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NEXUS

camosun's student voice since 1990
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editor's letter Luck be a lady

On my first day of college, I found my first four-leaf clover. In the field of patchy grass and trampled daisies, it stood up with conviction of its supposed good fortune. Resting my back on the ground, we faced each other. My eyes shot open. I've never been much for superstition—I don't play baseball or participate abundantly in astrology. But in the torrid heat of this September afternoon, I plucked the clover, about the length of my ring finger, with destiny in mind. This was it—things were looking up.

For a long while before, I soaked in a lazy river of self-doubt, “over-thinker” aptly branded on my forehead by my costly therapist. Daydreams of writing books, articles, movies, essays slipped into the cracks between naps and anxious dread before ever reaching a page. Writing was my first love but a luxury I had been convinced was reserved only for the various men and women whose paperbacks sit dusty on my bookshelf, and I am neither Joan Didion nor F. Scott Fitzgerald.

In a nightmare, I dreamt best-selling author and American treasure Danielle Steel towered over me a staggering 50 feet and knocked me cold against her Olympia SG1 typewriter. She howled to herself as she recalled over 190 book publications to my zero. I woke up in a sweaty puddle of defeat.

Countering my claim of luck, Steel's office door reads: “There are no miracles. There is only discipline.”

On a magazine cover, like the ones right beside grocery-store tills, a busty woman with perfectly styled beach waves told me what it meant to be a successful woman in *Impact Bold*. *Woman's World* cover girls have the step-by-step guide. Among home-style cooking recipes, they chant empowering messages under false pretenses. Hard work is always the answer to their meritocratic questions. So on many occasions, I prayed at least that my self-esteem would quit lending me premature greys to allow me the liberty of productivity and creative outbursts, but it did not. Instead, with fear and tense shoulders was a young woman, still desperate for an ounce of luck on her first day of school.

Staring at my four-leaf clover, tracing the perimeter with my eyes, I fantasized about the new woman soon to possess me with omnipotent talents and a winning lottery ticket. She will be brave and confident and zealous—the type in portraits on the back of novels, the kind that writes.

Now, as I finish my first year at Camosun and as a writer at *Nexus*, I collect my milestones into mental trophies of a semi-realized young lady; each one I would've sworn not to receive is now in a tempered glass case. Many just for participation.

Whether or not an old wives' tale is responsible is tricky to say, but the days of sloth are (mostly) over and out. I am now a writer, and will continue to be for the rest of my days.

Lydia Zuleta Johnson, student editor
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open space

Food insecurity an unnecessary crisis

CORA TIMMERMAN
AND TIM HENDERSON
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Stop wasting food, Canada—starving students have suffered enough.

Post-secondary students across Canada are grappling with food insecurity, a stark reality that hinders their ability to thrive academically and personally. With rising tuition fees and housing costs, and limited financial aid, many students find themselves unable to afford nutritious meals regularly. The resulting conditions are poorer physical health, poorer mental health, and poorer academic achievement.

The burden is especially heavy on marginalized communities and international students who face

food banks and meal programs, and foster awareness about the challenges faced by marginalized student populations. Ultimately, addressing food insecurity among students is not just about providing meals—it's about empowering individuals to fulfill their potential and ensuring that education remains a pathway to opportunity for all.

Here's food for thought: Canada does not have a food shortage. In fact, according to food-rescue non-profit Second Harvest, a whopping 58 percent of food gets wasted annually. One study from last year found that 19.2 percent of the general population in Canada suffers from food insecurity. Even more telling is a survey from fall 2021 of 6,167 students from 13 Canadian university campuses: it found that

Ultimately, addressing food insecurity among students is not just about providing meals—it's about empowering individuals to fulfill their potential and ensuring that education remains a pathway to opportunity for all.

additional financial barriers. For international students, trying to acclimate to new traditions, expectations, and resources in a different country is challenging. They often cannot access healthy foods that fulfill their food preferences and dietary needs; it can also be difficult to source culturally appropriate food. Food banks on campuses are witnessing increased demand, highlighting the depth of the issue. For these students, the dilemma isn't just about hunger—it's about the fundamental right to access necessities while pursuing education.

Working against food insecurity among post-secondary students in Canada means addressing a pressing social-justice issue and making a tangible difference in people's lives. By combating food insecurity, we all contribute to creating a more equitable society where everyone has access to essential resources, regardless of their socioeconomic background. Working on this issue allows people to advocate for policies that support affordable education, promote community-driven initiatives like

56.8 percent of students were moderately or severely food insecure. These high numbers have increased demand for wider-scale discussions at the federal and local levels, including conversations around food subsidies, tuition supports, and a basic income program.

We're all accountable to help reduce food waste and must do a better job. Food that's grown and produced but ends up not being consumed will fill our landfills and produce methane gas.

Let's check our own habits; don't buy and stock up on more food than you'll consume, or else you run the risk of the food spoiling before you can eat it. Plan your meals before going to the grocery store. Is it more work? Sure. Will it reduce food waste? Absolutely.

If you do have more food at home than you need, you can always donate it to food banks before it spoils and goes to waste. It will come back around to you. If changes aren't made across the board and students in Canada don't get some relief, this unnecessary crisis will only worsen.

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!

NEXUS

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COVER PHOTO: RAY NUFER/NEXUS

OVERHEARD AT NEXUS: “OMG my vibes were too strong.”

NEXUS

camosun's student voice since 1990

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student politics

Camosun College Student Society receives high student turnout at spring election

“It was quite an exercise in democracy and student interest.”

MICHEL TURCOTTE
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY

LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON
STUDENT EDITOR

The Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) held its spring student elections from Monday, April 8 to Wednesday, April 10. An increased voter turnout landed a total of 1,136 student voters in the elections, which were held online. 674 voted on day one, 120 on day two, and 342 on day three.

Because of a mistake where a platform statement was not included on the online election ballot, a re-election was held from Tuesday, April 16 to Thursday, April 18 for the position of Lansdowne executive; 642 students voted in this re-election. Emily Lam was voted in as the Lansdowne executive.

Electees include Prince Solanki

as external executive and Talwinder Singh as finance executive; Rose Patterson was voted in as Indigenous director and Polly (Phuong) Tran as international director; John Sultan Hagos and Angela Chou are Interurban directors, and Sean Leyland is Interurban executive. Terence Baluyut was elected as pride director, and Talhia Grace Plourde as wellness & access director. Leia Grace Elaine Unarce is sustainability director, and Olivia Bult is women’s director.

CCSS executive director Michel Turcotte says that the high voter turnout isn’t the election’s only success—the increase in candidates, and multiple contested positions, is evidence of greater student interest in Camosun issues.

“It was quite an exercise in democracy and student interest,” he says. “So the CCSS is pleased with that result because not having your members interested in running for office is never a good thing... It was the most contested election we’ve had in quite a few years and that really shows maybe an increasing level of democracy, or at least some re-emerging student interest in these sorts of positions and student issues and advocacy and all the other things that go with that.”

Turcotte believes the newly elected board offers a diverse representation of the student body and he looks forward to hearing a range of opinions and ideas from the new board. In past elections, some positions were left unfilled, leaving the responsibilities to other members of the board. With all positions filled this year, he says the variety of contributing voices implies a step in the right direction.

“It’ll be nice to learn to have board meetings where everybody is represented because we have a

board structure that’s designed to give representation to various groups or areas within the college community,” he says. “And it’s nice to be able to actually hear those voices.”

The CCSS—which is responsible for services such as the UPass, health and dental plans, food bank, and Walk Safer—is financially supported by students. Turcotte says voting in the CCSS election is a way students are able to participate in selection of these initiatives and the people who enact them.

“CCSS feels that elections are important because this is how students choose the representatives that run the organization that they are all members of and fund,” he says. “So it is much in the same way that a municipal, federal, or provincial election [is] important.”

Turcotte anticipates that the CCSS will continue to support its initiatives and events, including its successful Holi, Diwali, and sustainability-based celebrations. With upcoming goals in mind, he

hopes to focus on advocacy going into the future.

“I think that we have the ability to have a bit more of an advocacy focus to add to some of the events and wellness initiatives that we have been working on in the last couple years,” says Turcotte. “So it might be that as one of the areas the CCSS could put a little more effort in.”

Although a portion of candidates were unsuccessfully elected, Turcotte wishes to acknowledge each participant and hopes students remain as an active part of the Camosun College community. He says that the student society best functions with variety, valuing all participants.

