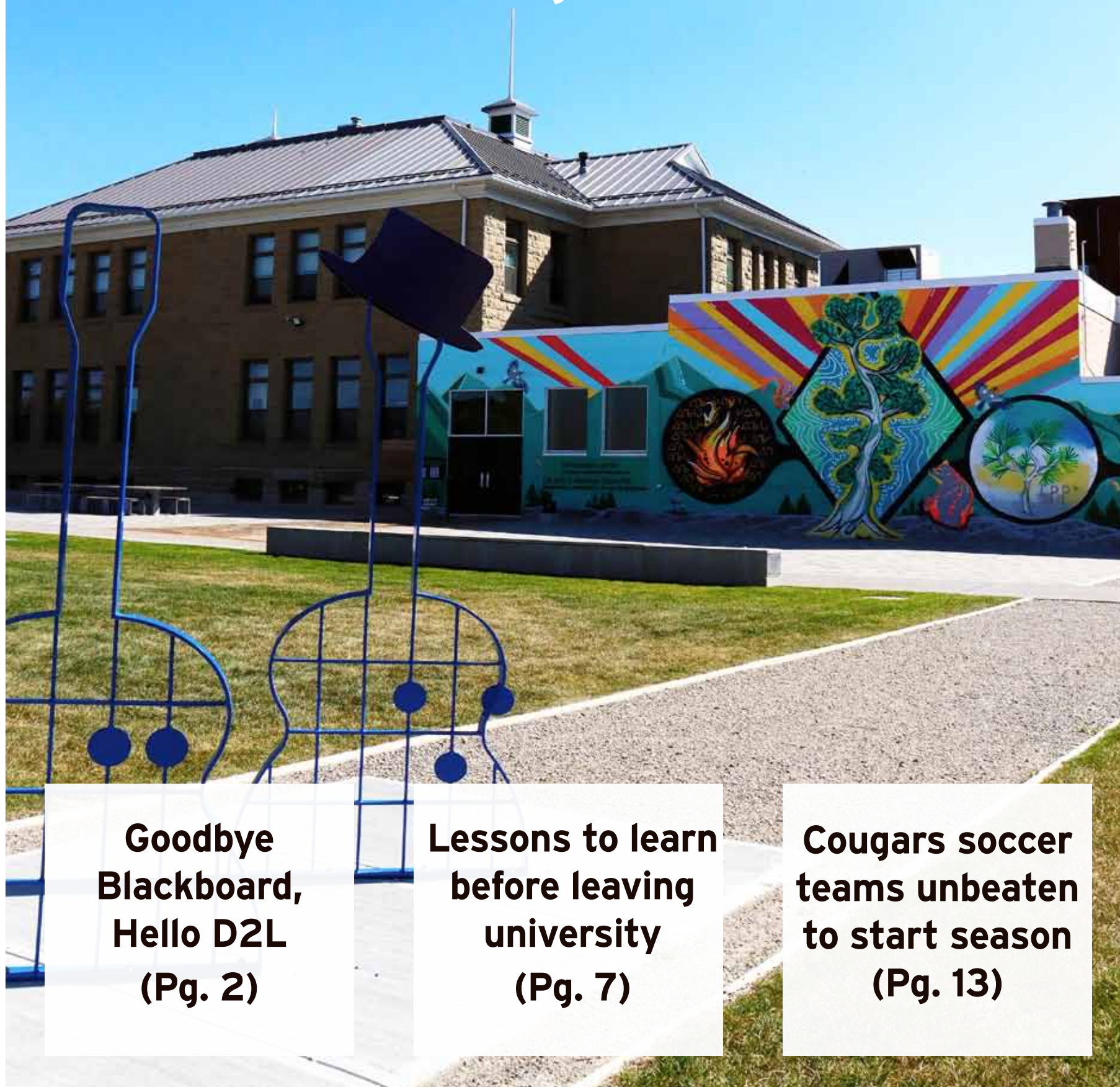


New BUMP murals brighten up Calgary's downtown (Pg. 9)



**Goodbye
Blackboard,
Hello D2L
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**Lessons to learn
before leaving
university
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to start season
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Calgary reeling from the effects of violent gun crime

Matthew Hillier
 Staff Writer



Calgary has seen an increase in gun violence for the year 2022. Photo by Abbie Riglin

Calgary Police are currently investigating its 97th shooting of the year. According to *CTV News*, the incident occurred in the early evening of Aug. 23 when witnesses saw a white car pull out of a parking lot after shots were heard. A man, only known to the police, sought treatment for a non-life-threatening gunshot wound at the Peter Lougheed Centre after the incident. On record, he is the victim of the city's most recent incident of gun crime as of writing.

This incident comes during the current investigation of a shooting in an abandoned home in Crescent Heights on

Aug. 20 that left a 55-year-old woman dead. This was then followed by another shooting on Aug. 21 at the Ambassador Restaurant and Bar on 17th Ave—the victim unfortunately passed away while police were attempting treatment.

Almost a week before the 97th incident, a shooting also occurred in Evergreen where the police have charged one man. The victim of this shooting, Nakita Baron, was survived by her husband who was with her and also shot during the incident. Baron was an alumna of Mount Royal University and

according to *CBC News*, had plans to continue her studies at University of Calgary to become a doctor.

Dr. John Kortbeek, a trauma surgeon, has seen these type of injuries first hand and in an interview with *CTV News* stated how they can impact a hospital's resources.

"Victims of firearm injuries often sustain severe and multiple injuries. They're very sick people. They require a huge team to look after them and they're resource-[intensive]." Kortbeek told *CTV News*.

"It also affects individuals, not just at the time of

their injury, but for years afterwards. Many of them have long-term disability, assuming they survive."

In this time, Calgary has already elapsed the total number of shootings for all of 2021. The true scale of this increase is still being calculated as only the statistics for the first quarter of the year are available to the public.

So what caused this recent spike in gun crime?

Calgary Police say that the summer months of July and August have seen spikes in violent crime due to many factors, but this new trend's frequency has been unlike previous years.

Compared to other Canadian cities, Calgary's provincial neighbours in Edmonton have seen 93 this year, with Ottawa and Vancouver seeing 40 and 61 respectively.

From an interview conducted by *CTV News*, former Vancouver gang squad detective Doug Spencer said, Calgary and Vancouver are linked when it comes to gang activity and this relationship may be a factor in the increase in gun crime.

