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Tuesday, November 16, 2004 Volume 86 Issue 19

A COWGIRL AT HEART: VP Research Samarasekara leaving UBC to become President at the University of Alberta. NIC FENSOM PHOTO

Greener Albertan pastures

by Dan McRoberts
NEWS EDITOR

Dr Indira Samarasekara didn't see it coming.

"If you asked me three years ago if I was going to become a university president I would have said no," said UBC's Vice President of Research, responding to her recent appointment as the next President of the University of Alberta (U of A). "This was completely unplanned."

Samarasekara will take over the position on July 1, 2005, becoming the first female head of Alberta's largest post-secondary institution. She said that she is very honoured to be assuming the presidency.

"These are very competitive positions," she said. "Canada has three or four top universities and the University of Alberta is one of them. So to become president of one of Canada's top universities is extraordinary."

Samarasekara, who has served as UBC's VP Research for the past four years, was approached by the U of A hiring committee, not the other way around.

"I was very happy here at UBC," said Samarasekara. "I don't think you ever apply—I certainly would never dare to apply for a job like this."

Having spent 28 years at UBC as a student, professor and administrator, Samarasekara acknowledged some initial reluctance to the move.

"You don't simply pack up your bags and leave in a moment," she said.

After learning more about the potential for the U of A's development Samarasekara became more excited about the offer.

"This was an opportunity that was too good to miss," she said. "The University [of Alberta] is advancing in terms of its stature both nationally and internationally."

Samarasekara feels well prepared for the

See "Samarasekara" page 2.

Season's greetings... from the flu

by Linda Mei
NEWS WRITER

Most students may not be at high risk of complications from influenza but there are reasons to begin immunising them against the virus as the closed populations in classrooms may facilitate the spread of the flu, according to one UBC professor.

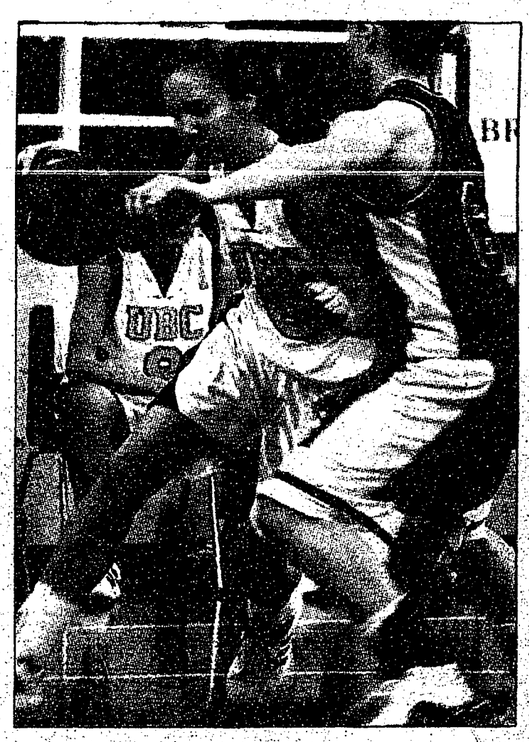
"There is a chance students with influenza in a university, for example, could be a major pool that could disseminate the virus into the general population, the same as daycares and grade schools are," said Dr Grant Stiver, who works for the Division of Infectious Diseases at UBC and is a professor in the Faculty of Medicine. "So from that point of view, yes [students getting flu shots] would be good."

Each year, around 20 per cent of Canadians get influenza, and more than 1,400 people in BC die from the flu or pneumonia-related illnesses. As the number one cause of vaccine-preventable deaths, the flu can be avoided with a yearly vaccination and adequate hand washing.

The flu shot is an injection of dead or inactivated flu viruses, which can help build immunity against influenza. The vaccination is 70 to 90 per cent effective in preventing infection in healthy adults, according to the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority.

A common misperception is that the flu shot

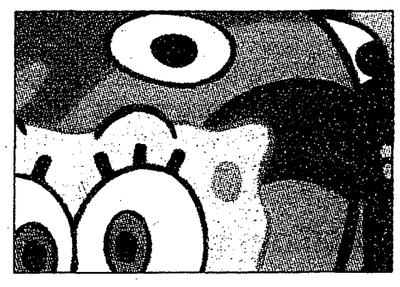
See "Flu" page 2.



Hooperama!

Women's Birds play home and home versus SFU. MAX YINAN WANG PHOTO

THIS ISSUE:



CULTURE: More than a contraceptive
From the sponge's mouth. **Pages 6-7.**

FEATURE: The laughter fades
A Canadian student writes home about election-sadness in California. **Page 8.**

EDITORIAL: Reality bites
No, really. **Page 10.**

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UNBC student referendum decides in favour of independent newspaper

by Jonathan Woodward
BC BUREAU CHIEF

VANCOUVER (CUP) — After a student newspaper was shut down and had its funding frozen by its student union publishers over an article that said men should become "novelties for the super rich," students at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) have voted to make that newspaper an independently funded publication.

More than two-thirds of undergraduate student voters at the Prince George campus decided in a referendum to separate *Over the Edge* from the Northern Undergraduate Student Society and fund the paper directly at $5 per student per term.

"We know now that the student body supports *Over the Edge*," said editor-in-chief Carolynne Burkholder. "The concept of freedom of the press and that governments should never control the press are the main issues behind this referendum."

In September, *Over the Edge* published a satirical article called "Men in the Modern World," which blamed men for the development of destructive technology, saying only men would need "dangerous phallic symbols like guns, rockets and submarines."

When genetic technology allows, "men should be forced into non-existence for the safety of the entire Earth. Maybe one or two could be kept alive as novelties for the super rich," the article said.

University harassment officer Cindy Hardy said the article violated the university's harassment policy and could be offensive to men. The student union pulled papers from the campus and froze *Over the Edge*'s bank account.

That's when the student newspaper began its campaign for independence, and lobbied the student union to hold a referendum, November 8 and 9.

With 338 votes for and 161 against, the referendum achieved the required two-thirds majority threshold by only eight votes. Sixteen per cent of students voted.

Student union director of external affairs Ingrid Hope said she hoped the paper would interpret the vote as a mandate to improve coverage of campus events.

"I hope they're not going to bash everyone because they can," she said. "They need to please the students; they're the boss now." The student union had lost a newspaper, she said, but there was no chance it would start a competing publication.

See "UNBC" page 2.

CLASSIFIEDS

Announcements

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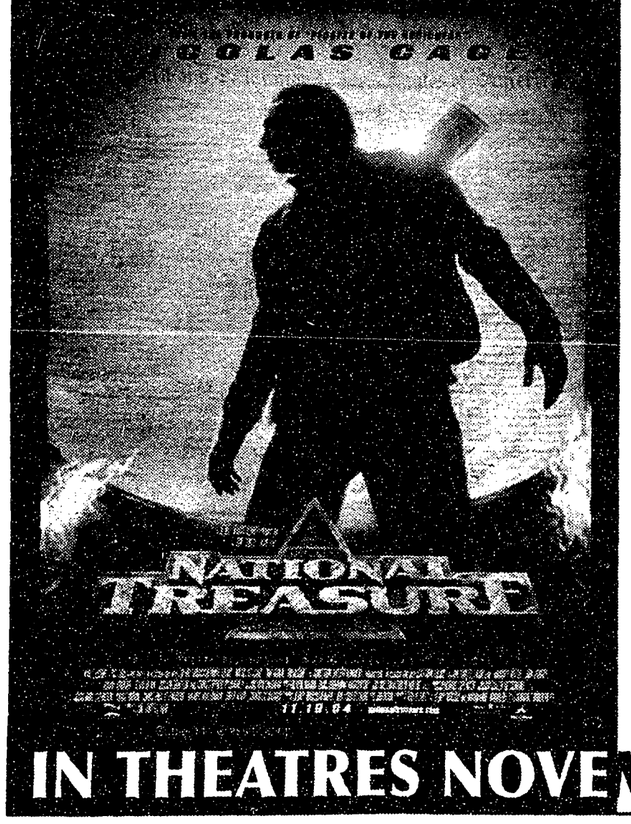

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IN THEATRES NOVEMBER 19

Search begins to find Samarasekara's replacement

"Samarasekera" from page 1.

challenge that lies ahead of her, citing her experience in dealing with governments and the business community while in her position at UBC, but admits that there will be some learning on the job.

"Of course I will have to learn. Nobody is a ready-made president," she said.

Looking back at her association with UBC, Samarasekara has fond memories of her time in the Faculty of Applied Science.

"The thrill that comes when you're working with a student and they can't understand what you're saying and all of a sudden the light bulb goes on...That's what I found really exciting about being at the university," she said.

Officials at U of A expressed excitement that Samarasekara had agreed to make the move to Edmonton.

"We are indeed fortunate that such an esteemed academic and administrator has agreed to lead our great institution," said Jim Edwards, chair of the university's Board of Governors and organiser of the presidential search.

UBC's top administrator, meanwhile, was likewise pleased by the development.

"I was thrilled for her and thrilled for the University of Alberta and pleased that she will go on to lead a remarkable institution," UBC President Martha Piper said of Samarasekara. "Of course there is some sense of sadness that she's leaving us, but I'm very pleased that her abilities have been recognised."

The process to select a new VP Research is just getting underway, Piper said.

"It will start fairly soon...We're just beginning to realise that we have to do this," she said. An advisory committee will be struck to recommend candidates to Piper, who will then present her choice to UBC's Board of Governors.

Piper said that Samarasekara's dedication to her area of responsibility will be missed.

"It's clear that she advanced the research agenda on a number of different fronts," she said. "The one thing that I think everyone would acknowledge would be her tremendous leadership she brought to CFI [Canada Foundation for Innovation] competitions... UBC led in that in the country." The money won in CFI competitions is used to build research infrastructure at UBC.

"I think that if you ask her peers across the country they would recognise that this particular program was something that Indira did and did extremely well," Piper said. ❖

Students encouraged to get flu shot before end of December

"Flu" from page 1.

can give a person the virus. While side effects of the flu shot can include a mild fever, fatigue, or aching muscles, they generally disappear in one or two days and complications are extremely rare.

"About ten per cent of people who get a flu shot feel a little bit ill maybe," said Stiver. "Some people say that they get sicker than they've ever been after a flu shot, I think that's an exaggeration and is not based in fact."

The flu virus itself is highly contagious and affects students a lot more than most people would believe, explained Jane Ngai, a UBC student and a volunteer at the Minoru Residence for Seniors in Richmond.

"I think a lot of people don't realise how vulnerable they are to the flu and how dangerous it can be sometimes," she said.

This year at UBC, the Department of Health, Safety and Environment Health Promotion Program, and the Department of Student Development and Services Student Health Service have combined to promote immunisation for both faculty and students.

Flu can lead to serious complications and death for seniors and especially for people with certain health conditions, and while students may not fall into that group, many of them have contact with those people. According to Lori King, a nurse with the Health Promotion Program, students "spend a lot of time indoors, very close to many other people, so they are at particular high risk for getting the flu."

