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RANT

Literary Supplement
N°47

31 MARCH, 2006 | VOL. LXXXVII
Learning to draw with Chrissy since 1918

The Ubyssey

Travel and Mounting!
Grab, Burn out,
or ride away?
6.7
1.8
1.6
Ben Fankhauser
didn't invent
this...no

Harper discs strictly black and white

BEN HARPER
Both Sides of the Gun
 Virgin Records

by D. WinterWhite
 CULTURE STAFF

Ben Harper's music has acted as an aid for many people. His breadth of topics, lyrical diversity and range of styles make it seem as though there is always a song from his repertoire that will suit the moment. So of course when he releases his first solo effort in a few years it will act as a censore in the culture.

Opening the package of *Both Sides of the Gun*, you are confronted by the strict black and white packaging of the album. Dividing

the album into two black and white discs allows Harper to maintain the concinnity of each, the first being softer—more reminiscent of his earlier work; the second has a broader range of stylistic variety and experimentation.

The white disk begins and ends with maudlin tunes. Starting with songs of separation and unfulfilled desire is an unusual touch for an artist, but Harper pulls it off superbly. Just listen to the names of the songs: "Morning Yearning"; "Waiting for You"; "Picture in a Frame"; "Never Leave Lonely Alone." From this he moves into an instrumental that calls to mind warm beaches in tropical places. The disc then works to a climax with

anti-paeans from "Reason to Mourn" through to "Cryin' Won't Help You Now," and ends with the short dénouement of "Happy Everafter In Your Eyes." This disc is a beautiful piece of work.

The black disc is the "bête-noir" of the package. Some of the songs work well by themselves, but the arrangement does not show the thoughtfulness of the first. Listening to it leaves one with the feeling that Harper had a hodgepodge of songs left over after making the first, but that he could not find a way to make them fit into an album, so they ended up thereafter on the black disc. And that's fine, but you probably won't want to listen to it straight through many times.

The colour-coding creates an



interesting package, and moreover is pertinent to the content: white good, black bad. The quality of the white disc more than makes up for the lack of thought in the black, so this album is worth buying even if you are only going to listen to the white disk—it is that good. ■

Two pasts converge in Claire Morrall's haunting, "ethereal" novel

NATURAL FLIGHTS OF THE HUMAN MIND
 by Claire Morrall
 Sceptre

by Gemini Cheng
 CULTURE WRITER

If improbable situations are your thing, maybe you'll like Clare Morrall's second novel, *Natural Flights of the Human Mind*.

She's a good writer and an entertaining read; you won't pick up this book and stop reading it because it's bad. It's good, and shows a darker side of humanity. That said, the novel was slightly disappointing for what it could have been. Reviews hail it as "ethereal" and "heart-stopping," but I wouldn't label it in those extremes.

The premise of *Natural Flights of the Human Mind* is haunting enough. Peter Straker has killed 78 people and the 25th anniversary of their deaths is fast-approaching. He talks to them in his mind, in his dreams, while he lives in a lighthouse on the Devon coast.

Imogen Doody has just inherited a cottage by Straker's lighthouse, and as Straker is drawn into helping her repair it, their pasts gradually begin to converge.

A couple of questions I had about this novel were answered more quickly than I expected. Why did he kill 78 people? How did he kill 78 people? Did he even want to? Right from the beginning, it's obvious that the incident has plagued his dreams. As for the how and the why, you find out pretty early on

because it's actually not the point of the story like I thought it was.

Essentially, this novel is about the human heart and the pain it can endure. There is Peter Straker, who cannot escape the past because he bears the responsibility of 78 deaths. At first, Straker is silenced by his sin, although he quickly begins to open up when he meets Doody. The silence is effective at first—the antihero cannot bring himself to speak, but his sudden decision to talk is actually unexpected and goes unnoticed within the narrative. Rather than save speech for his atonement, Morrall chooses to have Straker speak without fuss early on in the novel.

There is Doody, who is bitter from her husband's disappearance

25 years ago. With many flashbacks to her husband, we see that she is troubled because after finding someone who appreciates her after her emergence from her sister's shadow, she is actually shunned by his family and is eventually abandoned without explanation by the man she loves.

What makes a compelling story is the pain behind the characters. We meet some of the people whom Straker has killed, and the loved ones left behind. For some, the pain has turned to anger, culminating in what I deemed a far-fetched climax. It paints an accurate picture of what human nature is capable of, but I'm not sure who would find it truly realistic. But I have to ask: is this really a problem? I didn't like the ending, but you might. ■



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The Ubyssey

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Once upon a time Amanda Truscott decided to go on a voyage to the bottom of the sea, accompanied by George Prior, Boris Korby, Simon Underwood and Champagne Choquer. Along the way they met a mermaid in the form of Alia Dharssi. She took them to see the United Nations of the Ocean, composed of Gemini Cheng, Kellan Higgins, Michelle Mayne, Bryan Zandberg and Yinan Max Wang. They were debating whether to attack the kingdom of Frieda Luk, who had been attacking Jesse Ferreras with many Jesse Marchands. Suddenly, Eric Szeto and Paul Evans burst in, demanding to talk to Ruben Heredia; they left disappointed. Finally, an attack was made, and Generals Mai Bui and Megan Smyth ordered Andrew MacRae, Colleen Tang and Michael Kenan into action. The victory was swift, though not without loss as D. WinterWhite lost his best pants, and Claudia Li beat up the Sexual Harassment Panda. The troupe of Mary Leighton, Candice Killantin and Michelle Lee was installed to rule the sea, and all was happy with the world. The end.

COVER DESIGN Champagne Choquer
EDITORIAL GRAPHIC Yinan Max Wang
EDITORIAL GRAPHIC Paul Evans & Mary Leighton



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Upgrading the doghouse with style

or, Fifi gets designer digs

by Reuben Heredia
CULTURE WRITER

For a man as fashionably ignorant as I am, the term "Designer Doghouse" was about as foreign a concept as any. Scared, curious, and somewhat excited, I headed down to the Vancouver Architecture Institute Gallery to find out what all the fuss was about. As it turns out, the sordid "Snoopy shacks" of yesteryear are out, and creative canine condominiums are in—so are annoying attempts at alliteration, apparently.

The event, entitled Doghouse Vancouver, is, as the title indicates, a showcase of doghouses, or more accurately, "designer doghouses." The brain child of Jason Heard, director of the dv Interior Design and Urban Living Expo, the exhibition is a way for the Vancouver design community to interact with the public.

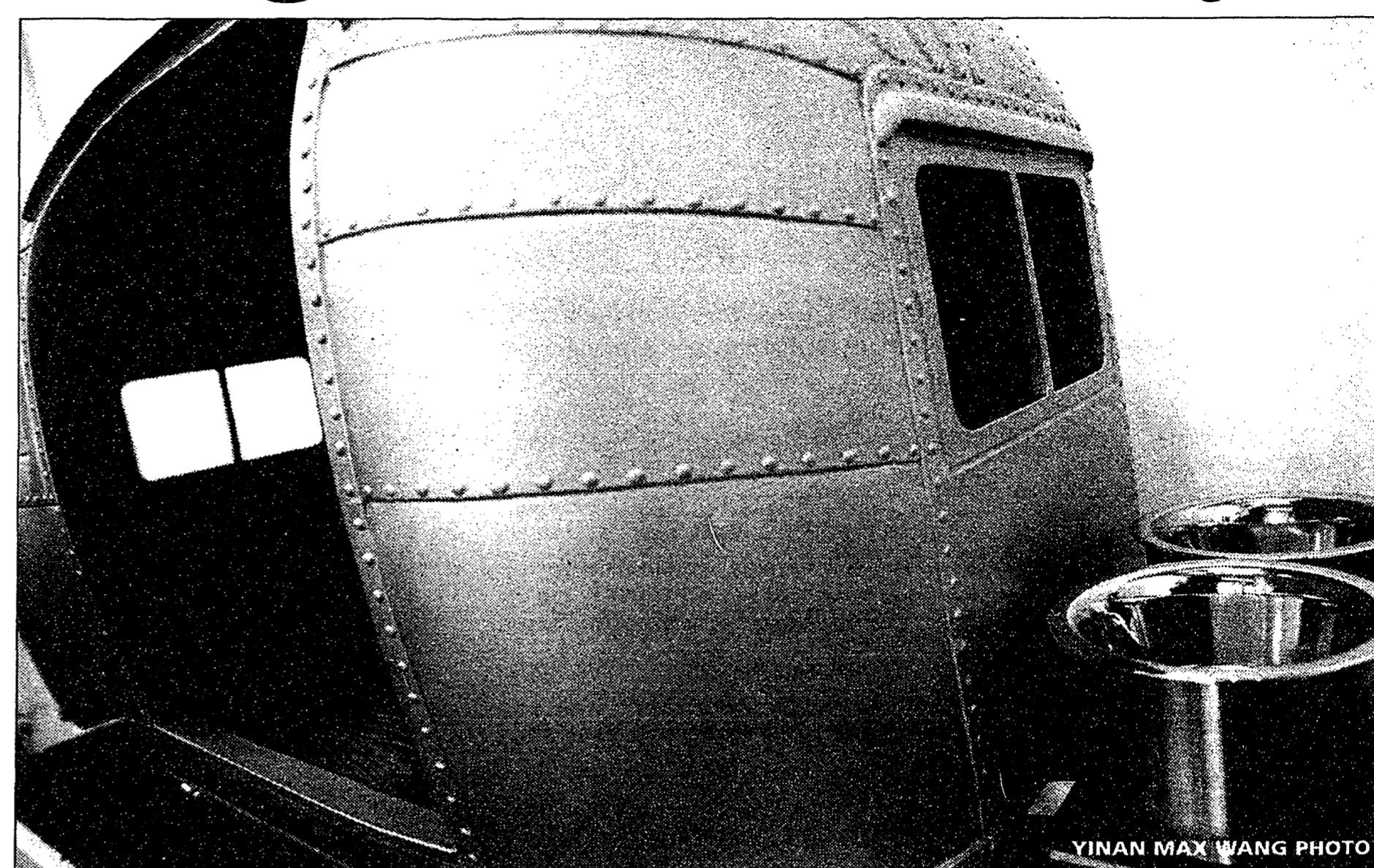
"What we decided to do was we hooked up with the Architects and Interior Design Institute of BC, and with K9 Biscuits Company, and did [a takeoff] of an event that K9 was involved in about four years ago called 'Barkitecture,'" said Heard. In addition, all the exhibitions at the show will be up for auction on April 13-15, with every penny going to the BC SPCA.

With a total of ten exhibition pieces from various architecture and interior design firms, and designs ranging from the traditional outdoor doghouse to furniture pieces that

would be at home in the most "new-age" of apartments, I was blown away at the sheer ingenuity of some of the designs. The biggest surprise came from the visually drab but conceptually brilliant "wRoof" from In Space design. Looking like a cardboard-cutout house, it is in fact a portable doghouse, which turns into a suitcase with compartments for food and other doggie supplies. Other cool designs include the "Lombok Pavilion" from It Inc., a doghouse inspired by traditional Thai houses; the Bau Wau house from Industrial Artifacts, the sustainable house for a mindful 'Green' dog that thinks it's important that his or her house is made locally using recycled materials with a story," according to the dv's online description; and the "Doggy Wallbed" from Instant Bedrooms Manufacturing, an extremely practical doggie bed that folds up into an inconspicuous, elegant cabinet.

The doghouses are just as much for the owners as for the dogs. I've noticed that some dog owners tend to live vicariously through their dogs; this is eerily similar to parents who try to make up for their unfulfilling childhood by vicariously living through their children—except the latter results in annoyed, belligerent children.

Luckily, dogs don't tend to get annoyed with their owner as long as there's an abundance of food and affection. When I asked Heard about my aforementioned "theory," he



agreed and told me that dog owners tend to gravitate towards houses that mirrored their own interests. I, for example, was drawn to the Lombok Pavilion, mirroring my interest in all things Thai. As for whether the dogs like the houses, according to Heard, the ones that were brought into experience the true joy of being a posh pooch were impartial to which houses they liked, and were more inclined to find the food placed in the houses. Heard has a background in dis-

tribution logistics and started the dv Interior Design and Urban Living Expo last year in order to bring a new perspective to urban living. The idea for doghouse Vancouver came about when Jason was driving home

when it clicked in my mind. I read an article about two weeks prior about how Vancouver was the dog capital of North America, [and I just thought], 'It's got to be dogs.'

"This is the first year that we've done something like this, and the response just within the community itself has been unbelievable," said Heard. "We're really happy with how it's turned out, we're getting some great exposure, and it couldn't go to a better cause, in my opinion."

THE UBYSSSEY Community Contribution AWARD

\$ 3 , 0 0 0

The Ubyssey feel that we should be doing our most to recognize and encourage activities and events that develop and strengthen a sense of community on campus. On our 80th anniversary in 1998, we established a \$50,000 endowment that will fund the Ubyssey Community Contribution Award. This annual award recognizes returning UBC students who have made a significant contribution to developing and strengthening the sense of community on the UBC campus by:

1. Organizing or administrating an event or project, or
2. Promoting activism and awareness in an academic, cultural, political, recreational, or social sphere.

The award is open to all returning, full-time UBC students, graduate, undergraduate and unclassified in good standing with the Ubyssey Publications Society. For the 2006-2007 academic year, we will award a \$3000 award for a project. Deadline will be April 7 2006 and the award will be disbursed to the successful candidate in early September 2006.

Nominees for the award will be judged on:

1. The impact of the contribution made - the number of people involved or affected.
2. The extent of the contribution - the degree to which it strengthens the sense of community on campus.

3. The innovation of the contribution - preference will be given to recognizing a new contribution over the administration of an existing one.
4. The commitment of the individual to UBC as a community.

Nominations should include a cover letter by the nominator, either an individual or a group, briefly stating the nature of the contribution made, the individual being nominated, contact information of the nominator and the nominee and a letter (approximately 500 words in length) describing the contribution made and how the above four criteria have been met.

Students are welcome to nominate themselves, but those doing so must attach a letter of support from another member of the campus community. The award will be judged by a committee chaired by a representative of UBC Student Financial Assistance and Awards office and members from various parts of the campus community.

Deadline for submission of completed nominations should reach the Ubyssey, Room 23, SUB, no later than Friday, April 7, 2006.

For further information, please contact Fernie Pereira, Business Manager, The Ubyssey, at (604) 822-6681 or email: fpereira@interchange.ubc.ca

Staking out to the Xtreme



by Mai Bui
CULTURE STAFF

Those on their way to class one afternoon last week may have noticed a curious phenomenon taking place in the wooded area behind Buchanan Tower: a small group of recreation-enthusiasts and their *Ubyssey* writer sidekick congregating in a thicket. What in the name of obscure sports were we doing there? If the wickets and mallets didn't give it away, then the sign staked territorially in the grass certainly must have: "Croquet Society—Match in Progress."