"You can see the run-off between Vancouver and Calgary in Kelowna, which is where they meet. It's a corridor where they exchange guns, they exchange drugs from province to province," Spencer stated.

According to Calgary Police,

the majority of these shootings have been reported to have been targeted shootings. Only a quarter of these incidents are related to organised crime, meaning the rest are domestic or interpersonal-related shootings.

At the time of writing, there have been 3118 victims of violent crimes in the city of Calgary which are solved with a clearing rate of 55 per cent. Calgary Police crime statistics found that in the first quarter of 2022, weapons-related charges, such as possession and trafficking has seen 137 incidents with a clear rate of 92.7 per cent.

A recent example of this new focus on weapon enforcement, according to Calgary Police Deputy Chief Chad Tawfik, are the seizures of over 300 non-restricted rifles and shotguns and restricted firearms such as handguns.

In addition to combating the increases in the availability of illegally obtained firearms, government officials are also looking to increase community resources. The goal of the resources is to prevent residents and vulnerable groups such as youth with language barriers from turning to violent crime.

Citizens are encouraged to contact the Calgary Police Service non-emergency line for information and leads at 403-266-1234. Anonymous tips can also be provided to Crime Stoppers via their website, calling 1-800-222-8477 or using the app P3 Tips.

MRU transitions from Blackboard to D2L

Mikaela Delos Santos

News Editor

Mount Royal University (MRU) students are to expect the new learning management system Brightspace, or better known as D2L, this upcoming fall 2022 semester and beyond, consequentially retiring the use of Blackboard Learn.

This motion is considered necessary for the student body as new users will not be able to access the Blackboard platform come fall 2023 due to the brand phasing out its services.

According to a news release from the Students' Association of Mount Royal University (SAMRU), the selection for a new preference on Learning Management Systems (LMS) included many different factors.

An online survey was sent out to students and faculty and the following proved to be the most important components for a new platform: searchable course content, easier tools for collaborating, effective user design and experience, mobile compatibility and simplified workflow.

In a set of emails sent by Michael Quinn, MRU vice provost and associate academic vice president, the implementation of moving to D2L began in August 2022 to prepare students and faculty.

The program was soft launched in spring 2022, with 15 instructors delivering course materials via D2L.

Quinn states in the emails that "[It] would be highly disruptive to students and faculty if we were to move to a new LMS in the middle of an academic year. We recognize that this transition will require a high level of support..."

Student Reception

MRU students have expressed mixed feelings

about D2L. Instagram account @mruchatter have posted anonymous students' entries regarding the transition. In one post, an entry states "Kinda ticked off with D2L. Like I have completely mastered Blackboard but now in my last year I have to learn a whole other platform?? It's not a major issue, but it's kinda just not needed."

Another post states "I will not take this D2L slander lmao. It's so easy to use, pin all your fall courses to the top of your page. You will be able to see all your due dates for all your courses in one calendar, it's super easy to use. I used it during high school and love it, so much better than Blackboard. Just wait until the semester starts y'all."

Test Drive

Over 400 people were recruited to test drive the new platform. According to SAMRU, Blackboard and D2L will be running together during the first two weeks of the term.

Full implementation is planned for the fall semester for new and returning students. The organization has also noted that transferring files to a new system may take up to a week or more.

SAMRU states that many institutions within the city of Calgary have been using D2L.

This includes the Calgary Board of Education, University of Calgary, and SAIT. Approximately 75 per cent of MRU students have already used D2L.

D2L resources are readily available for students through different resources such as the live library chat, library tech support, learning D2L and calling the MRU Library service desk at (403) 440-6019.



Mount Royal University students attend their first day of classes for the fall semester. Photo by Mikaela Delos Santos



Mount Royal University students are to expect a new learning management system for the upcoming fall semester. Photo by Abbie Riglin

MRU announces new Conservatory director

Mikaela Delos Santos

News Editor



The Bella Concert Hall located within the Mount Royal campus is a prestigious venue for concerts and other events. Photo by Abbie Riglin

Mount Royal University (MRU) has announced Dr. Terry Clark as the new director at The MRU Conservatory beginning fall semester 2022.

Having spent the past seven years as a research fellow at the Centre for Performance Science at the Royal College of Music in London, England, Clark found himself back at the Conservatory in MRU to oversee the acclaimed program.

Clark was an alumni of the Conservatory during his youth and is also a graduate of Bachelor of Music in flute performance in the University of Calgary.

His research in London focused primarily on performance psychology. According to Clark, while musical training is technical, there has been an increase in mental and physical well-being in the field.

“Musical training focuses a lot on technique... not recognizing that the

environment on stage is very different and not the same sort of task compared to what is done in the practise room.” Clark quotes.

Clark hopes to bring forth a better focus on the teaching by broadening the musical education that is offered by the university. He also hopes to bring an interdisciplinary approach within the program.

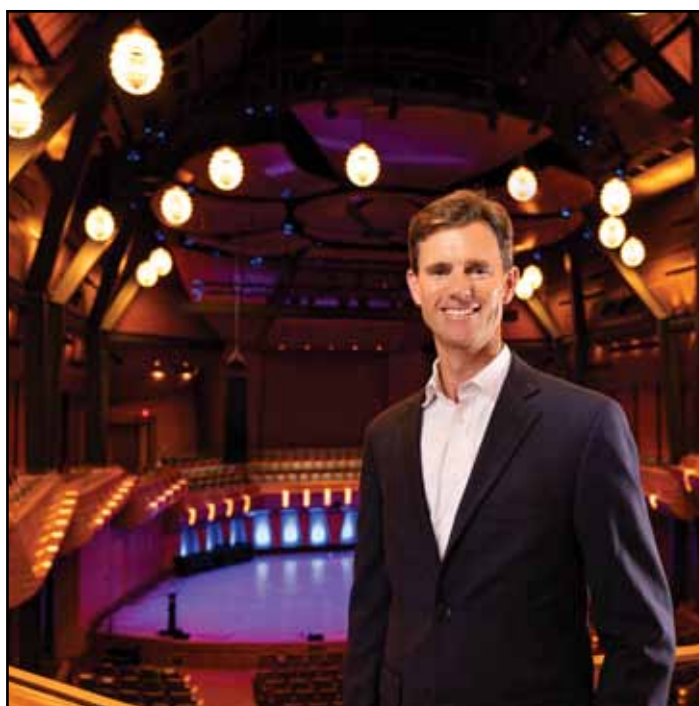
“We’re looking at incorporating things from performance psychology and life skills to addressing health and well-being so we are able to offer more wholistic training and develop more rounded musicians and people.”

