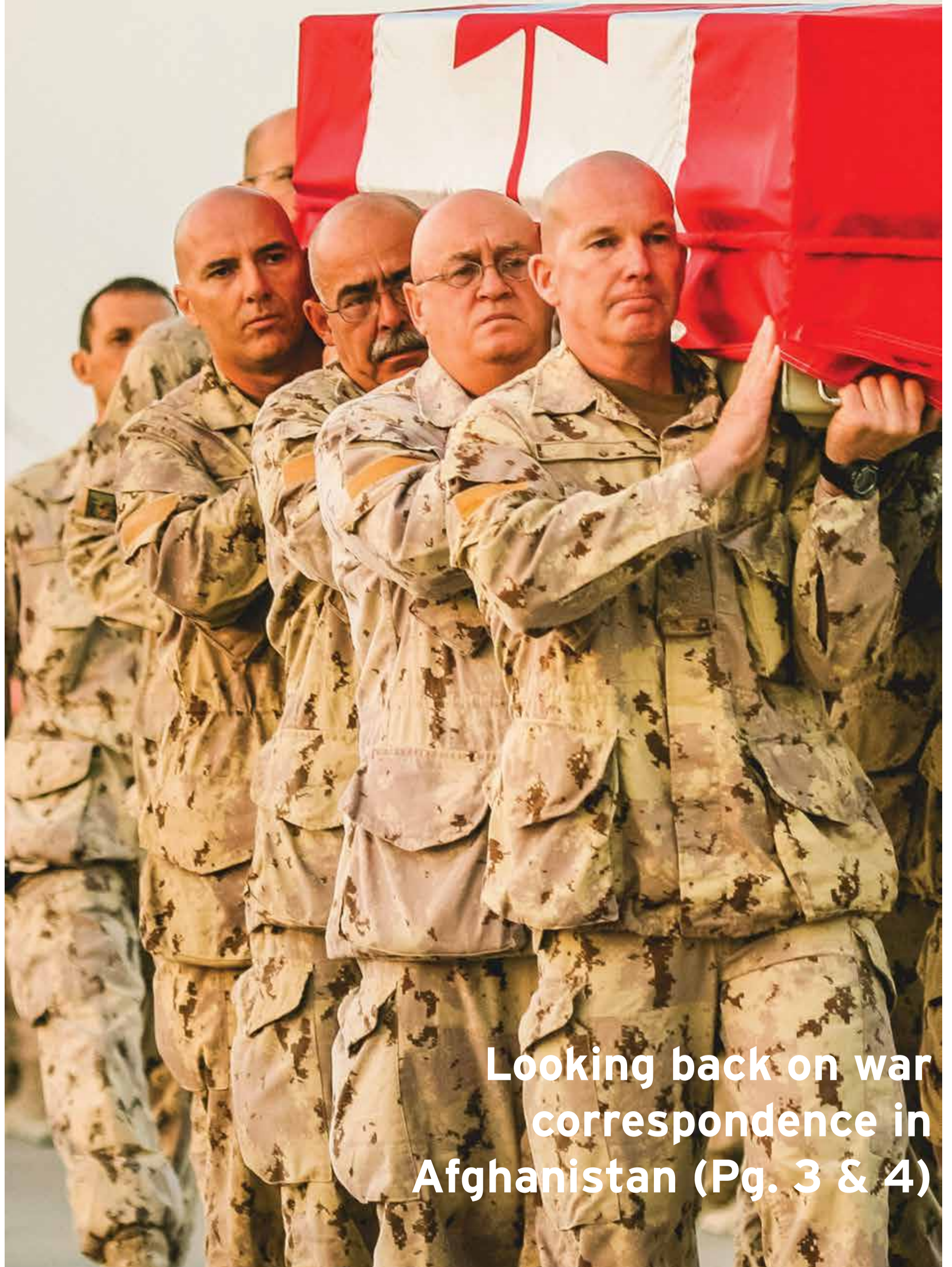


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Looking back on war
correspondence in
Afghanistan (Pg. 3 & 4)

Letter to the reader

The Reflector regrets to inform you that a factual error was made in Issue 2, Vol. 56, published Oct. 23, 2025. In ‘Two years and counting of destruction in Gaza,’ there was a typo stating that the print version of the story cited events regarding the Gaza Strip from Oct. 7, 2023, to Oct. 15, 2023. This was incorrect, as the cited events occurred from Oct. 7, 2023, to Oct. 15, 2025. We apologise for the error.

Meet Calgary’s new mayor

After a close race and a recount, Jeromy Farkas has been chosen to lead Calgary

Khaoula Choual

Staff Writer

On Oct. 20, Calgary chose its mayor. It was a tight race between Jeromy Farkas and Sonya Sharp. This recent election saw low voter turnout, a recount, long wait times, and former mayor Jyoti Gondek conceding. This is the first time in 45 years that a Calgarian mayor has only served one term.

After a long night of hand counting on Oct. 21, it was decided that Farkas would be Calgary’s next mayor.

Who is Jeromy Farkas?

Farkas was one of the youngest councillors elected in Calgary. Before the election, during the debate, Farkas was known as a “flip-flopper.”

The CBC reported that many ward councillors, like Shane Keating, described Farkas as a “disruptor” and impossible to work with, and that refused to support ideas of fellow councillors as they did his.

“He’d knock everyone else’s sandcastle so his was the highest rather than doing something to raise his castle or ideas to the top,” said Keating in a CBC interview.

Farkas said in a podcast with the National Observer in 2023 that he reflected on his 2021 campaign and Ward 11 councillor days and that he is “embarrassed.”

He branded himself during his 2021 mayoral campaign as “your conservative choice!”

“I’ve made mistakes, and I think it means...having the courage to say that you are wrong, that you’ve learned,”

said Farkas during a debate hosted in the Jack Singer Hall on Oct. 8. “Leadership means being willing to show up on stage like this to admit that you are wrong.”

He cited newfound change for his not-for-profit experience. Now, he had to prove to Calgarians he had changed.

Farkas didn’t capture all the votes of Calgarians, but just enough to get him to win the election.

Lower voter turnout

The CBC reported that one in 10 Calgarians voted for Farkas.

In 2021, when he previously ran for mayor, his 116,700 votes indicated a significant increase in voter turnout compared to 2025. Of 896,042 eligible Calgarians, fewer than 350,000 voted. Forty six per cent of Calgarians voted in 2021. That number went down to 39 per cent in this year’s mayoral election.

The long waits potentially deterred many voters, with some voters waiting hours.

“Those costs are really to account for the hand counting of the ballots,” says Calgary’s returning officer, Kate Martin.

The long lines were due to the time it took election workers to uphold the electoral registry and issue three separate ballots for a mayor, a councillor and a school trustee.

According to *The Sprawl*, the reasoning for hand counting was due to the provincial legislative changes that switched from electronic



Jeromy Farkas at the 2025 mayoral debate at the Werklund Centre. Photo by

Khaoula Choual

tabulators instead of being tallied by hand.

“With the prohibition of the vote tabulators—moving to a hand count—that is going to cost us more in terms of the number of voting stations, the number of election workers that we’re hiring, and, of course, all the supplies,” says Martin.

What is the Local Authorities Election Act?

Farkas led with a margin-of-victory (MOV) of just 581 votes, with 91,071 votes total. Sharp picked up a close 90,490 votes.

Under the Local Authorities Election Act, Sharp requested a recount. If the difference in the vote between the first and

second candidates is 0.5 per cent or less, the second may request a recount.

Sharp said in a statement, “Given the margin-of-victory for Mr. Farkas is only 585 votes or 0.16 per cent, I believe it is appropriate to request the Chief Returning Officer undertake a recount of the ballots to ensure the accuracy of the election outcome.”

The provincial government’s banning of electronic vote tabulators was at play for Sharp’s reasoning for requesting a recount. She cited that due to a long night, long lines, and hand-counted votes, mistakes were bound to occur, as she insisted she isn’t criticising the election workers.

“Given the razor-thin margin-of-victory in this

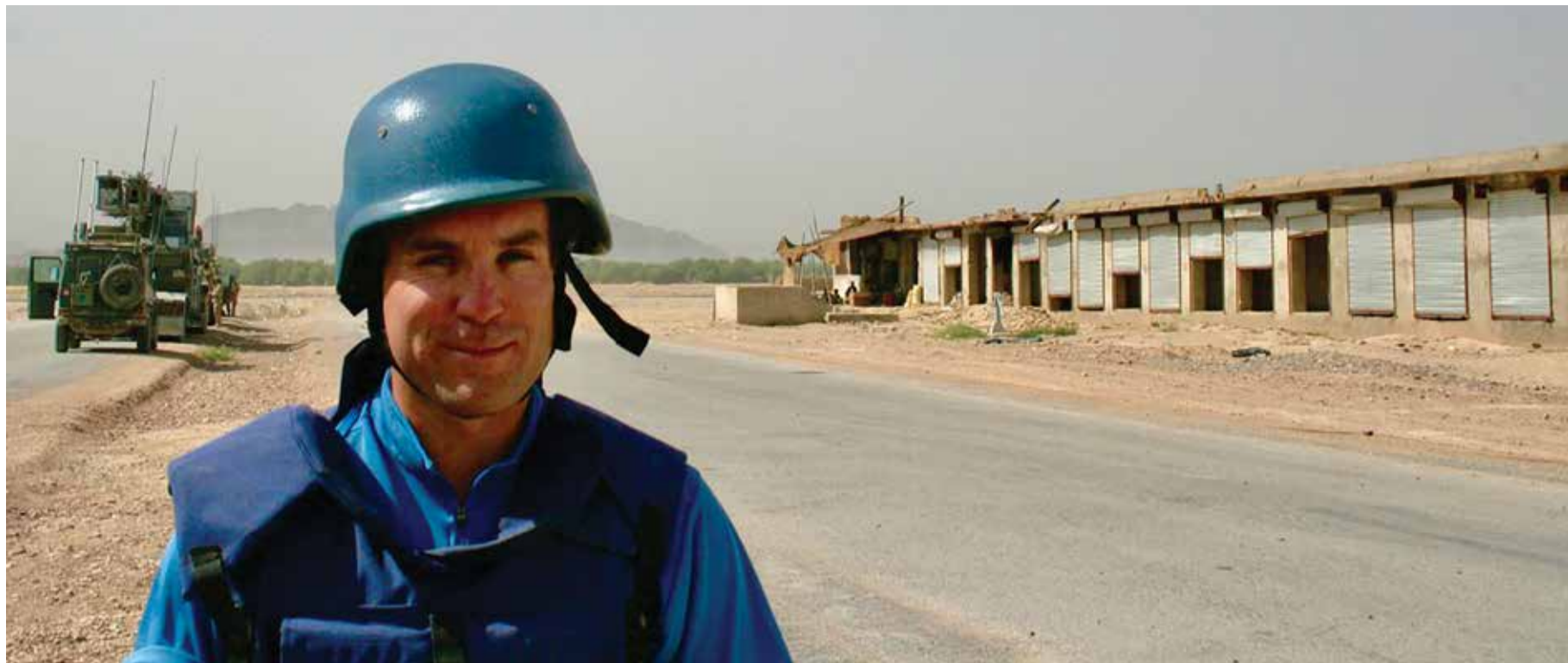
election, it makes ample sense to review and double-check that appropriate processes were followed, and the count is accurate,” says Sharp.

A recount was completed on Oct. 28. Both Farkas and Sharp gained more votes this time, with an MOV of 616. The updated numbers released were Farkas’ 91,112 to Sharp’s 90,496.

On Tuesday, he addressed Calgary as a whole.

“To every Calgarian, whether you voted for me or not, I will be your mayor. I will work alongside you, listen to you, and stand up for you every single day,” says Farkas.

On Wednesday, Oct. 29, Farkas was officially sworn in as mayor after the recount.



