FINDING EACH OTHER: AUTONOMOUS AND ANARCHIST SPACES IN MONTREAL

Visit resistance.montreal.org for a calendar of radical events in the city, and a larger list of anarchist groups, spaces, and news.

L’Achoppe
Event of a community of radical events in the city, and a place to find and organize events. They are fighting to re-establish themselves, thereby creating a sustainable, anti-authoritarian environment.

L’Insoumise
L’Insoumise is a radical, feminist bookstore with a focus on queerness, anti-capitalism, and anti-fascism.

La Mandragore
La Mandragore is a feminist, queer, and anti-racist collective that publishes and distributes material that challenges the status quo.

La librairie Racines
La librairie Racines is an anarchist bookstore and meeting space with a focus on radical literature and politics.

La Défore
La Défore is an anarchist social space in Hochelaga. They host library, workshops, and more.

POLICE & PRISONS
March 15th: Anarchists Clash with Police

Anarchists clashed with police during the march against police brutality. This was the 22nd installment of the march — and along with MayDay, it’s one of the most militant demonstrations that take place in the Canadian city each year. People attacked the cops with flag poles and fire extinguishers filled with paint. Corporate stores and banks had their windows smashed, but the police managed to protect the studios of TVA – a right-wing TV network that published a fake news story that stoked anti-Muslim sentiment in Quebec City. The police violently charged at the crowd, seriously injuring one person and arresting three. Three cops were also injured.

Stories of Struggle
March 15: Anarchists Clash with Police

On March 13, we went to the Villeray-St-Michel-Parc-Extension borough council meeting in order to prevent the elected officials of the borough from granting Ron Basal a permit to continue the development of his luxury apartment project in Plaza Hutchison. After the council refused to consider the appeal of residents in Villeray who opposed the Taxi Diamond condo project, we decided to disrupt the meeting, so that Ron Basal would not receive his permit. We were brutally forced out of the room by the police, and two people were arrested and charged. The borough council then approved the permit for Plaza Hutchison construction, in an empty room, with Ron Basal sitting in the front row.

We have pursued all of the available administrative and political channels, but those have only led us to an impasse. It is time now to take to the streets, instead of trying to work with a system we don’t believe in. If the mayors find this messy, that is too bad for them. We are disgusted, but not surprised by the lack of initiative, openness, and lack of political will demonstrated by borough mayor Fumagal-lli. Fumagallli has demonstrated that she won’t dare to take even the slightest risk in denying a simple permit, even when facing an issue with such grave consequences for the community. Writing a
Two Queen Victoria Statues Vandalized with Green Paint

Two landmark statues to Queen Victoria in Montreal were vandalized last night, a few days before St. Patrick’s Day. Both the Victoria Memorial in downtown Montreal as well the bronze statue on Sherbrooke Street at McGill University were both covered in green paint. The statues were unveiled in 1872 and 1900 respectively, more than a century ago.

The presence of these racist statues in Montreal are an insult to the self-determination and resistance struggles of oppressed peoples worldwide, including Indigenous nations in North America (Turtle Island) and Oceania, as well as the peoples of Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, the Indian subcontinent, and everywhere the British Empire committed its atrocities.

We are motivated and inspired by movements worldwide that have targeted colonial and racist statues for vandalism and removal: Cornwallis in Halifax, John A. Macdonald in Kingston, the Rhodes Must Fall movement in South Africa, the resistance to racist Confederate monuments in the USA, and more. We are also inspired by the recent action in Montreal, in November 2017, against the John A. Macdonald Monument.

Our action is a simple expression of anti-colonial and anti-imperialist solidarity, and we encourage others to undertake similar actions against racist monuments and symbols that should be in museums, not taking up our shared public spaces.

Communiqué by the Delhi-Dublin Anti-Colonial Solidarity Brigade

During the night of March 18th, as a response to the Soldiers of Odin going out to promote themselves during the Saint Patrick Day’s parade, we destroyed the car of the provincial president of the S.O.O., Kathy Lantupe. We found her grey HHR Chevrolet, (licence plate W69 K2M), parked in a small street in the Ville-Marie neighbourhood. We painted “FUCK S.O.O.” on the side, smashed up all the windows, and slashed all the tires.

That same night, we also smashed all the windows of the car belonging to Montreal director of S.O.O., Stéphane Blosin. We found his blue C5S Mazda, (licence plate G54 HTB), parked in front of his house at 2555 rue Fletcher, in East Montreal.

A few days later, we dudeled out the same treatment to Simon Arcand’s car. He’s the amateur videographer for the S.O.O. We found his car parked in front of his house at 4965 rue Laurentien, in Drummondville.

