

EDify.

OCTOBER 2025 EDIFYEDMONTON.COM



CITY. BUSINESS. CULTURE. LIFE. EDMONTON.

WHO IS

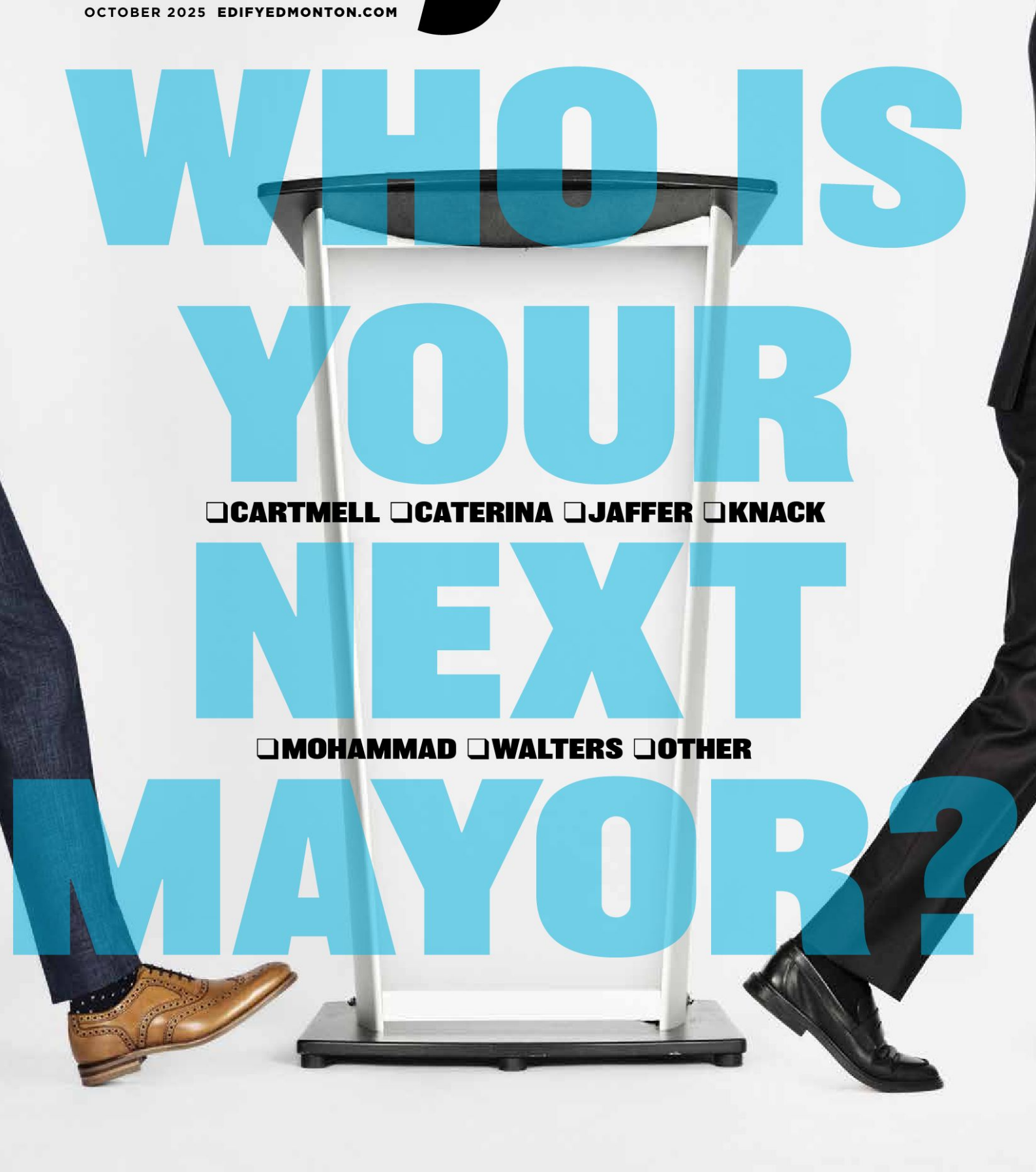
YOUR

CARTMELL CATERINA JAFFER KNACK

NEXT

MOHAMMAD WALTERS OTHER

MAYOR?





Global News Hour at 6

with Carole Anne Devaney & Scott Roberts

Our CITY. Our NEWS.

Globalnews.ca

Global
NEWS

They're changing the world. Will you change theirs?

You might know them – U of A grads **changing lives, shaping industries and inspiring communities.**

Recognize their achievements by nominating them for a 2026 Alumni Award. With five categories honouring excellence in leadership, service, innovation and impact, it's a powerful way to celebrate those making a real difference.

Nominations close December 15. Start yours today.

Find out
how you can
nominate
outstanding
alumni!



BE THE FIRST TO MOVE IN

LEWIS BLOCK

ELEVATED LIVING: Bright, modern suites featuring floor-to-ceiling windows, stylish designer finishes, thoughtfully designed layouts, and the convenience of in-suite laundry.

PREMIUM AMENITIES: This newly built, pet-friendly residence offers a curated selection of amenities, including secure underground parking with bike storage, and a stunning rooftop End Zone Club and fitness centre.



**BOOK YOUR TOUR
AT STADIUMYARDS.COM**

**STADIUM
YARDS**

Rohit™
RENTAL LIVING | Bold Goes Further

CONTENTS



ON THE COVER: Podium and leg model Eric Beliveau photographed by Aaron Pedersen ABOVE: Lauren Kyle McDavid at Trove Living photographed by Paul Swanson

CONTENTS



10 THE CASE FOR SLOW JOURNALISM

Editor-in-chief **Omar Mouallem** on *Edify*'s first and next five years

CITY

18 DELIVERING COMFORT

Demand for midwives is rising but access remains out of reach for many

by **BROOKLYN HOLLINGER**

DELISH

22 TASTE OF OAXACA

El Jardin reimagines itself in the spirit of Mexico's epicurean capital

by **OMAR MOUALLEM**

FEATURES

24 MEET YOUR NEXT MAYOR

How each candidate hopes to lead a city stretched by growth, safety concerns and rising costs

by **OMAR MOUALLEM**

36 THE SECRET LIFE OF HORUS

Tracing a mummy's strange odyssey from ancient Egypt to Edmonton — and the secrets still entombed

by **RUSSELL COBB AND SARAH BRANDVOLD**

42 KEEPING THE CURTAINS UP

Why arts organizations must innovate for their survival

by **ZACHARY AYOTTE**

LOOK

48 BET ON EDMONTON

Lauren Kyle McDavid and Brittany Schulz go all-in with Trove Bar and Living

by **CAROLINE GAULT**

54 HOT OFF THE KILN

Ceramic goods that are as beautiful as they are functional

by **BROOKLYN HOLLINGER**

STAGE

58 MEMOIR

An ailing musician and his bandmates vow to keep rocking until time runs out

by **SCOTT MESSENGER**

61 SPOTLIGHT

What to see, hear, read and watch this month

by **ZACHARY AYOTTE**

63 LOVE LETTERS

A writer reflects on letting go after her divorce, and the journey towards healing

by **LISA MARTIN**

65 LOST ONES

Remembering Gary Lopaschuk, a pioneer of cardiovascular research

by **CHRISTINA FRANGOU**

66 CROSSWORD

Put your memory to the test with clues drawn from our pages

by **BRANDON CATHCART**

ON THE LOOKOUT In the next issue of *Edify*, we unveil the next generation of Edmonton leaders on the 17th annual Top 40 Under 40 list.





**WE DELIVER
THE CORE SERVICES
THAT SHAPE OUR CITY.**

Civic Service Union 52 members keep Edmonton safe, inclusive, and thriving.

Every corner of Edmonton, Civic Service Union 52 members are at work—supporting the services that keep our city moving, connected, and cared for.

From the front lines to behind the scenes, we help shape a safer, more inclusive, and thriving Edmonton—for everyone who calls it home.

Learn more at edmontonforeveryone.ca





élan

Canada's Best
New Community

at the 2024 CHBA National
Awards for Housing Excellence.

Live Vibrantly In West Beaumont

*SMALL TOWN CHARM 20 MINS
SOUTH OF EDMONTON*

From townhomes to charming duplexes,
to porch-front laned homes, to larger
park-backing homes, Élan offers
attainable choices for every lifestyle.

Multi-family homes
Starting from the low

\$400s.

Single family homes
Starting from the high

\$400s.

Art Homes | Cantiro Homes | Hopewell | Homes by Avi | Sher-bilt



myelan.ca

EDify.
EDifyEdmonton.com

Publisher Trudy Callaghan

Associate Publisher Jennifer Walton

Editor-In-Chief Omar Mouallem

Art Director Kim Larson

Associate Editor Zachary Ayotte

Editorial Intern Brooklyn Hollinger

Production Betty Feniak

Contributing Editors

Tracy Hyatt, Scott Messenger, Danny Ross,
Michelle Deanne Schultz

Contributors Calvin Alexander, Adam
Borman, Sarah Brandvold, Brandon
Cathcart, Russell Cobb, Christina Frangou,
Caroline Gault, Glenn Harvey, Jordan Hon,
Jay Procktor, Lisa Martin, Scott Messenger,
Aaron Pedersen, Allison Stephen, Paul
Swanson, Yuliia Syvokin, Tiiu Vuorensola,
Aspen Zettel

Digital Strategist Steve Glen

Client Services Ari Tik

Accounting Lana Luchianova

Printing Transcontinental Printing

Distribution Bowers Distributing
and Media Classified

Subscriptions (prices plus GST):

One year \$39. Two years \$69.

Submissions Edify accepts queries via
email for editorial submissions.

We do not accept unsolicited manuscripts.

Please review writers' guidelines at

edifyedmonton.com. Published 9 times/
year by Odvod Media Corp.

Copyright (2025) by Odvod Media Corp.

No part of this publication may be reproduced
without the written consent of the publisher.

The views and opinions herein do not necessarily
represent those of Odvod Media Corp., the publisher,
Trudy Callaghan, or the editor, Omar Mouallem.
Canadian Publications Mail Product Agreement
No. 41354037. Return undeliverable Canadian
addresses to Odvod Media Corp.

odvod **OM**
media

President & CEO Trudy Callaghan

Operations Director Jodi Glen

Creative Director Kim Larson

ODVOD MEDIA CORP.

10221 123 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta

Canada T5N 1N3

T 780.451.1379 F 780.482.5417

odvod.com

info@odvod.com

AM Alberta Magazine
PA Publishers Association

MIX
Paper | Supporting
responsible forestry
FSC® C011625

Canada  Alberta 

CONTRIBUTORS

Q: Kiss, marry, kill: bike lanes, LRT expansion or multiplex infill?



CHRISTINA FRANGO

Writer of "Lost Ones," p. 65

Kiss multiplex infill: some are gorgeous, and they mean more people can live centrally without being boxed into multi-family residences. Automatically marry bike lanes: I'm obsessed. Kill LRT expansion: feels harsh, and it doesn't reflect my true feelings, but so goes the process of elimination.

BROOKLYN HOLLINGER

Writer of "Delivering Comfort," p. 18

Kiss bike lanes: even my beat-up hatchback wants that extra space for the two-wheelers. Marry LRT expansion: I dream of one day taking a continuous ride from my south side home to the far north end. Kill multiplex infill: too complex and polarizing.



JORDON HON

Photographer of "Soy Delicious," p. 21

Kiss bike lanes: I don't own a bike anymore so this one feels like a romantic fantasy for me. Marry LRT expansion: I'd love to one day get down to a one-car household by taking the train anywhere in the city. Kill multiplex infill — or rather, kill the conversation: more units mean more property taxes from the same lot. Density over building more outwards. Debate over!

From this

to that

THE BUTCHERY
BY RGERD

Cook at home.
(Tip your server!)

Local • Dry-aged • Beef, Bison, Elk, Pork, Chicken

rgerd.ca

THE READERS' TRUST

Five years in, *Edify* has been a voice and mirror for this city. Help us make the next five possible

A little over five years ago, my predecessor, Steven Sandor, sent a cryptic email to me and nine other writers — his “inside circle of freelancers” for what was then still *Avenue* Edmonton magazine. He wanted to meet with us on Zoom the very next day, a Friday, at 4 p.m.

Media professionals call this the “late Friday dump” — the prime-time slot for bad news you hope will slip past reporters. News outlets loathe this tactic when governments employ it but embrace it themselves, which in June 2020 was ever more frequent, and so I assumed the worst.

After all, one of my last notes from Steve, on March 17 — six days after the World Health Organization declared a pandemic — was to cancel my latest assignment. The magazine was in “transition,” he said, which I interpreted as a state of chaos caused by collapsing ad revenues. His next missive, months later, was an attempt at damage control after our sister publication, *Avenue* Calgary, announced it would publish exclusively online until the



fall. “Don’t panic,” Steve wrote. Now he wanted us at an urgent Friday meeting, signed NDA required. Sure Steve, we won’t panic.

But it wasn’t bad news. It was, in fact, great news. After 14 years, *Avenue* Edmonton was parting with its Calgary partners, reinventing itself as something authentically Edmonton.

Truth be told, I’d wished for this since interning in 2008. *Avenue* Edmonton felt awkward on its feet then, less from youth than from a brand tailored to Calgary’s more corporate, status-driven culture. Edmonton is an institutional city, more socially minded, preferring grassroots initiatives over marquee spectacles.

Of course, there was much good to that awkward



fit — modest Edmonton could use Cowtown bravado. Since launching locally in 2006, Edmonton's cultural landscape has become more ambitious, and *Avenue* Edmonton magazine played no small part in that. I sincerely believe its coverage of the finer things in life motivated many to raise their own standards and take more pride in themselves. Best Restaurants inspired healthy competition that elevated our dining scene, while Top 40 Under 40 became a benchmark of professional recognition that young leaders now strive toward.

What would change was voice: not aspirational but inspirational, less about lifestyle than life. The future would be guided not by a brand guide but by values — elevated, informed, connected, approachable — words scrawled

years ago on the back of an *Avenue* poster and still in our office today.

The very essence of the new magazine was in its name: *Edify* — to enlighten, to uplift, to strengthen. And that's what we've done from the first issue five years ago.

Since then, the magazine has celebrated Edmonton's innovators while holding space for difficult stories that deepen our understanding of ourselves. It has been a platform where slow journalism — the kind that takes time, care and context — could thrive in an age of speed and distraction.

In its first year, *Edify* won Magazine of the Year at the Alberta Magazine Awards. It has continued to make an impression as tastemaker and storyteller — helping the city understand itself, set cultural standards and preserve its picture in time.

And now that I've told you about our celebrated start, I want you to sit with a thought: what if it were gone?

The marker of good journalism is transparency, so let me be frank: every issue is a fight for survival. At the root is a collapse of ad dollars — the foundation on which glossy magazines were built. For most of the past century, advertising allowed magazines to flourish. In boom times, *Avenue* Edmonton swelled to 154 pages and even turned advertisers away.

Then came the 2015 crash. Marketing budgets were slashed across the country. Many advertisers pulled out and never returned, convinced they could reach customers more efficiently and cheaply through digital platforms. Online ads are indeed cheaper, easier to place, and come with the metrics — clicks, conversions, referral data — that social media has trained companies to expect. But they're not more efficient, as they compete in an over-saturated marketplace where attention is fleeting. Print, on the other hand, offers a captive audience with storytelling and images that command attention. Yet, because there is no dashboard, those benefits could not be quantified, and magazines never fully recovered.

The pandemic was crueler still. Our publisher, Trudy Callaghan, drew on the company's reserves to buy out the Calgary partners and rebrand the magazine as *Edify* — an idea, and even a name, that had been simmering in her mind for years. It was a bold move, very much in step with the vision she showed when she and her late partner, first launched *Avenue* Edmonton. In the middle of a crisis, she chose to bet on Edmonton and on the future of this magazine. But revenues didn't rebound as hoped, and today our issues hover at 68 pages.

We've tried to adapt. Newsletters, podcasts and events have become integral, and I'm grateful for the silver linings — they let us tell more stories and reach more readers. But they haven't closed the gap in ad revenue and they certainly don't make it any easier to produce physical media at a time when printing costs have soared. And yet the subtleties matter: the weight of the paper, the depth of the colour, the tactile quality of holding a finished issue. These are not incidental luxuries; they are part of what makes a magazine worth lingering with.

Meanwhile, the costs of producing our journalism have not changed. In this very issue, three stories — Scott Messenger's memoir about preserving an ailing bandmate's brilliance

(“Crescendo Ending”); Russell Cobb and Sarah Brandvold’s feature on a contested museum artifact (“The Secret Life of Horus”); and Zachary Ayotte’s essay on the future of arts funding (“Keeping the Curtains Up”) — consumed more than three-quarters of our editorial budget. Each went through multiple drafts and was meticulously verified by our lead fact-checker, Brooklyn Hollinger, before moving to creative director Kim Larson and her roster of freelance photographers and illustrators. After designing them into stunning features, Kim returned each story to undergo several rounds of proofreading by every member of the editorial team, including associate publisher Jennifer Walton. Keeping in mind that our production involves two fewer editors than it would have 10 years ago, the combined hours for these three stories was still over 150.

Quality takes time, and time is expensive. This is why we cannot publish work of this depth online alone. Digital ads may support lighter coverage — restaurant reviews, event guides, artist profiles — but not the ambitious, time-consuming reporting that serves a wider public interest.

Few city magazines in Canada still publish fact-checked reporting and in-depth literary journalism. Each closure means the loss of a civic voice.

