

# NEXUS

november 7, 2018  
issue 6 | volume 29  
nexusnewspaper.com

camosun's student voice since 1990

student issues

## Referendum to join Canadian Alliance of Student Associations passes in student society elections



FILE PHOTO

Camosun College students may soon be members of a national student organization again.

**ADAM MARSH**  
STUDENT EDITOR

A referendum question asking Camosun College students if they would like to be members of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) passed in the recent Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) elections, meaning that Camosun students may soon be part of a national student organization again.

Almost the exact same number of students voted in the fall CCSS elections, which happened in October, as in the April CCSS elections. 697 students voted this time; last time it was 694 students.

CCSS executive director Michel Turcotte and CCSS clubs and events coordinator Tagg Kelt agree that they want more students to be voting. Turcotte says the turnout was better than some of the CCSS' traditional paper-ballot elections, in which the required five-percent voter threshold for the election to take place was sometimes a struggle to reach. Turcotte says that the CCSS thought the two referendum questions regarding student fees would create some buzz about the elections.

"We didn't engage CCSS staff to promote the election widely," says Turcotte. "We were sort of counting on the candidates largely for that."

One of the two referendum questions asked Camosun students whether or not they were in favour of allocating to a CCSS fund Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) membership fees that have been collected from Camosun students since the CFS expelled the CCSS in June of this year. That money will be put into a temporary CCSS campaigns and advocacy fund. 485 students voted yes; 212 voted no. (If accepted into

CASA, the CCSS will use money from that fund to pay CASA fees until the British Columbia Federation of Students [BCFS] raises its fees, which it is planning to do no later than December 31, 2019. The BCFS will be raising its fees by the amount that Camosun students used to pay to the CFS, so then the entire amount that used to be split between the CFS and the BCFS will go to the BCFS, and Camosun students will pay an additional 42 cents a month for CASA fees.)

"One of the main things that fund will do initially is pay the CASA membership fee and some of the costs related to other political/advocacy campaigns that we do at the CCSS. It increases our ability to do that," says Turcotte.

The other referendum question asked students if they support joining CASA, a national student organization that campaigns to have students' voices heard at a national level. 470 students voted yes; 227 voted no. (CASA and the CFS are the two national Canadian student organizations.)

Turcotte says that now that the referendum has passed, the CCSS is going to put in a request with CASA to join the organization.

"We will be applying to join the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, and if everything goes as predicted and they choose to accept us [we will be members]," says Turcotte.

CASA is having a lobbying week in Ottawa at the end of November, which Turcotte says CCSS intends to send representatives to; there will also be a plenary session during that week, at which time the CASA board of directors will decide on whether or not to bring the CCSS on as a member.

CASA executive director Manjeet Birk says that the CCSS voting to join CASA is wonderful news; she says that she would welcome the CCSS into CASA.

"We would love to have CCSS joining CASA, for sure," she says.

CASA membership fees are lower than CFS membership fees: CASA membership is \$0.42 per month, per student; the CFS' was \$1.14 per month, per student (the BCFS fee will be raised to a maximum of \$2.28 per month, per student). Birk says CASA focuses solely on student advocacy, without "swag" or services like International Student Identity Cards, which the CFS does offer.

"Our focus is on student advocacy," says Birk. "We don't do anything else... We lobby around our priority area. That's all we do."

Turcotte says that being part of CASA gives Camosun students a better chance at being heard;

"We would love to have CCSS joining CASA, for sure."

**MANJEET BIRK**

CANADIAN ALLIANCE OF STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS

alone, the CCSS is "a little bit more disadvantaged" due its size, he says.

"[CASA membership] will increase our ability to lobby federally. The federal government still spends a lot of money in the area of post-secondary education and controls much of the administration relating to student loans," says Turcotte. "Our ability as a small college to lobby the federal government is very slim, but as part of a larger umbrella of organizations with greater resources, it enhances that ability to do that."

The CCSS will also use a portion of the campaigns and advocacy fund to promote proportional representation in BC.

"Now that the municipal election is over, that's what the big campaign is for the student society this semester," says Kelt.

First-year general studies student Paige Kochanuk says she didn't know about the student society potentially joining CASA, but thinks that it would be great for Camosun students.

"We are the future of our political climate. It's important for our voices to be heard. It sounds awesome to me," she says, regarding CASA membership.

Second-year Hospitality Management student Elyse Nguyen says she also hadn't heard about CASA until she saw the email CCSS sent out to students about the elections.

"I think that it's okay. I signed for

it. I agree with that," she says about the CASA referendum question.

Kelt says that there were a few technical issues during the elections because someone forgot to activate the voting software.

"Apparently, it needs to be manually started," says Kelt. "There was just a lateness in clicking the button to start the election."

But the elections were supposed to begin at 12:01 am on Monday, October 22, so Kelt doubts the late start impacted many people, given that few people would be voting at that time of day.

"I don't think anybody, or very few people, are that engaged in our democratic process here at the college," he says.

The wrong end date was also set, making the elections end on Tuesday, October 23, instead of on Wednesday, October 24. The student society added an extra day to the elections to account for the technical troubles.

