

# 2024

A TIME CAPSULE



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# NEXUS

camosun's student voice since 1990

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## editor's letter

# On the maybes of tomorrow

"I have a new dream," I declare to my husband only two feet inside the door, stripping off the outdoors with great zeal. First it was an owner of a small cafe, living in the heart of Paris, selling only croissants and drip coffee. Then it was a botanist, but I then remembered that I've killed every plant I ever owned on account of never watering them. After that, I could have sworn it was a writer, followed by a psychologist, followed by a tattoo artist, and then a filmmaker. I returned later to writing.

I might've been right the first time, or maybe the second, or maybe I should become a seamstress when I grow up, although I have grown up and do not yet know how to sew.

This time, however, I think my dream has been solidified, as it has umpteen times before.

## I never did believe in certainty. To decide once the future of one's limited hours is alien.

"We'll move to Europe, I'll be a freelance writer, reviving new journalism, and on the side, I'll sell off my collection of vintage dresses at weekend flea markets," I finish as our backs hit the sofa.

I never did believe in certainty. To decide once the future of one's limited hours is alien. How one could even decide what one eats for dinner is just as unfamiliar. It cannot be done unless followed by great regret, I've decided. To make a choice is an insult to the imagination.

My schooling follows a similar angle: maybe an English degree, with a minor in political science, or rather a focus on political science with a minor in creative writing. Of course! Well, maybe a double major, but I cannot imagine the implications of that on my personal life. I could just drop out all together and hope for the very best, keeping my options open and my pockets fuller.

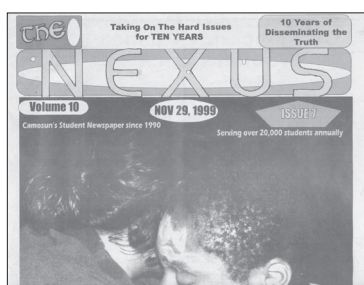
Of course this prolongs the process of just about everything, resulting in the procrastination of a future unfounded, eventually leading me toward the very fear that I turned from to begin with: regret. To look at the future is much easier than to execute it. To look back at an empty past is worse. But I just wait, hoping for my bright future to fall square into my eager lap, too tired, or maybe just too apathetic, to execute anything at all until a new fantasy blooms about, maybe New York.

There is hope for a spirit like mine, to wake up one morning, ready to become something of myself that exists only now in my mind, although I do not know when that moment will come, if it will come at all. But there is hope that, one morning, I'll write a blurb, maybe about myself, maybe of fiction, send it off, sell a dress, move to a new town, in a new country, with a new name, with a future in fruition.

Lydia Zuleta Johnson, student editor  
lydia@nexusnewspaper.com

## flashback

# 25 Years Ago in Nexus



LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON  
STUDENT EDITOR

**Reefer madness:** Weed, grass, pot, marijuana is now considered a common household item, useful for relaxation and celebration (and, in my case, inducing nightmarish panic attacks). However, before 2018, citizens across Canada were not afforded their God-given right to blaze, and in our November 29, 1999 issue, we covered the baby step that eventually led to cannabis fizzy soda drinks—the “exemption for medical purposes.” Temporary measures were made in place the previous summer, allowing for those suffering terminal illness failed by conventional therapies to access medical marijuana via physicians. Trials were set in motion for the turn of the century, verifying anecdotal claims for wellness. As temporary as they once were, OG Kush sour Nerd Ropes are here to stay.

**Good press:** Before apps and before short-form content, there was the physical. And in late fall 1999, students from York University set out to defend the physical news source leading their school, taking on commercial papers in their battle for rightful turf. This issue, we covered student pushback toward the *Toronto Star* as the company distributed 5,000 free copies of their paper to the city's students. Fearing that student newspapers would suffer from the competition, York students took legal measures to ensure protection, even running anti-*Toronto Star* ads to ward off their nemesis. Thankfully, today, student papers remain alive and well.

**At the movies:** What could ever be more fun than James Bond and Kevin Smith? Well, plenty now, but at the movies in 1999, *007: The World is Not Enough* and *Dogma* were playing, and very little could be so entertaining. *Nexus* writer Jon Valentine reviewed both films this issue, writing the only positive review *The World is Not Enough* will ever see and a descriptive remark on a scene from *Dogma* I believe could be said for its entirety: “composed entirely of human crap.” See *Lydia's Film Critique* on page 11 for more scalding hot takes.

## open space

# Don't settle for grade mediocrity

AJ AIKEN  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Has settling for grade mediocrity become the status quo? Maybe I'm just old, but the old adage of “Cs and Ds get degrees” seems to be thrown around a lot more these days, and it irritates me.

I've heard it from both students and faculty. What was once said to a student who was putting in their best effort yet still struggling to pass a course is now like the mantra for getting schoolwork done.

I understand that life is difficult, and we're pulled in many directions. We have lives outside of school. Un-

However, I do fully understand not wanting to do them. When it gets down to the final weeks, I'll calculate my grade to see what my final grade would be if I skipped the final assignments—but I don't skip them. It's just a fantasy of a burnt-out student who hates term papers. I work hard all semester long to get high grades; I wouldn't throw that away to avoid writing a paper.

Talkers frustrate me as well. There have been a few courses where students were talking so loudly that it made it difficult to hear the instructor even though I was sitting in the front row. Despite

## A few instructors mentioned that students weren't handing in assignments. It truly baffles me that students would skip assignments in college. We're literally paying instructors to give us those assignments.

expected situations come up such as illness or emergencies, which interfere with classes and getting assignments done on time. However, most instructors are approachable and understanding during challenging times and willing to work with students on deadlines. Are people talking to instructors or just skipping assignments?

My gripe doesn't apply to everyone, of course; there are many students that bust their ass getting to class, doing their work and getting the most out of their education. They also seem to be the ones that carry the weight of others when doing group work. Why should students who don't care about their education benefit from those that do care?

For the past three semesters I've sat in classes where instructors have mentioned they were concerned over the number of students who were going to fail the course. A few instructors mentioned that students weren't handing in assignments. It truly baffles me that students would skip assignments in college. We're literally paying instructors to give us those assignments.

Something on your mind? If you're a Camosun student, get in touch with us with your *Open Space* idea! Email editor@nexusnewspaper.com. Include your student number. Thanks!

the instructor asking students to stop talking, they continued. It's incredibly disrespectful to instructors and students to talk during lectures. If you don't want to learn, that's your choice, but go somewhere else to talk.

Students aren't the only ones settling for mediocrity. I've had faculty tell me the “Cs and Ds get degrees” slogan when I've been dissatisfied with how I did on an assignment. While potential employers won't check my grades, UVic will when I transfer. Although a C might be good enough to transfer into general studies, some faculties require more than a C. Other universities may be more competitive, and a C may not guarantee a seat. Instructors should be encouraging students to strive for their best rather than demonstrating an attitude of complacency.

Education is an investment into ourselves. We have the option to either accept a low return on our investment by doing the bare minimum to pass our courses, or we can participate in class, do our best on every assignment, and get the most out of our time at Camosun.

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OVERHEARD AT NEXUS: “We're just talking about doing drugs.”





post-secondary

## Camosun College Faculty Association concerned over college layoffs, restructuring

“Whenever an employer has a labour adjustment, and there’s also collective agreement language around that, the college can’t act unilaterally, and that’s what they’re doing.”

LYNELLE YUTANI  
CAMOSUN COLLEGE FACULTY ASSOCIATION



LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON/NEXUS

LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON  
STUDENT EDITOR

Camosun College has announced impending layoffs and a restructuring of the college’s schools in an effort to adapt to a projected \$5-million financial deficit caused by recent federal policy reforms and restrictions on international students—and the Camosun College Faculty Association (CCFA) does not approve.

In an email sent out to Camosun faculty and staff, Camosun announced an elimination of vacant positions in combination with layoffs across the college as a mode of reducing college costs.

In another recent email, the college prepared faculty for an upcoming redistribution of instructors, faculty, staff, and student numbers in restructuring its education arrangement, merging and reducing its areas of study into five categories: Arts, Access and Academic Preparation; Business; Health, Human Services and Sport Science; Science and Technology; and Trades, Training and Professional Studies.

Camosun College Faculty Association (CCFA) president Lynelle Yutani says faculty and staff were not consulted on the wide-scale changes, and disagrees with the college’s response to the federal announcement. She says the college has violated a BC Labour Code and their contract with the CCFA.

