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# current

## St. John's International Women's Film Festival

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October 16th - October 30th Volume 11, Issue 24

### this issue

Vampire's Ball

Love Drugs

Emma's New Game

Sébastien

Lefebvre

of Simple Plan

goes acoustic

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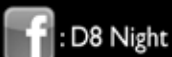
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# SOUNDS

## PEARL JAM – BACKSPACER

BREAKING FREE FROM TWO SIGNATURE ALBUMS (UNIVERSAL)

BY JONNY HODDER



Many band's struggle for years, playing to sparse, unenthused crowds at hole-in-the-wall bars, ultimately facing the reality their music will mostly go unnoticed and unappreciated. But, when a band's debut is successful, they're

showered with media exposure, platinum record sales and sold-out tours; when they and their music are still young, fresh and vibrant.

Attaining superstar status when a band's still in its infancy can also be a curse.

Apart from the notorious cultural pressures associated with stereotypical 'rock star' life, there's added pressure of having to live up to that expectation for subsequent records. And, the music-buying public can be a fickle crowd, anxious to pigeon-hole viable musical efforts because they don't fit within the band's pre-existing musical paradigm.

Case in point: Pearl Jam. Making their name early as one of the father's of early-90s grunge, Pearl Jam released two mind-blowing CDs: 1991's Ten and 1993's Vs. that brought them unimaginable fame and success, instantly solidifying their place in rock history. At the same time, that era and specifically those two CDs became the benchmark for

Pearl Jam's critical and commercial success. Nobody ever asks, "What's your favourite Pearl Jam album?" Rather, the question will be forever qualified as, "What's your favourite Pearl Jam album: Ten or Vs.?"

This isn't intended to be a plea to buy Pearl Jam's new CD because their kids are living on the streets and surviving on a steady diet of stray cats. It's fairly likely Eddy Vedder and Co. are still rich and more successful, Vedder himself is more well-read, well-spoken and respected for his opinions, than this reviewer could ever dream of being. But, when it comes to their new album, Backspacer (2009), the only measure of relevance for a nostalgic public will be whether it can break free from the shadow of its older brothers, Ten and Vs.

Let's be clear. Backspacer is not Ten. And, no, it's not Vs.

But nothing will ever be Ten or Vs. again. EVER. Instead, Backspacer delivers premium grade Pearl Jam on all fronts: the kick-your-face-in rock of "Gonna See My Friend" and "Supersonic" are tempered by acoustic strings and retrospective lyrics of "Just Breathe" and "The End".

Combine this with the talk-rock feel of "Got Some" and "The Fixer", the lost innocence turned to optimism in "Amongst the Waves", and a solid roster of tracks rounding out the album, and you've got a CD that can easily hold its own against any of their other records, from Pearl Jam (2006) to Vitalogy (1994), and, yes, even Ten and Vs.

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## NORTHEAST AVALON COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Call for Submissions

Eastern Health is conducting a community health needs assessment in the Northeast Avalon region, which includes the following communities: Avondale, Bauline, Colliers, Conception Bay South, Conception Harbour, Flatrock, Harbour Main-Chapel's Cove-Lakeview, Holyrood, Logy Bay-Middle Cove-Outer Cove, Marysvale, Mt. Pearl, Paradise, Petty Harbour-Maddox Cove, Portugal Cove-St. Philips, Pouch Cove, St. John's, and Torbay.

The purpose of a needs assessment is to gather information about the health needs and resources of a community to determine what issues are most important and to develop a plan to address those priorities. A health needs assessment looks at the things that determine the health of a community, from income and education to physical and social environments.

Written submissions (either hard copy or electronic) about the health needs of the Northeast Avalon are invited from individuals, community partners and service organizations.

Submissions should be received by **NOVEMBER 10, 2009** at the office of:

Gillian Janes, Planning Specialist  
Planning, Quality and Research, Eastern Health  
Room 1209, Southcott Hall  
100 Forest Road  
St. John's, NL A1A 1E5  
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## WORD UP

### EMMA'S NEW GAME

CHESTNUTS REVIVAL WRAPPED UP FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES

BY GINA GILL



Ah grandparents. Could anything be better? They carry little substantial responsibility for you, plus they have loads of money they just don't know what to do with. It's a win-win situation really, and Nanny and Poppy are always a relevant part of any Newfoundlander's childhood.

Emma's a bright young girl, willing to take on new challenges and is always interested in something she hasn't heard about. This need for learning is a good message for children, reminding that there's a great deal to inherit from grandparents besides money, breaking the rules and tea biscuits. Their stories are our traditions and connect us to the past.

"I hope that the children who read the Emma books will ask their grandparents about the games and pastimes they engaged in. I also hope children spend time talking with people from an older generation. As for a specific lesson, perhaps it is finding value in traditional activities and valuing the insight and knowledge of those who have more experience than ourselves," said Mercer.

Emma's New Game by Gerald Mercer and illustrated by Jill Nicol, shows a vibrant little girl's curious nature. It begins outside of Poppy T's shed, Emma is introduced to the classic game of chestnuts, one Mercer remembers playing himself as a child. "When planning the book, I reflected on some of the traditional playground games that children used to play. I could have chosen games such as alleys (marbles), skipping with rhymes, jump rope, or others, but as I brainstormed, I realized that the game of chestnuts would be perfect," said Mercer who decided that chestnuts was a more local and possibly forgotten game that needed to be remembered.

"As a child I remember walking to school and picking up chestnuts on the sidewalk around Whiteway Street and Bonaventure Avenue. My grandmother who lived on Cable Avenue in Bay Roberts had mature trees that produced profusely. Autumn meant chestnut time. I remembered the competition and the sheer will to win. So many of us gathered chestnuts and exchanged recipes to create the most sturdy, crack-resistant challenger possible," .

Emma's New Game is the sequel to Emma's Treasures, another book reflecting on the past and the importance of connections to our family and what they represent to each generation. Jill Nicol illustrated both titles and was influenced by her own past when creating Emma. "She's loosely based on me. One of the characters is modeled after a boy I went to elementary school with, and the Grandparents' house is inspired by my Aunt's summer home in Broad Cove."

Both Mercer and Nicol bring the island into the book, in the simplest, yet most meaningful ways. Pop's shed, blueberry picking season, the clothing and history. It's a reliable outlook on our lives, childhood and grandparents. Plus, the kids will remember who they are, who they love and a new game all in one.

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## EVENT

### C2C LAUNCHES 4PLAY6

A NIGHT OF THEATRICAL MAYHEM, FOR A GOOD CAUSE

BY JOSHUA JAMIESON PHOTOS: HILARY WINTER



Cathy Jones and Neil Butler

Now up for it's sixth installment, c2c theatre is launching its upcoming season with the annual 4Play event. Brad Hodder shares that the concept was found in Edmonton a few years back and adapted, "[we] made it our own. When c2c started, we knew we'd need some kind of fundraiser, but we wanted it to be an event in

its own right, not just a fundraiser. It is a lot of fun; creates a bunch of new plays and gets us working really intensively with some of our favorite artists to start each season."

For those that are unfamiliar with the concept, Hodder explains, "4 writers get the same first line and two props with which they have to write a new short play. Then a group of actors, designers, directors, stage managers and musicians rehearse and perform the play. It all happens in 24 hours. The writers get their line and props at 8pm on Saturday, the plays premiere at 8pm on Sunday. The first line and props are solicited from CBC Radio listeners and this year we're running with the idea of "Between the sheets..." you know, where magical things can happen. And sex."

