

CAMOSUN CULTURE

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NEXUS

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editor’s letter Fail big

My educational journey at Camosun College is quickly coming to an end, and with that comes the stress of leaving behind the comfort of the life I built here. There have been moments in my past when I’ve wanted to stop time just to get my footing right before I take off running, but that’s not possible; like trying to stop a large gust of wind with my hand, time slips through my fingers just the same.

Since I can’t stop the universe, I try to trust that everything will be okay. This isn’t an easy feat: I don’t necessarily believe in a higher power to guide me, nor am I coming confident off a golden path of gentle acceptance. I’ve been rejected and found myself on the kitchen floor in a puddle of tears while trying to make toast. I’ve been so low that I couldn’t possibly envision a future where I was successful, never mind content or happy.

So, why is this relevant? Because every failure, horrible experience, and rejection led me here. Some might jump in and say, “You mean community college?” And I’d proudly say, “Yes, community college, where, after 10 years of trying different avenues, I finally found a path that I want to pursue. I realize that all of my successes, along with my failures, are the reason that I’m here today, and I’m pretty happy with where I am in life.” (Although, if it were up to me, I’d have at least three more cats and a constant supply of baked potatoes, but I digress.)

With the mindset that failure, while disappointing, can sometimes lead to good things, the fear of not getting an ideal summer job, receiving a bad grade, or having to go back to the drawing board feels easier to grasp.

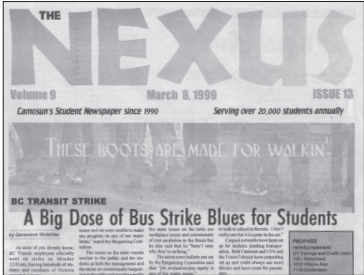
As an example, before I started at Camosun, I was floundering in health care and wasn’t able to find a program that interested me. I ended up finding an expedited program in Vancouver that would be mostly paid for. I can’t remember why it was mostly paid for, but I loosely qualified for the opportunity and applied right away. I was so tired of my life, my apartment, and my job that I tried it all: I prayed, I manifested, and I promised whoever was listening that I would do something good with it.

I still remember the rejection sitting in my email one Tuesday morning; I stared at it with glassy eyes at my desk while co-workers buzzed happily around me. I still remember that feeling. Looking back at it now, I couldn’t be happier that I didn’t get into that program—which was for programming. I would have been a horrible programmer; websites would be crashing endlessly in my wake. A few months later, I saw a certificate on the Camosun website that interested me, and now, here I am.

I hope readers will be led to amazing places through rejection and failure; the yellow brick road has a few more twists and turns than depicted.

Jordyn Haukaas, student editor
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flashback 25 Years Ago in Nexus



JORDYN HAUKAAS
STUDENT EDITOR

How things have changed: In the March 8, 1999, issue of *Nexus*, writer Jillian Dickens reported an eight-percent increase in international students attending Camosun College. This increase was staggering but would barely scratch the surface these days at Camosun. The grand total was 388 international students for the winter semester of 1999; there are 2,045 international students at Camosun this winter semester. Dickens reported on the many appealing aspects of the college, and Victoria, for international students, such as a good ESL program and a temperate climate. It’s fascinating to see the number of international students jump throughout the years, especially considering the cap currently implemented on international students allowed to study in Canada for the next two years.

I’m busy faxing: *Nexus* writer Brooke McIntosh offered students helpful tips and tricks on how to get hired in this 1999 issue. Thankfully so, because I’m about to look for some summer co-ops; I hope her

advice will benefit me 25 years later! Starting strong, McIntosh suggests faxing potential employers or stopping in with a “query letter”; this is perfect for me, as I have a fax machine handy and totally know what a query letter is. Secondly, McIntosh mysteriously suggests the internet. I’m trying to imagine what the internet looked like in 1999; I’m assuming bland? Lastly, don’t forget the very relevant Yellow Pages when writing down a list of companies you want to call. I can feel the opportunities rolling in already.

The drama: An ongoing issue that seemed to plague Camosun 25 years ago was students being upset over the increasing number of surveillance cameras on campus (a drama that never fails to pique my interest). Well, this issue of *Nexus* got spicy as writer Naomi Dunaway covered students who attempted to voice their concerns at a college Board of Governors meeting. Apparently, eight students tried to speak at the meeting but failed to call in and request to be put on the agenda. After a tense exchange, the chair of the Camosun board refused to let the students speak on the matter, and they left—I like to imagine they stormed out for the sake of the plot. I wonder what will happen next... Since I’m from the future, I know what happens next: the world gets overtaken by cameras and surveillance. Sorry, students of the past.

open space Camosun needs to leave gendered bathrooms behind

MACKENZIE GIBSON
SENIOR WRITER

Camosun College needs to get rid of gendered bathrooms on campus.

There are many reasons why multi-stalled gender-neutral bathrooms benefit everyone. You don’t need to personally benefit from every reason, but you’ll benefit from at least one, and none will make your life worse. (I’m not talking about change rooms, just bathrooms.)

Equity

People with mobility issues deserve to use the bathroom, too.

is frustrating. I’ve been in a number of places that have gender-neutral multi-stall bathrooms. The result is that a usable bathroom is always nearby—and these bathrooms are often some of the cleanest I’ve used. Despite the increased number of people using the bathroom, it increases the number of bathrooms you can find, so the availability actually increases.

Lower building costs

While changing existing bathrooms to be gender neutral is as easy as removing a gender marker from a sign, new buildings are given a new

I have peers at Camosun who choose to not use the bathrooms on campus at all because they feel awkward or unsafe wherever they go. As a trans person, this is something we’re thinking about all the time.

There are very few places on campus with enough space for a person with mobility aids to use the washroom. If a fully mobile student encounters a busy bathroom, they might be annoyed but they are physically able to find another nearby bathroom that will accommodate them.

Not all students are so lucky.

Unfortunately, trans and non-binary people need that same space to feel safe, which means a very limited resource needs to service twice as many people. The resource is further stretched since able-bodied, cisgendered students often use the single-stall washrooms out of convenience. Making all bathrooms gender-neutral would further free up accessible washrooms for the students who are limited to what bathrooms they can use.

Convenience

There have been too many times when I’ve desperately needed a bathroom only to have the one I find is closed for maintenance or unavailable because it has a gender marker that doesn’t allow me in.

Sometimes men’s and women’s washrooms are, inexplicably, on opposite sides of a building. This

design opportunity. Many smaller buildings only need one bathroom per floor, based on the average number of people who frequent the area, but then there needs to be double to accommodate the gender division. The extra cost just isn’t necessary.

While this will benefit everyone, it’s important to note that your trans classmates will benefit from this the most, and that carries a lot of weight right now. Last month, a nonbinary teenager was beaten up by their peers in the bathroom of their school in Oklahoma; they died the next day. I have peers at Camosun who choose to not use the bathrooms on campus at all because they feel awkward or unsafe wherever they go. As a trans person, this is something we’re thinking about all the time.

You’ve been using a gender-neutral bathroom your whole life: the one in your home. The way someone uses the bathroom, whether or not they’ll bother another person in the space, and the cleanliness level they leave it in has everything to do with behaviour, and that isn’t inherently linked to anyone’s gender. We know this is true—let’s start acting like it.

Something on your mind? If you’re a Camosun student, get in touch with us with your *Open Space* idea! Email editor@nexusnewspaper.com. Include your student number. Thanks!

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COVER PHOTO: Camosun College

OVERHEARD AT NEXUS: “It’s almost better to be a dictator.”

