

THE McGill Daily

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committee of the sages since 1911



VAUQUELIN

LIEUTENANT DE VAISSEAU

1728 - 1772

LOUISBOURG - QUEBEC

PROTECT
TRANS KIDS

IF BEING TRANS WAS A CHOICE
I WOULD MAKE IT AGAIN
AND AGAIN AND AGAIN

WE DON'T WANT YOUR
CIS KIDS TO BE TRANS
WE WANT YOUR
TRANS KIDS TO
SURVIVE

LET KIDS
GROWUP

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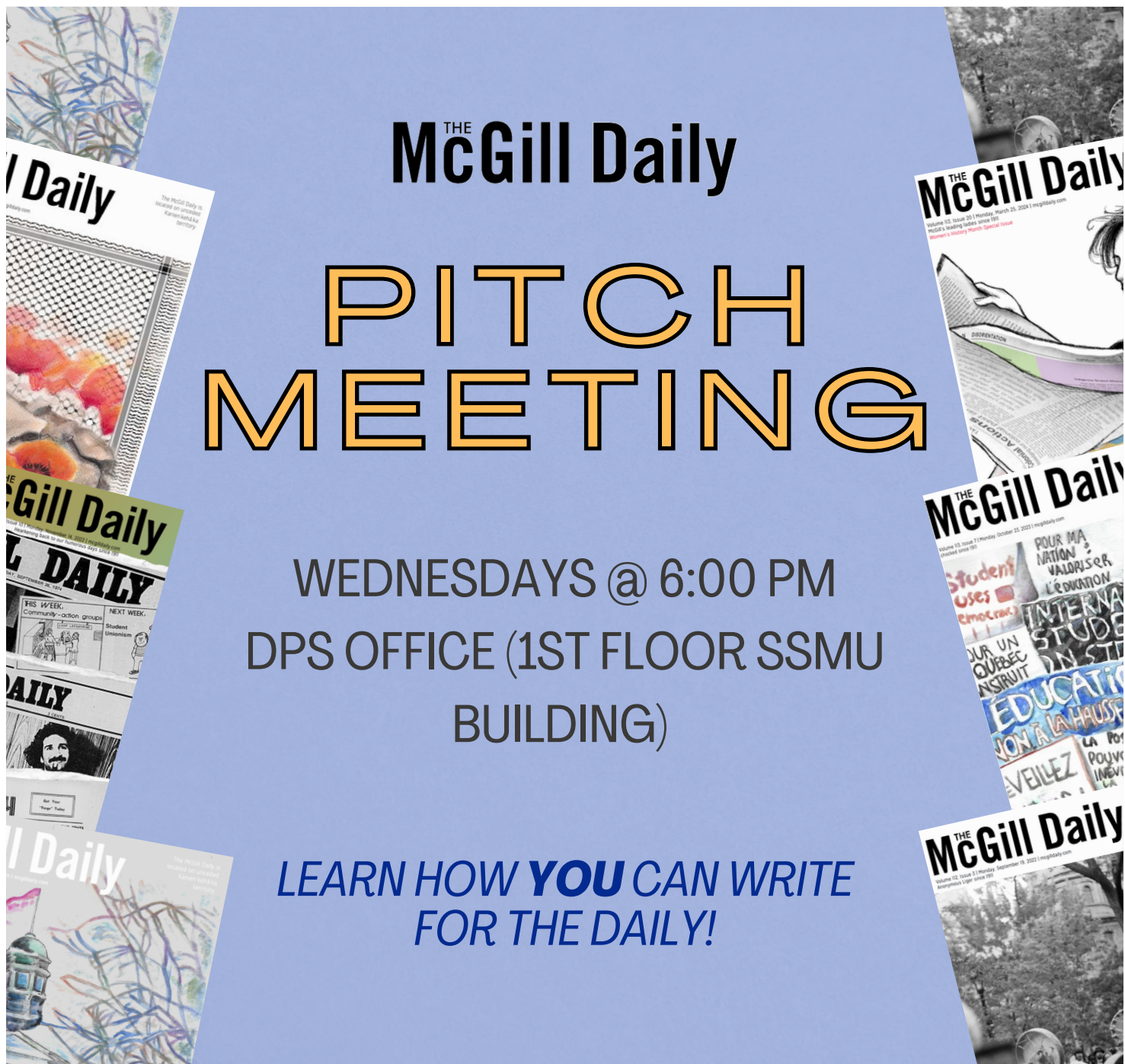
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THE McGill Daily

PITCH MEETING

WEDNESDAYS @ 6:00 PM
DPS OFFICE (1ST FLOOR SSMU BUILDING)

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Stand Against Anti-Trans Hate

Content warning: police brutality, transphobia

On September 20, protests were organized across Canada to oppose gender-inclusive education in schools and advocate for “parental rights.” In response, members of the LGBTQ+ community and allies rallied to counter these protests, calling them out for what they are: hate marches against queer and trans communities. In Montreal, police violently assaulted counter-protestors trying to confront the anti-trans march. Both the anti-trans protest and the police response to the counter-protest are extremely disturbing, and reflect rapidly growing transphobia in Canada that we must continue to resist.

This is the second year in a row the transphobic 1 Million March 4 Children protest has taken place. Although the organizers claim to be concerned about their children’s welfare, it is clear that what they really want is increased control over their children’s lives and the information their children are exposed to. Enforcing so-called “parental rights” comes at the expense of children’s autonomy, and has serious potential to jeopardize their safety. Children should be free to explore their gender identity and involve their parents in this process whenever they feel comfortable doing so.

In Canada, the transphobic ideology spouted by the 1 Million March 4 Children is present in both federal and provincial politics. Saskatchewan and New Brunswick already have active anti-trans legislation, with many other provinces, such as Alberta and Ontario, at risk of implementing similar policies in the near future. In Saskatchewan, Bill 137 prevents children under 16 from changing their name or pronouns at school without parental consent. Similarly, the New Brunswick government now requires schools to obtain parental consent for children wishing to use different names, and makes it optional for teachers to use their students’ preferred pronouns. Alberta Premier Danielle Smith is planning some of the most repressive measures in the country so far, including restricting access to gender-affirming healthcare and requiring parental consent for lessons about gender and sexual identity in schools. All of these policies have been condemned by human rights groups such as Amnesty International and Egale, underscoring the serious risk they pose to trans children.

At the federal level, opposition leader Pierre Poilievre has openly supported Alberta’s aforementioned policies, and stated that trans women should not be able to access women’s sports, bathrooms, or changing rooms. These beliefs are not uncommon within his party. At the Conservative convention in September 2023, 69 per cent of delegates voted for a policy to ban gender-affirming care for youth. Additionally, 89 per cent voted for a plan to ban transgender women from women’s spaces, such as in shelters, prisons, and bathrooms. With an election likely coming up in the near future, these troubling statistics indicate that a Conservative win would undoubtedly lead to even more repression of trans communities.

