

Trajectory: A local arts and culture magazine

How brand curation and storefront design contributed to rapid social change after the legalization of marijuana in Canada in Toronto: (2018)

by

Elijah Sean Nadler

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Program in Film & Media
Screen Cultures and Curatorial Studies
In conformity with the requirements for
The degree of Masters of Arts

Queen's University
Kingston, Ontario, Canada
(October, 2021)

Copyright © Elijah Nadler, 2021

Abstract

Trajectory is an arts and culture magazine that examines cannabis culture through retail storefront design in Toronto. This magazine aims to contribute to the growing conversation around design in the cannabis industry and its intersection with local neighborhoods. As a publication that is both high design and accessible to commercial endeavours, *Trajectory* will connect to art lovers and cannabis consumers of all ages. Through the examination of retail design, gentrification of cannabis in Toronto can be explored by the readers. The accompanying thesis will explain shifting social structures as a result of legalization and its impact on the cannabis culture and art. The editorial decisions are explained in depth as well as the institutions and artists that are featured in the magazine.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Keren Zaiontz, my supervisor, for her guidance as we explored the new and often stigmatized legal cannabis industry. Thank you to Gabriel Menotti for helping me complete my thesis for the last leg of the race. Thank you to the Queen's film department and all of my professors over the last five years for helping shape my academic career at Queen's and providing me the space and creative freedom to become a passionate student, and collaborator. Thanks to my friends for discussing their views and experiences with marijuana and allowing me to write my findings for an academic institution, as well as being the first, and most excited readers for *Trajectory's* first edition I would also like to thank my colleagues especially Zakary Jiwa, Darby Huk, and Will Boyle for being entertaining and engaged classmates who were always as eager to receive art as share art with one another. Thank you to my parents and my sister Oona for their support. To my parents who allowed me to study their anecdote, and neighborhood for a thesis, and to my sister, for her guidance for myself and my classmates through academia.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| Abstract..... | ii |
| Acknowledgements..... | iii |
| Table of Contents..... | iv |
| Introduction..... | 1 |
| 1. Background..... | 2 |
| 1.1 Marijuana, its legality and legalization..... | 2 |
| 1.2 Dispensary Design and Impact..... | 5 |
| 1.3 Magazine Influences..... | 6 |
| 2. Magazine Context..... | 7 |
| 2.1 Exhibitions..... | 7 |
| 2.2 Print Media..... | 8 |
| 3. Trajectory Structure and Content..... | 10 |
| 3.1 Aims..... | 10 |
| 3.2 Structure and Format..... | 11 |
| 3.3 Editorial Challenges..... | 12 |
| 3.4 Letter from The Editor..... | 13 |
| 3.5 Reasoning Behind the Artistic Choices of Selected Spreads..... | 14 |
| 3.6 Marketing..... | 16 |
| 3.7 Dispensary Feature..... | 17 |
| 3.8 Artists Featured..... | 19 |
| 3.9 Charitable Organizations Within Canada and Ontario..... | 20 |
| Conclusion..... | 22 |
| List of References..... | 23 |

Introduction:

Since 2018, the legalization of cannabis in Canada led to the rapid expansion of the cannabis industry with a boom of dispensary storefronts. As a result, I would argue that the consumer base for cannabis grew from subcultures to mainstream society. I was drawn to this topic because I saw gentrification and normalization of a once stigmatized substance in and around my neighbourhood in Toronto.

I responded to this trend by creating an arts and culture magazine called *Trajectory* to examine the retail design of legal cannabis dispensaries in Toronto. *Trajectory* reflects the acceptance of cannabis by mainstream society through art and culture. It illustrates current cannabis culture in dispensary retail spaces and art. *Trajectory* further recognizes the innovation in the dispensaries' retail design which incorporates interactive elements and thoughtful placemaking. Finally, *Trajectory* explores the aesthetic of now legal dispensary brands that are being developed through retail storefronts and the interior design of these stores.

In my magazine *Trajectory*, I used visuals from cannabis brands and artists working with the subject of cannabis to demonstrate how the cannabis industry is changing from the outside in. My magazine shows how these aesthetics, particularly those of dispensary store design, are intended to appeal to a broader audience, including Torontonians aged 40 and older.

Toronto's downtown has experienced gentrification. The Oxford English Language Dictionary defines gentrification as: "The process whereby the character of a poor urban area is changed by wealthier people moving in, improving housing, and attracting new businesses,

typically displacing current inhabitants in the process.” In her book ‘The Gentrification of the Mind: Witness to a Lost Imagination.’ Sarah Shulman further defines gentrification as “a process that occurs not only within the physical make-up of space, but also within the ideological space of the mind” (Shulman, 2012). For example, Yorkville was a neighborhood for artists and hippies in the 1960s and is now upper middle class (Hume, 2008). Dispensaries opening in gentrified areas apply sophisticated design techniques to build clientele. I maintain that my magazine will similarly appeal to an older demographic of upper middle-class consumers as they become increasingly exposed to and interested in high end dispensaries and cannabis culture. It will also appeal to my peers who are interested in cannabis culture and design.

As a millennial, I must consider and acknowledge my privilege in studying this area in a field with a history of criminalization. As a curator and Torontonionian, I examine the industry within my geographic region and the demographic experiencing rapid social change around the cannabis industry.