High-risk individuals include people with chronic conditions such as cardiac or pulmonary disorder, diabetes or metabolic disorders, immune deficiency such as AIDS and HIV, renal disease, anemia, alcoholism, seniors 65 years of age, health care workers and volunteers, caregivers and children aged six to 23 months.

These people are vaccinated for free in BC, though UBC health clinics offer students the vaccine for $15 if they don't meet any of these criteria. Some departments require students to be immunised against influenza, such as health sciences.

"Student Health Services remain available for students to continue to go to get their shots until the end of December as long as the supply lasts," said King.

"The big message we're trying to get out this year is that we're trying to encourage faculty, staff and students that if they get sick with the flu [they should] stay home from work, school and errands that involve contacts with others, as you're most likely to be contagious for the first few days of the illness," explained King.

Flu shots have received a lot of attention recently with the shortage in the United States driving people to Canada to be immunised. The focus in Canada has been on high-risk individuals, since there are not enough supplies to immunise all Canadians against the flu, said Stiver.

"It's a real problem if we have a pandemic virus develop, as we are concerned about this happening in the next few years," he said. "Even with the advanced techniques in vaccine manufacturing, which allow us to produce a vaccine in six or eight weeks, as opposed to six months by the older techniques, still it would be a question of could you produce enough. Right now we can't." ❖

—with files from Sarah Bourdon

UNBC paper doubles budget after narrow referendum win

"UNBC" from page 1.

"The student newspaper will still be a newspaper for students on campus," she said.

Behind the referendum results is a serious financial gain for the paper. Their fees have increased from $2 per student to $5 per student, meaning their per-term revenue more than doubles to $17,500.

The paper will hire a bookkeeper, but editors will remain unpaid for now, said managing editor Stephanie Wilson.

It will also strive to abide by the university's harassment policy, but editors will have the ultimate say in what goes in the paper, she said.

"It was blown out of proportion and I'm sorry it came to this but I'm glad it ended in our autonomy," Wilson said.

Experts watching the battle for freedom of the press play out in the microcosm of a university campus watched with bemusement, said Claude Adams, a lecturer with the UBC school of journalism.

"There's a real humour deficit on the campus of UNBC," he said. "I wonder if they've got more serious issues to deal with than to pick on Swiftian satire.

"A lot of what we see in student newspapers is pretty stiff and stodgy, so it's nice to see somebody using a bit of imagination to comment on the world around them," Adams said. ❖

Coming to a SUB near you

A computer store will soon be housed in the basement of the Student Union Building, filling the commercial space vacated by the Canada Post outlet's move upstairs earlier this fall.

Patch Computers, a Richmond-based company specialising in computer repair and parts sales, will move into the SUB over the winter break, said Stacey Chiu, VP Finance for the Alma Mater Society (AMS).

The store will open in January and will be the only on-campus option for computer repair, as UBC IT Services stopped offering repair services this fall.

Rental central

A new DVD rental kiosk is up and running on the main floor of the SUB.

Installed on Friday, the kiosk has been set up outside Pie R Squared and is already generating business, according to AMS VP Finance Stacey Chiu.

The kiosk is dwarfed by a neighbouring soft drink machine, but Chiu is pleased nonetheless.

"I'm really happy with the size, it's not too overbearing," she said.

The AMS will not know how much business the kiosk gets until the month-end report from the company, Chiu said. ❖

Transit fare evasions cost Translink $ 7 million

by Sara Norman
NEWS STAFF

NIC FENSOM PHOTO

How many people evade paying for transit fares?

Approximately six to seven per cent of passengers ride the rails for free, according to Ken Hardie, director of communications for Translink. The result? A loss in revenue of almost $7 million, half of it coming from the two SkyTrain lines operated by Translink.

In April 2002, Translink commissioned KPMG Forensic, an investigative accounting firm, to look into fare evasion. According to their report, fare evasion resulted in an estimated loss of $6,679,158 in 2002, $3.3 million of that coming from users riding the SkyTrain for free.

The proof of purchase system makes it possible for travelers to get on SkyTrains and transfer to buses without ever purchasing a ticket. There are no turnstiles at SkyTrain stations and riders can enter B-Line buses through the back doors unsupervised.

Though Translink staff are on hand in transit stations, it is difficult to ensure that riders pay the fares. One SFU student stated that as she was exiting the SkyTrain station during the summer, she was approached by a SkyTrain official. Rather than checking her ticket, he simply said, "I guess there's no point in checking now [since you're leaving the station]."

In 2002, KPMG reported that "there appears to be a lack of responsibility and accountability for managing fare evasion on a Translink wide basis at the senior management level."

Translink responded to the investigation findings with a large list of management responses including "[exploring] alternatives to maximise collection of violation tickets."

Translink even appealed to the provincial government "to triple its fines to $150 for such violations as fare evasion," according to an article in the *Vancouver Courier*. Fines remain at $46.

However, money from such collection has not been used to offset the costs of fare evasion because it goes to the provincial government.

Translink recently appealed to have collector money returned to the system, said Ken Hardie.

When asked if Translink losses from fare evasion contributed to increased fares or more expensive student U-Passes, Hardie responded, "Not really. The reason for fare increases is operating costs going up due to fuel prices."

The collection of violation fines also falls under provincial government jurisdiction. Translink officials do not have the power to collect the fines themselves.

However, should one of Translink's 85 special constables notice frequent fare evaders, they do have the power to serve the violatorwith a notice to appear in court, which if ignored could lead to an arrest.

The constables can also arrest fare evaders if they refuse to present identification or do not have identification on them.

But one UBC student stated that when issued a ticket for fare evasion, her friends simply "gave a fake address, name and telephone number to avoid paying or simply didn't pay at all," and no arrests or follow-ups were made.

According the *Courier* article, "88 per cent of [violation] tickets went unpaid" in 2002 and Hardie estimated that those figures stayed the same in 2003 and 2004.

There are also cases of accidental fare evasion. KPMG's investigation found that lack of communication and signage resulted in revenue loss because riders did not realise they were entering a new zone for which an additional charge on already-bought tickets is required or that they were entering a fare-required area.

Yellow and black "fare required" signs are now located on the floor and ceiling area of the SkyTrain station, but zone differentials are still unclear.

According to *The Buzzer*, Translink's newsletter, estimated fare evasion losses have been reduced since the 2002 KPMG investigation to 1.2 to 1.4 million dollars per year.

Despite this publicised finding, Ken Hardie estimated that the loss is still around 6 or 7 million dollars per year.

Why is it, then, that the Translink SkyTrain system does not have turnstiles, like many other rapid transit systems around the world?

Nice, France uses a turnstile system, as do New York City, London and Toronto.

Toronto Transit representative Mala Bolton stated that there is still fare evasion on the Toronto rapid transit turnstile system but it is a "very, very small percentage... of the 400 million riders per year." Lost revenue from fare evasion does "get up to a couple of million," she said.

According to a transit representative in Atlanta, Georgia, the city's rapid transit systems are being converted to a proof of purchase system in 2006. Their turnstiles need to be replaced and it is more cost-effective for them to switch over, the representative explained.

When asked whether or not Toronto would ever switch to a proof of purchase system when their turnstiles needed to be replaced, Bolton was adamant that the city would not consider switching.

Fares in Toronto account for 80 per cent of the operating costs for their transit system. Bolton felt that having a proof of purchase system might end up costing more in lost revenue than spending the money to staff and maintain turnstiles.

Beyond the financial aspect, Bolton felt that transit users would not be as comfortable without staffed stations.

"People in staffing stations also provide a pair of eyes...They are someone for people to report problems to," she said.

As for Vancouver, the issue of fare evasion remains. Translink loses one dollar through evasion for every one hundred dollars it earns in total revenue.

According to *The Buzzer*, the issue of adding turnstiles was dismissed because of the projected expense of retrofitting stations and the additional operating costs involved.

Hardie feels that adding turnstiles isn't cost-effective.

"We're looking at a 10 million dollar per year solution to a six to seven million dollar problem... fare evasion will happen no matter what."❖

Coordinated Arts Program gives students interdisciplinary experience

Combination of English, psychology and economics offered to first-years that don't make the cut for Arts One or Foundations

by Claudia Li
NEWS STAFF

The success of a new interdisciplinary program for first year students has the Faculty of Arts looking towards an expanded offering of the coordinated programs next fall.

The Coordinated Arts Program (CAP), which allows 200 first-year students to take Psychology 100, Economics 101/102, and English 112/110 together as a cohort, was designed for students who wanted a broad start to their UBC education but could not qualify for certain established programs.

"We [wanted to] give a positive experience to our first-year students who [could not] get into Arts One or Foundations," said Dean of Arts Nancy Gallini.

Like Arts One and Foundations, CAP seeks to integrate several subjects, allowing students to have a more in-depth understanding of the subject matter.

"[Economics and psychology] aren't totally separate and the ideas that are in one area are often reflected in another area," said UBC professor Gillian Watson, who is teaching Psychology 100 for CAP.

"There is a tremendous link...between economics and psychology," said Robert Gateman, the professor teaching Economics 101 and 102 for CAP. "Decision theory [in economics] is based on psychological preferences."

The theme for this year's CAP is "cooperation versus competition." The movie *The Corporation* was shown in Economics 101 and students have been discussing the extent to which individuals and groups, including corporations, tend to cooperate or compete with each other, as well as the psychology of decision theory.

In the English portion of CAP, students learn about expository and persuasive writing, and practice writing short exam answers in order to improve clarity and conciseness.

Aside from being established for academic reasons, one of the purposes of CAP is to make first-year students feel more at home and integrated into the UBC community.

"First-year students in these classes [are] coming from smaller high school settings to this massive place where they feel like strangers," said Watson. "The idea of them sharing classes is such a nice idea."

Ultimately, "the goal of the program [is] for students to learn how to think critically and creatively. We wanted to get away from memorising technical stuff," said Gateman.

However, this first year of the program has not gone without problems.

Planning for CAP only began early in the summer of this year, while many of the English professors involved were away. There was also great difficulty in setting up the registration system for a standard timetable on the Student Service Centre.

In addition, several students failed the Language Proficiency Index test and were registered in psychology and economics, but not English. Because of these problems, some objectives of the course could not be carried out.

"What we planned to do was, instead of having so many midterms, we would have a comprehensive paper where you were given a global theme and then you had to apply your economics and psychology in the same paper, and it [would be] reviewed by an English professor," said Gateman. "Because of start-up glitches that will be rectified next year, we had to postpone for next year."

The Faculty of Arts is currently working on up to three new course combinations for CAP in the future. This includes a combination of political science, economics and English, and possibly one involving the creative and performing arts, said Nancy Gallini.

"I can see in following years, as we start to understand a bit more about each other's topics and where they overlap that we can probably make more areas of coordination," said Watson. "We're seeing this as a trial year." ❖

Riveting rivalry redux

Basketball Birds sweep Clan over weekend

By Dan McRoberts
SPORTS STAFF

The UBC Thunderbirds and the SFU Clan might be heading in opposite directions this year, but their differences did nothing to diminish the intense rivalry between the squads as they met Thursday for the first time this season.