“Democracy requires people to run for positions, and even if you don’t succeed, you are making a difference,” he says. “I hope that the candidates who were not successful this time will continue to stay engaged with what’s going on at CCSS and Camosun generally, and we’d really like to thank them for putting their names forward.”

NEWS BRIEFS

Students display work in Craigdarroch Castle

Camosun Fine Furniture students, alumni, and faculty will display their work in several Victorian-style rooms in Craigdarroch Castle from Wednesday, May 8 until Sunday, May 26. Contrasting the castle’s historical features, the program’s contemporary original work is set to be the first exhibit of its kind as part of the Design Victoria Festival. For more information and admission details visit thecastle.ca.

Chargers student athletes get awarded

The annual Camosun Chargers Awards Ceremony was held on Thursday, April 4, recognizing the accomplishments of Camosun’s top student athletes. For a complete list of the awards that were given out, see camosun.ca/chargers.

Library creates Asian Canadian Heritage Month guide

May is Asian Canadian Heritage Month, and to celebrate, the Camosun Library has put together a guide of resources. The Asian Canadian Heritage Month guide is available at camosun.libguides.com/asian-canadian-heritage and features various works and resources by Asian-Canadian creators and authors.

Camosun launches free career-option programs

Camosun is launching two new programs to help women and Indigenous peoples explore career options in BC’s tech sector.

With additional funding from the provincial government, Camosun will be adding 36 seats in two 12-week, tuition-free programs focusing on computer science and civil, electrical, and mechanical engineering. Both programs—the Women in Technology Pathway (WiTech) and the Indigenous Peoples in Technology Pathway (InTech)—include additional support systems to reduce barriers to career pathways. Intake starts September 2024 for the WiTech program and is available to all self-identifying women. Intake for InTech begins January 2025 and is available to eligible Indigenous people of all backgrounds, ages, and experience levels.

Camosun awarded for Indigenous education

Camosun College recently took home an award for its Indigenous education initiatives. On Tuesday, April 30, the college won the 2024 Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan) bronze award of excellence in Indigenous education. The CICan awards acknowledge excellence in Canadian colleges and institutes.

Camosun faculty, staff aim to decolonize English placement assessments

Camosun College faculty and staff Maureen Niwa, Vivian Fayowski, Wendy McDonald, and a committee of 15 members, are working together in an effort to decolonize English placement assessments, a system that they say is American-based and fails to reflect Indigenous cultural practices and life experiences. The Indigenizing English Placement Assessment

(IEPA) project idea, which was conceived five years ago by McDonald, aims to create a safe environment and alleviate anxiety for prospective Indigenous students by including multimodality and storytelling traditions. With input from the college community and support from eight Canadian institutions, the team plans to continue developing the assessments. Watch for our full story soon.

Camosun faculty recognized at event

Camosun College’s third annual Teacher Recognition Awards event honoured college faculty members on Thursday, April 25 in the Sherri Bell Hall in the Wilna Thomas Building. This year’s event—which was part of Camosun’s one-day Walls Optional conference for faculty and staff—recognized 40 faculty members from a wide range of programs. Students, faculty, and staff had the opportunity to nominate instructors that exemplified a supportive and innovative learning environment. See camosun.ca for a list of the faculty members who were honoured this year.

Camosun recognizes Inn at Laurel Point

The Inn at Laurel Point, located in downtown Victoria, was recognized and congratulated in early April with the Camosun 2023 Co-op Employer of the Year Award for continuing to provide and prioritize an experiential learning environment for students of Camosun’s Hospitality and Tourism Management Program. Camosun co-ops aim to mentor and foster

professional development out of the classroom, something the Inn provides with networking and interviewing clinics, field trips, career fairs, and more.

Gordaneer family launches art adoption fundraiser

On what would have been Victoria artist and former Camosun instructor James Gordaneer’s 91st birthday, the Gordaneer family launched an online art adoption fundraiser. Running from Sunday, April 14 to Thursday, May 9, the Gordaneer Painting Adoption Project invites the community to select from hundreds of the late artist’s paintings, which were damaged in a series of floods. Proceeds from the event will go towards the Victoria Visual Arts Legacy Society, a non-profit organization that, among other initiatives, provides bursaries for visual arts post-secondary students, including a Camosun bursary award in Gordaneer’s name. Visit jamesgordaneer.com for more details.

Budget 2024 sees post-secondary investments

The federal government tabled its Budget 2024 on Tuesday, April 16. Among other post-secondary related items, it included \$825 million over five years toward graduate student scholarships and fellowships and \$1.8 billion over five years toward research funding. The budget eliminates the credit-screening requirement for mature students applying for Canada Student Loans and Grants. Budget 2024 also extended the Canada Student Grants amount of \$4,200 for full-

time students for an additional year; the Canada Student Loan interest-free increase from \$210 to \$300 a week for full-time students was extended as well. See budget.canada.ca for all the budget details.

Government brings back work restrictions

As of Wednesday, May 1, the temporary policy in place allowing international students to work more than 20 hours off-campus per week was restricted back to a 20-hour cap. Students who have a scheduled summer break are able to resume unlimited working hours until the fall semester. In a press release, the federal government said it intends to increase the cap to 24 hours a week in the fall semester.

Victoria welcomes community safety input

In effort to tackle a range of concerns, the City of Victoria is developing a Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan and is welcoming public input. The plan aims to address safety strategies and improvement for all community members. Conversations will be held with members of the Songhees and Esquimalt nations and local Indigenous organizations and the communities they serve, and the plan will be presented to Council in September. The online survey is available until Sunday, May 12, with print copies available at Victoria City Hall for pick up and drop off. To take the survey, visit engage.victoria.ca.

—LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON,
STUDENT EDITOR AND GREG
PRATT, MANAGING EDITOR

archaeology

Students get opportunity to excavate bear bones on campus

“My colleagues in Indigenous Studies came and helped and we drummed for the bear.”

NICOLE KILBURN
CAMOSUN COLLEGE

RAY NUFER
STUDENT EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Camosun Anthropology students recently had the chance to participate in an archaeological excavation of a black bear on campus.

After an Indigenous colleague gifted Anthropology professor Nicole Kilburn the carcass of a black bear in 2021, she took the first step to what would later become a hands-on learning opportunity for the students.

“When I was offered this unusual gift, I didn’t want to bury it in my backyard,” says Kilburn.

The bones needed some clean-up, and Kilburn thought that the Lansdowne campus would be the right place to let Mother Nature do her work. That situation turned out to be an opportunity for students down the road—by the winter 2024 semester, the buried bear was ready to be the subject of hands-on learning through a full excavation to reveal, lift, clean, and label the bones.

“There was a real adrenaline boost when we first uncovered those,” says Kilburn. “It was some

of the rib bones coming up off the top.”

Katie Waterhouse’s Forensic Anthropology class worked together with Kilburn’s Archaeology class to evaluate the bones from a forensics perspective. From looking at the bones they could tell a variety of information, such as the fact that the bear was a juvenile, from the presence of many small, unfused pieces of bone.

“If somebody’s a really good tennis player, you will actually see that on their bones,” says Kilburn. “It’s almost like our bodies are tattooed with parts of our lived experience. And I find that really interesting, that our bones can tell our stories.”

The paws of the bear were kept for Indigenous ceremonial purposes, and the skull was beaded and turned into a gift for Camosun Indigenous Studies alumnus Eddy Charlie, a co-initiator of Orange Shirt Day Victoria. Current students and instructors from the Indigenous Studies program were integral to the excavation, celebrating the bear’s life and death through drumming and song.



RAY NUFER/NEXUS

Camosun College Anthropology instructor Nicole Kilburn with some of the bear bones that students excavated.

“My colleagues in Indigenous Studies came and helped and we drummed for the bear,” says Kilburn. “[Indigenous Studies instructor] Sandee Mitchell decided, after talking to some of her mentors, that bringing out the Anishinaabe Bear Song a little bit early was appropriate because our bears are waking up earlier these days because of climate change.”

Kilburn says that seeing the bear through a different lens allowed her students to view it as more than just an object or a material piece of

history, and says that that extends to the archaeological study of humans. It’s very important to her that her students learn with their hearts, not just their heads.

“In the history of archaeology, we have had a very material focus where we think about things, and when you focus on the material culture, you can forget about the humans,” she says.

