

YORK

SUMMER 2004

# Big Ideas

Acclaimed author Nino Ricci  
talks about his life as a writer – and writes  
about his life as a reader

**PLUS:**

York's bold new chancellor

The talented couple behind  
Love, Sex and Eating the Bones

Fighting a lake invader  
in cottage country

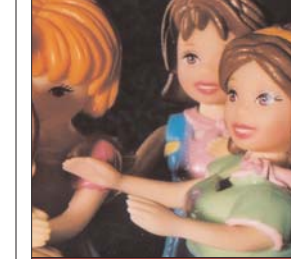
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Nino Ricci  
COVER PHOTOGRAPHY:  
EDWARD GAJDEL

# YORKU

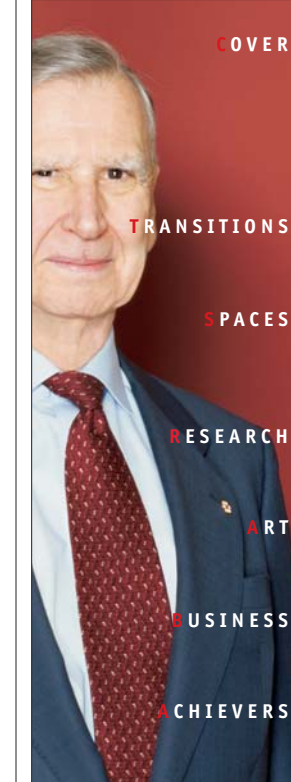
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# SUMMER 2004

Even great writers face rejection. BY BERTON WOODWARD

# Finding Nino

**I**N THIS ISSUE, we are delighted to showcase the work of Nino Ricci, one of many prominent writers who have passed through the portals of York University. To complement our profile of the award-winning author, Ricci has written a memoir specially for *YorkU* about his early life as a reader – Dr. Seuss, trashy novels and all – and what it taught him about writing. It’s a good warm-weather read, we hope, for a Summer issue that will be our last for this academic year; the next will be out in September.



on his first-novel success, he wondered if I might have been his first editor. I raced home to check the back issues of *Disting* – only to discover I was probably the first editor to send him a rejection slip! Oh shame.

“I console myself that lack of space – not lack of talent – forced this unfortunate decision. But Ricci hardly remembers the slight. Instead, he remembers another fellow Canadian’s tepid ‘it’s alright’ after he’d shown him a draft of his very first novel. The two had met on the island of Lamu, off Kenya, where Ricci had gone to write after two years in Nigeria. ‘It killed my enthusiasm,’ he told me. ‘I never went back to it.’ A pity. I wonder if that other Canadian dines out on his mistake the way I do on mine.”

In fact, Martha has many real accomplishments to dine out on. A graduate of Queen’s University with a BA in modern literature, she was a reporter for a variety of Southern Ontario newspapers before finding her calling in university communications. She has served Guelph University and Trent University, and joined York in 2001. All along, she has maintained her interest in literature – and watched closely the career of her old colleague, Nino Ricci. ■

Ricci got his BA in English Literature at York in 1981, and has remained warmly in touch with the University. Last fall, for instance, he met with a select group of students at a mentoring lunch organized by the York is U student alumni group. The students, as you might imagine, were spellbound.

Here at the magazine, we found that one among us had another connection with Ricci. Long before she came to work at York, staff writer Martha Tancock had known him in a completely different environment. Not surprisingly, we assigned her the profile of Ricci. Here is Martha’s account of their earlier time together:

“Nino Ricci and I go back exactly 23 years this September, when we flew to Africa with dozens of other CUSO volunteers to teach in Nigeria. I remember receiving short stories from him in the mail there, stories he asked me to print as editor of the in-country CUSO newsletter. Ten years later, after I waited in line at a bookstore to congratulate him

Send letters, submissions, comments and ideas to [editor@yorku.ca](mailto:editor@yorku.ca).

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY HORST HERGET

York has been blessed with its chancellors. BY LORNA R. MARSDEN

# Hail and Farewell

**Y**ORK IS THE LUCKIEST UNIVERSITY ON EARTH in terms of its chancellors. As the symbolic heads of Canadian universities, chancellors define our relations with the wider community. They deserve our respect and admiration not only for who they are, but also for the hard work they do to advance the university’s cause beyond its walls.

Since I came to York seven years ago, there have been three chancellors. Arden Haynes was generous enough to extend his term in my first year. He was the pioneer of building great relationships with the staff of the University and particularly those who worked on convocation. He was a tremendous help to a neophyte president at York, as I was, and he truly loved the students.

Avie Bennett, then publisher and CEO of McClelland &



## Avie Bennett generously

Stewart, agreed to be our next chancellor, and we have had six wonderful years with him. As chancellor, he has assisted the entire academic enterprise with two generous benefactions of Chairs in Canadian History and Canadian Literature. But he has done much, much more. When Pierre Trudeau died, Avie published a very special edition of the former prime minister’s writings and donated all the proceeds to the Trudeau Travelling Scholarship, intended for a student who must travel to complete her/his dissertation. He has also generously helped individual students to realize their dreams (including one student who came to York hoping to see a Blue Jays game, which he did – as the guest of our chancellor).

Chancellor Bennett’s convocation speech, in which he encouraged the audience to “do things a little differently at York – whoop and holler and jump up and down if you feel like it, for this is a special day and there will never be another quite like it”, has been wildly popular with us all – faculty, students and especially the graduates’ families. At his annual post-convocation barbeque last summer, the ushers, in honour of his

Lorna R. Marsden is York’s president and vice-chancellor.

retirement, appeared in their robes and uproariously recited his speech, almost from memory, to his total delight. There is no question: we love Avie Bennett and while he retires from the chancellorship, we hope he will remain with us at York in many other roles.

And now we welcome with enthusiasm our new chancellor. The Honourable Peter Cory has been a justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, a most distinguished lawyer, citizen, alumnus of Osgoode Hall Law School, honorary degree recipient of York University (1997), outstanding leader of the movement for human rights and civil rights, interpreter of the Canadian Charter. He is widely praised and admired for all these achievements – most recently for his appointment by the governments of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland as commissioner responsible for reviewing six murder cases of significance to the peace process in Northern Ireland. He has proved himself to be courageous in his defence of the same values that York holds dear: social justice, human rights and the dignity of the individual; the search for truth; *Tentanda via!*

Chancellors are the glory of leadership in our institutions. We are grateful for their generosity and benevolence, and we join all the graduates who have crossed the stage to receive their degrees in thanking the previous chancellors and welcoming the Honourable Peter Cory. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY COREY MIHALIUK



SUSTAINABILITY

# JAVA JOY

York's own brand of premium rainforest coffee is on sale at Timothy's

# UNIVERSE

**F**eel like a coffee? Why not head to your neighbourhood Timothy's café and order a cup of smooth Las Nubes. That's York's very own brand of premium coffee. It's brewed from quality coffee beans, certified "sustainable" and nearly all shade grown from farms near York's Las Nubes Rainforest reserve in Costa Rica, and roasted and packaged in Downsview at the Timothy's World Coffee central warehouse. The Canadian coffee chain launched York's Las Nubes brand as its coffee of the month in April at its 140 locations across the country.

This unusual marketing partnership between York and Timothy's was the brainwave of environmental studies Professor Howard Daugherty. In 1998, Daugherty's friend Dr. Woody Fisher donated Las Nubes Rainforest to York. As director of the Fisher Fund for Neotropical Conservation, which funds biodiversity research at Las Nubes, Daugherty was looking for a way to give nearby coffee growers an incentive to increase sustainable production, and to raise money for research. Over the past four years, the coffee growers had already implemented environmentally friendly agricultural methods, benefiting greatly from research conducted by York students and the Tropical Science Centre of Costa Rica. Daugherty decided to buy 10,000 pounds from their cooperative to test the market in Canada.

Then he approached Timothy's World Coffee president and CEO Becky McKinnon about marketing the coffee in Canada. Once she was assured the coffee growers could supply high-quality beans to meet Timothy's standards, she struck a deal. Timothy's has just bought 30,000 pounds directly from the growers' co-op for \$1.30 US per pound – four cents more than the official fair-trade price and about double the world price for coffee. Timothy's, already buying in Costa Rica, also agreed to cover the cost of transportation to port, which gave farmers even higher value. For every pound sold, Timothy's will also donate \$1 Canadian to the Fisher Fund, through the York University Foundation, to support sustainability research and community programs at Las Nubes.

"We are very excited about this relationship," says McKinnon. "We strive to educate our consumers about the link between good growing practices and great tasting coffee." The more coffee sold, the more money goes into research and quality; the more the quality improves, the more farmers get paid. It's an "upward spiral," says McKinnon. ■

FULL OF BEANS: McKinnon and Daugherty at Timothy's warehouse

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEOFF GEORGE



BOOKS

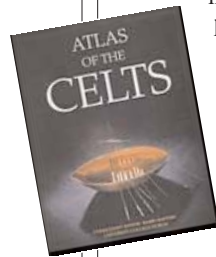
# What They're Reading

York profs reveal what's on the bedside table

**DIETHARD BÖHME**, Canada Research Chair in Physical Chemistry, Faculty of Pure & Applied Science:

*Atlas of the Celts*  
By Clint Twist  
Firefly Books

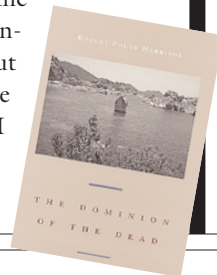
"I got this book in the York Bookstore at half price! I bought it because I became interested in the history of the Celts last spring while attending a plasma physics conference in Slovakia: there was a Celtic archaeological site nearby. The book is an illustrated account of the history of the Celts, their expansion, decline and modern revival, their art and religion, and their impact on the Western world."



**PRISCILA UPPAL**, poet, author, humanities professor, Faculty of Arts:

*The Dominion of the Dead*  
By Robert Pogue Harrison  
University of Chicago Press

"I think *The Dominion of the Dead* was justifiably named by the *Times Literary Supplement* as one of the best books of 2003. My PhD dissertation is on elegies and I have an immense interest in theories of mourning in the 20th and 21st centuries. I ran out and bought the book as soon as I heard about it."



TELEVISION

## The Colours of War

A York grad finds rare footage of World War II

**C**ome September, CBC Television will air a three-part documentary, "Canada's War: The Lost Colour Archives," directed by award-winning York film and video grad Karen Shopsowitz. The series presents home movies filmed between 1935 and 1949 by ordinary Canadians. Unusually, they are all in colour. "Most of us think of World War II in black and white," says Shopsowitz (MFA '90). But Kodak developed colour film for home movies in the mid-1930s. The effect is jaw-dropping, she says. "There's something about watching stuff in colour that puts you right in the moment."