"This year's line up is really exciting," Hodder continues, "Kevin Major, Berni Stapleton, Jonny Harris, Jody Richardson, Steve Cochrane, Didi Gillard-Rowlings, Petrina Bromley, Phil Churchill, Neil Butler Joel Hynes, Roger Maunder, Justin Simms, George Robertson, Mack Furlong, Bryan Hennessey, James Hawksley, Larry Barry, Phil Goodridge, Jenn Brown, Willow Kean, Renee Hackett and Jennifer Furlong. It's an incredible mix of established and emerging talent, all coming together for one night only."

The show can't go up without a dedicated crew and Hodder reveals the lineup that includes, "Brian Bishop who can light the arse end of a cat, my sister Sara, and Model Citizen's Chelsey MacNeil. We've got some kick ass musicians in Tom Power, Susan Evoy, Dave Rowe and Michael Peddle. The event demands exceptional co-ordination, so we got Mark White, Amy Anthony, Reggie Hynes, Andrew Crawford and Crystal Parsons on as stage managers."

Andy Jones and Mary Lynn Bernard will be assuming the duties of co-hosts for the evening. They'll help introduce the new plays as well as the upcoming season preview and help facilitate the ongoing auction. A number of prizes are also lined up. Highlights include a "sneak peeks at all of our shows for our 7th season, including a visit from Hedwig and the Angry Inch and Mummel and Mortimer from our family show of Robert Munsch stories coming in December."



Petrina Bromley and Amelia Manuel in 4Play5

While 4Play's structure may be a set one, "the nature of the event is such that there's no predicting what will happen, it all [goes] so fast. It really is an evening of theatrical mayhem. Maybe some actors will die. Or love. Or vacuum. Hard to say. The whole event is a surprise."

Interested in a little 4Play? Tickets are available at the Arts and Culture Centre Box Office (729-3900). Or, Brad suggests, "you could hide in the Bella Vista a few days before hand, perhaps in the vent, and wait. You won't see anything like 4Play anywhere else this year. It is always fun and you will get your money's worth and have a good time."

## CD RELEASE

# THE VAMPIRE'S BALL

WRECKHOUSE AND CHRIS KIRBY GEAR UP FOR HALLOWEEN

BY JONNY HODDER

They say good things come in pairs. On Halloween, it's especially true. Fond memories of dressing up as ghosts and goblins, witches and werewolves, or cowboys and Indians (that is, cow-people and Native Americans), and running haphazardly down our streets, alternately 'treating' ourselves to an endless bounty of chips and chocolate or Mike & Ike's, and 'tricking' unanswered doorbells with eggs and toilet paper (the preferred tools of our trade).

This Halloween, "Rhythm and Blues" and "Soul and Funk" can be added to the list of ghoulish pairings, thanks to an otherworldly partnership between Wreckhouse Jazz and Blues and Newfoundland's own guitar demon, Chris Kirby. Coinciding with the release of Chris Kirby & The Marquee's latest CD, Vampire Hotel, Kirby and WJB have combined their musical might to present the Vampire's Ball.

While Kirby and Wreckhouse tried to plan a concert during the annual Wreckhouse International Jazz & Blues Festival, they ultimately decided the CD release warranted its own spotlight and WJB's Liz Dunbar agrees, "given the title of their new CD, it seemed very fitting to coincide with Halloween."

The title, Vampire Hotel, is purportedly named after an off-George Street bar Kirby frequently played at while making a name for himself locally. Hearing him describe the titular venue is the thing of legends, like something out of a Bukowski story: "It was a little bar on Water Street where

you could buy beer with wooden tokens. I quickly learned that it was the type of place where you could stay all night if you really wanted. There were many times I crawled out of there with the early morning sun frowning down at me. It was filled with all sorts of interesting creatures of the night, and the later it was, the more eccentric the patrons seemed to be. I nicknamed the place the Vampire Hotel, and the title track from the album is about a night spent there."

Fresh off of a summer tour that took them halfway across Canada, Chris Kirby & The Marquee are eager to showcase the new material, which Kirby describes as "greasy and funky, and is sure to get people moving." In addition, fans will also get a chance to shake their collective costumed booty to the groovy winds of The Horns of Justice – who are also a part of The Idlers, featuring the funky melodies of Chris Harnett, John Duff and Susan Evoy.

The Vampire's Ball deal is sweetened by offering numerous door prizes, such as passes to next year's International Jazz and Blues Festival, T-Shirts and swag, with a special undisclosed 'Best Costume' prize.

The concert experience goes to the next level by offering one lucky vampire a shot at winning a unique prize. Dunbar explains, "Everyone loves a chance to win something, so what better prize for Chris Kirby & WJB fans to win than Chris performing a private house concert for them.



Chris Kirby (above) of "Chris Kirby & The Marquee's"

We decided to give them that opportunity to those that buy tickets online through [www.wreckhousejazzandblues.com](http://www.wreckhousejazzandblues.com) or [www.chriskirbyonline.com](http://www.chriskirbyonline.com)."

Between the marquee blues, absurdly cool prizes and a coven of musical vampires, the choice seems obvious. Chris Kirby & The Marquee never disappoint with their live performances, and this Halloween, at the Vampire's Ball, the only thing they will suck... is your blood. Blah!

The Vampire's Ball takes place on October 29th at The Bella Vista. Tickets are \$17.00 (HST incl.) and can be purchased online or the old fashioned way at Fred's Records.

## ART

# PENETRALIA

NEW EXHIBIT FEATURING RHONDA PELLEY & MICHAEL PITTMAN

BY CHARISSA REEVES

Penetralia's defined as coming from the Latin penetrare - to penetrate, the innermost or private parts. Penetralia is the title of the newest exhibit at The Leyton Gallery featuring artists Rhonda Pelley and Michael Pittman.

Pelley says in architectural terms it's the Holy of Holies, a secret room behind the altar where only the highest initiates may go. In human terms she thinks of it as a place in the mind that's the individual's sanctuary, a place no one else can go. "In these photographs I've tried to reveal that inner place, to [shed] some light upon a secret interior. Some are dreams of escape, others are nightmares of imprisonment, but all are about freedom."

Pelley's pieces are photo composites, meaning each work has a number of photos, and different exposures of the same photo layered on top of each other. Digital images superimposed using computers. Pelley said she doesn't use the filters available on photoshop to create texture, instead using other photos, "I shoot everything, if I see brick I like I shoot it because it could be texture." She also shoots wallpaper, tissue, burnt paper.

One of the works featured entitled 4am, shows a black and white image of a man from behind, sitting naked, from the waist up. At the nape of his neck a thick rope starts extending down his spine with a knot between his shoulder blades. The image has a hazy, almost smoky look to it. This texture comes from a photo of tissue paper layered onto the other images.

Pelley says she's always interested in exploring women's identity in the world and what she describes as psychic disturbances in female identity. "I believe emotions get trapped in the body."

Another piece entitled Aponia displays a nude women shown from a front view slightly off to the side. The women is shown from just above the breasts, her shoulders angled, neck and head turning away, the image stops just above her nose, her eyes not shown. Around her neck and coming down towards her left breast in such away as to give the idea of a scar, is text.

Aponia means voiceless, Pelley explained, it's a disease sometimes caused by hysteria or physical impediments, "like being strangled by the words you can't speak. It's also about finding your voice."

