

november 2016

# LINK

MAGAZINE

BCIT & BEYOND

ENTRE

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Colombie-Britannique

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## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

### Luisa Alvarez

When you're open to the possibility, who knows where life will take you next.

what's happening to

## CHINATOWN?

## WHISTLER LIFE

work. ride. repeat.

## LUKE CAGE

**PLUS:**  
Scientology, JoJo, and schawarma.

PHOTO FEATURE  
JOEL COAKLEY

## Frankenstein and feminism

### WOMEN IN FILM

Something's wrong  
with this picture

## CONSENT ROCK

Music with  
a message





In this issue:

- |    |  |    |   |
|----|--|----|---|
| 5  | <u>BCIT</u><br>Planning routes                     | 16 | <u>COMMUNITY</u><br>Chinatown                               |
| 6  | <u>STUDENT SPOTLIGHT</u><br>Luisa Alvarez          | 18 | <u>FOOD</u><br>Syrian cuisine                               |
| 8  | <u>THEATRE</u><br>Frankenstein 1945                | 20 | <u>TELEVISION</u><br>Luke Cage                              |
| 10 | <u>POV</u><br>Living in Whistler                   | 22 | <u>FASHION</u><br>Dress for Success                         |
| 12 | <u>SOCIETY</u><br>Discrimination of women in film. | 24 | <u>REVIEWS</u><br>My Scientology Movie; JoJo; MasterxMaster |
| 14 | <u>PHOTO FEATURE</u><br>Joel Coakley               | 26 | <u>FINAL THOUGHT</u><br>Attitude of Gratitude               |



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3700 Willingdon Ave.  
SE2 Building, 3rd Floor  
Burnaby, BC V5G 3H2

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CONTACT  
[editor@linkbcit.ca](mailto:editor@linkbcit.ca)

[www.linkbcit.ca](http://www.linkbcit.ca)



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CONTRIBUTORS

Danielle Carr  
Tanushree Pillai  
Kurt Tadeo  
Christina Willis  
Joel Coakley  
Teresa Sans  
Monika Szucs

**Selenna Ho**  
*Managing Editor*

**Alexis Cornwall**  
*Associate Editor*

**Jarell Alvarez**  
*Associate Editor*

**Rachel Chang**  
*Associate Editor*

**Maddy Adams**  
*Photo Editor*

**Annie Sheng**  
*Online Community Coordinator*

LINK is published 8 times annually by the BCIT Student Association and distributed free on newsstands across all 5 BCIT campuses.

**Dan Post** | *Publisher*  
604. 451. 7191

**Andrea Carl** | *Promotions*  
604. 453. 4072

Featured Contributors



**Tanushree Pillai**  
*Broadcast & Online Journalism*

Tanushree is a former journalist with 13 years of experience, currently studying Broadcast and Online Journalism. Tanu already holds a degree in Mass Media and Communications from Indraprastha College for Women in Delhi University. She's worked with Reuters, *Businessworld* and *Indian Express*.



**Kurt Tadeo**  
*Digital Design & Development*

Kurt has always had crazy ideas about stories to write that differ from the normal happy ending. He wants to show people that there is more to storytelling than that. Failures, dead ends, and worst outcomes can provide valuable insights which, in turn, can help us deal with said situations down the road. Kurt hopes you read his work with an open mind.



# Own Your L's

on the cover:

Where will life take you next?  
For **Luisa Alvarez**, it was the Philippines, where a fashion internship like no other taught her that anything is possible. (p6)

photo maddy adams



I feel like I've already taken a lot of L's over the course of my life (maybe not as many as Meek Mill in recent times) but so far I've been: fired, turned down for jobs, told that projects I've worked on just weren't good enough, and even told: "I'm sorry but I like your friend and not you." (*ouch, right?*) So how can I stop looking kinda dumb, with this finger and this thumb, in the shape of an L on my forehead? Wouldn't we all rather be Jose Bautista's bat, flipping to everything in life? The fact of the matter is, that's just not how it works, and sports stars can often be the first to show you how not to take an L.

Look at Cam Newton, whose post-Super Bowl 50 media tantrum showed us a 27-year-old reacting to watching his dream slip away right before his eyes. Or the oh-so-brave USA soccer goalie Hope Solo, who when her team lost to Sweden in the quarterfinal of the Olympics via a penalty shootout, called the opposing team, "a bunch of cowards," stating that the best team didn't win that day. She later took to Twitter writing: "Losing sucks. I'm really bad at it."

So aren't we all bad at taking L's? Think about it. When was the last time you posted your failure on Instagram? Or Snapchatted how shitty you felt after missing out on something you really wanted? *Psychology Today* actually published an article about the Top 5 fears all humans have in common, and the number one fear — higher even than death — is fear of failure. It's crazy how people actually obsess over failure. When someone is succeed-

ing, the second they mess up, we attack. We quickly mob together, and then collectively only remember the loss this person has suffered. There is just something about losing that is different to every other human experience.

After all those cruel losses we each face, I think we need to learn to take our L's graciously. What does that really mean though? It means that every time you fail, you use it to your advantage. L's aren't really "losses," they're more like lessons. Are you gonna approach a situation the same way again? Will you act like the world is going to end because of this one thing that didn't go the way you wanted it to? After all those L's you've taken, you're still here today, alive and well. Probably better than ever, if you ask me. You lose, you learn — and when you survive (which you will) you've basically just passed another test in this neverending school we call life. And I hate to break it to you, but you're basically in school forever.

You can never know what the result is when you take a leap of faith, and sometimes you will lose. But we all benefit from our losses in one way or another, we just need to be less scared of learning something the hard way.

We've all taken an L at some point in our lives, but it's what you do with the experience and how you keep going that matters the most. So own your L's, because you are not alone and you're only being exposed to yet another important lesson.

— **Alexis Cornwall**  
Associate Editor





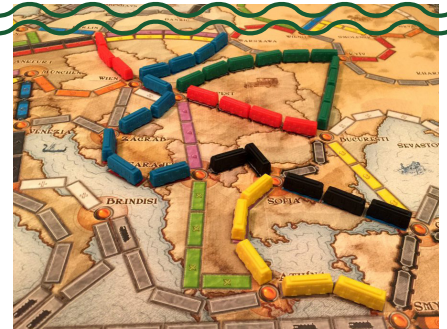
## Yeezy floats and Chance hopes

**Max Omeleniac** has been on a streak of seeing great hip hop shows and continues to serve up fascinating reviews. Find out what he had to say about Kanye's post-apocalyptic mosh pit and Chance the Rapper's ultra-positive puppet show.



## All a Board

Put down the controller and roll the dice on a time-honoured tradition: board games. Sure, there aren't any headsets to mock your friends through, but **Annie Sheng** thinks you'll still have fun pwn'ing your pals and unlocking the rewards of analog entertainment.



## Pack a bowl

Still think Mr. Noodles and an extra large coffee count as breakfast? Why not try **Mariah Millie's** recipe, for a nutrient-rich breakfast bowl that is both delicious and packed full of the energy-giving foods your busy body needs.



RT  
#BCIT

@BCITbusiness



@sarahdavidson95

"When dinner is a bagel, and you don't even have time to butter it #BCIT #studentlife"

@simon\_li

"I shouldn't complain about tuition  
I shouldn't complain about tuition  
I shouldn't complain about tuition.  
(avg \$183/cr) #BCIT"

@AshleyBurr\_





# PLANNING ROUTES

When you look ahead to your next move, hopefully you see a perfect ledge to grab ahold of and hoist yourself up, and not just another looming grey concrete wall with nothing to hang onto.



