

the reflector

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**PANTONE COLOUR OF THE YEAR:
CLASSIC BLUE**
(P. 6)

Will the coronavirus affect you?

What to keep in mind following the recent public health emergency

Christian Kindrachuk

Contributor

With the outbreak of the coronavirus people around the world have started to take precautions due to the nature of the new virus. However, in terms of an outbreak, this is nothing new.

On Jan. 30, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) qualifies as a public health emergency of international concern.

“That is because they see the increasing numbers of the coronavirus and are impressed by the ability of this virus to potentially spread through the entire world,” says infectious disease specialist Chris Mody from the University of Calgary. “What that declaration does, is it coordinates the world’s efforts in terms of reporting, screening and trying to prevent other citizens in the world from acquiring it.”

Risk to Canadians

The situation is being monitored closely by the WHO and countries alike. Currently the WHO is issuing daily situation reports on their website about the virus. As of Feb. 11, seven cases of the virus have been confirmed in Canada — three being in Ontario and four being in British Columbia, according to the Government of Canada website on the current situation.

The Public Health Agency of Canada has assessed Canada’s level of risk as low, and will continue to reassess as new information is available. The Canadian government recommends avoiding all non-essential travel to China and all travel to Hubei province, China, including Wuhan city.

While the actual risk does remain low according to officials, this has not stopped people from worrying about



As of Feb. 8, seven cases of the novel coronavirus have been confirmed in Canada.
Photo illustration by Riggs Zyrille Vergara

the contagious nature of the virus. The virus itself is technically a part of the family of cold viruses.

“They cause upper respiratory tract symptoms, runny nose, runny eyes, sore throat, the things that you associate with having a cold. This novel coronavirus has more features of pneumonia, so it’s also in the respiratory tract, but it’s basically in the lungs,” says Mody. “The cases that have been reported — about 80 per cent of them have pneumonia-like symptoms where only five per cent have cold like symptoms.”

Mody notes that the current coronavirus is harder to detect because of its nature.

“In Alberta, it’s still much more likely to experience a respiratory infection caused

by a common virus, such as the flu,” according to Tom McMillan of Alberta Health in an email correspondence.

The virus itself is in the same family as SARS, says Mody. Recent developments have shown that the current mortality rate from the novel coronavirus has surpassed SARS. Currently Alberta Health is monitoring the situation closely as a safety measure.

“There are no probable or confirmed cases in Alberta at this time. The risk to Albertans is still low at this time, but we have taken the necessary steps to ensure Alberta’s health system is prepared,” says McMillan.

“Anyone with specific questions or concerns about their health is encouraged

to call Health Link at 811 for assessment and health advice,” he says. As well, individuals are encouraged to visit: www.alberta.ca/coronavirus for updates.

Risk prevention

Alberta Health and Mody say it is helpful to employ basic flu practices to avoid getting sick and spreading it to other people.

“The best protection against respiratory illnesses, including the novel coronavirus, is to use good hygiene practices. This includes frequent handwashing and covering coughs and sneezes. Also, avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands,” says McMillan.

MRU is also watching the situation because of the traction it has been getting around the world. To proactively inform students, an email was sent out to students and faculty on Jan. 31.

“There’s been a lot of mention of it and I think people were feeling a little bit nervous,” says Rachelle McGrath, director of Wellness Services. “We were getting inquiries as to what we were doing or what might be happening on campus.”

The physicians from Wellness Services are affiliated with primary care networks like Calgary West Central and adhere to their professional responsibility and regulations within the network, says McGrath.

McGrath says the physicians within Wellness Services receive updates and direction from Alberta Medical Association and coordinate from there. However, when asked if MRU has a “pandemic policy,” McGrath was unaware of one.

“It would be within their [primary care networks] realm rather than necessarily within Mount Royal’s realm to have a policy or procedure related to if there might be an infectious disease on campus,” says McGrath.

Mody says they are currently updating their pandemic preparedness plan as a precaution at the UofC, which expands on what the responsibilities of the university and students are, should an outbreak occur.

“I think it’s important for us to start that conversation, not to panic about it, but just to say, ‘So what are we going to do?’ It’s that kind of conversation that I think is very helpful and then hopefully, we will never have to use any of those measures,

A year in review: What have Jason Kenney and the UCP done?

Nathan Woolridge

News Editor



Jason Kenney and the UCP government have seen a decline in support, even from individuals who voted for them in the last provincial election. Photo courtesy of *National Post*. Graphic by Nathan Woolridge

Alberta Premier Jason Kenney and his cabinet of ministers took their oaths for office on April 30, 2019 after winning a majority government with nearly 55 per cent of the popular vote. But, as we approach nearly 300 days, on Feb. 24, of the United Conservative Party (UCP) government, are voters still enthusiastic with their new government and what has that government been up to over the past several months?

In mid-December, ThinkHQ Public Affairs released the Alberta government's approval rating from a survey it conducted — 53 per cent of respondents said they disapproved of the government's performance, while 44 per cent approved. That was a 12 per cent slide in points from mid-October. And the poll also found 21 per cent of respondents, who voted for the UCP, now disapproved of the party and its actions.

So, what has the UCP government done in recent

months to either increase or decrease overall support?

Putting a price on carbon

One of Kenney's first legislative actions and one of his strongest campaign promises was to scrap the New Democratic Party (NDP) and former premier, Rachel Notley's carbon tax.

But, when Kenney announced his government's climate plan, he unveiled his own version of a carbon tax.

For the *Globe and Mail*, Jason Franson wrote: "Because even as Mr. Kenney quietly imposes his carbon tax on industry, he can keep up his very public opposition to any such tax on consumers — secure in the knowledge that Ottawa will act to fill the gap."

