

the reflector

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REMEMBERING KOBE BRYANT

(P. 11)

Loving what you teach and teaching what you love

A look into MRU prof Natalie Meisner's recent success

Christian Kindrachuk

Contributor



MRU's very own, Natalie Meisner, has been busy after recently getting four works published and a play set to debut in April. Photo courtesy of Leonora Andre

Publishing a work of art is something that can be hard for some authors, but for MRU's Natalie Meisner, it has been quite a year after getting four works published and a play set to debut this April.

While it is uncommon for any writer to publish that much in that time span, Meisner has stayed humble about having that opportunity for her work. She has found value incorporating her own life stories into her work.

"I never used to try to

write true stories. I always thought other people are more fascinating than me," Meisner says. "I thought, 'I'm just this ... young person from a small town. Who would care about my story?'"

This is noticeable in her work called *Double Pregnant: Two Lesbians Make a Family*, which is based on the crazy things that happened to Meisner as she and her partner were trying to have a family, she says.

Her recent publications include a collection of poems

titled *Baddie One Shoe*, a children's book called *My Mommy, My Mama, My Brother & Me*, three plays called *Legislating Love: The Everett Klippert Story*, *Speed Dating For Sperm Donors* and another that is set to be performed at the end of April titled *Boom Baby*.

Meisner is originally from Nova Scotia and says there wasn't much art and culture around growing up, but there was a bookmobile that helped open her eyes up to the literary world. After her studies had

started in Halifax she gained a strong appreciation for the power of literature.

"[I] became really passionate about the world of ideas, world literature [and] how stories can change the world," Meisner says.

While being a published author, Meisner is also a professor. She was offered to teach at the University of Calgary while completing her PhD, which she accepted.

With a background in theatre, Meisner brings a collaborative nature to teaching that shows in her classroom. This is seen by a former student who has taken one of Meisner's creative writing classes.

"[She is] super personalized, and she knew the students," says Tia Christoffersen, a former student who has worked closely with Meisner. "I had known her from taking several classes with her beforehand, and she knows how to bring out people's voices."

Meisner opts for a unique type of teaching that is aimed at helping students in their own way. She calls it the "co-teaching model," which is an effort to help students to be comfortable in asking their questions and asserting their opinions.

"So that they can say, 'No I didn't agree, I see it another way' and that is the moment that I always love because we all lean in closer," Meisner says. "We all learn from each other at that moment, it becomes super dynamic and super exciting."

While this might be an approach that might not come naturally for some, it seems to be who Meisner is as a person,

according to a fellow colleague at MRU.

"I remember her being warm as a new colleague," says Sarah Banting, a fellow teacher in the English department. "She's always happy to make connections, and to reach out to people and involve them in the things she's thinking about. I remember the warmth of her welcome to the department."

Now being in Alberta for 15 years, Meisner is balancing a perspective that is not always heard from in the west — an eastern perspective.

"I really appreciate being an easterner, but understanding the west. It's given me this cool perspective on Canadian culture," she says.

With her unique perspective on culture, she has been able to develop her own style towards topics that might otherwise be hard to pull off for another writer. That being a very human approach to things that can be serious with a touch of humor, Banting says.

"I feel like her work tends to be pretty humane, like pretty generous in spirit, especially to the lives of people who are marginalized in some communities... There's that generosity of spirit."

Meisner has been able to keep the balance of taking what she has learned herself in the field of writing and bringing it back to the classroom. This has also allowed her to keep her teaching career and writing career simultaneously.

"It's always been like you're in the world and you're also learning at the same time. I have loved the classroom from the very first day, but this is one of my homes. This is one of the places I feel alive," Meisner says.

MRU, 660 News attempts to set the record straight on student fee increases

Noel Harper

Contributor



Non-instructional fees could increase at MRU, but not as soon as a recent article suggested. Photo by Riggs Zyrille Vergara

In December of 2019, in the wake of the Alberta provincial budget and its reduced education funding, the Post-Secondary Learning Act was amended by the government to remove the necessity of student involvement.

The order “quietly repealed” tuition regulations, “allowing post-secondary administrations to increase tuition beyond previously approved limits without approval from students,” according to a press release from SAMRU.

“The issue becomes more acute when factoring in the removal of five years of freezes on other institutional fees apart from tuition, meaning some of those fees could skyrocket to fill the funding void left by considerable government cuts to operating grants,” SAMRU President Shayla Breen says in the release.

After that statement was released, 660 News published an article on the

announcement, reflecting that increases to non-instructional fees had occurred, and that “going to school at Mount Royal University will cost you more.”

However, fees being lifted does not simply mean that the university agreed to any increases at the time.