The symbolism behind the piece After The War grabbed my attention the most. A full frontal nude of a women standing with her legs crossed in front of her, one arm bent at the elbow behind her head in classic pinup girl pose, hair over exposed and a bit blurry but with the idea of a short 40's style bob. Around her feet are broken egg shells.

During the Second World War when women joined the work force, they were depicted in powerful positive roles in film, Pelley shared. When the men returned from the war and were confronted with this role reversal and more independent women, the femme fatal character became prominent in film.



"4am" (above) is on display at The Leyton Gallery as part of their newest exhibit titled "Penetralia"

The Femme Fatal was sexually dangerous, and independently dangerous, and it was really bad, said Pelley. "I think that's how the men dealt with all the psychic trauma of coming back and having they're world turned upside down."

The broken eggs at the feet of the women pictured represent domesticity, as well as breaking out and new ideas.

Penetralia will run until Nov. 7, the images are full of symbolism, keep in mind the idea of inner sanctum when you view them, and let your mind have fun.



# MY STYLE

## COURTNEY JACKSON

FUN, FLIRTY FASHION  
BY STEPHANIE ABBOTT



### The Outfit

A dance teacher in training, it's important to Courtney that she's able to move freely, especially when she heads out for a night of dancing with the girls. Today's outfit is one that she'd be comfortable wearing all night. Flats are a must for Courtney and her black leather ballet style is from Aldo. "I've had them for two years and worn them to death. I really need to throw them out." A tank or t-shirt tucked into a high-waisted pencil skirt is a favourite going-out outfit. Her bright blue skirt is from Urban Planet and is paired with a plain, lace-edged black tank. She incorporates a little more colour by looping a boldly patterned scarf

around her neck, picked up from Rio. Jewellery's kept to a minimum with some simple beaded anklets and a chunky turquoise and silver ring which she adores because of its colour.

### The Style

Courtney's style's fun and relaxed. She likes to incorporate lots of colour and doesn't shy away from bold shades or patterns. One of her favourite weekend looks are comfy joggers and a fleece paired with slouchy, pink knitted boots. She shops most often at the mall, favouring stores with lots of options for low-key yet stylish looks like American Eagle, Pseudio and Envy. Labels don't really matter to Courtney. "I just buy what I like," laughing that she is often teased by her sister for her "hobo" style but is completely comfortable with her carefree, bohemian inspired look.

### First Memorable Fashion Purchase

Courtney can still vividly remember her first big clothing purchase. "A pair of huge bell bottom jeans from Eclipse. Everyone wanted them and I thought I was the coolest." The flare jeans have long since been retired and she prefers skinny jeans or leggings for the most part these days.

### Style Advice

"Dress the way you want to." Courtney stresses that finding your own style is more important than buying into trends. She also admits that it drives her crazy when people try to be too "matchy, matchy." As well, she can't stand it when people wear pyjamas in public or when guys wear clothes that are too big for them.

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# COMEDY

## JUST FOR LAUGHS COMEDY TOUR

2009 ALL-STAR LINE UP LIVES UP TO ALL-STAR EDITION

BY JOSHUA JAMIESON

The cross-Canada comedy tour presented by Just For Laughs will kick off in St. John's at the Arts and Culture Centre, featuring a line up of three comics, a special guest and Sugar Sammy as the host. Sammy's been dubbed the New Comedy Rock Star, according to an Askmen.com headline, and says it "feels great. I don't know what the term really represents yet but it all sounds very positive."

The apt title is applied to a comic who's able to perform in a number of languages, allowing him to perform worldwide breaking attendance records left, right and centre. Sammy "feels good" about that as well, continuing, "It's always a great feeling when you draw a great audience. It gives your work purpose."

"Guinness and The History Channel haven't called yet but I'm sure it makes me unique in some way. It's also something I'm very proud of," he's humbly shares despite the recognition and broken records.

Sammy was aware of what he wanted to do very young, "I knew when I was 8 years old. As soon as I'd seen Eddie Murphy's Delirious, my destiny was sealed," continuing that Murphy would be "a dream come true" to work with.

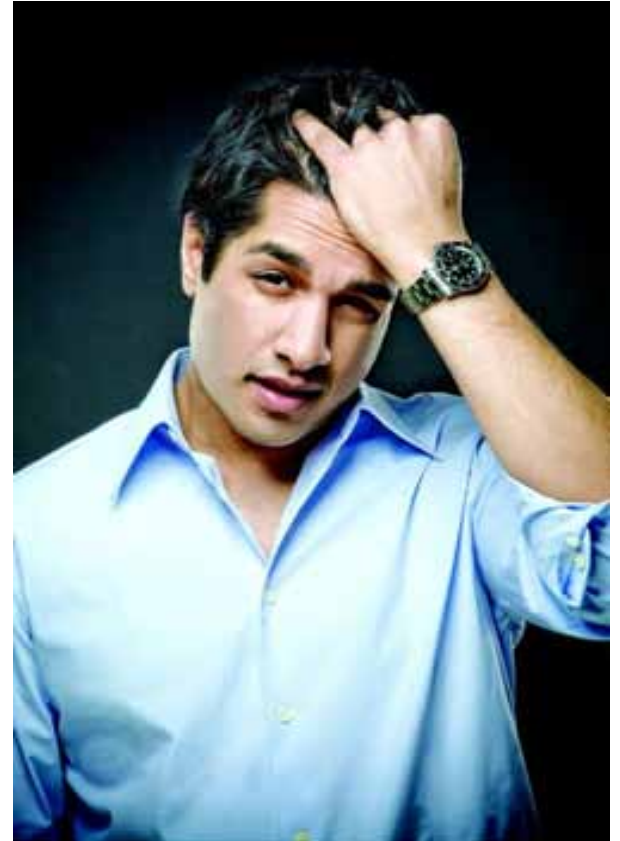
Though Sammy's no stranger to celebrity co-stars including George Lopez and Dave Chapelle, "working with two guys

you look up to is always amazing. What made it even better was that they were so amazing backstage as well. You want to believe that the people who are your heroes are great people once the camera is off. Once I met [them], their good nature and generosity made me an even bigger fan."

Building a reputation of his own, Sammy's said to have razor-sharp wit for anyone in his front row, "people know that I love to improvise and involve my audience. I also love going into dangerous territory." He's also got a couple of specials under his belt, one for Showtime set in Dubai and another recently with HBO.

While Sammy's never been to St. John's, he "can't wait to discover it for the first time. I'm looking forward to the audiences and to a great start to the tour," which will happen October 19, at 7pm. Tickets are \$39.50 and available by calling 729-3900. Or, you can email [info@currentmag.ca](mailto:info@currentmag.ca), including your name, email and the name of any comic on the tour and be entered to win a pair of tickets. More info is available at [www.hahaha.com/comedytour](http://www.hahaha.com/comedytour) - just a hint!

Sammy's last word: "I love facebook and love to hear from fans on my website [www.sugarsammy.com](http://www.sugarsammy.com)."



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COVER

# ST. JOHN'S INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FILM FEST HITS 20

CELEBRATING MOTION PICTURE EXCELLENCE, BREAKING RECORDS

BY DEBBY WINTERS



20/20 vision isn't necessary to appreciate the fruits of labour from women all over the globe as the 20th St. John's International Women's Film Festival opens at the Arts and Culture Centre (and other venues). Attracting local, national and international film industry professionals and enthusiasts, the festival was established in 1989.

