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Cult Mtl is...



We spoke to Arcade Fire frontman Win Butler about the new album *WE* and what they miss most about Montreal given their inverse snowbird south/north schedule.

Photo by María José Govea

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Lorraine Carpenter
editor-in-chief
lorraine.carpenter@cultmontreal.com

Justine Smith
film editor
justine.smith@cultmontreal.com

Clayton Sandhu
food editor

Savannah Stewart
contributing editor (arts)

Paul Desbaillets
contributing editor (football culture)

Chris Tucker
art director

Advertising
ads@cultmontreal.com

General inquiries + feedback
info@cultmontreal.com



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The beast of Montreal



Vitor Munhoz

BY DAVE MACINTYRE

If we're going to interview any newly minted local legend for this year's Best of MTL issue, who better than Michael Pezzetta?

The gloriously curly-haired, moustachioed Toronto native has broken through as a consistent figure on this year's Montreal Canadiens team, and his feisty, energetic playing style has quickly made the 24-year-old a fan favourite in his rookie season as a Hab. So what's going on in his head, behind that luscious mane? And which parts of the city he plays in define Montreal for him?

I caught up with Pezzetta via Zoom while he'd been serving a two-game suspension, asking him which parts of Montreal life are among his favourites (with a little help from his girlfriend, Mireille Boutin). Here's what he had to tell us about his favourite local people, places and things.

Favourite Montreal restaurants: "I do eat a lot of Italian food, because I like eating Italian before game days. I like la Medusa and Moretti. When I was in Laval [playing for the AHL's Rocket], there's a place called Kitchen 73. I'd go there a lot for some Italian food, and especially for breakfast... I love Souvlaki Bar — for the price, you get so much food. It's so good. For all-you-can-eat sushi, there's a place called Taiyo Sushi. It's lights out, by far the best all-you-can-eat sushi that I've had in Montreal, or maybe even in Toronto."

Favourite Montreal resto for takeout: "I love Mandy's. I get the vegan protein power bowl. *(asks girlfriend Mireille)* Is it vegan, or is it vegetarian? *(she responds with "veggie protein power bowl!")* The veggie protein power bowl! I get that all the time. Once I find something I like, I kind of just eat the same thing. I will happily order the same thing from Mandy's every time. I definitely order from there a lot. I like to switch it up and try different things, but Mandy's is definitely a staple.

Favourite Montreal poutine resto: "I do like poutine. I don't eat it very often. For Poutine Week, me and my girlfriend went to la Banquise, and it was awesome. Then there's a place in Laval called Cali, a fried chicken restaurant. They have a really good poutine, too."

Favourite music genres, and if he's a fan of any Montreal artists: "I listen to a hodgepodge of everything, like whatever's on the radio, or whatever shows up on my phone. For games, I mostly like listening to mashups and stuff like that — a bunch of songs all mixed together. I like country, rap, pretty much everything. As for Montreal artists, there was this one song that kept coming on the radio, and I kind of love it. «Ctrl + Alt + Del» by Rêve. I'm pretty sure she's from Montreal. It's kind of a banger."

Favourite Montreal clothing store: "Probably (the French sporting goods franchise) Decathlon. I know that's probably a weird one, it's not some boutique clothing store. But me and my girlfriend do a lot of hiking. They have some solid things, and they're not crazy expensive. It's good for outdoor activities. They're not from Montreal, but they opened up here first in Canada."

Favourite Montreal neighbourhood: "Mile End. It's kind of out of the way, so I'm not sure I would live there — it'd be a pain to have an extra 20 minutes to drive over to Brossard (for practice) every day. But I really like it there. Griffintown's super cool, too, and I like going to the Old Port and walking around. If I was looking for a place next year, Griffintown is where I'd probably look. But if I lived here and didn't have to travel to the South Shore, I'd live in Mile End."

Favourite Montreal street: "I like walking around in the Old Port, the main street there. I'm terrible with street names — you give me a landmark, I know how to get there. Obviously Ste-Catherine is nice, though it's busy. But I like walking around the Old Port by water, though I guess that'd be Griffintown. We actually just came back from a walk there,

so we walk there quite a bit. Parc Avenue, I guess — that's where we lived last year, and we'd be on there a lot."

Best part of Montreal for Instagram: "It's got to be the Old Port. It looks like Europe — a lot of good spots there... We've definitely been taking some cool photos in the Old Port. Mont-Royal Park is super, super nice. You can get some good photos there. It's nice when you go up top and look over the city."

Favourite Montreal business: "It's a restaurant, but I've got to shout out Kitchen 73. When I was in Laval, I'd always go there every off day we had. I'd go there for brunch with some of the guys. Rob (Mancini), the owner there, he's become like family. I talk to him all the time, I go to see him whenever I can, because I'm living in Montreal now, but I love their breakfast. When all my friends come here, we always go there."

Favourite Montreal bar: "Pub Saint Pierre, in the Old Port. It's a chill, cool spot. I'd never had beef tartare before, it's something that seemed like, 'Why would anyone eat raw beef like this?'. Two years ago, I had it, because someone I was eating there with ordered it. I was like, 'Wow, this is actually amazing.' I couldn't remember the place or the name for the last two years. Obviously, last year with COVID, we couldn't go anywhere. But this year, I was like, 'I know there's this place in the Old Port, and I know it's awesome.' Then, finally, we found it again. That's probably my go-to spot. All the guys on the team like it, too."

Favourite Montreal celeb: "I met GSP (Georges St-Pierre) at Medusa. I thought that was the coolest thing, so I'll say him. I think he's super cool. I follow him on Instagram. I love his message, and I was obviously a big fan of his when he was fighting in the UFC. He's a legend."

Favourite Montreal sports personality (including one of his teammates, if he wants): "I'll go with Gally (Brendan Gallagher). He's a legend here. I love that he's super vocal, and he'll say what he's thinking. His tweets always give me a good laugh. He's a legend, and it's cool to play with him every day."

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music

Us

BY LORRAINE CARPENTER

Arcade Fire are about to release a new record, *WE*, their first in half a decade.

The perennial Best Band in Montreal, according to readers poll voters, may be collectively less of a presence in the city these days, particularly with its principals Win Butler and South Shore gal Régine Chassagne having relocated to New Orleans six years ago. But in an inverse snowbird MO, the couple spends their summers in Montreal and still own property here.

“Oh, always,” Win Butler said in an interview on May 2. “We go north in the summertime.”

When asked what he misses most about Montreal during the long stretches away, Butler had to highlight the people, the friends and the ease of cultural exchange that feels different from what’s found in other North American and European metropolises.

“So many of my closest friends are in Montreal. There’s such a magical interplay between Haitian, Caribbean, West and North African cultures, with Québécois, Canadians and Americans, such a cool, interesting mix of people. It’s cultural, it’s food and just the humanity. There’s a way that people are able to interact in Montreal that is very different from cities I’ve been to that have a similar mix, like New York and Paris; it feels like people can actually hang out together. There’s a lot more cultural interplay in a way that I find really profound and kind of unique to Montreal. That’s the main thing I missed.”

The pandemic made travel difficult but not impossible, giving Butler a view into the havoc wreaked by the circumstances.

“I’ve been back a couple times since COVID, and I feel like it’s not the city I remember. It was hit really hard. Hopefully it’s starting to lift a little bit, but there’s a feeling like man, it’s been rough. Having survived many a Montreal winter, a combo of complete lockdown plus winter seems like it would break greater men than me.”

As for the Quebec curfew, which he saw from a distance, “It was already a pretty apocalyptic situation, then to add cops checking if you’re in your house — wow.”

When asked what prompted the move to New Orleans, Butler cited a gradual acclimatization to the culture and a Quebec connection that made the segue feel natural.

“We had been touring pretty intensely in the States, and particularly pre-Katrina, rolling into New Orleans felt like Port of Spain or Kingston, like fully Caribbean, not an American city — the energy of it is completely different. We played their jazz fest a couple times and ended up staying afterwards.

“There’s a really deep connection between Montreal and New Orleans. They’re my two favourite cities so I try to figure out a way that works with my life that I can spend time in both cities.”

Despite a brief runtime of not much more than 40 minutes, *WE*



Arcade Fire

Michael Marcelle

comes packed with all the things we associate with Arcade Fire: anthemic highs, vulnerable lows, memorable melodies and the song led by Régine Chassagne, almost always an unforgettable album highlight. (There’s also a cameo by Peter Gabriel in the self-titled album closer that feels right at home given the band’s previous guest spots by music legends like David Bowie and David Byrne.)

Some early reviews have praised the record’s “return to form,” an indirectly damning notion of more recent material that doesn’t sit quite right with Butler.

“There’s definitely things on this record that we have not done, or even gotten close to doing before. It feels like there’s a lot of hive-mind copy paste style thinking.

“I felt like we went really deep on this one. I don’t think anyone really has a firm grasp on whether something is good or not for 20 years after it comes out, so I usually take most reviews for the grain of salt.”