When *The Reflector* inquired about Mount Royal’s response to this change as reported by 660 News, a spokesperson designated the article as “puzzling,” saying, “It’s wrong in that the Board of Governors hasn’t approved any increases to fees or tuition.”

Connie Young, Associate Vice President of Finance and Risk Management for Mount Royal University, agrees that, “there have not been any decisions made at this point.”

While Young could not explicitly comment on whether or not the article is misleading, she says, “I think from a factual perspective, the fees have not been approved to increase at the

time of the article,” and have not been approved at the time of publication.

Despite this discrepancy, the notion of student fees going up in the future is far from out of the question, as the 2019 provincial budget left Mount Royal with a total of \$4.9 million in cuts that must be dealt with.

“Are there plans to look at what the fee increases will be? Yes, but those plans have not really [been] solidified,” Young says, confirming that “there will be increases to tuition and other fees” within the following academic year to help make up for the shortfall.

The said shortfall, though, cannot be recouped by this alone, according to Mount Royal’s President, Tim Rahilly. “It is not possible for us to balance our budget on increased tuition,” Rahilly said at a town hall last November, adding that “everything is on the table.”

According to Young, deciding what will be possible to balance it is “the

whole budget development process that we’re working through at the moment. There’s so many factors that go into that ... it’s multifaceted, and we haven’t developed those budget directions at this time.”

A taste of what may be coming to MRU came at the start of this year, when the University of Calgary approved tuition hikes of 10 to 15 per cent for the 2020-2021 year. Students demonstrated against these increases outside of a room that most members of the public and media were not allowed to enter.

“We’re obviously concerned about what students are feeling and thinking,” says Young. “I’m hopeful that the open dialogue that we have had with our students shows our commitment to going down that road in terms of any protesting.”

With the budget shortfalls requiring an eventual fee increase that has yet to be determined, Young reiterates

that Mount Royal is aware of what may lie ahead for its students.

“We do understand that it’s a legitimate concern for every student attending post-secondary in this province... we’re cognizant of that, and definitely aware of the financial pressures that everyone is facing.”

After *The Reflector* requested comment from 660 News on how the article was perceived, Kenny Mason, the author, clarified how the story came together.

“On that day, from the interviews we collected and the experts we talked with, it was our understanding that the changes were coming and it was just a matter of when,” Mason said in an email.

Several edits were also made to the article following our inquiry, to reflect that no changes had been made yet, including a revised headline stating that fees “could” rise.

Non-instructional fees go towards recreation, transit and general operations, among other services.

Mixed response for performance-based post-secondary funding

Nathan Woolridge

News Editor

The Government of Alberta introduced a new outcomes-based post-secondary funding approach on Jan. 20, as it looks to “increase transparency and accountability and help build a modern and diverse workforce for the future.” The transformation of post-secondary funding is receiving mixed reviews from both universities and students.

“This is a new and completely transformative funding model for our universities, colleges and polytechnics. Our new approach will help ensure students are set up for success by encouraging institutions to produce job-ready graduates,” says Minister of Advanced Education, Demetrios Nicolaides. “Students make a significant investment in their post-secondary education, and it is essential we do everything possible to give them a rewarding career at the end of their studies. By shifting the focus to performance, we will ensure taxpayer dollars are being used in the most responsible way possible.”

MRU reacted to the news of the performance-based funding model with a statement from President and Vice-Chancellor, Tim Rahilly, who says the university is on “the same page as [the] government.”

Rahilly says the changes help students “to become work-ready graduates and creating innovative programs that foresee the future labour force, all while constantly improving our services and being efficient.”

According to a Government of Alberta press release, “Under the new funding model, a portion of government funding to colleges, universities and polytechnics will be based on achieving key performance measures. Performance measures will encourage institutions to improve services, increase efficiencies and create opportunities for Albertans through strong labour market outcomes and innovative programs and research.”

“Today’s announcement is appreciated because it gives

us greater clarity, enables a transition period, and allows us to provide input on the metrics used,” Rahilly says.

But, on SAMRU’s website, they shared a release from The Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS), which says students are concerned with the idea of performance-based funding.

“While post-secondary funding in Alberta needs transparency, university students

fear this punitive funding model could be detrimental to their education if metrics are not equitable,” CAUS Chair Sadiya Nazir stated. “CAUS again calls on the Government of Alberta and Minister Nicolaides for thoughtful, evidence-based post-secondary institutional funding.”

CAUS itself says the shift of funding is concerning, especially after recent cuts to post-secondary education already implemented by the

government.

“It is currently unclear whether funding will remain in the [post-secondary education] system or be allocated elsewhere if an institution does not meet their minimum [performance-based funding] targets. The latter would ultimately translate to an additional cut to post-secondary in Alberta and would negatively impact students and institutions in our province,” CAUS says in its statement.

