of book you buy multiple copies, and give them away to all your friends. Hands down, my favorite novel of 2023. — **CZ**

CARNY SHORT STORIES VOLUME ONE By S.E. Tomas (self-published, 2023) Man, this guy can write! He’s funny, he’s gritty, he’s authentic — it’s surprisingly entertaining stuff, if you’ll just give it a shot. While “Toronto’s street author” is better known for his novel *Crackilton*, *Carny* is the first of a trilogy of short stories that introduce us to the unforgettable character Jim. We follow his misadventures as a seasonal employee on the carnival circuit across Canada, then down to Florida for the winter, in the early 1990s. Every story in this collection made me want to read more about a fascinating subculture of marginalized workers. — **TG**



Staff at BMV Yonge and Eglinton (one of Toronto's three BMV locations) recommend some of their fave new books to get you through these cold, gray days.



NEVER WHISTLE AT NIGHT Edited by Shane Hawk and Theodore C. Van Alst Jr. Introduction by Stephen Graham Jones. (Random House Canada, 2023) This anthology of dark fiction offers readers 26 stories of the supernatural — family curses, hauntings, monstrous creatures, terrible acts of revenge — told through the lens of Indigenous themes of racism, complex family legacies, and generational trauma. It’s quite rare for an anthology to fly off the shelf at BMV Eglinton, but with Cherie Dimaline, Waubgeshig Rice, and Richard Van Camp rounding out a roster packed with storytelling talent, we can barely keep this one in stock. — **DRP**

DAUGHTER By Claudia Dey (Doubleday Canada, 2023) What do you do when your biggest creative influence is also your most toxic personal relationship? How does an artist break free of their family to blaze their own path? Claudia Dey, author of *Stunt* (Coach House Books) and *Heartbreaker* (Harper-Collins) explores these ideas with her most kaleidoscopic and mesmerizing novel yet in *Daughter*. Claudia Dey is, in my opinion, the heir to Margaret Atwood and even comparable to Nabokov. When everyone else has just given up, and started writing “taut, propulsive” thrillers, it’s good to see someone still swinging for the fences in Canadian literature. — **TG**

JULIA By Sandra Newman (Mariner Books, 2023) Told from the viewpoint of Winston Smith’s lover in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, *Julia* is a feminist retelling of George Orwell’s classic novel. Mostly because we already know these characters, and this world, and what happens in the original, I experienced *Julia* as a page-turner, curious to see what happens next (or differently) as told through Julia’s perspective. While some of the concepts Newman introduces to the totalitarian world of 1984 stray too far from the existential terror of the original novel, the way she otherwise fleshes out our understanding of Orwell’s masterpiece is completely satisfying. — **TG**

NORVAL MORRISSEAU: MAN CHANGING INTO THUNDERBIRD By Armand Garnet Ruffo (Douglas & McIntyre, 2018) Norval Morrisseau (also called Copper Thunderbird) is an iconic Indigenous artist, and more Canadians should know his life story. You have to go back six years to find the definitive biography, but this book is well worth tracking down. Armand Garnet Ruffo did an incredible job, compressing the full scope of Morrisseau’s life and work into one volume. Norval Morrisseau was a complicated man, and he lived a complicated life, but I believe the purpose of literature is to allow readers to walk a mile in another person’s shoes. Empathy is the foundation of civilization, so great writing builds bridges between people. — **EMMETT**

THE GRIND'S
COMICS EDITOR
OLEA KIM
RECOMMENDS:

MORE! NOW!

By Paterson Hodgson
(September 2023)

Paterson Hodgson, a local Toronto cartoonist, extended an invitation for me to attend the October release party of her self-published booklet *More! Now!*. This compilation of short comics was the focal point of the event at Mama's Liquor & Lounge on Dundas Street West, and I purchased a copy.

In Toronto's tightly knit comics community, where it's hard not to know the cartoonist I'm reading, it struck me as a surprise that I hadn't come across Hodgson or her work before this invitation.

More! Now! serves as a collection of Hodgson's creative output from social media, a magazine gig, and her ongoing sci-fi realism endeavor.

The local nuances are evident, particularly in scenes featuring pairs of bicycles navigating Toronto's rail paths and public trails amid the backdrop of global warming and the "social distance hangs" era. The portrayal of Toronto's public walking trails and ravines as urban sanctuaries adds a layer of depth to the local storytelling.

Panels illustrating the graffitiing of the Landsdowne underpass — a common pastime disrupted by local law enforcement — resonate with the familiar struggles of politically engaged Torontonians who face the brutality of police interventions.

A visual prayer for the decline of landlords during the lockdown depicts the era's activism through community efforts. Meanwhile, a spread lamenting the gentrification of Parkdale depicts dialogue so integral to the west end 20-something's experience that it almost reads as satire.

The aesthetic of *More! Now!* adopts an instinctual and loosely defined style — so



loose that it occasionally breaks its own form. Despite this, it successfully captures a Torontonian cadence in dialogue, reminiscent of the familiar use of local landmarks and Toronto-isms found in Bryan Lee O'Malley's now-famous *Scott Pilgrim* comics. Unlike those, which meticulously explore the intricacies of indie culture through manga-influenced soap-romance plots, *More! Now!* eschews detailed explanations, choosing instead to immerse itself in the act of processing the time that shaped it.

Its visual cues are more in the ilk of Chicago's Caroline Cash. Themes of locality, queerness, and the humour of everyday life are also shared between these two cartoonists.

This collection stands as a representation of the socio-political intersections of its time in Toronto. Rather than serving as a nostalgic relic, *More! Now!* addresses the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic with a tone that suggests a shared acknowledgment of its persistent, albeit almost silent, presence. It also manages to infuse humour

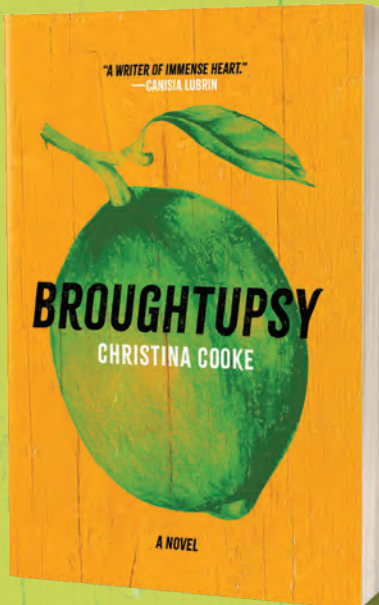


and a lighthearted touch to local narratives. The comic moments reflect the absurdities and idiosyncrasies of daily life in the city, making it a relatable and enjoyable read for anyone living here — and perhaps even for outsiders, too.

— OLEA KIM

You can order *More! Now!* from bit.ly/buypatersonscomic and follow Hodgson on Instagram at @patersinister.

<https://patersonhodgson.com/>



WHAT ARE WE WILLING TO DO FOR FAMILY?

WHAT ARE WE WILLING TO DO TO FEEL AT HOME?

