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NEXUS

camosun's student voice since 1990

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editor's letter

Where are we heading

It's been done before, this tension; it's nothing new. It echoes from the 20th century a reverberation of continual strike. We listen but fail to comment. Or we do but not directly, for that requires too much of our sanity, and that is required to hold our centre. Or we do but not adequately, for all the words have already been said by many generations before and to find others would be futile. We ourselves echo and we do so without cognition.

There was a promise long ago, and even not too long ago, that the world, wherever it was headed, would not resemble the same as it has. That isn't to say there were particular promises of equality or equity or the meeting of basic needs, but there was one that assured the masses that it would not ever return. And there was an agreement, in silent prayer or outspoken protest, that we would uphold that.

But in the today, and I mean the immediate now, we still seem not to acknowledge the past and see ourselves. We believe, perhaps because to admit this would be to tangibly kill the promise, that we are still on the trajectory (although, the trajectory continues backward). Some of us, of course, recognize this, and we are proud and holier-than-thou to proclaim this, but we are at this moment, this immediate moment, a minority.

We then, too, proudly alienate one another. It is much *healthier* for the individual to not be faced with confrontation and discomfort. *Cut them out*, we whisper to ourselves and each other, *focus on yourself*. We sedate the palpable irritation of the "other."

And it is true, to mingle with the other may be to sacrifice where we *should* be heading. And this is not desirable to the destination and cannot be sacrificed. But which way we go is dependent on one another. And, today, in this immediate moment, there are many who believe that the 20th century still remains only a memory. To move anywhere it is imperative that we do not leave behind our neighbour, especially the increasingly ubiquitous unrecognizable neighbour.

It is difficult to do this; indeed, it is increasingly difficult to care. It is easy to decide against it and remove ourselves entirely from pressures of the tomorrow. There are days when the tension is loud and it is much too tiring to plug oneself into the news network of umpteen different programs and websites: the CBC, CNN, BBC, CTV, FOX. Three-letter openers to the unknown. They tell us what once was familiar to world-history encyclopedias is now familiar to the internet. They also tell us news: new news. Scientific data news, or technological news.

We are heading, still however similarly, into an unidentifiable future which intersects with more than several other battles. And with one another, especially one another, we must ask ourselves and each other: when we are moving concurrently backward and forth, where are we heading?

Lydia Zuleta Johnson, student editor
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flashback

25 Years Ago in Nexus



LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON
STUDENT EDITOR

Origin story: The library on campus is often addressed only by its colloquial name: the library. And, unfortunately, students usually neglect its Christian name: the Alan Batey Library & Learning Commons. The name is no small commemoration. Batey was from 1966 to 1971 principal of the Institute of Adult Studies, and, following 1971's conversion to Camosun College, the first director of the community education services division. And he was "more than anyone... the biggest single reason that Camosun exists today," says our April 3, 2000 issue. This issue, we covered the name change, which came after several months of discussion. In 2009, nine years after the official recognition and plaque, Batey passed away. However, today his memory lives on between books and whispers.

Five o'clock somewhere: While today's Camosun campus clubs offer students opportunities to connect over religion and political social movement, in 2000, Camosun students were more apt to bond

over a pint. This issue covered the momentum of the Brewing Club, bringing together a community of beer lovers. Members not only learned how to make it, but often went home with an entire flat (24 500 millilitre bottles) for their own consumption. But they didn't stop there; in an effort to raise money for the campus food bank, the club hosted a keg party fundraiser. In a time when cheap beer and forming tight-knit groups are becoming increasingly scarce, it might be wise to revive the initiative.

Mass surveillance: Increasingly, throughout decades of technological innovation and reliance, surveillance cameras have taken up room on ceilings, entryways, and traffic lights in public spaces. What they ask of their subjects is for their privacy in exchange for their safety. Some don't mind, of course. And some do. This issue, we covered the installation of security cameras in the lobby of the Fisher building on Camosun's Lansdowne campus. Previous students had expressed opposition to the recording, having success with removal. But in 2000, however, the cameras came back stronger than ever, coming as a response to the abundance of vandalism, break-ins, and theft occurring in the lobby, including \$5,000 stolen from the cafeteria. Twenty-five years later, however, the caf now asks its students to pay for napkins, cups, and utensils with no purchase of food. *This* is highway robbery.

open space

A pet-friendlier Victoria

MARIAN RESTREPO GALINDO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Victoria is home to tens of thousands of pet owners. Yet, its pet-friendly policies remain limited. While cities such as Vancouver, Calgary, and Toronto have advanced toward pet-friendly spaces, transit options, and housing opportunities, Victoria is still on the path toward improvement in these areas. With the right initiatives, Victoria has the potential to embrace these changes to become a leading pet-friendly city, benefiting both the quality of life of residents and the local economy.

One of the challenges pet owners have to face is finding rental housing that allows animals. Landlords often impose strict pet policies, leaving tenants with limited options. Even when housing is available, pet deposits and additional fees increase the expenses. This financial burden forces some families to give up their pets, making the lack of pet-friendly housing one of the main reasons for adult animal surrenders in British Columbia.

The difficulty of securing pet-friendly housing opposes the fact that pets play a crucial role in people's well-being. For many, pets become more than just animals; they are lifelong companions that provide emotional support and improve mental health. With around 80 percent of Canadian households owning some type of pet and over half having a dog, cat, or both, pet ownership is certainly an integral part of life for many Victorians.

In Victoria, specifically, 72 percent of pet owners have one dog, while 11 percent have two, and less than two percent own three or more. Despite the presence of pets, many landlords remain hesitant to allow them due to concerns about property damage and the cost of renovations after tenants move out. While these concerns are understandable, the benefits of having more pet-friendly housing policies should be prioritized.

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!

Beyond the personal value that pets provide to their owners, the pet industry is also a major economic force.

In Greater Victoria, pet owners spend millions of dollars on food, veterinary services, and other pet-related products. Across Canada, the pet industry thrives, with over 2,500 pet stores, employing more than 22,000 people. Alongside embracing a more pet-friendly approach, Victoria could support local businesses and create a space for job opportunities in this growing sector.

Implementing new shared spaces in Victoria, similar to those in cities like Vancouver, Calgary, and Toronto, could offer residents a place to enjoy quality time with their pets while fostering a sense of community. These shared spaces, such as pet-friendly malls and more outdoor areas, can create more inclusive public spaces where pets are welcome. This will further solidify the city as a reliably pet-friendly region.

The city must also reconsider the rising popularity of exotic and wild animals as pets in Canada. This trend highlights the need for responsible pet-ownership regulations, as well as spaces and services that are supplied to all types of pets. With better policies, Victoria can ensure that pets, their owners, and the community share spaces harmoniously.

Victoria has the opportunity to become a model pet-friendly city, but for this to happen, it requires collaboration between landlords, policymakers, and pet owners. Encouraging more pet-inclusive housing, expanding pet-friendly public spaces, and supporting the pet industry will not only benefit residents but also contribute to the city's economy.

By embracing these changes, Victoria can become a model for pet-friendly living, enhancing the lives of citizens and reinforcing its reputation as a progressive and welcoming city.

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politics

Camosun students express concern over federal election

LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON
STUDENT EDITOR

The upcoming Canadian federal election will be met with apprehension and concern by some Camosun College students on April 28. For many of those in post-secondary, working toward a career and future, and often fairly young, tensions are high during this election; they're concerned about what's at stake and for how long results will last.

Having only sworn in as Canada's 24th prime minister on March 14, succeeding Justin Trudeau's negatively received leadership in his last term, Mark Carney has allowed students supportive of the Liberal Party of Canada to feel relief from the potential of a Conservative majority under party leader Pierre Poilievre. However, current polls project a tight race, still fueling worry among many, including Camosun students.

First-year Arts and Science student Igo Campbell says they're uncertain about what Canada's coming years may bring after the election; their perspective on the future has changed in recent months, compelling them to reflect on new and more potent ways to weather.

"Whatever the impacts of [the Canada-US trade war], it's going to be negative, and it's going to be decades of impact. And so I'm trying to move away from being like, 'Once I get a career, things are going to be stable,' because I don't even know what careers are going to look like in 10 years," says Campbell. "I think one of the major impacts that it's had is I'm planning for the future less... and I'm much more, like, I'm just going to incrementally build what is around me as much as I possibly can. I'm trying to broaden my horizons as much as I can... instead of locking myself into a single path."

Third-year Arts and Science student Charlie Crossno, who leans politically left, says she has experienced unease during this period, concerned over the long-term effects that may reverberate if Poilievre's Conservative party holds office.

"I'm definitely worried about the outcome because it's such a close race," she says. "And I feel like anything that does happen will shape our future permanently because we're in this very pivotal [period]. Are we going to have a revolution? Are we going to get rid of health care? There's so much in the air, and it's just going to make very permanent changes."

Both Liberal and Conservative leaders have made promises to cease "wasteful spending." However, as suggested by first-year Arts and Science student Katie de Varies, budget cuts and caps to Canada's

public service may result in job instability.

"As someone who is currently immigrating here and will probably have a family here one day, it's really scary. I'm going into teaching elementary school, and I feel like funding within education and for health and stuff is really important to me," she says. "And it scares me to think about immigrating to a country that I thought Canada was [and for it] to be possibly changing."

