

# THE VOICE MAGAZINE

Volume 16 Issue 12

March 21, 2008

## HUMN 310

Beginnings to Baroque

## Goodnight My Love

A beautiful goodbye

## AU Profiles

Gonzalo Belmar Ramírez

*Plus:*

*The Mindful Bard,  
From Where I Sit,  
AUSU This Month,  
and much more...*



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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We love to hear from you! Send your questions and comments to [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org), and please indicate if we may publish your letter.



## EDITORIAL

Sandra Livingston



## On Parade

It seems that everyone is media savvy these days. Corporations are jumping on the social-networking phenomenon in attempts to leverage the latest trends. The Internet teems with sites featuring amateur music and video producers, and even grade-school kids have at least a passing knowledge of the power of media and advertising.

Now, the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) has joined the parade of media manipulators, and in their case, the parade is a literal one. Civil liberties advocates have dubbed it the Con-Air parade, and they want

Vancouver police to stop the practice.

The process began earlier this year, and involves Vancouver police sending suspects back to other provinces where they have outstanding warrants. A CBC [article](#) reports that Jim Chu, Vancouver's police chief, wants "suspects from other provinces sent back regardless of the cost."

All well and good, but it's the way they're doing it that has civil liberties advocates protesting: when the suspect is returned to face charges, the VPD contacts the media, setting up a photo op where the individual is captured on camera as they're escorted to their flight.

In the latest incident, a 29-year-old man was returned to Nova Scotia for an outstanding assault warrant. A few hours before his flight, Vancouver police alerted reporters. Not quite the paparazzi frenzy generated by Britney or Lindsay, but the VPD's actions still create an atmosphere where media are encouraged to splash a suspect's face across news pages and TV screens.

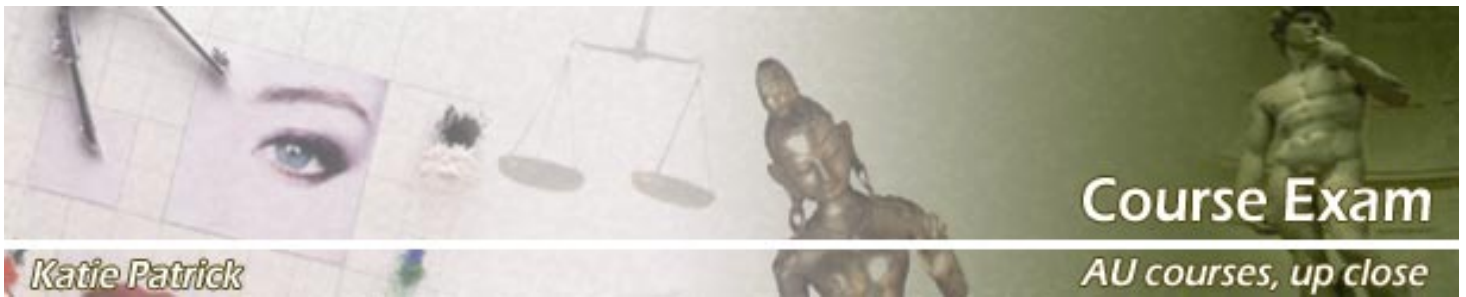
Besides the troubling aspects of real-life law enforcement on display as infotainment (*Cops* and its ilk plumbed those depths years ago), that's a problem, because the suspects involved are just that: suspects. Not convicted, not sentenced, just suspected. They may, indeed, be guilty, but then again they may not.

It's true that suspects' names and photos appear in the news all the time, usually at the time of arrest and usually in high-profile cases. And it makes sense to alert the public when a dangerous offender is apprehended and arrested.

But to manufacture a media photo op for suspect transfers seems somehow gratuitous. The question it raises is, to what benefit is such a practice? Jason Gratl, president of the B.C. Civil Liberties Association, has a theory. He believes that law enforcement agencies are using the media as a way to justify bigger budgets. The logic is that by keeping crime in the public eye and drawing attention to their work, police forces may attempt to manipulate perceptions of crime levels and justify the need for more funding.

"Here we quite simply have individuals who are accused but not convicted of crimes, paraded before the public eye for political purposes that are extraneous to their investigations," Gratl told the CBC.

I'd hate to believe that's true, but if it is, does that mean it's a bad thing? Yes. In the case of suspects who are already in custody, staged photo ops do nothing to protect the public and nothing for the integrity of the case. The police, the men and women who walk into volatile situations and put their lives on the line every day, should be well paid and well trained. Police forces should have enough funds to do the job right, period. And it's a sad day for all of us to think they might have to resort to media calls to do it.



## Western Music: Beginnings to Baroque (HUMN 310/MUSI 310)

Athabasca University's new HUMN/MUSI 310 course, Western Music: Beginnings to Baroque, provides students with an in-depth appreciation, both written and auditory, of early Western music. The course structure features a timeline approach and examines music throughout periods in history, enabling students to observe and analyze the trends and variations in music over the centuries. Course professor and published author, Dr. David Gregory, is excited about HUMN 301 and the fantastic learning experience it offers interested students. His favourite aspects of this course are so numerous, it's "hard to choose!" he commented.

The course content of HUMN 310 consists of 13 units, each of which features a relevant musical "era." The first three units of the course explore the rudiments of early music in our civilization. Students focus on the music of the ancient world and common instruments of the time. The music of the Early and Central Middle Ages is also examined, with discussion on popular composers and background information on historical events at the time.