Brooks Decillia embedded with the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) in Afghanistan, 2006. Photo supplied by Brooks Decillia

On the front lines and in the bylines

How a former CBC war correspondent navigates remembrance

Bella Coco

News Editor

When Brooks Decillia was in seventh grade, he was asked to write a report on any country of his choice. Little did he know that this country would follow him from elementary school to his career as a CBC war correspondent.

Decillia put his hand up to report on the conflict in Afghanistan back in 2006, hoping to achieve his goal of becoming a foreign reporter with hot-zone experience. When Canada decided that deployment to Afghanistan was a critical mission, Decillia knew he had to be there.

“Journalists have an obligation to tell those stories about why those forces are being deployed and what’s happening, and to be observers and documenters of the conflict. I thought it was important for journalists to be in Afghanistan and tell stories about what the soldiers were doing there and why they were there,” Decillia says. Despite entering the conflict with hostile-region training and prior reporting, Decillia says there was no way to be truly prepared.

Decillia’s first actual moment of fear revealed itself on base at the Kandahar Airfield when sirens blared a warning of incoming missile strikes.

Despite the insurgents’ inaccurate missile targeting, the idea of being in the wrong place at the wrong time stuck with Decillia before he even started his correspondence.

“Sometimes they would hit the airfield, or they’d hit a field, or they would completely miss where the sort of tents or the buildings were that we were working in. But some of them did. A few weeks before I got there, or even the week before I got there, I think they hit the sort of main cafeteria, and some people were injured,” Decillia says. “So the first time I ever heard the siren, I’ll be honest, it sort of freaked me out and scared me, but I had the presence of mind to, you know, get to some of these bunkers that they’d set up, or sort of shelters that they’d set up under concrete.”

The siren calls eventually became a daily routine for Decillia, but the blare of danger followed him home as well.

“I was walking in Covent Garden in Central London, and someone dropped a whole bunch of garbage down a chute, and it made a large noise. It scared me, and I sort of dropped to my knees, not almost to my knees, but, you know, it scared me to the point where I was getting down in front of a bunch of people who were a bit bemused why this man was on the ground after that loud time,” he says. “Still, you’re so conditioned to get down low when you hear the siren or [when] you hear the whiz or the whistle of rockets. So you kind of knew that you needed to get down low.”

Despite the “normalised” daily dangerous routine, Decillia’s job was no walk in

the park. An automatic target was strapped to his back when he went on patrol with Canadian forces, and the primary concern at the time was the threat of improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

Decillia says that while the question of safety while patrolling with the infantry or even the artillery makes the beat complex, staying objective in war journalism also proved to be a challenge.

“It’s also complex in terms of thinking about how you report on something. Because if you think about general reporting, you’re trying to be fair and balanced and accurate and all those sorts of things, but when you’re embedded with Canadian forces, really, you’re only seeing the war or the story from one side,” Decillia says.

Finding the other perspective by interviewing insurgents could prove

deadly, so Decillia and other reporters had to get creative. By seeking help from Afghan interpreters or even contacting a spokesperson for the insurgents, Decillia found a way to maintain balanced reporting.

However, even when playing fair, it didn’t always mean everyone was happy with the work that was published.

Decillia remembers the first time he received backlash from the military and the government, and the first time tension leaked out of the lede and into his life.

“I started my story with some video of gunfire, and I said, ‘This is definitely not peacekeeping,’ because I think a lot of Canadians assumed that Canada would be peacekeeping. This was very early on in the days of a conflict in Kandahar between the insurgents and the international stabilising

force, and I used a clip of a young private,” he explains. “I asked him, ‘You know, how did it go today?’ And he said, ‘It was really great. We finally got some payback.’ The concern was that maybe the soldiers seemed a bit bloodthirsty. I don’t think he was, and I think it was a fair question.”

In a time of conflict and immense patriotism back home, Decillia notes how fair reporting could have been seen as being “disloyal to Canada” from an outsider’s perspective.

“Aeschylus, the sort of ancient Greek dramatist and veteran, said, the first casualty of war is the truth, right? So sometimes it’s hard to sort fact from fiction,” he says.

Decillia says that it was easy to be misled by

Continues on Pg. 4



Decillia working on a story back on base. Photo supplied by Brooks Decillia

Continued from Pg. 3

optimistic updates from the military, with officials often stating that they were restoring safety and security.

However, when journalists saw no improvement on the front, they began fact-checking in real time. Despite reporting the truth and even getting critical of

the government, Decillia's understanding never left his reporting.

"I think empathy is at the core of journalism. I think

you need to bring empathy, particularly, because I think you can get cynical because you're in a situation where people are dying. It's life and death. You do need to remember that these are human beings," he explains.

After his time in Afghanistan, Decillia began to view remembrance through a new lens of appreciation.

"I came away from Afghanistan with a respect for why people serve in the military and what motivates them to serve, and this profound sense of giving selflessly and being willing to put their lives on the line," Decillia said. "To serve unselfishly and put pride in Canada and their pride in doing the work that they did and the pride in the history of the Canadian military and the history of the Canadian Armed Forces."

a takeaway for Decillia in his professional career as a journalist, he also walked away with newfound knowledge on those who served and lost their lives for their country.

"I had the honour, or the duty, of reporting on a number of ramp ceremonies, when Canadian soldiers are repatriated. There's a ceremony before Canadian dead soldiers are sent back to Canada, and those were very moving. I saw these big, burly soldiers with tears in their faces, carrying their dead comrades' bodies and flag-draped coffins onto military transport to take them back to Canada. Right? I thought that was a very moving experience, so the ramp ceremonies and the bagpipe music sticks with me."

While the experience was



Canadian soldiers perform a ramp ceremony for their fallen comrades. Photo supplied by Brooks Decillia

National headlines

This is how much the Earth will warm with countries' new climate plans, UN says - CBC

Bella Coco

News Editor

Countries worldwide submitted plans to combat climate change, but according to a new United Nations report, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) have "barely moved the needle."

A portion of the lack of progress can be traced back to the U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Agreement.

Only 0.1°C can be accounted for in progress, and nations "remain far" from meeting the Paris Agreement of below 2°C.



With nations far off from ideal climate goals, the UN has warned them to work harder to drop global temperatures. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

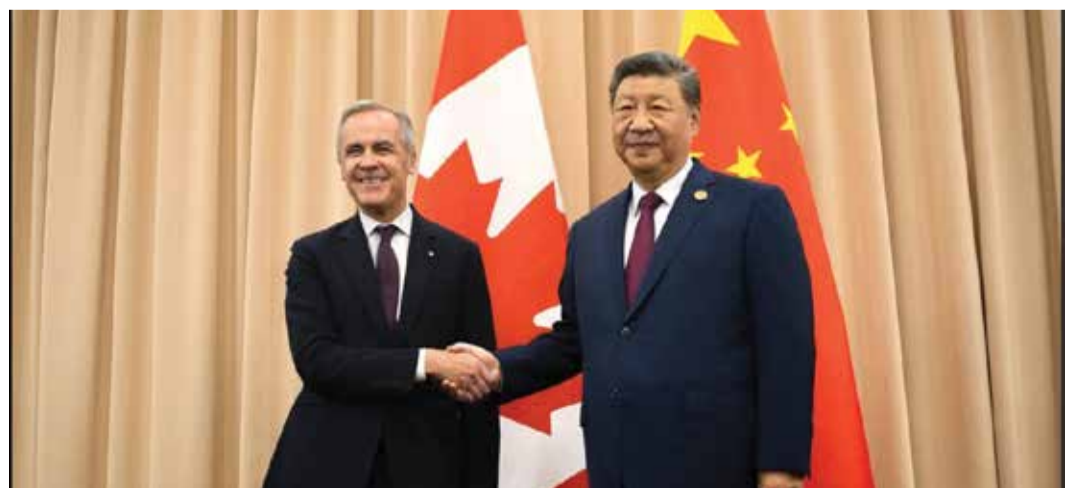
Liberals to table 'big, bold' federal budget Tuesday as Carney looks to put his stamp on government - CBC

Bella Coco

News Editor

The Liberal government is set to reveal the federal budget Tuesday, following multiple meetings between Prime Minister Carney and President Trump, as well as Carney's nine-day visit through Asia to discuss markets for Canadian goods and services.

Finance Minister François-Philippe Champagne will deliver the budget, and says it will contain "generational investments" in a time of tariffs.



Canadian Prime Minister Carney and Chinese President Xi met at the APEC to discuss trade issues between the two countries. Photo courtesy of Instagram/@markjcarney



Photos supplied by Brooks Decillia

Alberta teachers forced back into classrooms following notwithstanding clause

First-year teachers share their experience during and after the ATA strike

Mia Smith

Web Editor

Alberta teachers returned to work on Wednesday as the Alberta Teachers Association (ATA) strike was forced to end following the passage of Bill 2.

Bill 2, referred to as the Back to School Act, forced striking teachers back to work by imposing a “collective” agreement through fast-tracked legislation.

However, the agreement seemingly did not reach a consensus, with 89.5 per cent of teachers voting against Bill 2.

“Our intention is to pass this legislation immediately and end the strike by the Alberta Teachers’ Association,” Premier Danielle Smith said in a press release on Monday. “My expectation is that students and teachers will be back in the classroom on Wednesday [Oct. 29].”

While the act forces teachers back into the classroom, it also prevents them from striking until 2028. After roughly three weeks of the strike, the ATA

was met with no change and teachers were sent back to classrooms with the same conditions as before.

Naheed Nenshi, leader of the Official Opposition NDP, spoke to the media, following the announcement of Bill 2, about his own personal opposition to the bill, calling it “unconstitutional.”

Nenshi and other oppositional opinions are publicly warning the UCP government about the potentially harsh backlash they are about to receive from the province.

“She’s woken up everybody who wants a better Alberta, and she is going to rue the day that she did this,” says Nenshi.

For all students, parents and faculty, this experience has been hard to navigate and, as of earlier this week, downright devastating.

For first-year teachers who are expected to be well-prepared and ready to teach, the news of Bill 2 has them returning to schools with

large classroom sizes and limited resources.

First-year grade one teacher Olivia Blackman expressed that although the teaching community expected the events of the strike, that did not make the duration of the strike any easier.

“It feels like we have no voice and we are unable to get anywhere,” says Blackman.

She explains that the morale among students returning to school on Wednesday was extremely low, although putting on a happy face for them came easily. Blackman added that missing the students was difficult, but feeling unsupported by your own government is the bigger issue.

“I just hope people in Alberta are paying attention to what is happening,” she says. “If nothing changes, it will all feel like it was for nothing.”

Starting a teaching career is often exciting, but for today’s first-year teachers in

Alberta, Blackman explains, the reality feels far more daunting.

First-year kindergarten teacher Emma Bradshaw explains that the negativity on social media is making the weight of it feel all that much heavier.

“It’s more disappointing and discouraging to see what people are saying about teachers rather than acknowledging why we are striking in the first place,” says Bradshaw. “People think we are just being greedy.”

Bradshaw explains that many people are overlooking the central ideas of why the ATA struck in the first place.

“Everyone has turned this into such a political debate. It should just be fighting for the education of kids,” says Bradshaw.

Even though teachers have now been silenced between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m., others are not shying away from the fight.

Students have stepped up to the plate to fight for the rights of their educators, with groups in the thousands planning walkout protests across the province last Thursday. More protests are expected to come throughout the school year.

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A young boy supports Alberta teachers at the Calgary ATA rally downtown. Photo by Bella Coco

Fading legacy

The 103-year-old Leigon No. 1 building, once a hub for returning soldiers, requires great repairs to keep its memory alive

Khaoula Choual
Staff Writer

A waft of old, stale wood greets visitors passing through the limestone archway marking the building's entrance. Walking through the lobby, the floorboards creak with every step, as a handful of lightbulbs radiate a soft glow, revealing dusty portraits and veteran medals. Inside is a quiet darkness—not one of absence, but one of remembrance.

Located downtown on 7 Avenue SE, the Royal Canadian Legion Calgary No.1 Branch was once a home for veterans or children of veterans, a place to unwind, create community, dance, and laugh.

