“BANNED ON THE HILL”

Ottawa art exhibit highlights government interference in environmental education

Crystal Hajjar

Toronto artist Frankie James is displaying environmental artwork on Bank Street in protest of the Canadian government’s interference in her 20-city European art show and its decision to revoke $5,000 in funding intended to help tour the pieces.

The six-poster exhibit, entitled “Banned on the Hill,” was funded through crowd funding – a method employed by artists and organizations to finance projects through a collective pooling of resources by supporters, often via the Internet. The exhibit is part of the much larger show “What can one person do?”, which was supposed to travel Europe as part of a series of workshops facilitated by James.

Each of the colourful posters are addressed to Stephen Harper with a large “Dear Prime Minister” on top. They are designed to protest the way the Harper government has blacklisted environmentalists and muzzled scientists who have been outspoken about the pending dangers of climate change.

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XL BATTLE STILL TO BE FOUGHT ON KEYSTONE AND OTHER PIPELINES

Adam Kostrich

On Nov. 10 the Obama Administration decided to postpone any final decision regarding the future of the Keystone XL pipeline project until January 2013.

In an official statement, the US State Department and President Obama cited the need to consider an alternative route for the pipeline as the reason for the delay. The current route is contentious because it crosses the sensitive and important Ogallala Aquifer, which provides fresh water for drinking and irrigation to millions of Americans in the Midwest.

The so-called “policy experts” of big business and the corporate interconnectedness in environmental education

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The so-called “policy experts” of big business and the corporate interconnectedness
Lev•el•ler
noun

1 Historical: During the English Civil War (c. 1649), one who favoured the abolition of all rank and privilege. Originally an insult, but later embraced by radical anti-Royalists.

2 One who tells the truth, as in “I’m going to level with you.”

3 An instrument that knocks down things that are standing up or digs up things that are buried or hidden.

The Leveller is a publication covering campus and off-campus news, current events, and culture in Ottawa and elsewhere. It is intended to provide readers with a lively portrait of their university and community and of the events that give it meaning. It is also intended to be a forum for provocative editorializing and lively debate on issues of concern to students, staff, and faculty as well as Ottawa residents.

The Leveller leans left, meaning that it challenges power and privilege and sides with people over private property. It is also democratic, meaning that it favours open discussion over silencing and secrecy. Within these very general boundaries, The Leveller is primarily interested in being interesting, in saying something worth saying and worth reading about. It doesn’t mind getting a few things wrong if it gets that part right.

The Leveller has a very small staff, and is mainly the work of a small group of volunteers. To become a more permanent enterprise and a more truly democratic and representative paper, it will require more volunteers to write, edit, and produce it; to take pictures, and to dig up stories.

The Leveller needs you. It needs you to read it, talk about it, always be your friends, agree with it, disagree with it, write a letter, write a story (or send in a story idea), join in the producing of it, or just denounce it. Ultimately it needs you—or someone like you—to edit it, to guide it towards maturity, to give it financial security and a place warm and safe to live.

The Leveller is an ambitious little rag. It wants to be simultaneously irreverent and important, to demand responsibility from others while it shakes it off itself, to be a fun-house mirror we can laugh at ourselves in and a map we can use to find ourselves and our city. It wants to be your coolest, most in-the-know friend and your social conscience at the same time. It has its work cut out for it.

The Leveller is published every month or so. It is free.

The Leveller and its editors have no phone or office, but can be contacted with letters of love or hate at editors.the.leveller@gmail.com.

The Leveller acknowledges that Ottawa is on unceded Algonquin territory.

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Banned on the Hill

The tour was to be produced by Nektarina Non Profit, a Croatian non-governmental organization that seeks to educate and inspire people to care about the environment. The NGO applied for $5,000 in funds from the Canadian Embassy in Croatia under its climate change education program.

Article Six of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change requires that Canada provide funding for climate change education. According to Nektarina Non Profit, the Canadian Embassy verbally indicated that the funding would be granted. They were later told by the government that this would not be the case.

A recent report conducted by James through the Access to Information and Privacy legislation (ATIP) revealed that $5,000 in funding was approved for the show on Apr. 29, 2011. The ATIP request also revealed that Jeremy Wallace, deputy director of the Climate Change Centre, told the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, advised against funding. When Wallace argued the project is against Canada’s interests. "MTC [the Climate Change Office] has concerns that the funding would not be consistent with our interests and approach," said Wallace in an email written May 5 to Debra Price, the legal counsel at Canada’s Embassy in Romania, which he asked not to be shared with the requester.

"It would in fact run counter to Canada’s interest more broadly," he emailed.

The ATIP report showed parts of the emails were blacked out under Sections 15(1) because its release could be "injurious" to matters of international affairs and defense.

Representatives from the government had publicly denied that funding was ever guaranteed or withdrawn. The Harper government has not responded as of yet concerning the content of the posters or the results of the ATIP request.

Nektarina Non Profit hoped that the tour would inspire people to make changes and reduce their environmental impact. They found Canada’s decision to withdraw funding surprising and disappointing.

"This was most surprising given Canada’s reputation over the past decades as a leader in promoting democratic freedoms, the right to free expression and the international community," said Nektarina Non Profit in a statement.

James told the Leveller that "they [the Harper government] continued to interfere behind-the-scenes, eventually causing the show to be cancelled."

The Toronto Star reports that Nektarina Non Profit’s private sponsor, whose name remains undisclosed, told the organization that a Canadian official had contacted them directly. This led the company to revoke its sponsorship of the workshops.

James’ art exhibit seeks to highlight the government’s active interference in the tour.

"I hope to shine a bright light on how the Harper government is trying to silence environmental messengers," says James. "[The posters are designed] to provoke a response, but it certainly does not have any violence and hatred in it; it is asking some common sense questions like why don’t we make polluters pay?"

It is totally shocking that this is what happens in Cana-da," said James.