Likewise, the rollout for *WE* feels pared down and street-level compared with the pre-release secret-show fanfare for 2013’s *Reflektor*. There have been secret shows this time around, a series of gigs in New York City to raise funds for aid to Ukraine. With the pandemic seemingly winding down, the focus was on the music and the shows first.

2017’s *Everything Now* came with a big marketing push, a longform concept about selling out to a corporation, complete with brazen fake ads during their arena tour (in Montreal, they played the Bell Centre on that tour, followed by a show at Parc Jean-Drapeau).

“I never really look at it so much as marketing. I know it is, but to me the phase before the record comes out is sort of

like this magic. When I was a teenager, all the alternative music I was exposed to, like Nirvana and Pearl Jam, Jane’s Addiction, Radiohead and Björk, it was really through music videos. Even ‘Losing My Religion’ or ‘Nothing Compares 2 U’ — imagine hearing that for the first time without seeing the video? In that era, the video functioned in the same way that I think album artwork used to function in the ’70s, where you have the music but you also have a little bit of artistic context. There’s a universe that springs from the visual art. You’re trying to create a world that can help inform the record. On *Funeral*, we spent weeks working on every detail. I feel like we live in an era now where people are mostly receiving stuff on streaming, which is really not geared towards records at all. It’s really just a pop radio platform that’s masquerading as a music platform. That period before a record is released is an opportunity to have some artistic fun and kind of do things that help give some artistic context to the record, and for this one the vision was just more playing live. It was the music more than anything else.”

As for the tight length of the album, Butler said the band sought out a more express artistic concept than some of the epics they’ve delivered in the past.

“I love (the double album) *Sandinista* as much as I love the first Clash record, same with Dylan. Pretty much everyone I like, there’s things I like about a long record and things I like about a short record. (Our song) ‘End of the Empire’ is nine minutes and I feel like in the ’70s that would’ve been a record. There’s a lot of space within the song, there’s a lot to digest. It’s like the difference between eating at a buffet or having someone prepare a meal for you. I feel like the record we wanted to make was just like a beautifully prepared meal, and at the end you don’t want to die because you ate too much.”

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© Nicolas Party. Photo MMFA, Jean-François Brière



And the city has spoken.

Over the past four months, *Cult MTL* readers and other citizens who are invested in civic pride voted for their favourite Montreal things in the annual Best of MTL poll.

With the upside down pandemic world that we've been living in these past years, this poll has served as a cheering section, a reminder, a connection to what we've been missing and what we've been gradually experiencing again after a lot of time away — so many of the things that make this city great have been absent, and have been coming back for real in recent months.

This hasn't been an easy past year, and some have had it worse than others — something that's important to remember as we interact with people again, and see familiar faces once again.

Here at *Cult MTL*, we're grateful for our extended family, for our readers, and for the voters in this poll who took the time during the dark winter of 2021 and spring of 2022 to think about everything they love in this city. As always, and maybe more than ever, we felt it was imperative to salute the artists, promoters, organizers, reporters, restaurateurs and retailers who have kept Montreal's heart beating, even in partial stasis.

As always, the Best of MTL poll is open and democratic, with no editorial influence or interference. We are always glad to see so many people make an event of voting via social media campaigns, and while we can't resist sharing third-party get-out-the-vote tweets, we otherwise remain neutral during the polling period.

Ballot-stuffing is automatically weeded out by our survey

software. This year there were loads of votes for musician, comedian and social media personality Eve Parker Finley, columnist and social media personality Murphy Cooper, comedian/radio host Julian Bernatchez and local label On a Roll Records (and friends) in way too many categories. Joke votes were relatively minimal but there was at least one person who took the time to vote for "healthcare workers" in nearly every category and others who chastised us for legacy categories like Best Place to Have Public Sex as irresponsible during a pandemic. Conversely, a handful of conspiracy theorists and anti-lockdown/anti-mask types shared comments like "Montreal is a dump," "this is a socialist gulag," "not allowed to have fun in this prison" and «they outlawed art» across dozens of categories.

Cult MTL has been running the Best of MTL readers poll for a decade, but it bears mentioning that the survey follows in the tradition established by the city's defunct but fondly remembered alt-weekly newspaper the *Mirror*. Respect.

Along with the expanded Top 10 lists in every category (coming to cultmtl.com in the coming days), our website will feature a number of Best of MTL articles through the month of May and beyond.

We thank everyone who voted and promoted the poll. Participation continues to grow every year, making the 2022 results more representative of the city than ever.

(Anglos, if you're wondering why you don't recognize some names in these lists, it's because the other 70 per cent of the population is now voting in a bilingual poll. Francos, désolé, les résultats sont unilingues.)

To all the winners: congratulations.

More than ever, we're proud to bring you the Best of MTL.

People & Places

Comedian, podcaster and latter day Quebec reality TV star Tranna Wintour remains a favourite among Best of MTL voters, ranking #1 Best-dressed Montrealer, #2 Hottest Montrealer and. Voters were loving this year's ultra-underdog Montreal Canadiens even more than last year's mid-playoffs team, with four of the five Best Sports Personality spots going to the Habs, including Coach Martin St. Louis, who helped turn the season around (somewhat) in February. Slightly less popular is Premier François Legault, who ranked #1 Slimiest Politician, #1 Tackiest Personality and even #5 Best Weirdo (a category that is otherwise/ usually reserved for loveable oddballs). The reason? Legault is implicated in four out of five of this year's picks for Most Heinous Scandal, not to mention being in denial of our readers' #5 Most Urgent Social/Political Cause. And congrats to NDG for ranking #1 Best Neighbourhood — a first! The west wanted in.



"Wow. I am honoured and humbled. As #3 Best-dressed Montrealer, I wear this hotness badge with pride. Thank you to the millions of people who voted for me, for seeing me and believing in me. Thank you to my parents, and God. I would also like to congratulate my partner as they can now tell everyone they are with Montreal's #5 Hottest person. Vote for me in 2023! My self-esteem and self-worth depend on it!" —Kayleigh Choinière, Hottest Montrealer #5, Best-dressed Montrealer #3

Most Urgent Political/ Social Cause

- 1. Climate change
- 2. Affordable housing
- 3. Homelessness
- 4. Ukraine
- 5. Black Lives Matter / systemic racism

Best Politician

- 1. Valérie Plante
- 2. Manon Massé
- 3. Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois
- 4. Balarama Holness
- 5. Justin Trudeau

Slimiest Politician

- 1. François Legault
- 2. Denis Coderre
- 3. Valérie Plante
- 4. Jean Charest
- 5. Justin Trudeau

Most Heinous Scandal

- 1. CHSLD Herron
- 2. Curfew
- 3. Sunwing influencers / James William Awad
- 4. COVID-19
- 5. Vaccine passport

Best Neighbourhood

- 1. NDG
- 2. Plateau
- 3. Mile End
- 4. Verdun
- 5. Hochelaga
- 6. Saint-Henri
- 7. Rosemont-Petite-Patrie
- 8. Little Italy
- 9. Villeray
- 10. Parc-Extension

Best Park

- 1. La Fontaine
- 2. Jarry
- 3. Mount Royal
- 4. Laurier
- 5. Jeanne-Mance

Best Place to Have Public Sex

- 1. Mount Royal
- 2. Old Port
- 3. Parc La Fontaine
- 4. Lachine Canal
- 5. Beaver Lake

Best Tourist Attraction

- 1. Old Montreal / Old Port
- 2. Mountain
- 3. Biodôme
- 4. Botanical Gardens
- 5. La Ronde

Best Instagram Spot

- 1. Belvédère Kondiaronk
- 2. Old Port
- 3. Orange Julep
- 4. Botanical Gardens
- 5. Le Saint Motel

Hottest Montrealer

- 1. Justin Trudeau
- 2. Tranna Wintour
- 3. Céline Dion
- 4. Charlotte Cardin
- 5. Kayleigh Choinière

Best-dressed Montrealer

- 1. Tranna Wintour
- 2. Murphy Cooper
- 3. Kayleigh Choinière
- 4. Cary Tauben
- 5. Céline Dion

Coollest Montreal Company

- 1. Ubisoft
- 2. Spooks & Spanks
- 3. Grimey MTL
- 4. Lufa Farms
- 5. Moment Factory

Best Sports Personality

- 1. Carey Price
- 2. Cole Caufield
- 3. Laurent Duvernay-Tardif
- 4. Nick Suzuki
- 5. Martin St-Louis

Tackiest Personality

- 1. François Legault
- 2. Denis Coderre
- 3. Mado Lamotte
- 4. Céline Dion
- 5. Mose Persico

Best Weirdo

- 1. Julien Bernatchez
- 2. Beaver Sheppard
- 3. Uma Gahd
- 4. Natasha Nebula
- 5. François Legault

Glorious NDG

BY ERIK LEIJON

Well, well, well...No Damn Good is now #1 in your hearts. The day has finally come.

To quote that Van Wilder meme: "But, why?"