## CAMPUS COMMENTS

There was a time, believe it or not, when the world actually lived by the phrase: *If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all.* And then social media arrived, and internet commenting, and well, we all know how that's going. Seems the planning folks at BCIT have a thicker skin than I thought, because they've recently launched their Campus Plan project, wherein they've begun asking the general public about their feelings towards the current state of the campus. Good on them for wanting to listen, but also, pretty brave if you ask me, considering they're openly accepting feedback on things like parking, housing, and the overall aesthetic of the buildings around here. If you're feeling especially cowardly and callous, you can just fill out a survey online, but if you're not afraid to stand up and be counted on, attend an open house and join a real, healthy conversation about the future of your favourite four-letter fiefdom.

[www.bcit.ca/facilities/campusdev/campusplan](http://www.bcit.ca/facilities/campusdev/campusplan)

## GET REC'D

This past summer, my brother was living in his van in the parking lot at the base of The Chief. His whole life consisted of climbing rocks all day and eating spaghetti right out of the pot. He came down to Vancouver one night, so I could treat him to the luxury of a movie, and I found him cooking dinner on a camp stove on the curb outside the theatre. I'm not saying you have to go *that* far, where you totally abandon all social norms, but you *can* get a small taste of the traditional #climbinglife at the BCIT Burnaby rec centre in SE16 during one of their Wednesday drop-in times on the rock wall. Rock climbing shoes are available, but you'll have to bring your own camp stove and spaghetti.

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# AS SEEN ON TV

Heels high and smile bright, **Luisa Alvarez** knows her career is going to take her to new and interesting places — like the other side of the world. Now wrapping up her last year a BCIT, the Colombian-born Broadcast and Online Journalism student is getting a lot of international love after being sent on an internship to Fashion One Television in the Philippines. We caught up with Luisa recently, to hear more about her amazing experience abroad and how her world got flipped upside down.

interview **alexis cornwall**

photos **maddy adams**



**Was working for a fashion television channel in the Philippines something you expected to experience when you started your program?**

I've always been interested in going abroad, whether it studying or just travelling; it's always been a passion of mine. This opportunity kind of just came up and it was in a unique way. I got the opportunity and I decided to take it because it's not everyday you get offered to go across the world.

**What was the most surprising thing about your journey?**

I wasn't used to seeing so much poverty in one place. I stayed in Cebu, and where the studios were was kind of where all the resorts are... but then right next to the resorts is so much poverty. There are people living in cardboard boxes and kids don't have shoes and it was just shocking for me to see so much luxury and so much poverty so close together.

**Would you say it was culture shock for you?**

I was expecting it to be different, so I wouldn't say I was shocked. The people there have so little and they are still very happy with [what they've got]. I think that was the most remarkable thing. I think in Western culture we're so used to material things and we tend to put so much value into that, that we tend to forget that you can be happy without having so much and holding so much importance on 'things.' There the kids are

outside, they don't have shoes but they're playing and they're laughing. It's just so different.

**Do you feel like you learned something new about yourself in your travels?**

I feel like I really learned about working on deadlines. When something's going to air, you need to get it done at this time because you need to get it edited. It's not the same as when you're in school and you get that leeway... you don't have that in industry and you just need to get it done.

**Where do you see your career in the future?**

I would love to make documentaries, because one of my passions is for people and exploring their stories. I think that there are a lot of stories out there that haven't been told and should be told, like cultures that haven't been shared, and I would love to be that person that can integrate and immerse myself into those cultures and just help tell their stories.

**Would you recommend going abroad to study or to work?**

I would recommend going abroad for any reason. If anyone offers you any kind of position or any kind of opportunity outside of your hometown, I highly suggest you go ahead and take it. Because even if you don't like it, at least you tried.

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*Read our full interview with Luisa for even more about her experience with Fashion One, online now at [www.linkbcit.ca](http://www.linkbcit.ca)*





# BIOLOGY & THE BEAST

photos: julia siedlanowska

words **selenna ho**

*We seem to be in constant fascination with fear — blood, screams, beasts — and we tend to personify these fears through all kinds of art. Mary Shelley's gothic novel classic, *Frankenstein*, is just one example that speaks to our seemingly natural attraction to the unnatural. The allure of artificially created humans brings with it tensions and terrors of our own inner beasts. This year I found a unique take on the story in a film noir-inspired play by Little Mountain Lion Productions set in the World War II era. Mily Mumford, director of *Frankenstein 1945*, has previously directed Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five*, and written several plays, including *Pretty Monster* and *Love is for Superbeasts*. I had the chance to converse with Mily and better understand her insights and passions for beasts and biology, and how they fit in to modern times.*

**Of all the classic plays to remake and re-modernize, why did *Frankenstein* in particular stand out to you?**

The original book, *Frankenstein* by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, is very important to me as a writer. I fell in love with it from a young age and it is arguably the first true work of science fiction, which is my favourite genre to create in. My academic background is in sciences, specifically biotechnology and neuroscience, so the story appeals to me from a scientific point of view as well. The themes of mortality and the ethics of medical and scientific advancement are still so important and relevant to both today and the setting I chose for this adaptation: the Nazi medical experiments and Nuremberg Trials. I also wanted to combine my love of the text with my love of film noir, which inspired the aesthetic and style of the play.

**Can you elaborate on your take of the Nazi medical experiments and Nuremberg Trials in relation to your *Frankenstein* remake?**

In this adaptation of *Frankenstein*, Victor begins as a medical student specializing in neurology, and his supervisor is one of the top neurologists in the country, Dr. Herta Oberhauser. Dr. Herta Oberhauser was a real neurologist who performed nerve and bone grafting experiments at Ravensbrück Concentration Camp. We see Victor Frankenstein get swept up in these experiments under his mentor, leave his internship because of the unethical work they are doing, and then use the techniques he learned from Oberhauser to reanimate the dead and try to reverse the wrongs he has witnessed and been a part of. Later on in the play, we also see Dr. Herta Oberhauser, who did go to trial at the Nuremberg Trials, being prosecuted and Victor testifies against her, forcing him to face someone who has been his greatest inspiration and an enemy.



**In this current age of feminism, what does it mean to you to be directing an, "empowered, badass woman in a time when many women were being oppressed"?**

That quote was taken from one of my lead actors Madelyn Osborne, in describing her character Elizabeth. As a writer, it is very important to me to create work with diverse voices and points of view. Theatre and film are still failing to not only have equality in gender representation on stage and screen, but to portray female characters with intelligence and agency, who aren't just archetypes and accessories to their male counterparts. In this show, like all the shows I write, I have female characters who are realistic: they have thoughts, feelings and ambitions like those of real women — they are doctors, they are spies, they are engineers, they are nurses — and in writing and directing a historical piece, it was important to me to base these women off women who actually existed in that time period. Women's rights took a giant step back with the rise of the Nazi party in Germany. Women who held titles in the professional and academic world were stripped of their positions. The Nazi ideal of a good woman was a mother and homemaker. I wanted to show that women back then rejected that misogynistic ideal then, just as they do now. Feminism is not new.