In Unit 4, students discuss music from the Late Middle Ages. This involves education about 13<sup>th</sup> century music theory (Frances Cologne and Ars Antiqua); also, students learn about the new Nova Ars style, which was becoming popular at the time. The featured musician in this era is Guillaume de Machaut; both his religious and secular music are examined.

Unit 5 explores pre-Renaissance music, starting with the Italian music at the time (Florence, Jacopo da Bologna, Francesco Landini, Guillaume Dufay). Students also learn about English music at this time, from the Old Hall Manuscript to Power and Dunstaple. Music in the French courts at the time is paralleled, as is the Low Countries music of the same era.

The Renaissance was a time of growth in the arts, and music was no exception. Dr. Gregory commented that the "polyphonic church music of the Renaissance is some of the most beautiful music ever written..." His favourite Renaissance composer is Thomas Campion. "Anyone who doesn't know him and gets introduced to him through the course, is in for a treat," he smiled.

The Renaissance unit in HUMN 310 also includes Renaissance madrigals, "both Italian and Elizabethan/Jacobean," says Dr. Gregory. Additionally, students will discover the Renaissance music in Italy, France, and the Netherlands. The unit also contains information on "the instrumental music," consisting of popular instruments and advances in music theory.

Unit 7 covers the time period of the Protestant Reformation. Music trends before and after this historical event are examined, enabling students to landmark differences. Pre-Reformation composers studied include Innsbruck music composed under Maximilian I, as well as the compositions of Hofhaimer and Isaac. Post-Renaissance music studied includes that of Luther and Johann Walter, as well as the music at the time in France, Switzerland, and the Netherlands.



Unit 7 would not be complete unless it also addressed the music of the Counter-Reformation, which it does in detail, focusing on Orlande de Lassus and the music at the Court of Munich; Giovanni Pierluigi de Palestrina; Tomas Luis de Victoria; and Spanish vocals.

Unit 8 delves into Tudor England and Late Renaissance Italy, focusing on the music and composers surrounding this era. Tudor music involved music in English courts at the time of King Henry VIII and the English Reformation; it also had gifted composers, including Tallis, Weelkes, and Bryd.

As with the majority of the units in HUMN 310, where applicable, students are encouraged to discuss the popular instruments of that time. Music in Late Renaissance Italy was achieved by some of the following composers studied in this unit: Gesualdo and also Monteverdi (his early music).

Units 10 to 12 are devoted to exploring the masters of the Baroque era. Students deepen their understanding of Baroque Italy, and the religious and secular music of the time. The Baroque music of Germany, France, and England are also explored, including a significant portion of the talented composers of each.

The final unit of HUMN 310 is reserved for Johann Sebastian Bach. In this unit, students will focus on Bach's music from all aspects: keyboard, chamber, orchestral, cantatas, motes, oratorios, passions, and Masses. The "early life and musical influences" of Bach are also considered, as are his phases of musical development.

The course evaluation of HUMN 310 consists of four oral assignments (worth 20 per cent total), two written assignments (20 and 25 per cent, respectively), and one final exam (weighted at 35 per cent).

The oral assignments are completed via telephone. Dr. Gregory emphasized that students find these short assignments highly useful because the assignments facilitate "brief reviews of some or most of the important topics covered." Oral assignment examples include a "five-minute talk outlining the development of English music from Dunstaple to Purcell."

Students are given significant leeway in the two essays in HUMN 310. The choice of topics is very broad, with the only restriction being that the topic chosen is in a specified music era. The first essay's topic should be specific to the Medieval to Renaissance eras; for the second essay, students can write about any aspect of Baroque music.

Dr. Gregory encourages students to visit his [bibliography page](#). Not only does this link give students an overview of Dr. Gregory's personal history, enabling them to better know their professor, it also provides information on his radio program (CRUA), and other publications. Dr. Gregory's most recent publication is a book featuring Victorian music, *Victorian Songhunters*, and he is currently authoring the sequel.

For more information on HUMN 310, visit the course syllabus [here](#).

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## SLICE OF LIFE

Barbara Godin



## Goodnight My Love

He sat in the corner of the room, looking out the window. From his hospital bed he could see the crimson leaves waiting to drop to the ground. It was late fall and he knew this would be his last season on this earth. Though he struggled to hang on, his life was slipping away.

As the familiar footsteps grew louder, closer, he knew his wife was here for her daily visit. He hated to put her through this. She smiled as she saw the frail, shrivelled body of the man she had loved for the last 25 years. She also knew his life was slipping away. She sat on the bed and asked how he felt.

"Pretty good."

She knew he would say that; he always did, even after the rounds of chemo and the blasts of radiation, he never complained. Sometimes it made her frustrated, even angry. She wished he would tell her how he felt—cry, yell, share his pain with her. He didn't want her to be concerned. How could she not be concerned? The doctor told her he only had "days to weeks" left. That was three days ago.

They sat together talking about nothing, though every word would become etched in her mind for eternity.

"Help me."

"What do you need?"

"I want to go home."

"You can't, the doctor said you need to be here."

He looked away from her. They both knew he would never go home. They had talked about it, but hoped they had more time.

"I'm tired."

"I know."

"I'm going to lie down."

"I'll help you."

She held his tubes and IV lines while he got comfortable. He looked into her eyes.

"Will I be all right?"

"Yes, they'll take good care of you here."

She sat beside him holding his warm hand as he closed his eyes. She thought of a short time ago when his hand held hers and they walked together in the woods near their home. She remembered how he gently

caressed her feet as they lay in his lap each evening while they sat together watching television or talking and sharing their dreams for the future. These were the hands that gently touched her as they made love.