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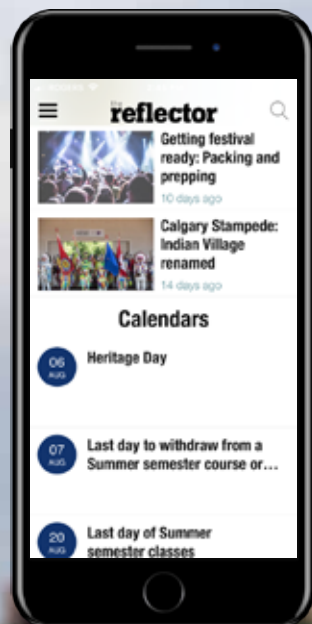
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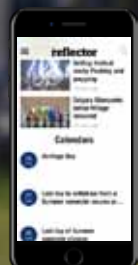
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If these 7 arguments don't convince you the Earth is flat, it might be because it's not

Isabelle Bennett
Features Editor

Wikipedia considers it archaic. NASA considers it crazy (probably). But what is it about the flat-Earth theory that makes so many consider it true? I've been fascinated by the flat-Earther community since I heard it existed, and here are seven of their best arguments I could drum up in my attempt to answer that question.

If the Earth were round, why can't we see the curve?

Around the world, this is one of the most common arguments flat-Earthers make to defend their perspective. Most people use far-off boats or buildings to illustrate their point, claiming that — if the Earth truly were spherical — the curve would cause these objects to eventually disappear into the horizon when they're a certain distance away. Typically, the buildings under analysis are closer than the distance required for the supposed curvature to cause them to fully disappear, but that's only because of the weakness of our darn eyeballs. Thankfully, telephoto lenses and aggressive squinting can help us verify this argument for ourselves — once Mount Everest comes into view, you'll know for sure. If that doesn't work, there's a time-lapse video of an even level on an airplane table out there for you to watch — it's called science.

The government is out to get us, and astronauts are big fat liars

It's surprising how many people still trust the government after they had the audacity to tell us that Elvis Presley died, but flat-Earthers understand that the government (a.k.a., the collusion of all governments, everywhere) is intent on keeping



The flat earth conspiracy has been growing in popularity thanks to Youtube. This is one interpretation of what a flat earth model might look like. Photo courtesy of BBC

citizens oppressed and in-the-dark — educating people that the Earth is round is just another ploy to achieve this objective. NASA, of course, is in on the conspiracy, in addition to all pilots and airlines. According to Mark Sargent in *Behind the Curve*, a documentary on the flat-Earth movement, scientists are also negligent to the flat-Earth theory due to the indoctrination of the education system. True flat-Earthers trust nobody but themselves. In fact, notable flat-Earther Math Powerland spends only half his time trying to debunk the globe-Earth “conspiracy” and the other half trying to dub other flat-Earthers as “conspirators” — so, there's that.

“People give you strange looks, that's fine. If you're not hurting them, let them think what they want. They're just asleep, going through life. They're just background noise,” says Sargent.

Because B.o.B. says so

Flat-Earth theorists are full of a lot of things, including imaginative ways to prove their belief system. One notable way was spearheaded by rapper

B.o.B., who started a GoFundMe campaign in 2017 to “launch one, if not multiple, satellites into space,” to see things for himself — a meaningful contribution to a community with trust issues. It's unclear what resulted from B.o.B. 's project as the GoFundMe page has since been taken down, but it appears flat-Earthers are still waiting for the proof they desire. In the meantime, they're devoting their energy into other experiments, like spinning a metaphorical gravity-less globe-Earth (a.k.a., a tennis ball) in a bucket of water to show that water flies off, suggesting the Earth is flat due to the fact we're not all drenched.

Gravity shmavity, we're all just too dense to fly

It's important to note that there are many schools of thought in the flat-Earth sphere, and explanations for gravity — well, what globe-Earthers know as gravity — is one area that regularly causes contention. Many flat-Earthers explain the phenomenon to be a product of density. Others say nothing is pulling us down, rather, the entire Earth is accelerating

upward at nearly 10 metres per second squared. The force behind it? Dark energy. This acceleration can be simply explained using Einstein's theory of relativity — a theory which globe-Earthers use to explain gravity. Fortunately, it's likely that Einstein's death was also a conspiracy, so next time we bump into his 141-year-old self we can just ask for clarification.

Globes prove nothing but the genius of Photoshop

The globe-Earth theory proves nothing but the magic of Adobe products. Seriously, what can't they do? If modern technology is not compelling enough to have you convinced, take a look at flight patterns. Why are there not more direct flights between South America and Australia? Many flat-Earthers believe that layovers are a tool that airlines use to confuse people and dodge questions about the illogical path being taken to their destination.