This precarity isn’t unique to *Edify*. It defines journalism today. Since 2008, Canada has lost 11 per cent of its local news outlets. Edmonton has been hit especially hard: the Local News Research

Project ranked it the third-most “news-deprived” city in the country, losing a third of its outlets, from *Metro News* and *Alberta Venture* to *Vue Weekly* and *See*.

It’s in this context that people sometimes complain to me, “The magazine is all advertising now.” I welcome the chance to correct them. Proportionally, *Avenue* and now *Edify* have always been majority editorial. Believe me, businesses try to buy coverage — an entitlement encouraged by less transparent magazines blurring journalistic red lines, undermining readers’ trust and, quite frankly, insulting their intelligence. To be clear, we don’t take money from subjects, never have, and any potential conflicts of interest are disclosed in the writer’s words or in mine through an editor’s note.

So no, there aren’t more ads. Rather, their presence is more prominent because the page count is half what it once was, and because their nature has shifted. Advertisers increasingly want advertorials: articles that tell their brand story. We’ve always offered these with ethical standards — different design, typeface and labelling to distinguish them as advertising — but demand has grown since businesses have become more proficient with social media. Any company can post a slogan or graphic online, but a printed profile carries weight. What advertisers seek from us is credibility. And credibility comes through storytelling — the thing magazines have always done best. It’s rooted in centuries of tradition, dating back to the first magazine, published in Germany in 1663 and aptly

THE EPICENTRICS



named *Edifying Monthly Discussions*. From the beginning, magazines carved out a middle ground between news and books: deeper than the daily paper, yet more accessible than a tome. By the early 20th century, titles like *Life* and *Time* made slow, premium journalism the norm.

By the 1960s, city magazines adapted that model locally, shaping civic identity with the same dedication to fact-checked reporting, literary journalism and elegant design.

Fewer than 10 city magazines of that standard this still exist in Canada. Each closure means the loss of a civic voice. A city magazine can both celebrate and scrutinize a place. That is the legacy *Edify* inherited — and the one it continues to fight for, issue after issue, against odds that grow steeper by the year.

This naturally raises the question, what can you do to sustain *Edify*?

It's not my job to sell ads — that's the publisher's. She steers the business so my colleagues and I can serve readers, undistracted and uninfluenced by our revenue sources. That said, if you own or manage an organization, the single most effective thing you can do is take out an ad or sponsor an event. You may not get a neat chart of clicks and conversions, but you'll gain something harder to measure and more valuable: a relationship with engaged readers and the pride of standing behind a magazine that belongs to Edmonton.

But most people aren't in that position, which is why we're launching **The Edify Readers' Trust** — a fund inviting direct support from individuals, not corporations. Unlike subscriptions or memberships, it has no tiers, perks or exclusivity. Contributions — one-time or monthly, at any level — will go straight to stories that ad dollars no longer cover: civics and politics, long-form features, narrative nonfiction. The more we raise, the more of these stories we can publish.

With the Readers' Trust, we can pursue this work more consistently and maybe even return to publishing monthly. If you believe in the value of independent local journalism — and the unique role of city magazines as cultural and community artifacts — I invite you to join us in sustaining it. Because without readers willing to stand behind it, there's no guarantee *Edify* will see another five years.

Omar Mouallem
editor@edifyedmonton.com



← Scan to support our journalism

SHOP AT THE EPICENTRE OF OUR CITY
edmontondowntown.com/shop



**SHOP
EDMONTON
TOWN**

2020-2025

THEN & NOW

Where four of our most talked-about cover subjects are today by **OMAR MOUALLEM**



“A Man, Broken” (October 2020)

Edify's first cover featured Javad Soleimani, whose wife, Elnaz Nabiyi, was among 176 killed when Iran's military downed Ukraine International Airlines Flight PS752. She was one of 10 victims tied to the University of Alberta community, which later dedicated a memorial on Rutherford Quad. Meanwhile, Soleimani channelled his grief into activism — producing a documentary about his late wife, gathering new evidence for an independent inquiry, challenging the RCMP's refusal to open a criminal probe and pressing for justice in Canadian and international courts. Underscoring the “long and difficult time” for justice that Soleimani foresaw, the pursuit has been marred by Iran's evidence manipulation, harassment of families and what Ottawa has called “sham trials.” As of September 2025, the International Court of Justice case is advancing, while the International Civil Aviation Organization case is paused pending Iran's appeal.



“True Colours” (September 2021)

When Ashley Callingbull appeared on *Edify*'s cover, she was already a trailblazing Cree model, actress and activist whose story of resilience and cultural pride had inspired Indigenous women across Canada. Internationally, she was best known as the first Canadian to be crowned Mrs. Universe — a contest distinct from the better-known Miss Universe because it welcomes married women like Callingbull, as well as mothers and expectant parents, to compete. Miss Universe changed its rules shortly after the story ran, clearing the way for Callingbull to become the first Indigenous woman to win Miss Universe Canada in 2022 — a victory that took her to the international stage, where she placed 12th. In the same year, she broke another barrier as the first First Nations woman to appear in *Sports Illustrated*'s famed swimsuit issue. Now an in-game host for major pro sports and author with a forthcoming memoir she continues to break barriers and hopes to launch a foundation supporting women and children escaping violence.



“Out of the Blue” (Summer 2022)

Our *Edify* cover featuring outgoing Premier Jason Kenney became our most polarizing ever, sparking outrage so intense that readers swore off the magazine (literally and figuratively) and people at events refused copies outright. Yet those who dismissed it by the cover missed a story written by an outspoken queer writer, who called Kenney's right-wing populism and policies “repugnant” for their impact on queer, racialized and disabled communities. At the time, Kenney was clinging to a leadership review he would lose by time of publication, clearing the way for his resignation. He's since taken private-sector advisory roles but continues to resurface as a commentator. Lately he's warned that Alberta separatism and anger-fueled populism are corrosive to conservatism — an irony not lost on observers who note he helped plant those very seeds, and that his critiques often seem aimed at his more divisive successor, Danielle Smith — our next cover subject! (just kidding)

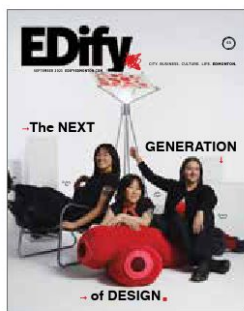


“The Art of Innovation”
(May 2023)

When *Edify* profiled visual artist Braxton Garneau in May 2023, he was four years removed from his first showing at the Art Gallery of Alberta’s “Five Artists, One Love” series, and becoming known for transforming materials like asphalt, raffia, cotton and sugarcane into textured works of art. Since then, his ascent has been swift: a solo show in Los Angeles, a group exhibition at Saskatoon’s Remail Modern and a painting acquired by the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego. This fall he capped a residency at New York’s International Studio and Curatorial Program with a breakthrough solo show at Chicago’s Monique Meloche Gallery, famed for launching artists now in the Guggenheim and Smithsonian. Garneau, whose works draw on Afro-Caribbean and European influences, is preparing his largest solo exhibition yet at the University of Saskatchewan. In February, he’ll return to the AGA for the 20th anniversary of the show where it began.

(Editor’s Note: Garneau is represented by art consultant Michelle Schultz, a contributing editor to Edify.)

YOUR TURN



RE: “Loss of a Big City Dream”
(September issue)

I’ve seen the mood of citizens and city council shift over the decades — from Jan Reimer’s idealism, to Bill Smith’s pragmatic boosterism, to Stephen Mandel’s visionary, often combative approach. Our current council has lost its grip on civic administration, leading to unrelenting tax increases and chaotic infrastructure spending. The next mayor, as the voice of council, will need to galvanize the community, business leaders, and philanthropists to prioritize aesthetic and artistic excellence in our city — without relying on the public purse as the primary driver. But first, we need to get our house in order. This is the time to refocus city council’s priorities on core issues, restore confidence, and show fiscal discipline. **-Neil Kaarsemaker**

Thank you for your editorial. It breaks my heart, but it rings true. Former mayor Mandel is right to lament the loss of the city’s “amazing architectural community.” I noted with despair that when you interviewed them, two mayoral candidates argued for scaling back our architectural ambitions. For me, this is a key issue in the upcoming municipal election. **-Lynn Odynski**

Great editorial. In my view, the people of the city are taking back the responsibility for public art and bringing it to communities in so many amazing ways. As a local artist, I’ve been live-painting at Bountiful Farmers’ Market with the Budding Art Collective and, most recently, was a vendor and patron at Strathearn Art Walk, which was gigantic this year. Night of Artists Gallery and Gifts in Bonnie Doon is also celebrating the local art scene. Yes, art should be supported and encouraged, but I don’t need my city council to see the vibrancy of the art scene here. **-Andrea Bauer**

RE: “Seeds of Shelter”
(September issue)

The wonderful profile of the late Lynn Hannley — a tireless advocate for “the city’s most vulnerable populations who were failed by a lack of accessible, affordable housing” — offered a poignant counterpoint to the lavish feature on the equally lavish homes of Ballet Edmonton’s Home Tour. The back-to-back placement of these two pieces boggles the mind. *Plus ça change, plus c’est le même chose.* **-Patricia Hartnagel**

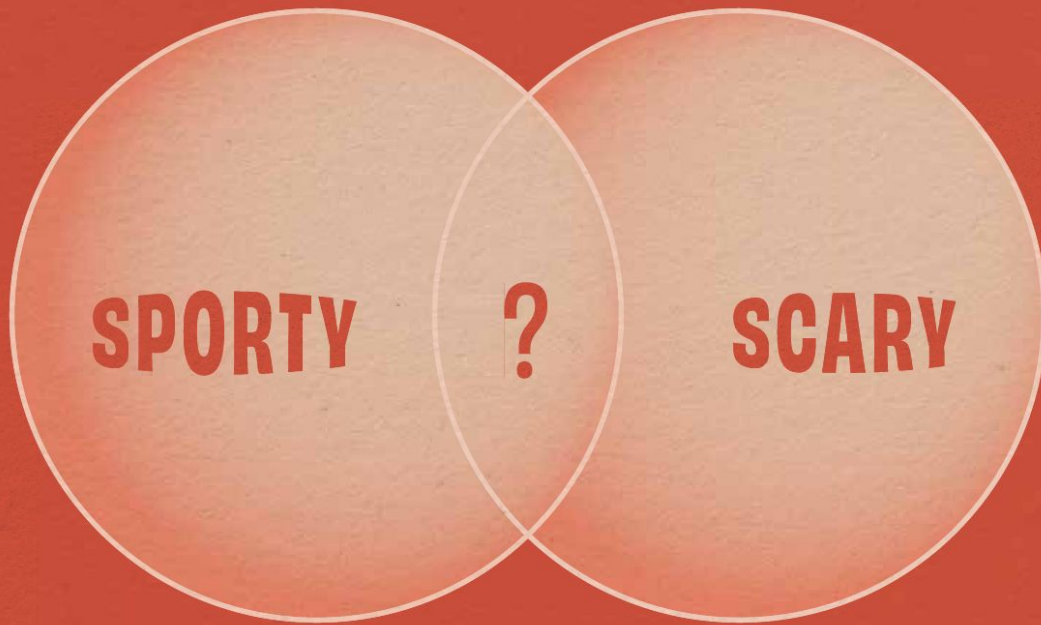
CORRECTION:

An article in the July/August issue (“Home Court Hero”) incorrectly stated that Sabry Philip was the second player to be signed to the Stingers after Jordan Baker’s retirement in 2022. This information has been updated online to reflect that he is the third player, after Ben Krikke in 2024.

Want to comment on a specific story or topic we’ve covered? Send us an email with “Your Turn” in the subject line to editor@edifiedmonton.com, or, for those of us who still like putting stamps on things:

Edify Magazine, 10221 123 Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5N 1N3
Letters may be edited for length and/or clarity.

Crossword Puzzle Answers (page 66): ACROSS: 1. Omar 5. Rigors 11. Cara 12. Andrew 13. Riff 14. Impala 15. Tony 17. Tim 18. Sleds 20. Fint 21. Cord 22. Book 23. Haas 24. Moons 25. Old 26. Boat 27. Resell 29. BACA 33. Unique 34. AMFM 35. Senses 36. Gary DOWN: 1. OCR 2. Mai 3. Art 4. Raters 5. Rains 6. In my 7. GDP 8. Oration 9. Relinks 10. Swami 16. Odd 18. Scalene 19. Loads in 20. Footbag 22. Boa 23. Horus 24. Moles 26. Blue 28. EQS 30. AMA 31. CFR 32. Amy



*IF YOU'RE OLD ENOUGH TO KNOW,
IT MIGHT BE TIME TO GO*

GETAMAMMOGRAM.CA

Do you cross your knees when you sneeze?

You've come to the right spot.

The spot where leaks and urgency stop
and living starts. Talk to us about coverage.

- ✓ NON-INVASIVE
- ✓ FULLY-CLOTHED
- ✓ PAIN-FREE

UROSPOT Edmonton | 780-409-7878
urospot.com



URO SPOT®
STRENGTHENING YOUR PELVIC FLOOR



Bronc rider Ben Anderson at the Canadian Finals Rodeo



Sports

Ain't Our First Rodeo

After six years in Red Deer, the Canadian Finals Rodeo (CFR) made a triumphant return to Edmonton last year — the city where it all began in 1974. The 50th anniversary event drew more than 42,000 fans to Rogers Place, with over half of attendees visiting from outside the city. Its comeback generated more than \$30 million in economic impact, supporting thousands of jobs and filling hotels across Edmonton. As Canada's premier professional rodeo championship, it brings together the top 12 athletes in each event to compete for national titles in bull riding, barrel racing, saddle bronc, tie-down roping and more. The 51st annual rodeo runs October 1 to 4 and features five high-energy performances at Rogers Place. —Brooklyn Hollinger

Health

Delivering Comfort

Demand for midwives and birthing centres is rising, but access remains out of reach for many

by **Brooklyn Hollinger**



It's easy to forget you're in a health-care facility when you step inside Rinita Birth Centre in St. Albert. Instead of sterile halls, there's a queen-sized bed, yoga balls and a deep tub for water births. If you can see past the oxygen tanks, suture kits and bottles of oxytocin, it can feel like an ordinary home — and that's what more and more expectant parents in Alberta are hoping for.

Alberta formally recognized midwives in the 1990s, but it was public funding in 2009 that set off a steady climb in demand. In 2011, Edmonton's Lucina Birth Centre opened, followed by facilities in Calgary and Rocky Mountain House. Before them, midwives practiced almost exclusively in hospitals or homes. Yet even as their numbers grew — from just 20 registered midwives in the early 1990s to 186 today — the supply has never kept up. Roughly 3,400 Albertans remain on a waitlist, with rural and Indigenous families facing the biggest barriers to care.

After operating from a commercial space for six years, St. Albert Community Midwives opened Rinita in 2021, making it Alberta's fourth — and, to date, most recent — birth centre. According to Anna Gimpel of St. Albert Community Midwives, which operates Rinita, visitors

are seeking emotionally supportive care — something less common in hospitals where rotating staff and shift changes disrupt continuity. “That's what motivated us to organize Rinita,” she says.

Birthing centres instead offer one-on-one care with the same midwife from enrolment through six weeks postpartum.

Roughly 3,400 Albertans remain on a waitlist, with rural and Indigenous families facing the biggest barriers to care.

“We know our clients well, and we are with them from the beginning of their pregnancy to the end,” says Gimpel. “But if any complications arise, we do recommend they deliver at the hospital.”

Birth centres only accommodate low-risk pregnancies — those without complications such as breech position or a history of excessive bleeding. Hospital deliveries, meanwhile, remain the standard for all types of pregnancies, and anyone

under a midwife's care can choose a hospital birth if they wish. “For us, the priority is to respect people's decisions. And we actively support choices that people make for their pregnancy,” says Gimpel.

This sometimes contrasts with hospital staff, whose priorities are less about emotional support and the choice of how to give birth, but more about doing whatever is medically necessary for a safe delivery. “That can sometimes mean interventions patients didn't plan for, but our priority is always the safety of both the mother and baby,” says obstetrician-gynecologist Dr. Cassandra Hirt-Walsh.

The Grey Nuns doctor admits hospitals can feel busy and impersonal, especially during shift changes, but notes that emergencies can arise even in low-risk pregnancies. She says the term “low-risk” can be misleading, because things can go wrong in an instant, regardless of the otherwise perfectly healthy indicators leading up to the delivery. Natural birth or not, she says, it's important to have a good backup plan if things escalate. “There's no one right way,” says Hirt-Walsh. “We recognize that there are different ways people are born and all of those can be viewed as a success.” **ED.**

Celebrate. Party. Network.

Join us as we recognize our city's most exceptional emerging community and corporate leaders as part of the Top 40 Under 40 Class of 2025!



X @EdifyEdmonton | @edify_edmonton | #Top40YEG



EDify.

TOP 40 UNDER 40
2025

Wednesday, November 19, 2025

Winspear Centre

Doors: 5:00pm Show: 6:30pm

Followed by networking reception



← TICKETS

\$95

+ GST & Service Charges

EdifyEdmonton.com



**UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA**

PLATINUM SPONSOR



MEDIA SPONSOR



VENUE SPONSOR



EDMONTON
DESIGN
WEEK



OCTOBER 14-19/2025

M A D E

BY HUMANS FROM SCRATCH
FOR EDMONTON DESIGN WEEK

STUDIO TOURS FURNITURE SHOWCASE
PECHA KUCHA PARTIES + MORE

INSTAGRAM @EDMONTONDESIGNWEEK
EDMONTONDESIGNWEEK.COM

PRESENTED BY



FOR MORE INFO



Best
PLUMBING & LIGHTING

**Alberta's
Largest
Plumbing
Showroom**

17111 118 Ave NW
Edmonton, AB
780.451.2432

*Shop MAAX In
Store or Online*



bestplumbing.ca



MAAX[®]
Enjoy the experience

Delish

Bar Cart
Second Course
Dining
Tastemakers
What's Cooking?



