Return to Analog
the allure of physical stuff in a digital world
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There’s no denying technology has made our day-to-day easier. Smartphones have condensed the capabilities of numerous tools into one handheld device and skills that previously took years to master can be tightly summed up in a two-minute Youtube tutorial. Interactions with the digital world are inevitable, but more and more we see people pulled toward the tangible, analog items of the past.

It’s debatable that a film photo really looks better, or an album on vinyl has an additional warmth to it, but long after technology should have made these formats obsolete, they continue to survive and in some cases, thrive.

Human beings have a natural predisposition to all things analog. We still touch things with our hands, making the act of turning the page of our favourite novel that much more exciting. Loading up a new album on vinyl is more of an experience than just tapping play on your phone. There’s an imperfect, yet unforgettable quality to a film photograph that any smartphone filter just can’t replicate. There’s even a nostalgic quality to this very magazine, as news online has never been more accessible than it is today.

While the term “analog” may be more precisely used in relation to electronics, we decided to use it as a catch-all category. Within this issue, we wanted to embrace the modern Luddite — those who could do things the easy way, but choose instead to keep the rituals of the past alive, regardless of if everyone else considers them the “good old days.” From the hand-drawn animators, to friends who gather around a table to play roleplay games, to Calgary buildings which act as a time capsule for a different period, we wanted to capture the appeal of the past, and look at its place for the future.

It may be hard to sum up the appeal of a book over a tablet, or a record over an MP3, but there’s an old-school spirit that thrives in our city - one we hope to capture through this issue, our look at the modern Luddites’ return to analog.

We asked our editors to bring in their favourite analog items and tell us why the still hang on to these pieces of the past.

BADRIA ABUBAKER, BLACK HISTORY EDITOR
My Michael Jackson Scream record was something given to me by my older cousin back when I was 15. I’ve kept it ever since and whenever I want to listen to Michael Jackson, I only ever listen to him on this record. There is a nostalgic feel and authenticity whenever I listen and it takes me back to when my cousin gave me this record and the stories she would tell me about Jackson, his music and his iconic dancing. Although I do have his music downloaded on Apple Music, this record is something I will cling to for the rest of my life.

CURTIS LARSON, TECH EDITOR
The croaking voice of my grandfather warbles from this old tape whenever I can dig up a deck capable of playing it. In soft tones he reads Petey the Snake to my older brother, making up his own little sound effects. The audio was transferred years ago, but the tape holds some power still. He was obsessed with putting labels on anything around his house — using an ancient drop-in component for his typewriter — every time I look at the front of the tape and see Petey the Snake across the front of it, I am reminded of him.

COLIN MACGILLIVRAY, CITY EDITOR AND EDITOR IN CHIEF
To me, chess pieces from my first chess set are more than just delicate statuettes used to maneuver across a multi-shaded square board. They’re tangible figurines that remind me of cold afternoons, huddled over a coffee table with my dad, hyper-focused on staying three moves ahead of him. Outside of sports, my dad and I have never really had an activity in which we could sit down and bond over. Playing video games was fun, but it was difficult to really create lasting memories after being bombarded with kinetic lights and twitchy movements. Chess gave us both a time to bond and get to know each other better, strengthening our relationship in the process and our love for an ageless game.

THOMAS BOGDA, A&E EDITOR
A camera is just a tool to get pictures, and I wouldn’t say I take particularly good care of my tools. My old Polaroid is another story though. While it may not be in great shape — you have to really pry it to get it open, and I still need to fix a thing or two — there’s motivation to keep it in good shape. It’s a remnant of the 1970s, for one, but it’s also a complete object. You have to fiddle with it, spend time with it, and then the photo comes out of the same box. This process really builds a connection to it, and for some reason, makes shooting with it a big deal. A fun deal.
ALEXANDRA NICHOLSON, PHOTO EDITOR
I chose my favourite book, *Six Of Crows* by Leah Bardugo. This is a physical hard copy first edition with limited-edition black edged pages. When I am reading a physical book I feel so much closer to the characters because it is so much more than text on a screen. The feel of the pages and the ability to shut the book dramatically if something intense happened is so much more fun than closing a tab on a tablet. Books may be heavier but they have intricate art or unique features you can't get online — like the black edged pages.

ANDI ENDRUHN, FRONT AND TRENDY 7 EDITOR
I'm bad with film cameras. I always overexpose, or my shaky hands will blur the image — but when I pulled this Rolleiflex out of a box of junked cameras at my grandmother's house, it was love at first sight. The clunkiness in the process, the waiting for my (admittedly terrible) photos to be printed and the patience it requires me to have when all I want is instant gratification drives me crazy. It feels entirely wrong looking down into the viewfinder that's perpetually covered in dust, and the sticky shutter button catches me off guard every time. I don't think I've ever taken a good picture yet, but I've never had more fun.

SHELBY DECHANT, SPORTS EDITOR
Picture this: a sleepy Sunday morning, a fresh cup of coffee, breakfast cooking, pajamas and slippers on. What makes this morning different than any other is the soundtrack of Billie Holiday playing in the background on the record player. This record represents my down time, my time where I don't need to be on my computer, I don't need to be at work, all I have to do is make my pancakes, drink my coffee and sing along to Billie.

ALEC WARKENTIN, PRODUCTION AND DESIGN EDITOR
It's simple, to write about the tangibility of a tried-and-true, cover-to-cover, book. That pulpy, lived-in library smell. Lines of text — maybe paired with pictures — faded, bolded, italicized, underlined, struck, split up or parsed out, marching in formation on crisp, smooth pages.

It's harder to write about how a book feels — the way it stands defiant in the face of digitization, lit up in the glow of phones, tablets and screens.

A cliché to admit, perhaps, but I read (and re-read) Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* in my first year of university, thumbing through in-between classes and on long train rides to the bookstore I was also working at.

It felt somehow liberating, reading those hundred-year-old words on dog-eared pages while ignoring the buzzing of the phone in my pocket.

In hindsight, it was equal parts goofy and reaffirming, but I'm sure I thought at that point that if that single book could last as long as it did in the post-secondary ethos, so could I.

NATHAN KUNZ, CITY EDITOR AND EDITOR IN CHIEF
I wish I could say I have a keen ear for detail, but I really can't tell much of a difference between digital music and vinyl. The draw for me instead comes from the experience vinyl offers — from crate-digging afternoons in record stores, to the physical drop of the needle and the fuzz of the first few seconds, there seems to be more value in listening to an album in this format than off of a YouTube rip.

This album, *Lift Your Skinny Fists Like Antennas to Heaven* by Godspeed You! Black Emperor has helped me through several day long essay sessions and study-cramming evenings. The double-album format often forces me to take a second to flip the record or switch to the second disk, often right as I need that break — something you don't get with the cold autoplay format of a digital version.

SIMRAN SACHAR, DIGITAL EDITOR
Music is one of the most important things to me in my life! Everyone knows there are so many more easily accessible ways to listen to music that don't involve a record player — and it's not even that it sounds too different. But I can't let go of some of my vinyls — my collection is always growing. I think it's because I really do love music so much, I want it on different platforms in my life. Maybe it's because of my huge dance background? I always notice there are obvious, different sounds that come out of your headphones versus when you play the song over a big speaker, so I think there are different sounds that come out of having a record as well.

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early a year after the federal government introduced sweeping changes to impaired driving laws, experts and advocates say they remain worried about the power the new legislation gives police.

Under the new law, police can give mandatory alcohol screenings to anyone they stop and can charge people up to two hours after they’ve finished driving.

While these provisions have been added to prevent common defences to impaired driving charges, Ian Savage, a criminal defence lawyer and president of the Calgary based Criminal Defence Lawyers Association says the laws are too broad.

“No law should be wide open such that it captures a potential wide range of innocent people in the net that it attempts to capture the guilty people,” says Savage.

Bill C-46, which received royal assent on June 21, 2018, consists of two parts — the second of which deals with impaired driving.

Under this new legislation, which went into effect on Dec. 18, 2018, language has been changed to prohibit being at or over the legal limit of 80 milligrams of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood, or at or over 0.08, within two hours of driving rather than at the time of driving.

These changes, along with the addition of authorizing police officers with an approved screening device to carry out mandatory alcohol screenings, have led to concerns regarding possible scenarios in which police could act unconstitutionally.

One such scenario offered by Savage is the possibility of screening a driver at a bar or at home within the two hour limit, despite having consumed the alcohol after driving.

“That’s an extreme scenario, but in theory, it is open to that happening now,” explains Savage. “That’s simply ridiculous and unconstitutional.”

This expanded time frame aims to prevent defences of “bolus” drinking, in which drivers attempt to reach their destination after consuming alcohol but before absorbing the alcohol into their system, as well as the “intervening drink defence,” in which drivers argue they consumed alcohol in the intervening time between an incident and the testing.

Sharon Polsky, vice president of the Rocky Mountain Civil Liberties Association says she has similar concerns to Savage regarding the Bill’s effect on Canadians’ individual rights.

“This has been a progression over time,” says Polsky. “[Bill C-46], like so many others, is chipping away at our individual freedoms.”
Polsky, who cites Statistics Canada’s reports of decreasing fatal collisions over the past decade, says the legislation acts upon unfounded fears based around the safety of roads in Canada.