And what moments she has salvaged from dusty attics and forgotten archives. The Vimy Ridge Memorial unveiled in 1936, the Royal Visit in 1939. There's a young soldier laughing as he says goodbye to his squirming baby, another bathing sore feet after a training exercise. A sailor pans his camera over the deck of a destroyer, and a prisoner of war focuses on a Japanese internment camp. There's blitzed London – in colour. YAP Films, which produced Canada's War, approached Shopsowitz knowing she had just rummaged through her own family's celluloid treasures to produce her Peabody Award-winning "My Father's Camera" in 2002. It's been an emotional journey, not least because of the wartime letters and diaries she also unearthed and uses as narrative. But the former journalist is a sucker for a good story – and the personal touch. That's why "home movies matter." ■

PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF KAREN SHOPSOWITZ

# UNIVERSE

DEPARTMENT

## York Rules!

IN THE MID-1960S, YORK SEEMED TO HAVE A RULE FOR EVERYTHING. IT WAS A TIME OF NO DRINKING ON CAMPUS AND A MIDNIGHT CLOSE FOR ENTERTAINMENT. HERE ARE SOME OTHER PROVISOS FROM "REGULATIONS FOR STUDENTS IN YORK UNIVERSITY 1963-64".

JUST A QUARTER

ALL STUDENTS INTENDING TO BRING MOTOR VEHICLES ONTO THE UNIVERSITY GROUND WILL BE REQUIRED TO REGISTER THEIR VEHICLES WITH THE UNIVERSITY AND PAY A DAILY PARKING FEE OF 25 CENTS OR AN ANNUAL FEE OF \$20.



PAPERS, PLEASE

NO STUDENT SHALL REFUSE TO GIVE HIS NAME TO AN OFFICER OF THE UNIVERSITY. A STUDENT SHALL GIVE HIS REGISTRATION CARD TO AN OFFICER OF THE UNIVERSITY UPON REQUEST.

GOING DOWNHILL

WHEN WEATHER CONDITIONS PERMIT AND THERE IS SUFFICIENT SNOW, THE SKI TOW [GLENDON CAMPUS] WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS' USE.



UN-GREEK

BY RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE OF THE UNIVERSITY, NO YORK UNIVERSITY STUDENT MAY BE A MEMBER OF A UNIVERSITY SOCIAL FRATERNITY OR SORORITY.



BUSINESS

## Clean-Up Time

A corporate ethics report shows what Canada needs to do

**I**f Canada wants to rescue its sagging reputation for "clean" dealings at home and abroad, its leaders should listen to business ethicist Wesley Cragg. Last year, the professor at York's Schulich School of Business brought together experts from business, government, non-governmental organizations and academia to discuss a code of ethics for corporate behaviour at home and abroad. In three days, they drafted standards for corporate social responsibility everyone could agree upon – and government should promote. They called for ethical accounting and auditing procedures, improved corporate disclosure and environmentally sensitive procurement policies, among other things.

Such guidelines could do wonders for Canada's recently tarnished image of incorruptibility, argues Cragg. Companies that promise human rights, fair wages, safety standards, environmental protection and no bribes, can boost – and won't bust – their profits and Canada's global competitiveness. Investors, he says, get better value and predictability for their money.

Cragg's message couldn't have come at a better time. The code of ethics was released just as news broke of the federal sponsorship scandal, the biggest in a string of scandals – such as Bre-X, Yorkton Securities and Hollinger Inc. – that had shaken international confidence in Canada. Canadians seemed in a mood to listen. "Businesses in Canada," says Cragg, "need to understand that ethical standards are a bottom-line issue." ■

GIVING

## DOUBLE DOLLARS

**I**t's not often that you can get the government to double your money. But that's what Ontario will do if you make a donation to the York University Foundation to provide financial aid to students. Under the Ontario Student Opportunity Trust Fund, the government will match, dollar-for-dollar, all new donations that individuals, corporations

and foundations make to endowed student aid until Dec. 31, 2005. Payments on pledges made by Dec. 31, 2005, will be matched until March 31, 2011.

The cost of attending university is more than double what it was 10 years ago. This is the time to help students – and get twice the bang for your buck. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICK REID



RESEARCHERS

# Hot Buttons

Psychologist Maryanne Fisher keeps pushing them



**E**ver since the *British Medical Journal* published her study of the dimensions of *Playboy* bunnies in December 2002, Maryanne Fisher has been fielding media calls from all over the world. If reporters weren't asking about the demise of the hourglass figure, they wanted to know why women prefer cads to dads for short-term sexual partners – another Fisher finding. Surprised by the attention, the recent PhD graduate in psychology was even more stunned by the frenzy over her study confirming that women compete over men, published online in February by the Royal Society in its *Biology Letters*. While the phenomenon may be no surprise to a casual observer, Fisher's study was the first to show scientifically that ovulating women will criticize a potential rival's looks when competing for a mate. Editors everywhere – from the BBC to *The Times of India* – found it compelling.

Evidence of intrasexual competition is controversial, says Fisher, because psychologists have assumed that women are cooperative, not competitive. As a budding scholar in the relatively young field of evolutionary psychology (concerned with species survival), Fisher is determined to set the record straight and bring a female perspective to her investigation of women's mating strategies. ■

PUBLIC SPEAKING

“Today, our immigrants are very different from those we used to get. They are much better educated. When they move to Canada, they don't restrain themselves to the crowded downtown ghettos. They want to live in a house with a full backyard in the suburbs. And with the massive number of people coming, we are seeing more ethnic neighbourhoods everywhere.”

LUCIA LO, geography professor, on a Statistics Canada report, in the *Toronto Star*

BUILDINGS

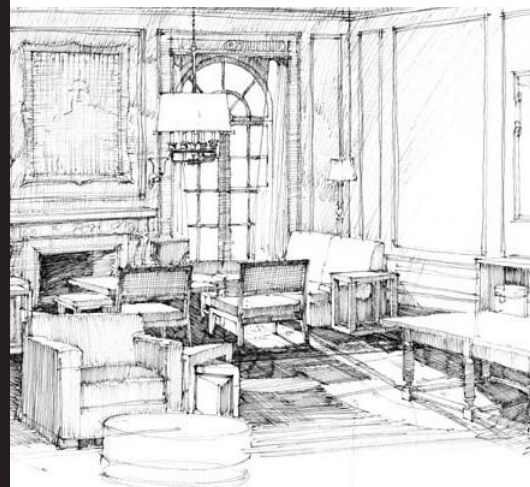
# A Mansion Remade

Top designers renovate historic Glendon Hall

**G**racious Glendon Hall has had a makeover. Not an extreme makeover – just a very elegant one. The Junior League of Toronto selected the historic hall (built in 1924) at York's Glendon campus as its seventh Showhouse, an imaginative, win-win program in which some of Toronto's finest designers renovate a prominent building for public viewing. The designers get the glory, charity gets the ticket proceeds and Glendon gets to keep the results.

Fear not – the exterior of Glendon Hall looks much as it did before. But the interior has been wholly repainted, refinished, rebuffered and refurbished. The front and rear gardens have been planted by landscape architects. This constitutes the largest Showhouse the Junior League has undertaken, featuring more than 50 indoor and outdoor design spaces.

The Showhouse version of Glendon Hall is open to the public from May 8 to June 6, 2004. After that, it becomes a college building again. But rooms have been designed with the end use in mind, so that only a minimum of conversion will be necessary. Glendon can even buy the designer furniture if it wants. The principal beneficiary from the funds raised is the Regent Park Community Centre's Pathways to Education program, which helps low-income students prepare for postsecondary education. Ticket details: [www.jlt.org](http://www.jlt.org) or Ticketmaster. ■



REDESIGNED: the former living room

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICK REID, ILLUSTRATION BY PETER CEBULAK OF KATHERINE NEWMAN DESIGN

UNIVERSE

THEATRE

# Costume Jewels

York's wardrobe collection goes through many stages



**D**oris Haidner-Seif is the perfect mom to have at Halloween. That's because she's not only an expert in costume design, but oversees the York Theatre Department's wardrobe collection – hats, shoes, scarves, dresses, jewelry, belts and much more.

Every bit helps when it comes to creating costumes, she says. “Good costume design is all about cannibalism. If we can't use something as is, we recut it or recycle it into something else!” The result might seem ugly up close, but beauty is in the eye of the audience. “Everyday clothing, the kind you'd wear on the street, would look flat onstage. It's important to add a third dimension. You have to be bold.”

Other vintage clothes in the collection are a valuable teaching aid, she says. “We're interested in handmade items,” she explains, displaying a 19th-century Edwardian silk walking dress. “This way students can see how things were constructed. Photos and drawings of period clothes only tell you so much. Here you can look under the fabric. In re-creating costumes for the stage, that's important.”

Haidner-Seif says she regularly scouts used clothing stores for bargains, but sometimes people send her old gowns and the like. Is there anything she particularly needs? “Corsets,” says Haidner-Seif, noting that they are what gave many period clothes their trademark shape. “You can never get enough corsets!” ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICK REID





# BIG IDEAS

York helped form celebrated novelist Nino Ricci,  
even if W.O. Mitchell didn't approve.

BY MARTHA TANCOCK

PHOTOGRAPH BY EDWARD GAJDEL

**W**HEN NINO RICCI ARRIVED AT YORK in 1977, the farm boy from tomato country in southern Ontario nursed a vague ambition of becoming a writer and signed up for the creative writing program. At 11, he'd penned a notebook novel called "Herbie the Time Machine Bicycle" (see next page). But he'd quit reading for pleasure in high school. It wasn't cool. "I was very green. I wasn't well read. I was clearly out of my element," remembers the celebrated Canadian novelist. He had never heard of W.O. Mitchell, his writing instructor. Three weeks later, he would never forget him. The author of *Who Has Seen the Wind* said Ricci couldn't write and threatened to fail him if he didn't drop the course.

Ricci would have left York after first year had not social science Professor Sally Zerker praised his essays and recognized his potential. "It was a big vote of confidence," he says. From then on, he soaked up all he could from "a lot of very good professors" of literature, humanities and arts. "York seemed to take me into new modes of being." Mitchell may have driven the creative Ricci into hibernation, but York ignited the intellectual Ricci. "York made me in a lot of ways."

Ricci never forgot the rebuke from Mitchell (who died in 1998). After earning a BA in English literature in 1981, he taught English in Nigeria for two years on a CUSO program, then finally enrolled in a master's program in creative writing at Concordia University in Montreal. His thesis turned into his best-selling *Lives of the Saints*, about an Italian boy whose mother dies in childbirth on the ship to Canada. It won the Governor General's Award for Fiction and catapulted Ricci into the pantheon of Canadian scribes. His next two books, *In a Glass House* in 1993 and the Giller Prize-nominated *Where She Has Gone* in 1997, completed the semi-autobiographical trilogy about Vittorio. In 2000, Ricci's fourth book, *Testament*, an imagined life of Jesus told by four of his followers, won Ontario's Trillium Award, was short-listed for the Commonwealth Prize, and was named a Times

Literary Supplement Book of the Year. Ricci couldn't have asked for a sweeter revenge.

