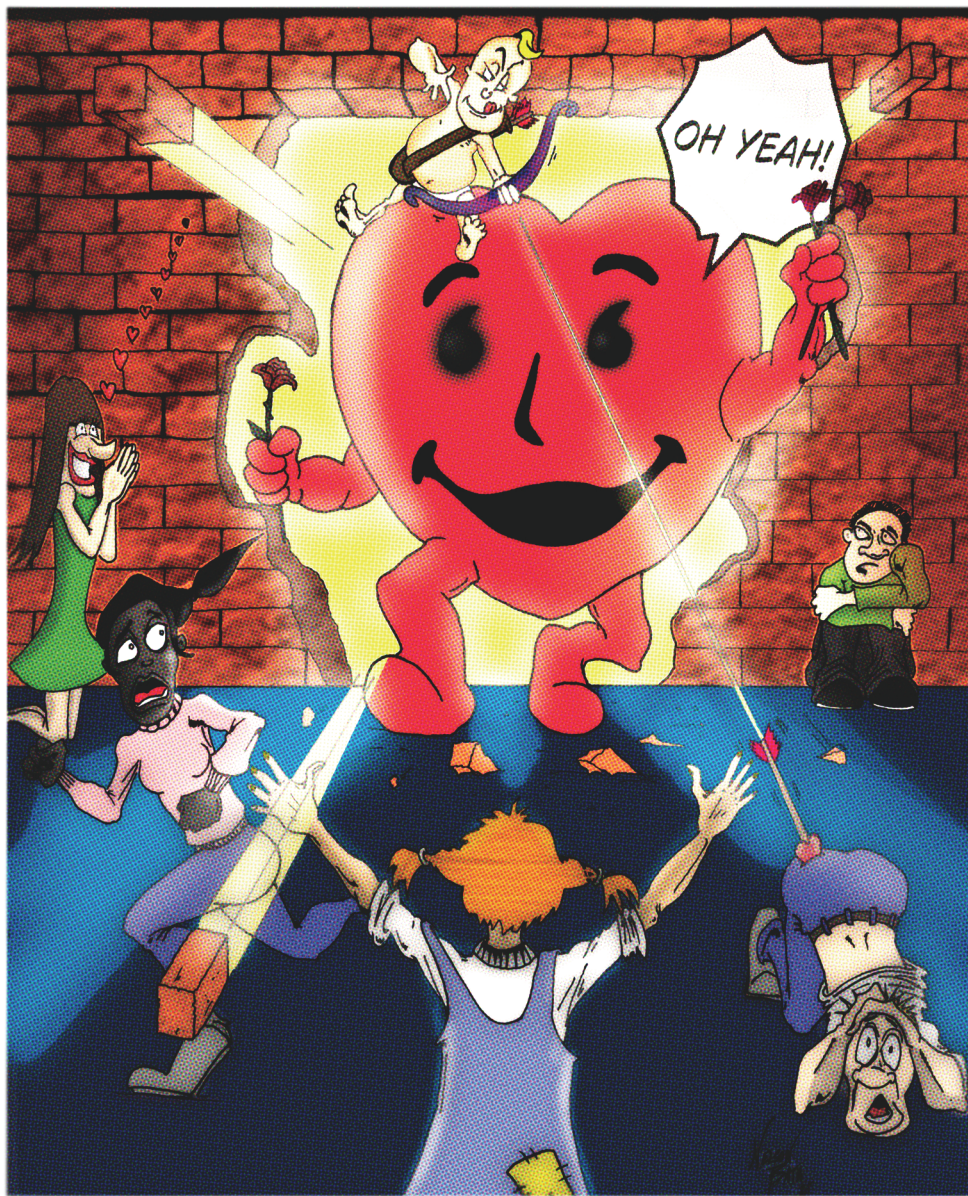


## LOVE LETTERS



### TALES OF DATING: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UNPLEASANT

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# NEXUS

camosun's student voice since 1990  
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## editor's letter Few winters

The winter, I've always felt, was the quietest season. The bugs and birds have departed until spring and we are alone to contemplate what they've left behind. Usually, it lets the person pause, waiting for all members of their ecosystem to spring out from hiding. But it isn't so quiet this winter. And by my own definition of winter, we are in the deepest fall, inescapable from its pull.

When living in Montreal, the winter I experienced was complete; it followed through with its totalitarian desires. I left my home only for small snacks at the *depanneur* and visits to my only friend, cutting away the fat of my existence outside my apartment. The mighty cold and ice refused my presence, as to traverse around anywhere was dedication to a life force I was not certain of. And in those moments living under the white sheet of winter, I felt most safe. The snow muffled all the peculiarities.

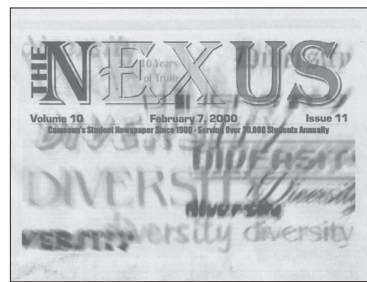
On the Pacific, and on a sea of variables, this winter is loud and the birds are still present. There is no snow, but the news is on, and it screams through the television, or smartphone, or laptop at its consumer, and it's too loud to quite make out the update, so we forget that it hasn't snowed for long now, or wonder where it has gone. I hear it's in Florida at this hour, lining the sands.

The sun bathes the concrete this winter, it screeches against the sidewalk. How crude it behaves is a matter of opinion, and everyone has got one to spare. (Had they ever stopped to think that the sun may not want to listen, perhaps we may not be in this predicament.) They shout, and so do I, the frustrations of an Earth without adequate winter, forgetting that winter requires the omission of this volume. And that frustrates them more.

There will be many winters from now on spent this way, waiting for the chill to weed us away but with no avail. And in our man-made snowball fights, we will wonder of the winter, where is its silence.

Lydia Zuleta Johnson, student editor  
lydia@nexusnewspaper.com

## flashback 25 Years Ago in Nexus



LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON  
STUDENT EDITOR

**Mosaics and melting pots:** Our February 7, 2000 issue was maximalist. On the cover it read “diversity” in at least 30 different fonts, smudged into each other with bright saturated colours. Loudly, it prepared the reader for a full-page documentation of a student discussion on the subject of diversity. Despite the trouble in finding enough students to talk about the topic, *Nexus* writer Lisa Hamilton goes on to say, the 10 who did attend enjoyed the discussion. The takeaway: well, it's rather non-PC to say, but I believe the bottom line is diversity is positive.

**Revenge of the nerds:** All across the nation, on February 2, 2000, students flooded city streets with chants and outrage over the

federal government's neglect of post-secondary education. As they knew it, a revolution was on the rise. Hundreds of picket signs read “Restore federal education funding” and they came as a response to social program cuts, major tuition increases, and a reduction of \$7 billion in education and training funding. In this issue, we covered the 400,000 students protesting for their right to education. Former prime minister Paul Martin had estimated a \$95-billion surplus in the next five years—significant enough money to stop traffic. Granted, Martin was the better prime minister of the 2000s.

**Easy rider:** After a catnap of about 20 years, the moped was predicted to have its grand return in 2000, claimed *Nexus* writer Jill Van Gyn. This issue, Van Gyn gave readers a comprehensive look at the return of the small vehicle, rediscovering the efficient and economical motivation for traversing on a moped. In fact, mopeds have over 160 kilometres to the gallon and come in various snazzy colours. In this parking crisis (see page 3), 2025 may too be the year of the moped.

## open space

# Everyone loses with book-buyback policies

HANNA SHULTIS  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Like many post-secondary institutions, Camosun College currently has a service in place wherein students can sell used textbooks back to the college bookstore at roughly 50 percent of retail price at the end of the semester. Up until recently, I and all of my two friends had never heard of this.

This is a great service to have in place, as buybacks are not only positive for students' bank accounts but also for the environment. Every year our precious, precious forests are

This may seem a particularly pedantic point to devote 500 words to in the student newspaper (especially considering I always had the option of selling the book online), but it's important to remember that when systems are more difficult to use, fewer people use them and everyone loses. Outgoing students don't get the benefit of extra money, incoming students don't get the benefit of cheap textbooks, and staff at the bookstore are forced to deal with irate customers such as myself.

So, what can be done?

The first answer is signage. Lots

## It's important to remember that when systems are more difficult to use, fewer people use them and everyone loses.

ravaged, ground into pulp, bleached by toxic chemicals, and hauled off in diesel trucks. By eliminating these steps, these second-hand textbooks are an example of vital sustainability.

Unfortunately, because of a lack of knowledge on the part of the students or lack of second-hand supply on the part of the bookstore, the current system leaves students often unable to access alternatives to new textbooks.

Cards on the table: I didn't know about the textbook buybacks until very recently, when I was fortunate (or unfortunate) enough to walk by the sign in front of the bookstore announcing the current round of buybacks. Although this was my third semester at Camosun, I had never heard of the service until that point. But bringing in the textbook meant an extra trip after my last final exam, which wouldn't have been so irksome had I, and the person in front of me, not been informed upon arrival that our books were ineligible to be bought back. Apparently, we would have known that information had we entered the books' ISBNs into the school website. While listed on the sign outside the bookstore, this last step was relatively simple but not intuitive. I had completely glossed over this even after reading the sign.

of signage year-round about what textbook buybacks are and when they are available.