First-year University Transfer student Danyn Fine argues that the motivation for budget cuts and cuts to taxation on behalf of prime minister Carney are politically performative. He believes the cuts will disproportionately target individuals with low income.

"I think, inevitably, no matter who gets elected, there's going to be cuts. I think Carney is going to make cuts," says Fine. "He's already

[gotten] rid of the carbon tax, which seems like a clearly political move and has very little to do with the tax itself, but more to do with the messaging around it. But it really does worry me because it's going to make, unfortunately, life harder for people who already are struggling and already are having to rely on things that are designed to protect our most vulnerable."

It's important for Campbell to aim their focus toward more tangible means of community improvement and assistance. They plan to continue on their path toward support on the ground level.

"I want to get involved in the politics of local community, not necessarily in the officially political realm, but in that area. And It feels like even more of a call to do that," says Campbell. "I think community support systems are really important."

sports

Camosun Chargers end seasons with two PACWEST medals



CAMOSUN CHARGERS

Kristofer La Guardia recently played his last game as a Charger; he has the most digs of any player in Camosun's history.

SANTIAGO VAZQUEZ-FUERTE
SENIOR WRITER

The Camosun Chargers' teams were able to take home two medals this year from the Pacific Western Athletic Association (PACWEST) championships. The men's basketball team won bronze, and the women's volleyball team won silver. The men's volleyball team fell just short of a medal, while the women's basketball team had a rather disappointing season.

The men's basketball team was able to have yet another successful season under the leadership of PACWEST Coach of the Year winner Geoff Pippus. They were able to cap it off by beating the Columbia Bible College Bearcats 90-72 to get the bronze medal. David Finch led his team with 26 points on the win.

Pippus has previously led the

team to a bronze medal in 2023, a silver medal in 2024, and a fourth place in nationals, the highest placement in the team's history.

Two players from the men's basketball team also managed to join the Conference All-Star Teams. Finch made the Conference 1st Team All-Stars, averaging 15.4 points, 6.1 rebounds, and 3.2 assists per game. Jaime Palamos Molins made the Conference 2nd Team All-Stars, averaging 6.1 rebounds, 5.6 assists (leading the league), and 2.3 steals per game.

The women's basketball team could not get anything going for them this season. Their home record was 1 win and 11 losses and their overall record was 4-20. The team was only able to score 57 points per game this season, which was

the lowest in the league. The team ended their season by losing in the PACWEST quarterfinals against Douglas College 61-67. Taya Karsen was the team's best player in that game, with a double-double, getting 10 points and 15 rebounds.

Only Kanda Diop salvaged the team this season. She made the Conference 2nd Team All-Stars, averaging 9.9 points and 10.5 rebounds per game.

The Chargers men's volleyball team had a record of 10 wins and 10 losses in the regular season and just came short of winning a medal. The Chargers lost in the bronze medal game to Vancouver Island University (VIU) Mariners 3 sets to 0. Kristofer La Guardia was the Player of the Game in his last game as a Charger.

La Guardia won the PACWEST award for the Top Libero and was named for the Conference 1st Team All-Stars with 194 digs this season, which led the league. He also reached the milestone of 1,000 digs in his college career and became the player with the most digs in Camosun's history, with 1,003. La Guardia retires as one of the best players to ever put on a Chargers uniform, with two PACWEST gold medals and two Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association national gold medals.

Apart from La Guardia, the Chargers had Lachlan Scherger in the Conference 2nd Team All-Stars and Gabriel Spinelli in the All-Rookie Team. So, despite La Guardia leaving, the men's volleyball team will be in good hands, adding a great recruiting class with names like Micah Snobelen, Jackson Boulding, and Dylan Young.

Similarly, the women's volleyball team had a record of 10 wins and 10 losses during the regular season. The Chargers swept the Capilano Blues in the semifinals to get to the gold medal game. There, they were not able to beat the VIU Mariners to win gold.

Erica Bolink was the team's top player throughout the season and was able to earn a spot in the Conference 1st Team All-Stars.

Despite leading the league in kills with 318, 62 more kills than runner-up Aimee Skinner from VIU, and leading the league in aces with 73, 27 more aces than runner-up Skinner, Bolink was not awarded with either the Player of the Year award or the Top Outside Hitter award. Both were won by Skinner; it's clear the voters chose team performance over individual performance despite it being an individual performance-driven award.

The women's volleyball team also had two of the top 15 blockers in Chandelle Dobie and Tahlia Cook. The future looks bright for this team.

NEWS BRIEFS

Camosun shared campus projected cost decreases

The projected cost of Camosun's new shared campus with the University of Victoria and Royal Roads has come down. A drop from \$112 million to \$108 million was recently announced; the project's original budget was \$98 million. The amount that Camosun will be contributing remains unchanged. Camosun will be offering its Early Learning and Care diploma, Health Care Assistant Certificate, and Information and Computer Systems Technologist diploma at the campus, which is set to be completed this fall, and is located at 798 Goldstream Avenue.

Camosun students win HR contest

Four Camosun College students recently got first place at the 2025 HRC West Case Competition. The team, dubbed The HRchitects, took home the gold at the event, which was held March 14 and 15 in Edmonton, by beating out 19 other teams from BC and Alberta. The competition tests students with human-resources challenges. The Camosun team consisted of Camosun HR Management and Leadership students Hillary Carr, Roxy Hemlock, Miracle Obimba, and Dex Owen.

—GREG PRATT,
MANAGING EDITOR

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event

Students showcase work at Camosun Comic Arts Festival



Student Declan Reilly will be showcasing his art at the CCAF.

SANTIAGO VAZQUEZ-FUERTES
SENIOR WRITER

Camosun Comics & Graphic Novels students will be showcasing their work at this year's Camosun Comic Arts Festival (CCAF).

Students who are part of the program will show the comics they've been working on throughout the year at the CCAF. The event takes place this year from 2 pm to 7 pm on Thursday, April 17 in the Wilna

Thomas Building's Sherri Bell Hall, located at the college's Lansdowne campus.

Miles "Mar" Roever is one of these student artists; they're excited to show their digital art comic, among other pieces.

"I'm doing a 30-page digital art comic... called *XAcademy*," Roever says. "It's a fantasy thriller series about these students at two rival schools who are basically living with



Some of Miles "Mar" Roever's art that will be on display at the event.

the consequences of this 3,000-year-old war, and they're just kind of learning how to get along again. [I'll also be showing] an art book of the traditional art that I've done in our drawing classes this year."

Previously working as a theatre artist, Roever enrolled at Camosun to learn about making comics.

"I wanted to take some time to train and do comics because what I really want to do is publish my own independent work," says Roever. "I've just been here the past year, learning everything I can about digital art and technique, working on light drawing, and everything."

Roever grew up reading comics, a key reason they've chosen to pursue this medium.

"I mostly grew up with, honestly, newspaper comics. I grew up reading all of the *Calvin and Hobbes* and *Baby Blues*," says Roever. "For some reason, I was a child reading comics about parenthood, and I thought that was so cool. But that was the stuff that I was reading as a kid. And then I grew up and I got into shows like *Gravity Falls*, that

kind of stuff. So that's probably my heaviest influence."

Apart from showcasing their comic book and skills, Roever is excited to finally be able to relax and enjoy the work of their peers.

"I'm honestly really excited to see everyone else's work," Roever says. "I just think it's so cool that we all get to do this together and I get to, you know, share my art and then get to see theirs in return."

Along with Roever, student Declan Reilly will be showing his comics at the event. He consumes the medium in a much different way: by reading manga and superhero comics.

"My dad loves comic books, and I've always had comic books around me my entire life," he says. "And I read all sorts of other comics, like manga—it does not just have to be superheroes... I'm inspired by a lot of Japanese content and stuff like *Invincible*, which I really like. A lot of *Daredevil* comics are really cool to me. I like grittier, real-life takes on what superpowers would look like in the real world. Stuff like *The Boys*."

Reilly showed this inspiration in the project he'll showcase in the CCAF: *Portal Comics*.

"My project, essentially, is about what superpower I personally would want, and I just thought of a quick eight-page story on kind of what heavy superpowers in real life would be like," he says. "The title of the comic will be *Portal Comics* because that's the company name I've created. [The] superhero's name is Portal because he can teleport."

Apart from working on his comic, Reilly says it's been inspiring to be in a room full of people with a similar passion to his.

"It's really awesome to be in a space filled with creative [minds]," he says. "You feel really focused during this course just on improving because there are so many people doing the same thing as you that you're just getting inspiration from."

Reilly is grateful that this program helped kickstart his comic-creating journey. He says that if there's something he wants people to take away from his art it's that it doesn't matter which stage of their life they're in—they should get their dream started.

"I hope when people see my art, they are able to take away that, you know, I'm not a professional artist. But I'm proud of myself that I tried my best," he says. "I hope other people can kind of take that and use it as inspiration to just start whatever they're thinking about. Maybe they're scared to start because they're worried that it won't be what they can picture in their head. But once you just start it, then it'll eventually turn into what you want it to be."

health

Experts warn of energy-drink consumption

HANNA SHULTIS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

On campus, energy drinks are abundant. Cans of Rockstar and Monster line lecture halls and fill recycling bins. Yet, energy drinks are perhaps not as innocuous as one might assume. What even are energy drinks? Are they truly safe to consume?