440 films were considered - 93 were selected to highlight during the 5 day festival. 20 are local submissions – a festival record.

Love and Savagery written by Des Walsh, directed by John N. Smith screens at the opening gala. Barbara Doran, Lynne Wilson, Kevin Tierney and Tristan Orpen Lynch produced this film, set in 1969 Ireland. A lyrical story of an impossible love between Newfoundland geologist/poet Michael McCarthy (Allan Hawco) and barmaid, soon to be Nun, Kathleen O'Connell, (Sarah Green).

"White has superbly crafted a simple yarn about the struggle to get by, and the transformative possibilities that come from growth and understanding," says Noreen Golfman, Chair of the Festival's Board and founder of the event. "This is in so many ways a small film about very big things."

Attendees will also be treated to a preview of Republic of Doyle, the new CBC-TV series starring Hawco. Playing the Machines is another local submission written by



Adrianna Maggs debuts with "Grown Up Movie Star"

Barbara Doran and produced by Rob Blackie, This 43 minute documentary examines gambling addictions and is "a sobering doc about a ubiquitous menace...VLT's."

Writer Adrianna Maggs debuts with Grown Up Movie Star, the Newfoundland set story of a flamed-out NHL player and his two irrepressible daughters. Producers Shawn Doyle, Jill Knox-Gosse, Adriana Maggs and Paul Pope tell the story as Ray (Shawn Doyle) struggles to raise Rose, 11, and her 13-going-on-25 year old sister, Ruby after his wife leaves with aspirations of being a movie star. The tag for the film reads "A father and daughter battle over separate sexual awakenings, as he embraces his homosexuality she gets the attentions she craves from a man who carries a grudge of his own."

What do Barbara Doran, Sara Sexton, Edyth Goodridge and Lois Brown have in common? They're all indomitable movers and shakers, thinkers and players, mothers and daughters, each a Newfoundlander, each in her own way. Rhonda Buckley's admiring documentary, The Real Matriarch, explores what makes these models of adult girl power so necessary.

On the national and international stage, the festival offers many exceptional films. Motherland from the US, directed and produced by Jennifer Steinman and co produced by Anne Magill, follows six grieving US-based women who have lost their children, as they travel to South Africa to help other grieving mothers. On their journey each of the visitors is encouraged to confront, not only their own situation, but also that of an entirely different culture.

## STEVE DRISCOLL



The Galloping Goose, urethane on board, 2009, 24"x30"

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In this day and age people download music and movies freely. RIP: Remix Manifesto is a very timely Canadian documentary about copyright and remix culture. Written by web activist Brett Gaylor the film explores boundaries on commercialism. This progressive, inviting documentary has been in more film festivals than there are copyright laws before Parliament.

From Germany, the film Expansive Grounds takes on the Holocaust in a stunningly unique way as filmmaker Gerburg Rhode-Dahl bridges the gap between the horrors of the past and hope for the future. Chronicling memories and feelings as a huge memorial is assembled in the centre of Berlin. The film is described by the screening committee as, "an absolutely fascinating film about many things. . . This film is as much about art and symbols as it is about history and tragedy."

The Closing Gala features Crackie written and directed by Sherry White, co-produced by Jennice Ripley and Rhonda Buckley. Set in an almost timeless rural Newfoundland, with the larger world of affluence and opportunity existing somewhere way off screen, the film focuses on a young woman, Mitsy (Meghan Greeley) and her tough-loving guardian grandmother, Bride (Mary Walsh). White's superbly crafted a simple yarn about struggling to get by, and the transformative possibilities coming from growth and understanding.

The Festival runs October 20 - 24 at the Arts and Culture Centre, Majestic Theatre, The Masonic Temple, The Rooms, Yellowbelly Brewery and Public House, Eastern Edge Gallery, A1C Gallery, Inco Innovation Centre Theatre and others. The festival will host receptions, youth workshops and other events, including film forum 2009, a four day series of workshops, seminars and networking sessions involving local, national and international film industry professionals. For more information go to: www.womensfilmfestival.com.



# SNAPS!

## BUDDHA VISION

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PHOTOGRAPHER: ADAM TUCK - INFO@ELECTRICTWILIGHT.COM



# TOUR

## RAH RAH HITS NL

REGINA BASED BAND GOES EAST  
BY DEBBY WINTERS

Rah Rah will bring their It's Never Too Old To Believe A Dream Tour 2009 to Corner Brook and St. John's.

The band is made up of Erin Passmore (Vocals/Drums/Keys/Bass), Marshall Burns (Vocals/Guitar/Bass), Joel Passmore (Vocals/Bass/Drums), Kristina Hedlund (Vocals/Violin/Accordian/Keys/Pop Rocks/Pyrotechnics), Samra Sahlou (Vocals/Keys/Bass), Leif Thorseth (Vocals/Guitar), Vanessa Benson (Vocals/Keys/Bass) and Dan Crozier (Guitar) has been together since they first formed in high school although they've gone through some changes over the years. Burns said, "It feels like we've grown into a big family, and everyone has come into their own. Its way more fulfilling nowadays then it was however many years ago, but maybe that's just because of all the experiences we've had as a band, like touring and playing hundreds of shows."

Rah Rah has already performed with Wintersleep and Bedouin Soundclash as well as having recorded the album, Going Steady.

The band had a quite a time putting the album together over, "quite a few months as we were all in school and doing other things so we all went in one at a time and did our own parts," Burns explains. "The tracks were pretty much a collection of all the songs that we had written over the past few years and some earlier. It was much different than our recent recording which was mostly written during one winter in a more collaborative fashion. The most recent recording was also recorded in only 2 weeks in Montreal."

After this tour Rah Rah members are planning to take it easy and will focus on getting the album mixed and ready to be



released so they can y tour with it in the spring. Rah Rah takes their musical inspiration from the likes of Neil Young, Bob Dillon, The Ramones and Gram Parson to mention just a few.

The group's recordings were recently available on iTunes as a free download for a week gaining the band wide exposure. Rah Rah will be in St.. John's at the Rockhouse with the Tom Fun Orchestra on the October 16th and at The Ship on the 17th. For more on Rah Rah check out [www.rahrahband.blogspot.com](http://www.rahrahband.blogspot.com) or <http://www.myspace.com/rahrahband>.



FILM

SHORTS, NOT TO MISS

ST. JOHN'S INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL

BY TIM CONWAY

Every autumn, cinema fans join the St. John's Women's International Film Festival in celebrating the works of female filmmakers. For five days, motion pictures from here and around the globe light up screens around the city, offering a program that's sure to touch on every conceivable taste and sensibility. If you like movies at all, there's likely to be something in the schedule you'll want to see. This year's Fest is a little more special celebrating its 20th anniversary. Although some of the festivities commemorate this glorious occasion, organizers haven't been distracted from their main task, screening great films.

As opening night approaches, more buzz will emerge about a record breaking number of local entries, and some of the major ones from elsewhere, so let's take the opportunity to highlight a few "visiting" short films, lest they go unnoticed.

