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The Editor

Greetings and Salutations,

Welcome to 2020 our year-end issue. While it's been a challenging year for many, we continue to bring you the positive stories that bring us joy and happiness, as we forge into a new year ahead. As we're being encouraged to shop and support local businesses, we decided to also support local talents in this issue.

Our main feature takes a look at a new local record label, **So Fierce Music**, launched to specifically spotlight the talent of marginalized artists. Created by Toronto recording artist and electronic music producer, **Velvet Code**, the first official release is from his long-time friend, **Sofonda**, one of the fiercest gender performance artists here in Toronto. The pair worked together musically to release the single, *Thrive*, the electronic dance groove we can all use right now.

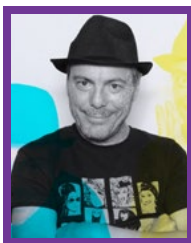
Our second feature is on a new musical outfit called, **MANifesto**, a gaggle of five gents paying tribute to some of the most powerful girl groups in the music industry. The concept was initiated by Toronto musician **r. Kelly Clipperton**, along with four of his BFF's, as a way of "honouring and celebrating these powerful women which gay men tend to gravitate towards." The group are doing regular single releases, and videos, with an anticipated full album release next year.

Our guest *Wigged Out* columnist in this issue is Hamilton's **Karma Kameleon**, who has offered up some advice for those within, or thinking about getting involved in the drag industry. Cat Grant chatted with actor/writer **Shelley Thompson**, best known for her role as Barb Lahy on *Trailer Park Boys*. She's set to release her debut feature, *Dawn, Her Dad and The Tractor*, with a trans character as the central focus of the story. Boyd Kodak caught up with **Monica Forrester**, a 2-Spirit Trans activist who founded *Trans Pride Toronto: Transitioning Together*. Paul Bellini met up with comedian **Gavin Crawford** to get a behind-the-scenes look at his new CBC series, *Because News*. Finally, Raymond Helkio tells us how the **Paul Petro Gallery** has navigated remaining open during the pandemic, and what they have planned for this holiday season.

Our popular **BUZZpicks** events listings are now virtual, meticulously chosen by our Events Editor, Sherry Sylvain, and as always, a big thank you to our designer, Mychol Scully, for making us all look so damn fabulous!

Stay safe, happy holidays, and best wishes for whatever the year ahead holds for us all.

Bryen Dunn
Editor-in-Chief



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Music has the power to unite communities, and strengthen our sense of identity. The music industry, on the other hand, can be a tight-knit-club of warriors fighting-it-out to reign supreme. Luckily ***Velvet Code***, recording artist and electronic music producer, is learning how to roll with the punches.

His newest release, *Teenage Dreamer*, was written before quarantine, but in a sudden twist of events, the music video had to be shot entirely during isolation. This meant *Velvet* had to keep himself focused while gathering creative ideas for the shoot, and staying aware of regulations as restrictions for productions fluctuated.

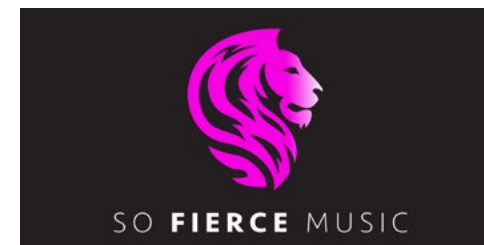
"I struggled to be creative during quarantine for six months, because 'going-out' was part of my creative process." This meant *Velvet* could no longer write a song in the day, and shop it around at night. "I took a chance remixing the **Lady Gaga** track, *Stupid Love*, during quarantine, and then I sent it to her team, and they loved it," *Velvet* tells me.

It seems that seeking out all available opportunities and taking risks in his artistic practice is how *Velvet* managed his award-winning career, and garnered a contract with MTV for multiple popular reality television shows.

Velvet most recently launched, **So Fierce Music** to provide marginalized artists with the full-scale production value that is often reserved for the cultural elite. "I know how it feels to lose opportunities because of my sexuality," *Velvet* shared with me. That's why he made it his personal mission to support artists that are on the fringe of the art world.

