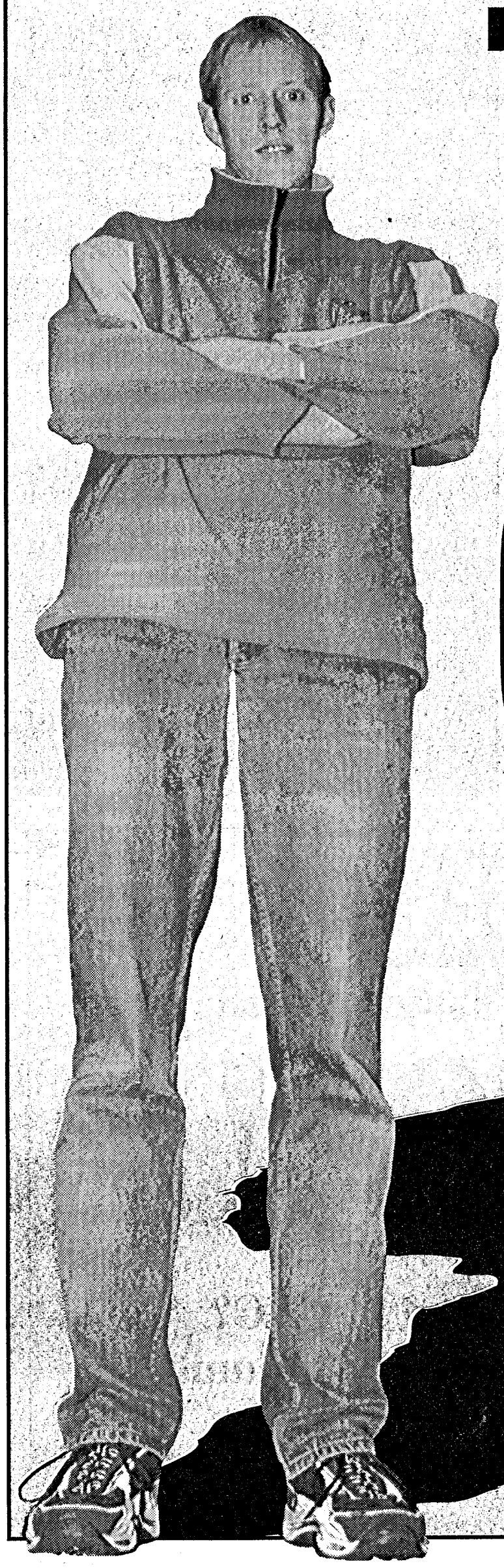
UBC Archives Serial

PAGE FRIDAY



TALL ORDER

SOUTH AFRICAN IMPORT RYAN GANDY ADDS SOME HEIGHT TO THE UBC MEN'S VOLLEYBALL TEAM— SEVEN FEET OF IT, TO BE EXACT.

THE UBYSSEY
January 26, 2001
Volume 82 Issue 30
The $34,000 Question since 1918

3 HOW OLD IS THE UNIVERSE?
6 THUNDERBIRDS VS THE CHICKEN POX
9 CHUTNEY MAKES FOR SPICY THEATRE

CLASSIFIEDS

Accommodation

ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE IN THE UBC SINGLE STUDENT RESIDENCES JANUARY - APRIL 2001. Rooms are available in the UBC single student residences for qualified women and men applicants. Single and shared rooms in both "room only" and "room and board" residences are available. Vacancies can be rented for immediate occupancy in the Walter H. Gage, Fairview Crescent, Totem Park, Place Vanier, and Ritsumeikan - UBC House Residences (availability is limited for some residence areas and room types). Applicants who take occupancy of a residence room now are entitled to reapplication (returning student) privileges for a "guaranteed" housing assignment for the 2001/2002 Winter Session. Please contact the UBC Housing Office in Brock Hall for information on rates, availability and condition of application. The Housing Office is open from 8:30am - 4:00 pm weekdays, or call 822-2811 during office hours.

Callboard

SUBMISSIONS WANTED! Wreck magazine is looking for poetry, short fiction, drama, art and photography by UBC students. Email gil@lynx.net

Volunteer Opportunities

MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN A CHILD'S LIFE: Become a Literacy Tutor! The Learning Disabilities Association Vancouver chapter is offering valuable volunteer experience for individuals planning a career working with children. Info session: JAN 31, 7PM, Firehall Library. For more information call the LDAV office @ 873-8139.

MOTHERS WITH 2 SONS are needed for a UBC study. Mothers get $20 and children a T-shirt. If interested call 822-9037.

VIRTUAL REALITY TREATMENT STUDY is recruiting volunteer research participants who have severe driving fears. Please call Jaye Wald, Ph.D. Cand. 868-3890.

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Tutors

ACCOUNTING & TAX TUTORIAL by experienced accountant: Beg & Intermediate acct. Personal & Corporate Taxes. Multi-student discounts. Call 831-5060.

WANTED: ECONOMICS TUTOR to help internalize intermediate economics theory to a single female who enjoys walks on the beach and the sunset (just kidding). Rate negotiable. email econhelp@ubc.2ndmail.com

Announcement

VEGGIE LUNCHES, every Tuesday 12:30-2:30 pm in the Penthouse (3rd floor) of the Grad Center, 6371 Crescent Rd, vegetarian and vegan food, suggested donation: $4.00

Announcement, cont.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERISM? Join WUSC - UBC Feb 9th to 11th at International House for our Symposium: International Volunteerism in Perspective. Examine local and international volunteerism from different perspectives and with a critical eye. Scheduled events speakers will discuss such topics as International Volunteerism, Youth and Volunteerism, and First Nations issues in BC. For more info, email us at wusc_ubc@hotmail.com

SPARTACUS YOUTH CLUB FORUM: Defend the Palestinian People! Wed. Jan 31, 6:30pm Rm.330 Buch.B. Info: 687-0353 or tllt@look.ca

AMNESTY UBC'S ANNUAL STUDENT CONFERENCE on Human Rights, Voices in Activism. Saturday, February 10th, 9am-5:30pm, SUB. $10 Registration Fee, $15 after Feb 1st (includes breakfast, lunch and snacks). Info: email amnestyubc@hotmail.com or 221-7864.

Miscellaneous

START YOUR OWN FRATERNITY! Zeta Beta Tau is looking for men to start a new Chapter. If you are interested in academic success, a chance to network and an opportunity to make friends in a non-pledging Brotherhood, e-mail: zbt@zbtnational.org or call 800-431-9674.

To place an Ad or Classified, call 822-1654 or visit SUB Room 245.

'TWEEN CLASSES

- The UBC School of Journalism presents "How the European Press Meets the Challenges of Globalization," a brown bag lunch with Thomas Ferenczi, Deputy Managing Editor of *Le Monde*. Monday, January 29 from 12:30-1:45 pm at the School of Journalism.

- Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter is offering training for women interested in volunteering on the 24-hour crisis line and in the transition house for battered women and their children. Training sessions offered every Tuesday night. For more information or for an interview call 872-8212.

- UBC Theatre presents a double-bill of one-act plays directed by its first-year MFA directing candidates. February 1-3 at 7:30 pm in the Telus Theatre at the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts. Admission is free.

- Jean Vanier, recipient of the Order of Canada, will be speaking at the "Seeds of Hope" gathering at Our Lady of Perpetual Hope School March 2-4. Registration deadline is January 31. For more information call 434-1933.

- Women in Print presents Shannon Cowan, reading from her new novel, *Leaving Winter*. Tuesday, February 6 at 7:30 pm, at 3566 W. 4th Ave.

'TWEEN CLASSES IS A PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE UBYSSEY

THE UBYSSEY

3rd Annual Community Contribution Award

$3,000!!

Are you a UBC student involved at UBC?
Have you made a contribution to the UBC community?
If so you may be eligible to receive $3,000!

Just get another UBC student to nominate you or nominate someone you feel is eligible. Within the nomination please include:

- **a resume of the nominee**
- **details of their contribution to the UBC community**

SUBMIT NOMINATIONS TO SUB 245 by FEBRUARY 28, 2001.

For more information contact: Fernie Pereira @ 822-6681 fpereira@interchange.ubc.ca **or Esther Abd-Elmessih** esthera@interchange.ubc.ca

Prof looks to the stars

by Sarah Morrison

A UBC astronomy professor is leading a team of researchers who hope to find one of the 'Holy Grails' of cosmology after being granted a large amount of observation time on the Hubble Space Telescope.

UBC astronomy professor Harvey Richer, along with astronomers from as far away as France and Australia, aims at using the observation time to determine the age of the universe.

'It's one of the Holy Grails...of modern cosmology. One of the cornerstones of modern cosmology is to find out what the age of the universe is, and that's what we're striving for,' Richer said.

Typically, projects are allocated 15 to 20 of the Hubble Space Telescope's orbits around earth. Richer's proposal received a much higher 123 orbits, and the telescope will begin making observations directed by the team on January 30.

Richer's team will attempt to determine the age of globular star clusters–massive, ancient clusters made up of a million or more stars that were formed soon after the big bang.

After discovering the age of the clusters, Richer predicts it should only be a mild extrapolation to discover the age of the universe itself.

To determine the age of the cluster, Richer's team will be pointing Hubble at white dwarf stars. These are ancient, extremely dense stars, the end product of the evolution of a normal star like the sun.

As they age, white dwarfs cool and change colour.

'They cool at a very, very predictable rate,' explained Richer. 'So in a sense they're a tremendously good clock. Nature's provided us with this wonderful chronometer out there, whose temperature basically tells us its age.'

'What we're trying to do is find the coolest one of these, and that'll be an estimate of the age of the universe.'

By determining the age of the oldest white dwarf stars in the cluster, astronomers can hypothesise how old the cluster is. But the project is difficult because the oldest star will be very dim, explained Richer.

'It's...a risky proposal,' he admitted. 'We have no guarantee that we're actually going to be able to image things faint enough to see the very, very coolest white dwarfs.

'The kind of thing we're looking for is about one-fifth as bright as a typical Christmas tree light sitting on the moon. That's the faintness of the thing. That's why we need Hubble and that's why we need a huge long exposure.'

Richer received the news that his proposal had been accepted in late December 1999, just before heading off to Victoria to celebrate the new year.

After two previous proposals had been rejected, Richer didn't want the possibility of a third rejection to ruin his weekend. Sitting at his desk, Richer was reluctant to open the new message in his e-mail inbox.

'I decided I wasn't going to look at it, so I walked out the door,' Richer said. 'I was halfway to my car, when I decided, 'No I can't do that, that's not me.' So I came back and had a look at it, and almost fell off my chair. A colleague next door thought I was sick or something, I started screaming.'

Richer spent several months writing the proposal with Michael Rich, a professor at the University of California Los Angeles and the US Financial Principal Investigator for the team.

'I think [Richer]'s very good at managing the complex relationships that can occur in a group, and I think he also has a very broad vision of the subject in general,' said Rich. 'Not just measuring the age of a particular star cluster, but also measuring the age of the universe.'

Tom Tiedje, head of UBC's physics and astronomy department, is also optimistic about Richer's work.