It probably took a certain amount of intestinal grit to conceive of Glamour Guts and name it so, but this offbeat comedy, eerily dark at times, cleverly conveys a message that in many other forms could easily wane in the minds of its audience. This witty take on the challenges of living with bowel disease, however, is sure to remain with viewers for a very long time. Of course, there are many obstacles in life, and sometimes

the ability to deal with them is impeded by well-meaning friends and acquaintances. Such is the case in the superbly crafted *How Are You?*, in which a woman, whose marriage has just bottomed out, finds that this recent event in her life has redefined her in the eyes of those around her, and that their attempts at support are no help at all. A delightful picture that's sure to tickle the Miss Manners in everyone.



*The Necktie* is the kind of animated short that's helped boost the reputation of the NFB worldwide. The film begins with a young man who's about to start a new job and quickly goes through to the day many years later where he realizes that he's better suited to something else. Sure, it has an anti-corporate bend that's easy fodder for artists, but this is the work of an artist, and it's great.



How Are You?

From across the ocean, *Mother Mine* follows the reunion of a young woman and her biological mother. The performances are superb, the production is excellent in every respect and although the resolution is somewhat different from what's expected, *Mother Mine* is thoroughly captivating. Another UK film, *After Tomorrow* presents a man who appears to be held against his will by two women. Then again, there's a reference to an incident of domestic violence, regarding his wife. Hmmmm, the possibilities are numerous here, and the outcome is certainly effective and completely satisfying.

From this small sample, it appears that the Festival has maintained high standards in offering a great selection of motion pictures courtesy of the brilliant minds and shining talent of women film-makers. At this, their twentieth year, we're eagerly looking forward to the delights that are sure to mark successive festivals.

CONCERT

LES MS. AND FRIENDS SING FOR CARE

200 PLUS VOICES JOIN IN SONG

BY DEBBY WINTERS

For the fifth year Les Ms. will join with local choirs to raise voices as they raise money for the Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Care Centre. The idea began with a choir member, Janice Day, when Les Ms. was looking for a signature event that would identify the spirit and collaborative choral heart of the choir. Day suggested something along the lines of *Run for the Cure*. The rest was history.

Director Valerie Long explained how the charity was chosen which "was due to the level of support we received from the Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Care Centre and the fact that in supporting the Patient & Family Support Fund at the Care Centre we were guaranteed that 100% of the profits would be used to directly benefit cancer patients and their families within our province."

The initial concert featured all female choirs from the St. John's area, along with a guest soloist. This year, Les Ms., Holy Heart of Mary Alumnae, Newfound Sound and Newman Sound, an all male choir, will come together. The guest vocalist will be Melanie DeMore, music teacher and vocalist.

Long explained how DeMore was recruited, "in the Spring of 2008, Les Ms. traveled to New Brunswick to participate in Podium, the bi-annual conference of the Association of Canadian Choral Conductors where Melanie was doing workshops....we contacted her to explore this idea and she immediately said yes. Holy Heart of Mary Alumnae are sharing the cost with Les Ms. to bring Melanie in from Oakland, California and we'll have the privilege of working with Melanie in workshops during the run-up week."

The concert features four selections from each choir. Performances will range from traditional choral pieces to barbershop, jazz, spirituals and pop arrangements. The finale number - Moses Hogan's *I'll Make the Difference* features all performers - over 200 voices, along with the guest soloist.

Regarding the fundraising Long said, "we never have a definite amount [to target] and are hesitant to set a goal, we've been fortunate to see our donation total increase each year. We've raised over \$45,000.00 to date and would love to see that rise to around \$60,000.00 this year. Les Ms. also



Members of the Les Ms. choir with Director Valerie Long

raises money through our own events as well, a percentage of all our CD sales as well as other performances go towards the same charity."

The event is presented twice, at 2pm and 7:30 pm, October 25th at Cochrane Street United Church. Tickets are \$20.00, available at Auntie Crae's, Take Note Music School and from choir members. Surf to [www.lesms.ca](http://www.lesms.ca) for more!

COMICS

*the little world*  
by Kevin Woolridge





## DATING

### BRIEF ENCOUNTERS

BY TARA LEHMAN  
A.K.A. LOVE DIVA



Let's preface by saying the Love Diva's a dating columnist rather than a sex columnist. That said part of leading a healthy single life until 'the one' appears means you must have fun along the way, and if casual sex is on the radar, go right ahead. It's not taboo and is a road well travelled by more than would care to admit.

feel amazing and if it means multiple brief encounters rather than settling into a mediocre relationship because you think it's the right thing to do, ditch that attitude and do what most people do: Soak up the sex and don't feel guilty.

Now, let's back up. Can you handle casual sex? If you can, great. But, if you can't, the bad end of the stick is you won't know until you try. Before you get too many casual sex notches on your belt, ask yourself if you are okay with this lifestyle. It isn't something that automatically needs to come along with being single and shouldn't be taken lightly. It means leaving your emotions at the door and not caring if you don't remember their name in the morning. Do you feel emotionally attached to someone once they make you orgasm? If so, then casual sex isn't for you. Do you have a regular 'friend with benefits'? Then agree that no strings are attached and know that the longer it goes on, the higher the

chances of emotions surfacing. This also means you can't be jealous if he/she is sleeping with others. Most importantly, remember that casual sex brings extra safety concerns into your life.

If you aren't comfortable with casual sex, invest in some extra toys and you'll be just fine. For those who are totally game, let your body do the talking but don't short change yourself. Don't get so caught up that you're missing opportunities to meet Mr. or Mrs. Right. At the end of the day, those gems are the ones you should be messing the bed sheets up with!

Tara runs D8 Night, a local dating service which offers Speed Dating and a variety of other events. Reach her on the Facebook Group: D8 Night or by e-mail: tara@eventivenewfoundland.ca

It may seem like relationships are the cats ass, however, and sorry to be blunt, but you enter this life alone and leave it alone. Therefore, spend time with people who make you

## CD RELEASE

### SÉBASTIEN LEFEBVRE, SOLO

SIMPLE PLAN MEMBER GOES ACOUSTIC  
BY JOSHUA JAMIESON



Montreal-born, 28 year old Sébastien Lefebvre has been writing and making music since he was 13 but not everything he's ever written suits Simple Plan. Inspired by what he knows and what happens to him and his friends, there were songs he's created "on the

Lefebvre reveals noting he's had some time off since last Christmas. He counts Bob Dylan and Jonny Cash amongst inspirations for the musical point of view, "for some reason I can never get over that style," he admits.

Simple Plan band mates are "very happy and supportive, excited," says Lefebvre who revealed "Chuck will direct the video for the single I Fall For You, keepin' it in the family." That can be expected sometime in November, with the EP itself dropping on October 20.

side" that he "still wants out there." And so the EP You Are Here / Vous Etes Ici has become reality.

The mellowed out acoustic 7 track record is not intended as a leaping point for something more, necessarily. "It'd be great if it did turn into more, but it's not the main goal. I hope people like it; it was done more for me, just something to do,"

Even with a musical side project, Lefebvre keeps busy with an online podcast called Man of the Hour which he's co-anchored since 2006. Also an avid Tweeter, he expressed his affection for Lego's which begged a question in the interview. He shared that on a way to a meeting "we passed a store with Lego in the window and I've been playing Lego



Simple Plan's Sébastien Lefebvre's new solo project hits record store shelves October 20th

Star Wars on the Wii lately so I had to get a fix."

Five minutes after the interview, Lefebvre Tweeted, "First interview was good..." and CURRENTmag thanked 'seblefebvre' wishing success for the EP, it's a great listen!