Velvet understands that quarantine has been challenging for the queer community, but he still believes, "we have a lot of work to do to be seen and heard." He wants his team to feel as supported as possible. "After the creation process we take steps further to support the artist. We have a publicist that handles radio and print, and social media strategists building quality brands with topical content."

So Fierce Music pushed up the company's official release to support the new single, *Thrive*, by gender performance artist, **Sofonda (Jonathan Cruz)**.



Velvet felt the synergy right away, "I heard the singles, *Kiss My Aaawwww*, and *Game Ova*, and was blown away by *Sofonda*'s lyrics and presence. I thought, after twenty years of knowing Jonathan, the time was right." When *Velvet* first heard the demo for *Thrive*, there wasn't a melody, so he wanted to try something different. "I thought we should add a loud circuit beat. Then we worked together to build a chorus, and we added the music to the vocals," *Velvet* explains to me of the collaboration.

The music is paramount, but *Sofonda* says, "Joining a label like *So Fierce Music* was so great, because they have such a wonderful mandate. It's important to reach out to anyone that needs a helping-hand. I'm committed to giving young people the opportunity to be creative through drag, and hopefully it helps them find parts of themselves in the process."

In the two-weeks since the release of the music video, *Thrive* has already been viewed over twenty thousand times on YouTube, and is trending on social media as the "Song of 2020."

Recently *Sofonda* was featured on *Canada's a Drag* (CBC), which highlights spectacular drag artists from across the nation to which she replies, "The success of drag queens has led to an upswing in performance venues, positive media representation, and has given access to new audiences."

Sofonda has proven to be one-of-the hardest working gender performers in Toronto; from reigning as TD Bank's Pride Ambassador, to being named "Canada's Viral Sensation." She's also done tributes to **Destiny's Child** in a brilliant hybrid performance, a multi-video extravaganza for the release of **Beyonce's** *Lemonade*, and a music video for the Golden Globe Award-winning, *This is Me*, written by **Benj Pasek** and **Justin Paul**.

As COVID-19 hit, "I thought quarantine would be a two-week thing. I was happily waiting it out, but then it started to get serious." *Sofonda* pauses for dramatic effect... "All of a sudden no one is working." Shifting into survival mode, she began "Sofonday," a nine-hour drag marathon. After the success of the live-stream event, she began researching virtual platforms, and other innovative ways to supplement her income.



Because of her determination Sofonda's career is once again on the rise. "I'm shocked because *Pride Toronto* seemed busier this year. I was doing virtual shows helping office workers celebrate milestones, and corporations were hiring LGBTQ performers for sensitivity and awareness events," Sofonda divulges. "But, if we weren't under quarantine everyone would've come to *The Village*, and I miss that."

Being a role model means the world to Jonathan because, "It takes everyone's help for Sofonda to be successful." There's a reflective pause, "It's the community working together that gives Sofonda the magnetism we see in her performances." Duality has never been an issue because, "Jonathan and Sofonda feel like two people that really exist," he tells me with a giggle. "Sometimes I'll be out with friends, and they'll suddenly turn to me and say, 'I miss Sofonda!' It throws me at first, because I'm right here."

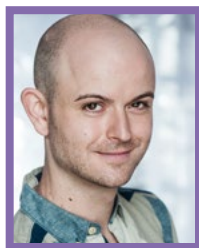
When it's not quarantine and Sofonda isn't working, you may find her out as her third alias, Naomi. "She's an international exchange student dressed for a lesson in seduction," Jonathan purrs, without giving too much away about a possible 'Sasha Fierce' style musical cross over.

As for forming a fictional drag super-group, the first queen would have to be, "**Scarlet Bobo** because she's so multi-talented, and she would create opportunities, even if no one books us!" Then after a short pause, Jonathan tells me, "there's a newer artist that I also love, **Ophelia Manson!** Have you heard of her? You will! She's an amazing make-up artist." And for the final choice Jonathan takes a deep breath before he reveals, "Of course! **Jada Shada Hudson!**"

Whether it's Naomi, Sofonda, or Jonathan we see them as a shining beacon of positive representation for LGBTQ people, using star power to break down barriers in the music industry, proving that we *thrive* best under pressure.

