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red river college students' association newspaper
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RRC to fill hole on campus with new donut shop

Robin's & Tim Hortons bid for Java Junction spot

By Kyla Duncan

Red River College student and staff are in for a treat in the fall of 2001.

Food Services is currently shopping for a makeover for Java Junction, currently in the Buffalo Cafeteria, and popular franchises Robin's Donuts and Tim Hortons are looking good.

RRC Food Services director Cliff Packer says the decision to tender out Java Junction came with a survey of 600 staff and students from across campus.

"Based on recent customer satisfaction, it was the opinion of a number of staff members and students that something like a Tim Hortons or Robin's Donuts, or even a Coffee Time would be something they would be interested in," says Packer.

Packer says a letter is currently being sent out to invite proposals for the Java Junction site. Three finalists will then be invited to make a presentation and the sweetest deal wins.

RRC will purchase the franchise and it will be run by Food Services.

"We want something to keep with our academic program, to work in concert with our other food outlets," says Packer.

The franchise would be offered sole access to about 5,000 customers who visit one of Food Services' restaurants and cafeterias daily.

"Our goal is to pursue a strategic alliance with a branded kiosk. We want to do something similar to the Coke deal," says Packer.

In 1997 RRC gave soft drink giant Coca-Cola exclusive access to the college's captive market, leaving Pepsi lovers only two choices - drink Coke or leave campus.

The addition to a well-known franchise to the Buffalo cafeteria would not only bring the franchise's products to RRC, but lower prices with them.

"All of the companies are prepared to give us some precedence over pricing. Currently our doughnuts are five per cent more expensive than what they cost off-campus, but a kiosk would allow us to lower our prices," says Packer.

He says this is another step towards pleasing Food Services customers.

"We're trying to be all things to all people. We want to bring better service and better quality with something that compliments our other restaurants. We're not in it to make a profit," says Packer.

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Online evaluations by Sept.

By Kyla Duncan

Overcoming opposition over security concerns, a new online instructor and course evaluation will be available by September through the Red River College home page.

The online course evaluation system, originally proposed by the RRC Students' Association, was approved by RRC College Council on Feb. 13, 2001.

Students can evaluate their instructors and courses through the site, which can be accessed through Student Services on the RRC home page at www.rrc.mb.ca.

SA president Ian Scott says this is only a step towards what RRC students need.

"Students really have no outlets to voice their complaints. They complain to us, but all I can do is phone the director and tell them. My efforts at getting something to happen has a fairly minimal effect. Their concerns really die at this office," says Scott.

RRC administration currently does not have an office to hear complaints whether they be from staff, students or visitors.

"The college has no way of tracking complaints right now. There needs to be a formal system so administration can be armed with information," says Scott.

"Students really have no outlets to voice their complaints. Their concerns really die at this office." Ian Scott

Initially, Scott says, some staff and administration were opposed to the idea of online evaluations because of security concerns.

"There was initially a lot of hesitation to the idea. The word evaluation almost has a negative connotation to it. What we want to provide is feedback to improve the classroom environment. Feedback going back and forth between staff and students would provide on-going growth. The point is to educate and teach, not to tell you how bad you are," says Scott.

He says security concerns have been erased due to the fact the evaluation will be connected to the Student Information Site.

"The Student Information Site allows students to go online and check out their marks, transcripts, grades and outstanding parking tickets. The big thing was security and being linked to this site protects the information under their security system," says Scott.

Scott says he predicts the online evaluations should be fully ready by September. Students can soon access s an older college evaluation form which asks for feedback in areas of the instructors teaching and classroom effectiveness.

Scott says he wants to update this old form.

"The existing questionaire has some fairly basic questions, nothing in-depth. It is so archaic, some were even typed up on old typewriters. We are going to update the evaluation big time, but I suspect that the college would like to do a lot of research before we can put that up."

photo: Katie Chalmers

RRC students will be able to evaluate their instructors and courses online starting Sept. 2001.

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Do you want to be President?

Elections are just around the corner and as a student you will be asked to choose a new Executive. But have you thought about taking an active role in student government? If you have, the position of President is a fantastic opportunity to learn and lead. The President of the Association is the Chief Executive Officer of the Association, the student representative on the College Board of Governors, Chairperson of the Board and Executive, liaison with the administration and Faculty of RRC.

Huh!

Well, that's what the official job description is. However, in a nutshell, what that means is the President:

- Prepares the agenda and relevant materials for the Executive and Student Advisory Board meetings
- Oversees the work of the Executive Director of the Association
- Communicates with the media
- Prepares for and represents student interests at college committees
- Works to lobby effectively for policy changes relating to post secondary education

To do this the President should:

- Be proficient in public speaking
- Have a thorough understanding of the by-laws of the organization and the procedures for meetings
- Have effective interpersonal skills and the ability to lead

A lot of people don't seem to know; this (and the other positions) are paid positions. The President receives a $18,000 annual salary plus tuition.

The President plays a crucial role in leading the Students' Association towards both long and short term goals.

It could be you!

ELECTIONS ARE COMING!

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Two RRC students win national contest

photo: Katie Chalmers

RRC students Olga Safroshkina (pictured above) and Ajit Singh are off to Ottawa Mar.19.

By Andrew Buck

Two Red River College students were chosen to be Manitoba's sole representatives in the International Notebook program.

Ajit Singh and Olga Safroshkina, both first-year Creative Communications students, will join 13 other students from across Canada in Ottawa on March 19.

The program, hosted by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, gives students interested in foreign affairs and international trade a week-long all expenses paid trip to Ottawa to educate them on environmental issues, strategic communications, and human security.

Safroshkina, who came to Winnipeg from Odessa, Ukraine two years ago, says she is looking forward to seeing the nation's capital.

"I didn't have a chance to see much of Canada," says Safroshkina. "I've heard Ottawa is a beautiful city and I want to talk to different people and students from colleges across Canada."

Safroshkina was a TV journalist for seven years in the former Soviet Union and says she is looking forward to learning about the CBC's foreign bureau.

She says one of the reasons she came to Canada was to escape the growing censorship in the Russian media.

"It was really hard to work as a journalist," she says.

Singh, who speaks six languages including French, Hindi, Punjabi, Spanish and Japanese says he looks forward to representing Manitoba at the conference.

Safroshkina and Singh were selected after a two month nation-wide search. Each candidate had to write a letter to DFAIT explaining their interest in foreign affairs and international trade.

This is the second year DFAIT has conducted the program.