“The messaging is, from a very strong lobby, that the police have to have these powers to protect the children,” says Polsky. “I have searched for a better way of describing it, but it has been a propaganda campaign.”

THE LAW IN ACTION

Cst. Andrew Fairman with the Calgary Police Service Traffic Section, however, says Bill C-46 hasn’t much changed the way Calgary police operate.

According to Fairman, the Bill’s inclusion of an exception for anyone who had no reason to expect an alcohol test within the two hour period acts as a safeguard for unconstitutional use of the legislation by police.

“There has to have been something that would make you reasonably believe that the police would want to talk to you,” says Fairman. “So it’s only going to be done if you ran from a collision, or you ran over a pedestrian or something like that.”

“We don’t have the authority to just randomly decide that we’re going to walk over to this bar and we watched five vehicles drive into there and then go into the bar and start testing people.”

If such a scenario were to occur, however, Fairman says the onus would be on the individual to prove they were not intoxicated when operating the vehicle.

Fairman says the largest change so far has been through mandatory alcohol screenings carried out by traffic section officers at every stop, regardless of what prompted it. This measure was introduced to maintain unbiased testing through the legislation. Traffic section officers, as explained by Fairman, are often identifiable through motorcycles in warmer months as well as unmarked vehicles. On any given day, Fairman says roughly eight-to-10 traffic section officers are on duty.

In addition, Fairman says police have always had the authority under the Alberta Traffic Safety Act to pull over any vehicle to check for documents. Bill C-46 only adds the roadside screening device to the process.

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—Sharon Polsky

The CEO of MADD Canada Andrew Murie says the organization supports the legislation, adding that MADD has campaigned for mandatory screenings in Canada for close to 10 years.

“Since it was introduced in Australia in the 1980s, and going across the world, it has had a significant impact on decreasing the number of people killed and impaired driving crashes,” says Murie. “We expect, minimum in 2019, to save about 200 lives.”

Canada is the latest of several countries which have introduced mandatory alcohol screenings, including Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

According to Murie, misinterpretation of the language involved in the bill has led to confusion surrounding what can and can’t be done through Bill C-46.

“Unfortunately, when it was launched in December, a lot of people misunderstood the bill and when police could use these new powers,” says Murie. “You had a lot of comments from lawyers, which were, in my opinion, fear-mongering and making the situation a lot worse than what could actually be done under the current law.”

It’s likely there will be challenges to the law. Already, Savage says a number of clients have come to him to seek representation in pleading not guilty to charges related to Bill C-46. The first court dates, according to Savage, will likely take within the coming months.
A SALVAGEABLE FEAST
Are Calgarians doing enough to curb the national food waste problem?

COLIN MACGILLIVRAY
cmacgillivray@journal.ca
Since its introduction in 2016, Calgary’s green cart program has reduced the amount of food and yard waste ending up in landfills by 50 per cent. “It’s huge when it comes to reducing our greenhouse gas emissions,” says Laura Hamilton, a waste diversion specialist with the City of Calgary, explaining that diverting food waste away from landfills causes the reduction.

The program, which separates organic waste from traditional trash, along with new food and yard waste bylaws and food waste bylaws for businesses, have all been a success.

But despite this local success, Canada’s food waste problem is one of the worst in the world. A 2019 report by Second Harvest, a Toronto agency that collects surplus food and distributes it to various other organizations in need, suggests that approximately 58 per cent of all food produced in Canada — 35.5 million tonnes — is wasted, while a third of that wasted food is salvageable and could be sent to communities in need across the country.

The report found the value of all food lost or wasted in Canada is an astonishing $49 billion, while, on average, there is $1,766 of avoidable food loss and waste per household.

Rob Ironside, an environmental engineer and director of social enterprise for the LeftOvers Foundation in Calgary — an agency that rescues food from being thrown in the garbage and ensures it gets to service agencies in need — says that the food waste problem can be managed, but it relies on everyone working towards a common goal.

“It’s a very, very manageable problem, but it’s just at a scale now that nobody is offering a real solution to it,” says Ironside. “It’s not like we need to discover something, or come up with this new huge model. Somebody needs to just show up and grab it and do something with it.”

In terms of prevention, Ironside says that consumers need to be incredibly conscious when purchasing food, explaining that although green carts and mandatory composting is a step in the right direction, it’s not a perfect solution.

“Before, if your only option was to throw food out into the garbage, you’d feel more guilty about it,” says Ironside. “Now, because you can compost it, you could say ‘I’m doing a good thing, I’m composting.’ When in reality, you’re still contributing waste to the entire process for about 200 grams of fertilizer.”

Ironside says this lackadaisical attitude towards food waste, especially in an era in which city-wide composting exists, almost lets consumers off the hook, despite being the biggest contributors to the problem.

“Everyone usually thinks that it must be restaurants or grocery stores who are the number one culprit, but it’s consumers,” says Ironside. “Overall, we waste approximately 50 per cent of food that’s either grown in or imported into Canada, and half of that half comes from consumers buying perfectly good food, bringing it home, forgetting about it and throwing it out.”

While LeftOvers primarily focuses on diverting salvageable food to not-for-profit agencies like Inn from the Cold — helping them offset a food cost so they can focus on their other programs — and keeping good food out of landfills, they have also recently launched a mobile food truck service that Ironside describes as an “affordable grocery store,” in which they can address food insecurity in the city.

“You’re not going to solve food insecurity by just throwing a day-old baked good at someone.”

— Rob Ironside

According to Ironside, bringing affordable groceries to a community in need, rather than the other way around, is “how you legitimately tackle the issue.”

Yet, it seems that diverting food that would otherwise go to waste and distributing it to those who are lacking food security would be a straightforward solution to both problems. However, Ironside suggests that it’s not as simple as it may seem.

“You can’t just walk up to people that are hungry and offer them free food,” says Ironside. “You’re not going to solve food insecurity by just throwing a day-old baked good at someone.”

Ultimately, Ironside believes that to solve these issues, food needs to be re-evaluated on a global scale.

“In a country where we have billionaires — people with multiple properties, their own jets — the fact that approximately one in 10 Canadians, on a weekly basis, are struggling to balance paying rent and buying nutritious groceries, is a failure of our economy. That is just ridiculous, he says.”

“I understand that we’re going to live in a world where there is homelessness and there are billionaires no matter what we do, but the fact that there are four million Canadians who struggle with this shows that it is a flawed system.”

Despite these flaws, Ironside believes that proper food education is a must, something that both Hamilton and Fabrizio Bertolo, manager of Waste and Recycling for the town of Cochrane agree on, despite the different sizes of their municipalities.

“Communication, food education and continuing to try to reach all of the different personalities is key in trying to reduce food waste, regardless of where you live,” says Bertolo, who has worked with the Town of Cochrane on their Zero Waste Framework.

The initiative started in 2012, with the town hoping to divert 80 per cent of their waste from the landfill by 2020. So far, they have diverted 60 per cent through composting programs similar to those in place in Calgary. That said, Bertolo acknowledges that curbing food waste is not something that can be done overnight.

“We know it takes a while, but we need to start somewhere,” says Bertolo.

As per the City of Calgary, “food waste is definitely on our radar,” with Hamilton saying that school tours of their composting facility, public presentations and direct interactions with residents will continue as Calgary looks to further food waste initiatives in the future, with an audit planned for next year where they will analyze the food waste that has come in since the initiative started.

As Hamilton, Ironside and Bertolo all recognize the food waste problem, they encourage residents to do their part by only buying what they need, freezing food rather than tossing it into the compost and trying to be extra conscious of their food waste.

“It’s really hard to get people to change their behaviour,” says Ironside. “I live and breathe food waste and I still throw out food. I still mess up. It’s really hard to be disciplined about it, but it’s super important to have these systems in place at home to ensure you’re not throwing out food that doesn’t have to be”
The power and psychology of analog entertainment

Everyone knows vinyl is back. Books have always been here. Some people even treat these products as rituals. But why are people obsessed with owning their own stuff?

Vinyl is special for Callum Stewart because it makes the act of listening to music a big deal. When his friends are over, they have to flip through the stacks, pick and pull out the record and drop the needle. From there, it’s only full albums, Stewart says. No singles.

“A big part of it for me is the ritual,” he says.

Even picking out a record at a store is its own fun. Amy Gulliver, a customer at Inglewood’s Recordland, says she likes to “make an adventure of it instead of just sitting at home, clicking.” Other customers agree.

“There’s a certain warm feeling about it, and a certain happy feeling that you get from throwing on this physical thing,” says Al Cohen, Recordland’s owner.

Indeed, a study conducted on vinyl by Dominik Bartmanski and Ian Woodward, a pair of professors in Europe interested in the sociology behind the rebirth of vinyl, described the process of selecting and playing a record as a ritualistic experience — dropping the needle has a tangible and immersive effect on how we interact with the music, something Stewart agrees with. But that feeling isn’t limited to music. “It’s about being able to flip the pages,” says Tami Neilson, co-owner of the used book store Fair’s Fair.