The most important component of energy drinks to question is arguably the most regulated: caffeine. Every energy drink on campus contains, by its nature, supplemented caffeine and a warning not to consume more than a certain amount of the product per day—often, the number is one or two cans.

Canadian Beverage Association communications and engagement specialist Ana Hamilton says the labelling is part of regulations for food packaging to keep people safe.

"Under the Supplemented Foods Regulations, energy drinks providing more than 79 mg caffeine per serving must provide a statement indicating the maximum number of servings of the product that can be consumed daily to not exceed the daily limit for adults

set by Health Canada of 400 mg of caffeine," she says.

Hamilton stresses that one benefit to energy drink consumption over more traditional means like coffee is that consumers are better able to monitor caffeine intake.

"One benefit of energy drinks over coffee is that, due to the caffeine source, producers of energy drinks know and advertise the exact amount of caffeine in your beverage," she says. "This is because coffee contains naturally occurring caffeine, which can vary in amount depending on processing, whereas energy drinks contain added caffeine in known and consistent amounts. The structural and physiological properties between the two caffeine sources are identical."

Of course, all of the energy drinks on campus, apart from Yerba Mate (if it can indeed be called an energy drink), contain supplements other than caffeine. In practice, the typical energy drink on campus is a combination of vitamins (usually, B vitamins), and caffeine and other legal stimulants such as guarana and taurine. Questions regarding the health effects of drinks such as

Red Bull, Rockstar, and Monster are examined in *The Dark Side of Energy Drinks: A Comprehensive Review of Their Impact on the Human Body* by Andrea Constantino, et al., published in the National Library of Medicine.

"Reports underscore that energy drinks have deleterious effects on a broad spectrum of bodily organs," a section of the report concludes, "culminating in mild adversities such as anxiety, gastrointestinal disturbances, dehydration, nervousness, and tachycardia, along with more severe outcomes like rhabdomyolysis, acute kidney injury (AKI), ventricular fibrillation, seizures, acute mania, and stroke."

The paper stresses that while individual ingredients are shown to be safe, excessive energy drink consumption often leads to adverse health effects. To mitigate these dangers, the paper urges caution.

"We suggest that the daily intake of energy drinks should not only not exceed the safety limits for caffeine established by European and American regulatory authorities, but should be even lower," the report reads. "Indeed, these drinks



GREG PRATT/NEXUS

Energy drinks for sale at Camosun's Lansdowne bookstore.

also contain other neurostimulants, the effects of which are not fully understood. Furthermore, as this review points out, there are cases in the literature of people with no known medical conditions who have suffered acute cardiac events after

consuming just a few 250 mL cans of these drinks."

Students, especially younger persons whose brains are still developing, should be vigilant on their consumption of these drinks. The effects could be catastrophic.

clubs

Revolutionary Communists of Camosun seeks political reform

“[The system] essentially leaves people like me to die because we can’t function in the system.”

TOBY CUMMINGS
REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISTS OF CAMOSUN



PHOTO PROVIDED

The Revolutionary Communist Party, which the Revolutionary Communists of Camosun club is a part of.

HANNA SHULTIS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

While communism may seem like a relic of the 20th century, The Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) has been gaining new members in Victoria, and there’s a communist club right here on campus, the Revolutionary Communists of Camosun (RCC).

RCC members Dan Gibson, Adam Beech, Liam Proudlove-Dunne, and Toby Cummings all cite discontent with the status quo as the reason for joining the club. Cummings was particularly attracted to the party as a disabled person.

“[The system] essentially leaves people like me to die because we can’t function in the system,” he says.

In the past, the RCP was more shy about its communism. Former-

ly, the party was called Socialists Fight Back: Marxist Voice of Youth and Labour.

“All of our rhetoric was used in terms of socialism,” says Gibson. “So, we were saying: are you a socialist? Are you interested in socialism? Are you interested in Marxism?” That kind of thing. That was kind of our pitch.”

Beech says that they were never duplicitous in their communist identity—indeed, it’s difficult to imagine that a group with “Marxist” in their name would be.

“Our name being the Revolutionary Communist Party is a relatively recent thing... about the past year or so,” says Gibson, “and we found that since we’ve been more bold and more open about the fact that we are unabashed communists [we’ve got more members].”

Currently, RCP membership in Victoria is up from under 20 members in 2023 to around 40 members in 2024, spread across five cells, including two at UVic. A portion of the new membership was once affiliated with the alt right.

“[It] was the criticism of capital that was what interested them in the far right,” says Beech. “And when that didn’t pan out or when they saw the disconnect between action and rhetoric [they were drawn to communism].”

“And it’s not really a failing on their part,” adds Proudlove-Dunne, “but failings in their capitalist endeavours. Like, there’s a lot of people who would see, like, ‘Oh, I’m going to own a big business

one day; I’m going to climb up the ladder. Anybody can make it with just the right level of ingenuity and they go one of two ways. They either say, ‘I’m broken’ or ‘The system’s fucked.’”

Beech stresses that the RCP is not a Stalinist organization, although he does defend the Stalinist concept of a planned economy.

“[We] would defend it as a democratically planned economy,” he says. “That is to say that right now, the economy is not planned at all. Or if it is, it’s planned by Amazon for profit.”

Beech separates the party’s vision from that of the Soviets’.

“The Soviet economy was bureaucratically planned, in a very

centralized way. As in, there was an office of whatever, that you get appointed to by the government and you’re now literally just punching numbers and calculating... then spitting it out to the workforce that you might have no relationship [to] whatsoever. [The party aims for a system wherein] people involved in the industry get that kind of say. Not some guy in an office separated out from it all.”

But a planned economy is further off in the future. Currently, the party is collaborating with labour organizations and working to boost new membership. Email communistclub@camosunstudent.org for more information on the Revolutionary Communists of Camosun.

social issues

Local business owner starts crowdfunding campaign for supportive housing

ACACIA TOOTH
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Conversation about housing in Victoria is often focused on complaints and concerns: “Why does rent have to be this high when other places are cheap?”; “Why is rent so high for students?”; and the increasingly ubiquitous “Why am I paying so much money to live downtown where I don’t feel safe?”—what they speak of here is the unhoused vulnerable population.

But there are many who hope to change the conversation, and who hope to give back to others in positions they may have been in before. Clairmont Conditioning owner Mylan Clairmont has started a crowdfunding initiative to raise money for a down payment on a supportive transitional housing complex for local social services organization SOLID Outreach Society.

According to Statistics Canada in 2023, “While financial and relationship issues are the most common causes of homelessness, health-related issues can also lead to homelessness episodes.” Clairmont is hoping that by having a fully transparent conversation about the funding and how any amount counts, they can change people’s outlooks and offer some more kindness.

“The biggest thing for me is to

“The biggest thing for me is to demonstrate community support.”

MYLAN CLAIRMONT
VICTORIAHOUSINGCROWDFUND.CA

demonstrate community support,” he says.

No one is exempt from the possibility of displacement, and if students were to find themselves in these positions but a bed was unavailable for even just one night, it could leave them in an unsafe position. Victoria residents have resources available to address the housing problem for students, but change has come slow.

“There needs to be a multifaceted approach,” says Clairmont. “If there’s people who might take places that students would be in, that might free up some space.”

After talking with some local businesses, it was time for Clairmont to take action.

“In having conversations like this... [business owners have said], ‘Yeah, I would pay \$10 extra a month if it meant it would fix the problem [of displacement],’” says Clairmont.

The government has long failed to put adequate funding into supportive facilities. Waiting for beds to open, lack of social workers,

and community support or interest contribute to the cycle of homelessness. Clairmont wants to fill this gap and he feels equipped with his background.

“I spent eight or nine years working with at-risk youth living in poverty in Ottawa,” he says, “and it’s hard for me not to see these individuals as grown-up versions of them.”

When people are brought back from BC-funded supportive facilities into a community where they’ve had problems before, it’s more likely to resurface and happen again. Clairmont says a necessary remedy to this issue is discussing it.

“People that are helping the cause, talk to your parents, talk to your in-laws, friends... They may be looking to get involved in the community,” he says.

Clairmont says the issue is in the community’s hands.

“We all agree this exists,” he says, “and nobody wants it to be happening.”

Visit victoriahousingcrowdfund.ca for more information.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Mylan Clairmont started victoriahousingcrowdfund.ca in hopes of helping others.

Confronting book bans always comes with a debate regarding censorship, as pulling books from shelves is itself a form of omission.



The slippery slope of censorship thus brings us to the concerning habit of books portraying queer and BIPOC experience being challenged.

NO BOOKS ALLOWED

What libraries face when challenges hit shelves

When it comes to distribution of books, there's always a question of propriety and the follow-up of censorship. The subsequent challenging, shadow banning, or outright banning of books is most common in school libraries and curriculum-required books for students of high-school age and younger. This problem is most heavily documented south of the border in the United States—Texas and Florida banning the most, according to 2022 statistics. A question then presents itself to scholars, authors, and teachers north of the border as the challenges to books on library and school shelves begin to rise: could this, if not already, then begin to occur in Canada?

