



Live from Victoria

A concert-reviewing odyssey

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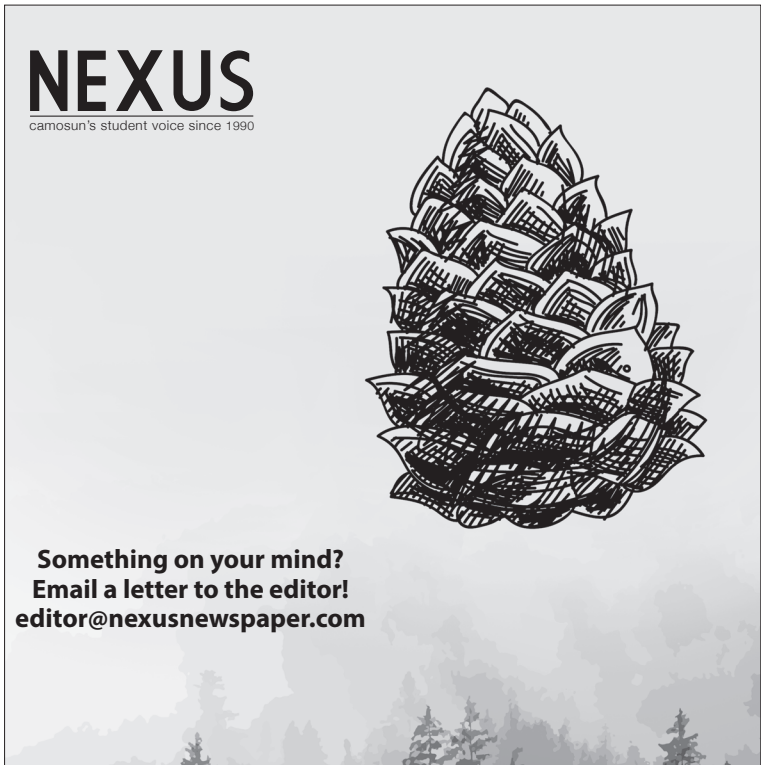
Lydia Zuleta Johnson, student editor

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!

So, no, I don't believe there is a reason for straight pride. I am a visibly queer individual who regularly gets instructed by men and even women to Find Jesus—or else I'm called slurs. In no universe should this be allowed to happen and have no repercussions. Why do these

While the number of cisgender men in the comments continues to grow, I do notice the change of those who have found their voice to protect others and take charge in making the world open to a whole rainbow of beauty. The world is just a better place when we are accepting.

OVERHEARD AT NEXUS: "I'm always fibbing."



students

Camosun grads take home alumni awards

LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON
STUDENT EDITOR

In recognition of significant commitment to lifelong learning, community, and leadership, two Camosun alumni are honoured annually with either the Promising or Distinguished Alumni award. This year, for these reasons, dentist Alex Mitchell was named the former and the Canadian Navy manager of program support for the Centre for Leadership Excellence, HMCS Venture Angus Fedoruk the latter.

The annual Camosun alumni awards highlight individuals who exemplify excellence in their field and community. Presentations of the awards are held during the Camosun convocation ceremonies.

Since his 1996 graduation from Camosun’s Business Administration diploma program, Fedoruk has maintained a variety of community volunteer positions and has made a career in the Canadian Navy and public service.

Fedoruk says receiving the Distinguished Alumni award has been an honour and has reaffirmed his commitment to community.

“It’s a great sense of satisfaction,” he says. “I think not many folks go out and do things to be recognized; they want to contribute, and that’s how I feel. So I feel really humbled and honoured that they’ve recognized this, and it makes me feel that I’ve been able to give something back, and folks can see that. And hopefully, it’s an example for other folks who maybe are like me, when they’re starting out, they’re getting going, but later on, they have a chance when they have time, and they have resources, they can give back, too.”

After some time in the Navy prior to attending college, Fedoruk says he began to desire an education outside of his milieu, ultimately leading him to Camosun.

“I was finishing the fifth and sixth year in the Navy. And at the time, I didn’t see myself progressing much further. I was like, Okay, I’ve done this, and perhaps now is the time for me to try something different. And so I thought, I’ll go. I didn’t do a degree, so I thought, I’ll



PHOTO PROVIDED

Camosun College Promising Alumni award winner Alex Mitchell.

go back, and I’ll go to school, and maybe start a completely different life journey... But as things worked out, I ended up back in the Navy,” he says. “So it’s interesting because I’ve never seen myself going back to the Navy; that wasn’t my plan. It was just over time, there were some things that drew me back there, and... [Camosun] set me up.”

During his college career, Fedoruk took on student leadership roles in the Camosun College Student Society (CCSS), and Camosun’s Education Council and Board of Governors. He says his work and skill building with the CCSS was especially useful in later roles.

“[The CCSS] really helped me understand relationships between people. And I’m not saying I’m great at it, but it helped me to understand it,” he says. “As I progressed through the Navy, I would draw back on these experiences... and think about... how we interacted and how we worked together.”

Fedoruk says he appreciates his time at Camosun, which emphasizes continuous learning.

“I really came to appreciate and really connect with the lifelong-learning culture, or certainly, that’s the way we spoke: ‘Being here is about lifelong learning,’” he says. “I think I connected with that while I was there... I wasn’t just taking a course. It was just another part of a lifelong learning journey, and it was always a journey.”

As current students work toward their careers, Fedoruk suggests they find, plan, and reach for what they desire for their future.

“The advice I would give [Camosun students] is just to set out the path they want to go to, set out the goals. Everyone will say that,” he says, “but measure the progress along the way, and don’t hesitate to change if you need to. It doesn’t have to be because you picked one path, it doesn’t mean it has to be that path. You can change moving along. And don’t wait for everything to happen for you because you’ll miss it.”

After graduating from Camosun’s Associate Degree program in 2015, Promising Alumni recipient Mitchell transferred to UVic, where he completed a Biology degree. In 2024, Mitchell graduated from UBC with a doctorate in Dental Medicine.

During his education, Mitchell participated in projects and initiatives to bolster a supportive environment by working to improve the UBC Dentistry online interview process, understanding how ketamine-assisted therapy can treat nurses with PTSD, and volunteering with the Aboriginal Health Society. Mitchell was accepted into University of Alberta’s periodontal program, where he hopes to graduate as a periodontist in 2028.

Mitchell says that receiving the Promising Alumni award is significant to him.

“Obviously, it’s an honour to be



PHOTO PROVIDED

Camosun College Distinguished Alumni award winner Angus Fedoruk.

“[The Camosun College Student Society] really helped me understand relationships between people. And I’m not saying I’m great at it, but it helped me to understand it.”

ANGUS FEDORUK
CAMOSUN COLLEGE ALUMNUS

acknowledged,” he says. “Camosun kind of put the framework for my education—I built a lot of connections that I carried forward through UVic and, ultimately, UBC. So to be acknowledged for the award means quite a bit.”

Mitchell says that the attitude he brought to dental school was in part informed by what he got out of his education at Camosun.

“At Camosun, I felt like I was more so learning the building blocks of how things work, as opposed to just raw memorization,” he says, “and that carried forward, and still carries forward every day to what I do now as a dentist, and carried forward through dental school.”

Camosun’s small class sizes offered Mitchell an environment for socializing; he says he still maintains friendships with fellow Camosun alumni.

“I would say that the social aspect of getting to know your peers and being able to relieve stress from... class, that sort of stuff carries forth,” says Mitchell. “I still

have a bunch of close friends that I still talk to, even though I went to school 10 years ago. And most of my study partners and friends I made at Camosun were the ones that I still continue to talk to.”

Mitchell suggests current students take advantage of their time at the college—learn and make good friends.