"Even if people don’t agree with my position, I think that most Canadians would agree that I have the right to speak."

The "Banned on the Hill" event displayed on Nov. 2 and runs until Nov. 27. It is meant to draw attention to the banned exhibit, raise awareness on climate change and encourage the public in a discussion.  James’ work combines art, photography and writing to produce visual essays that highlight various environmental and social issues.

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Continued from page 1

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INVESTIGATING SABOTAGE BY SYRINGE IN CONFEDERATION PARK

Marc Benoit

Amidst a wave of attempts by municipal governments across North America to evict Occupiers in the name of safety and sanitation, Occupy Ottawa protesters were surprised and concerned to find several hundred used hypodermic syringes scattered around the perimeter of Confederation Park on Nov. 10.

Confederation Park has been home to the protesters since the Global Day of Action on Oct. 15. Reports from protesters indicate that between 350 and 400 used syringes were scattered, placed and even stabbed into the ground along the edges of the downtown Ottawa park. Protesters first found the syringes around 2:00 am and embarked on a seven-hour cooperative clean up. No one was harmed during the ordeal.

Many protesters feel that this was a direct attempt to sabotage the integrity of the Occupy Ottawa movement. The unresolved issue coincides with the National Capital Commission’s (NCC) concern over the use of the park as Ottawa’s annual Winterlude Festival approaches. The festival is held there every year.

The health and safety risks associated with hypodermic needle use could be cause to evict the protesters on the grounds that living conditions in the campsite are no longer safe.

The emphasis on health, safety, and hygiene is being used by North American municipal governments as justification for evicting protesters from Victoria to Vancouver, London to New York, Oakland to Halifax, and elsewhere.

As of Nov. 15, New York City occupiers have been banned from bringing tents and sleeping bags into Zuccotti park because of Mayor Bloomberg’s concerns with health and safety.

"For the beginning I have said that the City had two principal goals: guaranteeing public health and safety, and guaranteeing the protesters’ First Amendment rights. But when those two goals clash, the health and safety of the public is our first priority," said Bloomberg in a Nov. 15 press release.

His mayoral counterparts have been less careful in their rationalizations, from focusing on the illegality of pitching a tent in Halifax to the need to not interrupt holiday festivities in Victoria.

Although Occupy Halifax protesters made space so Halifaxians could participate in an annual Remembrance Day ceremony in Victoria Park, Mayor Peter Kelly seized the opportunity to distribute eviction notices. Kelly did not even try to articulate a health and safety justification, choosing instead to enforce Municipal Bylaw P-600 that forbids being in a park after hours or pitching a tent without permission from the city.

Protesters were given a few hours to leave and their evictions were violently enforced by the Halifax Police department.

"The mayor ordering a peaceful, democratic protest removed on Remembrance Day, which celebrates the veterans who fought for democratic freedoms in the first place, is absolutely shameful," Kyle Buott told the Globe and Mail. Buott organised a 300-protester strong rally demanding Kelly’s resignation on Nov. 12.

In Ottawa, the physical location of the syringes along the perimeter of the park rather than within it places the issue under the legal jurisdiction of the city of Ottawa and the Ottawa Police. Had they been within the park, it would have been federal jurisdiction and the RCMP.

Confederation park is under the jurisdiction of the NCC, not the city of Ottawa.

Occupiers noted, “We had a tactical squad come in in three unmarked SUVs; the night after the needles were found.”

Protesters have expressed concerns regarding the neutrality of the police investigation.

"The RCMP have come twice and threatened to do a drug raid,” says Benedetti.

The Ottawa Police told the Leveller they are unable to comment since this is an ongoing investigation.

It is clear that protesters are becoming uneasy with the events of last week, as calls have come from municipal governments across the continent to the end the Occupy movement altogether.

CRITICAL THINKING MATTERS TO WORKING PEOPLE.

Postal workers were legislated back to work, losing the right to free collective bargaining, after Canada Post and Conservative politicians claimed that the labour dispute was costing “hundreds of millions of dollars.” But the financial reports show this was a lie.

That’s why critical thinking about what you see and hear in the news really matters.

A message from the Canadian Union of Postal Workers
Continued from page 1

The value of critical thinking

There are notable thinkers in history who have helped us see the value of critical thinking, such as Karl Marx, Theodore Adorno and Michel Foucault. Marx once argued that, “what we have to accom-
plish at present [is] the truth-
less criticism of all that exists, ruthless both in the sense of not being afraid of the results [our criticism] brings, and the in sense of being just as little afraid of the powers that be.” Here Marx was not being the better SOB, but to use another anal-
og, the well reasoned and witty kid who challenges the schoolyard bully in defense of her/his premises.

In this sense, Finn is right to call critical thinking a kind of “martial art of the mind” because it aims to fight against the violent nature of ignorant and authoritarian thinking. Critical, dialectical thinking is always pulled into a fight because it challenges power and authority. As Adorno ex-
plained, “dialectics mean to show something that is other than what is, by means of negation.” What is presented to us as truth in our own environment (or in the mainstream media) is often a pseudo-reality that hides more than it reveals. By thinking critically, dialectically, and even negatively (in the sense of negating what we are told is the “truth”), we can reveal the murky waters that underlie inequality. Fink also advocated criticism as a form of trans-
gression by analyzing the limita-
tions of dominant points of view. “[It] is a matter of fleshing out on what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of ma-
chines, unchallenged, uncon-
sidered modes of thought the practices that we accept… and then) trying to change it.”

Finn argues critical think-
ing is linear, yet it is actually based on the idea of dialectic. It is meant to bring something new into existence through the interaction of thesis and antithesis. The goal is syn-
thesis. Critical thinking ques-
tions, destabilizes and helps us better understand how the world in which we live has come to be this way. This is the first step in thinking of just alterna-
tives.