Confronting book bans always comes with a debate regarding censorship, as pulling books from shelves is itself a form of omission. The act of restricting or removing access to books containing subject matter considered offensive, damaging, or inappropriate for consumption leads to a precedent for future censorship of greater lengths and standards becoming deeply restrictive to the modes of education available.

This sentiment is echoed by Camosun College English instructor Kari Jones.

"If we're not reading... teaching... or making those books available to children then... we're not showing them history as it happened," says Jones.

Camosun English instructor Janice Neimann argues it is "unethical" to omit historical reading. In fact, literary classics like *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Of Mice and Men*, and *Lord of the Flies* have all been pulled from curriculums in schools for outdated and racist language used within them. Jones points out that there's a genuine fear, mostly on the part of concerned parents who are sending in the book challenges in the first place, of the presentations of timely hate and racism being passed on to readers. Unfortunately, if the portrayal of racism in books, either intentional or a product of the time they were written, is prohibited from being displayed in school curriculum and libraries, less justifiable reasons for censorship may begin to creep into policies.

If portrayals of historical racism like in the classics, or bullying like in *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, is inappropriate, then pieces written from the perspective of those experiencing that pain get banned, then any mention of race or childhood cruelty is banned, and so on until there are only sanitized portrayals remaining on the shelves.

Neimann says there's misguided rhetoric of "safe spaces" as places where it's expected, even required, for the environment to avoid discomfort. That discomfort, Neimann argues, is in fact critical to the learning process, and circles back to the subject of books: the context of uncomfortable subjects and portrayals in their pages further facilitates enriched education, doing that history justice.

The slippery slope of censorship thus brings us to the concerning habit of books portraying queer and BIPOC experience being challenged. Children's book authors Danny Ramadan and Robin Stevenson had their books shadow banned by a Catholic school board in Ontario; Jones is a friend of Stevenson's, and says that 12 of Stevenson's books are being deliberated over by the Supreme Court of the United States. And with this begins a trend: the Canadian Library Book Challenges Data has reported a 55 percent uptick in challenges to books between 2022 and 2023, particularly with race, gender, and sexuality present in its subject matter. The challenges suggest an impression that the subjects of queerness and non-white perspectives are considered "inappropriate" for children to engage with or witness openly. It sends a message to authors, librarians, and young readers that such content is in some way shameful and unwelcome, which does not inspire the confidence to further learn about those experiences, even in cases where the book is still available through special request and permission from a teacher.

The Waterloo Catholic District School Board highlights particularly a dissonance of understanding by its Ontario Library Association representative, justifying the shadow ban

by stating that the books are technically still available, just placed in a shelf only accessible to teachers. Though not direct erasure, how are children even meant to know the books are available to begin with, never mind the courage and resilience expected of a child in such a school to request a book on the matter when it had been made abundantly clear by the board that it is meant to be secretive?

Neimann pushes forward the concern of these targeted bans and challenges being an effort to control the education of children in rather exclusionary ways and by abusing the demeaning assumption that children are deeply fragile beings with little ability for critical thinking as justification for larger censorship. Jones, herself an author of books targeted towards children, acknowledges the concern of age appropriateness being relatively subjective, but says that trust and responsibility should be given to librarians and educators to give appropriate context and discernment, as opposed to concerned parents challenging material in reactionary ways. Neimann says that beyond schools and their libraries, those in lower socio-economic groups who may not have the means to gain their education and knowledge outside of public libraries are particularly affected by the push of book banning. And the system benefits from this demographic's oppression of knowledge to remain dominant.

It's worth noting an important distinction in this discussion: many of the concerns brought up in this discussion begin with the drastic images of empty school shelves and mass censorship of anything even tangentially related to race or queerness. It's a harrowing sight to be sure, although the process in Canadian schools and libraries function much differently.

Jones mentions a union of sorts among Canadian libraries called the Library Learning Commons (LLC) that works out of BC. LLC is a fierce advocate for the freedom to read, and has a position statement that holds them to the fight for diversity in books featured in libraries and schools.

Libraries and schools in Canada are distinct from the US in their independent funding and internal processes on the collections they keep. People can and have sent in many challenges to books and requests to remove books from shelves, but it's up to the deliberation and advisory of the librarians and the consultation of their peers to assess the need to relocate or remove books.

There's little a complaining party can do about a book still being on the shelves when librarians have repeatedly concluded it has earned its place on the shelf. Of course, there's still the risk of retaliation, groups pressuring their providers to cut or reduce funding to the libraries in order to enforce their demand. Schools and libraries with an insufficient amount of funding for full-time librarians, says Neimann, are particularly vulnerable to this tactic of book suppression.

There are, however, counter-measures librarians and readers can partake in to continue the preservation of such literature. Crucially, supporting local libraries. Whether that be through fundraising to allow skilled staff and large collections to be acquired, or reading and borrowing books from them, the public's presence and continued borrowing of books matters and signals to the libraries that such books are popular enough to be kept for future readers in regular rotation.

But if you have the money, as books are increasingly more expensive, it would also be wise to acquire banned and shadow-banned books so that at the very least our own personal libraries are populated with the books in case they are taken away. Neimann emphasizes preserving physical media in particular; while the internet is accessible, it is dependent on servers staying up, access to Wi-Fi, and, naturally, access to electricity.

Jones suggests The Canadian Library Challenges Database as being a prime source for lists of various challenged books along with the reasoning behind their challenges. Places that sell second-hand books of all kinds are great places to look. One option in Victoria is Camas Books & Infoshop on Quadra Street, which has a selection of banned books at lower prices.

Reading is key, but so is the community voice. Citing the Cite Black Women Collective, Neimann emphasized the sharing, assignment, and understanding of challenged and banned books as being equally as important as reading them yourself.

The Freedom to Read Week, an annual event encouraging Canadians to reassert and defend their intellectual freedom, brings many inflammatory literature out of the woodwork at bookstores and libraries, occasionally with little written pieces explaining why the books are controversial to begin with. It is a form of scholarly appreciation that allows you to draw your own conclusions on the work, and take in the literature so many seem to want erased.

Neimann emphasizes media literacy; without it, context and nuances of stories, especially controversial ones, are lost, and the abandonment of that knowledge contained in the books follows. There's no true value in reading banned books without a skill in media literacy, and it is a muscle that must be sculpted and worked on a regular basis. It may seem a chore, but it's essential for all consumption of every media type, books especially.

Go forth and read, folks. Learning is itself a form of resistance.

Story by Ash Barnard, contributing writer

Graphic by Lydia Zuleta Johnson, student editor

film

The Roxy theatre brings back on-screen cinema



GREG PRATT/NEXUS

Unlike watching films at home, Searer says, the atmosphere of a theatre offers its audience an opportunity to disconnect from the outside world and tune into one collective experience.

“Movies are definitely a thing that’s more enjoyable when you have an audience. The laughs are stronger, you get scared easier. It’s a communal thing,” he says. “I know at home when I’m watching stuff on streaming, I’m on my phone the entire time. But when I go to a theatre, I’m actually paying attention to the movie and absorbing what’s happening.”

During a digital zeitgeist of on-demand movies at home, paying, too, for a movie ticket may, to some, feel expendable. However, Searer says, the theatre experience cannot be replicated at home; the theatre is an opportunity to break away from routine streaming.

“It’s definitely somewhere people can go have a night out, enjoy time with others,” says Searer. “Why do people go out and eat? They want to go have a fun time and enjoy something that they can’t do at home. Most people don’t have a large screen and a sound system that knocks your socks off... Just to experience something with the lights down and the magic of movies that you’re not going to get just at your home.”

For Searer, reviving the Roxy meant offering films that hadn’t yet had the opportunity to reach Victoria. Along with leaseholder

Andrew Golin, he saw that the city’s cinema space had room for lesser-known films.

“Well, for us in the Victoria market... we definitely felt there was enough movies that weren’t getting played in that market that were important to play,” says Searer. “A lot of arthouse, foreign films, Canadian films, too, that just didn’t get a wide enough release to hit Victoria. We’re able to play those. We’re definitely a home for Bollywood and stuff now. And we can just know that we have a space for those.”

The Roxy’s historical significance is indeed potent in the Quad-

ra-Hillside neighbourhood, its marquee a reminder of lost years. To Searer, it was important to maintain the theatre’s particular charm, presenting a past generation to a new one.

“It definitely is iconic. It’s had a bunch of different lives throughout these years, and we definitely felt it was worth bringing it back and keeping that style there, too,” says Searer, “because I think a lot of people have come in, they’re still just finding out about us. They’re super happy and excited to have the Roxy back, and it brings them a lot of nostalgia to be back in that building.”

The Roxy theatre is screening movies again, under new ownership.

LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON
STUDENT EDITOR

The Roxy theatre has long stood on Quadra Street a monument of the mid-20th century, its pale blue paint only marginally chipped and faded. After several years with an empty screen, and some years taken over by Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre, the Roxy has reestablished its origins with new owners: Golin Cinemas.

In May 2024, the theatre began screening newer blockbusters while balancing their schedule with independent arthouse films, curating enough range for its new audience.

Golin Cinemas director of

operations Nathan Searer says the Roxy offers movie-goers a different experience to corporate chain cinemas. And they’ve most recently acquired an alcohol licence; drinks can be purchased during select showings.