“It’s being able to hold the book in your hands. You could hug a book. You could share a book … People come in here, they take a deep breath and they smell the books.”

The draw of the physical leads to a community and culture too. Neilson notes that lots of readers operate off recommendations from friends, and the interaction creates a readerly comradesy. She says she’s practically seen family reunions in front of the store desk.

One of the main draws to another analog activity, board games, is social too, according to Randy Wong, co-owner of Hexagon Board Game Café.

Gamers gather at Hexagon’s Dungeons & Dragons on Tuesday nights to continue their campaign with their own group. Cafe regular Andrew Rigby says he likes changing groups, building new stories and characters.

Hexagon’s Dungeons & Dragons nights on Tuesdays can draw between 30 and 40 people. And yet, D&D’s enjoyment only comes from the imagination, a few character sheets and a set of dice. One of their volunteer dungeon masters,
Ben Rowe, says part of the draw is the physical. “There’s people who like rolling the dice,” he says. “That’s a pretty iconic part of the game, but you can have apps on your phone that will roll the dice for you because it’s just numbers. But so many people like the tactile nature of actually having a pair of dice and rolling them across the table.”

He adds the biggest draws were the freedom for imagination in the game, and the “by necessity” social aspect. Changes to D&D’s accessibility over time has increased the popularity of the game too, he says, making this the most popular era for the game since the ’80s.

“In the end, it’s really no different than having a poker night,” Rowe says.

Vinyl, on the other hand, has a set history in its tangibility, according to Bartmanski and Woodward. The heritage of pop and rock on vinyl and turntables in electronic and hip hop imbue the physical object with history, they said. Consider too that those records often pass through different hands and second-hand markets.

The constant cycle of store shelf to home shelf and back in the second-hand market builds a relationship the researchers thought energized the culture through cities and record stores. “They’re important in the way that they hold a piece of people’s heart inside every single one,” Cohen says of records. “Every single record — I have a thousand records here — and every single one of them has a story.”

However, another study on psychological ownership and music streaming in the Journal of Business Research a couple years later found that people were, predictability, on the side of nostalgia and practicality. They like the experience of physical media, but won’t shirk streaming apps that they can scroll through for the perfect song.

Cohen and his customer, Stewart, argue that Spotify was a way for discovery, and the biggest fans of music would eventually pick up the vinyl once they find something on the app they like. But it’s hard to ignore the age of practicality and its influence on how people consume their products. The same study found that people were moving their allegiances away from bands and musicians toward streaming apps. A Jay-Z fan, for example, would be too loyal to Spotify to switch to the rapper’s own streaming service, Tidal, just for his music.

So why does the physical still persist despite the practicality and availability of online media? Why do books and vinyl and board games still thrive?

“We get given things when we’re kids and then it’s ours,” Neilson explains. “I think people want to feel like they have ownership over something.”
Amanda Forbis and Wendy Tilby’s Ingelwood home studio is a lot like their animation career — unassuming. It’s very textural and very modest. Yet the pair have shared a more-than modest career mostly out of this home. Their animated short films for the National Film Board (NFB), *When the Day Breaks* and *Wild Life* were nominated for Oscars in 1999 and 2011, respectively, while the former won Best Short Film at the Cannes Film Festival. They’ve animated commercials for General Motors to Suntory Water in Japan. And last year, they won the prestigious Winsor McCay Award for their lifetime contribution to animation.

So, with their recent collaboration with the Alberta Ballet in February and working on their next short film, Tilby and Forbis sat down with the Calgary Journal to share some insight into their remarkable career, and preen what it takes to be revolutionary animators on the small scale they’ve made for themselves.

Q: I’ve always felt it’s taken a particular childhood to be an artist. What were yours’ like?
Amanda Forbis: I think a critical thing that we share is that we’re both youngest children and thus you end up just not being so much a focus of your parents’ attention. Our parents were of a generation where they did not play with you and so we played on our own and spent a lot of time alone as kids.

Q: You were on your own a while before you guys started working together. Does it get hermetic?
Wendy Tilby: Yeah. Particularly because I was doing a technique called paint-on-glass, which was where you’re sitting under a camera with Plexiglas in front of you painting an image. You photograph a few frames and then manipulate the paint, repaint the characters or whatever it is that you’re animating ever so slightly in a different position, then you take two frames and paint again. So it’s like a performance. You’re just animating in real time destroying everything that came before. You don’t end up with a stack of drawings. We call it “straight-ahead animation.” I did that at school, and that’s extremely hermetic.

Q: Animation has the power to connect on a human level more so than live action sometimes. That’s a funny thing, isn’t it? It’s kind of a contradiction sometimes. If you wanted to show sexual abuse of children, you do it in animation because it’s intolerable in live action. You get some distance by doing it in animation. But if you want to draw people into a character, say, our pig, it’s much easier. You see that pig, you’re like, “I like her!” And with a human character, you have to work a lot more, especially in a short film. I think you’re really reluctant to engage with this character. You’re thinking, who is this? Why do I care? What are you doing? At least I have that response.

Q: And you guys like to add hyper-realistic elements too.
Wendy Tilby: Well, with *When the Day Breaks*, that comes from the video and the backgrounds. Sometimes you see the backgrounds coming through. The real street, the cars, all that sort of stuff. There was sort of a cinema verité thing about it that gave the city a reality that we liked or certainly suited that story. Then on *Wild Life*, the structure of the interviews with the characters –

Q: When you started together, you were printing images from video and painting on top. It’s very tangible. How did you first come across that style?
Wendy Tilby: Somebody in French animation at NFB in Montreal had a video printer for some reason. But I remember just seeing them somehow and just tried printing off some film footage on it and then photocopying those images and drawing on them. I thought, that’s kind of fun!

Q: Animation has the power to connect on a human level more so than live action sometimes.
Forbis: I don’t know if we ever fully articulated why we did that, even to ourselves [laughs]. We just kind of liked it.

Q: You were interested in documentary filmmaking, so maybe it just seeped in.
Wendy Tilby: Totally. The paradox is that animation is so hyper-controlled, as you really are in charge of every single
frame. And that’s appealing, but what’s great about documentary is you just go out and shoot stuff and then you’ve got your stuff to make something out of. You sort through it, and I love that process. I like the idea of just reacting to what you’ve already done, which animation usually isn’t but I think we’re trying to. I guess you can kind of call this a more experimental approach.

Forbis: Accidents are what you deprive yourself of in animation. It’s really hard to come up with something spontaneous and off the cuff. It’s not impossible, so that’s why I think you need to leave little openings for yourself to do things you didn’t plan because it’ll re-spark your excitement about it. It’s the unexpected.

Q: How do you go about capturing the human experience in animation?

Tilby: Animation is very good at that. Even in some ways more successfully than live action because there’s a shorthand to animation that you can get to the heart of something more quickly. Because sometimes it’s exaggerated, but you can describe it. You could take a most rudimentary stick figure and imbue it with all the emotion and heart and you could get the audience caring about what happens to that character really easily.

Q: How do you go about creating your voice?

Tilby: I don’t think you do. We’re not at all prolific, and partly because it’s animation. But even in animation terms we’re not prolific. I’m very slow. But it isn’t until you’ve made a few films that you realize, “Oh yeah, they’re all about the same thing.” You don’t set up to do that. You don’t set out to create a style or an oeuvre or anything like that. In fact, we always try to do something totally different. We think we’re doing something totally different. We don’t like to repeat the look of something or the kind of story — which we haven’t.

Q: How has your style changed over time?

Forbis: This idea that we’re working on now, we had ages ago and it’s been kind of sitting there. Obviously, it’s a different film now than it would have been 20 years ago. I don’t even know if it’s because of maturity, it’s just whatever is at the forefront of your mind that needs to be exercised at the time. There are things you wouldn’t do now that you did 20 years ago.

Q: And what about your method? You guys have said before the hand-painted process was grueling. Has the computer made a difference?

Forbis: It makes a big difference, but in a way, it’s a double-edged sword. What nearly sunk us in Wild Life was just the infinite number of possibilities that were never quite good enough. And so that’s why we went back to real paint then. I miss it. I miss the tactile, and the smell of it. The balancing of water. It was just so much more fun.

Q: You’ve done three productions with the Alberta Ballet. How did you first get involved with them?

Forbis: Actually, that’s really funny because we had neighbours next door and the guy was their technical director. So he just said to Jean Grand-Maitre [artistic director], “Oh, my neighbours are animators. Maybe you should talk to them,” which is so ridiculous. And so we did. The first production we did with them was Mozart’s Requiem, and we did projections for that which were really tricky and not a huge feature of the piece, but it was super fun.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.
Eddie Richardson is the president of Genesis Basketball, an NBA-affiliated club based in Calgary that provides high-level basketball training for youth, regardless of their socio-economic background. Richardson’s mission is to provide equal opportunities to kids that come from all walks of life, starting Genesis so that financial barriers would not stop a child from pursuing their dreams.

Raised by a single parent, Richardson understands how it feels to have limited opportunities, especially as a black teenager pursuing a career in basketball. Finding mentors that looked like him was not easy either.

