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Thursday, June 5th, 2008

[Last Hurrah for a Park With No Name](#)

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Rooftop sleepovers aside, Mile-End isn't normally known as a camping destination. That will soon change, at least for four days, with "Camping aux bons plaisirs fugaces," a camping-themed arts event, hosted by the artist-run centre [Dare-Dare](#), which will take place this weekend.

From tonight, Thursday, June 5 until Sunday, June 8, 13 artists will sleep under the stars at the Parc sans nom, the vacant-lot-cum-arts-space at the corner of St-Laurent and Van Horne. In a sense, the event will be a last hurrah for the park, which will be converted into a storage space for the Plateau Mont-Royal borough's public works equipment when Dare-Dare leaves at the end of the month.

"We wanted to do something with the Parc sans nom and it came up that we could do some camping there," says Marjolaine Samson, one of the event's organizers. "The park will become a really dynamic place and we want all the neighbours to come participate. It's going to be an artistic and community space—a lived-in space.... With what the city is doing there won't be much left. It's too bad. So this will really be an ephemeral event."

The 13 artists participating will use their tents, the park and the neighbourhood around it as their artistic point of departure. The projects include an instruction video on urban survival, an experiment in underground camping and a sound-based walking tour from Rosemont metro to the Parc sans nom. One artist will recreate a night sky; another will serve a meal each night made entirely from food scavenged from Mile-End's dumpsters.

Originally, the plan was for the public to be able to access the campground around the clock, but the organizers were forced to scale back when the borough refused them permission, allowing them only to open the site from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m.

“We thought we could really push the limits of what we can do in the theme of camping, because a campground here is not legal. We wanted to see if it was possible to create a real campground, but the borough said it wasn’t possible,” said Jean-Pierre Caissie, Dare-Dare’s creative director. “It could have been fun having people come to camp in their neighbourhood park.”

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