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— STACEY D'ERASMO, AUTHOR OF *THE COMPLICITIES*

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'FRIQUES TAKE THE CLUB

Nightlife DJs Afrique Like Me Inspire Connection and Exploration through African Electronic Music

BY KVESCHE EBACHER

Toronto-based trio Afrique Like Me (ALM) emerged out of love for collective experiences and a desire to challenge narratives in electronic music. The artist collective officially came together in 2019, beginning with founding members Razaq Onakoya and Martin Sesinu Ogun, and later adding Toronto- and Nairobi-based DJ Anowa Quarcoo. As an event series, they've forged spaces for all types of 'Friques to dance all night and connect with ease.

On the dancefloor, they span the universes of Afrobeat, Afrohouse, and techno while crossing over countless regional genres. ALM creates space for people to access and discover the expansive legacies in African electronic music.

Razaq (DJ Razaq El Toro) is a pioneering producer of the Eko Electronic sound from Lagos, Nigeria, and blends into wider genres such as Afrohouse. Anowa (Sonic Griot) weaves together sounds from where she grew up in Kenya, Uganda and South Africa.

These musical origins shape the distinct and self-affirming core of ALM's sonic curation, while their selections and collaborators travel countless musical worlds with ease. Anowa invites all to come connect unconditionally, unapologetically: "Come as you are — no judgment."

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A 'FRIQUE?

Razaq knows people who come out to ALM events feel a comfort, ease, and sense of exploration. "People don't come to our parties to be cool... I love that a lot of people come to our parties by themselves." Razaq sees this as a reflection of ALM's efforts to create a safe space to be themselves, where people feel able to show up and connect authentically around the music with others.

Martin notes the deep understandings of regional, local music with distinct origins provide people a forum to connect and learn. Genres rooted in a specific people, land or city of Africa, such as fuji, apala, and highlife, that have spread to continents far from Nigeria and Africa as a whole, were and are specifically created for a public forum.

DJ Martin Ses calls himself a 'Frique — a tongue-in-cheek double entendre which rejects the idea that Africans who engage in club or electronic music are "outsiders." Martin takes issue with this misconception of electronic sounds. Where for some, North American club and pop may not have been a central language, electronic music is just as embedded in regional African music styles. "Technology and electricity is not something that can be claimed by one particular culture," Martin reinforces. "We are bringing together Africans. ... When you take the concept of electronic music, it's always misunderstood as something foreign to the African setting."

To Razaq, ALM has existed as an engine countering a narrative that these electronic styles are obscure or inaccessible if they're not known or popular in Toronto. In the group's experience, he says, "As long as you build something that's true to you, something that's meaningful, people will gravitate toward that."



Known for its event series, which bears the same name, Afrique Like Me started with an intimate after hours party in Toronto's west end.

For people who want to access this culture of participation through music and dance, ALM refers to an exploration in shared experience. Razaq resonates with how an atmosphere of comfort and ease is facilitated by the excitement of exploration. He recalls pivotal moments for ALM under the rays of the Toronto afternoon sun, hauling speakers out under the canopy on a remote beach with the smell of back home wafting off the barbecue. This public effort, with everyone bringing their own offerings, and no end of DJ sets and performances, creates a forum of exploration and connection. Razaq recalls laying in the sand and dozing off, amid everyone dancing until the sunrise.

"The sun is coming up on the beach... [it was the] first time I played the Burna Boy, 'Wonderful' & 'Ten Walls' [Sparta] mash up. It sticks in my head. East end, secret beach. Everyone comes together, carries speakers, generators, coolers — to set up a production. ... There's this ease; you're in nature — adventure! It's super important to bring that feeling back."

Spaces, environments that lend themselves to collective participation run counter to much of the club industry's culture of catering largely to a North American popular mainstream. Razaq says they've faced challenges where ALM's events may appear unfamiliar to arbiters of mainstream spaces: "Some places look for clout in a sense — a certain amount of followers, cosigns, people who endorse you. We have a lot of support from the standpoint of authenticity."



Afrique Like Me is a Toronto-based collective comprising Razaq El Toro, Martin Ses and Sonic Griot.



Afrique Like Me celebrates art, electronic, dance, underground and alternative music from across Africa and the diaspora.



“When you take the concept of electronic music it’s always misunderstood as something foreign to the African setting.”

PUSHING PAST THE LIMITS OF TORONTO’S STIFLED SPACES

Anowa laments the disappearance of many do-it-yourself (DIY) spaces that fostered the comfort and explorative energy ALM brings. Some of her favourite venues, such as Sub-Division and Red Room, both downtown, closed their doors or are struggling. She notes the over-regulation, restrictions and policing of open-air spaces. Exasperated after years of stifled efforts, she asks rhetorically: “Can we do a party in the streets like in Berlin?”

For Sesinu and Onakoya, the duality of Toronto and Lagos as home exposes the reality of who does and does not have regular access and power over spaces. In many ways, music is afforded to everyone in Lagos as a public culture. This exists as a core memory for Martin: “You throw a party at your house or outside encroaching on a neighbour’s compound — they have no other option but to attend your party. They don’t call the police.” While this approach may not fly in Toronto, Sesinu says it is possible “to create spaces that minimally infringe on others, far from where people live.”

A dominant social current in Toronto’s music spaces, also common around the world, produces a socially fragmented culture in nightlife and club music spaces. As Martin sees it, many mainstream spaces miss out on facilitating a collective participation in music, opting instead to cater to more individualistic experiences. Martin contrasts the Toronto club industry with countries where this culture of public music is celebrated, “there’s an active participation,

in contrast to the pop culture that exists in the club... where it’s separate — people go there for alcohol, bottle service, the common American music, pop, techno.”

Anowa echoes these thoughts, adding that many venues that took risks on less mainstream experiences suffered during COVID due to additional limitations on public gatherings:

“It’s been even more challenging to find spaces. ... There’s a reality everyone in the [city] talks about: permitting, noise restrictions. These bureaucratic challenges favour people who have access and power.” She says the work falls on collective-minded artists to take the power back.

TAKING THE POWER BACK COLLECTIVELY

Anowa says many well known electronic spaces felt overwhelmingly white, overlooking countless African artists and DJs, staying exclusionary as a result. “[ALM events started] a space where everyone could show up, and be themselves.”

Martin reinforces that when they took on ALM, it “enabled them to build a community that involved everyone else that felt they were on the outside of something. This could be Black culture, or African culture.” The space they’re creating is intentionally inclusive. “We’re welcome here, just as you are.”

“It’s a foremost African electronic dance music experience, and it’s a welcoming place for everyone. For those

who consider themselves outsiders and those who already feel part of the community.”

Afrique Like Me embodies a sense of active participation in and exploration of the music. While their efforts haven’t been without challenges (Razaq recalls a summer beach party getting shut down, for example), ALM believes that more collectives and communities should be encouraged to take risks, open up new spaces, and cultivate a more participatory culture of music. Razaq talks about how “chef” Martin often opens up the small terrace in his building, cooks up food and artists, while listeners share their latest productions in a chill, open-minded hang. Razaq invites creators and music lovers to reach out and see how they can open up more adventurous, explorative spaces. “Let’s see how we can make this happen, in a really good way. We would love that... Fuck it, let’s go find a secret beach again, let’s camp out!”