At 45, Ricci still likes to gnaw on intellectual bones, do the research, ponder the big questions: What is the meaning of life? What does it mean to be human, to be alive in our time? He has quoted Freud in interviews about the incest in *Where She Has Gone* and dropped casual references to Foucault in public discourses on multiculturalism. He once spent a month figuring out the astrological birth chart for each character in *Lives*, then never used them. To prepare for *Testament*, he scrupulously studied the Jesus Seminar, an ongoing debate about the historical versus the mythical Jesus, scrutinized the gospels and studied Jewish historian Flavius Josephus for a sense of first-century Palestine. His controversial portrait of Jesus as the product of Mary's rape by a Roman soldier was rooted in second-century, anti-Christian arguments.

Ricci's current project, ignited by a trip to the Galapagos Islands, pivots on Darwin's theory of evolution. "For me," he says, "it's good to be tying into something larger, probably more so now as I get older. I've lost patience with novels that are concerned with small domestic details, that lose the bigger picture."

After the phenomenal success of *Lives* – currently being made into a television mini-series starring Sophia Loren – Ricci was suddenly forced to think of himself as Italian. The Italian-Canadian community claimed him, the media pestered him about his roots and multiculturalism, and York invited him to lecture on the Italian-Canadian imagination.

But Ricci's identity is neither bound up in his immigrant background nor in being The Writer, now that he and his wife, Canadian novelist Erika de Vasconcelos, have their own little page-turner. Writing is his day job and he's "grateful every day" for being able to make a living solely by his pen. But now he turns off the computer in the evening and leaves it off. He's discovered fatherhood. "My three-year-old son is more important to me than any novel I'll ever write." ■





A memoir. BY NINO RICCI



PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICK REID

**S**ATURDAYS AS A CHILD I went to the Leamington Public Library, a vaguely neo-classical building with musty aisles and high shelves that was one of the thousands of libraries across North America built courtesy of Andrew Carnegie. I was not an informed reader, but for a while, at least, I was a voracious one, and there were certain shelves there that seemed almost alive to me because of their familiarity and promise, like different countries I visited. It is hard to describe the mix of the plain, hard reality of the place, the smell of the books, the light through the high windows, with the peculiar investment imagination gave it, imagination that started somehow with a book's simple numinous presence – its bindings and gold lettering, its tissue-protected frontispiece – before I'd read a single word of it.

That I became a reader at all was somewhat of a fluke, given the almost total absence in our home of books. Both my parents had ceased their schooling after the fifth grade, all that was offered back in their village schools in Italy, and while they maintained the highest opinion of books, they did not have any of their own. When my sister graduated from teacher's college and convinced my father to buy a set of the *World Book Encyclopedia* as a teaching aid, the decision, made as the salesman sat gravely at our kitchen table in his Sunday best, seemed to bear the momentousness of a marriage contract. It was as if, having determined that books were indeed necessary, we had settled upon these as the ones that would do the trick. Afterwards the whole house seemed to shift with the weight of those tomes in my sister's bedroom, which on special occasions I was allowed to consult. To this day I reserve a special veneration for encyclopedias, and indeed can hardly bring myself to write unless I am virtually surrounded by reference books.

In those days, of course, I did not know I was going to be a writer; I thought I was going to be a priest. But in this, too, a book played its part: the first, and, for many years, the only book I

owned, a picture bible that was handed out to newborns in Leamington by the local chamber of commerce. Before I could read I used it mainly for colouring, but once I was able to start piecing my way through it, I was quick to feel swelled with the solemnity of my task. At school, where I happened to mention among my friends that I read the bible regularly, I was immediately marked out as someone of special virtue and indeed was often consulted on ethical questions, such as the fine moral line dividing "heck" from "hell".

The dirty truth, however, was that I was not virtuous at all; rather, I was steeped in sin. Again, it was a book that lay behind the matter, in this case Dr. Seuss's *Green Eggs and Ham*, which happened to be the first book I ever read unassisted from cover to cover. When I made the mistake of boasting of this feat to my grade one teacher, she held me in at lunch hour and actually made me read the thing aloud to her at her desk while she ate her lunch. I couldn't quite have put a name to the feelings I had for my grade one teacher, who, fresh out of teacher's college, must have been all of 19 at the time. But I knew that any closeness to her usually stirred what seemed a not entirely healthy commotion in me. That particular day, probably incited by the ribald iconoclasm of Dr. Seuss, I was overtaken mid-sentence by a kind of throbbing sensation and had a sudden image of the teacher sitting next to me completely naked. For long afterwards I burned in the shame of that image, and indeed my bible readings and dedication to the priesthood became my penance for the rot that was clearly already spreading through my soul. All this was to no avail, however, for in later years the rot only grew more general. Indeed, I was only able to exorcise that vision many years later, by attributing it to a character in one of my novels, who subsequently suffered a steep decline.

In hindsight, then, I can see that the poles of my writing life were already well set by the end of the first grade, in that tension between my picture bible and Dr. Seuss. But my golden age of reading

was still to come. It did not begin in earnest until well into the third grade, when one of my brothers, to get me out of his hair, passed on to me his library copy of *Pitcher with a Glass Arm* and I discovered that staple of literature, the misfit. Hence began a long association with misfit books – *Today I am a Ham*, about a boy who does badly at football but finds his niche in ham radios; the Dr. Dolittle series, where the doctor, in his pre-Eddie-Murphy incarnation, sacrifices respectability and personal hygiene for his love of animals; the Henry and Ribsy series, about a boy and his misfit dog. These books, along, of course, with the stories of Jesus in my picture bible, helped cement my lifelong identification with the underdog. In later years, I would come to learn that what the underdog suffered from was an incurable condition known as alienation. But as a child what appealed to me in these stories – and in this, again, Jesus, for all his turn-your-cheekness, was the prime example – was the hero's slow but inevitable revenge against his foes.

**HAD I NOT PASSED THROUGH** this stage of indiscriminate reading I fear I may never have become a writer at all, and indeed it was during this time that I enjoyed one of my most prolific writing periods, producing any number of little masterpieces, including a workbook-length novel, unfortunately lost now, called "Herbie the Time Machine Bicycle". But already by the sixth grade a decline had set in. The imagined visions of female unclothedness had turned into real ones, first through the *Reproduction* entry in, as it turned out, the *World Book Encyclopedia*, then through certain publications I did not at the time look at for the articles. In the school library were certain texts with the gilt-edged, faux-leather look of classics that I knew I ought to be reading – *Little Women*, *The Last of the Mohicans* – but inevitably I was drawn to the more lurid books I could get now from my sister's fiancé: *Airport* by Arthur Hailey, *The Sensuous Man* by M. By the eighth grade, I had descended to *The Love Machine* by Jacqueline Susann. This was a book I was



## COVER

never able to finish because it was confiscated by my grade eight teacher (does she still have it? If so, and if she is reading this, I wouldn't mind it back), putting paid to my hopes for the Religion Prize and forcing a definitive re-evaluation of my choice of the ministry as a career path.

I fell into the Dark Ages now known, paradoxically, as High School. Although by this time I had already resolved to become a writer in later life, I had abandoned the two activities that might actually have brought me closer to this goal: reading and writing.

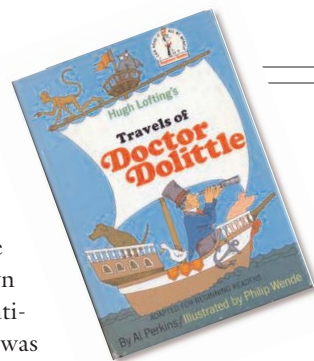
One of the few books of any significance that I read in this period was *The Defense Never Rests* by F. Lee Bailey, the same Mr. Bailey of later O.J. Simpson fame. This was another book about underdogs, in this case the wrongly accused (not a problem, apparently, that Mr. Bailey encountered with all of his clients). Since I already knew by then that you couldn't earn a decent living as a writer – an impression reinforced by the fact that the guidance office had no career pamphlets on writing, but quite a few, say, on medicine and law – I had already begun to cast about for a fall-back. Mr. Bailey, having written a book, proved that you could be both a writer and a lawyer, so for the time being law became my profession of choice. Later, of course, I strayed from this perfectly sensible path as well, even though, being a person of fairly high scruples, I probably would have made a better lawyer than priest.

It was during these years that I read the only ethnic literature that ever crossed my path in my youth: *The Godfather* by Mario Puzo. *The Godfather* was an underdog too – he was Sicilian, after all – which made me his immediate

supporter; never mind that a few dirty punks had to die so he could rise. While down in New York the Anti-Defamation League was buying out screenings of *The Godfather* because of its slur on Italian honour, up in Leamington it was the best thing that had ever happened to us Italians: suddenly we had cachet. Also: while Mr. Bailey had shown me you could be a lawyer and write a book, Mr. Puzo, more importantly, had shown me you could be Italian and write one. (I had not yet heard of Dante.) There remained, of course, the small problem that I personally had never actually met a Mafioso or been involved, say,

in a blood vendetta. This continued to be a dilemma for me for many years – who in the world could care about a bunch of backwater Italians in some Ontario farm town who made their own prosciutto and had not the remotest connection to organized crime? – until multiculturalism arrived and turned prosciutto into a household word.

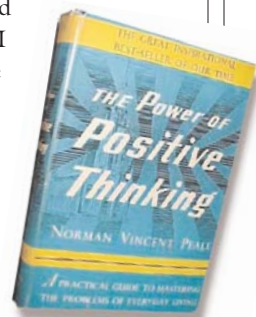
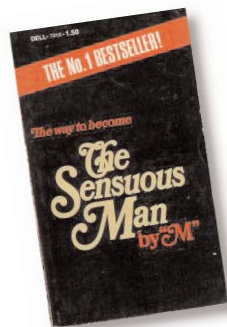
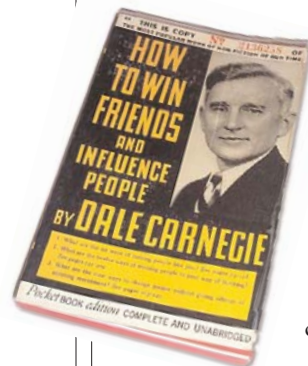
During my time in high school I had a friend, an utter geek (he now works in mergers and acquisitions in New York and lives on the Upper East Side) who used to talk to me sometimes about writers like Nabokov and Leo Tolstoy. I was always very embarrassed for him, of course. But I also felt a pang, remembering those unread classics from elementary school. Toward the end of my high school years, reflecting back on the desolation high school had been, I went through a phase of reading self-help books, people like Norman Vincent Peale on the power of positive thinking and Dale No-Relation-To-Andrew Carnegie, whose *How To Win Friends and Influence People* (“Rule Number 1: Smile!”) left me thoroughly depressed for many years. Among the offerings on the self-help



shelf at the public library – gone, now, alas, were those days of reverie in Children's Fiction – was this one: *The Lifetime Reading Plan* by

Clifton Fadiman. Mr. Fadiman, surely a benefactor on the same level as the two Carnegies, had dutifully perused the great works of human civilization, chosen those most representative, and compiled an annotated list for the public's edification. A quick glance showed that I had not read a single book on his list, and indeed had hardly heard of any of them: *The Iliad*; *The Aeneid*; *Remembrance of Things Past*. All my childhood reading, it seemed suddenly, had been a washout; all the universes I had visited had been for naught. Why had I had the misfortune to be born amongst hapless immigrants? Why had someone not taken me in hand while there had still been hope? It was with a heavy heart, then, that I set out for university, *The Lifetime Reading Plan* under one arm and my battered self-image under the other.

