



FEBRUARY 2010

TO THE RESCUE

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thousands of child soldiers

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INSIDE



COVER
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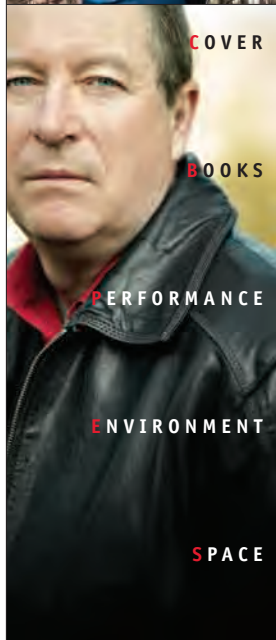
THE MAGAZINE OF YORK UNIVERSITY



4 Editor@YorkU York's birthday face. BY BERTON WOODWARD

5 Leading Edge The global university. BY MAMDOUH SHOUKRI

6 Universe Master Class...What They're Reading...Mommyblog Mavens...Ethics A to Z...Poor Visibility...In Cardiologists We Trust...Smoke Signals...Popularity Context



COVER

BOOKS

PERFORMANCE

ENVIRONMENT

SPACE

12 To the Rescue

Staring down ruthless warlords, Pernille Ironside has saved thousands of child soldiers.
BY MARTHA TANCOCK

16 Well Read

If you've never heard of bestselling author Eric Walters, ask a kid.
BY MICHAEL TODD

18 He Be Jazzin'

Ron Westray riffs on the past, present – and unsettled future – of jazz.
BY MICHAEL TODD

20 Ice Break

The ravages of climate change are readily apparent in Canada's Eastern Arctic.
BY MARTHA TANCOCK

24 Stars in her Eyes

Ilana Dashevsky helps keep the Hubble telescope humming.
BY DAVID FULLER

26 York People

IT strategist and mentor Liban Gaashaan...biologist Elizabeth Gow...sculptor Carl Tacon

29 Giving

There's a world of research to support at York.

30 Alumni

Dreaming Big...Class Notes

38 Back Talk

What do athletics and creative writing have in common? Me.
BY PRISCILA UPPAL



FEBRUARY 2010

Checking in with our birthday grad. BY BERTON WOODWARD

A Face of York

A year ago, we published a special issue of *YorkU* to celebrate York's 50th anniversary. On the cover, under the title "First Class", were leading lawyer Clayton Ruby, representing the original class of students who entered York in 1960, and Janaki Vallipuram, a top student in the current class headed for graduation. We chose Vallipuram because she was so emblematic of what York has become: diverse, high-achieving, ever stronger in the sciences. Our story noted that her A+ average in the Faculty of Science & Engineering had landed her a place in Professor Dorota Crawford's neuroscience research lab in the Faculty of Health. At York, undergrads can get the opportunity to do serious research, and Vallipuram, bent on a medical career, was immersed in work involving genes and autism.

It was clear the world would hear more about Vallipuram, but the moment came even sooner than we expected. In September, the journal *Cellular and Molecular Neurobiology* published a York University study showing evidence of a direct link between a mutated gene and autism. Lead author: Janaki Vallipuram, with Crawford and grad student Jeffrey Grenville in the supporting roles. News of the study was picked up by various media outlets and, perhaps more importantly, many autism Web sites. Vallipuram remembers working with autistic patients and beginning to understand the importance of the research. "It didn't hit me till we were halfway through, the impact it was going to have," she says. "Now that it's out there, so many other people



will be able to work on this and take it to a whole new level."

When we talked to her last time, Vallipuram was still mulling what she'd do after getting her BSc Spec. Hons. in biochemistry – maybe postgrad, maybe medical school. She chose med school, at the University of Toronto. But she wishes she'd had the option to consider York, which has proposed a medical school that would be right down her alley. The University's brief to the Ontario government calls for a school that would boost the ranks of general practitioners, which Vallipuram wants to join. "I think it would be more interesting to know about a lot of things, and see a variety of cases in a day rather than just one type." She says she and her other Yorkie classmates agree that "York prepared us really well for medical school." York's bid, she adds, "is a natural next step".

One thing hasn't changed for Vallipuram, despite being smack in the centre of the millennial generation: her preference for human contact over electronic communication. But don't her friends just expect her to know what's happening online? "The article helped," she says of our story last year. "They say, 'Oh yeah, she doesn't use Facebook.'" ■

Send letters, submissions, comments and ideas to editor@yorku.ca.

YORKU

THE MAGAZINE OF YORK UNIVERSITY

VOLUME 7, NUMBER 3

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YorkU is published bi-monthly, five times during the academic year, by the Marketing & Communications Division of York University. All issues circulate on York's campuses. The October, February and Summer editions are also sent to alumni, for a total circulation in those issues of 200,000 each.

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See rate card, back issues and digital edition at
yorku.ca/yorku

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40069546
Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

Marketing & Communications Division
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Ideas and opinions expressed in the articles do not necessarily reflect the ideas or opinions of the University or the editors.

ISSN 1708-4512

PRINTED IN CANADA



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YORKU
UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY
redefine THE POSSIBLE.

York is emerging as a leader in internationalization. **BY MAMDOUH SHOUKRI**

Our Global Reach

Tell me and I'll forget.

Show me and I may remember.

Involve me and I'll understand.

Chinese proverb

This fall, I had the opportunity to visit Asia on a trip designed to raise York's profile, to strengthen our current connections in the region and to establish new ones. The trip achieved those goals, and it also put into sharp focus just how important internationalization is to postsecondary institutions.

Internationalization is widely understood as a university's response to the forces of economic, social and cultural change – what people outside universities call “globalization”. It is a necessary, vital and deliberate transformation of how we teach and learn. I believe we need to think of ourselves as a global university in order to give our students the best education possible

Universities are key agents

and to help them become citizens of the world.

Other universities have certainly gotten the point. I had a chance to meet with Canada's consul general in Shanghai, Nadir Patel. He has only been in Shanghai since July, and I was already the seventh Canadian university president he had met with.

I believe York is emerging as a leader in internationalization. We are very fortunate in the number and quality of partners we have in Asia – institutions with good reputations, high profiles and strong rankings. And all of these universities are eager to work more closely with us, especially in the area of joint or dual degrees. In a time of scarce resources, these degrees are seen as a cost-effective way to provide students with a breadth of offerings that the institutions could not do alone.

We offer a broad, international curriculum that brings world perspectives into the classroom, and we have excellent student mobility programs, funded international internships and award-winning offerings such as the Emerging Global Leaders Program,

Mamdouh Shoukri is York's president and vice-chancellor.



an opportunity for students to increase their global knowledge and intercultural skills. And while I was in China, York's Schulich School of Business officially launched the Schulich MBA in India. This is the first MBA program to be delivered in India by an international business school from outside the country.

**of change. We need to instill
in our students a sense of
our shared citizenship.**

We also have a strong alumni presence in Asia, especially Hong Kong. I was amazed to learn that Hong Kong has the third-largest community of York alumni – only Toronto and Ottawa have more. Over 200 of them

turned out for an alumni event, proud of their connection to York and eager to strengthen ties with their alma mater.

In a world characterized by challenges and opportunities of global proportions, universities are key agents of change. The great global issues we face – climate change, poverty, epidemics, war – cannot be addressed by great technological advances alone. Technology provides us with important tools, but we also need to develop social innovations that allow for a better exchange of information between cultures. We need to instill in our students a sense of our shared citizenship.

Our students are the leaders of tomorrow. They will be the ones to develop the technical and social innovations that will change their local communities, and the global community, for the better. It is our responsibility to respond with educational programs that help prepare them for that future – and involve them in becoming global citizens. ■

SPORT

Master Class

Older athletes defy stereotypes

Call them what you will: geezer jocks, the over-the-hill gang, has-beens. But the fact is, master athletes can kick butt beyond the age of 35 – the starting point for the master’s category in most sports – and perform admirably into middle and old age. Exercise and sport participation need not stop in one’s twenties, says Joe Baker, a professor in York’s School of Kinesiology & Health Science, Faculty of Health, and he has co-edited a new book to prove it.

The Masters Athlete: Understanding the Role of Sport and Exercise in Optimizing Aging examines the evidence that cognitive skills, motor skills and physiological capabilities can be maintained at a high level with advancing age, and that age-related decline is slowed in athletes who continue to train and compete in later years.

“As populations in the industrialized world get older and governments become increasingly keen on promoting healthy aging and non-pharmacological interventions, the study of masters athletes enables us to better understand the benefits of and motivations for lifelong involvement in physical activity,” says Baker.

A marathon and ultra-marathon runner himself, Baker mixed business with pleasure in October when he attended the 2009 World Masters Games in Sydney, Australia, to compete and collect data on the participants. He has published articles on the requirements of successful performance in journals such as *Applied Cognitive Psychology* and *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, and has presented his research at academic conferences around the world.

“The book challenges conventional views of old age and presents topics that may have important implications for policy and future research,” Baker says. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KC ARMSTRONG

NO NEED TO STOP: Baker in time-lapse

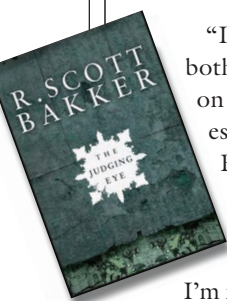
BOOKS

What They're Reading

York people reveal what's on the bedside table

Norman Yan

Biology professor



"I always have books for both escape and enlightenment on the bedside table. For escape, I've started R. Scott Bakker's *The Judging Eye*, the latest book in his astonishingly powerful fantasy series. For enlightenment,

I'm reading Robert Cooper's *The Breaking of Nations: Order and Chaos in the Twenty-First Century*, which is greatly deepening my understanding of current world affairs, and Seymour Garte's *Where We Stand: A Surprising Look at the Real State of our Planet*. Garte's synthesis of the oft-ignored good environmental news stories has changed my writing plans for retirement, as this was a book I had planned to write!"