HEPATITIS C VIRUS

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada (SOGC) hopes to identify more at-risk patients and improve reproductive care for women who have been infected with the Hepatitis C virus (HCV), with the release last fall of guidelines that are the first in this area for Canada.
Dr. Marc Boucher, principal author of the guidelines and chair of the SOGC working group that developed them, has pointed out that most Canadians infected with HCV are not aware of it. In fact, only 30% of infected individuals know they carry the virus, which has been identified as a major public health problem worldwide.
The full guidelines document is available online at www.sogc.org; follow "Clinical Guidelines" links to "Obstetrics" and select #96. The guidelines document was published in the October 2000 edition of Journal SOGC.
The SOGC stated in a news release that Canada's HCV infection rate is escalating, particularly among 20-24 year olds, and is more prevalent in urban than rural areas. These women are of prime childbearing age, and there's a risk of transmission from mother to child-which increases from 7.9 to more than 40% if the mother also has HIV.

Among key recommendations is a call for targeted screening for women involved in risky behaviors such as past or present injection drug use, having multiple sex partners and practicing unsafe sex or being hemodialysis patients, blood recipients or children of HCV-infected individuals.
Please visit the Health Centre if you have any questions regarding Hepatitis C.

Source: Canadian Nurse, February 2001, Volume 97, Number 2

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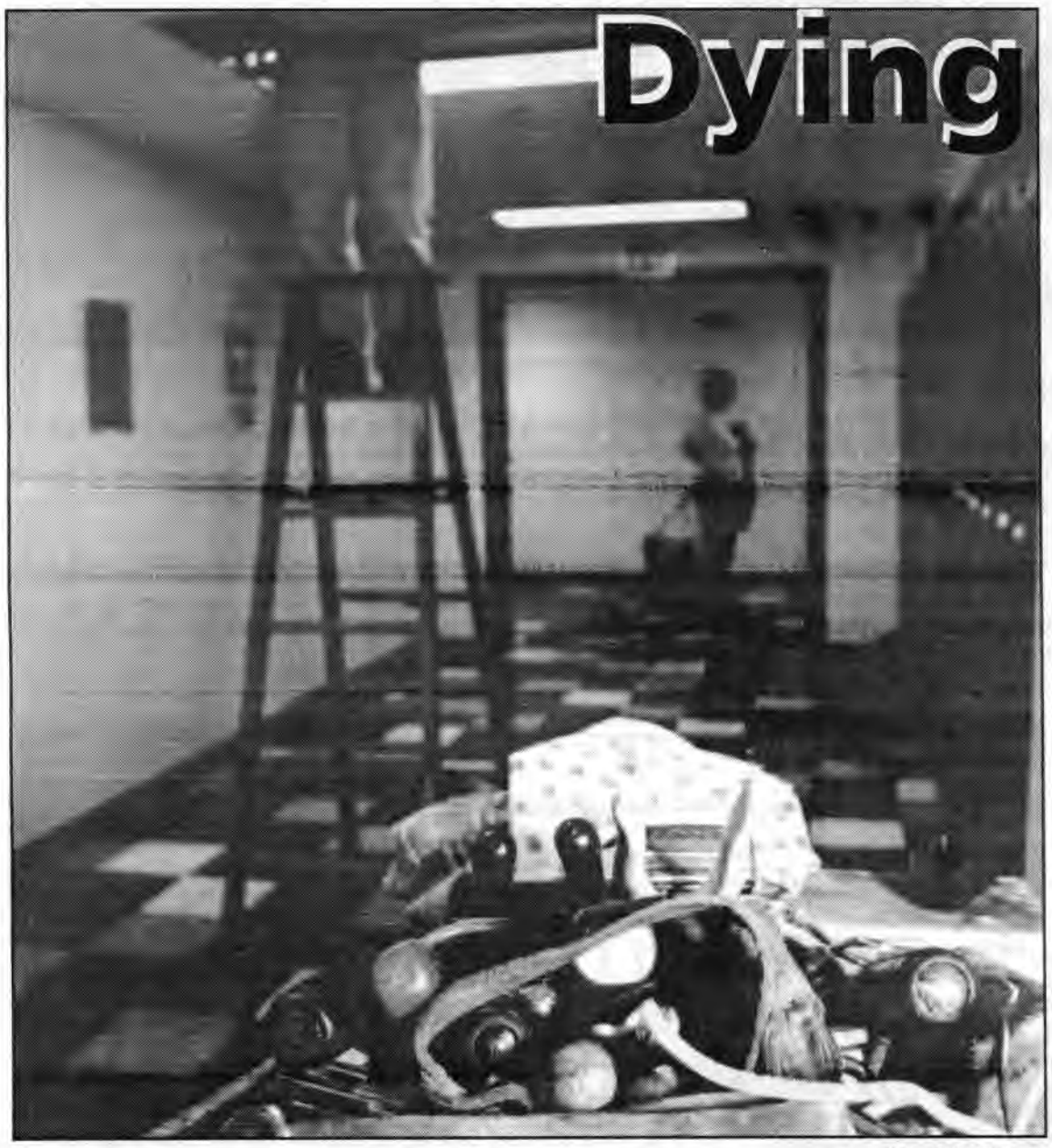

photo: Katie Chalmers

Manitoba has the highest injury rate in the country. Young workers entering the construction and manufacturing sectors are most at risk.

Dying to work

High fines for worker deaths show dangers of being young and working in Manitoba

By Sean Thiessen

Many of the careers students are studying at Red River College can be deadly.

Manitoba Labour department statistics show that the manufacturing and construction sectors have accounted for 30 per cent of Manitoba's workplace fatalities over the last 20 years.

Two recent court decisions have highlighted the danger.

First, Clearwater Electric Ltd. was fined $27,500 for the 1999 death of 19-year-old Michael Skanderberg who was electrocuted while working on fluorescent lights at a Beausejour school. The power was left on.

Surespan Construction Ltd. was then fined $75,000 for the 1998 death of Brian Jones who died after falling off a platform he was using to paint a bridge in The Pas. The platform had no safety railings and there was no rescue boat in the river below.

Geoffrey Bawden, executive director of Workplace...

See 'unacceptable' Page 7

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Manitoba Advanced Education

MB injury rate 'unacceptable'

..continued from page 6

Safety and Health, says the pair of court decisions reflects a changing attitude towards workplace safety.

"The courts have realized that working unsafely is no longer socially acceptable," says Bawden.

He says Manitoban courts have handed out over $145,000 in fines in the first two months of 2001. That is more than the total of all fines handed out in the two previous years.

Despite the imposition of hefty fines, the jobsite remains a dangerous, potentially lethal, place.

Highest rate of injury in country

WCB statistics show over 820,000 workers were injured in Canada last year. That equals an injury for every nine seconds of work with three workers dying every day. According to the WCB, Manitoba has the highest rate of injury in the country.

Bawden says Manitoba's rate of workplace injury is unacceptable.

"The accident rate is too high," says Bawden. "We have too high of an acceptance of these rates. Each injury represents a human tragedy."

He says young workers, such as the ones coming out of RRC, account for a disproportionate amount of injuries in Manitoba.

"New workers and young workers are over represented," says Bawden.

Young workers at risk

Bawden is supported by WCB statistics. One third of all compensation claims are paid to workers between the ages of 15 and 29. Workers between the ages of 20 and 24 are most at risk.