The danger in instrumentalist thinking

Finn claims our universi-
tes are all teaching critical thinking and lamenting that it has misguided us. Yet in our own experiences we have seen the growing domi-
nance of instrumentalist thinking and a decrease of critical thinking and, we believe it is dangerous. Instru-
mental thinking, or the way we (or in the mainstream media) reduce our thoughts to a simple yes or no, is the highest form of pa-
totitarianism.” Along these lines, we believe dialectical or criti-
critical thinking is the highest form of social engagement. Not only is critical thinking valuable, but to demonstrate why critical thinking can be a valuable enterprise and consequently, why instrumentalist thinking can be dangerous.

Let us not forget that totalitarianism has arisen in societies where criticism of the authorities. It leads to an increase in authoritarianism, which has seen the growing domi-
nance of instrumentalist thinking. But it is not the only cause of authoritarianism. In societies where criticism of the authorities. It leads to an increase in authoritarianism, which has seen the growing domi-
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nance of instrumentalist thinking. But it is not the only cause of totalitarianism.
LES CONSERVATEURS DÉMONTRENT LEUR MISOGYNE UNE FOIS DE PLUS

Personnellement, quand j’entends le mot « sniper » je ne pense pas à une bonne fermière qui veut qu’on la laisse tirer ses perdrix en paix. Je pense à James Charles Kopp, l’assassin anti-avortement du Dr Barnett Slepian.

La carabine Ruger Mini-14, utilisée en 1989 par le misogyne Marc Lépine pour tuer 14 étudiantes à l’École polytechnique de Montréal et, cet été, par le tout aussi misogyne Anders Behring Breivik, pour tuer près d’une centaine de personnes, dont plusieurs adolescents, en Norvège, sera éliminée du registre. Le fusil de précision (sniper) le sera aussi. Personnellement, quand j’entends le mot « sniper », je ne pense pas à une bonne fermière qui veut qu’on la laisse tirer ses perdrix en paix. Je pense à James Charles Kopp, l’assassin anti-avortement du Dr Barnett Slepian.

Stéfanie Clermont

Saviez-vous que les conservateurs démontrent leur misogynie une fois de plus, il y a quelques années, en essayant d’enlever le registre de tous les fusils de précision ? Les questions de sécurité et de loi se sont largement réparties à travers la population. Les conservateurs ont finalement décidé que le registre devait être conservé. Où est le vrai libéralisme ?

Le registre est en place depuis 1995, suite aux meurtres de l’École polytechnique de Montréal, et en septembre 1998, par le misogyne Marc Lépine, qui a tué 14 filles d’étudiants. Depuis lors, les armes de type militaire semi-automatiques, qui n’avaient pas été utilisées dans les cas de homicide conjugal, seront désormais exclues du registre. Les armes d’épaules, qui sont les armes les plus couramment utilisées dans les cas de homicide conjugal, seront désormais excluses du registre. Le registre est inutile, gaspillage de l’argent et est une forme de discrimination envers les habitants des régions rurales.

Suite à la tuerie de l’École polytechnique, plusieurs groupes, dont certains se sont unis pour former la Coalition pour le contrôle des armes, ont fait pression sur le gouvernement fédéral pour réglementer les armes à feu. Au cours des années 1990, la Coalition, toujours l’intention de réduire le nombre de personnes, dont plusieurs adolescents, en Norvège, sera éliminée du registre. Le fusil de précision (sniper) le sera aussi. Personnellement, quand j’entends le mot « sniper », je ne pense pas à une bonne fermière qui veut qu’on la laisse tirer ses perdrix en paix. Je pense à James Charles Kopp, l’assassin anti-avortement du Dr Barnett Slepian.

Le gouvernement conservateur avait vrai­si bon sens qu’en 1966, il y avait 170 meur­tres par an à l’Été-Unis. La NRA a publié un rapport sur les homicides au Canada en 2010. La dernière fois que le nombre d’homicides avait été aussi bas qu’en 1966 était en 1996. Il y a eu 170 meur­tres par an à l’année dernière au Canada. Par comparaison, la même année, plus de neuf mille meurtres ont été commis avec une arme à feu aux États-Unis. Si le gouvernement conservateur avait vrai­ment comme priorité de se protéger du crime, il se serait engagé à aider les habitants des régions rurales. Les conservateurs, qui ont déjà tenté à quelques reprises de se débarrasser du registre des armes d’épaule, ont une nouvelle tentative. Sous le gouvernement majoritaire conservateur, le projet de loi C-19 à toutes les chances d’être adopté. Les mêmes politiciens censés avoir comme priorité de sé­vir contre le crime ont maintenu l’intention de retirer l’obligation d’enregistrer les armes à feu qui ne sont pas pro­hibées ou à autorisation restreinte. De plus, les données accumulées à ce jour seront détruites et le gouvernement fédéral ne relu­mera pas le registre. Le fusil de précision (sniper) le sera aussi. Personnellement, quand j’entends le mot « sniper », je ne pense pas à une bonne fermière qui veut qu’on la laisse tirer ses perdrix en paix. Je pense à James Charles Kopp, l’assassin anti-avortement du Dr Barnett Slepian.
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February 1st
NATIONAL DAY
OF ACTION ON TUITION FEES
WINTER CYCLING

Not just for the foolhardy

Samantha McGavin

Ah, November...the days are getting shorter, the air is cooler; you’re thinking of putting your bike away. But, maybe not yet – the weather is so up and down – maybe you just pulled it back out again. When should you put it away?

Putting your bike away. But, are getting shorter, the air you always thought of winter cycling as something for the foolhardy, not just for the foolhardy, winter cycling is a great way to keep exercising to beat any winter blues, and to be out in the sunshine and crisp air instead of stuck in a bus or car.

GETTING DRESSED

The key to dressing for winter cycling is layering, so that you can adjust if needed. You’ll be much warmer cycling than you would be while walking or taking the bus. If you dress so that you feel a bit cold leaving your house, that will be the right amount of clothing while pedaling. When it’s warm around, I wear a thermal top, a close-fitting shell, and a down vest over your mouth, whereas face masks have bigger holes to let out your sneaky breath.