In Quebec, the CAQ recently established a committee known as the Comité des sages to advise government officials on matters regarding gender identity. Despite their supposed mission statement, this committee has no trans members, clearly disregarding trans perspectives. Abe Berglas, former Administrative Coordinator of Queer McGill, told the Daily that the committee “won’t progress queer rights or trans rights at all but I also don’t think it was ever meant to. I think it was meant to placate trans foes.” The forming of this committee has even delayed progress on policies that would benefit trans communities, such as X gender markers on provincial documents. Although the situation in Quebec may not be as dire as in other provinces, we must continue to stand up for trans rights to prevent further injustices from occurring here.

September 20 has once again proven what many LGBTQ+ folks know to be true: we can’t trust the police to protect us from transphobic and queerphobic hate. When anti-trans protests happen, it’s important that we stand together in opposition to show that there is no place for hate in Montreal, Quebec, or anywhere in Canada. Keep an eye out for future counter-protests and show up if you’re able to! Support groups at McGill that uplift and advocate for trans people, such as the Trans Patients’ Union, Queer McGill, and the Union for Gender Empowerment.

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Police Tear Gas Counter-Protesters Opposing Transphobia

Counter-protest organized in response to 1 Million March 4 Children

Sena Ho
News Editor

Emma Bainbridge
Coordinating Editor

Content warning: police brutality, transphobia

On the morning of September 20, Montreal police officers beat and tear gassed LGBTQ+ community members and allies gathered at Place Vauquelin to oppose transphobia. People had gathered to counter the 1 Million March 4 Children protest organized by Hands Off Our Kids (HOOK) and Ensemble Pour Protéger Nos Enfants (EPPNE), both notorious for spreading rhetoric against 2SLGBTQ+ rights. This counter-protest, titled Protect Trans Kids, aimed to protect trans children across Canada, and the world, while connecting the struggle to the ongoing genocide in Palestine. Over 30 counter-protests and rallies for trans rights happened on this same day across the country.

Groups such as HOOK and EPPNE repeatedly claim that schools indoctrinate children through LGBTQ-inclusive education and purposely undermine parental authority. Slogans such as “Say no to indoctrination” and “I belong to my parents” have been used for the mass mobilization of their members to launch nationwide protests, initially held on September 20, 2023.

A statement supporting the counter-protest denounced the claim that schools indoctrinate students as false, arguing that HOOK and EPPNE “oppose



Emma Bainbridge | Coordinating Editor

the simple mention of trans people and couples of the same sex.” The statement added that “it is just as scary to consider the ideology of these groups that view children’s autonomy as eroding parents’ rights.” It also condemned the actions of the Quebec government, specifically the creation of the Comité des Sages as an advisory committee of gender identity.

In a press release on behalf of the organizations and communities that brought this counter-protest to life, they discussed the importance of standing against such hate: “We are fighting towards the same goal, only ours includes the protection and wellbeing

of trans and queer youth, youth who have queer and trans parents or loved ones, or youth who have trans and queer friends,” Zev Saltiel, a registered social worker and parent, wrote.

Early into the counter-protest, the *Daily* spoke with a U1 McGill student, who chose to remain anonymous. “A lot of people are still ignorant,” they said, when reflecting on the importance of bringing awareness to not only trans people, but the harms and obstacles actively posed against them. They emphasized on what they believe this ignorance entails, by saying, “I feel like among a majority of

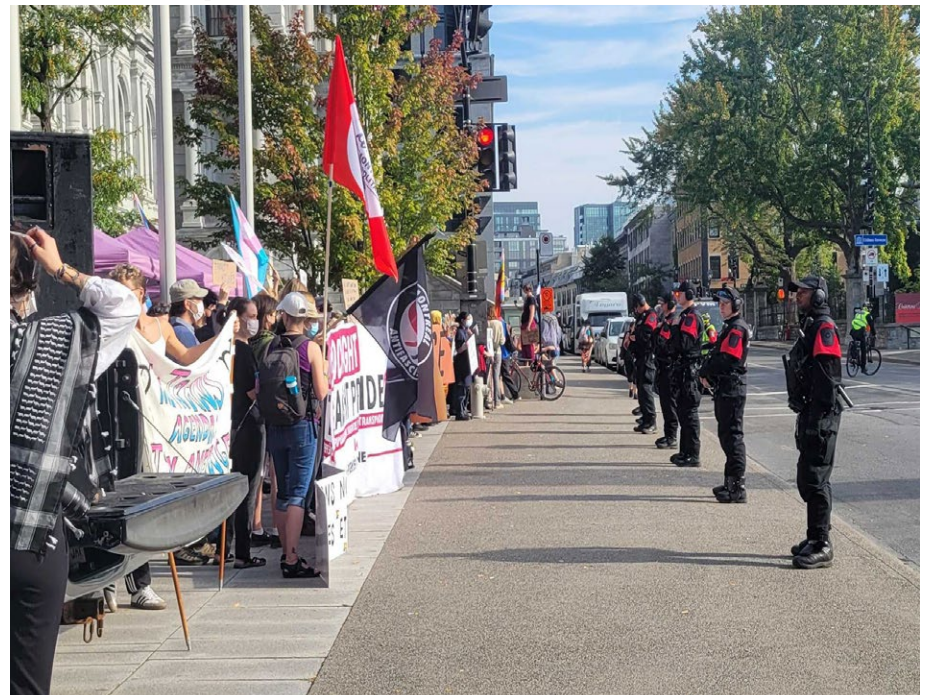
non-queer people I meet, there is ignorance. And by ignorance, I mean lack of knowledge about trans people and a lack of empathy as well.” The student felt it critical that they come to support and participate in the counter-protests’ mission.

Throughout the morning, the two sides were separated by two lines of riot police. Around 10:30, the original protest began to march and counter-protesters split into several groups in an attempt to cut them off. However, riot police formed a line between the two groups, and quickly started pushing the counter-protesters back with their shields and spraying the crowd with tear

gas. Riot police formed a line between the two groups, and quickly started pushing the counter-protesters back with their shields and spraying the crowd with tear gas.

The *Daily* witnessed police continue to push and assault counter-protesters even when they showed visible signs of injury or medical distress. When speaking with an organizer after the protest, the *Daily* found out that at least one counter-protester was arrested, and another sustained a head injury from a police baton. The *Daily* did not witness a similar level of police brutality towards the anti-trans protesters.

After the police violence calmed down, counter-protesters gathered in Place Vauquelin to wash off the tear gas and recover from the assault. Food from People’s Potato was served for lunch, which helped to boost morale. Around 12:15, a counter-protester arrived to announce that the original protest had disbanded, drawing cheers from the remaining counter-protesters.



“They Do Not Protect Us”

Vigil held in Montreal to honour the lives of the six Indigenous lives lost to police violence in the past two weeks

India Mosca

Managing Editor

Content Warning: death, police brutality, racism

“I don’t understand why it seems like it’s open season on Indigenous people and it’s just fine to kill us and no one’s going to complain and no one’s going to make a fuss about it.”

