

EXPLORE

Dr. Emily Stowe Way

Three things to do this weekend

> Rendezvous with Hermès

The Design Exchange offers a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the luxury fashion house Hermès and the artisans who craft the brand's bags, scarves and leather goods. The series features interactive lectures and demonstrations performed by the craftspeople. More information at Toronto.com

> Stay up all night

From dusk till dawn the contemporary art festival takes over the streets of Toronto, with works by Canadian and international artists on display alongside projects by Toronto museums and galleries. Art enthusiasts have more than 100 exhibits to explore this year. More information at Toronto.com

> Mix it up

For seven days the city celebrates the best cocktail combinations in a series of events, tastings, food pairings and more. Participants can join drink-making lessons, watch mixologists concoct new libations and sample the results. More information at Toronto.com
Erica Salyi-Panno

> ONLINE

More events, legends and urban life on our website
thestar.com

> STREET NAMES

This week, a portion of Elizabeth St. was renamed to commemorate Dr. Emily Stowe, the first woman to practise medicine in Canada. Stowe enrolled at the New York Medical College for Women since no Canadian college would accept a female student.
Astrid Lange/Toronto Star Library
Source: Canadian Encyclopedia

> TORONTO'S CHANGING FACE



RICK MADONIK/TORONTO STAR FILE PHOTO

The Aura condominium is under construction near Yonge and Gerrard Sts. It's giving the CN Tower a run for its money as a landmark in Toronto.

Landmarks that define us as a city



Shawn Micallef

The things we can see from a variety of angles and distances provide common points we all relate to

There's a new landmark in town at the corner of Yonge and Gerrard and its name is Aura.

Rising 78 storeys — soon to be Canada's tallest residential building — the Aura condo is suddenly the most dominant thing between Queen and Bloor Sts., a tent pole between two other high-rise clusters.

Aura is a city unto itself, a self-contained organism with two separate condo corporations running it and retail at the bottom that opened before the building is even finished.

As you walk down Yonge from the north, the Aura is the new face of downtown; it might start to compete with the CN Tower as the landmark we use to know where we are in the city. Visible deep into the GTA, our weird-looking but beloved CN Tower always reminds us where the bottom of Toronto is, unless you're on the islands or Queens Quay. The tower is always there in the periphery of our vision, letting us know where we are.

After Sept. 11, many New Yorkers said they felt



SHAWN MICALLEF

The lion monument was moved to parkland in the 1970s.

somewhat lost in their city as the World Trade Center towers always let them know where the bottom of Manhattan was.

In 1960 urban planner Kevin Lynch wrote his landmark book, *The Image of the City*, noting we all create mental maps of the city based on its paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks. The landmarks, the things we can see from a variety of angles and distances, provide the common points we all relate to. It's why we tend to use landmarks when giving people directions rather than just a series of right- and left-turn instructions.

Landmarks will often have a deeper

meaning and that is why the announcement of Honest Ed's being put up for sale and the ongoing uncertainty around the Sam the Record Man sign resulted in public outcry. Not only do they mark a spot, they represent a part of Toronto, an era in the city's history, and the way a place used to be.

Our landmarks do change, though. The Bata Shoe headquarters along the DVP, marking just about the halfway point between the top and bottom of the city, has given way to the Aga Khan Museum. Nearly finished, it's certainly destined to be a future landmark on the way through the city, the way the two Palace Pier towers at the mouth of Humber River are along the Gardiner Expressway. Just south of the new museum, the twin Leaside Towers in Thorncliffe Park remain landmarks, and themselves were once the tallest residential buildings in Canada when they opened in 1970.

Across the Humber from Palace Pier is a somewhat lost landmark, the Lion Monument. Now located off to the south side amidst some trees, this noble stone lion and column was once in the middle of the highway, but moved in the mid-1970s when the highway was widened. It marked the beginning of the QEW in 1939, named after the Queen Mum, not our current Elizabeth.

In a city that changes as much as Toronto does, the lion had as good a run as a landmark here can hope for.

Shawn Micallef writes every Friday about where and how we live in the GTA. Wander the streets with him on Twitter [@shawnmicallef](https://twitter.com/shawnmicallef)

Q&A > ANDRI PETRILLO

Talking Hockey Night and Bloor West Village



REBECCA FLEMING
THE GRID

We asked the *Hockey Night in Canada* rinksider reporter Andi Petrillo to tell us about her Toronto.