(From left)
Wesley Ying,
Jyn-Ting Ying,
Lac Van Ying,
Nicolas Ying,
Alexander Ying

Tastemakers

Soy Delicious

If you've driven by the corner of 98 Street and 105 Avenue on a weekend morning, you've likely noticed a lineup out the door of **Ying Fat Food Products**. The draw: fresh tofu. But this is no grocery store tofu. For over 30 years, the family-owned grocer and producer has been turning out the soft, nutty staple daily, without any preservatives, and using flavourful soybeans that you can actually taste. Ying Fat produces several soy-based products, but if there's one to try first, make it the silken tofu. It's a delicate, creamy all-purpose ingredient perfect for desserts, soups and savoury meals. *-Allison Stephen*



Dining

A Taste of Oaxaca

El Jardin reimagines itself in the spirit of Mexico's epicurean capital

by **Omar Mouallem**

When El Jardin opened in the Mercer Warehouse

in 2023, it was billed as a pan-Latin American restaurant. It felt apt for the space formerly home to Rostizado, Edmonton's first refined Mexican restaurant, which enjoyed a celebrated run and would be greatly missed. El Jardin ("The Garden" in Spanish) was also having a good run, so I was surprised to learn that it recently changed ownership. The partners have redirected its focus toward a single, deep-rooted culinary tradition: Oaxaca.

The state in southern Mexico is often called the country's culinary heart, a place where Zapotec and Mixtec traditions remain strong. Some Oaxacan recipes predate Spanish colonization and the cuisine overall has had minimal European influence. It's also where the vast majority of Mezcal is distilled, making the smoky agave spirit as symbolic to the state as scotch is to Scotland.

The concept is largely that of co-owner Flavius Iulian Joita, who built a hospitality career in Mexico City and Puerto Vallarta before moving to Edmonton. Together with chef Luis Barocio and his other business partner, they've replaced El Jardin's multinational menu and clubby evenings (when tables were cleared out for a dance floor) with a dining room of historic brick and mirrors that keeps the spotlight firmly on the complexity of Oaxacan flavours.

My guest and I started with the *tasajo asado*, an authentic market staple. It arrived on a crisp corn tortilla with black bean paste, lettuce, avocado, tomato and queso, a Oaxacan string cheese. The wood-grilled salted beef was tender with a gentle chew, its salinity softened by the creamy cheese and beans.

We then turned to the ahi tuna tostada, a structurally similar dish, albeit with a more coastal, New World influence thanks to its wheat flour tortilla, cut into four pizza-style slices. The tortilla was crisped to a cracker-like texture and topped with seared ahi tuna, smoky avocado purée, pickled onions and a drizzle of creamy chipotle sauce.

But the standout was the chicken with mole negro — one of Oaxaca's seven moles traditionally served for different occasions. This one is reserved for weddings and other major celebrations because it's so labour intensive. With 20-some ingredients, including Oaxacan chocolate, the sauce was smoky, spicy and balanced — neither overly sweet nor bitter. The bone-in chicken was juicy, accompanied by local mushrooms standing in for Oaxaca's wild varieties.



Left page: El Tocayo cocktail (mezcal, ruby port and dry vermouth)
Above (clockwise from top left): Mezcal and hot champurrado; mole negro with pan-seared chicken; wild mushrooms in zesty aguachile sauce; shrimp tossed in chintextle sauce

When we visited in August, El Jardin's ambitious Mezcal Passport program hadn't yet launched. It's now available, taking patrons on a journey through Oaxaca's agave biodiversity, from the versatile Espadín to rare wild varieties like Tobilá and Tepeztate. The idea is to give guests a guided, story-rich tasting of mezcal's breadth and depth.

In the meantime, we sampled cocktails from the mezcal-based list — all named with a wink. La Tóxica takes its name from Spanish slang for "the toxic one" in a relationship (meant as a playful tease between friends or partners). Made with Mezcal Solmano, watermelon, lemon and a Tajín rim, the drink is colourful and fruity, smoky on the nose but light on the palate. El Tocayo is a smooth Mezcal mix with Ruby Port, Martini Dry Vermouth, syrup and habanero bitters. Smooth and velvety under a creamy foam, it's balanced between sweet and herbal notes, with a hint of habanero.

While it's a long way from Oaxaca, and authenticity is limited by the ingredients it can source, El Jardin's new direction is closing the distance between Edmonton and Mexico's culinary capital. **ED.**

Tax hikes.
Agonizing traffic.
Record homelessness.
Unrelenting overdoses.
Staggering growth.

The next mayor will have one job:

Lead Us Out of This Mess

BY OMAR MOUALLEM + PHOTOGRAPHY AARON PEDERSEN

THE OCTOBER 20 ELECTION feels like a turning point. Cost-of-living pressures are biting, poverty rates are high, and while the overall crime rate has dropped to its lowest in more than a decade, violent crime has risen sharply. Meanwhile, years of progress on homelessness and overdoses were undone by the pandemic, a shift that the City has thus far been unable to temper, leading to historically high numbers and some of the worst per capita rates in Canada.

Frustration is also mounting over uncoordinated construction that makes traffic intolerable, compounded by rapid growth as Edmonton hurdles toward two million people.

Against this backdrop, voters' priorities have shifted. While past campaigns leaned into big-city building, the mood in this election is all about going "back to basics" — property-tax freezes and spending restraint, as well as core services like renewed focus on road maintenance, snow clearing and policing. And for good reason: despite an unpopular tax hike this year, Edmonton's debt limits are nearly maxed out.

This is also a historic election under Alberta's Bill 20, which opened the door to big-money donations and party affiliations on the ballot, raising concerns over corporate and partisan influence.

So who would want to deal with such a headache? As it turns out: many would. Too many, in fact, to interview them all.

That was the intent when this project began in May, but by mid-summer the number of candidates made it impossible. Instead, we focused on six leading contenders, guided by a late-August Leger poll on awareness and voter intent. For a fuller picture, we encourage you to learn about the other candidates, which, as of September 1 include business consultant Vanessa Denman; lawyer Ronald S. Billingsley, Jr.; civil engineer Malik Chukwudi; health-care administrator Olney Tugwell; activist Andrzej Gudanowski; and policy advisor Paul Bakhmut. A complete list is available on the City of Edmonton's 2025 Election site.

On the pages ahead, you'll find concise, policy-driven conversations with the six front-runners, who weren't provided any questions in advance before meeting with Editor-in-Chief Omar Mouallem. Each one-hour conversation was edited for brevity and clarity, then independently fact-checked for accuracy and context of the transcript, as well as the veracity of their claims. What remains are candid exchanges that cut through talking points and reveal how these contenders hope to lead Edmonton.

THE FRONTRUNNERS (IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER)

ANDREW KNACK	TIM CARTMELL	TONY CATERINA	MICHAEL WALTERS	OMAR MOHAMMAD	RAHIM JAFFER
PARTY Independent	PARTY Better Edmonton	PARTY Independent	PARTY Independent	PARTY Independent	PARTY Independent
EXPERIENCE Three-term city councillor since 2013; community organizer	EXPERIENCE Two-term city councillor since 2017; engineer and business owner	EXPERIENCE Four-term city councillor (2007–2021); small business owner	EXPERIENCE Two-term city councillor (2013–2021), non-profit leader, communications strategist	EXPERIENCE Pediatric dental surgeon, international development	EXPERIENCE Four-term Member of Parliament; small-business owner
THE PLEDGE Focus on affordability, smarter growth and core services (including LRT), while pressing the province to improve poverty and addictions — or properly fund municipalities to do it themselves.	THE PLEDGE Fiscal restraint, core services over big projects, bus rapid transit over LRT and stricter boundaries between city and province. Spend on items helping the most people instead of trying to please everyone.	THE PLEDGE Kill rezoning bylaw 20001, refocus city hall on core municipal services and stop downloading provincial responsibilities onto taxpayers. Lead council with a blunt, no-nonsense style.	THE PLEDGE Address poverty and addictions with prevention and nonpartisan collaboration, while speeding up construction, revitalizing main streets and fostering a vibrant city.	THE PLEDGE Shift investment from infrastructure to people by prioritizing social services, safety and affordable housing — especially downtown, where density is needed to reactivate businesses.	THE PLEDGE Prioritize businesses by cutting red tape, freezing taxes and fostering inter-governmental partnerships to improve economy and safety.



Andrew Knack

Andrew Knack

Andrew Knack (Top 40, '23) surprised many when he entered Edmonton's mayoral race, having previously vowed not to seek a fourth term on city council — where he's sat virtually his entire career, starting at age 23 straight out of university. Known as a tireless "retail politician" willing to engage with everyone, Knack has built a reputation as city hall's nice guy. But might his people-pleasing tendencies double as his Achilles heel in an election where many voters want a fighter?

OM: Looking back at your three terms as councillor, what are you most proud of doing?

AK: Starting in my ward (Nakota Isga), getting the Lewis Farms recreation centre, library and district park to come to fruition. The other major project is the Valley Line LRT. When I started on council in 2007, the conversation was about securing funds just to start it, which meant years before completion. That was not acceptable because, for a city of our size, you can't build your way out of congestion without mass transit. It's also about affordability — the number one issue I hear about today. If a family can be a one-car household instead of a two-car household, they're saving about \$10,000 a year.

OM: Your core message seems to be "invest now to save later," but Edmontonians have heard that for decades and yet budgets keep rising. What do you say to voters who want change and see you, the longest-serving councillor, as part of the problem?

AK: The best indicator of what I'll do is what I've done. Take infrastructure: I set up a motion last year that sped up road construction by closing intersections for a shorter period of time — get in, get out. On finances, yes, I've been part of a council that supported tax increases, but I was also part of the council that delivered the lowest increase in 25 years. I respond to the moment. And I'm proud of my record of engagement and finding common ground, even across political divides.

OM: For readers concerned about infill and upzoning, make your case about why it's necessary.

AK: Almost every conversation I've had about infill has started with a shared agreement: we can't keep expanding outward because it's financially and environmentally unsustainable. Zoning has always applied to the entire city, and there's an understanding that we make decisions for all Edmontonian's best interests, even though occasionally there are communities, like two I represent

right now, Crestwood and Glenora, that want to go down a different path with restrictive covenants, which are personal property decisions. So, I don't think the city should remove the covenant option, nor should people feel pressured into one by their neighbours.

OM: Do you trust the provincial government to adequately fund shelters and supportive housing?

AK: No. Homelessness is at record levels, mental health, addictions and drug-poisoning crises are playing out daily on our streets. Groups like Alberta Municipalities have made a simple request of the province: What is your detailed action plan? Where will units be built? What do you need from municipalities? Don't just announce funding over the next couple years — show us a plan. We've asked repeatedly and still haven't received it. For years we've been trying to fill the gaps left by the province on housing and homelessness. I think it's time we ask: what if

this was our jurisdiction? Because waiting on the province hasn't worked.

OM: What would you want to see specifically in terms of the drug-poisoning crisis? Would it include supervised consumption sites, drug testing, naloxone distribution, safe supply?

AK: It's everything you've listed, as well as the province's recovery centres. When it comes to the drug-poisoning crisis, it's an *and, and, and, and* approach. This provincial government has been very ideologically focused on recovery — that's not necessarily a bad thing. We need reactive solutions, but we also need to invest heavily in prevention.

OM: The City's relationship with the Province is crucial. Given your outspoken criticism, should voters worry this could hinder your ability to get things done?

AK: I don't think so. I've worked with people in governance across the political spectrum and we've been able to accomplish things. That said, it's incumbent on the mayor to speak up when the city is being mistreated.

OM: You've called the allowance and establishment of municipal parties "poison." As an independent, do you worry about being at a disadvantage?

AK: The one disadvantage of running as an independent is financial. I can raise up to \$1 million — the provincial cap — but parties enjoy roughly a three-to-one fundraising advantage. And since party resources can be shared, it's a distinct advantage. That said, Edmontonians have been clear: they don't want big money or partisan structures in local government. There's a huge opportunity to prove you can run — and win — without playing the partisan game. ■

Tim Cartmell

Tim Cartmell built his reputation on council as a combative voice for fiscal restraint and a critic of city hall straying into provincial territory, often positioning himself as a foil to Edmonton's last two progressive mayors. Cartmell champions prioritizing core services and delivering them well, a simple but popular message that struck a chord with voters exasperated by rising taxes and obstructed roads. That support took a big hit in July after he skipped a contentious infill vote for vacation, but when I interviewed him in June, Cartmell was still the clear front-runner, riding high on a war chest that supercharged his campaign.

OM: Reflecting on your last two terms as a councillor, what are you most proud of?

TC: I'm pleased with the things I was able

to do for my ward (pihêsiwin). When I first ran in 2017, southwest Edmonton was the fastest growing area but was lagging in →

Tim Cartmell



TC: I don't think this council has accomplished much in the last few years. We've been spread way too thin and trying to please too many people.

OM: Isn't that the job though? To appeal to as many constituents as possible?

TC: If everything is a priority, nothing is a priority. This is one reason why we've seen significant year-over-year property tax increases. We're trying to do so many things for so many people, as opposed to focusing on things that are going to help the most people in the moment.

OM: When you speak to Edmontonians, what do they say are their biggest priorities and concerns?

TC: Taxes — it's getting unaffordable to live here. Safety. There seems to be no coordination on city work, and the condition of our city isn't being maintained. People are saying, "I'm paying a lot of money and I don't see my money at work. I don't feel safe. Where is everybody?"

OM: The solutions to these problems all come at a cost. How can we afford them?

TC: By combing through our budget and eliminating a lot of busy work. If we had a few less middle managers and a few more people on lawn mowers, then our boulevards would look better. So it's a reallocation of our existing budgets to the services we need most.

OM: And how many middle-manager positions can you reasonably lose in order to rebuild one road?

TC: Let me rephrase: how many new things can we afford to build on taxpayer dollars right now? How many more arenas and swimming pools and fitness centres? Practically none.

OM: These amenities are usually for new neighbourhoods to service a growing population.

TC: We want to see complete communities as they develop and evolve. But what is the size and scale of those amenities? Maybe they're \$80 million rec centres, not \$350 million. There are also opportunities to repeat construction. Design one efficient building and build it three or four times and do that in partnership with the private sector and other levels of government. So, it's not that we can't have these things; it's whether we can deliver them without increasing taxes by 10 per cent.

OM: Would you try to reduce property taxes?

TC: A reduction in taxes is virtually impossible. What we want is for taxes to level off for a number of years, so that they become a smaller proportion of the overall cost of living. It will take time to implement the changes we're talking about. ■

infrastructure investment. We've brought a number of investments that I'm quite proud of: Terwillegar Drive and at least 20 other roadway projects; getting the Ambleside maintenance site under way that allows for southwest road clearing and landscaping crews to be more efficient; getting the province to widen the Anthony Henday.

I've also been on the losing side of a number of votes around more efficient use of

tax dollars, setting a standard for behaviour in public spaces. I've tried to maintain open dialogue and communication with our colleagues at the province and the police through face-to-face meetings. And so I'm proud of the way that I've carried myself with these, even if I've been in the minority.

OM: Is there anything else from your last two terms that you'd want to carry forward as mayor?



Tony Caterina

Tony Caterina

As a four-term city councillor, Tony Caterina earned a reputation as an effective yet combative conservative voice. His slogan — “There is no substitute for experience” — leans on that record, but his current mayoral run has puzzled many: a low-visibility campaign marked by ribbon “signage” in place of lawn signs, press-release gaffes and unfiltered straight talk. Still, Caterina distinguishes himself with a brand of conservative populism — from pledging tougher policing to promising to kill the “disastrous” re-zoning Bylaw 20001.

OM: In the four years since you last held office, you were retired, spending time in Florida and looking after your grandkids. Why give that up?

TC: I hoped someone would voice opposition on this past council, but they all seemed the same. With 12 councillors, there should

be real debate, but it’s been homogenized — continuing bike lanes, rapid infill. What puzzled me most was how tone-deaf council seemed coming out of COVID. With gas and grocery prices rising, it wasn’t the time for high taxation or new spending. Instead, they added to people’s burden.

OM: It’s a very competitive race. What’s your strategy to pull ahead?

TC: My strategy is simple — if you want change, I’m the one willing to make tough decisions. If you like the way things are going, I’m not your guy. Right now, every campaign looks cut-and-paste. Change the name from Cartmell to Knack to Walters and it’s all the same. “I want to hear you. I want to listen to you. I want to know what you think.” Fuck off — they’re just checking the boxes and I’m too old for that.

OM: You’ve been very vocal against Tim Cartmell in particular. Why?

TC: He’s pretending to be conservative, but he’s voted for (almost) every tax increase and budget. Now he’s running on voting “no” to the last budget. But that’s misleading — he voted “yes” to all the capital budget, then “no” to the operating. It’s like building a hospital but not staffing it. It’s fucking stupid.

He’s not mayor material because he’s too thin-skinned, always trying to please everyone, which means he doesn’t stand on principle. If you want to make everyone happy, go sell ice cream.

OM: What do you hope to achieve as mayor that you can’t as councillor?