Bawden says inexperience and youthful attitudes of immortality can prove to be a deadly combination.

"When you first go into a workplace you don't know what's going on," he says. "The people you are working with and maybe training you don't see the job through the same eyes as someone who is just starting. What an experienced worked takes for granted is new to a young worker."

Protection through education

Bawden says the only way for young or new workers to protect themselves is through education.

"If you take somebody and put them into a workplace with no training you will get accidents," he says. "New people have to be taken by the hand and walked through all the pitfalls of a job and told how to avoid them. We can't have people learn from trial and error because the errors often result in injuries."

Bawden says this type of training is part of the obligations spelled out to employers in section 4 of the Workplace Safety and Health Act. It specifies that an employer is required to provide a safe workplace, including providing the "information, instruction, training and facilities to ensure the safety, health and welfare at work of all employees."

"The accident rate is too high. We have too high of an acceptance of these rates. Each injury represents a human tragedy."

Geoffrey Bawden

He says despite the law, the training of new employees is often overlooked.

"We don't spend enough time training workers on the job site," says Bawden.

Bawden says no worker can be forced to work unsafely. He says if workers think something is unsafe they should inform their superiors or their on-site safety committee. If those fail to bring a resolution, Bawden says workers can phone Workplace Safety and Health Division inspectors at 945-3446.

LETTERS

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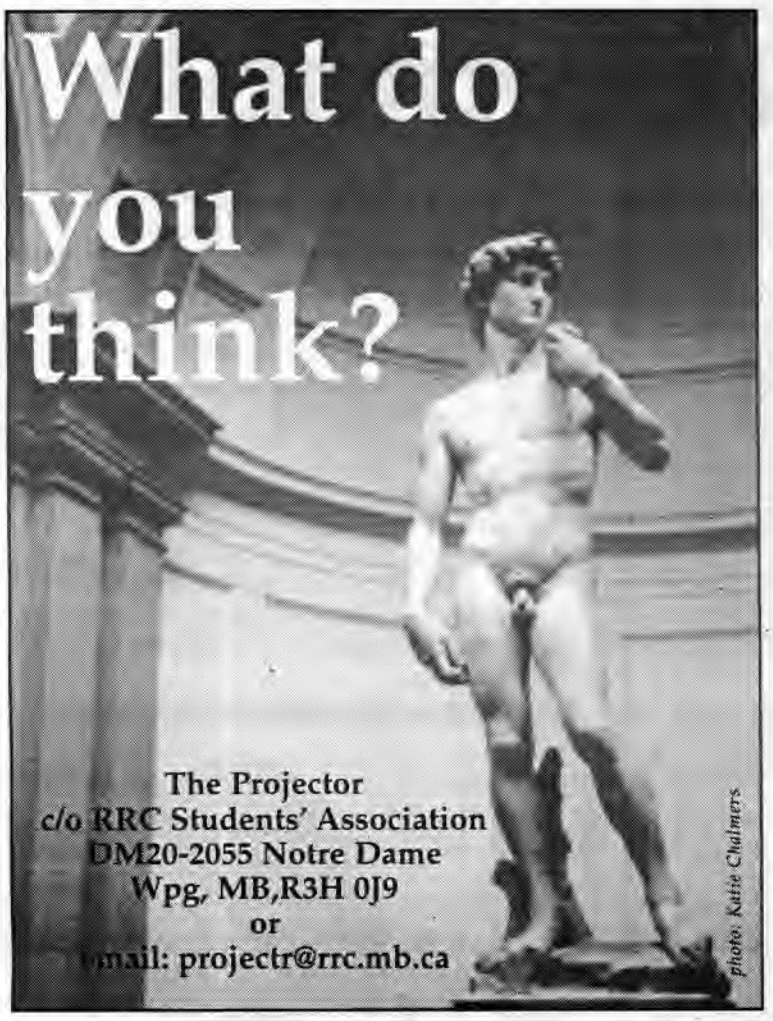

Oops we did it again - actually we didn't

Dear Editor,

Once again I am compelled to write in order to register my deep displeasure with our college newspaper, the Projector.

The Jan. 22, 2001, edition once again failed to employ its political voice to speak out in editorials about events on campus.

The "Transport Centre on the move" article by Andrew Buck screamed for an editorial response from the Projector's editorial staff. Did it not occur to any of them that requiring students to perform unpaid manual labour is quite certainly an abuse of power on the part of the college administration?

The Student Advisory Board initiative with online course evaluations could have been discussed as well. The Projector staff could have presented an editorial on the positives and negatives of such a step. I was particularly pleased to see that the Red River College Students' Association's political clout was increasing with the formal joining of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations. Yet again, editorial staff decided not to take a position on this historical moment.

The lack of coverage of campus events is shocking.

I noticed the SA had to take out an advertisement to let the students know about the change in their health plan. I certainly think a news article was called for. But instead we were treated to yet another article on Centra Gas.

I think the Centra Gas issue has been covered quite adequately by Winnipeg's two daily newspapers.

It was also a major disappointment to see seven pages of entertainment articles and yet only one involved a RRC student. If students want movie reviews, music reviews, contemporary commentary on society then they can go out and pick up one of the mainstream media papers.

I know that Creative Communications students must get one article published in the Projector. Do any of the editors think that their instructors will be impressed when you parrot what has already been said? The boy arrested, at least in part, due to the writing and reading aloud of a fiction story in drama class ("Think what you will, but don't write it down") has been hashed over in the mainstream media. What can Ms. Duncan say that hasn't already been said?

I know the Projector is funded by advertising revenue and student fees. It's a crying shame we don't have a say in how our student fees get spent. Because having seen the Projector I would definitely opt out of paying any part of my student fees towards it.

If you want to change my feelings start doing your jobs and write about events that happen on campus.

Oppose or support issues based on the facts of each issue in the editorials.

Scott Wignall
First-year Business Administration.

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Workers hurt by old union thinking

Silly Putty was invented by accident during the Second World War by a chemist looking for an alternative to rubber.

Canadian Auto Workers Union president Buzz Hargrove made a similar discovery earlier this month when he came to Winnipeg to add his two cents to the bitter strike between his CAW workers and farm machinery manufacturer Buhler Industries Inc.

While not known as an inventor, Hargrove ended up creating a time machine.

He did it by accident when he suggested, and later demanded, the Doer government step in and take over the plant if its owner followed through with plans to relocate it and its jobs to a new plant in North Dakota.

With that single statement Hargrove traveled back to the heyday of socialism in the '60s and '70s.

This was the time when union ranks swelled and their war chests overflowed. This gave them an undeniable voice in the halls of power.

This voice was loudest in countries that had turned to socialism as a means of government. After revolution brought communism to Cuba, all private enterprise was nationalized by the new government in the name of the workers.

This must be the Garden of Eden Hargrove wanted to take his followers back to.

But unlike when Superman reversed the hands of time, only Hargrove and his supporters traveled backwards while the rest of the world continued to live in the new millennium.