Secondly, a better system would be one in which the titles of eligible textbooks are listed outside the bookstore during the buyback period. Remember, this is information the bookstore will almost certainly have. This saves students wasting time by bringing in ineligible books and employees needing to spend their shifts doling out bad news.

Thirdly, the bookstore currently doesn't buy back textbooks for courses not taking place the following semester. This is extremely short-sighted as many courses happen only during certain semesters, meaning the school is virtually guaranteeing no second-hand options will be available for those courses. Indeed, this means touching on broader issues of how college courses are scheduled.

Lastly, the college should extend the buyback period by a week earlier given the bookstore is still operational in that time and, by the time finals roll around, many students have already read through the textbooks.

If you're interested in getting some money back, the next round of textbook buybacks are taking place April 22 to April 25. And it benefits everyone if you show up.

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!

# NEXUS

camosun's student voice since 1990

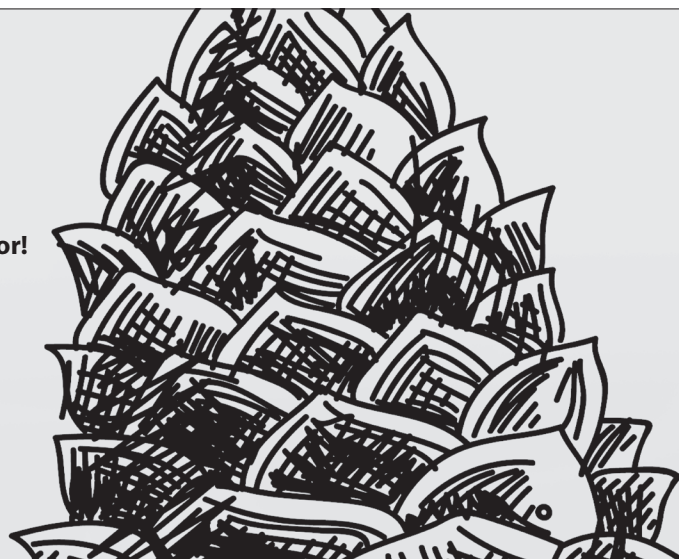
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Send a letter  
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OVERHEARD AT NEXUS: "I wanted to be a journalist but I've realized it's just writing a lot of emails."





transportation

## Parking challenges worsening at Interurban



JUSTIN CURRAN

Two shots from the Interurban campus taken in mid-January show the extent of the parking problem, with vehicles parking on grass and students circling the lots looking for spots.

**SANTIAGO VAZQUEZ-FUERTE**  
SENIOR WRITER

With the winter semester well underway, the parking frustrations at the Interurban campus have reached a breaking point with students and staff alike. The lack of parking spots during the busiest time of the semester has sparked complaints and frustration over Camosun's absence of solutions despite years of concern over the issue.

The parking problem is not new, according to Electronics and Computer Engineering instructor Justin Curran, who has seen this situation worsen over time.

"Actually, [it's been going on for] years now," says Curran. "I mean, the parking on the lawns is the worst I've seen, which has just started happening this term."

Nursing alumna Amy Davenport shares the sentiment about this problem not being new and adds that this issue caused her stress after practicum.

"I would often come to school hours early before my classes to ensure getting a spot near the building,

or even a spot at all on campus so that I could be on time for my classes," says Davenport, who graduated in 2023. "When I worked in the mornings and couldn't go early like I usually wanted to, to ensure a spot, it caused me a lot of stress and anxiety before my classes because I was almost late every single time those days."

The sight of student vehicles parked on grass is an example of students' desperation; searching for a spot disrupts their daily routines, according to Curran.

"We're just losing time," he says. "If we have any errands and meetings that are off campus, if we come back or if we just have later start times in the day [there will be no parking left]. Today, for instance, I showed up to campus half an hour before my class, just after 10:00, and there's no parking to be had."

Curran has had to use the Vancouver Island Technology Park parking lot, a significant walk from campus, to get to class on time.

"It's like a 10-minute walk. So from there back to campus, you get to drive around, go over there and

pay," says Curran. "The faculty can submit a receipt to get reimbursed for doing it, but students aren't even made aware that there's parking over there available to them."

Curran says the school tried to fix this problem with a solution that only made matters worse for students.

"The teachers union complained last year," he says. "They assured [us] that there'd be more parking for staff by replacing a bunch of stalls for staff parking, which is partially why the student parking is worse now."

This has resulted in students having to park in the lawns or staff parking spots, which can mean fines or, in some cases, getting their vehicle towed. Curran says he has no idea why the college is not doing anything about it but offers some ideas to help.

"I have no idea; no one has said why. I mean, there's a bunch of options for them that they can look into," he says. "Like adding more parking by adding, say, gravel parking... extending the gravel lot for PISE. There's a whole parking

**"If your class is at 10:30 and you are at the campus around 10:00, I'm telling you, you'll be late in the class because you won't get any parking at that time."**

**PRINCE SOLANKI**  
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY

lot behind the Vancouver Island Tech Park that's empty and chained off, so they could rent off them."

Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) external executive Prince Solanki, who studies at Interurban, confirms that parking can be increasingly difficult in the morning.

"If your class is at 10:30 and you are at the campus around 10:00, I'm telling you, you'll be late in the class because you won't get any parking at that time," says Solanki. "It's getting worse. I've also seen students parking their cars on the grass because they have to get to classes. So students are parking their cars off the parking [lots]. And

last I heard from students they even got fined for that as well."

However, Solanki says the CCSS board has made parking one of its top priorities. On Monday, January 13, the board met with Camosun College Faculty Association (CCFA) president Lynelle Yutani to discuss this problem.

"We had a meeting with the CCFA because of [an] incident when they towed lots of cars from the campus," says Solanki. "We had a pretty huge conversation about the parking issues on campus... and we have decided we're going to talk to the college about this."

Camosun College declined a request to be interviewed for this story.

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Chargers recognize student athletes

The Camosun Chargers recently recognized graduating volleyball student athletes. On Saturday, February 1, Chantelle Dobie, Kris La Guardia, and Liam Conlin were recognized at Seniors Night. As of press time, both Chargers men's and women's volleyball teams are 8-8 this season. See [camosun.ca/chargers](http://camosun.ca/chargers) for more info.

### Camosun announces West Shore programming

Camosun College recently announced some of the programs it will be offering at its new West Shore combined campus. The college will be offering

the Information and Computer Systems Technologist diploma, the Early Learning and Care diploma, and the Health Care Assistant certificate program, as well as Arts and Science courses, at the campus as of September 2025. The five-storey campus is a joint partnership between Camosun, Royal Roads, and the University of Victoria; it will also have space for School District 62 (Sooke) and Justice Institute of British Columbia programming.

### Former Camosun president appointed as school board trustee

Former Camosun College president Sherri Bell was recently appointed as trustee to carry out the Greater Victoria School Board's duties until the next

board elections in 2026. Bell was appointed after education minister Lisa Beare dismissed the entirety of the current Greater Victoria School Board, saying the board had refused to work with local First Nations, police, and other key stakeholders in the interest of student safety. This stems from a 2023 board decision to cancel the district's school police liaison program.

### Boraas retires

After 25 years with Camosun, vice-president of education John Boraas retired after a 40-year career in education on January 24. First joining the college in 2000 as dean of School of Access, Boraas was heavily involved in developing the college's Indigenization initiative and its Truth and

Reconciliation response, and was dedicated to initiatives and supports to enhance the college.

### Camosun recognized as a top school in Canada

Camosun has been recognized by CourseCompare, a platform for education insights and ratings, as the second-best college in the Vancouver category, only below British Columbia Institute of Technology. The college's high ranking is attributed in part to its trades training programs, providing students looking to further their education, a step toward a degree. Particularly, the range of the college's trades programs made them most notable. Camosun's two-year Massage Therapy diploma program was

mentioned as well on the list, ranked 14th for best massage therapy schools in Canada.

### College hosts career fair

Camosun's Career Lab recently hosted their first Mega Career Fair. On Tuesday, February 4 at Interurban and Thursday, February 6 at Lansdowne, the college offered the opportunity for students to connect with over 120 guests from various industries.

**-LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON, STUDENT EDITOR AND GREG PRATT, MANAGING EDITOR**

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CCSS

## Student society offers free consensual valentines



CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY

The Camosun College Student Society is offering free consensual valentines.

RAY NUFER  
STUDENT EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

The superficial displays of Valentine's Day romance have become exhausting over the years. Where's the holiday for platonic love and community? The Camosun Col-

lege Student Society (CCSS) will be putting a twist on Cupid this month—during Campus Life Days, students can subvert the norm and order a “consensual valentine,” a sweet treat to be delivered by the student to a friend, at no cost.

“A consensual valentine is a valentine that you are able to make the choice whether you accept it or not,” says CCSS clubs and events assistant Amy Lee-Radigan. “It's really just a way of promoting consent culture and creating more awareness about consent.”

Consent awareness around Valentine's Day is not only about receiving informed consent when propositioning romance with a crush, but also encapsulates an overarching environment of respect and trust.

“So often with holidays that have that kind of romantic nature, there can be increased pressure in romantic situations,” says Lee-Radigan. “Creating an ongoing respectful and safe environment for everyone is especially important to keep in mind.”

With consensual valentines, Lee-Radigan says that the focus can be shifted away from romance.