1. Background:

1.1. Marijuana, its illegality and legalization:

Marijuana is defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as “the dried flowers and leaves of the cannabis plant.” It is also often referred to as weed, pot, dope and cannabis. Its mind-altering compound is tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). The marijuana plant also contains cannabidiol (CBD) which is not mind-altering (CDC).

CBD can be used for pain management and to lower inflammation. In 2001 about 400,000 Canadians were using cannabis for medical purposes but only 40 Canadians had

obtained a special dispensation to use cannabis to relieve symptoms of cancer, AIDS, multiple sclerosis or epilepsy (John Hoey, 2001). However, there is limited evidence that marijuana works to manage chronic pain (CDC).

More commonly today, marijuana is used recreationally and it is, arguably, far less dangerous than the more accepted drug, alcohol. The American Addiction Center notes that:

In most cases, drinking alcohol is not life-threatening. However, when people consume too much alcohol, it can be fatal. The CDC reports that nearly 88,000 alcohol-related deaths occur each year. And binge drinking accounted for about half of these deaths. In comparison, the number of deaths caused by marijuana is almost zero. A study found that a fatal dose of THC...would be between 15 and 70 grams. To give you an idea of how much marijuana that is, consider that a typical joint contains about half a gram of marijuana. That means that you would have to smoke between 238 and 1,113 joints in a day to overdose on marijuana. (Lauren Villa, 2021)

Even so, ideology and institutional policy created structural prejudices and punishments for marijuana use. The legal history of cannabis and its socio-cultural impact are naturally interwoven. Marijuana was a relatively late addition to Canada's list of banned narcotics in 1923 and the first arrests for cannabis possession were only reported ten years later (Hathaway, 2007). Drug laws in effect created a hugely profitable 'black market' which led to social problems including violence, unsafe street drugs, a decline in the respect for government and police (Hathaway, 2009). "The Journal of Cannabis Research" explains: "As applies to cannabis, some structural sources of stigma include laws criminalizing cannabis, policies banning cannabis and cannabis users in the workplace as well as (public) housing, school programs where cannabis is taught to be a dangerous drug, and organizational views that problematize cannabis." (Matt Reid, 2020).

As a reaction to the stigmatization of marijuana, compassion clubs were created in the United States in the 1990s to provide safe access to medical marijuana and information about its use (Willetts, 2009). Hilary Black created the first compassion club in Canada after she saw the benefits of marijuana for individuals with arthritis (Ore, 2018). Compassion clubs influence dispensaries today. Information exchange is a pivotal component of the dispensary experience. ‘Budtenders’ (dispensary staff) are encouraged to educate visitors who are curious about cannabis. Similarly, *Trajectory* can contribute to the conversation of social acceptance of weed.

Through the turn of the century the Canadian government maintained restrictive laws on cannabis even though 1.5 million Canadians smoked marijuana recreationally. The Canadian Medical Association criticized Canada’s legislation on marijuana use as ‘unduly restrictive’ for patients with terminal illnesses. (Hathaway et al, 2007)

Modern government reviews of marijuana legislation concluded that marijuana prohibitions caused disproportionate harm to society including placing social stigma for its users. Government regulation of cannabis sales would alleviate the social implications of the ‘black market’. Less money would flow to criminal entities within Canada and raise tax revenues for the government. Marijuana legalization would lead to economic growth and job growth. The 2018 report, “Marijuana for Medical Purposes Regulations” created conditions for a commercial industry, responsible for the production and distribution of marijuana for medical purposes. "The [proposed] regulations were intended to ensure that Canadians with a medical need could access quality-controlled marijuana grown under secure and sanitary conditions"(MacKay et. al, 2018).

Canada legalized marijuana on October 17, 2018. Adults 18 years of age or older can now possess up to 30 grams of legal cannabis (dried or equivalent) in public and buy cannabis from provincially-licensed retailers. (Government of Canada D. of J, 2021). There are still restrictions. “The Cannabis Act” has measures that prevent youth from accessing cannabis and of what can actually be *seen* by pedestrians (potential youths) on the street. Penalties for violating these prohibitions include a fine of up to five million dollars or three years in prison. (CITE)

With decriminalization, the social stigma of cannabis eased. My magazine *Trajectory* aims to visually demonstrate how marijuana is becoming more socially acceptable in Canada. *Trajectory* explores how design contributes to the gentrification of cannabis culture.

In *Trajectory* I explore how the new dispensaries cater to an older, more discerning consumer and their mindsets while displacing the older, stigmatized pot culture. My target audience is a similar demographic, but the content of the magazine introduces them to high art around the subject of marijuana and the trajectory of marijuana culture to the now mainstream gentrified industry that they are now indulging in. Downtown Toronto has seen significant gentrification since the 1980s. The dispensary storefronts opening in Yorkville and adjacent neighborhoods builds on this trend.

1.2 Dispensary design and impact:

Dispensary design must both deal with government regulations and respond to consumer needs. Cannabis products cannot be legally viewed from the street to protect our youth. The

high-end dispensaries featured in *Trajectory* overcome this design challenge in various ways to contribute to their brand aesthetic. They borrow design approaches from Apple Stores and emphasize interactive elements inside the store to make the space inviting to the sophisticated consumer.