The sun doesn't set, it dramatically fades into the distance

The tendency of the sun to rise in the east and set in the west can certainly raise suspicions with the flat-Earth theory, but believers face the doubt with this sentiment: the sun doesn't set, it just travels far enough away that it can't be seen anymore — clearly, the billions of existing photographs of the sun peeking over the horizon are all products of Photoshop, too. To make this disappearing act possible, flat-Earthers propose the sun's properties to be quite different than scientists naively believe — rather than an inflamed ball of gas that can turn humans into lobsters from 150 million kilometres above Earth's surface, for instance, it is an itty bitty flashlight hovering a mere 5,000 kilometers away.

A dome-shaped planet makes so much more sense

Think about how long it's taken to develop the globe-Earth theory into what it has become — it's first documented mention dates back to ancient Greece, and it's taken exploration, satellites, space travel and scientists of all kinds to round out and defend the perception which governments and education deem as fact. In contrast, flat-Earth theorists only require a little imagination to understand the world as they know it: a flat circle with a dome-shaped top attached by the glue that is Antarctica — essentially, a giant snow-globe. It's relieving that no rigorous scientific proof is required, because the flat-Earth community is still wrestling to provide that.

If this is your first time hearing about the flat-Earth theory, you probably have many questions — I do too. If you have answers, please email featureseditor@thereflector.ca

Food for thought: Why superfoods may not be all that super

Alaina Shirt

Contributor



Superfoods have grown in popularity in recent years for their excellent health benefits, but little consideration is devoted to the ethical and environmental considerations of consuming these ingredients. Photo by Ella Olsson from Pixabay

Have you fallen into the superfood trap? Do you buy foods like goji berries and chia seeds that not only make your food look aesthetically pleasing, but also prevent cancer, fight off dementia and make you the most optimally functioning human ever?

Superfoods don't have a set definition, but are most commonly known for their high volume of nutritional properties: vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. Most superfoods — at least the ones marketed to North American countries — are native to foreign places. But the way these foods are sold to us creates an illustrious appeal that draws hipsters from near and far. Thus, demand has

gone up.

This increased demand is starting to raise concerns about long-term sustainability. As North Americans become increasingly obsessed with these exotic products, will the supply be able to keep up with the demand? And at what cost?

Environmental cost

Originating in places like Tibet and South America, these sought out commodities travel great distances before gracing our smoothie bowls.

And transportation doesn't come without a cost. That cost being pollution — specifically carbon dioxide,

Continues on Pg. 7



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Continued from Pg. 6

the main gas emitted during transportation of food. It is believed the transportation of food accounts for around 11 per cent of the greenhouse gas emissions from the food system.

As a *New York Times* article points out, food has been moving around the world for years, but never before at such a rapid speed, or in such high quantities.

The demand for avocados for example, which require

large amounts of space and water to grow, have led to many forests in Mexico being cut down. More so, as one article points out, they are “heavy and difficult to transport, which increases the carbon footprint of mass production of this crop.”

Ethical considerations

The growing popularity of superfoods raises ethical concerns as the staple food in developing countries starts to

become commodified.

An article in *The Guardian* analyzes the recent boom in quinoa, a nutrient dense, gluten-free grain. For thousands of years, quinoa has been a staple in the native Peruvian and Bolivian diets. But due to increased demand, and a subsequent increase in cost, many quinoa farmers can no longer afford to buy their own grain.

What is an everyday food for some has begun morphing into a luxury product, increasing the disparity in the countries

in which they have become a trend. Those with a higher socio-economic status can add these trendy products into their diets, leaving behind those who don't have the ability or means to attain them.

No more smoothie bowls?

While the rise of superfoods certainly presents challenges, we don't have to boycott them altogether. That being said, it's important to consider that

much of what makes these foods “super” is the way they are being marketed. There are many foods we have easier access to in Canada that will provide us with the nutrients we need.

By striving to shop locally and eat foods that are native to us, we'll reduce the ethical and environmental challenges that importing superfoods presents. But don't worry — a decorated smoothie bowl every once in a while is still okay.

There's a group for that

Meet-ups you need to check out in Calgary

Andrea Wong

Contributor

Tired of lonely Tuesday nights eating soup whilst reading Victorian literature? Now you can have a group to do that with. From avid hikers with adventurous dogs to taco-eating tech junkies, Meetup.com is the place to find anyone interested in anything.

If you haven't heard of Meetup before, it's a social networking site where people can organize groups that host local events. The bustling site invites people to meet new friends, discover and share hobbies, find support groups or even advance a cause. The possibilities are as diverse as the community.

Inspiration for the site came following the 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers. While feeling disconnected from his neighbours, founder Scott Heiferman saw others turning to one another for support in the wake of the tragedy. This outpouring of connection sparked an idea to build community by bringing common interests together.