“I would highly recommend making the most out of your time at Camosun,” says Mitchell. “I felt like out of the three schools that I’ve been to, I have the best educational experience at Camosun. So try and take advantage of your time at Camosun and build friendships... I would just say, make the most of your time at Camosun.”

While the award marks a celebration of excellence, Fedoruk says, for him, it restores his continued passion.

“It renews this commitment I have to the college,” he says. “I look fondly back on my time. I’m excited about it, and I’m excited looking forward.”

NEWS BRIEFS

Construction company chosen for student housing

Kinetic has been chosen to construct the student housing project at Camosun’s Lansdowne campus. The project will feature over 400 beds in a six-storey building; its approved total cost is \$154.7 million and construction is expected to start next year.

Students show off fine chair-making skills

Camosun’s Fine Furniture students are again showing off their work at a year-end showcase. Until Sunday, July 20, Kick Back! Seating In

Western Maple will be open for the public to view; the showcase features chairs made by graduating students in the 10-month program, with, among others, rocking chairs, loungers, a chair for making music, and a “praying mantis chair” on display. The showcase is at the Arts Centre at Cedar Hill, located at 3220 Cedar Hill Road.

Technology and Engineering students awarded

Over 30 Camosun students studying Computer Science, Civil Engineering, Electronics and Computer Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering

were recently honoured at the college’s annual Technology and Engineering awards. The awards, which were given at a ceremony on Tuesday, June 10, are given to high-achieving students in STEM-related programs. Visit camosun.ca/news/2025-technology-and-engineering-awards for the full list of students who got the nod.

Chargers athletes recognized by Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association

The Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) has honoured two Camosun Chargers athletes as Academic All-

Canadians for their achievements in sport and academics. Third-year Athletic and Exercise Therapy student Erica Bolink achieved an 8.25 GPA and through the Chargers women’s volleyball team has received two PACWEST Athlete of the Week awards and two CCAA Athlete of the Week awards, and has been named PACWEST First Team All-Star, PACWEST Championship All-Star, and CCAA All-Canadian, as well as Accent Inn Player of the Year. Fourth-year Sports Management student David Finch achieved a 9.0 grade point average last year and through his work with the Chargers men’s basketball team earned two PACWEST

Athlete of the Week awards and a CCAA Athlete of the Week award, and was named PACWEST First Team All-Star and CCAA All-Canadian, as well as Accent Inn Player of the Year, and received the CCAA Torchbearer Scholarship.

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

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students

Grads take stage at emotional, exciting convocation ceremony



ALL PHOTOS BY CAMOSUN COLLEGE

Students enjoying the convocation ceremonies at Camosun College (above and below); six ceremonies took place between Tuesday, June 17 and Thursday, June 19.

LYDIA ZULETA JOHNSON
STUDENT EDITOR

Some 1,200 graduating Camosun students crossed the stage in blue gowns in June to honour their achievement and celebrate in community. Held on the college’s Interurban campus, six convocation ceremonies took place from Tuesday, June 17 until Thursday, June 19 and were organized by each of Camosun’s six schools and centres. This year, over 2,000 students graduated from the college.

Camosun Strategy, Planning, and Transformation executive director Jennifer Stone says that in addition to student success, the convocation ceremony recognizes the support networks that bolster students’ post-secondary accomplishment.

“I love the energy of Camosun convocations because I just find them really family friendly, and it’s about celebrating everyone,” says Stone. “Obviously, we’re there to celebrate the students, and they’re

amazing accomplishments, but I think we also give a lot of credence to family and friends... who are there and help students get through it... So to me, the energy is just such a celebration of accomplishment and support. I just find it super positive. It’s honestly hard not to get emotionally wrapped up in it because it’s so special.”

Stone says this year’s convocation theme, “Your path to success,” is a reminder of the nuanced fulfillment that students can find before and after their time at Camosun.

“There’s many different paths to success, and there’s many different definitions of what success is to each and every student,” she says. “And so what I find so great about Camosun is that we create space for that, and we celebrate that, whatever that means to each and every student. What their path to success might look like is going to be different from the student sitting next to them, or what my journey to success might look like, or how I might define that.

“There’s something, to me, magical about watching students cross the stage.”

JENNIFER STONE
CAMOSUN COLLEGE

And it’s finding that for themselves, and creating space for that, and the right support, and the right service to see that through.”

Stone says the ceremonies were executed superbly, thanks to the planning committee as well as the staff and faculty who attended the event in support of this year’s graduates.

“I think our planning committee... did an incredible job in terms of thinking of every detail and planning ahead and making sure that guests felt welcome, and each event has its own personality a little bit. So I think they do such a great job of

planning for that and making sure those events run really smoothly,” she says. “I was super impressed all the way through. I went to every single convocation event, and it was incredible to be a part of.”

Convocation ceremonies offer graduates an opportunity for collective celebration, Stone says. As a witness to the event, she has seen convocation provide joyful closure for students and attendees.

“It’s a wonderful way to celebrate with your family and your friends, and it’s their opportunity to be a part of that journey in that celebration of that journey with you. There’s something, to me, magical about watching students cross the stage. I see them go up the ramp, I see them receive their little certifi-

cate and shake hands with our board chair and president, and there’s something that happens when they come down the ramp. And just being able to be a part of... that pride and that celebration is really powerful,” she says. “I think it’s a great way to wrap up your time at Camosun and celebrate all of that hard work.”

Students often bring their unique flair on stage—a dance move, a zany gesture, a sentimental belonging. Stone says this year her favourite moments were those that honoured family and nationality.

“There’s some lovely examples of students holding up flags from home countries, which is great. Then you can always hear their cheering section go wild, which is always super fun. One particular student brought a lovely portrait of her grandfather that she carried across the stage, and that was quite emotional, I think, for a lot of people. It was quite profound what she did, carrying that across the stage. And I always love seeing moms and dads walk across the stage with their kids,” says Stone. “I just think that’s so cool when they’re able to do that.”



culture

A student’s reflection on the Lapu-Lapu Day tragedy



BELLA LOPEZ

A vigil with personal items set up at the site of the Lapu-Lapu Day festival tragedy in Vancouver.

EMILY WELCH
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

I had not always known a great deal about Filipino culture, but about three years ago, when I started seeing my partner Jaime, my learning process began. Jaime comes from a long descent of Filipino heritage, and we try to make a point of going to most of the events and festivals in Vancouver and Victoria that honour that heritage. Up until recently, Jaime lived in

Vancouver, and in late April, he informed me that the Lapu-Lapu festival would be happening—right in his neighborhood, no less—and we made our plans to go.

The Lapu-Lapu Day festival in the city is fairly new; it started in 2023 and was originally a small parade down Joyce Street and Collingwood Street, and has turned into a full-day celebration, drawing thousands of people who recognize this day as a chance to

let go, have fun, and eat a ton of amazing food. It’s a celebration of cuisine and music, of dancing and bright colours. However, it’s also about honouring something deeper.

Named after the Visayan warrior who fought against Spanish colonization, the festival has become a symbol of cultural resistance and renewal, and it’s a major celebration in Vancouver’s Filipino community. It’s a day where assimilation can be forgotten and the true vibrancy of

this culture can be seen. There are an estimated 174,280 Filipinos in British Columbia, and most are concentrated in the Lower Mainland. Lapu-Lapu day becomes much more than a party to them. It is a day of reclamation.