Specifically, it was a practice match of Xtreme Croquet. For those who have yet to try croquet, a match basically involves using a mallet to strike a ball through a series of embedded wire hoops (wickets) until you 'stake out' of the match by hitting the finishing stake with the ball. The Xtreme variant is traditional croquet's renegade half-brother, whose participants ditch manicured lawns in favour of the obstacles provided by Mother Nature. When setting up the Xtreme Croquet course, players scout the terrain for roots, stumps, and other impediments in an effort to maximise and diversify their challenges.

Former UBC Croquet Society President Daryl Wile, namesake of the 'Wile Cup' championship, came up with the idea to start a UBC cro-

quet club in 2003. "It's such an odd spectacle to see people play croquet," remarked Corey Fischer, current President of the UBC 'Croqsoc' and Wile's best friend since first grade.

Since its inaugural year, the Croqsoc has held numerous 'Friendlies,' (non-competitive matches) to acquaint players with one another as well as with the style of croquet to be played at an upcoming tournament.

"Friendlies are a nice way to take a break from school, especially during those warm September days," said Fischer. "If you don't know anything about [croquet] but you'd like to try it, you can come and check it out. Usually people who play [at a Friendly] will then come out to the tournament."

There are four tournaments played each year according to four different variations on the game. The first two tournaments of the year are the 'Autumn Classic,' which uses the North American traditional style of croquet, and 'November Reigns,' which pitches teams of three against each other.

"I think if we opened up with Xtreme [Croquet] we'd turn off a lot of people," explained Fischer. "We open up with a simple backyard style of playing. You're hitting the ball through these little hoops on the ground; anyone can do it. That's what I like about it."

This year's third tournament, the

'Xtreme Challenge,' took place last Sunday afternoon in the woods beside the International House. Players navigated through a wicket on a tree stump and a ball-trapping hollow in the ground en route to the finishing stake, to name just a few obstacles. After close semifinal and final rounds, the Croqsoc's self-effacing President himself won the medal for the Xtreme Challenge tournament.

But it's not over yet. This year's Green Jacket has yet to be won for 'Masters of the University,' the final tournament of the year, played in the International format using six wickets set in a figure eight. The points accumulated from players' standings in all the tournaments, explained Fischer, are then tallied up for the points-championship, the winner of which takes the coveted Wile Cup.

"Dylan [Gunn] and Brandon [Taylor] are tied for the Wile Cup lead," said Fischer. "It's exciting going into the last tournament when it's really close. It's a good sense of competition."

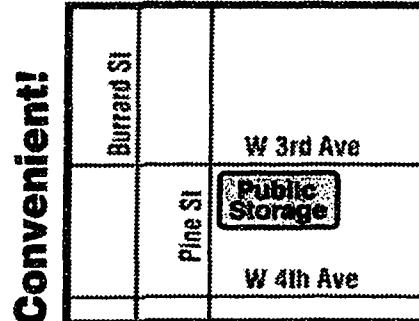
Fischer, who is in his final year of a BA in Film Production, hopes this sense of good-natured competition will continue long after he graduates. "We're just trying to create a legacy," he said. "I'd like to in five years look up our website and see it still going."

Check out www.croqsoc.com for more information on upcoming Friendlies and tournaments. ■

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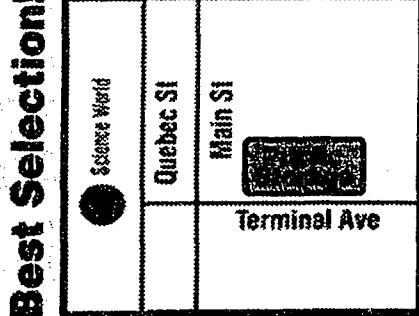
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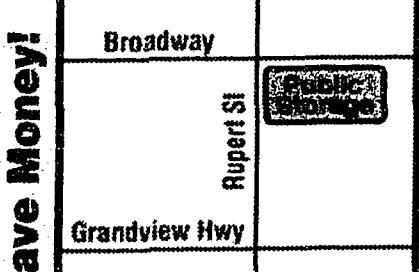
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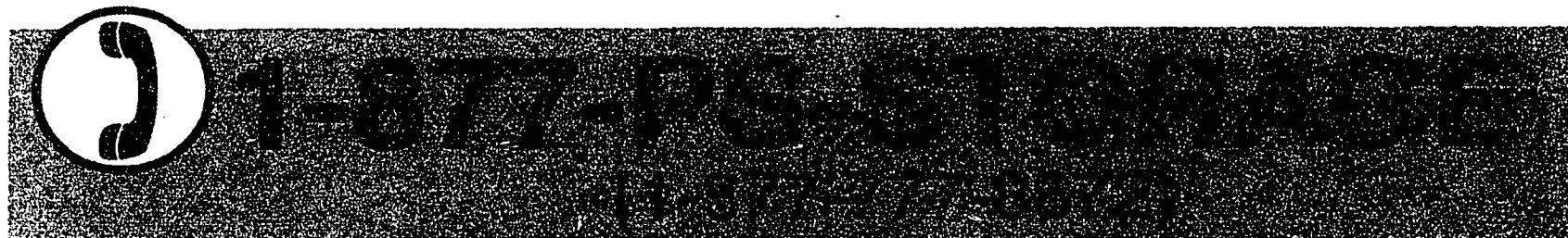
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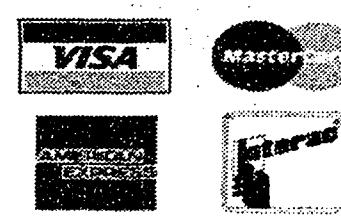
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AFTER THE GRAD RUSH

One student's thoughts and ramblings
on her last week as an undergrad

text by Frieda Luk

photo by Michelle Mayne

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On Tuesday afternoons we have to be a little careful because the Bandsra truck comes to town. Other than that, traffic is pretty minimal. We walk a lot. I get out and jog. I sit in the window of my classroom looking for moose on the east bank of the Selkine. Most of my kids come and join me after a minute or two and we see who can spot the most. Sheila, the secretary often comes in. She grew up here and can always spot the most.

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ACF ain't just about music and beer

by Colleen Tang
NEWS STAFF

Spiderman, mudslides, streakers, flashers, and porta-potties on fire are all part of Arts County Fair's (ACF) colourful tradition—that organisers say won't be forgotten this year.

But ACF is not just about drunken debauchery. Although it may have started out that way, it's become more than that, said Aleksandra Brzozowski, who has worked at four ACFs.

"The point of it is to have a really good concert," she said, "and we are able to make a profit of it and give the proceeds back to charity."

Omar Sirri, ACF financial director, also stressed the philanthropic nature of the event.

"It's important to remember that it's a charity event," he noted. "We've been able to contribute thousands of dollars to various charities."

All proceeds from this year's student-run charity event go to the

Canadian Diabetes Association and Muscular Dystrophy Association.

Safety is always a focus for patrons, performers and staff. This year, the Alma Mater Society (AMS), International Crowd Management (ICM) Security, Campus Security and UBC housing will be involved with safety and security measures.

"We're just trying to make the event as safe as possible," said Stephanie Ryan, ACF safety coordinator.

She added that the staff of over 50 will be "trained specifically what to do in terms of chaos and...for every situation that may arise."

Paul Wong, Campus Security communications manager indicated that Campus Security and the contract security, ICM Security, have been involved with ensuring safety at ACFs for many years.

Campus Security takes a role in facilitating and coordinating response to the emergency and safety planning," said Wong.

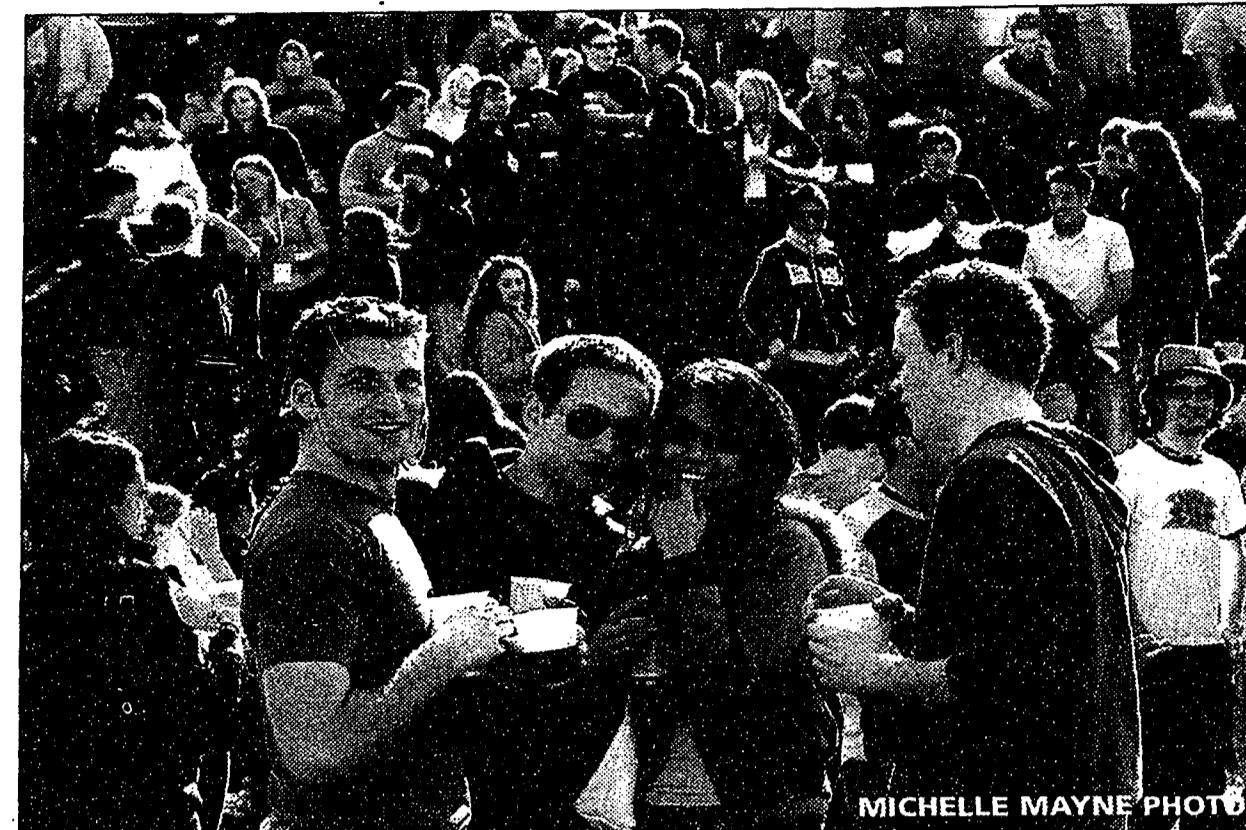
Wong added that they had been in contact with the Arts Undergraduate Society (AUS) as early as September and facilitated meetings in October. "The real success is the students have been hard workers around the planning of it," he said. "They've done a lot."

The most obvious safety precaution all students can take is to drink within reason, said Wong.

"Think of safety and if you're going to drink, drink responsibly. Don't drink and drive. And have a plan for getting home. Leave with your friends, [and] use Safewalk."

Minors will no longer be allowed into the event this year, marking a significant change from previous years.

"We really want to make sure the message is out there that the minors on campus need to make plans somewhere else," said Ryan. "[This decision] is going to make the event, overall, a lot safer which is why we decided not to have minors."



MICHELLE MAYNE PHOTO

The absence of minors is not going to affect the cost very much, however, added Ryan.

This doesn't mean the ACF is going to promote inebriated behavior before the fair either, quite the opposite, suggested

Ryan.

"People who arrive at the fair intoxicated will not be let in," said Ryan. "If someone in the fair was too intoxicated, it would be dealt with either by ICM security or the RCMP." ■

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France's "Black Tuesday" riot

More than a million students and union members protest youth labour law across France

By Candice Vallantin
NEWSWRITER

LYON, FRANCE—The streets of France surged with student and union protesters this past Tuesday, now referred to as "mardi noir" on account of the scale of the demonstration. An estimated one to three million took to the streets—estimates vary widely between officials and organisers—in what was the fourth and largest nation-wide protest organised against the country's new labour law, le Contrat de première embauche, or First Employment Contract (CPE). Demonstrations, rioting and blockades forced a closure on educational institutions and brought certain sectors of transit to a grinding halt.

More than 200 rioters were arrested in Paris and almost 400 more across France as police in riot gear came up against paint, rocks and other projectiles.

The CPE aims to increase youth employment by establishing a two-year trial period during which employees can be fired with no motive. Combined with other proposed legislation, the bill was created to decrease discrimination and high unemployment that plagues youth in suburban areas.

At the daily General Assembly for the Institut de sciences politiques (IEP) in Lyon Wednesday, student organisers evaluated the results of their mobilisation. "The government has remained stoic," said one member.

"Basically the Prime Minister's message is that it's not up to the streets to govern."

Some are accusing the PM Dominique de Villepin of trying to "rot" the movement.

Elsa Johnstone, a student and member of

the League of Revolutionary Communists explained the increased student demands.

"The CPE was just a spark at first—and maybe I'm exaggerating with my left-wing glasses—but it's become much bigger now," she said.

Although at first the mass mobilisation was concentrated on the CPE, it has now snowballed to include a larger context of labour and social issues.

But students are becoming aware of the inefficiency of university blockages and have elaborated on their choice of civil disobedience. Yesterday large groups of high-school and university students across France blocked railways, freeways, highways and main intersections, which created backups for dozens of kilometres in some areas and delayed trains.

Canadian and so-called "Anglo-Saxon" press in general have developed a cynical perspective toward the movement, interpreting relaxed labour laws as a necessary part of modernisation. Francois Marcade, a member of the IEP's Mobilisation Committee, points out that the CPE is a small battle in France. He argues that this mobilisation is rejecting a larger trend towards a liberal economy, which is perceived to increase social inequalities. The protests are emblematic of a greater "social malaise" he explains.

Many point to the danger of adopting liberal "Anglo-Saxon" economies, which, although they may have higher rates of employment, also suffer from high poverty rates.

Students worry about the "précarité" in another light, and refer to the complicated French administration that requires income sheets with a minimum guaranteed income for many essential things, like finding lodging or getting a loan. As a result, lack of job security in



FRENCH CONVICTION: 4-5 million expected at next protest with paint in tow.
HUGHES LEGLISE-BATAILLE PHOTO FLICKR.COM/PHOTOS/LEGLISE_BATAILLE

France means lack of access to certain social necessities.

Yesterday evening, after a review demanded by the opposition, the French government's Constitutional Committee approved the Law for the Equality of Chances, including its CPE legislation.

France's Education Minister, speaking on the public television channel *France 2* asked for "respect" of government institutions and said he hoped to re-establish dialogue with the main unions involved.

French President Jacques Chirac, who has been mostly absent throughout the past couple months, is expected to make a speech that will likely endorse the law.