NEXUS

camosun’s student voice since 1990

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post-secondary

British Columbia Federation of Students pens open letter to premier

“The letter was one of the ways we wanted to address or just put it out there to the premier that this is what we need for post-secondary education and now is a crucial time to take some action on things.”

JESSIE NIIKOI
BRITISH COLUMBIA FEDERATION OF STUDENTS

LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON
STUDENT EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

In an effort to fix what it says are systemic issues plaguing British Columbia’s post-secondary institutions, the British Columbia Federation of Students (BCFS) has written an open letter to BC premier David Eby calling for urgent action.

On Tuesday, February 13, the BCFS, along with student unions and partner organizations across the province, released the letter, titled “We Can Do Better for Students: Our Vision for a Post-Secondary Education System that Delivers for Students and Communities in British Columbia,” addressed to Eby and the provincial government.

The open letter focuses on five core demands: for the government to cap international student tuition fee increases at two percent annually; to release a plan on how international study permits will be distributed to institutions in BC; to complete the Post-Secondary Funding Formula Review and determine gaps in government funding, in particular for regional colleges and universities; to develop a funding model that provides long-term financial stability for institutions, delivers quality education and services for students, and does not rely on student tuition fees as the main source of funding; and, lastly, to invest in BC’s public post-secondary institutions to ensure post-secondary education is affordable and accessible, and that the province is

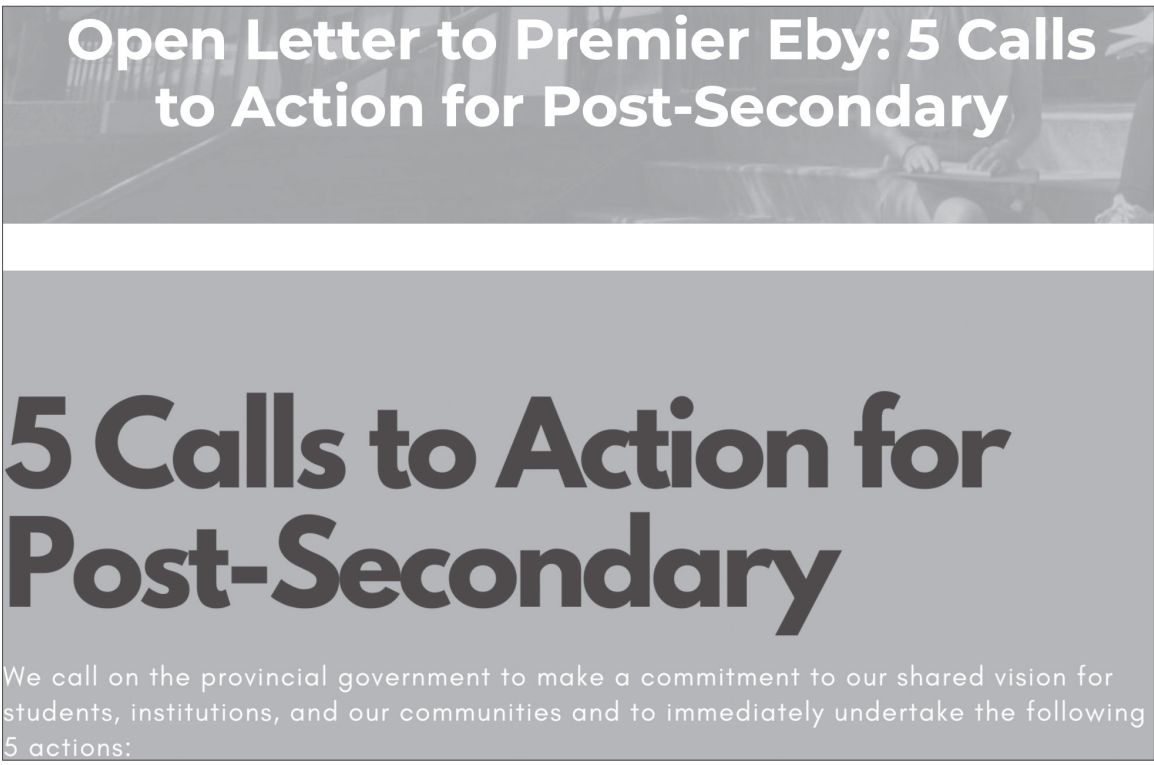
able to produce the skilled workers needed in the labour force.

BCFS secretary-treasurer Jessie Niikoi says that addressing these issues isn’t anything new, but with many problems being left unresolved and new ones being created, it’s essential to continue addressing them.

“The reason why we have this letter is another way of getting our message out there,” says Niikoi. “We’ve been making the calls, we’ve been advocating for these things for... over four years now. And the letter was one of the ways we wanted to address or just put it out there to the premier that this is what we need for post-secondary education and now is a crucial time to take some action on things.”

Niikoi says that the provincial government has long overlooked issues regarding funding and this has led to an over-reliance on international student tuition fees. She believes this creates an environment where “students are going to feel preyed on,” she says. Following the federal government’s recent announcement regarding its two-year international student permit cap, critics have brought up concerns surrounding financial issues. Niikoi says this issue isn’t unfamiliar.

“When COVID happened and the borders were closed and we were not receiving as many international students, there were some institutions that were facing major deficits,” says Niikoi. “And right



SCREENSHOT

The British Columbia Federation of Students have laid out five calls to action in its open letter to BC premier David Eby.

now, since we have a cap on the numbers, or we’re going to have a cap on the numbers, that is also something that could occur again.”

Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) external executive Jagjeet Singh says that there’s a significant lack of funding that needs to be addressed and resolved by the provincial government as soon as possible.

Since the BC government decoupled post-secondary funding from inflation in the early 2000s, institutions have had substantially less funding. At the time, funding was at 80 percent to 90 percent, which has since dropped to an average between 30 percent and 40 percent today.

“So that’s been a deficit that the government itself has created over the years because year by year the funding never increased,” says Singh. “But everything got more expensive and so did the operational cost for the institution.”

Singh says that international students disproportionately suffer from these systemic obstacles. He says the issue lies with the lack of financial support from the BC government and says that “most of the time it’s because of the limited resources that our institutions have.”

Niikoi says that students are the ones funding their education, which shouldn’t be the case for a system that is public.

“[If the] post-secondary education sector is called a public post-secondary education sector, it means it has to be publicly funded,” she says.

The BCFS is looking to see Eby and the government take the first steps to fund a larger percentage of post-secondary students’ tuition.

“I think one of the things we want to, we’re expecting, is at least for the government to start taking more steps in actually addressing the issue of post-secondary education funding,” says Niikoi. “We

want the funding review completed so that we can identify, or the government can identify, the gaps in funding that is happening with the post-secondary education sector and then fund that sector. Because that’s one of the basic things that’s causing all of these issues.”

Singh realizes how this impacts students currently living with economic adversity.

“They struggle a lot,” he says. “There’s food insecurity, which, obviously, because tuitions are so high at times, students have to choose between that and food, and I’ve seen that happen more than once.”

But the BCFS and CCSS see the potential in action from Eby and hope that he takes the right steps to ensure stability, and a lighter financial burden, for post-secondary students.

“The students, hopefully, will have better services when they come here,” says Singh, “and better supports, which they need.”

NEWS BRIEFS

New post-secondary minister appointed

On Tuesday, February 20, BC premier David Eby announced that Lisa Beare, MLA for Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows, will assume the role of provincial minister of post-secondary education and future skills. The former minister, Selina Robinson, stepped down from cabinet on Monday, February 5 after facing backlash due to comments she made about the Middle East on a public Zoom conference (see our stories on this at nexusnewspaper.com).