As we walked down Fraser Street the day of the festival this year, we could hear the pulsing of the music before we could see any of it happening. Soon we were in a crowd of people. It was hard to walk. There were families and couples of all sorts lining up at different food trucks. There were food vendors shouting out to people to come try what they were offering, but no one was in competition. Above everything there was laughter. We watched a man standing in front of a booming speaker which was playing “Celebration.” He was encouraging people to dance with him, and more and more people started to join him and dance his steps. I might have thought it was corny any other day, but it was impossible not to watch and grin at this impromptu flash mob. Those who weren’t dancing were watching and clapping their hands to the music. There was joy being served everywhere.

After eating so much that we thought we might not make the walk home, Jaime and I left, the music and laughter echoing behind us. We settled inside his apartment, and were in the process of relaxing for the evening, when Jaime got a phone call from a friend of his.

This friend wanted to see if we were alright. In fact, he said he wanted to see if we were “alive.” He had seen a news clip online that said a car drove through the festival, hitting over a dozen people. His friend said disbelievingly, and shakily, “There’s people who have died. I wanted to make sure it wasn’t you.”

As Jaime and I watched the news, and registered what had happened not even 90 minutes after we left the festival, we couldn’t believe how such a wonderful day could end in such chaos. A black car hurtling through the street, smashing into people right and left. A young man running from the vehicle and being restrained by bystanders until police arrived. I still cannot forget the expression in that young man’s eyes—because there was no real expression at all. He was a person who had lost himself a long time ago. At least that’s how he looked to me.

The Filipino-Canadian community, already bonded through shared heritage, have now had to come together through vigils and prayer.

Vigils have been held not only in Vancouver, but across Canada. Grief isn’t picky about municipal lines or people it seizes. This tragedy has been felt everywhere. The Lapu-Lapu festival, a day intended to honour ancestral bravery, became a day to remember the bravery in collective vulnerability. It became a day to discover how to find connection in times of loss.

music

Museum exhibit looks at artists behind protest music

HANNA SHULTIS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The Royal BC Museum’s *Beyond the Beat: Music of Resistance and Change* exhibit centres on protest music throughout the decades, boasting a wide range of paraphernalia—from Neil Young’s harmonica to the jacket of Public Enemy’s Chuck D. The goal of the exhibit is to illustrate how music functions as a catalyst for social change and collective action. It explores the many ways music has inspired resistance and how artists have used their platforms to voice different messages.

The exhibit delves into the artists behind the movement, the causes they supported, and the broader themes their music addressed, according to Royal BC Museum vice president of research and collections Jodie Giesbrecht.

“Everything from women’s rights to racial justice to Indigeneity and colonialism [and] climate change,” says Giesbrecht. “A range of different genres of music is included. There’s rap, hip hop, there’s rock ‘n’ roll, there’s pop. And the show really spans generations as well. So, I think there’s really a lot for everybody, no matter what your musical taste is.”

The artifacts come from across Canada and the US, including the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleve-

land, the Museum of Pop Culture in Seattle, and the National Music Centre in Calgary. Some were not previously displayed to the public.

“You’ll see a lot of items that are actually direct loans from different bands and different artists,” explains Giesbrecht. “So, that was really cool, getting to interact with some of these personalities, sharing those personal memories. We’re really grateful that they were willing to lend us their instruments and their clothing.”

The exhibit includes music and movements from both past and present, giving visitors a comprehensive look at how resistance through art has evolved. From the civil rights anthems of the 1960s to contemporary tracks addressing police violence, gender equality, and climate change, protest music remains a powerful form of expression.

“I think a lot of songs used to be, perhaps, more overt political messaging,” says Giesbrecht. “Whether that was opposition to the Vietnam War, for example, or music in support of the civil-rights movement. And, I think, what we see today, is artists are still protesting and they’re protesting things like racial injustice. But the way in which they’re doing so is a little bit different. A lot of artists are challenging social boundaries in terms of who



ROYAL BC MUSEUM

Beyond the Beat: Music of Resistance and Change is at the Royal BC Museum until January of next year.

they are and what they wear. And it’s more of an in-your-face form of protest. So, I think, the way that people are addressing these issues has definitely changed over time. But the majority of these issues have remained remarkably similar.”

Indeed, societal discontent has taken on many different forms throughout the decades. As audiences change, so do the methods of

resistance and the messages artists emphasize.

“I think, if you look at older forms of protest music from the ’50s and ’70s, focused on broader external social issues or events, such as the war in Vietnam or broader working-class discontent, and I think in more recent times a lot of issues stem more around identity,” says Giesbrecht. So, whether

that’s LGBTQ+ rights or other issues, related to colonialism. I think [we’re seeing] a little bit more identity-based protests... in recent years.”

Beyond the Beat: Music of Resistance and Change
Until Monday, January 5, 2026
Royal BC Museum
royalbcmuseum.bc.ca

Live from

A concert-review

Music is filling the summer; the City of Victoria has opened their pop-up venues at Ship Point, Cameron Bandshell, and The Fort Commons, and the regular spots still are keeping busy with live music.

Victoria has so many live music events during the warmer season, most of which are free, that it was possible to check out an abundance, but I'm old and can't party like I used to be able to (although I try). But for this story I went to as many shows as I could in a short period of time.

I kicked off this adventure at Ship Point, which is a cool venue. The stage is a converted shipping container, sensible for the area. One side of the container folds down into a platform—this is where the vocalists stand, whereas the drummers are inside the container. Of course, the downside to this makeshift stage is that larger bands would be unable to play here.

While I believe the installation of artificial turf, lawn chairs, and cornhole games adds to the area, I still find it unnecessary: with various food trucks, including appearances from the Victoria Beer Society truck, sitting and listening to music there felt like a bougie version of friend and family BBQs, as our food isn't as fancy and we don't have a stage when bands play.

Over the two nights I was at Ship Point, I visited Poutine66, Naked Dressings, and Vegan Ice Cream by Odd Burger, in addition to the adult beverages. Both nights I ate at Naked Dressings as it was difficult to deny myself their Spirit Bowl, a salad with a delightfully seasoned peanut dressing and vermicelli noodles, greens, and other veggies, and I was curious to find out what their berry dressing tasted like. Spoiler alert: it's divine! The portions were large, so if you have a smaller appetite, share with a friend; one salad was two meals for me. The third night only Taco Revolution and Ice Cream by Odd Burger were there and I wasn't in the mood for either; I'm weird that way sometimes.

Blaise Blaise was the first band I saw at Ship Point. It was a snug fit with their drums and keyboards, but they made it work. Blaise Blaise is a blend of jazz, funk, and hip hop. Vocalist Dani Jackson has a beautifully powerful and melodic voice and fun sense of humour, cracking jokes while introducing the band members and in between songs.

The guitar solo in one song was long, with solid riffs that showed off the immense talent of their guitarist. Unfortunately, their keyboardist, who also rapped, had the same cadence throughout the set, which was a stark contrast to Jackson's vocals.

Richard Garvey was the next performer I saw at Ship Point. His folk-music style, switching between banjo and guitar, was full of melody, with some songs having a slower tempo and others more upbeat. Garvey has a lovely, strong voice, yet it sounds gentle and soothing. He's adorable, too; he offered hugs when telling the crowd about merch he had available. The price for his album was "whatever seems reasonable." This hospitality and the way he sang showed he was in this for the love of music, despite his song "Tonight I Sing (For the Drunks)" having had airtime on CBC Radio One.

He has many road-trip-playlist-worthy songs due to their melody and lyrics, such as "I Will Meet You Where You Are," which is about showing up for your friends. One humorous song called "Beer in the Snow" was a true story, as he told the crowd, of when his friends found a case of beer in the snow. I will definitely see him again, and next time bring cash to "reasonably" purchase his album.

My last visit to Ship Point was for rotating event Inter-Tidal Relations, which happens every other Wednesday throughout the summer—different ethnic groups are featured on different weeks.

