

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 21 Issue 26 2013-07-12

More or Less

Time is on our side

Ice Palace

Thing of beauty

Go Guilt-Free

Escape the everyday

Plus:

Gregor's Bed

*Click of the Wrist
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.



STUDY SPACE

Maxie van Roye

Hour by Hour

This article was originally published June 29, 2012, in issue 2025.



Does it ever seem as though the secrets of life can be narrowed down to a formula? Success is 99 per cent perspiration. Eating right plus getting exercise makes you lose weight. Do this, get that.

It sounds reasonable, right? If you don't put in the time, you can't expect to get results. And yet it's missing something significant, and that omission might affect your productivity at home, work, and school.

At the risk of harping on a truism, quality wins out over quantity every single time.

Recently I came across a fascinating *Harvard Business Review* piece that applied the quality vs. quantity question to an area that needs it badly: the workplace. As the article notes, the current model of

employment presumes that your worth as an employee is determined by your hours; after all, that's what your wage is usually based upon. But the author suggests that this is deeply flawed.

Not to say that your boss doesn't want top-notch work. But inevitably, when managers equate work with time, they lose the soul behind the effort, destroying the creative spark and consequently, productivity: "By focusing on hours worked instead of results produced, they let professionals avoid answering the most critical question: 'Am I currently using my time in the best possible way?'" This makes professional employees, the article claims, learn to "use their time inefficiently."

When we re-enter the educational world from the workforce, it's hard not to carry with us these hardwired concepts, ill-suited as they may be to personal or professional studies. Because just as more hours spent at work don't necessarily equal excellent product, neither do more hours spent studying.

Frequently students follow a strict schedule: two hours to study, then a break. Another hour, another few minutes to relax. This places the focus on hours spent studying, which is good in one way, but it also means that we will never ask ourselves whether we're using those hours well.

We always manage to fill up the time we have, whether it's many hours or just 20 minutes. If we've got all the time in the world to finish a task—or even just half a day—chances are we'll take that time. But if we focus on end product over hours, it's likely that we'll work faster—and better.

Time is precious. Let's use it well.

CALGARY FLOOD UPDATE

AUSU and *The Voice Magazine* are deeply concerned about the flooding situation in Calgary and surrounding areas. Calgary has the single highest population of AU students anywhere, and AUSU estimates that close to 20 per cent of our total membership lives in areas affected by flood conditions (including students in Canmore, High River, and other ravaged areas).

Assistance: We want to hear from everyone affected by the floods so we can assess needs and make sure we're helping where we can. There will be computer bursaries for those who have lost all, and we're currently planning other relief measures to help ensure students from flooded areas can stay on track with their studies. Email ausu@ausu.org and give us your contact info and status when you are able!

Additionally, assistance may be available to AU students who have lost their course materials. Contact AU at 1.800.788.9041 ext. 6366 for further information.

AU Calgary: AU Calgary remains closed because of the flooding emergency. City officials have restricted access to parts of the downtown core, including the south campus of Bow Valley College, where AU's exam centres are located.

Due to the ongoing power outage at the BVC south campus building, phone service is unavailable for AU's Calgary location.

While we remain unable to return to regular AU Calgary facilities, AU has secured temporary space at the University of Calgary's downtown campus at 906 - 8 Avenue, SW. Students who had exams scheduled at the AU Calgary location can expect to be contacted by phone and email regarding an alternate write date/time.



VOICE HOLIDAY

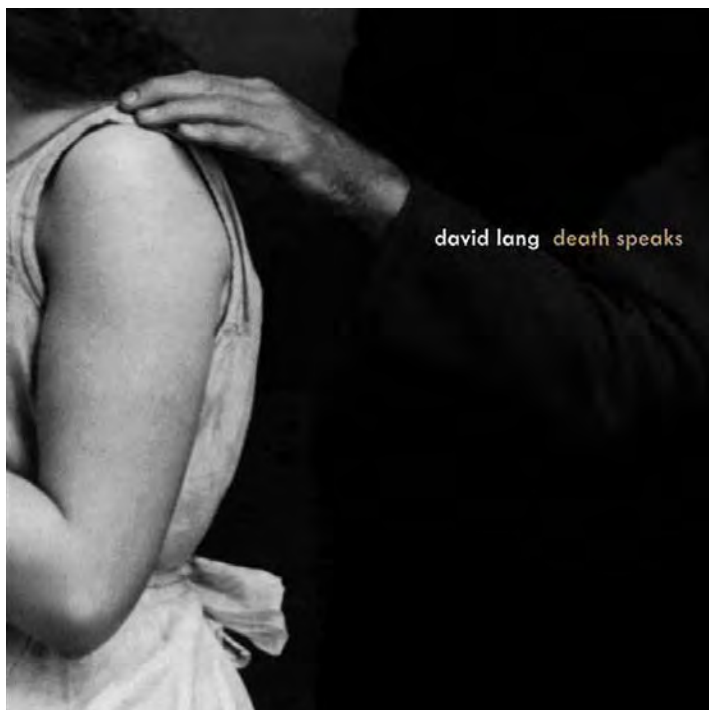
The long weekend's behind us, but there's a lot of summer left to enjoy. How will you be spending your holidays? At the beach? Sightseeing in the city? Or just curled up with a cold drink and a good book?