“There’s actually two specific things that are problematic with the way that the college is going about the changes that they’ve proposed or that they’ve announced,” she

says. “One of them is that inside our collective agreement... there are some rules, specifically, that state how they have to provide notification and consultation, as well as agreement with us for making these kinds of wide-scope changes”

Yutani says that this is backed up by Section 54 of the BC Labour Relations Code, which governs labour adjustments such as layoffs.

“So whenever an employer has a labour adjustment, and there’s also collective agreement language around that, the college can’t act unilaterally, and that’s what they’re doing,” says Yutani. “They’re making announcements, they’re saying, ‘This is what we’re doing,’ and they’ve done all of that without any consultation.”

Camosun College executive director of communications and marketing Rodney Porter declined to comment on the CCFA’s concerns for this story.

Yutani says Camosun’s reaction is not on par with several other BC colleges whose approach has included more involvement and input from the college community.

“Other colleges have been discussing these kinds of issues, have done so more openly, they have done so more transparently, and they have done so to everyone,” says Yutani. “So Vancouver Community College and North Island College had school-wide town halls that everyone could attend. So everyone heard the information at the same time, and everyone received the same message.”

The CCFA is particularly displeased with Camosun’s restructure

Camosun College Faculty Association president Lynelle Yutani says faculty and staff were not consulted on the changes.

of Indigenous Studies, Yutani says. She says their response goes against the college’s commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.

“From our perspective, the greatest and most significant loss, and the one that we are reeling from, is the Centre for Indigenous Education and Community Connections basically having all of the educational programming stripped... And there’s a number of, I would say, substantial issues with that, notwithstanding the college’s supposed commitment to decolonization and reconciliation. So what the effects of that is, is we have Indigenous programs and Indigenous instructors and Indigenous students who had been basically able to progress through their educational path as a community. So that community has been stripped, and it’s going to be individual courses, are going to be tucked into other programming areas,” says Yutani. “So I can’t think of anything more colonial than that to be done to something that’s supposed to be, I would call it, the centrepiece of our college’s philosophy.”

Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) executive director Michel Turcotte says the CCSS is

still uncertain about what impact the changes might have on students. However, he says he feels confident that student education is of top priority.

“I was talking to senior college administration and have been assured that they are seeking to prioritize the educational experience for Camosun students,” says Turcotte. “So they are seeking to ensure that the cuts are minimal at the level that will impact students directly.”

The CCFA, together with the Vancouver Community College Faculty Association and North Island College Faculty Association, traveled to Ottawa early November to lobby against the federal government decision. Yutani says their discussion focused on negative effects specific to BC colleges. (The CCFA also met with NDP MP Laurel Collins in Victoria in November.)

“[We] went to Ottawa in particular to discuss how the recent changes to international student visas and post-graduate work diplomas were disproportionately negatively affecting colleges, in particular colleges in BC... For example, post-graduate work permits for anyone graduating from a degree program at a college have been excluded, whereas if you get

your degree at a university, you’re eligible for a post-graduate work permit,” she says. “And we felt that that was unfair, especially because in BC, colleges, largely, especially in specialty areas and programming like Camosun or regional areas like North Island College, where there aren’t university alternatives, those communities are suffering because they don’t have the ability to meet regional labour market needs.”

Yutani says larger discussions need to be had with the provincial government, requiring post-secondary funding to better support schools. She also hopes to see advocacy come from students, the demographic she sees as being most powerful.

“It needs to be everyone calling for this change,” she says. “And I think the student body may be one of the most powerful groups if they took up that call. Because they’re suffering because BC isn’t adequately funding post-secondary institutions, our college is making these changes without consultation with [the] very students that it affects the most. So faculty, we can demand things because we have a collective agreement. But students are the reason we all are here, the reason the college exists.”

# NEXUS

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## student clubs

## Camosun Muslim Students Alliance bridging community

MACKENZIE GIBSON  
SENIOR WRITER  
WITH FILES FROM LYDIA  
ZULETA JOHNSON  
STUDENT EDITOR

Practicing a religion that isn't part of the dominant culture of where you live can be lonely, as was the experience for Muslim student Leia Grace Elaine Unarce.

This is why Unarce restarted Camosun's Muslim Students Alliance after it had been inactive for a few years, following a thought she had while breaking her fast during Ramadan.

"It was my first Ramadan here. And it's a little bit challenging for me that time because, you know, in Wilna Thomas building there's quiet rooms over there. So that's the place I found to break my fasting to eat because I was hungry, I was thirsty [the] whole day. And I was eating there so quick and hoping to pray in the quiet room before returning to my classes," she says. "But the thing is that [a person] scold me in a nice way, reminding me that you can't actually eat here."

Her next step was to do some digging on what might already exist, but what she found was out of the way and inconvenient.

"It made me think, like, am I the only one experiencing this?" she says. "So, I found out that, of course in the Richmond [House] there is a prayer room upstairs, which I will not go alone at like 7 pm or 8

"The purpose of the club is to make students feel welcome, to make the students feel that their identity or their religion or their culture is being accommodated or it helps on their adjustment in a new culture, in a new school."

LEIA GRACE ELAINE UNARCE  
CAMOSUN MUSLIM STUDENTS ALLIANCE

pm... So I reached to some sisters and brothers in the same religion and then they said, 'Yeah, we don't know, we just tend to go home.'"

Feeling the disconnect happening, Unarce didn't just accept the situation—she took action.

"I know that there is a place for the prayer, but I think the community is not that close together in Camosun," she says. "I feel that I had to do something about it."

For Muslims, community isn't just a nice thing to have, it's also a central part of their religious practice.

"We pray five times a day," she says. "And when we pray, actually, alone, it's not okay. It's better if we are with others."

She says the club has helped build some of that necessary community back up.

"Like, hey, is it your break time? Should we pray together? That is, you know, powerful in itself, knowing that you can go into the prayer room, not alone, and pray with other

students," says Unarce. "It gives a sense of community, which I feel is lacking for us."

With the club up and running, its members are hoping to build enough awareness and community in time for the event that started the club: Ramadan.

"We're trying to plan about the next Ramadan... I hope we can organize one iftar. Iftar is the dinner after a whole day of fasting. And yeah, it could be attended by anyone with the fasting students or with others as well that, you know, just want to know about what is happening or what is the importance of that celebration for us."

The club exists to build community for Muslim students, but not just with each other. Students of other religious backgrounds are welcome to join in, and Unarce hopes to encourage inter-religious discussions and connections.

"The purpose of the club is to make students feel welcome, to make the students feel that their



PHOTO PROVIDED

The Camosun Muslim Students Alliance wants to build community on campus.

identity or their religion or their culture is being accommodated or it helps on their adjustment in a new culture, in a new school," she says. "So, yeah, and at the same time, we're hoping that it would not only

contribute as well to the Muslim community, but to others as well... People can still connect with each other, even [if] we have [a] different religion. It should not be a barrier to stop us from being friends."

CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY SPONSORED CONTENT

## Camosun College Student Society hosts sustainable fashion event

ELAINE UNARCE  
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY  
SUSTAINABILITY DIRECTOR

Ever wondered where all our clothing trash ends up?

Sustainable fashion is all about reducing the massive environmental footprint created by the fashion industry. Society's modern clothing habits are driving an unprecedented environmental crisis, fuelled by must-have trends from online shopping apps, ASMR videos encouraging people to buy more, and posters in shopping malls promoting constant consumption. According to Changing Markets, 92 million tons of textile waste are generated annually on a global scale. Do the math, and that's like a garbage truck full of clothes ending up in a landfill every second. So, imagine reading this article for five minutes—yep, 300 garbage trucks filled with clothes are wasted in that time.

One of the biggest culprits? Polyester. A synthetic fibre used in more than 60 percent of our clothing which, unfortunately, sheds microplastics with every wash. So, where do these microplastics go after the laundry cycle? It eventually seeps into our rivers and oceans, harming aquatic life and making their way up to the food chain.

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Seeing the need for change, Business students Dona Palo, Marjoe Bantillo, Marivic Perez, and Reveena Macabare, in collaboration with myself, hosted an event on November 7 at Camosun's Interurban campus. The event, held in the Cultural Centre of the Health and Wellness building, aimed to raise awareness about sustainable fashion and give students and community members a space to rethink their clothing choices. Attendees shared stories of thrifted treasures and beloved hand-me-downs, like a vintage dress from grandma or dad's old (but still cool) jacket!