Franson sums it up by adding: "Yes, Alberta's overall plan is weaker and narrower than what smart climate policy should look like: It covers major emitters such as power

plants and the oil industry, but it exempts consumers. Nevertheless, it represents a step forward for Mr. Kenney's government.

"It's not a complete plan. But it's far from a complete sham."

Cutting public spending

In their 2019 Budget, the UCP were criticized for their actions to cut public spending in several areas.

The budget cut around 2,100 public service positions by 2020 — a 7.7 per cent reduction, according to *CBC*.

Some of the decisions made in the budget resulted in a loss of jobs. Although, the government maintained funding for kindergarten to grade 12 education as the previous year, it made cuts to Class Size Funding, Classroom Improvement and School Fee Reduction. The Calgary Board of Education announced it would cut 300 temporary teachers following the budget.

As well, the Calgary Catholic School District will face \$11-million in funding cuts and will also be faced with \$6-million in additional costs related to growth, *CBC* reports.

The budget also included a 5 per cent decrease in funding for post-secondary education. This led to the University of Calgary to cut 250 jobs.

In November, MRU announced cuts to 10 positions along with the merging of two departments.

President and Vice-Chancellor, Tim Rahilly ensured, "There will be no other layoffs planned in the [2019] calendar year, but unfortunately I must tell you we have more budget work to do, which will inevitably result in the elimination of more positions in 2020."

Jobs, jobs and no jobs?

In late November 2019 labour organizations in Alberta said there could be a

loss of an estimated 6,400 to 7,400 unionized public-sector jobs by 2023, the *Edmonton Journal* reports. Largely this is related to the UCP's intentions to contract out various services and enlist changes.

In particular, 3,900 and 4,900 of the expected job losses come from positions in healthcare.

Kenney signed a public health care guarantee, which stated his government would maintain a universally accessible publicly funded health-care system along with maintaining or increasing funding to health care.

But, the official opposition leader, Notley, accused the premier of breaking his promise, the *Edmonton Journal* reports.

And it appears the budget will affect more and more jobs as time goes on, leading to losses in health care positions and other public sector jobs.

Donald Trump impeachment: Why do we care?

Nathan Woolridge

News Editor

United States President, Donald Trump, became the third president in history to be impeached after The House of Representatives made its decision on Dec. 18. Its decision came from two particular charges — first charging Trump with abusing his office and the other charging him with obstructing Congress. But, on Feb. 5, the Senate voted to acquit Trump after finding him not guilty of the charges.

What does this all mean? Was Trump impeached? And is he still president?

Technically, yes Trump was impeached and that idea will be forever stamped on his legacy as president. But, for Trump to be removed from office, there would have to be support from two-thirds of the Senate to do so. The Senate consists of 53 Republicans, 45 Democrats and two independents, according to *Business Insider*.

And as mentioned, Trump was acquitted on both charges of impeachment on Feb. 5.

On abuse of power, senators voted 52-48 and on obstruction of Congress, senators voted 53-47, in favour of their party interests.

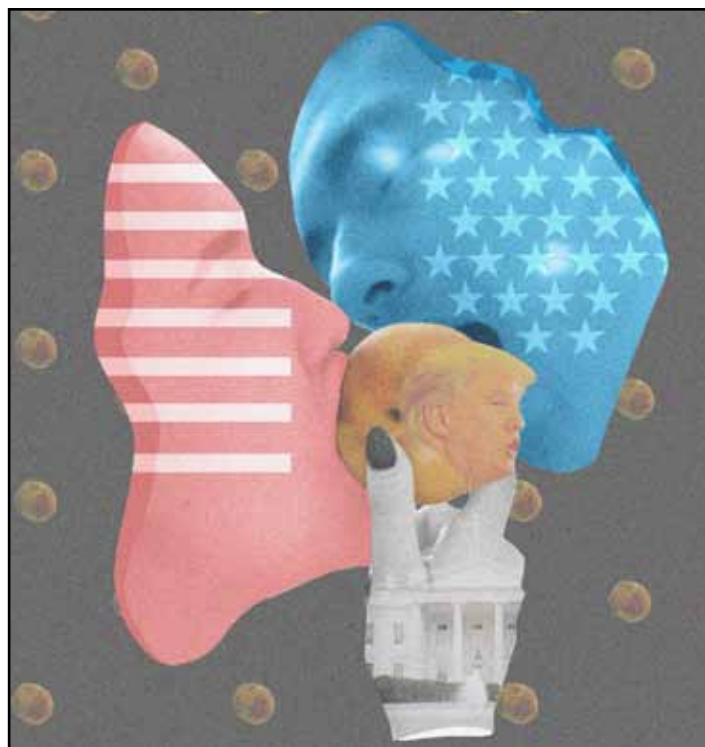
Senator Mitt Romney was the sole Republican vote to convict Trump on abuse of power going against the party line. But, Romney voted with Republicans to acquit Trump on obstruction of Congress.

Essentially, this means Trump will remain in office as president of the United States. But, during the impeachment trials there were a lot of demanding questions raised that many have been asking all along: Is the president fit to serve office? Is America showcasing a “broken politics, a broken democracy, a broken country?”

BBC News' New York

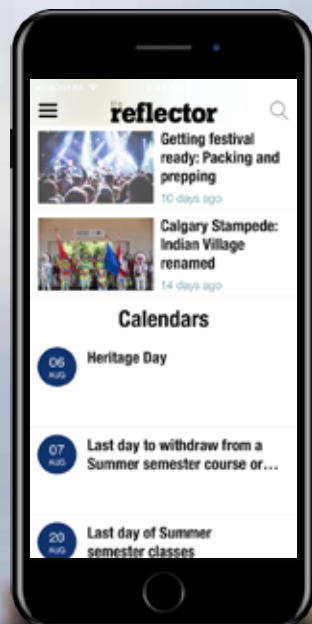
correspondent, Nick Bryant put it best when he said, “During the impeachment trial it often seemed that the very idea — and ideals — of America was on the stand.