The Thunderbirds, ranked third in the nation going into the Remembrance Day clash, had their hands full with a feisty Clan side but emerged on the winning end of a 72-63 score.

The game got off to a sputtering start; both teams seemingly nervous in front of the 2,000 boisterous fans who had gathered to witness the rematch of last year's division final. Sloppy passing and hurried shots made for a low scoring tit-for-tat battle on both ends of the court in the initial minutes.

The Clan, reeling from a tumultuous off-season that saw three starters leave the team, were held in the game by the inspired play of guards Brent Charlton and Raj Mander, both of whom hit timely shots to prevent the T-Birds from building a substantial lead before the halftime break.

After the UBC women's team unveiled their championship banner at halftime, their male counterparts took the court with a renewed energy and clawed further in front of their rivals. Third-year guard Casey Archibald led the way, as he rounded into fine shooting form from beyond the arc and finished with a game-high 29 points.

The competitive nature of the contest came to a head mid-way through the second half, when Jordan Yu was knocked to the floor by SFU's Aaron Christensen as the two grappled for a loose ball.

UBC's Peter Wauthy, who thrives in his role as the team's scrapper and rebounder extraordinaire, thrust himself into the mix and earned a technical foul for his trouble. Two SFU benchwarmers were ejected after coming on to the floor during the melee, which stood as the only flashpoint in an otherwise civil match.

When heads had cooled and sweat had been swept away, the Birds still found themselves unable to pull away from their opponents who continued to defend courageously and score when necessary.

SFU's Mander provided a bit of late drama with a remarkable four-point play, as he was fouled on a long-range three point shot and drained the ensuing free throw. His late heroics made the score 67-63 for UBC and Birds captain Karlo Villanueva stifled any hopes of a miraculous rally by making good on five of six free throws down the stretch and snagging a decisive steal in the dying seconds.

UBC won 81-77 on Burnaby Mountain Saturday night to complete the weekend sweep, paced by Jason Birring's 24 points. SFU coach Scott Clark was back on the bench after missing the Thursday game attending to team-related matters.

With the two victories, UBC is off to a 4-0 start in conference play and atop the Canada West, while the cross-town Clan occupies the basement suite in the conference standings. If the two sides hold true to form, the chances of another playoff battle are indeed remote, but when SFU visits War Memorial on February 5, fans can expect another dramatic match up. ❖

Hockey Birds trampled by Bisons

Winless season continues for Birds

by Dan Morris
SPORTS WRITER

The disappointments continue to pile up for the UBC men's hockey team.

After losing forward Nick Marach to a two-game suspension, and defensemen Ryan Thrussell, forwards Chris Curran and Stephane Gervais to injury, the Birds now have to deal with a shortened bench as well as face a winless streak that has been extended to 10 after a loss and tie in a weekend series versus the Manitoba Bisons.

Amidst the season of turmoil, UBC played a very solid opening frame against the Bisons on Friday night. The Birds held Manitoba to just four shots, and took an early lead courtesy of defenseman Jarret Winn's power-play goal. The Birds headed into the locker room with a 1-0 lead due in large part by backup goaltender Peter Mandoli's solid start and UBC's excellent defensive coverage.

The second period proved to be a different story. Nick Marach was handed a five minute major penalty and a game misconduct, and although UBC held the Bisons off the board during the major, it proved to be the catalyst that roared Manitoba's offensive to life. The Bisons scored two goals in 90 seconds to give them a 2-1 edge, furthered later in the period by another two goals in under a minute to make it 4-1.

Manitoba quickly set the tone in the third period by opening with a power play goal to make it 5-1. UBC put in a valiant effort getting 17 shots on goal, but Manitoba netminder Krister Toews proved too good, allowing only one in the third. UBC forward Eric Clark managed to score the Birds' only goal of period.

Costly mistakes that led to quick goals killed the Birds in this 6-2 loss as they were unable to chip away at Manitoba's huge lead.

Eric Clark commented on the T-Birds defensive breakdowns.

"We made a few small mistakes that really cost us. We had some costly turnovers at the blue line, and [Manitoba] is an opportunistic team."

Playmaking centre Casey Bartzen, who collected one assist Friday, believes there were some encouraging signs for the team.

"We outshot a team, we skated well, we killed penalties, and so it's just frustrating. I know we have players in our line-up that can score goals".

He further emphasised UBC's commitment to team goals.

"Milan set a goal of 40 shots for. We got 33, which considering our short bench is pretty good."

Head coach Milan Dragicevic talked about the team's injury woes.

"Five keys guys are gone for the weekend, but I've never seen injuries like this."

He stressed that a lack of focus led to breakdowns.

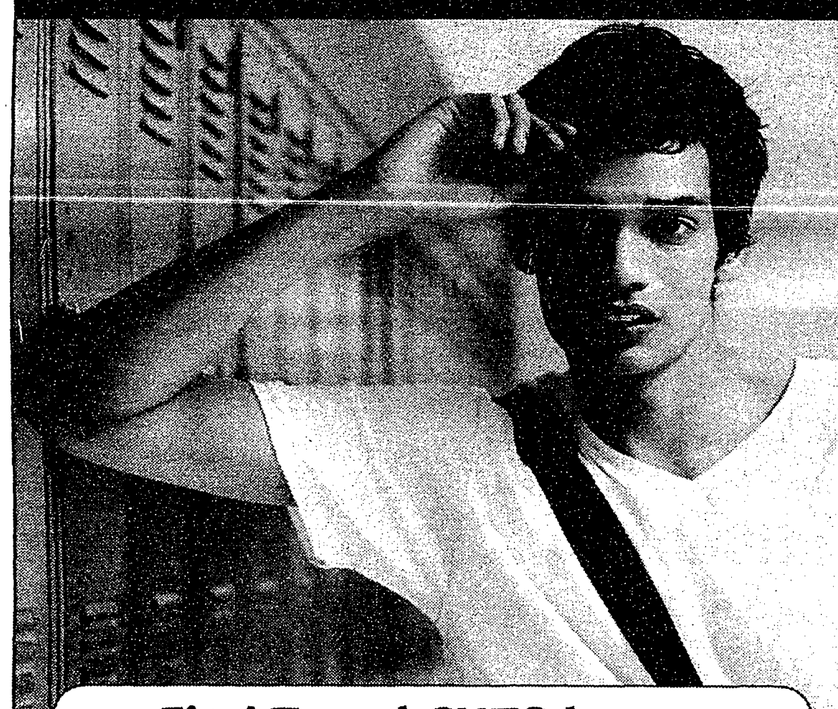
"We can't be making these mistakes. In the second period, two shifts in a row, we beat ourselves. Players have to know that if they cut down individual mistakes, we will start winning. But in a tight game, those types of things just can't happen."

Dragicevic also added that a lack of consistent goaltending is also affecting the team in the win column.

"Our goaltending has not been consistent. Every team in this league has a legitimate goaltender but us. We have given three guys a chance, and none have taken the team on his shoulders."

On Saturday's rematch, the Birds tied the Bisons 3-3. The tie gives UBC their first home point of the season but they still do not have a win this year. UBC's next opportunity to get a victory will be next weekend against Saskatchewan. ❖

HAVING TROUBLE FINDING CHEAP DATES FOR THE HOLIDAYS?



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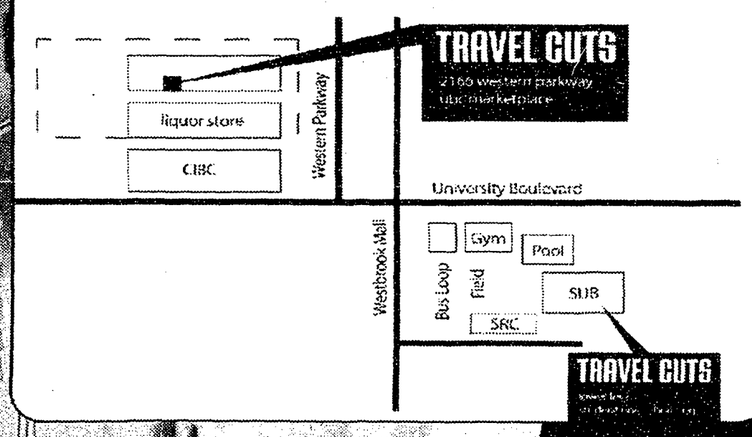

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Clan drop basket-Birds

UBC struggles to find its winning ways

by Andy Prest
SPORTS WRITER

The number three-ranked, defending national champion Thunderbirds lost an exciting match Thursday in game one of what should be a tight, season-long series against the number one-ranked SFU women's basketball team.

The Clan took the Remembrance Day game at War Memorial Gym 60-54, outscoring UBC 15-5 in the final six minutes of the second half and riding a double-double performance from 6'4", post-player Julia Wilson. She scored 14 points, grabbed 12 boards, and blocked five shots.

SFU moved their record to 3-0 in league play despite shooting a mere 34 per cent and being out rebounded 42-38. "We were lucky to get out of here with a win," said SFU head coach Bruce Langford.

UBC, who dropped to 1-2 for the season, was led by slick point guard Sheila Townsend, whose strong forays to the basket confounded Clan defenders and netted her a game-high 21 points. Kelsey Blair added a team-high of 11 rebounds.

"Sheila is going to get her points," said Langford, "If we can keep her to 20 we're pretty happy."

Both head coaches admitted their teams were tight to begin the contest as they combined for 20 first-half turnovers. UBC, who warmed up with poppies pinned to their golden shooting shirts, started the game with a 6-0 run.

SFU kept close and ended a low-scoring first half with a 10-2 run to lead 26-25 at the break. The Clan's late surge was capped by back-to-back threes from Maren Corrigal, who came off the bench to score 13 for the visitors.

The scoring picked up in the second as the teams traded big baskets. UBC got three point plays from Jane Meadwell and Letah Beck to take a late lead, but SFU fought back with Wilson scoring tough points inside.

The game hinged on simple execution in the final minutes, said UBC head Coach Deb Huband.