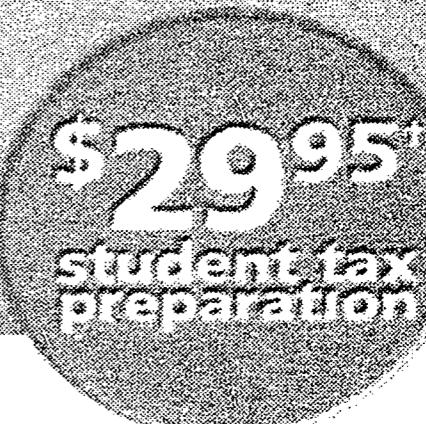
Johnstone worries that the Constitutional Committee's approval of the CPE "could bring a blow to the mobilisation."

A fifth massive protest and strike is planned for April 4 and Johnstone hopes that it will out-do "black Tuesday."

"We're thinking, maybe four or five million," said Johnstone. ■

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Ever need some very specific doohickey and found out it just didn't exist? Just look at those scientists that recently cloned a pig that contained Omega-3 fat, identical to fish fat: now we have pork rinds that are delicious and healthy. So for those who always wanted an Omega-3 pig, we too felt your pain. So for our pleasure and yours we have decided that there are a few other as-of-yet uninvented things that really need to be invented. Anyone who decides to rip off any of these inventions and subsequently make millions of dollars will be indebted to the *Ubysssey*—we expect our cut. And keep in mind that all of this was inspired by a pigfish.

The power desk

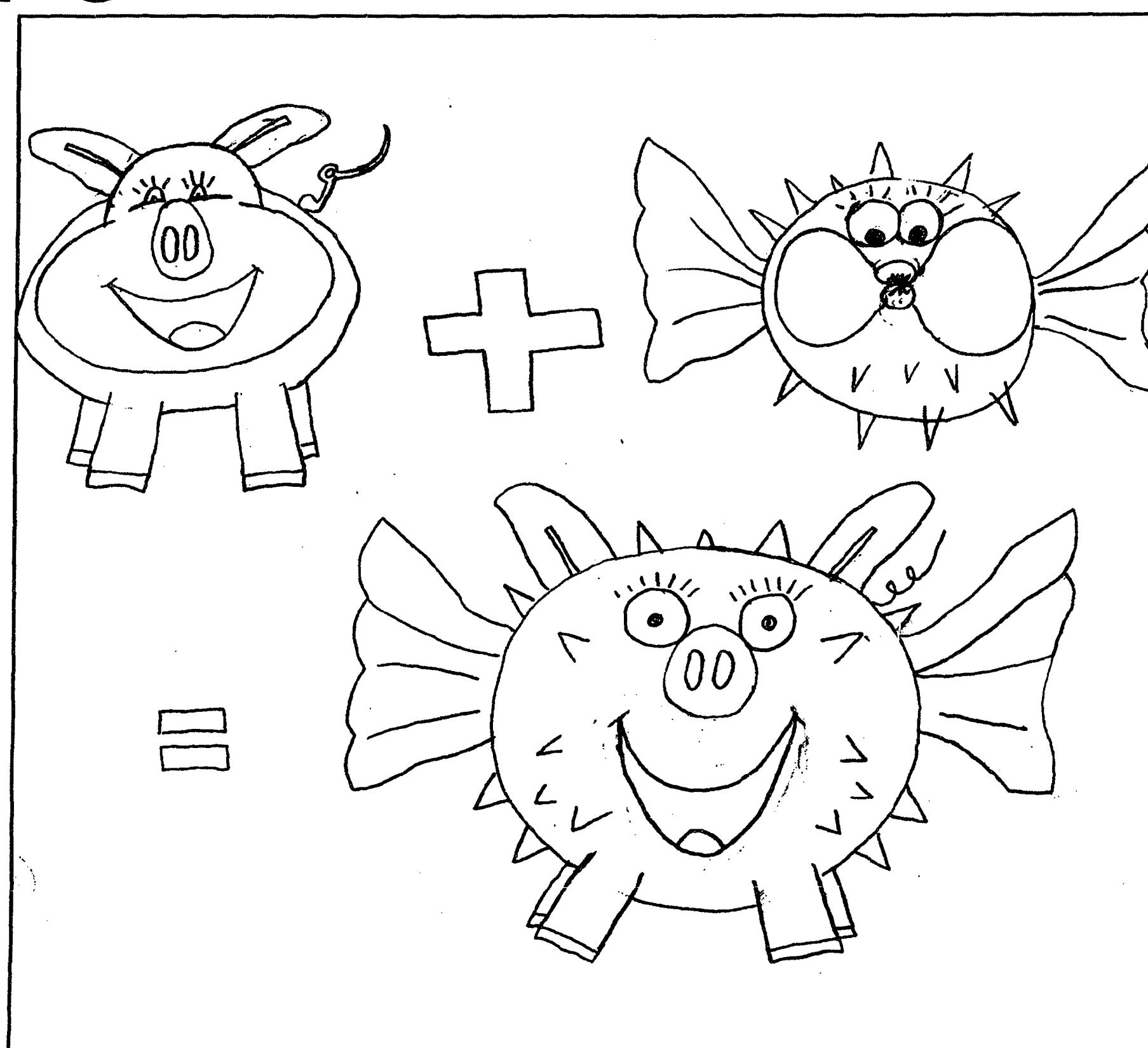
No wires, no plugs, no re-charging—EVER! This desk is a power source. Simply place your laptop, or desktop on the desk and it will automatically have power and begin charging—no battery will ever die when using this bad boy.

Same goes for your phone—landline or cell: phone lines can run directly into the building and attach directly to the desk. Never again will you forget to charge your cell phone due to leaving it on your bedside table. iPods and other not-so-trendy MP3 players will seamlessly connect to your computer while charging themselves at the same time. A lamp sitting on the back corner of such a functional and stylish desk would not require an extension cord, but would easily draw power from the desk itself and illuminate your workspace.

Warning—spilling liquids onto the surface of this desk may result in severe electric shock and possibly death. But the power desk will not cause leukemia.

Perma-Kool™Pillow

Do you love the refreshing sensation of a nice cool pillow on a hot summer night? You can experience that same refreshment all night long with the Perma-Kool Pillow™—no more pillows turning into a sweaty mess, this is just pure relaxation. Using patented Kool™ Inc. technology, a constant stream of cool air is generated and circulates throughout the pillow. You can also use the Perma-Kool Pillow™ to store a cold beverage so that you don't have to get up and go to the fridge when you need a beer



at 3am. Warning: Kool™ assumes no responsibility if your face becomes frozen to the pillow.

Pillowsock

Not to be confused with Perma-Kool, this sock is for the rugged outdoorsperson who likes to pack light but also likes to enjoy the comfort of his or her own home. Instructions are quite simple: step (1) put on sock (2) walk around all day (3) lie down (4) remove sock and allow sock to inflate into pillow (5) apply under head before going to sleep and voila!

Toothbrush in bed

There are mornings when one's breath is so bad it offends oneself. Yes, one's own self is gravely offended. And if one perhaps does not sleep by oneself—that is to say, one slumbers with one's partner—one's chances of amorous morning encounters decline with each pass-

ing (fetid) breath. No more! Your friends at the *Ubysssey* have devised a clever solution: the bed toothbrush. Suspends from the ceiling, the ol' BTB is just an arm's length away. One can enjoy a leisurely brush without slipping out of bed—and possibly out of a lover's embrace. And when it's time to spit, there's no need to budge an inch. The bed spit suction kit can lick that problem. (Note the alliteration.)

Fart identifier

Ever been in a situation where someone farts and everyone denies it? Find the flatulent culprit with this useful gadget. Simply register someone's odour mixed with their pheromones, and the next time they pass gas, the fart detector will tell you who dunnit. The device also comes with a free pamphlet on ten fun farting (that's partying, fools) games. (Note: Does not detect ori-

gins of diarrhea spills.)

Alcohol/drug neutralizer

Don't you just hate it when you're high on coke and your boss calls asking you to come in to work? This handy shot instantly neutralises all intoxicants in one's body and purges them all immediately. Get crunked. Inject the neutraliser. Drive home. Everyone wins, including the 78-year old lady you ran over the night before.

Fish n' beans

Okay, so this isn't really an invention, but has anybody ever craved fish and beans? Well we thought that a big fat can of this would make a delectable treat for all those craving a nice warm serving of refried bean and poisson (ha ha!) on those warm summer nights.

For all those vegetarians out there, there's also tofu-fishn' beans. (Note: may or may not be real tofu.)

LETTERS/PERSPECTIVE

ACF: Your guide to staying safe while having fun drinkying. FYI use condoms

The countdown to April 7 has begun. It's the last day of classes; a time to bring eight months of successful studying to a close and a chance to have some fun before buckling down for exams! Conveniently, it also features a little event known as Arts County Fair (ACF), a fabulous way to celebrate with 15000 of your closest friends! The Fair is a ton of fun, but there are some things to keep in mind to make sure your ACF experience is safe! Here are some things you can do to make sure you and your friends have an amazing time while staying safe at the Fair:

1. Before you leave for the Fair, make sure you have arranged a meeting place with your group of friends. Meeting place signage will be posted around Thunderbird Stadium; make sure you know where your

friends will be, and have a system to be able to find each other! Cell phones are a great idea!

2. Plan for a ride home in advance. There are several ways to get home after the concert. An RCMP cruiser is not the most desirable. Instead, assign a designated driver, have taxi numbers on hand or bring your U-Pass.

3. Eat breakfast the day of the Fair.

4. Drinking lots of water is also a great idea.

5. What to wear: sunscreen. And clothing.

6. What not to wear: flip-flops. You will lose them. A shoeless Fair-goer runs the risk of injury and will also be very sad at having lost their shoes. Keep that in mind when planning your outfit for the day.

7. Don't drink excessively at the Fair. It won't make your day

any more fun, and you will be risking physical injury. First Aid teams will be present on site, but spending the afternoon in a tent won't be nearly as much fun as enjoying the concert from the outdoors. Remember that intoxicated persons will not be admitted to the Fair and that tickets are non-refundable. Drink with care.

Keep these simple things in mind to make Arts County a day to remember!

—The Arts County Safety Committee

Patillo bridgin' the Knoll

Ian Patillo. Great guy. Really. He loves puppies and babies, and especially Terry Fox. He may just become the next Canadian Hero, but until then he's VP External of the AMS. It seems, though, not everyone is a fan of Ian Patillo. Justin Visser lobbied some pretty

hefty claims against Ian (who again is a Really Great Guy), his campaign, and his involvement with the *Knoll*. The most serious, that Ian "used the student funded publication to further his campaign" is simply not true. As for the "radical left who control the student government," I ask that Justin step aside from the empty rhetoric and conspiracy theories for just a moment and recognise the real problem: apathy. Not enough people are running for positions, voting, or generally caring. That Ian also helped to get a new publication off the ground is important and commendable. But like the radical liberal that I am, Justin, I will fight to allow your opinion to be heard. I encourage you to submit to the *Knoll* at www.theknoll.ca

**—Samantha Rapoport
English 3**



STREETERS

IF YOU COULD INVENT ANYTHING, WHAT WOULD IT BE?



"It would be a little USB flash drive that you could stick in your brain...so that if you have a test you'd hand it in instead of an actually written test."

**—Eugenja Kisin
Anthropology 4**



"Some sort of energy efficient vehicle."

**—Shannon Jones
Psychology 4**



"A time machine."

**—Mason Bennet
Commerce 2**



"An instant transport machine."

**—Johan Wu
Science 2**



"A fuel-cell powered bike."

**—Chris Nicola
PhD Electrical and Computers**

Streeters coordinated by Andrew McCrae and George Prior

International students force University Act amendment

Decision to allow non-Canadian students to sit on BoG sets national precedent, says SFU student society president

by Paul Evans
NEWS EDITOR

The BC Legislature has set a Canadian precedent by giving the green light for international students to sit on the Board of Governors (BoG), the university's highest decision-making body. As part of an effort to clarify the University Act, the provincial government approved an amendment removing the Canadian citizenship requirement for anyone seeking membership on the Board.

"I think it's great. It's been a long time coming," said Jeff Friedrich, Alma Mater Society (AMS) VP Academic and University Affairs. "It gives international students a voice they didn't have before."

Friedrich explained that it was the combined effort of several student initiatives that contributed to the realisation of this change, cit-

ing a letter from the AMS to the provincial government, a meeting with MLAs in Victoria, and the efforts of UBC student Lyle McMahon and the Simon Fraser University student society (SFSS) as the major factors.

"It's one of those great instances where a lot of different student lobbying efforts had some real effect and things moved along," he said.

Clement Abas Apaak, SFSS president, was pleased with the announcement, stating that since international students already participate in other areas of university governance, it was only logical that they be allowed to sit on the BoG.

"It's a big victory for the student movement across the province and the country, particularly for international students," he commented. "We've collectively been able to influence government

policy and indeed have changed [the University] Act, which I believe is going to set a standard for the rest of Canada."

Apaak, himself an international student, had attempted to run for the Board ever since he came to SFU in 2001. Each time he was disqualified.

"This is a personal crusade that I started in 2001. It's good to see that this has come to pass," he said.

He noted that support from the SFSS and UBC's AMS was crucial to getting this issue brought before the government.

"When individuals take up these kinds of causes, there is always a tendency to dismiss them as troublemakers or people who do not appreciate rules, but once you have institutional support in the form of having your student union passing a motion and taking on the cause as a formal position, it carries a lot of

weight," said Apaak.

Spencer Keys, who was the AMS president when the letter sent to Victoria was drafted, explained

"WE'VE COLLECTIVELY
BEEN ABLE TO INFLUENCE
GOVERNMENT POLICY...
WHICH I BELIEVE IS
GOING TO SET A
STANDARD FOR THE
REST OF CANADA."

-Clement Apas Apaak
President, SFSS

"I was really glad the AMS was able to take a leadership role on this issue," said Keys. "Other schools like SFU had been working on it for a significant amount of time before we got involved but it was our involvement that seemed to get the ball rolling on this issue."

In terms of timing, both Apaak and Friedrich would have liked to see this change happen before elections earlier in the year.

"Unfortunately it wasn't fast enough. It would have been nice to have this issue resolved before we had our BoG and Senate elections," said Friedrich.

It was in this past election that Lyle McMahon unsuccessfully appealed a UBC decision that disqualified him from running for the Board on the grounds that he wasn't a Canadian citizen—an obstacle students no longer have to face. ■

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Norwalk virus infects 16 at UBC-O

Fecal-oral transmission caused virus to spread rapidly in close living quarters, say Okanagan health officials

by Eric Szeto
NEWS EDITOR

Students at UBC Okanagan (UBC-O) are learning first-hand why it's important to wash your hands after using the bathroom.

Last week, 16 students in residence reported having flu-like symptoms that included acute gastrointestinal pains, muscle aches, fevers, vomiting and diarrhea.

Okanagan health authorities later confirmed this to be an outbreak of the Norwalk Virus.

Although it provided a brief scare, UBC-O officials said the outbreak was easily contained because it was restricted to only one wing of the student residence.

"We've contained it by getting students to wash their hands and by keeping the area itself very clean," said Shannon Dunn, UBC-O Housing and Conferences general manager.

All students have since recovered, she added.

"It was sort of a short and tense experience," she said. "[For] many of these students it's their first time away from home; it's not a pleasant experience."