**IN THE YEARS SINCE** then, when there has hardly been a book I've read that wasn't prescribed for me in one way or another – and indeed I am still making my way through *The Lifetime Reading Plan*, which is still in print and still making people miserable – I often long for the days of *Airport* and *Dr. Dolittle*, when I could read any bloody thing I wanted. While it's true that whatever little I know about writing I'm still in the process of learning, what I know about reading I'd already learned by the first grade: read what transports you. If I had never been transported, it would never have occurred to me to write. That is what I try to remember every day when I put my pen to the page. ■





**T**

**AKE THE ELEVATOR** to the 34th floor of the Exchange Tower in the heart of Toronto's financial district, and you step out into a hushed world of dark wood and subdued lighting – home to Canada's Department of Justice. You also enter the world of York's new chancellor, Peter Cory. At 78, Cory still works as a senior advisor with Justice Canada. "I come into the office most days," he says. Today he appears in a dapper suit and tie. His office is a no-nonsense place. Not posh or law firm-like, but comfortably decorated with personal pictures of family and his time in the Royal Canadian Air Force, and boasting a breathtaking view of the Toronto harbour to the southwest.

The Honourable Mr. Justice Peter deCarteret Cory, former Supreme Court of Canada justice (he retired in 1999), takes over from the popular and personable Avie Bennett, chairman of publisher McClelland & Stewart Ltd., who became York's 10th chancellor in 1998. But if Bennett seems a hard act to follow, Cory – open, friendly and very focused – is up for the challenge.

Cory has lived through some of the toughest times the 20th century has dished out. He was born in Windsor, Ont., in 1925 and endured economic hardship during the Depression when his father lost much of his investments and his job. "I remember going to the store for a loaf of bread and dropping the dime – it was traumatic," says Cory. "My father banked in the States and it went under, so all the family savings were lost,

# A JUSTICE FOR ALL

**Come June, former Supreme Court jurist Peter Cory will succeed Avie Bennett to become York's 11th chancellor.** BY MICHAEL TODD

**HANDING OVER:** Avie Bennett (left) and Peter Cory

**PHOTOGRAPHY BY** GEOFF GEORGE



## TRANSITIONS

and his US life insurance company went under, too. It was a time you had to live through to appreciate.”

Cory’s family eventually recovered some lost economic ground, and with those troubled years behind him, he joined the RCAF while in his teens. He flew bomber missions over Germany with the 6th Bomber Group. At the end of

and Freedoms. He was made a Companion of the Order of Canada in 2002.

While Cory is tough and sharp in conversation, there’s also a genuine underlying concern for the social welfare of people and in the role law has to play in protecting the welfare of individuals and society. So it’s perhaps no surprise that he was invited to be chancellor of York. He’ll represent ideals like “critical intellect”, “tolerance and diversity” and “a community of faculty, students and staff committed to academic freedom, social justice and accessible education”, as expressed in York’s Mission Statement.

“It’s a real honour to be part of the educational system,” says Cory, “even if it’s just a ceremonial role. You’re dealing with the next generation of Canadians, the Canadian leaders. And of course I have a particular interest in Osgoode.”

What does he think a good law school’s education should be about? Osgoode, for instance, puts a certain stress on social justice. “And thank goodness!” responds Cory.

“I think it’s just what’s needed. You need dedicated people who will accept lower compensation in service to people on legal aid or who don’t qualify for legal aid but need legal advice. There’s a duty that I think is owed by the legal profession to society. I think law schools should foster the concept of civil rights.” He points to the Charter’s multicultural clause. “The more you see the more you know – that it’s the very Camelot of democratic principles to recognize the worth of every individual no matter what race,

colour, creed or nationality, and yet know that they belong to a still greater concept, that of Canada. You begin with tolerance.”

Cory is indeed an expert when it comes to the ins and outs of civil rights. He’s frequently sought out by governments and international leaders for his legal and public policy abilities. In 2002, he was appointed commissioner by the British and Irish governments to investigate six controversial murder cases involving alleged official collusion between members of the security forces and loyalist or republican paramilitaries.

Cory reported his findings in October 2003. After the Irish government made his reports public on the two southern cases, the British government delayed publication on the four Northern Ireland cases, citing security concerns. Leaks to the media had indicated what the bottom line of the reports would be. The families of the victims became extremely concerned. Cory suggested that the result was cruel for the families and that they should be advised of the conclusions to alleviate their concerns. After an additional time had elapsed, and the Northern Ireland Office did not take this step, Cory in January boldly advised the families’ legal representatives that he had recommended public inquiries into all four cases. Only at the end of March did the British government finally publish an edited version of the reports and initiate inquiries in three of the four cases.

How would Cory characterize his life mission, his “good fight” as it were? “You try to do the right thing,” he says. “Probably that’s an egotistical question, the ‘right thing’ in *my* view – admittedly, who knows? – but you look at the question as widely as possible and ask yourself what’s fair in the situation.”

He will be installed at the Glendon convocation in June. Asked what he expects to do in the job, Cory says, “It’s a great honour to be selected. But I don’t really know enough about the role yet to make any comment worth recording.” Maybe he’ll be able to create his own role? “Oh,” says Cory, his face lighting up, “Yes! I’d be good at that!” ■



hostilities, Cory decided to pursue a career in law and enrolled at Osgoode Hall Law School. Called to the Ontario Bar in 1950, he had been appointed queen’s counsel by 1963 and was elected a bencher of the Law Society of Upper Canada in 1971. His appointment to the Supreme Court of Ontario came in 1974 and the Ontario Court of Appeal in 1981. Then, in 1989, he was named to the Supreme Court of Canada, where he helped decide many groundbreaking cases arising from the Charter of Rights

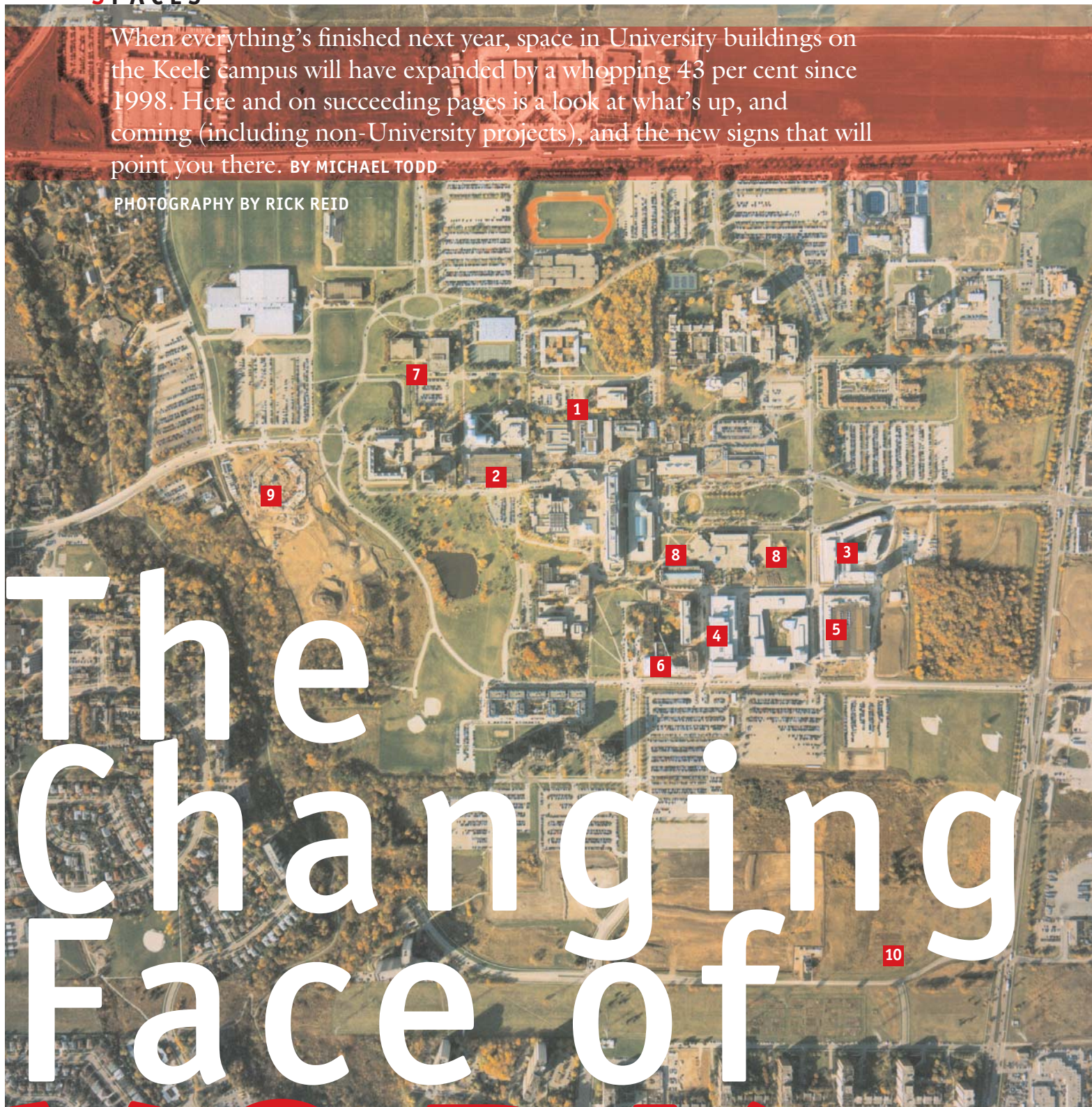


## SPACES

When everything's finished next year, space in University buildings on the Keele campus will have expanded by a whopping 43 per cent since 1998. Here and on succeeding pages is a look at what's up, and coming (including non-University projects), and the new signs that will point you there. BY MICHAEL TODD

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICK REID

# The Changing Face of YORK



### COMPUTER SCIENCE & ENGINEERING BUILDING

Opened 2002

**1** Home to the Department of Computer Science and the Centre for Vision Research, the CSEB is the most advanced "green" cold-climate building at an academic institution in Canada

### WILLIAM SMALL CENTRE/ARBORETUM PARKING GARAGE

Opened 2003

**2** The William Small Centre (attached to the Arboretum Parking Garage) is named in honour of the late William Small, York's founding comptroller. It houses Campus Services & Business Operations, which includes Security, Parking & Transportation, and the Computing Commons.