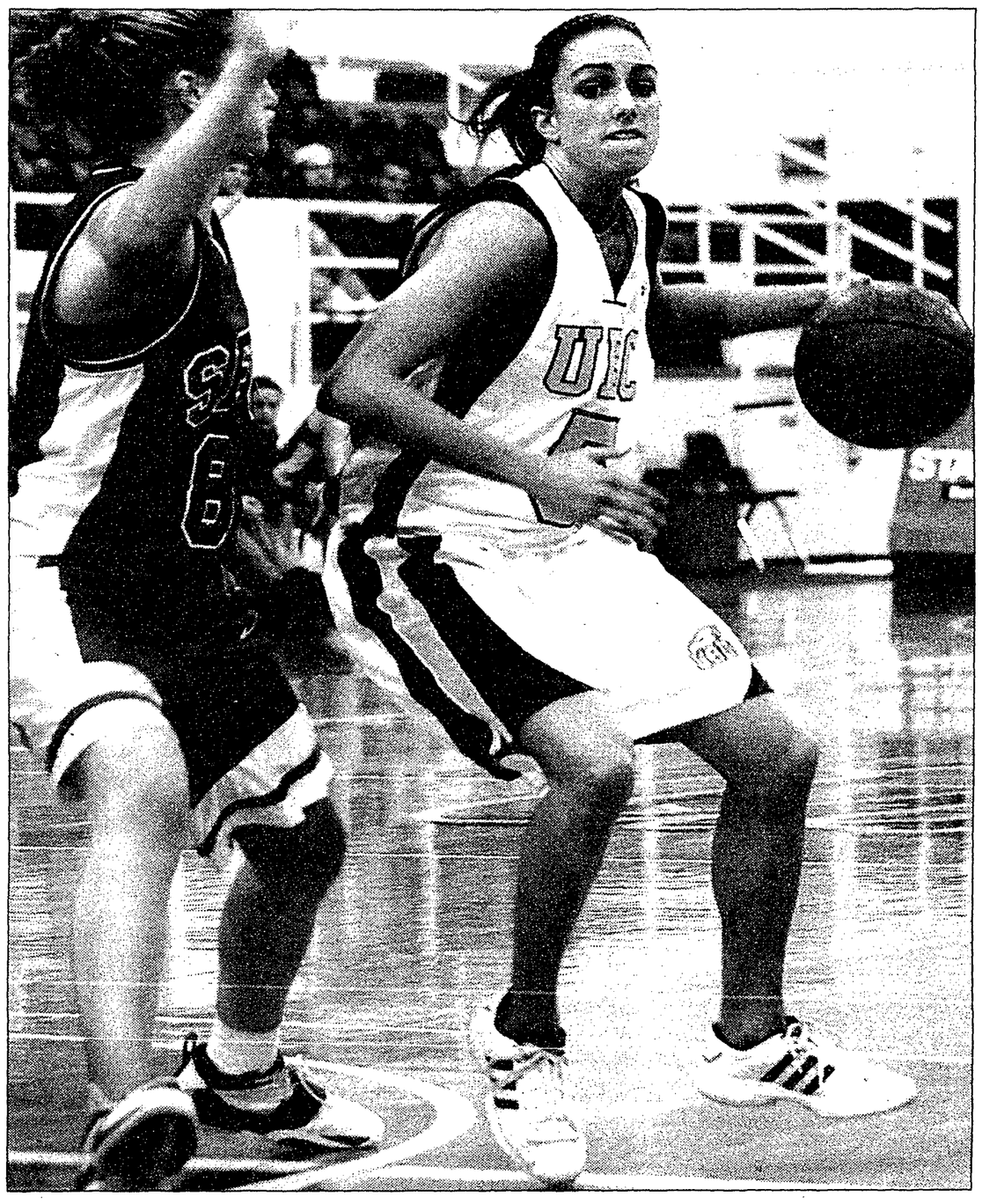
"Towards the end of the game we had some defensive breakdowns that allowed them to get some easy shots," she said. "It comes down to hitting key shots down the stretch."

SFU did that, icing the game with late free throws while the T-Birds missed key shots in the last six minutes.

If the first game was any indication, these two teams will produce some memorable battles this season.

"We're happy they are in our conference and we will get to fight it out to see who is the class of the lower mainland," said Huband.

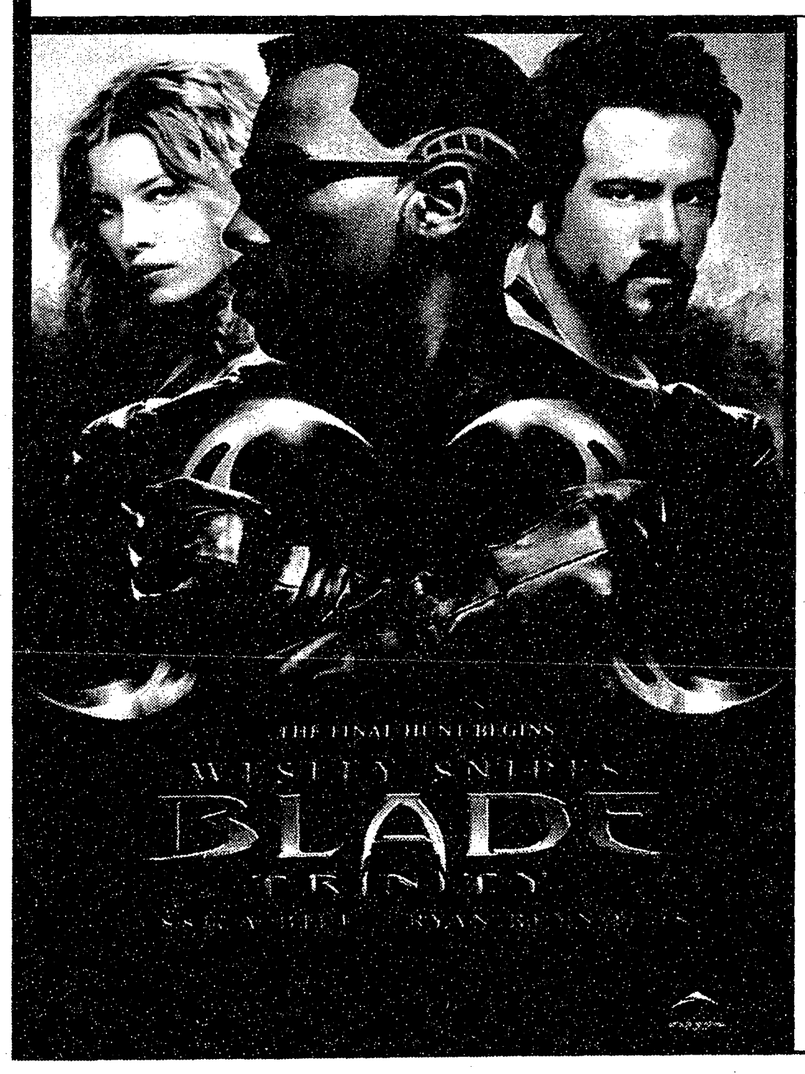
The Birds head to Victoria to play a back-to-back this weekend against the Vikes. ❖



BAD START: The frustration is mounting for the Birds after losing a pair over the weekend to SFU. YINAN MAX WANG PHOTO

85 years THE UBYSSEY Still getting picked up at 85. SHAMELESS GIVEAWAY

BLADE TRINITY



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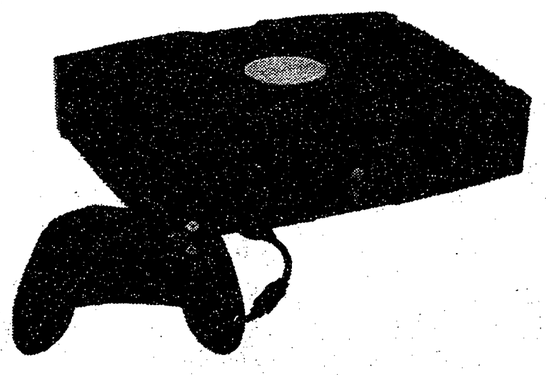


Watch Blade 1 and Blade 2 at the Norm on November 22nd and be sure to check out Blade Trinity Dec 7 at the Norm. Get your punch cards to win the XBOX at the door.

Stop by the Ubyssey to get your guaranteed ticket to Blade 1 and 2. Prizes available to early arrivals at each event including Blade Trinity advance passes.

*For arrival minimum 5 minutes prior to start of film. FUTURE SHOP ALLIANCE ATLANTIS

Keep reading the Ubyssey for more info on upcoming Blade 3 screenings.

IN THEATRES DECEMBER 8

Elections 2005 is around the corner!

The AMS Elections take place in mid-January and there will be two informational sessions for students interested in running for a position.

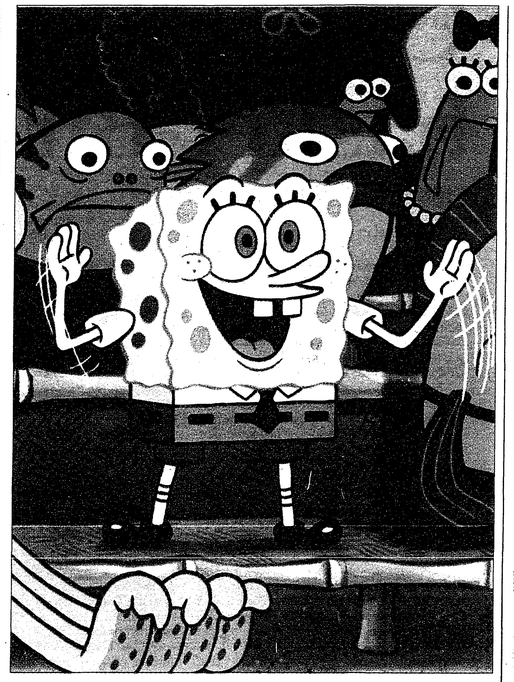
Bring your questions for Anthony Waldron, AMS Elections Administrator, on one of these two days:

Monday, November 15, 5 pm
AMS Council Chamber
(2nd Floor, SUB)

Friday, November 19, 5 pm
SUB Rm. 209

For more information about the elections process, contact elections@ams.ubc.ca.

AMS www.ams.ubc.ca



The man behind the sponge

by Eric Szeto
CULTURE STAFF

If you asked Steven Hillenburg, the creator of SpongeBob Squarepants, a few years ago whether he thought that a show about a talking sponge living in a pineapple-hut would be a success, his answer would have been not in a million years.

Since then, SpongeBob Squarepants has become so hugely popular that according to Hillenburg, it's bizarre.

The SpongeBob Squarepants Movie, slated to open this Friday is about a sponge (not to sound redundant) named SpongeBob. Along with his best friend, a not so intelligent but loyal starfish named Patrick, embark on an adventure to Shell City to retrieve the stolen crown jewel from their hometown Bikini Bottom.

In an interview with Hillenburg about the upcoming movie, he explains that SpongeBob is a rarity because the show has a cross-spectrum appeal.

"Definitely the characters are based on either people that I know or days where I feel a certain way. Where you feel like, say, a curmudgeon one day, you feel like Squidward and angry one day like Plankton, but you are frustrated another day. Maybe you are elated and naive and just happy to be drinking an ice cream soda."

He reminds us that SpongeBob is still an idiot at heart. "We are just trying to be funny. We always try to keep him from being too aware. He is naïve but I don't think he is stupid. When we write, we try to keep that feeling that he is fresh and optimistic and naïve and as long as you try not to deviate from that and make him too aware, try not to make him mean spirited and don't go for I think some of the maybe...cheap joke[s] in order to get a laugh...Once you start doing that, I do think that the believability of that decays."

