

EXHIBITS 2009

BRISER L'INDIFFÉRENCE

Centre St-Pierre
February 2009
1212, rue Panet - Montréal, QC

CENTRE COMMUNAUTAIRE ET DE LOISIR DE LA CÔTE-DES-NEIGES

Avril 2009
5347, ch. de la Côte-des-Neiges, Mtl

NUIT BLANCHE SUR TABLEAU NOIR

June 2009
Marché d'arts sur Mont-Royal, Montréal

ATSA

Quand l'art passe à l'action
November 2010
Place Emilie-Gamelin

EXHIBITS 2010

BRISER L'INDIFFÉRENCE

Centre St-Pierre
February 2010
1212, rue Panet - Montréal, QC

PEOPLE BEHIND THE ART

March 2010
St-Peters Anglican Church
900 Laird, Mont-Royal

BURRITOVILLE

June 2010
2055 Bishop Street, Montreal

NUIT BLANCHE SUR TABLEAU NOIR

June 2010
Marché d'arts sur Mont-Royal, Montréal

GALERIE GEORGES LAOUN

November 2010
1368 Sherbrooke O. Montreal
ATSA
Quand l'art passe à l'action
November 2010
Place Emilie-Gamelin

MAISON DE L'AMITIÉ

December 2010
120, av Duluth E

EXHIBITS 2011

MAISON DE LA CULTURE MERCIER

January - February 2011
8105, rue Hochelaga, 514 872-8755

BRISER L'INDIFFÉRENCE

Centre St-Pierre
February 2011
1212, rue Panet - Montréal, QC

PEOPLE BEHIND THE ART

March 2011
St-Peters Anglican Church
900 Laird, Mont-Royal

LA RÛCHE D'ART

March 2011
4525 St-Jacques, Montreal

BURRITOVILLE

May 2011
2055 Bishop Street, Montreal

NUIT BLANCHE SUR TABLEAU NOIR

June 2011
Marché d'arts sur Mont-Royal, Montréal



WARRIOR BY ART

AN INTRODUCTION TO ST-JAMES DROP-IN CENTRE

Alain Spitzer, Director

THE MISSION:

The St-James Drop-In Centre offers a safe and supportive environment where those who are marginalized and/or homeless can experience community to its fullest. The Centre seeks to be a catalyst for the flow of creativity, compassion and empathy.

THE CENTRE:

The Drop-In, which is located in but independent from St. James United Church, attempts to meet the needs of its more than 250 members by offering a safe and flexible home-like atmosphere, food (including one hot meal a day), and access to showers and clean clothes. It is visited once a week by a volunteer nurse.

As well, the social workers on staff do counseling, referrals and crisis intervention. They also monitor medication and help find housing for people. And they network with other agencies such as hospitals, CLSC's, rehabilitation facilities, detox centres and legal clinics.

In addition, the Centre provides jobs for capable members through welfare projects and serves as a teaching facility for social work students from McGill University and social service students from Dawson College.

The people who use the Drop-In have a large amount of freedom in deciding how they spend their day. They can chat, sleep, find assistance for an immediate problem, watch television, use the telephone, help prepare meals, play a table game and take part in the poetry workshop or an occasional outing. The poetry workshop has resulted in a book written and illustrated by our members.

We offer our members a chance to have their physical and mental health needs met in an environment where they feel safe and comfortable. There are strong bonds of affection and community between members and a real sense of family that comes from spending so much time with the same people.

It is the kindness, support and help that members extend to each other that make the St-James Drop-In a special place where people can truly feel "at home."

THE ST-JAMES DROP-IN CENTRE

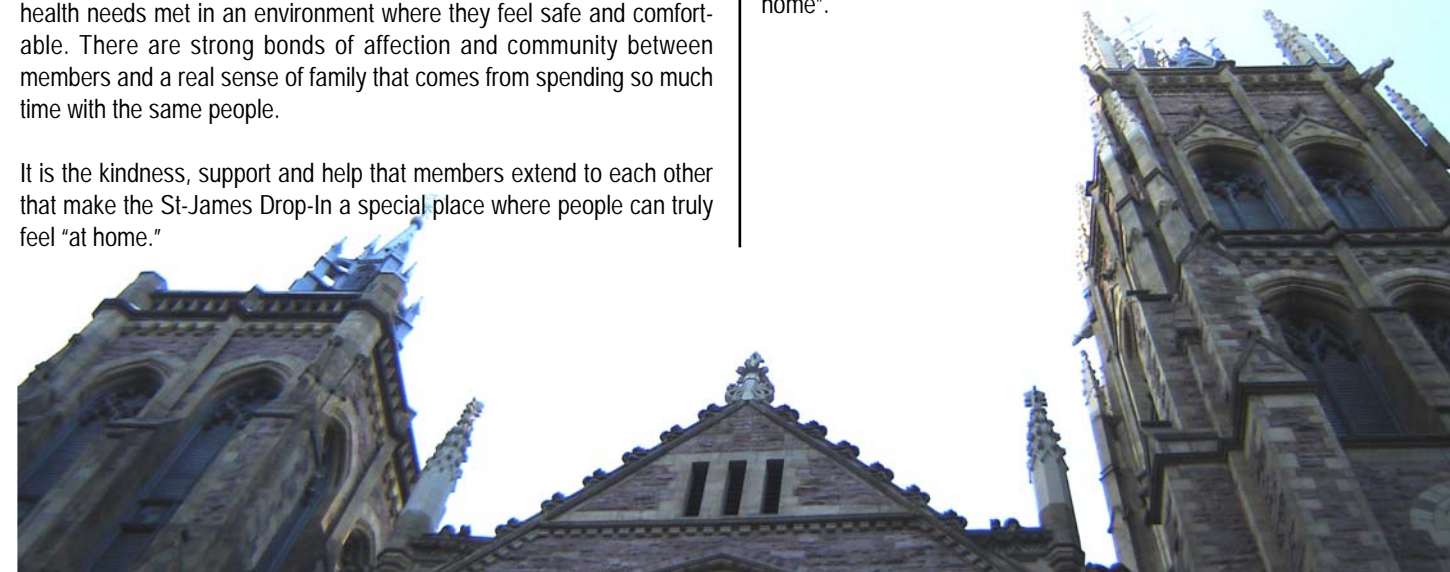
The St-James Drop-In Centre in Montreal has been operating as a day centre for men and women who are experiencing difficulty in their daily living situations due to one or a combination of the following factors: homelessness, mental illness, substance abuse, personality disorder, or intellectual handicap.

