

creative writing students collective kick-off

by Isabel Granic

This season's inaugural poetry and prose reading was launched on Tuesday by Vanier College Council and the Creative Writing Students Collective.

York students Juni Suwa and Jarmo Jalava were the first to contribute their original works to this year's "The Writers Read Series." The informal setting of the Vanier Senior Common Room provided the ideal location for the notable turnout of interested students and faculty.

The first to read was Juni Suwa, a Japanese student currently in his fourth year at York. Suma's reading of his original poetry allowed the audience a brief look at his Japanese heritage. Images of nature were a predominant

theme.

In addition, his collection included a number of humorous poems with occasionally serious undertones. "Batman," which particularly entertained Suma's listeners, suggested that Batman refrain from killing his enemies in fear of no longer being needed by society. The result predicted by the poet would be unforeseeable: Batman would be forced to "turn his Batcave into a wine cellar."

Towards the end of Suma's reading, he introduced the audience to a unique form of Japanese poetry. "It's similar to the Haiku style of poetry," he explained. The poem has five lines with 5,7,5,7 and 7 syllables respectively in each line. Suma first read his original poem following this format in Japanese. He followed with an English translation. This

task was not to be underrated considering the English version had to comply to the same strict pattern of syllables as the original poem.

Following a short break, the second half of the session began with the introduction of Jarmo Jalava. Jalava explained to the audience he would be reading a short story entitled "Vantages," which he wrote before he came to York. He modestly suggested, "It may not be very literary."

If not "literary," at least he thoroughly entertained his audience with his keen insight into the irony involved in relationships.

Jalava's story began with a woman's diary entry in 1986 in which she unceasingly complains about her marital problems. Among others, these hardships include living with a "psychologi-

cally dead" husband who claims to be a "sound" poet. She insists the husband gives her insufficient doses of "band-aid affection," and suspects the reason behind her husband's lack of affection is his jealousy of her "socially upward search." Jalava criticizes the woman's superficial principles through her husband. In one instance, her husband calls her apparent high class business parties, "cockatiel" parties.

The second half of Jalava's story is the husband's journal entry revealing his perspective of the marriage. The husband's problem is that he is simply revolted by his wife. There is an ironic twist that Jalava presented his audience with: The husband's revulsion does not stem from his wife's apparent shallowness but from her being fat.

It was evident Jalava enjoyed reading his work aloud. He entertained his listeners not only with words, but with the presentation of his material. By intermittently changing his voice and varying his intonation with respect to the changing of the characters, Jalava effectively kept his audience's attention. He teased the listeners in the end by announcing he did not have sufficient time to finish his story, but that "if it ever got published" they could then read the outcome.

Jalava is now working on a book of short stories he hopes to get published.

If the works of Suwa and Jalava heard at this reading were representative of their overall writing, then they deserve the best of luck with their future writing endeavors.

CHRY-FM 105.5 FM

- 1 Various Artists (C)
- 2 Redhead Kingpin (C)
- 3 Entouch
- 4 Ziggy Marley and the Melody Makers
- 5 Junior Red

- En Garde
Do the Right Thing
II Hype
One Bright Day
One Blood

- En Garde/Cargo
Virgin
Elektra/WEA
Virgin
J.R.

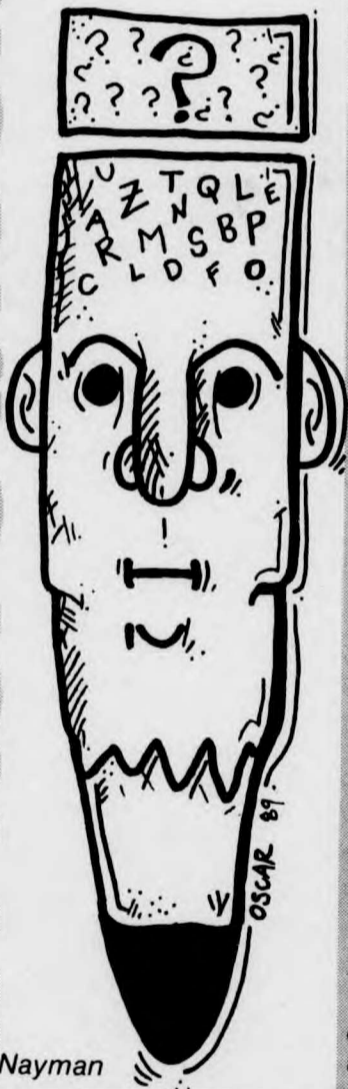
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- 6 Soul II Soul
- 7 Lieutenant Stitche
- 8 the Doughboys
- 9 Various Artists
- 10 Inner City

- Back To Life
the Governor
Home Again
Time Between
Do You Love What You Feel

- Virgin
Atlantic/WEA
Restless
Imaginary/Communion
Virgin

writers block



by Ira Nayman

A couple of years ago, I had a simple idea for a story: to compare excerpts from an article from a soft core porn magazine describing a sexual encounter with some poor teenager actually having one. (The idea came from a story I had read years earlier which propagated some outlandish, not to mention harmful, ideas about sex, such as when a woman says no, she really means yes.)