“Being in Calgary in the ‘80s and ‘90s and playing basketball, there were not a lot of black people in the city. So there were not a lot of faces that I’d recognize and feel comfortable to turn to so finding role models was hard,” he says.

Being discriminated against and called racial slurs by his peers did not stop Richardson from taking his basketball career to the top. As one of SAIT and Mount Royal University’s star players, Richardson had scholarship offers from universities in Canada and the U.S., as well as a pro offer in Germany. After playing basketball for little over 10 years, Richardson decided to transition from player to coach, founding Genesis in 2006.

“I got together with a couple buddies and said, ‘How can we support these kids?’ So we raised funds to support one team of kids and trained them up at a high level and as the years went on, one team turned into being able to train about 28 teams.”

Richardson’s success with Genesis Basketball has allowed him to have a seat at the table, and become the role model to the youth that he never got to have. He teaches his students that success is in their own hands.

“I’ve worked through a lot to get to where I am and I still have a lot ahead of me,” he says. “I hope that my story inspires others to never settle and to push through adversity because anything is possible.”
Joyce Okunsi
CEO OF JOYCES CLOSET CONSIGNMENT BOUTIQUE

Joyce Okunsi’s love for fashion started when she was a little girl, when she was often found playing in her mother’s closet or digging through her fashion magazines. But it was not until eight years ago that she decided to shift careers and take her love for fashion seriously. In 2011 Okunsi started up Tall Freckled Fashionista, her personal fashion and lifestyle blog, which kickstarted her fashion career and allowed her to pursue fashion full time.

Not long after launching the blog, Okunsi started styling clients. That eventually led her to start-up her own business called Joyce’s Closet Boutique Consignment, an online store that provides personal styling, wardrobe consultation, personal shopping and offers dress rental services.

Okunsi, who was born in Nigeria, has had the opportunity to style clients like the U.S. Olympic bobsled team, but her success has not come without hardships. She emphasizes the struggle to find herself in the Calgary fashion scene.

“Trying to become a stylist in the city was hard, no one looked like me, it was hard to find other black women in fashion in Calgary," she says.

Although there were few role models Okunsi could identify with, she always had her mother to look up to who taught her to always be strong, ambitious and confident. Okunsi, a mother herself now, continues to live by her mom’s teachings even when she feels like an outsider.

“In fashion, I faced many barriers. I had to work twice as hard to prove my credibility as a stylist. Because I am a black woman, I was excluded from many things that I should have been a part of,” Okunsi says.

Before starting in fashion, Okunsi worked for the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society where she helped resettle and integrate newcomers. She says that the journey to success is not easy especially as a black woman, adding that there would be moments where you question your abilities and second guess yourself.

As a mother, Okunsi hopes that her hard work and perseverance will pave the way for her daughter’s future endeavors, and that she and other black girls will be judged by their skill set and not the colour of her skin. She advises aspiring stylists to never stop pursuing their dreams in fashion.

“I used hardships as a way to keep me motivated so that I could create my path,” Okunsi says. “I did not work hard to prove anything to anybody, but to prove to myself that I could do it and I didn’t need their validation to be successful.”

Beni Johnson is many things — the founder of 10at10 (an event and media platform dedicated to promoting the hip-hop scene in Calgary), a graphic designer, a recording artist, a spoken word artist and a black man raised Fort McMurray. Johnson was raised in one of the few black families in the community at the time and knew at a young age that being black was different.

“People were racist in their ways. If something does not look like you, people get afraid of it, so it was a combination of many things,” he says.

Johnson never let the stereotypes define him or restrict him from doing things he wanted to do.

“Whenever I was given a job or a task I would always try to be the most educated on it. I never wanted to feed into the stereotype of being that unethical black kid,” he says. “I was also on student council doing graphic design for the yearbook, and I designed the football team’s website — all while I was a captain of the basketball team, the volleyball team and football team.”

At 20, Johnson moved to Calgary for post-secondary and went on to graduate from SAIT with honours from the New Media and Production program all while pursuing his music career. Johnson combines his love for hip-hop and his skills in design and production to promote blackness in a positive light.

“I think a motivating agent for myself was always trying to be the best representative for black people. We have so many negative stereotypes towards black people in general, so I always told myself that I wanted to be the opposite," he says.

Johnson explains his hardships as a black man in the working world will always be there, and he hopes the work he does will show that facing difficulties as a black person does not mean you will not be successful. Navigating the world while black is challenging, Johnson says, but one piece of advice to make the journey easier is to never shy away from your blackness.

“Own your blackness. Be that unapologetically black person so you can teach people how you want to be treated point-blank, period. That is the only way you can ever surpass negative stereotypes given to you as a black person.”
The story behind Black Hair

My documentary, Black Hair, started as a class project for journalism school, but it quickly turned into a passion project. I became obsessed with creating a film that truly captured the emotional, psychological and social effects that come with having afro-textured hair. I wanted to tell more than just a story, I wanted to shed light on a painful reality that goes untalked about.

Going in, I had no expectations as to what would happen once I finished producing the film, I just knew I wanted this project to hold value. When the Treaty 7 Film Collective wanted to collaborate and host a screening, I was gratified by the opportunity. I did not think my documentary screening would draw in that amount of traffic it did, but I was surprised by the amount of media attention it received and the reaction on social media from different communities in Calgary. It completely exceeded any expectations I had.

I had only dreamed that conversations about the racial controversies of afro-textured hair would spring from a documentary I produced. When one screening turned into five screenings, three of which were screened in honour of Black History Month, I realized how impactful my film had become. People were wanting to learn about the issue, and black men and women were able to resonate with the film through their own experiences.

Sharing my documentary and it receiving the positive response it did was a humbling experience as a student journalist. I plan to continue to create projects that spark conversation, allow for perspective and most importantly, create change.
By hearing. By listening. We search for understanding and solutions concerning issues affecting multiple Indigenous communities.

This is a collaboration between Mount Royal University’s Iniskim Centre and the Calgary Journal

RAISING RECONCILIATION

PODCAST

Five Raising Reconciliation podcasts, located on CalgaryJournal.ca and by searching Calgary Journal in iTunes

Episode 1: INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA AND RESILIENCE
Episode 2: CHALLENGING TRANSITIONS FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO POST-SECONDARY
Episode 3: INDIGENOUS STUDENTS ON EDUCATOR DO’S AND DON’TS IN THE CLASSROOM
Episode 4: NO MORE CHILDREN IN CARE - REFLECTIONS FROM AN ELDER, SOCIAL WORKER AND INDIGENOUS STUDENT
Episode 5: ALLIES IN THE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY
Sometimes looking sharp on a budget can be difficult, especially at work. But with a bit of hunting, you don’t have to shell out big bucks to look like a million bucks.

Samantha Verlan is the marketing director at Dress for Success, a not-for-profit that helps low-income women find work-appropriate attire. She advises anyone on a budget to stick with the basics when building a wardrobe.

“Stick with classic items,” Verlan says. “Stick with something that is classic and not necessarily trendy and not necessarily anything that has a ton of wild colours. Stick with basic simple pieces. That way you will be able to use them over and over and over again, which will really make things more affordable.”

Verlan says it’s worth shopping around, at thrift, discount and consignment shops.

“There are a ton of consignment stores in Calgary that are offering a little bit higher-end clothing,” she says. “There are enough options out there that can still give you a really great shopping experience, but one that is not going to hurt your wallet the way that it would if you went to the mall.”

PHOTOS: AAMARA KHAN

Model: Jenna Wenkoff

Primark jeans: $22
H&M tank top: $7
Walmart sweater: $20

H&M turtleneck: $20
H&M pleated skirt: $50

H&M sweater: $45
H&M pleated pants: $30
Wish.com t-shirt: $3
Champs hat: $30
Wish.com sweatpants: $15
Amazon chain: $15

Wish.com jean jacket: $20
Old Navy jeans: $15
Wish.com t-shirt: $5
Champs hat: $30

Jack & Jones sweater: $25
Wish.com t-shirt: $15
Buffalo jeans: $30

Model: Nouyan Syed (Top)

Wish.com shirt: $10
American Eagle jeans: $20
Footlocker hat: $15
Amazon chain: $20

Old Navy sweater: $15
Bluenotes jeans: $20
Old Navy long sleeve shirt: $30

Model: Arghman Syed (Bottom)

PHOTOS: AAMARA KHAN
BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG CITY

Bold and colourful, the lights in Calgary during the evening help give the city a gorgeous look.

Bright. Bold. Colourful. These are just some words to describe Calgary’s downtown. Flashing lights and neon signs have become a symbol for having a good time, be it dancing in a club or going out for a late-night snack. Here are some shots of Calgary’s shining night life.

Home to the Riverwalk path and the new Central Library, downtown’s East Village is rich with stores, venues and the hottest restaurants.

The Calgary Central Library late in the evening.

PHOTO: RICHIE NGUYEN
Chinatown lantern ornaments contrast with city buildings late at night.  
PHOTO: ALEXANDRA NICHOLSON

The Silver Dragon is a family-owned Chinese restaurant that has been a part of the city since 1966.  
PHOTO: RICHIE NGUYEN

The Blue Line C-Train during the evening.  
PHOTO: ALEXANDRA NICHOLSON

The Hudson’s Bay corridor at the Core Shopping Centre.  
PHOTO: ALEXANDRA NICHOLSON
The Hunt House is a tiny log cabin that is also the oldest building in Calgary. Built during the late 19th century, it is now considered part of Calgary’s cultural DNA.