Aaron Rothermund wrote, directed, and produced two plays, *Ambiguous* and *Charming Monsters*. Aaron made three films as part of the Script to Screen program at Centennial College. *Power Lines* and *Love Wins* are currently touring Canada, UK, and the US. *Respect* was chosen as the main class project, to be released in 2021. Since graduating Aaron co-directed the film, *Surprise in the Night* and produced, *Baby Fever*, which will be released in 2022.

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By Raymond Helkio

MANifesto is r. kelly Clipperton's latest musical collective of talent, that combines pop music and beautiful harmonies, with swish-and-drag camp, to create a queer tour-de-force of cover groups. The five semi-grown-up gay boys are from Toronto, and specifically cover songs originated by girl groups.

Clipperton came up with the idea a decade ago while with his band *Kelly & The Kellygirls*. "As a group they were always really diverse, but very rarely were any of them gay, so the idea occurred to me that I wanted to do something with other out gay men. It kind of hearkens back to when I was 23 and my entire world was other gay men," he explains.

For many gay men being with like-minded people is our first experience of being accepted, but perhaps more importantly, surrounding ourselves with other queer people can serve as a reminder that it's not only okay to be gay. Embracing it can

liberate us from the pressures to conform to societal ideas for what a gay person should or should not be. Consider how a flaming gay boy might be treated by the fellas at the auto body shop? What if the local male bank manager came to work wearing a heavy dose of eye shadow? People's reactions can constitute a type of homophobia for sure, but that's the sweet spot where MANifesto is creating from. By embracing full camp, they effectively perform their identities, a type of activism that is as uplifting as it is provocative.

Beyond the novelty behind the concept, Clipperton brought together each person based on talent, and equally as important was for each person to be able to bond into a sisterhood similar to the power girl groups of the 80s. "I found that girl groups like Bananarama had a sense of tribalism, like a bunch of brats having fun and getting away with it, and I just wanted to pledge allegiance to that sorority. This is a perfect mix of honouring and celebrating these powerful women which gay men tend to gravitate towards, and turn these beautifully written songs into something new," Clipperton asserts.

Decidedly queer, the group is comprised of Clipperton, along with **Twaine Ward, Balaram Vilchis, Icarus Devdas, and Dionisio Silva**. There are also three musical directors, **Anthony Bastianon** (yes, the same Bastianon that wrote *The Rob Ford Musical*), **Stewart Borden**, and **Alan Moon**.

Clipperton refers to the group as gay men he can count on, a chosen family of sorts.

Vilchis echoes this sentiment, "We've addressed the importance of becoming real friends and supporting one another when we hurt or are going through difficult times, supporting each other beyond the studio and rehearsals." Being in a group requires a fair amount of chemistry between the members, and so being able to trust one another on stage means counting on one another offstage as well.

Devdas, who had stepped in to replace a member that didn't work out, has experienced firsthand the group's efforts towards building trust. "Two days after I agreed to join the group, Kelly casually mentioned that we were meant to be in the recording studio two days later, where I would meet the other singers and lay down tracks for the first two songs. No pressure! As we were wrapping up Mr. Sandman, there was uncertainty in how the song should end, and I had an idea and told them to trust me and record what I was about to sing, and their trust paid off," he shares.

"Artists are resourceful and that will always warm my heart. Any huge obstacle that is put in front of them, creative people will find a way through it."

~ r. kelly Clipperton ~

One thing Kelly hadn't counted on was a pandemic which would ultimately bring the city to a standstill, but not *MANifesto*. They found ways to continue rehearsing online, outdoors, and over the phone, virtually anything to keep the ball rolling and the group in contact. Clipperton adds, "More often than not artists need other artists, because you function in that space of needing to create together."

So when it came time to start recording sessions, they faced a new set of challenging questions, including how would they record five vocals when new social distancing measures limit the number of people in the studio to one at a time? Clipperton says, "I've been recording, writing, mixing, producing, and touring for thirty years now, and I'm still learning. Now it's a totally different animal trying to mix five voices into the landscape of a song and make it feel unified." Fans may not be able to see the extra work that has to happen in order to produce a song during a pandemic, but that's okay because what matters is getting the final product to a place of pride. As Ward recalls, "The excitement of hearing our voices professionally recorded and blended with the music lovingly played and arranged by very talented people thrills me every time."