**What brought about your passions for film noir, and why did you decide to bring it to *Frankenstein*?**

My parents were very adamant that I watch 'the classics' as a child. I sat through *Casablanca* and *The Maltese Falcon* in elementary school and, at the time, thought they were boring. But they actually helped develop my aesthetic and love of film noir from a young age. My favourite comedy as a kid was *Young Frankenstein*, which borrowed a lot of classic noir tropes and made them comedic. My favourite elements of noir are the dark, dramatic lighting and the way it informs the mood, as well as the sense of mystery and foreboding that comes from the narration and quick quips and twisting plots. Given that I was setting *Frankenstein*, which is inherently a very dark and mysterious gothic tale, in an era that was a golden age of film noir, marrying the two made perfect sense.

**When people think of *Frankenstein* and World War II, what do you hope they take away?**

The show explores both the darkest sides of humanity, Nazi Germany and the medical experiments, but also humanity's fierce desire to make things better, to take responsibility. I hope people will watch the characters and see themselves reflected in them, which is another reason why diversity of voices and actors is so important to me. And hopefully they might get a little bit spooked too.

**"the sense of mystery and foreboding..."**


**the dark, dramatic lighting"**





# ABOVE THE ENTIRE WORLD

Life in Whistler as experienced  
by **christina willis**



*The first run was always the best.*

*Gliding on the snow,*

*A surfer on a wave,*

*Weaving between trees, beneath branches,*

*Before breaking into wide open runs;*

*The freedom of the mountains.*

---



# “I’m filled with gratitude as I rise into the sky.”

My work week is over and there’s a forecast for up to 30cm of snow overnight. It’s late November and there’s been snow in the village since Halloween. Mountain locals have been in heaven this first week on the ski hill.

It’s quiet as I leave work and make my way to the Brewhouse. My best bud, Jennie, isn’t here yet so I pull up a stool at the bar and Cody pours me a pint of my favourite alpine ale, Grizzly Brown. Cody and I catch up; he’s been hunting fields to snowmobile in and he’s had a few early adventures. Before I can finish my pint, Jennie arrives with a big smile. She gives me a hug and pulls something out of her backpack. “Crystal Lounge is having a band competition this winter. Don’t the posters look great?!” I smile and we give a big cheers. “We should hit up the Crystal tonight for wings.”

It’s dark and snowing by the time I walk home. The big hood of my coat keeps me warm and sheltered as I walk beneath puffy flakes. I’m full and sleepy when I get home and I go to bed happy. But I’m like a kid on Christmas Eve, awake with the excitement of the next morning. I finally drift to sleep sometime after midnight.

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The alarm comes quickly. It’s dark out as I rise and I move through the house lightly and call into the snow phone. *Oh yeah!* 25cm of snow has blessed this little mountain town. I quietly fry an egg for breakfast, the silence of the morning broken only by the distant sound of avalanche bombing. I warm and wake in the shower before dressing for the mountain. I leave the house and drive into the village.

The sky is getting lighter now, pale blue surrounded by hazy pink clouds. The day lots are nearly empty. Mid-week and early season: the perfect combination for a quiet day on the hill. I sit on the back of the Jeep and trade my snow boots for snowboard boots. I keep them loose for the walk to the lift.

It’s lovely and quiet in the village. The only people out work for the muni or are headed to the hill. And the only shops open are coffee shops. I prop up my snowboard outside of Gone Bakery and head inside for a coffee. The bakery is warm and smells of muffins and soups. The Aussie at the counter smiles as he stamps my coffee card. “It’s gonna be an epic day up there,” he says as he moves to the espresso machine. I smile with excitement.

It’s a beautiful bluebird morning as Glacier chair, the mightiest lift on the mountain, shifts from yellow to green. Glacier is one hell of a chair, as it climbs out of the creek, ice and snow hiding its waterfall neighbour. The cliffs that surround the base of the chair softly curve into snowy ridges. I ride the lift alone and turn to look behind me. I’m suspended above the entire world, above the tiny town of Whistler. I can see the hotels in the village, the path of the stroll; I can even make out the street I live on. I can see Nita Lake and Alta Lake and Green Lake, Rainbow and Alpine and Emerald. A live aerial map, a bird’s eye view.

My eyes settle on the kingdom of mountain ranges beyond the town, the most spectacular sight I’ve ever seen; layers upon layers of peaks and ridges, infinite beauty. I’m filled with gratitude as I rise into the sky.

I reach the top of Glacier chair at 2,100 metres above the sea, and I glide over the snow of Horstman Glacier like I’m riding a wave, fluid and smooth; a force of nature. I cut onto the run and ride the ridge, flying fast as light, completely alive as the oxygen flows through me. I’m laughing and my muscles burn as I reach Crystal Hut.

This is my favourite place on the mountain. I drop comfortably into the trees of Outer Limits. The snow is soft and light and there is trust as I turn and weave between the trees. I laugh aloud and shout into the day. *I’m alive!*

---

Living in Whistler is a trip. It’s a town of less than 10,000 residents but it hosts more than 2 million visitors each year. Whistler is an international community, and as everyone comes from a different place, I always discover people to have unique hidden talents. But in this little town we all practice the same religion and we worship the same Gods: Whistler and Blackcomb.





# WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

Exposing Gender Discrimination in Canada's Film Industry

words **danielle carr**

**T**he Canadian Union for Equality on Screen (CUES) recently released a new report titled, "What's Wrong With This Picture?" stating that, "an overwhelming body of evidence shows that the content we consume is predominantly generated by men, and Canada is no exception."

Dr. Amanda Coles from the University of Melbourne's School of Culture and Communication wrote the report with the Directors Guild of Canada, saying, "Our screen-based industry is both an important economic employment driver in the Canadian creative economy... The stories we see on our screens are not reflective of the Canada that I know."

The CUES report focuses on the lack of female directors in the Canadian film industry. Christine Wiles, Chair of the Union for B.C. Performers ACTRA & CUES representative, says, "The statistical evidence is appalling that Canadian women are hired to direct less than 10% of screen-based media produced here... Speaking personally, I'm a working actor, and up until four years ago, I could

have counted the number of women directors I worked with on the fingers of one hand."

Stereotypes and tokenism are two reasons cited in the report for why women are being hired to direct less than men:

"One woman is hired to direct one episode of a 26-episode television series... It's as if the people who are in charge think, 'Okay, we've been inclusive, we've hired a woman director and there's no need to hire anymore.' The unspoken, invisible bias suggests that women are a risky hire when it comes to directing... It comes into play when funding bodies decide who's going to get how much money... Women directed only four percent of the films that received investments over one million dollars."

Sharon McGowan, Chair of the Vancouver advocacy group Women in Film and Television, says the issues faced by women in the film and television industry, "qualify as systemic discrimination in Canada because the system is set up to exclude women, including



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# “Canadian women are hired to direct less than 10% of screen-based media produced here.”

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racialized women, indigenous women, and disabled women... The gender inequality outlined in the CUES report doesn't just affect female directors, but women in every single area of the film industry. What happens for female directors is very similar to what happens to female directors in photography, editors, writers, and production designers.”

Women in the film industry are not only hired less than men to direct, but are also more likely to be sexually harassed. McGowan personally experienced harassment when she began working in the industry in the 70s: “The first 10 years was non-stop sexual harassment, but it was considered at the time the price you had to pay to work in a man's world.”