His breathing changed. She touched his brow and kissed his soft lips.

"Good night, my sweet gentle husband."

### Grief

My world is silenced  
I do not hear your voice  
I do not feel your touch  
Where you sat is empty  
Where you slept is empty  
You are no more.

My heart aches  
My eyes weep  
Where are you?

I wait for you  
But you do not come.  
I want to go to you  
But I cannot.  
No one would understand.

I have to wait here  
Until it is time to be with you again  
I hope it will not be too long  
As I cannot bear the days and nights of nothingness.



# AU Profiles:

## AU Profiles: Gonzalo Belmar Ramírez

Christina M. Frey



AU students are scattered all over the globe. Take Gonzalo Belmar Ramírez, a musician living in Lima, Peru, who chose Athabasca because its flexibility allows him the freedom to work on his music and other hobbies. He describes the importance of art and music in his life, why a musician would study business management, and how he has combined both. He also explains how he stays motivated despite his hectic schedule.

Music has been a part of Gonzalo's life from early on. With musician parents, it is not surprising that he began playing instruments at a young age. Now, he sings and plays violin, bass guitar, guitar, piano, and drums. He also studies composition and bass

guitar with a local teacher, and is examined once a year.

In addition to playing, Gonzalo is also a composer: in 2005, he wrote an orchestral piece, *Bellum* (meaning "war" in Latin), which was performed by a juvenile symphony in Lima. Gonzalo describes it as "programmatic," like movie soundtrack music.

Composing a piece involving multiple instruments can be quite complicated. The composer must learn "not only the . . . range of notes [an instrument] can play," says Gonzalo, "but also the different ways these can be used and combined in order to turn into sound what one feels inside."

Currently, Gonzalo is working on another large-scale musical project: he is writing and recording his first single CD. It's an orchestral piece, but he is performing all the instruments himself, recording them individually; he will then overlap the music to create a unified sound. It is time-consuming, but Gonzalo is enjoying it.

"The best thing is to have fun," he says. "That's what it's about!"

In addition to music, sculpting, and sports, however, Gonzalo also enjoys business. "I . . . enjoy making deals [and] creating opportunities," he says. His interest in the business world was part of the reason he turned down a music scholarship and began studying business at AU. He is currently in the first year of AU's Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration program.

Gonzalo had begun by studying at a traditional university in Peru. However, “I just couldn’t take it,” he says. The schedule was rigid, and because the traditional class structure had time gaps between classes, Gonzalo had very little time for his music, art, and sports. He realized he needed something more flexible: Athabasca University.

Although he misses the social interaction that comes with traditional university, Gonzalo feels the end result is well worth it. “I worked my math, and decided to invest three years of true effort in my future,” he says. “I’ll have plenty of time to meet people and interact then!”

Gonzalo approaches his courses in an innovative way. Rather than spreading out his classes, he takes one course at a time and focuses solely on that course for a month. This means he is able to complete one course every month. “In the end it comes down to reading and . . . hard work,” he says.

It isn’t always easy. “I’m struggling because I’m starting to get used to doing all these things at the same time,” he says.

However, he’s determined to succeed. Creating a schedule has been a lifesaver. “If I weren’t [organized], I couldn’t make it,” Gonzalo says.

He has drawn up a timetable that allows him to get his course work done, but leaves plenty of room to pursue his interests. “Instead of having . . . those gaps and having to lose time . . . going and coming back . . . now I can use that time to study music [or] bodybuild,” he notes.

So far, the plan has been working well. To prevent burnout, fitness is a must.

“I go to the gym every day,” says Gonzalo. Moreover, because his music, art, and other hobbies are built into his schedule, he’s able to look forward to them: knowing that art is waiting keeps him motivated as he works through his homework each day.

Additionally, he’s found a way to combine both business and art: he has started his own business, Belmar Arts, selling the art he creates. Gonzalo handcrafts beautiful musical instruments from wood, and has just begun to sell them as part of his business. “It’s taking off pretty well,” he says.

“I can’t imagine living without art in my life,” Gonzalo says. “I am very grateful to Athabasca University . . . none of this would be possible at the time if I were studying in another university.”

## DID YOU KNOW?



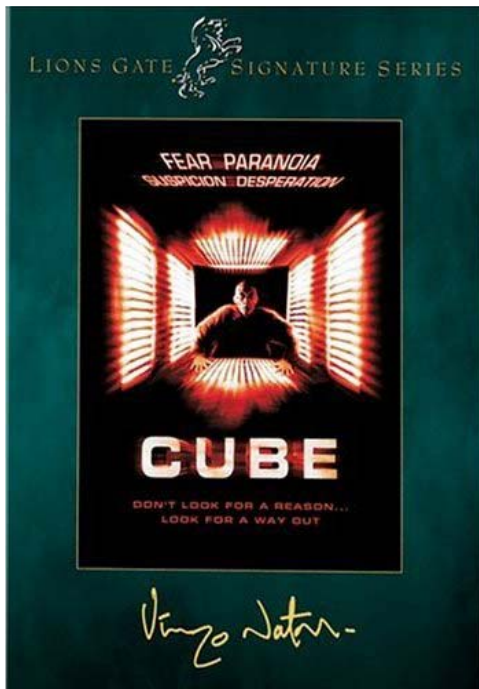
### The Story Behind the Picture

Next time you visit Athabasca University’s [home page](#), check out the “I Stand Out” banner at the top of the page. The banner features photos of AU students in their home towns. But did you know the banner is interactive?