Camosun library celebrates Women’s Day

The Camosun College library is celebrating International Women’s Day with an online resource guide highlighting a collection of women’s literature throughout March. The guide features novels, biographies,

and creative non-fiction dedicated to acknowledging women’s successes and struggles worldwide. There will be displays of books from the list at both Interurban and Lansdowne campus libraries. See the resource guide at camosun.libguides.com/internationalwomensday.

Chargers women’s volleyball team gets bronze

The Camosun Chargers women’s volleyball team are leaving the 2023-2024 season as Pacific Western Athletic Association (PACWEST) bronze medallists after securing a four-set victory over the Douglas Royals—this is the second time in three seasons that the Camosun Chargers have left PACWEST with bronze medals. Charger rookie Edyn Van Brabant was named Player of the Game after finishing with 16 kills. The women’s

volleyball team were eliminated after losing in the quarter-finals on Friday, February 23.

Chargers to host volleyball nationals

The Camosun Chargers will be hosting the 2024 Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) men’s national volleyball championship this month. The games will run from Thursday, March 7 to Sunday, March 10 at the Pacific Institute for Sport Education (PISE) at Camosun’s Interurban campus. For full game information, including schedule and ticket info, see camosun.ca/chargers.

Camosun instructor, Langford councillor confronted outside of home

On Friday, February 17, during a news conference, Langford

mayor Scott Goodsmanson discussed an incident that took place on Monday, January 29, where Camosun College Economics instructor and Langford city councillor Keith Yacucha was confronted on a sidewalk outside of his home by a man who was allegedly also taking pictures through the windows of Yacucha’s house. A Langford resident called CFX after the incident, admitting he was the one who was outside of Yacucha’s home, but saying that he was on his way to visit a friend in the area and denies taking any pictures of Yacucha’s home. The caller had previously been critical of Langford council and, during a council meeting last March, he was asked to stay on topic but continued talking, eventually being removed by bylaw officers. RCMP said that while the confrontation outside of Yacucha’s home

was concerning, no illegal activity had taken place.

Saanich asking for road-safety feedback

The District of Saanich is sharing the draft of its Road Safety Action Plan (RSAP) with a survey asking for feedback and review from Saanich residents. The RSAP is aimed at enhancing safety for all road users, including people who walk, ride the bus, drive, or use a mobility scooter in Saanich. The feedback from the survey will be collected over the next six months before being presented to Saanich council later this year. You can access the survey at hello.saanich.ca/en.

-JORDYN HAUKAAS,
STUDENT EDITOR AND
LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON,
STUDENT EDITORIAL
ASSISTANT

student life

Student tips to de-stress as exam season approaches

JORDYN HAUKAAS
STUDENT EDITOR

I used to see April as an optimistic transition into spring: the days getting longer, flowers emerging from their muddy cocoons, and the slow death of winter. And yes, I know that the first technical day of spring happens in March, but the Victoria weather system is a lawless land, filled with second winters that rear their ugliness just as spring offers a sample of pleasantness.

Why am I talking about seasons? Well, it’s an appropriate transition into discussing the exam season that’s quickly approaching—sorry about the jump scare.

For students, April instead symbolizes a wrestling match, where pupils face off with burnout, a desire to do well, brain fatigue, adrenaline, and anxiety. I wish these phenomena attacked us with spandex thongs and cool wrestling names instead of slithering into our minds quietly, whispering sinister “What ifs?” causing inner turmoil and a pulsating stress that beats behind our temples, but here we are. (Stay with me: I promise I’ll eventually say something positive.)

To assist with the upcoming stress, I’ve devised a list of five stress-management tactics to ensure you thrive during the arduous final stretch of the semester. And if you’re asking what makes me qualified to report on mental wellness, let me tell you: absolutely nothing. However, this isn’t my first rodeo.

For students, April symbolizes a wrestling match, where pupils face off with burnout, a desire to do well, brain fatigue, adrenaline, and anxiety.

After surviving many exam seasons and coming out on the other side, I’ve learned what works and what doesn’t.

1. Ask for help

While this might seem like an obvious piece of advice, it’s easy to get sucked into an endless pit of homework and studying and by the time you realize you need assistance, it’s too late—trust me, I’ve been there. Plan ahead now: book time to visit teachers during office hours, make appointments at the Writing Centre, and plan some study sessions with friends. A portion of stress can stem from feeling unprepared. Organizing early on will help with managing stress levels when the semester crescendos into a twister of due dates and exams. To avoid getting swept up, plan an alternate route and enjoy the semi-calm seas.

2. Monitor your mental health

I recently heard a classmate compare mental health to doing maintenance on a car: if your car starts to make a weird noise, the quicker you get it taken in for maintenance, the better. If you neglect to do so, your car will break down even-

tually, there’s just no telling when. This is something I can personally attest to. My mental health starting to slide can feel like I’m standing in a shallow puddle of water, which isn’t ideal, but manageable. However, without warning, this puddle can suddenly rise up to my neck, leaving me gasping for air and unable to find solid ground. If you find your mental health declining, book an appointment with a counsellor or find someone trusted to talk to and let them know that you need help. Additionally, counsellors at Camosun are free; booking information is available at camosun.ca/services/health-and-wellness/counselling-centre/access-counselling.

3. Go outside

All of the time spent indoors studying and essay writing is enough to make anyone feel like a rat in a cage (despite all our rage). So, leave the cage behind and take a walk in the woods, or go stare at the ocean for a while and breathe in all the seaweed-infused air that Vancouver Island has to offer. It’s impressive what spending the occasional 30 minutes outside can do for your well-being. Next time



JORDYN HAUKAAS/NEXUS

Getting out into nature is a good way to de-stress during tough times.

you’re sitting down for homework, plan to take a break and go for a walk around the block, blast some music, and get away from the screen. It’ll do wonders.

4. Meditation or journalling

I recently downloaded a guided meditation app (Headspace) on my phone because it was recommended to me by a therapist. I used to boo meditation as a form of stress management because I couldn’t shut my brain off for long enough for it to have any effect, which in turn would leave me feeling worse. That being said, once I discovered guided meditation, I noticed a significant positive effect on managing my day-to-day stress—I really can’t suggest it enough. Finding a daily(ish) activity like guided meditation or

journalling will help in facilitating an overall sense of well-being.

5. Plan me time

Lastly, plan time for yourself, even if it’s for an hour. I find that my social battery can be easily drained throughout school, so I like to schedule a time once a week to either take a long bath, play a video game, or watch a horror movie. If you need a distraction from school, make a date with a friend, or plan an activity that you genuinely enjoy doing that has nothing to do with homework or school. Having something to look forward to can be extremely beneficial in reducing stress.

I hope these tips ensure a smooth voyage through the remainder of your semester. Happy studying!

CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY SPONSORED CONTENT

Students get access to myvirtualdoctor through CCSS

Do you need help with a health issue but have no family doctor? Or maybe you have a family doctor but the wait is too long? There’s a service available that can help you out.

Camosun College students get access to myvirtualdoctor, a virtual health care service that provides unlimited access 24 hours a day, seven days a week to licenced health experts such as doctors and nurse practitioners. The service is provided by the Camosun College Student Society (CCSS).

You can access myvirtualdoctor, which is powered by Telus Health, through its app—available for Android and iOS devices—or any browser.

Eligible students will get an email with an activation link from help@vc.telushealth.com in the email you provided to the college (check your spam folder!); if you don’t get one, contact Telus Health at the above email to get set up (include your full legal name, that you are a Camosun student, and your email address that Camosun has on file).

It’s not just you who can access myvirtualdoctor: if you have eligible dependents, they can also

access the services. Eligible dependents include a spouse and children.