In 1922, the building was initially used by the Great War Veterans Club, which was established in Winnipeg in 1916 to honour those who fought in the First World War. Five years later, the building was rebranded as Alberta's first legion.

Its 103-year-old brick and mortar has welcomed countless dignitaries, veterans, and their respective families over the years. But Philip MacAulay, president of the Royal Canadian Legion

Calgary No. 1 Branch, says the building has long started to show its age.

MacAulay says the decline of the building started in 1992, and that issues like the roof have been brushed to the side since. The total estimated cost to replace the roof is \$350,000—not including repairs to the east side of the roof, which have already been completed for \$42,000.

Having only received \$10,200 from the provincial government, MacAulay says that the rest came from the Legion's pockets, and that the roofing project is still five years away from being checked off their to-do list.

Money a massive hurdle, says president

Because it's a historic site, MacAulay says the biggest obstacle to obtaining funding is getting grants from the province and the city. This is due to how the Legion is required to get approval from the government to proceed with the repairs.

"Dealing with the government, that's basically



Warm wooden bar at Calgary's Legion No. 1 sits empty on Oct. 31, 2025. Photo by

Khaoula Choual

the big thing... because everything you do, you have to go through the [government], it's not like I can go out and hire a contractor and start the job," says MacAulay.

The Legion No. 1 branch has faced many financial struggles in recent times, with the first being the construction of the Bow Building, which shut them down in 2008 and 2009.

Then, during the pandemic, the building was shut down for another two years. Although the building was closed, bills still needed paying, and during the 2013 flood, the Legion went into the negatives, paying \$50,000 in repairs.

MacAulay says that despite the shutdown of the building, they still were required to pay the bills, which were anywhere from \$42,000 to \$45,000.

"They don't give you no break. You have to pay the bills. You have to pay the bills regardless," says MacAulay.

Fundraising is challenging because the Legion No.1 is a not-for-profit organisation, meaning it cannot issue tax receipts. After all, it is not a charity and does not have a charity number, which impacts fundraising opportunities.

They still receive restoration efforts and funding, and they rent out

the building to a multitude of organisations, like CJSW. They also host plays like *The War Brides*, which is coming on Nov. 2, and wrestling events. All the money earned from these events is going into repairs.

The Legion No. 1 has over 400 members, and 100 of those members have served in the Canadian Armed Forces. Just like the building has aged, so have its members—who say they're both holding on and still standing.

Wayne Morin has been a member of the Legion for over 50 years and employed by them for the last 30 years. He has a close relationship with the building. It's the place where he and his buddies can meet up once a week on Fridays, have a beer, and just laugh, and it's the place where he met his wife, Sylvia "Syl" Kennedy-Morin, whose father was part of the Calgary No. 1 Legion and served in the Canadian Navy during the Second World War.

The Legion was a vibrant area that even had a Gentlemen's Club, which Kennedy-Morin infiltrated and broke the rules of a men-only club.

Fred Otway has also been a member for over 50 years. He joined the Legion No. 1 "originally, to eat," but along the way, he met some friends. Today, they get together

every Friday for a beer to talk about their week.

He thought the place would be shut down by now due to the declining membership and pending repairs.

"I said 10 years ago that it would be shut down by now, but it's still here," says Otway.

Otway says the number of legions in Calgary has become few and far between.

"There used to be about 30—now there's about eight," says Otway. "We haven't had any new members for a long time."

Kennedy-Morin is passionate about this building. She has fond memories of the place and her father and has been a part of the Legion No. 1 since she was 18. Many members raised the concern of the building being bulldozed.

Kennedy-Morin says she'll "fight it every step of the way."

For the veterans and their families that still walk through its door, it's not just a building to them—it's a living reminder of service, connection, and keeping history alive for the next generation.



Framed portraits of Canadian veterans hang in the hall of Calgary Legion No. 1 on Oct. 31, 2025. Photo by Khaoula Choual

Side hustle culture

What it means to work multiple jobs

Aubree Quapp

Contributor



With rising costs, many people are forced to work multiple jobs to make ends meet. Graphic by Sarah Palmer / Assets from Adobe AI

In 2025, grocery prices are rising, the cost of living is increasing, and the once sought out nine to five is rapidly being replaced with the phenomenon of side hustle culture.

In the regular work week, evenings and weekends are reserved for leisure. But today, many young adults are working a second job to fill that spare time—a side hustle, which Cambridge Dictionary defines as something you get paid for alongside your main job.

Compared to other major Canadian cities, like Toronto and Vancouver, Calgary is home to a relatively affordable cost of living, which for a single person is around \$1,555 each month, excluding rent.

No matter where one resides, the price of food, shelter, and gasoline has seen a steady increase across Canada this year. But what has not seen a hike, however, is Alberta's minimum wage, which currently sits as the nation's lowest at \$15 an hour.

A report by Vibrant Communities Calgary (VCC)

calculated the city's living wage as \$24.45, and found that full-time work is simply not enough to live and maintain basic needs.

"People are stuck in temporary contracts, gig work, or part-time roles that do not provide financial security or benefits," the report reads.

VCC explains that the financial strain of the economy affects many, from families supporting multiple people to students trying to afford university, and that working multiple jobs is what many individuals have turned to to meet their financial needs.

Capital One's May survey polled over 1,000 Canadians and found that 36 per cent of people between the ages of 18 and 44 have a side hustle, and that 49 per cent are considering getting one.

Of this population, 94 per cent of people cite earning more money as the primary reason for them obtaining a second job, not "pursuing a passion, hobby or interest."

Additionally, more than half say juggling their side hustle, school, and a primary

job is challenging.

But for University of Calgary student, Ihn Ah Jung, side hustles offer much more than financial benefits.

Doing it for passion, not paycheques

Jung runs her own jewellery business and says that the side hustle not only brings in additional dollars but also makes room for creative freedom with a newfound work-life balance.

"Since I'm a student, I just really wanted something that allowed me to have flexibility in my schedule, so I started making jewellery," says Jung. "It's always been a passion of mine, but I guess I started to take it more seriously the past few years, and I just thought, why not?"

Even though she sometimes feels overwhelmed when managing school and a business, Jung sees moments of burnout as an indicator that she needs to spend more time feeding her passion.

"Maybe that just means

I need to spend more time being creative and doing what I actually enjoy, or like the part of it that I enjoy," she says.

Research by Thea Tselepis from the University of Johannesburg supports this, saying that today's young adults tend to prefer precarious jobs over traditional ones because this lets them enjoy their off-the-clock time to the fullest.

"Their innovation and creativity seem to be linked to how they reclaim their time to perform what is referred to as 'passion projects' and create work-life balance and meaning to solve problems in society," writes Tselepis. "There are others of Generation Z who are not even willing to take on full-time jobs and prefer to have several contracts or 'gigs' as this allows more work-life balance."

Calgary resident Tegan Van Den Bossche has found a niche in working multiple jobs, working not only in construction but also as a hairdresser. He sees not just a financial reprieve, but an opportunity to pursue his

interests.

"I'm passionate about what I do, especially in construction. I love it," says Van Den Bossche. "But I also am pretty creative."

While side hustles can provide individuals with the time to do what they love and get paid for it, juggling multiple responsibilities can turn into too much. Van Den Bossche emphasises that if it's not a need, it's a choice.

"I mean, that was my fault, my doing. I said yes," says Van Den Bossche. "I think you can always say no to a job... you got to look after yourself too."

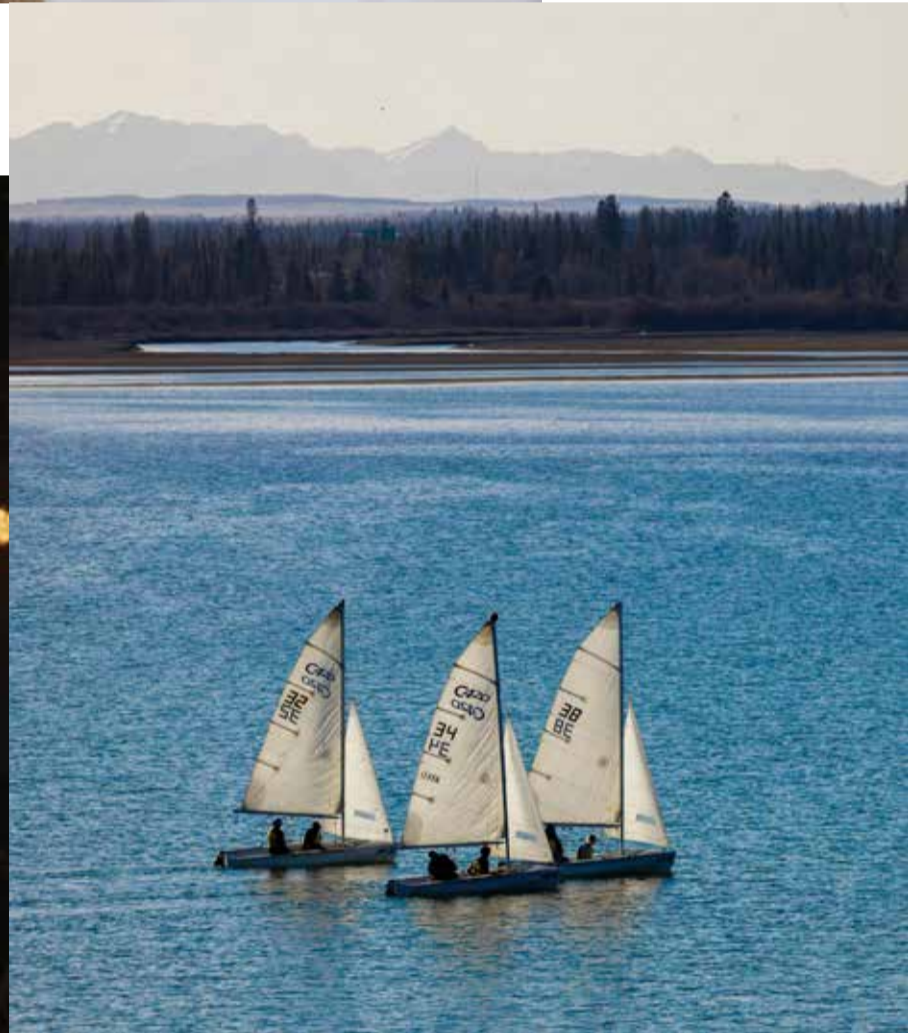
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A curious white-tailed deer on a trail in Kananaskis, Alta. Photo by Greg Derer

American singer-songwriter Khalid plays the Calgary Stampede's Coca-Cola Stage on July 9, 2025. Photo by Sarah Palmer



Three sailboats cruise through the Glenmore Reservoir in Calgary, Alta. Photo by Greg Derer

Olympic Plaza in downtown Calgary, Alta. Photo by Antino Saridis



Opinion: Finding home away from home

Exchange students to Canada share shocks, similarities

Abby Hext

Contributor

When I was searching for countries to do a semester abroad, I didn't know what kind of experience I wanted, but I knew I needed an adventure, a change of scenery from my small university in rural Australia. The impending question lingered in my mind: what do I want to get out of my exchange?

While scouring my options, I came across Mount Royal University (MRU). I had never been to Canada, and I barely knew anything about the country. 'Why not?' I thought, 'let's give it a go.'

Half a year later, with a heavy checked bag in hand, I was standing outside of residence on move-in day. What have I gotten myself into? I literally moved to a different country by myself, knowing absolutely no one. What happens when it gets cold? How cold does it get? How do I even dress for the cold?

What I wish I could go back and tell myself is that this is exactly where I was meant to be.

MRU's international education program offers study tours, work experience, and exchange opportunities in over 25 countries across the globe. Last year, the inbound exchange program welcomed 81 students to Calgary, according to MRU's annual report.

For the 2025 and 2026 academic year, MRU's international students have spent the last two months immersed in Canadian culture—just enough time to notice some key differences between here and home. I sat down with three inbound exchange students to discuss the cultural shocks and similarities that we have experienced whilst studying abroad.

