



When art meets low-rent housing

There are a number of artistic initiatives that bring colour and vitality to low-rent housing in Montréal. Here are three inspiring examples.

Art stirs the senses

Youth aged 5 to 18 from Habitations Place Normandie in Montréal-Nord discovered the world of painting thanks to a collaboration between MU, the Centre de pédiatrie sociale and the organization Coup de pouce Jeunesse. They experimented with primary colours, mixing them to paint baseball hats and T-shirts. The group then joined forces to paint a mural in the common room! "Young people have opened up to art, to a world outside their day-to-day reality and have emerged more composed and responsible as a result," said Diane Demgne, an outreach worker at Coup de pouce Jeunesse. The group finished their experience with a visit to TOHU to admire the mural *Hymne à St-Mich*, created by Maliciouz—another Montréal-Nord local.

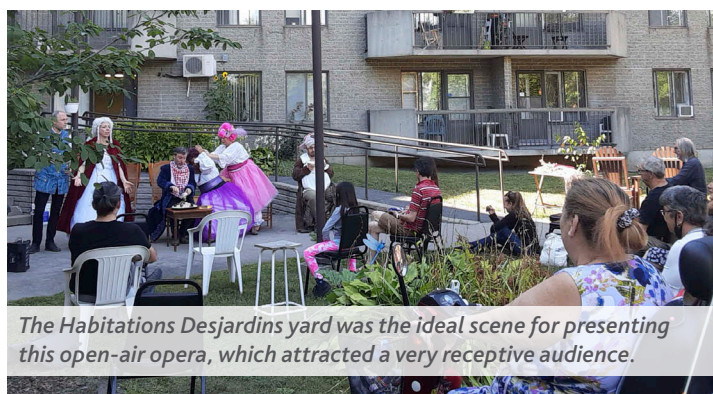
Opera in the yard

On September 4, the Maison de la culture Maisonneuve presented the opera *La Cenerentola* in the yard of Habitations Desjardins completely free of charge. Some fifteen tenants enjoyed the show from their balconies or on glider chairs outside. Yanick Thibault, Cultural Officer at Maison de la culture, said the residents were "delighted to discover this art form, which is too often reserved for the wealthy". The Productions Alma Viva singers performed Perrault's Cinderella-inspired tale in Italian with a narrator explaining the story as it unfolded.

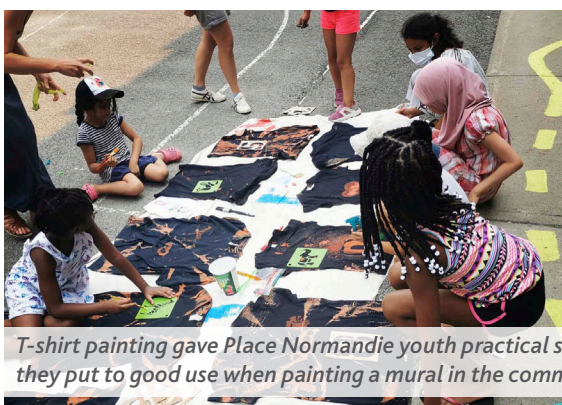
Creating your own rap

At Habitations La Pépinière in Mercier-Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, Projet Harmonie's Haut-parleur initiative encourages youth to create music in its professional music studio. Project Coordinator Rémi Ste-Marie is on hand to tweak their lyrics and technicians help the kids record them. The studio is a relaxing space where young people can thrive while sharing ideas, having fun, and expressing themselves. Mr. Ste-Marie says "it is a great environment for building trust" as well as being a unique space where youth can develop skills in urban and performing arts.

In their own special way, each of these initiatives provided tenants with an opportunity to include art in their daily lives.



The Habitations Desjardins yard was the ideal scene for presenting this open-air opera, which attracted a very receptive audience.



T-shirt painting gave Place Normandie youth practical skills, which they put to good use when painting a mural in the common room.



Slowly getting back into community life



While we still can't say that COVID-19 is behind us, it is now possible to resume some community activities thanks to Quebec's high

vaccination rate. Your neighbours depend on your energy and solidarity. We encourage you to reconnect with community life through various activities in small groups and to hold your Annual General Meeting while maintaining a 1-metre distance between each other.

In 2022, sector committees will operate under a new formula. They will each manage fewer associations, but there will be more of them and they will be more proactive. Your engagement is key to the success of this new formula.

Take all the necessary health precautions and revitalize your living environment. It's high time to do it, and up to you to make it happen!

Nathalie Fortin, directrice
Service de la gestion des milieux de vie
Director of Community
Relations Management

Bridging the digital divide Computerization becomes a reality

Last spring, some 60 tenant associations received computer equipment for their common rooms. The Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) has since entered a service agreement with Insertech, who will ensure this equipment is fully functional and provide technical support.

Currently, many computers do not work and none are equipped with cameras. Also, not all association members are comfortable with computers.

Insertech to the rescue

Insertech will do an initial tour of the associations this fall to provide cameras, check that equipment is working properly and ensure it is secure.

A training schedule will then be proposed to tenant committees, including beginner and advanced sessions.

The equipment is there for you—make the most of it! You can now **schedule an appointment with Insertech at 514-596-2842, ext. 6**, to have it checked.