In the election, Sacha Christensen was voted in as Lansdowne executive; Angela Chou is returning as pride director; Shayan de Luna-Bueno was voted in as women's director.

Gurpreet Singh Bhollar, Max Walther, Hayley Lamb, and Gagandeep Baath all got in as Interurban directors.

Yara Abaza, Nishant Harmilapi, Malcolm McLaren, and Elvin Khankisbiev got voted in as Lansdowne directors.

### eyed on campus



CAMOSUN COLLEGE A/V SERVICES

Camosun College hosted a pit cook demonstration on Friday, October 19 at the Lansdowne campus.





# Burst bubbles

## How Victoria’s housing crisis impacts Camosun students

On September 15 of this year, a letter from a Camosun College instructor was published in the *Times Colonist*; in the letter, the instructor told of a “dedicated student” who had been evicted from Saanich’s tent city and faced challenges that most of his peers likely haven’t considered. My initial response was strengthened gratitude for what I have, but as it sank in, I was faced with a number of questions. Why this student and not me? What kinds of barriers are faced by students who find themselves in a similar predicament? And, considering how hard society works collectively to sweep the marginalized under the rug, I couldn’t help but wonder how many of our fellow students have found themselves facing similar battles, what their lives look like, and—if they want it—where they can go for help.

When I’m not writing for *Nexus* or going to Camosun, I work as an outreach worker. I’m professionally centred in the downtown red zone, right at ground zero: the 900 block of Pandora. At a glance, the street-entrenched population doesn’t seem to be bound by age, gender, creed, sex, or economic background. While my position helps me in terms of understanding, I didn’t know of any homeless Camosun students; however, I do have a network of friends and colleagues who I thought would be more than happy to help me out. I started a chain of emails to academics, paramedics, fellow outreach workers, and instructors, and then went out and shook hands and started talking to people on the Pandora sidewalks.

I was initially directed to Paige Phillips, a 28-year-old first-year Camosun Business student who, on the surface, shows no signs of her convoluted past. Today, Phillips is a happily married mother of two who attends Camosun with hopes of completing an Accounting degree over the next five years. But life wasn’t always this way for her.

“While I was in high school, I bounced around between provinces,” says Phillips. “I was fully homeless in those situations. They put me in a group home, and then I got kicked out, and I had to go to an adult shelter,

---

**“We used every Camosun resource possible to avoid being homeless. We really used every support possible that Camosun offered. We drained their resources. Like completely draining them, but they kept us afloat, and it kept me in school.”**

PAIGE PHILLIPS  
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT

and got really fucked up. I was still going to school, so there was some regularity, but as soon as I graduated, my sustainable, 9-to-5 kind of life was gone, and I was just fucked all the time. Because there was nothing in place, you couldn’t access adult resources as a ministry kid who couldn’t access ministry resources as a student. It doesn’t make any sense.”

Unable to find a safe and steady place to live, Phillips had to do it by herself.

“I was living on my own, and I didn’t make rent, so I lost my apartment,” says Phillips. “I was a teenager, so I just left really quick. I kept my suitcases behind a couple of dumpsters, and I just wandered around most nights. I worked night shifts, and then I just partied the other nights, and they turned into days, and they turned into weeks, and they turned into years. I was homeless on and off for the rest of my life after that.”

Phillips says that her primary issue was a lack of social support the first time she was homeless.

“I really didn’t feel like I had anyone I could go to to talk about my tenancy issues,” says Phillips. “It was easier to deal with on my own. When you have a drug habit, you really don’t want people in your business. Especially when you’re high functioning—you don’t want to be ratted out. There is a level of shame, too. You don’t want people to know. Sometimes

you just want to prove people wrong. That’s exactly why I stayed in high school and got through it.”

As I know from my own history, it can be very hard to reach out, or even to accept help when it’s offered. I couldn’t help but ask Phillips if she would have taken it if proper support were in place.

“When I was in high school, yes,” she says. “It was the first time. It’s scary, so you don’t want to be homeless. If there were more supports there I definitely would have taken it, and I would have taken it any time, but it wasn’t there. When I moved to BC, my husband Jack and I were living on the streets. We moved from Vancouver to Victoria when I was 21, but that continued until I was about 24. We were completely entrenched on the streets.”

Phillips says that when she was pregnant she tried to use every resource possible, but it was still difficult to get help.

“There are still people who currently work in the system who wouldn’t help us. It isn’t until your second or third trimester that you will even get looked at. We still didn’t get accepted. We couldn’t get housing with anyone. We had to do everything on our own. I couldn’t get into the Cool Aid system because I couldn’t get my health care records transferred, so I have a pharmacy bill of over \$10,000 for my methadone. I couldn’t get into the clinic, and I have chronic health conditions. I couldn’t get a worker, even as a pregnant young person. I was pretty pissed off. I don’t think the services were helpful locally. Their judgment stopped us from getting help at a lot of places. It seems it’s more about who you know than what you know. Not being from here didn’t help.”