The concept stuck, and Meetup is now home to over 200,000 self-organized groups around the world. With over 24 categories to browse in any city, you'll likely find at least a handful of groups that pique your interest. Search for events any day of the week on the Meetup calendar or explore groups by topics like

Health & Wellness, Sci-Fi & Games or Career & Business. Don't see what you're looking for? Start your own group, and build the community you want.

A sample of Calgary groups you'll find on Meetup**Calgary Playgroup for Social Dogs and their Social Owners**

Are you and your pooch equally excited by new faces? A Doggy Pawty is the perfect way to socialize your small canine companion (under 20 pounds) in a safe environment while also making great connections with fellow dog owners.

YYCSBC - Silent Book Club

Held at the Société Coffee Lounge, Silent Book Club invites you to two blissful hours of unwinding with the book of your choice while sipping on your favorite wine or coffee. Socialize with other book-lovers and share about what you're reading. Then, enjoy the beautiful silence of Introverted Reading Hour.

Calgary Horror Films Meetup

Brought to you by the executive producers of Haunted Calgary, Screampfest, Horror-Con and TenScaryMinutes, this group



Meetup is a social networking site where people can organize groups that host local events, like the Calgary Hiking & Scrambling Meetup. Photo by Walther Luecker on Unsplash

is for fans of all things horror. Monthly meetups include talks from the organizers and people on the frontlines of special effects. There will also be featured movie screenings to make your skin crawl!

Calgary Pub Grub Review: Heritage Pubs

You might not expect to eat your next meal at an old army base or funeral home, but that's exactly what you might find when you join this group. Accompany other burger

enthusiasts as you explore some of Calgary's oldest and strangest pubs and search for delicious, reasonably priced food.

Calgary Cuddle Party!

The name may have caught you off guard, but the goal of this group is to build authentic connection with others. The workshops take place in a safe, supportive space and teach people about non-sexual touch, finding and expressing your boundaries and

communicating compassion. Cuddling is welcomed but not required.

Calgary Hiking & Scrambling Meetup

If you relate to the word “outdoorsy” or are looking to change up your house cat lifestyle, this group is the way to go. Join or organize meetups like backpacking, hut trips, rock climbing, cycling or paddling. As long as it's an activity and it's outdoors, you'll find it here.

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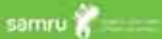
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Painted in oil

How oil and gas funding influences Calgary's art scene

Ayra Fouad

Staff Writer

In Calgary, it isn't just the economy that is impacted by the boom and bust cycle of the oil and gas industry. Calgary is home to a vibrant arts scene, that in part is supported through the patronage of the oil and gas companies that call our city their headquarters.

With Calgary's reliance on the oil and gas industry, the moment gas prices drop, the local economy finds itself in a recession. Although the arts are not often seen as a sector impacted by economic hardship, with the instability of the Calgary economy, how are our arts impacted when one of their major sources of funding falls? With a city that is as proud of its arts as it is of its oil, do these two important cultural characteristics coexist or conflict?

As I was wandering the streets of downtown Calgary the other day, I noticed just how artistically expressive our city is. I passed by the beautiful wall murals and boards covered in posters for different plays and orchestral events, and was overwhelmed by the degree to which art is embedded in Calgary's culture.

But so is the practice of the oil and gas industry to donate, or sponsor arts projects around the city. In an article published in the *Calgary Herald*, journalist Stephen Hunt wrote, "through its patronage of our arts scene – and new play incubators such as

Lunchbox Theatre and Alberta Theatre Projects – Calgary's oil and gas industry plays a vital role in Calgary's emergence as one of the more dynamic, innovative arts communities in the country."

Hunt adds that many local works have premiered at the Lunchbox Theatre, giving many local playwrights and actors the opportunity to pursue a professional career in theatre, as a result of Suncor's 26 year long sponsorship of the theatre.

Despite the fact that this kind of patronage allows otherwise underfunded artists to pursue their careers, the direct correlation between Calgary's economy and the oil and gas industry could pose a potential threat.

Upon visiting the Glenbow Museum, the influence of the oil and gas industry was quickly made evident. An entire exhibition is dedicated to the industry, complete with summaries of influential figures, deeming them to be heroes. Much like any other learning space, museums shouldn't exhibit a biased perspective. Unfortunately, due to the fact that the arts community in Calgary is heavily funded by the oil and gas industry, the viewpoint that these spaces showcase will also be heavily biased.

Although it may seem that an economic downturn in the oil sector, may mean a downturn

in support for the arts, so far, the arts scene has been thriving.