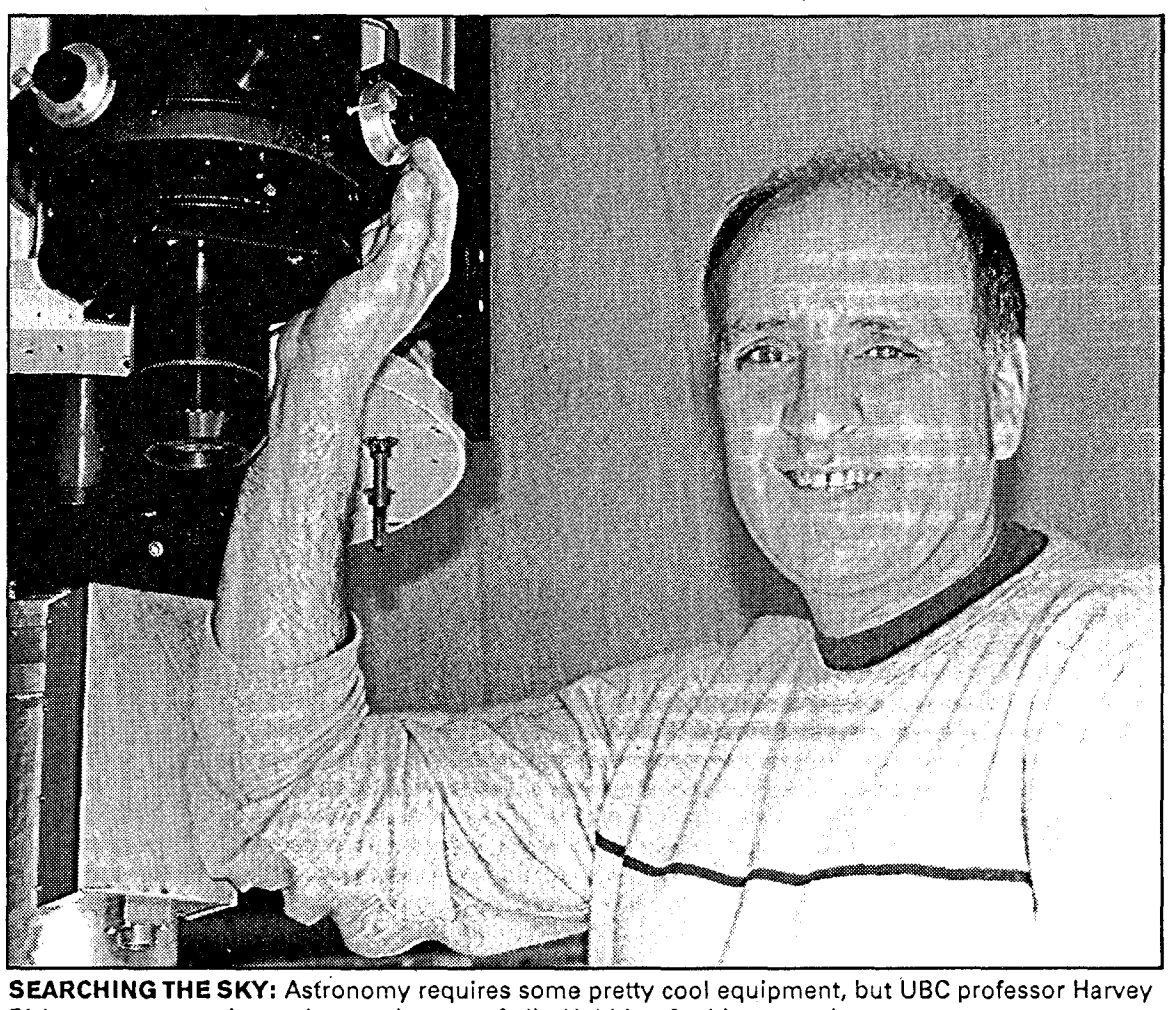
'I think it's wonderful,' said Tiedje. 'This is a US telescope which has cost billions of dollars to make, and the fact that they're willing to give observing time for this observing plan that Harvey has developed...is a really strong vote of confidence in Harvey's plan.'

'I think it really makes us look good. It shows that the researchers who work at UBC here in our department, astronomy, are doing world-class research.'

As for Richer, he says he's getting recognition for something he's been interested in all of his life.

'This is going to sound like a fairy tale but it's actually true,' said Richer.

'When I was six or seven years old, someone...took me to a public lecture by some astronomer. And he talked about exploding stars, matter popping out of nothing, expanding universe...so I think I knew when I was six or seven...that's what I wanted to do. And I did.' ❖



SEARCHING THE SKY: Astronomy requires some pretty cool equipment, but UBC professor Harvey Richer gets to use the coolest equipment of all–Hubble–for his research. SARAH MORRISON PHOTO

No recount for election

by Alex Dimson

The Alma Mater Society (AMS) Elections Committee has denied a request to recount the ballots cast for two AMS executives positions, leaving the candidates to decide if they will appeal this decision.

The committee denied the request of defeated Students' Voice presidential candidate Rob Nagai and vice-president academic and university affairs candidate Josh Bowman to have the ballots for their positions recounted Thursday afternoon.

The contest for both positions was very tight. Nagai lost to Students for Students candidate Erfan Kazemi by 47 votes and Bowman lost to Students for Students candidate Evan Horie by 57 votes.

While Students' Voice felt that a recount may have tipped the count the other way, AMS Elections Administrator Jo McFetridge disagreed, citing the recount of this year's Board of Governors election, which brought the margin between Tieg Martin and Megan Cassidy down from a difference of nine votes to a difference of five, a change of only four votes.

McFetridge also cited historical precedent, noting that the margin between the two candidates was higher than the standard one per cent in cases when ballots are re-counted.

Nagai said that he's not sure if he will file an appeal over the decision, but will likely make his decision on Friday.

'We'll think about it. I think the elections administrator, before we filed our request, told us there wasn't much chance of having a recount,' he said. 'A recount doesn't mean you're going to win either way. It does mean you solidify things in your mind.'

Provided there are no appeals, the AMS Council is expected to ratify the elections results on February 7. ❖

Online deal looms

Canadian schools may be signing with Thomson

by Jaime Kirzner-Roberts
The McGill Daily

MONTREAL (CUP)–UBC could soon be one of 18 universities involved in an online education project marketed by Thomson Corporation, a media conglomerate that owns newspapers across Canada.

Thomson is close to signing a deal with Universitas 21–a consortium of universities worldwide, including UBC and McGill, that have banded together to forge private-sector links and market their prestigious names.

If the deal is completed, Thomson will market a new line of web-based university courses bearing the names of participating universities. In return for the use of their names, universities will receive royalties on all profits made by Thomson from the initiative.

'We are in the midst of looking at the material and trying to make a decision,' said McGill Principal Bernard Shapiro last week. He expects a decision to be made in the coming weeks.

However, Jim Turk, executive director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, said that his organisation is worried that such a deal paves the way for an increasingly corporate and low-quality education system.

'Universities like McGill are moving towards a corporate model, where education becomes a commodity which can be sold,' he said.

'You can also see that jurisdiction is being given to private corporations that don't really have any stake or experience in undertaking the vital role of providing public education.'

But according to Chris Robinson, a professor at the University of Melbourne and the chair of Universitas 21, the consortium has found a major marketing opportunity.

'Universities are getting less and less from the public purse and need more revenue to keep up the quality of what they do,' Robinson said.

Robinson believes that demand for online education will quadruple worldwide over the next ten years because of globalisation and the new 'knowledge-based economy.'

If existing educational institutions want to maintain their quality in the face of cutbacks, he says, they must strive to meet the rising demand by signing on to initiatives such as the one proposed with Thomson.

'[Universitas 21] has set out to establish a major global e-education business, and I believe that the Thomson deal could bring us a substantial share of the global market,' he said.

While Robinson would not comment on the exact amount universities could receive if they sign on to the deal, he did say that the deal 'has the potential to be a significant source of revenue.'

But Turk thinks that this attitude is a dangerous one.

'When Universitas 21 courses go online, what assurances are there for quality?' he asked.

'What assurances are there that universities will actually be writing the course material, rather than just lending their names? What happens when curriculum doesn't fit into the vision of Thomson [Corporation]?'

The University of Toronto recently announced that it would not be signing onto the Thomson deal.

Sheldon Levy, the university's vice-president of government and institutional relations, said that the university was not ready to become part of any global web-learning initiatives for the time being.

'We have not come to the conclusion that a partnership with Thomson...is in the best interests of our university. We did not want to bind ourselves in a formal contractual way,' said Levy.

Universitas 21 pulled out of similar negotiations initiated last spring with Newscorp, owner of the Fox Network and major newspapers around the globe. ❖

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The Trickster Travels of Leo Africanus
Monday, January 29th at 12:30pm
Buchanan A-102

The Knot of Slavery: Stedman and Joanna in Surinam
Tuesday, January 30th, 2:30-4:00pm
Lasserre 104

Braided Histories: Jews, Africans and Slavery
Saturday, February 3rd at 8:15pm
Woodward IRC 2
Vancouver Institute Lecture

Please Clip and Save!

Alberta pumps more money into education

by Christie Tucker
Alberta Bureau Chief

EDMONTON (CUP)–After months of pleas from student representatives and administrators, the Alberta government has started to put money back into post-secondary education.

Colleges and universities will be getting $25 million from the government thanks to ten recommendations made by the provincial funding review committee, which has been considering post-secondary education funding since it was established in March, 2000. Lyle Oberg, Alberta's Minister of Higher Learning, accepted all ten of the committee's recommendations.

Of the $25 million, approximately $13 million is earmarked for faculty retention and attraction. A portion of the remaining $12 million might be used to reduce tuition–which has risen by almost 210 per cent in ten years –but the decision of how much remains up to the institutions.

At the University of Alberta (U of A), where the school was given approximately $5.5 million, $1.8 million went towards reducing the tuition hike from a proposed 3.7 per cent to 3.2 per cent. The government is expected to announce exact funding levels for other institutions in the next few weeks.

Alberta Ministry of Learning spokesperson Randy Kilburn said that the government's main priorities are maintaining funding flexibility and responsibility.

However, Naomi Agard, vice-president external of the U of A Students' Union, said that the funding isn't enough.

"We don't have enough money in the system right now to address problems like infrastructure, tuition, and maintaining good faculty," she said.

Agard still thinks that the funding boost is a step in the right direction.