A CLOSE-FITTING HAT THAT CAN FIT UNDER YOUR HELMET

Face masks help keep your cheeks warm. You can use a scarf instead, (one that is still enough so that it won’t fall down while cycling) but you’ll have to tie it snugly so that it stays up. Using a scarf can lead to some frost formation on the cloth over your mouth, but it seems to melt the snow remaining.

BOGGLES OR A SKI MASK

It’s nice to shelter your eyes and the surrounding skin when it gets well below zero, though even sunglasses will help cut the wind. These are however essential if you wear glasses, as they will fog your glasses from your breath and keep them from getting fogged up (be sure to get a style with the nose cut out to prevent fogging up (be sure to get a style with the nose cut out).

FOOTWEAR

Keep your feet warm by wearing wool socks. Some people prefer old grubby running shoes – anything that costs about $65 each, has “studs” which look like screw stems, protruding slightly on either side of the centre head, that engage when your wheel is angled to give you better grip and thus control while turning. I find they are great for cycling through both black ice and the thin layer of ice that can lie beneath snow. If you decide to invest, but find it prohibitive to buy two, be sure to install the studded tire on the front wheel, as it is the most important wheel for control while turning.

FENDERS

There are mixed opinions out there on fenders. Some people say they’re essential in winter to keep the snow and slush from spraying up onto your back, others find that when riding in snow, a thick layer can accumulate under the fenders and slow down their tires. I’m in the first camp.

Getting your bike ready

If you take good care of your bike, it should survive okay, though you will likely end up replacing parts more quickly than you would otherwise. In general it’s a good idea to get your bike more love in the winter that you normally might in warm weather. You should commit to very regular cleanings and oilings (some people would say to do this every ride, keep an eye out for rusting/bolts, and test and maintain your brakes. It’s also a good idea to give a tune-up before and after the winter. Bike co-ops – fully equipped shops where volunteers can help you do your own repairs – are a great and affordable way to do this and become more self-sufficient by learning to maintain your own bike. As a winter-cycling bonus, they are less busy in the off-season. Visit Recycles Cycles (473 Bronson Ave., www.recycles.ca) and the University of Ottawa Bike Co-op (201 Lowertown Rd., www.bikeshelf.ca). If you start cycling regularly in winter, or have a very expensive bike, consider getting an old and safe bike just for the winter. Some items that you may want to consider for your bike are:

- Tire pressure
- Chain adjustments
- Chains
- Pedals
- Crankset
- Derailleur
- Brakes
- Forks
- Handlebars
- Seat
- Wheels
- Fenders
- Saddle
- Gloves
- Clothing

When should you put it away

There are mixed opinions on whether your tires will grip – whether you are going downhill or on black ice – break only on your back wheel and use your front wheel to steer. Give yourself more stopping distance. At the start of the season, keep an eye out for black ice, especially in the evening when it’s hard to see – dew will begin freezing before snow arrives. Ride more slowly and consider using your lights. See this local website: http://icebike.com/Articles/techniques.htm

With a little preparation, you and your bike can continue your love affair year round.

Illumination by Shawn Hansdale

For more information: http://ottawa.ca/residents/onthemove/travelwise/cycling/weather

Cycling conditions and techniques

Most of Ottawa’s cycling paths are not maintained in the winter, and are often the first casualty of incomplete snow removal. Some National Capital Commission (NCC) paths are cleared or kept clear through use, such as the one along the canal. Others however, such as the paths along the Ottawa and Rideau rivers, and through the arboretum, will become impassable at times as the snow melts. The city has informed me that the segregated Lautier bike path will be maintained in the winter, and that they will also be clearing Lautier between Elgin and the canal (where the snow is currently). As to the NCC Canal path.

However, you will likely be taking roads more often than you might ordinarily. If you cycle on snow, you will develop your own preference as to riding on side streets or main roads. Side streets have less traffic, but are snowier; main streets have less snow, but the snow on them is generally hilly and bumpy and icy. In situations where you are riding with traffic, occupy the lane if the snow or ice along the curb offers insufficient room for you to pass companies. If you are sliding right out of the lane. Be sure to make wide, slow turns and try to keep your bike as upright as possible. If you’re braking and are unsure of whether your tires will grip – whether you are going downhill or on black ice – break only on your back wheel and use your front wheel to steer. Give yourself

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Byline: Samantha McGavin  

vol 4, no 3, Nov/Dec 2011 - The Leveller 9
It’s a magical time of tur- mor and upheaval.

In an article by Jonathan Braun, the culture section of this edition of the Leweller covers a seemingly nonpo- litical event: the fifth annual Quidditch World Cup in New York City. A ball game played by fans of the Harry Potter series of novels and films, quidditch is based on fictional equipment and competition rules. For this reason, the sport has been adapted for real-life play with players simulating flight by carrying brooms between their legs at all times.

Braun, who was in New York as a member of the University of Ottawa Quidditch team, argues that the tournament was comprised of a healthy mix of athleticism, entertainment, and good old-fashioned fun. But to what extent can Harry Potter be seen as a serious political metaphor for resistance to the cur- rent economic crisis? Is Potter’s struggle against his arch-nemesis, the evil Lord Voldemort, a worthy symbol against the inequities of global capitalism?

If Voldemort is a sym- bol for big business, then Harry Potter’s concern for the humble and oppressed — including the house elves of the magical world — qualifies him as a fictional hero for the occupation movement.

The witches and wizards in the novels refer to Vol- demort as “He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named,” much like the modern economists and politicians dare not speak the word “capitalism,” or place the blame for the cur- rent crisis on an economic system implicated in the ex- pectations of profits.