Joe Baker

Kinesiology & health science professor

"I try to have several books on the go at any one time so that I can always find something to match my mood. For instance, I'm reading *Kluge: The Haphazard Construction of the Human Mind* by Gary Marcus, an interesting book that explores the myriad ways the brain's design interferes with its operation in certain circumstances, and *The Talent Code* by Daniel Coyle. I'm only partway through the latter, but so far it just reminds me how badly popular science writers can misinterpret or oversimplify scientific evidence."



SOCIETY

Mommyblog Mavens

Talking online about motherhood may be a radical act

You'd think mothers would have enough work on their hands just raising and keeping track of their (and others') kids, let alone writing a daily blog about them. Guess again. The blogosphere is alive and well, and many mommyblogs present an interesting alternative to the sanitized version of motherhood presented elsewhere, says May Friedman, co-editor of a new book on the topic.

Friedman, a doctoral candidate in women's studies at York, and Shana Calixte (MA '02), a fellow mom who teaches women's studies at Laurentian University, have just released a new book titled *Mothering and Blogging: The Radical Act of the Mommyblog*. "The book came from a very personal place for both of us," Friedman says. She adds that mommyblogging has been criticized as solipsistic and self-indulgent, but says many women see it as a radical act.

The book covers subjects ranging from how blogs change mothering conversations to "celebrity moms, babies and blogs". Who reads mommyblogs? "Moms or people who want to be moms," Friedman says. "Policy-makers ignore them. Marketers, however, read them in ever-increasing numbers, and monetizing mommyblogs has become a hugely contentious trend."

The mommy blogosphere is exciting, says Friedman, because it's a true compendium of human knowledge and because it offers the reader opinions on parenting that are much less monolithic than those found virtually anywhere else. Does Friedman read many mommyblogs herself? "It's one of my most cherished activities – aside from mothering. It's also something I hope I can put to use for my upcoming dissertation!" ■

Given the recent financial meltdown and money-managing malfeasance, the publication of a 2,592-page, five-volume, award-winning business reference guide, *Encyclopedia of Business Ethics and Society*, couldn't be more timely.

Mark Schwartz (BA '87, LLB '91, MBA '91, PhD '99), a professor of law, corporate governance and ethics in York's School of Administrative Studies in the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies, is on the editorial board of the encyclopedia and is also a contributor. His eight articles include "Tylenol Tampering", "Ford Pinto" and the key entry, "Business Ethics".

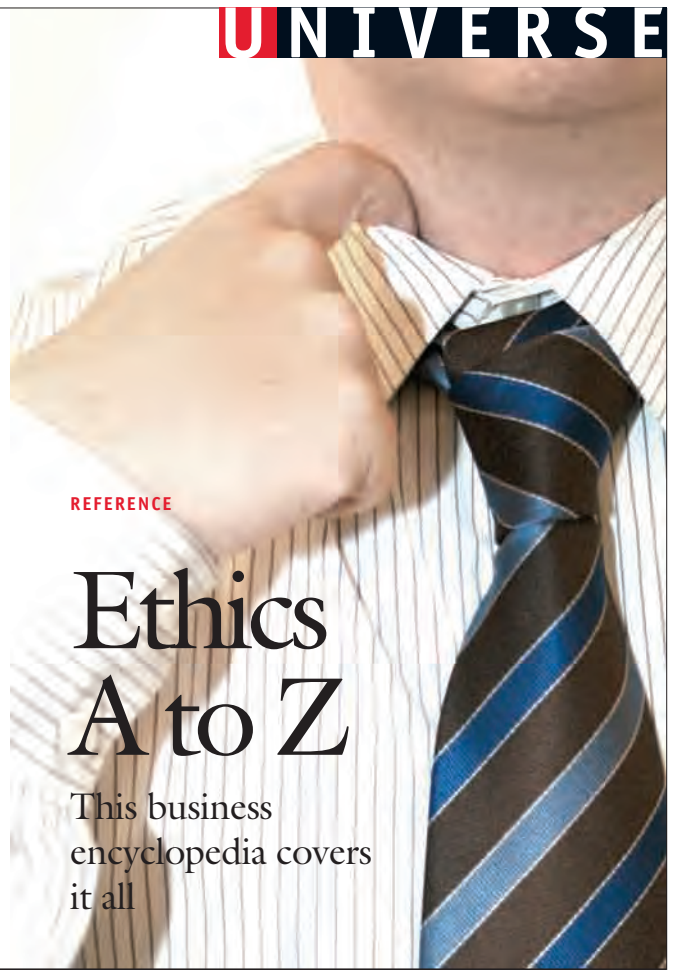
The volumes focus on issues such as executive compensation, honesty in accounting, transparency and respect for the environment. "These are the perennial questions that accompany the history of human economic activity," says Schwartz. "For instance, I think the 1970s Ford Pinto decision represents the classic business ethics case. Ford, concerned about the bottom line, chose not to recall the Pinto despite knowing the potential danger from a misplaced fuel tank that would explode when rear-ended."

The encyclopedia examines the interplay of business, ethics and society by including more than 800 entries covering such areas as corporate social responsibility, the obligation of companies to various stakeholder groups and the contribution of business to society. There is one other specific business ethics encyclopedia out there, notes Schwartz. "But it's only a single volume. This edition, at five volumes, is the most significant and substantial collection of articles that's ever been produced in the field of business ethics." ■

REFERENCE

Ethics A to Z

This business
encyclopedia covers
it all



GOVERNANCE

Poor Visibility

Canada's non-profit boards
are still not ethnically diverse

The boards of Canada's non-profit organizations might have addressed gender imbalance, but they've still got a long way to go to tackle diversity, a York study has found. Organizational behaviour Professor Pat Bradshaw, of the Schulich School of Business, found that while non-profit boards are close to equal representation for women, they are still nearly 90 per cent white.

Bradshaw, the study's lead author, looked at the proportion of board members who were visible minorities or from ethnically diverse backgrounds. Whites were in the majority (87.6 per cent), followed by Aboriginals (8.2 per cent) and South Asians (7.4 per cent), while Koreans, at 0.2 per cent, were least likely to be included. Women made up about 44 per cent of membership.

"We found that while women have made great strides in the last 15 to 20 years, the proportion of board members from different ethnic backgrounds and visible minorities have made much less progress," says Bradshaw. "This is surprising considering that in the last two decades there's been considerable attention paid to the topic of diversity." In her study, diversity was defined as dimensions of personal difference, including Aboriginal status, ability, age, country of origin, ethnic origin, visible minority and immigrant status, among other factors.

Bradshaw says one of the drivers for diversity has been the shift in the demographic composition of Canada's population. She notes that 2001 census data showed 28 per cent of Canada's total population was born outside Canada – the highest level in 70 years. "The important thing is that our findings show those boards that have greater diversity are also, statistically, significantly more effective." ■



HEALTH

In Cardiologists We Trust...

Or do we? Grads not so much.

Trust in one's family doctor has been linked to increased patient satisfaction, better adherence to treatments and improved health. But do patients trust specialists like cardiologists?

A recent study, "Degree and Correlates of Patient Trust in their Cardiologist", undertaken by York researchers and the University Health Network (UHN) and funded by a Canadian Institutes of Health Research grant, investigated this question.

The study was similar in manner to others that have assessed patients' trust in their general physician or primary care provider, says Sherry Grace, a professor in the School of Kinesiology & Health Science in York's Faculty of Health and the study's principal investigator. "But the inspiration to do this study specifically came from an interest in patients' perceptions of their cardiac care, which can be life or death."

There was a key difference among respondents by education – those with postsecondary degrees had less trust in cardiologists. Yet no differences by gender showed up, Grace says, although such differences have been reported in studies involving non-specialists. "It's somewhat surprising that females did not report less trust than males, given reports of their poor diagnostic and treatment experiences with cardiovascular disease, since the perception is that it's a male disease," she says.

Grace says the York-UHN study is important for patients, cardiologists and health educators. End result? "Cardiologists may need to tailor their communication style to ensure trust among patients and to promote adoption of health behaviour changes that can save lives," she says. ■

While forest fires can have beneficial effects – such as renewing forests, triggering seed dispersal, releasing nutrients and reducing species competition – out-of-control forest fires can endanger public safety and have negative economic and social consequences. That's why modelling by Faculty of Environmental Studies Professor Justin Podur, designed to forecast the spread of escaped fires, is particularly valuable.

Escaped fires are defined as ones that have not been brought under control by initial attack forces, says Podur, who has developed a simulation model for the growth and suppression of large fires in Ontario. Weather patterns, topography, forest type and now global warming mean Ontario's annual forest fire count can vary wildly, he says. It has ranged from 601 to 3,970 fires a year.

Podur, with colleague David Martell from the University of Toronto, modelled the growth of escaped fires taking into consideration varying weather conditions and available fire suppression resources. He used historical weather scenarios from 1976 to 2003.

"Forest fires are influenced by weather, fuels and topography," says Podur. "Our model lets us test the impact of weather, climate and fire suppression – intensive and no suppression – on the severity of larger fires. We can then give a probability distribution for annual area burned, given numbers of large fires in a season and the average of the fire size distribution." ■



ENVIRONMENT

Smoke Signals

Justin Podur researches forest fire behaviour

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RSQUARED

It's tough enough to keep up with the dizzying amount of new popular music, let alone make any sense of its past, but a recent book co-authored by music Professor Matt Vander Woude may help. *North American Popular Music: A Multicultural History, First Canadian Edition* is a historical survey of popular music since the 18th century or so, and features chapters on such topics as "Gospel Sounds and Popular Music", "African Origins, Slavery and Slave Culture" and "The Broadway Musical".

"It's designed for courses in North American popular music in humanities and cultural studies," says Vander Woude, who is based in York's Faculty of Fine Arts. He notes that previous books on popular music usually presented Canadian contributions in dribs and drabs. He has rectified that by incorporating Canadian musicians into the general story of the continent's musical history.