Camosun College Student Society international director Phuong Thanh Tran (Polly) shared stories about her grandmother's necklace and a chic blazer from her mom, both

brought from her home country, Vietnam. Camosun instructor Laura Basar shared her purple ear muffers, which she has been using for over five years. Solamae, a social science student, also shared her love for shopping at thrift stores and consignment shops. She mentioned that the top she was wearing that day was from a thrift store, while the skirt came from consignment store The Patch.

From the Business students, Elham shared the story of her favourite scarf, bought at WIN Victoria, her go-to second-hand shop that also supports women in need; Himanshu spoke about his bleached pants, which he continues to wear, embracing the design rather than throwing them away. An impromptu speaker, Giovanni Lopez,



PHOTO PROVIDED

A sustainable-fashion event at Camosun College's Interurban campus.

shared a story about his jeans, which he bought when he first arrived as an international student in Canada. The memory reminded him of how he started with only a few pairs of pants, and how these jeans became a symbol of his journey.

Among the 19 participants, Camosun alumni Mariale Vasquez commented, "Wow, I never thought about how my clothing choices affect the environment. I'll be more careful not to join every fashion fad, probably save more money for travel and creating memories rather than buying new clothes!" Kaye, an exchange

student from the Philippines, playfully said, "When I go home, I'll ransack my mom's clothing wardrobe. It would be nice to sit down and hear her stories about those clothes and wear them to school!"

The event sparked thoughtful conversations, and we hope to keep them going!

For more sustainable fashion content and updates on future events or if you have any collaboration ideas, be sure to follow @camosunsustainability on Instagram. Each step toward sustainable fashion is small but a powerful one—this is not the end but just a start!



magic

## Illusionist to bring art to life in magic show



PHOTO PROVIDED

New Westminster-based illusionist Vitaly says that magic is like art, and that art is a process of self-discovery.

RAY NUFER  
STUDENT EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

What makes a moment magical? Canadian illusionist Vitaly Beckman is back in Victoria on December 7 to perform his interactive, art-based magic show, inspiring audiences to answer this question for themselves and explore the power of their senses.

As a visual person, Vitaly thinks in visual terms and incorporates artistic elements such as paintings, photographs, and sculptures into his show to utilize them in magical ways. These elements become animated, with a paintbrush that paints by itself and photographs

that come to life—including the driver's licence pictures of audience members.

The New Westminster-based artist didn't start out his creative journey with magic, however. He originally started crafting magic through a medium featured heavily in his show—painting.

"When I was a small kid I first started to paint," he says. "I accidentally watched the Bob Ross show on television, and I said, hey, that looks easy—give me some paint. Next thing you know, my house was filled with 'happy accidents.'"

He took to magic after discovering magicians on television, re-

cording illusionists such as David Copperfield and Siegfried & Roy on VHS tapes to replay, analyze, and learn from. He came up with his own creative resolutions to their magic tricks, inventing his own style of magic which he has continued to hone through the years.

"I realized that magic can be presented as an art form," he says. "That's what inspired me to pursue it, but it was through trial and error that I learned."

Vitaly is inspired by a range of movies, comedy, live theatre, musicians, and martial artists, and especially by director Alfred Hitchcock, whose films have captivating

"I realized that magic can be presented as an art form."

VITALY  
ILLUSIONIST

musical soundtracks, and comedian and pianist Victor Borge, who spoofs concert pianists with stand-up comedy but is also a brilliant pianist himself. They have helped construct who he is—an artist who draws from multiple disciplines to combine them in order to elevate the work. Magic is the medium where he feels these inspirations can come together most, where he can innovate and bring something new to say on stage.

"Art is a process of self discovery," says Vitaly. "Hopefully, over the years I'm becoming more and more myself, or finding my true self. To be on stage and share your true, authentic self with an audience, well, that's not easy."

Because Vitaly's performances are interactive, every show is a little different. Even though there is structure, there is no script, so the results are always changing. What matters most to him is that he is able to immerse the audience in his world, making them feel comfortable in this new environment he's created. Sometimes during shows he even invites audience members up on stage.

"I've done my show hundreds of times, but it always feels fresh because of the audience," says Vitaly.

He says that, like art, magic is in

the eye of the beholder—we are constantly crafting magic through our perception of everyday moments.

"We can look at a leaf fluttering in the wind, and it can look magical," he says. "We can look at a cherry blossom shedding its petals, and that can look magical."

Contrary to preconceptions, Vitaly says that it is not the technology that makes magic.

"If you show an iPhone to someone 30 or 40 years ago, they would maybe look at it as magical. It's the same technology today, but it's ordinary to us. It is never the technology that's magical—it's always the human experience and how we perceive reality... Something that elevates our spirit."

Vitaly says that he feels his mission is to inspire people and to "elevate them to a higher vibration."

"Life can be hard and challenging," he says, "but when you experience magic, you often feel sparks of inspiration that might be otherwise missing in mundane life."

Vitaly

7 pm Saturday, December 7  
\$47, \$10 student rush tickets  
available two weeks prior  
to show

Farquhar Auditorium, UVic  
uvic.ca/farquhar

review

## *Murders on Paper St.* a sublimely unscripted escapade

LANE CHEVRIER  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

A chill wind blows across the darkened grounds of Craigdarroch Castle. On this momentous eve, a young entrepreneur is celebrating his success in the commercial fishing industry. Surrounded by oaken walls, tapestried ceilings and lavish portraits, the fresh-faced fish fat-cat has the perfect life. Or does he?

In attendance is his sister, who resents the fishy reek that has permeated her existence. The fishmonger's fiancé is also present, but it seems that their engagement is suspiciously predicated on being appointed his sole benefactor. A gruff and shady merchant ship salesman harbours outward spite at the baracuda baron, and a lowly factory fish-gutter is constantly insulted by the codfish kingpin, who scorns his dreams of becoming the proud captain of a glorious fishing vessel.

Arguments flare and tensions rise until, unexpectedly, the mackerel mogul is found dead, gutted like a greyback with suspicious efficiency, lying amidst the lingering scent of his sister's perfume, and clutching in his cold grasp the ship merchant's tobacco pipe. Who among this motley crew is the slithering eel who committed this dastardly deed? Was it the sister, the fiancé, the factory worker, the

It's unique and fascinating to watch a story unfold when you are perfectly aware that the actors know just as little as you do.

salesman, or could it have been the intoxicated woman who roams the halls threatening to tear down the priceless paintings and hammer dead fish in their place?

Such was the intricate and fascinating storyline of *Murders on Paper St.*, but it may surprise you that the story was not premeditated in any way. The Paper St. Theatre Company is an impressively efficient improv studio. Starting from a random premise suggested by the audience, the cast launches into an entirely ad-lib story. Someone may announce himself as a persona he has just invented, or another actor may spontaneously create a name and backstory for the bewildered performer opposite her. Awkward pauses are frequent, as the actors struggle to catch up to their own story.

Yet, most captivating is the performer's ability to shift and adapt to an unscripted narrative, to create characters rich with emotion, personality and nuance, who never even

existed half an hour previously. Artistic director Dave Morris spoke of the power of improv to visit serious and emotional topics, rather than merely being a vehicle for comedy. *Murders on Paper St.* was indeed presented comedically, with actors consistently generating witty one-liners out of thin air. While these talented performers clearly have the ability to affect serious drama, they chose to lean into the campy, over-dramatic nature of film-noir mysteries to create something fun and effervescent, which I think was perfect.

It's unique and fascinating to watch a story unfold when you are perfectly aware that the actors know just as little as you do. Typically after a show, the audience might ponder the intent of the writers and directors. For *Paper St.*, however, I found myself speculating on which actors even knew what was happening. When one of the women was poisoned, did she intend to die, or did she only commit to her own fatality



PHOTO PROVIDED

*Murders on Paper St.* was an improv performance held at Craigdarroch Castle.

when one of the other actors spontaneously announced it to be so? And, since the wine she drank was actually brought by the fish baron, could it be that he intended to poison his guests all along, but never got the chance to see it through before he was killed?

The fun of this kind of speculation is that everything is correct, because everything is undefined. "The audience leaves having told

themselves the story," Morris told me. In a sense, through bearing witness, the audience is writing the story just as much as the performers are.

*Murders on Paper St.* was a theatre experience more engaging and exciting than any I've seen, and I eagerly await the return of the Paper St. Theatre Company to witness another original story, for the first and only time.