AfriqueLikeMe has been producing original music, and is headed to the studio with surprise collaborators from across Africa and Toronto matched in force. They expect to produce and drop a full-length album by the end of 2024. And we know they’ll want all the ‘friques in on it.

READ ONLINE



DIRECT INVESTMENT

Alcohol producers, both in Canada and internationally, provide significant financial support to the music industry through paid sponsorships and partnerships at events, advertisements in music-related magazines and websites, or hands-on involvement in the curation and promotion of live shows and festivals. Musicians in turn also become brand ambassadors, using their profile to market their own vanity spirits, or even call out specific brands in their music. From working class musicians to mega pop stars, artists are incentivized to devote their time and energy to selling alcohol, whether that's through bringing audiences out to shows, or through direct marketing.

"I really do think that a big part of it is has to be attributed to the very concerted work that the alcohol industry itself has done for decades to really associate any form of relaxation or any form of pleasure with alcohol consumption," says Canadian journalist and author James Wilt, over a mid-afternoon phone conversation. Wilt has extensively researched the alcohol industry for his book *Drinking Up The Revolution: How To Smash Big Alcohol And Reclaim Working-Class Joy*. Throughout the book, Wilt examines the social history of alcohol and ways in which "big alcohol" has influenced the drinking habits of western society. "And this is the part I think often kind of gets left out is the really concerted efforts by the industry to do so. I mean, it is a highly profitable commodity."

Despite the industry-pushed idea of alcohol as an "affordable pleasure" as Wilt describes it, alcohol is, for many, a source of social discord and harm. The lack of alcohol-free spaces isolates and alienates people who simply have no interest in consumption of alcohol for a variety of reasons. It can also act as a barrier to engagement for people under the legal drinking age while intoxication can cause safety concerns, both to the person drinking and those around them.

Creating alternative spaces outside of a bar or club presents many challenges. Such spaces often exist in residential areas, either in houses or lofts which invariably leads to noise complaints and friction between neighbours. Additionally, myriad permits and licences — where one wrong piece of paperwork can invite the attention of bylaw officers or municipal police — are often required. Starting a DIY space with these priorities in mind shouldn't be so difficult, but the potential fees, fines, surveillance, violence, and evictions make the notion riskier than it ought to be. "There have been house concert series' locally who have run into issues with sort of noise by-laws," says Jenkins. "I've seen that with venues in cities like Halifax, that are sort of within mixed-use areas, places that tried to get a live music venue thing going but then just couldn't make it happen because of regular noise complaints and fines."

FINAL THOUGHTS

While it can be said that there are valid reasons why the live music industry has accepted the alcohol industry as one of its primary financial supporters, it is clear that this relationship is not without problems. Greater efforts must be made to ensure a healthy and accessible musical culture that does not have to rely on big industry to exist, in the face of growing societal pressures.

Look out for a longer version of this article in New Feeling

"WE DON'T WANT THESE DRINK TICKETS"

With the alcohol biz pushing into all aspects of the music scene, more artists and fans are looking for venues that centre the music, not the drinks

BY DANIEL G. WILSON

I have always felt out of place in most live music spaces, whether I have performed on stage, been a part of the crowd, or organized the entire event. No matter how much my love of the music connects me to the crowd, my near constant sobriety has always put me in a position of being slightly out of step with those around me.

Growing up in Canada and Jamaica with most of my exposure to the substance being largely negative up to and including the loss of close family members, the idea of alcohol consumption had lost any and all potential mystique; I made the choice to become a teetotaler. Commercially and socially, alcohol is bound up in all aspects of the music industry and culture, so much so that seeking out spaces where it isn't centred requires a lot of work— and oftentimes the existence of such spaces is short-lived.

For many venues, the large profit potential of alcohol sales serves as the primary or even only source of income. Skyrocketing commercial rents and property taxes add to an environment where alcohol sales and consumption often take precedence over the music itself.

"I consider myself very lucky to have grown up in a time and place where there

was a big alternative DIY community," says Matty Morand over a video call from their home in Windsor, Ontario. Morand is the front person of sober Canadian indie power-pop/punk band Pretty Matty as well as a member of the band Pony. "For the majority of my early formative years playing music, drinking wasn't really at the forefront of it in the same way that it is now or in a lot of

From working class musicians to mega pop stars, artists are incentivized to devote their time and energy to selling alcohol

spaces now." They have been active in the Southern Ontario punk and independent music scene since the mid 00's and have largely been straight-edge since their teens.

Comparing their formative experiences to the current scene, Morand explains that for "bands who are being considered for a show, oftentimes their [previous] alcohol sales are a factor in their being chosen."

It's not uncommon in DIY and club circuits for bands to be paid with "drink tickets," essentially free drinks, in lieu of remuneration. Musician Nigel Jenkins recalls

encountering this dilemma as a young, touring musician in the mid to late 00's. "When I was in my late teens, early 20s, we definitely had that happen," Jenkins tells me over the phone. "I would always try and negotiate like, 'Wow, can you just give us even \$50 instead of the drink tickets? Because we don't want these drink tickets.' And even that was a stretch."

Jenkins, who also works as an artist manager and label owner, has since co-founded a Newfoundland-based, multi-use music and art space called 62 Broadway, which acts as an alcohol-free, all-ages performance venue. Some venues, like 62 Broadway, are able to supplement the income that would typically come from alcohol sales through a variety of sources.

"We're not dependent on revenues from alcohol sales or even ticket sales," says Jenkins. "We're in a bit of a privileged position to be able to position ourselves as a dry space because of the way that our business actually runs."

62 Broadway isn't solely a venue, but is also home to an artists' management company, record label, and publishing company. "The events that we do run are done more from a community building and community engagement model or perspective than they are from a revenue generating sort of model or expectations," Jenkins explains.

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February 12-16, 2024

Sexual Health Week



 SCAN ME

Join the conversation
on sexual health!

Sexual Health Week is a chance to promote resources
and organizations, which help create a
healthier, inclusive, sex-positive future for everyone.

sexualhealthweek.ca



Action Canada
for Sexual Health & Rights



A curated list of happenings around the city from January through March. For consideration in future listings, email arts@thegrindmag.ca.



Adrian de Leon



DON'T MISS OUT! Canisia Lubrin's highly anticipated fiction debut "Code Noir" launches on Feb 5.