“Myvirtualdoctor is invaluable for students without a family doctor,” says CCSS health & wellness officer Kyle Jones. “Even for students who already have a family doctor, this service has tremendous value. With myvirtualdoctor, students have access to medical care without making an appointment, day and night.”

The service include access to health care professionals in 30

able fee—\$35 a year, including eligible dependents—to your student account. Note that students in partnership programs, including Canadian Forces and high-school contracts, are not eligible.

If you have a family doctor, you can still use the app! However, if you want to opt out, you need to submit an online application, available through camosunstudent.org. The deadline to apply is 30 days from the official date of starting your program, and no exceptions are made if this deadline is missed.

It’s the student’s responsibility to pay the plan fees if they miss the opt-out deadline.

If you opt-out you aren’t able to re-enroll in myvirtualdoctor

until your enrolment anniversary. To keep the waiver active, you need to submit an opt-out application each year or when you see the fee included in your tuition.

For any questions about opting out, contact the CCSS Benefits Plan office at ccssplan@camosun.ca.

See camosunstudent.org and navigate to “health” or go to mystudentplan.ca/camosun/en/myvirtualdoctor to learn more about myvirtualdoctor.

“Even for students who already have a family doctor, this service has tremendous value.”

KYLE JONES
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY

different languages through chat, video call, or a phone call. Some of what is provided through myvirtualdoctor includes diagnosis, labs, imaging, and referrals; prescription delivery; specialist appointments; and safe and secure transfer of medical records to primary care physician.

As long as you’re a fee-paying member of the CCSS, you’ll be automatically enrolled in myvirtualdoctor and assessed the applic-



review

The Belfry’s recent production of *As Above* an absolute success



PETER POKORNY

As Above recently ran at The Belfry; Nexus senior writer Mackenzie Gibson says that the play was a must-see.

MACKENZIE GIBSON
SENIOR WRITER

The greatest challenge I face in writing this review of *As Above* is containing my praise to the word limit. You simply must see this play. Written by rising star Christine Quintana, *As Above* (which ran at The Belfry until March 3) offers a vague premise—Jo, an ecologist, eight years sober from alcohol and struggling to rebuild her life, receives a mysterious phone call from her estranged daughter. But what the story delivers is anything but vague.

In its 90-minute run time, Jo navigates some of the hardest questions a human being can tackle. How can she live with the pain she has undeniably caused, individually as a sober addict, and culturally as the descendant of colonizers? How can you live in the moment, be present with new connections, when the bed you’ve made is so painful? Do we deserve to be happy, become comfortable, and recover when we’re so keenly aware of the damage we’ve left in our wake? The play doesn’t atone Jo of her sins, either. It constantly re-

minds her and us of the trauma she caused to the people around her, while still offering her a deep well of sympathy. People’s trust in her has been broken, but at every step we the audience are encouraged to believe her, understand her frustrations, and admire her efforts. The nuance offered to her experience is exceptionally executed. Most stories about addicts either condemn or excuse their behaviour—but it’s always more complicated than that in reality. Canadian acting legend Gabrielle Rose leads the play as Jo,

Everything about the stage felt intentional, with the wheel often spinning for no discernible reason other than representing the chaotic movement that dominates Jo’s psyche.

and her work was nothing short of extraordinary. The acting did as much as the script to bring life and complexity to this moving tale. Making me laugh in the middle of crying, and making me cry mid-laugh, Rose was not only believable, but transcendental. Her desperation to solve the mystery of her daughter’s phone call, her bravery in the face of recovery, her venom spat in weak moments, and the tender romance blooming with her new, also-sober boyfriend demonstrate as broad a spectrum of human emotion as I can imagine on the stage. The chemistry in the romance may have been aided by the fact that her love interest was played by her real-life husband of 30 years, Hrothgar Mathews. Mathews offers a different story of recovery through his character, Rick, who has a longer history of sobriety. Early on it becomes clear he possesses a deep desire for patient, loving, authenticity, which deeply challenges Jo’s tendency to avoid being present and sincere at all costs. Combined with the strained relationships in Jo’s family life (the

role of Everyone Else was played by the playwright on opening night, but is otherwise done by Sereana Malani) combines to a beautiful heart-wrenching piece which left me in awe. The theatrical design is also to be celebrated. With massive tree rings making up the three walls of the rotating stage, and a small translucent greenhouse structure as the only set piece, everything was used to its fullest extent in both symbolism and choreography. Everything about the stage felt intentional, with the wheel often spinning for no discernible reason other than representing the chaotic movement that dominates Jo’s psyche. But my love of the set design echoes my love of everything else: every aspect of the story, the space, the acting, the lighting—it was all used to the fullest possible extent it could be and everything was thoughtful to the nth degree. I’m not a crier, but this story cracked me—and most of the audience that I could see—wide open and the tears of catharsis flowed. Brava to the entire production.

review

Snotty Nose Rez Kids offer night of healing, messages, entertainment



AJ AIKEN/NEXUS

Snotty Nose Rez Kids performing live at the Capital Ballroom on February 16.

AJ AIKEN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Darren “Young D” Metz and Quinton “Yung Trybez” Nyce are Indigenous hip hop duo Snotty Nose Rez Kids; the two brought their sounds to the Capital Ballroom from Kitamaat Village on Friday, February 16 and Saturday, February 17. On Friday night, the air was filled with excited anticipation waiting for the show to start. When opener Travis Thompson stepped on the stage, the dance floor began filling up; it was packed by the time Snotty Nose Rez Kids came on stage. Thompson got the crowd jumping with his fast-paced, melodic

rapping and call-and-response-style songs. Encouraging the crowd to get into the night, Thompson’s DJ suggested they loosen up their shoulders. Echoing the sentiment, Thompson said they should loosen their shoulders and start dancing. Snotty Nose Rez Kids were high energy from start to finish, with one sombre pause. Stopping the show, Young D asked everyone to pull out their lighters and phone flashlights, then explained the passing of his father a few days earlier. He talked with deep emotion and passion about his father and the past few days trying to process and heal, surrounding himself with family and loved ones. Thompson

came back to the stage to perform a song with Yung Trybez as Young D sat on stage getting support from Yung Trybez and Thompson, who provided hugs; it was a touching and endearing moment. For the rest of their set, they used their music as a platform, bringing attention to Indigenous culture, fashion, and issues such as racism, water advisories, and broken treaties in a thought-provoking and meaningful, but also entertaining, way. The level of energy that Yung Trybez has while performing is intense, putting his whole body into jumping around as he raps. It’s similar to a basketball player trying to dunk a ball the way he spreads out his arms, jumps in the air and brings his arms back in as he comes down. To security’s displeasure he came out into the crowd by walking on a tall table. There were a few hiccups during Snotty Nose Rez Kids’ set. At the beginning, Yung Trybez’ mic became inaudible, leaving only Young D’s voice heard. Other than a little frustration showing on their faces, they kept going without pause. The situation was soon resolved, and by the next song the mic was working again. Later on, during the show, Yung Trybez’s high energy and somewhat flailing movements caused his prescription sunglasses to go flying. He needed to bring up the house lights

so that the crowd could look around to try and find the glasses. Not wanting to be “that guy” when he asked for the house lights brought up, Yung Trybez apologized for having to ask. However, losing prescription glasses halfway through a show does pose a problem. The crowd didn’t seem bothered at all and kept checking the area around them until Yung Trybez said the sunglasses were found. After that, the duo went right back into performing as if nothing had happened.