Hillenburg also added that during the making of the movie they wrote in a part for David Hasselhoff, popular pop-star to his German fans, before even knowing whether he would take part in it.

Luckily, Hasselhoff was a fan, said Hillenburg.

"We wanted him to do it. We called him and he said, "Yes, and then he just really nailed it. He was fantastic," said Hillenburg. "We basically wrote [Hasselhoff] into the story without asking him, which is a really dangerous thing to do when you are under a tight deadline like we are... We found this spot where we wanted a human and we needed a person that we associated with the ocean like Jacques Cousteau or something and David Hasselhoff became the person to represent basically the quintessential lifeguard."

But any chance of Hasselhoff singing in the movie was quickly dismissed.

"He doesn't sing in the movie. We talked about asking him to sing in the credits... I think we didn't want to go too far with the Hasselhoff spice."

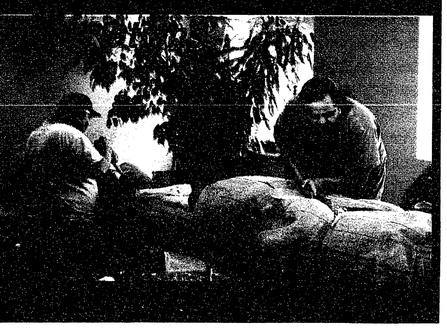
With the opening of *The SpongeBob Squarepants Movie* November 19, I now have an opportunity to watch SpongeBob Squarepants alongside David Hasselhoff in a full-length feature film. Can anyone ask for more? ❖

...at the shops

and skip on down to *the Ubyssey* to help with the Buy Nothing Day supplement. Contact buynothing@journalist.com to get involved. we still need writers and ideas. Watch for the issue on stands Friday, November 26

Interested in Issues?

Check out the Ubyssey First Nations supplement. On stands this Friday.



Best of Bridget?

Long awaited sequel not as charming as original

BRIDGET JONES: THE EDGE OF REASON
now playing

by Sara Norman
CULTURE STAFF

Sometimes, it is better to leave well enough alone. The sequel to *Bridget Jones* is one of those instances. A successful movie requires an equally well-made sequel, and *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* is simply not.

With a cast featuring all of the original actors, Renée Zellweger, Collin Firth and Hugh Grant, the movie had potential, but just didn't follow through. Starting in the exact same sequence as the original, Bridget Number 2 was predictable and repetitive, sometimes purposefully, which made it that much worse. Though the movie theatre was full, the jokes got few laughs and more often than not, only made sense if you had seen the original movie.

This time around, Bridget's diary had only a small part at the beginning of the film, though Bridget's never-ending narrative was present in too many scenes. Her blunders were over-dramatic at best. Several times in the movie, she ended up in the exact same situations as the original movie: single again and emotionally distraught. Bridget deconstructed her world and emotionally moved backwards, yet again.

But, Bridget seemed to have lost that gutsy attitude and underlying self-confidence that she had in the first movie. Most disappointing, though, was the re-packaging of characters stuck in Bridget's new world to create conflict. The worst offender: Hugh Grant's character, Daniel Cleaver. For some unspoken reason, he gave up his career as a bigwig publisher and became a bigwig television personality. This places him where Bridget works, to her dismay and surprise. Duh.

Despite the disjointed setting, repetition and recycled characters, it is refreshing to have an ingénue portrayed as being less then perfect, both physically and otherwise. But, overall, *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* fell over the edge, with no reason. Lacking any intelligible wit, it relied heavily on physical humor and allusions to the original. This is one sequel that should have been left to the viewer's imagination. ❖

Him and his guitar

DAN MANGAN
All At Once

by Ritu Kumar
CULTURE WRITER

Raw and real, Dan Mangan's mellow vocal stylings are accompanied by little more than a guitar as he ushers listeners into the rich relaxation of submission.

In his first CD, *All At Once*, Dan Mangan captures us with his acoustic flair. Mangan—a fourth year UBC student—entertains listeners with amusing, heartfelt lyrics, as in his second track, "So It Goes," where he opens with the proclamation "I don't smoke, sometimes I wish I did." His tracks are accompanied by a familiar sort of candor with music reminiscent of the melodies of Jack Johnson, only mellower.

However, I wish Mangan had opted for more musical diversity. The style he has adopted in this album seems to restrict his musical abilities and I would enjoy hearing Mangan produce something with a little more beat. As it stands, *All At Once* is a great album with nine tracks that showcase the potential of this artist, but it needs a bit of fine tuning that simply comes with experience and exposure in the field. By the middle of the album I had tired of tracks, which, apart from the lyrics, seemed to run into one another.

This is not to say that I did not enjoy the album. I did. Mangan is undoubtedly someone to keep your eyes on, as he possesses great skill of his craft. I just hope that in future albums Mangan recognizes that while he can still be true to his acoustic roots, he can also diversify his sound.

Altogether, *All At Once* combines to create a mix of harmony, soul, and sincerity, and I know that Dan Mangan has much more within his musical prowess to share with us. ❖

Warm and fuzzy performances

BYE BYE BIRDIE
presented by Footlight Theatre Production.
at the Shadbolt Center for the Arts until November 27.

by Dana Schindel
CULTURE WRITER

Anyone who's ever seen "Bye Bye Birdie" knows it's fuzz; the characters are light and bust out into snappy songs, it's set in the teenybopper era of the 1960's and the majority of the dramatic (if you would call it that) action unfolds in a town called Sweet Apple, Ohio. How could it not be fuzz?

The hitch is that its catchy, warm, delightful, carefree fuzz, that can have even the most skeptical audience member tapping their toes to the Tony Award-Winning show's hits like "Put on a Happy Face", "Telephone Hour", and "A Lot of Livin' to Do".

Elvis-like heart-throb rocker Conrad Birdie has been drafted and must depart in two weeks. His agreeable agent Albert Peterson has lost a fortune promoting Conrad's career and is distraught the star will leave before he regains it. However, the vivacious Rose, Peterson's love interest, has a keen publicity stunt to save the day. The three travel to a small town so Birdie can publicly kiss one lucky fan, 15 year old Kim MacAfee, played by Amber-Grae Coe, goodbye. And from there the fun unfolds.

The beauty of community theatre is that its cast is a compound of mainly non-paid actors and crew, performing after school and after work, for the love of theatre. And the love is felt in this production from the ardent pastel set, to the wild fabrics of the title character's costumes by seamstress Rene Schindel, to the not so subtle hip sways of Birdie, charismatically executed by Dane Szohner.

Other acting highlights include Sonia Church as the hilariously disapproving mother, Laura Cowan who handles director/choreographer Peter Jorgenson's zealous dance moves with ease, and ecstatic fan club devotee Ursula Merkle , played by Courtney Shield. Emerging from the strong male chorus, a rarity in itself is my favourite show stopper —über nerd, and Kim MacAfee's new boyfriend, Hugo Peabody, who has the audience laughing with, and mostly at him, every time he's on stage.

Sure there are some rough patches throughout the show. They are not so rough though as to ruin the fuzz. Go and get some for yourself. Fuzz can be fantastic, and this production surely is. ❖

Diggin' his talent, not the album cover

Jake Langley, with Joey DeFrancesco and Terry Clarke
Diggin' In
[Alma Records]

by Glen Chua
CULTURE WRITER

Be slow to judge the outmoded album cover with the schmaltzy pose, as *Diggin' In* soon redeems its poor taste in design. Alongside B3 organist legend Joey DeFrancesco and drummer Terry Clarke (whose credentials include touring with the Oscar Peterson Trio), Toronto guitarist Jake Langley forms a classic organ trio that takes on works by such jazz standards as Dexter Gordon and Wes Montgomery. Take note to not expect any radical interpretations or wildly original pieces (although Langley does contribute his own composition to the album); Langley himself admits that he's not inventing anything new, but someone has to keep the tradition alive. And that is where the album succeeds—it presents itself as an authentic collaboration of three jazz artists well versed in their respective crafts.

Regardless of whether or not this is your style of music, it is hard not to recognise the talent that this trio brings. Langley, who studied under greats Jim Hall and Pat Martino, manipulates his guitar to express a melody flexible enough to cry out in the rendition of Billy Holiday's "God Bless the Child" while swinging and hitting some chromatic movements of licks in his original piece, "Garage".

And DeFrancesco is hardcore—if such a term can be used in reference to a jazz artist—at the organ, working out some intense and liberating musical lines all within a sound rhythmic framework. Clarke completes the trio with a precise yet adventuresome groove that guides the music in the same direction.

If you're genuinely interested in this traditional groove of jazz music, then give this trio a listen. So if the likes of Norah Jones or Diana Krall are a little too jazzy for you, then this album may simply serve as distracting background music. But remember, Langley is Canadian; props to him for pursuing and succeeding (winner of the 2004 National Jazz Awards Guitarist of the Year) in a relatively barren music environment. ❖

Longer than a game of chess

On display now until Friday in the SUB Art Gallery, the UBC Pottery Club presents *Artifads from Clayland*, a display of beautiful pottery pieces, including a chess set built by Ekta Nadeau, a student and audio visual technician for the Faculty of Arts here at UBC. Finishing the final pieces—the king and queen—just a few months ago, the set has taken Nadeau 30 years to complete and is proudly on display as a part of this "show and sale". A part of our campus community for almost 17 years, Nadeau is still honing her craft and will continue making more art. A charity project helping to benefit GEERing Up! UBC Engineering & Science for Kids, everything from bowls and plates to intricate figurines are on display, and many are on sale. As for the colorful chess set, Nadeau says it may be sold for the right price. TREVOR GILKS PHOTO

Election dejection:

Dispatch from Santa Cruz

On the morning after Bush's victory, Republicans rejoiced across the US; but on the streets of a California democrat safe-haven, there was silence

by Myles Estey
FEATURES WRITER

A FINAL PLEA: A note on a windshield in Santa Cruz encapsulated the regional thinking. MYLES ESTEY PHOTO

It used to be really funny, but that was, like, so 2001 to 2004. Ha! He confused the words "fecal" and "fetus," and he claimed Jesus Christ to be his favourite political philosopher. Everyone's got a grab bag full of quotes that, if they are not downright hilarious, possess logic so perplexing that you really have no choice but to laugh in uncomfortable disbelief. His proclaimed concerns about "hemispheric pollution"; his belief that "Africa is a nation that suffers from incredible disease"; or his assertion that books can be great because "sometimes they have great pictures in them"—these are just a few of the many things that make for some quality entertainment.

Alas, the joke has worn itself pretty thin to many Americans, and most of the rest of the world. Yet, our southern buddies have voted to keep the joke running for another four years. But you think Canadians are pissed? You don't have to live here.

Fifty-six million American people did not vote for George Bush and of those, many woke up on the morning of November 3 severely shaken, disturbed, depressed and in a state of forlorn disbelief. The controversy and disappointment surrounding Bush's first election caused a national ruckus, with blame thrown in every direction. But now what? With no media scandal, no disputed state, no Supreme Court, and an uncontested win, there's no straws left to fish with. George won by three million votes, and in doing so, left a group of people in the US equal to twice Canada's population to bemoan the question "whhhyyyyy?"