Government regulation also sets a standard price for cannabis products. Design choices, store branding, and customized accessories are the tools the high-end dispensaries apply to differentiate (“gentrify”) themselves. Interestingly, these dispensaries often apply nostalgic imagery of cannabis culture to bridge the generational gap, to bring in boomers and young millennials. As a millennial, I must acknowledge that I am filtering that nostalgia through an ironic lens.

1.3 Magazine Influences:

My first inspiration for *Trajectory* was to tie its aesthetic to the sense of place created by the dispensaries “gentrifying” cannabis culture in Toronto. I was fascinated by how some dispensaries instinctively applied placemaking strategies, the “creative reimaging and reinventing” of the public space to strengthen... the connection between people and the places they share” (*What is Placemaking?*, 2007) to their commercial approach. Like the Compassion Clubs or Apple stores, high end dispensaries and its budtenders offer a community, a place where the upscale consumer feels safe and can receive expert advice (as it was emotionally and educationally for the compassion club members).

As outlined in Mary Ann Pascucci’s paper: “The Revival of Placemaking”, interactions and interactive experiences can make an environment (place) ‘healthy’ and contribute to its

community. In HiQ in Toronto's west end a swing is set up inside to provide an interactive experience and Instagramable opportunity. Having ways that consumers can engage with the store and have fun arguably becomes a pivotal part of their experience. This turns the dispensaries as a place what are fun rather than stressful. The government regulation which shields youths from seeing what goes on inside the dispensary from the street lead to some dispensaries created storefronts which gave the sense of the activity inside being illicit. The better designed dispensary fits into its neighbourhood as a acceptable retail experience. Therefore, for my magazine, I searched out warm images of the entrances and interactive pieces within dispensaries that welcomed first time visitors.

I also looked at past cannabis media to understand the visuals associated with marijuana subcultures and nostalgia. For example, Cheech and Chong defined stoner culture in the 1970s and '80s (Holson, 2019). West Coast Gifts – a cannabis accessories retailer – trades on nostalgic imagery including Cheech and Chong themselves for its branding and advertising to appeal to boomers and millennials. Similarly, I appreciated the retailer Sackville and Co's use of film photography to create a vintage aesthetic. I was inspired by their use of language and tried to emulate their inclusive and approachable language within my magazine.

2. Magazine Content

2.1 Exhibitions featured in *Trajectory*

I sourced images from formal art exhibitions such as David Bienenstock's *Outlaw Glass* shown at Apex Art and *#Grassland Up the Okanagan* at the Penticton Art Gallery for *Trajectory*. *#Grassland* focused on creative work on the history or politics of marijuana (*#Grassland Smoking Up the Okanagan*, 2017). The curator, Paul Crawford, wanted to be part of the first

wave of artists and art institutions discussing legalization in their work as it unfolded. These projects are significant as they brought a stigmatized subject matter into mainstream art spaces.

In contrast, Weedmaps's *Museum of Weed* takes cannabis culture to new audiences. It is a pop-up museum designed to travel and incorporate large scale aesthetic immersive installations (*The Buzz: The Art of Cannabis - Weedmaps Museum of Weed*). *Museum of Weed* places educational content is at the forefront. As a curator, I comment on how its installations are designed to read well on social media platforms. Therefore, participants are encouraged to share their images of the museum online and disseminate information about cannabis.

In addition to conversations around cannabis in the formal art space, I wanted to foreground artists and creators who use marijuana as the center of more intimate pieces. I also wanted to focus on female artists and female representation within the cannabis art space. My editorial decisions of which artists to include were naturally heavily focused on female artists. I was especially interested in working with Maya Furh, who not only is a female artist, but her work I included in *Trajectory* was part of a photography series that represented female smokers.

2.2 Print media

In designing my magazine, I considered a number of other print publications as models both in terms of their design approach and their intended audiences. Current cannabis print media requires the dedicated reader to seek out the subscription through the publication's website or social media account. Independent and high design dispensaries offer these publications for purchase for those consumers already interested in cannabis culture. In contrast,

Trajectory aims for a wider, more general demographic. With its hyper-local focus and design aesthetic it could be offered through local brick and mortar retailers beyond dispensaries as discussed below in relation between Superette and Big Trouble Pizza.

I drew some inspiration from *Spacing Magazine* which examines urban landscapes, urban issues and encourages their readers to think critically about how they can shape public spaces that surround their everyday lives (*Spacing*, 2021). I hope that my magazine can encourage readers to think critically about design around them and how it shapes meaning and placemaking. “Spacing” also bridges to digital components, linking up with a network of blogs in Canadian cities. Following this strategy, I include QR codes to encourage readers to connect with the content online.

I appreciate how *Spacing* integrates photos within a large white border. I wanted to use this technique to give *Trajectory* a high art feel and to make the reader almost feel like they are walking through an art gallery. I also echo *Spacing*’s clear page number structure which helps direct the reader.

Broccoli Magazine is a female founded magazine for ‘cannabis lovers.’ They describe their magazine as ‘playful, informed, thoughtful’ (*Broccoli*, 2021). I was inspired by their goal of encouraging readers to discover cannabis culture with an intelligent appreciation through art, culture and fashion. My magazine aims for a slightly different end product. Instead of a more irreverent tone *Trajectory* invites art lovers and those new to cannabis culture alike. While I used a different color palette for my magazine, *Broccoli Mag*’s fearless use of bold and bright colors

encouraged me to be as bold and creative with my own design and color palette. Particularly in areas of the magazine that could be considered ‘busy’ I reminded myself that *Broccoli Mag* adopts a spirit of bold creative direction.