PHOTO: ALEXANDRA NICHOLSON

Bricks Wine Company is built within the 1911 McGill block.
PHOTO: ALEXANDRA NICHOLSON

In a city that often neglects its history, Inglewood’s old buildings lend the neighbourhood its quirky charm.

Inglewood is one of Calgary’s oldest neighbourhoods. Established in 1875 under the name Calgary East, the area changed its name in 1911 to what it currently is today. According to InglewoodYYC “Atlantic Avenue, now 9th Avenue, was the city’s first main street.” Even though now it is a vibrant walking community full of artisans, small businesses and eateries, the historical buildings draw lovers of history and architecture.

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RICHIE NGUYEN
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The Suitor House is a brick residence that belonged to Alderman Robert Suitor. The establishment was built in 1907 and has been since restored.

PHOTO: ALEXANDRA NICHOLSON

Located deep within Inglewood, the old National Hotel was established in the 1900s. The Nash restaurant features sophisticated dishes and cocktails.

PHOTO: RICHIE NGUYEN

Established in Calgary in 1875, the Inglewood district is the oldest neighbourhood in the city.

PHOTO: RICHIE NGUYEN

The Hose & Hound pub occupies Fire Hall #3, built in 1906.

PHOTO: ALEXANDRA NICHOLSON

The Suitor House is a brick residence that belonged to Alderman Robert Suitor. The establishment was built in 1907 and has been since restored.

PHOTO: ALEXANDRA NICHOLSON
Dave Grohl flips his wetted down hair as the band plays the hit single “The Sky is a Neighbourhood” at the Scotiabank Saddledome Oct. 23, 2018.

PHOTO: SAM PHELPS

I love this shot because it perfectly illustrates Dave Grohl when he’s performing. He’s wild, with hair and sweat flying all over the place. He’s one of the biggest rockstars of our generation, and Grohl just rocked out for that Foo Fighters show in October.

- Sam Phelps @srphelpsphotography

The Esker Foundation is a beautiful escape down in Inglewood, full of unique artwork to work your mind and your eyes. PHOTO: MICHAELA NEUMAN

Something I’m constantly telling myself when taking photographs is to always look up, and this photo is a result of that. While soaking in the pieces at the Esker Foundation, I found myself looking up to the artfully designed lights that have the perfect amount of flow to be smooth but also stiff. The cool tone of the lights has a calming sensation, without distracting from the art on display. - Michaela Neuman @equidem

Photojournalist Olivia Baychu shows her admiration for the art of film photography through an up close tribute. PHOTO: OLIVIA BAYCHU

The reason why I love this photo so much is because I love film photography. I took this photo as a tribute to film to bring back this old folk of art. I still do film photography so I thought it was appropriate. I really liked the mixture of cool and warm colours together. It makes the photo more interesting. - Olivia Baychu @redbone.o
I’m from Pincher Creek and grew up only 30 minutes from Waterton Lakes National Park. When the Kenow wildfire started in the summer of 2017, I remember being quite worried that this hidden treasure would be lost. The night of September 11, 2017 was a very close call but Waterton was thankfully saved due to the firefighting efforts. I took this photo only two weeks after the fire, and was so relieved to see that Waterton still stood, and even amongst the blackened trees and landscape, was still as beautiful as ever. - Arianna Korbett @akorbett

Working to capture parallelism in a photograph was a wonderful challenge. I went to Calgary’s new Central Library to utilize the gorgeous, wooden architecture which in itself has a lot of natural parallelism. The lines of the walls and lights, and the curve of this particular hallway offered the perfect location for this shot. The group in the background had the same idea, taking plenty of photos of each other. I love the flow of this image — how your eye is drawn along the curve of the architecture taking everything in. - Stephanie Babych @stephaniebabych

The reason this photo is one of my favourites is because it was the first photo that I saw the potential of editing .RAW files. It was overcast when I reached the top of the Ink Pots hike, which made the lighting perfect for a photo. The Ink Pots had a teal hue that was complemented by the surrounding red, yellow and green foliage. That, combined with my super wide lens, made for a great landscape shot. - David Kim @davidjaesun
Why epilepsy can be a slippery slope to homelessness

The relationship between health and homelessness has been acknowledged for some time, but employment discrimination due to disorders like epilepsy often go unnoticed

Sean was on his way home from work, exhausted and waiting at a bus stop in the southeast. Suddenly, he crumpled to the pavement, debilitated by an epileptic seizure that he can get every few weeks or a few times a day depending on a number of factors like stress, nutrition and sleep.

When he regained consciousness minutes later, he was alone. Not only that, but his phone was shattered from the fall and his backpack and wallet were stolen while he was out.

“It took me awhile to process what happened — that I was robbed instead of helped. It felt horrible to realize that,” Sean says.

Sean, who did not want to use his full name because of a fear of being stigmatized, had a home to go to that night, but he hasn't always had that option. People with epilepsy often struggle to find stable employment and “homeless people are 20 times as likely to have epilepsy as members of the general population,” according to the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness.

Kathy Fyfe, the executive director at the Epilepsy Association of Calgary, says that the hidden nature surrounding epilepsy is the biggest factor in why people who have epilepsy don't get hired. This fear is often compensated for, by people with epilepsy not talking about their disorder to their potential employer.

“Some people never disclose it,” Fyfe says. “Some people disclose it in an interview but it's a big huge risk as you might never get offered the job. Some people disclose it after they start the job and those people may still find themselves being shown to the door.”

According to the Epilepsy Foundation epilepsy is defined as a “neurological disorder and affects people of all ages [and it] is characterized by unpredictable seizures and can cause other health problems. Epilepsy is a spectrum condition with a wide range of seizure types and control varying from person-to-person.”

Sean has had epilepsy since he was 21, he is now 34, when he was brutally physically assaulted outside of his mother's house. He has had trouble keeping a consistent job ever since the event. Employers often decide to let him go after his first seizure.

His mother, Janice Howells says, “Sean would like to work and have a life, but he loses his jobs due to the seizures, then the stress of not having an income causes him to have more seizures.”

Discrimination against epilepsy is illegal in Canada but unfortunately, Fyfe explains, “No one is ever going to dismiss you and say it’s because you have epilepsy, because that's not legal. But it’s still likely the reason.”

A problem many people with epilepsy face is the lack of understanding and compassion from their employers about the downtime they may need. Howells’ son has more severe epilepsy meaning he needs more recovery time.

“Sean has been in emergency at least 10 times in the last year. He has had at least 50 stitches and over 10 concussions. He was in emergency a couple of weeks ago and they basically checked him for a concussion and then sent him home. He should not have gone home as it was the third seizure he had that day and more observation should have been provided for him. This is a common occurrence.”
The other issue Sean and many other people with epilepsy face is long wait times to see their specialist. For Sean, this wait time, often a few months, results in more seizures due to pain and stress.

Despite the consistency of Sean’s seizures and his difficulty finding an understanding employer, his application for Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) has been repeatedly unsuccessful, with the feedback that he was not disabled enough.

If it wasn’t for the support system of Sean’s family and friends, he would have been homeless a few times already. Often the amount of support Sean receives makes him feel guilty and uncomfortable which can cause him to avoid asking for assistance sometimes.

“His medication is very expensive and there have been times he has had none and didn’t want to impose on me again for money. So, he went without and, of course, ended up in the hospital.”

Fyfe says that people with epilepsy often fall between the cracks of society.

“It’s hard to go on and off AISH. Sometimes people with epilepsy will be in and out of the workforce because of their seizures, maybe a medication change, or all kinds of other reasons.”

Even if somebody gets approved for AISH, “most rentals are out of their reach cost wise and there is very little subsidized housing,” Fyfe explains.

Howells confirms that if Sean didn’t have the ability to lean on his family when he needed to that he easily could have been homeless or without his medication many times. Without a built-in support system, it’s very easy for people with epilepsy to become homeless.

Boris Lesar, the director of clinical operations and programs at The Mustard Seed says there are many reasons why people become homeless, including addiction, childhood trauma or mental illness.

For people with serious conditions or disorders like epilepsy, “they will have a much more difficult time getting a job. Then one thing leads to another and pretty soon they are homeless,” Lesar says.

The Mustard Seed doesn’t currently have any programs or initiatives to specifically help support homeless people who have epilepsy.

“We need shelters who have special beds set aside, and equipment and staff that are medically trained to handle people with epilepsy,” Lesar says.

Both Fyfy and Lesar say the best way to stop this cycle of unemployment is for the public to become more knowledgeable about epilepsy. Without proper training there is a tendency for bystanders to, run away from the person having the seizure rather than towards them to try and help them, Lesar says.