For example, on Jan. 23, Contemporary Calgary opened its doors to the public, displaying exhibits that "feature works from local artists and international exhibitions including Yoko Ono, Luke Jerram, Omar Ba and more." The event attracted over 1,000 people and gave Calgarians a chance to appreciate influential works of art from world-renowned artists up close, as well as experience local artists alongside them.

Not only does the arts scene offer a fresh sense of vibrancy to our city, it also benefits and diversifies our economy. It brings in tourists with a thirst for entertainment, be it in the form of an opera performance, a stroll through a museum or even to have their picture taken beside a sculpture of a human head at the base of Calgary's tallest skyscraper. It also attracts artists to pursue careers in their particular niche due to the fact that the arts community is not only protected by, but is championed by both the people and the economy.

Despite the fact that the economic state of Calgary is primarily dependent on the oil and gas industry which is, quite frankly, unstable, it is comforting to know that the art community is very much supported by it, and strong on its own terms.



Not only does the arts scene offer a fresh sense of vibrancy to our city, it also benefits and diversifies our economy. Photo illustration by Riggs Zyrille Vergara

OUT'N ABOUT

Bell Let's Talk Day at NMC

There will be events like a drum therapy session led by JB Music Therapy, a Kimball Theatre Organ demonstration, and a tour by NMC president Andrew Mosker, to highlight the healing power of music, on Jan. 29.

Particle + Wave Media Arts Festival

From Jan. 30 to Feb. 1, Calgarians can marvel at the latest screenings, installations and live performances from local, national and international multimedia artists.

We've Read This Book Club: *Three Women*

On Jan. 29 from 7 to 8 p.m. Anne Logan, a local blogger and book reviewer, will lead participants through a discussion of Lisa Taddeo's bestseller *Three Women*.

Burnt Toast Studio Open House

Art collective Burnt Toast Studio is opening its doors to the public for an open house and exhibition from 6 to 9 p.m. Jan. 31.

How *Little Women* shows the different sides of feminism

Mackenzie Gellner

Web Editor

Arguably, there is a certain stereotype associated with feminism. However, feminism as a word and a movement merely refers to gender equality, and the right to determine your own future without the confines of preconceived gender roles. In Greta Gerwig's latest film, *Little Women*, the idea of feminism is explored through the characters and the choices they make to pursue their dreams.

Adapted countless times, *Little Women* began its life as a novel published in two volumes in 1868 and 1869 by Louisa May Alcott. At the time of writing *Little Women*, Alcott was already a published author, writing novels and children's literature which quickly became successful. With this success under her belt, Alcott set out to write a semi-autobiographical account of herself and her four sisters and their childhood in Concord Massachusetts, ultimately creating *Little Women*.

The story follows Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy, four sisters growing up together, yet who each have completely different aspirations. Meg hopes to find the love of her life, Jo dreams of being an unwed writer, Beth prefers simplicity and the sound of her piano and Amy wants "...to be an artist in Rome and be the best painter in the world."

Although both Jo, played by Saoirse Ronan, and Amy, played by Florence Pugh, have high career aspirations, Amy has come to terms over her limitations of being a woman during the 1800s, whereas Jo still strives to break through.

19th century limitations

Being a woman in the 1800s came with a certain societal

mold you were expected to fit into. A mold which Alcott — an unwed abolitionist writer who refused to wear a corset — herself did not fit, and sought to explore through the characters of her novel.

In the film, Amy speaks to Laurie, portrayed by Timothée Chalamet, about her decision to marry a man she doesn't truly love. Due to her stagnant career as a painter, she sees her only option as marrying a man who can financially support her and her family.

In Laurie's confusion, he asks why she would marry for money, and she reminds him that from her perspective, marriage is an economic proposition, not just a romantic one. Marriage is one of the few opportunities provided to her to become financially stable.

Meanwhile, her older sister Jo, who is determined to make it on her own terms finds herself working as a governess while trying to pursue her writing career. Jo often finds herself writing what editors tell her will sell in order to be published and make enough money to continue. Although Amy and Jo have very similar ambitions — becoming artists successful enough to achieve financial stability — their ultimate answers to success differ as they are both reigned in by the financial and social limits placed on women during the 19th century.

Even today, economic independence can be a challenge for women, as a gendered wage gap continues to prevail, and the struggles of these two sisters and the concessions they must make — looking for money in marriage, and sacrificing independence in artwork to make a profit — continues to be a consideration for many women in their

own search for economic independence.

Faces of feminism

Moments before her wedding, Meg, played by Emma Watson, asks Jo to understand that, "Just because my dreams are different than yours, doesn't mean they are unimportant." This line comes at an emotional moment as Jo tries to convince her older sister that she would be better off not being married, so the two of them could live their lives writing for and performing on the stage.