Communal washrooms and living spaces, she said, allowed the virus to spread like wildfire. Anything that comes in contact with

soiled hands such as sinks, door knobs and railings can carry the virus.

Norwalk is spread through "fecal-oral transmission," she explained. "It's hand washing. It's not an airborne [virus], it's hand."

UBC-O has since launched an awareness campaign to help prevent outbreaks like this in the future, said Melissa Federson, health nurse at Campus Health.

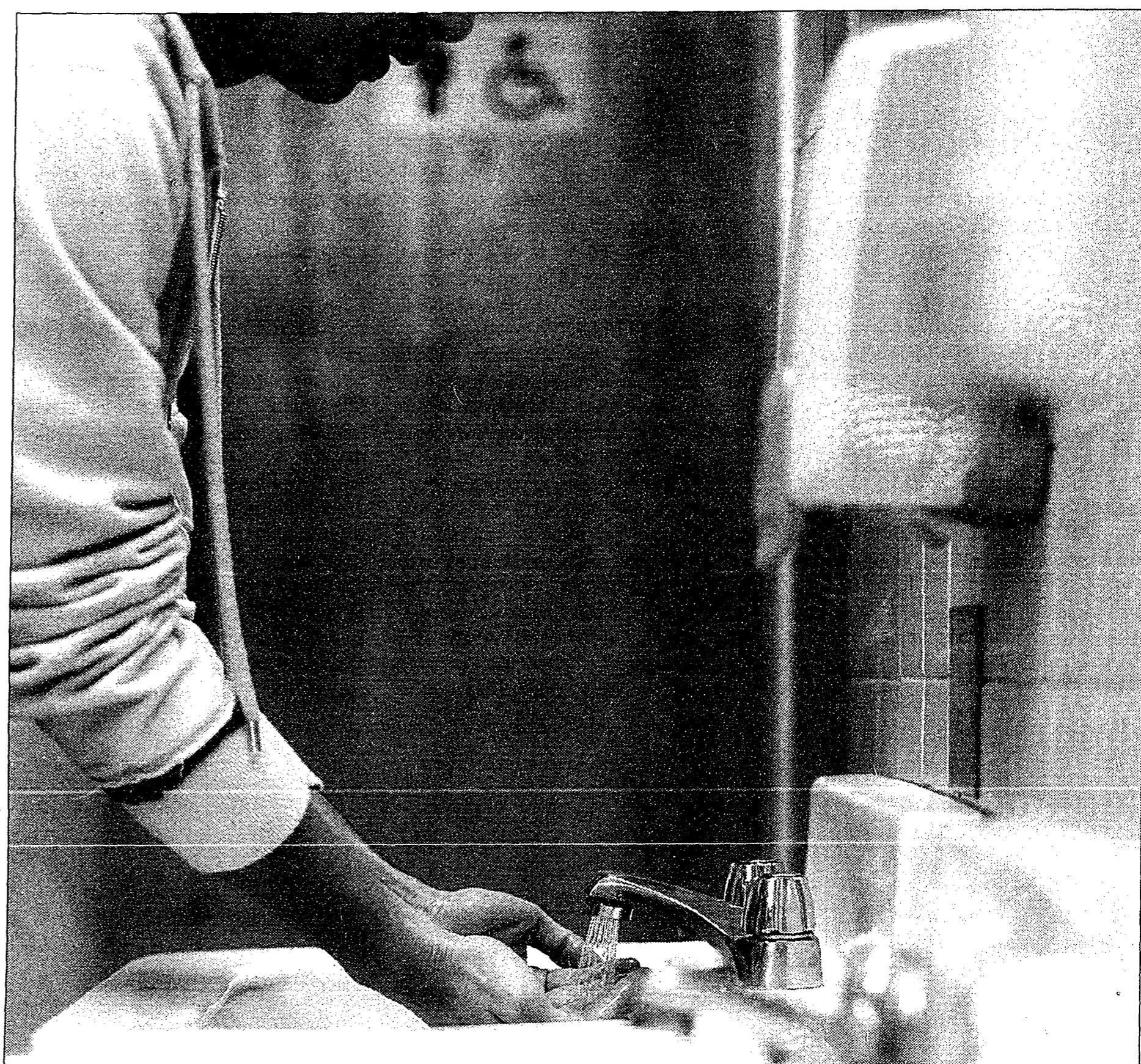
"We did a big blitz about getting cleaner. It's not pretty, people don't like to hear it, but it makes people wash their hands," Federson said.

Gundie Volk, a senior public health inspector at the Interior Health Unit in Penticton couldn't explain why students wouldn't be inclined to wash their hands before leaving the lavatory.

"If I had the answer to that question, we could avoid a lot of illness," she said. "I don't know why people wouldn't."

The reported incident came on the heels of a Norwalk outbreak that closed wards in two Lower Mainland area hospitals around the same time last week.

The Norwalk virus, which usually occurs during winter, can in extreme cases cause severe illness and hospitalisation and its effects can last up to 72 hours. ■



WASHY WASHY: Cleanliness is next to godliness when it comes to Norwalk. Make sure you scrub for at least 20 seconds or else you may get violent diarrhea. YINAN MAX WANG PHOTO

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JUDGES

GILLIAN JEROME: Poetry

Professor Jerome teaches composition and poetry in the Department of English at the University of British Columbia. Her poetry has been published in anthologies and journals in Canada and America.

MELVA MCLEAN: Long Fiction

Melva has worked as an editor and managing editor over the last twenty years. She is a freelance editor and teaches editing and publishing courses through the Vancouver School Board.

MELISSA EDWARDS: Long Non-Fiction

Melissa is the managing editor of the International 3-Day Novel Contest and a regular contributor to *Geist* magazine. She sits on the board of directors for the B.C. Association of Magazine Publishers and the Word on the Street Literary Festival.

MARGUERITE PIGEON: Snap Fiction

Marguerite is a Vancouver writer of fiction and poetry and a graduate of the UBC Creative Writing MFA program. She is currently at work on her first novel.

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WRITERS

The coordinators would just like to thank all those who submitted entries and congratulate the winning submissions.

NEALE BARNHOLDEN

*Long Fiction runner up,
Snap fiction winner*



Neale is a honours English major. He routinely forgets crucial facts. He feels this inability to retain key information has probably influenced his fiction. He enjoys writing so much that he is often shocked to find that it occasionally has a use beyond personal entertainment. He thinks it is pretty darn cool when that happens. "Gone" is based on a t-shirt that Neale once owned. "Attack of the Aliens" is a true story, kind of.

SAMANTHA RAPOPORT

*Poetry second runner up
Long non-fiction runner up*



Samantha began writing in the transition from "weird kid" to "angsty teenager". "Andar con el Cutis Flojo" or "Road Diarrhea" was written in response to what she calls the "epic mythmaking bullshit" surrounding "The Road." After reading "I am sitting in a Philadelphia Coffee Shop", her professor concluded that she was a jealous lesbian. She was assured that the professor was wrong. Samantha helps publish a little zine called *Bleach*.

HILARY SMITH

*Long fiction winner,
Long non-fiction second
runner up, Snap fiction
second runner up*



Hilary Smith has not seen her house keys in days, which hasn't been a particularly serious problem since the basement doors don't lock. She has recently had work published in *Arc*, *dANDelion*, and *Carousel* magazines. In addition, she has just learned to swim with her face in the water, blowing bubbles, instead of holding her head up all the time.

FAZEELA JIWA

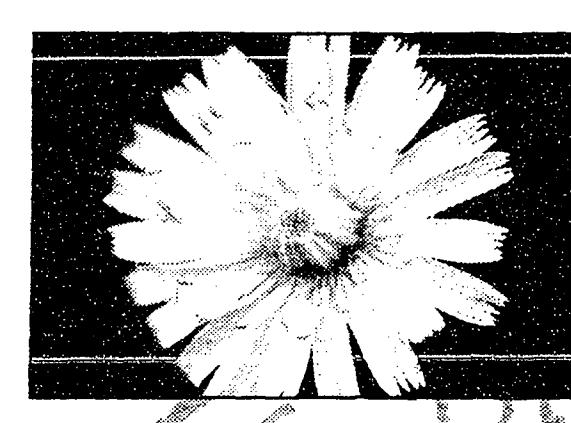
Snap Fiction runner up



Sitting in a cramped airplane seat may be an occasional discomfort for most, but Fazeela flies to Halifax "constantly"—a nine hour affair with that one lucky person on whom she falls asleep. Fazeela believes that journal-writing is an outlet for the things she can't say in 2000-word essays. Fazeela has kept a journal since she was 12, but has since dropped the "Dear Diary" header.

KARLY STILLING

Long non-fiction winner



Karly Stilling is in her fourth year at UBC earning a double major in English literature and film studies. Her major interests are Canadian literature and film, and she hopes to go on to work in these industries. "El Milagro de Mindo" was written as part of a second year creative writing class assignment and was in response to a humanitarian trip to Ecuador, which she participated in during high school. The trip had a great impact on her and she is pleased to see her reflections of the experience move into print.

MARLAINA MAH

Poetry runner up



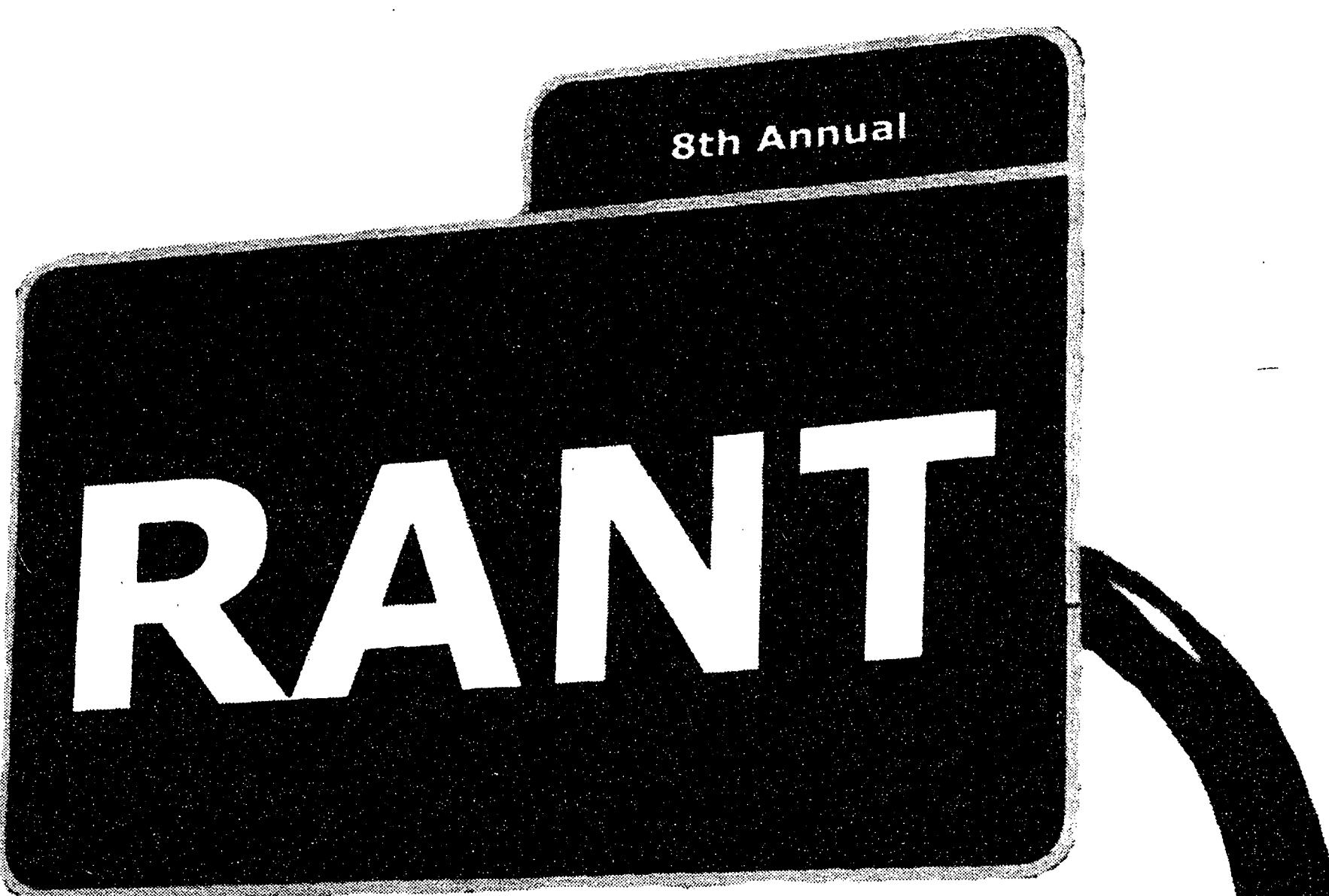
Marlaina is an English literature student at UBC. She grew sick of the Montreal winters and came home, picking up creative writing at Langara. Her poem came out of her time there, although the inspiration for it was faceless. She has thankfully not had the misfortune of undergoing what she imagines is a very unpleasant experience (that is, lifting up buildings).

ROWAN MELLING

Poetry Winner



Rowan is a second-year arts student. He began writing in his homeland of Victoria, where he took creative writing in high school with local writer Terrence Young. He enjoys Hunter S. Thompson, Tom Wolfe, Dennis Johnson, Franz Kafka and others. His favourite book is "Zorba the Greek" by Nikos Kazantzakis and Nietzsche as well. A great deal of his literary inspiration comes from Dinosaur Comics.



COORDINATORS

Alia Dharssi, Mary Leighton and Colleen Tang

"Saddam's
Weapons of
Mass
Destruction:
Killer Dinosaurs"

*Weekly World
News Headline*

POETRY WINNER
BY ROWAN MELLING

It gives hope to anyone
who ever saw *Jurassic Park*,
to all the people big-banged
out of Noah leaving the reptiles
to writhe beneath the flood
with unicorns and leviathans,

to see them saddled
ridden like elephants into battle.
Odai, the next Hannibal,
on a scaly tank in electric blue.
With each step the H-bomb explodes,
mushroom clouds shoot
from their eyes,
no more Scipio in the way.
The desert is alive
with awakened footprints
and the roars of a new Carthage.

They are crossing the world
knee deep in the Atlantic
sending tsunamis of warning
to their Rome,
to the hockey rink coliseums,
the Wall Street agora,
the legions of Texas Rangers.

Look out America
Now it's time to be afraid.