If Rick Astley was gay (don't I wish), and decided to form his own boy band, he would produce something akin to

how *MANifesto* has mastered En Vogue's *My Loving* vocal harmonies. This five-piece has a knack for bridging the gap between where they are creatively, and where they think they should be. "Stewart Borden was teaching us *My Loving*, and with his gentle direction and musicality it happened almost organically. I didn't think we'd be able to do it just by listening to each other, so it was a beautiful moment for all of us," admits Clipperton. While *My Loving* is yet to be released, like their other tracks, it'll be available as a music download and on YouTube soon after they hit the recording studio again.

Silva describes a similar experience after receiving their first arrangement from Alan Moon. "We had all been nervous about how we were going to sound. Once we got our notes and started singing, it was clear to all of us that we were doing something really special and spectacular. We all stopped singing and started jumping up and down shouting 'this is really happening,' and uncontrollable giddy laughter ensued for the next five minutes. It's the best feeling in the world having this much fun doing what we love."

Say You'll Be There originally by the **Spice Girls**, and *The Promise* by **Girls Aloud**, are two deeply sexy tracks that *MANifesto* recently released. According to Clipperton, "It was a longer haul than usual, but the extra time and effort shines through in each track." Their videos can be found on YouTube, including *The Promise*, which was filmed from a Wellesley and Parliament rooftop. A *Much Music* era act of defiance, and a whimsical commentary on pop culture and identity politics.

Fans can look forward to the official full album release, slated for Pride 2021. Until then you can hear them on *103.9 ProudFM*, or support the artists directly by downloading the tracks and sharing their videos. Like their pop-star contemporaries, *MANifesto* is sure to ignite, empower, and help you live proud all year long!

MANifesto

YouTube: [r. kelly Clipperton](#)
Bandcamp: [manifesto2.bandcamp.com](#)
Facebook/Instagram: [manifestotimes5](#)

Raymond Helkio is an author, director and filmmaker. He graduated from the Ontario College of Art & Design University and is co-founder of The Reading Salon.

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WIGGED OUT

BY KARMA KAMELEON

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY WITHIN DRAG



I have a unique perspective on working in drag. I've watched my home city of Hamilton's queer/drag scenes die and re-emerge again, and somehow have managed to find regular work in a city with no queer venues.

I'm also a comedian with poor judgment, so I've decided that I'm more suited to giving advice. I'll admit that's out of necessity. When one can't afford a therapist, they take to joking about problems they can't/won't address. As such, here's some advice I try to live by with drag.

1 - Be professional. This one is simple yet effective. Be on time, or better yet be early. An early drag queen is like a top on Grindr with a face pic, the stuff of legends. Be self-sufficient backstage. Needing a zip is one thing, but if you can't get yourself stage ready at a venue without a team there's a problem. I always say that when people think of drag, they think it comes down to two things; looks and performance. I believe it comes down to three; looks, performance, and professionalism, and not necessarily in that order.

2 - Don't be an ahole.** You can be as gorgeous and as talented as you want, but if people don't want to work with you, you won't work. This goes for how you treat promoters/venues, other entertainers and most of all your audience. This is a hard one because drag queens LOVE a good diva. We idolize them. Being a diva can be a great character choice, but the trick is not to become one in real life. P.S. I'm not a doctor, but I play one on TV.

3 - Stop listening to the haters. Welcome to my after school special. Spoiler alert: when you succeed, it threatens insecure people. Haters gonna hate, not because of what you do, but because of what they can't do.

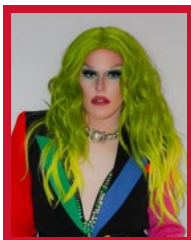
4 - Know who you are and own it. Listen to some Lizzo. You got this! When I started drag I performed for what I thought people wanted from a drag performer, and that insecurity showed. When I decided to do the drag I wanted, I had more confidence, more fun, and that showed.

5 - Have fun! This is most important. When you have fun, your audience has fun, and when they have fun they keep coming back.

I'll end this advice column with how I like to end my shows, drunk, crying, and preferably under a stranger. You don't have to go home, but if you take me home I'll put you in my act one day.