With no choice but to move forward, Phillips says that her family struggled through all the difficulties. She came back to school in 2015, enrolling in the Building Employment Success for Tomorrow (BEST) program at Camosun. At the time they were recently housed, and Phillips says that she and her family almost lost their tenancy.

“Because we had a child, and I was going to Camosun,” says Phillips, “we were able to use the ombudsman, and we used every Camosun resource possible to avoid being homeless. We really used every support possible that Camosun offered. We drained their resources. Like completely draining them, but they kept us afloat, and it kept me in school. I kept up with the BEST program, and then finished my upgrading, and now I’ve gone into business. Being able to access those resources kept us from the streets. We were really, really close. They were helping us call shelters and everything.”

Phillips says that investment that Camosun or the Camosun College Student Society—she can’t recall exactly who she got the help from—put into her has returned double, as she now works in the community, helping others in the same situation.

“I am a health education coordinator and an advocate. Because I have had to learn to navigate the system to stay alive and keep my family together, I help others by showing them what I did to get through the system and keep working through the legal, medical, and housing systems,” she says. “It’s therapeutic for me, and it’s therapeutic for other people. It’s really peer support and peer navigation to help people meet the social determinants of health. I learned it the hard way, but it all comes naturally now.”

With her permission, I brought Phillips’ success story to the attention of Camosun ombudsman Carter MacDonald. I let him know that she is now working in the community helping others in the same way that he helped her. MacDonald says that sometimes the work he does multiplies in the community.

“I would call that a success story,” says MacDonald. “I’ve seen it a few times. Sometimes if a student comes back and feels that they are at a point where they can stand on their own two feet they may not feel the need to come back and see me. These stories don’t often come to my attention. I’m pleased that you shared that with me because it encourages me to keep practicing being an ombuds in the way that I do it. I’m a human being, and I very much care about the health and the success of our students. I don’t have a magic wand. I can’t solve everybody’s problems, but I will do my best to try.”

When it comes to helping students in the outside community, MacDonald says that he primarily uses the Bridges for Women Society’s Bridges Community Handbook to refer students to the proper services.

“I’ve seen a lot of students who have been in dire financial need, and students who have racked up a tremendous amount of student debt,” he says. “You don’t always get the opportunities, but you need to act on them when they present [themselves]. That’s why I take the time I take with our students to make certain that they don’t slip between our collective fingers.”

MacDonald says that his primary role is to ensure fair process for students.

“I try to allow them the time and the space to be able to talk about their situation,” says MacDonald. “Listening is the most underestimated communication skill that there is. If people feel that they are listened to, they’ll tell you more. It’s hard to help someone unless you have the proper information.”

In recent years, MacDonald says there’ve been some international students who have had landlord-tenant issues.

---

**“We hope that the government will provide funding to Camosun to build affordable student residences to help alleviate this particular problem, because if we get some students out of secondary suites and things of that nature, that will also free up housing for more of the non-student residents of the capital region.”**

MICHEL TURCOTTE  
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY

“Unfortunately, there are some unscrupulous landlords, and students for whom English is not their mother tongue get taken advantage of. Over the past couple of years, three international students came to see me, and I put them in touch with an advocate in the community. The students all seemed to me to have acted in good faith, notwithstanding the fact that they were having trouble trying to understand the rental scheme. In all three instances, the adjudicator found for the students.”

Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) executive director Michel Turcotte says that the CCSS acknowledges that there are affordability and capacity problems in the Victoria-area rental situation that disproportionately impact students.

“The CCSS believes that having a roof over one’s head should be a right and people should not have to choose between food or shelter,” he says. “We hope that the government will provide funding to Camosun to build affordable student residences to help alleviate this particular problem, because if we get some students out of secondary suites and things of that nature, that will also free up housing for more of the non-student residents of the capital region.”

Turcotte says that the CCSS has a guide available at its food banks that lists non-profits and social-service agencies.

“Our expertise is student issues; housing is not our area of expertise, so we would tend to want to refer them to others that have more experience in that area,” he says. “But we do have some of those resources available at our offices.”

Turcotte says that the CCSS has definitely encountered some Camosun students who are homeless, and has encountered a lot more who are in accommodations that are not ideal.

“People have to make choices nowadays, given prices and availability of accommodations,” he says. “So you have more roommates than you may like, or it may not be as nice as you may want, or a lot of students would prefer a non-shared type of accommodation, but that’s becoming increasingly difficult, given the situation.”

I would guess that many people associate homelessness with drugs, alcohol, whisker length, and clothing condition, and do their best to not think about the actual housing crisis. The truth is that, with vacancy rates where they are, much of the student population is vulnerable.

I sat down for a chat with August, a recent Camosun grad who is finishing up her final year of Nursing at UVic (August is not her real name, but she was granted anonymity for this story).

August could walk through any west coast campus and blend right in. On the surface, she looks young, happy, healthy, and full of energy. So why is she different?

“Basically, myself and my roommate, who is also in fourth-year Nursing, are both living in a 1975 Vanguard motorhome,” says August. “We live in there together because we could not find a place we could afford. We are in school with a 100-percent course load, and that doesn’t allow much time for us to work at all.”