Interim dean of Continuing Education at MRU, Dr. Evan Cortens, says that Clark’s leadership is valuable for the MRU community.

“[Clark’s] a team builder and is someone who is passionate about what we do in the Conservatory. We couldn’t be more thrilled to have him on board.”

The MRU Conservatory has been around since 1911 and is home to more than 125 instructors with a range of different programming for all

ages. The acclaimed program has built its reputation as one of the most trusted schools for musical education in Calgary.



Dr. Terry Clark, an MRU alumni, comes back to the Conservatory as the new director. Photo courtesy of Haley Jarman

THE REFLECTOR

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Half a Decade

Looking back at Criminal Justice

Katia Gallardo

Staff Writer



Katia Gallardo graduated last May from the Criminal Justice program and now has a full time career working to aid victims of domestic violence in Calgary. Photo by Katia Gallardo

Half a decade. For half a decade, I spent my time racing to complete my Criminal Justice degree at Mount Royal University (MRU). This past May, I was thankful enough to finally walk the stage and take home my really expensive piece of parchment. As a result, my degree secured me a full time position at a domestic violence intervention agency that hosted me as their practicum student.

I'm working full time applying what I had absorbed in classrooms to the real world of justice and law. If you're a Criminal Justice major looking for advice to

survive your years of study, then look no further. As your former fellow student, now MRU alumna, I'd like to share some of my experiences as I spent my time (and money), at Mount Royal.

Criminal Justice is an amazing degree for a host of reasons. The graphic cases and reports discussed in lectures will provoke original thoughts and ideas about how the justice system works. Class discussions inspire the need to investigate what parts of the current justice system work in everyone's favor, and which areas are needing improvement to better serve people and communities.

While stereotypical to say, I also noticed that the majority of the men in the program were aiming to become Royal Canadian Mountain Police (RCMP) or police officers, while the women were studying to become lawyers or be involved in law. As for me, I was striving to be involved in either criminal forensics or domestic violence cases. You will find that this degree can open up many opportunities for students looking for an exciting career in criminal justice or criminology.

The majority of the classes made it easy to follow their guidance of the fundamentals of criminological theories and law structures. First and second year within Criminal Justice were particularly intimidating, especially for new students.

The shift in style of learning from high school to university will feel very alienating. There will often be less assignments but they'll be higher graded than what you're used to. Having a paper worth 30-50 per cent of your grade will become the new norm. Certain assignments will require you to develop independence to complete the work, but always go to a fellow classmate or professor for clarification or help if you need it. Take your professors up on their offers to review your assignment before it's due, that's an easy way to get a solid extra 10 per cent on your papers!

I was always more safe than sorry, and a sucker who bought every textbook or reading material I needed for my classes. It wasn't until my last year of study did I

realize how many times I spent money on a 500-page textbook, and only read about 20 pages of it for a class. Inquire to the professor and/or a former student of the class about how well the textbook assisted in their learning, and if it is genuinely necessary. Some professors will still swear by the textbook, but remember that the MRU library will have a copy or two of the material, and you can make photocopies or take photos of the reading you need. Asking to borrow books, buying second hand, or purchasing digital copies of textbooks/readings are always the cheapest if you prefer.

My last sliver of advice is be patient and avoid taking anything too seriously. You will eventually get that degree. It's okay to take your best shot at the midterm you barely studied for and

see what happens. Beating yourself up and stressing about the assignment that's due in an hour that you wish you had more time on, will not change your overall placement in the degree. Remember, a 10 per cent on an assignment is better than a flat zero per cent. Stay determined to stick it through.

Every student stresses about their grades, but if you're not enjoying what you're learning and only focusing on a 4.0 GPA, then MRU will feel more like a chore than a window of possibility. Allow yourself space to grow and make mistakes. I've made more than my fair share of mistakes during my time at MRU, but I still walked the stage and was proud of both my blunders and my victories with every step.

Remember, it's only half a decade.



The Criminal Justice degree can open up many opportunities including becoming a Royal Canadian Mountain Police officer. Photo courtesy of Pixabay

A summer with CIFF: Interning with a Film Festival

Miguel Oblea

Contributor



A photo of Miguel Oblea and Keo Bunny, taken at a production shoot they did with the Calgary International Film Festival (CIFF). Photo by Miguel Oblea

As part of the Broadcast Media Studies program at Mount Royal University (MRU), I just recently finished my internship with the Calgary International Film Festival (CIFF). From the start of May to the end of August, my friend, Keo Bunny and I embarked on our first-ever internship with CIFF. The experience and opportunities we had there is something we will always remember and carry with us in the future.

CIFF is celebrating their 23rd year as a movie festival with over 175 multi-genre feature and short films from Canada and around the world. The largest in Alberta and sixth largest in Canada, they're also an Oscar-qualifying festival for short films as well. This year, the festival will be held in-person and online from Sept. 22 to Oct. 2.

As artistic interns, the main task assigned to Bunny and I was to help the programming team find their selection of movies. We did this by watching and

reviewing short films and feature films. Short films tend to be films that are less than 40 minutes in length and feature films are usually an hour or longer. This task, while instrumental to the quality of the festival, didn't even feel like a chore since it was just basically watching movies at work. Though sometimes, the amount of films we watch in one day felt overwhelming and our brains felt like shutting down from media overload.

This overwhelming feeling really changed our minds on how we perceived films as our internship went on. At times, if a film didn't capture my attention right away or was too slow-paced, I would give the film a lower rating. If the acting was terrible or the film didn't make sense, they also didn't make the cut.

But with this process of reviewing content, we really got to know what we liked and disliked. We realized that if we were to make our own short films in the future, our time watching and reviewing films serves as a

lesson to what makes a film captivating and entertaining to the viewer.

We also got the opportunity to be part of some production events during the internship. Our first production event was making a commercial for CIFF. Bunny and I got to act as a couple which was kind of weird for us to play but we were just happy to be part of a video production.