Karma Kameleon is a Hamiltonian drag queen who describes herself as the midpoint between Charlize Theron, and that character she played in the movie Monster. As a self-professed scholar of the gay arts, she was born from a mix of the best parts of the great divas before her, but mostly the worst parts of Celine/ She is a stand up comedian, lip sync artist, high fashion glamour model, and compulsive liar.

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Shelley Thompson



Multi award winning actor/ writer Shelley Thompson, is best known for her character of 13 years, Barb Lahey on *Trailer Park Boys*.

She grew up in Calgary with an artist mother, who had all her children take music lessons and read a lot of books.

Writing by the age of eight, and dreaming of acting by 10, Shelley put her sights on attending “the best” school, and went on to participate in a choir exchange at the *Royal Academy of Dramatic Art* (RADA), in London, England.

Upon returning to Canada, Shelley acted in Toronto before moving to the East Coast. “I went to Nova Scotia to be in the first season (1995) of the newly created *Atlantic Theatre Festival*.” She is currently back living there again, with her husband, who she credits with inspiring and encouraging her when she branched out into a new path of writing and directing for screens. Shelly also cites being inspired by her mother, and her own child, **T. Thomason**, a singer/ songwriter who competed on the second season of *CTV's The Launch*, and who identifies as non-binary.

Shelley has written and directed several short films, and is about to release her upcoming debut feature, *Dawn, Her Dad and The Tractor*. The protagonist is a trans woman

returning home to honour her mother's dying wish to have Dawn and her father mend the rift between them. Shelley explains, “It's a story about a family and community moving towards understanding and acceptance at a time when trans individuals are in danger, and still struggle for acceptance and justice.”

It's also a personal narrative for Shelley. “My child's journey has made me a warrior for them, and their community. Though I can't always begin to know their experiences, I can try and be there for them.”

The release date is still tentative, as Shelley says, “With Covid... who knows? We're hoping for early next year, so we'll see what festivals are doing then.”

Creating during COVID is a mixed bag for Shelley. “I'm never bored, I always have more stuff I want to create. I'm hugely aware of my mortality these days, so I'm always in a hurry. That results in creativity, but it can also produce desperation masquerading as creativity. I spend a lot of time sifting and deciding which is which.”

Shelley says her writing ritual consists of, “Coffee. Sit. Get up, adjust the light. More coffee. Or maybe tea this time. Sit. Get the cat off my chair. Get the cat a treat. Make another coffee. Put my starter out for sour dough. Sit at the desk. Adjust the blinds. Check Facebook. Check my starter. Make the bread. Wonder about a walk. Start.”

Her dream gig? “Writing and directing a series that people are desperate to watch, and that made a difference. Made them laugh, cry, and re-think.”

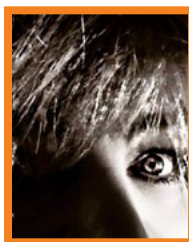
In five years Shelley wants to be, “Alive, thinking, writing and collaborating in Nova Scotia.”

The one thing you need to know about Shelley besides her humour and immense talent, is that she follows her mantra, “Be Kind,” which she states, “I'm doing my best.”

www.shelleythompson.com
www.pictureplant.com

Cat Grant (OCAD) is a multidisciplinary fine artist, with a focus on photography, multimedia portraiture, and illustrating children's books. She's also a published poet, and senior reporter for *On the Couch* LGBTQ TV show.

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GAVIN CRAWFORD



It all started in Taber, Alberta, when a precocious Gavin Crawford was cast in a local production of *The Music Man* at age ten.

"I naturally lisped my way through the role of Winthrop," he told me. He attended UBC, and upon graduating he states, "I was cast in a feminist retelling of the *King Arthur* legend, which was about six hours long, and I remember thinking, this is not for me." So he wisely turned to comedy.

Crawford's career rose quickly, from *Second City* live shows in Toronto, to *The Gavin Crawford Show* on *The Comedy Channel*, then eight seasons of *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, out of Halifax. It was while in that city that someone spray-painted "Gavin Crawford is a fag" on a building, and the producers of the show brought him into the office and asked if he wanted protection. He told them that what he wanted to do was grab a cameraman and turn it into a bit.