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

The Voice will be on hiatus from July 15-19, so there will be no issue next week. We'll be back to our regular publishing schedule with the July 26 issue. Meanwhile, keep sending in your comments, letters, and submissions. We always love hearing from our reader

IN CONVERSATION

Wanda Waterman



Recent Discoveries from the Realm of the Experimental and the Avant Garde

Album: *Death Speaks*

Composer: David Lang

Artists: Shara Worden (vocals), Bryce Dessner (guitar), Owen Pallett (violin), Nico Muhly (piano)

"Art songs have been moving out of classical music in the last many years. Indie rock seems to be the place where Schubert's sensibilities now lie, a better match for direct story telling and intimate emotionality."

David Lang (from his official website)

"I walk in joy. I am kissed by angels."

David Lang, from "I am Walking"

Stop a While and Let the Angels Kiss You

It's tempting to assume that the avant garde is synonymous with a cynical coldness, until we remember that when romanticism went mainstream in the 19th century, it was every bit as avant garde as you could want.

I've remarked a number of times in this column on the recent—and significant—shift toward romanticism in avant garde music. Surprising as it was when I first met it, in retrospect I should have seen it coming, if only because romanticism in general has had such a long period of exile. For so long the object of dismissal, contempt, or even ridicule, romanticism is finding its place in the postmodern world, bringing all of its longings and obsessions back into the cultural mainstream.

David Lang is a professor of composition at Yale and won a Pulitzer in 2008 for his *Little Match Girl Passion*, a work whose fairytale subject and preoccupation with beauty, innocence, suffering, and death form the quintessence of romanticism.

The above quote is in part an explanation for why Lang chose to write this collection of Schubert-style art songs for classically trained musicians who've grown famous within the indie rock world; he assumed that these artists would be better suited to interpreting the thoughts and feeling discussed in *Death Speaks* and to lending an urgency to the kind of narrative that unfolds there.

He couldn't have been more right. The accompaniment is profoundly sensitive to the libretto, but what's truly jaw-dropping is the beauty of Sharon Worden's vocals. She makes this very difficult score seem like an excess of grief whittled and crafted into a poignant masterpiece.

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.

CLICK OF THE WRIST

On Vacation

Summer's in full swing as we head into the middle of July. Got vacation plans, or are you kicking back locally this year? Whether you stay or go, here are some holiday tips and stories—some good, some bad—to entertain you, inspire you, or scare you off vacations for good.

Worst Vacations

Gawker.com held a contest for readers' worst vacation experiences. From tornados to shootouts to IBS attacks, these vacation horror stories give the Griswolds a run for their money.

People Pay for This

Sure, you shelled-out \$20 on a museum that turned out to be a dud. But don't feel too badly; here's the lowdown from Cracked on some of the "worst vacations people actually pay for." From killing farm animals with machine guns to touring working sewers, these local attractions make your museum experience seem a bargain (and a pleasant one!).

Go Prepared

While you might not be mistakenly diagnosed with cancer on vacation, "minor" problems can crop up for any traveller. From losing your passport to getting trapped by bad weather, here are some common issues—and *Marie Claire's* advice on how to deal with them.

Enriching Vacations

Sometimes a vacation turns out better if you go with slightly different expectations. Here, NPR's *Talk of the Nation* discusses so-called enriching vacations—skill-learning or volunteering trips, for example—and how they can transform a plain old summer experience into something amazing.

Aftermath

So you had the vacation from hell—or something didn't go as planned. Check out this resource on how to prepare your complaint (and determine to whom you should direct it).



