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# A Quick Tour of LESBIAN MONTRÉAL

by Johanne Cadorette

You might not know it walking around Montréal's Gay Village, but this city is teeming with lesbians and lesbian culture. The Gay Village (located on Ste-Catherine Street East, roughly from Amherst to Papineau) is a primarily commercial area full of bars, restaurants, hotels, saunas, cafés and shops. Dykes are of course welcome in the Village, but you may feel drowned in the sea of men. If you want to get a true feel for lesbian Montréal, you'll need to go out of your way a little, but it'll be worth your while.

Your first stop in Montréal (as in any big city, by the way) should be the lesbian and gay bookstore, L'Androgyne (3636 boul. St-Laurent). No need to buy anything - L'Androgyne is a great distribution center for free community papers, and fliers. Pick up *Fugues*, the free gay and lesbian monthly, for a complete listing of bars, shops, restaurants and activities (mostly in French, but there is an English section aimed at tourists). Check the counter for fliers or ask the staff if there are any other special events going on. Hour and Mirror, Montréal's English-language free weeklies, will also provide you with good listings.

Incidentally, L'Androgyne will be celebrating its 25th anniversary in September. Lots of events are planned, including an evening with cartoonists Alison Bechdel and Eric Orner on Saturday September 12. Call (514) 842-4765 for details.

There's always something going on in Montréal, but the highlights of Montréal's lesbian social calendar are by far Divers/Cité, our Pride, and Image & Nation, the lesbian and gay film festival.

If you're feeling bummed out

that you missed our Pride, listen up: it's coming up on August 2! Plenty of time to get down here, and this year's celebration are shaping up to be exceptionally fabulous. One of downtown Montréal's most famous parks, Parc Émilie-Gamelin (formerly Berri Square, right at Berri and Ste-Catherine) is reserved for Divers/Cité activities from Wednesday the 29th of July to Sunday August 2, the day of the traditional parade. There will be tons of things to do the entire week-end, including lots of special events and parties for women. *Queer Girls*, the all-dyke musical extravaganza and party on Friday night featuring singer Geneviève Paris is not to be missed. For a detailed programme, call (514) 285-4011.

Image & Nation, the lesbian and gay film festival, will be held at the end of September. Now in its eleventh year, Image & Nation offers ten

days of excellent programming including feature length films, documentaries, and shorts. Films are shown evenings during the week and all day and evening on week-ends. If you are coming from out of town, try to get your tickets in advance as many of the programmes sell out. There will

Catherine in the Village) on a Friday night. Unity is a mixed club (men and women) with a women's night on Fridays (still lots of men, but more women. Cuter staff, too). It's a huge, multi-leveled complex with a beautiful roof-top terrace, a big dance floor, and several smaller dance rooms (on

panied by women are welcome.

There are also places of lesbian interest in the Gay Village. Drug-store (1360 Ste-Catherine East) another multi-leveled "complex" (they're all the rage here, you'll see), has lots of little rooms and terraces often filled with women, even though the space

## DIVERS CITÉ



Don't bother asking if there is a smoke-free area in a bar, because you will end up having to help the server get up off the floor from laughing so hard. Chalk it up to a cultural thing and be prepared to dry-clean your clothes.

of course be plenty of films for dykes and lots of opportunities to socialize at any number of fundraising parties and cocktail parties. Call (514) 285-4467 for more information. If you can't make it for Divers/Cité or Image & Nation, don't dismay, we can still find some trouble for you to get into!

Montréal has an excellent selection of bars to choose from. If you are interested in the true-blue nightclub scene, your best bet is to head to Unity (1400 Montcalm, corner Ste-

Fridays one features 80's retro, another soul and rhythm & blues). There is also a stage on the main floor, and often some kind of show will happen at around 1:00 a.m. The crowd is somewhat young and the music very loud.