During the commercial shoot, we had the chance to talk with the director and his crew about how they plan their shoots and how they got started in the industry. I remember the director telling us the importance of planning and pre-production so that when it's time for production, everything should go according to plan.

His advice reminded me of when we had to plan our late-night talk shows for our broadcast program. My team would plan our shows last minute before production day. Let's just say that some things didn't go according to plan. But nonetheless, we had fun shooting our shows

and the commercial we did for CIFF turned out well even though I felt like my acting performance wasn't the best. That's the beauty of post-production editing.

Part of being an intern at CIFF also meant doing some typical intern work. Bunny and I got to archive a lot of old newspaper clippings of past festivals throughout the years. Scanning newspaper clippings and photos were probably one of the most tedious tasks we had to do.

But for me, I think the most tedious job was putting credits for films on Excel sheets. Doing this made me realize how hard it is for only one person to put all the credits of multiple films on a spread sheet.

It was a good thing Bunny and I got to split the workload evenly with this task. But even though the work was split, the number of Excel sheets we had to do drained my energy and had me worried at times thinking that I might have put the

wrong credits for a single film.

Thinking about my time with CIFF, I truly enjoyed watching short films, going to production events and talking to other people who also love talking about them. The only thing that I didn't like about the internship was that it was unpaid and paying for parking when we had to go to the office. Other than that, I had a great time with the internship and the new people I got to work with at CIFF.

Everyone there is so kind and they make it their top priority to make everyone feel safe and included. It was a blast doing this internship with Bunny since it felt like I just got to work with a friend all the time. Though our internship is over, I'm very excited for the festival to come. I can't wait to see the movies they have lined up and to reconnect with former coworkers during the festival. This internship was an unforgettable experience for sure.



CIFF's production manager, Matt McKinney, setting up lights for a production shoot. Photo by Miguel Oblea

From first to fourth: four lessons to learn before leaving university

Abbie Riglin

Photo Editor

It's bittersweet but my time as a student is coming to an end. On one hand I'm happy to be done with school, but on the other I'm leaving the safety net that organized education has become. Soon I'll no longer have student benefits, and I'll be forced to trade in my partially premade class schedule for a job search. I'll have to navigate myself. It's not easy saying goodbye to something so familiar, but I've realized that this is a step I'm ready for as I prepare myself for my last first day.

I've been reflecting on how the past four years have changed my values, beliefs, and outlooks on life. Sure, you change as you grow up, that will always be true, but university has caused my life to be turbulent in terms of my knowledge, the people I meet, and the events I experience. It's never stagnant and my days are forever changing, meaning I've gotten to change too.

1. You're better than you think

I struggled academically in high school and thought this would follow me to university. But it turns out that once I find topics I'm interested in, I excel. I'm no longer a procrastinator (not as severely as I was), and it's become easy for me to prioritize tasks.

This isn't always true for everyone, but it can be translated in different ways. Whether it be school, jobs, or hobbies, everyone has something they're good at. It might take a few tries, but that's okay. The only expectations you have to follow are your own.

2. Choose who you put your energy into

You can meet friends anywhere, but the relationships have to be more purposeful, and they take more effort.

University class sizes are typically much larger and more often than not, you experience each class with a different set of people, so in order to keep and explore friendships you have to explicitly find time to be together.

This might have been the hardest lesson to learn, but it also made me more mindful about what I put my energy into. Friendship is a two-way street, but you also have to surround yourself with people who realize that you might have other matters of importance in your life, and they probably do too.

3. The world doesn't hate you

Through my university experience I've become more open-minded. It's easy as a young person to assume that the world is against you. But as I've gotten older, I've realized that people are willing to help and listen



Friendship is a two-way street, but you also have to surround yourself with people who realize your time is valuable. Photo courtesy of Pixabay

to you, they might not just understand.

Intermingling with people who have had different upbringings than me has allowed me to see that sometimes people just have never had access to the resources to educate themselves. I can even say I've been one of those people and if I can change and grow, so can others. It's hard to understand, and easy to judge something you've never experienced, but it's a choice to accept it and learn more.

4. Let loose a little

The final and possibly the most important thing I've realized is that university and your early 20s is also a time for fun, and that indulging your inner kid is important, no matter what

that looks like.

Your education is still important, you wouldn't be here if it wasn't, but it's also not everything. There's time for playing video games, a midnight ice cream run, hanging out with friends, and treating yourself to a spa day. It has taken me time to learn a work-life-school balance, and I think I'll be working on it for the rest of my life, but I know I'll never be as free again as I am now.

Everyone has different lessons to learn but saying goodbye to comfortable habits, friends, opinions and places doesn't have to be a bad thing. Mount Royal has held a lot of those comforts for me in the past four years. It wasn't until recently I learned that, but passing on the knowledge of accepting change within myself might be the final step into rest of my life.



University doesn't last forever, you might as well make the most of what you have. Photo courtesy of Google Creative Commons

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Calgary's 2022 BUMP Festival

Bringing Life in Colour to the City

Danielle Steele

Staff Writer



Artist DAIM in front of a mural. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

This August, Calgary was fortunate to host the 6th consecutive BUMP Festival. The festival took place Aug. 1 - 28. During this time, BUMP held a multitude of events for the community. The events included a kick-off party in Central Memorial Park, artist talks and a graffiti jam, where guests were encouraged to make their own graffiti art using aerosol paints and pieces of wooden plywood.

The festival highlights numerous murals painted around the city, spanning

from Highland Park to Marda Loop. However, most of the artwork is displayed in Calgary's Downtown area. The variety of artwork from BUMP Festival, as well as the festival's community engagement, aims to represent Calgary's true diversity in a modern way.

One mural from this year's BUMP festival has been proclaimed as the tallest mural in the world and has drawn the attention of many Calgarians. The unmistakable artwork is located on the First on

Tenth building in Calgary's Beltline. Notable German graffiti artist, DAIM, designed and painted the tall art piece, putting Calgary on the map as a creative hub. DAIM has painted murals with his signature style all over the world, including the Nike World Headquarters in Portland, Oregon.

The world's tallest mural can easily be viewed just before the corner of 10th Ave. and Centre Street SW. On a nice summer's day, groups of people can be seen admiring and photographing the mural from this viewpoint.