The recent leaked Donald Trump and Billy Bush tape from Access Hollywood, which is being referred to as “Pussygate,” has made the topic of industry harassment a mainstream conversation in the media. In the video, Bush encourages *Days Of Our Lives* actress Arianne Zucker, to hug Trump and himself after making derogatory, sexualized comments about her. This reveals that even on a professional television show, with a crew of people producing a promotional segment, this type of objectifying dialogue occurs in the open without a second thought.

The language and behaviour of Bush and Trump is not an isolated incident in the film and television industry. On the popular blog, *Shit People Say To Women Directors*, women in the industry anonymously post their experiences. One anonymous excerpt says: “An assistant editor once said to me, ‘Don't bother dressing like a slut when the director comes in. His wife has him on a tight leash so you won't be able to sleep your way up.’”

Objectifying women is an issue off screen and on screen. McGowan says roles for female characters are “over sexualized, [where they] speak less than men, and have less time on screen. The Geena Davis Institute has been a leader in showing the impact media stereotyping has on young boys and girls... When boys watch television for six hours, their self-esteem increases, but for girls their self-esteem drops significantly.”

Wiles says the way to create change is through policy and financial incentives, like linking “diversity with production tax credits and setting hard and fast benchmarks.”

The increasing global conversation about gender in the film industry is starting to create change, as more media outlets announce new guidelines. The BBC recently pledged half of its workforce will be made up by women to achieve gender parity by 2020. McGowan says with growing awareness around media diversity, “there isn't a better time to enter the industry. But it's important to get engaged in the conversation because the only way these barriers will come down is through collective action and continued pressure from the public and the media.”

Wiles says everyone has a responsibility in creating a diverse media: “Where you spend your dollars says far more to producers. So when you go see a movie or watch a TV show, look into it, so that you're purchasing a story that reflects your values. Now we hear about [women in film] in speeches at awards shows, on panels at film festivals, but in North America, the needle hasn't moved, and we've got to move the needle.”







## JOEL COAKLEY

"I first started taking photos in grade 10 when I found a digital point-and-shoot camera in my house. That same day, my mum had just happened to bring home two stray kittens that were abandoned on our street. This led me to be the unofficial cat photographer of the family and I've been taking photos ever since. These days I've moved on from strictly stray cat photography and am currently learning how to shoot film which has been an interesting and challenging experience. The most rewarding part of shooting film is the ability to hold the developed photo in your hand to keep for yourself or give away as a gift. The least rewarding part is bringing a camera to the developer just to find out that there isn't actually any film in the camera you've been using for two days."







# CHANGING CHINATOWN

words **rachel chang**  
photos **maddy adams**

*"Chinatown is the first place I remember holding my aunty's hand. Our first stop was always the vegetable stand. She taught me that the freshest choi (Chinese lettuce) had sturdy green roots and bright yellow flowers. She would then guide me through the marketplace, bakeries and butcher shops, and teach me how to buy the best product for the best price. I felt so small with my aunty amongst the hoards of people getting groceries for their families. But the community was small for my aunty; she was always running into old friends. They would chat while picking oranges together, and sometimes sit down for won tons at Hon's Restaurant. As they slurped their noodles and drank their teas, I would ask my aunty how she knew them. Her eyes would glaze over, and she'd wink at her friend. 'We met back in China.'"*

— Selenna Ho,  
LINK Managing Editor

Once a bustling neighbourhood with a thriving community, Vancouver's Chinatown has now become a ghost town, a shell of what it once was. The gentrification of Chinatown is a critical example of what's happening to many of the heritage neighbourhoods in Vancouver, and many other cities around the world. The departure of its defining businesses, the staggering housing prices, and the indifference of the younger generations have created a multi-faceted problem with many half-solutions and even more complications.

*The King of Yees*, is a local theatre production about a young Chinese woman's search for her own cultural identity, and on October 16<sup>th</sup> they hosted a discussion panel consisting of moderator Frances Bula and members of the Chinese Canadian Historical Society of BC, (Doris Chow, Bob Sung, and Hayne Wai) who spoke out about their concerns for our fading Chinatown.

The answer, it turns out, is not simple.

Doris Chow, one of the young leaders for the efforts to revitalize Chinatown, elaborates: "We shop where we live. That's what everyone does. Whether it's Chinatown or Richmond or Mount Pleasant. The core customers of the traditional businesses – like the herbal shops, the barbecue meat shops – are generally low-income and Chinese seniors. If we start looking at the housing that is available for this

demographic, we're starting to see less and less. Then you start seeing the new condos come in. Then you see businesses that respond to that demographic come in. It's a multi-layered issue."

LINK's very own Selenna Ho has seen Chinatown change before her. "As my feet familiarized themselves with the pavement of Chinatown, my eyes began to notice the emptier streets. Families that usually frequented Chinatown for their weekly groceries disappeared. Shopkeepers, once so lively with their fresh products, sold their real estate and moved elsewhere. It's strange to see that the grocery store where I learned how to buy choi no longer stands. In its place is a coffee and pie shop – two things the original Chinese immigrants seldom consume. From the original crowd, it's mostly seniors strolling through Chinatown, dedicated to its familiarity."

While the older generations have a homegrown respect and desire for a revitalized Chinatown, the greatest challenge may be getting the younger demographic on board. Even with great restaurants, markets, and bakeries that draw in large crowds, the question of cultural relevance comes to mind. Bob Sung, an active member of the community and Chinatown tour guide, says, "The key factor is making Chinatown relevant. In lieu of the mass Chinese population in this city, it's not concentrated in one specific area. The only way that Chinatown



is going to grow is to make it the centre for Chinese culture in British Columbia. The key pivot points would be programming – [for example], the Chinese Culture Centre – to compel people to come down, to enjoy Chinatown from a cultural approach.”

However, the massive influx of foreign money, high-income households, and resulting outflow of locals, has created a dilemma for all of those involved. With the demand for newer and higher-end retail stores, how do you control who gets to come in? How do you preserve the ethnic culture of Chinatown when the newer residents aren’t aware? How do you get them to care?

For many new immigrants, especially youth from China or Taiwan, getting involved in the Chinatown community seems to be low on their list of priorities. Practically speaking, how do you convince someone to choose Chinatown as a practical source for Asian food and goods over Richmond? Culturally, how do you get them to recognize the importance of Chinese culture in Vancouver, when they’re trying to learn English and integrate into Western society?

Selenna expressed her desire for change, but similar to the rest of the people that are fighting for change, she shares the frustration of tackling such a complicated and tremendous issue. “I still visit Chinatown. Not as often as I used to, or as I’d like to. I would like to get more involved in the initiatives to preserve Chinatown and its culture. More than anything, I would like to make Chinatown vibrant, traditional and fun once again. But I’m often at a loss as to how to do this. The economic and cultural factors of preserving Chinatown’s roots are in tension, and there’s only so much a small community can do. But I know that the organizations dedicated to keeping Chinatown’s historical and current significance will gain traction with more and more youth involvement.”

Vancouver tends to be a rather cliquey city, with many of its residents never straying from their social circles, keeping to their own tight-knit group of family and friends. However, in addition to the benefits of preserving Chinese culture and breathing life back into a neighbourhood that sorely needs it, getting the youth involved with the vitality of Chinatown will revitalize a sense of social and cultural closeness for the Chinese community here in Vancouver.

