

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 21 Issue 05 2013-02-01

Coffee & Copies

Books to go

Playing Dad

The story of Abel

No Goals

Clear and present

*Plus:
From Where I Sit
In Conversation
and much more!*



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We love to hear from you! Send your questions and
comments to voice@voicemagazine.org, and please
indicate if we may publish your letter.



EDITORIAL

Christina M. Frey



Ends and Means

In any situation—academic, professional, and personal—setting goals is a given. After all, we’ve been told, it’s impossible to achieve without first defining what that achievement is going to be.

But this isn’t an article about goal setting. In fact, it’s recommending just the opposite.

A recent *Harvard Business Review* [article](#) convinced me that placing too much emphasis on goals can actually hurt us in the long run. At first look, the concept seems strange and even disconcerting, since it flies in the face of nearly all the self-help

wisdom we’ve encountered since elementary school. But the author makes some good points. Focussing too much on achieving goals as an end result as opposed to an ongoing process can cause us to cut corners, take on an ends-justify-the-means approach, and lose motivation. Worse, the overly narrow focus encourages us to put on blinders, missing opportunities and overlooking potential problems.

But without clear-cut goals, how to avoid distraction? The phrase “We’re all a little bit ADHD” isn’t necessarily medically accurate, but we’ve all experienced how life and its myriad of distractions can keep us from getting anywhere. While in theory a goal-setting session might help combat distraction, perhaps a better tactic would be to look at the present rather than toward the far future. As the *Harvard Business Review* author suggests, “[instead] of identifying goals, consider identifying areas of focus.”

Identifying areas of focus forces us to decide where and how we want to spend our time—with the unspoken idea that we’re working to further the aspects of our lives that are most important to us.

To get started, an excellent resource is the Zen Habits blog’s [piece](#), “72 Ideas to Simplify Your Life.” While the premise is simple—author Leo Babauta advises the reader to “Identify what’s most important to you [and] [eliminate] everything else”—in real life, it’s a little more complex. That’s where Babauta’s 72 ideas come in. Through a series of questions, he helps readers evaluate their commitments, goals, and dreams, and determine what, essentially, they need or want to focus on.

In a way, it’s a thought process that guides us beyond goal setting and achieving and allows us to focus on goal seeking and pursuing. After all, creating a list of proposed achievements doesn’t necessarily help us arrive at our destination when we’re still trying to sort out our conflicting commitments (and keep from being distracted by the “noise” of our busy lives).

And when we’re forced to concentrate on the here and now as opposed to the future, we do a better job of ensuring that our time and energy are in fact focussed on the things that really matter to us—the half-formed ideas and concepts that mean we’re following our dreams *now*, not just hoping to attain them in the future.

IN CONVERSATION

Wanda Waterman



Photo: Daniel Dufour

Patricia Deslauriers, Part I

Patricia Deslauriers is the Quebecois jazz contrabassist spearheading the Patricia Deslauriers Trio, whose recording debut is a reverent tribute to the songs of beloved Quebec songster Richard Desjardins (read the Voice review [here](#)). Recently Patricia took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about her beginnings.

"Anyone can make the simple complicated. Creativity is making the complicated simple."

Charles Mingus

A New Home Every Two Years

I was born on the 24th of April, 1970, in a hospital in St-Agathe in the Laurentiens. My mom was living with my grandparents in Notre Dame de la Merci near St-Donas in Lanaudière; I'd been due to be born in June, so I was in an incubator for two months. Until I was 16, we moved to a different place almost every two years.

Since I was moving all the time I had to make new friends and make my place all the time, but I'm a positive person and always saw the good in everything.

Musical Dawnings

I loved music from an early age. My grandparents worked for a camp called Le Camp Ouareau, and I went with them when they went to work. There was a piano there and I dreamed about it all the time!

My parents weren't well off, so I couldn't have lessons or a real piano, but every Christmas I got an electric keyboard that got a little bigger each year. I composed music and sang with it, not really knowing what I was doing.

Growing Pains of the Growing Artist

I was different and had a hard time with my parents because I wanted to be an artist. I had to prove . . . I was making the right choice.

At the age of 10 I started a performing company with a friend. We invented dance, theatre, and musical acts and presented them at school and for friends and family. We had an office and everything and took it all very seriously.

I recently contacted this friend, and she's since become a dancer. She's danced in many productions and now owns a dance school.