“We’re trying to do something different at the Roxy than Silver-City,” says Searer. “We’re showing some films—Oscar films, stuff like that—but for the most part, we’re showing arthouse films, we’re looking at classics, things that you’re not going to see at the other local theatres. We’ve had French films recently; we’re going to be doing event nights.”

review

Twelfth Night unsure of its own identity

LANE CHEVRIER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Having written nearly 40 theatrical productions in his career, Shakespeare is widely considered one of the masters of literary antiquity, and his work is still studied today, four centuries after his death. UVic theatre professor Fran Gebhard has been teaching and producing Shakespeare for many years, and *Twelfth Night* was, in fact, her directorial debut, decades ago. Considering this, I was initially uncertain why the Phoenix Theatre’s production of *Twelfth Night* struck me as such a muddled, mediocre mess, but it seems that this iteration of Shakespeare’s play just couldn’t figure out what it was supposed to be.

The play is supposedly set in 2037 on the west coast of Vancouver Island, after a series of climate-related catastrophes, so the play is carrying a poignant ecological message, as well as being a champion of gender and identity fluidity. However, there is nothing in the finished product that indicates the slightest sense of disaster, survival, poverty, or suffering, and instead mostly comes across as a flippant story about a group of friends who pull a heartless prank on a sympathetic, hapless woman they all dislike.

Additionally, the two lead female twin actors, one who plays a man, and the other who unironically plays a woman playing a man, merely results in two actors who are nearly indistinguishable in appearance, voice, and character, and whose gender-bending antics have little impact on the story other than causing moderate confusion among the characters and the audience alike. Being dressed nearly identically, and almost never appearing simultaneously, most of the time I had no idea that an entirely different person and character was on stage, and my narrative comprehension suffered for it.

While the actors were clearly talented and dedicated, there was an odd lack of consensus about how a Shakespeare production is supposed to be portrayed. Some characters were extremely dramatic, like one may expect of that era of

theatre, while others were flippantly casual in a way that reflects modern sensibilities. This is not necessarily a bad thing, since both of these portrayals can work equally well... if executed with consistency.

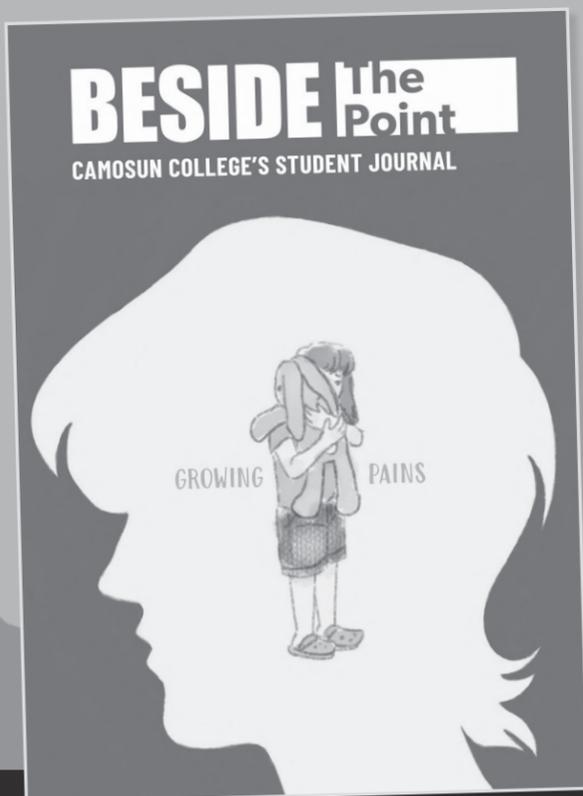
For example, the 1968 film adaptation of *Romeo & Juliet* adhered to the antiquated approach, creating a consistent through line, placed in the 1500s, with corresponding set design, costuming, dramatic tension, and acting style, and the result is a conservative but strong interpretation of the classic work. On the contrary, the 1996 Hollywood production of *Romeo & Juliet*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, was fully set in the present day, and while the language remained antiquated, every other aspect of tone, setting, and acting style was consistent with ’90s Los Angeles, and it also worked surprisingly well as a Shakespearean epic.

This iteration of *Twelfth Night*, however, employed a strange mish-mash of styles, and the result was that half the cast played the story as a silly comedy with a casually modern portrayal, while the other half played it as a serious drama straight out of the 16th century. The tonal whiplash is uncomfortable, particularly considering that a couple of the actors waffled back and forth between ridiculous absurdity and genuine trauma.

The set was nothing to write home about, consisting simply of an old mobile home, some fish netting, and the rear section of a flatbed truck, and the lack of variation gave the weird impression that the entire play took place in the front yard of somebody’s trailer park across the course of a summer day. Anticipating the argument that this static design was the result of the small space, it’s not: I’ve seen several plays on both sides of the Phoenix Theatre, and a little ingenuity can transform a cramped stage into a refreshingly versatile setting.

Ultimately, I left *Twelfth Night* feeling unsatisfied, confused, and conflicted, and unable to shake the urge to search out a more cohesive, consistent, and comprehensive version of what is undoubtedly at its core a solid literary masterpiece.

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PIECES OF PERFORMANCE

BY ACACIA TOOTH

Rallying for prosperity in the Forbidden Land

As I passed through the US border in March, I was terrified. Having recently changed my gender on my passport to X, during a period of a new “president” law-maker, there is a potential to ban me from entering with the accusation of fraudulent paperwork. All for a little alphabetical letter.

I don’t think I am terrifying—let alone do I think others are who fall under the 2SLGBTQIA+ umbrella. My journey to Baltimore, Maryland was just beginning. Strutting through the airports heavily guarding myself behind my veteran card, daypack with Navy crests, and a sweater I’ve had since my military basic training, I couldn’t help but feel empty.

I live fearlessly here in our country. Dyed hair, cut to the skin and a mullet to match. I wear my pride pins. I kiss my girlfriend and hold hands. I perform in drag. I could shout “I’M GAY” outside and the looks I’d receive would only be for yelling. But this shift in energy could not be ignored as I travelled to what I am naming the Forbidden Land—or as you know it: the USA.

On March 8, a rally was held at the Washington Circle in Washington, DC. I was lucky enough to attend with many others in and out of drag to show support for all drag performers across the Forbidden Land. Milord Henry (@milord_henry) was a focal point to



ACACIA TOOTH/NEXUS

A scene from a recent rally that was held in Washington Circle in Washington, DC.

making this march happen. With organizing, hosting, ensuring a safe route and guides were available for the walk, harm reduction, bike supports to block roadways, and a chance to dance with pride afterward, this was no small feat to pull together.

Some beautiful words were said by guest speakers before the march and there was so much love and awe throughout the crowd. Voices from MasVusi—Brooke N.

Hyme, Crystal Edge, Indiana Bones, and others—promoted a circle of safety among us. They represented the joy of drag and offered insight to allies and lended passersby a look into how the president’s laws affect the daily lives and safety of our community. How we are no harm to anyone. How we deserve to live a life just as anyone else: with unconditional love as humans. Just as we are.

The march from Washington

Square to Kennedy Center went on without a snag. Chanting held strong from start to finish. “Who’s streets? Our Streets!” and ‘Hey hey, ho ho, Donald Trump has got to go!’ were some of the loudest chants, filling any empty space on roads and echoing through laneways. Over 800 strong.

The strength felt through a crowd of people all marching to support the lives of others, and themselves, is truly a powerful thing to be part of and witness.

This is a word and reminder that politics should not govern sacred bodies. Our bodies are our own. We know ourselves better than anyone else.

This world operates better on kindness than hatred, and even Canada could become the Forbidden Land if we are not wise to vote for the right individuals. We will always rally and fight back. There is always space for queer, trans, and disabled bodies.

Over the land and through the sea we are all equal. When treated less than, we have a right to speak out and protect our power. There is power in supporting one another, loving one another, and opening our minds and hearts to those that may look different to ourselves, and who may believe in different things. But at the end of the day, the world survives and thrives not on hatred, but on kindness.

New Music Revue



Galgeberg

Cerberus

(Our Ancient Future) 2/5

Cerberus is the debut album from Norwegian death metal band Galgeberg. The record consists of six songs that are an amalgamation of death metal and punk; each song will shred your eardrums like thin slices of cheese. The guitars and drums are an assault to the inner ear.

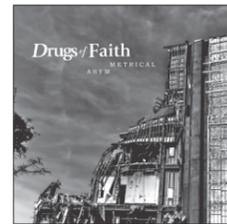
The song “Ode to O’Connor” was a missed opportunity for the band to give a slower, more melodic, tribute to the late Sinead O’Connor. Instead, it thrashes on like the rest of the songs. O’Connor’s name can be heard screamed at the start of the song.

If you like taking the three-headed dog for a walk through Hell, then this album is for you. It’s a non-stop wall of sound from start to finish. It’s perfect for the atmosphere of Satan’s domain.

However, *Cerberus* left me feeling disoriented and wishing I was as far from Hell as possible.

—Miles Patterson

New Music Revue



Drugs of Faith

Asymmetrical

(Selfmadegod Records) 4/5

North Virginian metal trio Drugs of Faith has returned with their third LP, *Asymmetrical*, exploding back onto the scene with a timely tackling of modern issues. With each song clocking in at an intense one-to-two-minutes long, the album says a lot with efficiency.