There is no shortage of opportunities for young Chinese immigrants, Chinese-Canadians, or anyone else to get involved and reconnect with their roots. S.U.C.C.E.S.S. trains volunteers to provide support for the community, from clerical positions to job mentoring. The UBC Learning Exchange offers volunteer opportunities to help Chinese seniors with English and computer skills. The Youth Collaborative for Chinatown, a group founded by Doris and her sister, June Chow, host mahjong (a Chinese game) socials on the streets of Chinatown, where they live up the streets through public space activation. And who says getting involved can’t be fun?

By participating, volunteering, and educating each other, we can save Chinatown. With Vancouverites like Doris and her sister June Chow leading the charge for the younger generations, the awareness of the cultural importance of Chinatown will spread through the city. We can only hope that with time, our Chinatown becomes the bustling, energizing, and educative community that we all want it to be. As Bob remarked, “Each generation will reap what the former generation has sown. When it comes to the evolution of Chinatown, it is a respect for the past, it is also staying focused on the present, and with a whole lot of hope for the future.”





# SERIOUSLY SYRIAN

CAS  
photo maddy adams

words **tanushree pillai**

## **Abdul's BBQ & Shawarma**

The Crystal Mall  
4500 Kingsway (at Willingdon)

*Syrian cuisine is a delightful blend of the cultures and civilizations that settled in Syria. You can find similarities in Lebanese, Jordanian, Palestinian and Greek cuisines. It includes dishes like: 'kibbeh' (fried croquettes), 'kebab halabi' (skewered meat), 'hummus' (chickpea spread), 'tabbouleh' (salad), 'fattoush' (bread salad), 'shawarma' (wrap) and many other equally flavourful and scrumptious dishes.*

*In the Greater Vancouver Area, Syrian cuisine is typically hard to come by. However, since welcoming over 30,000 Syrians to the city, it has become easier for the cuisine to become ubiquitous. At least one man has been the proud torchbearer of Syrian cuisine in Burnaby for the past 10 years. His restaurant Abdul's BBQ and Shawarma's delicious aroma gives this tiny restaurant its own unique identity.*

**Abdul Quadrr Chowman**, the warm and affable owner of the eatery, is a machinist at heart, but a chef by choice. A well-travelled man, Abdul came to Vancouver in 1990 after first living in England, Belgium and Holland. The last time he visited Syria was 10 years ago for his pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca. Normally a good-humoured man, one mention of his hometown of Aleppo is enough to send shivers down Abdul's spine, as he considers himself lucky that most of family escaped the war-torn country.

At Abdul's BBQ and Shawarma, regulars and newcomers sit down to their favourite Syrian meals, including shawarmas, and hearty combinations of rice, meat, falafels and salads. Abdul's most popular menu item is the 'shawarma' – a mouth-watering mixture of Middle Eastern spices, two secret marinades, hot sauce and a lip-smacking hearty dose of either lamb, beef or chicken, all warmly wrapped in a pita bread. This is a Syrian dish that is so much more than a wrap and tastes absolutely heavenly.

What sets shawarma apart from other wraps, is that the shavings of meat are packed on a skewer and grilled to perfection on a rotating spit, giving it a distinctive aroma and taste. John Perrin, a Coquitlam resident and a former BCIT student, says he has been visiting Abdul's for the past 10 years: "It's the quality of the meat that brings me here. The food is fresh, the meat is high-grade and I know it is not the usual

mixed donair meat that you get in most places." I pass this praise along to the modest Abdul, and his eyes are shining. He's all smiles because he knows that Perrin is speaking the truth. "I am a hard-working man and the quality of my food is the evidence of that hard work."

### **Abdul's recipe for a lip-smacking Shawarma:**

Every morning, Abdul gets a whole piece of top-round beef, chicken, or lamb, then slices it into small pieces. He marinates the meat in a secret mix (*sorry, can't spill the secret*) and then places the slices on the skewer, one by one. The skewer is then barbequed and remains on the grill until the end of the day.

Every time a customer orders a shawarma, a hot, freshly grilled piece of the meat is sliced off, allowing for the inner layer to then be cooked from scratch. The secret technique to flavourful shawarmas is marinating the meat twice; the second time comes after the meat is cooked.

To make the shawarma, Abdul takes a pita bread and covers it in garlic sauce. Depending upon how spicy the customer wants it to be, a generous dash of hot sauce is spread out. The pita bread is then stuffed with tomatoes and lettuce, or with tabbouleh salad. The choice of meat is then sliced from the skewer and added to the bread. Finally, the pita is rolled and sliced into two. Hungry yet?





# THE MUSIC IS THE MESSAGE

photo courtesy hand drawn dracula

words **alexis cornwall**

In a musical world that seems saturated with such hard-hitting lyrics as, “baby, baby, baby,” “swag, swag, swag,” and “lit, lit, lit,” it can be hard to find something of substance. And that’s fine, because sometimes we all just need a little filler; the extra fluff that’s not there for meaning, but simply there because we like it. It especially helps when it seems there’s more and more to worry about each passing day. But I believe there is a place for more music that carries a message and, quite frankly, I think the world is ready for it.

Vallens is a Toronto goth-gaze quatro whose recently released debut LP – earnestly entitled *Consent* – is challenging what we know about lyrics and the hidden meaning embedded in some of our favourite songs. Good music, where there’s melody and meaning, is actually quite difficult to find, but Canadian artists seem to be paving the way in making music that matters, and Vallens is a continuation of just that.

*Consent* (released by indie label Hand Drawn Dracula) and its title track, explores women’s issues surrounding sexual, physical and communicative consent. The lyrics, and the accompanying video, tackle several stereotypes as the song runs its course as a day in the life of a typical woman – from scrutiny distributed by media, to stomping on the cliché of, ‘you dressed that way so you wanted it,’ to calling out rape apologists.

This is heavy stuff, especially for a debut album. *Consent* continues to be a big issue, and because it is such a heavy topic, we don’t hear much talk about it in our day-to-day lives, let alone through our headphones.

Singer/songwriter Robyn Phillips wrote the lyrics for the song “Consent” in a Starbucks one day when she was furious. A couple of her close friends had chosen

to confide in her around the issue of rape. She found it difficult to handle their stories, but at the same time found herself angry at the fact that women in the media or in difficult situations like that, are never straight up believed. With lyrics like, “*When I say no, I mean no*,” Phillips wasn’t playing games anymore. Their group took the avenue of making this LP meaningful as opposed to menial.

So as a music listener (as most of us are) how do you feel about music with a message? Do consumers want to their music to be this deep? It kind of comes down to how open you are to learn while you listen. Many people might argue that music is where we turn to escape life’s struggles, and having music that deals with consent and women’s issues is just too dark and depressing. However, the very fact that Vallens is creating art around these problems shows that we can still create change through media.

I think an album called *Consent* is exactly what we need. Vallens is using their influence to spread awareness, rather than pretending that issues like these don’t matter. Ignoring misconduct and injustices won’t make them go away and I believe all good art comes with a message; be it music, painting, dance, photography, poetry, theatre, graffiti and more. That’s what makes art unique: it’s expressive. These are the issues of today, being represented by people who are living it.

Is Vallens worth checking out? Short answer: yes. Long answer: it’s up to you. Either way, Canadian artists like Vallens are bringing meaningful music to an eardrum near you, so we should wake up and realize the considerable influence our lives have on art, as well as the considerable influence art has on our lives.