How I Became a Bass Player

In high school I studied drums. I wanted to play them in the big band, but too many kids wanted to play drums. The teacher decided to use only two drummers, narrowing the criteria to those who owned their own drums and had had private lessons.

Naturally I was out of the running, so I choose the tenor sax. Again, there were too many sax players. The teacher announced that he wouldn't start the band until he had a section of four trombones. I was terrified. I wanted to play music so bad!

"Music, music, music, the power to express yourself without words, creativity, direct expression of the soul, friendship, sharing, freedom!"

Patricia Deslauriers



Photo: Daniel Dufour

I became a good trombone player, but I had a gum problem requiring three surgeries, and needed to change instruments. The bass player happened to be leaving at this time, so the teacher gave me the bass.

Why Jazz?

Music, music, music, the power to express yourself without words, creativity, direct expression of the soul, friendship, sharing, freedom!

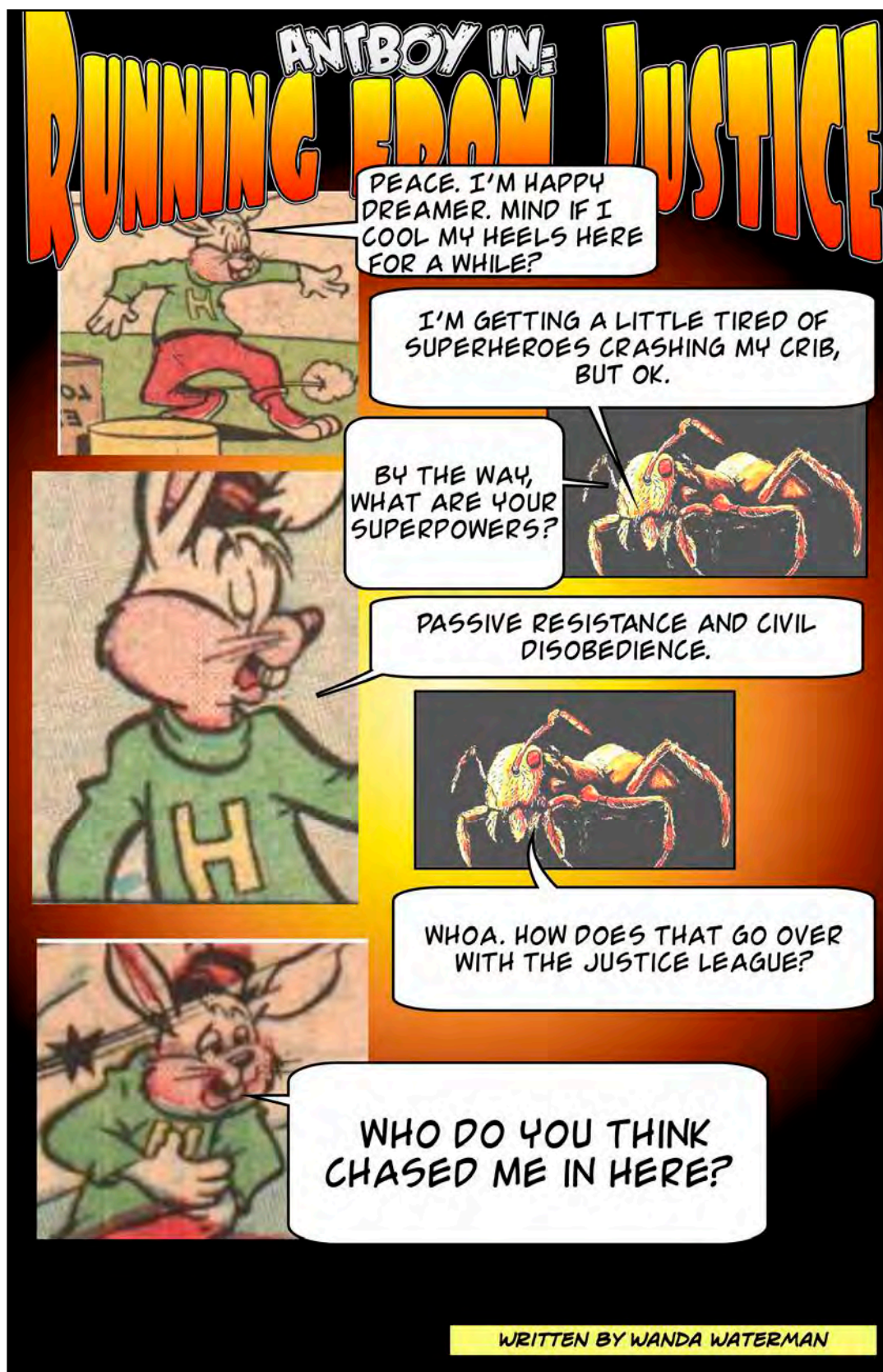
Amazing Moments

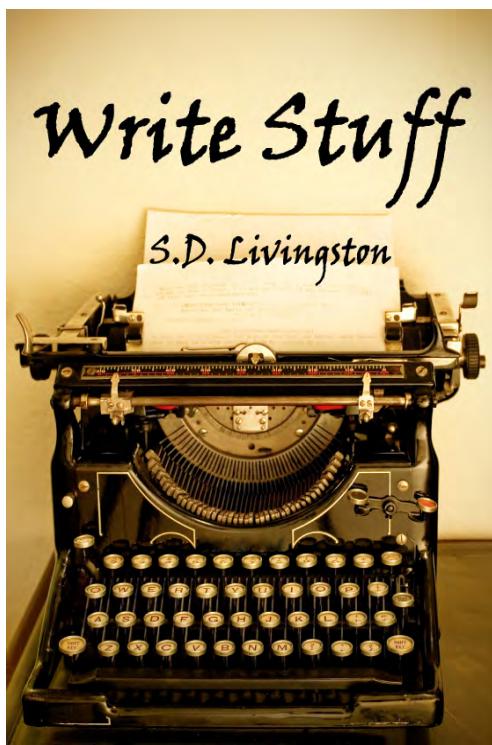
I've had a lot of amazing moments, and I keep on adding more! Like meeting Toots Thielemans; playing with Rachel Z at the Blue Note in New York; my first show at the Bell Centre, Montreal; playing one set in Los Angeles with Terri Lyne Carrington; my first show with Celine Dion; my first TV show as a musician; my first European tour; playing with Francis Cabrel; doing my first recordings with my own trio; and playing with my trio in the Montreal Jazz Festival to a full room at the Astral!

To be continued . . .

ANTBOY IN "RUNNING FROM JUSTICE"

Wanda Waterman





Espresso To Go

How do you take your Espresso? Medium-dark with a hint of Dickensian workhouse? Or perhaps you prefer something lighter, like Mark Twain's *Library of Wit and Humor*. Whatever you choose, it can be ready in minutes at the [Espresso Book Machine](#)—a device I was lucky enough to see in action.