It’s admirable that Young D would be back on the stage so quickly after the loss of his father. The way he spoke and how he sat during the one song showed how much he was truly hurting despite the spectacular performance he had given. His strength and resolve to bring his music to his fans is incredible, and the love and support demonstrated by Yung Trybez and Thompson on stage goes to show the level of friendship and respect these men share.

contest Find the hidden Nexus and win



GREG PRATT/NEXUS

We’ve hidden this copy of our last issue somewhere on Camosun’s Lansdowne campus. Find it and bring it in to our

office for a prize! Nexus HQ is located at Richmond House 201 at Lansdowne. Good luck!

Camosun Cultural Showcase

This month, Camosun International will host its annual Cultural Showcase. Featuring performances from domestic and international students, the showcase aims to honour students' backgrounds and highlight the joy that comes from celebrating diversity.

Now in its 15th year, event organizers Jayanti Bachani and Dana Pankowsky are looking forward to shaking things up. Pankowsky, a Camosun International student experience advisor, is especially excited to share the new format of the show.

"We have a different narrative for this year's Cultural Showcase, and I don't want to spoil anything... It has always been a very formal kind of show, this time we want to give it a twist, do something more creative, and give students the chance to decide what they want to do a little bit more," she says. "So it's going to be really, really fun and interesting."

While Pankowsky is employed by Camosun, the rest of the crew that brings the showcase to life are all students—including Bachani, the event coordinator. For Bachani, the production means more than just extracurricular credit.

"It was about building connections," she says. "It was about having students share their cultures, their talents, giving them a space to be free."

As a student, Bachani's very familiar with the limited time the performers have for non-academic projects.

"I'm surprised by their resilience and commitment, because some students are parents, they have other responsibilities," says Bachani. "They work a lot. They're taking three, five courses, all of them full time-students, [they're also] working, and then having this commitment."

But the time commitment is worth it, because of what the showcase does to bring students together. Pankowsky has repeatedly witnessed the friendships that are forged through the sharing of culture.

"[The students] have built stronger connections and stronger networks," says Pankowsky. "I've heard them saying they met new people, new friends, from different programs, because sometimes if you're in a cohort, you only interact with your cohort for two years or one year. And then when you get a chance to be part of the Cultural Showcase, you meet people from other countries, other cultures, other programs."

Friendship isn't the only reason the event—which this year is in honour of recently retired Camosun International counsellor Brian Herron, who started the event in 2007—is important. Students have sincerely put their hearts into their performances because, as the saying goes, home is where the heart is.

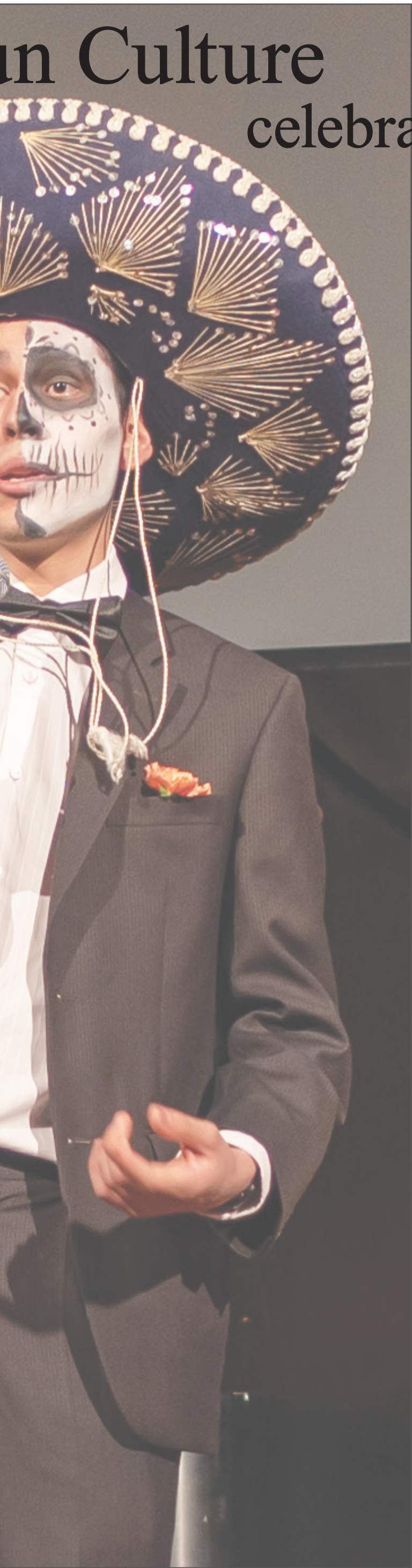
"What fascinates me about this event is how students really honour their roots and they honour their backgrounds where they come from," says Pankowsky. "I feel like this is a night where they can symbolically bring their families with them, bring them to Canada... I had this lovely student last year from India, it took her, I don't know, three, four hours to get her makeup done, and wearing her clothes and doing her hair. She shared that this is something she used to do with her mom back in India... We really got very emotional about this, because she felt like she was going to be on stage with her mom, as she used to do it in her home country."

The showcase will be broadcast live on Camosun International's YouTube channel, so even students far from home can share the performance with their families. Bachani is busy overseeing finishing touches to the show, and is excited to see everyone's hard work paying off.

"I love just seeing their connection to who they are and where they come from," says Bachani. "I think that's really important... Performers are really practicing their hardest and hosts are putting [in] their soul and their time. So this will be a very special night, and we are looking forward to seeing everyone there."

The Cultural Showcase will be held at 7:30 pm on Thursday, March 21 in the Gibson Auditorium at Camosun's Lansdowne campus.





in Culture celebrates milestone

Story by Mackenzie Gibson, senior writer
All photos by Camosun College



review

Ainadamar gives new life to old art form

LANE CHEVRIER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The art of opera was born in 16th-century Italy, combining the visual spectacle and rich storytelling of theatre with striking emotive soundscapes of intertwined voice and orchestra. Opera was historically an elitist art form, presented in dazzling theatres frequented by society’s snobbery. Subsequently, opera has gained notoriety as being a pompous overblown affair showcasing gaudy costuming and incomprehensible, glass-shattering sopranos.

Fortunately, modern artists and production companies have carried the art into the present day, creating memorable contemporary stories with stunning music, dance, and voice. *Ainadamar* (meaning “fountain of tears” in Arabic), written in 2003 by Argentinian composer Osvaldo Golijov and presented by Pacific Opera Victoria, is a prime example of this.

Unique to *Ainadamar* compared to Italian operas of antiquity is the inclusion of Spanish flamenco dance and lyrics. Some of the most breathtaking scenes feature the strong, emotive staccato rhythms of whirling tap dancing, underscored by the strange, haunting score (conducted by Giuseppe Pietraroia) that seems to evolve classical music into an entirely new genre of sound.

Set during the Spanish civil war, *Ainadamar* tells the story of revolutionary queer playwright



DAVID COOPER PHOTOGRAPHY

Pacific Opera Victoria’s performance of *Ainadamar* featured “staggering artistry and talent,” says *Nexus* writer Lane Chevrier.

Federico Federico García Lorca (Hanna Hipp), who was captured and executed for “crimes against Spain.” Lorca’s muse, Catalan actress Margarita Xirgu (Miriam Khalil) recounts events 40 years prior, when she adopted Lorca’s portrayal of Mariana Pineda, a woman executed for refusing to give up the names of revolutionary leaders, including Lorca.

Throughout the production of *Ainadamar*, the viewer witnesses flashbacks of Xirgu’s life. The talent and chemistry between Khalil and Hipp is powerful, supported by a robust cast of characters who depict

the innocent civilians caught in the midst of a powerful political conflict.