Alynda Segarra, better known as Hurray for the Riff Raff, performs at The Great Hall on March 10 with NNAMDI

LITERARY

OSBORNE COLLECTION OF EARLY CHILDREN'S BOOKS Until Feb 11, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St, Free

HOUSING ACROSS CANADA: A WEBINAR ON RESISTING EVICTION Jan 29, Virtual, Free

SHELLEY THOMPSON IN CONVERSATION - ROAR Feb 1, Queen Books, 914 Queen St E, Free

GARY BARWIN AND STEVEN MAYOFF - IN CONVERSATION Feb 3, Queen Books, 914 Queen St E, Free

CANISIA LUBRIN "CODE NOIR" BOOK LAUNCH W/ DI-ONNE BRAND, BRITTA BADOUR, CHRISTINA SHARPE, TORKWASE DYSON, SAFIYA SINCLAIR, RACHEL ELIZA GRIFFITHS, KAIE KELLOUGH, KARLYN PENCIL AND OLA MOHAMMED Feb 5, Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Ave, Free (tix req'd)

"BE A REVOLUTION" BY IJEOMA OLUO Feb 5, Hot Docs Cinema, 506 Bloor St W, \$15

SECRET SEX BOOK LAUNCH AND MASQUERADE PARTY Feb 6, Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St W, \$10 entry or \$30 includes book, RSVP via eventbrite

SHEILA HETI ON ALPHABETICAL DIARIES Feb 6, Hot Docs Cinema, 506 Bloor St W, \$15

TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF AUTHORS (TIFA) VIRTUAL BOOK CLUB Wednesdays from Feb 7 to June 12, Virtual, \$74 + HST

ASHLEY AUDRAIN, SHARI LAPENA & ASHLEY TATE: I DIDN'T SEE THAT ONE COMING Feb 7, Bram & Bluma Appel Salon, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St, Free (registration req'd)

FOR THE LOVE OF OUR WORDS: WRITER'S FORUM SHOWCASE Feb 7, 7:00 PM, Nia Centre for the Arts, 524 Oakwood Ave, Free (registration req'd)

THE FASCIST THREAT: WHAT IT MEANS FOR WORKING CLASS POLITICS, FEAT. ADOLPH REED JR. Feb 9, East End United Church Eastminster, 310 Danforth Ave, Free

DYSTOPIA NONFICTION BOOK CLUB - THE SIXTH EXTINCTION BY ELIZABETH KOLBERT Feb 12, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St, Free (registration req'd)

ADRIAN DE LEON LAUNCH "BUNDOK" Feb 15, Another Story Bookshop, 315 Roncesvalles Ave, Free (tix req'd),

CHILDREN'S STORY TIME WITH TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY Feb 16, Toronto Botanical Garden, 777 Lawrence Ave E

PAUL LYNCH: PROPHET SONG Feb 16, Bram & Bluma Appel Salon, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St, Free (registration req'd)

MENSTRUAL EQUITY WRITERS AND CREATORS BOOK TALK WITH ANOTHER STORY BOOKSHOP Feb 19, Another Story Bookshop, 315 Roncesvalles Ave, Free (the hosts will be running a mini drive of period products for Parkdale Community Food Bank and attendees can bring period product if they are able)

NITA PROSE: THE MYSTERY GUEST Feb 20, North York Central Library Concourse, 5120 Yonge St, Free

SPEAKEASY READING SERIES Feb 21, Glad Day Bookshop, 499 Church St, Free

BOOK LAUNCH OF "IDEAS BRUSHING AGAINST IDEAS/ THE LIBRARY AS REFUGE" Feb 22, The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, 231 Queens Quay W, Free

AN EVENING WITH DOLLY ALDERTON Feb 24, Hot Docs Cinema, 506 Bloor St W, \$25,

PALIMPSEST PRESS TRIPLE LAUNCH: SHAWNA LEMAY, BARBARA TRAN, ROBERT COLMAN Feb 29, Another Story Bookshop, 315 Roncesvalles Ave, Free

DECOLONIZE DRAG: A ROUND-TABLE ON QUEER(ING) INDIGENOUS AND BLACK STUDIES Feb 29, OISE Auditorium, 252 Bloor St W, Free

BRIANNE SOMMERVILLE "IF I LOSE HER" Mar 6, Wine Academy, 67 Richmond St W,

SPOKEN WORD PERFORMANCE BY RANDELL ADJEI Mar 7, 6:00 PM

MICHAEL ONDAATJE ON A YEAR OF LAST THINGS Mar 20, Hot Docs Cinema, 506 Bloor St W, \$15,

MUSIC

AFRIQUELIKEME Jan 27, 10:00 PM Drake Underground, 1150 Queen St W, \$17.31, 19+

HOLY OAK FAMILY SINGERS Jan 28, 7:00 PM Tranzac Club, 292 Brunswick Ave, Free

HIMALAYAN PINK Jan 28, 8:30 PM, Drom Taberna, 458 Queen St W, Free, 19+

MARYAM TOLLAR Jan 29, Tranzac Club, 292 Brunswick Ave, PWYC

COMPOSITION WORKSHOP: FURNITURE MUSIC 2:00 PM, Tranzac Club, 292 Brunswick Ave, PWYC

SOLITARY SHREW SHOWCASE Jan 30, 7:00 PM, Tranzac Club, 292 Brunswick Ave, PWYC

HOLGER SCHOORL Jan 31, 7:00 PM, Tranzac Club, 292 Brunswick Ave, Free

THE SUSPICIOUS .EXE FILES, Jan 31, 8:30 PM, Drom Taberna, 458 Queen St W, PWYC

STRANGETOOTH STRANGETOOTH Feb 1, 7:00 PM, Tranzac Club, 292 Brunswick Ave, PWYC

LOX RUTZ & REDBOY Feb 2, 9:00 PM, BSMT 254, 254 Lansdowne Ave, \$12 adv. / 20

QUOTED AFTERLYFE: PARTY & DESIGNER MARKET Feb 3, 7:30 PM, Lee's Palace, 529 Bloor Street W, 20 adv. / 25, 19+

DJ SHADOW Feb 3, 7:00 PM, 888 Yonge St, \$56, 19+

PUCKER UP! TECHNOIR / MOODY.CN.MAN / CRITTER / KAI Feb 3, 10:00 PM, BSMT 254, 254 Lansdowne Ave, 19+

NICK ZUBEK - 'ECHO PARK' RELEASE / MIDSWIM 7:00 PM, Tranzac Club, 292 Brunswick Ave, \$20 or PWYC, 19+

EXPO TURNS 2 - CRASHER / JANE INC. Feb 3, 7:30 PM, EXPO 1978, 1978 Dundas St, \$15, 19+

LA CUEVA - FLAMENCO Feb 4, 7:00 PM, BSMT 254, 254 Lansdowne Ave, \$27, 19+

AFRIQUELIKEME AT BUBBA'S FIXIN'S Feb 4, 6:00 PM and 8:30 PM, Reid's Distillery, 32 Logan Ave, \$110, All ages

LISTENING AND SOUNDING IN THE DARK: WORKSHOP LEAD BY ANNE BOURNE Feb 15, Music Gallery, 918 Bathurst St, Free (RSVP req'd)

HOT GARBAGE - 'PRECIOUS DREAM' RECORD RELEASE / MOTHER TONGUES / LUGE Feb 17, EXPO 1978, 1978 Dundas St W, \$22 adv. / \$25, 19+

JULY BLACK PERFORMS AT KUUMBA / AQYILA Feb 17, 6:30 PM, HarbourFront Centre Theatre, 231 Queens Quay W, \$45 - \$65, All ages

BEHIND THE SONG - PUBLISHING AND SONGWRITING / OBUXUM (WORKSHOP) Feb 18, 1:45 PM, HarbourFront - Lookout, 231 Queens Quay W, Free