Another notable piece from this year's BUMP Festival is one by Cree artist Kamamak. Kamamak's mural, "SHE SHINES BRIGHTLY" is located in Inglewood at 922, 9th Ave., Southeast. According to BUMP, the piece is based on the seven sacred Cree teachings: love, respect, courage, honesty, wisdom, humility and truth.

Kamak's 2022 mural is distinctive with its vibrant colours and an elongated tree as the centre focus. Below the tree, a small bear gazes upwards, animated by shades of neon orange and red. These details, and the

size of Kamamak's mural, have made it a stand-out piece from this year's festival.

The BUMP Festival mural artists have noticeably brought an ambience of life in colour to Calgary's Downtown area. According to local Calgarians, the new artwork has been a bright and welcoming addition to the city. With the help of BUMP Festival, locals

are able to enjoy colourful summer artwork throughout the year.

Though the BUMP Festival has come to an end, the murals painted within Calgary will continue to be on display. For those interested in admiring the murals from this year's festival, a map with locations of the artwork can be found on BUMP's website, yycbump.ca.



Tip: Take a picture of the world's tallest mural from 11th Ave. to also get the iconic Calgary Tower in the same shot! Photo by Danielle Steele

OUT'N ABOUT

FREE Outdoor Movie Night

Enjoy the last bits of summer by gathering your friends at Royal Sunalta Park for a free showing of Mamma Mia on Sept. 9 at 8 pm.

Inglewood Night Market

Support your local community by attending Inglewood's night market on Sept. 9 and 16 from 5 - 11 pm. Local vendors, food trucks, live music and a beer garden, what more could you want?

Canadian Country Music Awards

Put on your cowboy boots and head over to Scotiabank Arena on Sept. 11 to celebrate Canadian country music! Tickets are available on Ticketmaster.

Saskatoon Farm Annual Fall Fair

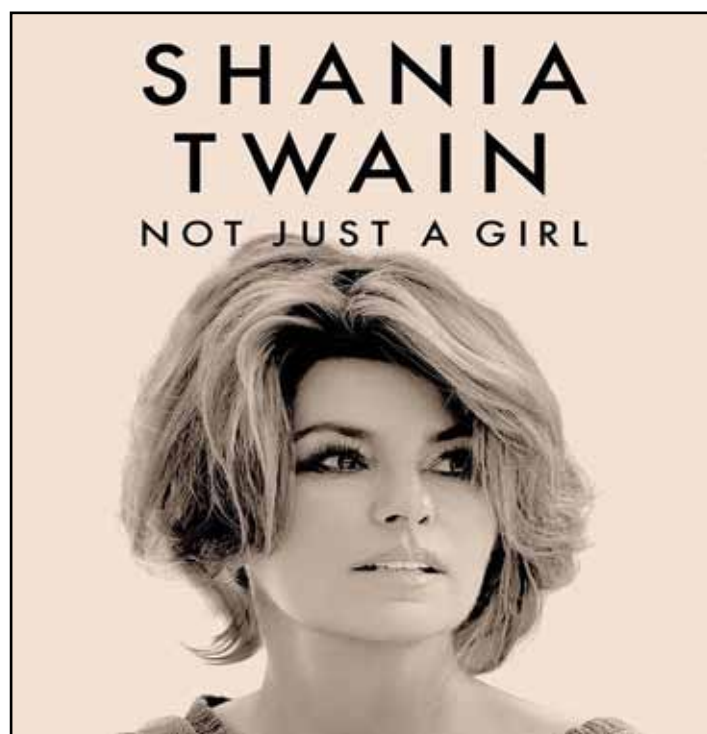
Get into the autumn spirit by participating in some fall festivities at Saskatoon Farm on Sept. 17 - 18, for only \$6!

Shania Twain: She's still my girl

We're not buying the Shania Netflix is selling

Emme Larkins

Staff Writer



Shania Twain is the best-selling female artist in country music of all time trailing behind Garth Brooks. Photo courtesy of Netflix

Shania Twain's notoriety goes beyond being a music talent and hitmaker. She's a cultural icon to Generation Z. Just ask Harry Styles. At Coachella 2022, he credits our Canadian songstress in a tender moment for teaching him how to sing.

Gen Z youth idolize this woman. In the 90s our moms partied with Twain blasting on their boombox, hummed her tunes while we were in utero and walked off the baby weight on treadmills with "Come on Over" spinning on the CD player. We've contentedly listened along since we were in playpens.

I know that I, like Harry, felt a connection to her music from childhood. And the reaction at Coachella when she joined Styles on stage shows that we are not alone in our love for this music legend. People freaked out.

It's no surprise Twain has once again reclaimed her rightful title of Pop Culture Queen in recent years. Post

Malone, Taylor Swift, Diplo, Orville Peck – in addition to Styles, are just a few of the current pop stars who idolize Twain.

Given our love for the lady, it's no surprise that Twain took her time in a newly lit spotlight to release a new project... or three. *Not Just A Girl* is the title of Twain's summer 2022 Netflix documentary, single and album.

As a staunch fan who could belt "You're Still The One" by age four, this package just didn't seem to live up to the hype. In fact, it has left me feeling a little sad for what could have been.

"Let's go girls" is the most iconic line from Twain's entire songbook. And yet ... "I'm not just a girl" and "Let's go girls!" send two distinctly different messages. One of Twain's draws from the beginning was that she felt like a friend, a mentor, who didn't apologize for being "just a girl," Twain revelled in it.

Yet here in the second peak of her career, she's telling us that isn't the case anymore?

Once we get past the disappointing title and song lyric, there is still much to dissect, starting with the Netflix documentary. While enjoyable, there was nothing spectacular, jaw-dropping or awe-inspiring to it. The production seemed shallow from the second the opening credits rolled.

Reflecting back to when Katy Perry released the documentary, *Part of Me*, I recall a reviewer saying that the show was definitely "just a part" of Perry. I finished *Not Just A Girl* feeling the same. I understand that an artist's entire life can not fit into a 90-minute flick, but it felt like the messy bits were glossed over.

When I'm getting a peek inside someone else's life, I want vulnerability, not bravado.

The documentary skims quickly over her heart-wrenching divorce, a scary battle with Lyme disease and

her struggle balancing being a mom and superstar.

Showing the vulnerable side, while not dwelling on victimhood, would have been a strong juxtaposition to her unimaginable strength in overcoming these obstacles. Without the relativity of the lows, the highs didn't seem to be as big of a deal as they should have been.