Money being top of mind for students is nothing new, but in recent years the situation has become more dire. This was reflected not only in my own feature story on **money troubles**, but also in a number of other articles throughout the year.

From the federal budget breakdown (by Dan Ellerton) to tips on getting more food out of your food (by AJ Aiken), students had a lot to say on the financial state of things. It wasn't all bad news, though. When talking about money, it's easy to focus on where it's tight, but the CCSS announced earlier this year that Camosun would receive funding to build affordable on-campus housing (which we covered in an article by Lydia Zuleta Johnson).

Finances are stressful and can leave people feeling desperate—it's part of why so many people have become politically engaged, hoping for something different from their government.

Just remember to look past campaign promises and check how the actual policies parties want to implement will affect you financially in the tax bracket you occupy.

We can't always control the economy, but we can control whether or not we take care of each other and make good use of what we have available to us.

Mackenzie Gibson, senior writer

In recent years, **AI** has exploded in sophistication to a degree that's both amazing and alarming. On one hand, it allows ordinary people to create something that was, in the past, only accessible to those of great talent. As a tool, AI can be used to generate dazzling works of art (especially if trained on original media), or allow people to gain insight or understanding, in a highly-bespoke, easy-to-digest manner. In our September 3 issue, *Nexus* explored the pros and cons of the technology.

Along with this freedom comes ethical issues around using AI to deceive, either with deepfake images, videos, or voices that only Hollywood could previously pull off, or to cheat in an academic setting. If abused, it can be incredibly harmful, and it is easier than ever for the scant actions of a few bad actors to create chaos in the lives of good people.

AI marks a pinnacle of human ingenuity, and its positive potential is manifold. As with any technology, it will continue to grow and integrate into society. People will become better at detecting AI chicanery, and policies will arise to address issues. As with any tool, it allows people to reach beyond their capabilities, for better or for worse.

I think, in the long run, if we can agree to uphold a standard of transparency, it will be for the better.

Lane Chevrier, contributing writer

Over the last couple of years, the federal government has implemented tighter restrictions on study permits and narrowed eligibility for post-graduation work permits (PWGP). Having come to Canada as an international student, I see both positives and negatives with these changes.

**The cap on international students** can protect students from private institutions that blatantly exploit and use them for their money, prioritizing profit over quality. I've seen many stories of international students being misled by these organizations.

On the other hand, the restrictions on permits overlook why some students come to Canada. In my case, coming from Mexico City, a place where violence and crime are frequent realities, studying in Canada was an escape into a better world and a more promising future. For other people, especially from Latin America, coming to Canada is perhaps the only way to marry their loved ones because queer marriages are illegal in their country. Not everyone comes for the sole reason that they think Canada is a nice country—many come for the possibility of a better life.

The PWGP was often viewed as a promise that Canada would provide education and a chance to stay. Canada has always had a reputation as a welcoming country that values diversity and offers an opportunity to grow, but in international students' eyes, that's changing.

Santiago Vazquez-Fuertes, senior writer

# 2020

## THE STORIES SHAPED

The music scene saw some big losses in 2024. In addition to more venues closing, one of the hardest-hitting losses was **Dylan Willows**. The Zone FM's morning show co-host with Jason Lamb, Willows was also a promoter, music advocate, venue owner, and my friend.

On March 18 and 19 the city celebrated the life and contributions of Willows, who had terminal cancer, at two sold-out shows at The Royal McPherson Theatre. The outpouring of love was overwhelming. Willows' family came from as far as Australia, and old Zone staff returned to Victoria to honour him.

On June 6, The Zone announced the passing of Willows. I still see the occasional Instagram post from current and former staff and their spouses as we grieve our loss.

Willows gave his heart and soul to the music community. His creativity and big thinking brought us VIC Fest and the Food Truck Festival. This makes me wonder: what ideas would Willows have for the disappearing-venue problem we're facing now? Whether he had the answers or not, I know Willows would've continued to advocate for and promote Victoria's music scene. That's who he was. That's what made him the legend that he is.

AJ Aiken, contributing writer

The January snow day was a yet memorable event. If you are new to Victoria, here's the gist.

On January 17, students in Victoria received an email saying that classes were cancelled due to the commute to school, while I was stuck at home. The light snowfall was (as predicted) not as light anymore. The college then closed all of its campuses at noon.

Many students were already frustrated with getting home in what was, for them, a very long day. It took me two and a half hours to get home. Several folks crashed out, making for an overall unpleasant experience.

Students were already frustrated with the snow take, but things got even worse when the snow stopped. The exact same thing.

I hope that we aren't writing about this again, and that for the safety of all students, this will be only one time will tell.

Jaxson Smith Peterson, contributor

Few things drew Camosun students to campus this year as one furry feline did. A dark and cold on-campus cat who lives near the Lansdowne campus was the talk of Camosun.

Former student editor Jordyn wrote in "Neighbourhood cat brings joy to campus" in our January 24 issue, "The cat has all her glory gracing the cover."

"Alaska once vanished through the Young building's gym and caught the attention of Haukaas wrote in the story, justifying why the cat had gained the attention. In fact, for a time during early 2020, the cat was on campus day without someone mentioning her name, of, well, catness.

But it's been a while since we've contacted her human owners to see how she's doing. The time we hadn't heard back, but she was still bringing joy to people like she did.

Greg Pratt, managing editor



ys were one of the most frustrating  
ts of the 2024 winter semester.  
to Camosun or need a refresher,

Victoria woke up to a light snowfall  
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(predicted by meteorologists) not so  
n made the decision to close both

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at this point, a full-on snowstorm.  
to get from the Interurban campus  
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strated after this preventable mis-  
e the next day, when Camosun did

y this same story again in the winter,  
ents, the college just shuts down,

Contributing writer

**W**ith 49 percent of the world's population in 64 countries voting in **elections** worldwide, 2024 was a record year for democracy.

In Canada, provincial elections took place in New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, and here in British Columbia. On October 19, British Columbians went to the polls in what turned out to be one of the closest provincial elections in our province's history. The campaign saw attacks between BC NDP leader David Eby and BC Conservative leader John Rustad over key issues including drugs, homelessness, and the cost-of-living crisis. Votes took several days to be counted, but in the end, voters elected Eby and the BC NDP with a majority government in the close election.

In US politics, on November 5, Americans went to the polls to vote in an unprecedented election between vice president Kamala Harris and former president Donald Trump. Joe Biden dropped out of the race in late July due to concerns over his age. After a short and sometimes ugly campaign, Donald Trump was re-elected as president, sweeping the "battleground states" concerning and shocking many around the world.

And here at Camosun, students casted their vote from October 21 to 23 to vote in new students on the Camosun College Student Society board, with 688 students from both campuses taking part in the bi-annual process.

Cayden Gill, contributing writer

# 2024 CRISIS THAT THE YEAR

**D**ecolonization—as well as Truth and Reconciliation—has been a big topic this year in Canada and other countries around the world that have a history of colonial rule.

Here in British Columbia, the Haida Nation recently gained Aboriginal title to the entirety of Haida Gwaii in April, and in July the Great Bear Sea initiative was launched—a 100,000-square-kilometre network of marine-protected areas just off BC's northern coast to be managed under shared authority of 17 coastal nations.

Even more decolonial action is in the works—including here at Camosun.

In June, student editor Lydia Zuleta Johnson spoke with Maureen Niwa and Wendy McDonald about the Indigenizing English Placement Assessment (IEPA) project, which aims to create a culturally appropriate learning environment for future Indigenous students.

Re-framing this assessment through an Indigenous lens is one example of an important step forward in making an institution like Camosun more culturally relevant for Indigenous peoples, including storytelling traditions and expressing Indigenous worldviews.

Likewise, the Camosun library is currently conducting a survey looking to gain more insight from students, faculty, and staff about what it can do to decolonize and form a more inclusive environment.

The practice of decolonization is ongoing—and should remain so.

Ray Nufer, student editorial assistant

**A**s we approach the end of 2024, there can be no denying that **climate change** has shaped public opinion, politics, and education. People may say that the year was dominated by politics and the economy. Maybe that's true, but climate change remains central to almost every major societal issue facing us today.

Forest fires, heat waves, flooding, and drought; these stories continue to dominate headlines across the globe. Indeed, in response to this, governments, communities and institutions have spearheaded projects aimed toward climate change.