My theory: the more Montreal seems to change, the more Notre-Dame-de-Grâce stays the same. As Griffintown Condo Disease blights neighbourhood after neighbourhood in the downtown core, the Decarie eyesore has acted as a pseudo-barrier to the barbarians at the gate.

Don't get me wrong, rents are rising here at a criminal rate as well, but the lifeblood of NDG hasn't been sucked out yet and seems to be hanging by a thread.

Sherbrooke's mom and pops have weathered storm after storm. Souvlaki George is still slinging pitas for the students. The only Starbucks actually closed up shop. You don't feel the crushing march of modernity breathing down your neck. The classic weirdos of Montreal are still acting weird — in NDG.

The last two years, spacious NDG has served as a comforting pandemic outpost, with wide enough sidewalks, barren north-south stretches and plenty of green space to make the necessary constitutional peaceful and relaxing. And if you needed human interaction, the locals were surprisingly chatty even from a distance: there's a reason Porchfest goes down here.


Girouard/NDG/whatever you want to call it Park is an underrated gem in the city, offering all the pleasures of park hangs with half the crowds.

It's not perfect, of course, but even its fundamental problems seem quaint in a way. The interminable Vendome area construction. The regular blackouts whenever there's a gust of wind. That ominous giant tower in Upper Lachine. Even when people ask about safe/unsafe neighbourhoods in Montreal Subreddit, the response usually reassures that as bad as you think it might be, it's still NDG. Things ain't that bad here.

I'm not naïve, though. There's likely an element of protest voting here from those exasperated by Plateau and Mile End living. No one cares how you found your way to NDG, we're just glad you're here. Quit your job, pull up a folding chair, crack open a cold one and enjoy the vibes.



Cindy Lopez

 **Desjardins**
presents


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VIKINGS

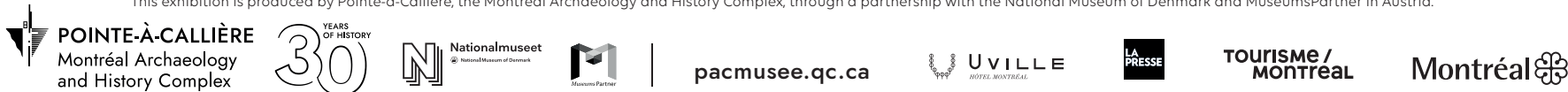
DRAGONS OF THE NORTHERN SEAS

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Media

Concordia University's AM radio station CJLO is the big story in the Media section. Aside from Prince Rara ranking #1 Best Radio Host and two CJLO shows making the Best Radio Show category, the station was voted #1 Best Radio Station for the first time. As for print, we thank our readers for making *Cult MTL* #1 Best Magazine and #1 Best Website. As we said we would last year, we've disqualified ourselves from the Newspaper category, and with respect to *La Presse*, this is the last year we will allow them to ride on their honorary newspaper status (they stopped printing five years ago!). As usual, the Best TikTok category is filled with funny, extravagant, colourful characters, including the well-curated account by local jewellers Inchoo Bijoux, observational comic Rachel Boutin, attention-grabbing drag queen Sami Landri and of course musician and icicle critic Maryze, our April cover girl.

Best Radio Station

1. CJLO 1690AM
2. CHOM 97.7FM
3. CKUT 90.3FM
4. CBC Radio One 88.5FM
5. CISM 89.3FM

Best Radio Show

1. *NoeTheKulcha* (CJLO 1690AM)
2. *Des si et des rais* (CHOQ.ca)
3. *Ashes to Ashes* (CJLO 1690AM)
4. *Melnick in the Afternoon* (TSN 690AM)
5. *La soirée est encore jeune* (ICI Radio-Canada 95.1FM)



"On behalf of everyone at CJLO 1690AM, from our hard-working volunteers to our staff and board, we're so thrilled to finally grab the top spot in this year's Best of MTL poll. Over the past two years, we've worked harder than ever at providing Montreal listeners with the very best in music curation, music storytelling and original audio projects that disrupt traditional modes of radio programming. But, we've got even more in store for you! Be sure to keep your eyes and ears peeled to CJLO 1690AM! Thank you so much, Montreal!"—CJLO 1690AM, Best Radio Station #1, Best Radio Host #1 (Prince Rara, pictured)

Best Radio Host

1. Prince RaRa
2. Julien Bernatchez
3. Mitch Melnick
4. Jason Rockman
5. Tony Marinaro

Best Podcast

1. *Reference Point*
2. *2fxfslematin*
3. *Chopvision*
4. *Sorry About the Kid*
5. *Chosen Family*

Best TV Station

1. CTV
2. CBC
3. ICI Radio Canada
4. Noovo
5. TVA

Best Newscaster

1. Mutsumi Takahashi
2. Céline Galipeau
3. Patrice Roy
4. Pierre Bruneau
5. Maya Johnson

Best TV Personality

1. Tranna Wintour
2. Mutsumi Takahashi
3. Rita Baga
4. Jean-René Dufort
5. Jay du Temple

Best Magazine

1. *Cult MTL*
2. *Elle Québec*
3. *Also Cool Mag*
4. *Maisonneuve*
5. *Urbania*

Best Newspaper

1. *The Gazette*
2. *Le Devoir*
3. *La Presse*
4. *Journal de Montréal*
5. *Métro*

Best Website

1. cultmtl.com
2. pornhub.com
3. mtlblog.com
4. montreal.eater.com
5. lapresse.com

Best Twitter

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Best Instagram

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2. @julienbernatchez
3. @ponto_mtl
4. @eveparkerfinley
5. @onarollrecords

Best TikTok

1. @everparkerfinley
2. @maryzemusic
3. @inchoobijoux
4. @rachel.boutin
5. @sami.landri



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Nightlife

Nightlife is one of the industries most battered by pandemic-related closures. Quebec clubs and standing-room-only concert venues were dealt a major blow by FINALLY being permitted to reopen last October only to be shut down again when Omicron arrived in December. It hasn't even been two months since the grand reopening of all things back in mid-March — though “all things” wouldn't be accurate given the number of bars, clubs and even concert venues that closed permanently after two years of lost revenue. It's wonderful to see Best of MTL voters bouncing back to old faves like Grumpy's, Bar de Courcelle and Notre Dame des Quilles, among many others — we hope that those establishments are getting as many clients as they're getting votes. But with terrasse season rapidly approaching, even the most pandemic-prudent people will hopefully be able to enjoy a relatively stress-free pint in the presence of actual humans.



Cindy Lopez

"It always feels good to make the list as we don't do any campaigning for it. Feels nice to know that people genuinely love what we do. Our goal has always been to put together a no-frills, relaxed vibe with our aesthetic, music and product. The sort of place we'd like to hang out at. We're glad folks agree." —Ram Krishnan, Best Bartender #3 at Grumpy's, Best Bar, Best Sleazy Dive #4

Best Bartender

1. Turbo (Hurley's)
2. Judy Kennedy (McLean's)
3. Ram Krishnan (Grumpy's)
4. Gwen (Barfly)
5. Helen Du (Else's)

Best Bar

1. Turbo Haüs
2. Grumpy's
3. Hurley's
4. Bar de Courcelle
5. Foufounes Electriques

Best Sleazy Dive

1. Barfly
2. Bar de Courcelle
3. Bifteck

4. Grumpy's

5. Turbo Haüs

Best Wine Bar

1. vinvinvin
2. Pullman
3. Loïc
4. Vin Papillon
5. Keela

Best Club

1. Datcha
2. Rouge
3. Stereo
4. Sky
5. Unity

Best Terrasse

1. Terrasse St-Ambroise
2. Pub le Sainte-Élisabeth

3. Turbo Haüs

4. Terrasses Bonsecours

5. Bocado

Best Live Music Venue

1. MTelus
2. Turbo Haüs
3. Corona
4. La Sala Rossa
5. Bar le Ritz PDB

Best Promoter

1. Blue Skies Turn Black
2. Evenko
3. KickDrum
4. Greenland
5. Extensive Entreprises

Best Strip Club

1. Café Cléopâtre
2. Chez Parée
3. Wanda's
4. Les Amazones
5. Kingdom

Best LGBT Bar/Club

1. Notre Dame des Quilles
2. Unity
3. Cabaret Mado
4. Sky
5. Bar le Cocktail

Best Burlesque Performer

1. Loulou la Duchesse de Rière
2. Sugar Vixen

3. Joy Rider

4. Roxy Torpedo
5. Miami Minx

Best Drag King or Drag Queen

1. Rita Baga
2. Uma Gahd
3. Sisi Sinatra
4. Mona de Grenoble
5. Charli DeVille

Best Bowling Alley

1. Rose Bowl
2. Darling Bowling
3. Notre Dame des Quilles
4. Quilles G Plus St-Zotique
5. Laurentian Lanes

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Best Comedy Club

- 1. The Comedy Nest
- 2. Le Bordel
- 3. The Diving Bell Social Club
- 4. Kickback Comedy
- 5. Le Terminal