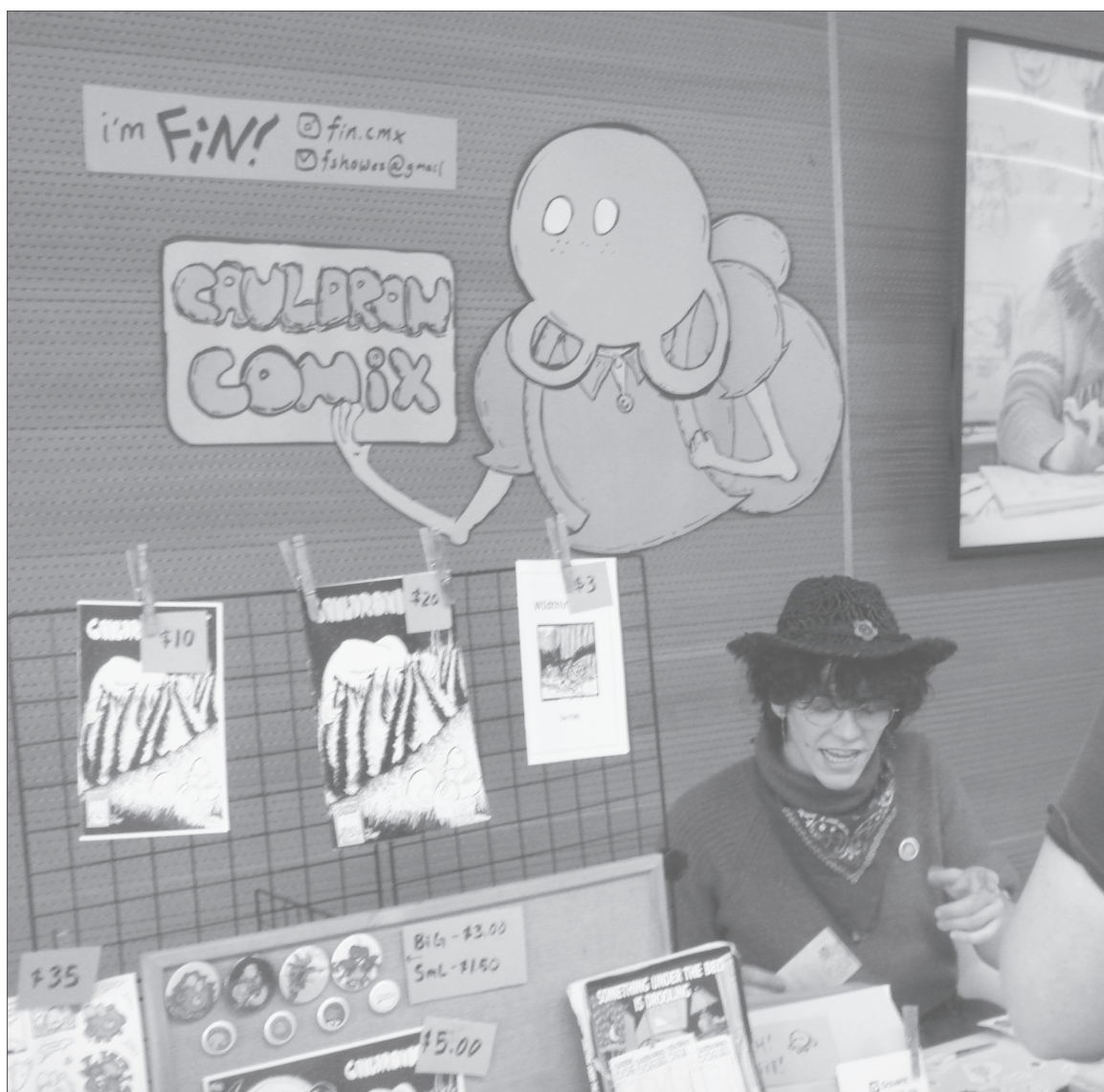
Overall, the students were excited, and the experience took learning outside of the textbook in a way that they had never done before.

Kilburn—who adds that the Anthropology department is actively working with the college on similar projects for the future—says that many students stayed after class hours because they were so engaged with the project.

“I think that we can get quite overwhelmed with how much work there is, and the pressures of just focusing on grades instead of remembering that we’re getting all these skills,” she says. “And one of those skills is getting excited about learning something new.”

eyed on campus

Camosun students display comics, art at recent year-end fest



On Thursday, April 18, Camosun College Comics & Graphic Novels students showcased their work at the year-end Camosun Com-

ics Arts Festival. The event—held in the Sherri Bell Hall in the Wilna Thomas Building at the Lansdowne campus—featured, among many

others, outgoing *Nexus* cartoonists Finnegan Sinclair Howes (above), Kit Miller (upper right) and Recla Ker (lower right).

ALL PHOTOS BY GREG PRATT/NEXUS



student experience

Camosun trades students head to Germany on exchange trip

“In Germany they’re pretty ahead of the game with innovation and just how they do things.”

TREVER JOYCE
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT

AJ AIKEN
SENIOR WRITER

Seven Camosun Fine Furniture and three Carpentry students recently went to Regensburg, Germany to get a glimpse into the world of post-secondary trades overseas.

The students went to Germany as part of the German Apprenticeship Training Exchange (GATE) program, with support from Global Skills Opportunity, which is funded by Employment and Social Development Canada. Four German students came to Camosun through the exchange.

Similar to Canada, German trades programs combine classroom learning and work experience.

“When we were first told about the opportunity to go it was early on in our course,” says Fine Furniture student Trever Joyce. “Then, working through the course and gaining more knowledge and skill, I got more excited to go to Germany, to see how things were done over there, because I know in Germany they’re pretty ahead of the game with innovation and just how they do things.”

The students were able to visit different schools in Germany—while there are similarities in tools and practices, they noticed a difference in the education system. During Grades 5 and 6, students go through a period of orientation and testing to determine which educational track—trades or university—they’ll take. Teachers make recommendations based on academic achievement, self-confidence, and ability to work independently. However, parents have the final say on what track their child takes.

“A lot of the students that we met were early 20s, 21, 22,” says Joyce, “One of the schools we went to, they had 17- and 18-year-olds doing carpentry and furniture. It just seems that things are decided for you at an earlier age over there than they are here.”

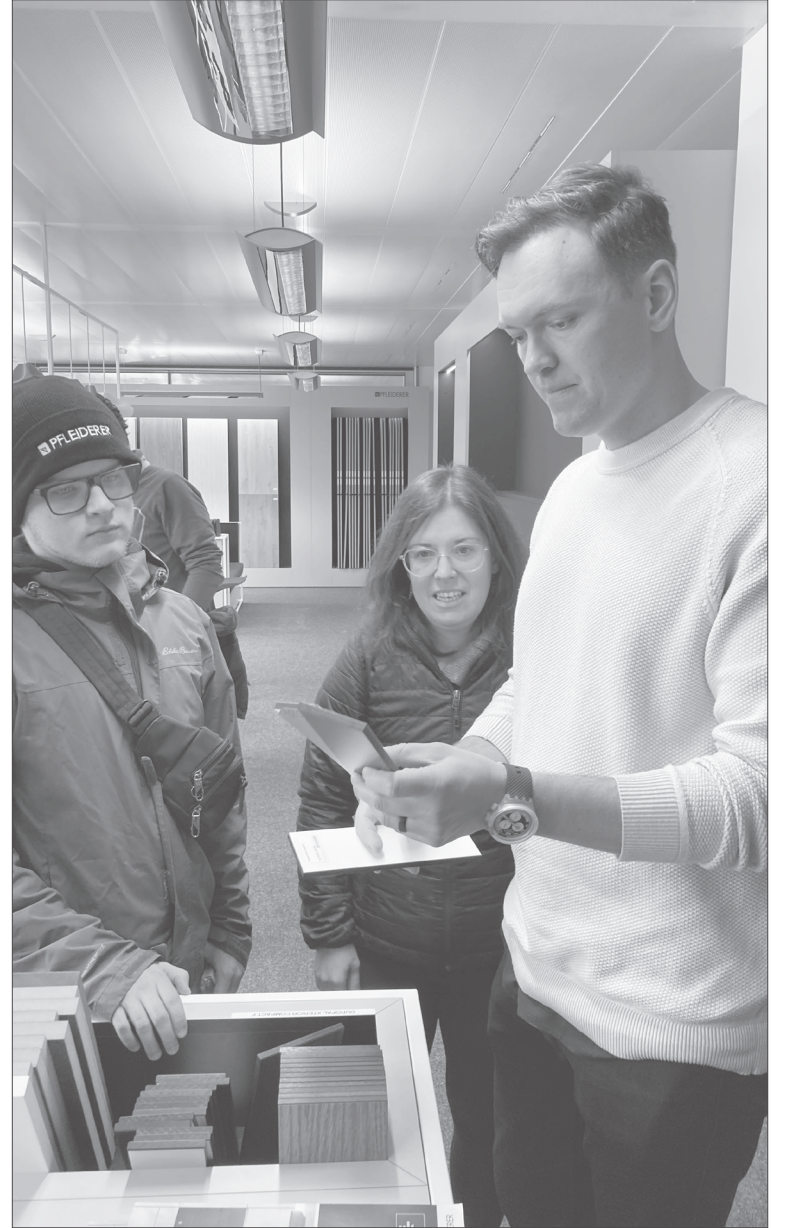
The advancement, innovation, and amount of technology that German schools have was an eye-opening experience for students.