“Is the United States beyond the point of repair?”

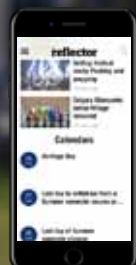


Donald Trump became the third president to be impeached, but was acquitted of impeachment charges on Feb. 5. Photo illustration by Riggs Zyrille Vergara

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How to have the Tokyo experience in Calgary

Mackenzie Mason
Contributor



Ajito is a new hidden Japanese treasure in Calgary, carefully concealed by this pop machine. Photos by Mackenzie Mason

If you're anything like me, you've always wanted to visit Japan and experience the vibrant and bustling city of Tokyo.

If you're even more like me, you probably can't afford to pay for the 11-hour flight from Calgary, the expensive hotel costs (even if you're in one of those capsule hotels) and the price of transportation from destination to destination. But fear not my friends, because you barely have to leave home to enjoy Japan!

Here's how to experience Tokyo in Calgary in a day.

1. Glenbow Museum

130 9 Ave SE

You'll begin your day at the Glenbow Museum to learn the history of Japan through some breathtaking Buddhist art, originating from Japan and other Asian countries. There is

also some stunning Japanese O-Yoroi samurai armour from the Kamakura or Muromachi period (12th-14th century). This can be found on the fourth floor of the building in the warrior exhibition.

2. Chinook Kendo Dojo

7008 Farrell Rd SE

Once you've immersed into the impressive history of Japan, it's time to get down and dirty. Channel your inner samurai as you take a Kendo class at the Chinook Kendo Dojo. Kendo is a traditional Japanese, semi-contact, martial art, using bamboo swords (shinai) and protective armour (bōgu). Even though you don't get to use a real samurai sword (a katana) which is probably for the best, you're going to have a great time immersing yourself in the rich warrior history of Japan

that you just learned about!

3. Devonian Gardens

400, 317 7 Ave SW

Despite the fast-paced, urban lifestyle of Tokyo, the city has 56 parks and gardens to wander around and find your zen. After all the hard work it took to become a samurai, it will be nice to relax in the Devonian Gardens in the downtown Core Shopping Centre. Here you'll find one hectare of botanical gardens habiting over 500 trees, 50 varieties of plants, a 900 sq. ft. living wall, fountains, koi fish ponds and even a playground.

(Bonus points if you meditate in the garden and send us a picture!)

4. Oomomo

1075-999 36 St NE

If one of the main reasons

you wanted to visit Tokyo was for the Shinjuku Shopping District, then you're gonna love Oomomo. Oomomo is a Japanese lifestyle variety store that strives, "to bring new and trending products in Japan to Canada every month." They have everything in this store — literally everything. There's cosmetics, household goods, electronics and all the Japanese snacks you could wish for! Shop at your heart's content because everything in the store is \$3, unless otherwise specified.

5. Ajito

110-7212 Macleod Trail SE

After a long, eventful day in Tokyo — I mean, Calgary — it's time to sit down and enjoy a bottle of Coke, right? Wrong! Think beyond the Coca-Cola dispenser and imagine the world of possibilities that lies behind it. Okay, that's a

little dramatic, but you're not going to want to miss out on this one. Ajito is a Japanese speakeasy hidden inside a sushi restaurant, behind a vintage Coca-Cola machine. Yeah, you heard me.

When you walk in, it's like you entered a hidden dimension full of delicious food and new experiences. From fancy, colourful drinks to menus that look like ninja masks, all the way to sashimi dishes being served in a cloud of smoke and the best ramen you might ever have, Ajito is all about the experience. And if you're lucky enough to meet the owner, Takeshi Kawabe, you'll be met with some wholesome omotenashi or Japanese hospitality.

After all is said and done, it's time to go home. Good thing you don't have to go on that 11-hour airplane ride!

Opinion: Pantone should have just chosen brown for their Color of the Year

My thoughts on the 2020 winner, Classic Blue

Isabelle Bennett

Features Editor

Each December, the Pantone Color Institute designates a Color of the Year. Though the choosing of a king-pin colour seems about as significant as *People's* designation of the sexiest man alive, the effects of this single decision are manifested through trends in marketing, merchandising, interior design and — for better or for worse — bridesmaid dresses. Historically, the Pantone Color Institute has made bold decisions representative of timely social and political messages, but this year's colour, "Classic Blue,"

appears not to say much beyond, "meh."

It should be noted that this is not the first of Pantone's selections to warrant pursed lips and a slow shake of the head — last year's colour, "Living Coral," is a perfect example. Intended to directly pay tribute to the ocean's coral reefs as they slowly, painfully deteriorate in the wake of climate change, many felt the colour was too naively wishful, too unsuitably bright, too insensitively blunt or — unrelatedly — dang ugly.