“They can absolutely be platonic—there's nothing better than telling your friends that you care about them,” they say. “There's so much focus on Valentine's being a very romantic holiday, and I think this is a fantastic opportunity for students to also bring it into the friendship realm. We've had some students order them and then organize in a group so that their entire class has received them on the morning of.”

CCSS advocacy and outreach coordinator Michael Glover thought

“They can absolutely be platonic—there's nothing better than telling your friends that you care about them.”

AMY LEE-RADIGAN  
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY

up the idea for the event several years ago, but this year, the CCSS is changing it up a little.

“We used to hand-deliver the valentines to different classrooms for students, but simply due to the event expanding, we've had to stop that,” says Lee-Radigan. “This year, students can pre-order their valentines in advance, and then go pick them up on the 11th [at Interurban] and 13th [at Lansdowne] of February. Then they can give them to their friends themselves.”

Students can sign up to have candy, a flower, or an orange packaged together with their consensual valentine.

“It's lovely to give and receive, especially if it's a free event,” says Lee-Radigan. “If you are a student who doesn't feel like they can afford to splurge on their friends, this is a wonderful opportunity to get them a little treat.”

Campus Life Days, which go on every week from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, happen in the Centre for Business and Access foyer on Mondays and Tuesdays at the Interurban cam-

pus, and in the Fisher building foyer on Wednesdays and Thursdays at the Lansdowne campus. From Monday, January 27 until Thursday, February 6, students can drop by the CCSS table at Campus Life Days and pre-order their valentine. There will be a few available on the day of, but it's recommended to pre-order, says Lee-Radigan.

“The Office of Student Support will be joining us [at Campus Life Days] to have one of their consent information booths set up,” they say. “So not only can you get a valentine, you can also have trained professionals give a little bit more information on consent culture.”

So, if you're feeling down and the romantic pressure is high around this Valentine's Day, it could be an opportune moment to see a friend and take a break from your homework.

“It's so easy to get bogged down in schoolwork and everything going on in the world and all around us right now,” says Lee-Radigan. “It's nice to have that person-to-person connection highlighted.”

food

## This year will be the year of the can



LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON/NEXUS

A sampling of some of the canned foods set to dominate in 2025, the year of the canned good.

LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON  
STUDENT EDITOR

To survive off of canned food is to billow in a sweltering breeze. The body bloated and subdued, still happy-go-lucky. Tins of beans and soups and peaches stew in their own thick fluids on grocery-store shelves and then on the buyer's for several years with no consequence, not one spoil. Various items for consumption at suspicious temperatures mingle in the cupboard and wait for desperate stomachs. Meanwhile, an entire planet is on the fritz. In a time

so dire, so uncertain, it is the year of the canned good.

A well-stocked pantry has never not been in style, but the quantity which the fridge will bear, I predict, is on the decline. Out with the per-pound food measurements, and in with the grams and millilitres.

I wouldn't be the first, or even the second, to make an observation on the surging price of groceries. And indeed they will continue to go up. Canada's Food Price Report for 2025 predicts that “based on the 2024 predictions, the total

annual expenditure for a family with the following demographic composition: a man (aged 31-50), a woman (aged 31-50), a boy (aged 14-18), and a girl (aged 9-13), was projected to be \$16,297.20. Based on the observed changes in 2024, a family with the same demographic makeup spent \$16,032.07, a difference of \$265.13.” This is to say by about five percent.

To chat unaffordability in a supermarket aisle is the glue that binds. “It is entirely unprecedented,” a mother of four says to the

In a time so dire, so uncertain, it is the year of the canned good.

self-diagnosed anxious college student. “It's impossible!” And it is. And then they purchase \$75 worth of lettuce and find ways to forget.

The interaction happens in the cracker aisle, the freezer aisle, the cleaning, the baking, and the produce aisle, but in the quaint canned-goods corner of a Safeway, it is quiet.

It is true that the price of even cans has gone up; there are no blind spots to this inflation that has been going around. But what happens in the cool, dry pantry stays in the cool, dry pantry. Low-acid foods like luncheon meat and vegetables are in their prime to be eaten up to five years. And high-acid foods like tomatoes, jams, and pickles up to 18 months. But, so long as no rust, swelling, or dents are visible, canned foods are safe to eat indefinitely. (If rust, swelling, or dents are visible, do not ingest these canned items, as they may cause botulism, a life-threatening illness, terrible.)

Both the lifespan and value of canned goods make them increasingly attractive with most other items, inside and outside of the grocery store, priced above \$5. An entire meal in one Campbell's Chunky Chili is undeniably precious in a devastated economy.

In the midst of serious concerns over climate change and political spectacles too, it isn't so absurd to even see the fridge be tossed away this year, making room for more shelved pantry space. Perhaps this will even spark a new interior design trend. The new lime wash. I predict this will begin foremost with the *nouveau* trad-wife, first doing her own canning with rustic-looking cursive labels, and then will move forward to the broader working class.

It would be unsurprising to see this trend manifest as well in the cooking-show and -book industry, teaching consumers how to “can up” their lives, with cheeky recipes for sardine sammies and cream of mushroom cocktails. This will likely be the “it” Christmas stocking stuffer of the year. However, one of these authors will surely have a scandal that puts canning into question.

But cans will not come alone to the Thanksgiving table this year, luckily. With them, I predict, will be freeze-dried foods, bottled water, powdered eggs, honey, instant coffee, and boullion cubes. I predict many who once were deemed freak doomsday preppers will soon be revered.



## venues

## The Coda continues a legacy with new downtown music venue

“We both went to Hermann’s lots. When we were younger and all through the years, and it has a super special place for both of us.”

AL SMITH  
THE CODA

ACACIA TOOTH  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

While Victoria’s music scene is reeling over the consistent loss of venues, Al Smith and Christina Morrison are filling the gap with The Coda. The two are no strangers to the music community and knew they had to step up to save what is left of a piece of history in Hermann’s Upstairs.

Smith and Morrison share their ties to the old Hermann’s Jazz Club as far back as they can remember.

“We both went to Hermann’s lots,” says Smith. “When we were younger and all through the years, and it has a super special place for both of us.”

Morrison says the space hosted her first gig when she started playing.

“I used to go to the jam sessions down there all the time because it was a place you knew that all the top musicians in town were going to be,” she says. “And they would teach you things.”

The personal attachment to the space and community made for an emotional decision when it came to saving this piece of local music history. With worry about the future tenants not jiving with the jazz club space below, they felt something had to be done.

“There was nothing except that we just didn’t want it to die, so we’re going to make it work,” says Morrison. “We didn’t want to see whatever this was affect Hermann’s downstairs because the sound travels [and] it might affect the success of the jazz club. [It] was super important to me Hermann’s Jazz Club sticks around.”

While making sure that sound quality is in check, there comes a price to pay for labour, even when it’s the at the expense of your own back. While Morrison handles the bookings, coordinates bands and permits, Smith has taken on sawdust and design.

“We’re so picky about the sound gear that goes in here. We 3D mod-



PHOTO PROVIDED

Al Smith and Christina Morrison are opening The Coda downtown at the old Hermann’s Upstairs location on View Street.

elled this room and had it sound engineered,” says Smith. “Little dings in the walls—let it go, who cares? It better sound good.”

Community is a high priority for Smith and Morrison. They hope those who visit the venue come from all walks of life and appreciate a good groove and the hard work that goes into keeping music alive.

“We want to also build a following of people that just love live music,” says Smith.

Smith hopes when people decide to go out on a Friday they think of The Coda.

“[I hope people say] ‘I’m going

to go and listen to some great music and hang out with some cool people. I know there’s going to be cool people there,” says Smith.

With word spreading fast, Morrison says they have already received interest from out-of-town bands.

“We’ve had some touring bands call and ask if they could do part of their album release tours here,” she says.

Morrison is excited to continue the momentum and be able to accommodate musicians who hope to play for anything from small crowds up to a larger following of fans. The ability to have two separate

rooms for beginner performers and larger-scale acts makes this one of the more versatile spaces for music performers and lovers.

While there is still lots to be done, the aim is to be open mid-February and to allow for all-ages daytime shows in the future.

“We’ve never done this before. So we’re using our combined experience... Coming together is a great combination for it to be able to work. And for so many musicians relying on this, and so much community relying on this, we just can’t fail. So... no pressure,” says Morrison with a laugh.

## film

## Victoria Film Festival showcases documentary on family curse



COURTESY MICRO\_SCOPE, NFB, URBAN FACTORY 2024

A still from *Ghosts of the Sea*, one of the films screening this year at the Victoria Film Festival.

SANTIAGO VAZQUEZ-FUERTE  
SENIOR WRITER

It’s lights, camera, and action for the Victoria Film Festival (VFF). The VFF celebrates cinema and this year will bring together filmmakers and film enthusiasts for 120 movies.

One movie screening this year is *Ghosts of the Sea*, a documentary that delves into Virginia Tangvald’s search for clues about her brother Thomas’ death at sea, which leads her to unravel the dark secrets of her family history and her father, the famous sailor Peter Tangvald.

“For a long time, I tried to just

not give it too much importance. But somehow that doesn’t work,” says Tangvald. “I started to really feel this itch to understand who my father was... and when my brother disappeared, I’d say I thought, okay, I have to change strategy, instead of always avoiding my father’s story and the family story, I really have to look into it face on.”