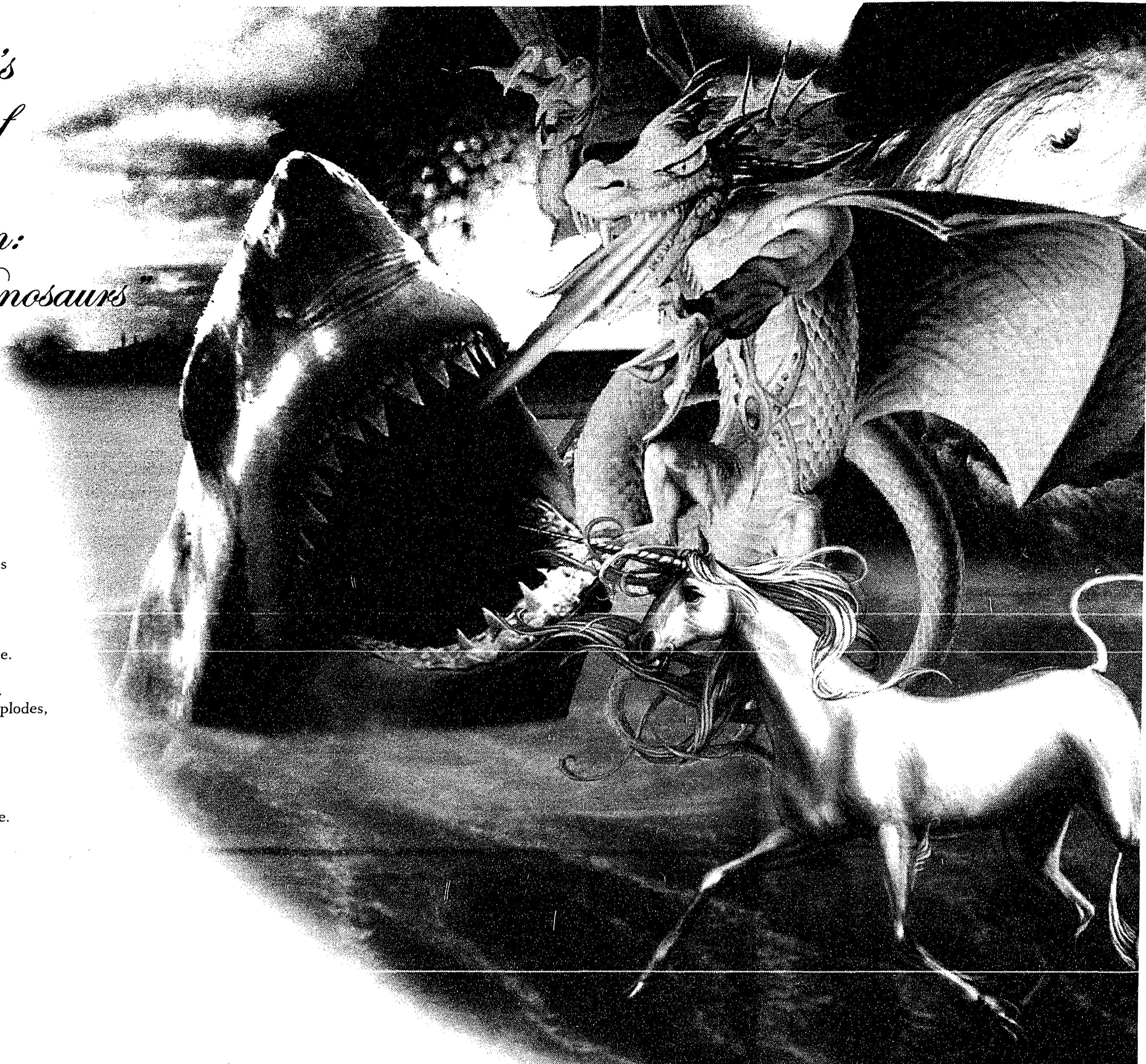


ILLUSTRATION BY KELIAN HUGGINS

Untitled

POETRY RUNNER-UP
BY MARLAINA MAH

I could not find you:
I scoured the city,
lifting up the buildings
turning up dust, seeing
no hints, finding no footprints.

I swooped up speeding cars in my giant arms
fearing they would cause you harm.
I swam out to the sharks,
priced their jaws open wide
to check that you were not inside.

And after I searched the kidnappers' homes,
after I dug under the martyr-domes,
roped my legs to ostrich into quicksand,
checked hangouts, back alleys, secret hideouts
and wielded my way into biker gangs

to make sure you were at no dangerous brinks.
And after every impossible thing I could think,
until at last I took a bullet in the head,
I surrendered
to find you in my best friend's bed.

Andar con el Cutis Flojo, Or Road Diarrhea

The Greyhound Bus is the poor man's Tall Ship
I'll sail to China for Easter furs when I have enough time
The passengers are fat and often talkative
I pretend to sleep so no one will sit next to me
In notebook, I record the passage of highway
And what it feels like when the sun rises over Oregon
On the seventeenth hour.

The seventeenth hour is barbecue chips
And cigarette smoke at a gas station in Eugene
I think his name was Juanito and he had never been
To Los Angeles before. I wanted to go to Mexico,
And write novels about drinking tequila
And marijuana that grows like Saskatchewan wheat
Acostarse con rosemaria?

Juanito spit into his cigarette, "But you're a
Pretty girl." In Eureka, California we stop for
Coffee and Popey's Fried Chicken in oily paper boxes
Balanced on the stomach and too many white napkins
"Breakfast," the driver calls out over the microphone,
Pleased with himself. On the road, the indiscriminate stomach
Is king.

Sips of rest are all you can manage passing through
The United States, stopping only for gasoline
Instead I drink deeply of patterned foam cushion,
Every road sign I manage to remember and those I forget,
Drifting in and out of other people's conversations,
Over shoulders reading newspapers, and my mother's letter:
To my darling Sammy, be careful out there.

POETRY SECOND RUNNER-UP
BY SAMANTHA RAPOORT

One day you're going to remember what the road tasted like.
I do, mother, I do. Salty numb and chalky like paper,
And only caffeine is bittersweet, and only for a time
I still taste the road when I forget to brush my teeth
Andar con el cutis flojo, I could sail to China
With my stomach, now turned to liquid, emptying itself
In this cubby hole of a bathroom.

Attack of the Aliens

SNAP FICTION WINNER
BY NEALE BARNHOLDEN

"I JUST CAN'T SEE IT GETTING ANY BETTER," said David. He drummed his fingers on the old Formica counter that he had always wanted to get rid of. The previous owner had been a charmingly confused retiree with brown clothing and berries in the garden. Orange smoke rose in a pillar from behind the forest out the window.

"So you think you should go. And that's it," replied Vanessa, her arms crossed, leaning against the fridge that they had bought. The old one had fallen apart a week after they moved in. "That's it," Vanessa repeated, and David knew that he had to do something, keep talking or stop talking, to make sure that she didn't start crying. "I'm sorry," said David. He leaned heavily against the counter, not facing her. He couldn't, not just now. He didn't want to see how close she was to crying. He hated it when people cried. He rarely did.

There was another burst of smoke out the window, this one further away.

It slowly unfurled itself like a sped-up flower dying into the sky.

"I just don't get what more you want," said Vanessa. She wasn't crying, not this time. There had been too much crying. It was too easy. "What? What's missing?"

David turned and looked at her with one eye. The smoke was a pillar rising out of his shoulder. He turned away. She didn't know what the glance was supposed to mean. "Well?"

"I don't know."

Outside, birds were fluttering around excitedly. The ugly clock ticked obnoxiously. It had come with the house.

"You can't just ruin my life because you didn't get exactly what you wanted, dammit!" yelled Vanessa. David started slightly, and then he wanted to let himself fall to the floor. He didn't. He wanted to say something to stop her from yelling more. He didn't do that either.

Vanessa launched herself off the

fridge and paced over to the kitchen table. It was wood, wood that they had finished the last winter in the cold basement. They had kept the radio on and listened to all the old songs, the only music they agreed on.

"Goddamnit," said Vanessa. She caught herself from breaking down, steadying herself on the table. "What the hell do you think you're going to do?"

"I don't know," said David, too softly to hear. "I don't know!" he said loudly.

From the woods came a slight tremble that ran through the house. Vanessa slammed her foot onto the floor and whirled around. David still wasn't looking at her.

"I need you," said Vanessa. "How am I going to... do anything? There's going to be a fire, you know that, how am I supposed to deal with that?"

"So you just need me for house repairs," he said idly.

Vanessa raised her arm to hit him, but didn't. She was trembling. So was he. He didn't see her raise her arm.

"I don't believe you," said Vanessa. "What? What's wrong with this? With what we have here?"

"Nothing's wrong. Nothing's wrong. Nothing's wrong. It just... it just... I was thinking about when I was younger and I, I wanted to travel around the world."

"We can travel around the world," she said desperately.

"No we can't."

"But you can."

He drummed his fingers on the counter again.

"So you had dreams that didn't come true," said Vanessa softly, crossing her arms again. "We all did."

Many guns fired at once in the distance. There was shouting.

"It's just..." said David, trembling even harder. "I thought that every day would be something, there'd be something that happened, a new thing

every day, and here we are, and every day's the same."

"I like these days," said Vanessa.

There was a dull roar from the direction of the dirt road, and the foundation of the house trembled again. A bit of plaster fell onto Vanessa's head.

David turned to look at her, and he took a step towards her.

She looked at his face. It seemed like a movie face, with a few lines and a nice color. His eyes were dull gray.

She had black hair that fell just past her ears when she leaned forward. Her chin didn't come to a point, but to a flat edge.

There was the sound of many men running in step down the gravel driveway, crunching rhythmically. Some of them were shouting.

He reached over and picked a piece of plaster out of her forehead. He let it fall onto the kitchen floor.

Her eyes were green.

The doorbell rang frantically. —

Obtrusive Urges

SNAP FICTION RUNNER-UP

BY FAZEELA JIWA



YOU HAVE TO PEE. MAYBE YOU CAN HOLD it? Airplane bathrooms aren't so great: small like a donut hole and ultimately you can still smell the excrement underneath the dainty wisps of urinal cake, but you can (gladly, effectively, metropolitan-ly) ignore it. What really kills ya about going to the bathroom is not the circumstances under which you squat, jostled and holding the plastic, germy railing (it's kind of wet, actually...) so that the pee you've been holding for so long doesn't run down your leg. What really kills ya is the reason why you wish to have the ability to shrink or deflate at will, or at least have a really great ass, the reason why you don't drink coffee or water on the drive to the airport, the reason that demands awkward "oops" and "oh jeez, sorry's" and "I'm just gonna get by you here's" and at least a dozen "thanks, thank you's" within a span of two minutes. The reason why the aisle seat is coveted. You hold it...hold it...can't hold it anymore, damn, just hold on another four hours! Okay. Brace yourself and

prepare the person next to you for what you're about to ask by fidgeting and sitting up in your seat, looking pointedly at the back of the plane. Alas, they take no notice of your painfully subtle efforts; they're "dozing." (When do you ever "doze" except when you pay exuberant amounts of money to sit in a tiny chair and have your ears pop? Oh yes, that's right, also when you pay exuberant amounts of money to sit in a classroom at UBC.)

"Um?" you squeak. They snore. Do you get up and try to climb over them? What if the plane lurches and you end up sitting on their lap? Hm...It would be less awkward to inform them of your obtrusive urge. It is biological anyway, you justify.

TAP, TAP. "I'm sorry I just need to umgetoutandumyesoh sorry, thanks, thank you." Next person in the row, that bastard with the aisle seat, feels obliged to get out for you, fumbles with their oh-so-complicated seat belt while you wait, straddling the neighbor's knees. Looking anywhere but at them,

think of something clever to say, dammit! When you were deciding whether to take the front to back or the back to back route, you didn't count on a PROLONGED situation.

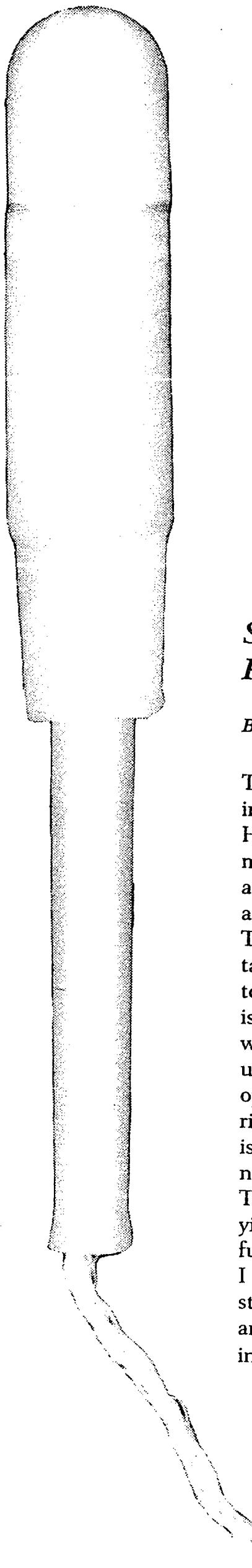
Okay, finally free, down the aisle turning sideways to pass the flight attendant with too much make-up and a fake smile on (unless you're on Westjet, and then you know they have been slipped caffeine pills before work or are actually robots programmed to be overly happy), jutting your butt into the shoulder of the fortunate aisle guy who eagerly awaits his pretzels and coffee (he can afford to drink coffee because he's free to go pee whenever he wants to, the asshole). Alright, time to squat gingerly over the teeny-tiny seat, but make sure you don't take too long or else there will be stories, courtesy of your neighbours, about the chick in the window seat who probably took a shite on the plane and then stuck her bum in your face as she was getting back into her seat. —

She Considers Alternative Menstrual Products

SNAP FICTION SECOND RUNNER-UP

BY HILARY SMITH

THERE IS A MAN IN AN OFFICE SOMEWHERE in the US who thinks I am a spaceship. He designed a plastic ring to fit inside of me that would seal the exit, as it were, and fit snugly to prevent leakages. It was a faulty O-ring that made Apollo fail. These people do not make the same mistake twice. I will be sealed. Cotton was too flammable, even wet. They say there is something in the wet like kerosene which causes these things to ignite at unpredictable times. Plastic was a safer option, thick and tough like a teething ring. Its smooth unnecessary toughness is challenge for bite marks, but there are no teeth where it goes, up inside of me. The elastic flesh is useless against it, yielding to its expanding form. It is a futuristic catcher's mitt as big as the sky. I am a rocket redesigned. Instead of stuffing me with tough white fuses there are O-rings now. Space can't be contaminated by what's sealed in. —



RA
NT

VIA AIR MAIL - PAR AVION

wednesday 31 march, 2006 **IV**

Sleeping bags not permitted

SHE IS STANDING IN THE GLASS TUNNEL AT THE Sydney Aquarium, face pointed upwards, staring at the vagina of the great white shark. The slit is like the cleavage between two mounds of bread dough squashed together, white and rubbery, and she imagines that reaching inside one must be like putting your hand into one of those mystery holes at the Children's Museum, fist pushing through the black rubber lips to grasp a billiard ball or the femur of a dinosaur. She pictures coloured billiard balls popping out of the shark like gumballs and sinking to the bottom of the tank one by one to settle among the coral and grow algae. A manta ray the width of a compact car soars past her face, and through the ripple of its lungs she sees the sunlight at the water's surface. It occurs to her that all of the animals at the Sydney Aquarium are stark naked.

Above the oceanarium's four metres of salt water, the sky over Darling Harbour is a bright clear blue. The restaurant patios are open and freshly table-clothed and a pair of grungy backpackers discreetly ogle the menus as they trudge past, the oil from last night's Chinese take-out still slick under their ribs. A high school boy making his first attempt at clowning selects an unwilling volunteer from the audience to stand between two skipping ropes blindfolded, and then makes wide, looping gestures nobody understands to explain what will happen next. Nothing happens. The clown makes more incomprehensible gestures to which nobody reacts. The young, fashionably dressed woman takes off the blindfold and looks annoyed. Audience members drift away.