“They had rooms set up for you to go into to do the type of work that

we’re doing, but then they also had these machines that would basically make our jobs obsolete,” says Joyce. “One of the shops we went to would take a complete raw log, bring it in from outside, strip it, and then make its way through the facility and process it into whatever you needed, basically. It cut joints and joinery to the dimension and shape you need.”

The Camosun students also had the opportunity to do some sightseeing, including seeing the restoration of St. Peter’s Cathedral in Regensburg. Joyce says that it was a wonderful experience to visit other schools, and visit another city, and he hopes there will be more opportunities for students to go on exchange programs in the future. Another benefit to the exchange program was the development of stronger relationships between classmates.

“I think another main reason [for going was] because I got to spend two good weeks with people in class that I didn’t get to with other people [in the class]. So, my relationships with them are definitely stronger than other people in the classroom,” says Joyce. “Which is great, because going out on my own it’s always nice to have people that you can call on and trust to come give you a hand or help you out in situations with this type of work. Relationship building is a huge thing.”



AL VAN AKKER
Camosun student Trever Joyce (right) touring the Pfleiderer factory in Germany.

CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY SPONSORED CONTENT

Camosun College Student Society supports Camosun open education initiatives

“Open educational resources and other zero textbook cost initiatives make education more affordable for students and ensures equitable access to learning materials.”

MICHEL TURCOTTE
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY

Open Education Week was back in March, but the Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) celebrates the achievements of Camosun College instructors in the area of open education year round.

Open educational resources include learning, teaching, and research materials that others can use, make changes to, and distribute, for free. For students, one of the main benefits of open education resources is access to free textbooks.

CCSS executive director Michel Turcotte says that open education is beneficial for students because it helps ease their financial burden and also can help create better learning materials.

“Many students are not able to afford all of their required or recommend textbooks and struggle academically as a result,” says Turcotte. “Open educational resources and other zero textbook cost initiatives make education more affordable for students and ensures equitable access to learning materials. Open educational resources are not inferior to regular textbooks—in fact, they are often more adaptable, interesting to read, and better customized to the course material.”

On Friday, March 8, Camosun held its Open Education Showcase and Recognition Awards event at the Sherri Bell Hall in the Wilna Thomas Building at the Lansdowne campus. Faculty from programs including Anthropology, Math, Sheet Metal, Pipe Trades, Marketing, Sport Management, and many others were rec-

ognized at the event. Turcotte was invited to attend the event to help acknowledge Camosun’s leaders in open education.

“It was wonderful to help recognize amazing Camosun instructors who are dedicated to providing cost-free learning resources to their students, even in areas such as Biology and the trades, which have historically had very expensive textbooks,” says Turcotte.

At last year’s teacher recognition award celebration, Biology instructor

Charles Molnar was given the Mary Burgess Open Education Recognition Award for his work helping create free open-source textbook *Concepts of Biology—1st Canadian Edition*.

“The modern textbook companies write many different formats that students can take advantage of and provide various resources, like videos and online quizzes and stuff like that,” Molnar told *Nexus* at the time. “The point is is that students get this quality product with all the different aspects included and it is forever, and it is free of charge. So, they can have this and don’t have to rent it or return it or anything of the sort.”

Emily Schudel is a big supporter of open education here at Camosun. Schudel is the instructional designer and chair of the Dr. Lloyd Morin Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at the college.

“Emily received a surprise award to recognize her tireless efforts and it was a pleasure to co-sign that certificate on behalf of students,” says Turcotte. “I really enjoy working with Emily and can not help but be infected by her unrivalled passion and energy. She is an amazing advocate for zero textbook cost initiatives, which has helped save Camosun students thousands of dollars.”

Head to camosun.libguides.com/c.php?g=733032 to check out the Camosun College Open Education Resources guide. It’s a handy resource that, among other things, can tip you off to some courses that use open



textbooks (hello, Marketing 230 and Anthropology 260) and also provide you with interesting pieces of information, such as the fact that within open education there are Traditional Knowledge Licences, which honour Indigenous and cultural knowledge, something lacking in traditional copyright laws.

The Camosun College Open Education Resources guide also features profiles of Camosun instructors who are involved in open education, such as Dental Hygiene instructor Liz Morch. Morch pointed out that another great aspect of open education is the flexibility it offers for instructors, which can mean a more reasonable course load for students.

“In January, students have quite a bit of time, whereas in April, they are going to be stressed out and maxed out with projects that require considerable time and effort,” Morch explained in her profile. “If I create modules for them to work through on their own, then they can choose to finish 80 or 90 percent of this course in January so they have more time at the end of the term to devote to their final projects.”

What I really learned

One student

Story by Jayanti Bach
Photos by [unintelligible]



I finished the Community, Family and Child Studies program (CFCS) this winter semester and it feels so great. Finally, I could see assignments and exams coming to an end. These two years have been wonderful and so full of learning experiences, hard work, new people, and curiosity. These two years have also been intense and loaded with emotions. This program has opened my heart and eyes, undoubtedly.

My academic life already started some years ago with my bachelor's degree. Then, in 2020, when the pandemic hit the world, I was trying to defend my master's thesis. I remember saying, "I don't want to study anymore. I am so done with this studying thing." Little did I know that after some months I'd be looking for a new program to enrol in.

Behind every choice I've made in my scholarly life, there's always been a particular connection. For instance, I studied education because I started teaching when I turned 17 and I was sure that was my vocation. Next, I decided to pursue a master's degree in Performing Arts as a genuine attempt to integrate my love for classrooms with my passion for acting and dancing.

How does the CFCS program at Camosun fit in this puzzle? After working for some years with a large spectrum of families, children, youth, and adults, I realized I wanted to develop more tools to support individuals through arts and education. After some exhaustive research, I found this unique program that immediately clicked with what I wanted to achieve. I checked the curricula and right away could see myself at Camosun. Would this be it? Is this what I really wanted? After some months, my family and I were packing our lives in four bags that travelled through four different planes all the way from Peru.

Now that I've just finished this adventure at Camosun, I've made a list of things the CFCS program brings into your life that no one tells you about.

Self-appreciation

First things first: get a mirror and make sure you look at your reflection every single day. That mirror will reflect a face full of happiness, excitement, and—I'm not trying to sell perfection—exhaustion. It's in charge of reminding you what a great person you are and the steps you had to take to move forward. The CFCS program has a big reflective component that allows you to delve into your personal world, and you learn that you have to consciously acknowledge the positive within you.

Time is pure gold

This program doesn't bring time into your life. However, it does help you develop a great awareness for this valuable resource. As you can tell, it's no secret that I'm not a teen student anymore, so I'm somewhat experienced with time and due dates. Nevertheless, studying in a new country and being a mother were two unique challenges while being a full-time student. My time at Camosun taught me attention to detail while keeping in mind the big picture. In other words, planning time slots for assignments and projects while not losing perspective that you also have a life.

New friends, old friends

The connections I've built with my classmates are *sui generis*—all so diverse, from many countries, speaking distinct languages, with each one of us going through different life stages and yet

I think that the Community, Family and Child Studies program recognizes the natural curiosity every student has and finds a way to encourage learning. Some of the things I learned from the program

managing to find a special bond. It gave me a sense of familiarity and affection, as if we had known each other for years. Teamwork projects, innumerable hours of conversations on life and love, our internal struggles, the support we gave each other, the food we ate together. All those memories are so important in my thoughts today.