Looking in from the outside

One of the first things I noticed about Canada is the polite and friendly culture, and that most Canadians will go out of their way to help you when needed. Scottish exchange student Amy Addison says she sees the

same.

"I expected people to be nice, and I noticed it almost immediately after I got here," she says.

Coming to MRU was the first time Addison had ever left her country, let alone travelling by herself. She says the helpful and selfless nature of Canadians hit her instantly—even before entering MRU's campus.

"I had no idea what I was doing. My phone had no service, and a stranger phoned my hotel for me to make sure I had someone to pick me up," says Addison.

Compared to Scotland, she says, there is a stark contrast between the social customs of residents.

"People are a lot more open and social [in Canada]," says Addison. "Back home, the people in rural areas would be more friendly, whilst the city people would be like zombies. But everyone is nice here—it doesn't matter if you're in a small town or the city. It is the people that make a place."

However, some exchange students say Canada shares more in common with

their home country than it does differences. Mexican exchange student Sarahi Barrales Zárate says she was shocked to find that Canadians follow familiar civil protocols.

"I wasn't expecting Canadians to be like Mexicans in the sense that we both apologise for everything all the time," says Barrales Zárate. "Where I'm from, you're sorry all the time, so I guess we are both sorry for existing."

Canadian university culture is unique to the rest of the world—you don't join a school just to study, you go to have fun, meet new people, challenge your thinking and beliefs, grow as a person, and create communities.

When I came to MRU, I was blown away by the wide variety of food outlets, sports facilities, and events situated on campus—not to mention West Gate Social's discounted drinks and snacks.

I was always told that university gets boring by your third or fourth year, but as soon as I found myself a group of friends, we were going out and spending time

together two to three times a week. People here want to go out and do things, have fun, and make memories.

Australia's campus life and university culture are very minimal in comparison, and Addison feels the same way about Scotland.

"I prefer the culture here—this feels like what university should be," she says. "I feel like I'm in my first year again."

Trang Nguyen, an exchange student from Vietnam, also appreciates the fun and balanced culture of Canadian student life.

"The thing I love about here is that people study, but they also spend time going outside, having fun, and experiencing the nightlife," she says. "It's a good life balance—I will really miss it when I come back to Vietnam."

But it is not just university life where Canadians like to go all out. Trang says Halloween and Christmas are fast approaching, as are her feelings of culture shock.

"We do celebrate them in my home country, but it's not really a big thing," she says. "People here absolutely take it to the full extent—

they decorate their homes, have a complete makeover in their rooms, and have a lot of activities and events to celebrate. I think it's great."

Halloween is also not celebrated to the same extent in Australia, and I felt severely underprepared when my friends had their costumes planned for a month while I had barely thought about it.

I'm currently sitting in the Airbnb that my new friends and I have rented just outside of Banff, Alta. We just finished a long hike, and are all exhausted and sore. But that isn't stopping us from enjoying the night, watching the sun set over the Rockies, and cooking a BBQ dinner.

I look over at my friends, who are laughing and reminiscing on the funny memories we made today, and I realise that I made the right decision—stepping outside my comfort zone was worth it. It really is the people that make a place, and no matter our differences or where we come from, Canada is somewhere that welcomes us all and gives us a home away from home.



Inbound exchange students to MRU visit Lake Louise and Banff, Alta., early in the fall 2025 semester. Photo courtesy of Abby Hext

Pressing play

How an old iPod taught me to listen again

Joy Dutta

Contributor

Tucked between the hoodoos of Alberta's Badlands, the Royal Tyrrell Museum shrank in my rearview as the Gorillaz hummed through my headphones, and I realised something startling: not once, in the past three hours, had I checked my phone.

According to Statistics Canada, that's rare these days. Of the 84 per cent of Canadians who reported owning a smartphone in 2020, 53 per cent said they started their day by switching on their devices.

Between emails, social media, and endless playlists, most of us carry our entire lives in our pockets, but I'd left all that behind. In my hand was a modified iPod Classic: sleek, silver, and loaded with 1,000 hours of audiobooks, Daft Punk deep cuts, and enough Gorillaz to last a lifetime.

It began as a cost-cutting experiment. Audible kept glitching on my aging phone and library tablet, and, as a university student with not a lot of money, I couldn't justify getting a new device or another subscription.

I craved something simple, something that worked. So, I turned to an old iPod Classic and upgraded it to be a device dedicated to one thing only: listening.

No texting or 'are you still watching?' Just sound.

Making your own escape

Modding the iPod wasn't easy. Prying open the case demanded patience, the right tools, and a few deep breaths. But after some elbow grease, I had a portable library that didn't drain my phone battery, data plan, or bank account.

A new high-end phone? Unnecessary. Premium streaming add-ons or cloud storage fees? Skipped. This little machine costs less than \$100 total and runs for days on a single charge. If you're willing to put in the time, you too can have your own in five steps.

Carefully open the case

Using a thin plastic pry tool, like a guitar pick or spudger, into the seam between the front panel and



Getting swept away by old technology makes a peaceful escape. Graphic by Sarah Palmer / Assets from Adobe AI

the metal back. Gently apply pressure around the edge to release the clips. Never use knives or screwdrivers, as this could scratch the case or cause short-circuit damage.

Disconnect the battery

With the back now lifted just enough to see inside, I unplugged the battery's ribbon cable from the logic board. Ribbon cables are fragile and only fit in one place, so make sure to handle them carefully. Always work with the power disconnected, as this prevents shorts and protects the machine's delicate insides.

Replace the battery

Like mine, most old iPod batteries are worn out, so I replaced this with a new lithium-polymer (Li-Po) 3.7 V battery sized specifically for the Classic. The original battery was held by a light adhesive, so I slowly lifted it

and placed the new one in the same spot to reconnect the ribbon.

According to the University of Vermont, mishandling LiPo batteries can lead to "fire, explosions, and toxic smoke inhalation." It's important not to puncture the battery, and if it shows signs of swelling, leaking, or other damage, be sure to dispose of it properly at a marked drop-off location. Visit recycleyourbatteries.ca to find ones near you.

Upgrade the storage

I removed the aging hard drive and installed an iPod-compatible adapter—often called an iFlash board—that accepts an SD or microSD card. This fits neatly into the same ribbon that was attached to the original hard drive.

Reassemble

Before snapping the case shut, I double-checked that every ribbon cable was

properly seated. Then, using Apple's iTunes, I restored the iPod to format the new storage, and synced my pre-purchased music as usual.

With headphones in and the volume low, your handy work is ready for testing. If it plays clean—no skips, static,

or surprises—you're good to go.

Experiences over specs

On my trip to Drumheller, Alta., I wandered Horseshoe Canyon with Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* playing softly, the wind threading silence between Raskolnikov's tormented thoughts.

Later, perched beneath the shadow of the world's largest dinosaur, I queued up the Gorillaz "Feel Good Inc." and watched the sunset drench the Badlands in gold.

That's what a lot of us are chasing now: presence. We're tired of hyper-curated feeds and battery anxiety. We want to feel music, not skim it. We want stories that unfold slowly like film in a darkroom or pages easing to yellow.

My iPod gives me that. It demands intention. Every album, every chapter is chosen—not served. When I'm sunk into a Gorillaz groove or drifting through a Daft Punk synthscape, there's no calendar ping, no meme, no nudge toward the next thing. I'm simply there.

So if you've got a dusty iPod Classic in a drawer or can snag one for cheap on Kijiji or Facebook Marketplace, do yourself a favour: crack it open, mod it up, and fill it with the stuff that matters to you.

Because sometimes, the best way forward is pressing play on the past.



Inside of an iPod Classic switch board. Photo courtesy of Joy Dutta

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Amarie, the multi-faceted artist

Taking music out of your peripheral vision

Hunter Pratt

Staff Writer

“Made to f**k the game up” are five simple words in an Instagram bio, which refer to this artist’s own plans—this is Amarie, and she is one to watch.

Few artists announce themselves with the kind of audacity that Amarie does. “Made to f**k the game up” isn’t a boast, however, but a prophecy in progress.

“As a kid...I always knew I’d be singing on a stage,” she says. “I feel like that comes from leading some sort of rebellion.” Here, Amarie is speaking her aspirations into

existence in ways as simple as changing her Instagram bio to words of confidence.

Although she is relatively new to putting out singles, with only three currently in her artist catalogue, her other choices of art are what make her a multi-faceted creator.

Amarie is not limited to just music—she dabbles in painting, clothing design and pole dancing. The music, she says, is the artform that requires the most delicacy.

“I would say [music] has challenged me. I think music is one of the only artforms, in

my experience, that requires some sort of perfectionism,” says Amarie.

How does music challenge the artist framework Amarie has built for herself?

With respect to the creation process, she says that “there are certain rules you have to follow, and that has been challenging for me as an artist. When I create other stuff like clothes, I leave the seams raw and I leave the strings hanging, because the need for perfectionism when I started making clothes is what stopped me from

making clothes.”

Although music may challenge Amarie to strive for excellence, it nonetheless helps her achieve a different sense of identity.

“I really think it’s helped me become who I’m supposed to be,” she says.

And, whether you believe in fate or birthright, it’s safe to say that Amarie got it from her mama. She is not the only one in her family with a creative side, as she gives credit to her mother and father for pushing her towards creativity.

Her parents both have a strong background in music. With her mother being a band teacher and her father being a singer-songwriter, it’s natural that Amarie would tap into her musical side.

“I’m very lucky my parents always let me do what was coming towards me...they always knew I was an artist,” she says.

Amarie began her journey as an artist in the fourth grade, letting her poetry mold her art into the shape of songs. At just 17, it dawned on her that her poetry didn’t have to stay on the page. It could live and breathe as music.

At that time, Amarie’s brother was making music too, and he let her jump on one of his songs.

“Ever since then, it was like home, and I’ve just kept going with it,” she says.

Fueled by ardor and persistence, Amarie’s current discography is a steady stream of art pieces that weave stories through both her songs and their accompanying visuals. Her most recent release, “DIAL IN,” provides an added element to her sound with the aesthetic visuals, building onto the Amarie brand.

Being able to have creative

freedom is what makes Amarie’s work unique to herself. She explains that the marketing aspect of her art is part of what makes it enjoyable.

“You add a whole different element to the music itself when you think of the branding of a particular song...personally, I think it’s fun and I think I would get bored if I was only limited to the sound of the art,” says the artist.

With Amarie considering herself to be a multifaceted artist, it’s clear that her visuals would hold the same amount of importance as the songs themselves, thus deepening her identity as a well-rounded artist.

Amarie’s art is a catalyst to a broader perspective of how others will interpret it. A big reason she cherishes her art dearly is the worth she finds within it and the connection she hopes it will create with listeners.

“A goal of mine when I sit down to write a song is to bring value to the people that are going to listen to it,” she says.

She also comments on the importance of being real in your music, and how she sees value being lost through lackluster entertainers.

“I feel like it’s getting kind of diluted where people are talking about the same things over and over again and it’s not for a real reason.”

Amarie’s intentions are bonafide. Not only does she call herself “Made to f**k the game up,” but she plans to do so by being true to her values and her art.

With the confidence, vision and drive that Amarie possesses, there is no sense in keeping her in your peripheral as it’s only a matter of time before she’s in your line of sight.



Amarie, a Calgary-based artist, brands herself as a multi-faceted creator. Photo by The Blue Hour Magazine

OUT'N ABOUT

Shawnessy Christmas Craft Fair

In partnership with the Calgary Food Bank, Shawnessy Christmas Craft Fair wants to give back this holiday season. Hosted at the historic Shawnessy barn, the event includes two floors of hand-crafted treasures and artisans goods. The fair starts at 11 a.m. on Nov. 15, with admission by food donation.

Batman Returns at the GRAND

Presented by the GRAND, the November Night Series returns with Tim Burton’s *Batman Returns* (1992). Starting at 5:30 p.m. on Nov. 9, the event features a showing of the classic film, as well as pizza for purchase from Portland Street Pizza. Tickets are available at thegrandyyc.ca.