The Espresso I saw sits in a sunny corner of the University of Toronto bookstore (the branch in the gorgeous Beaux Arts building on College Street). I have to confess, the machine looked nothing like I'd expected. With its historic location in mind, and my own vague notions of bookmakers, I'd envisioned something in a grand wooden cabinet; maybe something reminiscent of the Victorian era, with its moving parts discreetly hidden.

The Espresso Machine is anything but. Instead, it's a complex piece of modern engineering that blends an industrial printer, book-

block maker, inkjet printer, and proprietary software to create books from digital files—on demand, in any language, in as little as 10 minutes.

On Demand Books, the company behind the Espresso, offers a [video](#) of the machine on their site. But the truly creative part is the way people have been putting it to use, and our U of T guide had dozens of stories. (The university calls its Espresso service the [BookPOD](#).)

One Espresso customer was a self-published author in Australia. Her books are part of a popular presentation she gives—and it just so happened that one speaking engagement was in northern Ontario. Rather than having her books printed in Australia and shipped halfway around the world, the author simply uploaded her PDFs to the U of T bookstore. They loaded them into the EspressoNet software and printed her books, and she picked them up on her way through Toronto.

Other writers, many of them academics, use the Espresso a little closer to home. One book our guide showed us was by a specialist who writes a series about forests in different areas of the world. When he's getting close to a final draft, he'll use the Espresso to print a few copies for his beta readers, other specialists in the field. Instead of a bulky stack of papers, they get to see a book that's close to the finished product, and can give him feedback on everything from the cover to chapter breaks.

Then there's the man who's recording over 80 decades of personal knowledge about Toronto's history in his memoir, preserving it for family and friends. And several professors who developed a textbook used the Espresso to present their idea to faculty—and had it approved as a course text.