Childcare services

Are you aware that Camosun has childcare services on each campus? If you were a parent, it would be a fantastic decision if you drop off your child at the Camosun Childcare Centre. The human warmth I've found in the staff has been outstanding. I have nothing but praise for every educator who has taken my child to school in my country without knowing any English. My son was able to easily adapt due to the support every educator showed him.

New colours

As you can tell, one of the aspects I loved about the vast diversity Camosun holds is the connection with a wide variety of people from all continents in these two years. My experience could only be compared to a young person in *Eighty Days* for the first time.

My time at Camosun opened a new world for me. I held about life and diversity. It went back in Peru, as I discovered the importance of inclusion. My understanding of culture and identification of nationalities. I realized that my identity is not only your country, but your upbringing and the extent of your identity as a human. In my opinion, it is doing visible work in promoting cultural diversity to integrate and respect our identities, through the annual Cultural Showcase, the celebration of various cultures at the Victoria Pride Parade, the social media campaigns for Ramadan, and volunteering opportunities.

My classes have allowed me to appreciate the new nuances I discovered. The way each teacher and the care each teacher took to support their students has been incredible. I feel a big sense of pride in the instructor I've met since I started in Sociology. I gained colourful insight when I started

... at Camosun College

...ent's story

...hani, contributing writer
...provided

...nily and Child Studies program
...every student has and uses it as a
...times I wonder if I chose it or if
...chose me.

...ives me that unique sensation of
...met during our childhood years.
...urs in class, our nonstop conver-
...jokes and nicknames, the many
...to each other, and, of course, all
...ories are in the past but hold an

...n College has a daycare facility on
...n't, you are now. Having my child
...services has been one of the best
...2022. Not only are the logistics
...e same campus where you study,
...every person at my son's daycare
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...eptember 2022.
...arted to get a deep understanding

of Canadian culture. When I talk about it, I don't only refer to the everyday interactions and societal protocols, but I'm also referring to the incredible Indigenous cultures that I wasn't aware of. I'm so grateful and honoured that these lands in which Camosun College is situated, the territories of the Lək̓ʷəŋən (Songhees and Kosapsum) and WSÁNEĆ peoples, have granted me with the opportunity to learn here. Acknowledging this essential cultural and historical piece in Canadian history made me more connected to these lands as I was able to find similarities and connections to my Peruvian and Indian heritages.

Last but not least, due to the cultural diversity Camosun has, I've really enjoyed fitting in. Being half Peruvian and half Indian can often be, believe it or not, difficult. I've had to answer the question "Asian or Latin American?" more than once. The Camosun culture has allowed me to embrace both cultures and portray the best of both worlds.

Lifelong learner

After working in the education field for over 15 years, I've heard the term "lifelong learner" quite a bit. Many international schools and first-world scholastic environments promote lifelong learning experiences as a way to ensure these students will always... learn? If you're confused, as I once was, about this pompous expression, let me explain it to you through my first-hand experience at Camosun.

As I've previously mentioned, the way in which the CFCS program is designed is tailored to make you question what we see and to confront the biases we carry. The program made me notice that we all have some sort of bias or prejudice that interferes with our judgement and decisions—the systems around us while we grow in life, the education we receive, our daily interactions, our friends, everything and everyone contributes to the people we are today. In this regard, this program makes you explore the person behind your many layers; it provides you with tools to connect with your inner self. This means that after you know what your strengths and areas for development are, you will be a more complete version of yourself to provide support to individuals in the community. To put it another way, you gain skills to understand the world in you and around you, which allows you to constantly build a better version of yourself so you can serve your community.

The fact that you are asked to revise who you are and what you are good at gives you a lifelong learning perspective as it acknowledges your natural human drive to explore and grow, and it improves your sense of self-worth by focusing on goals or ideas that inspire you. Moreover, this process is associated with your own personal and professional growth, something we're regularly seeking as humans, which means it's something we aspire for the rest of our lives. That's why I dare to call my studies at Camosun a lifelong learning experience.

I think that the CFCS program recognizes the natural curiosity every student has and uses it as a way to encourage learning. Sometimes I wonder if I chose it or if the program chose me. I've grown so much, even though it's been a challenging two years. This piece is a way to honour these lands that have taken care of me, all the lessons I've learned, all the instructors who've shared their wisdom with me, the countless moments of laughter I've shared with my friends, all the difficulties involved with migrating here, the immeasurable support my family has given me, and, most importantly, the self-determination I thought I didn't have.



stage

Vision Disturbance helps people see hope

“This play shows that even if you’re not perfect, there are aspects of the world around you that you can savour and enjoy.”

WENDY GAIL
VISION DISTURBANCE

MACKENZIE GIBSON
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Vision Disturbance is an odd love story written by Christina Masciotti, and Theatre Inconnu is bringing it to the stage this month. The play follows Mondo, an immigrant woman in the middle of a divorce so vicious that the stress begins to affect her eyesight—this leads to a budding romance with her optometrist. The pair are the only on-stage characters, and the script digs deep into their psyches, allowing director Wendy Gail to dig deep into the messaging.

“In some ways, we all feel like strangers in a strange land,” says Gail. “Mondo, she is an immigrant from Greece who lives now in Redding, Pennsylvania. And she also doesn’t feel like she belongs in this community at all.”

Gail is a well-established director in the Victoria theatre scene and she always finds a way to put her own spin on things, particularly when it comes to her stance on women taking the stage.

“Plays have mostly been written

by men for men and one of my guiding things is to find plays that have strong women in the roles,” says Gail. “If it doesn’t, and I’ve been asked to direct it, I’ll try to figure out a way to make it have strong women in it. For example, I directed a play called *Trad* for Theatre Inconnu—it was supposed to be done by three men. I thought, well, the heck with that. It was sort of a fantasy play set in Ireland... So I figured, hey, we can have women play those men, and we did. They put on the long, grey beards and the hats and everything, and they were fabulous, and people loved it.”

This play is no exception. Mondo’s character arc shows her strength, humanity, grit, sense of humor, and grief, says Gail.

“Coming to a completely different world, you have to have a lot of strength and fortitude, and flexibility too, because you have to be able to pick up on the new language as well,” she says. “And so Mondo’s journey is really well illustrated by the author. Mondo has a lot of monologues in which she describes



SARAH NICOLE FAUCHER

Vision Disturbance is an odd love story that aims to remind people about seeing the positive, even in negative times.

not only her husband, but also her experience as an immigrant living in this new, weird world, and also what life was like in Greece. She ultimately comes to a realization that she has to integrate into this world if she’s going to make it, but not to sort of shove off her Greek identity because she will always be a Greek woman in living in the US... It certainly gives it a lot of texture and a lot of depth to have that to work with.”

The show deals with a wide range of human emotions, leaving it hard to clearly label as a tragedy,

comedy, drama, romance, or any other singular definition. But Gail says that, ultimately, the show is about hope.

“I think a lot of people are angry, a lot of people are anxious, a lot of people are depressed for various, you know, gazillions of reasons,” she says. “And this play shows that even if you’re not perfect, there are aspects of the world around you that you can savour and enjoy. And that’s what these two people discover with each other. And it’s not saying, Oh, they get married, and they wind up happily ever after

or anything like that. It’s just saying that with another person, or a friend or whatever, you can find ways to find joy in your life. And I think we all have to hang on to that and remember that, and hopefully this play will make people think that and feel that.”

Vision Disturbance
Various days and times,
until Saturday, May 18
\$10 student tickets,
1923 Fernwood Road
theatreinconnu.com

review

The Marriage of Figaro exciting and beautiful opera



DAVID COOPER PHOTOGRAPHY

The Marriage of Figaro is an opera with a complicated story but this adaptation was pulled off excellently.

EMILY WELCH
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Opera is a tricky thing. People either love it or are seriously frightened of it. I grew up in an arts-appreciative family and had a fair amount of experience with opera from a young age, so I was excited, to say the least, when I heard that *The Marriage of Figaro* was being performed at Victoria’s Royal Theatre in April.

The story of *Figaro* is beyond complicated, as it’s a wild ride of

soap-opera-esque storyline filled with love, jealousy, and even long-lost parents and children reuniting. It’s excruciatingly funny and silly, however, the music set to it is some of the most achingly beautiful that Mozart ever wrote. The orchestra, conducted by Timothy Vernon, pulled it all together flawlessly.