Understandably, the Pantone Color Institute

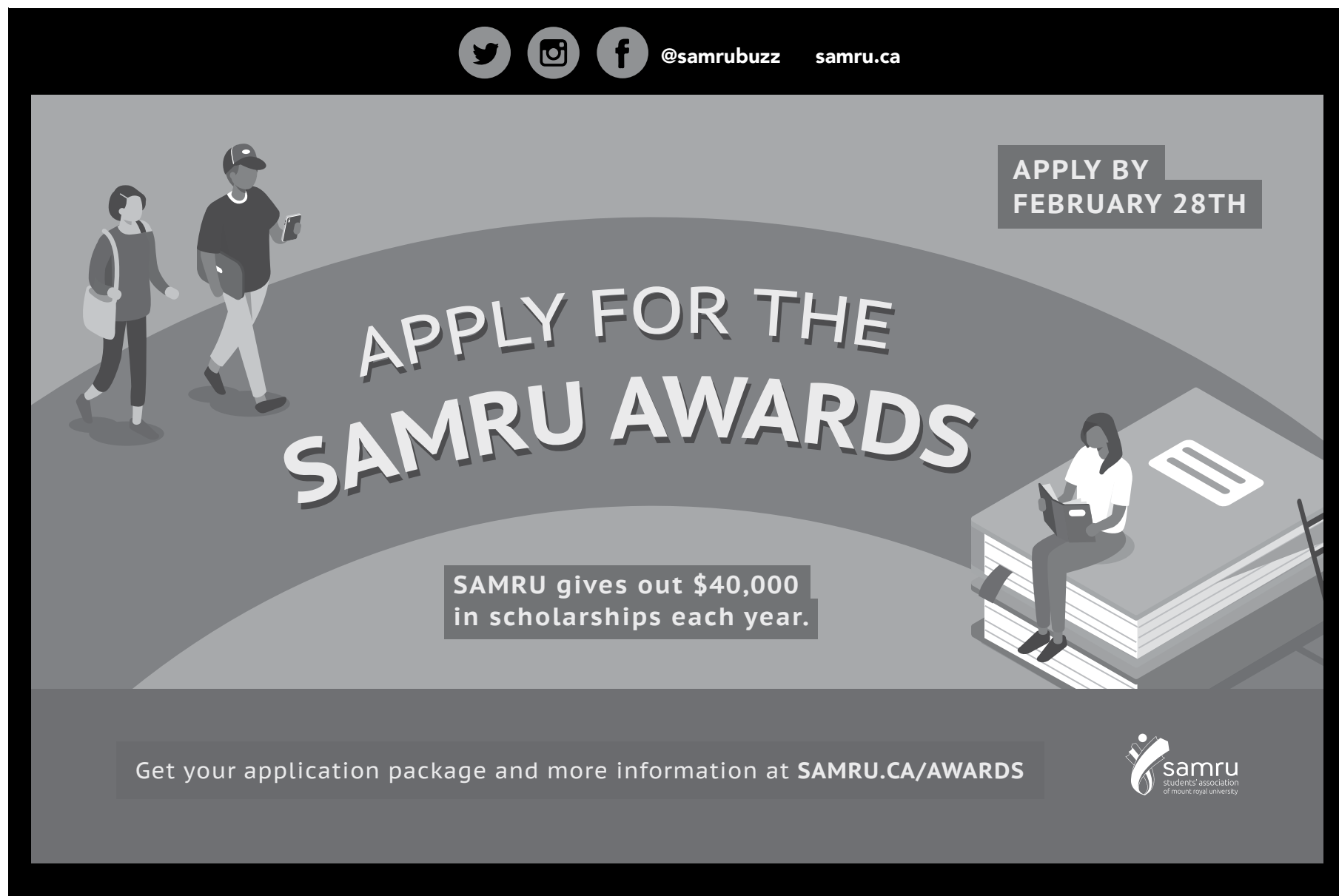
decided to play it safer this year, by choosing a colour intended to offer feelings of, "reassurance, confidence, and connection that people may be searching for in an uncertain global milieu," according to *CNN*. To summarize, they chose Classic Blue. Pantone says this shade pays tribute to a sky at dusk, though it reminds me more of the sky in the 2007 default Windows wallpaper. Or the Facebook logo. Or the Google results. Or a box of Pepsi pop-cans.

Here's the problem: beyond the items listed, Classic Blue reminds me of

nothing. It feels artificial and corporate. If offered a selection of products in a variety of colours, I would most likely not choose Classic Blue. I own almost nothing in the colour, besides a myriad of free T-shirts I've earned over the years from sports tournaments, volunteering, and draw prizes — all of which currently lie in a spare pyjama drawer at my parents' house. Yes, in my case, Pantone has succeeded in their effort to choose an inoffensive colour that fails to personally resonate on any level — a colour that I don't like, but struggle to explain

why.

I'm just one of the masses, though. For many others, Classic Blue presents reminders of political parties and sports teams and — perhaps most contentious of all — Sonic the Hedgehog, whose initial CGI rendering caused a whole movie to be postponed. It's laughably ironic to consider the way that Pantone surrendered to the criticism of the masses — whether intentional or not — and are still receiving so much backlash. Thus, the conclusion I've come to is this: they should have just chosen brown.



A poster for the SAMRU Awards application. At the top, there are social media icons for Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, followed by the text "@samrubuzz" and "samru.ca". The main text in the center reads "APPLY FOR THE SAMRU AWARDS" in large, bold, white letters. To the left, there is an illustration of two people walking. To the right, there is an illustration of a person sitting on a large stack of books, reading. A box in the top right corner says "APPLY BY FEBRUARY 28TH". A box in the bottom center says "SAMRU gives out \$40,000 in scholarships each year." At the bottom, a banner says "Get your application package and more information at SAMRU.CA/AWARDS". The SAMRU logo is in the bottom right corner.

Show some love to your community this month

A local Valentine's Day gift guide

Cassie Weiss

Staff Writer



Valentine's Day can be a great excuse to show some love to your friends and family, but you can show love to your whole community by shopping local for gifts this year. Photo courtesy of Unsplash

Valentine's Day is hard to avoid. Red, pink and white merchandise takes over the world, leaving the lingering, sweet scent of roses hanging around wherever you go. Lovers rejoice, bundling up with their hunnies, finding a cute booth in the back of a cozy bar, where they can giggle and stuff their faces with chocolate and other foods rich in carbs and sugar.