### SEYMOUR SCHULICH BUILDING

Opened 2003

**3** The \$102-million new home of the Schulich School of Business includes an airy central marketplace, glass-walled offices, lots of natural light and a 13-storey Executive Learning Centre complete with hotel facilities.

### TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED LEARNING (TEL) BUILDING

Opened 2003

**4** York University and Seneca College of Applied Arts have jointly opened the most technologically advanced teaching facility in Ontario. Its calm, elegant design looks good too.

### STUDENT SERVICES CENTRE

Opened 2004

**5** Admissions, the Career Centre, the Registrar's Office, Student Affairs and Student Financial Services are all now conveniently housed in this sustainable building, wrapping around a new parking garage.

### THE POND ROAD RESIDENCE

Opening fall 2004

**6** This building will house 430 undergraduate students. Among its environmentally-friendly features is the 1,000-square-metre planted roof that will increase thermal insulation and store ground water.

### TAIT MCKENZIE EXPANSION

Expected completion 2005

**7** The athletic centre expansion will reorient the primary entrance of the building towards the south-facing the campus – and will double fitness activity space.

### THE ACCOLADE PROJECT

Planned opening fall 2005

**8** Two buildings, currently known as Accolade West and Accolade East, will provide a welcome 31,800 square metres of new space along the south side of the Harry W. Arthurs Common. Major new performance venues and studios will be included for the Faculty of Fine Arts, plus new classrooms for general use (see page 24).

### REXALL NATIONAL TENNIS CENTRE

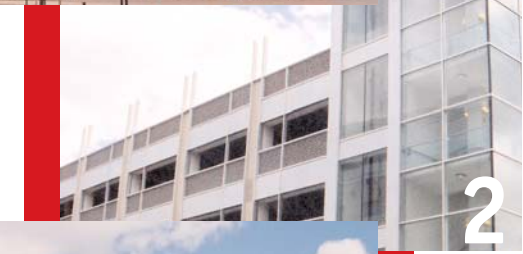
Opening July 2004

**9** Operated by Tennis Canada, the \$45-million Rexall National Tennis Centre, featuring a 12,500-seat stadium court, will replace the old National Tennis Centre as the venue for the top stars of the international circuit each summer.

### THE VILLAGE AT YORK UNIVERSITY

Opening in stages from spring 2005

**10** Tribute Communities' private development, on land purchased from the University along Murray Ross Parkway off Sentinel Road, will offer upscale residential living next to the campus, in 497 single, semi-detached and townhouse units.





# Applause for Accolade

Two artistic new buildings are rising along the Common. BY CATHY CARLYLE

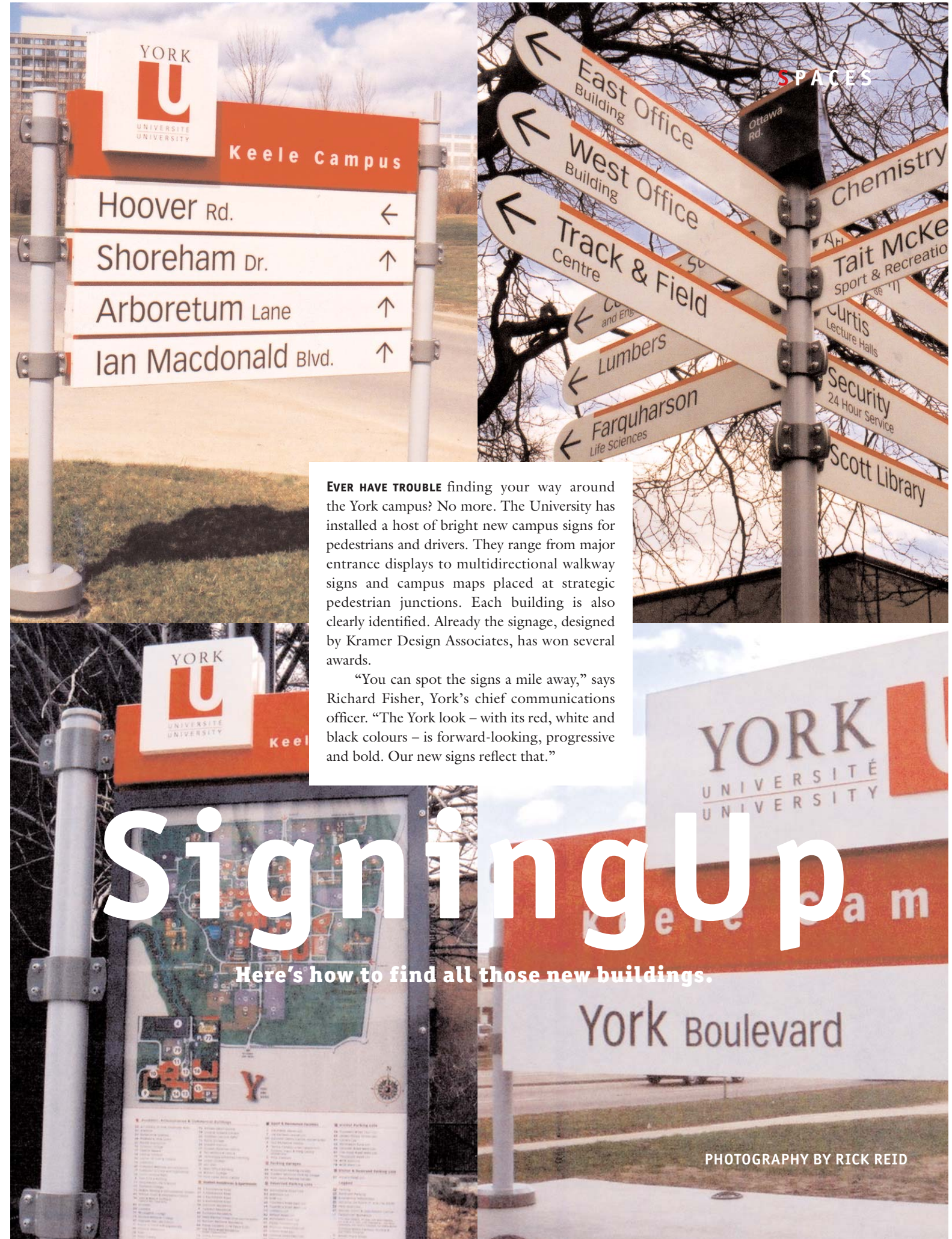


**I**T'S THE NEXT GREAT STAGE. As the newest element in York's current building boom, the Accolade Project is a \$90-million arts-and-minds enterprise comprising two new, airy buildings adjacent to the existing Joan and Martin Goldfarb Centre for Fine Arts. With their planned lofty performance halls and ultra-modern classroom facilities, right down to roughed-in stations for the much-anticipated subway to York, the tinted concrete-and-glass structures will stand front and centre along the south side of the Harry W. Arthurs Common.

Partly funded by the Ontario government's SuperBuild initiative, the buildings will, when they open in fall 2005, further accommodate the double-cohort expansion York is experiencing. Most of the classroom seats are for the general student population, even though more than half the actual space is for Fine Arts students, whose work often requires more room.

Both the Department of Music and the Department of Dance will move into Accolade's state-of-the-art facilities. Phillip Silver, dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts, expects that the well-equipped recital halls and studios will encourage more people from the York community and beyond to take in noonday concerts and evening theatre and dance performances.

Accolade East, as it's currently known, is the larger of the structures (25,000 square metres), located east of the Centre for Film and Theatre. Here, the Art Gallery of York University will find a new home. It will also feature a 325-seat recital hall, a 325-seat proscenium theatre and a 500-seat lecture hall/cinema with projection facilities for every conceivable film format, from digital to 35mm widescreen. The 7,200-square-metre Accolade West, nestled between Vari Hall and Burton Auditorium, will include a student art gallery as well as large lecture halls and smaller "smart" classrooms. "Accolade," says Silver, "will bring all of Fine Arts together, integrating all our departments into the larger University community – to the benefit of everyone." ■



**EVER HAVE TROUBLE** finding your way around the York campus? No more. The University has installed a host of bright new campus signs for pedestrians and drivers. They range from major entrance displays to multidirectional walkway signs and campus maps placed at strategic pedestrian junctions. Each building is also clearly identified. Already the signage, designed by Kramer Design Associates, has won several awards.

"You can spot the signs a mile away," says Richard Fisher, York's chief communications officer. "The York look – with its red, white and black colours – is forward-looking, progressive and bold. Our new signs reflect that."

# Signing Up

Here's how to find all those new buildings.

York Boulevard

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICK REID



## York's Norman Yan turns his fresh-water expertise on a tiny but potentially devastating cottage-country invader.

BY CATHY CARLYLE

# I

**T USED TO BE THAT** a quiet day at the lake was marred only by mosquitoes biting or by fish not biting. Now there's the spectre of the spiny water flea. It may not cause an itch, but researchers are scratching their heads about just how devastating it could be. The little flea has already gummed up the recreational fishing

industry in the Great Lakes, and now there are fears that it will affect sport fishing in Ontario's inland lakes. Luckily, York biology Professor Norman Yan is on the case.

Yan is a pre-eminent limnologist, as lake scientists are known, well qualified for this investigation. He was one of the first lake experts in North America to investigate the problem of acid rain, and he is now assessing how areas such as Sudbury have made successful recoveries from it. Through a laboratory established in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and built with Canadian Foundation for Innovation funding, he is also studying other problems affecting lakes, such as UV radiation, climate change and invading species. And top of his invaders list right now is the pesky spiny water flea, officially known as *Bythotrephes*.

Yan focuses on the tiny critters in and around the Dorset Environmental Research Centre, only a half-hour drive from his Bracebridge home in Muskoka. Appropriately, his house is across the road from the north branch of the Muskoka River. It's an ideal base for a limnologist who spends half the year checking on the animal life in lakes.

Yan admits he has a grudging respect for the little barbed-tailed animals that are "incredibly good at what they do and incredibly versatile. They're really adept at avoiding predators and catching prey." Spiny water fleas were first spotted in Canada after they hitched a ride on a cargo ship from Russia in the 1980s. They spread from the Great Lakes, where they began tangling the gear of recreational salmon fishers, to the smaller lakes in Ontario. They're now found in more than 50 lakes in this province – working their way to the other half a million – and in the Ohio and Mississippi watershed.

Yan has been establishing whether the water fleas are a threat

to native biodiversity. They are, he says. The centimetre-long crustaceans, which he describes as "very live, very colourful and very active", have been stealthily creeping into the Muskoka lakes, and seem to be here to stay.