I was immediately impressed by the cast of *Figaro*. Each character was perfectly cast, but I was particularly taken with Suzanne Rigden,

who plays Susanna. Rigden brings life and expression to her character; she sings almost effortlessly with a voice that seized my heart. However, the entire cast threw themselves into this production with a *tour de force* I haven’t seen in a long time.

The set and costumes were surprising and unique, as instead of the original 18th-century brocade and powdered wigs, the whole cast was outfitted—thanks to costume designer Nancy Bryant—like a

Mad Men episode, straight from the early 1960s. The set, designed by Ken MacDonald, was mystical, interchanging, and colourful, also resembling art from the ’60s period.

I can’t recommend *The Marriage of Figaro* enough. It’s as exciting to behold as it is beautiful to listen to, and the endless laughter is a wonderful bonus. Even if you’re normally put off by opera, I’d take a chance with this one if you get a chance. You won’t regret it a bit.

New Music Revue



Peter Bibby

Drama King

(Spinning Top Records)
3/5

Drama King—the fourth album from Australian indie-rock artist Peter Bibby—is excruciatingly mediocre, as the good songs don’t make up for the bad ones.

The first four songs on the album are a slow buildup of tension to “Baby Squid,” a track that puts you into the less-than-sober state where Bibby spent much of his adulthood, apart from the last year. The song marks a tonal change in the album—while the first half is drunken, the second half is self-reflective, and this song is in between it all, showcasing thoughts and an overall headspace that feel like recovering from a hangover.

However, while there’s a buildup that promises something, the payoff to the growing tension doesn’t quite live up to what the album is trying to be. While there are a few songs here that sound nice and are worth a listen, it’s just not as emotional as Bibby thinks; *Drama King* is unable to keep me engaged through the length of the album.

—Jamie Abigail Lennox



Listen and Learn

by AJ Aiken

Fleshxfur aims to put Victoria rap on global map



MICHELLE BOSCHARD

Local rapper Fleshxfur got his stage name from his love of dogs.

“[Classified’s ‘The Maritimes’] just kind of put the Maritimes on the map and I just felt like I needed to do a song like that for Victoria.”

FLESHXFUR
RAPPER

Fleshxfur (pronounced “flesh and fur”) is setting the bar for the underground rap scene in Victoria. And it’s not just locals who think so: he’s the only Canadian to win five consecutive battles on Eminem’s Shade 45 XM station’s demo competition, where listeners vote on their favourite songs.

Originally from Brampton, Ontario, Fleshxfur (also known as John Welch) came to Victoria to pursue a bachelor of arts in Geography. His love of dogs turned him toward dog training, and eventually he began his own business as an adventure dog walker, running dogs on hiking trails and through forests.

Working as a dog walker was not Fleshxfur’s first experience working with animals—when he was younger, he worked with wolves and coyotes at a wildlife sanctuary. Deriving his stage name from his love of dogs, “Fleshxfur” is a play

on man and dog and also a way to be distinct within rap culture.

“I wanted a name that you can search and you’re not going to come up with a million others of that artist,” says Fleshxfur. “You know, like Lil’ this, Lil’ that, so, I just came up with something unique.”

Before he started listening to rap music, as a kid, Fleshxfur’s musical taste was partly influenced by his parents and partly by popular music.

“I listened to my parents’ stuff, Led Zeppelin or The Beatles, or I listened to Smashing Pumpkins and Alanis Morissette,” he says. “And then when I started getting to rap, it was like Lil Wayne and Eminem, Jay-Z, DMX, Busta Rhymes, that kind of stuff.”

Fleshxfur’s not shy about collaborating on songs: his latest release, *Premeditation*, is a collab with local rapper Mr. ESQ.

“Mr. ESQ started making music

right around the same time, actually. We started going to the same studio and we’ve kind of watched each other grow and we just became friends,” he says. “We’ve always kind of hit each other up for verses or to collab on different songs and it just felt natural that we should just do a whole album together. Something we can perform together. Something that can put Victoria on the map. So just for the two of us to get on an album just made sense.”

Another way that Fleshxfur is trying to bring attention to Victoria’s rap scene is through his song “welcome to Victoria.” The inspiration for the track came from the song “The Maritimes” by Nova Scotia rapper Classified.

“[Classified] was talking about how [‘The Maritimes’] hooked a lot of people onto his music, even with people that weren’t from the Maritimes,” he says. “It just kind of put the Maritimes on the map and I just felt like I needed to do a song like that for Victoria. And I felt like they didn’t have a song like that, so it just came together.”

The song is an uplifting tribute to the city; it starts out with the line, “I just feel my city doesn’t get the recognition it deserves.” The lyrics to the song hit all the Victoria hot spots.

“I talked about, like, Government Street and Mile Zero and Langford and the Sticky Wicket,” says Fleshxfur. “I tried to, you know, put landmarks in people’s minds.”

review

The Lehman Trilogy offers behind-the-scenes look at financial crash and so much more



DAVID COOPER

The Lehman Trilogy, which runs until Sunday, May 19 at The Belfry Theatre, is highly recommended by Nexus’ Emily Welch.

EMILY WELCH
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

I’ve been fascinated with the backstories of the 2008 financial

crash since it happened. I’ve wondered many times about what could possibly have led to such immense chaos. *The Lehman Trilogy*, current-

ly running at The Belfry Theatre, gives those of us who wonder a closer look into the crash—starting out with an innocent dream of new

The Lehman Trilogy is never dull. We watch these three brothers get seduced by the fantasy of endless wealth wrapped up in the drama of life and world events which will surround it.

life and freedom and ending up with those dreams being taken over by cruel capitalism.

The Lehman Trilogy brings us on the journey of three brothers—Henry, Mayer, and Emmanuel Lehman—as they arrive in Montgomery, Alabama from Rimparr, Bavaria in 1844. The brothers are starry eyed and full of hope as they open up their new fabric and clothing shop.

The audience is immediately taken in; it’s easy to feel what they’re feeling, what it’s like to have to start over with nothing but hope and uncertainty to keep them afloat.

The Lehman Trilogy is never dull. We watch these three brothers get seduced by the fantasy of endless wealth wrapped up in the drama of life and world events which will surround it. The acting is superb; I can’t favour any one actor of the three because they are all really good. They each play several different people as their family changes generations, and, as difficult as that

is, they pull it off very smoothly, with humour and empathy.

The set, designed by Shawn Kerwin, is a standard-looking boardroom, but it rotates, perhaps to symbolize the fluctuation of capitalism.

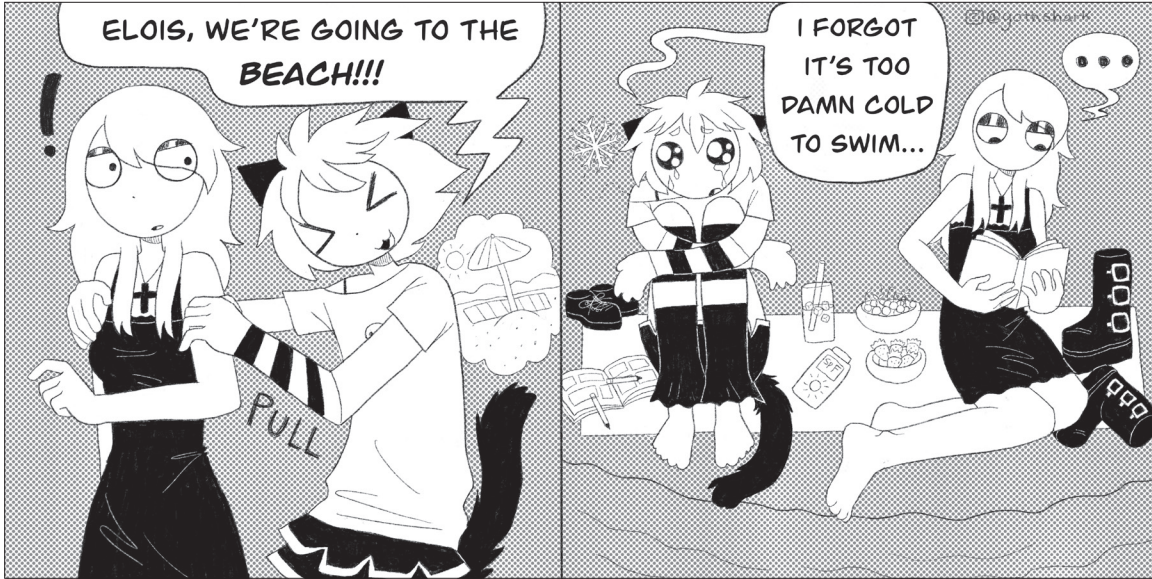
I think anyone would enjoy this performance. The story of how the Lehman brothers started off with a tiny fabric store and quickly became one of the most successful financial institutions ever to exist (and crash) is pretty riveting. The play explores many other important topics: slavery, anti-Semitism, and even love, and it’s all wrapped up in their growing obsession with wealth.