Click on the banner and you’ll enter a mini site. Along with links to courses, programs, and other AU information, the stories and photos of four AU students are featured. Just click on any of the links to discover the story behind the photo!

## MILK-CRATE BANDIT

Erik Ditz



## All Your Mainstream Are Belong To Us

In a lot of ways, the mainstream is representative of human evolution. It is never the same from year to year, is dependent on popular opinion, and involves a lot of skulls (I hate Avril Lavigne more than mere language can describe.)

I equate Faith No More's constant radio play with the human ear developing opposable thumbs, and Ian MacKaye's attempt to gain age equality at licensed shows by drawing X's on his hands becoming a world-famous cult phenomenon with the higher brain power granted humankind through the consumption of meat. (Watch the BBC series *Walking with Cavemen* and the documentary *American Hardcore* if you're confused here.)

Essentially, mainstream media is divided, like all parts of business, into two camps: those who try to make money, and the right-place-right-timers. It's a stock market of human interest, and for my money, here are the winners and losers.

*10,000 BC vs. Cube*

*10,000 BC* is an epic action movie about some mammoth hunters who steal a lot of Aboriginal North American culture. Hey, Hollywood, cavemen are not Indians.

*Cube* is an epic action movie following six people who wake up in a series of randomly rearranging cubic rooms, some of which are death traps, as they try to find their way out, and if I say anything else I'll ruin it. So interesting you want to wet yourself, and it's 100 per cent Canadian.

*The Darjeeling Limited vs. Be Kind Rewind*

*The Darjeeling Limited* is a Wes Anderson movie, and that's the best thing you can say about it. All the facial expressions and wacky interpersonal moments are arranged to create the impression that you're watching *The Life Aquatic* or *The Royal Tenenbaums*, but there's absolutely nothing of merit going on, unlike those movies. Bo. Ring.

*Be Kind Rewind* defines vicarious childhood. Brilliant and understated special effects are always welcome from Michel Gondry (if you haven't seen *The Science of Sleep* then you haven't lived), who can just as easily make you bawl with laughter as tears.

*Sweeney Todd vs. The Green Butchers*

Sweeney Todd's theme of the down-on-his-luck man who turns murder into meat sales is certainly not a new one (see the original *Sweeney Todd*, the *other Sweeney Todd*, *The Green Butchers*, *The Mad Butcher*, *Bloodthirsty Butchers*); cannibalism is just good entertainment. Too bad Johnny Depp and Helena Bonham Carter can't sing.

*The Green Butchers* brings a human element to the telling of this tale, through a fresh take on the details and simple sets that draw intense focus to the actors. While the Norse can't seem to avoid stoic slapstick—read Ibsen or watch *The Five Obstructions*—the bare production helps to accent the true horror of it all.

### *Children of Men* vs. *Dark City*

*Children of Men* is a great idea; a movie about a future where people are all sterile and life itself becomes a precious commodity. Unfortunately, the same jerk that brought you *Harry Potter* and *Paris, Je T'aime* still doesn't think you deserve good cinema and will keep pumping ultra-edited, star-studded garbage down your throat until you pay him to buy another Jaguar and stop writing for a while.

*Dark City* is a great idea; a movie about a city-sized space prison camp holding and studying an entire city's worth of people. Jennifer Connelly and Kiefer Sutherland deliver performances that *Requiem for a Dream* and *24* never even hinted at, and the set designer did an excellent job of living up to the film's title. Hard effing core.

### *Snakes on a Plane* vs. *C.H.U.D.*

*Snakes on a Plane* was over-budgeted, plain and simple. Everyone knows that stupid, tagline-dependent creature features should always be made on \$100 and two pots of coffee, not limitless credit accounts and Samuel L. Jackson's flaring nostrils. Try again when you're broke, guys.

*C.H.U.D.* (which is, of course, short for Cannibalistic Humanoid Underground Dwellers) is a not-so-far-reaching prediction of times to come, featuring fallout-ridden monsters that feed on the destitute and downtrodden masses that major cities (namely New York) have to offer. If you thought Jeff Goldblum ruled in *The Fly* and *Jurassic Park*, then watch this movie with your socks off so they don't get knocked that way.

## CALLING ALL GRAD STUDENTS



### Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association

Are you an AU grad student? If you are, do you know about all the services and information available to you through the Athabasca University Graduate Students' Association (AUGSA)?

Created in 2007, the AUGSA is "dedicated to serving its students worldwide, by promoting a global community and acting as a liaison between students and the university."

As a grad student, you can contact the Association to find help in answering questions about programs and courses, to discover opportunities for peer-to-peer mentoring, and to access resources on employment, research, and funding. Their website also provides links to other graduate associations, including the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies, the Graduate Students' Association of Canada, and GSAs at other Canadian universities.

The AUGSA is there to provide representation and support for the unique challenges—and opportunities—that are part of life as a graduate student.

To find out more about this dynamic and growing group, visit their [home page](#) today.



# The Chronicles of Cruiscin Lan

by  
Wanda  
Waterman  
St. Louis





## Books, Music, and Film to Wake Up Your Muse and Help You Change the World

CD: Cat Power, *Jukebox*

Release date: January 22, 2008

Label: Matador Records

I have yet to decide whether alt country represents the swan song of American pop music or signals the dawn of a musical renaissance every bit as significant, varied, and amazing as

those of the 20s, 60s, and 80s. Either way the magic is flowing out of the south land, the historical incubation zone of American pop music forms.