In 2015 he embarked on a *CBC Radio* show called, *Because News*, and now he's starring in the television version of the same. Gavin and three guest comedians talk about current events and people in the news. Unfortunately, they must shoot without an audience, which he describes as, "Not great. However, I had an idea to use footage of vintage CBC audiences, which everybody knows is fake, but it does work."

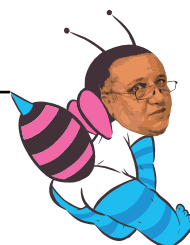
The episode I saw, using an audience of pimply teenagers from a 1990s taping of *Jonovision*, worked beautifully.

Crawford tries hard to balance the three guests. "It's not really an informative show. We're not going to solve the refugee crisis, and I don't want to set up a Liberal and Conservative to yell at each other. The panellists need to tease each other, and have fun." He is also thrilled that he gets to put Canadian comedians on television. "There are so few places where you can see comedians' faces in Canada. How can you build a brand and tour comedy clubs all across the country if audiences don't know who you are?"

For Gavin there is something personally rewarding about hosting *Because News*. "Unlike every other CBC show I've ever done, including even *The Sound of Music* show, *How Do You Solve A Problem Like Maria*, I'm finally allowed to be as gay as old boots on this one. Throughout my career, I often got letters asking, 'Why do you have to be gay and stuff?' Um, why? Because you wrote a letter like this. As soon as I don't get these letters, I'll finally stop."

Stay up to date with Gavin's adventures [here](#). Stream *Because News* on [CBC GEM](#) and Podcasts [here](#).

Paul Bellini is an award-winning television comedy writer (*Kids in the Hall*, *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*). He also teaches comedy writing at *George Brown College* in Toronto.



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A KODAK MOMENT

Monica Forrester

BY BOYD KODAK



Monica Forrester - It's been challenging due to COVID, to connect with community and the displace of folk through the outreach. I have been working steadily through social media and Zoom, as many community members are feeling isolated. I've also been working with service providers to make sure people have access to limited services, such as food delivery, harm reduction supplies, and online Zoom programs.

BK - During that time, which was the most exciting event for you?

MF - It's been great to still be able to celebrate *Pride and International Sex Workers Day* with online events, and programming to connect community on these yearly events.

BK - What are you looking forward to next year?

MF - I'm looking forward to achieving more funding to create more programs for community members. I'm also hoping we have a vaccine for COVID so that we can get back to engaging with community at our space at *Trans Pride Toronto*, which is very vital for the health and well-being of community members.

BK - Future plans?

MF - To create more programming for diverse communities we serve, and start planning for next year's events, like *Pride and Trans Remembrance*. I'm also excited to be part of the council, to represent the communities I serve regularly through my work and outreach to low income, homeless, and the sex worker Trans/2Spirit Community. This committee will allow me to bring the voices from the most marginalized in the Trans/2S communities to the forefront when it comes to planning and implementing programming and structures in the communities

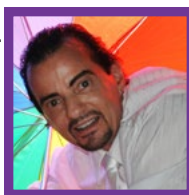
BK - Any message you would like to put out there?

MF - Thanks for supporting *Trans Pride* work, and seeing it as vital and important to keeping the community connected, especially during times like this.

BK - The last thing I do before I go to sleep is...

MF - I think about what I've done that day to better the lives of people and the community, but and I also think about what I need to be doing for days ahead to keep the community engaged and connected.

Boyd Kodak is an award-winning trans activist, musician, writer, filmmaker, curator, and festival/entertainment director.



Monica Forrester is 2Spirit Trans women of colour, pronouns are her/she/they. She has been part of the Trans community for 30 years, actively working to create awareness for the most marginalized and racialized Trans/2Spirit community members, who experience homelessness, poverty, stigma, and discrimination.

Most of her work has been working from a harm reduction approach, to better the health and well-being of people in the communities she serves. In 2004 she founded *Trans Pride Toronto: Transitioning Together* to better the lives of Trans/2Spirit individuals. She is currently part of drum group called *Circle of Cedar Drummers* who meet weekly at Barbara Hall Park, and she has also produced and directed video work.