When I arrived, tables and a tent were set up for bingo,

which was confusing at first, but I stuck around and watched as people with vests from the Victoria Native Friendship Centre were roaming; it seemed like I was in the right place.

Sure enough, there was music after bingo; Jeremy Frederickson played acoustic guitar. He sang covers such as "Pretty Woman," "Mr. Bojangles," and "When Doves Cry." His voice was enchanting, eliciting passersby to step through to stop and listen. There's a peacefulness to his presence; his demeanour on stage was quiet and reserved but his voice and guitar playing proved he belonged on stage.

After Frederickson was Hill60, a folk/country band with guitar, upright bass, two vocalists, and while they said they normally have a banjo player, they were away that night. The harmony between the vocalists was impeccable and the music was toe tapping and dancey. The upright bass added a unique depth to their sound that a bass guitar can't; it was a nice break from what I usually see. The lead vocalist was animated in her stage presence in a way that draws an audience in, moving back and forth, and up and down.

Last up on this busy evening of unexpected twists was DJ Nova Jade, host at Ship Point and soundwoman extraordinaire—she's constantly running around with a tablet checking levels.

At the beginning of her set, she introduced it quietly as "Bad Rabbit Radio." The house music she played was seamlessly blended together with each song and beat track flowing into the next, and her song selection was on point. She should be working in a club if she isn't already.

I sat near a guy, who looked more like a biker than a raver, dancing around in his wheelchair; it was awesome.

In between seeing shows at Ship Point I also went to The Coda and Lucky Bar. I had never been to The Coda, in any iteration of that spot. I remember when it was a nightclub, destroyed by a fire, replaced with another nightclub, then a jazz club, and now The Coda.

Starting off the night, the owners came out and introduced themselves. They explained that The Coda is "a genre agnostic" venue and their vision is to fill the place with music every night. From posters on the wall, I can say that they have been doing fairly well at covering the genres.

There are two stages at The Coda, one in a smaller room with a stage in a corner, a few tables in the middle of the room, seating along the wall, and a bar facing windows at the back of the room. The other stage is in a bigger room with two levels of seating and a dance floor.

What impressed me most about the venue I found out

while the second band played. bar, and the owners were bussi the small room we'd watched owners of venues are noticeable work, but the owners of The C faces, still ready to help their g

The show was called Reb was rebellion in music. The fi Cuchulain, a Celtic band with banjo, harp, and mandolin. significance behind the variou



by The Pogues. They followed their selection of material.

Vocals varied between so frontman taking the main m taking backup and/or playing women did duets. Throughout was on point. Their voices blen one sound.

The Coda was smart to ha play in the smaller room. Bei a bar gave a feeling of being a maritime activity. I also appre band wore old-style Celtic ou travel, and they at times made seen Disney's *Brave* too many

Story by AJ Aiken,
Graphic by Lydia Zuleta

in Victoria

ewing odyssey

I went to get a drink from the bar and wiping down tables in the first band in. It's not often I see a band, let alone seen doing grunt work, but I did it with smiles on their faces. I hope all my guests have a great night.

I went to the Rock Riot and the theme song was The Hounds of Cuchulain. The frontman explained the theme song, a few of which were

The one issue I had was that the Irish whistle wasn't properly mic'd, making it very difficult to hear, which was unfortunate. When I could hear it, however, it was magical to the point that I found myself getting annoyed when I couldn't hear it.

I would definitely see The Hounds of Cuchulain again and listen to their music at home to ensure I hear the Irish whistle in every song.

For the second band we moved to the bigger room which was necessary for the dance floor. Vanilla Riot is a rockabilly band that played covers of Blondie, Veruca Salt, The Bangles,

Manfred Mann's Earth Band, and Don Henley. It didn't take long before people were on the dance floor to kick up their heels to the familiar songs.

The guitarist, who was the promoter of the show, is incredibly talented. He played complicated riffs effortlessly and used pedals to manipulate the sound perfectly. As per the vocalists, they had good chemistry and harmonization.

I was impressed with the backup vocalist's stage presence. Despite long stretches with nothing to sing, she smiled the whole time, grooved to the music, engaged with the lead vocalist when appropriate, and looked like she was enjoying herself. Not all backup vocalists have good stage presence when they have nothing to sing for extended periods of time like she faced; some will begin to look bored after some time.

The person sitting next to me said the band was a good party band. I agree. I'd book them for a wedding or anniversary party, but I wouldn't book them for a show—I'm not a fan of bands that just do covers unless they're a tribute band.

Unfortunately for me,

the next band, Acid Martini, was also a cover band, playing songs from Rebecca Ferguson, The Kinks, Edwyn Collins, and Iggy Pop. I do like their name, though; I'm a fan of martinis, and "acid" makes the name edgy. Despite having the same guitarist, they were more bluesy than Vanilla Riot and proved that Baby Boomers can still rock. Dressed in suits, they had a definite Blues Brothers vibe.

They had a lot more energy than Vanilla Riot and more people hit the dance floor during their set.

Acid Martini's frontman had an intense stage presence, moving around the stage from one floor speaker to the other. He looked like he was going to come off the stage, but he had a wired microphone. His flexibility and movement when at the microphone stand reminded me of Steven Tyler and Axl Rose.

There were two low points in their set, though. During "I

Am a Passenger" it was obvious that the vocalist didn't know the words and was reading them off a device attached to the mic; it also lowered the confidence in his voice compared to other songs. Then during "Personal Jesus" the echo effect on the keyboard muddled the overall sound. It was disappointing, but the band played the rest of the set extremely well.

A music adventure, for me, would not be complete without some punk or metal thrown in. I've been to a lot of punk/metal shows; I used to be a punk music promoter in my 20s. By far, the show at Lucky Bar was one of the best metal shows I've been to despite one issue I had with the first band that played that night.

Chop Suey played first; they're a System of a Down tribute band. Listening to them instrumentally, it'd be hard to tell the difference; they're that good. Of course, the vocalist's voice is different, but he did have the same power and melodic tones that Serj Tankian does, when the vocalist actually knew the lyrics. Like Acid Martini, I could hear it in his voice when he didn't know the song; he was amazing and nailed songs he did know, but was quiet when he read the lyrics off a device. System of a Down songs may be slow at points but they're not timid. I found myself screaming in my head, "Learn the words!"

What made up for Chop Suey's lyrical issue was Dead Goon from Vancouver, a Mr. Bungle tribute band with a twist. Similar to Mr. Bungle, they switched up genres during songs, rather than having one genre or mashup of genres in a song; it was a musical montage.

However, Dead Goon took it a step further and had some fun with their interpretation of songs and the genres they used. In one song they would flow smoothly through mellow rock, to punk, to ska, and/or to funk. They were mind-blowing.

In addition to the overall sound, the bassist was incredible. He played chords switching from underneath to the top of the fretboard. The keyboardist used various sound effects during and in between songs. He also played two types of saxophones (I don't know saxophones well, so I'm not sure which is which). The vocalist used a megaphone as a voice changer. Indeed, it was an odyssey of sound.

In the same spirit of Mr. Bungle, the band also had a fun, somewhat challenging, style. The vocalist wore a black leather hood that covered his face; it looked difficult to sing through. The small slit for the mouth and tightness of the hood limited how much he could open his mouth to sing.

Dressed in a rubber Richard Nixon head mask with blue coveralls, the guitarist reminded me of a thief in heist movies; he looked ready to go rob a bank or jewelry store. But the bassist wins the award for Best Costume: he wore a wig that belonged in a Jane Austen movie, a short blue and sparkly spaghetti strap dress that hung off one shoulder, and matching arm sleeves.