"The book provides critical perspectives on the key musical practices that combined to create the various streams of rock culture since the 1950s," says Vander Woude. In recent years, he notes, the study of popular culture has gained prominence, with music providing a particularly powerful and visible dimension. Staying current with its topic, the book enhances the learning experience by tying in technology such as iTunes, which makes available most of the musical examples cited.

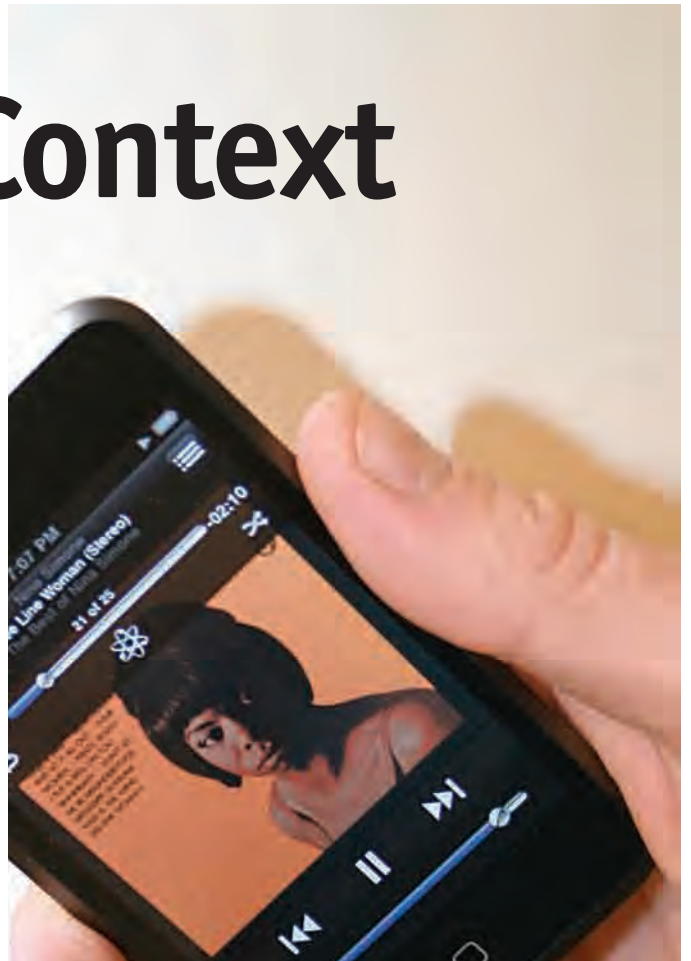
"Popular music today has become one of the world's most pervasive forms of cultural expression," says Vander Woude, "and it can serve as one of the clearest identifying points of any culture." ■



MUSIC

Popularity Context

A new book puts pop music in perspective



TO THE RESCUE

Staring down ruthless warlords, Pernille Ironside has saved thousands of child soldiers.

BY MARTHA TANCOCK

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOPHIE KINACHTCHOUK

PERNILLE IRONSIDE HAS PEERED DOWN the barrels of Kalashnikovs and negotiated with the most brutal of men in deepest, roughest Africa for the release of thousands of child soldiers. It's hard to imagine this willowy, soft-spoken 36-year-old woman with a mane of Pre-Raphaelite curls staring down ruthless warlords responsible for killing, torturing, raping and terrorizing millions of civilians during more than 10 years of civil war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). But she has.

It was her job as a child protection specialist, first with the United Nations peacekeeping mission and then with UNICEF. For four years, Ironside (LLB '99) charged into the lawless eastern Congo jungle to free children abducted and recruited as fighters, sex slaves, porters, cooks and spies by rogue militias fighting for control of the country's precious minerals. She showed no fear. Shielded by the blue flag of the United Nations and bolstered by UN peacekeepers, "I felt protected," she says. "The consequences would have been extreme if they had harmed me." The colour of her skin may have helped, too. "There was a curiosity factor. It wasn't often that they got to speak to a white woman."

Once she gained an audience, negotiations could take days. She spoke French, her Congolese colleagues translated into Swahili. Discussions required patience and diplomacy, and Ironside's "soft, yet firm and persistent approach" usually worked. "You need to exude a power, humbly. You can't walk in there being nervous and meek. Body language is important." So is strategy. "It is a bit like chess. You need to know how to raise issues and steer the conversation in the direction you want it to go," she says.

At first, "of course they say, 'We don't need you here.' They test you, too. They want to know you are serious, yet someone they can work with. Earning their trust is important. You need to get over the fact that these are war criminals and not nice people, yet people you need to have a conversation with in order to help children. It was not my job to hold them accountable."

In a nutshell, here's how she would make her case: Children should not fight the wars of adults. They belong at home with their families and in school. It is an international crime to



recruit children. If you cooperate with us now, you are less likely to be prosecuted either domestically or before the International Criminal Court. Your cooperation will reflect favourably upon your efforts at political legitimization and integration with government forces. We're not going to pay for the release of these children.

"I don't have children yet, but I imagine the work I do is like that of a mother defending her children against an external threat," says Ironside. "You muster up the courage because children are so vulnerable and require protection. It's not about you."

Saving children was not always Ironside's mission in life. Until she was 22, nothing consumed this Prairie girl more than equestrian show jumping.

As an undergraduate, she planned her courses around a daily six-hour training schedule and won bronze at the North American Young Riders Championships, the picking ground for national teams. After earning a commerce degree, she took a year off school "to get riding out of my system", then gave up her mount for good, waved goodbye to Edmonton and drove to Toronto, bound for York's Osgoode Hall Law School. For the only child of academics, there was never any question she would go to graduate school. "I knew I wanted an international career," the multilingual, well-travelled daughter of an English father and Dutch mother recalls. "I just didn't know how it would manifest itself."

Osgoode promised international adventure of a new sort. Missing her horse and feeling like "a bit of an odd duck" among more corporate-oriented classmates, Ironside buried herself in her books during the winter, then skipped out of the country during the summer. She interned at the Canadian Embassy in Washington after first year and took courses at the International Court of Justice in The Hague after second. By third year, she had discovered immigration and refugee law. Instead of articling after law school, Ironside clerked in Ottawa for a Federal Court judge.

Ottawa was a turning point for Ironside. The Department of Foreign Affairs & International Trade hired her as a legal officer and sent her to the UN with a Canadian team to negotiate an international treaty on children's rights. Upon returning, she lobbied furiously to make sure Canada – already spearheading bans on landmines and the use of child soldiers –

was the first nation to ratify the treaty. Besotted by the UN, Ironside enrolled in a master of laws program at Columbia University in New York City and a year later stepped directly into a policy-writing job with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Then she jumped to UNICEF

for a chance to focus on children affected by armed conflict and get field experience. "The thing that was bothering me most at the time was that I was working on conflict issues but hadn't spent time in a conflict zone."

She could have worked anywhere but chose to go to the eastern Congo – considered the world's most dire humanitarian crisis. (Since 1998, according to UN estimates, over five million civilians have died

due to war, 200,000 women and girls have been raped, and 35,000 children have been recruited and used as child soldiers.) "Until you go there, you don't know whether or not you can handle it," says Ironside. She quickly proved she could. Within a month of arriving in February 2005, she and her team had negotiated the release of 500 child soldiers and over the next four years helped free several thousand.

In hardship duty stations such as eastern DRC, UN staff typically rotate out after six to 24 months. Ironside stayed 46. She calls her Congo mission a defining posting in her career so far. "Even while I was there, I suspected it was going to be as challenging, dynamic and exciting as anything I would ever do."

In 2007, Caldwell Partners named her one of Canada's Top 40 Under 40 for her achievements with UNICEF. "I feel this work is my calling," she says. "Seeing children's lives transformed, seeing them smile and be kids again, seeing their hopes and dreams revive after surviving terrible ordeals – it is incredibly motivating and keeps you going, especially on the tough days."

Now based in New York City, she still gallops around the world overseeing UNICEF's child-protection efforts in conflict and natural-disaster hotspots. Among the countries she visited in 2009 alone were Colombia, Sudan, Morocco, Jordan, Iraq, Kenya and the Central African Republic. She also helped organize a 91-country ministerial-level meeting that bolstered commitments to help child soldiers and prevent their recruitment. "Now," she says, "I can make a difference not just on a local level but on a massive scale." ■



HANDLING IT: Ironside with displaced children in eastern Congo

YORK TO THE POWER OF 50

The \$200 million York to the Power of 50 fundraising campaign is nearing completion. Donors are making an exponential difference by giving to enhance York's unique brand of learning and discovery. There is still time to be one of them. Here are just a few examples of how donors are helping.

EMPOWER⁵⁰ Chairs and Professorships



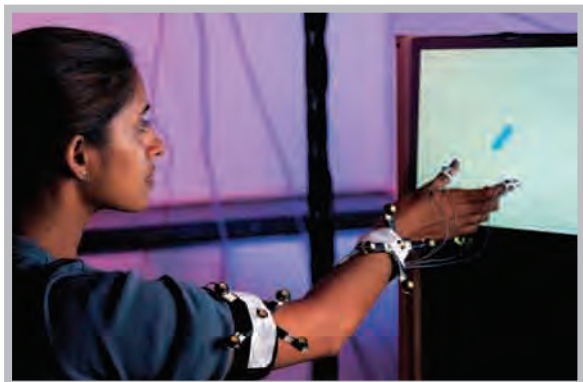
The Jean Augustine Chair in the Faculty of Education will study issues affecting schooling in urban environments to improve teaching methods and student outcomes. Fundraising continues from supporters across the country.

CREATE⁵⁰ Infrastructure



The successful \$10 million fundraising campaign for The Accolade Project helped create studio and performance space, enhanced programming and other benefits for York's Faculty of Fine Arts.

INNOVATE⁵⁰ Pioneering Programs and Research



The Sherman Health Science Research Centre is being made possible by a \$5 million gift from Honey and Barry Sherman. The centre will boost York's leading research into areas such as how the brain functions and the effects of osteoarthritis on knee and hip joints.

