

FEATURES

Poetic muse lives on at flourishing York campus

Clifton Joseph

Though it seems to be following Walt Whitman's credo as "the life that does not exhibit itself," poetry at York, nonetheless, is a thriving, flourishing art. Through a combination of teacher-poets, student-poets, poetry/literary journals, college-organized reading series and through such official channels as the Creative Writing Programme, the state of the poetic art is taking root and blossoming.

A cursory look at the list of writers who in some way have been associated with the university reveals an impressive sideboard of modern Canadian letters: Margaret Atwood, Clarke Blaise, Irving Layton, Dennis Lee, David Godfrey, bp Nichol and Matt Cohen have all been involved in some area of the York community. The

present York English Faculty has a reservoir of accomplished poets, many of whom currently have books on the store shelves, including Robert Castro's *The Arrivals*, Miriam Waddington's *The Visitors* and Eli Mandel's *Dreaming Backwards*.

York's poet/teachers have long been instrumental in helping to forge the development of the poetic

poetic empathy

landscape of the campus.

"It is encouraging," said poet Eli Mandel, "to see that a number of poets do teach here at York. That has been very important because students have had the opportunity to associate with them, and through such an association has come some understanding and some empathy."



Alex Wolosewych

According to Mandel, "York is one of the leading universities in this country as far as writing is concerned."

York's Miriam Waddington, Maurice Elliott (left) and Eli Mandel. They are dedicated to the art of poetry.

Don Coles, another poet/teacher and head of the Creative Writing Programme, sees a renewed interest in poetry and attributes it

partially to a resurgence of interest in Canadian writing across the country in the last decade. "Poetry is certainly more visible to Canadians in the 1980's than it was twenty years ago," he said. "Margaret Atwood, Dennis Lee and Eli Mandel are all fairly prominent in our time. Canadians are more aware of Canadian poetry and that interest has filtered down into the schools."

Coles should know. A poet who has been published by McMillan, Canada (his latest collection, *The Pinze Horn Collection*, is due out in the spring), he has seen the Creative Writing Programme progress to the point where this year they have had to turn students away.

The programme is mainly designed to assist students interested in writing prose, fiction, poetry, drama and the screenplay, and most of the teachers are writers, including Coles, Castro, Matthew Corrigan, Eli Mandel, Frank Davey and Clarke Blaise. Noted poet bp Nichol is the visiting poet/teacher this year, conducting workshops in prose and poetry. It is this

Clarke Blaise

kind of endeavor that Miriam Waddington would like to see more of. Poet, lecturer, and editor of *Poetry Toronto*, she has recognized a rise in the interest in poetry over the years but feels that more could be done to solidify that interest. She remembers a Christmas issue of the newspaper at her Alma Mater, University of Toronto, devoted to campus writings and suggests the same for York, along with a continuing coordinated writer-in-residence series, as two of the things that would greatly help the further entrenchment of poetic interest on campus.

"In these times of financial recession," she says, "the Arts and Humanities are the first things to suffer. Those interested in poetry and the arts must insure that these programmes continue."

There are a fair number of publications and reading series that do their share to insure the continuation of poetry programmes at York. WAVES and Vanier College's Existere are at the forefront of this promotion of poetry and provide a forum for local, national and international poets. Stong, McLaughlin Calument and Vanier Colleges all hold readings on a regular basis and at times, such as last Tuesday, these readings swamp the campus with poets: McLaughlin's lunchtime series presented Roger Kuin; the Creative Writing Series presented Charles Ritchie, and Winters presented Douglas Loch-head.

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Bob and Doug Contest Deadline Extended

LLOYD WASSER

Bob: Good day! (okay, do the theme)

Doug: Coo roo coo coo, coo coo coo coo!

Bob: Again!

Doug: Coo roo coo coo, coo coo coo coo!

Bob: Beauty. Okay, and welcome to The Great White North—On Campus. I'm Bob McKenzie, this here's my brother, Doug...

Doug: How's it goin', eh!

Bob: Okay. Like, today's topic is contests, okay?

Doug: Right. Like, we have a contest goin' at your school, eh. Our "Bob and Doug Essay Contest."

Bob: Right. And like, there's a problem with it now.

Doug: No, hold on, eh! Like our topic today is Beer on Draft, eh!

Bob: Take off! It is not!

Doug: You take off! We discussed this before the issue went to press and, like, you told me we were going to talk about Beer on Draft, hosehead.

Bob: Geez, are you ever a hose. That's next week's topic, okay? This week we've gotta tell them about the contest!

Doug: Oh, right. Okay. Sorry.

Bob: Geez. My brother here is suffering from terminal brain death, eh. He's been gettin' pissed lately

and, like, it's been affecting his ability to put two thoughts together, eh!

Doug: Hold on, eh, 'cuz there is no issue next week, and, like, we're gonna have to do both topics today.

Bob: Geez. You're right for a change. Okay...(whispering) We'd better start again, eh?

Doug: Right. I'll do the theme. (pause) Coo roo coo coo, coo coo coo coo. Coo roo coo coo, coo coo coo coo!