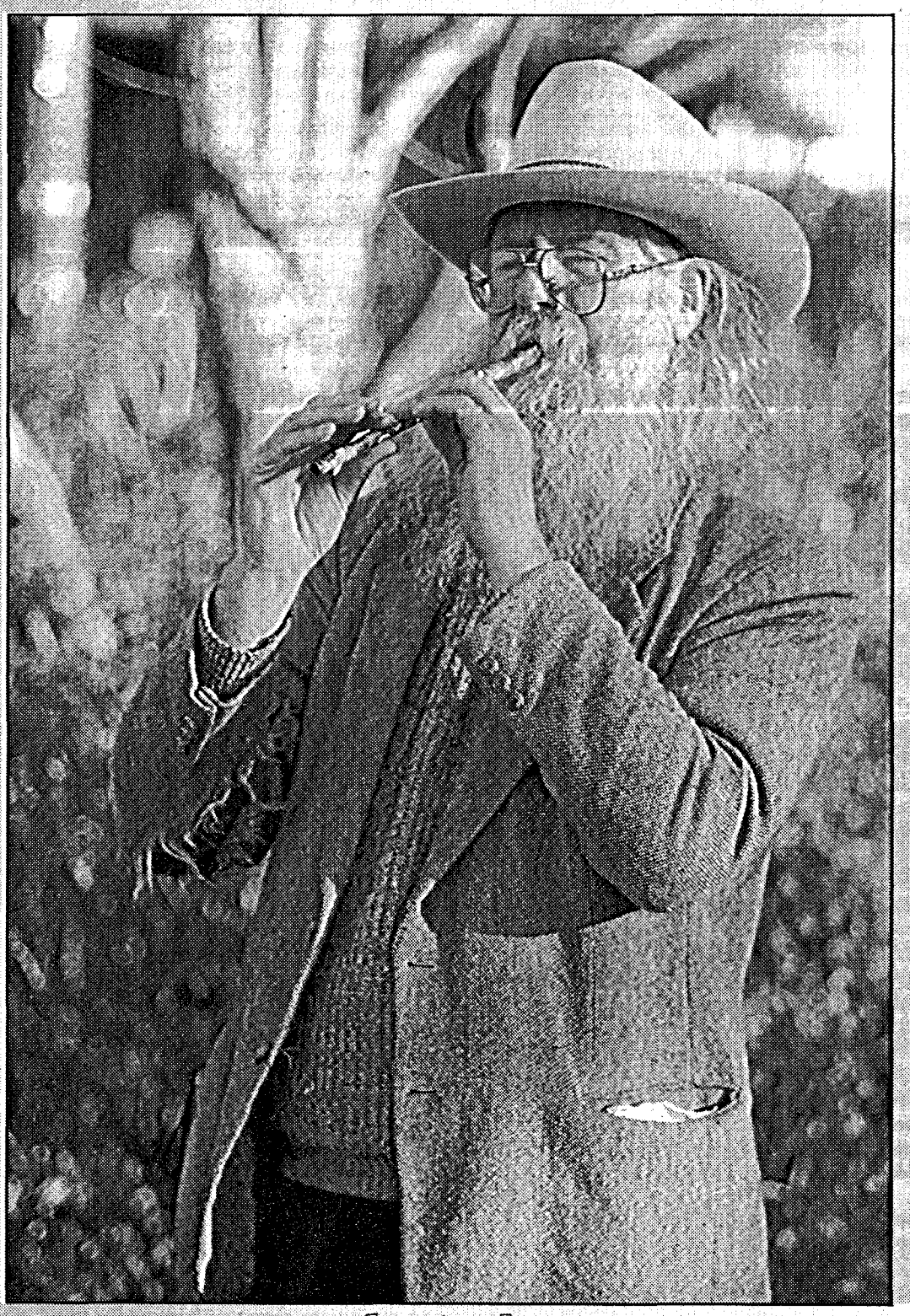
"It gives me hope. It's time for this kind of funding. Students are starting to voice their concern. The heat is on. [The government] is getting the word from everyone that this is the kind of money that universities need."

Rob Renner, chair of the funding review committee and a Medicine Hat MLA, is happy that the government accepted the report.

"This is a very fair reflection of what we heard in consultation. And I think it goes a long way towards ensuring we have one of the best post-secondary systems in North America," he said.

The funding boost accompanies the recent government announcement of 1245 new full-time spaces in programs such as nursing, teaching, business, and information and communications technologies.

"Some might say that it's because it's an election year, but I'm glad to be seeing any kind of funding increase," said Agard. ❖



A tune to brighten you up

POET EXTRAORDINAIRE Rantin' Tim Lander colours another UBC day with the sound of music. Mind you, how merry do you feel when you have to walk past him four times a day and feel guilty each time because you're saving that $1.50 for a Nanaimo bar at the Delly?
TOM PEACOCK PHOTO

Olympic dreams uncertain

SUB and Gage involved in bid plans

by Hywel Tuscano

Working out the logistics of having the SUB as part of the Olympic Village and Gage Towers as a home for athletes are among the issues facing Vancouver/Whistler's bid for the 2010 Olympic Games.

While details are still being hammered out, UBC figures prominently in the bid. Tentative plans call for UBC to host curling and speed skating events, with the SUB hosting a section of the athletes village and Gage Towers being accommodation for 1400 of the expected 2000 athletes.

UBC spokesperson Karen McDonald emphasised "all plans are very tentative right now.

"Consultation continues between us and the Bid Corporation, as we decide whether it would be worthwhile for the school," McDonald said. "After consideration of what hosting certain venues here will entail, we can still easily say 'No, this won't be worth it.'"

The Canadian Olympic Association (COA) selected Vancouver's bid over other domestic candidates in November 1998. An official Bid Corporation was formed in June 1999 to determine finances and organisation of Vancouver's candidacy.

Having the Olympics on campus could bring very substantial benefits to the UBC, according to McDonald. University buildings and athletic venues would be built or renovated with no financial cost to the university. An additional residence may also be built to house the remaining athletes.

"We would essentially be refitting all of Gage Tower as it would be repainted and recarpeted. As owners of the SUB, there should be some significant renovations left behind as legacy," she said.

It is estimated that hosting the Games could lead to a revenue of $1.2 billion for BC, as well as $258 million in tax revenue. The games would create 25,000 jobs and a sports legacy worth $300-400 million.

The 2010 games are tentatively scheduled to run from February 5-21. This timing is a bonus for the university, McDonald noted, because the games would occur over the February break, which would help to reduce the impact that the games would have on students.

The Bid Corporation will submit a formal report on Vancouver/Whistler's plans, detailing everything from sport facilities to vendor contracts, to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) this fall. The corporation still has to raise $10 million of the $21 million required to make an official bid.

Meanwhile, consultation with campus groups continues. A formal university committee of over ten departments, including the Alma Mater Society, is discussing the implications of hosting part of the Olympics on campus.

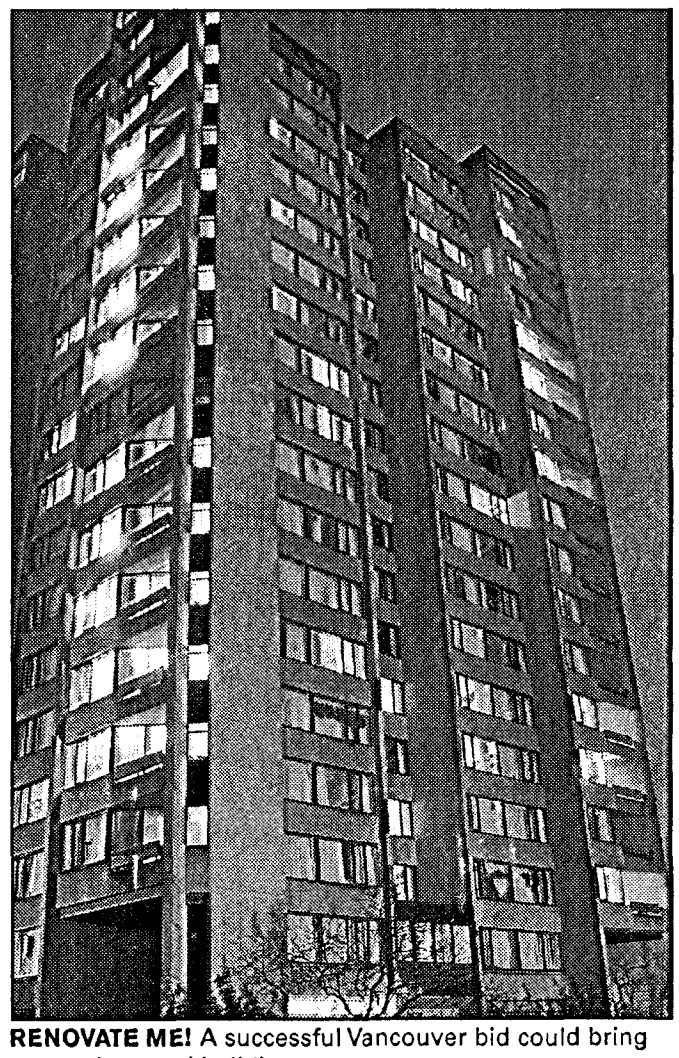
Despite all of the preparation, the likelihood of success for Vancouver's bid is far from certain.

Vancouver's chances hinge on the success of Toronto's bid to host the 2008 Games. Traditionally, the location of the Olympic Games rotates between European and North American cities, slimming Vancouver's hopes if Toronto wins. The IOC will decide in July who will host the Summer games.

If Toronto does win, Ian Tait, director of community relations for the Bid Corportation, said that the corporation will put in a modified bid instead of a fully competitive one.

"This is not an east-west competition, the point of the modified bid would be to point out that Canada is summer and winter multi-sport capable, and can compete on the world-stage," Tait said.

Chances become better for Vancouver to host the 2014 Winter Games if Toronto wins its bid later this year. ❖



RENOVATE ME! A successful Vancouver bid could bring renovations and buildings to campus. TARA WESTOVER PHOTO

Bus routes on the chopping block

by Sarah Morrison

With the future of TransLink's proposed $75 vehicle levy in doubt, UBC has gone from hoping for an expanded transportation program to trying to salvage existing bus routes.

After the provincial government told TransLink that it would not help collect any vehicle levy, the transport corporation is preparing to cut services—possibly bus routes and funding for municipal roads.

"We have a budget that we have to live within, and what's happened is we'd gone ahead with expansions, because we had...every indication that there was support for the levy to fund them," explained TransLink spokesperson Russel Busche.

"It's a decision that the board's going to have to make, and so the board will ultimately be the ones who decide what course of action will be taken in terms of what routes where could be affected."

In a TransLink board meeting on November 9, the board described two possible scenarios for cutting transit services.

One option is to cut transit services uniformly across the region, which would lead to an approximate 25 per cent reduction in buses.

However, according to Busche, this may not be financially prudent.

"You might end up cutting services that are viable in one municipality, and keeping routes in other municipalities that are not producing the kind of ridership required to keep costs reasonable."

A second option is to cut transit routes based on performance. Routes with good ridership that can maintain their cost-effectiveness would stay, while poor-performing routes would go.

In the example given for both the uniform- and performance-based options, TransLink would cut all bus services after 1:00 am and night services after 9:00pm in certain areas. The plan would also decrease the regularity of peak period and evening main routes, and would reduce mid-day service on major lines like Granville.

Graham Senft, Alma Mater Society (AMS) vice-president of external affairs, has spent his term trying to implement a U-Pass plan at UBC, which would include a mandatory student bus pass, car- and van-pool parking deals, and improved facilities for cyclists.

The AMS supported TransLink's controversial levy after it was passed by the Greater Vancouver Regional District in November, but BC's refusal to collect the levy has brought the plan to a halt.

Now instead of trying to implement the U-Pass, Senft plans to lobby TransLink to ensure UBC will not be significantly affected by proposed reductions to transit.