But isn't that what happens

every year? Hunny number one comes home with a bunch of flowers and a box of chocolates, hunny number two is (not) surprised, and then the two either stay in and enjoy their favorite takeout, or head out to a restaurant, which features a specific Valentine's Day menu that is probably more expensive than it needs to be.

Although February 14th is a great excuse to show our

people just a little bit more love and appreciation than we already do, wouldn't it be nice to switch it up a little this year? Surprise them with a gift that they couldn't predict? One that elicits a truly genuine "I can't believe it! You really shouldn't have!"

If that's the kind of reaction you're looking for this year, look no further. Here's a couple of amazing gift ideas that still

cover sweet and fun, but that are also unique, different and will last a lot longer than those roses that are already starting to wilt as you read this. More importantly, all of these options support artists and business owners here in Calgary.

A beautiful piece of jewelry from Cinder and Sage

This local company was started in 2009 by Lindsay Saunders, and although it started as a minor hobby, Lindsay's talent soon took off. Her website, www.cinderandsage.com, features gorgeous homemade jewelry, hair accessories, travel bags and other items to make your loved ones beam. Although you can shop for items online, Cinder and Sage has their own beautiful store in Mission, located above 4th Street Pizza. Take your hunny accessory shopping, grab some delicious pizza and switch it up this year. Sounds like a perfect date to me.

Create a love fern at Plant

I'm biased — I would consider any type of hang out in Inglewood date material (it's a very romantic neighbourhood), but taking an evening to go create a plant masterpiece in this magical hideaway is a neat escape from the things we usually default to on this holiday.

Buy tickets to Beer Fest or tour some microbreweries

While we are on the topic of Inglewood, did you know the neighbourhood features its own craft brewery tour of many different tastes and flavours to satisfy the craft beer lover in your life? If you don't want to brave the crowds on February 14, buy connoisseur tickets to the upcoming Alberta Beer

Fest, which features hundreds of local and Canadian craft breweries and has (literally) a type of beer for everyone.

Ceramics, essential oils, incense, oh my!

Carmen Zvonik has been sharing her love of ceramic making, her knowledge of herbology and her passion for wellness products with Calgary for years. Featuring homemade ceramic mugs, bowls and incense holders, she also makes her own incense and her Instagram (@wildharvestbotanicals) features a plethora of items from her botanical apothecary. Draw your lover a bath, spray a grounding blend of frankincense, bergamot and copper in the air, and relax together with your favorite music playing and the candles burning the night away.

Satisfy your sweet tooth with macarons

I know, I know, we can't actually celebrate Valentine's Day without some type of chocolate, but to keep it fresh this year, why don't you visit Ollia Macarons, just off 17th Ave? They have specific Valentine's Day boxes, featuring decadent flavours such as strawberries and cream, mango champagne and chocolate cake, but there are tons of other flavours for you to snack on as well. Buy a box of eight or 12, and maybe your hunny will let you sneak one or two for yourself.

No matter what you decide to do this Valentine's Day, or what gifts you decide to bring home, just remember the real treat is having someone special to share your love and affection with. And yes, February 14th is a great reminder to tell the ones you love that you love them, but every day should be filled with love, and in my opinion, I'll snack on macarons any day of the month.

YOUR STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION



GENDER AFFIRMING CLOTHING SWAP

Donate your unused clothes and give them a new life, and pick up new cool additions for your wardrobe at the Pride Centre's Gender Affirming Clothes Swap!

Donations* accepted
and clothes available for the taking
at the Pride Centre (Z211)
from 10am-4pm Monday-Friday
contact pride@samru.ca for more information

*all clothing items, including partly used bras, binders, jewelry and shoes can be donated. No underwear that touches genitals or gaffs, please.



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MONEY TALKS

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For the full schedule, please visit
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Parasite on the wealth class divide

Riggs Zyrille Vergara

Photo Editor



Joon-Ho's take on the layers of the wealth class divide is another reason why this masterpiece deserves all this attention. Photo illustration by Riggs Zyrille Vergara

Overrated or not, awards season has come and gone, and one of the many standout masterpieces of 2019 is the dark comic thriller, *Parasite*. Co-written and directed by South Korean director Bong Joon-Ho — also known for his work directing *Okja* and *Snowpiercer* — *Parasite* became the first non-English language film to win the best picture Academy Award, in addition to a win at the Golden Globes and the Palme d'Or at Cannes Film Festival. Focusing on the Kims, an impoverished family, the film follows them as they infiltrate the affluent Park household by working for them as unrelated skilled individuals.

Witnessing Joon-Ho's strokes of genius, like the stitched shots achieved to precisely recreate

his storyboards, was an amazing experience. But aside from the meticulous film techniques, Joon-Ho's realistic take on the many layers of the wealth class divide is another reason why this masterpiece deserves all this attention.

Breaking tropes

The Kim and Park families weren't the usual TV caricatures of the rich and the poor. The rich Park family weren't corrupt corporate employees, spoiled brats or even eccentric millionaires. The portrayal of the Kim family also didn't rely on the poverty porn trope. As Joon-Ho said in an interview with *Cult MTL*, "In films, you often see stereotypes of rich people who are malicious and very greedy.

But, in real life, no one's really like that. The poor family [in the movie] does end up doing bad things — they are con men — but you also see their clumsy side." This intentional portrayal intensifies the realistic effect of the fundamental identities of the characters.

Parallels and privilege

The film gives an incredible depiction of how different elements of society can look, and feel different depending on one's privilege. At the climax of the film, the Kim family's home is flooded by a storm. Due to their community being situated in a geographically lower area of the city, and living in a semi-

basement, they have to frantically salvage their belongings in neck-deep grimy water. They also have to sleep on the floor of a jam-packed evacuation centre beside hundreds of other residents. The morning after, Park Yeon-kyo — the matriarch of the Park family — nonchalantly tells her friend that, "Today the sky's so blue and there's no pollution in the air. It's all thanks to that rain."