The Espresso's a boon to readers, too, since it allows them to print copies of hard-to-find books from one of the many publishers working with On Demand Books. You can also send a PDF of public domain books,

like those at Project Gutenberg, and print your own copy of a work that would be next to impossible to find anywhere else.

There are, of course, detractors—like those who say that, unless a book is part of a publisher’s print run at a traditional printer, it’s not really a book.

Which is ridiculous. The Espresso can’t produce hardcovers or special touches like coloured endpapers and deckled edges, but the paperbacks it produces are just as much books as anything sitting on Chapters’ shelves. In fact, as I compared a still-warm copy of an Espresso book with one from the U of T bookstore’s stock, there was virtually no difference at all (an embossed title and slightly thicker cover stock were the only things I could spot).

And the price is definitely right, with an average-sized paperback costing about the same as it would in a retail store—though prices will likely vary from one location to the next.

So whether you’re in Manila, Abu Dhabi, Fairbanks, or one of the dozens of Espresso locations in between, stop in and pick up a good book to go.

S.D. Livingston is the author of several books, including the new suspense novel Kings of Providence. Visit her [website](#) for information on her writing (and for more musings on the literary world!).

DID YOU KNOW?

W3Schools

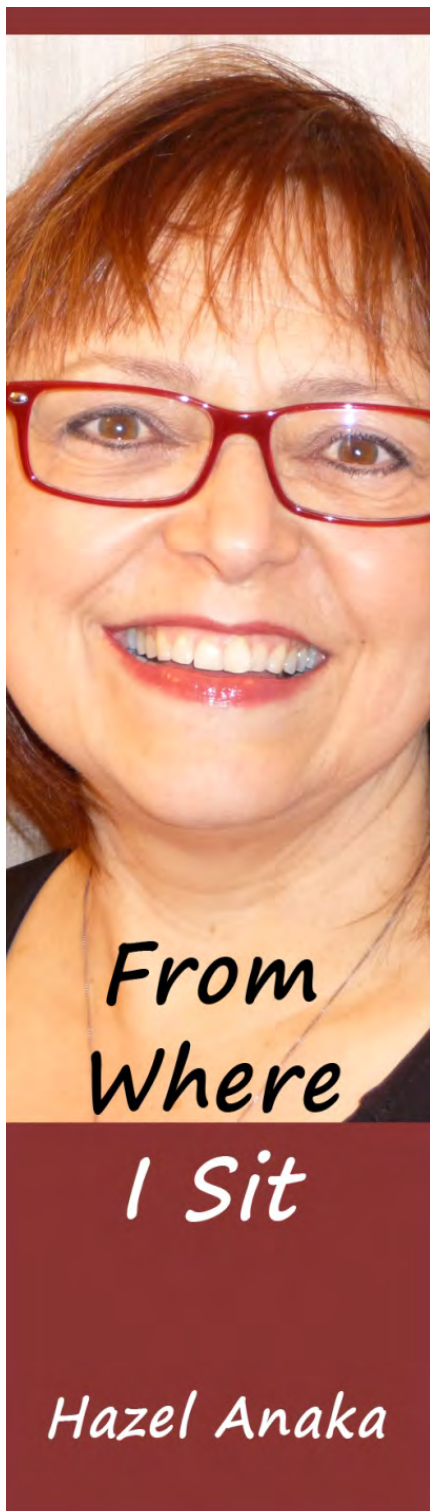


Back in the day, it was all about learning the “three Rs.” Now, with the explosion of information technology into our everyday lives, many of us are more concerned with keeping up with the three Ws: specifically, the www, the worldwide web.

It’s becoming more and more common for employers even in fields unrelated to information technology to expect prospective employees to show a basic familiarity with HTML, the web, and maybe even CSS or Java. And even if you’re working your dream job already, staying current with the technology will help you keep ahead of the game—or at least not feel quite so lost in the sea of tech terms.

The [W3Schools](#) tutorials, freely available online, offer users the opportunity to learn the basics of web development or brush up on their skills. Similar to Code Year, though less formal, W3Schools still structures its material and lessons in a logical way, allowing users to start out gently and move on to more difficult skills later. Those who want to go beyond the basics can use the W3Schools materials to obtain their certification in a particular coding language.

Even if you’re not specifically interested in taking a tutorial at this time, you’ll want to bookmark the site for its handy reference pages, forums, and more.