TC: The mayor sets the tone for how we move forward and conduct ourselves, but the priority must be focusing on what municipalities are actually responsible for — and doing it well. A top example is housing: it’s mainly a provincial jurisdiction. The contribution that the City has made voluntarily in this sector is something I’d like to revise because when we take that on, other governments don’t step up. My priorities are police, fire, infrastructure and the core services taxpayers expect. To put it bluntly, I’ll be the SOB in this election.

OM: But if the province keeps underfunding social supports, which is what’s being argued, where does that leave our city?

TC: I remember back in 2009 we faced a similar situation with EMS. We had to decide: keep overspending or hand it back? Ultimately, we said, “This is your jurisdiction, here are the keys,” and the province took it over. That’s the kind of difficult decision needed again now.

OM: Are you satisfied with how the provincial government is running or funding addictions and mental-health services?

TC: No, because obviously we have many problems. But my personal views don’t really enter into how I would govern. The province needs to take full responsibility for what’s in its jurisdiction and pay for it.

OM: As Edmonton’s mayor, though, you still have a powerful platform and responsibility to influence the provincial government on →

issues that directly affect your constituents. So what would you do in that respect?

TC: One thing I would not do is embarrass the provincial government publicly. This council, and this mayor, have gone out of their way to call out the Province and embarrass them. That's not the way to do things because the next morning, after you've done that, you still have to go back and ask them for help.

OM: So then, related to help with health and addictions care, what specifically would you be asking the Province for?

TC: We have Alberta Hospital in Horse Hill, and the plan was always that Edmonton's next hospital would be built there. I'd advocate for that. The land is already set and the psychiatric facility needs enhancing. But we also need a new general hospital on that site to relieve pressure on the Royal Alex, the only hospital on the north side.

OM: Safety is central to your platform. You argue the current model of council directing the police commission, and the commission

then directing EPS, is fraught. Why?

TC: The current commission is like-minded with this council. I believe it's been populated with people who lean toward the "defund police" mentality. They've set the tone for how police should react, and now officers are more worried about optics than doing their jobs. Progress is fine, but the thinking that police are bad, and that bylaws shouldn't be enforced, is wrong. For example, council eliminated the loitering bylaw in 2021, and now you see the results downtown.

OM: What are you advocating for?

TC: Enforcing the laws that we have. If people don't like those laws, there are proper channels to change them — but you don't just ignore them because you disagree. The police need to feel supported. It's a large part of the city budget, yet we still haven't fixed problems downtown. Chinatown businesses had to hire their own security because police couldn't help with encampments, disorder, defecation — all of it. ■

of contractors than residents.

OM: Do you think it's diminished confidence in the City of Edmonton's ability to pull off big projects or to build new ones?

MW: When it comes to new projects, there just isn't as much financial capacity because we're bumping up against our debt and debt-servicing limits. But I don't think they're against building things — they just want them built well and without the level of inconvenience we've seen. It feels like we're living in a constant renovation — it'd be nice to finish it up and finally enjoy the space.

OM: Your platform emphasizes livability but leaves out arts and culture. Where do they fit into your vision for vibrancy?

MW: My entry into Edmonton was based in the arts. I moved here from Drayton Valley in my 20s because of the arts and culture scene. As we prioritize public safety and our response to homelessness right out of the gate, I also want to lift up our central arts district and bring people back into that hub. That means working with the Citadel, Winspear, the AGA and the broader community around the civic precinct. I also would like to create arts hubs that neighbourhoods and local economies can galvanize around.

OM: You've promised to fast-track more housing. How will you accomplish that?

MW: Suburban communities still play a role in affordability, but we need to rebuild the regional consensus lost in the last four years. Our neighbours grow toward us for our services and amenities. But we develop land at a denser, more sustainable and affordable rate than other municipalities, making us the most responsible developer in the region.

OM: What actions can the city take within its jurisdiction to expand mental health and addiction supports, given its limited tools?

MW: We have to go upstream with prevention, which always plays second fiddle to reaction. Edmonton could build the largest after-school program in the country with vision: make rec centres free from 3 to 7 p.m. — when kids from newcomer and low-income families are most vulnerable — provide free transit from high-needs neighbourhoods and partner with the province to open schools after hours. It's basically Free Play on steroids. Those kids could grow into leaders and mentors, creating a cycle of support that prevents more serious mental health and addictions later. It's not a silver bullet, but it's significant.

OM: It's significant, but it's a very long-term plan. What can we do for people who've already fallen through the cracks?

Michael Walters

Michael Walters' (Top 40, '09) path runs from the Bissell Centre, where he managed its street newspaper for people living in poverty, to advocating fair wages and stronger community services with the Greater Edmonton Alliance. After an unsuccessful run for MLA on the Alberta Party ticket in 2012, he served two terms on city council. He later became a partner at Berlin Communications as it expanded its strategic and political portfolio. Now, with a campaign focused on housing, affordability and urban vibrancy, Walters argues the city can't afford another four years of "drifting." His mid-summer campaign launch caught many off guard, with analysts speculating that Walters was capitalizing on Tim Cartmell's fading support among moderates and the business community. The question now is whether Walters will consolidate the centre — or merely split it.

OM: Just about all the mayoral candidates have prioritized the same things — affordability, safety and governance. How are you going to set yourself apart?

MW: I think it's those issues *and livability* — what does a successful city look like? What is a city we can feel proud and excited about? I got into the race because I didn't see excitement about the future or a focus on our potential. And setting myself apart also means understanding what the job really is — it's leadership for the next four years. It's

not project management.

OM: But you've also said the city has "drifted." How so?

MW: I think we've drifted from a lack of focus. The results are clear: the city doesn't feel as safe as it did four years ago; we have acrimonious relationships with the police and province; and we're not making progress on housing or homelessness. On city-building — LRT, transit, recreation — we're tackling too many projects everywhere all at once that are poorly coordinated and more mindful

Michael Walters



MW: We can fund police according to the social policing model, where frontline officers work with agency partners and, through the commission, strengthen partnerships with social agencies. Take HELP (Human-centred Engagement and Liaison Partnership Unit) — boutique policing that should become mainstream. I've seen success, but it needs to be a bigger priority.

The City can also invest in overdose teams and prevention sites, ideally in coordination with the province since this is a health issue. This is where the mayor must unify Edmontonians across partisan lines. I stood proudly with Boyle Street Co-op

in supporting the Ritchie health hub when it faced neighbourhood opposition. Local politicians didn't stand up. They took cover.

OM: In an op-ed for our former sister publication *Urban Affairs*, you defended dismantling encampments despite limited shelter space. Since the policy began in 2023, frostbite amputations hit record highs, which critics link to the evictions.

MW: For four years we've debated whether encampments are "safe" or "unsafe." Everyone knows they're unsafe. I don't want to be the mayor defending encampments. I want to get to work expanding shelter access

and building the housing people need.

The Navigation and Support Centre is a fine idea — it coordinates services and gives people access to what they're missing. But we also need 500 or more supportive housing units, plus transitional and recovery-oriented housing with provincial support, and something like Calgary's large day shelter model. What matters most is helping people survive the nights by getting them into housing quickly, and with the right health-care supports, because the number of people dying is unacceptable. ■



Omar Mohammad

Omar Mohammad

Running on the slogan “Shine Brighter Together,” Dr. Omar Mohammad, a sharply dressed and charismatic pediatric dental surgeon, casts himself as an agent of hope and change. Though new to politics, he approaches the race with clear-eyed realism about the long odds — yet with the confidence of someone who’s beaten them before. Growing up in a turbulent home, he spent his teens in shelters and living out of his car. Those experiences, along with work in international development, shape a campaign centred on poverty, affordability and compassion.

Edify: How did you become political?

OM: Out of concern for my city. After returning from my residency in Manitoba in 2016, I started seeing encampments. I was proud of Edmonton — we take care of each other — so I kept asking, “What’s going on?” Back in 2009, we were trying to end homelessness — but there was no fentanyl then. Now it’s everywhere, combined with rising costs and lack of housing.

Edify: What’s your plan for tackling these issues of homelessness and housing?

OM: The first model has to be Indigenous-led housing with wraparound services — addiction treatment, mental-health care, vocational training, family supports. People become homeless for many reasons, and each group needs housing that fits their circumstances, but dignity must be at the core. Shelters should be places people want to be, including bridge housing for those in transition or long-term care for severe addictions. At Alberta Hospital, I saw how devastating fentanyl withdrawal can be. The province is adding treatment beds because I believe involuntary treatment is coming — and the city won’t be ready for the aftermath. Yes, you can force sobriety, but if you don’t address why someone became homeless or addicted, they’ll fall back in.

Edify: And if they fall back in, they’re at higher risk of a fatal overdose.

OM: Exactly. That’s why vocational services are so important. A lot of people don’t have the tools to thrive, and we need to provide them. Employment leads to stability, stability leads to community and community leads to security. As a clinician, I approach this like treating a disease. With cancer, we can’t save everyone, but we save many. It’s the same with addictions — we need comprehensive care, not just short-term fixes.

Edify: What are your plans for LRT safety?

OM: Requiring proof of payment before boarding is one way because, yes, people who aren’t paying for LRT are generally the

ones making it unsafe.

Edify: You’ve said homelessness has doubled and affordability is a major issue. Yet you also want to keep people without tickets off transit. Isn’t that a contradiction?

OM: No, you have to look at it holistically. This is where housing-first solutions, plus addiction and mental-health supports, come in. Those need to be coordinated with the city so people can get passes and access the system. But there also has to be accountability. What we have now — checking proof of payment only after you’re on the train — is flawed. Too often I see Black and Indigenous people singled out, and it creates conflict. I don’t accept that.

Edify: A core tenet of your campaign is tackling the city’s \$4.4-billion debt. How do you propose being fiscally responsible and freezing property taxes without cutting

essential services, and in some cases, expanding essential services?

OM: I know this won’t be an overnight fix, but we must balance both the operating and capital sides of our budget. That means stopping the borrowing, cutting back on capital megaprojects and shifting investment from infrastructure to people.

Edify: How do you reconcile that with our rapid growth?

OM: We’ll need to embrace density. Growing outward endlessly isn’t sustainable. There’s always “not in my backyard” people resisting higher density near them, but there are places people want and need it. Post-COVID, far fewer people are working downtown, so if we want the core to thrive, we need to convert unused buildings into housing and bring more people back to live there, instead of pouring money into downtown revitalization projects. Once you bring people, businesses follow.

Edify: Your policies seem reasonable and likely popular. But, forgive me for asking, why not run for councillor first? Running for mayor is like skipping the juniors to try for the NHL.

OM: I know it’s a long shot, I’m not delusional. But there’s a chance because I’m not the status quo. I’m an advocate for change, and when I do something, I’m all in. Watching the city that raised me fall apart compels me to act. This feels like a calling. I’ve worked abroad in development and seen how small changes transform lives. That history of service and problem-solving is what I want to bring as mayor. Even if the odds are small, running is advocacy. ■

Rahim Jaffer

Name recognition isn’t always an advantage. For Rahim Jaffer, first elected to Parliament at 25, his four terms as Conservative MP for Edmonton–Strathcona were overshadowed by ethical and legal scandals, culminating in DUI and cocaine possession charges later reduced to a careless driving conviction. His fall from grace was so profound that he left the limelight entirely — first as a stay-at-home parent, then running a Whyte Avenue diner, the Rooster Kitchen and Bar, where he now serves brunches and burgers in a plain company T-shirt. But, he says, it was that small-business grind that revealed supposedly anti-business policies at City Hall, inspiring his comeback bid.

OM: I have to ask about your past. As a former four-term MP, your record sounds strong on paper, but then come the controversies. The word “disgraced” often

precedes your name in articles. How can you overcome that?

RJ: I don’t have any skeletons in my closet; they’re all out there. Those who want to →

focus on them are welcome to, but I'd rather focus on what I've gained from weathering the storms. I was very young when I was thrust into the limelight, and it was a lot of excitement without the responsibilities I have now — a family, a son, employees who rely on me. I'm humbler now.

OM: You've said you were enjoying your anonymity — not even being on social media — why are you returning to politics after 17 years?

RJ: I remember the potential of Edmonton and what this city can be. As a business owner risking my own capital, I've seen how difficult it's become to succeed here. I hoped someone with a business background would step forward, who understood what it takes to create energy and attract investment. That kind of representation is missing. Instead, I saw many of the same people who helped create today's problems putting their names forward for promotions or leadership roles.

OM: You're calling for a hard reset of city hall, including reviving Edmonton's economy, improving safety and fixing what you've called "absurd priorities." What practical changes would you want to see?

RJ: With so many pressures, the City needs to get back to basics and manage spending better. From my experience running a business, I've heard constant frustrations about parking. We should support businesses by restoring parking rules that worked — free after 6 p.m., Sundays and holidays. I'd freeze new bike lanes until we evaluate their real impacts.

The permitting process is a real problem, too. Permits should be processed within 30 to 45 days or get an automatic green light. I'd also revisit the industrial policy council shelved. We have land south of the Henday — let's make it competitive, with tax offsets, to attract major investment. Finally, I'd freeze property tax increases.

OM: How do you fund a city without property tax increases while also making it more affordable in other ways?

RJ: Edmonton needs to send the message that we're open for business. We should adjust taxes to attract investment, jobs and revenue. We're not only competing globally but with our own region — businesses are choosing suburbs because of permit headaches and costs.

OM: Public safety is a key part of your campaign, especially around transit. What do you see as the problem now, and how would you like to see transit made to feel safer?

RJ: First, back up police with more beat cops and mental-health support. We can't normalize destructive behaviour, and repeat offenders need consequences, because there's no bail reform.

Rahim Jaffer



Second, transit design is ineffective. We've spent so much on LRT, yet it's easy to ride without paying. That's causing issues. We need some sort of barrier so access isn't free and unchecked. New line expansions can include (purpose-built security) barriers, and there are (retrofitting) options for existing stations like turnstiles and metal fences. Yes, there will be costs, but some of those costs can come from provincial security funds.

OM: That's your safety plan for people who aren't street-entrenched, but how do you make it safer for those dealing with housing and substance problems too?

RJ: I'll start bigger, then get to your question. When you create economic activity, you reduce the risk of people being trapped in poverty. A thriving city means more jobs, more supports, more resources for social programs. But we need to think outside the box. Why not locate services — police, mental health, addictions — in one area? Like an Olympic Village with training, medical and other services for athletes.

OM: These sound a lot like the conditions of a ghetto.

RJ: I'm glad you used that word, because what I'm proposing is the opposite. Housing should integrate social services in the same area. By keeping accommodations and supports together, they don't have to travel across the city, and mature communities are prepared to deal with projects lacking medical or addictions services. Otherwise, crime and disorder spill into neighbourhoods.

OM: Where would you find land for a community this size? Edmonton's homeless population is comparable to many neighbourhoods.

RJ: Unlike denser cities, Edmonton has land to target. Some Anthony Henday land could be used for housing, treatment and job training all in one place. Centralization means police can better manage the area.

OM: Concentrating people in one place and with heavy police presence sounds like even more of a ghetto.

RJ: You can see it in a negative way, but the goal is to help people stabilize, then transition into society. It's just an idea worth exploring. ■

your ticket to all things edmonton arts

From tickets to local and community events, to coveted works from more than 200 emerging and established Edmonton artists, discover the unique experiences and artistry that sets Edmonton apart by visiting us in person at Churchill Square.



**edmonton
arts
council**



shop & services

9930 102 Avenue NW | edmontonarts.ca

Glass mugs by Suspended Studio.
Photo: J Walker





THE SECRET LIFE OF HORUS



TRACING A MUMMY'S STRANGE ODYSSEY, FROM ANCIENT EGYPT TO EDMONTON, AND THE SECRETS STILL ENTOMBED

THE FIRST TIME STUDENTS ASKED DR. JOCELYN HENDRICKSON about an Egyptian mummy hidden in a basement at the University of Alberta, she brushed it off. Apparently, a student had opened the door to a storage closet somewhere on campus and — *the horror!* — a mummy came tumbling out. Spooky campus legends are not really Hendrickson's thing; she's a professor specializing in Islamic legal history in medieval and early modern North Africa, not a scriptwriter for *Scooby Doo*.

But a year later, when a different group of students came with the same questions, Hendrickson decided to look into it. Poking around on the Internet, she found a Reddit thread about "Creepy/Haunted Places on Campus" that mentioned rumours of a potentially cursed Egyptian priest. According to legend, a visiting researcher became so obsessed with the ancient priest that he gradually retreated from the world, refusing to leave the mummy's side until he was forcefully removed by campus security.

Now Hendrickson was really intrigued. She checked with her colleagues and spoke to Christine Conciatori, director of University of Alberta Museums. They all confirmed that there was indeed an

Egyptian mummy housed in an undisclosed location on campus. But he — not "it" — wasn't stashed away in a basement broom closet: he was an official part of the university collections.

When discussing this venerable member of the university community, Conciatori chooses her words carefully, noting that in recent years the term "mummified person" has increasingly replaced "mummy" in Western museums. Others prefer the word "ancestor" but, in the Canadian context, this could be misinterpreted as referring to a deceased Indigenous person. "Egyptian ancestor" may seem like a better fit; however, this is potentially problematic as well, since the people and culture of modern Egypt are not direct continuations of those from antiquity.

So, we are back to "mummy," which, while accurate enough (the word comes from the Persian/Arabic *mūmiya*, referring to the bituminous resin used during embalming), unfortunately conjures up spooky images of undead figures blindly ambulating about in toilet paper wrappings. "We've lost the perspective that we're looking at a person," Conciatori says. "We need to treat this person with dignity. It's not a freakshow."