An age characterized by the forces of globalization, capitalism and instant information. An age where capital is more mobile than it ever has been. Unfortunately for Hargrove, in such an environment capital, much like water, will only run out faster when squeezed by the heavy hand of government.

This blundered attempt at time travel only serves to show the continuing obsolescence of the established unions.

It is interesting that Hargrove chose this past week to highlight the reasons the union movement is going the way of the dinosaur and Alf. Interesting because it is the same week when an issue came to the forefront that would have truly highlighted the continuing need for unions in today's workplace.

The judgements against Clearwater Electric Ltd. and Surespan Ltd. last week for the deaths of their workers could have become a rallying call for the voice of the workers.

Unfortunately Hargrove's time machine can only look backwards.

Sean Thiessen

photo: Katie Chalmers

Day mortgaging his political future

Stockwell Day is in the news again. It seems he just can't keep himself out of it.

First it was his questionable policies regarding same sex relationships, abortion and immigrant rights during the election. He would start to make a comment, and then retract or deny it the next day, leaving most to wonder if he really had the gall to say it in the first place. This branded him, in some corners at least, as the leader of a racist, backwards party.

Then it was the tactics he used during the election. Granted, it was an election, but Day received more media coverage than the other three candidates vying for the Prime Ministers chair combined. Maybe it was because he arrived at a press conference on a jet ski dressed in a wetsuit. Poor Stockwell, he has been the brunt of endless jokes and editorials ever since.

Or it could have been when he refused reporters their very bread and butter for sound bites - the scrum. Instead he made them sit in chairs and put up their hands before they asked questions. If the media was amused by him before, they hated him now.

For the past few weeks, Day has been in the news for the whooping $800,000 bill the Alberta government must pay out to a defamation lawyer and the person he defamed - another lawyer who Day had written a nasty letter to regarding his defense of a pedophile.

Last Tuesday, papers were full of headlines like "Contrite Day pays." Yes, he was contrite, even misty eyed as he announced to the media that he and his family had decided to mortgage their house and give $60,000 back to Alberta tax payers.

What a stupid thing to do.

Day's time as a federal politician has been short, and disastrous. He never seems to say the right thing, or do the right thing for that matter.

Day doesn't seem to understand that as a politician, a very public figure, scandal is a part of the mix.

Day should not mortgage his house. He shouldn't have said anything about the case. When people asked for the settlement amount, he should have pretended he didn't hear the question.

Yes, he is trying to be honest, but it's a little late. What he should have done is just bite the bullet and ducked in dark corners until it blew over. Or was brought up again by Joe Clark.

Don't mortgage your house Stockwell. And don't cry at press conferences.

You are a politician.

Act like one.

Kyla Duncan

Avenge Napster - starve the artists

Fans of digital music and amateur bootleggers have been dealt a severe blow.

A U.S. federal judge castrated Napster when she issued a revised injunction last week forcing the Internet music service to prevent the sharing of copyrighted songs.

Although Napster users haven't encountered many problems when downloading songs so far, it seems clear the days of free and convenient MP3 file sharing is nearing an end.

Ironically, the hasty ruling against Napster (which a higher court apparently found much fault with) might end up doing more damage to the record labels than it will good.

If the major labels think many people will be willing to pay for MP3s that can't be duplicated, they are in for a rude awakening. Not only are they destroying a potential source of profit for themselves, they are further alienating young listeners by calling them thieves.

Instead of labeling Napster users, perhaps we should be asking why the record labels deserve to be paid in the first place.

When compact discs first became popular, their high prices were attributed to the newness of the format. CD prices would soon fall to roughly the cost of a cassette, the public was assured.

That was over a decade ago, and we're still waiting.

I have a proposition to compensate for the loss of Napster - that music fans refuse to buy music from the major labels until they reduce the price of CDs.

We could call it Starve the Artists Month. Don't be fooled by the name, it's the record companies who are hoarding the profits - but maybe putting the spotlight on musicians will force some of them to speak out on the issue.

Sure, Metallica and Dr. Dre will always be dicks, but surely a lot of hip, relevant musicians would sooner side with the great unwashed masses than the evil empire that is the recording industry.

Think about it - would it be that hard to go an entire month without buying a CD?

It would be hard on the record labels, that's for certain.

The only thing any company understands is profits, and we have to hit these tasteless, tone-deaf imbeciles where they'll feel it most - in their wallets.

Remember, most music is shit now, anyway.

You listen to maybe a couple of songs on a CD before placing it on your bookshelf beside your old Nirvana albums and all the crap you haven't listened in 10 years and probably never will again.

So let's pick a month sometime in the year 2001 and starve the industry into submission.

Or at least cut into their caviar budgets. Stupid rich jerks.

Adam Clayton

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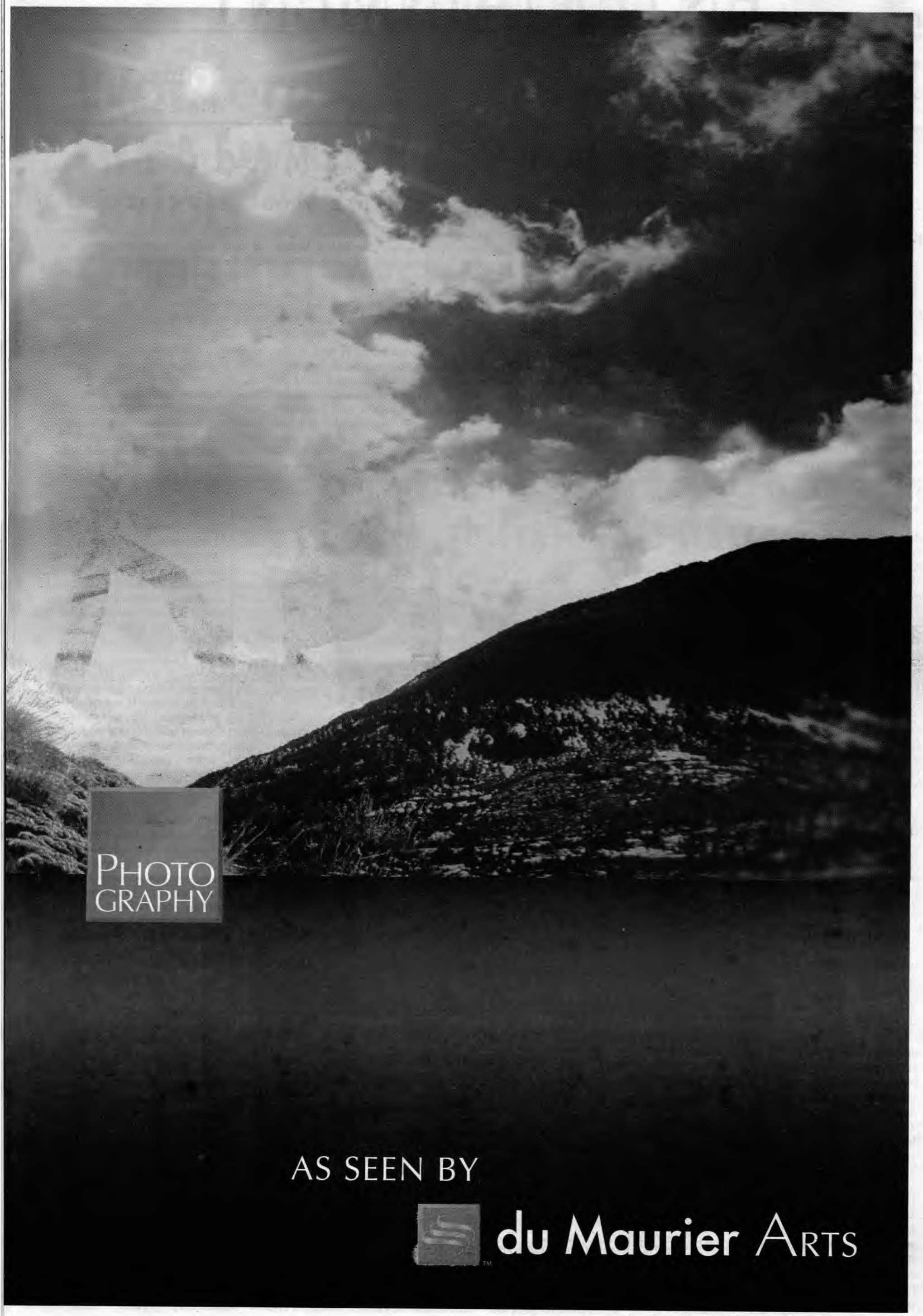
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PROFILE