Her father died in a shipwreck when Tangvald was five. She and her brother were both born at sea on the ship her father built. However, they had different life paths. While her mother brought her back to

dry land, her brother (who had a different mother), followed in his father’s footsteps.

“I asked myself that question a lot—Why was he still so drawn to that life at sea when he lost everything?” says Tangvald. “And I think that he was very loyal to the story that my father had built... [which was] if you really want to live fully, you always have to live on the edge of death. So I think that my brother wasn’t able to question that because it was too painful, because his father was really all he had.”

Thomas, who was also an ex-

“I think I was able to break the curse because of this movie, because of the storytelling, because of the research, because I was able to retake control over the narrative.”

VIRGINIA TANGVALD  
FILMMAKER

perienced sailor, set sail in bad weather with no radio or motor, an unusual decision for someone who knows the sea. The film explores the possibility of a family curse and that perhaps Virginia is bound to the same destiny.

“I also felt that pull and that lure [to follow my father’s path],” says Tangvald. “When my brother disappeared at sea, I thought, I really have to figure this out because I’m going to do the same thing. Some way or another, unconsciously or not. I think I was able to break the curse because of this movie, because of the storytelling, because of the research, because I was able to retake control over the narrative.”

Once she delved deeper into the story of her father, she found out some dark secrets about him. Tangvald says that her father had a selfish way of living and an idea of freedom that led him to live a lonely life.

“He imprisoned himself in his

own notion of freedom,” says Tangvald. “All of a sudden, he was this poor old man alone stuck on a boat with nowhere to go and with no perspectives. So he was totally trapped. It was really a catch-22, because he thought that other people were the enemy of his freedom, but, in fact, he needed other people to be free.”

Tangvald hopes that the audience leaves the theatre reflecting on the importance of owning one’s own story.

“Figuring out who you are and how you want to live, its stories tell us a lot about ourselves,” says Tangvald. “So we should really be aware of the stories that we tell about ourselves and who gets to tell the story of who we are.”

Victoria Film Festival  
Various times,  
Friday, February 7  
to Sunday, February 16  
Various prices and venues  
victoriafilmfestival.com



HAYLIE EWING  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Growing up in a group of friends more focused on video games than relationships, the topic of flirting and romance rarely came up. I wasn't really interested in dating, either; I enjoyed watching high-school love drama from afar. That is, until I met this guy when we were both 16.

We first met at a waterpark in the night. He was drunk, and thought I was weird. Still, he liked "weird" people, so we became friends easily. We found out we went to the same high school, and I'd skip class to hang out with him and his friends. Skipping class was something I'd never done before, but I thought it'd make me seem cool.

I just found him handsome from the start, but spending more time with him made me realize I was crushing on him, hard. The problem? I had no clue how to flirt. So, I turned to the group chat for advice, only to be met with, "That's crazy. Want to play *Minecraft*?" My friends were no help. I then resorted to the best (worst) site for relationship advice: Reddit. The only tip that stayed consistent was to be direct, so that's what I did.

So that same day, I texted him a meme of two cats "kissing" and I added a message below saying "could be us," testing the waters in the least subtle way possible. He replied saying, "could be," which had me shocked. So I went for it: "I'm kissing you at school tomorrow if that is ok." To my horror, he replied with a "yes."

So, as tomorrows usually work, it became a today. On that today, I avoided him. I wasn't expecting him to agree to a kiss and I was scared. He caught me right after lunch break, asked my permission, and gave me a kiss. Then I went to class and ignored all messages from him for the next three hours because I was absolutely terrified, which made him think I was upset with him. I sent a message not long before classes ended for the day and we agreed to meet up, where once again, I was very direct: "You kissed me... am I your girlfriend now?" He later said my flirting was so terrible, it became cute. We're still happily together almost three years later. So my best dating advice: don't listen to Reddit, unless they like pathetic flirts.

AJ AIKEN  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

When it comes to dating apps, there's an ocean of bad-date stories. I have a few, including finding my ex-husband with a picture of our son on Tinder, being called intimidating, and finding a new husband (who quickly ran out on me), but my favourite, and most often told, really isn't about dating apps despite meeting on one. From what I've been told, the problem was an island thing.

Years ago, I had been talking to a guy for a week or so on Tinder before we decided to meet for drinks. I suggested we meet at The Drake; back then it was new and exciting and one of my favourite spots. The day we were to meet, he confirmed the date was still on; all signs pointed to a good night.

Knowing The Drake would be busy, I went down a bit early to try to get a table. Sure enough, when I got to the pub, the place was packed; all the tables were full, so I sat at the bar. I knew I had a bit of time, so I ordered a drink and waited... and waited... and waited.

The more time passed, the more restless I got. I didn't know what to do. There were no messages from the guy saying something had come up and that he wasn't coming. I didn't know how much time I should give him before leaving. I kept thinking, "What if I leave and he shows up a few minutes later?"

The bartender noticed I was constantly checking my phone and getting frustrated. He asked if the person I was waiting for was late. Embarrassed by how obvious it was, I let him know my date was 15 minutes late.

Now, I had only lived on the island for a few years and hadn't really dated in Victoria. When the bartender responded, "He's not late, he's running on island time," I was a bit shocked. I thought island time was a joke, but he seemed serious. So, I grabbed another drink and waited a bit longer.

After another 15 minutes, the bartender came back and said, "You've been stood up." I was stunned; I had never been stood up before. I must have looked shocked or confused because the bartender informed me that being stood up is a rite of passage in Victoria.

I ended up staying at The Drake that night and chatting with the bartender. We shared stories about bad dating-app experiences and relationships. It ended up being a fun night.

So, if you ever get stood up in Victoria, don't worry: that's island life. If you're lucky, a cute bartender might buy you a drink to soften the blow.

# LOVE LETTERS

## TALES OF DATING: TINDER AND THE U

JASMINE WAGSTAFF  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

For my second date with my girlfriend, I made us dinner at her place.

We matched on Tinder and talked for a few weeks before we met up in person. I was busy with school, she was busy with work, and it took a little while for our schedules to line up.

Our first was fun but a bit awkward; we met at Peacock Billiards and played pool for a while. Mostly we were just making out on one of their couches, though. We did still play a few games of pool.

For our second date, I made us spaghetti and meatballs. I got everything from the grocery store, even spent \$10 on a small block of the good parmigiano reggiano. I've always loved cooking for people and mentioned this to her while we were still just texting. I was excited to make the two of us a nice dinner.

When I got there, she surprised me with some beautiful pink flowers. I've never had a girl buy me flowers before. I mentioned previously in our Tinder messages that pink is my favourite colour and that's why she picked those ones out for me.

I made everything but the pasta from scratch. I made the meatballs from some ground beef, parsley, eggs, breadcrumbs, and, of course, the good parmesan. I used to be a prep cook at a restaurant, so I always make what I can instead of buying it from a store.

I lit some candles, plated the pasta all nice with some parsley and parmesan as garnish, set the table up nice, and we had our meal together. She loved it and told me we needed to do this again in the future.

We snuggled after dinner on the couch and watched a few episodes of *Star Trek*. It was a cozy night in.

I couldn't stop smiling when I was bussing home afterwards, holding the flowers she got for me. I was so happy with how the night had gone; I was really nervous that it would go poorly. I'm glad I was wrong about that.

We've been dating for about three months now. Although we go out for dates sometimes, we have a lot of those cozy nights in. And she often requests I make her that same dish of spaghetti and meatballs. That simple dish just has something special to it now, at least for us.

Art by Nelson Bath



ALLY MARTINDALE  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

I've experienced the good, the bad, and the ugly when it comes to first dates. The story I'm going to share with you today is about an amazing first date and how I met my current partner.

It all happened one night when I was supposed to meet a girlfriend for dinner. Keep in mind I only met this girl a month ago while I was out downtown and she gave off very chaotic energy. So I go up to the address she sent me, which was supposed to be a restaurant, and it ends up being a random apartment complex. I was pretty weirded out, but I ended up buzzing up anyways and, honestly, I'm so glad I did.

My friend meets me in the hallway and takes me upstairs to the apartment. It ended up being full with strangers, but there was a guy in the corner who immediately caught my eye.

We ended up hitting it off, and he asked if I wanted to leave so he could take me on our first date. Of course I said yes. This was around Christmastime so all the lights were up around town; we started it off in Centennial Square with all the beautiful lights and we shared our first kiss in the light tunnel. I got such a huge swarm of butterflies.

Then we got late-night Denny's and shared life stories over pancakes and milkshakes. (He made me laugh so hard from the very first date; he's absolutely the funniest person I know.) After Denny's we were going to call it a night, but we both didn't want the night to end. So we went back to my place and baked cookies.

Baking cookies, we made a huge mess in the kitchen, which is mostly my fault—I'm such a mess in the kitchen. We ended up eating cookies and getting to know each other until about 3:00 am, when we both decided it was time for bed, so we passed out snuggling each other. When we woke up in the morning we got delivery for breakfast and ate it at the lake near my house.

We are still together to this day and we basically live together now. He's still the funniest person I know and I love him.

LANE CHEVRIER  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Imagine an awkward, 19-year-old autistic man full of pep and hopeful vigour, about to meet a girl for a first date, having almost never gone on a date before in his life, and certainly never a successful one. This was to be no exception.