Marda Loop Christmas Market

Hosted by cSPACE, the Marda Loop Farmers and Christmas Market returns. Enjoy a diverse marketplace, which includes local artisans, good eats, and seasonal treats—the event is also pet friendly. The market runs Nov. 14-15, with more information available at cspacegardaloop.com.

25 Years of Heritage Calgary

Celebrate the 25th anniversary of Heritage Calgary alongside the Calgary Heritage community. Enjoy a presentation by local historian David Finch, as well as a number of live panels that reflect on the preservation of the city of Calgary. Join them on Nov. 6, with tickets available at eventbrite.ca.

How we can remember WWI

The history of war art in Canada during the First World War

Aiden Johner

Photo Editor

With Remembrance Day approaching on Nov. 11, it is important to look back and remember those who have fought for our country.

I want to highlight some of the lesser-known records from the First World War which remain one of the biggest reasons we are able to remember it in the way we do today.

At the start of the First World War, soldiers were allowed to carry cameras. However, in 1915, Great Britain stopped allowing this for security reasons, which stayed true until April 1916.

During this time, Max Aitken started the war art program as a way of capturing what the war looked like. Max Aitken was a millionaire entrepreneur who left Canada in 1910 to go to Great Britain.

It was there that he was knighted as a member of parliament, and began purchasing newspapers. By 1915, he was known formally as Lord Beaverbrook.

With the war starting in 1914, Beaverbrook went back to Canada, where he would begin covering the Canadians in the war via newspaper. In 1916, Beaverbrook convinced the Canadian War Office to allow official photographers and videographers to accompany forces on the front lines. Beaverbrook, who at the time was head of the Canadian War Records Office (CWRO), and founded The Canadian War Memorial Fund (CWMF).

The CWMF commissioned painters to paint scenes from the First World War. This fund would eventually employ close to 120 artists from Great Britain and Canada, who together created nearly 1,000 works.

The first of these commissioned artists was English-Canadian Richard Jack. He was commissioned to paint the now famous painting, *The Second Battle of Ypres*, 22 April to 25 May 1915. This painting is currently on display at the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa.

The CWMF continued commissioning artists to paint art coinciding with the war. Although few of these artists served on the front lines, their paintings were created with first-hand accounts of the conflict, allowing people to see what went on during



The Second Battle of Ypres. Painting by Richard Jack, courtesy of the Canadian War Museum, via Library and Archives Canada

the First World War.

A.Y. Jackson, another military artist with CWMF, was one of few who had served on the front lines before joining the fund. One of his most famous paintings, *A Copse Evening*, 1918, depicts a landscape affected by the catastrophic effects of the First World War.

If it weren't for Lord Beaverbrook and his push to have the First World War documented to the extent that it was, and the artists, photographers, and videographers who worked to show what the war looked like, we may not be able to remember it as we do today.

The fact that we have legal photographs and videos, along with commissioned paintings, allows us to remember one of the most horrific times humanity has seen—it provides a better understanding of the past, as well as the enduring struggles of soldiers and families alike.

The First World War ended 107 years ago on Nov. 11, 1918. No one alive today fought in this battle, which is why it's so important that these paintings exist.

During some of the worst times in human history, there



A Copse Evening, 1918. Painting by A.Y. Jackson, Courtesy of the Canadian War Museum, Via Wikimedia Commons.

have been artists sent to some through paint. They all capture the moments—some help us to remember. through photography, and

The trajectory of film

The MRU Film Society revives their club and an interest in film

Emma Voelpel

Contributor

Film is an industry that is constantly shifting. Recently, some say it's shifting in the wrong direction, while others believe this shift could bring film full circle.

In 1878, Eadweard Muybridge introduced the concept of moving pictures with his sequence, *The Horse in Motion*. Since then, film has evolved into one of the most crucial forms of artistic expression and storytelling.

From horror to romance, it's remained a medium that is meant to explore the human experience in all its facets and forms.

Movie theatres have long been a bastion for the sharing of long-form art, acting as a place with zero distractions. In the early days of moviegoing, people would dress in their Sunday best for a Saturday night at the newest moving picture.

However, in recent years, filmmaking and content creation has seen a massive shift.

With platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook leading the way, shorter form content is at an all time high. In addition, in a post-pandemic era, the need for nostalgia in media is causing limited space for creativity, which gravely affects how the film industry

operates and how audiences are consuming cinema.

Nonetheless, a club on the Mount Royal University (MRU) campus is hoping to help audiences appreciate just how important film is—the MRU Film Society.

The club had been disbanded two years ago, with English department liaison, Tamas Nagypal, recently resuscitating it.

"It creates a nice chill space for people," says Film Society president Teresa Zell. "It also brings more awareness to films that maybe people haven't seen before, which is cool."

Deciding on their films as a collective, the club's screening choices are based on what they think could ignite important discussions and enjoyment among peers.

Chase Norton, a treasurer for the club, remarked about this shift in short form content and how it's affected how audiences engage and appreciate film.

"I don't know if you've ever heard 'it's not that deep,' but it's a trigger phrase for me now," says Norton. "I want people to think, 'maybe it is that deep' because it usually is."

The saturation of quick videos results in shorter attention spans for

users—especially younger generations—which takes away from the overall experience of watching and engaging with film.

This sudden drop in attention spans is what the club intends on fighting.

Since the pandemic, many feature length films are going directly to streaming. There's been discussion about "second screen viewing." It is a scenario where studios take into account how many viewers may have their film or television show on as background noise, which contributes to them simplifying their plots.

Along with this influx in short form content and second screen viewing, the film industry has also seen backlash for a lack in original ideas in the last few years.

In 2024, the top 10 highest grossing films in the world all fell under the category of sequel, remake, or adaptation. This was the first time there hadn't been an original film on the list.

The amount of oversaturation in the media landscape also drowns out the films that do have unique concepts or original ideas.

Norton argued that the need for nostalgic content could be affecting the turnout at the box-office, as revisiting

these stories provides comfort and are a safe bet for studios.

"Everything is scary as hell right now," says Norton.

However, despite this disheartening dip in quality film, Nagypal explained how many people have shown support for local film festivals, with the Calgary International Film Festival (CIFF) selling out all their major events.

The moviegoing experience is also having somewhat of a comeback, with releases like the double feature of *Barbenheimer—Oppenheimer* and *Barbie* in 2023. This was a revitalisation of the movie theatres post-pandemic, with people dressing in costumes and making an event out of going to the theatre.

Along with that, companies such as A24—a studio that has been valuable in uplifting upcoming filmmakers—have audiences becoming increasingly interested in independent films.

Zell explained this phenomenon by sharing how the fatigue of these overused cinematic formulas could

result in audiences craving more original ideas.

"People are starting to get sick of the same formulaic movies," says Zell. "Like, do we really need another *Star Wars*?"

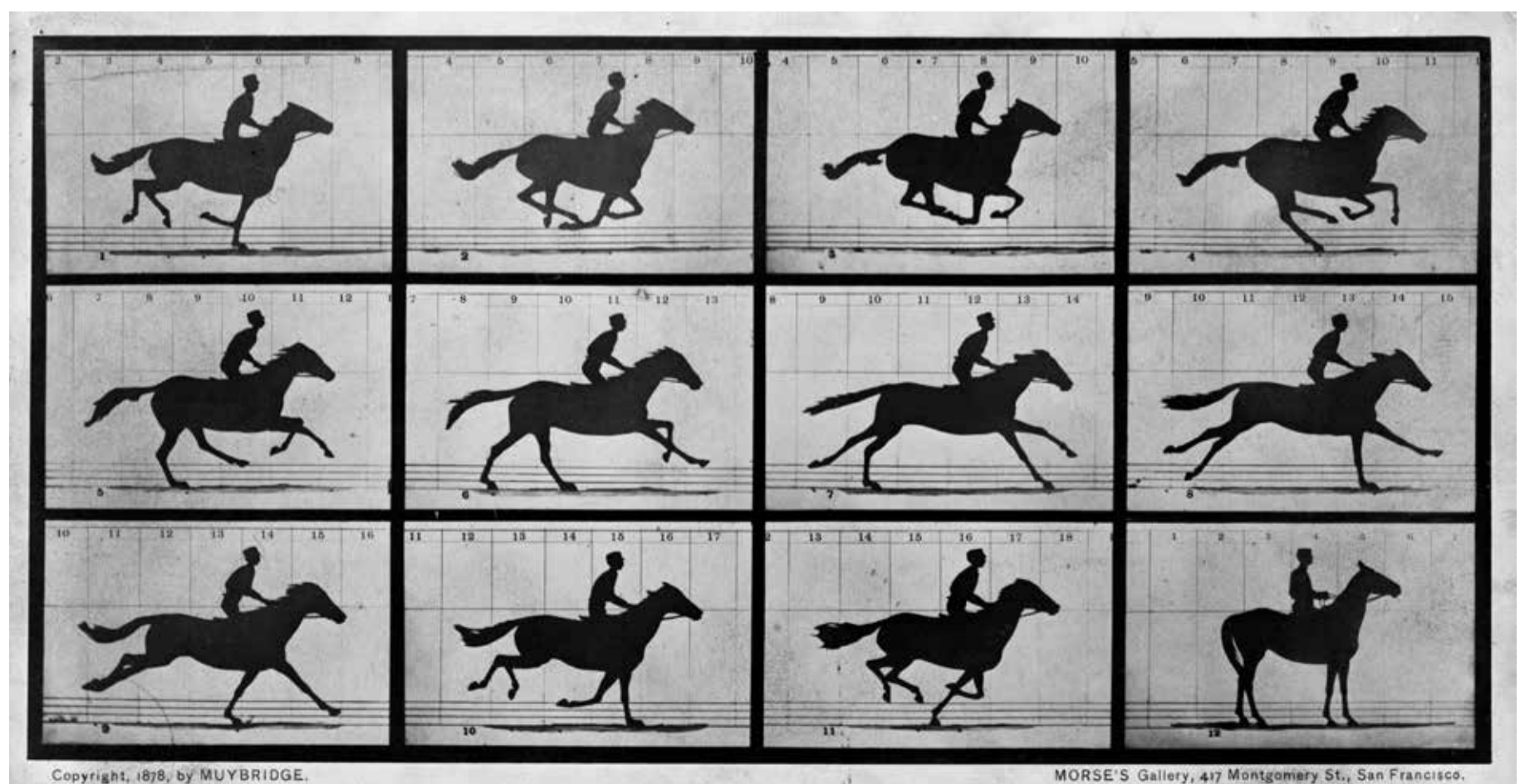
Besides the ever changing media landscape, the club wants to appreciate film and filmmaking for what it is at its core—fun.

The club's first screening of the year, *The Lobster*, had a large turnout of students eager to dissect and discuss the 2015 drama. The club's vice-president, Dylan Armstrong, described how the screening in a group environment like that resulted in the audience using critical thinking when watching.

"Picking up on what other people found interesting or funny or shocking changed the way that I was taking in the film," says Armstrong.

Continuing their monthly gatherings, the club wishes to make these observations about film and appreciate it more for the in-depth meanings.

As for the film industry itself and its 130 year history, it may shift back and forth between quantity over quality, but movies will always get people talking to each other and will always welcome audiences to the theatre.



Copyright, 1878, by MUYBRIDGE.

MORSE'S Gallery, 417 Montgomery St., San Francisco.

The *Horse in Motion* introduced the concept of moving pictures, marking a revolutionary turning point for film. Photo by Eadweard Muybridge via Wikimedia Commons

Reflections from ART SPOT Calgary

The art of noticing

Aima Talat

Contributor

The importance of art lies in noticing. This noticing can be done on the train, in your house, in your bed—in your mind, if you'd like.

Maybe this noticing can be done with the back of a leaf, in the veins that stretch into streams on its back. It is noticing that led me to the Friday night of Oct. 17, with tickets to a free VIP event for an under \$200 art gallery downtown.