I was also inspired by *Broccoli’s* representation of women in the cannabis space. They feature many positive images of women (which my magazine does as well). Their Instagram page works as a portfolio of their creative vision for the magazine with vibrant colors and an eclectic style. *Broccoli* often creates images full of detail, color, shapes and whimsical chaos. I tried for a similar vibe in my table of contents page - creating beautiful but busy visuals, full of color.

I drew from information presented through Broccoli Talk - the accompanying podcast to *Broccoli (Broccoli Talk, 2021)*. Broccoli Talk is a bi-weekly podcast co-hosted by Lauren Yoshiko and Mennlay Golokeh Aggrey for my magazine. Broccoli Talk podcast, explores the world of cannabis through interviews, discussions, readings and more. I linked the QR code for the episode titled ‘Cannabis Equity in Canada with Akwasim Owusu- Bempah’ which is the episode on criminalization.

3.0 Trajectory Structure and Content:

3.1 Aims:

As an artist I looked to include emerging artists in the industry. I displayed Superette in *Trajectory* in a similar aesthetic style that it uses for its brand. For example, I used Superette's Summerhill logo and font on the spread that introduces the Superette feature (p. 24-25) In Superette’s feature I wanted to extend the hyper-local feel when one enters the store through the

pages of the magazine. Also, I echo the Summerhill/ABC community outreach of the store by displaying the interactive elements in Superette's store design that connect consumers with local businesses. This contributes to the hyper-local mission of *Trajectory*: highlighting the connection between the hyper-local and the dispensaries business models.

In addition to the hyper-local aspect of *Trajectory*'s mission, the magazine also aims to highlight the past, present and future of cannabis culture. To do this I chose the name *Trajectory* to symbolize that progression. Also, the slogan of the magazine reflects the chronological study of cannabis culture; "Where we've been, how far we've come, where we're going."

As well, the slogan uses 'we' to bring to light another aspect of the magazine's mission; to be as inclusive as possible to newcomers to cannabis culture. I wanted to include a new demographic that is being exposed to marijuana due to the gentrification and legalization. This demographic is 40 plus in Toronto's downtown neighborhood that these high design stores are targeting.

The newcomers that read this magazine should be informed of the broader context of this topic. In each issue I want to include historical, current and developing elements of cannabis culture, as I have done with the first issue.

3.2 Structure and format:

The first issue of *Trajectory* is 46 pages with 25 spreads. I structure the work as a narrative so that it guides the reader from cover to cover. This will allow there to be a flow for

the reader to enjoy. In order to engage the reader's attention, I did not have a typical table of contents. Instead, I created a visual table of contents, with images from the retailers included and the artworks featured. I also kept in mind the 40 plus demographic and wanted the magazine to be easy to navigate.

In *Trajectory*'s first issue, I balance elements from commercial magazines and artists magazines. From commercial magazines, I drew from their structure and organization that creates ease for readers (page numbers, table of contents and QR codes). From high art magazines I utilized large scale images to focus on art pieces, and in depth information on artists and exhibitions. In addition, I created a bridge between the physical space and digital space, by including QR codes which lead to playlists and videos that are curated to match the content.

The colour palette used throughout serves to create a cohesive aesthetic. I chose modern, pastel colors to complement Ezra Soiferman's cover photo, as well as many of the retailers I would be featuring in the magazine (Soiferman, *Macrojuana Series*). I chose geometrical shapes throughout to provide structure for each spread and help direct the reader's gaze. I chose a semi-circle or rounded edge shape for a modern look, and the rectangular shapes for versatility throughout my spreads.

3.3 Editorial Challenges:

The most pressing struggle for me was securing an artist's permission to use the piece *Sweet Maryjane* by Myfanwy Macleod as the front cover (Macleod, 2015). This piece was reminiscent of classical art pieces, while being focused around marijuana flowers. This is a photograph of a small statue positioned between multicolored marijuana flowers. The tone and

spirit of this piece would have contributed to the approachable visual style I was aiming to create for my magazine.

I also based the original color palette on her work, and hoped that the bold colors that she used in the piece would represent the new and exciting emerging cannabis culture post legalization, while the traditional elements of the piece would evoke a feeling of a white cube space. Both being major pillars in the hybrid of a high art magazine and a commercial magazine for the masses.

Unfortunately, when trying to contact her failed, I pivoted towards Ezra Soiferman's photography. His hyper close-up image of a weed flower, with abstract colours used throughout, had a similar effect as Macleod's piece.

3.4 Letter from the Editor:

On the "Letter from the Editor" page the images I included really exemplify what Toronto looks like today in contrast to what Toronto looked like 20 years ago. For example, I included a photo of myself and my family visiting an outdoor art exhibition called *Moose in the City*. I wanted to create a personal connection with the reader and myself as a Torontonian who has lived all my in downtown Toronto. Throughout my thesis I focus specifically on the ABC neighbourhood (Avenue, Bay, Cottingham) (ABC Residents Association, 2021). In the top right corner of that same page, I included a photo of my local LCBO. I thought it was important to include that LCBO location because it is a recognizable institution housed in an historic remodeled train station. I draw attention to the parallel between the well-established Liquor

Commission and the new emerging dispensary brands, who are using design and innovation to attract the same level of attention and respect.

