

# New York street poet and former heroin addict Jim Carroll offends sensitive listeners at the El Mo

By Kathryn Bailey

"You're better than Burroughs," a feeble voice commented when New York poet Jim Carroll began to read "[William S.] Burroughs' favorite part" from a collection called *Forced Entries*. That feeble voice may have been right.



Modestly taking the stage after a chaotic opening by Groovy Religion, Carroll spread his works out in a meticulous/anxious fashion. The two selections from *Forced Entries*, the follow-up to *The Basketball Diaries*, a book that literally made him at the age of 13, had never been read to an audience before, and it showed.

This did not diminish the strength of his performance. In fact, it is at times difficult to tell if the quiver in his voice is a result of nervousness, or the junk-ridden days of youth (he was addicted to heroin from childhood, heavily influencing his early works).

Whichever, Carroll captured the audience immediately. He began with a tale of his chance meeting with Salvador Dali on the streets of New York. An elaborate fantasy is described, where Carroll imagines Dali embracing him as a fellow artist. It turns out that all Dali was interested in was stealing his cab. Carroll described his humiliation: "I can't believe it—popped by a fucking surrealist."

## CONCERT

Jim Carroll  
El Mocambo  
Saturday, March 21

Carroll has a tendency to describe strange sexual habits encountered throughout his New York City life. In the Burroughs selection from *Forced Entries*, Carroll described a drug party he attended with a schizophrenic porn star/actress. No censorship here.

Intense descriptions of bizarre narcissistic masturbators and multiple sex-acts in a sandbox were revealed in Carroll's wiry, almost hesitant voice. This was an incredibly transfixing moment, until a raucous woman in the audience decided she'd had enough.

She screamed for him to "go the fuck home," calling him a bastard and making comments on every sexual element of his story. Carroll was obviously upset. He lost his place several times, explaining that this was the first time he had read the piece, and apologized for not having the right rhythms.

He finally got so fed up that he was going to skip to the end and leave. But the rest of the audience was on his side, and he then stated, "You're right. I don't rattle that easily," and continued. When the female piped up again, he told her that she was not good looking enough to draw such attention to herself, which basically shut her up.

This proved Carroll can handle any situation. And given the years of success he has had, such interruptions are criminal. Fortunately the rest of the night was not spoiled.

Carroll finished the readings with several new works of poetry, which displayed a more confident poetic voice than some of his earlier works. A few were included from his new spoken word album, *Praying Mantis*. At one point he even did a striking impression of the philosophical side of Axl Rose.

The grand finale, which was unexpected by many, was his musical performance. With Groovy Religion behind him, he performed two songs from his first album, *Catholic Boy*: "City Drops Into The Night" and the infamous "People Who Died," a classic which brought the night to a tumultuous crescendo.

Jack Kerouac wrote of *The Basketball Diaries*, "At 13 years of age, Jim Carroll writes better prose than 89 per cent of the novelists working today." This is even truer today, when, well into his forties, Carroll is one of the best writers, not only of prose, but poetry and lyrics as well. He is a gifted storyteller—witty and intense, and a solid performer with a distinctly individual voice.



Jim Carroll brought intense descriptions of bizarre narcissistic masturbators and multiple sex acts in a sand box to the El Mocambo on Saturday. The performance offended at least one member of the audience, whose heckling momentarily threw Carroll off.

## campus events calendar

Theatre York presents Sally Clark's *Lost Souls and Missing Persons*, directed by Stephane Kirkland, until March 28. A middle-aged housewife disappears while visiting New York City with her husband. Suffering from amnesia, she develops her own language, is rescued by a young artist and begins to examine her past life. The show, in room 139, Studio B, Centre for Film and Video, starts at 7:30, with a 2 pm matinee Wednesday. For more information, call the theatre department at 736-5172.

A reception for Steven Martyn's "Exercises of Vision" will be held in the Student Centre Gallery on Thursday, March 26 from 4 to 8 pm. The exhibi-

tion of artworks will continue in the SC Gallery until Saturday, March 28.

"Printings," an exhibition of the Glendon Studio Course, has an opening Wednesday, March 25 from 7 to 9 pm in the Glendon Gallery (Glendon College, 2275 Bayview Avenue). The exhibition continues until April 8. For more information, call Glendon College at 487-6721.

A two person show by Stephanie Moy and Lynn Oreskovic, "Frozen State of Pretty," appears in the Winters College Gallery, 123 Winters College, until April 3. It is a mixed media, interactive show dealing with the role of perception when encountering work in a gallery setting. An opening reception will be held from 6

to 9 pm on March 26.

Recent work by Andrew Brouse and John Marriott will take over the Student Centre Gallery from March 30 to April 3. The opening reception for the show, called "Art Pigs," will take place Wednesday, April 1 from 6 to 9 pm.



Music, poetry and dance will be featured in a concert of recent works and collaboratio composed and performed by fourth year music student Robin Stimpson, and other performers. Thursday, March 26, 1 pm, Dacary Hall (050 McLaughlin College).