AFRIQUE LIKE ME Feb 24, 10:00 PM Drake Underground, 1150 Queen St W, \$18, 19+

BIA FERREIRA - TERREIRO DO SAMBA Feb 25, 7:00 PM, Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St W \$28, 19+

TERRY JONES Feb 25, 7:30 PM, Tranzac Club, 292 Brunswick Ave, PWYC

WAVELENGTH WINTER FESTIVAL 2024 NIGHT 1: PANEL + BEAMS + JUST PRINCE Feb 29, 7:00 PM, Hugh's Room Live, 296 Broadview Ave, PWYC (suggested \$28), All ages

WAVELENGTH WINTER FESTIVAL 2024 NIGHT 2: DIJAHSB + BIG SISSY + JANETTE KING + CAIUJ Mar 1, 7:00 PM Hart House Music Room, 7 Hart House Cir, \$27.94, UofT students free, All ages

WAVELENGTH WINTER FESTIVAL 2024 NIGHT 3: GEORGIA HARMER + KALI HORSE + CHARLES SPEARIN + LOVE LANGUAGE + COTS + ANIMATIST + SADSTAB, 6:30 PM, St. Anne's Parish Hall, 651 Dufferin St, \$34.92, All ages

DANIEL ROMANO'S OUTFIT - IVY WYE, UNI BOYS Mar 2, 6:45 PM, Great Hall, 1087 Queen St W, \$40, 19+

HURRAY FOR THE RIFF RAFF! - NNAMDI Mar 10, 7:45 PM, Great Hall, 1087 Queen St W, \$36, 19+

VIDEO AGE & SEAN NICHOLAS SAVAGE Mar 12, 6:45 PM, Garrison, 1197 Dundas St W, \$32, 19+



VISUAL ART

STEPHANIE COMILANG: HOW TO MAKE A PAINTING FROM MEMORY until Feb 3, 2024, Gallery 44, 401 Richmond St W #120, Free

LIZ MAGOR: THE SEPARATION until Feb 4, MOCA, 158 Sterling Rd #100, 18 and under free, Adults \$14, Seniors (65+) \$10, Students (19+) \$10

VERA FRENKEL: THE LAST SCREENING ROOM: A VALENTINE Feb 10, 3:00 PM, Trinity Square Video, 401 Richmond St W #121, Free

CHRIS CURRERI: NOW YOU DON'T until Feb 17, 2024, Daniel Faria Gallery, 188 St Helens Ave, Free

FRANCISCO DE LA BARRA: AFUERA Y ADENTRO until Feb 17, Paul Petro Gallery, 980 Queen St W

GHISLAN SUTHERLAND-TIMM: ONCE MORE, ONCE AGAIN until Feb 17, 2024, InterAccess, 950 Dupont St Unit 1, Free

MEHRNAZ ABDOOS: KABOOS: AN EXHIBITION OF NIGHTMARES until Feb 17, 2024, InterAccess, 950 Dupont St, Unit 1, Free

RON GIII: THE EFFECT OF TEMPERATURE until Feb 17, Paul Petro Gallery, 980 Queen St W, Free

VISION321 (GROUP EXHIBITION WITH ANTHONY DOUGLAS COOPER, GABI DAO, OLIVER HUSAIN, AND CHANG YUCHEN) until Feb 18, The Plumb, 1655 Dufferin St (basement), Free

BRITTANY NEWLOVE: WHAT SHOULD I SAY? until Feb 24, The Image Centre, 33 Gould St, Free

CAROLINE MONNET: PIZAN-DAWATC / THE ONE WHO LISTENS / CELUI QUI ÉCOUTE until Mar 23, Art Museum - University of Toronto, University of Toronto Art Centre, Free

PARASTOO ANOUSHAPOUR, FARAZ ANOUSHAPOUR, RYAN FERKO: LOVERS' WIND until Mar 23, Mercer Union, 1286 Bloor St W, Free

SEDIMENT: THE ARCHIVE AS A FRAGMENTARY BASE (GROUP EXHIBITION WITH SANDRA BREWSTER, FILIPA CÉSAR, JUSTINE A. CHAMBERS, MICHAEL FERNANDES, LOUIS HENDERSON, PAMILA MATHARU, AND KRISTA BELLE STEWART) until Mar 23, Art Museum - University of Toronto, Justina M. Barnicke Gallery, Free

ZINNIA NAQVI: THE PERSON YOU DON'T SEE IN THIS IMAGE IS ME, THE CAMERA-PERSON until Mar 23, YZ Artists' outlet, 401 Richmond St W, free, Zinnia Naqvi: the person you don't see in this image is me, the camera-person until Mar 23, YZ Artists' outlet, 401 Richmond St W, Free

ABDELKADER BENCHAMMA: SOLASTALGIA: ARCHAEOLOGIES OF LOSS until Mar 24, The Power Plant, 231 Queens Quay W, Free

ANNA BOGHIGUIAN: TIME OF CHANGE until Mar 24, The Power Plant, 231 Queens Quay W, Free

ARIA DEAN: ABATTOIR, U.S.A.! until Mar 24, The Power Plant, 231 Queens Quay W, Free

MEERA MARGARET SINGH: WHAT WE HOLD until Mar 30, Gallery TPW, 170 St Helens Ave, Free

ALEXIS CORDESSE: TALASHI until Apr 6, The Image Centre, 33 Gould St, Free

OTHERWORLDLY: DEBORAH TURBEVILLE PHOTOGRAPHS until Apr 6, The Image Centre, 33 Gould St, Free

STORIES FROM THE PICTURE PRESS: BLACK STAR PUBLISHING CO. & THE CANADIAN PRESS until Apr 6, The Image Centre, 33 Gould St, Free

MAGDALENE ODUNDO: A DIALOGUE WITH OBJECTS until Apr 21, Gardiner Museum, 111 Queens Pk, \$15 (individual), \$11 (senior), Free (18 and under, students)

JULIUS PONCELET MANAPUL: SILA/SIYA/AKO until Apr 27, A Space, 401 Richmond St W, Free

THE SECRET CODES: AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIAN QUILTS until April 28, Textile Museum of Canada, 55 Centre Ave, \$15 (individual), \$10 (senior), \$6 (6 to 18, and students), Free (5 and under)

SHEZAD DAWOOD: NIGHT IN THE GARDEN OF LOVE: INSPIRED BY AND FEATURING YUSEF LATEEF until May 5, Aga Khan Museum, \$20 (individual), \$15 (senior), \$10 (6 to 13), \$12 (students), Free on Wednesdays 4-8 PM

TAQRALIK. PARTRIDGE: >ኒ፡ብርኵ (PULLAAQATIGIIT) until May 18, OCADU Onsite Gallery, 199 Richmond St W, Free

POWER (GROUP EXHIBITION WITH ROCKY DOBEY, NATALIE KING, JAMIYLA LOWE, KHADIJAH MORLEY, EKOW NIMAKO, RAJNI PERERA, AND FIONA SMYTH) until May 18, OCADU Onsite Gallery, 199 Richmond St W, Free