You too are annoyed at the patient unfuniness of the clown and turn sharply towards the water. A one-legged seagull with a bright, mean eye looks at you and squawks. You squawk back. It's too bright and you don't have your sunglasses. In the hostel sugar jar this morning you found a lump of someone's hamburger, grey and fuzzy. A vegetarian you were disgusted, fished it out with a spoon and whacked the spoon against the inside edge of the garbage can. You stared at your coffee, which was bitter and becoming lukewarm, and thought of all the other shit that had probably been in that sugar jar. You took a fresh spoon and dug to the bottom of the jar where the crystals had compacted into a solid block and extracted a lump of it. The germs would burn off in the hot water anyway. Right? Just in case, you glanced around the kitchen and, holding the spoon to your lips, blew hard, like when you were ten and dropped a cookie on the floor. There. You dropped the sugar lump into your coffee and took a sip. Of course it tasted good, you

thought to yourself. Either way, you ended up pouring most of it down the drain.

A group of families with small children presses into the oceanarium tunnel and the serene violin music emanating from the speaker system is immediately drowned out by their voices. One of the kids, a girl in a cotton playsuit, wanders apart from the rest humming to herself, turning big eyes towards the ceiling. She is going to live in the tank with the dolphins and otters and they will love her and bring her presents like sea-shells for her hair and she will be the prettiest but also kind of sad and people who come to the aquarium will see her when they come and think, there's the princess. She doesn't notice that there are no dolphins or otters in the oceanarium. A few metres ahead, her brother has found a tiger shark resting on the bottom near the glass. He growls at it and reaches over the handrail to pound the glass but his mother wrenches his arm away before he gets the chance, hissing "It says *Don't Touch*." He twists out of her grasp and runs a few steps to the other side of the tunnel, where another tiger shark is passing by. It is swimming quickly and he runs after it, keeping his eyes on the shark's big dull ones. He bumps into a big girl, a lady-girl, the one who is staring at the Great White's vagina, makes a growling noise and keeps running.

She emerges from the oceanarium into the Coral Reef exhibit and walks past the touch tank without touching any of the squishy, tentacled life forms that stick to the glass. Once she is out of sight, the attendant goes back to prodding a sea anemone with his official Sydney Aquarium flashlight-pen, flicking it on as he pushes it into the creature and off as it slides out again. With the light inside it, the anemone glows pink like a votive candle. On the wall behind the attendant is printed an informational message about the fascinating complexity of life forms in our oceans. He flicks the light on and off, in and out. She walks through the gift shop without stopping and is funneled out the back door. You scratch your legs. There are little red bumps on the backs of your knees and you don't know where they came from. Every hostel you've stayed in has had a sign on the dormitory wall saying, 'Sleeping Bags Not Permitted'. When you asked another backpacker why this was, he said, 'bedbugs'. They get into one sleeping bag and travel from hostel to hostel, spreading. You still used your sleeping bag the first week. No way you were letting that ratty hostel blanket touch your skin. Who knew what kind of weirdo creep had slept under that thing? You could probably catch an STD just from smelling it. Then you moved to a different hostel with nicer bedding, and then another one, and haven't used your sleeping bag since except to lug it at someone that night in Melbourne when the whole dorm was drunk and having a pillow fight and you almost hooked up with that hot German, but fell asleep like an idiot and woke up the next morning with drool all down your chin.

The backpackers are sitting on a bench not far from you. They haven't been to the Sydney Aquarium because the admission fee is 17 dollars and besides, they went to the one in Melbourne and it was shit. You haven't been to the aquarium either, but think you might go some afternoon if it rains and there's nothing else to do. It's one of the things you're supposed to do while you're in Sydney, like see the opera house. It's a stupid question people ask when you say you've been to Sydney, did you see the opera house. Of course you saw the fucking opera house. You'd have to be blind not to see the fucking opera house, or else a pervert who stays in Kings Cross the whole time wanking off

in the triple x theatre. Hey now. Why so irritable? It's a beautiful day, the ocean sparkles, you're in Sydney and still have 50AUD left over after paying the week's rent at the hostel. You're not going to ruin this with cynicism.

The high school boy-clown switches off the portable stereo, stuffs his skipping ropes into an old duffel bag, and retreats into the shadows under the monorail. Sitting against a cool concrete pillar, he produces a ham sandwich and eats it crusts first. There's too much mustard and the bread is nearly saturated. He tosses the soggy middle to the one-legged seagull, who gives it a peck or two before taking the whole piece in its mouth and swallowing it like a frog. A miniature tourist train carrying visored senior citizens rolls past on its way to the aquarium. Most of their time will be spent in the gift shop comparing grandchild-sized t-shirts. A close second will be time spent in the ladies' room, in which they will leave little sprinklings of pee on the black toilet seats and apply red lipstick. None of them will notice the shark's genitalia.

She feels the small body graze her leg and the vibrations as his running shoes beat the floor. It's too noisy now and a group of parents are sending her pointed looks, hoping she will move along so they can get a better view of the giant sea tortoise lumbering in the corner. A mother elbows her way into the narrow space beside her and stands there breathing heavily. The Great White shark heaves its bulk from the top of the tunnel and the wide, utilitarian cunt glides over their faces as it swims away. Fascinating. The girl watches it disappear around the corner. Another mother's face is hovering over her shoulder now, and the breath on her neck annoys her. There's nothing to see anymore. She peels her coat from the handrail and strolls out.

The backpackers are sitting on a bench not far from you. They haven't been to the Sydney Aquarium because the admission fee is 17 dollars and besides, they went to the one in Melbourne and it was shit. You haven't been to the aquarium either, but think you might go some afternoon if it rains and there's nothing else to do. It's one of the things you're supposed to do while you're in Sydney, like see the opera house. It's a stupid question people ask when you say you've been to Sydney, did you see the opera house. Of course you saw the fucking opera house. You'd have to be blind not to see the fucking opera house, or else a pervert who stays in Kings Cross the whole time wanking off

The backpackers light cigarettes. They kind of want to hitchhike up the Gold Coast, but to Brisbane before they run out of money. But if we stay another five nights at the hostel in Sydney,

LONG FICTION WINNER

BY HILARY SMITH
BACKGROUND PHOTO BY KELLAN HIGGINS

thought to yourself. Either way, you ended up pouring most of it down the drain.

We'll get two nights free. Yeah, and people don't pick up hitchhikers so much anymore. They wonder how much weed they have left, and if the Americans who flew home last night left anything decent in the hostel fridge. Last time they checked, there was a plate of raw hamburger meat, hunk of cheese and six or seven half-empty bottles of salad dressing. Gross, man, this shit expired a month ago.

Let's get Chinese. That was last week. They've lost track of how many days they've been in Sydney, but know it's much, much longer than they planned.

The kids lose interest in the slow, un hurried circles of the sharks and rays in the dim oceanarium and bolt ahead to the touch tank. By the time their parents saunter in, they are elbow-deep in saltwater, crushing tender suction cups, shoving fingers into cartilaginous orifices and ignoring the attendant's bored reminder to stroke gently and not pick anything up. A little girl drops a starfish on the floor. Nobody notices, and at the end of the day the janitor sweeps it into a pile along with discarded visitor's maps and greasy fish stick wrappers from the cafeteria. The little girl becomes silent and anxious and does not speak for the rest of the day, afraid she'll tell and get in trouble and they'll take her to the office of the Aquarium Man and she's really, really sorry. In the gift shop, one of the old ladies from the miniature tourist train notices her and asks her mother if it's alright if she buys the poor sweet heart a plastic dolphin. The mother acquiesces. Say thank-you to the nice lady. She murmurs the words, pressing the figurine to her body. That's a dear. Outside, the other kids jostle to see what she has. How come she gets a toy?

In the Darling Harbour, a cloud passes in front of the sun. Your legs speckle with goosebumps and you stop scratching to pull them up against your body for warmth. Should have worn long pants. You only brought one pair of jeans on this trip and they're balled up under your bunk at the hostel. The hostel is two subway stops away, in Central, and you don't want to spend the dollar eighty to go back and get them. Anyway, it would be a waste of time. Maybe you'll go to that art gallery—that free one at the Rocks—to warm up and use the toilets. Yeah, that's what you'll do. You stand up and wait for a second as the blood rushes back to your feet. Tourists mill about the docks, hands full of brochures for museums, jet boat rides, and day trips to Discover the Blue Mountains. Walking to the art gallery, you wonder why people travel at all. It's expensive and clichéd and when you get right down to it, there really isn't that much to see.

Gone



LONG FICTION RUNNER-UP

BY NEALE BARNHOLDEN

NATHAN HAD A SERIOUS HOBBY AND ONLY ONE enemy, so he thought he was doing pretty well. The e-mail group that shared his obsession was tied together through mutual suspicion and loneliness; in that way it resembled all e-mail groups. Nathan knew that the group was a cunning way to keep an eye on each other as much as it was a way to collaborate on daring schemes.

It was mainly Helen that he liked. Originally from South Africa, she was a stewardess with a large airline, and she traveled all over the world. This put her in prime position to collect artifacts of vanished cities, and indeed, her collection was enviable. She had a complete collection of phonebooks for all the vanished Soviet cities; the Stalingrad White Pages alone was worth around 7,500 dollars according to the latest speculation. She had three of them.

Nathan had been attracted to the hobby when he bought a collection of tourist brochures for Saigon at a garage sale. These were also fairly valuable, which he discovered online, at the Yahoo! group for collectors of anachronistic city memorabilia. That was seven years ago. When Helen had appeared two years later with a cheap Kaliningrad phone book, they had quickly bonded.

There were 40 members of the group, ten of whom almost never participated, keeping a morbid interest from afar. A few more were not particularly interested in the hobby but had some items that passed in or out of their hands. By far the most notable member was McMenamin. McMenamin hadn't founded the group, but he had stayed there the longest. Apparently a businessman from California with far too much money, his zeal for correcting people on minor matters was only exceeded by his furious acquisition of any notable items featuring cities that technically no longer existed.

Nathan had only seen him once, which was also one of two times that he had seen Helen in person. That was in the summer of 2001, when a wealthy Turkish restaurateur died and his estate came up for auction. Among the items included was a very extensive series of items with prominent references to Constantinople. These items—library books, customs tickets, ephemeral papers—were intensely valuable to people who

collected such things.

Five members of the group descended on San Diego a week after this auction came to their attention. Nathan met Helen and the other two ahead of time and they had an enjoyable afternoon in the city, with Nathan showing them all around. Then when they entered the auction house they saw him, in a suit and manicure with an elusive smile: McMenamin.

McMenamin captured every lot of interest in that auction. The others left, broken, as he arranged for the items to be packaged and mailed to his home on Catalina.

Helen put her finger to her lips.

She hadn't known that McMenamin was here, but she had received the same tip that Nathan had about Pretoria's upcoming name change. Helen had, in fact, joined the airline in South Africa, so when she quit they had given her enough to return to her point of origin, making one last flight to bring things full circle.

When they were there, they didn't see McMenamin at all, and they wandered the streets buying everything they could with the word Pretoria on it. Nathan's money dwindled as he mailed it back, piece by piece, to other members of the group. It was like Christmas in the hotel room crammed with souvenirs as he and Helen decided who would want what. The good karma flowed like the wine they couldn't afford. They ate simply and carried suitcases of knickknacks.

The end of the story only reached Frank, Nathan and Helen's closest friend via e-mail. With the very last stamp they mailed him a snow globe with a view of Pretoria and a short letter of explanation. McMenamin had discovered them at last in a postcard stall; when he learned of their desperation he offered them money for particular items that he knew they had. Instead, via legal contracts, they transferred the rights to the remaining phone books, the china set, t-shirts, postcards and assorted trinkets that they owned to members of the group, and then they took the back of his mind.

McMenamin smiled too easily. "Oh, I was just wondering if you'd be interested in selling anything. I was in town, so I figured that..."

"Why do you care so much?" demanded Nathan. "I mean, you throw so much into this whole thing. Why?"

McMenamin's guard disappeared from his face momentarily. "Care? Oh, I don't care about it. Not really. It's just something to do."

Frank's speculation was that they continued to roam the world, but what they were doing was entirely a mystery. Liberating items from McMenamin was a good guess; but there was a hint in their letter that they were going to try to do something of real substance. □

El Miraglo de Mindo

BY KARLY STILLING

LONG NON-FICTION WINNER

WE LANDED IN QUITO NEAR MIDNIGHT TO POURING RAIN. I stepped off the plane onto the small tarmac, lifting my face to the warm shower. I took a deep breath, summing Ecuador up by the smells it offered me. The night air held the promising scent of flowers brought out by the dampness—orchids, birds of paradise, and bromeliads. My classmates and I filtered through the small airport, avoiding the disheveled men outside who greeted me “*Buenas noches, señorita!*” and tried to take our bags. They wore mismatched clothing and smiles that revealed missing teeth.

I was one of a group of ten students from my high school on a trip to Ecuador. The group was headed by two of my teachers and their relatives. We were going to work at an orphanage in the small village of Mindo. We had fundraised for months, getting supplies and money wherever we could.

We lugged our stow-away suitcases onto the bus waiting to take us to Crossroads Hostel for two nights. We would soon be rid of the bulky suitcases. We had painted them bright colours and filled them with supplies for the orphanage. We only brought as many personal items as we could fit into our small school backpacks, an interesting experience for me at seventeen. Two weeks of my life was in the bag on my back while I helped load twenty-eight technicolor suitcases filled with school and medical supplies, clothes, and toys for the orphanage onto the bus.

Quito, Ecuador's capital, has two halves. New Quito is distinguished by its gleaming office buildings and busy streets, while Old Quito retains much of the city's colonial charm. We spent our one full day there wandering around New Quito's cobblestone streets with plans to return at the end of our trip to see the sights in Old Quito. Situated in the Andean highlands, Quito is nearly 10,000 feet above sea level, and most of us were taking pills to help us get accustomed to the high elevation. Despite the medication, I was experiencing sudden vertigo and stomach pain, common symptoms of altitude sickness.

On our second morning we boarded a charter bus to take us to the orphanage in Mindo. I was nervous and anxious with excitement. Our bus was equipped with a roof rack and we took turns riding on top and feeling the cool breeze in our hair as the forest slid by around us. The air was warm, but the wind had a damp chill to it that forced me to wrap my jacket tightly around me. The road wound through the hills, surrounded on either side by bright green plants I had never seen, and others that I recognized, like ferns and poinsettias with their bright red leaves.

We soon stopped at the largest inhabited active volcano in the world. I stood at the edge of an enormous valley and looked below at the neat squares of interlinking farmland bordered by roads and rows of trees, dotted here and there by small farmhouses. I sat on my jacket at the edge of this vast crater and thought that this is how people's interaction with nature should be. Not cities with towering skyscrapers and masses of people, but an environment in which people rely on the land and care for it in return. The tops of the mountains that surrounded the valley disappeared into clouds and it seemed to me that they could go on forever to isolate this perfect little community.