It was a sweltering, humid day in August. Stepping off the bus, I hadn't gotten very far before the sky darkened as a flock of seagulls swarmed and whirled overhead, screaming raucously. I heard the pattering of small, wet impacts, like a fleet of enemy airships dropping their explosive payload. I dodged and weaved like a drunken elephant, but to no avail. A rich, moist deposit of bird shit splattered down the back of my neck.

Frantically, I infiltrated a restaurant bathroom and washed up. However, I overlooked something. The greasy reek of digested fish is a scent best cleaned with cold water, otherwise the smell will set in. I used the hottest water possible, and by the time I finished, I had a very wet, stinking shirt. Instantly, I knew this was unacceptable, so I came up with my next brilliant plan. I snuck into the fragrance department of a Shoppers Drug Mart and bathed in the only cologne they were sampling. To my horror, I realized that this did not help. Rather than smelling like hot, dead fish, I now smelled like hot, dead fish in a perfume factory.

I would have to risk it. I scrambled to meet my date. She looked amazing, but her brow furrowed as she noticed that I was saturated from the tits up, and entirely flustered. Not wanting to remain indoors, I suggested we walk. This was a bad idea. Inside, it was air conditioned, but beneath the searing naked rays, I began to sweat, and soon realized I had forgotten to apply deodorant that morning. I was moist, anxious, and smelled indescribable.

If you've ever watched a young autistic man interact with the opposite sex, it is a masterclass in cringe. Despite my best efforts to be suave and dazzling, it was increasingly clear I was making a disastrous impression. The poor girl kept grimacing, and kept a generous distance between us. Eventually, she supplied an excuse to leave. For some senseless reason, I felt that the best departure would be predicated on a hug, but she dodged me, and gagged.

We never had a second date.

NIK OVSTAAS  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Dating is tricky. And seems to be getting trickier. But it's an entirely different world when you're gay. If you're cruising for an otter or scanning the room for a lipstick, that's easy, but if you want to settle down, get a bearded dragon together, and hope for someone to clean you up when you shit yourself as you die, that's a whole other bunch of bananas.

This has become increasingly obvious to me as I age. There was a time when I could crawl out of a boxcar, figure out what city I was in, and then just try not to vomit on whatever old guy was buying me dinner and drinks. It was the life—I slept under bridges, caught rides with questionable truckers, did more than one thing that I've tried to forget, and now suddenly I am the lecherous old man at the bar. The shift from being whore to john was so subtle I didn't even notice it happening.

Sex work is really hard work with long hours, and they deserve to be supported. But I'm here to tell you that suddenly realizing that you might be the john is also no picnic. Now every old guy I meet thinks I have sass-mouth.

Unfortunately, as a homosexual, these were the options I was proffered. Be gorgeous and friendly and the world is your oyster, or... the alternative. There are darling stories where you and the high-school jock fall in love behind the bleachers, but for the vast majority of us, we are just behind the bleachers to roll cigarette butts into butt smokes and drink shitty beer.

That brings us up to speed. I'm a middle-aged, vaguely unpleasant and overbearing gay man that already hates you, reader. Balding, overweight, covered in ill-advised tattoos, and bubbling over with rage. Yours truly.

I suppose it's too much to ask to just be allowed to roll around in a field of wildflowers, until some fucking rad as shit dude comes and sweeps me off my feet.

If we're being so unjustly deprived of that sort of baroque love affair where we both wind up dead, at least give us a little rococo whimsy to while away the hours.

I suppose all of this is just to say that those of you that should find yourselves so lucky as to slip easily into the dull-as-dishwater mould of heterosexual domesticity should count your boring blessings. Us queers will see you when we're done having fun.

# BETTERS

## THE GOOD, THE BAD, UNPLEASANT

, contributing artist



## music

## Pacific Baroque Festival celebrates musical artistry borne from tragedy

“Music, or any art, follows a course, and it develops experimentation and new styles, but it’s always in some way reflective of the time when it’s created, and I would say times of hardship, conflict, or great prosperity as well, can inspire a great deal of very rich artistic expression.”

MARC DESTRUBÉ  
PACIFIC BAROQUE FESTIVAL

LANE CHEVRIER  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The Thirty Years’ War, during the first half of the 17th century, was a period of intense political and religious upheaval in Europe, which claimed the lives of millions of soldiers and civilians due to conflict and famine. However, it was also a time of artistic flourish.

“Somehow, the music that came out of that implies how great art can grow out of terrible things, and how art and music can exemplify the best in humanity, when daily life doesn’t necessarily do the same thing,” says Pacific Baroque Festival artistic director Marc Destrubé, speaking about the upcoming 21st Pacific Baroque Festival.

Destrubé says that as a form of catharsis, music can express a rich tapestry of emotions, even within a single piece.

“Like any art, music tends to

follow along a path, stylistically, and those sorts of upheavals give life and a lot of freedom to composers to set off in new directions and experiment and try new things,” he says. “I think it inspires and really delves into the depths of the human soul, and how one expresses emotion through music, and I suppose that despair, and ultimate joy, can all be reflected through music. Sometimes I think what’s maybe most extraordinary about music is, as an artist, you can reflect conflicting emotions at the same time, or different subtleties of emotion in one piece of music, and that’s a special quality.”

This year’s festival—Peace, Friendship and Joy: Music from the German Baroque—focuses on the three musicians in Johannes Voorhout’s painting *Allegory of Friendship*: Johann Reinken, Dietrich Buxtehude, and Johann Thiele, whose music revitalized

Hamburg as a centre of music during the Thirty Years’ War. This music illustrates not the horror and pain of war, but how strife can bring people together in a desire for peace and unity.

“I should say that the Peace program [in the Festival] also has a lot of tragic music, because it reflects the yearning for peace amongst the composers writing in that program, so a lot of the text simply reflects the yearning of the artists and musicians hoping for peace in the horrors of war,” says Destrubé. “Music, or any art, follows a course, and it develops experimentation and new styles, but it’s always in some way reflective of the time when it’s created, and I would say times of hardship, conflict, or great prosperity as well, can inspire a great deal of very rich artistic expression.”

For those who are inexperienced with classical music, Destrubé considers the baroque period to be the most accessible, with brighter, more energetic pieces that are quite short compared to many classical works, and with aspects that resemble some modern music. The festival, which spans a week, features six concerts played at local venues, including the Christ Church Cathedral and the Alix Goolden Performance Hall. A variety of string, wind, and organ music will be accompanied by the vocal talents of soprano Dorothee Miels, and features a finale of chor-



PHOTO PROVIDED

Soprano Dorothee Miels will be singing at the Pacific Baroque Festival this year. al evensong by the Christ Church Cathedral Choir.

The choice of venue has a great effect on the perception of the music, says Destrubé, because the acoustic resonance flavours the music in the same way that the quality of light enhances visual art.

“If you look at a painting in poor light, you don’t see its best aspects,” he says, “and a good acoustic for

musical instruments is the same thing—it brings out the best in the music for people to hear it.”

*Pacific Baroque Festival*  
Various times,  
Tuesday, February 18 to  
Sunday, February 23  
Various prices and venues  
[pacbaroque.com/2025-festival-program](http://pacbaroque.com/2025-festival-program)

## review

## Sum 41 sum up 30 years of punk at final Victoria arena performance



COLIN SMITH TAKES PICS

Sum 41 on stage at the Save-On-Foods Memorial Centre in Victoria on January 10; it was the band’s final Canadian tour.

ACACIA TOOTH  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Arriving at Save-On-Foods Memorial Centre to take in Sum 41’s Tour of the Setting Sun—their final Canadian tour—on Friday, January 10, I was met with multiple generations of lovers of the Ontario punk band.

Joining the tour were Vancou-

ver punks Gob; having them open was unfortunate as the majority of people were still waiting in line and missed the opportunity to see them perform.

The angsty PUP, celebrating their first arena tour, had a transgender flag in tow to show love for the diversity in the music community. The sound was balanced, but

the lead singer was outshined by his back-up singers and was a bit shaky with nerves.

When Sum 41 was introduced with the drop of a massive curtain, it was clear I was in for a show full of love, sadness, and a band proud of their legacy. The lighting was done beautifully and matched the mood of each song.

Not only was the sound enough to immerse every corner of the Memorial Centre, but the band also made sure to include every individual in their quirks, call-outs, and collective singing.

The main theme of the show was consistently recognized as being a celebration of the Sum 41 family, their supporters through

the years, and even the new lovers of the punk rock legends. The lead singer, Deryck Whibley, rallied the crowd on the floor to mosh but to make sure everyone was looking out for each other.

Sharing music from their 2024 double album, *Heaven :x: Hell*, they also touched back to their early music that made them who they are and was part of their rise to fame. From *Half Hour of Power* to the forever classics off the albums *All Killer No Filler* and *Does This Look Infected?*, it was an emotional journey from beginning to end.

Being able to sum up almost 30 years of music in one night made this one of the most touching concerts I’ve ever attended. The mix of concert-goers from different walks of life came together for the purpose of saying goodbye to a group that provided the soundtrack to some of the toughest years of our lives, highlighting heartbreak, teenage angst, and a love for punk.

I was holding back tears as the band came together for one last bow on stage in Victoria. You could tell it was hard for them to want the night to end. They let us know that they would only be gone in person but not in spirit.

As they finish off their tour from coast to coast, the legacy will live on through the younger crowd, and that’s a feat that would be hard for any band to replicate.