## WINE

### BROKENWOOD, 2005

BY JOSHUA JAMIESON



This medium-bodied red can be safely enjoyed on its own or with saucy pasta dishes or the good old fashioned BBQ. It is a wine best kept for a few years before opening to allow the flavours to fully blossom, exhibiting a full fruit forward palate that includes red cherry, briar fruit and strawberry. The accent is slightly sour and nutty with sweet oak coming through leading to a light finish.

The 2005 Brokenwood Sangiovese retails for about \$23.00 and comes from a region of Australia that's 35km south of Adelaide in the Southern part of the country well known for its wine. The Sangiovese varietal is Italian in origin and is slow to ripen, generally produces wine that is high in acid and tannin, harvested in late March or early April. The 2005 was bottled in July of 2006 after being hand-plunged in 2-3 tonne open fermenters and then run to older oak.

This particular wine's acidity and tannins were lighter and more supple than expected, making the drink smooth and silky. Its bright red colour with purple tints makes this dry but balanced wine a great pick for any occasion.

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# LISTINGS

# WHAT'S ON!

CHECK OUR LOCAL EVENTS CALENDAR

## FRIDAY, Oct 16

Arts & Culture Centre: NSO: Beethoven's 5th  
 Club One: Bic and the Ballpoints  
 CBTG's: Kujo  
 Distortion: Ok Cobra, The Leathers  
 Erin's Pub: Connemara  
 Greensleeves: The Tequila Rockingbirds  
 Loft 709: DJ Mayehem  
 Shamrock City: (8PM) Barry Kenny & Glen Harvey from Celtic Connection  
 Spin: Funktastic Friday w/Leo van Ulden & Kid Cue  
 Stanley's: (10PM) Karaoke  
 The Levee: The Sellouts, Baytown Connection, Quiet Elephant  
 The Majestic: Danny Fernandes, DJ JBillz  
 The Rock House: Tom Fun Orchestra  
 The Ship: Swamperella - Cajun Music/Louisiana-style dance band  
 Tol's: Route One  
 Turkey Joe's: Filthy Fridays w/ DJ Lex  
 Whalen's: Des Gambin  
 Yuk Yuk's: Darcy Michael

## SATURDAY, Oct 17

Arts & Culture Centre: Thank You For The Music (ABBA Tribute)  
 Club One: Bic and the Ballpoints  
 CBTG's: Ok Cobra, The Leathers  
 Erin's Pub: Jason Simms & John Barela  
 Greensleeves: The Tequila Rockingbirds  
 Liquid: Mikey B, Steve Murray, Electro  
 Loft 709: Spesh K w/Filthy Gentlemen, Antics, Paddy G  
 Mile One: Chubby Checker  
 Shamrock City: Kilkenny Krew  
 Spin: Seamless Saturday w/Mike the Tailor and Steve Murray  
 Stanley's: (10PM) Karaoke  
 The Fat Cat: Mojo  
 The Ship: Rah Rah  
 Tol's: Route One  
 Turkey Joe's: Sexual Saturdays w/DJ Jaycee  
 Yuk Yuk's: Darcy Michael

## SUNDAY, Oct 18

Arts & Culture Centre: Masterless Men, ShanneyGannock  
 DF Cook Recital Hall: Atlantic String Quartet  
 Greensleeves: Damian Follett  
 Grumpy Stump: Karaoke  
 O'Reilly's: Traditional Open Session w/ Alan Byrne  
 The Fat Cat: Open Mic w/Shawn Beresford  
 Turkey Joe's: Retro Sunday (Ladies Night) with DJ Lex

## MONDAY, Oct 19

Greensleeves: Damian Follett  
 Grumpy Stump: Open Mic  
 Loft 709: Martini Mondays w/DJ Diamond  
 Turkey Joe's: Manic Mondays: Happy Hour All Night

## TUESDAY, Oct 20

Auntie Crae's: (Noon, free) Auntie Crae's Band  
 Bella Vista: (8:30PM, \$5) Sizzlin Salsa Tuesdays  
 Grumpy Stump: Karaoke  
 Loft 709: Hip Hop Tuesday w/Paddy Greene & Shawn Goldz

The Ship: Women's Film Fest Opening Party  
 Turkey Joe's: (10PM) Two for Tuesdays w/Carl Peters & Dave White

## WEDNESDAY, Oct 21

Grumpy Stump: Karaoke  
 Junctions: Wild Wednesdays w/ Dr Drake, DJ Fox  
 Loft 709: Retro Wednesday with DJ Sina  
 The Rock House: (8:30PM, \$5) Salsa On the Rock weekly salsa dancing  
 The Ship: (9PM, \$5) Folk Night w/ Ian Foster  
 Stanley's: Karaoke  
 Turkey Joe's: Wacky Wednesdays w/ Dave White  
 Yuk Yuk's: New Talent Night

## THURSDAY, Oct 22

Distortion: Ninjaspy  
 Greensleeves: Unlisted  
 Liquid: Open Decks  
 The Dock: Stixx and Stones  
 The Ship: Sean Panting  
 Tol's: Mainline  
 Turkey Joe's: Tropical Thrus w/DJ Chamba  
 Whiskey: Open Mic with Stephen Green  
 Yuk Yuks: Tony Krolo

## FRIDAY, Oct 23

Distortion: Ninjaspy  
 Erin's Pub: Graham Wells  
 Greensleeves: The Regulators  
 Loft 709: DJ Mayehem  
 Stanley's: (10PM) Karaoke  
 The Dock: Generation Lost  
 Tol's: Mainline  
 Turkey Joe's: Filthy Fridays with DJ Lex  
 Yuk Yuk's: Tony Krolo

## SATURDAY, Oct 24

Distortion: Steve Abbott  
 Greensleeves: The Regulators  
 Loft 709: Dance League Saturday w/ Paddy Greene  
 Spin: Seamless Saturday w/Mike the Tailor  
 Stanley's: (10PM) Karaoke  
 The Martini Bar: Burly Q Babies Cadaverous Cabaret  
 Tol's: Mainline  
 Turkey Joe's: Sexual Saturdays w/ DJ Lex  
 Yuk Yuk's: Tony Krolo

## SUNDAY, Oct 25

Greensleeves: Dave White & Carl Peters  
 Grumpy Stump: Karaoke  
 O'Reilly's: (7:30PM) Traditional Open Session with Alan Byrne  
 Turkey Joe's: Retro Sunday (Ladies Night) with DJ Lex

## MONDAY, Oct 26

Greensleeves: Damian Follett  
 Grumpy Stump: Open Mic  
 O'Reilly's: Larry Foley & Patrick Moran Open Mic  
 Shamrock City: (10PM) Anthony MacDonald & Ronnie Powe  
 Turkey Joe's: Manic Mondays - Happy Hour All Night

## TUESDAY, Oct 27

Auntie Crae's: (Noon, free) Auntie Crae's Band  
 Bella Vista: (8:30PM, \$5) Sizzlin Salsa Tuesdays  
 Greensleeves: Damian Follett & Gary Bambin  
 Grumpy Stump: Karaoke  
 Turkey Joe's: Two for Tuesdays - "2 for 1" w/Carl Peters & Dave White

## WEDNESDAY, Oct 28

Greensleeves: Kronik  
 Grumpy Stump: Karaoke  
 Junctions: Wild Wednesdays w/Dr Drake, DJ Fox  
 The Rock House: (8:30PM, \$5) Salsa On the Rock weekly salsa dancing  
 The Ship: Folk Night (Madhatter Night)  
 Stanley's: Karaoke  
 Turkey Joe's: (10PM) Wacky Wednesdays w/ Dave White  
 Yuk Yuk's: New Talent Night