TRANSFORM⁵⁰ Student Awards and Scholarships

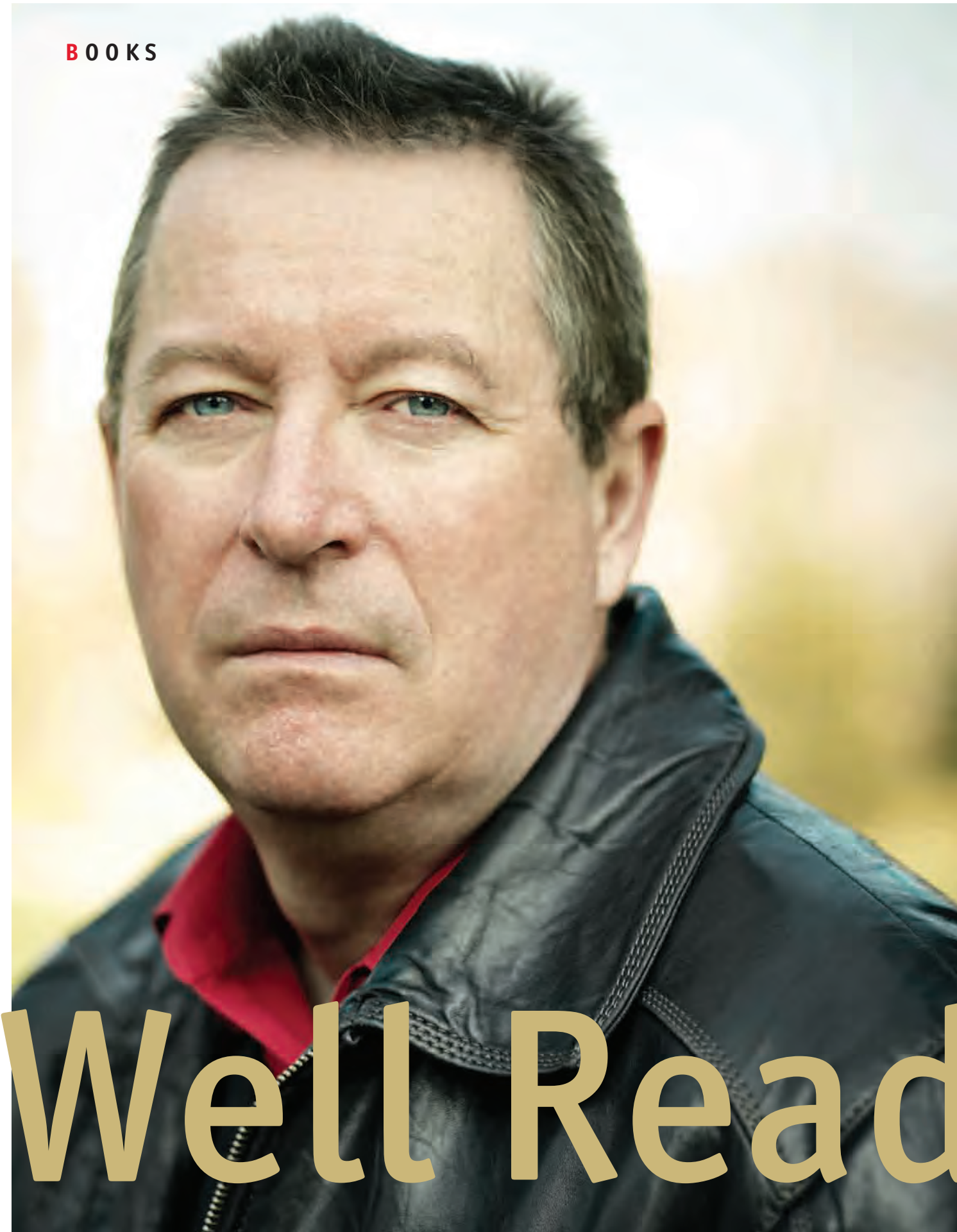


The Lillian Wright Maternal-Child Health Scholars Program supports undergraduate and graduate students in the critical field of maternal-infant health and early child development. The program was made possible by a \$2 million gift from the Lillian and Don Wright Foundation.

You can make a difference, too. Give today.

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www.yorku.ca/foundation



Well Read

If you've never heard of Eric Walters, one of Canada's most successful authors, ask a kid.

BY MICHAEL TODD

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOPHIE KINACHTCHOUK

THERE ARE PULITZER PRIZES, Booker Prizes and Giller Prizes for adult fiction, but nothing similar for children's literature. That young-adult and kid lit doesn't get the respect it deserves mystifies Eric Walters. "It's a little strange considering that I basically outsell all the adults writers in Canada – as do many children's writers – but, yes, we are not given much respect," says Walters, who is a critically acclaimed author of more than 60 books for children and the winner of more than 80 awards (such as the Ontario Library Association's Silver Birch and Red Maple Awards). His books are so popular that they have been translated into French, German, Swedish, Norwegian, Chinese, Dutch – even Slovenian.

Of course, comparing the creation of adult fiction to children's might be a bit apples-and-oranges. "Writing for adults is different. Not better, not more difficult, just different, and we all need to respect each other," says Walters, who is about to launch his latest novel *Shell-Shocked*, based on espionage in the Second World War. "Unfortunately there is almost an inference that since kids aren't really that important, how important could any of us be who write for them? That's so sad."

Walters (BA Spec. Hons. '79, BSW Spec. Hons. '82, MSW '86) more or less stumbled on writing. In fact, he has never taken a creative writing course. His background is psychology and social work, and he got his social work degrees from what was then Atkinson College part time in the evenings. "I was employed as a social worker already when I got my social work degrees. I worked during the day and furthered my education at night."

From social worker to successful kids' author? The stretch isn't as far as you might think. "Social work and psychology both teach you how people think, the things that go on inside, which allows me to plot not only dialogue but motivation," says Walters. It was later, when Walters was a teacher, that he "ended up developing a great love for children's and young-adult literature. But I also found out along the way what kinds of writing worked and what didn't work."

Walters' kid-lit career was born in 1993. He was teaching a

Grade 5 class of what he calls, with a smile, a group of "more challenging students". The class was mostly males who, says Walters, "had little interest in reading or writing." To motivate them, he wrote his first book, set in their school, with local features and backdrops. Even better, a number of the kids became (with their permission) characters in the book itself.

"I wrote it for them chapter by chapter," says Walters. "At the end, one of my students said my book 'wasn't as bad as most of the garbage in the library' – a high compliment. The class suggested I publish it. I got five rejections, but the sixth publisher accepted it."

Walters gets his story ideas from anywhere and everywhere. "Stories come to me from history, current events, personal history, stories people tell me, life experiences and things that just pop into my head," he says. Aside from stories that are sports, mystery or humour based, Walters is a real fan of historical fiction. "We have many great stories as a country and a people, but we are very poor at telling them. So I love to write about things like Camp X [the name of one of his novels] and explain to kids that James Bond is actually the fiction version of a real Canadian spy – William Stephenson."

When Walters isn't busy writing, you can probably find him working on his other passion, Creation of Hope (COH), a small non-profit run by Walters and his family along with contacts in Kenya. COH – creationofhope.com – provides rent and food for the Exodus Children's Home in Kenya, and runs outreach programs providing medicine, clothes, food, school uniforms, chickens and goats, and micro-grants along with many other initiatives. "Our whole approach is a 'hand up' one rather than a hand out because we believe that's what most people really want," says Walters.

Of his many books, is there a favourite? "I like to say it's simply the one I'm working on. Two days ago I finished a story about a 17-year-old boy who uses false ID to enlist in World War II and becomes a navigator on a Lancaster. That will remain my favourite until I start the next book – probably in about two weeks." ■

Ron Westray, York's new Oscar Peterson Chair, riffs on the past, present – and unsettled future – of jazz.

BY MICHAEL TODD

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MCKENZIE JAMES

ALTHOUGH HE HAS EVERY RIGHT, you won't find Ron Westray blowing his own horn, unless, perhaps, he's onstage at Toronto's Lula Lounge (as he was recently with saxophonist and Yorkie Richard Underhill, formerly of the Shuffle Demons), or giving a trombone master class for York jazz students. That's not to say Westray, York's newly appointed Oscar Peterson Chair in Jazz Performance, doesn't have bragging rights. He does. As he puts it, he's a "cat" who spent 14 years on the road touring with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra and as a sideman to trumpet virtuoso Wynton Marsalis in the Wynton Marsalis Septet. In other words, Westray has plenty of street cred.

And as a newly minted York prof, Westray has every intention – and obligation – to keep fresh by performing, composing and recording. Westray's first stint in academia only began in 2005, as an assistant professor at the University of Texas at Austin, where he taught a jazz appreciation course for four years before moving north. Westray currently gives jazz master classes and teaches Contemporary Black Urban Music in the Faculty of Fine Arts.

So how did York hear of him or vice versa? "I was following the academic positions online. I knew York was looking for someone. So I sent in my material. But I got a call and then was eventually flown up for an interview. A few months after that, I got a job offer." It is no small posting. The Oscar Peterson Chair in Jazz Performance, honouring the legendary pianist-composer and former York chancellor who died in 2007, is funded by a \$4-million endowment by the Ontario government and includes \$1 million to establish music scholarships for talented students from underprivileged backgrounds.

Despite years on the road, Westray wasn't exactly a stranger to academia, although, musically speaking, he was pretty much self-taught on both piano and trombone from his earliest days. "I think my real music education took place when I got to college," he says. Westray, who was born in Columbia, South Carolina, in 1970, did his undergraduate studies at South Carolina State University, where he played (and learned the "hard data") about jazz from luminaries such as Marcus Roberts. Later, he completed an MA at Eastern Illinois University and joined the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, conducted by Marsalis, in 1993, while also performing as a regular member of the Mingus Big Band (Westray did the arrangements for the 2005 CD *Don't Be Afraid... The Music of Charles Mingus* by the Lincoln Center orchestra).