The two of them had spent two years in their previous home, which August says was a decent place at a decent price, but they were asked to sign a lease for another year.

“Because our program is ending in April,” says August, “and I’m not even sure that I can get a job in Victoria, I can’t commit for a whole year. So [our landlord] basically evicted us, and it was all of a sudden. Basically, we freaked out and started looking everywhere for places, but we could not find a single place that was within our budget that wasn’t a rat’s den.”

August says that time was running out and they had to leave, so they started to look for vans. She says they found one that, at 21 feet, is big enough, so they moved in. Then the challenges began.

“We don’t have running water,” says August. “I have to do my dishes at school in the bathroom. Everything is more of a challenge. Everything takes longer. We have to walk to a public washroom. We have to go and gather water about every three days. We have to be very creative with what we eat. We have a fridge, but we never know when it’s going to go out. We can’t really rely on anything. Not to mention I don’t have Wi-Fi, which makes it a lot more difficult to do my homework. I can stay at UVic to use the Wi-Fi. I have to always think ahead to make it all work.”

August says that the most challenging part is finding a place to sleep, because it’s illegal to sleep in a vehicle.

---

**“We don’t have running water. I have to do my dishes at school in the bathroom. Everything is more of a challenge.”**

AUGUST  
UVIC STUDENT

“We have, basically, been told by law enforcement officers to continuously move so we’re not congregating,” says August. “We have to vacate the park by 7. They hand us a pamphlet telling us we can go to the shelter, or we could build a home out of anything from 7 pm to 7 am. That’s not going to work when we have class at 8. I’m not going to take everything I own to school, participate in nursing and my practicum, and then go back and build my home again every night.”

As a full-time student, August is living off of student loans. She says that some of the money she had been spending on rent is available to improve other aspects of her life.

“I have been able to go to yoga and have a gym membership, and I have been able to spend my money on more healthy things that are supporting my lifestyle,” she says. “It can be intense to be doing this alternative living, but this experience has changed my whole outlook on life. It has pulled me or physically removed me from society, and I’m grateful for that. As shitty as it is sometimes, I am so grateful, because it has opened an incredible can of worms.”

August says that she hopes that the recent civic election brings some changes to the housing market. She says housing seems to be on every candidate’s mind.

“Me and my roommate are not an anomaly at all,” says August. “This is the way the world is going. Alternative living, tiny homes, van life—it is what is practical right now. It’s too expensive out there. It’s not feasible for students, and we really, really, really need to look at providing a different

By Fred Cameron, features writer

source of housing—not just affordable homes that we have been talking about forever here. We need to do something different, because this just isn’t working.”

Working in the support field, I am regularly in direct contact with the homeless population. There’s one person I’ve overheard talking about returning to school whom I was hoping to get a chance to talk to for this piece. He seems intelligent, fit, and enthusiastic, but from what I can see in passing he lacks the support needed to get his feet under him. I don’t know him by name, but he agreed to talk to me.

The young man doesn’t have a phone, but I see him from time to time on the street. We have to reschedule on more than one occasion and our meeting doesn’t seem to be happening. Then, on a Saturday night, I run into him on Pandora Avenue. I walk up and ask him how he is doing. He is

---

**“I would love to go to Camosun. If I’m not going to be working in construction then I need to bump up my education big time.”**

STEVEN  
HOMELESS VICTORIA COMMUNITY MEMBER

clearly not at his best, but he says he’s fine and asks me if I’m ready to do the interview. We walk down to a Tim Hortons; as we choose a table and start talking, I can see immediately that we should have picked a better time, but he insists that he wants to do the interview.

The 23-year-old, who we’ll call Steven, tells me he has been homeless as long as he has been living in Victoria.

“I live wherever I rest my head,” says Steven. “Sometimes I am lucky enough to stay with friends, but I can’t rely on them to house me. I had a place lined up for October, but I couldn’t come up with the money, so I didn’t get the place.”

In addition to the struggles a homeless addict faces, Steven has a brain injury. I couldn’t forget the promise I had seen in him in our prior visits, so I asked what he thought he would be doing if he weren’t caught in this lifestyle.

“I’ve been to work, man,” says Steven. “I have a bachelor’s of the job site, because no matter what you need done, I can do it—except for plumbing, pipefitting, or electrical. It’s easy to find work, but it’s hard to want to get there every day. I know nobody wants to go to work, but it’s different when you’re on the streets. I used to do it every day, but it’s different now. I don’t have a sigh of relief when I close myself off to the outside world—it’s a constant state of regret, but I can’t get out of it.”

Steven says he knows he needs a change, but he doesn’t know where to start.

“I would love to go to Camosun,” says Steven. “If I’m not going to be working in construction, then I need to bump up my education big time. I was thinking about taking a mathematics refresher before I go back. Honestly, it’s myself holding me back. It’s not like there is a big bully standing in front of me.”