Our group decided to hike down the crater and asked our bus driver to pick us up at the bottom. My body was reacting to the change in climate and food, and I walked down the long, winding path clutching my stomach, forcing myself to appreciate the plants and flowers around me. After a couple of hours, we finally reached the floor of the crater. Our bus driver and a friend of his showed up in two large pickup trucks with corrals on the back, usually used for cattle. My classmates were excited to ride up the

volcano in the back of a pickup, but I was nearly crying from the pain in my stomach and I opted to take the only seat available in the cab. The truck bounced and jerked its way up the hill and I tried to appreciate the vivid beauty that surrounded me.

Most of the Andean region of Northern Ecuador is covered in dense cloud forest, so called because the elevation is so high that the hills and trees are often shrouded in cloudy mist. It creates a beautiful scene—intense green ferns and vines peeking out from the mist, the occasional shock of red, yellow, and orange from the large ginger lilies and golden heliconias that thrive in the moist environment. I was tired from the hike and my stomach pain, and I couldn't help but fall asleep. My friends made fun of me afterwards, amazed that I could've slept on the bumpy road, but I felt refreshed and ready to continue upon our return to the bus.

I kept my window rolled down as we turned off the main dirt highway late that evening onto a smaller, bumpier road. The evening air was cool and refreshing, and I could hear frogs croaking and crickets chirping. I stuck my head out of the window and every now and then I would get whacked by a branch dripping with the evening's rain. It was refreshing after hours in the bus. I couldn't see the flowers or the ferns anymore, but their sweet, earthy smells lingered.

Our hostelería, El Carmelo de Mindo, was located a fifteen minute walk from the orphanage in the middle of the forest. Designed to resemble tree houses, each cabin had two beds and a bathroom. An open restaurant sprawled beside a shady pool, and the effect was of a tropical oasis nestled in Ecuador's misty hills.

El Carmelo became our retreat after long and emotionally draining days spent working at the orphanage, El Miraglo de Mindo. It was a boarding school run by a group of nuns for children who were orphaned or whose families could not afford to support them. It housed 650 children between the ages of 1 and 18, most of whom had never seen their parents. We spent most of our time there in the classrooms, sanding and painting the desks a bright aquamarine. The buildings stood in the middle of a field with open doorways and windows blocked off by bars. They were light, airy, and empty except for neat rows of decrepit desks facing a solitary green chalkboard on the wall. The children weren't allowed in the classrooms while we worked, but they would climb up the horizontal bars on the windows and hang there watching us, chattering excitedly in Spanish.

During the afternoons we got to spend time with the children. Most of my classmates played with one child in particular, but I preferred to wander around, playing soccer with the older kids and clapping games with the younger ones. I learned how to ask “*Como se dice?*” and the kids would take me by the hand, showing me around the orphanage teaching me the words for everything we came across. The children called me Karlita and I perfected my two sentences in Spanish: “*Como te llamas?*” (what is your name) and “*Yo tengo diecisiete años*” (I am seventeen years old). I showed them my pierced tongue and they gasped in shock and tried to touch it.

Although the children did not have parents or many possessions other than a few changes of clothes and some ratty toys, they were a happy, close-knit community. I left the orphanage every evening wishing that I could give up my life back home in Canada and stay in Mindo forever. I vowed that at some point in my life I would return and live in a shack in the bush.

On our eighth day in Mindo, the children put on a goodbye presentation for us. They danced traditional Ecuadorian folk dances and stood up with their little hands over their hearts to

sing their national anthem. That night a small girl named Andréa fell asleep in my lap. I took off my bracelet, which she had admired, and placed it on her small wrist. The goodbyes were a long and sad ordeal, and the children cried more than we did. As we walked away, Andréa ran up to me and gave me an orange and purple beaded bracelet that I cherish to this day.

We walked back to the hostelería that evening in silence and sat around together until late that night trying to bring some perspective to the experience. Most of my classmates were still crying, but no tears came to my eyes. I shared their emotions of sadness and regret at not being able to do more, but wondered why I was more bothered by the monkey we had seen chained to a fence in a yard than by these orphaned children and this poverty-stricken village. I realised that I envied this way of life, the simplicity of it. In this village free from the interruptions of technology and the tendency to define the value of a person by how much he consumes, the little things seemed to mean so much more. The children at the orphanage defined their worth by the love that surrounded them, by the strength of their friendships and their ability to survive. I longed to live like them, free from the material obsessions of the developed world. I came to terms with something I had always suspected: what you own is not what you are. My desire to live in a shack in the bush was really the desire to shed my skin, to rip off the markings of a material culture and get back to what I felt really mattered: to let my life be guided by necessity, to find my worth as a person in my own capabilities to make myself happy. I wanted all that comes with such a life, the poverty and lack of food, the lack of luxuries like heating and hot water, and the lack of upward mobility. Something in me wanted to reject the trappings of my world and start over with nothing but a flimsy shack in the bush no matter what I had to give up.

We spent our remaining five days touring through Ecuador's beautiful countryside. We haggled prices with the locals for jewelry, blankets, and rainmakers at the market in Tavaló. In artisan villages we learned how to make flutes and llama's wool scarves. Ramiro, our tour guide, described the racial and social climate of Ecuador, explaining the origins of the term “mestizo” and the state of most of the country's peasants. They lived a simple lifestyle and many had family businesses that had been carried on for generations. I envied them and longed once again to escape the commercialism of my society.

With one day left to go, we returned to our hostel in Quito. I felt so changed from my experiences that I wondered if my family and friends would notice a difference when I returned home. We spent our last day wandering the streets of old Quito with a new understanding of the city and its people. I dreaded the return home to normal life.

Over the next couple of weeks as I recounted the details of my trip over and over, I longed to be back in Ecuador's misty forests. Compared to the way of life I had experienced, home didn't seem the same. The things I used to care about, like school and student council, just didn't seem to matter anymore. That feeling returns to me often. Whenever life here gets too stressful and I get too caught up in the material definitions of success, I always long to return to live in my shack in the bush.



I am Sitting in a Philadelphia Coffee Shop

BY SAMANTHA RAPORT
PHOTO BY TINAN MAX WANG

LONG NON-FICTION RUNNER-UP



I AM SITTING IN A PHILADELPHIA COFFEE SHOP. The man my Catherine loves is working the counter. There is so much I want to tell him. How she is beautiful and tall and deliberate. How she stands in the mirror putting on a hint of blush and a little eyeliner and sings to herself. How she is pale and burns easily. How I hate the way he treats her.

I will tell him none of this.

I will tell him none of this and I will bury my face in a newspaper when his eyes catch mine from behind the counter. When his eyes catch mine from behind the counter, I will be bent, furiously reading the *Daily Pennsylvanian*. When the line in front of the till grows, when girls in singles and pairs with sensible haircuts and canvas tote-bags, these Ivy League girls, line up to get their lattes, then I can raise my eyes from beneath the fine print and watch. I can see why he fears her. How can I tell him she will never be *one of them*?

He is chewing gum. He wears his hair greasy and long. He has a strand of leather tied around his wrist and a black tee-shirt thin and worn over his long frame. He jokes with the girls in line, "What'll it be?" He jokes that it is almost dinner time. Confirms their hunger. Ordering muffins, they need him to do this. They also, it seems, need to scowl at him, need to be rude to him. He is just a necessary step between them and their beverage. They talk into their cell phones, they don't smile back, they take their coffees and they leave.

His voice is low and his arms are long and lean and pale. His face, his mouth that chews slowly on a bit of pastry while he looks out the window. His face, his eyes lined with fine red veins; cocaine-bleary and espresso shot. His face that I have never seen before because he wouldn't let Catherine take his picture. His face that I have never seen before, but I am certain this is him. Certain this is Rudy.

When Catherine told me she had been accepted to the University of Pennsylvania, I had been gone six months and I was jealous. At Christmas when she told me she was lonely and miserable, that school was hard and not fulfilling and that she worried about money all the time, I could not believe what kind of friend I had been. When she told me about Rudy, I knew it was time for a visit.

Catherine is the kind of person that refuses to have her name abbreviated. We met when we were

fourteen and she told me that she was named after Catherine Deneuve and I believed her. Her penmanship is perfect. Her eyes are milky like lychee fruit and she has a face like a china doll and freckles even in January.

I do not remember when it was that I started loving her.

But I do remember the ache of high-heeled shoes in the snow, holding onto the crook of her arm for support. I do remember ordering off French menus in English with a terrible kind of adolescent conceit and throwing up in the bathrooms of fancy restaurants and blood on white table napkins. I remember her little house in Ville Saint-Laurent and her tiny mother wrapped in blankets on the couch watching movies with a mug of tea and sighing to herself as we bounded past and locked the bedroom door and talked all night. I remember what it was like to be English in a French province and know that one day you would have to leave.

It is a red-eye from Seattle to Philadelphia. The man sitting next to me is smiling unusually and I don't know what to do, so I smile back. When we're about to take off he finally leans closer to me, as if he has something really important to say.

"You should put your seatbelt on—here let me." He fumbles with the two straps and buckle, his hand lingering just a half-second longer than comfortable.

I don't know if I thought anything of it then.

Catherine's mother had been sick since I had known her. Catherine's mother had been sick before I met her. Catherine's mother died three days before graduation. We had been shopping for dresses, we had been busy, and this was how she wanted it.

I was the one who cried at the ceremony because my date was too drunk and wouldn't dance and embarrassed me. Catherine always had a better head on her shoulders. She gathered me in her arms in the bathroom and I immediately felt foolish.

Typical middle aged bull-shit. Pink Floyd's *Wish You Were Here*. The man next to me, no I never did get his name, is trying to put his headphones on me. I let him because I don't know what else to do and I don't want things to be more awkward. He is singing to himself and I wonder if I could hate anybody more.

Catherine and her roommate couldn't agree on how to decorate their apartment, so they have left the walls completely blank. The carpet is white, the couches are white, the walls are white, and I don't know how she lives here. Her roommate is afraid of the subway, doesn't drink wine. She is from Minnesota.

"It's a nice place close to campus," Catherine offers by way of an explanation.

I finally manage to twist my body into a comfortable sleeping position. I don't know how long I've been out. I feel his hand on my thigh and I think I am dreaming. I feel his hand on my thigh and with half-open eyes can only manage to croak.

"Stop it, I'm sleeping." Then pull my thighs together and press closer to the window. Pull my body around as far as a few inches can go and press closer into the plastic moldings, the side of my face resting on the cool glass that keeps me from falling forever into the endless night sky. Pull myself tight, as small as I can be, and feel small too. Feel small and tight and smaller.

When you hear stories like this, you think to yourself, if this ever happened to me, I'd stand up for myself. I'd stand up and scream, 'No!' Scream, 'No one has the right to touch me.' You feel his hand on your thigh, rubbing, urging. You feel his hand on your thigh and all you can manage to do is turn and whisper, 'Stop it, I'm sleeping.' You feel his hand on your thigh and you should be on your feet, waving your arms in the air, getting the attention of anyone who will listen because he's not right; this is not right. This man is touching me, this man is touching me, stewardess, stewardess, this man is touching me.'

Instead, your stomach, now turned to water, empties itself with startling violence, and in the bathroom you hold your head between your legs, and your face is flush with sweat, and in the mirror you look green, and wash your face with sickly-sweet smelling soap and stall for time, stall for time. But the plane has to land. You have to go back to your seat.

I flush the toilet. I walk back quietly. The bastard is still smiling.

It is the day after Valentine's Day when I arrive and Catherine and I are smoking cigarettes in a sports bar. The bartender is visibly pregnant and calls us 'hun' and despite all this I think she will be a good mother. Rudy was supposed to come over

after work yesterday, but he never called and Catherine thinks he went to see his old girlfriend and did coke all night. He tells Catherine about the sex they used to have. Catherine feels exposed. Catherine tells me she didn't want to wait up for him, but she just kept thinking, 'a few more minutes, a few more minutes,' until she found herself waking in her clothes, and then she felt more sheepish than angry.

She also tells me that once Rudy realized it was midnight and he hadn't eaten all day and so he ordered thirty ten-cent chicken wings in the bar where they had been drinking and tore into those tiny limbs with his teeth, sauce all over his face. Half-way through, he threw up into those dirty baskets of flesh and bone and sauce and just sat at the table moaning with his head down.

Rudy is in a metal band. Rudy had a difficult childhood. Rudy grew up in a trailer outside of Pittsburgh and his father beat him and he never graduated high school. Rudy has been fired from two jobs in the months that Catherine has known him. He lives on a couch and doesn't own a suitcase. He gave Catherine a piece of cake late on a Saturday when she couldn't take one more sorority party and her make-up was running. Rudy was fired from that job for giving away free food and he didn't care. Catherine helped Rudy open his first bank account and lent him the fifty dollar required deposit, which he still hasn't paid back. Rudy is twenty six. Rudy is dark. Rudy was impressed when Catherine told him her mother had died and he said sometimes he wishes he could kill his father. Rudy has cut thin, fine, deliberate slits in his forearm with a razor blade. Rudy is dark. Sometimes Rudy rings Catherine's doorbell in the middle of the night and sleeps beside her in all his clothes and does not touch her and keeps sleeping when she leaves for school and her roommate hates this and thinks he's going to steal from them.

Catherine has fallen in love with Rudy and this is all that matters.

I am sitting in a Philadelphia coffee shop. The man my Catherine loves is working the counter. I wonder who his mother is and who he will go home to tonight. I wonder if he is thinking of my Catherine and I wonder if he knows what he is missing.

Juan de Fuca Trail: A Travel Diary in Reverse

LONG NON-FICTION SECOND RUNNER-UP

BY HILARY SMITH
ILLUSTRATIONS BY MICHELLE LEE

WE SAT AT THE SIDE OF THE ROAD OUTSIDE THE TOURIST information/First Nations cultural centre in Port Renfrew and ate the apples the Alaskan man's Japanese wife had given us in their van when they gave us a ride from the Botanical Beach endpoint of the Juan de Fuca Trail to this hot, quiet turnoff to Victoria. Soft yellow apples with thick red skin that goes stuck between your teeth, warm juice. Our packs flattened the grass. No shade. We sat in the gravel and stood up every time a car came along, thumbs out. Most turned down the other road, towards the lakeside cottages, kayaks strapped to the roof. It was taking a long time. I went into the info centre, where some Pacheedaht women were hanging out chatting in the sunny, coat-hangered rooms, and used the bathroom. When I came out Erica had stopped a van. It was an old couple with two big dogs in the back. They put our packs between the cages and we hopped in the backseat.