Boyd Kodak - What have you been doing over the last year?

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PAUL PETRO SPICES IT UP FOR THE HOLIDAYS



Paul Petro Contemporary Art (PPCA) has produced well over three hundred exhibitions in the gallery's 27-year history.

Paul attests to the high degree of care they put into the programming and artists they work with. Paul notes, "The estate of **Will Munro** (1975-2010) is included among the artists we exhibit. He was recognized as a leading artist, activist, and community builder of his generation, and we're working to preserve his cultural legacy through our programming. The museum acquisitions are a way to help remember him, and to educate new generations to his ideas."

Given that many arts organizations and galleries are struggling because of the social distancing rules, it's exciting to see PPCA remaining open with viewing time slots to experience their always provocative collection of works safely. While Paul is super busy these days planning for the next set of shows, it wasn't always clear where they were going. "When the pandemic first hit it was hard to avoid the emotional roller coaster of not knowing where this was going to take us. By keeping to our programming schedule, and maintaining brick and mortar exhibitions, we could retain a feeling of normalcy while the spread was happening," he explains.

The struggle to remain open has come with some unexpected rewards, including a large group exhibition at the beginning of the year that infused the space with a new sense of hope and optimism. That show, *Canaries In A Coal Mine*, revealed nineteen artists reflecting on the times that we are currently

living in. They addressed many environmental concerns and considered the fundamental welfare of children, indigenous communities, and of democracy itself.

That exhibition was followed by new paintings by established Canadian artist **Carol Wainio**. The work explored *Aesop's Fable* of the tortoise and the hare. "As the exhibition came to a close and as the spectre of the pandemic was becoming apparent, we realized that the exhibition was capturing the gravity of the collective moment," Paul stated. Which is when he began to see first-hand how the work he curated had become deeply meaningful for people. "It was heartening to see members of our audience coming in under the wire of the lock down, to acquire a work of Carol's that they felt would help get them through the unknowable depths of the months ahead. In a way it made us feel like an essential service."

Paul Petro Contemporary Art
980 Queen St West, Toronto, Ontario M6J 1H1
416-979-7874
www.paulpetro.com

Raymond Helkio is an author, director and filmmaker. He graduated from the Ontario College of Art & Design University and is co-founder of The Reading Salon.

www.raymondhelkio.com
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Photo credit: Paul Petro Contemporary Art, Stephen Andrews & Daniel Gruetter/Firmament installation view, 2020

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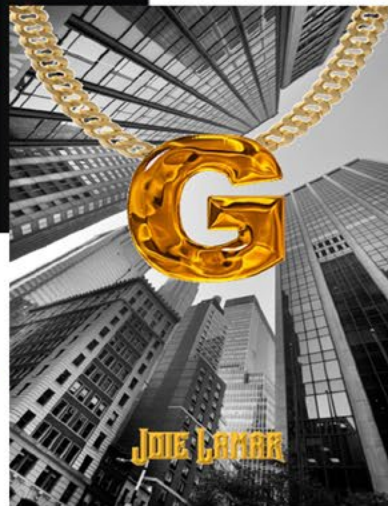
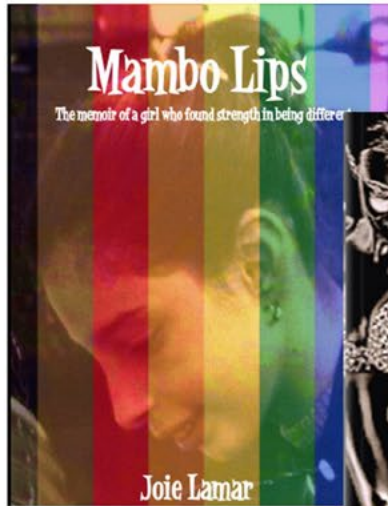
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In response to COVID-19 and the closure of venues due to restrictions on social gatherings, all events, festivals, and other group activities have either been cancelled or postponed for the immediate future.

In the meantime there have been several creative virtual events taking place online.

Please check our listing of events that are happening from a screen near you - www.thebuzzmag.ca/events

Our regular events print section will return as soon as venues start reopening.

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