An instrumental “Opening” builds intrigue, followed by eight songs packing a one-two punch of heavy lyrics and hard riffs. The album continues on in a scatter-shot of sound, wielding good flow and transitions some moments, harsh cuts in others, masterfully reflecting the apocalyptic themes in the lyrics. Finally, the longest song, “Conspiratorial,” wraps up in pure instrumental to sit and chew on what you’ve just experienced.

Capturing current anxieties of climate and economic crises, grind-core proves the perfect medium to scream these straight-forward messages without feeling preachy. Wrapped in a title carrying double meanings of societal inequality and raucous variety in tunes, *Asymmetrical* proves a triumphant return.

—West Carter

New Music Revue



Playboi Carti

Music

(AWGE/Interscope Records) 4/5

Playboi Carti has finally released his long-awaited third studio album, *Music*. The album contains a whopping 30 songs and lasts for a total of one hour and 16 minutes.

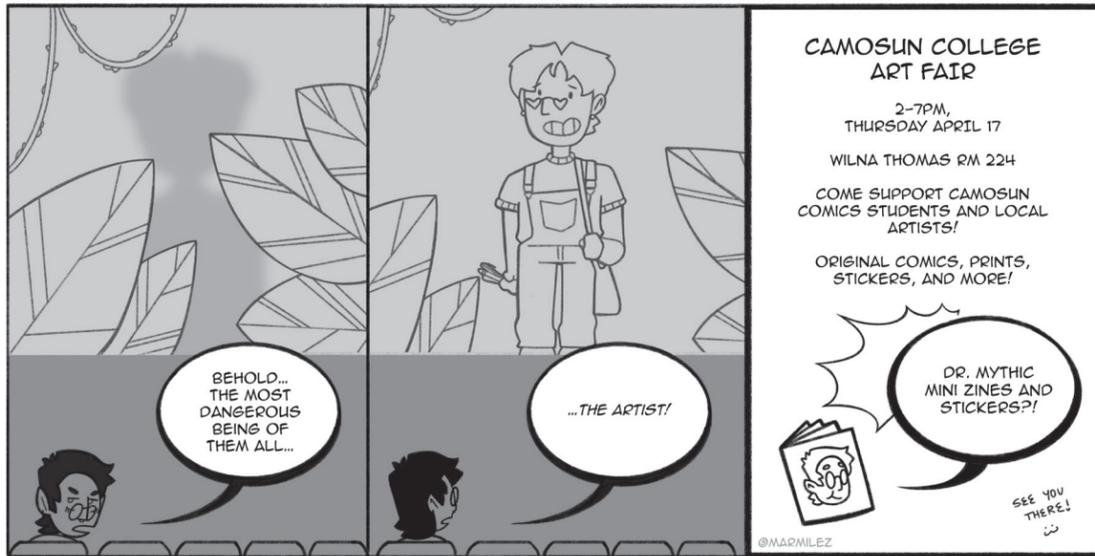
Unlike his last album, *Whole Lotta Red*, which was groundbreaking and changed the way trap music is made, this album is less experimental. Still, it brings that punk/trap sound that makes Carti special, with catchy beats that will make you nod your head throughout the whole project.

The Weeknd, Travis Scott, and Kendrick Lamar excel in their features. However, Future’s voice, being so low, gets lost in the sound quite a bit, making his contribution to this album null.

Overall, if you pick and single out every song in the album, you could argue 26/30 songs are good with about five to 10 being great. However, unless you are Led Zepelin, it’s hard to get through any album that lasts over an hour, and 30 songs is just too long for its own good.

—Santiago Vazquez-Fuertes

Dr. Mythic - Miles Roever



contest

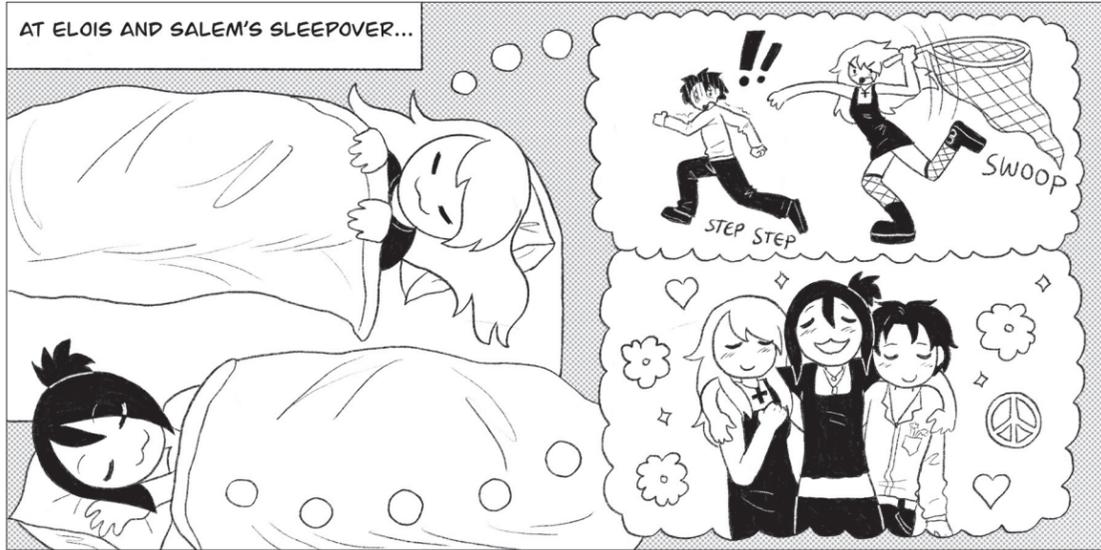
Find the hidden Nexus and win



GREG PRATT/NEXUS

We’ve hidden this copy of our last issue somewhere at the Lansdowne campus. Bring it in to our office to claim a prize from contest sponsor Arsenal Pulp Press, who have donated an assortment of books for you to choose from. *Nexus* HQ is located at Richmond House 201 at Lansdowne.

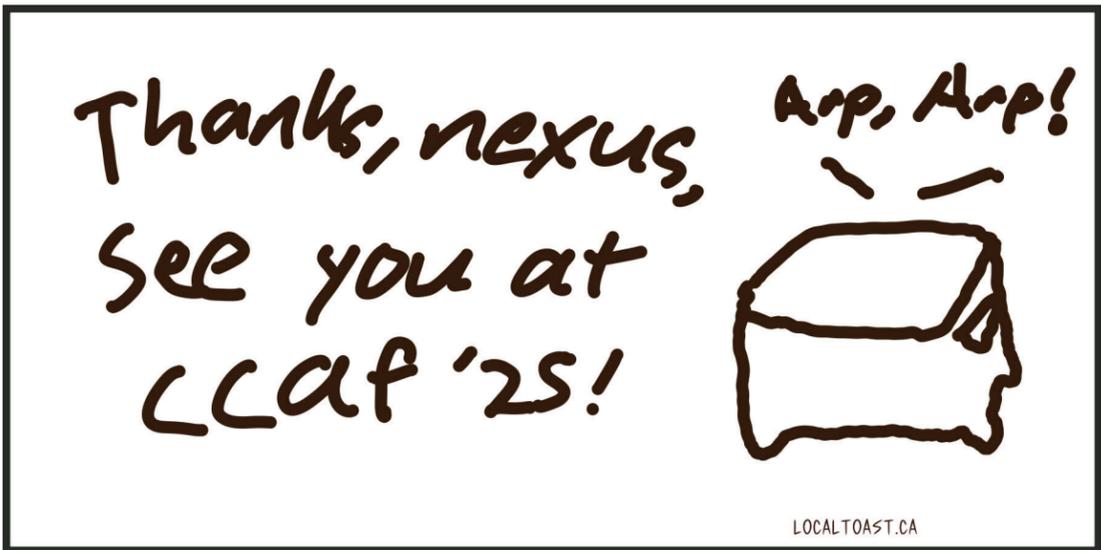
Ruby Rioux and the Bats from Saturn - Ray Nufer



