

# MacDonald's new play gives viewer a hell of a Ride

by Carolyn Martin

Bryden MacDonald brings us a dynamic new work with *Whale Riding Weather*, the second play in Factory Theatre's New Writer's Series. MacDonald, a former Factory Theatre Playwright-in-Residence, tackles sex, love and fear with humour, intensity and a painful honesty.

Director Annie Kidder and cast — Allan Gray, Randy Hughson and Patrick Galligan — faithfully follow into this dangerous territory to create a wonderfully witty and raw production.

*Whale Riding Weather* revolves around three emotionally damaged characters. Lyle (Gray) is paranoid and hasn't left his apartment in ages. He prefers to drink endless glasses of sherry and deliver biting clever monologues from his bed.

"All intellectuals want to do is sleep with your children," he announces to his lover Otto (Hughson) who seems to have heard all this before. Otto continues to roll his cigarette and drink beer at the desk, which is his refuge as much as the bed is Lyle's.

Otto has panic attacks and he doesn't talk much — about anything. Actually he doesn't do much either. It's all stagnation and alienation in Lyle's apartment until Otto brings Jude (Galligan) home one night.

Jude is the catalyst to breaking

## theatre

**Whale Riding Weather**  
written by Bryden MacDonald  
directed by Annie Kidder  
Factory Theatre

down Otto's protective shell and bringing Lyle back to reality. The tasks are heavy, but Jude is the right man for the job. He, too, has been wounded but he's full of hope and life and he's not afraid to try.

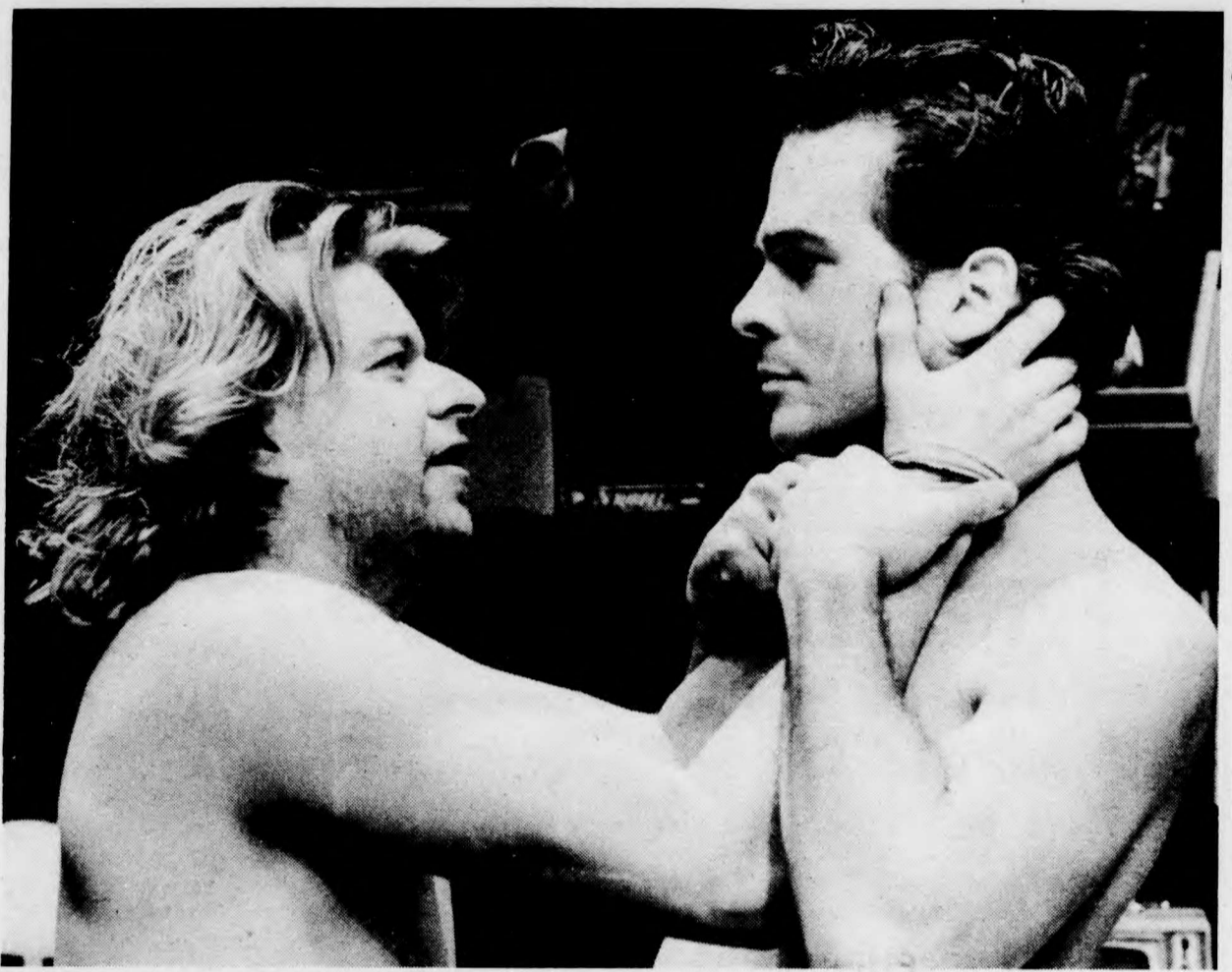
When Otto denies his feelings for him, Jude says, "You held me so tight last night I could hardly breathe. Maybe there's nowhere to look except at each other." Then, he pleads, "How desperate do I have to sound?"