Another big element of the film that points to the disparity between the families is the Parks' complaint about the Kim father, Ki-taek's smell. Dong-ik, the Park counterpart, described Ki-taek's smell like "an old radish" or "a boiled rag." Yeon-kyo was also seen in some scenes covering her nose when she's around Ki-taek. This was Ki-taek's tipping point, he suddenly stabbed Dong-ik when Dong-ik, trying to get his car keys from underneath the dying body of Geun-se — the first underground inhabitant of the Park house — covered his nose. The fact that element was only subtly yet repetitively portrayed in the initial parts of the film goes to show that small acts of disgust like these can build up and torment a person if repeatedly experienced from many people. It was a clear-cut act of microaggression.

A seemingly harmless practice seen in the film that further comments on the wealth divide is the use of referrals for job-hiring. In the film, it looked helpful to the Kims. It's how they got their jobs. But they had to use deception because in the real world, this chain of

recommendations is what hurts the chances of anyone outside the wealthy circle from getting a job. Even Yeon-kyo said, "I only trust someone recommended by a person I know well." The Kim family wouldn't even possibly have met the Parks if it weren't from a recommendation from another rich person they know.

Who is the true parasite?

The most innovative take the film does on the wealth divide is that it didn't have any clear heroes or villains. Each character has their own good and bad qualities. The decision on who to root for solely relies on the audience. It begs the question, "Who is the true parasite?" Is it the poverty-stricken Kims who deceived the Parks and latched themselves onto the household and a circle where they clearly do not belong? Or is it the well-off Kims who, without the exploitation of labour of the lower class, wouldn't have that kind of wealth in the first place?

This film's depiction of rich and poor families shows us that things are not always clear-cut or black and white. Joon-Ho emphasizes this point in his interview with *Cult MTL*, "Everything is in grey zones in this movie." Those grey zones show us that there are reasons behind every action. Yes, there will always be consequences and accountability. But it still pays to contemplate the reasoning behind that action, because it opens so many doors for meaningful conversations.

OUT'N ABOUT

Animal People Screening

On Feb. 13 at 6:30 p.m., join Calgary Animal Save at their screening of *Animal People*, a documentary that follows six advocates as they try and expose the world's-largest animal testing lab and take on the U.S. government to do so.

Valentine's Day at Calgary Farmers' Market

Join the Calgary Farmers' Market on Feb. 14 for Valentine's Day celebrations with a photo booth, chocolate-dipped treats and a caricature artist to draw a photo of you and your loved one.

New Music Concert

UofC's School of Creative and Performing Arts will be unveiling new works in the Eckhardt-Gramatté Hall. Join them on Feb. 13 for famous works brought to life by the UCalgary Orchestra, Wind Ensemble and students.

Glow Winter Festival

From Feb. 14 to 16, see Glow Winter Festival light up Stephen Avenue with light-show installations, live music, dancing, outdoor lounges and more between 1 St. S.E. and 4 St. S.W.

Chasing dreams with start-up STRYVE

Kemi Omorogbe

Contributor



Myra Blen, Romar Duco, Valerie Mendoza, Kobe Amoh and Monique Read repping their STRYVE sweaters. Photo courtesy of Romar Duco

Being a young entrepreneur is no walk in the park. 23-year-old Romar Duco can confirm this with his early start in creating his clothing brand, “STRYVE”.

Not only is STRYVE a brand that sells sweaters, t-shirts, tanks and sweatpants, it is a brand with a message behind it that reminds people to never give up when it comes to succeeding at their own personal aspirations in life.

Duco created STRYVE at the young age of 20 to live out his dreams. Since then, STRYVE has transformed into a recognized brand, leading Duco to hire his friend Joshua Magtoto.

Duco says, “STRYVE is actually a combination of the word strive and try (sTRYve). Anything you’re striving for in life has to be backed by effort.”

Living in a generation where success is always desired immediately rather than gradually, having the patience to pursue personal goals can be a hard concept for some to grasp.

Duco explains that his design concepts are meant to express a message of patience and growth. For example, his popular rose design represents a seed

that is ultimately the starting point of all of our ideas.

He says, “As we grow as individuals, slowly moulding ourselves to an ideal version of who we want to become and accomplish, the beauty of the self development we go through is compared to the beautiful bloom of a rose.”

Planting his own seeds was a struggle at first.

As a young entrepreneur who was trying to figure out his way around building a business, money was one of the first challenging obstacles he faced.

Duco says, “I wasn’t working much at the time when I launched the site. I remember getting my tax return back in April and putting it all in the first batch of hoodies. I’d be maxing out credit cards in hopes that the hoodies would sell out.”

Thankfully, his brand took off, but not everyone is as lucky. He put all of his cards on the table and took a huge gamble so he could finally “STRYVE” himself.

Duco later realized his risk paid off because it has led him to great successes like reaching a personal goal of 1000 orders and getting invited to pop-up shops.

“Seeing the actual product in public on people we’ve never met is a crazy concept to digest for sure,” says Duco.

Even with his successes, Duco knew he couldn’t just stop after attaining them.

He says, “People think I’m motivated non-stop but it really isn’t like that. I 100 per cent lose motivation occasionally, and I think that’s fine. I believe if you’ve truly got a goal you’d like to accomplish, it doesn’t matter if you’re motivated or not. You do the work regardless.”

A business built off of the unknowns has helped Duco understand that thinking about our goals isn’t the only step we should take when pursuing success.

It’s all about the work ethic behind the dream.