In many respects, the wizards on Wall Street wield their tickery and illusory power by creating credit out of thin air, money out of nothing. The global game of finance appears to be a grea- ter, magical ritual, when all those pensions may cum- bles with the misplaced flick of a wand. Their consistent financial incompetence is excused away time and time again as if politicians were under a magical spell not to demand accountability.

In Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Voldemort sets up a police state, as- sembles a large army, and launches an invasion of Hogwarts School. In many respects, Voldemort’s plan to engineer an assault on Hogwarts is similar to the recent attacks on WOS pro- testers around North Amer- ica who have chosen to occupy public parks. Occu- pyers are like the brave rebel witches and wizards who dared take a stand against the seemingly invincible Lord Voldemort, staying off wave after wave of attack on their small territory: Mu- nicipal police forces from New York to Vancouver to Oakland to London laying siege to OWS tent communi- ties are not unlike the detractors who are ordered by Voldemort to destroy Hogswarts.

So, violence, under the dark wizardry spell of big business interests, is a lived reality. As state violence swoops into the semi-sovereign spaces of the Occupy encampments throughout North America, it is worth remembering the importance of democratic space.

As state violence swoops into the semi- sovereign spaces of the Occupy encampments throughout North America, it is worth remembering the importance of democratic space, be it in the pages of your favourite rag, the park where you hang out, or the classroom in which you try to learn.
Looking to Israeli Apartheid Week next spring I am glad that Jonathan Braun wrote his excellent critique on the CPCCA’s report. Four years under a Harper majority could bring increasing pressure on any group opposing the Conservations’ insular alliance with the right-wing Zionism. The CPCCA report is one of the tools that can/will be used to intimidate any criticism of Israel’s apartheid and repression. We have to spread the message on the many flaws of the report and show that the concept of the “new anti-Semitism” is undermining our freedom of speech. I have read the analysis by Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East. It is thorough research and very well written. By the way I picked up my copy of the Leveller at Occupy Ottawa. Keep up the fight, 99%!

Martina Lauer
Chateuville, Ontario

It was wise for The Leveller to publish Mr. Braun’s article “Debating the new anti-Semitism” in this issue. There is doubt that broadening anti-Semitism to include criticism of the state of Israel is simply wrong and potentially dangerous. Shall we equate criticizing child abuse by catholic priests with criticizing Christianity? Shall we consider the anti-apartheid movement anti-white? Have we forgotten that allowing criticism of any government policies is a basic norm in the modern world, and Israel cannot be an exception?

Dr. Nahid Tabbara
Adjunct Clinical Professor
Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry
University of Western Ontario

Crystall Hajar
The Canadian Youth Climate Coalition has sent
18 delegates to the UN climate summit in Dur-
ban, South Africa, which is convening from Nov. 28 to Dec. 9. The Coalition urges the UN to adopt "Operation Oil Change," which focuses on reducing greenhouse gases in Canada, regardless of the outcome of the summit negotia-
tions. The campaign was initiated to demand im-
mediate action on climate change in response to recent speech made by Canadian En-
vironment Minister Peter Kent. Kent announced that Canada will not sign a post-Kyoto agreement, "however acute the international pres-
sure," unless all of the other major greenhouse gas emitters do. Instead, the federal government plans to invest $148.8 billion over the next five years in climate change adaptation policies (focusing on minimizing the vulner-
ability of Canada and its citizens to climate change rather than taking steps towards reducing environ-
mental impact).

This announcement comes after major cuts in Environment Canada’s budget last summer, largely from the Climate Change and Clean Air Division.

"While Minister Kent’s dulcet tones may pull some into a false sense of security, the CPCC’s policy hawks are not sold," commented Chris Buson, a policy re-
searcher with the Canadian Youth Delegation. "This announcement of $149 billion sounds like a grand gesture, until you remem-
ber that $222.2 million was cut from Environment Canada...resulting in a loss of 1,231 full-time jobs and a massive dismantling of our ability to monitor our country’s environmental changes."

In comparison, oil and gas companies receive $1.4 billion in annual subsidies from the federal govern-
ment, according to a study by the Global Subsidies Initiative – ten times the amount set aside for in-
vestment in climate change adaptation measures. The Alberta oil sands industry is the primary beneficiary, receiving almost $1 billion in subsidies from the Har-
per government and slightly more from the government of Alberta.

Dedication of public funds to fossil fuels continues despite the Internation-
al Energy Agency’s warning that a drastic reduction in fossil fuel use is needed by 2050. Tar sands will compromise other efforts to mitigate climate change with huge greenhouse gas emissions, and lock Canada into fossil fuel development for de-
cades to come.

Kent’s speech did not account for the real cost of government inaction. The deva-
crating consequences of climate change are al-
ready becoming apparent in Canada and around the world. Many indigenous people are facing dangerous rises in sea level -the govern-
ment of the Maldives held a cabinet meeting under-
water to draw attention to its dire situation in 2009. Indigenous peoples around the world risk losing their traditional way of life and sovereignty over their land as climate change continu-
ues to alter already stressed ecosystems. Species are go-
ing extinct at an alarming rate. The recent IPCC panel found that climate change has been shown to cause extreme weather events, so the frequency and intensity of dry spells, floods, and storms are only going to increase.

The expenses facing Canada and the rest of the world are thus far greater than $148.8 billion and must be taken seriously. However, Canada has made consistent efforts to defeat cle-
an energy policies inter-
nationally. The European Union is currently revising its Fuel Quality Directive in order to reduce green-
house gas emissions. The proposed directive would label oil produced from tar sands as one of the ‘dirtiest’ forms of crude oil. Ottawa is actively asking members of the EU11 to reject the pro-
posed directive.

"We demand that Can-
da reduce its dependence on fossil fuels by removing subsidies to the oil and gas industry and re-
applying them to the renewable energy sector," said Robin Tress, a delegate. "This way Canada can drastically cut greenhouse gas emissions while becoming a world leader in renewable ener-
gy." Members of the Cana-
dian Youth Delegation are delivering a list of five de-
cs to the government.