Although Meg has been shown to excel at acting, her dreams of being married and having her own family have been as prevalent as Jo's dreams to become a writer. Jo is choosing her career and Meg is choosing to have a family, but both are choices they each want to make for themselves, and despite the differences, this scene perfectly exemplifies how both Jo and Meg are feminists, each in their own unique way.

Feminism has never been about burning bras and hating men, it has been about the right to make a choice. Feminism is a movement to promote the ability of women to decide what they want to do with their lives, regardless of societal expectations.

Still a reality

Although the the film is set in the past, one must consciously recognize its relevance today. No matter your gender, taking time out of your day to watch, or read *Little Women* will give you a perspective you didn't even realize you needed.

Through this film, Gerwig presented feminism through a coming-of-age classic with elements of comedy and emotion which makes it highly relatable (especially if you grew up with sisters).



Nightfall

Little Big Town
Capitol Records
Nashville

Score: A

Nearly every Albertan can agree that the recent deep freeze has left everyone seeking warmth. Released on Jan. 17, Little Big Town's *Nightfall* is the fire that we need to thaw out our frozen spirits.

Nightfall is an album that creates a tingle in your chest; it's an album full of love, heartbreak and acceptance.

For someone who rarely listens to country (but is very much open to it), I found myself pouring my heart out along with the album. The title *Nightfall* is fitting in itself too; this album emanates the ambience of sitting under the stars with an open campfire keeping you company.

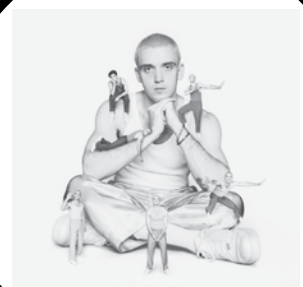
- Mikaela Delos Santos

~how i'm feeling~

Lauv

AWAL

Score: A-



Lauv will get you in your feelings with *~how i'm feeling~*. True to Millennial and Gen Z fashion, this album perfectly exemplifies emotions we can't express.

Compiled into 27 minutes of mellow sensibility, this album sounds how everyone's diary reads. Full of sentimentality, *~how i'm feeling~* emits the perspective of looking at the bright

side despite the confusing sensitivity we all possess. As for Lauv, he stays true to his artistry which makes this album even more distinctive. If this album was a photo, it'd be the bathroom selfies we take after a breakdown, holding up a peace sign. We've all been there.

- Mikaela Delos Santos

Remembering Kobe Bryant

Dan Khavkin
Sports Editor

A black mamba is a venomous snake. Everyone knows that. Its true danger however, is the fact that it'll attack you without any provocation.

Kobe Bryant didn't need you to be an enemy on the court to drop 50 points on your head. It didn't stop him from hanging 55 points over his mentor, the GOAT Michael Jordan.

The same mentality he carried in basketball translated into stardom just a year into his retirement.

Did we all forget that Bryant won an Oscar for the best short story just over two years after hanging the shoes up? Just a year after he put up 60 points in what is most likely the greatest farewell game in human history.

Whether he carried scrubs or was the head of an all-star starting five, Kobe's mentality was the same. He was Michael Jordan after Jordan. A cold-blooded killer on the court who's regimented training and zero tolerance for lack of effort, earned himself the reputation as one of the baddest-men to play in a sport.

Known for getting up at 5 a.m. and practicing until 7 a.m. in high school, he would practice two hours before practicing with the Lakers as an 18-year-old. There was the account that he practised on his own from 4 a.m. until 11 a.m. and wouldn't leave until he shot 800 jump shots with Team USA. He would watch game-film of himself at half-time. He was the first one in and last one out. The list goes on and on.

During his time in the spotlight, we also witnessed him grow as a person. Unlike many



Bryant won five championship rings within his 20 year basketball career and quickly became one of the NBA's greatest players. Photo courtesy of Getty Images and Bleacher Report

other public figures he publicly admitted to adultery and apologized for getting involved in a sexual assault case.

Yes, we remember the rocky relationship he had with the LGBTQ+ community when he was fined \$100,00 USD for calling a referee a homophobic slur. But did we forget that two years later he called out a fan on Twitter to get rid of such foul language?

"Come on Kobe... you called a ref a f*****. Don't preach, just win," one fan tweeted at Bryant's response.

"Exactly! That wasn't cool and was ignorant on my part. I own it and learn from it and expect the same from others," he said

to the fan.

For the LGBTQ+ community it was a big step in the right direction for an iconic basketball player like Bryant to apologize, and show that people can change for the better.

In his life post-NBA he continued to embody the same energy and personality we came to love on the court. We saw a man open his arms to competition when, just a day before his death, he congratulated LeBron James for leapfrogging him in the NBA all-time scoring list.