Music was also in the Westray family's blood. His father, Ronald Westray Sr., was a singer (and a paramedic by day), and his grandfather, Joe Westray, was "a huge local legend in Pittsburgh," according to Westray. "Joe played with the likes of Art Blakey and Stanley Turrentine, Arthur Prysock, Ahmad Jamal and Dr. Lonnie Smith." Grandfather Westray was an organist in the Wild Bill Davis style – playing the Hammond B-3 jazz variety, not a church organ. "Fortunately I had this jazz legacy from the '50s and '60s jazz scenes as part of my DNA," says Westray. "Joe Westray gave George Benson, who was relatively unknown at the time, one of his first guitars. And my father's mother, my grandmother, still lives in Homewood, the same borough [of Pittsburgh] that Billy Strayhorn was born in."

Is Westray arriving at a time when jazz is in crisis – and losing audience? Well-known former Toronto jazz clubs like George's Spaghetti House and Bourbon Street have long been closed, while Top O'The Senator and the Montreal Bistro shut their doors only a few years ago. Recently *The Journal of Music*, a thoughtful international magazine, carried a lengthy piece on jazz musicians questioning their role as keepers of the tradition and whether jazz music is being diluted by other musical styles.

None of this pondering over jazz's destiny bothers Westray in the least. In fact, just the opposite. "You know, questioning is healthy. It means people are paying attention – that jazz is still on the radar and important enough to think about! This is nothing new. People have been questioning the future and state of jazz for the last 50 years. When we stop asking questions, that's when we should worry."

These days, says Westray, jazz represents a very small percentage of the total music audience. "It's around 2-3 per cent, I'd say. In the past it used to be closer to 4-5 per cent, so it's always been really small compared to pop and classical." The solution to jazz's longevity question lies in teaching and turning younger kids on to the music, he says. "Generally speaking, the 18- to 28-year-olds don't really like jazz. They're more into contemporary urban music, which includes rap and hip hop. They don't like it because they don't understand it. But in my jazz appreciation course – it's general and open to non-majors – my job is to educate that generation. Boomers don't need it. They grew up with the tradition. So if in a jazz appreciation class of 120 students I can impact 10, and then they go out and impact others – that's what it's all about." ■



He Be Jazzin'

Ice Break

The ravages of climate change were readily apparent at a York-organized “floating conference” in Canada’s Eastern Arctic.

BY MARTHA TANCOCK

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBERT MCKENNA

LAST AUGUST, York geography Professor Kathy Young chartered a passenger ship and hosted more than 60 Arctic hydrologists and oceanographers on a one-week cruise up the east coast of Baffin Island. It was no luxury holiday but a “floating conference”. Young had reserved the Lyubov Orlova for the 17th International Northern Research Basins (NRB) Symposium & Workshop. It was the only way to see Canada’s Eastern Arctic. “There are no roads up there,” says Young. “You can’t just hop on a Greyhound coach for a scenic tour!”

Despite careers devoted to northern research, few of the conference delegates, who hailed from every circumpolar nation, had travelled to the eastern Canadian Arctic. Even Young had only touched down briefly in Iqaluit, Nunavut’s capital on southeastern Baffin Island, as part of her annual summer migration to Polar Bear Pass on far northern Bathurst Island, where she monitors snowbeds and hillslope streams that sustain extensive wetlands. So on Aug. 12, 2009 when they boarded the passenger ship in Frobisher Bay, these expert observers of Arctic freshwater systems were as eager as ordinary

tourists to catch a glimpse of polar bears and icebergs.

Young, the first woman to organize an NRB symposium, raised \$150,000 in kind and cash from public and private sources and made sure her peers from polar nations Canada, the United States, Russia, Finland, Iceland, Denmark (Greenland), Sweden and Norway, as well as from Britain and Japan, could participate.

Over four intense days, scientists heard 50 papers on the theme of managing hydrological uncertainty in high-latitude environments, a reference to the challenge of understanding

the impact of global warming in the Arctic. It couldn’t have been more timely. In 2007, record high temperatures in the Arctic caused record melt and sent vast shelves of the Greenland ice cap crashing into the sea. Global warming is happening twice as fast in the Arctic than anywhere else in the world. And presenters at this conference, like the native peoples of the North, have seen it coming.

Across the circumpolar north, river and lake ice is thawing earlier and freezing later than usual, affecting transportation. Rising temperatures and melting sea ice have brought more fog, rain, snow and extreme weather along the coasts, causing storm surges that have battered the Mackenzie River Delta, as well as provoking rare rain-on-snow flash floods and more ice jams. As sea ice melts, polar bears are finding it more difficult to reach seals, their main food source. In Alaska, melting permafrost has caused mudslides, lower water tables, drought and forest fires that could force many communities to relocate. Degrading permafrost could release a lot more harmful methane into the atmosphere.

These hydrologists can predict what might happen at a local level but say they need much more data and more sophisticated computer modelling to begin to forecast the big-picture impact of climate change in the Arctic. But to forecast the bigger picture they need to understand how northern hydrological processes interact with oceanic and atmospheric processes. That is why, for the first time in the NRB’s 35-year history, they invited Arctic oceanographers to share their research and will invite atmospheric scientists to the next conference in 2011.

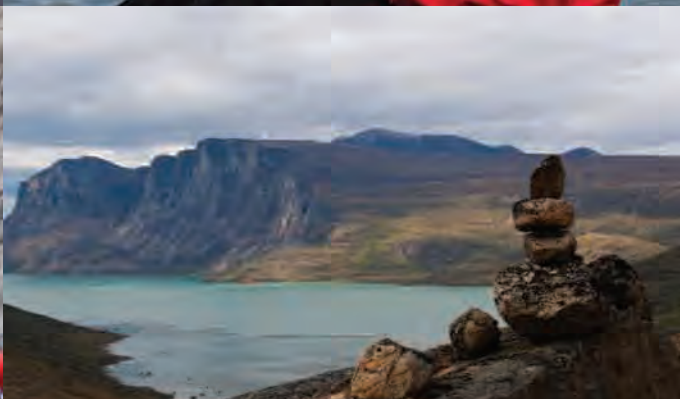
Oceanographers told them how freshwater run-off is affecting the salinity of coastal waters; that run-off from Greenland glaciers travels around the tip and north with the currents of the north Atlantic Ocean; that the currents of the Pacific Ocean, Beaufort Sea, Arctic Ocean and Atlantic Ocean are intricately connected – not distinct as is often believed; that the loss of sea ice will add vastly more ultraviolet radiation to the system than what enters through holes in the ozone layer; and that the Arctic Ocean could be seasonally ice free by 2013.

“We’ve got some huge challenges,” said keynote speaker Larry Hinzman, director of the International Arctic Research Center in Fairbanks, Alaska. To predict the environmental impact of climate change responsibly, he said, researchers have to start viewing the Arctic as a system and not focus solely on their own special areas. Scientists are already working on a predictive model that could be ready in 10 years.

Sober words and serious purpose, but the conference was not without distractions. For a few hours every day, scientists switched off their PowerPoints, pulled on rubber boots and rain gear, and filed into Zodiac dinghies for excursions into the storied land of the Inuit. They watched a massive iceberg steal past, so big it must have calved from the Jakobshavn Glacier, the mother of the iceberg that sunk the Titanic. They saw whale and human bones on the killing rocks of historic Kekerten Island whaling station. And on a tour around



CHALLENGES: Young (right) and Arctic scenes



Akpatok Island, they knew they had just missed a deadly clash between two male polar bears when they spied the bloody-pawed victor and soon after his mortally wounded opponent dying on the stony beach.

Remote, barren and billions of years old, Baffin Island might seem immutable to the average observer. But not to this

crowd. When elders at Pangnirtung described, through a translator, how the glacier across Cumberland Sound had disappeared and a flash flood the year before had knifed through permafrost right down to bedrock, they were not surprised. Scientists and elders, fellow front-line witnesses to global warming, agreed – all we can do now is adapt. ■

See Martha Tancock's *YFile* diary of the trip at bit.ly/fdZPW and Robert McKenna's photo gallery at reflectioncom.com/nrb.

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STARS IN HER EYES

Ilana Dashevsky
helps keep the Hubble
telescope humming.

BY DAVID FULLER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KC ARMSTRONG

ILANA DASHEVSKY ALWAYS ENJOYED her mother's stories about the stars in the night sky. And although little Ilana didn't know it – or the quiet pain that lay beneath – those mother-daughter chats were laying the foundation for a science career and a key job at the home base for NASA's Hubble Space Telescope mission. Years later, Dashevsky (BSc '97) would come to the realization that those stars were her future.

As a six-year-old in 1980, Dashevsky emigrated from her native Latvia when her parents were allowed to leave the Soviet Union. The family lived in Calgary for a time before moving to Toronto. It was there that Dashevsky's mother began fostering her love of astronomy by talking about the phases of the moon and stars and taking her to the McLaughlin Planetarium. "She told me enough to keep my interest going," says Dashevsky. "They were happy times. It was just my mom telling me about the stars – I didn't know the reason for it."

When she came to York in 1992, Dashevsky decided to major in English and also took courses in philosophy, early civilizations and myths. "My parents read a lot and had an interest in literature, so it was very natural for me to pursue English initially," she says. For her compulsory general education credit in science, Dashevsky picked astronomy and, from the moment she first walked into class, knew she had found something special. She took extra courses that summer and changed majors the following year. It was only when discussing the change with her parents that she found she was following the same career path her mother had been unable to pursue in the still secretive Soviet state research community. "She had all of the qualifications to pursue a degree in physics," Dashevsky explains, "but Jews were not trusted."

Her father, who knew physics and works as a robotics programmer in Toronto, was also a big influence. After her first year at York, Dashevsky realized it was the combination of arts and science that was fuelling her curiosity about the physical universe and making a career path clearer. "Astronomy has a sort of romantic side to it," she explains, "a very beautiful and intangible part that is inspirational."