Dead Goon is a band I'd go to the lower mainland to see; I'm so sold on them. They didn't have merch out, but they do have an album. I will get it even if I have to hunt them down in Vancouver.

The Fort Commons had a show I wanted to go to. It's a cool little courtyard tucked in behind the buildings between Fort Street and Broughton Street with an entrance off Blanshard Street. Unfortunately, I got the time wrong and missed it because I got the showtime mixed up with a show at Cameron Bandshell. You'd think I was a rookie!

I highly recommend checking out the City of Victoria pop-up venues; showtimes at all the venues, plus other events around town, are listed in a guide on the City of Victoria website. Ship Point has its own schedule in addition to the city guide, which lists the shows along with the food trucks at victoria.ca/ourdwtn.

Have some fun this summer and create a musical adventure, and remember to double-check showtimes.



d the night's theme well with songs. Sometimes it was the melody, with the two women instruments, other times the their songs the harmonization ended together beautifully into

ve The Hounds of Cuchulain in a room with tables and at a kitchen party, a common ciated that the women in the outfits, adding a sense of time me think of fairies (I may have times).

stage

Great Works Theatre Festival presents timely mix of comedy and tragedy

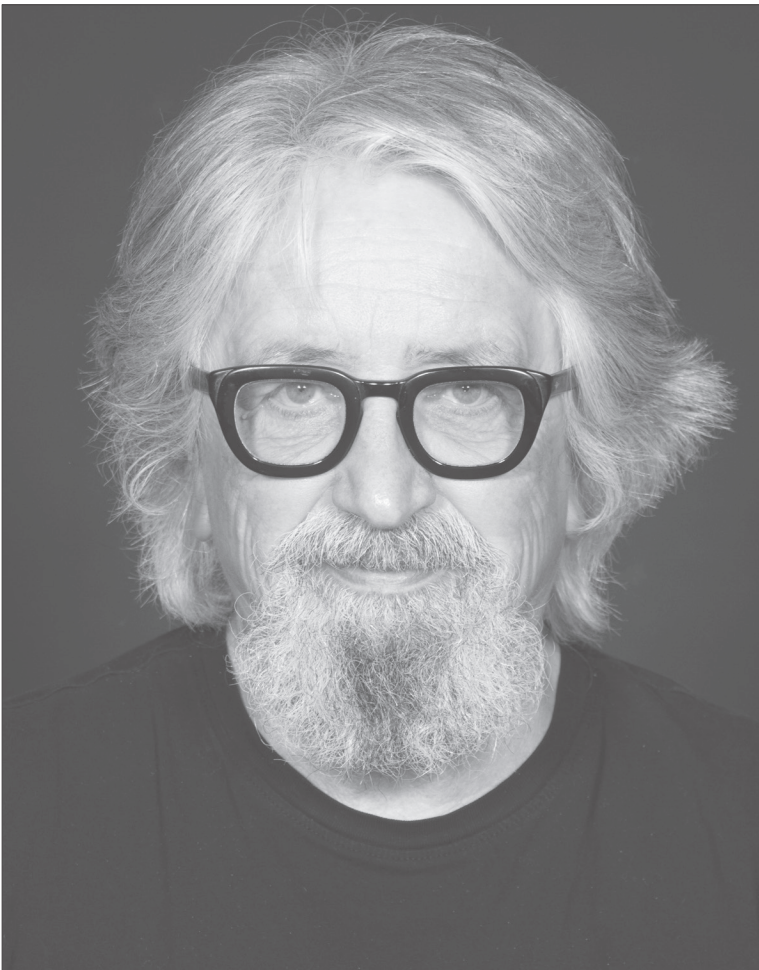


PHOTO PROVIDED

La Bête director Brian Richmond is also with Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre.

“The seriousness of [*La Bête*’s] theme is about where truth resides in language; it’s about whether truth in language is important to a culture, or not.”

BRIAN RICHMOND
DIRECTOR

LANE CHEVRIER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Challenging audiences with relevant issues, the Great Works Theatre Festival features two plays presented in collaboration through Puente Theatre and Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre that will be performed at the Belfry Theatre. The plays on offer are a modern retelling of *Blood Wedding*, originally by Federico Garcia Lorca, and a classic rendition of David Hirson’s *La Bête*.

Directed and written by Mercedes Bátiz-Benét of Puente Theatre, the updated adaptation of *Blood Wedding* alters the theme of the play from something more conventional to reflect modern struggles.

“The original is about forbidden love and generational violence, and mine is about fear of the others, the fear of the ones who own land and inherit that land, and are from a particular place, and the fear of people who are transient,” she says. “What happens in a world where that’s all we inherit to our children: fear and hatred and violence?”

Bátiz-Benét calls attention to the current issues regarding US immigration policies and how they

reflect behaviour seen less than a century ago in Europe.

“If you just look down south of the border, what’s happening right now, with all the rounding up of Latin Americans in the United States, not caring if they’re US citizens or not, putting their children in jail, sending lawful individuals direct to jail who are just trying to look for a better job—it’s just insane,” says Bátiz-Benét. “If you see all the countries in Europe where fascism is rising and the far right is gaining power in the state, it’s a long list of very specific situations that are happening and echoing the political structure that Lorca was responding to.”

Bátiz-Benét says that racism is a way to incite one group of people to hate another group for senseless reasons, and the only function of this is to create blame where none exists, which we perpetuate unknowingly.

“There’s always a scapegoat,” she says, “and it’s that fear and that hatred that gets passed down generation after generation that I’m trying to speak about in the play.”

Bátiz-Benét suggests that the solution to this kind of ingrained



PHOTO PROVIDED

Blood Wedding director Mercedes Bátiz-Benét says her take on the play is about the fear of others.

hatred is to teach our children tolerance and love for other people; she says this starts from the very beginning.

“It starts by what we teach our children, the kind of world we want to create. If we just keep feeding them the same garbage, like be scared of the others, be fearful, be violent, then the world will never change,” she says. “Instead we offer them tolerance, love for the other human beings, understanding, acceptance, curiosity, the fact that we’re all the same, we’re just trying to survive and be good people, we just keep reinforcing that and things will change, I think.”

La Bête, directed by Brian Richmond of Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre, likewise features a strong political message. It’s a classic retelling, but delves into similar themes of manipulation and populism.

“This is just so dead-on, this kind of insistence on vulgarity and populism at all costs,” says Richmond. “Of course, I’m referring to the orange-faced man south of the border. It’s just such a current issue.”

The theme of *La Bête* is about adherence to the truth as a philosophical ideal.

“The seriousness of the theme is about where truth resides in language; it’s about whether truth in language is important to a culture, or not,” says Richmond. “What every artist is attempting to do is tell the truth, which is a very broad-reaching concept, but they attempt to do that by utilizing the

“What happens in a world where that’s all we inherit to our children: fear and hatred and violence?”

MERCEDES BÁTIZ-BENÉT
DIRECTOR/WRITER

rigour of their skill, of their craft, and their approach to the world around them.”

Bátiz-Benét’s take on *Blood Wedding* underscores this. Although difficult, it’s not impossible to break free of systemic racism, she says.

“It really takes a lot of individual and collective effort to really change things, but I do think it’s possible if we all realize that this is not the way,” she says. “At what point do we say enough is enough? It’s about breaking the cycles of violence, and teaching different values, like let’s not be scared of each other.”

Bátiz-Benét wants her play to be an eye-opener for viewers, to show how they can take individual action for the collective good, and make a real change.

“Our differences make us better, so I think it’s about that, about just being curious with one another, and kind,” she says. “That’s what this play is about. If we just keep handing fear to our children, this cycle of violence will not end, and it will just keep being the same thing over and over again.”

Bátiz-Benét says that she intends to update a classic every year to increase cultural relevance and accessibility to new audiences.