Duco explains, “We’re more than just a random name slapped on a piece of clothing. We create products people can wear, and relate back to what it is they’d like to accomplish in their life, and hopefully motivate them to keep pushing — whether you’re on the top of your game, or completely lost in the direction you want to take your life. There’s always something to strive for and go after.”



CHICKABOOM!

Tami Neilson
Outside Music

Score: A-

Canadian born, New Zealander Tami Neilson has returned with her latest album, *CHICKABOOM!*. While nominally a country artist, Neilson’s sound has less in common with what you’d hear on the stage at Stampede and more in line with the new class of country artists who have come up in recent years like Orville Peck and Kacey Musgraves.

With her powerhouse vocals putting her in the same class as Amy Winehouse and Arethra Franklin, Neilson pays homage to the country sounds of the 50s and 60s. Tracks like ‘Ten Tonne Truck’

have the heavy driving guitar reminiscent of early Johnny Cash songs with the powerful backing of the Tennessee Three. Others like ‘Any Fool with a Heart’ are filled with classical guitar and harmonizing that could fit in with any 40-year-old acoustic love ballad.

Lovingly performed, and authentic — sometimes coming across as camp, like the dragging and clinking of a ball in chain in ‘You were mine’ — *CHICKABOOM!* Is a refreshingly modern take on a classic sound.

- Andi Endruhn

We’re New Again

Gil Scott-Heron,
Makaya McCraven
XL Recordings
Score: A



Shortly before his death, Gil Scott-Heron gave an interview to the *New Yorker* about his latest album, *I’m New Here*, in which he explained that the album – the brainchild of producer Richard Russell – wasn’t necessarily his creation, but he had no issues creating it because, “All the dreams you show up in are not your own.”

Scott-Heron has returned in another dream, this time with Makaya McCraven. McCraven has transformed the recordings of the legendary poet, submerging them in the instrumental sounds of the late-20th century that Scott-Heron often used in his works. Perfectly segueing between genre’s McCraven takes from the funk, blues, soul and experimental jazz

of the era when Scott-Heron was most prolific. Tracks like ‘New York is Killing Me’ sound like they came straight out of the Blue Note recording sessions in 1962, while others like ‘The Patch’ have the same gritty feel as Gil Scott-Heron’s most well known 1971 track ‘The Revolution Will Not Be Televised’.

Although the album travels through both the history of Scott-Heron and the time he was most active during, McCraven’s collage approach to mixing together genres, instruments and Scott-Heron’s deep baritone create something that is entirely new, again.

- Andi Endruhn

Cougar Corner: Playoff season is near

Dan Khavkin

Sports Editor



MRU Cougars men's hockey captain Tyson Helgesen led his Cougars to an 18-8-2 record during 2019/2020. Photo courtesy of Brian Wells

The end of the 2019/2020 varsity season is near.

Three out of the six remaining Mount Royal Cougars varsity clubs have their eyes set on playoffs while two narrowly missed out and one is on the outside looking in.

Women's volleyball

Mount Royal's most successful 2019/2020 club are looking like a formidable opponent heading into the final weekend of regular season play.

The Cougars sit in second-place in Canada West with a 19-3 record and have enjoyed national recognition for nearly every week as they currently sit at number four in USPORTS.

On top of the outstanding team play, the MRU well-oiled machine does enjoy standout performances.

Sophomore Dholi Thokbuom ranks third in blocks per set with 1.12 in Canada West while senior outside hitter Chantal Park owns the highest count of service aces

per set with 0.56.

Third-year setter Quinn Pelland's 9.42 assists per set puts her third in Canada West.

Men's hockey

The Mount Royal men are playoff bound for the seventh-straight season and will host a Canada West quarter-final for the first time since 2016/2017 and fourth time overall since joining USPORTS in 2012.

MRU finished the regular season fourth-place with a program-high 18-8-2 record and will host the UBC Thunderbirds on the Feb. 15 weekend.

The Cougars are on the hunt for their sixth consecutive semi-finals appearance and will face the top-ranked Alberta Golden Bears, if they beat UBC.

On top of seeing great success as a team, the Cougars enjoyed plenty of individual success, as well.

Sophomore Ryley Lindgren was tied for the goal-scoring lead with 18 goals and finished

third overall in the conference in points with 31 through 28 games.

Rookie blue-liner Connor Blake finished his first season with MRU as the second highest scoring defenceman, putting up 25 points (7G, 18A) through 28 games.

Second-year net-minder Riley Morris finished the regular season with a 12-3-1 record and posted a 2.68 GAA and .897 save percentage.

Women's hockey

MRU made program history after sweeping the UBC T-Birds to conclude their 2019/2020 campaign.

The Cougars will host their first-ever playoff series after finishing fourth in the Canada West regular season with a 12-14-2-0 record.

Third-year Cougars forward Anna Purschke finished the season tenth in the conference as the MRU leading scorer with 18 points (11G, 7A).

The true story of the Cougars' success comes from the strong goaltending between the pipes.

Rookie MRU goalie and back-to-back Saskatchewan midjet AAA goalie of the year Kaitlyn Ross led the conference in wins for rookie goaltenders and finished with a 8-3-0 record, including four shutouts.

Ross put up a brilliant 1.14 GAA which is good for second in Canada West along with the third-highest save percentage of .943.

She was supported by fellow rookie and NCAA-III Oswego State transfer Cassie Shokar who finished 5-5 on the year and put up her own impressive totals of 1.54 GAA and .934 save

percentage.

Cougar Hockey veteran Zoe DeBeauville finished 1-6 but despite seeing nearly no support on offence during her starts, put up a 1.89 GAA and .914 save percentage.

Women's basketball

It's a step in the right direction. That's the best way to describe the 2019/2020 Mount Royal campaign.