I can almost see his thought process at times. Steven’s energy moves in ebbs and flows, to the point of him nodding off once or twice. I haven’t quite got the story, so I asked if it were up to him, all barriers aside, what would he like to do next. Instantly, Steven stated that he would go to a treatment centre that is focused on sober surfing. The only thing keeping him from going is the \$3,000-a-week tab. Steven is very adamant about the fact that he doesn’t want to live like this anymore. Then, I ask another question, and... silence.

Steven has fallen asleep at the table. I wait a minute and call to him again, but he doesn’t respond. I start to pack up my things and put my coat on. I turn off my recorder, and the beep makes him jump a little. I watch for a moment, but he seems to be asleep. I stand up and pat him on the shoulder to see if he was okay to leave.

“I’m in,” Steven says. “Can you fast-track me? I need help.”

stage

## Locals take on reimaged version of classic opera

“When I first heard that we were doing this version, my first concern was whether they had changed the music, and I was very relieved to hear none of the music had changed.”

TOM MITCHELL  
THE VICTORIA GILBERT AND SULLIVAN SOCIETY

ASHLEE SOLECKI  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

According to the Victoria Gilbert and Sullivan Society (VGSS) music director Tom Mitchell, classic opera lovers and newcomers alike can enjoy the VGSS production of *The Mikado: Reimagined*, a take on Arthur Sullivan’s original 1885 opera *The Mikado*.

“Sullivan brought such wonderful music for all the operas, and in *The Mikado*, there is certainly a wealth of wonderful, delightful tunes,” says Mitchell.

The VGSS production of *The Mikado* is the first to incorporate an added prologue, created by the New York Gilbert and Sullivan Society. While *The Mikado* is a classic, satirical comedy, it has come under scrutiny for its treatment and presentation of Japanese culture. The prologue is used to set the scene for the opera, and works to diminish what previously seemed like racist tones within it.

“The New York Gilbert and Sullivan players were originally going to mount this production in

2016,” says Mitchell. “There was a great deal of controversy in the press, such that they cancelled the production and went into what I believe was just more than one year of consultation with the Japanese Cultural Association in New York, and came up with this approach to it that would be acceptable without being insensitive to Japanese culture.”

The prologue brings in some much-needed context without taking away from the original wit and comedy present in Gilbert and Sullivan’s works. Mitchell says that it sets the scene up in a way that allows for a more Victorian take—and less of an imitation of Japanese culture.

“It certainly does the job of setting up the premise of the show,” says Mitchell. “It basically sets the scene for the opera to take place in what the time was—the current time in London, England, in the 1880s. So it’s set in Victorian London with hints of Japanese to it. But it’s basically English people enacting out what’s going through



PHOTO PROVIDED

*The Mikado: Reimagined* is an updated version of the 1885 play *The Mikado*.

Gilbert’s mind as he formulates the *Mikado* in his own mind.”

While the prologue creates a framework for the opera, the rest of *The Mikado* remains much the same, with no changes or additions to the classic music. This is a plus for Mitchell, who considers the music a huge part of what makes *The Mikado* so enduring.

“When I first heard that we were doing this version, my first concern was whether they had changed the music, and I was very relieved to hear none of the music had changed,” he says. “There’s certainly an element of a couple of

places, because one of the principal characters, of course, is *Mikado* himself, the emperor. And so, when he’s coming in, there is very much a Japanese element to the tunes. And it is actually a true Japanese marching song that Sullivan chose to use.”

Still, Mitchell hopes that there will be younger people in the audience to enjoy the addition to the opera, and that longtime Gilbert and Sullivan fans can appreciate what the prologue does for the opera without changing its essence.

“Hopefully, we will have a lot of people in the audience that are still

younger people,” says Mitchell, “for future generations who either don’t know *The Mikado*, or don’t know very much about it, and therefore they’ll see it for what it is, as opposed to comparing it to the way we’ve always seen *The Mikado*.”

*The Mikado: Reimagined*  
Various times,  
Friday, November 9  
to Sunday, November 11  
\$30 student tickets,  
Mary Winspear Centre  
gilbertandsullivanvictoria.ca

music

## Larkin Poe take independent route to roots rock

“We take great responsibility for the way [our music] ultimately comes out for fans, so, of course, that means we sweat every detail.”

REBECCA LOVELL  
LARKIN POE

KATRINA BROOKE  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Atlanta roots-rock sister duo Larkin Poe are about to fly through Victoria as they head out on a world tour, and they’re coming here for a cause: their show is a benefit for Community Living Victoria, a non-profit organization that raises funds and awareness to benefit individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

Rebecca and Megan Lovell have been performing since childhood, when classical training met Georgia bluegrass in their first band, The Lovell Sisters (which included their third sister, Jessica). When Jessica decided to move on, Rebecca and Megan re-formed as Larkin Poe, drawing on family-tree connections to Edgar Allan Poe to inspire their new musical endeavours. It’s been a journey eight years in the making, and the two are strong believers in the value of persistence. Persistence, and the right motivations.

“You really have to understand

acted so positively to their video series. “It was the first time Megan and I got into the studio with just the two of us—no production, no other musicians—and it was such a liberating experience.”

With a central theme of self discovery, their new album, *Venom & Faith*, continues that experience, with a layering of instruments and voices that is all their own.