The event is called ART SPOT, and it supports local and emerging artists in the community, offering a platform to those without one.

It was reading week, and I was bored and needed something to focus on. I was there with my sister, and the event started at 9 p.m. sharp.

It was warm. That's what I would like to tell you. Here I was, looking at the gallery, decorated with images, decorated with the act of noticing.

Each piece was that act of noticing. Noting the way lines moved, the way shades of blue formed a shadow on the nose of a girl in a portrait. When touched, the caked layers of acrylic paint under her eyes would feel as if it would crack if you dug your fingertips deep into the canvas.

I noticed then, the way the colours filled the depth of the rooms, and when faced with the height of the gallery wall, I was held in admiration.

It's difficult to write about noticing. Perhaps because most of the effort is expended on the actual process of completing it. The night at ART SPOT gave me the time to process art, which is a process of noticing things in continuum.

In an era when being actively attentive is becoming harder, and pages of art and creation can be generated through online prompts, it is in the act of noticing that we can find significance.



The ART SPOT YYC event, featuring works under \$200. Photo by Aima Talat

Whether gallery exhibitions, streetlight corners, bus stations, or the backs of leaves, each moment and detail holds the weight of

that mystified beauty of attention. Each stroke adds to another, and each line forms the connection to the next. And every time we notice,

we connect to ourselves, and soon, the observer becomes the holder of the experience.

Nerve-racking new releases

Amanpreet Kaur

Contributor

Stranger Things

The show we all have been waiting for is here, with its science fiction, supernatural-horror, and undeniable mystery vibes.

The final season of *Stranger Things* is releasing on Netflix on Nov. 26, with chapter one of the final season coming to the screen immediately, chapter two being released on Christmas, and the season finale coming on New Year's Eve.

It has been three and a half years since season four was released in May and July of 2022, leaving fans on a cliffhanger. Since then, anticipation has only grown for the show's inevitable conclusion, which will leave fans saying a bittersweet goodbye to Hawkins.

In preparation for the show's finale, there have been rewatch parties throughout the month of October to refresh memories and get ready for the twists of this season. The *Stranger Things*

fandom is also coming up with their own theories about what will happen this season, which can be found across different social media platforms.

If you tune in on Nov. 6, the first five minutes of the show will be released to celebrate 'Stranger Things Day,' with a watch party, cast interviews, and games included.

According to IMDB, *Stranger Things 4* was also the fastest streamed and most watched series on Netflix in 2022, with 1.35 billion hours of viewership in the first 28 days of release.

This last season is expected to have record breaking viewership numbers.

Don't Date Brandon

Don't Date Brandon is a real story adapted in this documentary series. It follows Brandon Johnson, a Washington native, who deceived, manipulated, and stalked many women over

the span of 20 years.

It is a limited true crime series, which was released on Oct. 28 on Paramount+. The series begins with Brandon's relationship with his second wife, Amber Rasmussen—they meet online, quickly fall in love, and are engaged within six weeks.

That is until Brandon's ex-wife, Athena Klingerman, enters his and Amber's newfound love story, which makes Amber dig deeper into Brandon's life. She soon discovers his lies, restraining orders, and ex-girlfriends who are also asking the same question: "Who is the real Brandon?"

It is a cautionary tale for young people about online dating, fraud, and the dangers of placing blind trust in a partner. Moreso, it is about exposing the underbelly of domestic violence and the importance of holding predators and abusers accountable.

Even though we crave deep love and connection,

we often have to face the reality that we need to be vigilant and rational about our relationship.

With only three episodes

to the season, *Don't Date Brandon* is a short, bingeable series.



Official poster for *Stranger Things* season five. Photo courtesy of Netflix

Critically examining *One Battle After Another* Another

Is it the best film of the year?

Avarie Mckinnon-Forgeron

Contributor

One Battle After Another was released on Sept. 26, directed by Paul Thomas Anderson. This film received high praise from audiences and critics, with some viewers going as far as to say the film is the first blockbuster movie of the year.

The film begins in the past, showing the protagonist, Bob, and his partner, Perfidia, as part of a revolutionary group known as the French 75. Throughout the first part of the movie, they organise and execute raids of government facilities.

When Perfidia becomes pregnant, however, she refuses to leave behind their life of crime. The movie then jumps to the present, 16 years later, and follows Bob's new life in hiding. It is not long, though, before the past he left behind catches up to him,

when his old enemy, Colonel Lockjaw, reemerges.

Political Message

This movie uses personal relationships to portray the dynamics within revolutionary groups. Instead of directly addressing the political issues the movie is focused on, Anderson used the characteristics of the leaders of the French 75 and the military to convey the message.

What sets the film apart is that it did not preach a certain political ideology to audiences. Each leader was equally important in continuing the conflict of the story, and each leader was equally selfish.

This perspective was impressive as many directors and writers have often run

into issues maintaining complete neutrality within films. The tone of the film thus added to its overall appeal, which concentrated on the flaws of both groups.

Tyranny versus anarchy

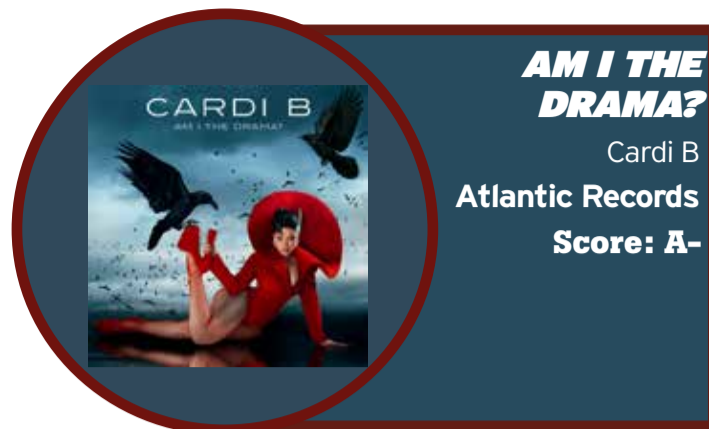
The film explores the inherent conflict between disorder and control of the state. The film highlights the ongoing conflict between tyranny and anarchy within the United States, which was found to be most prominent during the 1960s.

The film critiques both ideologies by exploring the underlying mechanisms that control the thought process for the leaders of each

Continues on Pg. 18



Official poster for *One Battle After Another*. Photo courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures via IMDB



Seven years after winning a Grammy for her first studio album, *Invasion of Privacy*, Cardi B graces the charts with her second studio album, *AM I THE DRAMA?*

Releasing at the peak of her beef with Nicki Minaj, and featuring performances from a variety of genre-bending artists, Cardi B takes listeners on an emotional journey. Many songs on the album tackle that beef directly, like “Imaginary Playerz” and “Check Please.”

She also opens a window into her tumultuous relationship with Offset, all before waving goodbye to that chapter of her life on “Man of Your Word,” wishing him well before happily bragging about her experiences with a new romantic partner on “On My Back.”

The album features a few club bangers like “Bodega Baddie,” which build on the

Latinx influence of “I Like It Like That,” serving to spice the album up.

However, the album is long. With 23 songs and over an hour of runtime, some of the tracks felt too similar to each other, and some just sounded bad.

Selena Gomez did her best on “Pick it Up,” but sounded like she was imitating Doja Cat’s cadence—in which case, Cardi, just get Doja Cat. And while we’re at it, don’t get Summer Walker to try to sound like SZA on “Dead”—just get SZA.

Regardless, the album has a tone for every emotion and provides a phenomenal female voice to an otherwise male-dominated genre. Overall, it’s an 8/10 and deserves a spot in your playlist.

— Zafir Nagji



After working closely with Kanye West on *VULTURES 1* and *2*, expectations for Ty Dolla \$ign’s next project rose tremendously, and while *TYCOON* isn’t a complete flop, it doesn’t contain enough bops to take it to the top.

Ye’s influence shows up on many tracks on the album, chiefly on “HARDER,” and even Travis Scott makes an appearance on “MIXED EMOTIONS,” which also features Leon Thomas.

Quavo and Juicy J team up for a Magic City strip club anthem on “DON’T KILL THE PARTY,” while Young Thug and Lil Baby add some luxury to “TYCOON\$” to add some Atlanta flavour to the Californian RnB artist’s project.

However, the album features too many skippable songs, and while most of the featured artists on this album perform excellently alongside Ty, I can’t help feeling that A\$AP Rocky, Kodak Black and even YG left too much to be desired in their

appearances.

Many of the songs felt too similar to each other, making me check my phone to see if it actually skipped to the next song or not at times. Compared to his work on *VULTURES 1* and *2*, *TYCOON* didn’t deliver the developmental improvements I expected to see from Ty Dolla \$ign after working with Ye.

Is it an awful album? No, but I only saved nine out of the 15 tracks on it, and less than half of them are certifiable bangers. It passes with a C-, but only just.

— Zafir Nagji

organisation.

Through his characters' development, Anderson reveals that the ultimate objective of each leader is to obtain more power and control. This purpose added to the film's overall cohesiveness, as there was one antagonist but not every protagonist had a perfect conscience.

Modern day relevance

Anderson alluded to a prominent modern day issue in the United States: the immigration crisis and detention centers, which are being used to keep control of the state.

The French 75 attacks one of these detention centers in the film, taking control of the facility. This is an important element in the film as it highlights the wedge which continues to grow between the far right and left within the United States.

When this issue was at an ultimate high in the 1960s, there were multiple revolutionary groups. The far left anti-establishment movement was detrimental to the control of the state and was thus sought to be undermined by the

authorities. During this time, multiple people who were not violent were killed by the state in the chance that they would act violently.

Therefore, this film emphasises the importance of extremism in driving separation and also the ways in which this extremism is reinforced and promoted by each individual.

Stylistic elements

The film conveys themes by using shots that increase suspense for the audience. Many scenes throughout the film were masterful in creating a sense of tension and constant surveillance by authorities.

These elements, accompanied by the comedy in the movie, made viewers feel unsure of what was to come next. This was a great technique Anderson invoked in the film and subsequently used his masterful style excellently.

One Battle After Another reinvents the action genre as we know it, linking cultural significance with political opposition. The film develops depth in content and message, while having cinematic elements alike to action films.



Leonardo DiCaprio stars in *One Battle After Another*. Photo courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures via IMDB

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sports

Sports Editor
Zafir Nagji
sportseditor@thereflector.ca

Oh Canada, we were oh-so-close!



Millimetres. That's how far away the Toronto Blue Jays were from winning their third-ever World Series title. After a league-best 49 regular-season comeback victories, Canada's team earned a first-round playoff bye as the best team in the American League (AL), finishing as the MLB leader in hits. The whole country cheered them on through three tough playoff rounds, but the Toronto Blue Jays were defeated by the Los Angeles Dodgers in the 11th inning of the seventh game of a historic world series...

Continues on Pg. 23

Photo courtesy of Instagram @bluejays

Cougars men's soccer christens new field with CW Championship

Zafir Nagji

Sports Editor

At the beginning of the 2025 Canada West men's soccer season, the MRU Cougars placed a lowly eighth in the preseason Coaches Poll, receiving zero first-place votes in the process. Waving goodbye to school legends like Caden Rogozinski and Miguel Da Rocha, both of whom graduated after winning Canada West gold medals in 2023 and silver medals in 2024, there were doubts about whether MRU could still be a contender for conference championships.

Two months later, the Cougars played their third Canada West Championship Final in as many years, qualifying for their third-straight trip to the U SPORTS National Tournament and bringing home their second Canada West banner on their newly renovated and turfed Stadium Field.

The man at the helm of all three of those finals was head coach Ryan Gyaki, a former professional player who instilled a culture of discipline, self-improvement and winning over the course of his 12 seasons with the Cougars. Gyaki was ecstatic after the win, reminiscing on the Cougars' championship win two years ago in their final game on the old Stadium Field and comparing it to their first win on the new Stadium Field.