3.5 Reasoning behind the artistic choices of selected spreads:

‘Toronto's ABC Neighbourhood and High Design Dispensaries’ (p. 6-7) introduces the importance of the geographical region and hyper-local focus in relation to dispensary design and gentrification. I chose images such as the neighborhood map, an image of the exteriors and interiors of Superette (including the identifiable Superette signage) and the THC warning label created by the government of Canada. These images link Superette’s business model with the context of the neighborhood it is trying to integrate with.

‘Legal and Regal’ (p. 8-9) offers more background about Canada’s history with marijuana. To demonstrate the history of legalization I use a photo of the Canadian government - when Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was speaking to persuade his party to legalize marijuana. ‘A Little Compassion Goes a Long Way’ (p. 10-11) looks at social acceptance around the use of marijuana.

Marijuana accessory brands and publications like *Broccoli* use their online profile to share and disseminate information on cannabis and lifestyle content to sell marijuana products or accessories. I showcase *Broccoli*’s creative approach to cannabis culture by including some editorial photography they feature on their social media. This page in *Trajectory* is incredibly colorful with deep blues, pink, green blues which connects my magazine to *Broccoli Mag*.

‘Experience it for yourself’ (p. 12-13) - is a closer study at the actual interiors of legal dispensaries. I used official photos from Superette. I included photos to demonstrate Superette’s funhouse inspired entryway (p. 13) which encourages visitors to take photos and relax as it enters in a fun interactive way. Here, we are welcoming readers into this new section of the magazine, opening the door to them and inviting them to explore. I use bold colors and statement color blocking to really draw attention to this title.

On the next page I explain how dispensaries are working to become your preferred vendor for marijuana (p.14-15). Interior design is integral to the company's success. Placemaking can foster positive community ties. I use photos of interactive elements in store - such as the Superette dispenser machine (interactive menu) and indoor swings at High Q - to show how the store is enticing customers based on their in-store experiences.

There are the only two images on this spread and there is deliberately very little text to let the images shine. I left a large white border around both photos in order to create a white cube feel and recreate the process of looking at a piece of artwork on the wall of a gallery. The photo on the left under the title "Interactive elements that shift the focus of retail spaces from functional to fun" (p. 16) are the communicative baskets for first-time shoppers that Superette offers. These baskets allow you the privacy or the ability to ask for someone to approach you to help. And on the right-hand side page (p. 17) is a photo of Superette’s Spadina location Pizza Phone, that directly connects you to a local pizzeria Big Trouble Pizza where you can order pizza directly from the dispensary - seamlessly. (Superette Summerhill has a direct line to the Rosedale Diner.) These photos exemplify how design is enhancing a shopper’s experience. With the

baskets allowing customers to feel comfortable and relaxed, and with the Pizza Phone creating ties to local businesses and helping members of the community stay connected with locals.

3.6 Marketing:

As mentioned above dispensaries leverage nostalgia to market cannabis (p. 18-19) to broaden their products' appeal. In *Trajectory*, I contrast an original Cheech and Chong advertisement with a West Coast Gifts X Cheech and Chong collaboration to highlight the revamped visuals (West Coast Gifts, 2021). I use muted pink, green, grey, black, to really let the retro yellow in the West Coast Gifts pop without losing the faded (and retro) red of the original Cheech and Chong ad.

Online retailers, like Tetra are featured in 'Merchants of Design' (p. 20-21). Here I wanted to explain to readers the creativity and thought put into the creation of high design smoking accessories. I use photos from Tetra, (Tetra, 2021) a brand that offers thoughtful smoking objects for 'aesthetically minded people,' as well as 'Summerland,' which has handcrafted ceramic smoking accessories, all done locally in California. Both these companies were considered in creating my color palette, so they seamlessly fit within the colors of my text, and teal color blocking. Finally, I use a screenshot from YewYew Shop (YewYew Shop, 2021) that shows how it has been featured in established magazines, like *Vogue* and *GQ*. Demonstrating how high design smoking objects are being integrated within mainstream culture. This screenshot shows how established magazine publications are recognizing their products. There is a high design feel to this spread, and it is very reminiscent of a high-end retailer which would be featured in a commercial magazine.

3.7 Dispensary Feature:

The next spread features two photos courtesy of the Superette team (p. 22-23) of their flower wall art installation within the store. This wall also gives customers a chance to smell whichever strain of flower they're interested in purchasing. This interactive art installation really exemplifies how functionality and design come together within these dispensaries to create a richer experience for the customer. The rich and bright colors were what really drew me to these two stills specifically, and even though there is weed flower at the center of the photography, I think these photos allow the reader to really understand visually the care and effort that was put into this installation - just like a bouquet of flowers being arranged.



[Photos courtesy of Superette]



Image 1.0 Page 22-23 of *Trajectory*



Image 1.2 Flower wall art installation at Superette Summerhill

The detailed image of the set dressings from Superette (p. 24-25) of the range of small objects from a *depanneur* store which have been styled to convey their brand, show not only the art direction of Superette, but their main marketing goal. Their goal is to connect the local demographic back to their past by playing on this Montreal-style *depanneur*. The idea creates an homage to a *depanneur* - a community hub with essentials, which appeals to the demographic in Summerhill.