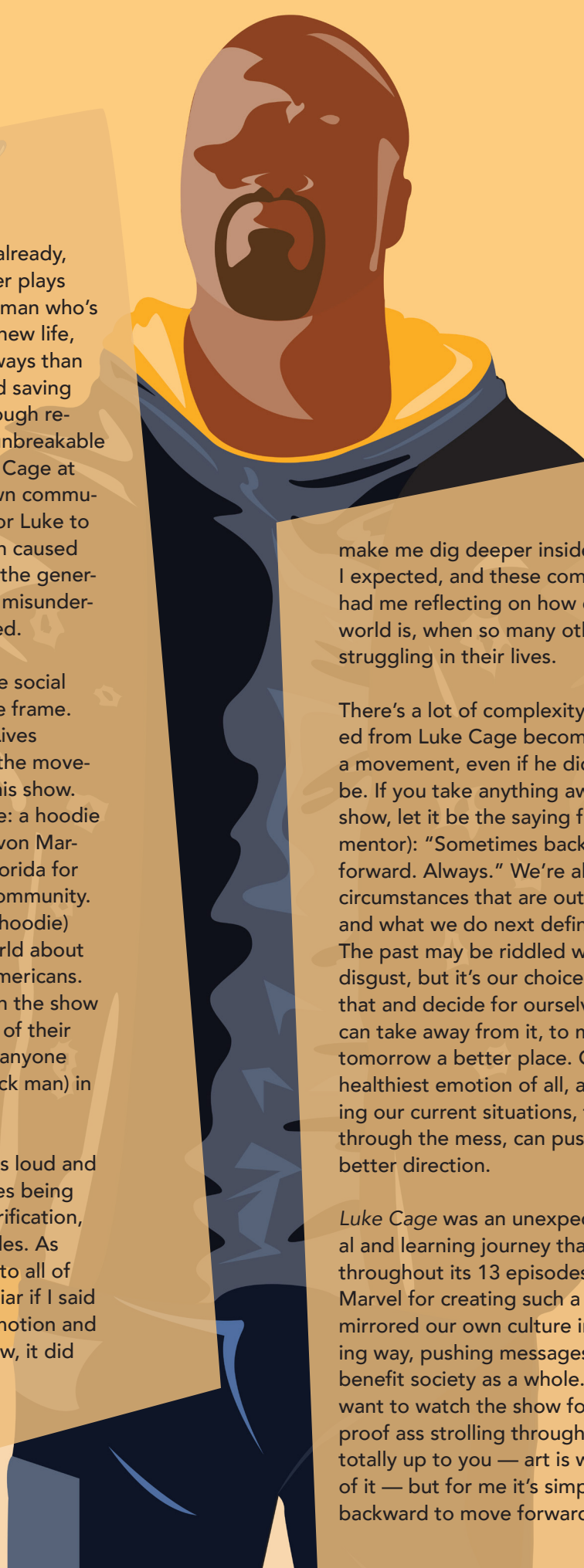
# BULLETPROOF ICON

words & artwork **jarell alvarez**

Marvel is back on Netflix with another new show that's turning the traditional super hero tropes on their heads. I didn't expect to be so mentally involved when I signed up for *Luke Cage*, the same way you also don't enter a *Spiderman* movie expecting to learn something either, yet here I am. So what's this show got me thinking about? Modern day social issues, and how pop culture is once again turning a mirror back onto its audience in a highly digestible form.

*"A lot of his  
good was  
misunderstood,  
spread by fear  
and hatred."*





If you haven't seen *Luke Cage* already, here's a breakdown. Mike Colter plays Cage, a wrongfully imprisoned man who's broken out of prison to start a new life, proving to be an icon in more ways than simply beating up bad guys and saving the day. The central conflict though revolves around how, even with unbreakable skin and superhuman strength, Cage at times still battles against his own community. See, this world wasn't fit for Luke to live in with these abilities, which caused widespread fear of him among the general public. A lot of his good was misunderstood, spread by fear and hatred.

It's here where I start to feel the social issues of today seeping into the frame. You might skip over the Black Lives Matter headlines, but many of the movements' messages resonate in this show. Take Cage's trademark costume: a hoodie that subtly pays tribute to Trayvon Martin — the black teen killed in Florida for looking suspicious in a gated community. Marvel's symbolic gesture (the hoodie) seems meant to remind the world about the racial profiling of African Americans. This is really hammered home in the show when, after the police lose one of their own, they spark a manhunt for anyone who even looks like Luke (a black man) in a hoodie.

For me anyways, the message is loud and clear. There are powerful themes being conveyed here, including: gentrification, racial profiling and class struggles. As a viewer, I can't possibly relate to all of these things, and I would be a liar if I said otherwise. But with so much emotion and anguish represented in this show, it did

make me dig deeper inside myself than I expected, and these complex themes had me reflecting on how comfortable my world is, when so many other people are struggling in their lives.

There's a lot of complexity to be extracted from Luke Cage becoming an icon for a movement, even if he didn't choose to be. If you take anything away from this show, let it be the saying from Pop (Cage's mentor): "Sometimes backward to move forward. Always." We're all presented with circumstances that are out of our control, and what we do next defines who we are. The past may be riddled with horror and disgust, but it's our choice to look past that and decide for ourselves what we can take away from it, to make today and tomorrow a better place. Gratitude is the healthiest emotion of all, and acknowledging our current situations, finding the good through the mess, can push humanity in a better direction.

*Luke Cage* was an unexpected emotional and learning journey that I traveled throughout its 13 episodes. I applaud Marvel for creating such a real story that mirrored our own culture in an entertaining way, pushing messages that I feel can benefit society as a whole. If you simply want to watch the show for Luke's bullet-proof ass strolling through Harlem, that's totally up to you — art is what you make of it — but for me it's simple: "Sometimes backward to move forward. Always." —





# Dress to Impress

## Be Prepared for a Job Interview

by **teresa sans**



According to a study from the University of Glasgow and Princeton, our brain only needs a half second to make a good first impression. So what's one of the best ways to make a great first impression in a job interview? Your attire.

Before and during the interview, your non-verbal communication will be a pivotal aspect considered by the interviewer. It's easy to forget how important our attire, body language, or attitude can be.

To make strong first impressions, here are some must-haves that should always be in your closet.



### EXTRA TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND

- Try to dress casual but elegant at the same time.
- Do not wear a suit and a tie anymore: if it is not a requirement, avoid it.
- Try to dress with neutral colours. You don't want to draw a lot of attention.
- Don't wear running shoes. Wear good dress shoes with black or dark socks. Clean and polish your shoes. A simple detail makes a strong impression.
- Be presentable. This also means taking care of your facial hair, nails, and overall hygiene.



### ACCESSORIES

This includes jewelry, watches, bags, etc. All of your accessories should be modest so that you do not distract the interviewer with them. No noisy jewels and watches. No oversized shawls. Basically, you don't want to be a Christmas tree, but you *do* want to compliment your outfit.





**WHITE TOP**

Most people have several white dress shirts or blouses in their closet. It is a piece that goes with everything because it is such a clean colour. Many politicians, TV hosts, and public speakers wear a white shirt.

**BLAZER**

This is a relevant piece that everybody must keep in the wardrobe. Do you know why? A blazer will give you a professional and jovial touch. However, you should try to avoid flashy colours such as yellow, orange, or green, because the main goal is to be modest. In my opinion, the best colours that are always on trend are black, navy, grey and red. I would recommend buying blazers in different colours for variety.