Cat Power can't be called alt country per se but she does draw on country singers, country themes, and that beautifully dismal country noir atmosphere to create a sound that is a highly original contribution to this musical movement.

Cat Power is the alias of Chan (Shawn) Marshall, a southern gal with a deep, smoky voice so tightly crammed with emotion she could be Billie Holiday the first time Billie sang at a nightclub to drum up enough cash to keep her ma alive. Chan's face has already attracted some big wheels in the fashion industry.

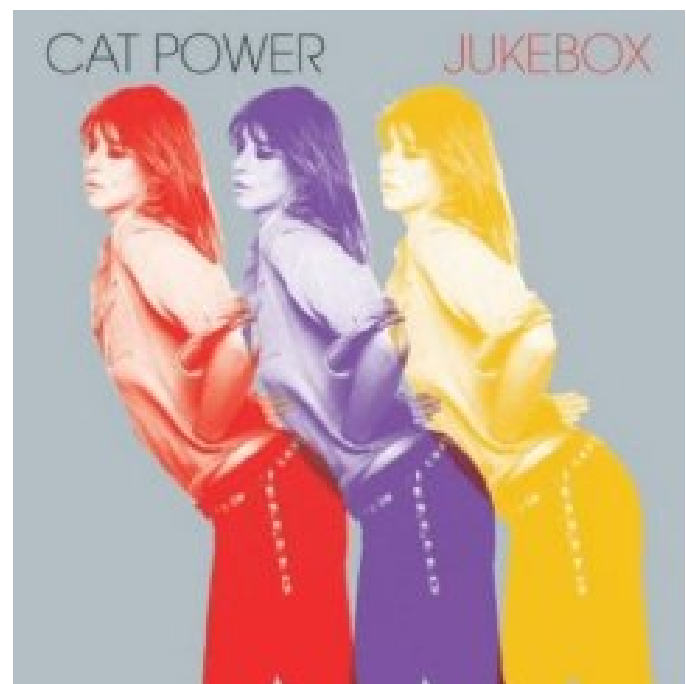
Chan Marshall also writes brilliant material (check out "Metal Heart"), but not long ago made the bewildering announcement that she was tired of doing her own songs. *Jukebox* remains in this strange Cat Power tradition; only two songs are written by Chan Marshall.

You listen for different things in a cover version than you listen for in the singer-songwriter's rendition (when all you really have to decide is whether you like the song). With the vocal stylist you consider interpretation, originality, and song choice, among other things.

This is especially true of indie music; we assume that the indie performer isn't just another assembly-line puppet dangling from the fingers of business executives who secretly despise youth, music, and creativity and are chomping at their bits to impose a corporate agenda on popular culture. We have a right to expect that the indie performer doing cover tunes will nonetheless cultivate an artistic agenda, not one obsessed with numbers.

That's precisely what you get with *Jukebox*. It's hard to believe such vulnerability and depth can emerge from such a laid-back vocal style, but Chan Marshall makes every syllable count, and every rise and fall in pitch breathes meaning into the simplest lyric. Every song is a revelation, and the whole CD is a crazy ride from despair to triumph.

Chan got some of her demons out with this CD, or at least sat them down and gave them a good talking to.





These songs plead for the poor, gently scold a cheating man, mourn the loss of a love, and hail the impending arrival of a new one. Cat Power takes a song in real deep before bringing out what sounds like a whole new song. For the songs themselves the process is both renewing and redemptive.

There are things about Chan Marshall that stick in the craw: her former alcohol abuse, for example, and her agreeing to represent a line of jewellery for Chanel. Besides, she doesn't even seem to *want* to be a success. After watching so many young folks, numbly determined to launch a stellar musical career, falling through the cracks of a heartless industry it is hard to read about the lackadaisical attitudes and psychological breakdowns that couldn't hold back Cat Power's rise to indie cult status.

I've said before in this column (notably in a review of a Ron Hynes album) that the artist's personality is highly susceptible to mental illness and substance abuse because the deliberate expansion of the imagination proportionately increases the experience of suffering without increasing the capacity for suffering.

There is no excuse for self-destructive behaviour; there is, however, cause for rejoicing when the prodigal returns. Deep inside a personal hell spawned by a wounding childhood Chan somehow made contact with a coherent self that rendered her one of the most awe-inspiring musical performers today. And it sure looks like she's taken the alcohol bull by the horns. Even gotten herself into charity work. As for the Chanel gig, you can't really call that a sellout; it's probably easy money, which is just what we creative types need to support ourselves while getting the important stuff done.

*Jukebox* lives up to five of The Mindful Bard's criteria for music well worth listening to: 1) it is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it makes me want to be a better artist; 3) it displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering; 4) it reveals a connection with the true self; and 5) it provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful endeavour.

*The Bard could use some help scouting out new material. If you discover any books, compact disks, or movies which came out in the last twelve months and which you think fit the Bard's criteria, please drop a line to [bard@voicemagazine.org](mailto:bard@voicemagazine.org). For a list of criteria, go [here](#). If I agree with your recommendation, I'll thank you online.*

## AROUND AU



### AU Learning Link Celebrates First Anniversary

On February 5, AU's Learning Link Office in the HUB Mall at the University of Alberta celebrated its one-year anniversary! Cindy Koziej and Jordanna Chipiuk hosted the celebration, and refreshments and prizes greeted visitors to the Learning Link, including AU staff members and U of A students and staff. Karen Wong, director of Learner Support Services, was also there to celebrate the milestone.