Best Comedy Night

- 1. Battle of Wits
- 2. Kickback MTL
- 3. There's Something Funny Going On
- 4. World's Smallest Open Mic
- 5. Offbeat Comedy

Best Karaoke Bar

- 1. Pang Pang
- 2. Club Date
- 3. Taverne Normandie
- 4. L'Astral 2000
- 5. Les 3 Minots

Best Drug

- 1. Cannabis
- 2. Cocaine
- 3. Mushrooms
- 4. Molly (aka E, aka MDMA)
- 5. Caffeine

Best Drink

- 1. Beer
- 2. Gin tonic
- 3. Wine
- 4. Old-fashioned
- 5. Water

Best Cocktail Bar

- 1. Atwater Cocktail Club
- 2. Snowbird Tiki Bar
- 3. La Distillerie
- 4. Le Mal Nécessaire
- 5. Keela



"We're honoured to have been voted into the Best of MTL's Best Cocktail Bars category. Ever since we opened back in 2017, we pride ourselves in coming up with great-tasting, fun-looking tropical libations. We enjoy using innovative glassware, coming up with clever garnishes and all our syrups and juices are made fresh in house. Thank you Montreal!" —Snowbird Tiki Bar, Best Cocktail Bar #2

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Music

While our Best of MTL 2022 cover stars Arcade Fire won Best Band and Most Pretentious Act (as usual), we're happy to see a number of other Montreal musicians who've graced our magazine cover over the past year make appearances in the rankings. Of the cover stars, Backxwash fared best, ranking #1 Freakiest Act, Heaviest Act and Best Hip Hop Act for the second consecutive year, while Charlotte Cardin is #2 Best Singer-songwriter, Skiifall is #3 Best Hip Hop Act and Maryze is #2 Best Electronic Act. We couldn't help but notice the dominance of Bud Rice across the Music section — he's #1 Best Country/Folk Act, #5 Best Singer-songwriter and even #2 Most Pretentious Act, which doesn't feel right. And while all musicians have been dealt a blow by the pandemic, let's not forget our buskers, who've weathered a major decline in foot traffic. Throw them a toonie when you can.



"Thanks so much to Montreal for voting for me again, it's nice to know that I'm appreciated!" —Backxwash, Freakiest Act #1, Heaviest Act #1, Best Hip Hop Act #1

Best Band

1. Arcade Fire
2. The Damn Truth
3. Half Moon Run
4. Ol' Savannah
5. The Hypnophonics

Freakiest Act

1. Backxwash
2. Bad Uncle
3. Hubert Lenoir
4. Screaming Demons
5. Big Sissy

Most Pretentious Act

1. Arcade Fire
2. Bud Rice
3. Madelline
4. Hubert Lenoir
5. Lakes of Canada

Heaviest Act

1. Backxwash
2. Cryptopsy
3. Dopethrone
4. The Great Sabatini
5. BIG|BRAVE

Best Hip Hop Act

1. Backxwash
2. Loud
3. Skiifall
4. Nate Husser
5. Strange Froots

Best Club DJ

1. ALL YOR BA55
2. DJ Blaster
3. Micah
4. DJ Crowd
5. Keith Dean

Best Electronic Act

1. Kaytranada
2. Maryze
3. CRI
4. Jacques Greene
5. Janette King

Best Country/Folk Act

1. Bud Rice
2. Ol' Savannah
3. Le Ren
4. Lil' Andy
5. Half Moon Run

Best Jazz Act

1. Dave Gossage Septet
2. Dawn Tyler Watson
3. Fish Jones
4. Dominique Fils-Aimé
5. Beth McKenna

Best Singer songwriter

1. Patrick Watson
2. Charlotte Cardin
3. Safia Nolin
4. Martha Wainwright
5. Bud Rice

— laige —

I COULD DIE



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Best Busker

- 1. Graham Downey
the bagpiper
- 2. Big Daddy Queen
Power
- 3. Dog mask violinist
- 4. Violinist Marc
Landry
- 5. Allison Von der
Lande

Best Label

- 1. Bonsound
- 2. Hot Tramp
- 3. On A Roll Records
- 4. Constellation
- 5. Bravo Musique



Martha Wainwright, Best Singer-songwriter #4

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Film & Arts

Guys, *Dune* (#1 Best Local Film of 2021-22) is not a Montreal movie. Despite being directed by Denis Villeneuve (and receiving funding from the government of Quebec, which apparently every single major movie does these days — yes, we stay for the credits), it would require a number of other Canadian attributes to even qualify as “Canadian content” as per MAPL rules. But we’ll let it slide because we love it so much. Elsewhere in Film & Arts, the late Jean-Marc Vallée (Best Filmmaker #3) got a lot of nods following his untimely death on Christmas Day, and Monk.e tops the Best Graffiti Artist category as well as the new Best Visual Artist category. Another new category, Best Photographer, features a wide range camera-wielding creatives from the realms of photojournalism, concert photography, burlesque portraiture and straight-up art. And hats off to Best Living Author Heather O’Neill for ranking #1 once again.

Best Actor/Actress

- 1. Jay Baruchel
- 2. Kaniehtiio Horn
- 3. Matt Keyes
- 4. Sophie Nélisse
- 5. Antoine Olivier Pilon

Best Filmmaker

- 1. Denis Villeneuve
- 2. Xavier Dolan
- 3. Jean-Marc Vallée (RIP)
- 4. Aisling Chin-Yee
- 5. Tracey Deer



"As a teenager, it was my dream to get published in the Rant Line and hopefully maybe someday make the Best-of list in some capacity. As an adult, I continue to be fucking floored at how lucky I am to be honoured by this paper and its readers. From the bottom of my heart, thank you! It sincerely means the world." —Jay Baruchel, Best Actor #1

Best Local Film (of 2021–2022)

- 1. *Woodland Grey*
- 2. *Dune*
- 3. *Beans*
- 4. *We Hear Running*
- 5. *#NoRegard - The Greatest Recreational Sports Story Ever Told*

Best Film Screening Series

- 1. Fantasia
- 2. Cinéma Moderne
- 3. Cinéma Política
- 4. Cabane à sang
- 5. RIDM

Best Theatre Company

- 1. Centaur Theatre
- 2. Black Theatre Workshop
- 3. Segal Centre
- 4. Mainline
- 5. D2 Productions

Best Museum

- 1. Museum of Fine Arts

- 2. McCord Museum
- 3. Pointe-à-Callière
- 4. Canadian Centre for Architecture
- 5. Musée d’art contemporain

Best Gallery

- 1. Station 16
- 2. PHI Centre
- 3. BBAM! Gallery
- 4. Arsenal
- 5. Never Apart

Best Multidisciplinary (Visual/Performing) Art Space

- 1. PHI Centre
- 2. MAI
- 3. Usine C
- 4. SAT
- 5. Never Apart

Best Living Author

- 1. Heather O’Neill
- 2. Michel Tremblay
- 3. Patrick Sénécal
- 4. Keenan Poloncsak
- 5. Dany Laferrière

Best Visual Artist

- 1. Monk.e
- 2. Jordan Lavery
- 3. Caroline Monnet
- 4. Teenadult
- 5. Pony

Best Photographer

- 1. Dave Gogan
- 2. Marisa Parisella
- 3. Daniel Esteban
- 4. Susan Moss
- 5. Dan Haber

Best Cartoonist/Comic Artist

- 1. Aislin
- 2. Jeik Dion
- 3. Tania Mignacca
- 4. Julie Doucet
- 5. Michel Rabagliati

Best Comedian

- 1. Sugar Sammy
- 2. Tranna Wintour
- 3. Les Pic-Bois
- 4. Ben Cardilli
- 5. Mike Ward

Best Video Game Company

- 1. Ubisoft
- 2. WB Montreal
- 3. BEhaviour
- 4. KO_OP
- 5. EA

Best Fashion Designer

- 1. Jennifer Glasgow
- 2. Pony
- 3. Katrin Leblond
- 4. Denis Gagnon
- 5. Eliza Faulkner

Best Graffiti Artist/Crew

- 1. Monk.e
- 2. Lost Claws
- 3. Waxhead
- 4. K6A
- 5. Miss.Me

Best Festival

- 1. Jazz Fest
- 2. Osheaga
- 3. Just for Laughs
- 4. POP Montreal
- 5. Fringe Festival



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Goods & Services

Uniqlo notwithstanding, Best of MTL voters love shopping local when it comes to clothes these days, as evidenced by the fact that the other four retailers in the Best Clothing Store (New) category are Montreal- or Quebec-based businesses. H&M has fallen out of the Top 5 entirely, which doesn't seem undeserved if you've been into their stores lately (our humble opinion). Among the businesses appearing among the results for the first time is Thai yoga massage establishment Tan Jai, which ranked #1 in Best Massage Spot at and #4 in Best Spa. Fans of Kitsch'n Swell should be applauded for making them #4 Best New and #5 Best Vintage Clothing Store as well as #1 Best Kitsch/Antique Store. And finally (once again), Moog Audio isn't an electronics store, despite the fact that they sell items that can be used to produce or DJ electronic music.