Bob: Beauty. Okay, Good Day and welcome for a second time to Great White North—On Campus. I'm Bob McKenzie and this here's my brother, Doug...

Doug: How's it goin', eh?

Bob: Okay. We've got pretty incredible topics today, Contests and... (pause)

Doug: Right. Okay. So, like, our second topic, is, like, contests, eh? Okay, so it looks like plans are changin' like the weather 'cause Excalibur, just got some news about us.

Bob: Right. Okay. So, like, our second topic, is, like, contests, eh? Okay, so it looks like plans are changin' like the weather 'cause Excalibur, just got some news about us.

So, like, we're like, gonna have to, like, sorta, like, extend the contest for a while longer, eh, cause like we may be

Doug: (whispering) Beer on Draft, hoseer!

Bob: Right! Contests and Beer on Draft, eh. Okay. So like let's start with the last one first, eh.

Doug: Sorta like ass-backwards, eh!

Bob: Right. Okay, so when you go in a bar, eh, like they usually only have cheap beer on draft, eh, and like it's usually the low-calorie stuff that tastes like applejuice, right. So, like, you gotta buy the more expensive beer, like Brador, eh, cause it tastes better than the draft.

Doug: Yeah, but Brador's got like way more alcohol level in it, eh, so like it takes less beer to get you pissed.

Bob: Right. Okay. So, like, our second topic, is, like, contests, eh? Okay, so it looks like plans are changin' like the weather 'cause Excalibur, just got some news about us.

So, like, we're like, gonna have to, like, sorta, like, extend the contest for a while longer, eh, cause like we may be

comin' down to York, right?

Bob: My outspoken brother here just ruined the surprise, eh. Like, he wasn't supposed to spill the beans, right, until after New Years.

Doug: (snorting) Ooops! Sorry, brother, I didn't realize that I'd been so foolish. I guess I'm just a bit pissed, eh.

Bob: No kidding, hoseer. Okay, so we may be coming to York in January eh, to see all of you, and, like, we'll be judging the entries if we come, eh, so we're gonna wait until then to announce the winners, okay?

Doug: Right. So now the deadline's January 11, 1982, eh. So you can write it over the holiday when you're pissed, eh.

Bob: Beauty. Okay, so that's all for today. So Good day and a Hoser New Year!

Doug: Beauty! Good Day, Hosers!

Bob: Don't call them hosers, you jerk!

Doug: Geez, like, I didn't know I was being rude, eh. Sorry, hoseer!

Bob: Oh, take off!

Doug: You take, off, hoseer. I'm walkin'! Good Day!

Bob: Good Day!

(Sound of beer bottles crashing to the floor).



Perry Leiko

Chowdown: Just Desserts is just plain fun for lovers of sweets, treats and Grey Cup retreats



E.P. Cureau

On a Sunday given over to the spectacle of behemoths bashing each other senseless in the name of sport and profit, it was unusual to find a place without a radio or television tuned in to the Grey Cup. *Just Desserts* at 306 Davenport Road, was one such place.

As one can imagine, this cafe serves practically nothing but desserts. Penny pinchers would be well advised to stay clear of its small and expensive selection of salads, quiches, and the like to chose from an extensive list of cake, pies and pastries chalked up on a huge blackboard.

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One particular flavourful cheesecake is the Apperaison for \$3.00. Other flavours available are Orange Chiffon for \$2.75, Strawberry for \$2.50, Almond Espresso for \$2.75 and the intriguingly named New York for \$2.65.

A much longer list of the cake available would be about as exciting as a sociology tract, but a statistically relevant sample should indicate what is available to those of us familiar with the delights of sugar, chocolate and cream.

dancing tastebuds

The Butterscotch Cream Torte is \$2.65; Blueberry Walnut Snow Cake is \$2.75, Orange-Date Cake goes for \$2.50 and a slice of Pavlova will dance on your tastebuds for \$2.75. A slice of Chocolate Chantilly Torte is well

worth its \$3.00 cost. Dark and rich, with an artfully arranged chocolate flake top, its two layers of mocha cream filling are worth \$3.00 all by themselves.

nice touch

To wash down this caloric cascade, *Just Desserts* has its own privately blended coffee for 75¢, with refills costing 35¢. A not very remarkable capuchino costs \$1.50. Cafe au lait is \$1.10, and hot chocolate is \$1.50.

The service at *Just Desserts* is quick without being pushy, and a server was observed showing a patron which cake was which, what the ingredients were, and so on. A nice touch.

Not so nice, however, was the decor: stark black tables, black curtains and black and white tiled walls supporting shelves full of chubby figurines.

As Joel Grey and Liza Minelli (this generation's Marlene Dietrich) ran through tape-recorded Cabaret songs, the cakes and pastries in the display cabinet began to remind one of the young things of indeterminate gender who sold their favours in pre-war Berlin. Definitely not an aid to one's digestion.

Just Desserts is open from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 a.m. on weekdays and 24 hours on weekends.

FLASH!

Features Editor Lloyd Wasser announced that he would be staying with Excalibur!!!!