Draw prizes included a three-credit AU course and two gift baskets brimming with items donated by the Office of the President, the Office of the Vice-President, Advancement, Learning Support Services and AUSU. Frits Pannekoek, AU president, and Margaret Haughey, vice-president academic, lent a hand to make the draws.

The Learning Link provides students with help planning their programs, including info on AU courses and programs, credit transfers, and more. So drop in to find out more—or just to say happy anniversary!



## *From Where I Sit*

Hazel Anaka

### **A Walk on the Dreamy Side**

Two Saturdays in a row I was able to convince Roy to go with me to see the grand prize homes in two charity raffles. Because it was Saturday, the crowds were heavier than they would have been on a weekday afternoon. There were also far more children tramping through the million dollar homes. I would have preferred more time to examine the finishes, soak up the ambience, and check out the furnishings. But I was also glad to have Roy see the finer things in life and imagine us there.

I would be willing to give the big-city life a chance. Everything we need and want is in the bigger centres and we drive a helluva lot of miles getting to those products and services. Wouldn't it be a kick to live where the action and the opportunities are and then just drive out to the farm to check on things periodically? I would be willing to give it a try.

Out of the four houses I've seen I've got favourites but would consider myself blessed to win any one of them. I'm thinking we could afford the utilities and property taxes. I'd be willing to try.

The 3,960 square foot Bach is the first prize—along with a Jaguar, a trip to London, and \$25,000 cash—in the Hospital Foundation's Full House Lottery. Would I love to own a house with a two-storey library with fireplace and custom bookshelves? Oh, yes.

Could I learn to love a walk-in closet bigger than our existing main bathroom? Oh, yes.

Could I learn to love the granite countertops, state-of-the-art appliances and flat-screen television sets, crown mouldings, ceramic tiles, multiple fireplaces and washrooms? Please, yes. Can I imagine a spot in the garage for the Honda and the Jag? It would be the first time in a lifetime for me.

Don't get me wrong. I am grateful each day for a home that is solid and safe and all paid for. I have used ingenuity and a creative eye to decorate it. It is both a sanctuary and a refuge from the madding world.

But I'd be lying if I didn't admit that I'd love a brand-new dream home at least once in my life. I was mentally converting the kids' rooms into something that would work for us: perhaps his and her offices and a guest room. I wondered about the neighbours. I noticed the size of the lot and the exposed aggregate driveway.

I even figured I could find my way back to Hope Road in Copperwood: just south on the Anthony Henday to 62 Avenue then left onto 199 Street and we're almost home. I told the attendants I was a little choked that all these people were tramping through my house but I would overlook it for now.

I thought it was a good omen that the woman selling us the ticket was originally from Andrew. I'll let you know about possession date. It's the least I can do for fellow dreamers, from where I sit.

## AUSU This Month



### AUSU Elections 2008

#### New Council Elected

On March 13 2008, Rehan Qureshi, AUSU's Chief Returning Officer for 2008, announced the results of our election. Your new council, who will take office by April 14, 2008, are:

Karl Low  
Lonita Fraser  
Zil-E-Huma Lodhi  
Barb Rielly  
Sarah Kertcher

Bethany Porter  
Sean Driscoll  
Emily Dukeshire  
Heather Fraser

The new executive will be elected at the time of changeover. Until then, the new councillors-elect will shadow the current council to learn about our programs and services and to begin taking part in council's discussions.

Voter turnout for this year's election was about 80% higher than our last election, but this increase is less impressive when the low turnout overall for both years is taken into account. However, the very large ballot this year may have contributed to this issue. We realize that making selections from this large ballot was difficult and thank everyone who took the time to cast a ballot this year.



The incumbents look forward to working with the new group to continue providing services to AU students and to develop new programs for our members.

Election materials will remain in the forum for a while so that students can learn more about their new councillors.

An announcement of the executive election will appear on the AUSU front page, including a full list of your new council, on April 14th.

Create professional-looking flowcharts, timelines, graphs, and more, in minutes, all by yourself. Then go spend some quality time with your family.

Free for AUSU members. Visit [www.ausu.org](http://www.ausu.org)



 **SmartDraw**

### AUSU Merchandise for Sale

Due to a high demand for AUSU merchandise, and delays in setting up our online store, we have put together a quick catalogue with a few items we have

in stock now. To download it in pdf, visit our [home page](#). Shipping costs will be calculated per order and we'll let you know by phone or email.

We are only accepting credit card orders at this time, unless you are able to visit our Edmonton office. Please excuse the poor quality of the product photos. These will be improved shortly. More products will be available soon. Suggestions are welcome.

### AUSU Handbook/Planner 2008 in stock now!

The wait is over! The 2008 AUSU planner is in stock and on its way to members. We've added a few enhancements this year, including cheat sheets for common citation styles, a clip-in page-marker ruler, and a funky fridge magnet to remind you to get your weekly dose of *The Voice*.