Dashevsky quickly threw herself into studying math, physics and computer science. She became president of the York Astronomy Club and a member of the observatory team,

thanks to the encouragement of physics & astronomy Professor Paul Delaney of the Faculty of Science & Engineering. Both, she says, were invaluable experiences. During her time at York, Dashevsky also worked with her first Hubble images as a research assistant to York Professor John Caldwell, a frequent user of the space telescope's services. "I'm sure this connection was very helpful during my job interview," she says.

She was hired by the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore, Maryland, the Hubble's scientific home base. While working with her team, known as "commandos" for the work they do writing software commands for Hubble's telescope and cameras, Dashevsky completed a master's degree in applied physics at nearby Johns Hopkins University. During that time, she shared the challenges and the joys of operating the world's most famous space telescope, especially the visits by shuttle astronauts before they went into space to improve Hubble's capabilities. The fourth and final servicing mission, completed in May 2009, gave Hubble a new camera and spectrograph that are 30 times more sensitive, and controlled by software that Dashevsky helped write. "Working with so many innovative people on two of NASA's greatest missions is wonderful," she says.

The second of those missions is nearing the horizon. After 10 years controlling the Hubble's cameras for scientists around the world – and meeting and marrying her husband, spacecraft engineer Chris Long – Dashevsky is now helping develop mission systems software for the James Webb Space Telescope. This next-generation instrument, set to launch in 2014, will orbit a point in space beyond the moon to take infrared pictures of younger, more distant regions of the galaxy and give the world a new collection of dazzling images to complement those compiled by Hubble over the past 19 years.

"I see Hubble images everywhere I go," Dashevsky says, "in bookstores and in movies. It's a really good feeling to know that I helped a tiny bit to make that happen and the images are out there to inspire other people." Two of those people are her own children, Alex, 6, and Julia, 5, who have accompanied their parents to work at odd hours and listened to stories about the stars. "I've done things like have my kids stay up to watch a lunar eclipse," says Dashevsky. "We're always pointing out the moon and planets, and now they're doing it all the time." Sounds familiar. ■

YORK PEOPLE

Liban Gaashaan

IT strategist, mentor

Carrying a Torch

WHEN HE WAS A TEENAGER, Liban Gaashaan fled civil war in Somalia with his family and came to Canada. Speaking no English, he entered Etobicoke's Kipling Collegiate Institute having to find his own difficult way in a new country. Eighteen years later, he has found it so well that, in addition to becoming an information technology strategy consultant with two university degrees and a strong record as a competitive sprinter behind him, he was chosen to run in the Olympic Torch Relay for the 2010 Winter Games in Vancouver.

The encouragement of people he barely knew left a lasting impression on Gaashaan, who graduated from York in computer science (BSc. '00) and later did an MBA at Wilfrid Laurier University. "A lot of people took me under their wing and helped me," he says. "I wanted to give back in return." In 2008, he hit on the idea of forming Mentor Partnership, a non-profit organization that helps like-minded professionals meet with young people from the inner city to offer advice and encouragement about their future. Gaashaan invited some of his business contacts to events he helped organize, such as a green career day, and they agreed to work together to break the cycle of poverty through education. What made them want to help? "People hear my story and they really get excited," says Gaashaan, "and York was the breeding ground for me in terms of thinking outside of the box." ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MCKENZIE JAMES





Elizabeth Gow
Biologist

Bird's Eyes

ELIZABETH GOW NEVER GOES ANYWHERE without her *Peterson Field Guide to Birds of North America*, binoculars, 300-millimetre camera lens, pencil, notepad and compass. If they aren't around her neck, they're at her fingertips in the cargo pockets of her hiking pants. Last summer, this graduate student tromped through Panama's tropical forest, sailed around the Eastern Arctic and toured Newfoundland in her singular pursuit to see songbirds, seabirds and shorebirds. Her eyes are as sharp as an eagle's and her knowledge, encyclopedic. In an instant, she can identify a flying blur by shape, flight pattern, wing structure. "I'm a goalie," says Gow (BSc. Hons. '07, MSc. '09), who played on York's women's varsity hockey team for three years. "I'm trained to read the name on a puck."

"What got me interested in birds was their colour," Gow says, recalling brilliantly plumed specimens she spied on a family trip to Kenya. Gow was top athlete in high school and enrolled in kinesiology before surrendering to the irresistible lure of biology. Blissful summers doing field research for renowned York ornithologist Bridget Stutchbury led to a master's thesis on the wood thrush. Now, as intrigued by birds' mating and migratory behaviour as by their hue, she's gone west to do a PhD, anticipating countless happy hours observing northern flickers, still hooked on research. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOPHIE KINACHTCHOUK

Carl Tacon

Sculptor

Off the Old Block

WHAT WEIGHS ABOUT 50 TONS, is 42 metres long and is made up of 20 individually hand-carved, 133-centimetre-high sections of Vermont Mountain White marble? Answer: Carl Tacon's public sculpture, *Shift*, an imposingly beautiful work sited at 1 St. Thomas St. in downtown Toronto near Bay and Bloor.

The sculpture's marble drapery makes reference to classical imagery while balancing that backward glance with a form-meets-function contemporary experience (the sculpture acts as the property line of its host, One St. Thomas Residences, a luxury condominium building).

Public sculpture hasn't had a very happy existence in Canada, or in Toronto for that matter, so how did Tacon (BFA Spec. Hons. '88, MFA '96) get commissioned to create *Shift*? "When the city gives developers concessions in the municipal zoning bylaws, the developer gives something beneficial back to the city in exchange. So one per cent of the project's total building budget goes to funding public art," says Tacon.

Shift's drapery imagery stems from the idea of a building's facade or surface being merely a perceptual skin, he says. "That skin empowers a building with a sense of authority and stature. It has an elusive quality that can be used to suggest the transitional space between the interior and exterior facades of a building." Tacon says a large part of his work is about "how surfaces, any surface, can be deceptive." ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE FORD



GIVING

DO YOU WANT TO HELP find cancer biomarkers that allow for easier – and earlier – diagnosis? Would you like to support studies of bullying and how to control it? How about determining what the weather is like on Mars? Or perhaps uncovering new approaches to rainforest conservation and sustainable farming methods? These are just a few examples of research studies currently underway at York University, and you can directly support them through a donation to York Research.

“No matter what concern is close to your heart, there’s almost always a York researcher who is generating new findings and pushing the boundaries of knowledge in that field,” says Shirley Freek, associate director of development at the York University Foundation. “Very often, the very best way to support the causes you care most about is through a gift right here at York.”

Giving to York University research is particularly powerful because there’s a continuum from knowledge creation (fundamental research) right through to practical application. “Research breakthroughs at York directly impact global society, economy and health care,” says Stan Shapson, York’s vice-president research & innovation. “New knowledge created here leads to cutting-edge applications, such as the creation of diagnostic methods and test kits to diagnose head and neck cancer by researchers in mass spectrometry.”

York University takes the translation of its research into practical application as a core responsibility. President & Vice-Chancellor Mamdouh Shoukri has summed up



the University’s attitude: “Knowledge is of no benefit to anyone if it sits on a shelf. The greatest responsibility of the University is to mobilize that knowledge.”

To this end, York has set up a Knowledge Mobilization Unit specifically dedicated to the task. And with research as a key priority of the University Academic Plan and one of four priorities for the York to the Power of 50 fundraising campaign, there’s a lot more knowledge to mobilize all the time. Major investments by government and donors have led to construction of the York Research Tower, the Sherman Health Science Research Centre and the upcoming new Life Sciences Building. These investments reflect a growing demand for research in key areas and serve as a barometer of York’s growing capabilities.

“Much of York’s interdisciplinary research aims to get at the very human topics that affect us all: air quality, vision, cities, gender, race, slavery, crime, bullying, sustainability, refugees,” says Shoukri.

“There’s truly a world of choice at York University for caring people who want to make a difference,” says Freek. “So many breakthroughs happen in University laboratories and, in fact, have happened here.” More information about specific research studies can be found by visiting research.yorku.ca.

Gifts to general research or to a specific research study can be made online at yorku.ca/foundation by clicking Give Now or by contacting Shirley Freek at 416-650-8206 or sfreek@yorkfoundation.yorku.ca. ■

ALUMNI

News:

Dreaming Big

This year's Bryden awards honour six high-achieving alumni

This fall, a diverse group of Canadians posed smiling for the camera at the historic Carlu auditorium in downtown Toronto. Though of different ages, different callings and different backgrounds, the group shared three attributes: they followed their passion, they were successful – and they graduated from York University.

This year, York's prestigious Bryden Alumni Awards honoured CBC broadcaster Barbara Budd (BA '74), lawyer and longtime York board member Marshall "Mickey" Cohen (LLB '60, LLM '63, Hon. LLD '86), veteran York faculty member Robert Drummond (BA '67), teacher Gretel Reid-Willis (BA Hons. & BEd '01) and sports-casting brothers Paul Jones (BSc Spec. Hons. '80) and Mark Jones (BA '84).

Applauded by nearly 300 grads, faculty and family members at a gala reception on Nov. 5, the honourees were all people who "inspire our York community, and Canadians in

general, to dream big and work hard," said James Allan, York's senior director, alumni.

Emcee Jian Ghomeshi (BA '95), also a CBC broadcaster, opened the event with humour about his own high-profile career, but took a serious moment to share his thoughts on the value of a liberal arts degree. "Being a renaissance person is a way to find success today," he said. "It's what people are looking for – well-rounded, interesting, interested humans. That's what York brought to me."

Paul Jones, the voice of the Raptors on Toronto radio station The Fan 590, received the Redefine the Possible Award, which he shared with his brother Mark, a sportscaster for ESPN and ABC in the US, who was unable to attend. They were recognized for their exciting leap from playing varsity basketball to commenting on major league games. On stage, Paul gave an emotional salute to his family. "I know there are some nights when daddy's not there, but I want to thank you for allowing



NETWORKING: Honouree Budd of CBC and attendee Sandie Rinaldo (BA Spec. Hons. '73) of CTV

me to live my dream."