I used Superette's own font in the title 'Toronto Summerhill' as well as their own 'Superette' italicized logo to frame the centerfold image. I hope that since readers have gone through the previous few spreads and have seen visually what Superette is achieving, this commentary will help connect for the reader what Superette aims to do. I also include a photo of

magazines that are offered at Superette. I think this connects really nicely with my thesis as it shows that dispensaries themselves are supporting small publications. Specifically, publications that relate to members of the cannabis community and creatives. The magazine in the photo is called ‘Dope Girl’ and is a feminist cannabis culture publication which includes essays, art, comics and in volume six a map of USA’s drug laws.

3.8 Artists Featured:

Artists features (p. 32-37) focuses on specific artists and their work and it leans more heavily towards an art magazine, rather than commercial. I examine art projects from artists who are contributing to the conversation around cannabis on an international scale.

Where possible I tried to be inclusive and feature female artists delving into cannabis themes in the magazine. For example, Maya Fuhr is a curator and photographer who has contributed to many publications, group exhibitions and her own solo exhibitions (Maya Fuhr, 2021). Her art often acknowledges consumerism through fashion objects, hangers and packaging. Her collaboration with Tokyo Smoke “Art Theory” (2017) appears in “Tokyo Smoke Magazine.”

Aditi Kapur is an Indian graphic designer based in Berlin. *PAPERS* is her collection of five categories of smoking papers (Aditi Kapur, 2021). Each represents a different genre and sense. Her playlists are also included in my magazine and also linked digitally so that readers can explore each playlist as they read *Trajectory*. I wanted to include another form of media - music - to engage readers across platforms. The cover art for *PAPERS* is beautiful but does not align

with my magazine's color palette. To counter this challenge, I used grey and pink primarily, with teal for the title on her page. I used the white space around the statement image of the project I chose on the right-hand page to really let the colors and her artwork be the statement of the page. I have linked the playlists digitally through a QR code in the bottom left-hand side of the spread.

Kenni Field is a ceramist who crafts half-moon shaped Demi Pipes with psychedelic marbled patterns. As *Trajectory* largely focuses on retail spaces and brands, I thought it was important to include information on objects crafted by local artisans that dispensaries could sell to build stronger ties to the arts community -- another strategy of placemaking.

I link a video to Field's studio tour and I include many photos of the smoking accessories she has designed and created. I include a brief description of dispensaries that encourage and work with independent artists. By including Kapur and Field, I am supporting independent female artists and introducing them to my readers, both as newcomers as artists within cannabis culture, much like how my readers may be newcomers as well.

3.9 Charitable Organizations within Canada and Ontario:

I wanted to focus on charitable organizations to balance out the lens of the magazine. Coming from a place of privilege, in an upper-middle class neighborhood, I knew having a strong focus on organizations within Canada and Ontario that support vulnerable populations was imperative (p. 38-41).

I decided to highlight the cover artist Ezra Soiferman's initiative; Hemp for the Homeless (*Hemp for the Homeless*, 2021). Hemp is different from marijuana. However, I wanted to include

Soiferman's short film from 2021 and the charitable organization of the same name in my publication.

I include a QR code that directs the reader to a *Broccoli Talks* podcast entitled *Cannabis Equity in Canada with Akwasim Owusu- Bempah*. In the bottom right corner (p. 39) I include a powerful quote from Owusu-Bempah that criticizes how, geographically, dispensary storefronts are not being distributed equally (Broccoli Talks, 2021). It is important to bring to light issues in how dispensaries are not equitably distributed in Toronto.

'Feed it Forward' is a food security organization in the GTA (Feed it Forward, 2021). I include information from their website that connects possession offenses with the geographic regions in Toronto where there are food deserts. This is an important organization to include because it focuses on supporting vulnerable populations that in part are vulnerable because of laws that prosecute marijuana offenses. I want to help support people who are being disproportionately penalized for marijuana offenses.

Similar to Feed it Forward, the We Matter organization assists the mental health and wellness of aboriginal youth. We Matter states that: "indigenous youth are overrepresented in cannabis-related arrests. They are segments of the population that are uniquely vulnerable to over-policing and over-incarceration" (*We Matter*, 2021). It is important to provide support and recognition to charitable organizations that focus on indigenous issues.

On the last spread I give a window into the next issue of the magazine. I provide some photos of the exhibition feature for the next issue; *Stories from the Underground: Reflections from the Shadows* by Mark Rutherford. This exhibition is in black and white, so this would suggest a departure visually for the second issue. I situated those photos to suggest this (at the bottom of the frame, towards the bold black bar.) The dispensary feature, “Axes on Queen West” reports on a hybrid space which serves as both a dispensary and art gallery. Both these topics are natural progressions from the premiere issue of *Trajectory*.

I think choosing promotional images for this section is important, as I hope when readers see these images somewhere else, they will identify the specific organizations and mobilize their recent education on each organization.