For instance, Camosun has revamped its Environmental Technology program to align with environmental needs and with an aim to getting technicians into the field faster. Camosun also installed a solar array on the Lansdowne campus library roof.

Sadly, governments are engaged in greenwashing with little evidence that they have any appetite to do anything effectual concerning climate change. One needs to look no further than the DRC and the red sand cobalt mines, or the lithium ponds in Indonesia that have absolutely decimated the ecosystems surrounding them.

While some communities are actively engaged in reducing their environmental footprint, many more remain committed to exploiting it.

Daniel Ellerton, student editorial assistant

**S**tudent encampments in support of Palestine were set up at post-secondary campuses across Canada in 2024, including one very prominent one right here in Victoria. In our *Open Space* opinion piece "People's Park proves student encampments can work on many levels" in our August 7 issue, *Nexus* contributing writer Kim Fehr posed a simple question: do student encampments work?

The People's Park encampment was set up in the quad at the University of Victoria on May 1. But was it a success? Fehr argued that with a prayer space, a library, art, picnics with shared food, and the assemblage of a community, People's Park was indeed a success.

After a tense back and forth with UVic, the institution served the camp with a trespass notice on July 20. The notice stated that the camp had to be vacated by 8 am on July 22.

"If the university refuses to engage in negotiations, is the encampment a failure?" Fehr wrote in the piece. "Perhaps, if having their demands met is the only goal of the encampment. In the case of People's Park, however, much has been accomplished, regardless of the embarrassing behaviour of the UVic administration."

Greg Pratt, managing editor



stage

## Wonderheads bring new twist to old Christmas tale

SANTIAGO VAZQUEZ-FUERTE  
SENIOR WRITER

*A Christmas Carol* will be reimaged this December by award-winning theatre company Wonderheads—bringing the classic Charles Dickens' story to Victoria's McPherson Playhouse.

Co-founders and performers Kate Braidwood and Andrew Phoenix say they've turned the story into a play where expressions speak louder than words—omitting words entirely.

"Wonderheads is a full-face mask and theatre company. We also like to say that we are visual storytelling or live-action animation. That's our finance elevator pitch," says Phoenix. "But, really, that's the heart of it, full-face masks that cover our entire heads and all kinds of puppetry, from small puppetry to 10-foot-tall backpack puppets."

The masks and puppets used in Wonderheads are unique, transforming the actors into otherworldly creatures. However, in regards to other aspects of the play, Braidwood says the team took on the challenge of telling the timeless story without any words.

"The most unique aspect of our version of [A] *Christmas Carol* is that it's entirely wordless," says Braidwood. "Our full-face masks cover our entire faces, so there is no dialogue in the show, which I am sure people would be like... 'How can you tell a Charles Dickens

story without dialogue?' But using the masks and puppets allows us to create a really inventive, whimsical, and very accessible version of the show."

Wonderheads' wordless approach invites the audience to experience *A Christmas Carol* freshly, Braidwood says, adding a touch of magic to the tale.

"Whereas more traditional interpretations might not have puppets and things like that," says Braidwood, "our puppets can fly, they can be tiny, they can be huge, or we have a flying Ghost of Christmas Past and they go on a time travel together with Scrooge. It is a quite whimsical and magical version of the story."

Braidwood says the reason the story can be told without words is thanks to the artistry and emotion of the cast.

"We've got masterful performers doing the puppetry and the mask performance. They are able to give new life, a new heart to the story," she says. "The masks and the puppets are very distinctive, they have a lot of character sculpted into their faces, [and] when our performers wear the mask or when they animate a puppet, they use their whole body to communicate emotion."

The masks and puppets brought to life by Wonderheads' skilled performers create emotional depth that resonates with audiences, Phoenix says, even without dialogue.



DARYL TURNER

Wonderheads theatre company are putting their own spin on Charles Dickens' classic *A Christmas Carol*.

"The biggest thing that people say when they see our work is that they swear they saw the masks move, like they swear they saw it change, saw it come to life. But they don't move," says Phoenix. "You really feel like it is living animation, like you are watching an animated version of [A] *Christmas Carol*, but live and it's human. Or is it? You are not quite sure and [it] certainly elevates you to a kind of fantastical place, hence the name 'Wonderheads.' People are often surprised

by how much emotion they feel in our shows."

In regard to audiences' emotional response, Phoenix reflects on the constant change and ongoing adaptation of the show each year.

"Every year we continue to work on it, it changes and adapts. We add characters, enhance the puppets, we are always working on [the show]," says Phoenix. "And that is the beauty of running your own company and being the co-creator. So even for those who may have

seen it before, I think they might be surprised to see what is different about it."

*A Wonderheads Christmas Carol*  
7:30 pm Wednesday, December 18 and Thursday, December 19  
2 pm and 7:30 pm  
Friday, December 20 and Saturday, December 21  
Various prices, McPherson Playhouse  
rmts.bc.ca

music

## Bedouin Soundclash continues connecting with music



MIKE NEAL

Toronto-based Bedouin Soundclash is coming back to Victoria in December.

AJ AIKEN  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Celebrating 20 years of music, Toronto's Bedouin Soundclash is coming to the Capital Ballroom this December for the second night of their Canadian tour. After the re-release of their 2004 album, *Sounding a Mosaic*, the band is bringing their sound back to the stage.

Bedouin Soundclash's hiatus

lasted a little longer than intended. The band took a break in 2011, returning to the studio in 2018 to record their album *Mass* in New Orleans, Louisiana with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band. They began playing shows again following the release of *Mass*, in 2019, until COVID hit. They've now returned to the stage again, first in the UK with a tour they recently finished

"It's like you're going to do something very personal, that you're going to present it to the world, and there's going to be rejection of some kind. And so, it's easy to forget that there is a ton of positivity out there in the world"

JAY MALINOWSKI  
BEDOUIN SOUNDCLASH

and now with their upcoming Canadian tour.

Hearing about people's experiences at shows is something vocalist/guitarist Jay Malinowski enjoys about touring. He says he goes into the audience to talk with fans after every show. Over time, Malinowski has even become acquainted with some fans.

"In the UK, there was a family that came out, Alex Star, a fan of ours, who passed away and played 'When the Night Feels My Song' at his funeral. They played it while they took his coffin down the aisle, and his whole family came out in Birmingham. I actually had met Alex a few times from when he was 14 years old, like way back in 2006," says Malinowski. "So, there's moments like that that make it really kind of, makes me realize what's important about what we do and what isn't. I've kind of an

indescribable feeling of being really humbled, and I mean all the emotions, but grateful that we got to be a part of some other people's lives in this way, because we don't take it for granted at this point."

After 20 years of putting out music, Malinowski also says the crowd is slowly getting younger. Some newer fans are coming with their parents who have been longtime fans; others heard Bedouin Soundclash from a surprising source.

"I remember when we were playing Toronto, [a] couple kids came up, and they knew 'When the Night Feels My Song' because of CBC Kids. They knew it as children, but they actually had no idea that we were the same band. They'd only heard us through *Mass*, the record we did in New Orleans," says Malinowski.

In music there are different

trajectories one can take. Starting in university, bassist Eon Sinclair and Malinowski immersed themselves in the music they wanted to create. From there, the sounds flowed.

"We just got ourselves so wrapped up into the world that we wanted to live in, which was like '80s, ska, and punk, and jungle, and drum and bass music. And we had all these influences, but we had no idea what was going on around us," says Malinowski, "And then everything flowed from that. And I think if you're going to be an artist who writes your own music and wants to have that kind of identity, then that's the way to start. And then everything can flow from it once you have that kind of core value or vision from your music."

Not taking anything too personally is a lesson that Malinowski works on every day and advises other creatives to do also.

"It's like you're going to do something very personal, that you're going to present it to the world, and there's going to be rejection of some kind," says Malinowski. "And so, it's easy to forget that there is a ton of positivity out there in the world."