Soldiers of Odin is a racist and fascist group. They have no place in this world, and we will fuck with them every step of the way, by all means necessary. Fuck fascists everywhere.

FUCK fascists everywhere
Stories of Struggle

Riots and Eagles - My World Opened

The story below is the first of the ‘Stories of Struggle’ series from MTL Counter-info. This series will give voice to experiences of anarchist struggle in the territory dominated by the Canadian State. We believe that the practice of story-telling is important, as it gives life to our collective memory and allows us an opportunity to learn from past experiences.

While Riots and Eagles is a tale of riotous joy, celebration, and magic, we hope to also create space for accounts of small everyday victories and failures, as well as the depths of isolation and despair that mark anarchist struggle.

We want to transmit stories that will be shared around a campfire. The moments that inspired us, that made us feel more alive than ever, that challenged us to shackle our imagination and alienating submissiveness to expertise (controlled experimentation), and an alternating submissiveness to expertise that was to smash both god and his historical determinist faith, did not always powerful. On this particular occasion, when I say that my break came as a result of struggle, I was raised with the former firmly rooted in my consciousness. All that might have been wondrous and with endless meaning was imprisoned in a linear progressive ideology in which “mankind” was to triumph. My Marxist father, with his historical determinist faith, did not give me the tools to smash both god and matter at once. Instead of the Christian God, rooted in authoritarian tradition, that my anarchist ancestors declared war against, it was the state, science (controlled experimentation), and an alienating submissiveness to expertise that was to shackle my imagination and agency.

I began to break with all this many years ago. And it is with full recognition that I sound far too similar to all the other white-boys who have found themselves in some exotic religion or culture, when I say that my break came as a result of struggling in close proximity to Indigenous people.

One of the first and most profound experiences I can remember that cracked my mind ajar came at a march for missing and murdered Indigenous women. This is an annual event with a great deal of pain, grief and warmth involved. This is an annual event with a great deal of pain, grief and warmth involved.

In fact, such projects only result in the alienation of intimate connection through pain and grief to those around me, I noticed some of the side streets attacking the highest iteration of Western enlightenment and death, to the world of exploitation and oppression, is instead a cry directed towards the destruction of all that binds us, in life and death, to the world of exploitation and domination, is really a matter of interpretation.

I was raised with the former firmly rooted in my consciousness. All that might have been wondrous and with endless meaning was imprisoned in a linear progressive ideology in which “mankind” was to triumph. My Marxist father, with his historical determinist faith, did not give me the tools to smash both god and matter at once. Instead of the Christian God, rooted in authoritarian tradition, that my anarchist ancestors declared war against, it was the state, science (controlled experimentation), and an alienating submissiveness to expertise that was to shackle my imagination and agency.

Every day — whether it’s the landlord charging ever more rent for ever shittier apartments, the boss pushing you to work harder, the business association lobbying for more cops, or just the Audi that cuts you off in rush hour — we have to deal with their attacks on us, every day we have to deal with their attacks on us, but every once in a while we can find a way to strike back.

On Saturday night, I met up with a group of people in the Durand neighbourhood, strolled along Aberdeen and up some of the side streets attacking the luxury cars and mansions we found there, making noise with a portable sound system and loads of fireworks. The march then turned down Locke and attacked as many yuppie businesses as we could before deciding to disperse. The police say we ran from them, but I didn’t see a single fucking cop after they were chased off up on Aberdeen.

To all the undoubtedly sincere and principled anti-capitalists on the internet who wonder why the Starbucks didn’t get smashed but all the poor, sweet small businesses did, it’s only because it was just a bit too far north. My one regret from the evening.

As the comrade Kirk Burgess explained on Twitter: “Imagine being so mad about gentrification; that you round up some loser friends, cover your faces, and run riot in one of the city’s most affluent neighbourhoods. Throwing bricks at homes and businesses. You’re disgusting.”

That’s more or less it Kirk, me and my loser friends.

All my worst bosses have been small business owners — the problem isn’t colour from our neighbourhood for the benefit of a new wave of richer and whiter inhabitants.

If the mayor and the councillors have thrown in the towel on this project, we cannot. We cannot abandon the struggle to preserve a community space that has been the heart of our community for decades. We will not allow gentrification in our neighbourhood. Together, we will continue the struggle!