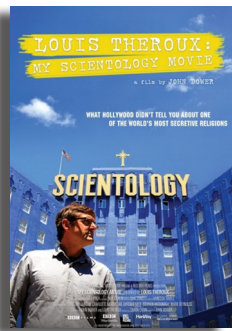
**BLACK PANTS**

These are a basic you must have! Black pants are always multi-functional for work, meetings, parties, etc. Simple black pants will be the key to creating many outfits. Moreover, wearing pants is sometimes more comfortable than dresses or skirts.



All these tips can help you feel more confident in a job interview. But remember: the most important thing is to be yourself and to dress according to your personality. Finally, make sure to rock your job interview. Good luck!





## My Scientology Movie

dir. John Dowe

(red box films)

9/10

words rachel chang

*Word gets out about the documentary and a white truck starts following Louis Theroux and his crew. They receive threatening letters from lawyers, and when Louis approaches the Gold Base, the property on which the leader of the Church of Scientology David Miscavige lives and works, he is immediately rebuffed at the door and threatened with arrest. In the following days, he is shadowed by anonymous men and women who record Louis and his crew. As to why they're doing this, a former Scientology senior executive sums it up best: "If you look into us, we'll look into you. Ten times as much. We're going to make your lives too miserable to continue what you're doing."*

Louis Theroux is best-known for his controversial documentaries, where he reveals information using his empathetic and non-judgmental interview style. His ability to coax meaningful and truthful answers from some of the most guarded subjects has been a signature in all of his works. *My Scientology Movie*, a project that Louis had wanted to explore and develop for many years, was repeatedly delayed behind the barricades the Church of Scientology put in place. The controversy surrounding this documentary has not gone unnoticed. Fans of Louis, including myself, have been waiting for this documentary to be released for over a year. After much delay, it was finally released this October in the UK.

In contrast to Theroux's previous documentaries, those that have taken him into the confines of the Westboro Baptist Church and the ranks of the Black Nationalists, the entirety of Louis' investigation takes place outside of the walls of Scientology. The Church has been extremely adamant about their disapproval and estrangement from the documentary. The lingering shots of the exteriors of church buildings and the lack of direct comments from existing members of the church are unnerving, yet very telling.

Unlike most religions, Scientologists do not worship a god. Instead, they have a massively complex system of levels, classes, and grades, invented by sci-fi novelist L Ron Hubbard, through which Scientologists can advance... for a price, of course. At the top of the pyramid are the Operating Thetan (OT) levels, the highest attainable state. At these levels, OTs are able to control "extra-sensory abilities." In other words, they attain superpowers. Their most famous member, Tom Cruise, is an OT 7—just one below the highest level.

Marty Rathbun, a former senior executive who worked closely with David Miscavige and was written off by the church as an "embittered and disgruntled" ex-member, has a principle role in the documentary, providing Louis with first-person insight into the organization, as well as the fierce determination to propel this project forward. Miscavige, leader of Scientology since 1986, was not painted in a kind light.

To help Marty reassume the mindset he had during his Scientology days, they hosted an audition during which several actors were commanded to verbally abuse and ridicule both Marty and Louis, speaking to the volatility and explosiveness of Miscavige's command. Marty and Tom De Vocht, another of Miscavige's "ex-friends," would later recall Miscavige's extreme paranoia, like recording every interaction between him and everybody else, and violent behaviour that would guarantee a prison sentence if it had been committed by anyone else. Even disregarding these accusations, it's not hard to see there's something off about David Miscavige. Whether it's his vacuous stare, or his insistence that his wife is okay (his wife hasn't been seen in public for the past ten years), there's just something about him that rubs me the wrong

way, and it's not an uncommon sentiment. Which begs the question, why do so many Scientologists continue to stick around?

One actor, selected for his intensity and uncanny ability to express Miscavige's distinctive aggressiveness, was tasked with replacing the real Scientology leader for the purposes of the documentary. His intermittent portrayal throughout the documentary paints Miscavige as a steely-eyed tyrant with a commanding voice. Character witnesses like Marty, Marc Headley, and Jeff Hawkins, all ex-members in advanced positions, regaled stories of how Miscavige "terrorized" those around him.

Louis sets up an experiment led by Marty. Pairs of participants engage in a training routine, where they're encouraged to verbally abuse and scare each other with the sole purpose of "flattening" their responses, effectively teaching them to numb themselves from harsh criticism. Marty becomes disheartened when he realizes the exercise only proved that, with the proper suggestions, anyone would do anything.

The documentary culminates in a final recreation. They reproduce the SP (Suppressive Person) Hole in a studio. The Hole, deemed Scientology's "Concentration Camp" by some, is the highly controversial confinement facility for executive members who are reportedly subjected to degrading punishment and humiliation, often at the hands of David Miscavige. During the recreation, the actors are screamed at by Miscavige's double, violently pushed around, and forced to crawl on their hands and knees. It's horrifying to witness, and difficult to sit through. Seeing these human beings being abused was the most uncomfortable part of the film for me as a viewer, and made it even harder to comprehend how the church has escaped persecution for this long. Even with witness testimony from multiple ex-members, none of these activities have been officially confirmed and investigations dropped without charges.

As a longtime fan of Louis Theroux, I have been anxiously awaiting the release of this documentary since it was announced. After *Going Clear* (an HBO documentary centered around the dubious history of the religion and the abuse and exploitation of their members) was released last year, Louis' fan base only became more impatient for his take on the subject. In a way, I was almost afraid that the documentary would end up being disappointing, due to the massive amount of hype. However, after watching it, I can say that it's arguably one of Louis' best documentaries. The dramatic reconstructions, the scary yet laughable reactions from church members, and Louis' signature calm made it a fascinating film to watch.

While the subject is touchy and it departs slightly from Louis' usual methods, *My Scientology Movie* is a thought-provoking documentary, filled with equal parts riveting and alarming insights into the religion. It's a must-watch for Louis fans, and for all those who have the morbid curiosity to know more about what goes on behind Scientology's barbed wire fences.



8/10



**Mad Love**  
jojo  
(atlantic)

When I first listened to Jojo's album she used to sing a lot of songs about falling in love and about surviving breakups. I remember listening to her songs a lot in elementary school. And some throughout high

school. But ever since music has changed so much over the years, her songs have disappeared from the media. Now her new album seems to be more about how confident she is as a person now. She has this tone which fits in well in today's modern music. I believe a couple of her songs will be playing on the radio. It is great that she is coming back and recording more music.

My favourite song from the *Mad Love* album would have to be "Vibe." This song has a really unique dark/sassy tone at the beginning then starts to get into this really good beat into the chorus. I love the finger snapping sound effect. This song is great for a party or just to listen to and jam out to in your room. This song seems to have a mix of that oriental tone Rihanna has and a mix of Meghan Trainor's sass.

The album consists of a variety of songs. Some are happier, sad, sassy, badass and lovey dovey. I love the different beats. They are unique and modern.

— monika szucs



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## GAMES



### MasterxMaster (MxM) PC, PS4, Xbox One (NCSoft)

MasterxMaster (MxM) is an action MOBA/MMO hybrid game developed by NCSoft, known for developing popular MMOs such as AION, Blade & Soul, and Guild Wars 2. MxM offers three different game modes which makes it stand out from the rest of the online games out there.