"Let's make sure they don't cut the routes to UBC," Senft said at the AMS Council meeting Wednesday night.

TransLink's board will make the final decision on any cuts at a meeting next month. ❖

—with files from Alex Dimson

THE UBYSSEY

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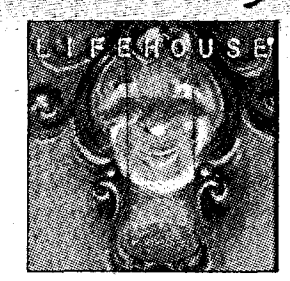
Come to SUB Room 245 with the answer to the question below, and you may win 1 of 5 copies of LIFEHOUSE's debut album "NO NAME FACE"!



Question: On what Vancouver radio station can you hear LIFEHOUSE's single "Hanging By A Moment"?

Drawing comparisons to Creed and Matchbox Twenty, LIFEHOUSE are fast becoming one of the most-talked about rock bands with their hit single "Hanging By A Moment"
www.lifehousemusic.com

rant

call for submissions for the Ubyssey's literary supplement

entry deadline: 5pm, Feb. 9th, 2001

fiction
epic: under 3000 words
snap: under 1000 words

nonfiction
essay: under 3000 words
snap: under 1000 words

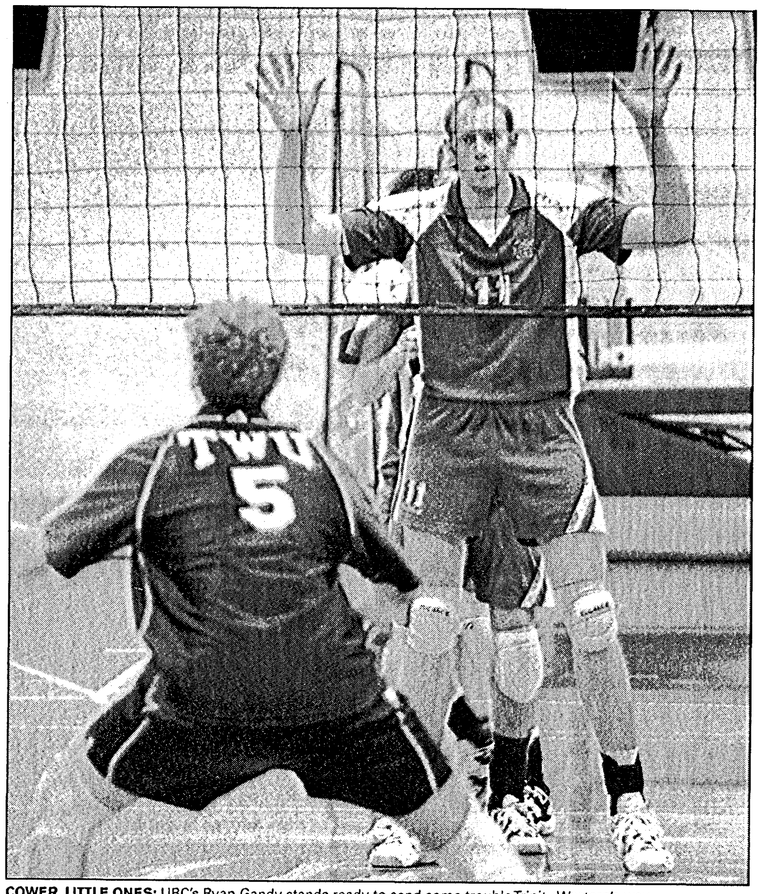
poetry
under 20 lines

prizes
cash, books, publication in **rant** March 9th, 2001

judges
to be announced

entry details
Submissions must be typed on 8.5" x 11" paper, with title on upper right-hand corner. Do **not** include name on submission. Entries are judged anonymously.

eligibility
Free entry. You must be a UBC student who did not opt out of your *Ubyssey* fee. Students who have made more than one editorial contribution to the *Ubyssey* since September 2000 are not eligible.



COWER, LITTLE ONES: UBC's Ryan Gandy stands ready to send some trouble Trinity Western's way. TOM PEACOCK PHOTO

Out of Africa

by Dirk Schouten

SOUTH AFRICAN VOLLEYBALL PLAYER RYAN GANDY HAS FOUND ALL HE NEEDS AT UBC. NOW HE'S JUST GOT TO GET USED TO THE CANADIAN GAME...AND THE COLD.

Ryan Gandy speaks four languages, has a Master's degree in geographic information systems, and is part owner of a high-tech company. He played volleyball for South Africa's national team. And he just happens to be seven feet tall. Given the 26-year-old's credentials, more than a few people are thrilled that Gandy has come to UBC to do his PhD and play varsity volleyball.

Thunderbird men's volleyball coach Dale Ohman is probably the most excited of all.

"He came up to me during the 1999 Thunderball tournament and told me he was interested in playing in Canada," said Ohman, whose smile has acquired a bit more lustre since Gandy arrived in Vancouver on Christmas Day. "It took some time for him to make it out here, but things have worked out."

For Ohman, whose squad has teetered around .500 for most of the season and now faces slim chances of making the playoffs, Gandy was a welcome gift from Santa. The South African has a full five years of varsity eligibility left and intends to stay at UBC for the duration of his doctoral program. A talented offensive player, Gandy should improve under the tutelage of Ohman, a veteran coach of 23 years who is known for his technical expertise. The UBC team will likely not make this year's national tournament but it has a promising future based on a group of talented first and second-year players, including the import from Pretoria.

Gandy is confident and self-assured, but he doesn't say much to add to the hype that surrounded his arrival. He wants to contribute to the team and adjust to North American volleyball, which he says puts more emphasis on defense. Although older than most of the undergraduates who make up the Thunderbird squad, Gandy has nothing but respect for his new teammates.

"Most of the guys on the team are very mature, so it's not an issue at all," he said during a recent interview. Gandy was especially thrilled that the Thunderbirds "made a real effort to welcome" him to the team. While his current priorities are to adjust to a new life, he doesn't hide his true aspiration–to earn a spot on an Olympic volleyball team.

"From next season on, I want to make a push...in the hope of eventually making an all-Canadian team," he explains.

"I had basically peaked in South Africa. I started out playing club volleyball and progressed until I made the national team. The only thing that was still to be done was to make the Olympics, but our national team had to get better. So I had to make a decision between ending my career in South Africa and going abroad."

Gandy made the decision to leave his own country, but didn't think of Canada as an option, at least at first. His first considerations were UCLA and Pepperdine, two schools in sunny California. But while visiting his girlfriend (herself a graduate student at UBC) over Christmas in 1999, he realised that by coming to Vancouver he could kill three birds with one stone: reunite with his sweetheart, play volleyball, and earn another degree.

"While I was here in 1999, I did an investigation into the geographic information systems (GIS) program at UBC, and was very impressed. I came across Dr. Michael Meitner, who's a GIS fanatic and knows about the environmental side of this field."

Gandy and his supervisors are still working out the specifics of his PhD program. In the meantime, he works as a teaching assistant in the Faculty of Forestry. "Everything fell into place," he said. "It was more than enough reason to put life on hold back at home and come out."

Gandy, a graduate of the University of Pretoria, has plenty of ties back home. His family lives in South Africa, as do his business partners. Gandy is the director and part owner of Innovative Geographic Information Systems Ltd., a company in the GIS industry. His Master's degree thesis entailed "developing a GIS-based system to implement the South African manual for outdoor advertising control on the Pretorian metropolitan area." In plain English, that means that he set up a satellite system that is able to monitor how much advertising exists in a given part of the city. Gandy wants to complete his doctorate in three years and return to South Africa to expand his business.

In the meantime, the addition of Gandy to the front row of the UBC volleyball team is a gift for Thunderbird players and fans. With his height and arm length, Gandy creates big problems–physically and psychologically–for most of his opponents. And fans love the sight of a seven-footer who can smash the ball down on offense and block opponents effectively on defense

Gandy plays the 'middle' position, and with university volleyball's new 'libero' position–which allows players to move about the court with more freedom–Gandy can avoid playing in the back row, a position unsuitable for his long frame. Because he's 84 inches in height, it's difficult for him to bend over to dig balls travelling in excess of 60 miles per hour.

Gandy is at his most dangerous at the net, where he seems to take up half its length when he stands with his arms outstretched. Although not gifted with speed, Gandy is adept at making the quick-set kill, an offensive play which, if executed properly, is next to impossible to stop. After cueing his setter, Gandy jumps. A split second later, the setter lobs the ball above the net. If the jump and set occur in sync, Gandy hits the high point of his jump at the same moment that the ball reaches its own. The obvious goal is to knock the ball downward, but this takes tremendous concentration and finesse. Earlier this month, Gandy and UBC's starting setter, Kyle Recsky, completed a series of "quick-set" kills at the tail end of a hard-earned victory against the Trinity Western Spartans. "As long as we set the ball high enough, Ryan won't have trouble," Coach Ohman said after the victory. "But we don't always do that."

Gandy has to become a better blocker in order for the Birds to compete against Western powerhouses Alberta, Calgary and Saskatchewan next year. But he knows that he can improve, and is eager to learn. Ohman has Gandy working on a new 'jump-float' serve that will replace the traditional flat serve he brought to Canada. This, Gandy admits, is a work in progress.

"It's a little shaky right now, but we're getting there," he said of his new offering from the service line.

Gandy's new serve is not the only thing that has to be determined. He still has to work out how exactly he plans to play for Canada, particularly whether he will apply for Canadian citizenship. There's also the question of whether he's national squad material. Answers to these questions are still tucked away in the future.

In the meantime, Gandy has no complaints. He's impressed by the civility and friendliness of Canadians, as well as by Vancouver's beauty. Used to the balmy weather of South Africa, however, he's still shocked by weather that can actually cause water to freeze.

"I know it's mild for Canada," he said. "But it's still blooming cold." ❖

BIRD droppings

Men's Hockey

The UBC men's hockey team is hosting the University of Calgary Dinos for two games this weekend at the Thuderbird Winter Sports Centre. The puck drops at 7:30pm Friday and Saturday night. The Birds are six points behind the Dinos in what's turning into a close battle for the last Canada West playoff spot.

Women's Volleyball

The UBC women's volleyball team, along with the swim team probably the school's best chance for a championship, is hosting the University of Manitoba Bisons this weekend in War Memorial Gym. Game times are 6:15pm tonight and 8pm Saturday. The Birds are currently in second place in the Canada West, with their 14-3 record. The Bisons are 5-3 and sitting in first place in the Great Plains division of the CIAU.

Men's Volleyball

The UBC men's volleyball team, coming off two disappointing losses last weekend against Saskatchewan, will look to get two wins off the Bisons this weekend in War Memorial Gym. The Birds are 7-10, and sit in fourth place in the Canada West. Tonight's game starts at 8pm.

Women's Hockey

The UBC women's hockey team travels to Edmonton this weekend for two tough games against the defending national champion University of Alberta Pandas. The Birds are 3-5 and sit in fifth place in the West. The Pandas are in second behind Regina.