Ready to Party

Our life has always brought more mini-getaways than full-blown multi-week excursions to exotic locales. It was our reality, so we learned to appreciate daytrips and weekends away.

We've also had no problem mixing work with pleasure. If one of us was a delegate to a conference, the other tagged along. Getting together at the end of the session for an evening meal or a conference banquet was a treat. Staying in a hotel was a treat, whether it was in Edmonton, Baton Rouge, Halifax, or Vancouver. Sleeping in was a treat. Taking time to see the sights and shop the city without being rushed was a treat.

Spending a week at an all-inclusive Mexican resort feels like we died and went to heaven.

As I write this, we have fewer than seven days until we head to the Mayan Riviera for my niece's wedding. In total, 33 of us are going. The excitement is starting to get palpable as we compare the status of our packing, how much spending money we're taking, and what we have to accomplish before jetting off.

In the past, anticipation of the time away has always been nearly as sweet as the trip itself. I enjoyed researching the destination, planning excursions, and scoping out the must-see retail offerings. I packed as smart as an over-packer can possibly pack when trying to anticipate every eventuality.

Like everyone else, I also got really productive in the days leading up to departure. Projects got completed, calls made, emails sent. There was frenzied activity as we attempted to secure our home and possessions. The goal was to leave things in good shape.

This time, my list feels especially long and filled with minutiae. In my gut I know it will all get done, because it has to—but I'm wondering how. I started packing so long ago that now I need to recheck everything and

see what I've forgotten. I need to turn the house over to find the sun hat I bought in Palm Springs.

Tomorrow I have appointments with both the chiropractor and the massage therapist (don't want to go with the current kinks in my neck and achy body). Then in the evening I drive into Edmonton to see Oprah. Add in a couple more out-of-town meetings Tuesday and Wednesday, at least one of which requires me to prepare a budget for an inaugural event. In the meantime, I can't decide if I should drag my laptop and sorry butt to an Edmonton hotel to work while Roy attends a conference, or be smart and

stay home. By the time the mani-pedi scheduled for Saturday rolls around I'm hoping everything will be done, including figuring out how we're getting to the airport and who's checking the house. God willing, the twin cold sores that sprouted a few days ago will be a memory. I'm so ready to party, from where I sit.

Hazel Anaka's first novel is Lucky Dog. Visit her [website](#) for more information or follow her on Twitter @anakawrites.

CLICK OF THE WRIST

Cashing In

Current events—or currency? Talking about money at a dinner party may usually be thought gauche, but these fun news bytes are definitely the exception (and a little trivia never hurt anyone).

Home Decor

The penny may be obsolete in Canada and disappearing elsewhere, but the lowly coin is not without its uses: One Chicago couple used 60,000 pennies to create a unique surface for their bedroom floor. Check out their blog for photos, stats, and a description of how the crafty pair developed the concept.

Ask the Botanist

The maple leaf is known worldwide as the quintessential Canadian symbol—but what's less common knowledge is that it's a specific variety of maple, the North American sugar maple, that is the model for the national emblem. What's the difference? Plenty, according to one botanist, whose keen eye detected that the maple leaf on the new \$20 polymer bill is actually a Norway maple, a variety found in Canada but not identical to the tree that's created its own legacy. Read this Reuters piece on the controversy—and see the Bank of Canada's response.