I highly recommend *The Lehman Trilogy*. It’ll have your mind whirling for days.

The Lehman Trilogy

Various times and days, until
Sunday, May 19
Various prices,
The Belfry Theatre
belfry.bc.ca

Ruby Rioux and the Bats from Saturn - Ray Nufer

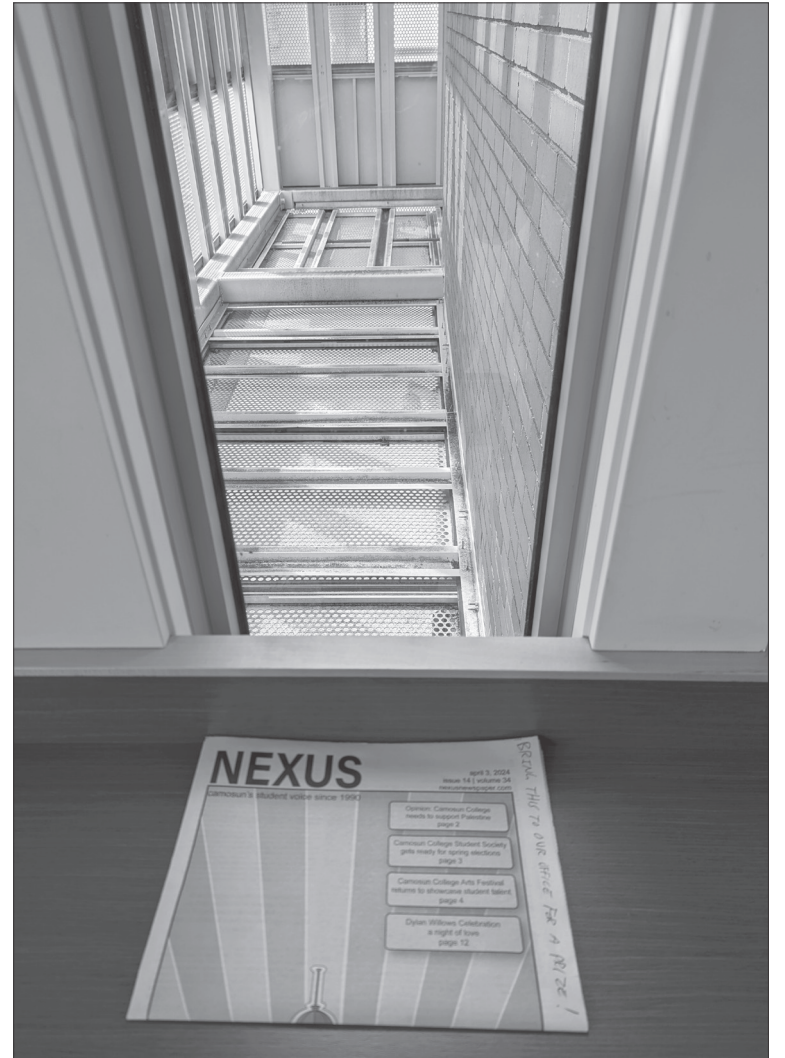


Things That Happen - Jaiden Fowler



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.

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

Find it and bring it in to our

Good luck!



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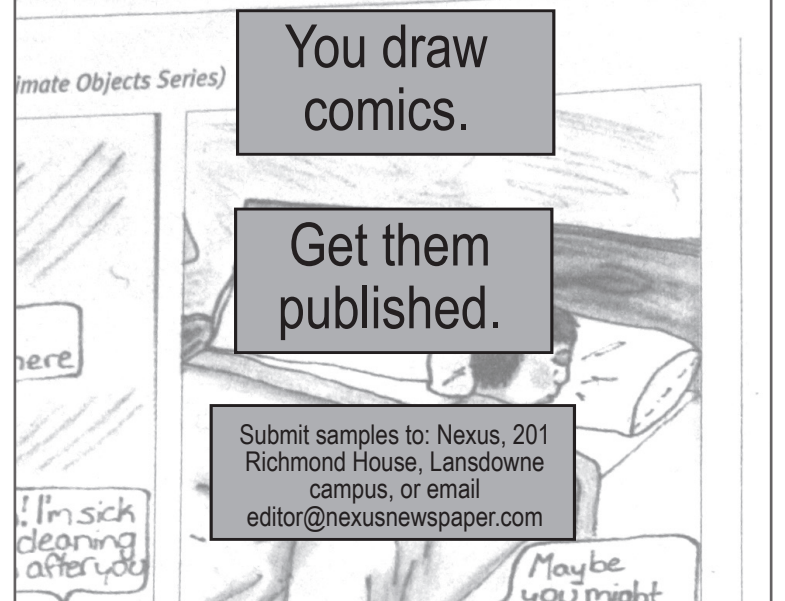
What's happening at nexusnewspaper.com

Week of April 29, 2024, top five most read stories:

1. "The Lehman Trilogy offers behind-the-scenes look at financial crash and so much more," April 29, 2024
2. "Listen and Learn: Dylan Willows Celebration a night of love," March 25, 2024
3. "Open Space: Camosun needs to support Palestine," April 3, 2024
4. "Nic's Flicks: How Star Wars copied Dune," March 25, 2024
5. "Camosun College Student Society April election results in," April 18, 2024

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

NEXUS HUMOUR



Find web-exclusive stories at nexusnewspaper.com.





Kiryn's Wellness Corner

Side-bending into spring

Although the first official day of spring was back in March, our local weather has still felt a bit chilly, and you've probably noticed that you crave the comfort of warming foods and drink and bundling up inside. Notice, though, that as the days get warmer and longer you tend toward being outside longer and you begin reaching for cold brew coffees, fruit smoothies, and raw vegetables and fruits.

Seasons are known to impact our moods, energy levels, and behaviour; you can support the natural rhythms of each season by eating seasonal foods. If you're new to Canada, you may not be familiar with the foods and which season they appear in. You can reach out to local connections or the internet to find out what local foods are more abundantly available in each season.

However, we all have a great guide inside of us asking us to pay attention to which foods we're drawn to when shopping at the grocery store or local farmers' market. Our bodies intuitively know with seasonal changes to reach for lighter, more energizing fruits and vegetables in spring and summer and to eat more raw than cooked foods to match our internal energy to the seasonal environment.

Our bodies also crave different types of movement as the seasons change.

The spring season is a great time to practice postures that open the body back up after the more hibernating winter months. Side bends are wonderful for stimulating energy movement and to begin sloughing off the heaviness of winter. Yoga's side-bending stretch

is often referred to as standing half moon or side tree bend.

With your feet together, or hip-width apart for more support, sweep your arms up over your head, bringing your palms together.

Keep your feet facing forward, inhale, and stabilize your core by drawing your navel in toward your spine and slightly up toward your heart. As you exhale, slowly bend toward the right, stopping where you feel a good stretch but are still stable. Stay for a breath or two and then, on your inhale, come back up to centre. As you exhale, repeat on the other side.

This posture can also be done with one arm down your side for added support as you build up core strength.

Until next time, keep it real and keep a spring in your step.

by Kiryn Quinn



Lydia's Film Critique

by Lydia Zuleta Johnson

A late '90s action-thriller double-feature

During lazy overcast days and nights, my television is plastered with simple-minded thrills. The DVD player runs on overdrive to amuse my obedient brain with good cops, bad cops, and Michael Douglas. I absorb every morsel of schlocky action. And while I sit at the edge of my crumb-infested sofa, tensions rise and fall into my lap of gas-station goodies. This is the good life, I say.