Undoubtedly, there are many places suffering from "post election shock," but I can say with strong confidence that Santa Cruz, California, my current home, ranks pretty high. There is an equal support network here for G-Dubs as there is in, say, Vancouver's Commercial Drive community. Saying that the Americans here are stoked on the prospect of "Four More Years" is like saying that Parizeau and his Bloc supporters were amped about the 1995 referendum. Ce n'est pas le cas.

Arriving into this atmosphere from Vancouver mid-September, I felt optimistic about the possibility for change. Santa Cruz is void of the stereotyped America that comes through the Canadian filters. There ain't no heartland here. There are recycling programs, independently owned stores and restaurants, weed that is reasonably priced (and not sold to you by an undercover cop), a plethora of social support networks, a thriving arts and culture scene, and many surfboards. Fuck, they even have yoga, spandex, and lattes.

This all makes for nice little safe haven—an ideological bastion from current government declared "American values." Here, in the weeks leading into what may perhaps be the most important election in recent history, thoughts about how divided a nation the United States really is were easily forgotten as people joined in the abudant laughter over the ludicrousness of their government.

The gist around Santa Cruz was something along these lines: there is no frickin' way that someone who wrecked our economy, our health care, and our education system, defaced our international image even more, started a pointless war, and claimed God to be at the root of his actions, can garner enough support to allow him to continue to make a mockery of our country. To many, it really just seemed like a vacant threat, a virtual impossibility. So why not laugh at the surreal nature of it all? It's so easy to laugh. And when everyone else around you is laughing, why not join in?

So this election made for a rude awakening.

The morning after

On November 3, the university was empty, the town deserted. Even the normally packed surf breaks that line the coast were suspiciously empty, and the laughter had definitely subsided. The few people that I actually saw that day would only cautiously approach the subject, lifting their heads up to express some sentiment of sadness or confused anger. That morning, people had woken to the looming possibility that had once seemed so preposterous. Many people, hoping this to just be an extension of the bad dream they were having, hit snooze, and skipped a day of life in protest. A visibly disturbed professor I ran into could only manage "you ain't seen nothing yet" before scurrying off to the library.

Now, a week later, spirits have risen, if minutely. After a brief stint of wailing the earlier question of "whhhyyyyy?," the laughter is back, but with a new face. Santa Cruz has since added another question to the public discourse: what are we going to do now? One answer has been "we'll move to Canada!" This popular idea has garnered me several marriage proposals, by both sexes. While I am flattered, the more practical answers that have emerged from this recent question are more deserving of note.

People who were so quick to laugh and poke fun have come to terms with some harsh realisations about the effect of their inaction. Profound consequences lie in another four years of Bush, particularly with a strengthened support network in the government. For the people of Santa Cruz, Bush's promise to spend his political capital has the potential of everything from a reinstated draft to an economic recession, another terrorist attack to a degrading environment, the infusion of church and state to further invasion of privacy and erosion of personal freedoms. These are all things that people in Santa Cruz see as downright wrong with a visceral resolve that we know nothing of in the bland realm of Canadian politics.

A major flaw that haunts the US is that much of the discourse in all elements of the United States exists as a polarised debate. Life is dominated by the binary structures of whether you're right or wrong, a Christian or not, with us or against us, from here or from somewhere out there, and of course, whether you're a Democrat or Republican. Politically, the result is that there is little room for an alteration: you are either one or the other. Changing a political affiliation means inverting your definitions of right or wrong, as there is no viable alternative from which to approach the current reality. Such a dramatic move is a bigger leap than a lot of people are willing to make. I certainly have yet to meet anyone willing to make this switch, myself included.

Towns like Santa Cruz, on both sides of the political debate, exist across the United States—ideological havens that will forever uphold the region's status quo of earlier generations, hampering any hopes for a more fluid political process as they remain stuck in the right-wrong argument. Insulated regional views guarantee that some regions will continue to sned a similar representative to Washington, with only slight alterations to regional biases along the geographic periphery, for year after year. So when a proponent of "right" takes presidency, and declares a town like Santa Cruz "wrong," the result is devastation.

The isolated liberals of the US are now beginning to realise the dangers of being trapped in an ideological bubble, and in such a limited form of democracy. There is a growing understanding that at least some of the fault for the election's outcome needs to be placed upon those who did not take seriously enough the potential threat and that the complacency must be stopped. This election has been a call for a more involved citizenry, to better communicate with politicians and fellow citizens, and to work to improve the quality of the democratic process.

There is true and honest apprehension, if not fear, of what may come. While the jokes will likely surface again, it has become clear in the people around me that this is no longer a laughing matter. That this is going to hurt. And I watch, with some sadness, the people around me digest their new destiny with noticeable discomfort, and gladly flash my Canadian card whenever pushed about what I think about "our" new government. Fortunately, I will only have to deal with the external, and not the internal implications of another term with Bush. ❖

Was Arafat good for the Middle East?

by Yusuf Faqiri
THE CORD WEEKLY

WATERLOO, Ont. (CUP) — As if the Middle East is not already in great turmoil, the news of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's ill health and subsequent death has further exasperated tensions, leaving no clear leader for the Palestinian people.

When the severity of Arafat's sickness had not yet been released, nations around the world expressed concern for the Palestinian leader's health. Even Washington said that it hoped Arafat would get the care he needs. But Israeli officials were split on whether Arafat should have been able to return to Palestine. While Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon agreed to let Arafat return, his foreign minister, Silvan Shalom, and defence officials rejected that idea.

Unfortunately, the decision was made for them upon news of Arafat's death.

Love him or hate him, Arafat was the only hope for a peaceful Israeli and Palestinian solution. Arafat is a symbol for Palestinian resistance and he was the only one in the Middle East that could unite all Palestinians to live peacefully alongside Israelis. Often overlooked, Arafat brought peace to Palestine and Israel with Yitzhak Rabin in 1993. This brought an end to the first intifada, or Palestinian uprising, which lasted from 1987 to 1993.

The largest problem concerning the Middle East is that there was no established figure in the Palestinian National Authority to take power. Arafat had never taken time to groom a successor because he feared an heir might be a threat to his power.

In my opinion, it is a scary thought to see Palestine without a true leader. Arafat exerted such an influence and power over the Palestinians that the thought of him not being at the helm is beyond belief. Palestine will literally fall into chaos and turmoil. It will create huge ramifications in the Middle East and abroad. The issue of Arab-U.S. relations will be called into question.

Although some believe that a take-over of the Palestinian authority by Hamas is far fetched, this remains a strong possibility. The guessing game can be played for hours, but the question of who will officially take leadership still remains.

The world must understand the dire need of this situation. The collapse of the Palestinian authority will be devastating, and the international community needs to help the Palestinians to find a successor and ensure stability. I am not calling for the international community to install a leader, but to assist Palestinians in finding a leader. Because of their perception in the Arab world, I am not calling on the United States to resolve this matter.

A neutral power must become a mediator in solving this issue. For example, in 1993, Norway played mediator between Israel and Palestine in the peace accords. This scenario needs to be repeated, because without a leader there will be only instability for both the Palestinian people and the world. ❖

PERSPECTIVE
opinions

by Richard Togman
THE CORD WEEKLY

WATERLOO, Ont. (CUP) — The leader of the Palestinian National Authority, Yasser Arafat, was flown to a hospital in France as concerns over his deteriorating health forced him to seek medical treatment. For a while it was unclear whether Arafat would be physically able to return to his duties as chair of the Palestinian authority. Since his death, many have breathed a sigh of relief.

Arafat has been the leader and embodiment of the Palestinian struggle for nationhood since the creation of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in the 1960s. The PLO originated as both a political, as well as military-terrorist, organisation in an effort to create a Palestinian state in Israel and the "occupied territories." It has been responsible for countless terrorist attacks, the most famous being the 1972 massacre of Israeli Olympic athletes in Munich.

Under the Oslo peace accords, the PLO withdrew a statement from its constitution that called for the destruction of the state of Israel and theoretically accepted the West Bank and Gaza as grounds for a Palestinian state. However, since Oslo broke down and the ensuing intifada began, Arafat was nothing but a blockade and hindrance to Palestinian nationhood. With him in power there was no end to the continuous cycle of violence.

Arafat maintained a stranglehold on the Palestinian authority, which was created after Oslo as a governmental structure for the Palestinians. He resisted any reforms, especially concerning the security services. This has been a large issue not only because the security services were supposed to police the territories and eliminate the rogue terrorist elements—which they have failed to do—but because many moderate Palestinians who have risen to the role of prime minister of the Palestinian authority, such as Abu Mazen, have resigned over their frustration and inability to act effectively, due to Arafat's interference.

He was dismissed by both Israel and America as an unacceptable partner for peace talks, as he consistently rejected any move toward reform or compromise (not to mention his heading of a terrorist organisation). He was even seen by Hamas as an obstacle and as acting irresponsibly toward his own people.

In his absence of a mere few days there has already been numerous talks of renewed peace negotiations between a new Palestinian authority and Israel. As well, Hamas and other terrorist organisations have been discussing a power-sharing agreement with the authority in the governing structure of the Palestinians. If this occurred it would give Israel a realistic partner for negotiation as all the main elements of Palestinian society would be represented and the problem of consistent terrorist attacks on its civilian population may be addressed.

Moderate leaders have already come forward and begun to take over the responsibilities and duties of running the authority and are beginning to give light to a real future for the Palestinian nation, instead of a continued and vain attempt to secure statehood and Israeli concessions through extreme violence and death.

The death of Arafat is a watershed moment in the Palestinian struggle as a new and more effective leadership emerges which will give true legitimacy and real results to the Palestinians instead of a corrupt and decadent leader whose time of passing was long overdue. ❖

AMS/GSS HEALTH & DENTAL PLAN

Important message for students covered by the AMS/GSS Health & Dental Plan in 2003-2004

As a student at UBC and a member of the AMS or GSS, you're covered by the AMS/GSS Health & Dental Plan.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING CLAIMS FROM LAST YEAR (for students covered in 2003-2004) - All health and/or dental claims incurred on or before August 31, 2004 must be received by the insurance company (Sun Life) by November 30, 2004. In order to ensure your claims are submitted by the deadline, they must be dropped off at the Health & Dental Plan Office **no later than Tuesday, Nov. 23, 2004**. If you're mailing claims directly to the insurance company, please leave adequate time for postage. Claims received after the deadline will not be reimbursed.

END OF BLACKOUT PERIOD (for students covered for 2004-2005) - Please note that the Blackout Period is now over and that claims reimbursement cheques will soon be mailed to you. For more information on the Blackout Period, visit **www.studentcare.net**.