Immediate past chair of the York Board of Governors and tireless ambassador for the University, Cohen received the Outstanding Contribution Award. He opened by saying the award belonged as much to his wife and fellow York volunteer Judi as to him, and continued, "I'm enormously excited about York's future. York is not just about people with degrees, but citizens, and people with consciences, and people who are thoughtful."

For his vision and longtime commitment as a senior member of the York faculty and administration, Drum-

mond was presented with the Local Hero Award. "I was privileged to be a student at York when it was a small liberal arts college," he said. "I was doubly privileged when I returned to York as a faculty member and could see the small college growing into the country's third-largest university." He said one of the benefits of his student experience was that, as dean of the former Faculty of Arts and in his many voluntary roles, he made sure York didn't lose "the virtues of that small college" as it embraced the opportunities afforded by growth.

Reid-Willis was described



CELEBRATION: (Top) Ghomeshi; Cohen; Paul Jones; (middle) Reid-Willis; Budd; Burry and Drummond; (bottom) student choir Wibi

as a much-loved teacher “who finds math in everything and is an incredible inspiration as an educator.” Following a video featuring many of her devoted students, Reid-Willis received the One-to-Watch Award. “York University has been a great training ground for me,” declared Reid-Willis, who shared one of her most valuable lessons learned from a professor: you cannot teach

them until you know them. She now shares this mantra with her colleagues.

The Pinnacle Achievement Award went to Budd for her extraordinary career as a stage actor and TV and radio personality, co-hosting CBC Radio’s “As It Happens” since 1993. Budd recalled that she originally wanted to go to a conservatory for acting, but her mother insisted on a uni-

versity education. “More than anything in the world, I wanted to tell stories,” she said, “and it was such a smart choice to come to York – where one was engulfed and enmeshed and embraced by so many cultures, suddenly and intimately and wonderfully.”

There were nearly 20 past recipients of Bryden Alumni Awards in the audience, further evidence that passion and

accomplishment go hand in hand. Guy Burry (BA ’82), chair of the York University Alumni Association, closed the ceremony with a special thank you to lead sponsor Manulife Financial, reception sponsor MBNA and video sponsor Wellington West.

For more information about Bryden recipients, including video profiles, visit yorku.ca/brydenawards. ■

Class Notes:

1970

Mooney, Patrick (MA) has moved back to Newfoundland after 15 years working in Ontario and Nova Scotia.

1974

Graham, Minna (MES) works as an independent consultant, committed to leadership development, team performance and organizational effectiveness. She feels strongly that her MES laid the foundation for her expertise.

1975

Lever, Bernice (BA Hons. '72 Atkinson, MA) had her ninth book of poems, *Generation*, published recently by Black Moss Press. She is retired and contentedly writing and editing on beautiful Bowen Island, BC.

1977

Davis, Gary (LLB) was appointed executive dean of the Faculty of Law, Business & Arts at Charles Darwin University in Darwin, Australia, in May, after six years as dean of the School of Law at Flinders University in Adelaide.

1978

Spezzano, Frank (BA Glendon) is an actor, director, teacher and playwright. He recently published *Bresani*, a historical drama about the first Italian Jesuit in North America.

1980

Parker, Ara (BFA Hons. Calumet) lives in Victoria, BC, with her daughter, and works as an expressive arts therapist at the Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health. She completed her master in expressive therapies at Lesley University in Cambridge, Mass., and serves on the board of the BC School of Art Therapy.

Starr, Rhonda (BA Glendon, BEd) will retire in 2010 after a 30-year teaching career. She looks forward to time with her husband, **Grant Dale** (BA '70, BA Hons. '91, Atkinson), travelling and photographing the world, as well as continuing their ballroom dancing.

1982

Phillips, Guy (LLB) recently retired after 24 years of practising military law with the Canadian Forces Office of the Judge Advocate General. He lives in Kingston, Ont.

1984

Dekleer, Rolf (BA '81 Atkinson, MBA & MA) joined GrowthWorks Capital in 2000, bringing 18 years of operating experience in the technology sector.

1987

Kooiman, Michael (BA Founders) graduated from Chicago Theological Seminary with a doctor of ministry.

He serves Central United Church in Weston, Ont.

Lister, Amy (BA Glendon) was a professor of nursing for almost 20 years with Centennial College's Collaborative BScN Program and retired in June 2009. She is healthy and happily married with two children and one grandchild.

Ross, Margo (BA Spec. Hons. McLaughlin) and husband Michael Mawdsley recently returned to Victoria, BC, from six months volunteering in rural South Africa on Edzimkulu, an HIV/AIDS project. She has resumed her position as executive director of sport in the Ministry of Healthy Living & Sport and serves on the board of the Victoria Women's Transition House Society.

1988

Shaw, Joanne (BA Hons. Atkinson) provides fee-for-service consultative financial planning as a certified financial planner. She is also a reiki master and certified yoga teacher, and is studying Yoshinkan aikido, go-ju ryu karate and Japanese sumi-e brush painting.

1989

Lyberopoulos, Luisa (BA Hons. Stong) received her certified general accountant designation in June 2009. She lives in Thornhill with her husband and two children, 6-year-old Nicolas and 3-year-old Kristin.

Riego, Lourena (BA Spec. Hons. McLaughlin) recently joined Mercer Canada's Global Investment Management group as an operations analyst. She lives in North York and enjoys daily fitness classes.

Swann, Antonia (BA Spec. Hons. Bethune) is a health economist with Signet Research & Consulting in Toronto.

1990

O'Brien, Tracy (BA Founders) started Designs by O'Brien, a full-service design office offering residential, retail and commercial design to clients throughout the Greater Toronto Area.



1980: Rhonda Starr

1993

Marville, Che (BA Glendon) is executive director of the Children's Own Museum and founder of the social enterprise company 6Minds Inc. She is a wife and mother of four children.

Mitchell, Vanessa (BA Glendon) is a senior account executive for Metroland Media's Goldbook.ca. She spent several years in Paris, France, working as an English language assistant and studying at La Sorbonne, as well as three and a half years studying Spanish in Valladolid, Spain, where she met her husband, Jose. She lives in Oakville, Ont., and is forever grateful to the French department at Glendon who inspired and encouraged her.

1994

Mintz Sanchez, Judith (BFA Spec. Hons. Winters) has shifted careers from the arts to yoga instruction and shiatsu therapy and now to a much-anticipated return to academia. Her graduate studies at Trent University focus on the Canadian women's narrative of the perinatal experience. She lives in Peterborough with her two young daughters.

1997

Cappadocia, Frank (BA Hons. Vanier) has accepted the new position of assistant dean of Lakehead University's Orillia campus, after



1994: Judith Mintz Sanchez

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Class Notes:



2003: Gail Cornish

working as director of York's Centre for Student Community & Leadership Development.

Sharma, Rajeev (BA Hons. '93 Founders, LLB) has been corporate counsel in the Law & Patents Department of Bayer Inc. since 2007. He also teaches the economic analysis of law at Glendon.

1998

Smith, Trisha (BA Hons. '94 Atkinson, BEd) is a teacher, artist and writer, and author of the novel *Holiday in Hell*. She has done research, interviews and writing for *Ecology Canada Magazine* and other publications, and has illustrated books and educational publications.

Zarins, Katherine (Kate) (BAS Atkinson) recently moved to Montague, PEI, as manager of Grant Thornton LLP's Independent Business Group Montague office.

1999

Tarlattini, Suzie (BFA Spec. Hons. Winters) is the Runaway Prevention Program supervisor at Covenant House Toronto. She facilitates runaway prevention and youth homelessness awareness programs in schools across south-central Ontario, addressing youth pressures including abuse, poverty, drugs and bullying.

2000

McEvenue, Shannon (BSc Spec. Hons. Bethune) completed her master in family studies & gerontology at Mount Saint Vincent Uni-

versity in Halifax, and is now studying law at Dalhousie University.

2001

Miller, Sandy (BA Hons. Calumet) graduated from Dalhousie University with a bachelor of social work in 2006 and a master of social work in 2007. She has since returned to work with the City of Toronto.

Bakriges, Christopher (PhD) has lectured in music at Elms College in Massachusetts, published seven academic papers, performed 170 shows a year and played piano on two dozen albums. He also co-leads the Oikos Ensemble, a Cleveland-based world jazz group that traverses ethnic, jazz and chamber music.

Di Ruscio-Bonofiglio, Claudia (BA Hons. Vanier) is a teacher with the Toronto Catholic District School Board. She lives in Woodbridge with her husband Tony.

Palumbo, Joseph (BAS Hons. '89 Atkinson, MBA) was named a Fellow of the Society of Management Accountants of Canada for his contribution to the profession and his leadership in the community.

McMillan, Ross (BA McLaughlin) and **Rochelle Bondy** (BA '09 Calumet) celebrated the birth of Charles Archibald McMillan this past June. Ross works for York's Centre for Student Community & Leadership Development.

Whillier, Stephney (BEd) was awarded a PhD in biology from Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, in September.

2002

Carrasco, Jaime (BFA Spec. Hons. McLaughlin) works as a freelance drummer and drum instructor in Winnipeg. He recently married Eva Jurikova in Bojnice, Slovakia.

Song, Hyoung Suk (BA Hons. Calumet) was recently promoted to assistant manager of the digital appliance division of Samsung Electronics Ltd.

2003

Cornish, Gail (BA Spec. Hons. Vanier, BEd) is an elementary school teacher with the Toronto District School Board. She and her fiancé will wed on July 23, 2010.

Pjescic, Minja (MBA) and husband Tihomir Cvijic became proud parents of a beautiful baby girl named Nina, weighing 8 pounds, 2 ounces, on July 16, 2009.