*The Student Recital Series* continues with pianist Andrea Ng performing works by Beethoven, Liszt and Ginastera. Thursday, March 26, 7:30 pm, Dacary Hall. Flautist Kimberley McBrien presents a program of works including Bach, Shorley, Lou Harrison and Charles Griffes on Tuesday, March 31 at 7:30. Dacary Hall.

*The Student Chamber Music Series* features an informal concert of solo and chamber ensemble work including piano, winds, strings, brass, voice and guitar. Friday, March 27, 12 noon. Dacary Hall.

On Monday, March 30, the York University Choir and Chamber Choir join forces and voices in a celebration of spring in their final concert of the season, under the direction of Albert Greer. Program highlights include "Songs of Springtime," by E. J. Moeran, Mozart's "Vespers" and "Lovesongs of Springtime," by Paul Halle. 7:30 pm. Dacary Hall. For more information on any of these events, call the music department at 736-5186.

## Cruelty promises juicy spectacle

by Michael Hussey

*Cruelty, A Blood Song*, a new play by R. Kelly Clipperton, will be at Atkinson Studio next week. It is a show that promises plenty of juicy spectacle.

The play is about a serial killer who is targeting a collection of dancers at a gay club in Toronto. But beneath that, Clipperton is trying to bridge a gap between two cultures (gay and straight) by dealing directly with bashing and ignorance.

And, Clipperton says, it goes deeper than that: "It's about abuse, mental, physical and emotional, about how people can stir up such hate without ever stopping to realize who they're targeting. I'm not just talking about the gay community, it's about all minority groups as well."

The director, York graduate Christina Uriarte, adds, "the production deals with elements of sexual confusion as a result of societal pressure, or oppression. There are some important issues being dealt with, but the play has many sensitivities — it's not a lecture from the gay community."



R. Kelly Clipperton's *Cruelty, A Blood Song*, about a serial killer who targets dancers at a Toronto gay club, opens on March 30.

## THEATRE

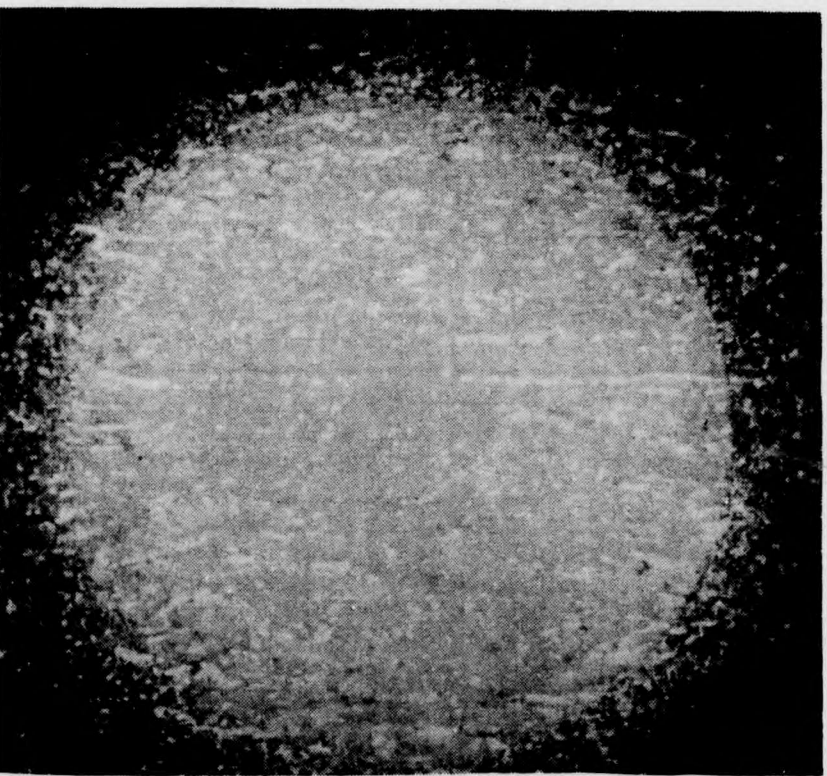
**Cruelty, A Blood Song**  
directed by Christina Uriarte  
written by and starring R. Kelly Clipperton  
Atkinson Studio, March 30 to April 4

Set designer Kathryn Immonene, also a graduate of York, describes her set as a "a wired go-go cage, iron maiden, un-cooked sausage."

Hmmm.

Of the cast — in which Clipperton appears as one of the dancers — keep a watch out for Xuann Fraser in the role of Tex. His past performances at York — in *Critical Mass* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* — were first rate. It will be a treat to see him again.

*Cruelty, A Blood Song* will be performed at the Atkinson Theatre. Tickets for the 8 pm shows April 1 to 4 are \$4. The March 30 and 31 performances are Pay What You Can.



## CORRECTION

In a story in last week's arts section, Joe Clark was erroneously identified as Minister for Interprovincial Affairs. He is, in fact, Minister for Constitutional Affairs. *Excalibur* will be happy to apologize to Clark for any embarrassment our mistake may have caused if he is prepared to apologize to the country for any embarrassment the Conservative government's mistakes may have caused.