And maybe that's why the documentary doesn't do justice to Twain's massive achievements.

In fact, "Man, I Feel Like A Woman" – the song that spawned the catchphrase that is known around the world, was barely mentioned, almost covered up. This surprised me.

Frankly, it felt like she was given some bad PR advice to try and rewrite her place in the history books.

The album was equally disappointing. When I greedily dug into Spotify the morning of its release, I found the new single - which is just ok – and 17 tracks of literally nothing new. Don't get me

wrong, I know and I love these songs but they didn't even bother to remaster them. These iconic tunes could have given new life by having Twain duet with the brightest lights on today's charts.

The whole package ended, feeling lazy and opportunistic.

My final thoughts on this summer 2022 repackaging of the legend that is Shania Twain? Someone did our heroine dirty. And frankly, when I watch her social media, I think Twain might feel the same. In a recent TikTok, she comments on all the pieces of her life that didn't make the Netflix cut.

Negative reviews aside, Twain came out at the Toronto Boots and Hearts festival as she did at Coachella, looking like the legend we've come to expect. If anything, the good bits from *Not Just A Girl* show that she deserves more credit than she has ever been given.

Here's hoping the actual new music Twain promised is less rushed and more true to the Shania we know and love.



"You're Still The One" singer who was nominated for four grammys. Photo courtesy of Netflix

An ideal life is achievable! Just not in real life?

Abbie Riglin

Photo Editor



Almost a decade later and *Sims 4* is keeping its loyal fanbase busy by releasing expansion packs such as “Cats & Dogs”—a fan favourite. Photo courtesy of Electronic Arts

When talking about video games, most people think of typical console games like *Call of Duty*, *Halo*, or the plethora of sport simulation games such as *Madden*, *FIFA*, etc. But for me, my version of escapism started with *The Sims*, a series of life and social simulation video games developed by Maxis and published by Electronic Arts. It’s not just me that has become invested in *The Sims*, the franchise has sold nearly 200 million copies worldwide, and is one of the best-selling video game series of all time.

My love for *The Sims* started from my sister. I was

no older than seven when she was playing *The Sims 2* on our family desktop during a time where there was only one computer in a household. While waiting for my turn to play *CoolMathGames* (like all the other cool second graders), I’d watch her play. Although I didn’t understand the point of the game, I found myself fascinated by all their crazy actions, giggling with my sister at the way Simlish sounded.

It wasn’t until a couple of years later when *The Sims 3* came out that I fully became invested in the game. I discovered my love

of building houses and when the *Cats & Dogs* expansion came out, it was game over. Briefly, my parents thought I’d become a crazy cat lady with how often I’d show them my coolest new pet.

But even without the addition of pets, *The Sims* was a world very different from the one I was growing up in. It promoted diversity and showed me people I could relate to. Plus, I could have a pool? Life couldn’t get much better than that.

The Sims 4 holds all the same integrity as

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As an artist in her early twenties, Laur Elle has the advantage of growing with her musical sound and lyricism. In her new six-track EP titled *August*, Laur Elle explores moving on from a relationship, young love, coming into herself and convincing her friend that Austin might not be all that.

The album starts off strong with the titular ballad track “August” which tells a story of walking through life as a shell of who you are, to seeing clearly for the first time as someone you want to be. This song is a perfect ode to coming of age and finding the good within yourself after hardships.

“Hate That You Love Me,” “Austin,” and “you were in my dream” allow us to see the faster, more upbeat side of Laur Elle’s sound using heavy

beats and dreamy hooks. The tone changes up again with “Crossed Wires” but stays just as catchy.

“What I Don’t Like” stands out as the star of the show and a personal favourite. The track lies on the line of soft rock/pop with a captivating instrumental and the typical last goodbye to a former love.

My only complaint is that *August* wasn’t longer, potentially making it hard to see Laur Elle’s full range as an artist and songwriter. But it does make me excited to hear more. Laur Elle is on my radar as a young, upcoming artist with a relatable escapism in her music and she should be on yours too.

—Abbie Riglin

HOLY FVCK

Demi Lovato
Island Records
Score: B



Demi Lovato is a household name for us, synonymous with Gen Z’s childhood. Along with so many of our Disney favourites in recent years, some have climbed the charts and climbed back into our hearts. While we might cheer them on, we have to ask ourselves, is it their talent or our nostalgia that keeps paving the way for them?

“Demi leaves rehab again,” this one lyric sets the entire tone for their most recent album, *HOLY FVCK*. Along with their Disney days, the star’s sorted past with drugs, alcohol and addiction are often the first things that come to mind at the mention of their name. Their reclamation albums, which generally follow their rehab stays, seem formulaic and expected. We hear the authenticity in songs like “29,” “BONES,” or

“COME TOGETHER.” Lovato unapologetically sends a message of power, sex and truth. Unlike, past tracks like “Skyscraper” or “Sober” Lovato isn’t apologizing anymore.

As for the sound, the album is listenable, something I might rock out to on the drive home from work. But the sound is nothing innovative or remarkable. I hear a similar edge to Lovato’s vintage tracks like “Remember December” or “La La Land,” so the sounds definitely hit a Disney channel kid in the heart. Yet, it’s not an album I’ll be reaching for often or in large quantities.

HOLY FVCK is a story of addiction and the difficulties of navigating fame performed by an artist who brings more nostalgia than raw talent to the mix.

—Emme Larkins

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previous releases in the franchise but brings to the table revolutionary graphics, better building tools, as well as more add-on packs than any other instalments. But this came at an unfortunate price according to Sims players. Fan favourite content in *The Sims 3* such as colour customization (12-year-

old me was obsessed with cow print beds), free roam within the worlds and the customization of basements, grocery stores, schools and work locations would not be featured in the game. Since then, game packs with added paid content have provided more interactive gameplay for users. Although the game simplified previously used mechanics and gameplay, *The Sims 4* has become my favourite game within my favourite series, especially through the COVID-19 pandemic.

It has been a time where everyone has felt lost, bored and unable to control the direction of their life. With me particularly, I felt like I was back in high school, stuck in the same endless pattern with even less scenery change. But *The Sims* was my way of breaking that pattern and building a more idyllic version of my own life.