Swimming

After cleaning up at the Canada West Championships in the UBC Aquatic Centre, some members of the team went straight to the airport and boarded a plain bound for a World Cup short course event in Stockholm, Sweden. Former UBC swimmer Marianne Limpert and current Thunderbird Kelly Stefanyshyn figured big in the event, the former winning gold in the women's 200m IM and the latter winning gold in the women's 200m backstroke. Bird Jessica Deglau placed seventh in the 200m freestyle and eighth in the 100m butterfly. ❖

It just gets worse

The UBC women's basketball team has a pretty good record, but the Thunderbirds also have pretty bad luck.

by Tom Peacock

It's hardly believable. First Brandie Speers left the team for personal reasons. Then Lindsay Cox left the team for medical reasons. Then star point guard Julie Smulders left the team earlier this month for personal reasons unrelated to the personal reasons Speers left the team for. Then Charmene Adams, Smulders' replacement at point guard, sprained her ankle three weeks ago during a home game against Trinity Western. Then Sheila Townsend, Adam's replacement at point guard, contracted the chicken pox. The chicken pox! What are the chances!?

Adams will travel to Manitoba this weekend with the other seven Birds but she's not expected to be able to play the full two games against the University of Brandon Bobcats. The ankle was feeling better during the two games in Winnipeg last weekend, but she turned it over again earlier this week walking to class.

"Physio said that I can play about half. Half a game, or half a half. But he said it's not recommended, but since they need me..." Adams said yesterday, before leaving for Brandon.

In Alberta last weekend, Adams played six minutes Friday, and thirty minutes Saturday. "[The ankle felt] good, but then I reinjured it on Monday just walking, so now I'm probably a little worse than I was before."

Since she rehurt the ankle, Adams says, she can definitely feel it on the court. UBC head coach Deb Huband said the only reason she is letting Adams travel with the team is because, with the shortened roster, the team is desperate.

"She's travelling, and then we'll see what happens when we get there...Under normal circumstances, if we had more depth, we wouldn't even be thinking about playing her this weekend," Huband said.

Huband explained that getting two wins in Brandon is key at this point in the season.

"They're very important games because they're against a team that we should beat, we are supposed to beat, and getting wins on the road will help us secure that play-off position."

Carrie Watson will sub in for Adams this weekend as UBC's fourth-string point guard. Townsend played at point guard two Saturdays ago against Trinity Western and shared the position with Adams last weekend. Huband admits that the constant change-ups in the key position have shaken the team up.

"I think we're a little bit rattled right now...I think we're a little bit shaken up and we need to settle," the coach said.

Townsend is expected to be back practising next week, and will likely play in the two games against Simon Fraser University. After spending three days in her room, her health is slowly improving.

Townsend started to feel sick in Manitoba, but figured it was just the flu. "On Friday, I was feeling a bit flu-ish, but I was okay. I played. And then Saturday I was feeling worse. I was pretty achy and tired in the game, but I was okay. Then afterwards I was pretty sick, and I just tried to sleep at the hotel. The next morning I noticed a couple of dots on me...I went to the hospital the following morning and they diagnosed me with chicken pox."

The timing couldn't have been much worse.

Townsend blazed up the court two weekends ago against Trinity Western, but as the sickness kicked in during the Manitoba games, she wasn't able to turn in a standout performance. And while she struggled through the two games, her teammates didn't do much better, according to Huband.

"We were just not taking care of the possession, not taking care of the balls. We had 26 or 27 turnovers per game, and that really hurt us. They scored a lot of points off our turnovers," the coach said.

Huband is still confident the Birds have a chance; she's just frustrated at all they have had to go through.

"It's been difficult. When people make commitments to your team, from year to year, but also when they are recruited, you expect them to hold up to their commitments. I think that losing Brandie earlier in the year–because of personal issues she wasn't able to continue with her commitment to the team–and more recently with Julie...Obviously we're suffering a little bit because of a couple of people not following through their commitments until the end of the year."

Travelling with eight players is a whole lot less fun and a whole lot more nerve-wracking than travelling with eleven, or even ten. The remaining Birds will have to get lots of pre-game rest, settle into their game, and get used to spending most it on the court, not on the bench.

"I told the players, 'Now's a time when nobody can hide,'" Huband said. "We need everybody to do their thing on the floor. Be a defensive stopper, do a great job on the boards, score some points, handle the ball. Whatever it is, people have to step up. Everybody has to step up." ❖

SIDELINED: UBC's injured Charmene Adams watches her teammates practise Wednesday night. TARA WESTOVER PHOTO

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CAPTURED LIFE

Eyes opened by the exotic and the ordinary

UBC PHOTO SOCIETY ANNUAL EXHIBIT
at the Asian Centre Auditorium until Feb. 2

I've always admired photography as an art form. A good photograph can do so much. It can capture history, it can move you, open your eyes to things that you didn't know existed and more. Photography is also unique as an art form because of its mass appeal.

Nonetheless, there's a huge difference between your holiday snaps and the photos at this year's Photosoc exhibit. I'm always interested in seeing what other students do in their sparetime, and when the results are as varied and beautiful as those shown here it's definitely a treat.

There are photos that transport you from a grey and dreary afternoon on the UBC campus to wherever the photographer decides to take you. Katherine Pettit's "New York Interior," is a photograph of the inside of an unnamed New York bar. It's a beautiful off-focus scene of the big city. I've never been to New York, but the photo brought to my mind images of crowded subway cars, grouchy cab drivers, and bustling Manhattan sidewalks.

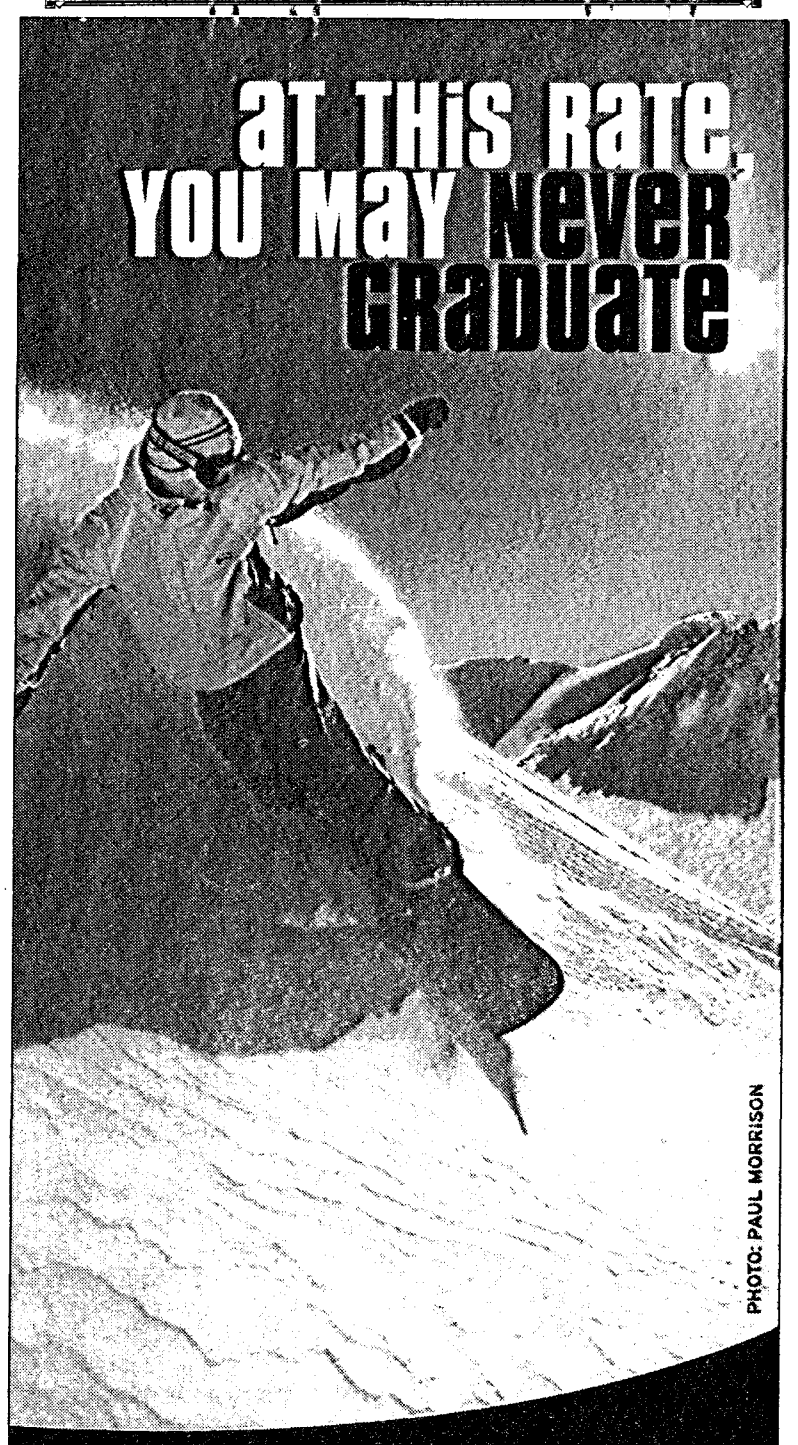
With "In an Annapurna Village, Nepal" Heather Conn takes us to a remote mountain village in Nepal. Conn's photo shows us the human element of this small village as an old villager stares at us with weary but curious eyes. Anjali Nayar's "Islam" is another example of travel photography that wouldn't look out of place in an issue of *National Geographic*. Nayar's photo is a beautifully framed shot of the Taj Mahal in Agra, India with all the exoticism and romance that the monument evokes. Equally captivating are Peter Kao's "Writing on Stone, Alberta" and Anthony Maw's "Mount Rundle"–photos that show nature in all its stunning and breath-taking magnificence.

There are also photos that forced me look at the ordinary things around me in a different way. "Softball Backstop" by Cynthia Fisher shows a neglected and overgrown baseball diamond. In one photo, Fisher manages to capture themes of innocence, the passing of time, childhood, baseball, and maybe even more. Norman Chan's "Destination?" is a skillfully constructed photo of a road disappearing into the horizon. The photo's simplicity belies the sheer evocativeness of the open road, of journeys and of course of destinations. More personally, Conrad Chevalier's "The Paper" pays homage to that simplest of objects, the daily newspaper. It is something that most of us take for granted, but it somehow struck a chord with the newshound in me.

Another photo that captivated me is Shannon Salter's "American Muffins in Vienna." It's a simple shot of muffins decorated with little American flags. The photo is a great tongue in cheek statement about globalisation and the pervasiveness of American culture. Bryan Nykon's "Salarymen" captures a trio of Japanese businesspeople waiting for their train. The looks on their faces are like those of prisoners at a Russian gulag, showing utter despair and defeat. In one photograph Nykon has captured the mind-numbing drudgery felt by millions of Japanese officeworkers everyday.