## THURSDAY, Oct 29

Greensleeves: Unlisted  
 Liquid: Open Decks  
 Tol's: Barcode  
 Turkey Joe's: Tropical Thursdays w/ DJ Chamba  
 Whiskey: Open Mic with Stephen Green

## What To Do? (For Artists)

Anna Templeton Centre (Duckworth) contact for info re: adult and youth classes, workshops  
 Clay Cafe (39 Commonwealth Ave, Mount Pearl 745-2345) Open til 9PM  
 Devon House Clay Studio - open studio times, contact for info  
 Creative Writing Fitting Room MUN, Nov 3 / Submissions due Oct 23 email paragoncollection@gmail.com

## Gallery Listings

The Craft Council Gallery (Devon House, Duckworth Street; www.craftcouncil.nl.ca) Now showing: Breaking Point by Jason Holley and 400: An Exhibition celebrating Cupids  
 Holley and 400: An Exhibition celebrating Cupids  
 Leyton Gallery Summer Exhibit (www.theleytongallery.com)  
 The Rooms (www.therooms.ca) Maurice Cullen & His Circle (until Nov. 22)  
 Irish Connections (Peter Lewis Gallery, ongoing) 15 new oil paintings done in Northern Ireland 722-6009

## Special Events Listings

Launch of Mi'sel Joe: An Aboriginal Chief's Journey (Chapters, Oct 16, 7pm) Chief Mi'sel Joe will be giving a presentation. Please contact Flanker Press, 739-4477.  
 4Play6 A fundraiser for c2c theatre (Bella Vista Oct 25, 8pm) Tickets avail. on the door or in adv. at the Arts and Culture Centre Box Office (729-3900)  
 Shallaway Newfoundland and Labrador Youth in Chorus (Cochrane St. United Church, Oct 23, 7:30pm) \$20 gen. / \$15 stu.  
 Eastern Edge 25th Anniversary (Johnson Geo Centre, Nov 7, 7pm) Live Art Auction feat. Gerry Squires, Peter Drysdale, Will Gill, Pam Hall, Jennifer Barrett and more. Tickets \$45, avail. at Fred's, The Travel Bug or Eastern Edge Gallery.  
 Family Fun Drop In Program (The Rooms, Oct 18, 2pm) Level 3, Atrium - Be inspired by artists Maurice Cullen and John Hartman and create your own art!  
 Family Fun Drop In Program (The Rooms, Oct 25, 2pm) Level 4, Museum Gallery - can you picture the Ice Age?  
 Halloween Howl Family Program (MUN Botanical Garden, Oct 24/25, 10am) visit www.mun.ca/botgarden for info  
 The Nightmare Before Christmas (Holy Heart Theatre, Oct 28-31, 8pm) NewBlood Productions \$13, call 579-4244  
 Classic Halloween Week Horror A triple play of spine-tingling stories by candlelight (Newman Wine Vaults, Oct 29/31, 8:30pm) \$10 Info at www.sbsts.info  
 The Finer Things (Newman Wine Vaults, Oct 30, 8pm) An evening of classic theatre by candlelight, port tasting, fine tea and gourmet cheese. \$50 Call 722-7287  
 Indian Drumming (Petro-Canada Hall, MUN, Oct 17, 8pm) World-renowned drumming master Trichy Sankaran with the Scruncheons  
 IABC All-Star Speakers Tour (Comfort Inn, Oct 21) More info at www.iabc.nf.ca  
 Festival du Vent 2009 (Oct 15 - 18) More info at www.acsi.ca/festival or by calling 726-4900 Events include Kite Contest, Schools Contest, visual arts, Friday Film Night at Grands-Vents (65 Ridge Road) screening Nickle Independent Film Fest titles  
 Gardening Workshop at MUN Botanical Garden: Putting Your Garden to Bed (Botanical Gardens, Oct 17, 10am) Pre-registration is required. For more information call 737-8590.  
 NLOWE Marks Small Business Week (Oct 17-23) visit www.nlowe.org for schedule of events of call 888-NLOWE-1  
 Weekly Storytime (Michael Donovan Library, Thursday's Oct 8 - Nov 12, 9:30am) Register - 737-2621  
 Cervical Cancer Prevention Workshop (A.C. Hunter Library, Nov 17, 7pm) Activity Room, 1st Floor call 737-3950 to register.  
 Volunteer Call The St. John's International Women's Film Festival runs from October 20-24 and we are looking for eager volunteers. Please contact Aimee Wall at 754-3141 ext. 224, or volunteer@womensfilmfestival.com  
 Stucco in the 80s (Spirit of Newfoundland, thru to Nov. 21) call 579-3023 for show times and tickets.  
 Our Celtic Spirit... in Crayon (Spirit of Newfoundland, thru to Nov. 14) call 579-3023 for show times and tickets.  
 Comic Jam (Hava Java, last Monday of every month, 7PM, free)  
 St. John's Farmers' Market (Saturdays, 10AM-2PM), Lion's Club Chalet, Mayor Avenue  
 Hurling Training on-going, Saturday afternoons at Mount Pearl Intermediate rugby grounds. Contact Brendan at Cabot Hill Hurling Club@yahoo.ca, or rosshoulihan@yahoo.com for more details.  
 Free Internet: Love of Learning offers free internet and computer use for resilient youth between 15 and 35 years old, noon to 6pm, weekdays in the basement of the Gower Street United Church. For more info, visit www.fortheloveoflearning.org or call Darcy at 722-8848.  
 For The Love of Learning (weekdays, 12pm-6pm, Free to youth 15-35): 99 Gower Street. Classes in world religion, philosophy, folklore, art, theatre, resume-building. Free lunch at 1PM (722-4846)  
 Mall Walkers' Club: (Avalon Mall, Thursdays, 8:45am) (737-2333)  
 The Pottle Centre: (323 Hamilton Avenue, social and recreational programs for users of mental health services) 753-2143  
 The Rooms: (Wednesdays 6pm-9pm Free admission, 9 Bonaventure Ave. 757-8000)  
 Seniors Bridging Culture: (Seniors Resource Centre, Thursdays, 2pm) Tea, guest speakers, and conversation (737-2333)  
 Seniors Friendship Club: (Seniors Resource Centre, Fridays, 2pm 737-2333)  
 Shambhala Meditation Group: (Billy Rahal Clubhouse, behind Elizabeth Towers Wednesdays, 7:30pm; Sundays, 9:30am) Free meditation practice (739-0270)  
 St. John's City Council Meeting: (City Council Chambers, 4th Floor, Mondays, 4:30pm) Public welcome, see agenda www.stjohns.ca, posted Friday afternoons  
 Tango On The Edge - Argentine Tango: (Thursdays 8:30-10:30, RCA Club, 10 Bennett Ave) All welcome.