"Thank you readers!! We love you!! Viva NDG!!" —Encore Records & Books, Best Bookstore (Used) #2, Best Used CD/Vinyl Store #5

Best Clothing Store (New)

1. Simons
2. Uniqlo
3. Lopez MTL
4. Kitsch'n Swell
5. Jeans Jeans Jeans

Best Vintage Clothing Store

1. Eva B
2. Renaissance
3. Tricky Inc.
4. Village des Valeurs
5. Kitsch'n Swell

Best Hair Salon

1. Two Horses
2. Salon Freyja
3. Danny's Coiffure Unisex
4. call me noAM
5. Unlistd

Best Barbershop

1. La Section Barbershop
2. Blue Dog Barbershop
3. Mint Barbershop
4. call me noAM
5. Two Horses



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STAFF AND LISTENERS OVER THE YEARS;
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Best Tattoo Parlour

1. Locust Tattoo
2. DFA Tattoos
3. Coop Crève-Coeur
4. Bait & Schlang
5. Adrenaline

Best Tattoo Artist

1. Aimee Boucher (Morning Gory)
2. Angus Byers (DFA Tattoos)
3. Janice Beattie (Locust Tattoo)
4. Mélissa Valiquette (DFA Tattoos)
5. Nick Oakes (Bait & Schlang)

Best New CD/Vinyl Store

1. Aux 33 Tours

2. Phonopolis
3. Le Vacarme
4. Cheap Thrills
5. Sunrise Records

Best Used CD/Vinyl Store

1. Cheap Thrills
2. Aux 33 Tours
3. Death of Vinyl
4. Beatnick
5. Encore Books & Records

Best Musical Instrument Store

1. Steve's Music
2. Long & McQuade
3. Jimi Music Store
4. Moog Audio
5. Archambault

Best Internet Service Provider

1. Vidéotron
2. Fizz
3. Bell
4. EBOX
5. Oxio

Best Electronics Store

1. Best Buy
2. Addison Électronique
3. Apple Store
4. Canada Computers
5. The Source

Best Movie Theatre

1. Cinéma Cineplex Forum & VIP
2. Cinéma du Parc

3. Cinéma Moderne
4. Cinéma Beaubien
5. Cinéma Banque Scotia Montréal

Best Bicycle Shop

1. 514BMX
2. Bikurious
3. C&L Cycle
4. Bicycles McW
5. Steve's Bike Shop

Best Bookstore (New)

1. Librairie Drawn & Quarterly
2. Indigo
3. Librairie St-Henri Books
4. L'Euguélionne
5. Librairie le port de tête

Best Bookstore (Used)

1. The Word
2. Encore Books & Records
3. S.W. Welch
4. L'Échange
5. Phoenix Books

Best Comics Store

1. Librairie Drawn & Quarterly
2. Crossover Comics
3. Capitaine Québec
4. Planète BD
5. 1,000,000 Comix

Best Drug Paraphernalia Store

1. Prohibition
2. Psychonaut

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- 3. Utopia
- 4. Bongia
- 5. SQDC

**Best Fitness Club/Gym /
Meilleur centre d'entraînement**

- 1. Econofitness
- 2. YMCA
- 3. Gym St-Henri
- 4. Mouvement Infinity Movement
- 5. Buzzfit

Best Yoga Studio

- 1. Modo Yoga
- 2. Naada Yoga
- 3. Ashtanga Yoga Montreal
- 4. Enso Yoga
- 5. Luna Yoga

Best Spa

- 1. Bota Bota
- 2. Strøm
- 3. Spa le Finlandais
- 4. Tan Jai
- 5. Spa Scandinave

Best Massage Spot

- 1. Tan Jai
- 2. Bota Bota
- 3. Espace Nomad
- 4. Spa Ovarium
- 5. Spa Vert

Best Hotel

- 1. The Ritz-Carlton, Montreal
- 2. Fairmont the Queen Elizabeth
- 3. Hotel Nelligan
- 4. Alt Hotel Montreal
- 5. William Gray

Best Kitsch/Antique Store

- 1. Kitsch'n Swell
- 2. Marché aux puces St-Michel
- 3. Marché Underground
- 4. Eva B

Best Jewellery

- 1. Inchoo Bijoux
- 2. Joel Muller Designs
- 3. Maison Birks
- 4. Aurum & Crystallini
- 5. Caitlin Taylor

Best Florist

- 1. Dragon Flowers
- 2. Fleuriste Monarque
- 3. Westmount Florist
- 4. Asher Fleurs
- 5. Jardin de Mathilde

TECHNO

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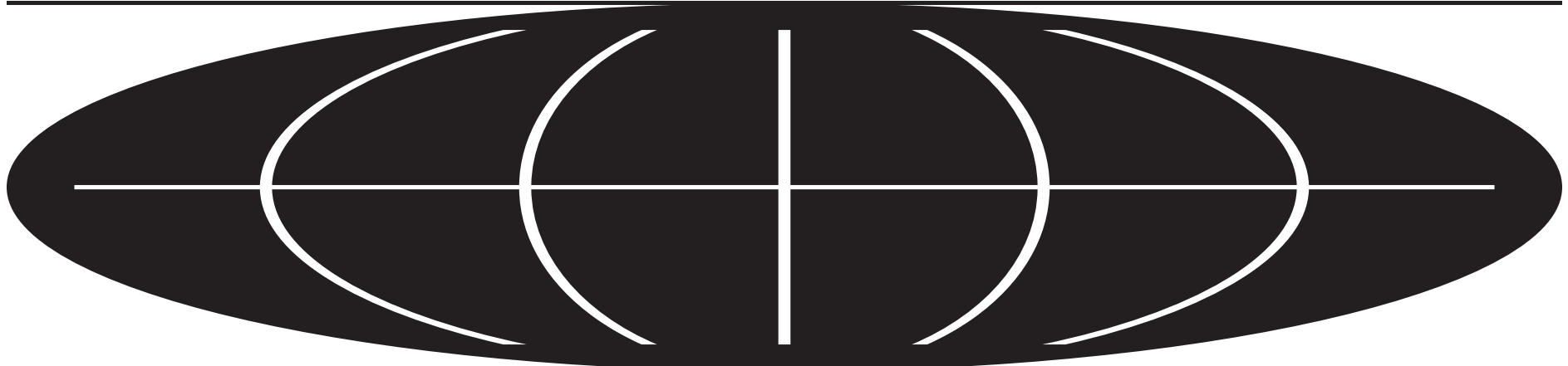
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Food & Drink

While takeout is a comfort-food experience for many, the sheer range of restaurant delivery options now available as a byproduct of the pandemic — including the proliferation of ghost kitchens and gourmet counters — has made takeout night(s) an avenue for culinary experimentation. But restaurants have had a third lockdown since last year's Best of MTL and we've all endured another period of social isolation, so why not venture out, dine in and support this struggling industry with your physical presence? These results can be a guide, as can reviews and lists by our food editor Clay Sandhu, who penned his annual Resto Wrongs editorial in this issue. With open-air restaurant dining coming soon, there's no better time to raise a glass, grab a bite or indulge in a feast, whether you choose from this city's rich offering of casse-croutes, fine dining, health-conscious cuisine or the multicultural smorgasbord of mom and pop restaurants.



“(DJ Khaled voice) We da best pizza! Thanks for voting us #1 Montreal. We love making pizza and we love you.” —Pizza Bouquet (Best Pizza #1)

Best New Restaurant

- 1. Keela
- 2. Pichai
- 3. Salle Climatisée
- 4. Café Mimosa
- 5. Fleurs et cadeaux

Best New Food Trend

- 1. Veganism
- 2. Arepas

- 3. Korean food
- 4. Fried chicken
- 5. Poké

Best Pub Grub

- 1. Burgundy Lion
- 2. McKibbin's
- 3. Ye Olde Orchard
- 4. McLean's
- 5. Mad Hatter Pub

Best Hotel Bar or Restaurant

- 1. Bar George
- 2. Maison Boulud
- 3. Marcus
- 4. W
- 5. Nacarat

Best Cheap Eats

- 1. Nilufar
- 2. Boustan

- 3. Patati Patata
- 4. Bocadillo
- 5. La Belle Province

Best Fine Dining

- 1. L'Express
- 2. Au pied de cochon
- 3. Île Flottante
- 4. Joe Beef
- 5. Gibbys

Best Late Night Eats

- 1. La Banquise
- 2. Boustan
- 3. Bocadillo
- 4. AA
- 5. Patati Patata

Best Breakfast/Brunch

- 1. Greenspot
- 2. Le Vieux Vélo
- 3. Bagels St-Lo
- 4. L'Avenue
- 5. Aux Vivres

Best Afternoon Tea

- 1. The Ritz-Carlton, Montreal
- 2. Cardinal Tearoom
- 3. Gryphon d'Or
- 4. Camellia Sinensis
- 5. Salon Rosie-Lanoi