Guy Maddin

The heart of the Maddin

Award-winning Winnipeg filmaker talks about his craft

By Kelly Stifora

When asked what advice he would give to aspiring independent filmmakers, Winnipeg director Guy Maddin says "just do it."

"When I started out, a lot of my friends were talking about filmmaking, but you'll talk all of your best ideas out into the cafe night air. You should just pick up a camera and do it."

It worked for Maddin. Since making his first film, The Dead Father, in 1986, Maddin has carved a comfortable niche for himself as one of the world's most respected experimental filmmakers. With no training in film, he holds an Economics degree from the University of Winnipeg and worked as a bank teller and house painter before beginning his career as a filmmaker, Maddin just decided he wanted to do it and picked up the camera.

"I got someone to show me how to load it (it's very simple to load a Bolex, which is the camera I use), and how to read a light meter," says Maddin.

"I didn't want to understand all those numbers on the light meter, I just wanted to know how to get it to work for me. I didn't want to understand the principle behind it," he says.

"I didn't want to know about foot-candles, or what all the other dials on the camera were. I just wanted to know the ones that made it work," said Maddin.

"I subsequently ended up learning a little bit, against my will, but not much more than a typical grandmother would know about her car."

The results of Maddin's tinkerings have garnered worldwide attention, and won him a few prestigious awards.

In 1991, the U.S. National Society of Film Critics named Archangel, Maddin's first full-length feature, the best experimental film of that year. In 1995, he won the Telluride Medal for lifetime achievement from the Telluride Film Festival, based in Colorado. Maddin was the youngest person ever to win this award, given in the past to Francis Ford Coppola, Gloria Swanson and Leni Riefenstahl.

Earlier this month, Maddin's latest film, The Heart of the World, won the Federation Internationale de la Presse Cinematographique Best Short Subject Prize from the Miami Film Festival.

"I tried to cram a feature length script into five minutes, so it moves very quickly," says Maddin of his latest work.

"It tells the story of a love triangle taking place against the backdrop of the final cataclysm that's to end the existence of the Earth. The love triangle somehow saves the world and then cinema. It's a little myth on the invention of cinema."

The film showed at the Toronto Film Festival, for which it was commissioned, as well as the recent Local Heroes Festival in Winnipeg. It's currently being shown in the U.S. along with an British film called The Last Resort and has been invited to several other American festivals.

Like most of Maddin's films, The Heart of the World pays tribute to an early style of silent cinema. In the past Maddin's films have evoked comparisons to the works of surrealists like F.W. Murnau (Nosferatu) and Luis Bunuel (Un Chien Andalou). This time it's Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisentsein, the man who many credit with inventing modern film editing techniques.

"It's a kind of editing that I specifically imitated - Soviet montage editing - so it's Eisensteinian, that's for sure," says Maddin. "The look of his movies is incredible, and so dynamic. I finally made myself watch a bunch of them a couple of years ago, and got quite excited by them, and I thought 'I'd like to try making one of these montage pictures' - and it worked out OK."

Maddin, despite his heady influences, has never thought of himself as an artist.

"But I always wanted to be a writer," he says. "I guess growing up I was a good enough reader to know I would never be a very good writer, that my writing would come out like a child's writing, and that's not very interesting to read."

So instead, Maddin turned to filmmaking.

"I'd seen a couple of Luis Benuel movies and they're very primitive and very thrilling to me," says Maddin.

"I thought 'Why be a primitive writer and fail for sure when you can maybe pick up a camera and be a primitive filmmaker?' I'd seen a lot of films by Winnipeggers and Canadians, and even the ones that were trying to be sophisticated ended up being primitive in one aspect or another - inadvertently primitive. I thought, 'Well at least make it intentionally primitive,' and then maybe it stands a chance of having that purity that children's drawings have. So I just thought I would pick up a camera and try not to learn too much."

Winnipeg filmmaker Guy Maddin's new film The Heart of the World is a darling of critics

Although he tries not to learn too much, Maddin has tried to teach. He recently ended a stint as an instructor for the University of Manitoba Film Studies department.

"I took an early retirement," he says with a laugh. "I liked it a lot, as a matter of fact I liked it too much - I found it used up most of my daydreaming time - which is pretty valuable to me. I found that I didn't end up writing as much for myself, and it kept me just comfortable enough economically that it took the hunger off of my filmmaking career. It removed the desperation that you need to commit yourself to the amount of work that it can be," he says. "It was a good strategical move so far. I'm always on the verge of starvation and missing rent. It's keeping me going on projects that I probably would have ditched a long time ago."

These include two features that Maddin says it would be premature to talk about as funding has not yet been secured. Before that, he will film the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's production of Dracula, for television, a project Maddin says he is very excited about.

"It's got to be adapted for two dimensions," he says. "Just picking up a camera and filming a bunch of dancers would be doing them a grave injustice, so I have to figure out a way that will serve the dance piece best."

Maddin says The Heart of the World is his first effort since making a pledge to himself about his career.

"I made a pledge to myself to make my films move really quickly and be really charged up and less meditative," he says.

"I'm pleased with my first experiment in this pledge to make the world's fastest paced movies, so I'm just going to work along these lines. I just want to keep things moving briskly from here on in, 'till I'm in the grave," says Maddin.

