

RED DEER URGENTLY  
NEEDS A NEW HOSPITAL

INTERVIEW: MINISTER  
SARAH HOFFMAN

UNCLE NICK: RADICAL,  
BY MYRNA KOSTASH

# alberta views

NEW PERSPECTIVES FOR ENGAGED CITIZENS // NOVEMBER 2018

**Inside**  
Lethbridge's  
supervised  
drug  
consumption  
site

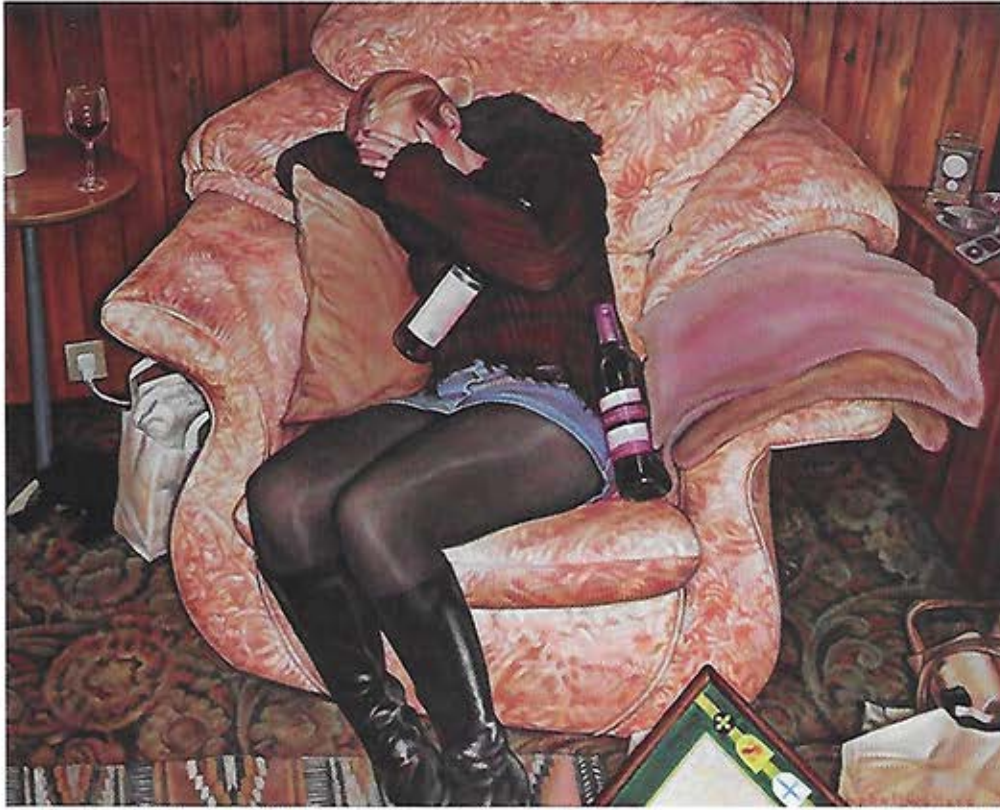
**PLUS:**  
Should we  
decriminalize  
all drugs?



\$5.95 DISPLAY UNTIL NOV 12







TRAPPINGS BY CAMPBELL WALLACE  
2015. Acrylic and oil on canvas. 29" x 36".

Alberta's conservatism today has more to do with a kind of unabashed celebration of the free market. Combine that with our agricultural history, and it makes sense that we could be home for the burgeoning cannabis industry, which pushes the limits of both agriculture and the free market.

"It's a crazy societal shift," Pels says. "In some ways, it's not even just about pot." He cites edibles, oils and shatters, products that won't be available as soon as recreational marijuana is legalized. "It's a similar path to [the one] after alcohol prohibition," he continues. "Now we have craft beer, we have imported alcohol, and it's evolved. It didn't evolve as quickly as I'm sure a lot of people wanted it to, and, for the cannabis industry to be successful, it's going to have to evolve a heck of a lot faster because there's a rampant black market."

In the meantime, he says, it's the role of companies like his to prove themselves as legitimate voices. So far it's working, because there's a clear demand for both the product itself and information around it. Some, like Pels, say the example they set—what a retailer could look and act like—was a key contributor to the province choosing to go down the private-retailer model.

"[The cannabis industry] really started buttoning up and creating a sense of community and respect," he says. Pels says he used to have long hair, hearkening back to stereotypical cannabis culture. Before opening The Green Room, he got it cut. "Right around that time, the industry got a haircut too."

NEW YORK CITY



## Weed in the USA

*From "From Prohibition to Progress: A Status Report on Marijuana Legalization," by the Drug Policy Alliance, Jan 2018. Since 2012 marijuana has been legalized in eight US states and Washington, DC. The Drug Policy Alliance is headquartered in New York City.*

**E**vidence shows that marijuana legalization is working so far. States are saving money and protecting the public by comprehensively regulating marijuana for adult use. This success has likely contributed to the historically high levels of public support for marijuana legalization in the US, which has steadily grown to an all-time high of 64 per cent. The majority of Americans, across party affiliations, support legalizing marijuana, with 51 per cent of Republicans now in favor.

Arrests and court filings for the possession, cultivation and distribution of marijuana have plummeted since voters legalized marijuana for adult use.... Marijuana legalization has a positive effect on public health and safety. Nationally, and in states that have legalized marijuana, youth marijuana use has remained stable or declined. Legal access to marijuana is associated with reductions in some of the most troubling harms associated with opioid use, including opioid