The humour, and point, of my story would lie in the difference between the masculine fantasy of sex and the reality. At the time, though, I was concentrating on

scriptwriting, and, since this was a very literary idea, I let it drop.

A year later, more or less, I had a second idea: if I included excerpts from a romance novel, I could not only compare the feminine fantasy of sex with reality, but I could also explore the difference between the way men and women view sex. However, I was still writing scripts, so I passed on it.

Then, two months ago, I was reminded of the Pulp Press' three day novel writing contest. There seemed to be a lot of advantages to entering: I could finally use the idea, getting it out of my system; I could always edit or rewrite sections I wasn't happy with once the contest was over; the first prize was publication, every writer's dream. (As it happened, it was also the last chance I got to write a major work before returning to school.)

So, that's how I spent my Labour Day weekend.

Writing a novel in three days is like having sex for 72 hours straight: it may seem like a fantastic idea, and you may initially get a lot of pleasure out of it, but, inevitably, it becomes a gruelling chore you're happy to see the end of. To say that you cannot appreciate what writing a novel in three days entails until you've actually experienced it, is like saying the federal government owes a little money: what an understatement!

Knowing how much work I had ahead of me, I spent the month prior to the contest preparing an outline (which turned out to be a highly detailed life saver) and doing research. Aside from some historical research for the romance part of the story (which took place at the turn of the century and during the Depression), I spent some time reading articles in soft core porn magazines (making me perhaps the only man in history who can honestly claim to have read the articles) and even reading a romance

novel.

Well, I tried to read a romance novel. My original plan was to read one a week so that I could have more than one source to call upon. I started to read the first, then put it aside to read some newspapers. I read a couple more chapters, then read a magazine. By the time I stopped reading the romance novel in order to start Kafka's *The Trial*, I realized that I really hated romance novels, and I would do just about anything to keep from reading one. I never did finish that book — I'll never know if Christy's father was murdered, if Theo will get her way, or how the Sergeant Ball turns out. Sigh.

I worked straight through 12 hours. After four hours of sleep, I wrote for another 10 hours or so. Within the first 30 hours, I had written 70 pages, the bulk of the novel. But, I was a physical basket case.

I had the bright idea to drink carbonated, caffeinated beverages to keep me going through the weekend, even though I had given them up years ago because they had destroyed my sleeping patterns (which are still pretty strange) and had contributed to bouts of ill-temper. Big mistake. Despite the fact that I was fatigued and having trouble breathing, I had enough energy to run an errand to the store, cut the grass and make a gourmet dinner for 12 from scratch.

I was wired.

With a few squirts of Berotec, a drug I take for asthma, and vowing never to drink soft drinks again, I managed to get some fitful sleep and muddle through. This was the low point of an otherwise fairly pleasant writing experience.

The words and ideas didn't flow as easily after this, and the novel (*Love in the Time of Dimin-*

ished Expectations) ended up being only 97 pages long. Still, you learn a lot of practical things writing to such a tight deadline: dialogue takes up more room (and takes less time to write) than prose; starting each chapter on a new page can add substantially to your novel's length (if I had known this beforehand, my manuscript would have been 10 pages longer); after three days of concentrated effort, you don't really feel like doing much editing.

I'm glad I entered the contest, although I'm hesitant to judge the results. (I ordinarily write at least three drafts of everything; having time to do only one draft was like walking a tightrope without a tightrope.) There are a lot of funny ideas there, and I still like the theme; but, does it hang together as a novel?

The winner of the contest will be announced October 30th.

TOM by MORN

YORK'S FASHION AUTHORITY ISSUE

THIS WEEK'S CONTRASTING LOOK AT SOME "KIND-OF-EXTREME" CANADIAN TYPES.

Bif, 3rd Year Stud-muffin, has his own Porsche and plans to run the country someday...

THE PREPPY LOOK ©:
Sunglasses by Vision Extrinaire \$300⁰⁰
Teeth by Parts R-US: (Caps \$500⁰⁰ ea.)
Hair by Almon's Impeccable Part, New York - \$500⁰⁰
• Shirt: Some-Animal/Sport-of-kings player, Insignia © \$2,000⁰⁰
• Shorts: Gold-Outfitters © of Sweden \$6000⁰⁰
• Top-Siders by Tapsider © - \$5,500⁰⁰
• Arjyle Socks by Arjyle Canada - \$400⁰⁰

Necessary Readings: *Trump: The Art of the Deal*, *Forbes*, and *Bif Bifactor*, *How I'm going to be P.M.*

OOO!
OOO!
OOO!
OOO!

BUFFIE, 4th Year ARTSIE SWAGGIE, HAS HER OWN MAKEUP DARK ROOM 0.0. AND PLANS A SERIOUS WOODSTOCK REVIVAL. (FOR CHAMPUNKS).

THE ARTSIE LOOK ©:
HAIR: 1/2 by Nu-Look-Black Hair Dye \$4.29, 1/2 by Neat © \$1.29
Shirt by Leather bound \$14.99. (Garbage bag Fringe by Glad © \$2.49)
Beth and skirt by Boogie from the Sistas © \$25.99
Almonds by Al's Almond Boutique \$2.49
Grimace and Exotic Dance by Interpretive - Action-Art-Tree Shop by Pedak (See catalogue)

Necessary Readings: *Interpretive*.