Possibly the best part of

the utopian society I created was the cheat codes. In real life, I was barely working due to shutdowns, but in *The Sims*? Motherlode, a cheat to get 50,000 simoleons, was my best friend and allowed me to skip the starter home phase, unlike real life where I will no doubt move from one mortgage to another. While Create-A-Sim allowed me to create myself according to my own beauty standards. The moral of the story is that *The Sims* gave me a sense of control when the pandemic gave me none.

This being said, I can't compare my simulated life to my real one. Emotions are felt by people, not machines, and even less so by Sims. The most important thing I learned was becoming comfortable in myself didn't take much. As long as I was happy and taking in the world as it came at me, I, like a Sim, could feel happiness through even the smallest of things.



Abbie Riglin's Sims character up close and personal. Photo courtesy of Electronic Arts.



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Cougars soccer teams go unbeaten in first two games of the season

Josh Werle
Sports Editor



Both the men's and women's soccer teams are off to an unbeaten start to the season. Photo by Josh Werle

The Mount Royal University Cougars soccer teams are off to a great start this season, as both the men's and women's teams have gone unbeaten in their first two games.

The men's team is coming off an incredible season last

year going 6-1-3 in their regular season play, leading them to an appearance in the Canada West playoff bracket. As the first seed in the Canada West's Central division, the Cougars took on Thompson Rivers

University in the quarterfinal matchup, defeating them 2-0. They would lose in their semifinal matchup against the University of British Columbia (UBC), and would ultimately go on to capture the Canada West bronze

medal, beating the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) 2-0.

The men's team have gone unbeaten to start the 2022 season, with a record of 1-0-1. Their first game of the season saw the

Cougars defeat the MacEwan University Griffins 3-0. The Cougars then went on to tie the University of Alberta Golden Bears with one goal apiece. The entire team has

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#s

0, games lost by the Cougars soccer teams so far this season.

13-2-1, Calgarian UFC fighter Hakeem Dawodu's fight record heading into Sept. 10 fight.

26-18, Stampeders victory over the Elks in Labour Day Classic.

23, Serena Williams' Singles Grand slams won.

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been contributing offensively to start the season, with all four goals coming from different players.

Last year’s two top scorers, Mohamed El Gandour and David Schaefer are back to their scoring ways. El Gandour scored the second

goal in game one, with Schaefer scoring the lone goal in game two. First-year students Mowbray Beghin and Jonathan Walter made an immediate impact in game one, scoring the first and third goals of the game, respectively. Goalkeeper

Sterling Kerr, who finished last season with four shutouts, has already begun adding to his statline with the Cougars’ 3-0 victory in game one.

The women’s soccer team is off to a blistering start to the 2022 season, having defeated the University of Lethbridge Pronghorns in back-to-back games, sweeping the season series. The team is already only one victory away from their overall wins record last season, and are looking to have a bounce-back year.

The 2021 season saw the women’s team score a total of 13 goals. This season, they have already hit the double-

digit mark in only two games, having scored 10 goals total in their season series against the Pronghorns. The team’s most recent game, a 4-2 victory over the Pronghorns, saw the Cougars score three goals in a span of only 10 minutes. This is coming off a 6-2 victory to start the season, where four separate players got on the scoreboard. Similarly to the men’s team, the women’s team has seen offensive success from a number of players.

After leading the team in scoring in her rookie season, Sydney Danielewicz hasn’t shown any signs of slowing

down in her sophomore appearance, scoring a goal in each of the Cougars’ two games this season.

Fellow second-year players Isabella Chirico and Catriona McFadden scored two goals each in the first game of the season, accounting for 66 per cent of the team’s goals that game. Natasha Furlas, Monet Alonso-Cruz, Caitlyn Vieira and Bethany Middlemass have recorded one goal each to start the season.

If the first two games of the season are any indication, the Cougars’ soccer teams both seemed poised for success this year.



Last season’s leading scorer Mohamed El Gandour looks to score even more goals this season. Photo by Josh Werle



The men’s soccer team got off to a good start in their season opener, defeating the Dinos 2-1. Photo by Josh Werle

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NFL quarterback recap: Grading the best QB moves this offseason

Josh Werle
Sports Editor

As exhilarating as sports games can be, sometimes the action that happens off the field can be just as entertaining. Sports fans know that even when a season is over and the championship has been won, the days of getting up and yelling at the television are far from over. The major sports leagues are known for their memorable offseason moments, primarily because this is when the bulk of the decisions get made for the forthcoming season. Trades and signings take place on a daily basis, sometimes making the teams hard to recognize when they start their next season.

The National Football League (NFL) is one of the largest and most popular

sports conglomerates on the planet. The Dallas Cowboys still reign supreme as the highest evaluated sports franchise on the planet, highlighting just how popular the league is. There will always be a debate about which position is the most vital on the football field, and every player makes their own impact in one way or another. But it's hard to argue that a good quarterback is not just important, but absolutely vital to success in the NFL.

This offseason featured numerous quarterback signings, trades and moves that are sure to shake up the NFL world. Here are the grades for some of the most notable quarterback moves this offseason.

Tom Brady re-signs with the Buccaneers

Surprise, surprise. The king is back. After a rather brief 40-day retirement, NFL superstar and seven-time Super Bowl winning quarterback Tom Brady announced to the world that he would return to the football field.

This season will mark his 23rd pro season, and his third year with the Buccaneers. Many will refer to Brady as the greatest football player of all time, and it's certainly hard to argue considering the success he has had.

Even in his 22nd professional season, Brady still put up the most passing yards of any quarterback during the 2021 regular season, managing to rack up 5,316 yards. After winning the Super Bowl in 2021, expectations were high. Unfortunately, the Buccaneers and Brady fell short when they lost to the eventual Super Bowl winners, the Los Angeles Rams.

Losing to the champs is nothing to be ashamed of, and all indicators point to Brady having another phenomenal season. The star quarterback accounts for less than six per cent of the team's salary cap, so this grade is a no-brainer. **A+**

Russell Wilson gets traded to the Broncos

The Denver Broncos relied on the work of quarterback Teddy Bridgewater during the 2021-22 season, who put up just north of 3,000 passing yards. If they wish to swim with the sharks in their division like the Kansas City Chiefs and Las Vegas Raiders,

it was evident that the Broncos needed to upgrade. That upgrade comes in the form of star quarterback Russell Wilson.