Saturday nights are good to try some of Montréal's smaller neighborhood pubs. O'Side (4075B St-Denis, corner Rachel) is in the heart of the Plateau where many lesbians make their homes. It's a warm, friendly space (women only, except for Monday nights) with big sunny windows, pool tables, and mellow music. Dietrich, a new pub just up the street (4282 St-Denis) offers a T-dance on Sunday afternoons from 5:00 to 10:00 PM with our favorite honorary-dyke DJ, Bobzilla (from Unity's 80's retro room). Dietrich also has a street level terrace which is ideal for sipping drinks in the sunshine. Men accom-

is mixed. The music is mellow, the atmosphere is more pub-like than club. It's a good place to have a quiet drink before heading to Unity. Mississippi Club (1584 Ste-Catherine East) is another nightclub (in the big Bourbon Complex - I tell you, it's out of control) and a generally safe bet on week-ends. Music is very commercial dance (i.e.: dance mixes of the Titanic theme) and everyone just dances their pants off (well, tops, actually, but you get the picture).

It's quite possible -and in fact recommended -that you'll want to do something other than go to bars while in Montréal. Montréal has tons of art galleries, theaters, and music venues and on any given week, there's bound to be something of lesbian interest. At the Museum of Contemporary Art (185 Ste-Catherine West) you'll find

MONTRÉAL, p12

# CALENDAR

8 SATURDAY

**Barnstead, NH** - Summer Picnic with the Women Meeting Women, 12 noon, Suncook Lake., FMI:603-883-9969, [WWW@aitavista.net](mailto:WWW@aitavista.net).

9 SUNDAY

**Burlington** - UU CIRCLE: Full Moon and Lammas ritual, potluck, and meeting. All who support the Covenant of UU Pagans' mission are welcome. Wear garb if you like, and bring something for feast, a musical instrument, and a cushion to sit on. Site TBA, 6 pm. Donations. Info, 658-9689.

10 MONDAY

**Burlington** - "Out of the Closet and Into the Art Gallery", *Out In The Mountains* poetry reading. Poets featured in this month's Poetry Issue read their works at Rhombus Gallery. Rhombus is located at 186 College St. (mezzanine level) in Burlington. Admission is \$2-6, sliding scale, with half the proceeds going to OITM. For more information, call 865-2144.

10 WEDNESDAY

**Lebanon, NH** - 6pm, Meet at Northern States Tire, to help clean our adopted hiway, Snack at the Baited Hook on Rte 4A before or after, Rain date: August 13. FMI: MaryLou: 603-632-7480.

**Montpelier** - Vermont Freedom to Marry Task Force meeting to plan future public forums. At the office of Vermont Cares, 7pm, 73 Main St. Mont. FMI Roberta Garr 223-7620

11 THURSDAY

**Middlebury** - Rainbow Families Gathering on the green for the Bristol Band concert. 7 pm. Look for the rainbow windsock, again. Everyone welcome, bring your kids or just the kid inside you. FMI: 388-8298 Barb

16 SUNDAY

**Montpelier** - Vermont Gay Men's Chorus board meeting, 4:30-6:30 pm at the UU Church in Montpelier. This meeting is for anyone interested in joining the board, talk about the director, 501c3, etc.

**White River Junction** - 6pm "Potluck/Lobster-fest" for details call Pat: 802-296-2095.

19 19 WEDNESDAY

**Stowe** - Women of the Woods Dinner/biking at Whiskers Restaurant, meet at 6 pm, use the nearby bikepath either before or after dinner. Call 485-8588 by 8/15 if you plan to attend.

22 22 SATURDAY

**Cornish, NH** - 6pm, Cornish Fair with Potluck after at Renee's: 603-542-1972.

23 23 SUNDAY

**Putney** - Lesbian Book Group: 7 PM at Heartstone Books. We read books

in all genres, by women authors, usually with some lesbian content. Please join us! For more information, Tatiana (802) 387-2781, or [tatianas@sover.net](mailto:tatianas@sover.net).

26 26 WEDNESDAY

**Montpelier** - Vermont Freedom to Marry Task Force meeting. At the office of Vermont Cares, 7pm, 73 Main St. FMI Roberta Garr 223-7620

27 27 THURSDAY

**Manchester** - Vermont Freedom to Marry Task Force meeting to organize VFMTF activities in Bennington County. For time, location or other information contact Sandi Cote (802) 362-2959