The thriller genre is wide ranging, beginning over 100 years ago with Fred C. Newmeyer and Sam Taylor's *Safety Last!* being released in 1923, and it carries on now to the umpteenth *Mission: Impossible*. Both are miraculously performed with many real jaw-dropping sequences of death-defying stunts. But I think Hollywood knocked it out of the park (and never returned) during the '90s with F. Gary Gray's *The Negotiator* and Michael Bay's *The Rock*, which both encompass everything I admire about the genre.

As its title would suggest, *The Negotiator* is a classic cop flick, and Danny Roman (Samuel L. Jackson) is the smoothest-talking negotiator in the game. As a testament to his expertise, the film cold opens on a madman, who, in a fit of rage, has taken his own daughter hostage. Within eight minutes, the situation is diffused and hero Danny is celebrated with commendatory cheers and applause. They all go back to a typical-looking cop bar to celebrate. Unfortunately for Danny, however, he's been struck with bitter luck. As the film's tagline reads, "He frees hostages for a living. Now he's taking hostages to survive." This is all true—he has been sorely accused of bloody murder and must use his resources accordingly. Thanks to a lifetime of trade tricks,

a cool-headed Danny locks himself and several colleagues in their office building to begin the plea of innocence—do not fear, he knows what he's doing. Danny demands only for one negotiator to resolve the issue: Chris Sabian (Kevin Spacey). Their short conferences dictate the fate of the several lives trapped under Danny's authority. With police corruption, wrongful accusations, hostages, and a ticking clock on the line, Danny must choose his words carefully.

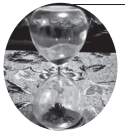
The Rock is similarly composed of clichés: hostages, unlikely duos, deadlines. But where *The Negotiator* lacks in chemical weaponry, *The Rock* does not. After many years of Alcatraz's remodelled tourism, decorated war hero General Hummel (Ed Harris) and his militia occupy the territory and all tourists inside, in demand of \$100 million. If the FBI does not comply, Hummel plans on releasing chemical warfare against the entirety of San Francisco. Thankfully, Goodspeed (Nicholas Cage) is an FBI scientist and Mason (Sean Connery) is a former Alcatraz convict and ex-British Intelligence. Needless to say, they are hired as an ensemble to save the day.

Bay's Alcatraz is a maze of Universal Studios-like amusement rides, quickly removing the good guys away from the bad ones. But in a real world without such luxuries, the cheesiest of them are the most indulgent. '90s thrillers continue to burn into my television without guilt and if the time ever does come to escape the plague it has developed on my vocabulary, a San Francisco cable car can explode me out into the atmosphere.

The Negotiator: 4/5

The Rock: 4/5

by Emily Welch



Not the Last Word

Connecting by disconnecting

I recently listened to a CBC program about our right to disconnect. Because of all the exciting technology available today, people are feeling more and more pressure to be plugged in to something all the time, whether it be scrolling through our phones, laptops, or Fitbits or giving commands to our houses and cars. There doesn't seem to be a moment in the day that isn't connected online somehow.

I remember a time when it wasn't like this, when telephone use was for home only, and if someone wasn't able to answer, you left a voicemail and assumed you'd hear from that person at their convenience. Nowadays, the option to be unavailable isn't there; if a phone or text isn't answered right away, the assumption is either that you've been ghosted or something terrible

has happened. It's not a fair excuse anymore to tell people, "I decided to take the night off and not answer my phone at all." It's also considered irresponsible for people to not answer work-related calls, texts, or emails if the work day is over.

The amount of trolling and bullying online is also continuing to rise. When I check out chat forums, I'm always kind of astounded at some of the cruelty that goes on between people. I don't understand what point there is to making another person feel small in order to get a quick shot of dopamine, yet it seems to be a really popular pastime. I notice when I'm in any public place—whether it be a coffeehouse, the bus, or the ferry to Vancouver—that almost every single person is on their phone, with the exception of the very occasional book or maga-

zine reader; I find those people super refreshing.

So when do we have the right to shut everything down and disconnect for our own sanity? How much courage will it take to tell people in our lives (friends, family, even employers) that our communication is down for the night and they can wait until tomorrow to get through? I'd love to take this challenge but I too am slightly terrified of what people will think, or what I'll miss. I do know, however, that if we keep adding more devices to our list of communication technologies, humans may give up speaking out loud at all, never mind taking time outside with only the sun and air to touch our senses.

So, think about our right to disconnect. Maybe if we do, we can find new connection to the world.

May Horoscope

by Ray Nufer

Aries (March 21 - April 19)

After the solar eclipse on April 8, you've had lots of time to focus on yourself, Ram. Career is a big topic for you in May; this is a good time for professional development. Jupiter entering Gemini on May 25 activates your third house, causing you to want to travel locally more, and the presence of your siblings and neighbours will be more prominent.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20)

It is your season, Bull, and the new moon that also lands in your sign on May 7 is a new start for you. Halfway through May, your practical energies will be supported by the thinking and communication powers of Mercury entering your sign. This is a good time for steadily achieving your goals and tending to practical matters, which is already your natural strength.

Gemini (May 21 - June 21)

With Jupiter entering your sun sign on May 25, this is the ushering in of a blessed year of knowledge. Because of this transit, you may also be more inclined towards spirituality—or at least, your ideas will be

supported by your intuition. The new moon on the May 7 passing through your 12th house supports this spiritual focus.

Cancer (June 22 - July 22)

11th-house energy is present this month for you, Crab, as the new moon in Taurus on May 7 forms a sextile with Cancer. This is good for making new friendships and hanging out in new groups of people, and also trying new hobbies. Social media may be tied up in both of these things—someone might reach out offering this kind of opportunity. The full moon in Sagittarius on May 23 will call for you to look at your day-to-day life, activities, work, and health.

Leo (July 23 - August 22)

This month may be difficult for you in your work, Lion, but rest assured, there isn't truly a bad aspect (astrology pun!) to this energy. Your blood, sweat, and tears are bringing you bread, even if work is challenging, says the Taurus new moon creating a square to your sign in the 10th house. Your creative projects are overall strengthened this month.

Virgo (August 23 - September 22)

Self-confidence will be marked in the first few weeks of the month. Jupiter entering Gemini on May 25 passes through your ninth house of foreign travel, higher learning, optimism, and spirituality, making the end of the month a great time for a trip or taking some classes.

Libra (September 23 - October 22)

Partnerships are always marked in a Libra's life, and this month is no exception—Venus in Taurus brings cozy feelings to relationships and physical presence. Venus sextile Neptune on May 21 will bring dreaminess and compassion to your relationship. Mars in Aries will help bless you with the drive and life energy forward in your endeavours.

Scorpio (October 23 - November 21)

With Pluto going into a temporary retrograde May 2, resist the urge to indulge in power plays during the first week of May. Luck may come to your romantic and/or business partner(s) around the

new moon on May 7. You will find it easier to relax in the second half of the month, with Jupiter sextiling Neptune on May 23, allowing you to tend to your inner garden.

Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21)

You spoke to your vision to the world in the high-energy week of April 29 to May 5, especially with the reflective energy of Pluto's retrograde back through Aquarius starting May 2. Existing health problems will lessen, and you'll be more focused on your day-to-day activities, as the new moon on May 7 passes through your sixth house. Enjoy the full moon in your sign on May 23!

Capricorn (December 22 - January 19)

You're ready to make well-thought-out decisions and are not in a hurry to act. Love in your life might be, or already has been, entering a lot of changes. Because the new moon crosses your fifth house on May 7, you will be strong in the sensual and creative side of life and focused on creative projects. The full

moon on May 23 is a time for rest and spiritual reflection.

Aquarius (January 20 - February 18)

Home, family life, and mother-related topics will come up on May 7—but you may have to look at these matters differently. Under the influence of the sun, Pluto, and Uranus, a lot of change and growth is ahead for you, and it's likely you already know in which areas this will be. Mercury in Aries will cause an urge for recklessness—don't. Slow down. Your career will greatly advance this month.

Pisces (February 19 - March 20)

You're feeling more self-confident than normal in the first half of the month—the concessions you normally make for others are lessened. Surround yourself with the people you love on the new moon occurring May 7. Some Pisces may have some of their dreams come true this month. However, many may be undergoing compassion fatigue around the full moon on May 23 as the full moon squares your sign.



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Moving out this spring? **Don't abandon your unwanted items at the curb!** Plan ahead to donate to a charity, sell online, or drop off the items at a garbage facility for sustainable disposal. It's the key to a stress-free move and a cleaner community.

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