

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 21 Issue 31 2013-08-23

Different Minds

Our problem, too

Rare Flute

TranzDenied

On Vacation

Maybe next year

*Plus:
Weird Canada
Click of the Wrist
and much more!*



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***The Voice
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www.voicemagazine.org

500 Energy Square
10109 – 106 ST NW
Edmonton AB
T5J 3L7

800.788.9041 ext. 2905

Email
voice@voicemagazine.org

Publisher

AU Students' Union

Editor-In-Chief

Tamra Ross

Managing Editor

Christina M. Frey

Regular Contributors

Hazel Anaka
Katie D'Souza
S.D. Livingston
Wanda Waterman

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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



Behind the Mask

If you've been on social media at all in the last week, you've probably heard about a shocking letter received by the Ontario mom of a teen with autism. Briefly, the letter berated the parents for the child's existence, suggested he had no place in a decent and "normal" neighbourhood, and not-so-subtly recommended he be "euthanized."

Wow. That was the reaction of bloggers, columnists, and ordinary people cycling through their News Feeds. We couldn't believe it, just couldn't believe that anyone could spew such hateful speech toward a child, let alone toward anyone who couldn't help his actions.

But should we really be surprised? Not that people can be hateful, certainly—we see that all the time on online forums—but nor should it shock us that someone would feel antipathy toward someone who's developmentally or psychologically different.

The thing is, we're not so innocent ourselves. And though we may turn our horror toward the writer of such a hateful letter, our disgust is better aimed straight back at ourselves, our society.

While in recent years there have been some great breakthroughs in fiction, nonfiction, documentaries, and other media raising awareness of developmental and psychological disorders, society doesn't really know how to handle those whose brains don't work the way we all expect.

Look around. As one reader of the *Kingston Whig-Standard* pointed out, Ontario has "shameful wait-lists" for services for people with special needs, and schools and organizations are slow to accept and embrace those who don't fit in with the standards. In her words, "Ontario is in no position to behave as though only one mean-spirited homeowner is the problem when, as a society, we are failing so many families every day, sending the message that their loved one with developmental disabilities should stay home, out of sight, out of mind."

She's got it absolutely right, and the problem isn't just limited to talking about developmental disorders like autism. What about the big elephant in the living room, mental illness? Bipolarity, anxiety, depression—all illnesses that affect every aspect of a person's life, from physical to emotional to social to even professional. Our laws do little to protect the interests of those with developmental or mental issues, but we as individuals do even less.

This *Atlantic* piece is heartbreaking in its truth. The writer is terrified at the thought of going public with the reality of mental illness, to the point where only a few close friends are aware of the writer's bipolar

disorder diagnosis. Work and social life must be twisted to carefully hide the truth in a desperate game that's as painful as it is unnecessary.

Because we're the ones who've created the closet in which people with mental issues feel forced to hide. *We're all a little ADHD. He has a split personality, like a psycho or something. She's manic.* We throw around real psychiatric diagnoses as hyperbolic descriptions or even epithets, discrediting the reality of mental disorders as some kind of humorous fantasy. And worse, when we're faced with someone with real mental illness, their inability to just *get with the program* frustrates and annoys us. *Why the hell won't she just eat a sandwich? You need to just calm down, relax, learn to cope. What is he so worried about all the time? That's irrational. Normal people don't act like that.*

What is normal, anyways? Who's got a bigger problem, a hateful letter writer or the kid who's struggling with bipolar disorder, autism, or anxiety? Who's got a bigger problem, a person with a big scary diagnosis or the people who would run away from her if they knew?

There are mental disorders and development disorders, and then there are disorders of the soul. And it's the latter which is keeping thousands of people hidden, alone, and desperate.

DID YOU KNOW?