Best Meal Kit Company/Ready to-eat Company

- 1. Goodfood
- 2. WeCook (ready-to-eat)
- 3. Cook it
- 4. HelloFresh

Best Delivery App

- 1. UberEats
- 2. SkipTheDishes
- 3. DoorDash
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- 5. Radish Coop



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**Best African
Restaurant**

1. East Africa
2. Queen of Sheba
3. Le Nil Bleu
4. Maquis Yasolo
5. Mokili

**Best
Chinese
Restaurant**

1. Mon Nan
2. Dobe & Andy
3. PM
4. Aunt Dai
5. Soba Sushi

**Best French
Restaurant**

1. L'Express
2. Leméac
3. Monarque
4. Chez Lévêque
5. La Prunelle

**Best Indian
Restaurant**

1. Bombay Mahal
2. Étoile des Indes
3. Palais d'Ajit
4. Classic India
5. Le Super Qualité

**Best
Japanese
Restaurant**

1. Kazu
2. Jun-i
3. Sushi Momo
4. Umami Ramen
5. Otto Bistro

**Best
Caribbean
Restaurant**

1. Seasoned Dreams
2. Lloydie's
3. Boom J's
4. Kwizinn
5. Caribbean Food Factory

**Best Eastern
European/
Russian
Restaurant**

1. Stash Café
2. Chez Anna
3. Euro-deli Batory
4. Nevski
5. Bistro Kapzak

**Best Greek
Restaurant**

1. Marvin's
2. Milos
3. Marathon Souvlaki
4. Panama
5. Souvlaki George

**Best Italian
Restaurant**

1. Da Emma
2. Impasto
3. Pasta Casareccia
4. Rita
5. Nora Gray

**Best Korean
Restaurant**

1. Seoul Chako
2. Bar Ganadara
3. Mon Ami
4. Ssam
5. Chez Bong



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**Best Latin
American
Restaurant**

- 1. Bocadillo
- 2. Arepera du Plateau
- 3. La Carreta
- 4. Sabor Latino
- 5. El Chalateco

**Best Mexican
Restaurant**

- 1. El Rey del Taco
- 2. Escondite
- 3. Tacos Frida
- 4. Tacos Victor
- 5. Tachido

**Best Middle
Eastern
Restaurant**

- 1. Damas
- 2. Boustan
- 3. Sham
- 4. Sumac
- 5. Rumi

**Best Portuguese
Restaurant**

- 1. Ma Poule Mouillée
- 2. Cantine Émilie
- 3. Minhota
- 4. Jano
- 5. Romados

**Best Spanish
Restaurant**

- 1. Tapeo
- 2. La Sala Rosa
- 3. Tinc Set
- 4. La Croqueteria
- 5. Iberica

**Best Thai
Restaurant**

- 1. Pumpui
- 2. Thai Express
- 3. Bangkok Express
- 4. Chu Chai
- 5. Co Ut

**Best Vietnamese
Restaurant**

- 1. Pho Tay Ho
- 2. Pho Bang New York
- 3. Tran Cantine
- 4. Pho 88
- 5. Pho Lien

Best Bagel

- 1. St-Viateur Bagel
- 2. Fairmount Bagel
- 3. Bagel St-Lo
- 4. Beaubien Bagel
- 5. MTL Bagel

Best Burger

- 1. Uniburger
- 2. Notre Boeuf de Grâce
- 3. Burger de Ville
- 4. Chez Tousignant
- 5. Five Guys

**Best Chicken
Wings**

- 1. Buffalo Bill Wings
- 2. Cunningham's Pub
- 3. McLean's Pub
- 4. Hooters
- 5. Next Door





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05.30-19.06





Falafel Yoni, Best Falafel #1

Best Donuts

- 1. Bernie Beigne
- 2. L  ch   Desserts
- 3. Krispy Kreme
- 4. La Beignerie
- 5. Trou de Beigne

Best Dumplings

- 1. Sammi & Soupe Dumpling
- 2. Qing Hua
- 3. HarBin Dumpling

- 4. La Maison de Mademoiselle Dumpling
- 5. Ai Dumpling

Best Falafel

- 1. Falafel Yoni
- 2. Nilufar
- 3. Falafel St. Jacques
- 4. Boustan
- 5. La Panth  re Verte

Best Fish and Chips

- 1. Brit & Chips
- 2. Comptoir 21
- 3. McLean's
- 4. O Fish
- 5. Burgundy Lion

Best Fried Chicken

- 1. Jack le Coq
- 2. Bucky Rooster's
- 3. KFC

- 4. Roch le Coq
- 5. Olivia's

Best Fries

- 1. Frites Alors
- 2. McDonald's
- 3. Patati Patata
- 4. Lafleur
- 5. La Belle Province

Best Hot Dog

- 1. Montreal Pool Room
- 2. Lafleur
- 3. La Belle Province
- 4. Dirty Dogs
- 5. Orange Julep

Best Mac and Cheese

- 1. Le Cheese
- 2. Seasoned Dreams
- 3. Dinette Triple Crown
- 4. Bucky Rooster's
- 5. Macbar et Fromage

Best Montreal Beer

- 1. St-Ambroise
- 2. Amiral IPA
- 3. Dieu du Ciel
- 4. Messor  m Bracitorium
- 5. 4 Origines

Best Pad Thai

- 1. Pumpui
- 2. Thai Express
- 3. Co ut
- 4. Bangkok Express
- 5. Chu Chai

Best Pho

- 1. Pho Bang
- 2. Pho Tay Ho
- 3. Pho Lien
- 4. Pho Bac No. 1
- 5. Pho Mont-Royal

Best Pizza

- 1. Pizza Bouquet
- 2. Fugazzi Pizza
- 3. Pizzeria Adamo
- 4. Pizza Toni
- 5. Pizzeria No. 900

Best Pok  

- 1. OKOK
- 2. Pok   Station
- 3. Ahi Pok  
- 4. Olu Olu Pok  
- 5. Venice

Best Poutine

- 1. La Banquise
- 2. Ma Poule Mouill  e
- 3. La Belle Province
- 4. Patati Patata
- 5. Poutineville

BEST I EVER HAD!

*Quote from a popular song.



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Best Ramen

- 1. Umami Ramen & Izakaya
- 2. Kinton Ramen
- 3. Yokato Yokabai
- 4. Tsukuyomi Ramen
- 5. Ramen Nakamichi

Best Ribs

- 1. Bâton Rouge
- 2. Bar-B-Barn
- 3. Blackstrap BBQ
- 4. Bofinger
- 5. St-Hubert

Best Rotisserie Chicken

- 1. Chalet BBQ
- 2. Ma Poule Mouillée
- 3. Coco Rico
- 4. Portugalia
- 5. Romados

Best Sandwich

- 1. Bossa
- 2. Bocado
- 3. Aux Vivres
- 4. Clarke Café
- 5. Santropol

Best Seafood

- 1. Lucille's
- 2. Milos
- 3. Sirène de la Mer
- 4. Garde Manger
- 5. Maestro SVP

Best Shish Taouk

- 1. Bousthan
- 2. Amir
- 3. Sham
- 4. Shawarmaz
- 5. Falafel St. Jacques

Best Smoked Meat

- 1. Schwartz's
- 2. The Main
- 3. Smoked Meat Pete
- 4. Snowdon Deli
- 5. Dunn's