WORDS BY RUSSELL COBB AND SARAH BRANDVOLD ILLUSTRATION BY GLENN HARVEY





As for the alleged curse, it seems likely any misfortunes befalling the mummified person's many caretakers over the years had more to do with ordinary human frailty than supernatural vengeance.

He was, after all, a mere mortal himself. Someone deserving of a name and story. For now, let's call him Horus.

BEFORE HORUS CAME TO EDMONTON, HE'D BEEN COVERED

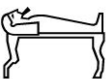
with a beautifully decorated shroud inscribed with hieroglyphs and images that may have depicted scenes from his life. But by the early 1970s, when the university first took possession, almost all of it had been destroyed by vandals. "It was very sad," recalls Bernd Hildebrandt, an exhibit designer who helped the university put Horus on display for the first time in 1982. "The head was pinned back. He was disheveled."

Hildebrandt remembers how a multidisciplinary team of researchers and a specialist from the Canadian Conservation Institute worked painstakingly to reconstruct what was left and restore some dignity to Horus. Sadly, the coffin's inscriptions were too badly damaged for his actual name to be recovered. Somewhere along the way, he was nicknamed "Horus," after the falcon-headed son of Isis and Osiris. Slowly, his story came together.

Here is what we know: Horus lived between 300 and 200 BCE, during Ancient Egypt's Greek or Ptolemaic period. He was a lector priest and scribe in the temple of Ptah, the creator god and patron of craftsmen whose sprawling temple complex stood in the ancient city of Memphis. He was the son of a man who had held the same titles before him, and he died young — likely between 25 and 30 — from unknown causes. After death, he underwent a 70-day embalming process during which his body was ritually transformed into what author and Egyptologist Kara Cooney calls a "sacred container" designed to house his spiritual elements for eternity.



HORUS WAS SHOWCASED INSIDE A DECOMMISSIONED EDMONTON TRANSIT BUS ALONGSIDE VARIOUS GRAVEYARD PARAPHERNALIA AND TAKEN ON TOUR ACROSS ALBERTA.



Mummification had been a venerable tradition for well over 2,000 years by Horus's time. Depending on the era, the dead could be interred with a variety of items: protective amulets, canopic jars, shabti figures and all manner of practical goods. (For royalty, this could get quite elaborate: Tutankhamun's tomb boasted six chariots.) Excerpts from funerary texts like the *Egyptian Book of the Dead*, which offered guidance through the underworld, or so-called "Books of Breathing," which ensured the deceased could live in the afterlife, were written on papyrus or linen wrappings or inscribed on sarcophagi or tomb walls. There are indications that Horus may once have worn a funerary mask (likely removed and sold), and he was originally wrapped in an elaborate shroud, of which only the section covering his footboard survives. As befitting his elite status as a priest and scribe, his coffin was made of imported Lebanon cedar, the head of which depicts the four sons of Horus (the deity, not the lector priest) as well as a table laden with food and other items needed in the afterlife.

Thus equipped, our Horus was likely laid to rest in one of Memphis's major necropolises, where he abided for more than two millennia. Empires rose and fell. The arrival of Christianity and then Islam permanently transformed Egyptian society. Meanwhile, Europe toiled through the Dark Ages, the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, which brought an emerging fascination with Ancient Egypt that eventually exploded into full-blown *Egyptomania* following Napoleon Bonaparte's 1798 expedition. For the next century or so, countless mummies were looted and sold by Egyptian street vendors to wealthy European tourists, who treated them as curiosities and coveted them for their private collections.

It's hard to imagine it now, but in Victorian Britain, owning a mummy was like driving a Rolls Royce — a mark of refinement and prestige. "Unwrapping parties" were fashionable social events, while "mummy brown" — a pigment made from actual ground-up mummies — was a much sought-after colour for the fine arts. Fortunately for Horus, the latter was not his fate.

THE EARLIEST WHISPERINGS OF A CURSE MAY TRACE BACK

to 1942, when Horus came under the custodianship of one George Woodrow of Stanmore, England. Woodrow had obtained the mummy from the widow of a friend who had purchased it from a failing antiques shop — and then died of a heart attack. The man's widow, wanting nothing to do with the supposedly cursed thing, gave Horus to Woodrow. When Mrs. Woodrow refused to have a mummy in the house, Mr. Woodrow moved Horus to a shed on his father's property, where he was stored, alone but intact, for around 25 years. At some point during that time, the Woodrows emigrated to St. Albert, leaving just a *few* things behind.

In 1967, Woodrow's father travelled to visit his family members in Alberta, where he discovered that he'd developed a cancerous tumour — and died. He reportedly expressed a wish for Horus to be donated to the U of A. We couldn't find a written record of this bequest, but whatever the case, Woodrow returned to England to settle his father's estate, and Horus was Alberta bound.

This is where things start to get weird. Well, *weirder*. Because instead of donating Horus to the university, Woodrow,

for reasons that remain unclear, elected to loan him to a singular Edmonton character by the name of Wilson Arthur Stewart.

It's hard to summarize Stewart succinctly, but let's try: he was a cross between P.T. Barnum, Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and John de Ruiter. In addition to being president and sole administrator of the Limestone Cemetery and Genealogical Society, Stewart ran twice for Edmonton alderman, campaigning for, among other things, greater reverence for gravestone epitaphs. Other resume highlights include: anti-fluoridation activism, beekeeping, stamp and coin collecting, ufology, and publishing vital statistics in his monthly newsletter, *The Guardian Mercury*.

Presumably — and with no discernible sense of irony — Stewart viewed custodianship of Horus as naturally aligned with the goals of his genealogical society and cemetery obsession, and perhaps a fundraising opportunity.

Horus was showcased inside a decommissioned Edmonton Transit bus alongside various graveyard paraphernalia and taken on tour across Alberta. Along the way, Stewart concocted a biography for Horus: he was a 4,500-year-old physician (false); from Egypt's Third Dynasty (false); and first "discovered" in Lower Egypt in the 1880s (maybe, but probably also false).

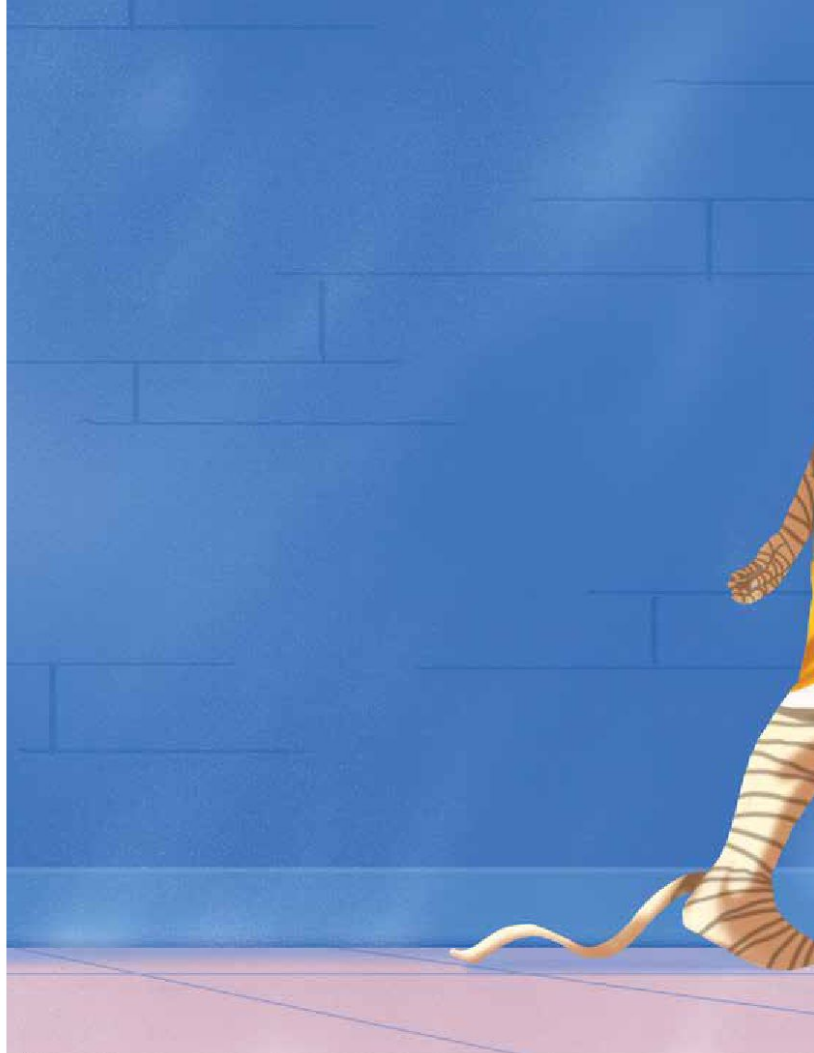
Funds did not materialize. Meanwhile, Edmonton wanted its loaner bus back and was threatening repossession. Never one to give up, Stewart petitioned city council for the use of some vacant city-owned store fronts to display "his" mummy and host a genealogical conference, promising to repay the rent with money raised from these schemes. The city declined.

Undaunted, Stewart took a second run at city council in 1970, this time recruiting Horus as his unwitting campaign manager. Stewart's public appearances were bizarre spectacles where Horus was displayed in an open casket while Stewart spoke at length about cemetery policies, public transit and "the rights of the individual in a complex society." This brazen exploitation of an Egyptian ancestor might've remained a colourful bit of local political history, were it not for what happened next: shortly after Stewart's unsuccessful campaign, he was hospitalized for a rare blood disorder and died at the age of 53. Whispers of a curse grew louder.

ARCHAEOLOGIST AND U OF A PROFESSOR EMERITUS DR.

Nancy Lovell studied Horus for decades. In 2018, she wrote an unofficial history of Horus's postmortem adventures in a newsletter for the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities. According to Lovell's account, as Stewart's health was failing, Horus overwintered in an abandoned shed. It was there that, in May 1971, Horus was discovered by a couple of teenage boys who — echoing the macabre curiosity of their Victorian predecessors — unwisely attempted to unwrap him. Horus was regrettably damaged in the process, and his head became detached from his body.

At this point, authorities were notified and Alberta's Chief Coroner became involved. Horus was officially pronounced dead and sent to the Royal Alexandra Hospital, where foul play was ruled out and x-rays confirmed that he was, in fact, an Egyptian mummy. Thus, a sadly disheveled Horus — along with his badly damaged coffin and what remained of his shroud — was transferred to the U of A Department of Anthropology.



The Woodrow family was soon notified of these developments, and Horus remained at the university on loan, until George Woodrow's death in 1979, whereupon Horus became part of the university's permanent collection.

ONCE THIS WAS ALL SETTLED, HORUS'S FORTUNES IMPROVED

dramatically. By 1981, the U of A had recruited a multidisciplinary team of scientists, medical specialists, Egyptologists and conservation experts to oversee Horus's study, restoration and eventual exhibition. Radiocarbon dating placed him firmly in the Ptolemaic period; infrared imaging revealed his lineage and titles; x-ray and CT scans showed his young age at death (he was initially misdiagnosed with cancer, later revised). Finally, Horus's linen wrappings were tidied and put back in order, and his head was carefully reattached.

Next, as part of the university's 75th anniversary in 1982, a newly-rehabilitated Horus made his debut as the dramatic centrepiece of an immersive exhibit titled *O! Osiris, Live Forever*, hosted on campus at the now-demolished Ring House gallery. Bernd Hildebrandt remembers the exhibit as a success, which is no surprise. Egyptomania, then and now, is very much alive and well. Perhaps inevitably, all this renewed attention on Horus triggered a wave of still-circulating campus lore that includes breathless reports of disembodied voices and falling ceiling fixtures, à la *Phantom of the Opera*. Rumours of a curse only grew when the state-of-the-art CT scanner used to examine Horus "died" the following day, and when one of the project's x-ray technicians quit after developing unexplained health issues.

All of this was gleefully echoed in the press of the time. One *Edmonton Journal* feature story, "The curse of the headless



**STONY PLAIN ROAD
DINING WEEK 2025**

**Dine-in to win
one of three
\$100 gift cards!**

October 2 - 12

View full event details,
menu & participating
restaurants:

**STONY PLAIN ROAD
DINING WEEK**

frenchie's
HAIR

Rooted in care.

Lead with great hair.

Specialized treatments for
hair loss and scalp conditions.

Call to book:
780.244.4566
FrenchiesHair.com

Sign up for

**ED. on
the town**

**Your weekly guide to
Edmonton's arts, culture
and entertainment.**

Every Wednesday you'll get
stories like:

25 Things to Do
Writer Caitlin Hart's monthly
roundup of Edmonton's can't-
miss events

At the Galleries
Arts writer Zachary Ayotte's
overview of notable exhibitions

And **event listings** for the
upcoming weeks
curated by our editors.

Sign up for FREE!

edifiedmonton.com/newsletters

Choose your next adventure...

...at Edmonton's Iconic Indie Bookstore

10702 Jasper Ave | audreys.ca | 780-423-3487

Audreys
BOOKS LTD.

mummy,” recounted Horus’s improbable backstory alongside a campy illustration resembling a still from a low-budget horror film.

The truth is decidedly less dramatic, but more comforting: After the *O! Osiris* exhibit, Horus was moved to a new home in a high-security, climate-controlled room, where he has remained ever since. Access is strictly controlled, with trained staff conducting routine checks a few times a week to monitor storage conditions. He has been removed for study or display only a handful of times since: for medical imaging in 1996 and 2016, and for public display in Enterprise Square in 2015. According to a radiology webinar available from the Ontario Association of Medical Radiation Sciences, the most recent set of scans in 2016 saw Horus attended to by a museum employee who was quite protective of him and made sure he was handled with the utmost care.

SO, WHAT TO DO WITH HORUS NOW? AT THE MOMENT

our priest’s future is complicated by the fact that, in Alberta, protocols governing the ethical treatment and study of human remains are focused primarily on consultation with Indigenous communities, many of whom — both in Canada and abroad — have fought for decades to stop their own ancestors from becoming museum attractions.

The situation is a bit different in Horus’s homeland, where many contemporary Egyptians take pride in exhibitions of mummified persons. In 2021, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi held a “Pharaoh’s Golden Parade,” in which the mummies of 22 New Kingdom kings and queens received a glittering military escort from the ageing Egyptian Museum to the newly opened National Museum of Egyptian Civilization. Others find such displays offensive, including former president Anwar Sadat, who famously closed the Royal Mummy Room in 1980, arguing that exhibition of human remains was distasteful and sacrilegious.

Should Horus be returned to Egypt? Egyptian authorities are reportedly aware of his existence (which seems to have come to their attention following Dr. Lovell’s 2018 article), but they have not yet requested his repatriation. (Conciatori says her predecessor returned the Egyptian consulate’s phone call and left a voicemail, but nothing has happened since.)

The global movement toward repatriation of culturally sensitive artifacts — not to mention human remains — is generally recognized as desirable (the Egyptians would like their Rosetta Stone back, thank you very much). Still, it doesn’t always line up with the reality on the ground. “It’s not my job to judge,” says Conciatori. “My job is to make sure we are ethically caring for our collections, including this person, because it is a person.”

Conciatori is on the board of directors for the Canadian chapter of the International Council of Museums and was involved in helping revise the council’s code of ethics. “The field is in constant evolution and adapting to changing mentalities,” she says. Still, she admits that she doesn’t always have a clear answer when asked why members of the public cannot see Horus. There’s a fundamental tension between knowledge creation and human dignity in the museum world. On one hand, studies of mummified persons have yielded valuable knowledge. On the other hand, says Conciatori, we must remember that Horus never

“WHY DID SHE COME?” (EXCERPT)

Poem by Iman Mersal (translated from Arabic by Khaled Mattawa)

Why did she come to the New World, this mummy,
this subject of spectacle
sleeping in her full ornament of gray gauze,
an imaginary life in a museum display case?
I think mummification is contrary to immortality
because a preserved corpse will never be a part of a rose.
The mummy did not choose migration, but those who
waited in long lines
at consulates and built houses in other countries
still dream of returning when they become corpses.
— You have to take us there!
This is what they instruct in wills they hang around
their children’s necks
as if death is an unfinished identity
that matures only in the family burial plot.

Iman Mersal is a renowned Egyptian–Canadian poet and professor of Arabic literature at the University of Alberta.



gave consent to anyone to dig him up and cart him around Alberta. “We have to ask: ‘what is the goal?’” Over the last few decades Horus has been hauled up and down fire escapes, diagnosed and un-diagnosed with cancer, loaded in and out of minivans in parkades, poked and prodded with every kind of (non-invasive) medical imaging imaginable. But to what end — and to whose benefit?

And what of the curse? A mummy is, first and foremost, a dead human being — and that triggers complicated, often unsettling emotions. On one hand, we feel a natural urge to protect and respect the dead and their humanity (“mummy brown” paint notwithstanding). On the other, there’s a deep and entirely understandable fascination with the dead. That tension is uncomfortable. To rationalize our objectification of a dead body and absolve our own guilt, we must dehumanize and sometimes even villainize it. From this angle, the “cursed mummy” trope is textbook psychological projection: I feel uneasy about my attraction to this dead guy. But I’m not the bad person here — *he* is!

For her part, Conciatori doesn’t think much of the curse, but she acknowledges that untimely coincidences can give some people pause.

When Jocelyn Hendrickson finally started looking into the mummy lore, she was pleasantly surprised by what she found. The university had indeed been handed an eerie, disturbing touchstone that had been maimed and mistreated. But there was no conspiracy. In fact, there have been — and continue to be — many people over the years who have thought deeply about Horus, how he should be cared for, and whether he should be subject to scientific inquiry or ethical display.