Student ID Cards



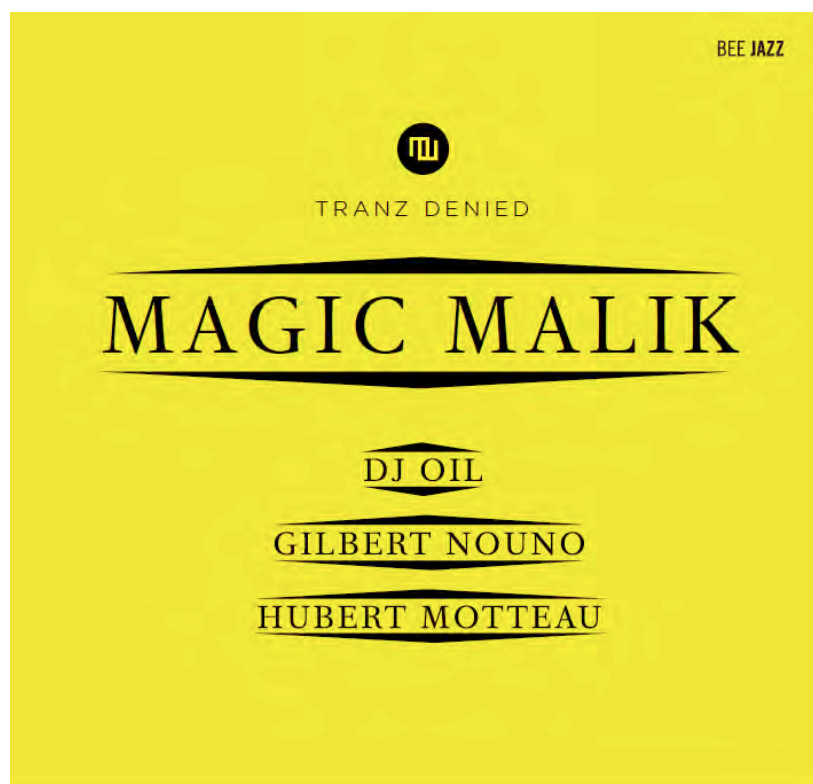
Studying by distance? You can still get student discounts at the movies, bookstore, or train station! According to the [AU Student Calendar](#), every “active Athabasca University student” is eligible to request a photo student identification card.

To apply, you need to complete the required [form](#) and submit a photo. Acceptable photos are “taken by an Athabasca University staff member whenever possible.” However, if circumstances require it the Registrar’s Office will accept a digital photo together with a copy of your driver’s license, or a passport photo. If not taken by AU staff, photos must be signed by a guarantor, someone “who can attest to your identity.” Further instructions can be found [here](#).

Still have last year’s ID card? Don’t throw it away, as AU students are only eligible for one card during the course of their studies. To keep the card current from year to year, active students may “request a date sticker from the Office of the Registrar, AU Edmonton, or AU Calgary.”

GREGOR'S BED

Wanda Waterman



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

Album: Magic Malik, *TranzDenied* (to be released September 12, 2013)

"Primitive people attributed to sound a divine origin. It became surrounded with religious respect, and reserved for the priests, who thereby enriched their rites with a new mystery. Thus was developed the conception of sound as something apart, different from and independent of life. The result of this was music, a fantastic world superimposed upon reality, an inviolable and sacred world."

Luigi Russolo, from *The Art of Noise*

Is This Even a Flute?

Malik Mezzadri is a Guadeloupe jazz flautist who started out on the recorder as a child and eventually went on to learn Ravel, Stockhausen, and Bach under the tutelage of Marc Rovelas. He discovered jazz at the Marseille Conservatory, where he became first flute. After graduating he played in a reggae band for 10 years and collaborated with avant garde artists, eventually founding the Magic Malik Orchestra in 1992.

His recordings have been marked by a personal voice of extraordinary innovation, and this album is densely packed with delightful experimentations and novel methods. His pioneering aesthetic—owing a debt to all music but also notably to Russolo's noise theories—resonates in the work of the other musicians, creating a very appetizing repast of found sounds, distorted sounds, and inspired improvisations (check out the flute solo on "Zivanoui").

A listen to "Montreuil Market" makes the listener wonder, *Is this even a flute?* In addition to some strange purrings and tuneful breezes you can hear the traces of soft vocalizations, as if he's whispering seductive nothings into the mouthpiece.

"Dark Stone" bespeaks familiarity with Captain Beefheart or someone of his ilk. The bluesy soulful vocal is so totally vague and senseless it merges seamlessly into the instrumentation.

In keeping with the current avant garde trend toward romanticism and away from dissonance, most of the tracks are accessible and of interest to those who may not normally be fans of the avant garde. High

points in this trend on *TranzDenied* are “Shibuya Memories,” which manifests a mellifluous beneficent flute rhapsody, and “Chunky Delice,” which includes an enchanting Cagney glockenspiel.

Looking forward to seeing what new ground this guy will be breaking next time around.