“We’re choosing great plays from around the world and reawakening them with a bold new vision, for audiences of today,” she says. “We’re trying to show audiences plays that they would never really know about or have the chance to see, because that’s not the kind of theatre that you can see anywhere near here, and we’re trying to offer that to them.”

The two plays will feature the same actors and be performed on alternating days at the Belfry. According to Richmond, *La Bête* and *Blood Wedding* balance each other well because they’re two sides of the same coin; they find opposing ways of commenting on the same themes.

“If you look at comedy and tragedy as the foundation of theatre, these are prime examples of that,” he says. “One is very beautifully dark and mysterious and dramatic, and the other is very bright and frivolous with a serious theme at the centre of it all.”

Great Works Theatre Festival
Tuesday, July 29
to Sunday, August 10
Belfry Theatre
belfry.bc.ca

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Pieces of Performance

by Acacia Tooth

Junk Male gets wacky, nerdy, and silly with a smile

Junk Male is jumping into the spotlight with a mish-mash of positivity, seduction, and gut-hurting laughter. This non-binary bean lights up every room they walk into and has become one of the top producers to work with on the island.

“I’ve been involved with the drag scene since 2018. [I] watched a couple friends in various King Fling shows and my mind was blown,” says Junk. “These friends became my drag family and Junk Male was born.”

Pre-pandemic and with more stage space, Junk Male decided to take matters into their own hands and become the king of comedic and sultry queens by birthing drag show For the Love of Drag, now known as Brick and Lavender Productions. The aim of this show was to take over stages and fill them with the love and identities of the varying performers.

“The focus is taking up space, including more queer performers, such as burlesque, and making shows outside of the mainstream,” they say.

Inspiring others and connecting family with performance art has introduced a variety of ideas to create the weirdest performances, shared or not.

“My [inspirations were] sweet drag angels Nyx and Candy Boxx,” says Junk. “After seeing them on stage, I knew I wanted to be a part of that, and we started creating weird and wonderful magic together as Misterpiece Theatre.”

While the passion has been driven by watching others, Junk—who describes themselves as “a human form of a muppet”—always wants to make sure there are laughs to share and have everyone in on the joke.

“I love creating wacky, nerdy, and silly performances, usually with an unexpected audio cut or costume reveal,” they say. “I really just want folks to laugh along with me and the ridiculousness.”

Drag has offered so many pivotal realizations and chances for people to create a persona that can express how they truly feel. It allows the opportunity to explore and become comfortable with all aspects of their sexuality, gender fluidity, and even help with gradual transitions, says Junk.

“Getting into drag helped me a lot with my gender journey. I didn’t even know the spectrum of gender diversity that existed until I was involved in the scene,” they say.

While in these spaces, they



MKM PHOTOGRAPHY

Local performer Junk Male describes themselves as “a human form of a muppet.”

shared opportunities and struck a chord within themselves.

“Seeing fellow drag performers living authentically and also discovering themselves through the art was super inspirational,” says Junk.

The drive and passion that Junk has shown over the last six years translates into being highly sought-after to work with, and the community is well aware that they have become a safe and inclusive

person that they can reach out to. Creating shows from scratch and working their way up has been a ride that they are happy to have been on.

With multiple closures of local inclusive event spaces, Junk says that one of their dreams in life is to “open a free-to-low-cost, fully equipped performance space” offering barrier-free spots to highlight the diversity of the community.

“My passion has shifted from just drag to encompass more performers, but I’d say it’s always been a passion to help as many folks take the stage as I can. Truly a labour of love,” they say.

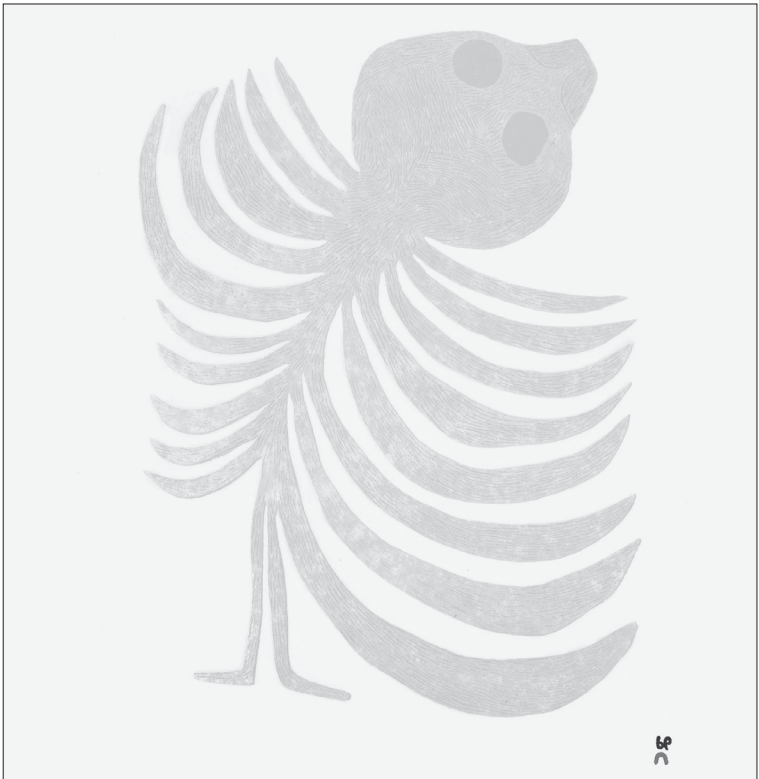
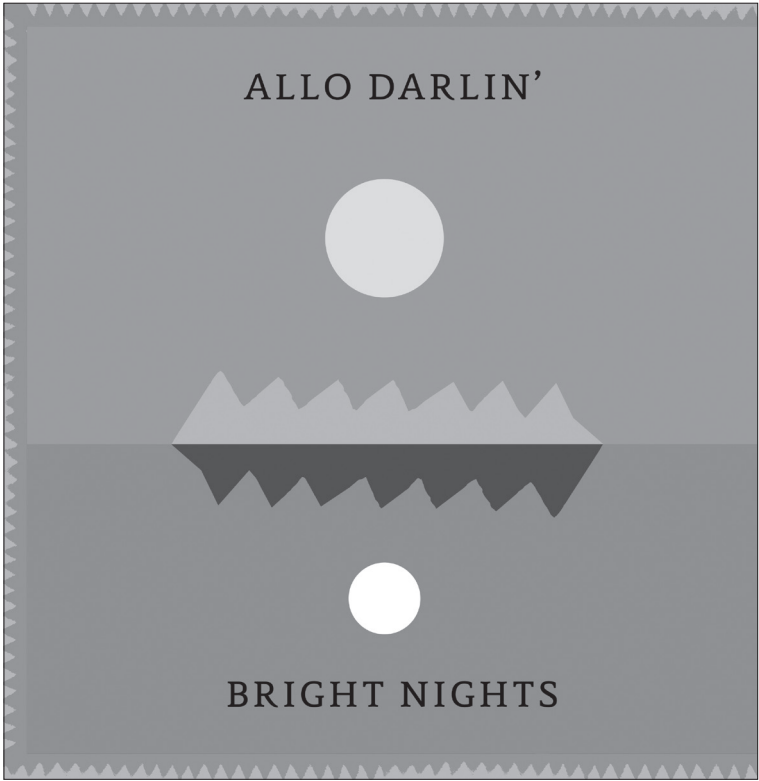
Junk says that certain words of wisdom can be translated through all different communities and beings and should be a way to live life.

“[Remember] to show kindness to each other. Keep fighting for our trans siblings.”

And what does the future look like for Junk?