MxM's MOBA game mode is set in a standard 5v5 map where players work together as a team to take down the

enemy's base. Player's must utilize their characters by switching between them in the middle of fights to create devastating combos, as well as using epic monsters called "Titans" to assist each team in destroying the enemy's base. If that's not your style, MxM's MMO game mode allows players to team up or go solo to overcome dungeon-style stages where they fight mobs of monsters and avoid deadly traps.

At the end of each stage, players must utilize their character combinations to take down the stage boss to get their hands on some handsome loot. The

MMO game mode also features weapon and skill upgrades to help players get through the increasingly difficult stages. MxM also offers a minigame-style arcade mode for players that want to take a break from all the action of the previous modes. The arcade offers minigames such as a 2D-platforming race, bullet-dodging arena, and more.

Whether you're looking for a high-intensity, teamwork game, or you prefer to grind dungeons for loot, or even just playing casual minigames to relax, MxM's got all three bases covered for you.

—kurt tadeo

8/10



## FICTION

### NOT WHAT IT SEEMS (pt.1)

by **kurt tadeo**

*Dear Diary,*

I woke up earlier than usual today. My body was sweaty and I was panting heavily. It sounded like I was having a nightmare but really, it was a good dream. Playing tag with my classmates, it was quite fun. But for a game of tag, usually the person who is "it" is the one chasing, not the other way around. I didn't think much of it since dreams sometimes don't make sense. We probably made up some ridiculous way of playing tag. Maybe I should try to remember it and play it with the class in school? Either way, it's morning so I should get ready for school so I won't have to scramble later.

I took the vitamin pill beside my bed like I usually do. Mom told me that it's supposed to keep me healthy so I take it. It tastes a bit weird at first but I'm starting to get used to it. I felt good after taking it and went about my morning routine to school.

It's 7:45am. I've got plenty of time since I woke up early. On my way to school, the neighbor's dog started barking at me again. He looks happy. Did he take a liking to me? I tried to pet him through the wire fence but I think I grazed my hand on it. There's some blood, but not much. My classmates and I tend to get rowdy when we play during lunch so small scratches like this were common. We usually just wash and walk it off and we looked cool doing it. It made us look tough. The school is still a bit further, so I decided to hurry so I can wash it immediately.

The bell rang and class started. It was Math. I hate Math. The teacher makes us go into groups and solve hard questions. My group usually talks about what we were going to play during lunch, and worry about math later. I'm not bad with math, but I still didn't like it for some reason. Either way, I told my classmates about the different game of tag that I dreamed of and asked if they wanted to try it. They thought it sounded fun, but decided to do it after school so we have more time to play it. I agreed. I can't wait till school is over.

I met with my classmates in the lot that we usually hang out and play in. When I asked them if they wanted to play the tag game, everyone immediately started to tag me. I guess they liked the



idea and wanted to get started immediately. Luckily, I wasn't caught off guard by their head start and managed to get a lead from them. I wasn't a fast runner, but I wasn't slow. We played for a while and we ended up near my house by the end of the game. My head started to hurt and my forehead damp with sweat. Did I run too much? I guess I should stop for today. As if they read my mind, my classmates left saying things like "See you" and "We'll continue this tomorrow." I guess they got tired from all that running too. That's okay with me since I'm starting to get a headache, so I went home and washed myself. I just hope I'm not "it" again tomorrow.

I checked the fridge for dinner since mom usually gets home late. She works hard so I have no complaints. After dinner, I went to my room and took my vitamin pills again. The pills soothed my headache and I felt much better. "This vitamin stuff really works huh." I decided to tuck in for today since I was very tired. I thought about the dream I had this morning and hoped for another good one. I can't wait for tomorrow.

continued next month

**AGM**  
**Annual General Meeting**

**November 28<sup>th</sup> - 5:30pm**

**Council Chambers - SE2**





# Attitude of gratitude.

words **selenna ho**

I only started practicing gratefulness when I hit rock bottom. I was struggling with mental illness, surrounded by toxic people, and I could hardly get out of bed in the morning. I remember waking up from a nightmare one day. My heart was beating fast and my breath was hardly catching up. I layed in bed for awhile, thinking about how much longer I could endure the terrors at night, and the despair at day. Then I looked in the mirror. My hair was dishevelled, cheeks sunken in, and lips white. The expression on my face was a mixture of confusion and fear. *Who was this girl?* I looked like a ghost of my former self.

That's when I decided that I needed to make a change. I didn't know what to do, only that something had to be done. I started observing the actions and words of people I encountered who seemed happier. I remember asking colleagues and friends what they did to have a positive mindset. They consistently told me one thing: they practiced gratefulness. This shocked me. It sounded so simple; far too simple to cure a negative mindset. But I decided to try it. After all, I had nothing to lose.

And so, every day I would wake up and think of three things I was grateful for. They were significant things, like family members and healthy friendships. They were also mundane things, like the crunching of autumn leaves as I walked through my neighbourhood block. Throughout the day, every time I found myself looking to the past, sadness and anger rushed inside me, and I immediately reminded myself to focus on something in the present that I was grateful for. Likewise, whenever I started looking at the future, and anxiety began overwhelming me, I would scan for something in the room to be grateful for. Gratitude taught me to be grounded, to remind myself that I am neither in the past nor the future, that I am in the present. And that that's all I need to know at the moment.

We are so lucky to live in the current age where the conversation of mental health is circulating like never before. Counselling, meditating, and emotions are becoming more and more encouraged. Janice Kaplan, author of *The Gratitude Diaries* recently came to Vancouver for the Fraser Institute lecture series, proving in itself just how major of a topic it has become. During her talk, Kaplan mentioned several things that reinforced to me the power of gratitude:

1. 95% of grateful people are happier. It is not happiness that leads to gratefulness; rather, it is gratefulness that leads to happiness.
2. Humans are wired to look at negatives. In the past, remembering dangers led to increased safety. Now it only leads to less productivity. Grateful people are typically more ambitious because they have a stronger mindset to be productive.
3. Grateful people are more positive, which in turn, attracts people to them. As a result, grateful people tend to have stronger social ties.

At the same time, Kaplan's research also found that millennials are the generation least likely to practice gratitude. Major reasons include: feeling guilt over lack of independence and/or dependence on parents, whereby the guilt is stronger than the gratefulness. Another major contributor is social media, as it's become so easy to compare ourselves to others who seem to be leading bigger and better lives than us.

Those factors definitely contributed to my negative mindset years ago (and still sometimes bother me today). It's these everyday little interactions that we have with ourselves that can lead to anxiety, guilt, and negativity. Countering it with everyday little reminders of gratefulness is such a small yet significant way of changing our whole outlook on life. Doing these small steps definitely helped me initiate change, and I hope it can for you too.

## TIPS FOR PRACTICING GRATEFULNESS

- Before you go to sleep, or right when you wake up, think of three things you're grateful for and write them down.
- When you find yourself thinking of something that makes you feel negative, do something that forces you to focus in the present. It can be as simple as throwing a pen in the air and catching it. Afterwards, take a deep breath, exhale, and say out loud three things you're grateful for.
- When with a friend, family member, or colleague, take a moment to express something about them that makes you grateful to have them in your life. It can be as simple as, "I'm grateful that you're my friend."



# Escape the elements.



pub • kitchen • patio

MONDAY - FRIDAY

11:00AM - 9:30PM

(SE2)



Student  
Association