“When someone knows how to assist with a seizure, what to expect and what they look like they are not that frightening at all,” Fyfy says. “We have taught kids as young as 5 years old to assist with a seizure.”
Indigenous resilience and strength

How two individuals are breaking through intergenerational trauma

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Intergenerational trauma perpetuates a cycle of cultural disconnect and misunderstanding in Indigenous communities, seen by many as the root cause of challenges faced by Indigenous Peoples. The Calgary Journal invited an Indigenous elder, a professor and a student — all who have been touched by intergenerational trauma — to discuss the critical importance of resilience.

Resilience focuses not on pain but on strength.

AUDRA FOGGIN — ‘THERE WERE PEOPLE THERE WHO LOOKED JUST LIKE ME’
Audra Foggin, a Sixties Scoop survivor who teaches social work at Mount Royal University explains her struggle with identity and how she reconnected with her roots.

...I was born to a loving mother in Frog Lake First Nation [near Lloydminster]. I was fostered and then I was adopted by a non-First Nations family. ... I won the parent lottery on my adopted and biological side. When I look at how I was a benefactor of privilege, I see my privilege not only from my Indigenous family and the culture that I can claim, but I also look at my adopted family and the social status that they afforded me as an individual.

But that doesn’t account for my loss of community, of my culture, of my language or my family ties. And there were times throughout my life that were so difficult because I didn’t look like my family. I saw the stereotypes of the First Nations people in the community I grew up in and didn’t have the context for them at all because I wasn’t taught any information about it because my parents didn’t know how to connect me to my culture or make me understand it. I didn’t fully connect to my culture until my early twenties. There was this disconnect with my culture and a denial of who I was as an Indigenous person and shame and fear that I didn’t know about my culture. My disconnect and distance of who I was, was a severe disrupt in my identity. And it was painful: with bullying, social segregation and trying to prove I fit in when I clearly didn’t.

When I got to having children and wanting to know about my genetics and background, I knew I had to [reconnect]. So I went home to Frog Lake First Nation and found out who my family was. And I found out there were people there who looked just like me, who were wonderful and lovely and loving and kind. And it was a time in my life that I was starting to understand my culture through the Native American studies program at Lethbridge and starting to understand the historical context. So it was a 180-degree shift.

...For Indigenous Peoples in Canada, resilience is grounded in their distinct cultures and traditions that connect people in the community to the environment, leaning on the importance of their languages, traditions and activism.

According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), there are an estimated 80,000 survivors of residential schools living today. The descendants of these survivors have continued to live with the effects of trauma caused by the painful experiences their parents and grandparents endured.

Breaking cycles of trauma is crucial for healing. Various Indigenous initiatives in Calgary are working to create welcoming environments. The Diamond Willow Youth Lodge, which is a part of United Way, and the Boys and Girls Club are connecting Indigenous youth with Elders to help them understand their trauma.

ALVIN MANITOPYES — ‘WE’RE STARTING TO SEE A NEW GENERATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE THAT ARE FREE FROM HISTORICAL TRAUMA’
Alvin Manitopyes, a Plains Cree Elder and justice administrator, believes there is always more than meets the eye regarding trauma. However, he believes the complex and painful cycle of trauma can be broken by support from the community and returning to Mother Nature.

...We carry rich and beautiful traditions and culture and world views that have existed for thousands of years. And it’s a very beautiful thing. And we all have that within us. If we go into the mountains to sacred areas, we can feel the beauty and the sacredness of the mountains and the water and trees ... that’s very healing for people. So we can find healing for our spirits and it’s important for young people to have that experience and have that connection to Mother Earth.

[Elders] talk about trauma going back over a hundred years ... but with each generation, it gets weaker and weaker. We’re starting to see a new generation of young people that are free from historical trauma, and this younger generation is much more gifted in terms of intellectual capacities. They’re starting to succeed in academics and higher learnings of institutions across this country. So we can see that happening and these generations are starting to be healed from that trauma.

... Manitopyes’ belief in the power of connecting with nature is supported by a 2008 study for the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. It shows traditional practices such as returning to the land in Indigenous communities was seen to lower depressive symptoms in a group of 287 Indigenous youth by 29 per cent.

In addition to these traditional practices, outside organizations are working with Indigenous communities to better understand trauma and resilience. The United Way in Calgary has invested more than $1.8 million in Indigenous programs with their 2018-2022 Strategic Plan. Throughout the course of last year, the Natoo’si investment strategy has supported individuals, children, youth and families in healing from intergenerational trauma.

Foggin and Manitopyes all agree that talking about resilience when discussing intergenerational trauma can help people heal from the painful experiences of their past. Moving forward, they hope to see this conversation become a universal one.

In partnership with the Iniskim Centre at Mount Royal University, the Calgary Journal presents ‘Raising Reconciliation’ — a series focused on increasing understanding of Indigenous stories that matter, for additional content go to calgaryjournal.ca.
Lost in translation
How the word ‘family’ has been imposed on Indigenous communities

Whenever one culture imposes its definition of family on another, nothing good follows, says Peter Choate, a social work professor at Mount Royal University.

“I don’t think we have a single example anywhere in the world where one culture defining family for another culture has worked,” says Choate.

Roy Bear Chief, an Elder from Siksika Nation southeast of Calgary, explains that in the Blackfoot language there is no equivalent word for aunt or uncle. “My late mother’s siblings would be my parents, too. My grandparents and their siblings are my grandparents,” says Bear Chief, who is part of a dwindling population still able to speak the Blackfoot language.

“That’s the beauty of still retaining the language, to be able to understand, because language and culture are tied together,” adds Bear Chief.

LANGUAGE MATTERS
An expert on child intervention and Indigenous issues in Alberta, Choate explains why language matters.

“There are words and concepts in Blackfoot that in English we can do nothing with.”

Choate adds without direct translations in First Nations languages, public institutions resort to using English terms, which impose concepts on First Nations people that do not exist.

Bear Chief agrees, adding, “I don’t look at it as my mother’s brother is my uncle, my mother’s sister is my auntie. There’s no such thing.”

Bear Chief also says using a western model to determine kinship doesn’t work.

The issue is exacerbated when children are taken from their families and from their communities, further removing them from their language and culture.

Bear Chief says his culture was lost as a residential school survivor. At age seven, he was separated from his family.

“Little did I know that we were not supposed to speak our language or we’d get punished for it,” says Bear Chief. Bear Chief sees language as the vital link to maintaining his culture and feels it’s his duty to pass down the language to the next generations. Even so, Bear Chief says subconsciously, he still feels shame when speaking Blackfoot.

A SYSTEM THAT NEEDS A MAJOR OVERHAUL
There is a long history of systems in Canada privileging western family structures over Indigenous ones, says Choate.

He cites the 1983 Supreme Court decision, Racine V. Wood, which ruled the bond between a child and single caregiver was more important than keeping the child connected to his or her culture.

The decision reads: “The significance of cultural background and heritage, as opposed to bonding, abates over time: the closer the bond that develops with the prospective adoptive parents the less important the racial element becomes.”

The ruling is among many factors that see many Indigenous children placed in non-Indigenous foster care.

The most recent Statistics Canada data, from 2011, shows that Indigenous children make up 52.2 per cent of all foster children 0-14, despite accounting for just 7.7 per cent of Canadian children in that age range.

Indigenous children, says Choate, are in an impossible situation. “You take the identity, and the child welfare system begins to hold the identity and holds the identity away from the child who then is somehow supposed to be creating an identity in a system, which is foreign to the child,” says Choate.

Bear Chief says providing First Nations communities with the resources to run their own “child welfare” is the best thing for First Nations communities.

“All I’m saying is give it back to us.”

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Despite the cultural dominance of video games, a growing number of millennials are choosing to put aside their controllers and pick up dice to play old-fashioned role-playing games, like Dungeons & Dragons. D&D has been especially popular in recent years, and in June 2018 the game’s official Twitter account tweeted that their newest expansion rule book, *Mordenkainen’s Tome of Foes*, was a national bestseller in the U.S. The game has received positive media coverage in recent years, with many wondering how the game became suddenly cool.

Samantha Kauffman, a student at Alberta University of the Arts, is an avid D&D player. She thinks one of the most fascinating things about the game is the personal exploration it encourages. “D&D makes you spend some time in someone else’s shoes.”

As a player, Kauffmann has developed a character called Suna, named for her fiery personality and almost exclusive use of fire magic.

“Suna is incredibly charismatic in a way that I never have been but I would like to be in the future,” Kaufmann says. “As a shy introvert, I never spent much time with people outside of a very few close friends and didn’t learn how to interact socially with other people until my late teens. Suna allows me to pretend to be a socially capable person and lets me practice that while having fun with friends.”

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**Samantha Kauffman’s Dungeons & Dragons character, Suna (pictured above), is named for her fiery personality and near exclusive use of fire magic.**

**Ryan Kerton’s Dungeons & Dragons character, Romeo (pictured above), is a mischievous rogue who uses charisma to get in and out of trouble.**
Kauffmann has been able to enjoy D&D both as a player and as a dungeon master. A dungeon master’s job is to facilitate the game, by playing all the characters in the world that the players interact with and by acting as a narrator and referee.

As a dungeon master, Kauffmann has noticed her players’ social capabilities improve over the course of a few games or a campaign.

Ryan Kerton, one of Kauffmann’s players, says that it’s exactly this social learning that makes the game so appealing.