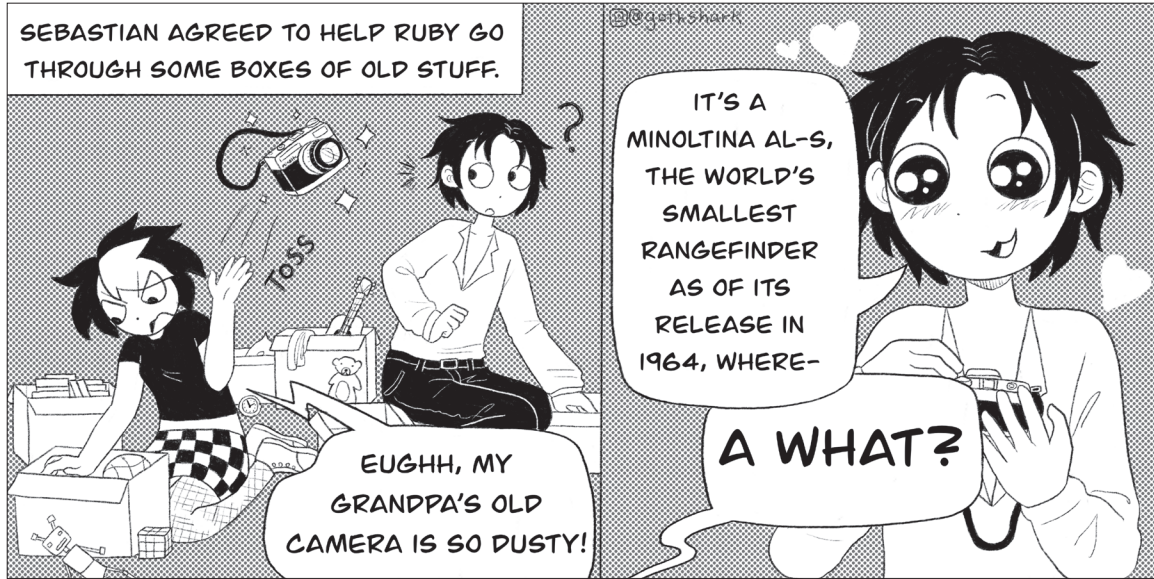
Bedouin Soundclash  
7 pm Friday, December 6  
\$27.50, Capital Ballroom  
thecapitalballroom.com



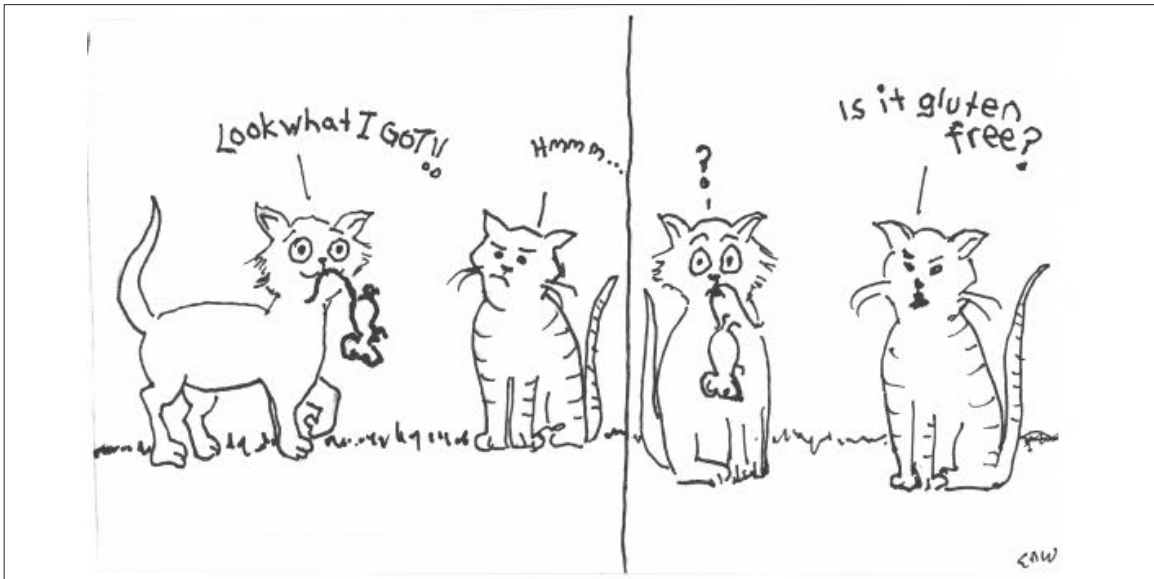




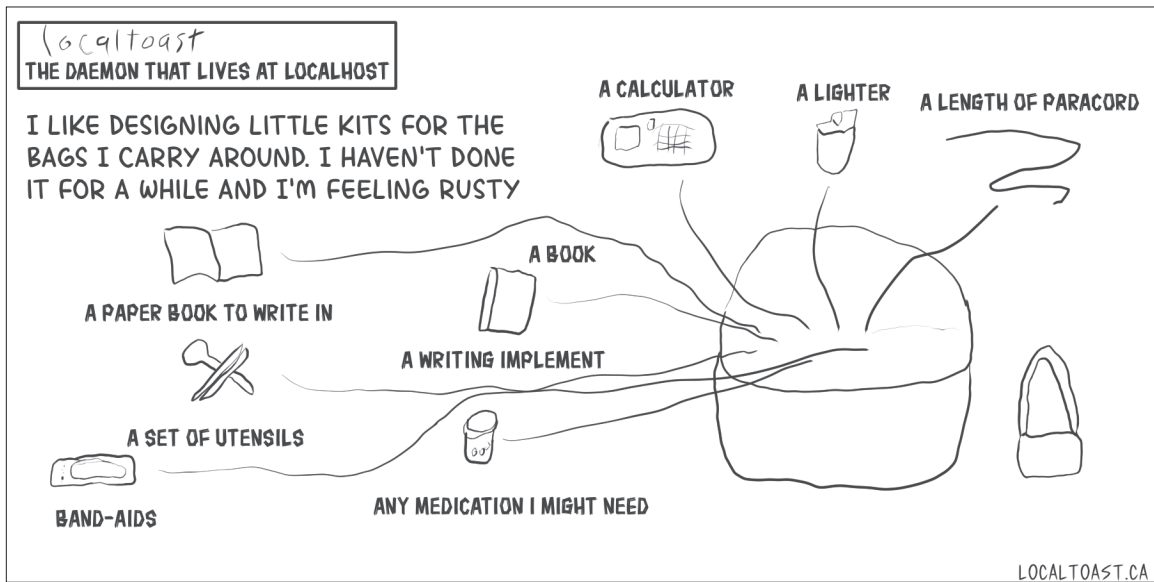
Ruby Rioux and the Bats from Saturn - Ray Nufer



Natural Selection - Emily Welch



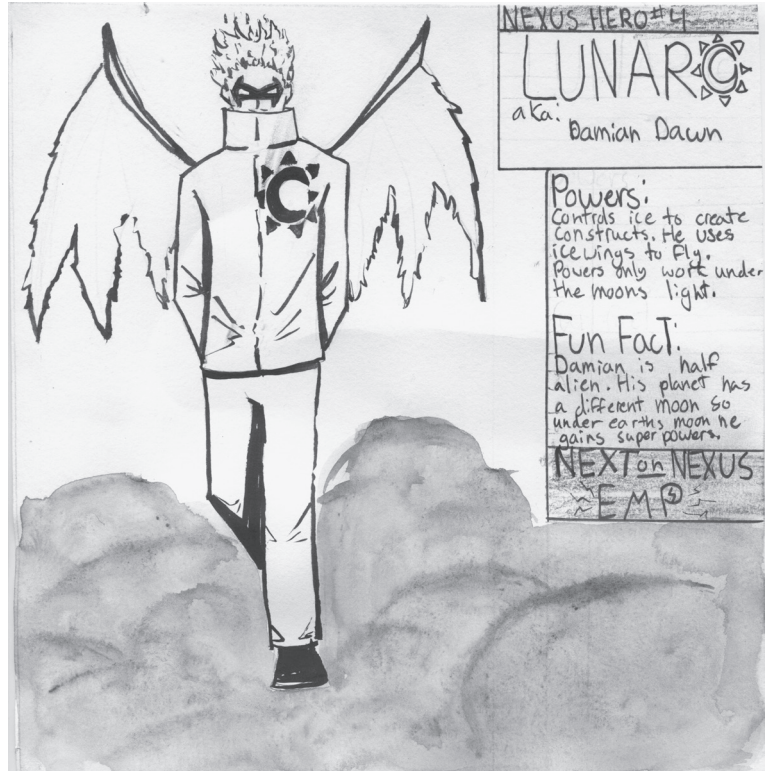
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Weird Dog Ink - Felix Best