Na’kuset’s words echoed through Place du Canada and resonated in each of us present at the vigil on September 18th. Behind her were six posters with the faces of Jack Piché, 31 years old; Hoss Lightning-Saddleback, 15; Tammy Bateman, in her 30s; Jason West, 57; Danny Knife, 31; Steven “Iggy” Dedam, 33; all of whom were killed by police officers since August 29.

Na’kuset, executive director of the Native Women’s Shelter of Montreal, along with the day shelter Resilience Montreal, held a vigil to honour the lives lost, offer prayers to their families and loved ones, and denounce systematic police brutality against Indigenous people. The speakers called out the Canadian government’s complicity, saying that “injustices like these don’t have a place anymore [in our country].” As McGill begins



basis, and then proceeded with a powerful chant. Among the speakers were also representatives of the Black community: Svens Telemarque, representative of Union United Church, and Claudette Soeurette, activist).

The vigil highlighted the importance of community building and mutual support of different anti-

of people is unacceptable.” She related this to Judith Butler’s conceptualization of grievable and ungrievable lives. Butler writes in their book *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable*: “An ungrievable life is one that cannot be mourned because it has never lived, that is, it has never counted as a life at all.”

In its 2024 report, Human Rights Watch denounced Canada’s persistent abuses against Indigenous peoples, alluding to issues of underfunding, and citing the Line 5 pipeline case. Police brutality is part of the systematic violence that Indigenous and people of colour face in Canada and in other parts of the world. Tracking (in)Justice, a Canadian law enforcement and criminal legal data and transparency project, has been accumulating data on police-involved deaths in Canada. Since 2000 they’ve established that 774 instances of police use of force involved death, and that Black and Indigenous people are overrepresented. According to their data, Indigenous people die at eight times the rate compared to white people. Additionally, Black and Indigenous people account for 27.2 per cent of the police-involved shooting deaths, when and where the race of the victim has been identified by police authorities, yet they represent around 8.7 per cent of the population in Canada.

“When I look up the RCMP and I look at their mission statement, this is what it says...] we commit to preserve the peace, uphold the law, and provide quality service in partnership with our communities. [...] Quality service in partnership with our communities doesn’t look like the lives that are lost

of Canada (TRC), activists and community leaders say change is urgently needed. “We need you, every one of you, to help us get out of this cycle of genocide that many generations continue to feel continue to feel its impacts,” concluded Ellen Gabriel.

To conclude the vigil, people formed a line and, one by one, placed tobacco in the fire while offering prayers for the

“The dehumanization of Indigenous Black people of color, and especially now, as you think of Palestine, the dehumanization of people is unacceptable.”

– Ellen Gabriel

lost lives and their families.

If you want to get more involved, there are volunteering opportunities organized by Resilience Montreal and the Native Women’s Shelter.

“When I look up the RCMP and I look at their mission statement, this is what it says ...] we commit to preserve the peace, uphold the law, and provide quality service in partnership with our communities. [...] Quality service in partnership with our communities doesn’t look like the lives that are lost behind me.”

– Svens Telemarque

its annual Indigenous Awareness weeks, the memorial served as a grim reminder of the ongoing abuses against Indigenous peoples and the Canadian government’s failure to ensure meaningful accountability for these crimes.

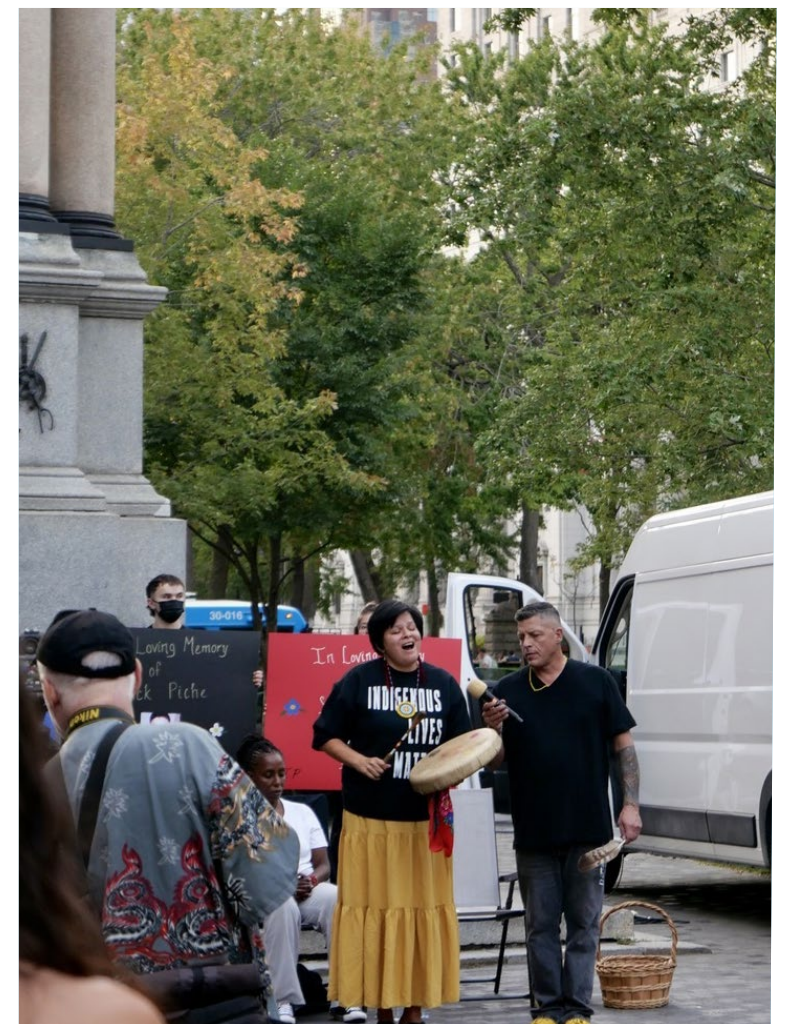
As people gathered around the fire and the speakers took their places, Bryce Morison opened the vigil by singing a sundance song in honour of the victims and to give strength to their families. Fay Desjarlais then addressed the group by talking about her 20 years working with Indigenous women, calling out the brutal realities they face on a daily

colonial and anti-oppression groups. Na’kuset made references to the common struggle of the Black and Indigenous communities, and the Palestinian liberation movement: “I think there’s a lot of work that the Black community and the Indigenous community can do together because we face so many of the same issues.” Ellen Gabriel, activist and artist from the Kanien’kehá:ka Nation, spoke about the pattern of dehumanization these groups face and how it serves as justification for the killings: “The dehumanization of Indigenous Black people of color, and especially now, as you think of Palestine, the dehumanization

India Mosca | Managing Editor

behind me,” said Svens Telemarque. He then added that “Systemic racism is not written in black and white. It’s hidden underneath policies, attitudes, beliefs, and the way that people get treated.”