FROM PAGE 1

Disruption of the Parc-Ex Borough Council Meeting to Denounce Gentrification

We also reject Valérie Plante’s proposal to invest 17 million dollars in projects to promote “social mixity” in Parc-Extension. Social mixity does not benefit everybody; it’s just a police term to make gentrification easier to swallow. In fact, such projects only result in the allocation of public funds to build housing for the wealthy - and actually furthers the process of gentrification by introducing them to “newly discovered” and “exotic” neighborhoods. We refuse to support the displacement of working class people of
the size of the business, it’s that the relationship is exploitative. When someone decides to be a capitalist, making money through their investments rather than through their labour, their position relative to changes in the city becomes fundamentally different. Gentrification, as an example: when rents go up, it means they make more money (rather than lose their home); when prices go up and rich people move in, it means a chance to sell luxury goods (while we work for minimum wage); when more police and surveillance come in, it secures your investment (while we get harassed and pushed out). They are getting rich because our lives are getting worse.

Sure, small business owners may work long hours, but even if I’m putting in 12 hour days next to my boss, and we both scrub the toilet, the fact that they own and I work means our relationship to the work is totally different. When business is good (or when they manage to crowd-fund), they’re taking out a new lease on a car or signing a mortgage on an investment property while my check is eaten up by rent, bills, and the grocery store. I’ve got no option but to show up tomorrow while their ability to enrich themselves increases.

Fuck the rich. Fuck capitalists (even the ones who sell high-end baked goods). And to all of you who want to complain about violence, remember that the only reason these parasites get to keep their hands clean is because most often their attacks just look like business as usual. Should we continue writing letters hoping Jason “I-want-an-Apple-store” Farr will do something? Or believing that somehow Andrea Horwath will stop kissing the Locke St BIA’s ass? Or we could trick ourselves that the solution to economic oppression is more innovative startups, or charity? Should I just keep smiling at the rich jerk in hopes that he’ll give me a bigger tip?

Locke St was downtown’s first gentrified street, its “success story” as Mayor Fred might say, the surrounding neighbourhoods the first to see the rent hikes that have since come to dominate so many of our lives. Turning the tables and finally counterattacking Saturday night helped me to shake off some of the fear and frustration that build up when you’re trapped in a hopeless situation. May the rich remember that they are still within the reach of all the people they fuck over.

I’ve got no option but to show up tomorrow while my check is eaten up by rent, bills, and the grocery store. Unsurprisingly, the local business class and the white supremacists who organized anti-immigrant demos in the city last year have found themselves on the same side.

All the dramas from Locke St show that they expected not only to make money pursuing their self-interest and ignoring its impacts on others, they expected to also be loved for it. We aren’t “shocked and horrified” by being attacked because we have privately. We oppose all repression and all collaboration with the police.

We know it’s not boutiques that are the main driver of gentrification and the suffering it brings; it’s real estate investment, speculation, and the municipal policies that encourage them. Small business are often visible and vocal in cheering, but aren’t the ones redeveloping whole blocks or carrying out mass evictions. What they have done, though, is to put themselves on the side of the speculators and landlords, positioning themselves to profit off forces that...
Demonstration Against the Police in Maniwaki

As part of the week against police brutality, the Outaouais region mobilized like every year to create a series of events denouncing the violence of the Gatineau police and the SQ. This year, community organizations from the region and activists also decided to rent a bus to go to Maniwaki in support of two families that have faced the violence of SQ officers. In 2015, Brandon Maurice was killed, shot by an SQ cop, and in 2018, a friend of the Maurice family, Steven Bertrand, was shot in the dead by a courthouse guard who refused to let him leave to smoke a cigarette.

We chose to say loud and clear that the police is nothing but an instrument of the state that abuses its power, all while protecting the rich and fascists.

In Maniwaki, as in many regions patrolled by SQ pigs, it’s young men just out of police school that end up in these postings they don’t want. These assholes show up in these regions, knowing nothing of their reality, which doesn’t interest them. As a result, in Maniwaki as elsewhere, the cops are cloaked in impunity when they murder, bully, and systematically profile the most oppressed. We refuse the colonial attitude of these cops just as we refuse silence on the disappearances and assaults on indigenous women.

All we have left is to defend ourselves against the police. We have no confidence in them, nor the justice system, nor their fraternalist doctrine.

To be clear, we won’t be filing police reports over this, but rather dealing with it autonomously and drawing on networks of mutual aid. The Tower will continue hosting the kinds of events and groups it always has, putting resources in common and sharing ideas. The events of the past few days change nothing about our project or our politics and we call on everyone with whom we’ve shared moments of struggle in the past to take some deep breaths and realize that although things are more intense right now, nothing has really changed.