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

Once in a Blue Moon

If you had clear skies this past week, you were treated to the stunning sight of a rare blue moon. But there’s more to this rare occurrence than meets the eye—or camera. These aspects of moon lore might have confused some, but they’re certainly entertaining:

The Blues

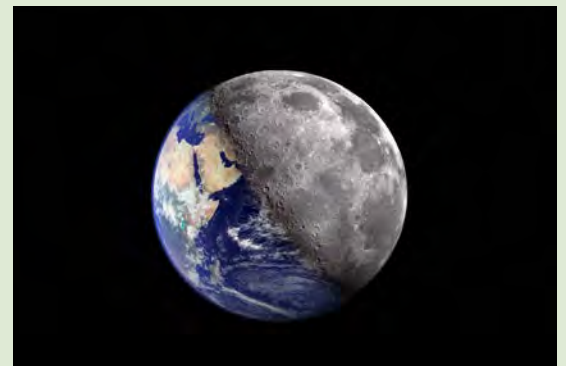
Popular understanding is that a blue moon is a full moon that occurs twice in the same month. But with the full moon falling on August 20 this month, how could it fit that category? The problem is that our popular blue moon rule is actually based on an astronomical misunderstanding. *Discovery* magazine explains how it all came about.

Moon Life

Maybe the skeptics who don’t believe the 1969 moon landing actually happened aren’t completely off their rockers; moon hoaxes have occurred before. The Great Moon Hoax of August 1835 was set off when a new newspaper, in an effort to make a satirical statement and boost readership, “reported” on studies from a fictional science journal that was supposedly claiming to have discovered life forms on the moon. The fantastical tales, which included unicorns and other mythical beasts, fooled thousands—including a delegation of scientists from Yale.

Visit the Moon

We can’t all fly to the moon to check out the geology first-hand, but some call Idaho’s Craters of the Moon National Park a good second choice. This *National Geographic* interview explains the origin of the park’s name, and how rangers have helped NASA over the years.

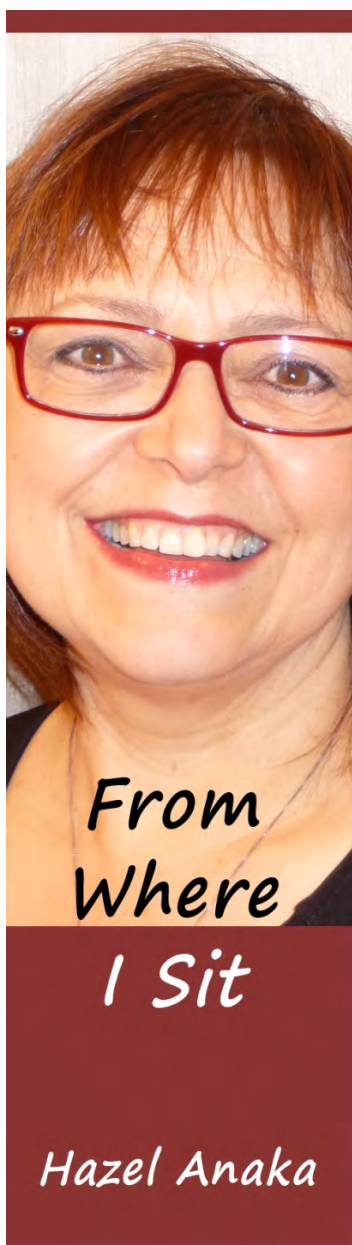


Weird Canada

THE HORSE AND HANDGUN LAW: "IF YOU ARE RELEASED FROM PRISON, IT IS REQUIRED THAT YOU ARE GIVEN A HANDGUN WITH BULLETS AND A HORSE, SO YOU CAN RIDE OUT OF TOWN!" (THIS LAW IS APPARENTLY STILL IN THE BOOKS IN ALBERTA. IF YOU HAVE ANY BUDS IN PRISON THERE, INVITE THEM TO CHALLENGE IT ON THEIR RELEASE.)

WELL, SON, YA PAID YER DEBT TO SOCIETY. NOW GIT YERSELF TO MONTREAL— I HEAR THEY'LL BE NEEDIN' A NEW MAYOR.





You'll See

Regular readers of FWIS will know that I've been preoccupied with a mammoth undertaking: coordinating a two-day festival that didn't exist seven months ago. It's been a journey and a rush; challenging but gratifying, maddening but worth persevering over.