PIECES OF PERFORMANCE

BY ACACIA TOOTH



## The self-discovery of Serra Moanie and Lincoln Sparks

“[I’d like to see] a fully accessible performance venue for both the drag and burlesque community to thrive.”

SERRA MOANIE  
BURLESQUE PERFORMER

Performing for decades and landing in the Victoria scene in 2023, Serra Moanie is no stranger to burlesque and performance arts.

“I have been a lifelong theatre brat starting at age five,” says Moanie, “all through high school and even pursued it post-secondary for a while.”

While many local legends have curated their own ways of performing, some also give back and teach others to celebrate their bodies and spirits and to live in harmony and joy within performance. Mx. Moanie learned the sultry art of tease from local powerhouse performer Rosie Bitts.

“After leaving a particularly chaotic relationship, moving to Victoria I chose to take Rosie Bitts’ burlesque course. I fell in love with burlesque, [reclaiming] my body, self-love, and [I] fell in love with the stage again.”

One of Moanie’s favourite moments during their career has been performing a burlesque interpretation of McKenna’s Theory of Evolution.

“I perform in a monkey mask and evolve from a full monkey to a business person during a psychedelic trip,” says Moanie. (Which

could lead to the question: what came first, the chicken or the monkey?)

While stepping back into the stage light, the personal journey continued. Another star was born. Lincoln Sparks came to life as an upbeat, masculine embodiment. Shimming his way into the drag scene, Sparks is self-described as a devilish dirtbag that only the angsty ‘90s kids would understand. Moanie/Sparks wants to bring a “very powerful and ceremonial” purpose to the burlesque/draglesque numbers and give space to breathe, start to finish.

“I want my audience to feel a whole range of emotions and connect with the acts as a journey often on themes that are deep,” they say. “Medicine bundles, if you will.”

As a genderfluid two-spirit person, performance on both spectrum ends has given them space to grow and understand themselves fully.

“Those parts are very much integrated into my daily life,” they say. “It has allowed me to express the full 2S spectrum and find more masculine styles that I love and have adopted into my daily wear.”

While balancing all things in a community, there stems a deep love



BILL POPE

Local burlesque performer Serra Moanie also performs as Lincoln Sparks.

of being present, giving back, and supporting a home life.

“I love the community very much; as a solo parent, my times for coming out and being involved is limited,” they say, “but it’s very cup filling when I can come out either to perform or take in a show.”

Looking to the future, there are some hopes and changes that Mx. Moanie hopes to see through Victoria and the performance venues as a whole.

“[I’d like to see] a fully accessible performance venue for both the drag and burlesque community to thrive... [and] furthering of accessibility at shows and showcasing folk from marginalized communities.”

In 2015, the City of Victoria established the Accessibility Working

Group, but has been slow to get the approval of funding needed to carry out plans. If successful, this could provide a whole range of opportunities to increase revenue for venues. Accessibility ensures that everyone can partake in viewing the massive art and performance scene, and have it also be attainable for performers themselves.

“It’s something we have been pushing forward as a community,” says Moanie, “it’s my intention to continue to educate myself on what that looks like and how I can co-create safer spaces for my inter-sectional community.”

Find @serramoanie, @lincolnsark.drag, and @imaginal.cabaret on Instagram for more information.



Mac Miller  
*Balloonism*  
(Warner Records)  
4/5

Mac Miller was an American rapper who has five studio albums. Miller died of an accidental overdose in 2018 at only 26 years old. *Balloonism* is the second studio album that has been released after his death.

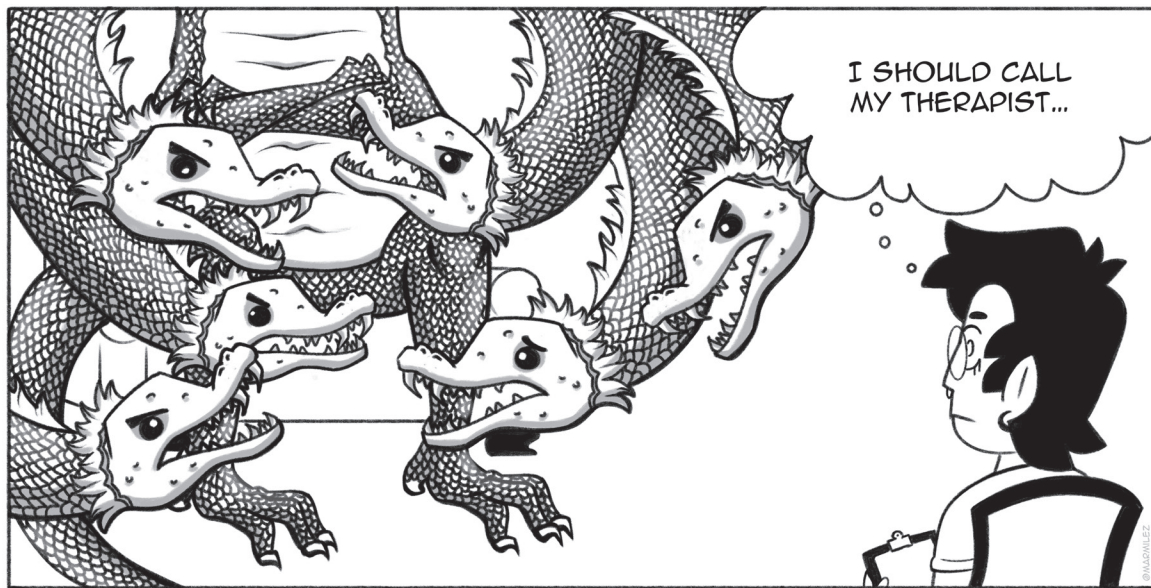
*Balloonism* is a heavy listen. Miller delves into his problems with addiction and being a public figure.

The record leans heavily into jazz and rap, and is quite experimental. Miller’s lyrics are reflective and tragic in retrospect. On “Manakins,” Miller raps “It feels like I’m dying/I’m dead,” and “Why is heroism so close to heroin?” The last song, “Tomorrow Will Never Know,” is 12 minutes, and it’s both calm and sad, which gives a sense of closure.

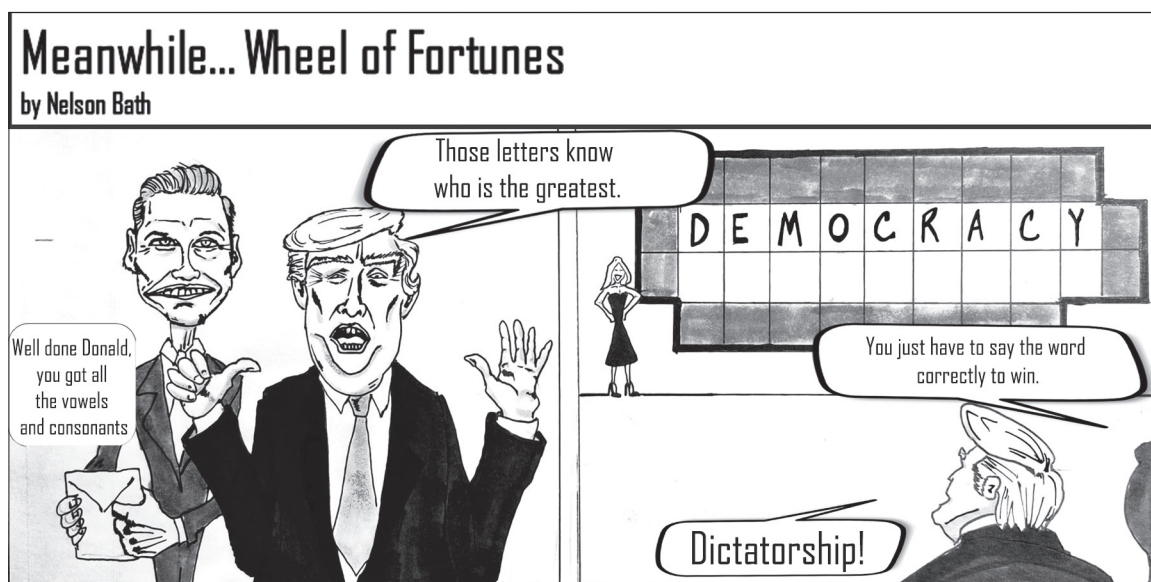
The album is quite heavy lyrically but not uncomfortable. On the contrary, it’s an experimental record that is enjoyable even if you don’t know who Miller is.