Galligan, Hughson and Gray portray their individual senses of desperation brilliantly. Hughson's Otto is aloof, awkward and ultimately, vulnerable. "It's nice being this uncomfortable with you," he is finally able to tell Jude.

Gray also offers a wonderfully textured performance, revealing the deep melancholy lying just beneath Lyle's humour. Galligan, as Jude, hits just the right notes of sensitivity and strength (not to mention playing a mean Brando).

The play takes place on a single set, each scene punctuated by a simple fade to black. The focus is on dialogue and performance, and it does not fail.

In fact, *Whale Riding Weather*



Randy Hughson (left) and Patrick Galligan star in the Factory Theatre production of Bryden MacDonald's *Whale Riding Weather*. The play, which is about people who have difficulty expressing their emotions, is reminiscent of Brad Fraser's *Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love*.

reminded me of Brad Fraser's instant classic, *Unidentified Human Remains and The True Nature of Love*, another recent Canadian play that dealt with

emotional damage and learning to heal. Like Fraser's work, *Whale Riding Weather* is a play where we get painfully close to the characters

and become vulnerable in a way that's all too rare.

*Whale Riding Weather* runs to November 17 at the Factory Theatre.

# Wolf explodes *The Beauty Myth*

by Moira MacDonald

## reading

**Naomi Wolf**  
*The Beauty Myth*  
Harbourfront  
November 1

Naomi Wolf proved to be a far hotter draw than was expected by organizers of the forum "Beyond Beauty." The Brigantine Room was filled to its capacity of 435; a disappointed 250

more were turned away. Demand for seating was so high that even media passes were given away — including that of *Excalibur* — before all reporters could claim them.

Doug Ramsay, Harbourfront's Communications Coordinator, admitted that audience turnout exceeded all expectations by either Harbourfront or the National Eating Disorder Information Centre, the event's sponsor. "We expected a good turnout but the venue only holds 435 people...the line-up started well before 6 pm," Ramsay commented.

Wolf, a 29 year-old Rhodes scholar, is known for her best-selling book, *The Beauty Myth*. "We (in the West) are in the midst of a violent backlash to feminism that uses images of female beauty as a political weapon against women's advancement: the beauty myth," she writes. Wolf believes that this myth has helped women advance in the workplace, with the incidence of eating disorders among women rising in equal proportion.

Women diet to achieve an "ideal" weight, as designated by the myth, but which is on average 15 pounds below each woman's natural weight. It is an ideal which is usually impossible to achieve, leading women into

an endless struggle of unsuccessful dieting, nutritional deprivation and a feeling of personal failure.

In the United States it is estimated that between 10 and 20 percent of college women suffer from either bulimia or anorexia nervosa. Eating diseases deprive women of the power to think, the energy to wage political battles and the ability to assert their sexual desires; they can even lead to madness.