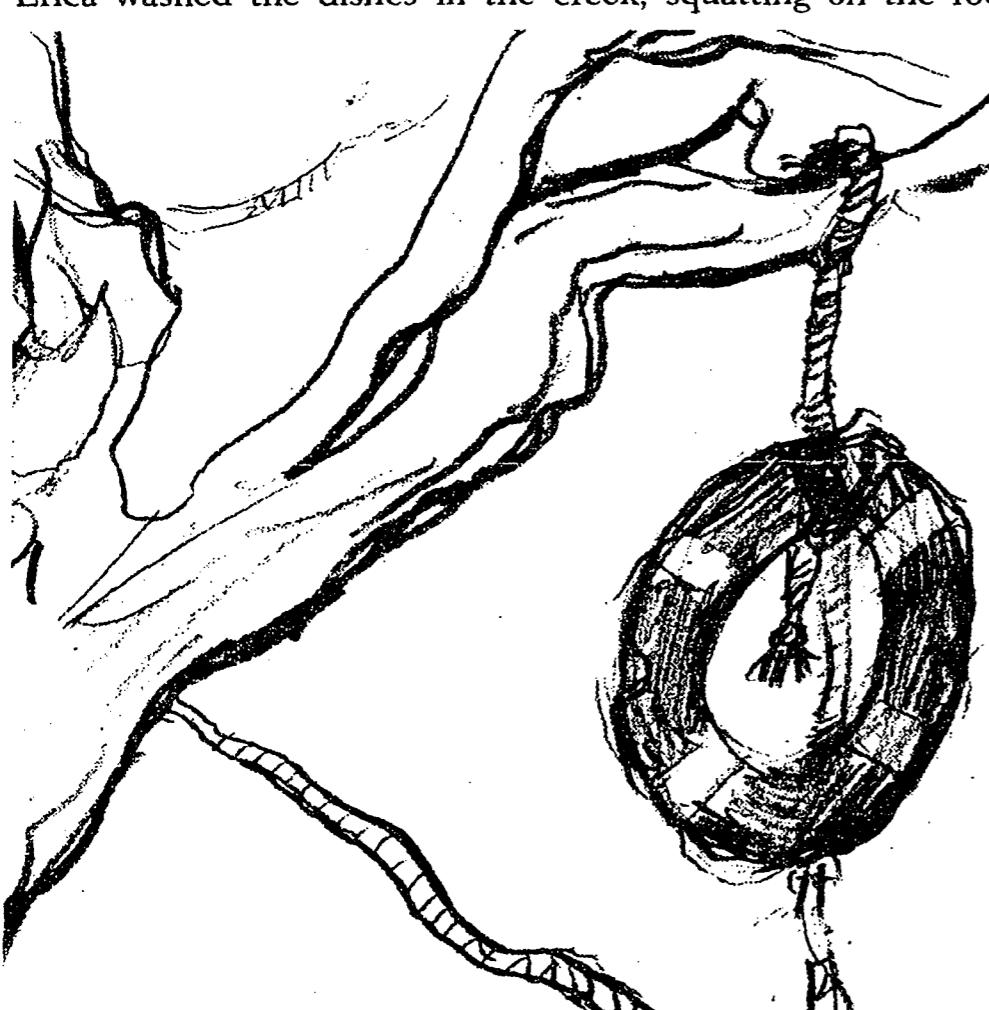
The trail widened and flattened into a path and we started to pass meandering families and day-trippers, old ladies in visors and white tennis shoes, strolling, cotton and that city light around them, like shiny cans just popped out of a vending machine. Botanical Beach was bare and scabby. A few shallow puddles with not much life in them and barnacled rocks scratching bare feet. We took a few pictures and put out boots back on and the lumpy dead weight of our packs and finished the ten-minute walk to the parking lot, where the last kilometre marker was on a post tucked into the corner of an information placard detailing the variety and wonder of the marine life at Botanical Beach. Another picture and the end of our granola bars. This was victory.



We stopped at Providence Cove, where the Pacheedaht left middens, and left our packs against a log and lay on the beach for a while, then waded out around the cliff face and clambered up the slippery kelp-coated rock shelf to see if we could see back around the point to where we had hiked earlier. There were beaches that might have been Sombrio, forest, and blocks and blocks of ocean stacked up against the hot blue sky. Erica led the way back to shore and I made my slow way behind her, squeamishly picking footholds among the rough traps of the rocks. Then we explored a big cave on the other side of the cove that fills with water at high tide, walking into the darkness and then turning around to see the amazing bright seascape framed by damprock.



Last ones out of camp in the morning. The Boy Scouts cleared out early and around us the other tent sites emptied like little sinks while we sat on a log eating porridge. Everyone else is so efficient. When I went to get our food from the bear cache, the other hooks were rattling in the breeze and there was our orange stuff-sack still at the top, a forlorn berry. We pulled up the tent pegs for the last time, unsnapped the frame into a bundle of metal sticks, stuffed the fly and screen into their bag and did some yoga on the footprint before packing it up. Payzant Creek was abandoned. It was a pretty morning, all blue-green-gold kaleidoscope in the treetops, silver water and red peat, feeling also in its benign advancing daylight something of a missed evacuation. Erica washed the dishes in the creek, squatting on the rocks



above a little fall, and we brushed our teeth and carried water up to purify with tablets. Erica took pictures of the treetops and we left Payzant Creek, not wanting to leave it.



Dinner at Payzant Creek was a three-course feast of freeze-dried food. Our little camp stove hissed steadily under the wobbly tank of Erica's cooking pot and I crouched next to it anxiously, fiddling with the gas and trying to keep everything from tipping over. The first course was vegetarian chili, spicy brown curds of textured soy protein bubbling horribly in the pot. When that was gone we boiled water again and poured in the entire packet of mashed potato flakes and watched it thicken into an orgy of starch, a ridiculous unbelievable pale-grey swirl of instant mash. While everyone else was already sleeping in their tents, we sat on that log washing down mound after mound of fake potato with swigs of butterscotch schnapps, long past the point of hunger and into macho territory. To finish off, we boiled water a third time and made dessert-round two of the chocolate cake mix. I felt so happy sitting there in the dark with Erica, laughing about the potatoes and already beginning to reminisce about the past three days of the hike. That night there were echoes of boys' voices through the trees until their counselors had them quiet.



We got to the Payzant Creek campsite after a long day of walking. There's a wooden bridge over the creek and a long set of stairs leading up to the campsite and down to the water. It was early evening and we spent a few moments finding a good tent site before setting up camp in the dimming light. Our tent site was a smooth dirt square with a few giant logs along one side of it and tall redwoods all around. The sunset filtering through the trees made everything glow. We were so happy to be spending a night in this magical place. It was tempting to sit on the log, relax and enjoy the last light, but we had lots of work to do before it got dark. When I took off my boots and socks, I could feel the night coming in my bare feet. Walking was hard because our bodies were twisted and sore from the packs and the hills, but we put up the tent and then somebody undertook the long limp back to the creek for water.



The afternoon is waning and we come out of the woods to a stretch of coastal walking. There are no sea lions on the rocks but the weakening sun is beautiful over the ocean and we take off our packs and rest for a while. When we get up to go, we have trouble finding the next buoy and make a few false starts before hitting the right trail. It looks like we're going to get into camp pretty late. We have another too-short water break at the top of a headland and hoist our loads onto our backs again. The last six kilometres to camp are quiet, steady, strong, and wearying. Despite the hard pace and the frustration of getting lost, Erica and I are doing alright. I feel like we're in tune, and even when we go for long stretches too tired to talk, the mutual trust is there that sustains an expedition into the unknown.



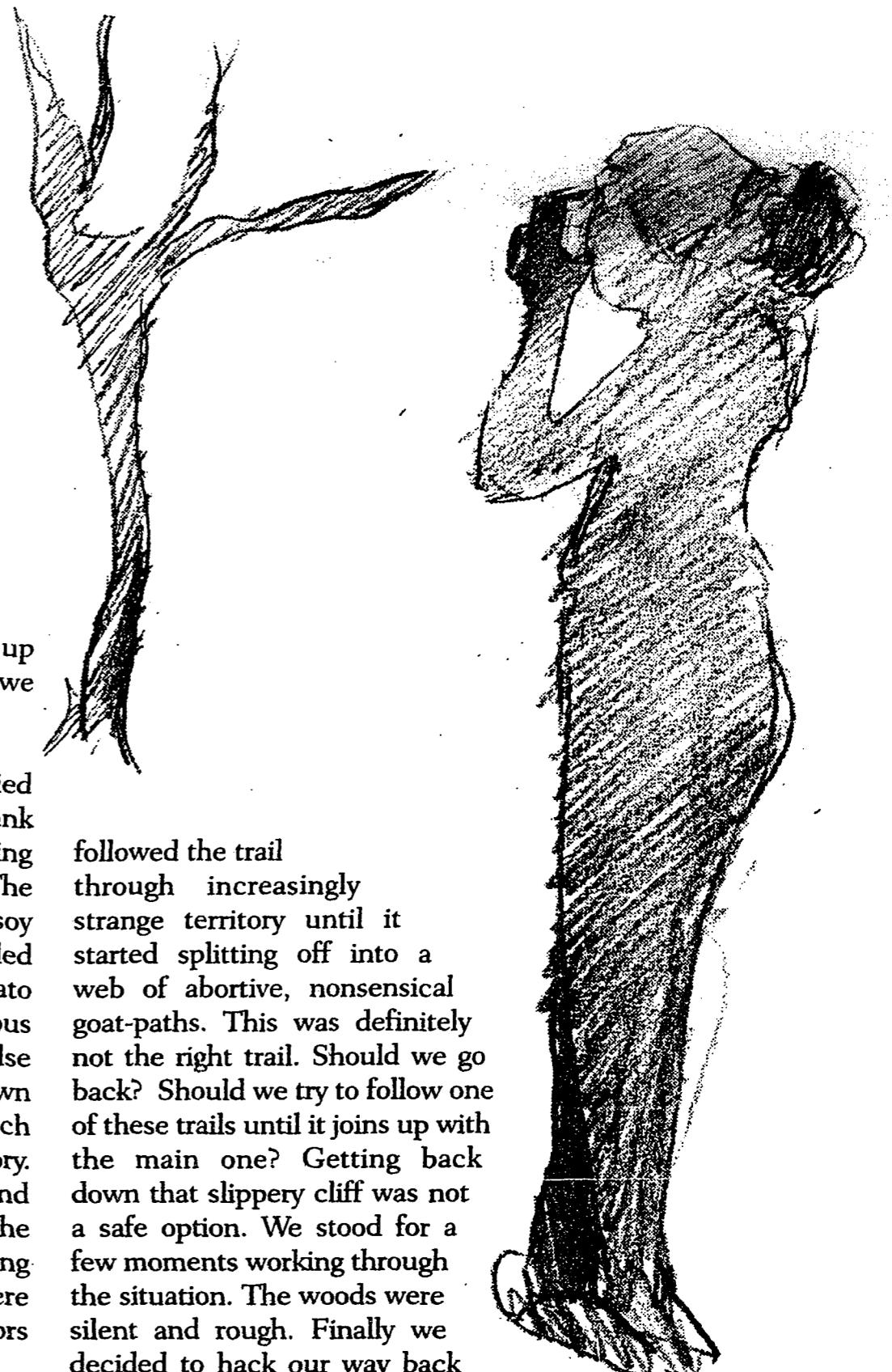
Through the logged place by Parkinson Creek. Earlier we passed a woman and her son who were going to camp here, but I don't understand why they wouldn't make the effort to get past it. It is a disconcerting place with stunted pines growing thickly on either side of the trail, knit with berry patches. It feels like bears. We got lost down a logging trail, following neon flashes which petered out into senseless brush after a few hundred metres. I was frustrated with the trail for not being clearer, and with myself for leading us down this miserable bastard side path. We turned around and clawed our way out of the bush, found the junction where I'd made the mistake, and Erica spotted the neon buoy in another direction. We set off again.



Getting into afternoon we often got a glimpse of the ocean through the trees that edge the headlands. We stopped by a kilometre marker to watch a herd of sea lions sunning themselves on an outcrop, dozens of them moving in and out between rock and water.



There was a buoy tied to a tree and below it an old knotty rope hanging down the dirt bank to the beach. We thought this must be the place where the trail enters the woods again. It was fun using the rope to struggle up the bank into the trees, where the trail passed by a pretty pool and waterfall before running into a steep wall of dirt pocked with old footholds. I looked at it doubtfully. Were we supposed to climb this? At least there was evidence that other people had. Anyway, we tackled the vertical incline, hanging on to gnarly roots and handfuls of slippery ground. At the top we



followed the trail through increasingly strange territory until it started splitting off into a web of abortive, nonsensical goat-paths. This was definitely not the right trail. Should we go back? Should we try to follow one of these trails until it joins up with the main one? Getting back down that slippery cliff was not a safe option. We stood for a few moments working through the situation. The woods were silent and rough. Finally we decided to hack our way back down to the coast. I did a quick reconnaissance mission along the headland and found a place where the earth had slipped away, carrying down rocks and young trees. There was a steep slide of red dirt ending in a big pile of debris, and beyond it the rocky beach and the ocean.



A bridge high over an amber river. The water was shallow and clear, running over a mottle of flat grey stones to sea.

For breakfast we had porridge with tough pieces of dried apricot stirred into it, cut over the pot with my kitchen knife. I loved cooking on the camp stove. Each time I screwed the burner onto the gas canister, I had a flicker of doubt that it wouldn't work. When I turned the dial, I could hear the gas hissing, but sometimes the flame didn't come. Just hissing. It always worked eventually, but the delay was enough to make me doubly grateful when the hard, powdery mixtures we carried with us cooked themselves into real food.



At Sombrio beach we left our packs at the first decent campsite we came across, then scouted further up the beach and decided to move to a flat sandy spot under a tree, beside a shallow stream where we could get drinking water and wash dishes. There were lots of handy logs around for spreading our clothing and equipment on, and the toilet was a hundred metres away up a staircase, in the trees. After setting up the tent, we had time to relax for a while. We wandered around the beach and climbed a huge piece of driftwood, then sat there watching skimboarders as the sun set. As evening settled in, people began to light campfires. Seeing the glowing orange fires made us want our own. On the way back to the tent, we looked around for dry sticks and driftwood to burn, but we weren't having much luck. I looked under a log and found a cache of plywood and paper, and Erica consulted her camping book about how to make a fire—we're such novices! We piled the strips of plywood in a kind of pyramid and I put in a firestarter to get things going, then we sat at our little fire roasting marshmallows and drinking Schnapps until it burned low and collapsed into embers.



The day grew foggy. As we rounded Sombrio Bluff, there was a steep side-track leading down to a rock shelf. We dithered over whether or not to leave our packs at the top, then carried them awkwardly down and left them on the rocks. A thin waterfall trickled down the rockface, and formed a pool and cut a thin slice to the ocean, where giant waves slammed against the rocks. The water surged into the pockets in the shelf, making loud booming noises I thought at first were thunder. From here, you could see around the bluff to Sombrio Beach. We each explored at our own pace and took a few pictures in which, developed, we look small and wind swept against the big grey anchors of rock, fog, and ocean.



We were in a place of hundreds of hills covered in tall trees. We climbed up and down and up and down, and hadn't seen anyone all day. It felt like we were alone on the earth. At the top of one hill, we took off our packs and lay flat on our backs. The forest was absolutely silent. I had the strongest feeling of being exactly where I was.