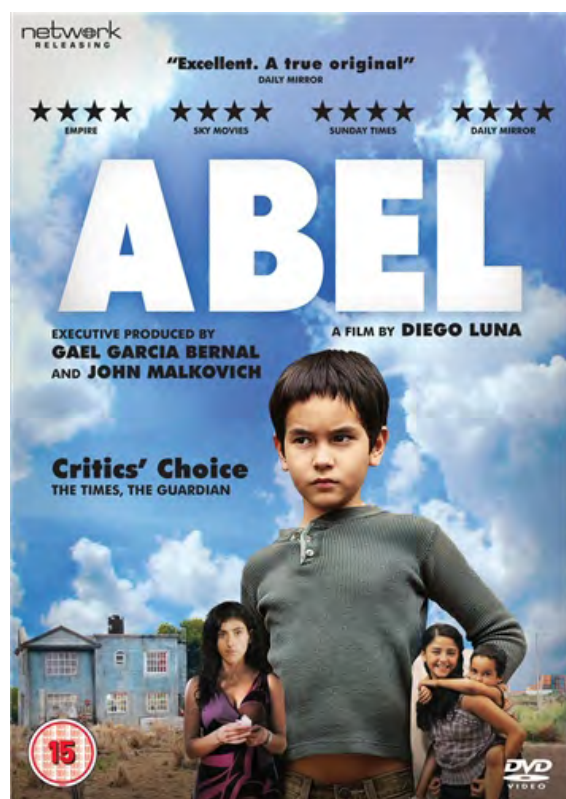
Buying Power

Some save coins in an old sock. Others store paper bills in a safe or invest in a savings account at a bank. For one Edmonton man, the savings process was a little unorthodox, but the end result was the same: Saving paid off. This *Toronto Sun* article tells how he spent 15 years saving over \$1,000 in Canadian Tire money (and purchased a brand-new lawnmower!).



THE MINDFUL BARD

Wanda Waterman



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

Film: *Abel*

Director: Diego Luna

Cast: Jose Maria Yazpik, Christopher Ruiz-Esparza, Carlos Aragon, Karina Gidi, Gerardo Ruiz-Esparza, and Geraldine Alejandra

"I know who I am and who I may be, if I choose."

"Too much sanity may be madness. And maddest of all, to see life as it is and not as it should be."

Cervantes

Don Quixote as Oedipus Rex

Eight-year-old Abel, recently returned home after two years in a mental institution, decides he's now the head of the house.

There's a suggestion that his mental instability was initially brought on by the departure of his ne'er-do-well father. When Dad returns unexpectedly, Abel grants him the role of a visiting uncle and promises to find him a job and "sort him out" with 75 pesos.

Abel's psychiatrist insists that confronting Abel with reality would return him to a catatonic state, so the family maintains the charade, acquiescing to Abel's demands as head of the house. The real father, needless to say, is becoming increasingly annoyed.

One of the most remarkable things about Abel is that he makes such a good dad. His father, the lazy, philandering tosser with an overweening sense of entitlement, shows that up in sharp relief. Under Abel's "care," the family becomes more agreeable and cooperative.

But he's still essentially a small boy, and the world is still big, frightening, and dangerous, full of barking dogs and great, blind machines. It's even more dangerous when you've convinced yourself you're capable of protecting your family from it all. For example, Abel promises his little brother Paul to teach him to swim, even though Abel himself doesn't know how.

This film is so watchable because of the cleverly mapped-out network of conflicts. The characters are all carefully matched to the dramatic tasks the screenwriter has set up for them, and the conflicts in turn illuminate their characters, their bizarre encounters at once mocking and honouring the human condition.

As you would expect, such a premise sets up many hilarious scenes that are rendered even funnier because they have to do with psychologically perilous territory: for example, the scene in which Abel,

believing himself to be his mother's husband, lies on top of her. When she pushes him off, he hands her a candy cigarette and then has one himself.

Water in this film is an important symbol of psychological danger, death, and the submerging of a reasoning consciousness. Light, both real and artificial, is another symbol and a kind of messenger; the buzzing of electric lights signals mileposts in Abel's consciousness as he seeks to defend his fragile, developing ego from a world that has become fearfully absurd to him.

Using madness as metaphor sometimes demands we be untrue to the harsh reality of mental illness (witness, for example, *Don Quixote*, *Benny and Joon*, and *King of Hearts*). It's nonetheless a very effective vehicle for examining and plumbing the meaning of life.

Abel manifests six of the Mindful Bard's criteria for films well worth seeing: 1) it is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavour; 3) it is about attainment of the true self; 4) it inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation; 5) it displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering; and 6) it makes me appreciate that life is a complex and rare phenomenon, making living a unique opportunity.

Wanda also penned the poems for the artist book They Tell My Tale to Children Now to Help Them to be Good, a collection of meditations on fairy tales, illustrated by artist Susan Malmstrom.

"The characters are all carefully matched to the dramatic tasks the screenwriter has set up for them, and the conflicts in turn illuminate their characters, their bizarre encounters at once mocking and honouring the human condition."

VOICE HOLIDAY

It's that time of year, the time when millions flee the winter blahs for sunnier climates, snowy adventures, or a week spent curled up in front of a cozy fireplace.

Here at *The Voice* we'll be taking a brief break, too, while we refocus, recharge, and get ready for the next step for *The Voice Magazine*.