As the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation approaches on September 30, as well as the 10th anniversary of the release of the findings from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission



India Mosca | Managing Editor

McGill Students Want to Thrive in Montreal's French Culture. The Quebec Government Has Other Plans

Policies designed to protect the French language in Quebec are making it increasingly difficult for Anglophones to live and work in Montreal

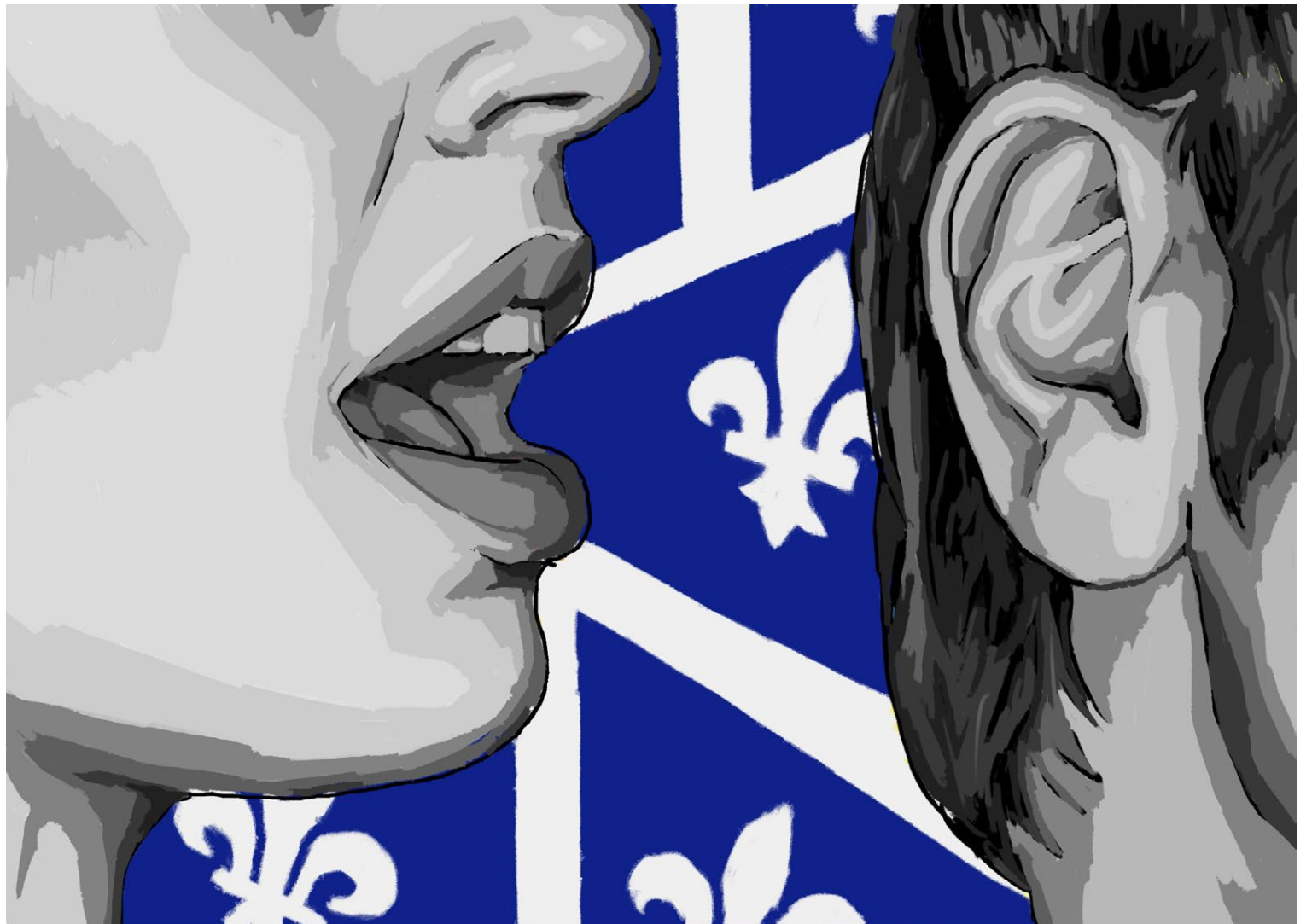
Enid Kohler
News Contributor

In the spring of his senior year of high school, Joshua Farmer was bewildered by the lengthy French documents he faced to get a study permit. The forms, required to obtain a Quebec Certificate of Acceptance for Studies, are only offered in French. Farmer, a U1 student from Massachusetts who is studying Economics and French, said in an interview with the *Daily* that he “spent days on days using a translator app to translate everything from French to English.” For Farmer, “it shows that they don’t want us.”

Quebec has a unique identity as the only province in Canada whose sole official language is French. The province has long committed itself to protecting its French culture, and its efforts have only redoubled in recent years.

In 2017, one year before becoming premier, François Legault told young Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ) supporters that it was “time to push for a new Quiet Revolution.” In making this comment, Legault referenced the period of rapid social and political change in the 1960s, in which the Quebec separatist movement gained traction and questions of nationality as a French province

[McGill students] find it challenging to envision a long-term future in the city due to language barriers and subsequent limited work opportunities.



Auden Akinc | Visuals Contributor

were brought to the forefront.

Since becoming Premier of Quebec in 2018, Legault’s CAQ party has introduced numerous policies to counter what they consider the French language’s decline in the province. In May 2022, the Quebec government implemented Bill 96, “An Act respecting French, the official and common language of Québec.” The Bill includes restrictions like requiring civil servants to speak and write only in French at work with minimal exceptions, and a mandate that six months after arriving in Quebec, new immigrants must receive government services exclusively in French.

Dr. Jennifer Elrick, Associate Professor of Sociology and Chair in Multiculturalism at McGill University, spoke to the *Daily* about Bill 96. She said that the Bill is not “fit for purpose,” adding that “I don’t think Bill 96 is what one would craft if one’s aim was really to improve French in the province.”

Dr. Elrick also stressed the consequences of policies like Bill 96. “These policies send

a message that non-French speakers are not citizens worth caring for or fostering,” Dr. Elrick said. She is also concerned about the barriers new immigrants or refugees will face, particularly in the healthcare sector, where non-French speakers may struggle to communicate in a medical setting or high-stress situation. For Dr. Elrick, these restrictive policies “represent a deep lack of empathy for large segments of the population. You’re really hitting people where they are hurting.”

This year, Legault’s CAQ ramped up pro-French policies. On April 28, Jean-François Roberge, Quebec’s language minister, announced a \$603-million plan to counter what he considered French’s decline. The strategy has 21 policies, such as increased monitoring of language trends, tuition-hikes for non-Quebec students, and a requirement that Quebec’s three English-language universities – McGill, Concordia and Bishop’s – ensure 80 per cent of their out-of-province and international students learn French at a level 5 oral proficiency by graduation. “We’re going on

the offensive,” Roberge said in a news conference.

