

All about CJSR 88.5, your alternative campus radio station

story by Stephen Noble

So you're strolling along the walkway beside the Students' Union Building and there are strange noises coming from the roof above. Intrigued, you stop. "Hmm," you think, "that's alternative." Then a voice from above says, "This IS your alternative, CJSR 88.5 FM."

There is a big difference between CJSR, the University of Alberta's voice on the FM dial, and all the commercial radio stations. Program director Denyse King outlines the basics: "People who like commercial radio are people who like their decisions made for them; people who listen to CJSR are people who think for themselves."

Whether or not you agree with the statement is irrelevant. The idea that it puts forward though, is the essence of what the people in Room 224 of the Students' Union Building are trying to do: to provide to the public entertainment based on the principles of creativity, intelligence and broad-mindedness.

Since its inception as a small radio club over thirty years ago, CJSR has progressed enormously. The beauty though, is that the station has survived all these years because of the original spirit which first got it off the ground: the love of music. (This and a budget provided by the Students' Union which is just too small to mention here!)

Unlike any other radio station, CJSR exists mainly through the support of its volunteers, all 150 of them. These radio-buffs who receive only the personal satisfaction of working for an organization that exists to inform the public and serve it music in large and varied portions. There are only ten staff

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members on the payroll and one might wonder about their sanity as they try frantically not only to keep everything under control, but to keep the whole operation above ground.

CJSR is, quite simply, not your average radio station. It was for this reason, and for this reason only, that over three years ago the CRTC granted them an FM licence. The station strives to provide an "alternative" from everything else commonly found on the dial, especially from the stations with the obnoxious loud-mouthed hosts who tend to shout something every five minutes between lengthy sets of commercials about there being more music, less talk, while trying to ram the latest fickle pop tune down your throat.

"Alternative" is definitely a point upon which everyone will agree. Whether or not it is a *worthwhile* alternative is something which is often hotly disputed.

The problems seem to arise from the very reasons why CJSR exists in the first place. Rather than just concentrating on a certain type of music to play, or even on a few different types, CJSR plays just about everything imaginable. A quick look over the program listings in *AIRright*, the station's free monthly paper, will reveal all.

There are seven different cultural programs and, on top of this, almost everything from alternative classical music of the 11th century to the latest scratchy demo-tapes of the River City's newest thrash bands. As Denyse King says, "you have to be willing to pay attention while listening to CJSR."

For those who tune in for casual listening, the assortment which the eclectic programs provide and the amateur nature of the presenters are simply too overwhelming. Selections are often too obscure for those who are not seriously interested in the music. This is not an easy listening music station, nor is it always an easy station to listen to.

It is, however, an essential feature for the music scene of any city. It is true that CJSR devotes a lot of air-time to bands that are yet unheard of, but where would bands like U2



Photo Bruce Gardave

Volunteer deejay, Sandy Shift, hard at work

and The Cure be today if there were no radio stations to support them when they were still young and alternative?

It seems that too many people put the station down without having had much experience of it. As a result, there are a lot of myths surrounding CJSR which the staff are still trying to shake off.

Since going FM, many changes have taken place and many are still underway. The station may be described as undergoing growing pains as it tries to adapt to the greater number and variety of programs which it

offers. To identify CJSR solely with obscure experimental music and hardcore punk would be terribly wrong; as time goes on, they are moving to extend their ties with the Jazz, Folk and Rock scenes in Edmonton.

CJSR is a radio station which exists to serve the diverse needs of a community — and that means you. It relies on your support, whether it comes from active participation or from just simply listening in. If you would like to offer your services in anything from reporting on current affairs to creative writing for commercials, drop by Room 224 of the SU Building, they'll be glad to see you.

Making Waves

by Dragos Ruiu

Let's talk stupidity, cowardice, greed, and general rottenness. You got it, I'm talking about the American film industry.

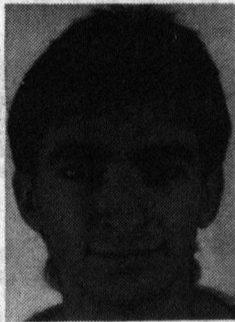
It's almost getting worse than Canadian films. Well, at least they can occasionally do something other than cute, homey prairie or period films. On an interesting aside, CBC had a screenplay competition this summer. From many interesting entries the winner was...*Poppa Goes to Town!* Yes folks, just what you wanted to see — a heart-warming story of a small-town Saskatchewan retiree who goes to the big city (probably Melfort). Puke!

Anyway, we were talking about sequels. *Poltergeist III* just started filming in Chicago. (MGM is providing the bucks). It's starring Tom Skerrit (the captain in *Alien* and the major in *Top Gun* and Heather O'Rourke and Zelda Rubinstein — both of whom survived the original as well as the putrid sequel.

No, it doesn't seem to matter that *Poltergeist II* was not worth the film it was made on; the executives at MGM seem convinced that they can make money of that time proven formula, the rip off. It almost seems as if movie companies are afraid to make original movies.

The fact that *Jaws IV* turned a profit should say something. The fact that producers like Golam and Globus (*Superman IV*, *Cobra*, *Chainsaw Massacre II* and so on . . .) stay in business is just icing on the cake. It just all goes to show you that the mass of moviegoers have jello for brain matter. They continue to support crap like this, and ruthless producers continue to exploit the viewers.

Next week, I'll tell you about *Alien III* (no joke) . . .



But enough of that. No use crying over spilt milk; let's face ugly reality. If you should get anything out of this, just think twice before you fork over the price of a book for some trash movie on a Tuesday. What are you telling the movie studios?

In other news, Stephen King has received an eight million dollar advance on his latest books to be. It's going to be the decade of the King horror movie (after all, people will always pay to see schlocky horror flicks . . .). King wrote part of *Tales from the Darkside — The Movie* and all of *Apt Pupil*, *The Stand*, and *Pet Semetary* which have started filming. The bad news is that King has started to do his own screenplays and take active involvement in the movies.

If the King directed *Maximum Overdrive* is any indication, this is very bad news indeed. To get a feel for King's taste in movies, he thought *Overdrive* was his "masterpiece" and absolutely hated the brilliant and chilling adaptation of his book *The Shining*. (Which was directed by Stanley Kubrick and starred Jack Nicholson — mere nobodies!)

On another interesting literary note, Arthur C. Clarke, the father of geosynchronous satellites, recently delivered a sequel to *2010* to his publisher out of the blue and utterly without warning. Although Clarke was given his standard one dollar advance and signed a contract to write *20001* a while back, this was not that book. This book is rumored to be set shortly after the maturation of the Jupiter life-forms, and there will probably be yet one more book in the 2001 series after this (probably 20001, but that's quite a leap in time).

No, I don't care how much the media kisses Michael's B.A.D. ass. It's gonna be a flop, and if it isn't then it's ultimate proof that whatever deity you believe in has a cruel sense of humor. The guy is fruit loops . . . the album belongs in the breakfast cereals section, not the records. Sugar coated refuse anyone . . .

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