"I'll just keep sprinting till that hole looms larger."

Something stinks south of the border

Pitt, Roberts combo results in little heat in The Mexican

Brad Pitt and Julia Roberts star in The Mexican

By Kyla Duncan

Those going to see The Mexican to see the supposedly hot-as-salsa pairing of Hollywood's Pretty Woman (Julia Roberts) and Pretty Boy (Brad Pitt) will be left with a bitter taste in their mouths.

The two barely share screen time, and when they do the result is a soggy taco.

But this strange romantic comedy, directed by Gore Verbinski (Mouse Hunt), helps salvage this poor mix to a certain extent with some decent gunplay, lukewarm jokes, and a few plot twists.

Samantha (Roberts) plays the high-maintenance girlfriend who insists her boyfriend Jerry (Pitt) pay attention to her 'needs,' quit his job with an L.A. crime boss, and move with her to Las Vegas.

When Jerry humbly explains to his hot-tempered ladyfriend that he has to finish one last job or he will become just another head on the crime boss' plate, the two go their separate ways.

Jerry heads down to Mexico to pick up a cursed antique pistol called The Mexican and Samantha heads to Vegas.

On her way there Samantha is kidnapped by Leroy (James Gandolfini of TV's The Sopranos), a hit man who is also after the gun.

"The only good thing about Roberts' irritating character is her wardrobe."

The two become an odd sort of friends because of Leroy's surprisingly sensitive and insightful nature.

Robert's character tells him at one point, "You're surprisingly sensitive for a cold blooded killer."

Indeed, Gandolfini makes the whole movie. His impressive performance almost makes it worth paying the $12 to see this movie.

His co-stars, however, leave the audience wanting more out of the well-seasoned actors.

The only good thing about Roberts' irritating character is her wardrobe.

Pitt doesn't suit his pushover role - it seems out of sync with his usual rebel roles.

Gandolfini, on the other hand, brings the movie together with charm, wit, and emotion.

As for the plot - what happened?

The audience spent half the movie wondering whether the director left out the really funny parts on purpose.

Jerry, not being the sharpest pencil in the drawer, manages to lose The Mexican and spends the rest of the movie fumbling through the movie to get it back.

Meanwhile, Samantha is back in Vegas, bonding with her new killer best friend and spilling psychobabble about her relationship with Jerry.

Jerry and Samantha eventually meet up south of the border only to encounter more difficulties, which are presumably the fault of the cursed pistol.

The Mexican has some laughs, some violence, some action, and a little intrigue, but lacks the southern spice that is necessary to truly earn your attention.

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Roberts and The Soprano's James Gandolfini

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Real appeal at Riel exhibit

Artists offer their own takes on Manitoba icon

By Tamara King

Louis Riel once said "My people will sleep for 100 years, and when they awake it will be the artists who give them back their spirit."

The Winnipeg Art Gallery has accomplished this with their exhibit, Rielisms.

Rielisms is a collection of works based on the stories of Manitoban and historical icon Louis Riel.

Riel is one of the most controversial figures in Canadian politics and is alternately considered a hero, a Father of Confederation, a founder of Manitoba, a madman, a rebel, and religious zealot.

The different things Riel means to different people are explored in a diverse arrangement of paintings, sculpture s and drawings in Rielism. The exhibit is set up in two distinct rooms; one of European artists, and one of Metis and Aboriginal artists, perhaps symbolizing the struggles between Riel different cultures.

Jane Ash Poitras depicts Riel's memory with anger and resistance. A multi-layered canvas shows the photographs of Riel and other historical figures layered against a red sunset, teepees and skulls. The effect is a serious and brooding look.

John Boyle's Batoche Series "is like a psychedelic dream with a bright, surreal appeal"

Rosalie Favell takes a more surreal approach to the subject with her piece I Awoke To Find My Spirit Had Returned.

Favell is looking out from under a Hudson's Bay blanket at the characters from the scene in the Wizard of Oz when Dorothy awakes after her dream.

In Favell's depiction, Riel is seen leaning in the farmhouse window. The message might relate to the famous Oz theme 'there's no place like home,' as if to comment on Riel's attitude toward a homestead that never really accepted him, based on his race and culture.

The second part a hosted a variety of mediums featuring Louis Riel.

John Boyle's collection, The Batoche Series, is like a psychedelic dream with a bright, surreal appeal. It envisions what happened in Riel's 'hidden histories' of the Northwest Rebellion.

Along similar lines of the colourful and cartoonish are the drawings of Jeff Funnell in The Riel Series. Drawn on large sheets of paper (like the kind found in elementary school classrooms), the drawings are arranged in two distinct strips and have the appearance of being sketched in pastel crayons.

The painting puts mood puts a bright spin on history.

Rielisms is an appealing array of different views on one of Canada's most controversial historical figures.

Rielisms is at the Winnipeg Art Gallery until March 18.

Rosalie Favell's 'I Awoke To Find My Spirit Had Returned' takes a "surreal" approach to depicting Louis Riel

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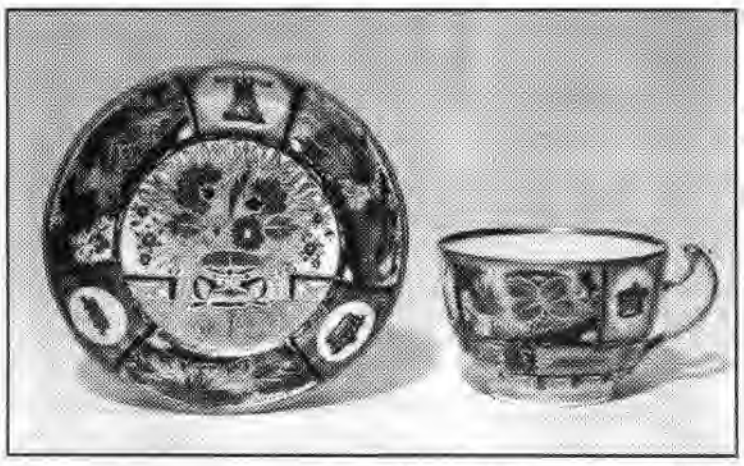
Dragon's Journey a trip through history

WAG exhibit explores Asian influences on ceramics



By Tamara King

And you thought picking out dishes from Ikea was complicated.

The Dragon's Journey: The Influence of Chinese and Japanese Porcelain on European Ceramics, proves that platewear, or more accurately ceramics, are a significant and intricate part of both Asian and European history.

The exhibit at the Winnipeg Art Gallery explores the influence of Chinese and Japanese porcelain on European ceramics.

It's a case of East meeting West, although to the naked eye it's difficult to tell the difference between the Chinese plates and those from Europe.

The collection highlights many different groups of porcelains, from the traditional and perhaps most popular blue and white porcelain from China to the Japanese influences of the Imari and Kakiemon designs.