As an added touch of authenticity, during the pre-show mingling, actors dressed as beleaguered 1940s civilians in shabby clothes walked amidst the audience, carrying suitcases and a hauntingly sad demeanour, as if waiting for a train that will never arrive. The significance of this only became apparent to me much later in the production.

Khalil’s vocals and performance paint an immaculate portrait of a woman weathered by years of grief and remorse, doomed in dedication to keeping alive the ghost of the

long-slain Lorca through endlessly enacting his plays. Even near death, she’s still committed to performing until her last breath. At her side is her chambermaid Nuria, whose introduction is unassuming as she silently assists her mistress for several minutes. When she finally finds her voice, grieving as Xirgu doggedly performs from the past into the grave, I was startled at the power within her small frame, evoking intense emotion with her voice alone.

Making brief but commanding appearances is Alfredo Tejada as Ramón Ruiz Alonso, a falangist dic-

tator who spreads lies and dissent among the revolutionaries, calling for Lorca’s execution. Standing in military garb atop an imposing tower, Tejada’s vocals are wild and unhinged, shrieking for the capture and death of Spanish revolutionaries. The uncontrolled nature of his vocals is shocking: we’re conditioned to expect poised and refined perfection from artists, but this choice is brilliantly intentional, mirroring Alonso’s instability.

Visually, the set of *Ainadamar* is stunning, featuring a combination of shifting set pieces accentuated by layered back- and front-projected screens, most notably casting incredible imagery atop a translucent curtain, behind which the actors undulate.

The production closes with the pristine image of dozens of citizens, dressed in white, carrying white suitcases... including Lorca and Xirgu. This recontextualizes the travellers seen earlier in the lobby, whose aimless paths and vacant, sad expressions foreshadow that perhaps these spectres wandering among us were not fleeing refugees, but ghostly echoes of lives abruptly ended.

The staggering artistry and talent involved with bringing *Ainadamar* to life is unbelievable for a show that only spanned four performances. I hope they bring it on the road so that others may also witness this incredibly impassioned production.

review

100 Years of Broadway worth seeing despite faults



DEAN KALYAN

100 Years of Broadway ran in February at the University of Victoria’s Phoenix Theatre.

It’s a big feat, all this whirling and singing, and I’ll say that the cast throw themselves into their tasks with all they’ve got to give. They are a truly spirited group.

EMILY WELCH
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

On the whole, I love musicals. I love the idea of having a perfectly poetic dialogue to accompany life and I love the idea that when questions or concerns come into that life, the best thing to do (obviously) is to break out in song. Hence, when I learned of *100 Years of Broadway*, which ran at UVic’s Phoenix Theatre until February 24, I jumped at the chance to go see it on opening night.

Arranged by Mac Huff and directed by visiting director Pia Wyatt, *100 Years of Broadway* is a two-hour long arrangement of well-known Broadway musical numbers stretching out over—you guessed it—the last 100 years.

With 11 actors who may or may not have had musical theatre training, the show is often impressive, but sometimes not so much. It’s a big feat, all this whirling and singing, and I’ll say that the cast throw themselves into their tasks with all they’ve got to give. They are a truly spirited group.

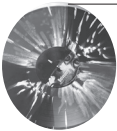
I was a bit unsure about the first

act, as it seems to go through the musical selections very fast, with narrations between scores about which decade they were in, which I found unnecessary. The second act is far more pleasing, because full songs are sung, giving more of a chance to see what the cast truly has to offer.

I would like to give a nod to Liam James, who sings “You’ll Be Back” from *Hamilton*. James has something; he can sing and dance with panache and style, and he gives an already fabulous song meaning that’s all his own. I think James has a promising career ahead of him.

With costumes that represent part old Hollywood glam and part can-can burlesque, the show is pleasing to the eye, but, unfortunately, the sound and choreography could use a bit of brushing up—I’m hopeful that it was mostly due to opening-night missteps.

This is put on by students, and they are obviously having a grand time doing it. It’s a show worth seeing, and, like the Broadway pieces it represents, it will get better with every performance.



Listen and Learn

by AJ Aiken

Garden City Grooves celebrates 10th anniversary

AJ AIKEN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The 10th anniversary of Garden City Grooves—which took place from Thursday, February 15 to Saturday, February 17—featured a tribute to Amy Winehouse, a celebration of Black History Month, and a night of British Columbian hip hop. Once again, the Victoria BC Ska and Reggae Society put together a stellar music festival.

A last-minute change to the lineup on the opening night brought Ranger to the stage. Ranger has a smooth, mellow jazz sound that provided a melodic start to the fest.

The Capital Collective brought the Amy Winehouse tribute. A 14-piece band from Western Canada made up of musicians from Lovecoast, Jon & Roy, Current Swell, Dope Soda, and Miguelito Valdes, they had three amazing vocalists—one of whom had the same power behind her voice that Winehouse had—sharing the stage. It was like Winehouse herself was there.

One of my favourite aspects of ska is a good brass section. The Capital Collective trombonist Dave St. Jean gave an amazing solo full of quick, punctuated notes unlike anything I’ve ever heard before.

In celebration of Black History Month, the second night of Garden City Grooves, which I was unable to attend, had performances from Toronto’s Tanika Charles,

While bringing his high-energy and positive message, Sirreal made one kid’s night by giving him a fist bump during a song. Seeing the joy and happiness on the kid’s face was almost better than seeing Sirreal perform.

Vancouver-based Missy D, and Zimbabwe-born, Nanaimo-based Alpha Centauri.

The final night was mostly British Columbian hip hop with XL the Band (featuring Prevail and Rob the Viking from Swollen Members), Mo Moshiri, and Sirreal with Blue Satellite.

The only two to take the stage not from BC were Seattle’s Khingz and Prometheus Brown, who’s returning from rapping after a 10-year hiatus.

Sweatshop Union founder Moshiri, from Victoria, gave a solo performance. He has a slower hip hop/rap style with an R&B flair and powerful and inspiring lyrics.

Mixing jazz and hip hop, XL the Band utilizes sound in various ways to create unique, fun, and, at times, transcendent music. Liesa Norman kills it on vocals, keyboard, and flute. Her sweet, angelic voice mixes well with Prevail’s easygoing rap style.

Norman and Prevail create live tracks by Norman playing notes on the flute and drumming on Pre-

vail’s chest, as well as clapping and snapping fingers with Prevail. Rob the Viking then expertly mixes the sounds with the rest of the song, adding a deeper layer of sound as well as an element of fun to their stage presence.

Nick La Rivière manipulated the sound of his trombone with wah pedals, something I didn’t know was possible. How the sound was captured for the wah pedal to bend the notes is a mystery to me.

XL the Band, Mo Moshiri, and Sirreal performed their single “Automatic,” a high-energy song with a message that things work out when you work hard.

Sirreal and Blue Satellite slid into the headlining spot by Sirreal winning a thumb war with Prevail, closing out the 10th anniversary of Garden City Grooves. While bringing his high-energy and positive message, Sirreal made one kid’s night by giving him a fist bump during a song. Seeing the joy and happiness on the kid’s face was almost better than seeing Sirreal perform.