“I feel like I’ve made most of my contributions over the last six years. I’m definitely still creating spaces and taking up space, but at a slower and more manageable pace.”

Find Junk Male at @brickand-lavender and check out some of their upcoming shows and a fundraiser to support Eves of Destruction.



New Music Revue

Allo Darlin’
Bright Nights
(Slumberland Records)
2/5

On a warm, windy afternoon in 2012 I lay on unattended grass listening to acoustic Jens Lekman and Cat Power, determining my 10-year plan. It was this young woman who believed sporting a carefully teased bob as a career-barista would be most fulfilling. By now, then, I’d be riding my cruiser bike to work and improv class in a belted dress and a compulsion for an overtly idiosyncratic laugh. Then I developed a stronger sense of self, and grew into my ears—though I still allow Lekman and Power to rule a segment of my world.

Allo Darlin’ has yet to do this: mature, fill out. Their returning

album of over a decade interval, *Bright Nights*, stales in early-2010s naivety. Indeed, it is my belief that they’ve fallen into the indie-pop trap of mistaken timelessness. The simple tune does not carry to this moment; it mischaracterizes the ethos.

Perhaps it’s their hiatus that has caused such arrested development, but then it’s important to remember the sea of other forgettable copycat indie pop albums that are still perpetually rolled out. It’s an epidemic that they are among; a variety of musicians that add no more nor any less to the genre. They are all so-so at their very best and blasphemous at their very worst.

Of course I leave myself vulnerable here when I claim an entire genre to be lacking in anything

radical. To be clear, what I desire, and what has not been delivered here with *Bright Nights*, is anything really sincere to itself.

I believe Allo Darlin’ and its vocalist Elizabeth Morris Innsef when she says this newest album is one “from the heart, dealing with themes of love, birth, and death.” My question, though, still asks “whose heart?”

Allo Darlin’ lives up to their name: the quartet is loveable in the kind of way that hurts. The type of sweetness you envy. And if we were to sojourn back in 2012, the pastel hues colouring the sky and cardigans, it would be the sweetness one treasures. At last, today, all I am left with is an uninspired echo.

-Lydia Zuleta Johnson

New Music Revue

Völur/Cares
Breathless Spirit
(Batke Records)
4.5/5

Close your eyes and let Toronto-based experimental doom metal band Völur and solo sound artist Cares take you on a fantastic adventure with collaborative effort *Breathless Spirit*.

The album is musical storytelling at its best—most of the narrative beats are told with carefully crafted classical and metal.

Listening to this album is like watching a movie: the instruments and the vocals lead the listener from the beginning through the climax and to the end with beauty and finesse.

I haven’t heard anything else

like it. Perhaps the closest sound I can think of is from Apocalyptica, but Völur and Cares create a distinct style together. Playing metal using classical instruments is rare and beautiful when found. Völur and Cares have made something to repeatedly listen to with *Breathless Spirit*.

The instrumentals are epic and are on the same level as Hans Zimmer’s soundtrack for the *Dune* films. Each song is a chapter in the tale the band is telling and blends the classical and metal elements seamlessly.

The sounds from the violin, bass, and drums dance together effortlessly like Tom Bombadil and Goldberry setting the table for dinner for four hungry hobbits.

So, open your heart and let the music in. Enjoy the mystical nature of these wonderful songs as they carry you to faraway places and immerse you in wonder. Every note ignited my imagination and made me want for more.

The album also consists of two bonus tracks that are beauty incarnate. They are crafted, played, and mixed as masterly as the first six songs.

For the best listening experience wear noise-cancelling headphones to capture all the delicious sounds of *Breathless Spirit*.

-Miles Patterson

Natural Selection - Emily Welch



word search



After you read writer AJ Aiken's feature story on page 6 where she reviews multiple concerts around town, find the related words in the above word search.

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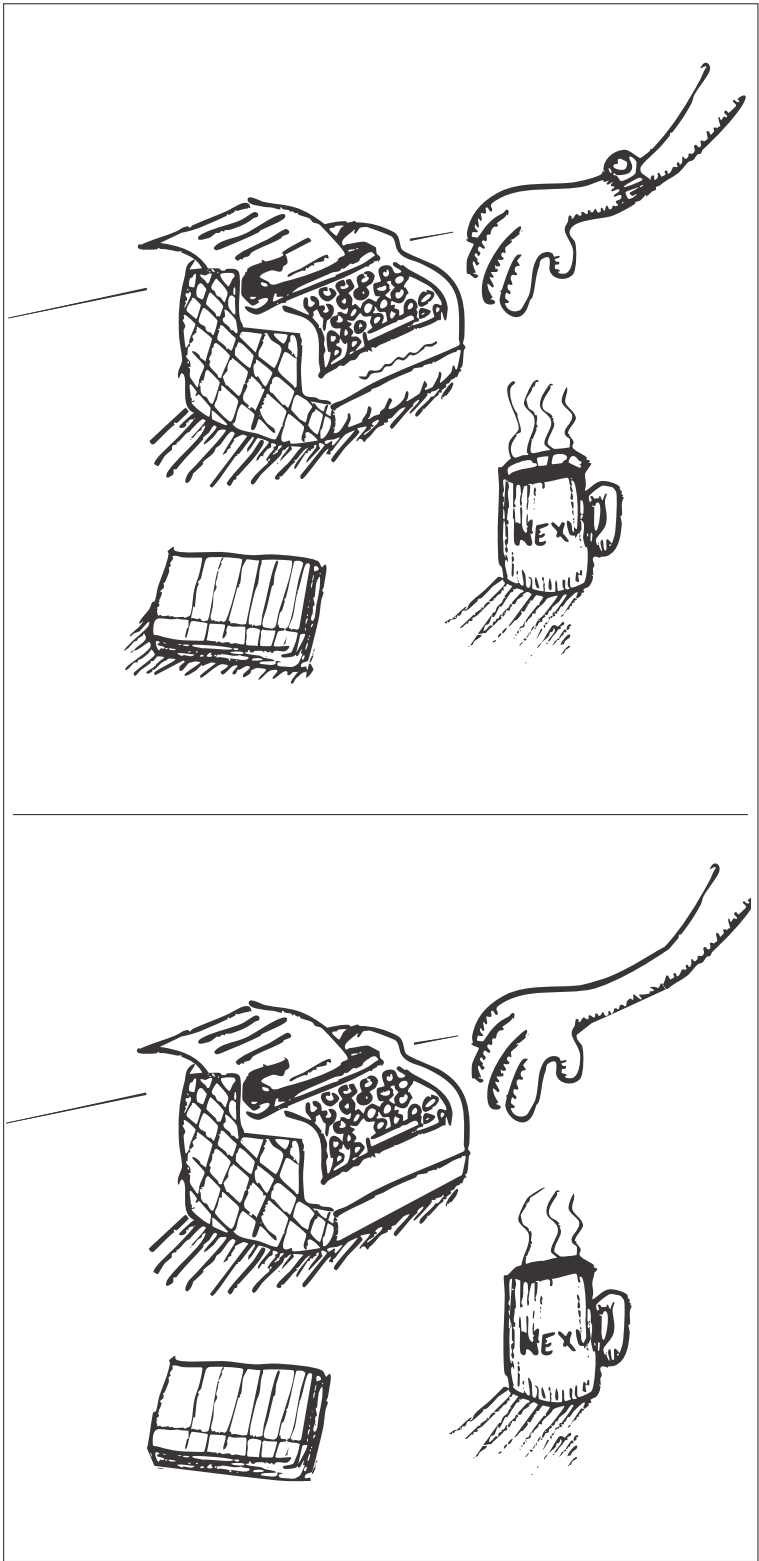