"How would America react to the mass self-immolation by hunger of its favorite sons?" Wolf wonders. She imagines such a scenario: "What is happening to the fine young men in their brush cuts and khaki trousers? It hurts to look at them. At the expense-account lunches, they hide their medallions of veal under lettuce leaves. Secretly they purge. They vomit after matriculation banquets and after tailgate parties at the Game. The men's room in the Oyster Bar reeks with it. One in five, on the campuses that speak their own names proudest... One would expect an emergency response... The sons of privilege are the future; the future is committing suicide."

Franca Abbate-marco, a third-year York Fine Arts student was one of those turned away but managed to meet Wolf back-stage before the event.

"I sneaked backstage. I was determined to meet her and I did. I was just waiting the whole day to see (her)." Abbate-marco spoke to Wolf for 20 minutes, and was later allowed into the Brigantine for the question and answer period after Wolf's talk.

"She has things amazingly relevant to say about women," Abbate-marco stated. "She doesn't hold anything back and she keeps on repeating her message. She's really sincere about what she writes...it struck a chord with so many women who read the book."

After the event the audience and those waiting outside were invited to a dessert reception with Wolf to celebrate 'Fearless Friday,' declared as a day when women can eat whatever they want without fear of gaining weight.



# Invisible filmmakers made visible

by Martin Chester

VANCOUVER (CUP) — After a drawn-out court battle over funds, a Vancouver-based group that encourages women of colour in the film industry is reemerging on the arts scene.

film • theatre • galleries • music

# arts

## news

A Vancouver-based group that encourages women filmmakers of colour is reemerging as a creative force

In Visible Colours and another women's film group, Women in Focus, were involved in a struggle over \$50,000 which came out of the 1989 In Visible Colours international film and video festival and symposium. The event had been sponsored by the two groups and the National Film Board.

The two groups agreed to split the money. With the legal battles behind them and a new board, IVC is up and running according to board member Farhat Khan.

Khan, who works with the NFB, said IVC supports and promotes women of colour who work in film. IVC, which receives most of its funding from federal and provincial government grants, also educates filmmakers and the public about the concerns of women of colour, Kahn said. It also helps put women of colour in contact with people in the industry.

Kahn said its mandate is to create venues for films to be shown and discussed. "One of the things [the old board of] IVC did was to have workshops for women to not only show films, but to discuss the process," she said. "That is something we would like to continue and expand."

IVC is sponsoring talks by American writer bell hooks, and British filmmaker Maureen Blackwood during February's Black History Month.

IVC would like to put on another film festival. "That would ideally be what we'd like to do," Kahn said, but no plans have been put in place at this time. "That took the old board two years."

Selina Williams, a film student at Simon Fraser University and IVC board member, said IVC plays a crucial role.

"Women of colour are just beginning to tell their own story through film," Williams said. She said it was very important for women of colour to have access to films made by other women of colour, "so your bank of images aren't just coming from the dominant society."



## TOP TWENTY

compiled by Matt Galloway

1. Public Enemy.....*Apocalypse 91*.....Def Jam/Sony
2. Digital Poodle.....*Soul Crush*.....D. O. V.
3. Red Hot Chili Peppers.....*Blood Sugar Sex Magic*.....Warner
4. Sons of Freedom.....*Gump*.....MCA
5. Dinosaur Jr. ....*Whatever's Cool With Me*.....Warner
6. Look People.....*Boogazm*.....A&M
7. Nitzer Ebb.....*Family Man EP*.....Mute/Warner
8. Vandalls.....*Fear of a Punk Planet*.....XXX
9. Pegboy.....*Strong Reaction*.....Touch & Go
10. Dickies.....*Locked n' Loaded*.....taang!
11. Pixies.....*Trompe le Monde*.....4 AD
12. Weird Paul.....*Low Fidelity, High Anxiety*.....Homestead
13. Neil Young.....*Weld*.....Warner
14. 24-7 Spys.....*This is...EP*.....Warner
15. Black Sheep.....*Flavour of the Month EP*.....Polygram
16. Me, Mom and Morgentaler.....*Clown Heaven and Hell*.....Chooch
17. Cypress Hill.....*Cypress Hill*.....Ruffhouse
18. Arrogant Worms.....*Arrogant Worms*.....Arrogant Worms
19. Blur.....*Leisure*.....Capitol/EMI
20. Swervedriver.....*Raise*.....A&M

as of November 5