Celebrating volunteer efforts differently

Since March 2020, you have had to completely reorganize your volunteer work. Now, it is our turn to rethink the way we say thank you, as large get-togethers are still not possible. A committee has been set up to come up with an original and creative way to thank you—in a big way! The OMHM team is working hard to treat you to a new fun formula worthy of your efforts. Soon it will be our turn to take care of you, because you always take care of others!



Budget priorities for 2022

This year, sector committee meetings could not be held to consult with tenants on the budget priorities for 2022. The Comité consultatif des résidents (CCR, i.e. Advisory Committee of Tenants) therefore had to establish them itself. It submitted the following requests to the OMHM Board of Directors:



Replacement of doors and windows



Renovation work in occupied apartments

Feeding the Petite-Bourgogne

The Petite-Bourgogne Neighbourhood Committee, which includes representatives from seven low-rent housing buildings, launched its *Nourrir son monde* (Feed our community) initiative. Thanks to an ID²EM grant and funds from various programs, the committee purchased seven commercial freezers for tenant associations this summer.

Once every two weeks since September, Coordinator Tenisha Valliant has been purchasing food and preparing over 200 meals with the help of half a dozen volunteers. Nicole Vallières from Habitations Richmond has been helping out in the community kitchen at Café citoyen, while Suzanne Payant has been cooking with her tenant committee at Habitations de l'Érablière. The results are the same: "The dishes are frozen, then distributed to low-rent housing residents, prioritizing those most in need," said Ms. Vallières.



Representatives of Petite-Bourgogne low-rent housing meet every second Thursday at Café citoyen to cook together as part of the *Nourrir son monde* initiative.

Living with the pandemic



Two nurses came to Habitations Des Carrières for the vaccination clinic last June.

Let's face it, we will be living with the pandemic for a good while longer. Here are some ideas to protect the health of residents in your building.

This fall, the various Montreal CIUSSS will give a **booster vaccine to seniors** along with the flu vaccine. Keep an eye out for when this will happen in your neighbourhood.

The Delta variant is much more contagious and aggressive than the original virus. It is therefore important for the people around you to **get vaccinated**. The vaccines used in Quebec are 90% effective in preventing infection, and if a vaccinated person is infected, their symptoms are much less serious.

Getting a vaccination passport

If a vaccinated person is having trouble getting their vaccination passport, offer to help. They can receive their QR code:

- In hard copy, by calling **1-877-644-4545**.
- In PDF format on a smartphone, tablet or computer by completing the questionnaire at **covid19.quebec.ca/PreuveVaccinale/en**.
- By downloading the **VaxiCode** app from the App Store or Google Play, and saving their QR code and even those of all their family members or of a group.

Finally, as long as the virus continues to circulate, everyone should follow **basic health measures** to protect themselves and the people around them. Let's look out for each other!



Thank you, Sylvain Labrecque

Appreciated for his energy, volunteer Sylvain Labrecque represented low-rent housing tenants on various OMHM bodies, including the Board of Directors, of which he was a member when he passed away at the end of the summer. Thank you and farewell, Mr. Labrecque!

A by-election was held on October 21 to fill the vacancy. Suzanne Payant, member of the Habitations de l'Érablière tenant committee and of the CCR, was elected for the balance of the term of office.

Let's get our community buzzing again!

Public Health now allows gatherings of up to 25 people in common rooms, provided everyone stays 1 metre apart. But how do we go about getting tenants to socialize again? We consulted two members of the Comité consultatif des résidents (CCR, i.e. Advisory Committee of Tenants) on the subject: Suzanne Payant from Habitations de l'Érablière and Tina-Lili Gagné from Habitations Saint-André. Here are some of their suggestions:

- First, we should ask tenants what activities they prefer.
- We need to comply with health measures to make them feel safe. Provide hand sanitizer gel, and masks to those who wish to wear one but don't have any with them.
- Let's start with small groups, targeting the most isolated residents and those who were regulars at previous activities. By word of mouth, others will join in.
- Choose popular activities that comply with physical distancing: bingo, movie nights, themed discussion groups, crafts, painting or computer workshops, etc.
- Offer the use of the common room Wi-Fi, either freely or at scheduled times.

Basically, offer people what they need: safety, companionship and small pleasures. Life will return to normal, little by little.



Tenants at Habitations Les Jardins Châteauneuf missed their activities so much, many jumped at the chance to participate in the painting workshop which restarted last September.

AGMs return to normal

Last year, tenant associations were unable to hold their Annual General Meeting (AGM) due to a ban on in-person meetings during the pandemic. The Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ) allowed associations to submit their financial statements and budget forecasts without having to get them approved at an AGM.

The ban was lifted on June 28 this year. Therefore, the SHQ asks that you hold your AGM within four months of the end of your fiscal year.

However, you must comply with current health measures. First, determine the maximum number of people you can sit 1 metre apart in your common room. If the number of members wishing to attend the AGM exceeds the number of seats, you will need to postpone your AGM as you cannot refuse members. In this case, your tenant committee must approve its financial statements and budget forecasts and submit them to the OMHM with an explanatory note on the matter.



Office municipal
d'habitation
de Montréal

Interaction is published by the Service des communications of the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal
415, rue Saint-Antoine Ouest, bureau 202, Montréal (Québec) H2Z 1H8 www.omhm.qc.ca

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Translation: Ubiquis • **Graphic Design:** Communication Art & Graf

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