“We take great responsibility for the way [our music] ultimately comes out for fans, so, of course, that means we sweat every detail,” says Rebecca. “I spend countless hours with headphones on and a laptop, perusing master sound libraries that I can choose from to create the musical landscape that people will hear on the album.”

Megan says that it’s really special to share something like the material found on *Venom & Faith*.

“The music industry is so competitive and crazy-making,” she says, “but, at the same time, we’re able to be in a field that revolves around creativity, and if you can introduce a bit of creativity into your day-to-day, you’re gonna experience every moment so much deeper and so much brighter.”

Roger turns to nature to decompress. She drove to Virginia to take a kayak-building course halfway through the recording process of *Cottonwood*. Although she may not be bringing her kayak with her, she

Larkin Poe  
8 pm Friday, November 16  
\$55 and up, McPherson  
Playhouse  
rmts.bc.ca



ROBBY KLEIN

The sisters of Atlanta roots-rock duo Larkin Poe.

art

## Hyang Cho turns mundane objects into art in new exhibit



PHOTO PROVIDED

Guelph-based artist Hyang Cho will be showcasing her art in her *At Random* exhibit at Open Space.

BECCA WHEELER  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Buttons, glass jars, tape. In the exhibition *At Random*, artist Hyang Cho brings a new perspective to mundane items like these.

Originally from Korea, Cho relocated to Canada about 15 years ago and currently lives in Guelph, Ontario. Learning how to navigate a different country with a new language has been a wellspring of inspiration for the artist.

“I use language, specifically English, as a primary medium of many of my works to express the otherness and anxiety I feel in everyday life,” she says. “What are supposed to be natural actions like speaking, listening, writing, and reading becomes unnatural. That’s why I think that misunderstanding, confusion, uncertainty became a part of my everyday life. The misunderstandings and distortion that

I feel in everyday life, because of the language barrier, are very positive aspects and not negative aspects. If the audience does not understand my work, I don’t think it’s a bad thing.”

In Cho’s work, ordinary materials are transformed into a contemporary magic that is simple and sophisticated. One of the pieces featured in *At Random* is made out of conventional glass jars that are broken into fragments and re-worked into a striking glass sphere. This piece exemplifies the complicated elegance that Cho applies to the entire exhibition. Each work is challenged by the presence of time and meticulous process—no object undergoes the same process, and each gets its own laborious effort. Cho examines the feelings and emotions evoked by the march of time and grounds her work in this concept.

“The passing of time, in every day—it’s not just the memorable events you need to measure, but the passing, accumulating, or repeating,” she says.

The pieces in *At Random* are simply that. They are disparate, and they are collected over a period of time. Some of the items are connected to Cho personally, while others are scavenged for at thrift stores or taken from donation piles. For example, in the exhibit, Cho features a string of buttons sorted from smallest to largest. Half of them belonged to her mother while the other half were found thrifting.

“Everything is equal to me,” she says. “I don’t have a specific, favourite button compared to the other buttons that are special to me. I collect a bunch of buttons. I collect a bunch of jars. I collect the papers. I like them as an object that I can touch, and feel, and sort, and

count... But I have an attachment to the result of my work, but not to the individual things.”

Another piece in the exhibit features handwritten transcriptions of letters that Hyang collected from a Google search. The letters vary in language, and the content remains mostly unknown to the artist.

“I just Googled ‘handwritten letters’ in a certain language and just collected a bunch of them,” she says. “Because I don’t know the content, I just chose whatever I liked the appearance [of]. I know some of them are personal love letters, but there are some letters that I was able to read, like old Korean letters. When the language is different, the context keeps changing from the viewer’s view, not from my view, I think.”

Cho does not predetermine how people should perceive the exhibition, and instead believes that each viewer’s subjective experience contributes to her message.

“A certain audience who speaks a specific language who comes to the show and reads some of the specific letters will perceive the whole letter scene in that context, or not, so I think it can open up the other half were found thrifting.”

*At Random*  
Friday, November 9  
to Sunday, December 16  
Free, Open Space  
openspace.ca

music

## Winnipeg’s Madeleine Roger brings gender parity and nature to debut album

KATE WOOD  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Madeleine Roger’s debut solo album *Cottonwood* is rich with the influence of the nature she surrounded herself with while writing it. The warm acoustic guitar and sweet vocal harmonies of the Winnipeg singer/songwriter will have the listener feeling transported to her great-grandparents’ cabin in the woods, stoking the wood stove to keep the room warm enough for Roger to play another song. Which makes sense, because that cabin is where Roger wrote the album.

Unplugging from the distractions of internet, cell phones, and electricity, Roger was in her element and inspired by what she calls the “marvellous routine” of daily life at the cabin. Chores like chopping wood and opening a hole in the ice to get her daily water were the only tasks to accomplish before she was able to sit and write for the rest of the day.

“In the winter, or even late fall or early spring, there’s either almost nobody on the lake or literally nobody on the lake,” says Roger. “It’s my favourite place to go because I have complete solitude.”