What does this mean to the average cottager? The jury's still out. The worst-case scenario is that the spiny water fleas will ravenously devour zooplankton (tiny aquatic herbivores), depleting lakes of these fish-food delicacies. Fish life would suffer and, ultimately, so would sport fishing and cottage life. There's more bad news: With fewer zooplankton, there are fewer herbivores, so algae may proliferate, reducing the clarity of the lake waters. Not a pleasant scenario.

"So far," says Yan, "we haven't noticed a measurable effect on the amount of algae in these waters. Instead, what we have in some cases is a tapioca-like sludge floating in the lakes – colonies of rotifers [minute aquatic animals]. We believe these colonies are increasing as the spiny water fleas eat the zooplankton. What this will mean in the long term, we don't know."

However, Yan is well aware of the impact spiny water fleas have had on recreational salmon fishing in the Great Lakes, and he knows they're maddeningly difficult to get rid of. "Lots of people have cancelled their annual fishing trips there because the creatures snag the gear. Anglers are unhappy, and this means a loss of revenue for some people relying on the tourist industry," he says. He also worries about the changing diet of fish in the Great Lakes and Muskoka waters. "We have a huge existing problem with mercury contamination of sport fish," he says. "The fact that they now eat spiny water fleas, which could also be contaminated, just might magnify the problem."

Yan wants to see more research effort put into finding out, for instance, if the fish that eat the spiny water fleas are safe and edible. "And what can we do about spiny water fleas if it turns out they are bad? First we would have to ascertain just how bad they are, then find the vulnerable parts of their life cycle. All this costs money." A challenge, yes. But if Yan is as successful at getting to the bottom of the spiny water flea problems as he was with acid rain, the inland waters of Ontario are in good hands. ■

**FAMILIAR GROUND:** Norman Yan



PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEOFF GEORGE

# Lake Doctor



WELL INSTALLED: Monk with new exhibit

**I**F YOU TYPE CURATING INTO YOUR WORD PROCESSOR it comes up redlined,” says Philip Monk, champion of Toronto’s art community and now director/curator of the Art Gallery of York University. “That’s because the job is so new it hasn’t been made a verb yet. Curating – in terms of contemporary art, at least – really isn’t much older than 40 years, although it didn’t take off until the 1980s.”

Although Monk recently arrived at York, he’s no arriviste. In fact, he’s got years of gallery experience, published two books, given dozens of public lectures and has a CV long enough to make human resources personnel weep (13 pages). Before coming to York, Monk spent eight years at the Art Gallery of Ontario (1985-1993) as curator of contemporary Canadian art, and a decade (1994-2003) at Toronto’s prestigious Power Plant gallery.

The AGYU, of course, is a much smaller gallery. Why did Monk decide to move there? He says it was largely a question of reinventing himself, and perhaps the AGYU as well. “I took the job because of York’s reputation for doing things differently and taking chances. That’s what York has been known for and I think the gallery can continue to reflect that,” he says. “This job puts me in different contexts and opens new paths. Here I can diversify into other projects too, not just exhibition-based ones. Aside from our catalogues, I’d like to start up two publications series.”

Monk never intended to become a curator, let alone a director. After studying art history at the University of Toronto, he became an independent art critic for seven years. Everything he has learned, he says, stems from that period of working in the Toronto art community that he mythologized in the 1998 Power Plant exhibition *Picturing the Toronto Art Community: The Queen Street Years*.

One of the AGYU’s recent shows, *What It Feels Like for a Girl*, illustrates his approach. Girl featured a new, young generation of Toronto’s women artists offering their take on female sexuality and what it means to be female. At the gallery’s front door, you were met with a large video screen showing images of the alt-pop diva, ex-Torontonian-and-now-Berlin-based Peaches, who was shown dancing alongside Iggy Pop in a video/karaoke installation. Pick up the available mike and you could sing along with Peaches, or Iggy. Pick Peaches, and Iggy disappeared from the screen that carried the message: “Learn the f—g words.”

Monk’s second show, *Sinbad in the Rented World*, continued the theme of gender using multimedia, in an exhibition exploring the queer aesthetic in Toronto art. It transformed the gallery in the process, as some artists draped the gallery in a kind of environmental costuming. The show’s title paid homage to the legendary underground filmmaker Jack Smith, who made a film by that name and persistently asked the question, “Could art ever be useful?”

As for the title of *What It Feels Like for a Girl*, Monk says, “Being lifted from the name of a controversial Madonna song, the title is ready-made. It is not a declarative statement that the exhibition goes on to describe. I like working against expectations that the audience might initially have – and they do because of this title – but the artists were chosen not to illustrate a theme but because I have always been interested in them and found this framework for putting them together.

“Likewise, *Sinbad in the Rented World*, which I see as a complement to *What It Feels Like for a Girl*, is not just a show of gay Toronto artists, which would be easy to compose, but an exhibition about the queer aesthetic applied to some social function. Whatever group exhibitions I do in the future will display this unexpected, oblique take on contemporary art.”

Monk is intent on also reaching a downtown audience, so he rents space in Toronto galleries for concurrent satellite shows of exhibitions running at York. (A smaller version of *Girl* was on exhibit at Zsa Zsa on Queen St. West.)

“I’ve inherited a strong gallery with a very strong reputation. I think the former curator was reaching out beyond Toronto, but I see my immediate job as establishing contact with Toronto – its artists and York students,” says Monk. “Contemporary art isn’t an elite thing. You can develop a sophisticated audience right in your own backyard.” ■

# What It Feels Like for Philip Monk

A fabled curator takes over at York’s art gallery.

BY MICHAEL TODD

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEOFF GEORGE



**TAKE A LOAD OFF:** Rosen at Pearson Airport

**A**DRIENNE ROSEN has never lost a funeral urn yet – or a casket. And that’s what you’d expect. No client wants Aunt Mary’s remains ending up in Brisbane instead of Capetown. That’s why clients rely on Rosen (BA Hons. ’94) and her courier company.

Rosen, who graduated from York’s Atkinson Faculty of Liberal and Professional Studies, started First International Courier (FIC) Systems, Inc., with two women partners in 1984, partly as a way to pay her way through university. Her business has always been – well – somewhat unusual. That’s because FIC found its own special niche in the super-competitive courier package world. “Seventy-five percent of our business deals with human remains and biomedical materials,” Rosen says.

Those materials include everything from stem cells and umbilical cord blood (used in bone marrow transplants to help leukemia and lymphoma victims) to infectious substances, body donor parts, and clinical trial samples (on which a great deal of research and development money rests). As with anything biological, time, care in handling and security are of the essence. It’s a world where results have to be 100 per cent or entire projects, even lives, can be jeopardized.

Of course, even the best-laid packages can go awry. “We once had a funeral urn that ended up flying in and out of four countries before we managed to catch up with it,” says Rosen. “But that was unusual.”

Guaranteeing things are on time and go where they’re supposed to is Rosen’s job as president and CEO of a company that billed \$2 million last year and has 12 employees. Her deliveries don’t come cheap, but her clients – who also include companies producing time-sensitive legal and financial documents – are willing to pay for the peace of mind FIC promises.

All this is pretty impressive for someone who only had a Grade 8 education and who took philosophy, not business, when she got to York. “Atkinson saved my life,” says Rosen, who remembers clearly the day she arrived at Atkinson as a high-school dropout and asked how to get in to university. “They told me you just can’t ‘get in’ like that. You have to write an essay. So I said, ‘OK, have you got any paper?’ Then I sat down at a manual typewriter – I’d never written an essay in my life – and typed one up on the women’s movement in Canada. Then I handed it to the admissions person. ‘So, do I get in now?’ I asked her. She read it and said, ‘Yes.’ I ended up graduating 10 years later – cum laude.”

Between her teen years and early 30s, Rosen worked a variety of jobs, including as a courier. “I had no formal education. I had to support myself somehow. Starting my own courier business seemed like the solution.”

Despite the success of her company, Rosen still felt something was missing in her life. She wanted an education. Now, at 48, not only does she have her BA from York but she’s close to completing her PhD from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (while still managing to be a mother to two young girls, continue her role as CEO, and pursue her latest hobby – being a hockey goalie).

Because of her life path, Rosen is a big believer in giving back to society. Her company sponsors two bridging bursaries at York for women. The \$950 International Courier Award is offered to one or more students proceeding from the Women’s Studies Bridging course into a degree program in any Faculty at York University. Usually those women are single moms and mature students who want to better their lives and need an economic foot up, says Rosen.

Rosen says she vowed that if, one day, she was successful, she’d give others a chance to better their lives through education. It’s a promise she’s...delivered on. ■

Whether it’s human ashes or an urgent donor transplant, Adrienne Rosen’s unusual enterprise will get it there on time.

BY MICHAEL TODD

# HANDLE WITH CARE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID STREET



# FUNNY BONES

DOUBLE VISION: Holness and Sutherland



PHOTOGRAPH BY VINCE TALOTTA/TORONTO STAR

ACHIEVERS

## York brought together the couple behind the hit film *Love, Sex and Eating the Bones*. BY MARTHA TANCOCK

**A** lot of people don't think there are black people in Canada," says director and screenwriter David "Sudz" Sutherland, who grew up in Scarborough. When he and his wife, producer Jennifer Holness, tried to raise \$2.5 million to mount their first feature, *Love, Sex and Eating the Bones*, potential backers told them it would flop in this country. You can't have two black leads, they said. Make one white. Don't show Canadian money, they said, if you want to reach an American audience. And what's this about the lead character having a pornography addiction? Forget it.

But after three years of hard slogging, the filmmaking duo finally found the money and shot the film their way. *Eating the Bones* was released March 5. Before it even hit commercial theatres, the romantic comedy defied nay-sayers and won a host of awards at independent film festivals, including Best Canadian First Feature at the 2003 Toronto International Film Festival. Toronto movie critics loved it. The *National Post's* Jason Anderson called it "sly, raunchy and very, very funny." *The Globe and Mail's* Rick Groen said it's better than a promising first try, it's a "fulfilled feature." The characterization, he added, is "neither

colour-saturated nor colour-blind, but just bubbles up with a simple effervescence that seems uniquely Canadian." Yes. Canadian.

That's how Sutherland and Holness intended it. Children of immigrant Jamaicans, both grew up in Toronto and stayed there to forge careers as independent filmmakers. In the early 1990s, fresh out of York University, they formed a production company and began making music videos for local rhythm and blues, reggae, hip hop and gospel singers. Then they made two award-winning shorts: *My Father's Hands* (1999), based on Sutherland's difficult relationship with his father, and *Speakers for the Dead* (2000), a National Film Board documentary about descendants of black settlers in Priceville, Ont., searching for their roots. Inspired by Spike Lee, the couple aim to make movies that reflect the black Canadian experience.

*Eating the Bones* (a metaphor for getting the most out of life) also dares to mock black male stereotypes. "Usually the black man in film is a compilation of super masculine menial, Mandingo and buck nigger," says Sutherland. "Not Michael." No, the protagonist is a security guard addicted to porn and unable to rise to the occasion when he falls in love

with a real woman. But his colour is ultimately irrelevant, says Sutherland. "It's a story about a human being which I hope is universal."