MNEMONIC SILENCES, DISAPPEARING ACTS until Jun 21, Art Museum - University of Toronto, Jackman Humanities Institute, Free

ZACHARI LOGAN: THE FLOURISHING EDGE until Jun 30, Gardiner Museum, 111 Queens Pk, \$15 (individual), \$11 (senior), Free (18 and under, and students)

FILM

HEY, VIKTOR! + POST-SCREENING Q&A WITH DIRECTOR CODY LIGHTNING Jan 28, 4:30 PM, TIFF Bell Lightbox, 350 King St W, \$14

AMBIENT LIGHT FILMS (CANADIANA) Jan 31, 7:00 PM, Henderson Brewing Co, 128 Sterling Rd, Free or \$6 + HST to guarantee a seat

SPECIAL EVENT: THE WILD BUNCH: THE DIRECTOR'S CUT - 55TH ANNIVERSARY SCREENING Feb 4, 3:30 PM, Revue Cinema, 400 Roncesvalles Ave, \$15 general; \$12 Loyalty Members, students & seniors; Free for Individual/Family membership

FALLEN LEAVES Feb 5 and Feb 6, 9:30 PM, Revue Cinema, 400 Roncesvalles Ave, \$15 general; \$12 Loyalty Members, students & seniors; Free for Individual/Family membership

THE SWEET EAST Feb 10-13, Various times, Revue Cinema, 400 Roncesvalles Ave, \$15 general; \$12 Loyalty Members, students & seniors; Free for Individual/Family membership



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Three Sisters

SUNDAY NOIR PRESENTS WHEN MORNING COMES Feb 11, 7:00 PM, Paradise Theatre, 1006 Bloor St W, \$15 + HST

AKIRA KUROSAWA'S DREAMS Feb 12, 7:30 PM, Paradise Theatre, 1006 Bloor St W, General Admission \$12.50 | Student/Senior (with valid ID) \$10.00 + HST/eventbrite fees

BORN BONE BORN (JAPANESE W/ ENGLISH SUBTITLES) Feb 15, 7:00 PM, Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre, 6 Garamond Crt, \$10-12

BHM THEATRE NIGHT WITH THE CARNEGIES (SCREENING + PANEL DISCUSSION) Feb 16, 5:00 PM, Isabel Bader Theatre, 93 Charles St W, Free (registration req'd)

JAMES BALDWIN ABROAD: ISTANBUL - PARIS - LONDON Feb 18, 3:30 PM, TIFF Bell Lightbox, 350 King St W, \$14 - \$24

SUNDAY NOIR PRESENTS LOVE & BASKETBALL Feb 18, 7:00 PM, Paradise Theatre, 1006 Bloor St W, \$15 + HST

JOHN WARE RECLAIMED Feb 22, 6:00 PM, Toronto Public Library, Lillian H. Smith Branch, 239 College St, Free (registration recommended)

CAMÉRA D'AFRIQUE: TWENTY YEARS OF AFRICAN CINEMA [IN FRENCH W/ ENGLISH SUBTITLES] Feb 22, 7:30 PM, Spadina Theatre, 24 Spadina Rd, Free (registration req'd)

ALI: FEAR EATS THE SOUL (ANGST ESSEN SEELE AUF) Feb 28, 6:30 PM, TIFF Bell Lightbox, 350 King St W, \$14 - \$24

AMBIENT LIGHT FILMS (MUSICAL) Feb 28, 7:00 PM, Henderson Brewing Co, 128 Sterling Rd, Free or \$6 + HST to guarantee a seat

IN WATER, PRECEDED BY THE DAUGHTERS OF FIRE Feb 29, 6:30 PM, TIFF Bell Lightbox, 350 King St W, \$14 - \$24

DEEP LISTENING: THE STORY OF PAULINE OLIVEROS Mar 7, Paradise Theatre, 1006 Bloor St W, \$15 - \$25

ALCESTE À BICYCLETTE/CYCLING WITH MOLIÈRE Mar 7, 7:30 PM, Spadina Theatre, 24 Spadina Rd, Free (registration req'd)

I WANT TO TALK ABOUT DURAS [IN FRENCH W/ ENGLISH SUBTITLES] Mar 21, 7:30 PM, Spadina Theatre, 24 Spadina Rd, Free (registration req'd)

AMBIENT LIGHT FILMS (MYSTERY) Mar 27, 7:00 PM, Henderson Brewing Co, 128 Sterling Rd, Free or \$6 + HST to guarantee a seat

PERFORMANCE

CASEY AND DIANA Jan 23 - Feb 11, various times, Soulpepper Theatre, Young Centre, 50 Tank House Ln, \$36 - \$87 and some PWYC options

ROCKABYE Jan 26 - Feb 11, various times, Factory Theatre, Mainspace Theatre, 30 Bridgman Ave, Regular \$35, Arts worker \$30, Student \$25

DE PROFUNDIS: OSCAR WILDE IN JAIL Feb 1-18, various times, Soulpepper Theatre, Young Centre, 50 Tank House Ln, \$36 - \$87 and some PWYC options

ROCK HARDER (BREAKING COMPETITION) Feb 3, Doors 6:00 PM | Finals 7:00 PM, Harbourfront Centre, Brigantine Room, 235 Queens Quay W, Finals: \$15 | Preliminaries: PWYC

DIANE FLACKS' GUILT (A LOVE STORY) Feb 6 - Mar 3, various times, Tarragon Theatre, 30 Bridgman Ave, Regular \$65, Arts worker \$25, Student \$15

FRAN CHUDNOFF: FACE RIDER / ANDREW TAY: ODD SENSUAL Feb 8-10 and Feb 15-17 (ASL on February 15, Live-stream on February 16), Winchester Street Theatre, 80 Winchester St, \$10 - \$45

THE RHUBARB FESTIVAL Feb 8-18, Buddies in Bad Times, 12 Alexander St Theatre, \$10 - \$70

AS I MUST LIVE IT Feb 11 - Mar 2, various times, Theatre Passe Muraille, 16 Ryerson Ave, Pay-What-You-Can-Afford \$12 | \$35 | \$65

NATIVE EARTH PERFORMING ARTS PRESENTS OMAAGOMAAN BY WAAWAATE FOBISTER Feb 15-18, various times, Aki Studio, 585 Dundas St E #120, Sliding scale: \$30 | \$20 | \$10

L'AMOUR TELLE UNE CATHÉDRALE ENSEVELIE (DIR. GUY RÉGIS JR.) February 22-25, Crow's Theatre, 345 Carlaw Ave, \$79.10 (general), \$63.28 (senior), \$28.25 (artsworker), PWYC for Feb 25 performance only

3 FINGERS BACK Feb 27 - Mar 24, various times, Tarragon Theatre, 30 Bridgman Ave, Regular \$65, Arts worker \$25, Student \$15

THREE SISTERS Feb 29 - Mar 17, various times, Soulpepper Theatre, Young Centre, 50 Tank House Ln, \$36 - \$87 and some PWYC options