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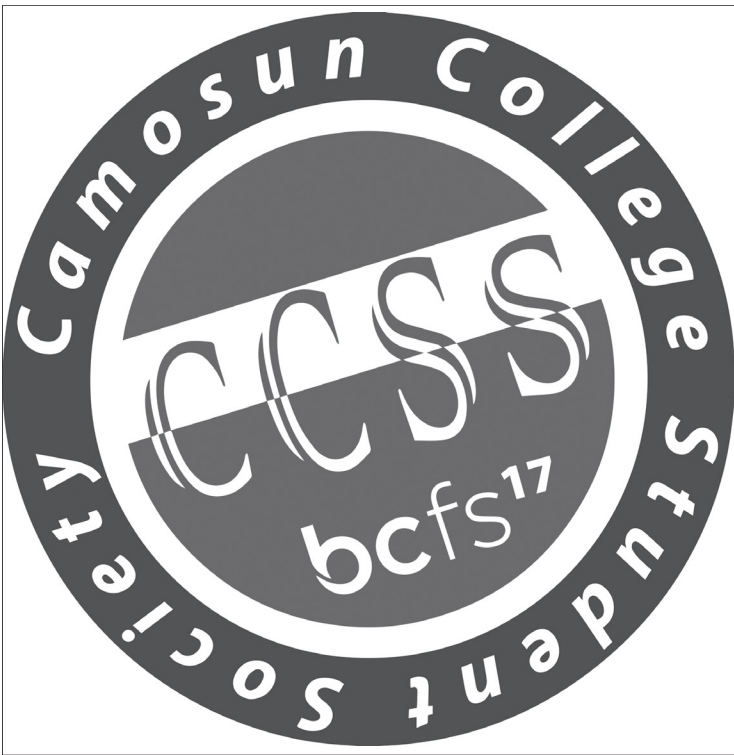
We've hidden this copy of our last issue somewhere at the Lansdowne campus. Bring it in to our office to claim a prize from contest sponsor Arsenal Pulp Press, who have donated an assortment of books for you to choose from. *Nexus* HQ is located at Richmond House 201 at Lansdowne.

spot the differences

Can you find the seven differences between the two drawings below?



Message from your student board



June has been one of the most meaningful months for our Camosun community. We celebrated the achievements of our graduates at convocation, embraced the vibrant spirit of Pride Month, and reflected on the values that guide us during National Indigenous Peoples

Day. It’s been a vibrant month of celebration, identity, and deep reflection. During convocation week, I had the privilege of witnessing every single Camosun student step onto the stage and into their next chapter. With each step, a story unfolded—stories

of paths taken, challenges overcome, and dreams pursued. It took countless sleepless nights (and probably a lot of caffeine!) to reach that moment. Seeing those moments firsthand is a powerful reminder of why the Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) exists: to serve and support you. Your success fuels our purpose. Throughout June, that purpose has been visible in everything we’ve done. Our pride director, Acacia Tooth, has been active all month, representing CCSS at the District of Saanich’s inaugural Pride proclamation and connecting with local partners to strengthen the work of our Pride Collective. For the second year in a row, we were proud to be part of Pride in the Park at Beckwith Park, creating space for 2SLGBTQIA+ community members to gather and celebrate. Acacia is also working on a bold new collaborative project: Victoria’s first-ever TransFest, expected to launch this August. We’re also getting ready for one of our favourite annual events... the Victoria Pride Pa-

rade on July 6. This is a moment where we proudly show up for 2SLGBTQIA+ students and stand alongside our broader community. This month, I also attended a national conference hosted by our health and dental insurance provider, where we reviewed how our students are using their plans. Mental health was the top reason students accessed their health services. And the biggest contributing stressors? Adjusting to life at college, relationships, and finances. These findings show how urgent our work is. Life at Camosun can be overwhelming, especially for those adjusting to new environments. That’s why our board is planning new initiatives focused on easing transitions, building community, and strengthening support systems. Our student wellness and access director, Athena Pimentel, is also working to expand the Deals App, a free app available to all Camosun students. The app connects students with discounts at local restaurants, retailers, fitness centers, and

service providers across the city. From saving a few dollars on your next coffee run to finding deals on essentials like haircuts or groceries, the app helps stretch your budget a little further. As financial stress continues to be one of the biggest concerns among students, we’re looking for ways to grow the number of participating businesses and make the app even more useful. Every bit of savings counts, and this is one way we’re helping students feel a little more secure and supported. Camosun students are facing real, everyday challenges. Some of those burdens are hard to carry alone. But you don’t have to. We’re here to walk with you, to listen, and to do what we can to make life a little easier. If there’s something you need, tell us. If there’s something missing, help us see it. This student society belongs to all of us—and together, we can shape a stronger, more supportive Camosun for everyone. In solidarity, Terence Baluyut External executive

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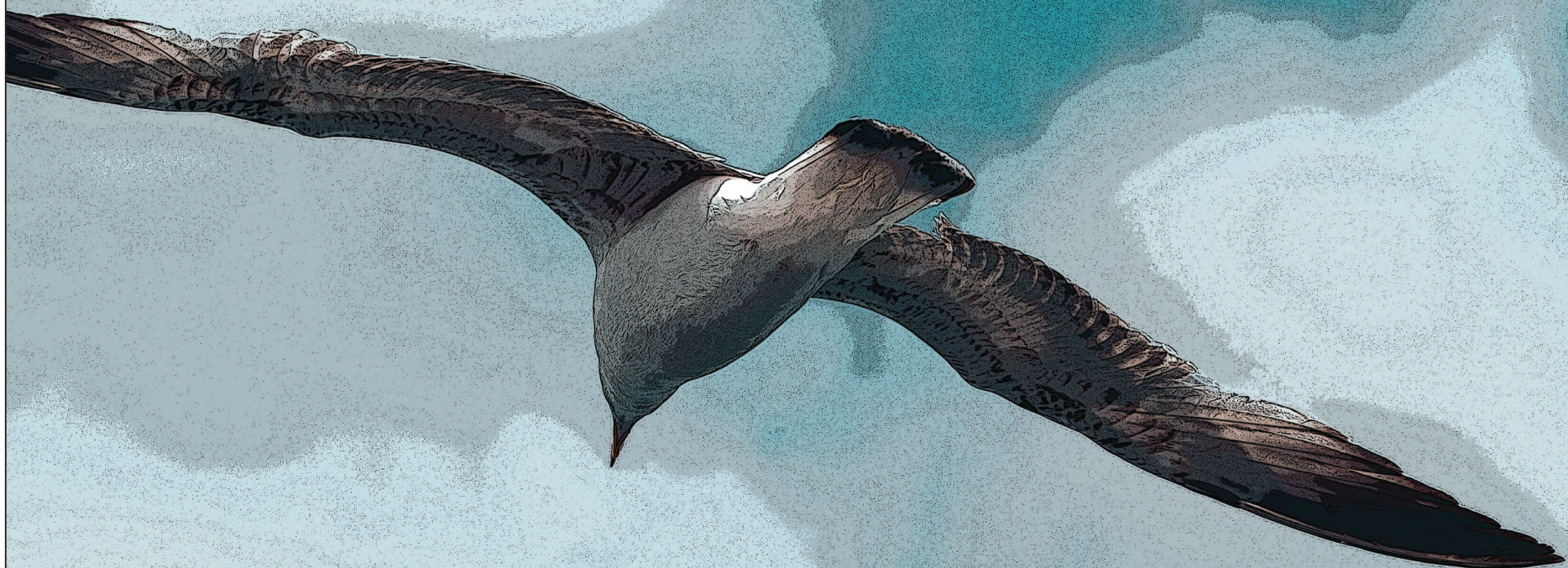
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