To the average viewer, these important historical pieces are just plates. To art buffs however, these plates represent the history of commercialism between East and West.

One of the highlights of the exhibit are the Armorial Services, which are basically very fancy tea sets for people important enough to have a coat of arms. In the 18th century, typical upper class families had a 49-piece armorial tea service, with replicas of their coat of arms, and the more affluent families had entire dinner services with at least 170 pieces to each set.

The Dragon's Journey is at the Winnipeg Art Gallery until April 29.

The Fake News

Armchair Jeopardy player defeats TV opponent

Winnipeg man shocked at lack of cash awards, parting prizes

By Adam Clayton

A Winnipeg man is feeling like a giant-killer after his Jeopardy victory over TV opponent and reigning Jeopardy champion Kirk De Smelt.

Gordon Loewen, 36, says the gruelling half-hour contest happened last week, when he was in "serious couch potato mode" after a long day at work.

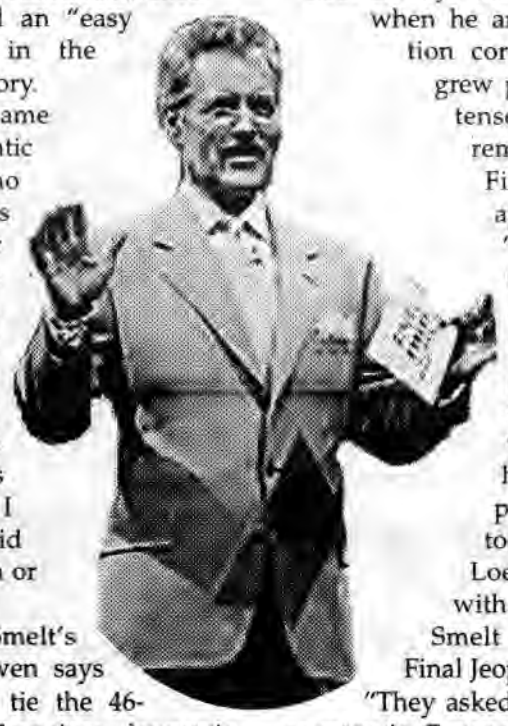
Loewen says he sat down in his favourite recliner to watch Wheel of Fortune as he does every evening when he discovered the station had rearranged its schedule and put Jeopardy in Wheel of Fortune's place.

"Normally I'm mad as hell when I miss Wheel, but I just needed to relax and figured the calming theme music and soothing blue graphics of Jeopardy were just what the doctor ordered."

Loewen says he remained a passive spectator for the first game's first few questions but grew increasingly irritated by De Smelt's "smarmy" attitude.

"There's something about his stupid-looking moustache and the way he strolled onstage when they introduced him as current Jeopardy champion that just sort of grated me. The more questions he got right, the more it bugged me."

Loewen says he decided to begin playing and keeping score when another Jeopardy contestant, Alice Rollins, bungled an "easy ass" question in the 'Potpourri' category.



"You had to name the two Democratic candidates who defeated Thomas E. Dewey for president of the U.S. I was screaming 'FDR and Truman, FDR and Truman,' but this woman was totally clueless. I think she said Woodrow Wilson or something."

Despite De Smelt's early lead, Loewen says he managed to tie the 46-year-old San Francisco lawyer's score by the end of the first round of questions.

"The Daily Double is where I really began to turn things around. Oh man, if De Smelt could have seen the ruckus in my living room when I bet $2,000 and got it right. And I don't consider myself an expert on sewing, either - that made it all the more sweet."

Loewen says his family went wild when he answered the question correctly, and things grew progressively more tense as the game remained close and Final Jeopardy approached.

"I was getting pretty nervous towards the end there, but my wife Jenny was great, keeping score for me and wiping my forehead when the pressure got to be too much."

Loewen credits God with his victory over De Smelt in the climactic Final Jeopardy.

"They asked what the smallest country in Europe was, and I knew that dumb shit De Smelt would say Luxembourg or Liechtenstein. Like any good Protestant, I knew it was the Vatican. That has to be some sort of sign. Or at least a sign that De Smelt is a moron."

Loewen said he was "stunned and saddened" when he called the show's producers in Hollywood, CA and was told De Smelt, who despite his failure in Final Jeopardy managed to eke out a victory, was the rightful owner of his $17,500 in prize money.

"What really pissed me off was when they said they wouldn't even cough up any of the parting prizes. What the hell is that? Cheap snooty bastards, think they're smarter than me. Well, they know better now."

Loewen said he doesn't hold any grudges against De Smelt, he just wishes De Smelt would "be the bigger man" and congratulate him on his win.

De Smelt could not be reached for comment.

The Fake News is a work of fiction and is entirely satirical in nature. It should in no way be construed as fact. The views expressed on this page do not necessarily represent the views of the Projector's editors or the Red River College Students' Association

RRC instructors cautious in wake of recent school shooting

By Sean Thiessen

Instructors and bullies at Red River College are living in fear after the latest string of school shootings south of the border.

Jim Dwindle, a Computer Engineering Technology instructor at RRC for over 20 years, says he remembers happier times.

"It used to be you could use your belt on a sniveling student if they even looked at you cock-eyed, and you'd use the buckle if they got lippy while they were getting it," says Dwindle.

"Those were the days of civility and respect. Now if a kid starts shooting up the joint I can't even return fire, thank you very much Allan Rock."

Dwindle says after the recent spat of school shootings he has become a prisoner in his own classroom. Students can only enter if they are wearing form fitting swimsuits. Dwindle says this is the only way he can be certain they aren't concealing stabbing weapons such as pens and pencils or blunt objects such as books, binders or rulers. Once inside, students can only hear Dwindle as he speaks from behind a barricade of four-liter milk jugs Dwindle has filled with his own excrement during his internment.

Civil CAD Technology teacher Ed Willis scoffs at co-workers who subscribe to Dwindle's siege mentality.

"If you're a instructor these days you have to live each day like it's your last," says Willis. "Every morning before I come to school I eat a hearty breakfast, have a good dump and get some oral worship from the wife. After that I'm ready to meet my fate."

Willis says every day he comes home alive he treats himself by doing one thing that he has yet to accomplish in his life.

"Just yesterday I was gassing up my car and ended up going down on some guy in the washroom," said Willis. "I don't have to tell you I definitely prefer pitching over catching but now I can go to my grave with that knowledge and I got $20 out of the deal."

Second-year carpentry student Bill Ferris says he is giving up his bullying ways and giving anyone associated with computers or engineering a wide berth.

"If I even hear someone saying anything about the last episode of Battle Bots or a new move they learned playing Quake online I find another hallway to walk down," says Ferris.

"It used to be me and my boys would get a good laugh putting their head in a full toilet and pouring Tabasco sauce down their ass crack. Good times, good times," he says.

Neither bullies nor instructors expressed much faith in the new security protocols implemented by RRC Security to harden the campus against possible attacks.