Everyone who comes to this exhibit will walk away from it with differing opinions. There are so many photos here of high artistic merit that picking which ones to write about in this review was a tough task. I found it far too easy to just sit and examine each photograph. I would recommend this exhibit to any students as an easy escape from your classes, your readings and your work. Best of all, the exhibit is entirely free. ❖

–Ron Nurwisah



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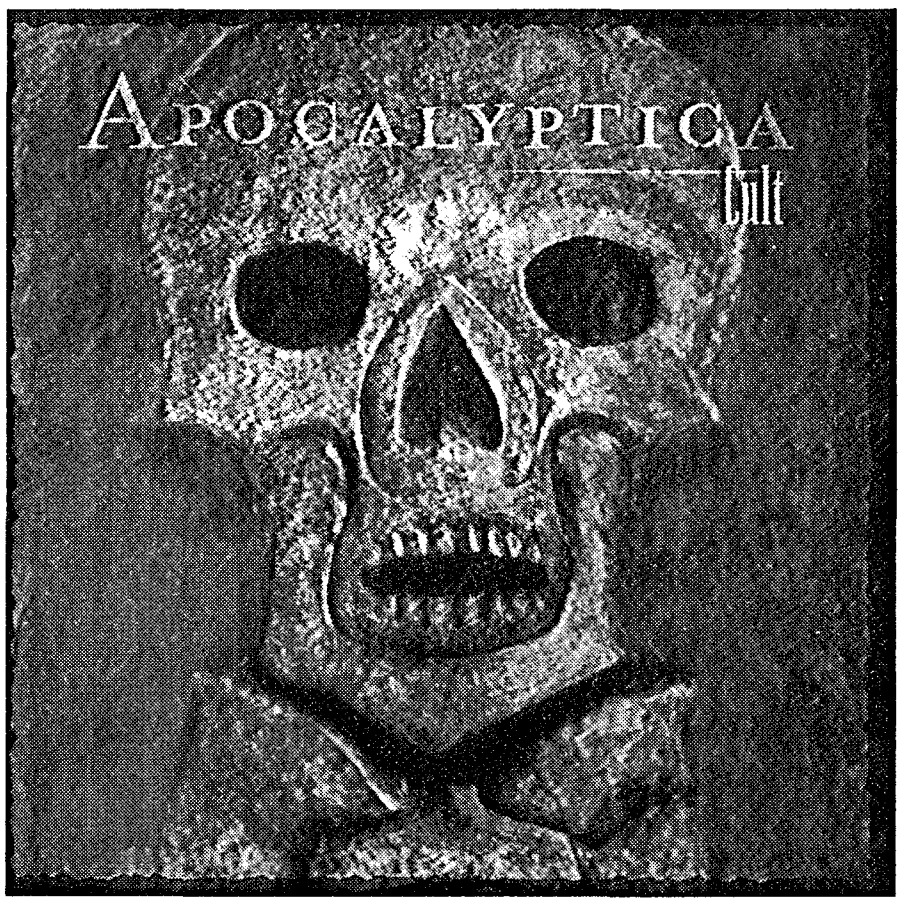

Cellos? What, you may ask, do cellos have to do with a band called Apocalyptica? Well, just about everything. It seems that four cello students at the Sibelius Academy in Finland got together and decided to make an album. Their music of choice–covers of songs by Metallica, arranged for their quartet. No, I'm not kidding.

Apocalyptica's third album, *Cult*, adds some percussion and a double-bass to the ensemble, and is made up of the arrangements and original compositions of band member Eicca Toppinen. The style imitates metal to a certain degree (it sounds like electric guitars) in its repeating bass line and distortion, and some of the tracks are as monotonous as your average Metallica instrumental.

The first few tracks have fairly similar themes, although "Romance" begins with a haunting duet melody and more classical accompaniments, until the drums kick in and then it's just more of the same. The only exception is "Hope," which has some beautiful duet melodies.

The problem is that most of the original songs just sound like Metallica. They may start fairly melodic, but by the second minute of the song, the guitar-sounding double-bass is making it clear that this is metal, not some kind of chamber music. It fails to sound original anymore, especially given Metallica's recent tour and album with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra.

Even Apocalyptica's performance of Grieg's "In the Hall of the Mountain King" and the one actual Metallica cover on this album, "Until It Sleeps," are just more of the same. Grieg's song, for example, just gets more and more frantic, without doing anything for the piece itself. Apocalyptica is something of a curiosity, but not much more. ❖

–Daniel Silverman

Colour-blind theatre

by Michelle Mossop

"Chutney is a condiment that adds flavour to your full meal. It's a mixture of fruits and spices," says theatre veteran Hamish Boyd, explaining the origins of the name of his production company, Chutney Productions. "In a way, it represents adding zest to your meal of theatre."

But the origins of the company run much deeper than sugar and spice. The production company—which he recently formed along with fellow artists Fif Fernandes, Russell Ferrier, Aliexkz Murdock Wei, and Alvin Sanders—came to being for political reasons.

"We formed Chutney Productions after getting together and realising that there wasn't the theatre we really wanted to see," explains Fernandes. "Theatre wasn't reflective of society.

"Everyone was white on stage," Fernandes continues. "And when there was someone of colour onstage, they were in productions with colour-specific roles: *Ain't Misbehaving, Driving Miss Daisy*...the list goes on and on."

So to shatter the paradigm of traditional casting, Fernandes, Boyd, and a few other artists wrote to the Canada Council of the Arts and the City of Vancouver for the funding necessary to start up their own production company, one which would try to increase racial and ethnic diversity in the arts. The funding came through and Chutney Productions was incorporated in June.

The next step was to find a script.

"One of the scripts we looked at that we enjoyed was *Filthy Rich*, by George F. Walker," says Fernandes. "We chose it because it has a wide range of characters...we felt that the themes in the play are reflective of themes that are in all cultures: greed, murder, mystery, corruption in politics."

Donna Spencer, artistic director of the Firehall Arts Centre, approached Fernandes about making the play a co-production. So with the theatre as a partner, Chutney Productions posted audition notices at theatre schools and the Canadian Actors' Equity Office. The response was overwhelming—200 people wanted a spot in the play.

The auditions, according to Fernandes, were the most crucial part of the company's goal. The company wants to appeal to a wide rage of actors. It wants to practice what is essentially a key component of Chutney Production's mandate—colour-blind casting.

"Colour-blind casting is not ethnic-specific," explains Boyd. "I'm not playing a Scottish soldier, Norman [Yeung] is not playing a Chinese coolie, and she [Fernandes], as an actor, is not playing an East Indian maid."

A SPICIER PRODUCTION: Norman Yeung (left), Fif Fernandes (centre) and Hamish Boyd (right) believe that the stage should reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of society. MICHELLE MOSSOP PHOTO

This concept is quite new to Boyd, a theatre veteran who started acting at the age of ten. But he found colour-blind casting so appealing an idea that he returned to the stage for *Filthy Rich* after a 12-year hiatus.

"When I was in theatre school, it was all white-bred. I was one in a sea of Anglo-Saxon actors," explains Boyd. "These days it's a really mixed culture and we need to reflect what is evident in society."

But for Yeung, a recent grad from UBC's BFA in Acting program, colour-blind casting isn't all that new—it was emphasised in the Vancouver Little Theatre, of which he was a part at the age of 12.

"We were conscious of this because we wanted the kids to see themselves as people living in a diverse community," explains Yeung.

However, Yeung soon realised that in professional theatre, colour-blind casting is rare. So when he heard that Chutney Productions was holding auditions for *Filthy Rich*, Yeung jumped at the chance to play the lead's sidekick—Jamie McLean.

"I'm glad to have had the chance to play this character, Jamie McLean—a part that was not written for a Chinese person, specifically."

Though the theatre community is seeing more and more colour-blind casting, Fernandes thinks that it will be some time before it is practiced in every production.

She points to the recent Arts Club production of *Amadeus*, in which Alvin Sanders, who plays Tyrone M. Power in *Filthy Rich*, was cast as Salieri.

"When Alvin got the part of Salieri, it was a big deal. People were shocked."

But Yeung thinks that colour-blind casting is becoming more and more accepted in theatre, especially in multicultural communities in North America.

"I hope there is more of it. It seems as though we are at the cusp of this movement."

So far, the response to the play has been positive. On opening night, the play was sold out. But it is the company's mandate that has been getting the biggest praises.

"Outside the theatre community, when I talk to people on the street, they don't see themselves reflected on the stage and, as a result, they don't come to see plays."

Chutney Productions doesn't want to stick to theatre. Both Fernandes and Boyd come from strong film and television backgrounds.

"We're looking at some film scripts," says Boyd. "You see, it's Chutney *Productions* because we don't want to just concentrate on theatre. We want to expand." ❖

Cinematic anarchy washes the brain

THE FILMS OF JENNIFER GENTILE
at the Blinding Light
Jan. 20

Watching the short films of Los Angeles director Jennifer Gentile at times feels like watching some obscure kind of avant-garde propaganda. Vivid, distorted images flash rapid-fire, in an entrancing, rhythmic series of disjointed jump-cuts. The mind races just to keep up, let alone to uncover just what exactly is going on.

But when the optical barrage ends, and the lights come on, what becomes clear is that the Gentile experience involves much more than mere art-house brainwashing.

Five of Gentile's renowned shorts, spanning the indie filmmaker's ten-year career, were screened last Saturday in a retrospective at the Blinding Light. Presented chronologically, they included *Corn Smut, One Eye Leads, Isabella Holding a Pot of Basil, My Pretty Little Girlfriend*, and Gentile's most recent short, *Life History of A Star*.

The sampling of the director's films (none lasting longer than 15 minutes) reflected the work of a daring filmmaker, one dedicated to exploring an array of unsavoury topics, ranging from rape and abuse to intense disillusionment. With unapologetic, no-holds-barred intensity, Gentile's shorts delve confidently into territory which most directors find anathema.

Her work covers a broad spectrum of subject matter and portrays it all through a distinctly macabre and disturbing lens. *Corn Smut*, for example, examines the dangerous relationship between flirtation, sexuality, and assault. *Life History of A Star*, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 1999, explores the dynamics of destruction in relationships and the dangers of delusional success.

Gentile's films are linked by an insatiable fascination with the power of the optical. In *Isabella Holding a Pot of Basil*, the audience watches a young girl, half naked and handcuffed, picking obsessively at her navel. Gentile's intent, it seems, is to burn a lasting string of haunting, vivid images into the mind of the viewer.

Though the films are open to charges of self-indulgence and incoherence, her jarring style is entirely in step with the complex nature of the subject matter she addresses. Abuse, obsession, and disillusionment, she insists, are subjects that words cannot deal with adequately—so she creates on-screen mayhem to convey wrenching inner chaos.

Cinematic anarchy, however, doesn't always make great entertainment and Gentile's films are clearly not to everyone's taste. But if visual spectacle is your thing, and your stomach is strong, her films are worth tracking down. ❖

—Ian Sonshine

Hey, that's my house!

NOROC
at Tinseltown Theatres
now playing

Half the fun of watching locally-shot TV shows and movies is being able to recognise local landmarks. But unfortunately, that's the *only* reason to watch *Noroc*.

Marc Retailleau's first feature tells the story of a Romanian immigrant photographer, Petru Machescu, who is faced with deportation if he doesn't find a paying job quickly. As luck has it, he gets the first job he sees advertised in the paper and becomes a shipyard security guard.