NO ONE'S SPECIAL AT THE HOT DOG CART Mar 13 - Mar 23, various times, Theatre Passe Muraille, 16 Ryerson Ave, Pay-What-You-Can-Afford \$12 | \$35 | \$65

EL TERREMOTO Mar 26 - Apr 21, various times, Tarragon Theatre, 30 Bridgman Ave, Regular \$65, Arts worker \$25, Student \$15

COMEDY

BLOOMIN FUNYUNS Feb 1, 7:00 PM Burdock Brewery, 1184 Bloor St W, \$15

FRESH HOT BABES Feb 1, 8:00 PM, Tallboys, 838 Bloor St W, \$10

LAFTER PARTY Feb 3, Doors: 8 PM | Show: 8:30 PM, TONIGHT Bar, 1704 Queen St W, Free/PWYC

JOURDAIN FISHER Feb 9 & 10, 9:00 PM, Comedy Bar Danforth, 2800 Danforth Ave, \$30

HEAT WAVE COMEDY Feb 9 and Mar 8, Doors: 7:00 PM | Shows: 7:30 PM, The Comedy Lab, 298 Brunswick Ave, \$25

MEDICAL EMERGENCY COMEDY Feb 9 and Mar 8, 9:00 PM, Tallboys, 838 Bloor St W, Free/PWYC

THE JAZZ GROOVES COMEDY MOVES Feb 18, 9:30 PM, Bar Cathedral, 54 The Esplanade, \$25

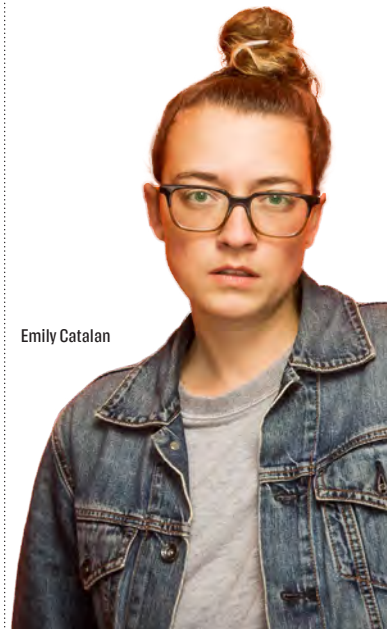
TURONNO ZOO: A COMEDY SHOW Feb 18, 8:00 PM, SoCap Comedy, 154 Danforth Ave, \$12 Online, \$15 Door

EMILY CATALANO Feb 23, 7:00 PM and 9:00 PM, Comedy Bar Danforth, 2800 Danforth Ave, \$28

FRESH LINEUPS Feb 24, Doors: 8:00 PM | Show: 9:00 PM, Kolos Barber-shop & Lounge, 1612 Queen St W, \$20

THE NUBIAN SHOW Feb 25 and Mar 31, 8:30 PM, Yuk Yuk's Toronto, 224 Richmond Street W, \$25

THE PROFESSIONALS COMEDY SHOW Mar 15, Doors: 7:30pm | Show: 8:00 PM, Free Times Cafe, 320 College St, \$20



Emily Catalan



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Detroit Lions

HOW FAR CAN THE LIONS GO?

Last issue, we noted that the Detroit Lions were having a historic season after nearly two decades of lacklustre seasons, including an 0-16 season in 2008. Since our prediction in November, the Lions have continued their successful campaign, beating the L.A. Rams and Tampa Bay Buccaneers to secure a place in the NFL conference championships. The Detroit Lions are now one win away from the Super Bowl. For those of you who consider football incidental to the Super Bowl halftime show, it's worth noting that Super Bowl LVIII will feature the smooth, soulful sounds of none other than Usher Raymond IV, also known simply as Usher.

Super Bowl LVIII (58) takes place on Sunday, Feb. 11.

Struggling Raptors Make Big Trades

On Dec. 30, the Raptors traded longtime fan favourite OG Anunoby, along with Precious Achiuwa and Malachi Flynn, to the New York Knicks for RJ Barrett and Immanuel Quickley. Two and a half weeks later, the Raptors then traded all-star Pascal Siakam to the Indiana Pacers for Bruce Brown Jr., Kira (pronounced Ky-ruh) Lewis Jr., and Jordan Nwora. Raptors power forward Chris Boucher is now the only player left from the 2019 championship-winning team.

When asked about the recent trade during a media conference, Raptors president Masai Ujiri offered the following sombre reflection: "the human part of this business is tough. My wife and my kids see me suffer. My son texted me and said 'you traded OG?' [...] It's not easy."

The struggling Raptors are, as of late January, in the midst of one of their worst seasons in the last decade. The recent trades signal a clear effort to rebuild the team around emerging superstar Scottie Barnes.



Pascal Siakam

COURTESY PASCAL SIAKAM



COURTESY WPHL TORONTO

FIRST SEASON UNDERWAY FOR PWHL TORONTO

The Professional Women's Hockey League (PWHL) officially began its highly anticipated debut season on Jan. 2, 2024, when more than 8,300 fans attended PWHL Ottawa's home opener against PWHL Montreal. Among the six teams that make up the league, PWHL Toronto was, as of Jan. 21, ranked in last place with only two wins in their first six games. With PWHL Toronto already a quarter of the way through their 24-game season, things will need to change quickly if they hope to compete for the inaugural PWHL championship. *The PWHL playoffs begin the week of May 6.*

UFC CHAMP MAKES ANTI-LGBTQ COMMENTS, LOSES FIGHT IN TORONTO

UFC middleweight champion Sean Strickland made headlines leading up to UFC 297 in Toronto in January when he made anti-LGBTQ and anti-Trudeau comments during a press conference. No disciplinary action has been announced for Strickland, who lost his title via decision to Dricus Du Plessis. During his post-fight interview, newly crowned champion Du Plessis called for a rematch against former middleweight champion Israel Adesanya.



Auston Matthews

COULD TRADES FIX WHAT AILS THE LEAFS?

The Toronto Maple Leafs are having a middling season, despite their offensive firepower, including centre Auston Matthews leading the league in goals as of January. We'll see if trades are made in an attempt to improve the struggling defence and goaltending by the March 8 trade deadline.

The all-star game is being held in Toronto this year on Feb. 3.

HOROSCOPES

BY LEE SUKSI

ARIES (MAR 20 — APR 20) Consider the most harmless lies you tell. When is deviousness acceptable? Have you ever told a lie to protect someone other than yourself? Keeping track of how you shape reality is important: we all bend it. Consider tracking your deception this year, in a lying journal, to account for how and when you compromise the truth. Encrypt it if you must.

TAURUS (APR 21 — MAY 21) This year, believe your heart is large enough to hold whatever you want it to. Trust your desires to guide you. Try not to shield yourself from closeness with others by burying yourself in your work or your serenity. Less defence, more curiosity. Let love in without sentimentality.

GEMINI (MAY 22 — JUNE 21) Anger can be useful when it's directed at everything there's a genuine right to be angry about. Believe in your ability to judge when to give it its power, and when to deny your anger its destruction. Give yourself a little space to determine the truth of your rage.