2004

De Sousa, Jacqueline (BA Hons. '02 McLaughlin, BEd) is a secondary school history and drama teacher for the Toronto Catholic District School Board. She promotes involvement in leadership within the school, volunteer work in the community and a mock trial that's held at Osgoode Hall Law School each spring.

Gibson, Hugh (BFA Spec. Hons. Winters) wrapped up work on a feature-length film he produced, titled *A Place Called Los Pereyra*, directed by **Andres Livov-Macklin** (BFA Spec. Hons. '04 Winters). It premiered at the International Documentary Film

Festival Amsterdam in November 2009.

2005

Piper, Robert (BFA Spec. Hons. '82 Calumet, MA) manages his company Music Alliance, where he teaches piano, guitar and violin. He also offers reconditioned pianos for sale as well as piano tuning.

2006

Kutty, Faisal (LLM) is a PhD candidate and adjunct professor at Osgoode Hall Law School and recently started as a visiting professor at Valparaiso University School of Law in Indiana. He has a daughter, Sahar, with **Bushra Yousuf** (BA '03 Calumet).

2007

Vuong Quinto, Julie (BA Hons. Stong) is a licensed paralegal with the Law Society of Upper Canada, and an active member of the Paralegal Society of Ontario and Paralegal Society of Canada. She works with an accident rehab and physiotherapy clinic, specializing in motor vehicle accidents and accident benefits claims.

D'Souza, Jocelyn (BAS Spec. Hons. Atkinson) works as an account transfers admin at the Royal Bank of Canada and has also begun a home business with Amway Global.

Kavanagh, Colleen (BA Spec. Hons. Glendon) is working towards her PhD in forensic phonetics at the University of York in England.

From LLB to JD

Alumni of York University's Osgoode Hall Law School can now apply to convert their bachelor of laws (LLB) degree to a juris doctor (JD) degree. A new diploma will be issued. The move to the JD is part of a growing trend among law schools in Canada and internationally to acknowledge that the degree holder has completed a period of postsecondary education prior to entering law school and that law is a second-entry degree. See details at yorku.ca/mygrad/jd.



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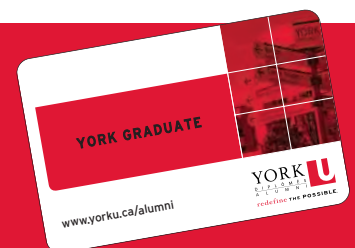
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Class Notes:



2009: Heather Davies

Fuller, Mark (PhD) just published his first book, *S3 – Sustainable Stakeholder Strategy*, which is available via amazon.ca.

Mathur, Rachit (BA Founders) moved back to India after graduation to start his own fitness company. He was recently awarded the 2009 Global Youth Leadership Award for changing the face of the Indian fitness industry.

2008

Browne, Kevin (BA Winters) enjoyed his undergrad so much that he's continuing his studies at Canisius College in Buffalo, NY, pursuing a master in childhood education.

2009

Szczypek, Beata (BFA Spec. Hons. Winters) landed her dream job working at RemoteStylist.com, a home decor Web site. She attributes her success to her invaluable York BFA.

Coronas-Cruz, Angelica (BA Hons. Vanier) attends Niagara University for teacher's college and plans to graduate in December 2010. She has been married for almost six years

and has two daughters. She loves working with children and enjoys drawing and painting in her spare time.

Davies, Heather (MFA) has been living in the UK for 18 years, working as a theatre director for the last eight. She recently returned to Canada to pursue her master of fine arts and to experiment and challenge herself creatively.

Turi, Jessica (BA Stong) is in teacher's college at the University of Windsor. She plans to teach high school in the Halton region when she finishes. During her time at York, she coached the York Lions women's hockey team and continues to coach girl's hockey in Windsor.

Stedman, Ian (MA) recently married **Aimy Lieu** (MA '04). He was called to the Ontario bar in June 2009.

Smith, Allana (BA Winters) will marry Pt. CFN Scott Robinson in June 2011 in Ottawa.

Hathaway-Warner, Valerie (BFA Spec. Hons. Vanier, BEd) was recently honoured as the 2009 recip-



2009: Ian Stedman

ient of the Joseph W. Atkinson Scholarship for Excellence in Teacher Education from the Ontario College of Teachers. She is pursuing her master of education at York

In Memoriam

Accinelli, Nancy, co-president of the York University Retirees Association and a treasured fixture at York for four decades, died on Nov. 1 at 69. She served in a variety of administrative roles and was the longtime executive producer of Vanier College Productions.

Bloore, Ronald, a major Canadian painter who taught art and humanities at York for 20 years, died on Sept. 4 at 84. When the Keele campus opened in 1965, Bloore set up a studio in Stong House. He also helped found the Faculty of Fine Arts.

Brooker, Douglas (LLB '92), a PhD student at Birkbeck College, University of London, in England, died in February 2009 at 57. After graduating from Osgoode Hall Law School, he received his master of laws from the University of Ottawa in 1995.

Burnet, Jean, founding chair of Glendon's Department of Sociology and a pioneer in her field, died on Sept. 14 at 90.

Corcos, Evelynne, a Glendon psychology professor who researched technology and brought interactive "clickers" into her classroom, died on July 8.

Crosby, Ann Denholm, a political science professor and expert on international relations in the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies, died on July 1.

Kreppner, James (LLB '89, BA '96), a much-honoured activist for the safety of Canada's blood supply, died on May 14 at 47 from complications caused by HIV and hepatitis C. While still a York student in the mid-1980s, Kreppner contracted the two life-threatening conditions from tainted blood he received for treatment of a severe form of hemophilia. He became one of the lead plaintiffs in the class action lawsuit that resulted in a \$1.1-billion settlement for Canadians infected with hepatitis C through tainted blood. He was also active with numerous organizations involved with the blood safety issue. He was married to York grad **Antonia (Smudge) Swann** (BA Spec. Hons. '89).

Mandelbaum, Marvin, a York professor of computer science & engineering who researched decision theory, died on Sept. 8.

Penner, Norman, political science professor emeritus and a mainstay of the Glendon campus for more than 20 years, died on April 16 at 88. Reflecting on his communist party memberships from 1937 to 1956 and his subsequent apostasy in 1957, he once commented that he spent the first half of his life being attacked for being a communist and the second half of it for not being one.



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What do athletics and creative writing have in common? Me. **BY PRISCILA UPPAL**

My Sporting Life

If I were asked to design one of those “Everything I’ve Learned about Life” posters, mine would read: “Everything I’ve Learned about Writing, I’ve Learned from Sports.” Well, not quite everything – I’ve read a few thousand books too. But, you’d be amazed by what I’ve learned about my artistic practice, as a poet, novelist and essayist, from my love of sports and my willingness to sign up for just about anything: diving, fencing, figure skating (I’m hoping to register for pole-vaulting next year). I was certainly surprised. In high school, I played sports as a way to escape my

You’d be amazed by what

troubled home, because I had nervous energy to burn and because I liked the uniforms. (I’m serious – we were poor and I could get new clothes paid for by the school).

In university, I became more of a spectator as I dedicated myself solely to art and academic work. (I am still an avid sports fan – I insist on live Olympic coverage no matter what time of night, and joke that every two years I renew my affair with CBC’s Ian Hanomansing.) But over the last decade, I decided to get back to the track and the gym, like many people, for health reasons. But it was also because in 2002 my first novel, *The Divine Economy of Salvation*, was published and I was hired as a professor at York – two events that threw me into the public realm and public speaking more than before. I was anxious. I thought springboard diving might make me braver. Did I mention I’m afraid of heights?

It took me six months to go backwards off the three-metre tower and nearly another year to go headfirst off the five-metre tower (my partner instituted a reward program, the coach goading me each week to *win that hat* or *get that gourmet dinner!*). But I’ve learned that no lecture hall or book tour is as scary as those Thursday mornings at the pool, so signing up for lessons did fulfill its initial purpose. And the lessons didn’t stop there. As a poet, I learned about clean esthetic lines, gracefulness and trusting instincts. Diving and poetry both rely on symmetry and tight form for effect, on a quick and dazzling compression of

intricate movements. Neither should look difficult. Although, with poems, the bigger the splash the better.

Since then, I’ve been more aware of the great complements of the sports and arts worlds, and that my writing owes more to sport than I ever realized. For instance, running is the novelist’s sport. Writing a novel requires the same daily disciplined devotion. Only a little progress is made each week, but you trust the process and build energy and stamina. Marathon runners don’t run 42 kilometres – they run from lamppost to lamppost. Novelists write one page and then another. Then another. And nobody’s cheering you until that book’s finished.

On guard! Advance, riposte, parry. Advance-lunge. Hit. When I won my first match (having taken up fencing at 30), my old Hungarian fencing master, who reminded me magically of Don Quixote, lifted me up and cried, “You learned something!” I have rarely been as proud as I was that day. Fencing has taught me as much about the verbal swordplay of essay-writing as completing a PhD dissertation.

Basketball was my sport in high school (I won MVP). I learned how to plan ahead as well as adjust the plan while on my feet. How to block shots and how to infiltrate defences. Most importantly: how to avoid going out of bounds, and if out-of-bounds, how to find the opening to race right back in. In other words, basketball taught me how to be a teacher.

For the last three years, I’ve been taking figure skating. Although I’ll probably never reach the level of even the hockey stars on “Battle of the Blades”, with every scissoring back-crossover, or spiral, or three-point turn, I’m gaining valuable insight into balance, performance and the joys of risk-taking – all important for the arts – which I bring back to my writing desk. The first thing you are taught is how to fall – a humbling exercise, but crucial to convince the mind and body to try new things. It’s figure skating, I know, that has given me the confidence to try a new writing form: playwriting.

So see you on the ice, and on the stage. And maybe in the pole-vault pit too! ■



Priscila Uppal (BA Hons. '97, PhD '04) is a York English professor and editor of *The Exile Book of Canadian Sports Stories* (2009).

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