For now, at least, Conciatori thinks it’s time to give him his rest. “Yes, we have a mummy,” she says. “But it’s not an object. It’s a human being deserving of dignity.” **ED.**



KEEPING THE CURTAINS UP

Inflation, COVID-19 and stagnant funding have hit arts organizations hard. Artist and writer Zachary Ayotte looks at how they're innovating to survive and considers where we go from here.

X

WISH
YOU
WERE
HERE



was still a university student when

I first exhibited artwork 21 years ago. My professor introduced me to a curator at the Works Art and Design Festival, who arranged an exhibition featuring

my photographs alongside work by two other students. I barely understood what I was trying to create back then and resisted calling myself an artist — a title that, being so new to the field, I wasn't sure I'd earned. In the years since, I've produced and collaborated on projects of all kinds, from books to installations. And yet, I still avoid calling myself an artist. Rather, I say I work as one — a distinction meant to remind people that art is work.

It's not always clear to our audiences how much labour goes into what we create. But let me tell you: it's a lot. And while a lucky few make a healthy living from art, most do not. Edmonton's arts sector runs on second jobs, side hustles, fundraisers, donations and public funding — a patchwork that has kept it alive. However, that foundation is beginning to crack, putting the artists and organizations who depend on it at risk.

Now, this might sound like familiar hyperbole. *Aren't the arts always "in trouble?"* It's true: artists and arts organizations could always use more money, would always benefit from spending less time fundraising and justifying their practice. But a confluence of recent circumstances has turned routine underfunding of the arts into something more existential.

The circumstances I'm referring to were recently outlined in the Edmonton Arts Council's (EAC) economic impact report, which details municipal arts funding and its social and economic effects. As an artist, I promptly read the report upon its release in July, and it's all business. It uses 2024 financial statements from arts organizations funded by the EAC — a list that includes the Edmonton Folk Music Festival, the Art Gallery of Alberta and Workshop West Playwrights' Theatre — to thoroughly outline how much taxpayers benefit from subsidizing the sector, totaling \$14 million per year. While there is a brief mention of more intangible benefits ("social cohesion, civic engagement, and community well-being") these are unlikely to sway a government trying to fend off consecutive deficits and an alarmingly close debt ceiling. Instead, the report is filled with assertive statistics about art as an economic driver (\$68.4 million in value-added GDP) and as an employment generator (over 1,400 local jobs created and funded directly by the EAC). The study aims to persuade its audience — first and foremost the City of Edmonton, which evaluates EAC funding every four years — that the arts are a profitable investment.

In recent years, much of the municipal funding that supports artists and arts organizations has stagnated or been redirected. The City of Edmonton, for instance, last reviewed EAC funding in 2023 but hasn't raised levels since 2019, despite staggering population growth. For artists, this means more competition for the same pool of money. The impact study notes that in 2024, the increase in grant

applications led to "an all-time low in the application success rate for individuals and collectives." Meanwhile, the province has increased support for the Alberta Foundation for the Arts by \$4.5 million for the second consecutive year — a welcome investment, but one that can't offset the pressure when municipal funding stands still.

Factors like the COVID-19 pandemic, inflation and global trade disputes have made it costlier to be an artist (consider associated expenses like materials, rent and transportation). Such challenges might once have prompted action from the private sector, but a significant amount of corporate giving has shifted in the wake of the pandemic. Earlier this year, for example, TD Bank ended its long-time sponsorship of a series of jazz festivals across Canada, leaving organizers little time to address the deficits. Edmonton Opera Executive Director Robin Whiffen says this shift reflects a national trend that's challenging fundraising efforts. "We're having to work twice as hard for the same amount of money," she told me.

This alone would be enough to hinder growth and development in Edmonton's arts sector. However, it comes at a time when consumer behaviour is also changing, with some local arts events seeing declining attendance. Not all are struggling — the Fringe Festival just posted record numbers — but overall, audiences are harder to reach and less consistent. The reasons are many: inflation affects patrons as much as artists, and tighter budgets often change how they engage with the arts. An EAC survey conducted in 2024 confirms this, adding that lack of time and insufficient knowledge about local events are also key barriers to participation — a gap that may have widened since the loss of alternative weeklies that were once the go-to guide for local listings. Now we all reach for our smartphones, which offer algorithmically tailored info, much of which has nothing to do with Edmonton.

It's difficult to ignore the impact of this technological shift, which has given us round-the-clock access to attention-grabbing entertainment, a lot of which — TikTok, for example — is free. As American literary critic Parul Sehgal notes in essays for *The New York Times* and *Sydney Morning Herald*, much contemporary literature, music and television has become simpler and shorter to appeal to our waning attention spans. That doesn't bode well for galleries, playhouses and other traditional venues that require participants to leave the house, silence phones and sustain attention for longer than a scroll.

Identifying the conditions of these funding

challenges is merely a diagnosis. Artists and arts organizations must now determine how best to ride it out — or if this shift proves to be permanent, how best to stay afloat.

I spoke with administrators from a range of local arts organizations — including the Citadel Theatre, Freewill Shakespeare Festival, Workshop West Playwrights' Theatre and Edmonton Jazz Festival Society — and their stories overlapped in striking ways, particularly regarding budgets

and fundraising. All emphasized the importance of keeping the arts affordable and accessible, but each acknowledged that a shifting fiscal landscape has forced them to be creative in achieving and sustaining these goals. Sometimes “creative” means experimenting with new productions, fundraising streams or ticketing models; other times, it simply means scaling back their offerings.

Take, for instance, the Freewill Shakespeare Festival. For most of its 36-year history, the festival has produced two distinct works of Shakespeare each summer, typically in Hawrelak Park. However, in 2024 and 2025, organizers reduced the season to a single play. COVID-19 and a major rehabilitation project in Hawrelak Park, which forced a relocation to Louise McKinney Park, are contributing factors, but the main cause is declining attendance. Artistic Director David Horak notes that they began to notice softening ticket sales years before the pandemic.

Earlier this year, the festival launched a fundraising campaign alarmingly titled “Save the Freewill Shakespeare Festival.” The goal is to raise \$150,000 to sustain the festival for at least 10 years, according to Horak. A review of public donations on the festival’s crowdsourcing page reveals who wants to keep it going: private citizens willing to donate \$50, \$100 and sometimes even \$1,000. Notably absent are large corporate donors for whom such contributions would be an easy lift.

Freewill Shakespeare is not alone in turning to crowdfunding. The Grindstone Comedy Theatre, a local venue known for improv, standup comedy, burlesque and musical theatre, is running a similar initiative called “Save the Grindstone.” Their goal: a modest \$40,000.

This year, the Edmonton Fringe Festival also launched a crowdsourcing campaign, cleverly inviting guests to “adopt a porta-potty” for \$250, which allowed donors to name their adopted toilets. The campaign, featuring taglines like “Show you give a sh*t about Fringe!,” inspired many pun-filled porta-potty names.

While crowdfunding effectively creates community awareness and emotional and financial investment in the arts, it raises questions about long-term sustainability. Can citizens afford to keep our arts

institutions afloat at \$100 a pop, year after year? I suspect not. If governments and corporate donors further retreat from arts funding, it’s unlikely that crowdfunding initiatives alone could fill the gap. Such campaigns are intended as bandages, not solutions for the underlying problem.

In 2024, Workshop West, a local theatre dedicated to producing and presenting Canadian stories, often by emerging playwrights, implemented pay-what-you-will pricing. Initially envisioned to make attendance more accessible, the pilot project has proven to be a financial boon for the 47-year-old company. Season subscribers have more than doubled, and shows are running at around 70 per cent capacity, up from very low numbers, according to Artistic Producer Heather Inglis.

WHILE CROWDFUNDING EFFECTIVELY CREATES COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND EMOTIONAL AND FINANCIAL INVESTMENT IN THE ARTS, IT RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY.

Ticket sales constitute only a small portion of Workshop West’s budget, which relies heavily on public funding from three levels of government. However, the increased revenue has given the organization room to breathe and the opportunity to reinvest in the business. Moreover, says Inglis, the company is finally attracting younger audiences, something virtually all theatres struggle to achieve.

An initiative from the Edmonton Opera, offering free admission to any of their productions for anyone under 21, has also yielded positive results. In the first year, 3,000 children and young adults attended its shows. It has attracted the attention of students exploring opera on their own and

parents who no longer have to weigh the cost of childcare and purchasing additional tickets when deciding to attend the opera. Similarly, the Edmonton Chamber Music Society now offers anyone under 30 tickets at nearly half the price of a regular adult ticket, and still significantly less than senior pricing.

All of these programs aim to build new audiences, expand access as arts education disappears and ultimately help people connect with the arts. There is some indication that it is working. However, for most arts institutions, attendance fees comprise a small portion of their annual budgets. If public funding continues to stagnate and corporate funding fades, it’s unclear whether existing arts organizations could make up the difference without downsizing.

It would be one thing if the

arts sector faced challenges in isolation. However, funding is declining at a time when other public sectors, like education and health care, are also strained. In moments like these, when resources feel scarce, solutions are often framed in zero-sum terms, with the thinking being: if we spend in one area, we must cut in another.

In a local news article from 2007, then-mayor Stephen Mandel addressed the backlash he faced for increasing arts funding while city roads were in disrepair. He pointed out how little we support artists, adding, “I’ve never once gone out to admire a sidewalk or road.” While I understand his intent, Mandel’s response highlights how easy it is to adopt the zero-sum mentality

between “core” and “noncore” services, pitting one against the other. It also reflects how quickly we take longstanding public goods — like sidewalks, public education and arts and culture — for granted. These things often fade into the background until they’re broken or gone. But sidewalks, when thoughtfully designed and well-maintained, are a thing of beauty. Our arts community is no different: it may not feel novel, but its enduring presence is vital to the city.

Infrastructure, education and the arts are separate sectors on paper. In practice, they’re vital organs, all part of one body. If we ignore the health of the arts sector, the entire city will suffer, and the negative effects will not be easily reversed. **ED.**

Siam
THAI KITCHEN



Discover the flavours
of Thailand

Edmonton | Sherwood Park
siamthaikitchen.ca

ROCKY MOUNTAIN WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL

EDMONTON CONVENTION CENTRE

USE CODE
EDIFY40
40% OFF
GENERAL ADMISSION

*while quantities last

ROCKY MOUNTAIN
WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL

Jobey LIQUOR

SAFEWAY LIQUOR

Happy
& Olive

All day. Everyday.



9640-142 Street Edmonton
happyandolive.ca • 825-401-4958

RAPIDFIRE
THEATRE

Frickin' great
improv comedy
since 1981



RIBEYE
BUTCHER SHOP



Discover bold flavour,
unbeatable value,
& tips from the butcher's block.

Learn more at
RIBEYEBUTCHER.CA



More than
a grocery store!

EDMONTON | CALGARY | SHERWOOD PARK



BOUTIQUE CUSTOM HOME BUILDER

National Award Winning Homes



Each home we create is an expression of modern innovation, outstanding functionality and a bold approach to design.



Renovations and Custom Builds

780.984.6666 • VickysHomes.ca

Look

Fashion
Style
Architecture
Design



Making Limb Differences Visible

When a prenatal exam revealed to Anna Parker that her unborn daughter had a congenital upper limb difference, she went in search of toys that her daughter could relate to. But the artist and mom-to-be came up short, so she created Mayana and Friends, a line of plush toys with limb differences. Like her child, each doll has its own name, personality and unique limb difference. Launched in 2024 and now sold internationally, the toys also behave as educational tools in the medical system. The dolls have earned praise from parents, educators and medical professionals alike. "It helps them understand that differences aren't something strange," says Parker. "They're just a part of life." *-Brooklyn Hollinger*

WITH CAVIAR SERVICE, LUXURY RETAIL AND PREMIUM FURNITURE, **LAUREN KYLE MCDAVID** AND **BRITTANY SCHULZ** ARE POURING THEIR VISION INTO DOWNTOWN EDMONTON. CAN THE CITY MEET THEIR AMBITION?

Bet on Edmonton

BY *Caroline Gault*

PHOTOGRAPHY

Paul Swanson

DESIGNER
LAUREN KYLE
MCDAVID

ton

It's June.

The streets are buzzing with playoff energy as the Edmonton Oilers battle the Florida Panthers in their second straight Stanley Cup final — outcome still unknown when I meet Lauren Kyle McDavid, 29 and newly married. She's pared down in low-rise, wide-leg, cocoa-coloured jeans and a cocoa tee, her blonde hair swept into a high ponytail. She appears unfazed by the demands of her husband's high-pressure career, even on the morning after a loss, because it's been full steam ahead for the grand opening of her business ventures with Edmonton design insider Brittany Schulz, 32.

The business partners leased the long-vacant Canada Permanent Building and refined it as a three-storey showcase of luxury: design studio up top, furniture gallery and cocktail bar below. The concept feels members-only, yet welcomes anyone who wants — and can afford — a taste of the elevated lifestyle Kyle McDavid and Schulz have curated. Kyle McDavid's six-year-old design business, Kyle and Co., anchors the top floor, while the lower levels debut two new ventures: Trove Living — a high-end furniture showroom and retail space — and Bar Trove — a 40-seat restaurant and cocktail bar. Blending luxury shopping with intimate, small-plate dining, the concept resembles Restoration Hardware Restaurants around the world, and offers an experience more common in Europe.

"What you're seeing is two things that might not go together in your head actually go together really seamlessly — and feed off each other," says Kyle McDavid as she welcomes me into the Trove Living showroom, sipping on a house-brand Trove coffee. She sits on a curved and cocoon-like custom-made sofa, Trove's 1947 "Jean Royère-inspired *Polar Bear* reproduction," Schulz later tells me — a design favoured by the stars.

The space is clean and clutter-free, styled in a soft, neutral palette with low-profile marble and wood coffee tables, pale oak herringbone floors, sculptural lighting fixtures and exposed white ducts. It's a curated juxtaposition to the decorative crown mouldings and wainscoting, both of which Kyle McDavid and Schulz added to reinforce the building's historic charm.

"When we originally started the business," Schulz explains, "the idea was that you would meet with Lauren for a furniture or design package upstairs, come down to the furniture showroom to shop and then have lunch and celebrate after in the bar on the main floor." Schulz, dressed in a



sleek black ensemble, is composed and precise, the perfect operational counterweight to Kyle McDavid's visionary role.

Their relationship developed organically over the years as Schulz worked as an external furniture rep for Kyle McDavid's interior design business. A solid partnership between the two has proven key in renovating the Edwardian Baroque building. Billed as Edmonton's first "fireproof bank," the building's structural skeleton is composed of reinforced concrete framing and detailed stonework, features that make structural renovations a major challenge.

To overcome this, Kyle McDavid and Schulz had to track down the original architectural plans and hire an engineer to dissect the structural slabs. "They're hand drawn and very difficult to read," says Kyle McDavid. "There were a lot of hoops to go through." They also worked closely with the city's historic committee to make sure the signage was appropriate for the building's grand exterior: soaring stone columns, ornate carved detailing and an arched, entablature entrance that once signalled prestige in early 20th-century Edmonton.

In the name of exclusivity, it was a hurdle they were willing to clear to create a destination where Edmonton shoppers could access rare, investment-grade furnishings. While Trove carries some more accessibly priced furniture pieces, their high-end European imports, such as the Italian line Tacchini and Collection Particulière from Paris, start in the low four figures, with hero pieces climbing well into five. According to the duo, no one else in Western Canada carries the lines, which they sell alongside a selection of vintage items from antique hubs in Milan, Texas and North Carolina. "Not everyone can afford super high-end furniture, and not everyone cares about brand names when they're putting their space together," says Kyle McDavid. "But there are really passionate design people who want a collectible piece in their home — something with a rich history"

Rethinking Dementia

Creating new pathways to wellness

JOE AND SHIRLEY, retired schoolteachers, like to keep busy. They visit different places around Edmonton and enjoy going for coffee. They're determined to keep booking cruises until someone tells them to stop.

But Joe's memory, shaky from old hockey concussions, has gotten much worse over the past nine years — sometimes he forgets things within minutes. Although he hasn't been officially diagnosed with dementia, his driver's license wasn't renewed, and they've been told to bolster their support network. His friends don't invite him hunting anymore. He loves to go for walks but lately he's been getting lost, so Shirley goes with him.



Dr. Holly Symonds-Brown, photography by Amanda Gallant

And it's only going to get worse.

Almost 700,000 Canadians are living with dementia, a number that's projected to reach one million by 2030. While most individuals with dementia receive care from loved ones at home, government funding historically prioritizes institutional care for later stages of the disease.

A recently announced initiative aims to reshape dementia care in Alberta. The Dementia Pathways Project is a multi-year initiative with the first two years funded by the University Hospital Foundation and supported by a \$1 million grant from the Government of Alberta's Primary Care Innovation Fund. The project will be led by University of Alberta researchers Dr. Adrian Wagg and Dr. Holly Symonds-Brown with three main goals:

Better care from day one: By creating clear clinical pathways, the project aims to ensure people receive faster diagnoses and more coordinated support.

A provincial dementia registry: A single, shared database will connect people with clinical trials, accelerate research, and facilitate the sharing of information across the province.

Help finding the right supports: The project will develop user-friendly tools to help people with dementia and their care partners easily find programs, services and opportunities for social connection.

The McLeod River Primary Care Network and the Kaye Family Medicine Clinic in Edmonton will be the first to pilot the project's integration into the health-care system.



Dr. Adrian Wagg, photography by Amanda Gallant

"Dementia is a dreaded diagnosis," says Dr. Symonds-Brown. "But with a clear pathway to the right programs, it doesn't have to be."