We all remember the wink he gave to his wife and kids sitting front-row after his legendary 60-point farewell game in 2016.

We witnessed the true family man Kobe was.

His praise and love for his daughters and his wife Vanessa triggered the real tears of his death. Proudly saying that he was a "girl dad," Bryant opened his own basketball academy where he coached his late 13-year-old daughter Gianna. She would've been an NCAA star who would've carried her career the same way her father did.

So, dear Kobe,

Thank you for sharing the Mamba Mentality with the world.

Thank you for having a Hall of Fame career that lasted 20 years with the L.A. Lakers.

Thank you for reminding us people can change.

Thank you for showing what it takes to get to the next level. Not only in finding advantages in life, but showing us the necessary steps it takes to rise above the rest.

We should change the phrase "KOBE" to "It's for Kobe" whenever we toss a rolled up paper into the trash bin in your honour.

There will never be another one like you.

Thank you Kobe Bean Bryant.

Ex-MRU star Yang remembers Kobe

Former Mount Royal Cougars men's basketball star Glen Yang has been out of school for over a year now and currently plays professionally for KFC Culle in the Spanish Liga EBA.

"Anytime I needed extra motivation I would watch a Kobe interview or a Kobe highlight.

"Everytime I didn't want to work out or felt lazy, I would think of what Kobe would do and sometimes that's all I needed to get up and go after it.

"His mentality and the way he approached life and the game is something I aspired to have and will continue to work towards having.

"If people asked me who I could sit down and have dinner with, I would pick Kobe Bryant. I wanted to pick his brain and learn from him that much."

Visit thereflector.ca to read an editorial piece commemorating Kobe Bryant.

#S

33,643, career points for Kobe Bryant, ranking him fourth in the all-time list of scorers.

5, ^{NBA} championships for Kobe Bryant during his 20-year career with the L.A. Lakers.

8,24, ^{Kobe Bryant} is the only player to have two numbers retired.

2, ^{Olympic Gold} medals obtained by Kobe Bryant in 2008 and 2012 with Team USA.

MRU women's hockey front and centre in 2020 Crowchild Classic

For the first time since 2012, the women's hockey teams play the prime-time slot

Dan Khavkin

Sports Editor

Girls, the floor is yours.

For the first time in the eight years since the creation of the Crowchild Classic, the Mount Royal Cougars and Calgary Dinos women's hockey teams will enjoy the privilege of playing the prime-time slot set for 6:45 p.m. inside the home of the NHL's Calgary Flames.

Last year the Crowchild Classic drew in 11,490 Dinos and Cougars fans, which is about a 1,000 person increase from the year before but fell short of the all-time attendance record set in 2016 with 12,859 in attendance.

The Calgary Dinos own the all-time record of 5-2 on the women's side and have won the last games 2-1 and 1-0. MRU hasn't won since earning a 3-1 win in 2017.

"Both institutions recognize they want to provide equality around the board which started the conversation and here we are today," says Cougars head coach Scott Rivett.

Dinos head coach and Hall of Fame member Danielle Goyette agrees.

"The two universities putting the game at 7 p.m. is a great idea and a good thing moving forward to give equal opportunity for both teams," she says.

"The impact on women's hockey is huge. We were always behind the men and I like what the University of Calgary and Mount Royal are doing to give the girls the opportunity to play in front of a full-house inside the Saddledome."

Rivett and his team are ready to take on the change.

"Even with the big crowd building up towards the end of the game, we all start to feel the excitement and the players will feel that energy come puck-drop rather than seeing the crowd build around them late in the game," he says.

Despite all the excitement surrounding being the headline event, the game on the ice is the primary focus.

"In all honesty, it's still about three points. It's simplistic but it is absolutely what the game is about."

The event being pushed to the second time-slot also allows for both the women's teams to prepare for the game.

In MRU's case, a lot of players take part in semester-long practicums.

A big part of it is playing in a regular time-slot that gives the players the best opportunity to prepare and play their best.

"Often in the past we had kids scramble to get there or that they potentially might not be able to play at the event," Rivett explains.

"As a result, it's dictating what our lineup looks like. Other times we weren't able to have all the players that we would want to play. Pushing the game time removes the big chunk of the conflicts from the academic perspective which is big."


Goyette adds: "It might be a player's first time and even only game in their life where they get to play in front of so many people. It'll be a great experience in their lifetime."

Rivett agrees.

"The girls are looking forward to having the opportunity to perform in front of the big crowd at the beginning of the game, no question," he notes.

Like last year, there is a charge for admission. All proceeds from the \$5 admission fee will be returned to the two campuses for investment into student wellness initiatives.

And one lucky student from each institution will walk away with \$5,000 toward their tuition, with plenty of other games and prizes to be given out throughout the evening.



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