—Santiago Vazquez-Fuertes

Dr. Mythic - Miles Roever



Meanwhile... - Nelson Bath

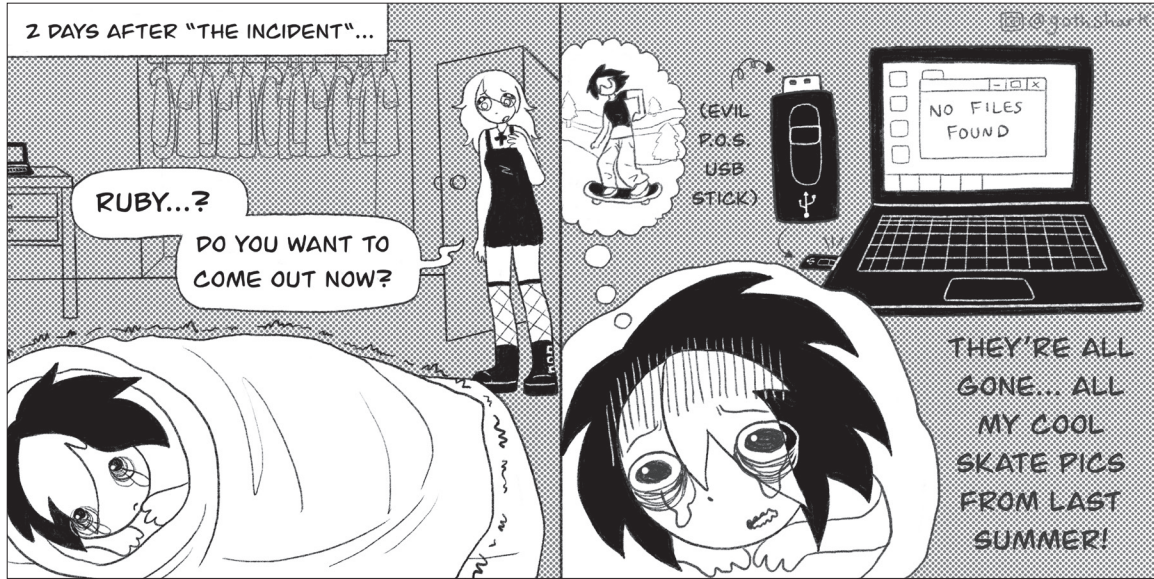


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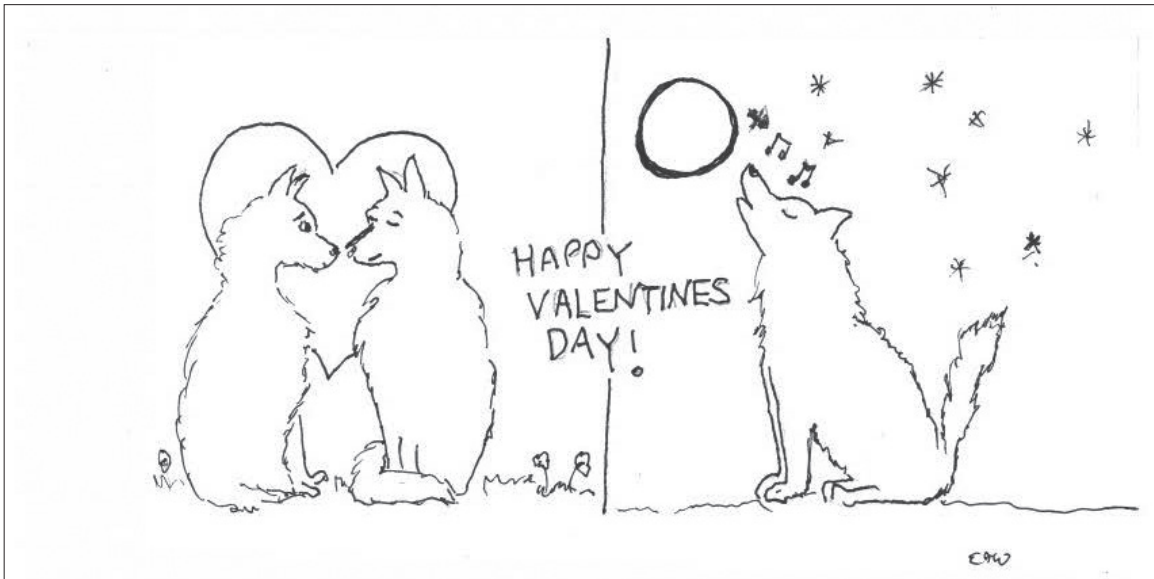
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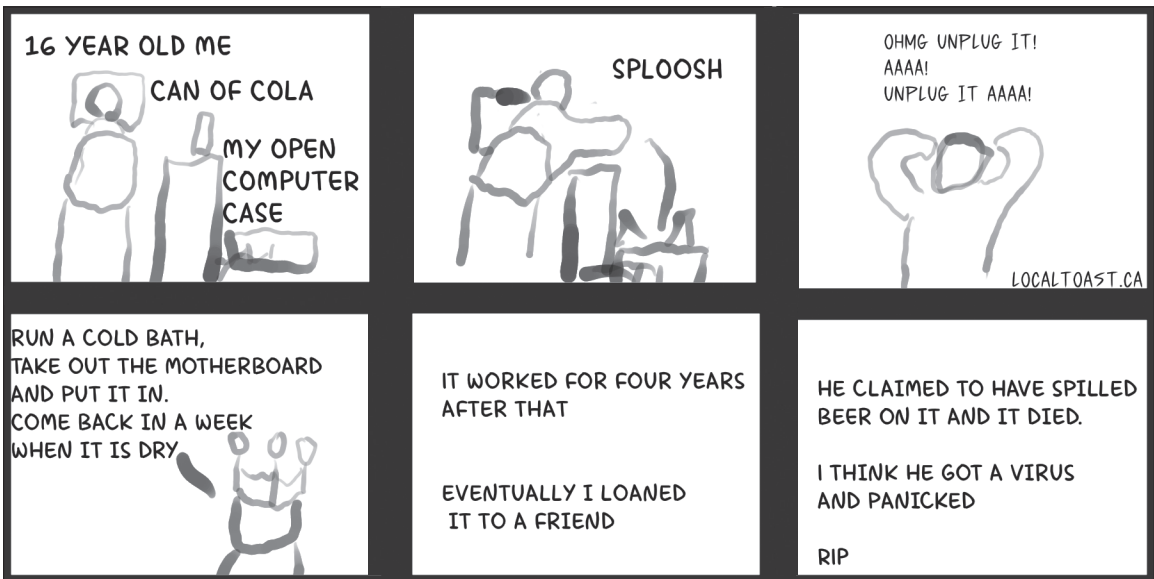
Ruby Rioux and the Bats from Saturn - Ray Nufer



Natural Selection - Emily Welch



Localtoast: The Daemon That Lives at Localhost - Ben Belland



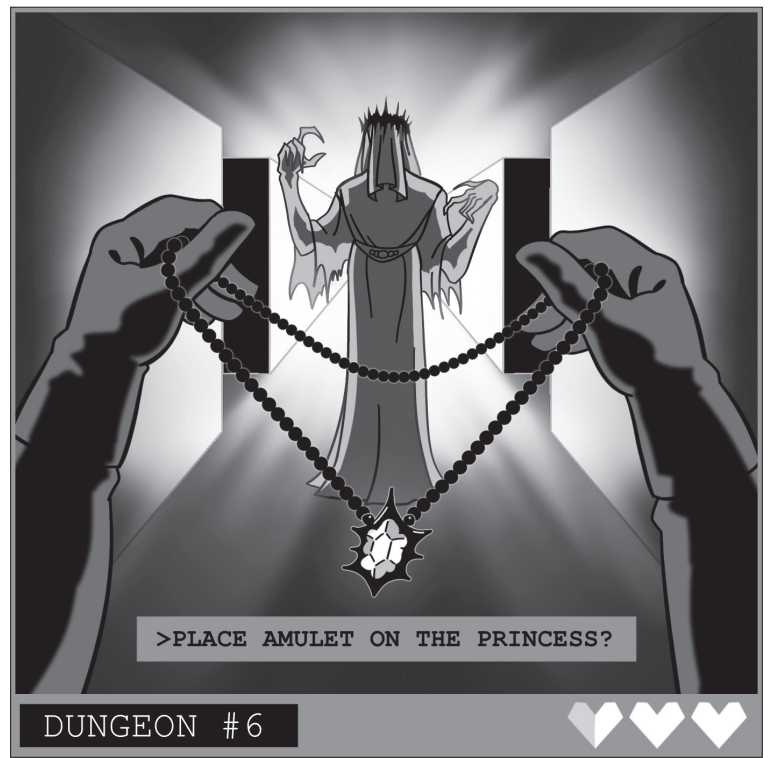
Weird Dog Ink - Felix Best



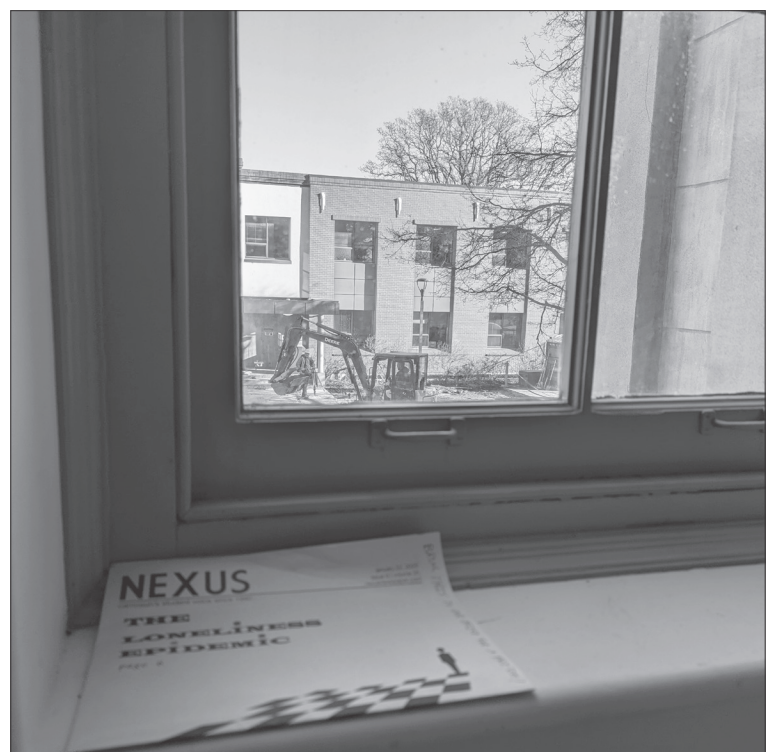
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LYDIA'S FILM CRITIQUE

BY LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON

My *Blue Velvet*

Lynch's films spoke a language I never did understand, but I believe my skin and beneath were fluent.