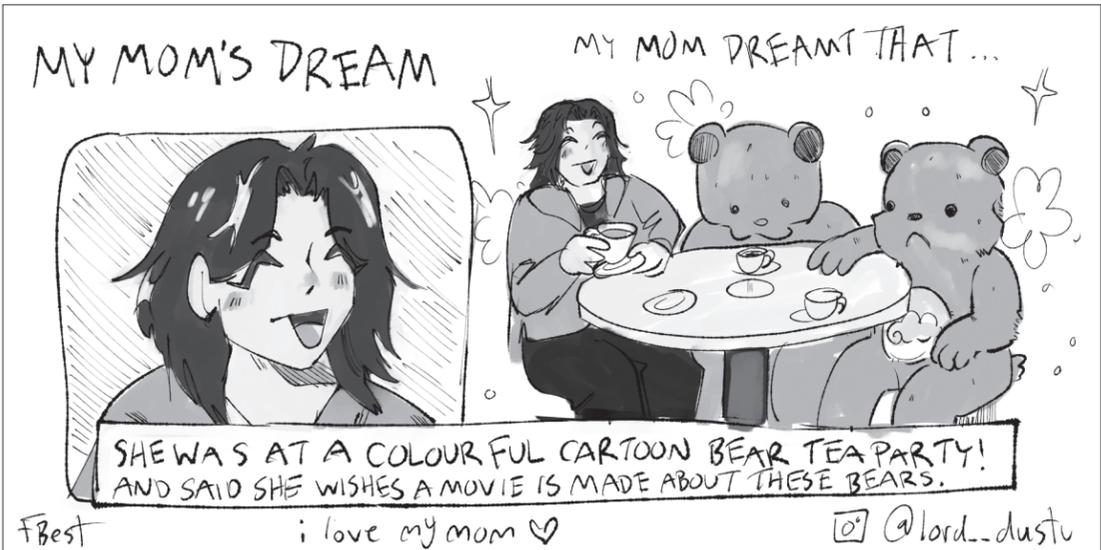
Natural Selection - Emily Welch



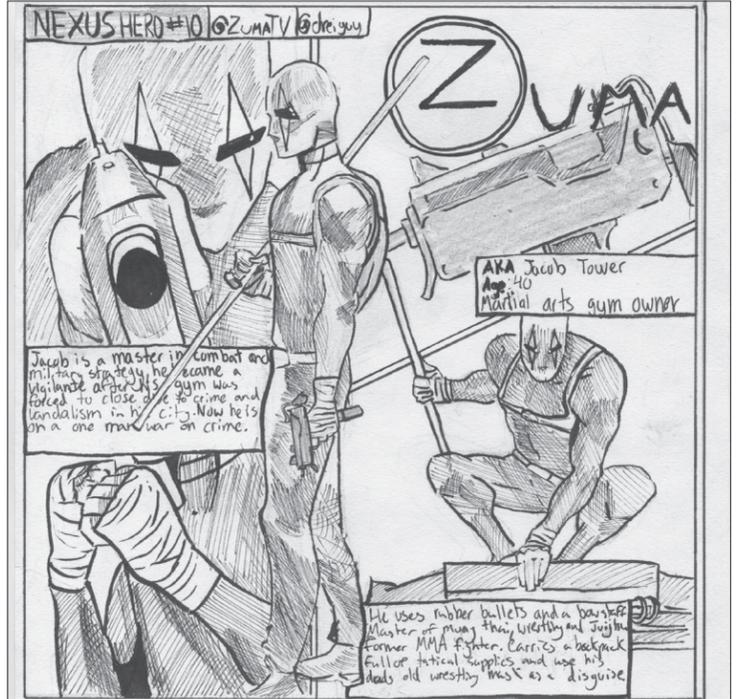
Localtoast: The Daemon That Lives at Localhost - Ben Belland



Weird Dog Ink - Felix Best



Nexus Hero - Declan Reilly



Tile Crawler - Jay London



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AGENDA

- I CALL TO ORDER
- II INTRODUCTION TO RULES OF ORDER
- III APPROVAL OF AGENDA
- IV APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS AGM
- V REPORTS
 - 1.) PRESIDENT'S REPORT
 - 2.) FINANCIAL REPORT
- VI ADOPTION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENT
 - 1.) ADOPTION OF MAR. 31, 2025 FINANCIAL STATEMENT
 - 2.) ADOPTION OF APRIL 1, 2025 TO MARCH 31, 2026 PROPOSED BUDGET
- VII RESIGNATION OF CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS
- VIII BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTIONS
- IX ADJOURNMENT

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LYDIA'S FILM CRITIQUE

BY LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON

A Face in the Crowd



There's a palpable prescience to the film, the kind that almost lends itself to the obvious: the machine of the promise will lend an individual power only in return of posing as the cog.

people are fascinating wherever you find 'em. And indeed they are fascinating in the Tomahawk County Jail. It, of course, holds Mr. Lonesome Rhodes.

Marcia's in luck: she's found the type with charisma to spare. He's unrefined, honest, he speaks to the ordinary American people tucked in the ordinary corners of farmland to cities left desperate for a voice. They adore his voice and his guitar and his ideas. And, eventually, seamlessly from earnest, they come to adore his hubris.

The film chronicles the rise and bitter fall of Rhodes. With success in radio came so in television and advertisement and populist politics. Through the direction and disobedience of Marcia's management, Rhodes finds himself on the top of America, grasping at the hearts of viewers and, to their detriment, leading them into his political demagoguery.

But he laughs his way through this. A booming, thick laugh, it asserts itself into the room, a sort of militaristic call. Rhodes puts his entire self into it, he says, like he does everything. But the self is subject to

change, it molds to circumstance, expands and contracts, it adapts to powerful positions and does so unapologetically. The self Rhodes puts into his laugh, by his last high TV rating, is reflective only of the manipulated audience perception, that not of a deeply corrupt persona but an image of a man with shirt-of-his-back sentimentality. He's even fooled himself.

There's a palpable prescience to the film, the kind that almost lends itself to the obvious: the machine of the promise will lend an individual power only in return of posing as the cog. If one fails to participate, however, the machine will swallow. And so the choice is laid out very clear to those interested in attaining influence, and those obsessive of it: to sustain glory one must enact onto spectators whatever it may take.

A Face in the Crowd, directed by Elia Kazan from a screenplay by Budd Schulberg, plays now as prophetic poetry, the grandeur of sensationalism and its implications, what would enter so sudden in the culture. Indeed, the effortless rise of fascism, the film informs us, would be blatantly televised.

In his little old town of Riddle, that's where scruffy vagabond Larry "Lonesome" Rhodes earned his southern Americana charm. His bluesman aptitude to carry a tune. His folksy witticisms. No, Riddle does not really exist. It's more of a composite, or, rather, a compost heap, he says. Still, it runs deep through his very veins, the soul and the force of American vivacity.

The camera keeps centered on Lonesome (Andy Griffith) in *A Face in the Crowd* (1957), his x-factor, but it is grounded and moved through the aspiring radio producer Marcia Jeffries (Patricia Neal). She's got ambition; she's mighty bright, too. In her pursuit to grow her local radio show, she travels northeast Arkansas drunk tanks for personality, a face. Who's face? Why, it could be yours, she says, or yours, or yours;



REASONS TO LIVE... IN VICTORIA

BY ALEX HANUSE

Garden: a noun and a verb

When gardening became a part of my life, so did the benefits of being outside on a regular basis.

for inspiration, a quiet retreat to reset your nervous system, or a romantic outing, now is the time to explore Victoria's sometimes hidden treasures.

Summit Hill Park is one of few remaining Garry oak groves in Victoria. The winding grassy paths and rocky perches with views of the city, Mt. Baker, and the Sooke hills make this park a whimsical place to take a stroll, have a picnic, and catch a breathtaking sunset. Perhaps most beautiful are the blue camas fields cultivated by the Coast Salish peoples. The camas bulb is a traditional staple food and trade item, blooming in late April.

The "garden that love built" is also one of Victoria's many treasures worth exploring. The Abkhazi Garden, located at 1964 Fairfield Road, is a unique and romantic garden hidden behind a hornbeam hedge. The character house, open for tea and overlooking the garden, belonged to Prince and Princess Abkhazi.

I love gardening. You might not guess that if you were to walk by while I'm cursing the weeds or momentarily blacking out as I stand up from the garden beds (low blood pressure), but despite the back-breaking spring clean-ups and landscaping projects, it brings me joy and balance. Except on days when I find a new patch of creeping buttercup: this causes me significant distress, as it takes over everything.

When gardening became a part of my life, so did the benefits of being outside on a regular basis. Before gardening, not normally one to participate in the endless outdoor recreational activities of Vancouver Island, I wasn't getting much time in nature. I'm so driven to complete projects that I will garden on miserable days when I would normally not leave the house. I once read the quote, "To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow." So, when I'm feeling overwhelmed, I remind myself that I'm doing this for my future me and whoever comes after.

I understand I am privileged to have my own outdoor space to cultivate and not everyone does. Fortunately, spring is finally here and so are the beautiful flowers that fill Victoria's many enchanting public gardens. If you're looking



FELLAS, LET'S FIGURE IT OUT

BY JAXSON SMITH PETERSON

Toxic vs. healthy masculinity

A lot has been made in recent years about the concept of toxic masculinity and its harmful effects on society. In this piece, I am going to attempt to cut through some of the noise surrounding this topic to get to the core of the discussion: what differentiates the two.

First, I want to establish what my definition of toxic masculinity is and isn't. Toxic masculinity is exemplified anytime a man lets his masculinity override reason. It's quickness to anger and refusal to communicate. It can manifest as bottled-up emotions and walls that only come down for violence or "locker-room talk" or behaviour that crosses a line.

Toxic masculinity is not competitiveness or adhering to personal priorities and boundaries, and it is certainly not toxic to live your life according to religious values.

With definitions established let's dive into how this relates to us as college students.

A common way that toxic masculinity shows up in college-aged men is sex. Treating sex as a conquest in the way you act or speak can be incredibly harmful. I try to live by the rule not to say anything that would upset me if it were said about my sister. Your boys don't need to hear every detail.

Communication is key in almost

all facets of college life. True toxic masculinity makes this difficult because of an inability to communicate emotional points of view. There's a time and a place for purely logic-based conversation, but an inability to deal with emotions in conversation can cause some serious roadblocks in personal and professional relationships, especially when anger is the alternative reaction.