Stop Deportations

Lucy Granados, mother of three and member of non status women’s collective in Montreal, was violently arrested in her home. She was being held at an immigrant detention center in Laval. People protested for her release, they called politicians, wrote letters, signed petitions, and held protests. After the federal court refused to stop Lucy’s deportation on Thursday evening and in the face of continued silence from the Minister of Immigration Ahmed Hussen, one last effort was made to stop the deportation.

Around 50 people arrived at the Laval Immigration Detention Centre shortly after 3am on Friday morning. They chained the gates and barricaded the exits, hoping to prevent Lucy’s deportation until Lucy’s immigration application was decided. People held the space and danced until sunrise. Riot police were called in, but no one moved. Finally, at around 10 am, the police announced that she had already left by plane. Folks left together and no one was arrested.

Don’t they understand that boarded up windows will bring down property values in the neighbourhood around the Tower?? Engaging in this kind of violence just creates lawlessness, and legitimizes the destruction of private property.

When we heard that the Tower got attacked, we had to show our love. Not only because we love anarchist social centres, but because we also live in a city where (as far as we can tell) small hip business owners exist solely to steal your wages, fondle cops, and sell you overpriced shit sandwiches. Fuck the class traitors, fuck the gentrifiers, fuck the police, but still no fucks at all given to broken windows. Imagine being so mad about another anarchist social centre getting attacked, that you round up your loser friends, cover your faces, and take a siiiick photo in solidarity.

From #HoMa to #HamOnt: The Secret is to Round Up Your Loser Friends.
This has been a big month for Hamilton. To contextualize Cedar’s arrest, we can start with the Anarchist Bookfair in early March, our first bookfair here in 7 years. The event was a smashing success, and brought together people from all over the continent to explore possibilities for radical change, to envision a world without enforced hierarchies and domination, to simply meet each other and learn from each other. The weekend was particularly marked by a small riot through one of Hamilton’s most affluent neighborhoods and down one of its most nosy commercial streets. The “Locke Street Riot” was a collective expression of rage, not only against the rapid gentrification of Hamilton, but against capitalism and the violent world of alienation it fosters. It led to a lot of productive conversations about the inevitability of discomfort in fighting for new worlds, and the importance of clarifying and articulating our politics. The riot also kicked up some toxic Hamilton sediment, including a mass spillage of sentiment by the local alt-right trolls who saw this as an opportunity to feed the fire of “terrorism” from city councillors, and the inefficacy of the police to delay it, was a painstaking ordeal. Four hours of blathering drivel in which it became clear that not only Cedar, but all of anarchism was on trial.

In the end Cedar was denied bail and sent back to the hellescape of Barton jail where hordes of abducted people wait in wretched conditions for trial. They will potentially remain in Barton for a year or more while the state drags its heels in making a case against them.

We in Hamilton have organized a solid support team to make sure that Cedar has reliable legal defense and as much advocacy and communication as possible. We want to continue the projects they hold dear, and support all fits of organizing they might pursue in jail. The group arrived in front of Montée Saint-François Institution (B-16), where the minimum security allowed us to be in direct contact with the detainees. Thanks to the windows directly facing the street, they could wave to us, see the banners and hear us. The second institution we visited was Leclerc, the former and outdated federal prison that was converted to a provincial prison for men and women until this summer, when it became just a provincial prison for women. The prison is very far from the road and access to it is usually prevented by the police, but the large number of people this year made it possible to get through and around the police lines with joy, everyone engaging in a rather funny race in the snow, during which several policemen were able to intimately appreciate the coolness of the powder. The inefficacy of the police allowed us to set off many fireworks in close proximity to the prison. At the same time, another group of people slipped to the opposite side of the prison to fire fireworks near the buildings where the prisoners are housed. All this continued in front of the Laval Immigration Detention Centre, where we recalled the importance of opposing the Federal Government’s project to replace the existing building with a new immigration detention centre in Laval. This project is part of a broader effort to expand the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)’s capacity to imprison and deport migrants. We want to see a world without borders, where everyone has access to the things they need to live with dignity. Imprisoning migrants, denying them a place to stay, and deporting them to situations of extreme danger are things we directly oppose.

The big chat was held at the Federal Training Center, a multi level, medium and minimum security prison. When our group finally decided to split in two for the return to the bus, the police chose to take advantage of the reduced number of people to make an arrest. Fortunately, the arrested person was released the same evening, but has judicial charges. 

Prisons were created to isolate people from their communities. Noise demonstrations at prisons are a concrete way to fight against repression and isolation. We want to extend a message of solidarity to folks inside and wish them a happy new year- although a truly happy new year would be one without prisons or borders and the world that needs them!