“From my character, I’ve gotten to experience a lot of different styles of thinking,” says Kerton. “I’ve improved and learned some good salesman tricks and tactics too.”

Not only has Kerton improved his communication and teamwork skills, but his fellow players have encouraged him to pursue his passion for voice acting.

That passion is now less of a hobby and something Kerton is seriously considering getting professional training in.

Without D&D, he says he likely never would have considered voice acting as a potential profession.

“Honestly nothing beats playing D&D in person. I feel more connected with everyone and their characters.”

— Ryan Kerton

Players will practice teamwork, planning and execution, problem-solving and so much more without realizing they’re doing it.”

— Samantha Kauffmann

Dungeons & Dragons player Ryan Kerton explains that without D&D, he would never have seriously considered voice acting as a potential profession.

Kerton is seriously considering getting professional training in.

Without D&D, he says he likely never would have considered voice acting as a potential profession.

“Honestly nothing beats playing D&D in person. I feel more connected with everyone and their characters. I feel the emotions are shown more along with the player’s intent. D&D is the perfect excuse to get everyone together,” Kerton says.

Kerton’s character is named Romeo, a rogue who likes to use his charisma skill for mischief. Often Romeo can be found talking his way into and out of most of his problems.

Kauffmann says that D&D is more engaging when it’s in person. Online gaming can still be fun and interactive she says but, “D&D is at its best when everyone is around the same table with some snacks, having a good time face to face. If you’re anything like my table, you’ll also play using miniature versions of your characters around a probably crudely drawn map.”
There was a time when attacking your broken appliance with a screwdriver in the hope of fixing it was not only considered appropriate, it was the only option.

But now your refrigerator has more computing power than the Apollo moon missions and your entire life is bouncing around in your pocket — on a device you have little power to maintain or repair.

Over the last decade, Apple has sold 1.2 billion phones and over 75 per cent of Americans rely on a smartphone for nearly every activity in their lives. Shopping, traffic, grooming, exercise, sleep tracking — everything is happening on the phone.

Since the inception of the smartphone, companies like Apple and Samsung have been reluctant to repair devices, often forcing customers to buy new or refurbished units, while being resistant when it comes to offering support for consumers looking to solve their own issues.

Sometimes, this reluctance has drifted into outright aggression toward consumers, third party repair shops and parts distributors. But a growing number of people in Calgary and around the world are battling back, arguing for the right to tinker and fix their phones.

Louis Rossmann — a YouTube celebrity and owner of Rossmann Repair Group in New York — was visited in 2016 by Apple's lawyers. The threat of a lawsuit loomed over Rossmann for several weeks during the summer because he was making schematics of Apple's logic boards available online. However, the law firm representing Apple claimed their contact was merely a type of approval of his YouTube channel. Rossmann himself made a video outlining how confusing their communication had been and no suit ever appeared.

Businesses in the U.S. felt Apple's powerful grip in 2013 when the company used a relationship with ICE — the U.S. Immigration Control and Enforcement — to kick down doors to repair shops and seize repair parts.

Nobody’s kicking down doors, but this effect has even made its way to Calgary.

Cindy Luffer — owner and creator of the aftermarket repair shop iPhix — has had her business affected by policies of smartphone makers trickling down to Canadian customs.

“We definitely had problems here and it was from border control,” Luffer says. “We’ve had parts seized and whole shipments sent back.”

Luffer began iPhix in 2009 when her iPhone broke. Her screen was cracked and when she went to Apple, the only option she was offered was to purchase a refurbished unit from the company for $200. Luffer looked for a third-party that could provide service or parts, but nothing came up, so she decided to start her own company.

She spent two years fixing phones in coffee shops and pop-up kiosks at the University of Calgary and Stephen Avenue, until business was lucrative enough to open the first location in Eau Claire Market Mall. Now iPhix has four locations in Calgary and 10 technicians. Luffer expanded their maintenance operations to include tablet, laptop and desktop computers.

A POLICY OF RELUCTANCE

In October 2018, CBC sent a reporter with a hidden camera into an Apple store in Toronto to get an assessment on a laptop with a screen issue. After an apparent checkover of the device, the Apple representative quoted over $1,500 worth of repairs to get the laptop back up and running.

CBC took the device to Rossmann in New York to film his assessment and repair. A bent pin on the ribbon cable that controlled the backlight was preventing it from getting power. Rossmann fixed the issue in five minutes and the cost?

“Nothing, I’d send you on your way,” Rossmann says.

This is a well-known story to repair shops like iPhix.

“We hear that a lot,” Luffer says. “We get at least two or three people a week who come in and they’ve been told something similar from their smartphone maker.”

Luffer has slowly adapted her business model to accommodate the number of people who are bringing in devices other than phones to be repaired.

CANADA BEGINS TO STAND UP

The right to repair movement is pressuring governments to legislate protection for consumers and their electronics. As more computing has entered into cars, appliances and other common goods, many companies have been reluctant to make these products repairable or provide reasonable access to tools and schematics.
Currently there are a handful of states initiating right to repair legislation: Nebraska, Minnesota, New York, Massachusetts, Kansas, Wyoming, Illinois and Tennessee.

Canada is following suit, albeit slowly. When Apple was caught affecting the processing speed of older model phones — under the guise of protecting hardware — the Canadian government brought the company to testify before the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology in the House of Commons.

Apple lawyer Jacqueline Famulak was grilled before a panel of MPs who demanded to know why changes were made to consumers devices without warning. Famulak offered a seemingly contradictory statement when she claimed Apple had done nothing wrong, just days after the company had issued an apology.

In the aftermath of their meeting, NDP MP Brian Masse spoke to CBC, stating that Canadian consumers needed to “stick up for their rights.”

“Canada is seemingly treated as colonialist when it comes to consumer matters,” Masse said. “I think Canada is not well positioned for consumer protection. We often get the bum’s rush when it comes to many of the consumer decisions and end up being kind of an afterthought.”

Apple’s policies regarding blind software changes and opposition to repair has left them facing multiple class action lawsuits in Canada and the United States.

Luffer says her best response is to keep expanding the scope of devices the business repairs and gain the protection of a robust customer base that isn’t threatened by corporate pressure.

“My best response is to keep expanding the scope of devices the business repairs and gain the protection of a robust customer base that isn’t threatened by corporate pressure.”

— Cindy Luffer, iPhix CEO
The allure of killing an entire day playing video games — themselves an already decades-old global phenomenon that is now the most popular form of entertainment, one which simultaneously allows for instant gratification and the release of pleasure-driving dopamine — is both enticing and seductive.

No need to stress over work, worry about classes, fret over bills or feel anxious over relationships. Only endless, self-gratifying, mind-numbing satisfaction as you progress, level-up and achieve virtual rewards.

For a teenaged Cam Adair, it was an all-encompassing reality. Days spent playing games like World of Warcraft and Counter-Strike led him to thoughts of suicide before he finally realized he had to make a change. Even now, eight years after he started speaking out about his video game addiction, he still feels the urge to play.

“Almost all the time,” Adair, now 30, admits. “I think it’s almost like a stress response … A lot of it is just nostalgia.”

Video game addiction is a relatively new problem being studied for negative health effects and habits. In 2018, the World Health Organization (WHO) even classified it as a bona fide disorder.

Five years ago, it’s what led Adair to create GameQuitters, an anti-addiction hub that centres around helping those escape from gaming’s powerful grip. Before that, he created the Calgary-based Kingpin Social, a group focused on helping other young Calgarians improve their social lives and skills.

Now, however, the focus is primarily on helping those with gaming dependencies.

“Some people struggle, it’s horrible,” says Adair. “They’re losing their families, they’re failing college, they’re living at home.”

“I have horror stories for days of a 30-year-old son, living at home. You remove WiFi? He gets violent. Those are hard stories.”

With online fixtures such as Epic Games’ Fortnite boasting a base of almost 200 million players, and the rising popularity of eSports with events such as the 2017 League of Legends tournament reaching 106 mil-
Adair, who still calls himself an “advocate” for gaming, notes that there is a social stigma around gamers in regards to perceived laziness and wasted potential, but argues that it isn’t wholly true.

“I wouldn’t say that the gaming community at large is the most mature, healthy, encouraging community out there,” says Adair. “It’s fairly toxic, and that’s just the way it is.”

“But, there’s tons of really good people and it is a community of people who understand each other, and understand each other’s passion. For a lot of people that’s really important, but it needs to be balanced.”

He believes the next step in terms of combatting gaming addiction, with a special focus on eSports in particular, is recognizing the need for preventative measures, referencing the STOP program in hockey.

“What are they doing for eSports to make sure that people play in a safe way?” Adair asks. “To make sure people know the warning signs? So people aren’t just gaming 15 or 16 hours a day to be the next star. How do you keep people safe?”

“The problem is prevention isn’t sexy. We live in a culture where we do something if it’s a crisis. My arm is broken? I’ll go to the hospital. You’re not thinking, ‘Wait, how do I not break my arm in the first place?’”

In the end, though, Adair says the most important thing is to continue the conversation around video game addiction.