There is a distinct before and after when one watches just about any film by director David Lynch. Before, of course, comes in a variety of forms and experiences. But, after is often the same result: the rebirth of a once-rotten core and a palpable sensitivity to the unknown.

After *Eraserhead*, I felt it. And then after *Mulholland Drive*, and *Wild at Heart*. Then when I had watched *Lost Highway* and *Inland Empire*, I felt it too. It was as if I had left the theatre without the clothing I had entered in—bare to the world, chilled by the elements. Lynch's films spoke a language I never did understand, but I believe my skin and beneath were fluent.

When I first watched *Blue Velvet*, however, no parts of me had been shifted or torn apart or reconstructed like they had during others. Maybe it had been the raisin Glossettes. And it could have been the seat, too far left to the screen. But I exited the cinema frustrated and discontent from the bitter aftertaste it had left me with. And for the several weeks afterwards, I aired my grievances to everyone who listened (and probably, almost definitely, some who didn't).

It wasn't until many showers later that my relationship to the film had been nurtured to maturity. It played in my mind as I sang along to Isabella Rosellini's tragically tortured performance of the tragically sentimental song "Blue Velvet," shampooing my hair to its rhythms. The small gestures of the film's characters moved in my limbs without my intentions. Lines from the film crept back into my mind and tickled the matter ("Fuck you, you fucking fuck!").

Despite the initial reception, its subsequent resentments, and what I certainly would have regretted to hear, *Blue Velvet* had become the film that quietly, below its surface, designed certain portions to me. And for that alone I cherish it dear to all my portions.

*Blue Velvet* is a neo-noir film about the loss of innocence, the uncompromising harshities of a corrupted world, and about what's left over when one rids themselves of it—yes. But, what the film has most taught me is the challenging ways that art affects its audience. How, regardless of its intentions, it may viciously grab onto any persons who witness it. Art, I learned,



is most visible in the precious and intimate relationship between the artist and audience.

When I heard the news, when all the news channels and stations I tune into reported on it, the portions of me that Lynch had manufactured felt emptied. On January 15, his family shared, Lynch had passed from emphysema brought after 68 years of cigarette smoking. His lungs had little air to sustain him with and, in an interview with *People* magazine, he admitted that he could "hardly walk across a room."

When I got home that evening, after I took off my shoes and outdoor clothing, made a meal, I inserted a Blu-ray copy of *Blue Velvet* into my player. And while credits rolled afterwards, I felt the parts I may have lost become refastened. Kyle MacLachlan and Laura Dern mended them. Even in his absence, Lynch mended them. In this strange world, velvet, it seems, still persists through our blue veins.



FELLAS, LET'S FIGURE IT OUT

BY JAXSON SMITH PETERSON

A word on intentionality

A few weeks ago, I was scrolling on YouTube trying to find a video about New Year's resolutions or goals that wasn't corny or cliché. I stumbled across a video by the author Ryan Holiday, where he talks about picking one word to be your motto for the year, something to shape the way you act and behave.

My word is "intentional." I believe that in this hectic, stressful college life, we're often

transparency, this is still a work in progress for me.

Being intentional with your time can look like planning your study schedule and your social life. So far, this has helped me accomplish more by designating time to do focused work, as well as chances to fill my cup with social interaction to avoid burnout.

Being intentional about your actions forces you to prepare and

Being intentional about your actions forces you to prepare and have a plan.

living on autopilot. Autopilot at work, during lectures, while studying, and even in our interpersonal relationships.

So I am making a conscious effort this year to be more intentional with my focus, my time, and my behaviour.

Here's how, and why.

Intentionality equals more productivity. One way that unintentional behaviour, or not thinking before I act, manifests in my personal life is doom-scrolling. Something that was not an issue, or even a phrase, 20 years ago is now one of the biggest threats to productivity and completing the work that needs to be done.

When one acts intentionally, they think before opening up social media, especially when there's work to complete. In the spirit of

have a plan. I find this relevant with the upcoming career fairs that Camosun is putting on.

Networking for the sake of networking is good, but networking intentionally, with a printed resume and prepared questions, could get you even further.

Finally, being intentional in relationships—platonic, romantic, familial. Planning events and things to do helps to make better use of time together, and creates a deeper, more authentic connection than unplanned hangouts where you just sit in the same room on your separate devices.

So, I challenge you, the person who is intentionally taking time out of their hectic life to read this. Apply it. Act more intentionally, if even for a short period, and see if you notice a change.



REASONS TO LIVE... IN VICTORIA

BY ALEX HANUSE

Janevca a work in progress

I turned 37 in January, which, in the words of my good friend, is "chilling." Come to usher me into my 37th year is a medical condition that has been causing me significant pain and decreased mobility. Along with feelings of grief and self-pity, I'm also feeling grateful for the wonderful things my body has allowed me to do so far.

Having experienced chronic pain in the form of migraines for the past 20 years, I've learned to greet pain like an old friend. "Hello, migraine. Welcome back—I missed you yesterday," I will sometimes mutter to myself. It's surprisingly effective at eschewing the common feelings of guilt and anxiety around chronic pain. But let us talk about a more entertaining coping mechanism: luxurious restaurants.

Every year I go out for dinner on my birthday. As someone who stalks the streets of Victoria gawking at character homes and willing the owners to invite me in (they never do), I was excited to hear that a restaurant, Janevca, was taking up residence in a recently restored Samuel McClure manor. Vancouver developer Lenny Moy has breathed new life into the Rosemead House, a Tudor-revival heritage building in Esquimalt. Originally built in 1906 as a private home and later

I'm hopeful that Janevca is simply suffering from growing pains and will find their stride with a few laps around the track.

becoming The Olde English Inn, the Rosemead House is now an opulent wood-fire restaurant and boutique hotel. The name is a combination of the founder's three children, Janelle, Evan, and Caliee.

The property and the manor are exquisite. However, I am devastated to report that the dining experience was not the escape from reality I was looking for. The service was very strange and while one of the four dishes we ordered was great, the rest just edible.

My husband used a sports analogy to describe what might be happening at Janevca. The new owner of a sports team, eager to win, tries to buy instant success. Millions of dollars are spent purchasing the best players and coaches, but the secret sauce is not there. It takes someone who understands how each person is going to work together to create the magic we're looking for, on the field, and in the restaurant. It's a vibe; an imperceptible flow that only obsessively involved and intuitive

visionaries can cultivate, like the seamless service one experiences at Marilena's, the restaurant I should have kept my reservation for.

What did work at Janevca was the pork cheeks with roasted pear and pickled mustard seeds. We escaped to the lounge for dessert, which was delicious. The service here was more natural and the view of the bar is spectacular. The drink menu offers a list of 1.5-ounce cocktails for \$12, along with more premium drinks.

What I thought was going to be a candidate for my reasons to live in Victoria became a review. But this is a write-up, not a write-off. I'm hopeful that Janevca is simply suffering from growing pains and will find their stride with a few laps around the track.

I still highly recommend visiting this Victoria original as there is nothing quite like it in town. Sit in the lounge, experience the property, have a cocktail or dessert, and decide for yourself.



DROPPING THE NEEDLE

BY SANTIAGO VAZQUEZ-FUERTE

Robbie Williams who?

For a long time, UK music fans have scratched their heads wondering why Robbie Williams has not become a household name in North America. Now, with the release of the movie *Better Man*, which depicts the rise and fall of the British singer, the question rises again.

To put his career into perspective we need to understand how big of a star Williams was in Europe. He sold over 85 million records worldwide, won 13 BRIT Awards, sold over 1.6 million tickets in one day (a record that stood until last year when Taylor Swift broke it), and sang for over 375,000 fans over three days at Knebworth in one of the biggest concerts in history.

Williams at his peak was one of the most famous artists in history, but why did he not break the North American market?

Williams has chimed in on this and has said before that his music is too British for American listeners. Yes, that is true—his records are quite British and differ from the pop rock that characterizes American artists. However, why didn't that stop bands like The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, or Radiohead? Or singers like George Michaels, Amy Winehouse, and Elton John from breaking into the North American

market? Their music style is not "American" either.

Some may say it's because of his demeanour. Every single time he talks, Williams comes off as arrogant, and when he is not talking about himself he's usually getting into it with other artists, like challenging Liam Gallagher during his acceptance speech at the BRIT Awards. Ironically, Oasis—the Gallagher brothers—are not exactly known for being the nicest of people, but for their antics and bad-boy personas. They were able to crack and become huge in the North American market, so we cannot solely blame it on his personality either.

I would describe this as the perfect storm. When Williams broke into the scene, North American audiences were not listening to that type of music. People were listening to grunge in Nirvana and dance-pop in bands like The Backstreet Boys. And when hip-hop jumped into the scene, people were listening to artists like Tupac and Biggie. Williams' music did not fit into any of these categories, which made him irrelevant in North America. So not only did people not like him, but his music didn't fit with the sounds of the time.



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