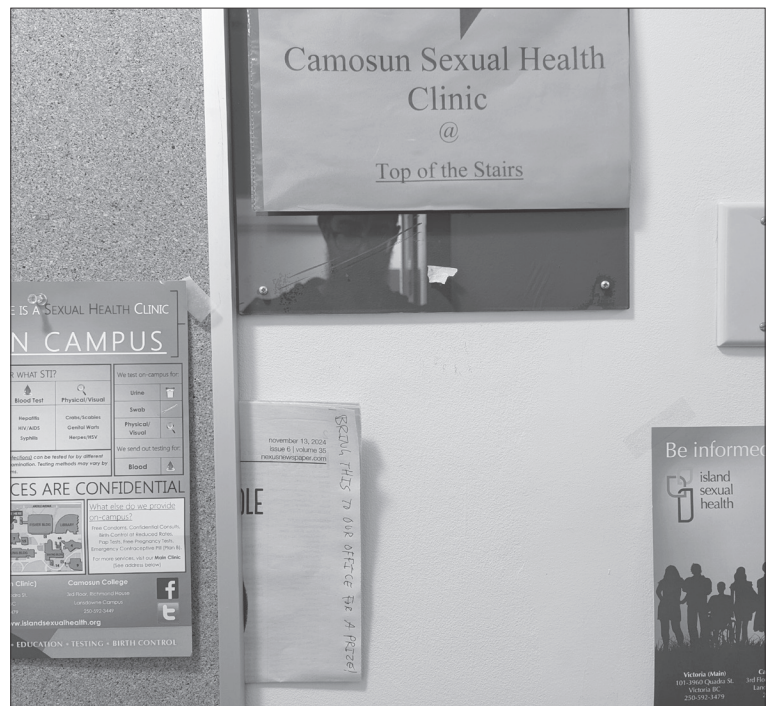
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Tile Crawler - Jay London



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Lydia's Film Critique

by Lydia Zuleta Johnson

## Clifford (and unconditional love)

Love does not require approval. It does not require explanation, either. *Clifford*, along with various other inexplicable artistic love affairs of mine, is a film that speaks not to the brain but to the very core of the human spirit.

It is beyond all reason and yet beyond all doubt we love what we do. And in regard to art (and in regard to film), there could be nothing more deeply and illogically adored. In other words, what is well loved, in public or otherwise, is anchored to the soul by intangible weight, inexplicable as to where one can, although it may seem strange, identify the source of attraction.

This is what comes to mind when I speak of Martin Short's 1994 film *Clifford*, and its merit of my unconditional love, beyond all odds.

First disapproved by audience members, and then critics, and then by time, *Clifford* does not conform to certain ideas of taste.

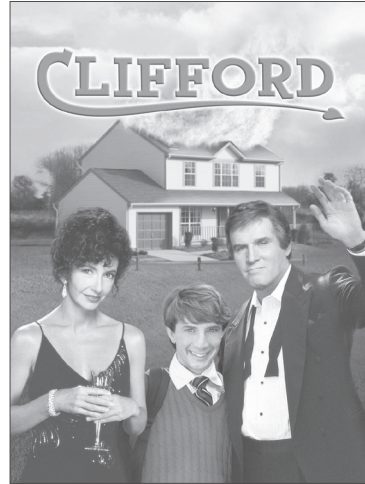
In a review for the film, Roger Ebert wrote, "It's bad in a new way all its own. There is something extraterrestrial about it, as if it's based on the sense of humor of an alien race with a completely different relationship to the physical universe."

No one may argue with that apt analysis. Short, as a 40-year-old

man, plays a 10-year-old boy simply by dressing in schoolboy clothing, using forced perspective to hide his true adult stature. On route to Honolulu with his parents (Richard Kind and Jennifer Savidge), Clifford discovers their plane is passing over Los Angeles, home to Dinosaurworld—the fuel that powers Clifford as he, ridiculously, turns off the plane's engine when introduced to the pilot, requiring an emergency landing. Wildly coincidental, Clifford's uncle Martin (wonderfully performed by Charles Grodin) is in need of proving himself fit for parenthood to his girlfriend, Sarah Davis (Mary Steenburgen). And so it's settled: Clifford will stay in the care of his uncle while his parents escape from him in Hawaii.

Deceptively, uncle Martin's first impression is darling, as he finds Clifford soundly napping on an airport office sofa with a handmade banner hanging above, reading, "I LOVE MY UNCLE MARTIN."

As their time together progresses, however, Clifford grows more



and more sadistic, beginning with small practical jokes that embarrass his uncle and ending with his uncle's sanity.

As a last minute decision, one that hardly works at all, the film is framed as an anecdote, told to a small troubled child in the year 2050 by a now wiser Clifford dressed as a priest—similar to *The Princess Bride* but worse.

Love does not require approval. It does not require explanation, either. *Clifford*, along with various other inexplicable artistic love affairs of mine, is a film that speaks not to the brain but to the very core of the human spirit.

It is in poor taste to look down upon any artwork, be it a Wayans brothers creation or a Fellini. To connect sincerely to anything is the essence of fulfilled living. It is beyond all reason that *Clifford* remains the essence of mine.



Fellas, Let's Figure It Out by Jaxson Smith Peterson

## Finals season

Enough planning. It's time to do the work. Put your headphones on and your phone away and get cracking.

Finals season at Camosun is fast approaching once again.

No matter what program you are in, it's likely you're starting to feel the crunch. At the time of writing, I have over a dozen assignments, five exams, and what feels like a million group projects due in the next month.

It can certainly feel overwhelming to have all this work due when all you really want to do is get in the holiday spirit. I get it. Here are some tips for managing workload and stress during the semester's busy season.

### Get organized

If you haven't already done it, this is step number one. Write down everything you have to do between now and the end of term. Prioritize by the amount of time it's going to take and how much the assignment or exam is worth.

### Break things into chunks

Ten-page papers and multi-unit exams can seem like a lot when they are staring you right in the face. Spreading the work you need to do over several more manageable pieces can be super helpful here. Try just writing a page a day or studying one unit at a time before reviewing all the concepts.

### Find the time

This is something I've written about in the past, and I'm revisit-

ing it because it's so important to actually accomplish things. Once you have all your tasks and chunks set up, figure out when you are going to do them. If you just leave something "until next week" or set a vague date to work on it there's a much higher chance it will fall through the cracks.

### Do the thing

Enough planning. It's time to do the work. Put your headphones on and your phone away and get cracking. If you're easily distracted by family members or roommates, then get out of the house. Campus is open but usually empty on the weekends, and, speaking from experience, they don't kick you out until at least 10 pm. You'll be surprised at how much work you can actually get done in a day without any distractions.

### Get help

Camosun has several resources available for students, including help centres for English, science, writing, and math. If you're confused about a topic, don't rely on AI, go talk to a pro.

### Go to office hours

Your instructors are the ones marking the work, so they know what they're looking for better than anyone else. It also never hurts to make connections.

Happy studying.



Reasons to Live... In Victoria

by Alex Hanuse

## The joy of cocktails

Having recently observed Remembrance Day, I found myself thinking about a poppy-red beverage from the golden age of cocktails, which spanned from the 1860s until after the first World War.

A while back I was experiencing a bout of depression, and was struggling to leave my house. I searched through the cobwebs in my mind for something that once brought me joy but would require little effort. My partner suggested we go out for dinner. I love everything about restaurants: the ceremony of fine dining, the friendly small talk at a local eatery, and the atmosphere of a sexy cocktail bar. I believe it's an experience worth investing your time and money in, if only on the rare occasion.

I dragged my feet to Part and Parcel, a small and charming restaurant in Quadra Village, and had such a culinary revelation I wanted to cry (and may actually have cried) tears of joy rather than sadness. I felt inspired to write about the experience and my partner and I joked about starting a blog where I

would review restaurants that were so good they could give you reason enough to live.

Playing on that idea for a blog, I will be sharing this food and drink forward column, where I will be offering my personal favourite things to eat, drink, and do in Victoria. I'll also be highlighting some things I just find uplifting and relevant... like cocktails.

Having recently observed Remembrance Day, I found myself thinking about a poppy-red beverage from the golden age of cocktails, which spanned from the 1860s until after the first World War. Although prohibition put a damper on the inventive bartending that had become all the rage, we were left with many of the classic mixed drinks we still enjoy today.