Roger turns to nature to decompress. She drove to Virginia to take a kayak-building course halfway through the recording process of *Cottonwood*. Although she may not be bringing her kayak with her, she

will definitely be taking some time to appreciate the wonders of the west coast when her tour takes her here.

“Thankfully, I am somebody who enjoys living out of a suitcase, but I’m trying to get better at actually taking time off while on tour,” says Roger. “What I’ve been noticing is that every national park in Canada has a good reason for being a national park and that they’re well worth seeing and well worth going out of the way for. So something we’ve taken to doing is just en route taking that maybe 100 kilometres off the main highway to go check out these incredible places that are so spectacularly reserved from development.”

*Cottonwood* was proudly created with gender parity; half of the musicians contributing to this album identify as female. Roger says this may not have had a discernible effect on the sound of the album, but it was important to her that the collaborative process was representative of her audience.

“I was sort of sick of opening the liner notes to albums and just seeing a bunch of men involved, for the most part,” she says. “Everybody on the album noticed the difference because so often it’s maybe one woman with a whole bunch of men around. It just became this really easy process and everybody remarked on how nice it was to just feel more at home. That’s a bit of



SAM BAARDMAN

Singer/songwriter Madeleine Roger recently released her debut album.

a convoluted way to basically just say that it felt really comfortable.”

Roger’s advice to aspiring artists and musicians who are feeling underrepresented is simple and achievable: even if they are harder to find, seek out those people to collaborate with who believe in the same things you do. The parts of the creative process that can be challenging are so much easier when you have a team that backs you up.

“Why does there need to be another album in the world? Why does there need to be another singer/songwriter? Well, everyone has something individual to say, and especially the people who are underrepresented; we need those voices

to be so much louder. I think it’s just having the gumption to do what we know is important even if it’s hard, even if there’s people who speak up against it.”

Roger says that for the concert here, guitarist Logan McKillop will join her, and that the show will be more than just music.

“There’s definitely going to be some storytelling,” she says, “so if you want to hear the stories behind the songs, that’s a part of the live show.”

Madeleine Roger  
7 pm Friday, November 9  
\$10, Vinyl Envy  
vinylenvy.com

New Music Revue



Kinnee Starr  
*Feed the Fire*  
(Aporia Records)  
3/5

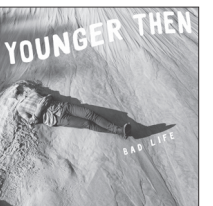
*Feed the Fire* is Toronto hip-hop/alt-rock artist Kinnee Starr’s ninth album. There is a drastic change in tone from her previous work, from heavily acoustic and lyrical to more aggressively electronic. Unfortunately, it leaves much to be desired in its artistry.

The title track is a powerful, ambient, anthemic opener that may be the only track I would voluntarily listen to again. “I’m Ready” harnesses arena pop, the theatrical choreography almost audible. “We Are Sky” pairs spoken word with a reverberating ballad and sends the listener off with a grand farewell.

Starr has incorporated more heavy instrumentation and synthetic sounds on this album. It’s well produced and a variety of genres have been blended effectively. Although the technical boxes are ticked, the songs on this album are held back by shallow songwriting and they fall flat, failing to keep the interest of the listener.

The lyrics are bare-bones and, at times, lack creativity. Although some listeners may appreciate the bluntness of Starr’s messages, there’s nothing on this album that makes me want to hear it again.

-KATE WOOD



Younger Then  
*Bad Life*  
(Standby Records)  
4.5/5

New York indie rockers Younger Then’s second album, *Bad Life*, is a deeply cohesive alternative record with a great deal of experimentation. It makes for a very enjoyable listening experience.

“Sara Told Them” is one of the best songs on the album. The use of reverb truly makes the track stand out and sets an atmosphere. “Cherry Glaze” follows it and has a similar effect, which makes the change between them feel very natural.

A very good balance between the instruments and the vocals is present throughout the album and lets the listener enjoy both. In the title track, the instrumentation serves as a build-up to make the chorus stand out; the effect at the end makes it linger in your head.

Each track on *Bad Life* flows into the next without getting monotonous; this makes the album very easy to recommend to anyone who enjoys alternative rock.

-BRUNO ADAME

STR8TS

No. 212 Medium

Str8ts puzzle grid with numbers and black squares.

Previous solution - Tough

Previous solution grid for Str8ts puzzle.

How to beat Str8ts - Like Sudoku, no single number can repeat in any row or column...

You can find more help, tips and hints at www.str8ts.com

SUDOKU

No. 212 Medium

Sudoku puzzle grid with numbers.

Previous solution - Easy

Previous solution grid for Sudoku puzzle.

To complete Sudoku, fill the board by entering numbers 1 to 9 such that each row, column and 3x3 box contains every number uniquely.

For many strategies, hints and tips, visit www.sudokuwiki.org

If you like Str8ts check out our books, iPhone/iPad Apps and much more on our store.

The solutions will be published here in the next issue.

Comic strip with three panels showing a character talking to a mushroom.

By Jayden Grieve

Health with Tess

by Tess Syrawik

Should talking about porn be less taboo?