The Voice will be on hiatus from February 25-March 3, so there will be no issue on March 1. We'll be back to our regular publishing schedule with the March 8 issue. Meanwhile, keep sending in your comments, letters, and submissions. We always love hearing from our readers!



INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



At Home: Footprints in the Snow

Remember those tracking skills from your days as a scout? They're helpful in a city setting too, though they may allow you to chase down and catch a quarry that's quite a bit different than a rabbit or deer.

As [Windsorite.ca reports](#), a thief was spotted after the victim's neighbour heard a car door slam and "[observed] a suspect stealing a bag from his neighbours' vehicle."

When police responded to the scene, they noticed that the thief had left "a single set of fresh footprints" in the newly-fallen snow. The police were able to track the suspect by following his footprints, which "were walking up and down driveways and stopping at parked vehicles in driveways and on the street in the neighbourhood."

The footprints led them straight to the suspect, who they discovered was carrying "multiple items including several GPS units, wallet and identification, lighters and cigarettes" that he had apparently taken from various vehicles in the neighbourhood. He was placed under arrest for theft and possession of stolen property.

Clearly he'd never been taught about the importance of covering one's, ahem, tracks.

Around the World: A Modern Jean Valjean

In *Les Misérables*, Valjean is arrested for stealing a loaf of bread to feed his starving family. In a case of life imitating art, a similar situation occurred in a Helena, Montana pizzeria—but with a much happier ending.

As [NBCNews.com reports](#), "[an] apparent attempt to rob a Papa John's pizza restaurant in Montana's capital went awry when the would-be robber -- who was wearing a black hoodie with a red bandana covering his face -- started to cry."

Just after midnight, a man "entered the restaurant . . . and gave the cashier a note demanding money." But when the cashier began to give him the money, the would-be thief "broke down and confessed he was doing the deed for his wife and child."

After the thief told his story, the cashier gave him free pizza, wings, and soda, and the man left the restaurant quietly—leaving behind "a large knife" that had fallen from his pocket during the conversation. The police are looking for a suspect that matches the man's description, but are unsure whether charges will be brought, given the circumstances.

AUSU UPDATE

Bethany Tynes



AUSU e-newsletters a success

AUSU has been piloting the use of e-newsletters to contact our student body over the last year. We began by sending these newsletters to students registered on our website, and after a very positive initial response, we are now sending e-newsletters to all students currently enrolled in any AU undergrad course, as well as all students registered on our site who wish to receive email. We're looking forward to keeping in closer touch with our members, and hope in future to be able to send regular monthly e-newsletters to all members (though we'll also respect your right to unsubscribe). If there's something you'd like to see included in our newsletters, please let us know!

Instructional model survey

Last June, AUSU learned that AU planned to move all undergraduate courses to a call centre model (like the one currently used in AU's Faculty of Business) beginning in September. We felt that this was a very major change, and was surprised that the university had not conducted consultation of AU's students or academics. AUSU drafted a survey and sent it to all our members via e-newsletter. Over 2,500 of you took the time to fill out this survey, giving us a wealth of information about what's important to AU's undergrad students. The AUSU Executive is now working to make sure that these important student perspectives are communicated to the university, and we have presented our survey results report to a number of AU community members and committees, including CUPE 3911 (the AU tutors' union) and the Board of Governors (AU's highest governing body).

DegreeWorks now available

We've been waiting for AU to roll out their new DegreeWorks system—and it's finally available to students! If you started an AU program after September 2010, you can now use DegreeWorks to see how your courses fulfill the requirements of your program. DegreeWorks is available online anytime, and can instantly help you see which courses you still need to complete on the way to your credential. Let us know what you think of DegreeWorks, and we'll make sure we let the university know how they're doing meeting student needs.

Get in touch with us

Have comments or questions about AUSU or anything in this column? Feel free to get in touch with AUSU President Bethany at president@ausu.org. You can also e-mail our office at ausu@ausu.org or call 1-800-788-9041 ext. 3413. We'd love to hear from you!

This column is provided by AUSU to facilitate communication with its members. The Voice does not write or edit this section; all content has been exclusively and directly provided by AUSU, and any questions or comments about the material should be directed to ausu@ausu.org.

CLASSIFIEDS

Classifieds are free for AU students! Contact voice@voicemagazine.org for more information.

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