Wilson has been a longtime member of the Carolina Panthers, having won the 2014 Super Bowl with the team. Wilson has been long seen as a dual-threat quarterback — one which can both run and throw the ball well — and is sure to make an immediate impact on the Broncos team.

On Sept. 1, Wilson signed a five-year deal with the team which will see him secure an average of \$49 million dollars a season. Once again, the Broncos are in one of the most competitive divisions in the league, leaving zero room for error if they wish to make the postseason. That being said, although the team may have a few rough patches to iron out, adding one of the best quarterbacks of the 2010's to your squad can hardly be considered a bad move. **A-**

The Packers extend Aaron Rodgers

The reigning NFL MVP is back with the Packers, making it his 18th season with the team. Rodgers has won back-to-back Associated Press MVP awards, and will look to three-peat this season.

Extending a player that has been with your team for 17 years is seemingly a no-brainer, even if doing so came with a price tag of \$50 million dollars per season. It is very clear that Rodgers is still a cut above the rest of his quarterback colleagues, and should continue to thrive this year.

Although he will be without his go-to wide receiver Davante Adams, who has scored 69 touchdowns in 108

games with Rodgers throwing to him, the quarterback still has a stellar team to work with. **A**

Deshaun Watson signs with the Browns

Trading for Deshaun Watson this season was a massive risk for the Cleveland Browns, but the team needed a hail mary. After the duo of Odell Beckham Jr. and Baker Mayfield didn't work out for the Browns, taking the risk on Watson wasn't the worst move they could make. Don't get me wrong, Deshaun Watson is a phenomenal football quarterback and one of the best in the league. The problem is that he may not be as good of a person as he is an athlete.

After receiving allegations of sexual misconduct from over two dozen women, the NFL has fined Watson \$5 million dollars and suspended him for 11 games, making him ineligible to play for the Browns until Oct. 10, 2022. Watson led the league in passing yards during the 2020 season, recording 4,823 throughout the regular season for the Houston Texans.

With the allegations and legal issues, the Texans wanted out, putting Watson on the trading block. Although the Browns are incurring a potentially serious public relations nightmare, they are also receiving one of the top quarterbacks of the past few years.

Whether he continues to play to the level he was at remains to be seen, but this move is high-risk, high-reward for the Browns. This season will show whether it ends up being a risk or reward. **B**



The consensus greatest quarterback of all time will return for another season with the Buccaneers. Photo courtesy of All-Pro reels/Wikimedia Commons

Up in smoke: How the Calgary Flames saved a potentially disastrous offseason

Josh Werle

Sports Editor

Ever heard the saying “lightning never strikes the same place twice?” Calgary Flames fans have, as lightning struck twice during the NHL offseason when Calgary’s two biggest stars left the team. Johnny Gaudreau and Matthew Tkachuk, who led the team in points and goals respectively, will both be wearing new threads to start the 2022-23 NHL season.

On top of the world

On May 18 of this year, Flames fans were on top of the world. They had just wrapped up a grueling first-round playoff series against the Dallas Stars — winning in overtime of the seventh and final game — and managed to defeat the Edmonton Oilers in the first game of round two. The 9-6 victory marked the first Battle of Alberta series in the playoffs in 31 years, and Calgary seemed unstoppable. On May 20, a mere 48 hours later marked the beginning of a nightmare for the Calgary Flames.

Downwards spiral

After their initial victory over the Oilers in round two, the Calgary Flames went on to lose four straight games, and were subsequently eliminated from the Stanley Cup Playoffs. As difficult as the playoffs can be, Flames fans knew that the offseason wasn’t going to be a walk in the park either, as Gaudreau and Tkachuk needed new contracts for the upcoming season.

Gaudreau has been with the Flames for almost a decade, and Tkachuk was one of the brightest young

players that Calgary had, making it seem like a foregone conclusion that they would be back in a Flames uniform at the start of next season.

On July 12, the day before free agency, the news broke that Gaudreau would become a free agent and test the open market. The next day, Gaudreau shocked the hockey world as it was announced he was officially a member of the Columbus Blue Jackets. The Flames had been eliminated from Stanley Cup contention and lost their star player, what else could go wrong?

On July 17, Matthew Tkachuk — who was perceived to be the future of the franchise — announced that he didn’t intend to sign a new contract with the team.

The comeback

Tkachuk’s situation differed slightly from Gaudreau’s, as he wasn’t an unrestricted free agent. This meant that Calgary could, at the very least, engage in trade talks with other teams so that they could receive something in return. Still, the once bright future of the Flames organization had taken a turn for the worse.

On July 22, things took a turn for the team, as the Calgary Flames traded Tkachuk to the Florida Panthers in exchange for Jonathan Huberdeau and Mackenzie Weegar, among other assets. Huberdeau finished in a tie for second most points in the NHL last season, with Gaudreau wracking up a league-best 85 assists. Weegar, a defenseman, finished with 44 points last season. The

duo contributed massively to the Panthers’ record during the 2021-22 season, where they led the entire NHL with 58 wins.

With Tkachuk’s exit from the team guaranteed, getting two high-quality players in return is exactly what the Flames needed to turn their offseason around. The Flames had unceremoniously lost two top-20 point scorers and only got one in return, leaving a hole that needed to be filled.

In order to do this, the Flames shipped off another longtime team member, Sean

Monahan, who went to the Montreal Canadiens to clear up some room for Calgary to sign one final piece to their puzzle.

On Aug. 18, the Flames landed free agent centre Nazem Kadri, who was a member of the 2021-22 Stanley Cup winning team, the Colorado Avalanche. Kadri also finished in the top 20 for points scored last season, meaning Calgary had effectively exchanged their players for two of equal quality. Of course, Tkachuk and Gaudreau were special members of the team — they

were locker room leaders who were responsible for a large amount of Calgary’s success last season — but they were guaranteed to leave and said as much.

What General Manager Brad Treliving was able to accomplish this offseason was historic, and he may have been able to save what had the potential to be one of the biggest downfalls in all of hockey history. Only time will tell where the Flames will finish in the standings this season, but the team is in great shape with their newest acquisitions.



Calgary’s leading goal scorer Matthew Tkachuk will show up in new threads with the Florida Panthers next season. Photo courtesy of tlop2000/Wikimedia Commons