"To say the last game [on the old field] and the first game [on the new field] are championship banners is an incredible feeling," Gyaki says.

The Cougars started their 2025 campaign on grassy Mount Royal Field 2, and two headlines caught people's attention: How would Alex

Kemsley function in his first year wearing the captain's armband? How will former Cavalry FC player and 19-year-old rookie phenom Chanan Chanda perform in his first U SPORTS season?

To answer the first question, Kemsley was phenomenal, getting the Cougars off to a seven-game undefeated streak to open the season. With the fifth-fewest goals allowed in the conference, Kemsley and co. made the MRU Cougars one of the most daunting defensive units in all of Canada West.

As far as how Chanda performed, how does winning Rookie of the Year sound? As a 19-year-old freshman, Chanda brought everything he learned from the Cavalry's U21 and CPL teams and used it to score nine goals—second-most of any player in Canada West. Chanda also tied for third-most assists with five helpers, giving him 14 points at the end of the season—second-most in the conference.

Stadium Field wasn't ready to start the Canada West playoffs, so the Cougars prepared to host their quarterfinal game against the Trinity Western University Spartans on Field 2.

The Spartans scored just over 20 minutes into the game, but the Cougars controlled pace and possession for almost the entire rest of the match, and in the 71st minute, Chanda tied the game up with a beautifully orchestrated penalty kick goal.

With the game tied, Gyaki made a bold decision to insert Clement Guay into the picture, who had only played

six games in the 2025 regular season. Guay buried a close-range goal from Joe Green's assist, putting the Cougars up by one goal in the 87th minute.

MRU held on to secure the win, but had a quick turnaround as they prepared to face the University of Victoria Vikes just two days later. Once again, the Cougars conceded early as Alex Moody scored to put the visiting team up 1-0 in the 16th minute.

In the 17th minute, Chanda scored the game-tying goal off an assist from Kemsley. Twelve minutes later, Chanda executed perfectly on a cheeky chip shot into the top right corner of the net to give the Cougars a first-half 2-1 lead. However, they only held onto it until the 32nd minute as Matteo

Hilton

tied the game up at two goals apiece.

No one scored again until the 60th minute, when Hilton scored his second of the game to give Victoria a 3-2 lead. Things looked grim for MRU, but in the 90th minute, Joshua Flaksman scored a heroic equaliser, sending the game into extra time.

Neither team found the back of the net in 30 minutes of extra time, and it took all 11 rounds of penalty kicks to determine a winner. In the end, it came down to keeper Sjard "Sharky" Strauss, who stepped up to the plate and fired home the game-winning shot in front of hundreds of fans in attendance, ensuring the Cougars would host their third consecutive Canada West Final game against the UBC Thunderbirds.

The final game was everything soccer fans could ask for. Stadium Field opened its gates once again with a new turf surface, and hundreds of fans and alumni packed the stands for the championship game.

A fourth-minute goal from the Thunderbirds put the Cougars on the back foot early, but Ruben Koudelka scored the game-tying goal at the end of the 26th minute.

Tensions built on the field as neither team could score for over an hour, and UBC grew frustrated. The Thunderbirds earned a total of four yellow cards in the game, one of which went to their head coach and Canada West Coach of the Year, Mike Mosher.

Then, on a breakaway in the 90th minute, Flaksman sent a perfect lob across the box to Chanda, who calmly deflected it off the front of his head into the bottom left corner of the net, past the outstretched hands of Thunderbird keeper Jack Garner.

The Thunderbirds did everything they could in stoppage time to equalise, even forcing a team yellow card on the Cougars, but it wasn't enough as MRU raised their second Canada West championship banner in three years in the first game on their new field.

Flaksman was ecstatic after the win, having contributed to all three of his team's Finals appearances and winning in his final year as a Cougar. His only goal now is to bring MRU its first match win and first men's soccer medal at the U SPORTS National Tournament in Toronto, which takes place from Nov. 6 to 9.

"We didn't want to come back to the Final and just make Nationals, we wanted to win it once again," Flaksman says. "We're still yet to have a medal in Nationals, so obviously I want to end my final year with a medal, hopefully win Nationals as well. I want to wear a nice pinky ring, with an MRU Cougar on it."



Cougars women's soccer celebrates successful first season

Zafir Nagji

Sports Editor

The Mount Royal University Cougars women's soccer team played their final season in the Pacific Division of Canada West in 2024, missing the playoffs by just one game. However, there were still many bright spots on the team, including the talent of their rookies, solid coaching, great goalkeeping, and some of the best strikers in the country.

Transferring to the Prairie Division in 2025, the Cougars posted a 10-3-1 record, good for second in the division behind only the University of Calgary Dinos. This came despite key injuries to Julia Makoloski and Ruby Szautner, who were brilliant in their 2024 rookie campaigns.

That qualified them to host a first-round playoff game for the first time ever at Mount Royal Field 2 against the UBCO Heat.

Despite going down by a goal, the Cougars fought their way back behind star midfielder Tamara Djurusic's signature set-piece heroics and rookie winger Darian Pluhator's physics-defying chip shot to advance to the Canada West semi-finals, where they would face the UBC Thunderbirds in Vancouver.

There, Djurusic became the only player to score on the Thunderbirds in 2025, but MRU took a tough 2-1 loss. That qualified them for a bad-weather bronze medal game against the University of Calgary Dinos, and despite being the only team to hand the Dinos a loss in the regular season, the Cougars took a 3-0 loss.

According to Ella Tait, though, there was still plenty to celebrate about their season as they rallied around their captain, Isabella Chirico, in her final season.

"It's been an unreal run with the team this season," Tait says. "It felt like the perfect end to her career as our captain... I think next year we'll be even better."

MRU started their season on fire, going six games without a loss to open the year. They suffered their first defeat against one of the best teams in Canada West women's soccer, the

MacEwan Griffins.

They then rattled off four consecutive wins, including three clean sheets, as they battled with the Dinos for superiority in the Prairie Division. Late in the season, they encountered their first losing streak, taking a 0-2 loss to the University of Saskatchewan Huskies and then a 0-1 loss to the Dinos.

That put them one point behind MacEwan for the second seed in the division, and the top two teams in each division earned home-field advantage in the quarterfinals. Knowing this, head coach Tino Fusco claimed not to have made any playoff travel plans, seeking to defeat the Dinos in a Crowchild Classic clash to end the Cougars' highly successful regular season on an even higher note.

Only one goal was scored in the tightly contested match, and it came on the boot of MRU's supersonically speedy sophomore striker Dany Juarez, assisted by captain Chirico.

Plenty of Cougars set new highs for themselves over the season, including first-time All-Star keeper Ella Filek and the Cougars' three-woman back line of Kyla Franks, Sidaly

Alcock and Chirico, who combined to allow just 12 goals—the third-fewest of any team in Canada West.

However, the story of the season started and ended with Djurusic, who co-led the conference with nine goals in 14 games played. She also tied for fourth in assists with five,

placing her second in the conference in points with 14. The Serbian sensation took home Player of the Year honours and was selected to be an All-Star, securing the MRU records for most goals in a single game (3), most goals in a single season (9) and most goals in school history (23 and counting) as a third-year player.

After scoring all three of her team's goals in the third-last game of the regular season against Regina, Djurusic didn't score in the Cougars' last two games of the regular season. However, no one was concerned about that narrative for too long, as in her first-ever home playoff game, Djurusic scored the game-tying goal on a 76th-minute free kick. Pluhator put the finishing touches on the game to beat the UBCO Heat 2-1, and the Cougars were off to Vancouver to take on the UBC Thunderbirds in the semifinals.

Going into the game, coach Fusco gave a simple, yet impactful, mantra to his team.

"We kept repeating that going into our UBC game, 'why can't we score on UBC?'"

And score they did, as after going down 2-0 against the Thunderbirds, Tamara found the back of the net in the 69th minute of the game. That made her the only player to score on UBC the entire year, even including the Final, which Tait said, "feels like a huge win to us."

The Cougars couldn't complete the comeback as they lost 2-1 to UBC, following that up with a 3-0 loss to the Dinos in the bronze medal game.

The Thunderbirds went on to

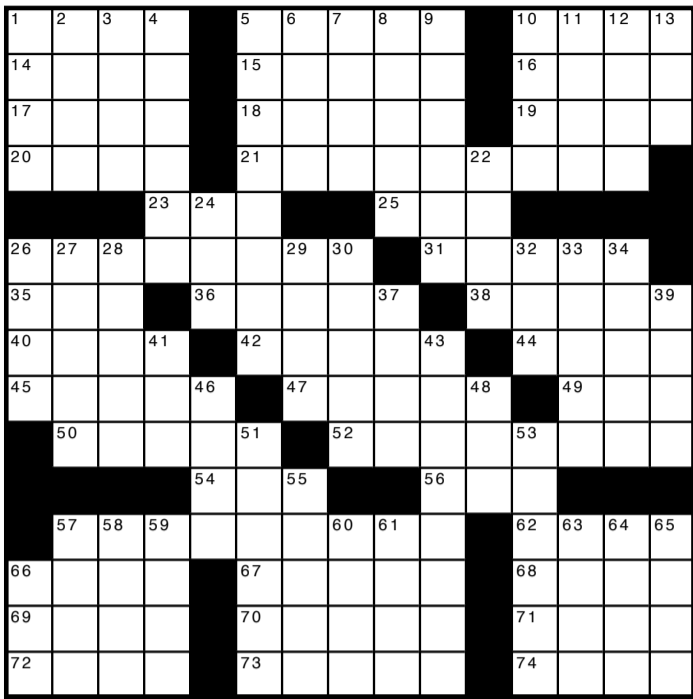
defeat the Trinity Western University Spartans by a scoreline of 2-0, keeping their two-year-long undefeated streak alive and winning back-to-back Canada West Championships.

Despite MRU's loss, Chirico made sure that Tait and the rest of the team understood the scale of their accomplishments in the 2025 season as they look forward to 2026.

"Getting to the Final Four was just a crazy experience in my fourth year, and we've never made it this far before," Tait says. "Bella kept repeating one word — history. We've made history, and there's more to come from this group."



REFLECTOR DIVERSIONS



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ACROSS

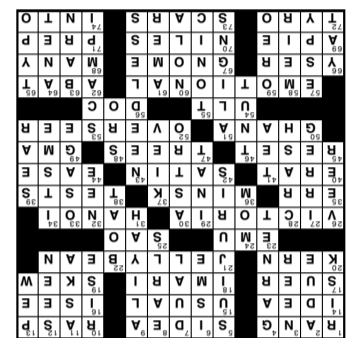
- 1 Peeled
- 5 Half of a 45
- 10 Grating sound
- 14 Conception
- 15 Customary
- 16 So that's it
- 17 Litigant
- 18 Japanese porcelain
- 19 Distort
- 20 "Show Boat" composer

- 21 Sugar candy with gel interior
- 23 Flightless fowl
- 25 ___ Paulo, Brazil
- 26 State in SE Australia
- 31 Capital of Vietnam
- 35 Go astray
- 36 Capital of Belarus
- 38 Critical evaluations
- 40 O.E.D. part
- 42 Glossy fabric
- 44 Facilitate
- 45 Adjust to zero
- 47 Forest makeup
- 49 "Today" rival, briefly
- 50 Kofi Annan's home
- 52 Supervisor
- 54 Last: Abbr.
- 56 Dwarf with glasses
- 57 Excitable
- 62 Blind as ___
- 66 Belgian river
- 67 Garden figure
- 68 Numerous
- 69 ...baked in ___
- 70 Frasier's brother
- 71 Type of school or cook
- 72 Beginner
- 73 Surgery souvenirs
- 74 Word of division