Dr. Elrick explained to the *Daily* that Quebec’s policies will not just affect Anglophones, but Allophones – those whose first language is neither French nor English – and Francophones alike. For example, Dr. Elrick explained that a reduction in English education opportunities will delay young people’s abilities to learn the English they will need for “competitive jobs in the global economy.”

At McGill, students are feeling the impact of Quebec’s pro-French policies. The *Daily* spoke with Cassie, a U1 student in the Faculty of Management from Ohio. Like Farmer, she was taken aback at the minimal accommodations for Anglophones in applying for a

study permit. “It’s kind of crazy,” she said.

For Hannah Chong, a U1 student in Anatomy and Cell Biology from Toronto, Ontario, Quebec’s strong French culture meant her family had to relocate. She said in an interview with the *Daily*, “My grandparents came to Montreal from Hong Kong, but they couldn’t make it work here, because learning English and French was too much for them. There are definitely barriers that cause people to relocate.”

Nevertheless, Anglophone students continue to flood to Montreal to study, where they do their best to embrace the city’s French culture.

Cassie said that Montreal’s culture has been an “eye-opening and unique experience.” She

“There are definitely barriers that cause people to relocate”

– Hannah Chong, McGill Student

“These policies send a message that non-French speakers are not citizens worth caring for or fostering”

– Jennifer Elrick, McGill Associate Professor of Sociology and Chair in Multiculturalism

added that, “I was able to fully immerse myself in a different culture than where I grew up.”

Chong agreed, noting that “there is so much charm to Quebec and having pride in it being a French speaking province.” Chong tries her best to interact with service workers in French, saying, “it’s a courtesy thing, because that’s their native language. I hate making [employees] adapt to speak English to me.”

Cassie Scarpa, a U1 student in Environmental Studies from Vermont, feels similarly. She said that she hopes to take a French class at McGill. “I feel like I owe it to the city to learn how to speak French,” she said in an interview with the *Daily*.

Likewise, Logan Hamele, a U3 graduating student from the United States, told the *Daily* in an email: “For those that do have the resources and ability, there should be a level of responsibility for those that want to live and work in [Quebec] to learn French.”

As much as these McGill students are adapting to Montreal’s French culture, they find it challenging to envision a long-term future in the city due to language barriers and subsequent limited work opportunities.

Eden, a graduating student from Ontario, wrote in an email to the *Daily*, “I love Montreal and I would like to live here after graduation.” However, due to her limited French, she worries about

finding permanent work. At a B2 level of French, Eden said that in Montreal, her post-grad plans are limited.

Scarpa has a similar outlook. As an Anglophone, she said that “learning French to the extent that I can work here...I don’t think that’s in my playing cards.”

Hamele hopes to stay in Montreal for at least one year after he graduates in the spring, but acknowledges the need to include French education in his plan. He said, “naturally, upward mobility in the Montreal job market is extremely difficult without a very strong command of French.” He aims to continue taking French classes to improve his language proficiency.

Cassie, despite her desire to improve her French while at McGill, does not see herself remaining in Montreal after graduation. “I’m not sure I’d ever be confident enough to use [French] in a workplace setting,” she said. Cassie added, “In our world, we should always be growing and changing and accepting of new cultures.” However, she points to Quebec’s stringent pro-French policies as a “turn off” for those who are moving to the province as non-French speakers. She concluded, “It’s not necessarily a culture that wants everyone.”



AGA & Call for Candidates

All members of the Daily Publications Society (DPS), publisher of The McGill Daily and Le Délit, are cordially invited to its **Annual General Assembly:**

Wednesday, October 2nd @ 6:00 pm

**McGill University Centre,
3480 Rue McTavish, Room 107**

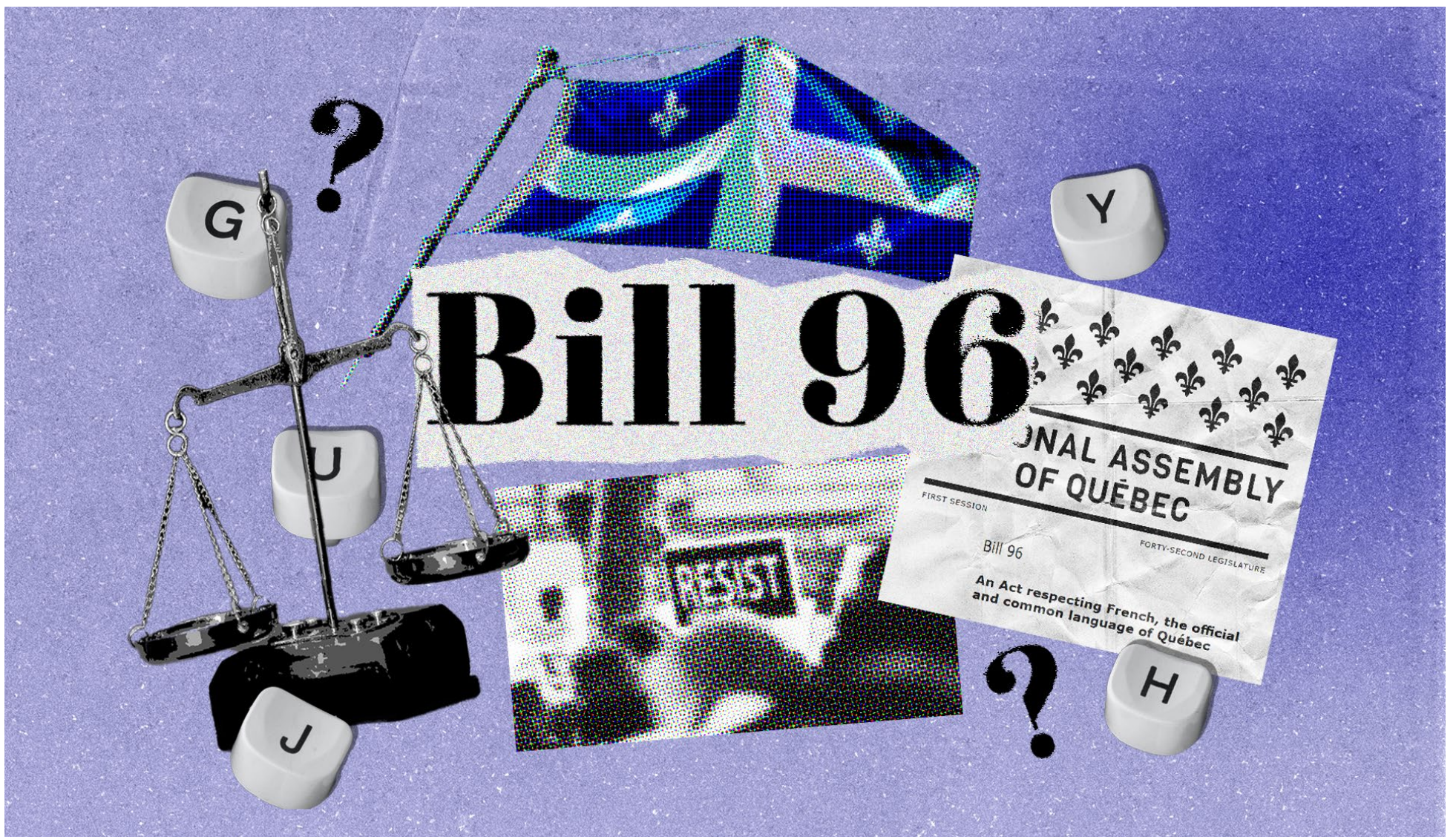
The general assembly will elect the DPS Board of Directors for the 2024-2025 year.