Last year we had about 400 pre-orders, but this year we have 1,000! Please be patient. We're working as fast as we can to fill all of the orders and everyone should have their book by the end of January when the 2007 edition calendar pages run out. As always, we're excited to know what you think of the planner and welcome all feedback to [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org)

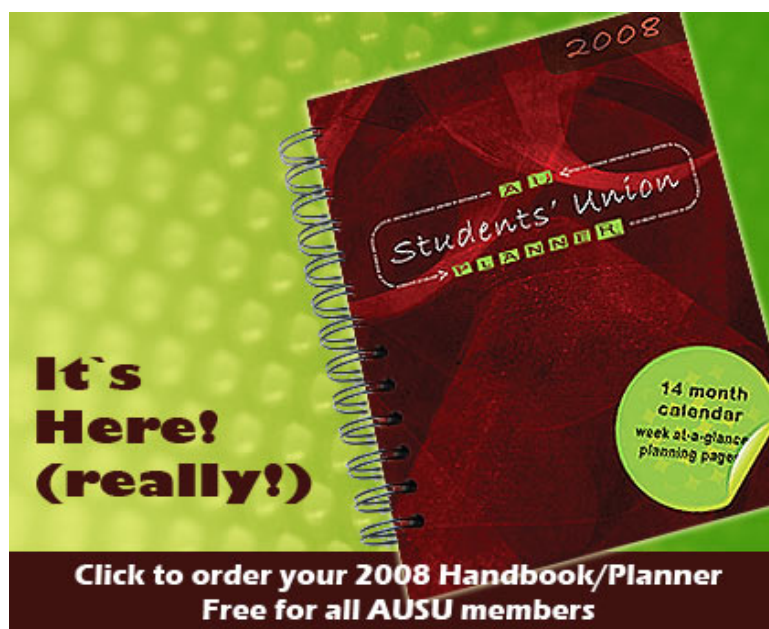
### Smart Draw – Benefit for AUSU members

AUSU has purchased a licence agreement to supply the award-winning SmartDraw software to all AUSU members (current undergraduate students). To access this deal and find out more, visit the front page of our [website](#).

SmartDraw allows you to create a wide range of graphics for your assignments and submit them electronically in a Word file. You can also place your graphics in Excel or PowerPoint files, or export them as TIF, GIF, or JPEG files to make a web graphic or even a logo. Just a few of the graphics you can make include Venn diagrams, genetics charts, graphs, organizational and flow charts, and Gantt charts.

For any course that requires charts that cannot be easily created in Word or Excel, this should be a real time saver and make it easier to submit all portions of an assignment by email. Remember, though, that you should always check with your tutor to find out if there is a specific format he or she prefers. Your tutor does not have to have SmartDraw to view these graphics, however.

Installations under this program are good for one year. The package includes both the Standard and Health Care editions of SmartDraw.





## INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



### At Home: More winter on the way for Canadians

Environment Canada's senior climatologist has some fashion news for Canadians: leave the spring bonnets in storage and hold onto your toque. Spring may officially be here, but the cold weather isn't going away anytime soon.

As the [CBC](#) reported, David Phillips cautions that "Canadians won't see any sign of balmy weather for at least a month."

"Spring," he said "is going to take its sweet time."

The next 30 days are expected to bring colder-than-normal temperatures to Canadians all across the country.

"The cold air is the bully now and it's hovering over Canada," Phillips said.

The lingering cold is a result of La Nina, a weather pattern that occurs when waters in the Pacific Ocean are cooler than normal. This winter, La Nina is not only persisting, but also seems to be gaining strength.

Although cold Arctic air is partly to blame for this year's chilly Easter weather, the calendar also plays a part. This year, Easter celebrations fall much sooner than usual—the earliest they've been since 1913.

Along with the cold, there's more snow in the forecast. This likely comes as no surprise to winter-weary Canadians, who have seen snowfall records broken in places such as Bathurst, N.B., Waterloo, Ont., and Quebec City. As well, the Prairies usually see their biggest snowfalls in April and May, and more records may be broken in the coming weeks.

But if the sight of snowbanks at Easter is getting you down, just remember that the spring celebration brings its own sweet consolation: chocolate, the perfect remedy after all that shovelling.

### In Foreign News: Chinese troops move into Tibetan areas

The conflict between Tibetan protestors and the Chinese government escalated March 21 as riot police descended on large areas of Tibet. The move by China's government was part of an effort to find rioters who took part in the recent protests.

The capital, Lhasa, was the site of the largest demonstrations against China's rule in decades, and, along with locating specific protestors, the crackdown by Chinese officials can be seen as a display of regaining control.

The protests began as peaceful demonstrations led by Buddhist monks. Events turned violent on March 14, however, and the ensuing clashes spurred forceful shows of support in neighbouring provinces, such as Gansu, Sichuan, and Qinghai.

On the same day that government troops were moving in, Nancy Pelosi, the U.S. House Speaker, met with the Dalai Lama, Tibetans' spiritual leader. Exiled from his home, the Dalai Lama met with Pelosi in Dharmasala, India.

As the [CBC](#) reports, Pelosi "called on the world to denounce Beijing's handling of the anti-government protests."

"If freedom-loving people throughout the world do not speak out against China's oppression in China and Tibet, we have lost all moral authority to speak on behalf of human rights anywhere in the world," Pelosi said. Her visit was part of a Congressional delegation planned before the riots broke out.

In spite of international criticism over China's actions, and protests at Chinese embassies around the world, the government does not appear to be easing its show of strength.

One resident of Qinghai province reported that as many as 300 troops were stationed in the town of Zeku, a result of a protest by monks outside government offices. Further north, in Yunnan province, the mainly Tibetan town of Zhongdian saw two truckloads of riot police arrive overnight. These troops are in addition to the 400 already there. Cities in other provinces are turning away visitors, and government forces are patrolling some tourist areas.

### **CLICK OF THE WRIST – Egg-zactly**

It's a sure sign that both Easter and warm weather are in the air when images of rabbits, eggs, and fluffy chicks start appearing everywhere. In the interest of all things spring-like—including weather, clothing, and moods—this week's Click took a stroll on the sunny side, and discovered there's more to these icons than pastel-coloured egg shells.