The old shipyard is home to an interesting community of artists, including a metal sculptor and a painter who like to piss on Petru's work. Petru strikes up a relationship with the idealistic metal sculptor, Helina, who loves Petru's intergrity—a personality trait he quickly sheds once he finds out that he has to get a job in his profession to stay in the country.

Petru learns to comply with the materialistic Canadian attitude towards work and life. Although the story is sketched out very vaguely (Petru has been in Canada for two years but is only now given his ultimatum.) The film has incredible style and form. Shot entirely digitally, the film adheres strictly to the Dogma 95 manifesto, which forbids artificial lighting, tripods or a prerecorded soundtrack. Retailleau acknowledges his guiding principles in a couple of painfully cheesy lines like "ever seen *The Celebration of the Idiots?*" referring to two founding Dogma films.

If you are interested in film technology, it's worth going to see the film. Tinseltown is showing Noroc in its original form, using a breakthrough digital projector. And of course, there are always those landmarks. ❖

—Aisha Jamal

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Alex Dimson stood at the top of a bombed out apartment building with Sarah Morrison and Tom Peacock, staring out at the cold steel dawn. Michelle Mossop and Daniel Silverman were about two miles west, searching for car parts with Graeme Worthy, the chief scavenger. Hywel Tuscano had tipped them off that there was a Buick in the area–the parts wouldn't fit their Mazda, but Dirk Schouten would make them fit. Six stories down, at the bottom of the same building Carmen DesOrmeaux was cooking the sparse food that Nicholas "the Strangler" Bradley had "bought" from Ron Nurwisah a week earlier, with some knives that Daliah Merzaban had made. It was cold, but getting warmer. Ian Sonshine was staying out longer and longer, soon they'd head north to meet up with Aisha Jamal's group. They'd split up in September at Holland Gidney's suggestion, she'd taken Tristan Winch and Tara Westover and the rest to make a camp for the winter up by the near-legendary Duncan McHugh's turf. They'd meet at the river near Julia Christensen's cabin, where she lived with Helen Eady and Regina Yung. Back at the apartment building Alicia Miller spotted a pidgeon, an auspicious sign. It looked like it was going to be a good day after all, but not for Lisa Denton...

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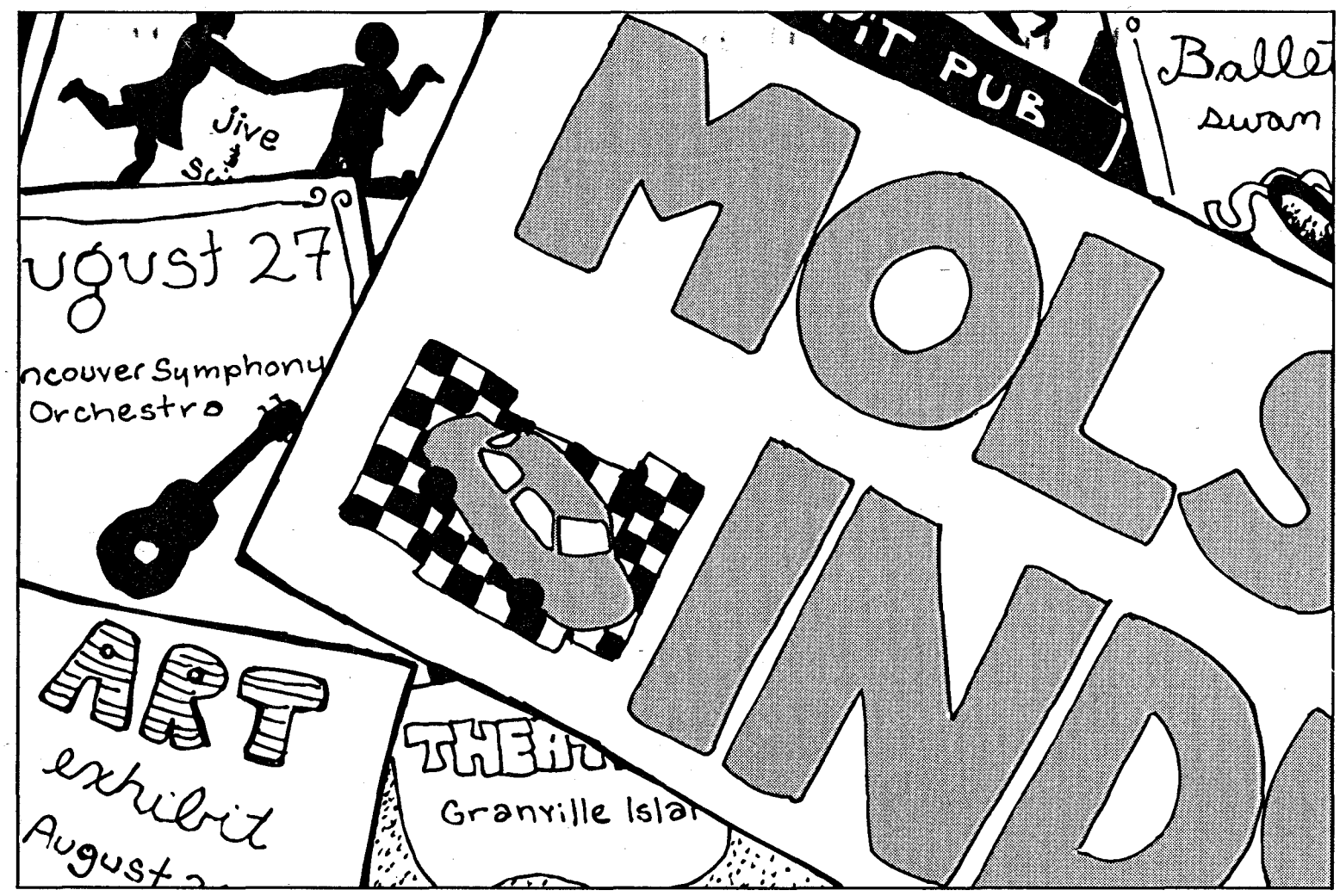

So long, Indy

Two weeks ago it looked like that the Molson Indy was moving to Montréal because of development in the False Creek area. Now it's not so sure, but no matter. Even the slightest chance that this hailed farce of an event is leaving town got everyone up in arms.

The question is, do we care if the Indy moves?

The answer is no.

But a lot of other people freaked out, including the *Province*, whose front page read: "No Fun City, Again...We're losing the Indy." This headline was accompanied by the sulking words: "First the fireworks leave Vancouver; now our top sporting event is moving to Montréal."

Boo hoo.

The announcement was reminiscent of the recent death of another "major cultural event" the Benson and Hedges Symphony of Fire.

In 1997, the House of Commons passed Bill C-71, which stated that by 2003, all sponsorship by tobacco companies must end. However, a section of the bill that demanded a drastic reduction of the amount of advertising allowed for tobacco companies prompted an early withdrawal of Benson and Hedges from the event.

Now it looks like we're not going to lose the Indy after all. That's too bad. When it looked like we might, a lot of people said the loss of the Indy would be just another blow to Vancouver's economy and self-esteem. Now we'll never know.

But since when does "having fun" involve tickets upwards of $100? And do we have to turn out by the tens of thousands, do we have to be crammed into tight spaces, surrounded by sweaty beefcake frat boys, overcharged for beer, and with a bad seat for actually seeing what's going on to have fun?

There are loads of festivals and events throughout the year for all different tastes that are just as fun, if not more fun, than watching people driving around a track or watching expensive pyrotechnics explode as you squat between a family picnic and a garbage can in a park a quarter of a mile away from the action.

"No Fun City" should read "Lazy City." Rather than going out and finding their own fun, citizens of Vancouver prefer to be taken by the hand and led to the beach or the track, there to bask in the glow of over-hyped corporate sponsorship.

It's not our city that isn't fun. It's us. Fun, it seems, has become just another aspect of our annual routine–like the Superbowl, or the Oscars, or Christmas, or the Indy, or the fireworks: all overhyped, and entirely predictable.

What really happens at the Molson Indy anyway? People get injured, people's ears get blown off. What happens at the Symphony of Fire? There were some fancy fireworks, people were drunk, and some people got busted for drinking on the streets because there were $310,850 worth of cops roaming the streets. Fun.

For the rest of the city, those who prefer not to have their fun force-fed to them in a hail of fire and a flurry of squealing tires, there were other events going on that weekend. There were great exhibitions of local art hanging in the galleries. Art not your thing? Well then you could have strolled through Stanley Park and ended with a picnic watching a game of cricket. Cricket not your thing? Well there was surely a great game of beachball needing a few more players down on Jericho. Or what about some mountain biking up at Seymour.

And at night, if you weren't all funned out, you might have checked out a piece of local theatre playing at the Firehall or some other small venue. Or maybe a band down at the Brickyard. Or a movie at the Blinding Light!! Or maybe too much beer down at the Cambie, or the Ivanhoe, where people will try to sell you stolen clothes, batteries, maybe a leg of lamb. But they will not charge you six bucks for a beer, and it's not standing room only.

But we're not here to dictate to you the difference between high culture and low culture, or what to do with your Saturday night, or Sunday afternoon. We just don't appreciate it when the powers that be try to tell us what's fun and what's not about this city. ❖

letters

Latimer sentence too harsh, petitioner says

The harsh sentence handed down to Robert Latimer has greatly disturbed many Canadians. I would be grateful if *the Ubyssey* could help spread the news of the petition to the Government of Canada regarding Robert Latimer sponsored by the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, so that as many signatures from the UBC faculty, staff and students sympathetic to Latimer can be collected.

The petition calls upon the Government of Canada: a) to take whatever steps are necessary to grant Robert Latimer executive clemency so that his imprisonment is substantially reduced and b) to introduce legislation amending the Criminal Code as to abolish those mandatory minimum sentences that permit no exception whatever, no matter how extenuating the circumstances.

The petition can be downloaded in PDF form from the web: http://www.robertlatimer.com

Thank you very much.