From this golden age came the Singapore Sling, which is believed

to have been invented at the famous Raffles Hotel during Singapore's colonial era. Still the signature cocktail at this colonial landmark, the fruity refreshment is served in a hurricane glass and garnished with a cherry and pineapple slice. The original girly drink, this gin-based cocktail was designed to fool onlookers as women sipped the spirited beverage disguised as a non-alcoholic punch during a time when ladies were not permitted to consume alcohol in public.

Prior to the Japanese occupation of Singapore in the 1940s, my grandfather, Lieutenant Commander William "Bill" "Digger" "Moose" Martyn, frequently patronized the long bar in the Raffles Hotel during time off from his duties. When I travelled to Singapore over two decades ago, I imagined him there, probably with a whiskey, while I savoured my then-\$16 Singapore Sling in the most beautiful hotel I've ever seen.

Although not on the menu, our very own grand hotel The Fairmont Empress will mix you up this lady in red upon request (just remember to ask nicely).

If fruity drinks are not your prohibition-era cup of tea, try something else made with their very own Empress 1908 Indigo Gin—you will not be disappointed.



Gay as in Happy

by Mackenzie Gibson

## Love in a time of elections

So what exactly are you supposed to do when an election puts someone who wants you non-existent in office? While the American election is outside our zone of influence, we're not outside of its influence. As Pierre Trudeau once said, "Living next to [America] is in some ways like sleeping with an elephant." And with Trump in the seat of power, this feels more looming than usual.

Voting is not choosing your friend, it's electing your enemy, who you'll be in dialogue with for the world you want to live in. How do we want to engage in that dialogue now?

The first thing I strive to keep in mind is that our rights were not given to us, they were fought for and hard won. We cannot simply wait for an election cycle to come around and then ask nicely for the people in power to recognize our humanity and our dignity.

This is something that has to be actively engaged with on an ongoing basis, and with so many broken hearts aware of the worst-case scenario, now is the time to give a rallying cry for real allyship. Likewise, allyship and mutual aid needs to be offered to the groups who suffer from bigotry you don't.

Next, I strongly encourage you to delve deep into the history of successful movements in the fight for

our rights. Who has been convincing to politicians or had effective grassroots organizing that foregoes bureaucracy to reach out hands and foster understanding?

This can be in our own struggle as queer people, but try to look at the cross-sections of oppression. Most people affected by bigoted systems exist at more than one point, be it by skin tone, religious background, ability, or other. Reach out and be aware.

Lastly, the world feels large and overwhelming. We can't change the world as one person alone, but each action we take affects the world we live in. How you do anything is how you do everything, and I want to do it with love. Not a toothless love that allows hurt in the hour of need, but a deep-rooted and powerful love that speaks truth to power in the name of the world I want. Let's fight for that world together, with a hand out to hold.

My recommendation this time is YouTuber Alexander Avila, particularly his most recent video "Hamilton and the Death of the Obama Era." His insight provided as both a sociologist and a trans man of colour is eloquent and funny, looking to the future for possible paths forward, while analyzing art about the past.

Good luck out there, I love you.





Pieces of Performance

by Acacia Tooth

## Missy Ink fills the stage with her burlesque energy

“I grew up in a more conservative part of the country and burlesque was my first chance [to] explore my queerness fully.”

MISSY INK  
BURLESQUE PERFORMER

Missy Ink has been a force to reckon with since stepping onto the burlesque scene in December 2022. As a dancer for 20 years prior to stepping into a different style and persona, she says the nerves are nothing but distant memories.

Before she performs, she creates the visual in her mind, the energy she projects filling the stage and the whole venue.

“I close my eyes and imagine myself filling up with purple light,” she says. “I imagine myself becoming fully [Missy] and leaving my real-life self backstage.”

As well as giving opportunities to others through Ink Splatters Production shows, Missy’s favourite performance so far has been *Cut the Tethers*, which she performed at Vancouver International Burlesque Festival this year. Using her background of contemporary and lyrical dance styles, she wraps herself in 80 feet of beautiful silks to portray

a cutting of toxic relationships from her life and to move toward healing.

“It was the first time I put something so personal into any of my art... I’ve been so moved by people’s reaction to it,” she says.

Missy—who will be starting one-on-one choreography workshops for burlesque performers in December; see @missy.ink\_ on Instagram for info—has two goals in mind when performing for audiences. To revel in the queer, butchy goodness, and to offer some catharsis.

“I grew up in a more conservative part of the country and burlesque was my first chance [to] explore my queerness fully,” she explains. “The intimacy created through burlesque allows me to explore deep and intense emotions and express them in a way you’re not able to in other art forms.”

Missy says the closing of the Victoria Event Centre, where she

held her first burlesque performance with Sapphos Isle, affects the community and the future of burlesque in this city.

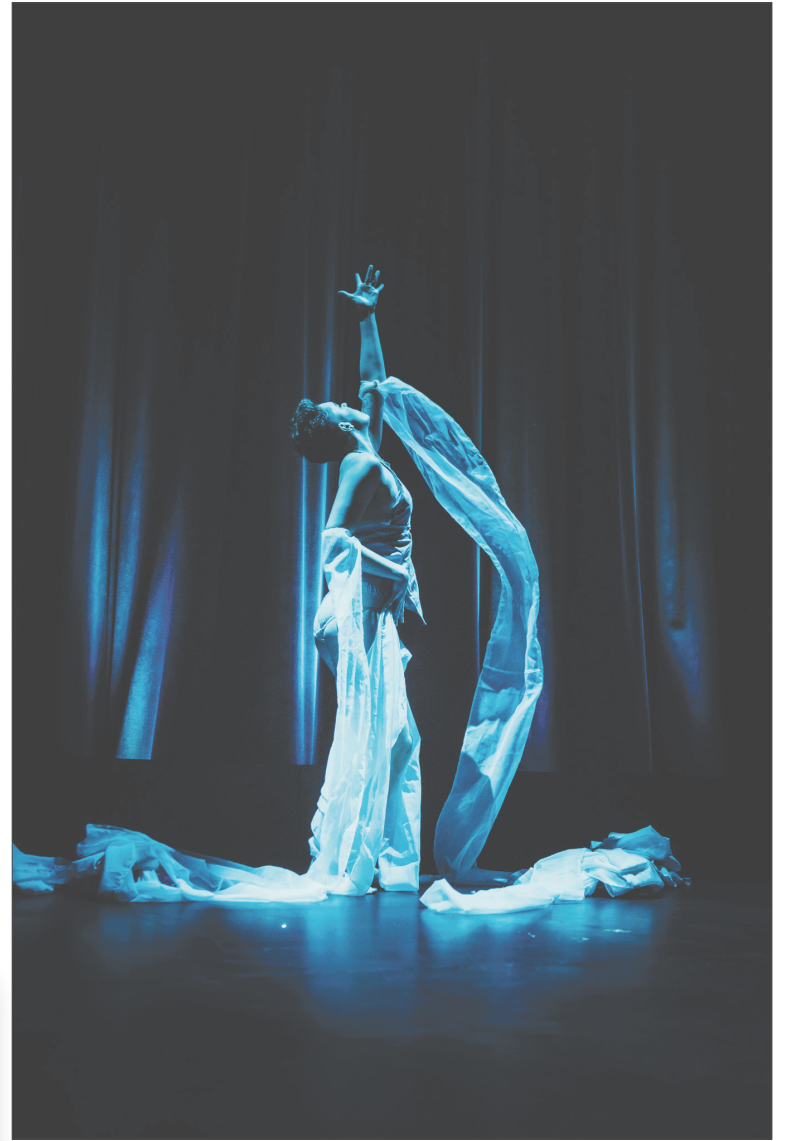
“I saw my first burlesque show there and made both my producer and performer debut there,” she says. “We didn’t just lose a venue for burlesque; we lost a space that was a cornerstone of the queer community in Victoria.”

Losing these event spaces and being pushed from alternative locations, such as food-primary venues, has taken its toll on queer and already marginalized communities.

“It comes across [as] devaluing specific kinds of art,” she says. “But I have faith in our community that we will rise [and] make a new space for burlesque and for queer art overall.”

Victoria is known for unique burlesque shows and Missy is bringing her third to The Mint this November. Ink Splatters Production has brought all-sapphic cast shows to the community and is not done making a mess of the town.

A F\*cking Mess:  
A Chaotic Cabaret  
7 pm Saturday,  
November 30  
The Mint  
[themintvictoria.com](http://themintvictoria.com)



VERONICA BONDERUD PHOTOGRAPHY

Missy Ink was a dancer for 20 years before stepping into her burlesque persona.

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