DPS Directors meet at least once a month to discuss the management of both Le Délit and The McGill Daily and get to vote on important decisions related to the DPS’s activities.

The annual financial statements and the report of the public accountant are available at the office of the DPS and any member may, on request, obtain a copy free of charge.

Questions?

Send email to: chair@dailypublications.org



Hyeyoon Cho | Visuals Contributor

On Fleeting Form Studio's First Workshop

Discussing the intersection between art, activism, and the environment

Evelyn Logan
Radio Editor

On September 6, Fleeting Form Studio held their first workshop in a warm, bookish room in the Critical Media Lab at Peterson Hall. The atmosphere was laden with warmth, hinting to its occupants what was to come. As the workshop began, the room filled with excited chatter as attendees fed into this eclectic learning space. Black and white checkered floor tiles, walls of bookshelves, windows ajar, and warm lighting from well-lit lamps set a tone of openness that welcomed all participants into the community.

Fleeting Form Studio is a workshop series formed by McGill students Ava Williams, Saskia Morgan, and Hannah Marder-MacPherson. The founders first met each other in FSCI 198 – a class on the climate crisis and climate action – where they formulated the idea for this project. The goal of the workshop series is to provoke discussions about changing the way McGill students think of climate activism, and to nurture the community around the visual arts at McGill. I went to the first workshop hoping to learn more about textiles from the featured artist, Tina Marais, and came out with so much more. One week later, I met with the founders of



Ava Hoover | Photos Contributor

Fleeting Form Studio to talk more about their process and the series as a whole.

This interview has been edited for clarity and concision.

Evelyn Logan for The McGill Daily (MD): When did you begin to draw parallels between climate action and art?

“We find there’s never any action [in response to the climate crisis] that’s centered around creation. So that’s where the art comes in, because it’s very much about creation, and it’s very positive, inspiring, and unifying.”

– Hannah Marder-MacPherson

Was that always a part of your project or did it come later?

Saskia Morgan (SM): We came up with this project – which was absolutely guided by our professors and TAs – where we would invite artists who were all already working at this interesting nexus between climate action and art. [These artists] could come and speak about what they’re doing and how their art is transformative – and how it should be seen as more than just beautiful. We also made this to address both the lack of fine arts at McGill, and the lack of emotive ways of learning about the climate crisis.

Ava Williams (AW): I’ve always heard of climate change deemed as a wicked problem. The solution is hard to find because it’s a convergence of larger issues that have been created over a long time. Some include colonialism and extractivism and [other] really deep-

seated, systemic problems. And if you’re just learning [about this problem] intellectually and technically, it’s solely information and facts. Which is harder to internalize and make sense of the scale of the problem. How can we make sense of it in a way that makes sense to us as people? Art. Art is a very human thing. And so I think for me, it’s a lot about making sense of it.

Hannah Marder-MacPherson (HMM): With all of us being environment students, we’re learning about climate action from a particular lens. Something that dominates our focus is that we learn a lot about our own destruction, and it’s very negative. Then, the corresponding response to that is often limitation, which is not tangible and is also still very negative and directionless. We find there’s never any action [in response to the climate crisis] that’s

centered around creation. So that’s where the art comes in, because it’s very much about creation, and it’s very positive, inspiring, and unifying.

MD: Why did you choose Tina Marais as the first artist in your series? What stood out to you about her work?

SM: Just by going down a rabbit hole I stumbled upon Tina, and I found the piece that she explored the most in this workshop: The Entangled Materiality of Water. I was absolutely struck by this work because it was not just about climate change, which so often is too broad [of a topic] to really get a sense of, but instead, specifically about water and how much water is within the fabrics that make our second skin. It also [raises the questions] how many hands touch the clothes that are on us now? How do we take for granted something that we paid \$15 for?

AW: [Mirais] said one

thing in an interview that I wanted to repeat: everything is made of the same molecules, but in different arrangements. How it just so happens that we as humans have a lot of power over the other arrangements. And she talks a lot about non-human and human interactions, which is going to be a huge thing in the series.

MD: Can you speak a little bit about the lack of fine arts programming at McGill? How has it affected you? How do you feel like your workshop is... [*The group breaks out into laughter*]

SM: You're preaching to the choir.

HHM: I was just going to say, I feel like the arts in general draw upon a different type of knowledge and a different type of thinking. Now, I don't think this is unique to just McGill, but I feel like a lot of institutions that are more prestigious tend to fall into that pit of promoting science and engineering. There isn't a recognition that these other

types of thinking and creating are just as valuable and are actually very compatible with more scientific pursuits, and they shouldn't be separated. A large part of our project is working towards interdisciplinary thinking.

SM: Another thing that we're trying to do with this workshop is not only bring something that a lot of people here may just be missing but also to make art more accessible. We're so lucky that the Sustainable Projects Fund has helped us basically provide free materials for every participant. We're limited to the amount of people who can come, but the act of being able to touch materials that you may not be able to otherwise is so important.

The next Fleeting Form Studio workshop will be centered around photography and will take place on October 4. To stay up to date with the workshop series, follow the project on Instagram at @fleeting_form_studio.

“When I reflect on the cloth of the garments that we wear, metaphorically unravelling it back to threads and fibres, imagining the fragmented traces of the production process of textile, imprinted in its transformative story. How does the body leave traces on the cloth of our garments, and its industry on our environment? Our livelihood is entangled with fragile water ecosystems. Does cloth contain traces of the memory of water that formed its fibres and structural process?”

- Tina Marais



Ava Hoover | Photos Contributor

Why Pop Music is Thriving Again

We can't separate recession pop from queer pop

Isabella Roberti
Culture Staff Writer

Some may say that “brat summer” is over, but the hypnotic effect it had on our collective consciousness has only begun to usher in a new, yet familiar era of popular culture. For the first time, Gen Z is experiencing the magic of “recession pop”: the dancey, upbeat, electronic and over-the-top music that comes as a reaction to economic limitations brought about by a recession. But the social awareness of Gen Z is giving this cultural phenomenon a new, more immediately inclusive angle, as opposed to the recession pop of the late 2000s. Older recession pop tended to be adopted by queer communities in hindsight, and at a much lower profile. However this time, an immediate link has been drawn between recession pop and the queer spaces that embrace it. So, what exactly are “queer pop” and “recession pop,” and why should we care?