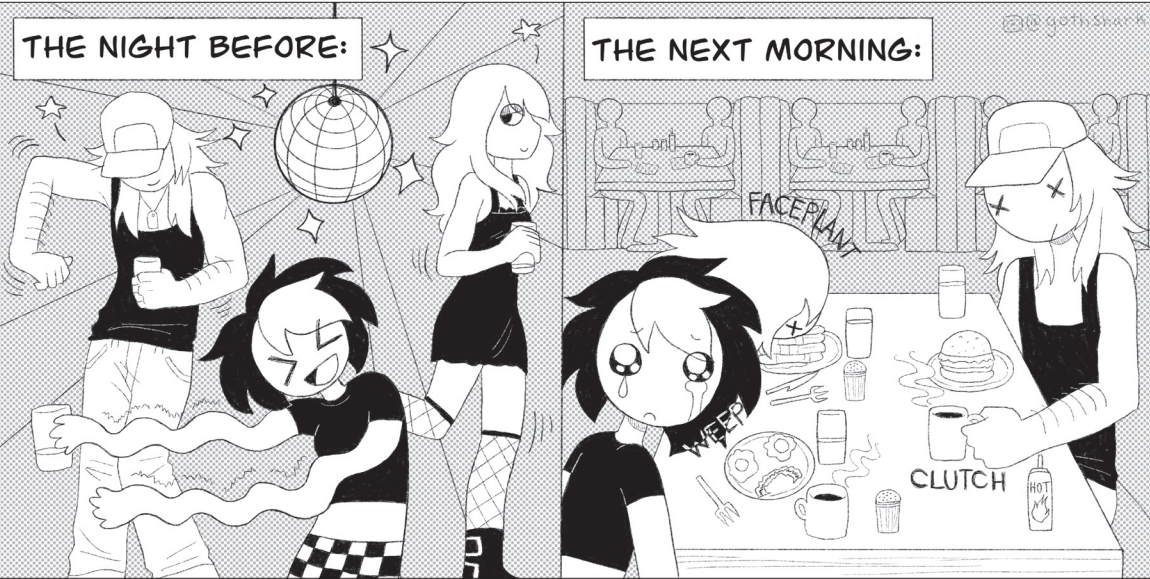


ALL PHOTOS BY AJ AIKEN/NEXUS

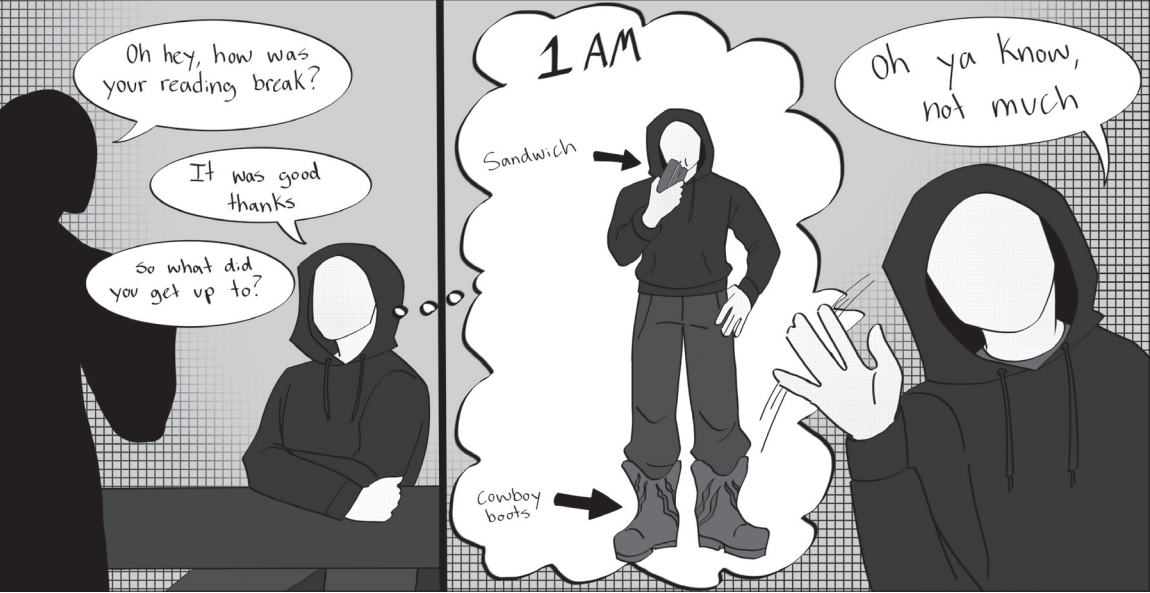
Various artists performing at this year’s Garden City Grooves.



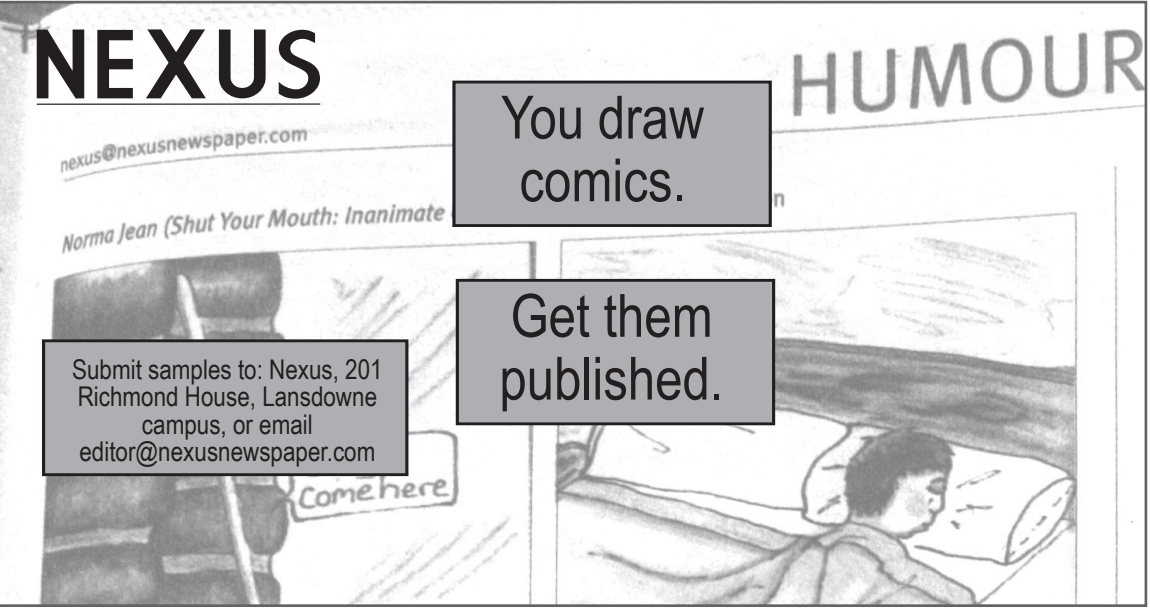
Ruby Rioux and the Bats from Saturn - Ray Nufer



Things That Happen - Jaiden Fowler



What's This? A College Meme? - Naomi Fisher



Brainrot - Kit Miller



wildthings - Finnegan Sinclair Howes



Creature Feature - Jenna Victoria





Kiryn's Wellness Corner

by Kiryn Quinn

Fly like an eagle

Hopefully the time during your reading week break allowed you to take rest, connect with nature and friends, catch up on reading, or do whatever helps you to best manage the stress of mid-winter and school projects.

A great go-to posture is eagle pose, or *garudasana* in Sanskrit. The posture is great for physically wringing out stress, stretching out your upper back, and stimulating circulation in your legs and arms. So, let's give wings to the rest of the semester and fly like an eagle whenever you need to wring out a little stress.

Stand with your feet together and your arms stretched up into the air. You're going to "twist-tie" your arms together in front of your body at the midline or hold on to opposite shoulders for that upper back stretch. Bring your arms out and down and then swing the left arm under the right one, nesting the right elbow on top of the inner left one. Attempt to twist your forearms around each other and bring your palms together. It may just be the fingers of the one hand

Hopefully the time during your reading week break allowed you to take rest, connect with nature and friends, catch up on reading, or do whatever helps you to best manage the stress of mid-winter and school projects.