Best Steak

- 1. Gibbys
- 2. The Keg
- 3. Bâton Rouge
- 4. Place Carmin
- 5. The Main

Best Sushi

- 1. Sushi Momo
- 2. Jun-i
- 3. Boîte Geisha
- 4. Park
- 5. Soba

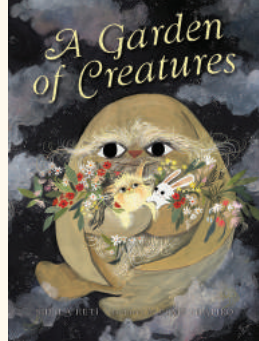
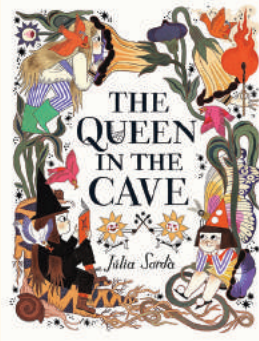
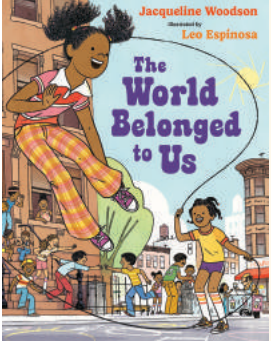
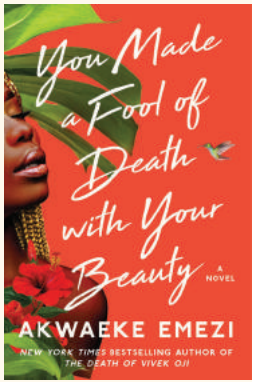
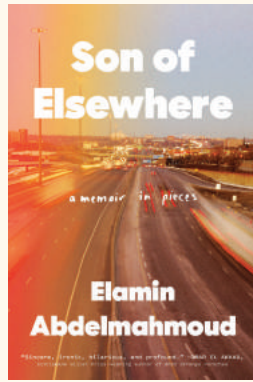
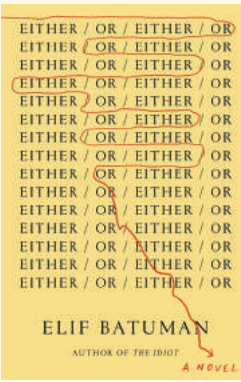
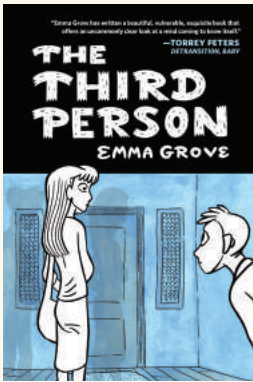
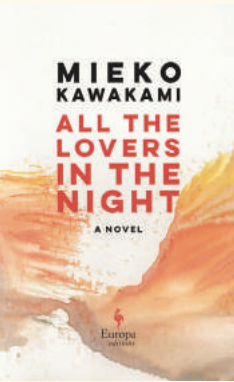
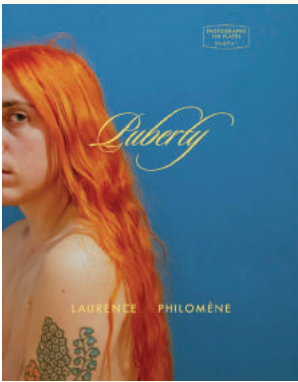
Best Taco

- 1. Tacos Frida
- 2. Tacos Victor
- 3. El Rey del Taco
- 4. La Capital
- 5. Escondite

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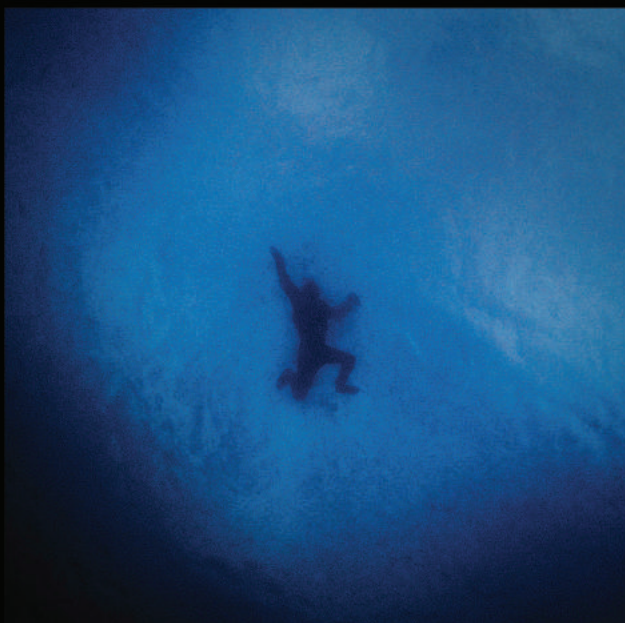
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UNIVERSAL MUSIC CANADA

Best Vegetarian

- 1. Aux Vivres
- 2. Sushi Momo
- 3. LOV
- 4. Lola Rosa
- 5. La Panthère verte

Best Café (for ambiance)

- 1. Café Olimpico
- 2. Crew Collective
- 3. Paquebot
- 4. Atomic Café
- 5. Tommy

Best Teahouse

- 1. Cardinal Tea Room
- 2. Camélia Sinensis
- 3. Cha Noir
- 4. Gryphon d’Or
- 5. Ming Tao Xuan

Best Ice Cream

- 1. Iconoglace
- 2. Kem Coba
- 3. Dalla Rose
- 4. Ca Lem
- 5. La Diperie

Best Butcher

- 1. Chez Vito
- 2. Boucherie Lawrence
- 3. McCormack
- 4. Boucherie Beau-Bien
- 5. Maître Boucher

Best Bakery

- 1. Guillaume
- 2. Automne
- 3. Le Toledo
- 4. Première Moisson
- 5. Arhoma

Best Coffee (for coffee)

- 1. Café Olimpico
- 2. Café Myriade
- 3. Dispatch
- 4. Paquebot
- 5. Caffè Italia

Best Fromagerie

- 1. Fromagerie Hamel
- 2. Fromagerie Atwater
- 3. Fromagerie Copette & Cie
- 4. Fomagerie
- 5. Bleu & Persillé

Best Chocolate/Sweets

- 1. Juliette & Chocolat
- 2. Lecavalier Petrone
- 3. Chocolats de Chloé
- 4. Dubrovina Chocolate
- 5. Chocolats Favoris

Best Produce Store

- 1. PA
- 2. Supermarché Mile End
- 3. Jean-Talon Market
- 4. Marché Atwater
- 5. Segal's



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Best Organic Food Store

1. PA Nature
2. Rachelle-Béry
3. Tau
4. Branche d'Olivier
5. Avril Supermarché Santé

Best Health Food Store

1. Branche d'Olivier
2. Rachelle-Béry
3. Tau
4. BioTerre
5. Avril

Best Fishmonger

1. Waldman
2. La Mer
3. Poissonnerie Falero
4. Odessa Poissonnier
5. Poissonnerie Shamrock Fish



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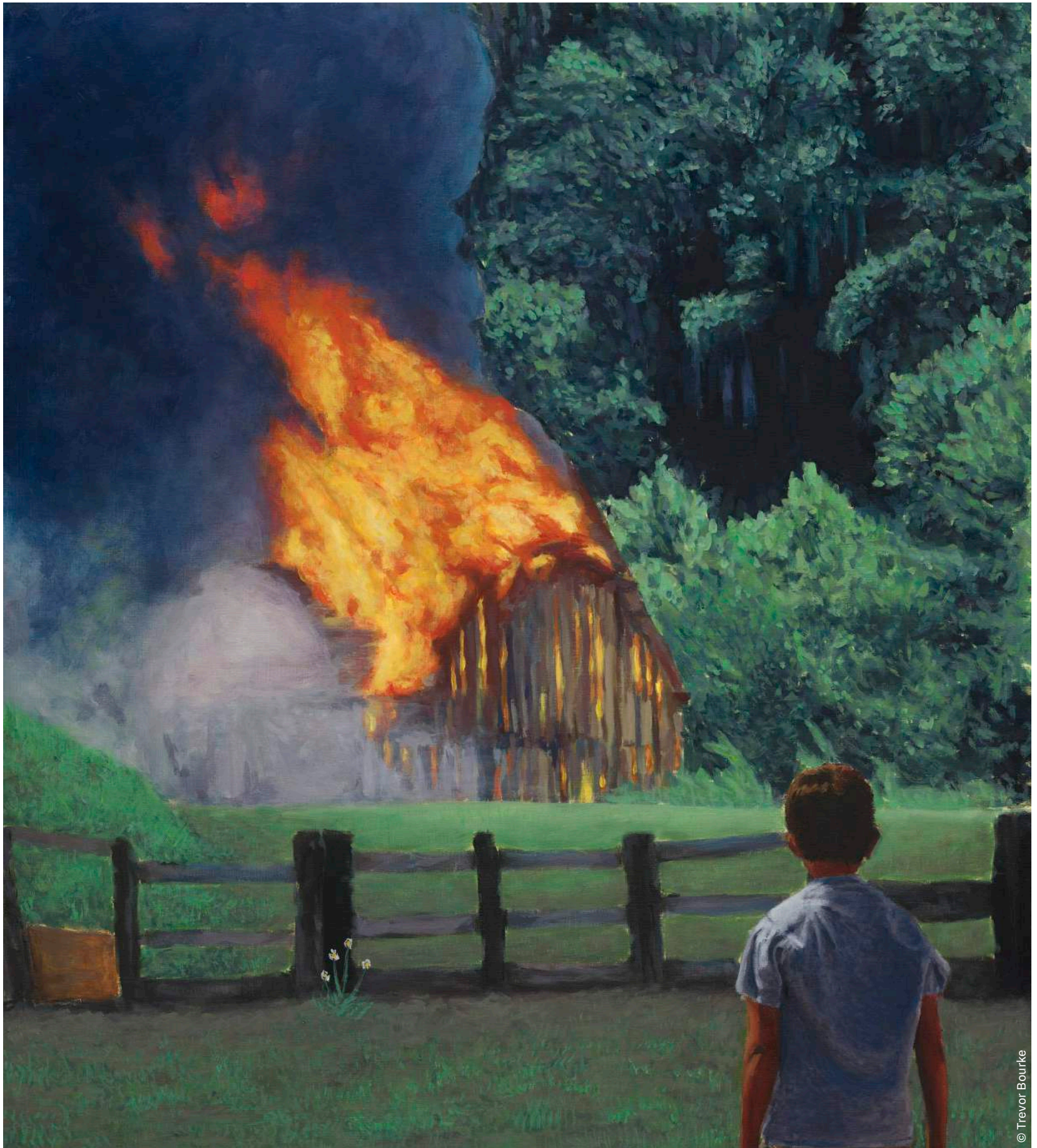
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LOCAL ARTIST

OUT OF SPACE



Disoriented | Ink on Watercolour Paper



Toilet | Sweatshirt



Astronaut | Sweatshirt



Tiny | Ink on Watercolour Paper



Out of Space logo | Toque

Astronaut is a common term among Canadians of Asian descent.