Firstly, the delegation de-
sands almost directly in-
crease fossil fuel produc-
tion and greenhouse gas emissions.

Secondly, the delegation calls on Canada to end its industrial addiction to fos-
sil fuels by 2040 and re-
duce the remaining green-
house gas emissions to near-zero by 2050. Ottawa should impose a moratorium

on oil and gas develop-
ment with an aim to end-
ning it altogether, redu-
ting emission levels to comply with scientific recom-

dinations.

Thirdly, the delegation de-
sands that instead of giving tax breaks and sub-

sidies to oil and gas in-
dustries, the government should instead be invest-
ing in energy efficiency up-
grades and in jobs in the renewable energy sector. This entails greater invest-
ments in windmill, solar panel, and geothermal technologies.

Fourthly, the delega-
tion calls on Canada to end its support for climate change approaches pro-
posed and led by interna-
tional financial institu-
tions (IFIs). Because IFIs are premised on a model of limitless growth in con-
gruence with a capitalist model of production, so-
lutions aimed at controll-
ing climate change will always fall at the altar of economic concerns. Using a loan-based capitalist fi-
nancing model to address climate change, such as the approach championed by the World Bank, is a major concern. The result has been increased debt for poor countries without meaningful change in en-
vironmental policies.

Fifth and finally, Canada must cooperate with other-
countries on reducing greenhouse gas emissions instead of actively lobbying on behalf of the tar sands industry and promoting dirty oil. The delegates de-
mand that Canada makes an effort to work with oth-
er countries in Durban to come to fair and ambitious climate policies and legally binding agreements.

While the delegates are in Durban, the Coali-
tion will be continuing the Operation Oil Change campaign here in Canada. Regardless of the outcome, the Operation Oil Change campaign in Durban, pressure must intensify on Ottawa to sig-
nificantly change its course in environmental policy. The campaign is a call-out for Canadians who are concerned about climate change to join the Domes-
tic Task Force and demand that the government put the needs of people ahead of polluters and “become champions for a just and sustainable future.”
The magic of quidditch hits NYC

Jonathan Braun

Manhattan just got magi- cal! On the weekend of Nov. 12-13, thousands of young wizards and witches from all across Canada, the United States, and even one group from Finland appeared to the fifth annual Quidditch World Cup on Randall’s Island in New York City. The Harry Potter-inspired tour- nament consisted of about one hundred teams, and even attracted Ottawa-area schools. Both Carleton University and the University of Ottawa made the ten-hour trek to put their athleticism, drive, and magical prowess to the test in a hunt towards the coveted trophy and the title of World Champions.

In the end, the reigning champs from Middlebury College in Vermont beat out the University of Florida Ga- tors to win the title for the fifth straight year. The game, which the International Quidditch Association (IQA) described as a “head to head battle between the North and the South,” ended when Middlebury, down by 10 points, managed to grab the Snitch and earn themselves enough points to come out on top.

University of Ottawa lost their chances at the Cup when, during round robin play, they were defeated by SUNY-Geneese by the mar- gin of a Snitch catch. Car-leton University managed to make it a bit further, but their dreams were soon cut short by Middlebury in the first round of sudden death play.

THE RULES OF THE GAME

Middlebury’s contin- ued success with quidditch comes as no surprise, as it was members from that school only several years ago found a way to turn J.K. Rowling’s invention into a living sport that has since gone global.

In the Harry Potter books, quidditch is played with fly- ing brooms and enchanted balls. As the art of magic has not yet been perfected in the Muggle (non-wizarding) world, several adaptations have been made to make the sport more suitable in the face of stubborn gravita- tional forces.

For starters, players do not fly around on brooms but instead hold one be- tween their legs. In official tournaments the brooms are standardized but one can often find quidditch teams practicing with anything broom-like, including mop handles, hockey sticks, or even tennis rackets. Each team consists of three chasers, two beaters, a keeper, and a seeker. Chas- ers try to throw the quaffle (a volleyball) through one of three hoops in the opp- osing team’s end of the field. Each goal scores ten points. The keeper can also score points but has the added task of defending his or her team’s hoops. Except against a keeper with pos- session of the quaffle in his or her zone, players may use reasonable force to try and remove the quaffle from an opposing player’s grasp.

The beaters try to hit the opposing team’s players with one of three bludgers (dodgeballs). Players who get hit must dismount their brooms and run back to touch one of their hoops be- fore returning to the game. As there are four beaters on the field and only three bludgers, the team in pos- session of two bludgers usu- ally holds a defensive advan- tage.

The role of the seeker is to catch the snitch. Unlike in the books, where a tiny golden ball flies around the field, the snitch is played by an impartial person dressed in gold or yellow and, unlike the actual players, is not on a broom. The snitch wears a ball in a sock that is attached by Velcro to the back of his or her shorts. When the ball is removed by a seeker the game is over and that seeker’s team receives thirty points. Typically perfomed by a tracklete, wrestler, or martial arts expert, the role of the snitch is to evade cap- ture for as long as possible. They often become quite physical in this endeavor.

THE MAGIC OF THE WEEKEND

Although neither Car-leton nor U of O won the tournament in New York, the result did not seem to faze team members. When asked how he felt about his time at the World Cup, U of O quidditch member Daniel Stojsic said, “the World Cup was an experience like no other. I made friends from various opposing teams, grew closer with my own team, and had one of the most memorable week- ends of my life.”

Despite the intensity of the sport and the athleti- cism shown by its players, a lot of the appeal of quid- ditch seems to happen off of the field. During one break, hundreds of players took to an empty field for a War of 1812-style Canada vs. Un- ited States game of dodgeball that, as one player quipped, “quite appropriately ended in a stalemate.” Throughout the weekend, other camp- style games could be seen sprouting up between the teams, as well as dance par- ties and inter-team cheering sections.