DOWN

- 1 Hazard
- 2 Together, musically
- 3 Not e'en once
- 4 January birthstone
- 5 Capable of managing one's affairs
- 6 Woe ___
- 7 Twofold
- 8 Viscounts' superiors
- 9 Immigration of Jews to Israel
- 10 Greet the judge
- 11 ___ silly question...
- 12 Espied
- 13 Church perch
- 22 Fishing vessel, perhaps
- 24 Popular tattoo
- 26 Go off course
- 27 Like some vbs.
- 28 Collide
- 29 ___ the finish
- 30 The Jetsons' dog
- 32 Bridal bio word
- 33 Inedible orange
- 34 "Who's there?" response
- 37 Ukraine's capital
- 39 Cauterize
- 41 It's in the bag

- 43 Unnecessary
- 46 Hardware fastener
- 48 Theater sign
- 51 Straightens
- 53 Shrimp dish
- 55 Quinine water
- 57 See
- 58 Rabin's predecessor
- 59 Creme-filled snack
- 60 Vincent Lopez's theme song
- 61 From the U.S.
- 63 Building for storing hay
- 64 Work without ___
- 65 Word processing error
- 66 China's Sun ___-sen



SUDOKU

Easy

4	7		9		1	6		5
	2		3				8	4
								1
	1	4	7		8		5	
6			2	3				9
	3		6		5	8	1	
8								
5	9				4		2	
7		1	5		2		9	8

Medium

		8		4				3
	9						6	1
			3					
			4			7	5	
		3	7		5	6		
	5	9			6			
					3			
5	4						9	
6			8			5		

Hard

	4		1	3				8
					5	6		
							7	3
			6		1			
8								4
			5		2			
7	1							
		8	4					
2				9	6		5	

WORD SEARCH

Second World War

B D F D G J U B M R O B R A H
 R D A I T D F S L I D R O Z K
 E U K R X V M T K A E W T C W
 W N N G G E J A X A C I N L U
 O K E E Y N L L X L M K S X F
 H I D I N F I I Y I R T O W D
 N R E R A Z S N N G E A T U U
 E K L K M K M G E P T U E G T
 S L T Z R Y U R D L L H N P U
 I S T T E H A A E P E E J D F
 E O A I G V U D T M H E E Z A
 C V B L L C A U C A S U S W N
 G I D B H L E M M O R P O B S
 P E M O U N T A I N Y L B K B
 B T I G A U L L E F E R S H P

AWOL
 AXIS
 BATTLE
 BLACKOUT
 BLITZKRIEG
 CAUCASUS
 DUNKIRK
 EISENHOWER
 FLAK
 GAULLE
 GERMANY
 HARBOR
 JEEP
 LENINGRAD
 MOUNTAIN

NIMITZ
 PEARL
 ROMMEL
 SHELTER
 SOVIET
 SNAFU
 STALINGRAD

Dodgers' double-play ends Canadian World Series dream

Zafir Nagji

Sports Editor

Continued from Pg. 19

The Blue Jays were not good at the start of the MLB season. A 3-2 start showed potential in March, but after agreeing to a 14-year, \$500 million extension with Vladimir Guerrero Jr., they fell two games under .500, posting a record of 11-14 and enduring their longest losing streak of the season of five games in April.

The Blue Jays made a serious turnaround in May, winning 16 of 28 games in the month, including two separate four-game win streaks. However, the Blue Jays were still not on anyone's radar as real contenders — but their fans knew something big was coming.

Changing things on the fly(ball)

Some of the hitters fans loved this season weren't even on the active roster to start the year, like Addison Barger, who was in Triple-A baseball until getting a call-up to the Blue Jays on April 15. Rookie pitcher Trey Yesavage, who pitched against the highest-paid player in the league in Game 7 of the World Series, Shohei Ohtani, didn't even make his debut until September.

Hitting their stride

In June, Toronto had its best month of the season to that point, winning five of its first six games of the month on its way to a 16-10 record by the end of it. They had two 10-run games in the month, and as their defence improved, they posted two shutout wins. The Blue Jays ended their June with back-to-back wins and carried that momentum into July, winning the first eight games of the month. Combined, that made for the longest win streak of their season — 10 games. Toronto pushed the bar even further for its best month of the season, winning a whopping 69.2 per cent of its games in July for a record of 18-8.

Closing strong

August and September weren't perfect for the Jays as they faced the toughest

part of their season schedule. Almost every game came against playoff teams battling for position, something that the Blue Jays were also doing as they had pushed themselves into contention for the best record in the AL.

Competing with them for that accolade were the Detroit Tigers and the New York Yankees, and through the final two months of the season, the Jays posted a 30-22 record in the final two months of the season.

What's even more impressive is how the team rallied around Bichette's late-season knee injury, which occurred in early September. Bichette led the Jays in hits, doubles, RBI's, and total bases, but the team compensated brilliantly as they went 13-9 without him. Toronto accomplished its goal of earning that first-round playoff bye with the best record in the AL at 94-68.

Throwing the competition out

The Blue Jays looked Aaron Judge in the eyes as they eliminated the New York Yankees in just four games in the American League Divisional Series (ALDS). They went toe-to-toe with the best home-run-hitter in the league and the regular-season all-time record-holder for home runs by a catcher, Cal Raleigh, and the Seattle Mariners in the American League Championship Series (ALCS). Even still, the Blue Jays made one of their signature comebacks in the seventh inning of the seventh game.

That ended a 32-year World Series drought for Toronto's baseball club, which won back-to-back titles in their only two previous appearances in 1992 and 1993.

So, the entire country rallied behind the Blue Jays in 2025 as they did with the Raptors in 2019 to win a championship against a stacked Californian team as the clear underdog.

Same, but different

The Toronto Blue Jays and

Los Angeles Dodgers battled in a grueling seven-game series that tested every aspect of both teams' dugouts, bullpens, and coaching staffs. The war included two extra-inning showdowns, one of which — Game 3 — set the record for the longest World Series game ever with 18 innings and six hours and 39 minutes of runtime.

After Toronto took a dominant Game 5 win, the Dodgers hung on to win Game 6 3-1, lining up the two best words in all of sports:

Game 7

Set for a Saturday night at Rogers Place in Toronto, Ohtani was set to pitch against Max Scherzer in a

match for the ages.

Ohtani did not score a single run, Bo Bichette hit a three-run home run, and all three of the Dodgers' home runs came with no runners on base. The Blue Jays were even up 4-3 in the ninth inning, two outs away from their first World Series title in 32 years.

That is, until Miguel Rojas scored a home run at the top of the ninth inning, and after the Blue Jays failed to score with the bases loaded at the bottom of it, the game moved into extra innings.

With one out at the bottom of the 11th, the Dodgers forced Kirk into a double play with the game-winning run on his bat, ending the World Series on a 5-4 win

in Toronto and crowning pitcher Yoshinobu Yamamoto World Series MVP.

Just keep swinging

2025 was a year of success for the Jays, even if it ended on a devastating loss. With almost all of their key players contracted for next season, this roster will have another opportunity to achieve greatness in 2026.

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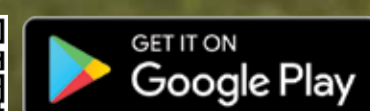
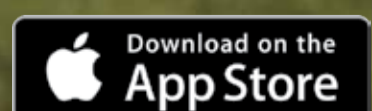
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Sisters by chance, teammates by choice

Naomi Campbell & Truman Bartman

Staff Writers

Two siblings who grew up playing hockey 35 minutes from Calgary in nearby Okotoks, Alta., joined forces this season on the Mount Royal Cougars women's hockey team. For Jordynne and Jaselyn Hojnocki, the chance to play together is more than just exciting—it's a dream come true.

Separated by two years in age, the Hojnockis didn't play on the same teams at the same time growing up. However, their paths mimicked one another, with the eldest, Jordynne, paving the way and the younger, Jaselyn, embracing and following her older sister's lead.

For both girls, their journeys started with a love for ringette. For worse or for better, their careers were both short-lived due to a lack of teams in Okotoks, but that opened up an avenue for them to transition into playing hockey.

"I started off playing ringette when I was five, and then we moved from Calgary to Okotoks, so I started playing hockey," Jordynne says. "I didn't like hockey at first. I didn't want to switch."

"I think I was four when I started playing. When we moved to Okotoks, there was no ringette for girls, so I had to start playing hockey," Jaselyn adds. "Same thing as Jordynne, I didn't really like it at first. I wanted to play ringette, but now, here I am loving hockey."

As the sisters' hockey careers progressed, so did their love for the game. So much so that Jordynne chased the game, moving alongside Jaselyn and her mother to British Columbia, joining the Okanagan Prep Academy (OHA) in hopes of pursuing a chance to play in university.

"We moved to Penticton with my mom, and we rented a house there," Jordynne says. "That was a cool experience, because we got to live together and experience that together."



Hojnocki sisters: Jaselyn Hojnocki, left, and Jordynne Hojnocki, right, are a killer defencewoman duo on the Cougars. Photos courtesy of Adrian Shellard

Jordynne also elaborated on the friends she and her sister made through the game.

"I think we're closer because, moving away together, we didn't know anyone on our teams yet. It also became a good way for me to get to know other people through her and her team. So we became closer throughout that time for sure."

After moving home, Jaselyn ended up playing two years with the Edge Prep School, while Jordynne signed and began her university tenure with the MRU Cougars.

Jordynne became a key member of the Cougars' defensive core as a shutdown defender in her first season. Last year, Jordynne was once again a productive presence for MRU, maintaining a positive plus-minus (+10) throughout her 2024-25 campaign.

Jaselyn, meanwhile, had her sights set on potentially joining the Cougars while finishing off her time with the Edge Mountaineers.

Those hopes soon turned

into reality with Jaselyn announcing her commitment to play for Mount Royal on Jan. 7, 2025.

In many cases, it's common for siblings to want their own shine, but for Jordynne, she was more than happy to have Jaselyn join her on the Cougars, even going so far as to give her a seal of approval.

"I definitely had a say in it, the first say on whether I was okay with it, just because I was here first, but it was a given naturally; I wanted my little sister to play here. Not everyone gets that experience."

The pair both joked that Jaselyn's joining MRU meant their parents could finally watch both girls play at the same time, instead of having to split up with the travelling for two different teams — and, in their words, having to choose a favourite.

"We used to make jokes about picking favourites and who they would go to watch for the weekend," Jaselyn says. "Of course, it was all jokes, and now, it's nice that they can watch both of us at once instead."

With Jordynne being a current player at MRU, there were family talks about having Jaselyn join the same team to finally be alongside her older sister. Both girls showed intense eagerness to finally have the opportunity to play together for the first time.

The sisterhood that the two hold is, without a doubt, special. While many siblings spend their time bickering or trying to stand out individually, the Hojnocki pair have embraced the privilege that comes with being sisters.

Jordynne has welcomed the task of being a role model and protector for her sister.

"I enjoy this team, this coaching staff, and everything about MRU so much that being able to share that with Jaselyn as an older sister excites me," Jordynne says. "It's been super exciting to show her the ropes. At the start, it was exciting to bring her in and explain how everything works and show her the relationships I have with my teammates."

As for Jaselyn, she

reinforces the important role that Jordynne has played in helping her reach the stage that she's at now, even going as far as saying she looks up to and in many ways admires her.

"I've always followed in her footsteps and looked up to her throughout all the years, even though I don't like to tell her that," Jaselyn says. "Just being here, it's nice that I've had someone give me advice and tips. That made it a little bit easier of a transition."

Being siblings isn't always easy, and neither is being teammates. But for the Hojnocki sisters, their appreciation for one another has helped them become not only the players but also the people they are today.

As Jaselyn puts it, the two have had their fair share of disagreements over the years, but when it comes down to it, their relationship as sisters and even best friends outweighs it all.

"When we were younger, we used to fight a lot, but as we've gotten older and matured, I definitely consider her my best friend."

#S

8 more runs scored by the Blue Jays despite losing the World Series in 7 games to the Dodgers

4 goals scored by Chanan Chanda, to help the Cougars win their 2nd CW Championship

39 points combined scored in back-to-back wins against Saskatchewan by Cougars guard Kole Scott

1 goal scored against the UBC Thunderbirds in 2025, thanks to Player of the Year and Cougars multi-record holder, Tamara Djurisc