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 You, Me and the SPP: Trading Democracy for Corporate Rule National documentary tour in St. John's (EN2006, Oct 9, 7pm) Admission by donation. Followed by Q & A with filmmaker, Paul Manly. www.youmespp.com  
 Stucco in the 80s (Spirit of Newfoundland, thru to Nov. 21) call 579-3023 for show times and tickets.  
 Our Celtic Spirit... in Crayon (Spirit of Newfoundland, thru to Nov. 14) call 579-3023 for show times and tickets.  
 Comic Jam (Hava Java, last Monday of every month, 7PM, free)  
 St. John's Farmers' Market (Saturdays, 10AM-2PM), Lion's Club Chalet, Mayor Avenue  
 Hurling Training on-going at Swiler's outdoor field, sundays 6pm. & St. Bon's, tuesdays 6:30pm. Contact alephmudra33@yahoo.ca or rosshoulihan@yahoo.com for more details  
 Free Internet: Love of Learning offers free internet and computer use for resilient youth between 15 and 35 years old, noon to 6pm, weekdays in the basement of the Gower Street United Church. For more info, visit www.fortheloveoflearning.org or call Darcy at 722-8848.  
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## MY MESSY BEDROOM

# THE LOVE DRUG?

WILL LONG-TERM LOVE EVENTUALLY BE AVAILABLE BY PRESCRIPTION?

BY JOSEY VOGELS

"People often rationalize their inability to have long-term relationships with psychological reasons - you know, they're inadequate or whatever," Professor Carl E. Wood of Melbourne's Monash University shares. "But, it may be in their brain chemistry and when they strike the right mix they're able to bond and form long-term relationships."

According to Wood, research into the chemicals that control love, lust and attachment could result in drugs that would make you fall in love. But, before running off to the doctor for a prescription, it's not quite there yet.

Robert T. Francoeur, a professor of human sexuality and author of *The International Encyclopedia of Sexuality* says neuroscientists have been studying the chemical makeup of love, lust and bonding using functional magnetic-resonance imaging (fMRI) for years. "We have some insights, but no complete explanations so far," Francoeur explains over the phone from his New Jersey home.

They do know why you suddenly become as excited as a schoolgirl, get butterflies and can't eat or sleep when you first fall in love. "Natural amphetamines are triggered in the brain and do what any natural or synthetic amphetamine does," Francoeur says.

So basically, you're on speed. If you're lucky when your

brain eventually comes down, endorphins kick in. "These are the natural opiates, like serotonin" says Francoeur, "these give us the feelings of relaxation and security that come with long-term love."

Combine endorphins with oxytocin, otherwise known as the "bonding" or "cuddling" hormone, and, tah-dah, you've got a long-term relationship. But Francoeur adds that while you can isolate the chemicals involved, it is harder to determine why amphetamine-fuelled lust turns into more relaxed long-term bonding in some cases and not others.

A lot of it has to do with our "love map" says Francoeur, "a unique, idiosyncratic sequence of events that determine who and what we are attracted to. Some of this is encoded before birth. Other things like sexual orientation and gender identity are part of it. Even the image of your first love can contribute to your ideal-lover template."

Then there are pheromones, chemicals our bodies release into the air to make people go, "Hubba hubba." While scientists are still unclear about how we detect and respond to pheromones, entrepreneurs have made a killing hawking their magic.

Francoeur says that while they've been able to identify pheromones and chemically reproduce them in a lab, there



Can a pill be the answer to finding real love?

is no proof that slathering yourself in pheromone cream will attract an endless number of women. "There is no research," he says. "People claim to have done studies, but I've never seen them in any journal."

There's no simple recipe when it comes to attracting and keeping a mate. And though many will admit that falling in love has much to do with the chemistry between two people; narrowing long-term love down to a chemical formula is undeniably simplistic.

Still, Professor Wood is confident that one day, research will lead to a pill that produces feelings of lust or love, and that this will be helpful in maintaining happy, healthy relationships. But even he admits that, as with Viagra - which can treat the physical problems associated with erectile dysfunction but can't solve the psychological problems and conflicts in sexual relationships - a pill may be able to create the physical sensations of love, but it can't guarantee that it will last. Of course, that didn't stop Viagra from becoming the highest-selling prescription drug of all time.

## \$3 BILL

# RUFUS!

RUFUS WAINWRIGHT'S PRIMA DONNA ISN'T AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL

BY RICHARD BURNETT

Over the last decade I've interviewed Rufus Wainwright 19 times - more than anyone else, more than my annual columns with Felice Picano and Kate Clinton. If we do the interview in person, it's usually at his favourite Montreal café, La Croissanterie Figaro. Sometimes we do it over the phone.

Rufus loves the media. He enjoys fame. And the media mostly love him back. But for the first time in his career he took a few hits when he debuted his first-ever opera, *Prima Donna*, budgeted at £2 million, at the Manchester International Festival.

Lynne Walker of *The Independent* complained "musically *Prima Donna* is at best banal, at worst boring."

Alfred Hickling of the *Guardian* wrote that "this is no mere rock star's vanity project, though few stars are quite as vain as Wainwright."

If anything, Rufus is audacious.

But there were also positive notes. "Inspired touches and disarmingly beautiful passages," *The New York Times* reviewed. And *The Globe and Mail* noted, "There's no shortage of emotion in *Prima Donna*, as you might expect from the first opera by Rufus Wainwright, who does nothing by half-notes. Strings soar, teeth are gnashed, heroines throw themselves across beds."

Rufus took it all in sanguinely.

"I'm relieved that [the public reception] was kind of positive," Rufus says. "It wasn't my masterpiece. I didn't shatter the opera world but the definite consensus was that it was a really strong attempt. I made a mark, which is a lot

in the classical world. I'm also happy that my mother was there to see it."

Not only was his mother, Montreal folk singer Kate McGarrigle, there opening night, but so was his boyfriend, German theater director Jorn Weisbrodt. Rufus arrived dressed as Verdi in a formal 19th-century black suit with white silk scarf and black top hat, and Jorn was a young Puccini in a cream-colored summer suit and straw hat.

"It was my idea," Rufus says. "[And] it was a very good idea. It fanned the flames of the press. Like they say, no press is bad press. So it was fun and we looked great."

But underneath it all Rufus admits he was scared shitless. "I loved watching the rehearsals. That was emotionally fulfilling. The night of the premiere I was a wreck. I hated it. The idea that people were ready to devour my creativity was upsetting."

Rufus won't have to put up with much more until *Prima Donna* has its North American premiere at Toronto's Luminato arts festival this coming spring. Expect Toronto critics to pounce since Rufus last year said, "I hate visiting Toronto. I can't stand it. The place drives me mad. I have friends there, I work there, but I find it really hard to like. I will have to go back there, but I wish I didn't have to."

Rufus may live in NYC but, as his low opinion of Toronto shows, he remains a true Montrealer and Canadian. He also hopes to bring *Prima Donna* to L'Opera de Montreal. "There's also interest in Paris and New York," he says.

Rufus is currently touring with his band, cross-promoting his new CD/DVD release *Milwaukee* at Last!



Above: Rufus Wainwright  
Photo credit: Ellis Parrinder, courtesy Universal Music

"This is the golden era of my life and I'm just enjoying it," Rufus says. "That being said, I still want to be on the charts! I want to make videos, win a Grammy. I'm still a pop star!"

What I really want to ask Rufus, though, is about a recent news story headlined "Wainwright swapped orgies for opera." During rehearsals for *Prima Donna*, Rufus chose to live in nearby Yorkshire rather than Manchester, a gay party town. Rufus, a former crystal meth addict, wanted to avoid temptation - an epiphany that came to him, he told the reporter, at an orgy.

Raising the subject, his cell phone then dies as he's sitting in his car at the beach in Long Island. I'll have to wait until interview # 20.



SNAPS!

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