“Geeky and athletic... well it’s definately a very odd combination,” said Virginia Tech Captain Kitty Schaf- femon. She continued that "from a sport aspect we want to train hard to be a good team, but you have to keep in mind that this is something tied to Harry Pot- ter.”

Harry Potter’s influence was not absent from the tournament. Even those less athletically inclined could find themselves wrapped up in the magic of the weekend. Apart from the games them- selves, a shop was set up to equip players and fans with their very own wands and brooms. Stars from the You- Tube hit “A Very Potter Mu- sical” were on hand to sing wizard songs while other entertainers treated audi-ences to magic shows and fire eating.

There truly was some- thing for everyone at the Quidditch World Cup, or at least something for every- one who still sits patiently by their mailbox waiting for that elusive letter.

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THE BEGINNING

The Oakland occupation started on Oct. 14 with a 4,000 rally on Broadway near the University of California at Berkeley. The demonstration was led by a coalition of labor unions, student unions, and other activist groups. The protesters demanded an end to the housing crisis and called for the city to address the needs of its residents. The protest grew quickly, with thousands of people joining the march and blocking streets in downtown Oakland.

The following day, on Oct. 15, the police removed the protest from the site, citing safety concerns. However, the protesters refused to leave and continued to occupy the site, which they renamed Occupy Oakland. The police response was met with widespread condemnation, and the city was plunged into a state of chaos.

The occupation continued for several days, with protests and demonstrations taking place throughout the city. The protesters demanded an end to police brutality and called for the city to address the needs of its residents.

THE MARCH

On Oct. 29, the protesters moved to a new location near the downtown area of Oakland. The protesters occupied a large vacant lot, which they renamed the Oakland General Assembly. The protesters continued to demand an end to police brutality and called for the city to address the needs of its residents.

The occupation continued for several days, with protests and demonstrations taking place throughout the city. The protesters demanded an end to police brutality and called for the city to address the needs of its residents.

THE END

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THE VICTORY

On Nov. 15, the protesters were able to occupy the site once again, and the occupation continued for several days. The protesters demanded an end to police brutality and called for the city to address the needs of its residents.

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REPORT BACK ON OCCUPY OAKLAND

The occupation of Occupy Oakland was a significant event in the history of the Occupy movement. The protesters demanded an end to police brutality and called for the city to address the needs of its residents.

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THE END

On Nov. 16, the protesters were able to occupy the site once again, and the occupation continued for several days. The protesters demanded an end to police brutality and called for the city to address the needs of its residents.

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THE VICTORY

On Nov. 17, the protesters were able to occupy the site once again, and the occupation continued for several days. The protesters demanded an end to police brutality and called for the city to address the needs of its residents.

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CULTURE

"A SPRINKLING OF HUMANITY AMID THE CLAMOUR"

Public art as kindness

Branden Lynch

Of all things that defy mundanity and habituation, the most powerful are the relations we have with others. In the smile of a stranger there is a sudden burst of colour to the grey-scale streets. These fleeting snatches at humanity remind us of the essential qualities that make us alike, that connect us irrespective of the larger looming world that would have us feel otherwise.

The various arts, each through their respective mediums, transmit this same sensation to us. They are powerful reminders of the extremes of human feeling that lend colour to our world. Principally, art embodies the blending of private and public that is integral to society; it retains individuality without discounting the things common to all.

The city is here to stay, along with all its streets, buildings, signs, symbols, and ever-growing population. It is easy to be, as they say, lost in the shuffle. This only heightens our need to moderate the influence of our larger world, to be arbiters of scale. This need not be an insurmountable task, to be tackled on a systemic scale; it is as simple as kind words to a stranger on a night when the land turns to mud and the streets are clouded in the general haze. Kind deeds, powerful though they are, are limited in scope. One can only be kind to so many people in a day, given the constraints of social interaction—one seldom has the opportunity or resources to help many people at once.

There is, however, an answer to this problem. Few things transmit as much feeling as music, and the simple act of a man on the street corner playing his guitar reaches the ears of many. The sense of humanity I feel as the riffs of Pink Floyd’s “Eclipse” linger in my ears is the same sensation I have when I gaze at a beautiful work of MC Escher, as I read the poetry of Charles Bukowski, and as I share a moment with a friend over a simple cup of coffee. Such things deserve a greater presence on our streets and in our lives. A sprinkling of humanity amid the clamour.

Despite Jim’s level of skill, he has in fact only been drawing and painting for the last nine years. He has been selling his works for four. Exhibition on the street has its difficulties – winter is coming, and with it a cold dampness that is not kind to paintings. Try and catch Jim before the weather changes, even if you don’t wish to buy anything (though at 20 dollars, the price is good). I’m sure he would be more than happy to talk to you. All his paintings are done on acid free paper, and the colours will not run or fade. Catch him while you can.

The streets are filled with people like Jim, plying their various arts and abilities, and each has an interesting story; if only one would slow down enough to see and hear it. I hope next time you see someone busking or painting, you will take a few minutes to appreciate them, whether it be with your money or your words.

Audited Financial Statements
GSA Carleton Inc.

The Audited Financial Statements for the 2010-2011 fiscal year of GSA Carleton Inc. are now available.

Members of the Graduate Students’ Association may view these statements by contacting the GSA Vice-President Finance at vpf@gsacarleton.ca.

National Day of Action
February 1st 2012

NEW MENU
More vegetarian, vegan, meat & Halal foods!

GSAC Office & Mike’s Place
Holiday Closure

The GSAC Office & Mike’s Place will be closed from:
December 17th to January 3rd
We will reopen January 4th of the New Year.
I hate this album not because I hate hip hop but because I love it so very much. I got into it as a young punk because I saw it as a continuation of punk. It spoke to me as a poor, angry teenager.