“The biggest thing I always say is we need to improve the conversation around the topic. So, it’s not like gaming is good or bad, should you play or not? It’s like, what’s your own relationship to it? Do you need to shift it?”

“Be open, talk about it. Isolation is a huge part of the problem.”

Q&A with Cam Adair

With gaming addiction being a relatively new issue, the Calgary Journal asked Adair some simple questions to hopefully glean a little more information on what an addict is, what it means and when someone should seek help.

What constitutes a video game addict?
Continuing to play despite negative impact. That negative impact might be known by them, or it might be impacting people around them.

When should someone seek help?
When they want to, in the way they want to. Eighty-four per cent of GameQuitters knew they had a problem over 12 months ago, and still hadn’t done anything about it. So, if someone is out there and they need help, seek it today, don’t wait. There’s no shame in it.

What are some of the potential consequences of gamers who are addicted but don’t quit?
Usually, it’s increased anxiety, increased depression, increased suicidal thoughts, failing work, failing school, divorce, losing their families.

Is it possible to quit gaming fully?
Yes. It’s definitely possible. What I recommend is for people to start with 90 days, and then reevaluate. If you can’t quit for 90 days, you shouldn’t be gaming in the first place. Take 90 days, use it as an experiment and learn about yourself.

What do you think are the most popular games that people are hooked on?
For gamers, League of Legends (LoL), Counter-Strike, Hearthstone. For parents, it’s Fortnite.
MORE THAN JUST POM-POMS

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PHOTO: SHELBY DECHANT
How all-star cheerleading is finally getting the recognition it deserves

The Calgary cheerleading community says the sport is finally starting to be viewed for what it is — a legitimate sport.

“We’re athletes, we’re doing tumbling, we’re lifting people in the air, we’re tossing them in the air, we’re doing jumps,” says Florence Myette, a coach for one of Calgary’s largest cheer clubs, the Calgary Stars.

“These guys train three times a week, four hours a day. It’s a lot.”

In 2016, the International Olympic Committee voted in favour of including cheerleading among the provisional Olympic sports, meaning cheer athletes will have the possibility to compete at the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris.

Myette says that the cheer community has been waiting for this for years, and they are excited about the recognition.

This year, Calgary hosted the annual Pacific All-Star Championships, which took place at the Nutrien Western Event Center on Feb. 2 and 3. Hundreds of teams from Canada and the United States competed for titles and trophies over the two-day event.

The venue was filled with cheerleaders in blinged-out costumes, hair piled high and extravagant makeup. The teams were all hoping to claim a first place spot, which would send them to the world championship in Orlando, Florida in May.

Mackenzie Gray, 11, was one of the athletes competing in the PAC this year.

Gray has been cheering for the Calgary Stars for four years, and had the opportunity last year to compete at the World Championship in Florida. The Calgary Stars Gymnastics & Cheerleading Centre started 15 years ago with six athletes. Now, the club had 15 teams competing in this year’s PAC. The Stars swept the competition, receiving multiple first-place prizes. Five of the Calgary Stars’ teams will be heading to Florida in May.

“I love cheer. I was doing dance and gymnastics but it wasn’t a great fit,” says Gray. “I started cheerleading and it turned out to be good for me.”

After snagging a first place spot at the Pacific Championships, Gray’s team will be heading back to Florida to compete later this year.

Cheerleading has had a large presence in America for decades. However, Canada has seen a large growth of enrollment and interest in recent years.

Gray’s mother, Kendra Gray, says she didn’t know much about the sport before her colleague introduced her to the idea. She says that she imagines her daughter involved with the sport for many more years.

“The first competition, I really didn’t know what it was all about,” says Kendra. “Having coached sports and played sports for a long time, I was kind of skeptical, to be honest. Then I walked into the first competition and it was like no athletic event I had ever seen before.”

“The positive energy, the teamwork and the family is like no other. It is hard to explain until you’re in it.”

When many think of cheerleading they might initially think of pom-poms on a football field. Despite this pre-conception, all-star cheerleading has been around since the early 1980s. These are squads not associated with any school or sports league, with their main objective being competition.

“My dad will even ask, ‘Oh, did you cheer loud with your pom-poms?’ and we have to explain ‘No it’s not that,’” said Kendra.
Playing for mental health

Crowchild Classic charges a $5 ticket fee for the first time with proceeds going towards wellness initiatives

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Students from the University of Calgary and Mount Royal University filled the Saddledome again this year for the seventh annual Crowchild Classic, with one small change — a $5 ticket price tag.

The funds raised from the event have yet to be added up and divided. Once done, the universities will decide on the wellness initiatives they wish to fund for the students, explains Jarron Mueller, sports information coordinator for Mount Royal University Cougar Athletics & Recreation.

According to Mueller, there was no negative impact on attendance from the new price tag on the tickets.

“There were just under 11,500 people that showed up. It was an increase from last year, it was top three of all time [for attendance] ... We were really happy with how many people came out.”

The games took place Jan. 29 at the Scotiabank Saddledome. A win of 2-1 went to the UofC Dinos men’s team, with the women’s game resulting in the same score, a 2-1 win for the Dinos.

Students didn’t seem to be bothered by the change. First-year MRU student Ryan Dunning said it’s good the money is going to a good cause.

“$5 isn’t a massive burden,” Dunning says. “Most students will spend more on alcohol at the game.”

No decision has been made on the possibility of a $5 entry fee for next year’s game.
The Calgary Tower is no doubt the most iconic structure in the city’s history. Construction began on what was originally called the Husky Tower in 1967 and finished in 1968.

The original price tag of the building was $3.5 million with an added $2.4 million in renovations during 1985. Among its features are a 360 degree panoramic view of the city, as well as a sturdy design able to withstand an earthquake.

The Husky Tower became the Calgary Tower in 1971. The change in name was meant to show that it belonged to all Calgarians.

The tower was also a very popular destination during the 1988 Winter Olympic Games. The Tower saw tens of thousands of people step inside for a stunning skyline view of downtown Calgary. And just one year prior, they placed a gas-filled cauldron on top to serve as the Olympic flame.

After the Olympics, the tower became a founding member of the World Federation Of Great Towers. This list has famous towers such as the Space Needle in Seattle and the CN Tower in Toronto.

In 2005, the tower went under renovations again when a glass floor observation deck was installed. Nearly a decade later in 2014, LED lights were added, making the downtown skyline even more extraordinary.

The Calgary Tower is more than a half-century old but has remained an iconic building in our city’s core over the years, despite being surrounded by an everchanging skyline of modern counterparts.
Calgary Journal photographers set upon the city in January with a one-word assignment: Parallelism. The resulting photos reveal the patterns in everyday life and capture the city and its people in ways that feel both familiar and novel. From a couple’s moment to wondrous patterns in the city’s infrastructure, here are some of our best shots.

(TOP PHOTO) The contrast of old and new right in the centre of the frame allow for parallelism to occur. Photograph was taken behind Studio Bell.

PHOTO: HUYANA CYPREIN

(LEFT MIDDLE PHOTO) A close-up shot of the Luminous Crossings art piece at City Hall.

PHOTO: RICHIE NGUYEN

(RIGHT MIDDLE PHOTO) From the first floor of the new Central Library in downtown Calgary, one can look straight up and see the overlap of all the floor layers.

PHOTO: ARIANNA KORBETT

(BOTTOM PHOTO) A close-up shot of an apartment complex’s lobby lights.

PHOTO: KIAH LUCERO

(RIGHT PAGE TOP PHOTO) While exploring the new Central Library, Gerrit and Danika Klumpenhower share a cute moment surrounded by the building’s wooden architecture.

PHOTO: STEPHANIE BABYCH

(RIGHT PAGE BOTTOM PHOTO) Nicholas Cobb (left), and Aisha Celestino (right) inside the Core Shopping Centre in downtown Calgary.

PHOTO BY OLIVIA BAYCHU
SHOT BY SHOT: Parallelism
Light in the dark

Creative student photography working with candles

With a primary goal of creating a relaxing vibe, 30 tea candles were utilized throughout the bathroom for this photo, aiming to effectively illuminate the bubbles inside the bathtub.

PHOTO: GABRIELLE PYSKA

Taken in front of a mirror to create an illusion of endless flames, the orange hue of this photo comes in part from the warm reflection of candles floating atop water.

PHOTO: KATE MACKENZIE

Taken in a moment of inspiration during shooting, a focused look at a model’s hands along with the hue of the candle allows for a detailed look at every crease and crevice present in frame.

PHOTO: EMMAUILLA KONDO

Titled “A Memorial for Disco,” the glass mirrors of a Dollarama disco ball reflect two candles in a pitch-black setting.

PHOTO: KOURTNEE BURNETT
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PRESENTED BY
THE CALGARY FOLK
MUSICAL FESTIVAL
BELLA CONCERT HALL

APRIL 5
JUDY COLLINS
BELLA CONCERT HALL

APRIL 12
SARAH MILLICAN
PRESENTED BY JUST FOR LAUGHS
BELLA CONCERT HALL

APRIL 16
DAVE KELLY LIVE -
AN EVENING WITH JANN ARDEN
BELLA CONCERT HALL

APRIL 29
TETZLAFF-TETZLAFF
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