Conclusion:

Trajectory aims to contribute to the growing conversation around design in the cannabis industry and its intersection with local neighborhoods. As an aspiring curator, I chose images and wrote copy to communicate how cannabis has become more mainstream, as seen through retail design of dispensaries. As an editor, I aimed to create a publication that is both high design and accessible to commercial endeavours. *Trajectory* focuses on the aesthetics of cannabis retail spaces and their use of visuals, and its move towards mainstream culture post-legalization and the resulting social impact. I hope that the *Trajectory* reader will gain a deeper understanding of the retail design of the emerging cannabis industry in Canada.

List of references

Online Articles

Bartlett, L. (2020, December 23). *Dreamy Cannabis Market Superette Talks Expansion*, Clio Award. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/lindseybartlett/2020/12/22/superette-canadas-dreamy-cannabis-market-expands-its-fleet/?sh=4910935e5878>.

Bergman, R., Hollenberg, S., Laurence, G. F. with R., & Gerges, M. (n.d.). *Exit Through the Pop-Up*. Canadian Art. <https://canadianart.ca/features/exit-through-the-pop-up/>.

Bernier, M. (n.d.). MEL. <http://www.melaniebernier.com/>.

The Buzz: The Art of Cannabis - Weedmaps Museum of Weed. CRx Magazine. (n.d.). <https://www.crxmag.com/issues/2019/fall/the-art-of-cannabis-weedmaps-museum-of-weed.shtml#>.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018, January 2). *Therapeutic benefits*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/marijuana/nas/therapeutic-benefits.html>.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018, March 7). *What is marijuana?* Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/marijuana/faqs/what-is-marijuana.html#:~:text=Related%20Pages,that%20are%20not%20mind-altering>.

Chan, T. (2020, November 10). *Just what exactly is the museum of weed anyway?* Rolling Stone. <https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/museum-of-weed-los-angeles-867070/>.

Contributor, G. (2017, September 9). *What Yorkville was like in the 1960s*. blogTO. https://www.blogto.com/city/2016/08/what_yorkville_was_like_in_the_1960s/.

- Cormack, P., & Cosgrave, J. (2021). *“Enjoy your experience”*: Symbolic violence and becoming a tasteful state cannabis consumer in Canada. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 146954052199087. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1469540521990876>
- Delamont, K. (2020, July 14). *Bong blowback: Tokyo Smoke gets heat from cannabis activists*. NOW Magazine. <https://nowtoronto.com/lifestyle/cannabis/bong-blowback-tokyo-smoke-gets-heat-from-long-time-activists>.
- Edition X is Re-Designing Cannabis Culture in Toronto*. Design Lines Magazine. (2021, February 23). <https://www.designlinesmagazine.com/edition-x-redesigning-cannabis-culture-in-toronto/>
- Government of Canada, D. of J. (2021, July 7). *Cannabis legalization and regulation*. Government of Canada, Department of Justice, Electronic Communications. <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/cannabis/>.
- Hall, D. (n.d.). *About*. Danielle Hall. <https://daniellehalldesign.com/About>.
- Hathaway, A. (n.d.). *The Legal History and Cultural Experience of Cannabis*. The Legal History and Cultural Experience of Cannabis | Here to Help. <https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/legal-history-and-cultural-experience-cannabis>.
- Hathaway, A. D., & Rossiter, K. (2007). Medical Marijuana, Community Building, and Canada’s Compassionate Societies. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 10(3), 283–296. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10282580701526088>
- Holson, L. M. (2019, July 4). *Marijuana, reefer, WEED: Language and the Devil's Lettuce*. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/04/style/marijuana-weed-cannabis-pot.html>.

- Howe, D. J. (2001). Marijuana: federal smoke clears, a little. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 164 (10).
- Hume, C. (2008, April 19). *Yorkville is a world devoted to tourists, luxury spending*. thestar.com. http://www.thestar.com/life/homes/2008/04/19/yorkville_is_a_world_devoted_to_tourists_luxury_spending.html.
- Jacoby, S. (n.d.). *23 Of The Most Stylish Ways To Get High*. Cool Weed Accessories For Smoking, Getting High On 420. <https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/cool-bongs-glass-pipes-for-weed-accessories>.
- Jin, D., Jin, S., Yu, Y., Lee, C., Chen, J., & Jin, C. (2018). *Classification of Cannabis Cultivars Marketed in Canada for Medical Purposes and Growth Trends of the North American Medical Cannabis Industry*. Innovation at the NHP/Food Interface. <https://doi.org/10.1055/s-0038-1644959>
- Justin Dallaire. August 11, 2020. (2020, August 11). *Why Superette is cautiously optimistic about cannabis retail strategy*. <https://strategyonline.ca/2020/08/11/why-superette-is-cautiously-optimistic-about-cannabis-retail/>.
- Kapur, A. (n.d.). *P A P E R S: Playlist Rolling Papers*. Aditi Kapur. <http://www.aditi-kapur.com/papers>.
- Kapur, Aditi, (*un*)*taboo Aditi Kapur*. Platform. (n.d.). <https://www.platform-mag.com/design/untaboo.html>. Klanten, R., & Niebius, M.-E. (2020). *High on design: the new cannabis culture*. gestalten.
- Laura. (2019, July 4). *Marijuana, Reefer, Weed: Language and the Devil's Lettuce*. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/04/style/marijuana-weed-cannabis-pot.html>.