**Egg Babies** - Slightly disconcerting if you look at them long enough, but these miniature hand-sculpted infants in egg shells are remarkably realistic. Other versions include Miniature Babies and Shell Babies.

**How to Cook an Egg with Two Cell Phones** - I have absolutely no idea if this works, but the instructions are clear and the author seems sincere about this offbeat cooking method. However, we can't be responsible if you start to glow in the dark after enjoying an egg salad sandwich prepared this way.

**Rabbit Videos** - Some truly amazing footage of rabbits. And who knew there was such a thing as the Danish Championships of Bunny Show Jumping? No kidding. This site has video of rabbits digging, eating, playing—and there's even a video of a bunny fight being broken up by chickens.

**House Rabbit Society** - Everything you ever wanted to know—and more—about house rabbits. You can even learn how to litter-train your pet bunny. No funny videos, but lots of good information in case your kids received a live Easter surprise as a gift.

**Chocolate Work** - Chocolate, chocolate everywhere, including decadent sculptures. There's even a white chocolate castle wedding cake. Mmm.

**Chocolate Lovers' Festival** - If looking at chocolate on the Internet doesn't satisfy your cravings, then the Chocolate Lovers' Festival might be what you need. Events include a Taste of Chocolate, a Chocolate Challenge arts extravaganza, and more. All you have to do is make your way to Fairfax, Virginia.



## EDUCATION NEWS

Ksenia Prints



### Canada student loans not equipped to deal with modern student

WINNIPEG (CUP) -- Many students are forced to reduce their course loads to get involved with their university, to earn money to pay for their education or for medical reasons. But when they do, Canada Student Loans is often the largest barrier they face.

Students who switch to part-time status, or drop out altogether, quickly lose their eligibility to be a part of the national loan program, and immediately start accruing interest on their loans. Payments are then expected within six months.

When David Jacks was elected president of the University of Winnipeg Students' Association, he still had another year left in his degree. The union's bylaws mandated that he drop most of his classes while he held the office.

As soon as that happened, Jacks lost his student loan and began accumulating interest on what he had previously borrowed.

"Students who want to get involved on campus, it's sacrificing a year of your academic life . . . and I certainly felt a financial penalty," said Jacks.

"I will lose one year of my studies, and if I want to continue my studies, then the money I've made through this position is going directly to the student loan."

CSLP has an interest relief line, which allows students to stop making payments on their loan, but to be eligible a students' family income is assessed and must fit the criteria established by CSLP.

Karen, whose last name is protected due to employment reasons, dropped out of school in 2006 after she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

She was denied interest relief based on her and her husband's projected income. She was making \$1,400 a month through private insurance, which she said did not even cover living expenses and medicine.

"Financially, we were in the shit. Those \$1,400 were all I had to live on."

Jacks, who took time off for a paid position, was also ineligible.

"I can't start a new line of credit [with Canada Student Loans]," he said. "It is difficult to get the national and provincial bodies to recognize student activism and the student union."

The scenario is no longer rare.

Between 10 and 40 people drop out of the University of Winnipeg every month, said Colin Russell, director of academic advising in the faculties of arts and science.

Financial difficulty is one of the most common reasons for the move, he said. "A fair number of students will cite the money that they have isn't sustainable and they have to work more," Russell said.

"Some students will make the decision to continue with courses and maintain funding, even if it's not to their benefit academically," he added.

"They might have a lower GPA that's not indicative of their ability, or if they had more money or time."

Applying for interest relief or an additional loan upon returning to school doesn't always work, either. Students are required to submit proof of enrolment in post-secondary studies, and to not have defaulted on any previous payments.

Many students have complained that paperwork gets lost, or the process takes too long and students are forced to find other ways to pay for their tuition while their files are being processed.

Karen's medical forms were lost three times, she said.

After extensive complaints, the federal government placed the entire CSLP under review during 2007 and, in the 2008 budget, earmarked \$123 million to Canada Student Loans Program reform.

Over half the funds, \$74 million, are dedicated to improving the program's responsiveness to borrowers' economic circumstances.

"There's not enough support when you phone student loans," said Karen. "It's not a service oriented, humanistic culture."

"We've heard complaints from students about this scenario," said Julian Benedict, co-founder of the Coalition for Student Loan Fairness.

The CSLF recently filed an Access to Information Request to CSLP to find out how many people are charged interest while still in school. They are currently awaiting results.

Many students are unaware of this complication until they go into collection, said Benedict.

While CSLP's original borrowing conditions state what happens if students change to part-time status, these documents are a confusing collection of rules and exceptions.

"The rules are more of a challenge than they need to be for students," said Benedict.

Hope is now high that the new government funding will be used to make CSLP more approachable and flexible. \$23 million has been earmarked for an online service overhaul.

Benedict also suggested creating a national student loan ombudsman, a neutral third party to assist people with specific concerns. At the very least, he said, problems should be assigned to an individual who can handle the case.

Benedict also believes that part-time loans should be interest-free, and the interest-free grace period reinstated.

Interest relief should also not be decided based on projected income, said Karen, but case by case.

Overall, Benedict doubts that \$123 million will fix the CSLP.

The final allocation will be brought to a vote in the House of Commons in the middle of March.

Monte Solberg, the minister responsible for CSLP, could not comment beyond the budget's projection.

# CLASSIFIEDS

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Classifieds are free for AU students! Contact [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) for more information.

## THE VOICE

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