For Joe and Shirley, it could be just what they need.

To learn more or to donate, visit givetouhf.ca/hope.



**University
Hospital
Foundation**

There's also a clear intention to spotlight local talent. Handwoven tapestries by Edmonton textile artist Jessica Kyca hang prominently on walls, and a local woodworker has been brought in-house to help craft pieces for the Trove furniture line. That ethos continues downstairs at Bar Trove, where the ivory-glazed ceramic charcuterie boards, rippled like draped fabric, were commissioned by Trove and handmade in Calgary. Bar Trove doubles as a showroom: selected plates and glassware, and even the house olive oil, are sold in their retail space across the corridor so that guests can buy the very items they experience in the bar.

Cozy and intimate, Bar Trove is smaller than you'd expect and feels like a secret New York lounge that might require a password to get in. The interior — with its floral-upholstered couches, panelled wood walls and show-stopping deep rouge fireplace (newly built, but convincingly vintage) — mixes the palette and ornateness of a Parisian salon with the brooding richness of a British drawing room. The effect is indulgent, transportive, yet grounded in the historical space it inhabits.

At the heart of the room is a dramatic bar with a custom base by Edmonton's Forge 53, wrapped in marble veined with blush and gold and flanked by brass shelves. And just when you think the design details are the main event — enter the menu.

With food curated by chef Eric Hanson, formerly of The Marc, the seafood-focused menu rotates with party-ready fare, like freshly shucked oysters and a decadent lobster linguini that also appears in Kyle McDavid's debut cookbook — one more in a growing list of entrepreneurial ventures.

As we climb the staircase, original to the building and solid with every step, Kyle McDavid warns me: "My office is still a little bit of a construction zone."

She isn't kidding. As we walk into the third-floor Kyle and Co. headquarters, it's all hustle: meetings in progress, boxes to unpack, decisions to make and employee questions flying her way (she employs 21 full-time staff across her ventures, plus contractors). Lenard — the McDavids' Instagram-famous dog — patters around beneath a bank of desks stacked with Macs and moodboards. The space hums with the kind of startup energy instantly recognizable to anyone who's worked in early-stage businesses.

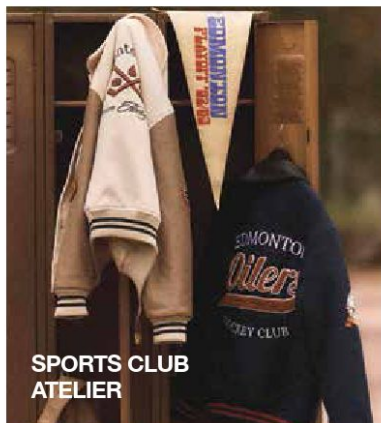
In a small corner stockroom, modern rancher jackets and soft knitwear with subtle Oilers branding are folded with care — remnants of the 2025 launch collection for Sports Club Atelier (if you're counting, that's her fifth business). The minimalist-chic line of game-day apparel sold out on its first drop.



BAR TROVE



TROVE LIVING



SPORTS CLUB ATELIER



KYLE AND CO.

Although it debuted in partnership with the Edmonton Oilers in 2025, the idea dates back to 2017, when custom jackets designed and worn by players' wives and girlfriends — also known as WAGs — gained traction. What began as a niche fashion trend has since become a viable commercial offshoot for pro teams, but that attention can cut both ways for the women behind the designs. As noted by a July 2025 *New York Times* feature titled "With All Eyes on Them, a 'WAG' Style Emerges," being a WAG comes with instant resources and rocket-fuel publicity, yet their own impressive achievements are often overshadowed — and undervalued — because the public credits their success to their pro-athlete husbands and boyfriends.

Carving out an identity of their own can take years (even for a Spice Girl). Kyle McDavid is up for it. Five ventures in, she isn't surprised by Sports Club Atelier's success. The pieces cost no more than an Oilers jersey; they're just made to turn heads beyond the arena. And that contrast is her business blueprint: elevate a game-day jacket, or transform a century-old bank into a home for luxury furniture, cocktails and caviar. Each venture mirrors her lifestyle — and now Edmonton can buy in. Can a city that prides itself on quiet wealth rise to the challenge?

"I get fired up whenever people ask me this question," she says. "I don't think we have a complicated relationship with polish and ambition. We've just been afraid to do it — but when we do, people follow. They just need to see it first."

She is fearless in the belief that if you build it, Edmonton will back it.

Even with her husband's long-term future unannounced at the time of our interview, Kyle McDavid insists her investment in Edmonton isn't contingent on where the Oilers captain ends up. "I love this city regardless of whether we're here." She pauses. "I would have done it regardless. People have multiple businesses all over the world." **ED.**



Sign up for ED.eats

Your weekly guide
to restaurants,
recipes and latest
dining trends.



Discover Edmonton's food
scene every Thursday with
fresh food content like:

*How To: Sharpen Your Knives with
a Whetstone*
by Zachary Ayotte

Why White Wine is Winning
by Tracy Hyatt

*Bella Makes Italian-ish Dining
Feel Like a Party*
by Omar Mouallem



Sign up for **FREE!**



edifiedmonton.com/newsletters



EDMONTON OPERA

October
9 & 11, 2025
Winspear Centre

OPERA'S GREATEST HITS

Bravissimo!



Opera's greatest moments come to
life with the Edmonton Symphony
Orchestra and Edmonton Opera
in a breathtaking theatrical event.

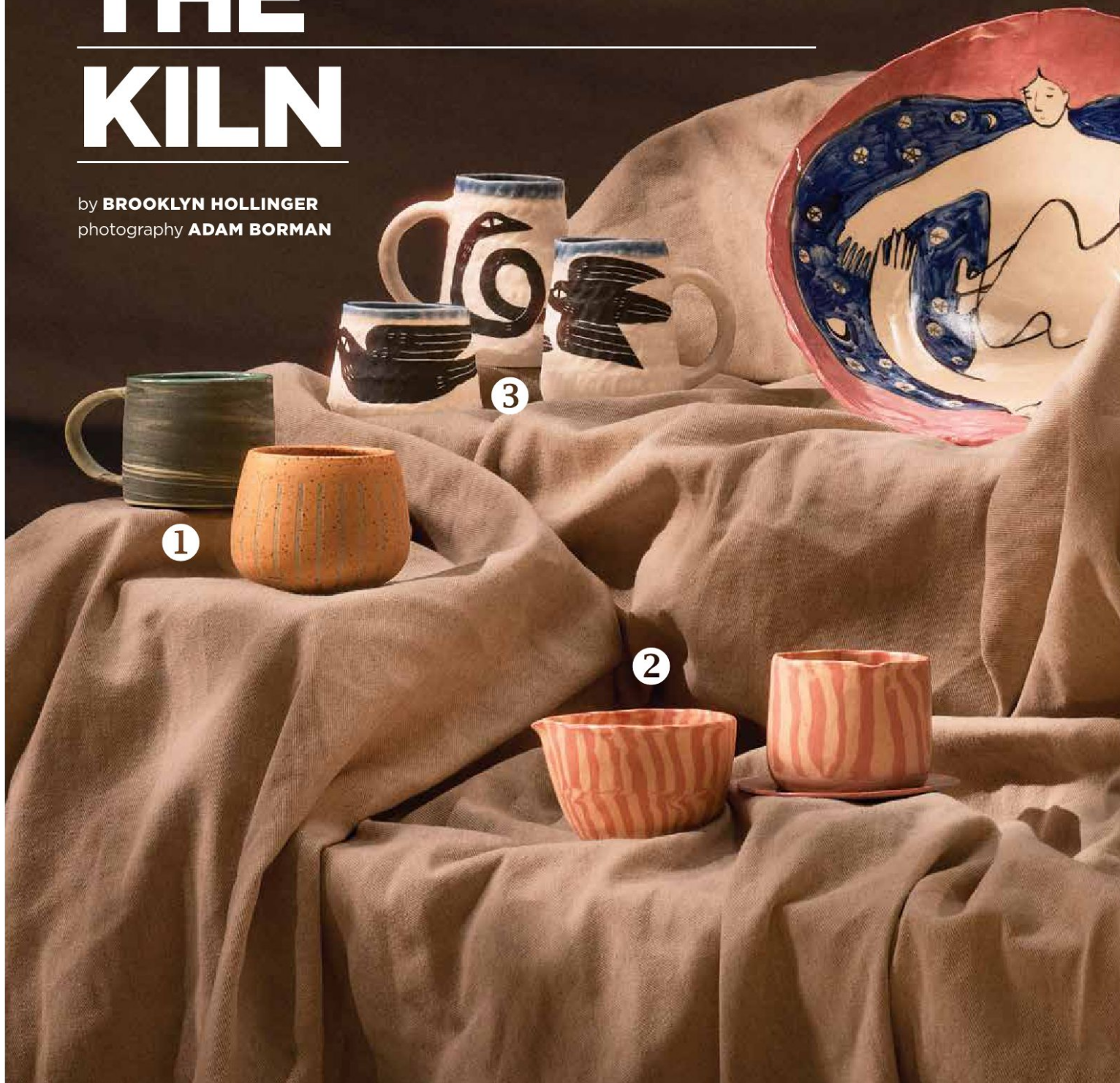
Get your tickets today!



HOT OFF THE KILN

Glazed, fired and anything but ordinary, these ceramics blur the line between everyday objects and collectible art

by **BROOKLYN HOLLINGER**
photography **ADAM BORMAN**





1 POTS BY GABS

These vibrant vases by artist Gaby Wong showcase how her style shifts with the changing seasons — blues and greens in winter, oranges and yellows in spring. Wong intentionally adds grainy black dots for texture. Each piece takes up to two months to make, a delicate process of drying and firing.

Instagram: @potsbygabs

2 MATERIAL CULTURE

Drawn to the tactility of hand-built pottery, Genevieve Ongaro of Material Culture primarily works in nerikomi, a Japanese technique that stacks and cuts coloured clay to form patterns. She favours the geometric style it evokes, inspired by solid shapes over loose forms.

materialcultureceramics.com

3 SKAVENGER CERAMICS

Mary Roach's ceramics draw on the stonecut printmaking of Kinngait, Nunavut, a method that transfers drawings onto stone blocks. The Métis artist often depicts Canadian wildlife in her pottery, especially animals from the river valley like rabbits, coyotes and magpies.

skavenger.ca

4 OIL AND BIRCH

Brin Steeves of Oil and Birch creates ceramics that honour identity through tender and tough imagery. Her work resembles tattoo styles, using a sgraffito technique — carving away the top layer to play with negative space and texture.

oilandbirch.com

5 ALYSON DAVIES SCULPTURES

Painted in delft blue — a signature Dutch pottery style dating back to the 16th century — this bowl by artist Alyson Davies reflects her interest in astrology, depicting two women embracing to symbolize their cosmic connection.

alysondavies.com

6 MOONK STUDIO

Moon Kyung Kim's work often blends imagery and style from her Korean homeland and Canada. Embracing modern, minimalist techniques, she focuses on functional pieces like tableware and tea sets painted with brushes to reflect Eastern artistic beauty.

moonkstudiopottery.com

OCT
17-19



SIREN

Bold. Contemporary. Dance.

balletedmonton.ca

ballet
edmonton



Rotating Wine List

Share Plates by
Chef Filliep Lament

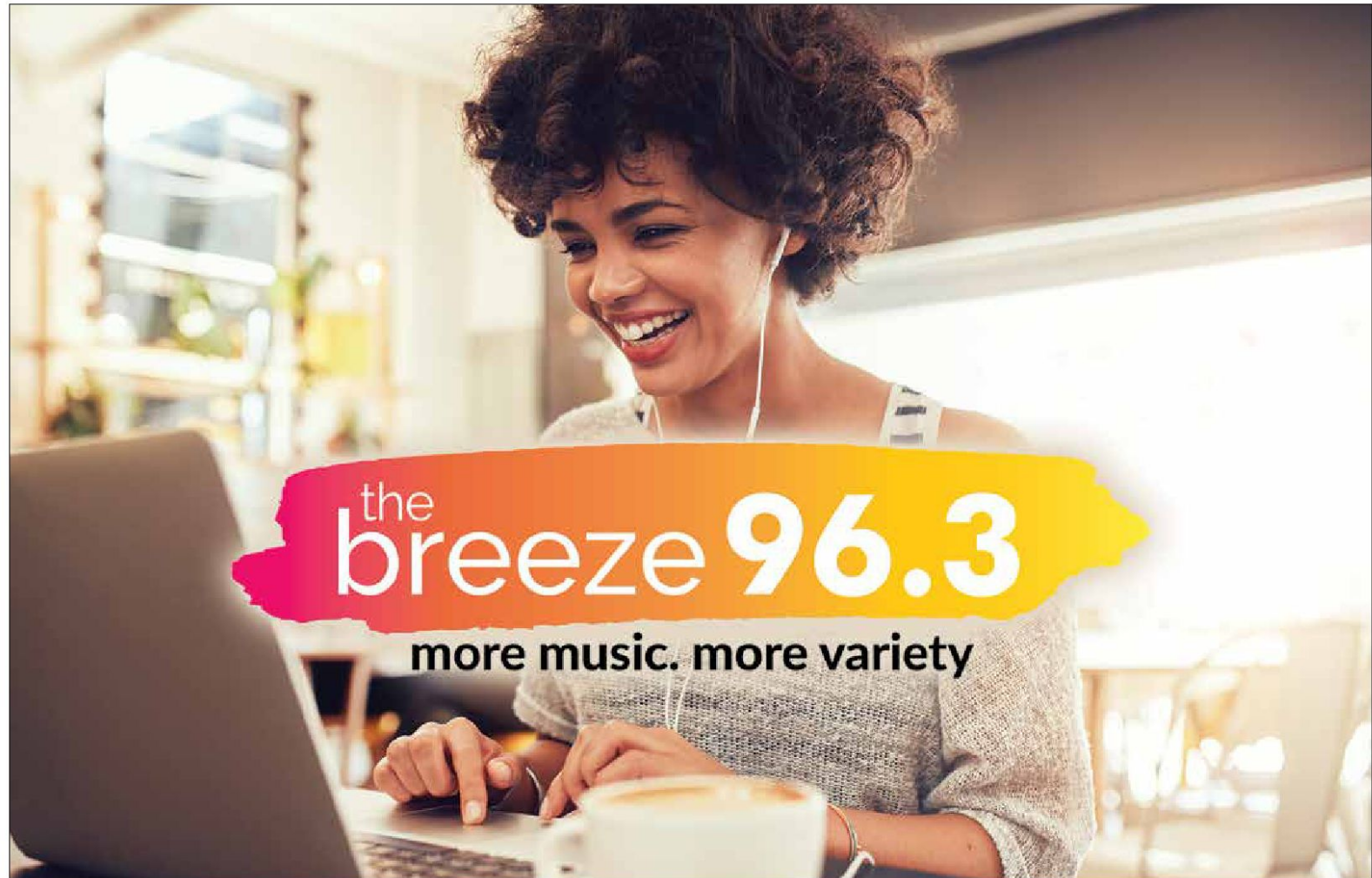
Good Vibes



nowherewinebar.com

the
breeze 96.3

more music. more variety





“SOMETIMES I LIE AWAKE AT NIGHT...”

The full title of my father's portrait is "Sometimes I lie awake at night, and I ask, 'Where have I gone wrong?' Then a voice says to me, 'This is going to take more than one night.'" It draws on one of my earliest memories — being terrified by the marching clown band that paraded Santa into an annual company Christmas party. To my horror, my dad played saxophone in that yearly procession. After his cancer diagnosis, we spent nearly every Saturday together, often over breakfast, where I'd take his photo. Collaborating on these portraits became his gift to me. For this photo, which would be our last, we returned to his favourite lunch spot, the old A-frame Burger Baron on Wye Road. After he passed, the collection grew into *Good Grief*, a series reclaiming spaces altered by his absence. —Jay Procktor

Memoir

CRES CEND OING.

After my friend and bandmate was diagnosed with a rare muscular disease, we decided to finish what we'd started by recording our first album while there was still time

by **SCOTT MESSENGER**



With the start of the show a few minutes away, Colin is suddenly, debilitatingly exhausted. We just hauled in drums, guitars and amps from our cars parked outside this rundown northside bar. But Colin didn't. He hasn't had the strength to do that for years now. The walk to the stage alone has left him collapsed in his folding chair — now necessary for every show. His guitar sits at his feet, his right hand rests atop an aluminum cane planted in front of him. I ask Colin what he needs. He raises his other hand gingerly from his knee, a gesture meant to reassure me. It doesn't.

"Just a bit of time," he says.

I get him a glass of water and return to setting up, stealing glances. Colin looks confused, even mildly angry, the resentment probably aimed at the disease that's doing this to him. I check the time but it doesn't really matter what it says. The truth is, time's running out.

We're both around 50, Colin and I. So are the other members of our band, Daughters of England: Guy, the drummer, and Brock, the bassist. Too old to have just released our debut album, and definitely too old to be performing it live around town. We could be dads to most of the musicians we've played with.

But we have to perform. I'm convinced destiny is at play here. Why else would we still be doing this if it wasn't? Frankly, it's silly for guys our age to play at being rock stars, to entertain dreams of headlining festivals with legions of screaming fans. But I believe we're obligated to acknowledge that, a long time ago, because of the history that Colin and I share, we were put on a path to at least try, however remote the possibilities would be.

Colin and I have been friends since eighth grade, quiet suburban kids bonding over grunge music when we should have been focusing on trigonometry. We begged our parents to buy us instruments so we could make sounds like the Smashing Pumpkins or Dinosaur Jr. They did, and then we grew up playing together.