There is an entire cultural language behind queer pop music that cannot be reduced to queer people simply singing about being queer. It's for that reason that earlier this year, Jojo Siwa came under fire, and rightfully so, for her comments about “creating” the genre of gay pop, and doing “what had never been done before.” There are queer artists who pioneered the aesthetics of the genre and were queer themselves, like David

examples of what actual allyship and advocacy look like: using one's platform to promote queer artists and imagery regardless of consequences to publicity, and regardless of whether or not something is palatable for the industry. It's the difference between artists now merely saying they support queer rights versus what that support would've signified based on social context in the past. For instance in the 1980s, Madonna spoke openly in support of queer people at the height of the AIDS crisis, doing so even before America's conservative president Ronald Regan.

Now, charli xcx, with her torn-up T-shirts, visible bras, mini-skirts, and club-style production, has entered this elite universe of pop girls. But what makes charli xcx especially iconic among queer audiences is her lexicon of references and associations. Her association and frequent collaboration with the late, great trans producer SOPHIE is widely known, with charli xcx paying tribute to her multiple times on *brat* in honour of her influence and passing. She has also collaborated with Troye Sivan, an openly queer artist, many times, including on her most recent remix of *brat*'s “Talk Talk.” They are also currently co-headlining the SWEAT tour in North America. Charli xcx's influences also reside in underground culture and counterculture, a sort of numinous space pioneered by and for queer people.

Chappell Roan is another current queer pop heavyweight, whose image



Eliana Freelund | Culture Editor

Louisville, Kentucky this past June.

What charli xcx and Chappell offer is ultimately a hedonistic rebuttal of the self-pitying and watered-down pop music that has been dominating the charts, which queer pop music has always been about. Freedom of identity becomes linked to musical freedom, with the sound of queer pop music intending for the listener to move their body and enjoy themselves, unconcerned with being taken seriously or rejected by the public. The terms “gay icon” and “gay pop” have far more to do with hedonistic, countercultural aesthetics, which sometimes intersect with actual queer text, more than many people realize. Lady Gaga's “Poker Face,” for example, is a dance club classic rife with excess, leather, and glitter that is actually about her fantasizing about women while having sex with men.

Gaga's 2009 track, and its accompanying album *The Fame Monster*, are an example of where queer pop intersects with recession pop. According to Dazed magazine, “Recession pop” first rose to prominence in the years surrounding the 2008 financial crisis, and refers to the fast, frenetic melodies and hooky lyricism that defines the music of recession periods, “colouring economic hardship with relentless optimism.” But the sound reflects more than an affective response to the economy; Diane Negra, professor of culture studies and co-editor of *Gendering the Recession*, calls it “a fulcrum moment after which many people rewrote the terms of their engagement with capitalism,” making it a cultural reconfiguration of capitalist hegemony as a whole.

The intersection of queer pop and recession pop is defined by excess, indulgence, club culture, and alternative aesthetics. It's the idea of idolizing cheap luxury and abundance as a way of aesthetically rebuking economic

and identity boundaries, and rejecting expectations outlined by hetero-capitalist society.

The period around the 2008 financial crisis saw a kind of unprecedented countercultural movement with albums like *The Fame Monster* and *Blackout*, which are now regarded as classics among queer audiences. They are examples of the connection between marginalized communities victim to

doesn't shy away from the contemporary moment. It isn't a recycled formula which tries far too hard to connect to marginalized audiences through unconventional aesthetics. *brat*, for instance, didn't come to be because it was sensing or jumping on a trend, economic or cultural; charli's style has been popular among alternative audiences for some time, and only during the current recession period has gained

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both classicism and homophobia, and the way that LGBTQ+ people are denied full participation in the economy. The ostracization of queer people and the middle class from popular culture during recessions causes pop music to cater itself to alternative spaces, relocating the nucleus of pop music into underground clubs and raves as opposed to stadium tours and awards shows.

As opposed to the retrospective lens through which recession pop and its connection to queer culture from the late 2000s is viewed, young people today, more aware of their socio-economic milieu than ever, are actually able to detect the “silent recession” we are in through the indications provided by pop music. The world does not need to openly be in crisis for recession to be considered so, as we continue to globally suffer from post-pandemic economic decline in what is being called a “silent depression.”

The newness and self-awareness of this particular iteration of recession pop is what attracts it to queer audiences: its nostalgia factor is authentic, and it

mainstream popularity. Just listen to 2020's *how i'm feeling now*, with the hard-hitting hyperpop intro of “pink diamond,” which embodies the same ideals as *brat* but was recorded at the very beginning of the pandemic, before we could even process its affective and economic impact.

What this self-aware, queer-oriented era of recession pop tells us is that culture has finally caught up to visionaries like charli xcx and Chappell Roan. Artists like Tove Lo, Kim Petras, and Ayesha Erotica are all LGBTQ women who have been releasing BRAT-like electropop music since the mid-2010s. All of them take influence from 2000s icons like Britney and Gaga and have long been overlooked commercially, but have always been embraced by queer audiences. However, it just may be that the state the global economy has put us in has finally necessitated this kind of energy that has been embraced by queer people on the margins of society since the beginning of the 21st century.

These gay pop icons, or “mothers”, are perfect examples of what actual allyship and advocacy look like: using one's platform to promote queer artists and imagery regardless of consequences to publicity, and regardless of whether or not something is palatable for the industry.

Bowie, Elton John, and Freddie Mercury, among others. But what makes this genre of pop music queer is also its sonic trademarks, influence, association, and on many occasions, the direct recognition and appreciation of queer audiences.

Since the late 20th century, a litany of gay icons like Madonna, Britney Spears, Lady Gaga, and Beyonce have enjoyed popularity while also being embraced by queer communities. Their discographies have become defined by queer pop staples, such as unapologetic accounts of love, sex, and their own bodies – all while accompanied by sexy, glittery, high-fashion stage outfits and danceable electropop. These gay pop icons, or “mothers”, are perfect

exists at the intersection of queer aesthetics and text. She sings about being a lesbian from the perspective of authentic experience, which is especially resonant considering her comparatively conservative Midwestern upbringing. All the while, she pays homage to pillars of queer culture like John Waters. She's even dressed as the legendary 1980s drag queen Divine, who starred in most of his movies. Because of her upbringing secluded from queer spaces in the Midwest, Chappell also makes a conscious effort to bring her music and performances to parts of the US that aren't as inviting to queer performers. For instance, she performed in her Divine outfit at Kentuckiana pride in

Mapping Indigenous Stories at Mont-Royal

A review of the *Tiohtià:ke: Mapping Indigenous Stories* podcast launch

Raymond Johnson-Brown
Culture Contributor

Jamais Lu, in collaboration with Musique Nomade, has built a pathway into restoration with their latest project, *Tiohtià:ke: Mapping Indigenous Stories*. Under the artistic direction of Alexia Vinci, this initiative highlights the rich Indigenous heritage of Tiohtià:ke (Montreal) through the words of Indigenous authors, allowing us to connect not just to the stories but to the land itself as a living entity.