The Centre (which is independent from the St-James United Church) attempts to meet the basic needs of its members by offering a safe and flexible home-like atmosphere, food, one hot nutritious meal a day, and access to a shower room and clean clothes. These basic services are integrated with professional services offered by three social workers, which include counseling, crises intervention, monitoring of medication, referrals, assistance with welfare, help finding housing and networking with other resources such as legal services, hospitals, CLSCs rehabilitation and detox centres.

The Centre provides jobs to capable users through welfare projects (I.N.S.O.) and serves as a teaching facility for McGill University Social Work students and for Dawson Social Service students.

Individuals using the Centre —open Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m— have a large amount of freedom in deciding how they wish to spend their day; they can sit down and chat with other members or staff, receive help with an immediate problem, lie down and sleep, watch television, use the telephone to make and receive calls, help with meal preparation, play a table game or participate in one of the recreational activities which are periodically offered (poetry workshops, bowling, etc). The Drop-In is visited once a week by a volunteer nurse. This kind of community outreach allows the members of the Centre the opportunity to have their physical and mental health needs assessed and cared for, in an environment where they feel safe and comfortable.

One of the most remarkable and special things we observe at the Centre is the strong bonds, warmth, and affection that grows between members. There is a real sense of family that comes from spending so much time with the same group of people, and it is the kindness, support and help that members extend to each other that allows to make the St-James Drop-In Centre a place where people can truly feel "at home".



THE ART PROGRAM

The St-James Drop-In has offered an art program since 1996. It is funded by the federal program for the homeless *la Stratégie des partenariats de lutte contre l'itinérance (SPLI)*.

The Art Program helps members in their daily struggles with mental illness, substance abuse and other issues related to poverty and social exclusion. Through it, they can find ways to overcome internal brakes, recover their personal dignity and better cope with the problems that they face on a daily basis.

Professional artists volunteer to help members in their creative expression of the inexpressible. The result is art that is both a form of personal affirmation and universal in its values.

The art room is open to the public and serves as a selling point. The money from all art sales is split 50-50 between the artists and the Drop-In.

In addition to this, since the autumn of 2006, the art studio has become a teaching facility for fine arts students of Concordia University. Once a week, students from the fine arts department come to St-James to conduct workshops for the its members, while learning about the dynamc of the St-James Drop-In Centre. This exchange is beneficial to both the members and the students, as they both get to learn about each other, and the issues that matter to them.

The art studio is a central part of the St-James Drop-In Centre, as it serves as a means of therapy for so many people, who are unable to express the pain that they go through on a daily basis. Through the creation of beautiful pieces of art, these marginalized segments of the population are able to express the deepest meanings of their lives. It is in that way that I believe the art program to be so successful. It breaks down the boundaries of expression that have imprisoned so many people for so long, giving them hope when all seems lost.



ART TO END INDIFFERENCE

Extract from an article in the *Mount-Royal Journal* by Joachim Tremblay



André Prévost

St-James is unique in its way to encourage people to discover hidden talents. Many people come to the centre thinking that they have no talents whatsoever; but within a few weeks we develop new skills that allow us to rebuild our self-esteem. On the long run, it is this that allows us to alleviate the isolation and solitude that surrounds us. 'I have a lot of trouble integrating mainstream society. When I was younger, I had a great deal of difficulty at school, and this prevented me from graduating. Painting allows me to express myself, and to raise my self-esteem'.

André Prévost started drawing at a young age. Years later he reconnected with his artistic side after spending some time on the street. Despite these difficult years, he always kept that keen interest for drawing, and would spend time drawing on bits of paper he would find on park tables. 'Drawing allowed me to temporarily forget my problems and to relax' says André. One day a few months ago, he came to St-James, discovered the art studio, and has not stopped painting since. 'With Bernard I am learning new techniques all the time, and I can now paint more complex things'.

'I am a person who is almost always alone, so being at the centre helps me to connect with & trust other people. Human contact is extremely important, and I have learned that when things are not going well, and that I need support, the folks at St-James are their for me. This touches me enormously. One must never lose hope, because good things await all of us whether we are rich or poor' says André.