- Mabee, C. (2019). *Gentrifying Marijuana: The Construction of Whiteness through Legal Marijuana*. CU Scholar. https://scholar.colorado.edu/concern/undergraduate_honors_theses/b2773w27g.
- MacKay, T. R., Phillips, K., & Tiedemann, M. (2018). *Bill C-45 : an Act Respecting Cannabis and to Amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Criminal Code and Other Acts* (Revised 5 July 2018). Library of Parliament = Bibliothèque du Parlement.
- A Magazine for Cannabis Lovers*. Broccoli. (n.d.). <https://brocolimag.com/>.
- Magazine, B., & Charbonneau, A. (2021, April 20). *Broccoli Talk - Broccoli - A Magazine for Cannabis Lovers*. Broccoli. <https://brocolimag.com/broccoli-talk-podcast>.
- Meet the Maker: Philly Ceramicist Kenni Field*. Tetra. (1970, October 13). <https://www.shop-tetra.com/blogs/news/meet-the-maker-philly-ceramicist-kenni-field>.
- Nunes, A. (n.d.). *Vinyl Joints and Spliff Packs Envision the Future of Weed Legalization*. VICE. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/qkqkxd/vinyl-joints-spliff-packs-future-weed-weedweek2017>.
- Ore, J. (2018, October 20). *How compassion club Founder Hilary Black changed the course of cannabis law in Canada | CBC Radio*. CBCnews. <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/hilary-black-b-c-cannabis-compassion-1.4869239>.
- Pascucci, M. A. (2015). The Revival of Placemaking. *Creative Nursing*, 21(4), 200–205. <https://doi.org/10.1891/1078-4535.21.4.200>
- Reid, M. (2020, December 7). *A qualitative review of cannabis stigmas at the twilight of prohibition*. Journal of Cannabis Research. <https://jcannabisresearch.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s42238-020-00056-8>.

- Robertson, K. (2018, June 7). *Goodbye counterculture: what will happen when weed goes corporate?* The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/06/canada-cannabis-legalization-corporate-influence-music>.
- Sandals, L., Sandals, V. recent articles byL., Aylan Couchie Raven Davis and Chief Lady Bird, Lee, Y., Hollenberg, S., & Laurence, G. F. with R. (n.d.). *Hotboxing the White Cube: The Rise of Cannabis Culture in High Art*. Canadian Art. <https://canadianart.ca/features/hotboxing-white-cube-cannabis-art/>.
- Schulman, S. (2013). *Gentrification of the mind: Witness to a lost imagination*. University of California Press.
- Steuer, F. (2021, February 5). *Cannabis Dispensary Design Best Practices & Examples*. Cova Dispensary Software. <https://www.covasoftware.com/blog/dispensary-design-best-practices-examples>.
- Thompson, M. (2013, July 22). *The Mysterious History Of 'Marijuana'*. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2013/07/14/201981025/the-mysterious-history-of-marijuana>.
- Tokyo Smoke Modern Interior on Queen Street W*. Designlines Magazine. (2021, February 4). <https://www.designlinesmagazine.com/tokyo-smoke/>.
- Villa, L. (2021, July 16). *Marijuana vs alcohol: Is marijuana safer than alcohol?* DrugAbuse.com. <https://drugabuse.com/blog/marijuana-vs-alcohol/>.
- "Weed World" - Penticton Art Gallery 2017*. Bentley Meeker . (n.d.). <http://www.bentleymeekerart.com/grasslands>.
- Weedmaps Museum of Weed*. The Museum of Weed. (n.d.). <https://themuseumofweed.com/>.
- West coast gifts*. West Coast Gifts. (1970, April 7). <https://westcoast.gifts/>.

What is Placemaking?: Category - Project for Public Spaces. Home - Project for Public Spaces.

(n.d.). <https://www.pps.org/category/placemaking>.

Willets, K. (2009). *Compassion clubs*. Compassion Clubs | Here to Help. <https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/compassion-clubs>.

Woodward, S. (2020). *Material methods: researching and thinking with things*. SAGE Publications.

Social Media

https://www.instagram.com/broccoli_mag/?hl=en

https://www.instagram.com/superette_shop/

Websites

(2021). ABC Residents Association. <https://www.abcra.ca/>

(2021). Aditi-kapur. <http://www.aditi-kapur.com/>

(2021, September). Broccoli Magazine. <https://broccolimag.com/>

(2021, July 27th). Broccoli Talk. <https://broccolimag.com/broccoli-talk-podcast>

(2021). Ezrasoiferman. <http://www.ezrasoiferman.com/hemp-for-the-homeless>

(2021). Feed It Forward. <https://feeditforward.ca/>

(2017, April 9). *#Grassland Smoking Up the Okanagan*. Galleries West.

<https://www.gallerieswest.ca/magazine/stories/grassland-smokin-show/>.

(2021). Helloedition. <https://helloedition.com/>

(2021). Kennifield. <https://www.kennifield.com/>

(2021). Maya Fuhr. <https://www.mayafuhr.com/>

(2021). Sackville & Co. (n.d.). <https://sackville.co/>.

(2021). Spacing. <http://spacing.ca/>

(2021). Superetteshop. <https://superetteshop.com/>

(2021). Tokyo Smoke. <https://ca.tokyosmoke.com/>

(2021). We Matter Campaign. <https://wemattercampaign.org/>