What's your first memory of visiting Toronto?

During the summer, I would go to work with my mom downtown (she worked in Metro Hall at King and John).

Sunny days, the smell of barbecue, and funky-dressed people made me fall in love with the city.

Describe Toronto using one word.

Home.

What would you change about Toronto?

Better public transportation! It needs to be more accessible, affordable and extensive.

Favourite 'hood?

Bloor West Village. It has all the luxuries of a city (unique shops, fresh produce, cafés, and restaurants), all within walking distance, but the neighbourhood's charming homes and beautiful old trees lend it a warm feel.

What food does Toronto do best?

Everything! No joke. Every culture is represented.

Favourite event?

Well, it doesn't happen very often, but I love when any professional Toronto team makes the playoffs.

What's the most underrated tourist attraction?

High Park is a fun place to spend the day. You can hike, bike, rollerblade, play some tennis, or enjoy a swim — and during the winter, you can enjoy Canada's favourite



Hockey Night in Canada rinksider reporter Andi Petrillo.

pastime: outdoor hockey!

Secret haunt?

Pizzeria Libretto.

Favourite musical act that's come out of the city?

Joe! I love my Euro beats!

You're faced with designing a new flag for Toronto. What's on it?

The city skyline.

Will the Leafs go all the way this year?

That's the beauty of sports — you never really know.

> A DRINK WITH . . .

The manager of the Elgin theatre

ERIC VEILLETTE
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Sometimes timing is everything. Brett Randall, manager of the Elgin & Winter Garden Theatres, emigrated from Australia in 1989, when Toronto was becoming the world's third-largest centre for live theatre. He reflects on family, Phantom of the Opera, and the Elgin's centennial gala on Monday, Oct. 7.

The drinks: "I generally drink Australian wines, having been weaned on them," says Randall. With no Australian wines on the menu, he chose the neighbouring Yealands Cabernet Sauvignon from New Zealand. I ordered the Col. E.H. Taylor bourbon.

Where: The Yukon, 1718 Queen St. W.

Did you grow up in a theatre family?

I did. My dad would take me down to the theatre at the end of a show, give me a hammer and I'd help him knock the set down.

How many generations back?

This is where my wife raises her eyebrow and says "Here he goes again. . ." I'm the fifth generation continuously involved in theatre. My great-grandfather was a light-opera singer who created the role of Mr. Blushington in Gilbert & Sullivan's *Utopia, Limited*. A minor show for them, but that was his big claim to fame.

How did your family end up in Australia?

My father brought (the trade) to Australia and then I came to Canada where I was general manager of the Pantages Theatre.

I still commend Garth Drabinsky for saving that theatre. By the late 1980s, most of our big theatre halls had been demolished.

Garth is someone who has so much energy and so much vision that he overwhelms everything around him and builds it up to a point where it is extremely successful and wonderful to be a part of, but somehow there is always a sort of self-destructive mechanism in there as well. Those of us who were a part of it likened it to being on a roller-coaster ride. If you can put up with the ups and downs, you're going to have a fabulous time.

You've been managing the Elgin for seven years. How unique is it compared to other Toronto venues?

It is unique in what it represents in terms of the evolution of the theatre, vaudeville and cinema. When it opened in 1913, it was the flagship of Marcus Loew's chain in Canada, when Vaudeville was probably at a peak, but starting to see the introduction of short films.

The opening night ads called for "select photoplays."

It was a complete novelty then. As sound was introduced in the late 1920s, it transitioned into a full-time cinema.

The upcoming gala seems to hearken back to those days of the variety show. That's a word we don't hear nowadays.

For the program, I was writing about Vaudeville and how it was a combination of acts that required this combination of excitement and momentum where one act followed naturally from another without interruption but had a natural connection to the one after it and so on. Well, that's really what we're doing for the gala. . . . The only difference is we don't have Australian wood choppers or bearded women.

What was the biggest challenge in producing this show?

You have to be able to provide the costumes, the lighting, the sets. It's not just one show that you have to provide for. It's a dozen. It's a lot more work than I'd anticipated, but I think it really represents 100 years of the Elgin.

Eric Veillette tweets about spirits, cocktails and the city @VeilletteTO