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UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA GRADUATE STUDENT SOCIETY

Alma Mater Society of UBC
UBC Graduate Student Society

Health & Dental Plan Office
Student Union Building, Lower Level
6138 SUB Boulevard
Vancouver, BC
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studentcare .net/works

THE UBYSSEY
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2004
VOLUME 86 ISSUE 19

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We are an autonomous, democratically run student organisation, and all students are encouraged to participate.
Editorials are chosen and written by *the Ubyssey* staff. They are the expressed opinion of the staff, and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Ubyssey Publications Society or the University of British Columbia.
The Ubyssey is a founding member of Canadian University Press (CUP) and adheres to CUP's guiding principles.
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Letters to the editor must be under 300 words. Please include your phone number, student number and signature (not for publication) as well as your year and faculty with all submissions. ID will be checked when submissions are dropped off at the editorial office of *The Ubyssey*, otherwise verification will be done by phone.
"Perspectives" are opinion pieces over 300 words but under 750 words and are run according to space.
"Freestyles" are opinion pieces written by Ubyssey staff members. Priority will be given to letters and perspectives over freestyles unless the latter is time sensitive. Opinion pieces will not be run until the identity of the writer has been verified.
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Liz Green has a wish. She wanted Hywel Tuscano and Megan Smyth to decorate the office. Alex Leslie and Jesse Marchand had a different plan, however. They wanted to hire Trevor "Garland" Gilks. After an episode of "jazz hands", Garland and his team of decorators including Claudia "Lighting" Li, Ritu "The Carpenter" Kumar, and Andy "Painter-dude" Priest began making the office beautiful. All of a sudden, Paul Evans exclaimed "this reminds me of decking the halls for Christmas" and he, Joel Libin, Jon Woodward, and Levi Barnet burst into joyous song. Ania Mafi, ecstatic over the creation of a new desk made by Nic Fensom, embraced the nearby Michelle Mayne. Dan McRoberts, slightly disturbed by the mayhem, burst out of the office muttering that he was going to Subway. Sarah Bourden and Eric Szeto, also overwhelmed by the chaos, followed Dan out the door while rubbing their tummies. Carrie Robinson, who had brought her dinner, sat munching and watching the action as Sara Norman and Myles Estey furiously battled over who would recieve the next design upgrade. Then, all of a sudden, Carol Domanko screamed, "oh my garland!" as Dan Morris and Linda Mei toppled off of a ladder as they attempted to hang a light. However, the day was saved by Max Yinan Wang as he jumped off the coffee table to catch the two falling decorators. To avoid future incidents, Jeff Desjardins, a safety freak, set up soft and cushy white padding all over the office. The decorators were even less impressed when Glen Chua, Dana Schindel, and Richard Togman geared up in sumo suits and began wrestling. So in the end, no one got their wish - except Dan, who got his Subway.

EDITORIAL GRAPHIC
Joel Libin

Canadian University Press

Canada Post Sales Agreement Number 0040878022

Fat people, make-overs, midgets and eating rat dung...on TV

The list keeps growing, and we keep watching. There are over 150 reality TV shows on various channels out there today and with each new show, the quality of television erodes even further.

Are viewers so interested in the lives of "average" people? What is it about a camera following these people around on their quest for love, money, beauty, fame, adventure, food, revenge, and makeovers of all kinds—from building a new home to a new chest (accessories included)—that is enjoyable to watch? Are people so unfulfilled that they have to vicariously live their lives, or lack thereof, through the thrilling spectacle of midgets battling for the perfect bride?

In *The Swan*, a popular reality TV show, the premise is to do an extreme makeover on people who feel inadequate about themselves. It's sad to think that there are people out there that are so unsatisfied with themselves physically that they are willing be subjected to a complete transformation on national TV. Even sadder still is the fact that the show serves to stir up the viewer's own self-consciousness, prompting them to believe that perhaps they too need an extreme makeover to be truly satisfied.

And though the superficiality of such shows is obvious, many of us still find ourselves watching them. We tell ourselves that we are critiquing society, or watching them to remind us how much we hate them. But that's when the gimmicks hook you. Wowed by beautiful bodies, backstabbing and shock value, we get sucked into the drama. But what are we really seeing?

The main premise of most reality TV shows is the embarrassment factor. While shows like *The Swan* point out one's "ugly" features, other shows like Superstar USA—a show that deceives its contenders into thinking they are battling it out for the title of best singer in the USA while the judges are in truth looking for the worst—blatantly make fun of desperate people looking for their 15 minutes of fame.

This embarrassment, for many of the show contestents, is very real. In watching shows that aim only point out people's shortcomings, one can only assume that the appeal of such shows lies in our desire to validate our own lives by watching the downfall of others. This is definitely a reality that has become apparent from the rise of reality shows. However, the situations presented in these shows are contrived and artificial, carefully planned to achieve a result that will pull in the highest ratings.

Reality TV started as a fad. It gave a glimpse into other people's lives—a glimpse that changed the face of television and provided a new source of entertainment. But when does it end? The latest reality shows have escalated to new heights, pitting people against their families, their lovers, their friends, all in the name of entertainment and of course, money. But at what cost? The winner of *My Big Fat Obnoxious Fiancée* completely alienated her loving family. And this is what people love to watch.

There are exceptions in the reality TV world. Esoteric shows do exist on channels like PBS and History Television. These networks offer up tales of everyday folk living like Klondike gold prospectors or pioneer farmers. In a strange way, it's actually educational to watch Joe Sixpack from Baltimore trying to churn butter or better yet, dry cow dung for fuel. It is also far more humourous than anything Joe Rogan puts people up to on *Fear Factor*.

The reality genre has definitely been lampooned by certain fictional shows. The fantastic BBC comedy *The Office*, proves that while truth may be stranger than fiction, fiction undoubtedly makes better television. A glimpse into a paper products office located on the outskirts of London, *The Office* features an egomaniacal boss, his anal retentive assistant and a host of other workplace stereotypes fumbling their way through the comedic minefields of everyday life. It's much more amusing than any reality show out there and at the end of the day, no one profits off someone else's damaged self-esteem.

Reality shows have no bounds and networks will continue striving to find the next shocking way of getting the viewers' attention. Maybe one day we'll see a show that fuses all the reality shows into one. We at *the Ubyssey* eagerly await the day when fame-hungry Amish folk will compete for the honour of eating a live snake on live TV, while their families hang on ropes Regis Philbin weaved from thousand dollar bills over metal spikes wielded by Ashlee Simpson, who really only wants a free makeover to improve her self esteem.

Oh, and laughing at fat people is fun too. Ha. Ah ha ha ha. Wait, did you laugh at that? You're fired. ❖

LETTERS

"Rabid anti-Americanism" plagues *Ubyssey*

by Justin Visser

As a dual [US/Canadian] citizen attending UBC, I have to say that I am deeply disappointed with both the lack of professionalism and the rabid anti-Americanism that characterised the November 5 edition of *the Ubyssey*. I am writing not only in response to the feature on the US election where the author, in response to the victory of George W. Bush, quoted someone as saying they wanted to "...go burn the US Consulate!" and noted someone's suggestion of "...driving down to the peace arch and attacking the border guard."

I can understand the distaste many in Canada have for our President, in fact I myself even voted against him—and I am a Republican. This kind of language however, even in jest is highly inappropriate. I can remember quite similar tactics used by Fox News on the eve of the Iraq war labeling France, Canada and Germany as the "Axis of Weasels," as well as many Americans making comments such as, "we should go bomb the Eiffel Tower," or "Let's just fucking invade Canada." These comments, although said in the context of a joke, are highly inappropriate and I can only imagine the fury of left-wingers at UBC if they were printed in a student publication.

Even more troubling to me, is the apparent student support of the foreign terrorists in Falluja, while stereotyping the American soldiers as baby-killers bent on destruction. The insurgents in Falluja are mainly foreign terrorists that have come to Iraq to kill Americans. These are the animals that lit a car full of American workers on fire and then desecrate their remains by hacking them up and hanging them from a bridge, that bomb a town square full children lining up to receive candy from American soldiers, or who kidnap and decapitate foreign aid workers, many of whom are Muslims themselves.

PERSPECTIVE
opinion

I was against the war in Iraq to begin with, however, now that the war has started I support the soldiers on the ground who are there. As a former US soldier myself, I would have been sent to Iraq for the invasion had it not been for the decision of the Turkish government to stay out of the war. I left the army in August of last year; however my unit was sent to Iraq in January and is right now involved in the battle for Falluja. These men are not the war criminals and thugs portrayed by the student press at UBC and if given the chance would much rather be in a college class than fight for their lives in a foreign city.

Say what you want to about American foreign policy, or lack thereof, but the guys on the ground in Iraq honestly believe they are there not to occupy and oppress the Iraqi people, but to ensure their freedom. I would ask the people who wrote the editorial to ask themselves who the bad guys over there really are. I would ask them what they have sacrificed in their lives, or if they know what it's like to find out on the news that one of your best friends has been killed. I would also ask them if they knew how lucky they were that they didn't have to join the military to pay for their education, because there are lots of men and women just like us here at UBC that did. It's alright to be against the war, just please do not be against the men and women who are fighting over there—they honestly have no choice in the matter.

—Justin Visser is in Arts 2

More to anti-war

For the second year in a row, the anti-war movement is receiving some coverage in *the Ubyssey*. Unfortunately, the story—again—focuses on the disruptive actions of a thinly-veiled front group for a small organisation. I hope that students understand that there is more to the anti-war movement in this city and worldwide.

Last weekend, November 5-7, I attended a pan-Canadian peace conference as a representative of Vancouver's StopWar coalition. Delegates from Whitehorse to Halifax gathered to plan an ambitious program of events and international mobilisations to show that, despite the re-election of George W. Bush, reports of the death of the anti-war movement have been greatly exaggerated. Plans were laid to, among other things: work to oppose Canada's participation in "Star Wars" missile defense, to expose Canada's complicity in occupations from Afghanistan to Haiti, and to continue to show our solidarity with the suffering people of Iraq and Palestine.

March 19-21 will see massive days of action worldwide on the second anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, and cities across Canada are already making preparations. We will also have an earlier opportunity to show the American President just how we feel about him and his warmongering foreign policy. Bush will be visiting Canada early in the New Year. I hope that, on our campuses and across the city, we can prepare the welcome that Mr. Bush so richly deserves.

—Derrick O'Keefe unclassified UBC student

These cherries not dry

The theatre critic plays an important role in the arts community, providing insight and direction for all involved. Nevertheless, sometimes critics write reviews simply passing judgment without due consideration for the people working on the show.

It unsettled me to discover one such critic writing for *the Ubyssey*. Jodi Carlson, a student herself, sees fit to unscrupulously pan the BFA actors of "The Cherry Orchard." She does not offer a single reason for her contention that "the actors were lacking." They are students, still learning and honing their craft. Whatever the opinions of the reviewer of their performances, they deserve an explanation that can help them grow, rather than a tactless generalisation of their failure as actors.