I've discovered new strengths and skill sets in myself and have come to love those people who give their word and keep it. I've had a helluva lot of fun. I've also wanted to weep in frustration. But mostly I just keep on going, day after day, setback after setback, victory after victory.

While the event is still a couple of weeks away as I write this, I'm sure it'll be a success. Too many people have invested too much blood, sweat, and tears for it not to be. I'm sure we all will look out over what we've wrought and say, "Yes, it is good." And like the pain of childbirth disappears once you survey the precious infant, soon we will forget all that has gone into birthing this brand-new event. We'll soak up the compliments and analyze the criticism. I'm already proud of my role in this undertaking.

But there is one thing that has ticked me off this summer. No, let me restate that. I'm not just ticked off, I'm bitter. Time and again, when I needed answers to a phone message or email, I waited and waited. And waited. Sometimes I called or wrote again. Nine times out of ten the reason was "I've been away."

Normal, well-adjusted people with a refined sense of work-life balance *took time off*. They went on vacation. Took road trips. Extended weekends at both ends. There were girls-only junkets and trips to the lake. Some people played golf like there was no tomorrow. I won't even mention the outlet shopping sprees. Even those who went to visit family, babysit the grandkids, or help

with flood relief seemed to be lucky to get away.

In the meantime, my cohort Jim and I just planned for after the festival. Boy, oh boy, that's when we'd live it up. We'd have a celebratory drink. Then, with the pressure gone, we too would take off. Separately. He might have golf on his mind. I thought I'd start by sleeping in or taking a nap. Going to Edmonton for no reason whatsoever. Reading a book. Putting the cushions out on the new patio set for the first time. Planning a trip to see a friend who needs me. Going to a garage sale for no reason. Frittering the day away without feeling guilty.

But then there's the post-mortem, final report, and recommendations waiting to be done. And harvest can't be far behind. Or the fall weddings I've booked. But next year will be different, you'll see, from where I sit.

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

INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



At Home: Shipping Route

Sneaking over the border by swimming has happened before, but agents near the Sarnia, Ontario—Michigan border experienced something new when they captured a Canadian scuba diver trying to smuggle marijuana across the water from Canada into the US.

As the Sun News Network reports, officials intercepted a “frogman swimming across the St. Clair River at night, towing an eight-pound bag of pot.” Three kilograms of marijuana were found hidden in “a dry bag used by scuba divers.”

Authorities received a tip about “someone swimming across the river south of Sarnia,” and further investigation revealed the 24-year-old man, full dressed in scuba gear, trying to cross the kilometre-wide channel. He was arrested when he reached the shore.

The trip, made during the night in an area that’s bustling with shipping traffic, is considered a “dangerous thing to do.” A spokesperson for the US Customs and Border Protection told reporters that “If there’s a freighter coming through there, there’s no way for a freighter to stop.”

The swimmer is in custody of the St. Clair County Drug Task Force.

Around the World: Not So Much Stuff

The only thing better than a regular Oreo is double the Oreo, right? Except that, as new research reveals, the Oreo Double Stuf isn’t actually double at all.

As CNN reports, an Oreo Double Stuf has only 1.86 times the “stuff” of classic Oreos. And it only took a high school math class in upstate New York to prove it.

The experiment was simple: student researchers, under the guidance of their math teacher, weighed Oreos of various types, both with and without the creme filling.

Teacher Dan Anderson told reporters that they were “very surprised” that the Double Stuf Oreos had only 1.86 times the filling of the regular version, while the Mega Stuf had only 2.68 times the creme.

A spokesperson for Oreo pooh-poohed the claim, telling reporters that she could “confirm . . . that our recipe for the Oreo Double Stuf cookie has double the stuff, or creme filling, when compared with our base, or original Oreo cookie.”

But the proof is in the pudding—or rather, the filling.

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.

CLASSIFIEDS

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THE VOICE

500 Energy Square - 10109 – 106 St NW - Edmonton AB - T5J 3L7
- Ph: 800.788.9041 ext. 2905 - Fax: 780.497.7003 attn: Voice Editor

Publisher Athabasca University Students' Union
Editor-In-Chief Tamra Ross
Managing Editor Christina M. Frey

Regular Columnists Hazel Anaka, Katie D'Souza, S.D. Livingston, Wanda Waterman

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