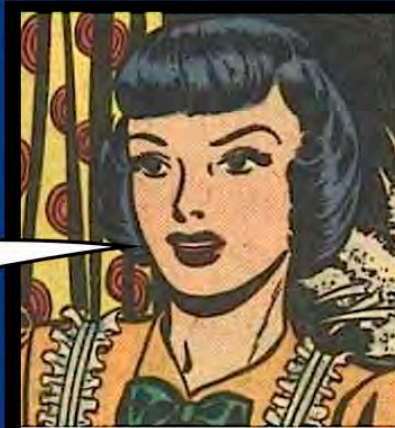
OVERHEARD

REAL CHRISTIANS



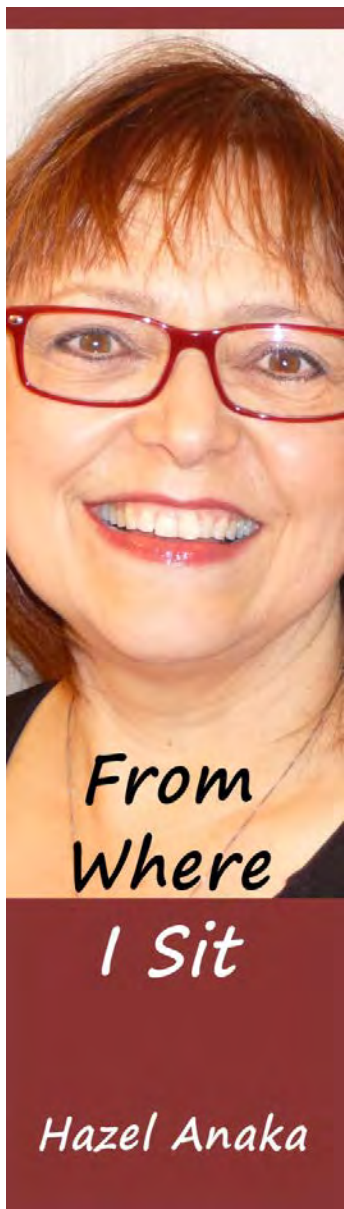
YOU KNOW, I'VE BEEN THINKING. MAYBE THE WORLD WOULD BE A BETTER PLACE IF WE WENT BACK TO THE WRITINGS OF THE GREAT CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIANs.

YOU KNOW, THAT'S NOT A BAD IDEA! MAYBE IT'S TIME TO TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT AUGUSTINE, LUTHER, AND BONHOEFFER.



GOOD GRAVY, NO! I MEAN REAL CHRISTIANS! THE ONES EVERYONE LIKES! LIKE AYN RAND!

WRITTEN BY WANDA WATERMAN



Guilt-Free Getaway

It's quite late Sunday evening as I write this. Whoever said (okay, I know it was the Big Guy) that Sunday is a day of rest obviously hadn't considered my to-do list. It goes on for miles and doesn't contain optional, wouldn't-it-be-nice-to-do-someday items; it's now or never, do or die, sink or swim-calibre stuff.

My most pressing tasks are related to the Babas & Borshch Ukrainian Festival I'm coordinating. The countdown clock I insisted our webmaster include on the home page is now terrorizing me with the fact there are only 47 days, 11 hours, 9 minutes, and 24 seconds until the Big Day.

So knowing how much work I have to do, why did I make the choices I did today? I chose to attend church because it's been a while since I've gone. I needed to be refilled, renewed, and reassured by the words, the music, the calm, the two hours of letting go of earthly concerns. It gave me time to pray for the strength and wisdom I need to carry on, to ask God to keep the people I care about safe, and to help us keep things in perspective as attacks against Roy and the Council begin early in this, an election year.

After church, I hopped in the car and drove to Sherwood Park to pick up Roy so we could attend a wiener roast at a friend's acreage. The occasion was our dentist's celebration of 50 years of practicing dentistry. Wowzer. We didn't know many people there and the pop-up showers soaked guests a few times, but it was fun. It was one of those occasions where you can't really afford the time but feel an obligation to attend, and in the end are glad you did.

Next was driving home to confront the work that had not magically disappeared during my absence. I managed to get several pressing emails sent

and refined and updated my "must do" list, but didn't get to the dishes in the sink. Nor did I bring up the suitcases we will need for a couple of days of rest and relaxation when we attend the Ag Service Board tour that begins in Bonnyville tomorrow. Typically I'm quite anal about packing and start so far in advance that I forget what I've packed by the time I'm throwing the last-minute items in. That won't be a problem tomorrow morning; it'll *all* be last-minute.

I can't decide if I should take the laptop and try to squeeze in some work. With a schedule that begins at seven in the morning and ends 12 or 14 hours later, it seems delusional to believe that anything of consequence will be accomplished. In fact, now that I think of it, I know that taking the laptop will keep me from being fully present and enjoying the mental break I need. Instead I'll work like hell later so I can go guilt-free, from where I sit.

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

THE MINDFUL BARD

Wanda Waterman



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

Film: *Chasing Ice*

Screenwriter: Mark Monroe

Director: Jeff Orlowski

Cast: James Balog, Svavar Jonatansson, Adam LeWinter, Jeff Orlowski, Tad Pfeffer, Jason Box

Genre: Documentary

"Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature—the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter."

Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*

A Humbling but Galvanizing Vision

Glaciers inspire a complexity of metaphors. Sometimes these metaphors are applied to their behaviours (e.g., "calving") and sometimes to their functions ("the canary in the global coal mine," as James Balog puts it). Time and again we see the glacier portrayed in terms of terrifying and invincible forces of nature—like the destroyer of the "unsinkable" Titanic—but also as mother, as mute beast, as storyteller, as vestibule of ancient wisdom.

James Balog, the founder of the Extreme Ice Survey (EIS) project, made it his mission to photograph glaciers while they were melting away. He wanted to showcase their phenomenal beauty and variety as well as find some way of getting through to the public that there is no question about the reality of climate change.

We're living through a time of apocalyptic change, and it's barely registered in the global consciousness. It takes advanced photographic techniques and tremendous personal risks for this group to make it real to us.

Even if we do accept that global warming really is happening, most of us don't value the earth enough to stop or even to slow our carbon-emitting ways. Living with the threat of impending extinction is like living under corrupt politicians—few will act to stop it as long as things appear to roll along as usual. *Sure, it's terrible, but what can you do?* The little people feel helpless and ineffectual and the big people have

gathered too much momentum on their way to their next million.

But water that's remained frozen for millennia is now thawing out, and these ancient waters are flowing into the ocean. How well is it being received in seas that can't accept it without raising their water levels? And what tales will it have to tell, this ancient deluge that's now subsuming a world that's almost a stranger to it?

We get a clear lesson on why carbon emissions are causing the glaciers to melt. It's not just that carbon emissions hold in the sun's heat, thus raising global temperatures and melting glaciers from the surface down ("deflating"). The waters of melting higher glaciers are also washing away the lower glaciers.

The melting is being speeded up from within by cryoconite, the sludge found in the billions of holes where the sky has deposited ash and carbon and where algae also grows. Because these holes are black, they absorb the sun's heat and melt the glacier at an even more alarming rate.

Perhaps the most moving images James Balog produces were taken at night, making you feel you're on the surface of only one exquisitely beautiful little planet in a massive universe.

The film loses a few points for being a little heavy on the hero worship (Balog could take a lesson from Jacques Cousteau and just let his subject do the talking), but gains them back for the splendour of the cinematography. Those who watch this film simply to be inspired by the beauty of nature will not be disappointed.

The film's director, Jeff Orlowski, has achieved a Mindful Bard triumph: the promotion of positive change by means of an artistic gift that exhorts change without diminishing the artistic merit of the work. James Balog calls his camera "a vehicle for raising awareness." Let's hope it's not just preaching to the choir.

Chasing Ice manifests seven of the Mindful Bard's criteria for films well worth seeing: 1) it is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it poses and admirably responds to questions that have a direct bearing on my view of existence; 3) it harmoniously unites art with social action, saving me from both seclusion in an ivory tower and slavery to someone else's political agenda; 4) it inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation; 5) it makes me want to be a better artist; 6) it renews my enthusiasm for positive social action; and 7) it makes me appreciate that life is a complex and rare phenomenon, making living a unique opportunity.

"[W]ater that's remained frozen for millennia is now thawing out, and these ancient waters are flowing into the ocean. How well is it being received in seas that can't accept it without raising their water levels? And what tales will it have to tell, this ancient deluge that's now subsuming a world that's almost a stranger to it?"

A globe constructed from a grid of numerous small, square photographic panels. Each panel depicts a different scene related to environmental themes, such as landscapes, urban architecture, renewable energy sources like wind turbines and solar panels, and natural elements like water and trees. The panels are arranged in a way that they form a spherical shape, with black lines separating the individual images. The overall effect is a mosaic of environmental imagery representing the Earth.

Makes a Double Whopper sound like a pretty good deal all around.

AUSU UPDATE



Dear Members,

You may have recently seen information on the internet speculating about the future of Athabasca University. These reports suggest that the Alberta government may broker a merger between AU and University of Alberta, and that this may result in drastic changes to the services and programs offered to students AU students.

We want you to know that AUSU is aware of these rumours and is actively investigating the source – we will keep you informed as we know more.

We can tell you that AU is governed via a bicameral structure with two main governing bodies: the General Faculties Council (formerly Academic Council) and the Board of Governors (formerly Governing Council). AUSU has representatives on both of these governing bodies and we can confirm that there has been no formal discussion of a university merger among these groups. The AU president, Frits Pannekoek, has also assured the press that there is no truth to the rumour. On behalf of our members, we are seeking more information from the Board of Governors, the minister, and AU executives.

At this time we simply have no evidence that a merger is being seriously considered by AU, the U of A, or the Alberta government, and we note that among the many committees and working groups of AU, planning and development for the future continues as usual.

We know that our members are worried and want more information. We will update you as soon as we know more. At this time we do not feel there is any reason for students to worry or make changes to their study plans.

Do not hesitate to contact our office if you wish to talk about this or any other issue affecting AU students.

AUSU.

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.

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

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