–William Hsieh
UBC Associate Professor
Earth and Ocean Sciences

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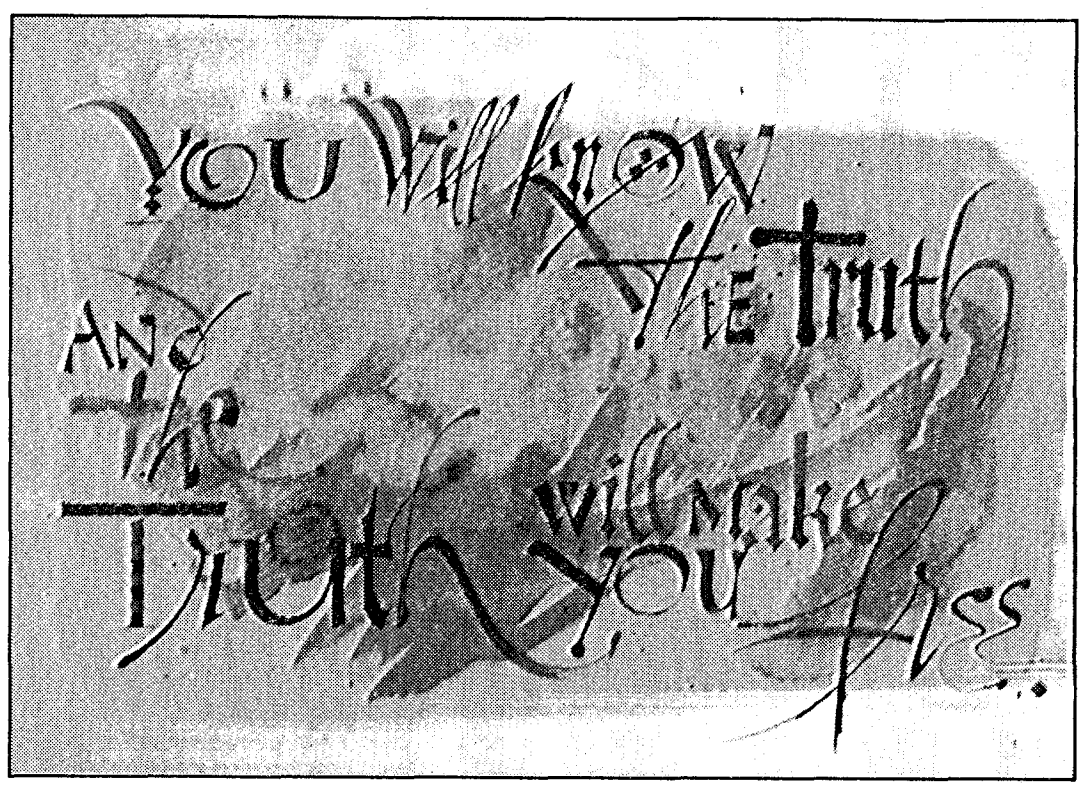

Love liberty

by Daniel Silverman

CHOOSE FREEDOM
at the Regent College Lookout Gallery
until January 27th

Choose Freedom is an art exhibit dedicated to Biblical ideas of slavery and liberation. The artists each have a unique view of what these concepts mean, and they use different media to communicate it.

Much of the artwork is contemplative. "The Call," a photograph by Carmen Tomé, shows a cross above breaking waves. The seascape seems to move within the photograph, giving a nice counterpoint to the stationary cross.

"Scars & Tears Wiped Away" by Jim Gladden is a stunning acrylic painting. It uses teardrop shapes so vividly it's as though their colour pops out of the canvas. "Equestrian," on the other hand, is very still but equally powerful. David Robinson's statuette is of a man, possibly a prisoner, bound to a horse. He has a look of serenity despite being clothed only in ropes–perhaps acceptance, or quiet pride?

Some of the pieces are more apocalyptic in tone. "A Plague of Frogs" by Kate Rose depicts hundreds of frogs overtaking an Egyptian hall of sculpted columns. The detail is intense and very precise, showing what the wrath of God really looks like.

"Dreaming of Lions–The Gates" by James Tughan is a large painting depicting an invasion with fiery meteors falling from the skies. The scene has been updated, with signalmen and people with flashlights laying siege to a city.

The last piece, "The Truth Will Make You Free" by Friedrich Peter, is the simplest: a beautifully-coloured calligraphy of the words "You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." This for me, sums up the whole idea of the exhibit: the artists are looking, as we all do, for freedom from something in our lives. ❖

Good return on tech stocks

by Carmen DesOrmeaux

TAKING STOCK OF TECHNOLOGY
David Rokeby Exhibit
at the Presentation House Gallery
until Feb. 18

Confusion. In a word, that was my first reaction to David Rokeby's current exhibit at the Presentation House Gallery–and it was probably part of the point he's trying to make.

Bedraggled and cold from yet another rainy Vancouver afternoon, I was soothed by the simple, white gallery walls of the Presentation House, with its subtle combination of natural and track lighting in the main room. As I looked around to take stock of the place, there was not much out in plain view.

I wandered over to a wall covered with a curious flow-chart concept-map. The chart is comprised of qualitative opposites like "saturated" and "unsaturated," connected to and branching out from other words. At the bottom of the wall display are toy-like objects, such as pears and dinosaurs velcroed to the wall. The chart was puzzling, though it was apparent that there had to be some structure behind the piece. Only later did I read the explanation on the entry-way wall, which informed me that "the wall display mimics the binary process a computer might use to visually identify objects." Ahh! Of course!

I joined some of the other patrons in one of the two sequestered rooms in the gallery. "Watch" is a dark, secluded room with two large projection screens producing mirror images of a busy street corner. The right screen is a reverse negative of the left screen. Every so often, the right screen flashes, as though a photograph is being taken. This is not a prerecorded video, but a live surveillance tape of the street corner just outside the gallery. Without knowing it, I had been under surveillance only 15 minutes ago as I crossed the intersection, heading towards the gallery. Every five minutes or so, the cameras slowly change their focus from the streetcorner to the room in which the audience watches. When this happened, there was a small, nervous laughter as people realised that they were suddenly on the spot. A few daring individuals even played with the screen's special effects by walking quickly around the room, to see their paths of motion.

Apart from an Orwellian reiteration of technology's invasion of privacy through nonconsensual surveillance, Rokeby may also be trying to address the interactivity of technology with this exhibit. As viewers, we become involved in the art before we are even aware of it.

"Giver of Names," another dark room, has a computer monitor glowing, showing words grouped together, seemingly by free-association. A three-foot platform stands in the middle of the room with a camera and two lights shining directly on top of it. Children's toys are strewn around the Platform, and just above it hangs a two-foot square, free-hanging screen.

Participants are supposed to place toys onto the pillar, and the objects' images are immediately outlined and projected onto the screen. Certain words become highlighted on the monitor and the computer then constructs sentences and recites them.

When I placed a naked Mr. Potato Head face up on the pillar the computer said "The unrhetorical circle that a select grey Afghan surrounds talked of these plentiful horns which a Fuji answered by up until a barely disagreeable passover (longing)." Makes sense–sort of. The computer came up with similar sentiments for everything that the audience placed on the pillar–more or less syntactically correct but lexically nonsensical. The computer's voice software also had a tendency to mispronounce words.

Evidently, a substantial amount of sophisticated software went into this project. The exhibit emphasises the theme of interactivity. Participants reacted in an immediate way with the technology, altering the outcome of the art. Rokeby is trying to create an explicit awareness of how technology improves and impairs, but most certainly influences, our lives. ❖

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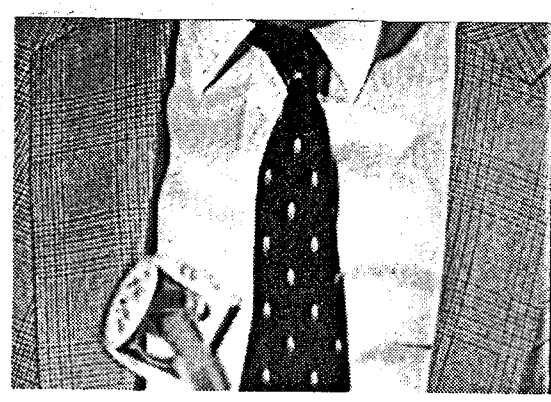

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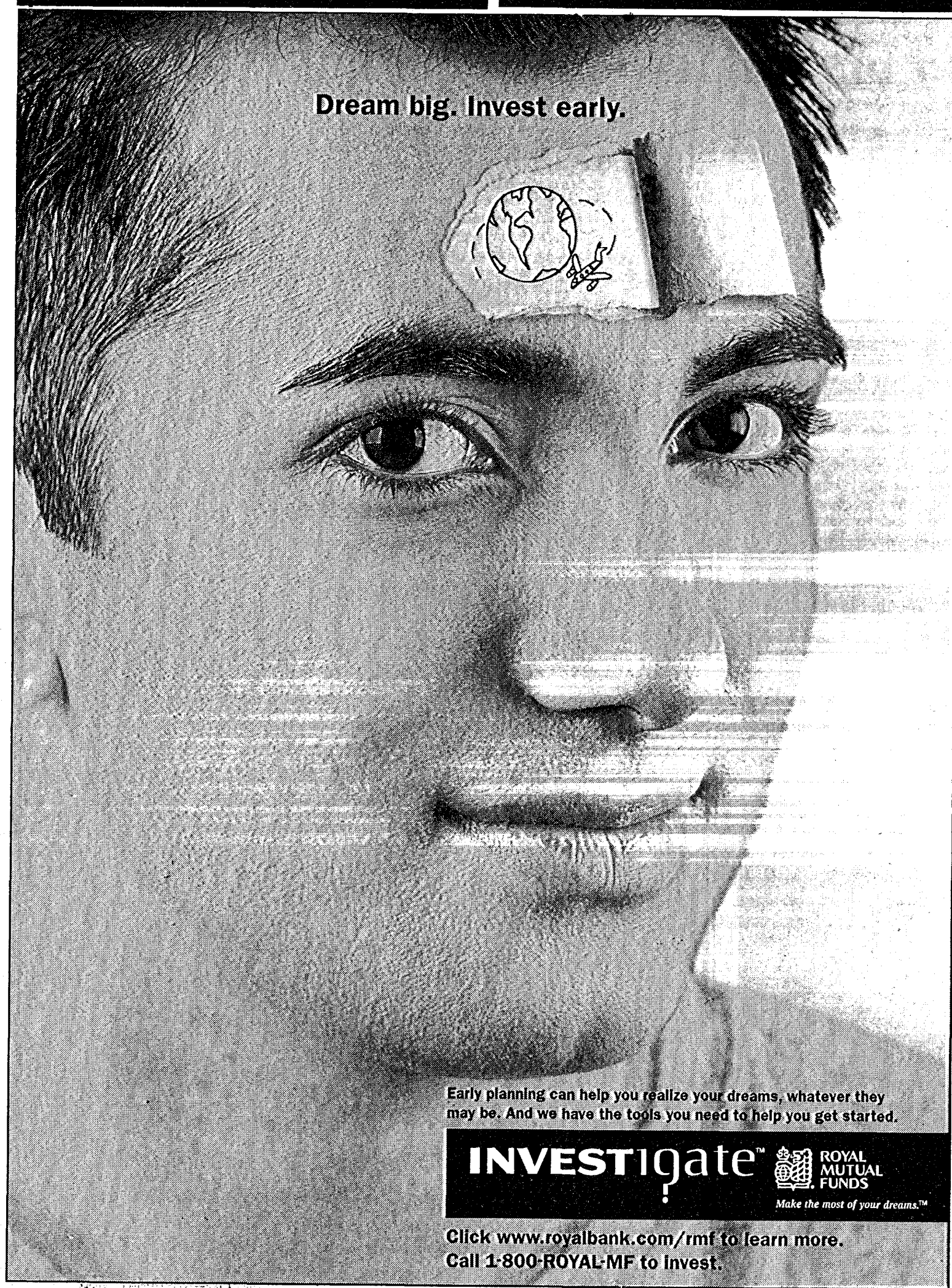

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THE UBYSSEY

WOMEN'S ISSUE

MARCH 2, 2001

For any women interested in contributing to the Ubyssey's annual women's issue, there will be a story meeting at 1:30 pm on Wednesday, January 31, for writers, photographers, and artists.

For more information contact Julia at juliabc@interchange.ubc.ca or Daliah at 822-2301

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