CANCER (JUN 22 - JUL 22) Do you remember your own birth? No. But when do you feel like you're experiencing something close to what you imagine about that experience? Describing near-death experiences is a cultural phenomenon, but what feels like a near-birth experience? How can you bring yourself close to the most radical beginning?

LEO (JUL 23 — AUG 22) "Adventure" is a term associated with free time, power and youth. Most of us are not young or in positions of major power, but you can still go on adventures! How do you adventure without conquering? Find the answer to that question, and do it.

VIRGO (AUG 23 — SEP 22) Virgos are conventionally bound to duty and dirty work — the service keeping our society alive. This year, prioritize the bonds of pleasure and affinity that will sustain your bonds of obligation. Perhaps they come from the same source. Mostly, try to notice when you're having fun.

LIBRA (SEP 23 — OCT 23) Crying and laughter fulfil the same need for release. They can also creep up unexpectedly, startle those around you, and exhaust you. Nevertheless, strong reactions are nothing to be ashamed of. When you express yourself, allow yourself the benefits of the expression: understanding and emotional catharsis.

SCORPIO (OCT 23 — NOV 22) Throughout the coming year, you'll have many gifts and blessings. When they come, commit to enjoying them. Refuse the impulse to worry about when the next blessing will come. Be with the fruits of your labour or luck for at least one 24-hour cycle before surrendering again to anticipation or work.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV 23 — DEC 22) When you go into unfamiliar territory, what do you bring back into the fold? Pay attention to how you change behaviours to meet peoples' expectations — or don't — and what you convey consistently across the different worlds you're a part of. Take nothing for granted, and consider yourself a messenger.

CAPRICORN (DEC 23 — JAN 20) Capricorn is the sign of structure, sometimes mistaken for the sign of authority or the boss. You don't need a hierarchy to have a structure. Use your structural thinking to consider reinvention, planning, expansive limits, and new affinities. Reach out to options you haven't considered. Invite more people than you normally would to your party.

AQUARIUS (JAN 21 — FEB 20) Happy birthday! Aquarius born here come into the coldest part of the year, like little reminders of life. Can you maintain that role as an adult? What is your role not as a muse, but as a leader? How do you give people energy, vitality, and faith, even when yours is flagging? Offer life and see how you are restored.

PISCES (FEB 21 — MAR 20) The past is not dead, but you live in the present. The past colours your present. Invent a new shade. Nostalgia beckons, and so do your dreams. The old year walks into the new one with you. Run a few steps ahead, but keep turning your head to look back.

Lee Suksi, The Grind's horoscopes writer, has been reading peoples' horoscopes for 10 years. You can book a personalized reading with them at leesuksi.com/getread. They're also the award-winning author of The Nerves.



Lee Suksi

ACROSS

- 1 "Sorry, no"
- 6 ___ Dhabi
- 9 Man with a golden touch
- 14 Rock bottom
- 15 What you might get your henchmen to do for you
- 17 Caribbean nation whose capital is Oranjestad
- 18 Stuffed pasta
- 19 "Oh, shit!"
- 21 Removes suds
- 22 Praise
- 23 Group of eight
- 25 It may require a harness
- 27 Outside of the Philippines, the largest concentration of speakers of this language is in the United States
- 31 "Dios ___!"
- 33 Dennis Lee and Samantha Nock, for two
- 35 Authorize a digital contract
- 36 Skin complaint
- 38 Slang term to describe someone who is hot and fat
- 40 Caffeine-rich nut
- 41 Finish a crossword, say
- 43 Butts
- 45 Safety ___
- 46 "Got a guess?"
- 48 Wrote down, perhaps
- 50 "I'm Coming Out" singer Ross
- 52 Where you probably are right now
- 55 "BoJack Horseman" actor Will
- 58 Like some fancy bags
- 60 Avatar and boomerang, e.g.
- 62 "You should be ___ to me"
- 63 They lead to drums
- 64 January, in Spanish
- 65 "Pretty in Pink" actor Jon
- 66 Prefix meaning new
- 67 Mend a seam, say

DOWN

- 1 Amazed
- 2 Gives a crap
- 3 Like some resorts and weddings
- 4 Morsel of food
- 5 Switch to a newer model, say
- 6 "Smoke Signals" actor Beach
- 7 Decisive rejection
- 8 Place for ashes
- 9 Phrase of address that occurs 17 times in "Henry V"
- 10 "No need to tell me"
- 11 Connect the ___
- 12 Pieces en un museo
- 13 Goes downhill?
- 16 Mexican sandwich
- 20 "Are too!" response
- 24 Med. imaging procedure
- 26 Capital of Iran
- 28 Chinese New Year performances
- 29 Look like a creep?
- 30 Small fly
- 31 Tamale dough
- 32 Desktop image
- 34 Certain piece of neckwear
- 37 Proof
- 39 Gator relatives
- 42 Battle between Wikipedia contributors
- 44 Woodworker, at times
- 47 ___ Centre (mall between Dundas and Queen stations)
- 49 "Thomas the Tank ___"
- 51 Confuse
- 53 Famous name in farm equipment
- 54 It's hidden in the FedEx logo
- 55 "Smart" guy
- 56 Crowd sound
- 57 Not one
- 59 Gas brand
- 61 Sprinted

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BY OLEA KIM OLEAKIM.CA



RANDOM ADVICE

In this edition, we corner people at Pearson International Airport to get their thoughts on waiting around versus taking off. Here's the question we received from a reader:

I have a friend who I don't see as much any more, but when we meet up, he only talks about his problems and his life. He hardly asks what's up with me. When I mention something about my life, he barely shows interest, and then goes back to talking about himself. What should I do? He's got a lot going on, but this doesn't feel like a friendship. Do I have to point this out to him? Can we still be friends?

EMILY (On a 7-hour delay back to Chicago)

I would probably be like, "Is everything okay? Is there something going on in your life where you're just not focused on anyone else?" I'd probably try to figure out if there was some kind of underlying issue, if I really care about that person. Maybe they're just like "Aw man, I haven't been able to focus on anything else yet." But after that, if they don't share any interest in me, then I'd just be like, "Okay, maybe you're not being the best friend right now."



JIGZY & BILL (Going to Colombia)

J I think you gotta say something to the guy because, you know, if you don't say nothing, nothing's gonna happen. An acknowledgment of the problem is the first step to solving the problem. You know what I mean? Straight up, no need to be nice about it. Just tell him, just be like, "Yo, I don't give a fuck." You know, maybe I do give a fuck. Depends on what they're talking about, but still, it's not always one-sided.

B If it continues, it's done. I can't complain; I did my part and that's it. That's all I can do.

J Mans have their own problems to deal with. I can't babysit no one.

B Exactly. I'll do what I can in the meantime, but if it continues, what else can I do?

J Everyone's grown, everyone's living their own life, so if I've been friends with them that long, they shouldn't be doing that. You gotta know who's in your circle.

B Facts.



Are you dealing with a complicated work situation? Is your landlord being shady? Do you have a relationship question you can't ask your friends about? We're here for you.

Email us at info@thegrindmag.ca and you might find the answer you're looking for in the next issue.