

PRESS RELEASE  
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## **Urban Occupations Urbaines** **a series of in situ public art installations** **and performance interventions**

In collaboration with the **Cultural Corridor Griffintown**, *Urban Occupations Urbaines* (UOU), a creative platform, will be presenting *in situ* public art installations and performance interventions that will be programmed monthly between September 2010 and August 2011. UOU is a mobile organization with future plans to identify and occupy a variety of urban sites and spaces in order to stage artistic projects that critically and creatively explore the spatial dimensions of historic sites and architecture as they relate to urban sites in transition.

UOU's current project site is Montreal's historic industrial district – Griffintown. Griffintown holds an especially privileged place in Montreal's history - once the crucible of Montreal's urban development and resonant within Canada's pre/industrial history. Since the 1970s, however, Griffintown has seen deep and enduring tensions between the interests of urban renewal, local residents, and heritage preservationists. UOU's mandate is to bring the spatial and political histories of certain sites in the built environment into public consciousness. UOU brings together a diverse group of local and international independent artists to creatively and critically examine the cultural fertility and performative agency of specific sites in Griffintown.

As part of the city-wide event, *Journées de la culture*, UOU kicks off the series with two in situ projects at *Le Dalhousie*, one of Griffintown's beloved interstitial spaces...

### **The Quotidian Project – Andrew De Freitas**

The *quotidian* is the daily, the ordinary existence, the “what happens anyway”. This project involves taking a second look at everyday experience - an attempt to recognize the elements of strangeness that are present even in the most familiar of environments and situations. Artist, Andrew de Freitas, will be employing techniques of narrative filmmaking to present an audience with scenes and images drawn (or seemingly drawn) from everyday life in Griffintown. This urban neighborhood will serve as both the subject and presentation context for the work - a space that is, historical, contested, commercial, residential, unique, generic, degrading, redeveloping, uncertain, in-between, strange and familiar. The resulting film will depict this environment whilst also emulating it - actual events in a fictional form - urban space that is at once a background for human events and a featured character, enacting.

### **Fenêtre Murées/ Daylight Robbery – Théâtre Nulle Part**

*Le Dalhousie*, a cul de sac situated between the CN railway viaduct and the New City Gas buildings. The cul de sac is framed on one side with windows that have been walled

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up, and on the other side by the CN viaduct, a large concrete structure offering a blank wall. The past and present are facing each other, yet without really looking at each other. Taking a closer look, one will notice how all these surfaces are cracked. The patina of this urban space lends language to these walls. If the walls had ears, what would they hear? What if they could talk?

*Théâtre Nulle Part* presents their latest site specific performance project: ***Fenêtres Murées/ Daylight Robbery: Phase One of Shadows at your Window/Window over Shadows***. TNP explores the forms and functions of windows as being an integral element of theatricality, taking their initial inspiration from the image of condemned and boarded up windows. Walling up a window fractures the dialogue between a building's interior space and exterior environment. On the few structures that remain from Griffintown's industrial history, a number of them display boarded up windows, muting the ghosts from the past and ensuring their presence will not obstruct the future.

**Friday September 24<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> (Rain or Shine!)  
19h00**

**Le Dalhousie, 956 Ottawa Street  
The event is free. Donations are welcome.**

For directions to *Le Dalhousie* - 956 Ottawa Street - and more information about UOU and the artists, please visit the website: [www.urbanoccupationsurbaines.org](http://www.urbanoccupationsurbaines.org)  
**Contact:** [info@urbanoccupationsurbaines.org](mailto:info@urbanoccupationsurbaines.org)

**Community Partners:**

*Le Corridor Culturel de Griffintown*  
Harvey Lev and Esther Hageman, New City Gas



MAI (*Montréal arts interculturel*)



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