Head coach Robyn Fleckenstein led MRU to a 5-15 record and fell just two wins behind a first-ever playoff berth in Canada West during her first season at the helm.

The Cougars women's program posted five wins for the first time since MRU transitioned to the USPORTS level back in 2012/2013.

Rookie Jenika Martens was the lone MRU player to put up a double-digit count in scoring and enjoyed success in her role as a "Lou Williams" during her debut campaign. She put up 11.2 points off the bench and led MRU in scoring and rebounds per game with 7.4 during her stellar debut season.

Men's volleyball

One year sure can make a difference.

Just after enjoying Mount Royal's greatest season as a school that saw: a fourth-placed finish inside USPORTS' toughest conference, a first-ever quarter-final hosting that was followed by a semi-final appearance and national playoffs, the Cougars are on the fringe of missing the playoffs.

Five of the eight playoff berths are secure with one weekend to go. MRU sits in seventh with

an 8-12 record and are in the middle of fighting for their playoff lives.

Manitoba and Thompson Rivers both sit at 7-13 and are tied for eighth while MRU are just one win behind seventh-placed Saskatchewan who hold a 9-11 record.

Men's basketball

What looked like a promising start quickly turned into a season of misery for Mount Royal, whose cold end to the season matched the sub-zero weather outside.

MRU lost 17 straight games after starting 3-0 and missed the playoffs by just three games.

Despite the poor team play, the Cougars enjoyed several individual successes.

Rookie Nate Petrone had an outstanding debut campaign as he finished with the highest shooting percentage in Canada West, converting a brilliant 46.9 per cent from beyond the arc.

He also finished with 11.4 points per game shooting a team-high 48.5 per cent from the field, while contributing 1.3 assists per game.

Third-year guard Matthew Guinto started in all 20 games from the navy and white. He led MRU with 14.9 points per game on 41.5 per cent shooting, including a 31.9 per cent clip from the three point line and contributed 1.6 steals per game.

Lincoln Anderson and Adam Pahl were the other two Cougars to average double-digit point totals. Anderson put up 10.1 points a game through 17 starts while Pahl averaged 12.2 points a game while logging a team-high 30.2 minutes per game and led the team in rebounds with 5.4.

#S

15, game win streak for the Toronto Raptors, which is the highest streak for any Canadian franchise.

51-50, all-time record between the UNC and Duke men's basketball teams.

552, different goal scorers for the Montreal Canadiens hockey team.

14, record title fight wins for UFC legend Jon Jones.

No. 4 nationally-ranked Cougars women's volleyball are on the hunt

Dan Khavkin

Sports Editor

The Cougars women's volleyball team is on the hunt for playoff success with the conclusion of the 2019/2020 season nearing its end.

No. 4 Mount Royal has been featured on the USPORTS top 10 since hitting sixth, all the way back in the first week of November. From the following week on, the Cougars rose to fourth and haven't moved.

MRU also qualifies for playoffs for the fourth consecutive year and will end the season with their best record since the transition to USPORTS in 2012.

They enjoy a 19-3 record heading into the final weekend of the season and sit in second place which means for the first time in program history, they will host the first round of the Canada West playoffs at Kenyon Court.

The supporting cast this year has been one of the strongest according to Cougars volleyball head coach Sandra Lamb.

"We have players who are older and more mature. Team chemistry has been unreal. [...] I would say it's because they were more mature and bringing in players into the mix that have blended in well," said Lamb.

"We get the job of hosting the first round of playoffs which is exciting. Playoffs are another season so it'll be tough but we're looking forward to it."

For every well-oiled machine, there are the standout performers.

Third-year setter Quinn Pelland ranks third in Canada West for assists per set averaging 9.42 while sophomore Dholi Thokbuom holds the conference's top hitting percentage count with .361 and sits fifth in blocks per set with a 1.12 count to her name.

Senior outside hitter Chantal Park leads Canada West with aces per set at 0.76 and has recently slipped into the top five all-time in aces count after reaching 154 aces.

On top of the maturation of her volleyball squad, coach Lamb helped bolster her team with the addition of de-facto nuclear weapon Tasha Holness.

Holness, 39, is literally a blast from the past for the Cougars.

She played for Mount Royal way back in 2003 for two years during the golden MRC days before she moved on to the university level at the U of A.

After one year with the Pandas, she moved onto the professional level for eight years that saw stops in Indonesia, Austria, Spain, Azerbaijan, Germany, Indonesia again, Romania and France from 2006-2014.

Holness was also on the Canadian National team from 2006-2014 while playing eight years as a pro.

Lamb pulled her off a OneVolleyball court, a league designed for up-and-coming university talent and a place for returning pros and national team members to stay in touch with the game.

"I walked up to her and said, 'Man, you don't lose a lot.' It stemmed from there and she still doesn't have a career set in stone so I wasn't taking anything away from her and she said 'You know? Why not.'"

The rest is history. Holness is now a fourth-year eligible student and is finishing her finance degree.

She maintains her eligibility as there is no running clock on her USPORTS eligibility and you can take time between athletic seasons and the laws of USPORTS proves to have no restrictions on a returning player having previous association outside of university sports.

She's been with the team since day one this year at the end of August and has suited up for every game since the start of the season.

"Tasha is an impact player and she'd be an impact if she didn't play one match for us. Her experience has been invaluable," Lamb notes.

"She's been ripping up the court. In her younger days she was known for her physicality. She may not be able to jump as high or move as fast but she makes up for that with her experience and her play on

the court."

Lamb explains that even as a former pro, Holness had to reverse-engineer her adjustment back down to USPORTS.

"The good news is: she's

experienced it so it doesn't take long to catch on to things."

The Cougars wrap up their season at home court against the Winnipeg Wesmen before starting their fifth consecutive playoff campaign.



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