Healthy masculinity in interpersonal relationships can show in different ways: setting boundaries when things don't align with your priorities, communicating calmly and authentically, and treating people with respect no matter the context. One of the healthiest things you can do is pause a conversation if you feel you may act irrationally in the heat of the moment.

The biggest difference between toxic and healthy masculinity is how you handle things, people, and concepts that you don't agree with. For better or worse the world looks a lot different than it did 10 years ago, and with the current political landscape, you almost certainly encounter things that you don't agree with on a daily basis. Respecting others and being able to have a civil conversation even regarding charged topics is one of the biggest signs of healthy masculinity.



DROPPING THE NEEDLE

BY SANTIAGO VAZQUEZ-FUERTE

The Beatles changed music forever

In an industry as opinion-based as music, it's hard for people to agree on anything. However, many do agree on this: The Beatles are the greatest band ever. But why? What makes these guys from Liverpool stand above everyone else? The answer is *influence*. The Beatles didn't just dominate music in the 1960s and early 1970s—they reinvented it.

In 1963, The Beatles came out with their debut album *Please Please Me*. It had a very classic '60s rock sound to it, heavily inspired by Chuck Berry. The album became extremely popular in the UK, and a year later the band appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show, and with this, Beatlemania was well on its way.

In two years, the band released four more albums with many popular songs like "Help!," "A Hard Day's Night," "Can't Buy Me Love," and many more. But in their album *Help!*, although similar to the last ones, they brought a more mature sound, hinting at the possibility of moving on from their "catchy love songs" gimmick.

And boy did they ever. The Beatles released *Rubber Soul*, with a folk-induced sound inspired by Bob Dylan. The Beatles never looked back from there, releasing *Revolver*, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, *The Beatles* (White Album), and *Abbey Road*, five of the best albums in history, one after another. This level of creativity and

productivity remains unmatched. In three years, The Beatles went from singing "I Want to Hold Your Hand" to having guitar solos loop backwards in *Revolver*, showing a level of experimentation and evolution that most artists never achieve in decades.

Beyond this, The Beatles changed the way we experience albums. They popularized the concept album with *Sgt. Pepper*, showing the world that an album can be more than just a compilation of songs. They revolutionized cover art, too. And they made performer-written songs expected of others. They played just about every kind of genre, and their influence is unmatched, influencing bands like Queen, Pink Floyd, Nirvana, Oasis, and even current artists like Billie Eilish.

What The Beatles achieved in seven years could only be possible due to the band having three lyrical geniuses in Paul, John, and George. Ringo, who is often overlooked, is one of the greatest drummers of all time; he wasn't flashy, but always knew exactly what the song required. And unlike any other artist or band that slowly fades away until their music is no longer good enough, The Beatles made arguably the greatest album of all time in *Abbey Road* and called it quits.

The Beatles were not a regular band—they were music's revolution.

review

Anda Union a powerful musical example of rich global history



PHOTO PROVIDED

Anda Union, who are from Inner Mongolia, appeared at the University of Victoria's Farquhar Auditorium in March.

LANE CHEVRIER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Throat singing, traditionally known as *khoomi*, is a form of overtone singing from Mongolia, where the throat is used to create a raspy sound that can resonate at many frequencies. Appearing at UVic's Farquhar Auditorium in March, Anda Union is a group of nine musicians formed in 2003, hailing from the Xilingol Grassland area of Inner Mongolia. Dressing in beautiful traditional Mongolian clothing, they play several regional instruments

including the horse-head fiddle, or *tsuur*; the three-holed flute, or *maodun chaoer*; and Mongolian versions of the dulcimer, zither, lute, and mouth harp.

The music created by Anda Union is difficult to describe from a Western framework. Heavy in stringed instruments that create simultaneously sorrowful and joyful melodies, they use traditional drums that sound like thunder to generate a rhythm that penetrates deeply to the core of the listener.

Several varieties of singing are

used, including *khoomi*, but also lyrical styles that lean into the natural musical qualities of Chakhar Mongolian to produce beautiful, warbling melodies.

Anda is a term used to describe a depth of brotherhood and sisterhood that sees friends held as close as blood relatives, and the members of Anda Union combine a blend of traditional and new sounds to unite the cultures of Mongol tribes from the era of Genghis Khan and make them accessible to new generations.

Listening to the powerful

sounds reverberating through me, I couldn't help but feel a little sad for the majority of North Americans who have been raised into a superficial mindset that either melts all other cultures into a bland, spiritless, homogenous mess, or focuses so heavily on highlighting global cultures that we forget that we really have very little to call our own. We celebrate Justin Bieber, Taylor Swift, the Kardashians, Metallica, Joni Mitchell, and Neil Young, but North American countries are less than 250 years old, while countries

such as Mongolia have existed for 5,000 years, through millennia of struggle and strife that have created rich cultural backgrounds that feel much stronger than ours.

As a modern-day Canadian awash in the tedious soup of social media, Hollywood celebrity culture, and capitalist commercialism, I feel bereft of a distinct and memorable culture that I can identify with. Much of the time I lose sight of the truth that most of the world's populations have had far more rich histories than Canada will ever be able to claim since its inception, having cavalierly discarded centuries of generational wisdom and tradition that the First Peoples knew intimately. It is of utmost importance, therefore, that Canadians and Americans travel or learn about distant lands and peoples, to embrace and learn about the many beautiful histories and timelines spanning the globe.

There's more to life than celebrity retweets, vapid game shows and reality television, Walmart rollback sales and Amazon Prime delivery. Anthropological documentaries and incredible, breathtaking live multicultural events like Anda Union remind us to look beyond the tepid grind of modern Western living and witness an incredible tapestry of world history, before it sinks beneath the oozing sludge of time and apathy, lost forever.

review

New Age Attitudes explores humanity through an unexpected format



REAGAN JADE

Amanda Sum performing *New Age Attitudes: Live in Concert—A Lo-Fi Listen*.

LANE CHEVRIER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

"There's nothing new under the sun" is an adage claiming that anything that can be done has already been done; in entertainment, this tends to be true. Supposedly, there are only seven basic story plots rehashed ad nauseam. Stories that resonate are those that ring true across time and cultures. If you watch a movie, you know mostly what to expect. The same is true of a concert or theatre production.

Arriving at the Belfry Theatre, I had no prior knowledge of *New Age*

Attitudes: Live in Concert—A Lo-Fi Listen, by Amanda Sum (which was part of Belfry's 2025 Spark Festival). I expected a large-scale production and was surprised when I was led into a tiny space which could barely seat 100 people. In a modest performance space at the front of the room, a young woman sits silently cutting and pasting together a small booklet using construction paper and a glue stick.

Eventually we each explore an envelope that contains a pen, a White Rabbit candy, and one

of the same booklets the woman is creating. With still no formal acknowledgement from her, we begin to read. On one page, we are surprised by a popup image of a little cottage set against mountains. The next page contains a short contract vowing to share this night, this time, and this space with each other. It is signed by Sum, and a blank space is given for our own sigil.

The beginning of the performance is divided into "songs," which are actually just silence, and we are directed wordlessly by Sum to go

page-by-page through the booklet, which she denotes by playing a note on a tiny piano beside her. Sometimes there are directions to follow, other times poetry, or artwork. Eventually, we are asked to share a bit about ourselves. What are our simple pleasures and pains? We are instructed to detach the page, crumple it up, and throw it to the front of the stage.

Abruptly, Sum exits the room. A short time later, a curtain lifts, revealing an extended stage with a piano resembling the smaller one. Facing away from the crowd, Sum begins to sing a series of songs that invite the listener to share her personal experience of living a simple, human life.

"I've spent a long time convincing myself I'm pretty," she sings. "I'm not that hot, but I'm funny, and if I have one thing going for me, it's my personality, and I'm okay with that." She tells us in one line that she feels fine, and then immediately tells us it's a lie, and that she's tired of hiding her vulnerability beneath bravado. Six out of seven days she feels pretty shitty, she says.

She's wearing no shoes, but patterned socks, and she stops at one point to peel and eat an orange from a fruit bowl on the top of the piano. In the simple silence she chews and slurps the juicy fruit, and a few audience members laugh, because such intimate sounds make us feel uncomfortable. But Sum is at home on a rainy day, practicing

piano all alone, and soon she wipes her hands and continues.

New Age Attitudes invites the listener to question what it means to be an audience member, or a performer. Sum allows us to sit in the mild discomfort of defied expectations until we begin to draw peace from the silence, the taste of a creamy candy, and the satisfying experience of flipping through a little booklet that, before the show, she personalized with our name and a heart, greeting us warmly with a smile.

I found myself in wonderment, realizing that even after thousands of years of human existence, there is still something new under the sun. Old ideas can be packaged in new ways. A performance can break the conventions separating performer from audience, and can remind us that each of us is a person with hopes, fears, and joys.

It must have taken bravery for Sum to create an avant-garde performance that refuses to follow proper, established theatre protocol. A sharing of intimacy that reveals her own fears, insecurities, and simple triumphs. With a bit of construction paper and a glue stick, a piano and a juicy orange, and some much-needed silence, she pulls us away from our endless thought spirals, back into our bodies. She reminds us that we're all just people, simultaneously vulnerable and strong, scared and happy, and this is what it means to be human.