

# ARTS & CULTURE

## Trepanation: a hole in the head

Deep and dangerous body piercing offers new headspace

BY GINA GRANTER

So maybe you just got that tattoo you've always wanted. Or maybe a new piercing, a hole through your ear, nose, tongue, nipple, whatever.

But what about a hole in your head?

I'm not kidding here. Trepanation — the drilling of a hole through one's skull — is getting a lot of attention lately. But don't worry, this isn't the latest trend. People have been doing it for about 10,000 years, and it has nothing to do with aesthetics.

Last Wednesday at 9pm the CBC television program *Big Life* featured a segment on this bizarre and fascinating practice. There were

three people interviewed — Amanda, Joey and Jenny — who were all trepanned. Amanda did hers herself. *With a drill in her bathroom.* According to her it was easy.

"There are three layers of bone so you know where you are."

Ahh, shivers. Jenny claimed "there was no blood". But Joey had tried several times, unsuccessfully, to be trepanned — and almost died.

So there are health risks, obviously. Why do people do it then?

Trepanees claim drilling a hole through the skull releases tension, makes you feel more awake and, according to Jenny, "less heavy-headed". They relate

the hole in the head to the 'soft spot' we all have before the skull fuses together during infancy. It is claimed that trepanation leads us back to a state of raised, childlike consciousness. Despite these apparently positive effects, even those who have been trepanned don't recommend it.

Neither does the medical community. They maintain any benefits associated with trepanation are akin to placebo effect. Besides that, it's really dangerous.

My piercings may not raise my consciousness, but they make me happy. I'm always willing to try new things, but as interesting as this sounds, I won't be taking the drill out any time soon.

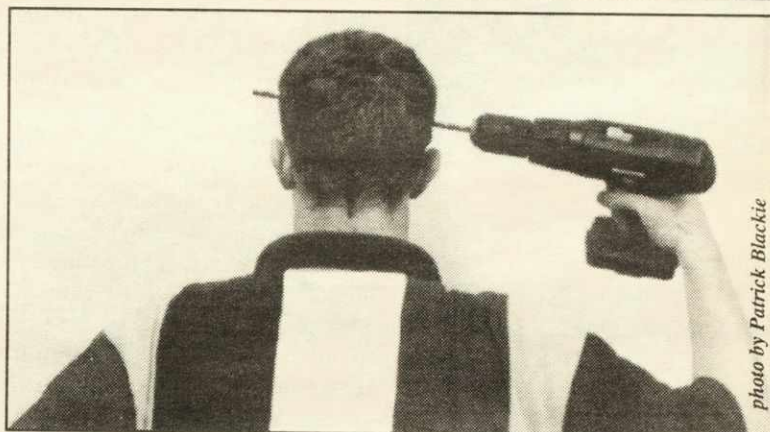


photo by Patrick Blackie

Running a drill through your head — the latest trend in relaxing, tension-releasing activities some people try at home. We don't suggest it.

## Students dedicate play to charity

The Dalhousie Theatre Collective will stage an independent student production of William Mastro Simone's play *The Woolgatherers*. The two-act play is a "quirky love story" involving Rose (Jennifer MacDowell), a cashier at a local five-and-dime, and Cliff (Ryan Sadler), a burnt-out trucker.

In a show of community support, all proceeds from the play will be donated to Bryony House, a Halifax shelter for abused women and children.

According to Maggie Stewart, it is not customary for profits from independent student productions to be donated to charitable causes. And the organizers are to be commended for their efforts to keep production costs low in order to make a more sizeable donation to this worthy cause.

*The Woolgatherers* will be presented at Studio One in the Dalhousie Art Centre from Dec. 3-5. Tickets are \$5. For information regarding reservations, contact Maggie Stewart at 492-1307.

## Chewing the Cuddy

Blue Rodeo songwriter sings with soul, emotion

BY NATALIE MACLELLAN

Being an avid Blue Rodeo fan since I was about ten years old, I was eagerly looking forward to Jim Cuddy's first solo release, *All In Time*.

While always a fan of his work with Blue Rodeo, I was admittedly sceptical of where his music would go without Greg Keelor's influence. It's kind of like the John Lennon/Paul McCartney combination: together they wrote wonderful music, but separately their weaknesses showed — Lennon became a bit... odd, while McCartney could no longer hide the cheese in his lyrics.

That was my fear with Cuddy. I was afraid he would slip over the line from folky-rock and smack right into cheesy "my girlfriend left me" country-style music.

And as a fiddle played the opening melody of the CD's first single, I thought my fears were about to be realized. Luckily, I judged too quickly. The fromage stayed under control. I was impressed.

Admittedly, there are a few places where perhaps Keelor's melancholy style may have helped a few "almost there" songs, but *All In Time* is a pleasant showcase of Cuddy's songwriting ability — an ability I obviously didn't give him enough credit for.

Jim Cuddy's new album *All In Time* is distributed by Warner.



Photo by Gill Reynolds

Jim Cuddy chillin' in big Toronto.

### Correction

In an article last week, "Halifax today, tomorrow the world", Wooderson bandmember Jon Cornwall was mistakenly referred to as Bob Cornwall. The Gazette apologizes for the error and any inconvenience it may have caused.

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