A responsible critic should also take time to research the play they are reviewing. Carlson failed to do so before writing her critique. She claims that "slapstick elements... were added to the script," like Yermolay falling over the couch. This is simply not true. Director Stephen Heatley stuck meticulously to the script Chekhov wrote, which includes the furniture-related mishaps. The "slapstick elements" were indeed written into the stage directions of the script by Chekhov himself. To ignorantly claim that "comedy doesn't always work with Chekhov" is ironic given that "The Cherry Orchard" is widely acclaimed as one of his greatest comedies.

I would like to have Carlson read the reviews made by the two professional newspaper critics of who incidentally saw the show on the same night. While both critics had positive and negative things to say about the performance, they also took care to give their reasons for saying so.

I realise that Carlson herself is still honing her craft as a reviewer. This is all the more reason that she herself should receive the useful criticism that she failed to give.

—Lori Webster
Copy Writer, Richmond

Squirrels no longer fun

I think that there should be more lizards on campus. Squirrels are soooo two years ago. And the rabbit thing has been done at UVic. Lizards are not only aesthetically pleasing but their tails are an exciting treat for the tired student looking to teach their professor a lesson.

Also I think giving me money is a good idea. I am poor. Really poor.

You could give me money at the Santa Claus parade. Throwing money out of a float is always a good idea. And candy too. I love candy. You know who else likes candy? Lizards.

And your mom, in bed.

—Becky Bigass
Anatomy '85

IE. WRITE US LETTERS PLEASE
SINCE 1918

Streeters: What reality TV show would you like to see?

"I would like to see a reality TV show about a group of people who think they're making a reality TV show about people who think they're on a reality TV show. Perhaps a fourth level of meta-fiction."

—Gavin Dew
Arts 3

"I really hate reality TV so I'm not looking forward to any new shows."

—Natasha Greenhouse
Arts 2

"I'm a big fan of *The Apprentice*; I think it's a great show. I'd like to see them make people live on the streets for like the rest of their lives and start competing for money and see what that's like."

—Arthur Yu
Medical Genetics 5

"Ones that I watch are *Survivor* or whatever so something similar to that."

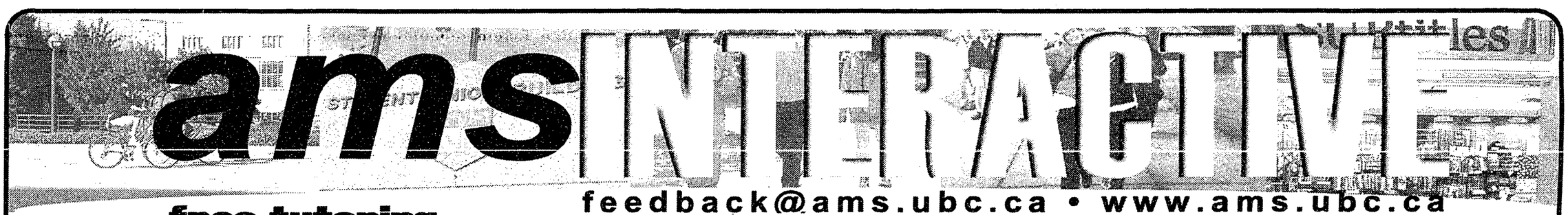
—Hannah Wong
Cell Biology and Genetics 4

"Something about computer/gaming; a lot of them are all about physical games and stuff. I'm a gamer so I like to see something about that."

—Sean Sutherland
Math 2

"I don't watch reality TV. I think it's boring and a waste of time."

—Andrej Marko
Film 4



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free tutoring

With December exams fast approaching, AMS Tutoring would like to remind you about their free drop-in tutoring services.

When: Monday-Thursday, 4pm-10pm
Where: SUB South Study Alcove
Subjects: For help with First year Math, Chemistry, Physics and all levels of English and writing.

For appointment tutoring or further inquiries, contact **tutoring@ams.ubc.ca** or call 604-822-9084.

Translink survey

Translink wants your input on raising transit fares for 2005. Some fares will face no increase, but others will be raised to as much as 12.5% from the last rate increase.

Between 1999 to 2003, most fares increased by 33% while the rate of inflation went up by 13%.

Let your voice on transit issues be heard. Visit **http://www.translink.bc.ca/Transportation_Services/Fares_Passes/fare_consultation.asp** to complete the survey by ***Wednesday, November 24, 2004***.

ams jobs

The AMS is seeking to fill the following vacancies:
Webmaster
Members-at-Large, 2005 Elections Committee
2005 Elections - Chief Returning Officer

Full job descriptions are available online at **http://www.ams.ubc.ca** and in the AMS Job Board on the concourse level of the SUB (by the Gallery Lounge).

ubc whistler lodge

Book some pre-exam and post-exam time off for yourself! UBC Whistler Lodge is holding a ticket sale for one day only - November 19 from 8:45 am to 12 noon in SUB Rm. 214/216. Tickets are valid for December 1, 2004 to January 3, 2005 only. Visit **http://www.ubcwhistlerlodge.com** for more details.

the outpost

The Outpost is your one-stop holiday shopping centre! Buy theatre tickets at Ticketmaster, cozy up to warm UBC-crested clothing, pick up a frame or two, and ship off your goodies at the Postal Outlet.

Visit the Outpost at the Main Concourse level in the SUB.

get your vote on

The AMS is looking for volunteers to participate with the ***Get Your Vote On*** campaign at UBC to increase youth-participation in the upcoming provincial election.

The volunteers will work to inform students about the election - in a non-partisan manner - and also encourage people to get on the voter's list.

If you would like to be involved please call 604-822-2050.

2005 ams elections

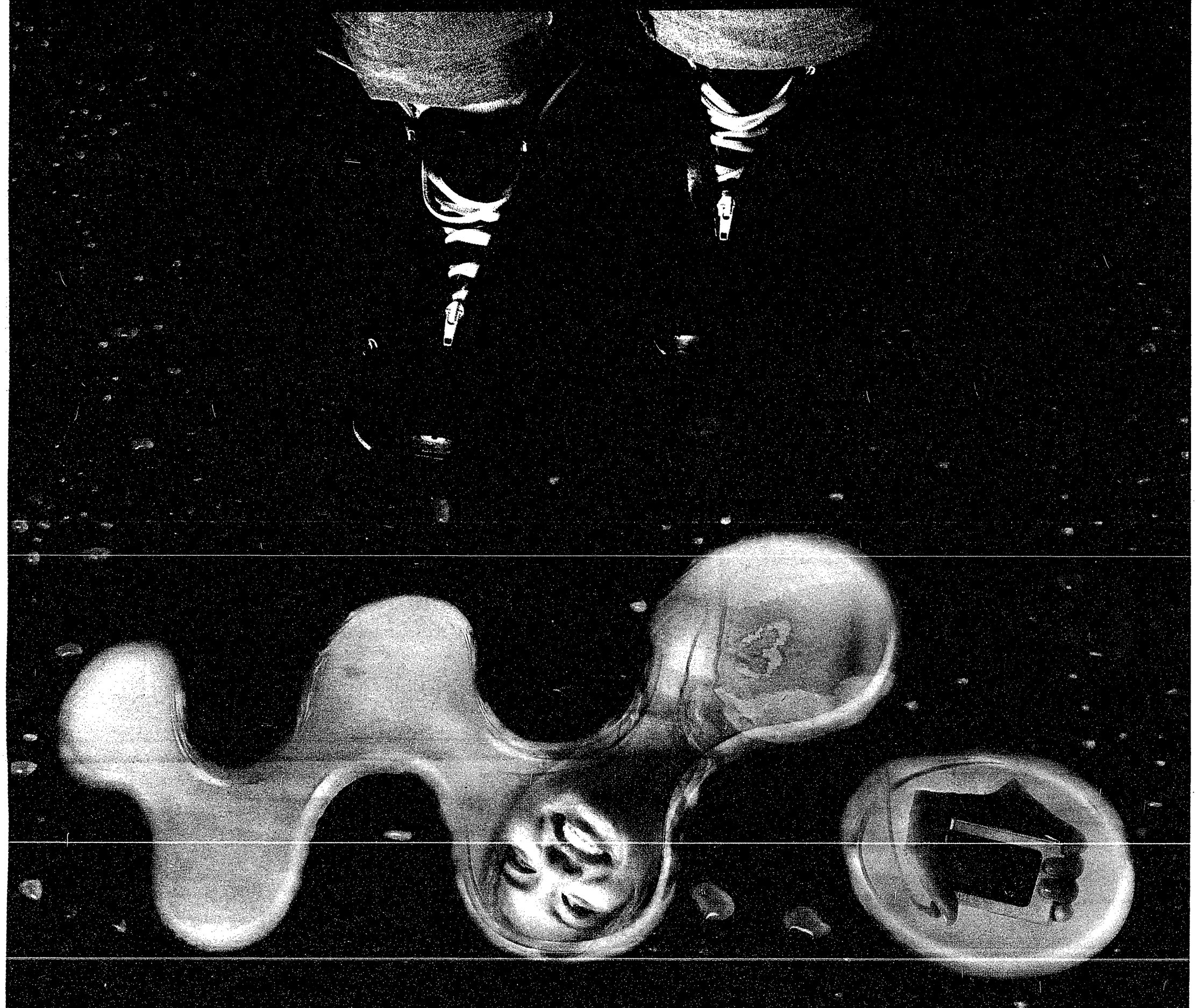
Want to run for an AMS Executive position for 2005?

Students interested in running for a position are invited to attend an informational meeting with the AMS Elections Administrator on ***Friday, November 19*** in SUB Rm. 209 at 5 pm.

For more information about the elections, please contact Anthony Waldron, Elections Administrator, by e-mail at **elections@ams.ubc.ca**.

WALKMAN

SONY



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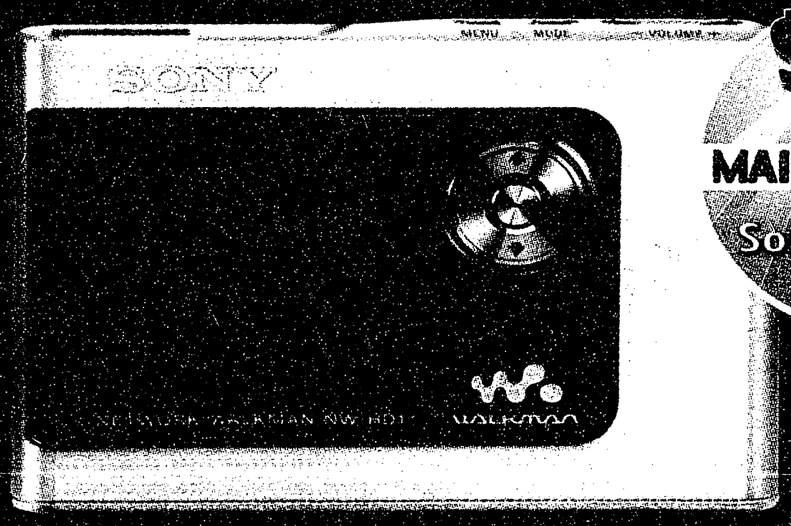

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