Darryl Reid

Were you ever doped into smoking parsley or oregano because some friend's sketchy older brother sold it to you, claiming it was primo weed? And because that sketchy older brother is smarter than you in all weed-related matters, you went along with it, despite some serious doubt in the back of your mind (since when does weed smell like my mom's spaghetti?)? Then you and your friend spent the evening perusing you were stoned out of your minds, because that sketchy older brother is sketchy and because no one wants to state the obvious that you were ripped off and the older heathen is now just a little richer for it. Well it happened to me, and I want my money back.

I kid you not, while listening to Drake's sophomore album, I was Careful, this sad tale of adolescent weed came back to me. Someone has ripped us all off. Someone's marketing genius has convinced the world that Drake is one hell of a great rapper. And the world, or Western pop culture, has swallowed it hook, line and sinker. It's the point that I listened to the album I started questioning my sanity. I felt like Cassadaga, who was blessed with the gift of seeing the future but cursed by never having anyone listen to her. I hated this album, but I kept second-guessing my disaffection. Why?

Because just about every major music magazine is calling this album a borderline masterpiece. I have read the words "hate to the throne" so many times I thought I was watching "Game of Thrones." Seemingly everyone is celebrating this album. So why did I hate it so much? Am I crazy? Or am I one of the few who can see through the ruse? Maybe I'm just an old curmudgeon who hates the young kids and all their infernal music. It's none of those reasons and it's all of those reasons, but first let's talk about the album.

I'm not imagining it when I say the industry loves Drake. The man was nominated for a Grammy before his first album was even released. It shot to #1 on the billboard charts and went platinum almost instantly in Canada. Critics fawned over his debut effort and are fawning over this one. It isn't hard to see why is so well-loved by mainstream music fans; he has boy band good looks and is able to effortlessly convey an evergreen charm. There is nothing controversial about him or his life, in fact if you have ever seen anything that would be controversial for him, you are just a little worried about your own status. He is a perfect, non-threatening pop star.

The reality is that the sixties is an ever more intense level of cross promotion on the ground level. We see the same artists being featured on each other's albums, produced by the same producers, and lacking the flavor of the month until then there's no further use for these artists, at which point they're discarded. I find Drake's album sounds exactly like half a dozen other albums released over the past three years, it all sounds safe.

Hip hop used to be angry. It used to throw us into a world that was hard, unforgiving, exploitative and violent. It was the oral tradition of those who had been denied a voice for centuries. Drake is celebrated for not being part of that tradition, for not being a rebel, for not being angry. He is celebrated for being safe.

I hate nothing more than when people of privilege complain about hip hop being about "cars, money, guns and hoes." I find this argument is made almost exclusively by privileged classes, and it betrays a certain prejudice by those who make the agenda. Yes, hip hop is filled with rhymes about stereotypes. Yes, it has many issues that are slowly (sometimes agonizingly slow) being overcome. But to dismiss a whole musical tradition and culture because you never understand it is terrible.

Some might say no to Drake. We all voted with our wallets and the result is a combination of hip hop and pop. It isn't hard to see why he is so popular. It is a cheap trick. I don't know how you look at yourself in the mirror every day.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

Scorpio, I know you've been looking up to the romantic aries for the last few months. Your last attempt at winning over your special someone by dressing up as 1986 David Bowie, or uniquely dressing in black and white while slowly spooning molasises along the perimeter of your bed, was admittedly bad advice. I'm pretty trying that next Thursday will actually work.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) Your future depends on winning the next archery tournament. Some say that you're gonna push that hard-ante for the last few months. If a company can complain about hip hop being about "cars, money, guns and hoes," it's a cheap trick. "Say no to Drake." We all voted with our wallets and the result is a combination of hip hop and pop. It isn't hard to see why he is so popular. It is a cheap trick. I don't know how you look at yourself in the mirror every day.

 cursos de yoga

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

I think your acting career is finally beginning to take off this month. What you need is a better stage name. How do you feel about changing your sign to "Salmon?" Salmon are tough as nails. Price him on the other hand reminds me of "pliers" and I hate pliers. You'll never land that role opposite Steven Seagal with the name "Pliers." At best, he'd be your pet fish who swims in a bowl of tears collected by his friends after each of his concerts.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Aries, you have earned a haiku horoscope this month.

Cancer (June 21-July 22) The stars tell me you can't have it all. You need to take what it gets to us universal consensus on the Occupation. No Occupy Ottawa, but in fact all the Occupations! I'm not even sure how you'd go about trying that, but you'd better get on it.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22) Hit the clubs this month and have your party on. Oh, and by the way, try to avoid Scorpio this month.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Appreciate your candor this month. Aquarius. It takes a lot of nerve to skip along the sides of the flame without getting burnt down. Enjoy your music child.

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Gypsy & Co.

In the Market

203 DALHOUSE ST.

(new old young kids)

3rd Ave at Bank
toctopusbooks.ca

CULTURE

JUST SAY NO TO DRAKE

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

The solution to your astrological despair is to stop liking your grape! But you'd better be fast – Ul of O’s snitch has it marked away, so don’t let your Dementor suit to drive away your fellow seekers and chase that snitch down at the next quidditch match. Hurry!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

So I was talking to Capricorn about you, and he said that you and Sagittarius were conspiring to falsify Virgo’s astrological data. That’s a cheap trick Libra. Real cheap trick. I don’t know how you look at yourself in the mirror every day.

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Taurus (April 20-May 20)

It’s finally time for you to unveil your new invention! That one that everyone is crazy for. You need to showcase your new line of magic cards where Carleton President Roseann Runte and U of O President Al- lan Rock are pictured as Gandalf and Dumbledore engaged in Mortal Kombat. It is gonna be a hit!

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

Stop it.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
The stars tell me you can’t have it all. You need to take what it gets to us universal consensus on the Occupation. No Occupy Ottawa, but in fact all the Occupations! I’m not even sure how you’d go about trying that, but you’d better get on it.

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