Behavioural addictions—when people get addicted to activities, not substances—are everywhere.

orgasm during intercourse due to overstimulation from internet porn, and that sometimes heavy porn users find themselves less attracted to their partner.

porn sites allows watchers to choose exactly what they want to see and change it as often as they want.

The Chopping Block Chronicles

by Justin Bennett

The importance of eating and shopping locally

Eating local has become somewhat of a phenomenon. In Victoria, we are blessed to be surrounded by an abundance of amazing producers, farmers, growers, and artisanal shops.

community. Most farms on the south island are run by families. Purchasing from them doesn't just benefit them; in turn, they put that money back into our local economy.

Food plays a major role in our carbon footprint. For example, whenever I'm in someone's house and I'm cooking for them, I always find the same ingredient: Himalayan pink salt.

Campus Access

by Kelsey Worth

Microwave concerns on campus

There are multiple options for food on campus. Well, there are multiple options for most people, that is. While some might argue that the campus cafeteria is perfectly accessible, that isn't necessarily the case.

while the lower section sticks out to provide a counter on which to prep one's food.

Given the fact that wheelchairs and, especially, powerchairs take up quite a bit of extra space, they are rather difficult to manoeuvre in crowds.

The crowded cafeteria could be made less crowded by installing a new line queue to be used only by people with access issues; this would help ensure that everyone has enough space to manoeuvre and gather their food without hindering their fellow students.

First Things First

by Tiegan Suddaby

Take care of yourself

The topic of health should never be taken lightly, especially when the post-secondary workload is something you've never experienced before.

overachiever brain will be oblivious to how your body is reacting. While you're thinking, "An extra espresso shot wouldn't hurt," your body is shaking to the point that you can't even hold the coffee you're drinking.



Let's Talk?

by Katy Weicker

A cautionary tale

We have all known—or will come to know—at least one fuck-boy over the course of our lives: the guy who makes our skin crawl whenever we have to interact with him; the one who has one too many dating apps, yet is eternally single;

Maybe, and most likely, fuckboys are a product of their environment. They come from a land of low expectations, where women have been deemed irrational and emotional.

He's the one who rotates through "baes" on a weekly basis, ending them all because "she's crazy." He has become a trope in the world of millennials, the avocado toast of the dating pool, if you will—you know it's not worth it, but it's convenient, so you do it anyway.

mirror myself before casting such irrational judgments on these poor guys, right? Because they are more than the sum of their dating profile pictures and Peter Pan complexes. Right?

They see the world through the lens that society has placed in front of them. And, fair enough.



Unpacking the Bags

by Renata Silva

Being international can be your biggest asset

Often, we as international students feel at a disadvantage compared to domestic students. We have this feeling because of the language barrier and the lack of knowledge of Canadian culture, but being international can be our biggest asset when it comes to looking at the job market.

communicate in more than one language. We international students have a great ability to know how to deal with people from different cultures, because we do this every day.

students because we want to be the same as them. The truth is that we never will be. We can perfect our English or learn all about Canadian culture, but we will always be international.



Tech Talk

by Sunki Baik

Preparing for exams with apps

Preparing for exams can be overwhelming, especially when you have many things to memorize. Here are two apps that can help you to memorize everything for tests.

haus' spacing effect theory. Using this algorithm, the app asks you the same question every couple of hours, days, or weeks.

you're studying. This technique became popular through English psychologist Tony Buzan.



Communication Error

by Nate Dawne

A breath of fresh air

What is it like to feel alone in a room full of people, to suffocate on your own breath as if you gasp for air but each attempt to inhale is so asphyxiating that your eyes begin to water and you momentarily forget your own name?

what happened to your T-shirt when you changed it this morning, your nightmares slowly become day-dreams, and daydreams become reality, so where can you run in this inversion of security?

How can you hide from what you cannot say when you can no longer hide inside yourself?

believe that trying to communicate with others has successfully killed you. Instead of letting the fluidity of why you couldn't say down you, why not learn to swim?

constructed an enclosure quite like a shark cage specifically for you by turning your world inside out? A world that looks real, has walls that taste familiar but are lined with hard metal bars that you never want your tongue to stick to?

When turned inside out, not unlike



The Periodic Column

by Gwyneth Faulkner

The action potential of the thalamus

How do our brains decide what to learn? As students, how can we force our brains to hold on to the facts from our classes that we need to remember for exams instead of random information from our favourite TV shows?

and bad stimuli. The researchers released odours just before they gave the mice a sip of water (good), and another before squirting the mouse in the face with a puff of air (bad).

**68%** OF  
BRITISH COLUMBIANS  
AGREE:

**IT'S TIME TO  
ELIMINATE INTEREST  
ON STUDENT LOANS**

Aran Armutlu, Chairperson, BC Federation of Students

**EMAIL FINANCE MINISTER CAROLE JAMES  
TO URGE HER TO ELIMINATE INTEREST IN BUDGET 2019**

**WWW.WEAREBCSTUDENTS.CA/INTEREST**



**TAKE  
ACTION**

  @theBCFS

**bcfs** | british columbia  
federation of students