Const. Larry Goh defended the random locker searches, pat downs and strip searches as reasonable precautions. But he couldn't explain why only young female students were being targeted when males have perpetrated the majority of the attacks.

"Come on, if you had to do a cavity search would you rather be looking at a clam or a hotdog," asks Goh with a suggestive wink. "It's a dirty job but someone has to do it."

Goh says security efforts would be bolstered if college administration agreed to the proposal to add vital measurements - height, weight, bust, and waist to RRC student cards.

"How many people have to die before simple common sense takes hold in this place?" asks Goh.

CD Reviews

Dave Matthews Band
Everyday

Matthews and his eclectic band serve up another impressive set of intelligent, deftly played rock on Everyday. This album will surely take Matthews one step further on his journey from college-rock touring machine to adult-contemporary rotation staple.

-Kelly Stifora

Rating: 7 out of 10. Favourable Tracks: 1, 3, 5, 7

Field Commander Cohen
Leonard Cohen

A live audience failed to put a whole lot of life into Cohen's latest all-live CD. His voice, as deep as the ocean, would relax a rabid dog, but 63 minutes is too much. This CD will knock you out if you can't sleep or want to get rid of partygoers that just won't go home - it'll bum anyone out in no time.

-Katie Chalmers

Rating: 5 out of 10. Favourable Tracks: 4, 8, 9

Hawksley Workman
(Last Night We Were) The Delicious Wolves

A brilliant collection of pop, lounge, and deep ballads from one of Canada's most promising new stars. Much higher production value on Workman's sophomore effort costs him some of his folk appeal, but his amazing voice and wonderfully disjointed melodies still shine through.

-Andrew Langendorfer

Rating: 8 out of 10. Favourable Tracks: 1, 4, 6, 10, 11

The Northern Pikes
Truest Inspiration

The Pikes return after a seven-year hiatus with an album that proves they've been listening, if not playing. The truest inspiration here seems to come from Sloan, U2 and the Hip. This album starts out strong, but isn't original enough to keep the Pikes from being thrown back.

-Kelly Stifora

Rating: 7 out of 10. Favourable Tracks: 1, 2, 4, 10

Big Dumb Face
Duke Lion Fights the Terror!

This concept album by Limp Bizkit guitarist Wes Borland is impressive in that Borland produced it entirely by himself, right down to the artwork. Not much can be said for the music, however. It ranges from death metal to Ween-type goofiness to tripped up rockabilly - and it's all pretty stupid.

-Kelly Stifora

Rating: 6 out of 10. Favourable Tracks: 3, 5, 8

Tequila Mockingbird
Any Shape or Form

I actually fell asleep listening to this disc. Granted I'm not a fan of the Indy soft rock genre but I will find myself occasionally bopping my head to a song or two if it comes over the radio. But not with this disc - I'd be surprised if I even make the effort to throw it in the trash.

-Sean Thiessen

Rating: 0 out of 10. Favourable Tracks: None

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Yin & Yang

By Karen Christiuk

Last week, as I strolled casually around a large department store (I won't say which one, but it starts with Z), I noticed a woman walk in with a small black dog, quite visible, under her jacket.

Now, first of all, let me point out that she was not a visually impaired person, nor did her dog seem to be of some special kind of ancient breed that only lives in women's parkas. Quite simply, this was a large noisy terrier that she carted in for no apparent reason.

OK, I'm not crazy about dogs, but our family does happen to own a small terrier named Winnie - I'm not a complete dog bigot or anything, but I was annoyed. What bothered me was that this woman decided to break one of the sacred laws of the shopping mall: no dogs allowed. I was curious to know what exactly she was thinking. Did she think no one would notice that her left breast was moving and barking?

Then, a few minutes later, I was hunting for a new binder in the stationary department when someone surprised me with a tap on my shoulder. It was a young hearing-impaired man who handed me a card and asked for a donation.

I politely said, "No thank-you" and gave it back to him. Of course, I felt guilty because I didn't donate to charity and was therefore a terrible person. But, at the same time, I was annoyed that this man had broken another sacred mall rule: no solicitations allowed.

These incidents reminded me of another time about a year ago, when I was shopping at the St. Vital Mall and was approached by a group of young people. I thought they were going to ask me for directions, but instead they introduced themselves and asked me to attend a "special church service," or something to that effect, that Sunday.

I said to them as politely as I could, "No thank-you. I have my own religion." A girl gave me an evil sneer in response.

Why should I feel forced to make decisions about ethics, animal rights, and religion when I'm shoe shopping?

Malls have rules. Let's use them and leave me in peace.

By Adam Clayton

Last month, the restaurant known as Salisbury House got a lot more attention than it deserved when it was announced that former (decidedly former) Winnipeg rocker Burton Cummings was among a consortium of owners purchasing the Manitoba-only chain.

Granted, Salisbury House (or Sal's, people insist on calling it) is a provincial icon, synonymous with the very word Manitoba.

But is this a good thing? C'mon, admit it, all you Sal's patrons out there - Sal's is Trash City, and you know it!

Don't get me wrong - Sal's trashiness is sort of cool if taken on a camp level - as kitsch.

It was also a convenient place to eat when you're piss drunk at 3 a.m., before the rise of Perkin's and other only moderately campy 24-hour sit-down eating establishments rose to prominence.

But those times are long past, and Sal's has become little more than a refuge for 15-year-old smokers and the mentally ill.

Maybe I'm being too hard on Old Man Sal. After all, he's a good old bastard at heart, especially when you're nearing puking and you don't have the money for Denny's.

I've actually had the opportunity to visit Salisbury House since the sale announcement, and it was an odd although not unpleasant experience.

But why the heck are some Sal's sit-downs, with waitresses and a lunch counter, while the one in my part of town is basically a cafeteria?

And while we're on the subject of Sal's peculiarities, what the hell is a Nip, exactly?

What on earth made Old Man Sal think he could just arbitrarily rename the hamburger one day?

Do you realize what fools people look like when they try to order Nips at other establishments?

It's a hamburger, for god's sake! Or a grilled cheese sandwich, whatever. It is what it is.

Just like Sal's.

Graduation

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The Royal Winnipeg Ballet's Butterfly is in Winnipeg March 14-17

TOP TEN

TOP 10 THINGS TO DO ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY

10 - Beat someone up

9 - Grab a midget and demand to know where he's hiding his gold

8 - Puke in your mug and pass it off as green beer

7 - Celebrate your two per cent Celtic heritage with a T-shirt that says 'Kiss me, I'm Irish'

6 - Beer + Lucky Charms cereal = How can you lose?

5 - Be like St. Patrick: Kill a bunch of snakes and tell people you're on a mission from God

4 - Forget to do your laundry and have to dig out your only other green shirt - that puke-green one you haven't worn since junior high

3 - Blow up a fish & chips place

2 - Refuse to stop doing your leprechaun voice, even at work

1 - Get drunk, jerkass!

- Adam Clayton

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