Their next feature mixes up cultures and expectations for laughs and that human touch. An American college basketball star reluctantly agrees to coach a team of native girls on a northern Ontario reserve after his career is cut short by a knee injury. *That's The Way the Ball Bounces*.

Sutherland and Holness fell in love at York. He was studying film and she was studying political science. When she graduated with a BA in 1992, he left with one more year to go. She was "on the way to being a deputy minister" before he lured her into moviemaking. He does the writing and directing, she negotiates the contracts and handles the budget. Though they often collaborate – they also have two baby girls – they have forged separate careers writing, directing and producing for television. For Holness, raised by a hardworking single mom and originally intent on law or business school, film hadn't seemed like a career choice until she met Sutherland. But "going to York really helped shape my world view," she says. "It made me understand that more was possible than I realized." ■



## Therese Brisson

MBA student, gold-medal hockey player

## High Impact

THERESE BRISSON HURLS HERSELF into her MBA studies the way she chases a puck down the ice – with the same intensity that netted her Olympic gold in 2002 as captain of the Canadian women’s hockey team. At 37, she’s more than simply a 10-year veteran of the national team and winner of five world tournaments. She also holds a PhD in kinesiology and was a professor in that field for five years at the University of New Brunswick. Since the heady Olympic days of Salt Lake City, she’s ditched academe for a future as a strategic planner in health technology or sport education. “I want to have more of an impact,” she says.

Attending York’s Schulich School of Business has given her the flexibility she needed to train for the world women’s hockey championships in Halifax, where Team Canada again triumphed, and complete her MBA this year. The eldest of five children, she grew up playing ringette in west Montreal and has always lived by her father’s motto: “If you’re going to do something, do it well.” ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEOFF GEORGE



**Marsha Barrow**

Youth mentor, volunteer

**Giving Back**

POLITICALLY MINDED MARSHA BARROW hasn't stopped forging ahead since she was a teenager. Recently honoured with an African Canadian Achievement Award for her volunteer work with youth, Barrow (BA Hons. '02) has spent much of her young life mentoring youth and tutoring children through Tropicana Community Services and Each One Teach One. "You make time for things you feel are important to you – and giving back to the community, particularly to youth, is something I deem very important," says Barrow, who holds down a full-time job as a project management coordinator with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment.

She dreams of carrying her visions further – right into the political arena. Her York professors certainly wouldn't be surprised to see her enter that field. "She is engagingly helpful and selfless – clearly one of the best examples of what our community and York has to offer," said a proud African studies Professor Pablo Idahosa. ■



PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEOFF GEORGE

**Lindsay Gordon**

Banker, York friend

**A Good Fit**

BANKER LINDSAY GORDON KNOWS the value of a dollar, but he also knows the value of giving back to society at the corporate and personal level. Now president and chief executive officer of HSBC Bank Canada, Gordon, a founding member of the York University Foundation board of directors, was instrumental in HSBC's donation in 2002 of \$250,000 to fund scholarships for York students.

"When we were looking for universities to support in Canada, we chose York among our top three," says Gordon, whose corporate parent, the London-based HSBC Group, operates in 79 countries and territories. "I think York's reputation has increased significantly over the last few years. And we liked its multicultural component. It was a good fit with what HSBC was looking for."

HSBC Bank Canada's head office is located in Vancouver, and Gordon recently stepped down from the York Foundation's board after moving there from Toronto to take up the CEO post. But he remains a firm supporter and friend of the University, and his successor on the foundation board, Toronto-based chief operating officer Sean O'Sullivan, will keep the ties between HSBC and York strong. Says Gordon: "I think York is a great university." ■

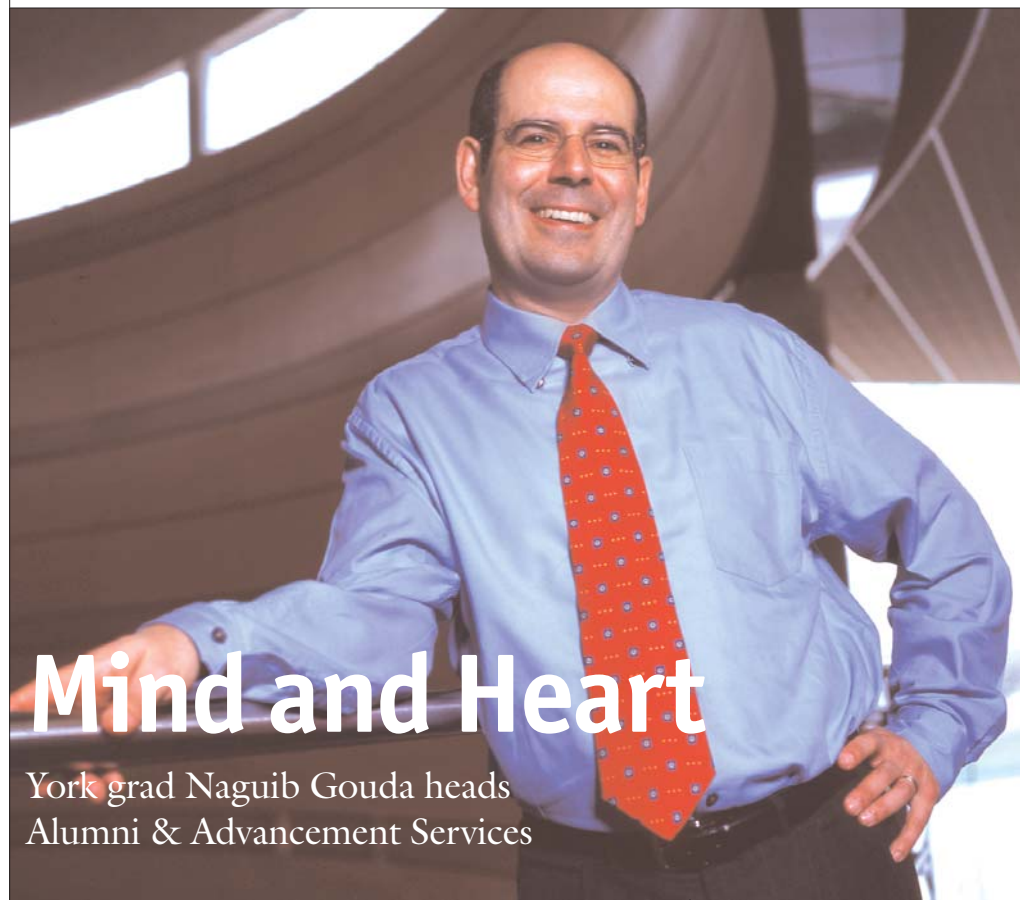
PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEOFF GEORGE





# ALUMNI

## News:



### Mind and Heart

York grad Naguib Gouda heads Alumni & Advancement Services

**N**AGUIB GOUDA, the University's new executive director for Alumni and Advancement Services, has York in his blood. Not only is he an alumnus (MBA '84), but he was born on York's birthday (March 26, 1959). He has fond memories of his time at York, including an exchange program to France where he and his group worked on their final paper. He kept up his connection with the University over the

years, guest lecturing in the iBBA program at the Schulich School of Business.

Prior to his York appointment, Gouda held senior executive positions in marketing and project management with such companies as Manulife Financial Corporation and the Bank of Montreal. A skilled, multilingual communicator (he came to Canada from Egypt in 1968), he also draws on his extensive experience at the community level. He has

served on numerous boards and committees and as a volunteer fundraiser for a variety of organizations, including The Learning Partnership, Sheena's Place, the Toronto Distress Centre and SafeHaven.

"I was looking for a career that combines mind and heart, and I wanted to do it in a place that matters," says Gouda. "York University provides just that opportunity." How does it feel to be back? "It feels like home." ■

### Dear Alumni

A message from Naguib Gouda

**THIS IS MY FIRST** opportunity to greet you personally since my appointment. I look forward to forming a partnership with you in leading the Alumni and Advancement Services offices in directions which intrigue and engage you. Tell me what you are interested in. Let me know if you want to hear regularly from my office (and what you want to hear about). Do you want to have us explore virtual communities which can connect you with other York alumni? What are your affinities to York? Sports teams? Professors? Departments? Clubs? Colleges?

We need to understand what York can do for you and how we might build programs that add value for you. We expect to do surveys over the coming months and we encourage you to participate. We can only improve our service and connections with you through open and honest dialogue.

We also want to know about what you are doing since graduation. Tell us about events in your life which we can acknowledge, celebrate or even announce in the Class Notes section of this magazine. Please write to me ([alumni@yorku.ca](mailto:alumni@yorku.ca)). I look forward to hearing from you. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SUSAN KING

# ALUMNI



RECOGNITION: Sorbara (left), Currie, Foster, Price

## Honoured Guests

Saluting this year's winners of the Bryden awards

**THE BRUCE BRYDEN AWARDS** recognize York alumni and friends who have brought honour to themselves and to York. To recognize and celebrate this year's recipients, the York University Alumni Association was set to bestow the awards at a gala dinner on May 13. Here are brief sketches of the winners:

### CONTRIBUTION: JOSEPH SORBARA

Recognizing dedication to the advancement of York University through commitment and contributions

**JOSEPH SORBARA** graduated from Osgoode Hall Law School in 1968. For more than 15 years he has served York. In 1988, he was appointed to the York University Board of Governors where he served for 12 years. In 2000, he was made an honorary board member, and now chairs the York University Development Corporation. He is also a member of the York University Foundation board of directors.

### LEADERSHIP: PETER CURRIE

Recognizing a true pioneering spirit in professional life or in any field of endeavour

**PETER CURRIE** (BA '73, MBA '78) is vice-chairman and chief financial officer for the Royal Bank of Canada Financial Group. He is a member of the York University Board of Governors and was a volunteer for the York University National Campaign. In 2003, he was named Canada's CFO of the Year.

### ACHIEVEMENT: JANET GREEN FOSTER

Recognizing true distinction in professional life or in any field of endeavour

**JANET GREEN FOSTER** (BA '69, PhD '78) has written, produced, filmed and co-hosted numerous nature documentaries, including the CBC television series "To the Wild Country",

"This Land" and "Wild Canada". Her outdoor and natural history programs have reached a huge television audience over the years, inspiring appreciation for the natural environment and its conservation.

### FRIEND: TIM PRICE

Recognizing contributions made by people who are not York alumni

**TIM PRICE**, a graduate of the University of Toronto, is Chair of Brascan Financial Corporation. His service to York University is longstanding in both governance and fundraising. In 2002, he became the first Chair of the York University Foundation board of directors and he has been a member of the York University Board of Governors since 1996. He also serves on the Dean's Advisory Board for the Schulich School of Business.