I had the privilege of attending the performance celebrating the launch on September 21, in which an actor and team of volunteers led us up Mont-Royal, immersing us in the stories that form the heart of this project. But it wasn't just about hearing the words; it was about feeling them through every step we took, with the earth beneath us and the sky above, making the experience deeply meaningful.

As we gathered at the Mordecai-Richler Pavilion, we were met by volunteers wearing orange T-shirts – a reminder of the legacy of residential schools and a commitment to the promise that every child matters. The pavilion had been filled with bannock, jams, and homemade berry punch for attendees. There was an openness in the air – people were



Raymond Johnson-Brown | Visuals Contributor

sharing stories of what brought them to the event, and why these kinds of gatherings are so important. As for me, I took a moment to acknowledge the power of community: of coming together not just to witness, but to meaningfully engage in something larger than ourselves.

During the launch, I had the chance to speak with the artistic director Alexia Vinci, and explore

our shared Mi'kmaq identities. There's something deeply grounding about those kinds of chance encounters – discovering similarities and differences between my being from Millbrook, and Alexia from Gespeg. We reflected on our variety of experiences, and how that diversity of perspective has enriched our collective understanding of what it means to be Indigenous on these lands. We found that these stories are present in all Indigenous peoples who call this place home.

I especially appreciated how the *Tiohtià:ke: Mapping Indigenous Stories* project honours both our land-based traditions and our oral histories, weaving the two together throughout various texts. These texts, written by six different Indigenous authors, offer perspectives on Tiohtià:ke/Montreal that challenge what we might know about these lands. Following earlier iterations in 2022 and 2023, the project has now expanded into a podcast series, co-produced with Musique Nomade. As of September 21 two podcasts, *Sous les branches du pin blanc* (*Under the Branches of the White Pine*) from Moira-Uashteskun Bacon and *L'étoile du jour* (*The Star of the Day*) from Jocelyn Sioui, are available online for all to experience. (But even so, there's something special about hearing them while being on the very land they speak about that can't quite be matched.)

Our journey up Mont-Royal was more than a walk; it reminded me of land-based ceremonies at home. As we moved between stops, we listened

to the actor give voice to the stories from the second podcast – Jocelyn Sioui's *L'étoile du jour* (*The Star of the Day*). Even when I couldn't grasp every word due to the language barrier, the tone and raw emotion of the actor's performance transcended

I would encourage listening to [these podcasts] while walking through your own landscapes – whether up Mont-Royal like we did, or through any place that holds meaning for you. There's power in engaging with these stories while moving physically across the land, allowing them to shape your experience in real time.

language and I felt connected to something much deeper – something that spoke to the land, to our shared histories, and to the invisible threads that braid us all together.

While I had the privilege of being accompanied by a fellow, bilingual McGill student who helped translate parts of the text, it's clear that these performances weren't merely to be heard, but to be felt. You don't need perfect linguistic comprehension to engage with them: sometimes, letting go of the need to understand every word opens you up to a fuller experience, as I felt it did in my case.

Another important aspect of the experience was connecting with other attendees who were not Indigenous. It was powerful to hear their reflections on how this project impacted them and

about their respective roles in reconciliation. Relationships and connections are essential to our worldview, and this experience showed me just how much can be gained from these spaces – how storytelling and connection can foster new understandings and growth amidst fractured relations.

Although the live performances introducing this project are over, the podcasts are still available to be listened to at any time. I would encourage listening to them while walking through your own landscapes – whether up Mont-Royal like we did, or through any place that holds meaning for you. There's power in engaging with these stories while moving physically across the land, allowing them to shape your experience in real time.

As an Indigenous anglophone in Quebec, I often feel like I'm navigating two worlds. There's a duality to my experience here, and one that can feel isolating at times. But projects like *Tiohtià:ke: Mapping Indigenous Stories* remind me that there is strength in choosing to participate in these collective events anyway, even when I couldn't fully understand the language of

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the performance. There is power in sitting with discomfort, in letting the land and the stories speak to us in ways that go beyond words.

Sovereignty, after all, is not just about asserting our rights over land – it's about Indigenous people reclaiming our right to experience and engage fully with the world around us. By connecting with these podcasts, you wouldn't just be listening to stories: you'll be actively participating in an act of restoring sovereignty, an act of connection – an act of healing. So take a walk, listen to their stories, and see what they awaken in you: moment by moment, story by story.

To listen to both podcasts, visit www.nikamowin.com.



Courtesy of Jamais Lu and Musique Nomade

Spicy Fall Bakes

Two easy recipes to welcome the season

The weather is getting colder – time to fire up your ovens and break out the spices! Here are two cozy, comforting recipes you can bake to get in the mood for the upcoming spooky season.

Banana Spice Muffins

These muffins are a perfect way to use some old bananas! They're light and fluffy, and pack a spicy punch. Enjoy them with a mug of coffee or a homemade chai for the ultimate fall morning experience.

You will need...

Dry Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups of flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- ¾ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- ¾ tsp. ginger
- ½ tsp. allspice
- ½ tsp. nutmeg
- ½ tsp. cloves

Wet Ingredients:

- ½ cup melted butter
- ½ cup white sugar
- ¼ cup packed brown sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 3 very ripe bananas (mashed)
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract



Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit (180 degrees Celsius) and grease a standard muffin tin.
2. Mix together all the dry ingredients – combine well!
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together the butter and both sugars until the mixture becomes light and creamy. Then add the eggs, bananas, and vanilla and mix until smooth.
4. Add the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients and fold together until just combined – be careful not to overmix!
5. Divide the batter evenly into your muffin tin. Sprinkle the tops of your muffins with a bit of cinnamon sugar and bake for 18-20 minutes – or until a toothpick comes out clean.
6. Let them cool for 10 minutes, and enjoy!

Apfelkuchen

This easy apple cake is a staple for my German family. You can whip it up lighting fast (it is a blitzkuchen after all!) and enjoy the fruit of the season. Feel free to get creative and try out some different patterns with the apple topping!

You will need...

Dry Ingredients:

- 250 g. flour
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- A pinch of cinnamon

Wet Ingredients:

- 3 eggs
- 125 g. sugar
- 125 g. butter (softened)
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2-3 apples (peeled and sliced)

Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 200 °C (390 °F), then butter and flour a 26 cm pan.
2. Sift together all your dry ingredients into a small bowl until well combined.
3. In a separate bowl, use an electric mixer to whisk the eggs and sugar together for about 10 minutes, until the mixture has tripled in volume and turned light yellow in colour. Then add your butter and vanilla.
4. Carefully fold your dry ingredients into the wet ingredients, being careful not to deflate the eggs or overmix. Add the batter to your prepared pan and line the top with your sliced apples.
5. Bake for 50-55 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean. Let cool for 10 minutes, then remove from the pan and enjoy!