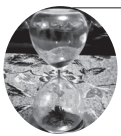
that touch the palm of the other; if your shoulders are tight, hold onto opposite shoulders instead. Take a nice big inhale into your upper back and as you slowly exhale, draw your shoulder blades and back down and luxuriate in the stretch.

To bring the lower body into the equation, sit your hips down and back as if you're about to sit in a chair. Keeping the fronts of your hip bones facing forward, bring your right leg up and over your left one, pointing your toes down toward the floor alongside your left calf, or wrap your left foot or toes around the calf. Hug your legs

tightly together and then squeeze your arms a little tighter together. Hold this semi-seated posture for three to five breaths, with your gaze focused on one spot in front of you to help hold your balance.

To unwind out of it, inhale to bring your feet back together, standing up and unwinding your arms out and up overhead and then exhaling them back down by your sides. Take a few breaths as you feel the blood rush back into your arms and legs. As you repeat this on the other side, take note if one side of your body is tighter than the other.

Until next time, keep it real.



Not the Last Word

by Emily Welch

Aging difficulties

I've mentioned before that I'm one of those late-blooming students that decided to go back to school in their 30s. I'd previously had a rather unpredictable and gregarious lifestyle through much of my life, changing jobs and careers, dabbling (or rather absorbing myself) in activities that were not healthy to my body or spirit.

The decision to come back to school was the first decision I had ever made that truly would enrich my life.

A drawback to this is that I'm often, although not always, older than the other students in the class, and, of course, with every semester I become more aware of it. I love learning, and I try not to let it get to me that I've started so much later in life than most of my colleagues. It's not always easy, though, when surrounded by so many fresh minds

and faces. I sit next to these students with their rosy, flushed, supple skin, and their ever-changing hip dialogues, and I feel terribly slow, and, yes, old. When I try to keep up with the way they interact, I often feel even older.

We live in a society that is unkind to women getting older. I felt in my 20s that I wouldn't get older; it felt completely out of reach. But middle age (aaaaagh) has descended on me faster than a rabbit on uppers. I am now suddenly in a world where Facebook is sending me endless advertisements for youth-inducing miracle creams and serums, along with articles about some essential plant products that will make me look and feel 19 again. I see how much shame women receive when they age, but it seems the opposite for men, who, when they age, become sexy, hand-

some, distinguished, and craggy, and have Clooney-obsessed young Smurfettes falling at their feet. Women, once they age, seem to disappear, and that's the best-case scenario. Others, such as female celebrities, are shamed and ridiculed for having their bodies go through their natural processes.

It's hard to face reality about the way my body is changing, yet my mind feels more agile than it's ever been. I seem to gain curiosity and energy to learn with every new line on my face.

I would love to say that I refuse to let social media influence my feelings, but I'm still human and, therefore, sensitive. I can, however, refuse to let my own mind slow down. Hopefully, with every passing year, time on Earth will be appreciated—rather than ridiculed—in women.



Lydia's Film Critique

by Lydia Zuleta Johnson

La noire de... (Black Girl)

The white-painted walls are prison bars in Ousmane Sembène's 1966 film *La noire de...* (*Black Girl*). They are adorned with African face mask ornaments—wooden trophies of post-colonialism. The promises of freedom will never be found here, and identity will be only lost. This is Diouana's shared story.

In 1966 Dakar, Senegal, Diouana (played by M'Bissine Thérèse Diop) looks for work within her illusion of choice. She loiters by the curb among other local women

hear the thoughts reserved within her inner monologue as she cries out her private resentment. They speak in rhythm over Sub-Saharan instrumental music like a harrowing ballad. Few moments are unscored in *La noire de...*, and it fits as a reminder of her spirit and identity. Hauntingly, the xalam, a Senegalese string instrument, is operated with commandment over her tragic ending.

Director and novelist Sembène's feature debut acts as a state-

There is no post-colonialism, *La noire de...* suggests, only concealed colonial restructure.

waiting for destiny. She will be a maid, a domestic slave, and strung along to Antibes by the white family who have hired her, Madame and Monsieur.

The figments of the Riviera, Juan-les-Pins, Nice, and Cannes are stripped with what can only be seen from the apartment windows she cleans. France is the kitchen where she cooks, the living room she tidies, and the bathroom she hides in.

Her rage only grows louder but her voice is empty. She is quieted by her employers who claim the art, culture, and land that they do not humanize. Diouana's silent resistance plays out in bursts and frees her momentarily under the guise of autonomy, but here she is trapped.

In the 60-minute runtime, Diouana is once a hopeful and realized young woman and, subsequently, a stolen soul, fallen into isolation. We

ment even more so than it does a film. It strives to deliver the modern marginalized pain of fetishism and dehumanization communicated in everyday gestures—especially those against women in oppression. There is no post-colonialism, it suggests, only concealed colonial restructure. It's as relevant now as it was in 1966, a painful reflection of white supremacy and migrant exhaustion. Its success as the first internationally recognized African film proves its potency of poetry and significance.

"*La noire de...*" better translates to "The Black Woman of...", which holds symbolism in its last word. Of what does she belong to, if not herself? Or, does she no longer belong to that? Her possession is now lost in transit of power and forever removed. She is a familiar story. Diouana is of martyrdom.

3.2/5



Fellas, Let's Figure It Out

by Jaxson Smith Peterson

Nutrition talk

Nutrition plays a pivotal role in the overall health and well-being of men, impacting various aspects of our lives, ranging from physical performance to mental acuity.

Today, I'll be sharing some actionable nutrition tips to help you improve your health and wellness one meal at a time.

The number-one easiest way to improve your health via diet is to cut out extremely processed food.

Let's take, for example, fast food french fries. Who doesn't love fries, right?

Well, the vast majority of fries are cooked in canola or vegetable oil. I would argue that these highly processed oils have been a major contributor to the increase in obesity levels that has occurred over the last 50 years.

Search on YouTube for how seed oils are made. I promise you will never look at "normal" food the same way again.

An easy way to avoid unhealthy oils is to pivot to extra virgin olive oil or avocado oil. Potatoes air fried in olive oil with some good seasoning beat McDonald's fries any day.

Another potential area for change in diet is the type of milk you consume. While alternative milks have become quite popular

these days, they are not necessarily that good for you.

Options like oat or soy milk are often filled with unhealthy additives, which can be quite harmful to your health. They also lack many of the vitamins and minerals that are in animal milk.

If you choose alternative milk because of lactose intolerance, consider trying A2 milk, which is now available at most grocery stores. It's made from cows that only produce the A2 protein, not the commonly irritating A1 protein that causes most discomfort.

But enough about what you shouldn't eat—what kind of food should men be eating to fuel their bodies for success?

Well, meat is king, man.

Both lean and fattier sources of protein derived from animals are fantastic for the male body and will help your body repair itself from the stresses of life. Chicken, beef, and turkey are all fantastic options.

To clarify, I'm not advocating for a full carnivore diet, although it looks fun. It's vital that you also consume a variety of colourful fruits and vegetables for your body to operate at peak performance.

Make a change; your body will thank you.

What's happening at nexusnewspaper.com

Week of February 26, 2024, top five most read stories:

1. "Ainadamar gives new life to old art form," February 26, 2024
2. "Ainadamar combines classical opera and Spanish flamenco," February 21, 2024
3. "As Above an absolute success," February 14, 2024
4. "Gord Hill to discuss contribution of art to social movements at lecture," February 21, 2024
5. "Student groups concerned over international student cap," February 21, 2024

Check it all out at nexusnewspaper.com, and find us on X!

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