Musically, Colin grew up faster, often in awe-inspiring, even irritating ways. While I struggled with fretting basic chords, he was mastering the fundamentals of soloing. He insists it was because he loved the challenge of figuring out a riff. "It made me feel like I was actually good at something," he tells me all these years later.

But that's too characteristically modest of Colin. I have another theory. I believe that music was part of his DNA, like a dormant gene. And when he touched his first guitar, a gene flipped on like a switch on an amplifier.

DNA, however, is also the problem. Alongside the genes responsible for his talent were those that would lead to its undoing. Colin has Kennedy's disease, an adult-onset loss of neurons in the spine and lower brainstem that slowly weakens all muscles. It's extremely rare. Maybe 30 people in Edmonton live with it. There's no known treatment.

If there's an upside, it's that Colin doesn't have amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (also known as ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease), which *is* fatal and was his initial diagnosis around 2007. He lived with that grim news for two weeks until a second doctor caught a facial twitch — one of few differentiating symptoms between Kennedy's and ALS — and lifted his presumed death sentence. He could grow as old as any of us. The question is, will he be able to enjoy it?

Colin already lives in sharp contrast to his youth. In high school, when not playing guitar, he'd ride freestyle BMX or ace me on the tennis court. He'd easily push 15-rep sets of bicep curls with 25-pound dumbbells. "Now I can only do three to five pounds," he says, which he does to battle muscle atrophy. He's told his muscles are weakening at a rate as high as five per cent a year. He thinks his strength is less than half what it was in his 30s, before the first signs of the disease.



There are other symptoms, too, though Colin is less inclined to reveal if he's experiencing them. Sufferers of Kennedy's, who are primarily men, may have trouble swallowing. They can experience a loss of basic sensation and reflexes. Testicular atrophy and a decrease in the masculinizing effects of testosterone can give way to the influence of estrogen.

What's for certain is that it will eventually take Colin's ability to play guitar.

"I think I've got a good couple of years before my hands start giving me real problems," he says. The tradeoff in the meantime, Colin adds, wryly but not wrongly, is "there's a possibility I could grow boobs."

During the pandemic, I realized that I'm a songwriter the way a framer is a house-builder. I can rough things out and get the studs positioned, but I can't really make a place where people would want to spend time.

For years, my bandmates and I would meet weekly in a rehearsal space above a central Edmonton pawn shop. We'd joke and jam and drink beer and write.

We let it go during the lockdown, leaving behind almost everything we made there, ghosts of songs I now hope haunt the place. A few weeks after the lockdowns started, loneliness drove me out to the garage with an acoustic guitar. Soon enough, I was writing new songs. But they were incomplete somehow, inhospitable. They needed Colin.

Swept up in the now-or-never aftermath of COVID, I asked if he'd consider preparing them for a studio.

His only question was, "Why didn't we do it before?"

I think I know the answer: the moment you truly understand what it will mean to lose something is just before it's taken from you. It's a tragedy of being human that we're incapable of preparing for such permanence. Or maybe the tragedy is mine alone. No matter what I know is coming, I'll never be ready.

That album, *Anomalies*, came out in November 2024 — and no, I haven't quit my day job. There's been no Billboard charting, no world tour. We've had a handful of shows in venues no further than about 100 kilometres from home, a few songs on listener-supported radio, a single positive review in a local zine. That's all. But the album makes me feel like we accomplished something just the same. Colin built homes out of the shacks I made, places where a listener could live comfortably for a few minutes of their lives. But more than that, he gave me, and the world, a record of his talent that will outlive us all.

In return, I want to share his talent as widely as possible — but it's not that simple. Most promoters aren't eager to book a quartet of middle-aged musicians with little social media savvy and no real following to show for it. I struggle to align the band's schedules or ambitions enough to rehearse as often as we should, and I'm constantly juggling the band's demands with the needs of my own family. The industry doesn't help either — it's broken. We're just a faint whisper in the deafening roar of terabytes flooding music streaming platforms. Still, I feel like I owe Colin a debt I'll never be able to repay.

If so, Colin has forgiven that debt.

Since the album was released, he believes we've done more together than we ever did in the decades previous. For him, it's not how many shows we play, it's what happens after each one. People buy T-shirts we had made, some even part with 10 bucks for a CD that they probably have no way of playing. But what stands out most to Colin are the people who approach us after a show to say how much they appreciated the music, that hearing it meant something to them.

"It gives me something to be proud of," he says. "That's all I need."

Which is to say that Colin's perspective, just like his playing, has evolved faster than mine. Maybe

quantity — of shows played or songs recorded or streamed — can't be the goal. That can't be controlled. But quality can. Rarely can we choose our circumstances, but maybe we can choose how we see them.

For Colin — for all of us — there's no need for a Rolling Stone feature or a Coachella slot. Just making the effort to share our music, even with the few who stop to listen, feels like enough. We've spent more than half our lives nurturing this talent and our love for it. In that sense, we've already "made it."

Back at that rundown northside bar, Colin rallies in time for the show just like he said he would. He plays every song with fewer mistakes than any of us. He breathes life into music, and music, it seems, is breathing it back into him.

A few weeks later, we're back at work on new material at Guy's house, in a room so small I sometimes set up just outside of it, poking my head in the door. Colin sits in the corner, improving a sketch of a song I'd brought in. I watch as his fingers find a melody on the fretboard as if it had been there all along. Then, for the first time, I notice his right cheek twitch, a slight and rapid pull and release, like a note bent on a guitar string.

The moment you truly understand what it will mean to lose something is just before it's taken from you. No matter what I know is coming, I'll never be ready.

It stays with me for being so ephemeral yet so deeply rooted in something absolute. Is time like that? The whole of it too big to comprehend, leaving us the also impossible task of trying to make sense of a single moment. Here and gone, here and gone, and then just gone.

But for now, at least, it's here. So we give it our best, playing through a crescendo ending. I think Colin gets that. He hears those moments, and their potential, in our music in a way that the rest of us don't. "We all keep getting better," Colin says — and that, he adds, is rare at this point in life. "You'd think there'd be a decline in whatever we do. We're getting old and tired, but the music gets better. It's weird."

That sketch I gave him turns into one of our best songs, a piece about, perhaps ironically, the unabashed confidence of youth — more mature and confident than almost anything on that debut album. In fact, it reinforces Colin's hopes for a sophomore release, and that, together, we will, in his words, "do this as long as we can." There's more music in him, and in us, just waiting. **ED.**

The podcast about women
of *a certain age* for people
of *any age*.

CroneCast



or find it on your
favourite podcast
platform.



**Facing a Legal Challenge?
Let us shoulder the weight.**

StandPoint Law carries the load,
so you don't have to.

- ▶ Estate Litigation
- ▶ Construction Liens
- ▶ Employment Law
- ▶ Commercial Litigation
- ▶ Administrative Law

A civil litigation firm
with thoughtful, strategic
guidance, and tailored solutions
— every step of the way.

standpointlaw.ca
780.800.3870

EDify.
Unfiltered

You've read
the stories.

**Now hear
the stories
behind them.**

The *Edify Unfiltered*
podcast brings you
Edmonton stories
you won't hear
— or read —
anywhere else.

Listen:





Love Letters

UNTYING THE KNOT

Letting go of something I'd been carrying for far too long

by **LISA MARTIN**

ABOUT A YEAR AND A HALF after my marriage ended, I flew to Vancouver for a short vacation. On my way out of the house, on a whim, I grabbed my wedding ring from the back of the closet and tucked it in my wallet, amongst the loose change.

Then I hefted my baggage, and took myself to the airport.

That night in Vancouver, I stepped off a dock into a friend's metal dinghy. The small craft propelled us across the water to the spot where he had left his boat anchored amidst thousands of reflected lights. We'd been friends so long we'd been at each other's weddings. Now here we were on False Creek, both of us with our marital knots untied.

My friend told me that when his wife left, he bought this boat to live on. One night while he was away from the boat, the anchor dragged and — beached like a whale — the boat took on water and sank.

He took the wreck apart, plank by plank. Tore out what was irreparable and replaced it with what would serve. Curved the wooden ribs of the boat with steam, filled the hull with cement. He did the hard, slow work of restoration until — in place of a disaster — he had a boat again.

I sat with him on the stern of that boat, considering the metaphors. Anchors that drag and ones that hold. Knots you lie awake at night worrying over — the ones you tried to tie — that you are sure you *did* tie — but that didn't hold.

Any good sailor will tell you not all knots are created equal, if you want a knot to hold you'd better attend to the way you tie it in the first place. But, for all that, there are factors beyond one's control — salt, humidity, the friction of metal on rope, the shorn edges of things no one ever thought would end up jagged, or torn. Knot, that word for the speed at which a vessel travels over water, and a metaphor for a marriage — tying, tied, untied.

I fished through the change in my wallet for the ring I knew the feel of, by heart. With the slight waves, the lights in the water kept shifting, renegotiating the balance. I stood up, leaned on the railing and looked out.

Then I threw my wedding ring right out into those shimmering lights, the darkness and depth beneath the surface.

Ripples formed around the ring as it hit the water, as they would form around any plain or precious thing.

We stared together at the place the ring had disappeared.

"Better it than me," I said.

There were circles around the ring's disappearance. And then circles around those circles. Healing must have something to do with this — with the boundaries of what's occurred. Eventually, those circles became so wide — they included so much — they lost their original meaning. **ED.**

This is a new series of essays by Edmontonians reflecting on human connection. Pitch your little love story to editor@edifyedmonton.com.

A CELEBRATORY RED CARPET AWARDS GALA
 FUNDRAISER IN SUPPORT OF THE NINA HAGGERTY CENTRE FOR THE ARTS



TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

[HeresNina2025.eventbrite.ca](https://heresnina2025.eventbrite.ca)

Presented by Preferred Bookkeepers

Sponsored by
 Edmonton Expo Centre • CTV • Odvod Media
 Production World • Lindisfarne Productions • Stephen & Lynn Mandel
 Roy & Co • Alberta Blue Cross • ATB • Westkey Xibita • CN Rail
 Realtor's Community Foundation • Dentons Canada LLP

HERE'S NINA! 2025

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2025
EDMONTON EXPO CENTRE



A feast for your
Feathered Friends

12204-107 Ave NW, Edmonton, AB
order.wbu.com/Edmonton



ALL IS BRIGHT 2025. ONE NIGHT TO CELEBRATE. ONE WEEK OF ART



124 Street & Area's biggest event of the year, All is Bright Festival, is back on *Saturday, November 15*. Enjoy twinkling lights, live entertainment, local eats, and free festive fun for all ages. After a big celebration on Nov. 15, enjoy an extended 1 week filled with immersive art on 124 Street & Area windows, on until *Saturday, November 22*. It's the brightest way to kick off the winter season—don't miss it! Be up to date with All is Bright event details, scan the QR Code for our website:

Rediscover 124 Street & Area at 124STREET.CA




Edmonton Chamber Music Society
 Bringing the world's best chamber music to Edmonton

2025 / 2026 SEASON



Stewart Goodyear
 October 3, 2025



Tafelmusik
 November 20, 2025

EdmontonChamberMusic.org

**ANYTIME,
 ANY PLACE.**

EDify.

EdifyEdmonton.com

Lost Ones

A LIFE IN FULL BEAT

Gary Lopaschuk
June 4, 1955 – April 2, 2025

by **CHRISTINA FRANGO**

WHEN GARY LOPASCHUK'S three kids were little, they used to lay in bed at night listening for their dad coming to check on them. They'd hear his voice whoop. The floor thump. And they'd know their dad was springing down the hallway in a series of backflips like the accomplished acrobat that he told them he was.

Don't come out to look, he'd warned. He might bowl them over with his powerful flips and they'd be hurt. For a long time, they heeded the warning. Until one night, his son David peeked — and caught his dad whooping, thumping his feet and so engrossed in acting out this fantasy that he was miming the motion of backflips with his hands.

Lopaschuk had a giant imagination and an equally sized brain, and he used both to revolutionize heart disease research, and then educate the world about it. He loved to give public talks about cardiovascular health (you'll find plenty of them on the internet). The heart, he liked to say, needs more energy than any other organ in the body because of its continuous need to contract. It gets that energy from burning two kinds of fuel — fatty acids and sugars.

Normally, the heart uses a balance of both. Early in his career, Lopaschuk became convinced the kinds of fuel used by the heart — too much of one or the other — affects its ability to function.



He proved this theory, and went on to help develop drugs that manipulate the types of fuel the heart uses in different diseases.

In 2005, Lopaschuk suddenly understood heart function on a different level. His daughter Sarah, then 20, was killed in a car accident while studying in Australia. For a long time after, her father kept her photo as the screensaver on his computer. He always carried a sadness in his heart for his daughter, but his dedication to the hearts of others stayed the same.

His ideas, colleagues agree, were ahead of their time, and his research put the University of Alberta on the global cardiovascular research map. Today, his work on metabolic modulators — drugs that change how the heart uses energy sources to make it work more efficiently — is core to new generations of heart disease and diabetes medicine.

To his students, Lopaschuk was titan in the world of research — someone known for his unflagging support and encyclopedic knowledge of the scientific literature. But to his family, he was a goof in the best way. He came up with wild ideas and followed through. He once bought a huge boat on a whim. During the Vancouver Olympics, he splurged on tickets to take his sons to the gold medal game between Canada and the United States. He loved sailing, golfing, scotch and the Edmonton Oilers.

He was still working at the U of A this April when, at age 69, his heart stopped while watching his beloved Oilers at Rogers Place with his son Tim. He didn't suffer. His colleagues and family call it a blessed passing. At the funeral, friends and students remarked that dying at a hockey game was exactly how he'd want to go. **ED.**

Lost Ones is a new series honouring local legends and unsung heroes who've recently passed. To recommend someone whose story deserves memorializing, email editor@edifiedmonton.com.

Crossword Puzzle

CIVIC CROSSINGS

Put your knowledge to the test

by **BRANDON CATHCART**

ACROSS

1. Mayoral candidate Mohammad, who wants to "(shift) investment from infrastructure to people"
5. American hardships?
11. Canadian singer Alessia whose *Love & Hyperbole* tour came to the Jube in May
12. Mayoral candidate Knack, with three terms as councillor
13. Guitar lick Colin Damo of "Daughters of England" might play
14. Car model sold at Lakewood Chevrolet
15. Mayoral candidate Caterina, campaigning on "blunt, no-nonsense leadership"
17. Mayoral candidate Cartmell, leader of the Better Edmonton party
18. Take these to Gallagher Park in the winter (wheel!)
20. "J'ai ___": "I'm done" at Café Bicyclette
21. Block heater attachment
22. Item signed by LitFest speakers this month
23. "Canada's Mr. Polka" and namesake of Highlands' Gaby ___ Park
24. See some of Jupiter's from the RASC Observatory
25. Like most items in the Royal Alberta Museum (and 23-Down)
26. Where Lisa Martin mused about "anchors that drag and ones that hold"
27. What Wee Book Inn does with used novels
29. Motorcycling grp. with a local chapter that advocates for children's safety

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10
11					12					
13					14					
			15	16				17		
	18	19					20			
	21					22				
23					24					
25				26						
27			28				29	30	31	32
33							34			
35							36			

33. Paintings and installations in the AGA's *nâpêhkâsowinowâk* group show, but maybe not the prints
34. 880 CHED and 88.5 CJSR radio bands, respectively
35. "Sensational ___"; experience for kids at the Telus World of Science
36. "Accomplished acrobat" and heart disease researcher Lopaschuk

DOWN

1. 5k Foam Fest or MUDGIRL run: Abbr.
2. ___ tai (Honi Honi Tiki Lounge drink)
3. Sound heard at PAWS for Life
4. Some floating down the North Saskatchewan
5. Forecasts from Josh Classen that may dampen the mood (among other things)
6. "Not ___ backyard" (self-prioritizing objection to eight-plexes)
7. Last year, EAC-funded arts orgs created \$68.4 million in value-added ___
8. Toastmasters club skill

9. Fixes a broken website menu, say
10. Teacher at the Hindu Society of Alberta
16. ___ Company Brewing
18. Like some triangles
19. Pulls artist gear off a truck at the Edmonton Folk Music Festival
20. Popular 1990s activity played in the U of A's Quad (a.k.a. hacky sack)
22. Chinatown restaurant ___ and Hare
23. Edmonton's mummified ancient Egyptian
24. Oaxacan cuisine (El Jardin's specialty) features seven
26. Oilers colour
28. Adjusts treble and bass, shortly
30. Roadside assistance company with a building on Gateway Blvd.
31. Event featuring bull riding and barrel racing, briefly
32. Matriarchal Quon of The Lingnan

Answers on page 15

Brandon Cathcart is a local record label owner and crossword constructor. He publishes a new puzzle every Friday at yegwords.com

RYAN JESPERSEN

Real Talk

Alberta's #1 Talk Show

★★★★★ - BEST NEWS IN CANADA

More than just a "radio talk show," this podcast helps me think critically and see points of views from all sides. I never feel like it's trying to sway my political views, but rather it keeps me informed about things that matter regionally, provincially, nationally, and internationally. I appreciate the easy to consume format and variety of topics and guests. Keep it up Ryan and the Real Talk team!

PS - I have been listening since day one, and the show is the best it's ever been right now. I love the dynamic of Ryan and Johnny!

— Aqu11

Find out more — ryanjespersen.com

[@realtalkrj](https://twitter.com/realtalkrj)



Listen on
Apple Podcasts



Spotify



Top 0.5% Podcast Globally