The term, *Astronaut*, is used among the economic-class immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan when one or both adult members of a nuclear family return to their country of origin to pursue a professional career or business, while leaving the child behind. Those left behind become *Satellite children*. Matthew, a local Montreal artist, comes from an interstellar family such as this.

During the political distress in Hong Kong, coupled with the global pandemic, Matthew's experience of being out of place continued to grow. He channels this shared experience into his art initiative, *Out of SPACE*.

Out of SPACE is a form of image poetry. It is a combination of a reflective process and social commentary on the environmental impact and implications of the current space race. It builds on the legacy of the annual social media event Inktober. However, instead of having a list of pre-determined drawing prompts, followers on Matthew's social media platform propose a one-word prompt to create and direct the exploration of space. This collaboration allows the artist to reimagine a rose-tinted future in space.

For example, "*Disoriented*" (top left) - a hand-drawn piece created using ink on watercolour paper - stemmed from a causal conversation with Jone, a follower of Matthew's social media.

"*Disoriented*" depicts an astronaut detached from their mothership. Matthew attempted to visualize the detachment of the umbilical cord at birth. The feeling of disorientation is the result of risk-taking and stepping into the unknown. This image poetry epitomizes Matthew's venture from Inktober to a start-up.

Matthew is displaying his art in three location this summer. *Hôtel Ambrose, Mon Shack au Québec & La cour des arts du Vieux-Montréal* and *Artpop Montréal* are featuring his art in downtown, Old port and Le Plateau-Mont-Royal.

Visit the Out of SPACE online store at outofspacematt.com or follow instagram @outofspacematt. If you want to participate, send Matthew a one-word prompts for his daily ink drawing posts. Escape with us.

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Resto Wrongs



Clayton Sandhu

BY CLAYTON SANDHU

Well, it looks like another year of off-and-on lockdowns had everyone feeling pretty nostalgic, huh? A lot of classics top the lists this year (which I can totally get down with) but I was expecting a bit more upheaval! With so many new concepts and new people in the mix, I would have thought we'd have a few more surprise winners. So, with that said, I guess resto wrong #1 is: You're boring.

But you're also right — at least on some things. Pichai and Salle Climatisée were both restaurants I put on my own list of best new restaurants. Congratulations are owed to the team at Keela who pulled off a surprise first place position. I haven't been to eat there yet but it looks like I ought to soon.

Continuing on with the positive — the whole Caribbean list is excellent. I might have switched up the ordering but it's full of great picks. Best Indian sees the addition of Super Qualité — a restaurant I love. Nice work with that one. I'm also happy to see Pizza Bouquet, Chalet BBQ and Bossa taking top spots in their respective categories.

Here's what you got wrong. To start off, the Chinese section is missing the obvious additions of J'ai Feng, Gia Ba and Kam Fung and I don't know what Soba Sushi is but neither Soba nor Sushi are Chinese. Shoutout to Doby & Andy and Mon Nan, though.

The French list is okay but a little expected. Yes, of course, l'Express and Leméac deserve their places on this list, no doubt. However, I can't repeat enough how good Bistro la Franquette is. It's everything you want to eat at l'Express — and I mean no disrespect — cooked better. No jars of gherkins, however. Another oft-overlooked French gem is Paloma up in Villers. It's Niçoise cooking (olive oil France, not butter France) with an excellent wine list run by father-daughter duo Armand and Rosalie Forcherio.

Sushi Momo for Best Sushi? I mean, I know we're not known for sushi here in Montreal but are we really willing to say our city's best comes from the vegan sushi place (which doesn't technically even constitute sushi)? What's next — Best Steak: beets? Don't mistake this as vegan-bashing — I'll concede it's earned its place among the best vegan restaurants but let's give sushi its proper respect. For me, Jun-i continues to reign supreme (unless, of course, you have the budget and good fortune to snag a spot at a Sushi Nishinokaze pop-up at Vinette).

The Best Fine Dining list is a bit of a mess for me. Fine Dining is a style — one we tend to reject here in Montreal. The term is often a substitute for expensive, but fine dining is more than that. It's about a considered dining experience that is elaborate, embellished and, yeah, expensive, too. L'Express, in my opinion, hardly counts as fine dining. It is by definition a bistro, which makes it casual. The beautiful room and austere service doesn't make it fine dining, it just makes it French. Île Flottante certainly merits its place on this list along with Joe Beef but I'd argue the list is missing some fine dining staples like le Club Chasse et Pêche, Bouillon Bilk and Toqué.

On to the real shames. KFC made it in the Top 3 for Best Fried Chicken. I think that speaks volumes. I'm not even a

fried chicken stan, but like, for real? I give it the top spot for greenest coleslaw. Also Bâton Rouge placed in the Top 5 in two different categories. Again, I'll let that speak for itself. We can, and should, do better than big-box style restaurant chains. Lastly, Frites Alors for Best Fries — nope. Actually, the whole list is busted (although I begrudgingly admit that McDonald's fries are very good). The best bowl of fries in town, if you ask me, is from Lawrence. Thick cut, proper salty and chock full of extra crispy craggy edges. It's a good-ass fry.

This year, the takeaway is that we love the classic spots. The names we know and love, the ones we think of when we think of food in Montreal inevitably make the Top 5 in their respective category. Classics aren't bad, in fact, they are the enduring examples of what makes Montreal's restaurant scene so good. However, there are incredible things going on in the food scene in Montreal these days — and I'm not just saying that because we're coming out of a very hard few years. The restaurant scene is more diverse, more interesting, and overall better than it has been in a very long time. I urge you all to spend some time checking out some new spots and eating some new dishes. I promise you that if you do, the lists will look a lot different come next year.

On a closing note, I want to express my appreciation and respect for everyone out there in the restaurant scene still doing the damn thing. These lists are fun, they give us a chance to reflect on the food and restaurants we love but they are, in essence, a testament to the work of cooks, servers, baristas and bartenders without whom none of this would be possible. Whether your restaurant is number one or not on the list at all, you're someone's favourite restaurant and that's a wonderful thing to be.

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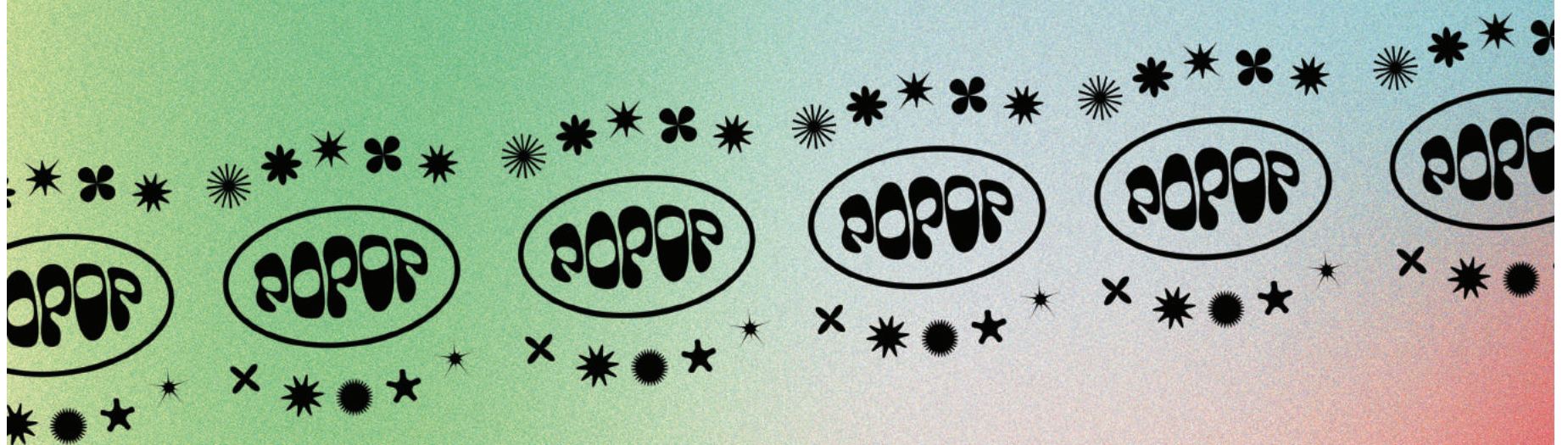
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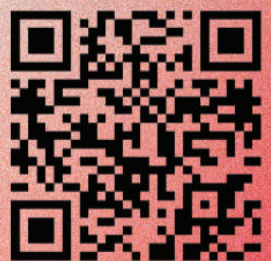
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