### WHO WAS BRUCE BRYDEN?

**R. BRUCE BRYDEN** (1943-1992) graduated from York University in 1964 with a BA in sociology and economics. Bryden's commitment, respect and contributions helped shape York University. He became founding president of York's Alumni Association (1965-1966) and alumni member of University Senate (1966-1968). In 1971, he joined the University's Board of Governors, and in 1974 became a Fellow of McLaughlin College. Bryden served as the first alumni Chair (of only two) of the York University Board of Governors from 1982 to 1992.



## Class Notes:

1963

**Nason, H. Ray** (BA Glendon) heads his own company, Personnel Advice Consulting, in Ontario.

1967

**Horne, Sarah** (BA Bethune) is a graduate of York's dance program in the Faculty of Fine Arts, and would like to keep in touch with others dancing through life.

1975

**Graham, Tom** (BFA Winters) is principal consultant and graphic designer of his marketing communications company based in Kemptville, Ont., TD Graham & Associates. While at York, Tom was curator of the Student Gallery in Winters College, and he and others founded the Visual Arts Student Council, getting student representation on the Fine Arts Faculty Council. Tom, along with Murray Leadbeater (BA '75 Calumet), James Newman (BA '75 Calumet) and Larry Towell (BFA '76 Winters) formed the Artists' Country Band while at York and the group is still playing together 30 years later.

1976

**Palladini, Grazia-Donata** (BA, BEd Calumet) is an FSL teacher for Hastings-Prince Edward District School Board. She resides in Belleville, Ont., with her husband and two sons.

1975

Tom Graham



1977

**Bedell, Debra K.** (BFA Stong) is a mortgage consultant for Park Avenue Mortgage Group, New York City.

**McGowan, Ken** (BA Calumet) is the estate and financial planner at the Community of Christ in Guelph, Ont.

1978

**Freeman, Evelyn** (BA Spec. Hons. Vanier) has been assistant professor and women's head coach of Track & Field and Cross Country at Grinnell College, Iowa, for the past 24 years. She and her husband Will (the men's coach at Grinnell) have three children, Cameron 17, Deidre 15, and Nicolette 11.

1979

**Hare, Geoffrey C.** (BA '76, MES) was appointed deputy minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal in February, by Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty. Previous positions he has held include: assistant deputy minister of Investment, Ministry of Economic Development & Trade; VP and assistant deputy minister of Infrastructure Strategies & Communications, Ontario SuperBuild Corp.; and assistant deputy minister of Capital Infrastructure Secretariat, Ministry of Finance.

1980

**Pinto, Bill** (BA Spec. Hons. Stong) is a sales representative with Royal LePage Real Estate Services Ltd. in Oakville, Ont.

**Zinally, Clement** (BA Atkinson) works in the produce department at the A&P-Dominion store in Milton, Ont.

1981

**Osborn, Rosalie M.** (MES) is retired and lives in Kenya where she does consultation work.

1983

**Madott, Darlene P.** (LLB), a practising lawyer at Teplitsky, Colson Barristers in Toronto, is also a published author of fiction. Her fourth volume, *Joy, Joy, Why Do I Sing?*, was published in early 2004 by Scholar's Press/Women's Press.

1983

Darlene P. Madott



1984

**Kho, Hock Seng** (BA Hons. Founders) would like to connect with York graduates from 1984-1985. His e-mail address is hs23@canada-11.com.

**Leon, Corinne D.** (LLB '83, BA Calumet) is senior counsel in the legal department at Visa Canada Association in Toronto.

1985

**Campbell, D. Andrew** (BA Hons. Vanier) is senior manager of finance at the Bank of Nova Scotia in Toronto.

**Hayward, Karen** (MA) has been accepted to the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, for doctoral studies, researching the American legal crime thriller and the impact of this genre on millennium audiences in the US.

1986

**Mwai, Angela Njeri** (BA Founders) is a manager at the Nairobi Liaison Office with the United Nations Federal Credit Union in Kenya.

**Willis, Mark** (BA Glendon) has been the project manager for the United Nations technical cooperation in Geneva, Switzerland, for the last 10 years.

1987

**McVey, Michael** (BA McLaughlin & BEd '80, BA '85 Atkinson, BEd) received his Ed.D in educational leadership in May 2002, and teaches at the College of Education at the University of Arizona.

**Steinbach, Robert** (MBA) is founder and president of The Art Company, a storefront Toronto gallery that opened in 2003, specializing in the works of established Canadian artists.

1988

**Nullmeyer-Benoit, Kimberly** (BA McLaughlin) is executive director of the faculty association and the official bargaining agent for faculty and professional librarians at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont.

1991

**Chichiarelli, Claudio** (BA '72, BEd McLaughlin) is a guidance counselor for the Toronto Catholic District School Board.

1992

**Miller, Pamela** (BA Hons. Glendon) received her MBA in May 2003 from Georgetown University in Washington DC. She has moved back to Ontario and is currently doing global strategic human resources work with Leggett & Platt.

## Class Notes:

1994

**Guest, Brenda** (BFA Hons. Vanier) is currently enrolled in the education program at the University of Western Ontario. She recently completed three years of ESL teaching in South Korea.

1996

**Balasubramanian, Maria** (BA Bethune) was recently named corporate counsel of Dimension One Spas (D1), a Vista-based manufacturer of luxury hot tubs in San Diego, Calif.

1997

**Henderson, Heather** (BA Spec. Hons. McLaughlin) has been teaching English in Japan for the past two years and is having a great time. She has seen most of the country and can now speak and write elementary Japanese.

**Shaw, Martina** (LLB '88, BAS Atkinson) owns and operates a standard-bred racing facility in Stayner, Ont.

1999

**Brown, Sharon** (née Leow, BFA Spec. Hons. Winters) was married on July 19, 2003, and lives in Burlington, Ont.

2001

**Dorotheo, Ruth E.** (BFA Spec. Hons. Winters) teaches jazz, ballet, tap and hip hop for Seneca College, Dante Alighieri Academy and the Columbus Centre School of Dance, in Toronto. She is also a member of Salsa Team Canada - performing this summer in Puerto Rico for the Salsa Congress.

2002

**Adam, Zaky** (BA Hons., CBFE Glendon) is a teaching assistant in the

Computer Science Dept. at the University of Western Ontario in London.

**Cornish, Gail** (BA Spec. Hons., BEd Vanier) is an elementary teacher with the Toronto District School Board.

## IN MEMORIAM

1968

**Wightman, Ian** (BA Glendon) passed away in November of 2003. He lived in Ottawa where he was a high-school English teacher.

1974

**Dunn, Brian James** (BA Vanier) passed away on January 2, 2003, after a brief illness. A passionate educator who loved teaching, he joined the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board in 1975. He had been principal at St. Thomas Aquinas Secondary in Brampton, Ont. since 1999.

1980

**Bulger, E. Anne** (BA Spec. Hons. Stong) passed away on November 10, 2003, at Markham Stouffville Hospital in Ontario, after being stricken with ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) less than a year earlier. Anne worked at TransCanada Pipelines and AON Reed Stenhouse for nine years each.

**Johnston, Grant** (BA Atkinson) was killed on March 7, with his beloved wife, Elizabeth, in a tragic head-on collision. Grant was a contracts manager and cost accountant at Accenture Inc. in Ottawa. Residents of Kanata for the past 16 years, Grant and Elizabeth leave behind daughter Julie, a design student at York, graduating 2004; son Andrew, graduating from Georgian College 2004; and one-year-old grandson Eric, Andrew's son.



What to say to a Manhattan mugger. BY BARBARA BUDD

# On Canadian Time

**T**he differences between Canadians and Americans are subtle. Among the differences: Canadians know how to make love in a canoe, and Canadians have butter tarts, Americans don't. I learned another subtle difference from a New York City mugger about 25 years ago, at a time when it was not only acceptable to wear a fur coat in frigid temperatures, it was wise. I'd been advised prior to my trip that with or without the raccoon coat, one should prepare to be mugged in New York.

"Carry your real stash of cash and ID on the inside of your

## Slipping off his perch

coat in a small wallet," advised my savvy traveller friend, "then, in your purse, carry Mug Money – enough that the mugger won't be disappointed enough to kill you, not so much to ruin your trip if you lose it."

In those days, \$57.83 added up to a decent wad. I determined it was an appropriate and realistic amount. I didn't relish the idea of paying even that sum to a stranger, but was prepared to part with it in a crisis. No one counselled me, however, on what to do if I were asked to relinquish my coat.

On this visit I was fortunate to be staying with friends in an elegant brownstone in a section of Manhattan called Turtle Bay. Safe. Well lit. Within walking distance of Doubledays and Saks. In the other direction were smart boutiques. I'd spent the day Christmas shopping. When leaving my last stop, I asked the clerk which way to walk to get back to my friend's house. "You aren't going to walk, are you?" she said. "It's dark. You should grab a cab."

Nonsense, thought I. I'd read the magazine articles: "Walk briskly, with purpose, as if you know where you're going." (I'd also read in the same columns: "If accosted, start spouting loudly in gibberish, like a thing possessed, so as to freak the mugger out." I had less confidence in my being able to pull that off, but I'm sure it would indeed have a disarming effect.)

So confidently, I set out briskly, with purpose. All was well for the first couple of blocks until I turned the corner. The

Barbara Budd (BA '74) is co-host of CBC Radio's "As It Happens".

residential street was lined with tidy brownstones. Shiny cars parked along the curb. And deadly quiet with not a soul apparent. I was suddenly aware of the sound of my boots on the sidewalk and was thinking how easy it would be for one of those car doors to open onto the sidewalk and how I could be nabbed. No one would be the wiser.



Even as I was thinking that, I noticed him in the gap between two brownstones. It was inevitable. Slipping off his perch he came up behind me, grabbing my left arm firmly, forcing me to a stop.

"Nice coat, lady. You got a watch to go with that?"

In the flash of panic when I first saw him, I knew I was about to part with my Mug Money. But my coat? No flippin' way! And my mother had given me my watch. My heart was racing but with him still holding firmly to my arm, I turned around to look him square in the face.

"Yeah," I said and gently pulled my arm away. And he let me. (I suppose he thought I was going to hand over the motherlode.) Then I looked at my watch and back up at him and said "It's 5:37."

I made to turn away from him and he grabbed my arm again more forcefully. "I didn't ask you the time, bitch. I said, You got a watch to go with that coat?"

"I'm sorry," I said, again looking him square in the face. "I'm Canadian. In Canada, when someone says, 'You got a watch?' it means 'what's the time?'" But I've got to get going, or I'm going to be late." Then I added, "Goodnight."

And for some reason that I didn't understand at that moment, he let go of my arm. With my heart still pounding, I started on my way again. He followed me for a few steps. "You're Canadian?" he said. I stopped and turned around to face him for the last time – and I actually made the decision to smile. "Yeah. But I have to get going now. Goodnight."

He let me go on alone – but he called after me, "You sure as hell must be Canadian. You ain't no f—ing American." ■